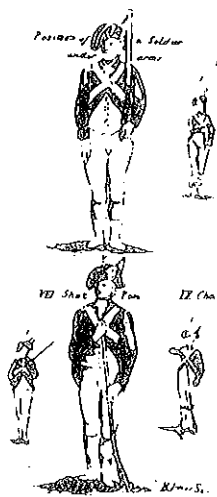


24 Soldiers from Everywhere

Peace in Europe—well, that was almost true. Russia, Turkey, and Bavaria were waging minor wars. There was almost never total peace in 18th-century Europe.

Fighting together with men from other regions made many soldiers begin to think as Americans. General Nathanael Greene of Rhode Island spoke out against “local attachments.” Greene said, “I feel the cause and not the place. I would as soon go to Virginia [to fight] as stay here [in New England].” This was a new way of thinking.



THAT Fiddley Acculeward
These drilling soldiers are on a revolutionary recruiting poster. It took a foreigner, Baron von Steuben, to teach Americans to drill.

There was peace in Europe, and that was unusual. It was also a problem for European soldiers who knew no trade but fighting. So when the American Revolution began, many of Europe's soldiers knocked on Ben Franklin's door. Franklin was in France looking for help—financial help—for the American cause. He wasn't really looking for out-of-work soldiers, but he sent many of them to America anyway. When the European soldiers got to America, many of them wanted to be generals, or at least colonels. But American soldiers didn't want to fight under officers from other countries, especially those who couldn't even speak their language. That created some troubles.

So no one quite trusted the Marquis de Lafayette (mar-KEE-duh-laf-fy-ET) when he first landed in America. A marquis (you can say MAR-kwis or mar-KEE) is a French nobleman, like an English lord. This marquis was very rich, and noble in the best sense of the word. He was 19 years old.

His father had died fighting the British. Lafayette wished to avenge his father, and he also believed in the liberty the Americans were fighting for. But in 1777, when he appeared in Philadelphia, he was taken for just another French soldier of fortune. “Thanks, but we don't need any more of your kind,” was what he was politely told, in French, by James Lovell, who was chairman of the Continental Congress's committee of foreign applications.

The marquis would not be dismissed. He had bought a ship to

come to America; he had paid for the soldiers who came with him; he had even angered his king, who was not yet ready to take sides in this war. Lafayette wrote a letter to John Hancock, president of the Congress. He asked for two favors: "The first is to serve at my own expense. The second is to begin my service as a volunteer."

Now that was an unusual request. John Hancock paid attention, and so did George Washington. And that brings us to one of the nicest stories of the war: the lifelong friendship of Washington and Lafayette. They became like father and son, and neither was ever to be disappointed in the other.

Like a young knight, Lafayette wanted to prove himself in battle, and he did. He became a general on Washington's staff, and suffered with the army during winter encampments. He fought well and, when he was wounded, his bravery endeared him to his men. He contributed much of his personal fortune to the American cause. Later, when he had a son, he named him George Washington.

Lafayette was a noble man and a hero.

So was the Baron Friedrich von Steuben, even though he was a bit of an imposter. Von Steuben told Franklin that he had been a general on the staff of King Frederick the Great of Prussia.

That wasn't quite true. He was a captain in the Prussian army. Ben Franklin was not easily fooled; he saw through von Steuben right away. But he also saw that he was exactly what the army needed: a fine drillmaster. He thought von Steuben might be able to turn that untrained Continental army into a professional fighting force.

Franklin was right. Von Steuben had a happy personality, a lot of energy, professional knowledge of soldiering, and a roaring voice. He hollered at the American troops in a language that was a combination of German, English, and French with a few swear words thrown in. He made himself understood, and he did exactly what Franklin thought he would do. He turned a disorderly group of recruits into skilled soldiers. He trained them to fight as Europe's soldiers fought: with muskets and bayonets. He taught them to follow complicated orders and execute complicated maneuvers. He made them as good as the best British troops.

