

U.S. Army Military History Institute
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4 Mar 2011

Military Service

RECRUITING/ENLISTMENT
(Emphasis on U.S. Army Experience)

A Working Bibliography of MHI Sources

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- Morgan, Matthew J. "Army Recruiting and the Civil-Military Gap." Parameters (Jul 2001): pp. 101-17. Per.
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See also:

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U.S. LEVIES, 1790-1791

Indian unrest in the Northwest Territory (OH, IL, IN, MI, and WI) persuaded the new Federal government in 1790 to dispatch a punitive expedition under command of General Josiah Harmar. His force comprised chiefly state militia troops from Pennsylvania and Kentucky. Complete lack of success in the campaign was attributed to the poor quality of the militia, and Congress responded by enacting on 3 Mar 1791, a new military program. It included authorization to raise another regiment of regulars, who were to serve for 3 years, and to employ "troops enlisted under the denomination of levies, in addition to, or in place of the militia...." Up to 20,000 levies were authorized for service up to six months. They were subject to Federal, not state, control. As such, these short-term volunteers represented a compromise between political unpopularity of a standing army and military unreliability of state militia. See:

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Letter to William Darke, 4 April 1791, which includes brief org info on levies.

A second punitive expedition, commanded by Major General Arthur St. Clair, marched into the northeastern frontier, Sep 1791. His 2,000-man force included 800 new levies organized into two regiments, as well as regulars & militia. The levies & militia were both woefully untrained; the total force was poorly equipped, supplied, and led. The result was disastrous defeat on 4 Nov 1791. See:

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St. Clair, Arthur. A Narrative of the Manner in which the Campaign against the Indians, in the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-One, was Conducted.... Philadelphia: Aitken, 1812. ca. 200 p. E83.79RareBook.

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The third expedition into the territory proved eminently successful--without levies. Congress enacted legislation on 5 Mar 1792 that reorganized the Army into the Legion of the United States (which lasted until 1796). Major General Anthony Wayne trained the Legion thoroughly before advancing against the Miami Indians. His decisive victory at Fallen Timbers, 20 Aug 1794, quieted the Northwest Territory. See:

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Griffith, Robert K. Men Wanted for the U.S. Army: America's Experience with an All-Volunteer Army Between the World Wars. Westport, Greenwood, 1982. 259 p. UB323.G738.

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