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ARMY PROFESSIONALISM 1877-1898:
MYTH OR REALITY

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff college in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

GARY E. RHAY, MAJ, USA
B.S., University of Oregon, 1974

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
1990

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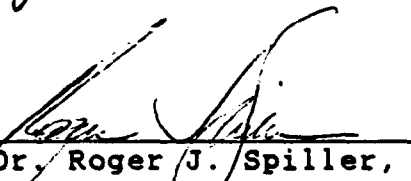
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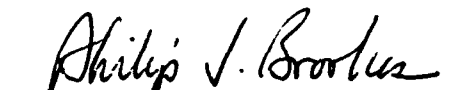
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ABSTRACT

ARMY PROFESSIONALISM 1877-1898: MYTH OR REALITY, by
Major Gary D. Rhay, USA, 106 pages.

This study examines the efforts to promote professionalism in the Officer Corps during the period 1877-1898. Initially, definitions are provided to identify the focus of the study and an examination of key 19th century concepts is made. Then issues affecting the growth of professionalism in America are discussed, followed by evidence of the growth of institutional and individual professionalism in the Army.

The conditions encountered by the bulk of the Army during this time were daunting. However, forces were dramatically altering American society. External influences and the operational environment interacted to forge conditions conducive to military professionalism.

Throughout this period a variety of measures were pursued which created an institutional basis for professionalism, leading to the acceptance of the unique position of soldiers in society and the requirement for expertise. Within the Officer Corps there were indicators of a rising interest in the profession. These efforts were evolutionary in nature. The definition of the Army's role and subsequent efforts to prepare the Officer Corps represented the pursuit of national security. It was a course which would ultimately become irreversible. All of the divergent effort was to coalesce later to produce an Army for the twentieth century.

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In order to answer properly the research question posed by this thesis three areas will be examined. First, the background must be addressed. The issues and events that shaped the people and institutions of the period will be established. Then after sketching the background adequately the condition of the Army during this period will be examined. This will show what effect, if any, the environment may have had on the growth of professionalism in the officer corps. Once the background and prevalent conditions are explored a logical outgrowth will be to examine if the growth of professionalism was encouraged. The efforts of the leadership to reform the organization and structure of the Army will be checked to show any advances in institutional professionalism. Finally, the extent to which the ideal of professionalism was embraced by the officer corps at large will be discussed. Taken as a unified whole the examination of the above areas will allow a reasoned and supportable answer to the research question. Was there a concerted effort to promote professionalism in the United States Army Officer Corps during the period 1877-1898, and if so, how widespread was this ideal?

The period following the Civil War was characterized by civilian indifference or hostility to the Army, a marked reduction in the force structure, and a lack of real mission. Additionally, the battlefield conditions encountered during the Civil War had shaken

American notions about being a soldier. In considering the post-Civil War Army many scholars seem to concentrate on the negative aspects of the period. Indeed, it has been referred to as the dark ages of the American Army. Yet this era of stagnation was also one of transition. Concepts and institutions which shaped the twentieth century Army originated in this period before the First World War.¹ There could not have been an instant professionalization at the turn of the century. What then is the role of the era between the Civil War and the Spanish-American War? Does it hold the key to the professionalism and ideas that sparked the great reforms at the turn of the century?

The purpose of this thesis then is to explore this transitional period and answer a fundamental question: was this a period of atrophy and stupor, or a time of professional growth and enlightenment which served as the springboard for the United States Army of the twentieth century? Any analysis of this issue must, by its nature, first provide a workable definition of what a profession is and how professionalism is manifested. Additionally, the study must attempt to understand what the officers of this period perceived to be professionalism and how they manifested it.

The terms profession and professionalism, so easily tossed about, defy precise description. No two social scientists agree exactly as to their meaning. It is best

to mesh the various definitions together and determine the common threads to supply a general understanding of the concept. Certain attributes of a profession surface over and over again. The first attribute is expertise which serves a need of the client or society. This expertise is skill-oriented, putting theory into actual practice to benefit the client. Doing this requires a formal educational base with theoretical principles and study. The second attribute is an ethic which puts the client's needs before the professional's. As an integral part of this ethic, the profession is seen as a lifelong calling or pursuit with standards which must be consistently maintained. It is thought to be unique with experience or skills mastered only by those within the profession. The last common denominator is the degree of autonomy or acceptance of society. The profession is granted, usually in the legal framework, a degree of autonomy and recognition that it is the only qualified practitioner. In addition, professions have formal organizations recognized by society which control recruitment and enforce their own standards. These three attributes, expertise, an ethic, and autonomy provide the working definition of a profession for this study.²

Given this general definition of a profession, how is professionalism demonstrated by the members of a profession? By synthesizing the prevailing views of several sources, it becomes clear that professionalism can

be manifested in two ways. Most easily captured is organizational or institutional professionalism. This "involves the creation and maintenance of a complex, effective, and well-organized social institution"³ which is accepted by society. This dovetails fairly easily with the attributes of expertise and autonomy. Institutional professionalism generally has a systematic method for accumulating and applying specialized knowledge. Methods are established to conduct research and study practical experience to expand the base of knowledge related to the profession. The social institution supports autonomy by establishing requirements for the aspirants to enter the profession and the standards they must maintain to be recognized as members. It establishes the training that is required to perform the unique skill and enforces the standards with an internal discipline system. Society in turn shows acceptance of the profession by allowing it to govern itself.⁴

The second way professionalism can be manifested, professional socialization, is more difficult to quantify. It is a complex process consisting of the "indoctrination and internalization of certain values, outlooks, and behaviors"⁵ generally associated with an ethic. The process is gradual as the entrant slowly adopts the values of the profession and develops loyalty to the organization or institution. This is manifested in

the professional's sense of social obligation, love of the craft, and attitude towards the institution.⁶

Just as a concise definition of professionalism today is difficult to formulate, a perception of what the officers of the late nineteenth century viewed as professionalism is an elusive issue. Generally, contemporary publications used the word to mean a full-time practitioner of the skill. Apparently, to these officers professional meant regular Army. Other studies of this time period suggest some other possibilities. The individuals who promoted the attributes discussed earlier as essential to professional status sought recognition as men educated in a peculiar skill necessary to the nation. They also promoted the idea of a professional identity tied to specialization in the art of war. Finally, they sought to eliminate amateurs from their field and gain a recognition by society that they were the unchallenged authorities on questions of national security. It must be noted that there was substantial resistance within the Army to these ideals.⁷ One aspect of this study will be to explore how widespread the attributes of a profession were spread throughout the officer corps.

To explore the issue of professionalism in the late nineteenth century Army, a review of the available relevant literature was initially conducted. A feel for the period from several perspectives was gained by studying secondary sources. This method was also used to

expand the working bibliography. Further research suggested a variety of primary sources which could be utilized to study this era.

ENDNOTES

¹ For a discussion of the effect of this era on U.S. military institution see: Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State, New York: Vintage Books, 1957, pp. 229-244; Alan R. Millett, The General: Robert L. Bullard and Officership in the United States Army 1881-1925, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1975, p. 9; and Timothy K. Nenninger, The Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army: Education, Professionalism, and the Officer Corps of the United States Army, 1881-1918, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1978, p. 7.

² For the various discussions of what makes a profession which were compared see: Bengt Abrahamsson, Military Professionalism and Political Power, Beverly Hills: Sage Publication, 1972, pp. 13-16; Huntington, The Soldier and the State, pp. 7-13; Millett, The General, pp. 3-12; and Carol Reardon, The Study of Military History and the Growth of Professionalism in the U.S. Army Before World War I, Bowling Green: University of Kentucky Press, 1987, p. 5.

³ Abrahamsson, Military Professionalism, p. 15.

⁴ For the elements of institutional professionalism see: Abrahamsson, Military Professionalism, pp. 13-16; Huntington, The Soldier and the State, pp. 7-13; and Millett, The General, pp. 3-12.

⁵ Abrahamsson, Military Professionalism, p. 15.

⁶ For the elements of professional socialization see: Abrahamsson, Military Professionalism, pp. 13-16; Huntington, The Soldier and the State, pp. 7-13; John P. Lovell, The Cadet Phase of Prof. Socialization of the West Pointer, Doctoral Thesis, 1962, p. ii; Millett, The General, pp. 3-12; and Reardon, The Study of Military History, pp. 4-6.

⁷ For a discussion of these views see: Millett, The General, pp. 3-12 and Reardon, The Study of Military History, pp. 1-3.

CHAPTER I

In this chapter the factors which seem to have had an influence on professional development during the period 1877-1898 will be reviewed. Some were external to the time, such as the influence of West Point and Civil War battlefield on the senior leadership of the Army. A major attraction that was external to the country was the European experience. The effect of the changes in American society had a dramatic impact on the Army, directly and indirectly. Lastly, the Army's traditional role of Indian fighter was fading as the hostile tribes were brought under control. Once these forces are discussed it will be possible to understand the conditions the Army operated under from 1877-1898. The chapter in total then should give us a complete picture of the underlying pressures which affected the officer corps of the period.

