

*Minutemen for Months: The Making
of an American Revolutionary Army
before Washington,
April 20–July 2, 1775*

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THE SCENE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON taking command of the army is ingrained into the American mind as one of the key moments of the Revolution, comparable to Washington's crossing the Delaware or Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown. On July 3, 1775, Washington, clad in a shining, blue uniform emblazoned with brass buttons and gold ruffles, gallops to a halt under the famous elm tree on the Cambridge Common, with mounted escort in trail. As his larger-than-life white horse rears up, the general tips his tri-cornered hat to take command of the army. Many years later, Joshua Slocum, one of the soldiers waiting for the general, recalled the emotion of the moment: 'What must have been the feelings inspired when . . . for the first time, we were permitted to see, face to face, the great man who, under

I would like to thank Fred Anderson, Bernard Bailyn, Yonatan Eyal, Ronald Florence, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, and the members of the Spring 2001 Harvard University graduate seminar in early American social history.

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God, was destined to achieve the Independence of his country, and to lay broad and deep the foundation of this stupendous republic.¹

Recounting the story of that July day to his son, Slocum continued: 'The Commander in Chief, immediately on his arrival among us, commenced organizing the army . . . which he found in a sad condition, undisciplined, poorly armed and equipped, and to some extent lacking in subordination.' While Washington's beaming figure dominates the moment, Slocum and his comrades are not absent from the scene. These rag-tag minutemen huddle together in undisciplined chaos. They have no uniforms, guns, or organization, and no leader of their own. Their eager faces display their awe at the general's presence but cannot mask their insubordination or the sad condition of their broken ranks.

Historians have long taken this image for granted. They have accepted the sharp dichotomy Slocum suggests between the militia that fought at Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill, and the Continental Army that Washington subsequently organized. The first generations of American historians celebrated these achievements of the 'father of our country.' By emphasizing the troubled state of the forces Washington took over, they enhanced the daunting challenge that he faced in his first public moment.² In recent years, scholars of the 'new military history' have focused

1. John Slocum, *An Authentic Narrative of the Life of Joshua Slocum: Containing a Succinct Account of His Revolutionary Services* (Hartford, Conn.: Printed for the author, 1844), 67-68. The author claims to be merely compiling and writing down the stories his father, Joshua, told him, so it is not clear whether father, son, or both have edited the story this way.

2. I take this notion of historical emplotment from Hayden White, 'The Historical Text as Literary Artifact,' in White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978). I do not wish to diminish Washington's accomplishments, rather to account for why the period before his arrival has been ignored and discounted by generations of historians. Historians writing about the beginning of the war have focused on three self-contained events: the opening conflict at Lexington and Concord, the Battle of Bunker Hill, and Washington's taking command, instead of looking at the more gradual transformation of the revolutionary forces. As early as George Bancroft, American historians have emphasized the chaos of the New England forces when Washington took command in order to enhance the Virginian's reputation. Bancroft labels Washington's predecessor 'incompetent' and goes into great detail on Washington's arrival. (Bancroft, *A History of the United States from the Discovery of the American Continent*, 10 vols. [Boston: Little, Brown, 1838-76], 7:321, 388; 8:40-45.) Richard Frothingham's *History of the Siege of Boston, and of the Battles of Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1873), like Bancroft's account of the beginning of the war,

on the differences between the militia and the Continental Army in order to scrutinize the character and social composition of the Continental Army.³ Despite the historiographic reversals, the early image has lived on, part of the lore of the Revolution that every schoolchild learns.

Lost in all of the rhetoric is the fact that by the time Washington reached Cambridge, New Englanders had already created an

focuses mostly on the battles of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill. Frothingham writes of Washington's arrival: 'Everything about him inspired confidence and hope,' and claimed that Washington introduced 'subordination into the army' (222-23). Allen French, in the early twentieth century, wrote two books on the Siege of Boston that again enforce the importance of Lexington and Concord, Bunker Hill, and Washington's arrival. French does not entirely ignore the contributions of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress to establishing an army (Allen French, *The First Year of the American Revolution* [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1934], and *The Siege of Boston* [New York: Macmillan, 1911]).

While many contributions to the 'new military history' ignore this period altogether in their thematic treatments of the Continental Army, even the most recent narrative accounts of the war follow these nineteenth-century trajectories for the opening of the conflict. Don Higginbotham, in *The War of American Independence: Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763-1789* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), titles his chapter for this period 'Militia versus Regulars.' He writes: 'When the War of Independence began, there was no American army. During the early hostilities only the colonial militias, especially that of Massachusetts, occupied the field against Britain's regulars (57).' Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution, 1763-1789* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982) contains extensive accounts of the battles at Lexington and Concord (266-73), Bunker Hill (281-92), and Washington's arrival and organizing activity (293-304), but little on the nature of the American forces before Washington came. Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), likewise implicitly accepts the notion that the American forces in late June were the same that had fought the first day of the war and states that the 'militia . . . had proven its competence at Lexington and Bunker Hill (37).' Recently, in an essay for the Massachusetts Historical Society, Bernard Bailyn has written that following Bunker Hill, if the Americans had any hope of success in the war, 'a leader of great personal force and of great political and military skill would have to be forthcoming' (Bailyn, 'Essay on Battle of Bunker Hill' [Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 2001, <http://www.mass-hist.org/bb/essay.html>; accessed August 23, 2004]). Fred Anderson's article 'The Hinge of the Revolution: George Washington Confronts a People's Army, July 3, 1775,' *Massachusetts Historical Review* 1 (1999): 21-48, most directly argues for Washington's importance, but is based on Washington's own writings (and thus his own assessment of his role).

3. Much of the recent literature, beginning with John Shy, 'A New Look at the Colonial Militia,' *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser. 20 (1963): 175-85, and continuing up to Charles Patrick Neimeyer, *America Goes to War: A Social History of the Continental Army* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), debunks the myth that the fighting was done by yeoman farmers. The most comprehensive account of the character of the Continental Army is Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War*. Royster classifies 1775 as an era of 'rage militaire,' in which men were eager to fight and needed (and received) little organization and support. I would like to modify that notion by showing how this willingness to take part in an army was carefully molded by leaders of the Revolution, and not as haphazardly as Royster suggests.

army that would fight in the American Revolution. Contrary to what Joshua Slocum and others would later claim, soldiers at the time, many of whom recorded important activities in their diaries each day, paid little attention to Washington's arrival. Although he might be 'destined to achieve the Independence of his country, and to lay broad and deep the foundations of this stupendous republic,' Washington was still a relatively unknown country squire from Virginia when he arrived in Cambridge on July 3, 1775. Elihu Clark of Connecticut, stationed in the second American camp at Roxbury, made no mention in his diary of Washington's arrival on July 2 or 3. On July 4 Clark hired a horse, arranged for friends to carry out his duties, and rode all the way into Cambridge. All that he wrote about his trip was that he left his 'hat to be dreped.'⁴ He made no mention of Washington at all. Samuel Hews was one of many soldier-diarists who wrote of July 3, 'nothing remarkable today.'⁵ While several diaries mention Washington's arrival, they do so in passing, while describing other activities of the day: organizing for parade with their units, serving guard duty, building fortifications, and dodging bombardments.

As the diary entries of many soldiers suggest, when Washington arrived in Cambridge, the American forces outside Boston were no longer the disorganized band of individual citizen-soldiers that amateur patriots and professional historians have long imagined. The Massachusetts civilian and military leaders of the Revolution had already transformed the minutemen who had rushed to defend their neighboring towns on April 19 into a structured, organized, and disciplined army. The records of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress (the representative governing body directing the Revolution) and the orderly book left behind

4. Elihu Clark, 'Journal of Elihu Clark, 1775 Apr. 20-Dec. 20,' Force papers, Series 7E, entry 17, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Entry is for July 4, 1775. I have left the original spelling, grammar, and punctuation in the soldiers' diaries, although in some cases, where I am working from published versions, the text has already been modernized. Hereafter all dates refer to 1775 unless otherwise noted. See Appendix for a list of diaries consulted in the preparation of this article.

5. Samuel Hews, 'A Journal for 1775,' in *The Military Journals of Two Private Soldiers* (Poughkeepsie, N.Y.: Abraham Tomlinson, 1855), 60. James Stevens wrote 'nothing hapeng extroderly' for July 3, 'Diary,' *Historical Collections of the Essex Institute* 48 (1912): 41-70.

by General Artemas Ward, the first commander of the revolutionary forces, underscore that they did so consciously and actively.⁶ The surviving diaries of twenty-two soldiers, from privates to colonels to chaplains, show how New England men experienced these opening days of the Revolutionary War and became integrated into a new army.

In the twelve weeks following the Battle of Lexington, the efforts of civilian and military leaders to instill in thousands of men a will to fight as part of an American army kept these men from going home and kept the Revolution alive. This brief period marked an important turning point between rebellion and revolution, between resistance and war. The enlistment of a paid, recruited army, the sole purpose of which was to fight the British regulars, not to defend a hometown, signaled a point of no return on the path towards American independence.

This transition from a collection of minuteman companies to a permanent army can be broken down into three roughly distinct phases. In the first phase, which lasted for a week following April 20, leaders of the Revolution stabilized the crisis and chaos of the immediate response to the outbreak of hostilities and designed the structure for a new army. Next, from the last days of April until the last days of May, officers and soldiers alike became aware that they would have to remain in their position surrounding Boston for some time, and became adjusted to more permanent routines and institutions of army life. The final phase, from the closing days of May until Washington's arrival, can be characterized by the new army's first significant fighting with the British and by a series of measures taken to enforce discipline.

In each of these three stages the participants have left behind evidence of three criteria necessary for the existence of an army:

6. This despite Royster's claims of the weariness of creating a standing army in the ideology of the Revolution, pages 35-40. I do not wish to defend Ward's tactical or strategic talents as a general. That has been done before by Charles Martyn, *The Life of Artemas Ward, the First Commander-in-chief of the American Revolution* (New York: A. Ward, 1921). The only other book-length account of Ward focuses on his position in the colonial elite: James Ferrell Smith, 'The Rise of Artemas Ward, 1727-1777' (Ph.D. diss., University of Colorado, 1990). The best biographical survey of Ward is in Sibley's *Harvard Graduates*, s.v. 'Ward, Artemas.'

first, the establishment of an organizational structure of units and chain of command; second, the carrying out of the practical tasks required by an army, such as paying and supplying soldiers, building hospitals, and guarding and cleaning camp; and third, the development of a common sense of belonging to an army. In other words, between April 20 and July 2, 1775, an American revolutionary army grew in words, in deeds, and in spirit.

