

*“Every Circumstance Concurs to Lead the General
to Suppose the Campaign Will Open Early.”*

A Snapshot Study of
Captain Edmund Munroe's Company
Colonel Bigelow's 15th Massachusetts Regiment
General John Glover's Brigade

What We'll Review...

- Organizational background of the unit
- Lexington's ties to the unit
- Importance of Glover's Brigade within the Continental Army
- Battle Record of the 15th Massachusetts Regiment
- Clothing, arms and equipment issued to the 15th Massachusetts
- What did a soldier of the 15th Massachusetts look like?

Background of the 15th Massachusetts

- In 1776, soldiers who enlisted in the Continental Army were required to serve a 1 year term. The enlistments expired shortly after the Battle of Trenton.
- The Continental Congress realized one year terms of enlistment were impractical. As a result, it reformed the Continental Army through the "Eighty-Eight Battalion Resolve". The law called for the raising of 88 regiments. Each state was to contribute regiments in proportion to their population.
- Massachusetts was expected to contribute 15 regiments to the cause.

The 15th Massachusetts

- The regiment was commanded by Timothy Bigelow of Worcester, Massachusetts. Colonel Bigelow was a veteran of the Siege of Boston and Arnold's Invasion of Canada.
- The 15th Massachusetts was raised by enlisting over 500 men from Worcester, Middlesex, Essex, Cumberland, Hampshire and Bristol Counties.
- It was composed of eight companies and was one of the largest regiments raised for the Massachusetts Line.

Field Officers

Colonel Timothy Bigelow

Lt. Colonel Henry Haskell

Major Hugh Maxwell

Major David Bradish

Company Commanders

Captain Daniel Barnes

Captain Joshua Brown

Captain Paul Ellis

Captain William Gates

Captain Joseph Hodgkins

Captain Adam Martin

Captain Edmund Munro

Captain Silvanus Smith

Regimental Staff

Quartermaster William MacCarthy

Adjutant Nathaniel Nazro

Paymaster Pheneas Bowman

Surgeon James E.B. Finley

Surgeon's Mate William S. Little

Quartermaster Sergeant Joseph Pierce

Sergeant Major John Flowers

Drum Major William Rice

Fife Major Ebenezer Hudson

Colonel Bigelow had some difficulty getting the regiment to assemble as ordered. As a result it was the last Massachusetts regiment to deploy in response to the Burgoyne Invasion

I HEREBY request all the recruiting Officers belonging to my battalion, to make an immediate return to me, the number of Soldiers they have enlisted: Also both Officers and Soldiers immediately to repair to Worcester, which is to be considered as the place of rendezvous, untill further orders.

TIMOTHY BIGELOW, Col.
Worcester, April 8, 1777.

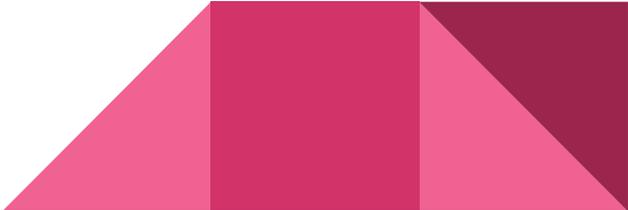
I HEREBY repeat an order published in this Paper of April the 8th, that all Officers & Soldiers belonging to my Battalion, immediately repair to Worcester, the place of rendezvous for said Battalion. As the exigency of the Times is well known by every Officer, no excuse will be taken; therefore all such Soldiers as shall not obey the above order may depend on being treated as Deserters.

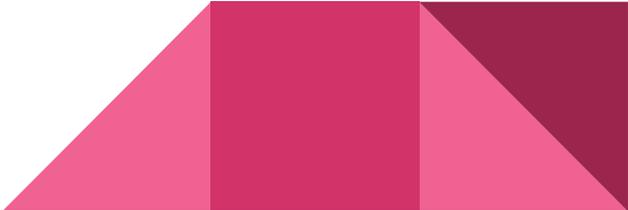
TIMOTHY BIGELOW, Col.
Worcester, May, 1777



