

History of the 8th Pennsylvania Regiment 1776–1783

Robert Cairns

THE history of the 8th Pennsylvania Regiment, 1776–1783, is a diverse and interesting story. The regiment saw service in the Western, Northern, and Philadelphia Campaigns. They fought against British troops in traditional linear warfare and against Indians as light infantry and rangers. Arguably no regiment of the Continental Army covered more ground on foot than did the 8th Pennsylvania. However, the purpose of this article is not to give a detailed unit history, but to use a unit history to frame an account of the clothing and appearance of the regiment during the Revolution.

Early in the Revolution, the British, from their Great Lake posts, including Fort Niagara and Fort Detroit, encouraged Indian raids against the settlers on the western frontiers of New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. In response, the Continental Congress, in July 1776, authorized the building of forts at Presque Isle on Lake Erie, Le Boeuf, and Kittanning, and a regiment of Pennsylvania troops to garrison these posts. The regiment recruited to strength of more than six hundred very quickly, probably because the men on the frontier saw this as an organized defense of their homes and families. The men came from Westmoreland (seven companies) and Bedford (one company) counties. The first colonel was Eneas Mackay, and the regiment was referred to originally as “Mackay’s Battalion.” The regiment assembled at Kittanning, Pennsylvania, northeast of Pittsburgh on the Allegheny River, and remained there until at least late November 1776. By looking at the entries in Quartermaster Ephraim Douglas’ ledger,¹ we can see that tools were regularly drawn and wagons requisitioned. It is not clear what was being constructed, but it may have been the fort at Kittanning ordered by Congress. Douglas’ accounts also show approximately twenty-eight separate entries for cloth and blankets issued to the various company officers. The total issue from 23 October to 5 December 1776 was:

Blue Stroud or Broadcloth – 165½ yards

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White Half Thicks – 153 ¾ yards

White Linen – 140 ¾ yards

Check Linen – 26 yards

Blankets – 60²

The white and check linen may have been used for shirts. It is probable that the blue stroud and white half thicks became leggings. This is confirmed by deserter descriptions of 26 March 1777.³ Of the six unit members described, two wear leggings, one wears blue, and one wears white.

Meanwhile, Gen. George Washington and his army were suffering defeat after defeat around New York City and in New Jersey. The army was reduced drastically through casualties, captives, and desertions, and many more men were due to leave at year’s end when their enlistments expired. In an effort to replenish Washington’s depleted main army, Congress on 22 November 1776, sent orders to Mackay’s Battalion, which, for the first time, was referred to as the 8th Pennsylvania Regiment, instructing them to “march to join Washington’s army wherever it might be found.” These orders were greatly resented, but the regiment did leave western Pennsylvania in early January 1777, even though they were not prepared for such a march, not having blankets, kettles, tents, arms, or regimentals.⁴ After a march of six weeks, they arrived in Quibbletown, New Jersey (present day New Market). The march over the mountains had taken a terrible toll. Both the colonel, Mackay, and lieutenant colonel, George Wilson, had died, along with a number of enlisted men, and a number had also deserted. The unit, now commanded by Maj. Richard Butler (who would go on to have an outstanding career), moved from Quibbletown a short distance to Bound Brook, New Jersey. On 26 March 1777, the *Pennsylvania Journal* reported:

Deserted from the Eighth Pennsylvania Regiment of Foot, commanded by Major Richard Butler, and Captain Michael Huffnagle’s company, quartered at Bound Brook, East New Jersey, the following persons:

JOHN LANE; had on when he deserted, a yellow hunting shirt, old buckskin breeches, half-worn felt hat, old shoes; he is 40 years old, has grey hair, about 5 feet 2 inches high. Took with him a rifle gun belonging to the public.

CHRISTIAN MOWRER; had on brown coat, lapelled with the same, buckskin breeches, wool hat, old flannel jacket patched, new shoes, brown hair, about 30 years of age, 6 feet high, and took a rifle gun, belonging to the public.

THOMAS BAIRD; had on an old blue coat, a short white jacket, buckskin breeches, blue leggings, blackish hair, tied, is about 25 years of age, and took a rifle gun belonging to the public.

JAMES HUNTER; had on an old hunting shirt, black velvet jacket, new buckskin breeches, old stockings, is about 28 years of age, and took a rifle gun belonging to the public.

REUBEN POWEL; had on a brown coat, lapelled with the same, a short white jacket, buckskin breeches, white leggings, and old hat, is



FIG 1 represents Thomas Baird, one of six deserters from Capt. Michael Huffnagle’s Company reported in the *Pennsylvania Journal*, 26 March 1777. He is dressed in civilian clothing. All six deserters wore leather breeches and carried rifles. Watercolor by Alan Archambault.

about 27 years of age, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high, and took with him a rifle gun belonging to the public.

JAMES WHITAKER; about 20 years of age, had on a hunting shirt, blue jacket, buckskin breeches, is 5 feet 8 or 9 inches high, sandy colored hair, and took with him a rifle gun belonging to the public.⁵

All six men are wearing buckskin breeches, but it is less likely that these were a uniform issue (one pair described as “old,” one as “new”), and most likely they were civilian clothing, a very common leg wear, especially when rigorous activity was involved. Two of the men are in brown coats lapelled brown, but this is probably more likely a reflection of what cloth was available on the Pennsylvania frontier. The blue and white leggings probably came from the issues of broadcloth made in the previous fall. From these descriptions, it is likely that the unit was still in civilian clothing and probably met the enemy on 13 April 1777 in their first action at the Battle of Bound Brook, dressed the same way. Although their morale was low for a variety of reasons, and although they lost the engagement and were forced to retreat, both General Washington and Capt. Johann Ewald of the Hessian Jaegers wrote

about the very accurate fire of the Pennsylvanians (most of which were rifle-armed).⁶

Shortly after the Battle of Bound Brook, Col. Daniel Brodhead, from Col. Samuel Miles’ Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment, took command of the 8th Pennsylvania Regiment.⁷ The 22 May 1777 saw the unit assigned to the 2d Pennsylvania Brigade (along with the 4th, 5th, and 11th Pennsylvania Regiments), commanded by Brig. Gen. John Philip DeHaas. Along with the 1st Pennsylvania Brigade, under Anthony Wayne, they formed a division under Maj. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln. At about the same time, Col. Daniel Morgan was ordered to raise a rifle corps from the army to act as rangers and light infantry. Lt. Col. Richard Butler, formerly of the 8th, became his second in command, and three officers and approximately one hundred men of the 8th Pennsylvania were attached for duty with this corps.⁸

