

RECONSTRUCTING CRAWFORD'S ARMY OF 1782

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WINSTON CHURCHILL once remarked, "Russia is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." Equally so are the army rolls of Colonel William Crawford's Sandusky expedition as they appear in the *Pennsylvania Archives*.¹ Only grudgingly do those lists of names release their secrets to the researcher.

At first glance, one would not expect the rolls to be puzzling. The introduction to them states confidently: "It is not the intention of the Editor to present an account of the unfortunate expedition of Col. Crawford to Sandusky. The narratives of [Dr. John] Knight and [John] Slover, which follow these lists of volunteers, are sufficient for the general reader. Of the men who went upon the expedition, we have the rolls of sixteen of the eighteen detachments of companies. About two-thirds of the troops were from Washington county, and with possibly the exception of one company, the rest from Westmoreland county, under which we place the entire force."² Staff officers from Colonel William Crawford down through the rank of captain are then listed, followed by the company rolls, and finally a miscellaneous list devoid of rank or company designation.

A two-year investigation at Harrisburg and Washington, D. C., leads me to conclude that the rolls *by themselves* are an inadequate and at times misleading source of militia information. The aim of this discussion is thus to shed light on the riddle of the "lost" Sandusky expedition rolls and the miscellaneous list attached to them. The original documents will be traced from the western frontier to the State Library in Harrisburg. More reliable sources of information will be introduced. And, finally, the question of the army's actual size will be addressed.

Mr. Brown published an article on a Crawford's Defeat ballad in the October 1981 issue of the *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*.—Editor

1 The word "army" is used in this article only in the general sense of denoting an armed force of men rather than as defined in strict military terminology. The earliest compilation of the Sandusky expedition company rolls is in William H. Egle, ed., *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2nd ser. (Harrisburg, 1888), 14 (hereafter cited as *Penn. Arch.*). *Penn. Arch.*, 6th ser. (Harrisburg, 1906), 2, includes a lightly edited reprint of the same material. To avoid paging confusion, all references will be to the *Penn. Arch.*, 6th ser., rolls.

2 *Penn. Arch.*, 6th ser., 2: 385.

Early in the 1870s, an Ohio lawyer, Consul Willshire Butterfield, turned to historical research and published a definitive history of the expedition.³ That Butterfield searched in vain for the army's rolls is soon evident: "There was, doubtless, a roll and roster of the expedition, but it has since been lost. It may have been sent, for some purpose, to Philadelphia, then the seat of the Pennsylvania government. These are conjectures only. Certain it is that no copy or original, in print or MS., is now known to exist. Mr. Hazard, the careful compiler of the 'Colonial Records,' of Pennsylvania, and 'Pennsylvania Archives' did not find any, as nothing of the kind appears in those voluminous and valuable publications."⁴

In 1873 Butterfield's history came off the press. Ironically, that very year workmen, repairing offices of the Pennsylvania state department, uncovered the musty comptroller general's books and papers that had lain untouched since their arrival in Harrisburg in 1812.⁵

The ledgers and bundled papers were sent immediately to the State Library for examination. Samuel Hazard meanwhile having died, the task of organizing and transcribing the name lists for publication fell to William Henry Egle, a onetime magazine editor and Civil War surgeon now appointed state librarian. The pressure on Egle to publish was tremendous. Little more could be done than "pour all available copy into the presses with a hurried and uncritical hand."⁶ Even so, it was not until fifteen years later that the rolls appeared in the *Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, Volume 14, and by then the centennial of the campaign was past, and such interest as the rolls aroused was primarily genealogical.⁷ Not until this century did any history make even cursory reference to the rolls. Edgar W. Hassler in his *Old Westmoreland* obviously knew of the rolls' exist-

3 C. W. Butterfield, *An Historical Account of the Expedition Against Sandusky Under Col. William Crawford in 1782* (Cincinnati, 1873).

4 *Ibid.*, 78. See also Hazard's report in *Penn. Arch.*, 1st ser., 5: 253.

5 J. F. Hartranft, Introductory, *Penn. Arch.*, 2nd ser., 1: 1.

6 Henry Howard Eddy, *Guide to the Published Archives of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, 1949), 71. According to the guide, the indifference toward documentation continued when George E. Reed as state librarian brought out the Fourth Series (1899-1902): "There is no certain evidence as to what sources were used in compiling the Fourth Series. . . . no specific manuscript source is cited. . . . After the days of Samuel Hazard, documentation became a lost art with the editors . . . ; with the Assembly demanding quantity production, there was no time for frills" (p. 75).

7 "Dr. Montgomery devoted the newly-founded Division of Public Records chiefly to the forging of tools for genealogical research. Twenty-five to fifty letters were reaching the State Library each week . . . , and providing adequate answers from the materials at hand involved dreary hours of searching" (*ibid.*, 79-80).

tence but merely copied Egle's list of officers and added a couple sentences about ethnic backgrounds (pp. 164-65). Again, in 1926, Earle R. Forrest in his *History of Washington County, Pennsylvania* repeated the roster of field officers with a "Roll of Honor" of the dead and wounded (vol. 2, pp. 218-22).

A serious study of the published rolls soon runs into problems. The spelling of names, of course, slows identification of soldiers as this sampling illustrates: Dernboy (Dunlavy), Pass (Peas), Wimans (Nemons), Same (Sams), Whitehead (Whitaire or possibly Whittier), Devo (Devore), South (Southerland), Dillow (Dille), Townhill (Tannehill), and Consailly (Gunsaula).⁸ More serious, however, than the frontier orthography are substantial errors. Mistakes in recording military rank are not uncommon, Hugh Forbes being an ensign in Captain Thomas Rankin's company, and Daniel Hamilton that company's lieutenant — not the other way around. In some instances, soldiers are shown enrolled in two companies at the same time.⁹ "[Thomas] Ashley" is listed as the lieutenant in Captain Andrew Hood's company; actually that company's lieutenant was James Kerr.¹⁰ The most critical error of all is the editor's including three companies that were not part of Crawford's army.¹¹

In view of such difficulties, it would be helpful to see the documents used in compiling the rolls, but unfortunately the original certificates from the western frontier are no longer available. In 1903 the loss was noted by the then Pennsylvania governor, S. W. Pennypacker, who stated bluntly: "The State Library had long been neglected. With the exception of Ehrenfeld and Egle, the librarians had either been politicians, pure and simple, or incompetents, who neglected their work. The archives, consisting of papers tied up in loose bundles, had long been the stamping ground of literary

8 "At the same time [1902-1906], active use of the lists printed by Dr. Egle in certain volumes of the Second and Third Series demonstrated that copying had been careless with the result that the printed version frequently varied from the manuscript original" (*ibid.*, 80).

