



# THE CONTINENTAL SOLDIER

*The newsletter of the Continental Line, Inc.*

## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Any feedback from the Fall news letter or if you have anything you would like to have added to the newsletter, please e-mail them to me (erick.nason.ctr@jpra.jfcom.mil) and I will make sure it's added. AARs, up-coming events, or points of interests, send them to me and I'll get them into the newsletter.

Additionally, during the recent Continental Line meeting, folks were coming up and telling me how they liked the newsletter. I would like to point out that while I am the editor, the design and structure of the newsletter belongs to Chad Becker who is responsible for that portion. So a BIG thanks to Chad for his part!

*Erick Nason, 2nd South Carolina, Editor*

## PROCEDURE FOR UNITS THAT WISH TO JOIN THE CONTINENTAL LINE

All units wishing to join the Continental Line (CL) must obtain Liability Insurance and be prepared to provide a copy of their insurance as proof of coverage. Once a unit has liability insurance coverage they must find an existing CL unit to act as their sponsor. The CL Sponsor Unit is usually (but not always) a unit in the same geographic area as the new unit so that the two units may work together at local events.

The Sponsor Unit must be of the same type as the new unit (i.e. artillery sponsors artillery, cavalry sponsors cavalry, rifle sponsors rifle and line unit sponsor line unit.) In many cases the Sponsor Unit provides help and advice to the new unit, covering areas like authenticity, drill, and safety. The Sponsor Unit can also provide information about the Continental Line organization and how it operates.

At the next Continental Line Annual Meeting, a representative of both the new unit and the Sponsor Unit must attend. At the appropriate time the representatives of both units will be asked to address the meeting. The Sponsor Unit will briefly introduce the new unit, and the new unit should provide a brief history of the historic unit, as well as describe the modern unit. (The presentation by both should last no more than 5 – 10 minutes.)

The purpose of this introduction is to make all CL member units aware of the new unit. It is also an opportunity for the new unit to become familiar with the CL organization, and meet many members.

Once the new member has been introduced at the CL Annual Meeting, the unit is designated an "Applicant Unit." As an Applicant Unit they are entitled to attend Continental Line sanctioned events as long as they maintain their liability insurance coverage, and provide proof of that coverage, and their Sponsor Unit is also in attendance. When their insurance policy expires (usually on an annual basis) all units must submit a copy of the renewed policy to the CL Adjutant within 30 days of renewal.

The Applicant Unit should attend at least one, and preferably more, Continental Line events in the year after they obtain applicant status. This allows other CL units to work with, and observe, the Applicant Unit "on the field."

At the next Annual Meeting representatives of both the Sponsor Unit, and the Applicant Unit must attend the "New Business" portion of the meeting. Both units will again give a brief statement in front of the meeting. Member units may make comments and observations about the Applicant Unit if they wish. Any specific concerns about the Applicant Unit should be brought up during this discussion so that the Applicant Unit has an opportunity to address the concerns. Once the discussion ends, the Applicant Unit representative will be asked to step outside the meeting room and the CL members will vote – yes, or no – to give the new unit full Membership in the CL.

## UP COMING BIG EVENTS



### THE WYOMING VALLEY RAID

MT. COBB, PENNSYLVANIA » JULY 16-17 2011

Co-hosted by the 24th Connecticut Militia Regiment and the 42nd Regiment of Foot.

Website: <http://battleofwyoming.org>

On July 3rd, 1778, a Loyalist and Iroquois force numbering around 800 or more under Colonel John Butler, ambushed an American column of 300 militia under Colonel Zebulon Butler. The militia force was defeated, which contributed to the fall of Fort Mifflin and also saw the valley laid to waste.

The site is a series of privately owned farms, with hay meadows that will be mowed before the event. This will be a campaign weekend, with excellent open woods for

primitive camping. Standard canvas camping will be located near the road. There are three fields connected by trails and the woods are open and easily passable, thus the entire area can be used for several battlefields.

There will be scripted tactical events in the afternoons, “woods walks” for the public featuring ambushes and skirmishes, and unscripted small-unit actions throughout the days and evenings. Hasty fortifications begun last year will be improved upon.

The event staff will have access to the site beginning Wednesday to lay out the camp, units can begin arriving on Thursday and the camp will remain open until Monday.

## DIRECTIONS

### *From the East*

From I- 84 East

Take the PA-247 Exit (Exit 8) towards PA-348/MT COBB/HAMLIN.

Turn left on to PA-247, after about 2.1 miles turn right onto PR 348/Mount Cobb Road.

After about 2.1 miles, turn left onto Hitchcock Road, follow signs to registration.