Lexington's Ties to the 15th Massachusetts

Edmund Munroe

- Edmund Munroe of Lexington, Massachusetts was recruited by Timothy Bigelow to serve as a Captain in the 15th Massachusetts.
 - Munro had extensive experience as a military officer:
 - Served as a lieutenant and adjutant during the French and Indian War
 - Saw combat on April 19, 1775
 - Participated in the Siege of Boston
 - Served in Colonel Reed's 2nd Continental Regiment (NH) as a lieutenant and quartermaster
 - Was present at Fort Ticonderoga in 1776
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- In exchange for his commission, Munroe was charged with raising a company of fifty (50) men.
 - On March 10, 1777, the Lexington militia was mustered for the purpose of enlisting volunteers for Munroe's Company.
 - By the end of the muster, Captain Munroe had successfully enlisted nineteen men to serve in his company. These men included a fifer and a drummer.
 - The remainder of the men were raised from Middlesex County.
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Men from Lexington Who Enlisted in the 15th Massachusetts

Pomp Blackman*

William Boardman

Joseph Cox

Samuel Craft

Nehemiah Estabrook

Matthew Farrington

Daniel Lyman

Levi Mead

George Munro

Jonathan Munro

Thaddeus Munro

Seth Reed

David Fisk

Thomas Hadley

Jupiter Tree*

Ebenezer Hadley

Daniel Simmonds

James Fowle

Amos Russell

**Indicates African American soldier*



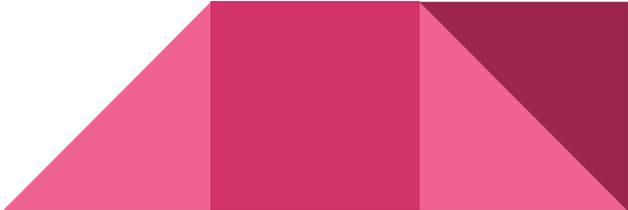
Loyalty Oath Signed by Edmund Munro

"I, Edmund Munroe, Captain in Colonel Bigelow's regiment, do acknowledge the United States of America to be free, Independent, and Sovereign States, and declare that the people thereof owe no allegiance to George, the Third, King of Great Britain; and I renounce and abjure any allegiance or obedience to him; and I do swear that I will to the utmost of my power to support, maintain, and defend the said United States against the said King George the Third, his heirs and successors, and his or their abettors, assistants, and adherents; and will serve the said United States in the office of Captain, which I now hold, with fidelity, according to the best of my ability, skill and understanding.

(signed) Edmund Munro Capt.

Sworn to, camp at Valley Forge, 18 May 1778.

(signed) The Baron de Kalb Major General"



Glover's Brigade

- In 1777, the 15th Massachusetts was assigned to General Glover's Brigade. It remained part of that Brigade until the regiment disbanded in January, 1781.
- General Washington considered Glover's Brigade one of his best and most competent brigades.
- According to Washington, Glover's Brigade was well disciplined and "far superior to the miserable constituted bands from New England."
- On two occasions, when Washington perceived a dire threat to the Colonies, he dispatched Glover's Brigade to assist in military operations.
 - The Saratoga Campaign
 - The Rhode Island Campaign

Some Unique Facts About the 15th Massachusetts In 1777

- In August, 1777, the regiment was without tents and was using brush huts and boards ripped off of nearby structures for shelter.
- Regarding food, the regiment was often issued chocolate and sugar.
- Elements of the 15th Massachusetts were transferred from the regiment and served as light infantry with Colonel Dearborn's Light Corps during both Battles of Saratoga.
- Two days after the 2nd Battle of Freeman's Farm (Saratoga), the regiment was ordered to field at a moment's notice with arms, equipment, and blankets only.



Battle Record of the 15th Massachusetts

- Saratoga Campaign (1777)
 - Defense of Philadelphia (November and December 1777)
 - Valley Forge (1777-1778)
 - Battle of Monmouth (1778)
 - Battle of Rhode Island (1778)
 - Forage Operations Around Hudson Highlands (1779 - 1780)
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SARATOGA, Oct. 14th, 1777.

Since I wrote the above, we have almost been in one continual action with the enemy, but not in very close order since the seventh instant, (the particulars of which I would refer you to Mr. Lincoln) but in close persute. We are now all round them and it is common to have thirty—forty, or 50, deserters and prisoners come in for several days past, The Canadians, we are told by the deserters have mutinied and decline having anything to do in the matter and was promised by the General that they should go home in a few days. They lost General Frazer in the action of the seventh, an officer of approved merit who commanded the light troops, in whom they put the greatest confidence, and give it as one reason we took the field, the early loss of that officer. Upon the whole I can hardly realize that the great Burgoyne is reduced to such a distressed situation as you may depend he is at present.

