

# George Washington's Masonic Generals

A Thesis  
(Formatted for the Internet)

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In his book, George Washington: Master Mason, Allen E. Roberts states that “ Washington had expected to “fall” during the war. And well he might have such expectations. Some historians claim that a third of the colonists were Tories; it would appear this was an underestimation. At any rate, it was evident that not even half were wholeheartedly in favor of revolution.” Why, then, go to war with a nation that was a mighty power in the world, that had an experienced and well-trained militia, and that had a Navy that ruled the seas? More from Roberts: “Each colony was first of all for itself; this wouldn’t change when they became states... No two colonies were exactly alike economically, politically or even religiously. Each had something to lose in a break with England. There would appear to be little to gain except to be taxed by representatives of their own choosing.” Again, why go to war? And, how to go about it?

Hindsight tells us that the colonies were indeed unlike, independent and willing to support war to varying degrees. Was there one element where there was agreement or similarity? A look at the Generals who led and conducted the war under Washington offers, perhaps, one.

## **PREMISE**

Amazingly, of the 74 generals who were commissioned by the Continental Congress during the full extent of the war, 46% were Masons.

Would this fact provide the cohesion necessary to be successful in so great a struggle. Given the socio-economic environment in Colonial America, the foundation and structure of the Brotherhood at that period, and the supposed protective and close-knit nature of Freemasonry, could this exceptional number of Masonic Generals overcome the dissimilarity of the populace and, by extension, the armies they would command? If so, the premise should be that they were a homogeneous group drawn from the colonial aristocrats, well educated, highly principled, and loyal to Washington, their brother Mason and Commander-in-Chief.

## **BACKGROUND**

There were about 230,000 men engaged as Continental troops at various times from 1775-1783 (see Table 1). They were generally untrained when they reported for duty and some entered directly into battle (there were many Minutemen). Those who had prior military experience gained it under the British. In many cases these troops were highly independent, rugged backwoodsmen who fought when it pleased them and went home when they wished.

The war was a costly one and exhausting to the agrarian economy of most of the colonies. The per capita cost was \$123, which compares to the Civil War cost of \$96 per capita.

## **NATURE OF THE RESEARCH**

Each of Washington’s Masonic Generals was researched in detail using, principally, the resources of the U.S. Army Heritage Foundation in Carlisle, PA. This organization holds over 14 million items that document the history of the United States Army. The pertinent facts on each Masonic General follow.

## The Generals

### GENERAL BENEDICT ARNOLD

Born in Norwich, Connecticut, on January 14, 1741, Benedict Arnold was one of six children, three boys and three girls, and one of only two to survive early childhood. As a young boy, he is described as wild, reckless and mischievous (1). One of his favorite boyhood activities was to “cling to the paddles of the great water-wheel and be carried with them into the air and down beneath the water as they turned”(2). At age 12 he was sent to Canterbury Academy about 12 miles from Norwich and, as a teenager, was apprenticed to the Lathrop brothers who owned the largest drug store in town. His apprenticeship was short lived, for he soon ran away to join the New York Militia. He quickly deserted (3), but reenlisted one year later, then deserted again, to finish his apprenticeship. He seemed to be forever revolting against the restraints of a puritan life (4)

Upon the death of his father, Arnold moved to New Haven and used his inheritance to open a store as druggist and bookseller. He soon expanded into mercantile trading and owned a small fleet of ships trading with Europe (and, some sources say, smuggling). Arnold had become a Captain of a state militia unit, the Governor’s Foot Guards, and at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War marched his troops to Cambridge and soon convinced the authorities to give him command of an expedition to capture Fort Ticonderoga at Lake Champlain. He joined forces with Colonel Ethan Allan; they took possession of the Fort without bloodshed, and captured an immense quantity of ordnance and munitions (5).

In January 1776 Arnold was promoted to Brigadier General. Benedict Arnold’s Revolutionary War military feats and his dastardly deeds as traitor to his country are widely and expertly documented. Prior to his turning traitor, however, it should be noted that he served with bravery (he was wounded in battle when General Montgomery was killed) and demonstrated expert leadership traits. He was close to Washington and, in May 1777, he was promoted to Major General. At the opening of the campaign in June 1780, Washington offered Arnold command of the left wing of the Army, which, according to Arnold’s rank, was appropriate, but he declined, citing his wound at Saratoga, and Arnold asked for command of West Point thus setting the stage for dealing with the British.

Arnold’s initial wartime experience was “a paradigm of his full military career: skillful, even brilliant, battlefield leadership followed by quarrels over rank and suspect accounting. He repeated the pattern over and over”(6).

After his traitorous acts he fled to England but if he expected gratitude in England, he did not get it. The average Englishman was too honorable to treat Arnold’s action with anything but contempt (7). He did return to the New World one more time when he purchased a “quantity of goods which he brought to New Brunswick. The store and goods took fire and the whole were consumed – but, according to a report, they were insured to a much greater amount than their real value”(8) -- further evidence of his larcenous heart.

In 1791 Arnold returned to England and settled permanently in London. Benedict Arnold died 14 June 1801. On his deathbed he is reported to have said, “Bring me, I beg you, the epaulettes and sword-knots which Washington gave me; let me die in my old American uniform...God forgive me...for ever putting on any other”(9).

As to the Masonic activities of Benedict Arnold, Thatcher reports that it is “not clear where he became a Mason” but at least three sources state that he became a Mason while living in New Haven. Todd reports that he was elected in a local lodge of “Free-Masons and soon attained prominence in it”(10); Sherwin reports he was elected a Mason in New Haven after he expanded his business there (11); and Wallace says that “Nathan Whitting, nephew of Samuel Fitch, presented Benedict Arnold for membership in the Masonic Lodge” while at New Haven (12). Lastly, it is interesting to report that on July 16, 1777, Washington and Arnold visited a Masonic Lodge and signed their names to the record of the Lodge (from the writings of Washington, Vol. IV, page 500, as quoted by Arnold)(13).

1. Sherman, Benedict Arnold, Patriot and Traitor.
2. Todd, The Real Benedict Arnold.
3. Some sources say that his mother used influence to have him discharged and returned to her.
4. Sherman, op. cit.
5. Todd, op. cit.
6. Purcel, Who's Who in the American Revolution.
7. Sherman, op. cit.
8. americanrevolution.org
9. Arnold, Life of Benedict Arnold.
10. Todd, op. cit.
11. Sherman, op. cit.
12. Wallace, Traitorous Hero, The Life and Fortunes of Benedict Arnold.
13. Arnold, op. cit.

### **GENERAL HUGH MERCER**

Perhaps one of the most gifted and most experienced of Washington's Masonic Generals was Hugh Mercer of Virginia by way of Ireland and Pennsylvania. Born around 1720 in Aberdeen, Scotland, he was educated at the University of Aberdeen and became a physician and assistant surgeon in the Army of "Bonny Prince Charlie" in 1745. Mercer, who was trying to help Prince Charles reclaim the throne lost by his grandfather in 1688, was a large man with flaming red hair and a strong Irish accent. The fight lasted until April 16, 1746, when a crushing defeat of the Prince's army came at Culloden Moor. King George II was victor and Hugh Mercer became a hunted rebel. He was in hiding for a year before he arranged passage to the New World (1).

Mercer landed in Philadelphia in May 1747 and promptly moved to the beautiful Cumberland Valley where he set up a medical practice. After eight years at the edge of the wilderness he returned to war when he rushed to offer medical help to the survivors of Braddock's defeat in Western Pennsylvania. He served as Captain of the Pennsylvania Militia and soon laid down his scalpel and picked up arms himself. Along with John Armstrong, he led the Kittanning Expedition that wiped out most of the scalper's camps in Pennsylvania. During one of the raids, Mercer was shot in his right arm. He mustered out in 1761 and returned to medicine.

Having met George Washington during the French and Indian Wars, and being much impressed by him, Mercer moved to Fredericksburg, Virginia, and opened both an apothecary shop and medical practice. He also joined Fredericksburg Lodge No. 4, Washington's lodge.

In 1775, he joined the Continental Army as a Captain and was promoted to Brigadier General in June 1776 at Washington's request. He took part in the crossing of the Delaware and fought with honor at the Battle of Trenton.

On January 3, 1777, Mercer commanded a brigade at the Battle of Princeton when his horse was shot from under him. On foot, he drew his sword but was surrounded and bayoneted at least seven times (some say a dozen) (2), (3). He was taken to a field hospital where he was tended by both Benjamin Rush and by Cornwallis' personal physician. He lingered for nine days and died January 12, 1777. George Washington said of his loss, "...success at Trenton is offset by the death of the brave and worthy General Mercer."

At Mercer's funeral in Philadelphia there were 30,000 people in attendance. He was buried at Christ Church Burial Ground, Philadelphia and, later, moved to Laurel Hill Cemetery by the St. Andrew's Society. Mercer County, New Jersey; Mercer County, Pennsylvania; Mercer County, Kentucky; Mercer County, Illinois; and Mercer County, Ohio, are named in his honor (4).

1. Historypoint.org

2. Blanco, The American Revolution 1775-1783
3. Waterman, With Sword and Lance
4. Wikipedia.org

### **GENERAL MORDECAI GIST**

Mordecai Gist was a successful shipper and businessman who was born near Baltimore in Reisterstown on February 22, 1742, the same day, but not year, as Washington. He came from a wealthy family whose men fought in the French and Indian Wars. He was educated to be an Episcopal preacher but, in 1775, took part in forming the first unit to be raised in Maryland and was installed a Captain. In 1776 the 1<sup>st</sup> Maryland was sent to help Washington in New York and helped delay the British at Brooklyn Heights. He was promoted to Major and took part, successfully, at Long Island although the battle itself was mismanaged by Lord Stirling (William Alexander). Following the battle of White Plains he was made Colonel and transferred to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Maryland which he commanded at Germantown. Promoted to Brigadier General in 1779, Gist was sent to the South and was noted for conspicuous bravery and leadership at the Battle of Camden, S.C. (1).