Virtually the entire senior leadership of the Army in this period had attended the United States Military Academy at West Point. Their attendance during what has been termed West Point's golden age before the Civil War was a common experience which influenced their post-war activity. There they were exposed to a variety of instructors, perhaps the most impressive of whom was Dennis Hart Mahan. In terms of the art of war, "all that the cadets learned of the theory and rules of warfare they

learned from Mahan, and the cadets so taught included nearly all the professional soldiers who became top commanders in the Civil War."¹

Mahan's course in strategy was really only a week's diversion from an engineering course but has been noted as the most interesting to the cadets. He wrote his own text, Outposts, and based most of his theoretical instruction on the work of Antoine Jomini. Throughout the course, in contact with the cadets, and by publishing his book, Mahan stressed his belief that soldier must study history. It was only through the study of the great historical campaigns that the roots of strategy could be understood. He also stressed that it wasn't enough to know a set of rules or techniques, the true leader applied the principles of flexibility to whatever situation he faced. Additionally, he emphasized the separation of the military from the political in all things.²

One of Mahan's favorite students was Henry Wager Halleck who published The Elements of the Military Art and Science, which became the definitive American work on the subject after Mahan's. In his book, Halleck attacked the militia and extolled the need for a professional officer corps because of the technical skills required.³

William J. Hardee, as Commandant of Cadets, also stressed the study of the art of strategy.⁴ In his book The Soldier and the State Huntington credits West Point as "the principal American source of the ideals of the

professional reformers" and goes on to state, "the intellectual grandfather of their work was Dennis Hart Mahan and its father H. Wager Halleck."⁵ Their influence will be seen later in the actions of the men who developed the institutions of the late nineteenth century.

Without a doubt the central experience of America in the nineteenth century was the War of the Rebellion. The effect of the conditions encountered on the battlefields of the Civil War was critical to the development of later reforms. The United States eventually created an effective Army during the war but at a tremendous cost. The officers never forgot what they had seen and endured; time and again they referred to their experiences as they attempted to justify their reform proposals in the later 1800's. For example, in his memoirs John M. Schofield referred to the cost in lives that the "mob of regiments without organization or generalship" imposed.⁶ William T. Sherman, also in his memoirs, abhorred the lack of military preparation for the war and discussed the contemporary fallacy of a separate staff based on his Civil War experience.⁷ The Civil War demonstrated conclusively the impact of technology on warfare and showed the need for a revolution in strategy and tactics. Additionally, it dispelled any romantic or elitist notions of war and pointed towards the need for a well-trained and prepared officer corps.⁸ These

impressions would find expression in various proposals in the last decades of the century.

Reinforcing the American experience in warfare were events occurring in Europe. The benchmark of these was the Franco-Prussian war which validated many of the technical lessons and spurred examination of a wide range of theoretical issues. It also freed the military in America from a dedication to French institutions and enarmored them with the Prussians. Progressive officers studied European armies, wars, and schools for lessons applicable to the American situation. Clausewitz was translated into English in 1873 and German was added to the West Point curriculum by Congressional mandate. Although definitely influenced by the Prussian movement the Army didn't rush to join the worldwide movement to adopt the Prussian system wholesale. Instead it retained its traditional organization through the late nineteenth century.⁹ Eventually though the European influence helped shape the views of leading American officers and through them American institutions.

The Army was a microcosm of American society so it is appropriate to examine what was occurring in the country at large during the same time. From the end of reconstruction to the beginning of World War I there was a marked shift in America from an agrarian society to an urban based industrial nation. This was "a shift from small-scale informal, locally or regionally oriented

groups to large-scale, national, formal organizations."¹⁰ During this period the expert emerged in American life and raised the idea of expertise to the forefront of society. Also the Industrial Revolution dispelled the heroic leader image and spurred the development of professional titles in society. This was an area where harmony existed between societal trends and the military. Of course the Army was not developing in a vacuum but as a part of society in general. Army officer's social and intellectual concerns increasingly matched those of other occupational specialties. The increasingly complex nature of war, coupled with the ongoing specialization of the entire American society, led to a desire for recognition as professionals. As other professions established institutions the officer corps attempted to follow suit. In generalities then the emergence of the organized officer corps was partially an outcome of the solidifying nation state and the Industrial Revolution of the late nineteenth century.¹¹

Paradoxically, at the same time industrialization and changes in society were moving the Army toward institutional professionalism, several popular philosophies were creating hostility towards the military. A pacifism movement took shape in the United States during this period. To be sure this was partially due to the shock of the Civil War casualties and their ripple effect in society. Additionally, the use of the

army in reconstruction had generated more than a little distaste for the military. However, more important than these factors was an older player with a new face, the economic cost of the military. The burgeoning economic might of the United States led to involvement in world trade on an unprecedented scale. This led to a view that was impossible because it would disrupt the economic linkage. This view of the world, known as economic liberalism, stated that international commerce lessened the chance of war and made armies obsolete.

Another of the leading concepts, social Darwinism, was a mirror of Darwinism but elevated the struggle for survival to the level of nations. Although this seems to suggest an expanded role for the military in America it was redefined as an economic struggle, where only the fittest would survive. The military then were not needed, but were counterproductive, and a drag on the economy. Religious moralists of the day also decried the military as being counter to the American work ethic. War was wasteful, evil, and soldiers by association were also.¹²

Progressive and thoughtful officers saw the same prosperous conditions, used by many to justify the elimination of the Army, as the most likely factor to draw a European power into a conflict with the United States. To these officers the expanding commercial strength of the nation implied a need for expanded military strength to protect it. The Army attempted to present itself as

insurance against a future risk. The difficulty lay in the fact that the peacetime Army establishment was created and organized to fight Indians not to provide national security.

The Indian had given purpose to the existence of the Army in the mind of society. The paradox was that the Army was never ready to fight a real war because it was too busy fighting the Indian. The leaders of the reform movement sought to correct this and install the Army in a more enduring role in America. They testified before Congress that the Indian mission merited no consideration at all in determining the purpose, strength, composition, and organization of the Army. However, the nation had grown used to the Army dealing with the Indians, could they conceive of it performing any other mission? The answer was yes but not necessarily tasks the officers approved of or appreciated. During the period of this study the Army was called upon to perform a variety of diverse civil tasks such as: suppression of labor strikes, restoring order in New Mexico, stopping anti-Chinese riots on the west coast, and the suppression of polygamy in Utah.¹³ It should come as no great surprise that this was not the future the Army leadership envisioned. Rather, they had some surprisingly modern notions on the function of the Army in national security which will be reviewed in Chapter IV.

Having discussed several factors which impacted in various ways on the Army of the period 1877-1989 we can discuss the actual condition of the force. Together these created the environment encountered by the officers of the late nineteenth century. At the start of this period the Army of 27,000 men was stationed in 142 small garrisons throughout the nation. The routine of almost a century of frontier service had created a virtual police force, its missions generally limited to exploration, escort duty, peacekeeping, and enforcing federal laws. There was periodic conflict with the Indians, generally on a small scale. However, the infrequent actual fighting didn't relieve the monotony or discomfort of the routine, it simply punctuated the normal duties. The noncommissioned officers did most of the supervision. Consequently, the officers were left with a great deal of time on their hands.¹⁴

The military policy of the United States was as unresponsive to the frontier as it was to a foreign threat. The Army was organized conventionally in regiments and companies but was forced to operate unconventionally. Its fort system was shaped not by military considerations or economy but by the movement of settlers into the west. Its weapons were not developed with the frontier in mind not were its tactics a product of the Indian wars. Serving officers recognized their foe as a master of guerrilla warfare and the use of terrain.

The Army never acted on this though, no school, training program, or manual ever provided guidance on how to fight Indians. Nor was there even anything resembling a way to formulate doctrine for the Army. The staff, who were to provide support, were rarely present or had flawed concepts of action. The General in Chief who should have pulled it all together lacked the power and authority to command the entire Army.¹³

It's difficult to conceive of such a convoluted command arrangement without an understanding of the contemporary military system. During this time there were really four separate and distinct armies. First, was the Corps of Engineers whose primary interest was nation building. Since the early 1800's they had been, except for wartime diversions, civil engineers mostly concerned with developing the nations waterways and harbors. Generally spending two-third of their time and resources on improvements they were also grudgingly responsible for the coastal fortification system. Tied as they were to public works they had considerable contact with, and influence in, the Congress. A logical outgrowth of this arrangement was that the Corps of Engineers exercised considerable autonomy.

