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# American War of Independence Commanders

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René Chartrand • Illustrated by Richard Hook

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## Author's note

The choice of individual biographies to appear in this work was inevitably a difficult one. I have tried to include as many as possible, not only in the main text but also in the many illustrations whose captions also form small biographies of their own. The military ranks or deeds of some, such as George Rogers Clark, may have been relatively minor but their effect was far-reaching. Others, such as Suffren or Bouille, will probably be unknown to many British and American readers yet they were the outstanding figures in the East and West Indies. Moreover, there were many German troops involved but no commander really stands out. It is hoped that this concise book will offer a satisfactory sample from all sides in the major theaters of operation.

## Artist's note

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# AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE COMMANDERS

## INTRODUCTION

THE IDEALS OF freedom, equality and "the pursuit of happiness" dear to French 18th-century philosophers and proclaimed in the 1776 American declaration of independence were put to the test on the battlefields of the American War of Independence (a.k.a. the American Revolution) in the 1770s and 1780s. It was a conflict that brought to prominence men of remarkably different backgrounds. Some were from the great families of the "Old World", others were frontiersmen or farmers in the "New World"; all were leaders in the events that led to the establishment of the United States of America.

The armies in which they served were subject to constant change and development. The British had a dependable but small army and the most powerful fleet in the world, and were still flushed with their outstanding successes in the Seven Years War. The French, humiliated in that war, strove for a rematch and, to that end, instigated radical reform of their large army and had a powerful battle fleet built. The Spanish had also modernized their armed forces. These Old World armies and navies were led by generals of varying abilities, the French probably having the most talented and progressive commanders at that time. The unknown factors were the emerging armies and new leaders of the United States. As we shall see, the New World generals - many of whom were civilians before the war - proved to be more than a match for their opponents, demonstrating that talent need not have blue blood; a notion upheld by the events of the French Revolution.[1] The greatest general to emerge from the American War of Independence was not a military genius but a man of high ideals, and an outstanding personality, who would influence democracy in the western world - George Washington.

**Thaddeus Kosciuszko (1746-1817) was a Polish-born officer of engineers who had been trained in France. In August 1776, he arrived in North America to volunteer his services and was commissioned in the nascent US Engineers. His input was invaluable and he was known as one of the bravest and most talented engineer officers during the war. His speciality was fortification and he built powerful works at the Delaware River, Saratoga, West Point and others during the southern campaign. After the war, he returned to Poland where he led a revolution in 1792 which was crushed by the Russians and Austrians. Print after Julian Rys.**

## AMERICA

### Gen. George Washington (1732-99)

Born on February 22, 1732, into a planter's family in Westmorland County, Virginia, the young Washington had little schooling. However, early on he showed an exceptional talent in mathematics

[1] See also Elites 72 and 83: *Napoleon's Commanders (1) & (2),* and Elites 73, *i,* and 89: *American Civil War Commanders (1), (2) & (3)*



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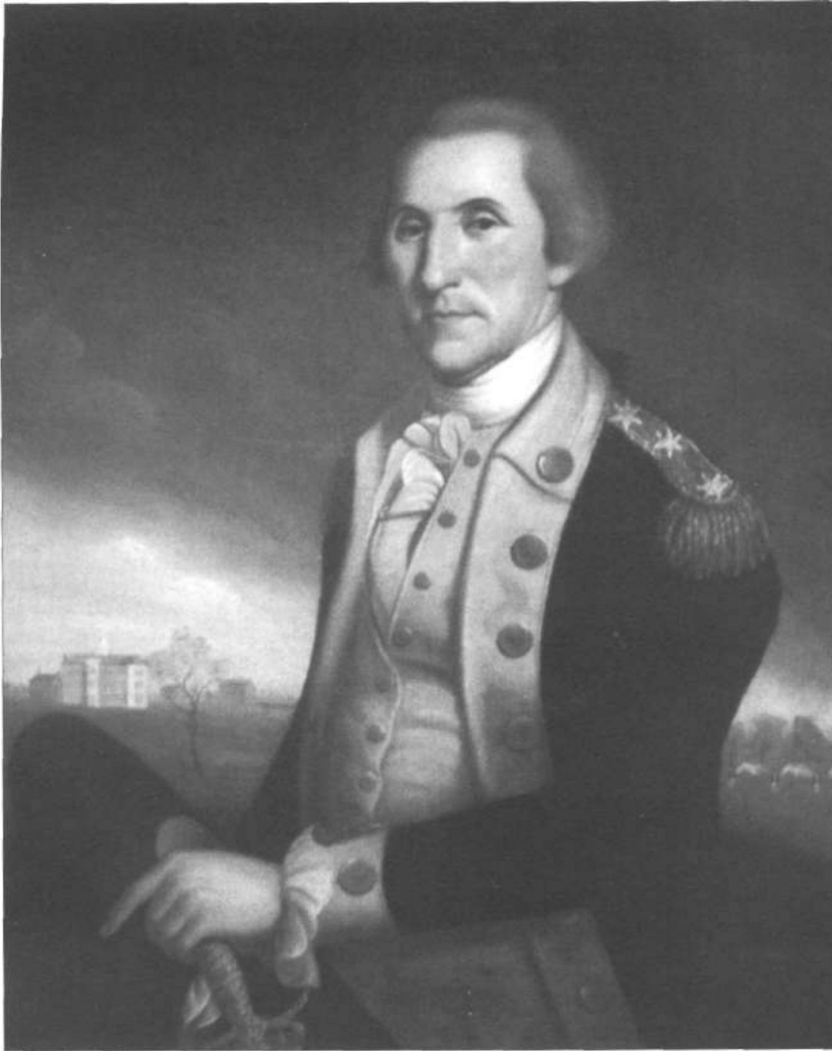

**George Washington according to a c. 1782 painting by Charles Willson Peale. The artist made many copies of this likeness over the years. He wears the blue and buff uniform which he wore from 1775 as a general of the American army and which was officially prescribed for American generals in 1780. (Indianapolis Museum of Art. Author's photo)**

and this led him to become a surveyor of new territories in Western Virginia when only 15. In 1752, he inherited Mount Vernon plantation when his older brother Lawrence died. With the French from Canada building several forts in the Ohio Valley, which was claimed by Virginia, Governor Robert Dinwiddie tasked Washington, by then a major in the militia, with delivering a summons to the French in the newly built Fort Le Boeuf (Waterford, Pennsylvania). The French commander there, Capt. Jacques Le Gardeur de Saint-Pierre, politely listened to the summons from Washington in December 1753 and passed it on to Governor-General Duquesne in Quebec. The French maintained that Ohio had first been explored by La Salle in the 17th century and Virginia's claims were thus groundless. Virginia did not see it that way and, the next spring, Washington was back in the area with a force of newly raised troops.

The situation quickly deteriorated following the "Jummonville Incident" on May 28, 1754 when Washington's party ambushed a French detachment killing several men including Lt. De Jummonville. The outraged French at Fort Duquesne sent out a strong force which caught



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up with the Virginians at Fort Necessity where Washington had to surrender and admit to an "assassination". In fact, no one admitted anything and both France and Britain were already sending more regular troops to America. By 1755, the war - although not declared - was in full progress in North America. Washington was with Gen. Braddock when he perished with his force of British regulars and colonial militiamen at the disastrous battle of the Monongahela on July 9, 1755. Washington displayed much bravery in rallying the men to make an orderly retreat. Two months later, he was made colonel of the Virginia Regiment which he led for the next three years, notably in Gen. Forbes' campaign which finally expelled the French from Fort Duquesne in 1758. He then resigned his commission and went back to managing his plantation.

The Seven Years War and its sequels had led Washington, like many other Americans, to become increasingly uneasy about the British government's arrogant and unfair attitude toward the old Thirteen Colonies. His reputation as a man of wisdom and as a soldier was widespread so that when, in 1775, the dispute erupted into armed conflict on June 15, the American Congress elected him commander-in-chief. From then on, Washington faced a daunting multitude of problems every day relating to both disciplining and providing supplies, pay and weapons to an upstart army. His commanders, as will be seen later, demonstrated varying abilities and varied origins and it is a true sign of his genius that he managed to hold them together through thick and thin and lead them regardless of the difficulties.

Typical, perhaps, was his very first campaign, the siege of Boston. It was already under way when he assumed command of a numerous but

**Casimir Pulaski (c. 1748-79) was a Polish cavalry officer who had fled to Turkey following the partition of his country, then to France and from there joined the American forces on the recommendation of Benjamin Franklin. Fearless and flamboyant, he led the cavalry at Trenton in 1777, fought at Brandywine and was at the head of his own Pulaski's Legion when he died of wounds received in action at the abortive siege of Savannah in September 1779. Print after a portrait attributed to his sister Anne.**

**Washington rebuffs Maj. Gen. Henry Lee for his conduct at Monmouth on June 28, 1778.**



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badly armed and disorganized band of militiamen turned volunteers facing a British regular army in the town. The British were hemmed in and, slowly but surely, Washington saw to it that his army was better organized, disciplined and armed. Eventually, in March 1776, the heavy artillery from Fort Ticonderoga arrived and Sir William Howe knew he had to evacuate. On July 4, independence was declared: the battles continued mostly around New York. As in all his campaigns, it cannot be said that Washington was a superb tactician, something he usually had the wisdom to leave to such men as Arnold, Lee, Lafayette and especially Nathaniel Greene. He was, however, a fine strategist with a good sense of where his often-outnumbered forces would be best deployed to put pressure on the enemy. A fine example is the campaign of 1777, where Gates coordinated the defense against Burgoyne's army in the north while Washington occupied Howe's army in New Jersey.

Brig. Gen. David Wooster (1711-77) was a veteran of the 1745 capture of Louisbourg and other campaigns. In 1775, he was a brigadier with the American army invading Canada. Left in command at Montreal, his harsh regime during the winter and spring of 1776 turned many a Canadian against the American cause. His troops were defeated at Cedars, west of Montreal, and the Americans departed in the summer of 1776 after unsuccessfully trying to set fire to the city. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)

The French alliance of 1778 was slow in bringing sustained assistance and while Sullivan was securing northern New York state and Clark reaching the Mississippi, the south was being lost to Clinton and Cornwallis. The arrival of Rochambeau's French army at Newport, Rhode Island, in the summer of 1780 changed all that. Washington now sent his best tactician, Nathaniel Greene, to deal with the British in the south which he did most brilliantly. Meanwhile, Rochambeau, who was just as wise, diplomatic and strategically astute as Washington - these two leaders making a superb combination seldom matched in military annals - had Adm. de Grasse cruise off North America for a few weeks in the early fall of 1781. His French fleet prevailed against the British Royal Navy squadron in the area, and thus Cornwallis was caught in Yorktown. Washington and Rochambeau marched around New York to Virginia, bringing enormous hope to the American people as they marched with the fine-looking and disciplined French regulars: independence seemed almost assured, and it soon followed with the surrender of Yorktown on October 19, 1781. It was a disaster of the first magnitude for Britain. Lt. Gen. Clinton, disgraced by his lack of strategic vision, was recalled and the remaining British army was left surrounded in New York. There were not enough troops in Canada to try relief operations, and in the Gulf of Mexico the Spanish under Gen. de Galvez, who had been campaigning successfully since 1779, now crowned their achievements with the capture of Pensacola (see Galvez's biography on page 53). The fighting practically ceased in North America thereafter. Still, Washington maintained the army, notwithstanding the difficulties during 1782 caused by the shortages of pay. On March 15, 1783, he made a famous address to his officers urging them to sustain the democratic ideals in spite of the difficulties and to respect, in spite of its faults, the elected Congress as the governing body. He warned



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of the dangers of military dictatorship: "the freedom of speech may be taken away - and dumb & silent we may be led, like sheep, to the slaughter." The war was over and the army was disbanded on November 2: on November 25 the British evacuated New York and Washington entered the city.

In May 1783 as he left the army and went back to running his Mount Vernon estate, Washington expressed his ideas on how the United States should be organized and governed: "1st. An indissoluble union of the states under one federal head. 2dly. A sacred regard to public justice. 3dly. The adoption of a proper peace establishment. And, 4thly. The prevalence of that pacific and friendly disposition among the people of the United States, which will induce them to forget their local prejudices and policies; to make those mutual concessions to the general prosperity; and, in some instances, to sacrifice their individual advantages to the interest of the community." Over the following years, these ideas evolved into the concept of a federal union which was agreed to in 1789. On April 30, 1789, Washington was inaugurated in New York as the first President of the United States and served in that capacity until 1797. On December 14, 1799, he passed away at Mount Vernon.

Ethan Allan (1738-89). Leader of the "Green Mountains Boys," an armed association of patriots in Vermont and western New Hampshire, Allen surprised the small and unsuspecting British garrison of Fort Ticonderoga on May 10, 1775: his bloodless attack catapulted him to fame as one of the first American heroes. Not a shot was fired and cannon that would prove vital to the siege of Boston were thus secured by the Americans. The capture of Ticonderoga astonished many and opened the way for the American invasion of Canada in which Allen participated. He was captured in a skirmish near Montreal on October 24, 1775. He retired to Vermont after his exchange in 1778. Print after Charles Lefferts from a miniature. (Private collection)

Washington was, by then, lauded as one of the world's great statesmen. Napoleon decreed that for ten days "black crape shall be hung on the standards and colors of the Consular Guard." Although not a great tactician, he could certainly hold his own with any of his contemporaries in the 1770s and 1780s. His strength lay in a sound strategic vision and, most of all, in the ability to identify the best minds in his entourage and to gain the loyalty of these men by exceptional and inspired leadership.

### Maj. Gen. Benedict Arnold (1741-1801)

Born in Norwich, Connecticut, Arnold became a fairly prosperous trader and occasional smuggler in the 1760s and a proponent of American rights. He gained his military experience in the militia, and was a captain in the 2d Company of Governor's Guards in 1775 when he marched to Boston with his men. He soon obtained permission from the Committee of Safety to capture Fort Ticonderoga - something Ethan Allen had decided to do without permission. Their forces united but Allen did not relinquish command and a miffed Arnold had to play second fiddle. The fort was taken by surprise on May 10. Arnold later partly took over as leader being familiar with navigation and boats, but Allen in the meantime had recruited most of his men and Arnold left after several bitter disputes. After some difficulties in settling his expense accounts, he was made a colonel with orders to march his men to meet Montgomery's troops at Quebec. His column faced great



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This French print of Maj. Gen. Benedict Arnold as "General de l'Armee Americaine" was a copy of an English print of c. 1775-76. As with other prints in this series, it should not be taken as a faithful portrait of the subject. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Photo: RC)

hardships marching in the late fall and early winter from Boston through the woods of Maine and following the wild Kenebec River to Quebec. There, his 600 men united with Montgomery's and, on the dark snowy night of December 31, 1775, attacked the city from two sides. Montgomery's attack was stopped by Quebec militiamen under Cape Diamond, where the American general was killed. Another column under Arnold courageously attacked Quebec's Lower City from the opposite side at Sault au Matelot. The Americans got past a first barricade but were stopped and surrounded at the second. Arnold was wounded in the leg and was taken to the rear. Daniel Morgan took command and, after some spirited fighting, had to surrender. Arnold would not give up and continued the siege (which was more of a blockade) until May 1776 when reinforcements

BELOW Maj. John Andre (1751-80) was on Gen. Grey's staff in Philadelphia in 1777 where his social graces made him a popular figure. He became a friend of Peggy Shippen, a society belle from a Loyalist family who married American Maj. Gen. Benedict Arnold in 1778, and he was instrumental in Arnold's treason. Andre became ADC to Lt. Gen. Clinton, and was promoted to major. In 1780, he secretly met Arnold to plot the handover of West Point to the British, but on September 23, 1780, three American militiamen arrested him wearing civilian clothing with compromising papers hidden in his boot. His execution as a spy caused a furor and he became something of a martyr. Andre was also a talented artist and drew this sketch of himself the day before his execution.

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Richard Montgomery (1736-75) was commissioned in the 17th Foot in 1756 and served at Ticonderoga and Crown Point in 1759. In 1772, he resigned his captain's commission, came back to America, married into the wealthy Livingston family in 1773 and espoused the American cause. Following the outbreak of hostilities he was made a brigadier-general in June 1775: he set out to "liberate" Canada, and took forts Saint-Jean and Chambly and the cities of Montreal and Trois-Rivieres. Joined by Arnold's troops who had come up from Maine, the American laid siege to Quebec. The mighty fortress city was well defended by Governor Carleton but Montgomery opted for a two-pronged assault. On the snowy night of December 31, 1775, Montgomery was killed leading an assault column on a position defended by Canadian militiamen just below Cape Diamond. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)

arrived from Britain. By then, due to his injury, he had been replaced by generals Wooster, Thomas and Sullivan in succession. Arnold's stamina was noted and he was promoted to brigadier-general. He led a stubborn naval fight against Sir Guy Carleton's superior forces at Valcour Island on October 11 which nevertheless stopped the British at Lake Champlain.

When several brigadiers junior to him were promoted to major-general, Arnold angrily complained to Congress, outlining the services he had rendered. Meanwhile, in April 1777, some 2,000 British troops landed in Connecticut and Arnold, who was on leave in New Haven, took up command of the American militias and skillfully turned Gen. Tryon's foray into a rout. He was raised in rank as a result, but without seniority, which left him bitter. With Burgoyne's advance into northern New York and Vermont, Arnold was under the command of Maj. Gen. Gates during the Saratoga campaign. Arnold and Gates did not get along at all, although the better tactician was certainly Arnold. He was also unlucky as, leading the American charge at Freeman's Farm on October 7, he was badly wounded when his horse fell on his left leg, shattering it and leaving him crippled. Gates took the opportunity to relieve him of command and, in spite of his seniority in rank being eventually restored by Congress, Arnold was increasingly unhappy at what he felt to be unfair treatment.

Following the hard winter at Valley Forge, Arnold was given command of Philadelphia and there he met and married Peggy Shippen, who had ties with the British. Already bitter at how he had been treated by the Americans, he plotted with Maj. John Andre his defection to the British while making possible the capture of the important American position at West Point. Fortunately for the Americans, the whole plot was discovered in time. Arnold got away while Maj. Andre was caught in civilian disguise and executed as a spy. The event received much publicity and the now Brig. Gen. Arnold's role shocked both sides, the Americans damning him and the British being rather uneasy with the new convert to their cause. Arnold's service for the British was not remarkable. He made a raid on Richmond, Virginia, in 1780 and especially angered the Americans with his ruthlessness at Fort Griswold in New London, Connecticut, the following year. Given a pension and land grants after the war, he settled with Loyalists in New Brunswick (Canada). He later went to London and died there in 1801. Unlucky to



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the end, Arnold was resented by the British and Loyalists as a turncoat and by the Americans as the very definition of a traitor.

Medal design celebrating the victory at Saratoga with the profile of Maj. Gen. Horatio Gates on one side and Gen. Burgoyne's surrender to Gates on the other. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)

**Maj. Gen. Horatio Gates(c. 1728-1806]**
Born into a humble family in England, the young Horatio became a lieutenant in Bolton's Regiment in 1745, and campaigned in Germany. He proved to be a talented staff officer and served in Nova Scotia in the early 1750s as an aide-de-camp (ADC) to various generals, was wounded in 1755 at the Monongahela and later served as his staff officer in North America and the West Indies. Back in England, his army career was disappointing in the 1760s and, in 1772, he settled near Shepherdstown, Virginia (now West Virginia). Here he prospered and became a lieutenant-colonel in the militia. Influenced by friends such as Charles Lee, he was soon won over to the patriotic cause. In June 1775, as the Revolution broke out, he was asked to be a commander because of his military experience and accepted the rank of brigadier-general: he also became the American army's first adjutant-general. He eventually made it to Boston and, in May 1776, was promoted to major-general, but placed under Maj. Gen. Schuyler which was not to his liking. By December, he was with Washington campaigning in New Jersey.