General Gist spent the next few months in recruiting and gathering supplies then returned to battle and took part in driving the British from the Southern States. In 1783 he retired from the Army and purchased a plantation near Charleston, S.C., where he spent the remainder of his years (2). General Gist was the first Vice President of the Maryland Chapter of the Society of the Cincinnati. In January 1780 the first Masonic Convention Lodge in America was called and Gist was unanimously elected president. The order of business was to arrange for a "General Grand Master" over all Masons in the 13 states. General Washington was offered the position and declined.

Gist was made a Mason in Lodge No. 16, Baltimore, in 1775 and was Grand Master of South Carolina in 1791. The Annual Report of the Grand Lodge of Maryland for 1911 states, "On the 27<sup>th</sup> day of April, 1780, the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania granted a charter for Army Lodge No. 27 to the Masons of the Maryland Line in the Revolution. Its officers were General Mordecai Gist, Worshipful Master..."(3).

1. Builder Magazine, December 1920
2. Purcel, op.cit
3. Builder Magazine, December 1920

### **GENERAL JOHN NIXON**

John Nixon, a Brigadier General from Framingham, Massachusetts, was a leader of the Minutemen at Lexington and was wounded at Bunker Hill – a wound from which he did not fully recover. Nixon was born on March 4, 1725, and began his military career early. At age 20 he joined troops under Sir William Pepperell and served in the Provincial Army and navy for seven years before returning home. He joined the Army as a Captain soon thereafter and fought at Ticonderoga and at the Battle of Lake George in 1755. General Nixon was present at the capture of Trenton but he and his unit were unable to cross the Delaware on December 25, 1775, and thereby participate in the fighting himself.

Nixon was appointed Brigadier General on August 9, 1776, and served under General Gates in 1777. At the Battle of Saratoga as commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Massachusetts Regiment, he was in the thick of the fighting (1). A cannonball passed so near to him that he lost the sight in one eye and the hearing in one ear. Due to poor health he resigned on September 12, 1780, and returned to farming at Middleburg, Vermont, where he died on March 24, 1815. It is unclear where he became a Mason, but he visited Masonic lodges and was considered a Mason by his contemporaries (2).

Although Nixon was one of the few of Washington's Masonic Generals who had extensive military experience prior to the Revolution, he did not stand out as a leader among the Generals, nor did he have full command at any major battles.

1. Purcel reports that Nixon was only on the fringe of battle at Saratoga.
2. From Bissel.org

### GENERAL WILLIAM THOMPSON

One of Washington's Generals born in Ireland was William Thompson and, again, his age is difficult to determine. One source (1) reports "about 1725" and a second (2) says 1736. Exactly when he emigrated to America is also unknown, but he did come directly to Cumberland County,, where he settled on a farm near Carlisle. At a young age, estimated at 18 or 19, he was appointed a Lieutenant in Colonel John Armstrong's 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of Provincial forces and was ordered to Kittanning to help subdue the Indians who were savaging the settlers but, on an overnight bivouac, the Indians stole all of his horses, especially embarrassing for a leader of a group of mounted militia. On a mission to Fort Duquesne that lasted from April until December 1757 he was criticized by his commanding officer for the loss of horses, saddles and other equipment as his soldiers simply went home with them after the long ordeal. How he escaped court martial over this is unknown, but he remained an officer until February 17, 1758, when he resigned and returned to Carlisle. He soon thereafter acquired a contract to supply meat to the remote forts between Carlisle and Pittsburgh. He also bought an interest in thousands of acres near Fort Pitt and Fort Bedford, and elsewhere in southern Pennsylvania. He had established himself as a land speculator.

On June 25, 1775, Thompson obtained a commission in the Continental Army signed by Thomas Jefferson, but resigned as a result of a dispute with his superiors. The resignation was ignored (a common occurrence during the Revolutionary War) and on March 1, 1776, he was promoted to Brigadier General (3).

In Pennsylvania there were so many candidates for the six companies that Congress authorized for that state that an additional three companies were authorized and all nine were formed into a Battalion that was thereafter referred to as Thompson's Battalion. Edward Hand, later a Major General and also a Mason, was second in command (4).

On March 19, 1776, Thompson relieved General Charles Lee of command of the forces in New York and in April was ordered to Quebec to reinforce General John Thomas. He was captured on June 13 and, in August, paroled to Philadelphia. During his parole he could not take part in the war but the troubles with his superiors did not subside. He wrote a letter accusing American Congressman Thomas McKean of "delaying his exchange" and was censored by Congress for this act (5). He apologized in front of Congress. Thompson lost a civil suit for damages brought by McKean.

General Thompson was not exchanged until 1780 and did not take further part in the war. He died near Carlisle on September 4, 1781.

Thompson was a member of Royal Arch Lodge No. 3 in Philadelphia. The minutes of that Lodge show that "Thompson, a Modern Mason, approved for membership" December 3, 1778, and that a "Lodge of Emergency" was convened under dispensation of the Grand Master and was, "init, pass'd and rais'd, and paid dues of \$10" (6),(7).

1. Famousamericans.net
2. Blanco, op. cit.
3. General Washington was not in "strong support of this promotion."
4. Ward, The War of the Revolution.
5. Blanco, op.cit.
6. Ibid
7. Bullock, op.cit.

## GENERAL ISRAEL PUTMAN

Another farmer turned General was Major General Israel Putnam of Connecticut. Putnam, born 1718, was raised to Master Mason at Crown Point in a military lodge in 1758 at age 40. He was not well educated but had native ability and showed military prowess during the Seven Years' War. He was haunted by bad luck during his military career. In 1757 he was captured by a savage fighting on the French side, and bound to a tree between the opposing forces as musket balls flew continuously. Having survived that, a second savage threw a tomahawk into the tree near Putnam's head a number of times as a form of self-amusement. A French officer then approached putting his firearm to Putnam's breast but that weapon misfired. In frustration the Frenchman hit Putnam in the jaw with the butt-end of his weapon. After the English were driven from the field his original captor returned, untied him and turned him into a bearer of burden. That night it was decided to roast Putnam alive but a sudden downpour extinguished the fire. Putnam was relieved of this continuing torture by a French officer who insisted that he be treated according to his rank and he was eventually exchanged. He later survived a shipwreck off the coast of Cuba.

In 1760 he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War he was appointed a Major General in the Continental Army. His bad luck continued. He was involved in the disaster at the Battle of Long Island, was transferred to the Hudson Highlands, but was removed after he failed at Fort Clinton and lost Fort Montgomery to the British. He was accused of being unfit to command but was exonerated of the charge. (1)

There is no evidence that he played any substantive role in the remainder of the War. In 1779, during travel from recuperation leave in Connecticut, he suffered a stroke and he died in May 1790. In June 1783 Washington sent Putnam a letter in which he wrote, "I can assure you that, among many worthy and meritorious officers with whom I have had the happiness to be connected in service through the course of this war, ... the name of Putnam is not forgotten; nor will it be..." (2) Damning with faint praise from one Brother to another. According to Purcell, Israel Putnam "proved that personal courage and good will were no substitutes for military competence". (3) Putnam was buried with Masonic honors in 1790 at age 72.

1. Faragher, Encyclopedia of Colonial and Revolutionary America
2. Extract of a letter from General Washington to General Putnam, headquarters, 1 June 1783.
3. Purcell, op.cit.

## GENERAL RUFUS PUTMAN

The man known as "The Father of Ohio" also served Washington as a General. His name was Rufus Putnam and he was a cousin of Israel Putnam of Connecticut. Rufus Putnam was born in Sutton, Massachusetts in April 1738. His father died when Putnam was seven years old and he lived with his grandfather for two years. At age 14 he chose his brother-in-law as his guardian owing in part no doubt to his treatment by his stepfather. He recalled, "I was made a ridicule of, and otherwise abused for my attention to books" by a "very illiterate" stepfather (1), and at age 16 became an apprentice millwright (some sources say his mother apprenticed him at age 14). At age 19 he enlisted in the Army where he volunteered for a company of Rangers as a scout at Lake Champlain and later at Fort Edward under his cousin, Captain (later General) Israel Putnam.

At the beginning of the Revolutionary War he enlisted in the Continental Army and, due to his skill as a millwright, was assigned to construct fortifications at Roxbury, Providence, Newport, Long Island, West Point and New York City. General Washington appointed him as his engineer at the rank of Colonel in August 1776. Putnam left that role to command the 5<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts regiment in 1777 in the Northern Army and fought with distinction at the Battle of Stillwater. He joined his cousin in building fortifications

at West Point and was later to assume command of a regiment under General Anthony Wayne. In 1783 he was promoted to Brigadier General.

Following the Revolution he engaged in real estate speculation and continued in his role as surveyor. In 1786, with other Revolutionary War officers formed the Ohio Company Associates (the Ohio Co.) to purchase land in the Northwest Territory. The company bought 1,500,000 acres, paying about eight and one-half cents, per acre. He founded the town of Marietta, Ohio, and quickly emerged as a political leader in the territory. He was influential in the drafting of the Ordinance of 1787 which set up the government for the area north of the Ohio River from which five states were eventually formed. It provided the template for the subsequent Western Territories and marked the beginning of the westward expansion.

Putnam was named the first Surveyor General of the United States in 1796 but was removed by President Jefferson because his “work as a surveyor was poor...due to faulty mathematical skill” (2). As a member of the Ohio State Constitutional Convention in 1802. he was responsible for preventing slavery from being legal in Ohio. Putnam was the cofounder of Muskingum Academy, and was a Supreme Court judge of the Northwest Territory. Rufus Putnam was made a Mason in American Union Lodge in 1779, and served as a Master in 1794. He was a true Renaissance man. Putnam died in 1824 and was the last surviving General of the Revolutionary War save Lafayette.

