

Chapter 1 : The Riflemen of the Revolution | American Prisoners of The Revolution | American Wars

Of all the American riflemen who fought in the Revolutionary War, the most celebrated was Timothy Murphy. It could be said that he was the man who won the war. He was born near Delaware Water Gap.

His weapon was the long rifle developed by the Pennsylvania gunsmith from the short, heavy European rifled gun. This rifle was intended to be used at a range far greater than the usual smoothbore musket. It enabled the marksman to select his target, rather than to blindly fire at a mass of men. The success of this tactic was quite disturbing to the British. However effective the rifle was at longer ranges, it had several disadvantages that prevented it being more widely used. In addition to its high cost, it was not designed to use a bayonet and it took longer to load. The dress worn by this man is not distinctive to the men of Virginia; it was a common dress of the frontiersman or ranger. The men themselves were all fiercely independent and most had no more desire to submit to orders in camp than they had to the King. The seated figure in red, so closely resembled the British grenadier or fusilier, is a member of the uniformed companies that existed in Connecticut before the war. One company of Foot Guards was raised in and a second in These companies are still members of the Continental Legion. The standing figure in the short brown jacket is a member of the Philadelphia Troop of Light Horse founded in under command of Abraham markoe, a Dane. This troop served as escort to George Washington on his trip to assume command of the Army. They also took part in that terrible winter at Valley Forge, where their services were very important due to their knowledge of the area. They still exist today as an active unit of the Pennsylvania National Guard. The War of the Revolution. Flags of the World. The American Revolution, Photolithos printed Zurich, Switzerland. Historical descriptions by Harry W.

Chapter 2 : Daniel Morgan Biography for Kids Â«

Colonial Riflemen of the American Revolution (Longrifle series) by Joe Huddleston, June , George Shumway Pub edition, Hardcover in English.

They were students of history and understood that from classical antiquity forward, an armed citizenry was essential to the preservation of freedom. Once disarmed, a people either submitted meekly to tyrants or fought in vain. The American Revolution strongly reinforced the historical perspective of the Founding Fathers: While the British had to train their troops quickly in the use of firearms, the American rebels could rely on men who had grown up using firearms as part and parcel of their daily lives. This was especially true on the frontier, where young boys were taught the use of the finest weapon of the era, the Kentucky rifle. By the time they were teenagers, these young men were crack shots whom the family depended upon to hunt game for food and to repel Indian attacks. The Kentucky rifle â€” an expertly crafted tool that no frontier family was without â€” was actually made in Pennsylvania, not Kentucky; the towns of Lancaster and Reading were particularly important centers of production. First called the long rifle because of its long barrel, the firearm later became known as the Kentucky because many famous frontiersmen, including Daniel Boone, used it on their hunting trips into that state. Dutch comes from Deutsch, meaning German. Historically in America, whenever anyone referred to the Dutchman down the road or the Dutch farmer across the creek, he meant German. The Kentucky was a flintlock muzzle-loader, with a rifled barrel that ran to three or even four feet in length. The long barrel gave black powder more time to burn, increasing muzzle velocity; it also allowed for finer sighting, resulting in much greater accuracy at greater distances. Most of the rifles came in. In the hands of an accomplished marksman, the Kentucky could bring down a man or a deer at or more yards and knock a squirrel out of a tree at or more. Shooting contests were regularly staged all along the colonial frontier â€” from New England to Georgia. In driving-the-nail, the lead ball would have to strike the head of a nail and drive it further into a post. The Kentucky had one problem, though: This involved several steps, each with great potential for difficulties. When a rifleman squeezed the trigger, the hammer or cock holding a piece of flint fell, striking steel on a small pan of powder outside the breech of the rifle and causing sparks to ignite the powder. The powder then burned through a keyhole, igniting the main powder charge. If everything went right, the expanding gases created by the burning powder propelled the bullet out the barrel. Dampness and fouling of the powder charge in the pan, however, and hangfire and misfire, were constant problems. As a consequence, the Kentucky fired only about three-quarters or four-fifths of the time. Reloading usually took up to a minute, although the very best riflemen could accomplish the task in 30 seconds. Widow-Makers Most American frontiersmen became deadeyes and could accomplish shooting feats such as snuffing-the-candle or driving-the-nail as a matter of course. From the incessant attacks of these bodies, their opponents could never be prepared; as the first knowledge of a patrol in the neighbourhood was generally given by a volley of well-directed fire, that perhaps killed or wounded the greater part. It could be said that he was the man who won the war. He was born near Delaware Water Gap in Pennsylvania in Within a few years, the family moved to the very cutting edge of the frontier, where land was cheap but so too was life. Indian raids were frequent and could bring death or worse â€” capture and horrific tortures. Women and girls were not spared. Capture meant gang rape and then mutilation and death, or enslavement. An Irish family such as the Murphys had to adapt quickly or be annihilated. Such was the environment in which Timothy Murphy grew to manhood. By the time he was in his mid-teens, he already had a widespread reputation among both whites and Indians for extraordinary marksmanship and fierceness in battle. To qualify for service with the company, a rifleman had to fire at and repeatedly hit a seven-inch target at yards, far more than that required for basic marksmanship qualification in any branch of the service today â€” using modern high-tech rifles. That kind of shooting would immediately get a marksman into a sniper school in the Army or Marines. The men made the more than mile march in a little more than a month. They could not only shoot but route step. He left home in his mid-teens and finished his growing up on the frontier. He served in the French and Indian War as a teamster, hauling supplies for the British army. For punching a British officer, Morgan suffered a hundred