### *From the West*

From I-84 West

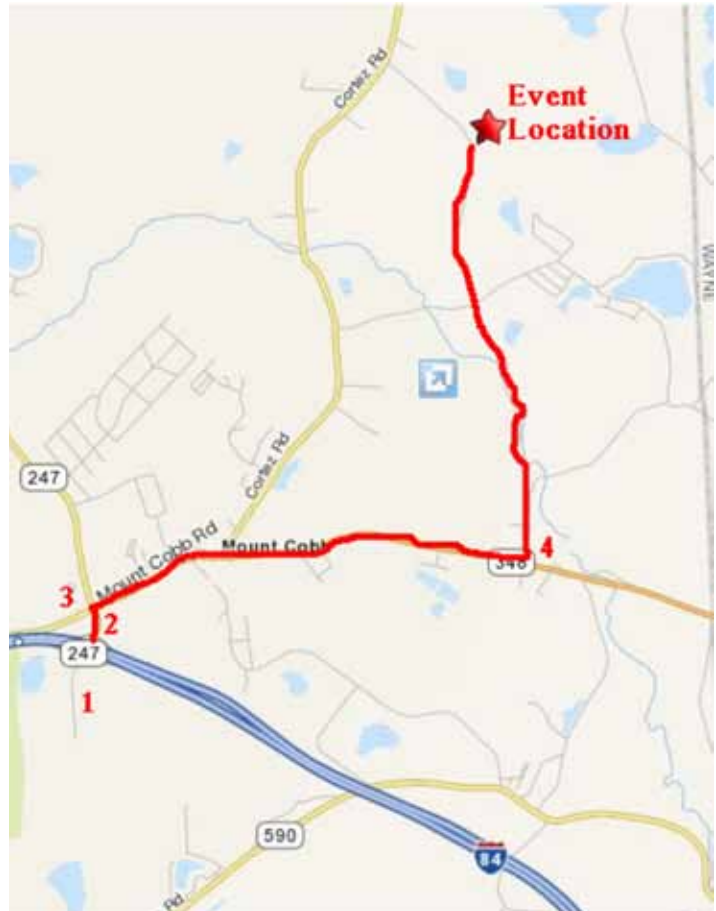
Take the PA-247 exit, EXIT 8, toward PA-348/MT COBB

Turn RIGHT onto PA-247 for 2.1 miles.

Turn RIGHT onto MOUNT COBB RD/PA-348 for 2.1 miles.

Turn left onto Hitchcock road, follow the signs to registration.

*Any questions, contact Harry Stevens, commander\_24thcmr@yahoo.com*







## MOUNT HARMON PLANTATION

EARLEVILLE, MD » SEPTEMBER 23-25 2011

Mount Harmon is a period plantation and former Dupont estate located on the Eastern shore of Maryland, at the northern end of the Chesapeake Bay. The plantation is located at the end of a peninsula and is surrounded by water on three sides.

Registration will be available online from the [www.mountharmon.org](http://www.mountharmon.org) as well as event information.

Amenities: The usual straw, firewood, water, and port-o-johns. Modern food vendors will be onsite during the day. Units will be able to pre-order bushels of oysters ahead of time.

Any questions can contact Tom Vogeley of the 1st New Jersey Regiment at [TVoageley@Juno.com](mailto:TVoageley@Juno.com), or Jim McGaughey of HM Marines, [britmarine@hotmail.com](mailto:britmarine@hotmail.com)

Scenarios are being planned that will include maximum use of terrain, the water, small and large unit actions and powder burning. As the event gets closer, the newsletter will pass any updated scenario information.

There is a planned school event where school children will be onsite. It is requested that units or individuals who would like to help out arrive on Thursday night for the school event will occur on Friday morning.

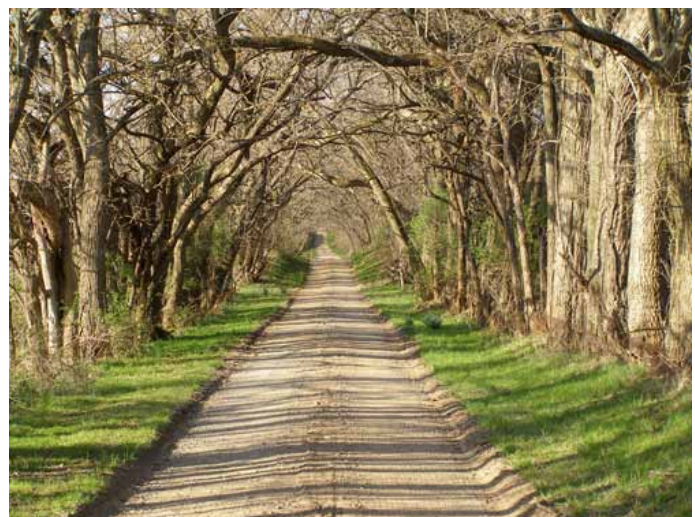
**DIRECTIONS:**

***From Points North***

Take I-95 South  
Exit Route 896 South (toward Middletown)  
Go right onto Route 40 (towards Elkton)  
Follow Route 213 south (toward Chesapeake City)  
Proceed to Cecilton  
In Cecilton, turn right (west) at the stop light (Route 282) and proceed 2 miles  
Turn Left onto Grove Neck Rd  
Follow Grove Neck Rd. about 1.5 miles  
Turn left into Mount Harmon entrance  
Proceed for 2 miles to end--lane ends at the plantation  
(watch for deer)

