# To Nourish The Troops:
# The Mess, Camp Equipage, Kitchens and Provisions of the Common British Soldier During The American War for Independence

**Gregory S. Theberge**
**H.M. 63rd Regiment of Foot, Recreated**

# Introduction:

The original version of this article was first published by the Brigade of the American Revolution in the Spring 2000 edition of the ***Dispatch*** (Volume XXX, No.1). That year, I had the honor to present this material at the annual Brigade School of the Soldier.

As researching the material culture of the common British soldier during the American War for Independence is an ongoing process, it is imperative for any study written on the subject to evolve as new material becomes apparent. If not, the work becomes obsolete and irrelevant. Having said that, I thought it was due time to update the original version of *"To Nourish the Troops, the Mess, Kitchens and Provisions of the Common British Soldier During the American War for Independence"*. Now over ten years old, new information has been added to the original text and improved photographs have been included in an attempt to make the work more meaningful.

It goes without saying that no man is an island when it comes to historical research. I am indebted to those individuals who have supplied me with both material and ideas over the years so that this work, and others like it, could be assembled. These friends are gratefully acknowledged at the end of this article.

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# The British Mess

During the American War for Independence, each company within a British Regiment was broken down into individual groups of 5 to 6 soldiers. These small bodies of men were collectively known as “messes”. Each mess fell under the direct supervision of a corporal and sergeant, who, in turn, were answerable to their officers for the well being of the men under their command.

In order to to maintain the health and performance of every soldier within a regiment, military regulations of the day required each mess to sleep as a common group and prepare its meals together. It did so whether the army was in the field, on campaign, or assigned to quarters during the winter.

This system of regulation was nothing new to the British Army. As early as 1727, Humphrey Bland wrote about the function of a company mess, as well as the duty of its commanding officers, in his work, *“A Treatise of Military Discipline”*. This work was available to, and referenced by many British officers throughout the 18th century. The latest reprint of Bland’s work was published in 1762.

Humphrey Bland
*"A Treatise of Military Discipline"*, 1746, Article III, Chapter XIII

*"The Men of each Company should be divided into Messes, each Mess consisting of four or six Men, or according to the Number in each Room; and every Pay-Day, each Man should be oblig'd to appropriate such a Part of his Pay to buy Provisions, which Money should be lodg'd in the Hands of one of them, in order to be laid out to the best Advan-tage, which the Orderly Sergeants and Corporals are to see duly executed, and to see each Mess boil the Pot every Day. Without this is carefully look'd into, the Soldiers will be apt to spend their Pay on Liquors, which will not only occa-sion their Neglect of Duty, but in all probability, the Loss of a great many Men by Sickness for Want of proper Victu-als to support them. It is therefore a Duty incumbent on every Officer to be more than ordinary careful in this Particular, and not to think themselves above the looking into these Things, since the Preservation of their Men depends so much on it: For in those Regiments where this Method is duly observ'd, the Men are generally Healthful; but when it is neglected, great Numbers fall sick and die.*

*The Captain should visit their Mens Quarters at least once a Week, and the Subalterns twice, to see that they are kept clean and in good Order; as also to inspect into the several Messes of their Companies, and to see whether their Provisions are good, and the Money laid justly out.*

*In some Regiments there is an Officer appointed daily to visit the Casserns or Barracks of the Regiment, to see that they are kept clean, and that the men dress their Victuals, and to make a Report of the whole to the Colonel: How-ever, that should not prevent the other Officers from looking into it also.*

*The Major should visit the whole very often, that he may know whether the other Officers due their Duty, and reprimand those who neglect it; it being his immediate Bu-siness and Duty, to see all Orders punctually obey'd."*

A

# TREATISE

OF

# Military Diſcipline:

In which is Laid down and Explained

## The Duty of the Officer and Soldier,

Through the ſeveral Branches of the Service.

By *HUMPHREY BLAND*, Eſq;
Lieutenant-General of His MAJESTY's Forces.

The EIGHTH EDITION, Reviſed, Corrected, and Altered to the preſent Practice of the Army.

*In omni Prælio non tam Multitudo & Virtus indocta, quam Ars & Exercitium ſolent præſtare Victoriam.* Vegetius, Lib. 1.

*LONDON:*

Printed for R. BALDWIN, J. RICHARDSON, T. LONGMAN, H. WOODGATE, and S. BROOKES, in *Pater-Noſter-Row*:
W. JOHNSTON, in *Ludgate-Street*,
S. CROWDER, on *London-Bridge*; P. DAVEY and B. LAW, and T. CASLON, in *Stationer's Court*. 1759.

Within a company, men of similar rank typically messed together. An examination of an August, 1777, orderly book entry for Lt. Col. Sir John Wrottesly's (3rd) Company, First Battalion, Brigade of Guards serving in America shows how messes were typically broken down in the British army. Here, we can see that officers, sergeants, corporals, and enlisted or "other" ranks messed independently from one another.

**Officers' Mess**

Capt. and Lt. Col. Sir John Wrottesley, First Guards
Lt. and Capt. John Thomas De Burgh, First Guards
Ensign Thomas Glyn, First Guards; Servants Brinkman, Wm. Evans, Thos. Levings and Wm. Lewis

**Mess No. 1**

Sergeants Jno. Hill, Thos. Hill, Manning, and Morgan
Jno. Chance (rank unknown)

**Mess No. 2**

Drummers Baxter and Robert Blunt; Corporals John Blunt, Thos. Jarman, Luke Parkison, and Pitcher

**Messes No. 3 through No. 16**

Groups of five or six privates

A Member of the Officer’s Mess of Lt. Col. Sir John Wrottesly's (3rd) Company
First Battalion, Brigade of Guards
Lt. and Capt. John Thomas De Burgh, First Guards

During the American War for Independence, wives and children were allowed to follow the British army in limited numbers.  As such, they were able to draw provisions from the regimental stores.  Those woman who were considered “industrious” (i.e. those who fulfilled the role of a laundress, nurse or petty sutler) were sought over those who were idle.  If a wife accompanied her husband on campaign, she typically joined his mess. In other cases, she messed with other women. When a soldier was either in garrison or winter quarters, there were times where he could be excused from his mess to sleep and dine with his wife, as long as his well being was maintained.

General Orders, America
(April 26, 1775)
*"The soldiers wives will be allowed half rations each, til further orders, and such as have more than one child, to receive a whole Ration. Returns to be given in immediately from each Corps, of the Women, with the names of such as have children, and the number of children each woman has."*

Bennet Cuthbertson
*"System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry"*, Chapter VIII., Section XII., 1776:

*"Those Soldiers who are married to industrious sober women, that can earn near as much as their husband's pay, and can be depended on for eating well, may be excused from messing with their Com-panies; but if on the contrary, the wives are idle, and trust to them for support, it must be insisted on, that such men be appointed to a mess, to prevent their being starved, and to oblige the women to some scheme of industry, by which alone it can be possi-ble for their husbands to be allowed to co-habit with them: Officers should frequently enquire into the married Soldier's manner of living, that they may be enabled to prevent, in time, any ill consequences which may arise, from the indulgence of permitting them to be with their wives."*

Smith, George; “An Universal Military Dictionary.”
London, 1779:

*“VICTUALS, or Regulations for victualling the Royal Regiment of Artillery and other troops* ***on board of the transports****; with the method of classing the men, women, and children, into messes.*

*As soon as the troops are embarked, the Quarter Master immediately divides them into messes, that is, 1 man, 1 woman, and 3 children under 10 years of age being equal to a mess of 4 men, Children at 10 years of age are counted men or women.*

*When the messes are completed, and everyone classed to their berths, the Quarter Master gives the steward of the transport a return of the number thereof; upon the receipt of which, he immediately issues out bedding and utensils at the following rate.*
*To each birth, 1 flock bed, 1 bolster, 2 blankets and 1 rug.*

*To each mess, 2 bowls, 4 spoons, 1 can, and 1 pudding-bag.*
*N. B. Three men are generally appointed to a birth...*

*For the better preservation of the men’s health, it is ordered that one day in the week there shall be issued out to them a proportion of flour and suet in lieu of beef; also a proportion of canvas for pudding bags, after the rate of 1 Ell for every 16 men.*

*In foreign voyages, there shall be supplied only 3 months butter and cheese; the remainder of those species is to be made up in olive oil.”* (S-1)

Those women and children who remained in garrison while their Regiment went on campaign continued to receive provisions through the local commissary. The 40th Regiment of Foot, for example, issued old camp equipage to those women who were left behind when the army went on campaign:

Howe's Orderly Book
(Halifax, May 2, 1776)
*"Six Women per Company will be allowed to Embark with each Regiment. The Commanding Officers will be responsible that no more Women are received on board, nor any Children. Provisions will be allowed at the rate of half a Ration for each Woman, and one quarter of a Ration for each Child, that is left behind."*

Orderly Book, H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot
(Head Qrs Nyork, June 3, 1777)
*"Four Women Pr Compy of Companys of 50 & 8 Women Pr Compy of Companeys of 100 are Allowed to Embark with their Respective Regiments and to be Victualud According to the Former Regulations the Remainder of the Women and Children of their Corps will be sent to NYork where A proportion of provisions & Qrs or Old Camp Equipage will be provided them"*

During the American War for Independence, a British soldier was responsible for cooking his own food. If a woman was in his mess, she may have provided some assistance to the chore, but the bulk of the responsibility fell upon the soldier himself. Theoretically, having 5 or 6 soldiers cook together ensured a healthier diet for the army. As each man contributed his labor and a portion of his money for the procurement of rations for his mess, any negligence on his part would directly affect the well being of his fellow messmates. Holding a soldier accountable to his comrades decreased the likelihood that he would neglect his duties. This reduced the indulgence of personal gratifications, which, in most cases, meant alcohol.

Bennet Cuthbertson
*"System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry"*, Chapter VIII., Section I., 1776:
*"Experience proves, that nothing contributes more to the health of Soldiers, than a regular well chosen diet, and their being every day obliged to boil the pot; it corrects drunkenness, and in a great mea-sure prevents gaming, and thereby desertion, nothing being more common, than for a Soldier (after having spent his pay in spirituous liquors, or perhaps gamed it away, and having no means left of subsisting, but by selling his linen. or committing a scandalous theft) to desert, in order to avoid the certain punishment of his crime; Officer's therefore cannot be too exact, in establishing every method, to enforce the strict ob-servance of regular and constant messing."*

Bennet Cuthbertson
*"System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry"*, Chapter VIII., Section IV., 1776:
*"Three quarters of a pound of meat and one pen-ny-worth of bread, with a proportion of roots, &c. for making broth, should at least be the calculation for each man's mess, for a day; but when the cheap-ness of provision will admit of it, the allowance of meat ought to be augmented to one pound; as the less money a soldier has to spend on drink, the better will be his health, his attendance to duty more punctual, and his dress more becoming."*

Of course, soldiers needed to be reminded of their responsibilities from time to time:

General Orders, America
(October 23, 1775)
*"The Commander in Chief having been informed that many of the Soldiers sell their provisions to the Inhabitants, the Commanding Officers of Corps will be particularly attentive to the mens messes being regularly visited which will in great measure put a stop to such irregularities"*

Ultimately, the corporals and sergeants of a company were the ones who were held accountable for the proper function of the messes under their command. As the health of the men in these messes directly affected the function of the army, the messes were also inspected by a designated officer of the regiment on a regular basis.

Bennet Cuthbertson
*"System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry"*, Chapter VIII., Section VIII., 1776:
*"Less any part of the provisions, laid in for the messes, should be sold or embezzled by the Soldiers, a Subaltern, attended by a Serjeant, must visit the whole of the Regiment, about one o'clock (which should be the general hour for dinner) and examine, whether each mess has dressed a sufficient quantity of provisions for the day; a report of which he is to make to the commanding -Officer: if a Regiment is quartered on a town, it will require two or three Subalterns for this duty."*

Should a mess happen to sell its provisions for liquor, Francis Grose gave the following tongue-in-cheek recommendation in his book, "Advice to the Officers of the British Army: with the Addition of some Hints to the Drummer and Private Soldier." London, 1783:

*"To the Private Soldier...*
*If your mess have changed their marketing for gin, or any other good liquor, and have nothing to put into the pot, wrap up a puppy or a brickbat, in a cloth, and call it a sheeps head, or a pudding. This you may very safely do, as it is an hundred to one that your officer will not be at pains to examine it."*

A soldier's main meal was typically taken in the middle of the day. To ensure that each mess cooked its victuals appropriately and in a timely manner, they were inspected by their non-commissioned officers.

Orderly Book, H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot
(June 6 or 7, 1777)
*"The Messes of the Differont Companys are to Cook Regularley Every Day at one o Clock in the Kitchen in the Rear of the En Campment and to be Visited by the sub of the Day..."*

Orderly Book, Brigade of Guards
(September 17, 1778)
*"The Messing time to be at 12 o'Clock. The Place for Cooking to be Allotted by the Commanding officer of Each Battalion. The men to go for water at 4 in the afternoon under the same Regulation."*

Orderly Book, H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot
(June 20, 1777)
*"The Cooks must be Regularey Paraded by the Non Commissd for that duty who will be Answerable to the Visiting Offr that Kettles are all Boiled at one place & time and he will make his report as formerley Orderd"*

An enlisted man paid for his rations through deductions in his pay known as Stoppages. Soldiers were typically charged two and a half pence a day for the provisions they received. In order to supplement his rations, every man within a mess also contributed a portion of his pay (or Subsistence) for the procurement of fresh cultivated provisions.

Bennet Cuthbertson
*"System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry"*, Chapter VIII., Section XII., 1776:
*"Whether a Company is paid daily, once, or twice a week, (which must entirely depend on the establish-ment of a market, or the nature of the service it is employed on) the Pay-Sergeants, after making the stoppages ordered, should give the remaining sub-sistence of the Soldiers, to the Sergeants and Cor-porals of the different Squads of inspection, in order to buy the regulated quantity of provisions for the several Messes, and never to the men themselves."*

Bennet Cuthbertson
*"System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry"*, Chapter VIII., Section VI., 1776:
*"On the evening of market-days, the Serjeants and Corporals should fully explain to the Soldiers of their respective Squads, how much money has been laid out for the several species of provisions, and having satisfied them that every thing is just, ought to pay each man an exact share of whatever balance re-mains."*

# Camp Equipage

During the American War for Independence, the Camp Equipage of a British regiment consisted of the tents, poles, and baggage necessary for the establishment of a proper castremetation. It also included those items necessary for the day to day well being of the troops under its command. This included canteens, cooking kettles, hatchets and haversacks.

Orderly Book, H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot
(Head Qrs Nyork, June 2, 1777):
*"The Regts under Orders for Embarkation will Immediately receive the Names of the several Transports Apropriated to them, on board of which they are as soon as possable to Embark their Camp Equipage Except such Canteens Camp Kettles Hatchets & Haversacks, as their Respective Regts may be in Immediate want of"*

# Canteens:

In order to maintain his well being, a soldier must be kept hydrated. Prior to, and during the American War for Independence, the British Government utilized canteens made of tinned sheet iron with thin linen cords. After 1780, these “water flasks with strings” were eventually replaced by canteens made of wood.

Dome Topped British Tin Canteen with Thin Linen Cord
(Don Troiani Collection)

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Mathew, or Mary, Darly - “A VIEW IN AMERICA IN 1778”
Note the Presence of a Dome Top Tin Canteen with Cap on the Pointing British Light Infantry Soldier
(American Antiquarian Society)

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"Myself on Piquet in a Tempest ---- a Cloak 1777"
Possible Provenance - Richard St. George Mansergh During the Philadelphia Campaign of 1777
Detail Reveals the Presence of a Tin Canteen with Rope Sling

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Edward Penny, R.A. “An Officer Giving Alms to a Sick Soldier”
While this painting pre-dates the American War for Independence, The Tin Canteen Shown Varies Little
From those that were used from 1770 - 1783. Note the Tin Cap and Thin Linen Cord.
Also Note the Large Linen Haversack Worn on the Soldier in the Background (Southeby’s Auction House)

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# Mess Kettles

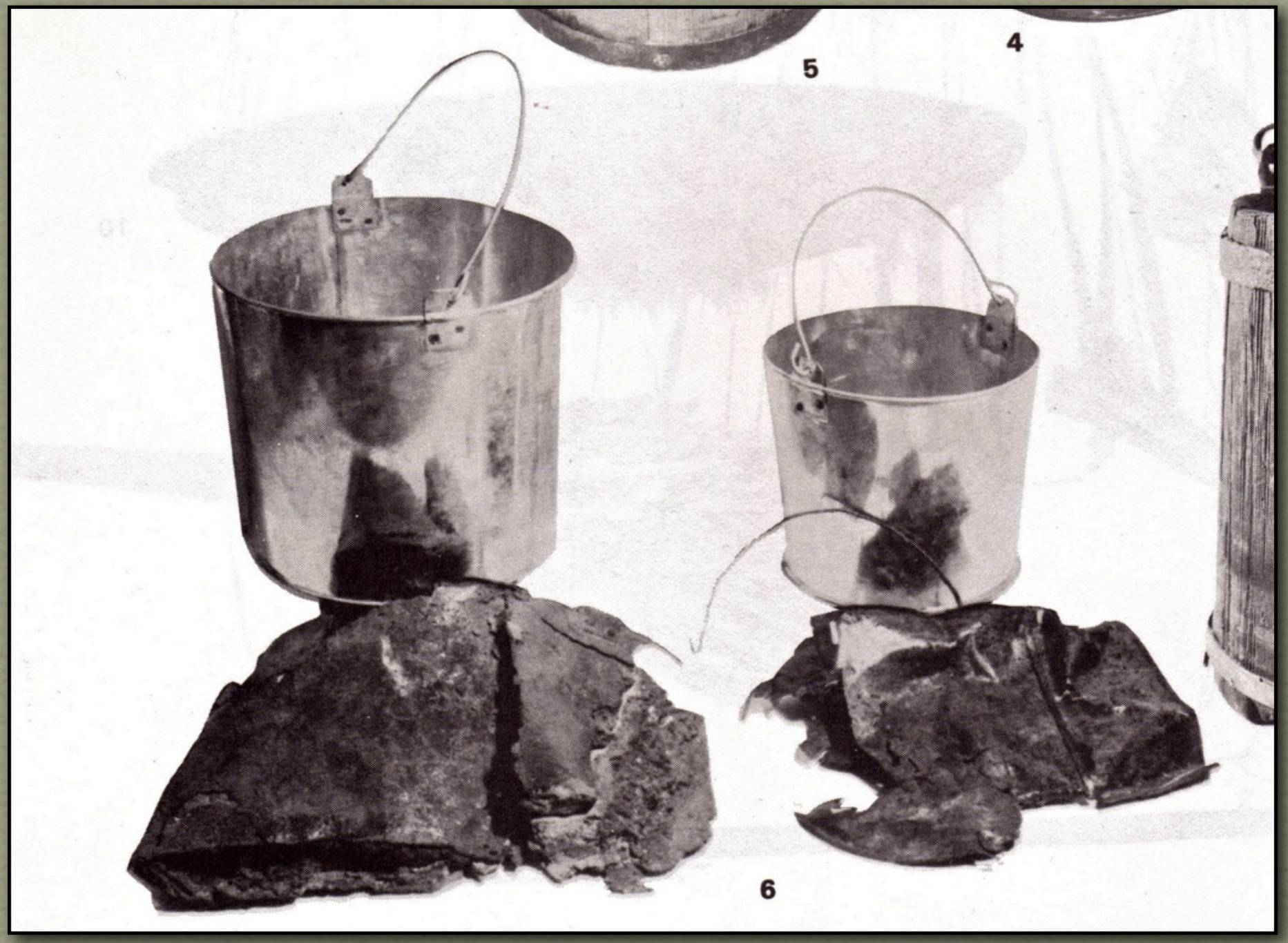
When a British soldier went on campaign or lived in the field, his mess, or tent, was issued a lightweight tinned iron kettle to cook its rations. On occasion, other materials than tinned iron were used, but references to them are rare. The 17th Regiment of Light Dragoons, for example, was issued copper kettles (and bags) in 1775.

During the American Revolution, British kettles were straight walled and typically 7 to 10 inches in height. They were suspended over a fire by an iron bale which was attached to the kettle by either a riveted ear, or a hole pierced into the body of the kettle itself. While extant kettles from the period are far and few between, they do exist, as do illustrations which show the use of kettles in military camps. Through their analysis, we can gain a better understanding on how these commonplace vessels were constructed.

Detail: “A Perspective VIEW of an ENCAMPMENT” by Bowles & Carver, 1780
A Light Infantry Soldier Carries Two Tin Kettles

Extant Tin Kettle Recovered at Fort Ticonderoga
Ten Inches in Height
Flat Rectangular Tin Ears Double Riveted to the Kettle Body
(Fort Ticonderoga Collection)

Remnant of a Tin Kettle Excavated at Fort Ligonier
From *"A Soldier-Like Way"* by R.R. Gale
Heights Excluding Bales and Ears: 9 1/4" and 7 1/4"
(Fort Ligonier Collection)




Tin Kettles or Pails with Flat Rectangular Crimped Dog Ears Found at Fort Ligonier & Reconstructions of the Same
As Pictured in Neuman and Kravic's "Collector's Encyclopedia of the American Revolution"
Heights Excluding Bales and Ears: 9 1/4" and 7 1/4"
(Fort Ligonier Collection)

Extant Tin Kettle
This Early Specimen was Recovered From a Well at Fortress Louisbourg
Smaller Size :  6” Tall by 8 3/4” Wide
3 Panel Body Construction with Single Riveted Flat Ears for Attaching the Bale
Capacity: 1 Gallon, 1 Pint
c. 1719 - 1768
(Fortress Louisbourg NHS, Parks Canada)

Extant Tin Kettle Remnants Recovered at Fortress Louisbourg
Double Riveted, Flat, Crimped, Rectangular Ears of Tin
(Fortress Louisbourg NHS, Parks Canada)

We can gain an insight regarding the holding capacity of British mess kettles by examining period accounts:

*"Invoice of Sundrys Shipt on board the Ship Peggy James Kennedy Master New york or Head quarters of the Royal Army in America by Patrick [Read?] on [illegible] of James Wilson[?] [Illegible]*
*Hallifax Nova Scotia 28 June 1776…*
[Lengthy list of foodstuffs, etc.]
*8 large Camp kettles_____3/6___£__1__8__-*
*8 small. do. do._____3/-_____1__4__-*
*8 do. do. do._____2/6_____1__-__-*
*…*
*2 doz. half Gall. Kettles & Covers_____9/-_____-_18__-*
*…"* (W-1)

While the following account recalls the recollections of a rebel prisoner aboard the British prison ship, Jersey, it nonetheless represents British kettles that were provided to these men. It is interesting to note the presence of concave bottoms to these kettles.

In 1782, Thomas Dring of Providence, R.I., on board the Prison-ship, Jersey, wrote:
*"As soon as we were permitted to go on deck in the morning, someone took the tin kettle belonging to the mess, with as much water and such splinters of wood as we had been able to procure during the previous day, and carried them to the galley... It required but little wood to boil our food in these kettles, for their bottoms were made in a concave form, and the fire was applied directly in the center."* (G-1 p. 73)

# Mess Kettle Covers

According to numerous period accounts, a portion of the kettles used by the British army were supplied with either “covers”, “frying pan covers”, or “stew pan covers”.

Simple “covers” were likely made from tinned sheet iron with an apparatus that allowed them to be removed.

In 1778, George Wray of the Royal Artillery Commissary in Rhode Island kept a journal of the Stores issued to the British troops. Among his entries included:

*“23 January 1778 For use by Innes' Company ... 12 tin camp kettels with covers ...;"*
*“24 August 1778 For use by Innes' Company ... 16 tin camp kettles with covers."*

While it was made slightly after the War for Independence (c. 1800-1810), a small extant British Kettle from the 1st Foot Guards reveals the presence of a simple cover that was fastened with a iron ring for removal. This style of cover can be corroborated with a 1790 illustration by Henry William Bunbury.

A Small Post Revolution British Tin Kettle
Round Double Riveted Tin Ears, Iron Bale, and Tin Cover Sporting an Iron Ring Handle
Provenance : 1st Foot Guards  c.1800-1810
(Armémuseum, Stockholm Sweden)

Post Revolution British Tin Kettle Cover Sporting an Iron Ring Handle
Provenance : 1st Foot Guards  c.1800-1810
(Armémuseum, Stockholm Sweden)

A Camp Scene by Henry William Bunbury  c. 1790
While this Illustration was Executed 7 Years After the End of the Revolution,  the Kettles Used During This Period Essentially Remained the Same. Note the Tin Kettle Cover with Ring Handle
(Ann S.K. Brown Library, Brown University)

Other references to British Kettle Covers include the use of “Stew Pan” or “Frying Pan” covers. This nomenclature, would imply that these covers were large enough for holding a stew (i.e. they acted as a eating vessel, such as a bowl for the mess) or were constructed to be able to used as some form of frying pan.

British Treasury "Warrant for Payment"
(April 30, 1776)
*"Camp necessaries for a detachment of ye [British] Guards."*
*"224 Tin Kettles with Stew pan Covers & Bags"*

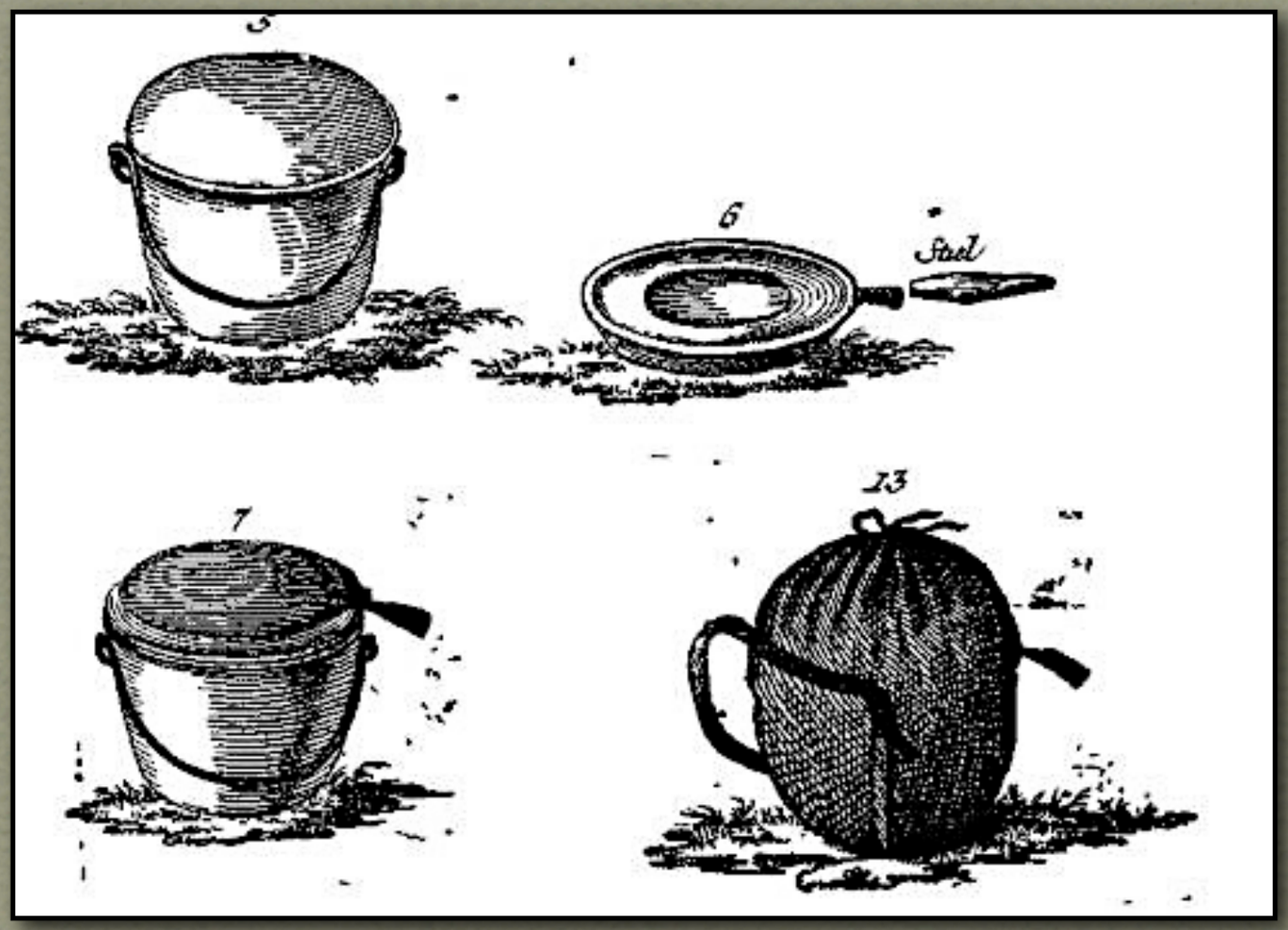
The use of “frying pan covers” by the British army can be seen in the inventory accounts of British ships captured by the American Navy during the American War:

Pennsylvania Evening Post
(December 12, 1775)
*"INVOICE of STORES on board the Nancy, store ship ... taken by the Schooner Lee ... Camp kettles, fifty ... Camp kettles, with frying pan covers, 100 ..."*

These kettles may have ended up with the American army, as shortly thereafter we can see that *"camp kettles, with frying pan covers, 66 ...”* were listed among the inventory that Artemus Ward sent to General George Washington in a letter dated July 22, 1776.

A week after this letter was written, the British ship, Peggy, was taken by American privateers and hauled into Marblehead. Among her cargo were *"twenty-four camp-kettles, [and] ... two dozen kettles with covers ..."*

While no extant British “Frying pan covers” have survived the annals of time, these articles were likely similar to those illustrated in the 1788 Carlsruhe German officer manual, *“Was ist jedem Officier wahrend eines Fedzugs zu wissen nothig"* (What It Is Necessary For Each Officer To Know During A Campaign).




German Mess Kettles (No. 5) with Covers (Nos. 6 & 7)
“Was ist jedem Officier wahrend eines Fedzugs zu wissen nothig"
(What Every Officer Needs To Know During A Campaign)
1788

# Kettle Bags

It was the responsibility of each mess to carry its kettle when it went on the march. In order to do so, kettle bags were issued so that these items would be easier to carry and not soil the men's clothing.

