GEORGE WASHINGTON'S DEVELOPMENT AS
AN ESPIONAGE CHIEF

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
University of North Texas in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

By

David Ritchey, B.A.
Denton, Texas
May, 1993
Timely intelligence regarding the strength and location of the enemy was vital to the commanders on both sides. Washington gained his early experience in intelligence gathering in the wilderness during the French and Indian War. By the end of the American Revolution, Washington had become a skilled manager of intelligence. He sent agents behind enemy lines, recruited tory intelligence sources, questioned travelers for information, and initiated numerous espionage missions.

Many heroic patriots gathered the intelligence that helped win the War for Independence. Their duties required many of them to pose as one of the enemy, and often incur the hatred of friends and neighbors. Some gave their lives in helping to establish the new American nation. It is possible that without Washington's intelligence service, American independence might not have been won.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ESPIONAGE IN THE WILDERNESS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ESPIONAGE IN THE SHADOWS OF BOSTON</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. SUCCESS AND FAILURE IN NEW YORK</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. THE DESIGNS OF THE ENEMY ARE NOT YET UNDERSTOOD</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. INTELLIGENCE SUCCESSES AT PHILADELPHIA</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. SPIES AROUND NEW YORK</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. GEORGE WASHINGTON- ESPIONAGE CHIEF</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1

ESPIONAGE IN THE WILDERNESS

On 18 December 1776 from his position on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River, General George Washington, commander-in-chief of the Continental Army, wrote to his brother, John Augustine: "I think the game is pretty near up. . . . No man, I believe, ever had a greater choice of difficulties and less means to extricate himself from them."  

Since the recent adoption of the Declaration of Independence, the Continental Army had barely escaped ruin on Long Island and at White Plains, and it had lost 2,800 men captured by the British at Fort Washington. The forces under Washington, owing to desertions and casualties, had dwindled to a few thousand, half-starved patriots. Only Washington's prudence in confiscating all the available boats after crossing the Delaware River prevented his pursuit by the triumphant British. Hessian forces commanded by Colonel Johann Gottlieb Rall occupied the Trenton side of the Delaware River, confidant the biting cold and hunger would extinguish the last flames of rebellion in the dwindling American encampment across the river.  

Then on the night of 25 December 1776, just seven days after Washington composed the disheartening letter to his brother, the continental troops crossed the Delaware to the Trenton side and in a masterful surprise attack routed the Hessian army without suffering a single American fatality. Washington in one night restored confidence and credibility to the floundering American effort in the War for Independence.
As he would on other occasions during the American Revolution, Washington used knowledge of the enemy's intentions to lead his chronically outnumbered American forces into action against the British. Whether the commander of the continental troops chose to advance or retreat, fight or run, his decision was often based on information gained through the use of secret agents. General George Washington's espionage system proved to be a major factor in the Americans' victories in the Revolutionary War.

Early in the war, spying simply was a matter of finding an intelligent volunteer to go behind enemy lines and procure information for General Washington and his staff. The Continental Army's successful Christmas Day, 1776, attack against the Hessians in Trenton, New Jersey, resulted from the actions of a brave weaver, butcher, and veteran of the French and Indian War named John Honeyman. If possible, get some person in Trenton. . . ." wrote Washington in a letter to his officers on 14 December 1776. "We are in a neighborhood of very disaffected people, equal care therefore should be taken that one of these Persons do not undertake the business in order to betray us." warned the commander-in-chief. Pretending to possess tory sympathies, Honeyman fled his Griggstown, New Jersey, home and went over to the British side posing as a butcher. The Hessians in Trenton were anxious to buy beef, and it would be natural for Honeyman to wander the area looking for cattle to slaughter. Honeyman studied the Hessian camp at Trenton during these ambles over the British-held side of the Delaware, noting the Hessians' relaxed discipline and inadequate defenses. Arrangements existed for Honeyman's capture by an American outpost whenever the
butcher-turned-spy learned anything of special importance. Honeyman's escape would be contrived after he delivered his intelligence to the commander-in-chief. John Honeyman practised his precarious profession throughout the war, and so far as is known, received no reward for his work.  

The information Honeyman gave Washington after the spy's orchestrated capture in the fields on the New Jersey side of the Delaware River included a description of the general situation in Trenton, a plan of the Hessian troop dispositions, and the vital news that no fortifications had been erected. When Honeyman finished reciting everything he had learned, Washington confined him in the guardhouse pending an early morning court-martial. A fire near the guardhouse conveniently broke out during the night and Honeyman escaped in the confusion. Honeyman then crossed the Delaware and fled until he was taken captive by a Hessian outpost. Within hours of his escape from Washington's encampment, the brave butcher informed the Hessian commander in Trenton that the Americans were unable to mount any effective operation. Honeyman thereupon set off hurriedly for New Brunswick knowing the American troops would soon march for Trenton.

Colonel Rall and his Hessian troops were asleep when the American forces marched into Trenton through a fierce sleet storm, and in two columns converged on the nearly unprotected King and Queen streets. In less than an hour Hessian defenses collapsed, Colonel Rall lay mortally wounded, twenty-five or thirty of his mercenaries were killed or wounded, and another 918 were taken prisoner. Others in addition to John Honeyman continued to play out their lonely, thankless roles, often
scorned by neighbors who believed the spies to be tories. A year later Washington acknowledged the difficulty of the spy's life in a letter to Governor William Livingston of New Jersey when he wrote, "The persons employed must bear the suspicions of being thought inimical; and it is not in their power to assert their innocence, because that would get abroad and destroy the confidence which the enemy puts in them."13

Espionage, the act of spying on an enemy or potential foe, is as old as war itself. The ancient Egyptians developed espionage into a fine art. Moses sent spies into Canaan. By the age of Voltaire, statesmen were systematically compromised, diplomats bribed, and messages regularly intercepted and copied as nations sought vital intelligence. Kings kept their servants under surveillance, government ministers were plagued by spies, and royal courts of Europe were overrun with secret agents.14 Spying has always been regarded as an essential government activity.15 George Washington, however, received his first lesson in espionage not in palaces or on European battlefields, but in the forests of the Ohio River Valley.

At the age of twenty, George Washington possessed no experience or training as a soldier.16 In Virginia, as in most of the colonies, every county supported a militia company. These companies were supposedly a military force, but they often more closely resembled social clubs. In February 1753, young, untried Washington was commissioned as a major and placed in charge of training southern Virginia militia.17 Washington learned in October 1753 that Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie, the highest resident official in Virginia, planned to send a messenger to the French commander at Fort LeBoeuf, Legardeur de St. Piere, to
deliver a protest against French encroachments into territory claimed by Britain. Washington volunteered to carry the message and successfully completed the assignment, traveling through five hundred miles of unbroken woods. The intelligence gathering techniques of Native American spies during the expedition were one of Major Washington's early introductions to the value of espionage. Washington stopped in Logstown, a small village near the point where the Allegheny and Monogahela Rivers join to form the Ohio River, to consult with Tanacharisson, a Seneca chief also known as the Half King. When Half King arrived at Washington's tent he reported that the French were determined to stay in the Ohio valley. Frenchmen who deserted from a company at Cuscuscas, near the mouth of the Ohio River, informed Washington the location and strength of the French forts on the Mississippi, and in the Illinois country. "They were," Washington recorded in his diary, "sent from New Orleans with one-hundred men and eight canoe-loads of provisions to this place; where they were expected to have met the same number of men . . . ." Washington returned to Williamsburg with St. Pierre's reply and provided Dinwiddie with detailed maps of the region and other information from his reconnaissance which convinced Dinwiddie to plan to establish a fort at the site of present day Pittsburgh.

Major Washington was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and received orders to enlist troops to garrison the new fort which was to be constructed on the headwaters of the Ohio River. In April 1754 Washington, who set out with about 160 poorly trained soldiers, was still 200 miles from the proposed location of the fort when he learned the French had occupied the site. On 28 May 1754 Washington surprised and routed
a group of French troops who later claimed to be on a diplomatic mission to the British. Meanwhile Governor Dinwiddie's failure to supply alcoholic beverages for the expedition continually hampered Washington's efforts to gather intelligence. Washington later observed that liquor was the essential currency in rewarding the Native Americans who provided intelligence. Washington's men advanced to about ten miles from Fort Duquesne, as the French had named it, and constructed their own stronghold, Fort Necessity. On either June 27 or 28 a message arrived from Monakatoocha, an important Native American chief friendly to the British. The chief had recently visited Fort Duquesne where he witnessed the arrival of reinforcements. He also overheard the French declare they would soon attack Washington's tiny force with 800 regular troops and 400 Native Americans. French deserters had previously reported to Washington that reinforcements were expected. In addition, two colonial soldiers had disappeared. Washington feared they may have deserted to or been captured by the French. If the French determined Washington's location and manpower, they would attack as quickly as possible. This was Washington's assessment prompted by his first important study of intelligence reports. The knowledge did him little good, however. A rainstorm turned the battlefield into a sea of mud, and on 4 July 1754 Washington, who by now was surrounded by the French, surrendered.

A discouraged Washington and his force were paroled and allowed to return to Williamsburg, where, to his surprise, Governor Dinwiddie and the Virginia colonists welcomed the returning Lieutenant Colonel home with praise for his bravery and resourcefulness. Washington was
promoted to the rank of Colonel, and all his officers and men were
given land bounties. The Seneca Chief, Half King, who
had accompanied Washington on the expeditions to Forts Le Boeuf and
Duquesne, described the future commander-in-chief as "good natured"
but inexperienced. Half King pointed out that Washington would, "
command the Indians as his slaves, and would have them every day
upon the Out Scout and attack the enemy by themselves, and that he
would by no means take Advice from the Indians . . . " At this
evWare stage of his career as a soldier, Washington displayed a preference
for intelligence gathered by indigenous populations and an independence
in interpreting the results which was characteristic of his subsequent
years as a Revolutionary War general.

When Major General Edward Braddock arrived in America to assume
command of His Majesty's troops, Washington volunteered to serve without
pay as aide to the General provided he was allowed time to find someone
to manage his business affairs at Mount Vernon. Washington believed
this expedition to be a rare opportunity to learn military affairs
and discipline from a regular British officer. At the time of his
arrival in America, Braddock was completely inexperienced with the
wilderness conditions a military trek to Fort Duquesne would inevitably
encounter. Braddock was desperately in need of counsel, and, despite
Washington's defeat only months before at the hands of the French and
Native Americans, Braddock considered Washington’s offer to serve potentially
useful. Seven days after his arrival in America, Braddock asked the
young Virginian to join his command as aide-de-camp, an invitation
Washington accepted.
Washington grew increasingly irritated by the slowness of the march and General Braddock's habit of blaming the colonials for every delay or misfortune. In a letter to William Fairfax dated 7 June 1755 Washington complained that, "The General, by frequent breaches of Contracts, has lost all degree of patience; and for want of that consideration and moderation which shou'd be used by a Man of Sense upon these occassion's, will I fear, represent us in a light we little deserve . . . ."35 As the British force drew nearer Fort Duquesne, Braddock became aware of his heavy dependence upon his Native American scouts and Washington. By 3 July the dangers of scouting and the possibility of ambush became so great that Braddock was unable to obtain necessary intelligence unless he constantly supplied the Native Americans with gifts and promises of reward.36

On 9 July 1755 a small French force, consisting mostly of Native Americans, attacked and completely routed the British.37 Washington described the battle and his narrow escape from death in a letter to his mother. He wrote: "When we came there we were attacked by a body of French and Indians, whose number (I am certain) did not exceed three-hundred men. Ours consisted of about thirteen-hundred well-armed troops, chiefly of the English soldiers, who were struck with such a panic that they behaved with more cowardice than it is possible to conceive." The fact that Washington was unscathed was miraculous. Washington continued in the letter to his mother, "I luckily escaped without a wound, though I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me."38 Washington conducted himself throughout the ordeal with heroic valor. He emerged a respected hero even in defeat.
Two decades later as Washington rode to Cambridge, Massachusetts, to assume command of the Continental Army, the farmer turned commander-in-chief knew he was ill-prepared for the task ahead. Washington understood that leading untrained and unconventional soldiers through the wilderness scarcely qualified him for leadership in the upcoming crisis. One of Washington's crucial strengths was his willingness to learn. Washington already had learned that the British Army could be beaten. He witnessed the defeat of Braddock who had failed to gather adequate intelligence to ascertain the strength and status of the defenders of Fort Duquesne. During the greater part of the long struggle for American independence, Washington would be his own intelligence officer. Carefully analyzing scores of often conflicting intelligence reports, General Washington always tried to assess his enemy's activities before he committed his forces into action. Secrecy and surprise became his chief tactical devices. Even his major generals were often uninformed of Washington's innermost thoughts until the last possible moment before going into action.

