



ARMY HISTORY

Summer 2008

PB 20-08-3 (No. 68) Washington, D.C.

IN THIS ISSUE

When Freedom
Wore a Red Coat **6**
By Gregory J. W. Urwin

Why Study War?
By Victor Davis Hanson **26**

The Professional Bulletin of Army History

ARMYHISTORY

The Professional Bulletin of Army History

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

GEORGE W. CASEY, JR.
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

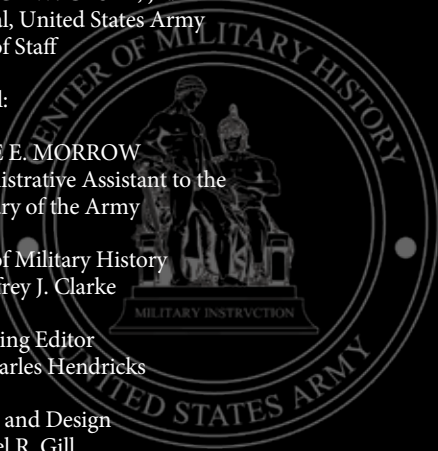
Official:

JOYCE E. MORROW
Administrative Assistant to the
Secretary of the Army

Chief of Military History
Dr. Jeffrey J. Clarke

Managing Editor
Dr. Charles Hendricks

Layout and Design
Michael R. Gill



The U.S. Army Center of Military History publishes *Army History* (ISSN 1546-5330) quarterly for the professional development of Army historians and as Army educational and training literature. The bulletin is available at no cost to interested Army officers, noncommissioned officers, soldiers, and civilian employees, as well as to individuals and offices that directly support Army historical work or Army educational and training programs.

Correspondence, including requests to be added to the distribution of free copies or to submit articles, should be addressed to Managing Editor, *Army History*, U.S. Army Center of Military History, 103 Third Ave., Fort Lesley J. McNair, DC 20319-5058, or sent by e-mail to charles.hendricks@hqda.army.mil.

Those individuals and institutions that do not qualify for free copies may opt for paid subscriptions from the U.S. Government Printing Office. The cost of a subscription is \$20 per year. Order by title and enter List ID as ARHIS. To order online, go to <http://bookstore.gpo.gov>. To order by phone, call toll free 866-512-1800, or in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, 202-512-1800; by fax, 202-512-2104; or by e-mail, contactcenter@gpo.gov. Send mail orders to U.S. Government Printing Office, P.O. Box 979050, St. Louis, MO 63197-9000.

The opinions expressed in *Army History* are those of the authors, not the Department of Defense or its constituent elements. The bulletin's contents do not necessarily reflect official Army positions and do not supersede information in other official Army publications or Army regulations. The bulletin is approved for official dissemination of material to keep the Army knowledgeable of developments in Army history and to enhance professional development. The Department of the Army approved the use of funds for printing this publication on 7 September 1983.

The reproduction of images not obtained from federal sources is prohibited.

Cover Photo Credit:

Michael R. Gill with special thanks to S.Sgt. H. Shalom Ratcliff

Table of Contents Middle Photo: General Eric K. Shinseki

EDITOR'S JOURNAL

This issue of *Army History* opens with Temple University Professor Gregory J. W. Urwin's thought-provoking reassessment of the threat to the success of the American Revolution posed by the campaign that British Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis, waged in Virginia in 1781. Although that campaign ended with the decisive defeat of Cornwallis' forces at Yorktown, the British general's use of fast-striking cavalry forces and his willingness to exploit the desire for freedom of African Americans held in bondage enabled him largely to eclipse the revolutionary authorities in that state during the spring and early summer of 1781, Urwin argues, until his military strategy was overruled by his superior, British General Sir Henry Clinton. Urwin's article is an expanded version of a paper he read at a conference of Army historians held in Arlington, Virginia, in August 2007, and the ideas it presents will be incorporated into a book he is writing.

The issue then offers two commentaries on matters that have been the subject recently of contemplation and debate among those interested in military history. *Army History* is pleased to present an annotated version of a previously published essay on the value of the study of warfare written by Dr. Victor Davis Hanson, a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and a well-known author of books on ancient and military history. Hanson's essay challenges the lack of adequate instruction in this subject that he finds in the nation's civilian academic institutions, explains the range of lessons that can be gleaned from this study, and recommends books that provide a good introduction to the history of war.

The issue also presents a rebuttal of the critique of testimony given to the Senate in February 2003 by General Eric K. Shinseki, then Army chief of staff, contained in a recent article by Damon Coletta in *Armed Forces & Society*, which has already been the subject of discussion in the pages of that journal. Lt. Col. Wm Shane Story's comments bring the perspective of the command historian of the Multinational Force-Iraq to this debate. *Army History* will welcome further contributions to these discussions and commentaries on other issues of broad interest to the military history community.

Finally, we are pleased to present in this issue Bryan Hockensmith's reflections on the military contributions of President James Monroe, one of this nation's early heroes, in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of his birth.



THE CHIEF'S CORNER

DR. JEFFREY J. CLARKE

On the Iraq front, Lt. Col. Shane Story has taken over the Multinational Force–Iraq command historian mantle, as mentioned in the last issue. Army Lt. Col. Jerry Brooks will soon join Shane in that country to head the Multinational Corps–Iraq historical office. We are confident that they will work together cooperatively to give greater focus to our combat history programs. Shane recently orchestrated a video teleconference involving his deployed historians and others at the Center of Military History and at the history offices of Central Command and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. That marked a first for the military history community and the promise of greater synergy in the future. All agree that the many moving parts of our efforts to compile the history of the Global War on Terrorism have to be in synch if the entire program is to work effectively.

From the vantage point of the Center, several other significant contributions are rounding out that effort. These include the assistance that the historical professionals at the U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) are providing to the Army's military history detachment (MHD) training effort, including their input to the second phase of that training conducted at the National Training Center; the contributions of the Center in the realm of information technology; and our systematic efforts to collect electronic records from redeployed active and reserve component units in their home states, targeting those missed by the overseas MHDs. Marking another significant accomplishment, the 90th MHD has received the Meritorious Unit Commendation, a signal honor, for its service in Iraq with the 1st Cavalry Division from December 2006 to November 2007.

At Forts McNair and Leavenworth, the production of current historical products continues apace, a fact best illustrated by Col. Tim Reese's list of publications on the Combat Studies Institute's Web site. Center historians Bill Epley and Dale Andrade have returned to Fort McNair from Iraq, but they will again be taking

interviews and collecting documents from the III Corps and the 4th Infantry Division, respectively, when those formations return to their stations in the United States. The Center's Museum Division is supporting Army Secretary Pete Geren's exhibit program for the Army corridors being refurbished during the next Pentagon wedge renovation. It is also responding to the demands of actually operating—yet another first for the Center—about a dozen ex-FORSCOM (Forces Command) Warfighter museums. Our Force Structure and Unit History Branch is updating active- and reserve-component unit lineage and award information as units rotate through Iraq and Afghanistan, while continuing the process of redesignating units in all branches and components of the transforming Army. Our Histories Division is providing direct historical support to the Army staff, especially relative to issues involving personnel, including troop retention, officer generation, and multiple deployment stressors, and in the arena of the forthcoming Quadrennial Defense Review.

Kudos also go to Dr. Charles Hendricks and the editorial and production staff in the Center's Publishing Division for the hard work required each quarter to produce *Army History*, a source of informative articles, essays, and commentaries of interest to the community of Army historians. While Charley ensures that *Army History* covers a mix of engaging topics, Michael Gill merits recognition for the creative design of each issue.





Summer 2008



Department of Defense

Features



U.S. Army

Department of Defense

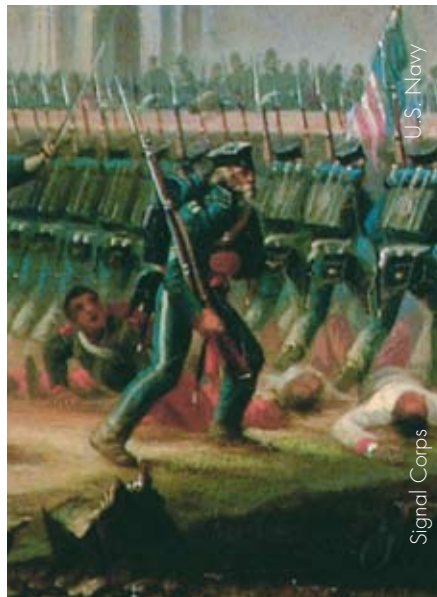
- 24 **James Monroe**
- 33 **Commentary**
- 35 **Book Reviews**
- 42 **Chief Historian's Footnote**

Articles

6

WHEN FREEDOM WORE A RED COAT

By GREGORY J. W. URWIN



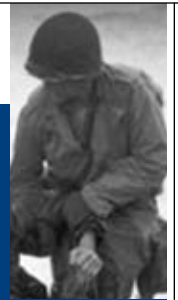
U.S. Navy

Signal Corps

26

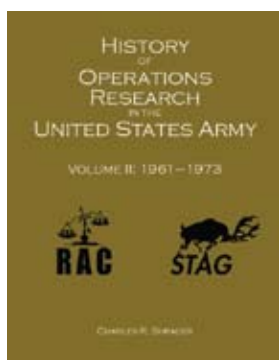
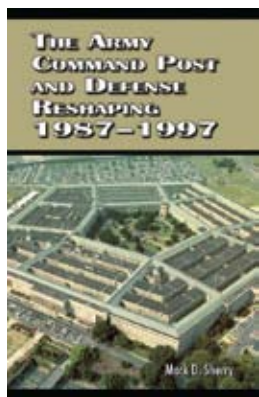
WHY STUDY WAR?

By VICTOR DAVIS HANSON



NEWSNOTE

CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY ISSUES NEW PUBLICATIONS



The Center of Military History has published a history of Army restructuring in the decade beginning in 1987, a history of the Army's use of operations research in the years 1961 to 1973, and a brochure on the battle of Buena Vista in the Mexican War.

The Army Command Post and Defense Reshaping, 1987-1997, by Mark D. Sherry examines the structural transformation of the Army in the years 1987 to 1997. In those years, which saw the end of the Cold War, the Army adapted to a world in which threats became less intense but more diverse and the new security environment offered the nation hope for a "peace dividend." Sherry details the impact of high-level Army and Defense Department studies relating to Army restructuring in this period and shows how the Army's leaders attempted to mitigate the impact of budget reductions on its forces' capabilities. The author has served as a historian at the Center since 1986 and represented it on several of the groups that studied ways to reorganize the Army in the period his book covers. The Center issued *The Army Command Post and Defense Reshaping, 1987-1997*, as CMH Pub 40-4-1.

The Center of Military History published Charles R. Shrader's book *History of Operations Research in the United*

States Army, Volume II: 1961-1973, for the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Army for Operations Research. Listed as CMH Pub 70-105-1, it is the second of three planned volumes that will examine the Army's use of the tools of operations research and systems analysis between 1942 and 1995. This volume addresses the more intensive application of systems analysis and cost-effectiveness analysis to Army decision-making under Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. It devotes particular attention to the impact of operations research and systems analysis on Army equipment, on Army counterinsurgency and airmobility doctrine, and on the actions of the U.S. Army in Vietnam. The book discusses both the work of the Army's analytical community and the contributions of the contract organizations that assisted it. The author of these volumes is a retired Army lieutenant colonel who has written *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia: A Military History, 1992-1994* (College Station, Tex., 2003) and other books on warfare in the twentieth century. The Government Printing Office is offering this second volume of the *History of Operations Research in the United States Army* for sale for \$32.

Desperate Stand: The Battle of Buena Vista by Center historian Ste-

phen A. Carney is the fourth in a series of brochures on U.S. Army campaigns and actions in the Mexican War. This 48-page illustrated booklet relates how a U.S. force of fewer than 5,000 soldiers serving under the command of Maj. Gen. Zachary Taylor but arranged for battle by Brig. Gen. John E. Wool took advantage in February 1847 of difficult terrain in the Sierra Madre Mountains south of the hacienda of Buena Vista as it thwarted the efforts of Mexican General Antonio López de Santa Anna's 15,000-man force to defeat the Americans in battle and drive them from northern Mexico. U.S. Army artillery units played a crucial role in overcoming the Mexican attackers. Dr. Carney has written each of the four brochures in this series. This pamphlet is CMH Pub 73-4.

Army publication account holders may obtain these new publications from the Directorate of Logistics-Washington, Media Distribution Division, ATTN: JDHQSVPAS, 1655 Woodson Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63114-6128. Account holders may also place their orders at <http://www.apd.army.mil>. The Government Printing Office will also be offering each of these three publications for sale. Individuals may order Army publications from that office online at <http://bookstore.gpo.gov>.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Gregory J. W. Urwin is a professor of history and the associate director of the Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy at Temple University in Philadelphia. He is the author of *Custer Victorious: The Civil War Battles of General George Armstrong Custer* (Rutherford, N.J., 1983) and *Facing Fearful Odds: The Siege of Wake Island* (Lincoln, Neb., 1997). He has also authored illustrated histories of the infantry and cavalry arms of the U.S. Army and edited a book on racial atrocities and reprisals in the Civil War and a history of an Iowa regiment in that conflict. He is the general editor of the Campaigns and Commanders series of books being issued by the University of Oklahoma Press.

Copyright-protected image removed from online version.

Colonel Tarleton by Sir Joshua Reynolds

WHEN FREEDOM WORE A RED COAT

HOW CORNWALLIS' 1781 CAMPAIGN THREATENED THE REVOLUTION IN VIRGINIA

Detail of British light dragoons charging, c. 1779
Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library

By Gregory J. W. Urwin

N

early every schoolchild in the United States has heard of the siege of Yorktown. It was the decisive battle that all but ended the military phase of the American Revolution and guaranteed the thirteen colonies' independence. Yorktown represents George Washington's finest hour as a general and the crowning achievement of his ragged Continental Army. It was also the event that assured British Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis, an undeserved place on history's list of famous losers, just as it furnished Americans with an exaggerated view of their martial prowess. President Ronald Reagan helped preside over the ceremonies marking the bicentennial of that pivotal event on 19 October 1981. This was Reagan's first extended, open-air appearance since surviving an assassination attempt the previous March, but he rose to the occasion with the uplifting rhetoric that had already become his trademark. A crowd of 60,000 heard the president evoke the exultation felt by Patriots of Washington's day when he called Yorktown "a victory for the right of

self-determination. It was and is the affirmation that freedom will eventually triumph over tyranny." Standing beside Reagan behind a massive shield of clear, bulletproof plastic, French President François Mitterrand politely echoed his host's sentiments by proclaiming Yorktown "the first capital of human rights."¹

Few Americans would quarrel with Reagan's and Mitterrand's words. History, however, is a matter of perceptions, and sometimes those perceptions are too narrow. Such is the case with Yorktown. American scholars are generally so intent on memorializing Washington's brilliant generalship during the Yorktown campaign that they ignore how close Cornwallis came to subduing Virginia.² They also fail to see that there was a dark side to Washington's celebrated triumph. Yorktown meant liberty and independence for the majority of the young republic's white citizens, but it signified something else for the 500,000 blacks who lived in the United States in 1781. For most African Americans, Yorktown meant another eighty years of chattel slavery. And for

many of the freedom-loving blacks who cast their lot with the British and joined Cornwallis in the summer of 1781, Yorktown became not merely the graveyard of their hopes, but of their mortal remains.

It seems unfair to say the British lost the Revolutionary War, for they never quite realized what they were up against. To George III and his advisers, the rebellion was a plot hatched by an evil minority, opportunistic demagogues who deluded the riffraff of the thirteen colonies into opposing lawful government. The British sincerely believed that most upstanding Americans remained loyal to their king. All that was required to quell the uprising was a show of force to discredit Rebel leaders and frighten America's masses into resuming their proper allegiance.³

Since the British were out to win hearts and minds, they usually did not treat Americans with the same cruelty they reserved for rebels in Catholic Ireland or the Scottish Highlands. Unrestrained barbarism would cost the Crown potential American supporters and even alienate committed Loyalists.

As the British were so sure the Revolution had no legitimate appeal, they did not act with the energy or ruthlessness that the situation warranted.⁴

The British set the basic pattern of the War of Independence during the 1776 campaign in New York and New Jersey. Whenever one of the king's generals wished to conquer a colony, he would head for its largest port, defeat whatever American army stood in his way, occupy his objective, establish a network of outlying outposts, and then wait for the Rebel cause to come unglued. That never happened. The beaten Continental forces would simply retire beyond easy reach, recruit themselves up to strength, and then take positions that threatened the enemy's smaller and more isolated outposts with sudden capture. At the same time, inflamed local militia harassed British garrisons and foraging parties, giving the occupiers no rest and depriving them of any sense of security. Forced to concentrate to avoid defeat in detail, the British found themselves confined to a few major towns and living under virtual siege.⁵

With the Rebels controlling most of the countryside, Loyalists found it impossible to rise in decisive numbers. Any Tory who openly declared for the king risked the loss of his property, imprisonment, and possibly death. Rather than chance such perils, many Loyalists adopted a wait-and-see attitude. If the king's regulars were victorious, loyal subjects would lose nothing by their silence while the issue teetered in the balance.⁶

To break the stalemate that came to characterize the American war, royal commanders seized more cities, but that strategy gained them nothing except worthless real estate. When a British army tried to divide the colonies by marching down the Hudson in 1777, it was trapped and forced to surrender at Saratoga. That stunning Rebel victory brought France into the war on the side of the United States, and Spain and the Netherlands soon

followed suit. Britain now faced a world war, and it strained its military resources to the limit while endeavoring to safeguard a far-flung empire.⁷

Assured that vast numbers of Loyalists inhabited the South, the British decided to shift their operations to Georgia and the Carolinas. In May 1780 General Sir Henry Clinton, the commander-in-chief of His Majesty's Forces in North America, captured Charleston, South Carolina, and more than six thousand Patriot troops whose commander had opted foolishly to defend the doomed port.⁸

Clinton soon returned to his main base at New York City, leaving Cornwallis and 8,000 regulars to establish British rule in the Carolinas. Cornwallis was a robust forty-one years of age when he assumed this important

Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis, by Daniel Gardner



command. He carried himself with the easy self-assurance that sprang from an aristocratic background and twenty-three years of military experience. The earl had been fighting the American Rebels since 1776, and he was esteemed as one of the king's ablest and most aggressive generals.⁹

At the outset, Cornwallis' mission in the Carolinas seemed easy. The capture of an entire Continental army at Charleston left local Patriots demoralized and vulnerable. As the British advanced inland, the Rebels either fled or switched their allegiance to the Crown. Magnanimous in victory, Cornwallis permitted them to take an oath of loyalty and join his Loyalist militia.¹⁰

Then in the summer of 1780, the Continental Congress sent a new Rebel army to reclaim South Carolina. Though badly outnumbered, Cornwallis crushed this threat on 16 August 1780 at the Battle of Camden, but his victory had a bittersweet taste. At the approach of the Continental troops, the crypto-Rebels of South Carolina turned on the British. Whole units of "loyal" militia took the arms and equipment they had drawn from royal magazines and defected to the guerrilla bands assembling in the swamps outside Charleston.¹¹

Later in the year, Cornwallis confronted a second American army under Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene, Washington's most trusted lieutenant. Keeping just beyond reach, the wily Greene goaded Cornwallis into launching a ruinous mid-winter pursuit across barren North Carolina.¹² One of the earl's sergeants called the Carolinas "a country thinly inhabited, and abounding with swamps, [that] afforded every advantage to a partizan warfare over a large and regular army."¹³ Greene led the earl on a furious chase for nearly two months, finally pausing to fight at Guilford Court House on 15 March 1781. Greene's forces outnumbered the British two to one, but Cornwallis gave battle anyway, and he defeated the Rebels once more. Neverthe-

less, the outcome of the battle was indecisive, and the cost to the British appalling. Of the 1,900 Redcoats, Hessians, and Loyalists that the earl led into the fray, more than a quarter fell killed or wounded. Another 436 British soldiers suffered bouts of sickness as a result of this strenuous campaign.¹⁴

Before Cornwallis' ailing army recovered its strength, Greene marched on South Carolina. This time, however, Cornwallis did not join Greene in an exhausting game of cat and mouse. Years of hard campaigning in America had finally shown the earl the flaws in Britain's fundamental strategy. For the rest of that spring and well into the summer—before he received orders to entrench at Yorktown—Cornwallis would experiment with a new approach for subduing the Rebels.¹⁵

Cornwallis' most significant realization was that most southern Loyalists could not be trusted. "Our experience has shown that their numbers are not so great as has been represented," he wrote ruefully from North Carolina, "and that their friendship was only passive."¹⁶ The Crown's American supporters talked a good fight, but they usually deserted the royal cause at the first sign of trouble. "The Idea of our Friends rising in any Number & to any Purpose totally failed as I expected," the earl confided to a brother officer, "and here I am getting rid of my Wounded & refitting my Troops at Wilmington."¹⁷ In reference to the handful of southern Tories who attached themselves to his battered army, Cornwallis described them as "so timid and so stupid that I can get no intelligence."¹⁸

As for the troublesome Greene, the earl had decided that there were less expensive ways to deal with Rebel armies than attacking them directly. Cornwallis would attempt to counter

the threat to the Carolinas by striking at the American general's base of supply, the state of Virginia.¹⁹

Virginia was not only the largest and most populous of the rebellious colonies, but the richest as well. Virginia tobacco was a prime reason why America's staggering economy had not collapsed entirely. With the fall of Charleston, Virginia became the mainstay of the Rebel war effort in the South. It provided the men and materiel Greene needed to keep his army in the field. If Virginia could be knocked out of the war, perhaps the whole Rebel confederation might come tumbling down.²⁰

In a letter dated 18 April 1781, Cornwallis expressed his views in these words:

If therefore it should appear to be the interest of Great Britain to maintain what she already possesses, and to push the war in the

Southern provinces, I take the liberty of giving it as my opinion, that a serious attempt upon Virginia would be the most solid plan, because successful operations might not only be attended with important consequences there, but would tend to the security of South Carolina, and ultimately to the submission of North Carolina.²¹

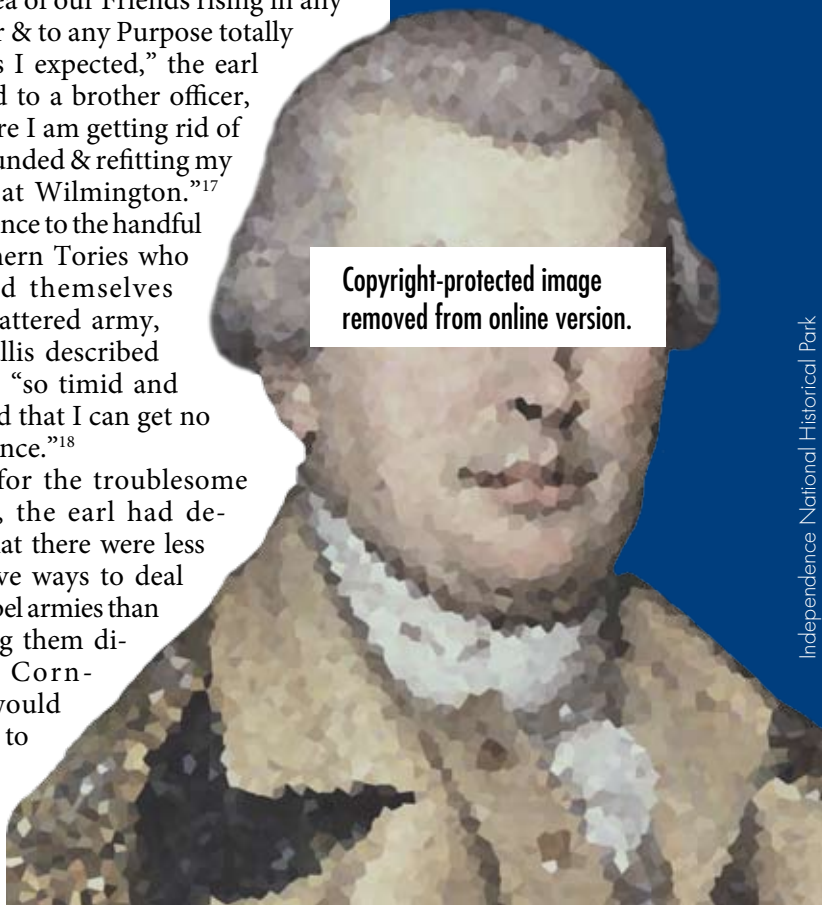
Virginia lay ripe for invasion in 1781. Like other Americans, Virginians were weary after six years of war. Almost all of the Old Dominion's Continental regiments had been captured at Charleston. That left only a few half-trained regulars to defend the state. In addition, large drafts of the Virginia militia had been sent far from home to fight under Greene. Those who survived the arduous campaigns in the Carolinas harbored no desire to face Cornwallis' Redcoats again—a reluctance that they communicated to the militiamen who had stayed behind.²²

Even nature favored the earl's designs. The most distinctive feature of colonial Virginia's geography was Chesapeake Bay. With its network of great tidal rivers (the James, York, Rappahannock, Potomac, and Susquehanna) and other navigable streams, the Chesapeake served as the highway that brought the first permanent English settlers to North America. It shaped the pattern of Virginia's society and became the key to the colony's prosperity. The Chesapeake also offered an enemy a ready-made invasion route, especially since its twisting, 8,000-mile shoreline was indefensible. As long as the Royal Navy ruled the waves, there was hardly anything of importance in Virginia east of the Blue Ridge Mountains that could not be flattened by British broadsides or menaced by landing parties. Not a town, not a plantation, and not a tobacco warehouse was safe.²³ As Cornwallis astutely observed, "The rivers in Virginia are advantageous to an invading army."²⁴

Having taken these facts into account, Lord Cornwallis began his march north toward the Old Dominion on 25 April 1781. By 20 May he was at Petersburg, south of Richmond, where he joined forces with a small British

Detail of *Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene*, by Charles Willson Peale

Copyright-protected image removed from online version.



