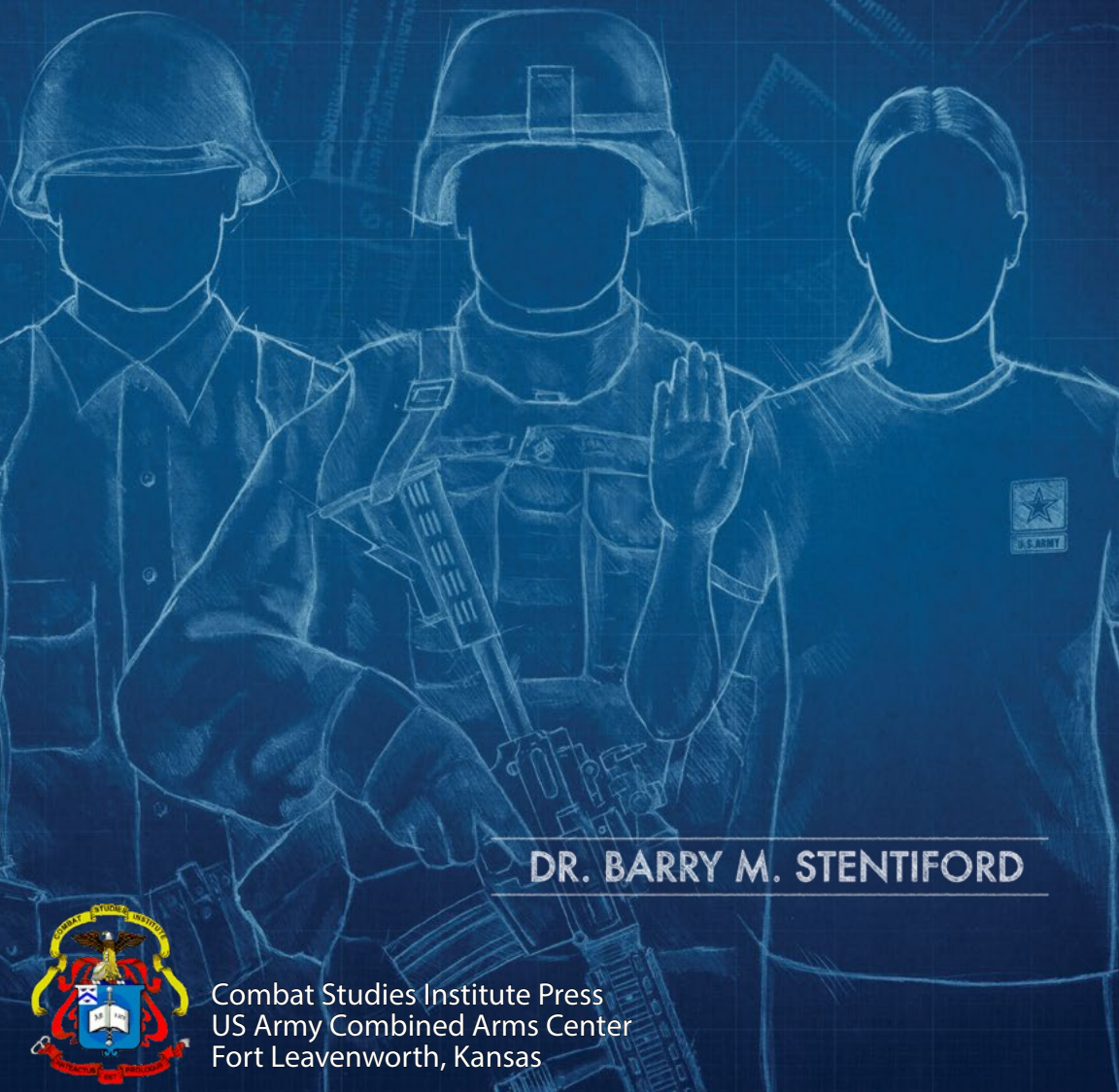


# ARMY EXPANSIONS

## AUGMENTING THE REGULAR ARMY DURING WAR



DR. BARRY M. STENTIFORD



Combat Studies Institute Press  
US Army Combined Arms Center  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

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## Augmenting the Regular Army during War

Barry M. Stentiford, Ph.D.



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Editor  
Michael L. Hogg

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## Introduction

Recent discussions about granting direct commissions as field-grade officers (major, lieutenant colonel, and colonel) to people with highly-desirable civilian experience are often couched in terms of “that was done during World War II.” Responses that such wartime commissions were temporary commissions in the Army of the United States (AUS), rather than in the Regular Army (RA), are usually met with blank looks. During World War II, almost all Army commissions—the authorization from the government that gives a military officer the right to command—were temporary AUS commissions. The AUS commission saw continued use in limited numbers after the war, but has been in hiatus since the early 1980s. The AUS commission was the last of several types of temporary commissions the United States government used to expand the Army officer corps during wartime. The use of temporary commissions to provide enough officers to lead the quickly growing ranks was the standard practice during most of the major wars fought by the United States until after the end of the Vietnam War, varying only in the type of commission and method for raising additional wartime forces. Only since 1980 has the US Army sought to wage war without issuing some sort of temporary commission to expand the officer corps.

The Constitution gives explicit authority to Congress to “raise and support Armies” without placing any restrictions on how those armies can be raised.<sup>1</sup> The framers of the Constitution came to accept, after the difficulties caused by the lack of a standing army under the Articles of Confederation, that the United States should have a standing army—a Regular Army—that would control the western territories and provide a nucleus of professionals around which a larger, temporary wartime army would form. For generations after the founding of the nation, Regular Army officers and government officials understood that the army as it existed in peacetime was inadequate for major wars. The question of how to expand the small, peacetime army into a larger, still-capable wartime army engaged many generations of officers and military reformers, and several methods were used over the history of the US Army. Key to any increase was the expansion of the officer corps. The AUS commission was only one of several methods the army used increase its size, and more importantly, to expand the size of the officer corps for war without seriously disrupting the structure of the Regular Army officer corps.

The concurrent question of how to shrink the army to its peacetime structure after a war is intimately linked with the question of how to ex-

pand the army for war. This inevitable post-war problem explains why what would seem the most obvious expedient to expanding the army for war—expanding the Regular Army itself—has generally been avoided. One of the most vexing problems resulting from simply expanding the Regular Army for war would be in the unbalanced officer corps after the war. Hypothetically, expanding the Regular Army would necessitate the rapid promotion of Regular Army officers to provide leaders for the new regiments, brigades, divisions, and corps. When such an army contracted, the Regular Army would be left with a highly-bloated officer corps, or, more likely, the need to discharge or retire many of its best officers, while the lower ranks would be filled with young and relatively inexperienced officers. To avoid this problem, the Army sought to preserve the structure of the Regular Army—and especially its officer corps—within the expanded wartime structure. The existence of temporary commissions during wartime has also allowed Regular Army officers to serve under temporary ranks, while maintaining their Regular Army commission and rank in hiatus. Thus when peace returned, such officers were not discharged or demoted, but simply reverted to their Regular rank when the temporary wartime structure was dismantled.

When conscription—the draft—ended in 1973, and the Army inaugurated the All-Volunteer Force (AVF), the assumption was that the AVF would be adequate for a peacetime force, but during wartime the Army would return to the use of Selective Service and the Army of the United States to expand. However, the draft has remained politically unpalatable, and thus since 1973, the United States has fought wars using voluntary enlistment into the Regular Army, as well as increased use of the Army National Guard and Army Reserve, both of which are also manned through voluntary enlistments. The army has responded to waxing and waning threats and missions through laborious processes of expanding the Regular Army and by placing more Army National Guard and Army Reserve soldiers on active duty. More critically, the expansion and contraction of the officer corps has been haphazard, with officers selected for removal during times of contraction, leading to shortages in various grades of officers during later expansion.

Traditionally, the Regular Army officer corps was expected to provide much of the leadership of any expanded wartime army, augmented by temporary officers who ideally would be in less key positions unless of proven ability. These temporary officers served under federally recognized state militia commissions, state or federal Volunteer commissions, National Army commissions, or Army of the United States commissions.

Additionally, some officers in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have served on active duty with Reserve commissions or commissions in the National Guard of the United States.

Officers with those non-Regular commissions came from a variety of sources, from the state militia, college graduates, professionals of proven abilities, and the enlisted ranks of the Regular Army. But the practice of using such temporary commissions ended in 1980. For soldiers in the modern Army, expanding the Regular Army, mobilizing reserve component units, and contracting more support functions, are the only methods for increasing the Army they have known. Currently, the US Army has officers with one of two types of commission—Regular or Reserve. No officer can simultaneously hold both types of commission. The only way to expand the officer corps in the Active Army has been to either increase the number of officers with Regular commissions, or bring more officers with Reserve commissions onto active duty. This current system of the government granting only one of two types of commission—Regular or Reserve—stands in contrast to much of the history of the US Army officer corps during wartime.

The current volume is intended to serve as a primer, arranged largely chronological, examining the various, other “armies” that have been raised during wartime to augment the Regular Army. The chronology is not rigid because the existence of these other wartime armies has overlapped. To make the chronology more confusing, the lines between some of the institutions used for expanding the Army for war were not always clear. The problem is most obvious in delineating militia, Volunteer regiments, and the National Guard. Those military units known as “Volunteers” are an especially difficult subject, as three linked yet quite separate institutions are designated as *Volunteers*—Volunteer militia, state-raised Volunteer regiments in federal service, and US Volunteers. To describe the evolution of these forces in chapters that stand on their own to explain each requires a certain amount of redundancy.

The officers of these temporary forces, and especially the types of commissions they served under, receive particular attention. While the service of the officer with the Regular Army commission has been the constant since the founding of the Regular Army under the Constitution, other officers have served on active federal service under state commissions, federal Volunteer commissions, National Guard of the United States commissions, National Army commissions, Reserve commissions, and Army of the United States commissions. Some officers have held more than one commission at a time, usually serving in the rank of the higher one. The

previous ability of officers holding a Regular or Reserve commission to serve in a higher rank under a temporary commission in the Volunteers, National Army, or Army of the United States, gave the Army a flexibility it now lacks—the ability to expand or contract quickly without unbalancing its officer corps.

While none of the methods used throughout American history has proven completely satisfactory, each had its merits, and in large show a linear improvement in the relationship between the peacetime army and the wartimes armies raised by the United States. The use of these methods demonstrates that the Army, as well as the Congressmen who crafted the laws on wartime expansion and commissions, were pragmatic, willing to work within the bounds of what was practical and acceptable to American values to expand the army for war. Since the end of the AUS, the Army has not had the flexibility for expansion in war provided by earlier methods. Exploring methods for expansion used in the past can provide models for direct commissions and wartime expansion, without the resulting bloat in the post-war officer corps.

## **Notes**

1. US Constitution, Art. 1, Sec. 8, para 12.



## Chapter One

### Militia

The first temporary military force used to augment the US Army during war was the militia, with officers serving under commissions from their states.<sup>1</sup> The militia was envisioned by the framers of the Constitution as the institution through which a standing army could be quickly expanded to fight a war. By the time the United States had a Regular Army that the militia could augment, the American militia had existed for more than a century and half. Most of the forms and practices of militia were well-established by the end of the colonial era. Militia units reflected their local and colonial roots long into the nineteenth century.

The first military forces in the English colonies were militia. Militia service was an obligation of most free English men in the community, with a few exceptions for clergymen or those physically, intellectually, or morally deficient to bear arms when required to do so by civil authorities. Militia had already been in decline in England for several decades, but with colonization, the institution was revived, suggesting unease over relations with the Natives and a fear of potential French, Spanish, or Dutch raiders.<sup>2</sup> Militia systems were established in Jamestown, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay almost immediately upon settlement. Initially, militia officers such as Myles Standish in Plymouth were appointed by the colonial leadership because of their previous military experience. As the colonies grew, and other towns and settlements were founded, settlers in the new towns created their own train bands or militia companies of various sizes.<sup>3</sup> These militia companies were the military force of the colonies.

The members of these militia companies usually elected their own officers, and sometimes even their own noncommissioned officers (NCO). The authority of officers to command was largely a function of their being elected by the men they would lead. The authority of NCOs—sergeants and corporals—came from the company commander. At the time, the distinction between officer and NCO was less clear; the rank structure in a company or train band was centered on the commander, usually a captain, and who would have one, two, or more numbered lieutenants to perform whatever duties the captain assigned to them and who stood ready to assume command if the captain was unable to perform his duties. Also under the captain was a first sergeant, second sergeant, third sergeant and sometimes more, and some corporals. The rank structure was linear, and when vacancies occurred during a campaign, usually everyone moved up to fill in the ranks.



Ideally, musters for training were held on Saturdays or sometimes on Sundays, after divine service, four times a year during peace, and monthly or more during war. During musters, the men practiced a simplified system of loading and firing in volleys. Musters during peacetime were more than just an obligation for military training—they were also a sort of holiday, a break from routine. They often ended with eating and drinking. Fines were levied on residents who failed to attend musters, and the funds thus raised were spent purchasing arms and other equipment.<sup>4</sup> The number of days spent training, and the seriousness of the training, waxed and waned as threats to the colony increased or decreased.

The officers in these first militia units had something that could be called a commission from their town, usually in writing. In 1636, the Massachusetts Bay colony organized these various militia companies and train bands into three regiments; the North Regiment, West Regiment, and South Regiment. The creation of regiments meant the development of field grade officers; majors and colonels. Field grade officers were elected by the company grade officers and commissioned by the General Court of Massachusetts Bay, which assumed the right to commission militia officers.<sup>5</sup> The election of militia officers and their commissioning by the colonial government ended in 1668, when the English government made changes to several colonial charters following the Restoration of King Charles II to the English throne. At the company level this development changed little; officers were still selected largely by election, with the names of those elected sent to the colonial government, to be issued a royal commission by the colonial governor. The royal commission had greater impact at the regimental and higher levels, where officers with connections in London rather than in the colonies had greater chance of higher rank.<sup>6</sup>

The requirement of militia officers in the colonies to hold royal commissions did not give them parity with their British Regular Army counterparts. During the wars against the French and Indians in the eighteenth century, when British forces operated in the New World, colonial militia officers were generally held in contempt by British Regular Army officers. Militia officers in regiments raised by the colonies for service alongside the British Regulars were hardly recognized as officers at all and never as equals by their British counterparts. In 1758, a directive from the British government explicitly stated that officers in the colonial forces, up to and including in the rank of colonel, were to be seen as the equivalent of captains or lower in the British Army. Eventually, such revisions were removed, although British officers were by regulation always to be superior to colonial officers of the same rank.<sup>7</sup>

The colonial militia was not a static institution—it adapted to changed circumstances throughout the colonial era. What started as obligatory town-based militia companies in which almost all able-bodied men in a community were expected to train and serve when needed, evolved into a manpower pool, with volunteers and occasionally conscripts drawn from the town-based militia companies to provide manpower for expeditionary forces during wartime. As communities grew larger, a smaller percentage of the men in each community were needed for active service, and the fines for not attending training musters became more of a tax on those with the obligation, usually the wealthier sort, who wished to avoid active training or service. The *general militia*, as such town-based militia companies were called, became pools of obligated men rather than fighting units. Raising temporary volunteer companies for wartime service, which were technically detachments from the militia, increasingly became the method by which towns in the colonies raised forces for war. Thus, from early in the colonial period, the militia bifurcated, with part evolving into a permanent, town-based institution with elected officers that served mainly as a training organization. In the other part, temporary expeditionary units were recruited from the general militia using a combination of enticements and pressure for specific campaigns. In these temporary expeditionary forces, company and field grade officers were likewise normally chosen through election of members, with colonial governors normally choosing general officers, or any commanding officers, and issuing them commissions.<sup>8</sup>

After the overwhelming defeat of France in 1763 in the last French and Indian and Seven Years War (1754-1763), and the withdrawal of French forces from mainland North America, militia in any form largely went into hiatus.<sup>9</sup> Most free men continued to have a militia obligation, but with no immediate threat, the obligation became increasingly theoretical. That situation changed in the early 1770s, with the rising tensions between the British government and the colonists. In 1774, a rival government of Massachusetts Bay was established in Concord—the Massachusetts Provincial Congress. The rival government began wresting control of the Massachusetts Bay colonial militia from the royalists, forcing out officers who remained loyal to the royal government in Boston. In the areas of Massachusetts outside of Boston, the selection of militia officers below the rank of brigadier general again became wholly dependent on election. The theory, as before, was that men would elect their social betters, and would be more willing to follow the leaders they had chosen. Most officers so chosen had higher wealth or educational status than the majority of men in



Figure 1.1. The militia under the command of President George Washington during the Whiskey Rebellion. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

the colonies. Militiamen did tend to elect those whom they believed also had military skills. Most such officers earned their skills through myriad ways, but in general through previous service in the last French and Indian War but also sometimes in the British Army.

During this period of increased tensions, the Concord government required towns to establish “minuteman” companies. Minuteman companies were a subset of the militia, with men younger, fitter, and more eager for active service and who agreed to train more often, and who agreed to keep themselves and their equipment ready for assembling in their towns and marching within an hour of notice. Roughly one-fourth to one-third of the theoretical militia members were enrolled in minuteman companies. The selection of officers in the minuteman companies was also by election. Formal commissions for officers, where they existed at all, again came from the towns. Thus more than a year before independence was formally declared, the officer corps of the Massachusetts militia, and much of the rest of New England, had severed its subordination to royal government.

After the April of 1775 skirmishes at Lexington and Concord, the New England militia established a siege around Boston. The forces besieging that town were soon formed into what was designated the New England Provisional Army. Eventually, militia units from outside of New England,

specifically from New York and Pennsylvania, arrived and joined the siege. It was this force that George Washington, recently commissioned as a major general by the Second Continental Congress, took command of in the summer of 1775, when it was re-designated as the *Continental Army*. That assumption of command would later be considered the birth of the US Army.

The Continental Army General Washington took command of was emphatically not a “regular army.” It was seen by the Continental Congress as a wartime institution only. It was initially an assemblage of regiments raised through the militia systems of the colonies, with enlistments for short duration, and no soldier obligated to serve beyond the end of each year. Continental Army brigadier generals and major generals, such as George Washington, Benedict Arnold, and others were issued commissions by the Second Continental Congress, but all officers below the rank of brigadier general were commissioned by the colonial, or, as they increasingly styled themselves, state governments. States also commissioned some officers in the general ranks, depending on the size of the force raised by the state, but their authority over Continental regiments from other states was never clear. The officers throughout the Continental Army drew on a variety of experiences and statuses to justify their standing as officers.

Throughout the war, the Continental Army evolved, with the adoption of enlistments for three years or the duration of the conflict starting in 1777, but it never resembled a “regular army” as the term is understood today. Most regiments in the Continental Army were creations of individual states, with officers serving under state commissions, and returning to their home state for disbandment after their terms of service were complete. But beginning in the autumn of 1775 Congress gave General Washington permission to raise up to 16 regiments without ties to any state. This option was used for two regiments of Canadians, one of German immigrants, and one for the Green Mountain Boys from Vermont, an area both New Hampshire and New York claimed.<sup>10</sup> As the initial enthusiasm for military service—the *rage militaire*—wore off, the officers who stayed with the army became a more professional lot, with a concurrent expectation of dependable and adequate pay, and for post-war compensation and recognition, but few expected to continue to serve in the army after the war.

The militia in each colony, or state, remained in existence during the war, serving both as an institution to organize regiments for the Continental Army, and also to augment the Continental Army when it was operating within a colony’s bounds. In areas removed from the fighting, rebel militia prevented British and Loyalists forces from moving about the countryside

except in large bodies, and in enforcing revolutionary discipline among the populace.<sup>11</sup>

This system of raising forces to fight the War of Independence (1775-1783) by the rebel governments in the colonies and by the Second Continental Congress drew on the colonial military systems and practices, as well as their fear of a standing army. They believed a standing army would not only be expensive, but would give any government too much power. The army they created for the war, the Continental Army, was to be disbanded upon the conclusion of the war. Under the *Articles of Confederation*, in operation from 1 March 1781 until the Constitution went into effect on 4 March 1789, the model for raising an army during the War of Independence remained the model for creating any future wartime armies. The Articles made no provision for a peacetime standing army—no Regular Army—and envisioned an army that existed during wartime only. A “federal” army was to exist only when regiments raised by the states—through their militia systems—were again amalgamated at the federal level for war or other crisis. The wartime army they envisioned would again be created by combining state-raised regiments brought onto federal service for a limited time.<sup>12</sup>

The framers of the Articles of Confederation drafted their plan of defense during the war with Britain. They planned a military system for a defensive war with a conventional adversary—Great Britain, Spain, or France. The problems of projecting military power in the western federal territories, or in suppressing rebellions, such as Shays’s Rebellion (1786-87) in Massachusetts, were not addressed under the Articles. Americans only became grudgingly reconciled to the idea of any standing army during Confederation period. They found that some federally-controlled, permanent military force was necessary to control the western territories and quell internal discord. Under the new Constitution, in effect from 1789, the federal government received specific permission to create a federal standing army—a Regular Army—that was not dependent on regiments organized by the states. The Regular Army, created in 1793 as the Legion of the United States, was adequate for policing the frontier, but was far too small in the event that the United States got into a war with a European power.

The militia remained as a central pillar of defense. The Constitution recognized the militia in Articles I and II, and in the Second Amendment. The framers of the Constitution in general saw the militia as the main force to defend the new nation, but broad disagreements surfaced over how the militia should be organized and were never completely resolved.

The Constitution set an outline for the militia. It would be organized and normally controlled by the states, under the discipline prescribed by Congress.<sup>13</sup> The militia would be used primarily by the states, but the federal government had the authority to take control of the militia for the purpose of repelling invasion, repressing insurrection, or enforcing federal laws.<sup>14</sup> With militia existing in every town or county in the nation, no enemy would be able to invade or raid before being overwhelmed by a population under arms. The Regular Army would be comparatively very small, and would exist primarily as a repository of military knowledge, but could provide security in the sparsely settled territories to the west, or, in the event of a major war would become the core around which a war-time army of mostly state-raised regiments would again coalesce. The specific details on the organization of the militia were left to legislation that would come later.

President George Washington and his followers, who would later coalesce into the Federalist Party, wanted a tiered militia. Under such a system, men would be divided into classes of the militia depending on their age and fitness. Young, healthy men would receive most of the training and be the ones expected to respond first.<sup>15</sup> Thomas Jefferson and his followers, who would later become the Democratic Republicans, wanted a more encompassing general militia structure, in which most free men served equally. After much wrangling and disagreement between the sides, Congress passed the *Uniform Militia Act of 1792* (MA 1792). This important document would be the last major piece of federal legislation regarding the militia until 1903.<sup>16</sup> It would be followed shortly by the *Calling Forth Act*, which made specific the authority of the president to call as much militia as he desired into federal service in the event of an actual or threatened invasion or to suppress insurrection. While the Calling Forth Act also allowed the president to use the militia to enforce laws, he could do so only when a federal judge informed him that local law enforcement capabilities had been overwhelmed.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, the act stipulated that federalized militiamen were to be paid at the same rates as Regulars, but could not serve longer than three months in any year. These two acts were a compromise that required most free white males between the ages of 18 and 45 to arm themselves and attend regular musters to be ready to serve, but neither the federal government nor the states enforced the laws. The militia, as outlined by the *Militia Act of 1792* and *Calling Forth Act*, never became the viable nation-in-arms foreseen by its supporters. The root problem was that the martial enthusiasm needed for an effective militia quickly waned at the local, state, and federal levels, once an immediate threat had passed, as it had throughout the colonial years.

Although the militia system in most states quickly became moribund, neither the American people or the states demanded any changes to the federal law on militia. However, in the *Volunteer Act of 1806*, Congress took an important step that clarified the status of regiments to be raised through the militia system but temporarily assigned to the federal government.<sup>18</sup> These regiments, dubbed Volunteers regiments, became the main vehicle through which the states participated in national war efforts through the Spanish-American War (1898). Although raised through the militia systems of the states, and state governments retained the authority for commissioning officers in them, such regiments were specifically not part of their state's militia while on federal service.<sup>19</sup> *They were federal forces.*

The first real test of this ill-defined system for expanding the Army during wartime came during the War of 1812. While in many aspects the war demonstrated the weaknesses of the system, the results also showed the strength of the decentralization of the United States. While the British were able to capture and burn the nation's capital, it did not result in a strategic victory by Britain. Additionally, the successful defense of Baltimore in September of 1814 showed that the Army and the militia could on occasion be adequate for defense. The refusal by militiamen from Vermont and New York to cross into Canada on constitutional grounds reinforced the idea that a citizens' militia prevented adventurism, and underscored the idea that the militia could be used only for defense. The incident, however, would long prejudice the attitude of Regular Army officers toward the militia. The officer corps of the fledgling Regular Army quickly developed an attitude toward state military forces that echoed the attitude of British officers toward colonial military forces.

For all the weaknesses in MA 1792, for more than a century Congress made no substantial changes to it. After the War of 1812, militia as an institution was increasingly neglected.<sup>20</sup> Few Americans saw a need to waste time at musters when no danger threatened and more profitable pursuits beckoned.<sup>21</sup> The situation regarding actual militia in the states varied widely. Some states, especially the northeastern states such as Massachusetts, Connecticut, and a few others, attempted to enforce a general militia system—also called the *enrolled militia*—at least through the 1830s. However, in many states, what was called “militia” were actually semi-private, amateur military groups that formed on their own. Theoretically, all the men in these organizations belonged to the militia by virtue of their age, sex, and race, but they were a subset of the militia. A self-selected group, these men formed or joined companies out of patriotism, for fun, from fear



Figure 1.2. An unflattering look at the militia from 1829. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

of slave uprisings, for the comradery, or as a way of establishing social and political contacts, but not out of legal obligation.<sup>22</sup> These organizations soon became known as the *volunteer militia*, to distinguish them from the enrolled militia.

Such groups usually designed and bought their own uniforms, and often required dues or other membership fees. Normally, officers were elected, and then their names were submitted to their governor for the issuing of a state commission.<sup>23</sup> Officers of some units did not bother to seek state commissions, and some such groups never sought any official standing, remaining in effect private military organizations. Those volunteer militia units that had state sanction were in general available for state governments to call upon in the event it needed a force for strike-breaking, riot-control, unrest, or disaster relief. In areas with large slave populations, such forces often acted as slave patrols. Therein began a legal fiction: the states legitimized and supported these organizations, and in return these organizations performed traditional militia functions for the state. With these volunteer militia forces available to the state governments for traditional militia functions, states had little incentive to enforce any sort of a general militia obligation.<sup>24</sup>



Despite the withering away of the general militia obligation, and with it the town or county based-general militia companies, the militia systems of the states continued to perform the function of raising forces for war, but such forces were usually separated from the state militia when they entered federal service. The nineteenth century saw the divorce from federal warfighting of militia units as militia. The militia systems of the states were used to raise and organize volunteer regiments for the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), but units raised in that manner did not augment the federal military as militia, but as Volunteer units. Aside from some minor Indian wars, such as the Blackhawk War (1832), militia as such had little involvement with the Regular Army or in fighting wars until the Civil War (1861-1865). During that war, many northern states created home guard units of militiamen which served only in their immediate area during crises, with Missouri's militia system the most complete.<sup>25</sup> Occasionally, militia units watched prisoners or performed other rear-area duties thus relieving federal soldiers for combat, but militia units in state service tended to avoid direct combat.

The concept of the enrolled militia, to which almost all free men belonged, had increasingly been forgotten throughout the nineteenth century. For the vast majority of American men, the idea that they had a militia obligation would have come as quite a shock. However, the problems with expanding the Army during the Civil War using state- and federally-raised Volunteer regiments and the renewed interest after the Civil War in reforming the organized militia made the inadequacies of the MA 1792 increasingly obvious. The idea of universal militia obligation of most free men inherent in the old *Militia Act of 1792* had had always been a reality, but it existed in the background, below the level of public consciousness. Instead, almost all Americans thought of the organized militia units—the volunteer militia—as *the* militia. But federal law did not distinguish between men who actually belonged to organized militia units and men who had never stood a single muster.

Not until the start of the twentieth century did Congress shake off its disinterest in the militia long enough to replace MA 1792. Its replacement was the *Militia Act of 1903* (MA 1903), also called “the Dick Act” after the bill’s sponsor, Congressman Charles F. Dick of Ohio.<sup>26</sup> Congressman Dick served as president of the National Guard Association, and was the Commanding General of the Ohio National Guard.<sup>27</sup> MA 1903 was the first real step by the federal government to bring the organized militia more in line with the Regular Army, to allow it to eventually supplant the Volunteers during wartime, yet to also be able to serve the states as organized militia in peacetime.<sup>28</sup>



Figure 1.3. Massachusetts Militia uniforms of the late 19th century. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

MA 1903 finally codified the distinction between the organized militia, and the unorganized militia. The distinction had existed in practice, and in most state laws since before the Civil War, yet had not been recognized in federal law until 1903. The organized militia were those non-professional military organizations recognized by the states.<sup>29</sup> The unorganized militia consisted of most of the rest of the adult males who did not belong to the federal military or to an organized militia organization. The National Guard concept was for a state-based military force that could serve the state as organized militia when needed, while also being able to through peacetime training to competently augment the Regular Army during war-time. However, the old Constitutional limits on the potential federal uses of militia—the same ones that prevented the militia from crossing into Canada during the War of 1812—remained in effect, and so the ability of the organized militia, even if called the National Guard, to participate in an expeditionary force was doubtful. While the question of whether National Guard units could serve on federal service as federalized militia was never in doubt, its ability to serve under the Constitutional authority of Congress to “raise and support armies” remained unclear.

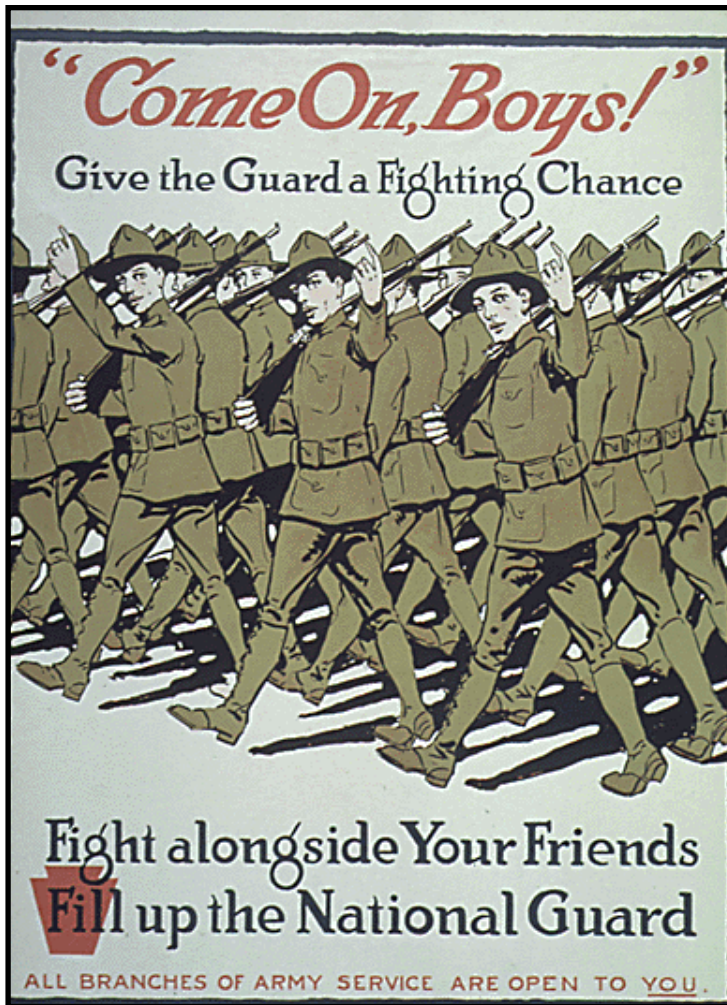


Figure 1.4. A World War I National Guard recruiting poster. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

The last time the National Guard, serving as federalized militia, augmented the Regular Army was in 1916. In response to the raid by Francisco "Pancho" Villa and his men on the town of Columbus, New Mexico, a US Army expeditionary force under Brig. Gen. John J. Pershing was sent into northern Mexico to break up the raiding forces. While the Pershing expedition was in Mexico, further raids along the border led President Woodrow Wilson to call up National Guard units from all states for duty on the border. However, the National Guard served as federalized militia, and was not amalgamated into the Army.<sup>30</sup> As federalized militia, the

Guardsmen on the border were forbidden to cross into Mexico, unless in hot pursuit of an invading force.<sup>31</sup>

In 1916, as a result of the war in Europe, and problems on the southern border, Congress passed the *National Defense Act of 1916* (NDA 1916).<sup>32</sup> Under NDA 1916, the National Guard assumed its long-sought standing as both organized militia of the states and reserve of the Army. The president could bring the National Guard into federal service to augment the Regular Army during a national emergency in a traditional militia role such as repelling an invasion or to enforce laws. But, more importantly, other sections of NDA 1916 would overcome the constitutional prohibitions of using state forces beyond the national borders. Under NDA 1916, all National Guard officers and men had to take a new oath swearing to defend the United States as well as their state. The new oath allowed the National Guard to accompany the Army beyond the national borders, but it would do so as part of the Army, not militia.<sup>33</sup> Officers in the National Guard would have to have a federal commission in the National Guard of the United States as well as a state commission.<sup>34</sup> Which commission they served under depended on whether the state or federal government had called them up. All adult men who were not in the Regular Army, Navy, or Marine Corps, or in their states' organized militia—the National Guard and naval militia—still formed the unorganized militia.<sup>35</sup> Only a few specific categories of men, such as clergymen and the insane, were exempt.