The riflemen, as part of Morgan’s Corps, were heavily engaged with the British and Crown troops in their role screening Washington’s army until mid-August when they were ordered north to Gen. Horatio Gates’ command. As a



FIG 2 depicts one of the unit’s riflemen selected to serve in Daniel Morgan’s Rifle Corps, formed in June 1777. Still in civilian clothing he wore when he left Western Pennsylvania, he carries the folding pike General Washington ordered for the Rifle Corps. The usefulness of these pikes is questionable, and after several letters between Washington and Col. Benjamin Flower, there seems to be no further mention of them. Watercolor by Alan Archambault.

result, the regiment had elements engaged in a meaningful way in both the Saratoga Campaign and the battles around Philadelphia, including Chadd's Ford at the Battle of Brandywine (where a detachment of approximately one hundred men of the regiment, under Lt. Col. James Ross, scouted across the creek and discovered the flanking movement),⁹ Paoli, and Germantown. They were present, but not engaged at Whitmarsh, New Jersey.

The unit's appearance during the summer and fall of 1777 is anything but clear. There is a single deserter report from the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* of 16 August 1777 that states:

Deserted from the Pennsylvania Eighth Regiment commanded by Colonel Brodhead, on the ___ Richard Richardson, about twenty two years age, five feet nine inches high, brown hair, grey eyes, born in England. Had on when he went away a brown linen hunting shirt, linen overalls, and white shirt ... and has reported he was a wagoner belonging to the regiment....

DANIEL BRODHEAD¹⁰

According to the Pennsylvania Archives, between January and September of 1777, the Continental Clothier General issued the unit:

- 515 Coats
- 795 Waistcoats
- 240 Pair of Breeches
- 1258 Pair of Shoes
- 896 Pairs of Hose
- 1472 Shirts
- 250 Hats
- 259 Blankets
- 291 Pairs of Overalls
- Not a single hunting shirt¹¹

Unit strength, including officers, in June 1777 was 481, and in November was 404.¹² By comparing the issue to these numbers, it can reasonably be assumed the regiment was adequately clothed. We can also draw some conclusions about the deserter in linen overalls and brown linen hunting shirt. Overalls were a military garment not commonly worn by civilians, so these probably reflect the issue of 291 pairs to the unit. The brown hunting shirt, on the other hand, cannot be accounted for in the clothing returns. Since the man described himself as a wagoner, perhaps he wore a civilian garment to preserve the coat and waistcoat he was issued. We can certainly believe that the unit had ample shoes and shirts. We can also assume that for at least a short period at the time covered by these clothing issues, the men with Colonel Morgan were not present and possibly did not receive some of the items. It is noteworthy that no hunting shirts were issued. This suggests that some of the men of the 8th Pennsylvania with Morgan did not appear in the fringed hunting shirt usually associated with riflemen. The color of the coats issued during this period is unknown, but may have been blue with red facings, based on the fact that a miniature of Colonel Brodhead was painted by Charles Willson Peale at Valley Forge, with Brodhead wearing a blue regimental faced red.¹³

Colonel Brodhead's appearance can further be documented

through a return of *Sundries for Brodhead, 1777*:

Dr/sic/Daniel Brodhead Esqr Coll of the 8th Pennsyla Regt. in Acct with John Boyd Formerly Paymr. Cr.

1777	August 5th	to Cash paid for mending stock buckle & Pistol £0. .7..6	
	8	to Ditto paid for a Gorget	6.10..0
		to ditto paid for holsters	
	23	to ditto paid for Grant the Taylor	32. .7..6
		to do for dressing a hat	
		to do paid Humphreys for a pair knee buckles	
	16	to a pair of silver mounted brass baredled & pi/s/tols	

/Cert as true copy July 12, 1786
Michael Huffnagle¹⁴

This return, along with the Peale miniature, leads to the conclusion that Brodhead was very conscious of his position and appearance, wanting to be sure the latter announced the former. In a future return it will be seen that other officers of the unit held the same belief.

On 1 November 1777, a return of necessities wanting in the unit listed as needed:

103 Coats



FIG 3. A single deserter from the 8th Pennsylvania was reported in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, 16 August 1777. He was a wagoner, and wore a brown linen hunting shirt, linen overalls, and a white shirt. Long over shirts were usually worn by wagoners to protect their clothing from the dust and dirt of their work. He carries a whip and bucket for use with his drought animals. Watercolor by Alan Archambault.



FIG 4 shows Col. Daniel Brodhead of the 8th Pennsylvania at Valley Forge (winter 1777-1778), based on the Charles Willson Peale miniature of Brodhead, and the receipt for sundries for the colonel. He wears a regimental coat with winged lappets, a gorget, and silver epaulettes. Although Brodhead and his field officers several times requested scarlet breeches and waistcoats, or cloth to make them, there is no evidence at this time to prove they received this. When mounted, Colonel Brodhead's horse would wear a pair of holsters to carry brass barreled, silver mounted pistols. Watercolor by Alan Archambault.

- 196 Shoes
- 137 Waistcoats
- 208 Stockings
- 168 Breeches
- 98 Haversacks
- 246 Shirts
- 152 Blankets
- 80 Hats¹⁵

The men with Morgan returned in mid-November, and it is possible this return requested items for these who had been ordered back to the main army after Maj. Gen. John Burgoyne's surrender on 17 October. Their hard campaigning had taken a toll on men and clothing, and in a letter from General Washington to Gen. Nathaniel Greene, Washington notes that Morgan's Corps is in a general want of shoes.¹⁶

Although the 8th seemed to be amply supplied in August, by 4 December 1777, Lt. Col. Stephen Bayard of the regiment, wrote to Thomas Wharton, president of the Pennsylvania Council of Safety, that except for the New England troops, all the rest were virtually naked, and would be except for General Wayne's sending officers to buy clothing of every kind throughout the countryside. Bayard said that one-third of the men had neither breeches, shoes, stockings, nor blankets and were, as a result, unable to do duty or stay in the field as they moved toward Valley Forge.¹⁷ The campaigning of the summer and fall had completely worn out the issues of clothing made to the unit.