Secrecy is the essential factor in the operation of a successful intelligence service. Washington was especially careful to avoid exposing his agents; even today, no secret files or day books concerning American espionage activities exist to identify Washington's spies. Though his initial efforts were crude, Washington had spy rings operating successfully out of Philadelphia by 1777, and from 1778 to the end of the war, several groups transmitted intelligence to him from within New York City, which was the site of the British Army's headquarters.
ENDNOTES


5 Ibid., 288.


7 Ibid., 369.


Freeman, *Biography*, 1:266.


Ibid., 309-10; Freeman, *Biography*, 1:283.


Ibid., 5, 6.

Ibid., 8.


26Freeman, Biography, 1:396-97.

27Ambler, Washington and the West, 89; Koontz, Dinwiddie, 299.


29Freeman, Biography, 1:415; Paul E. Kopperman, Braddock of the Monagahela (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977), 103-04 (hereinafter cited as Kopperman, Braddock).


32Ambler, Washington and the West, 97.

33Ibid.


35George Washington to William Fairfax, 7 June 1755, Fitzpatrick, Writings of Washington, 1:133; O'Meara, Guns, 127-29; Kopperman, Braddock, 15.

36Jacobs, Diplomacy, 143; Kopperman, Braddock, 104.

37Memorandum of George Washington, 9 July 1755, Fitzpatrick, Writings of Washington, 1:147.


CHAPTER 2

ESPIONAGE IN THE SHADOWS OF BOSTON

On 1 October 1768 royal transports anchored in Boston harbor and began to disembark redcoats onto Long Wharf. General Thomas Gage, commander of all British forces in North America, had received orders earlier in the year from the Earl of Hillsborough, Secretary of State to the Colonies, to dispatch two regiments of men from Halifax to Boston. Hillsborough ordered the troop movement to, "strengthen the Hands of Government in the Province of Massachusetts Bay, enforce a due Obedience to the Laws, and protect and support the Civil Magistrates, and the Officers of the Crown, in the Execution of their Duty." Prior to 1768 Bostonians had seen redcoats arrive and depart to Canada or frontier outposts, but most of these newly-arrived troops did not leave Boston until 17 March 1776.

The British sent troops to garrison the city in the wake of demonstrations over a series of unpopular acts passed by Parliament, including most recently the Townshend Acts. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Charles Townshend, persuaded Parliament to enact duties upon paint, paper, tea, glass, and lead imported into the colonies. When a Boston town meeting protested the newly-enacted duties in the fall of 1767, Thomas Hutchinson, Governor of Massachusetts, wrote to England urging the King's ministers to suspend the legitimacy of local government. Hutchinson believed the Bostonians were plotting the removal of royal
influence in colonial government. In his history of the colony of Massachusetts, Hutchinson wrote:

A stand made at this time by government in England; a stop put to all legislative acts whatever by the prorogation or discontinuance of all assemblies, . . . might have had the happy effect of restoring peace and quiet, or otherwise must have removed all doubts of the real designs of the leaders of the people; and, in such case, it would certainly have been good policy, . . . to have used the means necessary to compel to submission without delay.5

In order to send a subtle message to Hutchinson, the Boston Selectmen decided in September 1768 to enforce an obscure, overlooked law requiring an annual cleaning and inspection of each town's public supply of firearms. Old blunderbusses and muskets, dating as far back as Queen Anne's War, were dragged out and displayed at a special town meeting in Faneuil Hall. The Selectmen then opened a discussion seeking suggestions for preparations for home defense. The town meeting voted in a provocative resolution encouraging each citizen to arm himself in order to resist foreign invasion.6

With two thousand British troops occupying their city, the Bostonians found it difficult to carry on business as usual. Redcoats seemed to be quartered in nearly every street, and the presence of such unwelcome guests in Boston led to mutual insults, minor incidents, and occasionally serious offenses. Citizens were arrested and confined without warrants, and "Gentlemen and ladies coming into town in their carriages, threatened by the guards to have their brains blown out unless they stopped."7 Newspapers in other areas spread stories of suspected British misconduct. The New York Journal for 10 November 1768 reported that inhabitants of the town were, "greatly insulted and abused by some of the officers and soldiers, several have been
assaulted on frivolous pretences." Another story in the same issue of the *New York Journal*, reported that a captain with two other officers, "endeavoured to persuade some Negro servants to ill-treat and abuse their masters, assuring them that the soldiers were come to procure their freedoms, and with their help and assistance they should be able to drive all the Liberty Boys to the devil . . . " The "Journal of Daily Occurences" in the *New York Journal* for 10 November 1768, reported that the ladies of Boston refused to attend social meetings with the soldiers, " . . . who have been sent hither to dragoon us into measures, which appear calculated to enslave and ruin us." Offenses by the redcoats against the residents of Boston multiplied and so filled the local newspapers, that according to the *Supplement* to the *New York Journal* of 6 April 1769, "a particular enumeration of instances thereof, would be as tedious as it is painful." "Our cities are garrisoned," lamented a Son of Liberty, "every species of injustice that a wicked and debauched ministry could invent, is now practised against the most sober, industrious, and loyal people, that ever lived in society." By October 1772 a Boston town meeting unanimously resolved that twenty-one men be appointed to a Committee of Correspondence to declare and protect the rights of the citizens. Once organized in other towns and colonies, the Committees were a means of unifying patriot sentiment through an intercolonial network.

Patriots' distrust of the royal postal service led the Committee of Correspondence to hire its own post riders to deliver messages to outlying areas of Massachusetts. Paul Revere, a silversmith and a leader among Boston's artisan class, served as official courier and
as an unofficial link between town tradesmen and the leaders of the resistance movement.\textsuperscript{14} It was also the more clandestine business of Revere and his fellow Boston mechanics to help deserters from General Thomas Gage's forces out of their uniforms and into civilian attire.\textsuperscript{15} Some of the British deserters were caught and executed by a firing squad on the Boston Common by the British Army.\textsuperscript{16} Other deserters not only evaded capture, but they even joined the minutemen in order to instruct them in the proper method of handling their weapons.\textsuperscript{17} Revere's operatives also managed to mislead many of the British reconnaissance patrols sent into the countryside around Boston by General Gage.\textsuperscript{18}

Revere and his mechanics formed the basis for the first known American intelligence network in the American Revolution. Years later Revere wrote:

\begin{quote}
In the fall of '74 and the winter of '75, I was one of upwards of thirty, chiefly mechanics, who formed ourselves into a committee for the purpose of watching the movements of the British soldiers, and gaining every intelligence of the movements of the Tories. We held our meetings at the Green Dragon. We were so careful that our meetings should be kept secret, that every time we met, every person swore upon the Bible that he would not discover any of our transactions but to Messrs. Hancock, Adams, Doctors Warren, Church, and one or two more. In the winter, towards spring, we frequently took turns, two and two, to watch the soldiers by patrolling the streets all night.\textsuperscript{19}

So many late night walks by pairs of Boston's working class should have aroused the suspicions of the British Army officers. Revere's strolling spies however possessed the advantages common to improvised groups of local agents. As residents, they knew the streets and alleyways of Boston better than any redcoat patrols. Friends offered shelter and hiding places in emergencies.
Utilizing a number of their intelligence sources, the mechanics were able to see through the British cover story devised to mask the redcoat advance on Lexington and Concord. Dr. Joseph Warren, chairman of the local Committee of Safety, placed Paul Revere and William Dawes in charge of warning Samuel Adams and John Hancock who were residing in Lexington that they were probable targets of the enemy maneuver. After warning Adams and Hancock, Revere was seized by the British as he attempted to warn Concord and was forced to walk home. Another one of Revere's companions on the ride, Dr. Samuel Prescott, eluded the British and completed the mission in time.\textsuperscript{20} Paul Revere, prior to his famous midnight ride, carried warnings and intelligence to other towns. In December 1774 Revere rode to the Oyster River to warn Major John Sullivan of the colonial militia, that General Gage intended to occupy Fort William and Mary. Sullivan led a force of 400 militiamen and seized 100 barrels of gunpowder that the patriot forces used to cover their retreat from Bunker Hill.\textsuperscript{21}

Boston's gathering of operatives collected its share of failures as well as successes. Revere's ring did not detect plans for the British raid on Charleston. Before a warning could be delivered, 260 British regulars made their way up the Mystic River, destroyed gunpowder and other military stores, and were well on their way back to Boston before any patriots realized they had left.\textsuperscript{22}

By November 1774 Revere's assemblage of spies were aware that despite their efforts at secrecy and their Bible oaths, General Gage always seemed well-informed of their intentions. An unidentified person with connections to the tory party, but a patriot at heart, warned
Revere that his group's security had been breached. "We removed to another place, which we thought was more secure," Revere reported, "but here we found that all our transactions were communicated to General Gage." Members of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress also realized a traitor existed among them, and that General Gage was fully informed about their plans. All attempts to discover the identity of Gage's spy proved futile.

On 15 June 1775 the Continental Congress appointed George Washington as general and commander-in-chief of all forces raised in defense of the American colonies. At the end of September, Brigadier General Nathanael Greene and another man unexpectedly arrived at Washington's Cambridge headquarters and asked to see the General in private. Greene then introduced his companion, Godfrey Wainwood, a baker from Newport, Rhode Island. Greene handed Washington a letter Wainwood had brought to Henry Ward, Secretary of the colony of Rhode Island. A young lady, who had approached Wainwood early in August on the basis of a prior relationship, had requested his assistance in arranging a meeting for her with Charles Dudley, the Royal Collector of Newport, Captain James Wallace of H.M.S. Rose, or George Rome, an ardent tory and rich shipowner. The lady's manner alarmed the baker who proceeded to question her concerning her loyalties. The young woman admitted to her former paramour that she had been given a letter to deliver to one of the men she named so that it might be forwarded to Boston. Wainwood supplied most of His Majesty's ships in Boston harbor with bread and agreed to convey the letter to Captain Wallace. The baker, despite his business dealings with the Royal Navy, supported the patriot cause and became suspicious of his former companion's desire to communicate with a British officer.
Not knowing what to do next, Wainwood approached a Newport schoolmaster named Maxwell who, without hesitation, broke the seal and opened the communique. Strange characters filled the sheet of paper. Since they found the letter completely unintelligible, the two men put it aside until a few days later when Wainwood received an anxious message from the woman. Her letter declared:

I now sett down to right afeu Lines hoping they will find in good helth as thay Leave me Iexpeted you wuld have arote to me be for this But now Iexpet to sea you hear every Day I much wonder you never Lett me know By the first orpurtunity wen you expet to be hear & at the Same time whether you ever got an answer from my sister I am alittel unesey that you never rote thar is aserten person here wants to Sea you verey much so pray com as swon as posebell if you righ Direct your Lettr to mr. Ewerd Harton Living on Mr Tapthonges farm in Littel Cambrig

Their suspicions once again ignited, Maxwell and Wainwood took the letter to Ward, who forwarded the coded communication, the lady's follow-up note, and a report to General Nathanael Greene, commander of Rhode Island troops in Cambridge. Eventually the whole matter was placed before General Washington. The cipher was as unintelligible to him as it had been to the others. Washington questioned the baker, and then ordered the arrest of his former girlfriend. Later that same evening, the woman found herself face-to-face with the commander-in-chief. Although he regularly employed their services, Washington exhibited a special antipathy for spies. Washington possessed extensive knowledge of interrogation techniques since he had served as a civilian examining justice. "For a long time," Washington would later admit in a letter to Congress, "she was proof against every threat and persuasion to discover the author . . . ." Finally at daybreak, the woman revealed
that the man who had given her the letter to carry to Newport was the
Director General of the Hospitals for the Continental Army and leader
in the Massachusetts Congress, Dr. Benjamin Church. Washington ordered
the physician taken into custody, his papers seized, and his personal
property searched. Nothing suspicious was found and Washington later
reported that it appeared, "a confidant had been among the papers
before my messenger arrived."35

Benjamin Church Jr., who was born in Rhode Island in 1734,
was the oldest of Benjamin and Hannah Church's seven children. When
still a child, Benjamin Jr.'s family moved to Boston where his father
opened an import business and auction house. The young Church attended
Boston Latin School, and then graduated from Harvard in 1754 where
he achieved notoriety for his satirical wit and poetry. His talent
for verse assumed weightier implications with the publication of Liberty
and Property Vindicated and the Stampman Burnt, an ironic oration concerning
sacrifices to false gods. Church allegedly delivered the address to
commemorate the burning of stamp distributor Jared Ingersoll's effigy.38

