

**European Influences at the Genesis of the Continental Army and
the United States Armed Services in the Late
Eighteenth to Early Nineteenth Centuries**

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

The Second Congress established the Continental Army, the first national fighting force, in the European style, to encounter Britain in the American Revolutionary War. The army was inspired by its British opponent and affected by its French counterpart and allies. All these influences were demonstrated in several attempts that Congress and the commanding officers made to create a professional army, and how the army was shaped over time. The lack of most war essentials obligated the Americans to seek any possible way to handle these struggles.

Without a central government, the revolutionaries formed themselves as a team and used private networks to gain what they wanted for the army. In the first phase of the war the Americans adopted the practices of the British army. The Continental regiments were organized after the British model, the officers used British reading lists to educate themselves, and when they were faced with a shortage of men, they persuaded other ethnicities and races to enlist, like the British had done. The approaches worked, but did not completely solve the problems. The American envoys, therefore, were present in Paris to plead with the King of France for assistance, and later on the army was aided with money, supplies, fleet, and military technicians. French officers and their allies thus participated in most of the Continental units and helped to improve the army's performance and other war aspects. They also supported the thought of establishing the first American military school.

The thesis explores the influences of eighteen-century European warfare on the Continental Army, which was pushed to grow as a credible and honourable force. It analyzes how the army was based on European military tradition, and how it was sculpted by war-resource deficiencies. In doing so, it bolsters understanding of the first American army, which combined European culture with an American way of fighting.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
List of Tables	vii
Introduction	viii
Background of the Problem	xiv
Aims and Themes.....	xviii
Chapter 1 Making an Army	1
Introduction	1
The first phase of the war, year 1775	12
Washington’s army reorganization in 1776	23
The change of 1777	32
The arrangement of the army in 1778	40
Infantry	42
Artillery	43
Cavalry	43
Provost	44
Engineer Department	44
The inspector general arrangements and the organization in 1781	48
Army of 1783	54
Conclusion	58
Chapter 2 Relationship between Congress, States, and the Commander in Chief on the Army Characteristics	60
Introduction	60
The importance of Congress selecting a commander-in-chief.....	68
Military Commander and Congress delegates	77
Board of War and civilian influence on the Continental Army	80
Washington’s private network with civilian leaders.....	87
Conclusion	94
Chapter 3 Military Literature	98
Introduction	98
Military Books Shared by British and Continental Armies	104
The Military Books Used by the Continental Army	118
Conclusion	126
Chapter 4 Non-American Recruitments	128
Introduction	128
Native Americans in the American Revolution	132
Slave Recruitment during the American Revolutionary War	145

German Soldiers in America	156
Conclusion.....	167
Chapter 5 Foreign Officers' Roles.....	170
Introduction	170
Early French support acquisitions	171
Foreign officers and military leadership	174
Military Expertise.....	180
Engineering	180
Infantry and military tactics	190
The drillmaster	198
Foreign patriot and personal devotion.....	206
The politics of enlisting foreign officers	211
Foreign officers' integration into the decisive battle at Yorktown	216
Conclusion.....	222
Chapter 6 Military Academy	225
Introduction	225
Artillery	231
Engineering	238
French recommendations for artillery and engineering reform and military school establishment.....	250
American thought on military school.....	253
Conclusion.....	255
Conclusion.....	257
Bibliography	272
Primary Sources:	272
Electronic Primary Sources:	274
Eighteenth Century Collection Online Books	277
Secondary Source:.....	279

List of Tables

Table 1: Number of men in arms during 1775-1783.....	6
Table 2: British, Loyalists, and German troops present in the American theatre of operations during the Revolutionary War	6
Table 3: British Infantry 1775 and Continental Infantry 1776.....	28
Table 4: Senior staff departments.....	21
Table 5: State military quotas in 1781.....	53
Table 6: Regiment of Infantry 1783.....	55
Table 7: Regiment of Artillery and a corps of Engineers.....	56

Introduction

The characteristics of the first American fighting force in the Revolutionary War—the Continental Army—have been perceived in many different ways. Historians have debated whether it was a distinctively American institution or if it resembled the European armies of its day. Contemporaries and historians have argued over the nature of the American military system whether it was militia force or regular army. Nevertheless, the European influences at the genesis of the Continental Army have not yet been carefully examined. No consensus has emerged on what aspects of the army were affected by European military tradition and practices. Moreover, it has not been clarified how the army was exactly established and run, what the army was expected to be like, and what the army finally became. Beyond that, there is still the question of what were the factors that made the army develop that way.

Despite this contemporary debate, some historians have concluded that the Continental Army copied European military rules and styles of fighting. Caroline Cox explains that the Continental Army considered the regulars' rules more important than the cause of fighting.¹ This idea explains how the Americans could create an army so quickly to fight in the war. Moreover, she argues, the senior American officers had also fought alongside the British army during the Imperial Wars and thus were familiar with the administrative and operational structure of the European armies. Russell Weigley, however, disagrees and in his *The American Way of War* claims that armies such as Continental Army succeeded in finding support and equipping themselves, but that they were never able to match the British consistently in the discipline that required standing up to the open-field exchanges of volleys and bayonet

¹ Caroline Cox, 'The Continental Army', in *The Oxford Handbook of The American Revolution*, ed. by Edward Gray (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), p.163.

fighting that characterized eighteenth-century warfare. They could not match the well-drilled British in battlefield manoeuvrability or the tactical articulation of their battalions.²

Tal Tovy makes a crucial point about the characteristics of the American army during the American Revolutionary War. His *Militia or Regular Army*³ questions that if the militia was as effective as many had claimed and that it brought about the victory of this war, then why did the Americans still need to establish an army? Tovy mentions the importance of the European military tradition of the eighteenth century as well, but he does not discuss what kinds of European practices the Americans adopted. Tovy instead uses as his theme the strategies of George Washington, commander in chief, and Nathanael Greene, commander of the American forces in the South. The essay discusses that both of them agreed that only a well-organized and trained army in the modern style of warfare could lead the Americans to win the war.

Those on both sides of the American Revolutionary War have written many great works of history about the war in general as well as specific army. Some of these studies are devoted to the study of different aspects of the war and warfare beyond military operations. A few explore the British military endeavour in the American Revolutionary War, such as Stephen Conway's *The War of American Independence 1775-1783*,⁴ Sylvia R. Frey's *The British Soldier in America*,⁵ R. Arthur Bowler's *Logistics and the Failure of the British Army in America*,⁶ Franklin and Marry

² Russell Weigley, *The American Way of War, A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1974) p.4.

³ Tal Tovy, 'Militia or Regular Army', *European Journal of American Studies*, 5-1 (2010), <<http://journals.openedition.org/ejas/7814>> [accessed September 23, 2017].

⁴ Stephen Conway, *The War of American Independence, 1775-1783* (London: Edward Arnold, 1995).

⁵ Sylvia Frey, *The British Soldier in America* (Austin Texas: University of Texas Press, 1981).

⁶ R. Arthur Bowler, *Logistics and the Failure of the British Army in America 1775-1783* (Princeton New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1975).

Wickwire's *Cornwallis and the War of Independence*,⁷ and George Billias's *George Washington's Opponents*.⁸ These works can be situated alongside other studies which have explored the armed forces in America during the eighteenth century, such as Stephen Brumwell's *Redcoats*,⁹ John Houlding's *Fit for Service*¹⁰ and Ira D. Gruber's *Books and the British Army*.¹¹ Similarly, the American military effort during the Revolutionary period has been widely investigated in terms of military attitudes, politics and practice in texts such as Don Higginbotham's *The War of American Independence*,¹² Mark Edward Lender's *A Respectable Army: The Military Origins of the Republic, 1763–1789*,¹³ and Donald Stroker's *Strategy in the American War of Independence: A Global Approach*.¹⁴ And so many works have been written in the styles of battle narration and generals' bibliographies.

But not so many have made arguments about the culture of the Continental Army. Among those, Charles Royster's classic study of American characteristics during the Revolutionary War reveals the attitudes of the American people toward their first army. The root problem of the army was that the officers expected men to be mechanical and disciplined while men considered themselves free. The book, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character*¹⁵

⁷ Franklin and Marry Wickwire, *Cornwallis and the War of Independence*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1971).

⁸ George Athan Billias, *George Washington's Opponents: British Generals and Admirals in the American Revolution* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1969).

⁹ Stephen Brumwell, *Redcoats: The British Soldier and War in the Americas, 1775-1763* (Cambridge United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

¹⁰ J.A. Houlding, *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-1795* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1981).

¹¹ Ira D. Gruber, *Books and the British Army in the Age of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

¹² Don Higginbotham, *The War of American Independence: Military Attitudes, Politics, and Practice 1763-1789* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1983).

¹³ James Kirby Martin and Mark Edward Lender, *A respectable Army: The Military Origins of the Republic, 1763-1789* (Arlington Heights, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, 1982).

¹⁴ Donald Stroker, Kennet J. Hagan and Michael T. McMaster, *Strategy in the American War of Independence: A Global Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

¹⁵ Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783* (London: W.W.Norton & Company Ltd., 1981).

questions why Congress failed to run their army, and the truth is that the army almost fell apart. Royster focuses on the importance of public virtue to support the army and men, which was civilian governments' responsibility. He emphasizes its broad social composition and argues that public virtue was an important factor in the war's successful outcome, rather dismissing professionalization as a factor in the Revolution's military victories. However, the ambiguous administrative system in America that greatly affected the army has not been clearly discussed. American institutions at that time were forged in a legal sense. The connections formed in the army between powerful Revolutionists have not been carefully examined.

Robert K. Wright's *The Continental Army*¹⁶ is a unique work that deals with the army's organization and development step by step. It shows how the American officers perceived the situation they were fighting, and that played a part in transforming the troops. Caroline Cox's *A Proper Sense of Honor: Service and sacrifice in George Washington's Army* also examines the fundamental organizational pattern of the Continental Army, which was modelled by European army influences especially regarding notions of honour. Cox argues that social hierarchy supported military hierarchy, and military hierarchy was supported by harsh military law.¹⁷

Wright also mentions the professionalism that European officers brought to America from 1776 to 1778. He touches on the idea that the army benefitted from France and their allies' military experts. Those contributed to artillery, engineering, and infantry corps and helped to develop and add supportive units during that time. However, the root of foreign employment, the army reorganization caused by

¹⁶ Robert K. Wright, Jr., *The Continental Army* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006).

¹⁷ Caroline Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honor: Service and Sacrifice in George Washington's Army* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), p. 22.

European participation, and the actual roles of those foreign officers have not been completely discussed. Wright's book together with Fred Anderson Berg's attempt to gather the Continental units into his *Encyclopaedia of Continental Army Units*,¹⁸ should be appreciated. They give great detail of how the army's organization developed over time, and the readers can take it from there for more specific study. However, these two books are outdated; the references and analysis should be revised.

There are also books on specific aspects of the army. Charles Neimeyer's *America Goes to War: A Social History of the Continental Army*¹⁹ presents how joining the army became an opportunity for non-white races and ethnicities. Congress offered them various things, including a bounty, and in exchange Congress could recruit more men. Neimeyer shows who actually served in the army and reveals that the American Revolutionary War was not a purely patriotic war—it was partly about business. But the way Congress enlisted these groups of men has not been compared to the British approaches, which were similar.

Recently, in 2015, Phillip Tucker publishes a book presenting an interesting aspect of the Continental Army. His book, *How the Irish Won the American Revolution*²⁰, discusses how the Irish soldiers participated in the Continental Army and fought in some important battles. This is actually what Neimeyer investigates in his book. Tucker, outstandingly, ignores the upper-class figures and focuses more on the neglected Irish soldiers who, in fact, filled the colony and state quotas and fought in American battles. They made a great contribution to the war's outcome. Tucker's

¹⁸ Fred Anderson Berg, *Encyclopaedia of Continental Army Units* (Pennsylvania: Stackpole Books, 1972).

¹⁹ Charles Patrick Neimeyer, *America Goes to War: A Social History of the Continental Army* (New York: New York University Press, 1996).

²⁰ Phillip Tomas Tucker, *How the Irish won the American Revolution: Anew Look at the Forgotten Heroes of America's War of Independence* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2015).

work also tallies up more characteristics of the Continental Army in the ongoing debates. His argument is also based on the Continental Army's struggle to survive, as demonstrated by their enlisting of any able-bodied man.

Other factors, like how the American officers at that time educated themselves is also an interesting point which has not been examined evidently. When a military school was not available, the officers turned to military literature they could acquire. American military reading choice has not been discussed clearly. Steuben's *Regulation* is the most famous and seems to be well known to historians, but it demonstrates only one of many genres of military literature at that time. In addition, before Steuben produced his work, the army and its officers actually had possessed many other useful books. Some of these books even went in-depth regarding military theory like those read by British officers.

Reneé Critcher Lyons's *Foreign-Born American Patriots*²¹ is the only book available on the market that gathers as many as 16 outstanding foreign officers and Revolutionists who participated in the war. While the book gives interesting profiles and the reasons each individual joined the cause, it does not analyze their specific roles that contributed to the development of the army. Some informative works have been composed on foreign officers who participated in the Revolutionary War, especially those famous ones like Harlow Giles Unger's *Lafayette*²², Alex Storozynski's *The Peasant Prince: Thaddeus Kosciuszko*²³, and Paul Lockhart's *The Drillmaster of Valley Forge: The Baron de Steuben and the Making of the American*

²¹ Reneé Critcher Lyons, *Foreign-Born American Patriots* (North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2012).

²² Harlow Giles Unger, *Lafayette* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2002).

²³ Alex Storozynski, *The Peasant Prince: Thaddeus Kosciuszko and the Age of Revolution* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2009).

*Army*²⁴. These books give these men's overall private and military lives as a starting point for further analysis.

There have also been challenges to the conventional belief that the training provided by foreign officers at Valley Forge served as the turning point of the Revolution. In chapter 11 of Wayne Bodle's book, *The Valley Forge Winter: Civilians and Soldiers in War*, he asserts that the training efforts of Baron von Steuben, a Prussian drillmaster, were not significant enough to transform the army. Their effect was actually to give the soldiers more pride, confidence, and familiarity with the military routine.²⁵

Overall, the literature gives an idea of what the first American army looks like and touches on European integration during specific times of the war. Different aspects of the Continental Army are discussed, but none of those primarily and directly discuss the American army through European influences: what those influences are, why the Americans accepted them, and how the American force was affected in such way. My study, therefore, will investigate these influences and try to find out if they promoted the Europeanization of the Continental Army and intends to offer a contribution to this ongoing debate.

Background of the Problem

The failing of the troops around Boston to present themselves properly foreshadowed the problems of the Continental Army, when George Washington arrived at Cambridge, Massachusetts, on July 2, 1775. The commander-in-chief did not delight in seeing his troops. The camps were unorganized, unclean, and only a few units had

²⁴ Paul Lockhart, *The Drillmaster of Valley Forge: The Baron de Steuben and the Making of the American Army* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008).

²⁵ Wayne Bodle, *The Valley Forge Winter: Civilians and Soldiers in War* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

uniforms. Washington received information on the size of the army eight days later.²⁶ The numbers of the forces also disturbed him, but not as much as their manner. Comparing his men to the British regulars, he found that his troops were too weak and too poorly disciplined to begin to fight or even carry out defensive operations, reporting that out of 18-20,000 men, only 14,000 were fit for duty.²⁷ Furthermore, Washington expressed his low opinion of the military ability of his troops, and particularly wanted qualified men to be commissioned, ‘The Skill of those we have, being very imperfect and confined to the mere manual Exercise of cannon: Whereas—the War in which we are engaged requires a Knowledge comprehending the Duties of the Field and Fortifications’.²⁸

Raising the amateur army would indeed take patience. Washington recognized that this unorganized and undisciplined army could be led into a catastrophe, particularly when the enemy was not a long way from their camp. He wrote, ‘I found a mixed multitude of People here, under very little discipline, order, or Government. I found the enemy in possession of a place called Bunker’s Hill, on Charles Town Neck, strongly Intrenched, and Fortifying themselves’.²⁹

From Washington’s initial reaction to taking command, we can see that in the beginning the American armed forces appeared distinctly different from the professional armies of Europe.³⁰ The Continental Army was started from scratch, formed by some experienced officers, who recruited male citizens to perform military

²⁶ George Washington, ‘To Richard Henry Lee, Camp at Cambridge, 10 July 1775,’ in *the Writings of Washington, from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1775-1799*, vol.3, ed. by John C. Fitzpatrick (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1931), pp. 329-331.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Fitzpatrick, ed., ‘To the President of Congress, Camp at Cambridge, 10 July 1775,’ vol.3, p. 325.

²⁹ Fitzpatrick, ed., ‘To John Augustine Washington, Camp at Cambridge, about 5 miles from Boston, 27 July 1775,’ vol.3, p. 371.

³⁰ In an occupational sense, professionalism means that a person is paid for a period of time for his or her services that require some combination of special skills, training and education. See William C. Pruett, *A History of the Organizational Development of the Continental Artillery during the War* (Tennessee: Columbia University, 1998) p.3.

operations in an actual war. The men who participated in the Continental Army were drawn from all sections of society.³¹ The British Army, on the other hand, was led by members of the aristocracy. However, by the end of the American War of Independence, the Americans had improved their troops toward the profession of arms.³²

The thought of creating a professional army did not stem only from Washington's admiration of British discipline. Military professionalism was present in the Continental Army as many of Washington's senior officers served as both militia and regular British soldiers and gained battlefield experience during the French and Indian War.³³ Many other officers agreed that it was still necessary to create a disciplined army since the militiamen were unlikely to fulfil the respectable aspirations of the military. Irregular warfare was considered an uncivilized practice, and any group that participated would be unable to earn a place among European nations.³⁴ The law of nations also guided America toward an understanding of statecraft and encouraged Europeans to take the United States seriously.³⁵ Creating an army from its very foundations, however, has never been an easy task, especially when it must be as disciplined as and equivalent to the professional European ones.

³¹ Stephen Conway, 'The British Army and the War of Independence', in *The Oxford Handbook of the American Revolution*, ed. By Edward G. Gray and Jane Kamensky (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 178.

³² Historians have found the criteria of development professions before the Industrial Revolution. There are seven features that should be included: hierarchical organization; emphasis on service; internal control of recruitment, training and placement; internal enforcement of standards and discipline; possession of specific expertise; a well-developed career structure; and a strong esprit de corps. See Ira D. Gruber, *Books and the British Army in the Age of the American Revolution* (North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), pp. 23 and 58-60.

³³ George Athan Billias, *George Washington's Generals and Opponents: Their Exploits and Leadership* (New York: Da Capo, 1994), pp. viii-ix.

³⁴ John Whiteclay Chambers II, 'Continental Army', in *The Oxford Companion to American Military History* (New York: Oxford University Press), p. 186.

³⁵ J.M Opal, 'The Republic in the World, 1783-1803', in *The Continental Army, The Oxford Handbook of The American Revolution*, ed. by Edward Gray (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 599.

Washington believed that the Americans needed to know how to fight in a standard pattern, not only to compete effectively in the battlefield but also to gain honour as a national army so that the United States would be viewed by other civilized nations as being able to fight on regular terms. He wrote to the president of Congress:

Regular troops alone are equal to the exigencies of modern war, as well for defence as offence; and whenever a substitute is attempted, it must prove illusory and ruinous.—No Militia will ever acquire the habits necessary to resist a regular force.³⁶

This is why modern war style that Washington mentioned was so important to follow. Otherwise, even if they won the fight, they could not prove their honour. However, it seemed impossible to create a professional army in such a short time to European standards. Training the unorganized colonial troops required an intensive selection of military procedure and practice. General Nathanael Greene also agreed that the European military ideas should be carefully chosen for adoption by the army. He wrote to a council of war in December 1777. This statement predicted the future of the Continental Army—learn from pattern and know by experience:

[E]xperience is the best of schools and the safest guide in human affairs; yet I am no advocate for blindly following all the maxims of European policy, but where reason corresponds with what custom has long sanctified, we may safely copy their Example.³⁷

³⁶ Fitzpatrick, ed., 'To the President of Congress, 15 September 1780,' vol. 20 (1937), pp. 49-50.

³⁷ Nathanael Greene, 'To George Washington from Major General Nathanael Greene, 3 December 1777,' ed. by Frank E. Grizzard, Jr. and David R. Hoth, in *Founders Online*, National Archives <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-12-02-0486>, ver. 2014-05-09> [accessed 9 August 2014].

But even if it was clear from the start that Congress made the decision to create a full-time army, the real question was how the Americans would achieve that level of European professionalism. Washington and many Revolutionaries led this idea and made a great attempt to do so, but to build a professional army took time and effort. It was not only the American people's job; this work employed a great deal of foreign service support from France, which included giving advice and performing some special duties. But before the help came, the Americans had already followed some of the British army's plans and action.

Aims and Themes

This study will investigate European influences on the Continental Army and the United States land forces during its genesis in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries, mainly 1775-1802. The analysis will start with the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War and continue on to the more professional army that developed during the war. Moreover, it will look closely at the founding of the United States Military Academy West Point in 1802, which further professionalized the US Army. I will also discuss the factors that affected the development of troop discipline and professionalism. Looking at its development during this transitional period, I will attempt to determine whether the US Army represented a distinct fighting force.

This study will also utilize materials from the Eighteenth-Century Collections Online (ECCO); the National Archives Washington D.C., Fold 3, Revolutionary War Records; Washington's writings; Washington and his officers' correspondence, journals, and diaries; the Journals of Continental Congress; letters of members of the Continental Congress, letters of delegates to Congress; manuscript orderly books; published papers and memoirs. Secondary sources in the form of books, journals, and

theses will be used to gather general ideas, define guidelines and timelines, add historical arguments, and develop the overall research plan.

The research begins by examining the attempts of Congress and military commanders, in the first year of the war, to create a full-time army modeled after the British army's organization and composition. However, the troops were adjusted several times due to the shortage of men, current situation, and poor administration of Congress. The following chapter then looks at the social composition of the Continental Army. It explores the function of related institutions: Congress, the provincial government, and the Continental Army and its commander-in-chief, which were responsible for war matters. It will analyze the attempts they made together, formally and privately, to keep the army in existence and avoid its collapse before the war ended.

During the War of Independence, the US Armed Forces appeared different from professional European armies. In the eighteenth century, British Army officers were usually members of the upper class, and the rank and file were recruited from the bottom of the social hierarchy. The men in the Continental Army were volunteers with no professional training. They expected to serve for a single campaign and viewed their enlistment as a contract. Americans of the Revolution harboured a strong mistrust of permanent armies. This was reflected in the disbanding of the Continental Army following the War's end. General George Washington prevented a potential crisis by resigning as commander-in-chief after the war, which established a tradition of civil control over the US military. These first two chapters will examine social composition, army organization and the command structure as a way of analyzing its ethos.

The third chapter tracks the British impact on the Americans' reading choices. Since at that time there was no military school in America, the American officers had to educate themselves, and find a way to train the men. It will investigate military literature and reading of American officers during the war, especially material that was published in America. The military literature that was available and utilized during the Revolutionary War has been divided into two categories: books used by both British and Continental armies, plus what was not taken up in America, and books used by only the Americans. As well as exploring the content of these works, and their intellectual debts, this chapter will indicate how well the material was used and whether these military textbooks made a significant contribution to the Continental Army. It also looks for reviews of the books, advertisements, and the people's thought about them to explore how they were received and used.

The fourth chapter will determine how the Continental Army filled in military quotas, since many American men declined to reenlist, and Congress struggled to recruit new men into the army. It will also examine how the British and American armies were using the same groups of other ethnicities and races—the American Natives, Germans, and black slaves—to fight for them, and whether the Americans followed the British methods. It will look at the specific ways both armies persuaded those men to join their troops.

The fifth chapter then will shift the focus away from the British influence to the French, since the Americans were supported by the French king with funds, ammunition, war supplies, and military officers. The Continental Army relied on European assistance and foreign staff officers' instruction. The new Continental Army needed engineers, and experienced artillerymen, so Congress requested that Silas Deane and Benjamin Franklin secure professional European officers for the

Continental Army. Several military leaders of the Continental Army were European. This chapter aims to describe European officers' roles and contribution to the army.

The last factor to be considered will be the thought of the military academy establishment. American officers and legislators agreed that they relied too much on foreign engineers and artillerymen during the war. Domestic training was required, so they supported the creation of a national military academy in order to teach the arts and sciences of warfare. In 1802, Congress authorized the establishment and funding of the US Military Academy as a way to promote the study of engineering and sciences in the growing nation. This chapter will focus closely on the inspiration of creating the military school supported by American and French officers.

Whether or not the Continental Army mimicked all the practice, training, and discipline of the European armies during the eighteenth century will be examined later. However, it is clear that the American army was influenced by European military culture. The British army during the eighteenth century focused on firepower. The soldiers stood in lines, facing the enemy, ready to be attacked. Their best weapon was the musket; although its accuracy was less than a 100-yard fire range, it was the most effective weapon when firing in volleys. The French, however, were still debating the importance of firepower and shock of either muskets and cannon, or bayonets and sabres.³⁸ But both the armies focused on intense training, along with repetitive exercise in set movements and working as a team. During the eighteenth century a military enlightenment developed by which the Europeans tested the effectiveness of the new weaponry and simplified organization as well as improving on the marching step, system of drill and fixed manoeuvres.³⁹ During this time, the

³⁸ Ira D. Gruber, *Books and the British Army in the Age of the American Revolution* (North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), p.35.

³⁹ Wright, p. 51.

European nations were frequently at war so they preserved large permanent and standing armies to fight in open areas, and men made military careers and devoted their efforts to building specialized skills.⁴⁰ To become like the Europeans, the Continental Army needed to follow the Europeans' method.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

Chapter 1 Making an Army

Introduction

The first European influence on the genesis of the Continental Army was in fact into fostering of the need to create one. The idea of making a full-time army would not have happened if an agreement could have been made between the British parliament and the colonists. After long conflicts over taxes between the British government and the Americans, the first Continental Congress, with the delegates from each colony, was established on September 5, 1774 to protest a series of Coercive Acts and find the common ground between the colonies and its mother country. The Americans disapproved of the way that the English government kept soldiers in America and found it ‘quite unreasonable, that the mother country should be at the expense of maintaining standing armies in North America’.¹ They insisted that this action of ‘keeping a Standing army in these colonies, in times of peace without the consent of the legislature of that colony, in which such army is kept is against the law’.² Feeling threatened by the British garrison in Boston, the Americans formed a security guard to protect themselves. They decided to use their militia as their main force for this purpose, ‘the militia, if put upon a proper footing, would be amply sufficient for their defence in time of peace; that they are desirous to put it on such a footing immediately’.³ At this time the colonists did not have a permanent army—they used the militia as their main force.

¹ Richard Henry Lee, ‘first draft in, Wednesday, October 5, 1774,’ in the *Journals of the Continental Congress*, vol. 1, ed. by Worthington Chauncey Ford (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1904-37) p. 54.

² Ford, eds., ‘Friday, October 14, 1774,’ Vol. 1, p. 70.

³ Ford, eds., ‘Monday, October 3, 1774,’ Vol. 1, p. 54.

One of the main reasons Congress did not create the army at first was because the conflict was not expected to last long, and the Americans hoped to compromise in order 'to restore between Great Britain and the Colonies that harmony so necessary to the happiness of the British Empire, and so ardently desired by all America'.⁴ In October 1774, Congress delegates drafted a petition to the king to request the removal of the British army out of Boston, 'A standing army has been kept in these colonies, ever since the conclusion of the late war, without the consent of our assemblies; and this army with a considerable naval armament has been employed to enforce the collection of taxes'.⁵ The attempt of the First Continental Congress had no effect as John Adams concluded in his diaries, 'all Petitions, Remonstrances and Negotiations, for the future would be fruitless and only occasion a Loss of time and give Opportunity to the Ennemy to sow divisions among the States and the People'.⁶

By then, the distrust and hostile feelings toward the standing army were rooted in the Americans' minds, because the British army was seen as threatening. Discussions on creating a national army were not taken seriously until the first fighting at the battle of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775, between the British regulars and the American militia. People realized that the long conflict had now turned into an actual war. Many of the delegates of the first Continental Congress were determined that America have an able force to defend itself. Massachusetts delegates like John Adams planned to pursue a national force and acquire foreign assistance:

We were free but if the War should be continued, We were determined to seek Alliances with France, Spain and any other Power of Europe, that

⁴ Ford, eds., 'Saturday, October 1, 1774,' Vol. 1, p. 53.

⁵ Ford, eds., 'The Petition of Congress,' vol. 1, p. 116.

⁶ John Adams, 'In Congress, May 1775,' in *The Adams Papers, Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, vol. 3, ed. by L. H. Butterfield (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 314–321.

would contract with Us. That We ought immediately to adopt the Army in Cambridge as a Continental Army to Appoint a General and all other Officers, take upon ourselves the Pay, Subsistence, Cloathing, Armour and Munitions of the Troops.⁷

Soon after, the Second Continental Congress was formed on May 10, 1775, and the creation of an army was considered. The Massachusetts Provincial Congress promptly responded to this clash with the decision to establish a national fighting force. The army was expected to contain 13,600 men from the colonies. The letter of Massachusetts delegates was dispatched to London, and a part of it showed their offense:

The sanguinary Zeal of the Ministerial Army, to ruin and destroy the Inhabitants of this Colony, in the Opinion of Congress, hath rendered the Establishment of an Army indispensably necessary [...] we are now reduced to the sad alternative of defending ourselves by arms, or submitting to be slaughtered.⁸

The Americans were reluctant to begin open war with the British redcoats, knowing well how superior the British army was, since they witnessed the British victory over the French in the previous war. It was hard to digest that they were about to fight with this powerful army. But at this moment, there was no other option: they needed to create their own force—at least for a symbol of this determination to resist to the public. Without having an actual army, they had no hope in this war. And this implied their desire to create one as similar as possible to their mother country's troops. The Massachusetts provincial government was the most radical one on this matter:

⁷ Butterfield, ed., pp. 314–321.

⁸ Ford, eds., 'In Provincial Congress, Watertown, May 3, 1775,' vol.2, pp. 24-25.

With the greatest deference, we beg leave to suggest, that a powerful Army, as the only mean left to stem the rapid Progress of a tyrannical Ministry. Without a force, superior to our Enemies, we must reasonably expect to become the Victims of their relentless fury: With such a force, we may still have hopes of seeing an immediate End put to the inhuman Ravages of mercenary Troops in America, and the wicked authors of our Miseries, brought to condign punishment, by the just Indignation of our Brethren in Great Britain.⁹

Massachusetts delegates again encouraged Congress to pursue the creation of army, but even if an army was vital, the idea of using citizens as soldiers still appeared. The most open supporters for a Continental Army, still harboured doubts about its potential threat to liberty:

We are now compelled to raise an Army, which with the assistance of the other colonies. We hope under the smiles of heaven, will be able to defend us and all America from the further butcheries and devastations of our implacable enemies.—But as the sword should in all free states be subservient to the civil powers and as it is the duty of the Magistrates to support it for the peoples necessary defense, we tremble at having an army (although consisting of our countrymen) established here without a civil power to provide for and control them.¹⁰

The colonies, however, already had a militia in each province, and the men proved themselves effective in the Battle of Lexington and Concord. This increased the delegates' reluctance to create a regular army. The militia was not a new thing. It was

⁹ Ford, eds., 'In Provincial Congress, Watertown, May 3, 1775,' vol.2, pp. 24-25.

¹⁰ Ford, eds., 'Friday, June 2, 1775,' vol. 2, p. 77.

the system that the Americans inherited from the English in 1691. The Massachusetts charter stated that the regiments of militia were organized to empower the royal governor and to protect themselves from the Indian and the French:

The Governor of our said Province or Territory for the time being shall have full Power by himselfe or by any Cheif Comander or other Officer or Officers to be appointed by him from time to time to traine instruct Exercise and Governe the Militia there and for the speciall Denfence and Safety of Our said Province or Territory to assemble in Martiall Array and put in Warlike posture the Inhabitants of Our said Province or Territory and to lead and Conduct them and with them to Encounter Expulse Repell Resist and pursue by force of Armes aswell by Sea as by Land.¹¹

Before the army was established, on March 25, 1775, the Committee of Safety proposed a plan for embodying, arming and disciplining a militia for putting the colonies into an immediate posture of defence. The committee recommended that the colonies put in execution the Militia Law passed in the year 1738 because, ‘the legal and necessary disciplining of the militia has been much neglected and a proper provision of arms and ammunition has not been made, to the evident danger of the community in case of invasion or insurrection’.¹² It was advised that the colonies form one or more volunteer companies of infantry and troops of horse in each county and be in constant training and readiness to act on any emergency. The drill book *Military*

¹¹ *The Charter of Massachusetts Bay – 1691*, The Federal and State Constitutions Colonial Charters, and Other Organic Laws of the States, Territories, and Colonies Now or Heretofore Forming the United States of America, compiled and edited under the Act of Congress of June 30, 1906 by Francis Newton Thorpe (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1909).

¹² Thomas Jefferson, ‘Report of Committee to Prepare a Plan for a Militia, March 25, 1775,’ in *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 1, 1760–1776, ed. By Julian P. Boyd (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), pp. 160–162.

Exercise for Infantry established in 1764 refers to *The Manual Exercise*, and was recommended to use to train the men.

Therefore, the Continental Army at the beginning was a New England army, initially using a high percentage of militia along with the soldiers. The Continental Army in 1775 was made up of a large number volunteers—those who represented citizen force—gathering around Boston.

Table 1: Number of men in arms during 1775-1783

Year	Regulars/continentals	Militia	Total
1775	27,443 (72.9%)	10,180	37,623
1776	46,891 (73.74%)	16,700	63,591
1777	34,820 (77.5%)	10,100	44,920
1778	32,889 (88.3%)	4,353	37,252
1779	27,699 (84.4%)	5,135	32,834
1780*	21,015 (73.8%)	5,811	26,826
1781**	13,292 (64.6%)	7,298	20,590
1782	14,256		
1783	13,476		

Notes: *None of South Carolina and Georgia's troops were on the roll; **Congress removed Georgia's quota.

Sources: Numbers from 1775-1781 see Beach, p. 466; 1782-1783 see Berg, p.143.

Table 2: British, Loyalists, and German troops present in the American theatre of operations during the Revolutionary War

Year	Number of Men
June, 1777	28,000
March, 1778	33,750
August, 1778	34,000
November, 1778	22,550
February, 1779	26,750
May, 1779	25,600
December, 1779	29,600
May, 1780	31,600
August, 1780	35,000
December, 1780	38,200
September, 1781	36,600
November 1, 1781	29,400

Source: Berg, p. 144.

Since the Continental Army was established under the Continental Congress, which theoretically acted as a national government but had no power to enact the law practically, to understand the organization of the Continental Army, one needs to look at its founders and background problems it faced. The Continental Congress encouraged its members, who were the delegates of the colonies' to execute any resolution that the Congress developed. However, this practice hindered the effectiveness of the operations, particularly with the army. Congress could not force men to enlist so they distributed the quotas to each colony to fill along with using militia service. For the Continental Congress, this was a convenient and economical method.

It is rare to find literature on the Continental Army organization. This is probably because the evidence is difficult to access, and it deals with numeric and quantitative information. The most useful studies of the organization of the Continental Army are *The Continental Army* by Robert K. Wright, Jr, and Fred Anderson Berg's *Encyclopaedia of Continental Army Units*. However, these two books are old and do not provide adequate referencing and must be read carefully in order to make an analysis. Charles Royster's *Revolutionary at War* touched on how the military organization changed its style from that based on public virtue in 1775 to become a more professional under the European influence of the drill master Baron von Steuben and the French officers, as well as the emulation of the European tradition that the Continental officers adopted like uniforms, badges, honour and gentility.¹³ However, the book does not explore how the organization developed. This chapter does not examine every unit of the Continental Army throughout the eight years of

¹³ Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783* (London: W.W.Norton & Company Ltd., 1981).

the War, but rather discusses how the army was organized initially, how it changed over time, and the reasons for these changes.

Congress expected army organization to be modelled on European armies. However, the colonists were most familiar with the militia system. Moreover, it was easier to urge the colonial delegates to support the fighting force with their troops rather than enlisting a new group of men to be trained all over again. In fact, Congress at that time could not afford a professional army, which required large sums of funds—at least to pay officers and men.

A national army, however, was inevitable because the practice of the eighteenth-century warfare required that the war needed to be in pitched style and operate in open field, which ultimately required professional armies. Smaller battles could be fought in different ways—as looking at the battles in the War closely many tactics and techniques were used widely, such as hit and run raids and ambushes. In the Southern campaign Nathanael Greene kept retreating of weaken Lord Cornwallis' troops, or Lafayette lured General Howe's troops closer and fired at them behind trees when he reconnoitred near Barren Hill, Pennsylvania. Even if an unconventional warfare approaches were used, both sides of the army needed to perform professionally and honourably to reach a decisive battle. Besides, the Americans had to prove that they were capable of fighting and winning the war. In order to be acknowledged this way, they needed to create an effective force to meet the European standard. Not only did the Americans need to be able to defend themselves, they must also be honourable and professional, so the first task that Congress did was to create its national army, 'The present dangerous and alarming situation of our publick

affairs, renders it necessary for this Colony to make preparations for their security and defence by raising and establishing an Army'.¹⁴

The force started with employing a large percentage of the militia gathered around Boston in 1775. At this time, the war was idealistic and was the way that many people perceived the Revolutionary War. Washington, however, knew that this patriotic spirit was not going to work in the long run. Actually, he saw the flaw of public spirit since the first year of the war when his army found itself in shortage of men, 'the egregious want of publick Spirit which reigns here, instead of pressing to be engaged in the Cause of their Country which I vainly flattered myselfe would be the Case, I find we are likely to be deserted, at a Most Critical time'.¹⁵ The war that they were engaging in had just begun and would not be a short one. Men could not sacrifice their personal lives to become ready to fight all the time. They needed to get paid to live and support their family. Congress needed to create the role of a professional military employee in order to keep the men in arms. This was a standard for European armies as well. The Revolutionary War was different and special in its sense and cause, but it was not different in the terms that soldiering was as an employee that needed pay and training to perform effectively.

During the war Washington and his subordinates made several attempts to encourage Congress to fully support a professional army instead of relying on militia. John Shy discusses the situation that Washington nearly lost his position to Charles Lee, his second major general, for Lee envisioned the American Revolution as a

¹⁴ 'Provincial Congress, Concord, April 8, 1775,' in *American archives: fourth series: containing a documentary history of the English colonies in North America from the King's message to Parliament of March 7, 1774 to the Declaration of Independence of the United States*, ed. by Peter Force (Washington: M. St. Clair Clarke and Peter Force, 1837-1846), p. 1358.

¹⁵ George Washington, 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 28 November 1775,' in *The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series*, vol. 2, 16 September 1775–31 December 1775, ed. By Philander D. Chase (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1987), pp. 444–448.

popular war of mass resistance based on military service as an obligation for citizenship.¹⁶ Shy examined Washington's and Lee's conflicting ideas regarding appropriate American military strategy.¹⁷ Lee believed that militia system was more in keeping with American concepts of individuality. He valued simplicity, 'If the Americans are servilely kept to the European Plan, they will make an awkward Figure, be laugh'd at as bad Army by their Enemy, and defeated in every Rencontre which depends on Manoeuvres.'¹⁸ But, Washington supported warfare rooted in traditional British linear tactics, declaring that the militia would destroy colonial society.

The idea of creating a regular army, however, was usually compromised. A standing army was not popular among the members of Congress and American people alike. This deprecation stemmed from the fact that the British government had used this very policy to create an armed force stationed in the colonies and taxed the colonists in order to pay for it. In the eyes of the British, this force would be used to protect newly obtained land in Canada and Florida from French and Spanish attack. Moreover, they could protect the colonists from the Indians. But the Americans disagreed—the troops were no use, and to have armed forces in peaceful time fostered threats to accept the acts. The Americans feared that their army could stand against its own people when they had power and weapons in their hands:

Whereas his majesty's most faithful subjects in these Colonies are reduced to a dangerous and critical situation, by attempts of the British Ministry, to carry into execution, by force of arms, several unconditional and oppressive acts of the British Parliament for laying taxes in America, to enforce the

¹⁶ John Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed: Reflection on the Military Struggle for American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 161.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 150.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 154.

collection of these taxes, and for altering and changing the constitution and internal police of some of these Colonies, in violation of the natural and civil rights of the Colonies.¹⁹

To combine the militia with the army was a challenging task as militiamen were under the pay and direction of the colony and commanded by a local military commander. So, they could not be ordered by Continental officers, and even Washington felt that way, ‘it will not be proper for me to give any Orders respecting them’.²⁰ Using militia also had some major defects. First, the men did not have proper training. They were trained by their local commanders with whatever drilling the commanders thought was effective. This meant that men from different colonies had their own way of manoeuvring. They had never been trained together—and this caused a problem when they were called to fight together. Second, militiamen still felt a sense of belonging as citizens when they were fighting. Their lack of discipline was disapproved of from the very first days that Washington took command of the Continental Army that was based on the Massachusetts militia, ‘all the General Officers agree that no Dependance can be put on the Militia for a Continuance in Camp, or Regularity and Discipline during the short Time they may stay’.²¹ This problem needed to be eliminated. Men needed to be trained until they could act and cope with the situation almost without ever thinking. Additionally, this situation required men who could stay for long enough to be trained as an actual soldier—or at least make them feel like they were one, so the idea of using a large number of militia could not be an option in this war.

¹⁹ Ford, eds., ‘Friday, June 30, 1775, Rules and Regulations,’ vol.2, p. 111.

²⁰ Chase, ed., ‘From George Washington to Major General Philip Schuyler, 20 August 1775,’ vol.1, pp. 331–334.

²¹ Chase, ed., ‘II. Letter Sent, 10–11 July 1775,’ in *The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series*, vol. 1, pp. 85–97.

But the lack of enlisted men forced Washington to use militia service even if he disagreed with this idea, 'I fear I Shall be under the necessity of Calling in the Militia and minute men of the Country to my assistance'.²² As the militia belonged to the colonies, it was almost impossible to keep them disciplined and in control. Moreover, the men thought of themselves as a free man who could leave their service whenever they wanted. Washington's dissatisfaction with the militia was well known by other officers. It led Timothy Pickering, a colonel in the Essex County militia, to initiate writing a drill manual for the militia which was called *An Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia*, published in Salem, Massachusetts in 1775. The book was presented as 'a diligent application to the military art' in which Pickering aimed to write the plain rudiments of the military art.²³

The first phase of the war, year 1775

The army in 1775 is sometimes were referred to as a New England army since New England men from four colonies were called to form the troops immediately after the first battle. The battle at Lexington and Concord in April triggered the Americans to be prepared for the next potential clash with the British regulars. Massachusetts was the first and most forward colony that immediately responded against the British action. The Massachusetts delegates asked for support from other colonies but only three other colonies—New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Connecticut—responded to this call by sending their militia to Boston. Massachusetts then requested Congress to create a provincial force by using these men.

²² 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 28 November 1775,' in *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 2, 16 September 1775–31 December 1775, ed. by Philander D. Chase (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1987), pp. 444–448.

²³ Chase, ed., 'To George Washington from Timothy Pickering, 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 627–628.

The military policies and execution of the first phase of the Continental Army in 1775 was highly influenced by the delegates. Congress still insisted on their self-defence—the direction to the commander-in-chief to keep the army not exceeding double that of the enemy implied Congress' disagreement on creating a large standing army. The resolution of one-year enlistment, which was too short to create an effective army for defensive action, hinted that the Americans had thought that the conflict would be short, and the reconciliation with the British government would be made.

Richard Henry Lee proposed to raise an army on May 16, and Congress created the Continental Army on June 14. The term Continental Army was used because Congress hoped to persuade Canada to join and support this army.²⁴ Congress entered Canada under 'the most positive orders [from Congress] to Cherish Every Canadian and Every friend to the Cause of Liberty, and Sacredly to guard their property'.²⁵ John Brown, a Massachusetts delegate went to Montreal as an emissary from Boston in October 1774 and March 1775 to encourage support from sympathetic Canadians.²⁶ The Canadians were unwilling to join the revolution, and 'there is no prospect of Canada sending Delegates to the Continental Congress'.²⁷

Congress approved the idea of creating the Continental Army with the expectation of 9,000-10,000 men around Boston for defensive action. Immediately following this, it established a recognizably European army. Ten companies of riflemen were raised as the first Continental unit—six in Pennsylvania, two in

²⁴ Frederick Converse Beach ed., *The Encyclopaedia Americana*, fifth volume (New York: The Americana Company, 1904), p. 466.

²⁵ Chase, ed., 'To George Washington from Major General Philip Schuyler, 20 September 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 17–23.

²⁶ Chase ed., 'To George Washington from Jonathan Trumbull, Sr., 21 August 1775,' vol. 1, pp. 344–346.

²⁷ James Brown, 'Letter from J' Brown to the Committee of Correspondence in Boston, March 29, 1775,' <<http://amarch.lib.niu.edu/islandora/object/niu-amarch%3A102247>> [accessed 10 March 2017].

Maryland, and two in Virginia.²⁸ The expert riflemen were the first units of the Continentals to serve as a light infantry force for the Boston siege.

Each company consisted of:

1 captain,
3 lieutenants,
4 sergeants,
4 corporals,
1 drummer or trumpeter, and
68 privates.²⁹

After they had completed their quotas, men from each colony would march to join the army near Boston. The officers and privates would receive the pay as follows: a captain 20 dollars per month, a lieutenant 13 $\frac{1}{3}$ dollars, a sergeant 8 dollars, a corporals 7 $\frac{1}{3}$ dollars, drummer or trumpeter 7 $\frac{1}{3}$ dollars, privates 6 $\frac{2}{3}$ dollars, and they would have to find their own arms and clothes.³⁰ Congress also created a standard form of the enlistment for one year as follows:

I _____ have, this day, voluntarily enlisted myself, as a soldier, in the American continental army, for one year, unless sooner discharged: And I do bind myself to conform, in all instances, to such rules and regulations, as are, or shall be, established for the government of the Army.³¹

Congress then appointed the committee to draft rules and regulations for the government of the army consisting of George Washington, Philip Schuyler, Silas Deane, Thomas Cushing, and Joseph Hewes.

²⁸ Ford, eds., 'Wednesday, June 14, 1775', in *Journals of the Continental Congress 1774-1789*, vol.2 May 10-Septemeber 20 1775 (Washington Government Printing Office, 1905), p. 89.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 90.

³¹ Ibid.

On June 15, Congress was unanimously elected George Washington as an army commander with five hundred dollars per month to 'command all the continental forces, raised, or to be raised, for the defence of American liberty'.³² Like the British army commander, Washington was given full power to control his troops, but he was still directed by civilian leaders:

You are hereby vested with full power and authority to act as you shall think for the good and welfare of the service. And we do hereby strictly charge and require all Officers and Soldiers, under your command, to be obedient to your orders, and diligent in the exercise of their several duties. And we do also enjoin and require you, to be careful in executing the great trust reposed in you, by causing strict discipline and order to be observed in the army, and that soldiers be duly exercised, and provide with all convenient necessaries. And you are to regulate your conduct in every respect by the rules and discipline of war, (as here with given you,) and punctually to observe and follow such orders and directions, from time to time, as you shall receive from this, or a future Congress of these United Colonies, or committee of Congress.³³

On 16 June Congress determined to acquire 21 staff officers:

- 2 major generals
- 8 brigadiers general
- 1 adjutant general
- 1 commissary general of stores and provisions
- 1 quarter master general
- 1 paymaster general and 1 deputy after him
- 1 chief engineer at the grand army and two assistants under him
- 3 aids de camps
- 1 secretary to the general
- 1 secretary to the Major general

³² Ibid., p. 91.

³³ Ford, eds., vol.2, 'Saturday, June 17, 1775', p. 96.

1 commissary of the musters³⁴

Congress then proceeded to the choice of the officers in the army by ballot. Artemas Ward was chosen first major-general; Horatio Gates was adjutant general; Charles Lee was second major general.³⁵ After the senior staff election Congress made a decision to add two more major generals and eight more brigadiers, and this was not by election but by choosing. On June 19 Congress resolved to appoint two more major generals—Philip Schuyler of New York and Israel Putnam of Massachusetts.³⁶ Six other brigadiers were from Massachusetts and Connecticut, and the other two were from New Hampshire and Rhode Island as follows:

Seth Pomeroy of Massachusetts, first

Richard Montgomery, an Irish-born officer who had served in the British army, of New York, second

David Wooster of Connecticut, third

William Heath of Massachusetts, fourth

Joseph Spencer of Connecticut, fifth

John Thomas of Massachusetts, sixth

John Sullivan of New Hampshire, seventh

Nathanael Greene of Rhode Island, eighth³⁷

This shows that some colonial delegates were more influential, and some colonies participated more in the war's cause than others. Congress had their own way to elect appropriate staff officers, but it had to retain the patronage system. Congress itself worked on the delegate action—it did not have real power. It was the colonial/state delegates who executed the Congress resolutions.

³⁴ Ford, eds., vol.2, 'Friday, June 16, 1775', pp. 93-94.

³⁵ Ford, eds., vol.2, 'Saturday, June 17, 1775', p. 97.

³⁶ Ford, eds., vol.2, 'Monday, June 19, 1775', p. 99.

³⁷ Ford, eds., vol.2, 'Thursday, June 22, 1775', p. 103.

In order to manage men in Boston, Washington appointed his generals to take control over the army divisions and brigades based on geography. Washington saw that he alone could not watch over all the troops in the colonies. He would control the headquarters, but other army divisions and six brigades would be commanded by his senior staff officers. Washington took Cambridge, Massachusetts as his headquarters located at the house of the president of Harvard College, Samuel Langdon, located on Harvard Square.³⁸ He managed to form the army into three grand Divisions ‘under the Command of the Generals Ward, Lee & Puttnam’.³⁹ Each division had two Brigades which contained six regiments. Artemas Ward commanded over Roxbury, Boston (later the Eastern Division). The Northern Department or the Canadian theatre of operations was taken control by Major General Philip Schuyler.⁴⁰ New York would be the borderline of the northern and southern colonies. So was the army, ‘As New York is the most importt object they can have in view on Acct of its commanding Hudsons River leading towards Canada & seperating the Northern & Southern Colonies it appeard necessary for me to take measures for its Security’.⁴¹ And, Charles Lee was appointed as a commander of the Southern Department. The army authority was divided into three departments: northern, middle and southern. The number of sums for commissioners would be disseminated to each unequally based on the military theatre since at the first phase of the war the British and American armies remained in the North. The Southern Department received from the Continental

³⁸ William Lincoln, ed., *The Journals of Each Provincial Congress of Massachusetts in 1774 and 1775, and of the Committee of Safety. Boston, 1838* (Microfilm Collection of Early State Records), pp. 398–99, 460, 593.

³⁹ George Washington, ‘From George Washington to John Hancock, 4–5 August 1775,’ in *The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series*, vol. 1, 16 June 1775–15 September 1775, ed. by Philander D. Chase (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1985), pp. 223–239.

⁴⁰ George Washington, ‘Instructions to Major General Philip Schuyler, 25 June 1775,’ in *The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series*, vol. 1, 16 June 1775–15 September 1775, ed. by Philander D. Chase (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1985), pp. 36–40.

⁴¹ Chase, ed., ‘From George Washington to Landon Carter, 27 March 1776,’ vol. 3, pp. 544–547.

Treasury the sum of ten thousand dollars; the Middle six thousand dollars and the Northern sixty-six thousand dollars.⁴²

Among all Washington's generals, the most important position for army organization was an adjutant general held by brigadier general Horatio Gates. His main duty was to advise and principally assist the commander-in-chief. This adjutant general was modelled after the British staff adjutant for administrative duties to be responsible for guards, details, paperwork, and make a formation of the infantry into the line of battle. More importantly Gates was assigned to compile the first strength returns—a crucial task that was required since the army was established because the number of men and other information were essential for making a plan for military action:

A Question was proposed what Number of Troops may be necessary for the present Service in & near Boston to defend the Posts now occupied against the Force supposed to be employed against us. Upon which it was agreed that the Army for the above Purpose ought to consist of at least 20,000 Men... As by the Returns now made the Number of effective Men is far short of the above Estimate a Question was made in what Manner the Deficiency shall be supplied'.⁴³

From the first returns reported that the army outside Boston consisted of around 16,000 men, of whom about 14,000 were fit for service.⁴⁴

Other administrative staff were also important. The details were drawn from the letter Washington wrote to President John Hancock.⁴⁵ The Paymaster general was

⁴² Ford, eds., 'Wednesday, July 12, 1775,' vol. 2, p. 175.

⁴³ Chase, ed., 'Council of War, 9 July 1775', vol. 1, pp. 79–82.

⁴⁴ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to Richard Henry Lee, 10 July 1775,' vol. 1, pp. 98–100.

⁴⁵ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 21 September 1775', vol. 2, pp. 24–30.

assigned to take control over finances. The position was elected and given to civilian politicians James Warren of Massachusetts and Jonathan Trumbull, Jr. of Connecticut as the deputy Paymaster General. This agent was different from the British system in which the American Paymaster General only dealt with spending funds for salaries, but the British Paymaster General acted as the means which funds were transmitted to the regiment's commercial agent to purchase necessary items.

The Commissary General of Musters was responsible for documents that listed all the officers and men in a company. A company commander would report this information in a roll and the Mustermaster's department would performed formal inspection of the troops' dates of enlistment, rank, promotion, length of enlistment, and their status on a daily basis. This task was useful to check back on men if the number was consistent with the pay and supplies that each unit claimed. Washington chose Stephen Moylan to do this duty.