Independence National Historical Park

army commanded by Brig. Gen. Benedict Arnold. Arnold, the famed American traitor, had opened operations in Virginia by raiding up the James River in January 1781, and his activities highlighted the Old Dominion's vulnerability to amphibious operations. Maj. Gen. William Phillips had joined Arnold a few months later with 2,000 reinforcements and assumed command of the combined force, only to die of typhoid fever at Petersburg a week before Cornwallis' arrival. After Cornwallis absorbed Phillips' expedition, he had 8,000 seasoned regulars at his disposal, and he proceeded to subject Virginia to the ravages of war.²⁵ Two weeks after the junction of Cornwallis' and Phillips' forces, Virginian George Mason, a gentleman lawyer and a firm adherent of the Rebel cause, wrote in near despair:

Our Affairs have been, for some time, growing from bad to worse. The Enemy's Fleet commands our Rivers, & puts it in their Power to remove their Troops from place to place, when and where they please without Opposition; so that we no sooner collect a Force sufficient to counteract them in one Part of the Country, but they shift to another, ravaging, plundering, and destroying everything before them. . . . The Enemy's capital Object, at this time, seems to be Virginia.²⁶

For the next four months, Cornwallis terrorized the Patriots of Virginia with a new brand of war. One by one, he eliminated the mistaken assumptions that had hobbled the king's forces for the past six years. In their place, he introduced a simple but brutal strategy that strained Virginia's devotion to the cause of liberty. Less than a month after Cornwallis entered the Old Dominion, Richard Henry

Lee, who as a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1776 had been one of the leaders in the drive to declare American independence, was sounding like a defeatist: "We shall receive all the injury before aid is sent to us — What will become of these . . . parts heaven knows — We and our property here are now within the power of the enemy." To that gloomy assessment, Lee added: "Cornwallis is the Scourge — & a severe one he is — The doings of more than a year in the South are undoing very fast, whilst they rush to throw ruin into the other parts."²⁷

One of Cornwallis' most striking tactical departures was to cease putting his trust in the Loyalists. He no longer wasted his time courting unreliable allies. All he asked of those white Virginians who claimed to support George III was that they stay out of his way.²⁸

This public warning, which Cornwallis posted in the waning days of his Virginia campaign, characterized his new approach:

The Inhabitants of Elizabeth City, York & Warwick Counties, being in the power of His Majesty's Troops, are hereby ordered to repair to Head Quarters at York Town on or before the 20th day of Augst to deliver up their Arms, and to give their Paroles, that they will not in future take any part against His Majesty's Interest. And they are likewise directed to bring to Market the Provisions that they can spare, for which they will be paid reasonable prices in ready money.

And notice is hereby given, that those who fail in complying with this Order will be imprisoned when taken, & their Corn and Cattle will be seized for the use of the Troops.²⁹

of those too young
for service he cut
the throats, and he
burnt all the fences
on the plantation,
so as to leave it an
absolute waste.

Unlike other British commanders, Cornwallis kept his army on the move almost constantly. He did not just take cities and sit in them. "From the experience I have had," the earl reflected, "and the dangers I have undergone, one maxim appears to me to be absolutely necessary for the safe and honourable conduct of this war, which is, — that we should have as few posts as possible, and that wherever the King's troops are, they should be in respectable force."³⁰ By dint of frequent and rapid marches, Cornwallis kept the Rebels off-balance. He left his enemies no sanctuaries where they could rally or stockpile arms.³¹

Cornwallis also made certain that Virginia's civilians paid for their allegiance to the rebellion by suffering the horrors of war. He not only struck at the state's military capacity, but also at its citizens' purses. If Virginians wanted to defy royal authority, they would pay dearly for it. Cornwallis had his far-ranging army destroy anything that might be of use to the Patriot war effort—including private property. The following order, which the earl issued to his cavalry, typified his new strategy:

All public stores of corn and provisions are to be burnt, and if there should be a quantity of provisions or corn collected at a private house, I would have you destroy it. . . . As there is the greatest reason to apprehend that such provisions will be ultimately appropriated by the enemy to the use of General Greene's army, which, from the present state of the Carolinas, must depend on this province for its supplies.³²

Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton, the commander of Cornwallis' cavalry, believed that terrorizing the inhabitants of Rebel districts was a "point of duty." He boasted that he would "carry the sword and fire through the Land." Everywhere they went, Cornwallis' soldiers promised to retaliate against the homes and persons of any Virginians who bore arms against the king. The property of those who figured prominently in the rebellion suffered thorough destruction.³³ This was how Thomas Jefferson, then Virginia's

governor, described what Cornwallis did to his estate at Elkhill:

He destroyed all my growing crops of corn and tobacco, he burned all my barns containing the same articles of the last year, having first taken what corn he wanted, he used . . . all my stocks of cattle, sheep, and hogs for the sustenance of his army, and carried off all the horses capable of service: of those too young for service he cut the throats, and he burnt all the fences on the plantation, so as to leave it an absolute waste.³⁴

“This Family has not yet lost any Tobo [tobacco], Slaves, or other Property, by the Enemy,” George Mason reassured his son on 3 June 1781, “but we are in daily expectation of sharing

the same Fate with our Neighbors upon this, & the other Rivers; where many Familys have been suddenly reduced from Opulence to Indigence, particularly upon James River; the Enemy taking all the Slaves, Horses, Cattle, Furniture, & other Property, they can lay their Hands on.”³⁵

While threatening Virginia Rebels with instant impoverishment, Cornwallis kept the Americans from wearing down his troops with guerilla warfare by making his army more mobile than Patriot forces. The earl’s command was well suited for a war of swift maneuver. According to Sir Henry Clinton, “the chief part” of the royal troops in Virginia comprised “the elite of my army.” Most of Cornwallis’ British regiments had been campaigning in North America since 1775 and 1776, and they included such renowned formations as the Brigade of Foot Guards, the 23d Royal Welch Fusiliers, the 33d Foot (Cornwallis’ own regiment), and the 71st Fraser’s Highlanders. Long hours of drill and frequent combat experience left these regulars equally adept at the formal

European tactics of the day and the open-order woodland skirmishing favored by Rebel irregulars.

Among the most valuable units serving with Cornwallis were two green-coated Loyalist corps, the British Legion and the Queen’s Rangers. The British Legion was something of a miniature army. Half of its members were cavalry and the other half infantry. The Legion followed a ruthless young Englishman named Banastre Tarleton. This hard-riding light dragoon reportedly indulged a taste for cruelty. Rebels claimed that Tarleton ordered his men to murder prisoners, and the Legion also possessed an

unenviable reputation for looting. Like the British Legion, the Queen’s Rangers was a composite organization. Close to 40 percent of the men were horse soldiers—hussars and light dragoons—while the rest were superbly conditioned light infantry. The leader of the Queen’s Rangers was another alert and active young officer from England, Lt. Col. John Graves Simcoe. A master of partisan warfare, Simcoe delighted in luring his adversaries into cleverly laid ambushes. Nevertheless, he seems to have been cut from a different cloth than the impetuous Tarleton. Simcoe fought hard, but he had no stomach for atrocities. He effectively prevented the Queen’s Rangers from molesting helpless prisoners and noncombatants.³⁶

By combining the mounted detachments from the British Legion and the Queen’s Rangers, Cornwallis could count on the services of roughly five hundred hussars and light dragoons. That was the largest number of horsemen ever assembled by the British during the war in the South. The size of the earl’s cavalry had a particularly intimidating effect on the Virginia militia.³⁷ Recognizing the enemy’s superiority in mounted troops gave Cornwallis a pronounced advantage, the Marquis de Lafayette (the young French general commanding the Continental forces charged with the defense of Virginia) complained in a letter to General Washington:

Was I to fight a battle I’ll be cut to pieces, the militia dispersed, and the arms lost. Was I to decline fighting the country would think herself given up. I am therefore determined to scarmish, but not to engage too far, and particularly to take care against their immense and excellent body of horse whom the militia fears like they would so many wild beasts.³⁸

Even as Lafayette wrote those words, however, Cornwallis took steps that prevented the Rebels from impeding the progress of British forces in Virginia. Since the late seventeenth century, the favorite hobbies of Virginia’s gentry were breeding

Detail of *Marquis de Lafayette* by Charles Willson Peale

Copyright-protected image removed from online version.

and racing fine horses. There was hardly a plantation in the Old Dominion that did not boast of a well-stocked stable full of thoroughbreds. When Cornwallis invaded Virginia, he seized these spirited chargers for his own use. Thanks to this inexhaustible supply of remounts, the earl's 500 light dragoons and hussars could travel thirty to seventy miles a day, which greatly increased the range

and unsettling impact of their raids. Cornwallis also put 700 to 800 of his infantrymen on horseback, thus more than doubling his mounted strength.³⁹ On 4 June 1781, a worried Richard Henry Lee told his brother, "The fine horses on the James river have furnished them with a numerous and powerful Cavalry."⁴⁰ British ships visiting Virginia brought exaggerated accounts of Cornwallis' enhanced mobility to New York. As the *Royal Gazette*, a Loyalist newspaper, informed its readers on 13 June, "By the fleet from Virginia we learn, that Lord Cornwallis's army is at Richmond . . . in excellent condition for service, and has lately been supplied with a great number of good horses, so that the army . . . produces from two to three

thousand well mounted cavaliers." Another report in the same paper claimed "that his Lordship's whole army is now mounted, acting with great rapidity and decision."⁴¹

Hyperbole aside, the thing to remember is that Cornwallis had created a British army that could outrun its Rebel opponents for the first time in the American Revolution. Lafayette possessed only 4,500 frightened troops, many of them untrained, to counter Cornwallis' movements. That figure included no more than three hundred cavalry. To avoid encirclement or surprise by the earl's larger and faster army, Lafayette felt compelled to keep at least twenty to thirty miles away from the British. At that distance, he could neither oppose nor harass the Redcoats.⁴² "The British have so many Dragoons," Lafayette curtly informed Governor Jefferson, "that it becomes impossible to stop or reconnoitre their movements."⁴³

All through the spring and summer of 1781, Cornwallis found himself free to go where he wanted. Since Lafayette stayed out of harm's way, the earl kept his army intact and potent. He did not have to fight any bloody battles to advance his strategy. The ravaging of the Old Dominion proceeded unchecked. "The fact is," Richard Henry Lee related, "the enemy by a quick collection of their force, & by rapid movements, are now in the center of Virginia with an army of regular infantry greater than that of the compounded regulars and militia commanded by the Marquis [de Lafayette] & with 5 or 600 excellent cavalry . . . this Country is, in the moment of its greatest danger . . . abandoned to the Arts & the Arms of the Enemy."⁴⁴

Although Cornwallis sought to subdue Virginia by striking at its civilian population, he did not allow his army to degenerate into a mob of freebooters. His war on private property proceeded under strict supervision. From Cole's Plantation, the earl admonished his army on 5 June 1781, "All private foraging is again For bid, and the out posts are not to Suffer any foraging party to pass without a Commissioned Officer." Six days earlier, the commander of the 43d Regiment of

Loyalist dragoon of the British Legion
by Don Troiani



Don Troiani's Historical Image Bank

Foot announced, “Any Soldier absent from Camp without leave in writing from the Officer Commanding his Company will be punished as a Marauder.”⁴⁵ Cornwallis also issued detailed regulations to govern the confiscation of civilians’ horses.

Commanding Officers of Corps are desired to prevent the scandalous practice of taking Horses from the Country people; when the Commanding Officers of Cavalry find any Horses suitable to their Service they will report their [having] taken them the next morning at Head Quarters Unless when they are detached; In which case the Report is to be made the Morning after their joining the Army. Receipts are to be given to Friends and Certificates to all doubtful Persons; to be hereafter paid or not, according to their past and future Conduct, who are neither in Arms or public Employment, or have abandoned their Plantations.⁴⁶

Those Redcoats and Loyalists who defied the earl’s efforts to maintain discipline and order risked swift and merciless punishment. On 2 June 1781, Colonel Simcoe informed Cornwallis that two light dragoon privates from the Queen’s Rangers had raped and robbed a woman named Jane Dickinson. After an inquiry established the two Loyalists’ guilt, the earl directed that they be executed the following day. Four days later, Cornwallis required a field officer and a captain from each of his brigades, along with a junior officer and twenty men from each regiment, to witness the evening execution of a deserter from the 23d Royal Welch Fusiliers and two others from the 76th Regiment of Foot.⁴⁷

Cornwallis also attempted to restrain the depredations of British forces not under his personal command. Shortly after his arrival in Virginia, he complained to Clinton about “the horrid enormities which are committed by our Privateers in Chesapeak Bay.” Appalled at plundering that served no military purpose, the earl beseeched his commander-in-chief, “I must join my earnest wish that some remedy may be

applied to an evil which is so very prejudicial to His Majesty’s Service.”⁴⁸

Cornwallis not only strove to prevent his new strategy from reaching inhumane extremes, but he also made guarded use of conciliatory gestures.

On 14 August, he instructed one of his subordinates: “All Militia Men Prisoners of War taken before the 18th of June are to be released on parole, unless some particular Crime is alledged against them. I would have you detain all prisoners charged with heinous Offenses, & the very violent people of Princess Ann [County] & the Neighbourhood of Portsmouth who may be

some security to those who have been favorable to us.” Such magnanimity was lost on many of the earl’s enemies, who were more impressed by the destructive impact that his army had on the areas it traversed. “Cornwallis’ campaign and Tarleton’s patrols ravaged the countryside, and destroyed the fields of maize to an extent where even inhabitants had scarcely enough for their subsistence,” reported a French officer. “There is no hay at all in Virginia.” An apprehensive gentleman living in Hampton County exclaimed, “Many persons in Virginia, with large fortunes, are totally ruined. The inhabitants in our county have not yet suffered much . . . but I fear the time of our distress is drawing near.” After the British briefly occupied Williamsburg, a disconsolate major in the state militia wrote his wife, “Here they remained for some days, and with them pestilence and famine took root, and poverty brought up the rear. . . . As the British plundered all that they could, you will conceive how great an appearance of wretchedness this place must exhibit.”⁴⁹

As far as the white citizens of Virginia were concerned, however,

the most unnerving thing Cornwallis did was to liberate their black slaves. Virginia’s 200,000 bondmen made up 40 percent of the state’s population. Had Cornwallis been permitted to follow his own instincts, these exploited

masses might have tipped the balance in favor of his attempted conquest of the Old Dominion.⁵⁰

In this politically correct era, most American history textbooks are sure to mention those African Americans who supported the Patriot cause. As Ellen Gibson Wilson has pointed out, however, “there has been some reluctance to face the implications of the fact that the over-

whelming majority of blacks who acted from choice were pro-British.” Historian David Waldstreicher put it more objectively when he said: “One of the less-well-known facts about the Revolutionary War is that African Americans fought on both sides, primarily with their own freedom in mind.”⁵¹ Statistics reveal that many African Americans harbored no loyalty to a movement that promised life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness solely to white adult males. Of the 500,000 blacks who inhabited the thirteen colonies during the War of Independence, as many as 80,000 to 100,000 flocked to the king’s forces.⁵² Their reason was simple, but compelling. As Rev. Henry Muhlenberg, a Lutheran minister who worked near Philadelphia, confided to his diary, blacks “secretly wished that the British army might win, for then all Negro slaves will gain their freedom.” “It is said,” Muhlenberg later observed, “that this sentiment is almost universal among the Negroes in America.”⁵³

The British did offer freedom of sorts to slaves who reached royal lines—provided the fugitives’ owners were Rebels. That qualification was forgotten, however, as the news worked

The British did offer freedom of sorts to slaves who reached royal lines—provided the fugitives’ owners were Rebels.

its way through the slave grapevine. Most blacks came to equate the sight of a soldier in a red coat with liberty.⁵⁴

The British did not begin to suspect how far and wide this misconception had spread until they invaded the South, where the overwhelming number of slaves resided.⁵⁵ Dwelling upon his experiences in South Carolina, Colonel Tarleton reported “that all the negroes, men, women, and children, upon the approach of any detachment of the King’s troops, thought themselves absolved from all respect to their American masters, and entirely released from servitude: Influenced by this idea, they quitted the plantations, and followed the army.”⁵⁶

As long as the British sought to win the allegiance of white Americans, they discouraged this black exodus. A few weeks before Clinton sailed from Charleston to New York, he instructed Cornwallis, “As to the Negroes, I will leave such orders as I hope will prevent the Confusion that would arise from a further desertion of them to us, and I will consider some Scheme of placing those We have on abandoned Plantations on which they may subsist. In the meantime Your Lordship can make such Arrangements as will discourage their joining us.” The Redcoats even returned runaways to masters who were reputedly loyal or neutral. By the time Cornwallis entered Virginia, however, he no longer worried about the feelings of colonial slave owners, and he permitted black runaways to tag along with his soldiers.⁵⁷

The response of Virginia’s blacks astounded both the Patriots and the British. “The damage sustained by individuals on this occasion is inconceivable,” testified Dr. Robert Honyman, a physician in Hanover County,

especially in Negroes; the infatuation of these poor creatures was amazing: they flocked to the Enemy from all quarters, even from very remote parts. . . . Many Gentlemen

lost 30, 40, 50, 60 or 70 Negroes beside their stocks of Cattle, Sheep & Horses. Some plantations were entirely cleared, & not a single Negro remained. Several endeavoured to bring their Negroes up the Country & some succeeded; but from others the slaves went off by the way & went to the Enemy.⁵⁸

“Your neighbors Col. Taliaferro & Col. Travis lost every slave they had in the world,” Richard Henry Lee informed his brother William, “and Mr. Paradise has lost all his but one — This has been the general case of all those who were near the enemy.”⁵⁹ Other prominent Virginians told similar stories.⁶⁰ For instance, Thomas Nelson, the militia general who succeeded Jefferson as governor midway through Cornwallis’

Any place this horde approached was eaten clean, like an acre invaded by a swarm of locusts.

lis’ campaign, owned seven hundred slaves before the British entered Virginia. After Yorktown, no more than eighty to one hundred remained in his charge.⁶¹

Cornwallis’ soldiers actively encouraged Virginia slaves to follow them. Honyman, who refused to flee his home at the earl’s approach, observed the enemy’s recruitment practices. “Where ever they had an opportunity,” Honyman confided to his journal, “the soldiers & inferior officers . . . enticed & flattered the Negroes, & prevailed on vast numbers to go along with them, but they did not compel any.” Capt. Johann Ewald, the commander of a crack Hessian jaeger detachment with Cornwallis, explained his comrades’

sudden passion for liberating slaves: “These people were given their freedom by the army because it was actually thought this would punish the rich, rebellious-minded inhabitants of . . . Virginia.” Richard Henry Lee charged that “force, fraud, intrigue, theft, have all in turn been employed to delude these unhappy people [the slaves], and defraud their masters!” Despite such anguished assertions, there is abundant evidence that those slaves who joined the British did so freely. As one Virginia gentleman admitted, “Our negroes flock fast to them.” Lafayette even reported to Washington that many of the Rebel commander-in-chief’s slaves had joined the British.⁶²

By the middle of June 1781, at least 12,000 runaway slaves were with Cornwallis’ army. Jefferson later observed, “From an estimate I made at that time on the best information I could collect, I supposed the state of Virginia lost under Ld. Cornwallis’s hands that year about 30,000 slaves.”⁶³

How all this appeared to the British is revealed in the diary of Captain Ewald:

Every officer had four to six horses and three or four Negroes, as well as one or two Negresses for cook and maid. Every soldier’s woman was mounted and also had a Negro and Negress

on horseback for her servants. Each squad had one or two horses and Negroes, and every noncommissioned officer had two horses and one Negro.

Yes, indeed, I can testify that every soldier had his Negro, who carried his provisions and bundles. This multitude always hunted at a gallop, and behind the baggage followed well over four thousand Negroes of both sexes and all ages. Any place this horde approached was eaten clean, like an acre invaded by a swarm of locusts.⁶⁴

Virginia’s fugitive slaves did more than serve the earl’s soldiers as porters and body servants. The blacks also

contributed substantially to Cornwallis' new style of warfare.

