

## *THE DRUMMERS ASSISTANT*

Volume I

January, 1962

Number 1

"Headquarters, Williamsburg, Mar. 27th, 1776"

"They are to Practice the young Fifers and Drummers between the Hours of  
11 & 1 O'Clock"

- ANDREW LEWIS ORDERLY BOOK

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### A PROSPECT OF AMERICANA

by "A New England Fifer"

With the nation becoming ever more conscious of its heritage - taking an increasing interest in our distinguished history, both Civic and Military - new vistas are opening to the "Ancients."

Perhaps this wonderful new awareness is indicative of a national maturity or, possibly, it is only a normal by-product of the increased leisure time allotted us. Whatever the reason, we now have the opportunity to contemplate our national origins and, rather than continue to accept all things at face value, many demand to know the reason why. Once apprised of the development of, and background behind, our traditions, the enthusiast often finds that he has to do something. He endeavors to take part in one of the many movements designed to perpetuate and commemorate some of the more important, or colorful



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facets of our early development.

This is manifest in myriad ways - in groups and societies beyond number. Where once found only among professional Historians, cranks and Genealogical - cultists - today there are many many groups bound together by a national pride that impels them to seek new means of historical expression.

While the present observation of the Centennial, of our Civil War, has contributed, in no small way, to this new awareness - conversely - the "Centennial" could never have come into being had the time not been ripe for it. Were it not for the vast undercurrent of devotion to what, for a better term, we can dub - - - Americana - - - this all important commemoration would never have materialized.

Swept along with this new found love of the old, is the cream of Military Folk Music - The Ancient Corps. Obviously, this trend did not create the Ancients. They have been ever with us. Perhaps not always as seemingly noteworthy as today, nonetheless, never have we known a time when the crowd did not rise, screaming, at the sound of the long drum and the "wry necked Fife."

The instruments, and type of musical group, that inspired the Patriots and answered every subsequent emergency, had remained virtually unchanged among the many villages and hamlets of New England, and more specifically the State of Connecticut. This, then, was both limbo and staging area - the place where countless Ancients marked time waiting for the re-awakening.

Wooden Nutmegs, notwithstanding, Connecticut's greatest contribution, to our National Folk-Heritage, was, and is, in successfully resisting the blandishments of the perennial "Modernists." These temptors run concurrently with the four seasons. Their philosophies are no less ephemeral.

Today's interest in things "Folk" and historical has helped bring about a veritable explosion of Ancient, and traditional, Corps throughout various sections of the country. Many of these areas, we might add, had not heard the Fife in generations - others did not know it at all.

Where, a few short years ago, the true Ancients seemed in the twilight of their essence - unable to pit their measured tread against the frenetic step of the more flamboyant chrome-plates - we now hear of the movement journeying with the four winds, broadcasting seeds of Americana in shamefully barren territory.

The re-awakening has been neither simple nor sudden. It has been slowly, and painfully, developing for close to thirty years - a full generation. It was in 1935 that the Union-Endicott High School Corps, and 1938 that the Long Island Minute Men, were organized in New York State. The impact, and consequent influence, of these two Corps, can never be underestimated. Corps members of the



New York State Fife and Drum Corps Ass'n. (a competitively oriented Federation second only to the Conn. Ass'n. in age, size and activity) were finally able to feel themselves a more integral part of the thread of pure tradition that has always run thru' the fabric of the Drum Corps movement. The reaction was such that both units - orphans in their class - were soon the pride of Ancients and moderns alike, throughout the N. Y. Ass'n's. sophisticated sphere of influence. If we were to pursue a Darwinian pattern of investigation, New York would, undoubtedly appear as the single, most important, link between our burgeoning race of current Ancients and the common progenitor - Connecticut.

Temporarily suspended by the second World War, the Ancient Movement received another thrust forward with the organization, in 1947, of the Sons of Liberty of Brooklyn, N.Y. Here was a unique unit boasting "New sounds in Ancient music" and all but standing the ultra-conservatives on their collective ear. Two things were now obvious - (1) no longer was the field of Ancient activity to be confined within the borders of one state and (2) never again would "The Road to Boston" be the indication of the Ancient's ability.

With the removal, also, in 1947, of the Noah Webster Fife and Drum Corps from West Hartford, Connecticut to South Dakota - another vernal territory was given a wondrous new - albeit too brief (5 years) experience. For a while the adjoining South Dakota towns, of Hill City and Custer, boasted an Ancient Corps apiece and rivalry ran high. Things are quiet now, but there is ever the chance of renewed activity - the equipment and enthusiasm are still there.

The largest obstacle in the path of Universal acceptance, was hurdled by the Ancients in 1950. This was the year the Monumental City Fife and Drum Corps of Baltimore, Maryland, gave the city - once noted for its fine Regimental Fifers and Drummers - another glimpse of past glory. The Mason Dixon line was breached with the successful penetration of the South by a Corps-style husbanded in the North, tho' indiginous to all points of our compass. The dogged determination of the dedicated few, preceeding their official organization with countless field trips to Connecticut and environs, made an ineradicable mark in the Ancient panorama - both local and national.

To describe, in detail, the growth of our Ancient Renaissance was not and is not our purpose at this time. However, there are other units that cannot be overlooked, if the entire picture is to appear in its proper perspective.

The magic of the Fife and Drum, nearly dormant in the State of Michigan, since the days of the Grand Army of the Republic, was rekindled and channeled into the Ancient idiom when, in 1955, the Spirit of '76 Fife and Drum Corps was inaugurated in the modest community of Berrien Springs. Some thirty years ago, as the name implies, there had been a three man personification of Willard's immortal painting. This, however, was only a "special occasion" affair. Consequently, it was not until 1955 that a genuine Ancient unit emerged - to push the frontier back just a little further.



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The Albany District of New York State has been colonized by The Village Fire Fifers (org. 1956), while the Metropolitan area - partly in reaction to the Hydra-headed chrome-plates - has become one of the strongest areas of Ancient activity. Even adjacent Hoboken had its fling, in the form of the ill-starred Colonials.

Too much can not be said about the fantastic developments in the State of Virginia - nor can too many laurels be directed toward the man responsible for the Drum Corps Revolution therein - .