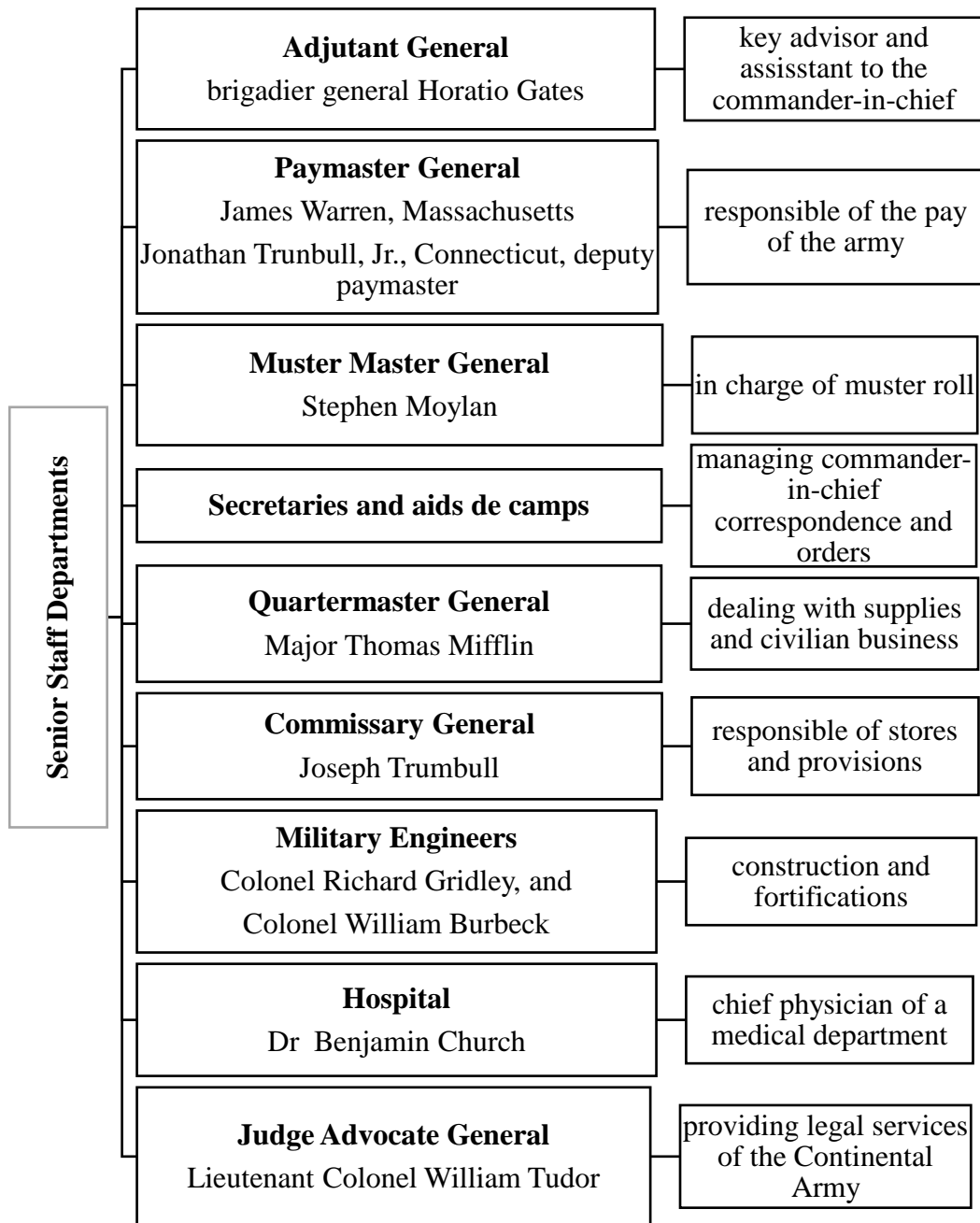
Secretaries and aides de camps were a part of administrative sector. The commander-in-chief and major generals were allowed to select their own personnel. Aides acted as messengers and secretaries. Washington chose young capable men from influential families to be his personal staff or 'Washington's military family'. Some of them were Thomas Mifflin, Joseph Reed, John Trumbull, Edmund Randolph, George Baylor, and Robert Hanson Harrison.⁴⁶

The next sector of staff took care of supplying. The American procurement as structured after the British army supply system. Congress created the Quartermaster General and Commissary General to be responsible for supplying the army, and these

⁴⁶ Worthington Chauncey Ford, 'List and Writing of Washington's Aides-de-Camp and Secretaries', in *Calendar of the Correspondence of George Washington with the Continental Congress*, (Library of Congress, 1906), p. 9.

tasks were crucial to keep the troops in field. The Quartermaster General at the beginning was responsible for troop movement, reconnaissance, and maintenance while the Commissary General dealt with food and general supplies. These positions were much criticized for their ineffectiveness. Throughout the war there were a number of reports complaining on lack of money, food, uniform, and other war supplies.

Table 3: Senior staff departments



Congress also followed the British regimental structure by creating the regimental surgeon and a hospital organization and medical supply system. On July 27, 1775 Congress appointed Dr Benjamin Church as the first Director and Chief Physician.

The military engineer department was the most difficult part to fill in because of the lack of experts. Even if the Americans could not find qualified staff, the unit

still existed at the beginning. The Americans were familiar with civil construction, but their skills were not qualified for standard European engineering fieldwork. The staff that the army had could make a blockade but could not perform a formal siege.⁴⁷ At the beginning Washington chose to use the service of Colonel Richard Gridley and Lieutenant Colonel William Burbeck from Artillery Regiment.

As mentioned the army at this time was primarily depend on the militia as their supportive force, Congress then requested all the colonies to form ‘regular companies of Militia’ made up of all able bodied effective men between sixteen and fifty years of age.⁴⁸ The companies of the militia look very similar to the army company—consisting of one captain, two lieutenants, one ensign, four sergeants, four corporals, one clerk, one drummer, one fifer, and about 68 privates.⁴⁹ One fourth part of the militia in each colony would select minute men ‘to be ready on the shortest notice, to march to any place where their assistance may be required,’ and more importantly to reinforce necessary service with regular companies and battalions.⁵⁰ In November 1775, Congress empowered the commander-in-chief to call forth the minutemen or militia in case the necessary of the service required it.⁵¹ The minutemen or militia while on service would be maintained and paid at the same rate as the rest of the Continental forces.⁵² The militiamen also were recommended to take proper care to acquire military skill, and be prepared for defence.

Even if Congress approved the establishment of the Continental Army in 1775, in practice the American troops were not an actual army until 1776 with Washington’s proposals for reformation. In 1775 the American ‘army’ was not separated from the

⁴⁷ Wright, pp. 38-39.

⁴⁸ Ford, eds., ‘Tuesday, July 18, 1775,’ vol. 2, pp. 187-188.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 188.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ford, eds., ‘Saturday, November 4, 1775,’ vol. 3, p. 324.

⁵² Ford, eds., ‘Wednesday, November 8, 1775,’ vol. 3, p. 338.

militia—the force consisted of 27,443 men which 10,180 were militia.⁵³ And in 1776 there were 46,891 continentals and 16,700 militia.⁵⁴ Before the Continental Army was created, each colony raised its own troops based on its own experience in the French and Indian War. By April 1775, the colonial army had raised 26 company regiments. In October it constituted 38 regiments of infantry and one regiment and one company of artillery. In addition, Congress ordered Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia to arrange 10 companies of riflemen. Commanded by the colonels, the infantry regiments consisted of 3 regiments of the New Hampshire Line, 27 regiments of the Massachusetts Line, 3 regiments of the Rhode Island Line, 5 regiments of the Connecticut Line.

Even if the army structure of command and staff were created after the British regimental organization, the Continental Army structure was much less complicated, and they selected only necessary positions. Some senior staff were elected based on their notable military experience, but a lot of officers were elected and appointed politically depending on how influential they were. Some technical positions in engineering and artillery were still being searched for. At this moment Congress and Washington were still debating on the idea of creating professional army. The commander-in-chief could not do that much with this issue since at this stage his main duty was to create practical staff officers and unity among those troops from different colonies.

Washington's army reorganization in 1776

The Continental Army was reorganized in the following year after Washington found the troops of 1775 too weak and poorly disciplined not only to fight but also to conduct

⁵³ Beach, p. 466.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

defensive operations. Washington was also frustrated with the incapable officers who were appointed for political purposes. He insisted to Congress that only qualified men be commissioned.⁵⁵ Washington wrote a proposal to Congress regarding the reorganization of the army. Congress then arranged meetings with a committee to discuss costs, pay rates, allowances, regulations, uniforms and other plans. At this time, Washington took part in reorganizing the army and added more areas from which to recruit men, aiming for the states in the Northeast since Massachusetts was responsible for raising more than a half of the quotas.⁵⁶ The Congress agreed to approve the new army, which consisted of twenty-six infantry regiments, one rifle and artillery regiment, and nine infantry regiments for the Canada—New York army. The headquarters of the artillery regiment in 1776 consisted of one colonel, two lieutenant colonels and two majors commanding staff, and twelve companies.

The army around Boston in 1775 actually had caused some serious problems. Apart from the army being in disunity, the other major problem was that this initial army would expire at the end of the year even if the riflemen remained, since their expiration date was July 1, 1776. The majority of the force's contracts would end on December 31, 1775, and men refused to remain in the army. They were 'going home by hundreds and by thousands'.⁵⁷ The troops of Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island would be released from their military engagement and not reenlist. Washington made a complaint of their departure from the lines, 'before the New Army gets greater Strength, they not only fix eternal disgrace upon themselves as Soldiers, but inevitable Ruin perhaps upon their Country & families'.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Chase, ed., 'To the President of Congress, Camp at Cambridge, 10 July 1775,' vol. 1, p. 325.

⁵⁶ Chase, ed., 'Circular to the New England Governments, 5 December 1775, vol. 2, pp. 492-493.

⁵⁷ William Heath, *Heath's Memoirs of the American War 1798*, ed. by Rufus Rockwell Wilson (New York: A. Wessels Co., 1904), pp. 43-44.

⁵⁸ Chase, ed., 'General Orders, 28 December 1775,' pp. 614-616.

To solve this problem, Washington insisted that the new enlistment of three years needed to be enforced. If the one-year enlistment still continued, the enemy might exploit this condition to attack the American lines during this confusion and vulnerability. Washington reported to Hancock that after the enlistment of 1775 expired, 'our Inlistments now amount to 9650'.⁵⁹ The new army was less than half of 20,000 men of the year 1775 troops, and this was considered a dangerous situation.

Washington disagreed with the idea of filling the army with the militiamen. The men needed to be recruited separately and directly enlisted to the army itself. He suggested Congress to enlist men outside New England. On January 1, 1776 Washington took his authority as a commander-in-chief generated the first General Order of the new year stressing the importance of the professional army, 'This day giving commencement to the new-army, which, in every point of View is entirely Continental; The General flatters himself, that a laudable Spirit of emulation, will now take place, and pervade the whole of it, without such a Spirit, few Officers have ever arrived to any degree of Reputation, nor did any Army ever become formidable'.⁶⁰

In order to fix this issue quickly Washington nevertheless called upon the militia for reinforcements. However, militia from the old regiments would join for a month only. About 3,000 Massachusetts and 2,000 New Hampshire served the Continental Army from December 10, 1775 to January 15, 1776 as replacements.⁶¹ The American lines were very weak during early January. Nathanael Greene mentioned this problem to Samuel Ward, 'We have no part of the Militia here [...] and the Night after the old Troops went of[f] I could not have mustered seven hundred

⁵⁹ Chase, ed., vol. 2, 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 31 December 1775,' pp. 622–626.

⁶⁰ George Washington, 'General Orders, 1 January 1776', in *The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series*, vol. 3, 1 January 1776–31 March 1776, ed. by Philander D. Chase (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1988), pp. 1–5.

⁶¹ Chase, ed., 'To George Washington from the Massachusetts General Court, 7 December 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 509–510.

Men [...] I am now strong enough to defend myself against all the Force in Boston'.⁶²

The recruiting process took time and it was not until March that the Continental Army was able to fill the number of men comparable to the old one.⁶³

The commander-in-chief prepared his proposal of the reorganization of the army. He decreased the number of the infantry regiments from 38 to 26. The quotas of the new 26 regiments were as follows:

Massachusetts had 16 regiments,
Connecticut 5,
New Hampshire 3, and
Rhode Island 2⁶⁴

Washington specified the strength of officers and men of 728. Each regiment would reduce their companies from 10 to 8 companies. Each company would contain:

1 captain
2 lieutenants
1 ensign
4 sergeants
4 corporals
1 fifer
1 drummer, and
76 privates

The new army would also include the newly reorganized artillery regiment of Henry Knox as well as a rifle regiment of Colonel William Thompson's Pennsylvania and the independent companies from Maryland and Virginia.⁶⁵

Throughout the war, the British Army obtained artillery, cavalry and infantry units, along with marine forces. In 1775, the British Infantry regiment consisted of headquarters: one colonel, one lieutenant colonel, and one major commanding five

⁶² Nathanael Greene, *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene*, vol.1, ed. by Richard K. Showman (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press 1976–2005), pp. 176–180.

⁶³ Wright, pp. 55-56.

⁶⁴ Chase, ed., 'Circular to the New England Governments, 5 December 1775,' vol.2, pp. 492–493.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

staff (one chaplain, one surgeon, one surgeon's mate, one adjutant, and one quartermaster); one light infantry company (one captain, two lieutenants, three sergeants, three corporals, two drummers, and fifty-six privates); one grenadier company (one captain, two lieutenants, three sergeants, three corporals, two drummers, two fifers, and fifty-six privates); three field officer's companies (each containing one lieutenant, one ensign, three sergeants, three corporals, two drummers, and fifty-six privates); and seven battalion and replacement companies (each containing one captain, one lieutenant, one ensign, three sergeants, three corporals, two drummers, and fifty-six privates). In total, each British regiment had 811 men. In addition, the British also had many subsidiary forces such as American Establishment, provincial units, militia, local volunteer corps, West Indian forces, and German auxiliaries. All of these forces fought on the side of the Loyalists. The Americans used the same regimental pattern but with different details.

The organization of the Continental infantry regiment was much less complicated. For example the organization in 1776, the regiments' headquarters contained one colonel, one lieutenant colonel and one major commanding ten staff (one surgeon, one surgeon's mate, one adjutant, one quartermaster, one pay master, one sergeant major, one quartermaster's sergeant, one drum major, one fife major, and one chaplain) and eight companies (each containing one captain, one first lieutenant, one second lieutenant, one ensign, four sergeants, four corporals, one drummer, one fife major, and seventy-six privates. In total, the regiment had 728 personnel.⁶⁶ As the war went on the army organization was adjusted and developed almost year by year to fit its limited resources and the problems at hand.

⁶⁶ Chased, ed., 'II. Minutes of the Conference, 18–24 October 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 190–205.

Table 4: British Infantry 1775 and Continental Infantry 1776

British Infantry Regiment, 1775 Each headquarter contained: 1 colonel 1 lieutenant colonel 5 staff (1 chaplain, 1 surgeon, 1 surgeon's mate, 1 adjutant, and 1 quartermaster)	Continental Infantry Regiment, 1776 Each headquarter contained: 1 colonel 1 lieutenant colonel 10 staff (1 chaplain, 1 surgeon, 1 surgeon's mate, 1 adjutant, 1 quartermaster, 1 pay master, 1 sergeant major, 1 quartermaster's sergeant, 1 drum major, and 1 fife major)
1 light infantry company: 1 captain, 2 lieutenants, 3 sergeants, 3 corporals, 2 drummers, and 56 privates	8 companies, each contained: 1 captain, 1 1 st lieutenant, 1 2 nd lieutenant, 1 ensign, 4 sergeants, 4 corporals, 1 drummer, 1 fife major, and 76 privates
1 grenadier company: 1 captain, 2 lieutenants 3 sergeants 3 corporals, 2 drummers 2 fifers, and 56 privates 7 battalion and replacement companies Each contained 1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 1 ensign, 3 sergeants, 3 corporals, 2 drummers, and 56 privates Total 811 men	Total 728 men

Washington also had intended to create a true Continental Army by mixing officers from different colonies in the regiments after he had failed to do so in November 1775, 'I should, in a day or two, be able to acquaint them of the disposition of the Soldiery towards a new Inlistment—I have been in consultation with the Generals of this Army ever since thursday last, endeavouring to establish new Corps

of Officers; but find so many doubts, & difficulties to reconcile, I cannot say when they are to end or what may be the Consequences, as there appears to be such an unwillingness in the Officers of one Government mixing in the same Regimt with those of another; & without it, many must be dismissed, who are willing to serve, notwithstanding we are difficient on the whole'.⁶⁷

Moreover, he also insisted that the significance of being disciplined and obedient was key to their becoming professional soldiers. He required officers and men to be aware of the orderly books and obey them, otherwise they would be punished. Washington used the general orders principally as a medium of instruction for the officers and men of the new army much as he had done for the old army during the previous summer. Washington stressed the importance of orderly books to this newly reorganized army. These books were disseminated not only to every regiment but also every company. They were expected to be regularly read and carefully explained to the men. Washington aimed that men would obey his order to avoid punishment:

the first wish of the General to have the business of the Army conducted without punishment, to accomplish which, he assures every Officer, & Soldier, that as far as it is in his power, he will reward such as particularly distinguish themselves; at the same time, he declares that he will punish every kind of neglect, or misbehaviour, in an exemplary manner.⁶⁸

After the British evacuated from Boston in March 1776, the committee of conference and Washington on May 29 recommended a flying camp in the middle colonies to

⁶⁷ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 8 November 1775,' vol.2, pp. 330–333.

⁶⁸ Chase, ed., 'General Orders, 1 January 1776,' vol. 3, pp. 1–5.

defend the area between New York and Philadelphia.⁶⁹ In June Congress called for an additional 10,000 militia reinforcement for the flying camp.⁷⁰ Men would be drawn from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. Washington appointed General Hugh Mercer commander of the unit. However, this unit lasted fewer than six months and had fewer than 5,000 men in arms which performed security in New York.⁷¹

In January 1776 Britain decided to send seven regiments of foot of 4,000 men and 10,000 German troops for the American Service to the southern colonies.⁷² In response to this, on June 27, 1776 Congress authorized the German battalion in Pennsylvania and Maryland.⁷³ John David Wœlpper, a French and Indian veteran and ‘a German by birth—was a Soldier in his own Country—Served many years as an Officer in the Regiment’ a lieutenant in the 3rd Pennsylvania Regiment was highly recommended by Washington to be appointed as a captain in the German Regiment.⁷⁴

The turning point and significant event in 1776 was the heavy losses at the Battle of Long Island in New York on August 27, 1776 which gave Washington and Congress the lesson that militia could not stand up to the British and German regulars on open field in terms of both performance and discipline, ‘The Militia, instead of calling forth their utmost efforts to a brave and manly opposition, in order to repair our Losses, are dismayed, Intractable and Impatient to return. Great numbers of them have gone off, in some instances almost by whole Regiments, by half ones and by Companies at a Time’. The army needed to be reformed in order to withstand those

⁶⁹ Chase, ed. Robert H. Harrison, ‘Expense Account of Journey to and from Philadelphia, 21 May–12 June 1776,’ vol. 4, pp. 363–368.

⁷⁰ Ford, eds., ‘3 June 1776,’ vol.4, pp. 412–13.

⁷¹ George Washington, ‘Second note from George Washington to Joseph Trumbull, 9 June 1776,’ in *Founders Online*, National Archives <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-04-02-0374>> [accessed 29 June 2017].

⁷² Chase ed., ‘To George Washington from Lord Stirling, 11 March 1776,’ vol. 3, pp. 452–453.

⁷³ Chase, ed., ‘To George Washington from John Hancock, 29 June 1776,’ vol. 5, pp. 149–151.

⁷⁴ Chase, ed., ‘From George Washington to John Hancock, 8 July 1776,’ vol. 5, pp. 239–240.

professional regulars especially when ‘a well appointed Enemy, superior in number to our whole collected force’. He expressed his concern that the force that he had at the moment had ‘an entire disregard of that order and Subordination necessary to the well doing of an Army’. Washington wrote to the President of Congress to request for ‘the generality of the Troops’.⁷⁵

Washington summarized this loss in his letter to the President of Congress, and this changed the way Congress adjusted the new enlistments for a new army in the following year. He no longer wanted to put in the militia or other troops except for ‘those enlisted and embodied for a longer period than our regulations heretofore have prescribed’. Washington considered it ‘greatly hazard’ if the Americans relied on the militia for national defence. He insisted on a permanent, standing Army during the war. He knew that the militiamen would fight like citizens when the professional troops were required which would not work in an actual war because, ‘Men who have been free and subject to no controul cannot be reduced to order in an Instant, and the privileges & exemptions they claim and will have Influence the conduct of others and the aid derived from them is nearly counterbalanced by the disorder, Irregularity and confusion they occasion’.⁷⁶

The evidence proved that America needed to create a proficient army as soon as possible because ‘the longer they delayed raising a standing army, the more difficult and chargeable would they find it to get one, and that, at the same time that the militia would answer no valuable purpose’.⁷⁷ Washington also complained one of

⁷⁵ George Washington, ‘From George Washington to John Hancock, 2 September 1776,’ in *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 6, 13 August 1776–20 October 1776, ed. by Philander D. Chase and Frank E. Grizzard, Jr. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), pp. 199–201.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Chase and Grizzard, eds., George Washington, ‘From George Washington to Lund Washington, 30 September 1776,’ vol.6, pp. 440–443.

the major problem of the militia that many of them did not show up for the service. In the return of brigades of September 1776, 14,759 rank and file were fit for duty but only 3,479 rank and file were on command.⁷⁸ Washington summarized the situation that, ‘It is true a body of militia are again ordered out, but they come without any conveniences and soon return’.⁷⁹

1776 was the year that made change with men in the army. With the heavy loss in New York, the arrival of the British and German reinforcement, and Washington’s insistence on professionalism combined, Congress finally consented with the idea of regular army. The Continental Army was able to recruit its largest of men so far at the end of the year—46,891 Continentals and 16,700 militiamen for the next campaign. The Americans were getting closer to obtain a large professional force.

The change of 1777

The battlefield losses in 1776 changed the perception that the Americans and their leaders had of the regular army. They now believed that they needed a large army of well-trained and disciplined men to win this war. The news that the British parliament would send Hessian soldiers to America not only hastened Congress to create a standing army but also to expand it. John Adams who had long protested the idea of creating a standing army, expressed his adapted attitude that the nation needed ‘a regular army, and the most masterly Discipline, because [...] without these We cannot reasonably hope to be a powerful, a prosperous, or a free People’.⁸⁰ In September 1776 Congress finally approved a full-scale regular army prepared for the year to come:

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Quoted in Wright, p. 91.

Without a well disciplined Army we cannot rationally expect Success against veteran Troops; and that it is totally impossible we should ever have a well disciplined Army, unless our Troops are engaged to serve during the War. The Congress therefore, impressed with these, & other Reasons, and fully convinced, that our Militia is inadequate to the Duty expected of them have adopted the enclosed Resolves, which I am persuaded will afford you Pleasure, as the only Means left to defend our Country in its present critical Situation.⁸¹

Congress made a new plan for a campaign in the year 1777. The size of the army would be expanded, and on November 12, 1776, Congress passed a resolution encouraging men to extend their length stay in the army to be a three-year term, ‘That all non-commissioned and soldiers who do not incline to engage their service during the continuance of the present war, and shall enlist to serve three years...shall be entitled to, and receive all such bounty (twenty dollars)’.⁸² Congress also was convinced to reenlist the men during the war in order to prevent the frequent calls for bounty upon new enlistments and men from leaving the army when the services were essential, and more importantly to ‘have an army ensured to service and discipline’.⁸³

Moreover, Congress then devised a whole ‘Plan of an Army of Eighty Eight Battalions, to be enlisted as soon as possible, to serve during the War’.⁸⁴ The delegates agreed to give besides a bounty of twenty dollars, and a hundred acres of land to each soldier.⁸⁵ At this time, Congress managed to enlist men outside New England—in fact

⁸¹ Chase and Grizzard, eds., ‘To George Washington from John Hancock, 24 September 1776,’ vol. 6, pp. 388–390.

⁸² Ford and Grizzard, eds., ‘Tuesday, November 12, 1776,’ vol. 6, p.947.

⁸³ Ford ed., ‘Tuesday, November 12, 1776,’ vol. 6, p.945.

⁸⁴ John Adam, ‘Monday September 16. 1776,’ in *The Adams Papers, Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, vol. 3, Diary, 1782–1804; Autobiography, Part One to October 1776, ed. by L. H. Butterfield (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 431–432.

⁸⁵ Chase ed., ‘To George Washington from John Hancock, 24 September 1776,’ vol. 6, pp. 388–390.

from all the thirteen states. State governments were made responsible for appointing officers and filling up vacancies—except for general officers. Every state provided arms, clothing (deducted from pay of the soldiers), and every necessary item for its quota of troops. The states were also responsible for enlisting their quotas; however, the money for bounties would be given to and paid by the paymaster in the department where the soldier was enlisted.⁸⁶ The distribution of Regiments of 1777 was as follows:

Massachusetts	15
Virginia	15
Pennsylvania	12
North Carolina	9
Connecticut	8
Maryland	8
South Carolina	6
New Jersey	4
New York	4
New Hampshire	3
Rhode Island	2
Delaware	1
Georgia	1
Total	88 ⁸⁷

In order to compete with General Howe's strength after the retreat from New York, Washington and his generals requested more men, and Henry Knox also proposed to raise five more artillery regiments. On December 27, 1776 Congress gave Washington the authority to raise 16 more battalions of infantry and appoint officers to those battalions; 3,000 light horse; 3 regiments of artillery; and a corps of engineers.⁸⁸ His troops were made of all available Continental troops from North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey.⁸⁹ In January 1777 a company of Artificers was raised to be attached to the Artillery in the field. Its task was to suggest

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ford, eds., 'Monday, September 16, 1776,' vol. 5, p.762.

⁸⁸ Ford, eds., 'December 27, 1776,' vol. 6, p. 1045.

⁸⁹ Chase, ed., John Hancock, 'To George Washington from John Hancock, 27 December 1776,' vol. 7, pp. 461–463.

the size of the cannon and to make spare carriage for the wheels, cheeks, limbers, etc. to be ready to put together for immediate use. The unit consisted of one master carpenter as a director, one master wheelwright, one master blacksmith, two tinmen, two turners, two copers, four harness makers, tow nailers, two farriers, six wheelwrights, twenty-five carpenters and fifteen smiths.⁹⁰

The Corps of Engineer was also improved and reinforced. The lack of engineering staff made the staff prompted the decision to move some of the infantrymen to work for the time being. In October each infantry battalion was authorized to give 50 men for the works of miners and sappers. The carpenters oversaw making *Cheveaux-De-Frize* to guard ordinance stores and barracks within the fortifications. A document entitled 'An Establishment for Corps of Engineers' stated that each battalion had 10 field and staff officers, and each company consisted of 4 commissioned officers, 10 non-commissioned officers, 30 carpenters or wheelwrights, 5 smiths, 6 masons, 25 miners and sappers, and 20 labours.⁹¹

Congress still maintained the same pattern of infantry and artillery regimental organization as in 1776, but all these new regiments were different from the 88 battalions because they were not under control of the states but commanded directly by the commander-in-chief. At this moment Congress also authorized Washington numerous emergency powers:

To use every Endeavour, by giving Bounties and otherwise, to prevail upon the Troops, whose Time of Enlistment shall expire at the End of the Month, to stay with the Army so long after that Period as its Situation shall render their

⁹⁰ Grizzard, ed., George Washington, 'Orders to Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Flower, 16 January 1777,' vol. 8, pp. 81–83.

⁹¹ Chase and Frank E. Grizzard, eds., Rufus Putnam, 'To George Washington from Colonel Rufus Putnam, 3 October 1776,' vol. 6, pp. 461–462.

Stay necessary [...] to appoint a commissary of prisoners and a clothier general and establish their salaries [...] to fix upon that System of Promotion in the Continental Army which in his Opinion, and that of the general Officers with him, will produce most general Satisfaction.⁹²

And, as Washington requested, Knox was promoted to be a brigadier general. Knox began to recruit his quota of additional artillery regiments and improve his corps. He managed and supervised the Springfield laboratory, led by a master carpenter with skilled workers for the reception and preparation of military stores of every species at Hartford in Connecticut, and York in Pennsylvania.⁹³ Moreover, Knox had encouraged Congress to publish artillery literature since the middle of the year 1776, since he saw that it was difficult to find texts on military art in America. Some books were published in Philadelphia but did not circulate widely enough. He recommended some other books that would be useful for the services such as Maurice de Saxe's *Reveries*, Francis Holliday's *An Easy Introduction to Practical Gunnery or the Art of Engineering*, Muller's *Artillery*, Hollidays' *principles of Gunnery*, Clariac, Mullers and Pleydells' *Field Fortification* as well as other translated books of Vauban Coehorn, Blondell, Count Pagan, and Belidor's which treat on fortification and military mathematics.⁹⁴ But Knox mostly emphasized mostly on, John Muller (a professor of artillery and fortification)'s *Elements of Fortification*, and his *Practical Fortification* should be printed to for artillery men to read. These two books were used

⁹² 'Friday December 27, 1776,' Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789, edited from the original records in the Library of Congress, vol. 6, ed. by Worthington Chauncey Ford, Gaillard Hunt, John C. Fitzpatrick and Roscoe R. Hill (Washington: U.S. Govt. print off., 1904-37), pp. 1043-1044.

⁹³ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 20 December 1776,' pp. 381-389.

⁹⁴ Henry Knox, 'To John Adams from Henry Knox, 16 May 1776,' in *The Adams Papers, Papers of John Adams*, vol. 4, February-August 1776, ed. by Robert J. Taylor (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), pp. 189-191.

in the Royal Academy of Artillery at Woolwich. However, the request was postponed since Congress reasoned that they could not afford it at that moment.⁹⁵

The 3,000-light horse authorized by Congress to be controlled under the commander-in-chief was a new element of the Continental Army. Previously this unit was usually used as mobile infantry for patrolling, serving as messengers and scouts.⁹⁶ However, after the siege of Boston Washington insisted that horsemen would be useful for reconnaissance and patrolling along the coastline for the enemy's landing as well as using as messengers. For his request on July 11, 1776, the Connecticut governor Jonathan Trumbull created three regiments of light horse to be attached to the main army, but the troops did not come with proper encampment equipment for the animals, so Washington decided to send them back to Connecticut.

But, the battle of White Plains on October 1776 proved the need of cavalry service when the British Dragoons launched a cavalry attack to charge the American lines, and the American could not withstand the attack with their only 200 cavalymen. So, Governor Trumbull sent 125 horsemen from the 5th Regiment of Connecticut led by Major Elisha Sheldon to aid the situation along with Virginia cavalry troops under the command of Major Theodoric Bland. This cavalry was crucial to help Washington to retreat. He wrote to Congress praising the capability of the horsemen, and he also recommended the establishment of one or more corps in addition to those already raised in Virginia because 'there is no carrying on the War without them [cavalry],' and Major Sheldon should undertake the Command of a Regiment of Horse.⁹⁷ Therefore, on March 14, 1777 Congress approved Washington's regiment of horse. Each regiment would contain 1 colonel, 1 lieutenant colonel, 1 major, a chaplain,

⁹⁵ Taylor, ed., 'From John Adams to Henry Knox, 2 June 1776,' pp. 225–227.

⁹⁶ Wright, pp. 105-106.

⁹⁷ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 11 December 1776,' vol. 7, pp. 296–298.

1regimental quartermaster, 1 surgeon, 1 surgeon's mate, 1 pay master, 1 riding master, 1 saddler, 1 trumpet major 1 adjutant, 4 supernumeraries armed only with swords and pistols. Six troops each contained 1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 1 cornet, 1 quartermaster sergeant, 1 orderly (drill) sergeant, 1 trumpeter, 1 farrier, 4 corporals, 32 privates, and 1 armorer.⁹⁸

On January 8, 1777, Congress authorized the Virginia State to form two extra companies since two regiments of Virginian battalions were ordered to immediately reinforce Washington's main army in New Jersey. The Virginian government then established their own independent companies in order to defend the western frontiers against Indian attacks and protect Fort Pitt and Fort Randolph. Each would be garrisoned with a company of 100 men commanded by 1 captain, 2 lieutenants, 1 ensign, and 1 usual inferior non-commissioned officer.⁹⁹ Congress let the Virginian governors appoint their own officers and recruit the men during the war.

Washington also tried to get rid of the problem of men's informal wear in 1777, 'half compleat and of a thousand different Colours as to uniform, which has not only an ill Appearance, but it creates much irregularity'. He wanted men to be formally and neatly uniformed, 'for when a Soldier is convinced that it will be known by his dress, to what Corps he belongs, he is hindered from committing many faults, for fear of detection'.¹⁰⁰ He wrote to James Mease, ordering him to make a clothing purchase for the army. Mease was directed to purchase and forward to the Quarter master general in New York 'as much cloth for tents as he can procure'.¹⁰¹ But Congress was not much concerned with this matter, so the problem with clothing still

⁹⁸ Ford, eds., vol. 7, p. 178.

⁹⁹ Ford, eds., 'Wednesday, January 8, 1777,' vol. 7, p. 21.

¹⁰⁰ Chase, ed., George Washington, 'From George Washington to James Mease, 17 April 1777,' vol. 9, pp. 194-195.

¹⁰¹ Boyd, ed., 'First Report of the Committee to Digest the Resolutions of the Committee of the Whole respecting Canada, &c., 17 June 1776,' vol. 1, pp. 389-392.

continued. Washington was furious, 'I am perfectly satisfied, that unless this very important and interesting Office [of Clothier General] is put under better regulations and under a different Head, than it now is, the Army will never be cloathed. Mr Mease is by no means fit for the business'.¹⁰² Congress postponed his recommendation until March 23, 1779 when the clothing department was established. But still no action was taken since Washington wrote to the Board of War in April expressing, 'Regrets that the clothing department is not yet reorganized'.¹⁰³

On June 20, 1777 Congress formed the corps of invalids containing eight companies. Each company had one captain, two lieutenants, two ensigns, five sergeants, six corporals, two drummers, two fifers, and one hundred men. Colonel Lewis Nicola was elected as a colonel of the corps. The tasks of the corps were garrisons, guards in cities and other places where magazines or arsenals or hospitals were placed. Moreover, it served as a military school for young gentlemen when off duty to study geometry, arithmetic, vulgar and decimal fractions. It was a special practice of this corps that the officers were obliged to contribute one day's pay on every month for purchasing books of tactics and the petite guerre for a regimental library.¹⁰⁴ It was discussed that the Invalid Corps actually was established in order to follow the European practice and sometimes were useless for performing security guard since limping men were taken to this corps.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² 'From George Washington to Henry Laurens, 3-4 August 1778,' in *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 16, 1 July-14 September 1778, ed. by David R. Hoth (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), pp. 236-240.

¹⁰³ George Washington, 'George Washington to the Board of War, 15 April 1779,' in *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, vol. 2, 1779-1781, ed. by Harold C. Syrett (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), pp. 27-28.

¹⁰⁴ Ford, eds., 'Friday, June 20, 1777,' vol. 8, p.485.

¹⁰⁵ Fred Anderson Berg, *Encyclopaedia of Continental Army Units* (Pennsylvania: Stackpole Books, 1972), p. 55.

Thus, the army of year 1777 had been majorly reformed in many aspects. The army now contained 88 battalions plus more extra infantry and an artillery regiment. The light horse units were in active service. The attempt to get men clothed uniformly was also made. Washington was empowered and able to pursue his intention to nourish his army to become a professional one. In addition, all the states could manage to participate in this war by sending their men to join the army.

The arrangement of the army in 1778

The victory of Saratoga commanded by Gates and Washington's loss of the battle of Brandywine at nearly the same time not only made an obvious comparison between the two commanders but also affected the authority and command of the army. The new format of the Board of War was approved by Congress on October 17, 1777. The Board of War which had been in the sole control of Congress now was modified to be controlled under Gates and his men, including Thomas Conway, and Thomas Mifflin. This new Board of War was given many responsibilities, such as keeping accounts of officers, their ranks and fates of commissions; tracking and estimating accounts of artillery, weapons, clothes, and war supplies that would be needed for the army.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, the Board of War was taking care of the duties and powers which once belonged to Washington, such as filling up military commissions, overseeing raising, recruiting, and dispatching of the land forces, directing the prisoners of war as well as advising all military matters.¹⁰⁷

On December 13, 1777, The Board of War generated a new important position, an inspector general. This seat was granted to Thomas Conway as the first inspector general of the Continental Army with the expectation of promoting discipline to meet

¹⁰⁶ Ford, eds., vol. 9, 'Friday October 17, 1777,' pp. 818-820.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

the standard of European armies. This position also was responsible for many administrative tasks, which would contribute to the following reformation of the military organization. Some of the main tasks included reviewing the troops to see that every officer and soldier be instructed in the exercise and manoeuvres, observing their discipline, giving the commander-in-chief advice if any of the troops should be fixed based on the reviews, preparing for the returns of clothing, arms and accoutrements, recruits, number of officers and men who were unfit for service, death, desertion, or loss. The inspector general also would review officers' and men's complaints and transmit to Congress what petition he thought worthy of notice.¹⁰⁸ Conway now was at the centre of troop training.

In January 1778, the committee visited Washington's main army at Valley Forge in Philadelphia and found out that the army had 17,491 rank and file, but only 7,600 were fit for service. To solve this problem, Washington suggested that the committee draft men for a nine-month term in order to fill in the regiments. On February 26, 1778, Congress required many states to fill up their continental troops through drafts from their militia or any other way possible. Congress decreased the number of all the states' quota. The German battalion became a part of Maryland quota, 'Let Maryland take the German batalion, wholly, as one of her eight, for she already claims a part of it'.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, Washington's 16 additional regiments were reorganized into nine since he saw that 'none of which are strong, some extremely weak and others only partially organized'.¹¹⁰ Georgia and South Carolina were in British hands and not on the roll. The arrangement was as follows:

¹⁰⁸ Ford, eds., vol. 9, 'Saturday, 13 December 1777', pp. 1023-1026.

¹⁰⁹ George Washington, 'From George Washington to a Continental Congress Camp Committee, 29 January 1778,' in *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. by Edward G. Lengel (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003), pp. 376–409.

¹¹⁰ Lengel, ed., pp. 376–409.

New Hampshire	3
Massachusetts Bay	15
Rhode Island and Providence Plantations	1
Connecticut	8
New York	5
New Jersey	4
Pennsylvania	10
Delaware	1
Maryland (including the German battalion)	8
Virginia	15
North Carolina	9
Total	79 ¹¹¹

In May 1778, Congress also adjusted the ration of officers and men in all the units of infantry, artillery, cavalry, provost, and engineering department. The Provost was established in May to take charge against the prisoners.¹¹² On May 27, 1778 the corps of light infantry enhanced their duty—one of light-infantry company attached to every infantry regiment.¹¹³ The information was drawn from the Journal of Congress on May 27, 1778 was as follows:¹¹⁴

Infantry

Each battalion of infantry consisted of 9 companies (1 of them was light infantry)

Commissioned	Pay per month
1 Colonel and captain	75 dollars
1 Lieutenant colonel and captain	60
1 Major and captain	50
6 Captains	40
1 Captain lieutenant	26 $\frac{2}{3}$
8 Lieutenants	26 $\frac{2}{3}$
9 Ensigns	20
Pay master,	20
Adjutant,	13
Quartermaster	13
(to be taken from the line)	(in addition to their pay as officers in line)
1 Surgeon	60
1 Surgeon's mate	40
1 Sergeant major,	10
1 Quarter master sergeant	10

¹¹¹ Ford, eds., 'Thursday, February 26, 1778,' vol. 10, p. 200.

¹¹² Lengel, ed., George Washington, 'To George Washington from Henry Laurens, 20 May 1778,' vol. 15, pp. 173-174.

¹¹³ Lengel, ed., 'General Orders, 7 June 1778,' vol. 15, pp. 338-344.

¹¹⁴ Ford, eds., 'Wednesday, May 27, 1778,' vol. 9, pp. 538-541.

27 Serjeant	10
1 Drum Major	9
1 Fife major	9
18 Drums and fifes	$7\frac{1}{3}$
27 Corporals	$7\frac{1}{3}$
Privates	$6\frac{2}{3}$

Artillery

A battalion of artillery consisted of

Commissioned	Pay per month
1 Colonel	100 dollars
1 Lieutenant colonel	75
1 Major	$62\frac{2}{3}$
12 Captains	50
12 Captain lieutenant	$33\frac{1}{3}$
12 First lieutenants	$33\frac{1}{3}$
36 Second lieutenants	$33\frac{1}{3}$
Pay master,	25
Adjutant,	16
Quartermaster	16
(to be taken from the line)	(in addition to their pay as officers in line)
1 Surgeon	75
1 Surgeon's mate	50
1 Sergeant major,	11 $\frac{23}{90}$
1 Quarter master sergeant	11 $\frac{23}{90}$
1 Fife major	10 $\frac{38}{90}$
1 Drum Major	10
72 Serjeant	10
72 Bombardiers	9
72 Corporals	9
72 Gunners	$8\frac{2}{3}$
24 Drums and fifes	$8\frac{2}{3}$
Matrosses	$8\frac{1}{3}$

Cavalry

A battalion of cavalry consisted of

Commissioned	Pay per month
1 Colonel	93 $\frac{3}{4}$ dollars
1 Lieutenant colonel	75
1 Major	60
6 Captains	50
12 Lieutenant	$33\frac{1}{3}$
6 Cornets	$26\frac{2}{3}$
1 Riding master	$33\frac{1}{3}$
Pay master,	25
Adjutant,	15
Quartermaster	15

(to be taken from the line)	(in addition to their pay as officers in line)
1 Surgeon	60
1 Surgeon's mate	40
1 Saddler	10
1 Trumpet major	11
6 Farriers	10
6 Quarter master sergeant	15
6 Trumpeters	10
12 Serjeant	15
30 Corporals	10
324 Dragoons	8 $\frac{1}{3}$

Provost

A provost was established to consist of

	Pay per month
1 Captain of provosts	50 dollars
4 Lieutenant colonel	33 $\frac{1}{3}$
1 Clerk	33 $\frac{1}{3}$
1 Quarter master serjeant	15
2 Trumpeters	10
2 Serjeants	15
5 Corporals	10
43 Provosts or privates	8 $\frac{1}{3}$
Executioners	10

Engineer Department

The engineering department had 3 companies to be established, each to consist of

	Pay per month
1 Captains	50 dollars
3 Lieutenants	33 $\frac{1}{3}$
4 Serjeants	10
4 Corporals	9
60 Privates	8 $\frac{1}{3}$

The engineer department appeared for the first time in the Continental Army in 1778 according to the French officers who sailed to join the army in 1777. In fact, the corps of engineers had been authorized by Congress since December 1776, and the army had a proficient Polish engineer, Thaddeus Kosciuszko, who performed his duty

effectively in fortifications in the Northern Army.¹¹⁵ However, the lack of enough technicians prevented the army from forming the engineering department. So, Congress took no further action until Louis Duportail, a skilful French engineer and his men arrived in America in 1777. And on May 27, 1778 Congress authorized three companies of engineers. Duportail was appointed a Brigadier general and became a Chief of Engineer, which was the first time that the Continental Army relied their execution solely on foreign officers. The engineering department then was informally referred as the ‘Companies of Sappers & Miners’ according to Duportail.¹¹⁶

1778 marked the beginning of foreign involvement and integration in full-scale. The foreign officers generated special supporting units and provided supervision. A topographical section was attached to the engineer corps in order to improve surveying and mapping. On July 25, 1777 Congress authorized Washington to appoint an appropriate person a ‘geographer and surveyor of the roads and take sketches of the country’¹¹⁷. Washington chose Robert Erskine, a Scottish engineer specialized in ironworks, who came to America in 1771. He was the person who built a mechanical model of *chevaux-de-frise* that Kosciuszko used to prevent the British invasion in 1776 in New Jersey, and supplied the big chain stretched across Hudson River in 1777.¹¹⁸ He began his job as a mapmaker in December 1776 when he assisted Charles Lee to sketch New Jersey terrain, and drew a pocket-size of map of New Jersey and Southern New York for Washington.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Ford, eds., ‘Friday December 27, 1776,’ vol.6, p. 1045.

¹¹⁶ Hoth, ed., George Washington, ‘General Orders, 27 July 1778,’ vol. 16, pp. 180–181.

¹¹⁷ Ford, eds., ‘Friday, July 25, 1777,’ vol. 8, p. 580.

¹¹⁸ Albert H. Heusser, *George Washington’s Map Maker: A Biography of Robert Erskine*, ed. by Hubert G. Schmidt, (New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 1966), pp. 175–188.

¹¹⁹ Grizzard, ed., George Washington, ‘From George Washington to the Continental Congress Committee to Inquire into the State of the Army, 19 July 1777,’ vol. 10, pp. 332–337.

Many other European officers were commissioned and appointed as commanders of specialized units and helped to generate new departments. Polish and French officers, Casimir Pulaski and Francois Louis Teisseidre, Marquis de Fleury, commanded the Corps of Light Dragoons. On 27 May 1778 Congress also created a provost guard known as the Maréchaussée Corps. The corps was ‘to be armed and accoutred in the manner of light dragoon’,¹²⁰ performing as a military police corps to be used as intelligence collectors, route escorts as well as Washington security providers. In June 1778 Washington appointed Captain Bartholomew von Heer, a Prussian officer, who had served as an adjutant of Ottendorf’s independent corps and a captain of 4th Continental Artillery Regiment in 1777, to command this corps.¹²¹ Full-scale foreign intervention in the war allowed many of the positions in specialist units and positions to be filled, and new ones created.

The Artillery Regiment became more sophisticated with separate units with different responsibilities. Two more artillery artificer companies were added to maintain small arms, and in February 11, 1778 Congress appointed Colonel Benjamin Flower to command a new Artillery Artificer Regiment.¹²²

The inspection by the inspector general helped to acquire accurate information. It was at this time that the Continental Army was integrated and supervised by foreign officers. The army gradually found its own direction by adjusting the military units based on what they had—not by the British role model. The Continental Army started to make adjustment to fit their men and capabilities. The ‘Conway Cabal’ forced Thomas Conway to resign in March 1778, Congress

¹²⁰ Lengel, ed., George Washington, ‘From George Washington to Major General Nathanael Greene, 6 June 1778,’ vol. 15, p. 335.

¹²¹ Lengel, ed., ‘From George Washington to Major General Nathanael Greene, 6 June 1778,’ vol. 15, p. 335.

¹²² Ford, eds., ‘Wednesday, February 11, 1778,’ vol.10, pp. 149-150.

replaced him with a new inspector general, Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben, who then became not only a legendary drillmaster but skilled in inspecting. He received orders from Washington to investigate the entire army, and this improved awareness of the actual amount of officers, men, arms and other military supplies in each unit. Steuben found out that the existing regulations were not effective, so he wrote to Washington with his suggestions to revise the army management. He mentioned that the authority of the officers now was able to grant furloughs for his non-commissioned officers and soldiers that should be adjusted, 'It is the Same with furloughs: Almost every Man who obtains one, is a Man lost to his Regiment'.¹²³ This was one of the reasons why Congress never had supplied the regiments with enough men. Steuben proposed to have passes and forms of discharge printed, as he claimed that this was practiced in Europe.¹²⁴

During this phase the Continental Army became much more sophisticated with all those special units. Many corps such as artillery, engineers, and cavalry were improved. Brigadier General Casimir Pulaski, a Polish officer, was the one who proposed Washington to reform the cavalry and enhance its capacities.¹²⁵ He planned to adopt regulations which were practiced in the King of Prussia's army, train the cavalry men and militia for two months for the men to learn the cavalry discipline which would be exercised and instructed by the officer rank of colonel. Pulaski also suggested how the unit should be organized and clothed and armed. He also recommended some capable officers to fill in the vacancies. Washington agreed with the idea of keeping the men in order and providing regiments with clothes and

¹²³ 'To George Washington from Friedrich Wilhelm Ludolf Gerhard Augustin, Baron [von] Steuben, 28 December 1780,' in *Founders Online*, National Archives <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-04367>> [accessed 13 May 2017].

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ Lengel, ed., 'To George Washington from Brigadier General Casimir Pulaski, 29 December 1777,' vol. 13, pp. 47–50.

accoutrements.¹²⁶ Pulaski was also interested in the forming a corps of light lancers (Polish influence) which was finally authorized as the formation of Pulaski's Legion on March 28, 1778.

The inspector general arrangements and the organization in 1781

The Army of 1780 was the result of the rearrangement in 1777. Since the three-year enlistment was about to expire at the end of September, Congress needed to recruit men. The year 1778 was the time that the main army was shifted to the south. Georgia and South Carolina were under the British control and could not send any troops. Congress then removed their quotas in 1778. In 1780, Georgia was still unable to supply their quota. Twelve states were expected to fill in the continentals of 35,211 men, and the quotas were distributed as follows:

New Hampshire	1215
Massachusetts Bay	6070
Rhode Island	810
Connecticut	3238
New York	1620
New Jersey	1620
Pennsylvania	4855
Delaware	405
Maryland	3238
Virginia	6070
North Carolina	3640
South Carolina	2430
Total	35211* ¹²⁷

*Exclusive of blacks.

However, the actual number of the enlisted men had been dropping continuously since 1778. The year from 1780-1781 marked the smallest number of men in regular troops, but the number of the militia was stable and slightly increased in 1781. However, the

¹²⁶ Lengel, ed, 'From George Washington to Brigadier General Casimir Pulaski, 31 December 1777,' vol.13, pp. 89-90.

¹²⁷ Ford, eds., 'Wednesday February 9, 1780,' vol. 16, p. 150.

American troops of the year 1781 made the lowest number even with the continentals and the militia combined.

The Continental Army at this moment had an effective inspector general whose duty, besides drilling and instilling discipline into the American force, was inspecting the army. In France and Prussia the inspector general had power over all other officers and was able to generate any order relating discipline. In Steuben's mind he believed that he should have had power to reorganize regiments on he thought necessary.¹²⁸ But in practice in the Continental Army did not seem to work that way. First, it was almost impossible that other senior officers would accept this approach, and second only Congress could approve it. However, Congress passed the proposal to Washington for his decision. Washington asked for his generals' opinion and obviously the proposal was not in favour. Fourteen of the Board of General Officers resolved that this proposal was 'unnecessary' and 'it would form a new-fangled system of power running through the line of the army uncontroled and unchecked'.¹²⁹

But Steuben had an important mission waiting for him. After he finished publishing the *Blue Book* in March 1779, Washington appointed him to investigate the condition of the men and the army and collect the returns to see if any regiments could be preserved. This task was crucial for planning and calculating force for the campaign in 1781:

the Inspector General and his Assistants shall review the troops at such times and places and receive such returns for that purpose as the Commander in Chief or commanding officer in a detachment shall direct; At which

¹²⁸ Paul Lockhart, *The Drillmaster of Valley Forge: The Baron de Steuben and the Making of the American Army* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008), p. 177.

¹²⁹ Hoth, ed., 'To George Washington from a Board of General Officers, 11 September 1778, vol. 16, pp. 567-569.

reviews he or they shall inspect the number and condition of the men, their discipline and exercise and the state of their Arms, Accoutrements & Clothes, observing what of these articles have been lost or spoiled since the last review, and as near as possible by what means, reporting the same with the deficiencies and neglects to the Commander in Chief or the commanding officer of a detachment and to the board of war.¹³⁰

The inspector general started his mission right away. The first major problem that he found was lack of discipline. Moreover, number of men in each regiment was less than what Congress had expected. Above all, the states could not fill in their quotas, and Congress was unable to do anything about it. Steuben went through each brigade and found out that the army carried no system to account weapons, supplies, or any equipment for soldiers.¹³¹ Steuben then created ‘company books’ to keep track of military properties, and ‘soldier’s book’ for men to record what he was issued and when.¹³² He set up a new approach for commanding officers to follow.

The army of 1779 expired in September, and Washington wanted to know the strength of his men, so he ordered Steuben to continue his investigation in December 1779, ‘the whole army is to be inspected this month by the Sub and Brigade Inspectors who are carefully to examine the Arms, Accoutrements and Clothing of each non-commissioned officer and private... what quantity of each is on hand and what will be wanting for the ensuing campaign; calculating from the 1st day of January 1780—to the 1st of January 1781’.¹³³ Steuben found out that that there was a great discrepancy between the total number and the men fit for duty. The number of men who were sick

¹³⁰ Lengel, ed., George Washington, ‘General Orders, 27 April 1779,’ vol. 20, pp. 229–232.

¹³¹ Lockhart, pp. 207-208.

¹³² Lockhart, p. 208.

¹³³ George Washington, ‘General Orders,’ December 13, 1779, *The Papers of George Washington Revolutionary War Series*, vol.23, 22 October—31 December 1779, ed. by William M. Ferraro (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2015), p.577.

was moderate but the columns of absent was excessive. In other words, the men who showed up on the rolls for government pay suggested a larger army on foot than it actually had. This happened with officers as well. Steuben found that in some regiments too many officers absent on furlough so that they were left without a sufficient number to preserve order and perform the common routine of service.

Several of the companies appeared without a single commissioned officer, and this was 'inadmissible on every principle'. The non-commissioned officers also made another defect. Some corps were insufficient, and some were having more than their complement. When the report reached to Washington, he expressed his feeling to his generals that, 'I am extremely concerned to find by the late reports of the Inspector General, that most of the corps in the army are in worse order than I had flattered myself'.¹³⁴ Washington then ordered his generals to make a distribution of the remaining officers and non-commissioned officers in appropriate proportion so that no company would be without officers to take care of the regulations. But if any company was still insufficient, new appointments were suggested.

Since Steuben was the one who observed the army conditions and the actual number of men, he went on pursuing his intention to reorganize the army as he saw fit. In March 1780 he proposed his plan to the commander-in-chief. Steuben found that the number of men was actually below the establishment, so he suggested recruiting as quick as possible to make the regiments equal to fill in some vacancies of some regiments and to be able to exercise the troops. He proposed the same formation of the infantry but lessening the number of men and horses in each regiment. Each regiment should then be completed to the number of 204 men, well

¹³⁴ 'Circular to Major Generals and Officers Commanding Brigades,' January 22, 1780, in *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol.24, 1 January-9 March 1780, ed. by Benjamin L. Huggins (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016), pp. 212-216.

mounted, including the non-commissioned officers and trumpeters. He insisted that the army should be formed by 35,000 men as a large-size army.

Steuben's plan was agreed with Washington who proposed it to Congress. However, the plan was against Congress' own plan of reduction of number of regiments and larger in size—25% of the army would be discarded. Both Steuben and Washington disagreed with this 'incorporation plan' since it would lessen the morale of the troops and present the states as weak and unable to maintain the structure and organization of the army in the army's eyes. But, Congress passed this Act on March 25, 1780 reducing the battalions, 'so that all reduction or incorporation is now out of the question & for next Campaign the Regiments in the line will be augmented by more or less by the respective states'.¹³⁵ Congress reasoned that this approach would save the cost due to 'all our misfortunes—the bad State of our Finances'.¹³⁶

On October 3, 1780 Congress came up with a new arrangement of the army to be consistent with their limited expenses. This time the additional 16 regiments originally raised in 1777 were not included, and the German battalion would be reduced in the following year. But this year Congress managed to allot the quotas to all the 13 states. The regular army since January 1, 1781 would appear this way:

4 Regiments of Cavalry or Light Dragoons consisted of 6 troops; each troop contained 64 commissioned officers and 64 non-commissioned officers and privates.

4 regiments of artillery consisted of 9 companies; each company consisted of 65 non-commissioned officers and matrosses and 65 commissioned officers.

¹³⁵ 'To George Washington from Friedrich Wilhelm Ludolf Gerhard Augustin, Baron [von] Steuben, 28 March 1780,' in *Founders Online*, National Archives, <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-01272>> [accessed 12 May 2017].

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

49 regiments of infantry (exclusive of Colo. Hazen's regiment); each regiment consisted of 9 companies; each company consisted of 64 non-commissioned officers and privates

1 regiment of artificers consisted of 8 companies; each company of 60 non-commissioned officers and privates.¹³⁷

Congress also defined the states to furnish the quotas for continental regiments by December 1780. If any state could not fill up their respective regiments, such state must supply the deficiency with men committed to serve for not less than a year. The quotas of the 13 states for the Continental regiments in 1781 campaign was as follows:

Table 5: State military quotas in 1781

States	Infantry	Artillery	Cavalry	Artificers	Total
New Hampshire	2				2
Massachusetts Bay	10	1			11
Rhode Island	1				1
Connecticut	5		1		6
New York	2	1			3
New Jersey	2				2
Pennsylvania	6	1	1	1	9
Delaware	1				1
Maryland	5				5
Virginia	8	1	2		11
North Carolina	4				4
South Carolina	2				2
Georgia	1				1
Total	49	4	4	1	58

Source: 'To George Washington from Samuel Huntington, 4 October 1780,' in *Founders Online*, National Archives

The Continental Army in 1781 had the smallest troops since 1775. However, 4,000 French troops came on August 19, 1781 to augment its number. The combined American and French armies reached in Philadelphia on August 30—nearly the same time that French fleet arrived at Chesapeake Bay. More 3,000 French men came to

¹³⁷ 'To George Washington from Samuel Huntington, 4 October 1780,' in *Founders Online*, National Archives <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-03475>> [accessed 9 May 2017].

support Lafayette's force. And on September 28, about 9,000 Americans and 7,800 French laid siege to Yorktown.¹³⁸

Army of 1783

In June 1783 Congress drafted a military Peace Establishment with many reorganizations and adjustments.¹³⁹ The Articles of Confederation in 1781 stated that the United States were obliged to begin to create at the very first moment 'to employ a fleet and army' and waited for an actual commencement of hostilities so they could prepare for defence.¹⁴⁰ However, at this time Congress considered that this task required a length of time to levy and form the army and even more time to build a navy, so it was agreed that such establishments in time of peace were needed for common safety. Since Congress had limited finances to spend on the army, the size of it was small. Absolute power to appoint staff officers was given to the commander-in-chief. Washington was in charge to choose a board of officers, the Inspector General and Commandant of Artillery and Chief Engineer. He was fully able to revise the army regulations and sketch a general ordinance for the service of all troops including the militia.