1. Bullock, op.cit.
2. Purcell, op.cit.

#### **GENERAL BENJAMIN LINCOLN**

As has been seen, agriculture was the main occupation of a number of Revolutionary War generals, and Major General Benjamin Lincoln is no exception. Until he was more than 40 years old he was a farmer, not well schooled, though he had served in the state legislature. In 1776 he was a lieutenant colonel in the Massachusetts militia and, during that same year, was rapidly promoted through Brigadier to Major General. On Washington’s recommendation, the Continental Congress appointed him a Major General in the Continental Army. He had considerable tactical skill, an example of which is found at the Battle of Lake George, where his command surprised the enemy, liberated 100 American prisoners, and captured 293 enemy with only three killed and five wounded among his own troops. He served with distinction at Saratoga where he was severely wounded, at Stone Ferry in the Southern Command and at Charlestown where against a far superior force and dire lack of supplies he was forced to surrender. He was exchanged for Major General Phillips in November 1780. He was held in such high esteem that in October 1781 he was chosen by Congress as Secretary of War, retaining his military rank. In 1783 he resigned and returned to farming, but was called to service yet again in 1787 when he was elected Lieutenant Governor by the legislature. In 1793 he was one of the commissioners who helped affect a peace with the Western Indians. He was chosen President of the Society of the Cincinnati in 1783 and served until his death in May 1810 at age 77. He was widely respected as a man of faith, patriotism, and courage. (1)

General Lincoln was raised in the Lodge of St. Andrew, Boston, Mass., in 1781, and has a record of having attended Grand Lodge meetings.

1. americanrevolution.org

#### **GENERAL JOHN GREATON**

One of Washington’s Masonic Generals who was nearly a non-entity during the war was John Greaton. Born in Roxbury, Mass., in 1741, he was an innkeeper and “trader,” as was his father. He joined the Sons of Liberty in 1774 and that same year was made a lieutenant in the State Militia. In 1777 he was installed as a Lt. Colonel in the Continental Army and fought at Trenton and Princeton. Greaton served under General Arnold at Lake Champlain where his troops were stationed on the opposite shore from those from the South “because of intense jealousy and ill feelings between the Southern troops and those of New England.”(1). As Greaton moved south to join Washington, his regiment was ordered

to halt at Morristown and there, under Maxwell, to “distress the enemy by harassing them in their quarters and cutting off their conveys”(2).

More than harassing the enemy, Groaton harassed the Continental Congress with many missives regarding his pay, his lack of promotion and complaining of conditions in the Army in general. His further promotions were held up due to political conflict, and he was not promoted to Brigadier General until 1783, after the war had been over for many months(3). He retired November 3, 1783, and died one month later. Many books on the Revolutionary War do not even mention General Groaton. His entry into Freemasonry is reported by Bessel as being “not clear where or when he became a mason,” but Parker reports in the book, Military Lodges, that he was a charter officer of Berkshire Lodge #5 in Stockbridge. He is also reported to have been an officer in Masters Lodge, Albany, NY, in 1779 (4).

1. Ward, The War of the Revolution
2. Ward, General William Maxwell and the N.J. Continentals
3. Purcell, op.cit.
4. From www.bessel/org

### **GENERAL JAMES CLINTON**

Clearly a lesser light among an illustrious family was General James Clinton. He was born in Ulster, Orange County, New York, in 1733, and was educated at home. He was the brother of Governor George Clinton of New York, a Mason, who served as Vice President of the U.S. from 1805 to 1812, and father of that famous inventor, DeWitt Clinton, also a Mason. James was made a Colonel in the 3<sup>rd</sup> New York Regiment in June 1775 and fought in the expedition to Canada where he survived the disastrous attack of Quebec in December of that year. He distinguished himself at the Passes of the Highlands in New York where he led mostly untrained militia, and served under his brother, George, who commanded as Governor of the State and head of the militia which had been activated (interestingly the head of the British forces here was Sir Henry Clinton – making the battle known as the Battle of the Three Clintons) (1). In August 1776 he was promoted to Brigadier General. General James Clinton’s greatest contribution to the War was in his 1779 service under Sullivan against the Iroquois in upper New York State where he commanded 1500 men. In 1781 he went southward with General Washington to Yorktown during the siege of Cornwallis’ Army. Clinton was a member of Warren Lodge, Number 17, in New York. He was brevetted a Major General and, after the war, he sat on the New York Constitutional Convention when, according to Purcell (2), he voted against the Constitution because it did not, at that time, contain a Bill of Rights. According to Blanco, however, he “called for ratification of the Constitution at the New York convention” (3). Clinton died in Little Britain, New York, on December 22, 1812.

1. Boudreau and Bleimann, Washington in New York.
2. Purcell, op.cit.
3. Blanco, op.cit.

### **GENERAL ELIAS DAYTON**

Elias Dayton was one of Washington’s stalwart generals, not famous but reliable and skilled. Born in Elizabethtown (now Elizabeth), New Jersey, in July 1737, he was an apprentice mechanic who saw extensive service during the Seven Years’ War as an officer in the New Jersey Militia. Commanding a party of small boats he, in conjunction with Lord Stirling (William Alexander), captured a British provision ship off Sandy Hook on January 22, 1776(1). At age 40, he was made Colonel in the 3<sup>rd</sup> New Jersey Regiment and was instrumental in putting down the mutiny of the New Jersey line in 1781. Promoted to Brigadier General in 1783 he was in active service for the entire war, contrasting sharply with most general officers. Dayton had three horses shot from under him, one at Germantown, one at Springfield, and one at Crosswick’s Bridge. He was complimented for bravery at the Battle of Connecticut Farms under Maxwell in General Orders by General Washington. In 1777, Dayton took on added duty as spymaster for Washington when he took over a ring of spies who were gathering intelligence in New York City. He assumed leadership from the ring’s founder, Joshun Mersereau(2). He served with Washington at Yorktown where he commanded 1300 troops. After the war he returned to Elizabethtown and operated a general store. Dayton was a member of Militia Lodge Number 17, AYM, under

Pennsylvania, in 1780. He was a member of the New Jersey State Assembly and represented New Jersey in Congress in 1787/88. He died in October 1807 at age 70.

1. Blanco, op.cit.
2. Purcel, op.cit.

### **GENERAL GEORGE WEEDON**

Many of Washington's generals had at least some military experience, and George Weedon was one of them. Born in Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1734, he was commissioned an ensign in the state militia in 1755 and served with Washington's Virginia Regiment during the French and Indian War. He spent most of his time on garrison duty but rose to captain-lieutenant in 1760. During the period between the French and Indian War and the Revolution he operated a tavern in Fredericksburg (1).

At the beginning of the Revolutionary War, Weedon was commissioned a Lt. Colonel of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Virginia Regiment and, in 1776, was promoted to Colonel of the Regiment. He distinguished himself at the Battle of Harlem Heights and was acting Adjutant General of the Continental Army from January 13, 1777, to February 28, 1777. On February 21, 1777, he was promoted to Brigadier General. Weedon fought at Brandywine and Germantown and played an important role in both(2).

At the end of 1777 Congress reordered the seniority of Virginia generals and one junior to Weedon was placed above him on the list. This he took as a slight and he decided to resign. At Washington's request, Congress tabled the request but Weedon went home anyway. In 1778 Congress accepted Weedon's retirement petition with the proviso that they could call him back at any time(3). He was not recalled to the Continental Army but did serve as Commander of the Virginia Militia at Yorktown. Weedon was made a Mason in Port Royal Kilwinning Cross Lodge No. 2 in 1757 and affiliated with Fredericksburg Lodge No. 4 in 1767.

1. nps.gov/colo
2. Purcel, op. cit.
3. Ward, The American Revolution, Nationhood Achieved.

### **GENERAL JOHN GLOVER**

In sharp contrast to some of Washington's other less stellar Masonic generals, John Glover of Massachusetts was a remarkable man and officer. Born in Salem in November 1732, his family soon moved to Marblehead where he grew up. Glover was both a shoemaker and a fisherman. He went to sea as a young man and by the 1760's he owned three ships that sailed to Europe and the West Indies. In 1759 he was appointed an Ensign in the Third Military Foot Company, was a Captain by 1762 and rose quickly becoming a Colonel in 1775, commanding the Marblehead Militia Regiment. In June 1775 he and his men were ordered to Boston where he was selected by Washington to commission and man two small naval vessels, the beginning of Washington's Navy. The Navy was, as yet, unauthorized by Congress, but start it did. By October 1775 six vessels were ready to serve.

At the beginning of 1776 the Marblehead Regiment was converted to the 14<sup>th</sup> Continental Regiment and in July ordered to Long Island. British General Sir William Howe had severely pounded the American Army in the Battle of Long Island and was about to finish it off. Should Washington's Army be decimated it would probably mean the end of the Revolution (1). Glover organized and supervised the evacuation of 9,000 troops and their equipment, guns, horses, and cannons at night and in bad weather. Washington's faith in John Glover was well placed. In nine hours he had snatched total success from the hands of the British and Washington's men lived to fight another day. Glover's Mariners, mostly seamen and fishermen, again prevented Howe from trapping American forces, this time at Manhattan on September 15, 1776.

John Glover fought at White Plains and at Princeton. Due to his wife's ill health, he went home in December 1776 but rejoined the Army in June 1777 as a Brigadier General. Prior to traveling to the side of his wife, however, he and his 14<sup>th</sup> Continental Regiment ferried Washington and 2,400 men across the Delaware River in terrible weather and at night.

He then marched nine miles to Trenton, fought a 36-hour battle, and then marched back to the Delaware with 900 Hessian prisoners and crossed the river again.

Glover fought at Saratoga, was commander of Fort Arnold at West Point, and served with great distinction until his retirement in 1782. He was brevetted a Major General in 1783. General John Glover was made a charter member of Philanthropic Lodge of Massachusetts in 1760.

Following the war, he returned to Marblehead and restarted his business, then went on to serve in the Massachusetts Legislature for two terms. He died at the age of 64 in January 1797.

1. From [www.americanhistory.about.com](http://www.americanhistory.about.com)
2. Blanco, op.cit.

### **GENERAL JOHN STARK**

Yet another farmer, this one from New Hampshire, John Stark was engaged in some of the major battles of the Revolutionary War. Born August 28, 1728, in Londonderry his family moved to Derryfield (later Manchester) when he was eight years old. Stark was appointed a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in Roger's Rangers at the beginning of the French and Indian Wars. He was made a Freemason in Masters Lodge, Albany, in 1778.