By encouraging the slaves to leave their masters, Cornwallis threatened Virginia with complete economic ruin. Slaves represented the currency whereby the Tidewater planters calculated their wealth. Slaves also provided the cheap labor undergirding the Old Dominion's agrarian prosperity. Thus Cornwallis robbed Virginia of the very means of production required to replace the vital resources his troops were destroying.⁶⁵

The addition of thousands of African Americans to the British forces greatly augmented Cornwallis' ability to ravage the countryside. Dr. Honyman of Hanover County composed this vivid picture of one of Cornwallis' abandoned campsites:

The day after the Enemy left Mrs. Nicholas's [plantation] I went over to her house, where I saw the devastation caused by the Enemy's encamping there, for they encamped in her plantation all round the house. The fences [were] pulled down & much of them burnt; Many cattle, hogs, sheep & poultry of all sorts killed; 150 barrels of corn eat up or wasted; & the offal of the cattle &c. with dead horses & pieces of flesh all in a putrefying state scattered over the plantation.⁶⁶

Virginia's fugitive slaves also served Cornwallis in a more deliberate fashion. Runaways sometimes acted as spies and guides for the British. The blacks frequently showed their new friends where fleeing masters had hidden their valuables and livestock.⁶⁷ In fact, the African Americans delivered so many horses to Cornwallis that Lafayette exclaimed, "Nothing but a treaty of alliance with the negroes can find out dragoon horses, and it is by those means the ennemy have got a formidable cavalry."⁶⁸ At other times, the blacks provided manual labor for the British Army. As one Virginian put it, the fugitives "ease the soldiery of the labourer's work." A corps of "Negro Pioneers" (military laborers), originally formed by General Phillips, buried the offal from butchered cattle

after Cornwallis' troops received issues of fresh meat, thus eliminating a nauseating stench and also a health hazard. The black pioneers and officers' servants pulled double duty as stevedores whenever Cornwallis used ships to transport soldiers, equipment, and supplies. The extensive earthworks that Cornwallis had erected at Portsmouth and Yorktown were built largely by black muscle. Finally, the defection of so many slaves spread the fear of servile revolt—the white South's most dreaded nightmare—throughout Virginia.⁶⁹

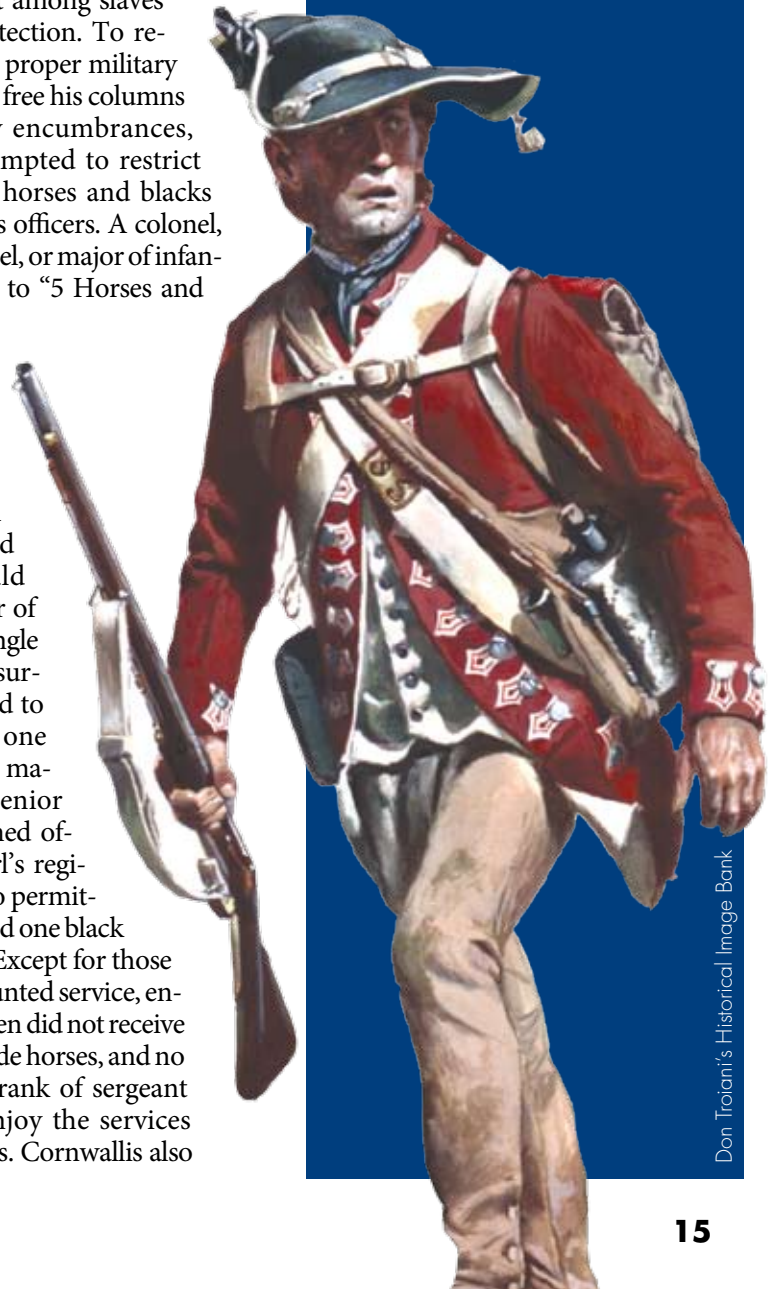
As much as Cornwallis benefited from the specter of black rebellion, he did not intend to unleash a racial reign of terror against the Old Dominion's white population. The earl composed numerous regulations throughout his Virginia campaign aimed at ensuring orderly conduct among slaves seeking his protection. To restore his army's proper military appearance and free his columns of unnecessary encumbrances, Cornwallis attempted to restrict the number of horses and blacks employed by his officers. A colonel, lieutenant colonel, or major of infantry was entitled to "5 Horses and 2 Negroes."

A captain could have three horses and one black servant, regimental staff officers and subalterns could each have a pair of mounts and a single servant, and a surgeon was limited to one horse and one black. Sergeants major, the most senior noncommissioned officers in the earl's regiments, were also permitted one horse and one black servant apiece. Except for those detailed for mounted service, enlisted infantrymen did not receive permission to ride horses, and no one below the rank of sergeant major could enjoy the services of black servants. Cornwallis also

stipulated, "No woman [white camp follower] or negro to possess a Horse, nor any negro to be Suffered to ride on a March except such as belong to publick departments."⁷⁰

To distinguish the African Americans who were authorized to accompany the army's different units from those who were not, Cornwallis decreed on 21 May 1781, "The number or names of Corps to be marked in a Conspicuous

Soldier in Tarleton's 33d Regiment of Foot by Don Troiani



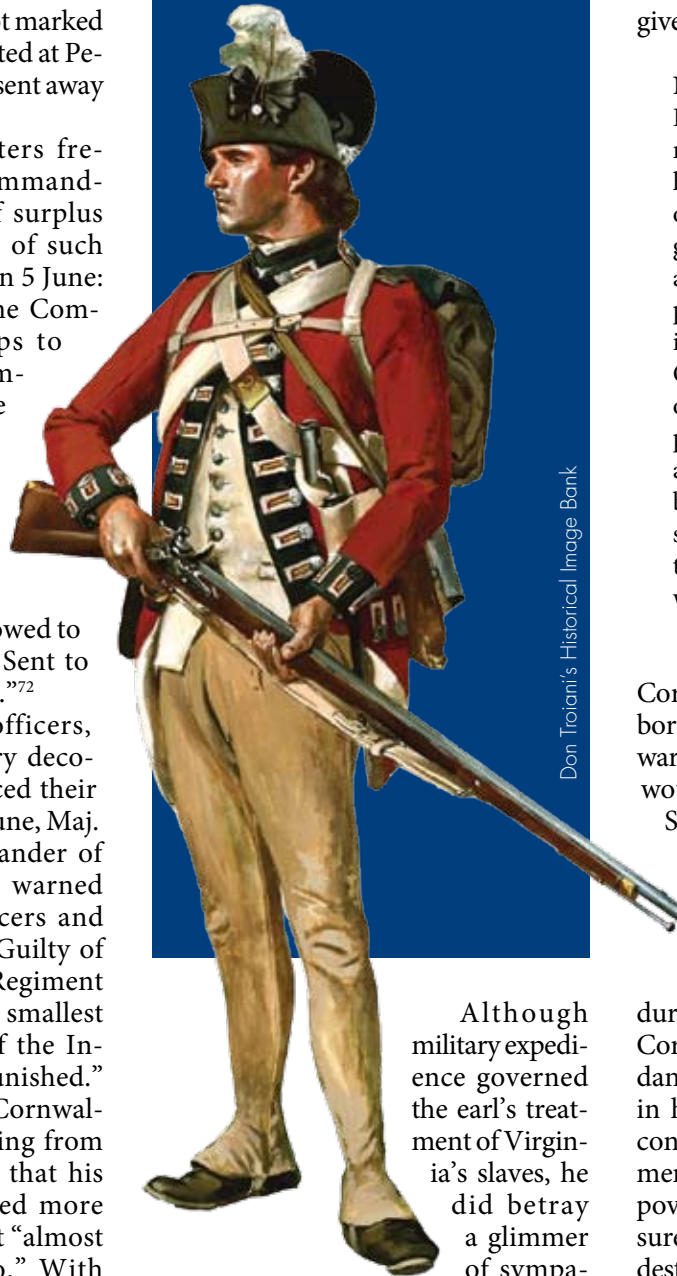
Don Troiani's Historical Image Bank

manner on the Jacket of each negro.” A week later, the earl informed his army, “All Negroes who are not marked agreeable to the Orders repeated at Petersburg will be taken up and sent away from the Army.”⁷¹

Cornwallis’ headquarters frequently reminded unit commanders to purge their ranks of surplus horses and blacks. Typical of such orders was this one issued on 5 June: “Lord Cornwallis desires the Commanding officers of Corps to Examine Strictly what number of Negroes there are with their respective Corps and See that no more are kept than those allowed by the regulation and They will order all the abel’d bodied Negroes which they find above their Number allowed to officers to be taken up and Sent to Capt Brown of the Pioneers.”⁷²

Some of Cornwallis’ officers, sharing his sense of military decorum, conscientiously enforced their commander’s orders. On 4 June, Maj. George Hewett, the commander of the 43d Regiment of Foot, warned his noncommissioned officers and privates: “Any Man found Guilty of sending the Negroes of the Regiment plundering or Maroding the smallest Article from the Houses of the Inhabitants will be severely punished.” Captain Ewald, who joined Cornwallis on 21 June after recovering from a wounded leg, discovered that his jaeger detachment possessed more than twenty horses, and that “almost every jager had his Negro.” With professional pride, Ewald scribbled in his diary, “But within twenty-four hours, I brought everything back on the track again.” Ewald also noted, however, that in other units “this order was not strictly carried out,” and “the greatest abuse arose from this arrangement.” The no-nonsense Hessian officer blamed the situation on “the indulgent character of Lord Cornwallis.”⁷³ In reality, the earl made repeated efforts to control his black camp followers and keep them from undermining his troops’ discipline and the army’s ability to respond to any threat.⁷⁴

Private of the 23d Royal Welsh Fusiliers by Don Troiani



Don Troiani's Historical Image Bank

Although military expedience governed the earl’s treatment of Virginia’s slaves, he did betray a glimmer of sympathy for the runaways. In late July 1781, Thomas Nelson, Virginia’s newly installed governor, sent Cornwallis a curious letter. “The frequent Applications that are made to me by the Citizens of this Commonwealth,” Nelson wrote, “to grant Flags for the Recovery of their Negroes & other Property, taken by the Troops under your Command, induce me to address your Lordship for Information, whether Restitution will be made at all, what Species of Property will be restored, & who may expect to be the Object of such an Indulgence.”⁷⁵

Cornwallis replied with a polite but carefully worded note that must have given Nelson little satisfaction:

No Negroes have been taken by the British Troops by my orders nor to my knowledge, but great numbers have come to us from different parts of the Country. Being desirous to grant any indulgence to individuals that I think consistent with my public duty, Any proprietor not in Arms against us, or holding an Office of trust under the Authority of Congress and willing to give his parole that he will not in future act against His Majesty’s interest, will be indulged with permission to search the Camp for his Negroes & take them if they are willing to go with him.⁷⁶

By the summer of 1781, Lord Cornwallis’ new strategy of conquest bore a strong resemblance to the hard war policies that another invading army would adopt to pacify the American South eight decades later. In his own way, Cornwallis taught the Old Dominion the same lesson that Maj. Gens. William T. Sherman and Philip H. Sheridan would administer to the Confederacy during the Civil War. A century after Cornwallis’ Virginia campaign, Sheridan captured the essence of that lesson in his memoirs: “Death is popularly considered the maximum of punishment in war, but it is not; reduction to poverty brings prayers for peace more surely and more quickly than does the destruction of human life, as the selfishness of man has demonstrated in more than one great conflict.”⁷⁷

Cornwallis’ impromptu version of hard war was steadily forcing Virginia to its knees. The startling mobility of the earl’s army denied local Continental forces the opportunity to engage in either conventional or guerrilla warfare. Cornwallis’ policy of property despoliation also neutralized Virginia’s last remaining line of defense, the militia. The strength and speed of British forces terrified Virginia’s citizen-soldiers. Militiamen grew reluctant to take up arms lest they provoke the Redcoats into destroying their homes.⁷⁸ The militia-

men also feared to leave their families alone with their slaves. “There were . . . forcible reasons which detained the militia at home,” explained Edmund Randolph, who had been a Virginia delegate to Congress. “The helpless wives and children were at the mercy not only of the males among the slaves but of the very women, who could handle deadly weapons; and those could not have been left in safety in the absence of all authority of the masters and union among the neighbors.”⁷⁹

At this critical juncture, the swiftness of Cornwallis’ movements made it impossible for Virginia’s state government to function. On 3 June 1781, British cavalry and mounted infantry raided the Virginia Assembly at Charlottesville, capturing seven legislators and forcing Governor Jefferson and the rest of the assemblymen to scatter for safety. “Lt. Colonel Tarleton took some Members of the Assembly at Charlottesville,” Cornwallis boasted, “& destroyed there & on his return 1000 stand of good Arms, some Clothing & other Stores & between 4 & 500 barrels of Powder without opposition.” In addition to Jefferson, many other well-known Virginians, including Richard Henry Lee and Edmund Pendleton, fled at the Redcoats’ approach, depriving the Patriot cause of some of its best political leaders.⁸⁰

Being denied protection by a skittish state government, lacking any hint of aid from the Continental Congress or America’s French allies, and facing the prospect of economic disaster, the people of Virginia began to consider making peace with Great Britain. The inhabitants of Norfolk, Princess Anne, and Nansemond counties placed themselves under British protection. The men of Montgomery, Bedford, and Prince Edward counties ignored all summons for militia duty. When state officials tried to raise the militia in Accomack, Northampton, and Lancaster counties, they encountered opposition from armed mobs. Farmers living around the British base at Portsmouth started trading with the enemy, sometimes bringing the Redcoats intelligence about Rebel activities.⁸¹ One of Cornwallis’ Hessian corporals marveled at the Virgin-

ians’ change of heart: “Toward us [the Portsmouth garrison] they were rather agreeable and showed more respect than in other provinces, especially the Virginia women had more affection for the Germans.”⁸² Defeatist sentiment reached such dangerous levels that Richard Henry Lee recommended that General Washington return to Virginia with his troops and assume dictatorial powers until the crisis passed.⁸³ Jefferson too urged Washington to hasten to the Old Dominion “to lend us Your personal aid.”⁸⁴

Although Cornwallis made Virginia howl, he failed to attain the objective that ostensibly drew him there in the first place—crippling General Greene’s logistical system. To be sure, the earl’s presence in the Old Dominion worried the Quaker general. As he reminded Lafayette on 9 June 1781, “Virginia is a capital link in the chain of communication and must not be left to sink under the oppression of such formidable attacks as are making upon her.” Greene’s concern for Virginia was compounded by the difficulty he experienced in supplying his army in South Carolina. “I can see no place where an Army of any considerable force can subsist for any length of time; and the horses are so destroyed in this Country that subsistence cannot be drawn from a distance,” he

I am also conscious that no General ever commanded troops worse appointed or worse supplied, than those which form your present army.

had observed in May. With good reason, Lt. Col. Henry Lee, one of Greene’s most active subordinates, flattered his commander, “I am also conscious that no General ever commanded troops worse appointed or worse supplied, than those which form your present army.” Cornwallis not only destroyed or confiscated resources that might have gone to Greene, but he also cost the latter considerable reinforcements. Greene had to halt the southward march of Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne’s Pennsylvania line and Continental recruits raised in Virginia to bolster Lafayette’s numbers.⁸⁵

Despite all these handicaps, Greene managed to keep his army alive. As Washington’s former quartermaster general, he was probably the best-qualified officer in the Continental service to confront such a challenge. He purchased some of what he needed from various sources in North Carolina and made up the difference by living off the land. He sent out strong foraging parties to requisition dragoon horses, draft animals, edible livestock, and grain from Rebel and Loyalist farmers alike. Greene also appealed to South Carolina’s partisan leaders—Brig. Gens. Thomas Sumter, Francis Marion, and Andrew Pickens—to send him some of the weapons, ammunition, and food that they had captured from the British. “I have Ten waggons on their way to you With Meal,” Sumter informed Greene on 2 May 1781. In addition, a caravan of nearly two dozen wagons containing clothing and ammunition from the north managed to slip through Virginia before Cornwallis rendezvoused with Arnold at Petersburg. The passage of such convoys became increasingly difficult after the earl unleashed his wide-ranging cavalry and mounted infantry on the Old Dominion. Fortunately for the Rebels, British efforts to interdict the Virginia lifeline were short-lived. Interference from above brought a premature close to Cornwallis’ campaign to knock the state out of the war.⁸⁶

Cornwallis had plunged into Virginia without seeking permission from his immediate superior, Sir Henry Clinton. Clinton would later call that move “a measure . . . determined upon

without my approbation, and very contrary to my wishes and intentions”—an opinion he made no effort to hide from his aristocratic subordinate at the time. Clinton faulted Cornwallis for exposing the Carolinas and Georgia to recapture by Greene. The British commander-in-chief also still clung to his faith in the Loyalists. He considered recalling a large number of the troops he had sent to the Chesapeake and using them instead to inspire an uprising in Maryland, Delaware, or southeastern Pennsylvania. Fear of a possible Franco-American siege of New York also made him contemplate a concentration of force there. At the same time, personal insecurity affected Clinton's strategic thinking. He and Cornwallis did not like each other, and they were rivals. Despite the heavy losses the earl suffered at Guilford Court House, his

Cornwallis and his six thousand weary regulars found themselves besieged by nearly seventeen thousand Americans and Frenchmen.⁸⁸

Cornwallis knew he was in a tight spot. Although he sympathized with the black runaways under his protection, he was the king's servant first. Hoping to stretch his army's provisions until Clinton could come to the rescue, the earl ordered all but 2,000 of the slaves sheltering at Yorktown expelled from British lines. Besides being terrified at the thought of returning to their vengeful masters, many of the cast-off blacks were seriously ill. They had contracted smallpox in the earl's camps. Frightened by what the future might bring and weakened by disease, hundreds of runaways simply lay down in the no-man's-land between the opposing trenches, where they died of

their hatred for chattel slavery and their desire for liberty—a desire so great they willingly braved the dangers of war to realize it.

aggressive efforts to crush the rebellion contrasted sharply with Clinton's relative inactivity at New York. Suspecting that the earl's success might precipitate his own removal, Clinton brought an end to Virginia's agony. In the middle of the summer, he ordered Cornwallis to retire to the coast, set up a naval base, and send 2,000 troops back to New York. An exasperated Cornwallis began entrenching at Yorktown on the York River on 2 August 1781.⁸⁷

Now fate turned against the British. At the end of August, a French fleet appeared off Chesapeake Bay, denying Cornwallis access to the sea. Seizing this opportunity, Washington pulled out of his lines around New York and slipped down to Virginia with a strong Franco-American army. By 28 September 1781,

exposure, illness, and starvation. The remainder took shelter in the woods around Yorktown. Few survived to witness Cornwallis' surrender on 19 October 1781.⁸⁹ Jefferson later claimed that 27,000 of the 30,000 fugitive slaves died of diseases brought to Virginia by the British.⁹⁰

Cornwallis had received an inkling of the bleak future in store for his black allies months before he was trapped at Yorktown. Within weeks of Cornwallis' arrival in Virginia, the blacks following the British began exhibiting the unmistakable symptoms of smallpox. On 18 June 1781, the earl's headquarters advised the army's "Diferent depertments who have Negroes in their employ to get them inoculated." That same day, Lt. Col. Thomas Dundas,

one of Cornwallis' brigade commanders, cautioned his officers: "Returns to be given in by the 43d, 76th, and 80th Regiments as Soon as possible of the number of Men in the Regiments who have not had the Small pox, and as a number of Negroes belonging to the Army now have the Small Pox, and a number going to be Invealed, it is recommended to such men as never had Such Disorder to avoid Communicating with the negroes until such a proper opportunity shall be found to have them inoculated." Inoculations were administered to the troops, but it is not apparent that runaway slaves received the same treatment.⁹¹

What is clear is that smallpox was soon running rampant among those African Americans who were exposed to the earl's Redcoats, Hessians, and Loyalists. Lt. William Feltman of General Wayne's brigade of Pennsylvania Continentals, which shadowed British movements in late June, found the enemy's route of march littered with sick and abandoned blacks. He described them as "starving and helpless, begging of us as we passed them for God's sake kill them, as they were in great pain and misery." Feltman accused the British of frequently leaving black smallpox victims lying in their wake "in order to prevent the Virginia militia from pursuing them."⁹²

"Above 700 Negroes are come down the River in the Small Pox," Maj. Gen. Alexander Leslie, the commander of the British garrison at Portsmouth, wrote Cornwallis on 13 July 1781. Leslie was coldhearted enough to continue to use the stricken blacks as military assets. "I shall distribute them," he informed Cornwallis, "about the Rebels Meantimes."⁹³ After Cornwallis decided to concentrate his forces at Yorktown, he detailed Brig. Gen. Charles O'Hara to oversee the evacuation of Portsmouth. A warm and friendly Irishman, O'Hara sent his commander a heartrending report on the rapidly deteriorating condition of the post's black population.

I shall continue till I receive Your positive instructions to the contrary, to victual the Sick Negroes, above 1,000 in number. They would inevitably perish, if our support was

withdrawn from them. The People of this Country, are more inclined to fire upon than receive & protect a Negro whose complaint is the small Pox. The abandoning [of] these unfortunate beings, to disease to famine, & what is worse than either, the resentment of their enraged Masters, I should conceive ought not to be done, if it can possibly be avoided, or in as small degree as the cases will admit.⁹⁴

O'Hara's words touched the earl, but the latter did not want the epidemic raging at Portsmouth to infect his army at Yorktown. "It is shocking to think of the state of the Negroes," Cornwallis confided to O'Hara on 7 August 1781, "but we cannot bring a number of sick & useless ones to this place; some flour must be left for them & some people of the Country appointed to take charge of them to prevent their perishing."⁹⁵

Ten days later, O'Hara added the postscript to this tragic story, which proved to be a foretaste of the tragedy that would engulf a much larger number of runaway slaves at Yorktown.

We shall be obliged to leave over 400 Wretched Negroes. I have passed them all over to the Norfolk side [of the Elizabeth River], which is the most friendly Quarter in our Neighbourhood. I have begg'd of the People of Princess Ann, & Norfolk Countys to take them. We have left with them *fifteen days provisions*, which time will Kill, or Cure the greatest number of them, such as . . . will by that time, be free from the small Pox,—which is the invincible objection, the people have, to these miserable beings.⁹⁶

For African Americans, the Yorktown campaign was a tragedy. What transpired in Virginia in 1781 was the most notable slave uprising to occur in the United States prior to the Civil War. At the bicentennial observances in 1981, François Mitterrand paid those desperate fugitives an unintended tribute when he said, "Everywhere one finds the same desire for independence, the same need for dignity."⁹⁷ The African Americans who flocked

to Cornwallis registered their hatred for chattel slavery and their desire for liberty—a desire so great they willingly braved the dangers of war to realize it. And thousands chose death instead of returning to bondage. Wherever freedom is cherished, their struggle and their betrayal should be remembered.



NOTES

This article is an expanded version of a paper read at the conference of Army historians held in Arlington, Virginia, in August 2007.

Anomolies in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization found in the materials quoted in this article have been retained without comment.

1. *Time*, 2 Nov 1981, p. 31 (first quote); *Virginian-Pilot* (Norfolk), 20 Oct 1981 (second quote).

2. Among the many triumphalist histories of the Yorktown campaign are Henry P. Johnson, *The Yorktown Campaign and the Surrender of Cornwallis, 1781* (New York, 1881); Thomas J. Fleming, *Beat the Last Drum: The Siege of Yorktown, 1781* (New York, 1963); Burke Davis, *The Campaign That Won America: The Story of Yorktown* (New York, 1970); Joseph P. Cullen, *October 19th, 1781: Victory at Yorktown* (Washington, D.C., 1976); William H. Hallahan, *The Day the Revolution Ended, 19 October 1781* (New York, 2004); Benton Rain Patterson, *Washington and Cornwallis: The Battle for America, 1775–1783* (Lanham, Md., 2004); Richard M. Ketchum, *Victory at Yorktown: The Campaign That Won the Revolution* (New York, 2004). A relatively recent drum-and-bugle account of the campaign with more of a British perspective is Brendan Morrissey, *Yorktown 1781: The World Turned Upside Down* (London, 1997). The latest and most scholarly treatment of this subject is Jerome A. Greene, *The Guns of Independence: The Siege of Yorktown, 1781* (New York, 2005). Unfortunately, Greene is unable to fully free himself of the triumphalist tendencies that influenced the work of his predecessors.

