

## Lesson #23 U.S. History

### General Washington Takes Command

General Washington takes command to recognized ranks in the different uniforms

- Commander-in-Chief wore a Light blue sash
- Field-Grade ranks had a Red or Pink cockade in hat
- Major General wear a Purple sash
- Brigadier General wear a pink sash
- Captains wear a yellow or buff
- Subalterns wear a green
- Sergeants wear a red Strip on shoulders
- Corporals wear a green strip on shoulder



General Washington used the British system of punishment in the army of 600 lashes – Congress reduced this to 39 lashes and later raised it to 100 lashes

The Lashing post was called “Adjutants Daughter”

Colonist deserter were sentenced to clean the latrines and wear a sign of their offense  
General Washington saw the New Englanders as dirty and nasty people

Gun powder was in short supply

- 1 pound of gun powder would provide for a volley from 48 muskets
- A 32-pound cannon ball took 11 pounds of gun powder
- An 18-pound cannon ball took 6 pounds of gun powder

When General Washington arrived, the army had enough gun powder for 9 rounds per soldier. General Washington and his view of the Army he was placed in command of was not an army built on British tradition that Washington was used to in the Seven Years War. New England had a tradition of a man raised a unit he commanded. The men joined because he was a man the felt could command. The military punishment was far less than British punishment. A man could only be given 39 lashes in the colonies while 500 lashes were allowed in the British Army. The soldiers in New England had a voice in command.

General Washington came from Virginia where men were drafted into units. The officers came from the gentlemen class. Later the soldiers were paid to sever in the southern colonies to replace

the draft. Washington set out to change the structure of the Continental. He wanted selection of who would be placed in command and Congress refused. He did get an increase in punishments to 100 lashes and enlistments to a three year term. Capital crimes were Desertion, Theft, Desertion to the enemy and mutiny in that order of court marshals. Pardons most in mutinies because of over reach of officers. Troops mutiny for poor command leadership. Discipline was lacking between 1776 and 1777. Then at Valley Forge the Prussian Drill began with a manual with the last 14 pages devoted to good leadership. That listed leadership all the way down the ranks.

By 1777 soldiers lost the right to select officers

1780 Mutinies? Connecticut - Officers replaced

New Jersey and Pennsylvania – executions

*Contest for Leadership: Mutiny leadership in Continental Army 1775-1783*, Lt. Col. Seanegan Sculley

The army remain divided along colony or State lines. Between 1775 and 1783 New England provided 2/3 of the troops for the war. Massachusetts provided most of the troops.

Service strips awarded and metals for gallantry.

A rifleman could hit a target at 200 yards – real worry to British troops

Boston starving and moved to New York

October 16, 1775 Lt. Henry Mowat given orders to burn 9 coastal towns – *HMS Conceaux* fired on Falmouth burning 416 buildings, sunk 11 American ships and captured 4 others. The cost to the British was high and Falmouth was the only town burn on the mission of destruction.