9 Names double-listed are: William Brady (Munn's and Reed's companies); John Gullon (Hood/Ritchie); James Hall (Ross/Munn); William Hall (Bane/Hoagland); John Jenkins (Reed/Rankin); Samuel Meek (Rankin/Bilderback); Samuel Morgan (Ross/Hoagland); James Parks (Hood/Ritchie); John Roberts (Rankin/Miller); Abraham Sutton (Ross/Ritchie); John Wallace (Bruce/Hoagland); Robert White (Hood/Ritchie); and Obadiah Wilson (Munn/Biggs). The duplication could result from errors by frontier clerks, but more likely the librarian-editor mixed up certificates from different tours.

10 *Penn. Arch.*, 6th ser., 2: 392; *ibid.*, 3rd ser., 23: 204.

11 The companies are those of Captains Bruce, Fife, and Reed in *ibid.*, 6th ser., 2: 390, 391, 398.

thieves.”¹² Thievery was not the only culprit. According to the present associate archivist, John Shelly, some documents were probably not returned by the state printer. Others were lent and disappeared. A number of certificates were casually offered as souvenirs to visitors to the State Library. Still other documents, dirty and deteriorating, were thrown out once their contents were published in order to make room for new acquisitions.¹³

Since the original certificates no longer survive in Harrisburg, the rolls published in 1888 must suffice. What do they tell us despite the mistakes cited earlier? For one thing, all the names in the Sandusky expedition rolls could not have been supported with indisputable documentation as the editor infers in his introduction: “That these portions of companies were upon that service we fully believe, being borne out by the fact that all contained certificates similar to the one re-produced in fac simile [*sic*] on the opposite page.” The facsimile to which Egle refers is that of a certificate of service for Francis McKinney.¹⁴

This is to Certify that Frenk MCinneyhis Served under my Command on the Campain that was Carried out against Sanduskey and is Intitled to Pay and Ration money when it Can be had from the State. Certifyed by mee on this 8th of July 1782

To whom it may Concern

Duncan MGeehon Capt

Such evidence is credible where Francis McKinney is concerned, but a closer reading of Egle’s introduction reveals that Egle never claimed that all the names were confirmed by identical certificates. The certificates were only *similar* to the one in facsimile. My suspicion is that Egle, laboring alone for the most part with a mountain of ragged certificates and pay vouchers, did what he could to reconstruct the rolls, using Butterfield’s history as a guide.¹⁵ Butterfield, however, only knew the names of eleven of the nineteen captains.¹⁶ Consequently, Egle had no means to prevent his including the companies of Captains Bruce, Reed, and Fife which never fought at Sandusky.¹⁷ In

12 Eddy, *Guide*, 79.

13 Interview, Oct. 16, 1980.

14 *Penn. Arch.*, 6th ser., 2: 385, and 386.

15 At the end of his introduction to the rolls, Egle cites Butterfield’s history as the “most reliable work” on the expedition. *Ibid.*, 6th ser., 2: 385.

16 Butterfield, *Historical Account*, 75-76, 135.

17 See below, p. 27 of this article.

other instances, names were inserted merely because Butterfield had said those soldiers campaigned with Crawford.

Secondly, the remarks added to some names in the rolls — “killed,” “wounded,” “escaped” — probably represent early (and often premature) reports given by survivors. For months I assumed the editor was simply dressing up otherwise barren name lists with information drawn from Butterfield. This, though, cannot be true. Too many reports are missing from Butterfield's work. No, Egle must have drawn upon another source, and doubtless that source was the papers uncovered by workmen in 1873. Several facts support this conclusion. The phrase, “killed on the Expedition,” found repeatedly in Egle's printed lists matches that frequently found in microfilmed Courts of Appeal minutes at Harrisburg. Wounded, John McDonald died painfully of gangrene, having been carried two hundred miles on a horse litter. Later a Court of Appeal clerk jotted after McDonald's name:¹⁸

Killed on the Expedition to St Duskie

A number of comments published by Egle are also mistaken, and in several cases Butterfield would have known better. “—— McCaddon” was neither a private in Captain Biggs's company nor was he slain. John McCaddon hired Aaron Longstreet as a substitute to go on the expedition and lived to the age of ninety-eight, dying in Newark, Ohio, in 1846. John Crawford, the son of Colonel Crawford, was not killed either. He applied for a federal pension in 1791, married, had seven children, and was buried near Manchester in Adams County, Ohio. Captain John Biggs was not “burned” at the stake as both Dr. Knight's narrative and Butterfield's history make clear. Hence the reports added to certain names are probably the reports of returnees. Rumors flew. Reports were jotted down. When soldiers finally straggled in later from the Ohio wilderness, the earlier notations went uncorrected.

As for the miscellaneous list directly following the company rolls, the editor's statement that all “were upon the Expedition” is untrue. Of the 142 names, 70 have no documentation whatever that places them in the army. Fourteen are soldiers in Captain John Beeson's company which the editor had no means to identify. Twenty-one other names belong to companies which neither Butterfield nor

¹⁸ Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, RG-4, Records of the Comptroller General, Militia Loan Accounts, Militia 1777-94, Wash. and Westm. Co. Operations. The description of McDonald's wounding and death comes from a nephew in the *Scioto Gazette*, Oct. 9, 1845 (Cleveland, Western Reserve Historical Society, MS 55).