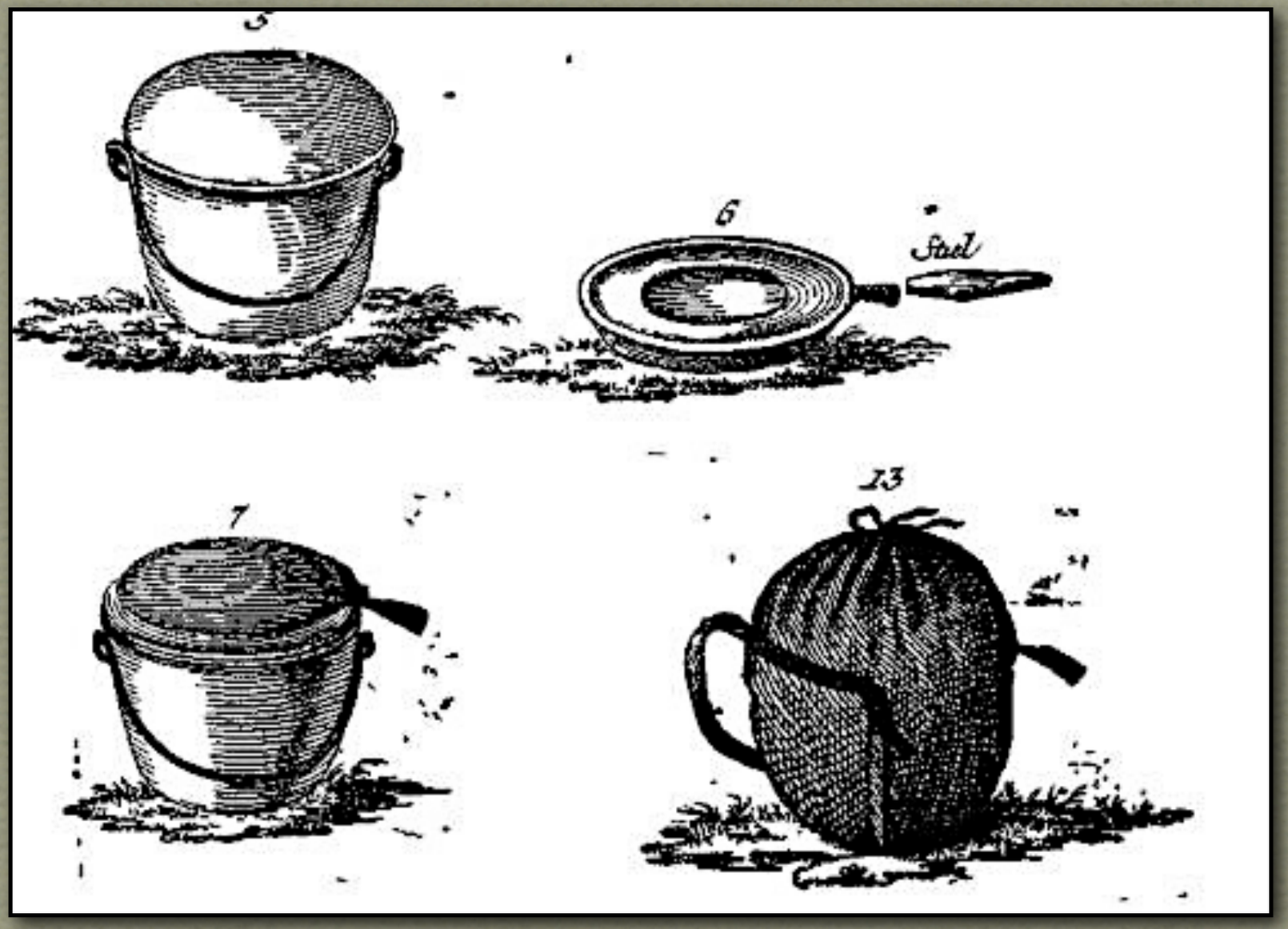
Orderly Book, H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot
(8 o'clock, June 21,1777)
*"The Tent poles and Camp Kettles to be carried by the men on the march"*

Orderly Book, H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot
(June 25, 1777)
*"The Whole to take their Camp Kettles with them & the Commandg Offrs: will take care that they are properly fixd: upon the men and not Carried in their hands they are to leave their Knapsacks at wt: the Baggage & Carry wt: them three days provision and One days rum"*

Orderly Book, H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot
(July 1, 1777)
*"The Tents to be struck and the Waggons loaded by 4 to morrow morning if the Wether is fare - The Men to carry their tent poles & Camp Kettles The Offrs: will see that the latter Are properly slung Agreable to A former Order"*

For ease in identification, the kettles and/or bags of a regiment were frequently marked for each company and the mess to which they belonged:

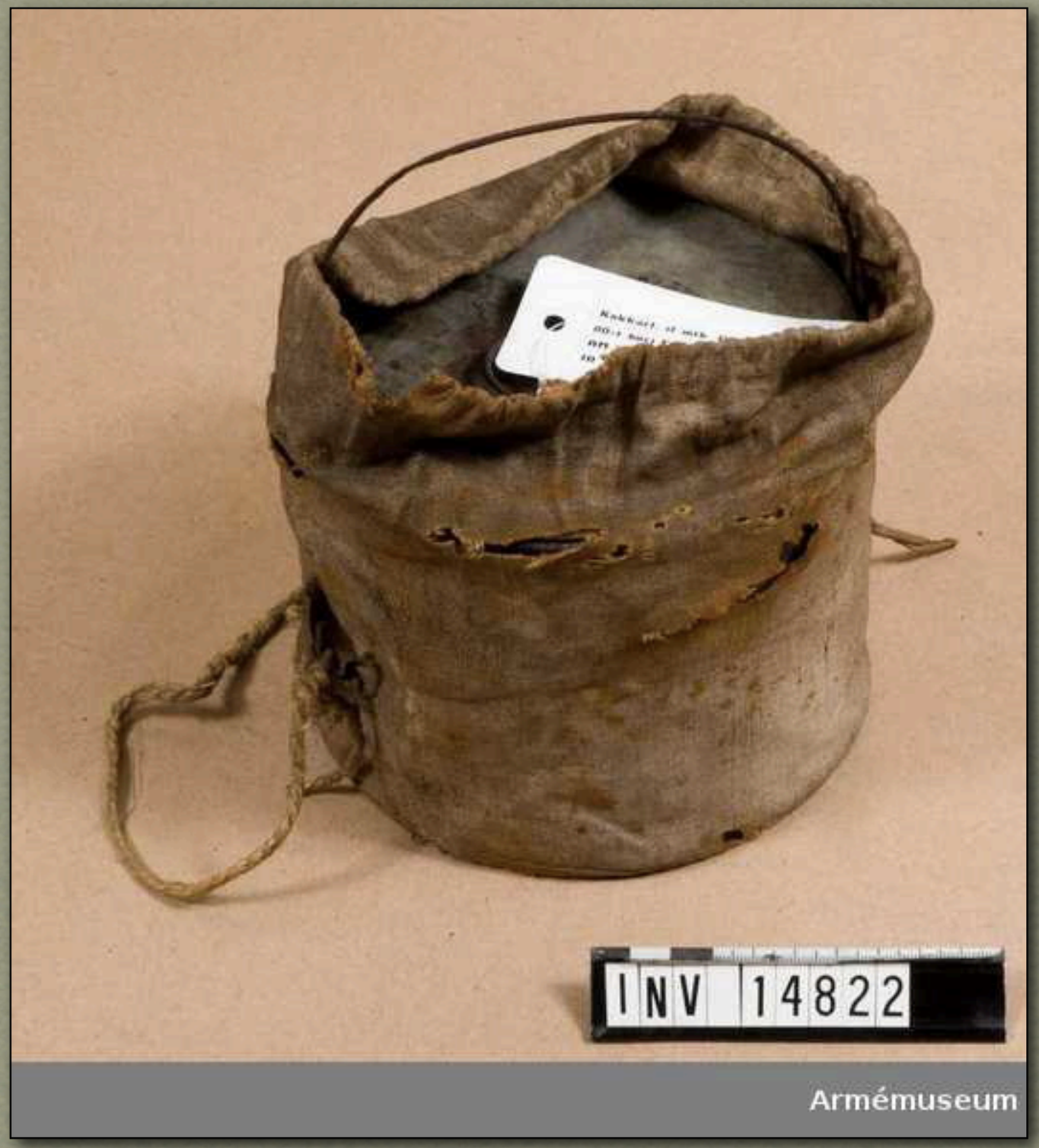
Orderly Book, Brigade of Guards
(July 15, 1778)
*". . .it is Recommended to them [Commanding Officers of Companies] to Cause the New Tents & Camp Kettles to be Immediately Mark'd Neatly & Uniformly. &emdash; distinguishing Each Company by the Number of it & Each Tent & Camp Kettle by the Number of the Mess to which it belongs."*




German Mess Kettles (No. 5) and Kettle Bag (No. 13)

“Was ist jedem Officier wahrend eines Fedzugs zu wissen nothig"
(What Every Officer Needs To Know During A Campaign)
1788

Kettle Bag Illustrated in the Lower Right




Post Revolution British Tin Kettle & Linen Kettle Bag
Provenance : 1st Foot Guards  c.1800-1810
(Armémuseum, Stockholm Sweden)

Post Revolution British Tin Kettle & Linen Kettle Bag
Provenance : 1st Foot Guards  c.1800-1810
(Armémuseum, Stockholm Sweden)

Post Revolution British Tin Kettle & Linen Kettle Bag
Provenance : 1st Foot Guards  c.1800-1810
(Armémuseum, Stockholm Sweden)

# Hatchets & Axes:

In order to cook its meal, a mess first had to prepare a fire. To accomplish this task, it was issued a hatchet for the splitting of wood. One messmate of each tent fell responsible to care for this hatchet when the army went on the march. He carried it either in his belting, or, more likely, in his knapsack. On a larger scale, axes were also available in the regimental stores for the felling of trees or cutting larger pieces of wood.

British Felling Axe Stamped with 4 British Broad Arrows
Found Near Fort Haldimand
(Don Troiani Collection)

Hatchet Heads Bearing British Broad Arrow Markings
(Tom Wnuck Estate,  Rochester, New York)

It is interesting to note that there is no evidence of cut and split firewood being transported by the army when it went on campaign.  Wood was typically gathered by foraging parties.

Orderly Book, Brigade of Guards
(September 17, 1778)
*"Each Non Commissioned officer at his Return to Report to an officer of the Company. At the Return of this Party one Man per Mess with a Non Commissioned officer to go for firing..."*

Samuel Johnson describes "firing" as "fewel" (in this case firewood) in his *"A Dictionary of the English Language"*, London, 1755.

# Haversacks:

To carry his rations when he was in the field, a soldier serving King George III drew a course linen strapped bag known as a haversack. Bennet Cuthbertson describes them:

*"On Service, a Soldier cannot conveniently get through the Duties of a Campaign, without a Haversack of strong, course, grey linen (which is always issued as part of the Camp-equipage) to carry his bread and provisions on a March; therefore need not be deem-ed a part of his appointments, nor provided with that exactness, which some Regiments always practice: whenever such things are delivered to the Men, the Name of the Owner, with the Number of the Regi-ment and Company he belongs to, should be marked on them, to prevent their being mixt or lost among those of other Corps."*

Haversacks were usually hung over a soldier's right shoulder so that they would not interfere with his cartridge pouch. They were closed by either two or three buttons. An extant artifact surviving from the late 18th century reveals the presence of brass buttons, although it is quite possible that these may be later replacements. In black ink, this haversack is marked with the British Broad Arrow as well as a "GR" (Georgius Rex) cypher signifying that it was part of the King's property.

British Linen Haversack
(Col. J. Craig Nannos Collection)
(Photographs Courtesy Roy P. Najecki)

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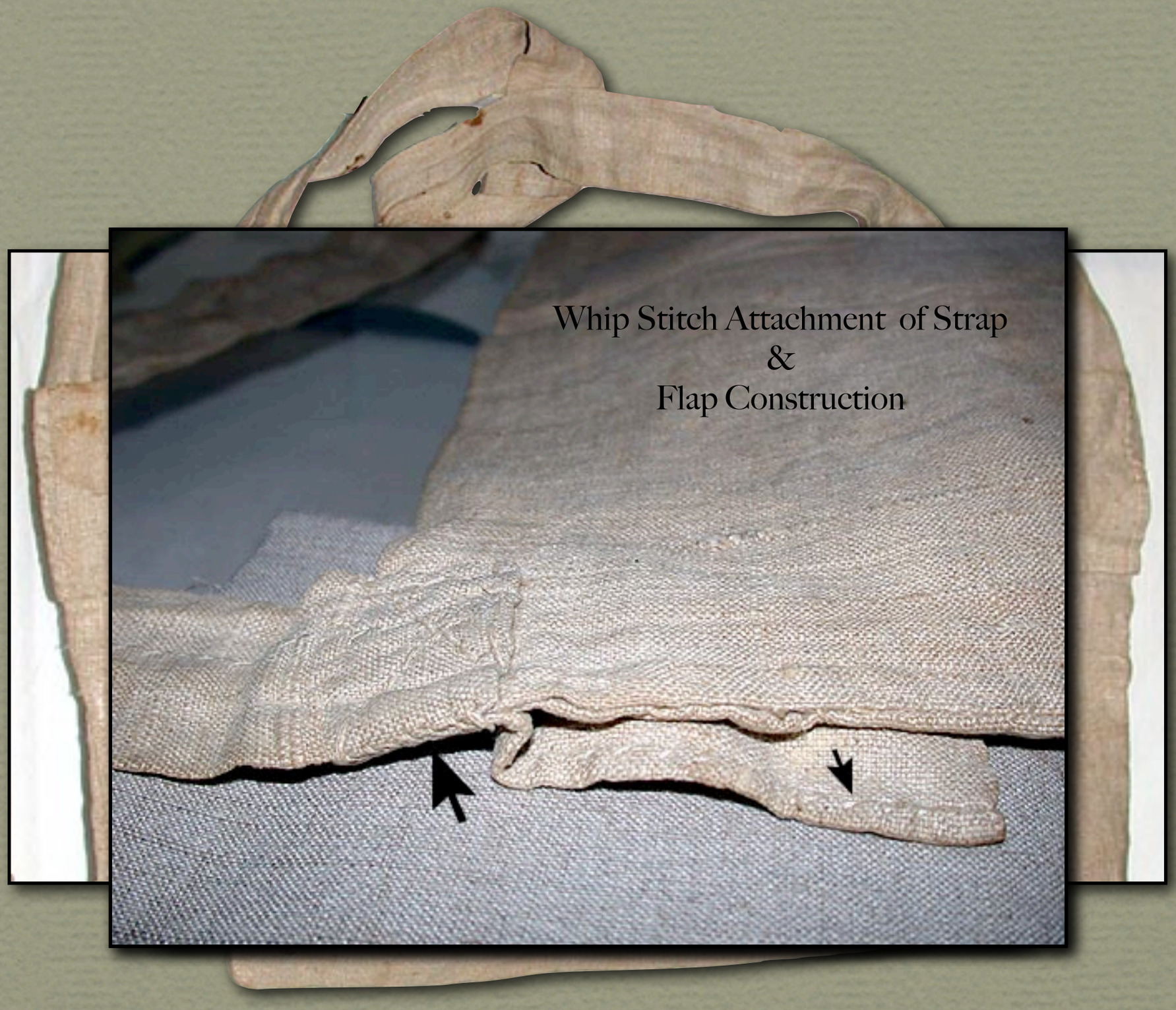


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In addition to carrying bread in his haversack, a soldier also carried his cooked and raw provisions.  In time, these articles became quite soiled with grease and debris.

Kemble's Orderly Book
(Aiken's Tavern, Maryland, September 4, 1777)
*"Each Corps will send an Officer and a sufficient Number of Men with Haversacks to receive one day's Flour. two Companies from 2nd Light Infantry are to attend as a Covering party."*

Through the examination of period artwork, we can determine the height at which a soldier wore his haversack.  It appears that haversacks were worn both high along the rib cage, as well as low along the hip.

Paul Sandby “The Encampment at Blackheath” 1780
Linen Haversack Worn Under the Ribcage
(The British Museum)

Paul Sandby “The Encampment at Blackheath” 1780
Linen Haversack Worn Under the Ribcage
(The British Museum)

Paul Sandby “The Encampment at Blackheath” 1780
Linen Haversack Worn Under the Ribcage
(The British Museum)

Paul Sandby "Ascent to the Round Tower" Winsor Castle c. 1770
3 Button Linen Haversack Worn at the Hip
(The Royal Collection)

Paul Sandby  “Ascent to the Round Tower” Winsor Castle c. 1770
3 Button Linen Haversack Worn at the Hip
(The Royal Collection)

# Military Field Kitchens

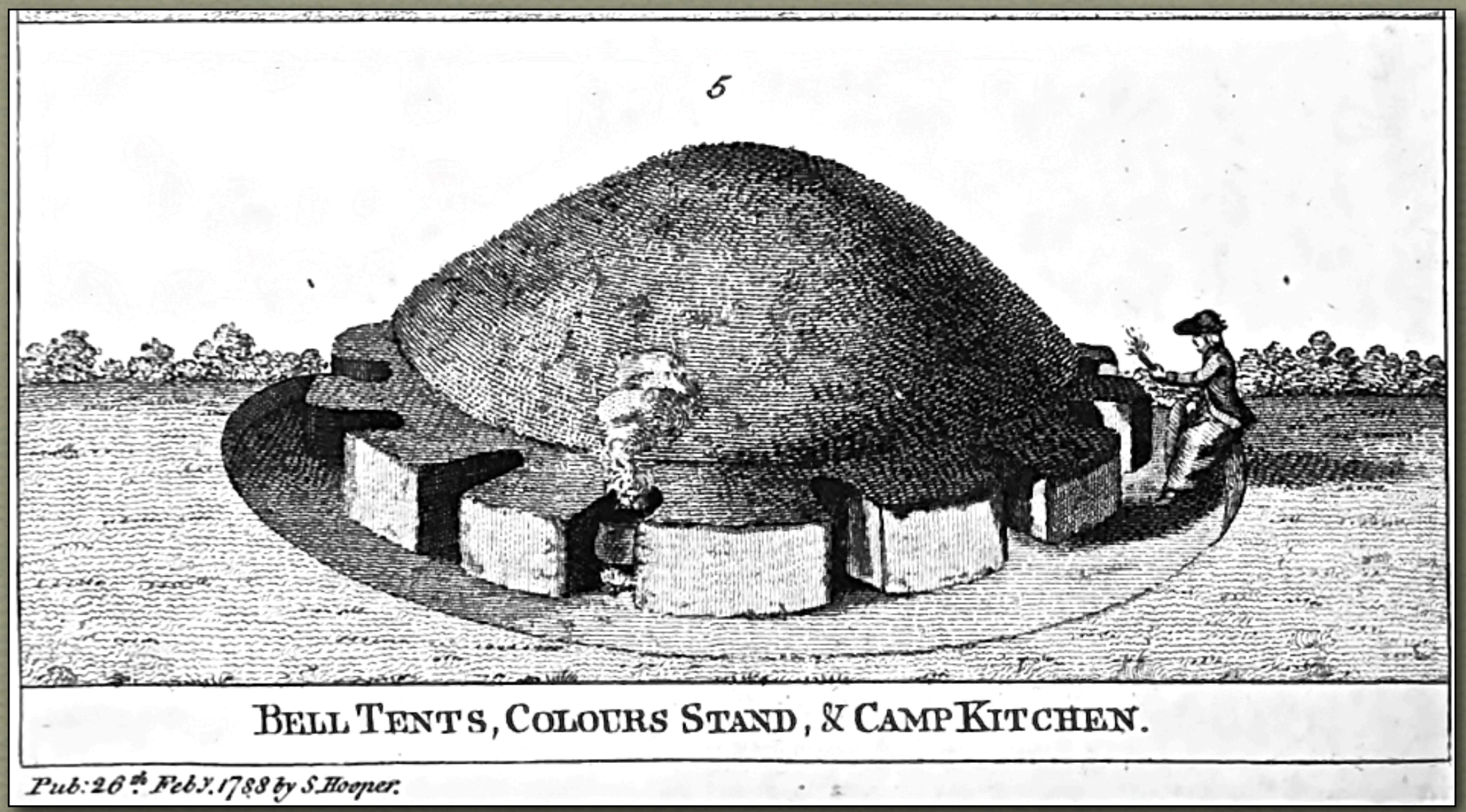
During the American War for Independence, the kitchens of a British regiment were located towards the rear of its encampment. In Lewis Lochée's 1778 publication, "*An Essay on Castremetation",* it was recommended to place them behind the Grande Sutler and in front of the Petty Sutlers and Rear Guard (presumably for their protection).

Each company within a regiment was responsible for making its own kitchen. If an army was to be encamped in a particular area for a significant period of time, these company kitchens were created by digging a circular trench into the earth. By throwing the excavated dirt into a central mound, an inner embankment and shelf was formed, into which each mess belonging to the company which created it dug a fireplace.

Lewis Lochée describes them:

*"The kitchen for each company, is a space of 16 feet diameter, with a ditch surrounding it 3 feet wide, the opposite bank of which serves as a seat for the men who dress the victuals... and as each tent forms a mess, each kitchen should have as many fire places as there are tents in the company."*

Francis Grose mentions that the ditch of a kitchen should be 2 feet deep by 3 feet wide. In his 1788 London publication, "*Military Antiquities respecting a History of The English Army, from the Conquest to the Present Time"*, we can see the presence of open fronted fireplaces. Each mess suspended their kettle over their fireplace by passing a stick through the kettle's bale and laying it over the inner shelf of earth.




1788 Camp Kitchen Illustration by Francis Grose Showing Open Fronted Fireplaces

Colonel Walter Stewart, 2nd Pennsylvania Regt. of the Continental Line
Charles Wilson Peale c. 1781
Continental Army Circular Camp Kitchen Detail as Used by the British Army

Colonel Walter Stewart, 2nd Pennsylvania Regt. of the Continental Line
Charles Wilson Peale c. 1781
Continental Army Circular Camp Kitchen Detail as Used by the British Army

Humphrey Bland also described a company's kitchen in his *"Treatise of Military Discipline"*. Unlike the Francis Gross kitchen which had open fireplaces, Bland recommended 1 foot square enclosed fireboxes which had 4 inch wide chimney holes to conduct the heat towards the kettles which rested above.

Detail, Recreated Humphrey Bland Fireboxes and Chimneys

Humphrey Bland described how a kitchen was made:

*"First, you draw a Circle or Square on the Ground of what Dimension you please, after that you dig a Trench or Ditch round it of about 3 or 4 Foot broad, and 2 deep, by which it will resemble the Bottom of a Cock-pit. When this is done, you are then to cut Holes or Niches in the Side of the Circle or Square of Earth which is left stand-ing with the Ditch. These Holes may be about a Foot square, the upper Part of which should be within 3 or 4 of the Surface, from whence they are to cut small Holes of 4 Inches Diameter, down to the great ones, in which the Fire is to be made, and the Heat convey'd thro' the small Holes to the Bottom of the Kettles which are placed on the Top of them. These Fire-places may be made 3 or 4 Foot of one another, quite round the said Circle or Square; and if you erect one of these Kitchens, (by which I mean an entire Circle of Square) for each Troop or Company, they need not be larger than what will con-tain as many Fire-places as you have Tents Pitched for your Troop or Company; for as all the Men who lie in a Tent are of one Mess, every Mess must therefore have a Fire-place, that they may have no Excuse for their not boiling the Pot every day."*

Recreated Company Kitchens Incorporating Humphrey Bland Style Fireboxes

Humphrey Bland described the benefits of these kitchens:

*"There are several Advantages by making of the Kitchens as here directed.*

*First, A very little Fuel will serve to Dress their Victuals; for as the Fire-places are open at the side , like the Mouth of an Oven, the Air which enters there forces all the Heat up the small Hole to the Bottom of the Kettle, and consequently boils it very soon, and as the Kettle covers the said Hole, the Rain can't come to extinguish it, or create the Men any Trouble in keeping of it in.*

*Secondly, They are not in great Danger of Accidents by the Fire's being blown amongst the Tents or Forage: For if the the Men only lay a Sod or Turf on the top of the Hole when they take off the Kettle, it can't be dispers'd by the Wind, which without this Consideration, they ought to do, in order to keep the Fire-places dry.*

*Thirdly, The Cutting of a Ditch round the Kitchens, does not only enable them to man the Fireplaces, but likewise prevents the Fire from catching hold of the Stubble or Grass, which, in very Dry or Hot Weather, is apt to do, and en-danger the Burning of your Camp, for which I have often seen for the want of this Precaution. Besides, the opposite Bank of the Ditch serves as a Seat for the Men who are employ'd in Dressing the Victuals.*

*Fourthly, and Lastly, By having of Kitchens made in this Manner, the Officers can with a great deal of Ease look into the Conduct and OEconomy of their men, and oblige the se-veral Messes to Boil the Pot every Day, for the Reasons already mentioned in the 3rd Article of the 13th Chapter."*

A Recreated Soldier Tends His Mess' Nooning
Lewis Lochée: *"the opposite bank of which serves as a seat for the men who dress the victuals..."*

Besides examining the recommendations of British field kitchens in period manuals, we can also corroborate their use during the American Revolution through archeological evidence.

As a means of protecting its defense lines against an impending naval assault during the 1781 occupation of Yorktown, Virginia, the British command stationed a portion of its troops across the York River at Gloucester Point. Today, this area is occupied by the William and Mary campus of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS).

Prior to the construction of a new seawater lab on its property, the VIMS was required by the state of Virginia to conduct a full archaeologic survey of the proposed site. In doing so, a field kitchen most likely constructed and used by British troops stationed at Gloucester Point was uncovered. According to Chris Sperling, archeologist with The Ottery Group, the Maryland based firm hired to survey the VIMS site, this kitchen was approximately 16 feet in diameter and had 11 fireboxes. It was found adjacent to a trench dug by the British troops to defend their position. Within the circular trench, oyster shells and the bones of pigs, turkeys and venison were found.  Apparently, the troops stationed at Gloucester Point ate fairly well during the British occupation.

During the excavation survey, the Ottery Group also uncovered various remnants of nearby 18th century cellars. Within these cellars were sealed wine bottles, British bayonets and a Cartridge Box plate from the light infantry company of His Majesty's 63rd Regiment of Foot. Attached to Abercromby's Light Infantry Battalion, the 63rd Light Bobs were in the first wave of troops ferried across the York River to Gloucester Point in Cornwallis' aborted nighttime attempt to evacuate Yorktown prior to the British surrender.

A regimental insignia of the British 63rd Light Infantry from the Revolutionary War was found at an excavation site at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science at Gloucester Point.

In addition to these elaborate company strength kitchens, other methods of cooking rations were used by the troops during the American Rebellion. Often, this was a function of practicality. If the army was on the move, or the lay of the land proved unrealistic to dig elaborate trenches, simpler systems were put into practice.

One method to heat a kettle was to lay it directly on a simple fire pit of stones.

A Recreated Mess of Loyalist Militia Cooks Their Victuals In A Cast Iron Pot

The Writings of Roger Lamb
Served with H.M. 9th Regiment of Foot during the Burgoyne Campaign
Served with H.M. 23rd Regiment of Foot during the Cornwallis Campaign

*"The Bivouack of an Army*

*It is a pleasing sight to see a column arrive at its halting ground. The Camp is generally marked out, if circumstances allow of it, on the edge of some wood, and near a river or stream. The troops are halted in open columns and arms piled, pickets and guards paraded and posted, and in two minutes all appear at home.* ***Some fetch large stones to form fireplaces****; others hurry off with canteens and* ***kettles for water*** *while the* ***wood resounds with the blows of the tomahawk****. Dispersed under the more distant trees you see the officers, some dressing, some arranging a few boughs to shelter them by night, others kindling their own fires. How often under some spreading pine tree which afforded shade, shelter and fuel have I taken up my lodging for the night. Sitting in the midst of my comrades, men whom I loved and esteemed* ***partaking of a coarse but wholesome meal, seasoned by hunger and cheefulness*** *(sic). Wrapt up in a blanket, the head reclining on a stone or a knapsack coved (sic) with the dews of the night or drenched perhaps by the thunder shower sleeps many a hardy veteran. A bivouack in heavy weather does not I allow present a very comfortable appearance. The officers sit shivering in their wet tents idle and angry. The men with their forage caps drawn over their ears huddle together under the trees or crowed (sic) cheerless smoky fires - complaining of their commissaries, the rain and the Americans."*

Additional methods of cooking rations in the British Army can be corroborated with those methods depicted in *"Was ist jedem Officier wahrend eines Fedzugs zu wissen nothig"* (What It Is Necessary For Each Officer To Know During A Campaign), a 1788 Carlsruhe German officer manual.

