

George Washington's Military Manuals

Compiled by

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Remember, that it is the actions, and not the commission, that make the Officer—and that there is more expected from him than the Title. Do not forget, that there ought to be a time appropriated to attain this knowledge. And as we now have no opportunities to improve from Example, let us read there is Bland's and other treatises which will give the wished for information.

George Washington addressing his officers, 8 January 1756¹

During the American Revolution, twenty years after advising his officers to spend an “appropriated” time to study military manuals, Commander-in-Chief George Washington issued a general order on the “pernicious consequences . . . of GAMING.” He reminded his Continental Army officers that nothing will “redound more to their honor—afford them more solid amusement—or better answer the end of their appointment than to devote the vacant moments they may have to the study of Military authors.”² Indeed, Washington's own collection of military manuals attests to the value that he accorded those publications for essential instruction. A study of the manuals can provide today's historians with insight into eighteenth-century military strategy, tactics, and ordnance. They can also provide a basis for comparing those with what the documentary evidence indicates took place in military actions during the revolution.

Interest in identifying copies of Washington's military manuals in the Library of Congress was sparked during several very informative discussions with Ellen M. Clark, Library Director, Society of the Cincinnati. At the time of Washington's death, the inventory of his estate listed some nine hundred volumes. His nephew, Judge Bushrod Washington (1762-1829), later an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, inherited the estate and added his own books to the library. Following his death all of the books, pamphlets, and papers were left to two of the justice's nephews. Over the years George Washington's collection, as reflected in the inventory, was commingled with publications acquired by family members, and some of the collection was dispersed.

By 1847-48, “a considerable portion” of the collection, “perhaps all that remained,” was acquired by bookseller Henry Stevens. He, in turn, expected to ship it to the British Museum. To prevent this from taking place, a group of men in Cambridge and Boston solicited subscriptions to meet Stevens' demand for five thousand dollars, later reduced by twelve hundred dollars. Many individuals subscribed as did the Boston Athenaeum, a private library established in 1807. When the subscribers met to discuss the disposition of their newly-acquired collection, they “voted to place the books permanently in the Boston Athenaeum, of which a

majority were Proprietors.” In 1897, that institution published *A Catalog of the Washington Collection in The Boston Athenaeum*. The topics reflect George Washington’s wide-ranging interests, including literature, religion, geography, history and politics, law and legislation, the military, agriculture and science, maps and charts. The *Catalogue* is arranged in four parts: (1) Books and pamphlets bearing George Washington’s autograph, bookplate, or publications that were presented to him, or “by other means can be proved to have been in his possession.” (2) Publications that had been at Mount Vernon, but belonged to individuals other than George Washington. (3) The writings of George Washington. (4) Washingtoniana³

Initially, the purpose of the following compilation was to use the *Catalogue’s* list of “Military Works” to identify paper copies of the same editions that are held by the Library of Congress. The six “Additional Titles,” listed in the *Catalogue*, were also included. These six items, published between 1777 and 1797, were “sold with Washington’s collection, but without a mark of ownership.” Four publications in the 1897 *Catalogue* are noted as being with “the Washington manuscripts in the Library of the Department of State, Washington.” In 1903 a Congressional Act, followed by an Executive Order, authorized transferring those items to the Library of Congress.⁴

There are fifty items listed below. Given the number of paper copies, the titles contained in two online subscription databases (Eighteenth Century Collections Online, and Early American Imprints), and on microfilm, the Library of Congress has sixty-eight percent of the military manuals listed in the *Catalogue of the George Washington Collection*. In preparing this list it seemed useful to expand the brief titles with full bibliographic citations, insofar as possible.

The Library of Congress call number follows each entry listed below if the volume is available in paper. If available online, or on microfilm, that information is indicated. A number of titles are available in paper and online. Copies of other printings, or editions, of specific titles, are also noted if paper copies are among the Library’s holdings.

