



## Virginia Defense Force Virginia Department of Military Affairs



### Initial Entry Training (IET)

### History of the VDF

#### References

- *Serving Commonwealth and Country*, By CW2 John W. Listman, Jr. (Ret.)
- VDF Bugler, June 2013

#### Training Objectives

- Colonial Jamestown (1607)
- Revolutionary War (1776)
- Before & after the Civil War
- World War I (1917)
- World War II (1941)
- After the Vietnam War
- 1980's to Today

#### Colonial Jamestown (1607)

In 1607 the Virginia Militia was formed as a part of the British Militia system in order to provide an organized defense against attacks and to give the Governor a body of men capable of bringing order during a disaster.

Soon after in 1623, the Governor dictated that all men in the Virginia Militia must drill every month on their county court house green.

Woodcut illustration showing surprise Indian attacks launched across Virginia in 1622.

#### Revolutionary War (1776)

- The Virginia Regiment was formed by Governor Dinwiddie in 1754 out of the Virginia Militia.
- Its commander was George Washington
- Its colors were retired in 1758 and members were returned to the Virginia Militia.
- The Virginia militia saw much action during the revolutionary war.

- They took part in many campaigns under the leadership of COL Washington.

#### Before & after the Civil War

- In 1846, the main county units mustered for service in the Mexican War
- Virginia Regiment did not actually deploy west and they were sent back to their homes and colors cased in 1848.
- These units formed the nucleus of the Virginia Divisions of the Confederacy in the Civil War

Members of the 6th Virginia Volunteer Infantry on mobilization day for the Spanish American War in 1898. Like the three white Virginia regiments they saw no combat and returned home in 1899.

#### World War I (1917)

- The various county units were organized and evolved into U.S. Cavalry and Infantry forces for WWI and WWII after the National Guard Act in 1903.
- In World War I the Virginia Volunteers served from 1917 to 1921 as a military force to ensure public order and security.

#### World War II (1941)

- In World War II the Virginia Protective Force from 1940 to 1944.
- The Virginia State Guard from 1944 through 1947 protected the Commonwealth until National Guard reorganization.

#### After the Vietnam War

- 1973 Total Force Policy, 1973 requires all active and reserve military organizations be treated as a single integrated force
- Reinforced original intent of the founding fathers (a small standing army complemented by citizen-soldiers.)

#### 1980's to Today

- In 1984 the Virginia State Guard was reformed to provide a military force should the National Guard be mobilized and sent overseas in an emergency.
- In 1986 the Virginia State Guard was reorganized the Virginia Defense Force, and in 1989 the VDF was reorganized as a cadre Light Infantry Division.
- During the Persian Gulf War (1990-1991), VDF units assumed control of the Armories of Virginia Army National Guard units deployed overseas.
- In 1993, the VDF began an in depth study of future roles and missions. This has resulted in a shift of mission focus from security to disaster relief.