Next, were the five Regiments of Artillery which, with the exception of a few light batteries, were located in obsolete fortifications sited to defend the coasts. This of course meant that they were near the centers of

commerce and civilization. Artillery, as a branch, was generally the most concerned with technology and science. Third, was the War Department staff agencies or bureaus who functioned as a separate chain of command throughout the Army. Relatively insensitive to the needs of the fighting army, known as the line, and operating out of Washington, D.C., the bureaus frequently caused fragmented control. More attuned to the needs and interests of Congress, the staff was also able to operate virtually independently. Last, came the line or frontier constabulary, garrisoning well over 100 remote western posts. Lacking influence and subjected to the desolation of the frontier they uniformly disliked and mistrusted the staff officers.¹⁶

This divisive relationship between the staff and line was exacerbated by the advantages enjoyed by officers assigned to the staff, which was a permanent appointment. The staff were stationed in urban areas, received a promotion upon appointment, had a substantial increase in pay, better quarters, and privileges unknown to the officers at the remote outposts. Compared to the line the staff had a swollen rank structure, over half the Army's brigadier generals and majors and almost half the colonels and lieutenant colonels were in the staff. A staff officer owed loyalty only to his department in Washington, D.C. not to his immediate commander.

Such a convoluted command arrangement often led to policies and decisions contrary to those of the tactical commander. This was a constant source of frustration and irritation to line officers which caused General Sholfield to comment to Congress in 1887:

The orders of the general commanding an army involving the most important military operations, may be practically annulled at any moment by orders to his staff officers respecting transportation of supplies, or even personnel of his command, coming to them from their staff superior in Washington, and without the knowledge of any military commander.¹⁷

As another example, Emory Upton an artilleryman and prominent leader of the reform movement commented:

The Ordnance...manufactures our guns and carriages; the Engineers build the fortifications on which the guns are mounted, and both are turned over to the Army to be tested in war without an opportunity for the General in Chief, or the officers who may die in their defense, to make the slightest suggestion.¹⁸

This feud between the staff and line was exacerbated by the fact that the Army was organized on a territorial basis, with three divisions: the Atlantic, Pacific, and Missouri. Each division was divided into departments which were further subdivided into districts. Each division and department had its own headquarters divided into separate staff departments answerable only to their bureaus in Washington. The General in Chief was a figurehead rather than a true commander. The Army's strength and organization was planned for administration and not for combat or defense.¹⁹

This dichotomy of command not only made command and control nearly impossible but also created the problem of who spoke for the Army. Whether it was to the President, the Congress, or the people of America there was no definitive way to know if someone spoke for the Army or just his small portion. As has been previously stated the Army in this period faced public and Congressional indifference and hostility. Its involvement in reconstruction and labor unrest, both of which were closely related to politics, earned the Army more than just a little prejudice from politicians. These feelings and the prevailing views of society on the economic liability the Army imposed was reflected in substantial cuts in Congressional appropriations.

The struggle for appropriations climaxed in 1877 when there was no appropriation at all for the Army when the Congress adjourned. The President was forced to call a special session where one was finally passed but only after a very heated debate. Oddly enough the reduction in strength for economy actually increased the operating expense of the force. This inefficient arrangement was caused by the scattered positioning and reduced strength of units. This forced the Army to have to rapidly reinforce any post or area which was threatened. Personnel costs were down but transportation costs skyrocketed. This constant battle for funds affected the quality of life, strength, and equipment of force in a

dramatic way. These problems weren't fully solved during the period 1871-1898. The appropriations varied from a high of \$46 million in 1873 to a low in 1880 of only \$29 million.

The Army during this period, the victim of repeated economy drives by Congress, was unable to retain sufficient strength to keep its regiments at minimal peacetime authorization. The problem was so intense that two companies of each infantry and cavalry regiment existed only on paper. The lack of money was also felt in the area of weaponry and equipment. Among other things the failure of the 1877 appropriation forced the closure of the Springfield Armory. This ended the manufacture of small arms as well as ongoing development of weapons. From then until 1892 the Army trained and fought with the existing stocks of leftover late Civil War single shot breech loading carbines and rifles. There were few war stocks for use in mobilization and no existing production facilities. The Army was also uniformed in surplus stocks of union blue wool uniforms until the supply was exhausted in the 1880's. The economizing affected not only research and development but also training and maintaining the force.²⁰

Quality of life was always difficult in the remote and undeveloped frontier posts, and the economic squeeze simply worsened an already bad situation. Congress controlled the funding of all permanent installations and

was loathe to authorize the establishment of more posts. However, the Army felt itself compelled to scatter units in small posts in an effort to adequately protect the settlers moving into the west. Subsequently most of the new small posts were 'temporary' as a way of getting around Congressional reluctance to authorize them. These 'temporary' posts generally resembled each other in appearance, only a handful displayed any sort of defensive works at all and even fewer the full stockade always seen in popular movies. Most were a collection of low huts built generally by the labor of the troops from whatever the local building material was. From a distance they were more like a small village or town.

Typical is this description of Fort Baylard, New Mexico by Lieutenant Fredrick E. Phelps:

The locality was all that could be desired; the post everything undesirable. Huts of logs and round stones, with flat dirt roofs that in summer leaked and brought down rivulets of liquid mud: in winter the hiding place of the tarantula and the centipede, with ceilings of 'condemned' canvas; windows of four and six panes, swinging, door like, on hinges (the walls were not high enough to allow them to slide upward): low, dark, and uncomfortable. Six hundred miles from the railroad...with nothing to eat but government rations...old Fort Baylard was the 'final jumping off place', sure enough.²¹

The remote life created an impression of, as one journalist, Deb Randolph Keim, reported, "the peculiar inspiration of a ship at sea: isolation within and desolation without."²²

Commenting on the issues of the small scattered posts the Secretary of War in his annual report of 1878 stated that the operations of the Army have:

...been much interrupted during the year owing to the reduced state of the companies, the exceedingly small garrisons, and the large amount of labor necessarily imposed upon the men in building, repairs, care of public property, etc.²³

Work details, or fatigue as it was known, eroded the training of the soldiers, their morale, and energy. The reality of duty on the frontier was fatigue, guard duty, undermanning, and training only as a very low priority. The soldiers "made poor laborers, and labor prevented them from being made into good soldiers."²⁴ Drudgery and hard labor were the primary occupation of the frontier troops. Nor were they particularly good at building living quarters, the barracks being described as dark, overcrowded, and vermin infested. Sanitary conditions were usually poor and personal hygiene primitive. Soldiers' rations can be characterized as drab and unimaginative prepared by the soldiers themselves on a ten-day rotation schedule. A Senate investigative committee found in 1878 that, "the food is, as a general rule, miserably cooked."²⁵ Pay was irregular, anywhere from two to six months between paydays. The enlisted force rarely rose above mediocrity. The shabby living conditions and harsh discipline caused astronomical desertion rates, up to forty percent of those enlisted in the 1880's.²⁶

The ramifications of the economic policies which existed can be translated into figures showing strength relative to units to indicate certain trends. There were 430 company-size units to man well over 100 posts. Through this period there were never more than 19,000 men in the line regiments, which consistently fell at least ten percent under their authorized strength. The reduction in end strength had been taken in the number of men per company rather than in the number of companies. After the 1876 ceiling was imposed this meant a maximum of 37 men were assigned per company, while the original organization had called for 100. This maximum usually meant there were less than 25 men per company for duty. The Cavalry fared better than the Infantry having been authorized, after the Little Big Horn fight, twelve companies per regiment instead of ten.²⁷

As a further illustration the following figures are from the Annual Report of the Secretary of War for 1881:

	<u>No. of Companies</u>	<u>Average Strength</u>
Cavalry	120	46
Artillery	60	28
Infantry	250	29

These figures caused General Sherman to comment that the "companies are almost ridiculous...compelling commanding officers to group two and even four companies together to perform the work of one." Indeed, Colonel John Gibbon fought the battle of Big Hole in 1877 with six companies of the 7th Infantry, with a total strength of 15 officers

and 146 enlisted, or an average of 24 per company.²⁸ When 2nd Lieutenant Robert L. Bullard finally reported to F Company, 10th Infantry he found himself in an isolated post 200 miles from the regimental headquarters on the Mexican border. The other two lieutenants were on detached duty and there were only 18 soldiers present for duty.²⁹ These examples show how efficiency suffered at the hands of Congressional economy.

These conditions had an even greater effect on the officer corps. Initially pay was the issue, the biggest cuts occurring in 1876. The debate in Congress included references to teaching the younger officers economy. Many Congressmen apparently wanted to help them avoid the dangers of extravagance. General C. C. Augur's testimony to Congress in 1877 eloquently expressed the sentiments of the officers.