His major command came on March 25, 1777, when he was named commander of the American Northern Army. After a lengthy dispute with Maj. Gen. Schuyler, Gates was confirmed commander by Congress on August 4 and he finally took over on the 19th. It was probably the right decision, as Gates had the common touch that could rally the men, whereas the more aristocratic Schuyler did not. And it came none too soon Burgoyne's powerful army of British and German troops was moving south from Canada with the objective of cutting the rebellious colonies in two by meeting up with the British troops in New York. Arriving to boat, Burgoyne's troops occupied Fort Ticonderoga then moved south by land, a fatal mistake in such wild country. Supplies soon ran low and they headed east. By now they were followed by the Americans under Benedict Arnold and Daniel Morgan, who harassed the British columns At Freeman's Farm on September 19, the British and German troop sustained very heavy casualties and realized they were nearly surrounded From there, a British foray west by 1,500 men was beaten back at Bemis Heights on October 7. Gates himself did not lead in the field - this was left to Morgan and Arnold (who was badly wounded) - instead, reverting to his qualities as a staff officer, he co-ordinated the arrival of more and more American troops so that by October 9 Burgoyne was totally surrounded by about 20,000 men. He had suffered serious losses and



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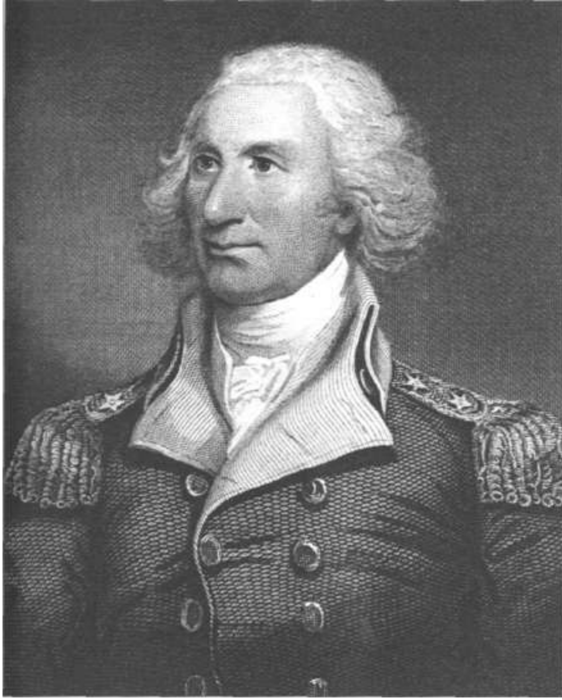

Maj. Gen. Philip Schuyler (1733-1804), a prominent landlord in the Hudson River Valley, was appointed commander of the Northern Army in June 1775 for the invasion of Canada. However, in August he became very ill and was replaced by Richard Montgomery. He resumed command at Albany two years later during the Saratoga campaign but his talents were better shown as a senior military administrator and he served in that capacity for the rest of the war. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)

his 6,000 or so regulars were hopelessly outnumbered, and on October 17, he surrendered to Gates near Saratoga. It was a disaster for the British as, for the first time, a whole army under one of Britain's best generals had been overcome by the American "farmers." This American victory brought France into the war.

Although Gates had not been very tactically active at Saratoga (clearly his weak point) he had been fortunate with his subordinates and had luck on his side. Given Washington's poor results in New Jersey, there were those in Congress who wanted to replace Washington with Gates; but their views did not prevail. In January 1778, Gates was appointed president of the powerful Board of War but a corruption scandal soon erupted, and by May Gates was back to commanding the Northern Department. He was reluctant to fight the Indians and, in 1779, went to command the Eastern Department at Newport before being appointed commander-in-chief of the Southern Department in June 1780. On August 17, he was defeated by Lord Cornwallis at Camden, South Carolina. As the day ended, Maj. Gen. de Kalb was killed while covering the American retreat with his Continental infantry regulars while Gates had apparently already left the battlefield. He claimed it was to rally more troops but it was viewed as outright cowardice, and on December 3 he was relieved of command by Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Greene who proved to be a far better general. He was put on leave until 1782, serving briefly at Washington's HQ at Newburgh, New York, and went back to his plantation in 1783. A widower, he remarried into a wealthy family in 1786, and moved to New York City: by the time he died in 1806, he had lavished about four-fifths of his wife's fortune. An experienced soldier who was best at staff work, Gates had a difficult personality and came into conflict with nearly all who dealt with him. No masterful tactician, as proven at Camden, he has nevertheless been justly granted the moniker "Hero of Saratoga" for the pivotal role he played.

### Maj. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln (1733-1810)

Born in Hingham, Massachusetts, Lincoln hailed from a farming background before he became a town clerk and officer in the Massachusetts Militia. In 1775, he was a lieutenant-colonel and was elected to Congress but was most attracted to the military life and became a brigadier-general in 1776. Lincoln did well commanding part of the American army at the Battle of White Plains on October 28. Gen. Washington liked Lincoln as a person as well as for his effectiveness as a commander. In February 1777 he was promoted to major-general and sent north to help generals Schuyler and Gates prepare for the impending invasion from Canada. The later part of 1777 was spent campaigning against Burgoyne's army but Lincoln was wounded in the right ankle at Freeman's Farm (or Bemis Heights) on October 7. This forced him into a ten-month convalescence and gave



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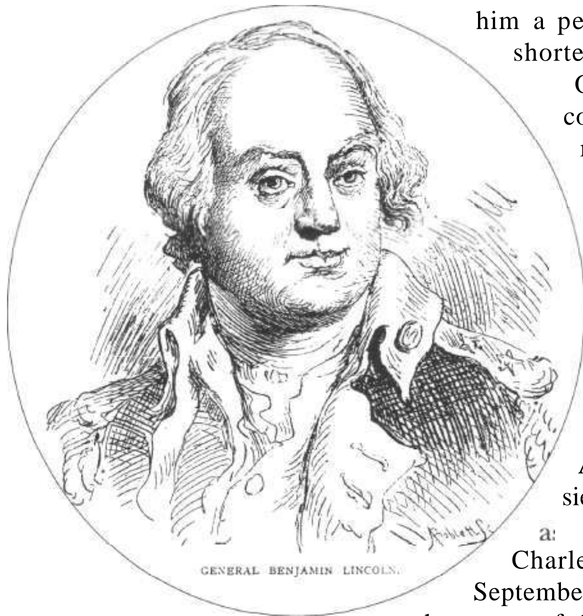


him a permanent limp, his right leg being about two inches shorter than his left.

Once recuperated, Washington appointed him as commander-in-chief in the Southern Department. He reached Charleston in late December 1778, just a few days after the fall of Savannah to the British, so that he had to cope with the effects of a major setback with few troops and militia. To raise American morale in the wake of the defeats, he sent Brig. Gen. John Ashe to recapture Augusta, the capital of Georgia, from the British. Ashe succeeded, but a month later on March 3, 1779, his force of militiamen was annihilated at Briar's Creek by Maj. Gen. Augustine Prevost. Lincoln hurried to the rescue to protect Augusta while Prevost marched on Charleston and laid siege to it in May. Count Pulaski arrived with his legion a: reinforcements and Lincoln marched back to Charleston so Prevost withdrew back to Savannah. In September, a French fleet under V.Adm. d'Estaing appeared off the coast of Georgia and Savannah now came under siege. On October 9, a combined assault by the Americans and the French failed, incurring many casualties including Count Pulaski. D'Estaing gave up and sailed away and on October 18, Lincoln reluctantly raised the siege. Sir Henry Clinton, hearing of Savannah's success, came down with a British army from New York by sea and trapped Lincoln at Charleston in March 1780. After a gallant resistance, Lincoln had to surrender on May 12. It was a serious blow to the American cause in the South. Lincoln was exchanged in November, and joined Washington's army marching to Yorktown. On the day of Yorktown's surrender, Lord Cornwallis claimed he was ill and sent Maj. Gen. O'Hara to surrender. James Thatcher, who was present, recalled that "Washington received him with dignified courtesy, but pointed to Major-General Lincoln as the officer who was to receive the submission of the garrison." Thereafter, Lincoln reverted to a more political role serving as Secretary of War until 1783. He was elected lieutenant-governor of Massachusetts in 1787 and was a member of the convention that ratified the constitution of the United States two years later. Also an early member of the American Academy of [ Arts and Sciences, he passed away in Boston on May 9, 1810.

**Maj. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, c. 1781. (Print after F. Darley from C.W. Peale)**

### Maj. Gen. Friedrich, Baron von Steuben (1730-94)

Von Steuben arrived at Washington's headquarters in February 1778 with letters of introduction from Benjamin Franklin and Silas Deane, the American "ambassadors" in Paris. According to these letters, Friedrich Wilhelm Ludolf Gerhard Augustin von Steuben was a Prussian officer with an estate in Swabia who had served in the Seven Years War as a lieutenant-general and an ADC to the King of Prussia, Frederick the Great. Historians have since found out that he was christened in Magdebourg with the names of Friedrich Wilhelm August Heinrich Ferdinand Steube, that he was a captain and that he probably was never very familiar with Frederick the Great. Such pretensions were not unusual in 18th-century Europe where nobility was a necessity to rise in society. He was nevertheless an experienced and knowledgeable officer and he had



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served as a staff officer on the Prussian General Staff, probably the world's best at the time. He was well educated and came from a learned background as his father was an engineer officer. Something of a soldier of fortune after the Seven Years War, von Steuben received his somewhat dubious "Baron" title in 1764 when he became chamberlain to the Prince of Hohenzollern-Hechingen. After years spent trying to raise funds for the prince, von Steuben drifted into contact with the Americans in Paris and offered his services. Although his rank was somewhat exaggerated in his credentials, his time on the Prussian general staff gave him outstanding knowledge of army organization and doctrine. Whatever his pretensions, his arrival in North America would be a turning point in the history of the Continental Army.

Maj. Gen. Friedrich von Steuben, c. 1783. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Photo: RC)

Washington soon recognized von Steuben's military ability and gave him the authority to train the army. For his part, von Steuben became quite determined to build an effective force capable of holding its own against the British. Initially, he spoke no English but knew French, as did Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Greene and Washington's ADC Col. Alexander Hamilton. With their help, von Steuben drafted training plans for the army which were approved in March. At this time the army was emerging from the awful winter of 1777/78 at Valley Forge and was now submitted to intensive drill and maneuvers. Model companies were organized, trained, and tasked with spreading the drills necessary for successful battlefield linear deployment and tactics in the musket period to the whole army. Von Steuben's drill manual, a simple, no-nonsense booklet compared to European drill books, proved excellent and was still in use during the War of 1812. Pleased with the progress, Congress promoted von Steuben to major-general and inspector-general in May 1778.

The American army, still somewhat ragged and armed with a variety of weapons, was now more steadfast and more confident, although the transformation did not take place overnight. At Monmouth, the army performed remarkably well and, on the whole, maneuvered effectively. By then, von Steuben was working to reorganize the army. This was refined with other senior officers and approved by Congress in late 1780 so that, in the crucial campaign the following year, American regiments were better organized and had better firepower than comparable British formations. Von Steuben commanded in the field as well, under Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Greene in the south during 1780 and at the siege of Yorktown where he led one of the three American divisions. By then, his role had evolved into something akin to a chief-of-staff. Following the war, von Steuben remained in the United States, became an American citizen in 1784 and settled in New York where he died, a confirmed bachelor, in 1794.

**Maj. Gen. Gilbert du Mottier, Marquis de Lafayette (1757-1834)**

Baptized Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roche Gilbert du Mottier, Marquis de



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Lafayette, this young man was destined to become the most beloved and influential French officer in the American army; and his name is still highly regarded today. Gen. Pershing's "Lafayette, we are here!" uttered when he landed in France in 1917 with the American Expeditionary Force, is a clear example of the regard in which he is held.

Lafayette was born into the *grande noblesse*- the wealthy and influential French nobility - and when only two years old, his father, a colonel, was killed at the Battle of Minden. At the age of 16, he married Françoise de Noailles, who was from one of the richest families in France as well as being related to the royal family. Like other youths in his privileged class, Lafayette held a commission in the army (although this does not mean he spent much time with his regiment). An exceptionally bright and personable young man, he recognized the shallow pleasures of the life he led, and looked for a cause. At a courtly dinner in August 1775, his passion for the American "cause of liberty" was ignited, and joined with his youthful desire for glory and fame. In spite of his father-in-law's opposition, he absconded from France with the Baron de Kalb and several other French officers and set sail for America. Landing in South Carolina in June 1777, he was immediately recognized by Congress as a representative of France's influential high nobility and on July 31 Lafayette was commissioned as a major-general in the American army. He met Gen. Washington and the two immediately got along well. Lafayette') baptism of fire was at the Battle of Brandywine, where he was wounded Joining Washington at Valley Forge, he was again in action at Barren Hill on May 20 and at Monmouth on June 28.

The Marquis de Lafayette, c. 1780-83, by C.W. Peale. He is shown wearing the blue and buff uniform of American generals according to the 1780 dress regulations. (Chapel Museum, University of Washington and Lee. Author's photo)

In August, he assisted Gen. Sullivan on Rhode Island during August and was commended for his actions by a pleased Congress the following month. Lafayette then took leave to return to France in late October and, a few weeks later was at Versailles with his wife and family. However this was no mere family reunion: French cabinel ministers and even King Louis XVI wanted to set him and, setting aside the fact that he had left without permission, the king congratulated him personally on his services in America. Lafayette spent much time at court getting all the money and support he could for the Continental armed forces and pressed the government on the urgency of sending a French expeditionary force to assist them. This lobbying in Versailles may have been his greatest service to the United States as it helped tip the balance in favor of sending a French army in 1780 under the command ol Gen. Rochambeau. Lafayette was back in Boston by April 1780 and Rochambeau's army landed ir, Rhode Island in July. As a result of the British invasion of the southern states, Lafayette was sent to join von Steuben in Virginia in early 1781 and with his American corps, shadowed Cornwallis army which went into Yorktown. Washington and Rochambeau's united army arrived on the scene and, in October, Cornwallis surrendered



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**Daniel Morgan (1736-1802). Six feet tall and solidly built, this celebrated leader of rifle troops during the Revolution received 500 lashes for striking an officer while a wagoner with the British army in 1756 and later served as a ranger. The scars, physical and mental, made Morgan bitter toward the British. In 1775, he was at the siege of Boston with his Virginia riflemen, then became part of Gen. Arnold's force invading Canada but was captured in the failed assault on Quebec on December 31, 1775. Exchanged, Morgan and his riflemen were outstanding during the 1777 Saratoga campaign. Promoted to brigadier-general in October 1780, Morgan's greatest moment came at the Battle of Cowpens, South Carolina, on January 17, 1781, when he routed Tarleton and his troops.**

practically putting an end to hostilities. Shortly after, on December 23, Lafayette sailed home to France where he received a hero's welcome.

He came back to visit the United States in 1784. He was a leading figure in the early stages of the French Revolution and managed to escape the guillotine. Later on, Napoleon feared his influence and this coincided with Lafayette's choice to set aside politics and quietly manage his estate near Paris. In 1825, he accepted an invitation to visit the United States and, because he was by now a living legend, his tour evolved into a memorable succession of ceremonies, parades and honors heaped on him by an adoring American public. He quietly passed away at his estate in 1834, lauded on both sides of the Atlantic for his actions for France and for the United States.

### Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Greene (1742-86)

Born to *Quaker* parents in Rhode Island, Nathaniel Greene should have been a pacifist, merchant and trader like his father, a prominent businessman. However, young Nathaniel craved learning, reading everything he could, and became interested in politics. By 1770, he was a deputy in the legislative assembly but was suspended from the



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Quakers in July 1773. Two months later, he attended a militia parade. *A* year later, he helped raise the Kentish Guards in East Greenwich, although he was not elected as an officer because of a knee injury. Disappointed but relentless, he went back to the legislature and, as the siege of Boston was getting under way in 1775, was appointed brigadier-general on June 22, the youngest in the Continental Army. Highly efficient and, as it turned out, well versed in military theory and doctrine from his reading, this intelligent officer was immediately liked and appreciated by Washington.

His first major battle was Harlem Heights, fought on September 16, 1777, where the British were pushed back towards New York. Having been given command of troops in New Jersey, he made an abortive attack on Staten Island on October 12 and then mistakenly ordered his troops to resist at Fort Washington, which turned out to be a near disaster: some 2,800 men were lost as was a considerable amount of ammunition, one of the worst American defeats of the war. Greene himself barely escaped when evacuating Fort Lee taken by Lord Cornwallis on November 19.

Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Greene, 1783. Print after Charles Willson Peale. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Photo: RC)

Mortified but full of fight, Greene was sent by Washington to beg Congress for more money and any supplies for the army, then fought with his division at Brandywine on September 11 and Germantown on October 4. He was now a seasoned battlefield general and had an especially good sense of strategy. At Monmouth, Greene led the American right, which beat back a British attack by Lord Cornwallis that might have crushed the American army had it succeeded, especially in view of Maj. Gen. Lee's unexpected retreat. Greene saw more action at Newport in Rhode Island on August 29. Having been appointed Quartermaster-General in February 1778, Greene ran into problems with Congress, which defended each state's rights regarding requisitions for the Continental Army, and he resigned from that post in August 1780.

Gen. Washington needed all the talented battlefield generals he could get and, in October 1780, put Greene in charge of the Southern Department. Arriving in Charlotte, North Carolina, in December 1780, Greene took stock of the situation and showed he had the best strategic mind of the American generals. In order to defeat Tarleton, his meager forces had to be mobile and act in conjunction with light troops under Daniel Morgan and partisans such as Francis Marrion's. On January 17, 1781, Morgan defeated Tarleton at Cowpens, North Carolina. On March 15, Greene defeated Cornwallis after a fierce engagement at Guilford Courthouse, North Carolina, forcing the British eventually to go north to Yorktown. Greene campaigned against the remaining British forces in the south,



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Brig. Gen. James Varnum (1748-89) was a leading figure of the Revolution in Rhode Island and raised a regiment there in 1775. He later commanded the Rhode Island Brigade and served in the Continental Congress. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)

ABOVE RIGHT Francis Marrion (1732-95) was a partisan leader in South Carolina, who waged guerrilla-style warfare on British and Loyalist troops. Nicknamed the "Swamp Fox," he did indeed vanish into the swamps from where he would emerge with his light cavalry to raid the enemy. He became legendary for his daring in harassing Cornwallis' army in 1780-81.

sometimes successfully (Hobkirk's Hill, Monck's Corner) and sometimes not so (Ninety-Six, Eutaw Springs). By November 1781, the British had evacuated Charleston and Savannah, and the South came under complete American control. By the end of the war, Greene was in a state of financial ruin, and in 1785 moved with his family to a new estate (Mulberry Grove Plantation) near Savannah given to him by the people of Georgia in recognition of his services. At peace with the bucolic surroundings of his estate, this brilliant general died suddenly on June 19, 1786. It came as such a shock to the people of Georgia that all business was spontaneously suspended in sorrow; an indication of the immense respect he had gained from his fellow citizens.