He was also smart enough to discover that there was something different about American soldiers. They were independent men who wouldn't take orders unless they understood the reason for them. In Europe, von Steuben said, soldiers did what they were

General Andrew Lewis, describing soldiers in Williamsburg in 1776, said, "It is observed that many of the Soldiers when posted as Sentries take the liberty of sitting down. This unjustifiable practice is strictly forbid."



The Marquis de Lafayette became known as "the soldier's friend." Although he returned to France and is buried there, his grave is covered with earth from Bunker Hill.

My Dear Heart

When Lafayette said he wanted to go to America to fight for freedom, French officials wouldn't let him. So he made secret plans, put a black wig over his red hair, and set sail from Spain. He couldn't even tell his wife, Adrienne, good-bye. This is what he wrote her from his ship, La Victoire.

My dear Heart: It is from far away that I am writing, and added to this cruel distance is the still worse uncer-

tainty as to when I shall have news of you.... How will you have taken my going? Do you love me less? Have you forgiven me?... I shan't send you a diary of the voyage; days follow each other and are all alike; always sea and sky and the next day just the same.... As a defender of Liberty which I adore...coming to offer my services to this interesting republic, I am bringing nothing but my genuine good will.

told. In America, he said, soldiers wanted to know why an order was given; then they would do it.

Most of the soldiers who fought in the war were said to be Scotch-Irish. They, or their ancestors, had been poor farmers in Scotland who were lured to northern Ireland by English promises of cheap land. They'd been fooled. Life in northern Ireland was hard, so when they heard of the opportunities in America, a

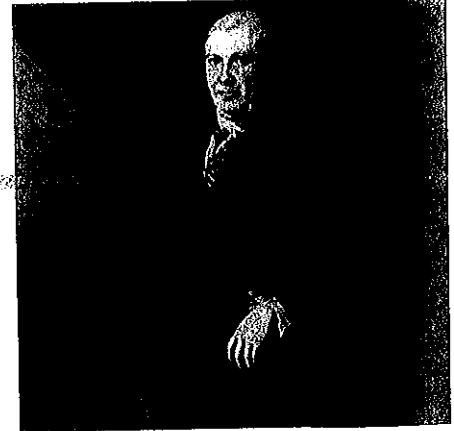
quarter of a million of them packed up, took their chances as indentured servants, and headed across the ocean. Because they had moved about, they quickly thought of themselves as Americans—not Scotsmen, or Irishmen, or Virginians, or Pennsylvanians. They were good soldiers.

Haym Salomon was not a soldier, but the help he gave the Revolution was as important as that given on any battlefield.

Salomon was Polish and a Jew. He had longed for religious freedom and liberty in his native country. But when Poland was invaded by Russia, Haym Salomon had to flee. When he came to America he felt at home.

Salomon was a shy man who spoke several languages and had a talent for the language of business. He had a reputation for integrity; people trusted him.

The British shouldn't have trusted him. When they captured New York, Salomon spied on them for the Patriot cause. He was captured, imprisoned, paroled, captured again, and imprisoned again. Finally, he fled to Philadelphia. Soon, in his quiet way, he won the confidence of the French



Robert Morris had the impossible task of finding the money to pay for the war. He did it—but died penniless himself.

Haym Solomons,
 BROKER to the Office of Finance, to the Consul General of France, and to the Treasurer of the French Army, at his Office in Front Street, between Mifflin and Arch Streets, BUYS and SELLS on Commission

BANK Stock, Bills of Exchange on France, Spain, Holland, and other parts of Europe, the West Indies, and inland bills, at the usual commission.—He Buys and Sells

Loan-Office Certificates, Consols and State Money, of this or any other State, Paymaster and Quartermaster General's Notes; and every other kind of paper transactions (bills of exchange excepted) he will charge his employers no more than ONE HALF PER CENT on his Commission.