***From Points South***

Take the Bay Bridge to 301 North  
Just past Millington, go left onto Route 313  
In Galena, road turns into Route 213 North (stay straight at light)  
Proceed to Cecilton  
Turn Left at light in Cecilton (Route 282) and proceed about 2 miles  
Turn Left onto Grove Neck Rd  
Follow Grove Neck Rd. about 1.5 miles  
Turn left into Mount Harmon entrance  
Proceed for 2 miles to end--lane ends at the plantation  
(watch for deer)





## NORTHERN DEPARTMENT



# COLONIAL PLANTATION

COLONIAL PENNSYLVANIA PLANTATION, RIDLEY CREEK STATE PARK, MEDIA PA

MAY 14-15, 2011

[www.colonialplantation.org](http://www.colonialplantation.org)

*Sponsored by the 11th Pennsylvania Regiment*

Event scenario is based on the spring of 1778, rumors of Howe's departure from Philadelphia while both forces forage to prepare for the up-coming campaigns.

The event is looking for 40-50 reenactors, and any colonial trades to be demonstrated. Additionally, the event would welcome any Loyalist, British Lights to be the primary opposition, but any Loyalist, British, or Hessian force would be welcomed.

Tacticals are planned for both days, area very supportive for foraging, skirmishing, light infantry tactics. Site is located on a working farm with limited to no modern intrusions seen from the park.

Any questions, contact Justin Blocksom, 610-952-7725 or [jumonvilleglen@gmail.com](mailto:jumonvilleglen@gmail.com) or [www.11thPA.org/cp/](http://www.11thPA.org/cp/)

Registration and a copy of your unit's insurance must be sent to the event sponsor by 31 March 2011.

Can send via email or  
Justin Blocksom  
113 West Fornance Street  
Norristown, PA 19401

### DIRECTIONS:

The Plantation is located in Ridley Creek State Park, Edgmont Township, Delaware County, Pennsylvania.

**From the "Blue Route" (Route 476)** - Exit at Route 3 (West Chester Pike). Follow Route 3 toward West Chester. Drive approximately 7 ½ miles. Go ½ mile beyond Providence Road and look on the left for the entrance to Ridley Creek State Park. Enter the Park and go about 1 ½ miles. The Plantation parking lot is on the right.

**From Route 202 South** - Exit at Route 3 (West Chester Pike). Head east on Route 3 toward Newtown Square/Broomall. Drive approximately 5 miles. Go about 1 mile beyond Delchester Road. Signs for Ridley Creek State Park are on the right. Enter the Park and go about 1 ½ miles. The Plantation parking lot is on the right.

**From Paoli** - Take Route 252 south. Follow the signs toward Newtown Square/Media. Go to the intersection of Route 252 and Route 3 (West Chester Pike). Turn right onto Route 3. Drive toward West Chester approximately 3 miles. Go ½ mile beyond Providence Road. Signs for Ridley Creek State Park are on the left. Enter the Park and go about 1 ½ miles. The Plantation parking lot is on the right.

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**MID-ATLANTIC DEPARTMENT**

## PETER WENTZ FARMSTEAD

MARCH 12-13, 2011

The Peter Wentz Farmstead was established in 1744 by Peter and Rosanna Wentz. By 1758 they had completed the large Georgian style stone house with many architectural features that reflected their German heritage including distinctive interior paint decoration throughout.

The Wentz farm served as headquarters for General George Washington during the fall of 1777. While here, Washington planned his attempt to keep the British forces from occupying Philadelphia that resulted in the Battle of Germantown on October 4, 1777.

All able body members of the Continental Line and the Mid-Atlantic Department are invited to participate at the first Mid-Atlantic School of the Soldier at the Peter Wentz Farmstead.

All participants should arrive no later than 0900 on Saturday march 12th. At 1000 there will be an officer's meeting at the major's Marquee. The soldiers will complete their quarterly muster requirements while perfecting the Drill of 1764. All enlisted camp followers and children will assist in the tasks that will make this a comfortable encampment, no matter how brief the stay.

The staff at eh Peter Wentz farmstead has agreed to open up the site for the weekend and provide the necessary supplies (wood, water, straw and restrooms/port-a-privy).

The farmstead is located directly off of Route 73 in the Worcester Valley, Montgomery County.