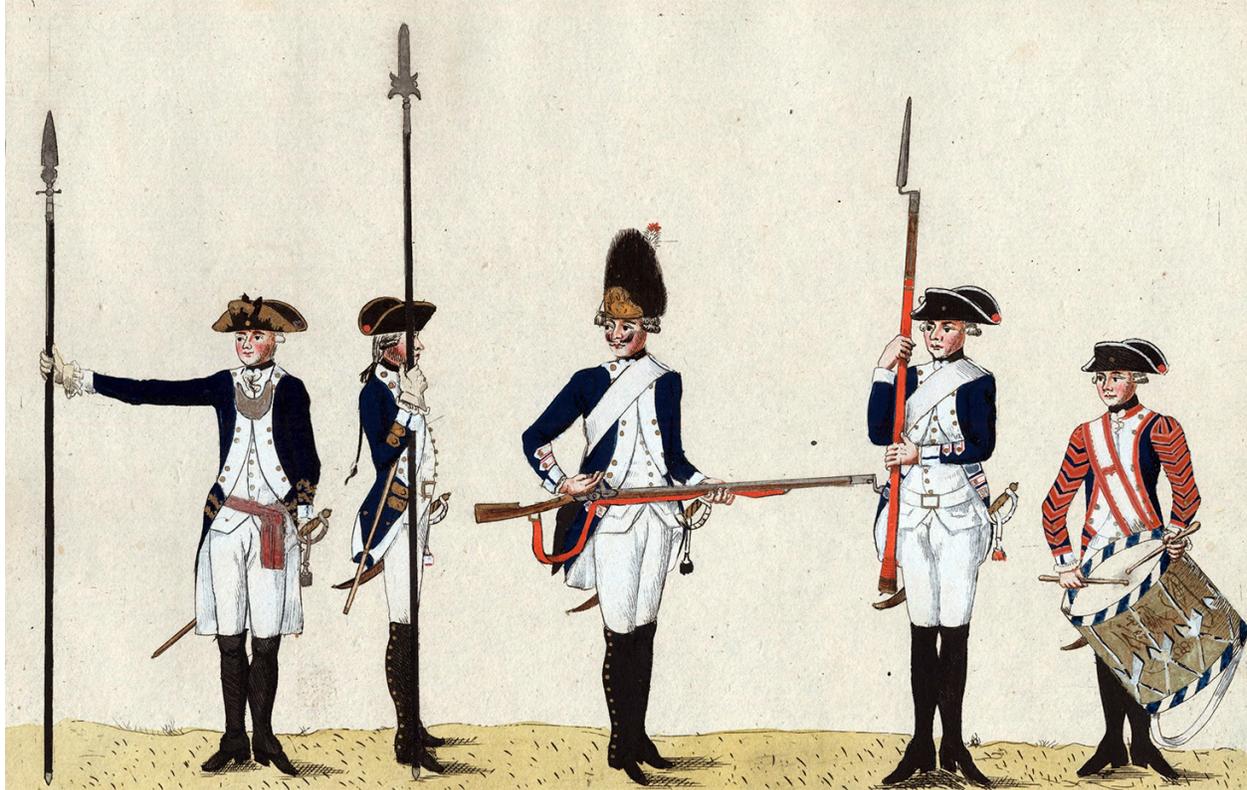


Prohibitory Act – galvanized American resistance – ships that traded with the colonies would be forfeited to the Crown and crews impressed into Royal Navy

### British and the War:

Parliament went to Hesse-Cassel to hire mercenary troops to fight in the Colonies. Hesse-Cassel was the leading state for mercenary soldiers. Ben Franklin is credited with writing the propaganda letter *The Scale of the Hessians* in 1777.

The cost to Hesse-Cassel was the ruin of the economy at home. To fill the ranks men were taken from shops and sent the fight in the Colonies were 5,000 casualties and 3,000 desertions took its toll. There were 30,000 German troops in the Colonies and  $\frac{1}{4}$  died and  $\frac{1}{4}$  deserted or captured. The colonies offered a bounty to Germans that deserted and more if they brought their weapon.



### Impact on the British:

The war was unpopular with a large section of the country. John Wilkes was Lord Mayor of London and opposed the war in 1775. Newspapers that supported the opposition against the war were bought off by the Crown.

The cost of supplying an army at the distance was great – a shipment of 950 horses to General Howe one summer had 412 died in transit

Travel from colonies to England took 6-8 weeks

Travel from England to colonies took 10-15 weeks

British evacuated Boston for New York and Washington followed. The Battle of Long Island and Retreat.



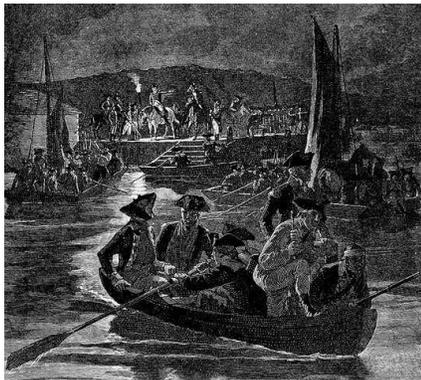
British move on Long Island



Battle



Defense and Retreat



Brandywine September 1777



Germantown October 1777



Retreat to Valley Forge winter Camp