George Washington’s Military Manuals

1. *Acts of the Parliament respecting militia*. 1 vol. [Unidentified]
2. Adams, John. *President of the United States. Rules and regulations respecting the recruiting service*. I. *No indirect methods are allowed to inveigle men into the service of the United States; and it is particularly forbidden, to enlist any individual, while in a state of intoxication.* II. *No individual is to be enlisted [unless ?] healthy, robust, and without unsound or sore legs, scurvy, scald head, or other infirmity that may render him unfit for service.* [1798?]
George Washington Papers, pamphlet, Series 6, Subseries C, microfilm reel 118, Manuscript Division.

3. Anderson, John. *Essais sur l'artillerie de campagne, depuis que l'on fait usage de la poudre à canon dans les combats*. [Paris, 1791]
4. _____. *Essays on field artillery since the use of gun powder in war*. Glasgow: Printed by Chapman and Duncan, 1788.
5. *The art of war*. 3 vols. I. *The duties of all military officers in actual service; including necessary instructions, in many capital matters, by the knowledge of which, a man may soon become an ornament to the profession of arms*. By Monsieur de Lamont, Town-Major of Toulon. II. *The duties of the soldiers in general ; including necessary instructions, in many capital matters, by remaining ignorant of which, a man who pretends to be a soldier, will be every day in danger, of bringing disgrace upon himself, and material injury, to the cause of his country*. III. *The rules and practice of the greatest generals, in the manoeuvres of encamping, marching, order of battle, fighting, attacking, and defending strong places, with the manner of surprising towns, quarters, and armies; exhibiting what is most requisite to be known by all who enter into the military service*. By the Chevalier de la Vallière. Lamont, Monsieur de; François de la Baume Le Blanc de La Vallière. Philadelphia: Printed and sold by Robert Bell, 1776.
U101 .A7 Am Im Rare Bk
Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, no. 14816.
6. Bland, Humphrey. *A treatise of military discipline: in which is laid down and explained the duty of the officer and soldier, through the severall [sic] branches of the service*. 9th ed. Revised, corrected, and altered to the present practice of the Army. London: R. Baldwin [etc], 1762. *
UD160 .N5 Am Im Rare Bk
Note: LC has the 1740, 1759, and 1776 editions.
Other editions of this work include 1727, 1734, 1743, 1746, 1753, and 1756.
7. Cavan, Richard Lambart, 6th Earl of. *A new system of military discipline, founded upon principle*. By a general officer. Ondon: Printed for J. Almon, 1773.
U101 .C3 Am Imp Rare Bk
Eighteenth Century Collections Online
8. Clairac, Louis André de la Mamie de, Chevalier de. *The field engineer*. Translated from the French of M. Le Chevalier de Clairac, by Captain Charles Vallancey. To which are added, remarks on Marshal Saxe's new system of fortification, proposed in his reveries, or memoirs on the art of war. Dublin: Printed for John Smith, at the Philosophers Heads on the Blind-Quay, 1758.
Note: LC has the 1773 ed.
9. *Considerations upon the different modes of finding recruits for the army*. London: T. Cadell, 1775.
UB325 .G7C6
Eighteenth Century Collections Online

10. Davie, William Richardson. *Instructions to be observed for the formation and movements of the cavalry. Published agreeable to a resolution of the legislature of North-Carolina.* Halifax, [N.C.]: Printed by Abraham Hodge, 1799.

Early American Imprints, 1st Series: Evans, no. 35383.

11. Drummond de Melfort, Louis, Comte de. *Traité sur la cavalerie.* 2 vols., one a folio atlas. Paris: De l'imprimerie de Guillaume Desprez, 1776.

12. *Essay on the art of war: in which the general principles of all the operations of war in the field are fully explained. The whole collected from the opinions of the best authors.* London: Printed for A. Millar, in the Strand, 1761.