Having served in the Militia at Crown's Point and Ticonderoga he had acquired valuable military experience in the Rangers, a rough and independent group. Even though he was a skilled military leader, he was made to feel inferior to the British and, after a dispute with his superiors, he returned home to further develop the family property (1).

The outbreak of hostilities at Concord and Lexington on April 15, 1775, marked the beginning of the Revolution and on April 23, 1775, Stark was commissioned a Colonel in the New Hampshire Militia and installed as commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> New Hampshire Regiment. Stark mustered his men and marched for Boston where he took up a position at Breed's Hill overlooking the harbor. The result was the Battle of Bunker Hill at which Stark's Regiment reinforced Colonel William Prescott's men who had survived a crushing bombardment from the 38 guns of the British frigate, *Lively*. On the Charlestown side there were several companies of men from other regiments milling around in disarray, afraid to march into range of the artillery fire (2). Stark told them to step aside and began an orderly march of his men to Prescott's position without one casualty. The British eventually took the hill but with such great cost that they could not hold it. When Washington arrived two weeks after the battle, he could place his cannon on the hill threatening the British fleet and forcing Howe to leave Boston and sail south.

Washington needed experienced leaders and, therefore, offered Stark a command within the Continental Army. Following Trenton and Princeton, Washington asked Stark to return to New Hampshire to recruit more men for the Army. Once home, Stark learned that while he was in battle in New Jersey, a fellow New Hampshire Colonel, Enoch Poor, had been promoted to Brigadier General. Poor had refused to march to Boston and reportedly had neither experience nor will to fight (3). This angered Stark and on March 23, 1777, he resigned his commission in disgust. Parenthetically, this happened to at least one other Revolutionary War general.

Four month's later, Stark was offered a Brigadiership in the New Hampshire Militia and he accepted on condition that he would not be answerable to the Continental Army. Brigadier General Philip Schuyler then ordered him to Saratoga. Stark refused and headed to Bennington to meet and engage the British. There, his force killed 207 and captured 700 while losing only 30 killed and 40 wounded (4). Stark's action at Bennington directly affected the outcome of the Battle of Saratoga a few month's later. Saratoga is seen as the turning point of the war. As a result, Stark became known as the "Hero of Bennington."

Stark was appointed a Brigadier General in the Continental Army in 1771 and joined Washington at the Battle of Short Hills in 1778. During the last part of the war, Stark sometimes took part and sometimes, during cold weather, went home to recover from bouts of rheumatism (5). This coming and going at will seems to have been somewhat common among Revolutionary War officers. He retired to his farm and in 1783 was brevetted a Major General (6).

Thirty-two years after the Battle of Bennington, John Stark was invited to speak at a gathering to commemorate the battle. Stark was too ill to travel but sent a message, "Live free or die. Death is not the worst of evils." The first four words became New Hampshire's official motto. John Stark died May 2, 1881. Stark had been made a Mason in Masters Lodge, Albany, N.Y. in 1778.

1. seacoast.com
2. wikipedia.org
3. Ibid
4. Ward, The American Revolution, Nationhood Achieved
5. seacoastnh.com
6. Marquis Who's Who in American History – The Military

#### **GENERAL HENRY KNOX**

When describing Major General Henry Knox of Massachusetts, Alden categorically states that he was a "fine artillery officer and nothing more". (1) Born July 25, 1750, the 7<sup>th</sup> of ten sons and one of four to survive infancy, Knox left school at age nine when his father died and his mother needed whatever Henry could earn in order to support the family. Knox became an apprentice in the Boston bookshop of John Wharton and Nicholas Bowes (2). On July 28, 1771 he opened his own shop, the *New London Book Store* in Boston. (3)

Mentored by John Adams, another Bostonian, Knox was a candidate for the position as Chief of Artillery for the Continental Army at the rank of a full Colonel. Although there was some resistance at this proposal Adams convinced General Washington of its merit and Knox got both the position and the rank. Prior to that, Knox had been elected an officer of a company of grenadiers at age 18. That company was so distinguished for its military precision and crisp appearance that it received the praise of a British officer of highest rank.(5)

Knox fought gallantly at Bunker Hill and soon convinced Washington, who was critically short of artillery, that he could go to Lake George and the forts along the Canadian frontier and bring back guns to aid in winning the battle of Boston. Washington had received this proposal without favor, but after an interview with the young Knox, he gave his consent and Colonel Knox left for the North. In November 1775 he traveled to Lake George and other outposts and returned with 42 sleds carrying 13 brass and 26 iron cannon plus eight brass and six iron mortars, two iron howitzers, 2,300 pounds of lead and a barrel of flints – all through the snow and ice of a frozen New England winter. Washington placed the artillery on Dorchester Heights on the night of May, 4 1776, and took a superior position overlooking Boston Harbor. The British fleet, on seeing the precarious position they faced the next morning, fled south.

Knox fought at Trenton and Princeton following which he was promoted to Brigadier General on December 27, 1776(6), Germantown and Monmouth, as well as Yorktown. In 1785 he was appointed as Secretary of War, a post he held for eleven years. He served in the State Legislature following federal service.

Knox and Baron von Steuben founded "the Order (sic) of the Cincinnati" immediately following the war. Knox served for years as its chief secretary (7). When war seemed probable with France in 1798 he was called to return to the Army but the threat passed and he returned to his home in Thomaston, Mass. His death in 1798 occurred when he accidentally

swallowed a chicken bone, causing an inflammation. It is not clear when Knox was made a Mason, but Bessel (8) reports that he visited Masonic lodges and Grand lodges and Fay states that he attended meetings at the “Temple of Virtue” with Washington and other Masons. (9)

Alden may have been right about Knox, he may have been just an artillery officer, but he was Washington’s artillery officer and he did the job Washington wanted done.

1. Alden, John R., A History of the American Revolution
2. Thompson, John Mark, Citizens and Soldiers: Henry Knox
3. Callahan, North, Henry Knox: General Washington’s General
4. Ibid
5. From: [www.americanrevolution.com](http://www.americanrevolution.com)
6. Brooks, Henry Knox, A Soldier of the Revolution
7. Alden, Op. Cit.
8. From: [www.Bessel.org](http://www.Bessel.org)
9. Fay, Revolution and Freemasonry, 1680 – 1800

#### **GENERAL OTHO WILLIAMS**

Otho Holland Williams was born in Prince George County, Maryland, in March 1747(1),(2), and was orphaned at age twelve. He worked in the town clerk’s office in both Baltimore and Frederick, Maryland. In 1775 he joined a rifle corps in Frederick County as a Lieutenant and marched for Boston. At Fort Washington in 1776, Williams was serving as a Major when he was wounded and taken prisoner. The British took him to New York where he was released on parole. He was reapprehended when the British discovered that he was passing military information secretly to Washington, a violation of his parole. Williams was thrown into prison where he was ill treated. He was not exchanged for 15 months.

On release, he assumed command of the 6th Maryland Regiment and took part in the Battles of Monmouth and Camden. General Gates named him deputy adjutant general, and Nathaniel Green, who had replaced Gates, named Williams adjutant general of the Southern Army.

Williams was promoted to Brigadier General in 1782, near the end of the war and served as Naval Officer (collector of the port) until his death in July 1794. Williams was made a Mason in American Union Lodge at Roxbury, Massachusetts, 1776, and was later an officer in Maryland Lodge No. 27, 1780.

1. Purcel, op. cit.
2. [historycentral.com](http://historycentral.com) gives his birth date as 1749 and date of death as 1800.

## **GENERAL JAMES M. VARNUM**

James Mitchel Varnum, born in Drucat, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, on December 17, 1748, was well educated and known as a polished and gracious orator and a man with most brilliant eloquence. He first studied at Harvard, but was expelled and moved on to Rhode Island College (later Brown University). He graduated in the first graduating class at Brown and established a successful law practice in East Greenwich, Rhode Island. He was admitted to the bar in 1771(1).

He was commissioned a Colonel in the Kentish Guards Militia in 1774, and of Varnum's Rhode Island Regiment in 1775. He helped in laying siege to Boston after the battles of Lexington and Concord in May 1775. He became a Colonel in the 9th Continental Regiment in 1776 and was promoted to Brigadier General on February 21, 1777. Varnum was part of General Lee's Division at Monmouth. Following a mutiny of his brigade in early 1779, he resigned his commission and returned to Rhode Island to practice law.

Varnum served in the Continental Congress twice, 1780-82 and 1786-87(2). In 1787 he was appointed a Judge of the United States Court in the Northwest Territory and moved to Marietta, Ohio, where he died on January 10, 1789.(3)

It is not clear where Varnum was made a Mason, but he attended Masonic Lodges, was accepted as a Mason by his peers, and was buried with full Masonic honors. He was the charter vice president of the Rhode Island Chapter of the Society of the Cincinnati and its second president.

1. Purcel, op. cit.
2. [bioguide.congress.gov](http://bioguide.congress.gov)
3. Meyers, Liberty Without Anarchy

## **GENERAL PETER MUHLENBERG**

John Peter Muhlenberg, son of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (1711-1787) who created the first Lutheran Synod in America, was born in Trappe, Pennsylvania on October 1, 1746. As was the custom among German families in those days, most male children were named John and later dropped the first name in favor of another, thus Peter Muhlenberg. He received his preliminary education at the Academy of Philadelphia and was sent to Halle, Germany, to study theology at his father's alma mater. He was examined and licensed to preach in June 1769 by the Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania (1).

He moved to Woodstock, Vermont, in 1772 but, in accordance to tradition, was required to go to England to be ordained an Episcopal priest before he could collect tithes from his flock.