lashes, a punishment that might have killed an ordinary man. His back would be scarred for life. When the Revolution erupted, Morgan joined a rifle company and was immediately elected captain. Upon his return to the American side in a prisoner exchange, he was promoted to colonel and given command of a special corps of frontier riflemen. American riflemen, including Timothy Murphy, wreaked havoc, especially on British artillery, picking off artillery officers and gunners by the twos and threes and putting most of the batteries out of the battle. Nonetheless, with volleys of musket fire and bayonet charges, the British eventually drove the Americans from the field of battle, although British losses were twice those suffered by the Americans. It was something of a Pyrrhic victory for the British. The battle could be called a draw. The conflict began about two in the afternoon when the British opened fire and attempted to advance on the Americans. Accurate rifle fire by the Americans, however, cut down the British by the dozens. Major General Benedict Arnold galloped up to Colonel Morgan and declared that it was up to his corps of riflemen to thwart the British advance. Arnold then pointed to Fraser in the distance and said that the British general was worth an entire regiment. I admire him, but it is necessary that he should die. Even if the shorter distance is correct, it was still a distance that put Fraser, or so he thought, well beyond the range of even the greatly feared American riflemen. While Fraser rallied his troops, Murphy rested his rifle in a notch on a branch, reckoned the wind direction and velocity, the distance, and the number of feet his bullet would drop. Adjusting his aim accordingly, he fired. Fraser dropped to the ground. Mortally wounded, he would die the next day. Murphy fired again and Clerke fell from his saddle, dead. Panic began to spread through the British ranks. Two commanding officers had been killed from an impossible distance. The British line began moving backwards, and men began to break ranks. Seizing the advantage, the Americans attacked. The British troops, already demoralized and retreating, fought for a time, then broke and ran. Burgoyne himself almost fell. American sharpshooters put a bullet into his horse, another one through his coat, and a third through his hat. The battle became a rout. Nearly British soldiers were killed and wounded. Gentleman Johnny and six thousand others later surrendered. Only 90 Americans were killed and wounded. The great American victory at the Second Battle of Saratoga convinced the French that the American colonists could defeat the British and win independence "if aided by France. This was the moment that many in France had been waiting for, a chance to revenge the loss of their New World empire to Britain in the French and Indian War. If France had lost her vast territory in North America, she would now see to it, by aiding the American rebels, that Britain lost hers. Without the aid of France, it is highly unlikely that we could have won our independence. And without the marksmanship of American rifleman Timothy Murphy at the Second Battle of Saratoga, it is highly unlikely that we would have stopped the British flanking movement and won the battle. He spent the winter of with the Continental Army at Valley Forge and was one of those who survived the arctic temperatures and near-starvation of that winter camp. During the spring, he led small parties of riflemen in harassing attacks on British troops withdrawing from Philadelphia. Again his crack shots dropped British soldiers from great distances and spread panic through the ranks. The attacks, aided and supported by the British, were particularly bloody, sparing neither women nor children. Murphy was one of those who tracked down and killed Christopher Service, a notorious Tory and British agent who helped arm and supply the Indians. Murphy also participated in the Sullivan Expedition in , a response to the Cherry Valley and Wyoming Valley massacres, which included torture, rape, scalping, beheading, and dismemberment of American men, women, and children. For a time the Iroquois were right and delighted in their savage attacks. Led by Major General John Sullivan, the son of Irish immigrants, a lawyer, a delegate to the Continental Congress, and the veteran of several Revolutionary battles, the expedition sallied forth in June with explicit orders from General Washington to completely eliminate the Iroquois menace forevermore. It will be essential to ruin their crops now in the ground and prevent their planting more But you will not by any means listen to any overture of peace before the total ruinment of their settlements is effected. Our future security will be in their inability to injure us and in the terror with which the severity of the chastisement they receive will inspire them. The expedition fought several skirmishes but only one major engagement, the Battle of Newtown. Riflemen figured prominently in every contact with the enemy, shooting them at distances that the Iroquois thought magical. By the middle of September, Sullivan had reduced 40 Iroquois villages to ashes and laid waste to their crops. Washington was disappointed that more Iroquois had not been killed, but their