3. Piers Mackesy, *The War for America, 1775–1783* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), pp. 12–61; Ira D. Gruber, *The Howe Brothers and the American Revolution* (New York, 1972), pp. 3–88; Paul H. Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats: A Study in British Revolutionary Policy* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1964), pp. 10–42; Troyer Steele Anderson, *The Command of the Howe Brothers during the*

American Revolution (New York, 1936), pp. 10–42; John Richard Alden, *General Gage in America* (Baton Rouge, La., 1948), pp. 151–91, 205–50, 287–98; Marshall Smelser, *The Winning of Independence* (Chicago, 1972), pp. 58–117.

4. John Richard Alden, *A History of the American Revolution* (New York, 1969), pp. 141–225; Frederick Mackenzie, *Diary of Frederick Mackenzie*, 2 vols. (1930; reprint ed., New York, 1968), 2: 525–26; John Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed: Reflections on the Military Struggle for American Independence* (New York, 1976), pp. 202–22; *Collections of the New-York Historical Society*, Vols. 16–17: *The Stephen Kemble Papers, 1773–1789* (New York, 1883–84), 16: 97–99, 263–64, 269–70, 287.

5. David Hackett Fischer, *Washington's Crossing* (New York, 2004), pp. 66–360; John W. Jackson, *With the British Army in Philadelphia 1777–1778* (San Rafael, Calif., 1979), pp. 1–52, 81–106; Alden, *American Revolution*, pp. 262–327; Gruber, *Howe Brothers*, pp. 389–93, 397–400; Mackenzie, *Diary*, 2: 525. See also Wayne Bodle, *The Valley Forge Winter: Civilians and Soldiers in War* (University Park, Pa., 2002).

6. Shy, *People Numerous and Armed*, pp. 211–22; Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats*, pp. 36–37, 60–77, 79–85, 115–21, 168–74.

7. Sir Henry Clinton, *The American Rebellion*, ed. William B. Wilcox (New Haven, Conn., 1954), p. 86; Alden, *American Revolution*, pp. 284–327, 370–88.

8. James Simpson to Lord George Germain, 28 Aug 1779, in Alan S. Brown, ed., "James Simpson's Reports on the Carolina Loyalists, 1779–1780," *Journal of Southern History* 21 (November 1955): 517; Charles Stedman, *The History of the Origin, Progress, and Termination of the American War*, 2 vols. (1794; reprint ed., New York, 1969), 2: 189; Banastre Tarleton, *A History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, in the Southern Provinces of North America* (1787, reprint ed., New York, 1968), pp. 13–23; Clinton, *American Rebellion*, pp. 150–74; Alden, *American Revolution*, pp. 408–09, 412–16; Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats*, pp. 121–28; Mackenzie, *Diary*, 2: 447, 525. A reliable biography of the Continental general who lost Charleston is David B. Mattern, *Benjamin Lincoln and the American Revolution* (Columbia, S.C., 1995). The most detailed scholarly account of that campaign is Carl P. Borick, *A Gallant Defense: The Siege of Charleston, 1780* (Columbia, S.C., 2003). Perhaps the most astute evaluation of the ill-founded assumptions that lured the British into the South is David K. Wilson, *The Southern Strategy: Britain's Conquest of South Carolina*

and Georgia, 1775–1780 (Columbia, S.C., 2005), pp. xi, xv, 59–62, 265–66.

9. Franklin B. Wickwire and Mary Wickwire, *Cornwallis: The American Adventure* (Boston, 1970), pp. 8–137; Stedman, *American War*, 2: 190–95; Clinton, *American Rebellion*, pp. 174–76, 186.

10. Stedman, *American War*, 2: 190–95; Tarleton, *Campaigns*, pp. 23–32, 71–76, 85–89; Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats*, pp. 128–36; Wilson, *Southern Strategy*, p. 264.

11. Cornwallis to Clinton, 6 Aug 1780, in *Correspondence of Charles, First Marquis Cornwallis*, ed. Charles Ross, 3 vols. (London, 1859), 1: 53; Roger Lamb, *An Original and Authentic Journal of Occurrences during the Late American War, From Its Commencement to the Year 1783* (1809; reprint ed., New York, 1968), pp. 302, 343, 381; Stedman, *American War*, 2: 198–209; Tarleton, *Campaigns*, pp. 90–96; Wilson, *Southern Strategy*, pp. 263–65. A fine recent description of Cornwallis' victory is John R. Maass, *Horatio Gates and the Battle of Camden – “That Unhappy Affair,” August 16, 1780* (Camden, S.C., 2001).

12. A. R. Newsome, ed., “A British Orderly Book, 1780–1781,” *North Carolina Historical Review* 9 (1932): 273–98, 366–79; Burke Davis, *The Cowpens-Guilford Courthouse Campaign* (Philadelphia, 1962), pp. 49–145; Christopher Ward, *The War of the Revolution*, 2 vols., ed. John Richard Alden (New York, 1952), 2: 763–83; Tarleton, *Campaigns*, pp. 207–18; Clinton, *American Rebellion*, p. 229. For a recent examination of that campaign, see John Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse: The American Revolution in the Carolinas* (New York, 1997).

13. Lamb, *Journal*, p. 341.

14. Henry Lee, *Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department of the United States*, ed. Robert E. Lee (New York, 1870), pp. 276–83; Cornwallis to Rawdon, 17 Mar 1781; Cornwallis to Maj Gen William Phillips, 10 Apr 1781; Cornwallis to Germain, 18 Apr 1781, all in Ross, *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, 1: 87, 88, 92; Stedman, *American War*, 2: 333–46; Tarleton, *Campaigns*, pp. 271–76; Newsome, “British Orderly Book,” pp. 388–92. See also Thomas E. Baker, *Another Such Victory: The Story of the American Defeat at Guilford Courthouse That Helped Win the War for Independence* (New York, 1981).

15. Stedman, *American War*, 2: 353; Clinton, *American Rebellion*, p. 284.

16. During the struggle for the South in 1780 and 1781, the most formidable and steadfast Loyalist units proved to be those that the British imported from the North and not locally raised commands. Wilson, *Southern Strategy*, pp. 89–90, 117, 176, 238, 243, 262–63; Cornwal-

lis to Germain, 18 Apr 1781 (quotes), in Ross, *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, 1: 89.

17. Cornwallis to Phillips, 10 Apr 1781 (quote), P.R.O. 30/11/85, Papers of Charles Cornwallis, First Marquis and Second Earl, Public Record Office, London, microfilm at the David Library of the American Revolution, Washington Crossing, Pennsylvania (hereafter cited as Cornwallis Papers); Cornwallis to Clinton, 29 Aug 1780, Rawdon to Clinton, 29 Oct 1780, Cornwallis to Germain, 18 Apr 1781, in Ross, *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, 1: 58, 62–63, 89–90; Newsome, “British Orderly Book,” p. 372; Tarleton, *Campaigns*, pp. 229–30, 256–57, 312–13.

18. Cornwallis to Lt Col Banastre Tarleton, 18 Dec 1780, in Ross, *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, 1: 74.

19. Cornwallis to Germain, 18 Apr 1781; Cornwallis to Germain, 23 Apr 1781, both in Ross, *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, 1: 90–91, 94–95; Stedman, *American War*, 2: 347, 353–54; Lamb, *Journal*, p. 357.

20. Edmund Randolph, *History of Virginia*, ed. Arthur H. Shaffer (Charlottesville, Va., 1970), pp. 3, 177–78; Richard Henry Lee to Thomas McKean, 25 Aug 1781, in *The Letters of Richard Henry Lee*, ed. James Curtis Ballagh, 2 vols. (1911; reprint ed., New York, 1970), 2: 247; Jefferson to Baron Friedrich von Steuben, 13 Jan 1781, in *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Julian P. Boyd, 34 vols. to date (Princeton, N.J., 1950–), 4: 352; Lee, *Memoirs*, p. 310.

21. Cornwallis to Germain, 18 Apr 1781, in Ross, *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, 1: 89–90 (quote, p. 90). See also Cornwallis to Germain, 23 Apr 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/5, Cornwallis Papers.

22. Jefferson to Marquis de Lafayette, 23 Apr 1781, in *The Letters of Lafayette and Jefferson*, ed. Gilbert Chinard (Baltimore, Md., 1929), p. 38; Fred Anderson Berg, *Encyclopedia of Continental Army Units—Battalions, Regiments, and Independent Corps* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1972), pp. 124–32; Col William Preston to Jefferson, 10 Apr 1781, in *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, ed. William P. Palmer, 11 vols. (1880–93, reprint ed., New York, 1968), 2: 25; Richard Henry Lee to Arthur Lee, 4 Jun 1781, in Ballagh, *Letters of Richard Henry Lee*, 2: 230; Lee, *Memoirs*, p. 299–301; Ward, *War of the Revolution*, 2: 717–30, 782, 868–69; Clinton to Cornwallis, 11 Jun 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/68, Cornwallis Papers; Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740–1790* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1982), pp. 275–76.

23. James Madison to Edmund Pendleton, 16 Jan 1781, in *The Writings of James Madison*, ed. Galliard Hunt, 9 vols. (New York, 1900), 1:

122; George Mason to George Mason Jr., 3 Jun 1781, in *The Papers of George Mason 1725–1792*, ed. Robert A. Rutland, 3 vols. (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1970), 2: 693; Allan C. Fischer, Jr., “My Chesapeake – Queen of Bays,” *National Geographic* 158 (October 1980): 431.

24. Cornwallis to Clinton, 10 Apr 1781, in Ross, *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, 1: 86–87.

25. Audrey Wallace, *Benedict Arnold: Misunderstood Hero?* (Shippensburg, Pa., 2003), pp. 75–80; Johann von Ewald, *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal*, trans. and ed. Joseph P. Tustin (New Haven, Conn., 1979), pp. 255–58, 266–75, 302; John Graves Simcoe, *Simcoe's Military Journal: A Military History of the Operations of a Partisan Corps, Called the Queen's Rangers* (1844; reprint ed., New York, 1968), pp. 158–72, 193–202; Rayford W. Logan, ed., “Memoirs of a Monticello Slave: As Dictated to Charles Campbell in the 1840s by Isaac, One of Thomas Jefferson's Slaves,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., 8 (October 1951): 561–65; Harry M. Ward, *Duty, Honor or Country: General George Weedon and the American Revolution* (Philadelphia, 1979), pp. 162–68; Cornwallis to Clinton, 20 May 1781, in Ross, *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, 1: 100; Lee, *Memoirs*, p. 413; Arnold to Clinton, 12 May 1781, quoted in Tarleton, *Campaigns*, pp. 334–40; Stedman, *American War*, 2: 354–55.

26. George Mason to George Mason Jr., 3 Jun 1781, in Rutland, *Papers of George Mason*, 2: 693.

27. Richard Henry Lee to Arthur Lee, 4 Jun 1781, in Ballagh, *Letters of Richard Henry Lee*, 2: 229–30.

28. St. George Tucker to Fanny Tucker, 11 Jul 1781, in Charles Washington Coleman Jr., “The Southern Campaign, 1781, from Guilford Court House to the Siege of York Narrated by St. George Tucker in Letters to His Wife, Part II, The Peninsula Campaign,” *Magazine of American History* 7 (September 1881): 207; Thomas Nelson to Washington, 27 Jul 1781, in Palmer, *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, 2: 259; Tarleton, *Campaigns*, p. 296.

29. Cornwallis, Notification, 9 Aug 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/101, Cornwallis Papers.

30. Cornwallis to Clinton, 26 May 1781, in Ross, *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, 1: 100.

31. Cornwallis to Tarleton, 11 Jun 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/87, Cornwallis Papers.

32. Cornwallis to Tarleton, 8 Jul 1781, quoted in Tarleton, *Campaigns*, pp. 402–03.

33. Pendleton to Madison, 30 Apr 1781, in *The Letters and Papers of Edmund Pendleton, 1734–1803*, ed. David John Mays, 2 vols. (Charlottesville, Va., 1967), 1: 354; Richard K. Mac-

Master, ed., "News of the Yorktown Campaign: The Journal of Dr. Robert Honyman, April 17–November 25, 1781," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 79 (October 1971): 400–401, 404, 411; Richard Henry Lee to Arthur Lee, 4 Jun 1781, in Ballagh, *Letters of Richard Henry Lee*, 2: 229–30; Tarleton, *Campaigns*, pp. 100–101 (first quote), 294–301; Simcoe, *Military Journal*, pp. 213–23; David Garland to Thomas Nelson, 23 Jul 1781 (second quote), in Palmer, *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, 2: 240–41.

34. Jefferson to William Gordon, 16 Jul 1788, in Boyd, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 13: 363.

35. George Mason to George Mason Jr., 3 Jun 1781, in Rutland, *Papers of George Mason*, 2: 690.

36. Gregory J. W. Urwin, "The British Guards in the Revolution," *Campaigns* 6 (July/August 1981): 48–51; Robert D. Bass, *The Green Dragoon: The Lives of Banastre Tarleton and Mary Robinson* (1957, reprint ed., Columbia, S.C., 1973), pp. 44–58, 72–126, 139–73; Philip R. N. Katcher, *Encyclopedia of British, Provincial, and German Army Units, 1775–1783* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1973), pp. 1–148; Philip Katcher, *The American Provincial Corps, 1775–1784* (Reading, England, 1973), pp. 3–32; Isaac Samuel Harrell, *Loyalism in Virginia: Chapters in the Economic History of the Revolution* (Durham, N.C., 1926), p. 49; Tarleton, *Campaigns*, pp. 101, 270–76; Stedman, *American War*, 2: 183; Lamb, *Journal*, p. 381; Clinton, *American Rebellion*, p. 304 (quotes); Simcoe, *Military Journal*, pp. 150–58, 165–67, 212; *Royal Gazette* (New York), 19 May, 14, 18, 25 Jul 1781; Ewald, *Diary*, pp. 140–50, 267–76, 278–80, 294, 296, 302; Lee, *Memoirs*, p. 413; Simcoe to Cornwallis, 2 Jun 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/6, Cornwallis Papers. For discussions of the British Army's adoption of open-order tactics during the War of Independence, see Lawrence E. Babits, *A Devil of a Whipping: The Battle of Cowpens* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1998), pp. 17–18; J. A. Houlding, *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715–1795* (New York, 1981), pp. 237–38, 336–37. Colonel Tarleton's controversial American career is reassessed in Anthony J. Scotti, *Brutal Virtue: The Myth and Reality of Banastre Tarleton* (Bowie, Md., 2002).

37. MacMaster, "Journal of Robert Honyman," pp. 398, 403, 406; Lee, *Memoirs*, p. 415; Lafayette to Jefferson, 26 May 1781, in Boyd, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 6: 18; Richard Henry Lee to Washington, 12 Jun 1781, in Ballagh, *Letters of Richard Henry Lee*, 2: 235; H. Young to William Davies, 26 May 1781, in Palmer, *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, 2: 120; "State of

the Troops that Marched with the Army under the Command of Lieut. Genl. Earl Cornwallis," 1 May 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/103, Cornwallis Papers; Scotti, *Brutal Virtue*, p. 41.

38. Lafayette to Washington, 24 May 1781, in *The Letters of Lafayette to Washington, 1777–1799*, ed. Louis Gottschalk (2d ed., Philadelphia, 1976), p. 198.

39. During the height of the Virginia campaign, the Queen's Rangers counted an enlisted strength of 632 men. Two hundred forty-eight of this number belonged to the regiment's four troops of hussars and light dragoons. The remaining 384 were divided among eleven infantry companies, which included one company armed with rifles and swords. While in Virginia, the rifle company usually operated as mounted infantry. In an engagement at Spencer's Ordinary on 26 June 1781, however, the versatile mounted riflemen joined the regiment's cavalry in delivering a horseback charge. Ludwig, Baron von Closen, *Revolutionary Journal, 1780–1783*, trans. and ed. Evelyn M. Acomb (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1958), pp. 176–77; Howard C. Rice and Anne S. K. Brown, trans. and eds., *The American Campaigns of Rochambeau's Army 1780, 1781, 1782, 1783*, 2 vols. (Princeton, N.J., 1972), 1: 68; T. H. Breen, "Horses and Gentlemen: The Cultural Significance of Gambling among the Gentry of Virginia," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., 34 (April 1977): 239–57; Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia*, pp. 98–101; MacMaster, "Journal of Robert Honyman," pp. 395, 399; Lafayette to Jefferson, 28 May 1781, in Boyd, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 6: 26; Lee, *Memoirs*, pp. 303, 415; Tarleton, *Campaigns*, pp. 286, 288, 299; Lamb, *Journal*, p. 371; *Royal Gazette* (New York), 7 Jul 1781; "State of the Queen's Rangers 25th Aug.¹ 1781, With Casualties from 25th June to 24 Aug.st 1781"; "State of the Queen's Rangers 25th December 1781 with broken periods from 25 Oct. to 24 Dec.^r 1781," both in Ward-Chipman Papers: Muster Master General's Papers and Regimental Papers, 1776–1785, Canadian National Archives, Ottawa, microfilm at the David Library of the American Revolution; Simcoe, *Military Journal*, pp. 107–08, 230, 233; De Witt Bailey, *British Military Flintlock Rifles, 1740–1840* (Lincoln, R.I., 2002), pp. 72–74.

40. Richard Henry Lee to Arthur Lee, 4 Jun 1781, in Ballagh, *Letters of Richard Henry Lee*, 2: 231.

41. *Royal Gazette* (New York), 13, 27 Jun, 27 Jul 1781.

42. William Feltman, *The Journal of Lieut. William Feltman, of the First Pennsylvania Regiment, 1781–82: Including the March into Virginia and the Siege of Yorktown* (1853; reprint

ed., New York, 1969), pp. 2–6; George Mason to George Mason Jr., 3 Jun 1781, in Rutland, *Papers of George Mason*, 2: 693; Lee, *Memoirs*, pp. 414–15; Ward, *War of the Revolution*, 2: 874–75; Lafayette to Jefferson, 26 May 1781, in Boyd, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 6: 18; *Royal Gazette* (New York), 13, 20 Jun 1781.

43. Lafayette to Jefferson, 28 May 1781, in Boyd, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 6: 26.

44. Richard Henry Lee to James Lovell, 12 Jun 1781, in Ballagh, *Letters of Richard Henry Lee*, 2: 237.

45. Brigade Orders, 31 May 1781; General Orders, 5 Jun 1781; Regimental Orders, 31 May 1781, all in Orderly Book: H. B. M. 43d Regiment of Foot General Orders: From 23 May to 25 Aug 1781, Additional Ms. 42,449, British Library, London.

46. Orders, 28 May 1781, in *ibid.*

47. Simcoe to Cornwallis, 2 Jun 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/6, Cornwallis Papers; Simcoe, *Military Journal*, p. 212; Orders, 7 Jun 1781, 43d Foot Orderly Book, 23 May–25 Aug 1781.

48. Cornwallis to Clinton, 26 May 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/74, Cornwallis Papers.

49. Cornwallis to Brig Gen Charles O'Hara, 14 Aug 1781 (first quote), P.R.O. 30/11/89, Cornwallis Papers; Closen, *Revolutionary Journal*, p. 174 (second quote); *Royal Gazette* (New York), 29 Aug 1781 (third quote); St. George Tucker to Fanny Tucker, 11 Jul 1781, in Coleman, "The Southern Campaign, 1781," p. 207 (fourth quote).

50. Ellen Gibson Wilson, *The Loyal Blacks* (New York, 1976), p. 25.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 21; David Waldstreicher, *Runaway America: Benjamin Franklin, Slavery, and the American Revolution* (New York, 2004), p. 210.

52. Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1961), pp. 40, 51, 71–72, 116, 119; Richard B. Morris, *The American Revolution Reconsidered* (New York, 1967), p. 76; Benjamin Quarles, "The Negro Response: Evacuation with the British," in *Black History, a Reappraisal*, ed. Melvin Drimmer (Garden City, N.Y., 1968), p. 133; Wilson, *Loyal Blacks*, pp. 21–22.

53. Theodore G. Tappert and John W. Doberstein, trans., *The Journals of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia, 1942–58), 3: 78.

54. *Royal Gazette* (New York), 25 Sep 1779; Sylvia R. Frey, "The British and the Black: A New Perspective," *Historian* 38 (February 1976): 225–29; Charles Francis Adams, ed., *The Works of John Adams*, 10 vols. (Boston, 1850–56), 2: 428; Wilson, *Loyal Blacks*, p. 29. Judith L. Van

Buskirk offers a vivid discussion of the African Americans who fled to British-occupied New York in *Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York* (Philadelphia, 2002), pp. 129–54.

55. David Ramsay, *The History of the Revolution of South-Carolina, from a British Province to an Independent State*, 2 vols. (Trenton, N.J., 1785), 2: 31–32; Wilson, *Southern Strategy*, p. 118. The most comprehensive discussion of this issue is Sylvia R. Frey, *Water from the Rock: Black Resistance in a Revolutionary Age* (Princeton, N.J., 1991).

56. Tarleton, *Campaigns*, p. 89.

57. Frey, “British and the Black,” pp. 228–29; Stedman, *American War*, 2: 193, 217; Wilson, *Loyal Blacks*, pp. 32–36; Wilson, *Southern Strategy*, pp. 176, 234; Clinton to Cornwallis, 20 May 1780 (quote); Nesbitt Balfour to Cornwallis, 24 Jun 1780, both in P.R.O. 30/11/2, Cornwallis Papers.

58. MacMaster, “Journal of Robert Honyman,” p. 394.

59. Richard Henry Lee to William Lee, 15 Jul 1781, in Ballagh, *Letters of Richard Henry Lee*, 2: 242.

60. George Mason to George Mason Jr., 3 Jun 1781, in Rutland, *Papers of George Mason*, 2: 690; Pendleton to Madison, 30 Apr 1781, in Mays, *Letters of Edmund Pendleton*, 1: 354; George Mason to Greene, 27 Jul 1781, quoted in Ward, *General George Weedon*, p. 205; Jefferson to William Jones, 5 Jan 1787, in Boyd, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 11: 16; St. George Tucker to Fanny Tucker, 11 Jul 1781, in Coleman, “The Southern Campaign, 1781,” p. 207.

61. Closen, *Revolutionary Journal*, p. 180.

62. MacMaster, “Journal of Robert Honyman,” p. 400 (first quote); Ewald, *Diary*, p. 305 (second quote); Richard Henry Lee to Washington, 17 Sep 1781, in Ballagh, *Letters of Richard Henry Lee*, 2: 256 (third quote); Logan, “Memoirs of a Monticello Slave,” pp. 562–72; Pendleton to Madison, 29 Jul 1782, in Mays, *Letters of Edmund Pendleton*, 2: 402; “Jefferson’s Statement of Losses to the British at His Cumberland Plantations in 1781,” 27 Jan 1783, in Boyd, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 6: 224–25; Lafayette to Washington, 23 Apr 1781 (fourth quote), in Gottschalk, *Letters of Lafayette to Washington*, p. 187; *Royal Gazette* (New York), 29 Aug 1781.

63. Jefferson to William Gordon, 16 Jul 1788, in Boyd, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 13: 364 (quote); Ewald, *Diary*, p. 305.

64. Ewald, *Diary*, p. 305.

65. William Duane and Thomas Balch, trans. and eds., *The Journal of Claude Blanchard: Eyewitness Accounts of the American Revolution*

(1876; reprint ed., New York, 1969), p. 162; Rice and Brown, *Rochambeau’s Army*, 1: 67; Closen, *Revolutionary Journal*, p. 187; Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia*, p. 136.

66. MacMaster, “Journal of Robert Honyman,” pp. 401–02 (quote); Ewald, *Diary*, p. 305; Closen, *Revolutionary Journal*, p. 174; St. George Tucker to Fanny Tucker, 11 Jul 1781, in Coleman, “The Southern Campaign, 1781,” pp. 207–08.