Muhlenberg was a friend of George Washington and became a Colonel in the Army. In 1776 he preached his last sermon and, as the story goes, he ended his sermon with the words, "There is a time for all things – a time to preach and a time to pray; but there is also a time to fight, and that time has now come." He threw off his clerical garb, revealing his Colonel's uniform and encouraged his congregation to follow him. Three hundred reportedly responded and the 8<sup>th</sup> Virginia Regiment, or "German Regiment" was formed (2).

In February 1777 Muhlenberg was made a Brigadier General and he performed well at Brandywine and Germantown, and was at Monmouth, but did not see action there (3). He served under von Steuben and Lafayette in Virginia and, in 1783, was brevetted a Major General, just before he was mustered out of the Army.

Following the war, he returned to Philadelphia to become a three term U. S. Congressman and was elected a Senator in 1801, but soon resigned to become Customs Collector in Philadelphia, a Jefferson appointment. Muhlenberg served as Vice President of the Commonwealth during Ben Franklin's term as President of the Commonwealth (4).

Peter Muhlenberg died in 1807. He, like General William Thompson, was a member of the Royal Arch Lodge No. 3 in Philadelphia.

1. Hocker, The Fighting Parson of the Revolution.
2. Sr. Mason – SJ.org/Journal.
3. Purcel, Op.Cit.
4. Ibid

### **GENERAL SAMUEL PARSONS**

Born in 1737 in Lyme, Connecticut, but moved to Newburyport, Massachusetts at age nine, Samuel Holden Parsons graduated from Harvard in 1756 at age 19, and returned to Connecticut to study law under his uncle, former Governor Matthew Griswold. Parsons was admitted to the bar in 1859 and settled in Lyme. Three year's later he was elected to the Connecticut General Assembly where he served for 18 consecutive sessions (1). He was a member of Connecticut's Committee of Correspondence and was one of the first to call for the organization of the Continental Congress. (One source gives him credit for originating the plan of forming the Congress (2)). He was appointed a King's attorney in 1773 and moved to New London, Connecticut. Like many politicians, Parsons held a position as a militia leader and was installed as a Major in the 14<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Militia Regiment in 1770. Five years later, on April 26, 1775, he was promoted to Colonel and joined the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment at Roxbury (3).

In June of 1775 Parsons was ordered to Boston where he fought at Bunker Hill. He stayed in Boston until the British left in March 1776. While on a trip to Hartford he met Benedict Arnold who was on his way to Massachusetts and obtained from him intelligence about the British fortifications of Fort Ticonderoga, including the number of cannons there. Without formally consulting his superiors, the assembly, or the governor, he raised funds and set out to capture the Fort. He sent a letter to Ethan Allen asking him to raise a force of New Hampshire volunteers. Allen met Parson's troops and took command. They, subsequently, captured the Fort.

Parsons became a strong opponent of the Continental Congress after the government bonds he purchased became valueless (4). In the summer of 1776, Parsons was promoted to Brigadier General. His major battlefield experience was at Long Island where he demonstrated exceptional bravery, but little tactical acumen(5). Due to ill health and, perhaps, his financial troubles, Parsons repeatedly threatened to resign and often asked that leave be granted him, but his requests were ignored.

Parsons' ill will toward the government convinced William Heron, a double agent working for both the British and the Americans, to try to get Parsons to switch his loyalties. Once source (6) reports that he steadfastly refused; another (7) reports that recently disclosed correspondence reflects that Parsons was guilty of treason.

In October 1780, Parsons was promoted to Major General and helped put down the mutinies of soldiers in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. In July 1782, following the British surrender at Yorktown, Parsons tendered his resignation. He had served continuously since the alarm at Lexington in 1775. He was 45 years old, broken physically and financially (8).

Parsons became involved in the Ohio Company in 1786 and took advantage of land grants offered officers. Parsons was granted 24,000 acres of land in the Ohio territory(9). In October 1787 the Confederation Congress appointed him, James Varnum (another Mason), and John Cleves Symmes, as the first judges in the Northwest Territory. He moved from

Connecticut to Marietta, Ohio, in April 1788. The next year Parsons traveled to the Connecticut Western Reserve, having invested money in the Connecticut Land Company. On the return trip to Marietta, Parsons was drowned in a canoe accident on the Big Beaver River in Ohio.

Parsons became a Mason in American Union Lodge in 1776 and was Master of that Lodge in 1779, and of St. John's Lodge No. 2 in Middletown, Connecticut in 1783.

1. [warmuseum.net/revolutionarywarhall/](http://warmuseum.net/revolutionarywarhall/)
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. [Ohiohistorycentral.org](http://Ohiohistorycentral.org)
5. Purcel, op.cit
6. [Ohiohistorycentral.org](http://Ohiohistorycentral.org)
7. [warmuseum.net](http://warmuseum.net)
8. [wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org)
9. Blanco, op.cit

#### **GENERAL JOHN PATERSON**

General John Paterson is described by Purcel as a relatively undistinguished field officer who spent most of the war on the sidelines. Born in Wethersfield, Connecticut, in 1744, Paterson graduated from Yale in 1762 and practiced and taught law where he lived in Lenox, Massachusetts. He was a member of the first Provincial Congress which met in Salem in October 1774.

In 1775 Paterson joined a regiment of Minutemen that marched for Boston and built the first defenses on the American line at Charleston. Although present at Breed's Hill and Bunker Hill, he and his men were in the rear and saw little action. When the British left Boston in March 1776, Paterson's Regiment was ordered to New York and then to Canada to reinforce General Benedict Arnold. Retreating from Canada they moved to Crown Point where they remained until November 1776. They then joined Washington's men at Newtown, Pennsylvania. His regiment participated at Trenton and Princeton and he was made a Brigadier General on February 21, 1777(1).

Paterson was at Ticonderoga and Saratoga, but his troops saw little action. At Stillwater he performed "efficient service" and, later, participated in the defeat of British General John Burgoyne. He was not mustered out until the end of the war. Paterson is not mentioned in most books on the war.

In October 1779 the brothers of Massachusetts petitioned the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts for a warrant to hold a traveling lodge and on October 6, 1779, it was granted. John Paterson was its Master and Washington Lodge No. 10 was born. This lodge met in the "Temple of Virtue" at Newburgh, New York, during 1782-83. In January 1783, Paterson was present at a meeting to discuss the formation of the Society of the Cincinnati. Also present were Generals von Stuben, Howe, Knox and Hand. Paterson served as the Vice President of the Massachusetts Society in 1785 and 1786(2).

After the war, Paterson returned to Lenox and took up law. He was a part of the ownership of the Ohio Company and served in the New York Legislature after moving to Tioga County. He was a judge at the end of his life on July 19, 1808(3).

1. Purcel, op.cit
2. Egleston, The Life of John Paterson, Major General, in the Revolutionary Army.
3. famousamericans.net/johnpatterson/

### **GENERAL von STEUBEN**

Baron Frederick von Steuben was man of many names. He was born November 15, 1730, in Magdeburg as Friedrich Wilhelm Ludolf Gerhard Augustin von Steuben, was primarily known in America as Friedrich (or Frederick) Wilhelm Augustus von Steuben and, later, he changed his name to Friedrich Wilhelm August Heinrich Ferdinand.

Frederick was one of ten children born to his parents and only three, two sons and one daughter, survived to adulthood. While in Russia he lost five siblings (1). Von Steuben lived most of his adolescent life in Russia and, at age ten, returned to Germany with his father. Jesuits at Neisse and Breslav schooled him and by 17 he was an officer in the Prussian military (2). He came from a family of soldiers and the military was to be his life also. His experience as a General Staff member in the Prussian Army gave him training that he could have gotten in no other Army and put him in perfect position to be of incalculable worth to someone like Washington(3).

The training von Steuben received under Frederick the Great enabled him to distinguish himself with brilliant military expertise. He was a master at instilling military discipline and advanced rapidly in the Prussian Army, becoming an ensign in 1749, second lieutenant in 1753, and first lieutenant in 1755(4). At age 33 he was discharged as a captain and the following year received his "Baron" title. Von Steuben was deeply in debt and tried to recover by serving in foreign armies in Austria, Baden and France. While in France he obtained a letter from Benjamin Franklin introducing him to Washington.

On September 26, 1777, he arrived in Portsmouth, NH, traveled to Boston, then to York, PA, where Congress was meeting. On February 23, 1778, von Steuben reported to Washington at Valley Forge. The condition of the Army there is well known and here it was that von Steuben began to work his miracle. He spoke no English but did have some command of French, thanks to his Jesuit education. Von Steuben gave orders in French, his aide then issued them in English. He slowly, but steadily, brought order, discipline and control to the ragged Army. He established standards for camp layout and sanitation, drilled the troops, taught them to use a bayonet, and wrote a book of regulations for American troops. He was to establish a reputation as the best general in the American Revolutionary War Army after Washington and Greene (5).

Von Steuben became an American citizen by act of the Pennsylvania legislature in March 1784 and was discharged from the Army with Honor on March 24, 1784. He established residence in New York where he died a bachelor in 1794. Later in 1794 the town engineer designed a road over his grave and on November 26 that year his coffin was laid bare during road construction and the body exposed. His former aide, Colonel Benjamin Walker, was summoned and the body removed to a grave on a nearby hillside (6).

Baron von Steuben was made a Mason in Germany, was a member of Trinity Lodge No. 10 (now 12) in New York and, later, affiliated with Holland Lodge No. 8.

1. Palmer, General von Steuben.
2. Doyle, Frederick William von Steuben and the American Revolution.

3. ushistory.org
4. Kapp, Life of Frederick William von Steuben
5. Roberts, op. cit.
6. Greene, The German Element in the War of American Independence.

#### GENERAL RICHARD MONTGOMERY

One of the Revolutionary War's Masonic Generals who had the potential to be a truly great leader was Richard Montgomery. Born December 2, 1738, at Conway House in Northern Ireland, Montgomery was the son of a Baronet. Educated at Trinity College (June 15, 1754), where he bought many books, telescopes, a barometer, and other scientific equipment. In some of his letters to friends and family, he quoted in Latin (4). He was a man of letters and great things were expected of him. He became a soldier in the British Army at age 17. He was "tall, slender, and graceful, yet strong, active and capable of long endurance and hardships."(1). Montgomery was aggressive in action with cool judgment and never negligent, never avoiding danger. He was "the complete soldier" (2). During the siege of Louisburg, gateway to the St. Lawrence from the Atlantic, Montgomery showed such heroism and military skill that he was promoted to Lieutenant on July 10, 1758.