More wearing and trying is the annual apprehension, inevitable as fate, which comes upon all, that the meager provisions...may all be broken up by a reduction in their pay.³⁰

The annual battle over money may have caused apprehension and concern in the officer corps. However, one inescapable certainty was that promotion would be snail like. The promotion system was far more damaging to the officer corps, caught in the stagnant pool of its seniority based rigidity. Initially, the Army entered this era with a promotion system which called for promotion from lieutenant to captain by seniority within

the officer's regiment. Promotion from major through colonel was by seniority in their respective arm, i.e. cavalry or artillery. This led to inequity as some regiments were envied for their rapid promotion, such as the 4th Cavalry. Note rapid in this case is a relative term. For example, some officers in the 4th Cavalry obtained promotion to captain after only twelve years, extraordinarily fast for the time. An 1877 analysis found in the Army and Navy Journal stated a new second lieutenant could expect promotion to major at between 24-26 years of service and to colonel in 33-36 years. In the 1887 Annual Report of the Secretary of War, General Schofield mentioned the inequity of the system and cited two examples. The first was a survey of all the first lieutenants of artillery which revealed terms of service as a second lieutenant from 9 months to 11 years. Secondly, two officers commissioned the same year were compared and it was discovered one led the other on the seniority lists by 10 years. He further gave vent to the feelings of the officer corps by stating, "nothing else does so much to dampen military ardor as the sense of the hopeless injustice in respect to promotion."¹

If pay and promotions lent anxiety and frustration to the serving officers, what were the effects of the frontier conditions on the officers? Robert Bullard, a lieutenant in the 1880's, described duty at a frontier

post as monotonous but not demanding, the normal work day ending at noon. Uniformly, the sources refer to an officer's duty as being full of idleness, boredom, and isolation. Their social and professional horizons were dulled and limited by the monotony of extended duty at remote frontier posts. They had been established at the same small frontier posts for such a period of time that circumstances had narrowed their minds and habits to their environment. What did the officers do when faced with years of monotony only occasionally punctuated by a campaign? Generally, they turned to drinking, gambling, and outside pursuits. Diversions such as hunting, fishing, riding, and exploring the nearby area were in vogue. Dances occurred sporadically as did racing and athletic competition. Always present when nothing else seemed interesting was the post trader's officers lounge and billiards.

One example of frontier duty has been given to us by Lieutenant R. L. Bullard whose main occupation during his first two months of duty with the 10th Infantry was the pursuit of a young widow. When he finally took the field on active campaign, his schedule consisted of minimal duties, hunting, the study of Spanish, law, and Indian lore.³² The consensus then is that the Army officers of the frontier Army 1877-1898 were dulled by the environment and discouraged by low pay and slow promotion.³³

Despite the conditions of service encountered on the frontier and the remote stationing of the bulk of the Army the Officer Corps of the late nineteenth century did not stand completely apart from society. The same forces that were dramatically altering American society affected the Army as well. External influences and the operational environment interacted to forge the individuals and the institutions of the military profession in America.

ENDNOTES

¹ Russell F. Weigley, Towards an American Army Military Thought from Washington to Marshall, New York: Columbia University Press, 1962, p. 43.

² Good discussions on Mahan's influence can be found in: Stephen E. Ambrose, Duty, Honor, Country: A History of West Point, Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1966, pp. 99-102 and Weigley, Towards an American Army, pp. 43-53.

³ Stephen E. Ambrose, Upton and the Army, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964, p. 11.

⁴ Ambrose, Duty, Honor, Country, p. 136.

⁵ Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State, New York: Vintage Books, p. 234.

⁶ John M. Scholfield, Forty-Six Years in the Army, New York: The Century Company, 1897, p. 535.

⁷ William T. Sherman, The Memoirs of William T. Sherman, New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1904, pp. 381-403.

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¹⁰ Galambos, "Emerging Organizational Synthesis," Business History Review, p. 280.

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¹² For the prevailing societal views see: Abrahamsson, Military Professionalization, pp. 14-16; Chambers, To Raise an Army, p. 66; Edward M. Coffman, The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime 1784-1898, New York: Oxford University Press, 1986, pp. 269-270; Jerry M. Cooper, The Army and Civil Disorder: Federal Intervention in Labor Disputes, 1877-1900, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1980, pp. 257-259; Huntington, The Soldier and the State, pp. 222-224; and Weigley, History of the U.S. Army, p. 271.

¹³ For examples of the quandary the Army was in over its mission see: Abrahamsson, American Arms for a New Century, pp. 4-6 and 42-43; Cooper, The Army and Civil Disorder, pp. 213-215; Jerry M. Cooper, "The Army's Search for a Mission," Against All Enemies: Interpretations of American Military History from Colonial Times to the Present, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1986, pp. 173-190; C. Joseph Bernardo and Eugene M. Bacon, American Military Policy: Its Development Since 1775, Harrisburg: Stackpole Co., 1961, pp. 240-241; Alan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America, New York: The Free Press, 1984, pp. 233-235; Walter Millis, American Military Thought, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1966, pp. 175-177; Marc B. Powe, Emergence of the War Dept. Intel Agency, Manhattan: MA/Ah Publishing, 1975 p. 15; and Robert M. Utley, The Contribution of the Frontier to the American Military Tradition, Colorado Springs: U.S. Air Force Academy, 1977, pp. 6-9.

¹⁴ Abrahamsson, American Arms for New Century, pp. 4-5.

¹⁵ Utley, The Contributions of the Frontier, pp. 5-7.

¹⁶ Millett, The General, pp. 47-49.

¹⁷ Graham A. Cosmas, An Army for Empire: The U.S. Army in the Spanish American War, Columbia: University of Missouri, 1971, p. 25.

¹⁸ Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, p. 290.

¹⁹ For the interaction between the staff and the line see: Abrahamsson, American Arms for a New Century, p. 7; Coffman, The Old Army, pp. 268-269; Cooper, The Army and Civil Disorder, p. 27; Cosmas, An Army for Empire, Ch. 1; Jack D. Foner, The United States Soldier Between Two Wars: Army Life and Reforms, 1865-1898, Berkley: Humanities Press, 1970, Intro.; Millett, The General, p. 81; Utley, Frontier Regulars, Ch. 1; and Weigley, History of the U.S. Army.

²⁰ Information on the defense appropriations and their effects can be found in: Cosmas, An Army for Empire, Ch. 1; Foner, The United States Soldier Between Two Wars, Intro.; Huntington, The Soldier and the State, p. 228; and Utley, Frontier Regulars, Chs. 1 and 2.

²¹ Utley, Frontier Regulars, p. 81.

²² Ibid., p. 82.

²³ Annual Report of the Secretary of War (ARSW), 1878, p. xix.

²⁴ Utley, Frontier Regulars, p. 24.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 80.

²⁶ To gain an understanding of this aspect of frontier duty see: Coffman, The Old Army, pp. 339-342; and Utley, Frontier Regulars, pp. 24 and 80-85; Parker, The Old Army, pp. 16-23; and Foner, The United States Soldier Between Two Wars, Ch. 1.

²⁷ Utley, Frontier Regulars, pp. 15-17.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 32.

²⁹ Millett, The General, pp. 52-52.

³⁰ Utley, Frontier Regulars, p. 19.

³¹ For more on pay and promotions in this period see: Army and Navy Journal, 6 Oct 1877, pp. 138-139; ARSW, 1887, pp. 121-122; Coffman, The Old Army, pp. 281 and 346-350; Cooper, "The Army's Search for a Mission," Against All Enemies, pp. 184-185; Parker, The Old Army, p. 47; and Utley, Frontier Regulars, p. 19.

³² Millett, The General, p. 57.

³³ For further discussion on officers' off-duty pursuits see: Cooper, "The Army's Search for a Mission," Against All Enemies, pp. 182-183; Millett, The General, pp. 60-62; Parker, The Old Army, pp. 22-31; Utley, Frontier Regulars, pp. 81 and 87-89; and Robert M. Utley, Indian, Soldier, and Settler: Experiences in the Struggle for the American West, St. Louis: Jefferson National Expansion Historical Association, Inc., 1979, Ch. 2.

CHAPTER II

Having laid out the forces and conditions which had an effect on the officer corps, 1877-1898, an examination of institutional professionalism during the period can now be conducted. The Civil War and Franco-Prussian War had shown a crying need for reform of the American military system. The lethality of technology and specialization of knowledge required to operate mass armies over great distances suggested a need for trained professionals. Specialized knowledge was needed but that knowledge had to be carefully controlled.

The changes in American society spurred the growth of corporations and new institutions. There was a need for managerial structures capable of operating in a new environment. In a democratic republic, however, it was necessary to carefully mold Army institutions to meet civilian perceptions and gain acceptance of the profession.¹

The frontier had failed as a training ground or as an experiment to shape new methods. Instead it had made the Army unfit for new roles. By 1877 the post-Civil War reductions were completed and fortunately the United States had virtual total security based on outside influences. Geography and the prevailing world balance of power combined to create staggering obstacles to invasion. No nation had the capability to project or

sustain an invasion force sufficient for the task.