Egle knew were part of Crawford's command. Still others are the names of those who hired substitutes or supplied weapons, blankets, rations, saddles, and the like.

We now can summarize conclusions about the documents used in compiling the published rolls. The service certificates of Crawford volunteers were gathered initially by the Washington and Westmoreland county lieutenants responsible for coordinating local militia activities. The certificates, probably with authorized company lists, were then sent to the Pennsylvania comptroller general's office in Philadelphia for payment "when it Can be had from the State," as McKinney's certificate tactfully states. In due time each company's list of names was recorded under its captain in the comptroller general's ledgers as funds were found and sent west to pay the militia or, if deceased, their next of kin. When recorded in Philadelphia, the original service certificates were bundled and finally shipped to Lancaster in 1799, and from there to Harrisburg in 1812 as the seat of the state government moved west. Decades passed. Lee's defeat at Gettysburg saved the records from probable destruction by fire in 1863. And then ten years later, workmen stumbled upon the books and papers. Had the state librarian, Egle, consulted the comptroller general's ledgers instead of plunging into the quicksand of confusing, half-legible certificates, he might have substantially reduced the errors that mar the published rolls. He would have learned that the rolls of Captain John Hardin's and Beeson's companies were not unavailable as he supposed. He would have set aside three company rolls he included. Lastly, he would have found the rolls of four companies he missed.

Of what value, then, are the published rolls? One value lies in the comments attached to various names. These judgments as to the fate of individuals, it is reasonable to believe, are reports that circulated following the American defeat.

Another value lies in the facsimile of Francis McKinney's certificate. It is dated July 8, 1782, over a month after the battle. The time lag would tend to corroborate the assertion of many veterans that they never received written discharges following the campaign. It is understandable then that a six-foot-two, 250-pound Baldwin Parsons could be overlooked and left unpaid.¹⁹ Or Stephen Burkarn who, during a Draper interview in 1845, gave explicit details about the battle and retreat.²⁰

¹⁹ Draper MSS 17S253; 19S186.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 8E78; 2S238-46.

Because of the obvious errors in the published rolls, there is a need for locating more reliable sources on the Sandusky expedition.

One source unknown to Butterfield and Egle is the journal of John Rose.²¹ Like Lafayette and von Steuben, this Russian nobleman of Baltic German extraction — whose true name was Gustavus Heinrich de Rosenthal — came to the aid of the American colonies in their revolt against England. Following a series of land and sea adventures including imprisonment at New York for a time, John Rose found himself at Fort Pitt in 1782 as an aide to General William Irvine, the fort's commander. When Colonel Crawford asked for help, Irvine sent Rose on the campaign as Crawford's aide-de-camp. Well-educated, Rose wrote daily journal entries throughout the campaign. Afterwards he added endnotes in which he evaluated the expedition's officers and made recommendations as to how to improve a comparable force in the future. Rose took the journal with its endnotes with him when he returned to his homeland in 1784. Today his journal and notes would be unknown on this side of the Atlantic except for a great-grandson who sent a copy to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1893 for publication.²² The original journal and notes are evidently now in an official archival institution in the Estonian S.S.R. in the Soviet Union.²³

The military pension applications at the National Archives in Washington are a rich source of information. In 1823 Congress passed the first comprehensive pension act which provided an annual grant to soldiers who served six months or more during the Revolution. Widows married at the time of the war were also eligible. As of this writing, eighty pensions of expedition volunteers or their widows have been identified. The pension files reveal a different picture of Crawford's army than is commonly supposed. The typical picture

21 First published in 1894 in the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 18: 128-57, 293-328. John Rose's *Journal of a Volunteer Expedition to Sandusky*, including endnotes, was republished by the *New York Times* and Arno Press in 1969 (hereafter cited as *Rose, Journal*).

22 Relevant letters from the great-grandson, G. Pilar von Pilchau, to F. D. Stone are at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

23 The exact location of this journal with its endnotes is at present unknown, but papers of Baron de Rosenthal are entered in a directory to the holdings in Soviet archives (*Lichnye arkhivnye fondy v khranilishchakh SSR; Ukazatel'*. Moscow, 1962, 2 vols.). The pertinent entry reads: (trans. Robt. V. Allen, Lib. of Cong.): Vetter-Rozentali (Rozentali) [Wetter-Rosenthal (Rosenthal)], von: Gustav Heinrich (1753-1829), participation in the war for independence in North America; Gustav Jacob (1789-1853), and others — landowners of the Estland guberniia [province]. TGI A Est. SSR [Central State Historical Archives of the Estonian SSR] f. 2638 [file number], 92 preservation units, 1630-1885 [dates of material included].

drawn by past historians and journalists has been that of an army filled with border ruffians led by a scattering of officers with Continental Line service. Pension narratives, to the contrary, reveal a significant number of Crawford's soldiers as having been former Continental Line veterans with experience gained in Arnold's attack on Quebec, the Battle of Saratoga, and George Rogers Clark's Illinois victories. Crawford volunteers helped construct Fort McIntosh and Fort Laurens. Some fought at Germantown, Trenton, Princeton, and Monmouth. Several endured the agony of the Valley Forge encampment. Many were discharged after fighting at Yorktown. Returning to their families on the western frontier, they went on lonely scouting trips up and down the Ohio River to provide early warning of Indian war parties and guarded isolated house-forts with little assistance from Congress and American regiments in the east.

