

Provisions for Military 1779

CHAPTER VI.

An Act Concerning Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines.

Approved May 1779 by the Virginia General Assembly

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, That every able bodied freeman who will enlist, and who having enlisted to serve a particular period of time unexpired, will re-enlist to serve during the continuance of the present war, among the troops of this commonwealth, either at home or in the continental army, as he shall be directed, or as a sailor or marine on board the armed vessels in this commonwealth, shall receive so much money as with the continental bounty if he be put on that service, shall make up seven hundred and fifty dollars, taking into account in the case of re-enlistment the bounty before paid the soldier, sailor, or marine re-enlisting, and the pay and rations allowed to the like soldiers, sailors, or marines in the continental service, to begin from the day of his enlistment; he shall also be furnished at the publick expense, with a coat, waistcoat, pair of overalls, two shirts, a pair of shoes, and a hat, to be delivered at the place of rendezvous, and with the like articles every year after during his service, to be delivered at his station; in lieu of such of those articles as are allowed by congress, which articles so allowed by congress, shall be received by proper officers to be appointed by the governour with advice of council, and applied to the discharge of the engagements of this act, or otherwise to the use of this commonwealth as the governour with advice of council shall direct. At the end of the war every of the said soldiers, sailors, and marines, shall be entitled to a grant of one hundred acres of any unappropriated land within this commonwealth, and every of the officers commanding the said soldiers, sailors, or marines, shall be entitled to a grant of the like quantity of land as is allowed to officers of the same rank in the Virginia regiments on continental establishment, which they shall locate according to the directions of the laws, for which no purchase money shall be required on behalf of the commonwealth: Such of the said soldiers, sailors, or marines, as shall be disabled in the service, and the widows of those slain or dying therein, shall be entitled to immediate relief, and also to annual pensions as provided in one act of general assembly, passed at the last session entitled "An act for establishing a board of auditors for publick accounts". Officers, soldiers, sailors and marines, during their continuance in the service, shall be exempted from all taxation in their persons. Officers, soldiers, sailors, and marines, raised under the laws of this commonwealth, shall, during their continuance in the service be furnished by the agent or commissary of stores on behalf of this commonwealth, at the principal encampments, with the following articles, at the rates herein stated, to wit: osnaburgs (Editor's Note: coarse, heavy cloth used in making work clothes) at one shilling and six pence by the yard, coarse hats at seven shillings and six pence each, coarse shoes at eight shillings by the pair, coarse yarn hose at five shillings by the pair, rum or brandy at ten shillings by the gallon, whisky at five shillings by the gallon, brown sugar at one shilling by the pound, coffee at two shillings and sixpence by the pound, and such other imported articles as may be necessary for them, at one hundred and twenty per centum advance on their costs at the European port where they shall have been imported: And if they shall have been purchased on behalf of the public, after their exportation from any European port, so that their costs at such port shall not be known, their costs there shall be estimated by such agent or commissary