While a member of the U. S. Army Band, George Carroll chanced to witness a demonstration; given by the Lancraft FD Corps of New Haven, Conn.; and realized that this was the type of military musical aggregation for which he had always been searching. Figuring importantly in the organization of the 3rd Infantry - Old Guard FD Corps, he was released to this unit, on detached service, and soon produced amazing results. The newly organized Corps was an outstanding success at the 1960 Deep River Ancient Muster and astounded Corpsmen and spectators alike, with a never forgotten exhibition of Revolutionary War calls and selections, unheard for years. The Continental Boys of Arlington, that joined the Old Guard, during the show, was equally impressive with its strictly veracious approach. Mr. Carroll's current charge - the Colonial Williamsburg Militia FD - is, if anything, the most uncompromisingly authentic of the lot. It is this unswerving devotion to historical accuracy that marks our brethern from the Old Dominion and which might, one day, topple the State of Connecticut from its long uncontested position of dominance. Rarely, if ever, have such recent additions to the ranks of time honored institutions, been the cause for so many cases of reflection and soul-searching.

The purely authentic display, more or less neglected by the Ancients to date, may well hold the key to our future. If so - blame, or thank, New England's old Revolutionary War co-conspirator - - - Virginia.

Writings of Washington  
J.C. Fitzpatrick - 1933

General Orders, Middle  
Brook, June 4, 1777

The music of the army being in general very bad; it is expected, that the drum and fife Majors exert themselves to improve it, or they will be reduced, and their extraordinary pay taken from them. Stated hours to be assigned, for all the drums and fifes, of each regiment, to attend them and practice. Nothing is more agreeable, and ornimental, than good music; every officer, for the credit of his corps, should take care to provide it.

The revellie is to be beaten at daybreak - the troop at 8 o'clock in the morning, and retreat at sunset. For the sake of regularity, the drum of the regiment, on the right of the line, to give three taps, allowing a sufficient equal space between each, as a warning to the drum of the one next on the left; which is to do the same, and so on, through the whole, - the second line taking it by the right from the regiment in front, and the advanced Brigades, by the right from the regiment in the rear.....



Published in Williamsburg, Va.  
for the Expressed purpose of  
preserving and presenting the  
martial music of our historic  
past.

EDITOR - George P. Carroll

ASSISTANT EDITOR - William  
D. Geiger

OF THE DRUM

By George P. Carroll

The following is an excerpt  
from "The Military Discipline and  
Etc," by Will Breton, Gentleman, 3rd  
Edition, London, 1717.\*

"Our soldiers being sufficiently  
instructed in the positions of the  
Firelock, Bayonet and Cathridge Box,

it will be as highly necessary for them to learn the several beats of the drum;  
for the Drum is the voice of the Commander, the Spur of the Valient, and the heart  
of the soldier; And by the Drum they must receive their directions, when the  
Roaring Canon, the Clashing of Arms and Neighing of Horses and other Great Noise  
causeth, that the Commanders in Chief, nor their Officers can be heard."

To the people of today who still feel much the same way about the import-  
ance of drumming and fifying, this modest undertaking, "The Drummer's Assist-  
ant" is dedicated. It is hoped that we can, in a small way, pass on to you  
the goodly amount of information we have been able to uncover in the way of  
Military Music of ancient days.

It is necessary that you, the subscribers, take an active interest in this  
Quarterly and send in contributions, no matter how small or seemingly insignifi-  
cant. This would include the subjects of dress, drill, tunes, beatings, con-  
temporary stories, current happenings of individuals and organizations and any  
other information which may be of help or interest in the way of perpetuating  
historical music.

If you have questions which you would like to have answered, let us know.  
It may be that someone wants the same information you do. It will be desirable  
to build up the circulation so that we can evolve into a more frequent printed  
publication.

Here is the rest of the excerpt from the 1717 Book:

"There are Six several Beats generally used that are Points of War, (viz.)

1. A Call
2. A Troop
3. A March
4. A Preparative
5. A Battail
6. A Retreat



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1. By a Call, you must prepare to hear present Proclamation, or Orders or else to repair to your Colours.
2. By a Troop, you must diligently march as the Officer directs.
3. By a March Beaten, you are to take your own Order in rank, to shoulder your Firelock, and to march either Quicker or Slower, according to the beat of the Drum.
4. By a Preparative, you are to close to due distance, (for an engagement) both in rank and file and to make ready that you may execute, upon the first Command.
5. By the Battail, or charge understand the Continuation, or pressing forward in Order of Battle; not lagging behind rather with the highest Pitch of Course, stepping forward, into the place of him that falls Dead, or Wounded; And let your Courage, and Prudence be so joyn'd, that you may perform, and attain things Noble and Great.
6. By a Retreat, observe an orderly Retiring, either for Relief, for advantage of ground or for some other Political End; as to draw the Enemy into some Ambushcade, or otherwise to compleat your Commander's Intentions.

There are two others, (viz.) The Tattoo or Taptoo, and the Revallee; They are not properly called Points of War; the first is used in Garrison; or upon the Rounds, to warn the Soldiers when they ought to repair to their Quarters, or Guard, and the Inhabitants when to shut their doors; that if any Spies, or disorderly persons be about, they may be better distinguished.

Just before the Tatoo begins to beat, a warning Piece is Fired; no soldier ought to be out of his quarters, or from his post, unless the watch-word be given him.

The Revallee signals to Rise up, or waken from sleep; this is beaten in the morning to give notice to Inhabitants that they may be abroad with safety, at which time the Centinals are taken off. Revallee in French is, awake; Travelly is to work again. There is a particular Beat called the Sergeants Call; more may be written concerning the Drum but this, (I hope) may suffice for this small tretise."

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\*We wish to thank Mr. Robert Miller of Arlington, Va., a member of the Company of Military Collectors and Historians for providing the original text.



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THE PANORAMA OF THE "BRITISH GRENADIERS"

By George P. Carroll

In trying to recapture the sound of the 18th Century drummer, I discovered that the only book of this period dealing with drum beating is a German duty manual of 1777. The famous Von Steuben Regulations has a listing of duty beats and the way they are played which is identical to the written and notated works of the early 19th Century. This leads me to believe that the style and notation could not have changed much, if at all, with late 18th Century drumming. The German book was entirely dis-similar, thus not proving much help in reconstructing the British and American drummer's sounds. The big stumbling block here is the fact that the 19th Century works were rarely written in musical notation. Mostly a sort of rudimental code was used. When these are interpreted, you have no guarantee that the sound is exactly as it was originally intended, but this problem must have beset the drummers of that period too. Obviously, the drummers sometimes had a special beating for a tune and sometimes used a stock pattern like we do today. No beating for British Grenadiers could I find in the old works, so I am using The Open Beating No. 4 from the Rumrille & Holton Book of 1817 with an added part by myself, following the period style.