Montgomery fought at Ticonderoga and Crown Point in 1759. By age 26 he was a Captain and held that rank for ten years. In 1772 he resigned as the peacetime Army held few opportunities for him. He moved to New York and became a gentleman farmer (3). Montgomery was studious, preferring the scholarly life to that in camp.

At the beginning of the Revolutionary War, Congress appointed him Brigadier General in the Continental Army and second in command for the coming invasion of Canada. When General Schuyler fell ill, Montgomery took command and led the troops into Canada.

At Cape Diamond at the lower end of Quebec, close to the St. Lawrence River, near a place called "Lower Town," Montgomery led a small band up to a dwelling on a narrow lane. Inside the house were a corporal with eight British militiamen, a captain with 30 French Canadians, a ship captain named Adam Barnsfair, and nine sailors. John Coffin, a Boston Tory, was with them. Because of the narrow passage, Montgomery's men were slow to approach the building. He called to them, "Come on, your General calls you."(6). Coffin encouraged the British to hold their fire until the Americans should come closer. Montgomery in the lead, Aaron Burr at his side, and about a dozen men pushed forward. At the last moment, from within the house, four small guns, three pounders, poured out grapeshot and bullets. Montgomery was dead, shot through the head and both thighs by three balls. Burr and one or two others got away. All others perished (7),(8).

Of Washington's 13 generals elected by Congress at the very beginning of the War, "some were mere *sabreures*, many incompetent, and several effete from sickness or old age; only two – Schuyler and Greene" (not Masons) "could be compared to Montgomery and neither were his superior in character, attainments, or military experience(9).

Montgomery is generally "presumed to have been a member of Lodge of Unity, No. 18, under Irish Registry in the 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot – he was accepted by his contemporaries as being a Freemason."(10).

Montgomery's potential, had he lived, is easy to estimate. He was highly regarded by all with whom he served. He was one of Washington's most experienced generals; he was brave, and he was well educated. His loss was a great blow to the young nation aborning and, had he survived, he would probably have been a General of even greater vision and value to his country.

1. Ward, The War of the Revolution.
2. Ibid.

3. Cullum, Biographical Sketch of Maj. Gen. Richard Montgomery.
4. Gabriel, Major General Richard Montgomery.
5. historycentral.com/bio/
6. Ward, op.cit.
7. Ibid.
8. Shelton, General Richard Montgomery.
9. Cullum, op.cit.
10. bessel.org

### **GENERAL JOHN SULLIVAN**

John Sullivan was born February 18, 1740, at Somersworth, New Hampshire. He was educated by his father, a common occurrence at that period, and read law with Samuel Livermore from 1758 to 1760(1).

In 1772, at age 31, he held a commission as a Major in the provincial forces. Two years later, he was a member of the

Provincial Assembly of New Hampshire and a delegate to the Continental Congress (2). Sullivan had financial success as a lawyer, but sought military glory and, in 1776, he was appointed a Brigadier General in the American Army. Sullivan, along with Thomas Pickering, planned an attack at Fort William and Mary in Portsmouth Harbor, one of the first acts of hostility against the British (3).

In 1776 Sullivan was ordered to Canada and, at the death of General John Thomas, took command of his forces. In August 1776 he, along with Major General Lord Stirling, was captured in the Battle of Long Island. In September Sullivan, now a Major General himself, was exchanged for British Major General Prescott. He next fought with valor at Trenton (4).

At Brooklyn Heights, General Washington was dissatisfied with Sullivan's performance and a court of inquiry was ordered to evaluate his performance. The result was an honorable acquittal (5). In the Fall of 1777 he performed so bravely at Brandywine and Germantown that General Washington, in a letter to Congress, concluded by commenting on the gallantry of General Sullivan.

The Indian massacres at Wyoming in Pennsylvania (1779) were answered by a campaign led by General Sullivan. Ninety miles of horrid, swampy wilderness did not stop Sullivan and his troops and they were successful, in general, in containing the Indians. At the end of that campaign, Sullivan resigned his commission due to ill health and returned to New Hampshire. He was President of New Hampshire for three terms and enjoyed financial success as a lawyer once again. He was also the owner of several slaves(6).

On July 8, 1789, he was present at a convention that met in Portsmouth for the purpose of forming a Grand Lodge. Sullivan was elected Grand Master but he had never served as a Worshipful Master. St. John Lodge in Portsmouth agreed to elect him as Worshipful Master and did so December 3, 1789. He was initiated December 28 and on April 8, 1790, he was installed as Grand Master (8).

In September of 1789, Sullivan was appointed a judge of the District Court for New Hampshire, a post he held until his death in 1795.

1. Whittemore, A General of the Revolution.

2. Armory, The Military Services and Public Life of Major General John Sullivan.
3. Ibid.
4. famousamericans.org
5. Ibid.
6. Whittemore, op.cit.
7. Roberts, Freemasonry in American History.
8. Ibid.

### **GENERAL WILLIAM MAXWELL**

Known as “Scotch Willie” most of his life, William Maxwell was born in Ireland of Scottish parents about 1733. At the time, his family lived in Newton Stewart, County Tyrone, and Willie was the oldest of four children. His family moved to New Jersey when he was a young boy, where he had a rural education and became a farmer. At age 21 he joined the British Army and was present at Braddock’s defeat in 1755. He later purchased a commission as an ensign in John Johnston’s New Jersey Regiment and fought at Ticonderoga. Following the French and Indian Wars he remained in the British service until 1774. He returned to New Jersey a 20-year veteran.

When the Revolutionary War began he was a member of the Continental Congress from New Jersey and received a commission as Colonel of the 2<sup>nd</sup> New Jersey Battalion on November 8, 1775. Purcel (1) describes him as an “undistinguished officer who nonetheless served in responsible commands during most of the war.” He participated in the Canadian invasion, one that was already lost when he joined it. While there, however, he was promoted to Brigadier General. He reportedly performed indifferently during the New Jersey campaign of 1776-77 due to alcoholism.

Maxwell commanded a New Jersey brigade at Brandywine and Germantown and was charged with incompetence, inactivity, and drinking. The charge was not substantiated, (but neither could innocence be proven) and he retained his command. He played an important role in the Battle of Monmouth after which he was left to “annoy the enemy’s rear in their retreat toward Sandy Hook” (2). Maxwell was discontented with his rank and treatment by the Army and he submitted his resignation expecting Congress to ignore it as it had others. To his surprise, his resignation was accepted in July 1780.

“Scotch Willie” was a tall, ruddy man, who never married, and had no family. In spite of his problems after Germantown and his recurring drinking, Washington described him as an “honest, warm friend to his country and firmly attached to her interests” (3). Maxwell was a member of Military Lodge No. 19, AYM, under Pennsylvania warrant. He died November 14, 1796.

1. Purcel, op.cit.
2. famousamericans.net
3. Blanco, op.cit.

## **GENERAL JAMES HOGUN**

Not a great deal is known of the early history of James Hogun of North Carolina. He was a native of Ireland who came to Halifax County, NC, about 1751, where his neighbors elected him as a delegate to the Provincial Congresses and the Constitutional Convention. He was enthusiastically in favor of independence(1). In 1776 he was appointed a Major in the Halifax County Militia and in November 1776 was commissioned a Colonel in the 7<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Regiment(2). Hogun led North Carolina troops at Brandywine and Germantown and, such was his demonstrated bravery, that Washington promoted him to Brigadier General January 1779

Hogun assumed command of the garrison of Philadelphia from Benedict Arnold but, in November, was ordered south to the relief of Charlestown. After a three-month march through heavy snow and extreme cold, Hogun and his troops arrived on March 3, 1780. General Lincoln, a Mason who had relieved General Robert Howe, permitted his and Hogun's men to be bottled up by the British and they were captured (3). Hogun's force had been reduced to about 700 men when they were imprisoned at Haddrell's Point May 12, 1780. Hogun was wounded during the Battle of Charlestown and was offered parole to return home, but refused to leave his men. He died in prison, probably of starvation or disease, in January 1781.

1. townofhobgood.com
2. Purcel, op. cit.
3. digital.lib.ecu

## **GENERAL JETHRO SUMNER**

Born in Virginia in 1735(1), Jethro Sumner's parents had emigrated from England and his father, William, settled near Suffolk,, VA, about 1690. Sumner served in the Virginia Militia during the French and Indian Wars, and then moved to North Carolina where he was active in local politics. Elected to the Provincial Congress in August 1775, he was soon appointed a Major in the Halifax County Militia (2) as was James Hogun, another eventual Masonic General. In fact, Sumner and Hogun nearly mirror each other's military careers. Sumner led a regiment at Brandywine and at Germantown, then wintered at Valley Forge. He was promoted to Brigadier General in January 1779, as was Hogun.

Sumner fought at Stono Ferry, SC, and when General William Smallwood was given command of all North Carolina troops in October 1780, Sumner refused to serve under him until General Nathaniel Greene urged him back in February 1786. Sumner commanded three North Carolina Regiments at the Battle of Eutaw Springs September 8, 1781, where he made a bayonet charge, a somewhat unusual, although not unknown, event during the Revolutionary War (3).

For the remainder of the war he was active in keeping the Tories in check in North Carolina(4),(5).

Sumner died in Warren County, NC, about 1790. Jethro Sumner held offices in Blandfort Bute Lodge in North Carolina, including Treasurer in 1766.

1. famousamericans.net says Sumner was born "about 1730."
2. Blanco, op. cit.
3. famousamericans.net
4. There are many letters sent between General Sumner and General Gates, his superior, on file in the State Records of North Carolina and they are available at tradingford.com.
5. Purcel, op. cit, reports that Sumner saw little action during this time.