An Army in Words (April 20–28, 1775)

Early on the morning of April 19, 1775, express riders alarmed the New England countryside that the British regulars had marched from Boston to seize the military stores that colonial rebels had deposited in Concord. While some towns, including Lexington and Concord, received the news in time to muster their companies of minutemen to confront the regulars, many towns farther away did not receive the alarm until days afterward. In the middle of the day on April 19, the news reached the town of Groton. The alarm spread quickly, and the members of the town's two minuteman companies—the rapid-response units that had been organized over the previous winter to complement the local militia—gathered and marched.⁷ Twenty-one-year-old Amos Farnsworth, living at home on his family's farm, served in one of the Groton minuteman companies and kept a diary of his experiences.⁸ Hours

7. Towns had raised militia companies since the earliest days of the colonial period. These companies were composed of nearly all of the men in the town between the ages of sixteen and sixty and served (in theory) as an emergency defense force for the town. Their original purpose was to protect against Indian raids. The minuteman companies had begun in the winter of 1774–75 when revolutionaries believed they needed smaller and quicker forces that could respond immediately to alarms. Robert Gross, *The Minutemen and Their World* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1976), 70–74.

8. Amos Farnsworth, 'Diary: April, 1775–May, 1779,' *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 2d. ser. 12 (1897–99): 74–107. Farnsworth's diary is neither the most extensively detailed nor the most typical of those I have looked at. I have, however, emphasized it in this paper for several reasons. First, Farnsworth is relatively reflective on his own experiences. Second, Farnsworth both responded to the initial alarm and enlisted into the permanent army. Many of the surviving diarists did one, but not both, of these activities. Finally, the Farnsworth diary covers many of the major themes and events mentioned more sporadically in other diaries. I have primarily, though not exclusively, used J. Todd White and Charles Lesser, *Fighters for Independence: A Guide to Sources of Biographical Information on Soldiers and Sailors of the American Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977) to locate soldiers' diaries from the period. Of the approximately seventy-five diaries I have looked at, twenty-two cover the time and place in question.

after the battle in Lexington ended, the company arrived and watched as the town began to recover from the day's tragedy. Farnsworth 'saw many Ded Regulars' and was shocked when he 'went into a house whare Blud was half over Shoes.'⁹ Farnsworth and his companions spent that first night in Lexington, and the next day marched to Cambridge, where the colonists who followed the Regulars' retreat back to Boston had set up camp the previous night.

Farnsworth wrote of his company's arrival in Cambridge: 'Thare was some men wanted to go to Charlston. I went for one and vewed the regulars and found thay was intrenching on Charlston hill.' Farnsworth's brief entry reveals much about the interests and attitudes of the thousands of men who arrived in Cambridge on the days after April 19. Many, like Farnsworth, who came from the country and missed the first day of fighting, had never seen British Regulars before. They had little idea of what to expect from war and had a keen interest in scouting out what a European army at work looked like. Farnsworth's entry also shows the irregularity of the forces arriving in Cambridge. Neither his company as a whole, nor individual soldiers, were *ordered* to march to Charlestown and scout the regulars. They do not even appear to have done this activity together. Farnsworth's language, 'I went for one,' suggests there were many who stayed behind. Acting on individual initiative, Farnsworth and his companions were a far cry from the professional soldiers they watched furiously digging to a new position. On this first day in camp they more played the part of curious tourists eager to explore a new surrounding.

Farnsworth's informal activity on April 20 followed the pattern of colonial resistance in the previous day's fighting. Historian David Hackett Fischer has corrected the myth that individual farmers single-handedly stood up to the British regulars at Lexington and Concord. Rather, they fought alongside their neighbors in minuteman and militia companies. There was little order or authority at work, however. When the Lexington militia gathered on the town green to block the British, they collectively debated

9. Farnsworth, 'Diary,' April 19.

whether to stand their ground or to retreat.¹⁰ Although they had elected their own officers, they saw no need to follow their every command. These were not soldiers following officers' orders, but men deciding whether to risk their lives to defend their town. The Massachusetts Provincial Congress's Committee of Safety, in theory, directed the overall resistance, but in reality there was little coherence in fighting. Companies simply went where they thought they might find action.

On the morning of April 20, General Artemas Ward arrived in Cambridge and took command of the colonial forces from William Heath, a Roxbury militia officer who, more than any other figure, had tried to direct the fighting the previous day¹¹ (fig. 1). Ward, an important official in his hometown of Shrewsbury, a representative to the Provincial Congress, and a veteran officer of the Seven Years' War, was one of three men who had been appointed the previous fall by the Provincial Congress to head the colony's militia efforts.¹² Ward set up his headquarters in

10. David Hackett Fischer, *Paul Revere's Ride* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 188–89. A large literature focuses on the colonial militia and minuteman companies and their fighting at Lexington and Concord. John Galvin, *The Minutemen: The First Fight: Myths and Realities of the American Revolution* (Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers, 1989) traces the origins of the minutemen and their role in the first day of fighting. John Morgan Dederer, *War in America to 1775: Before Yankee Doodle* (New York: New York University Press, 1990) offers a comprehensive survey of the colonial military tradition.

11. William Heath, *The Memoirs of Major-General William Heath* (New York: W. Abbott, 1901), 24. Ward had been notified of the alarm the previous day at about noon by Israel Bissell, an express rider on his way to Connecticut and New York with the news. As the story has it, Ward was in his sick bed when he received the news that morning, suffering from gallstones. He nonetheless saddled his horse, gathered his supplies, and rode off to join the battle. I do not know where this story originated, but it is mentioned, among other sources, in William H. Hallahan, *The Day the Revolution Began* (New York: William Morrow, 2000), 77: 'In Shrewsbury, Bissel alerted fat, slow-moving Artemus Ward, brigadier general and second in command of the Massachusetts militia. Racked with gallstones, the forty-eight-year-old General Ward struggled from his bed to his feet, climbed into the saddle, and in spite of extreme pain rode to Charleston.'

12. Ward had been appointed second in command. Jedidiah Preble, of Falmouth, appointed first in command, declined the command for reasons of old age and poor health. On Ward's appointment on October 27, 1774, as a field officer, second in command of the militia, see Massachusetts Provincial Congress, *The Journals of Each Provincial Congress of Massachusetts in 1774 and 1775, and of the Committee of Safety . . . and Other Documents*, ed. William Lincoln (Boston: Dutton and Wentworth, 1838), 35. Subsequent citations to this volume will be to the journals for each of the four sessions of the Congress and the 1774–75 journal of the Committee of Safety.



Fig 1. 'Boston with Its Environs.' This map of Boston in 1775 shows a city in wartime: State (formerly King) Street, Faneuil Hall, the Old South Meeting House, Beacon Hill, and 'places remarkable for Battles, Sieges, &c. indicated by a flag.' The fortifications of the British garrison on the peninsula of Boston, as well as the major American camps in Roxbury and across the Charles River in Cambridge, are clearly shown. Ward's headquarters were in Cambridge, adjacent to the town common. The areas that saw the heaviest fighting in the earliest months of the war are the peninsula of Charlestown and the islands in the Boston harbor, in particular Noddle's Island and Hog Island. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

the Hastings House in Cambridge, where the Committee of Safety was meeting. In daily councils of war with high-ranking militia officers and in meetings with the Committee of Safety, Ward sought to stabilize the chaos around him. It was a busy week for these leaders, and a tense one: at any point they expected the British regulars to attack either by land, toward Roxbury, or across the Charles River to Charlestown and Cambridge.

In addition to preparing for that scenario, they had thousands of men in camp who needed to be cared for, organized, and supplied. Following standard military procedure, each day Ward issued orders to direct the soldiers' activity. He created a quarantine for possible smallpox cases, posted various guards around the

American camps at Cambridge and Roxbury, ordered a newly appointed commissary general to supply the soldiers, organized his headquarters by naming officers of the day, ordered the officers of minuteman units to provide him with daily returns of the numbers of men in their companies and regiments, distributed orderly books to help those units organize their men, and established a daily schedule for reveille, parade, and curfew.¹³

By April 28, the orderly book kept by Ward's adjutant began to take on the form it would follow for the rest of the general's tenure. For each date, a password, officer of the day, field officer of the picket and main guard, and adjutant of the day were listed, followed by specific 'General's Orders' for the army. April 28, a week after Ward took command, was the first day that his orderly book contained just this standard set of orders with no additional commands, a sign that Ward and the army had weathered the initial storm.¹⁴

Amos Farnsworth's experience in his first week in camp reflected the military leaders' efforts to establish some stability in the army. During these days, he and his company were 'cept in mothon,' as he put it.¹⁵ They marched across the Charles from Cambridge to reinforce the American position at Roxbury. Once there, they responded to an alarm (which proved to be false) of a British attack and shuffled each night between houses that served as temporary barracks. On Sunday, April 23, the situation was calm enough that Farnsworth and his regiment were able to 'lay stil in the fore noon' and go to hear a 'fine sermon' in the meetinghouse in the afternoon. On Monday, Farnsworth went down below the American guards to observe once again the British regulars, and on Tuesday, he wrote, 'in the afternoon we went up to the Generals and received ordars and marched to Cambridge Again.'

Farnsworth penned a separate diary entry for each of his first

13. Jonathan Ward, 'General Ward's Orderly Book,' Artemas Ward Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, microfilm reel 4, April 20-26.

14. Cindy R. Lobel, 'Consuming Classes: Changing Food Consumption Patterns in New York City, 1780-1860' (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 2003), April 27, 28.

15. Farnsworth, 'Diary,' April 22. The phrase applies to his entire first week in camp.

few days in camp but wrote just a single, combined entry for the next four days, April 26 through 29. That these four days received just a collective recording suggests that the action-filled activities of his first days in camp had begun to subside. Farnsworth was no longer marching back and forth around Boston and life away from home was not quite as exciting and disorganized as it had been those first days. It also hints at the possible importance of the activity described in the entry: 'Was A Strugling with the offisers which should be the hiest In offist. Finaly Farwell got ordars to List And listed Some And then gined with townshind [Townsend, Massachusetts] Company and made out A Company. I myself listed with the rest.' Other surviving records can help unlock this cryptic entry to show how an American army was recruited and organized, at least on paper.

Farnsworth's description of struggles between officers, companies joining together, and 'listing' reflects the efforts of the Provincial Congress to create an actual army out of the disparate militia and minuteman companies gathered in Cambridge and Roxbury. In the fall of 1774, when the Congress had broken away from the British colonial government, its members had begun to make preparations for military resistance. They gathered military supplies, discussed alternate methods for military training, and organized the militia companies into larger battalions with elected field officers. In the early months of 1775, they began to plan an 'Army of Observation and Defense' to track the movements of the British regulars. In early April, they prepared oaths that this hypothetical army might take, rules and regulations it would follow, and even wrote to the other New England colonies about combining forces.¹⁶ The representatives from each town who served in the Provincial Congress were farmers, not professional politicians, and they adjourned home to take care of their fields on April 15, planning to reconvene in May to continue planning for this Army of Observation.

16. The Congress discussed these issues throughout April 1775, until their recess on April 15. 'Journal of the Second Congress,' April 1-15. 120-44; for rules and regulations adopted on April 5, see 120-29.