The original beating looks like - (Figure 1)

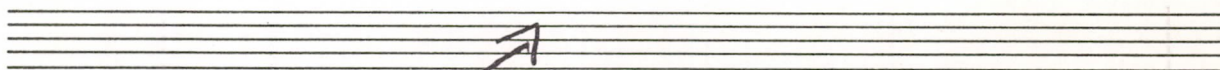
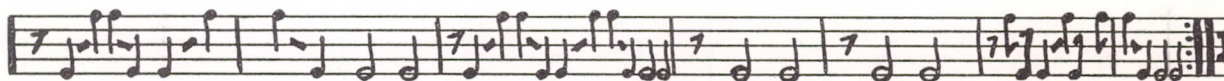


FIGURE 1

Now let us look at the rudiments in the front of the book and see what is meant by this code.

The numeral "7" means a hard seven strike roll.

Notes with a slash between represent flams.

"Open" or half-note figures are soft taps.

I believe a bar line was left out of the third measure, which, when inserted, gives you an eight bar phrase.

For use here in our Corps, I wrote a second 8 bars, added a bass drum part, and we have the finished product. The original part showed the left hand on the upper line on the inserted Broadside and the right on the lower. Many thanks to Ray Hill for the copy of Rumrille and Holton.



Following are some dated examples of "The British Grenadiers" also known during the Revolution as "Free America" with words by Francis Hopkinson.

The British Grenadiers

British 1719

Handwritten musical notation for the original British version of "The British Grenadiers" from 1719. It consists of two staves in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The melody is written on a treble clef staff, and the accompaniment is on a bass clef staff. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

American Ca. 1780

Handwritten musical notation for an American version of "The British Grenadiers" circa 1780. It consists of two staves in G major and 2/4 time. The melody is on a treble clef staff, and the accompaniment is on a bass clef staff. Trills (tr) and ornaments (or) are indicated above certain notes. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

American 1819

Handwritten musical notation for an American version of "The British Grenadiers" from 1819. It consists of two staves in G major and 2/4 time. The melody is on a treble clef staff, and the accompaniment is on a bass clef staff. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Free America, From "Sound 9th" by Dalph - 1775? (Last Time Only)

Handwritten musical notation for "Free America" from "Sound 9th" by Dalph, dated 1775. It consists of two staves in G major and 2/4 time. The melody is on a treble clef staff, and the accompaniment is on a bass clef staff. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Modern British

Handwritten musical notation for a modern British version of "The British Grenadiers". It consists of two staves in G major and 2/4 time. The melody is on a treble clef staff, and the accompaniment is on a bass clef staff. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.





# The BRITISH GRENADIERS

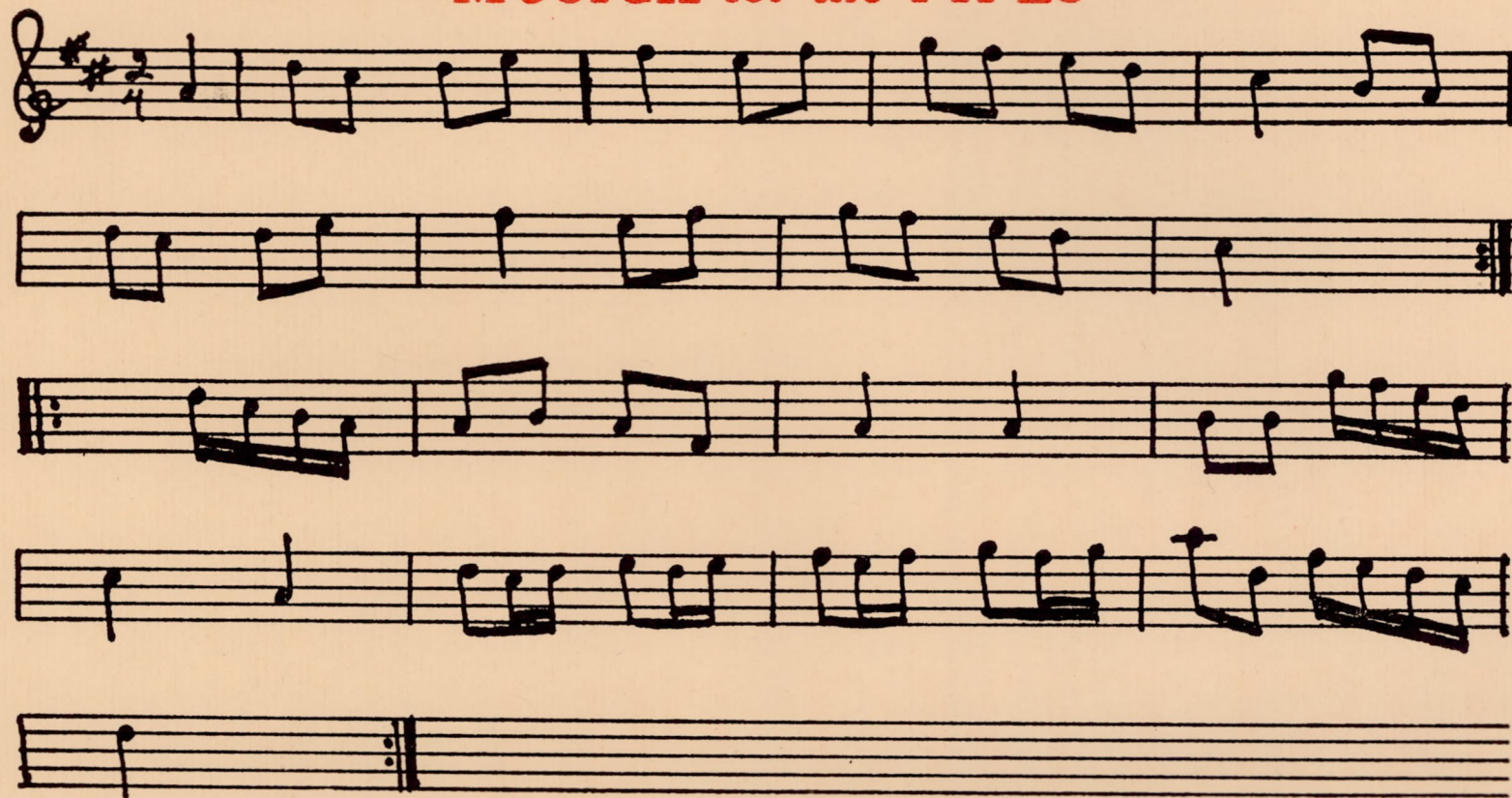
**T**HE GRENADIERS came to be the elite Troops of ENGLAND, and of many European Armies, in the Eighteenth Century. Originally they were assigned the hazardous Job of hurling Grenades, hence the name. Their placement on the Field of Battle was often the most difficult Spot, on the Flank, or in the much Highly Prized Honor Position on the Right of the Line.