once-powerful confederacy had been shredded and they could never again mount anything but raids of limited scope and duration. During October, Sullivan began marching his troops south to winter quarters in New Jersey. Timothy Murphy was not among them. He remained behind to lead riflemen in the 15th Regiment of the Albany County Militia. Knowing they had captured great warriors, the Indians kept them alive, intending to hand them over to the British for a reward. During the night, while the Indians slept, the two bound Americans freed each other and then killed all their captors but one, allowing the sole warrior to live so he could describe to other Indians the might of the American warriors. The British commander sent an emissary, carrying a white flag, to the fort to accept the surrender. But when the emissary approached the fort, Murphy, acting without authorization, sent a bullet whizzing just over the head of the British representative, who beat a hasty retreat. Johnson sent the emissary out a second time and Murphy again fired.

Chapter 3 : A Common American Soldier : The Colonial Williamsburg Official History & Citizenship Site

The American longrifle brandished by Morgan and his riflemen was not the main infantry arm of the rebellious Colonists, not by a long shot. Less than 10 percent of the American troops carried them.

Myth 6 People bit off the ends of clay pipes to avoid germs when they passed the pipe around. Clay pipes had long stems because they kept the heat away from the face. Most old clay pipe stems are excavated broken because they were fragile. Pipes, like most things in colonial America , were not made to be disposable. If your friend bit the stem off your pipe, you would have taken issue with it. Myth 7 A closet tax existed in the American colonies. I have no idea where this myth started, but I have heard it repeated many times. The story goes that a closet was counted as another room and increased the tax on your house. In truth there are no records of regulations or taxes placed on closets in colonial America , and we have extensive tax records from the time. Myth 8 Doctors used leeches to bleed patients. Doctors did use leeches, but not for any major bleeding. The 18th century doctor believed that the body held about 12 pints of blood it only holds pints. Benjamin Rush believed you could bleed a patient of pints over a few days. For that kind of bleeding you are going to have to open a vein. Leeches were used as cure alls for anything from fevers to facial discoloration but not for bleeding. Myth 9 Americans won the war by using guerilla tactics. There were some battles fought in the Revolution that used non-traditional, Native American style, or guerilla tactics, but they were not the norm and not decisive battles. The war was won when the American army learned to fight like a European army, learned to pick its battles, and got some major assistance from the French. That is all very simplified because the war lasted eight years and Washington learned new lessons and employed new strategies throughout. Only by keeping his army together and in the field was Washington able to finally find the right combination that brought victory. This in no way belittles the bravery and usefulness of the riflemen and minutemen who fought for Liberty , but it took a lot more to win Independence.

Chapter 4 : Colonial Riflemen in the American Revolution: Joe D. Huddleston: blog.quintoapp.com: Books

During the American Revolution many local state militia units were created to help defend the rights of the colonies. The 2nd Battalion of Riflemen Lancaster County (), a militia unit from Pennsylvania, fought in support of the American cause.

On that day, the Continental Congress assumed responsibility for militia regiments that had been raised by the colonies of New Hampshire , Massachusetts , Rhode Island , and Connecticut. Most of these troops were stationed outside Boston, Massachusetts , where they besieged the city occupied by British troops under the command of General Thomas Gage. The forces adopted by the Continental Congress amounted to 39 regiments of infantry, and 1 regiment and 1 separate company of artillery. The period of service for many of these regiments ended on December 31, , although some had a service period that expired earlier. The Continental Congress resolved on June 15, that the Continental Army should be commanded by a full general. This appointment was offered to George Washington , who accepted it the following day. In company with Philip Schuyler and other officers he began the journey from Philadelphia to Boston. On June 14 Continental Congress also for the first time ordered additional troops to be raised for national defense. It ordered that ten companies of "expert riflemen" be raised in Pennsylvania , Maryland , and Virginia , specifying their organization, pay, and term of enlistment. As came to a close, with no end in sight to the siege of Boston and troops in Quebec preparing to attack Quebec City, Congress authorized a second establishment of the army, with a new regimental structure. Unless otherwise noted, the regiments and companies listed were adopted into the Continental Army by Congress on June 14, These regiments were commanded by Colonels Stark , Poor , and Reed. These regiments were commanded by colonels Varnum , Hitchcock , and Church. The 1st through 6th regiments were adopted by the Continental Congress on June 14, The 7th and 8th regiments were adopted by the Congress on July 19, On May 25 the Continental Congress voted to support a force not exceeding 3, men for the defense of New York. The colony of New York availed itself fully of this number, subsequently raising them as the 1st through 4th New York Regiments. The Continental Congress ordered that six companies of riflemen be raised in Pennsylvania. A ninth company was added to the regiment on July The Continental Congress ordered that two companies of riflemen be raised in Maryland. The Continental Congress ordered that two companies of riflemen be raised in Virginia. On November 4, the Congress adopted the 1st and 2d Virginia Regiments. These were existing formations that had been authorized by the colony in August and organized at Williamsburg in October. On June 26, the Continental Congress voted to support a force not exceeding 1, men for the defense of North Carolina. The Continental Congress resolved, on November 4, to adopt two infantry regiments in South Carolina. The 1st and 2d South Carolina Regiments were existing formations that had been authorized by the colony in June. The Continental Congress resolved, on November 4, to authorized one infantry regiment in Georgia. Georgia did not raise a regiment of its own until Troops composing the 1st Canadian Regiment were raised by James Livingston as early as September , but the formation did not receive any formal designation by the Continental Congress until January Livingston was commissioned a colonel by Brigadier General Richard Montgomery in November , when the regiment was first formally recognized. Artillery[edit] Massachusetts: Order of Battle - July 22, [edit].