After he left Harvard, Church studied medicine for three years
in England with Dr. Charles Pynchon, one of London's leading physicians.
He returned to Boston in 1759 with an English wife, Sarah, where he
established his medical practice and engaged in wholesale and retail
drug sales. Church's practice flourished, and he was soon recognized
as a distinguished scholar, physician, poet, and politician. Leaders
of the emerging rebellion hastily recruited talented men such as Dr.
Church. An educated man such as Church who could write political propaganda,
construct verse, and speak persuasively soon had the confidence of
Revolutionary leaders and served notably on several important committees. Among the Massachusetts Whigs, he was as prominent and as active and as popular as Warren, Hancock, or Samuel Adams.41

Dr. Church served on the committee sent to Governor Thomas Hutchinson on 6 March 1770 to protest the Boston Massacre. Ironically, Church would later provide the sole testimony in favor of the British at an inquiry on the same topic.42 Lord North asked colonial attorneys Alexander Wedderburn and Edward Thurlow to decide whether high treason had been committed at the time of the Boston Tea Party and to issue warrants for anyone they found to be guilty. Their opinion, delivered a week later, stated that Dr. Church and two other men had been involved in treasonous activities. Fearing reprisals upon their lives and property, the attorneys refused, however, to take further action.43 Church also held a position on the Boston Committee of Correspondence, and in 1774 and 1775 occasionally chaired the Committee of Safety which practically ruled the province.44 When the Massachusetts Provincial Congress voted on 16 May 1775 to apply for aid from the Second Continental Congress and to propose the establishment of a Continental Army, it sent Church to deliver the proposal to the Congress sitting in Philadelphia. As a result of this visit, he was unanimously appointed by the Continental Congress to serve as director of the medical department of the Continental Army.45

Before long irregularities concerning the doctor's conduct began to surface. The day after the battle of Lexington, Church showed Paul Revere blood on his stocking which he claimed spurted on him from a dying militiaman. Testimony by eyewitnesses confirmed Dr. Church
had not been present at the battle. Dr. Joseph Warren, President of
the Boston Committee of Safety, recalled the doctor's mysterious and
certainly dangerous trip into enemy-held Boston to procure medical
supplies after the Lexington engagement. Church claimed he was arrested
and taken before General Thomas Gage, the Massachusetts governor and
commander-in-chief of the British Army in the colonies, before he was
finally released. Many people claimed to have seen Dr. Church associating
freely with known tories and British military personnel which aroused
further suspicions. Finally, Church's partner in his medical practice
noticed that, though usually in debt, the doctor seemed to have enjoyed
a sudden affluence. The circumstantial evidence, when combined with
the information supplied by the baker Wainwood's ex-girlfriend, indicated
the need for further investigation.

General Washington sent members of his personal guard to detain
Church, who once in custody, readily admitted writing and enciphering
the message, yet proclaimed the contents innocent of treasonous intent.
Despite vigorous outcries of his innocence, Church refused to decode
the communication. Two independent teams of cryptographers solved
the code, and the message contained military intelligence. Washington
concluded that Church had clearly engaged in traitorous communication
with the enemy. Washington and his aides also presumed that, "large
sums of money were from time to time given him for his treacherous
discoveries." Congress later resolved, "that he be closely confined
in some secure jail in Connecticut, without the use of pen, ink, or
paper; and that no person be allowed to converse with him, except in
the presence and hearing of a magistrate, or the sheriff of the county."
Washington's only directive was, "Dr. Church is gone to Governor Trumbull, to be disposed of in a Connecticut gaol . . . . So much for indiscretion the Doctor will say." General Washington would have been a great deal more disturbed if he had known how long Dr. Church had been spying for the enemy and how much he had reported. Though he evaded detection until long after the skirmishes at Lexington and Concord, Church probably relayed patriot plans to the British for several months, perhaps for as long as two years.

During the excitement over Church's duplicity, intelligence reached Washington that General Gage had been recalled and replaced as commander-in-chief of the British forces by Major General William Howe, the senior officer of the reenforcements sent to Boston in early 1775. The change in command necessitated an increase in intelligence gathering activities in Boston to detect any changes in policy.

Lieutenant Colonel Loammi Baldwin, in addition to his duties as the senior officer in charge of defense in the Chelsea area, began collating the intelligence sent out of Boston to General Washington. Except for two weeks in late August when he was ill, Baldwin reported regularly to Washington from early in 1775 until the middle of November of the same year. Baldwin regularly forwarded daily reports from Joseph Leach on ship traffic in Boston Harbor, intelligence from Boston grocer John Carnes, and statements from refugees and deserters coming out of Boston to Washington in an effort to keep the General informed as to conditions inside the occupied city.

Shelling of British positions within the occupied area began when the freezing temperatures of December hardened the ground, allowing
the transportation of heavy pieces of artillery captured earlier in the year at Fort Ticonderoga. During the last week of February 1776 the commander-in-chief received numerous reports from within Boston that the British apparently intended to evacuate the city. General Howe ordered heavy ordnance and mortars removed from the most forward British positions and fresh bedding and water taken aboard Royal Navy ships in the harbor. Washington admitted in a letter to Congress, "Whether they really intend to embark, or whether the whole is a feint, is impossible for me to tell."

On 9 March 1776 Washington informed John Hancock, President of the Continental Congress, that Merchant Marine Captain Irvine, who had escaped from Boston the night before, came to Continental Army Headquarters, and gave intelligence to the effect, "That our Bombardment and Cannonade caused a good deal of Surprise and alarm in Town, as many of the Soldiery said they never heard or thought we had mortars or Shells: That several of the Officers acknowledged they were well and properly directed That they made much distress and confusion."

Captain Irvine also informed General Washington that he believed the British would soon evacuate Boston. On 17 March 1776 the British sailed from Boston, ending an occupation begun nearly eight years previously.

The patriot underground, comprised of the Sons of Liberty, members of the Committees of Safety and Correspondence, and other individuals unified Washington's intelligence-gathering efforts through an emerging espionage network. When General Washington took command of the Continental Army in 1775, he recruited many of the members of the patriot underground for the purpose of seeking intelligence. Washington always welcomed
the information furnished by Revere's underground intelligence gathering system. Inexperienced and unable to evaluate properly much of the information, the General often hesitated to act upon it. Fortunately, little major action was necessary in Boston at that time. Still, Paul Revere's network of spies may be regarded as the ultimate precursor of all subsequent American intelligence operations.
ENDNOTES


6"An Appeal to the World or a Vindication of the Town of Boston," 18 October 1769, Cushing, The Writings of Samuel Adams, 1:433-34.


8*New York Journal*, 10 November 1768, 3.

9Ibid.

10Ibid., 1.

11Supplement to the *New York Journal*, 6 April 1769, 1.


14. The Committee of Correspondence of Boston to the Committee of Correspondence of Marblehead, Cushing, The Writings of Samuel Adams, 3:80-82; Warden, Boston, 261.


17. Ibid., 5.


21. Ibid.


24. Freeman, Biography, 3:436.

25. Freeman, Biography, 3:544; George Washington to Congress, 5 October 1775, Fitzpatrick, Writings of Washington, 4:9-10.


28Freeman, Biography, 3:545.


30Freeman, Biography, 3:545.


32Moore, Diary, 1: 249.

33George Washington to Congress, 5 October 1775, Fitzpatrick, Writings of Washington, 4:10.

34Ibid.


36French, Informers, 147.

37Ibid. 149.


40Wharton, Diplomatic, 1:657.

41Ibid.


43Alden, Gage, 201.

44French, Informers, 149.

45Bakeless, Turncoats, 27.


47Wharton, Diplomatic, 1:657.

Freeman, Biography, 3:547; George Washington to Congress, 5 October 1775, Fitzpatrick, Writings of Washington, 4:10.

Ibid.

Freeman, Biography, 3:548.


Ibid., 5.


George Washington to John Hancock, 9 March 1776, Ibid., 423.

Ibid.
"The enemy have the best knack at puzzling people I ever met with in my life," wrote General Washington to Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Reed from Cambridge on 25 March 1776. The British had evacuated Boston eight days before Washington wrote Colonel Reed, and yet their fleet still sat at anchor just outside the harbor, though the wind remained fair. Information obtained from a deserter indicated that the vessels were in no degree fit for an ocean voyage owing to the haste and disorder of the abrupt withdrawal from the city. Fearing an attack, Washington moved a few troops into the city, claiming in the letter to Reed, "I can spare no more Men till I see the Enemy's back fairly turned, and then shall hasten towards New York." Representatives from other colonies pleaded with Washington for protection from the British troops freed from their occupation duties in Boston. Governor Nicholas Cooke of Rhode Island wrote to inform General Washington that he had received word confirming the arrival of a British ship of war in Newport harbor and twenty-seven ships loaded with ministerial troops off Seconet Point. Rhode Island, according to Cooke, possessed no more than 400 poorly armed soldiers. Washington ignored the pleas of Governor Cooke and leaders of other coastal communities, regarding instead New York as the key position of greatest strategic value to the British. Once he gained possession of Manhattan Island with its surrounding waterways
dominated by Admiral Viscount Richard Howe's fleets, General William Howe could easily dispatch land forces into either Connecticut or New Jersey, or he could march troops up the Hudson River to seize the Highlands in cooperation with British forces dispatched from Canada. Manhattan Island could be easily held by a small force, and it offered excellent facilities for docking, warehousing, and billeting troops. Washington dispatched as many troops as possible to New York and made plans for his own departure. By 15 April 1776 Washington had assumed command of all Continental forces concentrated around New York City.

Two days later, Washington addressed the New York Committee of Safety on one potentially disastrous problem. He was concerned that the social and business intercourse which existed between the inhabitants of New York City and the enemy on board the ships of war in the harbor would hinder the American cause. This communication with the enemy, Washington believed, "opens a regular Channel of intelligence by which they are from time to time made acquainted with the number and strength of our works-- Our strengths and all our movements, by which they are enabled to regulate their own plans to our great disadvantage and injury." Many residents of Long Island and lower New York were reportedly favorable to the King's cause where General Howe optimistically expected to recruit several provincial battalions.

The New York Provincial Congress appointed a committee in May 1776 to deal with accused tories. Buried under its burden, the group gradually expanded into a nine member standing committee responsible for all cases of those arrested by the Congress or the local Committee of Safety. In June 1776 this Committee for Detecting Conspiracies
received a note from a prisoner held in the New York City jail on charges of conspiring to counterfeit currency. The prisoner, Isaac Ketcham, claimed to be deeply ashamed of his past misconduct. In a note to the speaker of the Provincial Congress, Ketcham begged for release to permit him to care for his six children, and hinted he possessed information the New York officials would find useful. The story Ketcham told the Committee began with a colonial engraver named Henry Dawkins, an unsavory character and a highly unlikely hero for the American Revolution. Dawkins originally settled in New York City in 1753 where he had prospered as a general engraver; several examples of his industry still exist including maps, seals, coats of arms, and an intricate plate illustrating the 1769 transit of Venus.

Counterfeiting colonial currency yielded higher profits than other forms of engraving, and, as a result, Dawkins was frequently incarcerated for his illegal activities. Comfortably situated in the Long Island home of Israel and Isaac Youngs after another of his releases from the New York City jail, Dawkins once again set up shop copying currency in early 1776. Dawkins easily duplicated the engraved copper plates, but procuring suitable paper proved more difficult.

The Dawkins counterfeiting gang used a simple means to obtain a sample of the paper used by the printers who produced currency for the Continental Congress. They used fragments of paper left upon the bills. The group then enlisted Isaac Ketcham to travel to Philadelphia, the center of the developing American paper industry, where he compared samples and obtained prices for the paper. In these far from ordinary times, this supposedly innocent inquiry attracted the attention of
more than paper salesmen. Someone in Philadelphia deduced a scheme to counterfeit was in the works, and Ketcham was arrested, returned to New York, and imprisoned under the authority of the New York State Committee for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies. Dawkins and the Youngs brothers soon joined Ketcham in jail, and Dawkins' attempt to produce fake tender failed. The frustrated counterfeiters' story might have ended there, but Ketcham, Dawkins, and the rest of the gang were placed in the same cell with others plotting an even more serious crime.15

Isaac Ketcham overheard other prisoners discussing a tory plot which, if successful, would have annihilated the Continental Army. With no worthier inducement than the saving of his own hide and oblivious to the sufferings of his fellow counterfeiters, Ketcham sought to escape punishment by revealing a vastly more serious threat to the Revolutionary cause. Secret companies of King's militia, Ketcham had discovered, were to assail the Continental forces from within the patriot formations. Ketcham was granted an interview with the members of the New York Provincial Congress.16 Officials of the Provincial Congress proposed that Ketcham return to the jail and serve as an American spy, not for country or honor but for his freedom. Ketcham agreed and returned to prison. In a matter of days, he collected information implicating members of the Continental Army in a plot against the Revolution.17

A sudden uprising of British sympathizers and suborned continental soldiers stationed in the rear of the American Army was to be timed to coincide with General Howe's attack on New York City and Long Island. The proposed action clearly intended to destroy the morale and organization of the assembled patriot forces. Tory supporters also planned to seize
American artillery to shell the Continental Army from the rear to create additional confusion. The destruction of King's Bridge, which spanned the Harlem River, would block the retreat of Washington's forces into Connecticut and beyond. It was rumored that hundreds of Washington's own men belonged to secret companies of King's militia. Then, in the midst of the confusion, General Washington was to be kidnapped or assassinated.