However, the steamrolling industrialization of America was creating pressure for expanding commerce. That commerce was essential for the national well-being and implied a need for expanded military strength.²

Army modernization in the 1880's and 90's was not dramatic or earth-shaking. The issues were complementary instead of contradictory, improved leadership, regimental reorganization, and improved defenses would not improve one segment of the Army at the expense of another. The major difference of opinion was over what the future Army mission would be. The debate over the size and the future role of the Army continued unabated.³

In 1877 Congress created a joint Senate-House committee to study Army reorganization. Headed by Ambrose E. Burnside, former general and now a senator from Rhode Island, it sought the opinions of the majority of the surviving Civil War leaders. Although mainly bent on economy, the committee's report, published in 1879, proposed sweeping changes to the organization and institutions of the Army. It would have codified all laws affecting the Army into one bill, consolidated staff bureaus, and streamlined Army leadership. Labeled by many as reformist, in a negative context, this far-reaching legislation was easily defeated. Its demise was a reflection of the practical difficulties facing the reformers, a general anti-military sentiment, a lack of

organized pro-military leadership, entrenched interests of the upper echelons of the Army, and a genuine feeling that the Army was in fine shape since it had successfully won the Civil War.⁴

Fighting the difficulties enumerated above a group of forward looking Army officers undertook several steps to secure the needed changes. One of the earliest manifestations of these attempts at institutional reform were the efforts undertaken to examine events occurring outside the United States Army. This growing interest in outside military developments was in part ignited by the War Department looking for an external mission. Foreign observation was especially intense as a result of the Franco-Prussian War. America, like the rest of the world, became enamored with the merits of the Prussian system. Most progressive officers of this era studied European armies, wars, and schools. During this period of history that meant the Prussian system which was seen in military circles as pre-eminent.

In the American Army there was a distinct split between slavish Prussian followers and those who desired to apply ideas to what they felt was a unique American situation. The majority of the officers who shaped the institutions of the Army in this era were the latter. They attempted to apply principals and methodology to our system, not just directly copy the Prussian system. In this vein the Army sent various teams/observers to witness

events or certain aspects of military systems. Russell Weigley's observation that, "various boards of officers visited Europe after 1880 to look at gun foundries...coast artillery positions...(and) better reserve systems"⁵ is typical.

Emory Upton's observation trip is the most well known and best documented. Upton, a protege of Sherman, was sent on a world tour to gather insights of use to the Army. The Secretary of War directed Upton to pay special attention to the German system, especially the schools. Sherman, on the other hand, gave different directions. He wanted Upton to forget about Europe and:

...observe Asian armies, especially the British and Russian forces which in India and Central Asia pacified vast areas with small numbers in the face of problems similar to the Indian frontier of the United States.⁶

Upton did note that the British Indian Army was worthy of imitation. He highlighted its use of native troops and their ability to play one adversary off against another. Although Upton noted certain parallels between the British and American experiences, he did not spell out any details. Instead his book, The Armies of Asia and Europe, detailed in depth the Prussian system and made several recommendations for U.S. Army reform. Some of the major proposals were:

- a 3 or 4 battalion infantry regimental organization

- alternation of officer service between the staff and line
- a report system to track officer performance
- an examination system for promotion of officers
- schools for enlisted men
- pre-commissioning qualifications for officers
- post-graduate schools for officers

The majority of these proposals found their way into the Burnside committee report. They went before the 45th Congress as part of the Army reform act, and were defeated with it. This was not to be the end of them, however, as will be shown later.⁷

As formal legislative proposals foundered the reform cause was not lost, rather the leaders of the Army turned to a series of administrative adjustments. Hampered by Congressional hostility or inactivity the Army's internal measures alleviated some of the difficulties by circumventing the need for legislation. In this way senior Army officers were able to institute modest reforms during the 1880's and 90's.⁸

One of the most striking of these successes was the establishment of a relatively complete military school system. During the period 1877-1898 West Point began its transition from an engineering school and advanced schools were established for specialized training in virtually every branch. Officers attending these schools received practical as well as theoretical instruction. For example, artillery officers at the Artillery School fired a variety of weapons but also studied diverse subjects such as the telegraph, metallurgy, and other sciences.

This did not occur overnight obviously but was a slow evolutionary change as will be seen.⁹

The United States Military Academy at West Point had been established in 1802 and had slowly expanded. However, by the 1850's many officers maintained it could not do it all. They suggested that it was impossible to prepare a cadet completely for service in all three arms concurrently. What was required was a post-graduate school system to provide further training in a specified branch. For example Colonel Harvey Brown suggested, in 1860, that the already established Artillery School be joined by one for Cavalry, Infantry, and even one for the Scientific Corps.¹⁰

This movement was given further impetus by the example of the European model of post-graduate schools, popular with American officers even before the Civil War. They were on the mark because historically the profession of arms in the United States and Europe has followed the development of the school system. The assertion was that schools would allow an objective evaluation of the officer's proficiency, specialized training, and mastery of the application and theory of military science. It was hoped that all this would assist the citizens of the nation to recognize the professional soldier as unique and needed by society.¹¹

Oddly enough, it was the perceived success of these same West Point trained officers in the Civil War which

delayed the further introduction of schools of application in the post-war period. One popular argument used by those opposing reform was to cite Emory Upton's success during the war in commanding major units of all three arms. His success on the battlefield with only West Point training was turned against his arguments for reform in the education system.¹²

Upton was calling for the study of "strategy, grand tactics, and the sciences connected with modern war"¹³ in schools. He wanted officers to develop their thinking powers "to insure action from foresight rather than impulse"¹⁴ and advanced schools were where this had to be done. He used his experiences in the war to justify the need for this training.

Ultimately during the period 1877-1898 the military education system in the United States evolved to encompass an entry-level, West Point, and post-graduate schools, the schools of application. This, of course was not a complete system in the modern sense as it did not yet include a war college or senior-level of education. However, it was an evolutionary system in the continued advancement of the profession. These schools created the foundation for the modern Army's system of officer education.

As an interesting side note the curriculum focused on conventional wars. These were referred to as civilized wars, meaning conflict between two developed, white

nations. There was little or no examination of the ongoing Indian wars. Rather the campaigns against the hostile tribes were viewed as interesting history, not as case studies to be used for lessons of relevance to future operations.¹⁵

As the Army entered the period 1877-1898 post-graduate educational opportunities were limited to the Artillery School and the Engineer School of Application, both accepted by Congress due to the technical nature of the branches involved. In 1868 the Artillery School was revived at Fortress Monroe. In 1877 Colonel G. W. Getty reported that the curriculum had been reorganized to focus on two subjects. First, the practical use of artillery weapons on the battlefield. Secondly, the theory of the different tactics used by the Engineer, Cavalry and Infantry branches. This knowledge was to be used to suggest better ways to utilize artillery in future conflicts.

While this evolution was taking place The Essayons Club also began a slow metamorphosis into the Engineering School of Application at Willets Point in 1866. In 1877 both were well established institutions which would serve as examples for further reform.¹⁶ By the time this period closed in 1898 there were schools of application for Artillery, Engineers, Infantry and Cavalry, Artillery and Cavalry, the Signal Corps, and the Hospital Corps. Additionally, there was an Army Medical School to train

surgeons in specialized military surgery. The officers who attended their respective branch schools were receiving a well rounded curriculum which included classroom, field, and laboratory instruction in the art of war.¹⁷

The evolution of these schools was by no means easy or a well orchestrated effort. Rather it was a series of trial and error, experiments, and administrative moves to give the Army a workable schools system. As a typical example of the development of these schools the School of Application for Infantry and Cavalry, established in 1881 at Fort Leavenworth will be examined.

Initially, General-in-Chief, William T. Sherman created the school by general order on his own authority. He philosophically supported reform and was in a position to initiate the development of the institution. His General Order Number 4 stated in part:

...as soon as the requisite number of troops can be assembled at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, the Commanding General, Department of the Missouri will take measures to establish a school of application for Infantry and Cavalry similar to the one now in operation for the Artillery at Fortress Monroe, Virginia....so that in time the whole Army will thus be enabled to keep up with the rapid progress in the science and practice of war.¹⁸

The purpose of the new school was to train lieutenants on detached service from the line regiments. Generally the idea was to expose the students to all three combat arms, artillery, cavalry and infantry, by placing them in positions within those organizations. Every five

to six months the officers were to rotate between the arms and in so doing gain experience. During the anticipated two-year curriculum Sherman wanted them to do theoretical work but place more emphasis on practical, hands-on experience. Sherman's expectations were apparently not very high. He said in a letter to Sheridan:

The school at Leavenworth may do some good, and be a safety valve for those who are resolved to escape from the drudgery of garrison life at small posts.¹⁹

Indeed the school itself did get off to an extremely shaky start. The guidance was imprecise and the officers assigned as the faculty were not sure what the curriculum was supposed to be. The students exhibited a wide variety of background, experience, and potential. There being no set criteria or centralized selection for the school the individual regimental commanders sent whomever they wanted to. Apparently many took this as a chance to rid themselves, for two years, of the worst lieutenants in their commands. This made for an interesting group of divergent officers. Also in keeping with the character of the officer corps of the day there was a vast difference in the academic ability of the students. This forced the establishment of a remedial track within the school to teach the basics. This naturally did nothing to enhance the school's standing.

