

General Orders, 30 June 1776

General Orders

Head Quarters, New York, June 30th 1776.

Parole Philadelphia. Countersign Holland.

The Brigadiers are to order the officers and men belonging to their several Brigades (not on duty) to march from their respective regimental parade to their alarm posts at least once every day that they may become well acquainted therewith, they are to march by such routes as are least exposed to a fire from the shipping and it is expected that all officers from the highest to the lowest, will make themselves well acquainted with the ground, that they may at any time be able to make advantage of it.[1](#)

Upon the Signal for the enemies approach, or upon any alarm, all fatigue parties are immediately to repair to their respective Corps, with their arms, ammunition and accoutrements ready for instant action; the working parties in no other instance are to be interrupted; the finishing of our Lines of defence and other works expeditiously, is a matter of so much consequence, that the General is persuaded from the known Zeal of the troops, that officers and men will stand in no need of arguments, to stimulate them upon common exertion upon the occasion, his anxiety for the Honor of the American Arms, and the noble cause we are engaged in, not a distrust in the officers care, induces him once more, and while time will allow it, to recommend a thorough Inspection in the mens arms and ammunition, to see that every Soldier is completed to Twenty-four Rounds, and has a good Flint well fixed into the lock; in short to be well prepared for an e[n]gagement is, under God, (whose divine Aid it behoves us to supplicate) more than one half the battle.

The General desires that each Colonel, or commanding officer of the established Regiments, will furnish him with a list of the vacancies therein, and that the Field Officers of those Regiments would recommend proper persons, to fill them[2](#)—The commanding officer for the time being, of such Militia as shall arrive in this City from New Jersey, Connecticut and Massachusetts bay, is to give in Returns thereof to the Adjutant General, of the parties as they arrive, he is immediately to discharge every man who comes without Arms, and is to see that all the others are completed with their Twenty-four rounds ~~W~~ man, and that they do their proportion of all duties, as well fatigue as other duty.

Capt: Josiah Fay of Col. Ward's Regiment to act as Major of the said regiment, 'till further orders, he is to be obeyed as such.[3](#)

After Orders. Twenty six thousand Musket Cartridges to be sent Col. Prescott on Governor's Island with some flints.

The Brigadiers to order a circle to be marked round the several Redoubts, by which their officers are to be directed, in giving orders for the first discharge—Small brush may be set up to make the line more distinct and familiar to the men, who are by no means to be ordered to fire before the enemy arrive at the circle.

The Countersign in future to be delivered by the Adjutant General, to the Brigade Majors, and Adjutant of Artillery, at six oClock P.M.; who are to send the same sealed to their respective Brigades, and to the Field Officers of their respective brigades, if required by the latter and to no others.

Capt. Stephen Brown of Col. Durkee's Regiment, to go immediately to New-Ark, and apply for assistance in procuring and fixing boats, near the ferries, for facilitating the passage of the Troops from Jersey to New York.⁴

Genl Heath to order the house and barn on Governors Island, to be consumed.⁵

Varick transcript, DLC:GW.

1. Lord Stirling reported to GW on 1 July: "In Consequence of the General Order of Yesterday, I gave it out in Brigade Orders (which were Issued in the Afternoon at the same time with the General Orders) that the fourth Brigade should be Under Arms on their Regimental Parades at Sun Rise and from thence March to their Alarm posts.

"Colonel's Nixon, Webb, & McDougal had their Regiments under Arms and Marched them to their posts in proper time.

"Colonel Ritzma's Regiment did not arrive at their post till Seven oClock, which was two hours after the Others: and then Came without one feild Officer. nor has one feild Officer been with the Regiment this day, or sent any excuse for their Absence" (DLC:GW).

2. Congress requested this information from GW in a resolution of 27 June (see [Hancock to GW, 29 June, n.1](#)). For GW's explanation of the delay in his obtaining and forwarding the necessary returns, see [his letter to the Board of War of 29 July](#).

3. Josiah Fay (1731–1776), a farmer from Southboro, Mass., who had served as sergeant in the French and Indian War, joined Artemas Ward's Massachusetts regiment as a captain in May 1775 and retained that rank in Col. Jonathan Ward's 21st Continental Regiment when the army was reorganized on 1 Jan. 1776. In an undated "Return of the Names of those Recommended to fill up the Vacancies in the 21st Regiment," Jonathan Ward writes that Capt. Josiah Fay, who was "Published in Genal Orders to do the Duty of Majr June 30th[,] Died Augst 8th 1776" (DNA:PCC, item 152).

4. Stephen Brown (d. 1777) served as a first lieutenant in the 3d Connecticut Regiment during 1775 and became a captain in Col. John Durkee's 20th Continental Regiment on 1 Jan. 1776. He served as a captain in Durkee's 4th Connecticut Regiment in 1777 and was killed on 15 Nov. 1777 at Fort Mifflin on the Delaware River.

John Durkee (1728–1782) of Norwich, a veteran of the French and Indian War who became major of the 3d Connecticut Regiment in May 1775, was promoted to lieutenant colonel of that regiment in July, and on 1 Jan. 1776 he was named lieutenant colonel of the new 20th Continental Regiment. Because Benedict Arnold, for whom the colonelcy of the 20th Regiment had been reserved, was made a brigadier general on 10 Jan. 1776, Durkee commanded that regiment almost from the start, and on 10 Aug. Congress officially appointed him the regiment's colonel ([JCC](#), 5:644; see also [GW to](#)

[the Board of War, 29 July](#), and [General Orders, 12 Aug. 1776](#)). Durkee served as colonel of the 4th Connecticut Regiment from 1777 to 1781 when he transferred to the 1st Connecticut Regiment. He died after a short illness on 29 May 1782 (*Norwich Packet, and the Weekly Advertiser*, 30 May 1782).

5. As brigadier general of the day for the previous day and night, Heath reported on this date: "Two Citizens were Sent to the East River Guard by one Mr Obell for drinking the Kings Health Success to his army &c., and were this morning Sent to the City Hall Guard, where there was 25 Prisoners before, 23 prisoners were also received by the Guard at the East River, who were lately Taken in Some retaken vessells &c." (DNA: RG 93, Revolutionary War Rolls, 1775–83).