

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

# Saratoga

## National Historical Park



## “Building an Army” –ACTIVITY KEY

—The structure of an 18<sup>th</sup> century army—

---

### Goals, Themes, Objectives

#### Goals:

This activity will enable students to better understand the makeup of an army in the American Revolution, and thus begin to have an appreciation for the human cost of war.

#### Themes:

18<sup>th</sup> century armies were structured organizations with many individuals in several roles.

#### Objectives:

1. Students will be able to name the three basic organizational levels of an 18<sup>th</sup> century army.
2. Students will be able to calculate the numbers of soldiers one would have encountered in a Revolutionary War army.
3. Students will begin to develop an appreciation for the vast numbers of soldiers that helped secure American independence.

### Supplies

- photocopies
- pencils
- scrap paper for calculations

### Summary

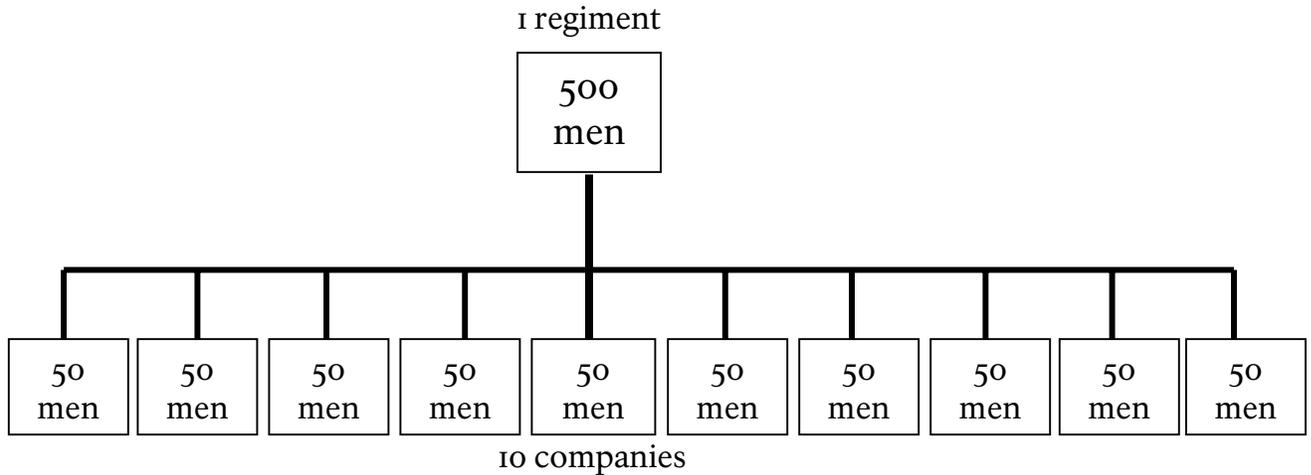
Armies during the American Revolution were more structured and organized than we often give them credit for. Far from being unruly mobs or scattered groups of disorganized and poorly trained farmers with rifles and pitchforks, the United States did have well trained and disciplined soldiers. These men, Continental soldiers, were generally as skilled as their British opponents. In some cases, they had even more experienced than the British troops they faced.

### Introduction

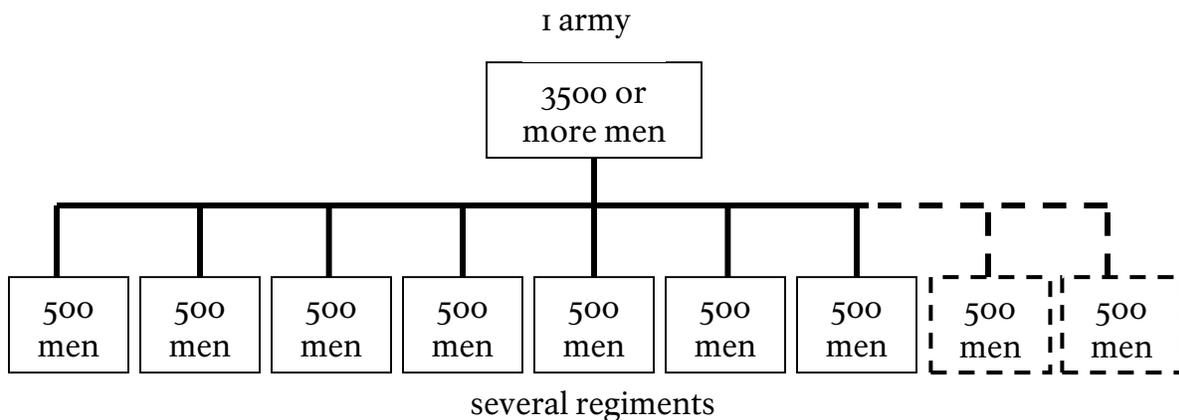
In talking about the American Revolution, we very quickly have to start talking about armies. Each side, American and British, didn't have just one army, but in fact had several. Different armies could be fighting in different places at the same time.

The basic “building block” of an army was the regiment (pronounced “red-ji-ment”). Each regiment had about 500 men. To better organize them, they were divided into small groups, called companies. Each company had about 50 men, so each regiment had 10 companies.

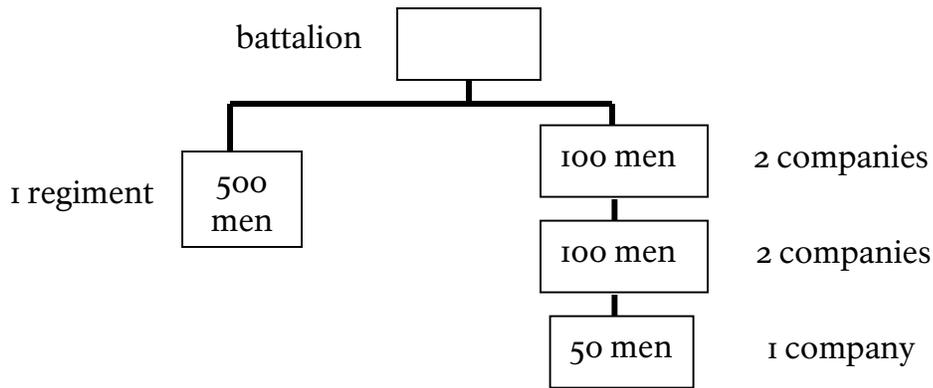
In picture form, it looked like this:



Armies would contain several full regiments. So:



Armies could also have parts of regiments (several companies) put together with a full regiment. Or, they could simply put together several companies from a few regiments. This grouping was called a battalion (“buh-tal-leon”).



**Scenario to read to your students:**

You are assisting the American commander at the Battles of Saratoga, General Horatio Gates. He is reorganizing his troops shortly after the first day of the battles.

Calculate the answers for the following problems to help General Gates with this work.

**Answer Key**

1. Given 100 men, how many companies can you create? 2
2. Given 300 men, how many companies can you make? 6
3. Given 500 men, how many companies can you make? 10
4. Given 1000 men, how many regiments can you make? 2
5. Given two full regiments, how many companies would you have? 20
6. Given one regiment, how many soldiers would you have? 500
7. Given three regiments, how many soldiers would you have? 1500
8. If the army has five regiments guarding the Hudson River, how many companies are located there? 50
9. Gates plans to send out a scouting force, one battalion with five full companies from two regiments. How many soldiers will he be sending out? 250