Here, three styles of individual fireplaces are illustrated:

1. Two Forked Sticks Suspending a Stick Crossbar Over a Fire (Figure 3)
2. An Earthen Pit Supporting a Stick Crossbar Over a Fire (Figure 2)
3. A Raised Earthen Mound Supporting a Stick Crossbar Over a Fire (Figure 4)

Kitchens Detail
*"Was ist jedem Officier wahrend eines Fedzugs zu wissen nothig"*
(What It Is Necessary For Each Officer To Know During A Campaign).
Carlsruhe 1788

**“Encampment of the Loyalists at Johnston, a New Settlement on the Banks of the River St. Laurence in Canada”**
Peachy 1782
A Camp Follower Cooks in a Tin Kettle Suspended by a Kitchen of Two
Forked Sticks Pounded into the Earth to Supporting a Stick Cross Bar
(Library and Archives of Canada)

**“Encampment of the Loyalists at Johnston, a New Settlement on the Banks of the River St. Laurence in Canada”**
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(Library and Archives of Canada)

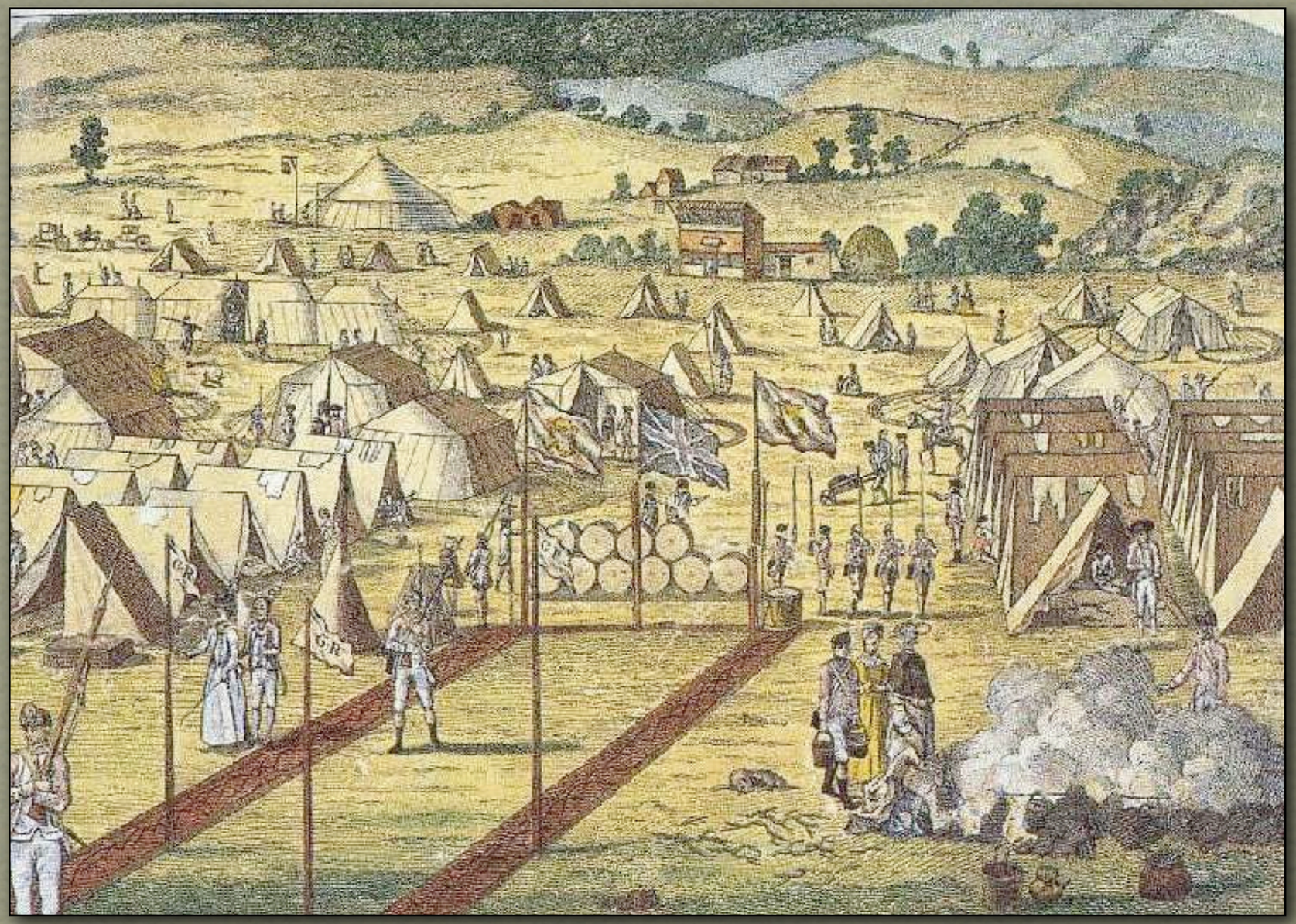
As in Peachy's View of the Loyalist Encampment in Johnston,
A Recreated Camp Follower Tends The Nooning of Her Husband's Mess

“A Trip to Blackheath” - Illustration of the Encampment Erected During the Gordon Riots
Executed c.1780
Note the Kettle Suspended over the Stick in the Background

“A Trip to Blackheath” - Illustration of the Encampment Erected During the Gordon Riots
Executed c.1780
Note the Kettle Suspended over the Stick in the Background

A Recreated Light Bob of H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot, 1777, Tends His Mess' Victuals

When creating one of these stick kitchens, it was not unusual for a mess to run into earth which may have been either too hard, or too rocky, to embed their uprights. To solve this problem, a tripod of sticks, or mound of dirt and/or rocks, could be used to support a crossbar over a fire. Both of these methods can be seen in the 1780 Bowles and Carver illustration, *"A Perspective VIEW of an ENCAMPMENT"*:



Bowles & Carver: "A Perspective VIEW of an ENCAMPMENT" 1780
Note the Kettle in the Foreground and Light Infantry Soldier Carrying Two Kettles
(Ann S.K.Brown Collection, Brown University)

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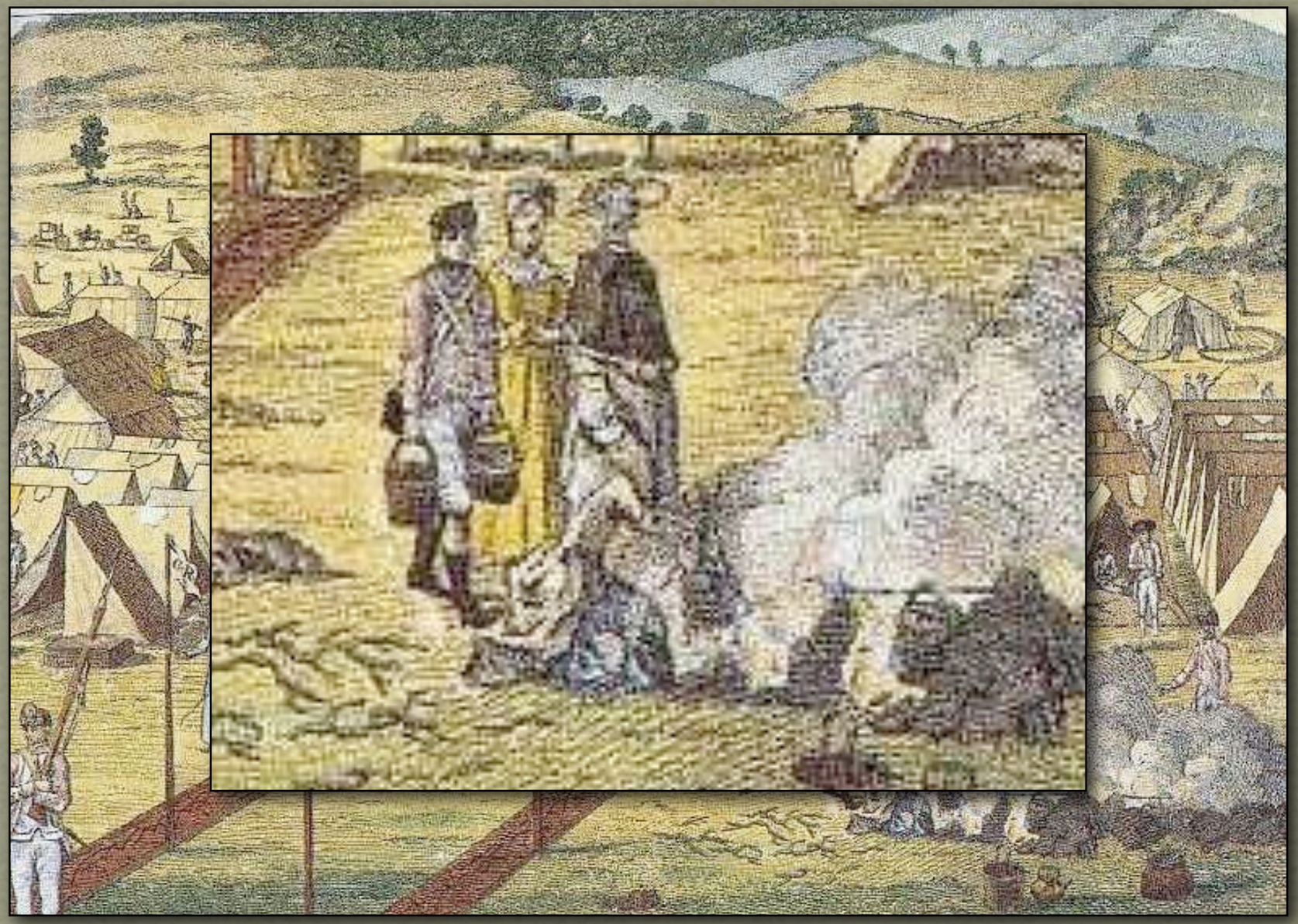

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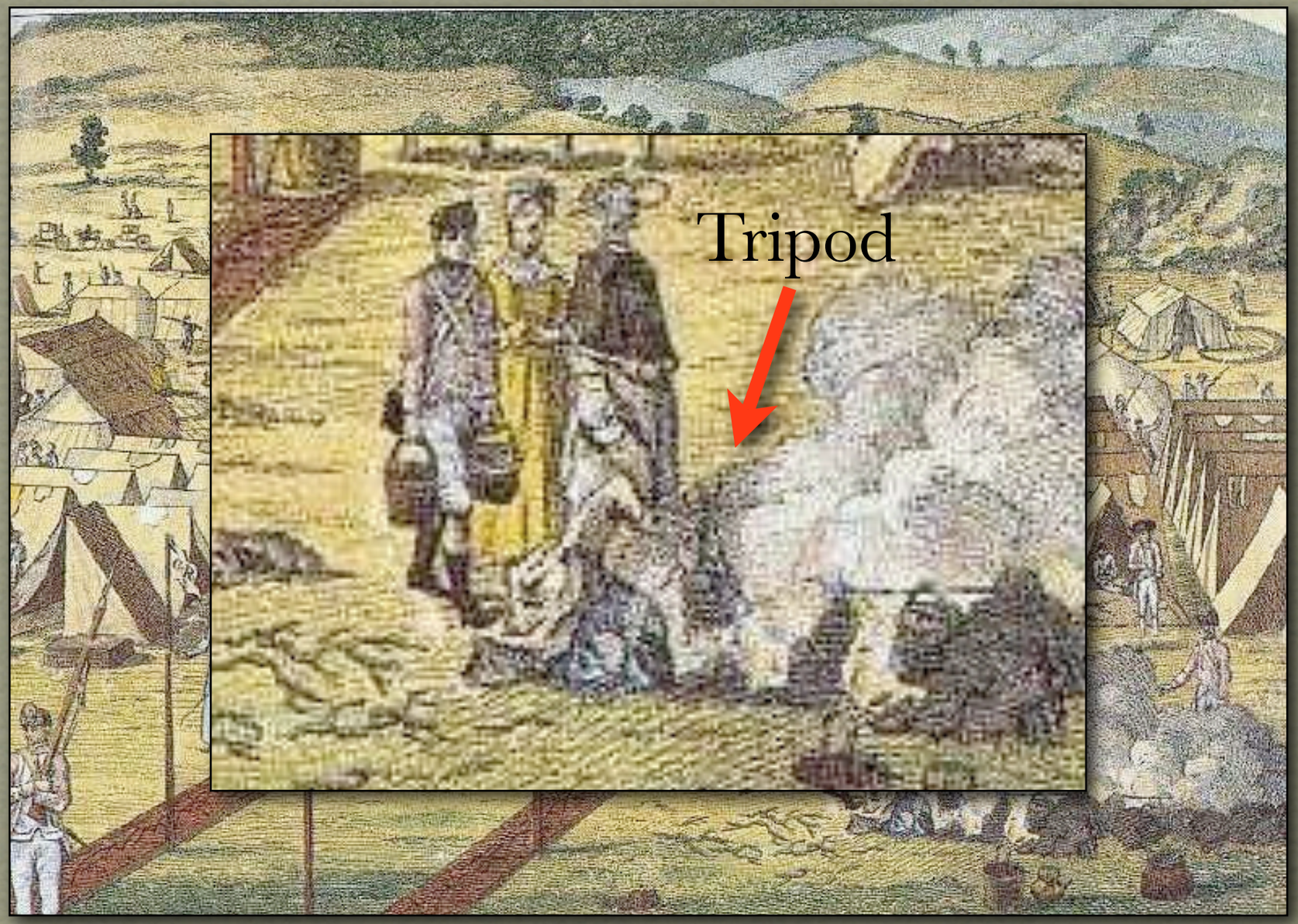


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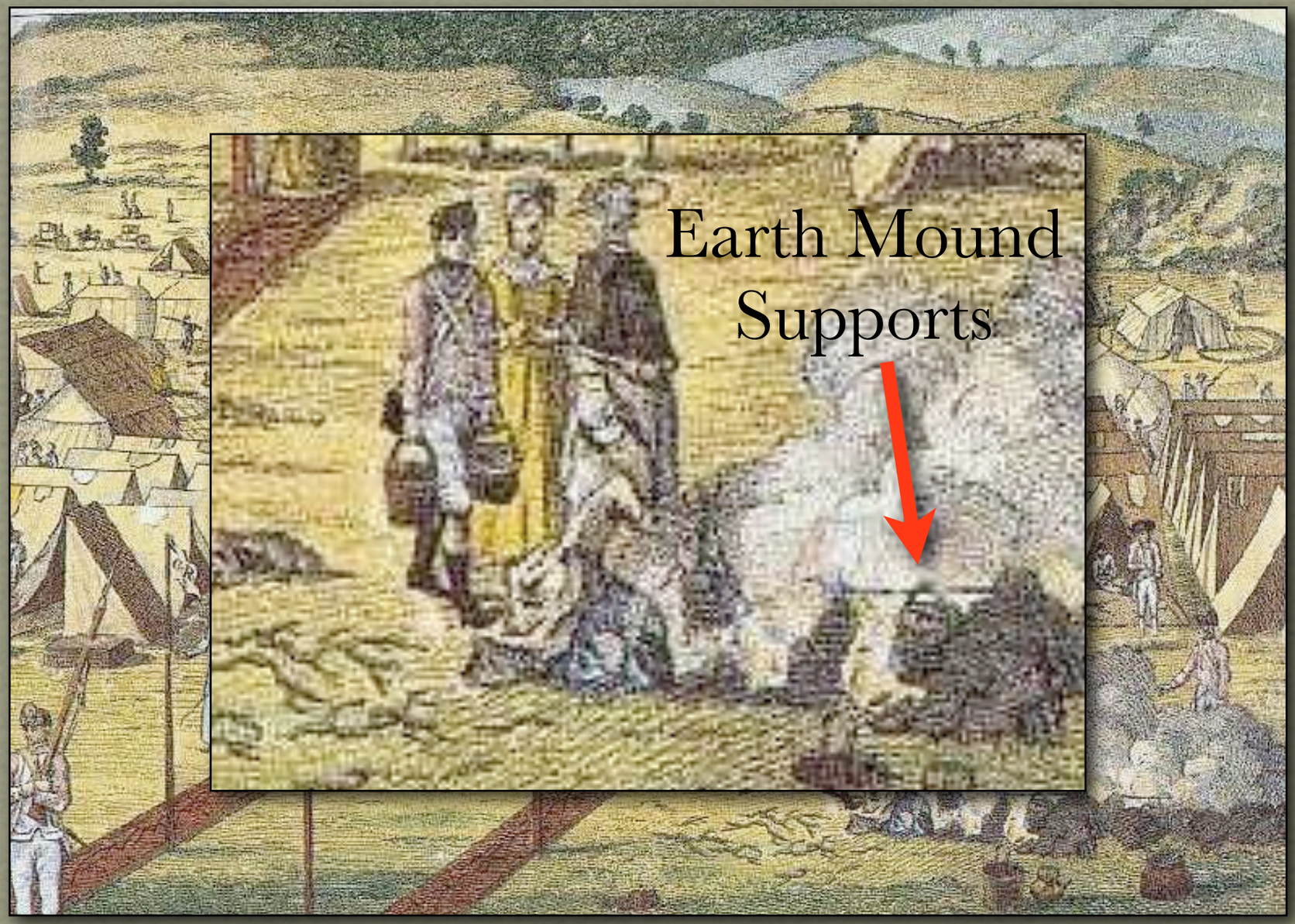


Bowles & Carver: "A Perspective VIEW of an ENCAMPMENT" 1780
Note the Kettle in the Foreground and Light Infantry Soldier Carrying Two Kettles
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"A Perspective VIEW of an ENCAMPMENT"
Bowles & Carver, 1780
A Tripod of Sticks Is Used to Support a Kettle Over a Fire - Note the Soldier Carrying Two Tin Kettles
(Ann S.K. Brown Collection, Brown University)

"A Perspective VIEW of an ENCAMPMENT"
Bowles & Carver, 1780
A Tripod of Sticks Is Used to Support a Kettle Over a Fire - Note the Soldier Carrying Two Tin Kettles
(Ann S.K. Brown Collection, Brown University)

"To His Royal Highness George Prince of Wales - View of an ENCAMPMENT AT FORNHAM"
Revealing Earthen Mound Kitchens as in Carlsruhe's 1788 German Manual
(The British Museum)

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# Cooking In Winter Quarters

During the American War for Independence, a British soldier spent the winter months garrisoned within quarters. He did this either in a barracks with a large number of men or billeted in a house with less. While his standard food ration basically remained the same as that when he was living in the field, the equipment he and his messmates encountered to prepare their meals frequently differed.

Bennet Cuthbertson, "System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry", Chapter VIII., Section V., 1776:
*"As it frequently happens, in quartering a Compa-ny in the inhabitants of a town, that not more than two men are billeted on a house, and of course, so few cannot lay in a proper quantity of provisions, with the same advantage and oeconomy which a greater number can; to obviate such an incoveni-ence, the Soldiers from three or four houses should be formed into a mess, and dress their victuals day about at each."*

It was not uncommon for a British soldier quartered in a building for the winter to encounter luxuries that were unavailable to him when he was living in the field. With a roof over his head, he often had a fireplace to heat his quarters and cook his food. He was rationed either firewood, peat, or coals for fuel as well as the instruments necessary to prepare them. The Barracks Master General and the department under his supervision often issued the messes barrack furniture. Among these items were heavy cast iron pots and iron grates for preparing rations. In addition, eating utensils were also included.

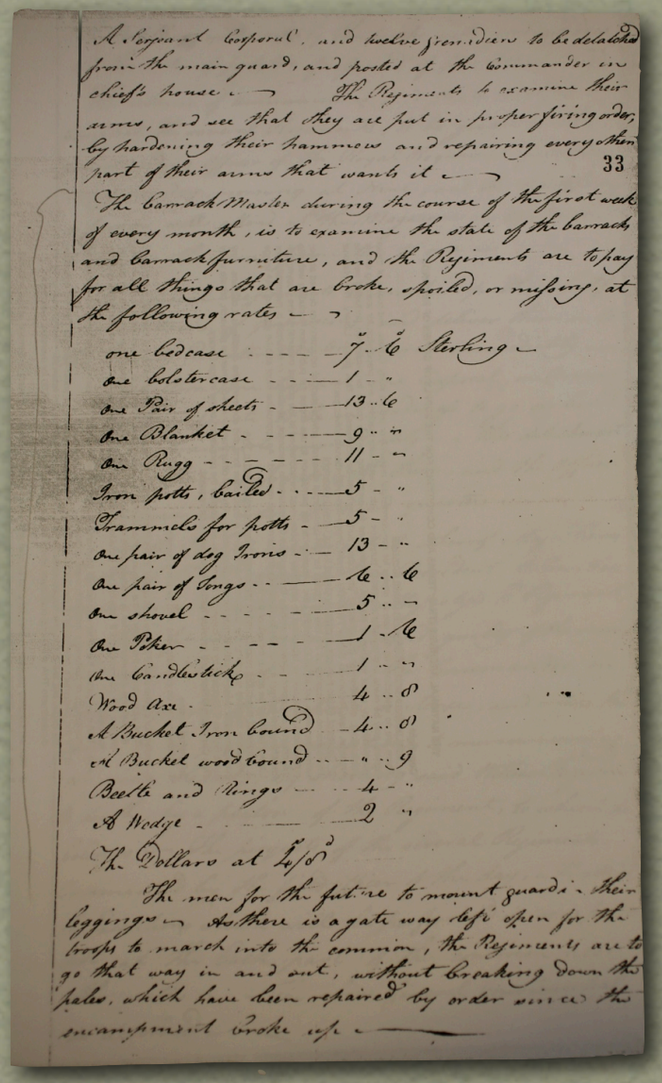
General Orders, America
(Boston, November 17, 1774)
*"The barrack master is to furnish each mess with a bowl, a platter, six trenchers, six spoons, and a wooden ladle."*

*STANDING ORDERS FOR THE XXXV REGIMENT; GIVEN BY*
*Major General CAMPBELL, 1769. Revised and Corrected to 1776.*
*(1776)*
*“Barracks...*
*II. No man to change his mess without leave from his officer. Each mess to be furnished with as many knives, forks and spoons, as there are men; also with one roller and two towels, in order to prevent the men from wiping their hands in the sheets.”*

General Orders, America
(Boston, November 20, 1774)

*"The barrack Master during the course of the first week of every month, is to examine the state of the barrack, and barrack furniture, and the Regiments are to pay for all things that are broke, spoiled, or missing, at the following rates-*

*one bedcase - - - - ---------- 7 - 6 Sterling*
*one bolstercase - - ---------- 1 - ”*
*one Pair of sheets - --- ---- 13 - 6*
*one Blanket - - - - ---------- 9 - - -*
*one Rugg - - --- --- -- -- 11 - - -*
*Iron potts, bailed - - - ------ 5 - - - -*
*Trammels for potts - ------- 5 - - - -*
*One pair of dog irons - ---- 13 - - -*
*One pair of tongs - - -------- 6 - - 6*
*One shovel - - - - - ----------5 - - - -*
*One Poker - - - - ---------- 1 - - 6*
*One Candlestick - - -------- 1- - -*
*Wood Axe - - ---------- 4 - - 8*
*A Bucket Iron bound - --- 4 - - 8*
*A Bucket wood bound - - - ” - - 9*
*Beetle and Rings ------ - - 4 - - ”*
*A Wedge - - ----------2 - - ”*
*The Dollars at 4 / 8”*



A Serjeant Corporal, and twelve Grenadiers to be detatched from the main guard, and posted at the Commander in chiefs house — The Regiments to examine their arms, and see that they are put in proper firing order, by hardening their hammows and repairing every other part of their arms that wants it —
33
The Barrack Master during the course of the first week of every month, is to examine the state of the barracks and barrack furniture, and the Regiments are to pay for all things that are broke, spoiled, or missing, at the following rates —

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| one bedcase | 7 | 6 | Sterling |
| one bolstercase | 1 | " | |
| one Pair of sheets | 13 | 6 | |
| one Blanket | 9 | " | |
| one Rugg | 11 | " | |
| Iron potts, bailed | 5 | " | |
| Trammels for potts | 5 | " | |
| one pair of dog Irons | 13 | " | |
| one pair of tongs | 6 | 6 | |
| one shovel | 5 | " | |
| one Poker | 1 | 6 | |
| one Candlestick | 1 | " | |
| Wood Axe | 4 | 8 | |
| A Bucket Iron bound | 4 | 8 | |
| A Bucket wood bound | " | 9 | |
| Beetle and Rings | 4 | " | |
| A Wedge | 2 | " | |

The Dollars at 4/8

The men for the future to mount guards their leggings — As there is a gate way left open for the troops to march into the common, the Regiments are to go that way in and out, without breaking down the pales, which have been repaired by order since the encampment broke up —

# “Iron Potts, bailed - - - - - 5”

An Example of an 18th Century Cast Iron Pot or Cauldron

# “Iron Potts, bailed - - - - - 5”

An Example of an 18th Century Cast Iron Pot or Cauldron

# “Iron Potts, bailed - - - - - 5”

An 18th Century Cast Iron Pot or Cauldron Without an Iron Bail
But with an Iron Hook for Hanging Over a Fire

# “Trammels for potts - - - - - 5”

An Example of an 18th Century Wrought Iron Trammel

“One pair of dog irons - - - - 13”

An Example of an 18th Century Wrought Dog Iron

“One pair of dog irons - - - - 13”

An Example of 18th Century Wrought Dog Irons

James Pattison, Colonel, Royal Artillery, Major-General in N. America.
[To Captain Waugh from Captain Stephen Adye, Pattison's Aide-de-Camp.]

*"New York, Septr 9th 1779.*
*Sir,*
*I am directed by Major Genl Pattison Commandant, to desire that a Room may be immediately Allotted at Brooklyn, neat the Ferry, for an Officer's Guard Room, and that it is to be furnished with two Guard Beds, large enough for four Officers, a Table and Benches,* ***Bar-Shot as Fire Irons****, Candlesticks, Brooms & whatever is usual for an Officer's Guard Room.*
*I am, Sir,*
*Captn Waugh,*
*Barrk Master, Long Island."* (P-2)

For the winter of 1776-1777 in New York, 4,498 five-gallon iron pots and 3,983 leather buckets were sent to General Howe's army from England. A February 1, 1780 inventory of necessaries for 3000 Provincials stationed in Canada lists 1000 Iron pots in addition to 750 camp kettles.

As the Barracks Master General was held accountable for barracks furniture issued to the men, it is unlikely that any of these items would have found their way into a summer encampment, unless specific orders were given to do so.

While not specifically listed in any contemporary written accounts, numerous items of material culture have been excavated from British winter quarters. Along with items found in American sites (to give a broader overview), these include such items as:

- Two and three tined Forks
- Folding Jackknives
- Pot Hooks fabricated from discarded barrel hoops
- Fry Pans fabricated from broken Shovel Heads (American Site)
- Fragments of dark green Glass Bottles
- Fragments of clear glass Tumblers and Stemware
- Shards of Stoneware and Westerwald pottery

It must be remembered, however, that some of these items may have been used only by officers.

WESTERWALD SHARDS EXCAVATED FROM THE OFFICER'S QUARTERS
at
FORT WILLIAM HENRY

WESTERWALD STONEWARE JUGS c. 1750
KING GEORGE CYPHER
(The Museum of London)

WESTERWALD STONEWARE MUGS c. 1750
KING GEORGE CYPHER
(The Museum of London)

Turned Wooden Bowl
18th Century

Wood Trencher and Bowls / Tin Bowls or Pans
18th  Century

A Turned Wooden Bowl
Mount Vernon Provenance
18th Century
(The Mount Vernon Association)

Wooden Bowl and Spoon
Carved with 8 Broad Arrows on the Rim and One in the Bowl
Base Carved with a Gibbet (A Hanging Cage)
Excavated off the H.M.S. Invisible Which was Sunk in 1758

Wood (Treen) Plate
18th Century

Wood (Treen) Plate
18th Century

Iron Skillet Fabricated from a Discarded Spade
Excavated from the American Encampment at Jockey Hollow, Morristown, New Jersey
While this Artifact has Continental Provenance, It is Within Reason
That a British Soldier Could Have Fabricated the Same
(National Park Service)

Iron Broiler Fabricated from a Discarded Barrel Hoop
Excavated from the American Encampment at Jockey Hollow, Morristown, New Jersey
While this Artifact has Continental Provenance, It is Within Reason
That a British Soldier Could Have Fabricated the Same
(National Park Service)

Tin Cup Excavated from Fort Ligonier c. 1758
From *"A Soldier-Like Way"* by R.R. Gale
(Fort Ligonier Collection)

# Government Rations
# &
# Fresh Provisions

During the American War for Independence, the British Army serving in North America received the majority of its rations directly from the British Isles. Resources were often abundant and goods could be had at reasonable rates. During those times when the army ran into shortages overseas, spoiled goods, or when the transportation of provisions proved to be too difficult over the Atlantic Ocean (especially when France joined the war in 1778), it occasionally relied upon local resources available in America. Unfortunately, victualing the troops in this manner often proved to be somewhat unreliable. All to often, negotiations had to be made in areas that were hostile to the British Government. In other situations, there simply were not enough resources in America to supply large bodies of men. Foraging occurred, but this often cut troops off from the main body of the army making these soldiers more susceptible to harm. When the system did work, it usually did so at a considerably higher cost to the government than that which could be negotiated at home.

Until 1779, the Commissioners of the Treasury oversaw the supply of military provisions for the British army. After that year, the Navy Board took on the task since it fell responsible for the safe shipment of these goods to North America. Each year, these departments met with, and hired, army contractors to supply a daily ration of food for every soldier serving the King. These contractors were hired upon the recommendations of the Prime Minister (the First Lord of the Treasury), the Secretary and Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, as well as the Secretary of War. In hiring a contractor, the Board also took into consideration any correspondence received from those officers and commissaries serving in North America who knew the specific needs of the army.

As a general rule, contracts for victualing the army lasted for 12 to 16 months. Under specific terms, firms agreed to supply rations for the army at set quantities and prices per soldier. If the goods supplied were either inferior in quality, unfit for consumption, or damaged upon reaching the army (either in North America or, more frequently, at Cork), they were required to be replaced at the contractor's expense, less any import or export duties the contractor was required to pay.

During the American War for Independence, numerous contractors were hired to supply provisions for the 48,000 men serving in North America. In 1776 and 1777, they were paid 5 1/4d. per ration by the British government.  This increased to 5 3/4d. per ration in 1778.

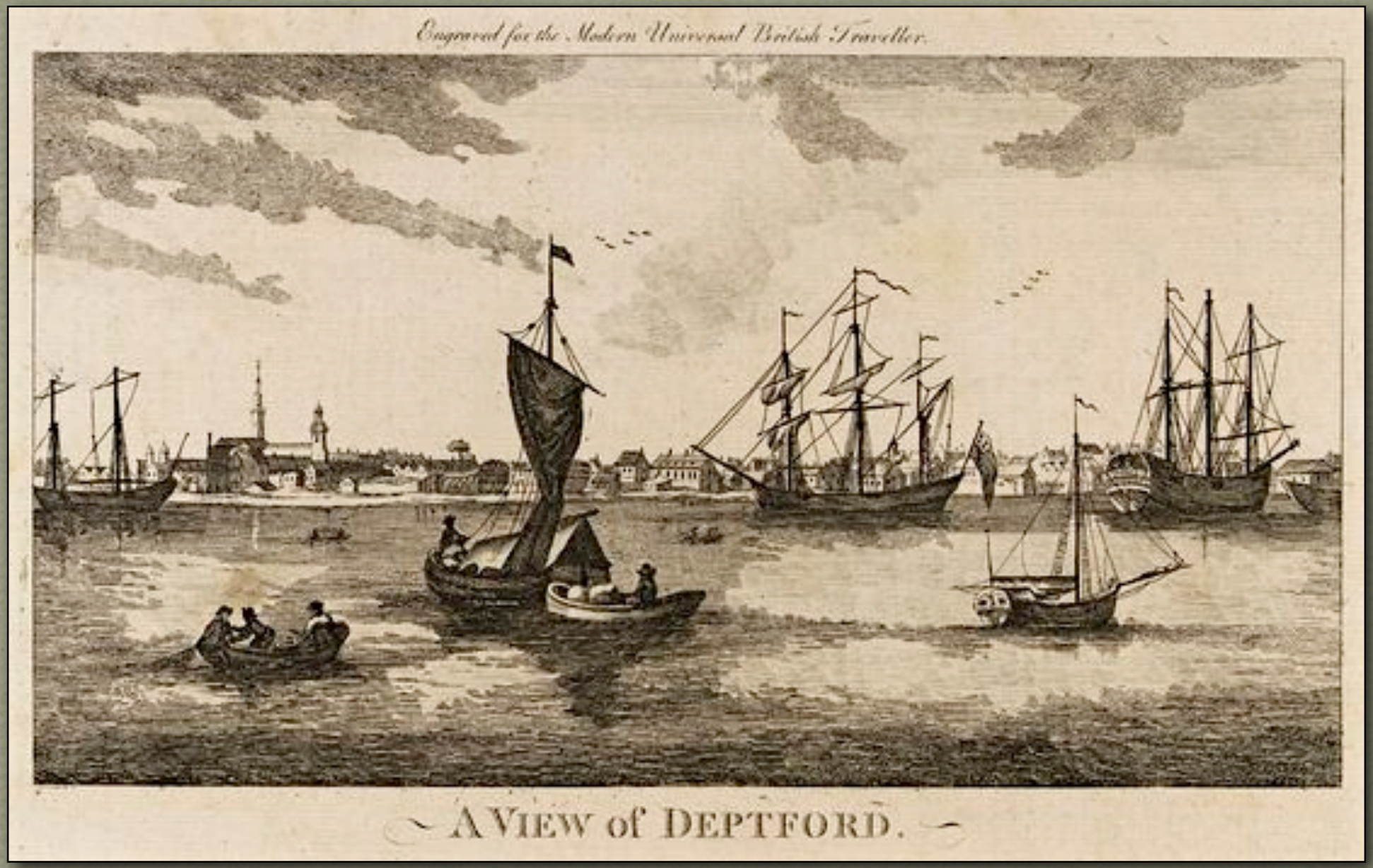
These contractors included the firms of:

Messrs. Nesbitt, Drummond, & Franks:  Contract held for 12,000 men
Messrs. Henneker, Wombwell, DeVaynes, &  Wheeler:  Contract held for 12,000 men
Messrs. Jones, Smith, Baynes, & Atkinson:  Contract held for 12,000 men
Messrs. Bacon & Mayne:  Contract held for 6000 men
Mr. Amyand:  Contract held for 3000 men
Mr. Durand:  Contract held for 3000 men

Once they were delivered by the contractors, all of the provisions destined for shipment to North America were first stored and inspected at a large central supply depot located in Cork, Ireland. Later in the war, supply houses were also located in the ports of Deptford and Cowes on the Isle of Wright. Cork was the largest western seaport of the British Isles. It was well known for its resources of beef, pork and butter. In addition, it was also the largest recruiting facility for Irish troops serving in His Majesty's army. When the need arose, additional troops could be sent aboard those ships which sailed to North America three times a year for the transportation of provisions. In 1776, Robert Gordon was appointed by the Treasury to the position of Commissary of Provisions in Cork. He was later succeeded by John Marsh, a member of the Naval Board, who assumed the title of Agent Victualler in 1779. George Cherry served as Agent Victualler at Cowes and Deptford during the American War for Independence.