Chapter 5 : Continental Army – American Revolutionary War

Without the intimidation of the riflemen the British might have poured out of Boston and put an end to the fledgling Revolution. 1 Force, Peter, American Archives, Series IV, vol. 3, page 5, Letter dated August 1, from Elbridge Gerry to General Washington.

We will first endeavor to give the reader some idea of the men who were imprisoned in New York in the fall and winter of 1776. It was in the summer of that year that Congress ordered a regiment of riflemen to be raised in Maryland and Virginia. These, with the so-called "Flying Camp" of Pennsylvania, made the bulk of the soldiers taken prisoners at Fort Mifflin on the fatal 26th of September. Washington had already proved to his own satisfaction the value of such soldiers; not only by his experience with them in the French and Indian wars, but also during the siege of Boston in 1775. These hardy young rifemen were at first called by the British "regulars," "a rabble in calico petticoats," as a term of contempt. Their uniform consisted of tow linen or homespun hunting shirts, buckskin breeches, leggings and moccasins. They wore round felt hats, looped on one side and ornamented with a buck tail. They carried long rifles, shot pouches, tomahawks, and scalping knives. They soon proved themselves of great value for their superior marksmanship, and the British, who began by scoffing at them, ended by fearing and hating them as they feared and hated no other troops. The many accounts of the skill of these riflemen are interesting, and some of them shall be given here. One of the first companies that marched to the aid of Washington when he was at Cambridge in 1776 was that of Captain Michael Cresap, which was raised partly in Maryland and partly in the western part of Virginia. This gallant young officer died in New York in the fall of 1776, a year before the surrender of Fort Mifflin, yet his company may be taken as a fair sample of what the riflemen of the frontiers of our country were, and of what they could do. We will therefore give the words of an eye-witness of their performances. This account is taken from the Pennsylvania Journal of August 23rd, 1776. They appear as if they were entirely unacquainted with, and had never felt the passion of fear. With their rifles in their hands, they assume a kind of omnipotence over their enemies. One cannot much wonder at this when we mention a fact which can be fully attested by several of the reputable persons who were eye-witnesses of it. It is said by those who are judges that no representation could possibly come nearer the original. This morning they will set out on their march for Cambridge. He, with a piece of chalk, drew on a board the figure of a nose of the common size, which he placed at the distance of 100 yards, declaring that those who came nearest the mark should be enlisted. Sixty odd hit the object. He will engage to take her with thirty men. The General thinks it best to decline at present, but at the same time commends the spirit of Captain Dowdle and his brave men, who, though they just came a very long march, offered to execute the plan immediately. A great part of his time was spent in listening to and relieving their wants, without any apparent sense of fatigue and trouble. When complaints were before him he determined with kindness and spirit, and on every occasion condescended to please without losing dignity. A clap board with a mark the size of a dollar was put up; they began to fire offhand, and the bystanders were surprised. Few shots were made that were not close to, or into, the paper. When they had shot some time in this way, some lay on their backs, some on their breasts or sides, others ran twenty or thirty steps, and firing as they ran, appeared to be equally certain of the mark. With this performance the company were more than satisfied, when a young man took up the board in his hand, and not by the end, by the side, and, holding it up, his brother walked to the distance, and coolly shot into the white. Laying down his rifle he took the board, and holding it as it was held before, the second brother shot as the former had done. Henry Bedinger was descended from an old German family. His grandfather had emigrated to America from Alsace in to escape persecution for his religious beliefs. The highest rank that Bedinger attained in the War of the Revolution was that of captain. He was a Knight of the Order of the Cincinnati, and he was, after the war, a major of the militia of Berkeley County. The document in possession of one of his descendants is undated, and appears to have been a rough copy or draught of the original, which may now be in the keeping of some of the descendants of General Finley. We will give it almost entire. Such family letters are, we need scarcely say, of great value to all who are interested in historical research, supplying, as they do, the necessary details which