The records of the Militia Loan of 1784 in Harrisburg are yet a third source of information. Concerning these records, an archives publication says:

Pay for military service was often long delayed. Thousands of militiamen returned from tours of active duty unpaid, bearing only a slip signed by a commanding officer. General financial confusion and the collapse of wartime currencies made prompt payment impossible, but eventually under an act of April 1, 1784, Pennsylvania compensated such men for their active service and settled accounts with certain other public creditors by passing to them interest-bearing *Certificates of the Funded or Militia Debt*. These certificates (bonds in the modern sense) were ultimately redeemed at face value. Unfortunately, when redemption came many of the original holders had long since sold their certificates at heavy discounts.²⁴

The importance of the Militia Loan records lies not only in the information they contain, but in the fact that each certificate number becomes, in effect, an American militiaman's "dogtag." Abel Cook of Washington County, for example, received a certificate dated November 4, 1784, for private's pay amounting to five pounds, eight shillings, and six pence. The certificate's number, 2203, falls among those of Captain John Miller's company (2193-2223), the tour dates being those of the Sandusky expedition, "20 May-20 June 1782."²⁵

At this point it should be inserted, for readers without convenient access to the Harrisburg archives, that the Sandusky expedition

²⁴ "The Military System of Pennsylvania During the Revolutionary War," Information Leaflet 3, Division of Archives and Manuscripts, Harrisburg, n.d.

²⁵ RG-4, Comp. Gen., Militia Loan Accts. 1784-85: Distribution Ledg. A, 101. "The time appointed for the rendezvous . . . was fixed . . . on the 20th of May. . . ." — H. H. Brackenridge, *Indian Atrocities: Narratives of the Perils and Sufferings of Dr. Knight and John Slover, Among the Indians During the Revolutionary War . . .* (Cincinnati, 1867), 10.

rolls in the Militia Loan ledgers are published in the *Pennsylvania Archives* (3rd ser., 23) in a section called "Rangers on the Frontier 1778-1783."²⁶ The only difference is that the published rolls do not include pay amounts or rank. The phonetic spelling is often grossly inaccurate as in the case of "John Buson" (Beeson) and "Javis Emol" (Emre in the original ledger, and probably Emory). But even this can have value for the historian or genealogist, for the crude spellings are probably the work of frontier clerks.

The fourth and final source of information is the microfilmed minutes of Courts of Appeal also available at Harrisburg. For the most part, references to the "Expedition to St. Duskie" are found in minutes taken in Washington County, although a few references are also found in records from Westmoreland County.²⁷ To read such minutes is to be at once exposed to military organization on the Pennsylvania frontier.

For purposes of administration and drill, *Companies* and *Battalions* of militia were set up on a geographical basis. . . . Each training company was divided by lot into eight equal *Classes*. These classes were an effective device for rotating service and establishing quotas. As need for men arose [such as the Sandusky expedition], each class was in its turn called. . . . This class system made it possible to call troops in such numbers as were needed without depriving any particular district of its entire labor and protective force. Once on active duty, militiamen were reorganized into new but temporary commands [such as the companies in Crawford's force], entirely distinct from their permanent home companies. . . . Avoiding militia calls was not difficult. . . . A militiaman called for active duty who found such duty inconvenient was permitted to hire a *Substitute* to march and fight in his stead.²⁸

All the organization described is reflected in minutes of Courts of Appeal which functioned much like World War II draft boards. Hence when we read,

Jacob Hook On Expedition with Col Crawford

²⁶ *Penn. Arch.*, 3rd ser., 23. Each company roll is headed by its captain's name: Joseph Bean (200-01); John Beeson (229); John Biggs and Edward Stewart (228, 229, 230, and again 321-22); Charles Bilderback (206); Thomas Carr (228-29, 321); John Dean (228, 321); Timothy Downing (207-08); John Hardin (229, 321); John Hoagland (219); Andrew Hood (204); William Leet (207); John Miller (218); James Munn (204-05); Duncan McGihon (203); Thomas Rankin (209); Craig Ritchie (199); Ezekiel Rose (206); and Eleaser Williamson (217). Another company commanded by George Brown (Basic Payrolls, Vol. B, 28) is published in *ibid.*, 6th ser., 2: 228.

²⁷ RG-4, Comp. Gen., Militia Loan Accts. 1777-94, Wash. and Westm. Co. Ops. In 1903, such manuscript documents as remained were moved to a fireproof building which became the new State Library. The documents were pasted into scrapbooks and remained so preserved until about 1949 when a staff person of the then Department of Public Records took the scrapbooks apart so their contents could be microfilmed. The two reels of film, referred to as "RG-4 . . . Wash. and Westm. Co. Ops.," were the result.

²⁸ "Military System of Pennsylvania."

the entry and its context tell us that the soldier was one of eleven who made up the Fourth Class of Captain Ezekiel Rose's home company in the Fifth Battalion of Washington County Militia. Called up for duty, he appeared at the Court of Appeal on April 25, 1782, and volunteered for the expedition.²⁹ Elsewhere in the minutes we learn that William Orr campaigned as Rowley Boyd's substitute,³⁰

Rowley Boyd on the Expedition to st. Duskie by W^m. Orr

and that on June 27, following the expedition, Nathaniel Rid was "acquitted" (that is, excused from duty) because of his having been on the expedition.³¹

Nathaniel Rid, Acquit Serd. Expedition

Thanks to these four tools — the Rose journal, the pension narratives, the Militia Loan records, and the Courts of Appeal minutes — we can reconstruct Crawford's expeditionary force to a considerable degree. The rendezvous was set for May 20 at Mingo Bottom, but the bulk of the expeditionary army was not across the Ohio River until the twenty-fourth.³² An election of officers was held, command of the expedition going to William Crawford with the rank of colonel. To assist him administratively, John Rose was elected adjutant, and Daniel Leet a brigade major. Four field majors were then elected, each to command a segment of the army during the march to Sandusky: David Williamson (second in command), Thomas Gaddis (third), John McClelland (fourth), and John Brinton (fifth).³³ The surgeon, John Knight, arrived with his precious instruments secure in saddlebags. Despite Colonel Crawford's earlier concern about a lack of guides, Jonathan Zane and John Slover were present, with Thomas Nicholson probably arriving the next day.³⁴

Now, at this point, according to Dr. Knight, the militia "distributed" themselves into eighteen companies and elected their company officers: a captain, a lieutenant, and an ensign. Such a practice of distribution had good and bad effects. Battle casualties were spread out so that if a company was hard hit, no single family or neighbor-

²⁹ RG-4 . . . Wash. Co. Ops.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Once a meadow with a spring, the frontier station of Mingo Bottom lay two and a half miles south of Steubenville, Ohio; the area is now covered with railyards and steel furnaces.