How the scene may change I cannot fully determine but from the present situation of things I expect to give you soon a further good account.

Here the letter closes by again referring to the sugar and requests that it be sent with his baggage to be forwarded from Worcester. And sends his love to Mrs. Bigelow and the Children. To Mr. Stephen Salisbury.

(Signed)

TIMO BIGELOW.

VALEY FORGE, *May 17th 1778*

MY DEAR,

I send these lines with my warmest love & respect to you & the Little ones Wishing they may find you & them & all friends in perfect Health & Prosperity. I am in good Health through divine goodness. I have nothing new to write you; the **Lexington** men are in a good State of health, Except Levi Mead & pomp,¹ they are not well, but so that (they) keep about. I am going on command tomorrow morning down

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to the Enemy's lines, there are two thousand going on the command I am of the mind that we shall have a dispute with them before we return Give my dutifull respects to Father & Mother Compliments to all Friends. I conclude, Wishing you & the little ones the Best of Heaven's Blessings, and remain, my dear,

Your Most Efectionate Husband

EDMD MUNRO

Inclosed is a Lancaster news paper which you will see the account of the grand fue de joy we had on the Sixth of May instant which is a true & particular account of that day



The Battle of Monmouth

Period Accounts of Glover's Brigade on the Eve of Battle of Monmouth

10 June [1778]. About 8 o'clock the General was beat before the B[rigade] . . . We struck our tents & loaded our baggage and about 10 o'clock we marched away from our huts about a half a mile in the front of our works, & encamped there in a very pleasant place near wood & water . . .

~ Sergeant Ebenezer Wild, 1st Massachusetts Regiment, Glover's Brigade



23 June. This morning at 5 o'clk the General was beat, & we turned out & got ready to march. About 7o'clk we marched off, but left all our tents standing & our heavy baggage behind us. We marched about 10 miles, & halted on the road about 4 hours, & turned into a field to cook provision, & had orders to march at 11 o'clk at night. Our tents did not come up this night, but what little time we had to sleep we slept in the open field, which was only from 11 o'clk at night till 4 in the morning. The reason we did not march at 11o'clk was because we could not get provision till late.

~ Sergeant Ebenezer Wild, 1st Massachusetts Regiment, Glover's Brigade



VALLEY FORGE, 12 *June* 1778

MY DEAR,

I send these lines with the Most affectionate love & Respect, to you & the children, wishing they may find you in Perfect Health & prosperity. I am well & in High spirits through divine goodness **Lexington** men are all well; news we have none except the Commissioners are arived from Great Brittain at Philadelphia in order to settle the dispute between us & them They have Sent a Flag of truce, what they had to offer is forwarded to Congress The new establishment of the army is arived in camp; there is to be a Large Reducement of officers, but as it has not taken place as yet, it is not known who are to be Reduced The new arrangement is on a Better footing than it was before. As it is to take place soon I will let you know my destiny by Mr Williams who is in a fair way to recover of the Small Pox; by him I am in Hopes to send you some money. I receiv^d you letter & a Pair gloves I hope to reward you for your kindness to your satisfaction Be kind enough to let me know whether you have Drawn a Blank or a Prize in States Lottery

My due respects to all Friends

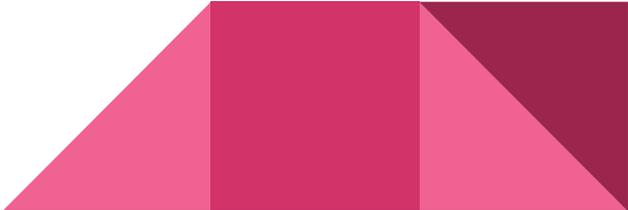
I am my dear your most affectionate

Husband

EDMD MUNRO

25 June. This morning at 5 o'clk the General was beat throughout the whole army; at 6 o'clk the Troop beat. We fell in & were counted off in order to march. We left all our tents standing & our heavy baggage behind us. We marched off, and making several short stops on the road to rest we arrived at Kingstown between 12 & 1 o'clk. We marched into a large field there and made a halt, it being very hot weather. Just after we halted we sent out a large detachment, to see if they could make any discovery of the enemy, under the command of the Markis Delefiat [Marquis de Lafayette]. About sundown we moved ahead about a quarter of a mile further, into a field where we expected to take up our lodgings for the night. But we had not been here above a quarter of an hour before the long roll beat. We fell in to our arms and marched about 5 miles, and halted in the road all night