Once the provisions arrived in North America from Cork, they were stored in multiple sub-depots located throughout the colonies and Canada. These sites included the British occupied towns of New York and Philadelphia, as well as Savannah and Charleston in the south. In Canada, they were located in Halifax, Montreal and Quebec. St. Lucia served as a depot for troops stationed in the West Indies.

During the American War for Independence, two Commissary Generals were assigned the duty of overseeing the inventory and distribution of provisions destined for the British Army. Both were civilians whose commission held them answerable to the Board of the Treasury in England.




A View of Deptford
Port and Depot for Some of the Goods Shipped to North America
During the American War for Independence

# The Standard Government Ration:

In 1775, the British government established an ideal "Standard" weekly food ration for every soldier serving in North America. Otherwise known as the "Seven Rations" or "Sevens", these allowances included:

- Seven pounds of Bread or Flour (usually wheat flour)
- Seven pounds of Beef or Four pounds of Pork
- Six ounces of Butter
- Three pints of Peas (dried)
- One half pound of Rice or Oatmeal

While serving in the Boston Garrison of 1776, Sergeant Thomas Sullivan of H.M. 49th Regiment of Foot reported:

*"Of the Provision the Troops Received in Boston. The Provisions were Issued out of the King's Stores, as follows. The Bakers always received 7 Pounds of Flour, for every man in the Regiment or Company, for whom they baked: Out of the 7 lb. of Flour the Baker gave two loaves, weighing 4 1/2 lb. each, which were served twice a week to the troops. Once a week we received 4 lb. of Pork or 7 lb. of Beef; 6 ounces of Butter; 3 pints of Pease or Oatmeal; and 1/2 lb. of Rice per man. Every Woman had 1/2 a man's share, and every Child 1/4 Rations"*

Per John Williamson's *"A Treatise on Military Finance, Containing the Pay, Subsistence, Deductions and Arrears of the Forces on the British and Irish Establishments, And All the Allowances in Camp, Garrison and Quarters, With An Enquiry into the Method of Clothing and Recruiting the Army, And An Extract from the Report of the Commissioners of Public Accounts Relating to the Office of the Pay Master General"*, the Standard Government Ration for a British soldier serving His Majesty in 1782 included:

*"The complete ration in every specie is, of flour or bread 1 1/2 lb. [;] beef 1 lb. [;] or pork 1/2 lb. [;] pease [peas] 1/4 pint [;] butter or cheese 1 oz. [;] rice 1 oz. But when the small species are not issued, 1 1/2 lb. of bread or flour, and 1 1/2 lb. of beef, or 10 oz. of pork make a complete ration: when nothing but flour or bread can be distributed, 1 lb. of flour or bread is a ration, as are also 3 lb. of beef, 2 lb. of cheese, or 1 1/2 lb. of rice. Only one ration is issued for each effective officer and soldier, for which they pay 2 1/2 d. [pence]. On board of transports, the ration is two-thirds of a seaman's allowance, for which, each officer and soldier pays 3d. per diem. Exclusive of the ration, the officers and soldiers are commonly supplied, in North America, with three pints of spruce beer each per diem, gratis."*

During the time of the American Revolution, British rations came in three forms: “Dried”, “Salted” and “Fresh”.

Dried and salted provisions could be kept for long periods of time without the fear of spoilage. These essential goods were able to travel long distances, particularly over the Atlantic Ocean. Fresh provisions, although nutritious, spoiled easily and had to be consumed within a short period of time.

General Orders, Rhode Island
(January 7, 1777)
*"The troops will receive one days fresh, and six days salt provisions to Morrow."*

# Bread, Flour & Biscuit:

By far, the greatest staple in a British soldier's diet was bread, flour, or biscuit. It was an economic means of filling a man's belly and, in one form or another, was often readily available. A soldier was charged a penny a day for his bread ration. As part of his "seven rations" of 1775, he received 7 pounds of flour per week. If this ration went to the regimental bakers, it produced two 4 pound loaves of bread.

Bennet Cuthbertson
*"System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry"*, Chapter VIII., Section XV., 1776:
*"Every Non-commission-officer, Drummer, Fifer, and Private-man being entitled, during a Campaign, to one pound and a half of bread per day, for which he pays one penny farthing, the Officers should fre-quently examine into the weight and goodness of it, and if defective in either, ought to inform the Com-manding Officer of the Regiment, that he may re-present the injustice in a proper manner to those, whose bussiness it is to redress it: if the utmost care is not taken in this particular, the contractors will play a thousand tricks."*

The Journal and Orderly Books of Lieutenant James M. Hadden, Royal Artillery
(Camp at Freeman's Farm, October 3, 1777)
*"By Lieutenant General Burgoyne. General Orders. ...the ration of Bread or Flour is for the present fixed at one Pound."*

The most common grain utilized in the production of flour for bread was wheat, but other grains such as rye, corn, or oats, were also available.

Orderly Book, H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot
(Camp at Freemans Farm, September 27, 1777)
“Each British Regt. to send a Baker to Mr. Commissary Clark to assist Baking for the Army.”

When accessible, regimental bakers were to practice their trade in ovens that were located in nearby towns or villages. When these were not available, the army also built bake ovens in the field.

General Orders, Rhode Island
(January 25, 1777)
*"Commanding Officers of Corps cantoned in the Country, to report to Lieut. Genl. Earl Percy the Number of Ovens in their respective districts in order to ascertain if a sufficient quantity of bread can be baked for the troops"*

Lewis Lochée
*“An Essay on Castremetation"*
*“As bread is indispensably necessary for the subsistence of the army, care is taken to establish ovens in the neighboring villages: the bread is conveyed in covered waggons, called caissons, and escorted by detachments. When villages are at too great a distance, the bread is baked at the camp in portable ovens."*

A Recreated 18th Century Bread Oven of Wood and Clay

Lewis Lochée, “*An Essay on Castremetation":*
*”... the bread is conveyed in covered waggons, called caissons, and escorted by detachments”*

Lewis Lochée, “*An Essay on Castremetation":*
*”... the bread is conveyed in covered waggons, called caissons, and escorted by detachments”*

A Recreated 18th Century Field Oven of Wood and Clay

In order to understand 18th century bread, it is necessary to know how it is made. In *"The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy"* written by Hannah Glasse in 1747, we can determine the process:

*"A Reciept for Making Bread Without Barm by the Help of a Leaven*

*Take a lump of dough, about two pounds of your last making, which has been raised by barm, keep it by you in a wood vessel, and cover it well with flour; (this is your leaven); then the night before you intend to bake, put the said leaven to a peck of flour, and work them well together with warm water; let it lie in a dry wooden vessel, well covered with a linen cloth and a blanket, and keep it in a warm place: this dough kept warm will rise again next morning, and will be sufficient to mix with two or three bushels of flour, being worked up with warm water and a little salt; when it is well worked up, and thoroughly mixed with all the flour, let it be well covered with the linen and blanket until you find it rise; then knead it well and work it up into bricks or loaves, making the loaves broad, and not so thick and high as is frequently done, by which means the bread will be better baked; then bake your bread."*

One means to filling a man's belly was to make a simple broth out of the bread a soldier was issued.

Orderly Book of the Royal Regiment of Artillery
(Montreal, June 24, 1776)
*"I desire that it may be ordered that the Messes of the Different Regiments may be obliged to make broth in which Bread, some fat & a Great Quantity of Wild herbs may be mixed among it..."*

Royal Artillery Cartridge Pouch
(Don Troiani Collection)

Enlisted Man c. 1777
Royal Artillery
After Friedrich Konstantin von Germann

When flour was transported to the regimental bakers from the Commissary General, it was done so in either barrels or bags.

Orderly Book, Brigade of Guards
(Head Qrs Jersey Brunswick December 30, 1776)
*"All flour bags and Barrells belonging to the Commissary to be returned as Soon as Emptyed."*

Linen sacks marked with the British Broad Arrow and GR signifying the property of King George
Bags Such as These Could Have Been Used for the Transportation of Flour or Biscuit

On occasion, a soldier was simply issued flour in lieu of his bread ration.  This was to be baked into small cakes, or biscuits, by the men. This was likely done by combining the flour with water, then placing the mixture on a surface over hot coals.  A Humphrey Bland style firebox created an ideal makeshift “oven” for baking these these “flour” or “ash” cakes.

Kemble's Orderly Book

(Aiken's Tavern, Maryland, September 4, 1777)

*"Each Corps will send an Officer and a sufficient Number of Men with Haversacks to receive one day's Flour. two Companies from 2nd Light Infantry are to attend as a Covering party."*

Orderly Book, H.M. 17th Regiment of Foot

(Hackensack, NJ, November 27, 1776)

*"It is Recommended to the Companies if they Receive Flour tonight to make it into Cakes and Bake it if possible."*

Orderly Book, H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot, Grenadier Company

(Camp at River Bouquet, June 24, 1777)

*"The Lieut. Genl. Has observed with Satisfaction, that some Corps have got the Art of making flour Cakes without Ovens which are equally wholesome and rellishing with the best bread- He recommends it strongly to the Commanding Officers to bring their Corps into this useful practice as it may frequently happen that the movements of the Army will be too quick to admit a possibility of constructing Ovens."*

"Flour Cakes" Baked on a Spade

Another common form of breadstuff rationed to the British Army was biscuit. These hard cakes were otherwise known as sea biscuits or ship's bread as they were a staple in the British navy throughout the 18th century. Made by baking a simple dough of water and "middling" wheat flour (an inexpensive coarse ground flour which contained a portion of the wheat grain), these unleavened biscuits lasted for many months (if not years) and could be easily transported. As such, they were able to be sent across the Atlantic Ocean and were frequently made by contractors in the British Isles. As the need arose, they were also baked in North America.

Kemble's Orderly Book

(Boston, March 12, 1776)

*"The Troops to be served with Biscuit instead of Flour."*

An Extant 18th Century Biscuit
95mm Wide x 10mm Thick
*'This biscuit was given – Miss Blacket at Berwick on Tuesday 13 April 1784, Berwick'*
(National Maritime Museum, London)

*"Captain BUN Quixote attacking the OVEN."*
*"Pub according to Act Jany 4th 1773 by MDarly (39) Strand"*
The Chelsea Bun House was owned by Four Generations of the Hand Family
Here is Captain Hand of the Staffordshire Militia

# Meat:

Meat, specifically beef or pork, was another important staple in the soldier's diet. According to the Standard Government Ration, an enlisted man was to receive 7 pounds of beef or 4 pounds of pork per week. On occasion, a soldier also ate mutton.

Meat was available to the British soldier in two forms: salted or fresh. Adding salt or brine to barrels of meat allowed the provision to last longer. Doing so allowed it to be transported over long distances. There are many accounts, however, that reveal this provision often reached the army in a somewhat rancid state.

Fresh meat was also rationed to the British troops when available. At the beginning of the war, the British Treasury contracted Anthony Merry to supply livestock overseas to the troops stationed in Boston and New York. Transporting cattle across the Atlantic, however, proved to be too impractical. Besides the expense, many animals simply did not survive the voyage. As a result, the British army was encouraged to procure its meat supply in America. To accomplish this, it often sought contracts with butchers. During the British occupation of Boston, General Gage sent out guarded transports to seek out livestock along the shores of New England. They returned with 100 head of oxen and 1800 head of sheep.

When livestock such as cattle, hogs, or sheep were purchased by the British army, they were kept by the commissary until slaughtered by the regimental butchers. On campaign, this precious commodity was escorted by a Cattle Guard which was usually composed of soldiers drawn from the various regiments or brigades.

Orderly Book, H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot
(HQ Middlebush, June 14, 1777)
*"It is the Commander in Cheifs positive Orders that all the Catle secured by the army by Immidiatley sent to the Commissarey General at Head Qrs to be Equally Distrebuted to the Army"*

Orderly Book, H.M. 43rd Regiment of Foot
(HQ Richmond, June 18, 1781)
*"Detail for the Waggon Guard and Cattle Guard to morrow Morning at 9 O'Clock"*

| | *S* | *C* | *P* |
|---|---|---|---|
| *43d* | | *1* | *7* |
| *76th* | | *1* | *4* |
| *80th* | | *1* | *10* |
| | *1* | *2* | *21* |

Study of Cattle
English School,  18th Century
(Private Collection)

On occasion, troops or livestock were transported by the British army by means of a river way. They did this in shallow draft, flat bottom boats known as bateaux.

Orderly Book, H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot
(Camp at River Bouquet, June 15, 1777)
*"Serjt Carral of the 20th Grenadiers and such Butchers of the Corp as he may want, to go up the River to Gallalands Farm in a Batteaux from the Grenadier Battalion this Afternoon to Slaughter in the coal of the Evening Bullocks sufficient to supply the Corps with two days provisions."*

Bateaux Detail: "The Landing of the British Forces in the Jerseys on the 20th of November 1776 Under the Command of the Rt. Honl. Lieutenant General Earl Cornwallis"

Camp at Skeinesborough House
(July 20, 1777)

*"Eight days' Provisions for the Corps of Savages, Canadian Volunteers, &c. under Major Campbell to be delivered this afternoon to their Commissary that it may be stowed on board their Batteaux immediately afterwards.The next delivery of Provisions will be salt meat, in order to preserve all the Cattle alive for the next movement of the Army. Four days' Provisions to be issued to the Troops to the 24th inclusive."*

Bennet Cuthbertson
*"System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry"*, Chapter VIII., Section XIV., 1776:

*"In the Field, when a Regiment has not the advan-tage of a regular market, the Commander of a Re-giment will find the benefit of contracting with a butcher of the country, to supply the men constant-ly with a certain quantity of meat, at a shared price, else they must frequently be reduced to numberless distresses; and as, by such a contract, the butcher will always have a large live stock, to move with the Re-giment, from Camp to Camp, the Soldiers should be strictly forbid not to offer the least inquiry to the cattle, or the owner, but rather to afford them every protection in their power, as it is a matter, in which their own interest if very highly concerned: and in order to attach this man more strongly to the Corps. and to have a security for his not deserting with his stock, it the middle of a campaigning, when it may, perhaps be absolutely impossible to provide another butcher, the Companies will act with prudence, al-ways to remain about five pounds each in his debt, until they get into winter-quarters, where they may venture to clear him off; it will also be very proper, to keep a guard of a Corporal and four trusty men upon his stock, at all times during the Campaign, both as a protection against strangler and marauder, and so deprive him of an opportunity of disposing of any part of his stock to other Corps, without the particular leave of the Commander of the Regiment; who alone is to be the judge, whether any can be spared."*

In order to promote better health, a mess was to boil its meat, not broil or fry it. According to 18th century medical and military doctrines, boiled meat was better for the overall constitution of the men. It also kept longer. This was important since a soldier often carried his cooked meat ration in his haversack when he went on the march. If more than one day's ration of fresh meat was issued to the troops at one time, it was to be cooked immediately to reduce the likelihood of spoilage:

General Orders, America
(Boston, September 20, 1775)
*"It is recommended by the hospital not to suffer the Pork to be fried, as being prejudicial to the mens health."*

Orderly Book, H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot
(June 11, 1777)
*"The Qr Mr to Deliver 2 days Provisions this Evening to the Differant Compy The pork to be Cookd Immediately After"*

Orderly Book, H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot
(June 15, 1777)
*"The Commanding Officer Desires the Non Commissd offrs & men Doe immediatly Cook the two Days provision that was Issued Yesterday"*

Orderly Book, H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot
(Camp at Freemans Farm, September 26, 1777)
*"The Lieutenant General Desires to Contribute Everything in his Power to the Comfort of the Wounded has Directed, half a Pound of Meat per Day to be added to their Present allowance of Meat."*

# Fish:

On occasion, fish was substituted for a beef or pork ration:

Kemble's Orderly Book
(Halifax, April 18, 1776)
*"Regiments will receive one day's fresh Fish, at the rate of two Pounds per Man, in Lieu of Salt Provision, for which they are not to Pay. And they will only receive six days' Pork next week instead of Seven."*

Kemble's Orderly Book
(March 13, 1776)
*"Each Corps to apply immediately at No.16 on the Long Wharf for a Barrel of Salt Fish to be divided amongst the Men and Women"*

Howe's Orderly Book
(Head Qrs Thursday 18th April 1776)
*"The 4th, 5th, & 10th Regts will receive one Days fresh Fish, at the rate of two pounds pr Man, in Lieu of Salt Provisions, for which they are not to pay, & they will only receive Six Days Pork next Week instead of Seven."*

The Journal and Orderly Books of Lieutenant James M. Hadden, Royal Artillery
(Isle Aux Noix, June 16, 1777)
*"The 20th Regiment, in Garrison at this place were compensated for a scarcity of Fresh Provisions by the immense quantities of all kinds of Fish taken every where round the Island. ...The Spruce Beer was also served to them & with success."*

In 1776, the British army utilized the Royal Fencible American Regiment to catch fish for the troops serving in Canada. Fencibles were regiments that were raised either in the United Kingdom or the colonies to defend their local homeland against foreign invasion. They were usually temporary regiments that were composed of local volunteers commanded by Regular Army officers. As they had no liability for overseas service, they were often confined to garrison and patrol duties which allowed the regular Army to perform offensive operations as it saw fit.

Kemble's Orderly Book
(April 7, 1776)
*"Head Quarters, Halifax, 7th. April, 1776.After Orders, 6 o'Clock.*
*One Subaltern and 24 Rank and File of the Royal Fencible American Regiment will be employed in catching Fish for the use of the Troops. They are to go on Board such Vessels as the Deputy Quarter Master General shall direct. It is recommended to the Officer who has voluntarily undertaken to Superintend this necessary piece of Service for the good of the whole Army, to pay every attention to it in his power."*

Salted Cod Fish

# Rice & Oatmeal:

As part of his standard government ration, a British soldier received either a half pound of rice or a half pound of oatmeal per week. He was issued more if his bread or flour fell below the standard ration. If this occurred, it was not uncommon to see either one of these grains incorporated into the flour for making his bread so that the shortage could be offset.

Captain Frederick Mackenzie, H.M. 23rd Regiment of Foot
(December 25, 1778)

*"The bread which is served out to the troops, is made of equal parts of Ground Rice and flour, and is very good. The scarcity of flour in the Store, is the reason of such bread being delivered."*

A mess usually consumed its rice or oatmeal by boiling their rations into a pasty mush and flavoring the pudding with the butter it received. As an alternative, a mess could also bake their rations into thin cakes by creating a dough of crushed grains and water.

Rice was considered a very therapeutic foodstuff by the physicians of the British army. As such, it was occasionally substituted for a portion of a soldier's meat ration and, as necessary, rationed for the hospital in times of scarcity.

The Journal and Orderly Books of Lieutenant James M. Hadden, Royal Artillery (Chamblee, August 7, 1776)
*"By Lieutenant General Burgoyne. General Orders. The Physicians to the Army having represented that the following change in the Ration will be very essential towards the Healths of the Men, that half a Pound be taken off the Beef Ration, and a Quarter of a Pound of Rice be added in its place, the Commissaries will begin to deliver it out accordingly."*

The Journal and Orderly Books of Lieutenant James M. Hadden, Royal Artillery (Montreal, November 28, 1776)
*"General Orders. During this Winter Provisions are to be issued according to a Complete Ration of every Species as settled and ordered by the Commander in Chief at the opening of the Campaign, but as Rice is now Scarce, that article must be reserved for the Sick and the Hospitals, and instead of one Ounce of Rice must be delivered Two Ounces of Oatmeal, and the delivering must be also twice of Pork to Once of Beef. The time of delivery every Four days."*

As a general rule, a British soldier received rice that was lower in quality than that which was available on the common market. This is best understood when examining the process of harvesting the rice itself.

Initially, rice is removed from the shaft through a process known as threshing. This produces a “rough” rice that requires pounding to remove the husk. Once done, the rice is polished and the resulting grains are sifted and separated. Full grain rice, being the highest in quality and most lucrative product, was usually sold to the general market. Half grain, or “pearl”, rice was usually made for sale locally and at a more economic price. The remaining bits and pieces, known as “grits”, were usually reserved for slave consumption. It is likely that a soldier received pearl and grit grade rice for his ration.

18th Century Heirloom Carolina Rice

18th Century Heirloom Carolina Rice
“Rough” Rice

18th Century Heirloom Carolina Rice
Whole Grain Rice

# Sauerkraut:

When cabbage was in season, it was frequently preserved in the form of sauerkraut. Otherwise known as sour cabbage, this foodstuff was easy to make and provided essential ingredients known for the prevention of scurvy.

In the 18th century, Sauerkraut provided an integral supplement to the soldier's diet as it could be kept for months on end:

Kemble's Orderly Book
(Boston, February 27, 1776)
*"Sour Crout will be delivered to the Troops at the rate of half a pound a man per week"*
*"It is recommended that the soldiers should eat the Sour Crout sliced raw with Vinegar."*

General Orders, Rhode Island
(January 25, 1777)
*"The troops on this Island. to receive Sour Kroat at the rate of two pounds per man each week."*

## Vinegar and Salt:

Vinegar was frequently issued to the men in great quantities. Salt, when available, was issued up to twice a week. Both were frequently used to season the men's provisions:

Kemble's Orderly Book
(Boston, February 8, 1776)
*"Vinegar for the soldiers not having been drawn regularly from the Commissary General, the Quarter Master of Corps are to attend to its being Received as usual, at 2 Quarts per week for a Mess of 6 men."*

Kemble's Orderly Book
(October 26, 1776)
*"Salt will be Issued to the Troops at a rate of a Bushel per Regiment this day at noon at Head Quarters, to make use of, with their fresh Provisions. The Quarter Masters of Corps to apply immediately for it."*

# Fresh Provisions:

Many modern analyses have evaluated the standard governmental food ration and concluded that the British soldier was malnourished. This basic ration, however, was not expected to be the soldier's entire diet. Besides the usual dried peas which were part of his Seven Rations as well as the occasional sauerkraut, "Fresh" cultivated provisions were also consumed. This included such vegetables as turnips, kidney beans, corn, potatoes and "greenes". These appear in numerous orderly book entries and were occasionally available to the army (when in season) through both contractors and local farmers:

Orderly Book, H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot
(Morning Orders, 11 o'clock, June 20, 1777)
*"..The Commanding Offr Expects the Provisions should be Dressd that the men wilt provide greenes or Contrive to have something Warm Every day"*

Kemble's Orderly Book
(Halifax, May 15, 1776)
*"Eight Bushels of Potatoes will be delivered to each Company of His Majesty's Troops."*

Kemble's Orderly Book
(February 10, 1776)
*"The following Corps to send immediately to the Commissary General's Stores to receive their proportion of potatoes. Viz... 22d. Regiment, 4 Bushels; 23d. Regiment, 28;... 40th Regiment, 23;... 55th Regiment, 8..."*

Brigade of Guards Orderly Books
(September 17, 1778)
*"After Roll Calling at 8 in the Morning one Man per Mess with a Non Commissioned officer per Company to go for water and Roots. Each Non Commissioned officer at his Return to Report to an officer of the Company..."*

18th Century Heirloom White Sweet Potatoes

Earlier in the war, vegetables were plentiful and inexpensive. Gardeners and laborers were often hired to cultivate vegetable gardens for the army. When in garrison quarters, the troops themselves harvested their own provisions. Gardens were established in the fields and pastures of Newport, Boston, New York and Philadelphia:

General Orders, Rhode Island
(April 30, 1777)
*"Garden Seeds having been sent for the use of the troops, the Commanding Officers of Regiments are desired to look out for Ground proper to make Gardens for the use of their Corps"*

General Orders, America
(Boston, September 17, 1775)
*"As ground has been sown with turnips for the use of the troops during Winter, and with a particular view of preventing the ill effects from the Scurvy..."*

Kemble's Orderly Book
(New York, March 16, 1777)
*"Several Lots of Ground being now inclosed in order to supply the Army in their several Quarters and Cantonments, with Greens and Vegetables of all kinds...."*

A Variety of Fresh Provisions Cooked by a Mess

# Miscellaneous Foodstuffs:

In addition to his “Seven Rations” and fresh provisions, the British soldier serving in North America also encountered additional types of foodstuffs as they became available.

Orderly Book of H.M. 43rd Regiment of Foot
(October 1, 1781)
*"The Commissary will issue Sugar and Cocoa to Morrow to the Serjts, Drums and Rank and File present in each Corp at the Rate of One Pound Sugar and 1/2 Pound of Cocoa to each Man."*

Belt Plate
H.M. 43rd Regiment of Foot
(Don Troiani Collection)

# Camp Markets

During the American Revolution, camp markets were often established adjacent to British encampments so that a wide variety of fresh foodstuffs could be made available to the men. These markets consisted of local merchants and farmers who sold their produce under the jurisdiction of an army officer who ensured that they did so at a fair, yet equitable, rate.

Orderly Book, H.M. 17th Regiment of Foot
(December 18, 1776)
*"No Officer Whatever is on any Account to send into the Country to Buy or take Forage. A Market will be Established as soon as possible and by that means Everybody will be Supplied With what they may want. Gentlemen are therefore not to send into the Country to Buy Provisions, or stop any of the Inhabitants Who are Bringing Provisions to Market."*

Howe's Orderly Book
(Staten Island, 4th July 1776)
*"The Inhabitants will supply the Army with Provisions at the following rates Beef, Mutton, Lamb, Pork & Veal 6d pr Pound, Chickens 9d Eggs 1 Shillg pr Doz; Butter 1s 3d pr Pound, Ducks 1s 3d, Geese 2s 6d Flour pr Hundred - One Pound. The whole York Currency."*

Whenever necessary, guards were posted at camp markets to ensure that they ran properly:

General Orders
(Rhode Island, 25th December 1777)
*"For the preservation of order and regularity in the Market, the General has directed a Guard to attend there from the hour of eight to eleven in the morning, and all kinds of Provisions are to be brought cut up, and sold there, and none to be disposed of but within those hours. This Guard is directed immediately to confine any one found guilty of committing disorders."*

Typically, one or two men from a mess would go to market to purchase produce on behalf of their messmates. As a company, they would do so under the guidance of their non-commissioned officers.

Bennet Cuthbertson
*"System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry"*, Chapter VIII., Section III., 1776:
*"Five, six or eight men being generally the num-ber of a mess, the Non-commission-officers should assemble a man or more from each, and march them regularly to market, and there buy a proper quantity of good and wholesome meat (either beef, mutton or pork) and also of vegetables, salt and oatmeal, to serve each mess, until the next day for receiving pay; and if not in the Field, they ought to buy a sufficiency of bread too, at the same time: all this being done, the men are to be marched back regularly to the place of Parade, and there dismissed."*

In the end, these non-commissioned officers were held accountable for the produce purchased for the men under their command:

Bennet Cuthbertson
*"System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry"*, Chapter VIII., Section VII., 1776:
*"When the Non-commission-officers return from market, they are to make up a return of the kind and quantity of provisions bought for each mess, and give it to the Orderly-Sergeant of the Company, who is to make out from them, a general one for the vi-siting Subaltern-officer, who, as soon as he receives it, should immediately go round his Company, and examine into the state of the provisions, comparing them with the return, in which, if he finds any thing disagree, he must enquire into the reason of it, and have every matter set right, before he delivers his report to the Commander of the Regiment; and if such mistake proceeded from the smallest neglect or convenience, in the Serjeant or Corporal who bought for the mess, he ought to bring him to a severe account for it."*

During the American War for Independence, there were, of course, times when the British army occupied ground that was unsympathetic to King George III. If this was the case, and if the local populace became noncompliant to the cause, martial law could always be established. This essentially forced the local inhabitants to provide produce to the local market, at reasonable rates, under penalty of law. If they did not comply to these orders, their goods could be confiscated and they, themselves, could be incarcerated for their insurrection.