67. Closen, *Revolutionary Journal*, p. 166; MacMaster, “Journal of Robert Honyman,” p. 399; Lafayette to Jefferson, 28 May 1781, in Boyd, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 6: 26; Rice and Brown, *Rochambeau’s Army*, 1: 154; Tarleton, *Campaigns*, p. 353; Simcoe, *Military Journal*, p. 165.

68. Lafayette to Washington, 20 Jul 1781, in Gottschalk, *Letters of Lafayette to Washington*, p. 209.

69. *Royal Gazette* (New York), 29 Aug 1781 (first quote); Joseph G. Rosengarten, trans., “Popp’s Journal, 1777–1783,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 26 (1902): 38; Phillips to Clinton, 3 Apr 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/96, Cornwallis Papers; Regimental Orders, 28 Jul 1781; After Orders, 4 Aug 1781; Morning Regimental Orders, 25 Aug 1781, all in 43d Foot Orderly Book, 23 May–25 Aug 1781; Cornwallis to O’Hara, 4 Aug 1781, in Ross, *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, 1: 113; Pendleton to Madison, 10 Sep 1781, in Mays, *Letters of Edmund Pendleton*, 1: 371; Robert J. Tilden, trans., “The Doehla Journal,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 2d Ser., 22 (July 1942): 243.

70. General Orders, 21 May 1781, 43d Foot Orderly Book, 23 May–25 Aug 1781.

71. General Orders, 21 May 1781; Orders, 28 May 1781, both in *ibid.*

72. General Orders, 5 Jun 1781, *ibid.* (quote). See also Regimental Orders, 5 Jun 1781; Brigade Orders, 18 Jun 1781; General Orders, 25 Jun 1781, all in *ibid.*

73. Regimental Orders, 4 Jun 1781, 43d Foot Orderly Book, 23 May–25 Aug 1781; Ewald, *Diary*, pp. 305–06.

74. Orders, 28 May 1781; Brigade Orders, 8 Jun 1781; General Orders, 11 Aug 1781; General Orders, 20 Aug 1781; General Orders, 25 Aug 1781, all in 43d Foot Orderly Book, 23 May–25 Aug 1781.

75. Thomas Nelson to Cornwallis, 23 Jul 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/90, Cornwallis Papers.

76. Cornwallis to Thomas Nelson, 6 Aug 1781, *ibid.*

77. Philip H. Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs of P. H. Sheridan*, 2 vols. (New York, 1888), 1: 487–88.

78. Lafayette to Thomas Nelson, 26 Aug 1781, in *Lafayette in Virginia: Unpublished Letters*, ed. Gilbert Chinard (Baltimore, Md., 1928), p. 54; St. George Tucker to Fanny Tucker, 14 Sep 1781, in Coleman, “The Southern Campaign, 1781,” pp. 206, 211; Richard Henry Lee to Washington, 12 Jun 1781, in Ballagh, *Letters of Richard Henry Lee*, 2: 233; Lafayette to Jefferson, 28 May 1781, in Boyd, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 6: 26; MacMaster, “Journal of Robert Honyman,” pp. 393, 394, 416; Ward, *General George Weedon*, pp. 203, 216.

79. Randolph, *History of Virginia*, p. 285. This fear was an American military weakness throughout the Revolution. As historian David K. Wilson observed, “The threat of a slave insurrection (and/or Indian attacks in the case of frontier counties) usually kept half of a southern county’s militia at home.” See Wilson, *Southern Strategy*, p. 3.

80. Emory G. Evans, *Thomas Nelson of Yorktown: Revolutionary Virginian* (Charlottesville, Va., 1975), pp. 100–101; Pendleton to Madison, 4 May 1781; Pendleton to Madison, 6 Jul 1781, both in Mays, *Letters of Edmund Pendleton*, 1: 356, 365; Lee, *Memoirs*, p. 438; Stedman, *American War*, 2: 387–88; Tarleton, *Campaigns*, pp. 295–97; *Royal Gazette* (New York), 4 Jul 1781; Cornwallis to Clinton, 30 Jun 1781 (quote), P.R.O. 30/11/74, Cornwallis Papers; Richard Henry Lee to Arthur Lee, 13 May 1781, in Ballagh, *Letters of Richard Henry Lee*, 2: 233; George Mason to Pearson Chapman, 31 May 1781, in Rutland, *Papers of George Mason*, 2: 688; MacMaster, “Journal of Robert Honyman,” p. 401.

81. Richard Henry Lee to Arthur Lee, 4 Jun 1781, in Ballagh, *Letters of Richard Henry Lee*, 2: 230; George Mason to George Mason Jr., 3 Jun 1781, in Rutland, *Papers of George Mason*, 2: 693–94; Tarleton, *Campaigns*, pp. 297–98; George Corbin to Jefferson, 31 May 1781, in Boyd, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 6: 44–46; James Arbuckle, Charles Bagwell, and D. Bowman to Jefferson, 15 May 1781; J. Parker to the Speaker of the Virginia Assembly, 9 Jun 1781; J. Parker to Thomas Nelson, 29 Jun 1781; Preston to Davies, 28 Jul 1781; Preston to Thomas Nelson, 28 Jul 1781; James Innes to Thomas Nelson, 29 Jul 1781, all in Palmer, *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, 2: 97–100, 151, 189, 246–67; Harrell, *Loyalism in Virginia*, pp. 59–62; Tilden, “Doehla Journal,” p. 240; Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia*, p. 276.

82. Tilden, “Doehla Journal,” p. 240.

83. Richard Henry Lee to Washington, 12 Jun 1781; Richard Henry Lee to James Lovell, 12 Jun 1781, both in Ballagh, *Letters of Richard Henry Lee*, 2: 233–37.

84. Jefferson to Washington, 28 May 1781, in Boyd, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 6: 32–33 (quote, p. 33).

85. Greene to Steuben, 2 Apr 1781; Lt Col Henry Lee to Greene, 2 Apr 1781; Greene to Samuel Huntington, 5 May 1781, 9 Jun 1781; Greene to Lafayette, 9 Jun 1781, all in *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene*, ed. Richard K. Showman et al., 13 vols. (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1976–2005), 8: 23, 28 (third quote), 206–07 (second quote, p. 206), 363, 366–67 (first quote, p. 366).

86. Sumter to Greene, 2 May 1781; Pickens to Greene, 25 May 1781; Greene to Lt Col Henry Lee, 29 Jun 1781, all in *Papers of General Nathanael Greene*, 8: 193 (quote), 310–11, 473; Marion to Greene, 21 Apr 1781, Nathanael Greene Papers, Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, Calif.; Davies to Greene, 17 Jun 1781, Nathanael Greene Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Lawrence E. Babits, “Supplying the Southern Continental Army, March 1780 to September 1781,” *Military Collector & Historian: Journal of the Company of Military Historians* 47 (Winter 1995): 163–71; Theodore Thayer, *Nathanael Greene: Strategist of the American Revolution* (New York, 1960), pp. 336–39, 349, 364; Terry Golway, *Washington’s General: Nathanael Greene and the Triumph of the American Revolution* (New York, 2005), pp. 264–66, 269, 271–72, 276, 278–79; Hugh F. Rankin, *Francis Marion: The Swamp Fox* (New York, 1973), pp. 184–238; For an insightful examination of the Continental Army’s logistical system, which General Greene did so much to build, see E. Wayne Carp, *To Starve the Army at Pleasure: Continental Army Administration and American Political Culture, 1775–1783* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1984).

87. Henry Clinton, *The Narrative of Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Clinton, K.B., relative to His Conduct during Part of His Command of the King’s Troops in North America* (London, 1783), pp. 7–8 (quote); Henry Clinton, *Observations on Some Parts of the Answer of Earl Cornwallis to Sir Henry Clinton’s Narrative* (London, 1783), pp. 11–12, 16; Clinton to Cornwallis, 8 Jun 1781; Clinton to Cornwallis, 11 Jun 1781; Clinton to Cornwallis, 15 Jun 1781; Clinton to Cornwallis, 19 Jun 1781; Clinton to Cornwallis, 8 Jul 1781, all in *The Campaign in Virginia 1781: An Exact Reprint of Six Rare Pamphlets on the Clinton-Cornwallis Controversy with Very Numerous Important Unpublished Manuscript Notes by Sir Henry Clinton, K.B.*, ed. Benjamin Franklin Stevens, 2 vols. (London, 1888), 2: 14–17, 18–23, 24–25, 26–28, 29–30, 49–56, 62–65; Cornwallis to Clinton, 30 Jun 1781; Cornwallis to Clinton,

24 Jul 1781; Cornwallis to Clinton, 22 Aug 1781, all in Ross, *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, 1: 103–06, 107–10, 112, 113–16, 117; Clinton to Cornwallis, 11 Jun 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/68, Cornwallis Papers; James Robertson to William Knox, 12 Jul 1781; Robertson to Lord Amherst, 8 Dec 1781; Robertson to Amherst, 27 Dec 1781, all in *The Twilight of British Rule in Revolutionary America: The New York Letter Book of General James Robertson, 1780–1783*, ed. Milton M. Klein and Ronald W. Howard (Cooperstown, N.Y., 1983), pp. 209, 231, 234; John Ross to Lord Ankerly, 2 Mar 1781, RH15/44/103, Papers of John Ross, National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, Scotland; Ira D. Gruber, ed., *John Peebles’ American War: The Diary of a Scottish Grenadier, 1776–1782* (Mechanicsburg, Pa., 1998), p. 464; Don Higginbotham, *The War of American Independence: Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763–1789* (New York, 1971), pp. 376–79; Clinton, *American Rebellion*, pp. 284, 289–90, 301–02; Mackesy, *War for America*, p. 409; Wickwire, *Cornwallis*, pp. 352–53; William Smith, *Historical Memoirs of William Smith, 1778–1783*, ed. William H. W. Sabine (New York, 1971), pp. 406, 407, 418.

88. Tarleton, *Campaigns*, pp. 368–69; Ward, *War of the Revolution*, 2: 879–87; Stedman, *American War*, 2: 414; Tappert and Doberstein, *Journals of Henry Muhlenberg*, 3: 443; Donald Jackson, ed., *The Diaries of George Washington*, 6 vols. (Charlottesville, Va., 1976–79), 3: 409–10.

89. John C. Dann, ed., *The Revolution Remembered: Eyewitness Accounts of the War for Independence* (Chicago, 1980), p. 244; Joseph Plumb Martin, *Private Yankee Doodle: Being a Narrative of Some of the Adventures, Dangers, and Sufferings of a Revolutionary Soldier*, ed. George F. Scheer (Boston, 1962), pp. 241–42; Fleming, *Beat the Last Drum*, pp. 175–76, 256; Ewald, *Diary*, pp. 314, 318, 328, 335–36; Edward M. Riley, “St George Tucker’s Journal of the Siege of Yorktown, 1781,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., 5 (July 1948): 387; MacMaster, “Journal of Robert Honyman,” p. 420; Logan, “Memoirs of a Slave,” p. 572; Feltman, *Journal*, p. 6; Frey, “British and the Black,” pp. 232–33; Cornwallis to Clinton, 22 Aug 1781; Cornwallis to Clinton, 16 Sep 1781; Cornwallis, 20 Oct 1781, all in Ross, *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, 1: 117, 120, 127–28; Wilson, *Loyal Blacks*, p. 42; Tilden, “Doehla Journal,” pp. 238, 241–46, 251; Rosengarten, “Popp’s Journal,” p. 41. A medical history of Cornwallis’ Virginia campaign that credits another origin for the smallpox plague that swept the blacks who followed the British is Philip Ranlet, “The British, Slaves, and Smallpox

in Revolutionary Virginia,” *Journal of Negro History* 84 (Summer 1999): 217–26.

90. Jefferson to William Gordon, 16 Jul 1788, in Boyd, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 13: 364. An untold number of runaway slaves escaped either death or recapture. When three transports arrived at Yorktown on 3 November 1781 to carry paroled British officers back to New York, some of them smuggled their black mistresses and servants on board. Other fugitives represented themselves as “freemen” and obtained employment among the victorious Continental and French officers. “Negroes without masters found new ones among the French,” reported one French lieutenant, “and we garnered a veritable harvest of domestics. Those among us who had no servant were happy to find one so cheap.” An exasperated General Washington repeatedly commanded his officers to surrender their newly acquired servants. In “After Orders” issued on 25 October, Washington decreed, “All Officers of the Allied Army and other persons of every denomination concerned are directed not to suffer any such negroes or mulattoes to be retained in their Service but on the contrary to cause them to be delivered to the Guards which will be establish’d for their reception at one of the Redoubts in York and another in Gloucester.” Thus Washington immediately converted the army that won independence into a posse of slave catchers and created another one of the ironies that continue to trouble students of American history. See Rice and Brown, *Rochambeau’s Army*, 1: 64 (first quote); John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *Writings of George Washington*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1931–44), 23: 265 (second quote).

91. General Orders, 18 Jun 1781 (first quote); Brigade Orders, 18 Jun 1781 (second quote); Brigade Orders, 28 Jun 1781, all in 43d Foot Orderly Book, 23 May–25 Aug 1781; Ranlet, “British, Slaves, and Smallpox,” p. 222. For more on the impact of smallpox on the Revolutionary War, see Elizabeth A. Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775–82* (New York, 2001).

92. Feltman, *Journal*, p. 6.

93. Leslie to Cornwallis, 13 Jul 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/6, Cornwallis Papers.

94. O’Hara to Cornwallis, 9 Aug 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/70, *ibid.*

95. Cornwallis to O’Hara, 7 Aug 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/89, *ibid.*

96. O’Hara to Cornwallis, 17 Aug 1781, P.R.O. 30/11/70, *ibid.*

97. *Virginian-Pilot* (Norfolk), 20 Oct 1781.


JAMES MONROE

By BRYAN HOCKENSMITH

the property upon his father's death in early 1774. At the encouragement of his uncle, Judge Joseph Jones of Fredericksburg, Monroe left home in June of that year to attend the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg. He soon found his attentions distracted by the tumultuous political situation that, by the following year, had led American colonists to take up arms against Great Britain. Early in 1776 Monroe chose to leave school for service in the Continental Army. He enlisted as a cadet in the 3d Virginia Infantry and was soon commissioned a lieutenant. In August 1776 General George Washington summoned the 3d Virginia to New York. The long, hot summer march to New York would be the first of many military hardships that Monroe would endure during the war.

The 3d Virginia arrived in New York just in time to participate in the Battle of Harlem Heights, where it received its baptism by fire. The day before the battle, when the British first landed at Kip's Bay on Manhattan Island, Connecticut militiamen had disgracefully fled without firing a shot, an embarrassment the Virginia troops swore to rectify. On 16 September the British began to advance north and, while doing so, sounded with their bugles not a military call but a tune used in foxhunts to signal that the fox was dead and the hunt concluded. This insult steeled the troops of the 3d Virginia, and they bravely stood their ground in the face of the oncoming Redcoats. While not a definitive engagement, the action that day did slow the British advance. Washington withdrew the bulk of his army from Manhattan in mid-October, moving north toward White Plains, where Monroe's company participated in a skirmish in which twenty British soldiers were killed and thirty-six captured.

When Washington decided to launch a surprise 26 December attack on Trenton, Monroe volunteered to be part of an advanced scouting party that crossed the Delaware River ahead of the main force. During the night his scouts awakened the dogs at a local farmhouse. The ensuing ruckus roused the owner, a Dr. John Riker, who rushed outside to curse the unknown trespassers. When he realized that the men were Continental soldiers, Riker offered his services as surgeon and accompanied the army to Trenton. During the battle with Hessian troops encamped there, Lieutenant Monroe suffered a near-fatal wound to

A portrait of James Monroe, an elderly man with white hair, wearing a dark coat and a white cravat. The portrait is set against a dark background.

The Army marked the 250th anniversary of the birth of James Monroe (1758–1831), fifth president of the United States, with a ceremony held on 28 April 2008 at the fort at Hampton, Virginia, named in his honor. Although he is best remembered for the Monroe Doctrine and for his years as secretary of state and president, Monroe's service as a Continental Army officer in the Revolutionary War and his contributions to the nation's defense during the War of 1812 merit our recollection on this occasion.

Monroe was born at his family's 500-acre farm in Westmoreland County, Virginia. The eldest of four children, he inherited

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bryan Hockensmith is the distribution editor at the U.S. Army Center of Military History. He enlisted in the Ohio Army National Guard in 1997 and served seven years in an artillery battery. He holds a bachelor's degree in history from Wright State University and a master's degree in military history from Norwich University. He is also the book review editor for the *International Journal of Naval History*.

his shoulder while leading a charge against enemy cannon; a musket ball fired from the Hessian lines struck Monroe in the left shoulder, severing an artery. Bleeding badly, he was carried off the battlefield, where Dr. Riker clamped the artery, saving Monroe's life. For his gallantry Monroe was promoted to the rank of captain in a new regiment to be raised in Virginia.

After recovering from his wound, Monroe returned to Virginia to aid in a Continental Army recruiting drive. This effort proved less than successful, as the Continental regiment could not compete with the higher cash bounties and shorter terms of service offered by the state militia. Monroe returned to Washington's army in Pennsylvania disillusioned by his lack of progress. Eager for a field command, Monroe was disappointed to find that none was available. Instead, he was assigned as aide-de-camp with the rank of major to Maj. Gen. William Alexander, known as Lord Stirling. Monroe served with this valiant brigade commander at the battles of Brandywine and Germantown in 1777, through the subsequent winter at Valley Forge, and at the 1778 battle of Monmouth. As Lord Stirling's aide, the young Monroe became acquainted with a number of Revolutionary War luminaries—Lt. Col. Alexander Hamilton; Lt. Col. Aaron Burr; the Marquis de Lafayette, a major general in the Continental Army; Pierre S. DuPonceau, secretary to Maj. Gen. Frederick William von Steuben; and Maj. Gen. Charles Lee, all of whom influenced Monroe's views on philosophy, international diplomacy, and Republicanism. Monroe would later observe that the lessons he learned from these associates and from Lord Stirling helped guide him when he was secretary of state and war and, eventually, president.

After serving sixteen months on Lord Stirling's staff, Monroe, still unable to secure either a field command or a diplomatic appointment, resigned from the Continental Army on 20 December 1778 and returned to Virginia. With the help of letters of recommendation from Washington, Lord Stirling, and others, Monroe was able to secure a state commission as a lieutenant colonel with orders to raise a new regiment. Again, recruiting was difficult. A lack of state finances coupled with an equal lack of enthusiasm from the state legislature caused the project to flounder. In the spring of 1780, Monroe left military life behind and went to Richmond to study law under

Virginia's governor, Thomas Jefferson.

Monroe went on to become a central figure on the political landscape of the young nation. His vast political and diplomatic career included service as a member of the Virginia legislature (1782, 1810–1811); member of the Continental Congress (1783–1786); delegate to the Virginia convention that ratified the federal constitution (1788); U.S. senator (1790–1794); minister to France (1794–1796, 1803); governor of Virginia (1799–1802, 1811); minister to Great Britain (1803–1807); and secretary of state (1811–1817). He also served concurrently between September 1814 and March 1815 as the secretary of war in the cabinet of President James Madison.

In August 1814, two years after the start of the War of 1812, warnings reached Washington, D.C., that British naval vessels in Chesapeake Bay had debarked a substantial landing force capable of threatening Baltimore or the capital. Recognizing that the Army lacked an adequate intelligence service, Secretary of State Monroe volunteered his services as a military scout. He led two dozen cavalymen out of the capital on 18 August and, after reconnoitering for two days, located the enemy force at Benedict, Maryland, on the Patuxent River. He reported the landing of 6,000 enemy troops and observed that Washington was their likely destination. Monroe arrived on the field at Bladensburg early on 24 August, where he contributed to the ill-fated arrangement of U.S. forces unable to stop the British as they approached the capital.

After this battle Monroe's bitter political rival, John Armstrong, resigned as secretary of war, and President Madison appointed Monroe to the post. As secretary, Monroe oversaw the successful defense of Baltimore in the face of the same British force that had burned Washington. In October 1814 Monroe urged the conscription of a large regular army, a proposal that, as it conflicted with the governing party's tradition of relying heavily on state militias for defense, failed to win enactment. A few days after the ratification of the Treaty of Ghent that ended the war with Great Britain, Monroe expressed to the Senate Military Affairs Committee his satisfaction with the conclusion of the war and his understanding of the proper use of military power. "The United States," he wrote, "did not make war to prevent a possible injury at a distant day. They declared it in retaliation for wrongs daily suffered, for which redress

was refused. As soon as these wrongs ceased the causes of war ceased, and the United States were willing to put an end to it."¹

In 1816 Monroe was elected to the first of two terms as president of the United States. During his tenure he oversaw a period of national peace, prosperity, and nonpartisanship known as the "Era of Good Feelings." He secured benefits for veterans of the Revolutionary War, acquired Florida from Spain, initiated a nationwide coastal defense construction program that would build works like Fort Monroe, and announced the Monroe Doctrine, prohibiting European interference in the affairs of the independent states of the Western Hemisphere.

Financially strapped in his later years, Monroe died in New York City on 4 July 1831, making him the third of the first five presidents of the nation to die on the anniversary of its birth. He is buried in Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, Virginia.



NOTE

1. Ltr, Monroe to Senate Military Affairs Committee, 22 Feb 1815, printed in James Monroe, *The Writings of James Monroe*, ed. Stanislaus Murray Hamilton, 7 vols. (New York, 1898–1903), 5: 322.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ammon, Harry. *James Monroe: The Quest for National Identity*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1971.
- Cunningham, Noble E. *The Presidency of James Monroe*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996.
- Mihalkanin, Edward S., ed. *American Statesmen: Secretaries of State from John Jay to Colin Powell*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2004.
- Monroe, James. *The Writings of James Monroe*. Ed. Stanislaus Murray Hamilton. 7 vols. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1898–1903.
- Morgan, George. *Life of James Monroe*. Boston, Mass.: Small, Maynard and Company, 1921.
- Schechter, Barnet. *The Battle for New York: The City at the Heart of the American Revolution*. New York: Walker & Company, 2002.

COMMENTARY

WHY STUDY WAR?

Military History Teaches Us about Honor, Sacrifice, and the Inevitability of Conflict

BY VICTOR DAVIS HANSON

Try explaining to a college student that Tet was an American military victory. You will provoke not a counterargument—let alone an assent—but a blank stare: Who or what was Tet? Doing interviews about the recent hit movie *300*, I encountered similar bewilderment about battles of the past from listeners and hosts. Not only did most of them not know who the 300 were or what Thermopylae was, but they also seemed clueless about the Persian Wars altogether.

It is no surprise that civilian Americans tend to lack a basic understanding of military matters. Even when I was a graduate student, thirty-some years ago, military history—understood broadly as the investigation of why one side wins and another loses a war, and encompassing reflections on magisterial or foolish generalship, technological stagnation or breakthrough, and the roles of discipline, bravery, national will, and culture in determining a conflict's outcome and its consequences—had already become unfashionable on campus. Today, universities are even less receptive to the subject.

This state of affairs is profoundly troubling, for democratic citizenship requires knowledge of war—and now, in the age of weapons of mass annihilation, more than ever.

I came to the study of warfare in an odd way, at the age of twenty-four. Without ever taking a class in military history, I naively began writing about war for a Stanford classics dissertation that explored the

effects of agricultural devastation in ancient Greece, especially the Spartan ravaging of the Athenian countryside during the Peloponnesian War. The topic fascinated me. Was the Spartan strategy effective? Why assume that ancient armies with primitive tools could easily burn or cut trees, vines, and grain on thousands of acres of enemy farms, when on my family farm in Selma, California, it took me almost an hour to fell a mature fruit

tree with a sharp modern ax? Yet even if the invaders could not starve civilian populations, was the destruction still harmful psychologically? Did it goad proud agrarians to come out and fight in pitched battle? And what did the practice tell us about the values of the Greeks—and of the generals who persisted in an operation that seemingly brought no tangible results?