Although Congress would tinker with the relationship between the Regular Army and National Guard in the decades after the passage of NDA 1916, the 1916 Act established the main points of that relationship to the present. It also meant the end of the concept of using state militia as such as a means of expanding the Army during wartime. The concept implicit in the Constitution, as well as in NDA 1916, of the federalized militia was rarely used in the twentieth century, and only in unusual circumstances. One such incident was in 1957, when President Dwight D. Eisenhower federalized the entire Arkansas National Guard during unrest over the integration of Little Rock High School. The place of duty for most Guardsmen was at their armories to prevent Governor Orval Faubus from using the Guard on state status to prevent integration. By the end of November, most of the federal soldiers had left the state and most of the Guardsmen had been discharged from federal active duty. A task force of about 430 Army National Guardsmen remained on federal active duty to maintain order at the high school.<sup>36</sup> But such uses of the Guard were rare, and instead, most of its use by the federal government would be as part of the Army. When carrying federal duties, the Guard would legally be a

federal force, as defined by the “raise and support armies” clauses rather than the militia clauses of the Constitution.

Although NDA 1916 stated that the only organized militia the states could maintain were the National Guard and naval militia, some states continued to maintain other organized militia units that remained outside of the National Guard. However, these companies, such as the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts, and the Governor’s Horse Guard in Connecticut, were almost entirely ceremonial, and had not performed traditional militia functions in generations. Despite provisions in NDA 1916 prohibiting such units, these and a few other units that were technically organized militia, continued on as before. Their officers received commissions from their states, although, unlike National Guard officers, they held no concurrent federal commission, and had no federal warfighting role.

But such organizations in the state militia did, obliquely, relate to another remnant of the old militia system, the state commission given as an honorary rank. While Kentucky’s state rank of colonel is the most well-known today, the practice was much more widespread prior to the Second World War. States such as Georgia, Tennessee, Indiana, and others commonly granted state rank in the militia to honored residents. The rank was in the unorganized militia. Typically the granted rank was colonel, although prior to the twentieth century, other ranks were also used. Recipients often styled themselves as “Colonel” in public and private life. Nebraska took a more creative path when in 1931, a lieutenant governor who was serving as acting governor realized he could commission some prominent Nebraskans, many of them his friends, in the non-existent state navy. The commissions, done in a humorous manner, were in the rank of Admiral in the Great Navy of the State of Nebraska. Today, the state has more admirals than the US Navy, Coast Guard, National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration, and Public Health Service combined. These ranks came from actual state commissions in the militia, but the idea of the holders of such commissions actually being expected to command state troops during an emergency had become an absurdity in the twentieth century.

Despite the apparent sidelining of officers holding only state commissions from federal warfighting, the use of state militia during wartime was not completely over. Since the NDA 1916 forbade the states from maintaining any organized militia outside of the National Guard and naval militia and also required that the entire National Guard be brought into federal service before any other forces were raised for war, the federal mobilization of the National Guard shortly after the United States declared war

on Germany in the spring of 1917 meant that the states were left during wartime without their primary institution for responding to unrest or natural disasters. Congress amended the NDA 1916 to allow states to create organized militia units that were not part of the National Guard for duties within their state. More than half of the states created some organized militia force, usually called a “home guard,” during World War I, although standards varied widely. For officers, states drew heavily on former National Guard officers, as well as former officers of the Regular Army.<sup>37</sup> But officers in such forces served only under state commissions.

During the Second World War, the states, with the encouragement of the army, which did not want to have to use federal soldiers to respond to riots or disasters, again created new organized militia organizations. Normally called State Guards, they again drew heavily on former National Guard and Regular Army officers to provide leadership. The officer’s state commission gave him the authority to command state forces. Some officers that also held federal Reserve commissions, but had not yet been activated, were allowed to serve in such state units without endangering their Reserve commissions. The army actually encouraged the few men holding Reserve commissions who had not been called up to serve in such state forces as a way for the army to provide some influence on them.<sup>38</sup>

Such purely state forces were largely disbanded after the end of each World War, but in 1956, after the mixed response to the Korean War, Congress changed US Code on the matter, and states were able to maintain militia forces during peacetime as a hedge against a future loss of the National Guard to its federal warfighting mission. Such forces have waxed and waned over the decades, and currently around half the states maintain some organized militia outside of their National Guard. Most State Guard forces, or State Defense Forces, as they are increasingly called, exist in a cadre form, with the idea that they would expand to provide local services in the event the National Guard left state control to perform its federal wartime function. While such forces can and have relieved the federal military from domestic duties during wartime, they are not part of the federal military, and have no warfighting function.

Militia was the main military force of the British colonies in what later became the United States. Militia was seen as the main military force in the newly independent nation, although its role was soon eclipsed by the creation of a Regular Army. Still, the militia was seen as the main force to augment the Regular Army in time of war in the early decades of the Republic. However, as wars increasingly were fought outside of the territories of the nation, the use of militia became constitutionally problematic.

But militia gave birth to two other, but closely related institutions—Volunteers and National Guard—that would in turn become important institutions for expanding the Army during wartime. The creation of the National Guard as it would be known in the twentieth century was still many decades away, but the idea of using Volunteer regiments to augment the Regular Army during wartime developed soon after Independence.

## Notes

1. US Constitution, Article 1, Section 8, Clause 16.
2. The English militia can be traced to an institution known as the “Fyrd” in Saxon areas of Britain. The Fyrd enrolled free men for training in the use of weapons for local and kingdom defense. Over the years, the Fyrd developed into the General Levy, which, like the Fyrd, was based on the obligation of all able-bodied free men to perform military service within their own districts, and in the event of invasion or rebellion, march to any part of the kingdom for service. See C. Warren Hollister, *Anglo-Saxon Military Institutions on the Eve of the Norman Conquest* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1962).
3. Jack S. Radabaugh, “The Militia of Colonial Massachusetts,” *Military Affairs* 18 (1954); 2. See also his “The Military System of Colonial Massachusetts, 1690-1740.” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1965, which focuses on the critical years when wars against the French led to more British involvement in the colonial militia.
4. Michael D. Doubler, *I Am the Guard: A History of the Army National Guard, 1636-2000* (Washington: GPO, 2001), 16. See also Richard P. Gildrie “Defiance, Diversion, and the Exercise of Arms” The Several Meanings of Colonial Training Days in Colonial Massachusetts” *Military Affairs* 52 (April 1988); 53-55, and Ronald L. Bucher “The Colonial Militia as a Social Institution: Salem, Massachusetts, 1764-1775” *Military Affairs* 37 (December 1973); 125-30.
5. Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, ed., *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, Vol. 5* (Boston: W. White, 1854), 30.
6. Shurtleff, 30.
7. Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1763* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 225-229.
8. Kyle F. Zelner, *A Rabble in Arms: Massachusetts Towns and Militiamen During King Philips War* (New York University Press, 2009), 28, 33, 40-69.
9. France did retain two small islands off the south coast of Newfoundland, St. Pierre and Miquelon, as well as several islands in the Caribbean.
10. Robert K. Wright, Jr., *The Continental Army* (Washington, DC: The Center of Military History, 2006), 56-57, 317-325; and, Christopher S. Wren, *Those Turbulent Sons of Freedom: Ethan Allen's Green Mountain Boys and the American Revolution* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018), 67.
11. For more information the use of the militia to enforce revolutionary discipline during the War for Independence, see John W. Shy, “The Military Conflict Considered as a Revolutionary War,” in *A People Numerous and Armed: Reflections on the Military Struggle for American Independence* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1990, revised edition).
12. Articles of Confederation, Article VII.
13. US Constitution, Article I, Section 8, Clause 16.
14. US Constitution, Clause 15.



15. Doubler, *I Am the Guard*, 67.

16. *Militia Act of 1792: An Act more effectually to provide for the National Defence by establishing a Uniform Militia throughout the United States*, ch. 33, sec. 1, *Statutes at Large of the United States of America* 1:271-274 (1846).

17. *An Act More Efficiently to provide for the National Defence by establishing a Uniform Militia throughout the United States*, ch. 33, sec. 1, *Statutes at Large of the United States of America* 1:274 – 276 (1846).

18. *Volunteer Act of 1806: An Act authorizing a detachment from the Militia of the United States*, ch. 32, sec. 2-5, *United States Statutes at Large* 2:383-384 (1845). This was the first act authorizing the president to call for Volunteers corps from the states.

19. *Volunteer Act of 1806*, ch. 32, sec. 2-5.

20. Martha Derthick, *The National Guard in Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), 15., also Russell F. Weigley, *History of United States Army* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1967), 156-157; also, Doubler, *I Am the Guard*, 90.

21. In slave-holding areas, a greater percentage of the white male population participated in the organized militia. However, it formed more a posse against the threat of slave insurrection than a force to guard against invasion.

22. Frederick P. Todd, "Our National Guard," *Military Affairs* 5 (Summer 1941): 73-86, 152-170. Although Todd's article was written before the U.S. entered World War II, it remains one of the clearest and most correct essays on the constitutional underpinnings of the National Guard.

23. Doubler, *I Am the Guard*, 68-69.

24. John K. Mahon, *History of the Militia and National Guard* (New York: Macmillan, 1983), 78-82

25. Robert S. Chamberlain, "The Northern State Militia," *Civil War History* 4 (June 1958): 105-109.

26. *Militia Act of 1903: An Act to Promote the efficiency of the militia and for other purposes*, ch. 196, sec 1, *Statutes at Large of the United States of America* 32:774-780 (1904).

27. Jim Dan Hill, *The Minuteman in War and Peace: A History of the National Guard* (Harrisburg: The Stackpole Company, 1964), 328

28. Derthick, *The National Guard in Politics*, 26.

29. In addition to the National Guard, a few states also maintained a naval militia as part of their organized militia.

30. Charles H. Harris III and Louis R. Sadler, *The Great Call Up: The Guard, the Border, and the Mexican Revolution* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015), 66-76.

31. John Listman, "Old Dominion's Wartime Maneuvers along the Rio Grande, in *The National Guard Magazine* 46 (May 1992), 45.

32. *National Defense Act of 1916; An Act for making further and more effectual provisions for the National Defense, and for other purposes, Statutes at Large of the United States of America*, vol. 39, part 1, sec. 166-217 (Washington: GPO, 1917), 166-217.

33. *Militia Act of 1903*, sec 3.
34. US Const. sec. 8, art. 12, and sec. 2, art. 1.
35. *National Defense Act of 1916*.
36. Paul J. Scheips, *The Role of Federal Military Forces in Domestic Disorders, 1945-1992* (Washington DC: Center of Military History, 2005), 45-68.
37. Barry M. Stentiford, *The American Home Guard: The State Militia in the Twentieth Century* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002).
38. Annual Report of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau for 1941, 33.



## Chapter Two

### Volunteers

Militia showed itself a poor vehicle through which to expand the Army for the wars the nation faced. Instead, a related institution—the Volunteers—rose to fill the role of augmenting the Army for war. Militia's strong links to its home states, Constitutional limits on its employment, and lack of enthusiasm by the states to enforce the militia obligation made it unreliable. In response to the uncertainty over the use of a militia regiments outside of its home state, Congress in 1806 provided the necessary legislation for temporary regiments raised by the states to augment the federal army.<sup>1</sup> The *Volunteers*, as these forces were dubbed, from 1806 until the United States entered World War I in 1917, were the main vehicle through which the US Army expanded for war. The Volunteer Act of 1806 authorized the federal government to augment the Regular Army by accepting regiments raised by the states for a prior agreed upon period; in essence repeating the practice from the colonial wars, when regiments raised by the colonies augmented the British Army. The states raised Volunteer regiments through their militia systems, but would be detached from their respective state for the duration of their federal service. The Volunteer officers' state commissions received federal recognition. The time a Volunteer regiment remained in federal service could be counted in days, months, or even years, but was always legally contracted before the regiment officially entered federal service.

The concept of the Volunteer regiment—a single group of men organized, mustered in, serving, and discharged as a group—was one of the main weaknesses in the Volunteer system. When the men in a Volunteer regiment entered federal service, it was for a specified length of time. All men were to enter and leave federal service on the same day. But over the period of federal service for a Volunteer regiment, especially the ones raised for three years, men left the regiment due to illness, desertion, death, or other causes. Regular Army regiments, being enduring formations that existed during war and peacetime, simply recruited new members to fill vacancies. But the Volunteer system did not allow for new recruits to join for the balance of the regiment's time in federal service. As a result, Volunteers regiments were at their peak of strength on their first day of federal service and would thereafter decline. Many regiments left federal service with less than half of their original strength.

Until the twentieth century, the US Army was organized around the regiment. A regiment could have between eight and twelve companies (or troops for cavalry) depending on the period. It had one colonel who was the commander, and he was normally assisted by a lieutenant colonel and a major, and often a lieutenant who served as adjutant. The regiment also had a sergeant major. Battalions were simply two or more companies operating together and did not exist as enduring formations. A US Army infantry company in the nineteenth century had three officers: a captain, a first lieutenant, and a second lieutenant. The company also had a complement of non-commissioned officers, of which the first sergeant was the top. All NCOs were appointed by, and received their authority from, the company commander. NCO rank only applied while in that company and if an NCO transferred to a different company, he usually returned to the rank of private. Platoon leaders were sergeants. Lieutenants normally served at whatever detail the captain assigned them, and stood ready to take command in the captain's absence. The idea was by watching and assisting the captain, the lieutenants would learn what it took to run an Army company. However, since every officer below the rank of brigadier general normally belonged to one of the authorized regiments in the Army, in practice this meant that very few regiments had their full complement of officers because officers were dispatched to serve as liaisons in other countries, to observe foreign wars, on recruiting duties, or to do the myriad duties required of the Army in Washington, DC.

Volunteer regiments were expected to be organized along the lines of Regular Army regiments, although prior to their induction for federal service, no mechanism existed to force them to be.<sup>2</sup> Volunteer regiments augmented the Regular Army during the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, and the Spanish-American and Philippine Wars, as well as during numerous Indian wars. In theory, Volunteer regiments were to be raised at the local level using pre-existing militia companies but with the decline in the militia as a functioning institution in much of the nation in the early nineteenth century, most war-time Volunteer regiments were recruited and organized specifically for federal service. The men in the regiments were just that—volunteers. While the men who volunteered would receive the same pay as the equivalent ranks in the Regular Army, and often received additional benefits from their state, nothing forced them to join. In most states, officers for Volunteer companies were elected by the men, following the militia tradition. The officers of each company would then elect their own regimental officers. The names of those elected to serve as officers would be submitted to the governor of the

state, who would then issue the elected men commissions in the state militia. Or governors could appoint whomever they wanted. Each company commander would in turn appoint the non-commissioned officers (NCOs) in the company.

The election of officers was a cherished part of the American militia tradition. Election had become a cornerstone of American militia culture. The widespread use of election of officers in the militia, and thus in the Volunteers, was looked at askance by Regular officers, who long held it as an example of the amateurish nature of militia and Volunteers. However, that amateurishness was exactly the reason most Americans felt comfortable relying on the Volunteers to expand the Army for war. Some Regular Army officers understood that temporary units drawn from a civilian community had different dynamics than a Regular unit, and accepted that while election would be disastrous in the Regular Army, it perhaps sufficed for temporary, community-based military units. Election of officers was based on the theory that the non-professional soldiers in the ranks would be more willing to follow a leader they had chosen, rather than one assigned over them. The statesman Daniel Webster went so far as to say that Americans would prefer to die under incompetent officers they chose rather than serve under strangers.<sup>3</sup> In the early Republic, political theory, especially among Federalists, held that people should and would elect their “natural betters,” whether that be in civilian government or military leadership.

Men joined these companies in the expectation that they would fight, and that they would do so alongside men they knew. Ideally the men elected local leaders of businesses or government as officers in the Volunteer regiments. Such men often had taken an active role in the organization of the Volunteer company in the first place. This system was believed to produce coherent companies and regiments in a short time. Regular Army officers and would-be reformers increasingly came to see the election of officers in the militia, and thus in the Volunteer regiments, as a weakness. However, the system had staunch defenders, and not just in the militia itself. Leadership through election was seen as very American and thought to serve as a hedge against the militarism many saw as inherent in a standing army.

The men elected as officers in the Volunteer regiments often had some previous military experience, in the militia, the Regular Army, and in the early days, serving with the British. Others had some rudimentary military training at college. Indeed one of the original concepts when the United States Military Academy at West Point was founded in 1802 was

that most graduates would spend only a little time in the Regular Army before returning to civilian life. These men were expected to return to active service with the Volunteers during wartime, providing much of the officer corps for the Volunteer regiments, or at least leavening the quality of the officers in these regiments. However, the men of a Volunteer company could elect an officer with no previous military experience or education. Fortunately, most Volunteer officers took their military duties seriously and often read widely on the subject or watched more experienced men to try to make themselves better officers. However, the quality of Volunteer officers varied greatly, and while many took their duties seriously and earnestly applied themselves to their military tasks, others paid scant attention to their duties. Due to the nature of the Volunteer companies, where members expected to return to civil life together after federal service, few became martinets.

Governors, usually through their adjutant general, had the authority to commission militia and Volunteer officers. Knowing this, some would-be Volunteer officers bypassed the election system and used political connections to obtain commissions. Men sought commissions because they felt their education or success in business had made it natural that they command men in war, while others sought Volunteer service as a way to expand their political opportunities. More damaging to the reputation of the Volunteer officers were those who sought high military positions as an opportunity to enrich themselves through various schemes of graft.

Until changes enacted during the Civil War, all Volunteer regiments were formed under state authority, and a regiment often spent days or even months on state active duty until it was mustered into federal service. While on state active duty Volunteers received pay from their state. State pay rates for soldiers on active duty could vary widely, although most were based on federal pay rates. Once in federal service, Volunteers received the same pay for their ranks as the Regulars. Usually, during the mustering in process, the Articles of War were read to the Volunteers, along with the admonition that they were now soldiers of the United States and under military law. The state commissions of the officers were recognized by the federal government. The period Volunteers were in federal service might be measured in the matter of days, normally 100 days; or it might be measured in months—3 months, 9 months, or even 36 months, but the length of service was fixed between the state government and the federal government before the regiment was mustered in to federal service. Once that period expired, nothing could legally keep an individual soldier in federal service if the man did not volunteer again. Volunteers expected to be trans-

ported back to the place where they were originally mustered into federal service—often their state capital or state training camp—for discharge by the date of their expiration of term of service.

The Volunteer officer's standing as an officer in the United States Army lasted only as long as his Volunteer unit was in federal service. His date of rank was the date when he was mustered into federal service, or promoted if still in federal service. Regular officers sometimes chafed when a Volunteer officer's rank placed the Volunteer above him, but in general, most officers, whether Regular or Volunteer, accepted the hierarchy. Upon demobilization and discharge of the individual officer, or the whole Volunteer regiment, the officer's rank and authority to command at the federal level went away. Whether or not the former Volunteer officer's state commission and rank continued depended on the state militia structure. A state government, usually through the governor, might continue the officer's commission in the state militia, but this state commission was not always granted or even desired. Regardless, former Volunteer officers who had seen combat (or not) were often addressed by their military rank in formal and informal situations for the rest of their lives.

Volunteer officers received their commissions from their state governors through their state militia. Once a regiment so raised was accepted into federal service, it was technically detached from the state militia. However, while in federal service, only their state government, usually through the governor, could remove an officer no matter how incompetent he proved to be.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, if a Volunteer officer resigned from service, was killed, or received an injury, only his state governor could name a replacement. Sometimes this replacement was chosen by a new election, but occasionally each officer would move up one rank and the first sergeant would become a second lieutenant. On the other hand, the governor could simply appoint someone from outside the regiment to fill an officer position, perhaps as a political favor, or to appoint someone with a proven military record.

In 1811, just prior to the declaration of war by the United States Congress against Great Britain, the Regular Army contained around 5,200 enlisted men and 396 officers.<sup>5</sup> To augment this regular force, President James Madison asked Congress to make an allotment for 50,000 Volunteers from the states, although Congress voted for only 30,000 Volunteers. In April of 1812 Congress also asked the governors of the states to maintain a force of 80,000 militia to be ready to answer the call if needed. At the time, about 71 officers of the Regular Army were graduates of West Point, and they were scattered throughout the Army, mostly in the compa-





Figure 2.1. Kentucky Rifles at Battle of Thames in War of 1812. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

ny grades. With the declaration of war, Congress substantially increased the authorized strength of the Regular Army, raising it to 35,603 men in 17 Infantry regiments, four Artillery regiments, one regiment of Dragoons, and some Engineers and other supporting units. The actual number of men in these formations remained far below the authorized tables of organization, but Congress authorized the addition of 13 new regiments. To fill the Regular Army to its authorized strength, Congress provided cash payment of bounties for enlistees, plus a promise of a grant of 160 acres of federal land in the West upon honorable discharge. Despite these enticements, actual strength of the Regular Army grew to only about 15,000 Regulars by the end of 1812, although it would peak at about 38,186, of whom 2,271 were officers, by the end of the war.<sup>6</sup> The governors were not much better at raising their militia, and fell far short of the 80,000 militiamen requested to be ready to assist the federal soldiers.

One of the most pressing problems for both the Regulars as well as for the Volunteers was to find suitable officers. In the Regular Army, regimental leadership was divided between rather elderly Revolutionary War veterans, who commanded most of the older regiments, and those appoint-

ed direct from civilian life through political connections to command the new regiments. A related problem was the status of the state-raised forces during the war, with the distinction between Volunteers and militia unclear. Most of the war took place within United States territory, and thus militia could be used to augment federal troops, whether they were Regulars or Volunteers. Based on a strict reading of the Constitution, many within the Regular Army, as well as within the Volunteers themselves, saw the Volunteer regiments as federalized militia rather than federal soldiers and thus still technically militia.<sup>7</sup> This uncertainty became an issue when regiments from Vermont and New York declined to cross the border into Canada on constitutional grounds.

The Volunteers, however, provided the bulk of the federal military forces during war. Despite all the difficulties, in some ways the War of 1812 can be seen as an example of how the Volunteer system was supposed to function, with the Regular Army providing the long-term professional military force around which the wartime army enlarged mainly by Volunteer regiments could form. However, the uneven quality of the Volunteers—and especially in the Volunteer officers—left much dissatisfaction within the Regular Army. Additionally, despite the rather clear language of the Volunteer Act of 1806 as to whether state-raised Volunteers fell under the “raise and support armies” clause or the “calling forth the militia” clause of the Constitution, uncertainty remained.

With the end of the war in early 1815, the Volunteers returned to their home states and were released from federal service, and then released from active duty by their states, and returned to civilian pursuits. Those who found they enjoyed military service—or at least that it provided a level of support that they found agreeable—could enlist in the Regular Army, or, if they wanted something less total, could perhaps join a local volunteer militia company. A few Volunteer officers of proven abilities might be offered commissions in the Regular Army. The War of 1812 demonstrated some of the drawbacks of relying on state-raised Volunteer regiments during wartime, yet the results also showed the strengths of the decentralization of the United States. But the institution of the state-raised Volunteer regiments in federal service entered into a hiatus that would last some three decades, with a few minor exceptions.

The Second Seminole War (1835 to 1842) was one of those exceptions to the hiatus in the use of Volunteers to augment the Regular Army in the decades between the ending of the War of 1812 and the war with Mexico in 1846. The Second Seminole War, fought in Florida, eventually involved all units of the Regular Army at one time or another. Volunteer regiments

soon started to arrive, but their utility was questionable. One of the first Volunteer regiments to arrive was the First Missouri Mounted Volunteers, with about 600 men. However, General Zachary Taylor believed only 132 men from the First Missouri were fit enough for fighting, and in December of 1837, employed them in front of his Regulars during a fight against Seminoles in a swampy area.<sup>8</sup> While General Taylor received harsh criticism from the government of Missouri, which charged that he had put the Volunteers out in front of his Regulars so that the Volunteers would receive the brunt of the Indian attack. Taylor countered that he needed his Regulars behind the Volunteers to ensure discipline and prevent a rout.<sup>9</sup>

Congress later authorized new Volunteer regiments to serve for either three or six months. This new authorization led to Volunteer regiments coming from Louisiana, Georgia, Tennessee, and Missouri. Two separate companies of Volunteers came from Pennsylvania and a single company from the District of Columbia and another from New York. Florida of course also formed regiments for the war, although the Florida Volunteers were often described as dirty and ill-disciplined by the Regular officers. Major General Thomas S. Jesup of the Regular Army, who commanded the soldiers in Florida, had at one point some 9,000 men under his command, of whom over 4,000 were Volunteers. General Jesup found that many of these Volunteers arrived too late to be of service. Regular officers continually questioned the discipline and fitness for service of many of the Volunteers, and believed their tendency to be cruel toward the Indians made the job of subduing the Seminoles even more difficult.

The Second Seminole War took place in lands the United States claimed as under its sovereignty, so the question of whether the Volunteers were under the Army clauses of the Constitution or under the federalized militia concept never became an issue. Certainly Florida had both Volunteers and militia active during the war; the only apparent distinction was that militia remained under state control and received state pay, whereas Florida Volunteers in theory were under Army control, and received federal pay.<sup>10</sup> But for Volunteer units from other states, the distinction was moot.

The next use of the Volunteers raised through the state militia systems and mustered into federal service came during the Mexican-American War (1846-1848). Prior to the start of the war, in 1845, the Regular Army was only slightly larger than it had been just before start of the War of 1812, with about 7,700 enlisted men with 826 officers.<sup>11</sup> The Army was organized into eight Infantry regiments, two Dragoon regiments, and four Artillery regiments, in addition to staff and other functional troops. Congress hoped to avoid one of the mistakes of the War of 1812, when it



Figure 2.2. The Mississippi Rifles in the Mexican-American War. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

authorized the expansion of the Regular Army far beyond what it could plausibly recruit. Instead, the increases in the Regular Army were more modest.<sup>12</sup> Much of the expansion would be accomplished by filling the existing structure rather than only by creating new Regular regiments. The peacetime Regular Army had been intentionally undermanned. At the start of the Mexican-American War, a Regular Army Infantry company contained 64 privates, while its war-time strength would be 100 privates.<sup>13</sup> To encourage enlistment in the Regular regiments, Congress authorized men to sign up for the duration of the war, rather than for the five-year enlistment normally used by the Regular Army.<sup>14</sup> As in the War of 1812, honorably discharged soldiers would receive a federal land grant. But along with expanding the number of men per company, Congress still expanded the number of regiments in the Regular Army.

But the expanded Regular Army would not be enough to fight the war, especially because many men eligible for military service would join a Volunteer regiment but would never think of enlisting in the Regular Army. In May, 1846, Congress authorized the raising of 50,000 Volunteers for the war. Unfortunately, the administration of President James P. Polk believed the war would be short, and Volunteers were initially mustered to serve for one year only, with some regiments mustering in for as little as three months.

President Polk delegated to the states that choice on the length of service for each regiment.<sup>15</sup> The crucial decision of who should serve as officers in these regiments was also left to the states. Most states selected officers through the normal militia system, which again meant election of company officers by the men in the company, and the election of regimental officers by the company officers. States that raised two or three regiments formed a brigade and got to commission a brigadier general to command it. Governors usually selected the generals, sometimes from the field grade officers, and often not. All Volunteer officers received state commissions, and their federal date of rank was again the date they were accepted into federal service. Many Regular Army officers were offended to see that, while they had completed West Point and served in the Regular Army for perhaps a decade before they made the rank of captain, men who had failed out of West Point or who had been dismissed from the Regular Army could come back into the Army through the Volunteers with field grade rank.<sup>16</sup>

After the initial battles in northern Mexico failed to bring Mexico to terms acceptable to the United States, Lt. Gen. Winfield Scott began a new campaign that took control of the east coast port of Veracruz, and began an advance on Mexico City. The war looked likely to last longer than the one year for which most of the Volunteers had signed up for. After the initial Volunteer regiments' term of service expired, Congress required that all new Volunteer regiments serve for the duration of the war. But as the call went out for new Volunteer regiments, news from the war came back to the United States via letters and newspaper articles informing people at home of the irregular warfare and of the high death rates from disease. The romance of the war was fading fast and later calls for Volunteers found recruiting much slower and more difficult. States and the federal government began offering more incentives, such as payment advances and grants of up to 160 acres of public land to those who joined.<sup>17</sup> Congress also authorized the president to call the militia of the states to federal service for six months. However militia was still under the prohibition of leaving the territory of United States, and since the fighting took place outside of the territory of the United States, this militia authorization was not used.

The Volunteers were enthusiastic but could be troublesome. Regarding combat, they could often boast with accuracy of their willingness to close with the enemy, but when not in combat other less laudable traits surfaced. They joined for adventure and glory, not to perform the myriad fatiguing details of military life that most Regulars had come to accept as normal. They chaffed at, and sometimes refused to perform, duties such

as sentry, picketing, and building defensive works. Volunteer camps were often notable for their untidy appearance and general filthiness. One of the problems with depending on Volunteers was that they served for only a specifically limited time. This problem became overt halfway through General Scott's drive to Mexico City, when seven Volunteer regiments neared the end of the year they had contracted for and demanded that they be transported home. Their departure cost Scott about half of his force, and he had to remain in place until May, when other Volunteer regiments that were to serve for the duration arrived to replace the departed.

Aside from contractual issues, Volunteers caused other headaches for the Regulars. Resentment against the relative youth and corresponding high rank of Volunteer officers remained a sore point with the Regulars, such as when a lawyer friend of President Polk named Gideon Pillow, with no previous military experience, was appointed to the rank of brigadier general, at the age of 35.<sup>18</sup> More serious was the tendency of the Volunteers to maintain slovenly camp discipline, which allowed illness to spread through their ranks, rendering their sick rolls 50-percent higher than that of the Regulars.<sup>19</sup> Finally, and most problematic, was the nature of the Volunteer soldier. Most joined the Volunteers to see action, not to participate in winning hearts and minds. They tended to look down on the Mexicans, especially their Roman Catholicism, and committed a host of rapes, robberies, and murders on almost a daily basis.<sup>20</sup> Some Volunteer regiments became notorious for their outrages perpetrated against Mexican civilians, all of which worked against General Scott's ideas of fighting a civilized war and not fueling a popular uprising against the Americans.

During the war, Congress tried a new method of raising forces by temporarily increasing the number of authorized regiments in the Regular Army. Beginning with the US Mounted Rifles in May, 1846, and with an additional ten regiments in February, 1847, the Regular Army expanded measurably. However these new, temporary regiments were not really Regular Army units, but more so Volunteer regiments recruited at the federal level rather than state. The regiments were to exist for the duration of the war only, and the men in them contracted to remain in the Army for that length of time too, with the standard promise of 160 acres at the end of their service.<sup>21</sup> Even in the crucial selection of officers, the Regular Army had no control, as President Polk made all the appointments, issuing temporary commissions to officers directly from civilian life to those that he believed suitable, or to whom he owed political favors. This experiment in federal organization and fielding of what were essentially Volunteer regiments would go on to see more use.

The most extensive use of Volunteer regiments came during the American Civil War (1861-1865). During that war, the Volunteers soon dwarfed the Regular Army in number and provided the bulk of the fighting force for the Union Army. As in the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, and some of the Indian wars, most Volunteer regiments were raised through the state militia systems and brought onto federal service for a term agreed to by the president and the governor of the regiment's home state. The president retained the authority to appoint and commission only the general officers—the commanders of brigades and higher formations.<sup>22</sup> In the response to President Abraham Lincoln's initial call for 100-day Volunteers, most of the units that responded were militia regiments that reorganized as Volunteers.<sup>23</sup> As in past wars, officers in Volunteer regiments were typically chosen by election and then commissioned by state governments. Some Volunteer officers had previous military service in the militia, as Volunteers, in the Regular Army, or at least had some military training at college. Others had no previous military experience. Their competence varied widely, but the experience of war usually inspired the less suitable to resign or seek service away from the front. Those who stayed often took their new responsibilities very seriously and sought by reading, asking, and observation to learn their required duties as quickly as possible.<sup>24</sup>

To provide some experienced officers for the new, state-raised Volunteer regiments, state adjutants general and governors sought former Regular officers who had returned to civil life. However, the opportunity for higher rank that such service in Volunteer regiments offered also led many serving Regular Army officers to write to the Secretary of War and ask to be given leave to allow them to return to their home state and take a commission in the Volunteers. After less than a year of war, the Secretary saw the utility of allowing Regular officers to leaven the Volunteers.<sup>25</sup> A captain in the Regular Army might have ten years or more of service, and the likelihood of reaching lieutenant colonel within the Regular Army within twenty years was slim. But by taking leave from the Regular Army and returning to his home state, he could potentially get a commission in the rank of colonel of Volunteers and serve as a regimental commander, and from there be promoted to general officer. The Regular Army commission and rank of such an officer remained, albeit in hiatus, as long as the officer remained in a leave status from the Regular Army and served on active service in the Volunteers. He would wear the rank, receive the pay, and be appropriately assigned based on his Volunteer rank. Upon leaving the Volunteers through resignation or the disbandment of that Volunteer regiment, he would return to the Regular Army at his Regular Army rank.