## Maj. Gen. John Sullivan (1740-95)

Sullivan was born in the parish of Somersworth, New Hampshire, on February 17, 1740. He became a lawyer in 1764 and a major in the militia a few years later. A patriot, he led a raid on Fort William and Mary in New Castle to seize weapons in December 1774. Elected to the Continental Congress the following year and appointed a brigadier-general, he served with Washington's army besieging Boston in 1775 and was later sent to Canada to join the American army already there. When British reinforcements landed at Quebec City in June, retreat was the only option. He tried to make a stand at Trois-Rivieres on June 7, 1776, but was driven off by superior British forces. He nevertheless had done well in the circumstances and, joining Washington in the New York area, was promoted to major-general on August 9, 1776. Eleven days later, he was captured at the defeat of Long Island and acted as an intermediary in negotiations with Gen. Howe until exchanged. On December 25, he commanded part of the victorious Americans at



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**Maj. Gen. John Sullivan, c. 1790. (Print after W.D. Tenney from a 1790 sketch by John Trumbull)**

Trenton and, on January 3, 1777, his troops participated in chasing the British out of Princeton. His good luck then turned bad and, in August, Sullivan failed to take Staten Island. Worse came later that year as he commanded part of the American troops at the defeats of Brandywine and Germantown.

Meanwhile, the northern and western frontiers of New York and Pennsylvania were being raided by Loyalists from Canada and Iroquois Indians from northwestern New York The only way to restore the initiative, reasoned Washington, was to send a powerful army into the Iroquois country to keep the Indians and Loyalists at bay. Sullivan was chosen to lead about 5,000 men divided into three columns respectively under Col. Daniel Broadhead, Gen. James Clinton and Col. Goose van Schaick. The columns marched into northwestern New York's Iroquois homelands with few difficulties and systematically sought to reduce them to wastelands "burning and destroying the huts and corn-fields; killing the cattle, hogs and horses, and cutting down the fruit trees belonging to the Indians throughout the country," as Mary Jemison, a white girl taken captive when 12 years old and adopted into the Iroquois, recounted in *A Narrative of the Life of Mary Jemison* (Canandaigua, 1824). This denoted a scorched earth campaign rather than a search and destroy operation.

First-Sergeant John Salmon of Morgan's Riflemen, who wrote a memoir of the expedition, noted that while "General Sullivan's bravery is unimpeachable ... [he] was unacquainted, however, with fighting the Indians, and made use of the best means to keep them at such a distance that they could not be brought into an engagement. It was his practice, morning and evenings, to have cannons fired in or near the camp, by which the Indians were notified of their speed in marching, and of his situation, and were enabled to make a reasonable retreat." There were a number of skirmishes but Sullivan managed to reach the Genesee River Valley, destroying everything in the area. Sgt. Moses Sproule (whose diary was published in the January 1957 issue of *The New York Historical Society Quarterly)* noted "1500 Peach trees also a number of Apple 8c other fruit trees" destroyed on September 24. Some officers, including Col. Henry Dearborn, a future general, were critical of Sullivan's policy of destruction which was obviously aimed at starving all Iroquois; it was in reality a policy of genocide. Thousands of Iroquois refugees, men, women and children, fled to the relative safety of Fort Niagara with its fortifications and British garrison. They survived the hard winter of 1779/80 and the expedition only redoubled their warrior's determination and the raids continued after the Americans had left. Nevertheless, the Iroquois' military reputation had been dealt a heavy blow from which it would never quite recover, and although they had not been destroyed, they were materially ruined. Sullivan wasj seen to have conducted yet another inconclusive campaign by his



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enemies in and out of Congress, yet his campaign considerably substantiated American claims to northwestern New York state, claims honoured at the 1783 peace treaty. He resigned from the army in November 1779 and went back to New Hampshire and later became its governor. His health failed and he died in 1795. For many years seen as a hero by 19th- and 20th-century historians, his expedition has in recent years been reinterpreted as a failed attempt to wipe out an Indian nation.

Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne (1745-96) rose to become the senior officer in the US Army in 1792 and gained lasting fame for his campaigns against the Indians. During the Revolution, he raised the 4th Pennsylvania Battalion in 1775 and saw much action during the war commanding the Pennsylvania Division. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)

### Maj. Gen. Charles Lee (1732-82)

Charles Lee was born in England on February 6, 1732, entered the British army as an ensign in 1744 and, from 1755, served in North America under Maj. Gen. Edward Braddock with George Washington, Horatio Gates and Thomas Gage right up to the surrender of Montreal in September. In 1762, Lee, by now a colonel, served with the British forces in Portugal led by Maj. Gen. John Burgoyne. He went on to be an aide-de-camp to the Polish King Stanislas II. Back in Britain, he angrily resigned his commission when he found the British army would not reinstate him and left for Virginia, where he became convinced of the righteousness of the American cause.

When hostilities broke out in 1775, Charles Lee offered his services to Congress, ambitiously hoping to become commander of the American army. George Washington was chosen instead, and from then on both men had something of a dislike for each other. Lee became a major-general on June 19, 1775, and went to Boston with Washington in July, where he served ably during the siege. Following the British evacuation of Boston, he was appointed commander of the newly formed Southern Department and landed in Charleston, South Carolina, on June 2, 1776. Two days later, a British squadron with troops under Maj. Gen. Sir Henry Clinton arrived and Lee hastily had Charleston fortified, the harbor being guarded by Fort Sullivan on Sullivan's Island under the command of Col. William Moultrie. On June 28, the British attacked but were repulsed by Moultrie's men and retreated.

Three months later, a lauded Maj. Gen. Lee was back with the main American army in New York and New Jersey. On December 13, 1776, he was captured at Basking Ridge, New Jersey, by a British patrol led by Lt. Col. Harcourt which included the young cornet Banastre Tarleton, destined to future fame (see Tarleton's biography on page 41). Lee's capture was a blow to American morale and Washington's offer to exchange him was initially turned down. Only after Saratoga was Lee exchanged for Maj. Gen. Prescott, in the fall of 1777. Considered next in line after Washington at the time of his capture, Lee came back to a rapidly changing Continental Army with increasing numbers of foreign officers such as von Steuben and Lafayette besides other experienced American officers. His military experience was not



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as unique as it had been a year earlier. The stigma of having been captured also did not help his prestige.

Lee was given command of the American army's vanguard in the spring of 1778. On June 28, the American army closed with the British at Monmouth, New Jersey. Washington ordered Lee to attack the retreating British. Instead Lee ordered his troops to fall back thus giving the British a chance to turn the situation to their advantage. The day was saved by Washington who came up with his troops, ordered Lee's corps to attack and, most angry and upset, gave Lee a severe and most public rebuff on the field of battle in front of other officers. Lee answered Washington with vile language and later wrote him letters displaying a marked lack of respect. Placed under arrest, he was court-martialed, found guilty of insubordination and suspended from command for a year. Adamant, Lee attacked Washington's character and these slanders brought a challenge to a duel from Col. Laurens, in which Lee was wounded. It was the ultimate humiliation. On

**Maj. Gen. Charles Lee as seen in a caricatured print of the period.**



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January 10, 1780 the Continental Congress, which had considered Lee almost on a par with Washington five years earlier, released him from duty in the army. He died from illness in Philadelphia on October 2, 1782. Charles Lee's career is one of the most striking examples of the rapid fall of an officer who had initially been seen worthy of the highest command. Indeed, one may wonder what the outcome of the American rebellion would have been had he been appointed instead of Washington.

Maj. Gen. Henry Knox, c. 1781-82. Print after Charles W. Peale. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)

### Maj. Gen. Henry Knox (1750-1806)

Knox was an unlikely candidate to become a leading general. Owner of the fashionable "London Book-Store" in Boston, he became fascinated first with studying the classics, then with military works, especially regarding artillery and engineering. His passion led him to join the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company and, before long, this brilliant amateur had become one of the few Americans who was a recognized expert in the exacting science of ordnance. He was a very sociable and engaging man, with a great sense of humor, yet he could be serious and authoritative when appropriate. He did not suffer fools gladly but could also be a very kindly person. When the call to arms came in 1775, Henry Knox found that his interests could be put to great use with the patriot troops against the British holding Boston. Washington and Knox immediately liked each other, Knox remaining fiercely loyal to his commander ever after. In Knox, Washington gained a trusted friend and well-informed officer with whom he could share his concerns.

During the early stages of the siege of Boston, Knox helped draw up the American lines to prevent British sorties, probably using his copy of Chirac's *The Field Engineer* for guidance, and, eventually, the situation evolved into a stalemate. The British did not want to repeat an expensive assault such as they had instigated at Bunker Hill while Washington could do little without heavy ordnance. The book business was now a thing of the past for Knox and on November 17, 1775, he was commissioned as a colonel of the Continental Regiment of Artillery. His first job was to acquire guns for the siege: he went to Fort Ticonderoga, where he selected 43 cannons, 14 mortars and one howitzer and had them transported to Boston - a difficult task in winter. Nevertheless, by early 1776, Washington had his guns set up on Dorchester Heights overlooking the British positions: this convinced the British to evacuate Boston in March 1776.

Knox commanded the American artillery at the battles of Brandywine and Germantown in 1777. At Valley Forge, he designed forts to safeguard the American winter encampments. Knox also assisted von Steuben in drilling the troops, particularly the gunners who went on to fight at Monmouth in June 1778. Knox's final engagement was the siege of Yorktown where he commanded the American batteries until the surrender of Cornwallis on October 19, 1781. Knox was promoted to



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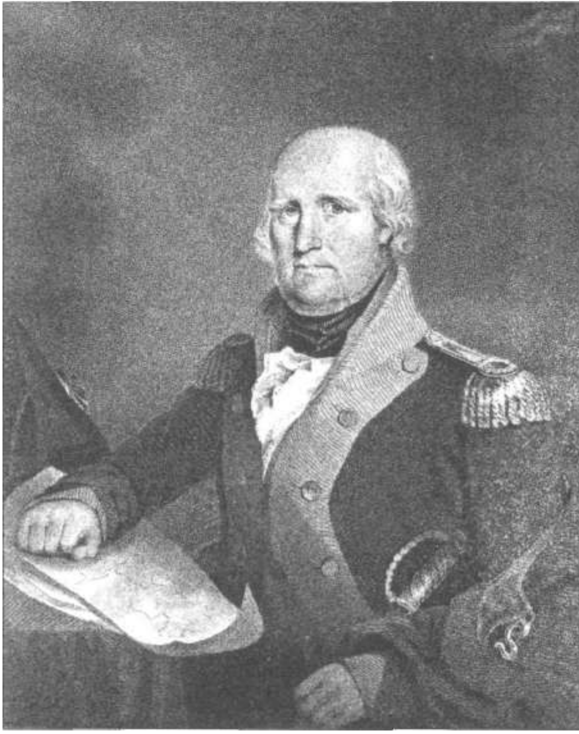
major-general on March 22, 1782. As senior general, he replaced Washington following his departure on December 23. In early 1784 Knox left the service and returned to Boston. However, he was elected Secretary of War by Congress the following year, a post he held until he resigned on December 28, 1794. Knox retired to Thomaston, Maine, in 1796 and died there in 1806.



George Rodgers Clark, c. 1804, his only known likeness. He wears an American general's uniform that remained blue faced with buff trimmed with gold buttons and epaulets until 1813. (Print after John Jarvis)

### Col. George Rodgers Clark (1752-1818)

George Rodgers Clark was born near Charlottesville, Virginia. He was the brother of William Clark (1770-1838), made famous by the celebrated Lewis & Clark expedition of 1803-05 to the Pacific Ocean: one of his nephews by his sister Lucy was Col. George Croghan (1791-1849) who became celebrated for his defense of Fort Meigs (Ohio) in 1813. A surveyor by profession, George was attracted to the western lands where he moved in 1772, and took part as a militia captain in Lord Dunmore's campaign against the Shawnee Indians in 1774. Despite possessing only a limited education, he was highly intelligent,) shrewd, bold, a natural leader - but also fond of drink. However, he did not let this affect his military duties and he rose to lieutenant-colonel in the Virginia Militia. He quickly wielded enough influence to convince the State of Virginia to assert sovereignty over the area in 1775 by the creation of Kentucky County. Clark had a far greater vision than just securing the frontier; he wanted to extend it to the Mississippi River and convinced the Virginian governor Patrick Henry to support his scheme to occupy Illinois east of the great river.

The "Illinois Country," or Upper Louisiana, had been settled by the French from the early 18th century. Following the 1763 Treaty of Paris, the area east of the Mississippi had come under the British while the west bank was ceded to Spain. "French" inhabitants - most of whom actually had origins in Canada - lived in towns such as Cahokia, Prairie-du-Rocher and Kaskaskia under the British flag although some had crossed the Mississippi to resettle at Sainte-Genevieve or the new town of Saint-Louis, the Spanish headquarters for their quasi-French government of Upper Louisiana. If American troops could occupy and hold territory on the upper Mississippi, Clark reasoned, British supplies and communications in the west would be cut which would greatly help to control hostile Indians and Loyalists.

In June 1778, Lt. Col. Clark set out with about 175 men of his newly raised Illinois Battalion of the Virginia state forces: they were mostly riflemen. Traveling on flatboats down the Ohio River, they landed before reaching the Mississippi in order to bypass Fort Massac, and marched some 120 miles (190 km) to Kaskaskia. Late on July 4, the town came into sight: the starving men of the expedition had run out of food two days earlier, but were determined to take the place at once, There was no garrison, the surprise was absolute and the town gleefully



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Col. William Moultrie (1731-1805) commanded the garrison of Fort Sullivan which guarded Charleston, South Carolina, when it was attacked and heavily bombarded by the British fleet in July 1776. Moultrie and his men made an outstanding defence and saved the city as the British withdrew. Moultrie later became major-general and governor of South Carolina. (Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Photo: RC)

ABOVE RIGHT Col. Christopher Greene led the Rhode Island Regiment, the only unit in the Continental Army that consisted mainly of African-American enlisted men from 1778. (John Hay Library, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)

greeted the Americans. In early August, the British outpost at Vincennes was occupied without a fight. In Detroit, Lt. Col. Henry Hamilton, nicknamed the "scalp-buyer" (as he paid the Indians for American scalps), prepared a counter-attack and, by December, Vincennes had been reoccupied by the British. Clark boldly decided to counter-attack and, helped by Father Pierre Gibault of Kaskaskia as well as town leaders Francis Vigo and François Bosseron, he marched on Vincennes with 127 men, nearly half of them "French" from the Kaskaskia area. By February 22, they were near their objective having suffered incredible hardships to do so such as wading shoulder-height through ice-cold water as they approached. Hamilton had sent out part of his garrison of Fort Sackville but still had nearly 100 men and artillery in reserve. Clark's men surrounded the fort while the British fired their guns: soon, though, the American riflemen began picking off the gunners. On February 25, Hamilton surrendered and the "Old Northwest" again came under American control. It was an outstanding coup and, although American troops were crushed by the British and Indians at Blue Licks in 1782, the area remained under American control. It had a huge effect on the geographic area of the United States as determined by the 1783 peace treaty, which included much of the Old Northwest and more, stretching from the present-day state of Mississippi to Michigan. As for Clark, he was rewarded with the rank of brigadier-general in the Virginia militia after the war. In 1786 he led another expedition against hostile Indians in Ohio and later kept up his military activities as an adviser to the War Department in Washington. He also founded Louisville, Kentucky. On February 13, 1818, he passed away at his home in Locust Grove - by now totally



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John Paul Jones (1747-92), a British-born sailor, settled in America in 1773. After joining the Revolution in 1775, he was commissioned in the new Continental Navy. Commanding the *Ranger,* he captured merchant ships in the Irish Sea and raided Whitehaven looting the Countess of Selkirk's silver in the process. He was then given a former French East India ship, the *Bonhomme Richard,* fitted as a frigate. On September 23, 1779, Jones encountered the frigate HMS *Serapis* and a ferocious fight ensued. The *Bonhomme Richard* was sinking when Jones managed to board the *Serapis* and at last compelled Capt. Richard Pearson and his remaining crew to surrender ending the most famous American naval fight of the war. Jones became the first naval hero of the United States. After the war, he was commissioned as an admiral in the Russian navy: although an excellent if temperamental captain, he lacked talent for senior command and returned to the United States.

destitute and forgotten. In time, though, the impact of his actions was reconsidered and he was duly recognized.

## GREAT BRITAIN

### Lt. Gen. Sir William Howe (1729-1814)

Born into an aristocratic family, William Howe was the younger brother of Admiral of the Fleet Richard, Earl Howe (see picture on page 29) and of the very popular George Augustus Lord Howe who was killed at Bernetz Brook near Ticonderoga on July 6, 1758.[2] William entered the army aged 17 and served under Wolfe at Louisbourg and Quebec, commanding the light infantry. He was one of the general officers sent out with reinforcements to Massachusetts for Gen. Thomas Gage in 1775.' During the Americans' siege of Boston, Howe had the doubtful privilege of commanding the British troops attacking the American position at Bunker Hill during the afternoon of June 17. It was expected that the

[2] See Campaign 76: *Ticonderoga 1758*



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American militia would easily cave in and the British soldiers had the knapsacks on their backs loaded with three days worth of provisions and rolled blankets for the expected pursuit. On the hill, Col. William Prescott, a veteran of the last war like many of his officers and men, instructed his men not to open fire until the enemy soldiers were within 50 yards. The British finally took the hill on their third assault but suffered very heavy casualties, and there was no pursuit. Gage was consequently recalled and Howe was appointed commander-in-chief. By March 1776, Howe could see Henry Knox's men building batteries for the big guns brought from Fort Ticonderoga on Dorchester Heights. On March 17, he evacuated Boston for Halifax.

Sir William Howe, c. 1776. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)

It is important to mention that, from the summer of 1775, what is now Canada and the eastern seaboard American states of North America, where most of the war was fought, was split into two military commands: Howe's command covered the British forces in the 13 rebellious Atlantic seaboard colonies and the northern maritime provinces of Nova Scotia, St John's Island (later Prince Edward's Island) and Newfoundland. The other command under Sir Guy Carleton at Quebec included the present Canadian provinces of Quebec, Ontario and northern parts of the American states of New York, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and Illinois. Independent of these was the West Florida command which included the eastern shore of the Mississippi River up to Illinois and the Gulf coast of the American states of Mississippi, Alabama and Florida, and the East Florida command which was the present northeast of the state of Florida.

In England, Lord Germain had come to power in November 1775 and was determined to crush the American rebels. As the British army lacked sufficient manpower, thousands of German mercenary soldiers, mostly from Hesse-Cassel, were sent to Howe in the spring of 1776 with orders in June to take New York. By August, Howe had landed nearly 20,000 troops near his objective and routed the outnumbered Americans at the Battle of Long Island on August 27. New York City was occupied on September 15 and Howe consolidated his position the next day scattering the Americans at Harlem Heights and taking forts Washington and Lee on the Hudson River in November. Washington was still a menace as proven when he attacked and beat the Hessians at Trenton (December 26) and at Princeton (January 3, 1777) when retreating to Delaware. Things were nevertheless moving apace for the British and a pleased government knighted Howe. The British 1777 campaign might be the worst-planned on record, due in part to Lord Germain's contradictory instructions which sent Maj. Gen. Burgoyne down to New York from Canada while sending Howe to chase Washington further south. Thus, on July 23, Howe sailed out of New



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York with 18,000 men for Delaware while Burgoyne was moving out of Canada. Disaster befell Burgoyne at Saratoga in October. Howe, in the meantime, had success against the Americans at Brandywine (September 11), Germantown (October 26) and Fort Mifflin (November 10—15) while Cornwallis occupied Philadelphia. Howe did not fully exploit his advantage to crush the enemy though in spite of superior forces and logistics, and thus had not achieved a decisive victory. In 1778, his resignation was accepted and command passed to Sir Henry Clinton on March 21. This ended Howe's military career and he quietly retired. He died at Plymouth in 1814.