Several key members of the conspiracy were employed as personal guards to the commander-in-chief. Washington's personal guard had existed for only three months following the issuance of a general order, dated 11 March 1776:

The General being desirous of selecting a particular number of men as guard for himself, and baggage, The Colonel, or Commanding Officer, of each of the established Regiments, (the Artillery and Rifflemen excepted) will furnish him with four, . . . His Excellency depends upon the Colonels for good men, such as they can recommend for their sobriety, honesty, and good behaviour; he wishes them to be from five feet, eight inches high to five feet, ten inches; handsomely and well made, and as there is nothing in his eyes more desirable, than cleanliness in a soldier, he desires that particular attention may be made, in the choice of such men, as are neat and spruce.

Loyalty to the General and the patriot cause perhaps would have been better served by qualifiers other than height and cleanliness for service in his personal guard. Four members of Washington's guard were positively implicated in the conspiracy about to unfold. These four included Sergeant Thomas Hickey, a fifer named Johnson, a drummer called Greene, and a soldier named Barnes. Sergeant Hickey had been previously jailed by New York City authorities on suspicion of counterfeiting activities. It was during this stay in the New York City jail that Hickey boasted to Isaac Ketcham that he was part of a tory plot against Washington.
Substantiating evidence surfaced when William Leary, a prominent businessman loyal to the patriot cause, reported being approached by a former employee, James Mason, who claimed he had received money from the British to support the plot. After he was arrested, Mason implicated Hickey, Greene, Johnson, and Barnes. Mason also implicated the tory mayor of New York, David Matthews, in the plot by claiming the mayor had provided money to assist the conspirators in their scheme. The New York Committee for Detecting Conspiracies ordered Matthews arrested and committed to the jail at Hartford, Connecticut. The mayor's rank in society and the lack of any physical evidence against him led to his transfer to the jail at Litchfield, Connecticut, where by 12 August 1776, he was living with the county sheriff.

The crisis had passed, and the Americans no longer feared an attack from within their midst. A secret Congressional Committee of inquiry reported its findings to the New York Provincial Congress which pleaded lack of jurisdiction and passed the matter over to the Continental Army. Sergeant Hickey and the others sat before a general court-martial authorized by General Washington. They were tried not for plotting against the life of Washington, but for participating in a mutiny. The specific accusation was that of, "exciting and joining in a mutiny and sedition and of treacherously corresponding with, enlisting among, and receiving pay from the enemies of the United American Colonies." Washington wished to avoid alarming his forces or the public. Hickey's three co-conspirators testified against the sergeant and were removed from the trial, leaving only Hickey to face the assembled tribunal. Sergeant Hickey testified that he originally became involved in the
plot, "for the sake of cheating the Tories, and getting some money from them, and afterwards consented to have his name sent on board the man-of-war, in order that if the enemy should arrive and defeat the army here, and should he be taken prisoner, he might be safe,"29 The court-martial's verdict was unanimous, "Thomas Hickey . . . by the unanimous opinion of a court-martial, is sentenced to die, having enlisted himself and engaged others."30 Washington signed the order approving the execution.

On 28 June 1776, the day following the trial, the brigades of Generals William Heath, John Scott, Joseph Spencer, and Lord Stirling marched to the execution site. Twenty men from each brigade formed a guard to prevent rescue or escape attempts, and Hickey was hanged without delay. Washington's order of the day drove home the point of the day's action:

The unhappy fate of Thomas Hickey, executed this day for mutiny, sedition, and treachery, the General hopes will be a warning to every soldier in the Army to avoid those crimes and all others so disgraceful to the character of a soldier and pernicious to his country, whose pay he receives and bread he eats. And in order to avoid those crimes, the most certain method is to keep out of the temptation of them, and particularly to avoid lewd women, who, by the dying confession of this poor criminal, first led him into practices which ended in an untimely and ignominious death.31

Whether or not "lewd women" figured in the plot is uncertain. It is known that women from New York City's "Holy Ground" district infected several squads of Washington's troops with veneral disease.32 An ever-present worry for any army commander, Washington may have taken advantage of Hickey's execution to present a moral lesson. Hickey alone faced the gallows. Fourteen others were imprisoned. Mayor Matthews eventually escaped from his Litchfield confinement and made his way
Four days after Hickey's execution, General Howe's army landed on Staten Island. Congress insisted upon a defense of Manhattan Island and Long Island, so Washington obediently undertook the task. Washington expected the British to attack without delay and felt certain their main effort for 1776 would be in New York. Now would have been the ideal time for Washington to create an intelligence network similar to Paul Revere's, but little was accomplished. A few volunteer patriot spies did remain on Staten Island, but they lacked the means of transmitting intelligence to Washington's headquarters. By 1 September 1776, Washington's need for intelligence became so severe that he wrote to General Heath, then stationed at Kingsbridge, New York:

As it is of great consequence to gain intelligence of the enemy's designs, and of their intended operations, I cannot but recommend your attention to this subject, and that you will concert some measures with General Clinton for establishing a Channel of information.

General Washington hoped that General George Clinton, who was a New Yorker, could locate volunteers among the population to spy for the patriots. In his letter to Heath, Washington further observed:

I apprehend that his general acquaintance with most of the people in the colony will give him an opportunity of fixing upon suitable persons, and in whom a confidence may be reposed, to embark in this business, and who, from their connections on the island and the assistance of their friends there, might obtain frequent accounts that would be useful and of great advantage.

Washington's desperation was apparent. He was prepared to employ people whose loyalties to the American cause were questionable to gather badly needed intelligence. By 5 September 1776, Washington no longer
cared whether the expenses of such an effort were excessive when he informed Heath, "Leave no stone unturned, nor do not stick at expense as I never was more uneasy than on account of my want of knowledge". Washington realized accurate information was essential to his defense of New York.

General Washington's options for gathering intelligence steadily narrowed. He realized he would have to send a spy through the British lines on Long Island and into their camps to uncover British plans. Washington sent for Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Knowlton, leader of Knowlton's Rangers, and ordered him to find a man to undertake the dangerous task. Knowlton's unit, nicknamed "Congress's Own", consisted of 130 men and twenty officers whose mission was to scout enemy outposts, supply forward reconnaissance, and collect intelligence. One of Knowlton's company commanders was Captain Nathan Hale of Coventry, Connecticut. Hale volunteered for the mission and on 12 September 1776 began his attempt to penetrate the British camp at Brooklyn. Ten days later Captain Hale was dead, and not a single line of intelligence had reached the commander-in-chief. Hale had passed within the British lines and probably collected detailed information on their disposition and strength.

On 21 September 1776 he was captured by the British, charged with espionage, and taken before General Howe who ordered him hanged. Hale's death proved to be an unnecessary sacrifice. The mission was poorly planned. Hale received no training, cover story, or safe contact behind enemy lines. Secrecy was nonexistent; other officers in Hale's regiment knew the details of his mission. Appalled by the poorly executed mission, Washington became increasingly secretive after Hale's death.
The American commander-in-chief now clearly recognized the need for a more professional and organized secret service.
ENDNOTES


2Ibid., 536-37.

3Ibid., 537.

4Seconet Point is five miles east of Newport. Governor Nicholas Cooke to General Washington, 25 February 1776, Abbot, Papers of Washington, 3:363.

5Ibid.


7General Washington to the New York Committee of Safety, 17 April 1776, Ibid., 77.

8Ibid., 78.


10Victor Hugo Paltsits, ed., Minutes of the Commissioners For Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies in the State of New York, Albany County Sessions 1778-1781 (Boston: Gregg Press, 1972), 1:11.


12Ibid.


17 Ibid.

18 Ibid., 1178; Freeman, *Biography*, 4:118; Campbell, *Minutes*, vi.


29 Force, American Archives Fourth Series, 6:1084-86; Hughes, Rebel, 399; Freeman, Biography, 4:119-20.

30 Force, American Archives Fourth Series, 6:1084-86; Moore, Diary, 1: 255.


35 Bakeless, Turncoats, 111.

36 Brigadier General George Clinton was the first governor of New York under the newly-established state government.

37 General Washington to General William Heath, 1 September 1776, Fitzpatrick, Writings of Washington, 6:1.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid., 2.


41 Ibid., 18.


43 Ibid.

44 Ibid.
CHAPTER 4

THE DESIGNS OF THE ENEMY ARE NOT YET UNDERSTOOD

Late in 1776, General Washington took steps to increase intelligence gathering activities as General Howe's army settled into the New York City area. The commander-in-chief stationed troops in New Jersey at such locations as Brunswick, Amboy, Elizabeth Town, and Newark, where they could provide information concerning the enemy's movements. Persons leaving New York City were detained and questioned concerning conditions in the occupied area. A sea captain identified only as "Bell" made his escape from New York City during the first week of January 1777 and informed Washington that British troops were massing in New Jersey, "... in order to make a Junction of their whole Army, to Endeavor to give us a total defeat." Washington ordered Major General William Heath, who was stationed at Morris Town, to gather the needed intelligence regardless of the cost. The British were also building sleds in New York City and General Washington requested that Heath's spies ascertain the purpose of their construction.

Several successful spy operations originated in New York City. Two of the more brazen included the espionage activities of Lieutenant Lewis J. Costigin, a New Brunswick merchant before the war, and John Mersereau, son of a Staten Island businessman. A first lieutenant in the New Jersey First Regiment, Costigin was captured near Fort Washington in late 1776 or early 1777. The British sent Costigin to New York
where he was released on a parole which lasted for nearly two years. Paroled officers were released from close confinement, yet their movements were restricted within limits set by their captors. Officers on parole pledged their word of honor not to escape or communicate intelligence to their units. Officers allowed to wander the streets of Manhattan easily gathered intelligence which would interest General Washington. On 21 August 1778 Washington ordered that the speediest method be found to obtain Costigin's release from the restrictions of his parole. Colonel John Beatty, Commissary General of Prisoners of the Continental Army, was authorized to take any measures necessary to procure Costigin's release. Washington warned Beatty not to appear too concerned with Costigin's release as this might alert the British to his importance. Then Washington got a better idea, for on 5 October 1778 he claimed to have lost the request for exchange. Upon receipt of an inquiry from Governor Livingston of New Jersey, Washington claimed a mistake occurred during the negotiation to secure Costigin's release. Instead, Lieutenant Costigin simply stayed in New York City and began reporting intelligence to Washington under the pseudonym, "Z." A new intelligence group, the Mersereau family of spies, began its espionage work as early as 1776 and continued throughout the war. John L. Mersereau was a native of Staten Island whose father served as George Washington's Deputy Commissioner of Prisoners. John L. Mersereau, his father Joshua Mersereau, and the rest of the family left the island when the British occupied Staten Island in July 1776. John Mersereau transported supplies for the American army and oversaw the construction of large flatboats which were to be used by the patriot forces in attacking
the British on Staten Island. The Mersereau's moved to New Brunswick, New Jersey, as Washington passed through on his retreat from New Jersey in late 1776.\(^{14}\)

General Washington and John Mersereau's father arranged for John to remain in New Brunswick while the Continental forces retreated and until the area was occupied by the British. John was to return to New York City or to Staten Island for the purpose of obtaining intelligence. Joshua Mersereau acted as intermediary between Washington and his son by conveying explicit instructions concerning the nature of the information the general wished to obtain.\(^{15}\) John Mersereau at first remained constantly behind the British lines on Staten Island, and used John Parker, one of his father's shipbuilding apprentices, as his courier. After he made three secret journeys to New Jersey and Pennsylvania, Parker was arrested by the British and imprisoned. John Mersereau visited Parker in the prison and offered to supply him with clothing and food. Parker's answer was that, "it was no use, for he should not live long; they kept the prisoners several days without food and then supplied them with poisoned bread; that numbers had been killed in that way, and that he, without being aware of it, had eaten of the bread and felt sick then."\(^{16}\) The next day, the jailer informed Mersereau that Parker had died during the night.\(^{17}\)

Mersereau devised another means to convey information to Washington. The intelligence was committed to paper and secured inside a weighted bottle, plugged by a cork with a string attached to it. Mersereau held the string as he rowed a makeshift raft to Shooter's Island, located between Staten Island and the New Jersey shore. If challenged, Mersereau
would drop the string and the weighted bottle would sink along with its incriminating evidence. After depositing the bottle under a specific rock, Mersereau rowed back to occupied territory and lighted a signal fire to notify his corresponding number on the New Jersey shore that the hidden papers awaited.  