Figure 2.3. The 6th Wisconsin Volunteers in the Civil War. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

The Regular Army officer corps of the nineteenth century was promoted strictly on the basis of seniority. While the Regular Army expanded slightly during the Civil War, it was dwarfed by the Volunteer Army. Still Regular officers who were on leave to accept a commission with the Volunteers maintained their Regular Army commission and rank, and thus the Regular Army during the Civil War was stripped of many of its officers. However, promotions within the Regular Army were not much faster



during the Civil War because the officers on leave still held their rank and position in the Regular Army, and the Regular Army expanded very little during the war. An officer holding a Regular Army commission might stay away for up to four years serving in the Volunteers. When such an officer returned to the Regular Army, he reverted to his Regular Army rank in the same regiment. He might have promoted a grade in the Regular Army during his time with the Volunteers, but his Regular Army rank was certainly lower—often much lower—than the Volunteer rank he had held during the war.

None of this should be confused with the practice of brevet rank, which was used in the Volunteers as well as the Regular Army officer corps since 1812.<sup>26</sup> Brevet rank in its nineteenth-century incarnation was an honorary rank normally given to officers for conspicuously heroic deeds. The US Army prior to the twentieth century prided itself on its lack of medals and other such awards given to its troops, seeing those as monarchical and not in keeping with the values of a republic. The only exception was the Medal of Honor, first awarded in 1863, and originally awarded only to enlisted men. One of the honors that was available to enlisted soldiers and officers was to be mentioned in dispatches. Conspicuous gallantry in combat was often singled out for inclusion in official dispatches sent to the War Department. However, officers could also be brevetted for heroic action. For example, an officer holding a Regular Army commission as a captain, if he had done something exceptionally conspicuous in combat, might be brevetted to the rank of major. In most instances, this meant that while he would still be assigned to typical positions held by a captain and receive the pay of a captain, he would wear the rank of a major and would be addressed as a major. Such officers could act in their brevet rank during a court martial or when on detached duty, but in their assigned regiment, they could only act at their Regular rank.<sup>27</sup>

This situation—holding one rank through a Regular Army commission and a higher rank through brevet could be even more confusing when Volunteer rank was included. An officer with a Volunteer rank could also be brevetted, thus it was possible for a Regular Army officer in the 19th century to hold four different ranks simultaneously: he might hold the rank of captain in the Regular Army, with a brevet of major, yet also, while on leave from the Regular Army, have been commissioned as a lieutenant colonel in a Volunteer regiment. In such a capacity, he might have been brevetted to the rank of colonel. Thus such an officer could have been a captain, major, lieutenant colonel, and colonel, all at the same time. While serving as a Volunteer officer, he would have worn the rank of colonel,

while receiving the pay and assignments of a lieutenant colonel. If he resigned from the Volunteers or the regiment was disbanded, he would have reverted to his Regular Army rank of captain, although he would normally wear the insignia of a major. That said, many Regular Army officers continued to wear, and be addressed by, their highest rank, brevet or not, whether it was Regular or Volunteer.

The awarding of rank by brevet ended in 1869, from a belief that brevets had become too common, and that too many officers carried brevet rank awarded at the end of the Civil War. Officers with brevets were still allowed to use that rank, if it remained higher than their Regular rank, but the awarding of new brevets was stopped. In 1911, regulations recognized the potential for the awarding of brevet rank, but indicated that only the president could award brevet rank, and only the president could authorize an officer to hold command at his brevet rank.<sup>28</sup> The use of brevets remained rare in the twentieth century, and the introduction of medals and other forms of recognition during the First World War negated the utility of brevets to recognize valor, and the practice ended shortly after the First World War.<sup>29</sup>

The Civil War saw an important development in the Volunteer concept, when the federal government began forming and mustering in its own Volunteer regiments without state ties. These regiments were in some ways a new incarnation of the few Continental regiments, such as the Canadians, that General Washington was able to accept into the Continental Army during the War of Independence, and of the so-called Regular regiments created only for the duration of the Mexican-American War. The *US Volunteers*, as they were termed during the Civil War, were similar to state Volunteer regiments but were created at the federal rather than the state level. Unlike in the state-raised regiments, in the US Volunteers the federal government had the sole authority over the selection and commissioning of officers.

The men commissioned to lead the US Volunteers were almost all Regulars on leave from the Regular Army, graduates of West Point who had returned to civilian life, or former officers of state-raised Volunteer regiments who had proven their mettle. Officers held their Volunteer commissions solely from the federal government, but they were not Regular commissions, rather, they were temporary ones intended to last only as long as the war, and the expanded wartime army. The first of these US Volunteers were the First and Second Regiments of Sharp Shooters, created in the summer of 1861, mainly recruited from veterans who had entered the Army with state-raised Volunteers under President Abraham Lincoln's ini-

tial call for regiments to serve for 100 days. Rather than return home with their regiments upon the expiration of their initial term of service, some of these men chose to remain in federal service by joining the Sharp Shooter regiments. These two regiments served in the Army of the Potomac and were eventually amalgamated into a single regiment in 1864.

Once the Rubicon had been crossed of having the federal government create Volunteer regiments directly, other US Volunteer regiments followed. Many of these were in the so-called Invalid Corps. The Invalid Corps was originally created in April of 1863, using men who, due to wounds or disease, were not physically fit for frontline service, but were able enough to serve as guards, cooks, orderlies, or in performing other less physically-demanding tasks. Eventually the Invalid Corps grew to 224 regiments and 186 separate companies. The name, *Invalid Corps*, however, inspired little faith and was also seen as demeaning to many of the men in it. As a result, in 1864 the name was changed to the Veteran Reserve Corps.

The concept of the US Volunteers was also used to organize regiments of former Confederate soldiers recruited out of Union prisoner of war camps. These regiments were numbered as the First through Sixth Infantry Regiments of the US Volunteers. They were used on the frontier against Indians and were not used against the Confederacy. But one of the larger uses of the US Volunteer concept was in the organization of African American enlistees. While some states, beginning with the Massachusetts 54<sup>th</sup> Regiment, had organized regiments of African American soldiers as part of their federal quota for troops, the federal government itself began to organize African American regiments beginning in 1863. These regiments were initially called the United States Colored Volunteers, and later, United States Colored Troops (USCT). Many of the African Americans who served in the USCT were only recently liberated or escaped from slavery. Their officers were all white men who held US Volunteer commissions. The USCT eventually numbered 120 regiments of Infantry, 12 of Heavy Artillery, 1 of Light Artillery, and 7 of Cavalry. Their total number was around 186,000 men, amounting to around 10 percent of the Union Army by the end of the war. While many were used as laborers or as garrison troops, others did fight in battle and often fought with distinction. They were initially paid less than white troops, although their pay was brought to parity near the end of the war.

The career of George Armstrong Custer provides a vivid example of a Regular Army officer serving under a higher Volunteer rank. Famously graduating at the bottom of his West Point class in June of 1861, he re-

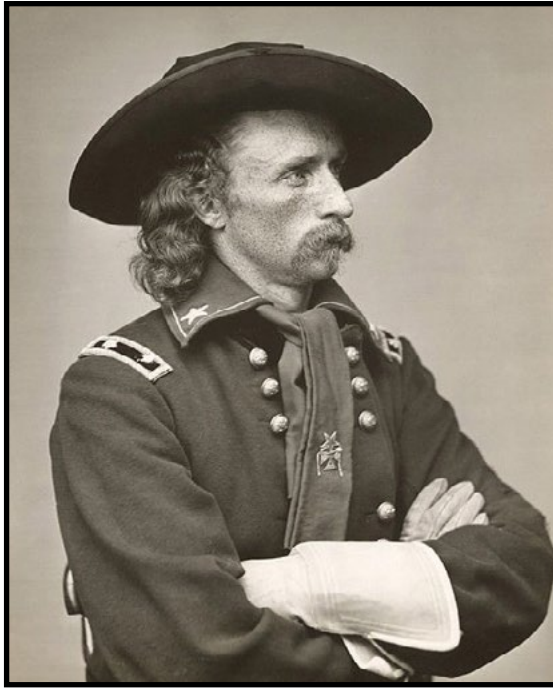


Figure 2.4. Major General George A. Custer. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

ceived a Regular Army commission as a second lieutenant in the Second Cavalry Regiment. As Regular Army officers with a West Point education were in demand, in the spring of 1862, Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan made him an *aide-de-camp* with the rank of captain, US Volunteers. When General McClellan was replaced by Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside, McClellan's staff was disbanded, and Captain Custer reverted to his Regular Army rank, which had risen to first lieutenant. Custer was eventually promoted back to captain in the US Volunteers while serving under Maj. Gen. Alfred Pleasonton. Custer lobbied the governor of Michigan for command of one of the new cavalry regiments being raised in that state, which would have brought him the rank of colonel in the Michigan Volunteers, but the governor turned him down, probably due to Custer's links with the Democrat McClellan. However, his disappointment did not last long, for on 28 June 1863, Custer was informed that he had been promoted in the US Volunteers from captain to brigadier general. He was 23 years old and the youngest general in the Union Army. After the Confederate surrender at Appomattox in May of 1865, he was promoted to the rank of major general in the US Volunteers. In December of that year, Major General

Phillip Sheridan tried to get a brevet promotion for Custer to the rank of brigadier general in the Regular Army but he could not get it approved. On 1 February 1866, with the US Volunteers disbanded, Custer's rank of major general went away, and he reverted to his Regular Army rank at the time, which has risen to captain. He would soon be promoted in the Regular Army to lieutenant colonel. However, whatever his Regular Army rank—and with it assignment and pay—he would be addressed as “general,” and wear the rank of a major general in most situations, as was the custom, for the rest of his life.<sup>30</sup>

Some unease remained over the quality of Volunteer officers commissioned directly from civilian life, and the early years of the Civil War seemed to demonstrate the problem of relying on a largely untrained non-professional officer corps to wage war. Men died needlessly until officers learned their trade. While this concern would in a large measure lead to the rise of the National Guard movement in the decades after the Civil War, during the war Congress considered the problem. One potential solution lay in collegiate educational programs. Aside from the US Military Academy at West Point, several colleges in the United States were organized in a military manor, the first being Norwich College in Vermont in 1819. Such colleges acquainted students with the rudiments of military life and gave them some familiarity with tactics. However willing graduates of such colleges were not enough to fill all the requirements for officers during a major war.

Partially in response to this perceived shortcoming in the educational background of the Volunteer officers, in 1862 Congress passed the Morrill Act, which provided federal lands to the states for the support of what were eventually called “land grant colleges.”<sup>31</sup> Under the Morrill Act, states were to use the grants to create and support state colleges where the education would be focused on topics that were of practical use to society, such as agriculture and mechanics. States received the land and could sell the land and use the proceeds to fund these colleges, and even use some of the grant to build the college on. One of the requirements for schools so funded was that they require all students to take courses in military tactics. The idea was that college graduates should know the rudiments of the military—how a company was organized and the basics of tactics, and be fit to serve at least as company grade officers should the need arise. However, the Army did not track graduates with the training, and no system of issuing some sort of reserve commission was instituted, so the benefits of the program for national defense in its first few decades are hard to measure.<sup>32</sup>

The last time the US Army used the Volunteers to expand for war was during the Spanish-American War (1898) and subsequent Philippine Insurrection (now commonly referred to as the Philippine War, 1899-1907). The Regular Army at the start of the war had about 28,000 men, hardly enough for the scope of the war as envisioned. The nation had another 115,000 or so men in the organized militia, although these men could not be ordered into federal service. Initially, the Army proposed to expand the Regular Army to about 104,000 men by enlarging companies from 70 to 200 men, and adding some new regiments, but this plan ran into political opposition. Eventually, through compromise, Congress authorized the Regular Army to expand to 62,000 men.<sup>33</sup> While the Regulars wanted a Volunteer forces of about 50,000 to augment the army, the initial call from the president was for 125,000 Volunteers. That number was later increased to 270,000 Volunteers mainly through pressure from Congressmen to get regiments raised by their home states onto federal service.<sup>34</sup> This number swamped the Army's ability to properly house, train, equip, or employ, and most Volunteers spent the war in camps in the American South fighting disease rather than Spaniards.

The Volunteer regiments mustered into federal service for the Spanish-American War were a mixed lot. While most were raised through the state militia systems, the president was authorized to accept up to 3,000 US Volunteers without any connection to a state.<sup>35</sup> But as in the initial call for Volunteer regiments during the Civil War, existing organized militia units reformed as Volunteers for the initial call for Volunteers. Many of these organized militia units called themselves *National Guard*, although the name had not been adopted by the federal government for organized militia. While the National Guard movement had been building in America in the decades prior to the Spanish-American War, organized militia, even if it called itself National Guard, was still constitutionally militia. As such, it could not be used except in the traditional militia roles of suppression of insurrection, repelling invasion, and enforcement of law. Under federal law, any National Guard battalion or regiment had the right to enter as a unit ahead of any Volunteer units organized specifically for the war, but the Guardsmen in those units had to volunteer as individuals, and they served as Volunteers. Any National Guard unit in which three-quarters of the members individually volunteered for federal service had to be taken in under their current organization, with the unit recruiting to make up any losses from individuals who refused to enter federal service. Officers of such units were issued federal Volunteer commissions upon acceptance into federal service. However, in a move long-sought by the Regulars—

corps or army commanders—all Regulars—could appoint a review board with the power to remove any Volunteer officers found incompetent.<sup>36</sup> No longer could governors protect incompetent Volunteer officers.

An example of a National Guard regiment entering federal service as Volunteers came from the Sixth Regiment of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia (MVM). When it was called by state authorities for service in the Spanish-American War, each man in the regiment had to volunteer individually for federal service. Legally, the members had no obligation to volunteer for federal service, and any member could decline to. Most of the men who made up the Sixth Regiment of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia did in fact volunteer for federal service. They also took in some recruits who joined specifically for the war with Spain. They then formed what was called the Sixth Massachusetts Volunteers. Legally the Sixth Massachusetts Volunteers was a different organization from the Sixth Regiment of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia, although it had the same structure, the same leadership, and most of the same enlisted men.<sup>37</sup> The Sixth Regiment, MVM, was placed in hiatus during the war while the Sixth Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers served on federal status. The Sixth Massachusetts fought in the Puerto Rican campaign, where its regimental commander resigned rather than face a board of Regular Army officers investigating his conduct during a firefight. A Regular Army colonel was then appointed by the Army to take command of the Sixth Massachusetts.<sup>38</sup>

Long after the war, Gen. John M. Palmer, who graduated from West Point in 1892 and retired from the Army in 1946, recounted an incident from the Spanish-American War that for him, underscored the problem of political influence in the selection of officers for the Volunteers. As a second lieutenant, of Infantry in the Regular Army, and an academy graduate, he was detailed to inspect and swear in so-called “Immunes,” which were companies of African Americans who were thought to be immune to Yellow Fever. These regiments had been among the US Volunteers the president had been authorized to accept directly into federal service, without state involvement. In this endeavor Second Lieutenant Palmer was allowed to employ two civilian clerks. One of his clerks was his younger brother who had recently been admitted to the bar and was looking for some adventure. Aside from a bit of military drill in high school, he had no military experience. In the Immune companies, all the enlisted men and lieutenants were black, but the company commander—a captain—was to be white. While making the rounds, Palmer and his aides met with a senator from their home state of Illinois, Shelby M. Cullom. Second Lieutenant Palmer hoped the Senator would appoint him to the Commissary Depart-

ment, which carried the temporary rank of captain. The senator declined, but later Palmer learned that through the pull of the senator, his brother had been appointed as a Volunteer captain for one of the Immunes companies that had been raised in Washington, DC.<sup>39</sup>

The Philippine War was the last time the US Army used the Volunteer concept to expand for war. After the initial conquest of the Philippines from the Spanish in 1898, the United States became involved in a prolonged war, first against the relatively conventional forces under Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, and then against a more irregular and disjointed guerrilla effort scattered around the islands. With the expiration of the terms of service for the state Volunteer regiments raised under the initial call for troops to serve against Spain in 1898, the United States Army began creating US Volunteer regiments in the islands. The Army recruited men and officers from the state-raised Volunteer regiment that were already in the Philippines, and later from other regiments in federal service elsewhere, and organized them into new regiments that had no state connection for service in the Philippines.<sup>40</sup>

The system of expanding the wartime army through the use of Volunteers lasted from its first authorization in 1806 until the entrance of the United States into the First World War in 1917. When Congress passed the legislation to allow President Woodrow Wilson to greatly expand the Army for that war, mainly through Selective Service, it included a provision that allowed President Wilson accept up to four Volunteer divisions. The president, however, did not exercise this authority as he feared that his political rival, former president Theodore Roosevelt, would command one of these divisions and he had no intention of giving Roosevelt such a stage to display his martial prowess. With that decision, the use of Volunteer regiments—whether state raised or federally raised—ended in the American military and never again would the Volunteers be the vehicle through which to augment the Regular Army for war. Instead, the role of the state-raised Volunteers, as well as the organized militia, would be fulfilled by an institution that had its origins in the reforms of the militia following the Civil War—the National Guard.



## Notes

1. *Volunteer Act of 1806: An Act authorizing a detachment from the Militia of the United States*, ch. 32, sec. 2-5, *United States Statutes at Large* 2: 383-384 (1845). This was the first act authorizing the president to call for Volunteers corps from the states.

2. John K. Mahon, *History of the Militia and National Guard* (New York: Macmillan, 1983), 52.

3. *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army, 1775-1945* (Washington: Center for Military History, 1955), 71.

4. This right of governors was originally codified in the Articles of Confederation, Article VII.

5. Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 566.

6. Weigley, 115, 118-119.

7. Weigley, 115, 118-119.

8. Mahon, 89.

9. Mahon, 89.

10. Mahon, 89-90.

11. Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 566.

12. Weigley, 182.

13. Weigley, 182.

14. Weigley, 183.

15. Weigley, 183.

16. William Addleman Ganoe, *The History of the United States Army* (Ash-ton, MD: Eric Lundberg, 1964), 200.

17. Peter F. Guardino, *The Dead March: A History of the Mexican-American War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017), 209.

18. Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 175.

19. Mahon, *History of the Militia and National Guard*, 92.

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## Chapter Three

### The National Guard

In the wake of the Civil War, military reformers searched for a way to increase the proficiency of non-Regular officers and regiments that would be acceptable to both Congress and the American people. Eventually, they reconsidered the organized militia. Organized militia units that trained in peacetime, with increased federal funding and especially with more Army oversight and assistance, were grudgingly considered as a potential vehicle for preparing units, and more importantly officers, to augment the Regular Army during wartime. From this idea the National Guard was born.<sup>1</sup>

Volunteer regiments, both state and federally raised, comprised most of the Union Army that won the Civil War, but the impetus to replace them with another means of building wartime armies began shortly after the Volunteers marched home. In the decades after the Civil War, the poor performance of some Volunteer regiments, especially of the officers, drew the attention of military reformers. What concerned them most was the inexperience of many Volunteer regiments when first in service that led to high casualty rates until men and officers learned the skills needed for war. Equally troubling were the states' willingness to commission officers without military qualifications. As the Regular Army officer corps of the post-Civil War era became increasingly professionalized, their contempt for militia and Volunteer officers also grew. Some Regulars went so far as to argue that only West Point-educated officers should receive Regular Army commissions during peacetime.<sup>2</sup>

Regular officers wanted to divorce the states from any role in raising military forces and instead create a reserve force that fell under complete federal control.<sup>3</sup> At the very least, the Regular officers wanted complete control over the selection and training of any non-Regular officers.<sup>4</sup> Implicit in that power was the ability to remove officers whom they found wanting, a concession they got for the Volunteers during the Spanish-American War. However, complete centralization of military organization ran counter to American values and found few supporters in Congress. State-based military forces were going to remain the primary means of expanding the Army during wartime for the foreseeable future.

The needs and desires of the Regulars coincided with those of reformers within the organized militia itself. Many militia officers were aware of its shortcomings and wanted to re-make the militia to increase its proficiency and enable it to continue to augment the Regular Army in

war. At heart, they wanted to ensure a continued role for the states in the raising of military forces. Proponents of the militia sought standardization and increased federal funds to make it the most suitable means of expanding the Army for war. The term “militia,” however, had amassed a lot of negative connotations in many states and increasingly the term *national guard* was used by organized militia units. The term “national guard” was first used by an American militia unit in 1824, when some companies of the New York militia adopted name to honor the hero of the American War of Independence, the Marquis de Lafayette, on his visit to New York that year. Lafayette had commanded the *Garde Nationale* during the French Revolution, and the name was Anglicized when adopted by New York.<sup>5</sup> The *Militia Act of 1903* later authorized, but did not require, states to adopt the term “national guard” for land forces in their organized militia. By 1916, federal law dubbed all land forces in the organized militia as “National Guard.”

Several decades would pass before the National Guard arrived at the form that one would find familiar today. Initially, National Guard units were little more than the old organized militia units with a new name. The new National Guard Association (NGA) was created by militia officers in 1879 specifically to lobby for reform of the militia, as well as increased federal support. The NGA soon began promoting the National Guard not only as a better state militia, but more importantly, as a suitable force to augment the Regular Army. The NGA wanted the National Guard to be federally recognized as the nation’s second line of defense, standing right behind the Regular Army. The new National Guard wanted two roles: first as state militia, ready to respond to state emergencies during peacetime; secondly, to fill the role of the Volunteers during wartime. With peacetime unit training, the National Guard would be, in theory, better trained and disciplined at the start of service than Volunteer regiments had been in the past. Some proponents of the National Guard even began to suggest that the nation would soon be able to do away with the Regular Army completely and rely solely on the National Guard for its defense.

That idea would gain little traction even among the most enthusiastic National Guard boosters. Of more immediate concern was the need to find a way around Constitutional limits governing the militia’s use —suppressing rebellion, enforcing law, and opposing invasion. All these tasks could only be performed within the territorial limits of the United States. But the Mexican-American War, and more recently the Spanish-American War and subsequent Philippine War suggested that future wars were likely to

occur outside of the United States, where militia could not go. If the National Guard was to be the means of augmenting the Regular Army during war, then it had to become something other than simply organized militia.

The transformation of the nineteenth century organized militia into the modern National Guard occurred through two key pieces of legislation, the *Militia Act of 1903* (MA 1903), and the *National Defense Act of 1916* (NDA 1916). The framers of MA 1903 hoped it would mold the National Guard into a reserve force for the Regular Army. The act authorized Guardsmen to be paid for two evening drills each month, and required militia units to spend five days training in the field annually.<sup>6</sup> More federal support and some standardization had arrived.

But constitutionally, the National Guard remained under the militia clauses of the Constitution and thus could not cross international borders. Even more problematic, governors retained the power to prevent a National Guard unit from entering federal service. Even with the governor's consent, National Guardsmen still needed to volunteer as individuals for federal service—they could not be drafted against their will.<sup>7</sup> But what really weakened MA 1903 in the eyes of Regulars was that no federal agency, including the Army, could remove a National Guard officer in federal service, no matter how incompetent.<sup>8</sup> For Regular Army officers, MA 1903 fell far short of what they wanted. The sections of NDA 1916 regarding the militia were included to address the problems with the National Guard remaining after the passage of MA 1903. Reformers hoped these two pieces of legislation would mold the National Guard into an effective reserve force for the Army.

The key change that would allow the National Guard to serve alongside the Regular Army worldwide was a new, combined federal and state oath all members of the National Guard had to take under NDA 1916. Any Guardsman who did not want to take the oath was to be discharged. The new oath meant that the National Guard was something other than simply the old organized militia under a new name. Once the Guardsmen in a unit took the oath, they held status as both organized militia of their state and as a reserve of the Army. Either the state or federal government could call the unit to active duty. When called, the men in the unit had an obligation to report. The oath meant that the Guard, when called up as part of the Army, was not limited by the Constitutional limits on the use of militia. The National Guard could be taken into federal service as part of the Army and sent beyond United States' territorial limits, without the former legal necessity of reforming as Volunteers, as had happened in the Spanish-American War.<sup>9</sup>

Along with requiring the dual oath for Guardsmen, the NDA 1916 created something new—the National Guard of the United States. Officers in the National Guard had to have two distinct commissions—a state commission and a federal commission. To remain in the National Guard, an officer had to have both. As with enlisted men who refused to take the new oath, any officer who could not or would not accept a federal commission in the National Guard of the United States was to be discharged from the National Guard. The state commission gave him the authority to command when in state service, and the National Guard of the United States commission gave him authority to command when in federal service.

Most Guardsmen took the new oath in the early summer of 1916. Those who did not want to take the new oath were discharged. Under the new oath, members no longer had the option of volunteering or not for federal service in the event that the federal government activated National Guard units. After taking the oath, all further federal service would be mandatory when called by the president.<sup>10</sup> In other words, volunteering for federal service occurred when the individual joined the National Guard and took the oath.

Theoretically, under NDA 1916, National Guard units inducted into the Army would retain their unit designations and basic structure of their regiments. However, the structure of companies and regiments were to be changed to match the Regular Army standards prior to mobilization.<sup>11</sup> The War Department and Army, acting under the authority of the president, dictated what types of units states had to maintain in the National Guard. Prior to NDA 1916, National Guard companies generally adopted whatever branch their members fancied, unless the state directed otherwise. Under NDA 1916, the Army directed whether a National Guard unit would be infantry, cavalry, artillery, quartermaster corps, or whatever it needed, to make a balanced force.<sup>12</sup> Alongside this increase of federal control came greatly increased federal funding for equipment, training, and even drill pay for Guardsmen.

NDA 1916 remains the watershed that created the modern National Guard. National Guard officers had to hold a federal National Guard of the United States commission, as well as state commission, while enlisted men were enlisted in both the National Guard of their state and as into the National Guard of the United States. When a National Guard unit was drafted into the Army of the United States, as had happened in August of 1917, the men in it were, in effect, discharged from the organized militia of their state and brought into the federal army.<sup>13</sup> The National Guard on active duty as part of the Army of the United States ceased to

be organized militia and was thus unhampered by the constitutional limits on militia. Once inducted, the National Guard fell under the sections of the Constitution that gave the federal government the power to “raise and support armies.”<sup>14</sup>

Having solved the legal and constitutional issues related to making the National Guard a reserve of the Army, the Army turned its attention to the issue that continually drew the attention of Regular Army officers regarding any non-Regular military forces—the selection and training of officers. While election remained a common means of selecting officers in the National Guard in most states until the entrance into the First World War, the standards to be eligible for election had steadily increased. Some states began formal training programs for officers. The Army developed the Series 10 correspondence courses, which provided some standardized training for potential officers. In most states, enlisted Guardsmen seeking commissions were encouraged to take the course to qualify for a commission. Massachusetts, one of the states that was at the forefront of militia reform, took a more direct approach to preparing future officers. Massachusetts established a training school in 1913 as a source of new National Guard officers, essentially what would later be called an Officers Candidate School (OCS). Guardsmen seeking commissions were assigned to the school for a year, and would perform their drills and summer training with the school. Guardsmen who completed the training school were placed on the statewide list of those eligible for commissions in the National Guard, and were commissioned as vacancies occurred.<sup>15</sup> The relatively compact nature of Massachusetts and its extensive street railway system made such a system plausible. The Massachusetts school was suspended when the United States entered the First World War, but reopened in 1927, and would become the model for the entire National Guard OCS system.<sup>16</sup>

The call-up of National Guard units from all states in 1916 for service along the Mexican Border occurred while NDA 1916 was being finalized, and thus the new law had little to no impact on the National Guard at the time. Also, the status of the National Guard units serving on the border was ambiguous, in that they were not amalgamated into the Army but served as federalized militia. Serving as federalized militia the National Guard could not cross the border into Mexico. Still, National Guard regiments were combined into brigades and divisions that were under the command of Regular Army officers, giving many Regular officers larger formations to command than had been possible since the Civil War. The Guard benefitted greatly from its year along the border, with the intensive Army training programs hardening the Guardsmen and weeded out many unfit officers.



Within a month of returning from the Mexican Border, the declaration of war by the United States against Germany on 6 April 1917 began the process of returning the National Guard to federal service. The frustrations of service on the border caused manning in the Guard to drop precipitously, to about 177,000 men, but concerns over the war in Europe and the desire to avoid the rumored conscription soon brought numbers back to around 377,000 Guardsmen, still below its authorized strength of almost 400,000.<sup>17</sup> The Guard actually began returning to active federal service in late March, when President Woodrow Wilson began calling up some units to protect key infrastructure from sabotage.<sup>18</sup> They again served at the time as federalized militia, but that status would not last long. By 15 July, about forty-four percent of Guardsmen were on federal service, and on 25 July, the entire National Guard, minus state adjutants general and their staffs, was brought on active federal service.<sup>19</sup> On 5 August 1917, President Wilson drafted it as a body into the Army, using section 111 of NDA 1916. From that point, the National Guard served in its federal role as part of the Army.

President Wilson wanted an American Army that would fight in Europe, and the peacetime Regular Army was far too small for the task, and even bringing the entire National Guard on active federal service would not suffice. With about 100,000 authorized Regulars, and another 400,000 men authorized for the National Guard, the half a million men the US Army could theoretically field was still far below what Wilson and Army leadership believed would be necessary if the United States was to have an impact in Europe.

When the National Guard entered federal service it took its officers with it. However, due to age, health, dependency, resignations, and a host of other factors, many Guard officers left active duty during the war. In past wars, state governors retained the power to appoint new officers in state-raised formations, be they militia or Volunteers. But while the National Guard was on federal service under the provisions of NDA 1916, the Regulars got something they had long clamored for—absolute control over the selection and training of new officers for the war. Governors could no longer commission new officers to replace departed ones and Guard units could no longer elect their own officers. Now the Regular Army, using men commissioned through West Point, land-grant college-based training programs, or, increasingly, officer training camps, assigned officers to National Guard units based on the needs of the Army. Such officers assigned to National Guard divisions did not become National Guard officers, but held either Regular or National Army

(see Chapter Four) commissions, and sometimes both. At the same time, many enlisted National Guardsmen were selected to attend an officers training camp, and were able to earn a non-Regular commission that way. Once commissioned, these former enlisted National Guardsmen were not automatically assigned to National Guard divisions, but could be assigned to any unit across the wartime Army.

The entire National Guard served in the First World War as part of the Army. The 16 divisions that originated with the National Guard comprised almost a quarter of the structure of the entire wartime Army. However in raw numbers, National Guardsmen were vastly outnumbered by men who entered the Army through Selective Service. National Guardsmen comprised about ten percent of the entire war-time Army. Once in federal service, the Army had the right to move men and units around as it saw fit. Not only were long-time unit designations changed, but often most or even all of the men in those units were changed. The Army took men brought in through Selective Service and distributed them to Regular Army units, National Guard units, and new National Army units to bring numbers up to the war-time strength. At the same time it moved officers from the Regular Army around, placing more and more of them in positions of command in National Guard battalions, regiments, brigades, and divisions. Very few senior officers in the National Guard remained in command of their units throughout the war. Only one National Guard division commander was still in command of his division when the war ended.<sup>20</sup>

Although the National Guard divisions continued to exist within the wartime army, men and units moved between the Regular Army, National Guard, and National Army divisions. Under federal wartime law, Guardsmen could be held in federal service past the expiration of their enlistments in the National Guard, but upon discharge from federal service, they returned directly to civilian life and not to the National Guard. But that point became moot when the Attorney General ruled that when President Wilson inducted the National Guard into the Army on 5 August 1917, individual National Guardsmen were from a legal standpoint discharged from their state militia, and had no obligation to the National Guard upon their discharge from active duty.

After the war ended, and the massive wartime Army was disbanded, the National Guard was not mustered out as units. Instead, the men who entered federal service with the National Guard in the spring or summer of 1917 were discharged as individuals, and had no obligation to rejoin the National Guard. State adjutants general had to recreate the National Guard in 1920 and 1921. While many veterans would join the post-war National

Guard, they had no obligation to do so. The units that were released from federal service back to state service were lineages only—empty units.

For practical purposes, state adjutants general and their headquarters staff constituted the entire National Guard when the war ended, and some wartime state adjutants general were not even in the National Guard. By 1920, Congress appropriated funds for a National Guard of 106,000 men—a quarter of what it had been in 1916—but the total enrollment was only 56,106.<sup>21</sup> During the war, some Regulars hoped that the National Guard would not be re-created after the war, or if it were to continue to exist, it would be reduced to a wholly state-funded organization with no federal mission, and be replaced in its federal role by a new, federally-controlled reserve force without state ties. But Congress backed the re-creation of the National Guard, which soon recovered to pre-war levels.