Lt. Gen. Thomas Gage (1719 or 1720-87) campaigned in Flanders and fought at Culloden during the 1740s, and in North America during the 1750s. He attained field rank and, following the surrender of Montreal, became its governor in 1760. Three years later, he was named Commander-in-Chief of British forces in North America. He then witnessed the slow decline in relations between Britain and the Americans. In 1774 he took command in Boston. Ordered by London to be firmer, Gage sent troops to Lexington and Concord on April 14, 1775, a move which started the war. The British frontal assault at Bunker Hill on June 17 with its high casualties was fatal to his career as he became the government's scapegoat. Lord Germain felt Gage to be "in a position of too great importance for his talents." He resigned command on October 10 and left for retirement in England. Print after John Singleton Copley. (National Archives of Canada, C1347)

### Gen. Sir Henry Clinton (c. 1738-95)

Henry Clinton was born in Newfoundland where his father was governor, before moving to New York in 1741. Back in Britain in 1751, the young Clinton joined the Coldstream Guards and saw action in Germany during the Seven Years War. He became a major-general in 1772 and three years later was with the British army in Boston under Lt. Gen. Gage, and fought at Bunker Hill, A bright and brave field officer, his services earned him the local rank of lieutenant-general in September. He was sent south leading the troops on an abortive naval expedition to capture Charleston, South Carolina, in July 1776. He later took part in the capture of New York and of Newport, Rhode Island. However, serious differences arose between Clinton and Lt. Gen. Howe, his superior. Clinton was granted leave to return to England in early 1777, where he was knighted. He returned to New York in July. Sir Henry did not receive clear instructions regarding the expedition of Maj. Gen. Burgoyne but moved north with a few troops along the Hudson River to create a diversion on October 3 and captured Fort Constitution. Numerous American troops under Maj. Gen. Israel Putnam gathered to meet him so that on October 22, Clinton withdrew to New York. Lt. Gen. Howe was recalled in 1778 and on March 21 Clinton became commander-in-chief. He campaigned in New Jersey in May but failed to catch Lafayette. Lt. Gen. Charles Cornwallis became his second-in-command and both agreed that reinforcements were much needed to hold North America. In December, Cornwallis was sent to England to press the issue and came back successfully with troops in August 1779.

With France in the war and its warships looming off the coast, Clinton had new worries. Newport had to be evacuated when a French fleet under Adm. d'Estaing appeared. Savannah was attacked in October 1779 and resisted brilliantly under Gen. Prevost, but for Clinton in New York it became clear that he now had to fight a defensive war. This was not to his liking and, while offering his resignation, he decided to invade the southern states. Leaving New York by sea with 8,700 troops on over 100 ships, Clinton arrived off Charleston and, after a spirited defense, Maj. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln capitulated on May 12. Another French



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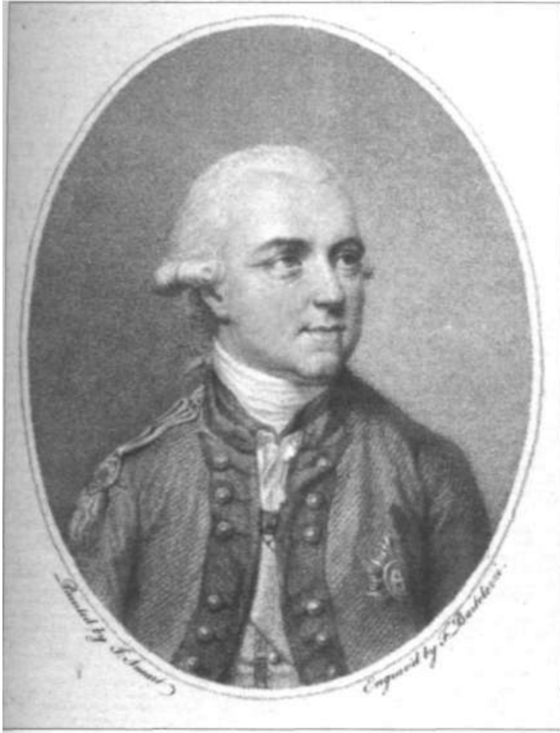


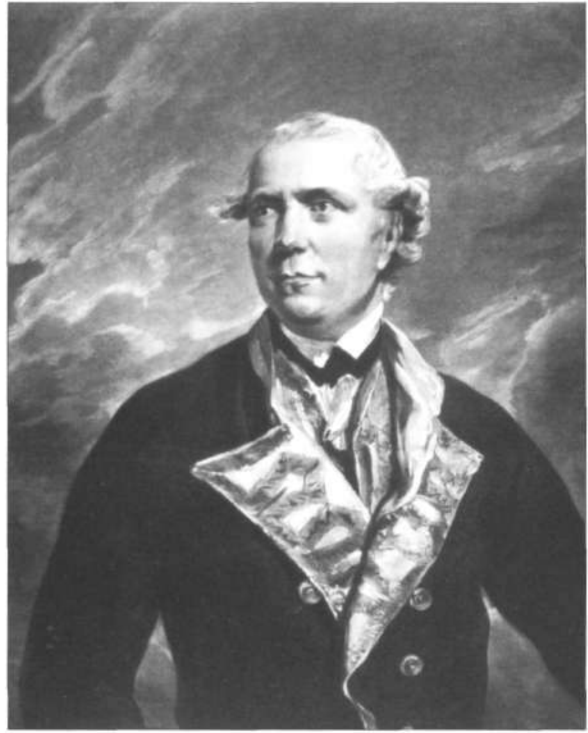

Lt. Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, c. 1777. Print after a miniature by John Smart. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Photo: RC)

ABOVE RIGHT V.Adm. Samuel Barrington (1729-1800): a sailor of merit who is less well known because of his natural modesty, he commanded the Royal Navy in the Leeward Islands in 1778 and, in spite of difficult odds against the French, managed to take and hold St Lucia. He then served under V.Adm. John Byron, his senior in rank if junior in ability, who was repulsed by d'Estaing at Grenada in 1779. Barrington went back to England and was with Howe at the 1782 relief of Gibraltar. He wears the Royal Navy's 1767-83 uniform for flag officers. Print after Sir Joshua Reynolds. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)

fleet was now rumored to be off the coast and Clinton went back to New York leaving command in the south to Cornwallis. The rumor proved to be true: Gen. Rochambeau landed with a substantial French army at Newport, Rhode Island, that summer and joined the American troops. For over a year, it was something of a "wait and see" game between Clinton in New York and the Franco-American armies, while Cornwallis was being slowly edged out of Georgia and the Carolinas. British intelligence in New York was poor as they did not realize until October 2 that Washington had departed on September 21, joined Rochambeau's army and that they were marching south to trap Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia. Clinton gathered what troops he could to stop them, but they had only just departed New York when news arrived that Yorktown had fallen.

The authorities in Britain were most upset and recalled Clinton, who turned over his command to Sir Guy Carleton in May 1782. He attempted to clear his name in the 1780s, and was again called to service in the 1790s. He was promoted to general in October 1793 and named Governor of Gibraltar in July 1794. He passed away on December 23, 1795.

## Lt. Gen. Sir Guy Carleton (1724-1808)

Guy Carleton initially served as an officer in the Foot Guards and became Lieutenant-Colonel of the newly formed 72nd Foot in 1758. His real talent was obviously as a senior staff officer, and in summer 1758 he served on Gen. Amherst's staff at the siege and capture of Fortress Louisbourg. The following year, he was on Gen. Wolfe's staff at the siege and capture of Quebec. Returning to Europe, he served and was wounded at Belle Isle on the coast of France in April 1761. In 1762, he



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Joseph Brant, or *Thayendanegea* (1742-1807) in 1776. Noted for his exceptional intellectual ability as well as for being a fine warrior - he took his first scalp when only 13 at the battle of Lake George - *Thayendanegea* was sent to be educated at Lebanon, Connecticut, by Sir William Johnson, the superintendent of Indian affairs. As Grand Chief of the Mohawk nation of the Iroquois Indians, he remained loyal to the Crown and led his warriors against the Americans in northwestern New York State with much success. He wore Indian dress when he sat in London for his portrait by George Romney in 1776 but Capt. Snider recalled that, on campaign in about 1779, Grand Chief Brant "wore mocassins elegantly trimmed with beads, leggins and breech-cloth of superfine blue; short green coat, with two silver epaulets, and a small laced, round hat. By his side hung an elegant silver-mounted cutlass, and his blanket of blue cloth ... was gorgeously decorated with a border of red." (National Gallery of Canada. Author's photo)

was back in America to participate in the expedition against Havana. On June 11, he led a party of troops who took an important redoubt near Moro castle but was again wounded in action.

In 1766, Carleton became governor of Canada. His governorship of the inhabitants of what had been New France did a great deal to secure the neutrality of most Canadians during the American Revolution. In 1775, he did not have enough regular troops to effectively oppose the American invasion. Some Canadians did join the Americans when they invaded Canada, but others, notably the residents of Quebec City, took up arms to defend themselves against the invaders. The Americans led by Lt. Gen. Richard Montgomery took the forts along the Richelieu River in September 1775, then Montreal - Canada's trade center - and

OPPOSITE V.Adm. Richard Howe (1726-99) had been round the world with Anson in the 1740s, with Hawke in the 1750s and had fleet command in North America in 1776 putting off d'Estaing in Rhode Island in 1778, before retiring. Back on active duty in 1782, he led the brilliant maneuvering at the relief of Gibraltar's hard-pressed garrison, an action that almost guaranteed Gen. Elliott's continued and defiant defense of "The Rock." He was later ennobled for his outstanding victory over the French on The Glorious First of June 1794. He wears the admiral's 1795-1812 full dress uniform. (Print after T. Gainsborough)



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were looking upon Quebec's walls by November. Within Quebec, Carleton had few seasoned regulars but organised an effective defence force of about 1,800 men with recruits, sailors and militiamen. They proved more than a match for Gen. Montgomery who was killed in the assault of 31 December while some 480 of his officers and men were killed, wounded or captured. The siege (more akin to a blockade) dragged on until May 7, 1776, when British ships carrying 8,000 troops arrived at Quebec. Carleton led 900 militiamen out of the city with four field guns and the remnants of the American force departed. Carleton had held on for nearly six months and was credited as being the "Savior of Canada" and knighted in July 1776. In the following weeks, the Americans evacuated the rest of Canada. Carleton's pursuit was not too vigorous, and on three separate occasions he did not attack when he had American forces at his mercy - possibly in the hope that the Americans would see the error of their ways. The practical effect of letting the Americans get away, according to most scholars of the campaign, undermined the campaign and possibly changed the course of the war.

American loyalists, persecuted by their neighbors, were also arriving to seek refuge in Canada, and Carleton issued commissions to organize Loyalist corps such as the King's Royal Regiment of New York, Jessup's Loyal Rangers and Butler's Rangers. A major-general since 1772, he became a lieutenant-general in August 1777, remaining in Canada during Maj. Gen. Burgoyne's disastrous campaign. Carleton was knighted for his defense of Quebec, and was finally recalled to England in 1778: he lived the life of a country gentleman until February 1782, when Lord Germain resigned. Carleton was then appointed

**Officer's gilt belt-plate of Butler's Rangers, c. 1777-83. There is no reliable likeness known of John Butler, a former officer of Rogers Rangers, who raised one of the most famous and feared Loyalist units of the war from among American Loyalist refugees in Canada. Outstanding at wilderness warfare on the frontier, Butler's Rangers - with their Indian allies - spread terror and kept the Americans on the defensive, even after Gen. Sullivan's 1779 invasion of the Iroquois homelands. (Parks Canada)**

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Commander-in-Chief at New York, serving from May 1782 to November 1783. His task was to evacuate 30,000 troops to Britain, 27,000 Loyalists and thousands of loyal colored people to Canada and the British West Indies. Washington objected to the latter's evacuation, but, to his credit, Carleton ignored him and stayed until satisfied that all who wished to go had embarked. It is estimated that over 40,000 Loyalists went to Canada, and most settled in the provinces of Upper Canada (now Ontario) and New Brunswick. Others went to Quebec, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward's Island and the Bahamas. Some 1,200 colored people were evacuated to Nova Scotia. Over 300 from South Carolina continued to serve as soldiers, mostly in Grenada, and eventually formed the nucleus of the 1st West India Regiment in 1795.

Carleton returned to England having successfully accomplished a depressing and thankless task. Although his military reputation was somewhat tarnished, he still had the support of the king and a fine record as an administrator. In 1786, he was again named Governor of Canada and granted a peerage as Lord Dorchester. He retired to England ten years later and passed away in his 85 th year.

**Joseph Brant, or *Thayendanegea* (1742-1807) in 1807. Joseph Brant and his Iroquois gave great services to the Crown during the war and, in spite of major American expeditions against them such as Gen. Sullivan's, were never vanquished. However, the British lost the war and the loyal Iroquois were compelled to emigrate to Canada where they settled in present day Ontario. The great chief wore traditional dress for this portrait by William Moll Berczy. (National Gallery of Canada. Author's photo)**

### Maj. Gen. Sir John Burgoyne (1722-92)

Educated at Westminster School, John Burgoyne entered the army in 1740 as a cornet in the 13th Dragoons. Burgoyne promoted the use of light cavalry during the Seven Years War resulting in the creation of several such regiments from 1759. His ideas on internal discipline and tactics were innovative and ahead of his contemporaries in the army. Now colonel of the 16th Light Dragoons, his opportunity for distinction came in 1762 when he was sent with a British force to help defend Portugal from the invasion by Spanish and French troops: he recaptured Valencia de Alcantara and Vila Velha from the Spanish in 1762. These brilliant actions made him famous overnight in Britain. He had already been elected to Parliament in 1761 and sat from 1763 in the House, where he denounced financial scandals in India. He also tried his hand as a playwright enjoying much success (in 1775) with his play, the "Maid of Oaks". In 1772 he was promoted to major-general and, in 1775, was sent as an observer to Boston, then besieged by the Americans: here he was much perturbed by the rigid linear tactics used by the British against their well-covered enemy.

After spending the summer and fall of 1776 in Canada, Burgoyne conceived a daring plan to cut the American colonies in two: an army



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would descend from Canada along Lake Champlain and the Hudson to New York, where Sir William Howe's forces were stationed. Cabinet accepted, and in May 1777 Burgoyne was back in Canada to carry out the plan. However, the army only marched south in late June and comprised some 7,500 British and German regulars besides a few hundred Loyalists, Indians and Canadian militiamen. By then, the Americans in northeastern New York and Vermont were mobilizing. On June 30, Fort Ticonderoga was reached by boat and it seemed that Albany would not be too difficult to get to. Burgoyne now made the fatal error of continuing by land rather than on the water. There were practically no roads and in the forest his soldiers came under constant fire from American troops. A lack of provisions eventually forced Burgoyne to alter his course southeast towards Bennington (Vermont) to find supplies and then cross the Hudson River westward near Saratoga This detour cost a thousand casualties as the Americans under generals Gates, Schuyler, Arnold and Morgan closed in. The first pitched battle at Freeman's Farm on September 19 cost dearly but the British held their own. However, at Bemis Heights, on October 7, they had to retreat toward Saratoga. Totally surrounded by October 12, Burgoyne had to surrender on October 17. Whether Sir William Howe's army might have saved the day by marching north instead of following Lord Germain's instructions has been much debated but remains a moot point. As for Burgoyne, he returned to Britain in disgrace after his release on parole in 1778 and never again held a field command. He went back to writing and, in 1786, his play "The Heiress" was a hit. "Gentleman Johnny", as he was nicknamed, died in London on August 3, 1792, and was survived by four children. Interestingly, Sir John Fox Burgoyne (1782-1871), his illegitimate son by Susan Caulfield, had an outstanding military career. He served with the Royal Engineers with distinction in Portugal and Spain during the Peninsular War, was a general at the siege of Sebastopol in the Crimean War, and became a field marshal in 1868.

Maj. Gen. Sir John Burgoyne according to a 19th century print after S. Holyer. Although the uniform details, such as the stand-and-fall collar which postdates the American Revolution, are not always exact, the likeness may well be fairly accurate to about 1775 as it bears a resemblance to George Romney's later portrait of Burgoyne.

### Gen. Charles, Earl of Cornwallis (1738-1805)

Born in London to the second Earl of Cornwallis on the last day of 1738, Charles was educated in England and Italy. In 1756, he became an officer in the 1st Foot Guards and ADC to Lord Granby in Germany and served at the Battle of Minden. In 1762, he inherited his father's estate and title but continued his military career as Colonel of the 33rd Foot from 1766, and with various appointments at court. In 1775, he was promoted to major-general, and in January 1776 was sent to America with a body of 2,500 reinforcement troops. He witnessed the abortive naval attack on Charleston in June, then joined Howe: he was second-in-command at the victory over the Americans at Long Island on August 27 as well as the other actions in the fall in the New York area to consolidate the British positions. His relationship had not been good with Lt. Gen.



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Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl of Cornwallis, from a print after a portrait made in 1786 by John Smart. This likeness, along with Thomas Gainsborough's 1783 painting, shows the actual appearance of Cornwallis at the time of the siege of Yorktown. Most publications on the American Revolution have shown a portly and older Cornwallis using the better-known later portraits of him as Governor General of India. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)

Clinton and Cornwallis was contemplating going back to England. However, hearing of Washington's success at Trenton, Cornwallis pursued him but Washington got away while defeating Cornwallis' rear guard at Princeton on January 3, 1777. The summer and fall of 1777 found Cornwallis campaigning under Howe in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, notably at Brandywine on September 11. On September 26, Cornwallis' division occupied Philadelphia, a notable success for the British but this was over-shadowed by Burgoyne's disaster at Saratoga. After a period of leave in England during which he was promoted lieutenant-general, Cornwallis was back in America in June 1778 and led an unsuccessful charge at Monmouth on the 28th. He took further leave in England during which time his wife died, and the grieving Cornwallis returned to America in 1779.

