

# **COLONIAL TRILOGY VI**



**The Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Ohio**

Presents

**100 Days in the Gulf**

by

Colonel George Franklin Welsh

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**Every Freeman and Every Freeholder Should be a Soldier**

by

Lieutenant Colonel Lowell E. Wenger

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**Captain John**

by

Frank G. Davis, Esq.

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## **COLONIAL TRILOGY VI**

This Trilogy looks at citizen soldiers from three different points of view.

The first paper, "100 Days in the Gulf" was read to the Ohio Society's Winter Court almost exactly one year after the commencement of hostilities in the Persian Gulf, by fellow Warrior George Franklin Welsh, M.D. It is an appropriate sequel to Frank's contribution to the Fourth Colonial Trilogy, "Reminiscences of a Flight Surgeon."

The second paper, on the Colonial militia, is by another citizen soldier, Lowell Wenger, Lt. Colonel, U.S. Army Reserve, history teacher at Seven Hills Upper School, Cincinnati, and a participant in the U.S. Army History Institute at Carlisle Barracks, PA.

The last paper, a bit of fiction, attempts to recreate the life of a citizen soldier of Colonial days, Captain John Gorham (or Gorum, as he spelled it) of King Philip's War. It is a sequel to "Howland's Relation" in the first Colonial Trilogy. (The advantage of being an editor is that one can slip in one of his own efforts from time to time.)

Frank G. Davis  
Editor

## **100 DAYS IN THE GULF**

*George Franklin Welsh, Colonel USAFR MC, Honorary Governor  
Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Ohio*

A year and a half ago, the world was turned up on end by the ruthless invasion of Kuwait by the forces of Saddam Hussein, the army of Iraq. This isolated, xenophobic Middle Eastern dictator was oblivious to the world around him and ignorant to the fury about to be unleashed. While the winds of winter swirled about the Southern Hemisphere, the winds of war were reaching full gale over the Persian Gulf. In the picture of the earth taken by Apollo VII, the Gulf was literally on top of the world, and Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iraq were at the top of the news.

The United States was not pleased. A year ago this week a juggernaut of allied forces more than a half million strong stood poised in the region to thwart further advances and free Kuwait. We were determined to restore the balance of power in the Middle East by reversing the invasion of Kuwait and insuring a secure oil supply for the world.

Gentlemen, I stand before you this evening neither to glorify war nor to vilify it, but to chronicle how one medic fought the Gulf War of 1991 - Operation Desert Storm. It was my privilege to be called to serve 100 days in the Gulf. From January 1 to April 10, 1991, I was posted to what was euphemistically called the AOR or Area of Responsibility. How could I, now in my fifties, do such a thing? How could I leave my wife and children? How could I fly off to an uncertain fate in a far and hostile land? I was motivated, nay vaulted, into action for three very clear reasons. For love of country - as a son of the middle west I could conceive of no finer mission than to serve my country in a dramatic and significant way. For sense of duty - duty to care for our people sent half way around the world, deployed to a hostile desert kingdom to suffer privation, exposure to the elements, and possible destruction. And finally, yes, because of a yen for adventure. I admit to feeling the same restlessness that motivated our forebears to set out across the seas to found this new land. I was buoyed up by a crusade for justice even as our forebears were sustained and stimulated by this cause, plus, of course, economic necessity. Last winter, we returned to the very birthplace of civilization for many of the same reasons. Just as we thank God our ancestors had the strength and determination to come here and mold the new life that we gather here to celebrate each year, I thank God that I had the strength and determination to return to the ancient land to build a life for our warriors in the desert so that they could survive and fulfill their mission. Perhaps tonight I should be speaking on the Bill of Rights, now 200 years old, or about the travels of Columbus, now 500 years in the past, but I am speaking on events that for a moment in

time were so arresting and dramatic that they were able to seize and hold the attention of the entire world.

## MOBILIZATION

First, it was necessary for me to strengthen myself and my reserve medical unit to overcome the shock of mobilization. If through knowledge comes strength, then we were armed with the history of reserve mobilization. In the past 40 years, the reserve forces of the United States have been mobilized only 11times. Ten of these mobilizations were in the 20 years between 1950 and 1970. There were no mobilizations at all between 1970 and 1990 until Operation Desert Shield in August 1990. Even more surprising, my unit did not serve together, but was dispersed to 16 different bases, first to fill urgent manning tours for Operation Desert Shield, then activated by Presidential decree to serve in Operation Desert Storm. I left Cincinnati on Sunday morning, December 30, 1990, for Philadelphia where I took a van to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware. After a short rest, I boarded a C-141 as a troop commander in charge of 80 men, their guns, and ammunition. We flew from Dover to Torrejon Air Base outside of Madrid where we stayed six hours to change air crews. We spent New Year's Eve in this vast hanger converted into a dormitory. While you all were hoisting another brew, I was standing in front of three clocks - labeled "East Coast," "Local," and "Saudi Arabia" - waiting for midnight to come and welcome in the New Year. It was helpful to note that Eastern Standard Time was six hours earlier than the local time in Spain, and Saudi Arabian time was two hours later. Thus, we reset our watches in anticipation of the eight-hour time difference between Ohio and Saudi Arabia

We took off from Torrejon and our next stop was Middle East. A global projection of the world depicts the Middle East in a way that illustrates why our military authorities call it the province of the Central command. Indeed, it is central between Africa and Asia and between Europe and the Indian Ocean as it has been throughout history. The Middle East is a crossroads of civilization, a transshipment point for trade from east to west and a source of our most vital energy resource, oil. Security was high as depicted by a sign on a sandbag bunker at the air base where we landed. It said, "Somewhere in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia." This site was roughly midway along the western shore of the Persian Gulf. Kuwait lay to the northwest, and my duty station was southeast in yet another time zone. I was not certain exactly where my base of assignment was because my orders had nothing but a zip code on them. But the aerial port people were quick to reassure me. "Oh, that's no problem," they said. "There are planes from there coming through here several times a day. Just wait for the next one coming around noon and we'll put you right on." During the couple of hours before noon, I busied myself visiting a tent medical facility at King Fahd International Airport and got

a briefing from a mobile intelligence officer. He had a trailer house and a map right there on the, flight line to explain the mission and, to a limited extent, the disposition of our troops at that time. It was the first of January.

Around noon a C-130 landed and taxied not to the passenger terminal, but off to the far corner of the air field, to the "hot pad." the "hot pad" is where bombs and ammunition are loaded. "We'll take you over there and you can get a ride with them," the crew assured me. Sure enough, I got on the C-130 and took my customary place up in the crew compartment. But in back, the cargo bay was filled with air to ground missiles for delivery to the front. We took off heading not for my new home base in the United Arab Emirates, but north to the front, directly toward the Iraqi border and King Khalid Military City. We continued to fly on and off to several different bases for almost twelve hours that day - a great theater orientation tour. Not until 11:30 p.m. that night did I arrive at my air base to be greeted by the commander.

## BED DOWN

Mirage Air Base was set up at the end of the Sharjah International Airport. Sharjah is third largest of the 7 Emirates. The airport included an ultramodern passenger terminal, a cargo terminal, and the police air wing. This division of the Department of the Interior was outfitted with an immaculate set of more than a dozen rescue helicopters which provided the Sea Air Rescue Service for the entire country. Our C-130 base was a recently reopened training wing for training United Arab Emirates pilots on British Hawk fighter jets. My home and medical facility was a double trailer house. We held sick call at one end and slept in the other. My roommate, and only other physician, was Bonnie Warmack from Detroit - a D.O. physician as well as J.D. attorney. He was a great guy, always cheery and helpful. He worked hard and saw lots of patients. He told me that back in Detroit, however, the lawyering was much more lucrative than the doctoring and he was gradually phasing out his medical practice to concentrate on his legal work. Unfortunately, he was called back to the States on emergency leave halfway through the war. Since the duration was brief, he never got back and I was the only doc on station for the second half of the war.