Eighteenth Century Collections Online

13. Grace, Henry. *The code of military standing regulations of the Bengal establishment. Containing an abbreviation of the standing orders, rules, and regulations, that are now in force; arranged under their respective and particular heads, in sections and articles; together with an appendix of the whole of the original orders from which the digest is formed, under a similar arrangement with their several dates and authorities; revised and corrected in the different public offices under government. Compiled by Captain Henry Grace, major of brigade to the artillery brigade, Fort William, by authority of the government, 1st of January, 1791.* 2 vols. Calcutta: Printed by Cooper and Upjohn, [1791].

Eighteenth Century Collections Online

14. Great Britain. Adjutant-General's Office. *The manual exercise as ordered by his Majesty in 1764. Together with plans and explanations for the method generally practis'd at reviews and field days.* Boston, New England: Printed by T. and J. Fleet, [1774].

UD234 .A3 1775 Am Imp Rare Bk

Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, no. 42621.

16. _____. *A list of the general and field-officers, as they rank in the army: of the officers in the several regiments of horse, dragoons, and foot, on the British and Irish establishments: (To which is now added, an alphabetical index): the Royal Regiment of Artillery and Corps of Engineers, the Irish Artillery and Engineers, and the marines on full and half pay: with the dates of their commissions, as they rank in each corps and in the army: the governors, lieutenant governors, &c. of His Majesty's garrisons at home and abroad, with their allowances: All the officers on half-pay: and a succession of colonels: With the uniforms to each reg'ment, from the new order for cloathing [sic], &c.: the whole complete to 1772.* London: Printed for J. Millan, [1772].

Note: LC has a 1771 edition.

17. _____. *A list of the general staff officers, and of the officers in the several regiments serving in North-America, under the command of his Excellency General Sir William Howe, KG. With the dates of their commissions as they rank in each corps and in the army.* New York: Printed by James Rivington, near the Coffee House Bridge, 1778.

E267 .L78

Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, no. 43460.

18. _____. *A list of officers of the army, serving in North-America, under the command of his Excellency General Sir Guy Carleton, K.G. With the dates of their commissions, as they rank in each corps, and in the army. For the year 1783.* New-York: Published by James Rivington, Printer to the King's most Excellent Majesty, 1783.

Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, no. 17809.

19. _____. *A representation of the cloathing [sic] of His Majesty's household, and of all the forces upon the establishment of Great Britain and Ireland, 1747.* London: [n.p., 1742].

Eighteenth Century Collections Online.

20. Grasse, comte de. *Mémoire [sur de combat naval du 12 avril, 1782.]* Paris, 1782.

21. Hanson, Thomas. *The Prussian evolutions in actual engagements; both in platoons, sub, and grand-divisions; explaining, all the different evolutions, and manoeuvres, in firing, standing, advancing, and retreating, which were exhibited [sic] before his present Majesty, May 8, 1769; and before John Duke of Argyle, on the Links of Leith, near Edinburgh, in 1771. With some additions, since that time, explained with thirty folio copper plates. To which is added, the Prussian manual exercise; also the theory and some practices of gunnery. By Thomas Hanson, adjutant to the 2d Battalion, and teacher of part of the American militia.* Philadelphia: Printed for the author, by J. Douglass M'Dougall, printer, book-binder and stationer, at his shop in Chestnut-Street, three doors below Second-Street, [1775].

U101 .H25 Am Imp Rare Bk

Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, no. 14098.

22. Janey, ___ de. *The partisan: or, the art of making war in detachment: with plans proper to facilitate the understanding of the several dispositions and movements necessary to light troops, in order to accomplish their marches, ambuscades, attacks and retreats with success. Translated from the French of Mr. De Janey. By an officer in the army.* London: Printed for R. Griffiths, Bookseller, opposite Somerset-House in the Strand, 1760.

Note: Translation of *Le partisan, ou, l'art de faire la petite guerre*, sometimes attributed to Henry Ellis.

Eighteenth Century Collections Online.