Orderly Book H.M. 43rd Regiment of Foot
(August 9, 1781)
*"NOTIFICATION: The inhabitants of Elizabeth City York and Warwik Counties being in the power of his Majesty's troops are hereby ordered to repair to Head Quarter on or before the 20th Day of August to deliver up their Arms and give Paroles, that they will not in future take any part against his Majesty's Interest And they are likewise directed to bring to Market the Provision they can spare for which they will be reasonably paid in ready Money. AND NOTICE is hereby given that those who fail in complying with this Order will be imprisoned when taken and their Corn and Cattle will be seized for the use of the Troops. Officers Commanding at the Out Piquets of Posts of the Army are particularly called upon to prevent any Irregularities being committed that may interrupt the inhabitants in bringing Supplies to Market and no Provisions are to be sold at any other place but that appointed for the Market to be held. Officers Commanding foraging parties are to give certificates to the inhabitants for the forage they take."*

# Offsetting Shortages:
## Plundering & Foraging

Throughout the American War for Independence, parties of soldiers on both sides of the conflict were known to plunder the countryside for valuables, firewood, and food. Whether they did this to cause psychologic trauma to an unsympathetic civilian population, or to simply improve the quality of their lives, the practice of looting homesteads was quite commonplace. In fact, it was so prevalent that it occurred on the very first day of the war, April 19, 1775, when Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith's column of British regulars marched on Concord, Massachusetts, to destroy the stockpiles of military stores that were held there by the "country people". Although the high command of the British army officially forbid the practice of pillaging, it often enforced its regulations with a blind eye.

During the campaigns of New York and New Jersey in 1776, there were over 500 accounts of personal property damage and theft committed by both the British and American armies. This loss was such a problem for New Jersey that the state Council and General Assembly passed an act on December 20, 1781 to provide restitution to those citizens who suffered damages caused by the hands of not only the British forces, but from the Continental Army, New Jersey militia, and neighboring state militias as well. Whether or not the state actually compensated these individuals for their losses cannot be determined.

By examining the inventories of goods stolen from the local inhabitants, one can get a better understanding of what MAY have been used and eaten by the British soldier above and beyond what he was issued and provisioned by his regiment.

It MUST be remembered, however, that both the private soldier serving His Majesty, King George III, and the woman who followed the army had to carry every personal item that was in their possession while they were on the march. With this in mind, cumbersome objects such as furniture, kettles, and pots, were likely discarded along the way as the army went on campaign.

William Dunlap was a witness to the rape of New Jersey by the British army in 1776. Ten years old at the time, he was the son of a New Jersey veteran who served in H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot with General Wolfe during the Seven Years War. In 1832, he recalled his memories of those atrocities in his memoirs:

*"The English army marched in hostile array through New-Jersey, and my father walked to the high road passing through the village, to present himself to General Grant as an adherent to the cause of Britain. He took me with him, and I saw the soldiers plundering the houses, the women of the village trembling and weeping, or flying with their children - the men had retired to await the time of resurrection.*

*In many houses helpless old men, or widowed females awaited the soldiers of monarchy. A scene of promiscuous pillage was in full operation. Here a soldier was seen issuing from a house armed with a frying-pan and gridiron, and hastening to deposite them with the store over which his helpmate kept watch.*

*The women who had followed the army assisted their husbands in bringing the furniture from the houses, or stood watch as sentinels to guard the pile of kitchen utensils, or other articles already secured and claimed by right of war. Here was seen a woman bearing a looking-glass, and here a soldier with a feather-bed - but as this was rather an inconvenient article to carry on a march, the ticking was soon ripped open, and a shower of goose feathers were seen taking higher flight than their original owners ever soared to. This scene was a lesson."* (D-1)

Cast Iron Fry Pans
18th Century

William Dunlap later recalled:

*"It made an indelible impression on me. Not far from me stood a female follower of the camp, having charge of a musket, and guarding a pile of household furniture, to which a soldier industriously added by bringing forth from a house, where the mistress and her child stood weeping at the door, every article he could find, from the table and the looking glass, to the tongs and shovel; pots, kettles, women's clothing, and feather beds, were, by the same industry, transferred from the owners' homes to various piles, similarly protected. Here a soldier was seen issuing from a house, armed with a frying-pan and gridiron; and there a camp-follower, bearing a mirror in one hand and a bottle in the other...* (D-2)

# Inventories of New Jersey Property and Provisions Either Stolen or Destroyed by the British Army in 1776

Plundered from Adrian A. Post and his son, Thomas Post:

*"One black Mare 9 years old, £25; One brown Mare 5 Years, £20; One brown Gelding 7 Years, £20; 2 ton English hay 40s. pr ton, £4; 10 Bushels of Indian Corn at 4s. pr bush, £; 300 Wt of Wheat flour, £3; 700 Wt of Rye flour, £3, 10s.; 25 Bags at 3s. Each, £3, 15s.; 150 Wt of Pork at 3 pr lb, £1, 17s. 6d.; Set of Wagon Gears partly worn, £1, 10s. Total, £84, 12s., 6d."*

Plundered from John Vreeland and certified by his wife, Gouda:

*"two horses, 7 Cows with Calf, 4 Swine at 30s., 9 Sheep at 15s., 3 Barrels of Cider at 12s., 3 Hives of bees, £3, 16 Shirts & Shifts at 6s., £4, 16s.; 11 new Pillow Cases at 9s. pr Pair, £2, 6s., 6d.; 2 sheets at 14s."*

Detail: Encyclopedie, of Dictionaire Raisonne Des Sciences by Denis Diderot 1772

Plundered from Jacob Vreeland:

*"6 tons English hay, £9; 600 Sheaves of Oats, £5, 5s.; 500 Do. wheat, £5; 9 Hives of honey, £9; 8 shirts, 96s.; 5 Barrels Cyder, £4; 30 Bushels Turnips, 30s.; 3 Bushels Potatoes, 7s. 6d.; 13 Gallons Methleglin, £2, 12s.; 100 Cabbage Heads, 25s; 50 Barn fowls & 7 Geese, £3, 4s.; Cash, £4, 8s.; 3 Shirts & 2 Pair Stockings, £2, 16s.; 3 Handkerchiefs, 10s.; 1 Gun, 40s. Total for the two days, £381, 9, 6."*

Detail: Paul Sandby c. 1765

Plundered from Cornelius Vreeland:

*"2 Loads of Cabbage, £1, 15s., 4d.; 6 Turkeys, 15s.; 10 Barn Fowls, 10s.;' besides '1 Pair of Buckskin breeches with Silver buttons, £2, 10s.; New Broad Cloth Coat, Vest & breeches, £9."*

Plundered from Derrik Vreeland:

*"2 Fat Oxen, £14; 2 Fat Cows, £8; 6 Calves, £6; 34 Sheep, £27, 4s.; 2 Bull 5 years old, £5; 7 Hogs at 20s."*

Vreeland also lost two mares, at £10 each.

Plundered from Richard Ludlow, dock owner on Acquackanonk Landing lost:

*"20,000 & heading, £100; 10 Cords of Walnut Wood, £15; 1 Boat with Sales &c., £60.' At his house they destroyed or carried off three copper kettles, worth £7; a brass pie pan, 20s.; an iron pie pan, 10s.; a brass tea kettle, 20s", and a 'Washing of the Linnen,' valued at £3. That visitation of the British cost him £187, 10s."*

These articles of wood were either destroyed or used by the British army for firewood. It is interesting such items as copper kettles, brass tea kettles, and brass and iron pans being stolen. It is likely that these items saw use by the British troops or their women at one time or another. How long they lasted as the army went on the march is another question altogether as a soldier had to carry everything he owned on his back.

*"three copper kettles, worth £7;"*

Woman with Copper (or Brass) Tea Kettle
Paul Sandby c. 1765

*“a brass tea kettle, 20s.”*

Brass Tea Kettle
18th Century

*"Connecticut Farms 29th May 1789.*
*Inventory and apprisal of the Damages done to the property of Sarah Sayres taken and destroyed by the British Army or their Adherents in the month of December, 1776.*

| | |
|---|---|
| *1 Coat Jack coat and Breeches Superfine Cloth* | *£ 8__0__0* |
| *1 Coat jacket and Breeches of Thick sett* | *4__0__0* |
| ***2 Copper Tea Kettles*** | *1_10__0* |
| *7 Linen Sheets* | *4_10__0* |
| *3 Woollen Bed Blankets* | *1__4__0* |
| *3 Coverlids* | *2__5__0* |
| *1 Silk and 3 Linen handkerchiefs* | *1__0__0* |
| *1 Black Silk Apron* | *12__0* |
| *1 Gum Rule Joint Table* | *2__0__0* |
| *1 Looking Glass* | *10__0* |
| *1 New Mans Saddle* | *3__0__0* |
| ***1 Brass Kettle*** | *15__0* |
| ***3 Large Pewter Basons*** | *12__0* |
| ***1 Iron Kettle*** | *1__0__0* |
| ***1 Grid Iron*** | *7__0* |
| *Almost a sett of Carpenter's Tools* | *8__0__0* |
| *60 Light of Glass 7 by 9* | *1_10__0* |
| *4 Good shirts* | *2__0__0* |
| *3 shifts* | *1__4__0* |
| *2 pair of Pillow Cases* | *1__0__0* |
| | --- |
| | *£44_19__0* |

*The above attested to by the oaths of Sarah Sayres and Charles Townley."*

*“1 Brass Kettle 15__0”*

Brass Kettles with Iron Bales
Brass or Iron Side Ears
18th Century

*“1 Iron Kettle* *1__0__0”*

American 3 Legged Cast Iron Kettle
Straight Sprue
18th Century

*"1 Iron Kettle 1__0__0"*

Cast Iron Kettle Fragments c. 1775
Recovered from the Site of Benedict Arnold's Hospital, Great Carrying Place, Maine
(Arnold Expedition Historical Society)

*“1 Grid Iron 7__0”*

Gridiron / Griddle Iron
Wrought Iron
18th Century

Gridiron / Griddle Iron
Wrought Iron
18th Century

Plundered from Christopher Vanoorstrand, a merchant shipper and neighbor of Richard Ludlow:

*"1 Boat almost New, £225; 2 Negro Men, £90; 2 Negro Women, £100; 4 Horses & Mares at £10, £40; 2 Saddles, £4; 15 barrels Cyder, £9; 1 Pair leather breeches, 40s., Cloth Coat, 60s.; 1 Waist Coat, 20s.; 2 Yd. Streaked Holland, 8s.; Pocket Book with sundry Accompts, £6; 2 Water Pots for bleaching, 15s.; 2 Bellows, 7s.; 2 Cases with Sundry flasks, 10s.; 2 Small trunks, 6s.; 2 Teakettles at 15s.; 3 pans at 4s.; Pewter, 8s; 50 Bushels Corn at 4s. pr Bus'l, £10; 40 Bushels Apples, £4; 1 Sheep, 20s.; 2 Hogs, 40s.; Potatoes, Turnips, Cabbage, &c., £2; Tobacco, 15s. Total, £540, 11s."*

Orderly Book, H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot, Grenadier Company
(Fort Edward, August 13, 1777)
*"Whereas 2 Barrels of Madeira Wine 3 Barrels of Rum 1 Bag of Coffee 1 Tierce of Barley 2 Kegs of Butter and 2 Rolls of Tobacco have been Clandestinely put into the provisions Carts of the Army & very properly reported by the Wagon Master General the Said articles are to be received into the public Stores by the Commissary and to be issued according to future Orders."*

Orderly Book, H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot, Grenadier Company
(Camp Jones House, Hudson River, August 27, 1777)
*"After General Orders. Notwithstanding repeated Orders that have been given that no Vegitables Shall be taken out of the Inhabited Houses, much less out of those Where there is a Safe Guard, and as in Order to Prevent such Excesses, Detachments of a Non Commission'd officer and ten or twelve Men have been Ordered to be sent by the Different Regiments, Yett Complaints have been made that Parties of thirty and Forty men att a time have gone out of Camp, and taken away every kind of Greens which the Inhabitants had for the Sustenence of their Famillys…General Burgoyne having forbid the Troops taking anything from the Inhabitants….If a Party of Men be sent out to fetch Vegitables it must be first known Where the Empty Houses are, from Whence they are to be brought, and if such Houses are in fact Empty or Not, and Whosoever Commands such a Party, must Not Presume to take any Vegitables 'till he is fully Informed of the later Circumstance…. All Persons Forraging Singly will be taken up and Punished as Morroders."*

Orderly Book, H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot, Grenadier Company
(Camp Jones House, Hudson River, September 5, 1777)
*"Information has been Received, that there are small Parties of the Rebels Lurking about in Order to Carry off any Single Soldiers, who may be in the Woods gathering Greens, and Yesterday three Men were taken off by one of these Scouting Parties near Fort Edward. It is therefore Expressly forbid that any Single Soldier go out of Camp under pain of being brought in Prisoner, and Punnished for Disobedience of Orders."*

Orderly Book, H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot, Grenadier Company
(Camp at Swordstown, Sword's House, North of Great Ravine on Hudson River, September 18, 1777)
*"To the great Reproach of Discipline & of the Common sense of the Soldiers who have been made prisoners, the service has sustained a loss within ten days that might have cost the lives of some hundreds of the Enemy upon it in Action. The Lieutenant General will no longer hear to lose men for the pitiful consideration of Potatoes for forrage. The life of a Soldier is the property of the King & since neither friendly admonition repeated injunctions nor Corporal punishments have effect…the first Soldier caught beyond the advanced Sentrys of the Army will be instantly hanged."*

In summary, a limited synopsis and evaluation of the plunder taken by the British troops and their female camp followers between the years 1776 - 1777 reveals that these individuals may have had, in addition to their regular camp equipage and provisions, the following items in limited quantities (depending on the date):

- Staves & Wood for firewood
- Frying pans & Grid Irons
- Looking Glasses
- Glass Bottles
- Sundry articles of Civilian Male & Female Clothing & Stockings
- Bed Sheets & Pillow Cases
- Brass, Copper & Iron Kettles, Brass & Copper Tea Kettles
- Miscellaneous pieces of Furniture
- Brass & Iron Pie Pans, Pewter Basins
- Shovels & Tongs
- Bee Hives
- Wheat & Rye Flour
- Oats, Barley
- Kegs of Butter
- Coffee
- Livestock:  Cows, Hogs, Sheep, Fowls, Geese, Turkeys
- Barrels of Cyder, Madeira Wine,
- Vegetables & Fruit: “Greens”, Corn, Indian Corn (for livestock), Potatoes, Turnips, Cabbage, Apples
- Tobacco
- Etc.

# Rum & Beer Rations

## The Rum Ration:

The British army in North America consumed more than 360,000 gallons of rum per year. It was single most expensive ration among all the government provisions. During the American Rebellion, a soldier received one gill (4 ounces) of rum per day. This was usually mixed with three parts of water and filled into his canteen.

Orderly Book, H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot
(June 11, 1777)
*"One days rum only to be Issued which the Offrs will see Mixd with 3 Watters put into the Canteens this Evening at sun set and giveing in Charge to the Different Non Commissd Offrs Ready to be Deliverd to the men before the Regt marches in the morning"*

Orderly Book, H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot
(June 23, 1777)
*"The rum is to be Deliverd Regularey to ye Compy Every day at 12 Oclock Which the Offr of the day is to see Mixd with three Watters as soon as Ever he Returns from the Wattering..."*

Orderly Book, H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot, Grenadier Company
(Camp at River Bouquet, June 11, 1777)
*"Brigade Orders. Brigadier General Fraser has been pleased to Order a Gill of Rum per Man for the Corps."*

Burgoyne's Orderly Book
(Ticonderoga, New York, July 5, 1777)
*"Camp near Ticonderoga, 5th July, 1777.*
*In consideration of the heat of the weather and the alacrity with which the men have worked, a Refreshment of Rum will be given to the whole Army. The Qr. Master with proper parties will receive it this evening from Mr McKenzie at Threemile Point at the rate of half a Pint a man.*
*The Brigadier will regulate the Portion of water to be mixed with it, and the times of distribution."*

Soldiers of the 40th Regiment may have had the burden of carrying their own kettles and tent poles while on the march, but their rum ration followed them closely behind:

Orderly Book, H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot

(June 25, 1777)

*"Two Waggons to be Allowed on the march to each Regt of Dragoons &Two to each Battn of Infantry wh four horses to Each One Waggon to Carry the Offrs Provision & two days Rum for the Men the Other to be A spare Waggon & Kept Empty"*

When a soldier served in a working party or posted guard in inclement weather, he was often given an extra gill of rum for his service.

General Orders, America

(April 26, 1775)

*"The Commander in chief is pleased to allow those men employed on the works, two Gills of Rum per day; one to be given them in the morning, the other in the evening. A Hogshead of Rum be given in charge to each Regiment for the above purpose, and the Commanding officers will direct their Quarter Masters to distribute it; who will keep a particular account of the number of men served each day, and settle with the Quarter Master General, for the same as soon as compiled"*

# Spruce Beer:

Throughout the American War for Independence, spruce beer was issued to the British troops in great quantities. In the 18th century, this antiscorbutic beverage was often used for the prevention of scurvy. It was also used an alternative to water when the source of that water was often a concern with regards to contamination. Spruce beer was made from the buds, needles, or essence of spruce trees. It was often fermented with molasses and occasionally brewed with hops.

Spruce beer was given great accolades in the February 1764 edition of the *London Magazine* or *Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer (Edition 33)*:

*"I think it the wholesomest drink that is made; I am seldom without it when I can get spruce. When I lived in New England, I had a vessel that went from thence to the West-Indies, and the bay of Honduras, for logwood: I always charged the master of her to take black spruce with him, and give his men beer all the voyage, which he did, and his men were healthy and well in the West-Indies and in the Bay, when others, at the same time and places, that drank water, were very sickly. I have so great an opinion of the beer, that I wish it was used in all our ships on the coast of Guinea, and in the West-Indies; and where at many places the water is very bad, which if brewed into this beer, by the fermentation would likely make it good drink, and with the help of the spruce nothing so easy to make."*

In 1757, James Lind, M.D., wrote about the benefits of spruce beer, especially when fermented with molasses, in his *"Treatise on the Scurvy"*:

*"I am inclined to believe, from the description given by Cartier of the ameda tree, with a decoction of the bark and leaves of which his crew was so speedily recovered, that it was the large swampy American spruce tree (m). For although the pines and firs, of which there is a great variety, ,differ from each other in their size and outward form, the length and disposition of their leaves, hardness of wood, &c. yet they seem all to have analogous medicinal virtues, and great efficacy in this disease. The shrub spruce, of that sort vulgarly called the black, which makes this most wholsome drink, affords a balsam superior to most turpentines, though known only to a few physicians.*

*A simple decoction of the tops, cones, leaves, or even green bark and wood of these trees, is an excellent antiscorbutic: but it will I am apt to think become much more so when fermented, as in making spruce beer; where the molasses contributes, by its diaphoretic quality, to make it a more suitable medicine. By carrying a few bags of spruce to sea, this wholsome drink may be prepared at any time. But where it cannot be had, the common fir-tops used for fuel in the ship, should be first boiled in water, and the decoction afterwards fermented wit molasses, in the common method of making spruce beer; to which a small quantity of wormwood and horse-radish root (which it is easy to preserve fresh at sea) may be added. It ought to be drunk when pretty brisk or new, and taken in sufficient quantity which will be found the most efficacious antiscorbutic perhaps of any fermented liquor, as being of a diuretic and diaphoretic quality. In extremity tar-water may be tried fermented in a like manner; by which it will certainly become much more antiscorbutic "*

Captain James Cook also wrote of the benefits of spruce beer. This was published in the 1784 edition of *"A Voyage To The Pacific Ocean; Undrtaken by Command of his MAJESTY, For Making DISCOVERIES in the Northern Hemisphere; Performed under the Direction of Captains COOK, CLERKE, and GORE, In the Years 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779 and 1780."*:

*"Two of our men were employed in brewing spruce beer; while others filled the water-casks, collected grass for the cattle, and cut wood ... Besides fish, we had other refreshments in abundance. Scurvy-grass, celery, and portable soup, were boiled every day with the wheat and pease; and we had spruce beer for our drink. Such a regimen soon removed all seeds of the scurvy from our people, if any of them had contracted it. But indeed, on our arrival here, we only had two invalids in both ships."*

Captain James Cook
by Nathaniel Dance c.1775

General Orders, America
(Boston, October 28, 1775)
*"Spruce beer being recommended by the Physicians of the hospital as a preservative against the Scurvy, the Corps... will receive ... Spruce beer at the allowance of three pints per day for each man....brewed with 5 quarts of Molasses, and 10 quarts of essence of Spruce. A Quarter Master from the line will attend each brewing, to see that the beer is brewed with these proportions of Molasses and Spruce."*

Kemble's Orderly Book
(New York, December 28, 1776)
*"Spruce Beer will be issued to the Troops at Mr. Horsfield's Brewery at the Rate of 4 Shillings per Barrel of 30 Gallons."*

Kemble's Orderly Book
(Halifax, April 8, 1776)
*"Officers of Corps will immediately send returns to Mr. Butler, of the Quantity of Spruce Beer they may want for their respective Regiments, who will Brew it as soon as Possible and deliver it at 7 farthings per Gallon. A Quantity of Port Wine and some Limes will be sold"*

Orderly Book, H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot, Grenadier Company
(June 16, 1777)
*“The Quarter Masters to be particularly attentive that provision is regularly sent to the Cartridge makers, of each Battalion, and when Spruce Beer is delivered out to the Men if possible to send them there share.”*

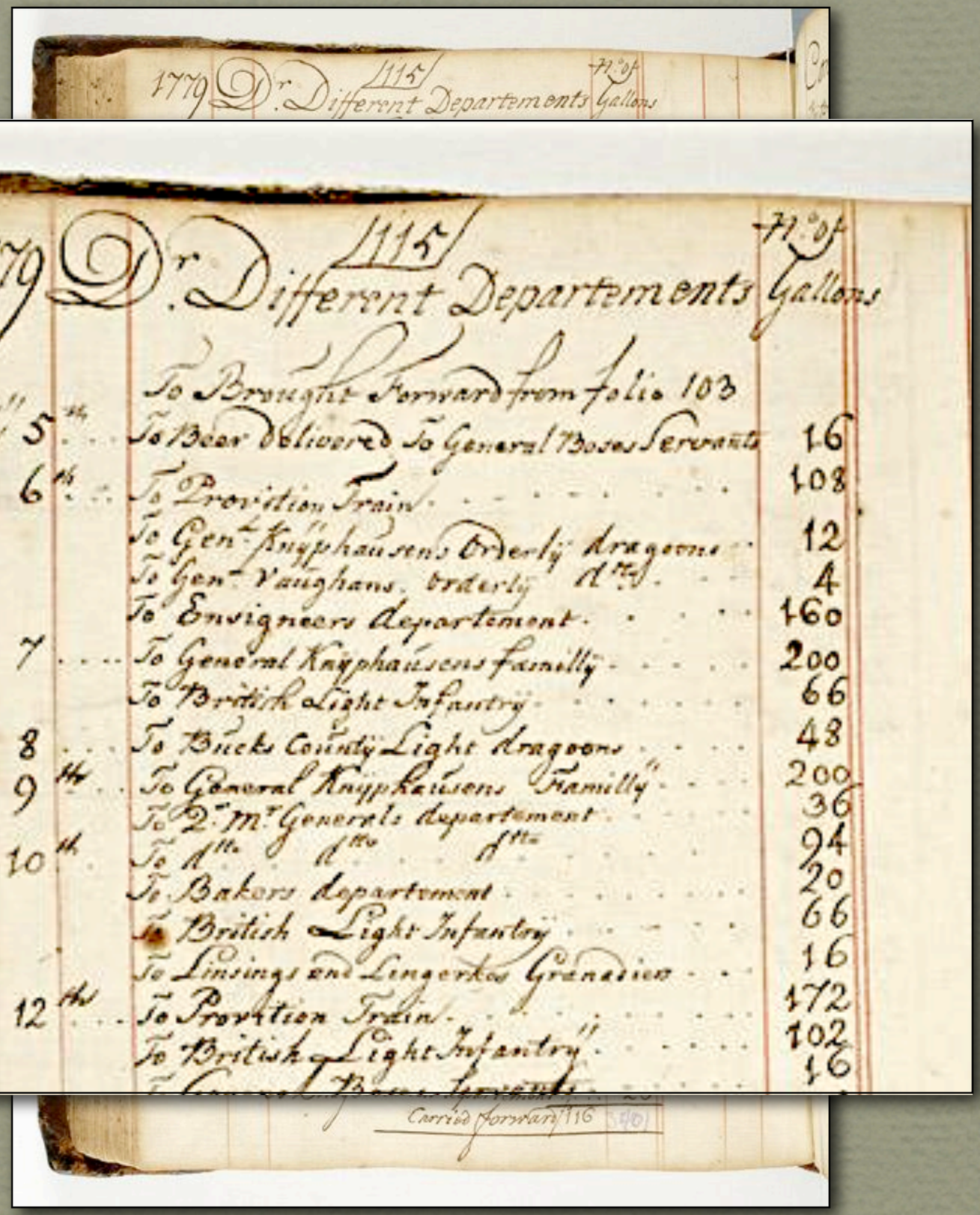
Orderly Book of H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot
(Camp at Freemans Farm, September 27, 1777)
*"As there appears not to be Spruce Beer sufficient for the 4 Regts they will it day about going for it in the morning in the same Order as mentioned yesterday & as the 21st got none this day they & the 20th will begin this rule tomorrow."*

Other Ranks of H.M. 20th, 21st, and 47th Regiments of Foot c.1777
After Friedrich Konstantin von Germann

1779 Dr. Different Departements 115 No. of Gallons

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | To Brought Forward from folio 103 | |
| July 5th | To Beer Delivered To General Boses Servants | 16 |
| 6th | To Provition Train | 108 |
| | To Genl Knyphausens Orderly Dragoons | 12 |
| | To Genl Vaughans Orderly Ditto | 4 |
| | To Ensigneers departement | 160 |
| 7 | To General Knyphausens Familly | 200 |
| | To British Light Infantry | 66 |
| 8 | To Bucks County Light Dragoons | 48 |
| 9th | To General Knyphausens Familly | 200 |
| | To 2d Mr Generals departement | 36 |
| 10th | To Ditto Ditto Ditto | 94 |
| | To Bakers departement | 20 |
| | To British Light Infantry | 66 |
| | To Linsings and Lingerlos Grenadiers | 16 |
| 12th | To Provition Train | 172 |
| | To British Light Infantry | 102 |
| | To General Boses Servants | 16 |
| 14th | To Ensigneers departement | 154 |
| | To Guides and Pioneers | 106 |
| | To General Knyphausens Familly | 60 |
| | To 2 Soldiers of the 37th Regt | 8 |
| 15th | To Provition Train | 34 |
| | To General Knyphausens familly | 200 |
| | To British Light Infantry | 87 |
| | To Bucks County Light dragoons | 52 |
| | To General Vaughans orderly Ditto | 4 |
| 16th | To General Knyphausens Familly | 200 |
| | To Ditto Ditto two orderly | 4 |
| | To Provintial Tailors | 111 |
| 17th | To Linsings and Longerlos Granadiers | 16 |
| | To 2d Mr Generals departement | 110 |
| | To Ditto Ditto | 32 |
| | To Hessian Jager Corps | 109 |
| | To British Light Infantry | 140 |
| | To Richardsons Bakers | 20 |
| | To 2 Soldiers of the 37th Regt | 8 |
| 19th | To 63th Regimt of Foot | 34 |
| | To 64th Ditto Ditto | 50 |
| | To General Boses Servants | 16 |
| 20th | To Ensigneers Departement | 115 |
| | To 2d Mr Generals Departement | 200 |
| 21th | To General Knyphausens Familly | 200 |
| | To Bridge Masters departement | 25 |
| | Carried forward 116 | 5401 |

A Page from the Account Book of William D. Faulkner,
New York City Brewer Who Operated Between 1772 and 1790
(New York Historical Society & Museum)



1779 Dr. 115 Nº of
Different Departements Gallons

To Brought forward from folio 103

July 5th ... To Beer delivered To General Bosas Servants 16
6th ... To Provition Train ... 108
To Genl Knyphausens Orderly Dragoons ... 12
To Genl Vaughans. Orderly A.Dy ... 4
To Ensigneers departement ... 160
7 ... To General Knyphausens family ... 200
To British Light Infantry ... 66
8 ... To Bucks County Light Dragoons ... 48
9th ... To General Knyphausens Family ... 200
To 2d M.r Generals departement ... 36
10th ... To d.o d.o d.o ... 24
To Bakers departement ... 20
To British Light Infantry ... 66
To Linsings and Lingerkes Grenadier ... 16
12th ... To Provition Train ... 172
To British Light Infantry ... 102
To ... 16

Carried forward 116

A Page from the Account Book of William D. Faulkner,
New York City Brewer Who Operated Between 1772 and 1790
(New York Historical Society & Museum)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | To General Bōes Servants | 154 |
| 14th | To Ensigneers departement | 106 |
| | To Guides and Pioneers | 60 |
| | To General Knyphausens Family | 8 |
| | To 2 Soldiers of the 37th Regt | 34 |
| 15th | To Provition Train | 200 |
| | To General Knyphausens family | 87 |
| | To British Light Infantry | 52 |
| | To Bucks County Light dragoons | 4 |
| | To General Vaughans orderly dto | 200 |
| 16th | To General Knyphausens Family | 4 |
| | To dto dto two orderly | 111 |
| | To Provintial Tailors | 16 |
| 17th | To Linsings and Longerks Grenadiers | 110 |
| | To 2d M.r Generals departement | 32 |
| | To dto dto | 109 |
| | To Hessian Jager Corps | 170 |
| | To British Light Infantry | 20 |
| | To Richardsons Bakers | 8 |
| | To 2 Soldiers of the 37th Regt | 34 |
| 19th | To 63th Regim.t of Foot | 50 |
| | To 64th dto dto | 16 |
| | To General Bōes Servants | 115 |
| 20th | To Ensigneers Departement | 200 |
| | To 2d M.r Generals Departement | 200 |
| 21st | To General Knyphausens Family | 25 |
| | To Bridge Masters departement | |
| | Carried forward | 116 |