## MEDICAL DUTY

I envisioned that my medical duty would consist of serving as a flight surgeon before the hostilities, as a general surgeon during the ground war, and a plastic surgeon afterwards to do the reconstructive work perhaps here in the V.A. Hospital. In fact, my duty was to create and sustain the wartime health care system - the same two-tiered

primary care-specialty care system we have in this country. My aim was to do the best possible job of taking care of the airmen of the 1660th Tactical Airlift Wing Provisional. The mission was to maintain and fly C-130 short haul cargo aircraft. The Clinic consisted of two rooms, a six-bed ward which served as a reception and holding area, and an examining room with two examining tables. There was a telephone to the Aeromedical Evacuation nurses and technicians who were also stationed at the base. To the right of the phone was the medicine cabinet. I was dispensing physician, and after examining each patient and recording his complaints I would count out the proper medication from this cabinet. The physician I replaced as well as Bonnie Warmack were Doctors of Osteopathy, and they had been using manipulation with great effect to relieve the aches and pains of the sedentary airmen who had to do a little more physical work than they were accustomed to. I had to scramble to think of a technique to compete with this in popularity because of the immediate relief from pain offered by manipulations. My strategy was to load each and every patient with at least four or five different medications so that treating their colds was a full-time job.

My armamentarium contained a good supply of Mentholatum, made in Buffalo, New York. Since half the Wing was from Niagara Falls or Buffalo, and the other half was from Detroit, I could hand out the mentholatum and say, "This is what your grandmother would have recommended. Put a dab of this in a steamy wet towel and wrap it around your head. Breathe the vapors and it should open you right up." My half dozen medics thrown together from several different medical units in upper New York state and Michigan were as uncooperative and fractious a group of people as you could ever imagine. I tried to get them to line up for a picture, and the result was almost comical. They all looked off in different directions and had no use for my unit cohesion exercise whatsoever.

The Unit members did have one closely held central value, however, and that was never to have the phone uncovered or the clinic empty. They also responded to social occasions. When one of our members had a chance to rotate home early, we went out to lunch. The prospect of a meal at the British club, the Sharjah Wanderers Sports Club, prompted them to line up in orderly fashion for a picture. People were in only mildly better humor. They'd been there six months by the end and had probably had their fill of the austere life.

Each seemed to have some obscure quirk of personality. My supply sergeant, for instance had spent fifteen years in the Army Rangers as an independent duty medical technician. Unfortunately, his medical knowledge was outdated but that didn't stop him from having a strong opinion about everything. He was so adamant about matters on which he was flat wrong or just plain lying that I gave him a letter of reprimand. Overall, however, he had done such an outstanding job scrounging up supplies from all over the theater and meticulously documenting his efforts that I put him in for a medal!

## LOCAL CUSTOMS

As a Muslim country, Saudi Arabia was dry, and all the bases were forbidden from serving alcoholic beverages. You might say they were "zero-beer" bases. In Oman, a somewhat more liberal land, there were "two-beer" bases. In the Emirates, the most liberal of all, we were privileged to serve at a "four-beer" base. As a consequence of this, some of the men would overindulge at the end of the week, which is Thursday night in that part of the world. Almost routinely at 2:00 a.m., I'd be called to get up and sew up somebody's head. I couldn't help thinking that perhaps it was divine province that stationed a plastic surgeon at a "four-beer" base. Another time-honored medical tradition for field-deployed troops is to hold a wart clinic. I'd heard from the dermatologist's years ago that you could freeze warts in liquid nitrogen. While we did not have liquid nitrogen, we did have liquid oxygen for the aircraft oxygen systems. The crew chief would spill some liquid oxygen in the tray, and then I'd take a Q-tip and freeze warts at my wart clinic.

## PUBLIC HEALTH

Of much greater concern were public health and preventive medicine measures. One morning I discovered that the sewer next to the clinic had overflowed because of a party the night before at the hanger. In order to prevent this in the future, I had to insist that the honey pot come around to drain the septic tank at least once a day, particularly the day after having parties. As Erma Bombeck observed, the grass is always greener over the septic tank. At my airbase, the only grass was the grass growing around the septic tank.

Another problem was the flies breeding in the Dempsey dumpsters. I negotiated with the preventive medicine office of the Emirates to come and fog the base. To my knowledge, they only did this on one occasion while I was there but they did a very thorough job. Since the order had come from me, they took special pains to fog the clinic especially well.

Insuring a pure water supply was also a priority. Most of the water consumed was spring water or desalinized water from the Gulf. During the ground war, we stored up extra water both by the truckload of bottled water and by filling a large rubber expandable tank as a reservoir for cooking and washing. My preventive medicine technician would add chlorine to the water supply and then monitor the chlorine and coliform bacteria levels.

I recruited a lady veterinarian from a nearby base to make regular inspections of the dining hall and the canteens on the base. The canteens were supplied from town, so we had to go off base to inspect the source of the baked goods. Then, from time to time, we would go downtown to patronize up-scale street vendors who made schwarmas, or pita pocket sandwiches. I never heard that anyone got particularly ill from eating schwarmas. The vendors were well up out of the dust and appeared to have a pretty tidy shop, but they hadn't quite started wearing plastic gloves for handling the food as yet. Naturally, I took every opportunity to emphasize hand washing to prevent colds - the most common complaint. We administered flu shots and gamma globulin injections for the prevention of infectious hepatitis to 100 percent of the people stationed at the base.

## TRAINING

We also continued training even as we fought. I was able to recruit a nurse from the aeromedical evacuation crews stationed at the base to refresh us on cardiopulmonary resuscitation techniques and to learn to use the defibrillator in case of heart trouble among our aging population. While local culture made a resuscit Annie impossible to obtain, we went to a local diving supply shop and borrowed a resuscit Ahmed. Resuscit Ahmed looked to be about 10 or 15 years old and was rather stiff, but still quite serviceable. Physical examinations are typically suspended during the time of war and deferred until return home.

## FLYING DUTY

My flying duty consisted of hopping aboard the C-130's and going to remote, sometimes gravel air strips to shuttle supplies, bullets, and beans back and forth a the northern end of the theater. Sometimes the pilots would go back and help push the cargo aboard just to have a chance to get up and stretch. The C-130's picked up the troops along the Iraqi border and moved them out after they completed their sweeping end run through the Iraqi desert up to the Euphrates River and down to Kuwait.

I took the occasion of these flights to visit my fellow practitioners around the Gulf and assess how they'd solved some of the supply and equipment problems. A young doctor at a nearby Emirate had the same set-up that I did - a desk at which he saw patients and a cabinet of medicine behind him for direct dispensing.

I also wanted to see what larger medical units looked like and went to Dhahran to visit the First Tactical Hospital. This unit was deployed with an air transportable hospital, a tent facility, from Virginia to the desert. They termed themselves "Tactical Air

Command's First and Finest," and indeed they had the right spirit. A large American flag was displayed right inside the reception area. The head of the operating room had all her equipment and instruments hung out - ready for selection for each case. The operating room was austere but serviceable, and appeared to be air tight, air conditioned, and well illuminated. It had two operating tables and two anesthesia machines side by side in the same room.

A joint Army-Air Force Hospital situated in Oman termed itself the "Biggest and the Best." After visiting the "First and the Finest" and the "Biggest and the Best," I decided I'd bill my clinic as the "Smallest and Most Sincere." I well remember returning from one of these junkets one night when our tail was lit up by the sky behind us. It was the very first of many Patriots intercepts of Iraq scud launches. The Wing Commander was quite surprised when I was the first to report this event to him the next morning.

## AEROMEDICAL EVACUATIONS

Another phase of combining flying and medical operations was that of aeromedical patient evacuation. Aeromedical evacuation begins with a rescue helicopter going out, picking up the injured serviceman, and taking him to a stabilization site. After splinting and bandaging, the soldiers are brought to the airport where they are off loaded from the helicopter and transferred either to a C-130 or a G-141 for transfer in the theater or transfer out of theater back to Europe or home. I well remember on one occasion getting a call that the Navy was bringing in someone with a broken leg. It sounded as if it had just happened. We were galvanized into action, rushing out before even getting into uniform to receive, stabilize, and transfer the patient into the aero med system. However, when the sailor arrived, we found that he already had a cast on the leg. The fracture had been reduced and set and the cast had been properly applied and bivalved in order to prevent swelling from cutting off the circulation at altitude.