At the same time Lieutenant Colonel Bayard was commenting on the poor state of the men's clothing to Thomas Wharton, Wharton sent the following to General Washington:

... Lancaster, 15 January 1778

... Lt. [Gabriel] Peterson of the eighth Pennsylvania battalion, applied to council for clothing for himself and several officers. At the foot hereof we transcribe from his application a specimen of their wants -

The call upon the state was thought to be for covering the naked part of the army; and as no idea that fine ruffled shirts, laced hats, or even fine ones of beaver, silken stockings, or fine scarlet cloth came under this description, no provision has been made, or can be expected. Your Excellency can best judge whether any precaution may be necessary to prevent such officers, as intend shortly to resign from obtaining a supply of the clothing expected to be delivered out.

Major [Frederick] Vernon of the 8th Pennsylvania Regiment wants

- 2 coats, 1 scarlet, 1 blue with red fringe
- 2 waistcoats, 1 scarlet, 1 white
- 2 pr. Breeches, do do
- 6 shirts, 6 stocks, 4 pr. of stockings,
- 2 pr. white cott & 2 pr. white silk



FIG 5. Charles Willson Peale painted this miniature of Daniel Brodhead during the Valley Forge Encampment. A black and white likeness of it appears in some of the Wisconsin Historical Society's publications, and a color photograph can be seen in the Peale biography written by Charles Coleman Sellers. The miniature's current ownership and whereabouts could not be discovered. Watercolor by Alan Archambault.

hat gold laced

Captain [Michael] Huffnagle

4 fine ruffled shirts, 4 stocks, 2 pr. silk stockings,
2 pair fine shoes, 1 beaver hat
Captain Samuel Miller
Scarlet for coat jacket and breeches
3 shirts, 2 pair stockings, 2 pair shoes

Doctor Waggoner

2 shirts, 1 ½ yards scarlet cloth
2 pair worsted stockings¹⁸

It is clear that Wharton has no intention of honoring these requests, and his concern that these officers were trying to obtain the clothing just prior to leaving the army is well-founded in Captain Huffnagle's case, since he retired from service July 1778 (Capt. Samuel Miller died in January 1778, but Maj. Frederick Vernon served until 1783). Just as in the case of Colonel Brodhead, we can see through this request that Major Vernon also expected to be seen in a particular fashion reserved for field officers. The captains' needs also suggest their desire to be set apart by their appearance.

Anthony Wayne, commander of the Pennsylvania Division at Valley Forge (including the 8th Pennsylvania), wrote a number of letters to Thomas Wharton, including on 10 February 1778:

... I also wish that no more cloth be made into coats unless it to be "blue," but that all the rest be made into overalls and vests except such colours as will admit of being dyed blue – the Virginians have rec'd blue cloth sufficient for the uniform the whole of their troops...¹⁹

On 27 March, Wayne asked Wharton for more linen overalls and other clothing.²⁰

On 16 April 1778, Wayne wrote to Wharton that he could get from a York, Pennsylvania, supplier enough linen for six hundred shirts. "We shall certainly want in the whole 9,000 shirts and 9,000 pairs of overalls."²¹

On 18 April 1778, the Continental Clothier General James Mease wrote to Wharton that he had supplied Colonel Brodhead's regiment with two hundred shirts. A return of the 8th Pennsylvania for the same month shows a grand total of 370 men.²² So, supplies of clothing were coming to the regiment at Valley Forge, but not in sufficient quantity to cloth everyone.

General Washington ordered the regiment on 23 March 1778 to return to the western frontier, and in a letter to the Continental Congress he wrote:

... on the subject of the Indian ravages upon the Western Frontier ... I ordered the 8th Pennsylvania Regt. to march. They ... are a choice body of men about one hundred of them have been constantly in Morgan's Rifle Corps ... I can very little spare the troops which I have sent, especially the 8th Pennsylvania Regt. which composed the greatest part of Morgan's Corps ...²³

It is interesting that only a year earlier Washington was extremely concerned about the very low morale of the regiment. So concerned, in fact, that he pardoned a number of men from the 8th who had been court-martialed. It seems that once they received good leaders (not that most of the original officers were inadequate, but the loss of all three field officers

certainly caused some doubt for the men in ranks), proper supplies (or at least supplies equal to the rest of the army), and many were fighting in the manner for which they had enlisted (as rangers and light infantry), they became a very valuable part of Washington's army.

Why, then, did General Washington order the regiment back to the west? There are several concrete reasons, and a conjectural thought. The regiment had a very difficult time recruiting replacements so far away from their home area. Men enlisting in eastern Pennsylvania naturally preferred to serve with men from their own hometowns. Another factual reason is that the threat in the west came primarily from Indians and the men of the 8th had enlisted to fight Indians, and many, on the Saratoga Campaign, had proven their expertise. A third point is speculation on the part of the author, but is based on the historical record. First, two officers of the unit, Colonel Brodhead and Capt. Michael Huffnagle, testified at the Court of Inquiry for General Wayne regarding the Paoli defeat, and both implied that Wayne had ample warning of the British



FIG 6. At Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in June 1778, as the 8th received supplies before marching to Fort Pitt, Colonel Brodhead, Lieutenant Colonel Bayard, and Lieutenants Peterson and Crawford each received "green dress coats." This illustration represents one of the lieutenants, who carries the sponoon of a company grade officer. No other mention is made for green coats for the unit. Watercolor by Alan Archambault.

attack.²⁴ Secondly, Brodhead wrote to General Lincoln:

... I have long wished to write you ... yet ... I confess this is the first letter I wrote you...since you left us your Division has suffered greatly and that is chiefly by the conduct of G.L.W. Most of the officers are unhappy under his command and as to my own part I have had very little satisfaction since the command devolved on him.²⁵

Brodhead had proven himself to be a very competent regimental commander, but his attitude toward his superior certainly did not endear himself to General Wayne, and returning the regiment to the west may have addressed several problems.

The 8th marched from Valley Forge on 11 June 1778, and stopped in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Colonel Brodhead, knowing it would be even more difficult to clothe the unit once they were on the frontier, decided to get what they needed before leaving Lancaster. The Supreme Executive Council, on 18 June 1778, granted him this authority.²⁶ At Lancaster, Brodhead, Lieutenant Colonel Bayard, Lt. Gabriel Peterson, and Lt. John Crawford each received a green "dress coat."²⁷ The meaning of this style coat is not clear, but the author believes the notation "dress coat" to be differentiating between what was issued and a regimental coat. This coat may not have had a military appearance, but more civilian in cut.