It being an administrative establishment the school received no Congressional appropriations at first, rather

it existed on whatever funds could be diverted from elsewhere in the Army. In the beginning there were no textbooks, few instructors, and a dearth of lectures or demonstrations. All of these limiting factors caused the school to focus initially, 1881-1887, at producing competent lieutenants. It was during this rather dismal start that the Leavenworth school was derisively known as the kindergarten.

However, beginning in 1888 the curriculum and the school began a slow evolution in content and higher standards were enforced. In this year the remedial track was eliminated and all students were expected to hold the same academic credentials. The course was still limited to lieutenants but now concentrated on a thorough and practical preparation in administration and tactics. Command of forces of all combatant arms was studied as well as the techniques of tactical problem solving. More than any other factor, the assignment of Eben Swift and Arthur L. Wagner to the faculty brought about the changes.

Together these forward looking officers refined the instructional techniques at the school to teach theoretical principals and axioms. To do this, they placed emphasis on historical examples, the study of history becoming the core of the theoretical instructions, and examination of the application of the principals discovered under different conditions. The touring of Civil War battlefields in a manner similar to today's

staff rides is a good example of the advances made in the instruction.

Initially European models, especially the Prussian system, were used for curriculum, texts, and methods of instruction. However, the application of the principles and methods to the American situation eventually produced a unique body of professional literature on the American art of war. For example, listed below are a few of the books published by Swift and Wagner during the period 1888-1898:

Swift, A Simplified Wargame
Wagner, Organization and Tactics
Wagner, Military Geography
Wagner, Books for a Military Library

Truly by the mid-1890's the school at Fort Leavenworth had changed to encompass a systematic, theoretical, and far reaching curriculum. Lieutenant R.E.L. Ballard of the 10th Infantry, when he attended the school, was impressed with the vigor and academic pursuit offered. For him it opened new vistas beyond paperwork and routine. It showed him that the Army was more than Indian chasers and introduced the art of war to him. The war with Spain forced the school to close in April of 1898 but the seeds were planted that would bear fruit at the turn of the century.²⁰

While the post-graduate school system was evolving during this period there was no such movement at the United States Military Academy. Once the leading edge of

reform the Academy following the war rested on the laurels of the successes of its graduates. West Point remained virtually the same as it had been twenty years earlier. General Sherman, sponsor of the new schools, wanted his alma mater generally left alone. While encouraging the establishment of schools of application, his ideas on West Point were much more limited. In 1877 he recommended to General Scholfield, then Superintendent of the Academy, some modest reforms. He wanted the Army system of money and property accounting taught along with Army organization, equipment, and logistics. General Sherman also voiced his opinion that the work of Jomini was antiquated and recommended a more modern example be found for the class on strategy and the art of war.

The Board of Visitors during this period felt that West Point educated officers should have been the Army's guiding influence. The cadets' education should have prepared them to be the organizers and leaders of the great volunteer armies with which America had always fought its wars. The Military Academy should provide:

...the proper technical education of officers and their preparation in all mental, moral, and physical qualities for the important duties they are to perform.²¹

The difficulty was that the West Point experience of this period left the graduates ill-prepared for the role envisioned for them. This period of time became known as the years of the Professors, during which the

academic board prevented or delayed any significant change. The members of the Board, the heads of the academic departments, were all former graduates and the constant inbreeding translated tradition into dogma. In 1881 Cadet Bullard's training was summed up as the following:

This training consisted of learning the tactical manuals for all arms of the Army, military signaling, and some exposure to the strategic theories of Dennis Hart Mahan. The largest part of the military training was tactical drill, the cadets performing with as much speed as possible the evolutions of Emory Upton's tactics for Infantry, Cavalry, and Artillery.²²

Instead of exciting him and awakening mental, moral, and physical qualities West Point did the opposite and came close to ruining his desire to learn. The United States Military Academy was left to atrophy, while the post-graduate schools began to take hold.²³

The expansion of the school system was joined by a similar program in 1891 when General Scholfield ordered the creation of post-lyceums. Every post was to establish one and all officers were expected to educate themselves in this manner. What the General-in-Chief envisioned was that line officers should use their time productively by reading and discussing various texts or presenting papers on military topics for discussion. Generally only some of the younger officers made use of the opportunity. Many of them were self-motivated by a desire to attend the developing school at Fort Leavenworth. As a whole General Scholfield's effort was unsuccessful.²⁴

Another Scholfield initiative which provided excellent opportunities for officers, and was better received, was the assignment of Professors of Military Science at land grant colleges. These were positions which provided educational opportunities as the officers taught military science. Often they also taught other subjects such as math, engineering, and foreign languages. Many furthered their own education by attending classes at the same colleges where they were assigned. As an example, the future General John J. Pershing attended law school during his assignment as a Professor of Military Science.²⁵

Along with the education system, the organization and structure of the Army attracted the reform minded element of the Officer Corps. At the top of the list of desired changes was the subordination of the Staff Bureaus to the Commanding General. Throughout General Sherman's tenure he attempted various measures to gain control of the staff and serve as the only interactor with the Secretary of War. Despite fifteen years of in-fighting with the Washington bureaucracy he only managed to gain a very temporary subordination of the Adjutant General and the Inspector General. All other staff officers, and their freedom to act independently, remained the same. As General Sherman noted in disgust upon his retirement to his successor General Philip Sheridan, "the real general

is a mere figurehead. If you change this you will be more successful than I."²⁶

He did not. In fact the relationship deteriorated even further. However, General Scholfield, who replaced General Sheridan, applied a new approach to the dilemma that had faced all post-war Generals-in-Chief. His approach to the problem was to work with the Secretary of War and the Bureau Chiefs, resolving the problem to the mutual benefit of all parties. Instead of fighting to gain control, General Scholfield determined to act as a Chief of Staff and function as an assistant to the Secretary of War. In this way he was able to gain the confidence of the Secretaries of War and actually command the Army in an ad hoc manner. Using this method Scholfield's military expertise was put to better service on behalf of the nation. He attempted to get formal recognition of this arrangement as a Chief of Staff but failed to gain Congressional support. So this productive arrangement was lost when General Scholfield retired and General Nelson A. Miles replaced him.²⁷

While the struggle at the senior levels of the Army continued several other proposals were presented dealing with the tactical organization of the service. Mostly these attempted to solve the problems imposed by the Congressionally mandated strength limit. The multiplicity of proposals included raising the limit by various figures and that only the line regiments be counted and not the

staff troops. The Army even offered to eliminate companies and regiments in order to use the excess personnel to fully man the remaining units.

With no real corps or divisional organization the Army offered the regiment as the best unit for peacetime administration. Reformers recommended a three-battalion organization, each with four companies of 100 men. The Army was able to administratively adopt the proposed organization but Congressional resistance kept the companies undermanned. A partial solution was found by maintaining two companies per regiment on paper and redistributing the personnel to the remaining units. This was the common practice in the Army by the late 1890's.²⁸

Stymied somewhat in efforts to improve the regulars the Army found considerably more political support for improving the militia. This was one reform initiative that gained the support of Congress and the state governments. This support was due to the failure of the militia in strikes and labor unrest during this period. Steps were taken to improve militia reliability, equipment, professional education, and facilities. The states funded new armories, tried to improve training, and organized new units. Congress approved a modest \$400,000 subsidy in 1887 to supplement the state funding of some \$3 million annually. President Chester Arthur included the subject of federal support for the militia in his address,

4 December 1883. He went so far as to suggest that the federal initiatives would result in a trained reserve for the regulars.

The Army for its part undertook several initiatives beginning with the Adjutant General R. E. Kelton opening correspondence with the state adjutant generals in the early 1880's. He offered the services of the Army to assist the states and shortly thereafter numerous requests were received for regular officers to inspect state militias. This informal arrangement prospered until, in 1886, Secretary of War Belknap formalized this procedure.