This even reminded me of the dilemma faced by every medic in the field - whether to "splint 'em where they lie" or "scoop and run." In fact, because of the uncertainty over which custom would prevail, a middle way designed to "splint 'em on the run" was implemented by supplementing the aeromedical evacuation crews (two nurses and three medical technicians per aircraft) with a variety of emergency and critical care physicians. While an airplane can never be a hospital in the same way that a ship can, it can be more of an emergency room than an ambulance. The doctors themselves volunteered for this duty and also volunteered to be stationed at the tent holding facilities located at each airstrip. When it comes to medical facilities, these were especially austere. They had just four shelves of medical supplies and scant supplies at that, two radios for arranging for pick-up of their casualties, a few canvas cots and a canvas floor. There were

two types of patient preparation facilities which insured the casualties were stable enough for the flight around or out of the combat zone. One was for *intra*-theater transfer on flights of no more than two to four hours in duration. The other somewhat larger facilities had a physician in attendance for stabilizing patients for *inter*-theater transfer back to Europe or the continental United States. This would necessitate a flight of six to twelve hours duration and accordingly, the patient had to be more fit to fly. The loading and securing of the patients for aeromedical evacuation is a craft all its own and requires repeated dry runs in order to train our personnel. The ambulatory patients were stacked four high in two rows down the middle of the plane. I flew on two aeromedical evacuation flights and felt that I was able to be of some service to the patients. I prescribed some oxygen for one frail young woman who had been thrown from a truck and suffered a skull fracture and internal injuries and morphine for two fracture patients suffering from closed but incompletely treated fractures of the ankle and hip.

## JOINT AND COMBINED MEDICAL OPERATIONS

Joint medical operations were carried out with our colleagues in the *Navy* and *Army*. When the hospital ships *Mercy* or *Comfort* were in for repairs, we would take our patients down to Dubai dry docks for specialty surgical care. The support was mutually beneficial in that the ship's doctors were looking for patients and we were seeking specialty care by people familiar to us. I took a complete tour of the *Comfort* and learned how a thousand bed floating hospital worked. An *Army* evacuation hospital was set up by moving four hundred doctors, nurses, and technicians from San Diego to nearby civilian hospitals in Dubai. The doctors of the 129th Army Evacuation Hospital came wandering across the desert on a van one day to knock on my gate. Like good doctors everywhere, they said "we're in town, we're hanging up our shingle here at the *Rashid* and *New Dubai* Hospitals and we'd appreciated any referrals you might send us." You might say the doctors themselves recreated our two-tiered primary/specialty health care system by driving back and forth promoting referrals just as they do here in the States. So I returned the visit by going to town to have lunch with the doctors, discuss items of mutual interest and build up the pattern of referral. At both the *New Dubai* and *Rashid* Hospitals, elective patients were sent home and only emergencies were admitted during the war in order to make room for potential casualties. *Combined* medical operations with our *allies* involved the men of the United Arab Emirate Military at their airbase clinic. They helped arrange to have our patients seen by the expatriate physicians at this Emirate military hospital, situated only seven minutes away across the highway from the Airbase. There were physicians from Egypt, Pakistan, and India, and the nurses from the Philippines - much as we have here. They were a great source of reassurance to us on numerous occasions when we had patients with heart trouble or other medical problems beyond the scope of primary care and required hospitalization or rest. At the end of our stay, I

awarded certificates of appreciation to all of the doctors at that hospital who helped us. They seemed much impressed. Two of the doctors have already returned the visit - by coming to our national annual professional meeting in Texas this Fall. I asked how they made the trip and they said them came by way of British Airways from the Emirates to England and by the Concord from England to New York and then on to Texas. Although this doctor was not so tall, he had nothing good to say about the Concord. It was two small, too cramped and he was toying with the idea of going back by way of Delta. Other medical actors were the British who had to solve the same problems we did. They first came to the front door of a C-130 to unload a litter patient, decided that wasn't going to work, which it won't, and went around to the back. They do have the good sense British colonials have had for centuries by blending the old with the new. Combining the Red Crescent with the Red Cross on the side of the ambulance. Other visitors included these Dutch medics who said they had a 50 bed facility at the local seaport and would we 'please keep them in mind. Three men from New Zealand who were on a week-end away from their station in Bahrain came by to exchange mementos. Their stated mission was to pitch in and help repair the rift caused by the falling out of ANSUS. (The refusal of New Zealand to allow our nuclear armed ships to use their ports.)

## CAMP LIFE

In spite of this maelstrom of activity, it was possible to enjoy *camp life*. The camps were not laid out like real estate developments here in the Ohio Valley but along strictly utilitarian lines. An aerial view of our base in Oman depicts the grid-like geometric array of tents. The tents came in kits, were two layered and had air conditioners and heaters attached. Porches were optional but encouraged. Some people got into porch business in a big way and had theme porches such as pirate decks or musical themes. Needless to say, mowing the lawn was not a priority. However, assembling these large corrugated metal frames by hand, piling them three high, and filling them with sand as revetments was an activity that all pitched in. Another pastime popular with the aero med crews was the firing of simulated patriot missile water balloons. The idea was try to fire the balloons simultaneously and get the two to collide and burst in the air. To my knowledge, this was never achieved. I amused myself with the discovery of a scud-like missile at the end of my porch which proved to be a rolled up carpet fragment, the remnant of our self-improved efforts. The clinic came with dirt impregnated yellow shag carpet. I felt for hygienic reasons we should remove this old carpet and replace it with more hard finish easy to maintain than carpet. I might add, this project also brought my dilatory airmen together. They did believe in bettering their standard of living in the field and did pitch in to help peel up the old carpet, push down the nail pops and sweep the floor in preparation for the new. I also had a little cement work done in the spirit of leaving the campsite better than I found it. The dining hall was

right on the other side of the hanger and consisted of several tents hooked up together. The food was served on bare metal trays without plates. While breakfast and supper were hot meals, lunch and the midnight supper were "meals-ready-to-eat" of which a third were made here in Cincinnati by Cinpac in Norwood. It was a blessing to have a pre-packaged message from home, although I was probably the only one at my base from Cincinnati.

## VISITORS

Visits by high persons were another pastime. While Mr. & Mrs. Bush did not visit my base, General Menill "Tony" McPeak, the Air Force Chief of Staff, did. I was fortunate to have dinner with him and then several weeks later, General Charles Homer, the three star who ran the air war, came by and we all had lunch with him. There were three other people from my unit in Columbus, Ohio who were stationed in Oman. Toward the end of the war, our paths crossed a little more often and I was able to get together with Dr. (Col.) Manual Corpus and his medical technicians. We had other photo opportunities on occasion, for instance, when the Sheik's falconer and the falconer's daughter came to tell us something about the sport of falconry. It was an opportunity for two old birds to get together. As perhaps you heard, it was easier to call home than it was to call the guy over the next sand dune. This was facilitated by purchasing phone cards which had ironic slogans such as "phone home today, it feels good to Let them know you're OK" and "no matter how far you may be from home, call, they really miss you." We did have a little excitement one day when a Hawk trainer landed on two (of 3) wheels. The Moroccan flight instructor expertly taxied it into the sand without a scratch. It didn't explode, it didn't blow up, it didn't raise any sparks and didn't burn. It just landed in a cloud of dust, barely flexing the down wing. There were so many rescuers and care takers, including the police air wing with their rescue helicopter, the pilot and student were whisked away before I even had much of a chance to take a picture, let alone rescue anyone. That was the nearest I came to a battle casualty.

