



# VIRGINIA DEFENSE FORCE

## VDF 200: VDF History



# VDF 200 Purpose

***Action: Discuss highlights of militia and specifically Virginia militia history***

***Conditions: Interactive classroom***

***Standard: Be able to explain the highlights of militia and specifically Virginia militia history***

- **\*SILENCE CELLPHONES**
- **\*50/10 TIMEKEEPER**
- **\*SIGN IN FOR CREDIT**
- **\*TESTABLE**
- **\*SAFETY BRIEF**





# Course Objectives

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**At the completion of this period of instruction, you should be familiar with the following:**

- **Explain the history of militias, from ancient times to modern American militias**
- **Describe the history of Virginia militias**
- **Understand the difference between the VDF and its predecessor militias**

# References

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





# Timeline



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



# Colonial Jamestown



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



# Colonial Jamestown



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



# Seven Years War



- **The Virginia Regiment was formed by Governor Dinwiddie in 1754 out of the Virginia Militia.**
- **Its commander was George Washington.**
- **Major engagement was Battle of Fort Necessity in 1754**
- **Its colors were retired in 1758 and members were returned to the Virginia Militia.**





# American Revolution



- **The Virginia militia saw much action during the revolutionary war.**
- **They took part in many campaigns under the leadership of COL Washington.**



# Before & After American Civil War



- **In 1846, the main county units mustered for service in the Mexican-American 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**



# Before & After American Civil War



• Usually referred to as ‘young Confederates off to war’ this photograph actually shows members of Company A, First Virginia Infantry, the “Richmond Grays,” at John Brown’s execution in 1859.



# Before & After American 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



- **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.**

**116<sup>th</sup> in World War I**





# After World War I



• **Members of the “Farmville Guard”, Company G, 2nd Battalion, 116th Infantry standing guard at a bridge on the outskirts of Danville in the winter of 1930-1931.**





# World War II



- **In World War II the Virginia Protective Force served from 1940 to 1944.**
- **As the officers chose and assigned units around the planning charts, General George C. Marshall insisted that the 116th take part in the first infantry assault waves of D-Day.**
  - **Marshall – a Virginia Military Institute graduate – was keenly aware of history and, as the accounts suggest, wanted to make sure that the Institute and The Valley would be accounted for on the historic day.**
- **The Virginia State Guard from 1944 through 1947 protected the Commonwealth until National Guard reorganization.**



# After Vietnam



- **1973 Total Force Policy** 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 Present



- **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 as the Virginia Defense Force, and in 1989 the VDF was reorganized as a cadre Light Infantry Division.**



# 1980's to Present



- **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.**



**Questions?**