The new army consisted of four regiments of infantry, and one of Artillery incorporated in a corps of Engineers. The regiments of infantry consisted of two battalions, each battalion had four companies, and each company had 64 rank and file

¹³⁸ Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Du Motier Lafayette, 'Lafayette to George Washington, September 1, 1781,' *Memoirs Correspondence and Manuscripts of General Lafayette*, published by his family, vol. 3 (New York: Saunders and Otley, 1837), p.437.

¹³⁹ The information was drawn from Alexander Hamilton's report on a Military Peace Establishment, June 18, 1783. The plan was discussed on October 23, 1783 by a committee of the whole for two days. It was not clear whether a committee made any changes, but the report of the date 23rd was Hamilton's report of June 18. See *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789* (Washington, 1904–1937), pp. xxv, 722–44.

¹⁴⁰ 'Continental Congress Report on a Military Peace Establishment, [18 June 1783],' *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, vol. 3, 1782–1786, ed. by Harold C. Syrett (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), pp. 378–397.

which the number would be increased to 128 in time of war. The corps of Engineer consisted of one Regiment or two battalions of Artillery, each battalion had four companies, each company of 64 rank and file. Congress also maintained a corps of Artificers to secure arms and ammunition, and a general hospital for the reception of the invalids of the army and navy.

Table 6: Regiment of Infantry 1783

Number Persons	Ranks	Pay per month in Dollars	Rations per day
1	Colonel	100	1
2	Majors	70	1
8	Captains, one to each company	50	1
8	First Lieutenants, one to each	25	1
13	company	20	1
	Second Lieutenants one to each		
	company and furnish Regimental		
	staff: paymaster, quartermaster,		
	adjutant and two ensigns; one to each	15	
	battalion	15	
	Paymaster extra emoluments	12	
1	Quartermaster extra emoluments	40	1
1	Adjutant extra emoluments	40	1
1	Chaplain	20	1
2	Surgeon	8	1
2	Mate	8	1
2	Sergeant Majors one to each battalion	8	1
32	Quartermaster sergeants one to each	5	1
64	battalion	3	1
448	Drum& fife Majors one to each		
16	battalion	2	1
	Sergeants 4 to each company	2	1
	Corporals included in rank&file		
	8 to each company		
	Privates 56 to each company		
	Drums & fifes 2 to each company		
Total			
6,015			

Table 7: Regiment of Artillery and a corps of Engineers

Number Persons	Ranks	Pay per month in Dollars	Rations per day	Rations Forage per day
1	Major General Commandant			
1	Colonel	110	1	2
2	Lieutenant Colonel	80	1	2
4	Majors	75	1	2
16	Captains 1 to each company	60	1	1
16	First Lieutenants 2 to each	30	1	
19	company	25	1	
	Second Lieutenants 2 to each			
	company including			
	Paymaster, Quartermaster	15	1	1
	Adjutant	15		1
	Quartermaster extra pay	12		1
	Paymaster extra pay			
1	Adjutant extra pay	75	1	
1		75	1	
1	Professor of Mathematics	75	1	
1	Professor of Chemistry	75	1	
1	Professor of Natural Philosophy	75	1	
5	Professor of Civil Architecture	75	1	2
	Drawing Master	40	1	1
	Commissary of Military Stores			
	Deputies each			
	Conductors as many as may be			
	found necessary to be appointed			
1	out of the Non-commissioned	40	1	
1	officers with the additional pay of	40	1	1
1	2 dollars per month	20	1	1
2	Chaplain	8	1	
1	Surgeon	8	1	
1	Mate	8	1	
32	Sergeant Major	6	1	
32	Quartermaster sergeant	4	1	
384	Drum and fife Major	3	1	
96	Sergeants 4 to each company	3	1	
16	Bombardiers included in	3	1	
	rank&file			
	Cannoniers 48 to each company			
	Sappers & miners 12 to each			
	company			
	Drums & fifes 2 to each company			
Total				
630				

Congress insisted that a corps of Artillery and Engineers must be kept because the officers of this corps required a long study of science and ‘cannot be formed on emergency’. Moreover, the proper fortifications were needed—for land and naval, for internal security and for protection of the fleet. They had to be established through a well-digested system for defence, and this task must be supervised by technicians. Congress understood clearly that their lack of this installation ‘would always oblige the United States to have recourse to foreigners in time of war for a supply officers in this essential branch’.¹⁴¹ The artillery and engineers were combined into one corps because these units worked closely together and their duties were reciprocal, and they also shared the preliminary and qualifications—‘the union is conducive to œconomy’.¹⁴²

The militia was also reorganized and adjusted to be more effective and sophisticated. The militia matter was taken consideration with proper arsenals and magazines by each state to perform ‘national defence’ and be ‘a part of the confederation’. All free males aged twenty to fifty were obliged to serve and be divided into two classes: married and single men. The differences of these two groups were that the single men were to assemble for inspection and exercise once every two months by companies and once every four months regimentally; the married men once every three months by companies and once every six months regimentally. Each class formed into corps of infantry and dragoons and were formed in the same manner as the regulars. Men who were willing to enter the corps of dragoons were expected to equip themselves, and the rest would be formed into infantry. If the war broke out,

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

men were obliged to take field and remain in service for one year. And when in peace they had to serve three years and march wherever their service required.

The Treaty of Peace was signed on September 3, 1783 to end the War of American Independence. This treaty was actually the same document that was signed on November 30, 1782, so Congress produced the report on a military peace establishment prior the treaty was signed. The long awaiting report was finally printed in the Journals of Congress under the date of October 23, 1783. On this day it was confirmed that all the British forces would leave New York in the following month. Washington insisted that he was verbally informed by Sir Guy Carleton that he expected to evacuate the city by November 20 when the transports from Nova Scotia returned.¹⁴³

Conclusion

The Continental Army faced a problem with enlistment from the beginning. The initial one-year recruitment used in 1775 was changed to three-year enlistment in 1777 to keep the men in field. This approach did not work effectively because the number of enlisted men was dropping drastically from 1776. But this could not be blamed on the long-term enlistment since Congress and the state government failed to pay and supply men with what they had been promised—the soldiers were left half fed, clothed, and for long periods unpaid.¹⁴⁴ Congress could not keep a large army, so it came up with a new arrangement with a decreased number of regiments and men to perform in the campaign of the year 1781. However, with the smallest number of men in the revolutionary time, the army won the final battle that brought about the victory.

¹⁴³ 'From George Washington to George Clinton, 23 October 1783,' in *Founders Online*, National Archives <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-11969>> [accessed 29 July 2017].

¹⁴⁴ Beach, pp. 466-467.

Undeniably the Continental Army of 1781 became much more sophisticated—the army had more special units, and men were trained properly. French troops and fleet made a great contribution to the last phase of the war in augmenting the force and performing in the decisive battle and laying siege. The organization of the Continental Army started mostly with militia and lacked higher administration but then was adjusted along the lines of European ones and got many improvements. The army had to adjust to problems and situations it encountered.

Besides, there were the critical events that shifted the army advancement. The Continental Army commanders made an attempt to develop the force to be as close as the professional ones in Europe because they realized that only well-trained men could stand against their opponents in the open war style. During the eight years of the war the American national army changed its structure, doctrine, regulations, training style, officers and men in order to make the best use of whatever it had to cope with the current and coming situation. In reality it was impossible to create an effective and professional force in a short time, but the American generals tried every possible way to form the army with necessary units and technique. Moreover they tried their best to make their soldiers disciplined and able to put up a fight without running away. The development of the men made it possible for the army to be ready for service faster—as Steuben said to a European officer, ‘Your army is the growth of a century, mine of a day’.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵ Frederick William von Steuben, ‘Steuben to Baron De Gaudy, New York, 1787-1788,’ in *The Life of Frederick William Von Steuben, Major General in the Revolutionary Army*, ed. by Friedrich Kapp, (New York: Mason Brothers, 1859), p. 699.

Chapter 2 Relationship between Congress, States, and the Commander in Chief on the Army Characteristics

Introduction

The second thing the Americans needed to do after they created their own force was to make it a professional one. And to make a professional army they had to comply with the European warfare tradition on the way armies were organized and fought. The decisive outcome was usually decided by the infantry engagement. Chapter 1 demonstrated how the Continental Army was formed in imitation of the British army. However, the American army was adjusted several times because of its limited resources and the problems it faced before finally showed its true structure at the decisive battle at Yorktown. The overall political control of the Continental Army was a crucial aspect of it being accepted and able to function well. Most European armies were closely tied to their monarchs, and so Congress needed to find a different way to fulfil this function. This chapter will try to analyze the attempts of Congress, the States, and the commander-in-chief to carve the Continental Army into professional fighters, styled after European troops.

To encounter the British regulars who threatened the colonists to pay taxes made Americans fear the abusive military power especially during in peace time. This idea was deeply established the thought of civilian control over the army prior to the time that the army was disbanded by Washington after the siege of Yorktown in 1781. This situation exemplifies the problem that Americans faced—they were fighting military tyranny yet needed to establish an effective military to do it. This shaped how the army would eventually become. In fact, Civilian control emerged in England in the seventeenth century and can be regarded as another example of European influences. As it appears in the English Bill of Rights 1689, ‘the raising or keeping a

standing army within the kingdom in time of peace, unless it be with consent of Parliament, is against law'.¹ This pattern of social structure made a separation within military forces—while the militia was supported by Parliament, the standing army was backed by the royals.

But it was argued that the 'professionalism' of the Continental Army was not that important to the war's outcome; the army was merely an adjunct of the American people who played a far more important role. One historian who produces works imbued with inspiration and spirituality around the Revolutionary War is Charles Royster. In his book *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Revolution*, he pushes the reader to consider public virtue as an important factor leading to the war's final outcome, rather than professionalization as a means of explaining more sensible reasons for events during the Revolution. When the war ended, the army and the American people had different ideas about how victory had been achieved. While the army felt that the Americans had won due to the valiant efforts of the soldiers, the public perceived that the moral efforts of the American people had instead played the more important role.²

The idea of a practice called 'citizen-soldier' or employing general men as soldiers that led America to Revolutionary victory was discussed. Some experts remain sceptical about this claim. Russel F. Weigley argued that the changes from the Europe conventions of the professional army of long-serving enlisted men to the army of citizen soldier prolonged the War of the Revolution itself.³ This is because

¹ English Bill of Rights 1689, An Act Declaring the Rights and Liberties of the Subject and Settling the Succession of the Crown, in *Yale Law School*, Lillian Goldman Law Library, The Avalon Project, Document in Law, History and Diplomacy <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/england.asp> [accessed 1 February 2017].

² Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783* (London: W.W.Norton & Company Ltd., 1981), p. 25.

³ Russell F. Weigley, *American Strategy: A Call for a Critical Strategic History*, in *Reconsiderations on the Revolutionary War*, ed. by Don Higginbotham (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978), p. 35.

the militia or citizen-soldier or ‘an armed populace’ so called by Walter Millis could not complete the action as effectively as well-trained forces.⁴ Even if the militia had been organized before the Continental Army to guard their homeland and proved themselves by forcing the British regulars retreat at the Lexington and Concord battle. But, this citizen soldier was bounded to fight in short term and wanted to return home. Gary Nash sees this tradition of militia recruitment as a way to avoid military service and be able stay at home.⁵

America in the revolutionary era was made up of colonies and did not have its own central administration and financial system to collect taxes; this made it difficult for the army to function effectively. Creating and maintaining an army was expensive and required capable management. The resources of the British and American armies were incomparable. America lacked the administrative infrastructure and all other necessary institutions while Britain had a strong central government, and a parliament that could tax to obtain money to support the army. Congress, which was supposed to be a national government which dealt with war and military matters, did not have legal power. Even if it could specify state quotas, it could not recruit men directly. Congress again could not tax, so the majority of the income to fund the army came from the state governments of the thirteen colonies. And many times it did not go well. While America was creating the nation and other essential foundations, including a fighting force, Britain already had its powerful army and navy.

There were some vital reasons behind the need to make an army professional. To obtain assistance from foreign countries they would have to create an actual army and prove its worth in battle. The militia, which was based on volunteers, would not

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Gary B. Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America* (London: Pimlico, 2007), pp. 217.

be acceptable in the world of eighteenth-century military professionalism. A conventional army was significantly required to bring people together and officially speak for the ‘continuity, stability, and dignity’ of the Revolutionary cause.⁶ Congress sorely needed foreign allies to help support this war, so their army had to be able to meet European standards. France and its allies would not aid the war of irregulars. The other reason was that only an actual army could confront the British army. To achieve this goal, men had to be trained well and long enough to do their job properly. Congress needed to keep men in the field to be trained, and to make the men stay, they needed to be fed and paid. A military career needed to be taken into consideration seriously like other professions that people could enter as well as earn a good living from. Congress’ primary task after creating an army then was to acquire money.

The American national force relied on three separate institutions: Congress, the Continental Army, and provincial governments. The members of Congress or the so-called ‘delegates’ were sent from each colony/state to meet in Philadelphia to make a decision and resolution relating to the War. The delegation created an army, appointed the commander-in-chief and staff officers, generated military policy, and planned campaigns and operations. The Continental Army and its commander-in-chief executed those decision and made other additional requests. State governments were the ones who paid and supplied men from their regions. The army’s very existence relied on this teamwork.

The main source of Congress’ income was from states’ taxes, which were gathered through the delegates. And this was the reason that the delegates and provincial governments were so important to the army. Congress could not impose a

⁶ Thomas G. Frothingham, *Washington: Commander in Chief* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1930), p. 109.

tax because the people did not elect it, so it could not obligate people to pay taxes. Men in the army then were a colonial responsibility and got paid by provincial governments. The majority of the sum (39%) to fund the army was from the state money.⁷ The states were legally able to print money, and they also paid their men of their quotas as well as their own militia:

All charges of wars and all other general expences to be incurred for the common welfare, shall be defrayed out of a common treasury, which is to be supplied by each colony in proportion to it's number of male polls between 16. and 60. years of age; the taxes for paying that proportion are to be laid and levied by the laws of each colony.⁸

But the request for support did not get a response every time. Congress struggled to obtain money from the outset. Congress had to print its own money to pay men with paper money (28%) of the time throughout the war, since the colonies could not submit enough money to fund the army.⁹ On May 7, 1775 Congress needed to vote, 'to Issue Notes for 100,000£ and to request your aid in giving them a Currency' because Massachusetts could pay £20,000 in taxes.¹⁰ But since Congress' paper money was not backed with metals to mint coins, it was almost valueless. In December

⁷ John L. Smith, Jr., 'How was the Revolutionary War Paid for', *Journal of the American Revolution*, February 23, 2015 <<https://allthingsliberty.com/2015/02/how-was-the-revolutionary-war-paid-for/>> [accessed 6 July 2017].

⁸ This version of Articles of Confederation was Benjamin Franklin's propose and Congress had not taken it any legally action; however, in the Articles of Confederation in 1781, Article IX. Showed the same matter about paying men in the army, 'The United States in Congress assembled shall have authority to appoint a committee...to ascertain the necessary sums of money to be raised for the service of the United States'. See Art. VI., 'Jefferson's Annotated Copy of Franklin's Proposed Articles of Confederation, June–July 1775,' in *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 1, 1760–1776, ed. by Julian P. Boyd (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), pp. 177–182.

⁹ Smith, 'How was the Revolutionary War Paid for', *Journal of the American Revolution*.

¹⁰ John Adams, 'To John Adams from James Warren, 7 May 1775,' in *The Adams Papers, Papers of John Adams*, vol. 3, May 1775–January 1776, ed. by Robert J. Taylor (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), pp. 3–6.

1776 Congress authorized Washington 'to arrest and confine Persons who refuse to take the Continental Currency'.¹¹

The colonies moreover were free from Congress' order. The relationship between Congress and state were more on requesting approach rather than obliging. Each colony was able to manage their own business and income as well as print their own money. Their delegates represented their people and made judgement based on their people's interest:

To establish a form of Government in that Colony, it be recommended to that Convention to call a full and free Representation of the People, and that the said Representatives, if they think it necessary, shall establish such a form of Government as in their Judgment will produce the happiness of the People, and most effectually secure Peace And good Order in the Colony, during the continuance of the present dispute between Great Britain and the Colonies.¹²

Even if colonies/states paid men, the amount for payment of officers and soldiers was stipulated by Congress. The tensions between Congress and states emerged when there was an attempt to reduce the pay of privates, but Congress voted that the pay could not be reduced since this would discouraged men to enlist in the army in 1776. Senior officers knew that money pay drew the men to enter the service. Sullivan thought that 'an attempt to reduce the wages at this time, will probably prevent the raising of another army' because men had to spend on clothing and army with their pay. So they would be left out with little money. Greene agreed that the reduction would make it difficult to fill the regiments and this would 'possibly weaken the Lines

¹¹ Chase, ed., 'To George Washington from John Hancock, 27 December 1776,' vol. 7, pp. 461–463.

¹² John Adams, 'November 4th. 1775,' in *The Adams Papers, Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, vol. 3, Diary, 1782–1804; Autobiography, Part One to October 1776, ed. by L. H. Butterfield (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 357–359.

at the Expiration of the old Establishments,' and men would consequently refuse to enlist. Gates shares the same opinion, 'the pay of The Privates had better be continued as at present established'.¹³ The way Congress listened to the officers and took their advice implied a shift of the balance of power between the staff and the delegates.

The fact that Congress, as the owner of the national army, was unable to tax to fund the army was a critical problem, as well as its inability to draft men into military service. The problem that colonies/states were unable to fill in their quotas became serious. In fact, many delegates of Congress saw this problem and proposed to fix it by putting the Continental Army directly under Congress to 'Establish a Continental Army of which this will be only a part, you [Congress] will place the direction as you please'.¹⁴ Congress also made a request to create a government which had its own army on May 16, 1775. Massachusetts had requested a regular established government with the ability to raise the army 'to have an army although consisting of our own countrymen, establish here, without a civil power to provide for and control it [...] to exercise the power of civil government'.¹⁵ This request was not fully responded.

Throughout the war Congress, however, created extra and additional Continental regiments which were controlled directly by Congress and the commander-in-chief. Starting in June 1775, Congress requested Virginia to raise two companies of riflemen led by Captain Daniel Morgan and Captain Hugh Stephenson, and a year later the companies were combined with Maryland companies to be Virginia-Maryland rifle regiment.¹⁶ In December 1776 Congress voted to grant

¹³ Chase, ed., 'Council of War, 8 October 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 123–128.

¹⁴ Taylor, ed., 'To John Adams from James Warren, 7 May 1775,' vol. 3, pp. 3–6.

¹⁵ William Lincoln, ed., *The Journals of Each Provincial Congress of Massachusetts in 1774 and 1775, and of the Committee of Safety* (Boston: Dutton and Wentworth, Printers, 1838), p. 231.

¹⁶ Boyd, ed., 'First Report of the Committee to Digest the Resolutions of the Committee of the Whole respecting Canada, &c., [17 June 1776],' vol. 1, pp. 389–392.

Washington a great deal of authority to raise several military units drawn from any states under his command.¹⁷ Those were 16 additional battalions of infantry, three thousand Light-Horse, three Regiments of Artillery, and a Corps of Engineers, and he could freely appoint the officers of these battalions and design their pay. Moreover, Washington could request for assistance from militia from any states if necessary. This was Congress' way of bypassing problems with states and finance.

Even if Congress had no legal power to govern, it acted as a national government. It was responsible for significant missions and tasks. Franklin's Proposed Articles of Confederation in July 1775 described the foundation of power and duty of the Congress on war and peace. At the first stage Congress's main task was to make reconciliation with Great Britain. However, after it decided to declare Independence Congress was mostly responsible in military matters to establish the posts, print paper money to finance the army, generate the regulation of common force, and appoint General confederacy's civil and military officers such as General Treasurer, Secretary, etc.¹⁸ Moreover, Congress could specify the quotas of men in the army of each colony, 'the United States assembled shall on Consideration of Circumstances judge proper, that any Colony or Colonies should not raise Men'.¹⁹ This men in the colonial/state quotas, however, did not belong to their governors but the Continental Army.

Even if the army was fragmented, America and its people still needed a force to defend themselves and fight in the war. This was the reason why each of these three institutions—even with ambiguous command—made its best attempt not to let the

¹⁷ Chase, ed., 'To George Washington from John Hancock, 27 December 1776,' vol. 7, pp. 461–463.

¹⁸ Boyd, ed., Art. V., 'Jefferson's Annotated Copy of Franklin's Proposed Articles of Confederation, [June–July 1775],' vol. 1, 1760–1776, pp. 177–182.

¹⁹ Ford, eds., 'Journals of the Continental Congress - Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union,' July 12, 1776, vol. 5, pp. 545-557.

army collapse before the war was decided, even if there were many times that it was on the verge of doing so. This situation gradually generated the practice of helping and relying on each other and networking. Private connections played an important role in the existence of the army. Congress' delegates worked with governors. Washington himself went out of his way to exploit his personal connection to get what he desired from states. His correspondence showed that he talked to some specific delegates and governors directly, and worked closely with the Congressional presidents. He also formed his strong team of dominant officers and this really helped the army to develop.

The Continental Army firstly represented the New England colonies, and the army was composed of men from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and New Hampshire. At this moment the army was a force comprising of volunteer men who was far from being like regulars.

The importance of Congress selecting a commander in chief

Congress had responsibility for the Continental Army and the superintendent of the commander-in-chief. Since the members of Congress believed that a standing army could harm the nation, and that they might lose their power to a military commander, they had to be selective and careful with who they chose to assume this position. Among the candidates, George Washington seemed to be the only one who had both a military and political background, and was born as an American. He was well known since he served in the French and Indian War as a Virginia militia officer, and he was also one of the members of the First Continental Congress, in which men from the upper society were acquainted with one another.

At first Congress intended to take control over the whole army. Military policy was controlled through political policies stemming from the collective agreement of

the Congress delegates where Congress had tried its best to take control over military operations so as to prevent the military's absolute power over the American populace. Once the Continental Army was established, on June 15, 1775 Washington was appointed a commander-in-chief — the only one designated throughout the American Revolutionary War. His power was stated in the *Journal of Congress*, 'A General be appointed to command all the Continental forces, raised, or to be raised, for the defence of American liberty. The five hundred dollars, per month, be allowed for his pay and expences'.²⁰ Washington won the election over some capable candidates. At the time, John Hancock had a desire to be appointed commander-in-chief as well.²¹ Thomas Paine also had a great opinion of General Artemas Ward who had a strong relationship with him.

It was John Adams's idea to nominate Washington for the job. In his autobiography, Adams wrote: 'I am determined this morning to make a direct motion that Congress should adopt the army before Boston, and appointed Colonel Washington commander of it'.²² Later, on the same day Congress assembled, John Adams gave a speech:

I had but one gentleman in my mind for that important command, and that was a gentleman from Virginia who was among us and very well known to all of us, a gentleman whose skill and experience as an officer, whose independent fortune, great talents, and excellent universal character would command

²⁰ 'The salary of the Commander-in-Chief appeared much higher than the officers,' in *Journal of the Continental Congress*, Wednesday, June 14, 1775, ed. by Worthington Chauncey Ford (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1904-37) pp. 89-90.

²¹ *Letters of Members of the Congress*, Vol. 1 ed. by Edmund C. Burnette (Washington, DC: The Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1921-36), pp. 130-132.

²² *Ibid.*

approbation of America, and unite the cordial exertions of all the Colonies better than any other person in the Union'.²³

The motion came under debate, and a few delegates declared themselves against it, but Washington seemed to be well liked in the first place, so the proposal appeared to be satisfactory. Washington received an overwhelming number of votes. The army of New England was having a general of its own, and the troops hoped to apprehend the British in Boston.

Adams clearly saw Washington as the proper man to lead the army. He was confident that Washington would not abuse the power of the position. Washington was a wealthy man who had a warm family, good friends, and rich properties waiting for him back home. As Adams described in a letter to one of the Congressional delegates, 'There is something charming to me in the conduct of Washington, a gentleman of one of the first fortunes upon the continent, leaving his delicious retirement, his family and friends, sacrificing his ease and hazarding all in the cause of his country. His views are noble and disinterested'.²⁴

John Adams explained Congress' attitude and the causes leading to this choice. Adams viewed Washington's selection as a highly political decision. The election of Washington was understood to encourage the people in the South to participate in the war and make unity among the colonies:

This measure of imbecility, the second petition to the King, embarrassed every exertion of Congress [...], but we were embarrassed with more than one difficulty, not only with the party in favor of the petition to the King, and the party who were jealous of independence, but a third party, which was a

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Taylor, ed., 'From John Adams to Elbridge Gerry, 18 June 1775,' vol. 3, pp. 25–27.

Southern party against a Northern, and jealousy against New England army under the command of a New England General. Whether this jealousy was sincere, or whether it was more pride and a haughty ambition of furnishing a southern General to command the northern army²⁵.

He concluded, 'This appointment will have a great Effect, in cementing and securing the Union of this Colonies. The Continent is really in earnest in defending the Country'.²⁶ Eliphalet Dyer, a Connecticut delegate, expressed a similar thought in his private letter to Joseph Trumbull, a commissary general of Connecticut troops, an alternate delegate from Connecticut:

[Washington] is a Gent. Highly Esteemed by those acquainted with him, tho I dont believe as to his Military, & for real service he knows more than some of ours, but so it removes all the jealousies, more firmly Cements the southern to the Northern, and takes away the fear of the former lest an Enterprising eastern New England Genll proving successful, might with his victorious Army give law to the Southern & Western gentry.²⁷

Washington's appointment was primarily based on the political calculation that a southerner would need to command the army if it were to be truly continental and not just a renamed New England militia force. To be fair Congress had other reasons for choosing Washington: he had experience from the French and Indian War, in which he served the lieutenant governor of Virginia, Robert Dinwiddie. He was then working alongside the British. Washington was a delegate to the Continental Congress and a wealthy gentleman who refused to profit from his position as a military commander.²⁸

²⁵ Burnette, ed., p. 130.

²⁶ Butterfield, ed., 'John Adams to Abigail Adams, 11 June 1775,' vol. 1, pp. 215-217.

²⁷ Smith, ed., 'Eliphabet Dyer to Joseph Trumbull, June 17, 1775,' vol. 1, pp. 499-500.

²⁸ Burnette, ed., pp. 130-2.

He was praised and much respected by other American leaders, and actually not long before the election Washington with other members consisting of Philip Schuyler, Thomas Mifflin, Silas Deane and Samuel Adams discussed possible ways to supply the colonies with armament and military stores. Washington was made a chairman of this first military affair before the Second Congress adopted the Continental Army on June 14, 1775.²⁹

Washington gained the respect of other influential leaders from the start. After the election, Silas Deane wrote of his admiration of Washington in a private letter to his wife:

Genl. Washington, who sacrificing private Fortune independent Ease, and every domestic pleasure, sets off at his Countrys call. To exert himself in her defence without so much as returning to bid adieu to a Fond partner & Family. Let Our youth look up to This Man as a pattern to form themselves by, who Unites the bravery of the Soldiers, with the most consummate Modesty & Virtue.³⁰

Eliphalet Dyer, similarly praised Washington in a letter to Jonathan Trumbull, a Connecticut governor, 'He is a Gentn highly Esteemed for his Military & other Accomplishments to that Important Command We Esteem him well Adapted to please A New England Army and much better Suited to the Temper & Genius of Our People than any other Gent not brought up in that Part of the Country'.³¹ John Adams, who supported Washington, also wrote to his wife Abigail Adams, 'I can now inform you

²⁹ The commission was set up on May 27, 1775. See James A. Garfield, 'The Atlantic Monthly: A Magazine of Literature, Science, Art, and Politics,' Vol XL (New York: Hurd and Houghton The Riverside Press, 1877), p. 54.

³⁰ Silas Deane, 'To Elizabeth Deane, June 16, 1775,' in *Letters of Delegates to Congress August 1774-August 1775*, Vol.1, ed. by Paul H. Smith (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), pp. 493-5.

³¹ Smith ed., 'Eliphabet Dyer to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr., June 16, 1775,' pp. 495-6.

that the Congress have made Choice of the modest and virtuous, the amiable, generous and brave George Washington Esqr., to be the General of the American Army'.³²

Even if George Washington was appointed a commander of a national army, American military matters worked according to the chain of command. After appointing the commander-in-chief, Congress immediately pursued an arrangement for voting in the second in command and the other three major generals. General Artemas Ward, a commander of Massachusetts, was elected second in command and General Charles Lee third. Lee was a professional soldier whose commission in the Continental Army would arouse much controversy 'in the hope of gaining a high, if not the highest, command in the patriot forces in the event of war'.³³ Washington himself also admired Lee as a British officer. In his diaries on December 30, 1774 showed that the two men at Mount Vernon discussed a plan for American troop organization.³⁴

During this week, Congress chose thirteen new generals, drafted initial instructions for Washington, and decided how to finance the campaign. Washington was allowed to choose Joseph Reed from Philadelphia as his secretary and Mifflin as his aide-de-camp.³⁵ After all these proposals had been resolved, Congress continued by appointing a committee of three, consisting of Richard Henry Lee, Edward Rutledge, and John Adams, to draft a commission and instructions for the generals.³⁶

³² Butterfield, ed., 'John Adams to Abigail Adams, June 17, 1775,' pp. 497-8.

³³ Arthur M. Schlesinger, *Prelude to Independence: The Newspaper War on Britain, 1764-1776* (New York, 1958), pp. 222-27.

³⁴ 'Diary entry: 30 December 1774' in *The Diaries of George Washington*, vol. 3, 1 January 1771-5 November 1781, ed. by Donald Jackson (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978), pp. 298-300.

³⁵ Jackson, ed., pp. 337-8.

³⁶ Ford ed., vol.2, pp. 91-5.

Congress also gave Washington general directions. These directions showed how Congress kept their military commander under observation while allowing him for individual initiative. Washington had to report the number of the forces he used and return them together with their military stores and provisions. He might recruit some men but to exceed double that of the enemy. He could appoint a person to fill up vacancies. He was also able to manage the prisoners of war with his own consideration. And, with a special power granted to him, Washington had the unspecified authority to make a decision ‘for such emergencies’ to find a solution if a situation could not be solved by his instructions.³⁷ Congress gave power to Washington, but an inspection was carried out. A committee was appointed to instruct him of his responsibilities. The authority of Congress was clearly defined. At the founding of the country, Americans adopted the idea of civilian control of the military. The authors of the Constitution also made sure that the president of Congress had more power than the military commander to avoid the creation of a monarchy or dictatorship. Therefore, the President of Congress was the chief executive office of the nation, and Congress had unlimited power by any law or regulation, ‘except the consent of the people themselves’.³⁸ This paved the approach that the military force of the United States was under the control of civil government.

Washington in fact realized what members of Congress thought of him. After he was elected to be the Military Commander, he declared his loyalty and intentions to Congress:

It may be said, that this is an application for powers, that are too dangerous to be intrusted. I can only add, that desperate diseases, require desperate

³⁷ Ibid, pp. 100-1.

³⁸ Ibid.

remedies, and with truth declare, that I have no lust after power but wish with as much fervency as any man upon this wide extended Continent for an Opportunity of turning the Sword into a ploughshare; But my feelings as an Officer and a man, have been such, as to force me to say, that no person ever had a greater choice of difficulties to contend with than I have. It is needless to add, that short inlistments, and a mistaken dependance upon Militia, have been the Origin of all our misfortunes, and the great accumulation of our Debt.³⁹

Luckily, due to his previous military and political background, Washington handled the situation smartly. He had been building his network with other legislators long before the Revolution. In May 1775, Congress appointed a committee of men to deal with defensive operations against Britain, and one of those men was George Washington.⁴⁰ This was a method that Congress used before the Revolution—let the representatives freely discuss the situation and vote for the resolution. Washington, as one of those leading men, knew exactly what Congress expected.

Therefore, Washington's main duties at the beginning of the war were to give reports to Congress and follow their orders. On June 30, 1775 Congress released the Articles of War specifying the conduct of the Continental Army which was composed by Silas Deane, Thomas Cushing, and Joseph Hewes.⁴¹ Congress recommended a plan for Washington to intercept British supply ships, adopted resolutions for the reconstitution of Washington's army in Massachusetts, and made provisions for the defence of South Carolina and Georgia. On November 13, 1775, Congress also

³⁹ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 20 December 1776,' vol. 7, pp. 381–389.

⁴⁰ 'Diary entry: 15 May 1775,' in *The Diaries of George Washington*, vol. 3, 1 January 1771–5 November 1781, ed. Donald Jackson. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978, p. 330.

⁴¹ Ford, eds., 'Friday, June 30, 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 112–123.

ordered the publication of additional ‘Rules and Regulations for the Continental Army’⁴² which gave more regulations to the commissioned and non-commissioned officers and punishment guidance. On December 20, they authorized an attack on Boston. Congress did not merely organize an army, they also authorized the construction of thirteen ships for the Continental Navy and appointed a Marine Committee and a commander-in-chief of the Continental Navy. During the first year of the war, the military situation was almost entirely controlled by the delegates.

Congress initially set the role of itself superior than the army and the commander-in-chief and used the militiamen along with the regulars. This approach worked for a year, but then proved ineffective. Congress could not make a proper decision or select proper officers to fill their positions. After the first year of the war passed, Congress decided to grant Washington much more power to execute operations as he saw proper. Washington in return reported to Congress as much as he could to let the delegates know what was going on.

Selecting Washington had significant meaning for how the army and the war developed—Congress did not want only a militarily experienced man, but also someone who they related to as a politician who understood the situation well and could be relied on. The relationship between Congress and Washington was smooth overall—Washington and Congress respected each other. Congress trusted the commander-in-chief so much that, even with the fear of a standing army, they empowered Washington to do what he desired by the end of 1776.

Washington’s decision to serve without pay certainly had a resonance in Americans’ minds and demonstrated an informal way of living that true Patriots

⁴² Ford, eds., ‘Publication of New ‘Rules and Regulations’ for Continental Army, November 13, 1775,’ vol. 3, pp. 352-353.

should emulate—men should volunteer to serve and ordinary people should sacrifice their personal interests to support the army and the cause of war. Besides, Washington's practice set a pattern for other officers who were willing to be commissioned in the Continental Army, especially the foreign officers. Marquis de Lafayette was one who followed Washington's step to serve the army without pay. These characteristics were hard to be found, and they made contributions to the War's outcome. Without Washington, Congress knew that the war would turn out in a different way. This was why his subordinates did not hesitate to prove their loyalty and do what it took to defend their commander's reputation. Washington's sacrifice made him highly creditable among other officers, delegates, and provincial governors.

Military Commander and Congress delegates

Washington worked closely with the Presidents of Congress. John Hancock was elected the first president of the Second Continental Congress and was supposed to be Washington's superior. John Adams's diaries showed that Hancock wanted to be appointed as a military commander, but it turned out that he was voted president of the Second Continental Congress. A few reasons can be given for this. He inherited not only his uncle's successful business but also his political connections. Thomas Hancock was a successful merchant even before the French and Indian War in 1754 and had built close relationships with Massachusetts' royal governors. His uncle's assets and connections made John one of the wealthiest and best-known men on the continent. He also experimented with many high positions in his political career and was a leading patriotic figure. Furthermore, he had ties with influential leaders such as Samuel and John Adams.

Again, even if Hancock was the President of Congress, he did not wield absolute power. Congress worked towards a resolution by appointing a committee and

voting. As a group of colonial representatives Congress was responsible for multiple tasks. While America was at war, Congress created and managed the national army by recruiting men and supplying the troops; they also supported the commander-in-chief. In the first few years of the war, Congress members were fond of Washington, had great expectations for him, and acclaimed him as a supreme commander who would control the whole army, but Washington was actually needed to take Congress's command and direction. Congress maintained its central control from the beginning of the war.

Rather than the President, it was Congress' delegates that had a lot of power. One of the most difficult tasks to do was to man the 38 regular regiments or find 8,000 men to serve in the Continental Army. This did not allow the militia and the army to work separately since there were many times Congress requested the states to provide men to put in the regiments. Even if Congress as the American people's legitimate government assumed control of the troops, it relied heavily on people's consent from the thirteen states.

Therefore, the delegates from Massachusetts like Samuel and John Adams undoubtedly had much power, but they exercised it subtly during the war. They were two of the five elected delegates of Massachusetts who attended the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia in September 1774. Fifty-six colonial delegates convened for the purpose of composing a response to the Intolerable Acts and discussing a boycott of British trade. Samuel had the idea for the first companies of minutemen in Boston, soldiers who would be immediately ready for action. Samuel was recognized as definitely the most radical patriot of the time.⁴³ This was echoed in his writing:

⁴³ Charles River Editors, *The Sons of Liberty: The Lives and Legacies of John Adams, Samuel Adams, Paul Revere and John Hancock*, (Kindle edition, 2012), p. 26.

If ye love wealth greater than liberty, the tranquility of servitude greater than the animating contest for freedom, go home from us in peace. We seek not your counsel, nor your arms. Crouch down and lick the hand that feeds you; May your chains set lightly upon you, and may posterity forget that ye were our countrymen.

He was described by Benjamin Franklin as ‘truly the Man of the Revolution’.⁴⁴ John Adams was also one of the most powerful figures of the time, both openly and in secret. He was involved in many crucial military committees and made several decisions at important times.

Historians like Charles Editors have agreed that President Hancock still had less power in Congress than these presiding officers and that his main duty was dealing with correspondence.⁴⁵ However, Hancock was the president when the Declaration of Independence was written. The Declaration was drafted by the leading delegates, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert Livingston, and those men requested him to add what was missing.⁴⁶ Even though the Continental Congress had had several presidential elections during the eight years of the war, Hancock held the highest position in Congress from 1775 to 1777 and was in charge when Congress created the national army, witnessed the failed campaign in New York and New Jersey, and decisively empowered their commander-in-chief. It is interesting to examine what role the congressional president had during the war since when it came to making crucial resolutions, Congress always had to vote and then create a committee to manage the resulting situation.

⁴⁴ John C. Miller, *Sam Adams: Pioneer in Propaganda* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1936), p. 343.

⁴⁵ Editors, p. 55.

⁴⁶ Ibid, pp. 58-9.

Board of War and civilian influence on the Continental Army

Consequently, military policies and strategies for governing the army were established by the Board of War and validated by members of Congress. This idea, in fact, had been introduced by Washington as he suggested that Congress institute a war-office as it was ‘certainly an event of great importance’.⁴⁷ On January 24, 1776 Congress responded to the proposal by appointing a committee of seven to consider the propriety of establishing a war office and its responsibility.⁴⁸ On June 12, 1776 the Congress approved ‘Broad of War and Ordnance’ consisting of five members: John Adams as a chairman, Roger Sherman, Benjamin Harrison, James Wilson, and Edward Rutledge assisted with one clerk and one secretary. The duty covered all the army administration.⁴⁹

Congress revised the organization of the Board of War in April 1777 by adding two more tasks: procuring all such ordinance, arms, military stores, clothing, medicine; and registering all correspondence with the generals and transmit to the proper officers all order that refer to the forming, marching, clothing and appointments for camp or garrison of the troops in every department.⁵⁰ In October 1777, Congress rearranged the Board of War by appointing three gentlemen who were not members of Congress and increased the organization’s duty. The committee was responsible to fill up all military commissions and control raising, recruiting, and

⁴⁷ Wright, p. 89.

⁴⁸ The members of the committee consisted of Mr. Thomas Lynch, Mr. Benjamin Franklin, Mr. Edward Rutledge, Mr. Benjamin Harrison, Mr. Samuel Ward, Mr. Samuel Adams, and Mr. Robert Morris. See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, 24 January 1776, pp. 85-6.

⁴⁹ The Board of War and Ordnance was responsible to obtain and keep a register of the names of all the officers, accounts of all the artillery, arms ammunition and warlike stores; have the care of forwarding all dispatches from Congress to the colonies and armies, and all moneys to be transmitted for the public service by order of Congress; superintend the raising, fitting out, and dispatching all such land forces; have the care and the direction of all prisoners of war; and keep and reserve regular order, all original letters and papers; be authorized to hire suitable apartments and provide books, paper, and other necessaries at the Continental expense. See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, 12 June 1776, pp. 434-435.

⁵⁰ See more in *Journals of the Continental Congress* vol.7, pp. 241-242.

dispatching of the land forces.⁵¹ In November 7, 1777 Congress proceeded to elect of a Board of War, and the vote went to General Thomas Mifflin, Colonel Timothy Pickering, and Colonel Robert Harrison, Washington's military secretary, but Harrison declined the offers.⁵² Mifflin suggested voting for two more members and recommended that major General Gates should be appointed President of the Board based on his 'military skill' that would 'suggest reformatations in the different departments of the army essential to good discipline, order and economy'.⁵³ Congress approved the proposal and the delegates elected General Gates as a president of Board and Joseph Trumbull and Richard Peters as two additional members.⁵⁴

In other words, the Board of War was created to rule over the military organization as a result of fear of military misuse. Even if Congress included distinctive members who picked war and desired absolute independence like John Adams, Samuel Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin, those people were the ones who feared a military coup, and held back long-term military services. This idea was deeply rooted in American society for long. Samuel Adams' article for *Boston Gazette* published on October 17, 1768 clearly demonstrated this idea:

Where military power is introduced, military maxims are propagated and adopted, which are inconsistent with and must soon eradicate every idea of civil government. It is moreover to be observ'd that military government and civil, are so different from each other, if not opposite, that they cannot long subsist together. Soldiers are not govern'd properly by the laws of their country, but by a law made for them only: This may in time make them look

⁵¹ Ford, eds., '16 October 1777,' vol.9, pp. 818-9.

⁵² Ford, eds., '7 November 1777,' vol. 9, p. 874.

⁵³ Ford, eds., '24 November 1777,' vol. 9, p. 959.

⁵⁴ Ford, eds., '27 November 1777,' vol. 9, pp. 971-2.

upon themselves as a body of men different from the rest of the people; and as they and they only have the sword in their hands, they may sooner or later begin to look upon themselves as the LORDS and not the SERVANTS of the people [...] Nay, they may even make laws for themselves, and enforce them by the power of the sword!⁵⁵

The concern over a standing army had also developed in the colonies since Boston Massacre. John Adams commented that the standing army should not be trusted:

This however is no Reason why the Town should not call the Action of that Night a Massacre, nor is it any Argument in favour of the Governor or Minister, who caused them to be sent here. But it is the strongest Proofs of the Danger of Standing Armies'.⁵⁶

This idea led Congress to support initially the militia system and adopt a one-year enlistment policy.

Washington realized how much Congress was afraid of the emergence of standing army, but he dissented from this view, 'The jealousy of a standing army, and the evils to be apprehended from one, are remote, and, in my judgment, situated and circumstanced as we are, not at all to be dreaded; but the consequence of wanting one, according to my ideas formed from the present view of things, is certain and inevitable ruin'.⁵⁷ Washington also complained about the Congress' hesitation, 'I assured [Congress] that the longer they delayed raising a standing army, the more difficult and chargeable would they find it to get one, and that, at the same time that the militia

⁵⁵ 'The Founders' Constitution Volume 5, Amendment III, Document 2' in *The Writings of Samuel Adams*, <<http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/amendIII2.html>> [accessed 7 June 2017].

⁵⁶ Ford, eds., '27 November 1777', vol.9, p. 971-2.

⁵⁷ Chase and Grizzard, eds., vol. 6, pp. 393-401.

would answer no valuable purpose, the frequent calling them in would be attended with an expense, that they could have no conception of'.⁵⁸

But this advice did not meet with the Congress' favour. The possibility of military dictatorship was frightening and from the beginning Washington was commanded to follow the instructions and directions given by a committee of Congress.⁵⁹ Their choice of him as the army commander emphasizes how much they tried to demonstrate American unity to the British and foreign allies.

Two major events forced the American leaders to rethink and adjust their military plan and strategy. The first event was the invasion of Canada. On June 27, 1775, Philip Schuyler was directly appointed by Congress to seize St. Jean and Montreal or any other part of Canada.⁶⁰ However, the campaign failed and ended up with the Americans forced into retreat. In early 1776 the Americans followed a consistent method for the use of forces in both the militia and Continental Army, but the British soon launched an offensive plan to put down the rebellion. At the same time, Congress was preoccupied by the Canadian campaign. Much effort was expended to achieve the goals of the Canadian operations. In response to General Montgomery's defeat and death in December 1775, Congress sent reinforcements to Canada again in January and later in 1776. In February, Congress appointed a committee to proceed to Canada to promote support for the American cause.⁶¹ Because the army's enlistments expired at the end of 1775, Washington was working hard to recruit men for his army. Even when the army lacked troops, Congress still sent troops to Canada and limited black recruitment to the reenlistment of 'free

⁵⁸ Chase and Grizzard, eds., vol. 6, pp. 440-443.

⁵⁹ Ford, eds., vol. 2, pp.100-101.

⁶⁰ Ford, eds. 'Instructions to General Schuyler, Continental Congress,' vol. 2, p. 1855.

⁶¹ Ford, eds., '15 February 1776,' vol. 4, pp. 150-153.

negroes who have served faithfully in the army of Cambridge'⁶² and forbade enlistment of prisoners of war.⁶³ Thus, Congress still kept close control of the army.

The second event was the battle of Long Island, New York in August 1776. Congress wanted the army to defend the city, but Washington knew that it was difficult to defend New York since at this time his troops were outnumbered and surrounded by professional regulars:

All agreed the Town would not be tenable If the Enemy resolved to bombard & cannonade It—But the difficulty attending a removal operated so strongly, that a course was taken between abandoning It totally & concentrating our whole strength for Its defence—Nor were some a little Influenced in their opinion to whom the deterrn of Congress was known, against an evacuation totally, as they were led to suspect Congress wished It to be maintained at every hazard.⁶⁴

Washington had probably 20,000 men with half of them militia, but General Howe commanded 32,000 British soldiers with 8,000 German mercenaries. The battle ended up with a heavy American loss. However, Washington decided at the end of 1776 to retreat to Pennsylvania to save his men and arms, 'Our Retreat was made without any loss of Men or Ammunition and in better order than I expected'.⁶⁵

The fall of New York encouraged Congress to rethink the necessity of allowing Washington and his subordinates to alter the plans as they saw fit. Congress had too many tasks occurring at the same time and could not manage them all effectively. This defeat made it clear that Congress could not make the right military

⁶² Ford, eds., '16 January 1776,' vol. 4, pp. 57-61.

⁶³ Ford, eds., '31 January 1776,' vol. 4, pp. 104-107.

⁶⁴ Chase and Grizzard, eds., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 8 September 1776,' vol. 6, pp. 248-254.

⁶⁵ Chase and Grizzard, eds., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 31 August 1776,' vol. 6, pp. 177-179.

decisions on the ground because they were in a different place and communication took a long time. After this event Washington wrote to Congress stressing the need for employing regular troops instead of using a high percentage of militia:

Our situation is truly distressing. The Check our Detachment sustained on the 27th. Ulto. has dispirited too great a proportion of our Troops and filled their minds with apprehension and despair. The Militia, instead of calling forth their utmost efforts to a brave and manly opposition, in order to repair our Losses, are dismayed, Intractable and Impatient to return. Great numbers of them have gone off.⁶⁶

Congress did not want to be responsible for the outcome, so Washington was allowed to follow his plan for defending the city and evacuating the supplies; but the plan was made too late and the British attacked before the supplies could be moved.

Washington now was allowed to manage the situation. He could compel the troops to stay with the army after their enlistment expired; had power to order Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey companies to join his main army; draw money from the nearest paymaster to spend on paying the troops and procure provisions for them on their march; appoint a commissary of prisoners, and a clothier general for supplying the army; fix their salaries, and return their names to Congress: to fix upon that system of promotion in the Continental Army with his judgement; direct the quarter master general to provide teams for each regiment, and for other necessary purposes.⁶⁷ Congress still kept Washington under close scrutiny but did not direct operations nor the management of the army on campaign. They

⁶⁶ Chase and Grizzard, eds., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 2 September 1776, vol. 6, pp. 199–201.

⁶⁷ Ford, eds., '27 December 1776,' vol. 6, pp. 1042-9.

ordered him to write to them at least twice daily when the speedy 'Communication of Intelligence' was necessary.⁶⁸ They placed more trust in him and allowed him to make a decision in some important matters such as choosing suitable personnel and number of men for certain tasks.⁶⁹

Washington used his new powers judiciously, seeking to build trust between him and Congress. When Congress requested him to report, Washington never left Congress waiting. The *Writings of George Washington* in the Revolutionary War Series demonstrate that he wrote to Congress almost every day. Moreover, Washington tried to show Congress how much he obeyed civilian power. One distinct example occurred in July 1776; twice he rejected direct peace negotiations from General William Howe, the commander-in-chief of the British army. He immediately made a report to the President of Congress.⁷⁰ He insisted that it was beyond his responsibility to receive this letter directly. In Washington's opinion, it was unacceptable that the British did not take the American army seriously, 'in this Instance, the Opinion of Others concurring with my own, I deemed It a duty to my Country and my appointment to insist upon that respect which in any other than a public view I would willingly have waived'.⁷¹

The situation described Washington's loyalty. Congress subsequently put more trust in him and allowed him to make some important decisions. Washington gained even more credit when he led his army to defeat and capture the Hessian garrison at Trenton on December 26, 1776. This resolution was much supported by

⁶⁸ Ford, eds., 'To George Washington from Richard Peters, 9 September 1777,' Vol. 8, pp. 726–27.

⁶⁹ Ibid., The enclosed resolution of this date requests GW 'to appoint a proper person at head-quarters to write to the president twice a day or oftener, if necessary, advising the position & movements of the armies; and that the board of war appoint proper expresses for conveying the said letters with the utmost expedition'.

⁷⁰ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 14 July 1776', *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 5, pp. 304–309.

⁷¹ Ibid.

Major General Nathanael Greene, one of Washington's best subordinates. Greene wrote to President John Hancock to encourage Congress to enhance Washington's power: 'that the General will not exceed his Powers altho' he may sacrifice the Cause. There never was a man that might be more safely trusted nor a Time when there was a louder Call'.⁷² Congress took Greene's recommendation into consideration and granted Washington 'full exertion of the military power'.

Washington's private network with civilian leaders

Washington, as a former congressman, knew many of the delegates and used this shortcut to get what he wanted. From the beginning of the war, Washington befriended some influential delegates. Several letters were sent formally and privately to make requests. There were many influential delegates to Congress, of which John Adams of Massachusetts was one. It remains a matter of some debate whether Adams trusted in Washington's military abilities and leadership, or whether he just saw his appointment as a way of controlling Washington, since even if Washington was appointed as the commander-in-chief, he still had to bow down to Congressional authority.

The relationship between Washington and Adams was nonetheless complicated. Adams obviously believed in his ability to inspire Southern participation, but he rarely spoke of Washington's leadership or military skills. He instead admired and paid much respect to Charles Lee and Horatio Gates. In one letter he wrote, 'Lee and Gates are experienced officers [. . .] of such great experience and confessed abilities, that I thought their advice, in a council of officers might be of great advantages to us'.⁷³ Throughout the war, Washington and Adams wrote more

⁷² Chase, ed., Nathanael Greene, quoted in 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 20 December 1776,' vol. 7, pp. 381-389.

⁷³ Ibid.

than ten letters to each other, and more than half of them were Adams's recommendations for new staff. Washington once requested that Adams give food to one of his men.⁷⁴ As Adams promoted his own position, Washington did the same. There is no evidence to suggest that Washington and Adams did not get along. Washington certainly wanted to create the army in his own style. Adams, as one of the most influential founding fathers who sought permanent separation from Britain, from the beginning just wanted to make sure that the nation would never end up a military dictatorship. There was enough agreement between them to work together and respect each other. Still, Washington seems to have felt more comfortable making requests for aid from other members of Congress.

Washington regularly sent official and private letters to the president of Congress as well as to other influential delegates. He clearly understood that Congress had limited his power. Some of the members of Congress were lobbying to appoint a military staff. The event that proved decisive happened on August 1, 1777. Congress replaced Philip Schuyler, a commander of the northern department, with Horatio Gates. Congress did ask Washington's opinion on the new commander; however, Congress excused him from naming a different commander and appointed the one it wanted. The delegates gave the reason that, 'We take the Liberty to signifie to your Excellency that in our Opinion, no Man will be more likely; to restore, Harmony, Order and Discipline, and retrieve our Affairs in that Quarter, than Majr. Genll. Gates. He has on Experience acquired the Confidence, and stands high in the Esteem of the eastern States and Troops'.⁷⁵ From that point on, Washington considered the northern department to be under the Congress's control, rather than his command.

⁷⁴ From George Washington to John Adams, 10 May 1780,' in *Founders Online*, National Archives, <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-01699>> [accessed 29 June 2017].

⁷⁵ Taylor, ed., 'New England Delegates to George Washington, 2 August 1777', vol. 5, pp. 261–262.

To accomplish his goals, Washington turned to other influential delegates to build a network to get what he wanted for the army. The three men who he wrote to the most were: John Hancock, Jonathan Trumbull governor of Connecticut, and Joseph Reed of Pennsylvania. It is understandable that Washington and Hancock talked a lot because one was the president and one was the commander-in-chief. They were also good friends, and in 1778 Hancock named his only son John George Washington Hancock. He admired and supported Washington by raising supplies, money, and troops for Washington's army. In the siege of Newport, Rhode Island, under the command of John Sullivan, Washington wrote him to raise 5,000 men and send a number of militiamen for reinforcement.⁷⁶ He was authorized by Congress to call for aid from New York and New Jersey, and Hancock also sent him 6,000 Massachusetts men under his command to join the effort.

One of Washington's closest friends and advisors was Jonathan Trumbull. Trumbull served as governor in both pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary Connecticut. When Washington was desperate for supplies, he turned to Trumbull:

Upon the Subject of Powder, I am at a Loss what to say, our Necesseties are so great, and it [is] of such infinite Importance, that this Army should have a full Supply [...] Sir be pleased to give us your Assistance, by taking this Matter into your hands to Direct, in which I have not the least Doubt, you will attend as well to the Expence, as other Circumstances conducive to the public Service.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Hoth, ed., 'From George Washington to Major General John Sullivan, 17 July, 1778,' vol. 16, pp. 92-94.

⁷⁷ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr., 14 August, 1775,' vol. 1, pp. 307-309.