## MY PERSIAN EXCURSION

Now about the last week of our stay, I was about to get off the base and see a little bit of the countryside. The day trip was billed as a trip to the camel races and indeed, that's where we started out. The camel races are run over a five or eleven kilometer sand race track so far away from the viewing stand that they had to send a Range Rover' with a television camera mounted on top around the track to follow the race. Interestingly enough, the camels sometimes walked and sometimes ran in these races and were ridden by small boys 5 to 8 years of age, velcroed onto the back of the camel. In case of injuries,

they had a Mercedes ambulance to take them to the hospital. There were no mishaps that day but I was interested to see a Sheik in the box next to us. At the end of the race, the Sheik and his many bodyguards got up, all of whom were toting rifles! At the end of the race, we stopped at the camel boutique where you could get all the accouterments of the properly outfitted camel and for camel cuisine, clover dispensed from the back of pick-up trucks. Indigenous to the area were fortified wells or guard and signal towers scattered over the hills and in the water as part of a relay system for ancient message traffic. We went from the camel races to the Dubai museum to see old ships and old style houses. Across the street from the museum was a modern building with twin cooling towers said to be able to air condition the buildings without electricity. We went to a dhow building works and were most fascinated to see this boat made of teak by hand. A water taxi ride next to see a dhow under way and going back, I couldn't help noticing a molded fiberglass version of the same boat in another shipyard. One of the telephone cards depicted the hair dance which came on television once or twice. The young ladies, who spend most of their life in public covered from head to toe including the face, would literally let their hair down and swirl it from side to side, evidently a treat for the eye to the Arab gentle- man. The tour concluded with a walk through the souq and gold bazaar. Here was a furniture store of interest named Bride of Nomadism Furniture Establishment. The products appeared to be almost entirely blankets and pillows, perhaps all that was needed for outfitting the Bedouin tent home. On the other hand, I suspected the Bedouins had long since come in from the desert because of the many houses under construction such as this elegant Palladian style home made of reinforced concrete. It was said to cost more than half a million dollars. I did have a chance to have dinner with the family of an Egyptian physician working at the Emirates air- base clinic and enjoyed his view of Dubai Creek at night. We had hummus tahini and tabbouleh salad, two, of my favorite things. Another pastime every Monday night was a run in the desert with the Falcon Hash House Harriers. This group of British expatriates works hard to preserve their native customs in the old land. They would run through the desert in a kind of combination point-to- point foot race, scavenger hunt, and wild goose chase then enjoy some fellowship around the campfire. The head hasher led toasts to each other and acknowledged the presence of all in this far and forlorn place. The highways and trails however, made exploring the Wadis and springs in the mountains easy by Land Rover. However, one had to watch out for camel crossings and be aware that "reduce speed, humps ahead" meant bumps, not humps. There were two luxury hotels accessible to us and some of our people were able to spend a week-end of rest and recreation at these hotels. I stopped only long enough to be able to say I rode a camel in the desert.

The folks in my clinic who had been posted to Oman got into running, weight loss and sun bathing. Because of the clash of cultures, screens were put up during the holy month of Ramadan so that passing natives would not be peering in at our sun bathers. At their two beer base in Oman, the bar was named Two The Limit. Our sun bathers, for

their part, laid out on the bunkers and enjoyed soaking up the winter sun. The swimming pool never got built although the idea was brought up. At long last, the air war of six weeks duration was followed by a 100 hour ground war and victory obtained.

## RETURN TO KUWAIT

Fortunately, I served only as a flight surgeon and neither as a general surgeon nor as a reconstructive surgeon in this short war. In fact, many of the medical personnel felt somewhat unfulfilled. We were fortunate to have overshot in preparation rather than been found wanting as evidently occurred at the outset of World War II. The week after the liberation of Kuwait, I jumped on one of our planes and flew north to visit Kuwait for myself. The oil spill that polluted the gulf has faded from the news and from memory but the cleanup effort continued for many months. The oil well fires were initially difficult to put out. Our people learned on the run, picked up the pace and completed the job within 8 months of the end of the war. The airport in Kuwait of course was a wreck. The wheels had been removed from the buses and cars and live ammunition remained scattered over the ramp including a live cluster bomb unit preserved as an example of what not to pick up. The burned out hulk of two civilian airliners and a Russian made Iraqi tank remained behind. A bomb crater and a cluster rocket casing were popular stops for after hour tours of the airport. Elizabeth Dole had stopped by for the Red Cross the day before my second visit.

## HOECOMING

Satisfied that our mission had been accomplished, I returned to base. The week before departure, it was my privilege to be interviewed by the Gulf News reporter who said she had interviewed Norman A. Schwarzkopf, commander and chief of our forces in the theater, the day before. As a matter of fact, she reminded me that most of my few free hours were spent at the typewriter out on the porch of my clinic. I fancied myself a kind of medical war correspondent mailing and faxing dispatches back to the family and county medical society magazine. Early in April, the planes left over a two day period for the long trip home. I personally stayed till the base had been rolled up, my clinic emptied and cleaned. I returned by charter air via Sigonella AB in Sicily, Shannon, Ireland and Bangor, Maine. My flying unit from Columbus, Ohio came back two months later after moving from Oman to a base in Saudi Arabia. They had a chance to move Shiite refugees out of southern Iraq. The tumultuous welcome home celebration had been worked out by all the reserve units. Ours was complete with a visit from Bob McKewn, our U.S. Representative from the rural counties between here and the airbase near Columbus, Ohio.

People asked me on my return if my surgical practice suffered. I can assure you that my patients were well looked after by associates and as near as I could tell, things picked up pretty well upon my return home. Would I go again today? Of course I would. Would I go again tomorrow, next week, next month, next year? I would go for one week, I would go for one month, I would go for a year. I would go for a lifetime if that's what it took to free the world from tyranny, to free enslaved peoples and, to make the world safe for democracy and trade. Thank you all for your kind attention this evening. God bless and good night.

Winter Court  
Society of Colonial Wars  
in the State of Ohio  
Queen City Club, Cincinnati, Ohio  
January 10, 1992

NOTE: This talk was accompanied by a slide show, as suggested by some comments in the text.

# EVERY FREEMAN AND EVERY FREEHOLDER SHOULD BE A SOLDIER:

Some Perspectives on the Colonial Militia.

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*“Every Man therefore that wishes to secure his own Freedom, and thinks it his Duty to defend that of his Country, should, as he prides himself in being a Free Citizen, think it his truest Honour to be a Soldier Citizen.”*

-*The Exercise for the Militia of the Province of the Massachusetts-Bay* (Boston, 1758), quoted in Douglas Leach, *Arms for Empire*, pp.8-9.

The concept of the citizen soldier has been a major part of the American military tradition at least since the famed Minutemen of the Revolution. They had continued the colonial tradition on militia service and won our independence - at least that is how one version of the legend goes. But almost thirty years ago in a seminal essay, John Shy urged historians to take “A New Look at the Colonial Militia.” It was time, he suggested, to move beyond simply criticizing or defending the militia and to look at it in a broader context. It needed to be evaluated as a military institution in its own right rather than as a predecessor of the Minutemen. Furthermore, it was not a static institution of the colonial period, but a very dynamic and complex one which changed significantly during the 168 years between Jamestown and Lexington. Those evolutionary changes reflect the geographical differences of the various colonies, the changing military situations, and the political, social, economic, and religious structure of colonial America. Historians who have examined the militia in individual colonies have found considerable support for the basic premise of Shy's thesis. The emerging picture is varied and colorful. The differences in the colonial militias portray the diversity of life in British North America and the similarities are sufficient to indicate the common heritage, military and otherwise, of the colonists.

·'It is not surprising that military concerns were a top priority for the English settlements. There was a potentially dangerous situation in a new world with peoples whose ways were very different from their own. Fourteen major wars and numerous minor ones against different Native American tribes or against colonists of other European powers in America would demonstrate a need for military action. Douglas Leach, whose *Arms for Empire* remains the most extensive general study of the colonial wars, estimated that “of the 156 years between the founding of Jamestown and the Treaty of Paris [ending

the Great War for the Empire], more than one-third were years of warfare somewhere in the colonies.” (pp. xi-xii) Since colonization was a private venture and the crown was often busy with either internal political struggles or external conflicts with continental powers (and often with both simultaneously), the colonists were on their own to solve their military problems. The obvious solution to this defense need was to require every able-bodied man to provide for the defense of the colony. This idea of a universal military obligation was at the heart of the old English militia system, and it formed the basis of the militias established in all the colonies.

Though not the first colony, Massachusetts Bay passed the first law for compulsory militia service in 1631. The Puritans learned from the experiences of earlier colonists, and the peril they faced may be surmised from the requirements for weekly drill and the prohibition against travelling in the colony without a gun. Virginia, which had experienced military problems from its beginnings, followed suit in 1632; and Plymouth provided for compulsory service in 1634. Later colonies also established compulsory militia service among their first acts. These militia laws changed as the population of the colonies grew, the settlements expanded, and the potential threats moved west. By 1754, there were 777 militia laws throughout the colonies of British North America. Only Pennsylvania, with its Quaker heritage, did not require militia service. Even here, however, the dangers faced by the colony in that year enabled some citizens, led by Benjamin Franklin, to put aside Quaker control of colonial defenses and institute voluntary militia service. While the militia laws obviously varied from colony to colony, the essential features were much the same. (1) Service was compulsory, with the exception of Pennsylvania as noted. (2) Officers came from the upper echelons of colonial society whether they were elected, as in early New England, or appointed. (Eventually, even the New England colonies provided for governmental appointment of high ranking militia officers, particularly for special expeditions. In addition, officers often had to meet additional requirements from the normal militia man, such as religious orthodoxy in Massachusetts Bay or property ownership in South Carolina) (3) There were also limits on the term of service, usually three months, and on service outside the borders of the colony.