If interested in attending, please contact Doug Bender at [d.l.bender@comcast.net](mailto:d.l.bender@comcast.net)

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## THE ANNUAL BATTLE OF BOUND BROOK

APRIL 8-10 2011 » THE ABRAHAM STAATS HOUSE, SOUTH BOUND BROOK, NEW JERSEY

The Abraham Staats House is one of the finest surviving buildings from the Dutch Settlement of the Raritan Valley in the 18th century. Over the centuries the house has been expanded several times and now includes a fine late, Federal/Greek Revival two-story addition.

The house had an interesting history during the American Revolution when it served as the headquarters of General von Steuben during the second Middlebrook Encampment (1779).

Soldier encampment at the Abraham Staats House, with the reenactment of the Battle of Bound Brook on the actual site of Cornwallis' and Ewald's assault, as well as street battles, drilling, tacticals and maneuvers on both Saturday and Sunday.

**Directions to Re-enactment:** Washington's Army at Middlebrook at the Abraham Staats House: 17 von Steuben Lane, South Bound Brook, NJ 08880

**From Union Avenue/Route 28, Bound Brook:** Turn onto East Street follow into the roundabout and take 2nd exit onto South Main Street go over the Queen's Bridge. At traffic light bare left onto Route 527/Main Street for approximately a 1/2 a mile. von Steuben Lane will be on your left after the apartment building. Follow lane to end. Rear of house and driveway/parking area is located at the end of Von Steuben Lane.

**Traveling NORTH on Route 287:** Take exit 10 (formerly exit 6) onto Route 527 New Brunswick/South Bound Brook. Follow Route 527 (Easton Avenue) North. Easton Avenue turns into Main Street, South Bound Brook. Turn right onto Von Steuben Lane. Follow lane to end. Rear of house and driveway/parking area is located at the end of Von Steuben Lane.

**Traveling SOUTH on Route 287:** Take exit 10 (formerly exit 6) onto Route 527 New Brunswick/South Bound Brook. At bottom of exit ramp immediately get into the

left lane and make a left turn (go under the overpass of Route 287). Follow Route 527 (Easton Avenue) North, same as above.

***From Trenton & points South via Route 206 North:***

Turn Right onto Route 533 North (Go about 8 miles). Turn Right at signal light onto Route 514 East (Amwell Road) (Go about 4 miles). Turn Left at signal light onto Route 621 (Elizabeth Street) (Go about 3-5 miles). Turn right at 6th traffic light onto Route 610 (Edgewood Terrace). At end make a right onto Route 527 (Main Street) and then a quick left onto Von Steuben Lane.

There will be also programs, speakers, house tours, guest speakers and presenters at the Staats House with topics ranging on the American Revolution and New Jersey.

Firewood, water and straw will be provided. Free coffee and muffins in the morning and a Firehouse Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, free for uniformed/period clothed reenactors. Sutlers are welcomed, no fee will be charged.

Registration and info will soon be available through <http://www.staatshouse.org/>. Registration and proof of insurance needs to be received by the event organizers no later than 1 April 2011.

Any questions contact Kath Faulks at [bkfaulks@aol.com](mailto:bkfaulks@aol.com) or [bkfaulks@gmail.com](mailto:bkfaulks@gmail.com), or 732-469-5836.

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# 233<sup>RD</sup> ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION OF THE BATTLE OF MONMOUTH

(BATTLE OF FREEHOLD) » JUNE 18-19, 2011



Hosted by the 4th Continental Artillery and 1st New Jersey Volunteers for the Crown.

No registration fee for reenactors. Firewood, straw, and water will be provided. The Friends of Monmouth Battlefield will partially reimburse for artillery and cavalry, \$100 for field guns and \$50 for horses.

Troop musters and proof of insurance must be received by the event organizers no later than May 1st. Registration forms will be available early 2011 from <http://monmouthbattlefield.nj.gov>

## DIRECTIONS:

Located approximately 12 miles east of exit 8 of the NJ Turnpike on Business Route 33.

From the NJ Garden State Parkway, take exit 123 to Route 9 south for 15 miles to business Route 33 west. Park is located 1.5 miles on the right.



**SOUTHERN DEPARTMENT**

**BATTLE OF GUILFORD COURTHOUSE**

**MARCH 12-13, 2011**

The 2011 anniversary commemoration takes place at 2 pm March 12-13 at Country Park, 3905 Nathanael Green Dr., and Guilford Courthouse National Military Park, 2332 New Garden.