Congress also authorized the transfer of some armaments from the regulars to the militia. In 1882 they directed the Army issue two heavy guns and four mortars to each coastal state which wanted them. These weapons were to be used to train coastal defense forces. These were some of the most successful reforms, albeit very limited in scope, the Secretary of War reporting in 1895 that a permanent union had been established between the regulars and the state forces. Though even at that late date it was still largely administrative and not codified in any way.²⁹

Another informal triumph was the formation, in 1885, of an embryonic intelligence agency by Adjutant General R. C. Drum. He had been embarrassed by a President request for a matter of routine military information on another country. His bureau had not been

able to answer, so on his own authority he created an intelligence unit in his office. This group became known as the Military Information Division. Formal War Department recognition came in 1889 and the office was supplemented by Army attaches at foreign embassies for the first time this same year. In 1892 the organization and functions were defined by the Secretary of War Stephen Elkins. These were laid out to be the gathering of data on foreign military forces and the preparation of rudimentary war mobilization plans. The organization was finally recognized in 1894 when Congress passed a modest appropriation acknowledging its existence. Initially modeled on the Prussian example, the Military Information Division was the first hesitant step towards a true general staff.³⁰

The rearming of the Army was another of the areas where the reformers met some success, although only late in the era. From 1877 to 1892 the standard small arm was the Springfield single shot, breech loading rifle or carbine. Finally, in 1892 the Army persuaded Congress to rearm the regulars with the Krag-Jorgenson magazine rifle. This weapon gave the soldier increased range, penetration, and rate of fire. Perhaps just as important was the development of smokeless powder for all the Army's weapons by the Ordnance Department. Additionally, the Artillery was re-equipped with modern steel breech loading cannon. These developments finally brought the Regular

Army on par with the other world armies. However, despite support for militia modernization efforts, Congress was reluctant to supply these same advances to the state forces.³¹

A second major effort at rearmament was sparked by the Endicott Board's examination of American coastal defense capabilities. The Board's report highlighted the total obsolescence of the nation's defenses and recommended extensive efforts to modernize them. There was a fair amount of support for these measures due to the growing commercial importance of the ports. Even so not all of the report's findings were funded, or ever even acted on. For example, no one seriously considered the refortification of the border with Canada as recommended in the findings. It was nevertheless extremely important to the Army because the attention paid to the Board's report provided impetus for change. The establishment of the Army gun factory was one example of the benefits garnered through the interest showed by the government. Another example was President Chester Arthur's comment in an address on 4 December 1883 that a suitable facility for manufacturing modern heavy ordnance was pressingly needed.

Even as the Army undertook the experimentation and study of creating such modern weaponry the private sector of industry took note. The possibilities of government contracts attracted a great deal of attention and the private arms industry expanded its capacity to develop and

produce such armaments. This growth of an early military-industrial complex supported the modernization of U.S. forces during this period.

The Endicott plan was not outwardly a landmark of reform and modernization. In 1897 it was not even ten percent complete. The appropriations for construction of the fortifications and guns fell drastically short of even a partial effort. Many of the guns already procured lay in wait for the construction of positions and carriages on which to mount them. It did, however, spark solutions to the technical and industrial base problems for production. The Endicott Board served as the ignitor of the American arms industry of the late nineteenth century, although production facilities for modern weapons and reserve stockpiles of weapons and ammunition remained embarrassingly limited by skimpy appropriations.³²

The most effective institutional change in terms of far reaching effects was not in weaponry but rather in the stationing of the Army. The successful effort to begin concentration of the line regiments to centralized locations probably did more to improve conditions within the Army than any other measure. Concentration became the official Army policy as early as 1880, when the Secretary of War included it in his annual report. It was a long, slow process against Congressional resistance but it made steady progress. The movement was based on the establishment of the rail system in the frontier areas and

the efficiency of transporting men and equipment which resulted. Reliance on rail transportation recast the Army fort system, the number of posts dropping to 62 in 1891. Each of these posts had a minimum of three companies present. By 1896, ten of the twenty-five infantry regiments were assembled on single posts. This economical concentration of units increased the time and money available to improve the Army's condition.³³

The increase in available time, money, and availability of large units fostered a marked advancement in training. In accordance with the views of progressive officers time was now allocated to calisthenics, marksmanship, and field maneuvers. Additionally, officers and men were trained in common tasks. Consolidation of the regiment, still the administrative backbone of the Army, aided the restoration of discipline and esprit.

Naturally concentration was not the only issue which affected training in the years between 1877 and 1898. The losses at the Little Big Horn and Big Hole fights had created an earlier uproar. In response there were a variety of training reforms implemented earlier. In 1881 companies of instruction had been established by the Army at the recruit depots. These were charged with giving the recruits four months of basic instruction prior to their arrival in the units. There was also a renewed emphasis placed on marksmanship. As money became

available the ammunition restrictions were lifted, ranges were established, and competitions were encouraged.

Fort Leavenworth became an early site for concentration, its central position, size, and terrain made it ideal for maneuvers and training. All these factors led to Fort Leavenworth becoming known as the birthplace of the systematic field exercise in the United States Army. These early maneuvers were restricted to regimental size but became the basis for further advances.

It was not until the late 1880's that concentration made more extensive maneuvers possible. Perhaps the most unique exercise conducted was the joint Army and Navy maneuver of 1887. In this exercise the North Atlantic squadron and troops under General Scholfield conducted joint trials of the fortifications on Narragansett Bay. These generated a great deal of enthusiasm and discussion based on their realism, utility, and novelty.

In the west General Miles conducted two exercises, in Arizona during 1888, and the following year, 1889, in California. However, it was General Wesley Merritt's 1889 exercise in the Indian territory that became known as the first real maneuvers conducted by the Army. The Merritt maneuver was large for its day, involving two regiments of Cavalry, one and a half regiments of Infantry, and two batteries of Artillery. This exercise elicited nearly universal praise from the officers who participated and observed. It was from these beginnings that field

exercises and training maneuvers evolved in the United States Army.³⁴

The concentration of units not only affected training but also caused an improvement in the quality of life within the Army. Moving to the larger, permanent, and funded posts improved living conditions immeasurably. Officers and men alike were now quartered in well constructed permanent buildings and given an improved diet. In the late 1880's, mostly due to the efforts of the post surgeons, the larger posts had begun to receive water and sewage systems, improved kitchens, and other civilized amenities.³⁵

Other improvements in the soldier's life took place, generally recommended by the progressive officers as a way to improve the quality of the force. In 1878 post schools for the education of enlisted soldiers were made mandatory. The retirement system was overhauled and liberalized in 1882, but the effect of this was limited. In the mid-1880's a movement to reform the disciplinary system formed inside and out of the Army. Change coincided with support from key political figures, to include the President. Change was required, noted President Grover Cleveland in 1885, because over half of the Army had been tried by courts martial in a single year. The system was formally changed during the period October 1890 through July 1892 by executive order and Congressional action. These reforms ended disparity in

punishments, long waits for trial in confinement, and forced due process on the Army.

During the period 1877 to 1898 there were two major reform cycles, the first in the early 1880's, and the second in the late 1880's to the early 1890's. These movements coincided with similar movements in the civil service and received a great deal of contemporary public attention. The accomplishments included, in addition to those already mentioned, improvements in housing and clothing.

Additionally, centralized enlistment criteria were applied to the recruitment of soldiers and the War Department took control of the system. The term of service was also reduced to three years to make it more attractive. In another action, General Scholfield directed a study of guard mount in September of 1890 in an attempt to increase the sleeping time of the soldiers. Finally, Congress established a system for promotion from the ranks to commissioned service in June of 1892. These reforms had the dual purpose of attracting better men to the service while reducing the desertion rate and increasing retention. The package of reforms had an effect. Desertion was cut in half from 1889 to 1891, although desertion temporarily increased during periods of economic prosperity.³⁶

Concurrent with the changes in the quality of life that were occurring the Army was striving to

institutionalize systems that would insure the professionalism of the Officer Corps. These attempts to raise the quality of the officers were probably the area of greatest success for the progressive faction. It was also in this area that most of the official progress was made. Early on, in 1878, Congress limited the granting of commissions to those who had graduated from West Point or others who could pass a rigorous exam, thus insuring a certain level of knowledge for entry into the profession.

In 1882 Congress established a mandatory retirement age of 64. This was to eliminate those officers no longer physically up to active campaigning and to speed up the promotion system. In another move to reform promotions, Secretary of War Redfield Proctor recommended, in 1890, that the regulations governing promotion of line officers be revised. This recommendation included initiatives that had been sought for years by the progressive officers. It caused all promotions to be by arm instead of by regiment. Additionally, promotion up to the rank of major now required the officer to take a competitive proficiency exam.

Also, a system of annual efficiency reports was inaugurated and initially used to make assignment decisions. Although it had no bearing on promotion when instituted, it did establish a rudimentary foundation for a merit promotion system. Officers were being put on notice that there were certain acceptable standards that

must be maintained to remain within the profession. These measures combined to hold out to the younger officers the hope of promotion to field grade rank before retirement. With this hope came incentive to remain in the Army.³⁷

The measures that have been discussed in this chapter formed the basis for the institutional professionalism of the United States Army during the period 1877-1898. With the creation of the schools of application an embryonic method for applying specialized knowledge began to evolve. The formal education of the Officer Corps was incomplete in the modern sense but the groundwork laid would reach fruition at the turn of the century.

Entrance requirements were established for the profession which excluded the appointment of amateurs through political influence. Along with this methods for checking an individual officer's performance of duty were established that were the underpinning of a true merit promotion system. Regulation of retirement and centralization of promotions were also inaugurated during this period.