Mersereau occasionally carried intelligence to the New Jersey shore in person. Once hearing his father was in Elizabeth Town, John Mersereau boldly used a discarded rowboat to visit him. Someone noticed the missing craft, however, and upon his return to the island, a British sentry stood guard at the same spot Mersereau chose to land.  

"The sentry hailed," Mersereau later reported, "and I fled on my hands and feet to a ditch, along which I could run without being much exposed to his fire."  

Raising his musket, the sentry fired at Mersereau and missed. Pursuing soldiers followed him to the house where he lived. Luckily for Mersereau, a British Major quartering in the same house halted further searches, swearing there were no rebels in the house where he lodged.  

Mersereau eventually came under suspicion, fled, and rejoined the American forces after eighteen dangerous months of service as a spy for General Washington.  

Colonel Elias Dayton, commander of the First Essex County, New Jersey militia replaced Mersereau and carried forward the espionage effort in New York City.  

Dayton recruited a group of agents for the New York to New Jersey intelligence network, and by 5 July 1777 Washington reported to Congress, "I keep people constantly upon Staten Island, who give me daily information of the operations of the Enemy."  

In the summer of 1777, Dayton sent out the brothers John Hendricks
and Captain Baker Hendricks, along with one of his soldiers, John Meeker, to observe the enemy’s activities on Staten Island. On 19 January 1778, the commander-in-chief received a letter from Colonel Dayton informing him that the three men were in the custody of patriot Rhode Island officials, suspected of engaging in an illicit correspondence with the enemy.25 From his headquarters at Valley Forge the next day, Washington sent a letter to Rhode Island Governor William Livingston, requesting that he put a stop to the prosecution. "They executed their trust faithfully," Washington asserted, "... what intelligence... came principally thro' them, was generally confirmed by the event."26 The Hendricks were saved by the accuracy of their intelligence, however this did little to alleviate Washington’s doubt concerning the amount of remuneration requested by the Hendricks for clandestine services rendered. "I am at a loss what will be a reasonable compensation to Hendricks for his services," Washington admitted, "his expectations founded on the risks he has run, what he has suffered and what he has lost, seem to be pretty high."27

Information supplied by his New York and New Jersey agents led Washington to believe that the British would eventually try to occupy Philadelphia.28 An unfortunate British agent unintentionally confirmed Washington’s suspicions when he was caught attempting to hire pilots acquainted with the navigation of the Delaware River.29 The British spy was hanged in Philadelphia.30

Though New York City throughout the war continued to be the primary intelligence target, Washington realized he must have his spy networks in position and ready wherever the British chose to operate.
"Where-ever their army lies," Washington instructed Major General Thomas Mifflin, "it will be of the greatest advantage to us, to have spies among them, on whom we may depend for intelligence." Washington ordered Mifflin to, "look out for the proper persons for this purpose, who are to remain among them under the mask of Friendship." Agents were to be scattered in Philadelphia and in the surrounding countryside.

"I would have some of those in Bucks County, some in Philadelphia, and others below Philadelphia about Chester," Washington suggested, "for if any of their force goes round by water, they will probably land somewhere there abouts." "Give the persons you pitch upon, proper lessons," Washington admonished Mifflin. Amateurs were no longer acceptable.

Washington even considered the use of Quakers as spies. "Some in the Quaker line," he reasoned in the letter to Mifflin, "who have never taken an active part, would be least liable to suspicion from either party." Thomas Long, a Quaker schoolmaster, went to Philadelphia at the request of General Washington to serve as an American spy. Another of Mifflin's spies reported that Long already worked as an agent for the British. General Washington informed Congress on 23 April 1777 that, measures would be enacted to apprehend and punish Thomas Long.

Information supplied by New York City agents indicated that the British intended to occupy Philadelphia. When transports escorted by Vice-Admiral Richard Howe's fleet of warships sailed from the New York City area in July 1777, Washington and the landlocked American army could only wait for intelligence to trickle in and verify the
intended destination of the British. On 21 August 1777 Washington received a message from John Page, member of the Virginia Council, announcing the arrival of a British fleet outside the entrance to Chesapeake Bay.\textsuperscript{37} Congress relayed similar information to Washington the next day.\textsuperscript{38} Intelligence reports indicated Admiral Howe's ships were well into the bay, somewhere above Swan Point.\textsuperscript{39} General Howe with 15,000 redcoats landed at the head of the Chesapeake on 25 August. Howe and Washington's armies first clashed on 11 September, at Brandywine Creek, southwest of Philadelphia. Washington was forced into retreat while the British successfully outmaneuvered the patriot forces and occupied Philadelphia with little opposition.\textsuperscript{40} As Washington explained in a letter to Brigadier General Thomas Nelson, Jr., "A contrariety of intelligence in a critical and important point contributed greatly, if it did not entirely bring on the misfortunes of that day."\textsuperscript{41} In a letter to Major General John Sullivan, Washington elaborated, "I ascribed the misfortune which happened to us on the 11th. of September principally to the information of Major Spear, transmitted to me by you . . . ."\textsuperscript{42} Washington, having failed to stop Howe, withdrew to Valley Forge for the winter. Now, unlike the situation in Boston or New York City, the British redcoats faced a large, organized, and well-trained group of secret agents who were located in and about Philadelphia.
ENDNOTES

1George Washington to the President of Congress, 14 November 1776, Fitzpatrick, Writings of Washington, 6:279.

2Ibid.


4Ibid., 24.

5Ibid.


7Bakeless, Turncoats, 175.


10Ibid.


13Ibid.


15Ibid.
16Ibid., 349.
17Ibid.
18Ibid.
19Ibid.
20Ibid., 350.
21Ibid.
22Ibid.
23Bakeless, Turncoats, 177.
24George Washington to the President of Congress, 5 July 1777, Fitzpatrick, Writings of Washington, 8:353.
26Ibid.
30Ibid.
31George Washington to Major General Thomas Mifflin, 10 April 1777, Ibid., 385.
32Ibid.
33Ibid.
34Ibid.
35Ibid.
36 George Washington to the President of Congress, 23 April 1777, Ibid., 462.


38 George Washington to the President of Congress, 21 August 1777, Ibid., 111.


40 Flexner, Indispensable, 104.


CHAPTER 5

INTELLIGENCE SUCCESSES AT PHILADELPHIA

General Washington refused to blame his subordinates for the failure of the intelligence service prior to Brandywine. Generals Washington and Sullivan misinterpreted the information supplied by their agents because of their unfamiliarity with the region.¹ "The Major's rank, reputation, and knowledge of the country gave him full claim to credit and attention," Washington admitted in a letter to Sullivan in late August 1777.² Four months later, John Laurens, an aide to Washington, wrote to his father that he had never known Washington to misjudge military intelligence.³ The commander-in-chief simply neglected to procure sufficient intelligence or to analyze it properly prior to the Battle of Brandywine.

Before the fight at Brandywine, Washington ordered General Thomas Mifflin, a former Quaker, to enter Philadelphia and set up an intelligence network. When on 26 September 1777 the British moved into Philadelphia, the spy system, now led by Major John Clark, was prepared to function.⁴ Clark depended upon merchants, farmers, tradesmen, gentry, old ladies, and peddlers for information.⁵

Intelligence reports indicated the British would attempt to seize Forts Mercer and Mifflin. The forts blocked the Delaware River below Philadelphia and prevented British transports from supplying the redcoats. General Washington and Major Clark watched the two forts
anxiously, attempted to anticipate the enemy's maneuvers, and used the soundest available strategy to strengthen the installations' defenses. By 21 October 1777 the anticipated assault on the garrisons appeared imminent. A combined naval and land attack began the next day as the British attempted to capture both strongholds simultaneously. Clark reported to Washington the extent of the British effort on the first day and predicted an early, although only temporary, withdrawal by the King's forces. One of Washington's aides advanced Clark $100 for expenses, but expressed doubt concerning the Major's interpretation of his intelligence from within the city. The British retired for a few days, exactly as Clark predicted, and Washington requested that he continue gathering information.

The Americans were kept well-informed of British movements within Philadelphia by Clark's network of spies. Washington wrote in a letter to Major Mark Clark, Jr. dated 4 November 1777 that his Philadelphia spy-chief, John Clark, "had fallen upon an exceeding good method of gaining intelligence and that too much secrecy cannot be used." By mid-November Washington regularly received Clark's accurate strength returns on the British forces.

Clark's agents operated so efficiently that Washington agreed to expand their role in the conflict. American counterintelligence had identified several Philadelphia residents leaking information to the British. Clark planned to feed false information to the British through an agent close to the suspected tories. Washington, who approved the scheme, warned Clark of the importance of secrecy in the operation and to safeguard the identity of the agent.
Washington and Clark developed a plot to alleviate two of the General's persistent concerns: that Sir Henry Clinton would dispatch part of his army occupying New York to Philadelphia, and that General Howe would learn the true nature of the great disparity in numbers between his army and Washington's. Major General Philemon Dickinson received orders from Washington to prepare a feint on Staten Island and to make the preparations as noticeable as possible. Washington suggested the collection of large numbers of small boats and a sizable bodies of troops, both of which would alarm British intelligence officers. Generals Gates and Putnam were likewise instructed to prepare as if they intended to attack Manhattan Island. On the morning of 4 November 1777 Washington issued Clark information to mislead the British:

In your next, I'd have you mention that General Gates, now having nothing to do to the Northward, is sending down a very Handsome Reinforcement of Continental Troops to this Army, whilst he with the remainder of them and all the New England and York Militia, is to make an immediate descent on New York, the reduction of which is confidently spoke of, as it is generally supposed that a large part of Clinton's Troops are detached to the assistance of General Howe and that General Dickinson is at the same time to attack Staten Island, for which purpose he is Assembling great numbers of Jersey militia; that the received opinion in our Camp is, that we will immediately attack Philadelphia on the arrival of the Troops from the Northward, and in short that the whole Continent seems determined that we use every exertion to put an end to the War this winter; that we mention the forts as being perfectly secure, having sent ample Reinforcements to their support. These are the outlines of what I think should be mentioned, however you will make any alterations you think necessary.

If Clinton, who was located in New York, and Howe, who had recently occupied Philadelphia, had compared notes, they would have found that their intelligence reports from independent sources were in perfect agreement. Clinton kept his troops in New York preparing
for an attack that never occurred, while Howe developed a strategy
based on opposing forces that did not exist.

Major Clark's success in Philadelphia owed to the boldness
of his agents, and the near perfect concealment of their identities.
Some of his agents were arrested for various minor offenses, yet the
British seem to have never discovered their clandestine employment. Robert Ritchie, a Philadelphia merchant, was arrested on suspicion
of supplying intelligence to Washington's army. Ritchie either escaped
or was released for nothing else is recorded.

General Washington frequently stressed the needs for care and
secrecy in his instructions to his agents. Captain Stephen Chambers
received permission from Washington to enter Philadelphia for a period
of ten to twelve days to gather intelligence within the city. The
commander-in-chief warned Chambers on 26 March 1778 that, "I would
have you attempt it but it must be done with the utmost care, knowing
well whom you trust, for such characters are generally tempted by gain
only, and therefore you are liable to be bribed by the Enemy and to
our Cost."