Mar 12-13	Guilford Courthouse
April 9-10	Camden: Armies through Time
July 9-10	Brattonsville, SC
July 16-17	Wyoming Valley, PA
Aug 6-7	House in the Horseshoe
Sep 24-25	Mount Harmon, MD
Oct 1-2	Walnut Grove, SC
Oct 8-9	Williamsburg, VA
Nov 5-6	Camden, SC

**MOUNT VERNON – WASHINGTON & ROCHAMBEAU COMMEMORATION WEEKEND**

**SEPTEMBER 10-11, 2011**

In celebration of the 230th anniversary of the American victory at Yorktown, George Washington’s Mount Vernon and the 1st Virginia Regiment invite you to participate in a weekend-long reenactment on the estate.

*Two Day’s at Mount Vernon: Washington and Rochambeau Commemoration Weekend  
September 10 and 11, 2011*

On September 9, 1781, General Washington returned from New York to Mt. Vernon. Joined by his staff and the French General comte de Rochambeau, Washington formed a bold strategy which would lead the American and French forces south to confront the British.

Exactly 230 years to the day and in celebration of the strategic movement of the allied forces from positions in the north to Virginia, marking a significant moment in the victory at Yorktown; George Washington’s Mt. Vernon and the First Virginia Regiment invite you to participate in a weekend long re-enactment on the estate. Please join us for this unique opportunity to camp on the ground where this historic event took place.

All Congressional and French forces that wish to participate please contact Marshall Smith at [Smithmdlt@aol.com](mailto:Smithmdlt@aol.com) or 703.978.5687 We will have a busy weekend of military demonstrations, drill, interpretation for the



public and celebratory activity at the Mt. Vernon Estate and Gardens.

**DIRECTIONS:**

Mount Vernon is located 16 miles south of Washington, D.C. and 8 miles south of Old Town Alexandria, Virginia at the southern terminus of the George Washington Memorial Parkway. Parking is free and convenient.

Street address: (use for mapping only, not a valid postal address) 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Mount Vernon, Virginia 22309



***Directions From Washington, D.C. / Memorial Bridge***

Cross the Memorial Bridge, heading toward Arlington National Cemetery. While you are on the bridge, get in the center lane. At the circle on the Virginia side, go to the right, following the sign George Washington Parkway (do not head to Arlington Cemetery). Just after the circle, take the left hand exit, marked Parkway South/Alexandria/Mount Vernon. Once on the Parkway, follow the signs to National Airport and continue south, through Alexandria. The Parkway is renamed Washington Street in Alexandria. Mount Vernon is eight miles south of Alexandria, located at the large traffic circle at the end of Parkway.

***Directions From Washington, D.C. / 14th St Bridge***

Cross the Fourteenth Street Bridge, heading to Virginia. While on the bridge, move to the far right lane. Take the second exit on the right, which is marked National Airport/Mount Vernon. Once on the Parkway, follow the signs to National Airport and continue south, through Alexandria. The Parkway is renamed Washington Street in downtown Alexandria. Mount Vernon is eight miles south of Alexandria, at the large traffic circle at the end of Parkway.

***Directions From the North (Frederick, Gaithersburg, Rockville, Bethesda)***

Travel south on Interstate 270 to Interstate 495 (the Beltway). Follow the beltway south to Virginia. As you cross the American Legion Bridge over the Potomac River, get in the right lane. Take the first exit in Virginia, marked George Washington Memorial Parkway. Follow the George Washington Parkway south for about 30 miles, which takes you directly to Mount Vernon. The Parkway is renamed Washington Street in Alexandria, and Mount Vernon is eight miles south of Alexandria, at the large traffic circle at the end of the Parkway.

***Directions From the South (Woodbridge, Richmond, North Carolina)***

Travel north on Interstate 95 and turn off at exit 161, Route 1 North, marked Ft. Belvoir/Mt. Vernon. Continue north on Route 1 about six miles, through Ft. Belvoir. Just after Ft. Belvoir, turn right on Route 235 north. Mount Vernon is three miles straight ahead, at a large traffic circle.

***Directions From the East (New Jersey, Baltimore, Annapolis)***

Travel south on Interstate 95 (which becomes the beltway). As you cross the Potomac River on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge, get in right hand local lanes for Alexandria. After you cross the bridge, take Exit 177 to Mount Vernon. The exit takes you to a light at S. Washington Street. Take a right on S. Washington Street. Washington Street becomes the George Washington Parkway as you leave Alexandria, and Mount Vernon is eight miles south, at the large traffic circle at the end of Parkway.

***Directions From the West (Reston and beyond)***

Travel east on Interstate 66 to Interstate 495 South (the beltway). Follow the outer beltway which becomes Interstate 95 North (headed towards Baltimore). Turn off at exit 177B, Route 1 North, marked Alexandria/Mount Vernon. Once on Route 1, make the first right turn, onto Franklin Street. Turn right again at Washington Street, which is marked for Mount Vernon. Washington Street becomes the George Washington Parkway as you leave Alexandria, and Mount Vernon is eight miles south, at the large traffic circle at the end of Parkway.