This Melody is truly an "ancient" military Air. It has been in constant Use in GREAT BRITAIN for over 250 Years and as a result was well known to both sides during the AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

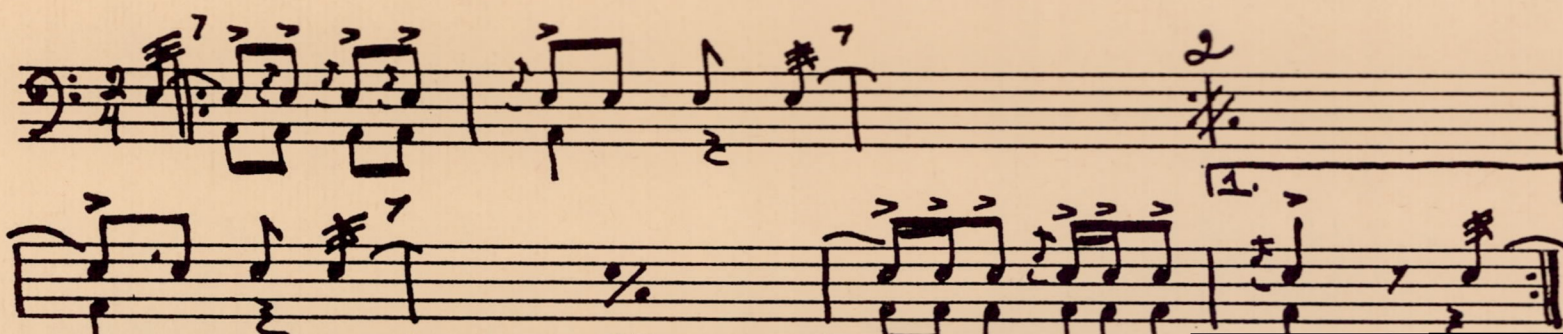
Early references to the playing of the Melody in this Country include at a Concert in BOSTON in 1769 and at the Battle of Charleston, South Carolina, in 1780. In 1775, *Francis Hopkinson*, a Signer of The Declaration of Independence, wrote new Words and renamed it "FREE AMERICA". Today the March, "THE BRITISH GRENADIERS" is still the Regimental March of the *Royal Engineers, Grenadier Guards*, and all the *Fusilier Regiments*.

The Tune is a popular Favorite in this Country among all Fife and Drum Units. The Fife Mufick presented here is taken from the Manuscript Book by *Henry Beck*, Fife Major in the Continental Line & the Drum beating is from the work of *Messrs. Rumrille & Holton*.

## MUSICK for the FIFES



## MUSICK for the DRUMS







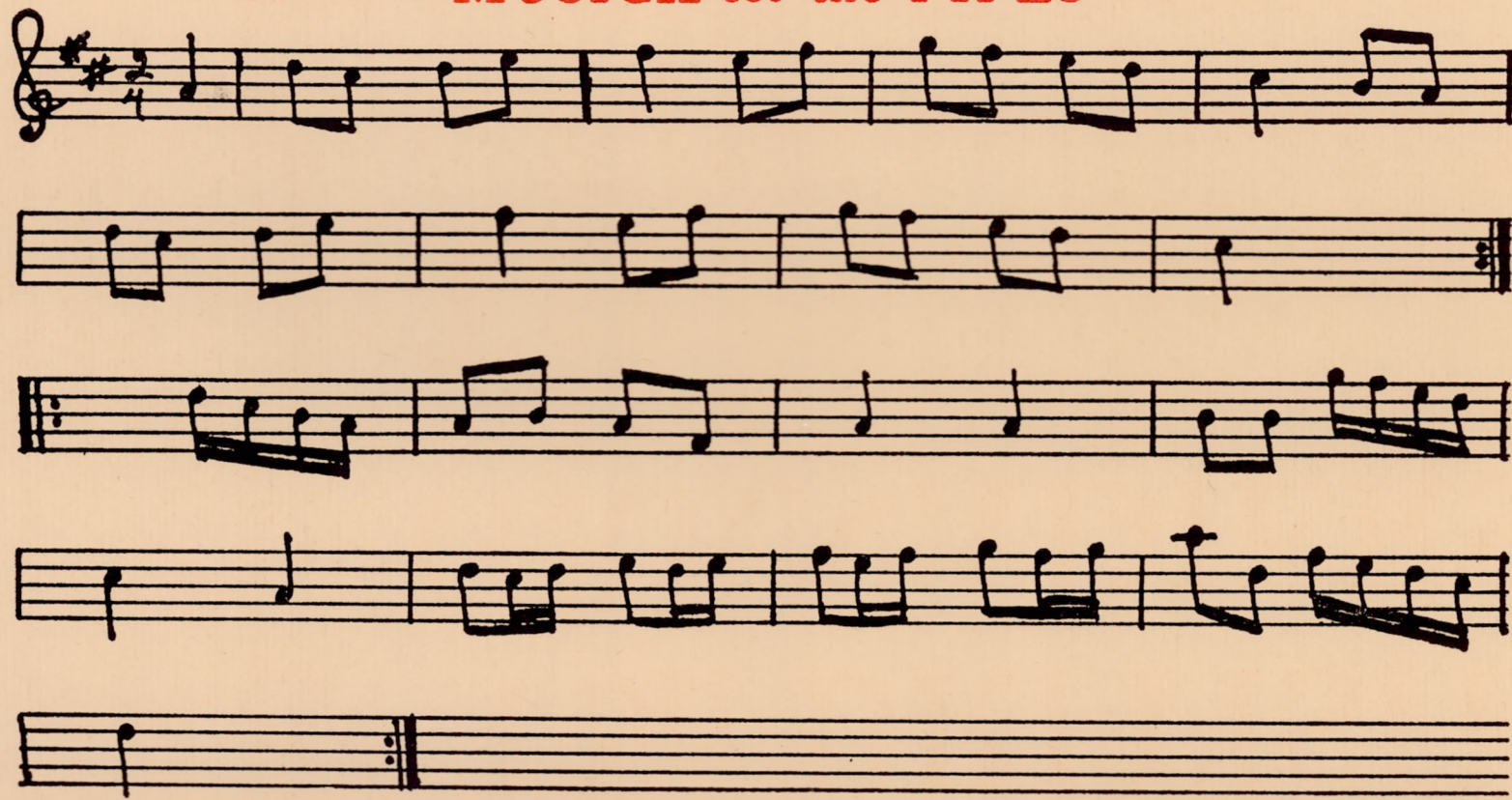
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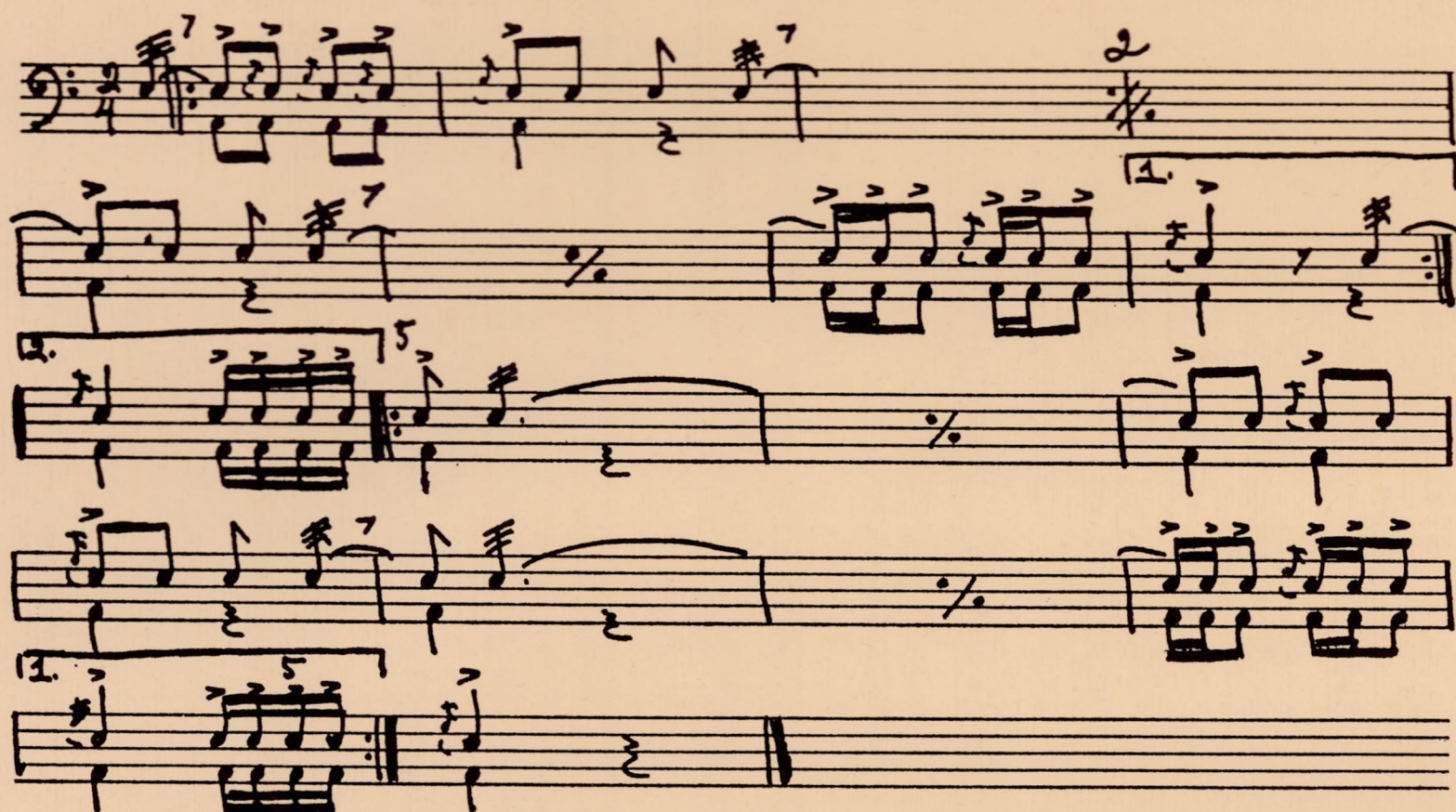
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### MUSICK for the FIFES



