



Women in 18th Century Media: Reading Between the lines.

FORT TICONDEROGA
AMERICA'S FORT™

One of the biggest frustrations for historians researching women at military sites like Fort Ticonderoga is the lack of a written record of women. Most documents from the period are written by men, and documents pertaining to military sites are usually related to the functions of the army. Orderly books are a perfect example of this. An orderly book contains the daily orders given by a particular officer to his command. Orderly books are one of the most useful sources of information on the day to day lives of soldiers, and the activities of the army.

In 1776, Colonel Anthony Wayne's Orderly Book provides a day to day account of the Continental Army at Fort Ticonderoga in 1776 from July 10th-December 31st . During this time, Ticonderoga is a major supply depot of the Northern Department of the Continental Army, and is full of activity. Of over more than 100 entries, only four mention women. However, important information on women at Fort Ticonderoga in 1776 can be gleaned from these entries if we analyze them well.

After having students read through these entries, you can use the questions on the following page to guide your students, or have them brainstorm on their own to mine information from these accounts.

It's also important to look at what information is lacking on these accounts. Ask you students what information is still missing from these accounts. Are there other primary sources that might have this information? The written sources we have from the 18th century contain only what people decided to write down, and preserve. Are there reasons that this information wasn't recorded in written history?



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July 13th 1776

Parole: Williamsburgh C[ounter]. Sign: Virginia

One woman from each company of each of the Pennsylvania Battalions, now at this post to be draughted as soon as possible & sent to the General Hospital at Fort George, to nurse the sick; they will have the customary allowance of prvision &c from Doctor Stringer, Director of the hospital there.

Captain Stevens of the artillery will encamp with his company, near the landing, on the east side of the lake, where all the artillery stores &c are to be landed.

When the batteaus are unloaded Captain Stevens will order them all to be carefully return'd and made fast in the bay to the south of the old Fort.

Lieutenant Colonel Baldwin will draw provision twice a week, for all the artificers & take the whole under his direction.

Head Quarters Augt 21st 1776 Ticonda

Parole: Henry Counter Sign: Carrol

Maurading is become so frequent, that the Genl. expects every officer will in a spirit'd manner exert himself to prevent it, and bring the perpetrators to exemplary punishment, last night a poor inhabitant was rob'd of all himself and his distress'd family, had to subsist on, or depend on this winter. Certain villians who said they belong'd to the Jersey Regt., there are more villians that wear blue than is suspected in the Jersey Regt., the Gcnl. recommends it to the commanding officer of the 4 Brigade to endeavour by every means in his power to discover and bring to justice all persons suspected of pilfering and maurauding. This army is paid to protect & not to pilfer the inhabitants. The Col. of the Regt. of Militia are forthwith to bring in their demands for mileage and billeting that they may be discharged forthwit without delay.



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Head Quarters Decembr 10, 1776.

Parole: Exercise, Counter: Sign Health.

Ensign John Tiffeny is appointed to do the Duty of Adj. in Col:

Burrils Reg^t.

Capⁿ of the Day to-morrow from Col: Daytons.

Capⁿ for M^t Independance from Col: Burrils Reg^t.

Adjutant of the Day, to-morrow, for Ticonderago, Harper.

Adjutant of the Day for M^t Independance, Tiffeny.

For Guard. Waynes, 1 Serj., 1 Corp., 1 Drum., 1 Fife, 18 Priv.

For Fatigue, 1 Sub., 17 Priv.

The Adjutant of the Day on M^t Independance is to give the Parole and Counter Sign to the Guards, who should have them, and shul'd see the Guards, parad'd and be accountable that it is compleat and the Men clean and well powder'd agreeable to the Gen. Orders of Nov. 10.

Regimental Orders

Any woman belonging to the Reg⁴, who shall refuse to wash for the Men, shall be immediately drumm'd out of the Reg', as they are not found in Victuals to distress and render the Men unfit for Duty, but to keep them clean and decent.

The whole Battⁿ to be under Arms this Afternoon at three o'clock with wooden Drivers in place of their Flints, which must be immediate taken out after the Exercise is over.

Head Quarters, Dec13, 1776.

Parole: Morris, Counter Sign: Mease.

Capⁿ for the Day for Ticonderago to-morrow from Col: Whitcombs Reg'.

Adjutant Boss.

For Guard. Waynes, 1 Corp., 1 Drum., 1 Fife., 10 Privates.

For Fatigue. 1 Sub., 11 Privates.

Regimental Orders

The whole Reg^t to parade this Afternoon with wooden Drivers in their Pieces.

All such Women as will wash for the 4th P. B. will be suplied with Wood and Water for that Purpose.

The Captains or Officers commanding Companies, will see that it is

immediately done, and will also be punctual in paying for all such

Washing and make stoppages from the Pay of the Men accordingly. ¹



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- 1. What are the occupations women have at Ticonderoga?**
- 2. How are women getting food at Ticonderoga?**
- 3. Are women being paid at Ticonderoga?**
- 4. What else is being provided to women at Ticonderoga?**
- 5. Are there children at Ticonderoga?**
- 6. Are there requirements of women if they are to stay at Ticonderoga?**
- 7. What information are you missing about women at Ticonderoga in 1776?**
- 8. What type of primary source could give you that information?**
- 9. Why might the information you seek not exist in written documents?**