The basic unit of the militia was the infantry company, between sixty and one hundred men. Some colonies later formed cavalry or artillery units, but many of these, such as the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Boston, were volunteer units outside the militia structure. The requirements for militia men to own and maintain their arms and equipment made cavalry a unit only the wealthy could form. In the seventeenth century, two-thirds of an infantry company was armed with matchlock muskets and one-third with pikes. Extensive drill was necessary since a matchlock required fifty-six movements to load, fire, and prepare for the next shot. Discipline and firepower were important in facing an Indian attack; but the easier mastery and maintenance of the pike, which required only

eleven movements, made it a preferred weapon of many militiamen, as John Dutton testified in 1681:

I thought a pike was best for a young soldier and so I carried a pike, and between you and I reader, there was another reason for it too, and that was, I knew not how to shoot off a musket. But t'was the first time I ever was in arms; which tho' I tell thee, Reader, I had no need to tell my fellow soldiers, for they knew it well enough by my awkward handling of them.  
(quoted by Radabaugh, p. 3). . .

As technology changed, so did the weapons of the militia. The introduction of the flintlock musket brought a simpler, more reliable weapon which, with a bayonet, replaced both the matchlock and the pike by the end of the seventeenth century. It was also cheaper to procure and to maintain. Although many colonies began to provide limited numbers of weapons, military stores, and gunpowder in the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, most continued to expect each citizen to provide his own weapon and maintain it in good condition.

A change in weaponry was not the only one for the colonial militias by the end of the seventeenth century. These early units met basic needs for frontier defense and weekly drills emphasized the need for military preparedness. New England seems to have been better able to maintain drill attendance and to answer emergencies because of its pattern of town settlement. Men were relatively close together and were willing to come together to defend farms and towns when to do so did not leave one's own family and farm in jeopardy. In the tidewater of the south, where settlements were more scattered and individuals separated by greater distances, to answer a militia call might leave one's home and family unprotected. A system of fines for missing militia service was in place in all the colonies by the middle of the seventeenth century, a testimony that all aspects of militia service were not that pleasant. But even with fines and other punishments, it became increasingly difficult to enforce compulsory militia service. As the early settlements became more secure, the frequency of drills declined from weekly to only four or six times per year. Furthermore, as colonial societies became more populous and more complex socially, economically, and politically, the idea of universal service changed.

By the late seventeenth century, most colonies recognized some citizens might reasonably be exempted from militia service. Again, specific provisions varied with each colony, but in general, age, mental infirmity or physical infirmity excused one from service. Colonial legislators, county or town officials, servants for some magistrates or officials, clergy and church officials, college professors and students, school teachers, physicians and surgeons received exemptions in one or more colonies. Massachusetts exempted masters of ships over twenty tons, fisherman employed all year, constant herdsmen, ship carpenters, millers, and ferry men. Southern colonies granted exemptions to

owners or overseers of four or more slaves. The distance one lived from the militia drill might also provide an excuse. Finally, those called could also choose to pay a fine or hire a substitute. This last provision became common throughout the colonies and helped to fund some of the militia company's social activities. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, few colonies had true universal militia service. In addition, drills, as infrequent as they were, often took on the atmosphere of a family holiday. Units larger than companies (Massachusetts had formed the first regiments in 1636; other colonies formed regiments later) seldom drilled more than once a year, if that often.

Part of this changing nature of the militia was a result of changes in the defensive needs of the colonies. Early Indian wars were often colonial responses to raids and were of short duration. These could usually be handled within the limitations of militia manpower and terms of service. Extensive campaigns, however, taxed the militia system to its limits and taxed the colonists to pay for them. They also required colonial authorities to take extra measures. The Pequot War (1636-1637) in New England brought rare inter-colonial cooperation. A combined expedition led by Captain John Mason of Connecticut and Captain John Underhill of Massachusetts finally defeated the Pequots and brought security to the northern frontier. In 1643, Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut joined Plymouth and New Haven to form the New England Confederation to provide for the mutual defense of the four colonies. Parochial colonial interests, especially an unwillingness to serve outside the borders of one's own colony or under a commander from another colony, hampered the effectiveness of the Confederation until the outbreak of King Philip's War in 1675. Nevertheless, it existed in one form or other until 1685. Other colonies also reached their economic and military limits with major Indian uprisings. Kieft's War (1642-45) in New York nearly exhausted the Dutch colonists before they made peace. The Second Tidewater War in Virginia (1644-46) required extensive efforts to secure a victory; and only a force of rangers patrolling between forts along the frontier provided some sense of security in the years following. These rangers and other garrison or volunteer troops in Virginia, New England, and elsewhere were outside the normal peacetime militia system. The absence of major threats after the mid-seventeenth century brought further changes to the importance of the militia and the enforcement of militia laws. In some colonies, the militia became a quasi-police force. This was especially true in the southern colonies where militia units assumed the duties of slave patrols.

The peace between Native Americans and English colonists was broken by King Philip's War (1675-1676) in New England and Bacon's Rebellion (1676) in Virginia. Both involved long, trouble-some campaigns. The New England colonies enforced the militia laws, including reinstating week drills; raised large armies of volunteers to supplement the militia forces; and finally enlisted Indian allies and adopted a total war philosophy to end the uprising. New England was secure for white settlement, but at a fearful cost in lives and treasure. In Virginia, the tidewater and the frontier disagreed over the extent and the

expense of campaigns to be taken against the Indians. A number of “volunteers” under Nathaniel Bacon waged their own war against the Indians and eventually turned against the governmental itself. Bacon's death from dysentery helped bring an end to the rebellion but also caused Virginia to reconsider arming large numbers of landless men for militia duty. Events in other colonies also changed the concept of universal military service in the militia. During the Yamassee War in 1715, South Carolina gave Colonel John Barnwell a force of 600 whites and 400 slaves to subdue the Indians. But here, too, was a problem. As the slave population grew, arming slaves seemed more dangerous to South Carolinians than any manpower shortage in the militia, and blacks were barred from further militia service. Most other southern colonies imposed similar restrictions. These final Indian Wars secured the colonial frontiers; but they also changed the nature of militia service.

If local uprisings and conditions brought a change in the colonial governments' thoughts on the militia, so, too, did the changing nature of international politics. As the American colonies became involved with the European rivalries and wars for empire from 1689-1763, military expeditions became large scale operations, requiring more extensive logistical and strategic planning than the militia forces could provide. Manpower needs were also more extensive, both in numbers and in length of service. It was one thing to fight to defend one's home. It was another to invade Canada or New Spain. To meet military requirements from King William's War (1689-1697) onward, colonial legislatures and governors had to modify the militia system or go to a different type of force. Some soldiers in New England were recruited for service with British forces by a militia draft. Towns and counties were assigned quotas and had to deliver a certain number of men. However drafted men could still hire a substitute or arrange some other form of replacement. Other men were recruited for long terms of service with the promise of bounties or booty - or both. The officers excepted, most of those who filled the ranks for these expeditions of the European colonial wars did not fit the earlier militia pattern. They were transients or those with seasonal employment, or those who saw this as a way to earn a living. They wanted to fight for the promised rewards if not for the sheer excitement of battle. They were, in effect, American mercenaries. Their lack of social involvement and status, and their erratic military performance contributed to the hostility and contempt British regulars came to feel toward them and, by implication, the American militia. Indeed, contemporaries, both British and American, used the term militia to describe any colonial troops whether or not they came from the militia muster. This accounts for many of the negative comments about the American militia during the eighteenth century. It is only fair to note, however, that the ill feelings were returned in kind. The expeditions against Canada in King William's War, against St. Augustine (1702) and Canada (1709 and 1711) during Queen Anne's War, and against Cartagena (1740) during King George's War can only be described as disasters and did little to endear the status and reputations of professional soldiers to Americans. The notable success of Massachusetts troops, both militia and volunteers, in taking the French fortress at Louisburg in 1745 seemed to justify

the American confidence in the merits of the citizen soldier. It infuriated the Americans when Great Britain returned the fortress to France at the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748.