fill out and amplify the bare facts of history, giving us a living picture of the times and events that they describe. Captains Hugh Stephenson of Berkeley, and Daniel Morgan of Frederick were selected to raise and command those companies, they being the first Regular troops required to be raised in the State of Virginia for Continental service. Great exertions were made by each Captain to complete his company first, that merit might be claimed on that account. Volunteers presented themselves in every direction in the Vicinity of these Towns, none were received but young men of Character, and of sufficient property to Clothe themselves completely, find their own arms, and accoutrements, that is, an approved Rifle, handsome shot pouch, and powder horn, blanket, knapsack, with such decent clothing as should be prescribed, but which was at first ordered to be only a Hunting shirt and pantaloons, fringed on every edge and in Various ways. Morgan had equal success. Your Father and some of his Bosom Companions were among the first enrolled. The Committee of Safety had appointed Wm. Henshaw as 1st Lieut. In the mean time your Father obtained from the gunsmith a remarkable neat light rifle, the stock inlaid and ornamented with silver, which he held, untill Compelled, as were all of us--to ground our arms and surrender to the enemy on the evening of the 16th day of November The Commissions of the Field Officers were dated the 8th July, , and those of our Company the 9th of the same month. Shepherd, Finley and myself were dispatched to Berkeley to recruit and refill the Old Company, which we performed in about five weeks. While actively employed in August, , he was taken sick, and in four days died. Several frigates ran up the Hudson from New York to cut off our intercourse with Fort Lee, a fort on the opposite bank of the North River; and by regular approaches invested us on all sides. Pattison declared all was ready to storm the lines and fort, we of course prepared for the Pending contest. A few of our men were killed with Cannon and Grape Shott. Not a Shott was fired on our side untill the Enemy had nearly gained the Summit. Though at least five times our numbers our rifles brought down so many that they gave way several times, but by their overwhelming numbers they at last succeeded in possessing the summit. Here, however, was great carnage, each making every effort to possess and hold so advantageous a position. This obstinacy continued for more than an hour, when the enemy brought up some field pieces, as well as reinforcements. Hanson and Tannehill were mortally wounded. The latter died the same night in the Fort, and Hanson died in New York a short time after. Daniel Cresap and myself, with fifty men, were detailed the day before the action and placed in the van to receive the enemy as they came up the hill. Our troops retreated gradually from redoubt to redoubt, contesting every inch of ground, still making dreadful Havoc in the ranks of the enemy. We laboured too under disadvantages, the wind blew the smoke full in our faces. Hanson and myself quitted the field together, and retreated to the fort. I was slightly wounded, tho my right hand was rendered entirely useless. Your Father continued with the regiment until all had arrived in the fort. It was admitted by all the surviving officers that he had conducted himself with great gallantry and the utmost propriety. All were driven into the fort and the enemy began by sundown to break ground within yards of the fort. Howe who Commanded in person, proposing to surrender on certain conditions, which not being agreed to, other terms were proposed and accepted. The garrison, consisting of privates, and officers, marched out, grounded arms, and were guarded to the White House that same night, but instead of being treated as agreed on, and allowed to retain baggage, clothes, and Side Arms, every valuable article was torn away from both officers and soldiers: On the third day after our surrender we were guarded to New York, fourteen miles from Fort Washington, where in the evening we received some barrels of raw pork and musty spoiled biscuit, being the first Morsel of provision we had seen for more than three days. The officers were then separated from the soldiers, had articles of parole presented to us which we signed, placed into deserted houses without Clothing, provisions, or fire. No officer was permitted to have a servant, but we acted in rotation, carried our Cole and Provisions about half a mile on our backs, Cooked as well as we could, and tried to keep from Starving. They were crowded into sugar houses and Jails without blankets or covering; had Very little given to them to eat, and that little of the Very worst quality. So that in two months and four days about of the Fort Washington troops had died. The survivors were sent out and receipted for by General Washington, and we the officers were sent to Long Island on parole, and billeted, two in a house, on the families residing in the little townships of Flatbush, New Utrecht, Newlots, and Gravesend, who were compelled to board and lodge us at the rate of two dollars per week, a small compensation indeed in the exhausted state of that section of country.