I posed these questions to my prospective thesis adviser, adding all sorts of further justifications. The topic was central to understanding the Peloponnesian War, I noted. The research would be interdisciplinary—a big plus in the modern university—drawing not just on ancient military histories but also on archaeology, classical drama, epigraphy, and poetry. I could bring a personal dimension to the research, too, having grown up around veterans of both world wars who talked constantly about battle. And from my experience on the farm, I wanted to add practical details about growing trees and vines in a Mediterranean climate.

Yet my adviser was skeptical. Agrarian wars, indeed wars of any kind, were not popular in Classics Ph.D. programs, even though farming and fighting were the ancient Greeks' two most common pursuits, the sources of anecdote, allusion, and metaphor in almost every Greek philosophical, historical, and literary text. Few classicists seemed to care any more that most notable Greek writers, thinkers, and statesmen—from Aeschylus to Pericles to Xenophon—had served in the phalanx or on a trireme at sea. Dozens of nineteenth-century



With permission of the Royal Ontario Museum © ROM

Bust of Thucydides

dissertations and monographs on ancient warfare—on the organization of the Spartan army, the birth of Greek tactics, the strategic thinking of Greek generals, and much more—by the 1970s went largely unread. Nor was the discipline of military history, once central to a liberal education, in vogue on campuses in the seventies. It was as if the university had forgotten that history itself had begun with Herodotus and Thucydides as the story of armed conflicts.

What lay behind this academic lack of interest? The most obvious explanation was the climate of the immediate post-Vietnam era. The public perception in the Carter years was that America had lost a war that for moral and practical reasons it should never have fought—a catastrophe, for many in the universities, that America must never repeat. The necessary corrective was not to learn how such wars started, went forward, and were lost or won. Better to ignore anything that had to do with such odious business in the first place.

The nuclear pessimism of the Cold War, which followed the horror of two world wars, also dampened academic interest. The obscene postwar concept of Mutually Assured Destruction had lent an apocalyptic veneer to contemporary war: as President John F. Kennedy warned, “Mankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to mankind.”²¹ Conflict had become something so destructive, in this view, that it no longer had any relation to the battles of the past. It seemed absurd to worry about a new tank or a novel doctrine of counterinsurgency when the press of a button, unleashing nuclear Armageddon, would render all military thinking superfluous.

Further, the sixties had ushered in a utopian view of society antithetical to serious thinking about

war. Government, the military, business, religion, and the family had conspired, the new Rousseauians believed, to warp the naturally peace-loving individual. Conformity and coercion smothered our innately pacifist selves. To assert that wars broke out because bad men, in fear or in pride, sought material advantage or status, or because good men had done too little to stop them, was now seen as antithetical to an enlightened understanding of human nature. “What difference does it make,” in the words of the much-quoted Mahatma Gandhi, “to the dead, the orphans, and the homeless whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or the holy name of liberty and democracy?”²²

The academic neglect of war is even more acute today. Military history as a discipline has atrophied, with very few professorships, journal articles, or degree programs. In 2004, Edward M. Coffman, a retired military history professor who taught at the University of Wisconsin, reviewed the faculties of the top twenty-five history departments, as ranked by *U.S. News*

civilians. So a class on the Civil War will often focus on the Underground Railroad and Reconstruction, not on Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. One on World War II might emphasize Japanese internment, Rosie the Riveter, and the horror of Hiroshima, not Guadalcanal and Midway. A typical survey of the Vietnam War will devote lots of time to the inequities of the draft, media coverage, and the antiwar movement at home, and scant mention to the air and artillery barrages at Khe Sanh.

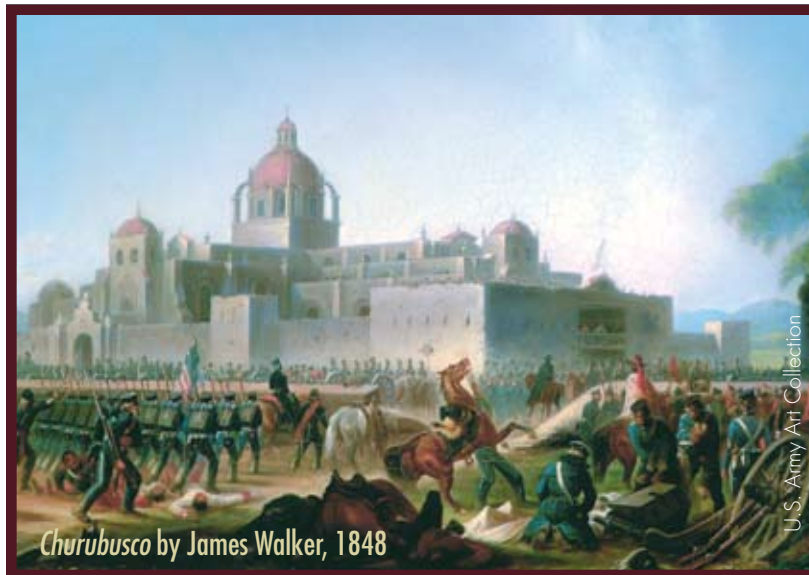
Those who want to study war in the traditional way face intense academic suspicion, as Margaret Atwood’s poem “The Loneliness of the Military Historian” suggests:

Confess: it’s my profession
that alarms you.
This is why few people ask me
to dinner,
though Lord knows I don’t go
out of my way to be scary.³

Historians of war must derive perverse pleasure, their critics suspect, from reading about carnage and suffering. Why not figure out instead how to outlaw war forever, as if it were not a tragic, nearly inevitable aspect of human existence? Hence, the recent surge of “peace studies.”²⁴

The university’s aversion to the study of war certainly does not reflect the public’s lack of interest in the subject. Students love old-fashioned war classes on those rare occasions when they are offered, usually as courses that professors sneak in when the choice of what to teach is left up to them. I taught a number of such classes at

California State University, Stanford, and elsewhere. They would invariably wind up overenrolled, with hordes of students lingering after office hours to offer opinions on battles from Marathon to Lepanto.



Churubusco by James Walker, 1848

U.S. Army Art Collection

and *World Report*. He found that of over 1,000 professors, only 21 identified war as a specialty. When war does show up on university syllabi, the focus is often on the race, class, and gender of combatants and wartime

Popular culture, too, displays extraordinary enthusiasm for all things military. There is a new Military History Channel, and Hollywood churns out a steady supply of blockbuster war movies, from *Saving Private Ryan* to *300*. The post-Ken Burns explosion of interest in the Civil War continues. Historical reenactment societies stage history's great battles, from the Roman legions' to the Wehrmacht's. Barnes and Noble and Borders bookstores boast well-stocked military history sections, with scores of new titles every month. A plethora of Web sites obsess over strategy and tactics. Hit video games grow ever more realistic in their reconstructions of battles.

The public may feel drawn to military history because it wants to learn about honor and sacrifice, or because of interest in technology—the muzzle velocity of a Tiger Tank's 88-mm. cannon or a comparison between the AK47 and M16 automatic rifle, for instance—or because of a pathological need to experience violence, if only vicariously. Yet the importance—and challenge—of the academic study of war is to elevate that popular enthusiasm into a more capacious and serious understanding, one that seeks answers to such questions as: Why do wars break out? How do they end? Why do the winners win and the losers lose? How best to avoid wars or contain their worst effects?

A wartime public illiterate about the conflicts of the past can easily find itself paralyzed in the acrimony of the present. Without standards of

historical comparison, it will prove ill equipped to make informed judgments. Neither our politicians nor most of our citizens seem to recall the incompetence and terrible decisions that, in December 1777, December 1941, and November 1950, led to massive American casualties and, for a time, public despair. So it is no surprise that today so many seem to think that the violence in Iraq is unprecedented in our history. Roughly 3,300 combat dead in Iraq in some five years of fighting is, of course, a terrible thing. And this has provoked national outrage to the point of considering withdrawal and defeat, as we still bicker over up-armored HMMWVs and proper troop levels. But a previous generation considered Okinawa a stunning American victory, and prepared to follow it with an invasion of the Japanese mainland itself—despite losing, in a little over two months, three times as many Americans as we have lost in Iraq, casualties of faulty intelligence, poor generalship, and suicidal head-on assaults against fortified positions.

It is not that military history offers cookie-cutter comparisons with the past. Germany's World War I victory over Russia in under three years and its failure to take France in four apparently misled Hitler into thinking that the German army could overrun the Soviets in three or four weeks—after all, it had brought down historically tougher France in just six. Similarly, the conquest of the Taliban in eight weeks in 2001, followed by the establishment of constitutional govern-

ment within a year in Kabul, did not mean that the similarly easy removal of Saddam Hussein in three weeks in 2003 would ensure a working Iraqi democracy within six months. The differences between the countries—cultural, political, geographical, and economic—were too great.

Instead, knowledge of past wars establishes wide parameters of what to expect from new ones. Themes, emotions, and rhetoric remain constant over the centuries, and thus generally predictable. Athens' disastrous expedition in 415 BC against Sicily, the largest democracy in the Greek world, may not prefigure our war in Iraq. But the story of the Sicilian calamity and the Athenian public reaction to it do instruct us on how consensual societies can clamor for war—yet soon become disheartened and predicate their support on the perceived pulse of the battlefield.

Military history teaches us, contrary to popular belief these days, that wars are not necessarily the most costly of human calamities. The first Gulf War took few lives in getting Saddam out of Kuwait; doing nothing in Rwanda allowed savage gangs and militias to murder hundreds of thousands with impunity. Hitler, Mao, Pol Pot, and Stalin killed far more off the battlefield than on it. The 1918 Spanish flu epidemic brought down more people than World War I did. And more Americans—over 3.2 million—lost their lives driving over the last 90 years than died in combat in this nation's 231-year history. Perhaps what bothers us about wars, though, is not just their horrific lethality but also that people choose to wage them—which makes them seem avoidable, unlike a flu virus or a car wreck, and their tolls unduly grievous. Yet military history also reminds us that war sometimes has an eerie utility. As British strategist Basil H. Liddell Hart put it, "War is always a matter of doing evil in the hope that good may come of it."⁵ Wars—or threats of wars—put an end to chattel slavery, Nazism, fascism, Japanese militarism, and Soviet Communism.

Military history is as often the story of appeasement as of warmon-



Gettysburg Battlefield, July 1863, photo by Timothy O'Sullivan

National Archives



Soldiers on Utah Beach, 6 June 1944

gering. The destructive military careers of Alexander the Great, Caesar, Napoleon, and Hitler would all have ended early had any of their numerous enemies united when the odds favored them. Western air power stopped Slobodan Milošević's reign of terror at little cost to NATO forces—but only after a near-decade of inaction and dialogue had made possible the slaughter of tens of thousands. Affluent Western societies have often proved reluctant to use force to prevent greater violence in the future. "War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things," observed the British philosopher John Stuart Mill. "The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks nothing worth a war, is worse."⁶

Indeed, by ignoring history, the modern age is free to interpret war as a failure of communication, of diplomacy, of talking—as if aggressors do not know exactly what they are doing. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, frustrated by the Bush administration's intransigence in the War on Terror, flew to Syria, hoping to persuade President Bashar al-Assad to stop funding terror in the Middle East. Perhaps she assumed that Assad's belligerence resulted from our aloofness and arrogance rather than from his dictatorship's interest in destroying democracy in Lebanon and Iraq, before such contagious freedom might in fact destroy him. For a therapeutically inclined generation raised on Oprah and Dr. Phil—and not on the

letters of William Tecumseh Sherman and William L. Shirer's *Berlin Diary*—problems between states, like those in our personal lives, should be argued about by equally civilized and peaceful rivals, and so solved without resorting to violence.

Yet it is hard to find many wars that result from miscommunication. Far more often they break out because of malevolent intent and the absence of deterrence. Margaret Atwood also wrote in her poem: "Wars happen because the ones who start them / think they can win."⁷ Hitler did; so did Mussolini and Tojo—and their assumptions were logical, given the relative disarmament of the Western democracies at the time. Bin Laden attacked on September 11 not because there was a dearth of American diplomats willing to dialogue with him in the Hindu Kush. Instead, he recognized that a series of Islamic terrorist assaults against U.S. interests over two decades had met with no meaningful reprisals, and concluded that decadent Westerners would never fight, whatever the provocation—or that, if we did, we would withdraw as we had from Mogadishu.

In the twenty-first century, it is easier than ever to succumb to technological determinism, the idea that science, new weaponry, and globalization have altered the very rules of war. But military history teaches us that our ability to strike a single individual from 30,000 feet up with a GPS-guided (global positioning system) bomb or

a jihadist's efforts to have his propaganda beamed to millions in real time do not necessarily transform the conditions that determine who wins and who loses wars.

True, instant communications may compress decision making, and generals must be skilled at news conferences that can now influence the views of millions worldwide. Yet these are really just new wrinkles on the old face of war. The improvised explosive device versus the up-armored HM-MWV is simply an updated take on the catapult versus the stone wall or the harquebus versus the mailed knight. The long history of war suggests no static primacy of the defensive or the offensive, or of one sort of weapon over the other, but just temporary advantages gained by particular strategies and technologies that go unanswered for a time by less adept adversaries.

So it is highly doubtful, the study of war tells us, that a new weapon will emerge from the Pentagon or anywhere else that will change the very nature of armed conflict—unless some sort of genetic engineering so alters man's brain chemistry that he begins to act in unprecedented ways. We fought the 1991 Gulf War with dazzling, computer-enhanced weaponry. But lost in the technological pizzazz was the basic wisdom that we need to fight wars with political objectives in mind and that, to conclude them decisively, we must defeat and even humiliate our enemies, so that they agree to abandon their prewar behavior. For some reason, no

American general or diplomat seemed to understand that crucial point seventeen years ago, with the result that, on the cessation of hostilities, Saddam Hussein's supposedly defeated generals used their gunships to butcher Kurds and Shiites while Americans looked on. And because we never achieved the war's proper aim—ensuring that Iraq would not use its petro-wealth to destroy the peace of the region—we have had to fight a second war of no-fly zones, and then a third war to remove Saddam, and now a fourth war, of counterinsurgency, to protect the fledgling Iraqi democracy.

Military history reminds us of important anomalies and paradoxes. When Sparta invaded Attica in the first spring of the Peloponnesian war, Thucydides recounts, it expected the Athenians to surrender after a few short seasons of ravaging. They did not surrender—but a plague that broke out unexpectedly did more damage than thousands of Spartan ravagers did. Twenty-seven years later, a maritime Athens lost the war at sea to Sparta, an insular land power that started the conflict with scarcely a navy. The 2003 removal of Saddam refuted doom-and-gloom critics who predicted thousands of deaths and millions of refugees, just as the subsequent messy five-year reconstruction has not yet evolved as anticipated into a quiet, stable democracy—to say the least.

The size of armies does not guarantee battlefield success: the victors at Salamis, Issos, Mexico City, and Lepanto were all outnumbered. War's most savage moments—the Allied summer offensive of 1918, the Russian siege of Berlin in the spring of 1945, the Battle of the Bulge, Hiroshima—often unfold right before hostilities cease. And democratic leaders during war—think of Winston Churchill, Harry Truman, and Richard Nixon—often leave office either disgraced or unpopular.

It would be reassuring to think that the righteousness of a cause, or the bravery of an army, or the nobility of a sacrifice ensures public support for war. But military history shows that far more often the perception of winning is what matters. Citizens turn abruptly on any leader deemed culpable for los-

ing. "Public sentiment is everything," wrote Abraham Lincoln. "With public sentiment nothing can fail. Without it nothing can succeed. Consequently, he who moulds public sentiment, goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions."⁸ Lincoln knew that lesson well. Gettysburg and Vicksburg were brilliant Union victories that by summer 1863 had restored Lincoln's previously shaky credibility. But a year later, after the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Petersburg, and Cold Harbor battles—Cold Harbor claimed

The United States was born through war, reunited by war, and saved from destruction by war. No future generation, however comfortable and affluent, should escape that terrible knowledge.

7,000 Union casualties in less than an hour—the public reviled him. Neither Lincoln nor his policies had changed, but the Confederate ability to kill large numbers of Union soldiers had.

Ultimately, public opinion follows the ups and downs—including the perception of the ups and downs—of the battlefield, since victory excites the most ardent pacifist and defeat silences the most zealous zealot. After the defeat of France, the losses to Bomber Command, the U-boat rampage, and the fall of Greece, Singapore, and Dunkirk,

Churchill took the blame for a war as seemingly lost as, a little later, it seemed won by the brilliant prime minister after victories in North Africa, Sicily, and Normandy. When the successful military action against Saddam Hussein ended in April 2003, over 70 percent of the American people backed it, with politicians and pundits alike elbowing each other aside to take credit for their prescient support. Five years of insurgency later, Americans oppose a now-orphaned war by the same margin. General George S. Patton may have been uncouth, but he wasn't wrong when he bellowed, "Americans love a winner and will not tolerate a loser."⁹ The American public turned on the Iraq War not because of Cindy Sheehan or Michael Moore but because it felt that the battlefield news had turned uniformly bad and that the price in American lives and treasure for ensuring Iraqi reform was too dear.

Finally, military history has the moral purpose of educating us about past sacrifices that have secured our present freedom and security. If we know nothing of Shiloh, Belleau Wood, Tarawa, and Chosun, the crosses in our military cemeteries are just pleasant white stones on lush green lawns. They no longer serve as reminders that thousands endured pain and hardship for our right to listen to what we wish on our iPods and to shop at Wal-Mart in safety—or that they expected future generations, links in this great chain of obligation, to do the same for those not yet born. The United States was born through war, reunited by war, and saved from destruction by war. No future generation, however comfortable and affluent, should escape that terrible knowledge.

What, then, can we do to restore the study of war to its proper place in the life of the American mind? The challenge is not just to reform the graduate schools or the professoriate, though that would help. On a deeper level, we need to reexamine the larger forces that have devalued the very idea of military history—of the understanding of war itself. We must abandon the naive faith that with enough money, education, or good intentions we can change the nature of mankind so that

conflict, as if by fiat, becomes a thing of the past. In the end, the study of war reminds us that we will never be gods. We will always just be men, it tells us. Some men will always prefer war to peace; and other men, we who have learned from the past, have a moral obligation to stop them.

STUDYING WAR: WHERE TO START

While Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*, a chronicle of the three-decade war between Athens and Sparta, establishes the genre of military history, the best place to begin studying war is with the soldiers' stories themselves. E. B. Sledge's memoir, *With the Old Breed at Peleliu and Okinawa*, is nightmarish, but it reminds us that war, while it often translates to rot, filth, and carnage, can also be in the service of a noble cause. Elmer Bendiner's tragic retelling of the annihilation of B-17s over Germany, *The Fall of Fortresses: A Personal Account of the Most Daring, and Deadly, American Air Battles of World War II*, is an unrecognized classic.

From a different wartime perspective—that of the generals—Ulysses S. Grant's *Personal Memoirs* is justly celebrated as a model of prose. Yet the nearly contemporaneous *Memoirs of General W. T. Sherman* is far more analytical in its dissection of the human follies and pretensions that lead to war. Likewise, George S. Patton's *War As I Knew It* is not only a compilation of the eccentric general's diary entries but also a candid assessment of human nature itself. Xenophon's *Anabasis*—the story of how the Greek Ten Thousand fought their way out of the Persian empire—begins the genre of the general's memoir.

Fiction often captures the experience of war as effectively as memoir, beginning with Homer's *Iliad*, in which Achilles confronts the paradox that rewards do not always go to the most deserving in war. The three most famous novels about the futility of conflict are

The Red Badge of Courage, by Stephen Crane, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, by Erich Maria Remarque, and *August 1914*, by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. No work has better insights on the folly of war, however, than Euripides' *Trojan Women* or Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*.

Although many contemporary critics find it passé to document landmark battles in history, one can find a storehouse of information in *The Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World*, by Edward S. Creasy, and *A Military History of the Western World*, by J. F. C. Fuller. Hans Delbrück's *History of the Art of War* and Russell F. Weigley's *The Age of Battles: The Quest for Decisive Warfare from Breitenfeld to Waterloo* center their



General Douglas MacArthur wades ashore at Leyte, October 1944

sweeping histories on decisive engagements, using battles like Marathon and Waterloo as tools to illustrate larger social, political, and cultural values. A sense of high drama permeates William H. Prescott's *History of the Conquest of Mexico* and *History of the Conquest of Peru*, while tragedy more often characterizes Steven Runciman's spellbinding short account *The Fall of Constantinople 1453* and Donald R. Morris' massive *The Washing of the Spears: A History of the Rise of the Zulu Nation under Shaka and Its Fall in the Zulu War of 1879*. The most comprehensive and accessible one-volume treatment of history's most destructive war remains Gerhard L. Weinberg's *A World at Arms: A Global History of World War II*.

Relevant histories for our current struggle with Middle East terrorism are Alistair Horne's superb *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954–1962*, Michael B. Oren's *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East*, and Mark Bowden's *Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War*. Anything John Keegan writes is worth reading; *The Face of Battle* remains the most impressive general military history of the last fifty years.

Biography too often winds up ignored in the study of war. Plutarch's lives of Pericles, Alcibiades, Julius Caesar, Pompey, and Alexander the Great established the traditional view of these great captains as men of action, while weighing their record of near-superhuman achievement against their megalomania. Elizabeth Longford's *Wellington* is a classic study of England's greatest soldier. *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, by Douglas Southall Freeman, has been slighted recently but is spellbinding.

If, as Carl von Clausewitz believed, "War is the continuation of politics by other means,"¹⁰ then study of civilian wartime leadership is critical. The classic scholarly account of the proper relationship between the military and its overseers is still Samuel P. Huntington's *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*. For a contemporary *J'accuse* of American military leadership during the Vietnam War, see H. R. McMaster's *Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies That Led to Vietnam*.

Eliot A. Cohen's *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen, and Leadership in Wartime* is purportedly a favorite read of President Bush's. It argues that successful leaders like Ben-Gurion, Churchill, Clemenceau, and Lincoln kept a tight rein on their generals and never confused officers' esoteric military expertise with either political sense or strategic resolution.



In *The Mask of Command*, Keegan examines the military competence of Alexander the Great, Wellington, Grant, and Hitler, and comes down on the side of the two who fought under consensual government. In *The Soul of Battle: From Ancient Times to the Present Day, How Three Great Liberators Vanquished Tyranny*, I took that argument further and suggested that three of the most audacious generals—Epaminondas, Sherman, and Patton—were also keen political thinkers, with strategic insight into what made their democratic armies so formidable.

How politicians lose wars is also of interest. See especially Ian Kershaw's biography *Hitler, 1936–1945: Nemesis*. Mark Moyar's first volume of a proposed two-volume reexamination of Vietnam, *Triumph Forsaken: The Vietnam War, 1954–1965*, is akin to reading Euripides' tales of self-inflicted woe and missed chances. Horne has written a half-dozen classics, none more engrossing than his tragic *To Lose a Battle: France 1940*.

Few historians can weave military narrative into the contemporary political and cultural landscape. James M. McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* does, and his volume began the recent renaissance of Civil War history. Barbara W. Tuchman's *The Guns of August* describes the first month of World War I in riveting but excruciatingly sad detail. Two volumes by David McCullough, *Truman* and *1776*, give fascinating inside accounts of the po-

litical will necessary to continue wars amid domestic depression and bad news from the front. So does Martin Gilbert's *Winston S. Churchill: Finest Hour, 1939–1941*. Donald Kagan's *On the Origins of War and the Preservation of Peace* warns against the dangers of appeasement, especially the lethal combination of tough rhetoric with little military preparedness, in a survey of wars from ancient Greece to the Cuban missile crisis. Robert Kagan's *Dangerous Nation* reminds Americans that their idealism (if not self-righteousness) is nothing new but rather helps explain more than two centuries of both wise and ill-considered intervention abroad.