Again, when he needed arms or utensils, he wrote to Trumbull, 'I must earnestly solicit your regard to their Arms, Blankets, Cloathing, Kettles and Ammunition, that they may come as well provided with these necessary articles as they possibly can'⁷⁸, or 'I find we are greatly deficient in the article of Ball, and as I understand a large quantity of Lead has been manufactured at Middletown in your Government, I must beg the favor of you to forward as much as you can spare to me, as soon as possible'.⁷⁹

When he needed qualified men, he was not hesitant to make a request to Trumbull:

I sincerely wish this Camp could furnish a good Engineer—The Commisary Genl can inform you how exceedingly deficient the Army is of Gentlemen skilled in that branch of business; and that most of the works which have been thrown up for the defence of our several Encampments have been planned by a few of the principal Officers of this Army, assisted by Mr Knox a Gentleman of Worcester—Could I afford you the desired assistance in this way I should do it with pleasure.⁸⁰

He even called on Trumbull when seeking to show guests hospitality:

I beg leave to recommend to your kind notice Monsieurs Pennet and De Pliarne two French Gentlemen who came here last night [. . .] I pray the favor of you to supply them with such necessaries as they may want and have Carriages provided for expediting their journey as much as possible.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr., 16 January 1776,' vol. 3, pp. 117–118.

⁷⁹ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr., 20 April 1776,' vol. 4, p. 100.

⁸⁰ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr., 2 November 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 289–290.

⁸¹ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr., 14 December 1775,' vol. 2, p. 546.

The relationship between Washington and other Congressmen from the start went on smoothly up until the winter of 1777, when he lost three battles in Brandywine, Paoli, and Germantown. The British captured Philadelphia, which disgracefully forced Congress to move to York, Pennsylvania. The loss from the Battle of Brandywine greatly affected American morale. However, good news arrived from Saratoga. Burgoyne's troops had been defeated by General Horatio Gates. (Less than a month before, Congress had replaced General Philip Schuyler with Gates). It was America's first outstanding victory, which resulted in the capture of Burgoyne and six thousand British prisoners of war. The path to triumph for the Americans now became clearer. Gates at that time was a hero with his distinct victory, and with much criticism and discontent about Washington's army, Congress determined to appoint General Gates as a President of Board of War on 27 November 1777.⁸²

Washington's reputation and leadership was disparaged. Jonathan Dickinson, a sergeant who became Attorney General of Pennsylvania, wrote to James Lovell on November 20, 1777:

Thousands of Lives and millions of Property are yearly sacrificed to the insufficiency of our commander-in-chief. Two battles he has lost for us by two such Blunders as might have disgraced a Soldier of three months standing, and yet we are so attached to this Man that I fear we shall rather sink with him than throw him off our Shoulders'.⁸³

Moreover, Washington's power was challenged by General Horatio Gates. Thomas Mifflin openly criticized Washington and urged Congress to replace him with Gates.

⁸² 'To George Washington from Henry Laurens, 30 November 1777,' in *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 12, 26 October 1777–25 December 1777, ed. by Frank E. Grizzard, Jr. and David R. Hoth (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2002), pp. 446–447.

⁸³ Description begins Bernhard Knollenberg. *Washington and the Revolution, a Reappraisal: Gates, Conway, and the Continental Congress* (New York, 1940), description ends 194.

Richard Henry Lee wrote a letter to Samuel Adams telling Mifflin's will, 'He urges strongly the necessity of having Gen. Gates to be president of new Board of War. He thinks the military knowledge and the authority of Gates necessary to procure the indispensable changes in our army. I believed he is right'.⁸⁴ Thomas Conway also wrote to Gates and reprimanded Washington, 'Heaven has been determined to save your Country; or a weak Genl and bad Counsellors would have ruined it'.⁸⁵

Washington then faced Congress' check-up on his winter camp at Valley Forge according to his reports and complaint about the lack food and supplies. In other words, the relationship between Congress and the commander-in-chief came to its lowest ebb. Congress, on December 24, 1777, appointed a committee composed of Elbridge Gerry, Jonathan Bayard Smith, John Witherspoon, Francis Dana, Joseph Reed, Nathaniel Folsom, Gouverneur Morris and John Harvie to inspect Washington's army. The letter from Congress to Washington openly stated its dissatisfaction:

Among the many reasons offered against a Winters Campaign we were sorry to observe one of the most prevalent was a general discontent in the army and especially among the Officers. These discontents are ascribed to various causes and we doubt not many of them are well founded and deserve particular attention, and in the course of the present Winter, will be taken into consideration by Congress, and we hope effectually remedied. That a reform may take place in the army, and proper discipline be introduced, we wish to see the Military placed on such a footing as may make a Commission a

⁸⁴ 'From Richard Henry Lee to Samuel Adams, York 23 November 1777,' Lee Family Digital Archive, Papers of the Lee Family <<http://leefamilyarchive.org/papers/letters/transcripts-gw%20delegates/DIV0384.html>> [accessed 2 January 2017].

⁸⁵ Lengel, ed., 'From George Washington to Major General Horatio Gates, 4 January 1778,' vol. 13, pp. 138-140.

desirable object to the Officer, and his Rank preserved from degradation & contempt, for these purposes we intend to recommend to Congress.⁸⁶

A committee arrived at the camp and was shocked to find a 'skeleton of an army'. The men were starving, in poor health, and was as discouraged as Washington claimed. Gouverneur Morris wrote letters to George Clinton Lieutenant Governor of New York on February 17 requesting his assistance in terms similar to those used by Washington:

A part of the army has been a week, without any kind of flesh & the rest three or four days. Naked and starving as they are, we cannot eno(ugh) admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiery, that they have not been, ere this, excited by their sufferings, to a general mutiny and dispersion [...] The Skeleton of an Army presents itself to our eyes in a naked starving Condition out of Health out of Spirits.⁸⁷

Congress, moreover, started dealing with foreign cooperation in 1777, and this dialogue became more intense in 1778. Many European officers flocked to the country. Other than that, some internal issues such as jealousy among the delegates and military leaders, desertion, royalists, Indian resistance, and popular uprisings in some colonies needed attention. The army command fell largely to Washington, and his power was much enhanced. In March 1778, he was authorized to employ American Indians with the army,⁸⁸ and he increased his authority to negotiate prisoner exchanges.⁸⁹ In April, Congress empowered Washington to call up the New Jersey,

⁸⁶ Grizzard and Hoth, eds., 'To George Washington from a Continental Congress Camp Committee, 10 December 1777,' vol. 12, pp. 588-589.

⁸⁷ 'Gouverneur Morris to John Jay, February 1, 1778,' *Letters of Delegates to Congress*, vol. 9, February 1, 1778 - May 31, 1778, in American Memory < [https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hlaw:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(dg0092\)\)](https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hlaw:@field(DOCID+@lit(dg0092)))> [accessed 26 March 2017].

⁸⁸ Ford, eds., '4 March 1778,' pp. 219-222.

⁸⁹ Ford, eds., '18 March 1778,' pp. 263-268.

Pennsylvania, and Maryland militias.⁹⁰ In June, Congress directed Washington to ‘proceed in arranging’ the army.⁹¹ Besides, longer enlistments were approved this year.⁹²

Between 1779 and 1781, Congress had its highest confidence in Washington. The war was more intensive, and America made a strong decision to reject a British peace proposal. In 1777-1780 enlistment terms extended to three years or to the length of the war to avoid the year-end crises that reduced forces. Congress’ main roles included communicating and making plans with—and requesting supplies from—their allies. During these years, America and France worked together on Canadian and state plans. Congress resolved to reassure France that the United States ‘will not conclude either truce or peace...without [her] formal consent’.⁹³ In 1781, the only task that Congress gave Washington came in a message dated 4 September that instructed him to investigate the British treatment of prisoners.⁹⁴

Conclusion

The Continental Army’s relationship with civilian institutions was also influenced by the British practice of managing forces—military under civilian control was based on public support which did not want to maintain the army if it was not necessary. The Americans only wanted the army to fight in the war, and everyone wanted to see the war end as soon as possible. It was the army that reflected much of the civilian aspect, even through the commander-in-chief’s practice. Washington acted as the glue in

⁹⁰ Ford, eds., ‘4 April 1778,’ pp. 306-310.

⁹¹ Ford, eds., ‘4 June 1778,’ pp. 566-571.

⁹² Ford, eds., ‘31 August 1778,’ pp. 852-856.

⁹³ ‘The Franco-American Treaty of Alliance, 6 February 1778’, *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 25, October 1, 1777, through February 28, 1778, ed. by William B. Willcox (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 583–595.

⁹⁴ ‘To George Washington from Abraham Skinner, 4 September 1781’, in *Founders Online*, National Archives, <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-06884>> [accessed 29 June 2017].

every institution. The British commanders did not have to work the way Washington did. They did not have to go out of their way to do anything like this because they had a clear chain of command. The Continental Army, on the other hand, was not that transparent, because they lacked central legal power. So, their commanding approach was not direct, but based more on requesting and helping each other.

The problem was that the states could not fill their quotas and Congress was unable to draft enough men forced the army to employ militia service. The combination of regulars and militia in the same force fighting in the battle made the Continental Army peculiar. These two tend to be confounded into one entity even if their duties were different—the Continentals fought in the actual war, while the militia patrolled, raided, gathered information, and guarded the main troops. Militiamen had to protect their own colony/state and preventing the Tories from aiding the British soldiers by providing food, supplies and information. Moreover, the militia sometimes acted as substitutes in their region if Congress could not acquire enough men to fulfil the rank and file.

The army acted as a servant of the public purpose, not the monarchy. Even if Congress decided to create an actual army with support from the commander-in-chief and many of his staff officers, they did not mean to have it to perform with the same purpose as European armies. It was true that Congress ultimately was desperate to create a professional army, in order to meet the requirements of military tradition of the eighteenth-century warfare, for two main reasons: to obtain foreign assistance and to produce a well-trained army to the standard of European armies so the men could fight properly and effectively enough to confront the British regulars. Moreover, disciplined soldiers would obey their commanders, and that is the most crucial element of any army.

The Americans started their army operations with citizens and notions of public virtue in an attempt to change it to something like the regulars of the European armies. However, the foundation of the American army was different from others, which had more effect on the army's identity. The contribution of civilian power and influence governed the army and shaped what the force became. Americans' belief in freedom and independence prevented the army from being a fully effective fighting force. But thoughts on military matters of the American people gradually changed—they understood the need for an actual army, and they fully trusted their commander-in-chief, who set a high, exemplary standard for American military commanders. The Continental Army then became partly professional, but did not reach the point of a full-scale army. The army was disbanded soon after the war ended and maintained a small size during peace time.

Congress was responsible for, and took control of, the army from the beginning of the war. They elected the commander-in-chief and chose his generals. Congress adopted methods to limit Washington's power and to prevent the misuse of a standing army. However, this practice gradually changed as the war played out. Congress found itself forced to deal with many issues and operations such as communicating about and requesting foreign assistance. The fall of New York in 1776 also proved Congress wrong in its intention to retain absolute control and command over the army and its commander. Congress' idea of short-term recruitment also did not work for this long war. All these matters forced Congressional delegates to rethink their military strategy. Washington himself tried to obtain what he wanted by lobbying some influential delegates privately. Congress learned to trust Washington by working with him over an extended period of time. They decided to give him extraordinary power and leave the majority of military matters in his hands after 1777. Washington

surely became something of a military dictator, but there is no evidence of his misuse of power.

Selecting Washington as a military commander was one of the best decisions Congress made. This was by no mean an accident. The delegates had good reasons to make this decision. Washington was a wealthy, American-born gentleman with wide connections, as well as one of the First Congress members, making it easy for the delegates to work with him. His military leadership skills and experience in the French and Indian War as a colonel in the militia of the British Province of Virginia was also considered—and this was the thing that most members of Congress sorely lacked. There were many times that Congress could not decide on what to do and who to appoint, so they delegated to Washington to make a judgment. And the last reason, which was significantly important, was his basic good intentions and his sacrifice in his service for the American cause. Washington was truly a symbol of American virtue. In 1778, he was referred as ‘a Man of approved Spirit & Conduct in whom the greatest Confidence may be safely reposed’.⁹⁵ He represented both military and civilian sphere. And for the Americans he was an ideal combination of a revolutionary warrior and a patriot.

⁹⁵ Smith, ed., vol. 9, p. 143–46.

Chapter 3 Military Literature

Introduction

Before the Continental Army was assisted and supervised by foreign officers, America did not have military experts or technicians, so American officers needed to educate themselves and find a proper exercise to train the men by reading military literature. American officers who were commissioned by the Continental Army were experienced in the colonial militia service, and only a few had been in the British army. The men who made up the troops were citizens who lacked the experience needed for the army to function professionally. The Americans' only fighting experience in an actual war was when they served the British army in the French and Indian War. There was no military school to teach and train officers and men properly in the colonies. The shortcut to gain military knowledge was to read available books on the subject.

Washington knew that reading military literature was vital. He realized that lack of military education was a problem since he was first commissioned as a Virginian provincial officer. When he was elected as the first commander-in-chief of American army, sources of military knowledge were limited. The best option was to read, since it provided essential instruction when teachers could not be found or afforded. Washington noted in his suspension and admonition to his officers in 1756 that, 'Do not forget, that there ought to be a time appropriated to attain this knowledge; as well as to indulge pleasure. And as we now have no opportunities to improve from example; let us read, for this desirable end'.¹

¹ 'Address, 8 January 1756,' *The Papers of George Washington*, Colonial Series, vol. 2, 14 August 1755–15 April 1756, ed. by W. W. Abbot (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1983), pp. 256–258.

Washington had desired military knowledge and a commission in the British army since he was young. In 1755 he wrote to Robert Orme, a principle aide-de-camp to Major General Edward Braddock when he got invited to serve under Braddock that this opportunity was ‘the laudable desire’ that he was able to serve his King & Country and he wished ‘earnestly to attain some knowledge on the Military Profession’.² After he was elected a general commander of the first actual American army, he wished to pursue professionalism in the Continental Army.

Washington as a commander-in-chief was responsible for all matters related to training, drill, and discipline as well as to occasionally initiate and enforce major reforms in the field. Given their admiration of the British Army, it is not surprising to discover that the Continental and British armies were using many of the same military texts, rules, drills and manuals throughout the Revolutionary War. Following the British and French models meant that the American needed the same textbooks to guide them.

It is important to keep in mind that the Revolutionary War lasted eight years, and the army was established during the first year. To create an efficient army in such a short time, Washington and his men had to seek manuals to guide regulations and military exercises in order to achieve military discipline. Washington ordered books according to his personal preferences and by other officers’ suggestion. Later on, many of them were reprinted in America, indicating their popularity and wide appeal among the officers. Moreover, some new books were written and published during the war. Military literature, therefore, can be described as a facet of European

² Abbot, ed., ‘From George Washington to Robert Orme, 15 March 1755,’ vol. 1, pp. 242–245.

contribution and relationship-building across the continents because both the British and Continental armies shared many military books.

The books mentioned in this chapter were mainly gathered from Washington's own collection of military manuals now held by the Library of Congress, and from the recommendation made in the correspondence between Washington and his officers. Self-education was a common characteristic of the American officers during the Revolutionary War. Henry Knox, the chief of artillery, was an excellent example of a self-learning officer. Knox was a bookseller in Boston. He had studied military matters by reading, and this was known by John Thomas, a brigadier general from Boston. Thomas introduced Knox to John Adams, 'I have had Some Acquaintance [Josiah Waters and Henry Knox] with, the first I take to be judicious, and has by Reading, Obtained a Theoretical Knowledge, in fortifications. I have been Pleased with Some of his Projections'.³ Therefore Knox and Waters teamed up to make a plan for fortifications at Roxbury even at that time Knox was not yet in the army yet.

Washington and Lee were impressed by the two men's work. Knox was praised much by the two generals as he wrote to his wife, 'Yesterday as I was going to Cambridge I met the Generals who beg'd me to return to roxbury again which I did when they had [viewd] the works they express'd the greatest pleasure & surprize at their situation and apparent utility to say nothing of the plan which did not escape their praise'.⁴ On Washington's recommendation on November 17, 1775 he was then appointed a colonel of artillery to replace Colonel Gridley.⁵ Knox inspired other officers that military knowledge could be achieved by reading. He helped Washington

³ Taylor, ed., 'To John Adams from John Thomas, 24 October 1775,' vol. 3, pp. 239–241.

⁴ 'Knox, Henry to Lucy Knox, 6 July 1775,' in *The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History*, <<https://www.gilderlehrman.org/collections/bc309e24-0820-48b8-b40d-102043727626>> [accessed 15 April 2017].

⁵ Ford ed., vol.3, pp. 385–59, 399.

reorganize artillery regiments. Many of his letters mentioned a list of technical readings he recommended to Congress for purchase.

In the first year of the war it was not only military leaders made an attempt to acquire books for their army, Congress also paid attention to this matter. John Adams was one who had been against the idea of a standing army, but when the need to create an actual army reached a state of public awareness, he supported the idea of military education among the officers. As the war continued, in 1780 he saw the benefits of the officers' acquiring and reading military literature, 'The American officers have however been industrious, they have had the Advantage of reading all the Books which have any Reputation concerning military science'.⁶ He concluded that at this time 'the Art of War is now as well understood in the American Army'.⁷

John Adams also discussed military reading with William Tudor, a lawyer and a judge advocate of the Continental Army, and requested a list of science materials for young officers to read, 'I want to know what Books upon Martial Science are to be found in the Army, and whether, among the many young Gentlemen in the service, any of them are studious of the Principles of the Art'. Adams knew how difficult to acquire the materials, and this was such a problem to improve the officers' capabilities, 'It is a shame for Youths of Genius and Education to be in the Army, without exerting themselves to become Masters of the Profession. If it is objected that Books are not to be had, Measures ought to be taken to procure them'.⁸ However, in the letter Adams had a list of books in mind, and those in fact appeared to be used in

⁶ '10. To Hendrik Calkoen, 16 October 1780,' *The Adams Papers, Papers of John Adams*, vol. 10, July 1780–December 1780, ed. by Gregg L. Lint and Richard Alan Ryerson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 226–229.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Taylor, ed., 'From John Adams to William Tudor, 12 October 1775,' vol. 3, pp. 194–196.

the army later on. They were Dalrymple's *Military Essay* of 1761,⁹ Maurice de Saxe's *Reveries*¹⁰, Le Blonds's *Military Engineer*,¹¹ Muller's *A Treatise of Artillery*,¹² Major Young's *Manoeuvres for a Battalion of Infantry*,¹³ Simes' *Military Guide*,¹⁴ Prussian Field Regulations, King of Prussia's *Advice to young officers*,¹⁵ Pleydell's *Field Fortification*,¹⁶ and Simes's *Medley*¹⁷.

Military literature used by the British is listed in John Houlding's *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715–1795* and Ira D. Gruber's *Books and the British Army in the Age of the American Revolution*. Houlding's work has been acknowledged as the best organized and comprehensive list of British military manuals used in the eighteenth century. It elucidated the British government's selection of writings from the War of Spanish Succession until the War of the French Revolution. The manuals were written by the British military authorities, officers, and scholars and covered drills, tactics and strategy, engineering, artillery, amphibious operations, and history. Gruber focuses on the importance of particular books during this period, and explores the British officers' preference for certain works which were

⁹ Cambell Dalrympe, *A Military Essay Containing Reflections on the Raising, Arming, Cloathing, and Discipline of the British Infantry and Cavalry; with Proposals for the Improvement of the Same* (London: D. Wilson, 1761).

¹⁰ Maurice, comte de Saxe, *Reveries, or Memoirs upon the Art of War*, by Field-Marshal Count Saxe. Translated from the French (London: J. Nourse, 1757).

¹¹ Guillaume Le Blond, *A Treatise of Artillery or, of the arms and machines used in war since the invention of gunpowder* (London: E. Cave, 1746).

¹² John Muller, *A Treatise of Artillery* (Philadelphia: Styner and Cist, 1779).

¹³ William Young, Sir, *Manoeuvres, or Practical Observations on the Art of War* (London: J. Millan, 1776).

¹⁴ Thomas Simes, *The military medley, containing the most necessary rules and directions for attaining a competent knowledge of the art* (Dublin: S. Powell, 1767).

¹⁵ Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Military Instructions, written by the King of Prussia, for the generals of his army: Being His Majesty's own Commentaries On his former Campaigns, Together with short instructions for the use of his light troops, illustrated with copper-plates, translated by an officer*, (London: T. Becket and P. A. de Hondt, 1762).

¹⁶ J. C. Pleydell, *An Essay on Field Fortification* (London: J. Nourse, Bookseller to His Majesty, 1768).

¹⁷ Thomas Simes, *The military guide for young officers, containing a system of the art of war [electronic resource] : Parade, camp, field duty; manoeuvres, standing and general orders; warrants, regulations, returns; tables, forms, extracts from military acts; battles, sieges, forts, ports, military dictionary, &c. With twenty-five maps and copper plates. By Thomas Simes, Esq. author of the Military Medley.*

drawn from the collection of early modern war books in the Anderson House Library of the Society of the Cincinnati in Washington, D.C. *Fit for Service* combined with Gruber's *Books and the British Army* provides a thorough analysis of officers' book choices, as well as a complete list of military books used by the British soldiers.

These lists of books used by both the British and American officers can be divided into two main groups: books that were shared by the British and Continental armies, plus separate choices made by the British, and books that were used by the Continental Army and printed in America in particular. How can we know that those textbooks have been read and applied in the battle field? This question is difficult to answer in the absence of direct testimony on reading habits; however, it can be addressed in different ways. Firstly, books are mentioned in the correspondence of Continental Army officers. Secondly, the print history of the book can be examined, for examples looking at number and frequency of reprints and editions. Also, points can be gleaned from their physical characteristics, such as if it is concise or not too bulky to carry around. Lastly, we have some surviving copies that contain annotations by the owner. This chapter plans to use the propagation of military literature during the Revolutionary War to explore relationships across continents and European influences on the Continental Army, focusing on key shared texts as well as those they used exclusively by each.

The selection of military books to be examined can affect the conclusion of this research. It should be noted that there were many kinds of military writings, which targeted different audiences and fulfilled different purposes. Spreading across the British and Continental armies were works reflecting eighteenth-century military thought. These could be categorized as theoretical texts, such as the essay and the treatise, and practical books such as handbooks. These books often had a particular

audience in mind. Some content was written for the militia officers and sergeants, while others were written to educate and advise young and new officers. Others were published for experienced officers to enhance their vision in strategic and tactical planning. The drill book itself has been categorised at a different level. Throughout the eighteenth century, the drill practiced in each regiment (horse or foot) consisted of five main elements known as the ‘manual exercise’, the ‘platoon exercise’, the ‘evolutions’, the ‘firings’, and the ‘manoeuvres’.¹⁸ It was with any or all of these elements that each of the several regulations and orders issued by the central authorities dealt, whether in whole or in part. Nevertheless, all the material ultimately aimed to serve the same purpose: training, regulation, and instruction for officers’ desired discipline: ‘A system of training could be known as “a discipline.”’¹⁹ Soldiering is more than job, but it was a way of life.²⁰ Training is preparation and making him a better skilled warrior, and disciplinarily ready to take dangers.²¹ Discipline was designed for producing obedience diffusing in every aspect of soldiers’ life.

Military books shared by British and Continental armies

During the eight years of the war, there were more than thirty books used across the British and Continental armies. Fourteen of them, which were drawn primarily from military books published throughout the Revolutionary war, were shared. All these fourteen texts were originally published in England, but only four of them were subsequently printed in America. These were *The 1764 Regulations: the New Manual, Platoon, Review Dispositions Firing and Manoeuvres*; General James Wolfe’s

¹⁸ J.A. Houlding, *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-1795* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1981), pp. 160-161.

¹⁹ Matthew McCormack, ‘Citizen Soldiers’ in *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1850*, ed. by Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 162.

²⁰ Sylvia Frey, *The British Soldier in America* (Austin Texas: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 94.

²¹ *Ibid.*

Instruction for Young Officers, Military Instructions for Officers by Roger Stevenson and John Muller's *A Treatise of Artillery*. However, other books were owned, noted and exchanged among the Continental Army's commanders. This list, in addition, will be discussed in greater detail by taking into consideration the books used only by the British.

The first genre of military literature is the handbook. The popularity and the number of editions of *The 1764 Regulations* make it stand out among other publications. The earliest copy was printed in 1766 in London and New York. Its regulations specifically contained positions of soldiers under arms and provided explanations of manual exercises. The new review procedure and manoeuvre, although designed for use only among the English regiments and first introduced there in 1764, had spread abroad unofficially and by 1768 was the standard practice followed everywhere the British army was stationed. These new drill manoeuvres were chosen for standardization because they were considered a comprehensive selection from the overall body of manoeuvres generally practised at the time. The *1764 Regulations* remained the standard drill of the British army as a whole until 1778; during that period, it was often reprinted and was widely available. Indeed, no eighteenth-century drill book was so widely or frequently reprinted as particular elements or the whole of the *1764 Regulations*.

The *1764 Regulations* was actually used to train the militiamen who formed the army of Boston in 1775. Congress recommended it to Washington to 'use their utmost endeavours to make themselves masters of the military exercise published by order of his majesty in 1764'.²² So, Washington ordered six copies of it.²³ The book

²² Abbot, ed., 'Resolutions of Fairfax County Committee, 17 January 1775,' vol. 10, pp. 236–237.

²³ A. P. C. Griffin, *Catalogue of the Washington Collection in the Boston Athenaeum*, Boston, 1897, pp. 135–6.

was also printed in America. As many as twenty-six American imprints were created between 1766 and 1780, and ten editions were made from 1775 onwards: in New York in 1766, 1769, 1773, 1775, and 1780; Boston in 1774 and 1780; Philadelphia in 1775–1776; Wilmington, Delaware in 1775; Providence, Rhode Island in 1774; Lancaster, Pennsylvania in 1775; and Newburyport, Massachusetts in 1774. It was used by most military units in America until it was replaced by Baron Von Steuben's manual in 1779.²⁴

Both the British and American forces, which were certain to increase in size for the upcoming war of 1775-1783, demanded more copies from the publishers.²⁵ There are several reasons for its popularity across the Atlantic. As the British led, the Americans followed. Finally this publication was obviously selected because it was popular among the British, and the American wanted to copy their style of training. In addition, the book gained popularity among the two armies since it was concise, containing only thirty-eight pages. It explained all of the basic positions of a soldier under arms, the practices of priming and loading, and the position of each rank in the firing. Secondly, using British drills helped make the colonial soldiers feel more secure by commencing with the prominent British manual. This confidence in British drill is reflected by the fact that many new American publications drew heavily upon the *1764 Regulations*, such as Lewis Nicola's *A Treatise of Military Exercise* used by Philadelphia's troops, and Timothy Pickering's *An Easy Plan of Discipline for the Militia*. These drill books share the same characteristics by emphasizing subtle details of motions and movement, especially standing still. This publication was the most popular and the only pure drill book both armies shared.

²⁴ Friedrich von Steuben, *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States* (Philadelphia: Styner and Cist, 1779), p. 3.

²⁵ Houlding, p. 214.

The next category of military literature was the treatise, larger works that went beyond drill to consider wider roles within the military, management of units and even military philosophy. Humphrey Bland's *A Treatise of Military Discipline* was a dense explanation of the duties of officers and soldiers. It may be considered one of the most well-read books in the British army and was reprinted in seven editions, between 1727–1753. Washington had read Bland since he served in the British provincial militia, as he saw that the book was full of essential military information.²⁶ When Steuben arrived at Valley Forge in 1778, he found that only two military books had been used by Washington: those of Bland and Simes.²⁷ This book was not printed in America during the war, but Washington ordered it from England in 1775, and was sent the 1727 edition.²⁸

The book was written for young officers, and the context emphasized the importance of their duties. Thinking carefully that he had a new-born army with a lot of inexperienced officers, Washington relied on this book to help him improve the officer corps, as the aim of this book was written to pass on military experience. As Bland put it in his introduction:

Considering how few old Officers remain, and that they are diminishing every Day, I hope I shall not be censured for having ventured to commit to Writing the little Knowledge I have acquired in Military matters for the Instruction of those who are yet to learn; who, in a little time longer, if they have no

²⁶ Abbot, 'Address, 8 January 1756,' vol. 2, pp. 256–258.

²⁷ Fred Kapp, *Life of Steuben* (New York: Mason Brothers, 1895), p. 130.

²⁸ *Catalogue of the Washington Collection in the Boston Athenaeum*, compiled and annotated by Appleton P. C. Griffin, Internet Archive (2007) <<http://www.archive.org/details/catalogueofwashiOObostuoft>> [accessed 17 February 2014].

opportunity of going Abroad, and wanting the Example of Old Officers to guide them.²⁹

This complex treatise was no doubt popular among the British officers because it was written by the British officer at a time when the military book market was dominated by foreign texts. It consisted of twenty chapters that covered every principle which might be required both for training and on the battlefield. It contained information about organizing and managing major events, including directions for the forming of battalions, and many little details such as visiting the soldiers' quarters and hospital. The treatise also provided tactical advice, such as directions for how a foot battalion should defend itself when attacked by horse,³⁰ and it includes the grand division,³¹ as well as rules for encamping an army. The treatise contains not only regulations and military discipline procedures but also many types of exercise: manual exercise, platoon exercise, firing and evolutions. It also was a British engineer textbook, which contains the duties of the troops at siege.

Bland's work inspired another text that was used by only the British army, Capt. Bennett Cuthbertson's *A System for the Compleat Interior Management and Economy of a Battalion of Infantry*. The Continental Army did not adopt this book which was specific to the British army presumably because the American officers preferred Bland's treatise which covers with a wider variety of British military discipline, and officer's and soldier's duty. It offered a deep knowledge of regimental affairs, including a section on the regular exercising and manoeuvring of the battalion and a suggestion of light company training. Having served as adjutant for twelve

²⁹ Humphrey Bland, *A Treatise of Military Discipline*, 7th edn. (London: John and Paul Knapton, 1753), p. 7.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.126.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p.134.

years, Cuthbertson claimed that many treatises he had seen in that century from French, German and a few British officers, except Bland's, were all designed for generals.³² Therefore, he aimed in his book to write to instruct the lower ranks of the profession and pass on knowledge of how to manage a company or battalion of young officers.³³ He focused more on life and actions rather than armies, routes of columns or battle plans, and urged young officers to become familiar with this small version of memoirs or reveries and be skilled with the interior duties. This medium-sized book contained up to thirty chapters that gather all the essential managing approaches, such as qualifications to be sergeant major, drum and fire major; treatment of the sick and management of a regimental hospital; clothing; arms care such as the method for keeping arms and accoutrements in the best condition and preserving ammunition from being damaged; some basic rules of recruiting, courts-martial and punishment; and life events such as marriage of non-commissioned officers and soldiers and methods for preventing improper ones as much as possible, burial of non-commissioned officers and soldiers.

Another similar book shared by both the armies was Thomas Simes's *A Treatise on the Military Science*. This was considered one of the most famous British treatises as well. This book was first printed in London in 1780. It differed in its editorial and included advertisements, and a special part was dedicated to its subscribers whose names were printed in the first part of the book to prove its popularity. The book claims to draw on several ancient disciplines and retains other military knowledge quoted from other British officers. However, the manoeuvring of British troops extracted from the ancient texts had been removed or changed since the

³² Bennett Cuthbertson, *A System for the Compleat Interior Management and Economy of a Battalion of Infantry* (Bristol: Rouths and Nelson, 1776), p. vii.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. viii.

formation of light infantry in that time of the theatre of war. This book was divided into two major sections: the first section involved preparations before taking the field and the march of an army upon leaving its quarters to go to the cantonment, and the second involved the attack and defence of a military post. Apart from these subjects, the book touched on punishment by mentioning the historical method of punishment, specifically the manner in which Spico suppressed and punished sedition that occurred in the Roman Army; it then offered methods of preventing mutiny in the army. The last part involves the principle of matters of utility, duty and obligations of conduct.

The other book written by Simes that the American and British shared was *A Military Course for the Government and Conduct of a Battalion*, printed in London, 1777. This long book was ordered by Washington but not published in America. This book was made particularly for the British army to deal with the rebellious conduct of the Americans since Simes saw that it was necessary to publish some instructions for the young and unexperienced officers. The book was designed for regulations in quarters, camp and garrison. It contains seven parts of varied information, and is basically a variety of regulations and disciplines. Both Simes' works reflect the British military mindset, so it is not surprising that the American had to acquire them.

James Wolfe's *Instructions to Young Officers* was one of favoured texts among the leaders in both armies. It is a collection of daily orders on routine regimentation for the British foot. It is distinguished in terms of its approach to military seniority which aims to teach 'young officers' what was expected from them. This concise work would benefit the Americans even more because they were sculpting new officers, and it was printed in Philadelphia in 1778. The book emphasizes the duty of officers to obey their superiors' orders and punctually execute their own orders rather than learning exercises, saluting, firing in the platoon,

mounting guards, and exposing their men on the day of battle.³⁴ It helped young and uninformed officers to perfect matters of firelock in a short time so they could train other young soldiers. It taught other necessary information, such as learning the names of persons in the company they belonged to, observing men's dress, their pay, and visiting company quarters at least thrice a week to check for cleanliness.

The other similar title, Roger Stevenson's *Military Instructions for Officers*, was first published in London, 1770, and reprinted in Philadelphia in 1775 for the honourable George Washington and edited for the situation of the revolution. This work was one of the most practical books, and suited a new army like the Continental Army 'in a country where every gentleman is a soldier and every soldier is a student in the art of war'.³⁵ It expressed the necessity of following the military treatise when 'arms are the alternative of commerce; and a nation robbed of the one, and invaded by the other'³⁶; it also offered encouragement and support from the editor and the publisher to Washington. The book itself was all about performing the operations rather than principles. It taught officers geometry and different ways of fortifying posts, churches, mills, other detached buildings, and villages. The book also explained small detachments of regulars and 'partisan corps' (light legions) which had been seen in most European armies during the 1740–1748 war and, more commonly, during the 1756–1763 war and could by themselves conduct small operations of the greatest utility to their larger parent armies. Moreover, it offered instructions for going on detachment and secret marches, reconnoitring, defending posts and attacking posts; surprises and stratagems for seizing posts; and ambushade and retreat. It was the only book used by both armies that illustrated plans of the manoeuvres necessary for

³⁴ James Wolfe, *General Wolfe's Instructions to Young Officers* (London: J. Millan, 1768), p. 13.

³⁵ Roger Stevenson, *Military Instructions for Officers* (Philadelphia: R. Aiken, 1775), p. 3.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

carrying on the *petite guerre*. It showed the formation of a partisan corps and its duties to perform reconnaissance, attack and defend posts, fortify villages and buildings, and conduct raids, ambushes, and skirmishes.

The British also added one other of Simes's books into their collection. *The Regulator, or, Instructions to Form the Officer* is one of the books that outline the administration and management responsibilities of a regiment. In this book, since he tried to describe the duties of all ranks in a regiment and illustrate the internal management and discipline of the regiment, and perhaps this was too specific information to appeal to the new Continental Army. Simes might have planned to write it because he had complained that he found the candidates for commissions to be not professionally qualified, as the duties were not mentioned clearly. He wrote, 'I hope the time will come soon, when a particular description, by authority, of duties required from each commission in the Service, with a general view of every thing an Officer should be acquainted with, will accompany all Commissions'.³⁷

The last type of military book explored the strategy, tactics and techniques of combat or in other words the 'art of war'. One shared work was Major William Young's *Maneuvers, or Practical Observations on the Art of War* is a manual of exercises and words of command offering the construction of a new system of fortification by making use of standing timber.³⁸ This content was really useful when Washington's troops arrived at Valley Forge during the winter of 1777, and the

³⁷ Quoted in Houlding, pp. 219-20.

³⁸ William Young, *Maneuvers, or Practical Observations on the Art of War* (London: J. Millan, 1771), p. 79.

soldiers needed to find shelter to prevent wind and cold. The 12-man huts were built from standing timber found in valley.³⁹

Field Marshal Count Saxe's *Reveries or Memoirs upon the Art of War* was widely read in America. General Charles Lee referred to it in a letter to Washington. Lee also suggested the books for forming an army to Washington as he claimed that he had studied this subject really well and almost got his own writing published:

I have given You must know that it has long been the object of my studies, how to form an army in the most simple manner possible—I once wrote a treatise tho I did not publish it, for the use of the Militia of England—by reading Machiavely institutions and Martial Saxe I have taken it into my head that I understand it better than almost any Man living.⁴⁰

General Henry Knox quoted it to John Adams, for example:

There are a variety of Books translated into English which would be of great Service but none more so than the great Marechal Saxe 'who stalks a God in war.' Tis he who has done more towards reducing war to fix'd principles than perhaps any other man of the age. Indeed his Reflections on the propagation of the human Species are odd and whimsical, as they without hesitation put to death all the fine feelings of the human heart.⁴¹

³⁹ Andrew Stough, 'The American Revolution Month-by-Month January 1778', *Revolutionary War Historical Article*, <http://www.revolutionarywararchives.org/index.php?view=article&catid=37%3Athe-american-revolution-month-by-month&id=248%3Ajanuary-1778&format=pdf&option=com_content&Itemid=59> [accessed 2 May 2014].

⁴⁰ Hoth, ed., 'To George Washington from Major General Charles Lee, 13 April 1778,' vol. 14, pp. 495–496.

⁴¹ Henry Knox, 'To John Adams from Henry Knox, 16 May 1776,' in *Papers of John Adams*, Founders Online National Archive, <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-04-02-0081>> [accessed 27 January 2014].

It is quite clear why Saxe was mentioned many times by American officers, since the book gives many different points and contents. As the title of the book implies, Saxe saw the mechanical part of war as uninteresting, and other *art of war* books gave principles but only a small amount of good opinion. He began with directions of administrating matters related to the manner of raising troops, clothing, subsisting, paying, exercising and forming the troops for action. Knox once again quoted it in other places, 'I wish you to consult Marshall Saxe on the Chapter of paying the troops'.⁴² Saxe concentrated on recruitment and he initiated the idea of conscription as law which nobody could avoid:

Would it not much be better to establish a law, obliging men of all conditions in life, to serve their king and country for the space of 5 years? A law, which could not reasonably be objected against, as it is both natural and just for people to be engaged in the defense of that state of which they constitute a part.⁴³

One chapter emphasized the cavalry and its armour, arms and accoutrements for man and horse, as well as the establishment of the cavalry with its manner of forming, engaging, marching, foraging, tent camping, and providing detachments or parties of light-armed service. In addition, the eighth chapter was devoted to the military discipline and disobedience was considered a crime. He wrote:

Next to the forming of troops, military discipline is the first object that presents itself to our notice; it is the soul of all armies; and unless it be established amongst them with great prudence, and supported with unshaken resolution,

⁴² Henry Knox, 'To John Adams from Henry Knox, 21 August 1776,' in *Papers of John Adams*, Founders Online National Archive < <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-04-02-0225> > [accessed 10 February 2014].

⁴³ Maurice Count de Saxe, Marshal-General, *Reveries, or, Memoirs Concerning the Art of War* (London: J. Nourse, 1757), p. 79.

they are no better than so many contemptible heaps of rabble, which are more dangerous to the very state that maintains them, than even its declared enemies.⁴⁴

There were also works for particular military units. Capt. Robert Hinde's *The Discipline of the Light-Horse* devoted to a highly mobile cavalry. A similar text, written by Major General de Grandmaison, was found in *America: A Treatise, on the Military Service of Light Horse, and Light Infantry, in the Field, and in Fortified Places*, which was translated from the French by Major Lewis Nicola. It was addressed exclusively to the light dragoon regiments, whose cavalry officers would profit from the study of this book. It showed all aspects of the light dragoon service: interior management, arms, training and drills, clothing, accoutrements, horses, and active service conditions.

The next group of texts that influenced the development of the artillery was suggested by Henry Knox, the artillery leader. In his letter to John Adams, he wrote, 'Mullers Artillery and Hollidays principles of Gunnery Monsr. Clariac [Clairac] Mullers and Pleydells field fortification are Books so necessary for a people struggling for Liberty and Empire'.⁴⁵ Knox mentioned two books for studying artillery. Both were written by British men. First, Muller's *A Treatise of Artillery* initially described the gunnery. However, in the seventh of his eight parts devoted to artillery service at home and to service in war, he explained tactics to use in battle. This book intended to provide an understanding of artillery and the foundation of artillery tactics. It also described the commander's responsibility in selecting the terrain for his artillery, identifying the point of attack of the enemy, servicing of individual pieces, selecting

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 2.

⁴⁵ Taylor, ed., 'To John Adams from Henry Knox, 16 May 1776,' vol. 4, pp. 189–191.

types of ammunition, assuring the safety of the cannon and crew and the positioning of powder carts. Other books of Muller's were still ordered except this one since this book was popular enough to be printed in Philadelphia in 1779. Congress ordered '100 Setts of Mullers Military Works in English except his "'Treatise of Artillery"' of which there is no want'.⁴⁶

The other book, Hollidays' *An Easy Introduction to Fortification and Practical Gunnery*, was written particularly for English men.⁴⁷ In this book, he omitted a description of the rules of gunnery, making it concise and 'easy'. His book shows the importance of mathematics in ballistics and gunnery. Holidays insisted that it helped to keep an accurate account of shots and powder for any piece and to have an understanding of geometric trigonometry.

Knox also mentioned books for engineering. As he wrote, 'I have This—There are others that are more scientific which those who intend to be a Warlike people had not ought to be without. Monsr. Clairac, Müller, & Pleydell held Engineering the most useful Kind of Fortification'.⁴⁸ Lieutenant John Pleydell's *An Essay on Field Fortification Intended Principally for the Use of Officers of Infantry* is the book designed for infantry officers on campaign in how to construct redoubts and other posts without the assistance of an engineer. The other engineering book was a French text, Louis-André de la Mamie Clairac's *L'ingénieur de champagne* or *The Field Engineer*. The book was first published in 1749 and printed again in 1757. It was translated in 1758, 1760 and 1773. The 1773 version, which was translated by John

⁴⁶ 'From Benjamin Franklin to Jonathan Williams, Jr., 22 December 1779,' *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 31, November 1, 1779, through February 29, 1780, ed. by Barbara B. Oberg (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 267–269.

⁴⁷ Francis Holidays, *An Easy Introduction to Fortification and Practical Gunnery* (London: G. Robinson, 1774), p. vi.

⁴⁸ 'To John Adams from Henry Knox, 16 May 1776,' in Founders Online, National Archives <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-04-02-0081>> [accessed 29 July 2017].

Muller, was imported to America. In this book the author argued that even though many wrote on the construction of fortification and the attack and defence of places, little had been written in regard to the necessary knowledge of an engineer in the field. This was divided into two different kinds: general principles (science) and action. He emphasized that speculative knowledge is sufficient to understand geometry, but much experience is necessary to give satisfactory instructions on the practical part. All the different parts of engineering were related to fortification. The book was distinguished by insisting that construction is an art including different objects and depending on so many circumstances.

In the early years of the war, the Continental Army could not find experienced and well-educated engineers, so their military fortifications were based on books' guidelines. In 1776, the decision to make a fortification in Dorchester Heights in Massachusetts was made, and Washington recommended using 'chandeliers,' or portable breastworks, which consisted of a framework made of wood holding fascines, since the ground was frozen.⁴⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Rufus Putnam, a chief engineer of northern campaign, was responsible for building fortifications. He picked the translation of an engineering book of Louis André de La Mamie de Clairac's, *The Field Engineer*, to be a guideline for this work and read from the start, 'I found the word, Chandiliears, what is that thought I [...] it is something I never heard of before, but no sooner did I turn to the page where it was described with its use'.⁵⁰ The purpose of this plan was put a lodgement on Dorchester Heights as a part of a plan to oblige 'the enemy to Leve Boston'.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Reed, 26 February–9 March 1776,' vol. 3, pp. 369–379.

⁵⁰ Rufus Putnam, *The Memoirs of Rufus Putnam and Certain Official Papers and Correspondence*, ed. by Rowena Buell Marietta (Ohio: The National Society of the Colonial Dames, 1903), p. 58.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

The Military Books Used by the Continental Army

Some of the military textbooks used by the Continental Army were ordered from England; however, many were made and reprinted in America. The evidence appeared in *Military Manuals* from Washington's own collection, which is now located in the Library of Congress. It provides a great list of works, including fifty books of eighteenth-century military literature that cover strategies, tactics and ordinances. The collection also covered the famous 'Washington's five books'.⁵² This list of military books was discussed in the correspondence between Colonel William Woodford to Washington. In November 1775, Woodford, writing from Virginia, asked for advice from the new commander-in-chief. Washington gave many suggestions and also recommended five military books for study:

As to the manual exercise, the evolutions and manoeuvres of a regiment, with other knowledge necessary to the soldier, you will acquire them from those authors who have treated upon these subjects, among whom Bland (the newest edition) stands foremost; also an Essay on the Art of War; Instructions for Officers, lately published at Philadelphia; the Partisan; Young, and others.⁵³

According to the letter, the five books were published in English and French, which is not surprising since the British officers in the eighteenth century preferred French texts. Humphrey Bland's *A Treatise of Military Discipline* was the longest English military writing of the century. The first edition was owned by George Washington, which dated from 1727. The second book is *Essai sur l'Art de la Guerre*, written in 1754 by Count Turpin de Crissé. It was translated from French into English by Captain

⁵² John Bell, 'Washington's Five Books', *Journal of the American Revolution* (2013) <<http://allthingsliberty.com/2013/12/washingtons-five-books/>> [accessed 13 January 2014].

⁵³ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to Colonel William Woodford, 10 November 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 346–347.

Joseph Otway and published in London in 1761 as *An Essay on the Art of War* (two volumes). The third book was *Instruction for Officers* by Roger Stevenson (1775). The fourth book, *The Partisan (The Art of Making War in Detachment)*, another French manual, was translated and published in London in 1760. Finally, *Young's Essays* (Major William Young's *Maneuvers, or Practical Observations on the Art of War*) was published in London in 1771.

It is notable that Washington opted to recommend a small number of books. John Bell remarked that Washington tried to avoid the dense and complicated treatises on artillery and fortifications because they were impractical for the infant troops at the time.⁵⁴ Washington did not mention any field manual books; his reading list was particularly for high-ranking officers. He also had mentioned his favorite book while he was dining with the Marquis de Chastellux at his New Windsor headquarters in 1780. Chastellux wrote:

War was frequently the subject: on asking the General which of our professional books he read with the most pleasure, he answered me that they were the King of Prussia's Instruction to his Generals, and the Tactics of M. de Guibert; from which I concluded that he knew as well how to select his authors as to profit by them.⁵⁵

The first book mentioned in the letter was Frederick II's *Military Instruction from the Late King of Prussia to his Generals*. In this text, Frederick the Great integrates ideas learned from military history into the instructions for his officers, 'Our reason only works upon matters upon which our experience throws light'.⁵⁶ Presumably,

⁵⁴ John Bell, 'Washington's Five Books'.

⁵⁵ Francois Jean Chastellux, *Travels in North-America in the Years 1780-81-82*, Vol.1 (Bedford, Massachusetts: Applewood Books), p. 163.

⁵⁶ Quoted in Jay Luvass, *Frederick the Great on the Art of War* (New York: First Da Capo Press Edition, 1999), p. 19.

Washington was impressed by the King's modernized vision of tactical and strategic concepts and his success in the War of Austrian Succession, Silesian Wars and the Seven Years' War. As a result of his battlefield excellence, Washington was determined to get a Prussian drill master to train his own force. In addition to Washington, top officers, such as General Nathanael Greene, held a great admiration for this book. In his letter to Washington, Greene wrote, 'The King of Prussia the greatest General of the age strongly protests against attacking troops by storm in villages much more, in large regular brick cities—He observes, it often proves the ruin of the best part of an army'.⁵⁷

It is understandable that Washington mentioned Jacques-Antoine-Hippolyte, comte de Guibert's work *A General Essay on Tactics* as one of his favorites. No doubt this was probably because he was having a dinner with a French officer, but in fact during the period of the American Revolution, two schools of tactics reigned in France. The first was headed by Mesnil-Durand, proposing the idea of a revolt against the linear system. The line was, he argued, unsuited for shock action or movement, so formations in small columns were recommended. Guibert led the other school and was impressed by the linear system of Frederick the Great. Guibert's work, *Essai General de Tactique*, was a favorite book of Washington. Indeed, Guibert's work suited the Revolutionary War because he recommended the idea of revolutionary fighting, which incorporated mobility, rapidity, and bravery in conducting the operations, achieving logistic solutions by relying on the countryside, and movement in independent formations.⁵⁸ Also preferred was flexible manoeuvring in open

⁵⁷ Grizzard and Hoth, eds., 'To George Washington from Major General Nathanael Greene, 3 December 1777,' vol. 12, pp. 516–522.

⁵⁸ Azar Gat, *A History of Military Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p.54.

columns before deploying into the firing line, rather than the complex and rigid manoeuvring of linear formation preferred by the Prussians.⁵⁹

Gruber also discussed ‘the five books’, the texts preferred by British officers between 1753 and 1783.⁶⁰ These books helped to organize the British officers’ approach to warfare. The history and theory of war was still key to professionals in arms.⁶¹ The five books were *Marlborough’s Campaigns*, Bland’s work, translation of works by Saxe, Clairac and Vegetius. It is interesting to compare Washington’s list with the books that the British commanders-in-chief preferred reading during the Revolutionary War. Between Thomas Gage, Sir Henry Clinton and Sir William Howe—the three commanders-in-chief during the Revolutionary War—only Clinton kept a record of his thoughts and readings in his leather-bound notebooks.⁶² According to Gruber, Clinton was fond of the works of Caesar, Vegetius and Polybius as well as the tactical treatises of Mesnil-Durand, Guibert and Hinde. Clinton, like other British officers, was influenced by French philosophy and military strategy rather than British authority.⁶³ Except for the aforementioned works of Bland, Saxe and Hinde, we can see that the British officers enjoyed reading the classics. Mesnil-Durand and Guibert represent the two French schools of tactical thought. It is understandable since the British and French had been fighting each other throughout the eighteenth century, and the Revolutionary War is no exception. The British were not only trying to defeat the colonists, but they were also competing with French. According to a comparison between British and American ‘five books’ and commanders’ favorite, we can see that Bland’s and Guibert’s works seemed to be favoured by both the armies’ commanders.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Gruber, p. 32.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., p. 75.

⁶³ Ibid.

The American force, however, started to create their army by using drill books, and many ‘American’ drill books relied heavily on British works. Even if Steuben’s regulations seemed to be a core text for training the American men, before his arrival the Americans had already produced two drill books: Timothy Pickering’s *An Easy Plan for Discipline for the Militia* (1775); and Lewis Nicola’s *Treatise of Military Exercise Calculated for the Use of American* (1776). Drawing up alongside the 1764 *Regulations*, Pickering’s works were adapted from an English model and extracted from *A Plan of Discipline, Composed for the Use of the Militia of the County of Norfolk*. Washington recommended Pickering to Congress; he described Pickering as, ‘A great Military genius, cultivated by an industrious attention to the Study of War, and as a Gentleman of liberal education, distinguished zeal and great method and activity in Business’.⁶⁴ This book served as the textbook for militia in Massachusetts, and was the foundation and inspiration for the training of the New England militia at that time. Nicola’s *Treatise of Military Exercise* represents a condensed version of them both, *A Plan of Discipline* and Pickering’s *An Easy Plan*, and was meant to teach and train the new American officers. We can see that even the most celebrated writings of the Revolutionary army drew upon British works.

The two drill books emphasized simplicity by using the fewest possible movements to load, fire, and manoeuvre. The Continental Army consisted of ‘people in arms’ who were likely to refuse to learn or perform difficult manoeuvres; therefore, the army in 1775-1777 had no uniformity for training or performing combat manoeuvres. The commanders adopted whatever plan they liked and let the sergeants teach it, but the soldiers made little effort to learn. But having a few guides was better than having only the commanders’ orders and their spirit. Pickering’s *An Easy Plan*

⁶⁴ Chase, ed., ‘From George Washington to John Hancock, 24 May 1777,’ vol. 9, pp. 517–519.

contained an outline for the discipline eventually developed in the Continental Army. Even though the revolutionaries disliked the European discipline at first, they could work with this simplified drill. Continental generals tried European discipline because they wanted to achieve their idea of a regular army and because they thought that men could best be restrained by force. *An Easy Plan for Discipline* advised the officers to win the affection of their men and, as a militia officer, Pickering marched and carried a pack. He did not believe that every man was equal, and he wanted to lead. In order to win his men's respect, he believed that he had to be more active and able than others. This method describes an American early way of drilling since the beginning and affected Steuben's regulations later on.

The most outstanding and well-known military manuals used among American staff during the years of the American War of Independence were Steuben's Regulations, twelve editions of which were produced in America. Von Steuben considered the situation carefully. He began crafting his regulations by applying some of the British *1764 Regulations*, which he saw had been already widely used. Steuben's regulations began by providing instruction to the officer concerning such a topic as the formation of a company or a regiment. It then moved on to teach the new men the instructions. Interestingly, Steuben taught them different march steps: the common step, at 75 steps per minute, as in the British style, and the quick step, at 120 steps per minute, as in the American style.⁶⁵ He emphasized the use of the musket and taught skills in using the bayonet, a practice in which the British were expert. He adjusted the light troops into a flexible unit that, when with the regiment, must form itself twenty paces to the right of the parade and exercise by itself. When the light

⁶⁵ Steuben, p. 13.

infantry was embodied, however, the light troops can exercise in the same manner as the battalion in the line.

Because there were a large number of men in the camp, General Washington ordered the model company to assist Steuben. In his general orders, he wrote, ‘One hundred men are to be annexed to the Guard of the commander-in-chief for the purpose of forming a Corps to be instructed in the Manoeuvres necessary to be introduced in the Army and serve as a Model for the execution of them—As the General’s Guards is composed intirely of Virginians, the one hundred draughts are to be taken from the troops of the other States’.⁶⁶ The model company consisted of one hundred men from various regiments, whom Steuben began to train from the outset. After the training, he would allow the men to return to their units so they could train the rest of the soldiers. Steuben played a major role in training the Continentals in the mixed and adjustable European professional manoeuvre. His kind-heartedness and attitude towards the army and its men shone throughout his book. He gave instruction to both the commissioned and non-commissioned officers, focussing on the importance of gaining the hearts of his men:

The first object should be to gain the love of his men, by treating them with every possible kindness and humanity, enquiring into their complaints, and when well founded, feeling them redressed.⁶⁷ There is nothing which gains an officer the love of his soldiers more than his care of them under the distress of sickness.⁶⁸ He should endeavour to gain the love by his attention to every thing which may contribute to their health and convenience⁶⁹ By avoiding too great

⁶⁶ Hoth, ed., ‘General Orders, 17 March 1778,’ vol. 14, p. 205.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 138.

⁶⁸ Steuben, p. 121.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 141.

familiarity with the men, they will not only gain their love and confidence, but be treated with a proper respect; whereas, by a contrary conduct, they forfeit all regard, and their authority becomes despised.⁷⁰

This idea echoed attitudes within the British militia. Matthew McCormack also emphasizes that contemporaries thought training citizen militia would be best achieved by appealing to the soldiers' sensibilities rather than through hardness. Citizen soldiers could be motivated to defend themselves as humans, along with their families, properties, and liberties.⁷¹

Steuben recommended that the officers and non-commissioned officers of each regiment educate themselves thoroughly through the manual exercises, marches and firings as well as through the security of the troops and discipline.⁷² The officers should be able to train and drill the army themselves. The commanding officers were supposed to take charge of the general instruction of the regiment, the exercises and the reason to do the exercise, if necessary.⁷³ Previously, the sergeants trained the troops and taught them to obey their orders. Members of the American Army, on the other hand, required an explanation for why an order or manoeuvre was necessary before they would obey. Yet, under Steuben's guidance, the army was able to perform complicated battle manoeuvres and became more orderly and disciplined than it had previously been. The Regulations or the 'Blue book' continued to be widely used until 1812.⁷⁴ This regulation was the culmination of European influence adapted to suit the new American army.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 148.