The *National Defense Act of 1920* (NDA 1920) set the legal basis for the post-war National Guard much as it had been under NDA 1916, and would set the legal and organizational basis of the National Guard for much of the interwar period. The NDA 1920 made clear the role of the National Guard as state militia and reserve of the Army.<sup>22</sup> No longer would Guardsmen called into federal service be discharged from their state militia.<sup>23</sup> Other changes after the war were more overt. Election of officers had ended for good. Officers who held National Army commissions during the war were able to convert those to National Guard of the United States commissions relatively easy. The post-war National Guard initially had many officers with wartime officer experience. Replacing those officers as they aged out would be more difficult, but the National Guard was increasingly able to attract college graduates who had completed the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC—see Chapter Five) into its officer ranks, and, with Massachusetts in the lead, began conducting their own officer training programs. Additionally, post-war Citizens' Military Training Camps (CMTC), which built on General Leonard Wood's Plattsburg camps of the pre-war period (see next chapter), also became a source for National Guard officers.<sup>24</sup> The NDA 1920 specified that no National Guard officer could be federally recognized as such who was not a former officer in any branch of the military, or who had honorable enlisted service, unless he had completed the six week summer training camp required of ROTC graduates.<sup>25</sup>

The relationship between the National Guard and the Regular Army was again modified slightly in 1933. The *National Defense Act of 1933* eliminated any ambiguity over the dual oath created in 1916.<sup>26</sup> While NDA 1916 required all Guard officers to hold a commission in their state, as well

as in the National Guard of the United States, some uncertainty remained over the authority of a National Guard officer when a Guard officer was on active duty as part of the Army. To avoid any uncertainty, most National Guard officers accepted a third commission in the new Officers Reserve Corp (see Chapter Four) to ensure they would have a commission recognized by the Regulars in the event of federal mobilization. The changes in 1933 made the federal commission held by National Guard officers a Reserve commission rather than a commission in the National Guard of the United States.<sup>27</sup> With these changes, National Guard officers held the same commission as did officers in the Organized Reserves, in addition to their state commission. This system, whereby all National Guard officers would simultaneously hold two commissions—a state commission and a federal Reserve commission—remains to the present.

Most National Guard units when not mobilized met one evening each week for training, for a total of 48 times a year. For each drill period, as such meetings were called, the Guardsman would receive pay based on the daily rate of a soldier in the Army.<sup>28</sup> Usually, the Guardsmen met with their company at a nearby armory. During the summer, the National Guard trained in battalion or larger units for two weeks at state-owned camps. Because of the Great Depression (1929-1939), the number of drills was reduced to 36, but by 1935, the number of paid drills was returned to 48 per year.<sup>29</sup> When World War II started in Europe in September of 1939, the federal government funded additional training for the National Guard which increased the number of drills to 60 per year. Seven additional days of field training were added. The additional 12 days of armory training occurred between 1 October 1939 and 31 March 1940, and the added week-long encampment took place over that winter. The specific weeks that units trained was staggered over several months, but few units strayed far from their armories.<sup>30</sup> The Chief of the National Guard Bureau recommended that in the following years the added week be part of the summer training period, giving National Guardsmen 21 days straight of field training. His proposal was approved for the summer of 1941, meaning that annual training that summer would see National Guardsmen spending three weeks straight at camp.<sup>31</sup>

The rapid fall of France in the spring of 1940 alerted the president and military leaders that something more intensive was needed. On 31 July 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt requested that Congress grant him the authority to order the National Guard to active federal service for a full year of training, along with the Organized Reserves and the reserves of the other branches. By Public Resolution on 27 August 1940, the president

was authorized to order into the active service any member or unit of the National Guard for twelve months. At the same time, he asked that Selective Service be restarted. Congress acquiesced and by Executive Order issued on 31 August, the first units entered active duty on 16 September 1940, and the last entered by the end of February of 1941.<sup>32</sup> The call-up of the National Guard came piecemeal over several months, rather than all at once. The staggered nature of the mobilization of the Guard was mainly a practical matter, as facilities to house the entire National Guard were not ready in the autumn of 1940. As a result, the president did not call the National Guard as a whole into federal service, as had happened in the First World War, but almost all its units and personnel were eventually ordered onto active service.

Under the legislation for the mobilization of the Guard, the War Department could send National Guard units outside of the United States, but they had to remain within the Western Hemisphere or in American possessions in the Pacific.<sup>33</sup> However the Guard was called up to train, and so of it most remained within the United States. After a heated debate in Congress, the Service Extension Act passed on 8 August 1941 to authorize President Roosevelt to extend the period of active service to eighteen months for all non-Regular soldiers.<sup>34</sup> Guardsmen younger than 21 who had enlisted without parental consent and who had served less than six-months were discharged to make the terms of the National Guard call-up more equitable with the regulations for Selective Service inductees. Also, lower ranking Guardsmen with dependents or jobs deemed critical to the economy were also discharged. Through these measures, the Guard lost 51,000 men—about one-fifth of its strength.<sup>35</sup>

In what was becoming repetitious, some Regular Army officers again hoped the mobilization of the Guard would permanently sever its connection to the states and place it permanently under control of the Regulars, or failing that, enable the Army to completely replace the National Guard with a fully federally-controlled reserve force.<sup>36</sup> Such a development was unlikely, but while it was on federal service, the Army could implement many changes on the Guard. Until the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Army kept the National Guard divisions organized under the old structure, the so-called “squared” divisions of two brigades, each with two infantry regiments, rather than converting them to the new, lighter “triangular” divisions, in which the Regular Army was organized. The conversion was delayed out of some lingering hope that the National Guard divisions might, if the United States went to war, be used only for continental defense, and not take part in any expeditionary force.

Once the United States entered the war, the Army began moving units and individuals around with no thought to lineages, as in the First World War. The movement was most pronounced in the National Guard officer corps. Approximately 22 percent of National Guard first lieutenants were at least 40 years old. Company grade officers in their thirties and even forties were not unusual in the National Guard, but the Army Chief of Staff, Gen. George C. Marshall, wanted a relatively young officer corps throughout and imposed rigid age limits. Many officers were simply declared to be overage for their ranks and moved out of leadership positions. These men were not discharged, but reassigned to other duties.

One of the acute problems for most divisions was the shortage of second lieutenants to serve as platoon leaders, a problem throughout the Army. For this reason, several branch specific Officer Candidate Schools were established around the country, and enlisted men who showed the potential to be officers were encouraged to apply. Officer candidates who came from the National Guard were commissioned in the Army of the United States. Graduates of all OCSs received Army of the United States commissions (see Chapter Six), and most were assigned throughout the Army as needed.<sup>37</sup> The only exceptions were in some special OCSs held by divisions, where newly commissioned officers were usually assigned to units within their division. An example was in the Americal Division, which had been cobbled together from various leftover Guard formations after the conversion of the National Guard divisions to the Regular Army's three regiment model of divisions. The Americal Division established its own Officer Candidate School on the French island of New Caledonia in the Pacific, specifically to provide officers for its own companies.

As in the First World War, any division numbered 26 to 45 was thought of as a National Guard division. But even more so than in the First World War, officers and men were moved around and replaced in such numbers that from early on, to speak of a division as being Regular, Guard, or Reserve was almost meaningless. Men who entered active duty with the National Guard, as well as Regulars and Reservists, were soon vastly outnumbered by draftees, while officers holding Army of the United States commissions were numerically the most common. Initially, many Selectees assigned to National Guard divisions complained of being discriminated against by the Guardsmen, but by October of 1941, Selectees comprised approximately one-third of the enlisted strength of the National Guard divisions, and were a majority in four of the Guard divisions.<sup>38</sup> The trend became more pronounced over the years of the war. By the end of the war, few Guardsmen who entered active service in 1940 or 1941 remained on active duty.



Figure 3.1. Guardsmen of the 121st Infantry, 48th Armored Division, Georgia National Guard, 1966. Photo courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

With the return of peace, the state adjutants general would again have to recreate the National Guard. Following a year and a half of uncertainty over the future of a state-based military reserve, the Department of the Army began organizing the post-war National Guard. As with what happened after the First World War, only lineages were released to the states, no Guardsmen, and so state adjutants general and their staffs again had to recruit and build a new National Guard. While legislative changes between the wars meant that Guardsmen were no longer automatically discharged from their state militia upon mobilization as part of the Army, the length of the Second World War meant that no former Guardsman was still under their Guard enlistment when the war ended.

The federal government handed the National Guard an important tool for recruiting World War II veterans in June, 1948, when it authorized retirement pay at 60 years of age for former Guardsmen who had served at least twenty years, five of which were on federal active service.<sup>39</sup> This was the first time Congress has authorized any retirement pay, aside from service related disability, for non-Regulars. However, most states still found recruiting their National Guard to its authorized strength difficult in the years immediately after the Second World War. Officers who held Reserve or Army of the United States commissions usually found themselves welcomed into the post-war National Guard. Those holding a Reserve com-

mission only had to obtain a state commission, usually in the same rank, while those holding an Army of the United States commission had to convert it to a Reserve commission, as well as obtain a state commission. The Guard got another boost to recruiting when Congress passed the peacetime Selective Service Act of 1948. Men who served six years in the National Guard, or other reserve force, were not eligible for conscription.

However the post-war National Guard had to compete for both officers and enlisted men with the fleshed out units of what became the Army Reserve, the enlarged reserves of the other branches, as well as the newly separated Air National Guard, all of which gave potential Guardsmen a variety of organizations through which to serve part-time in the military.<sup>40</sup> Competition for members became more acute in 1948, when Congress authorized drill pay for the reserves of all branches, a benefit that previously had been given only to Guardsmen. Service in the National Guard after the war was different in other ways. Widespread automobile ownership meant that Guardsmen could serve in a unit other than the one in their home town. The Guard began to hold drill one weekend a month rather than on a weekday evening beginning in the late 1950s, which also made membership in a unit further away more practical.<sup>41</sup>

In the summer of 1950, with the start of the war in Korea, the federal government inducted eight of the twenty-seven National Guard divisions, three National Guard regimental combat teams, and 714 company-sized National Guard units.<sup>42</sup> Federal law had guaranteed the National Guard in its entirety would be taken into federal service during war, in advance of reserves or draftees, but Congress suspended this right of the National Guard at the start of the Korean War. The Army desired the suspension to allow it to use individual draftees to fill slots in under-strength Regular Army and National Guard units, and to prevent the war in Korea from absorbing all of America's reserve forces. Leaders feared the war was a feint before a main Communist thrust into Western Europe. The Department of the Army and the Department of the Air Force absorbed only part of the National Guard, and within a year began returning men and units to state control as drafted soldiers began to fill out the Army.

In all, one-third the Army National Guard were brought onto federal service during the war, but in the late summer and early fall of 1950, the final extent of the participation of the National Guard in the war remained unknowable.<sup>43</sup> Still, unlike the World Wars, the Korea War was fought mostly under the peacetime structure, and Guard units were mobilized for a specific amount of time, normally a year rather than for the duration of the war plus six months, as had been the practice during the World Wars. Only two



of the National Guard divisions, the 40th and 45th, deployed to Korea; the others served either in Europe or in the United States to backfill the strategic reserve. The two National Guard divisions sent to Korea did not enter combat until the end of 1951, after the war of movement had ended and the war had settled into a stalemate. Over the course of the year the Guard divisions served in Korea, the Guardsmen who entered active duty with the Guard were rotated out and replaced mainly with draftees.<sup>44</sup> As in the world wars, Guardsmen discharged from active service returned home as individuals.

The Korean War led to a fundamental change in what the American people and government would expect in the peacetime standing army. For a few years after the end of World War II, with the nuclear monopoly of the United States, some Americans assumed that the Army could and would shrink to a size necessary only for perhaps some occupation duties rather than for large scale combat. The Korean War disabused them of that notion, and instead Americans came to accept for the first time maintaining a large army in peacetime. The standing army was significantly larger in the 1950s and 1960 than had been traditional in the United States, while conversely, the use of the National Guard to augment the Army for war decreased. Indeed with the threat of any war turning nuclear, military theorists believed that the US Army had to be ready to fight and win on the first day of a war, and the time when the National Guard or any other reserve force would be of any utility was perhaps over. At the same time, the larger size of the standing army relative to the size of the National Guard placed the National Guard, for the first time since its founding, at a relative disadvantage. Whereas prior to World War II National Guard officers outnumbered Regular Army officers by a ratio of about four-to-one, with the greatly expanded peacetime Army of the post-World War II era, the number of officers in the Regular Army, regardless of the type of commission they served under, outnumbered the number of officers in the National Guard by as much as five-to-one in some years.<sup>45</sup>

Although the National Guard was still equipped, trained, and organized primarily for its federal warfighting mission, it would see little employment in that role between the end of the Korean War and the 1991 war against Iraq. For domestic political and global strategic reasons, the National Guard saw very limited involvement in the Vietnam War.<sup>46</sup> At the same time, the involvement of the National Guard in domestic law-enforcement was also in decline. States increasingly had professional and large state police forces, and the use of the National Guard for responding to strikes or riots became increasingly rare. Traditionally, training for new National Guardsmen that had been performed during evening or weekend



Figure 3.2. Rangers from the Indiana National Guard in Vietnam. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

drills.<sup>47</sup> That changed beginning on 1 October 1956, when new regulations required that least twenty percent of enlistees in the National Guard either have prior military service or attend six months of active training with the Army. This requirement was increased a year later, when all non-prior service recruits were required to spend six months on active duty attending basic and advanced training with the Army.<sup>48</sup> These changes were intended to make new Guardsmen better aligned with Regular Army standards.

The assumption of the responsibility for providing basic training for new Guardsmen allowed Guard companies to concentrate on higher-level unit training,<sup>49</sup> but it also weakened much of the Guard's self-identity. It also made recruitment more difficult. A lack of positions in basic training schools for Guardsman meant potential recruits often had to wait long periods before going to basic training. The Guard also found that men who had served their obligatory two years of on active duty from the draft were uninterested in joining the Guard afterwards, while at the same time, the decreased draft calls in the late 1950s lessened the negative motivation that drove many men to seek service in the Guard as an alternative to conscription.<sup>50</sup>

Despite these changes in the enlisted force, throughout the years since World War II the sources of National Guard officers remained remarkably

consistent. One of the primary sources was and remains the Officer Candidate Schools held in each state. All the state OCS programs have to be accredited by the US Army's Officer Candidate School, ensuring a common course of instruction and consistency of standards. The state OCS program normally takes up to sixteen months to complete, with candidates in Phase I attending two weekend "drills" at the schools, followed by a two-week period over the summer. After completing the first two-week program, students entered Phase II, which was held one weekend a month for the next year. As a culmination, students attended a final two week session in Phase III. Graduates of these schools received a Reserve commission in the US Army, as well as a state commission. When the need for officers became acute, the National Guard has held OCS programs in a condensed eight-week format, often with candidates from multiple states attending. The ROTC program has also been a significant source of National Guard officers. A perhaps underappreciated source of National Guard officers are former Regular Army officers who left active service and then entered the National Guard, converting, if they had one, their Regular Army commission into a Reserve commission in the process. Each National Guard officer also continues to hold a state commission, giving the officer the ability to command when in either a state or federal status.

One of the few federal mobilizations of the National Guard in this period of the National Guard came in response to the 1961 Berlin Crisis. However, the Guardsmen soon stood down as tensions lessened. During the Vietnam War, the overwhelming majority of the National Guard remained unmobilized by the federal government, and the Guard became mostly identified with its state missions in the public mind. The direct American military involvement in the war in Vietnam (1965-1973) was fought mainly using the peacetime structure of the military, with the Army filled primarily with Regulars and draftees. Clauses in the draft law made drilling Guardsmen ineligible for the draft, thus the National Guard had many men in the lower ranks who served mainly to avoid active service in the Army.

President Lyndon B. Johnson's advisors recommended at least a partial call-up of the reserve components, including the National Guard, for the war in Vietnam, but Johnson decided against it partially for international geopolitical reasons and more so for domestic political considerations. He believed that use of the Guard in the war might lead to a direct Chinese or Soviet intervention. He also believed a large mobilization would drain middle-class support from his administration. In the larger realm, Johnson, as with many strategic planners, saw the most dangerous

threat to the United States coming from the Soviet Union in Europe, and thus kept the reserves of all services and the National Guard as a hedge against war in Europe.

Despite these limitations, individual Guardsmen could volunteer for active service in Vietnam with Regular units. About 2,000 Guardsmen, about half of whom were officers, served in Vietnam this way. One of the only call-ups of the reserve components for the war in Vietnam came in April, 1968, when Johnson mobilized 24,500 National Guardsmen and Army Reservists in response to the 23 January seizure of the USS *Pueblo* by North Korea, the Tet Offensive in Vietnam, and the generally low strength of the active forces for its world-wide commitments. By 13 May, some 13,633 Guardsmen from seventeen states were on federal active duty. The call-up included some thirty-four units from combat arms, combat support, and combat service support. But as in the Korean War only on a smaller scale, most of the mobilized Guard units were not sent to Vietnam, but remained in the United States training as part of the strategic reserve. Those that did serve in Vietnam, a total of 2,729 Guardsmen in eight units, spent one year in Vietnam—the same duration that draftees normally served.

With the winding down of American involvement in the Vietnam War, the United States Army implemented a plan to end conscription and rely on voluntary recruiting. The last man was drafted in 1972, and the authority for conscription ended in 1973, although the Selective Service system remained in existence. Conscription was replaced by the All-Volunteer Force (AVF). The National Guard, which had previously not needed recruiters as units usually had lists of men who wanted join, found manning difficult once the threat of the draft ended that motivation for joining. The implementation of the Total Force Policy in the late 1970s led to an expanded reliance on the National Guard and Army Reserve to wage war. Incorporating the reserve components more closely into the active army allowed defense planners to maintain a creditable military force in the years following the end of the draft in 1973.

The All-Volunteer Force was initially created with the idea that it would be for manning the peacetime Army. In the event of a large war, under the original concept, the Army would depend on Selective Service to fill any shortages in manpower. However, the Army participated in two small wars—the 1983 invasion of Grenada and the 1990 invasion of Panama—with just Regular Army soldiers. A much larger conflict, the 1990-1991 Desert Shield/Desert Storm, was fought with the Army National Guard and Army Reserve augmenting the Regular Army but without any use of



Figure 3.3. Soldiers from the 1/623rd Field Artillery, Kentucky ARNG, during Desert Storm, 1991. Image courtesy of the Kentucky National Guard Archive.

Selective Service, indicating that the draft was no longer seriously considered as a source of manpower. Instead the reserve components would be the method through which the Regular Army would be augmented for war. This paradigm played out in a larger and longer scale after the 9/11 attacks of 2001 and subsequent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. During those wars, at any given time, only a minority of the National Guard was mobilized, and all states retained control over large amounts of their National Guard. At the same time, Regular Army officers became accustomed to working with mobilized Guardsmen, and the National Guard became accustomed to more regular mobilizations as part of the operational force.

The National Guard arose after the Civil War from a movement to reform the militia and the Volunteers. Most of the vision for the National Guard envisioned by Regulars and Guardsmen in the late nineteenth century have been realized. The National Guard supplanted the state-raised Volunteers as the institution through which the states continued to have a role in raising forces for war. But the National Guard would not be the sole means of augmenting the Army during war in the twentieth century. The Guard would eventually be joined by the Army Reserve, the National Army, and the Army of the United States in augmenting the Regular Army for war.

## Notes

1. For an in-depth study of the early National Guard movement, see Jerry Cooper's *Rise of the National Guard: The Evolution of the American Militia, 1865-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997). For a look at the phenomenon in a single state, see Cooper's *Citizens as Soldiers: A History of the North Dakota National Guard* (Fargo: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, 1986).

2. Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 224.

3. Although Emory Upton's *The Military Policy of the United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903) would not be published until 1904, copies of the manuscript passed through the War Department during the decades before the turn of the century. See Stephen Ambrose, *Upton and the Army* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964). The final chapter, "Influence," traces some of the effects of Upton's unpublished work on the army from his death in March 1881 until the Great War.

4. Coffman, *The Old Army*, 269-272; also, Robert W. Coakley, *The Role of Federal Military Forces in Domestic Disorders 1789-1878*, Army Historical Series (Washington: Center of Military History, 1988).

5. Emmons Clark, *History of the Seventh Regiment of New York, 1806-1889* (New York: n.p., 1890), I: 105.

6. "An Act to Promote the Efficiency of the Militia, and for other Purposes" (Militia Act of 1903), Fifty-seventh Cong, Sess. II, Ch. 196, sec. 18. This part of the act stipulated that each unit would hold not less than 24 drills per year. Drill normally consisted of a weekly two-hour period on a weekday evening.

7. Section 7 of the *Militia Act of 1903* seems to dispute this. But the *Militia Act of 1908* (*An Act to further amend the Act entitled "An Act to Promote the efficiency of the militia, and for other purposes,"* ch. 204, sec. 43, *Statutes at Large of the United States of America* 35:399-403 [1909].) supports the notion of federal control only at the governor's consent.

8. *Militia Act of 1903*, sec. 8. The law stated that only militia officers could serve on courts-martials for officers and men of the National Guard for offenses while in federal service.

9. *National Defense Act of 1916*; "An Act for making further and more effectual provisions for the National Defense, and for other purposes." *Statutes at Large of the United States of America*. Vol. 39, part 1. (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1917), 166-217.

10. Barry M. Stentiford, *The Richardson Light Guard of Wakefield Massachusetts: A Town Militia in War and Peace, 1851-1975* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2013), 82.

11. *National Defense Act of 1916*, sec. 3.

12. *National Defense Act of 1916*, sec. 197.

13. Cooper, *Rise of the National Guard*, 168.

14. U.S. Const. sec. 8, art. 12, and sec. 2, art. 1.

15. Apparently Guardsmen attending the school were only temporarily attached to the school for training, but kept their ranks and assignments with their parent units until selected for commissioning. "The Training School Massachusetts National Guard Year Book 1930," (n.p., n.d.) at the National Guard Association Library.

16. *Historical and Pictorial Review of the National Guard of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts* (Baton Rouge: Army and Navy Publishing Co., 1939), 6.

17. John K. Mahon, *History of the Militia and National Guard* (New York: Macmillan, 1983), 156.

18. Mahon, 156.

19. Mahon 157.

20. That was Major General John F. O’Ryan, of New York’s 27<sup>th</sup> Division. John K. Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1983), 162.

21. US Militia Bureau, *Annual Report of the Chief of the Militia 1920* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1920), 5-7.

22.. *National Defense Act of 1920*; "An Act to Amend in certain particulars the National Defense Act of June 3, 1916, as amended, and for other purposes," Sixty-eight Congress, Sess. I., Chapter 275, accessed 19 March 2021, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/68th-congress/session-1/c68s1ch275.pdf>.

23. Michael D. Doubler, *I Am the Guard: A History of the Army National Guard, 1636-2000* (Washington: GPO, 2001), 186-88.

24. Donald M. Kingston, *Forgotten Summers: The Story of the Citizens' Military Training Camps, 1921-1940* (San Francisco: Two Decades Publishing, 1995), 139.

25. *National Defense Act of 1920*, sec. 74.

26. Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 400-402.

27. *National Defense Act of 1933*; "To amend the National Defense Act of June 3, 1916. As amended," Seventy-Third Congress, Sess. I., Chapter 87, accessed 19 March 2021, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/73rd-congress/session-1/c73s1ch87.pdf>. The act states that "officers in the National Guard of the United States are reserve officers and shall be commissioned in the Army of the United States."

28. *National Defense Act of 1920*, Sec. 7.

29. US National Guard Bureau, *Annual Report of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau* [hereafter cited as "ARCNGB"] 1934 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1934), 11.

30. ARCNGB 1940, 14.

31. ARCNGB 1940, 15.

32. Executive Order No. 8530.

33. John K. Mahon, *History of the Militia and National Guard* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1983), 179.

34. The Service Extension Act of 1941 (act 18 August 1941; 55 Stat, 626; 50 U.S.C. 351; MoL1939, Sup, II, sec, 2227-1).

35. ARCNGB, 16-17.

36. "C.Q.S." to Colonel Grimes, July 17, 1940, folder 42494, box 472, RG 165, National Archives I, Washington, DC.

37. Military Affairs, J.A.G.S Text no. 3 The Judge Advocate General's School Ann Arbor, Michigan (n.d.), V-22, V-36.

38. Memorandum for the Assistant Secretary of War, October 24, 1941, at the CARL. The Memorandum was in response to a letter from a New York attorney, Jacob Rubinoff, which listed a host of factors that Mr. Rubinoff believed was depressing moral among men in the National Guard divisions.

39. *National Guardsman*, July 1945, 4-5.

40. Renewed interest in the reserve components as the Korean War was in its last stages led the journal *Military Affairs* to dedicate its January 1953 issue to articles about each of the reserve components, but book-length works on the history of each of the reserve components are rare and in serious need of updating. Aside from official histories, most books dealing with the reserve components focus on a specific unit in war, such as Randy Keith Mills and Roxanne Mills's *Unexpected Journey: A Marine Corps Reserve Company in the Korean War* (Annapolis, MD: US Naval Institute Press, 2000). Official histories of the each of the reserve components are limited to Reserve Officers of Public Affairs Unit 4-1 *The Marine Corps Reserve, A History* (Washington: G.P.O., 1966); Gerald T. Cantwell's *Citizen Airmen: A History of the Air Force Reserve, 1946-1994* (Washington: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997); and Richard B. Curries and James Crossland's *Twice the Citizen: a History of the United States Army Reserve* (Washington: Office of the Army Reserve, 1984). The Air National Guard has fared better, although most works on it are likewise official publications. See Charles Joseph Gross, *Prelude to the Total Force: The Air National Guard 1943 – 1969* (Washington: Office of Air Force History, 1985) and *The Air National Guard and the American Military Tradition: Militiaman, Volunteer, and Professional* (Washington: NGB Historical Services Division, 1996). See also, George Hall, *Air Guard: America's Flying Militia* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1990). Forrest L. Marion and Jon T. Hoffman's *Forging a Total Force: The Evolution of the Guard and Reserve* (Washington, D.C., Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2018) has provided some necessary addition to the understanding of the Reserve Components, especially since the attacks of 9/11.

41. ARCNGB *Fiscal Year Ending 30 June 1957*, 28; and, ARCNGB *Fiscal Year Ending 30 June 1959*, 38.

42. Martha Derthick, *The National Guard in Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), 112.

43. ARCNGB 1951, 1.



44. William M. Donnelly, *Under Army Orders: The Army National Guard during the Korean War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001.), 89-122.

45. For example, in 1969, there were 30,432 officers in the Army National Guard, and 172,590 officers on active duty with the Army. See R. Earnest Dupuy, *The National Guard: A Compact History* (New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1971), 151; and the Department of the Army Historical Summary: FY 1969, accessed 19 March 2021, <https://history.army.mil/books/DAHSUM/1969/chIV.htm>.

46. Doubler, *I Am the Guard*, 256-61.

47. *ARCNGB Fiscal Year Ending 30 June 1949*, 16-17.

48. *ARCNGB Fiscal Year Ending 30 June 1957*, 23, and, *ARCNGB Fiscal Year Ending 30 June 1958*, 33. Men between the ages of 26 and 35 who already possessed skills the Army needed were exempt from the requirement to attend active training with the Army.

49. Doubler, *I am the Guard*, 240-241

50. *ARCNGB Fiscal Year Ending 30 June 1959*, 33.

## Chapter Four

### The National Army

After more than a century of depending on the Volunteer system to expand the Army for war, the United States used a more federally-controlled system to raise an army for the First World War (1914-1918). The First World War, coming as it did at the height of the Progressive Movement that sought to address many of the ills of society, would be the first war in which most American soldiers came into the army through conscription. No longer would the nation depend on the volunteer service of the patriot; instead government and neighbors would decide where each man could best serve the nation. The new temporary army raised through conscription was to be called the *National Army*. While the scope of American involvement eventually eroded much of the distinction between the Regular Army, the National Guard, and the National Army, the National Army concept remained influential long after its disbandment following the war.

The entry of the United States into the First World War came as no surprise to most Regular Army officers, but President Woodrow Wilson's concept for American involvement—fielding a large army to fight in Europe—was a shock to many. The US Army eventually reached a strength of around four million soldiers, which required at least 200,000 officers. When the United States entered the war on 6 April 1917, the authorized strength of the Regular Army was around 100,000, men with approximately 8,000 officers. The National Guard was authorized 400,000 men and officers. However, neither component was able to recruit to its authorized strength. The number of soldiers actually available was a total of 213,557 Regulars and Guardsmen in April of 1917. Of this force, 5791 were Regular Army officers.<sup>1</sup> The National Guard was of uneven quality, although it had recently undergone a period of rather intense training under Regular Army tutelage on the Mexican Border. While neither component had been able to recruit to its lower authorized peacetime strength, it was assumed that wartime enthusiasm would bring in a rush of recruits to allow rapid recruiting. On 19 May, Army leadership ordered both the Regular Army and National Guard to recruit to bring each infantry company up to its wartime strength of 150 men.

The years between the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898 and the entrance of the United States into the First World War witnessed an intense debate on how the nation could better expand the army for war. The Spanish-American War mobilization had been amateurish and wasteful,

with the Army forced to accept far more state-raised Volunteer regiments than it wanted, or was able to adequately equip. Federally-raised Volunteer regiments, used extensively in the Philippine War, were more acceptable to the Regular Army, in that the Regular Army exercised almost total control over their number, composition, and most importantly, the selection of officers. Many Regulars hoped that the federal Volunteers would be the model to be used for expanding the Army for any future war. However, the lobbying power of the National Guard Association, especially as shown by the legal reforms in the National Defense Act of 1916 (NDA 1916), ensured that the National Guard would play a role in the next war. Less obvious, the Progressive Movement then current in American social and political life meant that the nation would look to create a more logical and efficient way to build a wartime army. As a result, Volunteer regiments—whether raised by the states or the federal government—were to be permanently discarded. For the next 56 years and four wars, conscription—the draft—would be the primary means to expand the army for war.

The Regular Army of the United States prior to entry into the war ranked below that of Portugal in size. To enter into the Western Front with a force large enough to alter the balance would require a massive and rapid expansion of the US Army. The years prior to the entrance of the United States into the war had seen a fierce debate within the country over “preparedness.” While some Americans saw preparations for war as leading inextricably toward the United States going to war, others believed that a militarily strong and prepared United States would be better able to remain aloof from the war. Despite the obvious commitment of Congress to the National Guard, the Regular Army continued to ask for a fully federally-controlled reserve system, one that would cut the National Guard out of its role in fighting wars. One such proposal was to create a federal reserve force to be called the “Continental Army,” although the speculation that such a force would require conscription to be fully manned killed Congressional enthusiasm for it. The idea of the Continental Army, which was also called the “National Army,” did not completely die.<sup>2</sup> Its basic concept of a purely, federally-organized and controlled reserve force manned through conscription to augment the Regular Army for war would be resurrected sooner than most of its advocates realized.

NDA 1916, which had an enormous impact on the organization of the Army during the war, contained many compromises, and two of those were the creation of an Officers Reserve Corps (ORC) and an Enlisted Reserve Corps (ERC). The ERC was to contain specialists in engineer, signal, quartermaster, ordnance, and the medical fields. In theory, the ERC

would contain veterans of the Regular Army who were willing to be recalled to active service during wartime, while the ORC would be filled both with officers who left the Regular Army, and also by graduates of Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), and the new Plattsburg Camps (see chapter on the Reserve). NDA 1916 had been the watershed in transforming the haphazard military training at Land Grant colleges into the modern ROTC.<sup>3</sup> Officers completing either program before the war received a Reserve commission, and were identified by the initials “USR” on a disk on their collar of their uniform. Neither the ERC or the ORC was structured as anything more than a list of men who had agreed to the commitment—there were no units to which officers or enlisted men belonged, no training, and no pay. More fundamentally, these “corps” had attracted few members by the time the United States declared war. The ORC contained about 500 line officers and 2,000 medical officers by the start of the war, and was hardly to be a major source of wartime officers.<sup>4</sup> The specific need for officers soon became paramount as the Army expanded rapidly. The power governors had to commission officers, often with little or no military competence, was no longer an issue.

Under NDA 1916, the Volunteer system remained extant in theory, with an expansion of ROTC and Plattsburg-type camps to train a reserve of its future officers, which would largely be enrolled in the ORC.<sup>5</sup> But the Volunteers were relegated to the third tier of the nation’s defense, after the Regular Army and National Guard. The president was required by the provisions of NDA 1916 to induct the entire National Guard into federal service before raising any additional forces. Thus, the entire National Guard would have to be brought onto federal service before calling for Volunteer regiments or implementing any other means of expanding the Army for war.

However, after the United States entered the war, the previous method of expansion—through Volunteer regiments raised at either the state or federal levels—was soon cast aside. To expand the Army for this war, Congress created a new force that was neither Regular Army, National Guard, or Volunteer, but a new American military organization—the National Army. The National Army was intended to replace the Volunteer system. The National Army—intimately linked to conscription—would be the main vehicle for expanding the relatively small peacetime core of the Regular Army and National Guard into a massive wartime army. Unlike in the Volunteer system, vacancies that occurred in the National Army could be filled through Selective Service at any time for its duration.

A perceived weakness in the Volunteer system was that it depended on patriotic individuals making a choice to join the military for war. A problem



Figure 4.1. Selectees arrive at Camp Devens, Massachusetts. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

noted in previous wars was that often the initial *rage militaire* that surged through society at the beginning of a war soon faded, and getting men to volunteer as a war dragged on became increasingly difficult. The Volunteer system also meant that the more energetic and patriotic portion of the population tended to bear a disproportionately heavy military burden, while “slackers” chose to ignore their obligation. Finally, the Volunteer system tended to take skilled and productive workers out of the economy, an increasing concern in industrial warfare. In the Progressive Era, such inefficient ways of mobilizing the military potential of the nation would not do.