23. Knox, Henry. *A plan for the general arrangement of the militia of the United States: the regulations for the discipline and government of the militia, will be submitted hereafter.* [New York: s.n., 1786].

UA42 .A2 1786 Am Imp

24. Le Blond, M. [Guillaume]. *The military engineer: or, a treatise on the attack and defence of all kinds of fortified place. In which are explained the construction of the necessary works, with the method of designing them on paper, and transferring the plan to the ground; the attacks of large towns, with their different outworks most in use; and also of smaller places, forts and other posts, which occur in the course of a war; the manner of escalades and surprizes; and all other matters relating either to the works or operations, necessary to convey a full knowledge of the art of engineering. Composed by M. Le Blond, professor of mathematics, for the use of the French noblesse. To which is added, a succinct account of three remarkable sieges at different periods, by which the progress of the art is pointed out. In two parts. Illustrated with twenty copper-plates.* 2 vols. London: Printed for J. Nourse at the Lamb opposite Katherine-Street in the Strand, 1759.

Eighteenth Century Collections Online

25. Muller, John. *A treatise of artillery: containing I. General constructions of brass and iron guns used by sea and land, and of their carriages. II. General constructions of mortars and howitzes, their beds and carriages. III. The dimensions of all other kinds of carriages used in the artillery. IV. The exercise of the regiment at home, and in service abroad in a siege of a battle. V. Its march and encampment; ammunition, stores, and horses. VI. Lastly, the necessary laboratory work. To which is prefixed, a theory of powder applied to fire-arms. For the use of the Royal Academy of Artillery.* London: Printed for John Millan, Whitehall, MDCCLVII [1757].

UF144 .M95 Rare Book/Special Collections

Eighteenth Century Collections Online

Note: LC has the 1768 and 1779 editions; reprints of the 1757 and 1780 editions.

26. _____. *A treatise containing the practical part of fortification. In four parts. I. The theory of walls, arches, and timbers, with several tables of their dimensions. II. The knowledge of the materials, their properties, qualities, and the manner of using them. III. The manner of tracing a fortress on the ground, the making an estimate, and executing the works. IV. The method of building aquatics, as stone-bridges, harbours, quays, wharfs, sluices, and aqueducts. Illustrated with twenty eight copper plates. For the use of the Royal Academy of Artillery at Woolwich. By John Miller, professor of artillery and fortification. The second edition, with improvements.* London: Printed for A. Millar, in the Strand, 1764.

Eighteenth Century Collections Online

Note: LC has the 1755 edition.

27. *Ordonnance du roi, concernant de Corps du Génie. Du 31 Décembre 1776.* Paris: De l'imprimerie royale, 1777.

28. Pickering, Timothy. *An easy plan of discipline for the militia*. Salem, New-England: Printed by Samuel and Ebenezer Hall, 1773.

UD144 .P6 Am Imp Rare Bk

Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, no. 14404

American Culture Series, microfilm reel 351.003, Microform Reading Room.

29. Saxe, Herman Maurice, Comte de. *Field Marshal Count Saxe's plan for new-modelling the French Army, reviving its discipline, and improving its exercise. In which are shewn the advantages of the Roman legion; and a proposal made for forming the French infantry into thirty legions; with three tables, containing, the necessary alterations to be made in their present infantry for the purpose, and the pay of the several ranks in the legion. Together with that great man's thoughts on the true causes of the French victories and defeats in the two last wars; and his delineation of the present state of the French army. Translated from the original French, with an additional plan of the proposed legion, and other of the battalion, which were all omitted in the original*. Vol. 3. London: Printed for T. Osborne, in Gray's-Inn, MDCCLIII [1753].

DC135 .S3 N4 Vol.3 Rare Book Coll

Note: Short title of vols. 1 & 2: *The history of Maurice Count Saxe, field-marshal of the French forces, Duke Elect of Courland and Semigallia, in two volumes*. Imprint as above.