It appears from the Congress's records that the members planned to follow a model established during the Seven Years' War, when each year the colonial government recruited armies of Massachusetts residents to campaign alongside the British regulars. Historian Fred Anderson has described the stages of this recruitment process during the Seven Years' War. First, the colonial government selected officers and gave them 'beating orders' to go out to the towns and enlist men. Depending on how many men the prospective officers could sign up, they would be given a particular rank. The recruitment process was done in an orderly fashion in the late winter months of each year, and in the spring the companies and regiments gathered and marched off for the year's campaign.¹⁷ This system had worked well, but it was designed for organizing an army in peaceful surroundings and then marching it to a distant campaign. (The Massachusetts armies of the Seven Years' War fought in New York and Canada, never within the boundaries of Massachusetts.) It was not well suited to a wartime environment, with rival forces staking out ground opposite each other, as they did at Boston. This system, however, was the one that was familiar to members of the Provincial Congress; when the Congress rushed back early from its recess and reconvened on April 22, it was the one they enacted.

The Provincial Congress voted on April 23 to recruit an army of 30,000 men, some 13,000 of whom would come from Massachusetts, the rest from neighboring colonies.¹⁸ The process of

17. Fred Anderson, *A People's Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 26-62, especially 39-50. As Anderson emphasizes, the Massachusetts soldiers of the Seven Years' War had a firmly contractual understanding of their enlistment. They agreed to fight for a certain period of time, in exchange for a specified salary and a guaranteed list of provisions. If they were supplied with less, or told to fight longer, the soldiers would be quite upset. Many of the representatives who served in the Provincial Congress, including General Ward, were veterans of the Seven Years' War. Those who were not almost certainly had fathers, brothers, or uncles who were. Ward kept a diary of his service in 1758 as a lieutenant colonel in the Seven Years' War: Artemas Ward, 'Diary,' Artemas Ward Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, microfilm reel 4.

18. On April 21 the Committee of Safety resolved to enlist an army of 8,000 men ('Journals of the Committee of Safety,' April 21, 520). Two days later when the Provincial Congress reconvened, it decided that this was not large enough. ('Journal of the Second Congress,' April 23, 148.)

recruiting this army was delegated to the Committee of Safety. Meeting in General Ward's Cambridge headquarters, the Committee of Safety prepared enlistment forms and delineated the quotas for companies and regiments. The committee asked Ward, other high-level militia officers, and civilian representatives from each county to give them lists of men who could serve as colonels of regiments. The Committee of Safety distributed printed enlistment papers to these prospective officers, who set out to recruit their companies and regiments. Some officers recruited men from the minuteman companies already in the American camps outside of Boston, while others visited their home counties to enlist men who had not responded to the initial alarm or who had since returned home. When the officers filled their quotas of men, they received their commissions. Often, however, numbers of men from a single town were given the enlistment papers and tried to recruit the same individuals into their companies. Moreover, unlike the militia and minuteman companies, which were based on town residence, there was no necessary link between one's town and one's unit in the new army. As a result, frequent tensions developed between the prospective officers over who would rank highest and command the regiment, who would command the companies under them, and who would have the first option to enlist troops.

It was this chaotic and tension-filled process that Farnsworth described when he wrote in his diary in the closing days of April about the 'strugling with the offisers which shold be hiest in off-ist.' In Farnsworth's company, one of the captains, Farwell, got enlisting orders from the Congress, but could not fill his quota of fifty-nine men.¹⁹ So, he 'gined [i.e., joined] with townshind Company,' one of the minuteman companies from a neighboring

19. The quota for each company was originally set for one hundred men, the traditional number from the Seven Years' War. But it quickly became apparent that this was an unrealistic target, so on April 25, the Congress voted to reduce the size to fifty-nine men. Each regiment was to be composed of ten companies. This caused occasional confusion, as companies were at times formed with no regimental affiliation. The Congress and Committee of Safety had to deal with these incidents as they came up.

town, and thus put together a full company in the new army. This action represented a significant departure from the old minuteman and militia system to a new army. Companies no longer elected their officers; instead, revolutionary leaders appointed them. Moreover, men no longer served only with residents of their own towns but were mixed together with others from around the province. They were soldiers serving in an army.

Farnsworth closed his four-day diary entry by noting, 'I myself Listed with the rest.' 'Listing' meant that Farnsworth enlisted, signing himself up to join the army until the end of the year. He no longer served voluntarily as long as he wished, but was contractually bound to an eight-month campaign. He was to be paid for his service and supplied with certain provisions. This new process of organizing the army caused tension not just among prospective officers, but among the enlisted men. Men who in the first week of the war had served under officers from their towns, and alongside their neighbors, might be displeased at being placed under unfamiliar officers and among strange men. Ward addressed this complaint in an order of April 27 that 'the men that now enlist may be assured that they shall have liberty to be under the command of such officers as may be appointed by the Committee of Safety, until the particular regiments and companies are completed; and the utmost care will be taken to make every soldier happy in being under good officers.'²⁰ Ward's order emphasizes both his awareness of the importance of the enlistment contract and his recognition of the need to approximate traditional patterns of enlistment under anomalous circumstances.

Farnsworth's diary entry on this important moment of his enlistment was brief and to the point. A fellow diarist, Abner Sanger, of Keene, New Hampshire, described what enlisting was like for the men from New Hampshire. Like Ward and Farnsworth, he had responded to the initial alarm and rushed to Cambridge with his minuteman company. In an entry for April 29, Sanger wrote: 'We are drawn up (viz) Capt. Wymans Company to go & praid on ye grand common by caimbridge common. We

20. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' April 27.

& all hampshire forcies are drawn up; colonals and majors are appointed & captain are chosen to be over companies. . . . Major Maclintick or McClure leads the whole band of Hampshire forcies round Cambridge Common twice; yn we are dismissed till 2 o'clock to go to our Quarters & get Dinner. Aftn [i.e., afternoon] we meet on sd Common again. We are all drawed up in a four square form to Inlist into the service for the Defence of the Lives & Liberties of America our Propertice &c.²¹ Sanger's entry suggests a ceremonial aspect to the enlistment process. His description of companies parading, officers being called off, men marching twice around the common and forming a foursquare to enlist, not just into an army, but 'into the service for the defence of the lives and liberties of America,' depicts a far more orderly process than Farnsworth experienced.

Not everyone in the American camp enlisted into the new army. On the day after the enlistment ceremony, Sanger wrote: 'This morning the men of Keene Surry & Gilsome that don't List into the Service get Passes to return home to yr several towns. We set out. . . .'²² Sanger, himself, was one of the many men who did not choose to enlist, but instead opted to return home to their families and fields.

The days and weeks after April 19 were a period of coming and going. While men such as Sanger returned home after opting not to enlist, other companies recruited throughout New England arrived each day in Cambridge and Roxbury. Even the composition of individual companies changed dramatically. One of the

21. Abner Sanger, 'Ye Journal of Abner Sanger,' *Repertory* 1-2 (1924-27): 113. Entry is for April 29.

22. Sanger, April 30. While it is interesting that Sanger wrote on the following day only that he had not enlisted into the army, it is also dangerous to read too much into this. Most of the diarists wrote what they did each day, not what they did not do, or what they planned to do the following day. Sanger does not explain why he chose not to enlist. Another example is James Parker of Shirley, Massachusetts, who responded to the Lexington alarm but did not choose to enlist. He arrived in Cambridge on April 21 and by April 24 returned home. In his diary he noted that on April 30, an officer came by and 'enlisted 4 soldiers' from among his neighbors. Parker remained a member of the Shirley militia company and was called out briefly for a false alarm in late May. James Parker, 'Extracts from the Diary of James Parker of Shirley, Mass,' *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 69 (1915): 8-17, 117-27, 211-24, 294-308, transcribed by Ethel Stanwood Bolton. See entries for April 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 30, and May 30, all on page 123.

soldier-diarists, Joseph Merriam, wrote his diary in two parts. The first is a list of the soldiers who came and went from his company, and the second a more typical diary of his activities. He noted that on April 19, his company of thirty men marched from Grafton to Cambridge. Between April 22 and May 14, he listed the men who left his company and those who arrived to take their places. In this period, twenty-four of the original thirty men left, and only ten new men arrived. Until May 4, most of the men who went home did so, in Merriam's words, 'without leave,' but after that, most of them found replacements. Merriam himself went home on May 14 and was careful to write down who replaced him.²³

While men continued to come and go from the army each day, by the end of April the initial, chaotic phase following Lexington and Concord had come to a close. An army had been created, at least on paper, and men were either enlisting into it or returning home. The composition of the army would continue to shift, no longer haphazardly, but in a codified and organized way.

An Army in Deeds (April 29-May 26, 1775)

When Abner Sanger returned home to New Hampshire, the activities he wrote about in his diary show that despite a bout with chicken pox he quickly returned to the rhythms of daily life, making the rounds in town and working in his fields. Similarly from the last days of April until the last days of May, the soldiers in camp began to settle into the routines of military life. This was due in part to the passing of time and the easing of tensions as the British refrained from attacking. But to a greater extent it reflected the successful efforts of Ward and other leaders to create a more permanent environment for the army. As Ward realized that his troops would encircle Boston for some time to come, his orders began to focus less on responding to immediate emergencies and more on establishing a safe, healthy, and efficiently working military camp. At first, Ward's orders were comprehensive, if vague, such as that on April 29: 'That all officers are to observe

23. Joseph Merriam, 'Diary,' Manuscript Collections, Boston Public Library, Boston.

how duty is done, and reprimand those that are negligent, or report them to the proper officers, although they may not belong to the same corps.' Lest anyone not take this order seriously, Ward added: 'That all officers see that the foregoing orders be punctually complied with.'²⁴ This order required officers to act like officers and helped to enforce the notion of subordination within the army.

Ward also addressed a series of specific problems. He devoted much attention to the physical condition and hygiene of the American camp. With thousands of men living together, often sleeping in tents, barns, and other irregular shelters, and relieving themselves whenever and wherever necessary, the filth and stench of the camp became unbearable.²⁵ On May 2 Ward ordered 'that vaults be immediately dug . . . that the parade and camp be cleaned away every day, and all the filth buried.'²⁶ The cleaning of camp had cosmetic benefits but most importantly prevented the spread of disease. To protect the soldiers' water supply, Ward established a new guard post around the main water pump to 'take particular care that no person put any thing into said pump.'²⁷ In addition to cleaning up the camp, if the Americans planned to hold out there for some time, they needed to build proper defenses. On May 3, Ward ordered the organization of a fatigue party each day, of four hundred privates with the appropriate officers, to build defensive fortifications.²⁸ Each morning, they drew tools from the commissary general and followed the instructions of the engineer of the army.²⁹

24. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' April 29.