Lord Cornwallis now entered possibly the most unhappy period of his military life. Relations between him and Clinton were poor (they barely communicated) but Cornwallis took part in Sir Henry's southern campaign which took Charleston, South Carolina, in May. Clinton then returned to New York leaving Cornwallis in command of British operations in the south. Facing the untalented American Maj. Gen. Gates was not too daunting for Cornwallis and Tarleton, his dashing light troops leader, and Gates was crushed at Camden on August 16. This was followed by Tarleton's success over Brig. Gen. Thomas Sumter at Fishing Creek, South Carolina, the next day. However, everything changed with the defeat of Maj. Patrick Ferguson (inventor of a breech-loading rifle) and his force of Loyalists at King's Mountain, North Carolina, on October 7, and the constant harassment by American irregulars led by Francis Marrion. Cornwallis had to retreat to South Carolina. The arrival of Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Greene as American commander spelt doom for Cornwallis. Greene reorganized his army into swift-moving columns and overcame Tarleton at Cowpens on January 17, 1781. Cornwallis then pursued Greene who had regrouped and withdrawn his regulars to Guilford Courthouse, North Carolina. Cornwallis attacked Greene's well-chosen position on March 15 and the Americans put up such a fight that when they retreated, the British were unable to pursue the campaign due to high losses. In May Cornwallis' troops sailed from the Carolinas to Virginia in the hope of trapping the American troops and even Washington himself. In early June, they tried but failed to destroy the smaller corps of generals La Fayette and Wayne. Clinton instructed Cornwallis to occupy a seaport so that he could be supplied by ship, and Yorktown on Chesapeake Bay was selected. In September, the almost unthinkable happened when the Royal Navy lost control of the sea to the French fleet and the combined armies of Washington and Rochambeau surrounded Yorktown. The French

*(continued on page 41)*



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SARATOGA (OCTOBER 1777) **1: Sir John Burgoyne 2: Horatio Gates 3: Benedict Arnold**

**A**

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**B** GERMANTOWN (OCTOBER 6, 1777) 1: Sir William Howe 2: Henry Knox 3: John Sullivan

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NORTHWEST AND MONMOUTH (1778) **1: Sir Henry Clinton 2: Charles Lee 3: George Rodgers Clark**

C

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**D** VARIOUS FRONTS (CANADA, INDIA, GIBRALTAR) **1: Sir Guy Carleton 2: Bailli de Suffren 3: George Augustus Elliott**

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THE CARIBBEAN (1778-83) 1: Bernardo de Galvez 2: Marquis de Bouille 3: Sir George Rodney

E

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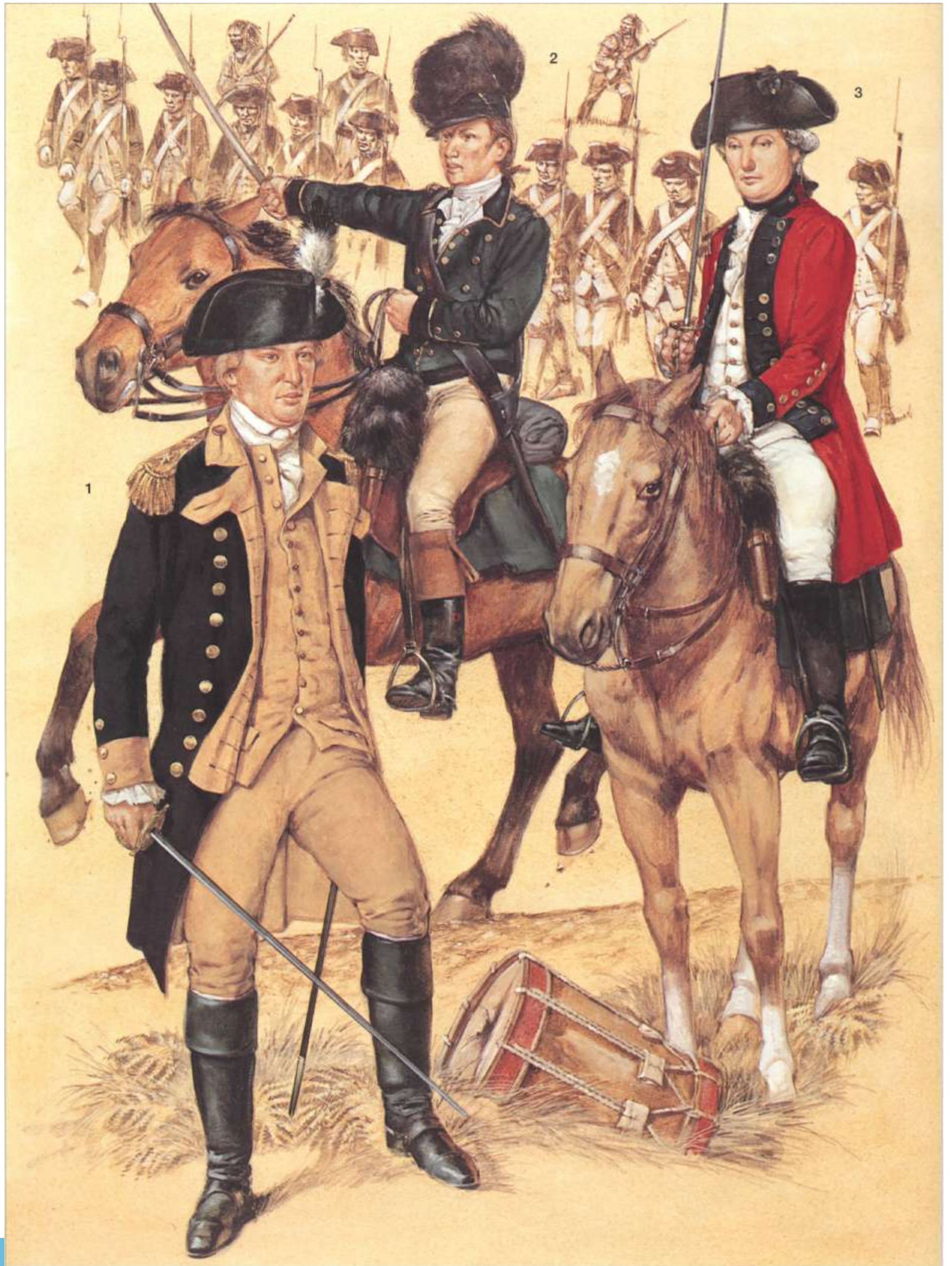


**F** GUILFORD COURTHOUSE (MARCH 15, 1781) **1: Nathaniel Greene 2: Banastre Tarleton 3: Charles, Earl of Cornwallis**

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YORKTOWN (OCTOBER 1781) 1: Friedrich von Steuben 2: Marquis de Lafayette 3: Duc de Lauzun

G

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**H** YORKTOWN (OCTOBER 1781) **1: George Washington 2: Benjamin Lincoln 3: Comte de Rochambeau**

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artillery was especially effective and some of the redoubts were stormed and taken by French and American troops. On August 17, 1781, Yorktown surrendered and Cornwallis was so upset that he sent Brig. Gen. Charles O'Hara to carry out the act. Lord Cornwallis later confided to d'Aboville, the French artillery commander: "it was to you that I should have surrendered since it is your well aimed guns that destroyed all my fortifications." This occurred when the two met during the negotiations leading to the 1802 Treaty of Amiens. Lord Cornwallis was part of the British delegation and d'Aboville, who had risen to general, was part of the French delegation (F Buttner, "Les Artilleurs de M. de Rochambeau", *La Sabretache,* numero special, 1976, p. 135).

Back in England in 1782, Cornwallis was not severely blamed, as Clinton was seen to be at fault. From 1786 to 1794, he was governor-general of India (and was made 1st Marquis of Cornwallis in 1793 for his exceptional services there) and from 1797 to 1801 was in Ireland. In 1805, he was back in India for a second term and died at Ghazipore on October 5. Although remembered in America for Yorktown, it was in India that Lord Cornwallis displayed the true measure of his great talents as an administrator and soldier.

## Col. Banastre Tarleton (1754-1833)

Born in Liverpool into a wealthy family, on maturity Banastre Tarleton took to gambling and the pursuit of women, squandering his inheritance in the process. He entered the cavalry in 1775 and, the following year, obtained leave to serve in North America. Shortly after, he was part of the cavalry patrol that captured Maj. Gen. Charles Lee on December 3, 1776. Raised in rank to infantry captain, he commanded the rear guard of Sir Henry Clinton's army in his campaign into New Jersey, Maryland and Pennsylvania in 1777 and 1778. Tarleton's opportunity came when Clinton's army moved south and laid siege to Charleston, South Carolina, in 1779. There, Clinton granted him the command of the British Legion, a Loyalist corps, with the provincial rank of lieutenant-colonel which was later confirmed in the regular army. Clinton's choice proved to be inspired; the daring and fearless Tarleton quickly became the beau sabreur of the British army and made his British Legion an outstanding corps.

Short and muscular, handsome, lively, shrewd, very brave, resolute, and swift to attack, Tarleton was possibly the finest light cavalry leader of the war. He and his men - American loyalists who had scores to settle with their former neighbors - also gained a reputation for a ruthlessness that became known as "Tarleton's quarter". During the southern campaign, from 1779 to 1781, Tarleton later recalled that "all the movements of the British army were covered, through a woody and difficult country, by my Legion, from the fall of Charleston,

**Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton, commander of the British Legion, c. 1780. He is shown in the legion's uniform. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)**

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to the melancholic catastrophe at Yorktown, in Virginia. In that circuitous march of more than 1,200 miles, many prisoners, cannon and colors fell into my hands, whilst detached from the main body of the army; a great proportion of the forage and provisions was provided for [by the British Legion] for the British; and all the risings and assemblies of the American militia were suppressed by the sword." The British Legion badly mauled the 1st Continental Light Dragoons, Pulaski's Legion and Bland's Light Dragoons at Charleston, fought victoriously at Wacsaws, Camden, Catwaba River, and Blackstocks, but had to withdraw at Cowpens (January 17, 1780). Tarleton narrowly escaped capture by Col. William Washington's troopers and was much criticized for providing erroneous intelligence to Cornwallis. At Guilford Court House (March 15, 1781), the Americans managed to surround the British cavalry. Tarleton made a successful charge to break out but "lost a considerable part" (two fingers) of his right hand in the struggle. At Yorktown, the British Legion's cavalry with Tarleton at its head encountered a new type of enemy, the French hussars of Lauzun's Legion who prevailed in a cavalry fight at Gloucester Point. Tarleton and his Legion escaped but there was little action thereafter. In 1783, the British Legion was disbanded in Canada, and Tarleton returned to England.

**Maj. Gen. Simon Fraser (1729-77) led the British advance guard from Ticonderoga. He is shown in the uniform of a brigadier. Print after Scouter. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)**

Following the war, Lt. Col. Tarleton was put on half-pay: it seems his unsavory reputation for being cold-hearted and ruthless followed him home as he wrote his account of the southern campaign to answer his critics. He was promoted to colonel in 1790, major-general in 1794 and was sent on active service to Portugal in 1798. A major-general in 1801, he commanded the Severn District in Ireland for seven years. Made a full general in 1812, the elderly Tarleton was by then also Governor of Berwick and Colonel of the 21st Light Dragoons. He was made a baronet in 1815, and passed away in 1833.

### Adm. Sir George Brydges Rodney (1719-92)

Rodney went to sea when 14 years old, and aged only 23 was a captain. He first came to public attention during the Seven Years War. A progressive officer, Rodney served under Adm. Hawke during the raids on the French coast at Finistere and Rochefort. Promoted to flag rank in 1759, he raided Le Havre that year. In early 1762, he commanded the fleet that landed the British forces leading to the surrender of Martinique. Following the war, Rodney was involved with various political factions, which did not always bring benefits. By the outbreak of the American Revolution, he was recognized as one of best tactical minds in the Royal Navy but had taken self-imposed leave in Paris following personal political disappointments, which had driven him into debt. With France's entry into the war in 1778, Rodney came home and was wisely given a command in the West Indies.



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V.Admiral Sir George Brydges Rodney, c. 1780, in the Royal Navy uniform of 1767-83 for admirals.

Fortune smiled on Rodney even before he reached the West Indies. Off Cape Finistère, he ran into 11 Spanish ships-of-the-line under Adm. Juan de Langara. "Engage to Leeward," Rodney signaled, in order to cut them off: a few hours later, one Spanish ship had exploded and six had been taken in the "Moonlight Battle" of January 16, 1780. In the West Indies, he inconclusively engaged the much more tactically able French under Adm. Guichen off Martinique in April and May and took St Eustatius before coming back to England because of illness. He was back in the West Indies in early 1782 at a critical time for the British. Nearly all the smaller British islands had fallen, even St Kitts with its fortress of Brimstone Hill, and the French and Spanish fleets were planning to meet at Haiti, where a Franco-Spanish army was to embark for a combined assault on Jamaica. One of the enemy fleets had to be intercepted before they united, and on April 12 Rodney's fleet intercepted de Grasse's French fleet off the small archipelago of the Saints. A fierce struggle ensued which resulted in the defeat of the French when Rodney, profiting from a slight change in the wind, managed to break the French line. Adm. de Grasse was taken on his flagship and Jamaica was saved.

After years of defeats, this victory provoked an outbreak of celebration in Britain with Rodney being the hero of the hour. For many years, the triumph was lauded by British, and oddly enough American, historians proclaiming how the French fleet had been crushed leaving France vanquished at sea. Less impassioned assessments concluded that, while Rodney certainly had saved Jamaica and dealt a hard blow to the French fleet, it was not a mortal blow; the French losses had not been crippling and were compensated for by the arrival of more ships. However, they had lost the initiative in the Caribbean, and for that, Rodney is to be fully credited.

Maj. Gen. George Augustus Elliott, c. 1784. Print after a colored pencil drawing by John Zoffany. (Author's photo)

### Maj. Gen. George Augustus Elliott (1717-90)

Born on Christmas Day 1717, Elliott was the seventh son of the Baronet of Stobs in Roxburghshire, Scotland, near the English border. Educated at the University of Leyden in Holland and at the French military academy of La Fere, he joined the British army aged 17 and served both in the Horse Grenadier Guards and as a field engineer. In the 1740s, he campaigned in Flanders and his talents were evident enough to King George II who made him his ADC in 1756. In 1759, he raised the 15th Light Dragoons, one of the new light cavalry regiments which had



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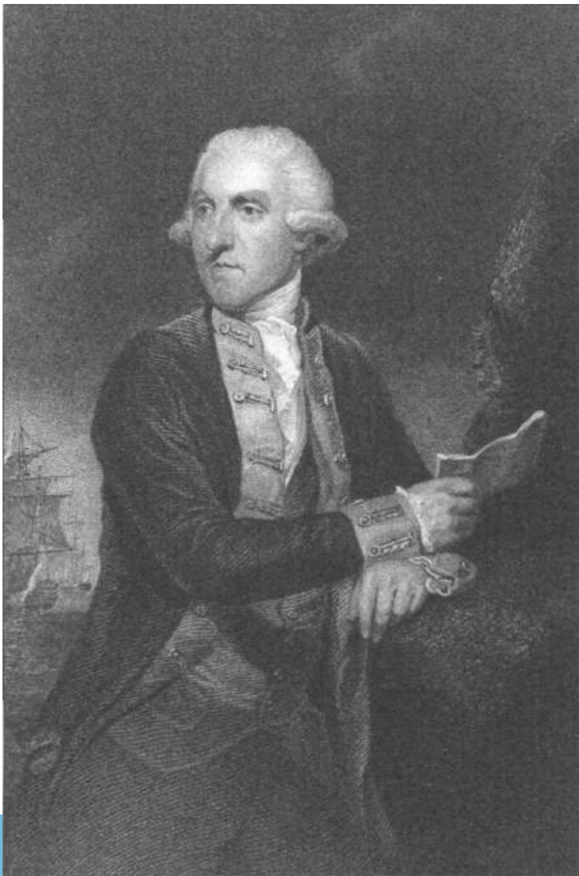
outstanding success at Emsdorff. He was also promoted to major-general that year and, in 1762, was second-in-command to Lord Albermarle at the siege and capture of Havana, the prize money of which made him a rich man. The post-war period was somewhat quiet and, in 1774, now a widower, he accepted the role of commander-in-chief in Ireland. However, the position required much more political maneuvering than he cared for and no sooner had he arrived than he asked to be recalled. Elliott was a stern person with austere manners; he only drank water and was a vegetarian; he was a disciplinarian and yet not too meticulous when it came to uniforms, and was seen as being fair. He was rarely regarded with either warmth or affection, but commanded considerable respect. His next posting, in 1777, suited his character to a tee - the governorship of Gibraltar.

When Elliott arrived, he found the place in good condition largely thanks to Lt. Col. William Green of the engineers who had improved the fortifications following the recommendations of a Board of Ordnance commission on the defenses of Gibraltar in 1769. One of the conclusions the commission reached was that an attack across the narrow strip of land connecting it to the mainland was all but doomed to failure. Seaborne attacks were considered the most likely, and work on the batteries and the guns redoubled. Soon after Elliott's arrival, the rumors of war with Spain grew, even more so after France entered the conflict in June 1778. A year later, Spain declared war and on June 21, 1779, Elliott was advised by the Spanish that he was henceforth blockaded. Soon, trenches were built by thousands of Spanish troops across the narrow peninsula - the Great Siege had started. Hoping to starve the 4,430 men of the garrison into surrender, the Spanish put a tight land and sea blockade around the Rock. Food became especially scarce and starvation loomed until Adm. Rodney broke the blockade after his victory over de Langara and arrived at Gibraltar with his Spanish prizes on January 26, 1780. Rodney brought much needed food, supplies, ammunition and reinforcements and sailed out in mid-February with the Rock's dependants. The blockade was resumed by the frustrated Spanish. By mid-February, the garrison was suffering many hardships due to shortages of all kinds, but on April 12, 1781, Adm. George Darby's fleet provided the second relief of the siege. The famished garrison was still in good spirits thanks to the resolute attitude of its governor who seemed to embody all the virtues of steadfast resistance and defiance against the odds. The blockade continued after the fleet's departure and the Spanish, now over 21,000 strong, resorted to all-out bombardment of the town of Gibraltar. Although the town was partly leveled, the spirits of the 6,000 men defending Gibraltar were kept high - and soon would soar. Elliott, wishing to

**R.Adm. Samuel Hood (1724-1816) had a fairly unspectacular career until sent to the West Indies in 1780 as second-in-command to Rodney. He participated in a series of actions in the islands and off the American coast under Graves (who muddled the signals at Chesapeake Bay in 1781 thus giving the French the advantage). Hood caught up again with de Grasse in early 1782 at St Kitts and at the Saints, where he brilliantly led his division, capturing de Grasse and five ships-of-the-line. In 1792, he presided over the Court of Inquiry into the famous mutiny on HMS *Bounty*. He wears the admiral's unofficial undress uniform c. 1774-83. (Print after Sir Joshua Reynolds' c. 1783 portrait)**





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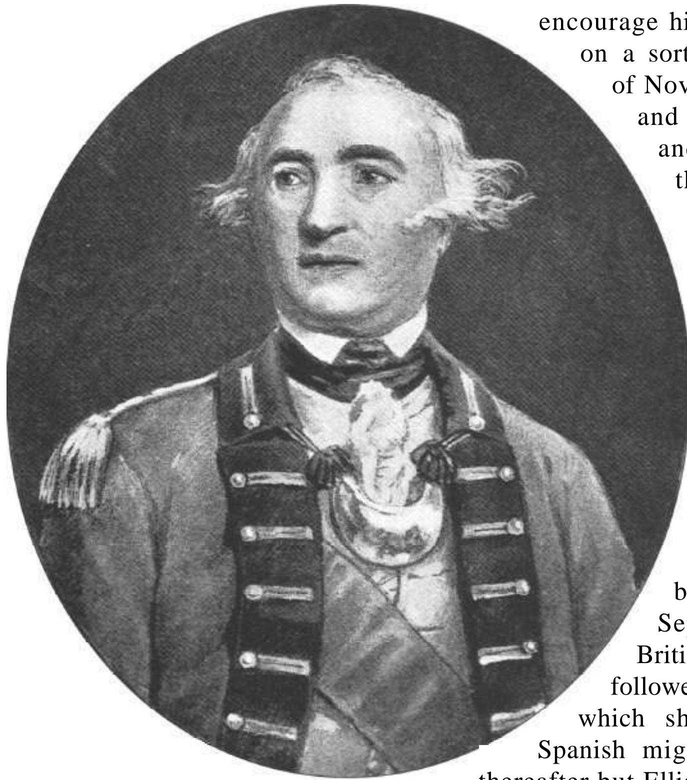
encourage his men while shaking up the enemy, decided on a sortie to raid the Spanish lines. On the night of November 27, 1781, several columns of British and Hanoverian soldiers surprised, overcame and destroyed the Spanish forward lines on the narrow peninsula with trifling losses. The humiliated Spanish now called on the French to help and the Duc de Crillon, who had previously captured Minorca, came with French troops and took over command of the besieging army. To subdue the town, Michaud d'Arcon the chief French engineer, had armored battering ships built that would be protected from British fire while bombarding Gibraltar's defenses into submission. Indomitable as ever, Elliott and his men were ready and, when the battering ships approached Gibraltar on September 13, 1782, they were set on fire by British hotshot at pointblank range. This was followed by Adm. Howe's relief in October 1782 which shattered whatever hopes of prevailing the Spanish might have had. The bombardments lessened thereafter but Elliott remained vigilant as surprises were always possible. On February 2, 1783, firing stopped and the blockade was lifted three days later. The Great Siege of Gibraltar was over.