The National Army would, it was assumed, consist largely of drafted enlisted men, with most officers coming from officer training camps and holding either Reserve commissions or one of the new, temporary, National Army commissions. This green National Army officer corps would be leavened by Regular Army officers, along with former Regular Army sergeants who had been granted National Army commissions based on their demonstrated military aptitude.

For the expansion of the Army during the First World War, the Regulars got what they had long sought—complete control over the selection, training, commissioning, and assignment of wartime officers. But finding those temporary officers would be a challenge. Despite stripping

many Regular Army and National Guard divisions of experienced officers and NCOs and transferring them to National Army divisions, not nearly enough experienced officers existed to fill all leadership and staff positions in the new divisions. The Army did not want to commission men directly from civil life as in past wars, unless to serve as surgeons or in other specialized roles.

Using the pre-war Plattsburg camps of Gen. Leonard Wood as a model (see Chapter 5) the Army conducted 16 officers training camps from 15 May to 11 August to create the initial group of officers to complement the Regular Army, ORC, and National Guard officers already transferred to the new National Army divisions. The Army counted 27,341 men commissioned in the Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery, or Engineer branches through the initial camps in the summer of 1917, out of almost 38,000 men who were admitted into the camps.<sup>6</sup> Later, some divisions began holding their own officers training camps, until the movement of divisions to Europe made that scheme impractical. Later eight general officers training schools, without a branch focus, were established, with a new class of officers graduating each month. Due to the pressing need for ever more officers, the original four-month course of instruction was condensed to three months. Additional, specialized officers training schools were also established for staff departments, and the Coast Artillery branch.<sup>7</sup> ROTC was placed on hiatus in 1918 for the duration of the war, temporarily ending that program as a source of new officers.<sup>8</sup> The wartime officers training camps became the largest source of officers during the war. Initially graduates received Reserve commissions, but soon began receiving National Army commissions.

After the war, the Army tabulated that 80,568 men had been commissioned through the officers' training schools.<sup>9</sup> The National Army commission, like the Reserve commission, could be granted by the president without the need for Senate confirmation. Unlike a Reserve commission, which lasted for five years, or a Regular commission, which lasted for life, the National Army commission was to last only as long as the wartime National Army existed. After the war, converting a National Army commission into a Reserve commission would be relatively simple.

The existence of the National Army, and more specifically, the National Army commission, provided a way for officers holding Regular Army commissions to accept higher rank during the war without jeopardizing their place in the Regular Army. The practice was an echo of the Civil War tendency of Regular Army officers to take leave to accept a commission in the Volunteers. In the First World War, Regular officers could serve at

a higher, National Army rank, and many did. George S. Patton, who was a captain in the Regular Army, was eventually promoted to colonel in the National Army, only to revert to his Regular rank when the National Army was disbanded following the war.<sup>10</sup> Eventually, officers holding Reserve commissions or a commission in the National Guard of the United States were also able to concurrently hold temporary commissions at a higher rank in the National Army.

NDA 1916 explicitly authorized the federal government to conscript men into the military. President Wilson reasoned that as a republic, when the elected representatives declared war, the citizens had volunteered for military service.<sup>11</sup> Congress did not pass the necessary legislation to begin conscription—the Selective Service Act—for more than a month following the declaration of war. Registration of potential *Selectees*, as drafted men were termed, did not begin until 5 July 1917, with the first lottery to determine priority not occurring until 20 July. The first large contingent of Selectees—180,000 men—reported to the new mobilization camps only in early September—six months after the declaration of war.<sup>12</sup> The delay had multiple causes, but as a practical matter, the new mobilization camps had to be built first. More importantly, cadres of Regular and Reserve officers had to be assembled, and National Army officers selected, trained, and commissioned, before the new camps could receive the Selectees and start turning them into soldiers and units.

President Wilson signed the Selective Service Act on 19 May 1917. The new conscription law reflected Progressive desires for a logically ordered society. Adult males, initially between the ages of 21 to 31 would serve where the government needed them. In later draft calls, the range of ages liable was increased, from 18 to 45. Eventually, some 25 million men registered, of whom 2.8 million were actually inducted.<sup>13</sup> Selective Service committees, informally called Draft Boards, run at the community level by local civilians considered the health, number of dependents, role in the economy, and other attributes of a potential Selectee before placing him in a category that would determine his potential for compulsory military service. In September, the bulk of the initial Selectees were to report to mobilization camps. When all voluntary enlistments in the military were ended, conscription was touted as an honorable and democratic way to serve.

The use of Selective Service—the draft—to build a wartime army was a risky proposition. While both the United States government and the Confederate government passed draft laws during the Civil War, that draft was generally seen as a failure and was used mainly to threaten the states to come up with other ways to raise their quotas of Volunteers. Less than five

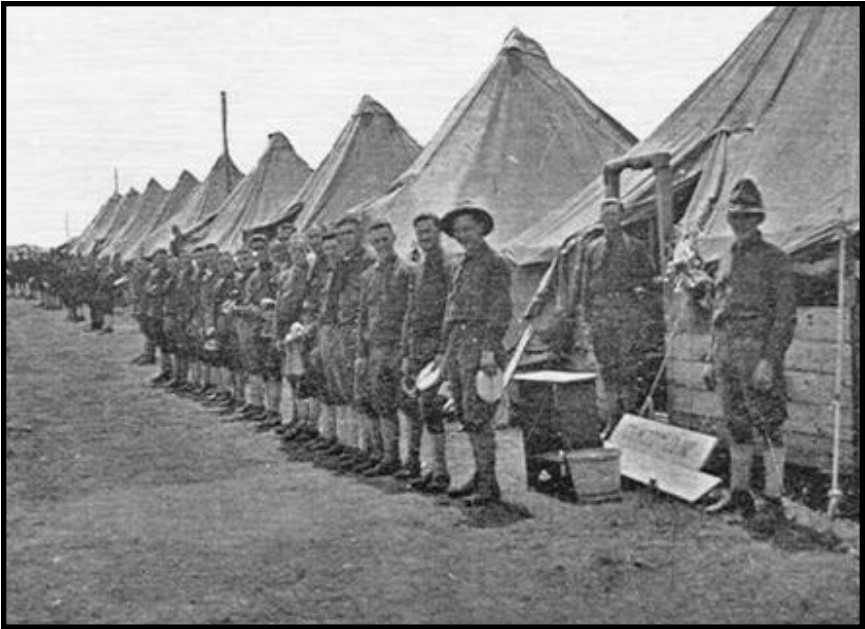


Figure 4.2. Company at Camp Syracuse, New York. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

percent the soldiers in the Civil War entered the Army through conscription. Conscription itself was seen as disgraceful, and Volunteers tended to look down on the drafted soldier, with the common remark that the convict and the conscript were equally worthless.<sup>14</sup> After considering the failure of conscription during the Civil War, the government settled on a Selective Service system to raise the manpower needed for the war.

For the draft to succeed, the government and the Army especially had to treat the drafted soldier differently than he had been treated in the past, and instill a sense of pride in his status as someone chosen to serve. This desire to depend on Selective Service rather than volunteering to raise the wartime army was a large part of the reason that the federal government ended all voluntary enlistments in the summer of 1918. Men who entered the military for the war after that date would do so through Selective Service. Newspaper stories, magazine articles, books, and other media were all employed to stress and celebrate the essentially democratic nature of the Selective Service system.<sup>15</sup> While much of this narrative was exaggerated or hyperbola, men from very different walks of life did indeed find themselves serving together in the National Army.

In theory, Selective Service would eliminate class and ethnic distinctions that often were apparent in Regular Army, the National Guard, and



in Volunteer regiments. The Regular Army enlisted force contained a high percentage of men from the lowest rungs of society—the very poor, and working class whites, with immigrants sometimes exceeding 20 percent of enlisted strength. Blacks served in four segregated regiments within the Regular Army, two Infantry and two Cavalry. The enlisted force of Volunteer regiments, on the other hand, at least initially tended to include men from the middle classes. National Guard regiments likewise drew more from the middle classes, but ideally the National Army, by using Selective Service, would draw from across the spectrum. College educated men would serve next to men with perhaps an eighth grade education; urbanites would serve alongside men from rural areas. This leveling effect was seen as the most democratic way to raise an army. The notable exception were the African-Americans. As in all aspects of American society, African American men were segregated from the other soldiers, and formed into the 92nd and 93rd Divisions.

During the war, the Army was re-organized around the division. Divisions were assigned numbers, with 1 through 25 set aside for the Regular Army, although the Regular Army only created eight divisions. Likewise, the National Guard was allotted division numbers 26 through 75, although only the divisions numbered 26th through 42nd were organized. All new National Army divisions were to be numbered from 76th and higher. Originally, the National Army was to be comprised of sixteen new, temporary, divisions. In a similar fashion, regimental numbers 1 through 99 were to be Regular Army, the National Guard regiments would be numbered between 100 and 300, and all National Army regiments were to be numbered above 300. In theory, the lineages of old units would remain, but the designation would change. Thus the New York National Guard's 7th Regiment became the 107th Regiment under the new system.<sup>16</sup> This basic numbering system would remain intact into the twenty-first century, although some divisions, such as the 82nd, and the 101st were later shifted to the Regular Army.

Of the entire wartime Army officer corps, only about three percent were Regular Army, and six percent were Guard officers.<sup>17</sup> The Regulars assumed quite correctly that most higher-level command positions—regiments, brigades, divisions—would be given to Regular Army officers. But many of those Regular officers served under higher, National Army commissions. Within the new National Army divisions, officers holding Regular commissions comprised perhaps 1.5 percent of the total officer corps, but were over-represented in positions of command. The remainder of officers, company grade officers and field grades officers serving in staff po-



Figure 4.3. Training the National Army. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

sitions, were mostly officers with Reserve commissions or National Army commissions only. One estimate based on the 81st Division assumed that 92 percent of second lieutenants and 63 percent of captains in the National Army held Reserve or National Army commissions.<sup>18</sup>

The new officers, along with some Regular and National Guard officers and NCOs, had the job of establishing new camps and turning masses of Selectees into soldiers. For each of the new National Army divisions, a mobilization and training camp was established. Unlike the National Guard camps in which the Guardsmen would be billeted in tents, plans called for the National Army cantonments to be equipped with wooden barracks. While contractors built some wooden structures on the National Guard camps, most of the effort went to constructing some 1,500 or so buildings on each of the 16 new National Army mobilization and training camps. Road construction was overseen by the new cantonment division, which became semi-independent from the Quartermaster Corps.

Initially, the new camps were planned around an infantry company that would contain 150 men. However after the commander of the American Expeditionary Force, Gen. John J. Pershing, increased the size of rifle companies to 250 men, a lot more barracks had to be built. While the new camps were spread throughout the country, the Southeast held the bulk of



Figure 4.4. Colonel George C. Marshall. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

them with the idea that the warmer climate would allow more training over the winter of 1917 to 1918. Most of these camps were established along major railroad lines, with Camp Green, North Carolina; Camp Gordon, Georgia; Camp Sheridan, Alabama; Camp Travis, Texas, and Camp Cody, New Mexico, all established along a single rail line that ran across the southern tier of the United States.<sup>19</sup> Most of these mobilization and training camps were reactivated during the Second World War, and some, such as Camp Devens, Camp Meade, Camp Lee, Camp Jackson, and Camp Lewis, eventually became Regular Army forts.

The 16 National Army divisions were organized geographically and so that while unlike the National Guard they did not have links to states or state governments, National Army divisions generally were filled with Selectees from a specific region. For example, The 80th Division contained Selectees from Virginia, West Virginia, and parts of Pennsylvania; while the 77th Division drew mainly from the state of New York. With these regional origins of National Army division, and more so the within the regiments in those divisions, local pride was strong. Divisions began to adopt self-chosen nicknames that often reflected their origins. The 86th Division called itself *Blackhawk*, while the 82nd Division, which took in Selectees from many states, called itself the *All American*. These self-selected nicknames spoke of a certain unit pride. An example of this pride became apparent when members of the 81st Division—the Wildcat division, began wearing unauthorized shoulder patches with the outline of a black cat on an olive green circle. At first Army leadership, especially General Pershing, disapproved of these example of individual division pride, but he eventually saw their benefit both for instilling esprit de corps, and also to allow leadership to easily identify the division to which soldiers belonged. Soon all divisions—Regular Army and National Guard included—began designing and wearing distinctive shoulder patches.<sup>20</sup>

While allowing for some divisional identity, the Army sought to end distinctions between components. Enlisted soldiers in the Regular Army wore a disk on their collar with the letters “US,” while enlisted men in the National Guard wore the letters “NG,” and often a state abbreviation on their collar. For enlisted men in the National Army the collar disc included an “NA” superimposed over the “US.” By this means, an obvious visual distinctions between soldiers in the three components (the term *branch* was actually used at the time) was maintained. However what could sometimes be a good natured competitiveness between the Regular Army divisions, the National Guard divisions, and the National Army divisions, was turning into bickering. As a result, Secretary of the Army Newton D. Baker, the Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peyton March, and General Pershing finally had enough. On 7 August 1918, General Order Number 73 officially abolished any distinction between the Regular Army, the National Guard, and the National Army.<sup>21</sup> From then on, there was officially to be only one US Army. All references to different branches or components were to be ended.

The distinction between officers holding Regular Army, Reserve, National Guard, or National Army commissions remained, although nothing on the uniform indicated what type of commission an officer held. Enlisted soldiers in the Army, whether they were Regular Army,

National Guard, or National Army, were all to wear the collar disc with the letters "US." While ordering such a change was relatively simple, providing enough of the metal "US" discs to the millions of American soldiers then in Europe proved much more difficult. Additionally, soldiers knew which division numbers belonged to the Regular Army, National Guard, or National Army, and so despite the desires of General March and General Pershing, the distinctions were still observed. Even the press, when reporting on actions in the war, almost always would identify the origin of each division.

Another reason for ending the distinction between the components was more practical. With the almost constant cross-leveling of leaders, and the use of Selective Service to fill all components after the ending of voluntary enlistments, such distinctions were increasingly irrelevant. By 1918, at least 25 percent of the soldiers in the supposedly National Guard divisions came in through Selective Service.<sup>22</sup> And the Army continued to grow. After the fielding of the 101st Division in the National Army, no higher numbered divisions were to be created. Instead the Army decided to create the new divisions with the unused numbers allotted to the Regular Army. Thus the Army began building divisions 9 through 14, which although technically part of the Regular Army, were filled with Selectees. On 1 August 1918, the Army announced that divisions 15 through 20 would also be created. Each of these new divisions was to consist of two Regular Army regiments and two National Army regiments, although as almost all enlisted men in these regiments would come from Selective Service, the distinctions were almost meaningless.

The Army was keen to continue growing in size throughout the fall of 1918 and the spring of 1919, with the belief that the war would last until the autumn of 1919, when the climactic battle to annihilate the German Army on German soil would probably occur. To bring this desired end state to fruition, the Army planned to have up to eighty divisions by the fall of 1919. As the campaigns in late summer and fall of 1918 were seen more as shaping operations, Regular Army officers were under represented in France. Most were expected to deploy over the winter of 1918-1919, to prepare for the big spring offensive.

One of the basic ideas from before the war was that in the event of war, the Regular Army would deploy first and the National Guard would deploy shortly afterward. While the Regular Army and National Guard held the line, a new third-tier force would be raised, trained, and deployed. While the pressures of the war did not allow this to happen quite as smoothly as envisioned, the pattern was roughly followed during the First World War.

While nine National Guard divisions were in France at the end of May of 1918, only three National Army divisions had made it over. By 25 August, the *New York Times* was reporting that for the first time, National Army divisions outnumbered both Regular Army and National Guard divisions in France. Eventually, 41 divisions made it to France, with the majority of them National Army divisions. Implementing this rough plan caused problems in National Army divisions. Some divisions with later deployment dates were again and again stripped of many of their best trained soldiers, who were sent to divisions with a higher priority for deployment.

Many National Army divisions became de-facto training divisions with, it was assumed, trained personnel transferred to Regular Army, National Guard, and other National Army divisions to make up for shortfalls. For example the 78th Division had companies manned with roughly 175 men in November of 1917. But due to the transfer of men from the 78th to other divisions, the average number of men in each company dropped to less than fifty by January of 1918. By April, the division was still at half strength, but in June, 1918, the 78th Division sailed for France with all of its assigned personnel. This full manning obviously meant that the division as it deployed contained a mixture of men who had been in it for a while and who had completed their training, and others who had only recently been assigned to the division and perhaps had only a few months in the army.<sup>23</sup> Five National Army divisions that arrived in France, the 76th, 83rd, 84th, 85th, and the 86th, were all either skeletonized or converted into depot divisions, and thus never saw combat as divisions.<sup>24</sup> The 93rd Division, one of the two divisions in which all of the enlisted men were African Americans, consisted of three Infantry regiments with no division headquarters. The regiments were detached from the American Expeditionary Force and assigned to French Army divisions where they built strong reputations as fighters.

Effort to build a wartime army had been extreme, but eventually the Army reached a peak strength of about 4,000,000 men. An army that size required an officer corps of at least 200,000. As the pre-war Regular Army and National Guard contained only about 18,000 officers, the War Department had to select, train, and commission about 182,000 officers during the 19 months the nation was at war. The Army also greatly shortened the course of instruction at West Point during the war, eventually reducing it to one year. Those officers who had received such a truncated education were required to return to West Point after the war to complete their education. But West Point was simply not an expedient method to expand the officer corps so rapidly. Graduates of pre-war military training at land-grant colleges pro-

vided approximately 28,000 officers to all military branches, but whether these officers received their commissions through their military training at college, or if they later went to an OCS is not clear.<sup>25</sup> The Medical Department and other branches did give direct commissions to around 70,000 men while the Army also granted National Army commissions to approximately 16,000 enlistedmen, usually experienced Regular Army NCOs.<sup>26</sup>

With the end of the war, public and political pressure to release the drafted soldiers was intense, and the Army disbanded much of its wartime strength very quickly. Most of the commissions granted during the war were National Army commissions, which ended in 1920 when the National Army was disbanded. Regular Army officers who held higher National Army rank reverted to their Regular Army ranks, while former enlisted men in the Regular Army reverted to their enlisted ranks. One of those Regular Army officers losing higher National Army rank was George C. Marshall, who as a member of General Pershing's staff had held the rank of colonel in the National Army. In the fall of 1919, shortly after his return to the United States, he was informed by the War Department that his National Army commission had ended and he was returned to his Regular Army rank of captain, although shortly afterwards he was promoted to the rank of major in the Regular Army.<sup>27</sup> A very few officers who only held National Army commissions were accepted into the Regular Army as officers to fill vacant officer positions. However, most of the National Army officers gladly accepted their discharge when the war ended and they returned to civilian life. Converting that National Army commission to a National Guard or Reserve commission was relatively easy, if the former National Army officer wanted to continue commissioned serving in either the National Guard or ORC.

After the war, the Army tabulated some statistics on its total wartime officer strength. It found that about three percent of the wartime officer corps had been Regular Army officers, while six percent were National Guard officers. Of the remainder, 48 percent, almost half, were commissioned through the Officer Training Camps and held National Army commissions, along with those commissioned from the ranks of the Regular Army, who were also given National Army commissions. Specialists, mostly medical, but also chaplains and other professions, were given direct commissions in the National Army.

In the immediate post-war era, proposals for Universal Military Training (UMT) for all American men went nowhere, since the First World War had supposedly made more wars unlikely.<sup>28</sup> With UMT dead, many leaders in the Army as well as in the ORC and society at large hoped to preserve

something of the wartime army structure during peacetime. The vehicle to do this was the new Organized Reserves. The Organized Reserves would largely replace the pre-war Officers Reserve Corps, and to a lesser degree, the Enlisted Reserve Corps. This new Organized Reserves would consist of cadre units, battalions and higher units and filled mainly by officers, and over which the War Department would have total control. Some in the War Department hoped that the existence of the Organized Reserves would mean that the National Guard would not be recreated after the war. Their hopes were dashed when Congress, under pressure from state governments and largely sympathetic to the National Guard, passed legislation and funding for the post-war National Guard. The Regular Army, with the National Guard, and the new Organized Reserves would in the interwar period provide the hedge against a time when the United States would again have to field large armies in foreign wars.

The creation of the National Army had, as it was planned, allowed the Regular Army to survive relatively intact during the rapid and massive expansion of the Army, and, perhaps more so, in the eventual rapid and massive contraction of the Army when peace returned. After the war, the National Army remained only as an idea, a model, possibly be resurrected at some future time, its form to be maintained in peacetime in the Organized Reserves.



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## Chapter Five

### The Reserve

Despite the increasing control of the Regular Army over the National Guard, and especially over the training and selection of its officer corps, its connection to the states would always taint it in the eyes of many Regular Army officers. The Regulars would long agitate for a wholly federal-ly-controlled reserve system. The Army had to operate within American political realities, and never got exactly what it wanted, but the creation of what would later become the Army Reserve came close. The National Army of the First World War, and especially the National Army commission, were seen as a temporary, war-time institutions. In contrast, the Reserve commission was developed as a means of creating a group of trained and ready officers that could provide competent leadership for new formations when the need arose.

The roots of officers holding Reserve commissions go back to the Civil War and the establishment of the Land-Grant Colleges in each state. Under the *Morrill Act* of 1862, all Land-Grant Colleges had to teach courses in military tactics, the root of what would eventually become the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC).<sup>1</sup> In theory, all graduates of these Land-Grant colleges would have at least a rudimentary familiarity with military arts, and could become a source of officers for Volunteer units in the future.

Decades later, the idea of ROTC extended beyond the Land-Grant colleges to any college that wanted the program and that the president approved. The only stipulation was that a Regular Army officer had to be assigned to the school as a professor of military science and tactics. In 1866, 20 officers were assigned to colleges for this duty; by 1894, 100 officers were assigned.<sup>2</sup> All students could take military classes as part of elective or mandatory courses, depending on the policies of each school. Implementation of the requirement to teach military tactics was spotty. While some colleges such as Norwich in Vermont and the Virginia Military Institute developed highly credible programs, at the majority of schools military training was seen as mindless drivel. Army officers assigned to teach the classes often considered it a form of exile. More problematic was that the War Department kept no record of students with this military training once they graduated from college, and so unless a graduate later individually volunteered for active service in the National Guard or in a Volunteer regiment, and was selected for commissioning, the benefits to the Army from the training amounted to nothing.

While the rising National Guard increasingly sought recognition as the means through which civilians would participate in military training during peacetime and augment the Regular Army during war, some reformers, especially Lt. Col. Emery Upton, remained wedded to the idea of a reserve force wholly controlled by the Army, without any involvement by the states. Upton graduated from West Point in 1861, and was a brevet major general of New York Volunteers by the end of the Civil War. Prior to his death by suicide in 1881, he would write extensively on the US Army, but his main goals were for an expandable Army controlled by Regular officers, and Regular Army control over any reserve system.<sup>3</sup> The initial step in creating what would eventually become the Army Reserve came in 1908, when Congress authorized the Army to create a reserve corps of medical officers.<sup>4</sup> Such officers, envisioned to be physicians, surgeons, and other health professionals, were to be granted Reserve commissions, which ranked them below Regular Army officers of the same grade, for five years as first lieutenants. The Secretary of War had the authority to order these Reserve officers to active duty during times of emergency. These men, for they were all men, formed the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC).

The first candidates for these new Reserve commissions were certified on 4 May 1908, with another 160 men recommended by 30 June.<sup>5</sup> The MRC continued to expand, reaching to almost two thousand members by the time the United States entered the First World War, greatly outnumbering the number of medical officers in the Regular Army. This new Reserve functioned in a similar manner as the modern Individual Ready Reserve; members had few obligations to the Army until actually called into active service. Still, the establishment of the MRC had, perhaps unintentionally, created a new paradigm with the Reserve commission. It established the precedent of a civilian holding a type of commission that allowed him to serve as an officer, with all the authority of an officer with a Regular commission, while on active duty.

In the preparedness debate which began in America in the summer of 1914, the abstract speculations of the 1880s became urgent arguments as the nation sought the proper balance of trained, professional soldiers and patriotic citizen-soldiers in a world that suddenly seemed far more dangerous. As Europe descended into war in the late summer of 1914, strategic leaders in the US Army began to seriously consider how the peacetime army could be expanded to the size necessary to protect the United States should the country be drawn into the war. While many military professionals assumed that enlisted men could be recruited and brought to a state of military competency in a matter of months—especially if wartime recruits

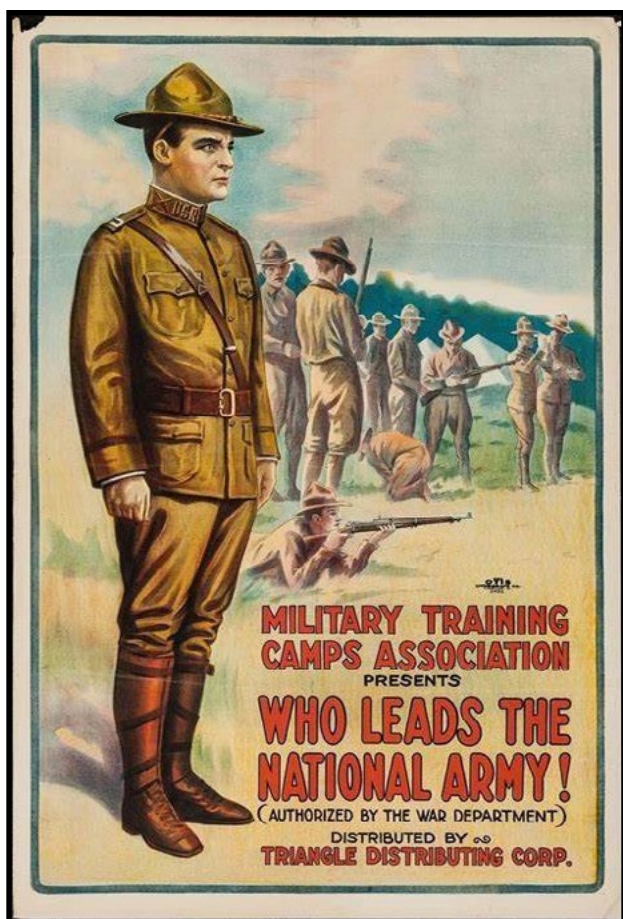


Figure 5.1. Poster extolling the virtues of the Military Training Camps. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

came from the middle class—expanding the officer corps to provide leadership for the growing army was more worrisome. Medical officers were one thing, but conventional wisdom held that a man needed years of training, education, and experience to become a competent line officer.

Major General Leonard Wood, who had entered the officer corps through the medical service, disagreed. Maybe an average man needed four years or so to become qualified to serve as a lieutenant, he reasoned, but what about the presumably highest quality of men—those who had recently graduated from the Ivy League schools and other top colleges? Wood believed that a much truncated period of instruction, perhaps three or so

months, could suffice to have them prepared assume the duties expected of a second lieutenant.

As an experiment, Wood held his first summer camps for college graduates in the summer of 1913, with one at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and another near the Presidio of Monterey, in California. Attendees paid for their own transportation, food, training, and uniform, and incurred no obligation to the Army. He judged the camp to have been so successful in acquainting civilian men in the rudiments of military life and the need for preparedness that a total of four camps were held in 1914. The most well-known camp was held in 1915 for older, more established men at Plattsburg, New York. Because of the wide publicity given to the camp at Plattsburg, the term "Plattsburg Camp" became a generic term for the whole program. But these month-long camps were more about acquainting civilians with the military and the need for preparedness than about producing officers.<sup>6</sup>

The Plattsburg Camps might have publicized the need for preparedness, but more was needed to lay the groundwork for a potentially massive expansion of the Army, and especially in building a source of non-Regular officers for such a force. General Wood had long agitated for cooperation between the War Department and the Interior Department to standardize military instruction at the Land-Grant colleges. He hoped to give some sort of provisional commissions to the top graduates. After a year of active service with the Regular Army these officers holding provisional commissions would form an officers' reserve, which would, he assume, provide the leaders for the Volunteers. That the Volunteers would still be needed in future wars was taken for granted.

The program remained of little more than an idea for expanding the officer corps until the reforms on the eve of the entry of the United States into the First World War.<sup>7</sup> By 1916, when the program became more regularly organized, those college students who completed the advanced ROTC courses and attended the follow-on six week summer training camp would be eligible for a Reserve commission.<sup>8</sup> Still, completing an ROTC program did not merit much respect from the Regular Army. Regulations held that any vacancies among the second lieutenants in the Regular Army that West Point could not fill were to be filled by soliciting from, in order, enlisted men who had passed the examination for commissioning, from the Officers' Reserve Corps, from the officers of the National Guard, and then only if any Regular Army second lieutenant positions remained unfilled, could Regular Army commissions be offered to honor graduates of ROTC programs.<sup>9</sup>

With the National Defense Act of 1916, Congress addressed a host of military issues.<sup>10</sup> Among other things, the act established the Officer's Reserve Corps (ORC). Under the act, the president was authorized, without needing the "advice and consent of Congress," to commission Reserve officers up through the rank of major.<sup>11</sup> All ranks above second lieutenant were limited to the number of officers of similar rank and arm as the Regular Army, but no limitation existed as to the number of Reserve commissions as second lieutenant the president could grant.<sup>12</sup> Reserve second lieutenants would be able to serve on active duty with the Regular Army for six months after commissioning to better acquaint them with the duties expected on them.<sup>13</sup> Commissions were again to last for five years.<sup>14</sup>

The new ORC absorbed the MRC, and was intended to provide a pool of officers of all branches who could be called to active service in the event of war or other emergency. Ideally, top graduates of ROTC programs who accepted Reserve commissions would enter the ORC after spending six months with the Regular Army and remain available for recall to active service. Top graduates from General Wood's summer training camps were also eligible for a Reserve commission. Ideally, at the start of a war, the Army would have a pool of Reserve officers ready to provide immediate and competent leadership in an expanded Army. However the entry of the United States into the First World War came before the act was a year old, and its full implications would have to wait for the restoration of the peacetime establishment.

With the entrance of the United States into the First World War, the Plattsburg Camps planned for 1917 were cancelled, but the basic idea continued in an expanded form as Officer Training Camps, also referred to as Officer Candidate Schools (OCS). The month-long program of the Plattsburg camps was expanded to a three-month-long program, with the candidates no longer technically civilians who paid for the privilege of being there, but soldiers in the Army training and being screened for selection for commissioning in the new National Army. The OCS camps were held in three series, with several schools conducted simultaneously in different areas of the country. By the time of the Armistice on 11 November 1918, some 57,307 National Army officers had been commissioned through OCS, with 46,000 men participating in the massive fourth series when the war ended.<sup>15</sup> Because of the need for officers at all ranks, some graduates of OCS were commissioned at ranks higher than second lieutenant, with a few commissioned as full colonels upon completion of the school.

During the war, the National Army commission became the most common commission held by an officer on active duty. While many Reg-



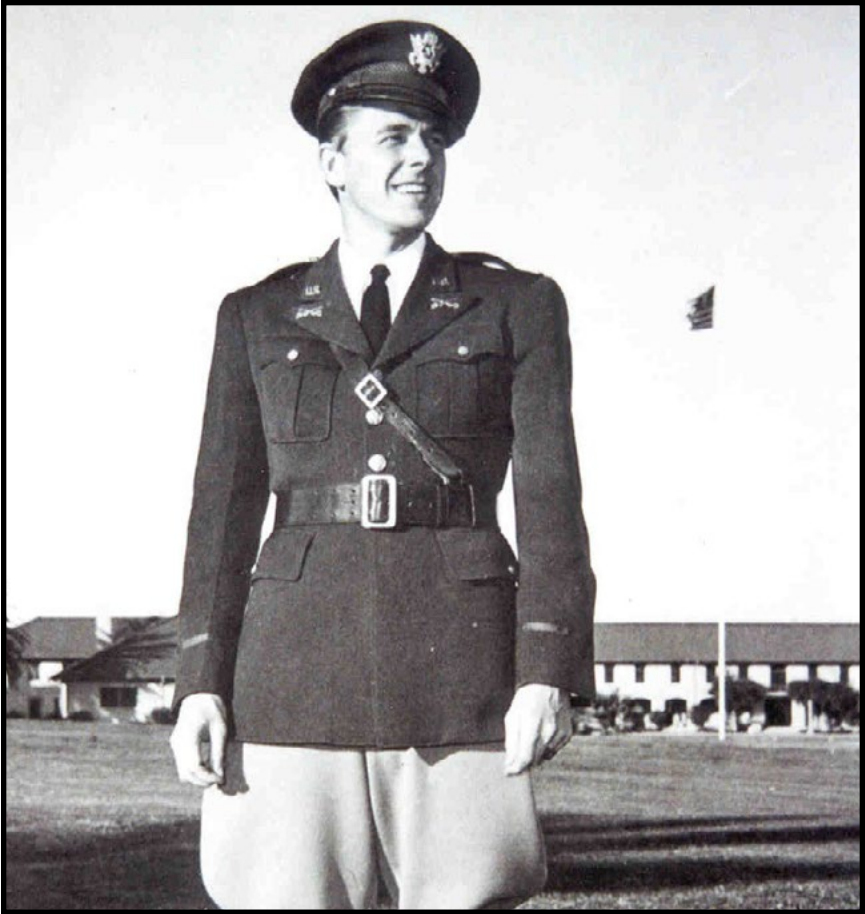


Figure 5.2. Second Lieutenant Ronald W. Reagan as a Cavalry officer in the ORC before World War II. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

ular Army officers, as well as National Guard and Reserve officers in Europe held a temporary higher rank through a National Army commission, OCS graduates held only a National Army commission. When the National Army was demobilized and these temporary officers were discharged, they were encouraged to apply for a Reserve commission.