⁷¹ Kennedy and McCormack, p.161.

⁷² Steuben, p. 6.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Riling, pp. 8-10 and 27-31.

Conclusion

The Continental Army fought on very different terrain, and the numbers of troops were fewer in number than in Europe, so the relevance of European military writing could be questioned. But the colonists found the European military literature interesting once they had observed British troops, who were sent to fight with the French in North America in the 1750s and 1760s. We can see the British and Continental armies' reading choices were similar but also different. The British army had professionalized their troops since the middle of eighteenth century, and its officers had acquired the continental art of war, using the continental books as their foundation. The British Army learned its tactics and strategies from French scholars and philosophers. On the other hand, the Continental Army started with officers who had gained experience in the Seven Years' War, and why read books on their commander-in-chief's recommendation, and trained their men with any knowledge they acquired. Most of the drill books they used in the beginning—even if they claimed that they wrote them—were extracted from British military exercise texts. The texts for the Continental Army commanders were mostly British and French. The Continental Army not only adopted a drilling model derived from the British military forces, but its commanders were influenced by French military theory of the eighteenth century, and the men were trained by the Prussian drill master. As suggested by their reading choices and the books printed in America during the Revolutionary War, the Americans definitely applied British and other European techniques, but selectively. These three armies were involved in the same war where they gained knowledge of each other's fighting style. Moreover, this intelligence was something that each wanted to gain, as Sun Tzu said in *The Art of War*, 'If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you

know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat'.

Chapter 4 Non-American Recruitments

Introduction

When the Continental Army was first established, Congress had expected to employ white American colonists to form the army, but as the war progressed, the army was unable to fill its regiments with Americans, so Congress sought other ways to enlist men in the service. The idea of employing non-American white men in the army was actually inspired by the methods of the British—the Americans followed the British example in their attempt to recruit Native Americans, Germans, and slaves to their cause. Washington saw the importance and necessity of recruiting non-Americans into the armed forces, just as the British had done before—employing non-British soldiers when drafting their own men became challenging:

If the Enemy mean to hold their present Posts in the United states the presumption is, that their operations next Campaign will be vigorous & decisive because feeble efforts can be of no avail unless by a want of Virtue we ruin & defeat ourselves; which, I think, is infinitely more to be dreaded than the whole force of G. Britain, assisted as they are by Hessian, Indian, & Negro Allies.¹

One of the American Revolutionary War myths is that all colonial able-bodied men took up arms in this war, which was considered the American spirit, fighting throughout this eight-year-long war. Initially, this seemed to be an impressive fact about the American manpower in the opening battle of the war, the battle of Lexington-Concord, Massachusetts on April 19, 1775. The news of British incursion quickly spread over New England. In this fight 700 British soldiers marched on their

¹ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to Andrew Lewis, 15 October 1778,' vol. 17, pp. 388–390.

way to Concord in order to destroy the rebel military supply, but they were forced to retreat to Boston by heavy fire from the American militia. The victory was a good start and strengthened the American morale, proving they could encounter and overcome one of the most powerful armies in the world. This battle was quickly followed by the Battle of Bunker Hill on June 17, 1775. This time the British won, but heavily suffered heavy casualties. Among the 2,200 men of the British forces, 200 were killed and 800 were wounded, while around 100 American died and 300 were injured, among their 1,000 troops.²

During this time, around 16,000 American militiamen gathered around Boston to lay siege to the British to force them leave. This siege lasted more than 10 months and was successfully achieved. These events proved that this was no minor rebellion. The rebels did not to give up easily. What both the British government and the patriots faced was a full-scale revolution. It would require actual armies, and probably the use of mercenary troops as well. This impressive assembly of the New England men who quickly responded the request to fight was one of the reasons the Second Continental Congress decided to create the first army in America.

But after the first phase of the conflict had passed, people realized the danger of armed service. These citizen-soldiers were no longer interested in being in the army and wanted to go back to their businesses and families:

A Soldier reasoned with upon the goodness of the cause he is engaged in and the inestimable rights he is contending for, but adds, that it is of no more Importance to him than others. The Officer makes you the same reply, with

² The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, 'Battle of Bunker Hill' in *Encyclopædia Britannica* <<https://www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-Bunker-Hill>> [accessed 7 July 2017].

this further remark, that his pay will not support him, and he cannot ruin himself and Family to serve his Country, when every member of the community is equally Interested and benefitted by his Labours.³

This was one of the major reasons that General George Washington, commander-in-chief, mistrusted the militia and the system of these soldiers, since they saw themselves as volunteers and believed they could go home when they wanted. Washington was right, because the following year there were only a few men left in service. In his letter to Congress he wrote:

When Men are irritated, & the Passions inflamed, they fly hastily, and cheerfully to Arms, but after the first emotions are over to expect, among such People as compose the bulk of an Army, that they are influenced by any other principles than those of Interest, is to look for what never did.⁴

In the commander-in-chief's opinion hiring soldiers was normal and would effectively persuade men to be in the service:

This contest is not likely to be the Work of a day—as the War must be carried on systematically—and to do it, you must have good Officers, there are, in my judgment, no other possible means to obtain them but by establishing your Army upon a permanent footing; and giving your Officers good pay. this will induce Gentlemen, and Men of Character to engage'.⁵

Congress also realized that the rebellious cause and motivation could not last forever. A year later, the Continental Army was facing its major problem, a shortage of men

³ Chase and Grizzard, eds., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 25 September 1776,' vol. 6, pp. 393–401.

⁴ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 25 September 1776,' vol. 6, pp. 393–401.

⁵ Ibid.

in arms. The army turned to Congress to seek a solution. The army quickly became a type of business. Cash bounties, wages, clothes, and land were offered to induce men to enlist. From this point, being a soldier was not different from any other occupation. The problem of deficient manpower in the Continental Army is evidence that the American spirit as the main driver of the armed forces was only the case at the onset of the war.

It seems clear that it was difficult to persuade American men to enlist in the army. It is estimated that during the Revolutionary War period there were 2.5 million people living in North America, excluding the Natives,⁶ of whom 500,000 were black (about 20 percent).⁷ Among those, if half of them remained royalists, we could roughly estimate that 500,000 men could join the fight. Throughout the eight years of war, as many as 150,000 men joined the Continental Army, but the largest number of troops fighting at any given time was around 19,000 soldiers in the Battle of Long Island on 27 August, 1776, and at the Siege of Yorktown on 28 September, 1781.⁸ America had an advantage over England in that the war took place on American soil, where the American army could replenish their roster of troops much more easily than the British, who had to sail 3,000 miles to reach the colonies. However, the American army size each year never reached up to 47,000 men.⁹

⁶ 'Colonial and Pre-Federal Statistics,' in *United States Census Bureau*, 2004, p. 1168 <<http://www2.census.gov/prod2/statcomp/documents/CT1970p2-13.pdf>> [accessed 1 December 2016].

⁷ John Sibley Butler, 'Affirmative Action in the Military', (in Individual Cases), in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 523, Affirmative Action Revisited, (September 1992), p. 198 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1047591>> [accessed 8 October 2016].

⁸ Donald N. Moran ed., 'Casualties during the American Revolution' in *Liberty Tree and Valley Compatriot Newsletter*, March 2006, <<http://www.revolutionarywararchives.org/warstats.html>> [accessed 7 October 2016].

⁹ The total Continental Army size estimates: 1775: 27,443, 1776: 46,891, 1777: 34,820, 1778: 32,899, 1779: 27,699, 1780: 21,015, 1781: 13, 292, 1782: 14,256, 1783: 13,476. See Fred Anderson Berg, *Encyclopaedia of Continental Army Units* (Pennsylvania: Stackpole Books, 1972), p. 143.

The British and American armies used similar methods to encourage men to enlist in their armies. First, they used economic necessity as a motivator. The British started out offering a monthly pay of one pound, which in 1778 was increased to three pounds. However, voluntary recruitment became more difficult to achieve by monetary means, so, in 1778 and 1779, the British government invoked the Press Act, which allowed them to conscript a man into the army. In 1776 America, men were offered signing bonuses of ten dollars and monthly pay of six and two-thirds dollars. By spring 1777, the bonus had doubled to twenty dollars, with 100 acres of land promised at the end of the war. Washington urged a draft of militia for a twelve-month enlistment. By 1778, every state had a draft and each militia regiment contributed a quota that helped fulfil the state's obligation to the regular army.

These approaches did help; however, they did not solve the problem completely. Both armies still suffered from a lack of men. On the American side, the truth is that not all American men were willing to go to war. Conversely, the British soldiers were fighting very far away from home at a time when Britain was dealing with other conflicts in Europe. Both sides sought new and effective ways to build armies. The two armies sought to acquire reinforcements, and there were many times they found themselves competing against each other for the same manpower. Those men who were available for service, outside of the American and English men, were the American natives, slaves and Germans.

Native Americans in the American Revolution

Indigenous Americans were employed by Europeans before the American Revolutionary War. Earlier, in the French and Indian War, these aboriginal people allied with France. With Canadian and Indian help, the French defeated the British in many battles, until the situation turned in 1757, when the American colonists suffered

from being foraged. The French troops, commanded by Louis-Joseph de Montcalm, with his troops of 8,000 French regulars, 3,000 Canadian militia and 2,000 Indians, combined to attack the British Fort William Henry in New York. Between 70 and 150 people were killed, scalped and beheaded by the Indians.¹⁰ This event shocked the white men, and even Montcalm had to stop fighting. For the Americans, this ‘merciless and savage’ action still stuck in their minds. The event pressed the British to send 20,000 troops to protect their people and block French ports. Moreover, in 1758, Britain offered terms that prevented the colonists from invading the Indian land in the Ohio Valley. The negotiation was made and the British colonial officers and Indian chiefs of 15 Woodland Aboriginal Peoples signed the Easton Treaty. This resulted in the Indians staying neutral throughout the war, and it played a part in the British victory in this war.

Even if in the American Revolution Native Americans played a part in the conflict, acting as local guides, messengers, traders, and fighters alongside both the British and American troops, they were accused of getting on the wrong side of the war by the Americans. The majority of the Indians joined the British since they had become allies with mutual trade and force. More importantly, the firm thought of Indians as ‘the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages,’ which appeared on the Declaration of Independence on the July 4, 1776, still stained the American people’s minds. This quote has not been widely discussed, and it is surely not fair to those Indians who sided with the patriots during the war. Yet, since the Seven Years’ War, the Indian way of fighting had been represented cruel, irregular warfare. From white people’s perspective, beheading and scalping were unacceptable.

¹⁰ William R. Nester, *The first global war: Britain, France, and the fate of North America, 1756–1775* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2000), p. 56.

Charles Neimeyer considered the Indians ‘ignoble savages’.¹¹ Still, until 1776, even John Adams was reluctant to recruit the Native people for the army. He admitted that he did not know much about the Indians and what he had heard was, ‘they are very expensive and troublesome Confederates in War, besides the Incivility and Inhumanity of employing Such Savages with their cruel, bloody dispositions, against any Enemy whatever’.¹² Nevertheless, Adams agreed that if the Indians offered their assistance to the Americans, there was no need to keep them neutral, and this should not be refused.¹³

Congress decided to persuade these non-American citizen men to join the army or at least keep them neutral. Discussions on dealing with the Indians had been taking place since the beginning of the war. In July 1775 three committees were appointed according to the three groups of the Indians—the northern department, known by the name of the Six Nations; the southern department, composed of all the Indians of the south, including the Cherokee; and the middle, or the Indian Nations that lay between the other two groups.¹⁴ The mission was to treat the Indians well, to ‘preserve peace and friendship’ and prevent them from getting involved in the commotion.¹⁵

In 1777, it was estimated that there were 200,000 Indians from 85 nations east of the Mississippi River.¹⁶ Among those numerous nations, the League of Iroquois, or

¹¹ Charles Patrick Neimeyer, *America Goes to War: A Social History of the Continental Army* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), p. 90.

¹² John Adams, ‘From John Adams to Horatio Gates, 27 April 1776,’ *The Adams Papers*, Papers of John Adams, vol. 4, February–August 1776, ed. by Robert J. Taylor (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), pp. 146–148.

¹³ Taylor, ed., ‘From John Adams to Horatio Gates, 27 April 1776,’ pp. 146–148.

¹⁴ Chase, ed., ‘Wednesday, July 12, 1775,’ vol. 2, p. 175.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ James H. O’Donnell in *The Unknown American Revolution* clarified that to count Indian tribes as nations was inaccurate because European nations and Indian tribes were significantly different. The American Indians were not ruled by sovereignty like the Europeans who were ruled by monarchy and

the Six Nations of the Iroquois, comprising the Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca, Mohawk, Onondaga, and Tuscarora, was the most powerful one.¹⁷ In 1775, the Iroquois Confederacy had a membership of 12,500 people.¹⁸ In the early days of the Revolutionary War attempts were made formally by the Americans to keep the Six Nations neutral, and the tribes agreed with this decision. The patriots insisted that this was ‘a family quarrel’ between father and son, with the Second Continental Congress releasing a statement to that effect to the Six Nations and their allies, the seven tribes on the St. Lawrence River, on July 13, 1775. This statement warned the League of Iroquois to stay away from the conflict and insisted the issue lay with the American bloodline with the English, ‘Brothers, thus stands the matter betwixt old England and America. You Indians know how things are proportioned in a family – between the father and the son – the child carries little pack—England we regard as the father—this island maybe compared to the son. [...] You Indians are not concerned in it’.¹⁹

The Six Nations and their allies were invited to meet again with Congress representatives in August at Albany, and this clearly showed that the League of Iroquois was more powerful than any other tribes. The letters were carried to the Six Nations by Reverend Samuel Kirkland and General Phillip Schuyler. One of the main objectives of the message was to ask the Indians to remain neutral, not join either side and not to ‘take up the hatchet against the king’s troop but keep the hatchet buried deep’.²⁰ Congress also aimed to restore their harmony to the tribesmen as, ‘we intend

government. See Gary B. Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America* (New York: Vikings, 2005).

¹⁷ Barbara Graymont, *The Iroquois in The American Revolution* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1972), p. vii.

¹⁸ Karim M. Tiro, *Iroquois, in History in Dispute*, vol. 12: the American Revolution, p. 173 <https://jscopeland.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/18-iroquois__did_the_american_rev.pdf> [accessed 30 August 2016].

¹⁹ ‘Thursday, July 13, 1775,’ *The Journals of the Continental Congress 1774-1789*, vol.2, 1775, ed. by Worthington Chauncey Ford (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905), pp. 177-182.

²⁰ Ford, eds., ‘Thursday, July 13, 1775,’ pp. 177-182.

to re-ignite the council fire which your and our ancestors sat round in great friendship'.²¹ Congress tried to remain at peace with the tribes so they did not have to deal with both the British and the Indians at once. As Congress resolved on July 1, 1775 that if any Indians were convinced 'to commit actual hostilities against these colonies, or to enter into an offensive Alliance with the British troops,' the colonies should retaliate by making alliances 'with such Indian Nations as will enter into the same, to oppose such British troops and their Indian Allies'.²²

The majority of the Indian people sided with the British, and this was not anything unexpected. The British could offer more products, especially weaponry. They were also able to promise the reduction in white people's invasion of Indian lands. The American knew that they could not compete with Britain in either case of recruiting or economic support. It would not be a surprise if they inclined to side with a particular group of people who could deliver what they needed. The best way at that time was encouraging the Indian to remain neutral.

Washington, however, predicted that sooner or later the Indians would be pushed to participate in the war, 'In my opinion it will be impossible to keep them in a state of Neutrality—they must, and no doubt soon will, take an Active part, either for or against us'.²³ The Indians could be a source of warriors and carry some useful tasks for both the adversaries. Washington suggested that Congress consider whether it would not be best immediately to engage them on American side, 'to prevent their minds being poison'd by Ministerial Emmissaries, which will ever be the Case while a King's Garrison is suffered to remain in their Country'.²⁴ Washington was right

²¹ Ford, eds., 'Thursday, July 13, 1775,' pp. 177-182.

²² Ford, eds., 'Saturday, July 1, 1775,' vol. 2, p. 123.

²³ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 19 April 1776,' vol. 4, pp. 86-88.

²⁴ Ibid.

about that, when trading and European products including weaponry became a crucial part of native life. The tribes in Maine wrote him that ‘we are in much want of Powder to Hunt with—the Old English people will not let us have any, Unless we will fight against our Brothers & Countrymen’.²⁵ This statement explained the current situation that the native people somehow were obliged to fight, because the British were the ones who held the trade and were able to supply the products, while the Americans could not or could but not enough. Until the Americans could offer an equal exchange the best thing they could do was to maintain the alliance with the Six Nations.

While Congress tried to maintain peace and keep the Indians neutral, the American established stronger relationships with some of the other tribes. Those were the Mohican, the Wappinger, and the Munsee from New England, who sided with the patriot cause from the beginning of the war. These tribes’ men were the first group to support the colonists’ revolution. The Sachem of the Mohican tribe in Stockbridge, Solomon Uhhaunauwaunmut, gave this statement in a speech to Congress, ‘Brothers; I would not have you think by this that we are falling back from our engagements; we are ready to do any thing for your relief, and shall be guided by your counsel’. However, they asked to fight in their style, and they did not need to be trained like the Continentals, ‘if you send for me to fight, that you will let me fight in my own Indian way. I am not used to fight English fashion, therefore you must not expect I can train like your men. Only to point out to me where your enemies keep, and that is all I shall want to know’.²⁶ The Indians of St. Francis, Penobscot Stockbridge, and St. John’s Tribes also offered their services to Congress if they were wanted. Congress accepted their proposal and agreed that these Indians might be called on in case of ‘real

²⁵ Ford, eds., ‘Speeches of the Caughnawaga, St. Johns, and Passamaquoddy Indians, 31 January 1776,’ vol. 3, pp. 223–224.

²⁶ Cited in William Leete Stone, *Life of Joseph Brant, Thayendanegea* (Carlisle, Massachusetts: Applewood Books), p. 59.

necessity and that the giving them presents' was proper and suitable.²⁷ The Indian Stockbridge men later formed a unit under the name Stockbridge Militia, led by Jehoiaikim Mtohksin and Abraham Nimham under the command of Major General Horatio Gates. These men took part in the Siege of Boston and Fort Ticonderoga.

On the other hand, the British undertook several meetings to turn the Indians in New York and Canada against the patriots. Guy Johnson, a superintendent of Indian Affairs in the northern department, had secret orders from General Thomas Gage to secure the Indian cooperation. Johnson then 'assembled 1,458 Indians and adjusted matters with them in such a manner that they agreed to defend the communication [on the lake] and assist His Majesty's troops in their operations'.²⁸ At the beginning of July, Johnson moved to Montreal, where on July 17th he 'convened a second body of the northern confederates to the amount of 1,700 and upwards who entered into the same engagements'.²⁹ This information was heard by Washington, and he suggested his men watch out for the movements of the Indian agent (Colonel Guy Johnson) to prevent his influence with the Indians. The men were also ordered to gather information of the temper and disposition of the Indians and Canadians that, 'a proper Line may be mark'd out to conciliate their good Opinions and facilitate any future Operation'.³⁰

It was confirmed that some of the meetings between British leaders and Indian tribes were successful when Congress received the report that the Caughnawaga Indians (Mohawk) 'had taken up the Hatchet' on behalf of the King and 'that

²⁷ Chase, ed., 'II. Minutes of the Conference, 18–24 October 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 190–205.

²⁸ Guy Johnson, 'Guy Johnson to the Earl of Dartmouth, 12 Oct. 1775,' in *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770–1783* (Colonial Office Series), Volume 11, ed. by K. G. Davies (Clare: Shannon and Dublin: 1972–81), pp. 142–44.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Chase, ed., 'George Washington, Instructions to Major General Philip Schuyler, 25 June 1775,' vol. 1, pp. 36–40.

Governor Carleton was giving them presents daily'. The committee also reported that Carleton was 'building Floating Batteries and Boats' at St. Jean, but that his preparations had been hampered by the refusal of English merchants at Montreal 'to take up arms against the Yankees'.³¹ In response to this situation, Congress appointed Major General Philip Schuyler to 'take or Destroy all Vessels, Boats or Floating Batteries prepar'd by Governor Carlton' on or near the waters of the Lakes and to take possession of St Johns and Montreal if he found it practicable and not disagreeable to the Canadians.³²

The British action to use the Indians against the Americans marked a shift in Congress' policy and forced Congress to change its plan. While the British appointed a superintendent to persuade the Indians to ally with the royal army, the colonists exploited their cause and asked for compassion from the tribes against the British, whom the Americans claimed would 'slip their hand into our pocket without asking, as though it were there own; and at their pleasure they will take from us our charters or written civil constitution, which we love as our lives'.³³ Congress still attempted to take the peaceful route by appointing Samuel Kirkland, a Presbyterian, to convince the Indians of the American's intention to be friends. Kirkland presented himself to Congress, offering his mission to propose a treaty to the five (then six) nations, and that he thought they would consequently be more willing to join the American cause. However, he also informed Congress that the five nations lately resolved in a conference meeting that they would not admit any white people to settle among them, 'The great God (said they to some white people) does not chuse we should live together: he hath Givin you a white skin & said live you on that side of the river: to

³¹ Smith, ed., 'Congress's resolutions of 27 June to Schuyler at New York,' vol. 1, p. 554.

³² Chase, ed., 'To George Washington from John Hancock, 28 June 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 42-44.

³³ Ford, eds., 'Thursday, July 13, 1775,' vol.2, p. 179.

us he hath given a Red skin & said live you on other side the river—let us not disobey him’.³⁴

Kirkland made an attempt to persuade the Six Nations to stay neutral, but soon after the war began the Indian tribes could not keep their unity. Four of them took sides with the loyalists, but the Oneida and Tuscarora favoured the patriots. The credit for this likely goes to Kirkland, who lived with the Oneida, and had been a missionary to the Oneida Indians since 1766.³⁵ His approach to gain the Oneida’s trust was to be generous and graceful. He used religion as a part of life, became a consultant, educated the locals, and gave them agricultural tools and sometimes food and clothes. Even if other tribes were estranged from the colonists, the Oneida maintained their loyalty. Colonel Cornelius Van Dyck the commanding officer at Fort Schuyler described the characteristics of the Oneidas as that they ‘stood in to the Six Nations as head of the Confederacy’.³⁶

There were also similar missions to convert and educate Indian youths. Eleazar Wheelock, a minister from Connecticut who devoted himself as a teacher and missionary. He founded Dartmouth College in order to train the Indians to be missionaries. Washington wrote to one of Wheelock’s leading students, Joseph Johnson, a Mohegan, to strengthen the friendship between the Americans and Indians:

You can tell our friends, that they may always look upon me, whom the Whole United Colonies have chosen to be their Chief Warrior, as their brother, whilst

³⁴ William Bradford, ‘To James Madison from William Bradford, 10 July 1775,’ in *The Papers of James Madison*, vol. 1, 16 March 1751–16 December 1779, ed. by William T. Hutchinson and William M. E. Rachal, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), pp. 154–157.

³⁵ Chase, ed., ‘From George Washington to the Massachusetts General Court, 28 September 1775’, vol.3, p. 61.

³⁶ Hugh Hastings and J. A. Holden, eds. *Public Papers of George Clinton, First Governor of New York, 1777–1795, 1801–1804*, vol. 4 (New York: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford, 1973), pp. 417–18.

they Continue in Friendship with us, they may depend upon mine and the protection of those under my Command. Tell them that we don't want them to take up the hatchett for us, except they chuse it, we only desire that they will not fight against us, we want that the Chain of friendship should always remain bright between our friends of the Six Nations and us.³⁷

While the British government arranged their superintendent to deal with the native matters, the Americans too had an Indian agent, James Deane, who was a relative of Silas Deane. He served in this position and also as interpreter from November 1775 until the end of the war, with his proficiency in Iroquois languages.³⁸ The Americans also applied the same method of approaching the Indians by supplying them goods. The Massachusetts Provincial Council made an attempt to keep them in control, stating 'it was absolutely necessary that the Truck house at Machais should be supplied with Cloth, Corn, Rum, and every Kind of Stores Necessary for such a Department as the best means to secure Tribes of Indians from taking part with the enemy'.³⁹

But the American intention of keeping the peace became slowly deemphasized after a year passed, as this method did not seem to be working well, since many Indians decided to join the Royal army. Major General Philip Schuyler, who had dealt with Indian affairs since the beginning of the war, became disfavoured by this action

³⁷ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to Joseph Johnson, 20 February 1776,' vol. 3, p. 349.

³⁸ 'To George Washington from Eleazar Wheelock, 15 October 1775,' in *Founders Online, National Archives*, <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-02-02-0165>> [accessed 10 July 2016].

³⁹ John Allan, 'An account of Colonel John Allen: A Maine Revolutionary,' in *Sprague's Journal of Maine History*, vol. 2, February 1915, No.5, p. 242
<<http://files.usgwarchives.net/me/washington/machias/amerrev/allan/sj2p233.txt>> [accessed 4 September 2016].

of the tribesmen. He urged that a meeting should be held to request the Six Nations' assistance for the American side as well:

Since some Indians have now openly joined the Enemy it becomes our Duty to request that such of them as are our Friends should declare for us, and that we and they should enter into mutual Engagements to defend each other [...] that in order to secure ourselves and our Indian Friends.⁴⁰

And if they supported the British, Schuyler warned the Indians that 'they must never expect to return to their Families, or ever hope for a Reconciliation with us'.⁴¹

The policy to deal with the Indians started to change in 1776. In a meeting held from June 14 to 17, Congress authorized a conference with the Six Nations and the employment of Indians where Washington saw fit.⁴² Washington recommended the payment of Indians for the capture of British soldiers, 'a reward of one hundred dollars for every commissioned officer, and of thirty dollars for every private soldier of the King's troops that they shall take prisoners'. Additionally, he thought that a bounty, as a 'powerful inducement,' should be offered to the Indians as well, to encourage them to engage in the service.⁴³

By the end of 1777 the Creek-Nation joined the Americans with the attempts of George Galphin, a commissioner of Indian Affairs, in the South. His approach to persuade the tribesmen was to supply them with goods they wanted, copying the method that the British had used, 'the Emissaries of British Government would by

⁴⁰ U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, *Papers of the Continental Congress*, Washington DC, item 153, See 'To George Washington from Major General Philip Schuyler, 10 June 1776,' *The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series*, vol. 4, 1 April 1776–15 June 1776, ed. by Philander D. Chase (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991), pp. 493–495.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Ford, eds., 'Monday, June 17, 1776,' vol. 5, p. 452.

⁴³ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to Major General Philip Schuyler, 20–21 June 1776,' vol. 5, pp. 59–60.

their Activity, and the advantages they possessed, of supplying the Indians with goods, spirit them up to become our Enemies'.⁴⁴ With this successful mission Major General Robert Howe, a commanding officer of South Carolina, planned to use these Tribes of Indians to form effective troops—all these men would make 18,200 in total.⁴⁵ However, Washington disagreed with the idea. He believed that the numbers of the Indians in the Southern Tribes were less than what Howe assumed, 'the account you give of the numbers of Indians in the Southern Tribes far exceeds any thing that I had an Idea of, and it therefore behoves us the more to cultivate their friendship'.⁴⁶

But in 1778, Washington proposed a plan to Congress to recruit native soldiers to the American army to act against the British. Washington suggested Congress employ two or three hundred Indians against General Howe's army in an upcoming campaign.⁴⁷ He also mentioned Kirkland as a person who was 'able to bring half that number of Cherokees' as well as the Northern tribes. These Indians and the army woodsmen would 'probably strike no small terror into the British and foreign troops, particularly the new comers'.⁴⁸ With the consideration of the committee, Congress approved this plan and empowered Washington to employ no more than 400 Indians. Washington decided to use them to reinforce and attach to the light infantry, but the plan was not achieved since the Cherokee were prevailing royalists.

The war became more intense in 1778, when France formally took the American side, and both the armies focused more on their main troops. However, the

⁴⁴ Grizzard and Hoth, eds., 'To George Washington from Major General Robert Howe, 3 November 1777,' vol. 12, pp. 103–104.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Lengel, ed., 'From George Washington to Major General Robert Howe, 13 January 1778,' vol. 13, pp. 221–222.

⁴⁷ Lengel, ed., 'From George Washington to a Continental Congress Camp Committee, 29 January 1778,' vol. 13, pp. 376–409.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

Indians provided some significant assistance to both the British and Americans. For the American side, the year 1777–1778 was the time that the Americans received the most Indian assistance. The Oneidas were responsible for scouting in the Battle of Oriskany. Later on they sent 150 men to support the Burgoyne Campaign, and at the camp of Valley Forge, 50 natives accompanied Washington's expeditions. And even when the French arrived in North America, they reinforced General Lafayette in the Battle of Barren in May 1778.

The first treaty between the United States and Native Indians was signed in 1778 called Treaty of Fort Pitt and was the only formal treaty made during the War. The plan was made and the commissioners were appointed in June for 'the purpose of holding a treaty with the Delaware, Shawnees, and other Indians who may assemble at Fort Pitt'.⁴⁹ This treaty allowed the Americans to travel into the Lenape territory in Delaware and 'give a free passage through their country'.⁵⁰ This was the nearest and best ways for the troops to get closer and attack the British posts, forts and towns. Moreover, the treaty stated that the Indian in this Nation would supplied such troops with 'corn, meat, horses or whatever' as well as their men engaging to join the American troops. Congress hoped that the Lenape would bring more tribes to be friends with the United States and join the present confederation. The tribesmen would receive the better security of 'the old men, women and children [...] whilst their warriors are engaged against the common enemy' in return. More importantly their territorial rights of the nation of Delawares was guaranteed by the United States. However, the treaty and the relationship collapsed after Chief White Eyes, the leader of the Lenape, died when he was serving as a guide for the American expedition in

⁴⁹ Ford, eds., 'Thursday, June 4, 1778,' vol. 11, p. 568.

⁵⁰ Charles J. Kappler, ed., Treaty With the Delawares 1778, in *Yale Law School*, Lillian Goldman Law Library, The Avalon Project, Document in Law, History and Diplomacy <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/del1778.asp> [accessed 1 February 2017].

Ohio Country in late 1778. After his death, the Lenape became estranged from the Americans, and some switched to assist the British.⁵¹

The Continental Army was still consistently assisted by the Oneidas. In Washington's opinion they were 'the strongest Attachment'.⁵² In March 13, 1778 Congress authorized Washington to employ four hundred Indians to be used as servants and light troops.⁵³ Washington showed great regard for this strong commitment to their missionary, 'Mr Kirkland seemed to have an uncommon Ascendency over them and I should therefore be glad to see him accompany them'.⁵⁴ Washington also planned to raise half the number among the Southern and the Northern Indians under the command of Colonel Nathaniel Gist who was, 'acquainted with the Cherokee & their Allies,' to bring as many men as he could to join the troops.⁵⁵ General Schuyler with the commissioners of Indian Affairs decided to build a small fort Oneida, 'about sixteen or twenty mile from Fort Schuyler'.⁵⁶ There the Indians of the Tryon County militia started to 'cut theyr wood themselves, some tools, (and) some picquets'.⁵⁷

Slave Recruitment during the American Revolutionary War

The idea of using black slaves to fight in the war emerged initially on the British side. The exchange of freedom for military service was offered to black slaves in America who decided to join the British. Black slaves were eager to respond to anyone who

⁵¹ 'Koquethagechton,' in *Ohio History Central*,

<<http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Koquethagechton>> [accessed 22 January 2017].

⁵² Hoth, ed., 'From George Washington to the Commissioners of Indian Affairs, 13 March 1778,' vol. 14, pp. 167-168.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Stanley J. Idzerda, ed., *Lafayette in the Age of the American Revolution: Selected Letters and Papers, 1776-1790*, vol. 1 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977-83) vol.1, p. 374.

⁵⁷ Hoth, ed., 'To George Washington from Major General Lafayette, 20 March 1778,' vol. 14, pp. 239-243.

offered them liberty, either British or American. The status of slaves in America remained that of servants rather than soldiers, but once the armies began to suffer from a severe lack of men, slaves seemed to be a good and convenient choice. Whilst it became clear that it was difficult to persuade white men to enlist in the troops, Congress still refused to conscript black slaves for the service.

Even if slaves were excluded from military service, they had white sympathizers, such as Arthur Lee and Robert Pleasants from Virginia, Samuel Hopkins from Rhode Island, James Otis and Samuel Cooke from Massachusetts, John Woolman from New Jersey, and Anthony Benezet and Benjamin Rush from Pennsylvania, men who supported the idea of freedom for black people.⁵⁸ In John Adams's summary of James Otis's celebrated oration, Adams wrote:

He asserted that every man, merely natural, was an independent sovereign, subject to no law but the law written on his heart and revealed to him by his Maker [...] He asserted that these rights were inherent and inalienable. That they never could be surrendered or alienated but by idiots or madmen and all the acts of idiots and lunatics were void and not obligatory, by all the laws of God and man. Nor were the poor Negroes forgotten. Not a Quaker in Philadelphia or Mr. Jefferson in Virginia ever asserted the rights of Negroes in stronger terms.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Gary B. Nash, 'The African Americans' Revolution in the Continental Army,' in *The Oxford Handbook of The American Revolution*, ed. by Edward Gray (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 252.

⁵⁹ From James Otis's Argument against The Acts of Trade as Revenue Laws Writts of Assistants, 24 February 1761, quoted by John Adams. See 'From John Adams to William Tudor, Sr., 1 June 1818,' in *Founders Online*, National Archives <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/99-02-02-6901>> [accessed 23 July 2016].

The American troops, however, did not completely exclude black men from the action, and a few freemen were found within militia ranks.⁶⁰ Evidence is shown in a letter from General John Thomas, a Massachusetts commander, to John Adams, ‘we have some Negroes; but I look on them. In General, Equally Serviceable with other men, for Fatigue & in action; many of them have proved themselves brave’.⁶¹ But Adams still disagreed with the idea of having black people in their forces. In a letter to William Heath, Adams wrote, ‘in the Massachusetts Regiments, there are great Numbers of Boys, Old Men, and Negroes, Such as are unsuitable for the service’.⁶²

Military policy still excluded black slaves from enlistment in the army. However, American leaders reconsidered the idea of using slaves when Dunmore’s Proclamation was signed on 7 November, 1775, by John Murray, 4th Earl of Dunmore, a royal governor of the British Colony of Virginia, and formally announced on 14 November, 1775, as a martial law. It was a cunning and effective plan to persuade and offer black slaves a chance to be free. The proclamation guaranteed freedom for those who fled from either patriot or loyalist masters to join the British army:

I do require every Person capable of bearing Arms, to resort to His MAJESTY’S STANDARD, or be looked upon as Traitors to His MAJESTY’S Crown and Government, and thereby become liable to the Penalty the Law inflicts upon such Offences; such as forfeiture of Life, confiscation of Lands, &c. &c. And I do hereby further declare all indented Servants, Negroes, or others, (appertaining to Rebels,) free that are able and willing to bear Arms,

⁶⁰ Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* (New York: The University of North Carolina Press, 1973), p. 8.

⁶¹ Quoted in Joyce Lee Macolm, *Peter’s War: A New England Slave Boy and the American Revolution* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2011), p. 103.

⁶² Taylor, ed., ‘From John Adams to William Heath, 5 October 1775,’ vol. 3, pp. 183–184.

they joining His MAJESTY'S Troops as soon as may be, for the more speedily reducing this Colony to a proper Sense of their Duty, to His MAJESTY'S Crown and Dignity.⁶³

Dunmore's statement was promptly opposed by colonial slave owners. Many strong warnings to slaves who wished to run to the British side were printed in the *Virginia Gazette*, 'The aged, the infirm, the women and children are still to remain the property of their masters, masters who will be provoked to severity, should part of their slaves desert them'. The Americans blamed this on Dunmore, and said that if slaves joined the royal army, the safety of the remaining slaves or their families could be in jeopardy. The publishers continued to attack the Proclamation, saying it was a lie and that no one should believe it or risk the safety of 'their defenceless fathers and mothers, their wives, their women and children'.⁶⁴ If they escaped, they must expect to suffer if they fell into the hands of the Americans.

John Hancock decried Dunmore's methods, noting that such 'measures are taking as will speedily and effectually Repel His Violences and secure the peace & safety of that Colony'.⁶⁵ Congress suggested that Virginia take utmost action to resist Dunmore's proclamation.⁶⁶ The *Virginia Gazette* immediately published the proclamation, exhorting and warning those slaves who might think to join Dunmore to consider whether his words were trustworthy:

⁶³ Transcription of Dunmore's Proclamation, Tracy W. Mcgregor Library, University of Virginia, <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-04-02-0081>> [accessed 27 March 2015].

⁶⁴ Letter Regarding Dunmore's Proclamation, *Virginia Gazette* (Dixon and Hunter), November 25, 1775, in Colonial Williamsburg <<http://www.history.org/history/teaching/tchaaltr.cfm>> [accessed 24 June 2016].

⁶⁵ Chase, ed., 'George Washington from John Hancock, 2 December 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 469-471.

⁶⁶ Ford, eds., 'Monday, December 4, 1775,' vol. 2, pp.402-405.

Lord Dunmore's declaration, therefore, is a cruel declaration to the Negroes [...] But should there be any amongst the Negroes weak enough to believe that Dunmore intends to do them a kindness, and wicked enough to provoke the fury of the Americans against their defenceless fathers and mothers, their wives, their women and children, let them only consider the difficulty of effecting their escape, and what they must expect to suffer if they fall into the hands of the Americans.⁶⁷

The Americans, on the other hand, initiated a policy to halt the progress of slavery and prevent human trafficking.⁶⁸ The Continental Association forbade the importing of slaves after 1 December, 1774, writing of this ban to Thomas Cushing, Samuel Hopkins observed that 'They have indeed manifested much wisdom and benevolence in advising to a total stop of the slave trade, and leading the united American Colonies to resolve not to buy any more slaves, imported from Africa'.⁶⁹ But these intentions were thwarted more by English merchants, 'who have always encouraged and upheld this slavery, than by their present masters, who pity their condition'.⁷⁰ The slaves were also told that the English ministry refused to stop slave trading and that if the colonists were defeated, their slaves would be sold in the West Indies. The Virginia Convention announced a declaration that fugitives who returned to their masters within ten days would be forgiven.⁷¹ But still there were able-bodied male slaves who managed to make it to Dunmore's camp. Three hundred of them were drafted as soldiers, the breasts of their uniforms bearing the inscription 'Liberty to Slaves' under Lord

⁶⁷ Letter Regarding Dunmore's Proclamation, *Virginia Gazette* (Dixon and Hunter), November 25, 1775, in Colonial Williamsburg <<http://www.history.org/history/teaching/tchaaltr.cfm>> [accessed 24 June 2016].

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Taylor, ed., 'Samuel Hopkins to Thomas Cushing, 29 December 1775,' vol. 3, pp. 388–390.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Quarles, p. 25.

Dunmore's 'Ethiopian Regiment'. In the winter of 1775–1776, eight hundred men were organized into this regiment.

The Ethiopian Regiment model may not have been successful because of an outbreak of smallpox spread throughout the camp and killed approximately five hundred of his men, but it definitely inspired the patriots to think about the same practice. Since many northern colonists already opposed slavery, the idea that fighting for the American Revolution could be used to promote black freedom was a popular one. This program proved effective—the slaves were motivated by this offer. John Adams feared that more slaves would fall for Dunmore's approach, which set an example. Slaves joining the British army were provided with arms and clothes and could proclaim freedom 'all the Negroes who would join his Camp, 20,000 Negroes would join it from the two Provinces in a fortnight'. And if some slaves joined the British army, others would do the same thing, 'the Negroes have a wonderfull Art of communicating Intelligence among themselves. It will run severall hundreds of Miles in a Week or Fortnight'.⁷² And if some slaves joined the British army, others would do the same thing.

In the general officers' circular of October 1775, there was a question concerning reenlisting black men whether it would be advisable to reenlist any Negroes in the new army, or whether there was a distinction between slaves and black free men'.⁷³ The intention to employ slaves was refused by the majority of the Committee of Congress, 'Ought not Negroes to be excluded from the new Inlistment especially such as are Slaves? All were thought improper by the Council of Officers? Agreed, that they be rejected altogether'.⁷⁴ The idea of recruiting slaves into the army

⁷² Butterfield, ed., '24 September 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 172–188.

⁷³ Chase, ed., 'Council of War, 8 October 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 123–128.

⁷⁴ Chase, ed., 'II. Minutes of the Conference, 18–24 October 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 190–205.

had been disapproved at the first place like General Horatio Gates warned the recruiters, 'you are not to enlist any deserter from the Ministerial army, nor any stroller, negro, or vagabond'.⁷⁵

But the sympathizers such as Samuel Hopkins did not give up. They still called for rights for black men and posed the questions:

Have they not a right to their liberty, which has been thus violently, and altogether without right, taken from them? Have they not reason to complain of any one who withholds it from them? Do not the cries of these oppressed poor reach to the heavens? Will not God require it at the hands of those who refuse to let them go out free?⁷⁶

In his letter to Cushing, Hopkins had also recommended the same approach that Lord Dunmore had used so that the slaves could fight for their freedom and the army could add more men without hiring foreign soldiers:

Does not the conduct of Lord Dunmore, and the ministerialists, in taking the advantage of the slavery practised among us, and encouraging all slaves to join them, by promising them liberty, point out the best, if not the only way to defeat them in this, viz. granting freedom to them ourselves, so as no longer to use our neighbour's service without wages, but give them for their labours what is equal and just?⁷⁷

Not long afterward, Congress resolved 'that the free negroes who have served faithfully in the army at Cambridge, may be re-inlisted therein, but no others' on 16

⁷⁵ Hezekiah Niles, *Principles and Acts of the Revolution in America* (New York: Baltimore, Printed and pub., 1822), p. 423.

⁷⁶ Taylor, 'Samuel Hopkins to Thomas Cushing, 29 December 1775,' vol. 3, pp. 388–390.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

January, 1776,⁷⁸ based on Washington's suggestion.⁷⁹ However, in composing the 1776 Virginia Constitution, Thomas Jefferson still denied black men rights in all of his three drafts.⁸⁰ The slaves were in fact seen as 'wealth [...] Negroes a Species of Property—personal Estate'.⁸¹ The idea of enlisting freemen persisted, but there were not many of them.

The Congressional resolution of expanding the army to 88 battalion army in fall 1776, however, ignited the idea of conscripting slaves again. Since the Continental Army was unable to acquire white men, they turned to black recruits.⁸² From William Heath's note showed that the black people were eventually allowed to join the army in New England colonies:

There are in the Massachusetts Regiments some Negroes. Such is also the case with the Regiments from the Other Colonies, Rhode Island has a number of negroes and Indians, Connecticut has fewer negroes and a number of Indians.

The New Hampshire regiments have less of both.⁸³

Washington complained of the difficulty of getting waggoners and of the enormous wages given them. He was tempted to use easier and cheaper labour. He wrote to Congress, proposing a plan to use black men for this service, 'whether it would not be

⁷⁸ Chase, ed., 'To George Washington from John Hancock, 6–21 January 1776,' vol. 3, pp. 42–46.

⁷⁹ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 31 December 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 622–626.

⁸⁰ In the first draft Jefferson wrote, 'by prompting our negroes to rise in arms among us; those very negroes whom by an inhuman use of his negative he hath <from time to time> refused us permission to exclude by law', and in his third draft he wrote, 'by inciting insurrections of our fellow subjects with the allurements of forfeiture & confiscation by prompting our negroes to rise in arms among us; those very negroes whom <he hath from time to time> by an inhuman use of his negative he hath refused us permission to exclude by law'. However, in the second draft this content was removed. But the second and third drafts insisted the slave trade prohibition as appear respectively, 'No person hereafter coming into this country shall be held in slavery under any pretext whatever'. and 'No person hereafter coming into this country shall be held within the same in slavery under any pretext whatever'.

⁸¹ Butterfield, ed., 'Notes of Debates on the Articles of Confederation, Continued, July 30. 1776,' vol. 2, pp. 245–246.

⁸² Neimeyer, p.73.

⁸³ Taylor, ed., 'To John Adams from William Heath, 23 October 1775,' vol. 3, pp. 230–231.

eligible to hire negroes in Carolina, Virginia and Maryland for the purpose'.⁸⁴ However, he still insisted that those must be freemen, 'for slaves could not be sufficiently depended on. It is to be apprehended they would too frequently desert to the enemy to obtain their liberty'.⁸⁵

But lack of men could not be easily remedied. In early 1778 Brigadier General James Mitchell Varnum wrote to Washington, asking whether he might raise a Battalion of Negroes, since the two battalions from the State of Rhode Island were small and needed more men to make up their proportion in the Continental Army, 'it is imagined that a Battalion of Negroes can be easily raised there. Should that Measure be adopted, or recruits obtained upon any other Principle, the Service will be advanced'.⁸⁶ Washington finally agreed to the idea. He sent Varnum's proposal to Nicholas Cooke, a governor of Rhode Island, and the Rhode Island general assembly passed this resolution on February 9, despite protest from six members.⁸⁷ It was the first time that a Continental regiment consisted of slaves, and this was because it was necessary, 'considering the pressing Necessity of filling up the Continental Army, and the peculiarly difficult Circumstances of this State which rendered it in a manner impossible to recruit our Battalions in any other way'.⁸⁸

But the idea of employing slaves in the army was still under debate. In 1778 Lieutenant John Laurens, one of Washington's aides-de-camp, had proposed a plan to form a black regiment in South Carolina, and Washington agreed to the plan, but no action was taken at that time. As the war went on in 1778, the revolution moved to

⁸⁴ Lengel, ed., 'From George Washington to a Continental Congress Camp Committee, 29 January 1778,' vol. 13, pp. 376-409.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Lengel, ed., 'To George Washington from Brigadier General James Mitchell Varnum, 2 January 1778,' vol. 13, p. 125.

⁸⁷ Lengel, ed., 'To George Washington from Nicholas Cooke, 23 February 1778,' vol. 13, p. 646.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

the southern theatre. After facing defeat in the Saratoga campaign, the British moved to the southern colonies and captured Savana, Georgia. This change made a significant difference when the Continental Army lost battles both in Charleston and in Camden, South Carolina. So, in early 1779 Laurens resumed his plan again since the country needed reinforcements, and ‘such black Men as I could select in Carolina I should have no doubt of success in driving the British out of Georgia & subduing East Florida before the end of July’.⁸⁹ But Washington still hesitated and thought that arming slaves was a ‘moot point’. He thought that idea should only be adopted if the British did. Moreover, Washington saw that employing slaves would cause jealousy with those who still remained in servitude, which likely would lead to more slave troubles.⁹⁰

But Laurens did not give up his plan. The plan was well supported by Alexander Hamilton, who agreed that in the present situation it was good to raise ‘two three or four battalions of negroes’. Hamilton saw that the negroes would make ‘very excellent soldiers with proper management’. He also argued against the theory that negroes were too stupid to make soldiers. In his opinion, those men had natural faculties that were ‘as good as ours,’ and their habits of subordination from a life of servitude would make them ‘sooner become soldier than our White inhabitants’.⁹¹ Laurens took leave to propose his plan in South Carolina to Congress. And eventually, on March 29, 1779, Congress’ members, including Henry Laurens, John’s father, considered the necessity and utility of arming Negroes, recommended South Carolina

⁸⁹ ‘To George Washington from Henry Laurens, 16 March 1779,’ *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 19, 15 January–7 April 1779, ed. by Philander D. Chase and William M. Ferraro (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009), pp. 503–505.

⁹⁰ Chase, ed., ‘From George Washington to Henry Laurens, 20 March 1779,’ vol. 19, pp. 542–543.

⁹¹ ‘Alexander Hamilton to John Jay, 14 March 1779,’ in *The Founders’ Constitution University of Chicago Press*, vol.1, Chapter 15, <<http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch15s24.html>> [accessed 16 March 2017].

and Georgia to raise ‘three thousand able bodied negroes’ to be put into the main army and be formed into separate corps as battalions, under the command of white commissioned and non-commissioned officers.⁹² Congress would make provision for paying proprietors of such Negroes who enlisted in the service. However, those men would receive no pay or bounty, but Congress would pay for their clothes and living expenses.⁹³ Congress recommended that ‘every negro who shall well and faithfully serve as a soldier to the end of the present war, and shall then return his arms, be emancipated and receive the sum of fifty dollars’.⁹⁴ However, this resolution was not adopted by South Carolina.⁹⁵

A short while after, Sir Henry Clinton adopted Dunmore’s Proclamation to encourage slaves in North America to join the Royal Army. The Philipsburg Proclamation was declared on 30 June, 1779, promising freedom, protection, and land to slaves who escaped their patriot masters. This differed from the old proclamation since it was offered only to patriots’ slaves, not to those of loyalists. Later, Clinton issued a stricter version, threatening the patriot slaves, saying they would be sold back into slavery if they were captured in American uniforms.⁹⁶ It was estimated that many slaves escaped from their masters to join Clinton’s troops, and more than 5,000 of them were from Georgia.⁹⁷

The idea on employing Negroes finally came in practice in late 1780. In November Joseph Jones, a Virginia delegate, suggested that James Madison raise and

⁹² Ford, eds., ‘29 March 1779,’ vol. 13, pp. 374, 387–88.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ford, eds., ‘29 March 1779,’ vol. 13, pp. 374, 387–88.

⁹⁵ Ford, eds., ‘Saturday, December 9, 1780,’ vol. 18, p. 1133.

⁹⁶ Nash, p. 262.

⁹⁷ Christopher Leslie Brown, *Arming Slaves: From Classical Times to the Modern Age* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 190.

‘give a bounty in Negroes to such Soldiers as will enlist for the War’.⁹⁸ In December 1780 Congress agreed to make another attempt to form a corps of one thousand able bodied Negroes in Georgia and South Carolina with the same condition of the act of the 29th of March 1779.⁹⁹ The corps would be organized and directed under the commanding officer in the Southern Department. In January 1, 1781 the Board of War considered Laurens’ plan and gave orders to the Commissary General of Military Store to provide Laurens 400 cartouche boxed and repair arms as well as clothing for his corps.¹⁰⁰

It was understandable that the Americans refused to allow slaves to be enlisted into their forces. The Americans not only feared slave insurrection, but many of them did not want to lose what they considered their own property. The Revolutionary War was at first a white man’s war. However, this idea changed over time because the slaves had white sympathizers who insisted upon emancipation and rights for black men. Other than that, the idea of exchanging freedom for service (as offered by the British in order to take men from the patriots) actually invoked the ‘Liberty to Slaves’ idea. It motivated the slaves to press for their freedom and to prove their honour by demonstrating that they too fought for independence, just as other Americans did.

German Soldiers in America

German combatants had the same fortunes as other races and ethnic groups fighting in the American Revolutionary War—they shared the same ethnicity but were on

⁹⁸ ‘To James Madison from Joseph Jones, 24 November 1780,’ *The Papers of James Madison*, vol. 2, 20 March 1780–23 February 1781, ed. by William T. Hutchinson and William M. E. Rachal (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), pp. 197–201.

⁹⁹ ‘Saturday, December 9, 1780,’ Journals of the Continental Congress, in *American Memory A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates*, <[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hlaw:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(jc01880\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hlaw:@field(DOCID+@lit(jc01880)))> [accessed 14 March 2017], p. 1133.

¹⁰⁰ ‘Tuesday, January 2, 1781,’ in *Journals of the Continental Congress* <[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hlaw:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(jc0197\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hlaw:@field(DOCID+@lit(jc0197)))> [accessed 17 January 2017], p. 10.

disparate. Those who sided with the King's army were hired and brought over from several states in the Holy Roman Empire to North America, but the Germans who supported the Patriot cause already lived in the colonies. However, the numbers of each supporting group were uneven. Even though both of the armies did not have enough men to fill in their regiments to fight in this war, the British were much better off. On the British side, King George III was the Prince-electors of Hanover in the Holy Roman Empire, and this made Britain the ally of other Protestant nations, especially German states.

After the Battle of Breed's Hill in June 1775, the King negotiated contracts for the hired troops with many German princes.¹⁰¹ Throughout the Revolutionary War, the British government employed soldiers from Hesse-Cassel, Brunswick, Hesse-Hanau, Ansbach-Bayreuth, Waldeck, Hanover, and Anhalt-Zerb. In 1776, the British were able to acquire 17,775 men from Brunswick, Hesse-Kassel, and Weldeck.¹⁰² It was estimated that from 1776–1783 the British government kept 20,000 German forces in active duty and around 30,000 men in total were taken to America.¹⁰³ It has been estimated that at least 34 percent of the total British troops in America were Germans.¹⁰⁴

Around 10 percent of the colonists in America during that time were Germans—some of them joined the loyalists as militiamen, but some became Patriot sympathizers.¹⁰⁵ In March 1776, Washington received news from George Merchant,

¹⁰¹ Rodney Atwood, *The Hessians Mercenaries from Hessen-Kassel in the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 24-26.

¹⁰² Christopher Ward, *The War of the Revolution* (Connecticut: Konecky & Konecky (Old Saybrook, CT), 2006), pp. 208–209.

¹⁰³ Edward J. Lowell, *The Hessians and the other German Auxiliaries of the Great Britain in the Revolutionary War* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1884).

¹⁰⁴ Neimeyer, p. 61.

¹⁰⁵ Benson Bobrick, *Angel in the Whirlwind: The Triumph of the American Revolution* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), p. 482.

a soldier in Captain Daniel Morgan's rifle company, who just returned from London where he was taken prisoner. In the letter Merchant reported that the British King had made several contracts to employ troops from German.¹⁰⁶ This message made the American people furious and they condemned the Crown and government as having hired foreign mercenaries to kill their own people. On June 10, 1776, Congress considered the resolution as a whole committee, and it was agreed to adopt a new government, 'where no Government sufficient to the Exigencies of their Affairs, hath been hitherto established, to adopt such Government as shall in the Opinion of the Representatives of the People best conduce to the Happiness and Safety of their Constituents in particular, and America in general'.¹⁰⁷ The committee consisting of John Adams, Edward Rutledge, and Richard Henry Lee was appointed to write the preamble to the Resolution on Independent Governments on May 15, 1776:

The whole force of that kingdom, aided by foreign mercenaries, is to be exerted for the destruction of the good people of these colonies; And whereas, it appears absolutely irreconcilable to reason and good Conscience, for the people of these colonies now to take the oaths and affirmations necessary for the support of any government under the crown of Great Britain, and it is necessary that the exercise of every kind of authority under the said crown should be totally suppressed, and all the powers of government exerted, under the authority of the people of the colonies.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ 'From Benjamin Franklin to Charles Carroll and Samuel Chase, 27 May 1776,' *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 22, March 23, 1775, through October 27, 1776, ed. by William B. Willcox (New Haven and London : Yale University Press, 1982), pp. 439–440.

¹⁰⁷ Butterfield, ed., 'Friday May 10. 1776,' vol. 3, pp. 382–384.

¹⁰⁸ Taylor, ed., 'V. Preamble to Resolution on Independent Governments, 15 May 1776,' vol. 4, pp. 11–12.