## COMING IN 2012 » PRESCOTT ONTARIO

JULY 21-22 , 2012

The last time the Continental Line and the British Brigade conducted an event at this site was in 1988. Jointly sponsored by the Town of Prescott, Parks Canada, the Kings Royal Regiment of New York, and the 64th Regiment of Foot.

Prescott Ontario is located right across the St. Lawrence River from Ogdensburg, NY. It is 7 hours from Boston, 6 hours and 35 minutes from New York, and 8 hours 45 minutes from Washington DC.

Participants will be camped in open parkland around the fort. Battles will be ran every day. In the evening, there will be an artillery fire using town provided powder. The artillery will be located on town-owned land.

### DIRECTIONS:

#### ***From the Boston area:***

Take I-89 to Quebec, then 10 & 20 through Montreal picking up the Ontario 401 to Prescott.

#### ***From the NYC area:***

Take I-87 north to Montreal, then follow the above directions. A slower but more scenic route is through the Adirondack Park, using routes 73, 3, 59, and 68, then cut across the Ogdensburg Bridge.



#### ***From Pennsylvania and south:***

Take I-83 north through Syracuse, crossing Thousand Islands bridge into Ontario, then 401 east to Prescott.

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## LOGISTICS AND THE CONTINENTAL ARMY

BY JOE WAGNER

***Logistics: “. . . the branch of military science dealing with the procurement, maintenance, and movement of equipment, supplies, and personnel.”***

PART FOUR – ORDINANCE

### ORGANIZATION OF CONTINENTAL ORDINANCE

The purpose of ordinance activities in the 18th century was to provide forces in the field with the weapons and ammunition to carry on the fight. While the focus was mostly on artillery needs, the term and the activities included provision and repair of muskets and other individual arms, preparation of ammunition for muskets, and supplying all





the materials and accoutrements necessary to maintain the army's fighting capabilities.

The management structure for ordinance changed constantly during the war, with the key players being Congress, its Board of War, and the Commissary General of Military Stores on one side, and Washington with his artillery chief Henry Knox, on the other. At the beginning in 1775-76, the field army under Washington and Knox controlled much of the supply chain for ordinance. They directed the establishment of supply points, gave orders as to what was needed, and arranged the distribution of the resulting weaponry. In the beginning of the war, ordinance logistics was mostly a matter of distribution, since no original supply sources had been developed. Ordinance consisted of captured British equipment, or assets procured by the colonial militia establishments before the war.

Because Washington and Knox were in the field with the Main Army, they could not keep track of supply problems at the source, nor could they know the needs of other forces scattered about the colonies. Trying to operate the ordinance logistics chain from the field caused innumerable problems and failures of the supply system which culminated in a complete reversal in 1779. Congress, through its committee known as the Board of War, took control and retained it through the end of major conflict in 1782. Congress appointed the Commissary General of Military Stores who was responsible for the supply end of the ordinance chain, who followed the guidance of the Board of War.

This was a commissariat position, and not a military one, so not subject to the Army (Washington's) command. The man who held the post of Commissary General for

Military Stores for most of the war was Benjamin Flower, who began the Revolution as a Lieutenant in a Philadelphia militia regiment. Congress originally had appointed him in 1776 as Commissary of Military Stores for the New Jersey flying camp. Then Washington named him as Commissary General for Military Stores for the Army in 1777, and in 1779, when Congress took control, he was reappointed to the same position, reporting to the Board of War. He served until his death in May 1781.

Under the 1779 arrangement, Washington, through his Chief of Artillery (General Knox), was now responsible for ordinance field operations and activities. In today's military terminology, we would say that Congress established and ran the acquisition and depot logistics operations, while Washington and Knox directed the field supply, distribution, and maintenance activities. This simple concept was not so simple in operation, given the multiple sources of supplies, the competing demands from the various geographical armies, (Northern, Southern, Main), and the overlapping responsibilities in many areas.



## ACQUISITION AND DEPOT OPERATIONS

The 1779 system of ordinance supply under Commissary General of Military Stores Flower operated in this way: Two major ordinance supply depots were established, one at Springfield, MA and the other at Carlisle, PA. As most of you know, these two locations would become important names in American military history. Carlisle Barracks is still an active Army post, while Springfield Arsenal was for two centuries the premier US arsenal for small arms manufacture. Their locations were selected to avoid the British Army strength around New York and the Hudson River valley, with Springfield to the north and east of contested areas, while Carlisle was west and south.

Each depot operated with approximately 100 craftsmen and supply staff, each known as a “Regiment of Artillery Artificers”, under the command of a deputy to the Commissary General of Military Stores. The staff included carpenters, wheelwrights, blacksmiths, and armorers.