In a letter to Brig. Gen. Lachlan McIntosh, 24 June 1778, explaining the unit's delay in beginning their march westward, Brodhead notes that when they arrived at Lancaster, the clothing there had already been assigned to other regiments, and it would be several days before they received theirs. He also said he had employed the woolmen and tailors of the 8th in making over the shirts, not more than half being complete. Brodhead assured McIntosh that he would march to York, Pennsylvania, the moment the regiment had the necessary clothing.²⁸

The regiment marched from Lancaster on 5 July and, at Carlisle on 8 July 1778, Colonel Brodhead ordered the men under Capt. John Finley to be clothed and join their respective companies (they had been away from the unit escorting supplies). The unit detoured from their westward movement and from Carlisle went north along the Susquehanna River to Sunbury and Munsey, to answer the threat of Indian raids. During this detour two men of the regiment were killed by Indians in Penn's Valley, within sight of Potter's Fort. They returned to Carlisle about 9 August 1778, after being relieved by Col. Thomas Hartley's Regiment, then resumed their westward movement.²⁹ It is interesting to note that Colonel Brodhead ordered the men to have "their hair powdered, & green boughs in their hats,"³⁰ and on 13 August an officer described the regiment as "well supplied."³¹ The regiment preceded on to Pittsburgh and Fort Pitt on the Forbes Road through Shippensburg, People's Tavern, Bedford, and Ligonier, arriving about 11 September 1778 at Fort Pitt.

After returning to the Western Department, the regiment was involved in three major operations, and when not involved in these, it was parceled out for ranging parties and to man dozens of forts and small posts along the Ohio River frontier.



FIG 7. A photograph of one of the "P" buttons excavated from the Fort Laurens cemetery by Dr. Richard Michael Gramly in 1986. All the buttons of this type that were discovered were 17mm in diameter, and coupled with their number and position on the remains suggests that they were worn on the waistcoats.

These outposts extended as far south as Fort Randolph at the site of modern Point Pleasant, West Virginia, at the mouth of the Great Kanawa River. The 8th found little time to rest from the rigors of their march across Pennsylvania, and began the first of the major operations less than two weeks after reaching Pittsburgh. This campaign had three primary goals; to build a road from Pittsburgh to the mouth of the Beaver River on the Ohio, to build a fort at that site, and to push on into the Ohio Country to build a fort on the Tuscarawas River. Colonel Brodhead and the 8th were given the road building task by commander of the department, Gen. Lachlan McIntosh, and the other Continental regiment, the 13th Virginia, traveled by the Indian route, known as the Great Trail, to begin building the fort, which was named Fort McIntosh. (Although Fort McIntosh is down river from Fort Pitt, it actually was north-west of Pitt due to the Ohio River flowing northwest.) The road and the fort were probably constructed at the same time due to the lateness of the season to begin such a campaign. The road building began about 20 September, and reached Fort McIntosh about 8 October 1778. During the first week of November, both Continental regiments and Pennsylvania and Virginia militia, twelve hundred in all, set off on the Great Trail to the Tuscarawas. As might be imagined, the march across Pennsylvania and several weeks of road building were having negative affects on the men's clothing, especially their shoes. Maj. Frederick Vernon of the 8th ordered that some soldiers would be permitted to hunt to provide hides for moccasins, and that these hides were not to be traded outside the regiment.³²

Although most of the army left Fort McIntosh, it was far from complete, needing the gates hung, and the bastions, tower, and barracks finished.³³ The army made very slow progress, often covering less than five miles a day, in large

part due to the very poor quality of the pack animals, and the necessity to let them graze. On 17 November, the men were ordered³⁴ to collect and wear deer tails in their hats as a sign to friendly Indians. About 19 November, the army arrived on the Tuscarawas and began building a fort, named Fort Laurens, at the site of a blockhouse built by Col. Henry Boquet during Pontiac's Rebellion. Due to the lateness of the season and short supplies, most of the army began their return on 9 December to Fort McIntosh, leaving 152 men of the 13th Virginia and 20 of the 8th Pennsylvania to complete the fort, the barracks not having doors, among their tasks. There were two purposes for the post. Several officers, including General McIntosh, believed a series of forts could be built to support a strike against the British at Detroit, and secondly, it was constructed to support the friendly Indians. It was to succeed at neither, since its location made it difficult to supply and at the same time, put it too far from the friendly Indian towns.

A clothing return for 1778 appears in the Pennsylvania Archives and records the following issues for the year:

- 392 Hats
- 53 Caps
- 338 Coats
- 291 Waistcoats



FIG 8. The two soldiers shown represent spring (leather breeches) [left] and fall (linen overalls) [right] 1779. Both wear the French contract, or "lottery" coat, and white wool waistcoat. The man in buckskin breeches wears stockings "of lead colour" (George Measam to the Board of War, 10 October 1778). The clothing of the man in linen overalls shows the wear of campaigning, especially his hat and shoes. The buck tails in their hats are a result of their service at Fort Laurens. Watercolors by Alan Archambault.

- 401 Breeches
 - 1,242 Shirts
 - 1,579 Shoes
 - 737 Stockings
 - 732 Overalls
 - 236 Hunting Shirts
 - 669 Stocks
 - 265 Blankets
 - 240 Mittens
 - 240 Woolen Caps
- Signed Benj. Neilly
Q.M. 8th Pa. Regt.³⁵

A clothing return for the regiment's officers from the same source reports that most of the officers needed:³⁶

- 1 Coat
- 1 pr. Breeches
- 4 Stocks
- 1 Waistcoat
- 4 Shirts

Returns of troop strength for March and April 1778 report grand totals each month of 370 men, and May's figure is 375, all reported while the unit was still at Valley Forge.³⁷ A return from September of 1778 as the unit worked on the road to Fort McIntosh reports a grand total of 254.³⁸ By comparing the clothing issue, much of which was probably made at Lancaster,

with the number of troops, it appears they were adequately clothed in 1778. One interesting note is the issue of 53 caps. It is this author's conjecture that these were for the light infantry company, but the style is unknown, as is the cut and color of the coats issued to the men. Daniel Brodhead is shown in a blue regimental coat faced red in the Peale miniature, and while the unit was under General Wayne's command at Valley Forge Wayne ordered no more coats for the Pennsylvania troops that were any color but blue, and at Fort Pitt in December 1778, Capt. James Moore of the 8th drew "six yards one eighth blue serge, two yards of white linnen, & twelve yards and a half of check for my use."³⁹ All this suggests blue coats were a possibility, but further documentation is needed.