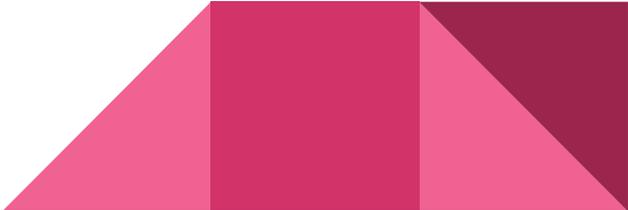
~Sergeant Ebenezer Wild, 1st Massachusetts Regiment, Glover's Brigade



Glover's Brigade at the Battle of Monmouth

28 June. This morning about 6 o'clk the General beat; in about an hour afterwards the Troop beat. We fell in & marched off. Went about 4 miles, & made a little halt to sarch [search] our arms and ammunition. Every man was compleated with 40 rounds apiece. We left all our packs and blankets, and marched on in pursuit of the enemy as far as we could. About 2 o'clk came up with them. Our Division formed a line on the eminence about a half a mile in the front of the enemy, and our artillery in our front. A very smart cannonading ensued from both sides. We stayed here till several of our officers & men were killed and wounded. Seeing that it was of no service to stand here, we went back a little ways into the woods; but the cannonading still continued very smart on both sides about two hours, when the enemy retreated and we marched up & took possession of their ground. This place is called Monmouth. It has been very hot all day. Numbers of our men had fainted and given out with the heat before we came up to the enemy. We lay here all night in the field.

~ Sergeant Ebenezer Wild, 1st Massachusetts Regiment, Glover's Brigade

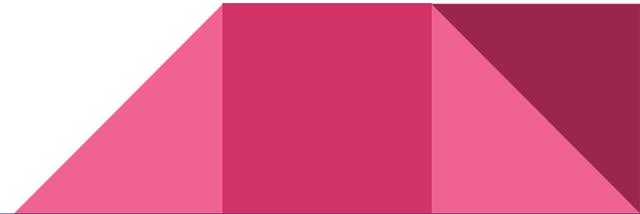


Other Notable Actions of the 15th Massachusetts

- Summer, 1778: Glover's Brigade helps suppress a mutiny of the 2nd Rhode Island Regiment in Providence, Rhode Island.
- January, 1780: Over 100 men from the 15th Massachusetts and over 60 men from the remaining regiments of Glover's Brigade mutiny. A sergeant of the 15th Massachusetts attempts to lead the mutineers in a mass desertion and march them back to Massachusetts. The mutiny is quickly suppressed.