He procures Money on Loan
 For a short time, and gets Notes and Bills discounted. Gentlemen and others, residing in this State, or any of the united States, by sending their orders to this Office, may depend on having their business transacted with as much dexterity and expedition, as if they were themselves present.

He flatters himself, his assiduity, punctuality, and extensive connections in his business, as a Broker, is well established in various parts of Europe, and in the united States in particular.

All persons who shall please to favour him with their business, may depend upon his utmost exertion for their interest, and

Part of the Money advanced, if required.

N. B. Paymaster-General's Notes taken as Cash for Bills of Exchange.

At the top of Haym Salomon's advertisement for his banking business are the words "Broker to the Office of Finance"—which meant that he lent money to the revolutionary government.



Ambassador Franklin pays his respects to King Louis of France. He and his co-minister, Silas Deane (*inset*), had to persuade France to help America.

who had come to the aid of America. The French made Salomon a general and their army paymaster.

Robert Morris trusted him, too. Morris, who was superintendent of finance for the Continental Congress, had the very difficult job of paying for the war. The colonies weren't much help. They raised very little money, and foreign countries didn't want to lend money to the Continental Congress. They doubted that the struggling new nation could beat mighty Britain, or pay its bills.

War and Peace Pipe

Normally, Thomas Jefferson didn't smoke. But he made an exception when he was with his Indian friends and they passed the pipe of peace. An Indian brother, a chief, wanted to know what this war was about. Jefferson, who was Virginia's governor, puffed on the pipe and then gave this explanation. What do you think of it?

Our forefathers were Englishmen, inhabitants of a little island beyond the great water, and, being distressed for land, they came and settled here. As long as we were young and weak, the English whom we had left behind, made us carry all our wealth to their country, to enrich them; and, not satisfied with this, they at length began to say we were their slaves, and should do whatever they ordered us. We were now grown up and felt ourselves strong; we knew we were free as they were, that we came here of our own accord and not at their bidding, and were determined to be free as long as we should exist. For this reason they made war on us.

A HISTORY OF US



General Washington with a group including three French officers: Lafayette (left), the Comte de Rochambeau (second from right), and, behind Rochambeau, the Marquis de Chastellux.

So Morris turned to Haym Salomon. Banks lent money to Salomon because they trusted him, even when they wouldn't lend it to the Congress. In Morris's diary you can count 75 times that he went to Salomon for help. Members of the Continental Congress needed help, too. Morris was unable to pay their salaries. James Madison, James Monroe, and Baron von Steuben were among those Salomon helped.

But mostly he helped the struggling army. Sometimes he dipped into his own pocket. When he had no more money to give he turned to the Jewish community and to others. The Jews were few in number, but the ideals of the new nation spoke to them in a special way because they had often been persecuted in the Old World. When he died in 1785, at age 45, Haym Salomon was almost penniless; he had given his country everything he owned.

Jack Jouett's Ride

After Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, he went home to Virginia, and, a few years later, was elected governor. That was during a difficult time when the British army invaded Virginia. The redcoats wanted to capture Jefferson and the members of the Virginia General Assembly—and they almost did. (Note: a dragoon is a British soldier. Monticello is the name of Jefferson's house.)



Jack Jouett (JEW ett)

Hardly anyone has heard of the ride
Of big Jack Jouett through the countryside;
No poet told of his frantic flight
Through Virginia's forest in the dark of night.
The British were marching, they were heading west
Seeking one prize over all the rest:
It was the man who had made the King glow,
Virginia's governor—WANTED—for London's Tower.
Big Jack, feather in his cap, cut by briars, short of sleep,
Had rivers to cross and fences to leap,
Till he reined in his horse and came to a stop
At a house, Monticello, on a mountain top.
"Dragoons," he warned. "They're coming, they're real!"
The governor, at breakfast, finished his meal.
Then he mounted his horse and rode off and away,
A minute later—that's the truth, so they say—
The redcoats arrived; too late, and they knew it,
Thomas Jefferson was gone, with thanks to Jack Jouett.

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