25. Paul Litchfield, a Harvard student who visited Cambridge from his home on the South Shore in May, was dismayed at the condition of the college, which was at the center of the American camp. He wrote: 'Found my chamber broken up & several things missing.' Paul Litchfield, 'Diary, March 23 to July 19, 1775,' Manuscript Collections, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, entry for May 25.

26. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' May 2.

27. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' May 2.

28. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' May 3. Originally, the plan was for a fatigue party of 200 men, but the same day Ward decided to double its size.

29. During this period, the Provincial Congress discussed the appointment of an engineer for the army to oversee the fortifications and construction of defenses. 'Journal of the Second Provincial Congress,' April 26, 1753.

While some men labored in the fatigue party, others served on one of several guard duties. Each day, officers drafted men from different companies to serve on either the main guard or the picket guard. The former patrolled the external boundaries of the camp; the latter was an on-call emergency response force. The men on guard served twenty-four-hour shifts, which served the double function of keeping them occupied and exhausting them to reduce disorder in their free time.³⁰

Cleaning, building, and guarding the new camp offered physical protection (both against the enemy and the spread of disease) and comfort. It also created a sense of order, not just in the men's physical surroundings, but in their daily schedules. Most men, however, on any given day did not serve on either guard or fatigue duty. To give them some daily activity, Ward, on May 3, ordered the entire army to stand in a general parade each day at 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on the parade grounds.³¹ These twice-daily parades gave structure to each day, displayed military organization, and fostered a sense of the army as a whole. The parades also played an important role in the soldiers' military drill, teaching them to respond to commands and to act in unison. Although the Americans prided themselves on doing away with the pomp and circumstance of the British army, Ward believed they needed some formal training. In the winter of 1774, the Provincial Congress had adopted Timothy Pickering's *Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia* as the official guide for training the province's militia. Pickering, himself a member of the Provincial Congress, devoted chapters to how men should equip themselves, how they should be taught exercises, and how they should perform various martial formations and maneuvers. The manual emphasized 'that the men be clearly informed of the Reason of every action and movement.' Referring to the British regulars, Pickering continued:

30. Anderson, *A People's Army*, 79, notes that the Massachusetts armies in the Seven Years' War served similar types of guard duty. Anderson claims that the duties not only added structure while the men were serving guard, but because they lasted twenty-four hours and left the men so exhausted, served to reduce disorder in camp.

31. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' May 3.

'Tis the boast of some that their men are mere machines . . . but God forbid that my countrymen should ever be thus degraded.'³²

Although the American soldiers spent much of their time following these daily schedules of parade, guard, and fatigue duties, they could be quite reckless in their time off. Ward, in the first week of May, tried to crack down on disorderly behavior in camp. He repeatedly commanded soldiers not to fire their guns without permission.³³ The frequent echoing of lone guns through the night caused accidents, wasted the army's dwindling supply of ammunition, and distracted guards listening for British movements. The gunshots were just one part of the disturbance. On May 5, Ward specifically ordered Colonel Wyman to 'reduce his men to good order, as there have been repeated complaints . . . of very disorderly conduct.' One cause for this disorder was the excessive consumption of 'spirituous liquors.' Ward prohibited the distribution of rum without his orders, and banned the sale of liquor.³⁴ That 'iniquitous practice,' he claimed in an order, 'has a tendency to destroy the peace and good order of the camp.' Those who violated this rule were to have their liquor seized by the commissary general 'for the use of the army.'³⁵ (Rum was not part of the daily provisions supplied to the soldiers at this time.)

32. Timothy Pickering, *An Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia* (Boston: S. Hall, 1776), 9-10. In the fall of 1774, when the Provincial Congress began to discuss military preparation, it chose a 1764 British training method, but it later reconsidered and selected Pickering's plan. 'Journal of the First Congress,' December 10, 1774, 74.

33. The constant explosions of gunshots through the day and night deeply troubled General Ward. Day after day, he commanded soldiers in vain not to 'fire a gun without orders.' He finally declared on April 30 that 'if any guards or regiments hear firing of arms near them, they are to send out immediately to know the persons and the cause of it; and if soldiers without leave, they are to be made prisoners, and a report sent to the commanding officer.' Ward, 'Orderly Book,' April 30. A chaplain in the camp, David Avery, wrote of friendly fire incidents on May 8: 'Ys day Four guns were discharged in ye camp & endangered men's lives. One out of our window—One at ye Piquit guard. Two others hurt.' David Avery, 'A Chaplain of the American Revolution,' *American Monthly Magazine* 17 (1900): 342-47, May 8. Joseph Merriam wrote on May 8 of 'the awful News of a young man . . . being Shot by a gun that was thought not Charged.' He noted it was 'a solemn warning to the whole army.' On May 9, Merriam attended services conducted by Avery who gave 'a friendly Admonition of ye Danger we were in from our own Carelessness & earnestly desired ye Solgery to a strict attention to there Duty care & watchfulness.' Merriam, 'Diary,' May 8, 9.

34. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' May 4.

35. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' May 8.

In this period, Ward and civilian leaders developed a system for effectively supplying the army. During his second day in command, Ward had ordered 'that the Commissary-General do supply the troops with provisions in the manner he can, without spending time for exactness.'³⁶ After the initial crisis passed and the army began to follow daily routines, exactness became a priority. On May 8, Ward issued a detailed order establishing a schedule for the distribution of provisions to the different regiments. The delivery, which began each day at 5:00 a.m., was broken into fifteen-minute segments, continuing until 4:30 in the afternoon.³⁷ A Committee of Supplies, under the direction of the Provincial Congress and the Committee of Safety, requisitioned the necessary supplies for the army. On April 28, the Congress essentially gave the Committee free rein to purchase and impress supplies as needed, from tents and straw for men to sleep on to shovels and spears to build defenses.³⁸

Ward engaged in a flurry of activity during the first week of May to create a more permanent camp and structure for the army, but between May 10 and May 28 he issued no general orders about the organization or function of the army. In fact, for sixteen of these nineteen days, he issued no general orders at all—just 'otherwise as usual.' The army had settled into its established routines.

Amos Farnsworth's diary shows that the patterns of his daily life changed with Ward's efforts to prepare the army for a more permanent existence. In his entry for May 1, Farnsworth wrote that he was 'cawled upon main Gard.' He 'marched to leachmors Point stayed there 24 hours And returned back to the Barn Again.'³⁹ Farnsworth's next diary entry is: 'Now from Mondy till

36. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' April 21.

37. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' May 8. Ward also issued an order on May 4 regarding the distribution of provisions.

38. 'Journal of the Second Congress,' April 28, 157. The Congress's proceedings are filled with debates and resolves on issues related to supplying the army. For example, on May 19, the Congress appointed John Pigeon as the official commissary for the army, responsible for supplying it (242). In May, the Congress began working out specific daily food allowances for soldiers but did not complete this until June 10 ('Journal of the Third Congress,' 317-18).

39. Farnsworth, 'Diary,' May 1.

Saturday night Nothing Material hapned. Did my turns of duty And we mooved A Saturday to a hous Oppersit the Collig &c.⁴⁰ Farnsworth's phrase 'did my turns of duty' expresses the repetitive nature of the new army routines. After this, he seldom mentioned which duty he served, suggesting that this had become as much a part of his life as eating, sleeping, or sitting around campfires at night. He wrote down his responsibilities only when they conflicted other plans. For example, on Sunday, May 7, he wrote: 'Was upon Piquit this day but got leve to go on the Comon and herd Prayers and Preaching all Day . . . o this was fine Preaching.'

Farnsworth, who appears to have been exceptionally devout, recorded details of his religious activities in camp in his diary. His entry for May 7, for example, suggests that he really wanted to attend prayers, not just as an excuse to miss guard duty. His entries for the Sabbath (that he never missed) contain details of which preacher (or preachers) he heard, what the Biblical text was, and often the location of the exercises and some sense of the content of the sermon. For Farnsworth, serving God was no haphazard activity. On Sunday, May 21, the first thing in the morning he 'etended pray on the common.' Then he 'retired for secret prayer.' At about ten, he 'went to the Chapel and herd the revent Docter Langdon' preach. Later that afternoon, he 'went to the meting house and herd Mr Havery' preach. Weekdays included prayers. In his collective entry for May 8 through 10, he wrote, 'etended prayers Morning and Night.' These religious services, as much as parade and guard duties, were by now part of Farnsworth's daily routine.⁴¹

Providing religious activities to the army was no less important an administrative task for the Provincial Congress than providing it with gunpowder and food. Within the first week of the war, the Congress and Committee of Safety asked ministers to serve as chaplains for the army. On April 28, the Committee of Safety appointed Samuel Langdon, the president of Harvard, as

40. Farnsworth, 'Diary.' This undated entry appears between entries for May 1 and May 7.

41. Farnsworth, 'Diary,' May 8-10. Farnsworth also had the opportunity to hear preaching on Thursday, May 11.

the chaplain pro tempore of the army.⁴² Throughout May and into June, the Congress ironed out details in the plans for providing each regiment with a chaplain and creating a system by which the province's ministers would rotate through the army for a few months at a time.⁴³ While the Congress and Committee of Safety saw to supplying the army with chaplains, it was up to the generals to ensure that their soldiers actually attended the required twice-daily prayers and services.⁴⁴

Religion served many purposes in the army. It comforted men facing trying and troubling circumstances. The daily morning and evening prayer services added structure and a sense of time to soldiers' lives and provided a sense of continuity with life at home. Religion contributed to the discipline of the army: it was expected that pious men would behave well. Religion gave motivation to the men and meaning to their service. Finally, many New Englanders believed in a providentialist world order, where pious behavior would promote God's active intervention on their behalf, a critical component of any military success. The sermons they heard were not always focused on heavenly matters. On Sunday, April 30, Farnsworth wrote that a 'Reverend Goodridge' delivered an 'exelent Sermon' in which 'he incoridged us to go and fite for our Land And Contry: saying we Did not do our Duty

42. April 28, 'Journals of the Committee of Safety,' 163; on April 26, the Congress thanked the province's ministers for agreeing to serve as chaplains ('Journal of the Second Congress, 158).

43. May 20, 'Journal of the Second Congress,' 247; Congress continued through June to work out the exact system of chaplains. See 'Journal of the Third Congress' for May 31, 280; June 1, 283; June 2, 290; and June 14, 333. David Avery kept a diary of his experience during this period as chaplain of Colonel John Patterson's regiment. Avery marched with a militia company from western Massachusetts on April 22 and arrived in Cambridge on the twenty-ninth. He notes nearly every day that he attended prayers with the regiment. He also helped men write letters home and visited them in the hospital. Avery, 'A Chaplain of the American Revolution,' April 22, 29, and May 1, 16. William Emerson, the minister of Concord, kept a diary of his experiences before and after the battles at Lexington and Concord. He preached to troops at Concord on April 21 and to the army at Cambridge on April 30 and June 11. Beginning July 11, after Washington took command of the army, Emerson served a rotation as chaplain to the army for a week. *Diaries and Letters of William Emerson, 1743-1776, Minister of the Church in Concord, Chaplain in the Revolutionary Army*, arranged by Amelia Forbes Emerson (n.p., 1972), 75-80.