³³ Rose, *Journal*, 137-38.

³⁴ Crawford to Irvine, May 20, 1782, Irvine Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 5: 112.

hood would be decimated in manpower. And the threat of this happening was real. Only nine survivors from Biggs's company returned home.³⁵ The distribution, however, left many volunteers virtual strangers since home units that drilled together were broken up. Each soldier thus had to weigh the odds, and choose accordingly. When four classes in Captain David Reed's *home* company were ordered to mobilize six days prior to the rendezvous, twelve of the twenty soldiers became members of the same company on the expedition, including Duncan McGihon who was elected captain. Family loyalties at times outweighed the risk of common disaster, so that James Ross, Sr., joined McGihon's company to be with his son. Both father and son survived, James, Jr., soon after becoming a Princeton graduate on his way to a distinguished career in Pennsylvania law and politics. Peter and Philip Saltsman also joined McGihon's company. One, and probably both of them, deserted at the end of the first day of battle and, on returning home, spread the rumor that "all the army was cut to pieces."³⁶

As stated earlier, the company rolls of Captains Bruce, Fife, and Reed in the *Pennsylvania Archives*, Sixth Series, Volume 2 (pp. 390, 391, 398), cannot be reconciled with the army's organization shown in the journal of John Rose or in the Militia Loan payrolls. Obviously the three company rolls are included because of the compiler's error. Three facts underscore this mistake: (1) None of the eighty pension files at the National Archives includes men in these companies, while one or more of the files are those of men serving in other companies known to have fought at Sandusky; (2) The captains of these three companies are absent from the officer list in the journal of John Rose. Nor do their names appear in the roll of militia captains in the *Pennsylvania Archives*, Sixth Series, Volume 2 (pp. 220-21), where the names of Sandusky expedition captains appear with expedition tour dates; (3) No supporting evidence is found in other sources that does not simply follow the erroneous inclusion of the Bruce, Fife, and Reed rolls in the *Pennsylvania Archives*.

A comparative analysis of the remaining Sandusky expedition rolls from the *Pennsylvania Archives* and that expedition's payrolls in the Militia Loan records can be revealing:

Joseph Bean's company: In the two lists there is considerable agreement. Five men appear in the *Pennsylvania Archives* roll with

³⁵ Knight, *Narrative*, 11; R. A. Sherrard, *The Sherrard Family of Steubenville* (1890), 17.

³⁶ *Penn. Arch.*, 6th ser., 2: 144; Draper MSS 4S137-38.

no other supporting evidence. Four appear in the Militia Loan list for this company, but not in the *Pennsylvania Archives* listing. The name of James Paull is found in both lists. This is an error by virtue of Paull's later testimony that he was in Biggs's company (pension file).

John Biggs's company: A pronounced discrepancy is immediately obvious in the two lists for this company: twenty names in the Militia Loan list do not appear in the *Pennsylvania Archives* list. The Rose journal records thirty-three men in this company. The Militia Loan list shows twenty-eight. To those twenty-eight may be added the names of confirmed members, David (actually Conrad) Harbaugh and John Sherrard, and probably William Nemons.

Charles Bilderback's company: A high degree of agreement exists between the two lists. Only the names of Lewis Dewall (Devall) and John Hews (Hughs) appear in the Militia Loan list and not the *Pennsylvania Archives*. Only James Wattson and William Hughes appear in the *Pennsylvania Archives* and not the Militia Loan. Samuel Meck (Meek) appears in the *Pennsylvania Archives* without Militia Loan support; his name appears in Rankin's company in both lists, which doubtless is correct. Thirty-four names match in both lists; the Rose journal records thirty-five for this company.

Timothy Downing's company: This unit shows considerable agreement between the two lists. Only three names in the Militia Loan list fail to show up in the *Pennsylvania Archives*. Seventeen names appear in both lists. The Rose journal records twenty-one men in the company.

John Hoagland's company: The names of "Ensign _____ McMasters" and "[Robert] Houston" appear in the *Pennsylvania Archives* roll, but not in the Militia Loan list. The name, "Peter Resner," appears in the Militia Loan list, but not the *Pennsylvania Archives* roll. When the three names are added to the fifteen names in agreement, the strength of the company is eighteen, the total shown in the Rose journal.

Andrew Hood's company: Of thirty-two names overall, twenty-seven are in agreement. That James Kerr was lieutenant, as stated by the Militia Loan, is correct. Lieutenant "[Thomas] Ashley" in the *Pennsylvania Archives* list is from Dr. Knight's narrative; because Butterfield accepted the reference in the narrative, librarian-editor Egle did also in the *Pennsylvania Archives* listing. I find no documentation for either the name or its location.

William Lee's company: Again a high level of agreement exists between the two lists. Twenty-five names appear in the Militia Loan

list; that total is only one less than the company's strength shown in the Rose journal (twenty-six). The seven men cited in the *Pennsylvania Archives* roll have no other documentation for their names being included.

John Miller's company: With only one exception (Daniel Rice in the Militia Loan), the two listings are in agreement. In the *Pennsylvania Archives* roll, Thomas Davis is shown as a private; in the Militia Loan list he holds the rank of ensign. The Militia Loan roll (including Daniel Rice) numbers thirty soldiers; the Rose journal shows thirty-three.

James Munn's company: With one exception (William Parkison in the *Pennsylvania Archives* list) the two rolls are in agreement. If the name of William Parkison is added to those in the Militia Loan list, the total is thirty-three, which agrees with the company strength in Rose's journal.