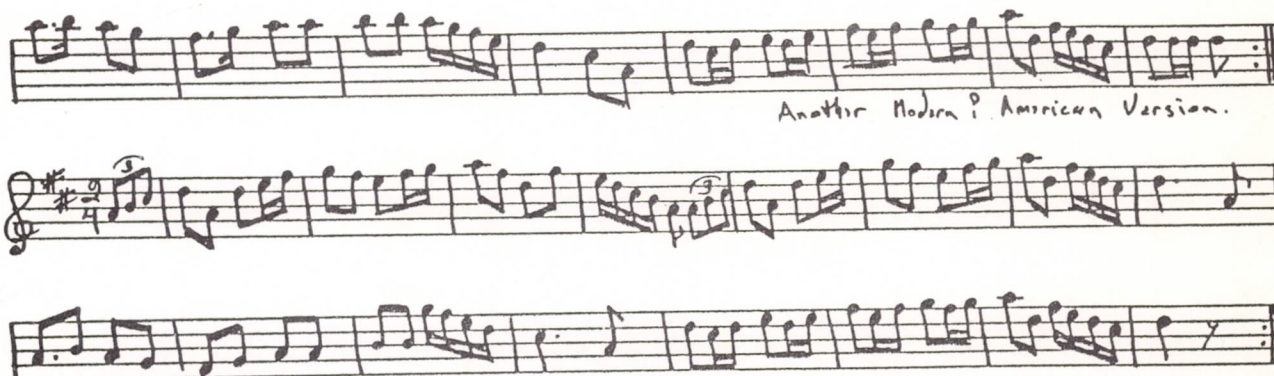
### MUSICK for the DRUMS



Composed, and Hand Set, by A. KLAPPER at the PRINTING OFFICE, *Williamsburg, Virginia*



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CORPS CORNER

PERSONNEL CHANGES IN CORPS

The joy of becoming South Eastern States Junior Champions in August of 1961 was dampened to a marked degree by the absence of seven of our members who have gone to college. Fife Sgt. Evans Harbour, Champion Junior Fifer, started his studies at Hamden-Sydney, Virginia; Cpl. J. P. Cottingham, 3rd place winner in Junior Fifeing, is attending Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Virginia; Sgt. John Ruffin, runner-up in the '60 Junior Fifeing, entered Davidson College in North Carolina; Talmadge Alphin, Champion Junior Bass Drummer for 1961 and '60 is studying Journalism at Richmond Professional Institute; and Drum Sg. Allen Lindsey is going to William and Mary here; and Sgt. John Jenkins is at Fork Union Military Academy, Virginia.

We are happy to say all these members will still be performing with the Corps on vacations and during the summer.

Though we lost seven, our new recruiting system has brought us Sgt. Richard Simms, Fife; Cpl. Tim Devitt, Fife; Cpl. Andrew Reeve, bass drum; Pvts. Andrew Bradley, George Gratton, George Fauerbach, Drew Babb, Ed Clay, Richard Haas, all Fife; and Pvts. Robert Harbour and Jimmy Holler, snare; also, Pvt. John Lowry, Bass; and Rct. Hugh Sisson, Fife. A new member from Ft. Meyers, Fla. is Sgt. James Meek who is a Chemistry Major at William and Mary.