Even before the enormous wartime army was disbanded, a group of officers got together and laid plans for an organization of Reserve officers that could lobby to keep Congress aware of the need for the nation to maintain a supply of officers ready to augment the Regular Army officer corps during wartime. The planned organization, the Reserve Officers Association (ROA), held its founding National Convention in 1922, with

Gen. John J. Pershing as the keynote speaker.<sup>16</sup> Although the ROA formed too late to influence the legislation setting the post-war defense establishment, it did serve to give Reserve officers a collective voice between the World Wars, in a manner similar to what the National Guard Association did for the National Guard.

One of the main goals of this new organization was to persuade Congress to provide for the preservation of the structure of the large wartime army in some sort of reserve form, as a hedge against a return to the unpreparedness ROA members saw as the pre-war situation. The ROA would eventually have great impact on policies toward a fully federally controlled military reserve force in the period between the World Wars. The Organized Reserves (OR), as it was named, consisted of the Officers Reserve Corps, the Enlisted Reserve Corps, and the ROTC. Placing ROTC under the OR clearly demonstrated that ROTC was seen at the time primarily as a source for Reserve officers. The ROA wanted the OR to be the main vehicle to expand the small, peacetime Regular Army into an enlarged war time army.

As envisioned, the divisions within the Organized Reserves would have 100 percent of the officer positions filled, and one-third of the enlisted positions. Members were not paid for weekly evening training meetings, only for their two weeks of training in the summer—if they got to attend. No retirement system existed. As a result, few enlisted men joined the Enlisted Reserve Corps. While divisions were usually maintained with a full complement of officers, they averaged less than 100 enlisted men per division, with many battalions consisting of only officers. In 1926, for example, the OR contained 72,000 officers, but only 5000 enlisted men.<sup>17</sup> The National Guard Association (NGA) was never keen on the OR concept, and fought a political battle to keep any federally-controlled reserve force from replacing the National Guard as the second tier of the American army. The OR therefore became the third tier.

What the OR attempted to do was preserve the leadership and structure of the National Army. The OR did indeed preserve a skeleton of the National Army, with the idea that when another large war broke out, Selective Service would again be used to put Selectees into the pre-existing mobilized reserve battalions. While the OR was initially able to attract thousands of former wartime officers, replacing them would soon be an issue. In 1920, for example, 35,060 Reserve officers were appointed to the OR, with 83 percent in the company grades.<sup>18</sup> This influx brought the total number of officers in the OR up to 68,232. ROTC would be the main source for new OR members, with direct commissioning and Citizens Military Training Camps (CMTC) providing the balance.

The CMTCs were, in essence, a continuation of the pre-war Plattsburg camps. Beginning in the summer of 1921, the Army began holding a series of summer camps around the country, mainly targeting college men, but some with businessmen who had been out of college several years. As with the pre-war Plattsburg camps, the main purpose was to acquaint civilians with the rudiments of military life rather than to serve as a commissioning program. However, men who completed three or four camps, depending on the period, and later, a correspondence course, could earn a Reserve commission through the camps. On average, only about six percent of the men who started a camp completed the entire process and earned a commission, and then entered the Organized Reserves.<sup>19</sup> Most would later be called to active service in World War II.

One of those who took advantage of the CMTC program and earned a Reserve commission and later served as an officer in World War II was Ronald Reagan, who was commissioned as a Cavalry officer in 1936.<sup>20</sup> However, as the main purpose of the CMST was not to produce Reserve officers, it compared poorly with ROTC as a cost-effective source of new Reserve officers. For example, in 1928, maintaining the ROTC program cost the Army \$2,600,000, and produced 5685 officers, while the CMTCs cost \$2,800,000, but produced only 25 officers.<sup>21</sup> The comparison was not fair, since ROTC existed mainly to produce Reserve officers, while CMTCs existed more to acquaint male citizens with the Army. Additionally, the CMTCs were increasingly run by Reserve officers, giving them training and leadership experience they would not normally have had in peacetime, not to mention a job during the Depression. One such Reserve officer who benefitted from participation in the CMTCs was Col. Harry S. Truman, who commanded a CMTC at Camp Pike, Arkansas, in 1933.<sup>22</sup>

Finding training opportunities so that Reserve officers could maintain their military skills remained a perennial problem between the wars. Reserve battalions would sometimes hold fifteen days of training at a Regular Army installation, although with no enlisted Reservists present, much of the training was more of a theoretical nature. Reserve officers were occasionally able to train with a Regular Army unit. Later, during the Depression, many Reserve officers spent time on active duty with the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), where after the initial startup, Reserve officers provided much of the leadership. However, funds for training were never adequate to train the entire force, and most officers were lucky if they were able to attend training one year in four.<sup>23</sup> For too many Reserve officers, their main peacetime training came from Army correspondence courses. Still, the OR did preserve much of the structure of the National Army of



Figure 5.3. Reserve Officers of the 61st Inf. Reg. at summer training at Fort Knox, Kentucky, July 1934. Courtesy of Pogue Special Collections and Archives Library, Murray State University Libraries, Murray, KY.

the First World War in a skeleton form, and allowed a generation of Reserve officers to maintain some competence, giving the nation an added measure of preparedness during peacetime.

As previously mentioned, before the First World War General Wood had proposed a scheme by which top graduates of ROTC programs would be given what he called “provisional commissions” and would serve on active duty with the Regular Army for a year, and then join the ORC. That scheme never came to fruition, mainly because of the disruption of the war. However, a germ of it remained, and indeed became entrenched because of a modification in the US Army’s platoon structure that was originally intended to be a temporary measure during the war, but which would become permanent.

Prior to the war, the typical Regular Army company was structured so that each infantry company, as well as other branches, normally had positions for three officers; a captain, a first lieutenant, and a second lieutenant, all of whom held Regular Army commissions.<sup>24</sup> Platoon leaders were NCOs. But at the beginning of American involvement in the First World



Figure 5.4. ROTC cadets train at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, in 1948. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

War, a change was made to the officer structure in most Army companies. The rapid expansion of the Army meant that many of the new sergeants had minimal time in the Army. To compensate for that lack of experience in the NCO corps, the Army decided to assign a second lieutenant to each platoon as the platoon leader, with the ranking sergeant in the platoon designated as the “platoon sergeant.” Since the number of authorized second lieutenants with a Regular Army commission was still based on one per company, the additional officers were to hold either Reserve or National Army commissions.<sup>25</sup> The idea was that although the second lieutenant often had even less time in the Army than the platoon sergeant, the officer’s higher education, intense training, and other qualities would compensate for his lack of experience. Having an officer paired with the noncommissioned officer would provide adequate leadership for the platoon in the greatly expanded Army.

This altering of the basic structure of the platoon, and thus the company, was meant to be a temporary measure only used during the war due to the special circumstances. However, the Army judged it so successful that it became a permanent part of the way companies and platoons were organized. This practice of having most second lieutenants serving with the Regular Army holding Reserve commissions was intentional because it was assumed that the majority of second lieutenants who came into the

Army would be there only for a few years after completing their ROTC training. After leaving active duty, most would go into the Organized Reserves or National Guard, giving those organizations a more professional officer corps, as General Wood had advocated before the war. Only the officer with the Regular Army commission was expected to remain in the Army more than a few years, eventually becoming a company commander, and then moving on to the field grades. As a result, in most Regular Army companies, the majority of the second lieutenants, and sometimes even the first lieutenant, were technically Reserve officers on active duty. The *Thomason Act* of 1935 did allow 50 Regular Army commissions to be granted to top ROTC graduates, but these officers represented only a minority of the ROTC graduates who would go on active duty.<sup>26</sup> This system evolved over the century to become something quite different from its original intention but nevertheless, the practice became entrenched in structure of the Army.

While the structure of the Regular Army was rather clearly defined, some ambiguity remained as to just what the Organized Reserves were. The National Defense Act then in force did not define it, but only described it as a part of the peacetime establishment.<sup>27</sup> The Organized Reserves existed during peacetime to provide an organization of Reserve officers, and in theory enlisted men, in cadre units. Units were to be organized within a particular state or territory. These units existed to provide partially-trained tactical units that in an emergency could rapidly expand to war strength using Selective Service and complete their training.<sup>28</sup> During the Second World War the OR partially fulfilled that function.

By the same Public Resolution issued on 27 August 1940 that allowed President Franklin D. Roosevelt to bring the National Guard onto active federal service in response to the new war in Europe, he was also authorized to order onto active service any member or unit of the Organized Reserves, as well as the reserves of the other military branches, and even any retired Regular Army soldier, for 12 months. As with the limits on the National Guard and Selectees, men so mobilized could not be sent outside of the Americas, unless to United States territories and possessions in the Pacific.

The cadre divisions of the Organized Reserves were initially called to active service in the fall of 1940 for the year for training, along with the National Guard and the reinstatement of Selective Service. The Selective Service system that began operating in the fall of 1940 was essentially the same as that used in the First World War. The OR divisions went to the mobilization camps—some new, other refurbished from the First World War—and began taking in Selectees. While Selectees also went

to the Regular Army and National Guard divisions to bring them up to the wartime manning levels, Reserve units absorbed the largest portion of Selectees. When the year was half-way through, the *Service Extension Act* in August, 1941, extended for six more months the length of time the Reservists, Guardsmen, and Selectees were supposed to spend on active duty.<sup>29</sup> The attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, meant all soldiers would be on active duty as long as needed.<sup>30</sup>

In February of 1942, the president activated all members of the Organized Reserves not already serving for the duration of the war effort.<sup>31</sup> Legislation made clear that all officers, warrant officers, and enlisted men of the Organized Reserves ordered to active service by the federal government for more than 30 days were entitled to the same pensions, compensation, retirement pay, and hospital benefits provided for personnel of the Regular Army of corresponding grades and length of service.<sup>32</sup> By late 1942, around 140,000 officers holding Reserve commissions were on active duty, but despite the presidential order in February another 12,100 officers in the ORC remained inactive. Some were on academic deferments or awaiting pilot training slots in the Air Corps. Many were individual Reservists who were simply too old and too senior for the needs of the Army. Officers in the grade of lieutenant colonel or higher, especially if in their fifties, often found getting called to active duty difficult. Despite the difficulties for the senior Reserve officers, by 1945, around 200,000 officers holding Reserve commissions were serving on active duty, representing almost all company grade officers and majors in the ORC.<sup>33</sup>

Despite the mobilization of the OR divisions, the use of Selective Service to bring all components up to wartime troop levels and the transfer of officers and NCOs among divisions meant that the leveling between Regular Army, National Guard, and Organized Reserves divisions was far more extensive during the Second World War than it had been in the First World War. By 1944, to refer to any division by its pre-war component was inaccurate. In some so-called Regular Army divisions, the majority of officers held Reserve or Army of the United States (AUS) commissions (see Chapter Six), a trend most pronounced among captains and majors. Officers commissioned through OCS during the war received AUS commissions, which many, if not most, Regular Army officers also held in addition to their Regular Army commission. Thus despite the induction of the vast majority of Reserve officers for the war, and the ORC being the largest pool of commissioned officers prior to the war, the Reserve officers came to represent about only one-quarter of the total officers on active duty during the war.<sup>34</sup>





## *Security's Command Post*

**AMERICA'S FIRST TEAM GATHERS HERE!**

These uniformed Reservists—and many thousands like them—will be out in the field again this summer, working with the Regular Services.

These officers and men were among the participants serving in our great World War II Armies. They are keeping in shape, commanding units, learning the latest techniques, firing the best weapons, solving military problems of movement and supply. As Reservists, they attend training assemblies periodically throughout the year—pointing toward summer camp where their knowledge can be applied in practical maneuvers.

Over the fields and plains of America, these public-spirited citizen-soldiers help keep the nation prepared by keeping themselves trained and ready.

Peacetime—and wartime—the Reservist works to protect your future...is an important part of "Your first team for security."



*Now more than ever before, MORE RESERVISTS ARE NEEDED TO SECURE OUR DEFENSES! Do your part! See your local Reserve Unit Senior Instructor, nearest Post Commander...or the U. S. Army and U. S. Air Force Recruiting Officer in your locality, for full details about the Army's Reserve program! Non-members, join up! Members, stay in!*

**Stay on the First Team for Security!**



*The men of the U. S. Army's Organized Reserve Corps help form the backbone of skill and experience for our security forces!*

Figure 5.5. Magazine advertisement for the Organized Reserve Corps. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

After the Second World War, the Army revamped the Organized Reserves. Veterans of the Second World War were encouraged to join by the authorization of pay for drill and the implementation of a retirement system. The post-World War II OR was envisioned to contain manned units down to the company level, rather than cadre battalions, as had



been the model before the Second World War. Drill pay and other benefits basically extended to the reserves of all services the financial benefits that had been available to the Nation Guard since 1916. Such benefits were deemed essential if the revamped Organized Reserves were to attract enlisted men. Former wartime officers holding AUS commissions were usually able to convert them into Reserve commissions. Reserve divisions were aligned with ROTC programs that were expected to serve as feeders for new officers.

Like its pre-World War II incarnation, the new Organized Reserves was intended to function as a strategic reserve to be mobilized only for major military events, which was primarily envisioned after the Second World War as a war with the Soviet Union. However, shortages in the active military force led to a large, although far from total, mobilization during the Korean War. Of some 600,000 Reservists in 1950, around 240,000 were called up during the war, either as individuals or as a member of one of 971 units that were mobilized. While some Reservists did serve in Korea, most either stayed in the United States, or deployed to Europe and served as a back-fill for Regular Army units that deployed to Korea.<sup>35</sup>

During the Korean War, Congress began to implement some changes in the Organized Reserves. In 1952, the Organized Reserves was officially renamed the *Army Reserve*.<sup>36</sup> This change was in part to avoid confusion with the reserve components of the other branches that had assumed a role in the Cold War defense structure. That same year, federal law prevented the president from mobilizing units or individuals from the reserve components without first declaring a national emergency.

As in the period after the First World War, the Army also used Reserve officers serving on active duty, usually immediately or shortly after commissioning through ROTC, to fill the positions for second lieutenants in excess of what officers holding Regular Army commissions could fill. Despite its original role, ROTC was becoming a major source for officers on active duty, and even for gaining Regular Army commissions. Federal law in 1949 raised the number of Regular Army commission available to top ROTC graduates to 2000, while OCS graduates still were only eligible for a Reserve commission. The much larger size of the standing army after the Second World War, and even more after the Korean War, meant that a larger amount of company grade and even some field grade officers holding Reserve commissions served on active duty with the Regular Army, a trend exacerbated by the tendency of officers initially granted a Regular Army commission to leave active service before completing 20 years of service. By 1954, around three out of four



Figure 5.6. New soldiers in the Army Reserve learn about engine maintenance. Photo courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

officers on active duty held a Reserve or AUS commission, with the ratio higher for the US Army in Europe.<sup>37</sup>

The Army eventually came to recognize that officers on active duty holding Reserve commissions fell very roughly into two broad camps—those filling their ROTC or OCS commitment, and those intending on serving out a career on active duty. Partially in recognition of the anomaly of having “permanent Reservists” in the Regular Army, the Army began in 1957 to allow some of those Reservists to convert their commissions to Regular Army commissions to fill vacancies. However, despite the changes, Reserve officers still accounted for about half of the officer corps on active duty.<sup>38</sup>

Most of those Reserve officers on active duty who did not seek a military career were lieutenants fulfilling their initial commitment. Many had taken ROTC and accepted a commission mainly as a means of avoiding enlisted service as a conscript once the peacetime draft was re-established in 1948. As such, they brought some cultural practices with them that were alien to the Regular Army officer corps. For example, Reserve officers, even those serving with the Regular Army, usually voted in elections.

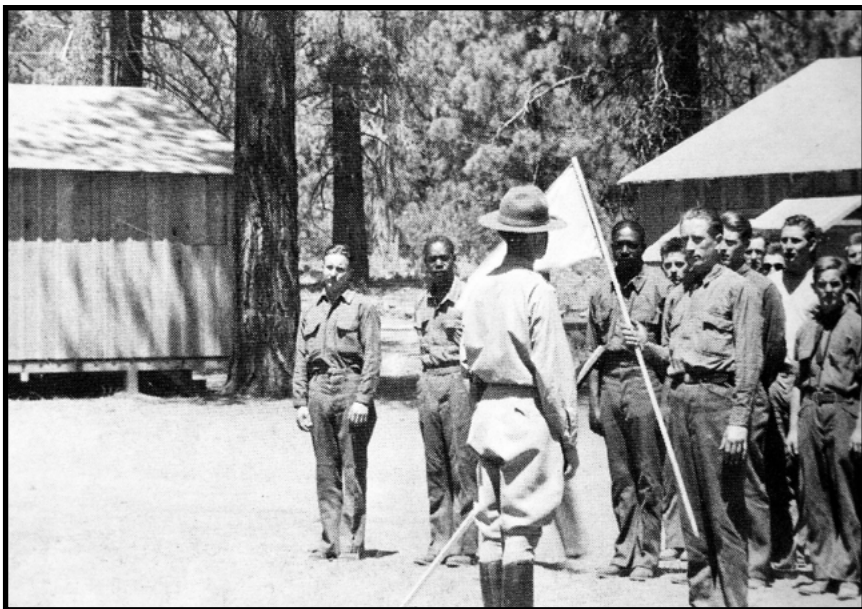


Figure 5.7. Civilian Conservation Camp. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

While no regulation prevented a Regular Army officer from voting, tradition from the generation after the Civil War held that a commissioned officer of the Republic should be so non-partisan as to hold himself above elections. Many Regular officers saw the tendency, and even encouragement, of Reserve and National Guard officers to vote as a sign of the non-professional nature of those officers. Samuel P. Huntington's widely influential *The Soldier and the State* heavily stressed the idea of the Regular Army officers providing the professional core of an American army enlarged with non-professional Reservists and conscripts, a distinction often lost on later readers with no experience with the army enlarged with conscripts and officers with Reserve commissions.<sup>39</sup>

For political and global strategic reasons, the Army Reserve, like the National Guard, remained largely inactive during the Vietnam War. The Army fought the war using its peacetime structure of Regular soldiers in units augmented with draftees. Because of President Lyndon B. Johnson's policies, the reserve components largely sat out the war. However, because the size of Regular Army officer corps had not been adjusted to provide enough second lieutenants with Regular Army commissions to fill all the commissioned platoon leader positions, the bulk of the company grade officers who fought in Vietnam held Reserve commissions while serving on active duty. Most Reservists, however, did not serve in Vietnam because

membership in a reserve component for six years made a man ineligible for conscription. All reserve components found themselves fully manned during the war with soldiers whose main motivation for joining the Reserve was to avoid active service. Most Guard and Reserve units maintained lists of men wishing to join.

In response to the Tet Offensive, an attempt by South Vietnamese communist guerrillas to spark a general uprising in early 1968, and increased tensions with North Korea over the seizure of the USS *Pueblo* on 23 January 1968, the Joint Chiefs of Staff requested that the president mobilize 32,000 Army Reserve soldiers to back-fill the Strategic Reserve, with most of them slated to serve in the United States or in Europe, rather than be deployed to Vietnam. On 25 January 1968, President Johnson ordered a limited mobilization of the Army Reserve. Politics and budget concerns trimmed the actual number of mobilized Reservists to 20,034 from 26 units. Despite opposition from politicians as well as from some Reservists, some Reserve units eventually deployed to Vietnam. The overall impact of the Reserve units on the course of the war was minimal. At their peak, Army Reserve soldiers totaled less than five percent of all American soldiers in Vietnam. Likewise, only a small fraction of all Army Reserve soldiers were mobilized for the war, either for deployment to Vietnam, or to provide backfill in the strategic reserve.<sup>40</sup> The shortcomings of the mobilization of some Army Reserve units in 1968 later influenced the reforms of the Army Reserve in the 1970s.

In 1973, authorization for the induction of men into the military through Selective Service—the draft—was not renewed, and thus conscription ended. The Army had been planning for the end of conscription for more than a decade, and had not drafted anyone since 1972, and so, while difficult, the end of the draft was not catastrophic.<sup>41</sup> With the shrinking of the Army after the Vietnam War, and even more so after the ending of conscription, officers holding Regular Army commissions became the norm, with officers holding Reserve commissions prevalent only in the company grades, especially as second lieutenants. Aside from mobilized Reservists or Guardsmen, almost all officers of the rank of major or higher on active duty held a Regular Army commission. A few NCOs in the Regular Army held an inactive Reserve commission, and some even an AUS commission in hiatus. Such situations were rare, and the only benefit it gave to such an enlisted man was the potential to be called into the officer ranks in the event of a massive expansion of the Army, and the ability to retire at the highest rank successfully held.

After the end of the draft in 1973, the Army Reserve lost many members, as Reservists who joined to avoid the draft left in droves.<sup>42</sup> The

All-Volunteer Force concept was originally envisioned as a peacetime manning process only, with Selective Service retained in structure to provide men during war. However, concurrent with the ending of the draft was the implementation of the Total Force policy. Under Total Force, the Guard and Reserve were more fully integrated with the active force. The Army continued to adjust the relationship between the Regular Army and the reserve components. In the 1990s, most of the remaining Reserve combat arms units were disbanded or converted to support functions, and Reserve division headquarters were converted into Regional Support Groups.<sup>43</sup> The Army Reserve became composed of almost all Combat Support and Combat Service Support units.

From the beginning of the Army Reserve until the mid-1990s, the Army Reserve mobilized nine times. In the years since 1995, soldiers from the Reserve have more than doubled that. Reservists have been in a continuous state of mobilization for over a decade, with an average of around 9,300 Reserve soldiers mobilized each year.<sup>44</sup> This constant use has led to a major shift in thinking about the role of the reserve components, from a strategic reserve to be used only in major wars, to an operational reserve to be used for a variety of missions.

During this time, the concept of the officer holding a Reserve commission had bifurcated. The old model held that graduates of the United States Military Academy received Regular Army commissions, and were expected to form the core of the professional, Regular Army officer corps. A few top graduates of ROTC programs would be offered Regular Army commissions to fill any positions West Point could not. Officers such as George Marshall entered the Regular Army officer corps in this manner. The majority of ROTC graduates would receive Reserve commissions, and while some would serve a few years on active duty, most would go into the Army Reserve, Army National Guard, or even Individual Ready Reserve. But increasingly ROTC was seen as the main source for officers for the Regular Army, regardless of the type of commission the officer held. Company grade officers in the Regular Army who held a Reserve commission did not consider themselves Reserve officers on active duty, but Regulars. The ending of the automatic Regular Army commission for West Pointers in 1996, only gave recognition to a long trend. But since the final end of the AUS commission in 1980, the Reserve commission remains the only alternative to the Regular commission, and no one can hold both simultaneously.

The Reserve commission remains the most common commission in the US Army today. Officers holding a Reserve commission are a small

minority of the officers serving in the Regular Army, but are the commission of all officers in the Army Reserve and the National Guard. Many graduates of ROTC programs accept their Reserve commission but go into the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR), theoretically subject to recall in an emergency, but never serving in either the National Guard or the Army Reserve. While the use of the Reserve commission has evolved and adapted over the past century, it remains largely what was first envisioned—something other than a Regular Army commission that a civilian could maintain in peacetime, that would allow him, and later her, to be ordered onto active duty when the need arose, and be able to carry out the duties of an officer. But while originally, the Reserve commission was technically in the “Army of the United States,” the Army of the United States commission would be something different, and be the main temporary commission of the Second World War.

## Notes

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2. Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 250.

3. Stephen E. Ambrose, *Upton and the Army* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964).

4. Senate Bill 1424, 23 April 1908.

5. Their commissions were dated 7 July 1908.

6. Donald M. Kington, *Forgotten Summers: The Story of the Citizens' Military Training Camps, 1921-1940* (San Francisco: Two Decades Publishing, 1995), 1-5.

7. Gene M. Lyons, and John W. Masland, "The Origins of the ROTC," *Military Affairs* 23 (Spring: 1959), 1-12.

8. William Addleman Ganoe, *History of the United States Army* (Ashton, MD: Eric Lundberg, 1964), 481.

9. National Defense Act of 1916 (An Act for Making Further and More Effectual Provisions for the National Defense, and for Other Purposes), Sixty-Fourth Congress, Sess. I., Chapter 134, Sec 24.

10. National Defense Act of 1916 (An Act for Making Further and More Effectual Provisions for the National Defense, and for Other Purposes), Sixty-Fourth Congress, Sess. I., Chapter 134.

11. National Defense Act of 1916, Sec. 37

12. National Defense Act of 1916, Sec. 37

13. National Defense Act of 1916, Sec. 52.

14. National Defense Act of 1916, Sec. 52

15. Kington, *Forgotten Summers*, 5.

16. John T. Carlton and John F. Slinkman, *The ROA Story: A Chronicle of the First 60 Years of the Reserve Officers Association of the United States* (Washington, DC: The Reserve Officers Association, 1982), 21.

17. Forrest L. Marion, and Jon T. Hoffman, *Forging a Total Force: The Evolution of the Guard and Reserve* (Washington, DC: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2018), 23.

18. Richard B. Crossland, and James B. Currie, *Twice the Citizen: History of the United States Army Reserve, 1908-1983* (Washington, DC: Officer of the Chief, Army Reserve, 1983), 38.

19. Kington, *Forgotten Summers*, 38-39.

20. Kington, 132.

21. Crossland, and Currie, *Twice the Citizen*, 40.

22. Kington, *Forgotten Summers*, pp. 131-33.

23. Crossland, and Currie, *Twice the Citizen*, 40-41.

24. *National Defense Act of 1916*, Sec. 17. The Act specified that each Infantry company was to have three officers—one captain, one first lieutenant, and one second lieutenant.

25. *The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Organization of the American Expeditionary Forces*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1988), pp. 124, 347—Table 7. The Table of Organization specifically states in the “Remarks” column that the second lieutenant could come from the Regular Army, Reserve Corps, or National Guard.

26. Army Regulation 605-6: “Appointment of 2d lieutenants in Regular Army during fiscal year 1938, under provisions of act of Aug. 30 1935” (Thomason Act) 49 Stat. 1028.

27. Sec. 3 (M.L. 1939, sec. 3). Section 3a of the National Defense Act was added by act 4 June 1920 (41 Stat. 160; 10 U.S.C. 341; M.L. 1939, sec. 1339b).

28. See AR 140-5, 11 June 1941.

29. The Service Extension Act of 1941 (act 18 August 1941; 55 Stat. 626; 50 U.S.C. 351; MoL1939, Sup, II, sec, 2227-1).

30. Public Resolution No. 96 (54 Stat. 858, approved 27 August 1940).

31. E.O. 9049, 6 February 1942 (Bull. 7, WD, 1942).

32. Act of 3 April 1939 (53 Stat. 557); act of 25 July 1939 (53 Stat. 1079); and act 10 of December 1941 (55 Stat. 796; 10 U.S.C. 456; M.L. 1939, Sup. II, sec. 1117

33. Crossland, and Currie, *Twice the Citizen*, 68-71.

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35. Crossland, and Currie, 99.

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38. Linn, 170.

39. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil Military Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957).

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## Chapter Six

### The Army of the United States

The most thorough system for temporarily expanding the Army, and more importantly, its officer corps, came with the creation of the Army of the United States (AUS) in 1940. The AUS existed for four decades, yet its very existence has been largely forgotten, even within the Army. The AUS consisted of the Regular Army, the Organized Reserves, the National Guard (only while on active federal service), and all conscripted enlisted men. It served as the greatly enlarged army for war, while preserving, to a large extent, the structure of the Regular Army within it. Officers holding AUS commissions, either independently or in addition to their Regular or Reserve commissions, provided the bulk of officers during World War II. After World War II, officers holding an AUS commission still existed, albeit in much smaller numbers and mainly in active warzones. The AUS commission outlasted conscription by a few years until such commissions went into hiatus in 1980 when the few officers who were still serving under one either reverted to their Regular rank or retired.<sup>1</sup> The continued existence of the AUS for more than three decades following the end of the Second World War allowed the Army to expand and contract its officer corps in response to the wars in Korea and Vietnam, while keeping the Regular Army officer corps intact. The AUS commission filled the role formerly filled by Volunteer and National Army commission, but was of longer duration.

The AUS was created by Congress as the nation began to rapidly and greatly expand the Army in the year before the United States entered the Second World War. The concept and term, “Army of the United States,” had been in the National Defense Act of 1916, which defined it as the Regular Army, the Volunteer Army, the Officers’ Reserve Corps, the Enlisted Reserve Corps, and the National Guard when in federal service.<sup>2</sup> But the term saw little use during the First World War, and the temporary commissions issued to officers in that war were National Army commissions, not AUS commissions. With the former National Army structure converted into the Organized Reserves after the First World War, and then brought onto active service in 1940, the term “National Army” fell out of use, and the temporary, wartime commissions were designated as “Army of the United States” commissions during the Second World War and beyond.

The creation of the National Army during the First World War had been, from an organizational standpoint, largely successful. With some



Figure 6.1. Selective Service drawing. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

revisions, such as the composition of divisions and the creation of specialized divisions—armored, air, airborne—the organizational system used during the First World War was employed during the Second. Likewise, the Selective Service system used during the Second World War was almost identical to that of the First World War.<sup>3</sup>

Legislation provided that in time of war or other emergency all enlistments in the Army were to be in the Army of the United States, without specification of component. In May of 1940, as a response to the fall of France, Congress declared a national emergency. Voluntary enlistments in the Army were still allowed, but enlistments were into the AUS, rather than the Regular Army.<sup>4</sup> Any enlistments were for the duration of the emergency plus six months, unless the president allowed earlier discharge.<sup>5</sup> The concept of the AUS was only applied to the Army—the Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard also increased temporarily, but all non-Regulars in those services were labelled “Reserve,” and the Reserve commission was the sole means of expanding their officer corps.

The lack of preparedness of the Regular Army, and even more so the National Guard as demonstrated during the summer of 1940, led President Franklin D. Roosevelt and military leaders to ask for a far more inten-

sive preparedness program. The president received permission to begin the first peacetime conscription in American history and the mechanisms of Selective Service again began to select men for compulsory military service. Eventually, some 12 million men would enter the military through Selective Service during the Second World War, with about eight million serving in the Army.

Prior to the influx of Selectees in to the Army, the president on 31 August 1940 ordered the entire National Guard, around 300,000 men, to enter active federal service for 12 months of full-time training, with the first units to begin their year-long tour on 16 September 1940.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, the Organized Reserves was also ordered into active service. The mobilization of the First World War began in the summer, which had given the War Department necessary time to build suitable shelters for the large influx of men. However, by the fall of 1940, facilities did not exist to house the entire National Guard and Organized Reserves over the winter, so the activation had to occur over a period of four months, with some units' entry into federal service pushed until early 1941.

The process regarding the mobilization of the Organized Reserves and the implementation of Selective Service was basically what had been envisioned since the end of the First World War. The Organized Reserves divisions would absorb the bulk of the Selectees because the Reserve divisions were only maintained as cadre units in peacetime. They had the structure and leadership down to the battalion level, but few, if any, enlisted soldiers until filled with Selectees during mobilization.

While the Organized Reserves were intended to receive most of the Selectees, National Guard and Regular Army also received a sizeable amount of Selectees. Neither the Regular Army or the National Guard had been able to maintain full peacetime strength, and the problem of recruiting became more difficult as the economy began to recover from the Great Depression as the war stimulated economic activity. But more fundamentally, the peacetime structure of the Guard and the Regular Army included intentionally understrength companies, especially in the infantry. In peacetime, companies normally had fewer than 100 men, while the war-time infantry company was to have about 200 men. As a result, Selectees were assigned to units in all three components.<sup>7</sup>

All Selectees were designated as belonging to the Army of the United States—not as Regular, Reserve, or National Guard, regardless of the units to which they were assigned. Originally, Selectees were to serve on active duty for one year and not serve outside of the Western Hemisphere, with the

exception of American possessions in the Pacific; the same limits placed on Reservists and Guardsmen called to active service.<sup>8</sup> The length of service was later extended to 18 months, but the United States entered the war before the Selectees were discharged, and all Selectees, along with everyone else in the military, were extended on active service through the end of the war, or until no longer needed by the government.<sup>9</sup>

After the war, the Army commissioned a study on the wartime sources and training of officers. The study concluded that the year Reserve and National Guard officers spent on active duty prior to the United States' entry into the war gave those officers the needed intensive training and also allowed the Army to eliminate those deemed unsuitable. A large elimination of Guard and Reserve officers came as a result of their sub-par performance in the General Headquarters (GHQ) Maneuvers of 1941.<sup>10</sup> But even if all the officers in the Organized Reserves and National Guard had been retained, they still would not have numbered enough to provide the necessary leadership for the wartime army. New, temporary officers had to be selected, trained, commissioned, and assigned.