The French and Indian War, or the Great War For the Empire, was the final military crisis for the colonies before the Revolution. Unlike the other imperial wars, this one began in the colonies. To enforce its claim to the Ohio Valley, Virginia sent an expedition under Lieutenant Colonel George Washington in 1754 to force the French out. The failure of Washington's mission and some astute French propaganda brought Britain and France to war once again in North America. The defeat of Edward Braddock's force of British regulars, colonial troops, and Indian allies a year later marked the beginning of a long nine year struggle for control of the continent. Although British troops bore the brunt of the fighting, colonial militia and volunteer units, along with their Indian allies, contributed to the final defeat of France and Spain and secured the Atlantic coast of North America for the British Empire.

This victory eventually altered many of the political relationships between Britain and her colonies, and it continued the strained relations and hard feelings of military men on both sides. British officers lavishly criticized colonial troops, whom they called militia. They were the dregs of colonial society; officers often inflated the number of troops present; they often deserted before a battle; they lacked discipline; they were ignorant of basic military procedures and camp sanitation. What British officers described was accurate in many cases; but they were describing volunteers and not the militia. Militia soldiers had always been the citizens of towns or counties who were responsible for local defenses. They composed a force to react on short notice to a short term emergency. Colonial legislatures and governors hesitated to draft or levy their citizen soldiers for long campaigns, especially if they would have little control over them or if they did not consider the campaign in the colony's best interests. These European wars were, after all, wars of conquest and empire. They needed a different source of manpower and they got it from a source which did not threaten either the local defense or the social and economic structure of the community. One British officer, Lord Loudon, noted the difference, "The Militia are the real Inhabitants; Stout able Men, and for a brush, much better than their Provincial Troops, whom they hire whenever they can get them, and at any price." (quoted in Millett and Maslowski, p. 42) This distinction was lost upon most other British observers and many Americans as well. George Washington's criticism and contempt for "militia" troops remained strong throughout the Revolution. Other Americans, particularly those who led colonial troops, praised the militia. They resented British arrogance and noted that the professionals had not done that well at Cartagena in 1740 or with Braddock in 1755. These attitudes of mutual distrust and contempt carried over into the revolutionary years and influenced the attitudes and policies of both the British and the Americans during the War for Independence.

From that war, as well as from these colonial wars, Americans gained a strong feeling of their military competence, ably displayed, as they saw it, by the citizen soldiers of the militia. The ideal of the militia became a perfect example of republicanism: the individual citizen responded to an emergency and fought to defend his family and home and to maintain his and his neighbor's freedom. Such a summary is sublime in its simplicity; but it omits both the complex nature of militia service and the long evolutionary process through which it developed. It is a good thing that historians continue to respond to John Shy's challenge and investigate the truth and the myth behind the colonial militia. Only then may we fully appreciate and understand our rich colonial heritage in both peace and war and effectively consider its potential application for the present.

Summer Court  
Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Ohio  
Miami Club  
June 13, 1992

NOTE: An example of Musket Commands appears at the end of the article on Fort Necessity in the second Colonial Trilogy.

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## CAPTAIN JOHN

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Honorary Governor  
Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Ohio*

I know now that he is going to die. At James's departure from Swansea we talked quietly of when we could safely bring him back to Barnstable, but it was a wish only, as we both knew but neither would give voice to. It was hard to see him lying so still, bathed in his own sweat and breathing so heavy through his teeth and plucking from time to time at the bloody rags pulled about his hip and thigh. Yet I have no regret at coming to Swansea with James, though God forgive me I would have better liked to remember Captain John as I saw him last in his health, riding off gaily on the grey stallion to join Major Bradford's force at Rehoboth.

Then when our son Jack came riding up to the house with a face as long as a poker, his breath and his horse's breath swirling together about them, the cold closed over my heart like a winter fog, and I knew even before he spoke that here were ill tidings indeed. Mother, he says, I fear to tell you that father has taken a ball in the hip at a fight in the great swamps about Petaquamscot below Wichford and is laid up at Swansea with only a few troops and Aunt Lydia's people to look after him.

Here was a cleft stick for a certainty -- to go post haste to his side as my heart cried out for, or to stay and mind the farm and the young ones and set guard lest the savages break through and destroy all. Jack begged me to stay. The paths are hardly safe even now, he says, and a woman, even with a few companions, is at risk to be cut down like another Ann Hutchinson should the savages go again adventuring on the ways.

But my place is at the Captain's side; I can put the farm in care of our servant Tooto, and trust Almighty God that the neighbors and townsmen can stand guard against attack when it should come. So off we go, James and Jack and I, and the coming into Swansea was a fair shock: the neighborhood farms as we drew near burnt out or wasted from last summer's savage raiding, skeletons of dead cattle by the roads, and everywhere the dim whiff of stinking smoke and death, but we won through at last to Miles's garrison house with the barricado still firm and manned by the neighbors too stubborn or bold to flee the town. My sister Lydia and James Browne her good husband were still there likewise and it was they who had set a good bed in one of the lean-to rooms and there we find my Captain John as I have said, and what little I can do to give him comfort I have done.

He knew me from the start I am certain-sure, for he grasped my hand and tried a smile that was more a ghastly grin. He has had some good days and more bad since, and like a guttering candle will flare up a while and sink away again, but ease him as we can, he slips from us little by little, or so it seems.

All this while my sister Lydia and the others have pressed me to return to Barnstable: first with my son James when he took leave as I have said, and since, when partys have gone out in the bitter cold to mend what they can at their burnt-out farms. But I reply that James is a leader in Yarmouth and Barnstable and with Jack's help and my brother John's people can keep all to rights. But still Lydia presses me. Return, she says, before the savages take heart again and we dare no longer take to the roads. You must go back, she says, and as soon as the Captain is enough recovered we will send him home in a good cart with careful guard.

But my place is at this side, and so I have sent James and Jack back to Barnstable, where Jack's firstborn was expected any day, God willing. So I saw them off home on an iron-hard January morning, breaths smoking from man and horse alike, and watched their dwindling black figures against the pewter sky till they went over the rise and out of my sight, then back I went to sit by my good Captain's side till God's side will be done.

I have heard much talk and no little repining amongst the men at Swansea, how Colonel Ben Church and the captains planned and led the attack on the bloody savages at their fort in the great swamp below Wichford; how my Captain John was leading a foot charge into the barricado and was shot down with a ball where his powder horn swung; how the fight went to our Plymouth men and the savages devastated and put to flight. But some held we were too hasty in withdrawing the wounded to their detriment: better to have tended the at the fort than drag them through the muck and snow back to Wichford and burning the fort and all in it.

But it is all one to me now. If God has willed to take him from us (and all the signs are there) what matter if he die in the snow at Pettaquamscot or on a bed of pain at Swansea?

This whole ill business started at Plymouth with a falling out between our people and the Chief Man or Sachem of the Wampanoags named Metacomet, whom we also called King Philip. The divers ins and outs of the matter are too tangled to tell but it came to a head with Metacomet swearing revenge on all New England, stirring up the Naragansett and the Nipmucks to the end of driving all God's people into the sea. We have been at it now for above seven months. My John being Captain of the Second Company of the Plymouth men was in due time sent off to Mendum in the west of the Bay Colony. I have by me a copy of his dispatch

to Gov. Leverett from Mendum which Jack gave me with John's other trifles when we reached the Garrison house at Swansea. He wrote in haste to this effect:

'Mendum, October th 1: 1675

Much Honored: My service with all due respects humbly presented to yourself and unto the rest of the Council hoping of your healths. I have made bold to trouble you with these few lines to give your honors an account of our progress in your jurisdiction. According unto your honors order and determination I arrived at Mendum with fifty men, and the next day Lieutenant Upham arrived with thirty-eight men, and the day following we joined our forces together and marched in pursuit to find our enemy, but God hath been pleased to deny us any opportunity therein; - though with much labor and travel we had endeavored to find them out, which Lieutenant Upham hath given you a more particular account. Our soldiers being much worn but having been in the field this fourteen weeks and little hopes of finding the enemy, we are this day returning toward our General, but as for my own part, I shall be ready to serve God and the country in this just war, so long as I have life and health, not else

John Gorun.'