**Frederick Haldiman (1718-91) was a talented Swiss officer in the British army who served in North America during the Seven Years War. He was appointed governor-general of Canada serving between 1778 and 1784. The French-speaking Haldiman did a great deal to ease the tensions and keep the Canadians favorable to the Crown if mostly neutral in the conflict. In strategic terms, he was to safeguard Canada while keeping the pressure on the Americans' northern frontiers while his garrison of British troops was being reduced. He therefore used the German troops as garrisons while promoting raids deep into American territory by parties of Loyalists and Mohawk Indians. This portrait shows him in the uniform of a field officer of the 60th Foot (Royal Americans) in the early 1770s.**

The conduct of the garrison and its commander won the admiration of friends and foes. Elliott, as dour as ever, was thanked by parliament, knighted, and in 1787 raised to the peerage as Lord Heathfield, Baron of Gibraltar. On July 6, 1790, while at Aix-la-Chapelle, this outstanding soldier died of palsy in his 73rd year.

## FRANCE

### Lt. Gen. Jean-Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Comte de Rochambeau (1725-1807)

Born into the high nobility, Jean-Baptiste was a somewhat delicate child and was destined to join the church. While he was at the seminary aged 15, his elder brother died and, *noblesse oblige,* his career was henceforth to be in the army which he joined the following year. He served with Marshal de Saxe in Flanders and in Germany during the War of Austrian Succession (1744-48). He was a brigadier-general at the start of the Seven Years War serving at the capture of Mahon, Minorca, in 1756. Promoted to major-general in 1757, he campaigned and was wounded several times in Germany. Following the war, he promoted the reforms sweeping the French army and insisted that officers should be thoroughly trained and highly educated.

Although at ease in the highest circles of society, learned, well read, highly efficient and a veteran of more battlefields than most generals, Rochambeau had an unpretentious, reserved personality



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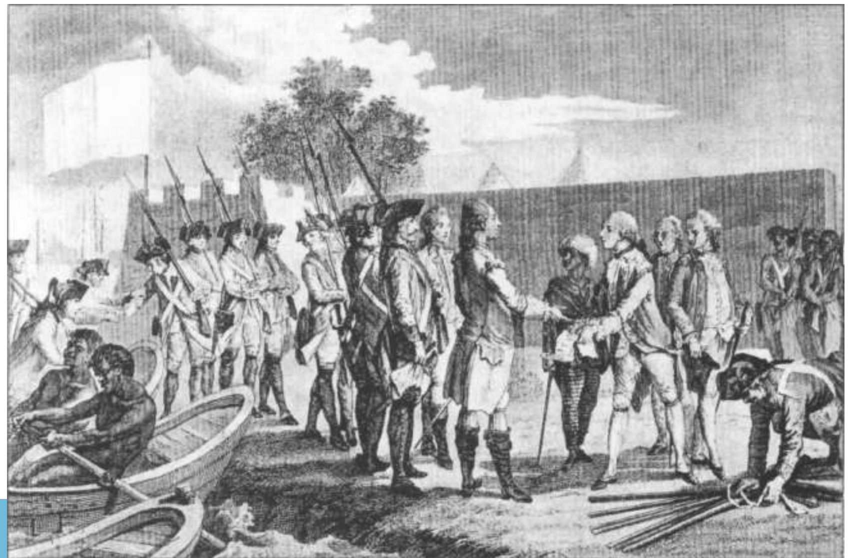
Comte de Rochambeau, 1787. Print after John Trumbull's sketch taken from life in Paris for his painting of the surrender of Yorktown. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Photo: RC)

and was a very tactful and considerate man. All these qualities were just what France's Foreign Minister, the Comte de Vergennes, needed and, one night in March 1780, Rochambeau was summoned to Versailles where King Louis XVI appointed him to command the army to be sent to the United States. The king added that he felt he was entrusting the alliance with the Americans, the "true allies" of France, into Rochambeau's hands. Thus, Lt. Gen. Rochambeau's expedition was not merely a highly important military campaign but also an equally vital diplomatic mission. He surrounded himself with some of the best and most talented officers in the army: d'Abboville, one of Lt. Gen. Gribeauval's colleagues, to command the new ordnance models of his artillery; Berthier, the brilliant young staff officer who would become one of Napoleon's best marshals; and Lauzun, one of France's ablest and most daring light-troop commanders. The units that landed in Newport, Rhode Island, that July were well disciplined, motivated, well supplied, well armed and most of all, well led. Rochambeau insisted that the most rigid discipline be observed by the French troops and that their dealings with the Americans be correct and courteous in all aspects. The Americans, who had been fed Protestant propaganda for years that the French were small, ugly, effeminate, frog-eating, lazy and cowardly, were now most surprised to see the smart and disciplined French army as it marched towards New York and then towards Yorktown during the summer of 1781: it was nothing like they had been led to believe. Furthermore, Washington's American troops had joined up with them, and in spite of language and various technical difficulties, everyone got along very well. Indeed, the



The Duke de Lauzun receiving the surrender of Saint-Louis in Senegal from the British on January 31, 1779. Goree and Gambia also surrendered. (Print after Lausan)



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Washington-Rochambeau march from Rhode Island to Virginia was one of the most important in the country's history as it marked an enormous change of attitude, a realization that a powerful ally was indeed on hand to help - in a word, it brought hope; hope that American independence could and would be achieved.

The self-effacing Rochambeau was largely responsible for this state of affairs. On arrival he had immediately placed himself under the command of George Washington. The American general-in-chief was, in many ways, an equally reserved individual and, as Segur put it, Rochambeau seemed "to have been purposely created to understand Washington and to be understood by him". With such harmonious relations in the senior command, whatever difficulties arose were quickly solved in a spirit of respect and friendship. The siege of Yorktown was, in many ways, Rochambeau's masterpiece. He had seen many sieges before and this one, which he knew to be vital for the war's outcome, was flawlessly carried out thanks to the excellent technical resources of the French army and the additional troops under Maj. Gen. Saint-Simon brought from the West Indies. The American and French light corps first surrounded Cornwallis' troops, then Yorktown was invested: the artillery did an excellent pounding job, the outer redoubts were stormed by French and American troops and, on October 7, Yorktown surrendered turning over 22 colors and 180 guns in the process. After this triumph, the fighting all but ended in North America. Rochambeau with most of his army left Boston in December 1782. Back in France, he received many decorations and honors. In 1790 he was promoted to marshal and retired two years later as he was rather elderly and wished to avoid the politics of the French Revolution. He quietly passed away in 1807.

It should be mentioned that Rochambeau is occasionally confused with his son, Donatien-Marie-Joseph de Vimeur, Vicomte de Rochambeau, who went to North America as Colonel of the Saintonge Regiment and was sent back to Versailles in the summer of 1781 with secret dispatches calling for a second corps to be sent to North America. This was deemed unnecessary after the fall of Yorktown. Young Rochambeau became a major-general during the 1792 campaign in Flanders, then served in the West Indies, most notably in Haiti in 1802 succeeding Napoleon's brother-in-law, Gen. Leclerc, in the disastrous expedition there. In British captivity from 1804 to 1813, he served bravely in Germany in 1813 and was killed at Leipzig on October 13.

### Col. Armand-Louis de Gontaut-Biron, Duc de Lauzun (1747-93)

The flamboyant young duke was a scion of France's wealthy, high-nobility. He was colonel by the age of 20 and saw his first action in 1768 campaigning with light troops in the hills of Corsica. He was also

**V.Adm. Charles Hector Theodat, comte d'Estaing (1729-94), served for many years in the land forces in Flanders and in India during the Seven Years War. He eventually joined the navy and rose to vice-admiral in 1777. Possessing a difficult personality, he was resented by many navy officers as an "intruder", but he could discern seaworthy talent as proven by his decision to promote Suffren. In 1778, he led a fleet of 13 ships to Newport, Rhode Island, then sailed for the West Indies where he was named commander-in-chief. However, he failed to prevent the fall of St Lucia to the British in December. In July 1779, he attacked and captured Grenada but failed to take Savannah in September. After a number of indecisive engagements, he returned to France in early 1781. In 1789, he rallied to the ideas of the French Revolution but he was arrested in 1794 and guillotined. He is shown in this c. 1783 print wearing the full dress uniform of a vice-admiral according to the 1764 regulations, but with black velvet breeches.**



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Charles-Francois-Joseph, Comte de Flechin (1744-1801), came to Martinique at the head of his Tourraine Regiment in 1780 and took part in the siege of Yorktown in October 1781. He was at Basseterre in St Kitts when, on January 28, 1782, the British landed a relief force. Flechin, with a party of 300 men, charged the head of the main British column. The stunned British re-embarked. Brimstone Hill surrendered on February 12 and Nevis also capitulated largely because of Flechin's outstanding action. Leading 500 men, Flechin accepted Montserrat's surrender ten days later. Flechin later served in the Auxerrois regiment and he is shown in this portrait wearing its uniform of white faced with black with silver buttons and epaulets. The Order of St Louis and the Order of Cincinnati medals are pinned to the lapel.

a handsome, quick-witted and noted courtier, and, in 1778 he was made colonel-in-chief of the *Volontaires étrangers de la Marine* (Foreign Volunteers of the Navy). This brigade-like new unit was to have up to eight legions of mostly German soldiers, comprising infantry, hussars and artillery, and was intended for service overseas. The *Volontaires étrangers de la Marine* raised only three legions, the 1st going to the West Indies, and the 3rd to Mauritius and later India. Lauzun was more interested in managing a corps at home and, in 1780, the 2nd Legion that had remained as a depot in France was transformed into Lauzun's Legion.[3]

Eager for action, Lauzun commanded the troops sent with Adm. de Vaudreuil's fleet to capture Senegal from the British: it fell on January 30, 1779. His new corps, the *Volontaires Strangers de Lauzun* (known to Americans as Lauzun's Legion) comprising 300 hussars and 300 infantry, sailed for North America with Rochambeau's army in June 1780. Once on Rhode Island, there was little action and it was not until a night skirmish on July 17/18, 1781, that a detachment saw action against some British light dragoons. The French army was now marching south past New York and Philadelphia and the hussars of Lauzun's Legion proved to be valuable scouts as it neared and then invested Yorktown.

The most famous action of Lauzun's hussars took place during the siege of Yorktown near Gloucester Point against the light cavalry of Tarleton's British Legion. One day, according to the duke's memoirs, an American Virginia dragoon galloped into his camp saying that Tarleton and his troopers were approaching. Lauzun went out with a party of hussars to see for himself. On the main road, he saw an American woman in front of her small house and asked her if Tarleton was about. She answered that Tarleton had just been there and had boasted that he very much wished to "shake hands with the French duke." A delighted Lauzun answered that he had come precisely to give him that satisfaction. The woman, Lauzun wrote, "pitied me very much thinking, I think from experience, that it was impossible to resist Tarleton; and the American troops were of the same mind." Just then, within a hundred feet of the house, Lauzun heard the hussars of his forward scouts firing pistols. He hurried to find suitable terrain to deploy his hussars in battle formation as he saw "the English cavalry three times stronger than mine; I charged immediately and we closed with them. Tarleton saw me and came towards me, pistol high. We were about to fight between our two troops when his horse fell, [tripped] by one of his dragoons that was pursued by one of my lancers. I ran toward [Tarleton] to take him, [but] a party of English dragoons came between us and protected his retreat, and I kept his horse." Tarleton and his dragoons charged Lauzun a second time, but without breaking the French hussars who



See Men-at-Arms 244: *The French Army in the American War of Independence 1778—83*

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then counter-charged. Tarleton's cavalry broke and was chased right up to the British lines enclosing Gloucester Point. A few days later, Cornwallis surrendered and Lauzun was given the honor of going to France to inform the king of this great victory. King Louis XVI granted him the privilege of keeping his hussars in regiment form. Lauzun's Legion remained in the USA until March 1783 when it sailed for France. The infantry was disbanded but the hussars went to Lauterbourg where the new *Hussards de Lauzun* regiment was formed on September 14, 1783: it later became the famous 5th Hussars of Napoleon's army, which was incorporated into the *Hussards du Haut-Rhin* (later 6th Hussars) after his fall in 1815.

Lauzun's career after the American Revolution was eventful. On the death of his uncle, Marshal Biron, he inherited the dukedom and was henceforth called the Duc de Biron. In 1789, having become politically active, he favored reform and by 1792 was a major-general commanding the Army of the Rhine and served in Vendee against the royalists the following year. By now, though, the French nobility was being hunted down by Robespierre's extremist government. The duke was stripped of his command, arrested and guillotined that year.

**V.Adm. Francois Joseph Paul de Tilly, Comte de Grasse (1723-88), gained his early experience in the navy of the Order of Malta before entering the French navy in 1740. He attained flag rank by the time of the American War of Independence. On August 29, 1781, de Grasse's fleet of 24 ships arrived off Cape Henry, Virginia, and landed some 3,100 French troops. On September 5, a fleet of 19 British ships under R.Adm. Thomas Graves was defeated by de Grasse's "Off the Virginia Capes." This had far-reaching consequences as it doomed Cornwallis within Yorktown. The British eventually regained the initiative and, on April 8, 1782, Rodney's and Hood's 37 ships overcame de Grasse's 30 ships off the archipelago of the Saints in the West Indies. De Grasse sacrificed part of his fleet to save the convoy he escorted and was eventually captured on board his 110-gun *Ville-de-Paris* after a 13-hour fight.**

## Gen. Francois Claude Amour, Marquis de Bouille (1739-1800)

Born on October 19, 1739, into the Auvergne nobility, Bouille (a cousin of the Marquis de Lafayette) entered the King's Musketeers aged ten as a cadet. He rose rapidly up the ranks, became Colonel of the Vexin Regiment in 1761 and went to Martinique in 1765 with his regiment. He became Governor of Guadeloupe three years later, was promoted to brigadier-general in 1770, and seven years later became governor-general of the French West Indies (excluding Haiti).

When news of the declaration of war with Britain reached Martinique on August 17, 1778, the energetic Bouille formed a body of some 1,800 men and sailed on September 6 for the nearby British island of Dominica, landing the next morning and catching the British by surprise. Following the loss of Dominica, the British counter-attacked. On December 13, 1778, VAdm. Barrington managed to land some 5,500 men on St Lucia which surrendered without a fight. By June 1779, reinforcements were arriving from France and Bouille instigated a series of attacks. On June 19, St Vincent surrendered without firing a shot. On July 2, a powerful French fleet landed 1,680 troops on the island of Grenada. With Bouille remaining in Martinique, d'Estaing took command of the troops that attacked Fort St George, which surrendered on July 4. There followed numerous naval actions with some minor island raids during the rest of 1779 and most of 1780 with no clear advantage to either side. In mid-October, there was a



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The Marquis de Bouille giving orders at the siege of the Fortress of Brimstone Hill, seen in the background, on the island of St Kitts in January 1782. (Print after Le Paon)

tremendous hurricane, one of the worst on record, which devastated *most of the islands, causing sickness epidemics and loss of shipping, and* hostilities were suspended. On December 15, 1780, they recommenced: Adm. Rodney tried to recapture St Vincent but the British were beaten back by the French garrison and the Carib Indians; however, the Dutch island of St Eustatius surrendered to Rodney on February 3, 1781. Meanwhile, Adm. de Grasse agreed to Bouillé's plan for an attack on Tobago. To do this, Bouille cleverly masterminded a feigned attack on St Lucia which had a substantial British garrison. On May 8, 1781, Bouille landed on St Lucia with 1,200 men and took Gros-Islet which he held as a base. He then made forays into the island while the British garrison mustered: when news came that the British fleet was coming from St Kitts, Bouille knew the feint was working. The French sneaked back on board their ships on May 25 and sailed for Tobago which surrendered after some spirited fighting on June 3. The next day, Rodney arrived from Barbados to rescue Tobago but it was too late. The capture of Tobago clearly put the British on the defensive. On the night of November 25/26, 1781, Bouille landed and attacked the British garrison at St Eustatius in the early morning. The British were totally unaware of the landing and, mistaking the red coats of Dillon's Regiment for their own troops, were completely surprised and the



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governor was captured on the spot. The nearby islands of St Martin's and Saba also surrendered.

The next target was St Kitts. The French landed there on January 11, 1782. Its British garrison retreated to the fortress of Brimstone Hill, considered almost impregnable. Bouille began siege operations but, at noon on January 28, Adm. Hood managed to land a relief force of about 1,300 men, hoping to attack the French army's rear. However, the Comte de Fléchin, with only 300 men, attacked the British force, which was forced to return to the ships. Having abandoned all hope of relief, Brimstone Hill's garrison of 750 regulars and 300 militiamen surrendered on February 13. Bouille was none too pleased by the 1783 peace treaty, as it returned most of his acquisitions to the British, keeping only Tobago and regaining St Lucia. He was recalled to France and left Martinique in 1783. During the French Revolution, he remained staunchly loyal to the royal family and was one of those who attempted to save Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette in their failed Varennes escape in 1791. He later joined the Emigre Army of the Prince of Conde and was an adviser to the Duke of York. He died in England on November 11, 1800.

### Adm. Pierre-Andre de Suffren de Saint-Tropez (1726-88)

Suffren was born near Aix-en-Provence into a noble family whose dominion included Saint-Tropez. He entered the navy as a midshipman during 1743, and underwent his baptism of fire on February 22, 1744, against British ships off Toulon. He was commissioned an ensign in 1747 but was captured at Cape Finistere. In 1748 he obtained leave from the French navy to serve in Malta, where the Knights of Malta's navy patrolled the western Mediterranean countering the powerful North African pirates. He spent the next few years mostly at sea chasing pirates where he gained an appreciation of swift and daring actions. In 1754, Suffren went back to France, was promoted to lieutenant in 1756, saw much action and was captured again by the British. At the end of the Seven Years War in 1763, the French fleet had to be rebuilt, and after several years of mundane routine, Suffren returned to Malta from 1769 until 1772 when he was promoted to captain. Until the end of his life, Suffren remained sentimentally attached to the Order of Malta and his proudest title was that of Bailli.