One of the key steps in creating a new type of commissioned officer came in an act passed by Congress on 22 September 1941.<sup>11</sup> Under it, the president was authorized to appoint qualified persons as officers in the Army of the United States without appointing them in any particular component.<sup>12</sup> In other words, such officers would hold an AUS commission only, and have no additional commission in the National Guard, Reserve, or Regular Army. Nor would they be considered as belonging to any component, only to the Army of the United States—essentially the same status as drafted men. Such officers, like all others, could be ordered to active duty for as long as the president desired or until the end of the emergency plus six months.<sup>13</sup> After the United States formally entered the war, the period of time for AUS commissions became defined as for the war plus six months.<sup>14</sup>

One key provision in the National Defense Act, as amended, then in effect was that an officer with a Regular Army commission could be appointed to a temporary, higher rank in the AUS in time of war or national emergency while retaining his Regular Army commission. On 22 September 1941, the ability to hold an AUS rank was extended to officers with a Reserve commission, whether in the Organized Reserves or National Guard, without affecting his appointment in the Officers' Reserve Corps or the National Guard of the United States.<sup>15</sup> Such temporary, higher rank in the AUS was often referred to as "theater rank," although many Regular Army officers in the United States served under higher AUS commissions.

Still, officers sent back to the United States for failure usually lost their AUS, or “theater” rank, and reverted to their Regular Army or Reserve rank, often referred to as their “permanent” rank. In theory, the AUS commission could be in a grade lower than the officer’s Regular or Reserve commission, but such theoretical demotions never happened.

Army leaders such as Chief of Staff, Gen. George C. Marshall, realized that the key to building the massive wartime army envisioned by strategic leaders and planners depended on finding enough quality officers to lead it. The problem was to fill all the positions for officers in the higher echelons, ideally with Regulars and select Reserve officers in temporary ranks, while finding enough temporary officers to fill the lower echelons. In World War II, the Army followed to some extent the model of the National Army commission as a temporary commission that Regular Army officers could accept in addition to their Regular commission. In concept, Regular Army officers, along with a few of the Guard and Reserve officers who had proven themselves, would be granted AUS commissions in higher, temporary ranks, and provide the bulk of army, corps, and division leadership, as well as key staff positions.

When the United States began mobilizing in the autumn of 1940, the Regular Army, and even more so the National Guard and the Organized Reserves, did not have enough officers for their own organizations, much less enough to provide for the expanded military being planned. Commissioning of officers in peacetime was limited to the United States Military Academy at West Point, the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC), the Citizens Military Training Camps (CMTC), and a program of extension courses and examinations for enlisted men in the Regular Army who sought commissions. Additionally, states increasingly held formal training programs for potential National Guard officers. The Army believed that these sources would be adequate to meet the requirements for the first 120 days of mobilization. Additional officers would have to come from reestablished Officer Candidate Schools (OCS).<sup>16</sup>

The Army began establishing OCS at various training camps around the nation as did all branches of the military. Graduates were only commissioned in the AUS. Sources for officer candidates varied. Ideally, candidates had a college degree, but that requirement soon gave way to more immediate needs, and men with no more than a high school diploma were admitted if they scored high enough in testing. Company and battalion commanders were tasked to take a hard look at their enlisted men and recommend the best for attendance at OCS. Men with any previous military experience, such as a few years of ROTC, or even junior

ROTC in high school, some National Guard experience, or later in the war, service in a wartime State Guard, often found themselves above their peers at induction centers and became corporals immediately, or even officer candidates.<sup>17</sup>

After the United States entered the war following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the need for officers rapidly increased. To expand the Army from its peacetime strength of approximately 400,000 soldiers to its potential wartime strength of roughly eight million soldiers, the Army needed more officers than it had soldiers in peacetime.<sup>18</sup> The need for regimental commanders and staff officers became acute during the first year of the war, with a scramble to find enough officers to meet the activation program.

The need for company-grade officers became so acute in some divisions that OCS programs were conducted outside of the United States, including one in Australia held by the Americal Division. As with all of the US military during the war, the US Army's European Theater suffered from a chronic shortage of officers. While it sent its share of men back to the United States to attend an OCS, those who successfully completed the course and received their commission were not guaranteed a return to Europe, but were assigned based upon the needs of the Army. In September of 1942, to retain those men as officers, and also to reduce transportation costs, the European Theater established its own OCS with an emphasis on Infantry at Shrivenham, in Berkshire, England.<sup>19</sup> As originally envisioned, training during the first eight weeks of the course was not branch specific, while training during the final four weeks focused on the skills needed for a specific branch. However, due to the lack of training equipment and facilities, the entire course soon followed a single curriculum, one with a heavy focus on the skills required of an Infantry officer.<sup>20</sup> In total, OCSs provided the majority of company-grade officers during the war. However, as with their World War I forbears, most of the World War II OCS graduates left the military after the war.

Normally, under the United States Constitution, being granted a commission by the president requires the approval of the Senate.<sup>21</sup> But these new AUS commissions were explicitly temporary. Congress delegated to the president the authority to grant commissions in the AUS up through the rank of colonel. General officers, from brigadier general and above, still required the advice and consent of the Senate. The president could also withdraw such a commission at any time. Officers holding an AUS commission received the same pay and allowances and were entitled to the same rights, privileges, and benefits as officers in the Organized Reserves of the same grade and length of service.<sup>22</sup> Upon creation of the AUS, all

new commissions were in the AUS, with the only exceptions being the Regular Army commissions granted to graduates of West Point.

Ernest Franklin Dukes, Jr., who eventually retired from the Air Force in 1972 as a colonel, was one of those officers whose initial commission was in the AUS. He entered the Army through Selective Service in April of 1942, after completing his degree at the University of Rochester. A year later, he was accepted for Aviation OCS, which lasted from June to August of 1943. He later recalled his actual commissioning as consisting of receiving "Special Orders Number 313," which discharged him from enlisted service so he could re-enter active duty as a second lieutenant in the Army of the United States. His letter of appointment as an officer in the AUS stated that:

The Secretary of War has directed me to inform you that the President has appointed and commissioned you a temporary Second Lieutenant, Army of the United States, effective this date. Your serial number is shown above.

This commission will continue in force during the pleasure of the President of the United States for the time being, and for the duration of the war and six months thereafter unless sooner terminated.

There is enclosed herewith a form for oath....etc.

This letter should be retained by you as evidence of your appointment as no commissions will be issued during the war.<sup>23</sup>

He noted that, despite the references to the President and Secretary of War, the letter was signed by a first lieutenant in the Air Corps, who was an acting assistant adjutant general. For the duration of the war, that letter was the only proof he had that he was a commissioned officer. After the war, in July of 1946, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Regular Army, with a date of rank of 11 October 1943. At the same time, he received a new, Regular Army serial number. Despite his new Regular Army commission, he retained and continued to serve in his AUS rank of captain.<sup>24</sup>

The Aviation OCS Colonel Dukes attended was run by the Army Air Corps, but the informality of his actual commission was common in all parts of the Army, as was the desperate need for officers. The Army Ground Forces (AGF), was established on 9 March 1942, during a reorganization of the Army that divided it into the Army Ground Forces, the Army Air Forces, and the Army Service Forces. The AGF inherited the responsibility for training most officer candidates. OCSs had been in operation as



branch specific schools under the control of the Chiefs of Infantry, Field Artillery, Cavalry, and Coast Artillery since July of 1941. The capacity of the OCS program was increased through 1943 to provide officers for the expanding Army, ideally with the officers commissioned before new units were stood up. In 1941, Officer Candidate School capacity was 1,389 officers graduated, which increased rapidly in the spring of 1942, doubling every three months. In total, some 55,440 officers graduated from the AGF OCSs and received AUS commissions during 1942 alone.<sup>25</sup>

Because the ratio of officers to enlisted men was lower in the Army Ground Forces (54 to 1,000) when compared to the Army Service Forces (97 to 1,000) or the Army Air Forces (156 to 1,000), and the Army Ground Forces received a higher proportion of officer from the National Guard and Organized Reserves, its need for Army of the United States commissioned officers was relatively lower, yet still represented an enormous number of officers.<sup>26</sup> Army Ground Forces leaders believed that while for the more technical positions in the Army Service Forces officers could be issued direct commissions, OCSs were needed to select and train potential officers for combat arms units. The various officer candidate schools were originally branch specific, although later the Cavalry, Armor, and Tank Destroyer OCSs were consolidated into a single program.

On 16 July 1942, the Army Ground Forces directed subordinate commanders to submit lists of names of qualified officers holding Reserve commissions from which appointments could be made to new units and headquarters staffs.<sup>27</sup> But this did not fulfill the immense requirement for staff officers. During an intense shortage of officers early in the war, even the Army Ground Forces resorted to commissioning officers with special skills directly from civilian life. About 600 men were commissioned this way. However, most of these men had previously served as officers or completed an ROTC program or CMTC course. Most of the officers so commissioned were sent to antiaircraft units. For Signal and Ordnance units, some civilians without prior military experience were also commissioned. This unusual situation was accomplished through what the Army called *affiliation*, through which many employees of an industry were organized as a military unit, with the managers becoming officers with AUS commissions. This system did not prove altogether satisfactory—the Army found that the relationship between officers and enlisted men in these types of units fell short of what the Army wanted, and affiliation was not widely practiced.<sup>28</sup>

Throughout the Army, officers holding Reserve or AUS commissions outnumbered Regular officers by almost 50 to 1. By the end of 1943, when

much of the mobilization had been completed, the Army started tabulating the sources of its officers. It found that 180,000 officers had come in through the Organized Reserve Corps. Most of those officers were pre-war graduates of ROTC programs, with some from CMTCs, and all held Reserve commissions. Added to them were the 100,000 officers commissioned directly from civilian life who held AUS commissions. Of those directly commissioned, just under half were doctors, dentists, or chaplains. Another 12,000 had previously served as officers, mostly in World War I and were re-commissioned directly. The remainder had technical or administrative skills that made them desirable for similar positions within the army. But OCSs were by far the largest source of commissioned officers for the entire Army, providing about 300,000 officers.<sup>29</sup> Of that number, 133,000 officers had graduated from the AGF's OCSs. OCS graduates holding AUS commissions amounted to about two-thirds of all officers in the Ground Forces.<sup>30</sup>

As a result of the large increase in officers serving with Reserve or Army of the United States commissions, officers holding Regular Army commissions only amounted to about two percent of all officers on active duty, and very few Regular Army officers during the war were not serving at a higher rank in the Army of the United States.<sup>31</sup> Higher echelons had the highest proportion of Regular Army officers. At Army Ground Forces Headquarters at the end of 1943, 48 percent of commissioned officers were Regular Army, while no non-Regular officer at AGF HQ reached the rank of colonel until early 1944. However, many of those Regular Army officers served under higher AUS commissions. The ratio of OCS graduates with AUS commissions to Regulars was much higher in the company grades than in the field grades.<sup>32</sup> At the division level, the proportion of Regular officers was less than five percent. To use one example, the 31st Infantry Division, theoretically a National Guard division, had only five Regular Army officers.

The existence of a temporary, non-Regular Army commission that did not require the "advice and consent" of the Senate gave the Army great flexibility on awarding higher rank that it had never possessed in peacetime. Observing that the "leadership ability of officers commanding troops in actual combat is quickly tested" the War Department and Headquarters, European Theater of Operations authorized the Commanding General, First Army, and the Commanding General, Third Army, to ignore time-in-grade when promoting officers up to, and including, the rank of lieutenant colonel for proven combat abilities, creating what were called "battlefield promotions." These promotions were, of course, in the AUS rather than in

the Regular Army, but they did give commanders a direct and immediate role in shaping the quality of the officer corps in theater. The authority was later delegated to subordinate commanders to make these battlefield promotions; however, only the theater commander had the authority to promote officers to the grade of colonel.<sup>33</sup> This authority could also be used to promote enlisted men, including to the rank of second lieutenant, which was usually referred to as a “battlefield commission.” Probably the most famous enlisted man to receive a commission in the AUS through a battlefield promotion was Audie Murphy. On 14 October 1944, as a staff sergeant in the Third Infantry Division in France, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the AUS, and would later be promoted to first lieutenant on 16 February 1945. Murphy had hoped to attend West Point after the war and earn a college education and a Regular Army commission, but eventually did not due to his physical limitations from his injuries.<sup>34</sup>

Within the expanded wartime Army of the United States, the structure of the Regular Army officer corps remained relatively intact. The tendency of Regular Army officers to hold temporary commission at higher rank is well demonstrated by the ranks held by Dwight D. Eisenhower. During the invasion of North Africa in 1942 under Operation Torch, General Eisenhower had to take a morning off from his duties at his headquarters in Gibraltar to report for a physical examination. The purpose of the examination was to see if he was physically fit for promotion to the rank of colonel in the Regular Army. While Eisenhower and many of his Regular Army peers saw meteoric rises through rapid promotions beginning in 1940, those promotions were largely within the Army of the United States, not within the Regular Army.<sup>35</sup> At one point, Eisenhower, despite the four stars he wore on his shoulder by the end of Torch and the immense responsibilities he carried, was still a lieutenant colonel in the Regular Army.

Throughout his career, Eisenhower demonstrated this tendency of Regular Army officers in the twentieth century to hold two commissions at certain times. Initially commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Regular Army upon completion of the Military Academy in June of 1915, he rose to the rank of captain in the Regular Army on 15 May 1917. But on 17 June 1917, he was promoted to the rank of major in the National Army, followed by promotion to lieutenant colonel in the National Army on 20 October 1918, even though he never left the United States. All the while, his Regular Army rank remained that of captain. On 30 June 1920, much of the National Army was dismantled, and Eisenhower, as with many Regular Army officers, lost his National Army rank and reverted to his Regular

Army rank. He would only remain a captain for two days, for on 2 July 1920 he was promoted in the Regular Army to the rank of major.

However, the post-war drawdown began to affect the Regular Army, and on 4 November 1922, he was technically discharged as a major and re-appointed as a captain in the Regular Army. He was promoted to the rank of major for a third time on 26 August 1924, and would hold that rank for the next 12 years, until 1 July 1936, when he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel in the Regular Army. After the war started in Europe, and the United States implemented its Protective Posture Plan and began building up the military, his promotions in the Army of the United States came fast. He was promoted to colonel on 6 March 1941, brigadier general on 29 September 1941, major general on 27 March 1942, lieutenant general on 7 July 1942, and general on 11 February 1943.

Despite all these rapid promotions in the Army of the United States, his Regular Army rank remained lieutenant colonel. His relatively low Regular Army rank was occasionally whispered about or snickered over by some petty subordinates and even allied officers, but above board, rank was rank. He would not make brigadier general in the Regular Army until 30 August 1943, when he was a full general in the Army of the United States. He was apparently promoted to major general in the Regular Army on the same day. On 20 December 1944, he was temporarily promoted to the new rank of General of the Army, in the Army of the United States. On 11 April 1946, Congress voted for him to keep that rank permanently.<sup>36</sup>

While Eisenhower's rate and height of promotion in the AUS was uncommon, to say the least, his experience of holding a National Army or AUS commission higher than his Regular Army commission was quite common. Eisenhower, like all officers, knew that his higher wartime ranks were intended to be temporary. Because the Army of the United States was seen as temporary, to last no more than six months after the end of the war, the idea of retiring with the AUS rank was not originally envisioned. In fact, only Regular Army soldiers—officers and enlisted—were eligible to eventually receive retired pay, and retired pay was based on Regular rank. Officers holding only AUS commissions, or Reserve commission for that matter, were explicitly not eligible to receive retired pay and benefits. However, later legislation did authorize retired pay, pensions for survivors, and similar benefits as provided by law for Regular Army officers of corresponding grades and length of service for AUS officers who were disabled or died in the line of duty.<sup>37</sup>



Figure 6.2. Recruiting poster for the Women's Army Corps. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

These changes were welcomed by officers holding only AUS commissions and certainly seemed fair. However, another quirk of the law gave officers holding only an AUS commission an advantage over officers who also held a Regular or Reserve commission. If an officer with a Regular

Army or Reserve commission, who also held a higher AUS commission, became physically disabled in line of duty, he was entitled to retirement pay based on his permanent—Regular or Reserve—rank, not on the higher AUS rank held at the time the disability was incurred. But an officer holding only an AUS commission who became disabled, was retired based on the AUS rank, because he held no other commission.<sup>38</sup> This anomalous situation was corrected in June of 1943, when Regular and Reserve officers who became disabled while serving in a higher AUS rank were allowed to retire at the higher rank. Additionally, Regular Army officers received the higher pay of their AUS rank when they went on the retired list.<sup>39</sup>

However, retired pay for 20 years of service based on AUS rank would not be possible until after the war and the retention of the AUS in truncated form in the peacetime Army. The change was part of a larger expansion of retirement benefits that also tentatively provided retirement benefits for some National Guard and Reserve soldiers. Retirement inequalities were only one of myriad oddities that arose during the massive expansion of the Army. One curious aspect of the Selective Service rules was that, occasionally, former officers from the Regular Army, as well as National Guard or Organized Reserves, who had been honorably discharged due to physical disqualification to continue to serve as officers, were drafted back into the AUS as enlisted men. Under changes in early 1944, such former officers, if found medically qualified to serve, were to be commissioned in the AUS in their former rank, and restored to their former branch. At the same time, men who had completed ROTC within the last five years but who had been denied either a Regular or Reserve commission at the time because of physical disqualification, who were drafted and found physically qualified for service were to be commissioned in the AUS.<sup>40</sup>

The AUS was intended to be a temporary wartime institution only. Within it, another element of the Army was organized—the Women's Army Corps (WAC)—that also was intended only as a wartime measure that would long outlive the war. The WAC replaced the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC), established in May of 1942, which had been a civilian component of the Army consisting of women volunteers whose work in clerical and other non-combat duties could relieve men for combat assignments.<sup>41</sup> The WAAC was described as being “with” the Army but not “part” of the Army. Women in the WAC, by contrast, were formally enlisted or commissioned soldiers. Starting on 1 July 1943, the WAC was established in the Army of the United States as a component of it.<sup>42</sup> Officers in the WAC were commissioned in the AUS the same as male AUS officers. Enlisted women in the WAC were likewise enlisted in the

AUS. However, the idea of a woman exercising command authority over a male soldier was beyond what the Army and Congress could accept, for language in the act creating the WAC specifically stated that officers and NCOs in the WAC could only hold command over women of the WAC, or other members of the Army of the United States specifically placed under their command.<sup>43</sup> The WAC, however, was only a small part of the wartime army, reaching just under 100,000 soldiers by the end of the war in an Army of over eight million.<sup>44</sup> The WAC was intended only to last as long as the AUS itself, generally described as within six months after the end of the war.

The formal end of the war in September of 1945, did not, however, bring about the complete disbandment and elimination of the AUS. While much of the wartime army was dismantled, and most of the Selectees discharged, the AUS remained in existence, albeit in truncated form. Most of the AUS officers commissioned during the war were eager to get out. But while many purely AUS officers held Regular Army officers in contempt, a few applied to convert their AUS commissions into Regular Army commissions, and those with good records and recommendations often were able to continue their service in the Regular Army.<sup>45</sup> Others such as Audie Murphy converted their AUS commissions into Reserve commissions and continued their service in the National Guard or the Organized Reserves. The National Guard and Organized Reserves were released from active duty, although since all the men in them who had entered active duty back in 1940 and 1941 were released as individuals, if they survived the war, what was actually released were unit lineages. As a practical matter, a new National Guard and the Organized Reserves, soon to be renamed the Army Reserve, had to be recreated. The wartime Selective Service Act of 1940 was ended by a new act of Congress on 31 March 1947, which should have been the end of the AUS.<sup>46</sup>

## **Post World War II**

Despite the initial “war plus six months” projected existence of the Army of the United States, it remained in existence well beyond the stipulated six months following the end of the war. The AUS should have been disestablished in March of 1946, if the formal surrender of Japan marked the official end of the war. However, while greatly reduced, Selective Service remained in operation, pending decisions on what the post-war military establishment would look like. Leadership of the Army, including Generals Marshall and Eisenhower, backed a plan for almost all 18-year-old men to spend a year with the Army for what was termed Universal Military Training (UMT).<sup>47</sup> After completing their year, most would be as-

signed to the General Reserve, unless they opted to join the Regular Army, Navy, Marine Corps, National Guard, or Organized Reserves. If they were in the General Reserve, they would have a six-year potential for call-up to active service in the event of war.<sup>48</sup> Even men who sought commissions were to complete UMT prior to starting a commissioning program. President Harry S. Truman supported UMT, but disagreements over its cost, utility, purpose, as well as the issue of racial segregation eventually killed the plan.

With the demise of UMT, the Truman Administration accepted that Selective Service would be required to bring the armed services, especially the Army, to the level required for its duties in the late 1940s. As the *Selective Training and Service Act* of 1940 expired in March of 1947, Congress eventually passed the *Selective Service Act* of 1948. The post-war continuation of Selective Service was intended as a stop-gap measure, originally to last two years.<sup>49</sup> President Truman, and many others, including General Marshall, still hoped the UMT would eventually be adopted and Selective Service ended.<sup>50</sup> But UMT was never instituted, and instead Congress continually extended Selective Service until 1973. The *Selective Service Act* set the basic mechanisms for the post-World War II draft.

The *Officer Personnel Act* of 1947 initially established a Regular Army officer corps of 50,000, for an Army of 400,000 enlisted personnel. However, it also indicated a retention of the Army of the United States, and with it the AUS commission as a temporary, almost always higher, commission that some officers holding a Regular Army commission might also have.<sup>51</sup> Much of the war-time structure of the Army of the United States went away when the AUS divisions were either disbanded or placed into the Organized Reserves, but the AUS designation for Selectees, and the AUS commission for some officers, remained.

The AUS would also remain, for a short time, the designation under which the WAC continued after the war. The WAC was intended to be a wartime-only organization. But with the end of the war, and the approaching end of the wartime Selective Service in 1947, Congress extended the WAC within the AUS until 1 July 1948.<sup>52</sup> Because the WAC existed only within the AUS, women who left active duty could not join a reserve component and continue their military service part-time.<sup>53</sup> That changed when, after a spirited debate over the role of women in the military, especially during peacetime, President Harry S. Truman signed into law the Women's Armed Services Integration Act on 12 June 1948. Among other things, the Act placed the WAC within the Regular Army and Army Reserve, rather than within the AUS.<sup>54</sup>



Following World War II, the US military shrank from over 12 million members to less than one and a half million members. After a national debate on the role and responsibilities of the United States in the post-World War II era, the idea of returning to the small, peacetime army was abandoned, and instead the nation committed to maintaining a much larger peacetime military than had been maintained in the past. The form of the larger standing army was a matter of intense debate and speculation. The National Guard and the Organized Reserves were demobilized and reorganizing. They would remain unmobilized unless needed in a dire emergency or war, increasingly seen as a potential war with the Soviet Union. Many questioned the utility of a reserve force that would need months of training before being ready for war in the atomic age. The Army, they argued, would have to be ready to fight on the first day of the next war.

The peacetime standing Army was to consist of the Regular Army, and the Regular Army structure, but with Selective Service employed to make up any shortfalls in numbers. The Army set its manning levels, and the recruiters went to work. The gap, if any existed, was to be made up with Selectees. Men drafted under the *Selective Service Act* of 1948 were of course not in the Regular Army or Reserve. While they served in Regular Army divisions, they were technically in the Army of the United States. Had the AUS not been retained, many, if not most Regular Army officers would have reverted to their lower Regular Army rank, as had happened after the Civil War and the First World War. But the continued existence of the AUS in the post-war era allowed many to remain in their higher grade.

The number of Regular Army officers in each grade was based on the number of Regular Army enlisted soldiers. The addition of the Selectees who technically belonged to the Army of the United States, in Regular Army formations, meant that not enough officers with Regular Army commissions existed to fill all the officer positions in the Army. As a result, the Regular Army officer corps was augmented by large numbers of Reserve officers, primarily in the company grades but with some in the field grades, who served on extended active duty throughout decades when the draft was in operation.

Originally, the peacetime Selectees were to serve on active duty for 21 months, followed by either 12 more months on active duty, or 36 months in a reserve status. On the other hand, a potential Selectee could enlist in the Regular Army for four years, or in a reserve component for six, and not be drafted. The initial annual draft calls were small, due to the cuts in the size of the Army, and the ability of the Regular Army to recruit most of its needed manpower. Only about 100,000 men were drafted in 1948.

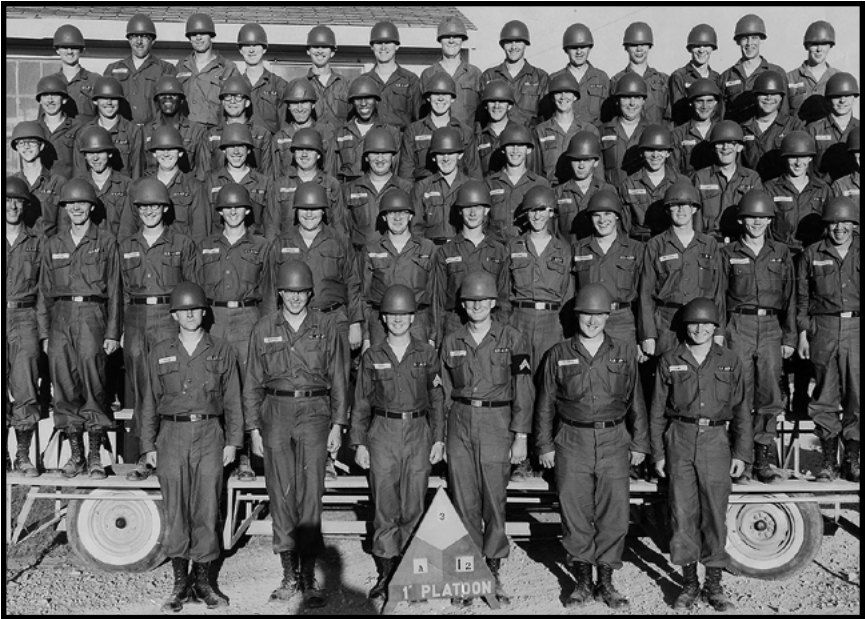


Figure 6.3. Basic Combat Training at Ft. Knox, KY, circa 1963. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

However, the Korean War changed that situation. When President Harry S. Truman committed the United States to the defense of South Korea following the North Korean invasion that began on 25 June 1950, much of the active US Army was involved in occupation duties in Japan, Germany, and Austria. Most units were under-strength and poorly trained for combat. To fill the Army, some million and a half men were drafted from 1950 through 1953. During the Korean War, the number of officers on active duty rose to 148,427 by the summer of 1952, with the vast bulk of them holding Reserve commissions.<sup>55</sup>

The pattern established during the World Wars was that all Reserve units and individuals would be brought onto active service, followed by drafted individuals, to build up the military to fight a war. The limited nature of the war in Korea and looming threat of war with the Soviet Union in Europe altered the pattern. Military and civilian leadership feared that the war in Korea could be a feint to draw the United States into a war in Asia before a Soviet invasion of Western Europe. The outbreak of the war led to a dramatic increase in the numbers of men drafted, but newly drafted men would take more than six months of training before they were ready to be shipped to Korea as replacements, and the military had an immediate need. With the active military too small for prolonged major combat oper-

ations in Korea, President Truman authorized the armed services to mobilize their reserve units and individuals on July 19, 1950. The Department of Defense improvised the mobilization and use of the reserve components during the Korean War, with only a partial mobilization and many mobilized units not serving in Korea.

During the Korean War, tensions arose between Reservists and potential draftees. Many Reservists were veterans, who resented that they were being recalled to active duty after having served in World War II, while many civilian men of military age remained home. Likewise, as the draft calls increased in late 1950, many draftees resented that they were being sent to Korea, while many Reservists, who had been paid for training during peacetime, were still unmobilized. Despite such grumbling, the military largely followed its early plan of using the reserve components as a stop-gap measure until Selective Service could raise sufficient manpower to begin demobilizing the reserves. While only the Army received draftees, the presence of the draft spurred voluntary enlistments into the other branches.

Key to expanding the Army was again in providing competent temporary officers. To do so, the Army started eight branch-specific OCSs, and lengthened the course from 17 to 22 weeks. While ROTC and the Military Academy continued as they had in peacetime, OCSs became the major source of the expanded officer corps, but the standards remained high. Over a third of the candidates who started an OCS course failed to complete it. During the war, around 7,000 officers graduated from an Army OCS and were commissioned into the Army of the United States. As had happened after the end of World War II, following the Korean War, most of the AUS officers left the service, although some converted their commissions to Reserve commissions, and a few were able to convert their commissions into Regular Army commissions and make the Army a career.

After the Korean War, the Army and its officers corps shrank again, but not as much as had been envisioned in the *Officer Personnel Act* of 1947. Under President Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Army and its officer corps became smaller each year, but by 1960, the number of officers on active duty—101,600—was still one-third higher than that called for in 1947.<sup>56</sup> OCSs became a permanent fixture of the US military, although reduced from eight to three programs, one each for Infantry, Artillery, and Engineers. OCSs rapidly expanded again during Vietnam War. The course was lengthened to a 23 week program, and again experienced a high failure rate. The infantry OCS at Fort Benning graduated 7,000

officers annually in the mid-to-late 1960s. During peacetime, OCSs remained small, with few classes held. In 1973, all Army OCS programs were consolidated at Fort Benning in the Branch Immaterial Officer Candidate Course, which was largely based on the Infantry program. While at the time all officers commissioned through West Point received a Regular Army commission (unless accepted for a Regular commission in another branch), and top ROTC graduates competed for Regular Army commissions, all OCS graduates received either a Reserve or AUS commission, depending on the period.

Throughout the existence of the Army of the United States, officers holding a Reserve commission or AUS commission were predominant in the company grades. These men, many who earned their commissions in World War II or Korea, would continue to have an influence in the army. Colin Powell, in his autobiography, mentioned being assigned in late 1958 as a newly qualified second lieutenant to Combat Command B of the Third Armored Division, which was then at Gelnhausen, in the Federal Republic of Germany. He described the company commanders, including his own, Captain Tom Miller, as “mostly World War II and Korean-era reserve officers, barely hanging on. If lucky, they would stay on for twenty years and retire as majors, maybe lieutenant colonels. If less lucky, they would be reduced to the enlisted ranks.” While he describes them as “reserve officers,” they almost certainly were originally commissioned in the AUS and might have still been serving under an AUS commission. But what Powell saw was that while they were certainly not Regular Army officers, and not products of West Point or ROTC, they had a hard won common sense and a vast store of experience to draw on.<sup>57</sup>

The practice of officers maintaining two separate ranks, one a permanent rank with its commission in the Regular Army or even Reserve, and the other rank from a commission in the Army of the United States continued beyond the end of conscription in 1973, not completely ending until 1980. To cite as an example of one of the last Regular Army officers to concurrently hold a higher AUS commission, William J. Gregor graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1969, and was commissioned as a Regular Army second lieutenant in the Armor branch. After Ranger and other training, he deployed to the Republic of South Vietnam. While continuing to hold the rank of second lieutenant in the Regular Army, he was promoted to the rank of first lieutenant in the Army of the United States on 4 June 1970, while serving in the 1st Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment. A year later, in June of 1971, still in Vietnam, he was promoted to captain in the Army of the United States. Meanwhile he still held the

rank of second lieutenant in the Regular Army. He would not be promoted to first lieutenant in the Regular Army until November of 1972.

Captain Gregor continued to serve as a captain with an Army of the United States commission while still a first lieutenant in the Regular Army. He would not be promoted from first lieutenant to captain in the Regular Army until June of 1976. However, his two commissions—captain in the Regular Army and captain in the Army of the United States—would not remain the same for long. On 1 August 1979, the Army promoted him to the rank of major in the Army of the United States. Major Gregor would finally be promoted to the rank of major in the “US Army,” as his orders stated, on 15 March 1982. However his orders promoting him to the rank of lieutenant colonel in July of 1985, referred to his commission as being in the “United States Army.”<sup>58</sup> The change in status of his commission in either in Army of the United States or Regular Army had been supplanted by his commission being designated as in the United States Army. The United States Army commission was the Regular Army commission, but as Army of the United States rank was no longer part of the Active Army, the need to specify the type of commission was no more.

The Army of the United States did not actually completely go away, but it did go into hiatus. By the time it did, few if any officers on active duty had only an AUS commission. When the active AUS commission went away, very rare was the officer whose Regular Army rank was lower than his AUS rank. Some enlisted men may have maintained inactive AUS commissions, hoping to serve out their 20 years and retire at their highest rank successfully held. But such were the exceptions. With the All-Volunteer Force, and the Total Force concept to better integrate the reserve components, the US Army would, at least in peacetime, rely on a new concept—the Active Army.