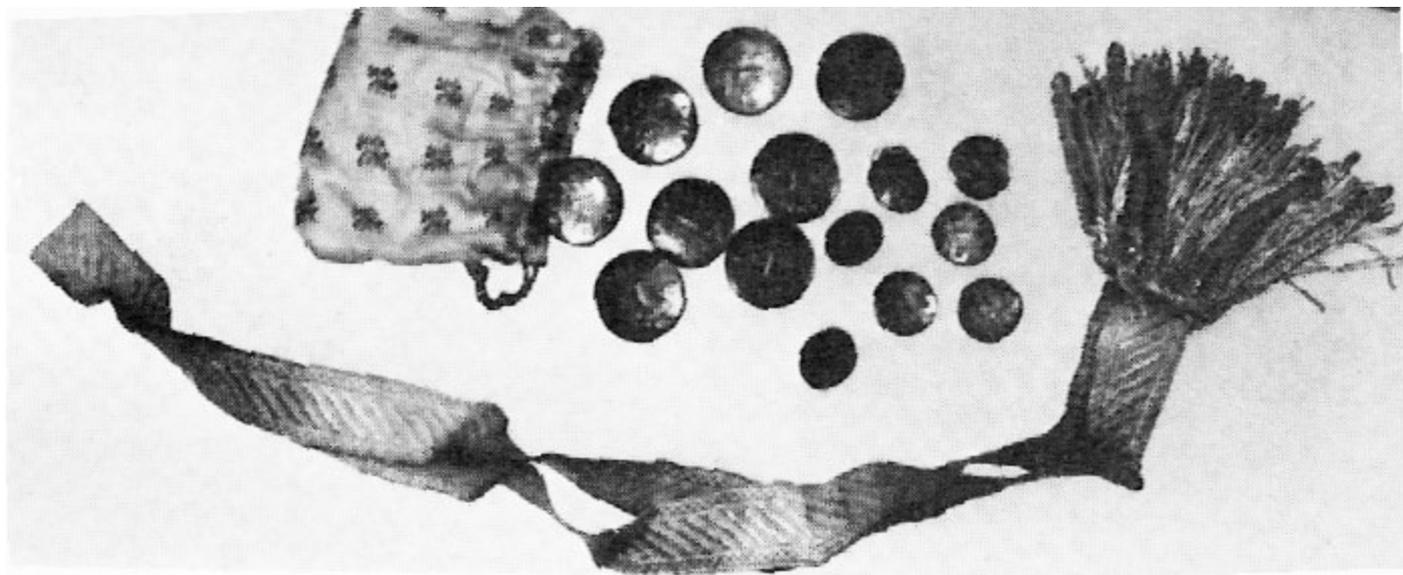


Artifacts Attributable to 15th Massachusetts or Glover's Brigade





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Arms, Clothing and Equipment Issued to the 15th Massachusetts

4th 5th - Indeed the Brigade are to form in the front
of their several Encampments and when orders
are given are to advance by the right in the same
Order they marched from Walschaichs Island
the 2th M^o Gen^l Will provide two Carriages to
Carry the Baggage of each Reg^t. Col. Ashley
to remain on his post until further orders -
Head Quarters 3 miles advance from Still
water Sept 12th 1777
The Gen^l Desires when the Encampments
are properly fixed that the Gen^ls Commisars
Brigades will see proper Communications
are Open between Reg^t & Reg^t that a
Squad be mounted this night from each
Brigade a field Officer two Capt^s A Subst^o
Army of 100 Rank and fix the Brigades
Gen^l of the Day will see those Squires
Properly posted in the front of each Bri
gade and that there be a proper regular
Chain of Double Centrys in advance
round the Camp field officer for the

Arms and Equipment

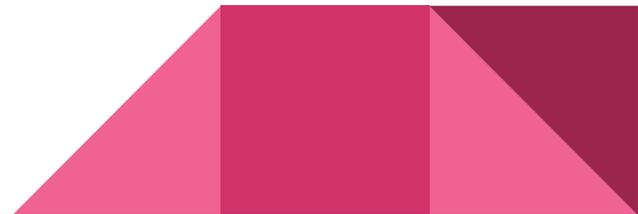
- Between January, 1777 and December, 1780, the 15th Massachusetts was issued a variety of arms and equipment. The overwhelming majority of supplies were issued between February and August 1, 1777.
 - The Regiment did receive knapsacks (NOT snapsacks). An account of the 1780 mutiny describes the 15th Massachusetts mutineers wearing packs and accouterments as they attempted to desert.
 - With the exception of **some muskets, bayonets and related tools**, the majority of arms and equipment were provided by the State of Massachusetts or the private contractor Otis and Andrew.
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Arms and Equipment (Con't)

- The Following arms and equipment were issued to the men of the 15th Massachusetts in 1777:
 - June 10, 1777: 225 “new French muskets” were issued to replace “old arms”
 - June 10, 1777: 225 bayonets and scabbards without belting were issued
 - June 10, 1777: Flints and worms for French muskets are issued
 - June 10, 1777: 200 knapsacks are issued
 - June 10, 1777: 200 blankets are issued
 - April 26, 1777: Gun slings are issued to the regiments
 - April, 1777: Canteens are issued to the regiment
 - August 14, 1777: 80 blankets are issued to the regiment
 - August 14, 1777: 80 knapsacks are issued to the regiment
 - April, 1777: The regiment is issued cartridge boxes

Bayonets?

- In 1777, the men of the 15th Massachusetts were issued bayonets and scabbards, but no belting for the edged weapons.
- According to one period account “many of the non-commissioned officers and privates ... [were] not furnished with Bayonet slings.”
- Thus, most of the men of the 15th Massachusetts may have been without bayonets during the Saratoga Campaign because the item was either lost or discarded by soldiers.