Any survey on military history should conclude with more abstract lessons about war. *Principles of War* by Clausewitz remains the cornerstone of the science. Niccolò Machiavelli's *The Art of War* blends realism with classical military detail. Two indispensable works, *War: Ends and Means*, by Angelo Codevilla and Paul Seabury, and *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, edited by Peter Paret, provide refreshingly honest accounts of the timeless rules and nature of war.



NOTES

This article is an updated and annotated version of an essay that originally appeared in the Summer 2007 issue of *City Journal*.

1. Address to the United Nations General Assembly, 25 Sep 1961, quoted in *New York Times*, 26 Sep 1961.

2. Mohandas K. Gandhi, *Non-Violence in Peace and War*, 2 vols. (1942, 3d ed., Ahmedabad, 1948–49), 1: 357.

3. Margaret Atwood, *Morning in the Burned House* (Toronto, Canada, 1995), p. 49.

4. See Bruce Bawer, "The Peace Racket," *City Journal* (Summer 2007), posted at http://www.city-journal.org/html/17_3_peace_racket.html.

5. Peter G. Tsouras, *Warriors' Words: A Quotation Book* (London, 1992), p. 467, quoting Basil Liddell Hart, *Defence of the West* (New York, 1950).

6. John Stuart Mill, "The Contest in America," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 24 (April 1862): 683.

7. Atwood, *Morning in the Burned House*, p. 50.

8. Statement by Lincoln in the Lincoln-Douglas debate at Ottawa, Illinois, 21 Aug 1858, quoted in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy P. Basler, 8 vols. (New Brunswick, N.J., 1953–59), 3: 27.

9. Patton, Speech delivered to various elements of the Third Army before D-Day, as quoted in Carlo D'Este, *Patton: A Genius for War* (New York, 1995), p. 602.

10. A slightly different translation of this oft-repeated dictum, "that war is nothing but the continuation of policy with other means," appears in Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. and ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, N.J., 1976), p. 69.

Dr. Victor Davis Hanson is the Martin and Illie Anderson Senior Fellow in classics and military history at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University; a professor emeritus at California State University, Fresno; and a nationally syndicated columnist. He is the author of *The Western Way of War: Infantry Battle in Classical Greece* (New York, 1989), *Carnage and Culture: Landmark Battles in the Rise of Western Power* (New York, 2001), *A War like No Other: How the Athenians and Spartans Fought the Peloponnesian War* (New York, 2005), and other books on ancient and military history. He received the National Humanities Medal from President George W. Bush in 2007 and the Bradley Prize from the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation in 2008. He holds a doctorate in classics from Stanford University.

COMMENTARY

POLITICS, GENERALS, AND IRAQ

By Wm SHANE STORY

In the October 2007 issue of *Armed Forces & Society*, a professor of political science at the Air Force Academy, Damon Coletta, takes General Eric K. Shinseki to task for asserting in Senate testimony on 25 February 2003 that stabilizing postwar Iraq would require “several hundred thousand troops.” Shinseki made this statement reluctantly, and only when pressed for a number by Senator Carl M. Levin (D., Mich.). In the aftermath of the invasion, critics of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld have frequently invoked Shinseki’s assertion and the resulting backlash from policymakers as proof that Rumsfeld ignored military advice in the run-up to the war. Coletta’s article, “Courage in the Service of Virtue,” purports to show that Shinseki’s testimony undermined American diplomacy and civilian control of the military. Coletta attributes Shinseki’s “inflated and inflammatory” estimate to Army paranoia, a psychological reaction to the way that the information age has rendered troop strength less important than technological superiority. To give the saga pathos, Coletta paints Rumsfeld and Shinseki as characters in a Greek tragedy, only to argue there was no tragedy and to conclude that Shinseki should have provided his politically charged views only in a closed committee session, if at all. Coletta’s concern with Shinseki’s testimony, even in view of the lightning-rod status it attained in the aftermath of the invasion, is misplaced. It was no more



than the tip of an iceberg, the sight of which should have instilled caution about the dangers that lurked unseen.

According to Coletta, Shinseki’s estimate was surprisingly high and contradicted General Tommy R. Franks’ plan. In fact, the estimate was no more than what Franks planned for and requested. It accurately reflected Shinseki’s operational experience and the conclusions of multiple institutional studies of the problem. Three days before Shinseki spoke, the National Defense University hosted an interagency planning conference focusing on post-invasion Iraq. Conference attendees included subject-matter experts—intelligence officers, Arabists from the State Department, retired generals, and reconstruction specialists—drawn from across the federal government and military planners from Central Command. The primary conclusion of the conference was that the United States was not prepared to stabilize Iraq after a successful invasion because it was not deploying enough troops for the mission.¹

Since taking office in early 2001, Rumsfeld’s foremost priority had been a radical transformation of the U.S. military to make it lighter, faster, and more agile. Many welcomed Rumsfeld’s energy and drive because the 1990s had left a legacy of frustrated post-Cold War reform efforts. Though smaller for what seemed a less hostile world, the military Rumsfeld inherited was floundering in its attempts to anticipate what threats lay ahead and how to shape the force appropriately. In Rumsfeld’s view,

the problem originated in the military’s deliberate planning model and its logistics-heavy operations, which he considered hidebound throwbacks to the devastating, attrition-based conflicts of the twentieth century. Together, Rumsfeld believed, these had produced the Pentagon’s lumbering bureaucracy, which now stood in the way of the strategic revolution promised by the advent of the information age. To remake the military, Rumsfeld created the Office of Force Transformation and appointed retired Vice Adm. Arthur K. Cebrowski its director. Cebrowski, who viewed himself as an iconoclastic visionary battling entrenched Luddites, took it as gospel that kilobytes were replacing fire and maneuver as the key to battlefield dominance.²

Cebrowski’s theories offered an explanation for how technical developments in aerial surveillance, satellite reconnaissance, communications, and global positioning systems were changing the face of battle. He argued that a modern military equipped with these fast-evolving systems would dominate

forces lacking the same capabilities. In Rumsfeld's hands, Cebrowski's theories became an intellectual sledgehammer. Disregarding customary Pentagon bureaucratic processes, Rumsfeld believed he was instituting military transformation by creatively destroying old ways of doing things, and he expected the result to be a smaller military that was more capable.

Rumsfeld regarded ongoing security obligations as unwarranted drains on American power and an obstacle to a smaller military, which he wanted to win the nation's wars, not police the world. His agenda especially undermined the institution designed for sustained land warfare, a form of conflict the secretary did not intend to undertake. In the weeks before the invasion, he complained publicly about the inconveniences of mobilizing reserves.³ He micromanaged force deployments.⁴ In mid-February, he criticized the international peacekeeping missions in East Timor and Kosovo for breeding dependency, which they did, and held up Afghanistan as the new model for modest interventions relying on precision-guided weapons as the best means of avoiding nation-building, a hope that has yet to be borne out.⁵ Two weeks before the invasion, Rumsfeld announced he was completely changing the contingency and war planning processes. This was tantamount to a vote of no confidence in the way the services had been trying to prepare for the invasion. It meant military planners could not trust the assumptions on which they had based their planning.⁶

Shinseki's pre-invasion estimate and Rumsfeld's response provided a glimpse of the suppressed conflict in the Pentagon between generals who feared an ill-prepared campaign and the secretary, who opposed large deployments as a violation of the tenets of transformation. Coletta might argue that this is the point, that Shinseki should never have permitted this hint of turmoil to escape. Rumsfeld's frequent criticisms of the Pentagon had, however, already revealed something was terribly amiss. Experience and professional education led Shinseki to estimate that toppling Saddam Hussein would be so destabilizing that it would force the United

States to commit large numbers of troops for an indefinite period to deal with the consequences. Conviction in the efficacy of military transformation and confidence that the political will to reject nation-building would spare the administration the troubles of occupation helped Rumsfeld assume that stabilizing Iraq was not something with which the Pentagon need concern itself. In terms of the road to war in Iraq, what Coletta calls the "civil-military decision-making process" was in fact an astounding set of contradictory assumptions at the highest levels. For all their attempts to ready the force, Shinseki and other generals upheld their oaths in deferring to constitutional authority.

Two significant events followed Saddam's fall. First, a violent struggle broke out between Iraqis for pre-eminence in the new order. Second, Rumsfeld halted the deployment of additional forces and ordered a precipitous withdrawal of units then in Iraq. Some of the Iraqi-on-Iraqi violence spilled over into isolated attacks on American forces. In what they viewed as rear-guard actions preceding their redeployments, American units launched battalion- and brigade-size cordon-and-search operations. American troops rounded up thousands of prisoners whom they could not interrogate for lack of translators and they could not feed or secure for lack of personnel, facilities, and supplies, all a direct albeit unintended consequence of Rumsfeld's refusal to contemplate sustained land warfare. Tactical commanders could do little but release the Iraqis, now humiliated and angry. Far more than the fall of Baghdad on 9 April, the decisive moment in the war came when Americans and Iraqis confronted post-Saddam realities.

The central problem Coletta's article addresses is the tension facing all officers confronting a costly, perplexing, and seemingly interminable conflict. What responsibility does any officer have to state forthrightly his estimate of the situation? Coletta argues, "More self-restraint among America's extraordinary generals who must somehow advise and execute without deciding war policy will restore the better part

of valor." In the context of Shinseki's appearance before Congress, Coletta's is a call for dissimulation.



NOTES

1. Conference Notes, Catherine Dale, 3 March 2003, sub: Interagency Rehearsal and Planning Conference: Summary and Analysis, Washington D.C., 21–22 February 2003, copy in the author's files at the U.S. Army Center of Military History.

2. For a hagiographic account of Cebrowski's ideas, see James R. Blaker, *Transforming Military Force: The Legacy of Arthur Cebrowski and Network Centric Warfare* (Westport, Conn., 2007).

3. Rumsfeld remarks to the Reserve Officers Association, 20 Jan 2003, posted at <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=165>.

4. Mark Thompson and Michael Duffy, "Pentagon Warlord," *Time* 161 (27 Jan 2003): 22–29.

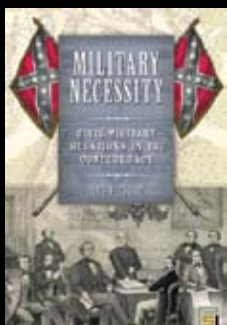
5. Secretary Rumsfeld, "Beyond Nation Building," 14 Feb 2003, posted at <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=337>.

6. Pentagon Town Hall Meeting with Secretary Rumsfeld, 6 Mar 2003, posted at <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=355>.

Dr. Wm Shane Story is the command historian for the Multinational Force–Iraq. A senior Army aviator, Story taught history at the U.S. Military Academy from 1996 to 1998 and served at the U.S. Army Center of Military History from 2003 to 2007. While he is collecting documents and conducting interviews in Baghdad, some of his former colleagues at the Center are editing for future publication his account of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Story is the author of the review essay "Transformation or Troop Strength? Early Accounts of the Invasion of Iraq," which appeared in the Winter 2006 issue of *Army History* (No. 62). He holds a doctorate in history from Rice University.

BOOKREVIEWS

Military Necessity: Civil-Military Relations in the Confederacy



By Paul D. Escott
Praeger Security International, 2006,
215 pp., \$ 49.95

Civil-Military Relations on the Frontier and Beyond, 1865–1917



By Charles A. Byler
Praeger Security International, 2006,
192 pp., \$ 49.95

REVIEW BY SAMUEL WATSON

Together these books present a mixed but auspicious beginning to Praeger's new series on American civil-military relations. Though they share common concerns and themes,

they are rather different books in form, tone, and effect, as well as subject. Paul Escott is a well-known historian of the nineteenth-century South, well-suited to connect that context to the impact of war. *Military Necessity* uses historiography and primary research in a series of mutually supporting thematic case studies; the result is a hard-hitting monograph that every Civil War historian, and perhaps every officer of the government, should read. *Civil-Military Relations on the Frontier* addresses a longer period and a wider context; the result is a survey. Both books help the reader think about the processes and challenges of change, but Escott does so explicitly, while readers of Byler must do most of the analysis themselves.

Confederate civil-military relations were as disastrous as they could be short of a military coup. The states of the Confederacy seceded from the United States in order to preserve their social system and claimed to do so to preserve constitutionalism and their citizens' political rights, specifically state and property rights. Beset by war, the Confederate States soon found that military necessity drove virtually all national policies. These policies enabled the Confederacy to resist until 1865 but undermined constitutionalism, civil liberties, and state and property rights to an extent never seen in the United States before or since. The antebellum restraints on executive and military power so dear to Americans nearly evaporated. "Jefferson Davis dominated military policy" (p. 22), Congress was ineffectual, parties (considered treasonous factions) never formed, and the courts were never fully established. The national government overrode the states, with almost complete support from Congress and military com-

manders. (Escott also points out that states' rights advocates like Georgia Governor Joseph E. Brown sought centralization within their states.)

The Confederate States established conscription more than a year before the United States, suspended habeas corpus across the nation for more than a year, and resorted on a vast scale to impressment (or seizure) of property by military forces, only sometimes giving IOUs. Thus, half of the supplies gained from Georgia were impressed (p. 76). Price controls, censorship, and a near-universal system of internal passports were imposed by military commanders, who not infrequently declared martial law on their own authority and carried out thousands of arrests, legal and illegal, or at least unauthorized by statute. Military necessity rapidly trumped the values of personal liberty and decentralization that southern whites had proclaimed (for themselves) before the war, and their government relied increasingly on military force to maintain everyday law and order. "In the Confederacy, society became militarized to a degree unmatched in U.S. history" (p. 94), Escott observes.

There are at least three possible explanations for this development, which was unforeseen before the war: first, that the Army wanted to take over—implying that something in Confederate military institutions and culture, or perhaps something in those of the antebellum U.S. Army, predisposed military commanders to martial rule; second, that the necessities of war demanded military power; or, third, that Confederate elites encouraged and Confederate civilian leaders effected this change. There is very little evidence of the first, either from Escott or in the research on the antebellum Army. The second assertion might

be true, but it may exaggerate actual military necessity.

The third possibility is what connects the contingency of war to the social context. Drawing on the work of George C. Rable and Mark E. Neely Jr., leading historians of the Civil War and the nineteenth-century South, Escott observes that Confederate elites ultimately preferred order to liberty.¹ This ought to be obvious, since the most important difference between North and South, and the one to which most of the rest can be traced most easily and directly, was slavery. Generations of pro-Confederate rhetoric, however, starting with Jefferson Davis' claim that he was fighting for states' rights, focused the study of the war on its "international" dimensions, rather than the dynamics of wartime (or antebellum) southern society. Since the 1970s, historians have examined these dynamics in depth and have uncovered a South and a Confederacy torn by divisions among white citizens. Escott does not take an explicit stand on why the South lost, but his evidence suggests that Confederate military policies directly contradicted the asserted "national" values of individual liberty and decentralization and so alienated popular support for the war in the South that they ultimately undermined national security as much as they helped make resistance to the Union possible.

The extent of "the rising tide of disaffection and social disintegration that threatened to inundate" (p. 173) the Confederacy has grown increasingly familiar to historians since the 1970s. Escott's principal conclusions are that enforcing conscription and impressment produced a spiral of escalation that required militarization; that, as a result, "our nation has never known the level of disorganization, disorder, and lawlessness that developed in the Confederate South" (p. 173); that Davis dominated the formation of military strategy despite opposition from some generals (the overhyped "western concentration bloc"); that demands for a military coup to replace Davis came from civilians rather than military commanders; and that the last bastion to resist the

demands of military necessity was, of course, the institution of slavery. Only Robert E. Lee's support gave proposals to arm the slaves any credibility, but these proposals, and Lee's support, came so late, in such desperate circumstances, and against such widespread resistance, that they are most significant as evidence of the Confederate commitment to slavery.

Ultimately, the ordinary Confederate citizen's worst enemy was his own leadership. Sadly, those leaders succeeded far more effectively in creating southern nationalism after the end of conventional warfare, when U.S. sovereignty returned, necessarily with a heavier hand, and southern whites could reunite to forget their divisions and resume the quest for white supremacy against Reconstruction. *Military Necessity* tells a cautionary tale about the relationship between civil liberties and national security, about the difficulty of balancing ends and means, and about the dilemmas of contingency and change.

Civil-Military Relations on the Frontier and Beyond lacks the focus provided by the Civil War. It provides a quick survey of most issues in military policy and the state of military institutions, as well as civil-military relations, between Appomattox and the United States' entry into the first world war. Byler lays out four core questions that concerned some contemporary Americans, and could concern historians today: Was the military subordinate to civil authority? Did it gain undue influence in policymaking? Did it provide support to political parties or individual politicians? Did it infuse American politics with militarism or authoritarianism?

The answers (yes, no, some soldiers sometimes, and no, respectively) are already clear enough that I would suggest a different set of questions, and a different starting point. Were the majority of Americans still "brought up to regard the standing army as a tool of monarchs and a threat to liberty" (p. xiii)? Even though such views were present, how salient were they? Though they may have been widely diffused, how intensely were they held? And among what segments of the pop-

ulation? Byler suggests that the military's image improved significantly by 1900, but in his account this appears to have been due to improvements in material conditions, as a result of which the military was no longer a refuge for impoverished, dissolute immigrants, as had been the stereotype (and unfortunately often the reality) before. Yet anti-imperialists had just as much cause for complaint as before. Did the views of southern whites improve as the United States began to look overseas? Were southern whites able to accept and applaud the military as an embodiment of American nationalism and to reintegrate themselves into the political nation?

In the North, how did the Civil War volunteer experience, or that of the Spanish-American War, affect views of the military? (The bibliography refers to Gerald F. Linderman's work on the latter war, but not the former.²) Jealousy, or antagonism toward West Point and Regular Army discipline, was one response. Were there others? Byler suggests that the middle class was happy to see the Army help restore order during the strikes of 1877. What about the working classes (a term extensively used at the time)? (David Montgomery's *Citizen Worker* has a stimulating section on the varied relationships between workers, particularly immigrants, militias, and the Regular Army.³) Perhaps most important, how did partisan attitudes differ? The Democrats had espoused anti-standing army rhetoric since the days of Andrew Jackson, but they had relied considerably on the Regular Army to lead and secure the territorial expansion on which their social and political vision depended. With a constituency of southern whites and northern and western workers after the Civil War, Democrats often criticized the Army—but there was another party that won half the congressional and most of the presidential elections throughout the period 1860–1932. Was the Republican Party equally hostile to standing military forces?

Unless we acknowledge differences in partisan attitudes, and even ideologies, toward centralization and military force, we are back with

Samuel P. Huntington in a long outdated vision of American society united in “liberalism” and antagonism toward standing military forces. Drawing on the work of several decades of historians, William B. Skelton has demolished Huntington’s unresearched shibboleths about the antebellum era; following John M. Gates and Terrence J. Gough, current scholars like Donald B. Connelly and David J. Fitzpatrick are beginning to do so for the post-Civil War period. Byler refers to Skelton’s work, but does not seem to have thoroughly thought through its implications for the postbellum era, nor does he cite the works of the latter historians. He cites Mark R. Grandstaff and Thomas S. Langston, but does not make much use of their insights.⁴

The result is a rather traditional interpretation, with the Army isolated from civil society, but with very little attention to professionalization or its implications for civil-military relations. “The sense of estrangement from civil society that permeated the officer corps produced no lasting breach” (p. 104), and “defiance of civil authority came largely from a few powerful individuals within the military, not from the military as an institution” (p. 125), Byler writes. This is reasonable enough, but two significant questions remain unexamined. Following scholars such as James L. Abrahamson, Byler points out that as conflict between capital and labor mounted during the Progressive Era (roughly 1900–1920), the regular military increasingly sought to remain neutral.⁵ Like the question of class (or social stratification) and civil-military relations, this is a major issue in U.S. history, that deserves a book unto itself; Byler offers no explanation.

Most important for civil-military relations, Byler observes that “the relatively rare occasions when military officers challenged civilian superiors usually involved instances in which the lines of authority were unclear” or senior officers who “had significant [civilian] political support” (p. 104). As Connelly has stressed, crises in civil-military relations usually spring from pressures from competing civilian authorities, rather than subordination to civil authority as such. Hence I

would suggest that General Ulysses S. Grant belongs in a different category than Lt. Gen. Nelson A. Miles, whose challenge to Elihu Root came from personal ego, or Maj. Gen. Leonard Wood, who meshed ego with the preparedness debate before World War I. Grant was trapped in the most serious clash between the executive branch and Congress in our history; he had to take a stand, and resignation would have been an abdication of responsibility, seen by the American people as dereliction of duty.

Students of the late nineteenth century, and of American civil-military relations in general, need to move beyond hyperbole about endless fears of standing armies. These have persisted throughout our history, but have varied dramatically in intensity. Historians of the United States now recognize that the “republican synthesis” crafted by Bernard Bailyn, Gordon S. Wood, and legions of disciples between the 1960s and 1980s is just one approach, though often a powerful one, to the study of the American past. We do not need to try to jam every peg into the same hole. Instead, let us do the harder work of looking into the ideologies of specific parties, the diverging interests of specific socioeconomic segments, and the details of legislation and policy formation. Let us examine each issue, each crisis, as historians, in historical context. The result will be more complex, less easily summarized, but far more historically accurate, far more valuable for its insights into American social and political dynamics and trajectories, into human behavior.



NOTES

1. George C. Rable, *The Confederate Republic: A Revolution against Politics* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1994); Mark E. Neely Jr., *Southern Rights: Political Prisoners and the Myth of Confederate Constitutionalism* (Charlottesville, Va., 1999).

2. Gerald F. Linderman, *Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat in the American*

Civil War (New York, 1987); Gerald F. Linderman, *The Mirror of War: American Society and the Spanish-American War* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1974).

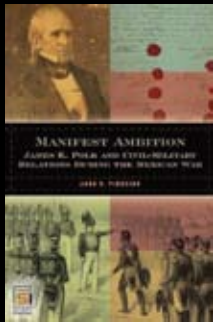
3. See David Montgomery, *Citizen Worker: The Experience of Workers in the United States with Democracy and the Free Market during the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1993), pp. 89–104.

4. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, Mass., 1957); William B. Skelton, “Samuel P. Huntington and the Roots of the American Military Tradition,” *Journal of Military History* 60 (April 1996): 325–38; John M. Gates, “The Alleged Isolation of US Army Officers in the Late 19th Century,” *Parameters* 10 (September 1980): 32–45; Terrence J. Gough, “Isolation and Professionalization of the Army Officer Corps: A Post-Revisionist View of *The Soldier and the State*,” *Social Science Quarterly* 73 (June 1992): 420–36; Donald B. Connelly, *John M. Schofield and the Politics of Generalship* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2006); David J. Fitzpatrick, “Emory Upton and the Citizen Soldier,” *Journal of Military History* 65 (April 2001): 355–89; Mark R. Grandstaff, “Preserving the ‘Habits and Usages of War’: William Tecumseh Sherman, Professional Reform, and the U.S. Army Officer Corps, 1865–1881, Revisited,” *Journal of Military History* 62 (July 1998): 521–45; Thomas S. Langston, *Uneasy Balance: Civil-Military Relations in Peacetime America since 1783* (Baltimore, Md., 2003).

5. James L. Abrahamson, *America Arms for a New Century: The Making of a Great Military Power* (New York, 1981).

Dr. Samuel Watson is associate professor of history at the U.S. Military Academy, where he teaches a senior course on the nineteenth-century Army. He is the editor of *Warfare in the USA, 1784–1861* (Burlington, Vt., 2005), and is working on several books dealing with civil-military relations, politics, and constabulary duties on the frontier between 1784 and 1861.

Manifest Ambition: James K. Polk and Civil-Military Relations during the Mexican War



By John C. Pinheiro
Praeger Security International, 2006,
228 pp., \$ 49.95

REVIEW BY GARY M. BOWMAN

Manifest Ambition is one of the volumes in Praeger's series on American civil-military relations. John Pinheiro, an assistant professor of history at Aquinas College, was a former editor of the *Papers of George Washington*. He also worked on the Correspondence of James K. Polk Project and has written several journal articles on anti-Catholicism during the Mexican War. In this book, Pinheiro analyzes civil-military relations during the Mexican War against the backdrop of three forces: the ideology of the American citizen soldier, the Market Revolution of the decades leading up to the Civil War, and partisan politics in the Age of Jackson.