The year 1778 saw Colonel Brodhead send many requests to General Washington, Timothy Pickering, and Joseph Reed for clothing. Some stores did remain from the 1778 issues, and a new recruit received "one blanket, one coat, one jacket, & one pair of shoes & one pair of hose"⁴⁰ 29 January 1779. This issue does not show a hat or cap issued, items of which there would be shortages for the rest of the unit's history. Brodhead communicated to both Pickering and Governor Reed that the quantity of cloth he had word of in Virginia would be no use to him since he did not have means to make it into clothing. He also said that the nature of the duty his men performed necessitated double issues of clothing, and emphasized the need for large amounts of shoes of the best quality. On 5 March 1779, Colonel Brodhead was appointed Commander of the Western Department, replacing General McIntosh, who had requested to retire from the command.⁴¹ On 22 May 1779 Brodhead wrote to both Pickering and Washington that he had learned a supply of clothing had been authorized and was on its way to him so the troops in his command would soon be properly furnished.⁴² In a letter to General Washington, dated 25 March 1779, Richard Peters confirms that Lieutenant Colonel Bayard of the 8th Pennsylvania had departed for Fort Pitt several weeks earlier with 15-16 wagons laden with clothing. Peters also remarked:

Col Brodhead with the least reason makes the most Complaints of any Officer we have done Business with. We will order Returns to be made of the Articles issued to his Regiment whereby it will appear that he has been supplied rather lavishly than otherwise ... Notwithstanding very ample Supplies were sent him in the Course of Last Autumn & the preceding Summer, a great part of which arrived...⁴³

A note on the clothing is appropriate. It is highly likely that coats, waistcoats, and breeches in this issue were part of the coats ordered from France in 1777, and delivered in 1778. These began to be issued in the fall of 1778. These were the "lottery" coats, so called because a lottery was held to determine what color coats were issued to which state's troops. This lottery turned out to be wholly unnecessary, since the number of coats greatly surpassed the size of the army, and there were more blue coats faced red than there were soldiers to receive them. (The other coats were brown faced red.) As a result, the Pennsylvania Line received blue coats. A small supplemental to the 8th Pennsylvania in October 1779 shows the unit receiving six blue coats,⁴⁴ that supports the idea that



FIG 9. This drummer represents 1779, when the unit received the French contract uniforms. Although it was usual in the period for musicians to wear coats with reversed colors to that of their unit, the 1777 contract for these coats did not specify reversed colors, and musicians would have received coats of the same cut and color as the rest of the men. Watercolor by Alan Archambault.

the 8th received blue French contract coats.

All through June, Brodhead noted a severe shortage of shoes and that he expected to receive a large quantity soon. He noted that private property and hides were being bartered for shoes at Fort Hand, and promised shoes to Capt. John Clark at Fort McIntosh and Colonel Bayard at Kittanning. (Bayard had ridden ahead of the supplies at Brodhead's order, replaced by Captain Moore.) The colonel reported to General Washington on 5 June 1779 that he could only send out small parties till a supply of shoes arrived.⁴⁵ It appears that the supplies did arrive in late June, because thirty pair of shoes were sent to Colonel Bayard 1 July 1779,⁴⁶ and Brodhead reported to Washington that he had "been obliged to give some soldiers' clothing to the Indians."⁴⁷ In the same letter, he requests more supplies before October. On 3 August he wrote to both Pickering and Reed, to complain about a lack of clothing, especially hats and stockings, and of a general deficiency of all articles of clothing. He also noted that the 9th Virginia Regiment had been much better supplied, causing jealousy in his unit.⁴⁸

In August 1779, the regiment was part of Brodhead's Expedition (11 August-14 September 1779), in support of the



FIG 10. From mid-1779 through at least May 1781, parties of the 8th Pennsylvania were dressed like Indians, in breech cloths, leggings, moccasins, and paint, to engage the hostile Indians on the Pennsylvania frontier. Many of these parties were led by Capt. Samuel Brady. Watercolor by Alan Archambault.

Sullivan-Clinton Campaign against the Indians of western New York. Brodhead led a force of six hundred men, including his own regiment, from Fort Pitt up the Allegheny River for four hundred miles, burning ten villages and destroying crops, and returned "loaded with plunder." Lt. John Hardin, leading the advance party, defeated a superior Indian force on 15 August.⁴⁹ Prior to beginning this campaign, on 6 August 1779, Brodhead wrote to Gen. John Sullivan:

... the Indians sometimes take a scalp from us, but my light parties which I dress and paint like Indians have retaliated in several instances.⁵⁰

This provides a very different and interesting picture of Continental soldiers.

Daniel Brodhead wasted no time after the end of the expedition against the Indians to take pen in hand and begin describing the poor condition of his men's clothing and their need for everything. On 23 September 1779, he wrote to Governor Reed:

But my officers and soldiers are exceedingly ragged; the soldiers naked, and I am unfortunately greatly distressed for want of cloathing & money to relieve their necessities ... I hope a second supply of stores is on the road to my Regt. and give me leave to beg you once more ... to procure some good blankets, shirts, Hats, shoes & stockings, & leggings, or woolen overalls for the men...⁵¹

The author believes several factors may have caused Colonel Brodhead's nearly constant effort to obtain supplies. First, since it took so long for items to reach him on the frontier, he most certainly asked for more than he needed, and before he needed it. In that way he may have hoped to build a reserve

of stores. Secondly, the nature of the duty in which his troops were involved, including road and fort building, and patrolling and campaigning through country without roads and bridges, would cause clothing to wear out much sooner than duty in Washington's main army. The Brodhead Expedition must certainly have done much damage to the men's clothing, so Brodhead needed to make this a priority.