Washington personally supervised the activities of some spies
in Philadelphia while others worked independently of official direction.
Jacob Bankson offered to enter Philadelphia as a secret agent, and
was so successful that Washington eventually became suspicious of his
apparent ability to come and go as he pleased. Washington requested
Governor William Livingston of New Jersey to observe Bankson's activities.
On 1 June 1778 from his headquarters at Valley Forge, Washington wrote
Livingston regarding Bankston that he was, "now satisfied concerning
him, you need not trouble yourself further in the matter."
On 10 January 1778, Major John Clark suggested in a letter to General Nathanael Greene that if:

a prudent Active officer was dispatched among the Quakers near the Enemy with Orders to engage a few Farmers as Spies on this Condition, that they shou'd be excused from all Military Service and fines for non attendance or not providing substitutes, it wou'd enable His Excellency to get every information of the Enemy's designs etc., and there is not one in ten of those Farmers but wou'd be happy to serve America in that station, permit 'em to carry marketing and give them a few dollars on extraordinary occasions and I'll pawn my life, you succeed.19

A unique feature of the Quakers' society was the extent to which the sect attempted to apply their view of Christian principles and ideals to civil and political life. The Society of Friends considered their religious community and message as primitive Christianity revived, and as a forerunner for the City of God upon earth. The Quakers believed man to be a spiritual being during his life on earth, the dwelling-place of a special light which should serve to guide and to enlighten him. Human relations should therefore be based on appeals to the spiritual side of man, and not conducted through violent means.20

The Quaker's pacifist ideals often bought them into open disagreement with government. Members of the Society of Friends were willing to suffer for their beliefs and peacefully protested laws they considered to be oppressive and unjust. Unwilling to participate in a rebellion, many Quakers reluctantly supported the resulting regime:21 Others were far less inclined to declare themselves in support of the emerging Revolutionary government.22

Patriots generally considered the Friends to be tories.23 Prejudiced by their policy of non-cooperation with military activities, General Washington at first viewed the Quakers as a disaffected element. "I have been informed by Colo. Forman," wrote Washington to Governor William
Livingston on 11 May 1777, "that the Quakers and disaffected are doing all in their Power to counteract your late Militia Law; but I hope, if your Officers are active and Spirited, that they will defeat their evil intentions and bring their men into the field."\(^2\) Especially irritating to Washington was the refusal of Quakers to sell grain or flour to the Continental Army.\(^2\) "You may be assured," proclaimed Washington in a letter to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety, "that nothing but the United Efforts of every State in America can Save us from Disgrace and too probably Ruin."\(^2\) Washington issued orders preventing members of the Society of Friends from passing through the American lines to attend meetings in Philadelphia, believing great quantities of intelligence reached the British in this manner.\(^2\) Despite their pacifistic tenets, several Quakers joined military associations and reports circulated of companies formed exclusively of Quakers. Alexander Graydon, a prominent Philadelphia Quaker, reported that:

\[
\text{notwithstanding their endeavor to keep aloof from the contest a good number of young men swerved from their tenets; and affecting cockades and uniforms, openly avowed themselves fighting men. They went so far as to form a company of light infantry under the command of Mr. Copperthwaite, which was called The Quaker Blues.} \(^2\)
\]

Thomas Gilpin, a Quaker and frequent correspondent of Benjamin Franklin, advocated at least a partial response to the conflict believing that too rigorous a stance would weaken the Quaker's position in society. Gilpin believed the American Revolution differed from other armed conflicts in that it lacked the bloody persecutions which distinguished other revolutions.\(^2\) John Adams, an ardent critic of the Society of Friends, wrote to his wife, Abigail, on 2 June 1775, that her Uncle Quincy,
"would burst to see whole companies of armed Quakers in this city, in uniform, going through the manual and manoeuvres like regular troops." Despite critical sarcasm, many Quakers served Washington faithfully in an intelligence gathering capacity before the war's end. In later years, Washington expressed great respect for the Quakers and considered many of them as valuable supporters of the new federal government.

Major General Thomas Mifflin erected the original Philadelphia network of agents. William Crispin, a Commissary in Washington's army, Quartermaster Clement Biddle, and the Levering brothers from the Wissahickson Creek area of Pennsylvania performed valuable espionage duty for the patriot forces, risking ostracism from the Society of Friends. Elizabeth Griscom Ross, better known as Betsy Ross, was disowned by the Society of Friends in 1774 for her association with supporters of the patriot cause. Ross reportedly made the first American flag.

Lydia Darragh bypassed the elaborate, organized secret service in Philadelphia and spent her days observing the British headquarters across the street from her home on Second Street. Lydia's husband wrote her daily observations on small bits of paper, which she sewed into the buttons of her youngest son's jacket. The teenager crossed the British lines, entered the American camp and sought his older brother, Lieutenant Charles Darragh. The intelligence was soon in General Washington's hands.

The Darragh house was selected as a meeting place for British officers by Lydia's cousin, Lieutenant Barrington, an officer in General Howe's army. Lydia one night listened through the wall of a closet adjoining the room occupied by British officers. She heard the British
discussing the possibility of a 4 December 1777 attack on Washington's defenses at Valley Forge. The Quaker housewife used her British pass to walk through their lines, supposedly to purchase flour, but actually to warn the American forces. Lydia walked through the cold December winter to a house on Germantown Road known as the widow Nice's Rising Sun Tavern. Colonel Benjamin Tallmadge, an American cavalry officer deeply involved in intelligence activities for Washington, was also at the tavern and reported:

After we had made ourselves known to each other, and while she was communicating some intelligence to me, I was informed that the British light horse were advancing. Stepping to the door, I saw them at full speed chasing in my patrols one of whom they took. I immediately mounted, when I found the young damsel at my side, entreating that I would protect her. Having not a moment to reflect, I desired her to mount behind me, and in this way brought her off more than three miles up to Germantown, where she dismounted. During the whole ride, though there was considerable firing of pistols, and not a little wheeling and charging, she remained unmoved, and never once complained of fear after she mounted my horse.

As a result of the intelligence delivered by Lydia Darragh, Washington shifted his forces to defend against the attack. The patriot entrenchments held firm and General Howe broke off the attack, and fell back to Philadelphia on 8 December 1777.

General William Howe knew he had failed to end American resistance. Lord George Sackville Germain, the Colonial Secretary, accepted Howe's resignation, and in a letter dated 4 February 1778 directed Howe to relinquish command to Sir Henry Clinton. Howe received Germain's letter on 9 April 1778. Soon afterward Washington was able to report its contents to Congress. The American commander-in-chief now had to decide what his new opponent's course of action was to be. Intelligence reports indicated Clinton intended to evacuate Philadelphia. The Marquis De Lafayette received orders from the General on 18 May 1778
to, "interrupt the communication with Philadelphia, obstruct the incursions of the enemy's parties, and obtain intelligence of their motions and designs." Washington further instructed Lafayette, "to procure trusty and intelligent spies who will advise you faithfully of whatever may be passing in the city." Three courses of action appeared possible according to the intelligence offered Washington. The enemy could march across New Jersey to rejoin the occupation forces quartered in New York City. Washington requested that Colonel Stephen Moylan assume intelligence duties in New Jersey to investigate this possibility. The British might try to reach New York by sea. Agents within Philadelphia reported that large quantities of heavy cannon and baggage were being loaded on board ships, and that all the transports were taking on wood and water. The third possibility involved the impact renewed hostilities between Britain and France would have on the American War for Independence. A large French naval force had been reported in the West Indies. Washington felt a growing French naval force menaced Britain's claims on the North American continent or their Caribbean islands. The British attempted to deceive General Washington by industriously reinforcing their fortifications. Washington refused to be misled, and reported to the President of Congress on 28 May 1778 that the construction by British engineers, "cannot be of sufficient weight to raise a doubt upon the subject, and must be considered, as merely calculated to deceive and mask their design." Clinton's army marched out of Philadelphia the night of 17 June 1778. Washington decided to strike a blow at the British rear guard. General Charles Lee led 4,200 patriot soldiers against 6,000
of General Clinton's combatants. The opposing forces converged on Monmouth Courthouse in New Jersey, and Lee was forced to retreat. Lee blamed contradictory intelligence for his failure. Clinton and his forces reached New York safely.49 Washington appointed Brigadier General Charles Scott to coordinate espionage activities in New York City. Washington's instructed Scott to, "Spare no pains, nor expence, to obtain and transmit the earliest intelligence of the Enemy's movements and designs, get an intelligent person if you can to remain constantly in the City and others to communicate with him for the purpose of conveying his observations."50 Espionage on Long Island and Manhattan now became more important for Washington than ever before.
ENDNOTES

1Freeman, Biography, 4:485.


4Bakeless, Turncoats, 173; Freeman, Biography, 4:304.


7Freeman, Biography, 4:528.


10George Washington to the President of Congress, 17 November 1777, Ibid., 76.

11George Washington to Major Mark Clark, Jr. 4 November 1777, Ibid., 8.

12George Washington to the President of Congress, 20 February 1777, Ibid., 7:168.


15Bakeless, *Turncoats*, 204.


18George Washington to Governor William Livingston, 1 June 1778, Ibid., 12:1; Bakeless, *Turncoats*, 207.


21Ibid., 3.


25Mekeel, *Quakers*, 181.


33 Mekeel, *Quakers*, 290.


36 Darrach, *Lydia*, 86.


41 George Washington to Major General Nathanael Greene, 16 May 1778, Ibid., 398.

42 George Washington to Governor William Livingston, 1 June 1778, Ibid., 12:2.


44 Ibid.


48 George Washington to the President of Congress, 28 May 1778, Ibid., 471.

49 Freeman, Biography, 5:26-27; Bakeless, Turncoats, 226.

"I am very anxious," admitted General Washington, "to obtain a true account of what is passing in New York, and am therefore endeavoring to send in a variety of persons from different quarters who have no connexion or communication with each other."\(^1\) After the British Army withdrew from Philadelphia in 1778, Washington issued orders to enable him to stay abreast of events in New York City, the British headquarters. Meanwhile Brigadier General Charles Scott assumed control of espionage activities in New York City. General Washington ordered Scott to keep a constant lookout for new recruits and to continue his surveillance of British activities.\(^2\) Numerous agents operated in New York and the surrounding area, some controlled by Scott, some reported directly to Washington, and others worked independently of any official control.

Major Alexander Clough, of the Third Continental Dragoons, originally controlled secret agents operating in New Jersey. In August 1778 Washington requested that Clough find someone to memorize a list of questions, enter New York, and obtain the desired information. "If the person who goes in," instructed the General, "cannot make an excuse of Business, he must be allowed to carry a small matter of provision in, and bring something out, by way of pretext."\(^3\)

Washington hired Nathaniel Sackett to establish an independent spy ring in New York, subject to his orders.\(^4\) The General advanced
Sackett $500 to pay those he employed. Sackett received fifty dollars each month for his own services. According to an unsigned letter generally attributed to Sackett, he recruited several agents, including the father of a British colonel, a businessman intimate with several highly placed tories, a Hessian, and a woman whose husband reportedly deserted to the British. Sackett requested the unidentified woman journey to New York City and to complain to General Howe about the seizure of her grain by American forces. During her sojourn in the city, she was to make as many observations of Howe's army as she found possible. Another woman, Mrs. Elizabeth Burgin, operated an escape line out of New York City for American prisoners of war. Washington commended the woman's service, stating that, "From the testimony of different persons, and particularly many of our own officers who have returned from captivity, it would appear that she has been indefatigable, for the relief of the prisoners, and in measures facilitating their escape." Finding herself under suspicion, Mrs. Burgin fled in 1779 to Philadelphia where Washington instructed the commissary to furnish her and her children with rations until Congress could decide on an appropriate reward.

Generals Alexander McDougall and Stirling also ran separate intelligence services in New York, as well as conveying messages from Washington to another set of operatives under the control of Colonel Aaron Burr. On 4 July 1778 Washington sent an order to Burr directing him to send someone to New York City to investigate reports that British ships were preparing to sail and to determine their destination.
General Washington placed great value on intelligence received from an agent in New York with the picturesque name of Hercules Mulligan. Mulligan relayed important military information to Washington throughout the occupation of New York City by the British. No record exists to identify the nature of the information, but Mulligan's son later claimed that his father sent intelligence to the patriot headquarters through an established agent on Long Island. Washington's first breakfast in New York City after the British evacuation was reportedly with Mulligan.9

Washington preferred resident agents such as Mulligan. As Washington explained to John Jay, "The Greatest benefits are to be derived from persons who live with the other side; whose local circumstances, without subjecting them to suspicions, give them an opportunity of making observations and comparing and combining things and Sentiments."10

Washington also had to make use of those who lived outside the city. Captain Elijak Hunter participated in several spy missions, and by late 1779 had worked his way into the confidence of the tory governor of New York, William Tryon. Washington distrusted double agents, however. He felt that often what the agent must do to preserve the pretended confidence of the other party counterbalanced any positive effect of his endeavors.11 The commander-in-chief warned other generals concerning the possible duplicity of Hunter.12 Even when Hunter delivered to Washington a letter addressed to General Sir Frederick Haldimand, the British commander in Canada, Washington expressed doubt over the agent's loyalty when he observed: "The letter directed to Genl. Haldimand was evidently intended to fall into our hands. The manner of contriving that, and some other circumstances, makes me suspicious that he is
Washington suspected another of his spies, Moses Hatfield, of loyalty to the British. 