In drafts before June 1776 of the Declaration of Independence, one of the reasons to act against the British was that the monarch employed these foreign soldiers to kill his own people:

George Guelf king of Great Britain and Ireland and Elector of Hanover hath endeavored to pervert the same into a detestable and insupportable tyranny; [...] by transporting at this time a large army of foreign mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation, & tyranny already begun with circumstances of cruelty & perfidy so unworthy the head of a civilized nation.¹⁰⁹

Much propaganda was released to persuade the colonists to support the American cause, including the famous 'Sale of the Hessians'. It was claimed that Benjamin Franklin wrote this satire, supposedly from Count de Schaumberg to Baron Hohendorf, a commander of the Hessian force in America. This propaganda bitterly insulted the German princes and the British Crown:

It is true that their king, Leonidas, perished with them: but things have changed, and it is no longer the custom for princes of the empire to go and fight in America for a cause with which they have no concern. And besides, to whom should they pay the thirty guineas per man if I did not stay in Europe to receive them? Then, it is necessary also that I be ready to sent recruits to replace the men you lose. For this purpose I must return to Hesse. It is true, grown men are becoming scarce there, but I will send you boys. Besides, the

¹⁰⁹ Boyd, 'Third Draft by Jefferson, [before June 1776,' vol. 1, pp. 356–365.

scarcer the commodity the higher the price. I am assured that the women and little girls have begun to till our lands, and they get on not badly.¹¹⁰

Washington saw that America might have to exploit the German colonists, so he suggested that Congress set up a German group of soldiers.¹¹¹ One of Washington's reasons to create German companies was to send some of them to be with the German troops who had just landed in America for 'exciting a spirit of disaffection and desertion' of those men, and he was positive enough to 'think they would have great weight and influence with the common Soldiery, who certainly have no enmity towards us, having received no Injury, nor cause of Quarrel from us'.¹¹²

Virginia was the first colony that Congress authorized to raise German troops. In January 1776 Colonel John Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg, born to German parents, was appointed a commander of the German Regiment or the Eighth Virginia Regiment.¹¹³ On June 27, 1776, Congress authorized a German Battalion in Pennsylvania and Maryland as well as additional riflemen in Maryland and Virginia; five companies from eastern Pennsylvania, two from Baltimore, Maryland, and two from Frederick, Maryland were formed as a separate unit.¹¹⁴ In July 1776 Congress appointed Nicholas Haussegger, an immigrant from Hanover, Germany, who came to America in 1774, to take command of the German Battalion as a Colonel.¹¹⁵ The German battalion under Haussegger's command was assigned its first major task in the Battle of Trenton in December 1776, where the men were attached to Matthias Alexis

¹¹⁰ Benjamin Franklin, *The Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 3, 1777-1779, ed. by Albert Henry Smyth (New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1970), pp. 28-29.

¹¹¹ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 11 May 1776,' vol. 4, pp. 276-281.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Chase, ed., 'To George Washington from Fielding Lewis, 4 February 1776,' vol. 3, pp. 244-247.

¹¹⁴ Ford, eds., 'Thursday, June 27, 1776,' vol.5, pp. 486-88.

¹¹⁵ Chase, ed., 'To George Washington from John Hancock, 8 September 1776,' vol. 6, pp. 254-256.

Roche de Fermoy's Brigade.¹¹⁶ In this battle the American troops under the Command of George Washington were fighting against the Hessians hired by the British. Fermoy's brigade was set to prevent the Hessians from retreating. As a result the Hessians yielded to the Patriot force and surrendered. The victory of this battle substantially heartened the Americans and gave them courage. The battalion then participated in many major battles in Princeton, Brandywine, Germantown, and Monmouth, and the Sullivan Expedition.

For a company commander, Washington recommended John David Wilpert (Woelpper), a German lieutenant who had been a soldier in his own country to command the regiment.¹¹⁷ Washington was acquainted with Wilpert since they were in the Virginia forces together. Being a good soldier and a German made Wilpert 'a man of good character' for this position. Since a majority of men in the battalion were German, to appoint German officers to command the corps would at least eliminate language and communication problems and create a sense of unity. This fitted with Washington's purpose that German patriots 'counteract the designs of our Enemies'.¹¹⁸ In Congress' view this German battalion influenced and induced German men in the colonies to recruit in the spirit of ethnic solidarity.¹¹⁹ As Washington suggested combining the German battalions,¹²⁰ in February 1778 the Pennsylvania

¹¹⁶ Brig. Gen. La Rochefermoy's brigade, which consisted of the 1st Continental Regiment and the German Battalion, had an effective strength of 638 officers and men on 22 December 1776. See Chase, ed., 'General Orders, 25 December 1776,' in *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 7, 21 October 1776–5 January 1777, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997), pp. 434–438.

¹¹⁷ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 8 July 1776,' vol. 5, pp. 239–240.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Neimeyer, p.49.

¹²⁰ Lengel, ed., 'From George Washington to a Continental Congress Camp Committee, 29 January 1778,' vol. 13, pp. 376–409.

and Maryland companies were formed as a formal German Battalion, or the 8th Maryland, and served as part of Maryland's quota.¹²¹

During the Revolutionary War one of the most significant problems the British army was facing was the desertion of German troops. Major General Henry Clinton suggested getting the Russians and putting no trust in the Germans, saying, 'We must be reinforced, not with Germans (I fear they will desert), [but with] my friends the Russians. They have no language but their own; they cannot desert'.¹²² In fact, the British minister had proposed to get 20,000 Russian soldiers from the Empress Catharine as their foreign mercenaries. But this proposal was denied. The Dutch came to the same opinion and refused to send their troops to serve outside Europe. So the British turned to their German allies. And like Clinton predicted, some of them left the service and slipped away as soon as they arrived in North America.

There were some crucial reasons for the Hessian desertion. Charles Patick Neimeyer in his *America Goes to War* made the interesting point that in fact some of German men who were sent to fight in America did not even know how they were employed by the Prince, because they were captured on the street, dressed in uniform, and shipped across the Atlantic.¹²³ They had no concept of the rebellion; therefore, they attempted to escape at the first opportunity. Congress saw this as the opportunity to encourage those men to desert the British, and some 'Hessian' (the name that the colonists called German soldiers) deserters turned to Continental Congress to be enlisted in the Continental Army. Some of them were captured after the British defeat in the Battle of Trenton in 1776. Washington as a commander-in-chief supported

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² William B. Willcox, ed., *The American Rebellion: Sir Henry Clinton's Narrative of His Campaigns, 1775-1782*, with an Appendix of Original Documents (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), p. xvi.

¹²³ Neimeyer, p. 55.

German desertion but disagreed with the plan that Congress tried to enlist those German prisoners of war. In his opinion this was not consistent with the Rules of War nor appropriate politically. He suggested that Congress follow the method the British used by persuading men to join the British army with offers, not obligations. The prisoners must be for only exchange and return. He wrote to Congress:

Our Enemies have committed an unjustifiable Action by inticing, and in some Instances, intimidating our Men into their Service, we ought to follow their Example. Before I had the honour of yours on this Subject, I had determined to remonstrate to General Howe on this Head. As to those few who have already inlisted, I would not have them again withdrawn and sent in, because they might be subjected to Punishment, but I would have the practice discontinued in future. I remarked, that the Inlistment of prisoners was not a politic Step, my Reason is this, that in time of danger, I have always observed such persons most backward, for fear, I suppose, of falling into the Hands of their former Masters, from whom they expect no Mercy, and this Fear they are apt to communicate to their Fellow Soldiers. They are also most ready to desert when an Action is expected, hoping, by carrying Intelligence, to secure their Peace.¹²⁴

Therefore, the Congress terminated its attempt to recruit those captives. In January 1777, Congress circulated recruiting instructions to the colonels of the 16 additional Continental Regiments, emphasizing that officers must enlist only freemen of the age 17–50 and not deserters from the Army of the King of Great Britain. And every non-commissioned officer and private who enlisted would receive a bounty of twenty

¹²⁴ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to the Board of War, 30 November 1776,' vol. 7, pp. 231–232.

dollars and clothes annually as they continued in the service, and they would also earn a hundred acre of land at the end of the war or after three-year service.¹²⁵

Many attempts were made to influence the Germans' minds. In September 1777, Brigadier General James Varnum, a commander of the 1st Regiment of Rhode Island, sent a letter to Colonel Friedrich von Lossberg who commanded the loyalist troop in the same state. The message conveyed a sense of brotherhood between the American and Hessians, 'the man who fights for gain (a sordid mercenary)—what is he? Why do Hessians contend with Americans? By nature they are brethren, the offspring of one universal parent, bound by universal laws of God to mutual benevolence. The glittering coin of Britain, or her dark intrigues, has interposed'.¹²⁶

All these persuasive efforts might have worked to some extent, but the number of German deserters from the British army remains unclear. But after the British loss and retreat from the Battle of Rhode Island in August 1778, there was the first major desertion of 236 German men. It was consistent with the report from Wilhelm Knyphasen, a second-in-command of an army of Hessians under General Heister:

The cause of this [heavy desertion], so far as I can guess, is that printed leaflets were spread about amongst the men in a secret manner, in which each man who would desert and settle here in the country was promised a quantity of land, two horses, one cow, and similar encouragements; Also those who were exchanged from captivity have made such glowing descriptions of the regions there, and how well they had been received; Which we can also presume, because the desertion in the three captive regiments, especially mine, of which

¹²⁵ Grizzard, ed., 'Circular Recruiting Instructions to the Colonels of the Sixteen Additional Continental Regiments, 12–27 January 1777,' vol. 8, pp. 44–45.

¹²⁶ Cited in Atwood, pp. 191-192.

the most men have been returned from captivity, was proportionately the greatest.¹²⁷

The Hessian headquarters also made a similar report of their recruits, criticizing the princes' men, saying that they came to America not for duty but to flee away, 'Most of the recruits, mainly foreigners, behave very badly and desert at the first opportunity; therefore we cannot use them on outposts. Many of them may have intended to take advantage of the chance of free passage to this country, and finally to quit Europe. They would have had to work about forty years to pay the cost of their crossing'.¹²⁸

In November 1778, Congress further released a proclamation written by General Israel Putnam to German soldiers in America to persuade them to desert the British army. Putnam made it clear that Germans were 'brothers and fellow inhabitants' who could be carried back to their fatherland at public expense after desertion.¹²⁹ This made a remarkable change since those deserters did not only have to join American troops, but they also had a chance to live the way they wanted. Of course some decided to be enlisted and served in some military capacity, but some worked on farms and married American women. Most importantly, they were free to make a living by their own choice and became citizens of America.¹³⁰

Neimeyer saw the Hessian desertion as a legacy of the war, and many of the deserters were in American service or provided local labour.¹³¹ But historians like Rodney Atwood in his *Hessians Mercenaries from Hessen-Kassel in the American*

¹²⁷ Cited in Atwood, p. 194.

¹²⁸ Cited in Neimeyer, p. 60.

¹²⁹ Cited in Neimeyer, p. 57. See 'Proclamation of General Israel Putnam, November 16, 1777,' in *Deutsh-Amerikanisches Magazine* (American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.), 1:401, trans. by William T. Parsons, cited in Neimeyer, p. 57.

¹³⁰ Neimeyer, p. 63.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

Revolution has insisted that the failure of the American plan to encourage the German troops to abandon their army was a failure. Atwood gives the reason that the Hessians were captured after the battle of Trenton, and that it was their first employment overseas, not desertion, and after the summer of 1778 British army turned to loyalists and left the duty of garrison and raids for the Germans.¹³² He concluded that there was no evidence to prove the British failed because of the German soldiers' desertion.

The German Battalion dissolved in January 1, 1781. And on February 21 all foreign non-commissioned officers and privates including the Germans who belonged to any reduced corps were transferred to Colonel Moses Hazen's regiment.¹³³ Hazen requested his men to be uniformed in 'white with Green facing,' and he was willing to pay for any officers who could not afford it.¹³⁴ After the siege of Yorktown, the regiment was still on duty and built its reputation. Washington's trust in Hazen is shown through the fact that after the main army was disbanded in late 1781, he kept this regiment and ordered Hazen to 'collect and keep together the Officers and Men of the Regiment...& hold them in readiness to march on the Shortest warning'.¹³⁵ The regiment continued its service until June 1783 when 300 men were discharged. The corps was finally disbanded in November 1783 around the time that the Treaty of Paris was signed.

¹³² Atwood, pp. 205-206.

¹³³ 'From George Washington to Jacob Gerhard Diriks, 21 February 1781,' in *Founders Online*, National Archives, <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-04942>> [accessed 27 June 2017].

¹³⁴ 'To George Washington from Moses Hazen, 8 January 1781,' in *Founders Online*, National Archives, <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-04464>> [accessed 8 June 2017].

¹³⁵ 'From George Washington to Moses Hazen, 18 March 1782,' in *Founders Online*, National Archives, <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-07999>> [accessed 18 June 2017].

Conclusion

In June 1775, soon after the battles of Lexington and Concord, the Second Continental Congress created the American Continental Army. Around 16,000 American militia assembled around Boston within weeks when they heard news of a British garrison there. Boldly encountering the British regulars and preventing their movement across land, the Americans created a legend of brave patriots harassing British regulars. However, a year later, as the war ground on, Congress faced a desperate shortage of manpower. After the siege of Boston ended, with the British safely evacuating over 9000 troops, the American militia decided to go home. Offering wages, food, clothes and land bounties, Congress tried to persuade the American colonists to join the army but this proved unsuccessful. Because Washington could not fill his regiments with Americans, Congress sought others, including those from minority groups such as Native-Americans, slaves, and Germans. Congress, initially reluctant to recruit from these groups, was left with no choice, but the policy was not straightforward.

Congress wanted to keep the Indians neutral, knowing that most would side with the British anyway because of a long-established trading relationship going back to the French-Indian War (The Seven-Year War). In fact, in return for their help, the British were prepared to give Native-Americans what they wanted, including weapons, tools, housewares and especially a guarantee not to encroach on Indian land.

As for the slaves, the Americans did not trust them, realizing that to arm slaves might lead to a slave uprising. The Southern colonists, moreover, needed slave labor to run their plantations, and while the Southern colonists were ready to challenge the Crown, they were not ready to overturn their own social hierarchy. It had taken Congress a few years to pass the proposal to raise slave troops—and this mainly due to an insufficiency of men and cope with the British proclamation to emancipate

slaves who join the royal army. The slaves succeeded in part at proving themselves free men. But without Lord Dunmore's cunning idea, it might have taken even longer for the emancipation movement to take hold. Moreover, the labour market was also put at stake. The British threatened the slaves who were patriots that they would be sent back to the bondage, but the Americans tried to adjust their slave policies and barred the slave trade.

The Germans were better placed to side with the Americans, since they were allowed to enlist in their own regiments, speak German, and be commanded by German officers. The employment of German mercenaries by the British must have had some effect on the Revolutionary War because, at least, it decisively turned the conflicts between English men into an actual war. And this war eventually became a global war, since, as the war went on, many European countries got involved on both the British and American sides. The decision to hire foreign soldiers by the British Crown and ministers was a turning point. These overseas reinforcements actually could have helped to break down the rebellion, but the outcome was in fact turned upside down. Negotiations and compromises could not be made anymore when the Patriots were shocked by the number of German troops who were sent to kill those who always considered themselves the King's children. The Continental Congress tried every possible way to recruit men, including those German immigrants, to encounter the British army. The plans might have worked to some extent, along with attempts to encourage the Germans to abandon the British army. But the actual effective response indeed happened right away after the King made contracts with the German princes. Then the Americans rushed to declare their independence, and the Americans struggled to survive until finally they received crucial assistance from

France. This was a costly lesson for the British of the perils of using force against their own people.

Congress, however, looked unfavourably on these groups of people, but when they saw that the British were recruiting them, they had little choice but to follow suit—British and American seemed to use the same approach to recruit men-at-arms. The Americans, then, conscripted non-Americans into their army because they could not persuade enough Americans to sign up, many of whom believed, after the initial enthusiasm for the war had faded, that there was little appeal to being a professional soldier. Throughout the war, the Continental Army did not have sufficient men to fight, which forced Congress to hire those who had little or no interest in the revolution.

Chapter 5 Foreign Officers' Roles

Introduction

The Americans lacked proficient military officers, and so needed foreign officers to sail across the Atlantic to America, to fill these vacancies. Congress wanted the Continental Army to be composed solely of American people, but in reality, to create an actual army like the European ones, America needed a large amount of money, skilled officers, and well-trained men. As mentioned in previous chapters, it was crucial to acquire foreign aid to deal with all these deficiencies. The Americans looked to France as the biggest source of aid. As soon as Congress declared independence, America sent its emissaries to Paris to plead French support. The French not only promised to provide money, munitions, troops, and other essential war supplies, but they also sent over some of their officers to furnish the American force—some were unfit, but some were indispensable.

The Continental Army acquired many foreign officers who were seeking honour, promotion, or adventure, and some who genuinely immersed themselves in the idea of liberty. These gentlemen got involved before the war began and remained active until the end, starting with helping to bring French support as an observer, and then providing advice in organizing, managing, working, and improving technical military units like artillery and engineering. Later on, foreign support was extended to other military units such as the infantry, and special tasks like training the troops, and even political missions. This chapter will focus on the roles of foreign officers in the Continental Army, focusing on some outstanding figures who devoted their efforts to the cause in various ways. They made a great contribution towards the Army's advancement and improvement. They all assisted with critical problems and events

during the war. Without the help of foreign officers the war might have turned out differently. They were greatly involved in the battles and crucial events until the decisive battle at Yorktown in 1781.

Early French support acquisitions

The Americans started to seek foreign assistance after they decided to open the war with their motherland. France was their initial and primary target. Conversely, the French government also sent their representatives to assess the situation and the Americans' attitude toward the British after the French and Indian War. This was aimed to determine if the French and Americans could work alongside against the British power. This showed that foreign intervention in any dispute between Britain and its American colonies was being considered even before the conflict broke out. It underlines how the tensions and then the war had an international and trans-national dimension from their inception.

In April 1767, Johann DeKalb, a German officer who served in the French army, was appointed (among other officers) to travel to North America to act as an observer. Some of his secret mission instructions were to inquire about the intentions of the colonists and try to find out whether the Americans were in need of 'good engineers and artillery officers, or other individuals, and whether they should be supplied with them'. He would examine their troops, fortified places, and forts. More importantly, his task was also to estimate how much the Americans wanted to be free from the English government, what their plan of revolution was, and who would lead.¹ In military matters, Kalb's instructions showed that the French had already known the American force's need and weakness of the shortage of artillerists and engineers. This

¹ Friedrich Kapp, *The life of John Kalb, Major-General in the Revolutionary Army* (New York: H. Holt and Co., 1884), pp. 46-47.

could be the reason that, when the war broke out, and before formal assistance was made, the French government first sent this group of men to America (among these men were some talented gems).

When Kalb arrived in America, he observed the American discontent with the tax on tea. He similarly found that the colonists were furious with the Stamp Act. In his report in 1768 he wrote that, '[I] am in a fair way to procure reliable information as to the discontent produced in the colonies by the passage of the stamp act. This affair is very far from being adjusted'. Kalb also mentioned that each colony had its own separate assembly and had their own measure to do any action. He added that, 'Some, it is true, were more violent than others, but the substance of each refusal was the same. The most violent of these provincial assemblies were those of Boston and Philadelphia, where the commissioners of the new impost were even threatened in their persons'. Kalb concluded that the tax was the main problem that would trigger the contradiction, 'The colonies have the same right; they can only be taxed by their own assemblies'.²

Kalb further observed that the Americans would prefer a parliament or a continental assembly, a power which, however, would soon become dangerous to the crown'. In his opinion the American people were imbued with such a spirit of independence and freedom from control. Sooner or later all the provinces would be united under a common representation, an independent State will soon be formed. He concluded the situation that 'this country is growing too powerful to be much longer governed at so great a distance The people are strong and robust, and even the English officers admit that the militia are equal to the line in every particular'.³

² Ibid, pp. 53-54.

³ Ibid., pp. 62-63.

The French observation, plus his thought to develop army professionalism, led Washington and his supporting officers to urge Congress to send American envoys to recruit European officers. Due to this, when French officers later flooded America in their fight for promotions and higher pay, Congress and Washington refused to grant it to many of them because they did not meet the required qualifications. This issue was an annoyance for Washington throughout the War:

I fear, it will be hardly possible to satisfie the views & claims of some of the French Gentlemen. From the high marks of distinction, but too readily conferred upon these Men, in many instances, they seem to have lost sight of what is just and reasonable'.⁴

And a day later he sent another letter to stress his point that he was not willing to give commission to those French men, 'I take the liberty to ask you, what Congress expects I am to do with the many Foreigners they have, at different times, promoted to the Rank of Field Officers?'⁵

Even if Washington and many of his generals strongly disagreed with the idea of commissioning unqualified foreign officers, they allowed it for those who were truly talented. In fact they genuinely admired some foreign officers, as evidenced by the fact that many crucial tasks, such as fortifications, commanding special infantry units, and troop training, were assigned to foreign officers. The American envoy Silas Deane visited Paris in 1776 and was later joined by Benjamin Franklin to recruit two groups of French officers. The first group was claimed to have expertise in artillery, led by Philip Tronson du Coudray, a military theorist with a rank equal to an artillery

⁴ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 16 May 1777,' vol. 9, pp. 438–440.

⁵ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to Richard Henry Lee, 17 May 1777,' vol. 9, pp. 453–454.

major.⁶ The second group was skilled in engineering led by Louis le Begue de Presle Duportail.⁷ Kalb was with the third group of the French officers who would present in infantry force. One of these men was the most famous foreign officer in the American Revolution, the Marquis de Lafayette, Gilbert du Motier, a young powerful French man who had inner connections with the French Court.

Foreign officers and military leadership

Bringing in foreign officers was aimed to aid the new troops; however, at the same time, it revealed the jealousy toward foreign officers, Congress and the commander-in-chief had to deal with this problem throughout the war. Washington, in particular, utterly disagreed with the idea of recruiting foreign officers that would outrank American officers. He wrote directly to Silas Deane:

The difficulty of providing for those Gentlemen in a manner suitable to the former ranks of some, and the expectations of many, has not a little embarrassed Congress and myself. The extravagant Rank given to the Officers who first came over from France, most of whom have turned out but little better than Adventurers, made those of real Merit and long Service, who came over with proper credentials, naturally conclude that they should enjoy the highest posts in our Army; indeed it could not be expected that they would consent to serve in this Country in an inferior Station to those whom they had commanded in France. Had not this difficulty been in the way, it would have

⁶ 'Jonathan Williams, Jr., to the American Commissioners, 21 January 1777,' *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 23, *October 27, 1776, through April 30, 1777*, ed. William B. Willcox (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983), pp. 219–220.

⁷ Willcox, ed., 'Louis Lebègue de Presle Duportail to the American Commissioners, 29 December 1776,' vol. 23, pp. 93–94.

been in a great measure impossible for us to have provided for them all in the line of the Army.⁸

Jealousy as well as disunity, and distrust were also found among the American officers themselves. Washington's vulnerable leadership was one of those situations. The Conway Cabal once shook Washington's leadership. Many people got involved in this event including foreign officers. Moreover, the situation was cleared up with the help of one of Washington's French officers, Marquis de Lafayette. And, Washington gained even more power partly with this support.

With this strong bond between the two men, Lafayette helped to restore the commander-in-chief's reputation and take revenge for his adoptive father on the Conway Cabal. Winter 1777 was a critical time of leadership in the Continental Army. Lafayette spent his late December 1777 until March 1778 on his Canadian campaign along with defending Washington's honour, by being confronted with the Conway conspiracy and the Board of War who acted against Washington. Horatio Gates' conquest of the Battle of Saratoga and the heavy loss of Washington at the Battle of Brandywine at about the same time made a critical comparison between the two commanders. Gates' victory increased French confidence and persuaded France to formally sign a treaty and lend the Americans money, as well as supporting the Continental Army with war supplies. Washington's loss on the other hand resulted in 1,000 American soldiers wounded and killed. In addition, it allowed the British General Howe capture and conquer Philadelphia which at that time was America's capital city and where Congress was located. Congress now was a body in exile and

⁸ Grizzard, ed., 'From George Washington to Silas Deane, 13 August 1777,' vol. 10, pp. 600–602.

had to set up a new place 100 miles away to the west of Philadelphia in York Pennsylvania.

Washington then was facing criticism of his poor judgement and weak leadership. A lot of members of Congress openly reprimanded him. John Adams the one who nominated Washington as a commander-in-chief actually was not satisfied with his military commander's power. He saw that Washington gained too much popularity and authority after he won two important battles at Trenton. Washington gained credibility from his victory that helped to correct Congress' mistake in delaying command and take back New Jersey from the British. Adams was covertly glad that the commander's fame was diminished. After Gates defeated Burgoyne, he expressed his relief to his wife:

Congress will appoint a Thanksgiving, and one Cause of it ought to be that the Glory of turning the Tide of Arms, is not immediately due to the Commander in Chief, nor to southern Troops. If it had been, Idolatry, and Adulation would have been unbounded, so excessive as to endanger our Liberties for what I know. Now We can allow a certain Citizen to be wise, virtuous, and good, without thinking him a Deity or a saviour'.⁹

Congress did not replace Washington with Gates, but the fact that they named Gates as a head of the Board of War, a position that gave him a voice in making war strategy, was a bitter taste for the commander-in-chief. 'This is the low point of George Washington professional life,' said Bruce Chadwick, author of *George Washington's War*, 'Congress begins to lose confidence in him. Gates followers are pumping up. Gates and the ideas then brought Gates ought to be the commander-in-chief, but now

⁹ Butterfield, ed., John Adams, 'John Adams to Abigail Adams, 26 October 1777,' vol. 2, pp. 360–361.

Washington knowing that he has seen as weak must win that soon to solidify that command'.¹⁰ The new high position allowed Gates and other officers who were against Washington to make a plan without seeking his advice. And on January 1778 Congress passed a resolution to invade Canada with the recommendation from the Board of War.

Lafayette was appointed to command the expedition with his deputies: Major General Thomas Conway and Brigadier General John Stark'.¹¹ This command was arranged by Gates. Presumably, Gates chose Lafayette as a head of the campaign to please the French, but he actually intended to make Conway as a real commander.¹² Lafayette was given instructions that the propose of expedition to persuade Canadians to support the Americans and stir up rebellion in a former French colony, and destroy and seize of supplies from Montréal.¹³ But Lafayette was furious that he was appointed as a commander of the Northern Campaign, given that this would be considered disrespectful to Washington since Lafayette considered himself Washington's subordinate. But the commander-in-chief encouraged him to accept this appointment. So Lafayette did, but he demanded to have Conway replaced by Kalb. In a letter to Henry Laurens, the President of Congress, Lafayette straightforward scolded Congress for choosing Conway to be with him in this campaign, and this was all because of Conway's accusation against Washington:

Amongs All the men who could be sent under me Mr. Conway is the most disagreeable to me and the most prejudicial to the cause. I confess you that over and friendship have always been my duties. This last sentiment I feel to

¹⁰ Bruce Chadwick, *interview with M Military History Channel*.

¹¹ Ford ed., vol. 10, pp. 84–87.

¹² Wright, p. 123.

¹³ Lengel, ed., 'To George Washington from Major General Horatio Gates, 24 January 1778,' vol. 13, pp. 329–332.

the most perfect degree for General Washington. How can I support the society of a man who has spoken of my friend in the most insolent and abusive terms, who has done and does everyday all his power to ruin him, who tries to spend the fire in every part of the army and the country? On the other hand I am very certain that every one who can find one single reason of refusing due respect and love to Genl. Washington will find thousand ones of hating me to death.¹⁴

Lafayette request was finally approved by Congress. And because Gates and Conway did not seem to have anything to gain from this campaign, the plan was casually abandoned and left unprepared. When Lafayette arrived at Albany on February 17, 1778 he found out that this plan was a joke, 'I have been much disappointed at my arrival in this place, when I seen such a difference between what promised me by the Board of War and what I have found'.¹⁵ Lafayette realized that it was Conway's plan to disgrace Washington's leadership and take him away from his commander. He wrote to Washington, 'If they have sent me far from you for I do't know what purpose, at least I must make some little use of my pen to prevent all communication be cut of[f] between your excellency and me. I fancy (between us) that the actual scheme is to have me out of this part of the continent, and Genl. Conway in chief under the immediate direction of General Gates'.¹⁶

Lafayette did not hide his anger at this fraud. He wrote to the Board of War aiming at Gates, 'I expect with the greater impatience letter from Congress and the Board of War where I'll be acquainted of what I am to do. I hope the good intentions of the honorable Board in my favor could be employed in a better occasion—indeed,

¹⁴ Idzerda ed., 'To Henry Laurens from Marquis de Lafayette, Valley Forge, January 26, 1778,' vol. 1, p. 254.

¹⁵ Idzerda ed., 'To Moses Hazan from Marquis de Lafayette, Albany February 18, 1778,' vol.1, p. 288.

¹⁶ Idzerda ed., 'To George Washington from Marquis de Lafayette, Albany February 23, 1778,' vol. 2, pp. 321-322.

Sir, there has been good deal of deception and neglect in that affair'.¹⁷ Then Congress passed a resolution to suspend this expedition and thank Lafayette for this mission. The Board of War resolved that, 'the Marquis and General Kalb will leave to Ga. Conway the chief command of the troops'. Lafayette was glad to be transferred to Washington's command, but the point that Congress made Conway replace him as a commander of the Northern Army could not be ignored. At this time Lafayette would not pardon Gates' action or let Conway be 'a commander' which would make his position equal to Washington's. He sent a harsh letter to the President of Congress disdaining this decision to replace him with Conway:

Gal. Gates tells me that a new arrangement will be made for the general officers in this part of the continent. That sentence I don't well understand, but was interpreted to me in this way—the Marquis and General Kalb will leave to Gal. Conway the chief command of the troops. If it is so (unless such a disposition has been made out of a particular consideration for General Washington's recommendation) I'll beg leave to object that in my country we hold a particular military command as an honorable mark of confidence—that if I am recalled to leave this command in the hands of a gentleman who comes from Europe as well as myself, who is not above me neither by his birth neither by his relations or influence in the world, who has not had any more particular occasion of distinguishing himself than I have had, who has not the advantages I can glory myself in, of being born a French man, I will took upon myself as not only ill used but very near being affronted—and such will be the sentiment of all those of my nation and Europe whose opinion is dear to me.¹⁸

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Idzerda ed., *To the President of Congress from Marquis de Lafayette, Albany March 12, 1778,* vol. 2, pp. 348-349.

Lafayette threatened to resign and warned Congress that this might affect the relationship with France. Lafayette was not someone who would brag about his power or connection since he never wanted to accept to be a commander of the Canadian expedition, but this all was to protect his commanding general and to teach Gates and Conway a lesson. More importantly this event actually deepened relationship between Washington and Lafayette. Lafayette showed everyone that he would stand by his commanding general no matter what happened, and Washington trusted Lafayette as his true friend and supporter even if he never completely trusted France. And he also knew that Lafayette did not mean to leave the Continental Army at once.

Military Expertise

Engineering

One of the American army's biggest problems was a lack of proficient engineers 'to construct proper Works & direct Men'. Washington mentioned this problem since he was appointed as a commanding leader.¹⁹ This was agreed by Charles Lee. Even if at that time Congress appointed two officers, Richard Gridley and William Burbeck, as engineers in Philadelphia, Washington and Lee did not see them fit for this task, 'We were assured at Philadelphia that the army was stock'd with Engineers. We found not one'.²⁰

The Continental Army stressed the pressing need for engineers most of all. Before Congress sent their first envoy, Silas Deane, to Paris in 1776, Arthur Lee an American diplomat in London, had already requested that France lend them experts. Neither du Coudray's nor Duportail's team were the only European engineers who

¹⁹ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock Letter Sent, 10–11 July 1775,' vol. 1, pp. 85–97.

²⁰ 'II. Letter Sent, 10–11 July 1775,' in *Founders Online*, National Archives <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-01-02-0047-0003>> [accessed 29 June 2017].

were commissioned in the American army. The first engineering officer that France offered was the Polish captain Thaddeus Andrzej Bonawentura Kosciuszko, a scholarship graduate of French engineering school, who sailed for America in June 1776.

This skill shortage was critical since engineering was essential in the eighteenth-century war. Kosciuszko had been well trained in France and spoke French. He was a suitable man to do this job. From his noble Polish family, Kosciuszko learned history, drawing, math, French, and Greek philosophy. When he was eighteen he pursued his education at a Royal Knight School, established by Poland's princes. This was a military academy and a school of patriotism, where he studied English, history philosophy, mathematics with military engineering and fortification. After he graduated at the top of the class he was employed as an instructor at the Royal Military School. A year later, he was granted a scholarship to study in France where he learned even more strategies, bridge-building, and architecture. Kosciuszko was one of the best educated of all the officers commissioned in the Continental Army.

Kosciuszko was an example of an ideal officer—properly educated and truly skilled, a rare find in terms of military expertise. It seems like the French were sending over one of the best, if inexperienced, engineering officers. His journey to America began when he was contacted by Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais, a French diplomat and spy, following Arthur Lee's request for war supplies and engineers. Beaumarchais arranged Kosciuszko and other men, Romand de Lisle, and Nicolas Dietrich, Baron von Ottendorf to sail to America. These men were the first group of foreign officers who were sent across the Atlantic by Beaumarchais.

Kosciuszko showed his confidence in his skills since he first arrived at Philadelphia. Without any recommendation, Kosciuszko went directly to see Benjamin Franklin at his shop and asked if Franklin could test his ability by doing an exam. Franklin was surprised and impressed. He told Kosciuszko that no one knew anything about ‘engineering or military architecture’.²¹ So, Franklin sent him to be examined by David Rittenhouse an expert in scientific mechanism who he worked with in the project of defending Delaware River, and Kosciuszko breezed through the test.²²

Franklin decided to hire Kosciuszko to help him design the fortifications in New Jersey and also recommended Kosciuszko to Congress. Shortly Kosciuszko was assigned his first task in August 1776 by Washington (at first Washington thought that Kosciuszko was a Frenchman²³) to fortify Fort Billingsport to prevent the British from entering the Delaware River and attacking Philadelphia. In retrospect, it was quite risky to put this responsibility in a foreigner’s hands, especially one whom he had never met, but neither Congress nor Washington had a better choice. Washington chose Kosciuszko’s services instead of Gridley’s. Kosciuszko succeeded, and he proved himself a capable engineer. With French artillery officer Romand de Lisle and thousands of Philadelphian men, the fort was built to prepare for the potential British invasion in Long Island. The speed at which they was put to use is a good indication

²¹ Alex Storozynski, *The Peasant Prince: Thaddeus Kosciuszko and the Age of Revolution* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2009) p. 20.

²² *Ibid*, p. 21.

²³ In the letter Washington wrote, ‘If the Measure of fortifying the City should be adopted, some Skillful person should immediately view the Grounds and begin to trace out the Lines and Works. I am informed there is a French Engineer of eminence in Philadelphia at this time. If so he will be the most proper’. This is because he had not met Kosciuszko in person and Kosciuszko primarily spoke French—one of the reason he became close to Gates who could speak French as well. See ‘From George Washington to John Hancock, 9 December 1776,’ in *The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, 21 October 1776–5 January 1777*, vol. 7, ed. by Philander D. Chase (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997), pp. 283–285.

of the need for engineers. It was pretty ad-hoc and done without much reference to Congress.

Even if the British took the fort in the Battle of Long Island, and Kosciuszko had not had a chance to completely finish the fortifications, he managed to design a 180-foot redoubt with a deep moat. He also adapted a technique to rip the enemy's ships' bottom by using *chevaux-de-frise*.²⁴ It was a technique that the American officers were not familiar with to stop an invasion:

The Structures were towed up the North River this morning; and seem to be intended for Cheveaux de Frize to block up the Passage, either to prevent the Ships, that are now above, from coming down, or our Fleet from getting up, without being raked by their Batteries. It is of a peculiar Construction; and all the Industry of malevolence, which is the most active Sort of Industry, has been used to complete it. Our People don't seem to regard it, and fancy they can easily run it down, or remove it out of their way'.²⁵

And this technique proved very effective, 'Last night four ships, chained and boomed, with a number of amazing large chevaux-de-frise, were sunk close by the fort, under the command of General Mifflin, which fort mounts thirty pieces of heavy cannon'.²⁶

Congress was impressed with Kosciuszko's design and work, so they decided to commission Kosciuszko as an engineering colonel on October 18, 1776. This was likely the first time that Congress and Washington saw the real talent in foreign officers. Kosciuszko never asked for any promotion or other benefits except his pay.

²⁴ A defensive obstacle which usually were interconnected beams with sharp spike or spear tips for the use of fortifications. In this case Kosciuszko laid them under water to tear open the British vessels.

²⁵ Ambrose Serle, *The American Journal of Ambrose Serle: Secretary to Lord Howe, 1776-1778* (San Marino California: The Huntington Library, 1940), p. 54.

²⁶ Chase, ed., 'To George Washington from Brigadier General Thomas Mifflin, 6 August 1776,' vol. 5, pp. 580-582.

Even if Washington still misunderstood Kosciuszko as a Frenchman, Kosciuszko's capabilities and reputation was well-known. Without any recommendation or personal connection, he proved his talents. Washington often mentioned Kosciuszko's expertise to others. Kosciuszko surpassed many French volunteers in Washington's opinion:

I know of no other man tolerably well qualified for the conducting of that business. None of the French gentlemen whom I have seen with appointments in that way, appear to me, to know any thing of the matter. There is one in Philadelphia whom I am told is clever, but him I have never seen.²⁷

Kosciuszko later was given a task to oversee many crucial fortifications in the Northern Department to protect the Delaware River in early 1777. Kosciuszko's humility led him to be more trusted to supervise the even greater construction at Fort Clinton at West Point. He then was assigned to build Fort Mercer on the New Jersey side and Fort Mifflin on the Pennsylvania side. Kosciuszko located Fort Mercer on a high cliff armed with heavy guns in order to watch over and fire British ships that attempted to get into the capital. For Fort Mifflin, Kosciuszko ordered his men to dig deep trenches outside the fort's walls and added another fortress along the river cliff. The fort was mounted with cannons ready for the invasion.

In April 1777 Kosciuszko was appointed to be an engineer of the Northern Department under the commander of Horatio Gates. Gates spoke French, and the two men developed their friendship quickly. Gates assigned Kosciuszko to investigate Fort Ticonderoga, a huge stone fortress on the border of America and Canada in New York, located where Lake Champlain and Lake George meet, for its defensive works. After

²⁷ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 20 December 1776,' vol. 7, pp. 381–389.

finishing his observation Kosciuszko suggested to put cannons on the Sugar Loaf Hill, a hill a few hundred yards away from Fort Ticonderoga that overlooked the fort, to watch over the fort and block the British attack.

Gates and Colonel Wilkinson supported this idea. But during that time Gates was replaced from being a commander of the Northern Department by Major General Philip Schuyler. He conferred with Major Jeduthan Baldwin, a forerunner engineer at Fort Ticonderoga and Major General Arthur St. Clair the commander of the fort, and they reasoned that since the hill was wooded and very steep, it was impractical to take cannons on top of the hill, 'no Engineer hitherto, French, British, or American, had believed in the practicality of placing a battery on Sugar Loaf hill (Mount Defiance), was not disposed to embarrass himself or his means of defense by making the experiment'.²⁸ Schuyler ignored Kosciuszko's idea and left the hill exposed.

On July 1, 1777, General John Burgoyne, along with his 8,000 men, came down from Canada along Lake Champlain. They cleared a road up to the hill and then erected a block and ripped the guns apart to lift them up piece by piece and put them back on top of the hill. Burgoyne's troops took control of Mount Independence on July 5, before opening fire at Fort Ticonderoga. They eventually started firing at the Americans on the ground. St. Clair had no choice but to order the men to retreat. The army got away, but they left behind huge cannons, food, medicines, and supplies. They had to blow up ammunition and arms that they could not carry away.

Schuyler was faced with this shameful defeat by his negligence. He now knew that the Polish engineer was right, so now he decided to place hundreds of men under Kosciuszko's command in to delay the British hunt so they could evacuate. Kosciuszko

²⁸ Quoted in Storozynski, p. 28.

ordered the men to cut down the trees along the road and destroy the bridges to intercept the British convoy. His tactics worked brilliantly, as it took the British Army twenty days to travel only 22 miles.²⁹ The Continentals made it to New York but suffered tremendously through war material losses.

But General Burgoyne's forces finally came to the American base in September. However, this time Kosciuszko was trusted to make whatever plan he saw best for defending. He investigated the area and located the defences at Bemis Heights. There he crafted strong protection with the use of barriers, trenches, and redoubts to encounter the British assaults. He also placed cannons 100 feet below Bemis Heights to fire at the enemy. Burgoyne's troops could not pass the defences, so they had to enter the woods and the rebels were waiting to attack them in there.

On September 19, 1777, as it had been planned, the British were left with the only option of taking a roundabout way, and they walked into the forest where they were facing with the militia men. This battle was known as the Battle of Freeman's farm—the first clash of the Battle of Saratoga. Burgoyne's troops suffered more than 500 casualties. He decided to press a more offensive attack, but General Henry Clinton sent a message that he would come to meet Burgoyne's troops for reinforcement, so Burgoyne held off on his plan.

The second battle occurred on October 7, when Burgoyne, without assistance from Clinton (which seemed like it never came) decided to attack the American line. Under the command of Gates, Major General Benedict Arnold led the attack, supported by Colonial Daniel Morgan's rifle regiment. The American troops waited

²⁹ Paul K. Walker, *Engineers of Independence: A Documentary History of the Army Engineers in the American Revolution, 1775-1783* (Washington DC: Historical Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1977), p. 111.

for the British as they got deeper in the wooded area around Bemis Heights in the South of Saratoga. Before long, the Americans attacked the British regulars and drove them back with heavy loss. Around 20,000 Americans surrounded Burgoyne's troops of 5,000 men until October 17 at Saratoga. Finally Burgoyne surrendered.

The two battles and the siege of Saratoga brought glory to the Americans. Gates praised his Polish friend, crediting his wise defending and sharp exploiting tactics, 'Let us be honest. In war, as in medicine, natural causes not under our control, do much. In the present case, the great tacticians of the campaign were hills and forests, which a young Polish Engineer was skilful enough to select for my encampment'.³⁰

Washington acknowledged Kosciuszko's talent and reputation and wanted to promote this Polish engineer, 'While I am on this Subject, I would take the liberty to mention, that I have been well informed, that the Engineer in the Northern Army (Cosieski, I think his name is) is a Gentleman of science & merit. From the character I have had of him, he is deserving of notice too'.³¹ But Kosciuszko humbly refused to get promoted since he knew that the promotion would bring him just jealousy.

1777 was the time that French officers sailed to America to be commissioned in the army claiming for rank and pay, but Washington refused to do so several times. Even when Duportail asked for promotion for his men and passed the request to Congress and the Board of War, 'In respect to their abilities and knowledge in their

³⁰ Miecislau Haiman, *Kosciuszko in the American Revolution*, in Armstrong's Memorial, Sparks Papers, series 49, vol. 1, (New York: Kosciuszko Foundation, 1975), p. 29.

³¹ Ibid.

profession, I must observe, they have had no great Opportunity of proving them since they were in our service'.³²

Kosciuszko's humility led him to be more trusted to supervise the even greater construction at Fort Clinton at West Point. In early 1778 Congress decided to create a fort to look over the Hudson River in New York at West Point in order to 'resist a sudden Assault of the Enemy'.³³ The fort was named Fort Clinton after Colonel James Clinton who took control over this fort during the Saratoga Campaign in 1777. He made a great contribution in preventing Sir Henry Clinton to reinforce Burgoyne's troops. The fort firstly was placed under the instruction of French engineer Colonel La Radiere (Louis de Shalx la Radiere), but he seemed not to be able to work with anyone, so it was agreed that the task would fall to this humble Polish Kosciuszko would be responsible to build this most important defence in the north, 'That it will be improper for Col: Radiere to Command the Troops, as he ought to Confine himself to the Business of an Engineer only [...] That Colo. Kosciuszko be directed to repair to the Army under General Putnam, to be employed as shall be thought proper, in his Capacity of an Engineer'.³⁴

Washington appointed Kosciuszko as chief of engineer of the Middle Department where he spent two and a half years designing and supervising the construction of fortifications at West Point.³⁵ In September 1778 Gates requested Washington to appoint his favorite Polish engineer under his command because the fort was almost finished, 'if I had not an Affectionate regard for This amiable Foreigner, I should upon no Account have made this my request—The out Works at

³² Grizzard and Hoth, 'From George Washington to Henry Laurens, 10 November 1777,' vol. 12, pp. 199–202.

³³ Hoth, ed., 'To George Washington from Major General Alexander McDougall, 13 April 1778,' vol. 14, pp. 496–498.

³⁴ Ford, eds., vol. 10, p. 222.

³⁵ Col. Thaddeus Kosciuszko continued as chief engineer at West Point until June 1780.

West point are in a manner finish'd & the Body of the place in such forwardness'.³⁶ But Washington denied it because he wanted Kosciusko to stay working at the fort since the fort might need some additions, 'Colo. Kosciusko has had the chief direction and superintendence of the Works at West point, and it is my desire, that he should remain to carry them on. New plans & alterations at this time, would be attended with many inconveniences, and protract the defences of the River'.³⁷

Despite hunger, lack of suitable winter clothing for men and supplies Kosciuszko managed to finish the construction in 28 months. The fort was then 'the key to the continent'. By 1779 a chain was drawn across the Hudson River, and it proved so effective that British ships did not directly challenge it. When the British attempted to move their army from Canada to join the troops in New York, they found that their way was blocked. Therefore, Sir Henry Clinton abandoned his objective to attack West Point and ordered a retreat leaving New York for the south.

After his work at West Point was completed, Kosciusko immediately asked Washington to send him south to work at the front line, 'I beg your Excellency to give me permission to leave the Engineer Department and direct me a Command in the Light Infantry in the Army under your immediate Command or the Army at the Southward agreeable to my rank I now hold. Your Excellency may be certain that I am acquainted with the Tactic of discipline and my Conduct joint with a small share of ambition to distinguish my self, I hope will prove not the Contrary'.³⁸ Even if Washington believed that the fort should be looked after by an expert, this time he

³⁶ Hoth, ed., 'To George Washington from Major General Horatio Gates, 11 September 1778,' vol. 16, pp. 574–575.

³⁷ Ferraro, ed., 'From George Washington to Major General Alexander McDougall, 19 June 1779,' vol. 21, pp. 188–194.

³⁸ Tadeusz Kosciuszko 'To George Washington from Tadeusz Andrzej Bonawentura Kosciuszko, 30 July 1780,' Founders Online, National Archives <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-02727>> [accessed 12 February 2017].

allowed Kosciusko to work in the Southern Department.³⁹ Under Greene's command in the southern campaign he worked as an engineer, intelligence carrier, and cavalry officer.

Infantry and military tactics

European officers also helped to improve American infantry. Armand-Charles Tuffin, marquis de La Rouërie or Charles Armand was one of French infantry officers who volunteered to come to America. He was a nobleman who had joined French military, the Royal House Guards, since he was ten. He was fluent in English and German.⁴⁰ With Deane's recommendation letter, he sailed to America in April 1777 and was one of those who were rejected by Washington at first, 'I shall inform Monsr Armand, and reconcile him to it in the best manner I can, that there is no vacancy for him at present'.⁴¹ But when Washington was presented by Armand's humility and faithfulness he changed his mind. Armand pleaded Washington courteously and sincerely to command his own French troops, and this would help to solve the communication with other French officers:

I am come into your country to serve her, and perfect my feeble talent for war under the command of one of the gratest generals in the world, of you, my general. i have proposed to honorable Congress to be employed in your army with this character...to levy, 60, or, 80, french soldiers [...] if my talents were dissaprouved in time to come by your excellency, you would put in my place one other officer, and that i would with pleasure obey him in all opportunitys

³⁹ George Washington, 'From George Washington to Tadeusz Andrzej Bonawentura Kosciuszko, 3 August 1780,' Founders Online, National Archives <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-02795>> [accessed 9 February 2017].

⁴⁰ René Critcher Lyons, *Foreign-Born American Patriots* (North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2012), p. 125.

⁴¹ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 16 May 1777,' vol. 9, pp. 438–440.

[...] some french soldiers who are in your army, not understanding the English language and will be more useful in your projects with a french chief.⁴²

Before Washington took action, Congress had already commissioned Armand as a colonel on May 10. Washington agreeably accepted Armand's request on May 19, 1777, granting him a command of a partisan corps (a light infantry corps) of 200 French men, 'I have consented to the request you made me of raising and commanding a Partisan Corps. You probably will have it more in your power, to distinguish yourself at the head of a body of Men that understand the French Language, on the usual terms, any number of Men not exceeding two hundred'.⁴³

Washington appointed Armand to take command of the corps of Major Ottendorff, a German mercenary, who deserted to the British.⁴⁴ So, Armand would direct the corps that comprised of French, Prussians, and Americans. He and his men engaged in the Battle of Short Hills with other troops comprising of 2,500 men where he suffered from the loss of 32 out of 80 men.⁴⁵ But he was able to manage to keep a cannon.⁴⁶ Later on he was trusted by Washington to discuss the plan to attack the British at the Head of Elk, Maryland. And in August his corps was responsible for a skirmish. Captain Muenchhausen, General Howe's aide-de-camp recorded that Armand was regarded by Washington to urge immediate attack on General Howe's troops. Armand made it at the right time when British men were exhausted from long

⁴² Varick transcript, handwritten copies in one of the bound volumes used by the team of clerks on GW's headquarters staff who worked from 1781-83 under the direction of Lt. Col. Richard Varick to record correspondence, orders, instructions, and related items from GW's Revolutionary War papers. Quoted from Instructions to Colonel Armand, 19 May 1777, in *The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, 28 March 1777–10 June 1777*, vol. 9, ed. by Philander D. Chase (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999), pp. 468–469.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Grizzard, ed., George Washington, 'Orders to Armand, 11 June 1777,' vol. 10, p. 2.

⁴⁵ Michael Cecere, *They Are Indeed a Very Useful Corps: American Riflemen in the Revolutionary War* (Maryland: Heritage Books, 2006) p. 96.

⁴⁶ Lyons, pp. 127-128.

journey and were able to use neither cavalry nor artillery because of sick horses.⁴⁷

Armand's corps participated in many battles later at Red Bank under Lafayette, Brandywine, and Germantown. Mostly he was responsible to command Hessian men.⁴⁸

At Valley Forge winter camp he was allowed by the Board of War to enlist deserters and trained them in his unit.⁴⁹ Washington disagreed with this idea as he saw that using the deserters or prisoners' services was risky and might damage his army, 'I am certain I never gave you any encouragement to enlist deserters because I had ever found them of the greatest injury to the service by debauching our own Men and had therefore given positive orders to all recruiting Officers not to enlist them upon any terms'.⁵⁰ But his advice was ignored, and Congress after all approved Armand to recruit 'deserters from the Enemy's foreign Troops, French Men, and others not owing Allegiance to the King of Great Britain' to fill in his corps, which later was renamed *The Free and Independent Chasseurs*, consisting of 14 officers and 438 men.⁵¹

Washington still disagreed with the idea of enlisting deserters and prisoners, but he could not do anything at this moment. It was the time that Congress had a new Board of War led by Gates, the hero of Saratoga. Washington's leadership was being challenged, and his opinion sounded bitterly valueless. However, Armand's approach actually benefited the army. He proved that his force was capable with irregular warfare and hit-and-run tactics. He also trained them with cavalry techniques and how

⁴⁷ Friedrich von Muenchhausen, *At General Howe's Side, 1776-1778: The Diary of General William Howe's Aide de Camp, Captain Friedrich von Muenchhausen*, translated by Ernst Kipping, annotated by Samuel Smith (Monmouth Beach, New Jersey, 1974), p. 27.

⁴⁸ Lyons, p. 128.

⁴⁹ Hoth, ed., 'To George Washington from Colonel Armand, 22 March 1778,' vol. 14, pp. 266-267.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 'From George Washington to Colonel Armand, 25 March 1778,' pp. 299-300.

⁵¹ Ford ed., vol.11, pp. 642-45.

to form an effective unit of dragoons.⁵² His skills showed in the raid against the Six Nations to secure the Hudson Valley, and transport of supplies.

Armand's commanding skill and tactics were impressive, so the commander-in-chief appointed him to control the cavalry corps after Casimir Pulaski, the previous commander, died from wounds during a charge on British positions at Savannah Georgia. Now Pulaski's Legion became *Armand's Legion*. A month later he was promoted by Congress to be a brigadier general.⁵³ This also made him a chief of the Continental Cavalry. Armand's Legion participated in the Battle of Camden. His corps suffered from heavy loss from the battle outcome, so he decided to return to France to acquire more war supplies for his corps.

Before departure Armand insisted that Congress must grant him a promotion for his credibility because that would help with his journey to France to get enough support for the troops. Congress first rejected the request, so he sent his complaint and plea to Washington:

I presented this, that should I be granted with the commission of brigadier, I would immediately in order to quiet the jealousy it might give in the army go to france and feach from there the equipement for the legion. I mantioned that this voyage considered as a service payed to america, together with four compeignes would justify my promotion to the eyes of the army—this request was rejected'.⁵⁴

⁵² Lyons, p. 128.

⁵³ Chase, ed., 'To George Washington from Colonel Armand, 20 January 1779,' vol. 19, pp. 36–37.

⁵⁴ Charles Armand, 'To George Washington from Charles, marquis de La Rouërie Armand Tuffin, 21 November 1780,' Founders Online, National Archives
<<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-06705>> [accessed 20 March 2017].

Washington then promised that he would secure the position of the infantry commander for Armand, and Armand would receive his requested commission by the time of his return to France, 'you will always maintain the same place in my esteem which you now possess, when you determine finally to return home, I shall take the liberty to recommend to Congress the promotion you desire'.⁵⁵ In France, Armand achieved a successful mission. He returned to Boston on August 16, 1781, with two French ships containing war supplies. He reported to Washington, 'I have been so lucky as to answer the purpose of my journey there—having with me the cloathing and equipment for the legion firelock and shoes for the foots men exepted'.⁵⁶ Armand found that his troops were sent to Virginia to encounter the attack from Benedict Arnold, so he rejoined his men there.

Another talented tactician was a young powerful French officer, Marquis de Lafayette. At the age of nineteen Lafayette was much enthusiastic to receive his own command—he came to America for field distinction and prove that his decision to leave France was right. Lafayette was trained in conventional European warfare, but when leading the troops in America Lafayette was able to adjust the plan and not afraid to apply unconventional tactics. His genius military talent got him slip away from British captures for many times. The Battle of Brandywine was the first one that proved his skill. He followed Washington to the field where he road into the centre of the battle at the spot precisely where the British troops were concentrating their heaviest fire. The continentals were destroyed and in disorder due to the panic and trying to run away from death. At that moment Lafayette actually threw himself into

⁵⁵ George Washington, 'From George Washington to Charles, marquis de La Rouërie Armand Tuffin, 27 November 1780,' Founders Online, National Archives
<<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-04065>> [accessed 20 March 2017].