Adding to the regiment's strength, but also to its needs and supply problems, on 9 October 1779 Capt. Samuel Moorehead's Independent Company was annexed to the 8th Pennsylvania, after correspondence between Brodhead and Washington on the matter.⁵² On 18 October 1779,⁵³ General Washington informed Brodhead that he had forwarded Brodhead's clothing requests to James Wilkinson, Clothier General in Philadelphia, and on 30 October,⁵⁴ Governor Reed wrote to Brodhead that clothing for 24 officers and 250 privates was being prepared and would be forwarded. Colonel Brodhead sent Capt. John Finley on 4 November to conduct the clothing to Pittsburgh. The unit still had some clothing in stores, evidenced by the fact that four new recruits to Capt. Samuel Brady's company were sent from Fort Armstrong to Pittsburgh to "receive their proper allowance of that article..."⁵⁵ The officers were issued by the state in mid-November 1779, for each of the twenty-four officers, one hat, one suit of clothes, three shirts, three stocks,



FIG 11. By late summer 1781, the regiment had a reduced strength of only 155 men, and received a clothing issue so each man could have one hunting shirt, two shirts, two pairs of linen overalls, and two pairs of shoes. This allowed the unit to appear as uniform as they had during the entire war, but certainly this changed as this linen clothing began to wear out. Watercolor by Alan Archambault.

one pair of silk hose, and one pair of shoes.⁵⁶ The unit seemed amply supplied and in fact, Colonel Brodhead wrote to Rev. David Zeisberger leading the Christian Delaware in Ohio, that he "could now [26 November 1779], supply the Indians with many articles of clothing."⁵⁷ It is the author's conjecture that if the troops were not properly clothed, Brodhead would not turn clothing over to the Indians. Shoes, however, were still a concern, and the order was given on 12 December 1779⁵⁸ to make deer hides into moccasins at Fort McIntosh. Brodhead also acknowledged a quantity of clothing soon to arrive, but noted to General Washington on 13 December 1779, that they had no hats and not enough shoes in the supply.⁵⁹

To address the shortage of hats, Colonel Brodhead asked Wilkinson on 13 December 1779 to authorize him to purchase hats available in Pittsburgh. He told Wilkinson he would need three hundred well-cocked hats in the spring.⁶⁰

A return of clothing issued the unit in 1779 is as follows:

120	Hats	316	Stockings
0	Caps	823	Overalls
260	Coats	440	Hunting Shirts
290	Waistcoats	0	Stocks
320	Breeches	176	Blankets
671	Shirts	0	Woolen Overalls
1,030	Shoes		

Three troops returns for the regiment are known for 1779, and show that the grand total of troops in April 1779 was 420, but that unit strength dropped in November and December 1779 to 212, with 233 men discharged in December as their three-year enlistments expired.⁶¹ Again in 1779, it would seem that adequate clothing was received, but Colonel Brodhead's repeated assertion that the nature of the duty required double issues of clothing must be considered.

Possibly the most concrete evidence having to do with the clothing of the 8th Pennsylvania for 1779 comes not from written records, but from the archeological work done at the site of Fort Laurens. When Dr. Richard Michael Gramly excavated the fort's cemetery in the summer of 1986, the remains of several soldiers were found with a number of buttons, 17mm in diameter, with a raised edge and a raised block "P" in the center. The shank of these buttons had a neck and a round eye cast on them. Since the fort was only manned from late December 1778 to August 1779, and since the only uniformed troops involved in the fort's life were the 9th Virginia Regiment, some North Carolina dragoons, possibly some men from Rawling's Maryland Regiment, and the 8th Pennsylvania, there can be no question that this button was worn on the waistcoats of at least some of the 8th's members. [See the article by the author, "Pennsylvania Line Button, 1778-1779," in *Military Collector & Historian*, 47, no. 4 (Winter 1995).]

After the discharge of more than two hundred soldiers whose enlistments had ended, including most of those that had served with Daniel Morgan in 1777, Henry Jolly, who remained with the 8th recounted that the unit became a compound of invalids, British deserters, etc., but that Capt. Samuel Brady selected a group to dress as Indians and range

the frontier.⁶² The year 1780 would be extremely difficult for the 8th Pennsylvania and Daniel Brodhead in terms of both supply and of the mission they were to accomplish, keeping the frontier safe from hostile Indian attacks.⁶³ On 22 January 1780, Brodhead wrote to Clothier General Reed that his men's clothing was completely worn out due to the nature of their duties, and they would be naked if not supplied by March. To James Wilkinson he wrote on 27 February 1780,⁶⁴ that the supply of clothing meant for them was delayed by snow in the mountains, and could not arrive before April. As a result, he intended to save this issue of woolen winter clothing till the fall 1780, and requested for each enlisted man one shirt, one hunting shirt, and two pair of overalls. (He had remarked in the 22 January letter that he had not received a single hunting shirt worth a shilling since he left Lancaster, June 1778. As the 1779 return reported 440 hunting shirts issued, this seems to be a remark on quality, rather than quantity). Before he closed to Wilkinson, he reminded him that the 9th Virginia had been much better supplied last season, and requested for himself scarlet cloth for a suit of cloths, linen for shirts, and some thin under dress for summer.

The Delaware began raiding the frontier in early March, and Brodhead requested some damaged cloth from Winchester, Virginia to give to the still friendly Indians.⁶⁵ He also requested one thousand French shoes from the same supply. On the same date as the request, he also sent Capt. Thomas McIntire to Lancaster for shoes and on to Philadelphia for the summer clothes he had requested.⁶⁶ This linen clothing may have arrived in June, because an order was issued at Fort Pitt, 30 June 1780, stating "each soldier who has received only one shirt for this campaign is immediately to be furnished with another..."⁶⁷ All during the spring and early summer, small ranging parties, many led by Capt. Samuel Brady of the 8th, patrolled the frontier and many times engaged in small skirmishes. This guerrilla warfare was the best the regiment could do, based on its reduced numbers and poor supply. The officers of the regiment were also in need of clothing, and Captain [Adamson?] Tannihill [Tannehill?] was sent to Philadelphia to procure clothing allowed to them by an act of Congress.⁶⁸

Colonel Brodhead attempted for several months to plan an expedition against the hostile Indians to the southwest, with the intent of destroying their crops. However, due to supply problems and the militia colonels not being able to raise enough men, this expedition had to be postponed till the following spring. On 21 July 1780, Colonel Brodhead sent Capt. John Finley to Joseph Reed to collect all the regimental stores to which the 8th was entitled through spring 1781, an obvious attempt at preventing their supply problems for some time.⁶⁹ In August, due to shortage of supplies, Brodhead was forced to draw in some of the Allegheny posts. Some supplies must have reached Pittsburgh in early August, because blankets and shoes were issued to the enlisted men on 16 August 1780.⁷⁰ During this period, Brodhead was constantly working to keep those Indians not already under arms against

him to remain peaceful. He did this primarily through the leaders of the Christian Delaware, Revs. David Zeisberger and John Heckenwelder. Some pressure was taken off the 8th Pennsylvania's area of operation in late August when George Rogers Clark, with a combined force of Virginia regulars and militia attacked and destroyed Shawnee towns, including Pickawee (near modern Springfield, Ohio), in the southwest portion of modern Ohio. This drew many of the Indians that had been active on the Pennsylvania frontier back to protect their homes further west.