The ordinance depots were known as laboratories, which at the time meant a place where things of a technical nature were manufactured. The mission of these depots had many facets. They received bulk shipments of materials and finished goods destined for the Army’s ordinance needs and transshipped them to the Army as required. They received raw materials or piece parts from suppliers and completed the manufacture as needed, then distributed them to the field. They manufactured ammunition at the laboratory, and also received and transshipped cannon, powder, musket ball, flints, fuses, cannon balls, and mortar or howitzer shells supplied from outside sources. And they operated shops for the repair of broken or worn out items sent in from the field. Examples include manufacture and repair of caissons and limbers, artillery tools (sponges, rammers), muskets, bayonets, ironwork, and leather goods.

The Carlisle location specialized in cannon and large caliber ammunition due to the large number of iron works and foundries in the eastern Pennsylvania region, which provided sizable quantities of iron. It is thought – though not supported by any hard historical papers, that most of the effort at Carlisle was in cannon ammunition, rather than the casting of tubes, and in repair of artillery gear, as noted above. The Springfield laboratory specialized in small arms since its location close to the New England coast made it the receiving depot for much of the small arms shipped in by France and other countries.

The depot laboratories delivered their products to the army’s field ordinance operations, where they went to one of two organizations, both under Chief of Artillery Knox. The tubes, carriages, ammunition, and equipment for the Artillery units went directly to those units. The infantry regiments were supplied through a specialized unit created at the Brigade level. Under the command of a Brigade Conductor (remember the term from the Transport section of Part 2. of this series), an allocation of wagons, tools, a forge, and a dozen or so men drawn from the brigade were assigned to receive powder and ball and other infantry goods from the laboratories.

They then prepared musket cartridges, and issued flints, bayonets, straps, and other weapons-related goods. Their table of stores called for each brigade to maintain 20,000 prepared cartridges, and the components for 20,000 more. Every time we gather in a basement, or in a tent, and roll cartridges, we’re recreating the activities of the Brigade Conductor and his men.



## CANNON

At the beginning of the war, at Boston in 1775, the first return for the Continental Artillery Regiment was 41 tubes of all types. Gains and losses early in the war included the famous capture at Ticonderoga of 55 guns that Henry Knox carried through the snow to Boston. There was the loss of Forts Washington and Mifflin on the Hudson in November 1776, resulting in a loss of 149 pieces, and the 1777 victory at Saratoga, which provided a badly needed 49 pieces from Burgoyne’s army.

The number of tubes actually produced in the colonies during the war is not known. There is plenty of correspondence and other evidence of plans and orders and expectations, but precious little evidence of actual production and deliveries of indigenous American tubes to the army. It can be said for certain that both brass and iron tubes in varying weight were produced, most from Pennsylvania, and delivered to Carlisle and directly to the field, but quantities are unknown. Difficulties and failures are the most notable evidence, including, as an example, a report of Daniel Joy, agent for the Board of War, that of 150 various pieces he proofed at the Hopewell, PA furnace in May 1776, not a single one withstood testing.

By far the majority of cannon, mortars, and howitzers were imported from nations willing to sell to the Americans. From early in the war, the French, Dutch, and Spanish provided them, shipping most to the Caribbean island of St. Eustatius (Dutch), where blockade-runners would pick them up and bring them to American ports. Once Silas Deane arrived in France and set up a supply conduit based on French funds, hundreds of artillery pieces and thousands of muskets began to fill the pipeline using French vessels, sailing directly to American ports such as Portsmouth, New Hampshire. A major order shipped in 1777 included 200 cannon, 30 mortars, 30,000 muskets, and 200 tons of powder.

Since Washington was essentially on the defensive the entire war – until Yorktown – he needed artillery mobility rather than heavy throw weight. This meant light guns of smaller ball size. He had little need for massive siege guns or heavy batteries for fixed defenses. His artillery had to be horse or oxen mobile, and able to keep with the infantry for mutual support. As a result, the requested artillery tubes usually ranged between 3 and 12 pounds in round ball weight. That is not to say the Continentals wouldn't take whatever came down the supply road, but their need was for light and mobile pieces for infantry support, more than anything else. Based on a breakdown of inventories of captured British guns, approximately two thirds of Revolutionary War artillery pieces were iron, with the other one third brass.



### MUSKETS AND POWDER

There were three sources of new military muskets for the American Army, beyond what the soldiers brought from home, as the war progressed. The first sources, which continued to some extent throughout the war, were the capture of British supplies either from the battlefield or their supply system. An example was the 1776 capture of the English brig “Nancy” by an American ship, delivering some 2,000 muskets to Washington. Second was the manufacture of muskets by American gunsmiths –

popularly known as committee of safety muskets. Some significant attempts to provide home-built muskets include the Virginia factory at Fredericksburg, lock production at several shops in Philadelphia, and numerous contracts for complete muskets to private gunsmiths in manufacturing centers like Baltimore, Frederick, and Hagerstown, MD. There were later attempts after 1778 by Congress to operate its own shops in Lancaster, PA and Trenton, NJ, but there was apparently little resulting impact on the shortages.