By 1778, it was obvious that war between France and Britain was imminent. Suffren sailed for America on his 64-gun *Fantasque* with a fleet led by VAdm. d'Estaing. He showed much daring at Newport when, leading several frigates, he boldly entered the harbor forcing the British ships there to be scuttled. The French fleet then sailed to the West Indies and Suffren took part in engagements at St Lucia, Grenada and the abortive siege of Savannah. Suffren was, by

Pierre-Andre Bailli de Suffren, c. 1785. In this somewhat formal portrait, the portly Suffren is shown in the full dress uniform of a vice-admiral. This consisted of a blue coat with scarlet cuffs, lining, waistcoat and breeches, white stockings, gold lace and buttons, the two laces on the cuffs denoting his rank. The light-blue sash indicates that Suffren was decorated with the prestigious Order of the Holy Spirit for his Indian Ocean battles: the crosses below his neck and on the coat's breast are of that order and that of Saint-Louis. A palm tree and a vaguely oriental port in the background evoke the naval campaigns on eastern seas. (Musée naval et napoleonnien, Cap-d'Antibes. Author's photo)

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V.Adm. Sir Edward Hughes (17207-94) led the Royal Navy squadron in the Indian Ocean against the French fleet under an equally portly Suffren in 1782-83. An experienced and skillful sailor, although never outstanding, he was perhaps lucky thanks to the conservatism of some of Suffren's captains, being several times repulsed but never destroyed. These inconclusive battles were not greeted with satisfaction in Britain and he had no further commands. He is shown in the Royal Navy's 1783-87 admiral's full dress uniform. Print after Sir Joshua Reynolds. (National Archives of Canada, C8561)

now, recognized as a daring, temperamental and non-conformist officer. He was vitriolic in his criticism and demanded the highest standards from his officers and sailors. His hot temper and impatience were famous in the navy. When things did not go his way, he would swear loudly in his native Provençal dialect. With such rough manners, many officers could not stand him, but others thought him to be a leader of genius.

In early 1781, he was given command as senior captain of a squadron of five ships-of-the-line to reinforce the Dutch at the Cape of Good Hope, who feared British attacks. Indeed, a British fleet under Commander Johnstone had sailed for the cape from Gibraltar on March 16 with 2,500 troops on board. On April 11, Johnstone put into the port of La Praya on the Portuguese Cape Verde Islands. Suffren needed water and also headed for La Praya, having no idea the British were already there until warned by the scout-ship *L'Artésien* which had been sent ahead. Seeing a stronger enemy - the British had 446 guns against the French's 352 - in the harbor of the currently neutral but traditionally hostile Portuguese, was too much for Suffren: he ordered an immediate attack. The surprise was complete and Johnstone, who was on shore, strove to rally his ships but ended up trying to organize the defense from a longboat. The British sailors, however, reacted quickly and the cannonade redoubled between mostly the French ships *Héros* and *Annibal* against the British ships in harbor while Portuguese shore batteries also opened up on the French ships. For Suffren, the damage had been done and he took his squadron out of La Praya. Johnstone would be delayed by repairs while the French reached Cape Town on June 21. Suffren then sailed on into the Indian Ocean meeting Adm. d'Orves, the French senior naval commander, there. On December 6, the combined squadrons, totaling 11 ships-of-the-line, sailed towards India, but d'Ovres became ill and on February 9, 1782, command was passed to Suffren. To protect India, the British had a sizeable fleet under the command of Adm. Sir Edward Hughes. Over the next months, Suffren and Hughes fought each other in five furiously contested if mostly inconclusive engagements. Suffren's tactics questioned rigid line formation for a naval battle, to the horror of his more conservative officers. They disobeyed his instructions several times thus compromising the fleet's efficiency in battle. In June 1782, Suffren sent four captains back to France and more followed. Contested by some of his officers, he also had the loyalty of others and the utter admiration of the fleet's sailors who trusted his leadership in battle. In all his battles, the temperamental Suffren displayed an ice-cold calm and would slowly walk back and forth on deck amidst the worst dangers. The tactical innovations brought about by Suffren, eventually gave the French fleet the upper hand. The ability of Suffren's fleet to keep the British at bay, albeit with much difficulty as Hughes was a worthy opponent, allowed the French to land troops in India in 1782-83 and to capture the



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important naval base of Trincomale (in Ceylon, now Sri Lanka). At Cuddelore in mid-1783, Suffren forced Hughes' British ships to withdraw confirming the French fleet's dominance of the Indian Ocean. However, shortly thereafter, a ship arrived from Europe with news that the war had ended, and British India was thus saved.

Back in France, Suffren was greeted with wide acclaim. Having left a mere captain, he now returned a vice-admiral, only three years later. Suffren died in Paris on December 8, 1788, having given the French navy some of its most glorious hours.

## SPAIN

### Maj. Gen. Bernardo de Galvez (1746-86)

Born on July 23, 1746, Bernardo de Galvez was from a family at its political height in the 1770s and 1780s. Several of its members had assumed influential positions, notably Bernardo's uncle, Don Jose de Galvez (1720-87), who was the Minister of the Indies at the time of the American War of Independence. Bernardo was the son of Don Matias de Galvez who was president and captain-general of Guatemala, a territory then covering Central America from Mexico to Panama, and later became viceroy of New Spain. His uncle Don Miguel de Galvez was a councilor in the kingdom's War Council.

As a young lieutenant, he took part in the Portuguese campaign of 1762-63 and then was sent to northern Mexico and campaigned against the Apaches in 1769. Returning to Europe in 1770, he spent time in the French army to further his military education. In 1775, he served in North Africa under Gen. O'Reilly, a former governor of Louisiana. This sparked an interest in that part of America and Galvez was promoted to lieutenant-colonel commanding the *Fijo de Luisiana* Regiment (the colony's regular garrison infantry unit): he arrived at New Orleans in 1776. On January 1, 1777, he was named acting governor of Louisiana and was later confirmed in the post with his army rank rising to brigadier: in February 1781, he was promoted to major-general *(Mariscal de Campo).*

**Esteban Miro, colonel of the Spanish colonial *Fijo de Luisiana* Regiment from February 1781, and governor of Louisiana and Florida following the departure of de Galvez in 1782. Although overshadowed by Galvez, Miro was an experienced soldier and a talented administrator who ably secured the gains made from the British on the east shore of the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico. He remained governor until 1792. (Print after a c. 1783 portrait attributed to J. Salazar)**

In late July 1779 news reached Galvez that war had been declared with Great Britain. In late August, he led an expedition of some 1,400 men (mostly militia) north to Fort Bute at Manchac. The fort was taken on September 6 without loss, and then Baton Rouge was besieged from September 12-21, when it surrendered. Within barely a month, Galvez had taken all the British posts on the lower Mississippi. It seemed so incredible to Maj. Gen. John Campbell, the British commander of West Florida, that he refused to believe it. Galvez meanwhile was already attacking Mobile and on March 14, 1780, its 300-strong British garrison surrendered.



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The next target for Galvez was Pensacola, the capital and remaining stronghold of British West Florida. It was defended by three forts built on hills. At the harbor's entrance was Fort Red Cliffs (or *Barracas Coloradas)* with heavy ordnance to prevent enemy ships from coming in. An attack on Pensacola was given priority by senior generals meeting in Havana on February 10, 1781, and on February 28 several warships and transports loaded with troops and supplies under Galvez sailed out of Havana for Pensacola. Until 1781, he had been left relatively free to follow his active ways but, as operations grew in importance and involved more troops and more warships from various commands, Galvez found himself saddled with an officers' council, which as expected exercised caution.[4] The senior naval officer, Capt. Don José Calvo de Izarabal, said no ship could enter the port but Galvez was as resolved as ever to risk an attack. On March 17, Galvez boarded Pierre Rouseau's brigantine *Galveztown,* raised his flag as commander-in-chief, set sail with a signal to other low draft ships to follow him and entered Pensacola harbor unscathed in spite of heavy fire from the British shore batteries. A humiliated Calvo watched the whole thing then left for Havana. Pensacola was invested and the siege of the town went ahead. Maj. Gen. John Campbell and his garrison of 2,500 men saw their hopes of relief vanish when on April 21 reinforcements arrived to join Galvez whose force now numbered 7,906. The bombardments redoubled and on May 8 disaster struck the British.

**Bernardo de Galvez is pictured here in 1785, in a marvelously modern way, during his time as Viceroy of Mexico. (Museo Nacional de Historia, Mexico City)**

[4] See *The Journal of Don Francisco Saavedra de Sangronis 1780-83,* edited by Francisco Morales Padro, translated by Aileen Moore Topping for details of the tensions within the Spanish command structure and the nature of these debates.



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At nine in the morning, staff officer Francisco Saavedra was looking at the British forts from a commanding position when, to his astonishment, he saw "Fort Half Moon explode with a terrifying noise. It had been set afire by a shell from our howitzers, which fell into the powder magazine within the fort." Galvez and other senior officers rushed out to see what had happened and immediately ordered Spanish troops to attack and secure the fort's remains which was rapidly done. Now hopelessly doomed, the British raised a white flag over Fort George at three in the afternoon and surrendered the next day.

Thanks to Galvez's daring, the British presence on the lower Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico was eliminated and indeed, in the 1783 peace treaty, East Florida was ceded to Spain. For his out-standing services, Bernado de Galvez was promoted to lieutenant-general and raised to the nobility as the Conde de Galvez. His coat of arms bore the vessel Galveztown and the motto Yo Solo (I alone) commemorating his bold entrance into Pensacola harbor. In 1784, he was appointed Viceroy of New Spain but fell ill and died in Mexico City on November 30, 1786.

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# THE PLATES

## A: SARATOGA (OCTOBER 1777)

### A1: Sir John Burgoyne

The uniform of British general officers, traditionally scarlet with blue facings and profusely laced with gold, came under precise regulation after the Seven Years War. Other major military powers, such as France, Austria or Russia, already had elaborate dress codes for their marshals and generals. Although it had a relatively small army compared to other major powers, Britain's successes late in the war had given its generals international status and, in April 1767, they were assigned, like other powers, three orders of dress. The grand uniform was a scarlet coat with dark blue cuffs, without lapels, gold buttons and gold embroidered lace edging the front, the collar, the cuffs and the pocket flaps. Lieutenant-generals were to have two laces on each cuff and major-generals one lace. With regards to epaulettes, they were not yet a rank distinction and the order only specified a gold epaulette with fringes on the right shoulder, like the gold aiguillette it replaced. It was really in the early 1780s that the practice of having epaulettes on both shoulders became prevalent and it became a regulation requirement in 1792. The coat's lining, waistcoat and breeches were initially ordered to be buff, the waistcoat ornamented with gold embroidery, but this was probably unpopular with the senior officers and, from 1772, the colour was changed to white and the waistcoat left plain according to later portraits (Lord Shelburne's for instance). This gala uniform must have been very rarely worn outside of appearances at court.

The dress uniform was the one actually worn on most formal occasions. It consisted of a scarlet coat, called a frock, with dark blue lapels and indented cuffs, a low collar of scarlet with a small dark blue patch at each side of the front, and a white coat lining which was not turned back. The buttons were set in line on the lower sleeve (the lowest button on the cuff) and vertically on the skirts. The rank distinctions were given by the placement of the buttons and the embroidered buttonholes on the lapels, lower sleeves and skirts. Lieutenant-generals had them in sets of threes, major-generals in pairs (as shown here for Burgoyne) with a gold epaulette on the right shoulder initially, and in the

**The death of Maj. Gen. Simon Fraser at the Battle of Freeman's Farm near Saratoga on October 7, 1777, was a major blow to the British army under Maj. Gen. John Burgoyne invading northern New York State from Canada. Fraser, a popular officer in the army, was leading the light infantry when mortally wounded by an American rifleman. In this painting by Samuel Woodforde in 1800, Fraser is met by Gen. Friedrich von Reidesel (1738-1800), commanding the German contingent, with Baroness von Reidesel just behind. To the right, a distraught Maj. Gen. Burgoyne runs in with arms raised. One of the ladies behind may be Lady Harriet Auckland and the one further back possibly Frederica von Reidesel. (National Archives of Canada, C46207)**

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1780s an epaulette on both shoulders. A white waistcoat, breeches and stockings, black shoes or boots and a gold-laced hat rounded off the general's dress uniform. They did not wear gorgets or sashes but had a gold-hilted sword with a gold sword knot. (Based on portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1766, and George Romney, 1782)

**A2: Horatio Gates**

The uniform of American generals at the time of the War of Independence had its origin in the dress of a company of Virginia militia formed on September 21, 1774, by a group of gentlemen of Fairfax County. This independent company of militia was not to exceed 100 men. The company's commander was none other than Col. George Washington, the hero of the French and Indian War. The uniform adopted by the company was a dark blue coat with buff facings, gold buttons, buff waistcoat and breeches, white stockings: officers had gold buttons and epaulettes, a gilt gorget engraved with the arms of colonial Virginia and a sword. Washington wore his blue and buff Fairfax County Independent Company's uniform when Congress offered him the command of the Continental Army on June 15, 1775. He continued to wear this uniform which, in late 1777, impressed the Comte de More for its simplicity as it had no lace or embroidery. This was unlike a general's uniform of any other nation and the sober approach towards military dress remained well into the 19th century in the United States. Other generals with Washington found this dress suitable, and took to wearing it; and so it was that during the late 1770s the blue and buff uniform became the dress of American generals and staff officers.

Washington was initially more concerned about rank badges than uniforms. It was important that officers be recognized and so a general order was issued in July 1775. The distinction between American generals and their staff consisted of "ribbands," silk sashes worn over the right shoulder. As commander-in-chief, Washington had a light blue sash, major-generals had a violet sash, brigadier-generals had pink, and ADCs and majors of brigade had a green sash. Portraits of Washington show the sash worn under the coat and over the waistcoat: one of the earliest, painted by Charles Willson Peale in 1776, shows the light blue sash, plain epaulettes and an indented cuff with three buttons on the lower sleeve. A French officer observing the American generals reported in early 1778 that the sashes were of varying widths. Washington and the major-generals had the widest sash, brigadier-generals had a narrower "red" sash and the ADCs had a still-narrower dark blue sash. The variation in color is probably due to the various hues used, as the orders do not mention any changes. This "ribband" or sash system lasted until July 1780.

On rare and special occasions, the early dress of American generals might have matched Gen. Washington's blue and buff uniform, but typically it was more modest. Gen. Gates was described by the Comte de More as an honest looking, short and portly farmer in his fifties wearing a wool cap under his hat at Valley Forge in late 1777. He was standing with generals Washington, Arnold, Lee, Sullivan, Stark, Knox, Col. Alexander Hamilton and Knox's ADC, the French artillery officer Duplessis-Mauduit. A dumbfounded de More recalled: "their hats with a cotton cap, some having overcoats, others covering themselves with blankets of thick wool just like those given to the sick in our hospitals in France. I realized a bit later that they were the officers and generals." (Based on portraits by Charles Willson Peale, 1782 and c. 1799; *Memoires du Comte de More,* Paris, 1898.)

**A3: Benedict Arnold**

A colonel at the time of the 1775 invasion of Canada, Arnold was promoted to brigadier early in 1776 and held the rank of major-general from July 1777: he would thus have worn the violet sash of that rank. Arnold was not very tall at about 5ft 5in. but this was about the average for the time. He had an athletic physique, piercing eyes and dark hair which was graying by 1780. He was wounded in the lower left leg at Quebec on the night of the assault (December 31, 1775), the ball lodging in his ankle, but he recovered. It was at Freeman's Farm on October 7, 1777, during the Saratoga campaign that his left leg was shattered by a bullet and then crushed as his horse fell on it. He remained crippled and thereafter walked with a limp. Adolpheus Parkhurst, a militiaman who served at West Point in 1780, recalled that Arnold "was a lame man, having been wounded in his ankle, and on that foot he wore a large red shoe. He was a smart-looking man about middling size." (Based on portraits by du Simitiere, c. 1779, and John Trumbull.)

**Maj. Gen. Benedict Arnold, c. 1780. This print was published in Paris in 1781 after a sketch of Arnold by Pierre-Eugene du Simitiere done in Philadelphia before he defected to the British on October 3, 1780. It is the only reliable likeness of this hero/villain of American history. (National Archives of Canada, C139530)**



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## B: GERMANTOWN (OCTOBER 6, 1777)

### B1: Sir William Howe

No likeness of Howe during this period appears to exist, and the 1777 print by C. Corbett is usually used to show his likeness. However, there is no certainty this was his actual appearance at the time.

### B2: Henry Knox

From the time of his youth, Knox was a tall, portly man and he remained a hefty individual in spite of hardships on campaigns, weighing 280lb by war's end. He had small but piercing gray eyes, a powerful voice and a ready smile. His first uniform, worn from November 1775 if not before, would have been of the Continental Artillery Regiment - dark blue faced with red with gold buttons and epaulettes. It was probably at this time that he had a British gorget he owned erased of the royal arms and re-engraved with "US", an arm with a sword and the motto *Inimica Tyrannis* (hostile to tyrants). Following his promotion to brigadier-general and Chief of Artillery on December 27, 1776, he seems to have continued wearing the artillery uniform for some time as a Peale miniature of May 1778 still shows him in that uniform and without the green sash distinguishing brigadiers. But he later wore the American general's blue and buff, certainly from 1780, with a silver star on his epaulettes and two stars when promoted to major-general in March 1782. (Based on portraits by Charles Willson Peale, 1778, c. 1782 and by Gilbert Stewart c. 1805; the gorget is in the Fort Ticonderoga Museum.)

### B3: John Sullivan

In his only known likeness, Sullivan is shown wearing the standard blue and buff uniform worn by American generals. (Based on a portrait by W.D. Tenney after a 1790 sketch by John Trumbull.)

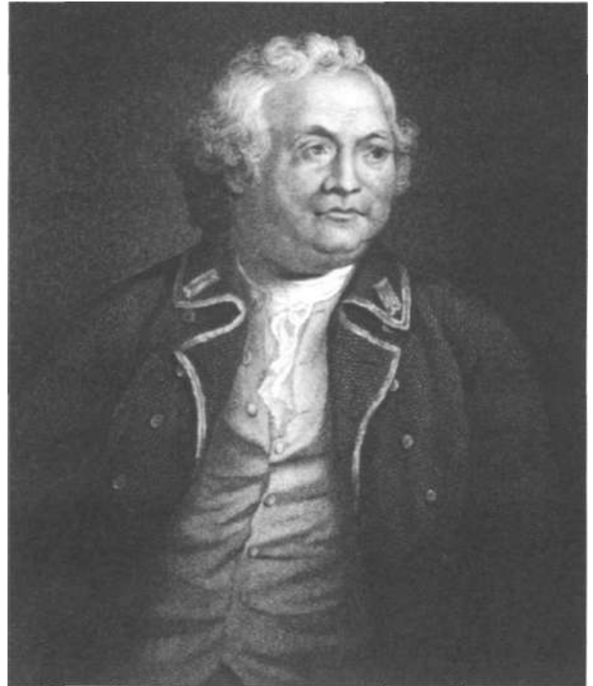
## C: NORTHWEST AND MONMOUTH (1778)

### C1: Sir Henry Clinton

The most commonly worn uniform by British generals was the ordinary service dress. It was not formally covered in the regulations but every general had it and wore it. It was similar in style and colors to the dress frock except that, instead of being embroidered, the buttonholes were plain being only garnished with silk twist cord of the ground color (scarlet twist cord on scarlet cloth and blue twist cord on blue). There was a gold epaulette on the right shoulder initially, and in the 1780s epaulettes on both shoulders. As with the dress uniform, a white waistcoat, breeches and stockings, black shoes or boots would be worn on service. The service hat was plain with no gold lace according to most portraits (for instance Lord Rawdon's by Gainsborough, Lord Cornwallis' by Gardner or Gen. Elliott by Carter). In his miniature portrait by John Smart, c. 1777, Clinton is shown wearing the unofficial undress coat.