Little wonder that at even such a time John would make his copy of this dispatch. My father early impressed on him the need for copies of all things sent off elsewhere, and in his later years father talked to the point of boredom of the early troubles of Plymouth, sprung as he said from Gov. Bradford's failings in copying the books of account et cetera

One bitter morning as I sat by the fire stirring a little porridge for the Captain lest he should wake and be in sorts to take a little nourishment, I think I fell into a sort of doze, for it seemed that a pale light loomed through the cold and dark, as if the serge had slipped from the windows of my mind where it was hung against the chill, and my heart was lifted and my whole mind and soul turned as it were to the grateful past and all God's goodness to us and ours. In my reveries as saw young John Gorum as I first beheld him, he coming into the Plymouth meeting house with his old father. Not much older than I he was, a handsome face and fine figure, and something of my father about him for size and bearing. Our eyes met, and before I could drop mine in maidenly decorum, there was such a flash between us as warms me even now in this bare room in Swansea. His father, Rafe the Joiner, they called him, was a carpenter and maker of fine chests and presses and the like. Indeed, being of a quizzic turn, he kept in his lean-to-room his own coffin, beautifully joined , and, to the wonder of all, stored with apples until, as he said, he have better

need of it. Contentious he was, too, quarrelsome and high of spirit. A true Northhampshireman, my father said, but why I never knew.

There were six of us Howland children then, and I as the oldest being 16 or thereabouts was already thinking toward husbands and families of my own. My brother John (how many Johns I have had about me!) was as yet the only son of my father (Joseph not as yet born) and I recall Rafe Gorum saying to my father by our fireside one day: "John, you have need of another son, with all those women about you, and only your son John to share your burdens in the fields and haymaking and all else. My own John, as I have seen, looks kindly on your daughter Desire and (he says quizzically) if so be you could suffer yet another John about you he would be right glad to take her hand. My son is of good family - the Gorums of Churchfield are of some standing in Northhants - he was put to common school in Benefield, he is strong as an ox, and my only heir."

Now I knew that my father looked kindly on John Gorum as a young man of promise, well inclined to the militia, an excellent hand with musket and long gun, diligent in the fields and with the cattle; and I knew too that he had already got my father's leave to court me.

But my father was not one to be hurried, and, I thought, took some small offense at the remarks on his family. So he replied that his Bess (my mother) was even then carrying another child, which with God's will might be a son, and that Rafe indeed had more need for sons than did my father. "Ah," says Rafe, going off on another tack, " 'tis true that my work keeps me over-occupied, and with the falling off of farm prices in Boston my farm in Marshfield is, like your own and all of Plymouth's, of little profit." Again my father made the stiff rejoinder that he had kept a large share in the Kennebec trading house, and was well anchored to windward for his own future and his family's.

Now I knew my father's temper well and could see plain enough that he was more at play then in earnest in all this, and soon the two fathers were settled with their pipes by the fire and agreeing that my marriage with John Gorum was like to be a blessing to all.

With that memory I fell to thinking how we had come to where we then were. I remembered how as a young girl I had lived at the Kennebeck trading houses with my parents, father being then in charge of the place, and my brother John and my sisters Hope and Elizabeth. They being small it fell to me to help my mother in their care and the household chores - cooking at the hearth, gardening in proper season, and the endless cleaning and washing of the clothes. My mother spoke often of Desire Minter, for whom I was named, who had gone back to

England, leaving my mother with all the house to manage, and a good and loving friend lost into the bargain.

I remember the day that my father strode into the house, still with his musket in the crook of his arm, his face like iron, and said to my mother "we had to kill that thieving rascal." I thought that another of the savages had broke into the stores, and wondered that he had to be killed, but mother somehow knew. "Hocking," she cried. "I feared it would come to this." I found long after that Hocking was a Piscataqua man, determined to overreach our Plymouth patent and intercept the Abanaki coming down the Kennebeck to trade. There was a great to-do on the river, one of our men shot by Hocking, and Hocking then killed by musket fire. It fell out that they of Massachusetts, learning of the battle, saw it fit to intermeddle in the affair and demand a showing by what right we had withheld the Piscataqua men. And Captain Standish showing at Boston our patent giving us full charge at the Kenebec, the Bay men were abashed and withdrew their complaints.

Nevertheless, certain great English lords having their hands in the Piscataqua Plantation, it was thought best that Plymouth make some composition therein, and my father and some of the others were relieved from Kennebec in due time and returned to their farming at Plymouth. My father never tired of relating how Capt. Standish met him at the shore, clapt him on the shoulder, crying "'twas well done John - like Wessagusset. If we need fight to defend our rights, so be it." It was thus that when my father told Rafe Gorum of his share of the Kennebec venture it all came back to me in a rush; moreover, my childhood memories of the tall somber savages stalking about the garrison house on the Kennebec are with me still.

Scarce had our fathers agreed on our marriage contract than old Rafe Gorum fell into a decline, and, lingering awhile, timely was carried off. It seemed that having arranged his son's affairs to his satisfaction that contentious old man lost his zest to live and sought the coffin he had kept so long and sweet with his apples. My John, in the full flush of his strength and youth, in good suitable time claspt my had before the magistrate, and we became thus husband and wife, with all the world opening before us. We took up the Gorum house in Plymouth, and with its lands and garden made a good start to building our future and our family as well, and little Desire, our first-born came quickly (but decorously and after suitable time) thereafter. John had a little learning from his father in joyning (atop his common schooling in England) and this with the grain and cattle we compounded and sold in Boston, with the little one and the house and the garden kept us busy from dawn to dark and beyond.

My father, being stronger for book learning than most in Plymouth, had taught me reading and writing and some cyphering after a fashion, for he oft said

that a good helpmeet must accommodate her man in keeping the household records - keeping the books being an obsession with him all his lifetime. Indeed, he had taught my mother and all us children much the same, and as for Plymouth Plantation, he said ever that the illness of the record-keeping and fair-copying went far to the never-ending troubles with the London Adventurers and that rascally Allerton.

However that may be, in the first years of our marriage my husband and father and some other forward-lookers kept close watch on trading at the Bay, where the Boston merchants were ever searching out markets for grain and the like, all New England now growing more than could be used, and prices, as old Rafe Gorum foresaw, falling daily. But what he had not foreseen, the Azores and Maderia had need of grain and even richer markets lay in the Plantations of the Caribbees. In those hot climes the planters all planted sugar, and stood in short supply of grain and beef. So when the harvest time came round there we were on the road to Boston, carting the new grain and driving the dry cattle to market, and returning with the iron tools, cloth, hats, knives, buttons, and all we wanted in our own places.

To be closer to the Bay markets we had removed ourselves to Marshfield where John's father had left him a parcel of land, and soon bought of my father another parcel which he before had of the Governor. We thrived some years in that place, and God blessed us with our daughters Temperance and Elizabeth, and then at last with the two applies of my eye, James and little John who we call Jack, who with my sister Lydia have been my props and support in these last harsh days.

Then on another day when he seemed more in his wits we talked idly but with joy of our days at Barnstable: how we had removed from Marshfield and took our growing family first to Yarmouth where we took up another farm John had from my father and then built at Barnstable where we have prospered for nigh on twenty years: Our farm so rich that John built a grist mill for our use and for letting out to our neighbors, and then a bark mill and tanning vats that our Jack has made to prosper.

From our upland and meadows we have raised and fed much cattle, some driven to market at Boston, some slaughtered in the fall, the flesh smoked or salted against the winter and the hides to our tannery with those of the horses not judged fit for breeding, work or riding. The swine also yield bacon and hams for salting or smoking and hides likewise for our tinning. Truly I am not drawn to the tannery, the stench and awkwardness of the hides being hardly to my liking. Indeed from my girlhood on the Kennebec I have been most content with the household tasks, most learned at my mother's knee: care of the little ones, cooking about the great

fireplace with its spits and kettles and trivets and pots, and later, when our trade increased we had a swinging crane to serve in the stead of the great old lug pole for hanging the trammels and pots. How we children loved to sit in the chimney corner of chill winter nights, toasting our toes by the ashes and watching the sparks snapping out of the roaring logs and twinkling up the chimney into the glittering stars! And so it is in these days when the last of our infants, little Shubael, he scarce eight years and Hannah and our Lydia (she named for my sister Lydia who harbors us here at Swansea), something older than Hannah and Shubael, still love to sit by the fire when their tasks are done.