44. Ward, for example, ordered the fatigue party to attend prayers before setting out for the day's work. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' May 30.

if we did not Stand up now.'⁴⁵ On May 21, Samuel Langdon used his sermon to the troops, in Farnsworth's words, to 'encorridge us to enlist our selves under the Great Jeneral of our Salvation.'⁴⁶ This 'Jeneral' was neither Washington nor Ward. By using the words 'enlist' and 'General,' Langdon imparted to Farnsworth and others a direct parallel between enlisting in the new army and serving God's will. Farnsworth was fully convinced that he was fighting under God and that God was on his side. As he wrote after taking part in a successful battle in June: 'Surely God fote the Battle and not we.'⁴⁷

Amos Farnsworth's diary is not the only one that reveals the routines that began to regulate the soldiers' days in early May. Joseph Merriam, on May 13, described the established rhythms of each day: 'Our people are all well; our warlike preparations are going on and many tents are pitched the army is employed thus; a large number is upon guard night and day another party is upon fatigue, or labour and the rest perform duty on the common from 10 to 12 and from 4 to sun set except such as have ben out upon guard all night; prayer at 6. . .'.⁴⁸ The army's increasingly stable environment did not put an end to extraordinary circumstances. The same day that Merriam described the routine schedule of army life, he added: 'A young man aged 19 was buried who belonged to bolton who was takend sick of a fever last Monday; was the 2nd that died with sickness in the hospital near us.'

Even though the American army saw virtually no combat in the month after April 19, soldiers did get hurt or sick, and some died.

45. Farnsworth, 'Diary,' April 30.

46. Farnsworth, 'Diary,' May 21.

47. Farnsworth, 'Diary,' June 1. Since at least as far back as the Seven Years' War, religion had given meaning and motivation to soldiers. On the soldiers' characterization of their efforts in providential terms, see Anderson, *People's Army*, chapter 7. Nathan O. Hatch, in 'The Origins of Civil Millennialism in America: New England Clergymen, War with France, and the Revolution,' *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser. 31 (1974): 407-30, reprinted in Stanley N. Katz, John M. Murrin, and Douglas Greenberg, *Colonial America* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1993), analyzes clergymen's efforts to connect the imperial conflict to religious life.

48. Merriam, 'Diary,' May 13. Merriam left the army on May 14. This perhaps explains why he wrote down the daily schedule, which had become so routine that most diarists did not consider writing it down.

The cramped and unsanitary living conditions of the camp, where men with little training were also constantly handling guns, exacerbated the need for medical care. Those who were directing the army realized this. At the end of April, the Committee of Safety established hospitals in houses impressed from Cambridge residents. In May they supplied the camps at Roxbury and Cambridge with chests of medical supplies and determined that each regiment could choose its own surgeon. It was not until June, however, that regular surgeons were appointed for each regiment and thorough procedures for medical care were established. The hospitals contributed to a sense of permanence and stability in the army, while at the same time serving a specific purpose.⁴⁹

Organizing the necessary institutions of army life did much to foster a sense of stability in the American forces. The common fear of British assault and bombardment also contributed to the formation of the army. Jehiel Stewart's diary reflects his obsession with British military prowess. On May 25 he noted: 'This day their was a man of war came in to Boston and they fired the guns they fired about 25.' The following day, he wrote: 'They fired about forty or fiftig great guns.' And the next day: 'They fired all night till morning they fired great guns.' Stewart's diary is a virtual chronicle of the number of guns fired by the British.⁵⁰ The constant threat kept the men on guard and reminded them that as

49. For discussion of establishing hospitals and regimental surgeons, see 'Journal of the Second Congress,' May 8, 203; 'Journal of the Third Congress,' June 2, 293-94; June 12, 321; June 19, 355, 357; June 20, 360; June 22, 374, 383; June 24, 383; June 27, 406, June 30, 424-25; and July 1, 436; 'Journals of The Committee of Safety,' April 29, 527; May 4, 536; May 7, 538; June 19, 571; June 26, 578; June 28, 582; and June 30, 364. Philip Cash, *Medical Men at the Siege of Boston* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1973) offers an exhaustive account of medical problems and solutions in the year the American army surrounded Boston. Cash divides his account into two sections: before and after Washington. He, however, gives a good deal of credit to the response of Massachusetts leaders to the extremely difficult health problems they faced.

50. Jehiel Stewart, 'Jehiel Stewart his Book,' Revolutionary War Pension Files, case number W25138, National Archives, Washington, D.C., entries for May 25-27. Another diarist, Samuel Bixby, wrote that when the British fired a particularly large cannon one day at Boston, some soldiers picked up the twenty-four-pound cannon ball and carried it to General Thomas, who gave them two gallons of rum as a reward. Samuel Bixby, 'Diary of Samuel Bixby,' *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 14 (1875-76): 285-98, entry for June 5.

generally peaceful as camp life had become, they did share a common enemy.

The leaders of the army also felt the constant threat of British bombardment. They watched as British transports carried reinforcements into the harbor and worried that while the British built up their forces, the river split their own army in half. They knew their army fell short of 30,000, but found it difficult to know how many they actually had. Pressured by the Committee of Safety and the Provincial Congress, Ward repeatedly demanded that his subordinates give him returns of troop strength.⁵¹ By the middle of May, many of the men who had responded to the initial alarm desperately sought to return home, at least temporarily, and went away from the camp without leave. In late April, anxious about the shrinking size of the army, Ward demanded that the Congress either take some action or risk leaving him all alone.⁵² In response, on April 29 and again on May 9, the Committee of Safety mobilized local militia units to provide emergency reinforcements.⁵³ Leaders realized that they could not keep the soldiers in camp forever, so they designed a plan to give them temporary furloughs if they could find replacements from their own towns.⁵⁴ Some men who could not find substitutes

51. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' April 30. The Committee of Safety, on May 20, reported that only 24,000 men had been raised. Other than this, no exact numbers for the army at different points survive ('Journals of the Committee of Safety,' May 20, 553-54). As Joseph Merriam's chronicle of just the coming and going of men in his company reveals, figuring out the size of the army at any given time could be a difficult task.

52. Ward wrote to the Provincial Congress on April 24, 'My situation is such, that if I have not enlisting orders immediately, I shall be left all alone.' Quoted in French, *First Year of the American Revolution*, 52.

53. 'Journals of the Committee of Safety,' April 29, 526; also May 9, 540. On May 10, the Congress considered a partial retreat from Cambridge, and the Committee of Safety told the regimental commanders absolutely not to allow any men to depart from Cambridge because it was considering a 'blow' against the enemies. This may have been a bluff to keep morale high ('Journal of the Second Congress,' May 10, 210; 'Journals of the Committee of Safety,' May 10, 540-42). Samuel Pierce, a militia officer from Dorchester, wrote in his diary for May 9, 'An express came to me from the General, and I got the Company together and marcht of, but we met with interruption that night.' Samuel Pierce, 'Diary of Samuel Pierce,' in Dorchester Antiquarian and Historical Society, *History of the Town of Dorchester* (Boston: E. Clapp, 1859), 365.

54. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' May 3. Ward's order forbade men from leaving the army without finding replacements from their own towns as substitutes. Men who had enlisted

expressed their reluctant acceptance at being denied leave. On May 11 Joseph Merriam and some of his companions 'went with our Captain to see ye General & to know wether we may Expect soon to be released who told us he would gladly do it but could not at present.'⁵⁵ Others were luckier. Amos Farnsworth wrote on June 5: 'My Brother Came and took my plase And . . . I Sot out on my journey for home . . . found my parance And frinds well.'⁵⁶

Massachusetts leaders looked to neighboring colonies to supplement the ranks of the army. Minuteman companies from New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island had responded to the initial alarm after Lexington, and as early as April 20, the Committee of Safety had sent circular letters to these provinces declaring it 'necessary that we immediately raise an army' and asking for assistance.⁵⁷ General Israel Putnam of Connecticut had joined Ward's Council of War on April 21.⁵⁸ Many men from these colonies had enlisted into the new army. Like Massachusetts, the other New England colonies fell short of the quota set for them, and the Committee of Safety and the Provincial Congress repeatedly sent out letters and delegates to other revolutionary leaders pleading for men, money, and supplies.⁵⁹ Connecticut leaders, in particular, hesitated to send men to Boston because

were not to be dismissed for any reason, and those who had already enlisted into one company were not to be signed into a second. This latter clause seems like a strange order, but given the system in place, it makes sense. Officers tried to get as many men to agree to enlist into their companies as possible, and men, unsure which officer might complete a company, might not hesitate to enlist multiple times, especially if substitutes were needed. A Connecticut lieutenant colonel, Experience Storrs, wrote on June 6 that he got liberty for some of his 'men who have been here since the allarrum to return home on furlough of 12 days.' Experience Storrs, 'Diary,' copied by Jas. L. Storrs, verbatim, *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 14 (1875-76): 84-87.

55. Merriam, 'Diary,' May 11.

56. Farnsworth, 'Diary,' June 5. Ten days after he returned home, Farnsworth wrote, 'took leve of frinds and rode to Cambridge and my Brother Came home.' Farnsworth, 'Diary,' June 14.

57. 'Journals of the Committee of Safety,' April 20, 518-19.

58. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' April 21.

59. 'Journals of the Committee of Safety,' April 27, 526; May 1, 530; and May 4, 536; 'Journal of the Second Provincial Congress,' April 28, 163; May 4, 190; May 5, 196; and May 7, 200-201. On April 23, when the Massachusetts leaders set a target of 30,000 men for the army, they had divided this number into quotas for each of the four New England provinces (April 23, 148).

they wanted to defend seacoast towns such as New London and be in a position to protect New York.⁶⁰ The recruits from different provinces were officially enlisted into the 'Connecticut army' or the 'New Hampshire army' and were organized and paid by that province. However, they served together as a single American army around Boston. A Connecticut officer, Samuel Richards, wrote of his company's arrival in Roxbury in May that they 'fell under the command of Genl. Ward of Massachusetts who was stationed there to command and receive the troops as they should arrive.'⁶¹ Men from different provinces put aside territorial issues to take up their positions in the new army. The recruiting and organizing of these men from outside Massachusetts turned the force around Boston into an American army.

Massachusetts leaders knew that the New England colonies alone could not hold off the British for long, so they worked to enlist the support of the Second Continental Congress that had convened at Philadelphia on May 5. The Massachusetts Congress carefully drafted and sent a petition on May 16, explaining that they had been 'compelled to raise an army, which will be able to defend us and all America.' They requested that 'as the army, collecting from different colonies, is for the defense of the rights of America, we would beg leave to suggest to your consideration, the propriety of your taking the regulation and general direction of it.'⁶² The Massachusetts leaders hoped to turn over the force they had put together to the Continental Congress, but it was not

60. Richard Buel, *Dear Liberty: Connecticut's Mobilization for the Revolutionary War* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1980), 40-45, notes the hesitation to leave Connecticut and New York for Boston, but also that two regiments immediately marched to Massachusetts, and later in June 600 more men joined the siege of Boston.

