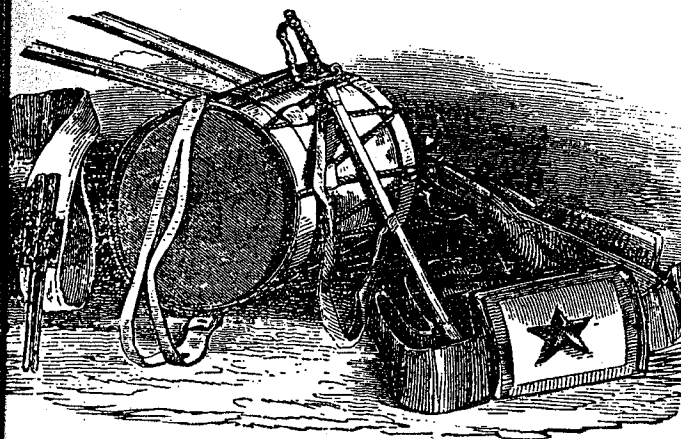


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by Alec R. Gilpin



THE WAR OF 1812 IN THE OLD NORTHWEST

The Michigan State University Press

1958

RNS 01219

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The Michigan State University Press
East Lansing, Michigan

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 57-10957



Published simultaneously in Canada by The Ryerson Press, Toronto
Manufactured in the United States of America

RNS 01220

highest court in his native Connecticut, commander of Louisiana Territory and al Court. Appointed a judge on Michigan's 7, he had resigned before actual service verner of Ohio. The election was invalid-ailed to comply with residence require- was appointed a Senator. In 1810 he had rnor of Ohio. The organization of Hull's due to the efforts of the Ohio Governor.

to Dayton, a town of a little more than y were directed to a camp pitched three ie northern bank of the Mad River. Most company strength under newly elected g regulations all field-grade officers were rs of lesser rank. Thus, each officer had en and officers under him, but popularity y prerequisite to leadership. The most s were ones such as Harrison, who won e of their men by explaining rather than times bore in mind that the militia re- t and thought. Unsuccessful as generals the militia to act like regulars and who : to vary their command techniques. rganized under Governor Meigs's orders. First Regiment of Ohio Volunteers were ir, Major James Denny, and Major Wil- , then forty years old and wealthy from : his home near Chillicothe to volunteer : commission as a major-general in the is of junior officers holding an election- out under Generals Harmar and Wayne cioto Valley. Since he had been popular oth houses of his state legislature and ernal for at least four years, there was d have to serve in the ranks—though he not elected to commissioned rank.

The Second Regiment of Ohio Volunteers, composed mainly of men from the Cincinnati area, elected Colonel James Findlay and Majors Thomas Moore and Thomas Van Horne. Findlay was two years older than McArthur, but despite his commission as brigadier-general in the Ohio militia, had had little active military service. He had had a successful political career: legislative council, United States Marshal, and Mayor of Cincinnati. A dependable, steady and conscientious officer, he lacked the fire that marks an outstanding leader.

The Third Regiment elected Lewis Cass as colonel and Robert Morrison as major, leaving another major to be chosen later. Cass, only thirty, had attended Exeter Academy, had moved to Ohio and studied law under Meigs, but had had no active military service. A brigadier-general in the militia, he had been a United States Marshal, served in the legislature, and was then prosecuting attorney for Muskingum County.

Obviously, these three colonels had no great amount of formal military service, but few active officers had, except in small engagements against Indians. They certainly were men of unusual political talents and, many people would add, of military ability as well. Cass and McArthur were later to serve during the war as successful brigadiers in the regular army, with Findlay declining a similar appointment. McArthur was to become Congressman and Governor of Ohio. In later life Findlay was elected to Congress but was defeated for governor by Robert Lucas, who also served under Hull. Cass, of course, was to have an unusual career as Governor of Michigan and in federal offices. Whether or not Meigs had unduly used his influence, it is clear today that the Ohio regiments were commanded by able men.

The lack of regular uniforms was another problem facing Meigs in preparing his force for federal service. It was solved with typical pioneer aplomb by adopting the only readily available substitute: homespun linen hunting shirts, trousers, leather belts, and low-crowned felt hats.

Still another problem was a shortage of weapons and ammunition. Eustis' original orders had stipulated that one third of the force were to be riflemen. Customarily riflemen owned their own