## GENERAL EDWARD HAND

Edward Hand was born December 31, 1744, at Clydaff, King's County, Ireland, and studied medicine at Trinity College in Dublin (1). Rather than submit to the requirement of a five-year apprenticeship required for surgeons in Ireland, he joined the British Army as a surgeons mate and sailed for America with the 18<sup>th</sup> Royal Irish Regiment, arriving July 11, 1767. He purchased, for 400 pounds, a commission as an ensign in 1772(2).

Hand left the British Army in 1774 and settled in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where he began the practice of medicine. When the Revolutionary War began he was made a Lt. Colonel in the Pennsylvania Riflemen. Under his leadership the Pennsylvania Riflemen "were regarded as one of the Armies (sic) best fighting units" (3). Hand was a soft-spoken man who was polite but firm with the troops.

In August 1775, Hand marched his troops over 400 miles to Boston. These men were, primarily, backwoodsmen in leather leggings and armed with Pennsylvania long rifles, many made in Lancaster (4). In March 1776, Hand was promoted to Colonel and placed in charge of the riflemen of the 1<sup>st</sup> Continental Regiment.

In January 1777, Hand held off Cornwallis, allowing Washington a victory over a smaller force at Princeton, and was promoted to Brigadier General on April 1, 1777. His subsequent military career was less promising. Appointed to commander at Fort Pitt later that year, Hand's militias were ill equipped and unmanageable. His men were so hostile to the Indians that it was impossible to maintain relations with even the friendly Indians. In what came to be known as the "Squaw Campaign," designed to capture stores and defeat Delaware warriors, the result was only the "murder of four Indian women and a boy"(5). His mission of marching from Fort Pitt to engage the British at Detroit was a failure (6).

In January 1781 he was promoted, by Washington, to Adjutant General, spent much of his later months of military life at routine staff details, and mustered out in 1783 at which time he was made brevet Major General (7). Hand returned to Lancaster to practice medicine, sat in the Pennsylvania Assembly, then in the Continental Congress (1783-84) and signed the Pennsylvania State Constitution in 1790. Hand died in Lancaster September 4, 1802, of cholera. He had been Master of Military Lodge No. 19.

1. Blanco, op. cit.
2. Forry, Edward Hand: his role in the American Revolution
3. cityoflancasterpa.com
4. Blanco, op. cit
5. Ford, editor, *Journals of Congress VII* (page 247).
6. Purcel, op. cit.
7. Forry, op. cit.

## GENERAL JOSEPH FRYE

The Revolutionary War career of General Joseph Frye was very short, but his military experience prior to the war and Washington's reaction to his Continental commission and subsequent resignation are well worth recording here.

Joseph Frye was born in Andover, Massachusetts, on March 19, 1711(1), which put him well into his mid-60's when the Revolution began. His father was a militia sergeant and town clerk. Joseph Frye was not highly educated but he was articulate, inquisitive and well read. The ninth of 13 children, Frye married and settled in Andover as a farmer. When he was 33 he enlisted in Hale's Fifth Massachusetts as an ensign, and the following year was in Maine as a Lieutenant. From 1747 to 1749, when King George's War ended, he served as Captain of a company of troops. When the first French and Indian War started in 1754, Frye returned to Maine as a Major in General Winslow's forces, who were charged to protect the east of the Massachusetts frontier. 1755 found Frye responsible for evicting a settlement of Acadians and burning their farmsteads. This was a low point in Fry's career, but he is said to have dealt with it in as humanitarian a manner as possible (2).

On Frye's return from Acadia in 1757, he raised a Massachusetts Regiment that was sent to support the British at the south end of Lake George. In August 1757 he and his men were ordered to Fort William Henry where, on arrival, he faced 2570 French regulars, nearly as many Canadian militia and about 1500 Indians from 30 different tribes, along with 200 artillerymen with 36 cannon and four mortars. Fort Henry had only about 2400 troops in total and the fort itself could hold only about 500 of them. The French soon surrounded the fort and a violent, eight-day, battle followed. Finally, the English surrendered, a truce was negotiated, and all British troops (and camp followers) were allowed to march to Fort Edward with their arms. What followed is called the Massacre at Fort William Henry. The French were unable or unwilling to enforce the provisions of the truce, and the Indians started killing and scalping – beginning with the sick, the wounded, the women and the children. Historians place the number of troops massacred at 175, of which 74 were Frye's men, plus an untold number of camp followers on which very little numerical data exists.

At the end of the last French and Indian War, Frye returned to Andover with 20 years of military experience. He petitioned the General Court for a license to sell liquor, as he was planning to open a store, and the petition was approved. Joseph Frye became a businessman, but his obsession was to acquire land, and he filed for many land grants, some of which were approved.

Frye was at Andover when Bunker Hill occurred, and he reported immediately to the American headquarters in Cambridge. The Provincial Congress of Massachusetts appointed him a Major General, but the Continental Congress did not follow suit, and Frye and others lost their military appointments.

Following heavy lobbying by John Adams, John Hancock and James Otis, Congress finally commissioned Frye a Brigadier General on January 10, 1776. Frye's election as a General caused yet another spate of dissatisfaction among other senior officers over whom he was promoted (3). Moreover, Washington was not pleased. He did not care for Frye or for many of the New England officers. Washington wrote to Joseph Reed, his military secretary, Frye "has not, and I doubt will not, do much service to the cause... For my own part, I see nothing but a declining life that matters (to) him"(4). And, writing to General Charles Lee, Washington said, "Brigadier Frye, previous to this, also conceiving there was nothing entertaining or profitable to an old man, to be marching or countermarching, desired... that he might resigne (sic) his commission on the 11<sup>th</sup> of April." This, just three months to the day after he obtained it. Purcel (5) says that Frye was hopeless as an active officer and that Washington maneuvered his retirement.

If Frye was sick and old, it didn't slow his retired life. For 18 more years he worked to develop the town of Fryeburg on his land grant on the Saco River. Frye died on July 25, 1791, at age 83. It is not clear where Joseph Frye was made a Mason, but the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts lists him as being a Mason (6).

1. Purcel, op. cit. – imaginemaine.com puts his birth date in 1712.
2. imaginemaine.com
3. geocities.com
4. imaginemaine.com
5. Purcel, op. cit.
6. bissel.org

## **GENERAL DAVID WOOSTER**

Born in Stratford, Connecticut, on March 2, 1711, David Wooster was the charter Master of Hiram Lodge, the first lodge in Connecticut (1750); which Lodge Record runs from 1762 to 1805 and, during all those years, the lodge conducted its business in the First Degree(1). Wooster “was a man who loved peace above almost everything else, yet he was always at war; and who was a civilian to the marrow of his bones, yet was seldom out of a uniform”(2).

As a young man Wooster became a successful businessman and decided to attend Yale College, later Yale University, and graduated in 1738 at age 28. Wooster entered the military in 1741 and was second in command of the Colony’s sloop, *Defense*. In 1742 he commanded the Colony’s first armed war vessel (3). Wooster was in all the wars and many of the battles from 1741 to the Revolutionary War.

In 1773 David Wooster commanded troops under General Philip Schuyler at Quebec and in 1776 was recalled on charges of incompetence. He was acquitted of the charges, retained his rank of Brigadier General, but was not thereafter given a command(4).

In April 1777 Wooster was at home on leave when a British fleet approached Campo Point and the alarm was sounded. Overnight the British burned the military stores they uncovered and began to march back to their ships. While Benedict Arnold, who was also at home on leave, dashed cross-country to intercept the retreating column, Wooster was to harass the rear guard. He twice led an attack by a small band of men, but a Tory sniper shot him and he was carried from the field of battle with a broken spine. He suffered for five days and died on May 2, 1777(4).

Although David Wooster was the first Master of the first Lodge in Connecticut, he is thought to have been made a Mason in a military lodge in Louisbourg, where he had served.

1. Haywood reports that so many Frenchmen came to Connecticut during the French and Indian Wars, 1754-1763, many of whom were Masons in distress, that Hiram Lodge bankrupted itself giving them relief.
2. Haywood, Wellspring of American Freemasonry.
3. Roberts, Freemasonry in American History.
4. Purcel, op. cit.
5. Roberts, op. cit.

## **GENERAL WILLIAM WOODFORD**

There are a few of Washington’s Revolutionary War Generals about whom little is known and William Woodford is one. He was born in Carolina County, Virginia, in 1734. In 1775 he was made a Colonel in the Third Virginia Regiment, which indicates that he probably had Provincial militia experience before the war.

On December 7, 1775, seven months before the first signing of the Declaration of Independence, Woodford, in charge of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Virginia Regiment, was gathering men from Fauquier, Augusta, and Culpepper counties in the western part of the Virginia colony, as well as from Princess Anne County. He reported to his superiors that about 250 men under Colonel Vail had arrived from South Carolina and about 150 from North Carolina. They gathered near Great Bridge.

Lord Dunmore, the colonial governor of Virginia, had retreated from Williamsburg to Norfolk due to growing disfavor of him in the colony (1). He had pillaged plantations along the way, thus winning slaves to his side. Dunmore believed that with a few more British troops he could control the rebels in Virginia.

General Washington urged that Dunmore be “instantly crushed”, lest his force grow. Dunmore built a stockade on the north side of Great Bridge, removed the bridge planking and stationed two 12-pound cannons at the narrow causeway approaches. Dunmore underestimated Woodford’s forces and sent sailors from his ship, *Otter*, plus about 60 townsmen on a surprise attack to Great Bridge. His forces advanced to within 15 steps of the American position before the 25 men there opened fire, felling most of the British. Woodford’s main force then attacked Great Bridge and then advanced on to the north side. It was all over in about one-half hour. The British authority in the Virginia colony was defeated. Lord Dunmore lost 102 men killed or wounded out of a force of 600. Of Woodford’s 1,000 men, only one was wounded. It was a rout. In 1777 he was promoted to Brigadier General.