We would also like to welcome Fife Major Gene Crain, formerly of the Old Guard, Ft. Myer, Va., where he served as section leader of the fifes.

.....Sgt. Stewart Spirn



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As a feature of each issue we plan to present an historical index of Fife and Drum Field Music. These tunes are known to most of you and this will be an attempt to date music of this type.

FRENCH & INDIAN WAR

White Cockade  
Yankee Doodle

REVOLUTION

Road to Boston (Farewell To Country Friends)  
(March To Boston)  
(Anson's Voyage)  
College Tune (Lincolnshire Poacher)

WAR OF 1812

The Girl I Left Behind Me  
My Love Is But a Lassie Yet (Caledonia)

CIVIL WAR

Battle Hymn of the Republic  
King Coming

POST CIVIL WAR

Grandfather's Clock  
Sisters

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A HISTORY OF THE UNIFORMS OF THE BRITISH ARMY - (LAWSON) VOL.III, P.5 -  
USE OF TRUMPETS - 1513 - 1515

In Hampton Court is a picture painted during the reign of the Battle of Guinegate or The Spurs, which shows Henry VIII at the head of a body of Knights, which are reasonably said to be the Speares of Honor . . . In the rear of the Speares are trumpeters sounding trumpets, with banners emblazoned with the Royal Arms.

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THE AMERICAN ARMY OF TWO

(Reprinted from the Cohasset Colonial Courier - - Cohasset, Mass.)

THE AMERICAN ARMY OF TWO

A few miles below Cohasset (Mass.) along the shore is the Scituate Light. Here was enacted one of the most exciting tales of the war of 1812; two girls defended the shore against an invasion of British Marines.

In the Fall of 1814 the British man-of-war La Hogue lay off Scituate Harbor. The sand cliffs hid her from the view of the townspeople who were busily engaged unloading flour from schooners tied at the town dock. These were hard times for the people of Boston and the South Shore since the English fleet kept a fairly successful blockade and only an occasional vessel was able to break through with food, clothing and muskets. As the warship let go her bower anchors and lay quietly off the Light, she was observed by two girls Rebecca and Abigail Bates who were alone at the Light. The girls were terrified as they watched boat after boat of armed marines head for the Harbor mouth. The older sister, Rebecca, felt they were planning to burn the town, as they had Washington, and rapidly devised a plan to head them off. As five large whaleboats entered the Harbor, coxswains standing at the tillers made their entrance a splendid and fearful sight. The marines with their bright red coats and bayonets glistening in the sun were about abreast of the Light on Cedar Point.

The docks were alive with excitement. As the boats approached all moves to prepare for the invasion were fraught with confusion. Every horse in the village was tied to a wagon so that the women and as much food as possible could be hurried off to the woods behind the town. The men with their flint lock hunting pieces planned to make a stand behind the fish house from which they could retreat to the woods if worse came to worse.

Suddenly from the area of Cedar Point came the strains of a fife and drum. As the martial music came first louder and then softer it was obvious that a detachment of Americans were drilling behind the dunes in preparation for the British landing. The steady measured strokes of the sailors ceased; the officers of the landing boats were in a quandry. As they were debating what action to take, the commander aboard the LaHogue, hearing the Fife and Drum, ran up the flag signifying danger and fired a gun as an order for the boats to return. The expedition was soon in full retreat. The towns people cheered and were as mystified as the British at the sudden appearance of troops that were coming to their defense. Could it be a contingent of Cohasset volunteers?

In short order the news spread like wildfire that it was Rebecca and Abigail Bates who had played the fife and drum marching behind the dunes to simulate the movement of a detachment of troops. The guardsmen had often



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left their equipment at the Bate's house by the Light and had amused themselves in their leisure hours by teaching the girls to play.

As night fell a gun flash was seen on the British warship and a single shot, aimed at the lighthouse, fell in the sand short of its mark. As the La Hogue sailed off, the canon ball was dug from the ground and displayed in the town; today the ball can be seen at the Cudworth House in Scituate.

The Bates girls, who had perpetrated the ruse that saved the town were heroines during their lifetime.

Some historians have tried to prove that one of the girls was not a Bates, but Abigail, in a signed statement says that the girl with her was indeed her sister.

Regardless of which girls were responsible for frightening away a company of Britishers, it was an heroic incident and one which will long be remembered in Scituate and Cohasset.



This article was called to our attention by Mr. Pat Cooperman of the Mt. Vernon Colonial Greens, Mt. Vernon, New York



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THE DRUM SHELF

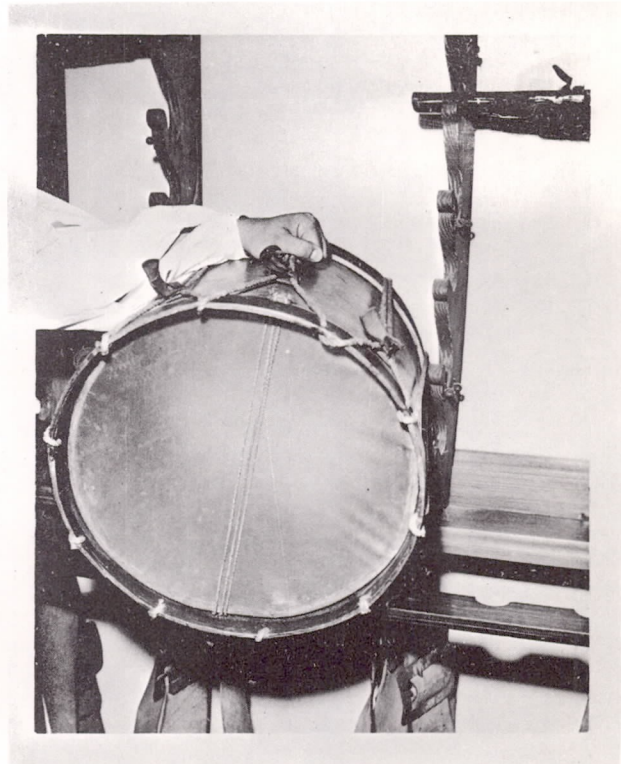
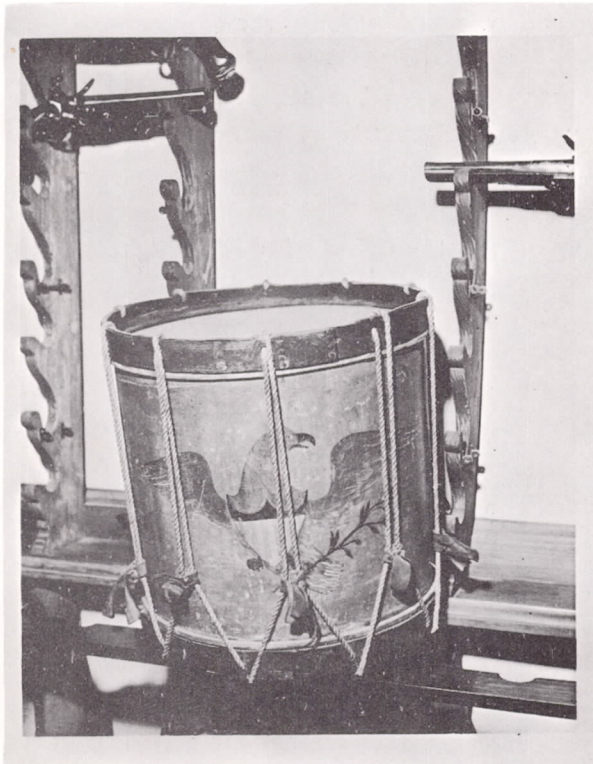
THE EAGLE DRUM - 1780