Duncan McGihon's company: With the exception of two additional names in the Militia Loan list, the two lists agree. Rose's journal records this company's strength as twenty, which tallies with the Militia Loan list.

Thomas Rankin's company: The Rose journal shows thirty men, the *Pennsylvania Archives* thirty-eight, and the Militia Loan twenty-five. In this instance, the *Pennsylvania Archives* total appears the more accurate, judging from Daniel Hamilton's pension declaration: "I raised a party of volunteers to join Crawford's campaign and marched with them to Mingo bottom where we joined Captain Thomas Rankin . . . , had about twenty men — Then together with my party, consisting of nineteen men, [of] which Captain Rankin was elected Captain, I chosed Lieutenant, and Hugh Forbes Ensign. . . ."

Craig Ritchie's company: A reconciliation of the two lists is impossible at this time. Rose's journal lists the company's strength as twenty-one men. The Militia Loan also lists twenty-one. The *Pennsylvania Archives* records twenty-three. But eighteen names in the Militia Loan are not in the *Pennsylvania Archives* list, and twenty names in the *Pennsylvania Archives* list do not appear in the Militia Loan. From other evidence I am inclined to believe the Militia Loan is more accurate.

Ezekiel Rose's company: In the *Pennsylvania Archives* list, the last name of Captain Ezekiel Rose is recorded as "Ross." Only two names (Ross and Bell) appear in the Militia Loan and not the *Pennsylvania Archives*. However, once more the number of names appearing in the *Pennsylvania Archives* and not the Militia Loan is large —

twenty-eight. I am inclined to believe the Militia Loan listing is more accurate. The Rose journal gives the company's strength as twenty; the Militia Loan lists twenty-one. My suspicion is that Egle, unaware of the Militia Loan list, mistook slips for another tour as those belonging to the expedition.³⁷

In addition to the sizable mistake of including the Bruce, Fife, and Reed companies, the Sandusky expedition rolls reflect no knowledge of two company mergers. The first merger occurred in Westmoreland County at Beesontown (now Uniontown), where, on May 16, two companies with their already-elected officers united; a company of nine soldiers under Lieutenant Edward Stewart joined a company of thirteen under Captain John Biggs. Both Biggs and Stewart retained their former rank.³⁸

Three other Westmoreland companies rendezvoused at the same place on the same date, electing as their captains John Beeson, John Dean, and Thomas Carr.³⁹ Besides these, yet another company under Captain John Hardin arrived. Only twelve soldiers made up this company, but it stubbornly frustrated attempts to merge it with another.⁴⁰ This independence is consistent with what is known of the Hardins' behavior a year earlier when campaigning with George Rogers Clark.

In July [1781] the hunters from every Settlement, fort or Station in Ky. assembled at the mouth of the Licking river. . . . The party from the Falls were split from the start. the Hardins declaring their purpose of forming a Separate Squad and acting as advance Scouts. Gen. Clark objected . . . and wanted them to form a part of . . . the Falls Company. A lively row sprang up and might have ended Seriously but just in time the . . . famed Simon Kenton with his company [marched into camp]. All . . . rejoiced to know that

37 There is no way to reconcile the *Penn. Arch.* and Militia Loan lists. Of the thirteen companies studied, three (Biggs, Ritchie, and Rose) show wide disagreement between their respective rolls in the *Penn. Arch.* and Militia Loan. The other ten rolls are in substantial agreement. Egle shows an inclination to follow Butterfield's conclusions uncritically.

38 *Penn. Arch.*, 3rd ser., 23: 228, 229, 321-22. A number of mergers may have occurred such as that which formed Rankin's company. Since the companies of Biggs, Stewart, Brown, and Hardin reached the rendezvous with their officers elected, they are listed as companies in the *Penna. Comp. Gen. Accts.* But Rankin's and Hamilton's prerendezvous groups are not so listed because each as yet was but a "party of volunteers" whose leader — though accepted in the interim — had not been elected an expedition officer. Such were the often unwritten understandings governing militia procedures.

39 *Ibid.*, 228-29, 321.

40 The company roll in *Penn. Arch.*, 3rd ser., 23: 321 is accepted here as the more accurate and is probably the roll sent to Philadelphia for payment. John Lucas is shown as a private (rather than a lieutenant as stated by Egle in *ibid.*, 6th ser., 2: 386), and all four Hardins are shown: father (Capt.), son (John, Jr.), illegitimate son (John or "Jack"), and a blood relation, Thomas.

Kenton would lead the Scouts and pilot Clark into the Indian Country. The Hardins agreed to march under him provided they were put in advance and kept there. Kenton agreed . . . provided they *obeyed his orders*, to this all consented, and all trouble subsided. Gen. Clark . . . put his army in motion for the Indians Camps. Simon Kenton with about seventy of his wild, unruly Scouts was in advance, the Hardins here led as usual. Kenton said he never gave them one order they ever obeyed and that "advance, learn all you can and report to me," he never saw one of them again from the time they left the Ohio river till the storming of the Indian Stronghold Pickaway. (or Piqua on the Miami).⁴¹

Based on evidence from Militia Loan records, the five companies of Beeson, Biggs, Carr, Dean, and Hardin marched to the Ohio River and crossed to where the general rendezvous was in progress. The statement of Dr. Knight that the volunteers at Mingo Bottom on May 24 distributed themselves into eighteen companies and elected their officers is thus inaccurate. Only the Washington County militia did this, and, with the exception of Biggs's company, the rolls found in the *Pennsylvania Archives* (6th ser., 2: 386-99) are those of Washington County volunteers.

Egle was also unaware of two Washington County companies in Crawford's force because he did not consult the comptroller general's records or have access to Rose's journal. One of the missing companies is the best identified in the *Pennsylvania Archives*. It is captioned, "Pay Roll of Capt. George Brown's Company of Washington C'y Mil'a on the Sandusky Expedition Com'd by Col. Will Crawford Com'g 18th May, 1782 & Ending 10th June '82 Both Days Included."⁴² At Mingo Bottom, this Washington County company and Hardin's from Westmoreland were grafted together for the campaign in order to bring the merged company up to a fighting strength of twenty-four.