Woodford saw action at Brandywine and Germantown but was relieved at Charlestown by order of Washington (2). He was captured in 1780 and taken to New York City where he died in captivity on November 13, 1780. Woodford was a member of Fredericksburg Lodge No. 4, Washington’s Lodge.

1. americanrevolution.com
2. Purcel, op. cit.

#### **GENERAL ARTHUR ST. CLAIR**

Another of Washington’s generals to be bankrupted by the Revolutionary War was Arthur St. Clair of Pennsylvania. Born April 3, 1734, at Thurso, on the coast of Caithness in Scotland (1), (2), the son of a local merchant, he received a fair primary education and attended the University of Edinburgh. He then was indentured to Doctor William Hunter of London. On the death of his mother, he used a part of his inheritance to liquidate his indenture and obtain a commission as an ensign in the 6<sup>th</sup>, or Royal, Army Regiment of Foot – he was 23 years of age at the time (3). St. Clair arrived in America on May 28, 1758, landing at Louisbourg and, following a battle there, he went on to fight at Quebec.

At the end of the war he retired to Boston where he married well – the half-sister of Governor James Bowdoin – and obtained a dowry of 14,000 pounds sterling. He soon moved to Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, and, in 1764, settled in Ligonier Valley where the Penn family employed him. There, he acquired a large land holding by purchase and by grant from the King for his service in the French and Indian War. St. Clair became the largest resident landowner in Western Pennsylvania (4). St. Clair was a tall, graceful man, who was intelligent and well educated. In all of his stations in life he acted in a stable and mature manner. It is said that he suffered from intense gout.

When the Revolutionary War began, St. Clair was commissioned a Colonel and served with success at Trenton and Princeton and was at Valley Forge. In July 1776 he was made a Brigadier General and, on 19 February 1777, a Major General. When Benedict Arnold’s treason was discovered, Washington ordered him to take command at West Point. His “sagacious maneuver of evacuating Fort Ticonderoga in face of superior numbers” brought intense criticism(5) and, at St. Clair’s insistence(6), he was court marshaled. A committee was appointed to collect testimony but “they could not find to convict and they did not report”(7); meaning that the charges dropped. St. Clair was not, however, entrusted with a major command during the remainder of the War.

Wartime neglect eroded his personal property and fortune in Ligonier. Further damage was done to St. Clair’s fortune by a failure of the new government to reimburse him for expenditures made by him in the war effort. When the Pennsylvania line revolted, Washington appealed to St. Clair for aid and he responded liberally with his own money to feed and clothe the starving soldiers(8). The money was never repaid. St. Clair put out \$9,000 for supplies when acting as superintendent of Indian affairs. The money was never repaid. This happened time and again.

When the War ended, St. Clair returned to Pennsylvania and was elected to Congress in 1786, served as president of Congress, and was appointed Governor of the Northwest Territory on October 5, 1787. In 1791 he was appointed a

Major General in addition to his civilian post to quell an Indian uprising. During the campaign, St. Clair and his 1750 men stopped for an overnight camp but did not erect fortifications, nor post sentries. During the night the Indians, under Little Turtle, surrounded St. Clair's troops and, on the morning of November 4, 1791, killed 657 men, wounded 271 and massacred between 60 and 200 civilian men, women and children traveling with them. The Indians lost about 20 killed and 40 wounded. This engagement was more costly than any single battle of the entire Revolutionary War(9). Arthur St. Clair's military engagements were haunted by failure.

Near the end of his life in 1814, his adopted State, in an attempt to ease his poverty, bestowed upon him an annuity of \$300 and, in 1817, increased it to \$600. He was then living in a log cabin five miles distant from the stately home he once owned. At age 83, while driving a pony cart to town for flour and other staples, the cart overturned, his head struck a rock and, ten days later, he died. The date was 31 August 1818.

St. Clair was a petitioner for the charter of Nova Caesarea Lodge No. 10 in Cincinnati in 1791. His lodge erected a Masonic monument over his grave.

1. Wilson, Arthur St. Clair, Rugged Ruler of the North.
2. Scottish historians use March 23, 1736 at his birth date.
3. Wilson, op. cit.
4. West, Arthur St. Clair, Ill-Fated General.
5. Smith, The St. Clair Papers.
6. West, op. cit.
7. Smith, op. cit.
8. [heritagepursuit.com](http://heritagepursuit.com)
9. West, op. cit.

#### **GENERAL LAFAYETTE**

Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert DuMotier was born an aristocrat whose family dated to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. He came into this world on September 6, 1757, and was soon a boy obsessed with tradition and character. His father died when Lafayette was two year's old and he spent much his remaining years searching for a father figure (1). At age eleven he went off to college at the College du Plessis. It is said that he was a shy and clumsy boy who suffered from an inferiority complex (2). Lafayette's mother, who died when he was 12, lived in Paris and took little interest in the boy. His maternal grandmother and two aunts raised him. Upon the death of his mother, Lafayette inherited an annual income of 140,000 *Livres*, equivalent to four to five million dollars a year in today's money.

Gottschalk (3) says that he took his schooling seriously, but de La Bedoyere (4) claims that school bored him and that he had little taste for reading but, rather, sought adventure. He soon joined the elite Black Musketeers, the King's bodyguard. In 1775 he was made a Mason in a military lodge at the invitation of his commanding general, Charles-Francois, Comte de Brogue, a Grandmaster Freemason (5).

The Marquis was enchanted by the American's fight for freedom and resolved to play a part in the struggle. He bought a ship, the *La Victoire*, obtained a letter of recommendation from Franklin, and set sail for America.

Lafayette arrived in South Carolina in June 1777, traveled to Philadelphia by June 27 and presented his credentials to Congress. His reception was cool due to his age, 19, and the unfavorable experiences Congress had had with other foreign applicants. His fervor and Franklin's recommendation prevailed and he was made a Major General in the American Army. On August 1 he presented himself to General Washington who, rather than give him a command, assigned Lafayette to his staff.

Lafayette, subsequently, fought bravely at Brandywine where he was wounded in the leg and was with Washington at Valley Forge in 1777-78. He was at Albany when the Franco-American Treaty was signed on February 6, 1778, thereby bringing France into the War as America's ally.

The Marquis returned to France in 1779 and was promptly arrested for going to America without the King's permission. After eight days house arrest he was freed. He returned to America on April 27, 1780, and was assigned to attack British troops under Benedict Arnold in Virginia. He failed to engage Arnold but was at Yorktown on October 14. In December 1780 he again left America for France sailing on the frigate, *Alliance* (6).

Following the War, Lafayette was present at "Assemblies that resulted in the French Revolution"(7), but he refused to join the revolutionary group and swore allegiance to the King. He decided to flee France for America or Germany, but was arrested and, in March of 1793, jailed at Olmvtz under very poor conditions. His wife was also jailed and her mother and two sisters beheaded by guillotine. Lafayette was released in 1797, delivered to Hamburg, then, in September 1797, turned over to the American counsel.

At the invitation of Congress, he visited America again in 1824 at which time he was voted \$200,000 and given 24,000 acres for his service to America (8). Lafayette was particularly close to Washington, who was to him yet another father figure. He was universally accepted as a Mason and is highly regarded among Pennsylvania Freemasons. He could be considered one of America's earliest civil rights proponents, evidence of which is contained in a letter from Washington to Lafayette at the end of the War – "the scheme, my dear Marquis, which you propose as a precedent to encourage the emancipation of black people in this country..."(9). He was also not above engaging in intrigue when it served his purpose – "I have inquired into the character of Lord Stirling" (another of Washington's generals) "and found that he is an ambitious and dangerous man"(10).

Sam Scott, biographer writing in Blanco(11), says of Lafayette that he was insensitive and egocentric in his youth and that his political, military, and diplomatic ambitions exceeded his skills. Whatever his personal skills and habits, he was well liked by Washington and was instrumental in bringing the French to the aid of a failing effort. Lafayette died May 20, 1834 – the last surviving general of Washington's Masonic generals.

1. Loth, The People's General.
2. Le La Bedoyere, Lafayette, a Revolutionary Gentleman.
3. Gottschalk, The Youngest General.
4. De La Bedoyere, op. cit.
5. Tresner, Jim, Review of Harlo Unger's Lafayette in the Scottish Rite Journal, 2002.
6. Lafayette, Lafayette in the American Revolution.
7. De Caidry, Lafayette and the French Participation.
8. Ibid.

9. Washington, Letters of Washington and Lafayette.
10. Ibid.
11. Blanco, op. cit.

## CONCLUSIONS

My thesis is disproved. Washington Masonic generals were not a homogeneous group – they were as heterogeneous as the general population – not reflective of Freemasonry at that period. They were not drawn principally from the Colonial Aristocracy. As many were farmers as were soldiers (see Table 2), and only about ten were highly educated. They were not all highly principled. Intrigue was common among Revolutionary War generals; some (not Masons), even plotting to displace Washington. Even among the Masons we find greed, jealousy, speculation, plotting and rumormongering, and even treason. Knox, Sullivan, Arnold and Sumner were openly hostile about rank and promotion. They were not all loyal to their Commander-in-Chief. Sullivan, Maxwell, Arnold, I. Putman, St. Clair, and Wooster were each either court-martialed or brought before a Court of Inquiry. All but Arnold were acquitted, but some act was suspect in order to cause charges to be brought.

This is not to say that Washington's Masonic Generals were all tainted. Some were merely incompetent or unreliable. Most though were loyal, hard working, generous men who made major sacrifices for their Country and its cause, and we were fortunate to have them. As a group, the Masonic Generals along with their non-Mason peers achieved a victory that probably should not have happened. They and their men were, especially at the outset of the war, ill prepared to enter into battle against a professionally trained, more disciplined, and better equipped army. Had not the French joined the battle and the English government tired of a distant war, we would have been British subjects for a much longer time.

There is one thing that might be added. It is generally accepted that there were 33 Masons among the Revolutionary War generals, Washington being the 33<sup>rd</sup>. I found evidence, some of it incidental, that three more were Masons: Charles Lee of Virginia, Count Casimir Pulaski of Poland, and William Alexander (Lord Stirling) of New Jersey.

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