The people were kind, being mostly conquered Whigs, but sometimes hard run to provide sustenance for their own families, with the addition, generally, of two men who must have a share of what could be obtained. These people could not have furnished us but for the advantage of the fisheries, and access at all times to the water. Fish, oysters, clams, Eels, and wild fowl could always be obtained in their season. Sometimes a companion would receive a few hard dollars from a friend through a flag of truce, which was often shared by others to purchase a pair of shoes or a shirt. He was still down with his wound, but requested Captain Shepherd, your Father and myself to come to his room, and there lent each of us ten Dollars, which enabled each of us to purchase a pair shoes, a shirt, and some other small matters: Major Williams was a Marylander, and to assist a Virginian, in preference to a Marylander, was a Crime almost unpardonable. It however passed off, as it so happened there were some refugees in New York from Maryland who had generosity enough to relieve the pressing wants of a few of their former acquaintances. Also to prevent becoming too feeble we exercised our bodies by playing fives, throwing long bullets, wrestling, running, jumping, and other athletic exercises, in all of which your Father fully participated. Being all nearly on the same footing as to Clothing and pocket money that is we seldom had any of the latter we lived on an equality. There were then on the Island about three hundred American officers prisoners. We were of course ordered off immediately, and placed on board of two large transports in the North River, as prison ships, where we remained but about 18 days, but it being Very Cold, and we Confined between decks, the Steam and breath of men soon gave us Coughs, then fevers, and had we not been removed back to our billets I believe One half would have died in six weeks. We have given a great deal of it because of its graphic description of the men who were captured at Fort Washington, and of the battle itself. Major Bedinger was a dignified, well-to-do, country gentleman; honored and respected by all who knew him, and of unimpeachable.

Chapter 6 : List of Continental Army units () - Wikipedia

This bar-code number lets you verify that you're getting exactly the right version or edition of a book. The digit and digit formats both work.

Numbers in the Army Both sides faced a major problem raising and maintaining an army, so that the war could actually be fought, and they found radically different solutions to it. American troops initially belonged to the colonies or states, as there was, of course, that point no real central government. When the Congress authorized the 20,man army that its commander recommended, as a result of a visit to Boston by a committee from Philadelphia, it was seeking to build up, and formalize, a regular standing army on the European model, and it proposed that these men be organized in 26 single-battalion regiments. If realized, this plan would have given Washington and Americans a small but presumably efficient force with which he could meet the British on their own terms. During the first year of the war, about 27, men were officially carried on the national rolls. For , Congress authorized 27 regiments, then later in the year, it upped the number to 88 regiments, and tried to enlist men for the duration of the war. Then, at the very end of the year, it voted to raise another 16 regiments, as well as cavalry and artillery formations. In fact, authorized strength was never reached, in spite of the offering of enlistments bounties either of hard money or future land grants, and there were fewer troops under arms in than the year before, and fewer still in For , recognizing both reality and the diminution of activity, the figures were adjusted downward, back to 80 battalions, and for the last 2 years of the war, down again to a merely 58 regiments. Figures compiled after the war showed that there had been some , enlistments in the Continental Army; many of these were reenlistments, so it is estimated that they represent perhaps , men. In addition to the regulars, there existed the militia. Every able-bodied man was officially part of the militia, and subject to call-up in an emergency. They tended at times to be poorly disciplined and commanded, though some militia fought very bravely and acted accordingly. The figures for militia service are far less reliable than for the regulars, but there seem to have been about , periods of service under militia auspices. Taking regulars and militia together, the total would be about , enlistments, of which settles down to around a range of , to , men serving in the armed forces of the Revolutionary War. The peak strength for a year was at 89, in , and half of those were militiamen. The highest strength of the Continental Army came in , at 35., and Washington never commanded more than 17, troops regular and militia combined at any one time. The Continental Army was composed mainly of infantry with limited cavalry and artillery. The basic unit of infantry organization was the regiment, composed of eight or more companies. Throughout the American revolution the Continental Army would see three major organizational approaches. These included the First Establishment , the Second Establishment , and the Third Establishment with ongoing changes through . Throughout the entire course of the war, smaller regimental adjustments, reassignments, and changes were authorized. Not all regiments were filled at all times. Cavalry regiments were similarly structured. Artillery Regiments could include specialized companies of soldiers that included bombardiers, gunners, and matrosses. Rather than as a large, regiment force, they would function in smaller, specialized groups to support strategic battle needs as necessary. Platoon The platoon will form the smallest tactical unit firing body. The platoon will consist of a minimum of 16 men and a maximum of 31 men. The platoon will be officered by 1 Lieutenant posted on the right of the front rank, 1 Sargeant posted on the right of the second rank covering the lieutenant and 1 Corporal posted on the left of the front rank. These men are to be included as part of the 16 man minimum. Platoon officers will stay in these positions at all times during a battle, never quitting their posts and only take commands from their Grand Division Captain. Company At full strength, a company would have 90 officers and men. The smallest administrative unit of infantry or artillery. Each company consisted of 91 men that could be made up of:

Chapter 7 : Battle of Cowpens - HISTORY

The American long rifle was a legendarily accurate weapon in the hands of dead-eye frontier marksmen during the Revolutionary War. By David Alan Johnson By the mid's, the American long rifle had acquired an almost supernatural reputation.