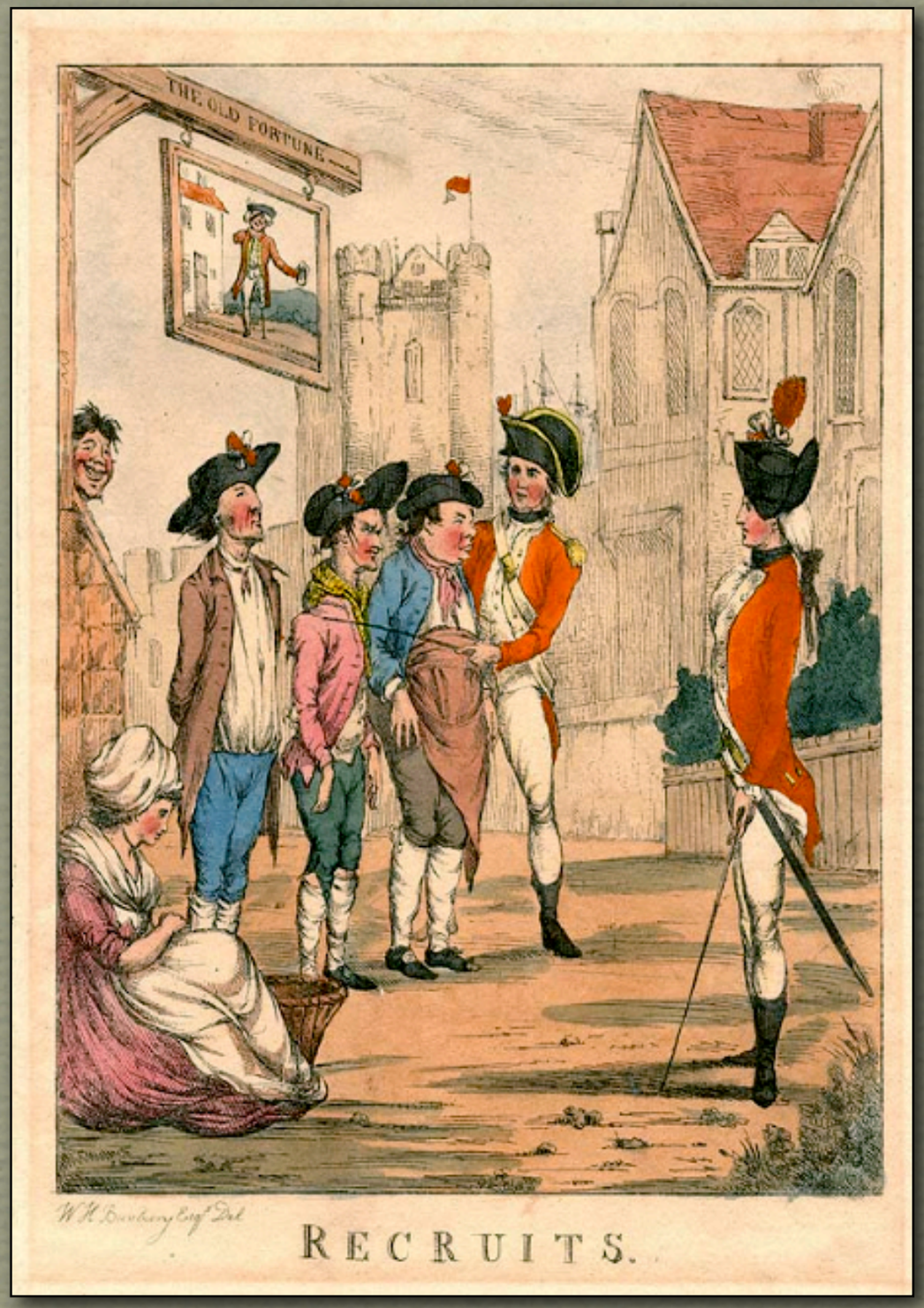
A Page from the Account Book of William D. Faulkner,
New York City Brewer Who Operated Between 1772 and 1790
(New York Historical Society & Museum)

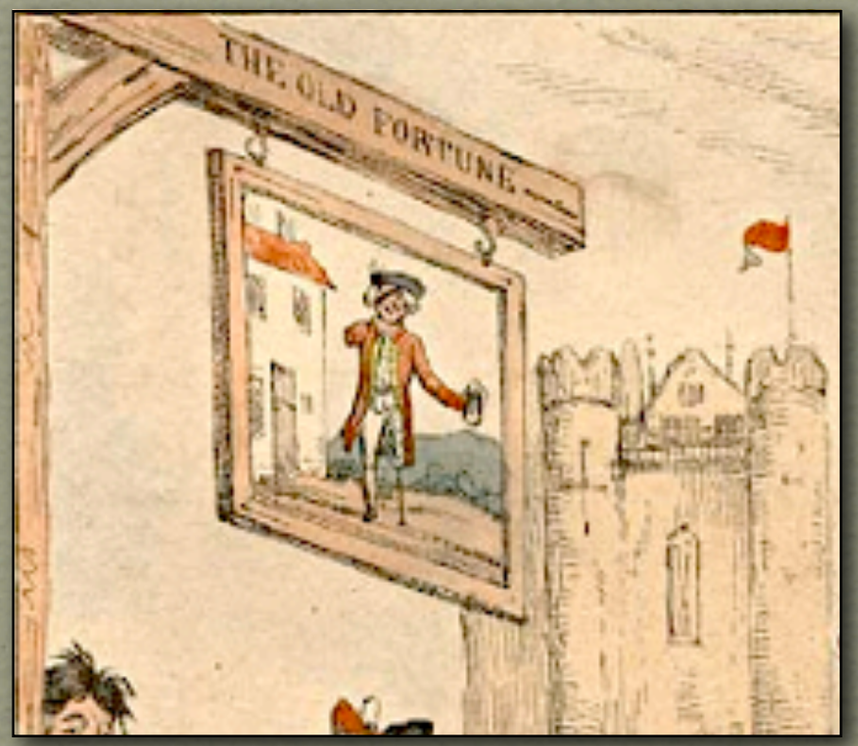
# Liquor & Sutlers

For most parts of 18th century society, the consumption of alcoholic beverages was considered widely acceptable. Taverns were present in nearly every town throughout the British Isles and North America. Not only were they a source of drink and entertainment, they were also the primary center for social interaction and the exchange of news within a community.  In the tavern, you could encounter people from all walks of life; from the most affluent, to the most downtrodden.

Throughout the course of history, whenever people get together, it is not unusual for politics to enter into the discussion. As such, taverns often became the meeting place for political debate. Dare it be said that the American Revolution was conceived in the taverns of Boston, and born with the blood shed of her patriots.

In the 18th century, taverns were also an important recruiting site for the British Army. Taking advantage of large gatherings of people, especially those under the influence of alcohol, these establishments were a tremendous resource for recruiting officers with quotas to fill. It should come to no surprise that the British soldier was therefore quite familiar with the consumption of alcohol long before he took the King's shilling.




"RECRUITS."
Note the "The Old Fortune" Tavern Sign of A Peg-legged Army Veteran Hoisting a Mug of Spirits

The Manchester Hero (Possibly a Tavern Keeper in His Apron) is Recruited into His Majesty's Service
&
Stoneware Mug by Hammersmith & Fulham, London c.1701 - 1710

BEATING UP FOR RECRUITS.

Published by Robert Sayer, N.o 53 Fleet Street

BM 5796
L-A, Vol. VI., c. 1780 ?

"BEATING UP FOR RECRUITS"
A Recruiting Party Recruits Patrons from a Local Tavern

In order to function to the best of his ability, a soldier must first and foremost maintain his health. In addition to eating well, he was also expected to stay sober. Unfortunately, achieving this ideal was a difficult task for the British army. When a soldier had extra money in his pocket, he often sought to spend it. With few alternatives to choose from, he frequently did so on gambling and alcohol.

An Order Read to the 37th Regiment of Foot
(1774)
*"Drunkenness is a Vice of all others, the most brutal in its Nature, the most Ruinous in its Consequences, and unfits a man for every sta-tion and duty, it is the source of every irregularity, from it Proceeds idleness, slovenliness, neglect of orders, and a total loss of all Military appearance, and character. It breeds disobedience, creates Mutiny, ruins health, and is destructive to the constitutions of men... it is the source of almost every crime the Soldier dose in generall Committ. Were there no Drunkenness there wd. be but few Courts Martial in the Regiment. The Lieutenant Colo. holds in such abhorrence and detestation this unsoldierlike unmanly Vice, That he solemnly assures the Regiment he will never give his Pardon to any Person who may hereafter be convicted of it."* (P-1)

H.M. 37th Regiment of Foot: Other Ranks Button (Don Troiani Collection)
Facing Wool and Worsted Regimental Lace (The *Lace Book*, Winsor Castle, Royal Library, c. 1768)

During the American War for Independence, one of the issues the British command had to deal with was the practice of soldiers visiting small unregulated drinking establishments located along the outskirts of an encampment or nearby town. Commonly known as “tippling” or “dram” houses, these shoddy little dens sold liquor at discount rates. In many cases, they were run by by the wife of a soldier. Since they were completely unregulated, these women often sold products that were unfit for human consumption. Many soldiers became intoxicated or sick after drinking their swill.

General Orders,
(W.O. Rhode Island, 23 December, 1776)
*“No soldiers wife is upon any account to keep a shop, without permission in writing signed by the commandant, or Deputy Commandant of the Town, for which they must be recommended by the Officer Commanding the Corps to which they belong. The General is concerned that no recommendation will be given to any woman without a certainty she will not make bad use of it, by selling spiritous Liquors.”*

General Orders
(W.O. London, Likely February, 1775)
*"When soldiers are found frequenting houses occupied by soldier's wives who sell liquor without a license, from whence the greatest irregularities proceed, and the liquor sold in such houses proves fatal to many soldiers. The commanding officers will direct such persons to be carried before a Magistrate with proper witnesses who will order them to be fined, and proceeded against in other respects according to the law"*

General, Sir William Howe's Orders
(January 23, 1776)
*"The Commanding Officers of Corps to Suppress all Dram Shops in their Respective Districts that are not licensed by Brig.-Gen. Robertson."*

General Orders
(W.O. Rhode Island, December 11, 1777)
*"Whereas the great Drunkenness that prevails among the Soldiers, proceeds from the Soldiers wives being allowed to keep little shops out of the districts of their Regiments, the Commanding Officers will give directions that they are not permitted to live out of the quarters of the Regiment they belong to."*

Diary of Lt. Frederick Mackenzie, H.M. 23rd Regiment of Foot
(Boston, February 2, 1775)
*"Notwithstanding the pains which have been taken to prevent Spirituous liquors from being sold to the Soldiers, Soldiers wives and others find means to dispose of the New England Rum to them in such quantities, and at so cheap a rate, that numbers of them are intoxicated daily"*

Orderly Book, 1st Battalion Light Infantry
(August 4- October 13, 1778)
*"...any Woman detected in Bringing Rum into Camp is immediately to be sent to Provost."*

In order to offset the consumption of these hazardous spirits from outside sources, the British army frequently licensed civilian merchants to sell liquor as well as other non-military provisions (such as victuals, soap, tobacco and other “necessaries of life”) to the regiments under its command. These individuals were collectively known as “Sutlers”.

Depending on the quantity and variety of goods they offered for sale, sutlers were labeled either “Grand” or “Petty”. A Petty sutler was an individual who sold goods in limited numbers. On occasion, a soldier’s wife held this title if she was granted a license to legally sell spirits. It is very likely she transported her goods in a simple basket, cart or wheelbarrow.

Thomas Simes
The Regulator *“Of the Colonel and His Duties”*, London, 1780
*“No non-commissioned officer’s or soldier’s wife is to suttle or sell liquors without permission; and leave will be granted to such as are particularly recommended by commanding officers of companies, and who will pay due attention to all orders concerning them. That no sutler off to harbor any body in the line of the regiment without the Major’s leave.* ***No more than one grand sutler and five petty ones will be allowed****; and any sutler who refuses to change the men’s money, or ask reward, shall be drummed out of camp.”*

We can get an understanding of the modus operandi of these women through a March 1785 deposition of Ann Bates, the wife of Joseph Bates, a former "Armourer in the Royal Train of Artillery under the command of Major Trail".

During the American War for Independence, Ann Bates was employed by the British army as a spy for "bringing and Conveying Intelligence from the Rebel Camps in America under the Command of General Washington". Setting up a plan with an officer of H.M. 8th Regiment of Foot, she stated that:

*"the Next morning the 28th June [1778] Mr Cragge brought me five Guineas to Furnish me with Necessaries for my Journey; with this Money I Purchased Rhuberb, Thread, Needles, Combs, Knives &c., to sell in the Rebel Camp, Which his Excellency Sr Heny Clinton approv'd very much of when acquainted with my Proceedings."* (N-1)

After she reached the Rebel encampment, she:

*"Divided my little Stock in Different lots as near as I could form an Idea of their Number of Brigades allowing one lot for Sale in Each Brigade, by which means I had the Opportunity of going through their whole Army remarking at the same time the strength & Situation of each Brigade, & the Number of Cannon with their Situation and weight of Ball each cannon was charge'd with…"* (N-1)

The Recreated Booth
of
John Inglis
Sutler to the 1st Battalion of Light Infantry
1777

Sutlers would follow the army depending on whether it was in the field or stationed in quarters. Depending on the circumstance, they sold their wares in a variety of structures, all of which were collectively known as “Canteens”.

If the British army went on campaign, a sutler packed up his belongings and sold his products out of a wagon, cart, or makeshift covering of canvas or wood.

General Orders, War Office
(White Plains, New York, November 26, 1776)
*“No follower of the Army can be allowed a Horse Except the Sutler of each Regiment.”*

During those occasions when the British army was quartered or encamped in a permanent or semi-permanent location, sutlers often set up their establishments in more elaborate booths, stalls, or tents. These structures could vary in complexity. In Paul Sandby’s contemporary illustrations of the semi-permanent British encampment during the 1780 Gordon Riots in London, we can see that these establishments were very elaborate structures. While we cannot assume that these same canvas structures were present in North America during the American War for Independence, they can, nonetheless, give us some insight as to their possible appearance. That said, we have to take into account that these booths were set up in a semi-permanent encampment in downtown London where goods and furniture were readily accessible. Taking into consideration that a sutler had to purchase and transport his own property, it is quite likely that he tried conduct his business with as little baggage as possible.

The Encampment in Hyde Park MDCCLXXXX
Sutler Booth in a Semi-Permanent London Encampment by Paul Sandby, 1780
Poole's "Butt" (Keg) Beer, Fine Ale & Amber. Note the Woman Selling Pears and Cakes

The Encampment in Hyde Park MDCCLXXXX
Sutler Booth in a Semi-Permanent London Encampment by Paul Sandby, 1780
Poole's "Butt" (Keg) Beer, Fine Ale & Amber. Note the Woman Selling Pears and Cakes

"View of St. George's Row from Hyde Park 1780"
Sutler Booth in a Semi-Permanent London Encampment by Paul Sandby, 1780
When Ya' Gotta Go, Ya' Gotta Go

"View of St. George's Row from Hyde Park 1780"
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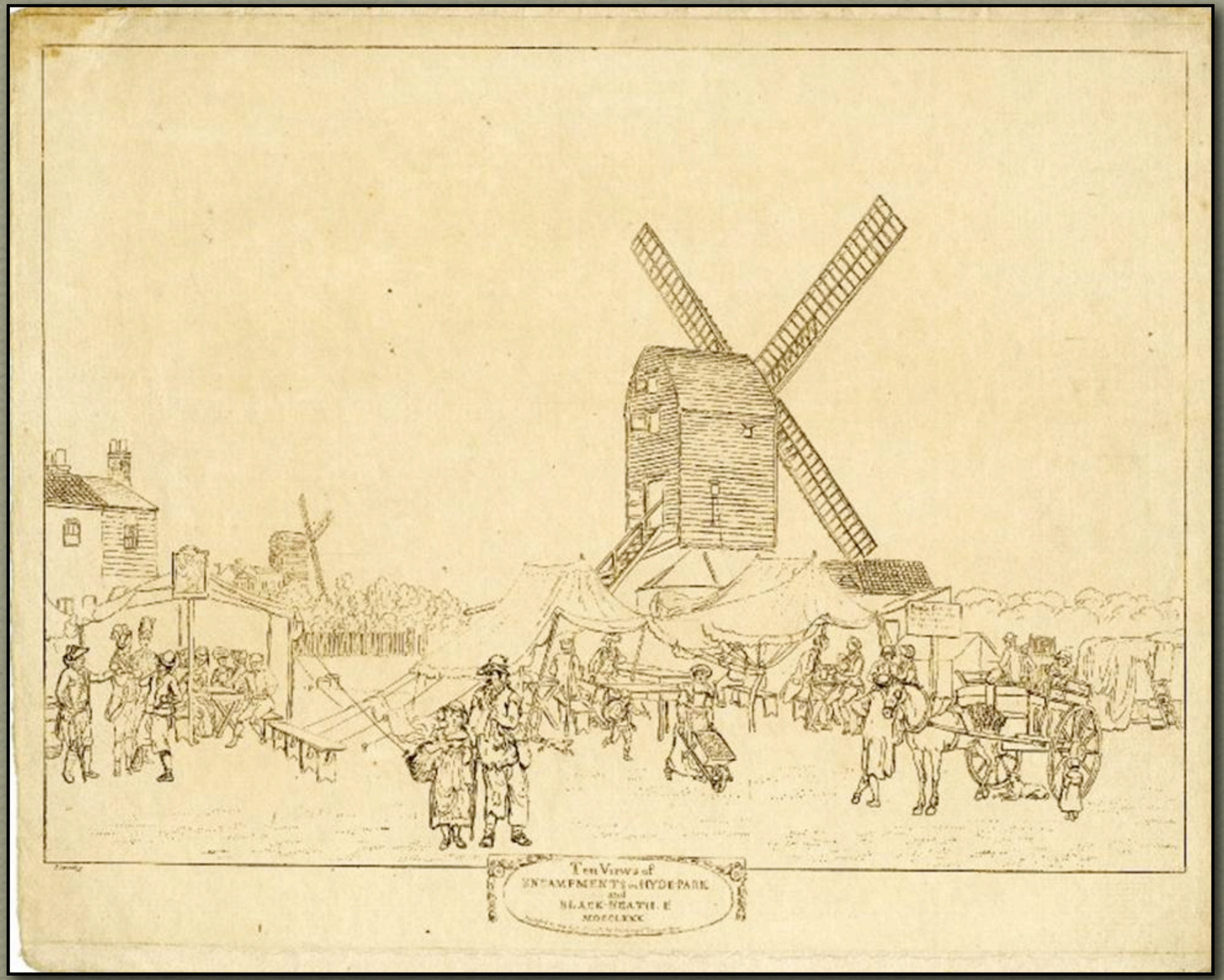
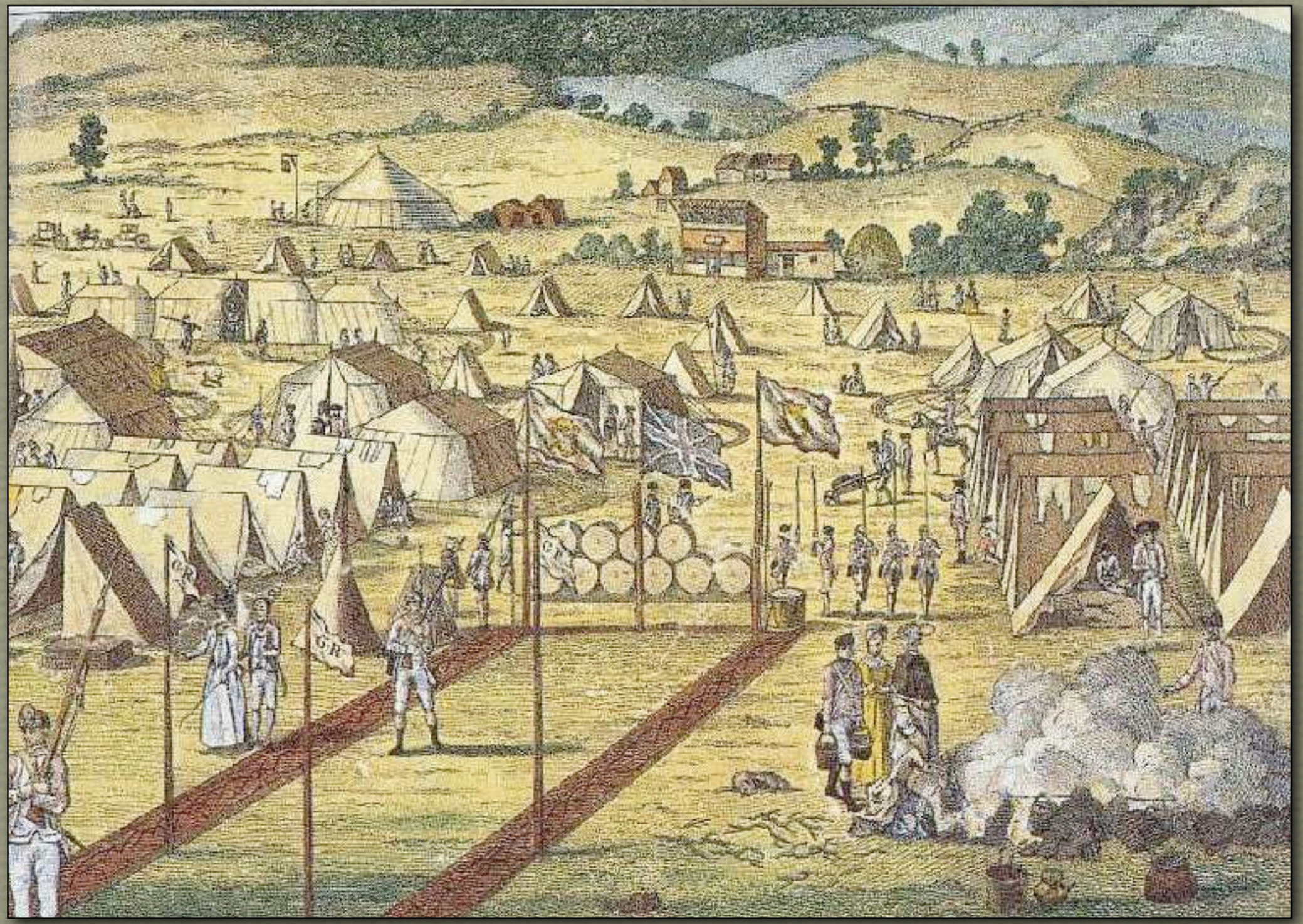
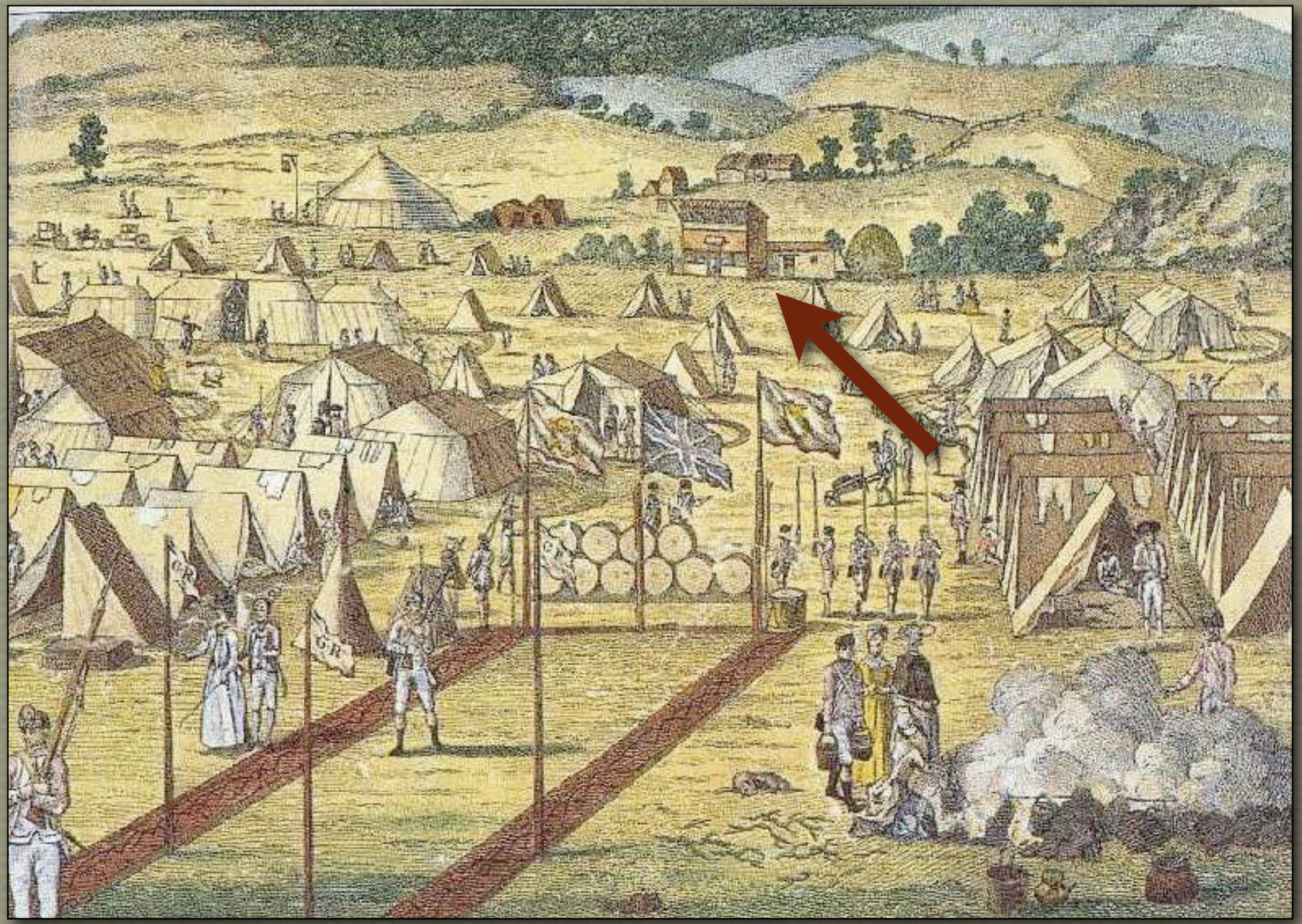



Ten Views of ENCAMPMENTS in HYDE - PARK and BLACK HEATH"
Sutler Booth in a Semi-Permanent London Encampment by Paul Sandby, 1780

"The Butcher and Sutler in Hyde Park 1780"
Sutler Wagon in a Semi-Permanent London Encampment by Paul Sandby, 1780



Bowles & Carver: “A Perspective VIEW of an ENCAMPMENT” 1780
Possible Wooden Sutler Booth or Stall in the Rear of the Encampment



Bowles & Carver: “A Perspective VIEW of an ENCAMPMENT” 1780
Possible Wooden Sutler Booth or Stall in the Rear of the Encampment

Sutler booths were generally located to the rear of an encampment. We can determine their placement in Lewis Lochee's "An Essay on Castremetation" (London, 1778)

*"Distribution of the Depth of the Camp of a Battalion of Ten companies of 60 Men each, which is 253Yards*

| | |
|---|---|
| *From the second row of the batmen's tents, to the front of the grand sutler -* | *10* |
| *From the front of the grand sutler, to the center of the kitchens -* | *15* |
| *From the center of the kitchens, to the front of the petty sutlers' -* | *15* |
| | -------- |
| | *238* |

*The grand sutler, for the sake of convenience, is placed in the rear of the colonel's tent."*

*Of the Camp of Cavalry*

| | |
|---|---|
| *From the front of the colonel's tent, to the front of the staff officers' tents -* | *14* |
| *From the front of the staff officers' tents,to the front of the grand sutler's -* | *15* |
| *From the front of the grand sutler's, to the center of the kitchens -* | *20* |
| *From the center of the kitchens, to the front of the petty sutler's -* | *15* |
| *From the front of the petty sutlers, to the center of the bells of arms of the rear guard -* | *15* |
| | --------- |
| | *220"* |

During the American War for Independence, sutlers were allowed to sell their goods if, and only if, they complied with a series of very strict regulations set before them by the British Command. Those sutlers who did not comply to these demands faced a courts marshal. This usually resulted in the revocation of their license and the confiscation, or destruction, of their goods. Essentially, it was fiscally irresponsible for a sutler to sell his liquor outside the law.

A sutler was licensed to a specific regiment or battalion. He was not allowed to sell his liquor without a license or to anyone outside his corps..

In order to maintain the proper function of the army, sutler booths could not operate before reveille or after 9:00 at night. They were also closed on Sundays and during the times of Divine Service.  A sutler had to see that the men patronizing his establishment maintained a state of sobriety at all times. The goods he sold were required to meet certain standards of quality or they would be destroyed.  In addition, a sutler had to sell his products at a fair, yet equitable, market price.  He also had to accept payment from any soldier wishing to purchase his goods.

