



The lunch-room

boys of our crowded cities, and from foreign localities, into worthy and valuable citizens, perhaps we would do well to turn some of our attention in the other direction and see if we cannot discover some equally efficient method for training and educating the sons of our most successful people—judging “success” from the economic standpoint. For

these latter are helped over every little educational tangle, they too often demand an automobile to carry them the few blocks to and from school, and they far too rarely are taught to look upon the possession of wealth as a deep responsibility, and consequently have no other idea than spending all they can for whatever pleasure or excitement happens

to attract them. Perhaps, I say, we may be able, once we consider it, to evolve some effective method for the education and character training of the children of the well-to-do, so that they too may become steady, purposeful, responsible citizens, such as seem to become the graduates of the Boys’ High School of Brooklyn.

# The British Army in the Revolution

By DON C. SEITZ

**T**HE might of Britain has been much exalted by those who have written the history of the American Revolution from the American standpoint. But was she so potent, after all? One is moved to this query after reading “The Organization of the British Army in the American Revolution,” by Edward E. Curtis, Ph.D., of Wellesley College, published by the Yale University Press, under the provisions of the F. J. Kingsbury Fund. The degree hunters have dug deep into many sidelines of our history, and this effort on the part of Professor Curtis is rather notable in what it reveals.

To begin with, the population of Britain was about double our own when the guns were fired at Concord and Lexington. Against this we were in possession of a vast country, three thousands miles across the sea, endowed as no other land on earth was in resources of every sort. The British army at the time of the outbreak consisted, outside of militia, of but 48,647 men, of whom 39,294 were in-

fantry, 6,869 cavalry, and but 2,484 artillery—a puny force to guard so far-flung an empire, for England was almost as great in territory then as now. Even though India was in the hands of a corporation, with its own army, it was a national responsibility.

Of this force around 15,000 were in England itself, 12,000 in Ireland, 8,000 in America, and the rest scattered in Scotland, the West Indies, Africa, Minorca, and Gibraltar. This represented the status of the troops as it had prevailed since the close of the Seven Years’ War, in which the American colonists had received their military education. Two sorts of troops existed—the ordinary regiments of the line and the household detachments on duty in London and Westminster, serving as a guard for the King.

**T**HE regimental average was a little under five hundred men. The officers were colonel, lieutenant-colonel, chaplain, adjutant, surgeon and his

mate—usually an ill-paid, half-educated apothecary. The cavalry and artillery had a similar complement, with the addition of a major. The cavalry regiments were small—under three hundred men, divided into six troops. The artillery regiments contained four battalions, each of eight companies. They were armed with very light pieces—3 and 6 pounders, drawn by three and four horses, respectively. Two guns were apportioned to each regiment of foot, although Burgoyne sensibly massed his cannon into batteries of four 6-pounders.

For music each regiment had fife and drum, though the more fancy guards had bands of eight pieces, plus a leader—two oboes, two clarinets, two horns, and two bassoons. There was a small force of engineers, of whom several officers only were employed in America.

The medical corps was almost nonexistent and pretty well suffused with brandy, many being Scots. They were not required to hold a degree, nor did the mates pass any sort of examination.



Many had no medical education of any sort. The mates were paid three shillings sixpence (less than \$1) per day. Medical supplies were scanty and under the control of an apothecary general, who paid himself in commissions. Surgeons had to provide their own outfits. The mates were forbidden to wear uniforms, and seem to have had no military standing. Chaplains were appointed by the colonels of regiments. These often left the position vacant and pocketed the pay, the rolls being in their custody. In other cases chaplains drew pay while they kept their livings and put on cheap substitutes, profiting by the difference in pay. Things were very loose and corrupt spiritually as well as materially in the army. Yet men so officered and provided for were expected to conquer a nation and strove valiantly to do so!

**M**ARRIED soldiers were allowed to be accompanied by women, nominally, and occasionally, their wives. It is stated that two thousand women followed Burgoyne on his luckless march to Saratoga, though only three per company were officially allowed on the field. The "wives" and children were fed from the public stores. To this day women follow the Mexican army, cooking and waiting on their warriors.

That families of women and children could go to the war in so distant and difficult a country added to the general problem of putting down the insurgents. They brought increased burdens in the way of transportation and supplies.