Harrington , Hugh T. Harrington is an independent researcher living in Georgia. He may be reached by clicking on his name. George Washington sucked in his breath sharply as he read a letter that had been delivered by hand only moments before. Washington had thought there were barrels of gunpowder. Gerry went on to say that there were no flints and only two tons of lead. Washington thought of his army. The army that was supposed to deal with the British in Boston just a few miles away. He had arrived in Cambridge on July 2, to take command of this army, "a mixed multitude of people here, under very little discipline, order, or government He was bringing organization to the multitude of inexperienced officers and men. Now he was faced with his first major crisis. Three major factors had to be addressed immediately. First, he needed to obtain more powder as quickly as possible. Second, it was absolutely essential that the powder shortage not become known to the British. To keep the shortage a secret as few of his own people as possible should know of it. A word leaked to the British would surely cause an immediate attack. It would be an attack that he could not possibly repulse. Washington had just under 14, men fit for duty. The powder crisis left his army with "not more than 9 cartridges a Man. Clearly then, the third factor was that the British must be discouraged from making an attack. Washington called a Council of War on August 3. He explained to his generals the critical need for powder. The explanation for the discrepancy of what had been listed as being in store and what actually was available tells much about the inexperience of the American forces. The Committee of Supplies, "not being sufficiently acquainted with the nature of a return The Council of War agreed "by a great majority" to send a detachment of men to make an attempt to capture the British powder magazine at Halifax. He informed Cooke that "our necessities in the articles of powder and lead are so great as to require an immediate supply Washington offered that "I am very sensible that at first view the project may appear hazardous and its success must depend on the concurrence of many circumstances, but we are in a situation which requires us to run all risques [sic]. No danger is to be considered when put in competition with the magnitude of the cause and absolute necessity we are under of increasing our stock [of powder]. Washington also caused a rumor to be circulated in his own camp that he had so much gunpowder he was somewhat embarrassed by having so much. Immediately, hundreds of young men from the western counties came forward to volunteer. These hardy men from the frontier used their rifles to bring in food and provide defense against Indians. As soon as they were organized, rifle companies marched to the aid of Boston. At that time, rifles were seen in the backwoods of Pennsylvania, Virginia and Maryland as well as the southern colonies, but in New England they were a novelty. Until the first rifle companies arrived there were no rifles or riflemen on either side at the Siege of Boston. The weapons used were smoothbores. The British were equipped with the Brown Bess and the Patriots with the Brown Bess and assorted smoothbores of varying ages and quality. Military training did not include marksmanship. Soldiers were drilled in quick loading and firing, on command, when their weapons were "leveled" at the enemy. In the linear formations in use at the time this was an effective method of delivering large numbers of balls in the general direction of the enemy. Volleys of musket fire were followed up with the bayonet. He looked forward to the arrival of the rifle companies. The riflemen went out of their way to cover ground quickly as well as to put on demonstrations of their marksmanship ability on their march to Massachusetts. The rifle was an unknown quantity to most of the population. Striking a mark at distances two or three times as far as a smoothbore musket provoked awe in the onlookers. Word of this new capability spread quickly by word of mouth, letters and newspapers. The news carried to England as well. The shortcomings of the rifle, slow loading, quick to foul, non-standard ball size, and no bayonet were not realized at this time. For now the only thing that was touted was the ability, often grossly exaggerated, of increasing the effective range of a weapon from "whites of their eyes" distance to several hundred yards. The riflemen themselves also took on a mystical quality. Richard Henry Lee claimed that six counties in western Virginia