61. 'Diary of Samuel Richards, Captain of the Connecticut Line War of the Revolution, 1775-1781' (Philadelphia: Leeds and Biddle Co., 1909). This 'diary' appears to have been edited, if not written altogether, after the Revolution. Richards likely has his details confused. His company as part of the army did serve under the command of General Ward, but it was probably General John Thomas, the commander of the Roxbury camp, who greeted them.

62. 'Journal of the Second Provincial Congress,' May 16, 229-31. The Provincial Congress petitioned the Continental Congress again on June 11, emphasizing its fear of the British ('Journal of the Third Provincial Congress, June 11, 319-20). Six days later, a committee was appointed to try to get arms and gunpowder from the Continental Congress (June 17, 348).

until June that the Continental Congress decided what to do about the army gathered around Boston.

The growing and strengthening institutions of this army—the creation of daily cleaning, parade, guard, and fatigue duties; the crackdown on disorder; the establishment of medical and religious institutions; and the cooperation between different provinces—signaled key steps in the transition from the disorganized militia mixture of April 19 to an army. These activities and institutions accomplished practical tasks such as protecting the camp, providing prayer opportunities, and taking care of the injured, but they also changed the attitudes and emotions of the soldiers. These military routines fostered in the soldiers a sense that they belonged to a larger, unified body, and gave the army life. Inactive periods can be trying for any army, but the establishment of these routines and institutions in the daily rhythms of the soldiers' lives helped pull them through the spring.

An Army in Spirit (May 27–July 2, 1775)

This relatively calm period of digging into new camps and developing new routines of military life would not last long. In the closing days of May, the British set out from Boston to Chelsea, Noddle's Island (now East Boston), and other islands in Boston harbor to capture livestock and produce. The Americans had cut off Boston by land and were determined to prevent the British regulars from getting these supplies, which they needed themselves. In response, the Council of War and Committee of Safety sent an American force to stop the British.

On the evening of May 26, after attending prayers, Amos Farnsworth and ten men from his company marched for Noddle's Island with a party that he estimated to be between two and three hundred men. His diary entries for the next two days describe his travels between islands, the capture of livestock, an exchange of fire with a company of British regulars, and finally his companions' burning of a British schooner that had run aground. Farnsworth's first combat (he had arrived in the American camp

after the Battle of Lexington) was a success. He wrote: 'Not withstanding the Bulets flue very thitch yet thare was not A Man of us kild Suerly God has A faver towards us.' Although four of his fellow soldiers were wounded, Farnsworth closed his entry poetically: 'Thanks be unto God that so little hurt was Done us when the Bauls Sung like Bees Round our heds.'⁶³

Israel Putnam directed the fighting in these island battles. A member of Ward's Council of War, he commanded not just Connecticut troops, but also Massachusetts men. James Stevens wrote in his entry of May 28, 'Curnul putnum com & ordered us down to the whoife [wharf].'⁶⁴ The joint command network shows the extent to which the regiments from the different provinces had been integrated into a single army.

Diarists at Roxbury and Cambridge followed these minor skirmishes, which involved just a few hundred men, with rapt attention. Phineas Ingalls was not selected from his company to go to the fight, although fourteen others were. In his entries about the battle, he used the word 'heard' many times: 'We *heard* they were upon Hog Island. *Heard* that a company went before. *Heard* firing all night,' he wrote on May 27. The next day: '*Heard* that the Regulars had wounded 3 or 4 of our men. . . . We *heard* that our men had got the victory. . . .' and on May 30: '*Heard* this morning that the Regulars were gone to Salem. . . . *Heard* our men were getting cattle off of Noddle's Island.'⁶⁵ Ingalls used the word 'heard' in two ways: to refer directly to sounds of the fighting in the distance, and to the rampant rumors running through the camp. His focused attention to the skirmish in the distance shows the growing mutual concern developing in the army. These men saw themselves as engaged in a common fight, whether they were watching and listening or dodging bullets themselves.

63. Farnsworth, 'Diary,' May 26–28. French, *First Year of the American Revolution*, 190–94, offers an excellent survey of the island fighting.

64. Stevens, 'Diary,' May 28.

65. Phineas Ingalls, 'Revolutionary War Journal, April 19, 1775–December 8, 1776,' *Historical Collections of the Essex Institute* 53 (1917): 81–92. See entries for May 26–May 30. Emphasis is mine.

Amos Farnsworth took a ten-day furlough from the army after this initial fighting and returned to camp on June 15. On the following afternoon, when the generals got word of a British plan to occupy Charlestown, Farnsworth's regiment marched to reinforce Bunker's Hill. He described the battle of June 17 in his diary. He and his compatriots 'sustained the Enemy's Attacks with great Bravery and Resolution, kiled and wounded great Numbers, and repulsed them several times.' They could not hold out against the British, however. Farnsworth continued: 'After bearing, for about 2 Hours, as severe and heavy a Fire as perhaps ever was known, and many having fired away all their Ammunition, and having no Reinforcement . . . we ware over-powered by Numbers and obliged to leave the Intrenchment retreating about Sunset.'⁶⁶ While the British perhaps did not launch as 'heavy a fire . . . as ever was known,' they did put up much more of a fight than Farnsworth and his fellow soldiers had ever faced.

Only later in his entry for that day, after he described the battle in its entirety, did Farnsworth add a note on his personal behavior under fire: 'I did not leave the Intrenchment until the Enemy got in . . . then I received a wound in my rite arm the bawl going through a little below my Elbow breaking the little shel Bone Another bawl struk my Back taking of a piece of Skin abaout as Big as a Penny.'⁶⁷ These two painful wounds were seemingly the most important events of Farnsworth's day, but he did not write of them in the beginning of the entry, or even in their proper

66. Farnsworth, 'Diary,' June 17. Farnsworth's account of the battle corresponds with historians' consensus that the Americans put up a courageous fight, and strategically won in terms of the morale boost from inflicting such heavy casualties, despite losing the battle tactically. General Ward has taken perhaps 'as heavy a fire as was ever known' from military historians of the Revolution for his failure to adequately reinforce the American position on Bunker Hill, perhaps the reason for his and this period's general loss of esteem. Ward's defenders claim he needed to protect the main American camps at Roxbury and Cambridge and could not afford to divert any resources.

67. Farnsworth, 'Diary,' June 17. Farnsworth made it back to Cambridge that night despite the 'great Pane' from his wounds. As he was out of service, he got permission to return home (June 17-20). We should be somewhat suspicious of the entries about Bunker Hill because after his June 20 entry Farnsworth wrote: 'Now for a coniderable time Pas I Could not keep my Jornal for my wound in my Arme But Now I begin to Rite a little.' It is thus not likely that he was able to write in his journal on the days immediately after he received his injury. He likely filled in the Bunker Hill entries later.

chronological place in the battle's action. (Soldiers almost always ordered their diary entries chronologically.) By writing his own personal story of the battle after that of the army at large, Farnsworth implied his interest in the welfare of the army as a whole. The detailed entries of many soldiers who were not at the Battle of Bunker Hill, but were left behind in Cambridge or Roxbury, further emphasize the collective consciousness the soldiers felt. The members of the army, through battle, came to see themselves as participating as a unit in a common cause.⁶⁸

The battle scared soldiers and officers alike. The Committee of Safety contemplated calling out the militia from nearby towns and set about fortifying new positions at a frantic pace. Samuel Bixby observed the rapid pace of digging—both new fortifications and graves for the dead—in the aftermath of the battle. On the 18th, the day after the battle, he wrote: 'The Rhode Islanders laid out a piece of ground for an entrenchment, & went to work entrenching.' Later that week he noted: 'Nothing new this day, unless it is new to dig graves.' Lest the Americans feel depressed, Bixby added: 'We can see the regulars, with the spy glass digging graves in Boston.'⁶⁹ The shock of large numbers of deaths in the fighting hit home. Many diary entries contain estimates of casualties sustained by both sides. The Battle of Bunker Hill made it clear to these soldiers that being part of an army meant fighting and perhaps dying, not just guarding and parading.

Several soldiers took avid interest in another military accomplishment later in June. Caleb Haskell wrote on the 25th: 'In the evening a number of Indians went down to the enemy's sentinels and fired on them. Killed five and wounded one.'⁷⁰ John Kettell mentioned similar activity that day, as well as earlier in the week.⁷¹ Two companies of Stockbridge Indians had first joined

68. Jehiel Stewart, for example, wrote almost two pages about what he heard and saw on June 17, even though he was in Roxbury. Stewart, 'Jehiel Stewart his Book,' June 17.

69. Bixby, 'Diary,' June 18, 23.

70. Caleb Haskell, *Caleb Haskell's Diary, May 5, 1775–May 30, 1776*, ed. Lothrop Withington (Newburyport, Mass.: William H. Huse and Company, 1881), 7. Entry for June 25.

71. John Kettell, 'John Kettell his Book,' Richard Frothingham Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, microfilm reel 2. See entries for June 21, 25, 26.

the camp at the end of April.⁷² These men had been recruited and negotiated with by the Provincial Congress from the beginning of the conflict through June. In late June, the Congress bargained with Penobscot Indians from Cape Cod to send men to the army as well.⁷³ American soldiers were not just curious, but they took pride in the successful raids of these Indians they served alongside: a victory for the army was a victory for each soldier, whether he participated in the fighting or not.

Other specific events in June, besides these encounters with the regulars, caught the attention of soldiers in different places and of different ranks. In his June 2 entry, Jehiel Stewart, based in Roxbury, wrote: 'Last night their was a man hanged him self at Cambridge.'⁷⁴ It is not surprising that James Stevens or Phineas Ingalls, who were based in Cambridge, where the incident occurred, wrote about it; it is surprising that Stewart and others in the Roxbury camp did, offering further evidence of the shared consciousness of the army. Only one of the surviving diarists, Samuel Bixby, who was also in Roxbury, offered an explanation: 'We heard to-day that a soldier over at Cambridge was deeply in love, & wished to go home to see his dear, and being refused leave of absence by his Captain, went into a barn and hanged himself.'⁷⁵

Whether or not the soldier killed himself because he was torn away from his sweetheart, his homesickness and lovesickness resonated with Bixby. By the beginning of June, many of the men in

72. Joseph Merriam that day noted: 'Large body of Mohawk or Stockbridge indians come, occasion much speculation; paraded and marched on common.' Merriam, 'Diary,' April 29.