Oddly, since Daniel Brodhead seemed to take up his pen with little or no provocation to request supplies, nothing more regarding clothing appears in the 8th Pennsylvania Orderly Book or Brodhead's personal letters until 7 December 1780, when he wrote to Richard Peters that he was in need of many articles of clothing, but would not send an officer for them, trusting Peters to send what he can when he can.⁷¹ A clothing return for 1780 demonstrates that Brodhead's complaints and requests on behalf of his men were legitimate. It shows the following issued:

5	Hats
26	Coats
48	Waistcoats
0	Breeches
391	Shirts
440	Shoes
4	Stockings
183	Woolen Overalls
114	Blankets

Troop returns for 1780 give the strength of the 8th as:

February -	195	July -	174
May -	186	October -	173
June -	183	December -	155

By comparing the two sets of numbers, it is easily seen the regiment was very poorly supplied, with each man receiving, on average, for the entire year, only one pair of woolen overalls, two shirts, and two pair of socks.

The year 1780 closed with some very important events for the regiment, Colonel Brodhead, and the frontier. The Delaware urged war, and Brodhead wrote to Wyngeneund, their leader, to continue their neutrality.⁷² On the same day, the colonel received a letter from Gen. Anthony Wayne, informing him of the reduction of the army, and the probability that Brodhead would be reassigned.⁷³ Finally, General Washington informed him on 29 December 1780 that the state of Virginia was planning an expedition against Detroit, and that some men, stores, and artillery at Fort Pitt would be transferred to George Rogers Clark for this purpose.⁷⁴ (In fact, early in 1781, Brodhead was informed that the 9th Virginia Regiment, then reduced to two companies, would be assigned to Clark. This expedition to Detroit, however, never occurred.)

The year 1781 began with an event that did not involve, but did directly affect, the 8th Pennsylvania. There was a mutiny of the Pennsylvania Line at Morristown, New Jersey. Although the 8th was hundreds of miles away, they were to

lose their commander and their regimental name. As a result of the mutiny, more than 1,200 men of the Pennsylvania Line were discharged, and the 7th through the 11th Regiments were eliminated, their remaining troops reassigned to six battalions, with Daniel Brodhead to command the 1st Pennsylvania Battalion. Brodhead had some things left to do in the Western Department however, and did not turn command of the department over to Col. John Gibson of the 9th Virginia Regiment until 6 May 1781, and departed the same day for Philadelphia.⁷⁵ The regiment's remaining men formed two companies, commanded originally by Samuel Brady (later John Finley) and John Clark, both under Lt. Col. Stephen Bayard. This arrangement was in place till at least April 1783. The unit was officially designated "a Detachment from the Pennsylvania Line."⁷⁶

In terms of supply, the 8th Pennsylvania began 1781 much as they had in 1780. Brodhead reported to Washington that unless supplied, the men would be naked by March. He requested permission to make personal application for supplies when he reported to Philadelphia.⁷⁷ On 10 March 1781, Brodhead wrote to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress, and requested matched coats, stroud for breech cloths and leggings, and paint so he could equip his men as partisans.⁷⁸

On 7 April 1781, the regiment made its last expedition as a unit, with Colonel Brodhead in command. One hundred and fifty regulars left Fort Pitt, rendezvoused with 134 militia under Col. David Shepherd, at Wheeling, and moved against the Indians, mainly Delaware, at Coshocton and Lichtenau. The Indians were completely surprised, a number of warriors were killed, many prisoners taken, and the towns were plundered. The Christian Moravian Indians, along with Captain Killbuck's band at Newcomerstown, supplied food to Brodhead's men, and Brodhead met with friendly Indian leaders. Some of the friendly Delawares returned to Fort Pitt with the soldiers.

After completing this expedition, which had been postponed from the previous summer, Brodhead turned over the command of the Western Department. However, he continued to advocate for clothing for the unit, and from Philadelphia he again wrote to Samuel Huntington on 30 May 1781, saying that:

... the parties which I have hitherto employed against the Indians are destitute of paint, & cloth for leggings & breech clouts, & cannot act to advantage until they are furnished with those articles. The non-commissioned officers & soldiers of the 8th Pa Regt, & the Maryland Independent corps, are entirely destitute of shirts & other clothing, & the shoes of all the troops are worn out.⁷⁹

General Washington responded to Brodhead's continued requests by saying he could only recommend the state make provision for Brodhead's men, since the Continental Magazine was exhausted.⁸⁰

On 21 July 1781, the unit was sent from Philadelphia 140 hunting shirts, 280 pairs of linen overalls, 280 pairs of shoes, and 280 shirts.⁸¹ Troop returns for February show 155 men.⁸²

Brodhead also tried to provide the unit with a continuation of leadership. Captain Brady had been reassigned to the 3d Pennsylvania Battalion, but Brodhead was able to impress Washington with Brady's expertise in the type of warfare

taking place on the frontier, and General Washington allowed him to stay at Fort Pitt.⁸³

The two companies that were the remainder of the 8th Pennsylvania continued at Fort Pitt and in April 1783, returns⁸⁴ show a grand total of:

66 men	Captain John Finley's coy.
67 men	Captain John Clark's coy.

It is noteworthy that the returns list several men deserted as late as June and September of 1783. However, no information has come to light at this time for this final period, beyond a single return, March 1782, that reports 121 men in the Detachment of the Pennsylvania Line, at Fort Pitt.⁸⁵

The 8th Pennsylvania Regiment covered several thousand miles, fought in three theaters, and performed as line troops, rangers and riflemen, and partisans. Their dress varied through the war from civilian garb, to regimental uniforms, to Indian-style breechcloth and leggings. Their duties sometimes dictated their needs, and their needs often dictated what duties they could perform. At one point, their morale made them one of the least disciplined regiments in Washington's army, but they became one of the most valued units within the same year. While none of these factors are uncommon to the Continental regiments, the combination provided a unique unit in the American War of Independence.

The author would like to posthumously thank Clyde H. Pence for beginning my interest in the 8th Pennsylvania. I thank CMH Fellow James L. Kochan for generously sharing his research on the uniforms of the Western Department, and along with Henry M. Cook IV, for sharing their knowledge and research on the French contract uniforms. I would like to thank my wife, Marty Quinn Cairns, for proof reading and for allowing me to dedicate so much time to this project. Thanks to author Douglas Savage for his guidance on writing. Thanks to the members of the re-created 8th Pennsylvania Regiment, Brigade of the American Revolution, for their continuous encouragement. Finally, thanks to Alan H. Archambault, author and illustrator, without whom this article would never have happened.