DC135 .S3N3 Rare Book Coll

30. Simes, Thomas. *A military course for the government and conduct of a battalion, designed for their regulations in quarter, camp, or garrison, with useful observations and instructions for their manner of attack and defence, ornamented with a frontispiece and twenty copper-plate plans*. By Thomas Simes, Esq. Late of the Queen's Royal Regiment, author of the military guide, &c. governor of the Hibernian Society for the orphans and children of soldiers. London: Printed for the Author, and sold by Almon, Piccadilly; Hooper, Ludgate-street; Richardson and Urquhart, Royal Exchange; and Walter, Spring-gardens, 1777.

Eighteenth Century Collections Online

31 _____. *A military guide for young officers by Thomas Simes, Esq., author of the military medley. In two volumes*. London, printed. Philadelphia, re-printed by J. Humphreys, R. Bell, and R. Aitken, Printers and Bookseller, MDCCLXXVI [1776].

U101 .S58 Am Imp

Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, no. 15083

American Culture Series, microfilm reel 417.207, Microform Reading Room.

32. _____. *The military instructor: for the non-commissioned officers and private men of the infantry*. London, 1779.

33. Starrat, William. *The doctrine of projectiles demonstrated and apply'd to all the most useful problems in practical gunnery. To which is added, the description and use of a new mathematical instrument. Together with several curious properties of projectiles never before publish'd.*

Dublin: Printed by S. Powell, in Crane-Lane, near Essex-street, 1733.

UF750 .S79 1773

Eighteenth Century Collections Online

34. [Steuben, Fredrich Wilhelm Ludolf Gerhard Augustin, Baron von]. *Regulations for the order and discipline of the troops of the United States. Part One.* Philadelphia: Printed by Styner and Cist, 1779.

UB501 1779 Am Imp

Note: Library of Congress also has editions of 1782, 1783, 1787, 1793, 1794, 1800, 1802, 1803, 1804, 1807, and 1809.

35 Stevenson, Roger. *Military Instructions for officers detached in the field: containing a scheme for forming a corps of a partisan. Illustrated with plans of the manoeuvres necessary in carrying on the petite guerre.* London: Sold by Messrs. D. Wilson, and T. Cadell, successor to Mr. Millar; in the Strand; T. Payne, at the Mews-Gate: and by Messrs. Foulis, Glasgow, 1770.

U170 .S84 Am Imp

Eighteenth Century Collections Online

36. *A system of camp-discipline, military honours, garrison-duty, and other regulations for the land forces. Collected by a gentleman of the army. In which are included Kane's discipline for a battalion in action. With a map of the seat of war, lines and plans of battles, and above sixty military schemes, finely engraved from the originals of the most eminent generals, &c. To which is added, General Kane's campaigns of King William and the Duke of Marlborough, improved from the late Earl of Craufurd's and Colonel Dunbar's copies, taken from Gen. Kane's own writing. With his remarks on the several stratagems by which every battle was won or lost, from 1689 to 1712. The second edition. Continued from the Restoration, where our standing army commences, in a series of historical and chronological facts of the military and naval transactions of Great Britain; being a concise history (to supply the scenes of action in which the general was not engaged) to 1757. By an impartial hand. 2nd ed.* London: Printed for J. Millan, opposite the Admiralty Office, 1757.

Eighteenth Century Collections Online

37. *Traité de Cavalerie.* 1 vol. fol. [Unidentified]

38. Turpin de Crissel, Lancelot, Comte. *An essay on the art of war. In which the general principles of all the operations of war in the field are fully explained. Translated from the French of Count Turpin, by Captain Joseph Otway.* 2 vols. in 1. London: Printed by A. Hamilton, for W. Johnston, in Ludgate-Street, 1761.

U101 .T96 Pre-1801 Coll.

Eighteenth Century Collections Online

39. United States. Office of the President. *Rules and regulations respecting the recruiting service*. United States War Department, 1798.