73. On these negotiations, from the perspective of the Congress, see 'Journal of the Second Provincial Congress,' April 25, 151; May 12, 218; May 15, 225-26; 'Journal of the Third Provincial Congress,' June 7, 304; June 8, 310-12; June 21, 371-72; June 23, 378; June 24, 383, 385-86, 391-92, 394, among other instances. The Stockbridge Indians' response to and participation in the Revolution is described in Colin G. Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 85-107.

74. 'Jehiel Stewart his Book,' June 2. Phineas Ingalls wrote: 'A man hung himself in a barn. He was found at daylight this morning. Supposed to have hung about ½ an hour.' Ingalls, 'Revolutionary War Journal,' June 2. James Stevens noted matter-of-factly, 'I herd that ther was a man hang[ed]. . . I went down & saw him I went hom & tuk a nap.' Stevens, 'Diary,' June 1. The entry date is off because Stewart was up all night June 1 on guard duty.

75. Bixby, 'Diary,' June 1.

the American camp had been away from their homes and loved ones for as long as seven weeks. The soldiers wanted to go home for a variety of reasons: to visit family, to take care of business affairs, or to plant crops. Some, as Farnsworth did, took brief furloughs if they could find replacements. Many others were denied any leave. Men wrote letters home: Colonel William Henshaw, one of Ward's adjutants, exchanged a series of letters with his wife, Phebe, that survive. On April 28, he wrote: 'My Dear,—I am sorry that you are distressed for me, seeing I am engaged in a good Cause.' He asked her to send him some supplies: linen, a sword, belt and gloves; suggested that she have her brother 'look a little to my affairs;' and gave her fairly detailed information on his accounts and agricultural needs.⁷⁶ Despite the efforts of the Provincial Congress to establish a postal system, the exchanging of letters was difficult and inconsistent. Phebe Henshaw's July 16 letter to her husband showed her frustration: 'I have received one Letter from you dated the 7th inst., and since that, have heard from you by Mr. Livermore who said he was to have brought a letter from you, but came by, and wholly forgot it. This is the third I have wrote and have not sent.' She updated Henshaw on his agricultural affairs and again begged him to 'write me as often as you can. . . .'⁷⁷

Separated from home for long periods of time, and with exchanging letters so difficult, men looked for other outlets for their loneliness. Eighteenth-century armies generally attracted female camp followers, who did some of the cooking and cleaning and provided companionship for the soldiers. While the British army in Boston welcomed these women, the American camp shunned them.⁷⁸ The soldiers in the American camp did their

76. William Henshaw to Phebe Henshaw, April 28, *The Orderly Book of Colonel William Henshaw of the American Army* (Boston: A. Williams and Company, 1881), 132.

77. Phebe Henshaw to William Henshaw, July 16, *Orderly Book of Colonel William Henshaw*, 134.

78. Donald Chidsey, *The Siege of Boston* (New York: Crown, 1966), 68–69. Holly A. Mayer, *Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community during the American Revolution* offers a thematically organized account of the camp followers and their relations to the Continental Army, focusing on later parts of the war.

own cleaning. Ward issued an order on June 1 'that the commanding officer of each regiment, detachment, or company, daily visit his soldiers, whether in barracks or tents, and oblige them to keep themselves clean.'⁷⁹ The order made an impact: Samuel Bixby explained, 'Orders to wash the floor of the Barracks, and clean out every hole and corner, and to sweep the yards.'⁸⁰ The men also did their own cooking: James Stevens recorded on June 10 that he 'cukt for out two meses.'⁸¹ Living together and taking care of one another like this forced the men to rely on each other as family.

On June 8 several diarists recorded another event that attracted widespread interest within the army. James Stevens described the occasion: 'In the afternune there was a woman dukt & drumd out of the regement.' John Kettel, Caleb Haskell, and Paul Lunt also noted the 'grate shouting' by the soldiers as they dunked this 'bad' woman in the river and then drummed her out of camp.⁸² While this is the only incident of the kind that diarists recorded, later in the month Ward ordered 'that all possible care be taken that no lewd women come into the camp; and all persons ordered to give information of such persons, if any there be, that proper measures be taken to bring them to condign punishment, and rid the camp of all such nuisances.'⁸³ The American army would distinguish itself through proper behavior. These righteous and religious New Englanders did not need the 'bad' influence of 'lewd' female camp followers and feared the wrath of God that their presence might call down on the army.

The soldiers themselves could face equally harsh disciplinary measures. Ward ordered on June 3 'that the commanding officer of each regiment, company, or detachment, oblige all that are off of duty, under his command, to be paraded at four o'clock in the afternoon, and be ready to attend the whipping of two persons for

79. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' June 1.

80. Bixby, 'Diary,' June 6.

81. Stevens, 'Diary,' June 10.

82. 'John Kettell his Book,' June 8.

83. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' June 30.

stealing, at five o'clock, P.M.'⁸⁴ Farnsworth wrote in his diary: 'About fore in ye afternoon Peraded with the Batllion And Saw two men whipt for Stealing and Another Dromd out of ye Camps.'⁸⁵ Nearly every diarist mentioned this episode of military discipline, and most in precisely the same way: that two men were whipped for stealing and that another was drummed out of the camp. Many added details to this account. Farnsworth editorialized: 'O what A Pernituous thing it is for A man to Steal And Cheat his feler nabers And how Prevocking is it to God.' Caleb Haskell noted that one of the men whipped was black and the other white.⁸⁶ Nathaniel Ober added that there were fifty drummers and seventy fifers at the ceremony who provided 'Fine music.'⁸⁷ Phineas Ingalls observed that one man had been whipped '20 & the other 10 lashes.'⁸⁸ The soldiers wrote similarly about several disciplinary ceremonies in the month of June. Ward had ordered the establishment of a system of general and regimental courts martial to enforce discipline in the army and to try offenders for crimes ranging from stealing to disrespectful statements about their officers. The exactness of the details in soldiers' diaries (four o'clock, twenty lashes, fifty drummers) suggests how closely they followed these increasingly codified disciplinings. The ceremonies seem to have had a powerful effect: the men were quite taken with the pomp and circumstance. By removing some men from the army, these ceremonies reinforced the bond connecting the soldiers who remained.

Phineas Ingalls's entry immediately after that of June 3—'One man drummed out of the army'—came on June 6. He wrote: 'We were sworn today. Many took their oaths.' Drumming men out could be even more powerful if a comparable ceremony initiated men into the army, as the late April diary entries of Amos

84. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' June 3.

85. Farnsworth, 'Diary,' June 3.

86. 'Caleb Haskell's Diary,' June 3.

87. Nathaniel Ober, 'His Book 1775,' Nathaniel Ober Manuscripts, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Entry for June 3.

88. Ingalls, 'Revolutionary War Journal,' June 3.

Farnsworth and Abner Sanger that described the enlistment of soldiers into different companies show. But the bureaucracy of the Provincial Congress had not caught up by then to the emergency action of enlisting an army. Although men had signed their names to serving in different companies and regiments, they still officially had to enter the army through a process known as 'passing muster.' For recruits to pass muster an officer known as a 'muster master' had to inspect them to make sure they were fit for service.⁸⁹

Once they passed muster, soldiers had to take an oath that the Provincial Congress had written in May: 'I, A. B. swear, I will truly and faithfully serve in the Massachusetts army, to which I belong, for the defence and security of the estates, lives and liberties of the good people of this and the sister colonies in America . . . that I will adhere to the rules and regulations of said army; observe and obey the generals and other officers set over me . . . So help me God.'⁹⁰ Soldiers then received their first month's pay of forty shillings.⁹¹ Officers, too, had to take specially prepared

89. Most of the diarists passed muster, took their oaths, and got their first pay in the month of June. See Stevens, 'Diary,' June 5, 6; Hews, June 9; Haskell, 'Caleb Haskell's Diary,' June 22; Paul Lunt, 'Paul Lunt's Diary, May-Dec. 1775,' *Proceedings of Massachusetts Historical Society* 12 (1871-73): 192-206, entry for June 22. The Provincial Congress originally directed that soldiers could pass muster only if they were properly fit and properly armed. It changed this because so many soldiers lacked effective firearms. 'Journal of the Second Provincial Congress,' May 6, 197; May 26, 260. This procedure was once again carried over from the Seven Years' War. However, passing muster in the Seven Years' War, as described by Anderson, while a similar process, was conducted in quite different circumstances. Then, the soldiers passed muster before they marched off to war, whereas in this case many had been fighting for weeks when they finally passed muster. Anderson, *A People's Army*, 66-67.

90. 'Journal of the Second Provincial Congress,' May 8, 201.

91. The Provincial Congress had an extremely difficult time finding this money. It relied on Paul Revere to print bank and promissory notes and also benefited from private contributions and loans. It would take some time to finally right the province's financial hardship. On June 1, the Congress worked out a plan to have the receiver general of the army pay the month's advance to one regiment each day. 'Journal of the Third Provincial Congress,' June 1, 282. The historical literature, led by Royster's *A Revolutionary People at War*, particularly 'Appendix: A Note on Statistics and Continental Soldiers' Motivation,' 373-78, generally discounts the importance of paying the soldiers until later in the war. The economic motivation for enlisting late in the war has been demonstrated by Edward C. Papenfuss and Gregory A. Stiverson, 'General Smallwood's Recruits: The Peacetime Career of the Revolutionary War Private,' *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser. 30 (1973): 117-32. Anderson contends that the men who served in the Massachusetts Provincial armies during the Seven Years' War did so because of an economic opportunity. Given that

oaths to receive their commissions. Their oaths were similar to those for the enlisted men, with the addition that they had to obey the Provincial 'Congress or any future legislative body and committees' lest the army usurp control from the civilian government.⁹² As soldiers passed muster, and companies and regiments filled up, the Congress and Committee of Safety approved the commissions for each regimental officer, and administered the oaths to them.⁹³ For enlisted men and officers alike, passing muster and swearing under God to fight for the natural rights of Americans for a designated term of enlistment marked a final step of initiation into the new army.

From the last days of May until Washington's arrival in early July, combat with the British regulars combined with military ceremonies to define the character and cause of the American

many men returned home in late April, just days after the initial alarm, I do not think it is inconceivable that those who stayed early in the war (between these two periods) did so because of the economic gain they expected to get from the army, not because of a sense of 'rage militaire.' *A People's Army*, 26-62

92. The Congress had prepared the oath for officers on May 17. The oath was administered to Ward, and his commission as general delivered to him, on May 20. 'Journal of the Second Provincial Congress,' May 17, 233; May 20, 247. The Provincial Congress was particularly concerned with maintaining a firm civilian control over the army. Its documents pertaining to the army repeatedly stress that the Congress held ultimate authority. This, no doubt, arose from members' perception that the British standing army based in Boston had not been properly reined in by Parliament and the Ministry in London. In late June, the Committee of Safety reprimanded Ward for not being properly deferential in dealings with it about the distribution of guns to soldiers. Its records for that day state: 'Whereas, the Hon. General Ward . . . has this day issued general orders, in which are these words, "and the committee of safety are hereby ordered to deliver out arms to such commanding officers as make application to them for the same" and whereas, this committee apprehend, that said resolve does not empower the general to *order them* to deliver said arms, but only to *order his officers*: and whereas, the committee apprehend, that it is of vast importance that no *orders* are issued by the military, or obeyed by the civil power, but only such as are *directed* by the honorable representative body of the people, from whom all military and civil power originates; and, though, this committee are satisfied, that General Ward has misunderstood said resolve, and does not mean or intend to set up the *military* power above the *civil*, yet, lest this order of the general, should be adduced as a precedent in the future, we think it our indispensable duty to protest against the general's said order.' 'Journals of the Committee of Safety,' June 28, 580. That the civilian authorities would even consider being usurped by Ward's armies shows that the army was a creditable and powerful force.