**I**N the latter respect the army overseas suffered great hazard. The country was sparsely settled and could not be lived on. Food had to be brought by sailing vessels from abroad, over stormy seas, infested by privateers, who wrought great havoc. The supplies were of substantial sort so far as specifications went, sound "beef, pork, bread, flour, rice, pease, oatmeal, and salt" being required. To these were added cheese, bacon, suet, fish, raisins, and molasses. Potatoes, parsnips, carrots, turnips, and cabbages were provided when possible. Nor was there lack of refreshment. Port, claret, and spruce-beer were forwarded in quantities. The last was for the soldiers, and several breweries were set up to supply it. It ranked as a remedy against scurvy, along with sauerkraut and vinegar. Celery seed and brown mustard seed were also employed as antidotes.

The weekly rations for men, though never quite standardized, ran about as follows: Seven pounds of flour, seven pounds of beef or four pounds of pork,

six ounces of butter or four of cheese, three pints of pease, half a pound of oatmeal. In another form the rations by day consisted of a pound and a half of bread, a pound of meat, half a pint of pease, and one ounce each of rice and butter.

If the food furnished had been good, this would have been but scanty feeding. It was, however, all too often bad. The commissaries were always complaining of moldy bread, weevil-infested biscuit, rancid butter, sour flour, wormy pease, and maggoty beef. Whole cargoes were condemned as musty, rotten, and unfit for men to eat. Most of this was due to rascality and some to long detention at sea. The pork, at times, seemed to be four or five years old. Beef enjoyed equal longevity, and the bread was reputed to have come down from the Seven Years' War, nearly two decades before, and so hard that it had to be broken up by pounding with a cannon ball. Large quantities were condemned. Rats, bad packing, and breakage added to lowering the quality and quantity of such stuff as got ashore. Much was sent in great casks that could not be transported in a region without roads, and so increased the travail of supplying the forces. Shipments were ill-balanced. Enormous quantities of pease came to New York that could not be used, but "counted" as supplies. As one observer wrote: "The speculation in every profitable branch of the service is . . . enormous, and, as usual, it is attended with a shocking neglect of every comfort to the troops. The hospitals are pest-houses, and the provisions served out are poison. Those that are to be bought are sold for the highest prices of a monopoly." Evidently the British did not lack for profiteering patriots. When cargoes arrived in good shape, crooked commissaries disposed of them, often for private gain, by the device of condemning them, rebuying, and reselling to the Government at a fat advance.

The demand for transportation exhausted the supply of ships and raised freight rates to high points. In short, all the usual results of war were present.

**G**REAT difficulty was had in recruiting. The navy could impress. The army had to persuade. Bounties were paid, and many Scotchmen enlisted as a canny way of migrating to the New World. The Hessian hirelings had to be taken on to fill the ranks. These were well-drilled bits of human machinery, but could speak no English and had no interest in the cause. Those taken prisoners usually preferred to remain where they were. While the term "Hessian"

remains a by-word of contempt, Washington liked these Germans and did all he could to persuade the prisoners to stay and send for their families, which many did. The term of enlistment was for three years, or until the "termination of the rebellion," at the option of his gracious Majesty, King George.

Officers bought their commissions and paid high prices for them. A colonel sometimes put up five thousand pounds for his rank and pay of two pounds per day. The system looks bad, but does not appear to have been as pernicious as promotion by pull. The officer owned the job he paid for, and was not dependent on the favor of some mistress or go-between. They appear, as a rule, to have been men of good military quality. Professor Curtis observes that the British failed from no lack of courage on the part of either officers or men. Bad generalship and maladministration made their high qualities futile. Negligence, corruption, and inefficiency were the great allies of the Continental cause.

**B**y no means the smallest of the results of all this was the poor quality of gun flints provided to flash the pans of the big Brown Bess muskets, capable of being fired but three times a minute. The flints were "notoriously poor." Those used by the Continentals would last for sixty discharges—the British, barely ten. Gentlemen in England used black-flint in their fowling-pieces, that equaled the quality of the American, but none were sent to the soldiers.

Brown Bess weighed fourteen pounds. The junior officers carried pikes or "spontoons," the sergeants halberds. Many discarded these mediaeval weapons during the war and took on firelocks. Bayonets were in use, but not much employed. Nor did the war develop any improvement in weapons, though a breech-loader was invented. It could not get by the authorities—an age-long difficulty. Did not Hotchkiss have to go abroad and Holland turn to private support in our own time? Further, the best machine gun in the World War, invented by a Regular Army officer, was rejected by our War Department and had to find acceptance across the ocean.

**S**OME one has said that the cootie has never had half the credit for its share in expediting the ending of the World War. So, perhaps, our own liberties are beholden as much to maggoty beef, petrified biscuit, moldy flour, and weak-edged flints as to the valor of our troops and the steadfastness of George Washington.

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