⁵⁶ Charles Armand, 'To George Washington from Charles, marquis de La Rouërie Armand Tuffin, 17 August 1781,' Founders Online, National Archives,
<<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-06705>> [accessed 20 March 2017].

the fight and tried to rally those American troops whom he could hardly communicate, but he stood his ground. Finally he got off his horse to rally them, and these men rallied round Lafayette. He finally got them regrouped so that they could retreat. In this struggle Lafayette was shot in his leg, and Washington insisted the doctor that, ‘treat him as if he were my son’.⁵⁷

His military ability was first tested when Washington was pushed to take Philadelphia back from the British. On May 18, 1778 Washington assigned Lafayette and his light troops of 2,200 men to observe the British—covering the area between the Delaware and Schuylkill, ‘to interrupt the communication with Philadelphia, obstruct the incursions of the enemy’s parties, and obtain intelligence of their motions and designs’.⁵⁸ Washington instructed his young general not to camp out to prevent being targeted. But the negligent Lafayette gave up his commander’s warning and set up position at Barren Hill—eleven miles from Philadelphia. He thought that this highland would be a defensible position, and his men could watch over the British from the top. But British spies were everywhere, and Sir William Howe soon knew his position. If Lafayette was captured, it would lessen the Americans’ hope for the French assistance as they lost their main supporter. It would also decrease the American morale to fight. So, Sir William Howe sent more than 5,000 men to hunt this young Frenchman.

As planned Lafayette found himself and his men surrounded by a huge force. The Americans started to panic, but Lafayette did not. This was one of his distinct characteristics—being calm and ready to fight—being young was advantageous in

⁵⁷ Quoted in Marc Leepson, *Lafayette: Lessons in Leadership from the Idealist General* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 37.

⁵⁸ Idzerda ed., ‘To Henry Laurens from Marquis de Lafayette, Valley Forge, January 26, 1778,’ vol. 2, p. 53.

this case. Lafayette knew that he would never let the British catch him. He sent some squads—two to three snipers down to the edge of the wood to fire at the British and hide themselves behind the trees and keep repeating the same steps. The British regulars were confused with this tactic and started to believe that there was a large force under Lafayette. Howe was deceived by this illusion, so he ordered his troops to step back and cross the river to watch over the Americans. Lafayette took this chance to get down from the hill and pull all his men back and slip away on May 20. His ability to cope with this situation seemed to confirm Washington's confidence in this young general.

As the alliance between France and America became stronger, the British planned to evacuate from Philadelphia to New York. The British government feared that their army might be trapped by the French Navy, so they ordered the commanders to withdraw. Washington heard this news and saw this a great opportunity to make a crucial attack during the British evacuation. He called all his generals to discuss the action. Some of them including Lafayette and Greene supported the attacking idea, but some like Lee and Steuben thought that the troops they had now were not yet ready and they should wait. So, Washington compromised by following the British convoy at a safe distance and waiting to see what they could do.

Washington now trusted his young French officer to take another important command. Washington had chosen Lafayette's services to command 6,000 men to harass Sir Henry Clinton's rear echelons when the British convoy made a halt near Monmouth Courthouse, New Jersey. But, Lee insisted in his seniority that Washington should give this important command to him, and Washington finally agreed. However, when Lee conducted the operations against the British, and the British started to turn around instead of going ahead, he ordered some units to retreat.

And when seeing other men retreat, other units started to retreat as well. Washington arrived at the battle field and got so furious. He took over Lee's command and got the men regrouped and stood firm against the British attack. However, the British troops quietly slipped away during the night. Washington was upset that he replaced Lafayette with Lee in this sharp attack. Lee's decision made the Americans miss the chance to diminish the British force.

After the heavy American loss in the Battle of Camden, South Carolina under Gates' command on August 16, 1780, the British commander Lord Cornwallis moved his troops to Virginia. At this moment most people thought that the war would be over after the majority of the battles in the Southern Campaign were lost. Fortunately the victory of the smaller battle at Kings Mountain on October 7, 1780 made a sense of relief to the Americans. After winter encampment of 1780, the war started with the Battle of Cowpens on January 17 with the American victory, followed by the Battle of Guildford Courthouse on March 15, 1781 led by Major General Nathanael Greene. The British claimed the victory but suffered from more casualties because Greene decided to make a retreat to save his men.

Washington saw an opportunity to attack the weakened British troops. He sent Lafayette with his light troops from New York to Virginia to defend against the British raiders. And on April 30, 1781 Lafayette faced with the British force at Richmond Virginia. And as he did at Barren Hill Lafayette spread his troops very wide to create an illusion of a larger force but refused to engage in a battle to protect his troops. Lafayette managed to retreat again. This left Cornwallis furious. He became obsessed with catching this young Frenchman. Each retreat he made, Lafayette left his a squad of snipers behind to assault the British troops. This tactic was effective and able to kill the British regular without them knowing who was doing that. It definitely frightened

the British soldiers to some degree, ‘Lafayette really has mastered this ability to run and hide’.⁵⁹

The drillmaster

During the time of being confronted with heavy criticism, at Valley Forge encampment in winter 1777 Washington realized that he needed to get his army in shape to fight. In eighteenth century warfare winter was the time to rest, to train, and to resupply. It was the time for the alleged commander-in-chief to fix his army and his prestige before spring came. The troops encamped in Valley Forge, north of Philadelphia, which was considered a good location to observe British movements. Washington exerted himself to improve his army. He designed the camp, issued strict rules and harsh punishments, and kept his men in good hygiene.

To win a spring campaign in 1778, one of the most significant challenges that Washington faced was to train his men to be capable of competing in the coming battles. In February 1778, Congress sent a new recruit to Valley Forge to aid Washington in keeping the men in line. This man was Frederick William Augustus Heinrich Ferdinand Baron von Steuben from Prussia. Paul Lockhart an author of *The Drillmaster of Valley Forge* reasoned that, ‘the greatest fighting force in Europe was the Prussian army under Frederick the Great. Its greatness came from its professionalism, its hardness, and the machinelike precision’⁶⁰ This practice showed its effective manoeuvres which made the army won the War of the Austrian Succession and the Seven Years’ War. Washington might share the same idea. He put Steuben right to work as he was desperate to find officers who could help train his troops.

⁵⁹ Crout, *interview with History Channel*.

⁶⁰ Lockhart, p. 14.

But before Steuben made it to this point, his appointment to the position was not easily won. He had to jump through several hoops and wait for the approval of Congress. He went to Paris to ask for a commission from Deane and Franklin, but the two American ambassadors were not in the mood to enlist anymore European officers. They had been rebuked by Congress for their overwhelming acceptance of all those European officers who were seeking military commission and higher ranks without meeting the necessary qualifications. Lockhart commented on this matter that it was not actually Deane or Franklin's fault, since neither of them knew enough about the art of war.⁶¹ Congress was not even any better—they also could not see any actual ability of men through those neat uniforms and their disdainful manner.

Therefore, Steuben's application was turned down by Deane. But Steuben was a friend of the influential Beaumarchais and St. Germain who would be willing to recommend him to the American representatives.⁶² The help was also hidden with deception. Beaumarchais and St. Germain knew that the Baron was capable to help the American situation with army organization and training. The French foreign minister Vergennes agreed with this idea, so he pushed Franklin to pursue this plan. Then the misled recommendation was sent to Washington with some true and false information. Steuben was none of aristocracy. He was no one and had nothing special to offer Congress except his experience and talent. But that was not enough to interest Congress, so his story needed to be made up. In the letter he was made a quartermaster general, but the truth was that he was a captain—not a lieutenant general in the Prussian army, and he had been the King's aid-de-camp:

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁶² Willcox, ed., 'From Benjamin Franklin to George Washington, September 4, 1777, Passy, near Paris,' vol. 24, pp. 499–500.

The Gentleman who will have the Honour of waiting upon you with this Letter is the Baron de Steuben, lately a Lieutenant General in the King of Prussia's Service, whom he attended in all his Campaigns, being his Aide Camp, Quartermaster General, &c.⁸ He goes to America with a true Zeal for our Cause, and a View of engaging in it and rendering it all the Service in his Power. He is recommended to us by two of the best Judges of military Merit in this Country, M. de Vergennes and M. de St. Germain who have long been personally acquainted with him, and interest themselves in promoting his Voyage, from a full Persuasion that the Knowledge and Experience he has acquir'd by 20 Years Study and Practice in the Prussian School may be of great Use in our Armies.⁶³

These exaggerated letters gave him a stroke of luck. Steuben and his men were given a warm welcome from congressmen. Congress granted Steuben a captaincy at first. Henry Lauren, the President of Congress sent Washington another recommendation of Steuben and his expecting task which was to plan and to construct discipline—in the hopes that would help the army:

The Baron Steuben who was a Lieutenant General and Aide de Camp to the King of Prussia—desires no rank—is willing to attend General Washington, and be subject to his orders—does not require or desire any command of a particular Corps or Division, but will serve occasionally as directed by the General—expects to be of use in planning Encampments &c. and promoting the discipline of the Army—he heard before he left France, of the dissatisfaction of the Americans with the promotion of foreign officers,

⁶³ Ibid.

therefore makes no terms, nor will accept any thing but the general approbation and particularly that of General Washington.⁶⁴

Steuben came to Valley Forge to informally hold Thomas Conway's position—an inspector general. The inspector general was an incredibly challenging position due to the variety of tasks it required: the inspector general had to be a teacher, a trainer, and a manager all together. He was responsible for keeping the men well trained and disciplined. The camp had to be cleaned and kept hygienic. The officer was also required to work on supply matters such as food and clothes, so he needed to have a good working relationship with the quartermaster. Lastly, it was his job to keep track of records and account for all his men and officers in each regiment. This position was new to the Continental Army, and Conway was the first one to be appointed. And if Conway had not been pressed to resign because of his conspiracy, Steuben might not have been able to take this position.

The fact that the position was new shows how the American army lacked any sort of joint cohesive training and joint discipline. Each regiment was trained by their own officer, who used whatever exercise book they could find. There was no consistency between the regiments, and when all the men from different groups assembled to fight together, they could not do it effectively due to having trained under different methods. Conway was confident that he could perform these duties and become a legend as America's first drillmaster. However, his offence against the commanding general was exposed, garnering him trouble from Washington's allies; they were ready to attack him both in Congress and in the army. Congress had an eye

⁶⁴ Smith, 'Henry Laurens to George Washington, February 19, 1778,' vol. 9, pp. 133-134.

on the Baron to replace Conway. However, Congress did not grant Steuben this position at first since he was still a captain, and Conway did not formally resign.

The reason that Steuben was such an important factor in the success of the Continental Army is that he transformed the men in the army into soldiers. Before he arrived at Valley Forge, men in the army lacked military discipline. Washington had been focusing on creating this attribute ever since Congress initially created the Continental Army to be a national army, but he was largely unsuccessful. The army was meant to consist of men from all the different colonies but who would be able to work together harmoniously. However, because Congress could not enact any law to force any colony—or later state—to do anything, there had not been any common training that at least gave the men a sense of solidarity.

Steuben was formally assigned as an inspector general on March 28, 1778, but he started working since he arrived in Valley Forge in February and training for first time on March 19. His instruction differed from any other—not even like an English one that the American had used. He started with basic training of positioning and marching in slow and quick steps. His teaching was observed:

We have a Prussian Lieutenant-General (arrived in Camp) and Knight of the Black Eagle &c [...] he is taken great notice of and is appointed Inspector General of the Army he is now Teaching the Most Simple Parts of the Exercise such as Position and Marching of a Soldier in a Manner Quite different from that, they have been heretofore used to, In my oppinion more agreable to the Dictates of Reason & Common Sence than any Mode I have before seen [...] we are first Taught to March without Musick but the Time of March is given

us Slow Time is a Medium between what was in our service Slow and Quick Time Quick Time about as Quick as a Common Country Dance.⁶⁵

It was an impossible task to train all 20,000 men in the army, and Steuben was expected to do whatever he could to solve this problem. His best suggestion was to have ‘a model company’ that would act as an example and instruct the rest of their unit. In Steuben’s method, he would teach each unit’s teacher and that teacher would then go on to teach the entire unit. He started small—spending hours each day—working directly with a model unit that will be used to train the rest of the army:

The Baron advised that there should be a select corps of this number to receive the manœuvres in the first instance and to act as a model to the Army; and proposed that it should be formed of the old guard company and drafts from the line. I presume, if it should be Congress’s pleasure, a Majority would be highly agreeable to the Captain, and that it is as much as he expects.⁶⁶

Steuben saw the problems of the Continental Army—the Americans could not be trained to be like European soldiers because of their own ideology, republicanism. They called themselves free men, and this caused obedience issues. Therefore, the army needed be drilled differently. In their mind the British army was so great and could not withstand, and this also made them panic and lose their will to fight. Men were not sure if they could really take action when they engaged in confrontation with their opponents because they did not know how to perform and how to deal with their

⁶⁵ ‘Col. Henry Beekman Livingston to Robert R. Livingston’ in *Robert R. Livingston Papers*. Quoted in ‘From George Washington to Peter Scull, 19 March 1778,’ in *The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 14, 1 March 1778–30 April 1778*, ed. by David R. Hoth (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004), pp. 231–232.

⁶⁶ Hoth, ed., ‘From George Washington to Henry Laurens, 22 July 1778,’ vol. 16, pp. 127–131.

fear in the battle field. Steuben, knew clearly that it would be such a tough and almost impossible job to get the men trained properly in such a short time.

Soldiers in eighteenth century warfare needed to fight in a linear tactic which contained two important parts: firepower and movement—the American needed to know how to do this well. Drill was the first thing that came to the Baron’s mind. It was the basic component that soldiers knew a series of movements and repeated them as a group. ‘Drill instills disciplines’, and it mentally persuaded men to leave their individuality behind and accumulated a sense of obedience.⁶⁷ With a proper practice of repetitive movement, men would react what they were supposed to do in the field automatically without thinking. When soldiers could clear up their individuality and handle their emotion of stress, they would be able to hold their loaded gun and wait for order without being in a frenzy and fire their gun or just simply run away.

He also employed tactics which he had learned during his Prussian service that were new to the Continental Army. But he made some important adjustment to teach them. Major John Hall, a military historian at West Point, acknowledged Steuben’s awareness of his duty that he was not instructing usual regulars but actually the citizen-soldiers who would be trained to be something close to that, so the approach must be different:

The Von Steuben recognised that he was not dealing with Prussian and conscripts. He recognized the individuality and the republican notions of the population of troops that he dealt with, and he was able to take principles and tactics and give them to this force in such a manner that they were willing to

⁶⁷ Lockhart, p. 90.

receive it. They were able to transform themselves from virtuous republicans into soldiers in a professional army.⁶⁸

With Steuben's instructions, the American army learn how to form columns, how to properly use, load, and fire a weapon. Caroline Cox also agreed that the soldiers who stood up to this compelling exercise at Valley Forge became more professional, 'The army that comes out of Valley Forge is in many ways much more sophisticated one than one that goes in there, Von Steuben brings a new level of professionalism to the army. That set creates its own sense of belonging—to something larger than themselves'.⁶⁹

Steuben's main duty was to instil discipline in the army as a whole. He performed this duty well, as he had trained the leaders of each regiment so thoroughly that he was no longer necessary to act as the trainer. At this time his task was to write a new manual that could be distributed to all the Continental units. He had a team of young officers who knew military practice and could do translation. Steuben wrote in French and translated into English by his aide Pierre-Etienne De Ponceau.⁷⁰ His first writing was named *Military Instructions 1778*, and a revised and expanded version was completed in March. The draft were sent out to Major General Sterling and Washington for revision and then was submitted to President John Jay for final approve. After a few adjustments were made on March, 29 1779 the manuscript was published, titled *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States*. Washington complimented Steuben's work:

⁶⁸ Maj. John Hall, *Interview with H History Channel, The Revolution: Forging an Army* (8 August 2007) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26Hwjtp1tTw>> [accessed 15 February 2017].

⁶⁹ Caroline Cox, *Interview with H History Channel, The Revolution: Forging an Army* (8 August 2007) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26Hwjtp1tTw>> [accessed 15 February 2017].

⁷⁰ Lengel, ed., 'General Orders, 4 May 1778,' vol. 15, pp. 27–28.

As the fine Season is advancing, you will I flatter myself shortly have the satisfaction, so rarely enjoyed by Authors, of seeing your precepts reduced to practice—and I hope your Success will be equal to the merit of your work'.⁷¹

Foreign patriots and personal devotion

Even if many foreign officers came to join the Continental Army mainly for their own fame and adventure, there were some who also genuinely devoted themselves to the American cause. Kosciuszko was one of those who dedicated his skill and hard work to American patriotism. The other outstanding foreigner who devoted his personal life, connections, and money to the love of American independence was one of the French volunteers, Lafayette, Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, or as the Americans call him, 'Our Marquis'. People know that he fought with the Americans during the Revolutionary War and became one of George Washington lifetime friends. Lafayette had a very close bond with America and his commanding general as he named his only son *George Washington Lafayette* and one of his daughters *Verginie* after the oldest colony. Lafayette considered himself both French and American as he wrote to Benjamin Franklin in 1779, 'When I say ours, I mean the Americans, and under that same denomination I us'd in America to mean the French, so that whatever of Both Countries I am in, I am at once Both speaking as a foreigner, and spoken of as a citizen'.⁷²

Lafayette's participation in and sacrifice for the American cause was outstanding. Throughout the War Lafayette never accepted payment. Not only did he stay in the army until the end of the War, but he also spent his own money on the

⁷¹ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to Major General Steuben, 11 March 1779,' vol. 19, pp. 443–445.

⁷² Idzerda, ed., 'To Benjamin Franklin from Marquis de Lafayette, Havre, October 14, 1779,' vol. 2, pp. 329-330.

Revolution starting with his first journey to America by purchasing his own ship for his journey named 'Victoire'. In eight years of the War Lafayette spent 165,952 livres or about 1.66 million US dollar in today's currency.⁷³

Lafayette is an example of a foreign patriotic officer who sacrificed his own wealth, time, and family for a cause that was not his own nation's. To be fair, he did all these good things because he was able and unencumbered. He did not have any familial bonds, as he lost his parents at a young age. His father died when he was two and his mother died when he was twelve, leaving him with prosperous assets that provided him about 150,000 livres of annual income.⁷⁴ He was willing and financially solvent. But even if they had the same assets and opportunity, there were few others who would do as the Marquis did.

Lafayette was a nobleman born in a knight family—one of the wealthiest families in France. His father died in the Battle of Minden in Prussia by the British cannon, and his mother's grandfather was general comte de La Riviere, commander of the king's personal horse guard or 'the Black Musketeers'. He was also well educated in military matters. At the age of eleven Lafayette enrolled at the College de Plessie, a private school for young knights and entered 'the Back Musketeers' at the Palace of Versailles as a second lieutenant. When he turned thirteen Lafayette was being trained at the royal riding school with the kings' grandsons. When he was fifteen, he married Adrienne, the daughter of a powerful brigadier general, Jean-Paul-Francois de Noailles, the Duc d'Ayen in the King of France's Army. Because of his own ancestry and his wife's family background, Layette had an intimate relationship with the royal family. The Noailles were one of the oldest and wealthiest families of

⁷³ Harlow Giles Unger, *Lafayette* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2002), p. 163.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

nobility. Harlow Unger the author of *Lafayette* considered them more powerful than the House of Bourbon.⁷⁵ This connection gave the man an honourable reputation and meant that he was acknowledged by those in power.

After marrying Adrienne, Lafayette became a family man. His decision to join the American army was not approved by his father-in-law. Duc d'Ayen rushed to King Louis XVI to stop Lafayette's voyage. The king ordered Lafayette to return home promptly, 'notably Monsieur le marquis de la Fayette, to leave immediately and return to France'.⁷⁶ The king actually did not agree with the idea of sending French officers to fight the British in America because he saw that it could provoke the war between France and Britain. He also issued a statement to cancel all the French officers who were about to travel to America to join the American army. But the fact is that this demonstrated how powerful the Noailles and how famed Lafayette was. Unfortunately, the king's words did not reach the expedition, but Lafayette decided to return his ship back to Paris after he felt much guilty for his father-in-law and his young wife. But he changed his mind again and left for America. On April 20, 1777 he and his team sailed to America and arrived in George Town Bay, South Carolina on June 12.

Lafayette hoped for glory for America, but this caused chaos in Paris. The news that Lafayette had abandoned the king's order made the French Foreign Minister Vergennes furious; the British stopped every French ship to find Lafayette, making trouble for the French merchants. The people of France saw the situation differently, though—they talked about the young gentleman who had made sacrifice to help the

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁷⁶ Stanley ed., vol. 1, p. 45. Louis XVI issued an order for Lafayette's arrest. Quoted in Unger, *Lafayette*, p. 25, translated from Henri Donial, *Histoire de la participation de la France à l'établissement des États-Unis d'Amérique* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1886, 5 vols), I:651-652.

American cause. The message of fighting for independence and liberty spread everywhere as Benjamin Franklin and Silas Deane observed, 'All Europe is for us. Our Articles of Confederation being by our means translated and published here have given an Appearance of Consistence and Firmness to the American States and Government, that begins to make them considerable'.⁷⁷

Lafayette's action and sacrifice also encouraged a lot of young men to take the same adventure. Deane and Franklin wrote to the American Commissioners reporting that they got many applications from European officers to be enlisted in the American army:

The Desire military Officers here of all Ranks have of going into the Service of the United States, is so general and so strong as to be quite amazing. We are hourly fatigu'd with their Applications and Offers which we are obliged to refuse; and with hundreds of Letters which we cannot possibly answer to Satisfaction, having had no Orders to engage any but Engineers, who are accordingly gone. If the Congress think fit to encourage some of distinguished Merit to enter their Service, they will please to signify it'.⁷⁸

But when he arrived in America, Lafayette had faced with rejection when he report himself to congress who passed this matter on to the commander-in-chief to make a decision. So Lafayette went to see Washington at Valley Forge, Philadelphia. Washington had received Deane's reaffirmation, and when he met Lafayette in person, the young man made a very positive impression. Washington immediately changed his mind. The boy look so young in his eye but so loving and passionate.

⁷⁷ Willcox, ed., Benjamin Franklin and Silas Deane, 'The American Commissioners to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, 12 March–9 April 1777,' in *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 23, pp. 466–476.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

Washington made a compliment of his 'zeal and sacrifices in coming to America'. And Lafayette 'was paid a thousand compliments and persuaded to establish his quarters in his (Washington's) household and dine at his table for the whole campaign'.⁷⁹ Washington accepted Lafayette's commission as a major general, the youngest general in the Continental Army.

When Lafayette arrived at the camp in Philadelphia the appearance of the soldiers and their site were much worse than he had imagined. Washington caught that disappointment and said, 'I suppose we ought to be embarrassed to show ourselves to an officer who has just left the French forces'. Lafayette smartly responded, 'I have come here to learn, mon général, not to teach'. This sentence showed Lafayette humility that was contrast with any other French or foreign officers who asked for benefit and looked down on Washington's new born army and men. Washington was impressed. The two men developed their relationship and soon became 'father and son'.

Not only did he have good relationships with American leaders, Lafayette was also loved by his men. As a generous man he spent his own money on American soldiers since the very first days he arrived in America to outfit and equip them. Robert Crout, editor of *Lafayette Papers Project* explained that, 'The difference with Lafayette was that they [Congress] became convinced of the genuineness of his commitment to the American cause,'⁸⁰ Unger also added that, 'Unlike everyone who fought in the war at that point he was the only one who have stood to gain nothing economically or politically'.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Idzerda, ed., Chevalier Dubuysson, Memoir by the Chevalier Dubuysson, in *Lafayette in the Age of the American Revolution: Selected Letters and Papers, 1776-1790*, Vol. 1, p. 80.

⁸⁰ Robert Crout, *Interview with M Military History Channel*.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, Harlow Giles Unger.

The politics of enlisting foreign officers

Foreign officers' participation went far beyond military use, such as in Lafayette's case. Congress realized that some of them were better used for different tasks, even if in the very first years of the war the excessive commissioning of foreign officers caused the issue of receiving unqualified foreign officers and jealousy among the officers. Congress had warned the American ambassadors in Paris not to easily promise commissions with the French officers. Deane might have recruited some French officers who irritated the American officers, he was so sure that Lafayette would give America a great advantage. It indicates that there was a political angle to the enlistment of foreign officers—the American cause in Europe, not just a military need like engineers and artillery officers. He wrote back to the commanding general:

I lately recommended to your particular notice the Marquis de La Fayette, a young Nobleman of the first rank, family, and fortune, and who adds to all these the most ardent zeal to distinguish himself in a cause which is justly considered as the most noble and generous [...] I am directed to inform your Excellency that his going, being without the approbation or knowledge of the King, is disagreeable, and that his Majesty expects that you will not permit him to take any command under you; but that he should be directed immediately to return. However disagreeable this may be to Monsr La Fayette, I am confident that the respect he will pay to the requisition, which I have the honor to enclose, will induce him to comply therewith in the most ready and agreeable manner, and that you will effect it so as to give satisfaction to his Majesty, and without occasioning public observations or reports disagreeable to the Marquis, who, I am sure, will comply with the orders sent without giving

you or any one in power in the United States the disagreeable task of interposing.⁸²

After being commissioned in the Continental Army, Lafayette in fact started his personal mission as a politician by writing back to France, not only to his family, but also to French government officials, while he was hospitalized from a gunshot wound from the Battle of Brandywine. He persuaded French ministers that this was a cause that France should make a contribution to its own interest because this was an opportunity to lessen the British power, and the American cause was certainly the matter that France should support. Lafayette was not only an officer, but he was an influence at the French foreign policy. He had acted as both French and American officer and representative. Throughout the Revolutionary time he always spurred French court to support the American cause by writing to Foreign Minister Vergennes and Prime Minister Maurepas. He also wrote to his father-in-law pleading him to urge the support for American cause from the French court. The letter directly explained his pure heart and intention for liberty:

America waits with impatience for us [French] to declare for her. I hope France will one day decide to humble England. This consideration, and the measures America appears willing to pursue, give me great hope for the glorious establishment of her independence. I no longer see us [Americans] as strong as I believed to be the case, but we are able to fight and we shall do so, I hope with some success. With the help of France we shall win, at some expense, the cause that I cherish because it is just, because of honours humanity, because it

⁸² Silas Deane, 'Silas Deane to George Washington,' in *The Deane Papers*, vol.2, ed. by Charles Isham (New York: the Collections of the New-York Historical Society, 1887-91), pp. 39-40

concerns my country, and because my friends and I are deeply committed to it'.⁸³

Lafayette obviously gained credibility which made his requests for French support sound credible. He also mentioned his close relationship with American leaders and presidents, and especially his commanding general:

I am closer to him than anyone else, and I find him worthy of his country's veneration. His warm friendship and his complete confidence on me regarding all military and political matters, great and small, put me in a position to know all that he has to do, to reconcile and to overcome'.⁸⁴

During the War Lafayette participated in commanding situations, proving himself influential and effective. Because of this, he became a symbol of the French in the eyes of the rest of Europe. After performing his duty in the American army for over a year, in winter 1778 Washington suggested Lafayette make a return to France to visit his family and the French Court to strengthen the support on America. On October 21, 1778 Congress authorized leave and voted to present a sword to Lafayette. Previously the Americans had received money, arms and supplies, and foreign officers from the French, but to make a decisive fighting the American needed more troops and fleet—as they had no fleet themselves to cope with the British Navy in the seas. This time Lafayette would fully act as an American representative. He took his leave for over a year to France making attempts to gain support from Versailles.

Lafayette was indeed a very powerful man. The event that proved his social status best was the fact that disobeyed the king's command but did not receive an actual punishment. His ship arrived at Brest on February 6, 1779. He received a warm

⁸³ Idzerda ed., 'Lafayette to the Duc d'Aden, 16 December 1777,' vol. 1, pp. 188-195.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

welcome from French aristocrats. He went to Versailles on February 12 and received the king's punishment to be put under house arrest for a week in order to maintain the king's dignity, which Lafayette had greatly offended by his disobedience. The king at first refused to let him have an audience and punished him by 'imprisoning' him in *Hôtel de Noailles*, one of his wife's family assets. This was considered staying comfortably at home and spending time with his wife and children. Lafayette knew that the king meant no harm to him, but he wanted to impose a nominal penalty. Lafayette wrote, 'I was questioned, complimented, and exiled; but it was to Paris I was sent, and the confines of Hôtel de Noailles were thought preferable to the honors of the Bastille, which was first proposed'.⁸⁵

Lafayette wrote to the king to admit his error and clarify his reason for the departure to America, 'Love of my country, the desire to witness the humiliation of her enemies, a political instinct that the last treaty would seem to justify: these, Sire, are the reasons that governed the part I took in the American cause'.⁸⁶ And a week after being put in 'prison' the king granted him an audience.⁸⁷ Louis gave him a mild reprimand and restored good relation, and a month later Lafayette was hunting with him as usual.⁸⁸

Then Lafayette was appointed as a lieutenant-commander of the King's Dragoons with the rank of *mestre de camp*.⁸⁹ He visited and wrote to many French leaders such as the minister of foreign affair, Vergennes, the minister of state, Maurepas, and the minister of the marine, Gabriel de Sartine in order to acquire as

⁸⁵ Stanley ed., Lafayette, 'Memoir of 1779,' vol. 2, p. 226.

⁸⁶ Stanley ed., 'Lafayette to Louis XVI,' vol. 2, p. 232.

⁸⁷ Stanley ed., 'Memoir of 1779,' vol. 2, p. 226.

⁸⁸ Stanley ed., 'Lafayette to Benjamin Franklin, 20 March 1779, Paris,' vol. 2, p. 241. Lafayette wrote to Franklin and mentioned that, 'I am just Coming from Versailles where I went à hunting with the king,' probably to reassure Franklin that they reconciled again.

⁸⁹ Idzerda ed., Lafayette, vol. 1, p. xxxviii.

much as support for the Continental Army. He was also working closely with Benjamin Franklin and John Adams who were at that time in Paris.

Lafayette spent most of his time working as an American diplomat. He discussed plans for a raid on Irish and English coasts, but the expedition was abandoned.⁹⁰ He tried to help the Americans procure loans from Holland and from France and Spain.⁹¹ He also submitted memoir to French minister on sending an expeditionary force to America.⁹² During January-February 1780 he opened negotiations for arms and munitions for Americans and presented his recommendations concerning an expeditionary force. Hard work eventually paid off, and Lafayette reaped great benefits from his efforts. On March 6, 1780 Versailles proposed to send the help to the United States comprising of the Naval force and guns, 9,000 men, officers, soldiers and sailors, six months provisions, clothes, and transports. Gabriel de Sartine wrote to Lafayette before his departure to America:

The succours which the king proposes to send to the United States of North America to facilitate the means of consolidating their independence and throwing of the yoke of English tyranny.

1st. The Naval force destined for North America actually consists of Six Ships of line, one of which is of 80 Guns, Two of 74, and Three of 64, equipped for war; of another Ship of 64, armed en flute, Three Frigates and one Corvette.

2nd. The number of Transports cannot be determined at present, but they will carry about nine Thousand men, officers, soldiers & [Sailors] with Six months provision sea or land.

⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. xxxviii-xxxix.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 236.

⁹² Ibid., pp. xxxviii-xxxix.

[3.] The fleet will be provided with Six months provisions complete...and additional quantity of drinks and salted meats [...]

8. All the Cloaths, Arms & other Effects which shall be delivered by Mr. Franklyn or the Commissioners of Congress to be transported to America.

9. The Transports shall carry as great a number of flat bottom boats as possible, and the Ships of war shall be provided with all the Shallops & Canoes.⁹³

Lafayette sailed back to America in March 1780 to hold an important conference on September 21-22 at Hartford Connecticut between Washington and the supreme French Lieutenant General Jean-Baptiste comte de Rochambeau and Chevalier de Ternay, a French naval officer. Lafayette served as an interpreter and secretary at the meeting. This duty means more than translation work as Lafayette could speak both French and English, but it implies that he was in a high position to know such important and secret matters about the overall battle plan and agreements. Lafayette was the only person present at the meeting aside from the two French officers and Washington.⁹⁴ The three commanders agreed that offensive operations could not be undertaken until more aid arrived from France, so they called on the French government to provide more troops, ships, and supplies.⁹⁵

Foreign officers' integration into the decisive battle at Yorktown

The successful fortifications designed by the Polish engineer Tadeusz Kosciuszko at West Point aided significantly in the defence of the Hudson River. This not only helped prevent the British from dividing the colonies, but it also allowed no British

⁹³ Idzerda ed., 'From Gabriel de Sartine to Lafayette,' vol. 2, p. 369-372.

⁹⁴ Idzerda, ed., vol.3, p. 178.

⁹⁵ Idzerda, ed., vol.3, pp. 175-178.

vessels to cross 'the Great Chain'. Even if the strength of the fort was never actually tested by the British threat, its durability made an impact on the British decision to move their troops southwards, because it successfully obstructed their lines of communication and transportation. This led to potentially the worst betrayal of the American Revolution, which occurred when Benedict Arnold tried to sell the fort's plans to the British. Fortunately, he was exposed before the plan reached British hands. Otherwise, the Americans would have likely lost the 'most important post in America'.

The British switched the focus of their operations to the Southern theatre in 1780. After Kosciuszko completed the fortifications at West Point, he was moved to serve in the Southern campaign under Major General Nathanael Greene, the Southern Department Commander who held that title after Horatio Gates. At that time, the Americans had lost every major battle in the South. Lord Cornwallis's army captured Charleston, South Carolina, which was followed by a defeat at Camden under the Gates's command. Greene was shouldering a difficult task. After several defeats in the South, he now had a very small amount of 2,307 men who were all extremely weak and exhausted.⁹⁶ The Americans had suffered from severe loss and humiliation.

The matter that makes these foreign gentlemen special is that they all, aside from Kalb, played a part in the Siege of Yorktown, which subsequently led to the decisive victory of the American War of Independence. Even if the Battle of Camden in 1780 took his life, Kalb had performed his duties with distinction. After the Canadian Expedition with Lafayette was abolished, he was transferred to Valley Forge and maintained serving Washington's headquarters with the task of guarding

⁹⁶ Gerald M. Carbone, *Nathanael Greene* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p.154.

from the British line and making a report of the enemy's action. His mission and his life ended in the disastrous defeat at Camden under Gates' command.

Kalb as a second commander of the Southern Department at that time actually warned Gates to stay defensive because they needed more information on the enemy's plan and men, and the American troops comprised majorly with the militia and Continentals from different brigades, and these men had never manoeuvred together. But Gates after all made an attack with his troops of 1,500 Maryland and Delaware Continentals and 2,200 militiamen of North Carolina and Virginia. Cornwallis had 1,500 British regulars and 600 British legions, Irish volunteers and North Carolina Provincials. As Kalb had predicted, the inexperienced militia men were not prepared for what was coming. When they could not handle—at least mentally with a well-drilled and undaunted enemy. Charles Baxley, Chairman of Preservation of the Battle of Camden Advisory Group, explained that, 'when you shoot at a British Infantry Regiment, they don't run. You do hit some of them, but every time somebody falls, someone else stands. They march in order with bayonets coming in your direction. That was enough for the militiamen. Many of them put down their weapons and took off and run without firing a shot'.⁹⁷

But the Battle of Camden was another turning point of the Revolution, partially due to Washington's confidence as a leader. At this moment in time, he firmly believed in his plan and in the abilities of his own men, especially training his troops to be a professional force because of Steuben's insistence that 'drill instills discipline'. Gates was replaced by Greene to command the South, seconded by

⁹⁷ Charles Baxley, *Interview with South Carolina ETV, Camden: Defeat and Destruction, The Southern Campaign* (21 March 2017) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_rJ9zPHFHcg&list=PLEZ6FUyOSGdtQDnyb2r5xkjNX_SaekDe5&index=6> [accessed 1 April 2017].

Lafayette. He began with finding a new position for an encampment in a defensible and safe enough location for his small force. The force was presently stationed at Charlotte, North Carolina, where provisions were not sufficient. Greene needed a winter camp and enough time to nourish and reenergize his ill troops. He entrusted Kosciuszko, his engineer, with the task of finding a new position for encampment:

Examine the Mount of Little River twenty Miles down the Peedee and search for a good position for the army. You will report the make of Country, the nature of the soil, the quality of water, the quantity of Produce, number of mills, and the water transportation that maybe had up and down the River. You will also enquire respecting the creeks in the Rear the fords and the difficulty of passing them, and which you will report as soon as possible.⁹⁸

Kosciuszko then went down the river and found a site on the east bank of the Pee Dee, nearly opposite Cheraw Hill. Greene accepted Kosciuszko's advice of moving the men to this new location, and on December 26, 1780, he moved the force to the suggested position. Greene reported to Washington, 'Upon a little further enquiry I was fully convinced, and immediately dispatched Col. Kosciuszko to look out a position on the Pee Dee, that would afford a healthy camp and provisions in plenty. His report was favourable, and I immediately put the Army under marching'.⁹⁹

Greene knew that he could not follow Gates's strategy of using his entire force to attack Cornwallis, because this time he knew that there would not be a second chance if they failed. If he lost, the Americans would undoubtedly lose the War. Greene took a risk in dividing up his already small number of troops for his first

⁹⁸ Nathanael Greene, in the *Papers of Nathanael Greene*, vol.VI (North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), p. 54.

⁹⁹ Nathanael Greene 'To George Washington from Nathanael Greene, 28 December 1780', in *Founders Online*, National Archives < <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-04356>> [accessed 10 March 2017].

mission, sending approximately 1,000 men—under the command of Brigadier General Daniel Morgan, who had made his name in the Battle of Saratoga under Gates—to harass the British in western South Carolina, which was at that time under the command of Lieutenant Banastre Tarleton, with a force of 1,500 regulars and volunteers.

Morgan picked his men carefully. He knew that the militia could attack the British regulars from a distance, but up-close battle must be conducted by well-trained soldiers—the same ones who had been instructed by Steuben’s regulations to not be afraid and run away in the heat of battle. He chose militia veterans as well as well-trained Continentals. This time, they could not retreat or lose. He planned the lines of the troops in an effort to deceive the British by making a retreat to the woods in an effort to lure Tarleton closer to the trap, and then come back out of hiding to attack the British. This plan worked effectively, and subsequently forced the British to surrender. Morgan’s troops also succeeded in defeating the ‘Bloody Ban,’ a much-feared British officer. This brought much courage to the people and to the army.

Greene now was confident with his tactics, while Lord Cornwallis was furious with the outcome of the battle. He was determined to hunt down Greene’s army, but Greene’s army was not ready for such a confrontation. Greene began a game of ‘cat-and-mouse’ in an effort to diminish Cornwallis’s supplies and buy time while waiting for support from the French. Cornwallis finally found out where the Americans were hiding, and Greene was forced to escape by crossing the Dan River. He appointed Kosciuszko with the task of building flatboats for the men, and then in February of

1781, the Americans made it across the river before the British could catch them. Kosciuszko also built breastworks with snipers to protect the troops.¹⁰⁰

After the battle at Guildford Courthouse, Cornwallis did not follow Greene and waited to join the main British force. This allowed Benedict Arnold to attack Virginia, while Washington sent Lafayette and his light division to join Steuben's militia in Virginia in an effort to capture the traitorous Arnold. At the meeting at Richmond, Virginia, Steuben told Lafayette about his plan to capture Cornwallis in North Carolina by moving his militiamen to the west, Lafayette's division from the north, and Greene's from the south, in an effort to trap the British.¹⁰¹

Lafayette agreed with this plan, and Steuben submitted the plan to Washington. But before Washington could make any response, Cornwallis received the news that other British troops under Phillips and Arnold were being sent to Virginia, so he decided to march his troops to join with these. He arrived at Yorktown, Virginia, on August 3, and began to build fortifications. His army was now stranded on a narrow isthmus between the James River and Chesapeake Bay. Lafayette was watching him closely and would oppose him if he tried to send out patrols or foraging parties. Cornwallis was now confident, with his back to the sea, that the British Navy would be able to rescue him. But this all became hopeless after Washington enacted a secret plan.

Washington probably got his idea from Steuben, but he made his plan simpler and more effective, by engaging the American troops with the French force and the Navy. Washington and Rochambeau had the idea of luring the British into launching

¹⁰⁰ Storozynski, p.98.

¹⁰¹ Baron [von] Steuben 'To George Washington from Friedrich Wilhelm Ludolf Gerhard Augustin, Baron [von] Steuben, 1 March 1781,' in *Founders Online*, National Archives <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-05063>> [accessed 11 March 2017].

an attack in New York, but instead they made the decision to take on Cornwallis in Virginia. And while Washington and Rochambeau moved their armies south to Yorktown, a French fleet sailed into Chesapeake Bay. When a British fleet arrived to rescue Cornwallis, they were instead faced with the French war ships lying in wait. The battle lasted for four days, ending with the British troops escaping to New York, and 3,000 marines joined Lafayette's troops. Washington and Rochambeau approached Yorktown in late September with 8,000 American troops and 5,000 Frenchmen. On October 9, Washington ordered his artillery to bombard Cornwallis's encampment. Lafayette, with his French reinforcements, was appointed to assault the British redoubts. Charles Armand's Legion participated in the assault on Redoubt number 10, and the siege of Yorktown. The siege continued until October 17, 1781, and then finally came to an end. Cornwallis then finally sent Washington his articles of surrender.

Conclusion

Foreign officers had an important role in the American Revolution and the performance of the Continental Army. They had made a contribution since before the war had begun, as observers for the French government, which helped Versailles to decide if the Americans were worth the cost of waging the war with the British. The decision to get involved in this conflict led to various kinds of French assistance, such as money, arms, war supplies, fleet, and, especially, officers. Some of those officers were rejected by Congress because they were not qualified, but some were talented and pragmatic. Not only did American emissaries work to obtain foreign aid, but some foreign officers did this too.

This group of foreign officers was trusted with vital tasks. Many of them performed special jobs such as engineering and construction. The strongest and

strategic fort that could prevent the British from sailing from the north was designed and produced by the Polish engineer Kosciusko. Many French engineers such as du Coudray and Duportail came to take care of the artillery and engineering. Some foreign officers also commanded significant special infantry units such as Armand's Legion. Moreover, one of the Prussians, Baron Von Steuben, became a legendary drillmaster who significantly turned the American troops into a more professionalized force in months. In addition, a lot of them were Washington's most trustworthy and credible officers in the army, strengthening the commander-in-chief's leadership. Some even represented themselves as politicians to acquire French support—Marquis de Lafayette was an example of these virtues. Best of all, many of them became American heroes and did momentous work.

But we cannot deny that the American Revolutionary War and the Continental Army were appealing places for many European officers—coming to America meant hope for better opportunities and higher ranks than those in their motherland. However, they were not as skilful as they claimed as Congress refused several of those who were not qualified. This problem annoyed Congress and Washington throughout the war. The arrival of many foreign officers was, in fact, motivated by professional development. The arrival of foreign officers also proved to be the flaw in patriotism, as it fostered jealousy and mistrust among Congress members and the army, between the American officers and the foreigners, and among the American officers themselves.

But, among those foreigners, there were some who actually enjoyed serving under the American command and devoted themselves to the war's cause. The fort at West Point built by the Polish engineer was evidence of the worst treason in the American Revolution. An attempt to oust Washington from his command was stopped

by a French officer. Some of them also used their personal money to support their men and operations, as well as used their connections to gain foreign assistance.

The roles of foreign officers in the Continental Army were abundant and memorable. Their contributions were something to be taken into consideration when looking at how the Continental Army was organized and developed over war time. The Americans lacked war funds, supplies, and experts in military strategies and performance, and this problem was soothed by those foreign officers who participated in most aspects of the army, if not all. This led to the idea that the Americans thought of this as a war for all of mankind's liberty and equal protection, an important right that most of the world supported. As Benjamin Franklin wrote in 1777, 'Tis a Common Observation here that our Cause is the Cause of all Mankind; and that we are fighting for their Liberty in defending our own'.¹⁰²

¹⁰² Willcox, ed., 'From Benjamin Franklin to Samuel Cooper, 1 May 1777,' vol. 24, pp. 6-7.

Chapter 6 Military Academy

Introduction

During the Revolutionary War, the Americans relied heavily on European officers and their military skills and specialties, but once the war was over, they realized they could no longer count solely on European experts if they wanted to maintain their independence. Even then, it took America almost 30 years to create the first military academy in 1802. West Point, however, had its roots in the Revolutionary War, and this idea of establishing a military academy was motivated by the military schools instituted in Europe, which served as an inspiration. Besides that, it was not only the American officers who wished to have their own training school, but the foreign officers who joined the war also supported this thought.

Accounts of West Point during the Revolutionary War time are scarce. Some historians, like Joseph Ellis and Robert Moore in *School for Soldiers West Point and the Profession of Arms* describe and analyze the operations of West Point, illustrating how it prepared the way for future military leaders.¹ However, the book does not say anything about the background of the military school establishment. Stephen E. Ambrose's *Duty, Honor, Country: A history of West Point*² touches on the founding of the institute, putting forth the idea that military schools in Europe inspired the concept of creating one in America. He also speaks to the struggle Americans faced in forming their military school, which ended in several failures before West Point was formally established. More interestingly, the official website of the United States Military Academy remarks on the role of West Point in the Revolutionary War as the

¹ Joseph Ellis and Robert Moore, *School for Soldiers West Point and the Profession of Arms* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. vii.

² Stephen E. Ambrose, *Duty, Honor, Country: A History of West Point* (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1966).

most important strategic area on the Hudson River for both the American and British armies. There was some small detail which reveals why some American leaders may have supported the idea of forming a school for the arts and sciences of warfare.³

Foreign officers participated in both building the fort at West Point where the academy is located, and in helping to organize the corps of artillerists and engineers, the two main technical subjects that were most necessary. The fort West Point was designed and constructed by the Polish engineer Tadeusz Kosciuszko to ‘protract the defences of the [Hudson] River’.⁴ Washington himself requested Kosciuszko to accept this job since he deemed that nobody was better fitted for the task.⁵ The fort performed its duty, preventing the British from travelling across the river from the north during the war. After the conflict was over, it was suggested that West Point become the first American official military academy, with many leading American and foreign officers giving their consent that one should be created.

This chapter aims to compile some analyses on the original concepts for the creation of the first military academy in America, which occurred before the Revolutionary War began and the Continental Army was created. It also considers both American and foreign participation in forming the corps of artillery and engineers, which were the first two main subjects to be taught. Today, West Point is known as one of the most famous military academies. However, the history of West Point needs to be traced back to before America developed its national army.

³ ‘A Brief History of West Point’, in *United States Military Academy West Point*, <<http://www.usma.edu/wphistory/SitePages/Home.aspx>> [accessed 17 December 2016].

⁴ Hoth, ed., ‘From George Washington to Major General Horatio Gates, 11 September 1778,’ vol. 16, p. 575.

⁵ Ibid.

The idea of establishing a military academy to meet the need for specially trained experts began when the Americans realized that they had only a few capable men to fill these roles in the Revolutionary war. In the eighteenth century, new technology produced new types of military weapons. Small arms were improved, such as the newer flintlock muskets that replaced the older matchlock muskets, and cannons continued to improve in range and hitting power. Fortifications, entrenching, building camps, and roads as well as siege craft knowledge could both provide better protection to troops and increase the chances of winning the war. These new developments proved their effectiveness by field fortifications built during the war time, and when the Americans laid siege at York Town in 1781 and forced the British troops to surrender. However, managing these new weapons and defensive operations required technical skills. The war was no longer limited to cavalry and infantry troops; it demanded other capabilities such as engineering and artillery.

The military academy grew out of eighteenth-century military culture and aimed to help young gentlemen achieve proficiency in the specialized military subjects of artillery and engineering that required technical skill. These two fields were considered superior to infantry and cavalry, and the artillerymen and engineers were considered the intellectuals of the troops. The artillery piece was a powerful weapon with a longer range than that of muskets, and it could be used in multiple ways: destroying fortifications, preventing an enemy navy from landing, and frightening and killing opponents at a short range. Men who were able to use this weapon were assumed to be good at mathematic and geometric calculation, and for the new-born army in their first war, it was rare to find such men.

The military academy in fact was not a new idea in the Revolutionary era. In Europe, it was France that was very good at training its officers. The *École Royale*

Militaire, an outstanding school that produced the best officers in artillery, mathematics, and engineering, was founded in 1750; Louis XV gave the founding decree ‘It is necessary that the ancient prejudice which has instilled the belief that bravery alone makes the man of war would give place imperceptibly to a taste for the military studies which have introduced’.⁶ England also acknowledged this new trend in military practice. In 1741, nine years before the *École Militaire* was founded, King George II established the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich to prepare ‘gentlemen cadets’ for their service in artillery and engineering. At Woolwich, the English focused on mathematics, geometry, fortification, mining, gunnery, and bridge building.⁷

Because the American colonists had had contact with European troops in the French and Indian War, they also saw the necessity of instructing officers. As early as August 1774, and prior to the establishment of the Continental Army, the concept of creating a company made up of the finest officers was formed. Named for the five Virginia counties where it was stationed, the corps was known as the ‘Independent Companies of Fairfax—Prince William—Fauquier—Spotsylvania & Richmond’.⁸ The propose of creating these companies was to improve and more firmly establish the militia of the colonies with ‘not exceeding one hundred men,’ and to serve as an example for other colonies, ‘the Expediency of putting the Militia of this Colony upon a more respectable Footing, & hoping to excite others by our Example’.⁹ The officers were chosen by members of the corps and met to ‘learn and practice “military

⁶ Cited in Stephen E. Ambrose, *Duty, Honor, Country* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1966), p. 4.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 5.

⁸ Chase, ed., ‘From George Washington to the Officers of Five Virginia Independent Companies, 20 June 1775’, vol. 1, pp. 16–19.

⁹ *The Papers of George Mason, 1725–1792*, vol. 1, ed. by Robert A. Rutland, (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1970), pp. 210–212.

Exercise & Discipline” to deal with ‘the Indian Enemy in our Country [...] and all that is dear to British Subjects & Freeman’.¹⁰

George Washington was unanimously chosen as commander of these companies on March 17, 1775,¹¹ and he initially accepted the nomination.¹² In June, however, Congress decided to create the Continental Army as a united force and elected Washington to be the commander-in-chief. Washington chose the second seat and became a commanding general for the entire American army. The day he was chosen to command the American forces, Washington presented himself in Congress wearing the Fairfax Independent Company uniform, or the ‘blue and buff uniform’¹³ which marked him as a Virginian combatant. Washington was proud to be one, seeing as the officers of the companies were trained properly and took part in ‘the laudable pursuit engaged of training’.¹⁴ These Virginia companies provided an ideal example of how other new companies should operate, emphasizing, as Washington insisted, ‘an exertion of your [the Companies’] military skill, by no means to relax in the discipline of your Respective companies’.¹⁵

The Independent Companies eventually influenced Bostonians to create a similar military unit in 1776 called the elite ‘Boston’s new silk-stocking’ of the

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ ‘To George Washington from Richmond County Independent Company’, 17 March 1775’, *The Papers of George Washington*, Colonial Series, vol. 10, 21 March 1774–15 June 1775, ed. by W. W. Abbot and Dorothy Twohig (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995), p. 305.

¹² Abbot and Twohig, eds, ‘From George Washington to John Augustine Washington, 25 March 1775’, pp. 308–309.

¹³ The uniforms of the Company were in blue and described as, ‘turn’d up with Buff; with plain yellow metal Buttons, Buff Waist Coat & Breeches, & white Stockings’. See *The Papers of George Mason*, 1725–1792, vol. 1, pp. 210–212.

¹⁴ Abbot and Twohig, eds, ‘From George Washington to John Augustine Washington, 25 March 1775’, vol. 10, pp. 308–309.

¹⁵ Chase, ed., ‘From George Washington to the Officers of Five Virginia Independent Companies, 20 June 1775’, vol. 1, pp. 16–19.

Independent Company.¹⁶ The company had 80 members, including John Hancock who was promoted as a colonel.¹⁷ It was known as ‘a fine company [...] consisting of young Gentlemen of the first families’.¹⁸ This company followed Virginian practice, acting as a training unit for officers to obtain military expertise, ‘they are the School for forming officers, they take great pains to acquire military Skill and will make a fine figure in a Little While’.¹⁹ Little detail exists about this corps, since it was not in a militia system or under the Continental Army’s control. The members were a small number of wealthy men, and the unit was perhaps created to prevent them from being recruited into the army.

With the creation of the Continental Army, these companies seemed less necessary as America now had a united force with colonial quotas and supported by the militia. Each colony had stronger and more varied forces to defend themselves. The Virginia Independent Companies were replaced with new troops in August 1775 when the Third Virginia Convention authorized an increase of ‘fourteen Hundred & forty five Men’.²⁰ The elite Boston Company lasted longer as they had the means to act freely and without control by any institution. Nevertheless, these Independent Companies indicated that ideas conceiving of a military school or unit to teach and train officers had occurred even before the Continental Army was created.

The objective of the military academy was to instruct and prepare officers with specific military skills. In the eighteenth century, the military technical services

¹⁶ ‘Introduction’, *The Adams Papers, Earliest Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, June 1753–April 1754, September 1758–January 1759, ed. by L. H. Butterfield (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), pp. 1–42.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Adams Family Correspondence*, vol. 2, ed. by L. H. Butterfield and others (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press Offices, 1963), p. 73.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Chase, ed., ‘To George Washington from Burwell Bassett, 30 August 1775,’ vol. 1, pp. 379–381.

included artillery, military engineering, and logistics.²¹ The logistics in the Continental Army appeared ineffective because supplying the troops proved to be one of the main challenges. However, the regiments of artillery and engineers played an important role. Washington and his subordinates made several attempts to find a way to set up a school, or at least some place to educate their officers so they could develop some expertise in these skills. Officers and men were self-taught and trained, using their own experience, the input of veterans, and their work with foreign officers. Even if there was no official military school in America during this time, the need for one clearly existed.

Artillery

The impulse to create a military school was derived from political and military leaders, and some credit should be given to Washington because he was fond of the professional army style in Europe. However, the person who was most instrumental in the creation of a military school was Henry Knox. Knox owned the London Book-Store in Boston, where he liked to converse with British officers and studied military science in his spare time. He had joined a local militia company, and, on November 17, 1775, he was made a chief of artillery by Congress with Washington's recommendation. Washington replaced Colonel Gridley with 26-year-old Knox, as Washington's thought Knox was the most suitable person the army could acquire, 'the Command of the Artillery should no longer continue in Colo. Gridley, & knowing of no person better qualified to supply his place, or whose appointment will give more general satisfaction, have taken the liberty of recommending Henry Knox Esqr'.²²

²¹ Chambers, p.3.

²² Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 8 November 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 330-333.

Knox also had been known for his intelligence by John Adams. The two men often discussed a list of military books. Adams requested information on engineers, fortification, and gunnery, as well as any military science books available.²³ In Knox's letter to John Adams on September 25, 1776, he wrote a 'Military academy must be instituted at any expense. We're fighting against a people well acquainted with the theory and practice of war, brave by discipline and habit'.²⁴

Washington's decision to replace the prior artillery commander, Colonel Richard Gridley, with Knox, changed the traditions of the Continental Army forever. Gridley was a provincial artillery officer who had gained experience from major battles in the French and Indian War. Knox, on the other hand, was still young and inexperienced but eager to study military arts and history by himself; he had even learned French to read artillery books. This way of practice became one of the Continental Army officers' characteristics—the officers acquired military skills by reading and learning from experience. After being appointed, Knox asked where the artillery was, and the Commander told him that there was none. Knox suggested bringing the captured British artillery at Fort Ticonderoga back to Boston, and Washington agreed, assigning Knox to take the guns. This was Knox's first task as the head of an artillery corps.²⁵

After the defeat in New York in August 1776, Knox expressed his concern about Washington's heavy workload in a letter to his wife Lucy, wishing he had some capable men to help him:

²³ Taylor, ed., 'John Adams to Henry Knox, 2 November 1775,' vol. 4, pp. 189–191.