Clothing

- The regiment was issued the following clothing in 1777:
 - Felt hats
 - Leather caps
 - Hunting shirts made of tow (linen)
 - Overalls and/or trousers

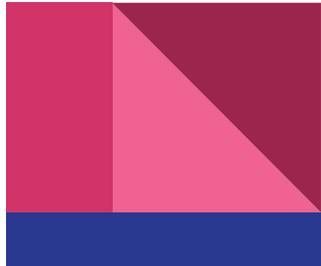


Other Clothing Issued

In addition to hats, leather caps and hunting shirts, the 15th Massachusetts was issued the following items between February 1, 1777 and August 1, 1777:

- 295 waistcoats
 - 295 breeches
 - 65 blankets
 - 295 linen shirts
 - 590 socks and stockings
 - 295 shoes
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Wait....Leather Caps?!?!?

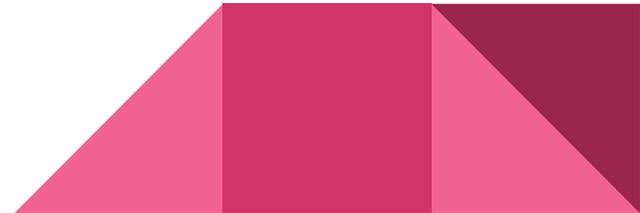


Regimental Coat

- The 15th Massachusetts *was* issued regimental coats in 1777. The coats were “cheaply made” by the Massachusetts clothing contractor Otis and Andrews.
 - Between February 1, 1777 and August 1, 1777 the regiment was issued 295 coats. Not every man in the regiment received a coat. At best, half the regiment wore regimental coats while the other half wore hunting shirts.
 - The regiment was issued an additional unknown number of coats in 1778, 164 coats on November 30, 1779 and 90 coats on March 20, 1780.
 - Glover’s Brigade never received the French “lottery coats” issued to the Continental Army in 1778.
- 

Regimental Coat (Con't)

- According to deserter descriptions, clothing issuances to sister units in Glover's Brigade (1st, 4th and 13th Massachusetts) and documentation at the Massachusetts State Archives, it is highly likely the regimental coat issued to the 15th Massachusetts was blue with white facings.



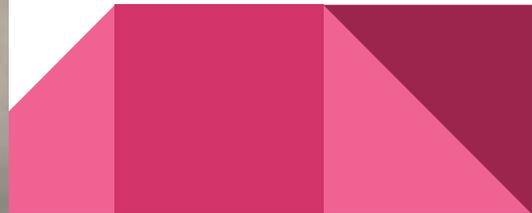
General Glover's Officer's Coat

- General John Glover's officer's coat is currently housed at St. Paul's Church National Historic Site, Mt. Vernon New York.
- The coat is blue faced white, cut in the "English" style and dates between 1776 and 1779.



- There is no evidence that the soldiers wore coats similar or identical to Glover's coat.
 - During the Revolution American officers paid private tailors to have their own coats made and often took liberties with materials, patterns and designs during production.
 - As a result, officer's coats were often significantly different than the coats of the NCOs and enlisted men in their company, regiment or brigade.
 - However, Glover's coat is consistent with the theme that his brigade may have been clothed in blue faced white coats.
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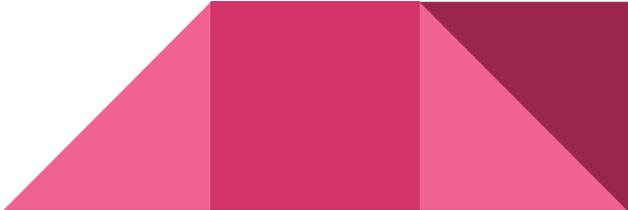
Over Coat



Deserter Description from the 4th Massachusetts

“DESERTED from my company, in Col. Shepard's regiment, in the continental army, one George Norton, a soldier, about twenty years of age, 5 feet 6 or 7 inches high, sandy hair, light complexion, grey eyes, something pitted with the small pox, says he was born in Pennsylvania, very apt to get intoxicated with strong liquor, **had on an old blue coat with . . . white facings**, other cloaths not known, talks of his pen. Whoever will take up said deserter and return him to his regiment, at Peck Kill, or to Ensign Samuel Chapin, at Westfield, in the State of Massachusetts Bay, or confine him in any of the goals in the thirteen United States; and send word to Col. Shepard, or the subscriber, shall have five dollars reward and all necessary charges paid, by JOB ALVARD, Capt. Westfield, March 30, 1777.”