### C2: Charles Lee

The only contemporary image of Charles Lee that might give an idea of his likeness is a caricatured print (see page 20) which shows him as a very thin man. He is dressed in a dark coat with lighter colored facings and plain buttonholes, buff waistcoat and white breeches, short boots and what appears to be a round hat. A straight sword hangs on a dark leather shoulder belt. All in all, this represents the typical dress of American army officers in the late 1770s. Simeon Alexander, a Massachusetts militiaman from Northfield,



**Maj. Gen. Israel Putnam (1718-90) of Connecticut, who had been a Ranger officer during the French and Indian War, took up arms again in 1775 and commanded the American army with Washington at the siege of Boston. Jovial but rather incompetent, Putnam was defeated by Howe at Long Island in August 1776. Print after a sketch by John Trumbull. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)**

recalled Gen. Lee arriving with George Washington at the siege of Boston in 1775: "I remember him well; he was a small man, and the soldiers used to laugh about his great nose." A description which, by and large, tallies with the crude print. Lee was also seen at the 1775 siege of Boston by Samuel DeForest, a Connecticut militiaman, who recalled that "he was dressed with a coarse blue duffel overcoat" on a cold day in the fall.

### C3: George Rodgers Clark

Clark's biographers, at first sight, offer somewhat differing views of his appearance. According to Temple Bodley, he had light hair and blue eyes, while J.A. James notes he had red hair and dark eyes; both descriptions might well be put together to mean light, reddish hair with dark blue eyes. His portrait was painted much later by John Jarvis and it shows a balding Clark with dark, willful eyes. In his youth - he was only 26 when he led the expedition into Illinois - he had a sturdy 200lb frame, a muscular body and is said to have been 6ft tall. He and his men of the Illinois Battalion have often been depicted with buckskin and racoon fur caps by late 19th or early 20th-century illustrators but there appears to be little evidence of what was really worn. All were unpaid militiamen enlisted on the frontier and would have worn their everyday frontier clothes. Buckskins are possible but hunting shirts (called "cassoks" by Clark, these being "long loose coats ... some having caped collars") and



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The meeting of Adm. Suffren with Hyder Ali on July 26-29, 1782, was a nightmare come true for the British in India. Hyder Ali and his son Tipoo Sultan ruled the Mysore during the last quarter of the 18th century. Much of that time was spent fighting the increasingly powerful and intrusive British. The American War of Independence brought them, for a while, French military help and great encouragement such as that provided by Suffren's historic visit. Hostilities went on for many years after 1783: Tipoo Sultan, nicknamed the "Tiger of Mysore," was killed at the storming of Seringapatam by the British in 1799. (Print after Sergent)

French-Canadian *capots* would have been the most likely dress. Clark's memoirs mentioned that the "design of our dressing as woodsmen, in Leggins, cassoks, handkerchiefs tied on our heads, was, in case the enemy had actually invested the fort, to quit our horses, fall into their lines, and fight with the Indians, as they would not be apt to discover us from their friends." (Based on P. Copeland and M. Zlatich, "Illinois Regiment, Virginia State Forces, 1778-1781", *Military Collector & Historian,* Summer 1972.)

### D: VARIOUS FRONTS (CANADA, INDIA, GIBRALTAR)

D1: Sir Guy Carleton

Gen. Carleton would have worn the usual dress and service uniform for generals, especially as he served in garrisons such as Quebec in 1775-76 and New York in 1782-83. He is recorded as having worn Canadian clothing, notably a hooded *capot* coat, when he hurriedly left Montreal as Gen. Montgomery's American army entered the city. His later portrait shows him in the dress uniform of a lieutenant-general. (Based on George F.G. Stanley, *Canada Invaded 1775-1776,* Toronto, 1973; and anonymous portraits of c. 1763 and c. 1790.)

D2: Bailli de Suffren

The obese Suffren was possibly the most slovenly dressed naval officer of his day. He certainly possessed the superb 1764 full-dress uniform of French navy officers (a dark blue coat with scarlet cuffs, lining, waistcoat and breeches, and the coat and waistcoat richly trimmed with gold buttons and embroidery) as he wore it during his meeting with Hyder AN, sweating considerably from the heat. On board ship and away from oriental protocol, it was another matter. William Hickey, a British gentleman held in custody on board Suffren's 74-gun flag ship the *Heros,* observed in early 1783: "his extraordinary dress and figure... in height, he was about five feet five inches, very corpulent, scarce any hair upon the crown of his head, the sides and back tolerably thick. Although quite grey, he wore neither powder nor pomatum, nor any curl, having a short cue [queue] of three or four inches tied with a piece of old spun yarn. He was in slippers, or, rather, a pair of old shoes, the straps being cut off, blue cloth breeches unbuttoned at the knees, cotton, or thread, stockings (none the cleanest) hanging about his legs, no waistcoat or cravat, a coarse linen shirt, entirely wet from perspiration, open at the neck, the sleeves being rolled up above his elbows as if just going to wash his hands and arms." Hickey was even more surprised when he realized



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that Suffren "always appeared as above described during the morning." By the evening, however, "when dinner was announced" Suffren would retire "to his state room, from whence he, in five minutes, returned, dressed in a blue jacket of thin coast cloth, his short collar buttoned, with a black stock on. He had also pulled up his stockings, buttoned his breeches' knees, and put on shoes instead of slippers." There were a few occasions when he was seen "oppressed by the heat, sweltering under a heavy laced uniform suit of clothes, which, however, in no way affected his temper or his customary kind manner." Most likely, what Hickey saw were elements of a captain's undress uniform worn for everyday duties introduced in 1768. This prescribed a plain, dark-blue *surtout* with gold buttons and epaulettes to be worn with (in principle) the 1764 regulation scarlet waistcoat, breeches and stockings, although several portraits of naval officers show black or dark blue breeches and white stockings rather than scarlet. (Based on *Memoirs of William Hickey,* edited by Peter Quennell, London, 1984.)

**D3: George Augustus Elliott**

In all of his portraits, which were done after the Great Siege of Gibraltar of 1779-83, Lt. Gen. Elliot is shown with epaulettes on *both* shoulders, on his laced dress uniform and also on his unlaced service uniform. This is evidence that by about 1780 many general officers were adding the second epaulette on the left shoulder so as to not be mistaken for a lowly junior regimental officer. (Based on portraits by F. Bartolozzi, George Carter, John Singleton Copley, Sir Joshua Reynolds, John Trumbull and John Zoffany.)

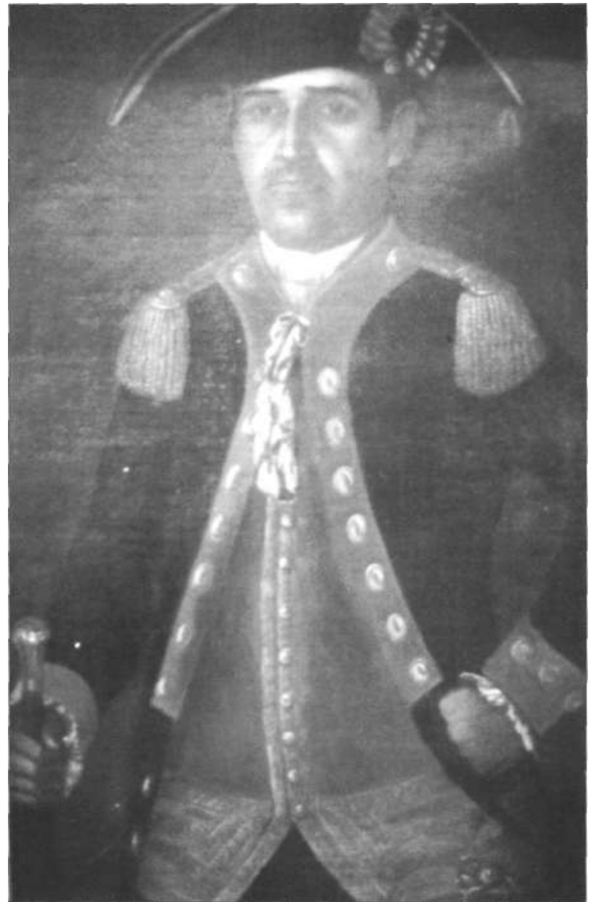
## E: THE CARIBBEAN (1778-83)

**E1: Bernardo de Galvez**

From the beginning of the 18th century Spanish general officers (captain-generals, lieutenant-generals and major-generals) wore dark blue coats with scarlet cuffs and lining, gold buttons, gold embroidery and lace, a scarlet waistcoat laced with gold, dark blue or scarlet breeches, and gold laced hats. At the time of the American Revolution, captain-generals had three embroidered laces on each cuff, lieutenant-generals had two embroidered laces on each cuff and major-generals *(Mariscal de Campo)* had one embroidered lace. From 1765, brigadier-generals had a dark blue coat with scarlet collar and cuffs, and dark blue lining, a waistcoat and breeches, narrow silver lace edging, one silver embroidered lace at each cuff. The brigadiers of infantry had buttons on the right side of the coat front, brigadiers of dragoons had buttons on both sides and brigadiers of cavalry had scarlet lapels. The uniform worn by Galvez at the time of the siege of Pensacola was that of a major-general. It should be added that in the Spanish army it was fairly common for generals to wear a regimental uniform with general-rank rows of embroidered lace on the cuffs above the three straight laces of a colonel. (Based on portraits at the Museo Naval, Madrid, and at the Museo Nacional de Historia, Mexico City; Archivo General de la Nacion [Mexico], Reales Cedulas, Vol. 86.)

E2: **Marquis de Bouille**

De Bouille was both a major-general and governor-general of the French Windward Islands with his headquarters at Martinique. He thus was entitled to the 1775 general's uniform and would have worn the same dress as Rochambeau (see page 63) except with one row of cuff lace.



**Pierre Georges Rousseau (1751-1810) was born in France, emigrated as a child to North America and, from 1775, was an officer in the Continental Navy arriving at New Orleans in 1779. He joined Governor de Galvez's Baton Rouge campaign and took part in the capture of a British brigantine. He was given command of the vessel renamed *Galveztown* and commissioned captain in the Louisiana Militia. He took part in the capture of Mobile in 1780. He "acquired great glory" when he steered the *Galveztown* with Gen. de Galvez on board past the heavy fire of British batteries at Pensacola in 1781. Later, from 1792 to 1803, he commanded the Spanish galley fleet on the Mississippi. In this c. 1782 portrait, his hat has the triple-alliance cockade: red for Spain, black for the American colonies and white for France. (Louisiana State Museum, New Orleans. Author's photo)**

Given the heat of the West Indian climate, it may have been made of light, good quality material and he would most likely have worn a white waistcoat and breeches, probably of fine linen. (Based on a contemporary print in Leymarie's *Catalogue* and an unsigned portrait miniature in François Grouvel's *Histoire chronologique de la Martinique pendant la Revolution,* 1999.)

**E3: Sir George Rodney**

At the time V.Adm. Rodney led the fleet in the West Indies, the Royal Navy had only one all-purpose uniform for flag



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officers which was supposed to serve as the dress and the service uniform. It had been introduced in 1767 and consisted of a dark blue coat with a small blue collar, white lapels, cuffs and lining, gold buttons, gold lace edging and bastion-shaped buttonhole lace loops, a white waistcoat laced with gold, white breeches and stockings, and a gold laced hat. Having one uniform for all occasions was not to the liking of all admirals and it seems several elected to wear an unofficial undress coat of the same cut and colors as the regulation coat but having only simple square-ended gold lace only at the buttonholes. Admirals Hood and Kempenfelt are shown wearing it but not Rodney, who may have kept to the regulation uniform. (Based on a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds; and also Dudley Jarrett, *British Naval Dress,* London, 1960.)

**F: GUILFORD COURTHOUSE (MARCH 15, 1781)**

F1: Nathaniel Greene

By 1780, the blue and buff uniform was prevalent amongst American general officers and a general order issued on June 18 prescribed it officially. The order stipulated: "The Major General to wear a blue coat with Buff facings and lining, yellow buttons, white or buff under cloaths, two Epaulets, with two stars upon each and a black and White Feather in the Hat." The brigadier-generals had the same uniform but one star on each epaulette and a white feather. There were amendments on July 19 stipulating that "The Feathers further to be worn by Major Generals are to have White below the black above: it will be best to have one Feather the upper part black." The same order also instituted the famous "Alliance" cockade, now that Rochambeau's French troops had begun to arrive in North America: "It is recommended to the officers to have black and White Cockades; a black Ground with a white relief emblematic of the expected union of the two Armies." (Based on *The Writings of George Washington,* edited by John C. Fitzpatrick, XIX, pp. 21-22, 209-210; and a portrait by Charles Willson Peale, 1783.)

F2: Banastre Tarleton

The uniform of the British Legion, which Lt. Col. Tarleton commanded, was green with black collar and cuffs, the officers having gold buttons and narrow gold lace edging. The cavalry wore jackets with three rows of buttons on the breast, breeches and boots, and the vizored black leather cap reinforced with metal and featuring a bearskin crest and a silk turban that became known as the "Tarleton" helmet. This helmet was adopted by several regular light dragoon regiments late in the war and, from 1784, by all light dragoons. While campaigning in the south, the British Legion was also seen wearing white jackets. (Based on a print after a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1782.)

F3: Charles, Earl of Cornwallis

Gen. Cornwallis is shown in 1783 and 1786 portraits wearing the dress uniform. A later portrait showing an older

**ABOVE Maj. Gen. Johannes de Kalb (1721-80) was a Bavarian-born French army veteran officer. He came to the United States accompanying Lafayette in 1776. Washington was impressed with his experience and he eventually became the general commanding the Maryland Division. An efficient and trusted commander, he led the most significant combat force in the south until killed in action at the Battle of Camden. Print after Charles W. Peale. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)**

**LEFT Maj. Gen. Banastre Tarleton, c. 1790, after a print published in 1799. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)**



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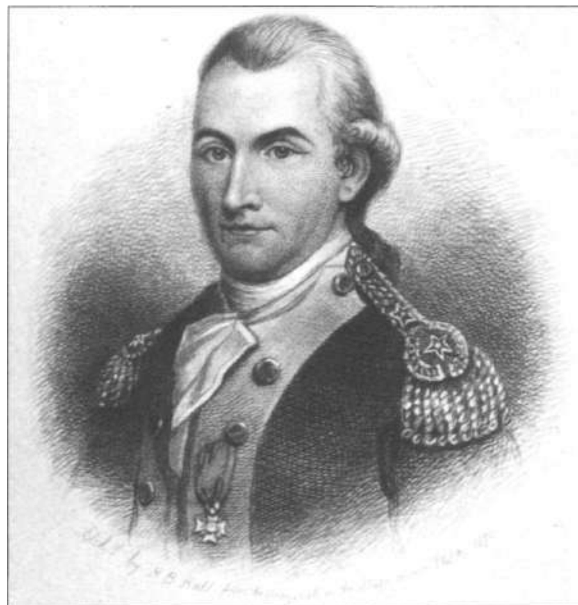
**Louis Le Begue du Presle Du Portail (1743-1802). This talented French engineer officer was loaned to the American army in 1777, made chief engineer and laid solid foundations for the practice and development of military engineering in the United States. Following the siege of Yorktown where he commanded the American engineers and oversaw their siege works, he was made a major-general. He is justly considered the father of the US Army Corps of Engineers. Back in France, he eventually became Minister of War and was instrumental in having the French army adopt Count Guibert's tactical ideas in the 1791 regulations. Print after Charles W. Peale, c. 1783. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, USA. Author's photo)**



and stouter Cornwallis in India has him wearing the unlaced undress coat, an order of dress he surely also had when he served in America. (Based on portraits by Thomas Gainsborough, 1783, and John Smart, 1786.)

## G: YORKTOWN (OCTOBER 1781)

### G1: Friedrich von Steuben

Being a Prussian officer, von Steuben has often been depicted wearing a Prussian army uniform drilling rag-tag American troops into a coherent, heel-clicking force. In reality, he probably never wore Prussian uniform in America. Rather, his likeness by Peale shows the blue and buff uniform of American generals. (Based on portraits by Charles Willson Peale, c. 1781-82.)

### G2: Marquis de Lafayette

As with most American generals, the dress of Lafayette in his first years in North America is not known but he probably adopted his commander's blue and buff uniform early on. There are several portraits of Lafayette in the 1780 uniform of a major-general, the golden epaulettes each bearing two silver stars. One of the most interesting portraits by Charles Willson Peale painted between 1779 and 1782, which form the basis of this illustration, shows Lafayette with a dark blue coat with buff collar, cuffs, lapels, turnbacks and breeches, a white waistcoat, gold buttons and epaulettes, and a plain black hat with a black-tipped white plume.

### G3: Duc de Lauzun

The dashing hussar officer who commanded the contingent of his legion with Rochambeau's expeditionary force was also one of Louis XVI's most accomplished courtiers. His military feats were only surpassed, it was maliciously said, by his romantic conquests in the boudoirs of power. Indeed, the fine plume in his cap (white tipped with black, which was not a regimental pattern) was said to have been a parting gift from Madame de Coigny, one of the ladies at court. His dress in America would have been the uniform of his legion's hussars according to the 1780 decree forming the unit; a sky blue dolman with scarlet cuffs, sky blue pelisse, scarlet breeches, gold buttons, cords and lace. The scarlet edging of the men's pelisse was replaced by fur for the officers but that garment was found to be intolerably warm in the south by all in the unit. Lauzun reported in 1783 they had none left and did not replace them due to the heat in Virginia. The cap more likely worn by Lauzun in America would have been his unit's black mirleton although the fur cap is possible. Indeed, he is shown with the fur cap in John Trumbull's famous painting of the surrender of Yorktown but this was produced years after the event. (Based on S. Bonsai, *When the French were here,* New York, 1945; and a c. 1785 portrait in Leymarie's *Catalogue illustre: exposition retrospective des colonies frangaises de l'Amerique du Nord,* Paris, 1929.)

## H: YORKTOWN (OCTOBER 1781)

### H1: George Washington

Later portraits, usually by Peale, show Washington wearing the epaulettes as rank distinctions officially introduced in July 1780; these were usually without (but sometimes with) both the light blue sash and the epaulettes variously with no stars, two stars or three silver stars. This three-star distinction was unique to Washington as the commander-in-chief. Another curious feature mostly seen in 1779-81 Peale portraits shows the top of Washington's cuffs cut to a scalloped shape. (Based on portraits by Charles Willson Peale, 1776 to 1784.)

### H2: Benjamin Lincoln

In all of his portraits from c. 1782 to 1806, Lincoln is shown wearing the standard blue and buff uniform of American general officers. (Based on a portrait by Charles Willson Peale, c. 1782.)

### H3: Comte de Rochambeau

Rochambeau's dress in America was in accordance with the September 2, 1775, dress regulation for French generals in force at the time of the American War of Independence. This consisted of a completely dark blue coat (including cuffs and lining), gold lace and buttons, a scarlet waistcoat laced with gold and scarlet breeches. Rank distinction consisted of two rows of lace at the cuffs for a lieutenant-general and one row for a major-general. The dress coat was garnished with broad lace while the "small" or ordinary service uniform had narrower lace. The latter was probably the uniform routinely worn by Rochambeau in America. There was also a dark blue undress frock with narrow lace. (Based on portraits by Charles Willson Peale, 1782, James Peale and John Trumbull.)



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