²⁴ Taylor, ed., 'To John Adams from Henry Knox, 25 September 1776,' vol. 5, pp. 40–42.

²⁵ Chase, ed., 'Instructions to Colonel Henry Knox, 16 November 1775,' vol. 2, pp. 384–385.

The enemy since our retreat from Long Island have attempted but little, what their next attempt will be is a little uncertain, as I said before we want men capable of great Ideas & who are acquainted with military matters. The General has such a vast load upon his mind that I wish for some easement to him But many promotions have been made with very little judgement some Good men we have but we all want experience.²⁶

He also realized that the British might actually have won the war if they had moved to block the American troops at the Hudson River, but they had not, and Knox was astonished to learn that the British were less intelligent than he had thought:

This would have left 15,000 men at least to have made a quest up the north River and landed in our rear and fortified - had they have taken this measure which in good policy they ought to have done, they might at one stroke have reduc'd the whole army to the necessity of surrendering prisoners without being able to fight in the least - But in this & several other capital matters they have not acted the great Warriors - indeed I see nothing of the vast about them either in their designs or execution.²⁷

In Knox's opinion, although the British may have missed their chance at victory because of their lack of sharp officers, the American army was even worse, 'if they are little thou knowest full well we are much less, and that nothing less than the

²⁶ Henry Knox, 'Henry Knox to Lucy Knox, 7 September 1776', in *The Henry Knox Papers*, September-December 1776, American History
<<http://www.americanhistory.amdigital.co.uk/Documents/Details/Henry-Knox-to-Lucy-Knox-criticizing-promotions-and-comparing-Americans-to-Romans/GLC02437.00442>> [accessed 9 August 2016].

²⁷ Francis S. Drake, 'Henry Knox to William Knox, 23 September 1776', in *Life and Correspondence of Henry Knox: major-general in the American Revolution Army*, (Boston: Samuel G. Drake, 1873)
<https://archive.org/stream/lifecorrespond00drakrich/lifecorrespond00drakrich_djvu.txt> [accessed 2 August 2016].

infatuation of the enemy and the immediate interposition of thy providence has sav'd this rabble army'.²⁸ He openly complained about the Continental officers:

There is a radical evil in our army – the lack of the officers. We ought to have men of merit in most extensive and unlimited sense of the word. On stead of which, the bulk of the officers of the army are a parcel of ignorant, stupid men, who might make tolerable soldiers, but [are] bad officers; and until Congress forms an establishment to induce men proper for the purpose to leave their usual employments and enter the service, it is ten to one they will be beat till they are heavily tired of it.²⁹

Knox reported to Congress emphasizing the importance of the officers as war experts and also mentioned the British military school that the American should follow:

As officers can never get with confidence until they are Master of their profession, an Academy established on a liberal plan would be the utmost service to America, where the whole theory and practice of Fortifications and the same plan as that of Woolwich making allowance, for the differences of circumstances.³⁰

Knox praised Washington as a great man but believed that he needed good assistants, and these were rare to find. Therefore, Knox decided that America needed a school that could teach young soldiers to be good officers. He wrote, 'We ought to have academies, in which the whole theory of the art of war shall be taught and every encouragement possible be given to draw persons into the army that may give lustre to our arms. As the army now stands, it is only a receptacle for ragamuffins'.³¹ His

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

proposal was accepted by Congress, which appointed a committee to aid in planning an academy and ‘to prepare and bring in a Plan of a military Accademy at the Army: The Members chosen Mr. Hooper, Mr. Lynch, Mr. Wythe, Mr. Williams and Mr. J. Adams’.³²

On December 18, 1776 Knox drafted *A Plan for the establishment of a Continental Artillery*. He underlined the importance of artillery discipline and recommended the unit compositions and suggested that Congress try to entice smart men to join the army, ‘In the modern mode of carrying on a war, there is nothing which contributes more to make an army victorious than a well-regulated and well-disciplined Artillery’ together with providing artillery troops with a sufficiency of cannon and stores as Europe had done.³³ In his opinion the superiority of artillery was vital for American victory.

Since Knox always wanted to organize a permanent military academy like the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich. In winter 1778 he started his own school at Pluckemin, New Jersey as a Formal Officer and Artillery Training Facility. George Washington wrote to Henry Lauren on November 27, 1778, specified the places for the army in winter-quarters, ‘The disposition for winter-quarters is as follows. Nine brigades will be stationed on the west side of Hudson’s River, exclusive of the Garrison at West Point [...] The Park of Artillery will be at Pluckemin’.³⁴

This place was perceived as a military academy for the general public. The *Independent Ledger* for 6 March published a letter ‘from a foreigner to a gentleman

³² John Adams, ‘From Henry Knox to John Adams 1 October 1776’ in *The Works of John Adams*, vol. 3, Autobiography, Diary, Notes of a Debate in the Senate, Essays, 1851 <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/adams-the-works-of-john-adams-vol-3-autobiography-diary-notes-of-a-debate-in-the-senate-essays/simple>> [accessed 28 July 2016].

³³ Chase, ed., vol. 7, pp. 381–389.

³⁴ Ford, eds., ‘George Washington to the President of Congress, Head-Quarters, Fredericksburg, 27 November 1778’, Vol.7, <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2411>> [accessed 28 July 2016].

in this city Near Middlebrook Camp', dated 22 February 1779' which described Henry Knox's 'preceptor of the park':

I had, till now, only seen the outside of the academy. It was raised several feet above the other buildings, and capped with a small cupola, which had a very good effect. The great room was fifty feet by thirty, arched in an agreeable manner, and neatly plaistered within. At the lower end of the room was a small enclosure, elevated above the company, where the preceptor to the park gave his military lessons. This was converted into an orchestra, where the music of the army entertained the company. The stile of the dinner was of that happy kind, between the extremes of parade and unmeaning profusion, and a too great sparingness and simplicity of dishes. Its luxury could not have displeased a republican. The toasts were descriptive of the day, while the joy and complacency of the company could have given umbrage to none, except our enemies the British.³⁵

A month later the *Pennsylvania Packet* also praised the appearance of Knox's artillery school:

I rode...to a place about eight or nine miles distant, called Pluckemin, where the artillery have their winter quarters. The huts of this corps are situated on a rising ground, at a small distance from the road, and unfold themselves in a very pretty manner as you approach. A range of field-pieces, mortars, howitzers, and heavy cannon, make the front line of a parallelogram; the other sides are composed of huts for the officers and privates; there is also an

³⁵ 'Ball, in Pluck'emin, description of dancers', in *Independent Ledger* 1/37 (Boston, MA: Draper and Folson, 1779) < <http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/PacanNew/CITATION/C0048/C0048074.htm> > [accessed 4 September 2016].

academy where lectures are read on tactics and gunnery, and work huts for those employed in the laboratory, all very judiciously arranged. This military village is superior, in some respects, to most of those I had seen.³⁶

In fact, the Pluckemin cantonment was intentionally built for three units: the Military Stores Department, the Park of Artillery, and the Continental Artillery Brigade staff.³⁷ Construction started in December 1778 and was finished in February 1779, and one of those facilities was an academy building which was used for classes and training of specific knowledge. Even if this place was used to train the artillerists for six months, and they left in June 1779, it made a significant step towards a permanent military school in the future.

North Callahan, the author of *Henry Knox: General Washington's General* considered Knox a revolutionary military academy pioneer. In his interview with the New York Times, he said, 'I'm convinced that Knox was the founder of West Point. It started from Knox at Pluckemin. But Washington and Alexander Hamilton always get all the credit'.³⁸ This idea was well supported by Alan Aimone, a senior member of the staff at the United States Military Academy Library, 'There is no conflict with West Point. Pluckemin was the most formal attempt at training artillery officers during the American Revolution. The fact is it didn't go anywhere afterward, and West Point did'.³⁹

³⁶ Frank Moore, 'Celebration at Pluckemin', *Pennsylvania Packet*, (1779)

<http://www.historycarper.com/1779/03/06/celebration-at-pluckemin/> [accessed 3 September 2016].

³⁷ John L. Seidel, 'Archaeological Research at the 1778-79 Winter Cantonment of the Continental Artillery, Pluckemin, New Jersey', in *Northeast Historical Archaeology*: Vol. 12 12: Iss. 1, Article 4, (1983) <<http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/neha/vol12/iss1/4>> [accessed 10 August 2016].

³⁸ Robert Hanley, 'Dig in Jersey Revealing Revolutionary War Site', *New York Times*, (1984) <<http://www.nytimes.com/1984/03/06/nyregion/dig-in-jersey-revealing-revolutionary-war-site.html>> [accessed 9 August 2016].

³⁹ *Ibid.*

Engineering

Because Congress was dealing with more important issues during the Revolutionary War, such as money and manpower deficiencies, the attempt to create a military academy was far from becoming a reality. Considering the idea that it takes time to train people to become experts in these building, machine, and weapon skills, other options were more attractive when the war was already underway. Congress agreed to send its representatives to seek assistance abroad. In December 1775, Congress appointed its Committee of Correspondence to search for skilful engineers to ‘engage in the service’.⁴⁰

Because it was defeated in the previous French and Indian war, France was Congress’ hope for assistance. French people seemed inclined to support America. The thoughts of famous French philosophers such as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Turgot persuaded people to think of America as a land of humanity and equity, which was free from mastering systems and corruptions. The ideas of the Enlightenment greatly influenced French people and played an important role in leading France to take part in the war and support America.

The eighteenth century was the era of modernization and industrialization, and at that time, France was the centre of military academy and knowledge. There was a need for engineering expertise for industry and infrastructure. It was also the period of warfare evolution. In 1748, the French founded *École royale du génie de Mézières* or ‘the Royal Engineering School at Mézieres’ to produce qualified officers in engineering for the engineer corps of the royal army who would have skills in offensive and defensive military operations. *École royale du Génie de Mézières* showed and emphasized defence skills and battle preparation. School applicants had

⁴⁰ Ford, eds., ‘2 December 1775,’ vol. 3, pp. 400-401.

to pass a difficult mathematics exam and then spend six years in studies. In the first year, students focused on theory; in the second year, students on military training; in the third and fourth years, students worked in the regiment; and in the last two years, students worked with engineering seniors.⁴¹

The students of *École royale du génie de Mézières* were greatly influenced by the writings of Sébastien Le Prestre de Vauban, particularly *De l'attaque et de la défense des places* or 'On Siege and Fortification'.⁴² Vauban was a seventeenth-century French skilled engineer and master of siege craft. His theory emphasized the idea that the troops who employed a siege could reduce losses by approaching systematically through connected trenches, and they could acquire better protection by building earthwork if needed. Most engineering volunteers who came to America used Vauban's doctrines. But before the French assisted the American Army, the Americans used the French handbook, Count de Clairac's *Field Engineer*, and the English textbook of John Miller, *Treatises on Artillery and Fortifications*.

The first chief engineer of the Continental Army, however, was not French; it was Richard Gridley, and he was also the first American Chief of Artillery. Gridley had worked as a surveyor and British engineer assistant in Boston. When the Revolutionary War broke out, Gridley was the most capable engineer because of his experience. But as commander-in-chief, Washington was not pleased with the appointment of Gridley because he knew that experience was not enough, and the army required knowledge in the area of fortifications. He wrote to congress, 'We have no one here better Qualified, he has done very little hitherto in that department. But if

⁴¹ Mathieu Aysel, *The teaching of mathematics in France: The setting up of the Grandes Ecoles, School of Mathematics and Statistics*, < <http://www-groups.mcs.st-andrews.ac.uk/history/Projects/Aysel/index.html> > [accessed 1 September 2016].

⁴² Ibid.

the Congress chuse to appoint him, I will take care that he pays a proper attention to it'.⁴³

In 1776, when Congress decided to expand the Continental Army to have 88 infantry battalions, Colonel Rufus Putnam, who took over the position of chief engineer from Gridley, submitted the idea of establishing the Corps of Engineers.⁴⁴ His letter to Washington expressed his concern that the army had not had a permanent Corps of Engineers yet:

I have long Wondered that no Corps of Enginears was yet Established. The Number of Works to be Executed; the Nesesity of Dispatch in them; the Imposability for Common hands to be made at once to Comprehend what they ought to do. With out a Core of Enginears is Established the Works Never will be properly Executed nor don in a Reasonable time'.⁴⁵

Putnam realized that he might not be qualified for this position, but this unit should be created permanently because it was necessary for fortifications. He wrote to Washington:

True it is that, after my arrival in New York, I had read from books on fortification, and knew more than when I began at Roxbury; but I had not the vanity to suppose that my knowledge was such as to give me a claim to the

⁴³ George Washington, 'Washington to the President of Congress, December 31, 1775', *American Archives Documents of the American Revolutionary Period, 1774-1776*, <<http://amarch.lib.niu.edu/islandora/object/niu-amarch%3A91858>> [accessed 4 September 2016].

⁴⁴ Chase and Grizzard, eds., 'To George Washington from Colonel Rufus Putnam, 3 October 1776', vol. 6, pp. 461-462.

⁴⁵ Chase and Grizzard, eds., 'To George Washington from Colonel Rufus Putnam, 26 September 1776', vol. 6, pp. 407-409.

first rank in a corps of engineers, yet my experience convinced me that such a corps was necessary to be established'.⁴⁶

In October 1776, Putnam submitted a plan for a Corps of Engineers establishment to Washington and enclosed an undated document titled 'An Establishment for a Corps of Engineer[s] artificer[s] &c. To Consist of 2 Battallions of 8 Companys Each 100 men In a Company Including officers'.⁴⁷ Washington quickly forwarded this plan to Congress, but the plan was turned down. Putnam then resigned his commission as chief engineer.

In 1776, Congress sent Silas Deane to Paris as its representative to trade American goods for French clothing products and weapons and build a friendship with France. Deane was also appointed to resolve the need for engineers. His mission was considered Congress's first attempt to find engineers abroad. Deane's mission was successful in recruiting engineering staff to the Continental Army. He signed a contract with Phillippe Charles Tronson du Coudray, a French adjutant general artillery specialist and the writer of treatises on gunpowder and metallurgy as applied to artillery. Deane was impressed by Coudray's expertise and personality as he wrote, "M' Coudray has the character of the first Engineer in the Kingdom, and his manners and disposition will, I am confident, be highly pleasing to you, as he is a plain, modest, active, sensible man, perfectly adverse to Frippery and parade".⁴⁸ Deane decided to hire Coudray and promised him a higher rank in the artillery corps when he joined the American army. Deane's letter explained Coudray's characteristics to insist to

⁴⁶ Mary Cone, *Life of Rufus Putnam with extracts from his journal and an account of the first settlement in Ohio* (Cleveland, W. W. Williams, 1886), p. 48.

⁴⁷ Chase and Frank E. Grizzard, eds., 'To George Washington from Colonel Rufus Putnam, 3 October 1776', vol. 6, pp. 461–462.

⁴⁸ Silas Deane, 'Silas Deane to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, August 15, 1776', *American Archives*, Documents of the American Revolutionary Period, 1774-1776, <<http://amarch.lib.niu.edu/islandora/object/niu-amarch%3A95765>> [accessed 1 October 2016].

Congress that, 'He is an officer of the first eminence, and Adjutant-General in the French Service, and his prospects here of rising are exceeding good [...] His proposals in general have been, that he should be General of the Artillery'.⁴⁹ However, the decision depended on only Congress or their Committee of War, or of their commander-in-chief.

Deane assigned Coudray an important task of taking two hundred pieces of brass cannon, with every necessary article for twenty-five thousand men provided with an able and experienced General at the head of it. In addition he was assigned to bring with him 'a number of fine and spirited young officers in his train, and all without advancing one shilling'⁵⁰. At the end of the letter, Deane praised Coudray's sacrifice to leave his country to go to America.⁵¹ The Articles of Agreement was made between Deane and du Coudray in September 1776 stating that du Coudray would be promoted a major general and shall have the direction of artillery and ordnance and corps of engineers.⁵²

This agreement between Deane and Coudray brought about dissatisfaction and disputation when the American officers learned they would be subordinated by a French man. When Coudray arrived in America in May 1777, the decision was protested by three major American officers, John Sullivan, Nathanael Greene, and Henry Knox; these men would not agree to be outranked by a French officer. The situation became intense when these three men threatened to resign, especially Knox

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² 'Articles of Agreement between Silas Dearie, Agent for the United Colonies of North America in France, and the Sieur Philippus-Charles John Baptist Tronson du Coudray September 11, 1776', *American Archives*, Documents of the American Revolutionary Period, 1774-1776, <<http://amarch.lib.niu.edu/islandora/object/niu-amarch%3A77922>> [accessed 1 October 2016].

who was almost succeeded by Coudray. Washington could not allow this to happen, so he wrote to Congress:

There is an Agreement between Mr Dean & him [Monsr Coudré], that he shall have the chief command of the Artillery [...] if it be true, it may involve the most injurious consequences. General Knox who has deservedly acquired the character of One of the most valuable Officers in the service, and who combating almost innumerable difficulties in the department he fills, has placed the Artillery upon a footing, that does him the greatest Honor. He, I am persuaded, would consider himself injured by an Appointment superseding his command, & would not think himself at liberty to continue in the service. Should such an Event take place, in the present state of things, there would be too much reason to apprehend a train of ills, and such as might convulse & unhinge this Important Department.⁵³

In December 1776, Benjamin Franklin came to Paris to unite with Deane and to build a relationship with France. Franklin mentioned military engineers as a matter of urgency to King Louis XVI. The King passed on the request to his ministry of war, the Comte de Saint Germain, and Germain appointed Lieutenant Colonel Louis Lebègue Duportail to be sent to America with three other engineering subordinates: Jean-Baptiste de Gouvion, Jean Baptiste Joseph, chevalier de Laumoy, and Louis de Shalx la Radiere. On February 17, 1777, all four officers signed a two-year contract with American administrators.

Both Duportail and Coudray requested a higher rank and better position when serving in America, but they had conflicts over the position of chief of artillery and

⁵³ Chase, ed., 'From George Washington to John Hancock, 31 May 1777', vol. 9, pp. 569–570.

engineer. Washington noticed this conflict, ‘there is a Jealousy between [Duportail and Coudray] and setting them to work together would only create confusion and widen the Breach’.⁵⁴ Thus, Coudray was appointed as inspector general of ordinance and military manufactories in August 1777. Unfortunately, Coudray suddenly died in September of that year when he fell from his horse into a river and drowned. Coudray’s death ended the competition between the two French engineers and secured Duportail’s position as chief engineer. In November 1777, he replaced Putnam.

The Americans opposed giving promotions and higher ranks to foreign officers—even Washington complained about this issue. Tensions started to increase in May 1777. In Washington’s opinion these men had ‘no attachment or ties to the Country,’ and different languages caused problem of communication and giving orders. More importantly being outranked by foreigners would cause dissatisfaction, lessen their merit, and make them refuse to join the army.⁵⁵ However, Washington still realized the importance of artillerists and engineers because America could not train men to fill these positions in time. His criticism did not extend to artillery officers and engineers since the first of these were ‘useful’ and the second were ‘absolutely necessary’ when the army did not have any.⁵⁶

Duportail, however, found it difficult to command his men. The Americans were rude and disrespected foreign officers, especially the French. He found it difficult to command and make the men obey his order since he was a colonel, ‘the colonels of the army and even the militia colonels refusing to follow my directions about the works. They have been accustomed to Say that they are colonels as much as

⁵⁴ Elizabeth S. Kite, ‘Washington to Gates, 29 July 1777’, in *Brigadier-General Louis Lebeque Duportail* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1933), p. 30.

⁵⁵ George Washington, ‘George Washington to Richard Henry Lee, May 17, 1777’, in *Papers of the Lee Family Digital Archive* <<http://leefamilyarchive.org/papers/letters/transcripts-gw%20delegates/DIV0042.html>> [accessed 28 September 2016].

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

I and had no orders to receive from me'. In a letter to Congress, he complained about the situation which drove him to almost quit and return home, 'I cannot express all the difficulty i met with, and i can Say that i had need of the largest, Stock of patience and Zeal to be kept from abandoning them entirely'. Duportail described that the French were treated really badly. His men were insulted everywhere they went, 'on public Service and in private life we meet with anxieties and mortifications which we can bear no longer'. He gave Congress an ultimatum required them to appoint the chief engineer to a higher rank, 'The rank of general officer which i call for witt immediately put a Stop to those inconveniences, as it is respected here it witt give our corps the becoming weight and regard'.⁵⁷

In a quick response, Congress made Duportail brigadier general on November 17, 1777, as they began to realize that it was not easy for American men to be supervised and controlled by foreign officers. This decision was crucial for the growth of the corps of engineers—as long as the French stayed in America, the American officers would learn from them. This also affected the establishment of the military academy since the French officers fully supported this thought. The inherited knowledge later on developed was to be the main syllabus of the academy.

Even if foreign officers had not been welcomed into the Continental Army, Congress still acquired many engineering volunteers, but they never had enough to work throughout the duration of the war. Washington tried to make it easier for the engineers by requesting that Congress create a geographer department to lighten the engineer corps load. This special department was designed to inspect the area of

⁵⁷ 'Louis Duportail to the President of Congress, November 13, 1777', cited in Paul K. Walker, *Engineers of Independence: A Documentary History of the Army Engineers in the American Revolution, 1775-1783*, Historical Division, Office of Administrative Services, Office of the Chief of Engineers (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981), pp. 20-21.

encampment and movement and keep watch over opponents. Congress appointed Robert Erskin, who was a Scottish 'good geographer', and Washington recommended him to work in this unit. Erskin, who had previously been helping the Continental Army as its mapmaker, also requested that Congress find assistants for him; he specified their qualifications as 'young gentlemen of Mathematical genius, who are acquainted with the principles of Geometry, and who have a taste for drawing, would be the most proper assistants for a Geographer. Such, in a few days practice, may be made expert surveyors'.⁵⁸ Erskin also gave the point of the importance of cartography as he described it, 'A great deal may be done towards the formation of an useful Map'. The map would help to make accurate some general outlines and some remarkable places. It would also point out other places by information and computed distances to give a tolerable idea of the country'.⁵⁹

Duportail as Chief Engineer carried on Putnam's intention to create a permanent Corps of Engineers. In January 1778, he wrote his plan and added the necessity of fortifications for protection:

If fortification is necessary in any Armies, it is peculiarly so in those, which like ours, from a deficiency in the practice of manoeuvres cannot oppose any to those of the enemy-being necessitated therefore to receive him on their own ground, they ought always to be protected either by a natural or artificial Fortification, if it were only to have (under favor of the resistance of this fortification) sufficient time to ascertain the Result of the Enemy's movements

⁵⁸ Grizzard, ed., 'Robert Erskine to George Washington, Ringwood, August 1, 1777', vol. 10, pp. 476–478.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

where his principal force is directed-anwhere his greatest effort is to be made'.⁶⁰

He insisted that it was important to choose the soldiers to perform in these companies and even more crucial to select the right officers. He emphasized the requirements of qualified sappers so that they would continue do the job after the French returned home. This message strongly urged Americans to rethink establishing their own military school and training their own officers:

The Companies of Sappers now proposed might serve as a school to them-they might there acquire at once the practical part of the Construction of Works, and if choice be made of young men, well bred, intelligent and fond of Instruction, we shall take pleasure in giving them principles upon the choice of Situations, and the methods of adapting works to the ground.⁶¹

Although Congress delayed moving forward with this plan, it eventually authorized three engineering companies with some adjustments, 'in the engineering department three companies be established, each to consist of 1 captain, 3 lieutenants, 4 sergeants, 4 corporals and 60 privates'.⁶² Congress also approved the idea of providing education for its officers in this specific field:

Three Captains and nine Lieutenants are wanted to officer the Companies of Sappers: As this Corps will be a School of Engineering it opens a Prospect to such Gentlemen as enter it and will pursue the necessary studies with diligence, of becoming Engineers & rising to the Important Employments

⁶⁰ Lengel, ed., Louis Lebègue Duportail, 'Plan for an engineering corps, January 18, 1778', vol. 13, pp. 262-266.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² 'Resolution of Congress, May 27, 1778', *The Library of Congress*, <<https://www.loc.gov/item/90898050/>> [accessed 4 September 2016].

attached to that Profession as the direction of fortified Places &c. The Qualifications required of the Candidates are that they be Natives and have a knowledge of the Mathematicks & drawing, or at least be disposed to apply themselves to those studies—They will give in their Names at Head-Quarters.⁶³

Duportail also made it a priority in seeking qualified officers. He also straightforwardly criticized the American engineers and believed that some of them were not capable of doing their duties, ‘When we first Came into the Country [...] We learned that there were not-that all the Gent. who had the title of Engineers’. It was impossible for French engineers to follow their direction, ‘we required of the Congress that not any of us Should be ever commanded by them’.⁶⁴

In March 1779, Congress officially formed the ‘Corps of Engineers’ which took ‘rank and enjoy the same rights, honours, and privileges, with the other troops on continental establishment’.⁶⁵ A few months later, Congress refreshed regulations for the Corps of Engineers including directions for the Companies of Sappers and Miners to be taught ‘the established manual Exercise and Evolutions on days when they are not employed in the particular duties of their department and the same police and discipline shall be practiced in their companies as in the other parts of the army’. These regulations began the first engineering training in the Continental Army:

15thly. the Commandant of the Corps of Engineers shall take the most effectual and expeditious method to have the Sappers and Miners instructed in their duty, and as probably the officers of these companies whose talents

⁶³ Lengel, ed., ‘General Orders, 9 June 1778’, vol. 15, pp. 357–358.

⁶⁴ ‘Louis Duportail to the President of Congress, Camp White Plains, 27th August 1778’, cited in Walker, *Engineers of Independence*, pp. 21-22.

⁶⁵ Ford, eds., *Journal of the Continental Congress 1774-1789*, Vol.13, p. 305.

and acquirements fit them for the profession, will be appointed Engineers, the Commandant of the Corps of Engineers shall form a plan of instructions for these officers which being approved by the board of War and commander-in-chief shall be carried into execution.

16thly. The Commandant of the Corps of Engineers shall appoint an Engineer or Engineers whom he shall judge but best qualified, to read lectures on fortification proper for towns or the field; on the manner of adapting fortifications to different grounds and positions; to regulate their extent according to the number of men intended to be covered; Upon Attack and Defence; Upon the use of Mines and their construction; Upon the manner of forming plans, reconnoitering a country and choosing, laying out and fortifying a Camp'.⁶⁶

There was no clear evidence that engineering education was pursued. However, it was obvious that the Corps of Engineers of the Continental Army worked effectively when it laid siege to the British troops at Yorktown. The engineering soldiers must have been trained and gained knowledge and experience during their service. Washington was fascinated by the Corps of Engineers' performance. He wrote to Congress praising his French engineers, 'I am very strongly impressed, and do injustice to very conspicuous merit, if I did not upon the present occasion offer my testimony to the distinguished abilities and services, both of General Duportail and Colonel Gouvion'. Washington was thrilled by their 'practice of Europe' and sieges which were considered a particular quality of the corps of engineers. He applauded that the engineering department made an important role in the success. This was due to 'these

⁶⁶ Huggins, ed., 'Regulations for the Corps of Engineers From George Washington's general orders, July 30, August 2, and August 3, 1779', vol. 22, pp. 29–30.

officers [who were] supported by a series of conduct in the line of their department, which makes them not depend merely upon the present circumstances'.⁶⁷

French recommendations for artillery and engineering reform and military school establishment

After the war ended in 1781, debate ensued over whether to keep the standing army during times of peace. Top ranking French engineers, such as Duportail and his subordinate Jean-Batiste de Gouvion, suggested America maintain an engineering department and establish a way to train its own officers. In Gouvion's letter to Washington, he proposed a valuable plan for establishing a military academy and combining the corps of engineering and artillery.⁶⁸ Gouvion explained how to combine the two corps and how to prepare future officers to continue the practice and performance. He stressed the importance of these two corps which required different methods and instruction for their officers to follow and regulation to be established to achieve it. The officers needed fully learned the theories and practice of it. Gouvion asserted that it was absolutely necessary that the officers of the corps should be 'intelligent, attentive, and industrious'.⁶⁹

The military operations of artillery and engineer have a connection and a good artillery officer should have vast knowledge of engineer service and vice versa. Gouvion suggested uniting these two corps, and artillery and engineering students should share some fundamental subjects in order to know and perform in both units if necessary. This similar practice had been carried out in France in which the officers

⁶⁷ 'From George Washington to the President of Congress, Head-Quarters, near York, 31 October, 1781', *The Writing of George Washington: Being His Correspondence, Addresses, Messages, and Other Papers, Official and Private, Selected and Published from the Original Manuscripts*, ed. by Jared Sparks, vol.8 (Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Metcalf, and Hilliard, Gray, and Co., 1835), p. 202.

⁶⁸ 'To George Washington from Jean-Baptiste de Gouvion, 16 April 1783', in *Founders Online, National Archives*, < <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-11075> > [accessed 4 June 2016].

⁶⁹ Ibid.

of the two corps were sent to help the other in wartime. However, sometimes because they had only general knowledge of a service they did not belong to, so when they had spare time the officers should find out what knowledge they needed to acquire from the other corps.

Gouvion then insisted that the basis to raise an effective corps was to have 'a well-established military academy and Kept up With great care'. He laid the essential courses of the artillery and engineering. The institution required officers who obtained knowledge and experience from important operations as well as a good professor of mathematics and another of drawing to give instructions. The young gentlemen who would be admitted in the academy must have a liberal education and knowledge of arithmetic, geometry and trigonometry, and they needed to acquire the knowledge of mathematics to perfection. They were also required to study the different machines employed by artillerists and engineers, their construction, how to put the forces in motion, and what the effect to expect. A cadet would be taught to survey to draw exactly the ground surveyed by him to be able to 'make plans and [profils] of works and buildings in the greatest detail'. All these instruction parts were a responsibility of the professors, and what followed would be taught by the commanding officers.

Gouvion also elucidated how the cadets and the subalterns should be taught and trained. He firmly believed that the young gentlemen should be instructed to make an effective plan to operate. They must be able to choose positions for an army to be covered and for the communications to be kept open. They would learn to fortify depending on the nature of the ground, the number of troops to be employed for defending, and the strength of the enemy. They should be able to determine the most advantageous batteries on a field of battle, fortify towns including maritime places and estimate the quantity of work and expenses and the parts that could not be

attended. They should know how to reconnoitre an enemy's fortification and determine the distance from it. The subalterns should have theoretical class twice a week with captain present to keep them in order and watch over the instructions; and the students would be tested on what they had learned. The regiments should be exercised to fire cannon and mortars twice a week, and the officers must be presented and make a report of any absence. The captains and field officers should confer twice a week for the care of all matters concerning artillery, fortifications, manufactures of arms, power mills, castings of canons, shells, balls, and carriages.

By the end of 1783, Duportail requested to go home with his men after his five-year service in America. Before leaving, he expressed his concern about the army's artillery and engineering units. In his letter to Washington, he proposed his plan for a corps of engineers and artillery and insisted on uniting the two corps because they were related to each other and it would save money. He also gave advice about military establishment and composition.

He asserted that the military academy was necessary as 'the nursery of the corps [which] must be commanded (under the Director General) by a field Officer, assisted by a Captain'. He recommended to acquire its teachers who were a master of mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, and drawing. Military matters it should be a responsibility of the officers to design and give the instructions. The students should spend at least three years for studying, and ten or twelve students should be enough to complete the corps. But, the America should find 'Men of Theory and Knowledge' to teach in school since Duportail and his men were leaving, and he

hoped 'to fill those Vacancies with the first Students which will receive their instruction at the Academy'.⁷⁰

American thought on military school

Besides Knox, other officers outside the corps of artillery and engineering also raised thoughts on the establishment of a military academy at West Point. Timothy Pickering, a quartermaster general in the army, saw that if the United States did not have a standing army, it would be pointless to create a military academy because none would 'find and interest in studying the military art as a profession'. And if there was any who could afford studying military might find it better to acquire military knowledge in 'Europe schools' which 'already established on the most perfect plans...with the greatest facility all that knowledge of the military art of which they are capable'. Pickering in fact was against the idea of the standing army as he saw that it would 'endanger our liberties'. He, however, was the one who suggested to locate the academy at West Point if Congress decided to create one, 'if any thing like a military academy in America be practicable at this time, it must be grounded on the permanent military establishment for our frontier posts and arsenals'.

Pickering also thought that all the subjects related to military arts and sciences should be taught in American universities, and the states should support it. He gave some basic guidance that the students of the academy should be instructed in 'military discipline, tactics, and the theory and practice of fortifications and gunnery'. The commandant and one or two other officers of the standing regiment, and the engineers,

⁷⁰ 'To George Washington from Antoine-Jean-Louis Le Bègue de Presle Duportail, 30 September 1783', *Founders Online*, National Archives, <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-11871>> [accessed 17 September 2016].

making West Point their general residence, would be the masters of the academy; and the inspector general superintend the whole.⁷¹

Washington had always supported the idea of America instructing its own officers, and he agreed with Duportail that Americans could not rely on foreign aid forever. America needed a school for training its own military students. After the War was over and a treaty of peace was approaching, Washington suggested that Congress ‘form Military Academies & Manufactories, as a part of this Establishment; should this Idea be adopted, and the Plan carried into execution’. He insisted that the French engineers should stay in America to teach after the school was built, ‘it is doubtless, be necessary for us to retain some of the French Engineers now in America, for the first beginning of the Institution’. In his sentiments on a Peace Establishment, Washington repeated his intention to form one or more ‘Accademies’ for the Instruction of military arts and sciences ‘particularly those Branches of it which respect Engineering and Artillery, which are highly essential, and the knowledge of which, is most difficult to obtain’.⁷²

Throughout the eight years of the Revolutionary War many plans for creating military academy were written by those respectable officers, but Congress ignored nearly all of them. The reasons that prevented Congress from approving the proposals were the lack of money and the fear of having a standing army. Washington and his men had tried many times to get this plan accepted. Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, John Adams, and other leaders did their best to eliminate the fear of an uprising at the military academy. They came up with the idea of a civilian-controlled

⁷¹ ‘To George Washington from Timothy Pickering, 22 April 1783’, in *Founders Online National Archives*, <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-11138>> [accessed 4 June 2016].

⁷² ‘From George Washington to Antoine-Jean-Louis Le Bègue de Presle Duportail, 23 April 1783’, in *Founders Online, National Archives*, <<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-11144>> [accessed 27 September 2016].

institution at which students would be selected by civilians and graduates would go back home to train their local militia. They were not supposed to stay in the army but were instead expected to return to civil life and participate in their local militias.⁷³ This plan sounded ideal, but because Congress kept neglecting it, nobody knew if it would work.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the Revolutionary War, America had many tasks to complete. One of those was to create its own army to fight in the war. Its officers were British veterans in the colonial wars, and its soldiers were provincial people. The officers gained military skills through experience and readings; soldiers were trained by their local sergeants. The colonists never had official schools for their officers to become properly educated, and their troops did not know how to fight professionally in European style.

Because the American officers and soldiers had fought alongside the British troops in the colonial wars, they had learned and absorbed the military profession, tradition, and training from the army of their motherland. They also developed the idea of military preparatory school from the British and wanted to pursue the idea. However, creating a school during a time of war was almost impossible because the Americans already had issues with a lack of money, and it always caused payment problems with their own personnel. They did not have skilled specialists who were well educated; the officers learned from reading and from experience in the field, but they were not proficient enough in this more modern war. This urged Congress to immediately find a solution by seeking help from Europe, especially France because it had always been the enemy of the British. Further, because France lost in the

⁷³ Ambrose, p. 7.

previous French and Indian War, they would do anything they could to get revenge on the Redcoats. Fortunately, the French were willing to aid the American troops with money, ammunition, uniforms, and personnel.

But when the French officers arrived in America, they were not welcomed. The French faced jealousy and bad manners from the American soldiers who would not obey foreign officers. This almost made the French team return home; however, Congress eventually resolved the problem by upgrading French officers' ranks and positions. This was a good beginning for the Continental Army in the long run because many French officers had made good contributions to the American army. Some officers, such as Duportail and Gouvion, generated and supported the idea of creating a military technical school by emphasizing the need for the Americans to have their own skilled specialists because the French officers could not stay forever. The Americans needed to be able to rely on themselves when the war ended.

Even if the first American military academy was not officially established until 1802, the intention to create a permanent military school started as early as the Revolutionary War began. And this original idea, field practice and experience definitely based the creation of the American first military school in the future. It was not clear that there was actual education during the war, but all these attempts to build a military school was the foundation for the idea of creating the first American military academy at West Point. Undoubtedly, the French were a large part of this idea.

Conclusion

The American Revolutionary War is a very popular topic that has been meticulously studied, but in-depth research on the actual fighting force in the war is scattered. Two years ago in 2015, I gave a presentation, at the Conference: War, Society, and Culture, c.1688-1830, at University of Leeds, on American military literature which was influenced by the British and French armies' reading lists. I was surprised that many people did not really recognize how close the American and European armies were during that time. Some interesting questions were raised as to why the Americans followed the British. The truth is that the Americans were once the British and had worked alongside each other in the previous war. The American officers respected and admired the British army and wanted to be like their professional British counterparts. Moreover, during the war, the Continental Army was intervened and then supervised by European personnel. It is clear that the first American military force was highly influenced by European practices. The questions that still need answers are: What European approaches did the Americans use? What European techniques were not used? How were these methods actually applied? If they could not be applied, then what was done instead?

The European influences on the Continental Army led to a discussion about the nature of this first American army—whether it was regulars or militia, if it represented an American fighting style, or if it carried traits of eighteenth century military warfare. The debates go on, but the European influences that had an effect on the creation of the Continental Army have not yet been examined. These influences played an important role in how the army was developed and finally became the Continental Army. Thus, my thesis is an additional study of the characteristics of the Continental Army with European military involvement as a theme and framework.

The Continental Army, the first national fighting force of America, was the result of many factors based on deficient resources. These factors pushed Congress to seek foreign assistance and the army to adhere to eighteenth-century military tradition, which shaped how the army became Europeanized in some degree. This new army of a soon-to-be-nation was distinctive in nature due to the objective of the war—fighting for independence from its motherland—together with the condition of unpreparedness and the struggle to keep the army afloat shaped the army's future. At first, the war was not expected to last long; several petitions and negotiations were sent to King George III in order to cease the Coercive Acts, but an agreement could not be achieved. In July 1775, the Second Congress thus decided to wage war with Britain by creating the Continental Army, headed by Massachusetts, the most radical colony of the thirteen colonies.

Before Congress decided to establish a national army, the colonies had mustered their own force, called a 'militia' to defend themselves from British soldiers and their Native American allies. All the conflicts surrounding taxing and unfair treatment culminated into an actual war at the breaking point, the battle of Lexington and Concord. Americans realized that their militia alone could not handle the situation. Congress required a capable and credible army to ensure the American potential to fight honourably. Congress, at that time, acted as a simulated authority that had no power to tax or enforce the rule—America was still comprised of British colonies without their own effective governmental system. Because of a shortage of essential military resources, Congress was obligated to seek other choices to support the army, acquiring foreign assistance to wage war.

Congress was primarily responsible for war matters. The resolutions were made by the delegates, who were elected in each colony. The delegates then carried

on Congressional decisions such as filling military quotas and providing war supplies and payment, as well as appointing military commanders and staff officers. This practice was ambiguous and ineffective without direct command. The Army never acquired enough troops, and the shortage of arms, money, clothes, food, and other necessities was a serious issue. The Continental Army was expected to rely on provincial support, but, in reality, the public's help was insufficient. However, in the first year of the war the Americans still hoped the conflicts would end quickly and they could compromise with the British king. Congress, therefore, was not inclined to establish a full-scale army, so the troops were formed by those volunteers who gathered around Boston while the feeling of patriotism was robust.

A year passed, but still an agreement between the British parliament and the American colonists remained distant. The situation of the war then changed in 1776 when the king decided to hire a large number of German mercenaries to fight for Britain. The news hit the colonists hard; the war was becoming serious. Congress swiftly decided to declare American Independence and expand their army, with many more regiments and additional units to confront the coming force. American envoys were sent to Paris to plead assistance in the way of funds, supplies, ships, troops, and military technicians. While in North America, the army commander and his officers were attempting to prepare and improve their troops.

The ideal goal of the commander-in-chief and some of his senior officers was to make the American army as similar to European armies as possible. For the Americans, the British army had been a model since the American veterans fought alongside them in the French and Indian War. The Americans witnessed Britain's military capabilities, which caused Congress to hesitate to thoroughly wage war with this powerful army. However, the war was irresistible, and it was hoped that the army

would perform at its best. Congress and the army leaders looked up to the European pattern and practice to create their force.

European armies, especially the British army, became influential prototypes that the Americans wanted to follow. All these influences were demonstrated in many features of the Continental Army. First of all, the lack of money made Congress expect the army to be populated with patriotic troops. In reality, however, the patriotic feeling did fade, and men wanted to go home. Before the end of 1775, the army was left with a small number of men. Washington had known that this would happen; the spirit of sacrificing for the war cause could not last forever when men needed to take care of their families and personal lives. Congress did not have legitimate power to collect money to fund the army and pay the men. It sought other ways to fill the quotas; in addition to the army enlistees, a high percentage of militia service was used. This practice of substituting the main force with militiamen was argued against by Washington, as he saw the flaws of this citizen force. The militia was raised and paid by the states, which all had different training methods depending upon each provincial commander. The lack of standardization created disunity when men from different colonies attempted to fight together. Moreover, the militiamen considered themselves ordinary people, not professional soldiers, and this caused them to be insubordinate and undisciplined. Even if many times they had to cooperate with the Continentals, in practice the militia often accepted only their local commander. Even Washington felt uncomfortable giving them commands, but the shortage of enlistees forced him to combine regular forces with militia forces throughout the war.

The Continental Army was reorganized and reshaped several times during the American Revolutionary War due to the resources the Americans had on hand, as well as the attempt to mimic the British army's structure. Congress still remained in self-

defence in the first year of the war, so the army employed volunteers as their main troops under 20,000 men, who enlisted for one year. The Continental Army adopted the British staff officer system, but the Americans' system was less complicated. The troops were new to war, a weakness that was soon revealed. The Continental Army could not form some technically necessary units because they lacked experts. In addition, after the one-year contract ended, men refused to reenlist; this was the first critical problem Congress had to face.

Congress and the military leaders knew that they had to adjust and improve the troops, starting with recruitment. As the commander-in-chief, Washington took part in reorganizing the army for the coming campaign. He suggested three-year enlistment and protested the method of filling the Continental quotas with the militia, as well as promoted curbing the size of the army to make infantry regiments more equal and effective. However, the news of additional enemy troops (the British regulars and the German mercenaries) reached America in 1776 and reinvigorated the spirit of patriotism. This time, the army obtained significantly more men for the next campaign than they had previously.

The enlisted men led Congress to reorganize the army by following Washington's recommendation of a three-year service term, as well as expanding the regiments to be 88 battalions in 1777. Congress also used the British approach of offering a bounty and land to persuade men to join the army. Men also were not only conscripted from New England but all of the thirteen colonies. Washington was granted direct command of 16 infantry battalions. Special units such as light cavalry, artillery corps, engineering corps, and companies of invalids were added to strengthen and fulfil the army function. Washington started to provide military uniforms for the men. It was in these ways that the Continental Army began to mature.

There were significant changes in the army between 1777 and 1778 in terms of leadership and complexity. Washington's capabilities were questioned because he had lost more battles than had Gates. Gates gained enough credibility to be appointed as a head of the Board of War, which was responsible for many significant tasks, some of which had previously belonged to Washington. The Board of War also generated an important position, an inspector general, which held many responsibilities including advocating for troop discipline. The army shrunk again because men refused to reenlist in the winter, and Georgia and South Carolina were taken over by the British.

Perhaps one of the most impactful changes in the functioning of the Continental Army involved foreign participation and integration. Many foreign officers from Europe sailed to join and assist the army, which led to the emergence of special supporting units such as a topographical section, the corps of Light Dragoons, a corps of provosts, and the engineering department. All this resulted from the Continental Army receiving European technicians to fill in vacancies. The army acquired talented engineers, highly powerful French officers, skilled field commanders and the first Prussian inspector general, who became a Continental drillmaster when the main troops camped at Valley Forge in the winter of 1777–1778.

The army earnestly became more sophisticated after foreign officers took part in most military units. However, enlistment was still an unfixed problem that became worse—the army had gotten smaller each year since 1778, so Congress decided to reduce the regiments. The army that fought in the southern campaign in 1781 was the smallest; however, the American troops were reinforced with French allies in the battle at Yorktown. After the decisive battle, the British regulars still remained in New

York, so the men were kept for defensive operations. The army formally disbanded after the Treaty of Peace was signed in 1783.

Besides pushing Congress to seek foreign assistance, the struggle of the army to survive generated connections between the people in Congress, the army, and provincial governments. Congressmen worked with the commander-in-chief and state governors, and Washington talked directly to some influential Congressional members and state politicians. He also formed his military team with some significant senior officers as his backup. All these private contacts helped the army to survive. Electing Washington as the commander-in-chief was the best decision Congress could have made. Washington was more than a commanding general; he was the centre, playing the roles of both civilian and military leader—a revolutionary symbol.

At first, the Americans were afraid to adopt a large army, as they saw it could possibly harm liberty, but Washington attempted to soothe this fear. The delegates knew he would not betray or overthrow them because he used to be a Congressional man who sacrificed his personal life for the war cause. They knew him well: Congress and the army worked as a highly collaborative, effective team. This reflects the nature of eighteenth-century American society—ruled and led by a small group of wealthy and influential men. Washington's hard work and effort to build a strong connection with American and foreign leaders paid off. He was empowered to take full control over the army, which made it function better and faster due to valuable assistance from France and its allies. He also was the one who preferred military professionalism and insisted in using a united army instead of militias from separate colonies.

The lack of central government created these networks, which worked as the base of the existing of the army. This means that the Continental Army relied on civilians and the public for financial support of the troops. The army, in the American

mind, was a public servant that provided national security and protected liberty. The men were fighting for their own future, not for any monarch; this distinctive characteristic made the army different and unique. Even with a different foundation, still Congress needed to create a professional, European-style army to fight in this war. They aimed to build a well-trained army as well as remain consistent with the military tradition of the eighteenth-century in order to be acknowledged as honourable fighting force.

America did not lack only military technicians and experts but also the rank and file to fight in the war. Congress' initial intention was to form the army of white American men. This plan was achieved at the first year of the war when the patriotism was still strong. However, after the war passed, the sensitivity faded. Congress used every possible way to encourage recruitments, such as payment and bounty as the British army did, but this did not solve the problem. Congress eventually found out that it could not persuade enough American men to enlist in the army, so they looked elsewhere for troops. Congress decided to follow the British practice of recruiting other ethnicities and races to fill in the army. Both the British and American armies were actually competing with each other to recruit the same groups of men to reinforce their troops. Those who were available for service were Native Americans, black slaves, and Germans.

The decision to employ these groups of men was discussed, and there were those who agreed and disagreed. Congress initially wanted to remain neutral with the Native Americans, but some of them were willing to aid the cause, as they had had good relationships with the American citizens nearby and their representatives. However, a majority of the Native Americans sided with the British because they had been relying on trading European products and weapons with the British even before

the war occurred. Other than that, the British openly employed these indigenous people, so Congress made a decision to follow this approach. Throughout the war the Native Americans' offered their services to both armies as guides, information carriers, traders, and warriors.

The British again started using black slaves to fill in their troops by offering freedom if they left their American masters to enlist in the king's regiments. The Americans at first protested this idea, as many of them possessed slaves. Congress was also reluctant to follow the British and use this group of men because the slaves were not trusted to hold weapons—they could harm the Americans themselves. However, some American leaders and people in the northern part of the country supported the idea of emancipation and saw that this approach was perfect: the army would acquire more men, and the slaves would become free. The British released Lord Dunmore's proclamation to persuade those black men to join the king's army in 1775. In 1779, the British launched another proclamation to encourage these men to leave their masters by offering them freedom, protection, and land in exchange. This made Congress change its mind, and it adopted the same approach to employ slaves, forming a corps of 1,000 Negroes for the first time (in South Carolina and Georgia at the end of 1780).

The idea to use German service originated from the King George III. The contracts for hiring soldiers were made in 1776, and the soldiers were sent across the Atlantic to fight for the Royal Army. The news soon reached America and made a great impact on the colonists' morale, which influenced Congress' hasty decision to declare America's independence. In response to the king's decision, Washington suggested raising a group of soldiers from the German immigrants in America. Congress immediately ordered Pennsylvania and Maryland to raise a German

battalion in June 1776. An attempt to recruit German deserters was made in 1778, as well as persuasion to abandon the British army. The battalion was inactive until January 1781, and all foreign troops were transferred to Colonel Moses Hazen's regiment until 1783.

Creating an effective army required proficient officers to make campaign plans and effective strategies, technical experts for special-skill tasks, and disciplined men to fight. When Congress established the Continental Army, they knew that they did not have enough professionals. And, before America was assisted by foreign military experts, American officers had to read military textbooks to acquire knowledge and field exercise. There was no military school or training in place for officers or their subordinates. Military literature that the American officers could find was written by European intellectuals, especially British, French, and Prussian. When military school was not available, reading military literature from Europe became an alternative. If the expertise could not be achieved in America, they searched in Europe.

At first, Washington and the American military leaders followed the British reading list not only theoretical and strategic books such as *The Treatise* and *The Art of War* for commanding generals, but also some guidance and instructional books for young officers. There were also some books for specific tasks, such as those for artilleryists and engineers. In addition, Americans used British field manuals to train the troops. Throughout the war, the British and the American armies shared a significant number of military books, some of which were popular and reprinted in America several times. However, the problem was that because the American officers had to plan to fight and educate themselves at the same time, it was impractical for them to read and follow all the guidance and instruction in the books. An intensive

selection of military reference books was required. Therefore, the Americans became selective and chose only the information they saw fit and uncomplicated. Later on, the army possessed its own first regulation book, *The Blue Book* written by the Prussian inspector general, which adapted some European techniques to fit the American way of fighting.

Army recruitments in America was not effective enough to acquire enough men, so Congress sought troop reinforcement from the French. American ambassadors were present in Paris to plead with the King of France for military support. Formal assistance came in 1778 with the promise to offer money, troops, fleets, and other war supplies. However, as early as 1776, France covertly helped the Continental Army by providing some of their officers to aid special tasks in the war. Congress at first aimed to employ technicians such as artilleryists and engineers, but as the war progressed, foreign enlistment went far beyond that. Some foreign officers performed in every part of military units in the battlefield and special operations; some took part in American politics and leadership, which greatly affected how the army was shaped over time.

France was the main source of military funds and foreign officers. The group of French officers sent to America was a mix of unqualified soldiers and truly talented ones. This practice, in fact, caused American troops to be jealous of foreigners who outranked them as well as jealousy among the American officers themselves. However, some of those with genuine will and talent proved themselves with their momentous works, such as fortifications, military schools of thought, French assistance, army development, and, clearly, the war outcome. This group of foreign officers became true friends of America—legends who devoted their personal lives, skills, and power to the American Revolutionary War.

The last European influence to investigate was the legacy of the need to train the officers and the idea of creating a military school during the Revolutionary War. It was a shared thought between American and French officers. Henry Knox, the Chief of Artillery, led this attempt. He was an influential man who supported military education even though he taught himself to read. Inspired by the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, in 1778 Knox developed his own school at Pluckemin in New Jersey for artillery training. Some refer to this place as the first American military academy.

The other military technical branch that offered valuable service to the army was the engineering corps, which later became a military course taught to students. This unit was commanded and mostly run by foreign officers, especially the French; therefore, it made the American and French officers concerned about the corps's future when the French left for home after the war. Louis Duportail, a commanding engineer and senior officer, suggested Washington unite the two corps of artillery and engineering because they shared a lot of knowledge and practice, and this would save money and time. He also insisted on the importance of creating a military school because the Americans could not rely on foreign service forever, especially after the war ended and America secured their place as an independent nation. Duportail and his men also gave thorough guidance for academy establishment and composition that the Americans could follow.

Washington and many of his senior officers fully supported the idea of creating a military academy. Many attempts to convince Congress to establish a school were made, but the proposals were postponed and eventually rejected. This is understandable, as the first important reason is the Americans' fear of a standing army, as they witnessed it themselves when they were threatened to pay taxes by the British

regulars stationed in the colonies. But this problem gradually disappeared as the war went on, firstly by the characteristics of the commander-in-chief. Instead of being afraid of becoming a military dictator, Washington took responsibility and was the symbol of an ideal patriot who genuinely sacrificed for the war's cause. The other reason was that the Americans realized that the army was quite unfit—it was unable to fill in the rank and file and usually lacked money and other essentials. More importantly, the army was raised and funded by American taxes; without public support, it could not survive. Thus, it was challenging if the commander-in-chief and the army turned the gun on their own people.

However, the same reason prevented the Continental Army to become a full-scale army and create a military academy. America at that time lacked all necessary components to build a strong standing army like those European ones, and a military school was something that could wait. The debates on how to shape and adjust the army never stopped because the war had not begun and the army had not been created until after the end of the war. The idea of creating a professional army was generated and accepted by Congress and military leaders, but the practice did not go along. The issue of money shortage and weak management of the related institutions responsible for the army's subsistence, as well as other obstacles such as limitation of time and war experts, hindered the Continental Army's development into a complete professional army.

European military tradition and practice thus had an influence on the genesis of the first American army. This could be described as that the army was fighting against the British regulars, with whom they had fought in a previous war. When the long conflicts could not be solved, the Americans formed their first national army, which lacked most war essentials and personnel, so they looked for help from the

British opponent, the French. The request was met, even if it took time and much effort to make it official. However, French help came loosely, in terms of military experts and officers who would guide some special tasks, even before the king of France ratified the choice of waging war against Britain. American officers and soldiers then learned from French and other European officers who came to join the army, hearing each other's advice and gaining experience from working together.

Throughout the war, the Americans mainly followed the two armies' (the British and the American) procedures. The British military had long been a model for American officers, so at the first phase of the war the Americans observed and imitated British methods and practices. They adopted the British reading list, British military organization, and British policy of recruiting their own men and other races and ethnicities. But, when the French took part in the war, it gradually changed the Continental Army's way of practice, which the Americans learned from daily operations. Many foreign officers, especially the French, were appointed to command positions, so they were authorized to command American troops. This had a significant effect on how the army was shaped.

The Continental Army was like other American institutions in which they were inherited from the European pattern but later adjusted to fit the new nation.¹ The army character represented a unique and different one mainly because of their struggles. In fact it could not be like other armies since the training time was so limited and the men in arms considered themselves people. It was a tough job to secure independence with independent mind. But the only way they could do in this war was

¹ Wright, p. 3.

to fight like regulars if they wanted to win the war and make their independence to be recognized by other nations.

Even if American commanders and officers tried their best to follow these European armies' practices, they could not reach the same level of professionalism because of many deficiencies. So, the Americans solved their problems with whatever they had on hand and made their own style of army—just because they could not afford to run a complete army in the eighteenth-century warfare style. Any military goal they set they could not fully achieve, so taking the middle ground became their only choice. The Continental Army thus was a mix of European-style of fighting and their American martial way, and this study has shown that the army was almost always evolving and subject to differing influences at different moments. In other words, the army emerged from American intention, was ideologically dominated by the British, and was shaped and improved by the French and other French allies' officers. The American way of fighting during the Revolutionary War and the peculiar characteristics of the Continental Army shine with the influences and effects of European involvement.

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