George Washington Papers, pamphlet, Series 6, Subseries C, microfilm reel 118, Manuscript Division.

40. Vallancy, Charles. *An essay on fortification: or, an enquiry into the causes of the great superiority of the attack over the defence*. Dublin: Printed by Richard James, 1757.

41. Webb, Thomas, Lieut. *A military treatise on the appointments of the army*. Philadelphia: Printed by W. Dunlap, 1759.

42. [Williamson, John.] *Advice to the officers of the British army, with some hints to the drummer and private soldier*. London: edition unknown.

U20 .G8 1783

43. [Windham, William.] *A plan of exercise, for the militia of the province of the Massachusetts-Bay. Extracted from the plan of discipline, for the Norfolk militia*. Boston: Printed and sold [by Richard Draper] the Printing-Office in Newbury-Street, 1774.

44. Young, William, Major. *Manoeuvres, or practical observations of the art of war: containing, Vol. I. 1. The manual exercise. 2. An essay on the command of small detachments. 3. A new system of fortification, by making use of the standing timber, &c. Vol. II. 1. Manoeuvres for a battalion of infantry. 2. Manoeuvres for a battalion, and brigade of infantry. 3. Manoeuvres in general, with a short table, containing above two hundred and forty different movements. With 62 copper-plates. 2 vols. in one*. London: Printed for J. Millan, [1771?].

Eighteenth Century Collections Online

Additional Titles

45. Grandmaison, de, Major General. *A Treatise, on the military service of light horse, and light infantry, in the field, and in fortified places. By Major General de Grandmaison, formerly a captain, with the rank of lieutenant colonel of cavalry, in the Volontiers of Flanders. Translated from the French by Major Lewis Nicola*. Philadelphia: Printed and sold by Robert Bell, in Third Street, 1777.

U167 .G713 Am Im Rare Bk

Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, no. 15319

46. Great Britain. War Office. *Light infantry exercise: as ordered in His Majesty's regulations for the movements of the troops*. Printed for the War Office, by T. Egerton, as the Military Library, near Whitehall, 1797.

George Washington Papers, pamphlet, Series 6, Subseries C, microfilm reel 118, Manuscript Division.

47. _____. *Rules and regulations for the formation, field exercise, and movements of His Majesty's forces*. Adjutant General's Office, June 1, 1792: [London]: War Office Printed, and sold by J. Walter, at Homer's Head, Charing-Cross, 1792.
George Washington Papers, Series 6, Subseries C, microfilm reel 118, Manuscript Division.
Note: LC also has the new ed. of 1798.
48. Pariset, Nicholas. *The American Trooper's Pocket Companion being a Concise and Comprehensive System of Discipline for the Cavalry of the United States*. Trenton: Printed [by Isaac Collins] for the author, 1793.
49. Simons, James. *A new principle of tactics practised [sic] by the armies of the Republic of France; illustrated and recommended to be practised by the regular militia armies of the United States*. Charleston: from the Press of Timothy & Mason, 1797.
George Washington Papers, Series 6, Subseries C, microfilm reel 118, Manuscript Division.
Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans no. 32838
50. White, Anthony Walton. *The military system for the New Jersey cavalry*. New Brunswick: 1793.
UE162 .N5W5

NOTES

1. *The Papers of George Washington: Colonial Service*. W. W. Abbot, et al, ed. 10 vols. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1983-1995), 2:257.
2. *The Papers of George Washington: Revolutionary War Series*. Dorothy Twohig, ed. 18 vols. to date. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1985-), 9:368.
3. *A Catalogue of the Washington Collection in the Boston Athenaeum* P.C. Appleton, comp. [Cambridge: University Press: John Wilson and Son].(Boston Athenaeum, 1897), vii–ix.
4. *Index to the George Washington Papers* (Washington: Library of Congress, 1964), xvi; *Catalogue*, 537-42.