"From what I have learnt," confessed Washington, "he is a suspicious character and will probably endeavour to serve the enemy more effectually than us." 

Enoch Crosby was one of the better known and more successful spies of the American Revolution. Born in Harwich on Cape Cod, Crosby grew up in New York and resided in Danbury, Connecticut, when the Lexington conflict occurred. Crosby served one tour of duty with Waterbury's Connecticut Regiment. As Crosby prepared to rejoin his regiment, a tory known only as Bunker mistook him for a royalist sympathizer wishing to join the British Army. Bunker told Crosby that a loyalist company was currently forming, and that it would soon join the British in New York. The tory offered Crosby a place in the company, and also told him that a man named Fowler was to be the company's captain. 

Crosby told Bunker he was unwilling to wait until the company was formed, and that he would try to get through to New York City alone. Parting with the tory recruiter, Crosby traveled on and stopped for the evening at the home of Esquire Young, a member of the Committee of Safety for the county of Westchester. Crosby communicated to Young the information he had learned from Bunker. The next morning Young took Crosby to White Plains where he repeated his story to the Committee of Safety. The committee believed it best if Crosby delayed returning to his regiment and temporarily assumed the role of undercover agent to investigate the leads he had stumbled upon. John Jay and the other members of the committee asked Crosby to help them capture the newly
formed tory company and promised to inform his regimental commander why he failed to report for duty.

Jay sent Crosby to pose as a prisoner of a company of rangers stationed in White Plains where he soon was allowed to escape. Crosby returned to Bunker's house, told the story of his escape from the rangers, and requested a position with the company being formed. The night before the scheduled departure of the newly-recruited tory company, Crosby made contact with Young and the American ranger captain from whom he had escaped and provided full details of the tory plans. Crosby rejoined the enemy, was arrested with the others, and remained in confinement for about a week in a hatter's shop in Fishkill before he was released.

Jay and the committee now retained Crosby as a permanent secret agent. Posing as an itinerant shoemaker, Crosby infiltrated another tory household, and once again enlisted in a tory company. He was sent to lodge in a cave with the commander of the company being raised. Crosby was unable to communicate with the Committee of Safety and therefore had to entrust a message to a Mr. Purdy, who, though a stranger, had the reputation among the tories of being an ardent rebel. This loyalist group was also arrested, and Crosby once again was allowed to escape.

Crosby successfully carried on his counterespionage activities for over a year. He joined one tory company after another. Each time the company was arrested, and each time Crosby escaped. Despite efforts to conceal his identity through name changes, Crosby's usefulness as a secret agent eventually ended.

In the summer of 1778, Washington organized his most elaborate and efficient secret service system yet devised in the War for Independence.
When the French fleet under Count d'Estaing anchored temporarily off New York in July of 1778, the possibility of increased military activity highlighted the expanded need for a reliable, organized system for conveying military intelligence.\(^2\) Obtaining the intelligence was only part of the problem, relaying it to headquarters in a timely fashion constituted the truly difficult task. Various channels existed under General Scott and Nathaniel Sackett for the exchange of correspondence with patriots in New York City. Washington was less than completely satisfied with the system then in use.\(^2\)\(^2\) The commander-in-chief advanced General Scott twenty-five guineas, advising him, "to get some intelligent person into the City, and others of his own choice, to be Messengers between you and him, for the purpose of conveying such information as he will be able to obtain and give."\(^2\)\(^3\) Washington then delegated Major Benjamin Tallmadge of the Second Regiment, Light Dragoons, to reorganize the bureau of secret service on Long Island. Tallmadge never revealed the exact date when he began espionage activities, saying only that he: "opened a private correspondence with some persons in New York (for Gen. Washington) which lasted through the war. How beneficial it was to the Commander-in-Chief is evidenced by his continuing the same to the close of the war. I kept one or more boats continually employed in crossing the Sound on this business."\(^2\)\(^4\)

Tallmadge, who had been Nathan Hale's friend and classmate at Yale University, may have requested the authority to take charge of the new spy system under formation in the vicinity of New York.\(^2\)\(^5\) Although he initially possessed no more experience than Hale in secret service work, Tallmadge proved to be a success where Hale had been
a failure. Tallmadge supervised a highly effective spy force known as the Culper network. Impressed by the Culper group's ability, Washington expressed the desire to meet Samuel Culper: "His account has the appearance of a very distinct and good one and makes me desirous of a continuance of his correspondence. I should be glad to have an interview with him myself." In the same letter however, Washington also expressed regret at his inability to pay Tallmadge. Two weeks later, Washington wisely retracted his desire to meet with Culper when he realized such a rendezvous could endanger the spy.

To help him in this dangerous business, Tallmadge enlisted two of his friends, Abraham Woodhull, who transmitted intelligence under the alias Samuel Culper, Sr., and Robert Townsend, another member of Nathan Hale's Yale class of 1773 and otherwise known as Samuel Culper, Jr. They were young men of good social position who were able to mix easily with British officers. Townsend also reported society news for the tory printer, James Rivington's New York Gazette. Rivington suffered from attacks by the Sons of Liberty in 1775 owing to his violently loyalist stance, which he freely espoused in his publications. Actually, Rivington was another American secret agent whose greatest achievement was stealing the British Navy's signal book.

Relaying the information collected in New York proved to be the most difficult and dangerous part of the operation. As a respected merchant, Townsend regularly shipped merchandise to customers in Oyster Bay and Setauket. Austin Roe of Setauket delivered the goods, making the 110 mile round trip in two exhausting days. The particular arrangement of black petticoats on Abraham Woodhull's clothesline informed Roe,
when and where to meet the messengers crossing the sound from Connecticut. A whaleboat crew commanded by Lieutenant Caleb Brewster took the messages from Roe and delivered them to Tallmadge, alias John Bolton, who forwarded them to Washington.33

The circuitous delivery route often resulted in numerous delays which never ceased to annoy General Washington.34 The commander-in-chief frequently suggested alternate routes for a more timely delivery of the intelligence from New York.35 Specific intelligence needs were also relayed through the system. "I wish to know where every Regiment lies, in order to govern my own movements with more propriety," Washington requested of Tallmadge.36 At one point, Woodhull expressed the opinion that Townsend devoted too little time and energy to espionage and too much time to his business. Washington advised Tallmadge to recommend Townsend not to give up his business, "I would imagine that with a little industry, he will be able to carry on his intelligence with greater security to himself and greater advantages to us, under cover of his usual business, than if he were to dedicate himself wholly to the giving of information."37

Washington relied heavily on the information supplied by the Culper network until the end of the war. Townsend, Woodhull, and Tallmadge sent a steady stream of information concerning troop and ship movements, destinations, new arrivals, availability of supplies, and informed predictions concerning British intentions. Washington grew increasingly anxious when messages from New York lagged. "I am very much pleased that the Correspondence with C____ is again opened," Washington stated in a letter to Tallmadge, 11 August 1780, "I have the greatest dependence
in his good intentions, and I am persuaded when he pleases to exert himself, he can give the most useful intelligence." The Culper network first intimated that something was wrong at West Point, and Tallmadge nearly caused Benedict Arnold to be apprehended before he defected.39

On 23 September 1780 Tallmadge learned of the capture of a Mr. John Anderson. Always interested in recruiting a new source of intelligence for his network, Tallmadge went to his regimental headquarters to interview the prisoner. Tallmadge recorded the event in his memoirs:

"On inquiry, I found that three men by the names of John Paulding, David Williams, and Isaac Van Vert, who had passed below our ordinary military patrols, on the road from Tarrytown to Kingsbridge, had fallen in with this John Anderson, on his way to New York. They took him aside for examination, and discovering sundry papers upon him, which he had concealed in his boots, they determined to detain him as a prisoner, notwithstanding Anderson's offers of pecuniary satisfaction if they would permit him to proceed on his course.40"

Unfortunately, Lieutenant Colonel John Jameson, Tallmadge's superior officer, had ordered the transfer of the prisoner and the incriminating evidence captured with Anderson to General Benedict Arnold, who commanded at West Point. Tallmadge persuaded Jameson to retrieve the prisoner; the evidence and an explanatory letter was forwarded to General Arnold. Anderson was placed in Tallmadge's custody. "As soon as I saw Anderson," Tallmadge later reported, "and especially after I saw him walk (as he did almost constantly) across the floor, I became impressed with the belief that he had been bred to arms."41

Tallmadge described the prisoner's confession in his memoirs:

"After dinner on the 24th, perhaps by three o'clock P. M., he asked to be favored with a pen, and ink, and paper, which I readily granted, and he wrote the letter to General Washington, dated "Salem, 24th September, 1780," which is recorded in most of the histories of this eventful period. In this letter he disclosed his true character to be "Major John Andre, Adjutant General to the British Army."42"
Major John Andre, alias John Anderson, had rendezvoused with General Arnold, alias Mr. Gustavus, to complete plans for the surrender of West Point and the desertion of Arnold to the British. While taking his breakfast on the morning of September 25, Arnold received the letter from Jameson. Arnold went immediately to his boat, and rowed down the North River to the British sloop-of-war, Vulture, which then lay in Tappan Bay below King's Ferry, where he sought refuge.43

All the men involved with the Culper spy network lived long after the end of the American Revolution. Washington appreciated the accurate intelligence they supplied throughout the war and pursued steps to guarantee that no harm came to them after hostilities ceased. Secrecy had become such a habit with the Culpers that it was 150 years before their true identities were confirmed.44
ENDNOTES


2George Washington to Brigadier General Charles Scott, 27 September 1778, Ibid., 482.


5Ibid.

6Freeman, Biography, 4:638-39.


11Ibid., 248.

12George Washington to Brigadier General William Irvine, 1 January 1780, Ibid., 17:338.


16Dann, Eyewitness, 339-40.

17Ibid., 341.

18Ibid., 342.

19Ibid., 343-45.

20Ibid., 347.

21Freeman, Biography, 5:45-46.


24Tallmadge, Memoirs, 29.


27Ibid., 356.

28George Washington to Major Benjamin Tallmadge, 17 December 1778, Ibid., 413.


31Bakeless, Turncoats, 228; Hall, Tallmadge, 46.

33 Hall, Tallmadge, 47; Pennypacker, Washington's Spies, 33-34; Bakeless, Turncoats, 228.

34 George Washington to Major Benjamin Tallmadge, 21 March 1779, Fitzpatrick, Writings of Washington, 14:276.

35 George Washington to Major Benjamin Tallmadge, 30 April 1779, Ibid., 468.


40 Tallmadge, Memoirs, 35.

41 Ibid., 36.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid., 37.

CHAPTER 7

GEORGE WASHINGTON- ESPIONAGE CHIEF

After Benedict Arnold turned traitor, Major Henry "Light-Horse Harry" Lee presented General Washington with a secret plan to return the renegade and bring him safely to the gallows. Washington approved the plan but insisted Arnold not be killed or injured, even at the risk of allowing him to escape. "My aim," Washington wrote to Lee, "is to make a public example of him." Sergeant Major John Champe was assigned to the special mission, and on 19 October 1780 pretended to desert to the British. Champe enlisted in the British army and was appointed a sergeant major in Benedict Arnold's regiment; one composed solely of American deserters. Champe now had complete freedom of movement in British occupied New York. He contacted patriot agents, and made plans for Arnold's capture. Unfortunately, Arnold's regiment embarked for Virginia on the night the operation was to take place and the plan was scuttled.

As the end of the summer of 1781 approached, General Washington was in immediate need of intelligence from New York which Tallmadge, the Culpers, the Mersereaus, Mulligan, and all the other secret agents operating in the city and on Long Island could not supply. The condition of Sir Henry Clinton's forces and their capabilities topped the list of questions which plagued Washington. A new spy would have to be recruited to enter New York City for a few days, hastily secure last
minute intelligence, and return immediately to report. By nightfall the next day, Sergeant Daniel Bissell of the Second Connecticut Line had penetrated the British defenses and appeared on the streets of New York as a deserter from the Continental Army. All might have gone well if Bissel had not at this critical time been stricken ill with an unknown malady which demanded immediate medical attention. Bissel lay ill for six weeks in a British Army hospital, during which time he was conscripted into the British Army. Clinton instituted a new policy requiring deserters to either give bail or enlist, and Bissel who lacked the funds necessary to meet his bail was forced to enlist in the British Army. For more than a year, Bissel worked as a supply sergeant in the Quartermaster Corps for the British before an opportunity to escape appeared. Bissel never knew that another officer in the British Quartermaster Corps, Captain David Gray, was also an agent for General Washington.  