The importation of foreign weapons through the French and other allies finally delivered the quantity of muskets necessary to fully arm the American Army. Tens of thousands of Charleville and other European arms were delivered. Even these massive quantities left spot shortages, which is hard to understand when the American army seldom rose above 10,000 men. As reenactors know, conscientious care of a musket can keep it going for years, even under field conditions. In fact, the capture of British equipment, the output of colonial builders, and the imports taken together, should have been ample for an army establishment numbering on average only in the few thousands.



For example, during 1777, 12,000 stand of arms, mostly imported, were delivered to the Main Army for use during the summer campaign. Despite the fact that the Army itself rarely reached this size, before the year was out, there were demands from Regimental and Brigade commanders for major new supplies of muskets. Washington was at a loss to understand where his muskets were going, but Congressional investigations found the likely causes. Foremost was the dire shortage of repair capability. There were nowhere near enough skilled armorers to repair and keep functional the arms on hand.

The Congressional investigators found hundreds of muskets left in camp or in warehouses because of a broken or missing part. The most common repair method appears to have been to turn in the musket and get a replacement. The inability to put a slightly damaged



weapon back into service meant it was totally lost to the supply system. The second important drain on supplies was the use of short-term militia. Washington and his regular army establishment had many, many reasons for disliking the use of militia. Not the least was their tendency to take everything they could home with them when they were mustered out.

They particularly valued their musket. Every campaign season, thousands of militia would show up without weapons, and in the fall would head home again with a new arm. Washington faulted the militia officers, who “allowed their men to carry home everything put into their hands and in consequence forever lost. . .”. He was very well aware, from his own past militia experience, that those militia officers were selected by their men, and were themselves happy to see their companies leave for home well-armed.

The need for gunpowder matched that of the cannons and muskets that used it. A standard barrel of black powder would make about 3,000 musket cartridges, not enough for a single regiment to issue even 10 rounds per man. Commercial production from America’s powder mills in the civilian world of pre-1775 was completely inadequate for a wartime need. Virtually all of the powder produced by the colonies during the war was procured by the colonial governments from mills which they activated and funded. Most local powder was made during the early years, when hard currency still was available and the price of labor and materials had not yet inflated.

It is estimated that domestic production through 1777, after which the great majority of powder was imported, came to just over 800,000 pounds. Even this local production depended on imported ingredients, of which saltpeter was the most important. About 80% of the 800,000 pounds was made from imported ingredients. For the remainder of the war, as with all other needs, we relied on the French, Spanish and other allies for our powder, with thousands of barrels imported mostly through the French port of Martinique in the West Indies.

We needed vast quantities of powder for our small Army which did not fight many major battles for the same reason we needed vast quantities of muskets. The habits of the troops caused it to be wasted in significant amounts. Since unloading a musket was a time consuming practice requiring special tools, the accepted method was to simply fire off the round in a safe direction. Sol-

diers would routinely load their musket whenever they went into the field with any expectation of meeting an enemy, including such things as sentry duty, patrols, road marches, etc. Repeat this practice day after day for thousands of men, and the steady expenditure of powder and ball was tremendous.

## CONCLUSION

This brings to a close our series on Logistics in the Continental Army. As you can understand, what we’ve seen here is only a short survey course of the subject. Books have been written about many of the individual topics. There are major areas we did not even address, such as the Hospital Department. Again, the intent is to give you some background and information to pass along in your interpretations to the public, and to give you a feel for some of the logistical circumstances in the Continental Army that are beyond our normal reenacting experiences.

To sum up the state of logistics for the Continental Army throughout the war, in the beginning there was an excess of Congressional oversight and bureaucracy, but also there was hard currency and available sources for many needed supplies. As the war continued, inflation and shortages of materials sapped the ability of supply units to provide what was needed. This led to; first, Congress handing over responsibility for most supply needs to the individual colonies (1780), who could do little better than Congress in meeting the need, and secondly, widespread use of the most reliable method for getting what was needed – impressments. In the end, even impressments didn’t work if there were no muskets, no powder, no horses, no clothing to impress. It was the French, the Spanish, the Dutch and others, working through their transportation centers in the West Indies, who sent us everything necessary to keep us alive, in the field, and ultimately, to gain the victory.

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The majority of the information in these articles, particularly the chronology of events, correspondence, and statistics, came from “Supplying Washington’s Army”, a publication of the United States Army Center of Military History by Erna Risch – published in 1981. For those particularly interested, I have a copy for short term loan.

*I would like to thank Joe Wagner for this series. Erick Nason, editor.*



**The Continental Soldier Newsletter**

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