These requirements of operation were clearly stated in the *"Rules and Articles for the Better Government of His Majesty's Horse and Foot Guards, and all other His Majesty's Forces in Great Britain and Ireland, Dominions beyond the Seas, and Foreign Parts, from the 24th day of March, 1778"*

*"SECTION. VIII.*
*ARTICLE I.*
*No Sutler shall be permitted to sell any Kind of Liquor or Victuals, or keep their Houses or shops open, for the Entertain-ment of Soldiers, after Nine at Night, or before the Beating of the reveiles, or upon Sundays, during Divine Service or Sermon, on the Penalty of being dismissed from all future Suttling.*

*ARTICLE II.*
*All Officers, Soldiers, and Sut-tlers, shall have full Liberty to bring into any of Our Forts or Garrisons, any Quantity or Species of Provisions, eatable or drinkable, except where any Contract or Con-tracts are or shall be entered into by us, or by Our Order, for furnishing such Provisions, and with respect only to the Species of Provisions so contracted for.*

*ARTICLE III.*
*All Governors. Lieutenant Go-vernors, and Officers commanding Our Forts, Barracks, or Garrisons, are hereby required to see that the Persons permitted to suttle shall supply the Soldiers with good and wholesome Provisions, at the Market Price, as they shall be answerable to Us for their Neglect.*

*ARTICLE IV.*
*No Governors, or Officers, commanding any of Our Garrisons, Forts, or Barracks,shall either themselves exact exorbitant prices for houses or Stalls let out to Sutlers, or shall connive at the Exactions in others; nor by their own authority, and for their private Advantage, shall they lay any Duty or Imposition upon, or be interested in, the Sale of such Victuals, Liquors, or other Necessaries of Life, which are brought into the Garrison, Fort, or Bar-racks, for the Use of the Soldiers. on the Penalty of being discharged from Our Service."*

General Orders, W.O.
(Boston, 22 June, 1775)
*"All persons belonging to, or followers of the Army, are forbid to sell spiritous liquors, excepting at the regimental Canteens, one and only one of them is allowed for each Regiment subject to the regulation of the Officer Commanding it; and as the appointment of the Sutler depends on the commanding Officer of the Corps, it is expected hence-forward they will be answerable for the sobriety of the Soldiers under their Command, all other sources for Spiritous liquors but that of the Canteen, being effectually stopped up from the A G Officers and Soldiers by the Proclamation"*

General Orders
(Boston, October 14, 1775)
*"The Commanding Officers of Corps not to allow their Sutlers to sell liquors to Soldiers, or any other persons who do not belong to their respective Corps; Upon a conviction of a disobedience of this order, the liquors will be destroyed, and the delinquent not have leave to sell any in the future.*

*Women belonging to the Army convicted of selling Spiritous liquors, will be confined in the Provosts till there is an opportunity of sending them from hence."*

Orderly Book, H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot
Camp at River Bouquet, June 16, 1777)

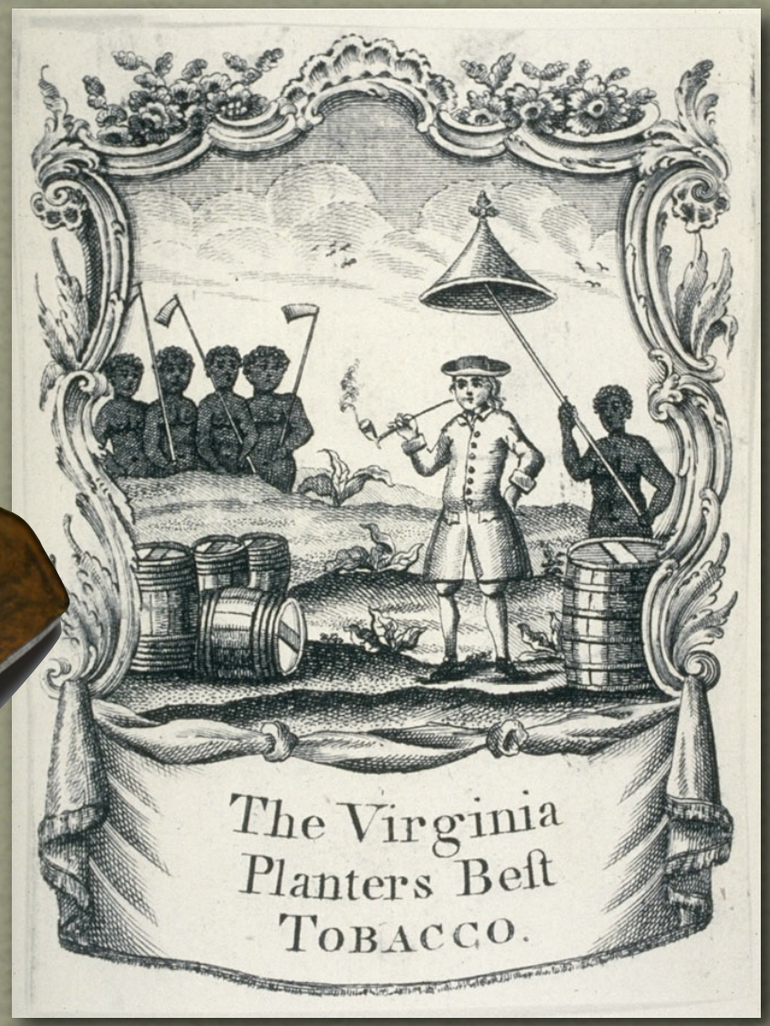
*"The Sutlers are not on any pretence to sell Rum or any other Spirits to the Men without a Written Order from a Commission'd Officer and never in less Quantity than a Quart"*

Orderly Book, General John Burgoyne
(Camp at Skeinesborough House, July 23, 1777)

*"Lieut. Atherton is appointed to act as Provost to this Army... Besides Patroles of the Provost to be made daily, and occasionally at night, to preserve the regularity and cleanliness of the Camp, he has Orders to enforces in the strictest manner, the Regulation of the 18th Inst. relative to the vending of Spirituous Liquors by the Sutlers or any other followers of the Army. For this purpose he is directed diligently to examine all Huts, Tents, or other abodes in the rear of the Encampment, and wherever any Person shall be found trafficking without a permit from the Adjutant General, or (having such a permit) of retailing spirituous Liquors to Soldiers, Women or Savages, or presuming to sell such liquors to Servants of Officers or other Persons whatsoever without a Certificate in writing signed by a Commission Officer, the Provost is instantly to make the Offender Prisoner, to have all the Liquors belonging to him or her destroyed, and burn the dwelling.*
*The Army to be Victualled to the first of August."*

By far, the most common product sold by a sutler during the American War for Independence was alcohol. Rum and whiskey topped the list of these liquors, but other spirits, such as flavored brandies and gin, were also available.  On occasion, beer and the fortified wines, Port and Madeira, were also placed on the menu.

In addition to liquor, sutlers also sold other goods as they became available. This included such items as produce, sugar, coffee, and chocolate. They also carried what was referred to as the  “necessities of life”. This included such items as tobacco, soap, spices, and, on occasion, limited articles of clothing.



According to the Orderly Book of H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot, Grenadier Company, a Board of Officers established prices on the Inventory of a "Mr. White" who was appointed Advanced Brigade Sutler during the 1777 Saratoga Campaign. Through this account, we can gain an understanding on the types of goods sold by sutlers licensed to the British army.

| Article | Pounds Sterling | Shillings | Pence |
|---|---|---|---|
| Madeira per Gallon | 0 | 16 | 0 |
| Claret (Wine) per Dozen | 2 | 8 | 0 |
| Spirits per Gallon | 2 | 8 | 0 |
| West Indian Rum per Gallon | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| New England Rum per Gallon | 0 | 8 | 0 |
| Porter per Gallon | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| Hams per Pound | 0 | 1 | 8 |
| Cheese per Pound | 0 | 1 | 8 |
| Brown Sugar per Pound | 0 | 1 | 8 |
| Bohea Tea per Pound | 0 | 1 | 6 |
| Soap per Pound | 0 | 1 | 4 |

Orderly Book, H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot
(September 4, 1777)
*"[Memorandum] — 4 [September 1777]*
*Jno Grant Suttler at Fort George has the following articles to sell—Tea, Sugar, Chocolate, Rum, Spirits of all sorts, Port & Merchandize of Do [all sorts]."*

Unfortunately, other period inventories of sutlers licensed to the British army are far and few between. That said, we can get a better understanding of the goods they sold through examining the accounts associated with their Continental brethren.

The New York Gazette The Weekly Mercury
(April 28, 1777)
*"Last Monday about 50 of the Royal Bergen Volunteers under the Command of Capt. Van Allen, went in quest of a Party of Rebels that infested Clouster, who, on hearing of their Approach made off, but in pursuing them smartly some miles, they took three Rebel Suttlers, with their stores of Rum, Sugar, Coffee, Chocolate, etc. to the Amount of Seven Wagon Loads, without losing a man.*
*One of the Suttlers is named David Phillips, who formerly kept a Beer house at the Sign of the Horse and Cart in this City."*

18th Century Keg
&
Keyed Brass Spigots As
Excavated On
War for Independence Sites

Israel Shreve to Thomas Curtis (his brother in law)
(Mount Independence Opposite Ticonderoga, August 26, 1776)

*"Dear Brother ...provisions plenty, Good pork & fresh beef, Bread. No Sauce for the men. Col. Maxwell and myself each purchased a Cow which Gives us plenty of Milk, our Captain has 2 more, pasture plenty; there Is three Scotch farms within about 1 1/2 miles of us, where we Git some peas, potatoes and Roasting ears of corn - these Articles aRarity among us. Good West India rum here Is 6 (?) New England Do. (12/0 or 16/1), Brandy 18/, Gin 22/, Wine that Is Madairy 30/ p Gallon, Chocolate 2/6, and hard Soap 2/0 per pound. If you had all the Cheese here you make in one Season, you might sell it at 2/6 York (currency) in 10 days for cash.*

*A few Days ago I set down and calculated the cost of Transporting Cheese from your house to this place, provided the North River was Clear, and I think It would not Cost a penny half penny p. pound. Now Reckon the profit I would Advise you to keep this years Cheese over Winter and try it next Campain when you would clear 1/6 p pound that Is ... 75. (Pounds) for every thousand Weight - now throw away one third for the Risks and Accidents. Bring 6000 Weight, the Clear profits would amount to three Hundred pounds of New Jersey, this may all be depended upon - and I believe that Quantity might be sold here at this time in one Week for Cash, a number of Settlers will make small fortunes here this Campaign, Shugars, Chocolate, Coffee, Pepper, Shoes, Shirts fit for officers, Stockings, Do. Dimity or any thing fit for officers summer Vests & Breeches would answer Extremely Well the time to Come would be Just after harvest or a month sooner only that would not (?) by this time the officers Stores Is Gone. I have give half a Dollar a Quart for Common Good Cider Vinegar and Glad to get it to; no more."*

Orderly Book of General Edward Hand of the Continental Line
(Valley Forge, Pennsylvania January and May, 1778: 26 Jan 1778)

*"HEAD QUARTERS,...A Board of General Officers having recommended that a suttler be appointed in each Brigade whose Liquor shall be inspected by two officers appointed by the Brigadier for that purpose, and those Liquors sold under such restrictions as shall be thought reasonable, the Commander-in-Chief is pleased to approve of the recommendation and to order that such Brigade Suttlers be appointed and Liquors sold at the following prices and under the following regulations: Peach Brandy by the Quart 7/6, by the pint 4/, by the Gill 1/3; Whiskey and apple Brandy at 6/ quart and 3/6 pint and 1/ by the Gill; Cider at 1/3 by the quart; Strong beer 2/6 by the quart; Common beer 1/ by the quart; vinegar 2/6 by the quart.*

*Any Suttler who shall be convicted before a Brigade Court Martial of having demanded more than the above rates, of having adulterated his Liquors or made use of deficient measures shall forfeit any quantity of his Liquors not exceeding Thirty gallons or the Value thereof, at the foregoing rates the fourth part of the Liquor or the Value thereof so forfeited to be applied to the benefit of the Informer and the remainder of the Liquor to be put in the hands of a person appointed by the Brigadier, who shall deliver it out to the Non Commissioned Officers and privates of the Brigade at one Gill per Man per day, if money the and privates of the Brigade and distributed in due and equal proportion; the Brigade same to be laid out in Liquors or necessaries for the Non Commissioned Officers Suttler is also at Liberty to sell leaf Tobacco at 4/ Pound, Pigtail at One Dollar Pound, and hard soap 2/ pound, but no other Articles rated for the public Market shall be sold by him or any person acting under him on any pretence whatever..."*

Despite the fact that sutler booths were established for the well being and convenience of the army, there were still occasions when the men sought to purchase alcohol in greater quantities. Unfortunately, this practice occasionally met with dire consequences.

General Orders
(America London, undated, probably January, 1775)
*"Altho' canteens have been allowed the several Regiments for the convenience of the soldiers, there are notwithstanding still complaints of soldiers wives keeping dram shops in the different parts of the town, where men get intoxicated in a very extraordinary manner, and two soldiers have been killed (with the poisonous liquors they sell) in one night. The Commanding officers will make enquiery amongst their Regiments, and give in return such women as hire rooms in the town to sell drams, where they live, and from whom they hire rooms."*

This battle of intoxication would continue to be fought throughout the war. Alcohol was simply too available. At times, the British command attempted to disarm this issue by paying the men more frequently. Theoretically, having less money in a soldier's pocket limited his ability to overindulge (even after his stoppages were deducted from his pay of 8 pence a day). To "*Remove this infatuation* (of alcohol) *& to Establish more order and Consistancy in their payments",* the 71st Regiment of Foot began spreading a soldier's pay 9 ways over the summer of 1778 in order for "*one proportional part only to be paid to the soldier weekly as pocquet money"*

Standing Orders
H.M. 71st Regiment of Foot
(August 15, 1778)

*"It is with the utmost astonishment and passion Lieut Colo Campbell has observed the unreasonable conduct of the men Since their last Settlement of accts. Instead of using their money with discretion they continue to squander it on Liquor and Debauchery by which they injure their Health, ruin their morals and Sully that valuable character, they have already acquired as soldiers"*

Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell
2nd Battalion, 71st Regiment of Foot

Thomas Wharton to Henry Laurens
(November 3, 1777)
*"By the quantity of cloathing delivered to the army, by the clothier General, within a few months, and the wants which are now evident there Is too much reason to fear that the attention of the officers hath not prevented the soldiers from selling their cloathing, perhaps for the purpose of purchasing* ***whiskey****, which at an enormous price it Is now sold by the sutlers at camp, Is alone sufficient in a few weeks to strip a soldier to the skin."*

18th Century Horn Cups
(Tom Wnuck Estate,  Rochester, New York)

English Onion Wine Bottle (1711-1730)

English Mallet Wine Bottle (1741-1760)

(The Museum of London)

Letters of General Pattison

*"To COLONEL de BISHAUSEN. New York, May 28, 1780.*

*Sir,*

*Complaint having been made to the Commandant that the Licensed Publick Houses in this City, encouraged the Convalescent Soldiers in the different Hospitals to purchase Spirituous Liquors, and absolutely(sold) them to them, the General took the Precaution of Ordering all Soldiers, who came under that Description to wear an H upon each arm and to forbid all Tavern Keepers from Harbouring or selling Liquor to such as bore this Badge. This has driven them from Town, and a number were detected the other day at a Tent Kept on the Greenwich Road, by one of the Musicians of the Regiment de Bose who has no License from the Magistrates of Police. As this is contrary to the Arrangements established for the Garrison, the Commandant requests that you will be pleased to give directions for this disorder and irregularity being immediately suppressed.*

*I have, &*

*S.P.A. (Captain S. P. Adye, General Pattison's A.D.C.)*

*(To:) Colonel de Bishausen."*

During the Northern Campaign in Canada and New York, the British Command often had to deal with the sale, trade or consumption of alcoholic beverages to their native American allies.

The Journal and Orderly Books of Lieutenant James M. Hadden, Royal Artillery
(Montreal, June 24, 1776)
*"Any non-commissioned Officer or Soldier detected in trafficking with the Indians in Rum, or anything else is to be punished in the severest manner."* (B-7)

The Journal and Orderly Books of Lieutenant James M. Hadden, Royal Artillery
(St. John's, September 13, 1776)
*"There being reason to suspect that some of the Soldiers sell their Allowance of Rum to the Indians, it is ordered that all Rum, drawn for Soldiers in Camp, be mixed with Water, under the Inspection of an Officer before they receive it."* (B-7)

Orderly Book of the Royal Regiment of Artillery
(Montreal, May 1, 1777)
*"It is most strictly forbid for any person to sell or exchange Rum with the savages for Trinkets or anything else. Any Non Commissioned Officer found guilty of disobeying this order will be immediately broke, if a private severely punished and if a follower of the army not only punished but application will be made to his Excellency the Governor that he be bannished the province."* (B-6)

Orderly Book, H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot, Grenadier Company
(Camp at River Bouquet, June 13, 1777)
*"After Brigade Orders The Men are not to be allowed to cross the River to the Indian Encampment nor is any Soldier or others, on any pretence whatever to be suffered to sell Spirits or other Liquors to the Indians, or exchange Rum for Belts or other Sorts of Goods with them."* (B-5)

Orderly Book, General John Burgoyne
(Camp at Skeinesborough House, July 18, 1777)
*"All persons desirous of establishing Huts or Tents, in the rear of the Army, for the sale of useful Commodities, are to apply to the Adjutant General, in order that their characters, and the nature of their Traffick may be inquired into; and any person presuming to Traffick with Troops without a proper permit in writing, or who shall abuse such permit by retailing Liquors to Soldiers or Indians, will be punished with severity.*

*The Disturbance of the 16th Inst. between some British and German Soldiers, was occasioned by Liquor, and one of the greatest principles of Military Order was so far forgot by some British Soldiers that a Guard was indulted."*

Orderly Book, H.M. 47th Regiment of Foot, Grenadier Company
(Camp at River Bouquet, June 13, 1777)

*"After Brigade Orders The Men are not to be allowed to cross the River to the Indian Encampment nor is any Soldier or others, on any pretence whatever to be suffered to sell Spirits or other Liquors to the Indians, or exchange Rum for Belts or other Sorts of Goods with them."*

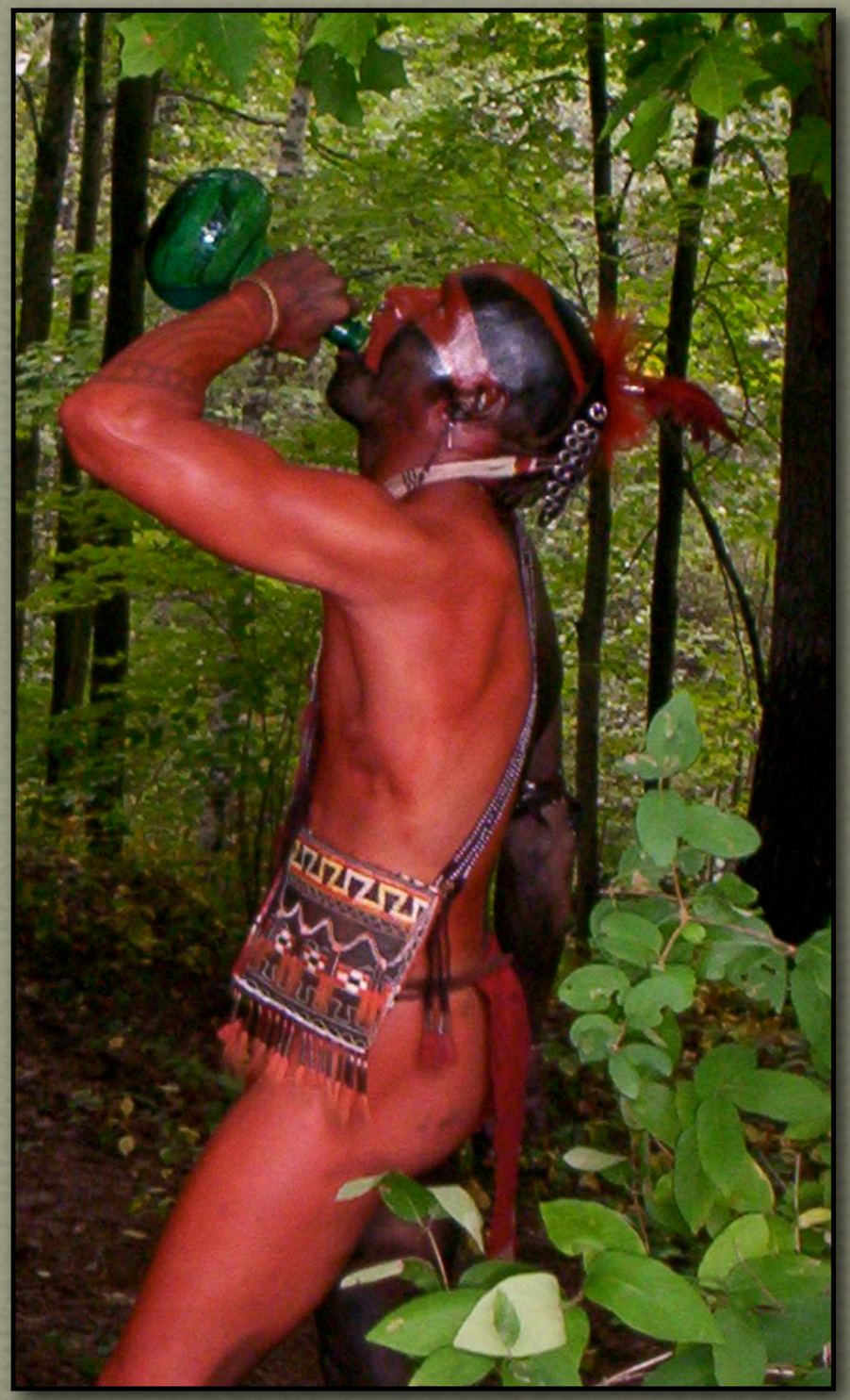
Orderly Book,  H.M.  47th Regiment of Foot, Grenadier Company
(Camp at River Bouquet, June 20, 1777)
*"Evening Brigade Quarters. Notwithstanding the Brigade Orders of the 13th Inst. The Brigadier General is extremely mortified to find that Liquor has been Sold and distributed among the Savages so as to make them disorderly & Riotous in Camp. 'Tis painful to him to repeat it once more that the Soldiers and Women are strictly prohibited selling or giving any kind of Spirits to the Indians should any woman be discovered vending Liquor to them she will be immediately brought to the head of the Battalion which she follows, Drummed out of Camp; and never more Suffered to appear in it. The Officers are relied on not to infringe this Order by giving the smallest Quantity of Rum or other Spirits to the Savages, or exchanging any kind of Liquor with them for their Trinckets &c."*

Orderly Book,  H.M.  47th Regiment of Foot, Grenadier Company
(Camp at Three Mile Point on Lake Champlain, July 2, 1777)
*"Morning Brigade Orders. As much evil is like to Arise from the Intemperance and irregularity of Savages, it is positively Ordered that no Officer should give them Liquor, and that no soldiers, Soldiers Wife, Suttler or follower of the Army should presume to sell them any- Captains of Companys are immediately to see if there be any improper Quantity of Liquor in possession of the women of their respective Companys and if any such quantitys are found in Kegs or other Vessells they will give directions for breaking and Staving the same instantly. It is expected that the Captains will carefully see these Orders carried into Execution and that they will strike off the provision Returns all women who may be discovered harbouring such and have them sent back to Canada by the first opportunity."*

Orderly Book, General John Burgoyne
(Camp near Ticonderoga, July 3, 1777)

*"It being apparent that Liquor is sold or given to the Savages, notwithstanding the positive and repeated Orders to the Contrary, the Commanding Officers are to assemble the Sutlers and Women of the respective Regiments, and inform them that the first person found guilty of disobedience shall instantly have their liquors and sutling stores destroyed and turned out of Camp, besides receiving such Corporal Punishment as a Court Martial shall inflict. All Officers are also to communicate to their men this prohibition of supplying the Savages with Spirituous Liquors. And it is expected that Officers, instead of screening Offenders, will be the first to bring them to condign punishment; and to give further force to this prohibition, ten Dollars will be paid by the Adjutant General to the first person who shall discover an Offender, upon Conviction of such Offender before a Court Martial.*

*Till further Order the Regiments are never to be without two days' Provisions ready cooked."*



Diary of Julius Friedrich Wasmus
Company Surgeon
Braunschweig Dragoon Regiment
July 3rd, 1777 (Camp before Ticonderoga)

*"Orders were given today that no sutler was to sell rum to the Savages. Whoever sells rum o the Savages will receive corporal punishment and be chased from the army. Every informer will receive 10 piasters. This is very good, for when the Savages are drunk, they scalp both friend and foe."*

# Officer
# Dining & Drinking

In progress, come back soon.

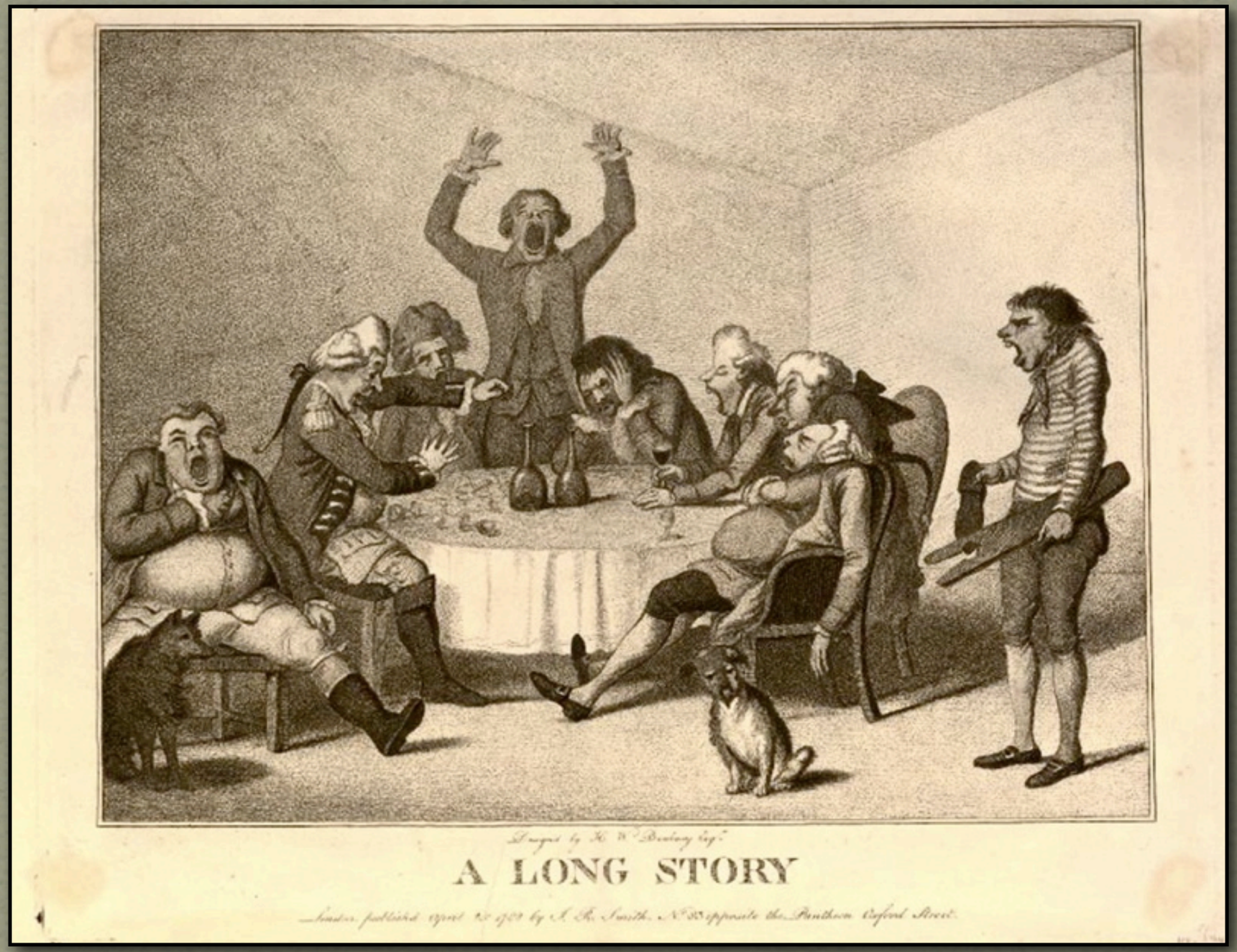
Captain George Harris
Grenadier Company, 5th Regiment of Foot
Long Island - Likely Autumn 1776
To His Uncle:

*"Before we started in the morning, our dinner, consisting of a goose and piece of mutton, had been put on the fire. The moment we marched, our domestic deposited the above-named delicacies on a chaise and followed us with it to our ground. When the fight was over, he again hung the goose to the fire, but the poor bird had been scarcely half done, when we were ordered to return to our station. There we again commenced cooking, and, though without dish, plate, or knife, did ample justice to our fare, which we washed down with bad rum and water, and then composed ourselves to rest on our friendly gate. Our baggage joined us next day."*

(W-4)

Bennet Cuthbertson
*"System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry"*, Chapter VIII., Section XVI., 1776:

*"The Soldiers manner of subsisting being fixed, ac-cording to the strictest system of oeconomy and ma-nagement, it is equally incumbent on the Commander of a Regiment to contrive every method in his power, for the establishment of a mess, at which all the Officers, without distinction of Rank, can be properly and genteely accomodated, and that con-siderably within the compass of an Ensign's pay, which is a circumstance to be principally considered: living always together as one family, must surely strengthen the bands of friendship between individu-als, and unite the whole in that sort of harmony and affection, which in a well regulated Corps ought ever to subsist, and without which every thing goes wrong; the young people too, by being frequently in the Company of the experienced part of the Regiment, must have many opportunities for improvement; and will in a great measure be thereby restrained from those excesses, in which they might probably indulge themselves, were they deserted by the senior Officers, and obliged to form a separate mess: if from the want of a proper room, or a sutler not being able to provide for so many, as an entire corps (which sometimes is the case on Service) it becomes absolute-ly necessary to divide in two messes, and equal number of each Rank should be appointed to each; and that there may not appear the least partiality in this divi-sion, the Officers for each mess ought to be determin-ed by lot: Field-Officers and Captains selecting themselves into a mess from the Subalterns of a Re-giment, is making a distinction that should never subsist among Gentlemen, except on Duty, as it must, beyond doubt, produce immediate jealousies, which by degrees lay a foundation for those kind of factions, which sometimes disturb the peace and quiet of a Corps: a misfortune of so accursed a nature, that a Commanding-officer should ever be attentive to de-stroy it in its earliest bud, as the censure of the world most probably will rest on him, should it rise to per-fection, from a natural supposition, that some ill-judged conduct of his first gave it birth."*




"A LONG STORY" 1782
An Older British Officer Recounts His Days of Service
(The British Museum)

18th Century Tinned Iron Braziers
(Tom Wnuck Estate,  Rochester, New York)

Iron Brazier with Wood Handle
18th Century

Tin Glazed English Punch Bowl
(The British Museum)

Tin Glazed English Punch Bowl
(The British Museum)

A Recreated Officer of H.M. 63rd Regiment of Foot Fathoms the Bowl
c. 1777

# German Provisions & Rations

Anonymous German Officer, New York, October 1780:
*"This is a bad country, this America, where you always have to drink, either to get warm, or to get cool"* (K-1)

Johann Gottfreid Seume, German conscript, The North Atlantic
Summer, 1782.