as nearly as he shall be able, and they shall be vended at the same advance on that estimation, provided that every of the said officers shall, in any one year, be entitled to receive of such agent or commissary, the following articles of imported dry goods, to wit: Six yards of cloth, seven quarters of a yard wide, with trimmings for a suit of clothes, stuff for six summer vests and breeches, linen for six shirts, cambrick for ruffles to them, and buttons, six stocks, three pair of silk, and three pair of thread hose, six handkerchiefs, two pair of good shoes, and one hat, and no more. All general officers of the army being citizens of this commonwealth, and all field officers, captains, and subalterns, commanding, or who shall command in the battalions of this commonwealth on continental establishment, or serving in the battalions raised for the immediate defence of this state, or for the defence of the United States: And all chaplains, physicians, surgeons and surgeon's mates, appointed to the said battalions, or any of them, being citizens of this commonwealth, and not being in the service of Georgia, or of any other state, provided congress do not make some tantamount provision for them, who shall serve henceforward, or from the time of their being commissioned, until the end of the war. And all such officers who have, or shall become supernumerary on the reduction of any of the said battalions, and shall again enter the said service if required so to do, in the same or any higher rank, and continue therein until the end of the war, shall be entitled to half pay during life, to commence from the determination of their command or service. The field officers of every county shall, from time to time, during the continuance of the present war, appoint one or more persons, such as in their judgment are best fitted to the purpose of recruiting soldiers, sailors, and marines, under this act, who shall be removeable at their will. Every recruiting officer shall, from time to time, give notice of the men enlisted by him to the governour, who, with advice of council, shall appoint such time and place within this commonwealth for their rendezvous as shall be convenient, and an officer then and there to review and receive them, to which place of rendezvous the said recruiting officer shall conduct them, and in the mean time, from their enlistment till their review, shall have the same powers over them as if he were their proper commanding officer. For every man who shall be reviewed and received by the officer appointment for that purpose, the officer recruiting him, shall receive one hundred and fifty dollars, to be paid on certificate of such review, and receipt from the board of war to the auditors, and their warrant on the treasurer. The board of war shall cause accounts to be raised, with every county in which each shall have credit for the men so recruited by their offices and reviewed by the officer of review: And whensoever afterwards it shall become necessary for the publick exigencies to call for any greater number of regular troops than shall have been raised under this act, the number of all those raised under this act, shall be added to the number to be called for, and the quota of the aggregate number being settled for each county, in proportion to their militia; where it shall appear that any county has furnished under this act a number equal to such their quota, they shall not be subject to furnish any part of those then called for, and where they shall have furnished a part of such quota, they shall be subject to furnish so many, only of whose as shall make up their deficiency; and for the greater security of the inhabitants of the county of Illinois: ***Be it enacted***, That one troop of horse shall be raised, to consist of one captain, one lieutenant, one cornet, and thirty two privates; the officers to be appointed by the governour, and to receive the same pay, rations, and forage, as is allowed to the cavalry now in the continental service; and the horses, arms, and accoutrements, to be provided for them, in such manner as the governour with the advice of the council shall direct. Every soldier who enlisted into the corps of volunteers commanded by colonel George Rogers Clarke, and continued therein till the taking the several posts in the Illinois

country, shall at the end of the war, be entitled to a grant of two hundred acres of any unappropriated lands within this commonwealth, on the terms herein before declared. Every able bodied freeman who shall enlist, or who having enlisted for a period of time unexpired, shall re-enlist to serve during the war, among the forces ordered for the protection and defense of the county of Illinois, shall receive a bounty of seven hundred and fifty dollars, and at the end of the war, shall be entitled to a grant of one hundred acres of land on the terms herein before declared. And for the better defence of this commonwealth in the eastern quarter: ***Be it enacted***, That four troops of horse shall be forthwith raised, to be commanded by a major commandant, to be chosen by joint ballot of both houses of assembly, each troop to consist of thirty two privates, and one commanded by one captain, one lieutenant, and one cornet, who shall be appointed by the governour with advice of council, and commissioned by the governour, and shall receive the same pay, rations, and forage as the cavalry now in the continental service. The horses, arms, and accoutrements, to be provided at the publick expense. Every able bodied man who shall enlist to serve during the war in the said troops, shall be entitled to a bounty of seven hundred and fifty dollars, and at the end of the war shall be entitled to a bounty of one hundred acres of unappropriated lands on the terms herein before declared; and each able bodied man who shall enlist to serve two years, shall be entitled to a bounty of three hundred dollars. The bounties and other allowances given by this act to officers, soldiers, sailors, and marines, shall be deemed in lieu of those of the same kind given by any act of assembly, ordinance, or resolution of congress heretofore passed. And where the same shall have been given by any resolution of congress, shall go towards lessening the quota of such gift which ought to be contributed by this commonwealth.

REF: "The Statutes at Large being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia", Vol. X, by William Waller Hening, pp. 23-27.