Officers

George Brown, Capt.	John Hardin, Sr., Capt.
	Cyrus Hunter, Ens.
Jacob Bonham, Serg.	
Harley Sappington, Serg.	

Privates

Joseph Fowler	Jacob Weatherholt
John Burton	John Lucas
Thomas Treacle	John Hardin, Jr.

⁴¹ Jack Hardin, Jr., *History of the Hardins*, TS, 22-23 (Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort).

⁴² *Penn. Arch.*, 6th ser., 2: 228.

James McQueen	John Hardin
Benjamin McQueen	Thomas Hardin
John Hays	Dennis Callaghan
Samuel Nichols	William Delanaway
Alexander Nailer	Joseph Moore
Edward Wissee	George Robbins
	Charles Burdin

Nowhere in the Sandusky expeditionary force is the Virginia-Pennsylvania rivalry more apparent than here. Neither company would take orders from the other's officers, so the hybrid company was commanded by Brown and Hardin as cocaptains. The arrangement was a paper one. Though the spliced commands left Mingo Bottom together, Rose's journal records several times when Hardin's company fought independently.⁴³

The second Washington County contingent of which Egle was unaware was Captain Eleazer Williamson's company of "light horse." To call this unit cavalry would be a misnomer. At the start of the march, all or most of Crawford's volunteers were mounted infantry, and Williamson's command was simply attached for the campaign.⁴⁴ The company was answerable to Crawford and his field staff, but once the Sandusky Plains were reached on the tenth day, the company scouted freely beyond the army's advance guard and flanks. While the Militia Loan records list only twenty-seven soldiers in this company as being later paid, Rose's journal indicates a larger body of thirty-six troops (p. 139), and later forty (p. 302). Little more can be said of the company except a few facts from pension narratives. Hugh Workman flamboyantly refers to himself as a "dragoon," but the common designation was "spy" or scout. John Allison rode with Williamson's light horse from the start of the campaign to its finish, but evidently others left their mounted infantry companies to join Williamson's command when the army reached the Sandusky Plains. Hugh Workman began with Leet's company, and Robert Taylor with Rose's. Their names therefore appear in rolls of both infantry and light horse companies so that they doubled their private's pay of five pounds, five shillings according to Militia Loan records.

⁴³ Rose records in his journal (p. 138) that the company had cocaptains ("Brown & Harden"), and that Hardin's company acted independently of Crawford's orders on the first night of retreat, June 5, 1782 (p. 152).

⁴⁴ Henry Taylor, in his pension declaration states that he turned out as a volunteer in Williamson's "company of horsemen who were attached to Colonel Crawford's Regiment."

How many soldiers actually marched with Crawford is easier asked than answered. Estimates of veterans years later vary greatly, James Ross declaring that the force numbered four hundred, and Thomas Gaddis that its size was "six or seven hundred."⁴⁵ A week before the departure of the expedition, Benard Dougherty met "Sundry Persons . . . from the Monongohala and Washington County," all of whom agreed that "upwards of six hundred Voluntiers are going against Sandusky."⁴⁶

From letters and notes which have survived, the growth of the expedition may be traced. En route to the rendezvous, Crawford in a letter to General Irvine at Fort Pitt lamented that "there will be three or four hundred men. I am afraid the smallest number" (May 20). At Mingo Bottom on the twenty-fourth, however, an encouraged Crawford wrote Irvine again, "After much confusion crossing the river, having only four small canoes to ferry men, horses and baggage, — we this day got over four hundred and sixty-eight men." Later the same day, John Rose as Crawford's aide-de-camp reported in a letter to Irvine, "Our number is actually 480 men — young, active, and seemingly spirited." Later still, possibly in the evening, Rose recorded "488" in his journal as the army's strength.⁴⁷ Three days after the army left, Washington County Lieutenant James Marshel wrote Irvine that "about five hundred men (including officers) set out for Sandusky," a figure reported a month later to the British by an American deserter from Fort Pitt ("500 chosen men & volunteers").⁴⁸

In attempting to reconstruct Crawford's command, one faces an incontrovertible fact. The number of names drawn from various sources indicates a larger force than stated earlier by historians. Militia Loan records provide 458 names in my files. Pension applications at Washington add six more. Twenty-one more names are those of individuals known to have been on the expedition. The total of these three — 485 — is close to that given by different participants.

⁴⁵ The following estimates come from pension declarations and Draper interviews: Angus McCoy ("489"), Hugh Workman ("489 including officers"), Robert Gullion ("489 or five hundred"), Francis Bedel ("about 480"), Lewis Martin ("four hundred and eighty-two"), Michael Walters ("482"), Stephen Burkarn ("489"), and James Williams ("465, officers and soldiers").

⁴⁶ Letter to Pres. Moore ("Bedford, May 18th, 1782"), *Penn. Arch.*, 1st ser., 9: 547.

⁴⁷ C. W. Butterfield, ed., *Washington-Irvine Correspondence* (Madison, Wisc., 1882), 363-65, and Rose, *Journal*, 139.

⁴⁸ Marshel to Irvine (May 29, 1782), Butterfield, *Washington-Irvine Correspondence*, 289. Reference to deserter, Lewis Williams, is in a June 30 letter in the *Haldimand Papers* B/102/81.