~ *Connecticut Courant*, May 12, 1777



Description of a Soldier from the 1st or 4th Massachusetts Regiment (1777)

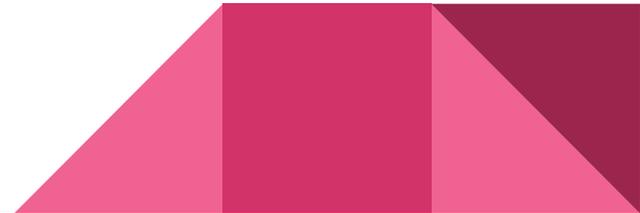
"At the same time we sent off one Taylor of middling stature, dark complexion, short brown hair, **blue camblet coat, white lappels**, who we expect will get through, as he has been employed in that way for several months past with success, having returned from that Quarter but a day or two before Mr. Williams left York."

~ General Glover to General Clinton, July 25, 1777



What Did the Coat Look Like?

- The cuffs and lapels were non functional
- The coat pockets were non functional
- The cuffs had no buttons
- The cuffs were “pointed” on the top of the sleeve
- The coat was unlined
- The body had no tails and non functional turnbacks





An American Soldier.



What Are “Eight Month Men”?

- In short, "9 Month Men", "6 Month Men" and "3 Month Men" were levies who were drafted or recruited from local militias to serve as short term substitutes for shortages in Continental regiments. The usual term of service was between three and nine months.
- The first use of levies occurred in the Summer of 1776 when Crown forces were threatening New York and New Jersey. Men were drafted from the standing militias of New England, New York and New Jersey and ordered to serve for several months in militia regiments, not Continental units.
- A similar system was used again in 1777 by New England and New York during the Burgoyne Invasion, although it appears levies were split between militia regiments and Continental units.



- In 1778, the Continental Congress ordered all thirteen states to start raising levies to meet the manpower shortages within the Continental Army. In response, Massachusetts passed its first levy law on April 20, 1778. The law called for raising two thousand levies, some serving in their own battalions, the remainder to be dispersed amongst the state's Continental regiments.
 - Each county was to furnish a specific quota of recruits and each "town or plantation" would pay a one hundred pound fine for every man under their allotted number.
 - By October 1778, Massachusetts had successfully raised 1,172 levies that were assigned to three Massachusetts Continental brigades – Nixon's, Patterson's and Learned's. It appears Glover's Brigade, of which the 15th Massachusetts belonged to, did not receive levies between 1778 or 1780.
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Did the 15th Massachusetts Ever Receive Levies?

- The short answer is yes.
 - A review of orderly books from the 15th Massachusetts reveal that the brigade was augmented by a small number of levies during the Saratoga Campaign of 1777.
 - According to a September 3, 1777 brigade order, the levies were identified as "privates who are engaged for eight months only."
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What Arms and Clothing Did Levies Receive?

- A review of Massachusetts ordinance and supply records from 1777 through 1779 reveals the Massachusetts government treated levies exactly the same as continental recruits.
 - Thus, levies were provided with the same arms, equipment and clothing that was issued to the three year enlistees of their respective regiments while in the field.
 - This included muskets, packs, bayonets, cartridge boxes, regimental coats, hunting shirts, overalls and hats.
 - Thus, an “8 Month Man” who fielded with the 15th Massachusetts would have been armed, equipped and clothed as similar to a continental soldier and not as a militiaman or civilian.
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Recreating a Soldier from Captain Munro's Company, 15th Massachusetts Regiment

1777 Impression:

- Civilian hat or leather cap
 - Civilian neckerchief, shirt, waistcoat and breeches, trousers or military overalls
 - Hunting shirt or blue coat faced white
 - Military musket or fowler
 - 19 round cartridge box
 - Cheesebox canteen
 - Uhl Pack
 - Blanket
- 



1778 Impression:

- Civilian hat or military cocked hat (TBD)
 - Civilian neckerchief, shirt and waistcoat
 - Hemp linen overalls
 - Hunting shirt or blue coat faced white coat
 - Military musket, preferably French in origin
 - 19 round cartridge box
 - Bayonet and carriage
 - Cheesebox canteen
 - Uhl or Warner Pack
 - Blanket
- 



Questions?