93. For example, on June 15, the Congress commissioned colonels David Brewer, Jonathan Little, and Jonathan Brewer and administered the oath to them. 'Journal of the Third Provincial Congress,' June 15, 338-40.

army and, by extension, the American Revolution. It was no coincidence that an escalation of disciplinary and ritualized proceedings came with the army's first test in combat. General Ward and civilian leaders recognized that for the army to fight successfully, it needed the discipline and the spirit that these ceremonies imbued in the soldiers.

An American Army

Although it probably did not happen, Joshua Slocum and his mates would have been wise to celebrate (as he later remembered they did) the news of General Washington's appointment to take over the American army: not because the army needed a brilliant leader, but because this news meant that a New England revolution had become an American revolution. The members of the Provincial Congress knew that Massachusetts alone, even with help from her neighbors, could not defeat the British, but they hoped that they could do so with the support of all of the colonies and the Continental Congress. General Washington's appointment signaled that the Continental Congress had adopted General Ward's army and the American Revolution. It meant that the Massachusetts revolutionaries—politicians, officers, and enlisted men alike—just by holding together an army, had kept the Revolution alive.

Ward and other leaders wished to leave the army in respectable shape for Washington and the Continental Congress. In his final days in command, after he had been informed of Washington's appointment above him, Ward issued a series of last-minute directives to correct disciplinary problems. On June 29 he reminded officers to make sure their men came out for duty 'immediately when called upon' and 'precisely by the time fixed.' The following day he announced 'that all profane cursing and swearing, all indecent language and behavior, will not be tolerated in camps.' He also reminded men to keep the camp clean, once again requested a return of the rank and names in the regiments under him, and directed 'that the rules and regulations for the American

army be read at the head of the respective companies by the captains, or such other person as they shall appoint, once a week.⁹⁴

Ward and the members of the Congress and Committee of Safety had not created a perfectly disciplined force that could match up to the standards of European armies. Despite Ward's efforts, when Washington arrived in early July he expressed some disappointment with the state in which he found the army.⁹⁵ The Massachusetts Congress knew that the work of establishing the army was not finished. In a letter to Washington, they warned him, 'We wish you may have found such regularity and discipline already established in the army, as may be agreeable to your expectations.' They continued by explaining, 'The hurry with which it was necessarily collected, and the many disadvantages . . . under which we have raised and endeavored to regulate the forces of this colony, have rendered it a work of time; and though, in great measure effected, the completion of so difficult, and at the same time so necessary a task, is reserved to your excellency.'⁹⁶ Washington issued a lengthy series of orders in his first few days. Many were the same sorts of orders that Ward had been repeatedly issuing over the past weeks: exact returns were to be made; cursing, swearing, and drunkenness were forbidden, and prayer required; cleanliness was to be maintained; and, of course, there was to be 'no firing of cannon or small arms . . . except in case of necessary immediate defence.'⁹⁷

94. Ward, 'Orderly Book,' June 29, 30.

95. The Provincial Congress's records for the last half of June contain many details of its effort to give a 'proper' welcome to Washington (and General Charles Lee, with whom he arrived from Philadelphia). The Congress sent a welcoming escort to meet him in Springfield, wrote him several letters, and prepared a headquarters and procured furniture for him. See 'Journal of the Third Provincial Congress,' June 24, 391; June 26, 398; and June 29, 418. The Provincial Congress showed far more deference to Washington than to Ward and gave Washington far more latitude in running the army as he wished. In part, it did so because it respected his military wisdom. To a greater extent perhaps, the members respected Washington because he represented the Continental Congress, a body which they saw as higher than their own. Ward, on the other hand, had himself been a member of the Massachusetts Congress, and they viewed him as very much an equal to themselves, and not one to defer to.

96. 'Journal of the Third Provincial Congress,' July 1, 438-39.

97. General Washington's orders for July 3 and 4 are contained in Henshaw, *Orderly Book of Colonel William Henshaw*, 40-41.

None of the soldiers who kept diaries acknowledged a change in the spirit or activity of the army upon Washington's taking command. They continued to record the same sorts of activities—religious services, conflicts with the British, and disciplinary ceremonies—for some time to come. Amos Farnsworth's diary is perhaps the most revealing. After he had been wounded at Bunker Hill, Farnsworth went home to recuperate. When he returned to Cambridge nearly two months later, on August 14, he wrote a simple entry: 'Found our Company perty well.' Farnsworth, away from camp for the six weeks after Washington arrived, did not observe any noteworthy change in the spirit or operation of the army. His next entry enforces his view of the situation: 'Now from Monday to Saterdag night Nothing hapned worth noteis.'⁹⁸

Ward and the members of the Provincial Congress and Committee of Safety kept the Revolution alive through their conscious and active work to create an American army. If they had not taken the measures they did to recruit, enlist, supply, organize, pay, and discipline the army, the men who gathered in Cambridge after the battles of Lexington and Concord would soon have gone home. Many men did. But many others were convinced to enlist into an American army: a force designed not only to protect their homes, families, and fields, but to fight the British. Once these men enlisted, Ward and his fellow officers and political leaders initiated the new soldiers into the duties and institutions of military life and imbued in them a sense that they were part of an American army, fighting for a righteous cause. As a result, by the time the Continental Congress appointed Washington and he joined the war effort at the end of June, there was an army to adopt and a Revolution under way.

By organizing this army, Ward and his fellow leaders not only made a drastic impact on the immediate course of events of the Revolution, but they also shifted the attitudes, motivations, and mindsets of the New Englanders who served in the army. Men

98. Farnsworth, 'Diary,' August 14.

who, on April 20, rushed to defend their hometowns, by July 2 were part of an American army, which was engaged in a war with the British in defense of the life, liberty, and property not just of their townsmen, but of all Americans. Most of these men did not arrive at the scene in time to fight in the battles of Lexington and Concord, and most of them watched rather than participated in the Battle of Bunker Hill. None of them took much interest in Washington's arrival in early July. For men such as Amos Farnsworth, it was not these events, but daily life in a military camp and entry into an army that made the first months of the Revolution important.

APPENDIX: DIARIES OF REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS, BOSTON, 1775

Name	Home	Rank	Diary Dates	Service Location	Diary Location
Avery, David	Connecticut	Chaplain	April 22-May 30, 1775	sa	<i>American Monthly Magazine</i> 17 (1900): 342-47
Barber, Daniel	Connecticut	Private	June, 1775	Roxbury	<i>Historical Magazine</i> 7 (1863): 82-88
Bixby, Samuel	Sutton, Mass.	Private	May-December 1775	Roxbury	<i>Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society</i> 14 (1875-76): 285-98
Boynton, Thomas	Andover, Mass.	Sergeant	April 19, 1775	Concord	<i>Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society</i> 15 (1876-77): 254-55
Burnham, John	Gloucester, Mass.	Sergeant	1774-76	Cambridge	<i>Magazine of History</i> , extra no. 54
Chamberlin, William	Hopkinton, Mass.	Private	April 19, 1775	Cambridge	<i>Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society</i> , 2d ser. 10 (1895-96): 490-504
Clark, Elishu	Colchester, Conn.	Clerk	April 20-July 7, 1775	Roxbury	"Library of Congress, Peter Force Transcripts"
Emerson, William	Concord, Mass.	Reverend	1775-76	Concord	<i>The Literature of the Nineteenth of April</i> (Concord, Mass., 1876)
Farnsworth, Amos	Groton, Mass.	Private	April 19, 1775-May 1779	Cambridge	<i>Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society</i> , 2d ser. 12 (1897-99): 74-107
Fitch, Jabez	Norwich, Conn.	Lieutenant	August 5-December 1775	Roxbury	"Library of Congress, Peter Force Transcripts"

Minutemen for Months

Haskell, Caleb	Newburyport, Mass.	Private	May 5, 1775-May 30, 1776	Cambridge	<i>Magazine of History</i> , extra no. 86, Lothrop W. Withington, ed. <i>Caleb Haskell's Diary</i> (Newburyport, Mass., 1881)
Haws, Samuel	Wrentham, Mass.	Minuteman	April 19, 1775-February 10, 1776	Roxbury	Abraham Tomlinson (ed.), <i>The Military Journals of Two Private Soldiers 1758-1775</i> (Poughkeepsie, N.Y., 1855)
Ingalls, Phineas	Andover, Mass.	Private	April 19, 1775-December 8, 1776	Cambridge	<i>Historical Collections of the Essex Institute</i> 53 (1917): 81-92
Kettell, John	Newburyport, Mass.	Private	May, 17-October 1775	Cambridge	Massachusetts Historical Society
Litchfield, Paul	Scituate, Mass.	Militia	March 23-July 19, 1775	Scituate	Massachusetts Historical Society
Lunt, Paul	Newburyport, Mass.	Sergeant	May 10-December 1775	Cambridge	<i>Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society</i> 12 (1871-73): 192-206
Merriam, Joseph	Grafton, Mass.	Private	April 19-May 14, 1775	Cambridge	Boston Public Library
Morgan, Nathaniel	Connecticut	Ensign	April 21-July 1775	Roxbury	<i>Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society</i> 7 (1899): 99, 101-110
Ober, Nathaniel	Wenham, Mass.	Private	May 15-September 3, 1775	Cambridge	Massachusetts Historical Society
Parker, James	Shirley, Mass.	Private	January 1770-1777	Cambridge	<i>New England Historical and Genealogical Register</i> 69 (1915): 8-17, 117-27, 211-24, 294-308
Sanger, Abner	Keane, N.H.	Private	October 1774-1782	Cambridge	<i>Repertory</i> , 1-2 (1924-1927)
Stevens, James	Andover, Mass.	Private	April 19, 1775-April 1776	Cambridge	<i>Historical Collections of the Essex Institute</i> 48 (1912): 41-70
Stewart, Jehiel	Blandford, Mass.	Private	April 23-July 13, 1775	Roxbury	Pension Files, National Archives
Storrs, Experience	Mansfield, Conn.	Lieutenant Colonel	June 1-28, 1775	Cambridge	<i>Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society</i> 14 (1875-76): 84-87

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