But the names gleaned from Washington County Courts of Appeal minutes must be added, and those ninety-eight names push the army's strength up to 583, a figure approaching that given by Thomas Gaddis, a field major and third in command under Crawford.⁴⁹

How can a discrepancy so large be accounted for? One might reason that some entries in the Courts of Appeal minutes are false, soldiers lying in order to gain the double-tour credit volunteers received for campaigning to Sandusky and back. That is possible, though unlikely in any significant number. To lie was to invite community ostracism. Joseph Doddridge, who was thirteen at the time of the expedition, years after recalled the rugged morality of that period: "in a sparse population, where all members of the community are well known to each other, and especially in a time of war, where every man capable of bearing arms is considered highly valuable as a defender of his country, public opinion has its full effect. . . . Although there was no legal compulsion to the performance of military duty, yet every man of full age and size was expected to do his full share of public service. If he did not do so he was 'hated out as a coward.'" ⁵⁰

The discrepancy could, to some extent, be accounted for by the fact that the army was numerically in a fluid state on the day of departure. While the official count ended with Rose's journal entry the evening of the twenty-fourth, the size of the force could have continued to grow slowly throughout the next day. We in this mechanized age make a mistake if we assume that Crawford's command broke camp one hour and was gone from Mingo Bottom the next. Rose tells us that "At 10 A.M. the troops began their line of march by companies as they could get ready. Colonel Williamson brought up the Rear in the afternoon, detained by the want of a horse for our third pilot." In short, the army got under way so late in the morning that the last of its columns of militia covered only ten miles the first day over a better-than-average Indian trail. Consequently, Crawford was compelled to warn in his written orders for the next day, "Every Man ought to be convinced that the success of our enterprize depends in a great measure upon a rapid & secret march."⁵¹ It is plausible, then, that clusters of latecomers dribbled into Mingo Bottom throughout the morning and afternoon of May 25 and marched with the last-

⁴⁹ Fed. Pension S.4292.

⁵⁰ Joseph Doddridge, *Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars* (Pittsburgh, 1912), 130-31.

⁵¹ Rose, *Journal*, 139. Crawford's written orders are in Rose's endnotes, 312-16.

departing units. Still, the gap between 485 and 583 is a large one to be closed by stragglers.

To what extent did desertions affect the size of the expedition? It is hard to say. Desertions, however, did occur as they had the previous summer during General George Rogers Clark's campaign. Encamped at Fort Henry (present-day Wheeling, West Virginia), Clark found that he could not afford to tarry longer waiting for more troops expected under Colonel Archibald Lochry. Each day cost Clark more soldiers "going over the hill." He therefore moved his force down the Ohio River to put more distance between it and the Westmoreland settlements. Hoping that the tardy company of rangers under Colonel Lochry would catch up, Clark camped at the mouth of the Little Kanawha. But again he found men deserting. The small army was bleeding to death, clots of militia slipping away through the surrounding forest toward the Monongahela settlements, five men here, a dozen there. At Fishing Creek, Lochry's delayed company, still trying to overtake Clark's army, came on seventeen deserters in one bunch. This proneness to desert carried over to the following year when Crawford set out. One group is known to have deserted in the midst of the battle, and another group two days later when the Americans were fighting desperately at the Olentangy River.⁵² Some soldiers ran out of "victuals," others were short of gunpowder and shot. A few became anxious to get home to protect exposed families from Indian raids. In an 1833 court deposition in support of John Allison's pension application, William Wolf curiously makes the point that Allison "*started with the troops who were defeated under the command of Col Crawford at Sandusky Plains and I believe he served out the Campaign, from several circumstances which have come to my knowledge; . . . he rode a horse he got from me, which horse he brought back with him.*"⁵³ The italicized testimony may only be due to an elderly man's scrupulous veracity. Or the edge of uncertainty may reflect more.

The expedition's chain of command, then, no longer remains a puzzle. But the size of the provisional force does. From evidence it would appear to have reached at least five hundred and possibly more, amounting to a demibrigade in strength.

⁵² Draper MSS 4S137-38, and Polk to Marshal (June 11, 1782) in Butterfield, *Washington-Irvine Correspondence*, 291. Five miles southeast of present-day Bucyrus, the main body of retreating Americans repulsed a larger force of pursuing Indians and British rangers in what was thereafter called the Battle of the Olentangy.

⁵³ Fed. Pension (Allison) W.2512.

In my search I have continued to find names in letters, pension records, and long-ago interviews by Shane and Draper conducted in the 1830s and 1840s. John Shannon, Senior, was kept out of the saddle by boils when the army left Mingo Bottom.⁵⁴ John Smith was left behind because of a "jambled" foot which caused Crawford to order him home.⁵⁵ Others on the expedition are unrecorded in Harrisburg or Richmond. Samuel Bridgewater was among the uncounted, and so was Philip Catt.⁵⁶ Sam, a black slave, was sent by his master, Richard Elson; Indians killed Sam the day after the battle.⁵⁷ "Henry," too, was at Sandusky as John Rose's servant. During the retreat across the Sandusky Plains, Henry narrowly eluded ("dodged") capture by mounted British rangers. Colonel Crawford's son-in-law and nephew were with Henry at the time. They ran one direction, he another. They died of torture at a Shawnee village, while Henry returned to Fort Pitt to resume tending General Irvine's garden of peas and asparagus.⁵⁸

Militia were difficult to count, much less command. Washington himself complained, "[They] come in you cannot tell how, go, you cannot tell when; and act, you cannot tell where, consume your Provisions, exhaust your Stores, and leave you at last in a critical moment."⁵⁹ Judging from Colonel Crawford's written orders during the advance to Sandusky, he would have agreed.

54 *Ibid.* (Geo. Shannon) R.9418.

55 Draper MSS 1S1-2. Smith was to experience worse misfortunes in years to come. Implicated in the Burr conspiracy, he resigned his Ohio seat in the United States Senate in 1808 to avoid impeachment for treason and died impoverished in Louisiana.

56 Fed. Pensions (Bridgewater) W.9371, and (Catt) S.16072.

57 Draper MSS 12C123.

58 Rose, *Journal*, 153, 156. Irvine to wife (May 1, 1782), in Butterfield, *Washington-Irvine Correspondence*, 346.

59 John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources*, 39 vols. (Washington, D. C., 1931-1944), 6: 403.