This instrument is supposed to date from the Revolutionary War and was purchased by Colonial Williamsburg from an arms dealer. The Eagle, I am told by reputable sources, was rarely used as a device during the Revolution, but it became very prevalent in The Federalist Period which followed.

The Eagle is definitely not the stylized type which was seen on very many War of 1812 drums, so it could very well be one of the rare instances which this insigne was used during our War of Independence.

The shell is 15-1/4" across by 14-1/2" deep. The hoops are 1-1/2" wide. There is a snare bed in the shell and a very shallow snare gate in the hoops. The braided raw-hide snares which are often seen on an early drum, are set in a piece of leather on one side and simply joined between hoops and head on the other. There is no snare strainer or evidence of any.

The shell is a very light red, such as was used on pine furniture, etc., in the late 18th Century, and the hoops are black, as is the Eagle. The rope seems to be some kind of rough hemp and is dark brown in color, the lugs being of buff leather and rather narrow. They are tyed together with small strips of the same.



Drum in Colonial Williamsburg Collection in the Public Magazine.



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THE VIRGINIA REGIMENT, 1754 - 1762

(Reprinted Through the Permission of The Company of Military Collectors  
and Historians)

Early in 1754 the Colony of Virginia, in response to pressures by the French in the Ohio Valley, raised its first two companies from the militia for service on the frontier. One, commanded by Captain William Trent, was sent in February 1754 to build a fort at what is now Pittsburgh. At the same time steps were taken by Lt. Gove. Robert Dinwiddie to increase the remaining force to a regiment of six companies, all volunteers, of which George Washington was appointed lieutenant colonel and Joshua Fry, colonel. This was the start of the Virginia Regiment, and at least five companies for it has been recruited by mid-year.<sup>1</sup>

In October the Regiment was broken up into ten independent companies with no field officers, but the following year saw it incorporated again with sixteen companies. Washington was appointed colonel; Adam Stephen, lieutenant colonel; and Andrew Lewis, major. Washington formally assumed command on 17 September 1755.<sup>2</sup>

Details of the uniform of the Virginia Regiment are numerous but conflicting. At the start the men were expected to wear their civilian clothing in the militia fashion. But Washington quickly saw the fallacy of this plan and, on 9 March 1754, wrote Dinwiddie from Alexandria:

"We daily experience the great necessity for cloathing the men, as we find the generality of those, who are to be enlisted, are of those loose, idle persons that are quite destitute of House and Home and, I may truly say, many of them of Cloaths...there is many of them without Shoes, others want Stockings, some are without Shirts, and not a few that have scarce a Coat or Waist-coat to their backs...I really believe every man of them, for their own credits sake, is willing to be Cloathed at their own expense."<sup>3</sup>

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1. This story is told in detail in Douglas S. Freeman, *George Washington: A Biography*, New York, 1948, I, 328-411.

2. Freeman, *op. cit.*, 412 ff., *The Writings of Washington, Bicentennial Edition*, I, 102, 160, note, 175.

3. *Writings*, I, 32.



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The Governor raised no objection to uniforms provided care "be taken of buying the cloth at the cheapest rate" and he authorized Washington to deduct enough from the men's pay "to purchase a Coat and Breeches of red cloth."<sup>4</sup>

The form taken by this first uniform is suggested by a description of several deserters dated 12 April 1754 at Alexandria. Two men wore "Thunder and Lightning Jackets; one had red, and the other Leather Breeches. They took their Arms with them, having Virginia, 1750, engraved on the Barrels." One deserter had on a "red coat turned up with blue," but three others wore simply "red Coats." All these last had on leather breeches.<sup>5</sup>

Exactly what was meant by a "Thunder and Lightning Jacket" is not clear, but it is safe to assume that the uniform coat provided was the simplest style then in use, without lapels, buttoned across the front ---the type worn by the Regiment of Invalids and some other corps. It would have been easy for local leather workers to fashion belts and cartridge boxes based on British army patterns; linen haversacks were made up by the companies themselves; each man provided his own blanket; and, as we see above, the muskets were taken from State militia stocks.

So far as can be told, the officers also wore scarlet coats. There is a reference to Major Adam Stephen donning a "flaming suit of laced regimentals" during the affair at Fort Necessity.<sup>6</sup> The best evidence, of course, is that scarlet was the accepted color for Foot officers in both the Regular Establishment and the Militia, and the color Washington would have already owned.

The independent Virginia companies that marched with Braddock may well have worn a variety of uniforms. There are references to hunting shirts and once the men are referred to as the "blues."<sup>7</sup>

When the Regiment was reorganized in 1755 it was decided to change the uniform to blue faced with red; the reasons behind this are not known. Possibly, scarlet cloth was too difficult to obtain or too expensive; possibly,

4. R. A. Brock, ed., *Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie.....*, Richmond, Va., 1883-1884, letters of 15, 21 and 28 March, in I, 106, 116, 120.

5. *Maryland Gazette*, 18 April 1754, see also Dinwiddie's letter to Governor of Maryland in April in which he says the Virginia Regiment wore "red coats and breeches," quoted in F. R. Bellamy, *The Private Life of George Washington*, New York, 1951, p. 74.