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Ladies Day at the Fort

Joseph M. Thatcher

IN these days of high security and multi-layered safety regulations, it is difficult to recall the relaxed atmosphere on military posts and forts in the nineteenth century. The following article from the *Oswego Times* newspaper of 4 June 1850, illustrates just how different things were, as it describes a target firing exercise at Fort Ontario, New York.

Experimental gunnery at Fort Ontario

The annual target firing at the fort came off yesterday. Company F, of the 4th Regiment, commanded by Col. Bliss in the Mexican campaign, is stationed here. The fortress is now in command of Col. Wright, also a veteran soldier and an accomplished officer in the service. Both himself and Capt. Judah, second in command at Fort Ontario, were with Gen. Scott, on the march from Vera Cruz to Mexico, and participated in most, if not all the severe engagements. The target yesterday was placed about three quarters of a mile out in the lake [Lake Ontario], and a battery of 18 and 12 pounders brought to bear upon it. The pieces were under the command of Capt. Judah and Lt. Underwood, aided by a veteran in the service, Sergeant Brown. The target was struck a number of times, and

once or twice the ball was sent directly through the “Bull’s eye”. It is but just to remark that these close shots were made by ladies, who stood at the guns and discharged the pieces by the percussion lock. The shrill whistle of the balls was almost equal to that of a locomotive, and they might be seen as they glanced along the surface of the lake for the distance of two or three miles. From the high ramparts of the fort, with the vast lake, dotted with white sails, spread out in the calmness before the eye, the scene was inimitably grand and beautiful.

It is unclear whether the ladies who fired the guns were wives of the fort’s officers, or visitors. Visitors were certainly allowed on post on a regular basis, as seen in photographs and engravings of the period. The use of the percussion lock is also noteworthy, as the friction primer was soon to replace the percussion system for all land based artillery. One must wonder at the reaction of the vessels on the lake when the fort’s guns suddenly boomed and sent shot several miles out into the water.

Detained a Prisoner ... and Then Released: The Revolutionary War Adventures of Nathan Pushee

Todd W. Braisted

CAN one loyally and faithfully serve both sides in a conflict? In the confusing and dangerous period of the American Revolution, many did just that. Nathan Pushee of Massachusetts was one of those people.

Descendants of United States Revolutionary War soldiers often rely on the thousands of pension applications residing in the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, D.C. The national pensions for surviving soldiers were awarded through different acts of Congress, starting in 1818, first to destitute Continental soldiers, then to most soldiers, and finally to widows. The pension applications often detail military service, including regiment and company served in, when served, in what battles engaged, and other minutiae, not to mention genealogical information such as date and place of birth, marriage, children, and residency. At face value, the pension applications can give descendants almost everything they need. However, the question must be asked. How accurate or truthful are these records?

Each applicant needed to swear an oath (or affirm) that his information was accurate and correct. Usually witnesses were produced to corroborate testimony, whether whole or in part. Records were occasionally checked. In an age before microfilm, photocopies, and the internet, how much factual checking could the government do?

Nathan Pushee appears to have been a model patriot for the first five years of the war, as his October 1838 pension application seems to attest. It is transcribed here verbatim:

Declaration
in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress
passed June 7, 1832.

State of Massachusetts }
Suffolk County } ss:

On this sixth day of October 1838, personally appeared before the Honorable Peter O. Thacher Judge of the Municipal Court of the City of Boston in said County and state of Massachusetts in open Court Nathan Pushee now resident at Boston in the County of Suffolk in Massachusetts, lately resident at Antigonish in the County of Sydney in Nova Scotia

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aged 80 years who first being duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following Declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress passed June 7th 1832.

That he was born at Lunenburg in Massachusetts and Enlisted in April 1775 as a private for the term of Eight months at Cambridge in Capt. [Phineas] Cook’s Company in Col. Gardner’s Regiment of Massachusetts Troops and served the whole term: he was engaged in the Battle of Bunker Hill in which his Col. Gardner was Killed, and Col. Bond afterward commanded the Regiment.

In January 1776 he again enlisted as a private for a year in the same Regiment [now called the 25th Continental Regiment] in Capt. [Nathan] Fuller’s Company under the Col. [William] Bond, & served in it till March 1776 when he & three others of the Company were drafted into Gen. Washington’s Foot-Guard [i.e. the Commander in Chief’s Life Guard] under Capt. [Caleb] Gibbs & Lt. Lewis: he marched with the army from Boston to New York, & served out the year there and in New Jersey and Pennsylvania and was guarding Washington’s baggage at the time of the battle of Trenton.

In January 1777 he enlisted for Three years as a private in Capt. Geo. Lewis’s Company of Horse in Col. Geo: Baylor’s Regiment of Virginia Horse, at Newtown in Pennsylvania, and was engaged at the Battles of Germantown & Monmouth & Brandywine, and was present at the massacre of Paoli where Maj. [Alexander] Clough was Killed with many of the Company: he served out all this enlistment, part of the time as private & then was made trumpet major.

In Decr. 1779 he again enlisted for during the war as Trumpet major in Capt. Lewis’s Company in Col. Wm. Washington’s Regiment of Horse in the Virginia Line, marched to South Carolina & served till he was taken prisoner at the Battle of Monk’s Corner and detained prisoner Eleven months till he escaped, but was not exchanged till Peace.

He never had a written discharge: Capt. Carter [identity uncertain], he thinks, was his Captain part of that time in Baylors or Washington’s Regiment. He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present & he declares that his name is not on the Pension Roll of any agency in any State.

Nathan Pushee

And the said Court do hereby declare their opinion that the above named applicant was a Revolutionary Soldier & proved as he states.

Peter O. Thacher Judge of the Municipal
Court of the City of Boston

Pushee was somewhat confused as to where his regiment was cut up by British light infantry, it being in September 1778 at Old Tappan, New Jersey, rather than September 1777 at Paoli, Pennsylvania. British Maj. Gen. Charles Grey commanded at both of those actions.

The most interesting, and contradictory, sentence in the pension application states he was “detained prisoner Eleven months till he escaped, but was not exchanged till Peace.” Pushee’s claim does not make sense, since only those who remained in captivity or were released on parole could be exchanged. The Battle of Monck’s Corner took place on 14 April 1780, when the Continental cavalry was defeated by a Loyalist force consisting of the British Legion and American Volunteers, hoping to close