President James K. Polk, who had been speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, governor of Tennessee, and a protégé of President Andrew Jackson, was a highly partisan Democrat, although he competed within the Democratic Party with factions led by former president Martin Van Buren and Senator John C. Calhoun. The Whig party, led by Senator Henry Clay, had been founded on the principle of opposition to the "executive tyranny" (p. 19) of Jackson, and it found new vitality in opposing "Mr. Polk's War" of aggressive expansionism.

The composition of the Army had significant partisan political implica-

tions throughout the Mexican War. Recognizing that militia, which could be mobilized for only three months at a time, was unsuited for an offensive war against Mexico, Congress authorized the call-up of volunteer regiments which, like militia, were organized in each state and elected their own officers, but could serve for up to twelve months. The administration also requested the expansion of the Regular Army by ten regiments, but Congress delayed passage of the bill because, among other reasons, it would have allowed Polk to appoint the officers in the new regiments and the Whigs justifiably suspected that Polk would have appointed Democrats. The "Ten Regiment Bill" passed only after a compromise ensured that the new regiments and officers would be demobilized at the conclusion of the war, leaving the regular Army approximately the same size as when the war began.

The leadership of the Army was also dominated by political partisans. Maj. Gens. Winfield Scott and Zachary Taylor were both self-identified Whigs who, Polk suspected, were seeking their party's nomination in the 1848 election. This was a significant threat in that era because generals dominated presidential politics: Jackson, the hero of New Orleans, had been elected in 1828 and 1832; William Henry Harrison, the hero of Tippecanoe, was elected in 1840. Two Mexican War generals followed Polk as president: Taylor was elected in 1848, and Democrat Franklin Pierce in 1852, defeating Scott. A crisis in civil-military relations occurred when Taylor's letters to Maj. Gen. Edmund P. Gaines, the commander of the Army's Western Department, were published, plainly expressing Taylor's criticism of Polk. Polk unsuccessfully attempted to reduce the power of Taylor and Scott by introducing legislation reestablishing the rank of lieutenant general; had the bill passed, Polk intended to appoint Democratic Senator Thomas Hart Benton as commanding general of the Army. The denouement of the conflict among the generals was the publication in occupied Mexico City of pseudonymous letters criticizing

Scott's conduct and praising Polk's appointee, the incompetent Maj. Gen. Gideon Pillow, leading to a court of inquiry in which the conduct of the Army's leadership in Mexico was placed on trial.

Pinheiro discusses misconduct and punishment within the army at length to illustrate the influence of politics on military administration. Soldiers engaged in excessive drinking, vandalism, and other misbehavior, such as the burglary of homes and the stealing of church ornaments, which soldiers called "golden Jesuses" (p. 84). Soldiers, often with the tacit approval of their unit officers, seized buildings and other property for military use without paying compensation, a violation of Army policy. Soldiers also committed atrocities: on Christmas 1846, drunken volunteers raped the women and girls and pillaged the property of a ranch near Parras, Mexico, prompting Mexicans to torture and murder an American soldier as reprisal, which, in turn, led to the massacre of thirty unarmed peasants by Arkansas volunteers. Punishment for misconduct was uneven: some officers were generally lenient, and, Pinheiro argues, "nativist officers" (p. 90) discriminated in their treatment of soldiers of foreign birth and Catholics.

Taylor and Scott took different approaches to maintaining order within their commands, but Polk undermined both generals. Taylor, mindful of the political consequences to him if misconduct under his command was publicized, was generally lax in the enforcement of discipline within his army in northern Mexico, but when he concurred in the dismissal of mutinous North Carolina volunteer officers, Polk overturned the convictions. Scott, on the other hand, "reacted swiftly and harshly" (p. 97) to misconduct in central Mexico, but his effort to maintain discipline was thwarted by his recall. In mid-January 1848, Polk recalled Scott so that he could "take Scott down a notch in advance of the 1848 presidential contest" (p. 77) and face Pillow's criticism at the court of inquiry in Washington. Scott's replacement, Maj. Gen. William O. Butler, a Democrat,

attempted to win the Army's loyalty by leniency, refusing to punish officers who were convicted of drinking and gambling with their soldiers. Butler's policy merely resulted in increased misconduct. Pineiro concludes that volunteers were not less disciplined than regular soldiers, but the obvious conclusion to be drawn from his analysis is that commanders' approaches to discipline were affected by political considerations: Polk and Taylor were reluctant to punish volunteers, who would return to their home states and vote in the next presidential election, while the more professional Scott, who imposed harsher discipline, was undermined by Polk's stalking-horse, the disloyal and insubordinate Pillow.

Another unique crisis of civil-military relations was precipitated by the conflict between Lt. Col. John C. Frémont, Benton's son-in-law, and Brig. Gen. Stephen Watts Kearny. Kearny was instructed to "conquer New Mexico and Alta California" (p. 114). While occupying New Mexico, Kearny exercised civil authority in the territory and even issued an "Organic Law"; Whigs protested that a general did not have such authority. When Kearny moved from New Mexico to California, he discovered Frémont, who had disobeyed orders, abandoned the mapping mission to which he was assigned, and headed for California. Relying upon a letter from his father-in-law, who was not acting under the authority of the president, Frémont's "confident bearing and gutsy behavior" (p. 117) had given the commander of the U.S. Navy's Pacific Squadron the impression that Frémont was acting under the president's authority, but the commodore did not ask to examine Frémont's nonexistent orders. Frémont then led American settlers in the "Bear Flag" revolt against the Mexicans and secured the entrance to San Francisco Bay. The Bear Flag rebels declared an independent republic. When a new naval commander, Commodore Robert Stockton, arrived, he declared that California was a U.S. territory and informed Frémont that he would appoint him to govern the territory. After further fighting to put down a rebellion, which was concluded only

after Kearny arrived at Los Angeles, Frémont negotiated a treaty with the local Mexican leaders. Frémont refused to acquiesce to Kearny's actual authority and accepted the governorship that Stockton finally conferred; Kearny waited for reinforcements before pressing the issue, averting a civil war among Americans in California. Frémont was charged with mutiny, tried by court-martial in Washington, and convicted on all counts. But Polk—recognizing that Frémont's illegal behavior had contributed to the accomplishments of Polk's war aim of annexing California—granted clemency and remitted Frémont's dismissal from the Army. Pinheiro concludes that rather than being a tyrant as some charged, Kearny, who carried the authority of the president, had in this episode won "a victory for civil authority over military power" (p. 124).

Pinheiro concludes that, although Polk was rigidly partisan, he was pragmatic in his supervision of the war effort. Polk began the war with three limited objectives—the annexation of Texas, New Mexico, and Alta California—and he resisted pressure to conquer "All Mexico" after Scott occupied Mexico City. Polk micro-managed the war: for example, he detailed "the exact numbers of troops needed for the Santa Fe and Chihuahua campaigns" and insisted "that pack mules would be more useful for transportation in Mexico than horse-drawn wagons" (p. 136). However, he prudently avoided controversy on the most significant issues. Although Polk accurately appraised Taylor as a poor administrator, he recognized his leadership ability and retained him in command in northern Mexico, even though he was a Whig; he recognized that Scott, although a Whig, was the only proper choice to lead the campaign into central Mexico; and, even though Polk disagreed with Scott's estimate of how many troops were needed for the initial advance into northern Mexico, Polk did not resist Scott's demand because he recognized that such action would force him to assume "responsibility for any failure of the campaign by refusing to grant

General Scott all he asked" (p. 137). Pinheiro observes that Polk expanded the executive's role in the conduct of war, a precedent later followed by Abraham Lincoln. Overall, Pinheiro concludes that Polk prosecuted his war very successfully despite significant and complex domestic opposition, overcoming challenges posed by Congress, state governors, the Washington bureaucracy, and his own generals.

Pinheiro's book is a persuasive analysis of the political background of the Mexican War. The author has assumed an understanding of both the chronological sequence of the war and the politics of the Second Party system, so the book is probably not appropriate for the reader who seeks an introduction to the Mexican War. However, the book is an important contribution to the understanding of civil-military relations; and the appendix, which contains the documents discussed in the text, such as the Gaines' correspondence and Kearny's decrees, is excellent.



Col. Gary M. Bowman, an Army Reserve officer in the Judge Advocate General's Corps, has been the deputy commander (individual mobilization augmentee) at the U.S. Army Center of Military History since 2006. He holds a doctorate and a law degree from the University of Virginia and practices law in Roanoke, Virginia. He has been mobilized and deployed overseas four times during the Global War on Terrorism.

NEWSNOTE

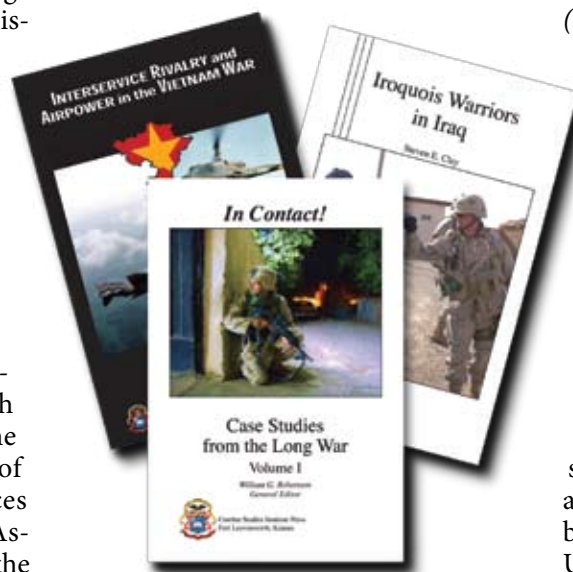
COMBAT STUDIES INSTITUTE PRESS ISSUES NEW HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS

The Combat Studies Institute (CSI) of the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center has issued several new books, the majority of which address twenty-first century warfare, and a larger number of bound papers on various military history topics. *In Contact! Case Studies from the Long War*, Volume I, prints seven small-unit narratives describing U.S. Army combat engagements and patrols in Iraq and Afghanistan that took place between November 2004 and September 2005. Compiled by general editor William G. Robertson, the studies in this 158-page book were written by seven CSI historical staff members. Two of the chapters relate to Mosul, while the other operations occurred in a village in Oruzgan Province in southern Afghanistan and in Fallujah, Tall Afar, and Baghdad, and on a highway twenty-six miles southeast of that capital city in Iraq. The Government Printing Office is selling this book for \$13.

Interservice Rivalry and Airpower in the Vietnam War by British historian Ian Horwood explores the challenges posed by the division of authority over airpower resources in Vietnam between the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, and the U.S. Pacific Command. Its focus is on the application of tactical airpower in South Vietnam between 1961 and 1968. The Government Printing Office is selling this 200-page book for \$17. *Iroquois Warriors in Iraq* by former CSI staffer Steven E. Clay examines the experience of the 98th Division (Institutional Training), an Army Reserve organization, as advisers to the Iraqi Army in 2004 and 2005. Providing this instruction was

an unprecedented overseas mission for an organization of this type, and Clay traces the division's preparation for the assignment as well as its work with three Iraqi divisions in this 276-page book.

Warfare in the Age of Non-State Actors: Implications for the US Army, edited by Kendall D. Gott and Michael G. Brooks, presents the papers delivered at the Combat Studies Institute's 2007 military history symposium, as well as transcripts of portions of the question-and-answer periods. Retired



General Barry R. McCaffrey, Lt. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV, retired Maj. Gen. Robert H. Scales Jr., Representative Ike Skelton IV, retired Lt. Col. Ralph Peters, and Dr. Thomas P. M. Barnett, featured speakers at this event, addressed irregular conflict and global security. Twelve other specialists participating in six panels discussed a variety of issues relating to insurgencies in the Islamic world and

the responses to them of the United States, France, and Israel.

The Combat Studies Institute's Long War occasional papers consider both contemporary and older issues in military history of interest to the Army. The most recent titles in this series are *The Challenge of Adaptation: The US Army in the Aftermath of Conflict, 1953–2000*, by Robert T. Davis II (Paper No. 27); *Flipside of the COIN: Israel's Lebanese Incursion between 1982–2000* by Daniel Isaac Helmer (No. 21); *The Other End of the Spear: The Tooth-to-Tail Ratio (T3R) in Modern Military Operations* by John J. McGrath (No. 23); *The U.S. Army on the Mexican Border: A Historical Perspective* (No. 22) and *We Were Caught Unprepared: The 2006 Hezbollah-Israeli War* (No. 26), both by Matt M. Matthews; and *Savage Wars of Peace: Case Studies of Pacification in the Philippines, 1900–1902* (No. 24), and *Masterpiece of Counter-guerrilla Warfare: BG J. Franklin Bell in the Philippines, 1901–1902* (No. 25), both by Robert D. Ramsey III. Helmer is an armor officer and a Rhodes scholar who earned a bachelor's degree in history from the U.S. Military Academy and a master's degree in international relations from Oxford University; Davis, McGrath, Matthews, and Ramsey are CSI staff historians. The Government Printing Office is selling copies of Occasional Papers 21, 22, 23, and 25 for \$10, \$9, \$10, and \$12, respectively.

Digital copies of each of the publications mentioned in this news note may be downloaded from <http://usacac.army.mil/cac/csi/randp/csi-pubs.asp>.

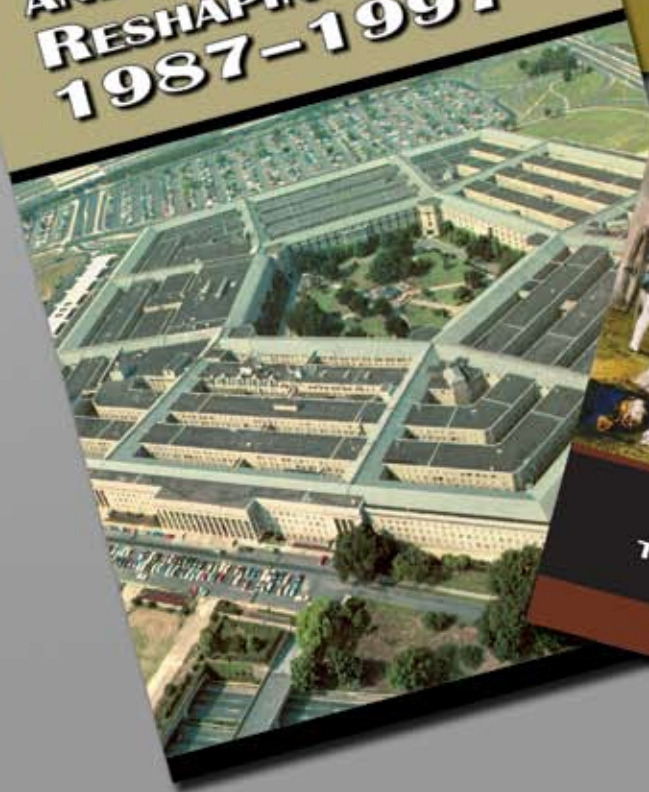
New CMH Publications

See page 5 for more information

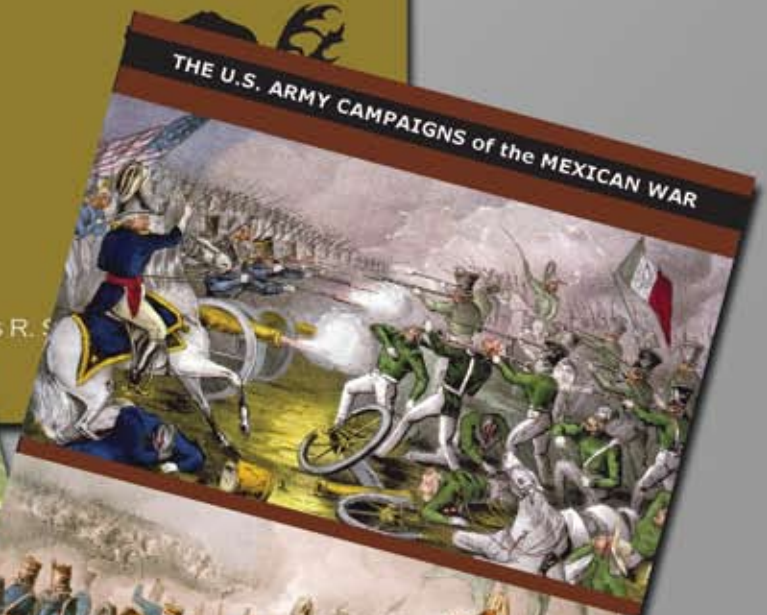
HISTORY OF OPERATIONS RESEARCH IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY

VOLUME II: 1961–1973

THE ARMY COMMAND POST AND DEFENSE RESHAPING 1987–1997

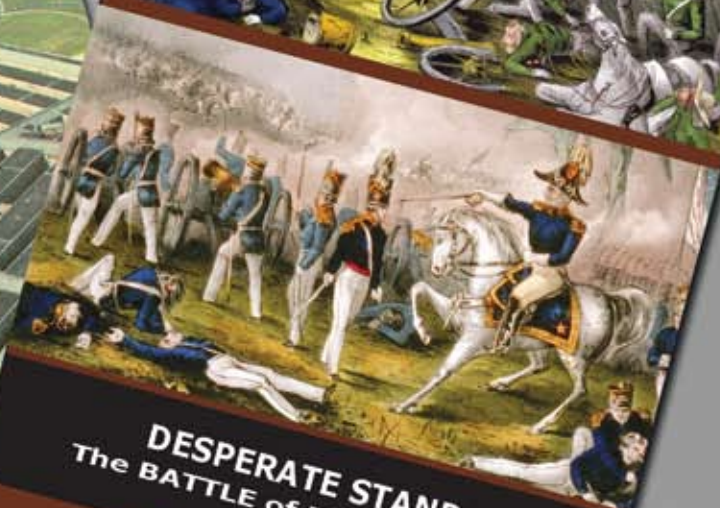


THE U.S. ARMY CAMPAIGNS of the MEXICAN WAR



ES R. S

DESPERATE STAND The BATTLE of BUENA VISTA



THE CHIEF HISTORIAN'S FOOTNOTE

DR. RICHARD W. STEWART



As fascinating as the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) is, I thought that in this issue of *Army History* I would turn to another topic that has just recently gained my attention. That topic is Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) and the attempt by a number of institutions and the scientific establishment to treat oral history as if it were the same as medical research using human subjects. Their collective goal, apparently, is to force all oral history interviews to be approved, in advance, by these IRBs, causing historians to jump through all the hoops required for a researcher who might propose injecting human subjects with smallpox to “see what would happen.” Generally staffed by medical personnel, scientists, and psychologists, many of these IRBs want to review all oral history proposals, approve any questions in advance, and prohibit any variance from those questions during the interview. They could, in short, serve as a sort of Court of Star Chamber (familiar to all of us historians of early Stuart England as a prime example of the all-powerful secret tribunal) with the power to make or break any proposal to gather oral history from living persons. They could even potentially wield a veto power over establishing and maintaining oral history collections. If instituted as currently interpreted by some institutions, IRBs with power over oral history would

do more than just have a chilling effect on the collection of oral histories; they would destroy our attempt as a community to capture and write any contemporary history.

This dire prediction may appear unexpected, since as late as 2004 it seemed as if the problem was going to go away. The entire issue of IRBs was started by the federal government to ensure that Mengele-like experiments on human subjects—such as the Tuskegee syphilis experiments run by the U.S. Public Health Service in the 1930s and exposed only in 1972—would never be permitted to happen again. This laudable goal led to the creation by the Office for Human Research Protection in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) of a series of regulations (45 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 46) that sought to ensure that all institutions involved in “research” establish review boards to approve all projects that conduct scientific research involving human subjects. This research is defined in the regulations as “a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.” (45 CFR 46.102—Also called “the Common Rule”—for DoD, 32 CFR 219.) An essential part of the approval process was the evident acquisition of informed consent of the human subject in any such research. This was already a requirement for any oral history interview. (See Stephen J. Lofgren, *U.S. Army Guide to Oral History* [CMH, 2006], and Chapter 8 of Army Regulation 870–5, *Military History: Responsibilities, Policies, and Procedures*, 21 September 2007).

However, older guidance from HHS in 1998 (and regrettably concurred with by the American Historical Association) included the statement that oral history was subject to an “expedited” IRB process. This

still left oral history vulnerable to the whole IRB process. Many IRBs throughout the country continued to expand their purview into humanities research in general and oral history in particular, in some cases *equating* humanities research with biological research. (Calling Dr. Kafka—call for Dr. Kafka.)

After undertaking an initial study of the issue and holding discussions with the Office of the Surgeon General (the office charged within the Department of the Army with oversight over Army IRBs, the Human Research Protection Program, and the various “assurance” programs required by the Department of Defense as a result of the HHS regulation), I am now spearheading an attempt to clarify the matter and exclude oral history from the entire process. I hope to do that by working with the Surgeon General’s Human Research Protection Office and by preparing a policy letter clarifying what oral history is, why it is not “systematic” research that leads to “generalizable knowledge,” and thus why it is *not* covered by the entire regulation of 45 CFR 46 or any of the IRBs that it has spawned. The policy I seek will conform to the standards of our profession as spelled out by the American Historical Association on many occasions, most recently in the February 2008 issue of *Perspectives on History*, and by the Oral History Association.

I guess the bottom line at the moment is: don’t give up on this issue! IRBs, established to protect human subjects from harm, have no business interfering in the generation of oral history questions; the conduct of oral history interviews; the development of oral history projects; or the storage, preservation, and use of oral history collections. I will work hard to clarify the Army’s policy on these issues and, hopefully, that will assist the other services as well. In the meantime, I recommend that you do not allow

any language to be placed into any regulations of your local IRB, whether they promise you a seat on the board or not, empowering it to exercise any control over oral history projects. We must work together to exempt oral histories from the IRB process and do nothing to imply that IRBs have any role in our profession.

I hope that within a few months we will have in place a new Army policy that makes more sense and that HHS (which recently sent out portions of its regulation for public comment and is in the process of changing it—I hope for the better) will amend 45 CFR 46. Until that happens, let’s do all we can to explain what oral history is, that it is the collection of unique and personal perspectives on operations and the Army and that it is thus not systematic research that leads to “generalizable knowledge.” Oral history is too critical to our understanding of recent events to allow non-historians to cripple its collection and use.



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

A *Army History* welcomes essays not to exceed 12,000 words on any topic relating to the history of the U.S. Army or to wars and conflicts in which the U.S. Army participated or by which it was substantially influenced. The Army’s history extends to the present day, and *Army History* seeks accounts of the Army’s actions in ongoing conflicts as well as those of earlier years. The bulletin particularly seeks writing, including commentaries, that presents new approaches to historical issues. It encourages readers to submit responses to essays or commentaries that have appeared in its pages and to present cogent arguments on any question (controversial or otherwise) relating to the history of the Army. Such contributions need not be lengthy. Essays and commentaries should be annotated with endnotes, preferably embedded, to indicate the sources relied on to support factual assertions. Preferably, a manuscript should be submitted as an attachment to an email sent to the managing editor at charles.hendricks@hqda.army.mil.

Army History encourages authors to recommend or provide illustrations to accompany submissions. If authors wish to supply photographs, they may provide them in a digital format with a minimum resolution of 300 dots per inch or as photo prints sent by mail. Authors should provide captions and credits with all images. When furnishing photographs that they did not take or any photos of art, authors must identify the owners of the photographs and art works to enable *Army History* to obtain permission to reproduce the images.

Although contributions by email are preferred, authors may submit essays, commentaries, and images by mail to Charles Hendricks; Managing Editor, *Army History*; U.S. Army Center of Military History; 103 Third Avenue; Fort McNair, D.C. 20319-5058.



ARMYHISTORY

The Professional Bulletin of Army History