6. MS "Life of Adam Stephen," in the Benjamin Rush Papers, Library Company of Philadelphia.

7. Bellamy, *op. cit.*, pp. 105, 131-132.



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the Virginia authorities wanted to distinguish their regiment from the companies established by the Crown. At all events, on 17 September 1755 (the day Washington took command) this general order was published at Fort Cumberland:

"Every officer of the Virginia Regiment to provide himself as soon as he can conveniently with a suit of Regimentals of good blue Cloath; the Coat to be faced and cuffed with Scarlet, and trimmed with Silver; a Scarlet waistcoat, with Silver Lace; blue Breeches, and a Silver-laced Hat, if to be had, for Camp or Garrison Duty. Besides this, each Officer is to provide himself with a common soldiers Dress, for Detachments and Duty in the Woods." <sup>8</sup>

This apparently remained the uniform of the officers throughout the period of the war. It is the uniform worn by Washington in the celebrated portrait by Charles Willson Peale, painted in 1772, except that in the portrait the breeches are scarlet.

The uniform of the soldiers was changed at the same time. Deserter descriptions thereafter speak consistently of "Regimentals" and "Regimental Coat" and this could only mean a coat with facings.<sup>9</sup> It is fairly certain that some of the Virginia companies with Braddock in the summer of 1755 had bob-tailed their coats and it seems likely that they remained bobbed as shown. Apparently there was a fairly regular issue of clothing although Washington several times had to complain to Dinwiddie about its poor quality and the frequent shortages.

The Virginia Regiment was continuously embodied for seven years. In 1758 a 2nd Virginia Regiment was raised under command of Colonel William Byrd, but it was mustered out in December of the same year. Finally in 1762, at Fort Lewis, Virginia, the old Regiment came to an end.<sup>10</sup>

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8. Writings, I, 176-177. The order was repeated on 5 October; *ibid*, I, 185.

9. The Virginia Gazette, 27 August 1756; 2 September 1757; 30 November 1759.

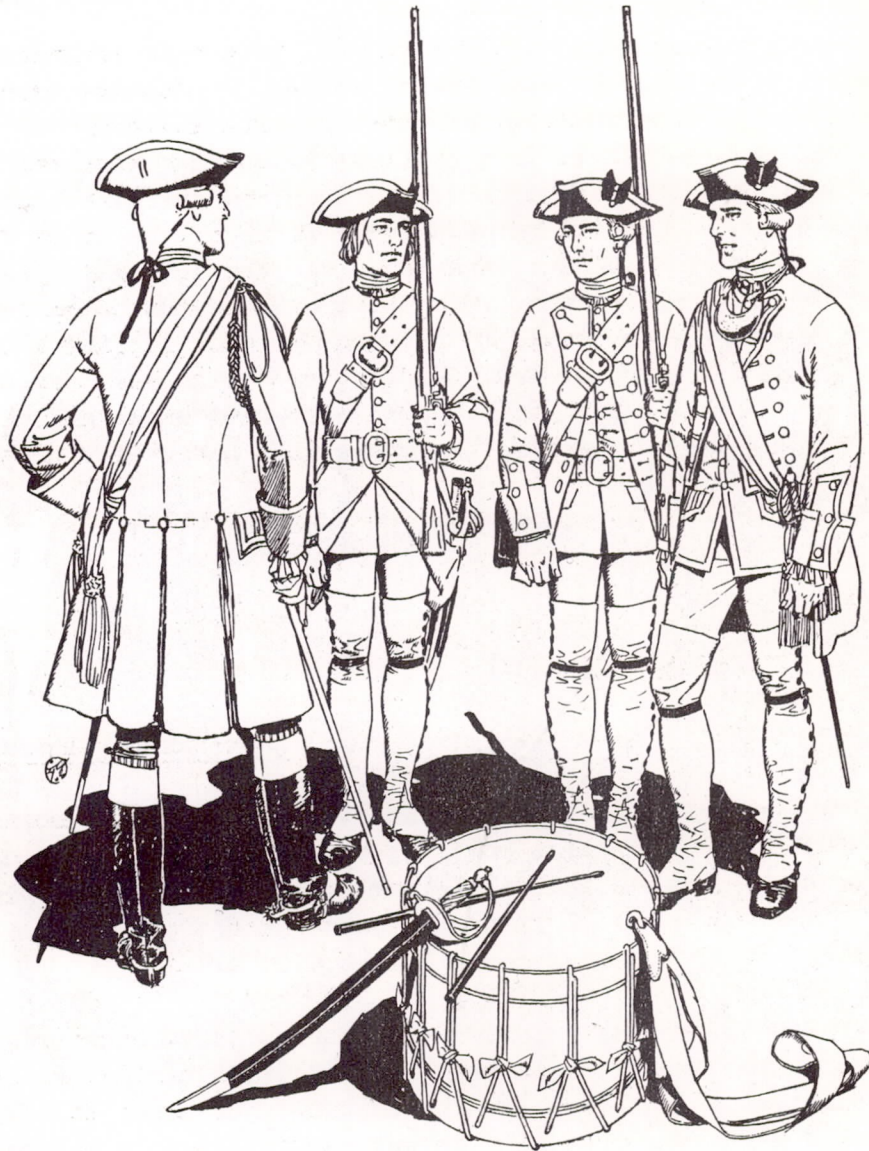
10. Department of the Army, Army Lineage Book, II, 504.

Frederick T. Chapman

Tom Parker



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*Field Officer and Private, 1754-1755*

*Private and Company Officer, 1755-1762*

**The Virginia Regiment, 1754-1762**



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Thatcher's Military Journal

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James Thatcher 1862

Description of  
Martial Music

American Revolution

A splended world is now open to our view, all nature is in animation-- the fields and meadows display the beauties of spring, a pleasing variety of vegetables and flowers perfume the air, and the charming music of the feathered tribe delights our ears. But there is a contrast in music. What can compare with the martial band, the fife and drum, bugle horn and shrill trumpet, which set the war-horse in motion, thrill through every fibre of the human frame, still the groans of the dying soldier, and atimulate the living to the noblest deeds of glory? The full roll of the drum, which salutes the commander-in-chief, the animating beat, which calls to arms for the battle, the reveille, which breaks our slumber at dawn of day, with "come, strike your tents, and march away," and the evening taps, which commands to retirement and repose; these form incomparably the most enchanting music that has ever vibrated on my ear.

June 22, 1781

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Thatcher's American Revolution

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James Thatcher 1862

Reville

American Revolution

.....We marched the succeeding day at two o'clock in the morning; at this early hour the drums beat the reville, which summons us from our hard beds and slumbers, in haste we roll up our traveling bed furniture, strike our tents, order them thrown into the wagons, mount our horses and with a slow pace follow the march of our soldiers.....

Marching orders, so soon as issued are communicated to each brigade and regiment. The whole line of encampment resounds with martial music; all is bustle and activity, but free from confusion. The drums and fifes beating a march, the tents are instantly struck and thrown into wagons, the line of march commences.....

July 30 - - August 1, 1780

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F I N I S