*"By the way our food was neither good, nor plentiful. We had one day, pork and peas, and the next day peas and pork, the day after that "pease and pork", followed by "pork and pease," that was about all the variety, Once in a while we had groats and barley, and for desert, pudding, which we had to prepare from musty flour mixed with half salt water, half fresh water, and some old, very old mutton suet. The bacon was probably four or five years old, had black stripes on both the outer edges, was yellow toward the middle, and had only a very thin white stripe in the very center. It was the same with the salted beef, which we used to eat raw, in short, like ham. In the bread there were many worms, which we had to eat for a substitute for fat... In addition the bread was so hard we had many a time to use cannon balls to break it into pieces; and hunger kept us from soaking it in water. Besides, water was mostly lacking anyway. They told us, and it was most probably true, that the biscuits were French. The English had captured them from the French in the Seven Years War. Since that time the biscuits had been lying in storage in Portsmouth..."* (S-2)

Hessian Folding Knife and Fork Combination
Lost at the Battle of Germantown, Pennsylvania  1777
(Morristown National Historic Park, New Jersey)

Adjutant General Major Carl Leopold Baumeister
Winter Quarters in New Jersey
December 1, 1776

*"Colonel Rall was ordered to deposit all dispensable baggage on Staten Island and follow General Cornwallis's corps as far as Newark. Here Colonel Rall doubled his pickets when he learned that a considerable body of rebels under General Williamson was approaching. His patrols also brought in a prisoner, who had been attempting to drive away cattle.*

*On this same day General Howe went to Jersey and ordered the Waldeck Battalion to embark at the King's Wharf in this city and sail to Amboy. General Stirn's brigade was also garrisoned here, partly in barracks and partly in uninhabited houses. The houses are provided with ship's mattresses, fireplaces, several benches, a common table in each room, kettles, and a few iron pots - certainly making rather poor quarters. While there is no shortage of wood, coal, light, and provisions, there is a decided lack of the comfort which the soldier expects, desires, and needs in winter quarters."*

(B-1)

# Food References
# Regiment Von Rall

Private Johannes Reuber
Rall Grenadier Regiment.
On board a troop transport, 12 April 1776:

*"...there are three rows of beds, one above the other ... There were more than 250 men on board, not counting the officers and servants ... The usual ship's provisions, which are also served to the officers when they so desire, and for which three pence is withheld from the pay, are as follows:*

*Every morning six men receive four pounds of ship's zwieback or bread, one and one-half as salted biscuits. On Sunday six men, as a group receive peas and four pounds of pork. Monday a gruel is cooked from oats, butter, and cheese. Tuesday six men receive four pounds of beef, three pounds of flour, one-half pound of raisins, and an equal amount of beef fat, from which a pudding is made. Six men receive a numbered pouch in which the pudding is served. Wednesday again a cooked gruel, plus butter and cheese. Thursday six men receive four pounds of cooked pork and peas. Friday again oatmeal gruel, plus butter and cheese. On Saturday again a pudding as on Tuesday. Every day six men receive four measures of small beer to drink and every morning a can of rum. These are served at eight o'clock. The officers have their own victuals cooked by our cook in the German manner and eat together."*

Private Johannes Reuber
Rall Grenadier Regiment.
On board a troop transport, 29 May 1776:

*"29 May - Here I shall note our housekeeping. In the morning at eight o'clock, bread, meat, butter and cheese are issued by a sailor who is called the steward, in the presence of an officer ... Each man receives a small can of rum and vinegar. When it is cooked and is done, every six men have a wooden bowl with a number thereon representing the berthing spaces, from number one to the end. The cook calls first and fills it, and so until the last. And what we receive each day, I have previously noted. The soldiers must stir the pudding themselves, and for every six men, a bag is provided on which is the number of their berthing place, also. When it is ready, the cook calls the number and the six men divide the pudding. The same procedure is used with the meat - one piece for six men, which is then divided into six pieces. The one who divides it points with his fork and asks who should have it. Another [of his mess], who has turned away, gives the answer. It would be a great pleasure to watch this activity if the portion of meat were not so small. Often a piece of meat is served which consists of more bone than meat."*

# Food References
# Hesse-Kassel
# Jäger Corps.

Diary of Captain Johann von Ewald
Hesse-Kassel Jäger Corps.

(December, 1776)
*"...The entire corps under Colonel von Donop took up quarters in the town [Mount Holly, NJ], and I received mine at the exit to Philadelphia. Because of its position, this town is a very excellent trading place and inhabited by many wealthy people. Since themajority had fled and the dwellings had been abandoned, almost the whole town was plundered; and because large stocks of wine were found there, the entire garrison was drunk by evening..."*

(January 1, 1777)
*"...For several days the snow had risen high, and the cold was exceptionally severe in the afternoon. In addition, the men had no bread and I had nothing to eat....On the 2nd at daybreak I arrived in Princetown, where I found the entire army under arms. I was ordered to draw biscuit and brandy from the depot for the men, and continue marching for Maidenhead..."*

(January 3, 1777)
*"...Hurriedly the Army was issued three days' rations of biscuit and brandy..."*

Diary of Captain Johann von Ewald
Hesse-Kassel Jäger Corps.

(March 12, 1777)
*"...But the men lacked for nothing, for the most excellent provisions of salted beef and pork, peas, butter, rice and flour for bread, along with the best English beer, were continually supplied during this time. Indeed, the concern for the English nation for its soldiers went so far that twenty overcoats of the finest English material were furnished free to each company, which were distributed to the sentries and the sick..."*

(July 5, 1777)
*"...We had to manage with dry biscuit most the time for three weeks..."*

# Food References
# Regiment Von Donop

Journal of Lieutenant Johann Heinrich von Bardeleben
Regiment von Donop
21 May 1776

*"The night was very restless. The back and forth rocking of our ship was very violent so that when we awoke in the morning, books, hams, chairs, and everything similar was scattered about the cabin ... Our ship's crew did not consider it a storm, but for us it was one of the strongest because at noon today we could only eat and drink less serenely than usual. Our meal was very scant, only a pudding, but it could not be eaten peacefully. When it was placed on the table, it fell out of the wooden serving dish, rolled about on the table, and nearly fell on the floor. However, because all of us, as we were accustomed to doing, had previously situated ourselves advantageously, we were quick enough to catch it again. This pudding stayed on the table, completely clean, but it was in numerous small pieces. This could not be prevented because one hastily grabbed it with a fork to keep it from falling on the floor, another used two or three knives, the third with a spoon, and the fourth with only his ten fingers. We were happy, however, that we had been able to save it. The small pieces tasted just as good to us and nothing remained afterward."*

Journal of Sergeant von Krafft
Regiment von Donop

(2 March 1778)
*"...a German came to the house who had butter and some chickens with him, in order to find a market for them in Philadelphia..."*

(9 March 1778)
*"...I could get neither food nor lodgings. Finally I went to a Hessian sub-officer's wine-room, drank some wine and ate some bread and cheese with it..."*

(14 March 1778)
*"...This afternoon at Capt. Donop's with a few officers in company at coffee..."*

(29 March 1778)
*"...As rations we received daily 1lb. salt meat, 1lb. bread or zwieback, peas, rice and Spritzmehl (ground flour) for 7 days regularly; also 1 quart of rum; at times also strang-bier..." (strong beer?)*

(19 June 1778)
*"...This night, during fire watch, I received 9 soldiers in arrest who had killed cattle..."*

Journal of Sergeant von Krafft
Regiment von Donop

(23 June 1778)
*"...Therefore I only demanded some fresh provisions for cash payment and at last received from her 1 rooster and 3 chickens which had been concealed in the oven. She would not name her price, but I gave her 1 Engl. shilling 10 pence..."*

(26 June 1778)
*"...I found fresh milk in a house where I was ordered to go with some men to fetch water..."*

(30 June 1778)
*"...On the march we got salt and fresh meat, biscuit and rum, nothing more...*

(5 July 1778)
*"...and we made a great noise because there were no provisons on board and no one knew where to get any. Some one was sent to other ships for provisions. The ship-captain was compelled to go too, so that at sunset we finally got our provisions. Never had I been hungrier and consquently I ate my salt pork, with the mouldy biscuit, raw and uncooked. After many entreaties I managed to get some very thin coffee without milk or sugar for a little money, and then I spread out a robe and lay down on the cabin-deck to sleep..."*

Journal of Sergeant von Krafft
Regiment von Donop

(7 July 1778)
*"...Thereafter I went and bought something to eat and among other things 5 1/2lbs of coffee for one Spanish dollar and 8lbs of brown sugar for one Spanish dollar, which we thought cheap enough..."*

*"...Many of the men complained of hunger, no provisions having been received for that day. At last, though very late, rum and salt-pork, but no bread came, which latter did not arrive until the evening of the following day. From the 7th inst. we again received as rations rum, fresh bread, salt meat, peas, rice, butter and spruce beer--later on vinegar..."*

(10 July 1778)
*"...Towards evening I left the city, taking, however, a circuitous route to the Jonischen House to get some cherries and milk and arrived at the camp at the beating of the tattoo..."*

(12 July 1778)
*"...12 July Sun. Field Watch. I was sent with one corporal and 18 privates a distance of 3 English miles from our camp to Yourck on watch on the road at a place called Tortellbey, to guard three powder magazines. Never until then did I eat so many cherries and oysters as in this place..."*

Journal of Sergeant von Krafft
Regiment von Donop

(21 July 1778)
*"...From this day on we again received rations for 7 days, excepting rice instead of bread for 2 days. The day of issuing was often changed..."*

(22 August 1778)
*"...The Yagers almost mutinied on account of being kept 3 days without provisions. There was constant calling for them. We Chasseurs got our rations seperately and usually on time..."*

(23 Sept 1778)
*"...23 Sept. Wedn. At 6am we started, taking our two Amazetten with the woolen coverings, also one shirt and bottles and kettles. As we had wagons I was only allowed to carry my kurzgewehr. We had marched hardly an hour when it began to rain very hard, and as it did not stop and were near what was called Phillip's House, we opened the pretty church there and quartered ourselves in it--but only the Chasseurs and Amuzette-Yagers, in all about 30 men. Finally a search was begun and a large potato-field was cleaned out and many other luxuries brought in. Fowls, pigs and beef were slaughtered, although everything had to be done secretly. As usual when on the march we received nothing but salt-pork, crackers and rum for rations. In short we led, as the Hessians termed it, a Hussar life..."*

Journal of Sergeant von Krafft
Regiment von Donop

(1 Oct 1778)
*"...Most of the soldiers and Yagers going in couples, had a stick between them for carrying meat and chickens..."*

English Caricature of a Hessian Grenadier
Note His Tin Water Bottle &
the Tin Kettle He Carries on His Back
1778

# Food References
# Braunschweig (Brunswick) Troops

The Journal of Colonel Van Specht
Senior Officer of Brunswick Troops, Canada & Burgoyne Campaign:

*"Colonel Tonnancour of the militia, who is at the same time a Jewish Merchant and has enriched himself at the expense of the poor habitants, supplied us with meat and bread and also acted as Colonel at times...."*

(Oct. 4th 1776)
*"...All the vegetables one finds in Canada are European, yet many vegetables and their numerous varieties are missing. One finds cabbage, potatoes (they are generally called patates here) turnips, kohlrabi, cucumbers, carrots, celery and beans. Melons grow entirely in the open air and turn out well—proof that it is warmer here than in our country."*

(May 12th 1777)
*"...Moreover, our soldiers always received fresh supplies, namely ½ pound of good beef or mutton [i.e. fresh killed] and 1 ½ pound of white flour, until the end of March. Although the former has stopped and instead, salt meat and peas are being delivered from the army's magazines, many a soldier still has the opportunity to exchange these at his host's for other items; also, for the past few weeks, he has also had the opportunity to catch many a good fish.*

*In many respects the soldier is now living better than his host, but it is unbelievable how these habitants know how to help themselves. Entire households are living on the tapped sap of the maple tree.... ...Many a habitant has refined 300-400 pounds of sugar... At the end of November, when the true frost sets in, they kill their fat oxen, their sheep, pigs, chickens, Indian hens [bitterns], geese, etc, and leave them in the care of nature's cold..."* (V-1)

Baroness von Riedesel
August, 1777 - While lodging at the “Red House” a.k.a. “John’s Farm”
(Between Fort Edward and Fort George at the southern end of Lake George):

*“The country there was lovely, and we were in the midst of the English and German troops. The place where we lived was the Red House. I had only one room for my husband, myself, and my children, in which we all slept, and a tiny study. My maids slept in a sort of hall. When the weather was good we had our meals out under the trees, otherwise we had them in the barn,* ***laying boards across barrels for tables****. It was here that I ate bear meat for the first time, and it tasted very good to me. Sometimes we had nothing at all, but in spite of everything, I was very happy and satisfied...”*

Frederika Chalotte Louise Von Massaw
Baroness (Freifrau) Riedesel Zu Eisenbach

Don Troiani Collection

# Food References
# Braunschweig (Brunswick) Dragoons

Diary of Julius Friedrich Wasmus
Company Surgeon, Braunschweig Dragoon Regiment
Captured at Bennington, 1777

March 13th, 1776 (On board the merchant transport Pallas in the Elbe River):
*"Each man receives one mattress, 3 woolen blankets, among them white and colored ones, as well as a pillow filled with hair and this is all. In addition, each man receives a wooden bowl and dish."*

*Our ship's provisions are the same for officers and privates; each one has 3 pence deducted per day for his ration, that is about 21 pfennig in Convention money. We receive 4 pounds of ship biscuit per 6 men each day. On other ships, 6 men receive 4 stübchen of Engl. Malt beer; a barrel of this beer is set on the foredeck of our ship and each one can drink as he pleases and as much as he wants. The bitters, which are largely brewed in London and other cities, are quite good. In addition, 6 men receive each day the following:*

*Sunday - 4 pounds of salted pork and yellow peas*
*Monday - sufficient oatmeal; each man 3 ounces of butter and 3 ounces of cheese*
*Tuesday - 2 pounds beef, 3 lbs. of fine flour, 1 lb. of raisins, from which a pudding is made*
*Wednesday - like Monday*
*Thursday - like Sunday*
*Friday - peas, oatmeal, butter and cheese*
*Saturday - like Tuesday*

*Stübchen: a liquid measure between 3 and 4 liters*

*""When the beer is gone," our ship's captain said, "we will get rum, a strong drink." The best rum is distilled in Jamaica, in the West Indies. Would that we do not stay so long on the ship that the beer is finished. We gladly do without the rum, as the beer is very good for us. Everything is cooked with coal on our ship."*

March 31st, 1776 (On board the Pallas in Portsmouth Harbour)
*"Everything was very expensive in Portsmouth. One pound of roasted coffee cost 6 shillings, that is more than 42 groschen, 6 pfennig. Unroasted coffee may not be sold at retail here or anywhere else in England under penalty of 50 pounds sterling. Thus, none of us was able to buy any coffee.— One pound of sugar cost 7 groschen, one pound of tobacco 10 groschen 8 pfennig. One bottle of Port coat 2 shillings; thus everything was very expensive."*

April 3rd, 1776
(On board the Pallas at sea Latitude 49° 11', Longitude 46° 6', westward course)
*"This morning, our ship's captain measured a depth of 40 fathoms. Thus we had reached the great fish bank of the New World (Terre Neuve). This bank is a mountain 100 Engl. Mile long, lying beneath the water. We found 2 French ships here, whose sailors were fishing. According to today's calculation the polar height is 44° 30' and the length 41° 46'. Our course is continually toward the west. As the fog lifted during the afternoon, a heavy rain shower came down. This did not hinder us from entertaining ourselves with fishing and we caught 9 of those fish the English call codfish and we Kabeljau. This is the fish that when salted and dried is called the Klippfisch or Stockfish. Those which our sailors caught today weighed between 20 and 30 pounds; they were very tasty and according to the English, are often caught weighing 40 pounds and more."*

May 28th, 1776
(On board the Pallas anchored off Ile-aux-Coudres in the St. Lawrence River)
*"I was most interested in getting some bread and for one shill. sterl. Bought a loaf weighing 4 pounds. I think that expensive; it was white bread somewhat like French army bread in the Seven Years War. But what joy! To eat bread which can be cut with a knife! We had not been treated to that for a long time."*

June 2nd, 1776 (On board the Pallas anchored at Québec)
*"Since we have to provide ourselves again with necessities, I was shocked that 1 lb. of coffee costs 2, and 1 lb. of sugar 1 shilling. Rice 1 shilling per pound."*

June 21st, 1776 (Camp at La Prairie nine miles from Chambly)
*"The supplies that are furnished here are more like those on board ship and are the same for officers and privates. Every man receives 1 ½ lbs. of good white bread, 1 ½ lbs. of fresh beef, butter and whatever else we got aboard ship."*

June 28th, 1776 (Camp at La Prairie nine miles from Chambly)
*"On orders of our Maj. Gen. von Riedesel, spruce beer is being brewed here from fir sprigs, (épinette rouge), toasted bread and syrup. This is a very healthy beverage, an anti-scorbutic, and tastes very much like resin."*

June 14th, 1777 (Camp at St. Jean)
*"We received supplies for 2 weeks i.e., ship rations, salted meat, that is to say pork, and ship zwieback, i.e., biscuit, quite nice and hard."*

June 18th, 1777 (Camp at Cumberland Head on Lake Champlain)
*"Our men drink nothing but tea made of VERONICA and maidenhair."*

June 19th, 1777 (Camp at Cumberland Head on Lake Champlain)
*"This noon, orders came for us to depart tomorrow; we had not expected that. We had just been making ovens for baking and the Hesse-Hanau Regiment had already finished theirs – again, a futile enterprise."*

June 22nd, 1777 (Camp at Ligonier Bay on Lake Champlain)
*"Masons and bakers were selected from our regiment and sent ahead. The army is to set out tomorrow. The rest of the salted pork and the ship's biscuit, that we had taken along from St. Jean, was given out to out regiments today. The other regiments had not wanted any biscuit and have been without bread for several days. They had taken flour instead in order to bake some bread; but they had not considered that in this wilderness, where no people were dwelling, there would not be any baker's ovens either. The soldiers made dough and put it on flat, glowing stones and baked it; it turned out to be very poor bread, however. There were many turtles in Ligonier Bay; near the 47th Regiment, I saw one that weighed more than 80 lbs. The English assert that it was very delicate food but although I had the opportunity, I have never been able to try it. The Savages eat them raw; no Englishman would do that."*

June 24th, 1777 (Camp at River Bouquet)

*"We also found the masons and bakers who had been detached the day before yesterday; they had built a baker's oven in the meantime and bread will be baked tomorrow. What joy! After all, we have not eaten anything but biscuit that was hard as rock."*

June 27th, 1777 (Camp at Crown Point)

*"Wine, rum, Engl. Beer, coffee, sugar, etc. continue to be sold to the regiments for twice as much as in Canada. But there is no tobacco to be had anywhere; I am happy to be amply provided with Canadian canaster."*

June 28th, 1777 (Camp at Crown Point)

"...all the regiments are to build baker's ovens at Crown Point."

July 4th, 1777  (Camp before Ticonderoga)

*"While I was walking on the lake shore today, a muscat rat (so called by the English) was killed there. They are as large as cats and smell of muscat; their tail is hairless like a beaver's; they are grey in color, have a good pelt, live in the water and on land like the beaver and belong to the lower mammals. The English eat these rats and assert that they taste very good."*

July 6th, 1777 [Camp at Ticonderoga]
*"The Reg. Prinz Friedrich and the 62nd Engl. Reg. moved into Ticonderoga and occupied it. It is beyond description how much the enemy has left behind in ammunition, provisions and such victuals as wine, rum, sugar, coffee, chocolate, butter, cheese, etc."* (W-5)

Enlisted Man c. 1777
Braunschw. Regiment Prinz Friedrich
After Friedrich Konstantin von Germann

Cap Badge
1777

Enlisted Man c. 1777
62nd Regiment of Foot
After Friedrich Konstantin von Germann

July 7th, 1777 (Camp at Bay La Belle (South Bay)
*"We had not seen any herring in America as yet but tonight I happened to eat a delicious herring salad and drink gin at Madame Aschholtz's; I was happy that we had ended the awful trip across Lake Champlain so well and so safely."*

July 9th, 1777 (Camp at Skenesborough)
*"Because we are lacking bread, baker's ovens are being built at the portage."*

July 31st, 1777 (Camp at Fort Edward)
*"We are living here quietly and well because we cannot possibly have any want of delectable meat. The woods are full of cattle which the inhabitants, for fear of us, had driven there."*

August 2nd, 1777 (Camp at Fort Edward)
*"Pork (salted meat from the pig) will be given out again today. They are building baker's ovens in front of our lines."*

August 10th, 1777 (Camp at Fort Miller)
*"This evening, they sent us flour on horseback, from which bread is to be baked tonight."*

August 11th, 1777 [Camp at Saratoga]

*"This morning, beef and bread were given out. We set out at noon...*
*The Parish is called Saratoga. We kept the Hudson River on our right and moved into a camp across from the church next to 2 beautiful houses. Some of the corn had been harvested and stored in the houses, some was overripe and being crushed. They had also started drawing the flax, but had run off. Their enmity against the King of England and the fear of the Germans had driven them away. They were probably roaming around in the woods, for their cattle returned to the house in the evening, but were treated in an overly aggressive manner by us strange, hungry guests. – They cultivate Turkish wheat here and many pumpkins have been planted in between. The gardens are full of fruit especially potatoes, from which one can conclude that we are enjoying ourselves very much."*

Pumpkin by Joseph Plenck
18th Century

# Canteens

Private, Regiment of Dragoons "König"
by David Morier c. 1748
(The Royal Collection)

Parliament Inquiry on Plundering, 1779
Questions by Sir William Howe
Witness, Major General Robertson

*"Q. You have said there was a great deal of plundering; will you ascertain where and when?*

*A. The places where I first saw the effect of it was on Long Island; the next on New-York Island.*

*Q. Do you know of a great deal of plundering in any other part of the country?*

*A. It has been observed, that these are the only places in which I accompanied the army: I have heard that in other places there has been a good deal of plunder committed.*

*Q. Will you explain the degree of plunder, within your own knowledge, on Long island and York Island?*

*A. When I landed first, I found in all the farms, the poultry, cows, and farm stocked; when I passed sometime afterwards, I found nothing alive: these were some reasons that appeared publicly to me: I saw some men hanged, by Sir William Howe's orders, for plundering; and I have heard, that after Mr. Washington took the Hessians at Trenton, he restored to the inhabitants twenty-one waggon-loads of plunder, he had found among their baggage.*

*Q. Did you ever hear of any orders from the convention of New-York, for the inhabitants to drive off their cattle and stock?*

*A. I have seen such a publication.*

*Q. Did not Sir William Howe give repeated orders to prevent plundering.*

*A. I have said so.*

*Q. Do you know, or ever heard, that the Hessian troops were encouraged to go to America by the hopes of plunder?*

*A. I have heard say, that the Hessians, before they went away, were told that they were going to a country where they would have great plunder; but I don't say, that any Hessian officer ever made use of expressions of that sort.*

*Q. Do you believe that the Hessians looked upon America as an enemy's country.*

*A. I believe so: the Hessians were ignorant of the people; when they saw the people in arms, it was natural for them, who did not know the people, to think they were enemies; people better informed, too much adopted the notion.*

*Q. From your experience of war in Europe, did you observe, that there was more plundering in America than there would have been by an army in an enemy's country in Europe?*

*A. The practice of armies in Europe is very different; some people in Europe would not let their army plunder, even in an enemy's country.*

*Q. Are you of opinion that Sir William Howe took every proper means to prevent plundering in his power?*

*A. I dare say, by Sir William Howe's orders, and by what I know of them, he wished to prevent it; and, I dare say, he took the means that occurred to him to prevent it.*

*Q. You have said, 'a number of officers lately come into the country, and who entertained the notion that Americans were enemies, perhaps did not take enough of care to prevent soldiers from gratifying themselves at the expence of the people, so that plundering was very frequent:' - you will therefore explain what officers you meant, and what particular facts you alluded to?*

*A. I had been asked if I stopped plundering; I answered, 'Yes.': in order to account for that not happening in every other brigade, I said, that the officers, who had lately come into the country, had not the same sense that I had of the merits and dispositions of the people; and that it was from this want, that the commander in chief's orders were not carried into execution in every other brigade; the reflection was general and did not allude to any particular fact.*

*Q Do you know of any particular instance, where he orders you allude to were disobeyed?*

*A. As often as plunder was committed the order was disobeyed.*

*Question repeated?*

*A. I don't know any other answer I can give; I should wish to satisfy every question that was asked; I don't know how to satisfy it more.*

*Q. From the evidence you have before given, can you say, that any officers did not do their duty, in preventing plundering, agreeably to the general's orders?*

*A. I have no particular accusation against any officer.*

*Q. You have said, that in your own brigade, after your orders had been read to the soldiers, there was no more plundering by the soldiers of that brigade; how long did you command that brigade after the time you speak of?*

*A. Till the 16th of September, when I went to the command at New-York."* (P-3)

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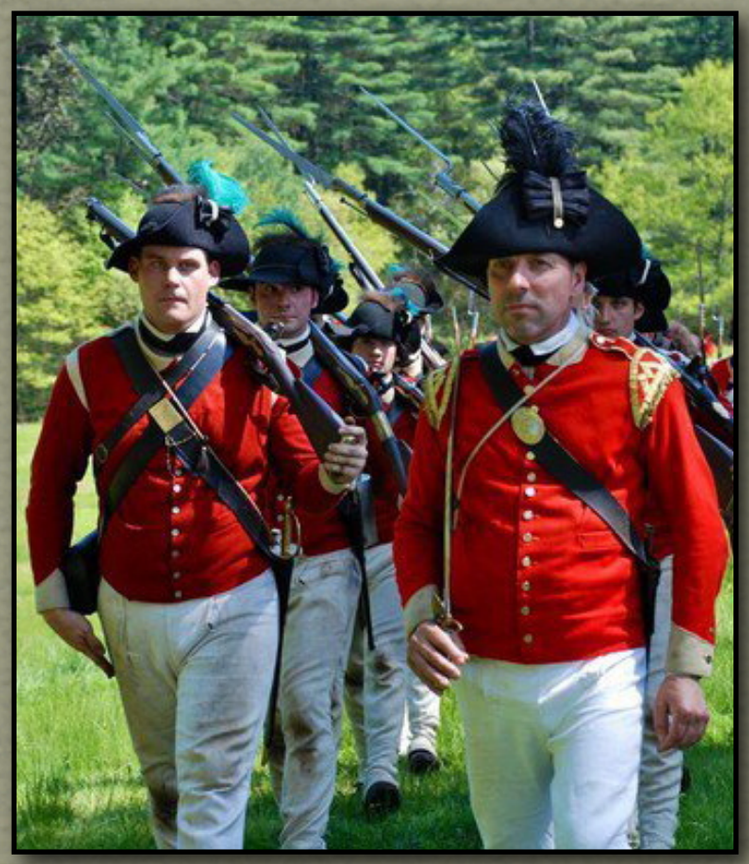
Although many folks have contributed their research and documentation to this work, there are two individuals I would like to give special recognition to. I am very fortunate to call both of these gentlemen friends. First, I would like to thank Roy Najecki for lending me his extensive collection of British Orderly Books. The vast majority of entries that are included here are from Roy's collection. Second, I would also like to thank John Rees for his extensive research and incredible works on the life and times of the common soldier during the American War for Independence. Without a doubt, John is one of the finest researchers and authors in the field. Every time I thought I came up with a new find, I realized that John covered the same subject years before me. It was through John that I first heard of fry pan covers on British army kettles. Thank you gentlemen!!



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H.M. 40th Regiment of Foot, Light Infantry Co., Recreated

H.M. 63rd Regiment of Foot, Grenadier Co., Recreated

10th Massachusetts Regiment, Light Infantry Co., Recreated 2nd Virginia Regiment, Recreated

Augustus County Militia, Recreated

The Company of Select Marksmen, Recreated:

Special Gratitude is  extended to this recreated Company for their  transcriptions of the:

47th Regiment of Foot Orderly Book

Hadden's Journal and Orderly Book

Orderly Book of the Royal Regiment of Artillery May 8, 1776 through June 29, 1777

18th Century Notebook (http://larsdatter.com/18c/index.html)

# Bon Appetite!

*"Leave the Gun, Take the Cannoli"*

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"bivouack," also spelled "biovac," "bihovac" and "bivouac" in period texts, is defined in Johnson's dictionary as "A guard at night performed by the whole army; which, either at a siege, or lying before an enemy, every evening draws out from its tents or huts, and continues all night in arms before its lines or camp, to prevent any surprise."

Bennet Cuthbertson, “System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry”, Chapter VIII., Section IX., 1776:
*“When a Soldier is ordered on Command, before the expiration of the time, for which his mess is laid in, the Serjeant or Corporal of the Squad of in-spection he belongs to, is to dispose of his proportion of the provisions, on the best terms to be had, to some of the married men of the Company, or to others, who can draw it daily as it is cooked: and whatever arises from the sale of it, must be given to the Pay-serjeant, towards making good the subsistence necessary to be advanced him on this occasion, which must be done, although his mess was only that day laid for a week.”*

Bennet Cuthbertson, “System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry”, Chapter VIII., Section X., 1776:
*“Where circumstances require a Soldier’s being or-dered to the Regimental Hospital, before he has con-sumed the provision laid in for his mess, the Serjeant or Corporal of his Squad must have his bread sent with him, and delivered to the Non-commission-officer attending there; his proportion of meat and broth should, every day, be carried there likewise, by one of his comrades, and delivered to the same person; by which means, there will be no occasion for advancing pay to the Hospital for him, before the next general day of issuing it to all the Compa-nies; but if there should be an absolute necessity for sending a man, under the above circumstances, to the Hospital of the Army, the same precautions are to be taken for the disposal of his provisions as for those going on command, as his subsistence will be demanded by the Hospital, from the day of his en-tering it.”*

Letters of General Pattison Pages 398-399
To COLONEL DE SEYBOTHEN. New York, May 30, 1780.

*"Sir,*

*In consequence of a Report made to me that the Convalescent Soldiers in the General Hospital had evaded the Regulations I established, to prevent their getting Spirituous Liquors, by Going to Suttling Tents, on the North River, My Aide-dc-Camp, by my direction ordered the ProvostMartial, to make enquiry by whom these Tents were Kept.----Upon his Report that one of them was Kept by a Soldier of the Regiment of Bose, without Licence from the Magistrates of Police, I desired Capt. Adye to write to Col. Bishausen Commanding that Regiment to order a stop to be put to such Irregularities and liquors being sold to the British Soldiery. The Provost Martial in making his Rounds discovered also a House on the North River, Known by the sign of the Cagg, the owner of which had no Licence from the Police, as also a Suttling Tent, the owner of which said he was particularly authorized by you, --- All the Liquor in the former the Provost Martial with-out Ceremony, and consequent to a Standing order destroyed; but his Respect, as he Assures me, to your authority prevented his taking any other steps with Regard to the latter than merely Reporting the circumstance and upon that Report the same request was intended to made to you, as had been upon the same Occasion to Col. Bishausen; The Provost Martial having repaired to this Tent, with a Body of Armed Men, was a Casual Matter: The provost Martial being Ordered Occasionally to patrole with a Party of this Sort, to suppress Irregularities. The Provost Martial Is ordered to wait upon you with This Letter, and to explain to you the Causes of his Behavior, should This not be thought satisfactory he shall be brought to a Court-Martial,to answer for his conduct. I have, &~ J.P.*

*(TO:) Colonel de Seybothen."*

Bennet Cuthbertson, “System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry”,  Chapter VIII., Section XI., 1776:.
*In like manner, if an unexpected order arrives for the march of the Regiment, or part of it, and that the Soldiers are to be furnished on the road by the publicans, agreeable the the Act of Parliament, the Serjeants and Corporals of Squads should dispose of whatever provisions remain unused, to the inhabitants of the country, and return the produce to the Pay-Serjeants, for reasons recited in the IXth Article; but if the Regiment is on Service, the provisions must be equally divided amongst the men of each mess, and carried in their haversacks: the experience of half a campaign will teach them to comply most chearfully with this method.*

Bennet Cuthbertson, “System For The Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry”,  Chapter VIII., Section XIII., 1776:.
*“Officers servants, who are Soldiers, should be ob-liged to mess with their Companies, unless their matters will be answerable for their living in a regular and proper manner.”*