## Notes

1. The Army of the United States commissions were all converted to US Army commissions by the ROPMA Officer Personnel Management Act of 1979.
2. *National Defense Act of 1916: An Act for making further and more effectual provisions for the National Defense, and for other purposes*, ch. 134, sec. 2, *Statutes at Large of the United States of America* 39:166-217 (1917).
3. Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 (aka Burke-Wadsworth Act), Public Law 76-783, 54 Stat, 885.
4. Par. 5a, AR 600-750, 30 Sept. 1942.
5. Adding par. 15 to sec. 127a of the National Defense Act (54 Stat. 213; 10 U.S.C. 634; M.L. 1939, Sup. II, sec. 2163a).
6. Executive Order No. 8530.
7. Yankee Division Veterans' Association, *The History of the 26th Yankee Division 1917-1919, 1941-1945* (Salem, MA: Deschamps Bro., 1955), 19.
8. Public Resolution No. 96 (54 Stat. 858, approved 27 August 1940).
9. The Service Extension Act of 1941 (act 18 August 1941; 55 Stat, 626; 50 U.S.C. 351; MoL 1939, Sup. II, sec, 2227-1).
10. Christopher Gabel, *The U.S. Army GHQ Maneuvers of 1941* (Washington: Center of Military History, 1992), 116-18, 172-74.
11. 55 Stat. 728; 10 U.S.C. 484, note; M.L. 1939, Sup. II, sec. 2160a; see Chapter 1, note 5, *supra*.
12. This option did not exist for the other branches of the US military. Temporary officers in the US Navy, US Marine Corps, and US Coast Guard received reserve commissions.
13. Regulations governing appointment are found at 6 F.R. 5660 and 5823; also see AR 605-10, 30 December 1942.
14. 55 Stat. 800, 50 U.S.C. 732; M.L. 1939, Sup. II, sec. 2228-2.
15. 55 Stat. 728; 10 U.S.C., Sup. I, 484; M.L. 1939, Sup. II, sec. 2160a.
16. William R. Keast, *The Army Ground Forces: Training of Officer Candidates in AGF Special Service Schools*, Study No, 31 Historical Section - Army Ground Forces 1946, 1.
17. Circular letter, CNGB, April 8, 1943, folder "Pennsylvania State Guard-State File 1941-1944," box 157, RG 168, National Archives II, College Park, MD; and, ARCNGB 1946, 248, "Appendix G." States lost officers at a lesser rate because State Guard officers tended, especially in the early years, to be too old for conscription, many being former Great War officers.
18. William R. Keast, *The Army Ground Forces, Training of Officer Candidates in AGF Special Service Schools*, Study No. 31. Historical Section, Army Ground Forces, 1946. 1.
19. The General Board, "United States Forces, European Theater Appointments and Promotions  
In the European Theater of Operation." Study No. 6, 28.
20. The General Board, Study No. 6, 3.

21. Const., art. II, sec. 2. Under this provision Congress may vest the appointment of such inferior officers as it thinks proper in the President alone; otherwise the appointment of officers of the United States must be with the advice and consent of the Senate.

22. By act 7 July 1943 (Public Law 114, 78th Cong.; Bull. 14, WD, 16 July 1943), the act 22 September 1941, was amended to provide that no warrant officer temporarily appointed as a commissioned officer under the act is to have his pay and allowances reduced below the amounts payable to him at the time of his appointment.

23. Ernest Franklin Dukes, Jr., “This is How it Was: The Memoirs of Ernest Franklin Dukes, Jr. 1920–2001 including The Memoirs of Marie-Anne Dukes 1925–2005,” Edmond Craig Dukes, Ed., 2005, 106–107.

24. Dukes, 107.

25. William R. Keast, *The Procurement and Branch Distribution of Officers*, Study No. 6, Historical Section–US Army Ground Forces, 1946, 7.

26. Keast, 1.

27. Keast, 2.

28. Keast, 2.

29. Keast, 1.

30. Keast, 1.

31. Keast, 1.

32. Keast, 3.

33. The General Board, “United States Forces, European Theater Appointments and Promotions

In the European Theater of Operation.” Study No. 6, 3.

34. See Harold B. Simpson, *Audie Murphy: American Soldier* (Hillsboro, TX: Hill Junior College Press, 1975).

35. See Michael E. Haskew’s *West Point 1915: Eisenhower, Bradley, and the Class the Stars Fell on* (London: Zenith Press, 2014).

36. *Official Register of Commissioned Officers of the United States Army, 1946*, 205. While the permanent rank of General of the Army is often seen as being a Regular Army rank, the highest Regular rank is major general. All ranks above that are temporary unless Congress specifically votes to make the rank permanent for a particular officer.

37. Sec. 5, act 3 April 1939, as amended (10 U.S.C. Sup, I, 456; M.L. 1939, Sup, II, sec, 1117); and sec. 1, act 26 Sept. 1941 (10 U.S.C. Sup, I, 456a; M.L. 1939, Sup, II, sec, 1117).

38. SPJG 210.851, 19 Mar. 1942.

39. Public Law 701, 78th Cong.; sec. I, Bull. 12, WD, 7 July 1943.

40. Sec. II, Cir. 172, WD, 2 May 1944.

41. Public Law 554. 15 May 1942. See Judith A. Bellafaire, *The Women’s Army Corps: A Commemoration of World War II Service* (Washington: Center of Military History, 1972); and Bettie J. Morden, *The Woman’s Army Corps, 1945–1978* (Washington: US Army Center of Military History, 1990), 5.

42. Public Law 78-110; SPJGA 354.01, 2 June 1942; SPJGA 354.01, 14 July 1942.
43. Military Affairs, J.A.G.S Text no. 3 The Judge Advocate General's School Ann Arbor, Michigan (n.d.), V-54.
44. Morden, *The Woman's Army Corps*, 407, Appendix A.
45. Brian McAllister Linn, *Elvis's Army: Cold War GIs and the Atomic Battlefield* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016), 18.
46. Public Law 80-26, 61 Stat. 31, enacted 31 March 1947.
47. William A. Taylor, *Every Citizen a Soldier: The Campaign for Universal Military Training after World War II* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2014), 1-12.
48. Taylor, 39, 99.
49. Taylor, 157-158.
50. Taylor, 165-166.
51. "An Act for the Promotion and Elimination of Officers of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps, and for Other Purposes," August 7, 1947 [Public Law 381], 80th Cong., 1st Sess., esp. Sec. 515.
52. Morden, *The Woman's Army Corps*, 46.
53. Morden, 58-59.
54. Morden, 56.
55. Linn, *Elvis's Army*, 168.
56. Linn, 168.
57. Colin Powel, with Joseph E. Persico, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), 43-45.
58. Personal papers of Lieutenant Colonel (ret) William J. Gregor.





## **Conclusion**

### **The Active Army**

In March of 1969, President Richard M. Nixon created the Commission on the All-Volunteer Force (AVF) and named former Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates as chair. The commission was tasked to study the plausibility of ending conscription and relying solely on individual volunteers to fill the Army.<sup>1</sup> This proposed change did not introduce anything new, but was instead a reversion to the traditional way the peacetime Army had been recruited. While the United States had relied wholly or partially on conscription to fill the military during the World Wars, and from 1948 until 1972, the nation had previously relied on voluntary enlistment for filling the Army in war and in peace. Opposition to the involvement of the United States in the war in Vietnam and to the inequities in the conscription system ended the national consensus on conscription and brought a return to a completely volunteer military.

While some board members had serious reservations about the possibility of relying on individual volunteers during wartime, the committee believed that maintaining a peacetime military with volunteers was possible and even desirable. The committee reasoned that the large population of the United States made universal military service unnecessary and impractical. As a result, conscription placed a large burden on a relatively small percentage of the population. Additionally, the mounting discipline problems among draftees led some Army leaders to seek a different means of acquiring soldiers. The committee reported that with increased pay and other reforms, voluntary recruits could be enticed in numbers sufficient for the peacetime Army.<sup>2</sup>

In 1971, President Nixon signed the legislation establishing the All-Volunteer Force. That September, Congress extended the government's authority to draft into 1973, although the last draft call was in 1972. With the ending of the draft, all enlistments were voluntary, and service was in a particular component—Regular Army, Army National Guard, or Army Reserve. No enlisted soldiers went into the Army of the United States without component. With the ending of the draft, Congress began to increase military pay substantially. The increases were especially felt in the lower enlisted grades, the grades held by most conscripts and first term enlistees. During the 1980s, the trend toward making enlisted service in the military more attractive continued by the upgrading of facilities on bases and the elimination of some of the more onerous duties, such as “Kitchen Police” (KP) and landscaping.<sup>3</sup>



Figure 7.1. Cartoon illustrating what was needed for the All-Volunteer Force to work. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

Very few senior military officers in the early 1970s had ever served in the military without a draft, and adapting to a purely-volunteer force took several years. Although most draftees served in the Army, the draft spurred voluntary enlistments into the Air Force, Navy, and ironically, the Army too. Many potential draftees sought some measure of control over their service by voluntarily enlisting into the Regular Army while the draft was in force. Additionally, since service in the National Guard or reserves of any branch made a man ineligible for conscription, all were fully manned through the negative incentive provided by the draft. As a result, all services and components were apprehensive about ending conscription, understanding that it would make recruiting more difficult.

That apprehension was well-founded. Despite the preparations laid for the AVF, recruitment proved difficult throughout the remainder of the 1970s. All services but especially the Army contracted professional advertising firms to attract recruits by selling the military as a career option.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, the military began offering incentives, such as the new Montgomery G.I. Bill and the Army College Fund, in an attempt to lure single-term soldiers. The services also began to target minorities and women for recruitment, groups not previously courted for military service.<sup>5</sup> Initially the Army planned to expand the WAC in part to maintain the size of the overall force. The WAC had always been a relatively small part of the overall strength of the Army, hovering around 12,000 soldiers. Plans originally called for a much larger WAC, up to perhaps 50,000 by 1978, which would still be far less than ten percent of the force.<sup>6</sup> Instead, in 1978, the Army disbanded the WAC and its members were reassigned to what had formally been all male units; although the ban on women in combat arms remained.<sup>7</sup> After the switch to the AVF, despite more aggressive and targeted recruiting that included women and minorities, the Army saw

a drop in new soldiers. Partially in response to that drop, the Army adopted a new policy that would place more emphasis on the use of the reserve components to augment the Regular Army during war.

General Creighton Abrams, the commander of US forces in Vietnam from 1968 to 1972, believed the political decision during the Vietnam War not to mobilize the National Guard robbed the American war effort of community-based support.<sup>8</sup> Back in August 1970, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird had directed the service secretaries to provide in their budgets for “the necessary resources to permit the appropriate balance in the development of Active, Guard, and Reserve Forces” starting in fiscal year 1972.<sup>9</sup> This policy of employing a mix of components for waging war would be called *Total Force*. Under it, National Guard and reserve forces from all services would be “prepared to be the initial and primary source ‘for augmenting active forces in any future contingency requiring rapid and substantial mobilization.’”<sup>10</sup> As a result, in the 1970s, the Army became structured in such a way as to preclude another Vietnam-level conflict without a call-up of the reserves.<sup>11</sup> The Total Force Policy led to an expanded reliance on the Army reserve components—the National Guard and Army Reserve—to wage war. Incorporating the reserve components more closely with the Regular Army allowed the Army to maintain 16 active divisions and locked the reserve components into participation in any future wars. Under the related Round-out Brigade concept, Regular Army divisions included one brigade from the Army National Guard, while more Combat Support and especially Combat Service Support functions were placed in the Army Reserve, freeing up more positions in the Regular Army for soldiers in the Combat Arms. Nevertheless, Creighton Abrams, Army Chief of Staff from 1972 to 1974, and most other strategic planners assumed Selective Service would be reinstituted in a major war.

Following the collapse of *Détente* with the Soviet Union in 1979, Congress reinstated the Selective Service registration requirement for men between the ages of 18 and 25, although actual conscription did not resume. However, it was still assumed that should the United State get into any large war Selective Service would become active again as the means to fill the Army to its authorized levels. The way the United States actually waged war in the post-Vietnam War era did not follow that script. Instead, the United States has waged wars through a combination of more reliance on the reserve components, enlarging the Regular Army, and especially though the increased use of contractors. The mobilization of parts of the National Guard and Reserve for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm (the 1991-1992 war against Iraq) allowed the United States to



Figure 7.2. Soldiers march in formation in the port area during Exercise Reforger in 1985. Photo courtesy of the author.

wage a medium-sized war without raising new forces. Existing Regular and reserve component forces augmented by a large number of contractors fought the war without resorting to conscription and resurrecting the Army of the United States (AUS).

The increased dependence on private contractors to perform many functions once performed by soldiers has been one of the more controversial trends since the end of the draft. This dependence has been especially pronounced since the end of the Cold War in 1990.<sup>12</sup> Tasks formerly performed by troops, from providing meals, to teaching ROTC, to providing security at bases, and a host of other functions, have increasingly been contracted to private firms. While contractors lessen the need for active duty soldiers for mundane tasks, the status of such contractors under international law is unclear, and their control by military authorities in war zones is often ambiguous. However, by contracting out many tasks, the US military—the Army in particular—has been able to conduct more and larger operations than the number of soldiers in the Regular Army would suggest. Outsourcing has allowed Congress to avoid the expensive and problematic large expansion of the Regular Army, or return to conscription and the AUS.

The Total Force policy was one of the more obvious changes brought by the ending conscription and the end of officers holding commissions in

the AUS. However, the concept of, and even the term “Army of the United States” remains in statute and in some usages, such as describing the entire Army—Regular Army, National Guard, and Army Reserve together.<sup>13</sup> In that sense, the Total Force *is* the Army of the United States. The officer’s commission in the AUS, however, went into hiatus, and without a draft, no enlisted soldiers were assigned to the AUS. In some ways, the AUS as well as the Regular Army were replaced by the concept of the *Active Army*. In theory, the Active Army was to be the total forces on active duty, including all of the Regular Army, plus any elements of the Army National Guard and Army Reserve that were also on active duty. Unfortunately, the term *Active Army* became, in common parlance, synonymous with the *Regular Army*. With that development, the Army lost a commonly understood collective term for all its forces on active duty. The 1990 *Army Officer’s Guide*, a commercially available distillation of the most pertinent aspects of being an officer, went so far as to claim that only the Regular Army was the US Army.<sup>14</sup> Sloppy use of terminology led to absurd situations during mobilization and even deployments of the reserve components. Some Guardsmen or Reservists on active duty have been initially denied services or equipment because the person handling such requests understood that the services or equipment were for the Active Army only, and understood that term as excluding Reservists or Guardsmen. While such irritants were usually fixed with a phone call or email, they underscored the problem created by imprecise terms.

Despite significant changes in Army commissioning policy, the language regarding commissions in Army Regulation 601-50, published at the end of 1987, was almost identical to the World War II language regarding commissions in the Army of the United States, should it be recreated during “time of war or national emergency.” The only significant change was to the president’s authority to appoint officers. He could appoint officers all the way up to the rank of major general, instead of only to colonel.<sup>15</sup> The potential for officers holding a Regular or Reserve commission to hold a temporary commission in the AUS remained, but only in a declared war or other time of national emergency.

The standard form used by the Army for administering the Oath of Office for officers, DA Form 71, still has three choices for commissions, “Regular Army,” “Army of the United States, Without Component,” and “Reserve Commissioned Officer.” Since the highest rank in Title 10, the section of US law regarding the federal military, remains that of major general, all commissions for lieutenant general and general remain, technically, Army of the United States commissions. All lieutenant generals

and generals hold those ranks as a result of the position to which they are assigned—when approved by the Senate—and while serving in those ranks, maintain their Regular Army rank as brigadier general or major general.<sup>16</sup> All it would take, in theory, for officers of other ranks to be commissioned in the AUS would be for Congress or the president to declare a war or national emergency.

The Army and Congress have not been idle on the issue of the Army officer corps and commissions. In the 1980s, a trend among career officers could no longer be ignored. Officers who were initially granted Regular Army commissions upon entering active service had become the least likely to stay for a full career.<sup>17</sup> The assumed model going back to the early days of ROTC and Leonard Wood was that officers initially commissioned with a Regular Army commission—mostly academy graduates, augmented by a few officers commissioned from the enlisted ranks and top ROTC graduates—would provide the long-term professional officer corps of the Army. These Regular officers would be temporarily augmented, especially in the lower officer ranks, by officers holding Reserve commissions. Those holding Reserve commissions would leave active service after a few years and return to civilian pursuits. They would also become part of a pool of Reserve officers the Army could call upon in the event of war, even if they did not join the Army National Guard or Army Reserve.

However, by the mid-1980s, those who were most likely to receive initially a Regular Army commission as a second lieutenant, academy graduates and those ROTC graduates who had received four and three-year scholarships, were also the officers most likely to leave active duty after completing the required five years of service.<sup>18</sup> Additionally, those who remained beyond the five-year mark were still less likely to stay for a full career.<sup>19</sup> ROTC-commissioned officers who got little or no scholarship from the Army and who initially came in on a Reserve commission and gained a Regular commission only upon reaching the rank of major, were the ones who provided the bulk of the professional officer corps. The officers who earned their commission through OCS, from which an initial Regular Army commission was not possible, were the most likely to remain on active duty for a full career, although such officers were far outnumbered by the ROTC-commissioned officers.

Addressing the disparity between the source of commission and service longevity, Congress in 1996 amended Title 10 and changed the way company-grade officers were commissioned. Under the new system, all commissions, whether from the academy, ROTC, or OCS, were Reserve commissions. If the officers was serving in the Regular Army, upon being



Figure 7.3. XVIII Airborne Corps in Panama circa 1989. Image courtesy of the author.

selected for promotion to the grade of major, the officer would receive a Regular Army commission. That model lasted just under a decade. In 2005, Congress reversed the policy. All officers going on active duty with the Regular Army began receiving Regular Army commissions. The Reserve commissions held by company-grade officers then serving with the Regular Army under the old system were automatically changed to Regular Army commissions.<sup>20</sup> The change in policy recognized reality, and finally ended the old model that determined the number of Regular Army commissions for second lieutenants based on one per company-sized unit. Since the change, with very few exceptions, the second lieutenant on active duty with the Regular Army holds a Regular Army commission.

The 2005 changes in commissioning policy made the Regular Army commission largely synonymous with something informally called the “Active Duty commission.”<sup>21</sup> Under it, all initial commissions, with one exception, are Reserve commissions.<sup>22</sup> Those officers who apply for active duty with the Regular Army, mostly those who rank high enough from their commissioning source in the Order of Merit List (OML) for selection, have their Reserve commission converted to a Regular Army commission upon entry onto active service.<sup>23</sup> The exception are the former enlisted soldiers who came into ROTC under the Green-to-Gold Program, with the Active Duty Option (G2G-ADO). Those soldiers cannot have a break in service and thus





Figure 7.4. The Desert Storm Victory Parade in New York City, 1991. Photo courtesy of the author.

are initially granted a Regular Army commission.<sup>24</sup> For most officers, the date their commission switches from Reserve to Regular is the date they start travel to enter active duty to assist at ROTC Advance Camp, to work as a Gold Bar Recruiter, or for most, to attend their branch school.<sup>25</sup> The actual change is accomplished by filing out a new DA form 71, checking the “Regular Army” box, and swearing the lieutenant in. The Regular Army commission, unlike the Reserve commission, still requires Senate approval.

Except for lieutenant generals and generals, the only options for a commission remains the Regular and the Reserve. Under the current sys-

tem, all officers in the Regular Army hold Regular Army commissions. While during the Civil War, World War I, and from World War II through the Vietnam War, Regular Army officers were able to take higher, temporary rank under another commission, such a situation would be difficult within today's structure. Various ideas such as "frocking" or even something called a "brevet" are considered as ways the Army can and will adapt the officer corps.<sup>26</sup> There is also the perennial idea of commissioning experts directly from civilian life at higher rank, but such proposals are usually of an ad-hoc nature. The federal military still has only two types of commission—Regular and Reserve—and no one can hold both at the same time.

National Guard officers of course hold a state commission in addition to their federal Reserve commission. Usually both commissions are at the same rank, but the state commission conveys no authority at the federal level. In states that maintain an organized militia in addition to their National Guard—a State Defense Force—retired or inactive officers holding a Reserve commission are able to accept a state commission without jeopardizing their federal status. State (and territorial) governors have always had the authority to issue state commissions under the provisions of state constitutions and state law. Since the rise of the National Guard, most state commissions were to National Guard officers in the rank equal to their federal rank. However, governors also have commissioned officers outside of the National Guard or State Defense Force. Some states, most famously but not exclusively Kentucky, have issued what are basically honorary commissions to prominent people for various reasons, usually in the rank of colonel. In states with a state military college, instructors and professors without federal or state rank are often offered state rank commiserate to their academic standing. Finally, while state adjutant generals are usually appointed by the governor, in most states, law requires that candidates to that office be eligible for federal flag rank. A state adjutant general without such qualifications usually serves under state rank only. A few Regular Army officers have taken a state commission temporarily at the same rank as their federal commission to permit assuming command of a National Guard unit. However, those incidents have been rare, and have no impact on the Regular Army. Finally, in states that maintain an organized militia in addition to their National Guard—a State Defense Force—retired or inactive officers holding a Reserve commission are able to accept a state commission without jeopardizing their federal status. However, federally recognized officers with a Regular or Reserve commission, who accept an additional state commission, are not relevant to any expansion of the

Active Army. Previous methods of expanding the Army for war have been largely forgotten.

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Throughout its history, the US Army expanded for war using several methods, each one tied to the political, societal, and military realities of the era in which it was used. The Regular Army officer corps has had a strong tendency to distrust the non-Regular officer, but the Regular Army has never been maintained at the size required for war without augmentation. The American tradition of maintaining a small standing army in peacetime forced the Regulars to grapple with the problem of expanding to the size required to successfully fight a war within the limits of what was realistic. The trend was toward increased federal control over any non-Regular military forces; a trend even more pronounced in the selection and training of non-Regular officers.

The founding fathers, whatever their differences over the organization of the militia, all understood that militia would be the primary means through which the small Regular Army would be augmented for war. The question was over how the militia was to be organized and trained rather than over whether it would be used. The Regular Army would provide the leadership for the expanded wartime army, as well as provide soldiers with specialized skills such as artillery and engineering. The militia would provide the bulk of war time forces. The decline of the militia as a viable institution after the War of 1812 led to the increased use of the Volunteers as the means to augment the Regular Army.

The state-raised Volunteers were a curious hybrid, not really militia but raised and organized through the militia system of the states. The Volunteers were used during the War of 1812 through the Spanish-American War. As with militia officers, Volunteer officers were usually elected. Elections, and any state linkage, rankled many Regular officers who saw them as a mark of the amateur nature of the Volunteers, but elections were also a check on the authority of the Regular officers over Volunteer regiments. Volunteers themselves often took pride in their amateur status, and saw the election of their officers as more in keeping with republican values. The role of governors in commissioning officers became a special target for reformers. While men in the ranks tended to elect officers they believed would be competent to lead them in war, and most governors had a strong disincentive in appointing officers who would bring disgrace or slaughter, the potential for incompetents to wear officer rank remained. That said, Regular Army officers did not disdain the system so strongly

that they were averse to taking advantage of it to gain higher wartime rank for themselves.

The idea of a fully federally organized and controlled temporary force to augment the Regular Army had its realization during the First World War in the National Army, but it had some precedents going back to the Revolutionary War. The few regiments in the Continental Army without links to any states, such as the Canadian regiments, underscored the readiness of the Continental Congress to improvise. Another precedent was in the ostensibly Regular regiments raised for the Mexican-American War, but which were to exist only for the duration of the war. The use of US Volunteers, as opposed to state-raised Volunteers, in the Civil War and Philippine War also gave a longer tap-root to the practice of a wholly federal war-time augmentation to the US Army than is commonly supposed. But reformers inside and outside the Army wanted something more enduring, as opposed to the ad-hoc nature of previously federally-controlled non-Regular forces.

Key to the success, or at least the acceptance, of any non-Regular force to augment the Regular Army for war was in the selection and training of non-Regular officers. The desire of the Regular officers for a fully federally controlled system for selecting and training citizens who could competently serve as officers during wartime gave birth to the Reserve commission, and later the Army Reserve, as well as to the National Army of the First World War, and the Army of the United States in the Second World War and early Cold War. The overwhelming majority of officers for all three of these forces would hold something other than a Regular Army commission. The creation of the National Army and the Army of the United States commissions, as well as the Volunteer commission before them, had the added benefit of allowing Regular officers, and even Reserve officers, to serve in higher ranks in the expanded wartime army without disrupting the structure of the Regular Army officers corps. The current absence of a mechanism permitting Regular or Reserve officers to hold a temporary, higher rank during wartime is an abnormality.

During the same time that Congress and the Regular Army was creating non-Regular forces to augment the Army during war, the National Guard came under ever increasing the federal control. Officers in the National Guard from 1916 onward have required a federally recognized commission in addition to their state commissions. That federal commission, initially in the National Guard of the United States, and later a Reserve commission, went a long way toward mollifying the Regular officers regarding the National Guard. The continued connection of the

National Guard to the states would, however, remain a matter of concern to the Regulars.

The relationship of the Regular Army to the ideal wartime army has never been settled. George Washington, in his *Sentiments on a Peace Establishment*, advocated for small standing army, and a large and well-organized militia that would provide most of the force for a wartime Army.<sup>27</sup> In the first half of the twentieth century, General John M. Palmer was the Army's most forceful advocate of that view. Palmer believed the Regular Army should be as small as possible, augmented during wartime by temporary soldiers in what he called a "citizens' army." He consistently advocated for Universal Military Training for all men in peacetime as the means to ensure the small Regular Army would have the forces needed for a wartime army. He argued that, if average Americans could fight as well as they did in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War, and in the Union Army during the Civil War, they would make even better wartime soldiers if trained during peacetime.<sup>28</sup>

That idea was at odds with the view of many Regulars, a view Palmer described as a desiring a Regular Army as large as "we could pursued Congress to give us."<sup>29</sup> The concept was first advocated by Secretary of War John C. Calhoun, who in 1820 advocated an expandable Regular Army in peacetime. In his expandable army concept, the peacetime army would have a much smaller number of enlisted men than its structure and the size of its officer corps would warrant. In wartime, the Regular Army would expand by filling its enlisted strength to wartime levels, while keeping its structure and officer corps intact. His idea found its strongest advocate after the Civil War in Emory Upton, whose writings on the subject would shape the thinking of many Regular Army officers well into the twentieth century and beyond. But the expandable army concept never had much Congressional support, and Congress would continue to expand the army for war by creating new forces to fight alongside the Regular Army until after the Vietnam War.

After successfully employing the National Army and Army of the United States, as well as Selective Service, during the World Wars and early Cold War, the United States in 1973 reverted to voluntary enlistments. All parts of the US Army—Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve—depended on voluntary enlistments. The two reserve components were more tightly integrated into the peacetime structure, but initially, conscription was still assumed to have a role in creating a future wartime army. Instead, the United States has fought several wars since 1973 using the Regular Army augmented by the reserve components. The



Figure 7.5. New recruits swear in to the All-Volunteer Force. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

Regular Army has itself expanded when the need for more forces arose, and contracted when fewer forces were needed. The reliance on the expansion and contraction of the Regular Army for war has proven inefficient and expensive. The greatest disruption has been in the officer corps. In the mid-1990s, as the Regular Army shrank, officers were forced out, leading to shortages in the middle officer ranks during the War on Terror. That shortage meant offering Regular commissions to some holders of Reserve commissions, and shortening the time Regular Army officers spent in lower ranks. That in turn led to shortages in the company grades. The process started again as the War on Terror began to ebb in the 2010s. The result was the repeated disruption of the officer corps of the Regular Army that earlier methods of expanding the wartime army sought to avoid.

Fortunately, the Army has a long history of more efficient means of expanding the Army for war to draw on. The former use of such temporary commissions provided great flexibility in meeting the leadership needs of an expanded Army, and it did so without totally disorganizing the Regular Army when peace returned. In the long view, most of the changes advocated by reformers after the Civil War have been adopted. The Regular Army maintains control over the selection and training of officers for any force that augmented the Regular Army in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Understanding how the Volunteer, National Army, and Army of the United States commissions functioned, as well as the National Guard and Army Reserve commissions, provides a sound basis to determine the

proper balance between the Regular Army in peacetime and the expanded wartime army.

Assuming that the US Army will never again undergo a rapid or large expansion is foolish. Whether a potential wartime expansion comes through the use of Selective Service or the use of temporary volunteers will be a political decision. However how such an increased force is organized is within the purview of the Army. The Army has a history of augmentation by temporary, non-Regular forces during wartime to draw upon. The Volunteer, National Army, or Army of the United States all provide examples of workable solutions to the problem of expanding the Army, and most importantly its officer corps, for war.

## Notes

1. Robert K. Griffith, Jr., *The U.S. Army's Transition to the All-Volunteer Force, 1968-1975* (Washington: Center of Military History, 1997), 29-33.
2. Griffith, 35-36.
3. Griffith, 41, 152-155.
4. Beth Bailey, *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 66-87, 114.
5. Bailey, 66-87, 114.
6. Bailey, 155-159.
7. Bailey, 155-159.
8. Lewis Sorley, "Creighton Abrams and the Active-Reserve Integration in Wartime," *Parameters* 21 (Summer 1991), 35-50; see also, Lewis Sorley, *Thunderbolt from the Battle of the Bulge to Vietnam and Beyond: General Creighton Abrams and the Army of his Times* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 361-364.
9. Richard A. Hunt, *Melvin Laird and the Foundation of the Post-Vietnam Military* (Washington D.C.: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2015), 292.
10. Hunt, 292.
11. Lewis Sorley, "Creighton Abrams and Active-Reserve Integration in War-time," *Parameters* 21 (Summer 1991), 35-50, see also, Lewis Sorley, *Thunderbolt from the Battle of the Bulge to Vietnam and Beyond: General Creighton Abrams and the Army of his Times* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 361-64.
12. Bruce E. Stanley, *Outsourcing Security: Private Military Contractors and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015).
13. For example, the USACC Regulation 145-9, dated 8 June 2016, has sample letters for both Regular and Reserve commissioned officers that refer to the officer as being appointed as an "officer in the Army of the United States," although with a Regular or Reserve commission, not an AUS commission.
14. Lawrence P. Crocker, *Army Officer's Guide*, 45<sup>th</sup> Edition (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1990), 478.
15. AR 601-50, Appointment of Temporary Officers in the Army of the United States (Washington: Department of the Army, 4 December 1987), Sec. III, Para. 9.
16. Title 10, US Code, Sec. 61, para a, c1.
17. Casey Wardynski, David S. Lyle, Michael J. Colarusso, "Towards a U.S. Army Officer Corps Strategy for Success: Retaining Talent," Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2010.
18. Many of those former Regulars converted their commission to a Reserve commission, and continued to serve in the National Guard or Reserve, but the Army has not given priority to tracking such officers.
19. Wardynski et al., "Towards a U.S. Army Officer Corps Strategy for Success: Retaining Talent."



20. AR 601-100, Para. 2-6.

21. The term is inaccurate, however, as officers in the Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) program are on active duty, but hold Reserve commissions.

22. United State Army Cadet Command (USACC) Regulation 145-9 (8 June 2016), para. 3-4, b.

23. Those officers holding Reserve commissions who go on active duty only to attend follow-on training (Jump School, Ranger School, Basic Officer Leadership Course—Branch (BOLC-B), etc., or to enter the Active Guard-Reserve (AGR) program, retain their Reserve commission and do not receive a Regular Army commission.

24. USACC Reg. 145-9, para 3-4, b.

25. The Basic Officer Leadership Course, Phase B (BOLC-B, pronounced “Bolic-B”) is where the officer is instructed in his or her particular career field.

26. Department of Defense Instruction Number 1334.02, 7 December 2012, “Frocking of Commissioned Officers;” See also Army Directive 2013-08 “Frocking of Army Reserve Active Guard Reserve Officers.” See also Title 10, Section 605, para. (f)(2); and, Tony J. Bianchi’s “Brevet Promotions Smart Card,” issued by the Army Talent Management Task Force. 2020.

27. George Washington, *Sentiments on a Peace Establishment* (1 May 1783) at <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-11202>, accessed 21 February 2021.

28. John M. Palmer, *America in Arms: The Experience of the United States with Military Organization* (Washington DC: Infantry Journal, 1941), 126-127.

29. Palmer, 72-75.

## About the Author

Barry M. Stentiford is a Professor of Military History at the US Army's School of Advanced Military Studies, and the Director of its Advanced Strategic Leadership Studies Program. Dr. Stentiford holds a BS in History from the College of Great Falls, an MA in American History from the University of Montana, a Masters of Strategic Studies from the US Army War College, and a PhD in Military History from the University of Alabama. His books include *The American Home Guard: The State Militia in the Twentieth Century* (Texas A&M Press, 2002); *The Jim Crow Encyclopedia* (co-editor, Greenwood Press, 2008); *The Tuskegee Airmen* (Greenwood, 2012); *The Richardson Light Guard of Wakefield Massachusetts: A Town Militia in War and Peace, 1851-1975* (McFarland, 2013); and, *Success in the Shadows Operation Enduring Freedom—Philippines and the Global War on Terror, 2002-2015* (CSI, 2018). Dr. Stentiford has been a Regular, a Guardsman, and a Reservist.





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