Bissel's adventure was the last major secret service operation of the war. By the time Bissel returned home, flags of truce were circulating freely throughout the streets of New York and Sir Henry Clinton had returned to Great Britain. Sir Guy Carleton, who assumed command, informed Washington that he was anxious to reduce hostilities. War-weary Americans, newspaper editors, and Congress eagerly grasped this hint at an early peace; yet Washington remained skeptical. The General believed that reports from London suggesting an end to hostilities were probably a deception. Washington believed the only means to a peace was to continue vigorous preparations for war. General Washington instructed Major Benjamin Tallmadge to increase information gathering activities in order to expose any attempts at deception.
Ever since the outset of the Revolution when General Thomas Gage issued his first set of instructions to a pair of fledgling spies, British intelligence agents had caused a great deal of trouble for Washington and his men. As his first pair of spies, Gage chose Captain William Brown, of the Fifty Second Regiment of Foot, and Ensign Henry De Berniere, of the Tenth Regiment of Foot. Gage's instructions were: You will go through the counties of Suffolk and Worcester, taking a sketch of the country as you pass; it is not expected you should make out regular plans and surveys, but mark out the roads and distances from town to town, as also the situation and nature of the country; all passes must be particularly laid down, noticing the length and breadth of them, the entrance in and going out of town, and whether to be avoided by taking other routes.

The pair eventually returned to Boston with maps, military drawings, and reports outlining the terrain, roads, and provisions available to the rebels.

General Sir William Howe increased the number of spies working for the British until even Washington confessed there seemed to be no means to neutralize their effects. Not to be outdone, Sir Henry Clinton who succeeded Howe, kept so many trained agents on call in New York that he could immediately send out spies to reconnoiter whenever a problem surfaced.

Clinton and his chief intelligence officer, Adjutant General John Andre undertook several audacious secret activities, including the negotiations with Arnold and an unsuccessful attempt to sway the loyalty of General Samuel Holden Parsons. After seven years of discovering spies at every turn, it was small wonder that General Washington hesitated to credit the early rumors of a negotiated peace.
Washington's doubts increased upon receipt of a letter signed by Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Robert Digby, dealing with a possible peace. Part of the second paragraph read:

We are acquainted, Sir, by authority, that negotiations for a general peace have already commenced at Paris, and that Mr. Grenville is invested with full powers to treat with all parties at war, and is now at Paris in the execution of his commission. And we are all likewise, Sir, further made acquainted, that his Majesty, in order to remove all obstacles to that peace, which he so ardently wishes to restore has commanded his ministers to direct Mr. Grenville that the independency of the thirteen Provinces should be proposed by him in the first instance, instead of making it a condition of the general treaty... 16

Washington still suspected a trick, 17 and in his General Orders for 3 September 1782 stated, "the readiest way to procure a lasting and honorable peace is to be fully prepared vigorously to prosecute war." 18 All the information that Tallmadge and the Culper network could gather indicated that the enemy were preparing to withdraw from New York City and that many of the known tories were fleeing the city. 19

By the time Washington once again occupied New York, he had become a skilled manager of his intelligence services. Washington's consistent use of strategic intelligence permitted him to challenge nearly every major British military strategem. This was particularly true in anticipating the attack on Charleston in 1776, defending Philadelphia in 1777, and in strengthening the forces of Generals Greene and Gates in the Carolinas and New York. Intelligence and deception contributed to the American success in the Yorktown campaign, yet failed them miserably at Brandywine.

As an intelligence manager, General Washington usually insisted that an agent's instructions and term of employment be recorded. He
wrote many letters of instruction himself including the following directions to Robert Townsend:

Culper junior to remain in the city, to collect all the useful information he can, to do this he should mix as much as possible among the Officers and Refugees, visit the Coffee Houses and all public places. He is to pay particular attention to the movements by land and water in and about the city, especially how their transports are secured against an attempt to destroy them.\textsuperscript{20}

Washington included a list of specific questions for Townsend to investigate. The list included questions on the state of the British defenses, forage, provisions, fuel, and the general health of the army and navy. The General instructed Abraham Woodhull, Townsend's partner in the Culper network, to:

\begin{itemize}
  \item entrust none but the persons fixed upon to transact the business;
  \item to deliver the dispatches to none upon our side but those who shall be pitched upon for the purpose of receiving them and to transmit them and any verbal intelligence that may be obtained to no one but the Commander-in-Chief.\textsuperscript{21}
\end{itemize}

Washington also emphasized his desire to receive written rather than verbal reports from his spies.\textsuperscript{22} This left Townsend, Woodhull, and other agents in a state of constant dread, fearing discovery through a captured message. As a partial solution to this problem, Sir James Jay, the brother of John Jay, developed a formula for invisible ink which he made available to Washington and his agents. As James Jay explained to Thomas Jefferson:

\begin{quote}
When the affairs of America previous to the commencement of hostilities, began to wear a serious aspect, and threatened to issue in civil war, it occurred to me a fluid might possibly be discovered for invisible writing, which would elude the generally known means of detection, and yet could be rendered visible by a suitable counterpart.\textsuperscript{23}
\end{quote}

The agents in New York and on Long Island were furnished bottles of the invisible ink for writing their reports, while only Washington
and Major Tallmadge kept the means to convert the invisible writing to readable script.\(^{24}\)

Washington continually tried to impress upon Tallmadge the importance of security and secrecy in handling the letters from his agents and the importance of guarding the secret of the ink. These instructions appear in a letter to Tallmadge:

> All the white Ink I now have (indeed all that there is any prospect of getting soon) is sent in Phial No. 1 by Colo. Webb. the liquid in No. 2 is the counterpart which renders the other visible by wetting the paper with a fine brush after the first has been used and is dry. You will send these to C____r Junr. as soon as possible and I beg that no mention may ever be made of your having received such liquids from me or any one else. In all cases and at all times this prudence and circumspection is necessary but it is indispensably so now as I am informed that Govr. Tryon has a preparation similar to it which may lead to a detection if it is ever known that a matter of this sort has passed from me.\(^{25}\)

Washington devised several methods to insure the security of the written communications received from his agents. The General suggested writing the intelligence on the blank pages of a pamphlet or on the unused pages of a common pocket book. The margins of almanacs could also conceal messages written in the disappearing ink. Personal letters could safely carry hidden messages written either in the margins or between the lines of the cover message.\(^{26}\)

Tallmadge also devised a code book of 756 important words, each having a number. The code was never broken even though the words were numbered in their alphabetical order. Often mentioned places and people were assigned numbers; Washington was 711, Tallmadge 721, and New York 727.\(^{27}\) This type of simple substitution code was widely employed. The private cypher of Henry IV of France consisted of numerals in place of words,\(^{28}\) while Dr. Benjamin Church used symbols to replace
the letters of the alphabet. Only four copies of the code were made by Tallmadge, one for Washington, one each for the Culpers, and one for himself.\footnote{29}

After the preliminary articles of peace were officially announced in 1782, American espionage efforts declined. Then, in an attempt to thwart reprisals against known tories who would be left behind when the British forces departed, Sir Guy Carleton began to relay information concerning conditions within New York City to Washington.\footnote{30} Washington informed Carleton that violence and retaliation against the tories who chose to remain in the city would be prevented as much as possible.\footnote{31}

As he related in his memoirs, Tallmadge had one more duty to perform:

I found it necessary to take some steps to insure the safety of several persons within the enemy's lines, who had served us faithfully and with intelligence during the war. As some of them were considered to be of the Tory character, who would be very obnoxious when the British army should depart, I suggested to Gen. Washington the propriety of my being permitted to go to New York under the cover of a flag.\footnote{32}

Tallmadge received permission from Washington to enter New York City to guarantee the safety of his agents. None of his agents were harmed. Many heroic patriots gathered intelligence for General Washington that helped win the War of Independence. Many who were required by the nature of their duties to pose as one of the enemy, incurred the hatred of family and friends. The Hendricks brothers were almost hanged by patriot New Jersey officials, yet they remained silent knowing the security of the Manhattan intelligence network must be maintained. Sergeant Daniel Bissell's name was entered for over 150 years as a deserter on his hometown register, and Nathan Hale gave his life, helping
to establish America's freedom. Washington called on ordinary people
to do extraordinary feats; he employed butchers, shoemakers, teachers,
businessmen, sailors, and housewives. His civilian intelligence corps
usually served the commander-in-chief in a timely and efficient manner.
As the leader of a cause, Washington possessed a distinct advantage
over the British generals who opposed him. The British never understood
that the patriots' desire for independence was not a temporary fixation,
but rather a passionate longing that intensified as the war progressed.
Civilian secret agents, who were often devoted patriots, were willing
to make the sacrifices and endure the risks inherent in supplying vital
information to Washington.

When the Continental Congress elected the forty-three year
old farmer from Mount Vernon to the position of commander-in-chief
of their new army, he had not borne arms in sixteen years. Washington
had little formal education, and he had never attended a military academy.
His military knowledge had been gained through his experience in the
French and Indian War. One of the fundamental lessons he had learned
in that conflict was the value of surprise.

Timely intelligence concerning the strength and location of
the enemy was vital to the commanders on both sides of the American
Revolution. Espionage activities led to the skirmishes at Lexington
and Concord when a tory agent informed the British commander in Boston
that patriots had hidden military supplies in Concord. A patriot intelligence
network in Boston discovered the preparations for a British expedition
to seize the supplies, and that resulted in Paul Revere's famous ride.

Military intelligence became even more important when the British
seized New York. The British force was larger, better-equipped, and
better-trained than was the Continental Army. The British Navy controlled the coastal waters, and that gave the British a distinct tactical advantage in the prosecution of the war. This forced a defensive strategy upon Washington. Intelligence regarding British movements was essential.

Early in the war Washington took a keen personal interest in the recruitment and training of agents for espionage. General Washington's intelligence requirements rapidly expanded as the British moved into Philadelphia. Washington soon delegated oversight of espionage activities to several of his subordinate officers, including Major Benjamin Tallmadge, General Thomas Mifflin, Major Mark Clark, and General Charles Scott.

As the war progressed, Washington became a skilled manager of his intelligence forces. Washington insisted that an agents' instructions and terms of employment be in writing. He emphasized his preference for written rather than verbal reports, and he demanded the information be delivered as quickly as possible. He sent agents behind enemy lines, recruited tory intelligence sources, questioned travelers for information, and initiated numerous espionage missions. Washington also proved adept at military deception and counterintelligence. He often misled the British by furnishing bogus information to their intelligence agents.

In August 1781 Washington convinced British General Henry Clinton that he planned an assault on New York City when he was actually transferring the majority of his army to Virginia for the crucial battle at Yorktown.

Washington developed the shrewdness, the mania for secrecy, and the talent for deception which characterizes a professional intelligence officer. Washington had a zeal for intelligence work which enabled him to become an excellent spymaster. Without Washington's military
intelligence service to offset Britain's mobility and power, the American independence movement may have faltered.
ENDNOTES

1Van Doren, *Secret History*, 392.


3Van Doren, *Secret History*, 392-93.

4Freeman, *Biography*, 5:312.

5Bakeless, *Turncoats*, 346-54.

6Sir Guy Carleton to George Washington, 7 May 1782, Jared Sparks, ed., *Correspondence of the American Revolution Being Letters of Eminent Men To George Washington* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1853), 8:537 (hereinafter cited as Sparks, *Correspondence*).


9George Washington to the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 5 June 1782, Ibid., 315.


13Ibid., 6-16.


90
16Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Robert Digby to George Washington, 14 May 1782, Sparks, Correspondence, 8:540.


18General Orders of George Washington for 3 September 1782, Ibid., 25:42.

19Bakeless, Turncoats, 357.


21Ibid., 467.


24George Washington to Major Benjamin Tallmadge, 30 April 1779, Fitzpatrick, Writings of Washington, 14:468.


27Pennypacker, Washington's Spies, 218; Bakeless, Turncoats, 231.

28Thompson and Padover, Diplomacy, 260.

29Bakeless, Turncoats, 231.

30Freeman, Biography, 5:459.


32Tallmadge, Memoirs, 61.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources


Secondary Sources


James, Sydney V. "Quaker's Ideas About Their Sect." *The William and Mary Quarterly.* 19 (July 1962) 360-382.