And so round again to the moment, Captain John wandering off from our rambling discourse, and drifting into a heavy breathing doze, and I steal out to the fire room to join Lydia in our cooking here at the great fire, and I am again in the midst of the strings of leeks and onions and garlicks, and the carrots and cabbages from the cellarage, as if I were again in my own home. It is hard to believe that for more than twenty years we have prospered at Barnstable and our family has likewise grown and spread. Our oldest, Desire, married with John Hawes the same year our Lydia was born, she now with little ones of her own in Yarmouth. Indeed, our first five have all married and our Jabez even now making eyes at pretty Hannah Gray, John Gray's young widow. Jabez too is off with the troops, and as I watch over my poor Captain withering away on his bed of pain and fever, my heart wrenches again when I think on our Jabez risking life and limb against the pitiless savages in the field. My little brother Isaac Howland too has fronted the savages at Middleboro where (as we heard) he shot down a howling savage at near half a mile with his log gun.

The savages have ever been puzzle and terror to me. When a child on the Kennebec I feared and shied like a colt from those cold dark eyes, thinking them truly the devils our Elder Brewster spoke on so often, and as I grew older and heard that they had for the most part refused our Lord Jesus Christ (except the few, like Sassamon, we called the "praying Indians") I thought and believed, and still believe in some part that they are indeed imps of Satan and none of the Lost Tribes of Israel as some hold. We have tried to deal fairly with them, paying fair price for lands we dealt for, seeking out and paying good wampum and trade goods for their furs, and holding back only liquorous spirits and firearms, neither of which they can use with proper reserve. But still they lie and cheat and steal and kill among their own kind and us as well and now turn their whole hate and spite against us. Our preacher John Cotton tells from the pulpit that God has let them loose upon us for our sins and the ill carriage of our children, and this may be, so far as I in my ignorance can tell. I only know that my father before his death warned against the savages and the impending doom. He said that while Massasoit, the great Sachem of the

Wampanoags, lived, he could keep rein on the savages, Massasoit's life having been once saved, as he believed, by our Mr. Winslow. But on Massasoit's death his sons raised trouble and complaint and at last the one, Metacomet, (or Philip as we call him) raised the Naragansetts and the Nipmucks and turned all against us with fire and blood, swearing to drive us all into the sea My Captain, being in the militia even from our days in Marshfield, kept well advised of all the tortuous turnings of the savages over the years, and there has ever been a dark cloud hanging on the quiet side of my mind, foreboding evil from the devils.

It was a little after our marriage word came of the slaughter of Ann Hutchinson and her family at Pelham Neck in New Amsterdam by the savages on one of their vicious outbreaks. That Ann was ever a secret heroine of mine, I having seen and heard her some years before as she passed through Plymouth after being warned out of Boston for wrongful preaching in and about the Bay. "Antinomian," they called her, she holding that faith alone secures our salvation, and works are worthless to that end. Though some were drawn to this, the divines were outraged, as much (so I think) by her womanly audacity as by her creed. This Ann was a tall strong woman, with a fire in her eye, and I was much taken with her, though I durst not say so among my elders, and to learn of her taking off by the savages was a great blow and burden to me, happy young wife though I then was.

I have thought on her often this last winter particularly on learning that her eldest son Edward was cut down by the Nipmucks in Massachusetts country last fall. This came to me from Captain John when he had ridden with his company and others to Mendum in bootless search for savage raiders.

Now on another dreary afternoon, with a dull red looming into the west, comes our faithful servant Tooto, riding up on one of our best roans, his white teeth flashing in a gaping grin. "Ah mistress," he cried, "best of good news. Master Jack he got him a strong little boy. Now he coming back to join Captain's company again." He lept from his horse and trotted in the door and we went in to John, who smiled' weakly and touched Tooto on the hand. Tooto fell to his knees at the foot of the bed, clasped his hands, and looking to Heaven said firmly "Lord Jesus be good to his man like he been good to me. Amen."

As he stood up and turned away, I saw two large tears coursing down his cheeks, and he went out into the fireroom, shaking his wooly head. Ever since John had bought Tooto in Boston and brought him down to be our servant, Tooto had ordered his God about thus. Even as he has learned the true Christian way at home and at the meeting house, he is still learning the true humility of prayer. As oft as John has chid him, he says that in his own country they ever told the gods what to do, or how would they know?

Good Tooto, he has been a strength to us all, and I know he will learn in God's good time. So this day he has risked the knives and clubs of the savages to ride through all the way from Barnstable to bring us word of Jack and Mary's firstborn.

He had hoped, too, to be of some service to me in caring for the Captain, but when he saw him I could tell he was altogether cast down. Lydia and I, seeing John from hour to hour saw not how he weakened and faded daily, and that flame which rose and fell like the guttering candle was each time a little less. But Tooto, minding him only in his health as he rode gaily off on the gray to Rehoboth, was smitten to the heart to see him now, that he had hoped to bring home in triumph.

But putting on a brave face, he begged me (as did Lydia so often) to return home with him and help with Mary's newborn and my own children at home. "Soon he be better, and Mr. Jack, he come to bring him home" said Tooto. "Little Shubael and the girls too they need you." And Tooto is right, I fear. If the savages break through, I will die in my home with my little ones about me as did noble Ann Hutchinson. And if the enemy are destroyed altogether (as it seems both sides can never live together save the savages turn to Jesus Christ and forsake their vicious ways) then my family must be tended as Captain John would wish. He has ever said, and I with him, that Shubael should have fair learning beyond the mere dame's school, and go up at last to John Harvard 's school hard by Boston.

So at last I see my duty clear. I shall hie home as soon as Jack returns from Barnstable and before the roads thaw into muck.

But I see, too, that Captain John will not be coming home. I know now that he is going to die.

The Literary Club  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
December 2, 1991

NOTE:

The Old Colony, as Plymouth Plantation came to be called before its absorption by Massachusetts in 1691, was a sprawling collection of farm villages in what is now southeastern Massachusetts, spreading out from Plymouth, the original settlement in 1620. The land was allotted by committees of the Mayflower elite to

various settlers, according to family size, and, I suspect, personal influence. John Howland and his son-in-law, John Gorham, were not behind the door when the lands were parceled out. The Old Colony was agriculture-centered: largely farms of arable land and upland meadows, worked by close-knit family groups on separate farmsteads. Large families like the Howlands and the Gorus were sprinkled throughout the Colony - Howland children with their offspring, - Gorum children with theirs.

All the named characters in this paper were real people, reported in contemporary documents of one sort or another. The principal events outside the immediate families are likewise documented.

Whether John Howland's young family went with him to the Kennebec trading house, however, is speculative, but I think probable, for too many reasons to set down here. It is also speculative whether Desire Gorum ever went to Swansea to see her dying husband, but I think a case could be made for that too. What is known is that after the Great Swamp Fight, Captain John was brought back to Swansea where he died on February 5, 1676 (or 1675 by the old calendar which until 1752 started the year at about the spring equinox instead of the winter solstice). He died intestate, but the division of his estate is recorded in the colony's will records.

By hindsight we can see that the Great Swamp Fight of December 19, 1675, was the turning point in King Philip's War, but even into the summer of 1676 Indian raids continued all over New England, and with the capture of King Philip in the late summer of 1676 the war finally ended in total disaster for the Indians.

Desire Gorum's attitude toward the Indians is hardly politically correct by our standards, but it was certainly well earned and generally shared in the New England colonies of her time.

I was surprised to learn that there was some slavery in 17th Century New England, but it seems more comparable to Roman household slavery than to the Southern plantation type. Tooto is mentioned in the settlement of Captain John's estate as reported in the Plymouth Colony records. (Wills, V 3 Pt. 1pp. 162-64): "Desire, the relict of the said Captain Gorum to have the improvement of the negro during her life." Probably at her death in 1683 he was freed, and like many Roman slaves he had accumulated quite an estate of his own. His will, recorded in Barnstable in 1691, left a house, land, personal property and livestock to various members of the Gorum family, and he asked to be buried "as neer his mistress feet as may conveniently be."

As you probably guessed, Captain John's report to Governor Leverett is bona fide, and is preserved in the Massachusetts records.

As is obvious by now, Desire did get back to Barnstable, but in spite of her efforts then and later, little Shubael never got his higher education. He seems to have foregone his chance at Harvard in favor of a career in and about Barnstable as a carpenter, tavern owner and enterprising business man. But that, as Kipling was wont to say, is another story.

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