could provide riflemen with "their amazing hardihood, their method of living so long in the woods without carrying provisions with them, the exceeding quickness with which they can march to distant parts, and above all, their dexterity James Thacher, described the riflemen as "remarkably stout and hardy men, many of them exceeding six feet in height. They are dressed in white frocks, or rifle-shirts, and round hats. These men are remarkable for the accuracy of their aim, striking a mark with great certainty at two hundred yards distance. It also is a look at the riflemen themselves. Health and vigour, after what they had undergone, declared them to be intimate with hardship and familiar with danger. Had Lord North been present, and been assured that the brave leader could raise thousands of such like to defend his country, what think you, would not the hatchet and the block have intruded upon his mind? When they had shot for a time in this way, some lay on their backs, some on their breast or side, others ran twenty or thirty steps, and firing, appeared to be equally certain of the mark. With this performance the company were more than satisfied, when a young man took up the board in his hand, not by the end, but by the side, and holding it up, his brother walked to the distance, and very coolly shot into the white; laying down his rifle, he took the board, and holding it as it was held before, the second brother shot as the former had done. By this exercise I was more astonished than pleased. But will you believe me, when I tell you that one of the men took the board, and placing it between his legs, stood with his back to the tree while another drove the center. What would a regular army of considerable strength in the forest of America do with one thousand of these men, who want nothing to preserve their health and courage but water from the spring, with a little parched corn, with what they can easily procure in hunting; and who, wrapped in their blankets, in the damp of night, would choose the shade of a tree for their covering, and the earth for their bed. The event is described by an eyewitness in a letter which was published in the Pennsylvania Packet of August With their rifles in their hands they assume a kind of omnipotence over their enemies Another of the company held a barrel stave perpendicularly in his hand, with one edge close to his side, while one of his comrades, at the same distance, and in the manner before mentioned, shot several bullets through it, without any apprehensions of danger on either side. The spectators appearing to be amazed at these feats, were told that there were upwards of fifty persons in the company who could do the same thing; and there was not one who could not plug 19 bullets out of 20 as they termed it within an inch of the head of a ten penny nail; in short, to evince the confidence they possessed in their dexterity at these kinds of arms, some of them proposed to stand with apples on their heads, while others at the same distance undertook to shoot them off; but the people, who saw the other experiments, declined to be witnesses of this. At night a great fire was kindled round a pole planted in the courthouse square, where the company with the Captain at their head, all naked to the waist and painted like savages except the Captain, who was in an Indian shirt, indulged a vast concourse of the inhabitants with a perfect exhibition of a war dance, and all the manoeuvres [sic] of Indians holding council, going to war, circumventing their enemies, by defiles, ambuscades, attacking, scalping, etc. It is said by those who are judges, that no representation could possibly come nearer the original. This morning they will set out on their march to Cambridge. It was common practice for newspapers to pick up news items from other newspapers as well as to reprint letters, such as the one to the gentleman in Philadelphia. Thus, stories such as this would rapidly spread far and wide. The Virginia Gazette of July 25, carried an article claiming that so many riflemen had volunteered for the rifle companies that a shooting test was required to weed down the numbers. It was claimed that the judges chalked a drawing of a human nose on a board and sixty men were said to have riddled the mark from yards away. They brought with them not only their rifles but a fierce reputation as fighting men. This public fascination with the riflemen was far out of proportion to their actual usefulness but for the short term they were just what was needed. As soon as they arrived they began to pick off British sentries and officers at great distance. The numbers of men killed by the riflemen was of little significance, but the terror factor and effect on morale was enormous. The British quickly learned the effective range of the rifle and gave the marksmen few targets. But the threat from the riflemen was always present. The real value of the riflemen was to buy time for the patriots. Washington seized onto the temporary excitement caused by the riflemen and worked it to his advantage. The riflemen were treated as privileged units. They camped together and were exempted from camp duties. No digging entrenchments for these specialized men. A few times the riflemen were used to creep out and attack small parties of British. Putting

the fear of riflemen crawling about in the dark into the minds of the British would be one more thing to bother the enemy. To make sure that the message was loud and clear Washington ordered a spectacular demonstration of the abilities of his riflemen. With a huge crowd of spectators on hand Washington publically had his men fire at a seven inch diameter pole from yards. The riflemen riddled the pole. Others fired at yards. Some companies, at quick march, hit seven inch targets at yards. With their hunting shirts they stood out from the mass of soldiers as something elite. Such marksmanship demonstrations and the loss of British soldiers exposed to their fire created discontent among the British in Boston and in England. General Howe wrote to England about "the terrible guns of the rebels. As soon as this was accomplished he had the rifleman sent to England to be exhibited. On August 24 Washington had barrels of powder as well as thousands of flints and several tons of lead. Throughout the war supplies were never what were wanted but at least the men could have some in their cartridge boxes as well as powder stocks in store. The army and the public never knew there had been a crisis. With the end of the powder crisis the riflemen, after having played such a major part in containing the British, became a nuisance. After making their triumphal march to join the army surrounding Boston, the riflemen became restless, bored and sullen.

Chapter 8 : History | Morgan's Riflemen

In any conflict as long and complicated as the American Revolution there are, of course, exceptions to generalized description of hostilities. At the Battle of Cowpens in South Carolina, January 17, , Morgan arrayed about riflemen militia as skirmishers against British forces led by Banastre Tarleton.

Chapter 9 : The American Rifleman in the Revolutionary War

The Northern American Colonies had been settled to enrich the mother country by exporting raw materials to England's factories and then serve as a market for their finished goods.