Recruitment, training, care, and discipline of the force became issues during this era. The Army moved with or ahead of the mainstream of American society in the reform of social institutions. Looking back at the proposals killed in 1878 by the 45th Congress it can be seen that many of these same options were adopted, by one

means or another, by 1898. Much of this was administrative and internal to the Army. However, at the close of these decades of ferment increased Congressional interest was apparent. Especially noteworthy were the measures to control and regulate the Officer Corps as the representatives of the profession of arms in America. In these steps can be seen the acceptance of the unique position of soldiers in society and the requirement for expertise, in other words the basis for a true profession.

ENDNOTES

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⁵ Russell F. Weigley, History of the U.S. Army, New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1967, p. 283.

⁶ Russell F. Weigley, Towards an American Army: Military Thought from Washington to Marshall, New York: Columbia University Press, 1962, p. 104.

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⁸ Cosmas, An Army for Empire, pp. 29-31.

⁹ For general comments on the system see: Cosmas, An Army for Empire, pp. 8-9 and Huntington, The Soldier and the State, pp. 237-244.

¹⁰ Ambrose, Duty, Honor, Country, pp. 143-146.

¹¹ For the correlation between professionalism and European influence see: Ambrose, Duty, Honor, Country, p. 145; Nenninger, The Leavenworth Schools, p. 2; and Carol Reardon, The Study of Military History and the Growth of Professionalism in the U.S. Army Before World War I, Bowling Green: University of Kentucky, 1987, pp. 6-7.

¹² Ambrose, Duty, Honor, Country, p. 145.

¹³ Upton, Armies of Asia and Europe, p. 362.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 216.

¹⁵ For information on the lack of interest in studying Indian campaigns see: Utley, Frontier Regulars, Ch. 1 and Robert Utley, The Contributions of the Frontier to the American Military Tradition, Colorado Springs: U.S. Air Force Academy, 1977, pp. 5-7.

¹⁶ Sources of information on the Artillery and Engineer Schools of Application see: ARSW, 1878, Addendum G, pp. 197-207; James L. Abrahamson, America Arms for a New Century, New York: The Free Press, 1981, p. 33; Utley, Frontier Regulars, p. 44; and Weigley, History of the U.S. Army, p. 273.

¹⁷ Cosmas, An Army for Empire, pp. 8-9.

¹⁸ "Report of the Commanding General," ARSW, pp. 1-13.

¹⁹ Sherman to Sheridan, 31 Jul 1881, Letterbook 95, Sherman papers.

²⁰ For a discussion of the development of the Leavenworth School see: Spiller, "The Beginnings of the Kindergarten," Military Review 61, pp. 2-12; Cooper, "The

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²¹ Report of the Board of Visitors USMA, 1884, pp. 6-7.

²² Millett, The General, p. 38.

²³ Information on West Point in this era is from: Ambrose, Duty, Honor, Country, pp. 200-206; Coffman, The Old Army, pp. 270-271; Millett, The General, pp. 37-40; and Weigley, History of the U.S. Army, p. 272.

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36 For discussions on the improvements of the quality of life see: Cosmas, An Army for Empire, p. 9; Foner, The United States Soldier Between Two Wars, pp. 10 and 111-113; and Utley, Frontier Regulars, pp. 24-25, 85, and 110-111.

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CHAPTER III

The institutional reforms of this period are, for the most part, a matter of record. What is not so apparent were the motives and goals of those officers involved in the reform movement. Was there a unified, systematic plan that was adhered to in order to achieve certain goals? Or was it a patchwork of extemporized solutions to perceived problems enacted as needed? The answer to these questions will determine the extent to which professionalism during the period 1877-1898 can be recognized and assessed.

An examination of the Officer Corps of the late nineteenth century American Army reveals a group of men who were extremely dissimilar. Precise classification defies the scope of this study, however, it is possible to categorize them into four general headings. First were the old guard, men who had seen company grade service in the 1850's and were still serving at that level. This group had been dulled by the conditions they had encountered and endured. They were too enamored with the Civil War experience to be interested in innovative change. Next were the young academy graduates, who arrived in the 1880's and 90's without experience but having a limited exposure to military science. Lastly, there was a smaller group of progressive, intellectual officers who sought to advance their profession. Any

large group of officers assembled during the period 1877-1898 would have contained a cross section of these categories.

Another phenomenon of this time which bears mentioning at this point was the protege system. The various senior leaders attracted followings of officers which adopted or espoused their views on various issues. These men were often given assignments within the senior leader's control and groomed for advancement. On many occasions they would be used by the senior leader to perform a special mission or to represent him on a particular issue. For example, Emory Upton was General Sherman's protege and spokesman for change as was Tasker Bliss for General Scholfield. Both were sent on observation tours and wrote extensively upon their return to the United States.

Lastly, the spread of Prussian militarism is an area which must be scrutinized to understand the officers of this time. Following the Franco-Prussian war the armies of the world turned to the German example when they sought improvement. American officers of the late nineteenth century generally studied European developments and were aware of this impulse. This produced a schism within the American military progressive movement. Some officers wanted to adopt the Prussian system wholesale while others thought it necessary to adapt the system to the unique American situation.¹

These general groups and pressures coupled with the realities of America in the late nineteenth century created the milieu of the Officer Corps. Functioning in this environment and faced with these issues the senior leadership spearheaded the institutional reform movement. However, what they said and the foresight attributed to them is often not in agreement. Perhaps the best example of this is General William T. Sherman, who has been elevated by contemporary historians to epitomize professionalism. Historians variously credit him as being an innovator, the leader of a renaissance, and an intellectual giant. The changes he sponsored have already been enumerated, still little is known of Sherman's motives for reform.²

General Sherman sponsored the reformation of the post-graduate school system, to include the schools of application, but confided in a letter to General Sheridan, previously quoted, that he wasn't sure what good it would do. His protege Upton was sent on a world observation tour and returned a devotee of the Prussian system. Younger officers flocked to the Uptonian reform system. Yet, as previously noted, Sherman had specifically instructed him to disregard the Germans and look for useful applications in India for use on the frontier.

Although the senior leadership during the period 1877-1898 displayed this paradox they manifested some modern ideas and rudimentary professionalism. It was not

a continuum of reform, their ideas were not always coherent but they were important. A revealing look at the opinions of several senior officers is provided by their testimony before the Burnside Congressional Committee. The committee was investigating and developing proposals for Army reform and the testimony ranged from the tactical and organizational change to what the true mission of the Army should be.

A perusal of their testimony on the correct function of the Army in American society is most revealing. General Sherman, for example, quoted from the earlier expansible Army theory then added:

...it must be borne in mind that the different branches of our military peace establishment are not constituted to form due proportions of an active Army.³

He then compared the early Legion of the United States with the contemporary force in ratio to the population in order to prove a decline in Army strength. Having made these two points General Sherman addressed public support for the Army:

The people have not asked for a reduction...they cherish and cheerfully support the Army which affords them a perpetual guarantee of national safety and domestic peace.⁴

This statement reveals more than General Sherman's desire to preserve the Army's strength it also led to this justification for the existence of a standing Army:

Our Army should be large enough to accomplish the two leading objectives for which the military establishment was created; the first and chief of these is to keep alive the knowledge and practice of military

science, so that...the nation may know how to defend itself against the most skillful enemy. In addition... the Army should be large enough to preserve inviolate our national boundaries....⁵

These were recognizably forward looking concepts by which General Sherman was laying out an enduring role for the Army.

Sherman's was not an isolated position. Two other famous senior leaders appearing before the Burnside Committee voiced similar views. George B. McClellan first discussed civilian control and education for Engineers, Artillerymen, and the Cavalry as essential to prepare for war. He then cautioned against unduly reducing the strength of the Army, referring to the service as insurance against future risk.⁶

Winfield Scott Hancock, while dismissing the Indian as only incidental, suggested that "...the strength, composition, and organization of the Army should depend on the purpose for which it is maintained."⁷ He then discussed the military history of America and talked about the conflict between maintaining a force ready in peace or raising an Army in the war. General Hancock then stated that in America the solution of this problem had:

...led to the compromise of a small standing Army which is expected to keep pace with the progress of the profession, construct adequate and suitable national defenses, hold some of our most important military positions...be prepared at all times to supply national forces (non-regulars) with the most improved weapons, implements, and munitions of war...be ready at a moment's notice to organize, equip, and supply with efficiency and economy armies of any magnitude... lastly to serve as a nucleus for the new levies raised as needed.⁸

Defining further the future role of the Army in America

General Hancock added:

Its value consists in its serving as a model and a standard for the militia, and in knowledge and system, the spirit of discipline, and the military information which its members store up in peace and disseminate among the national forces when the struggle comes.⁹

The vision of the future of the Army held by the senior officers reflected in this testimony revolved around two concepts: the need for a standing force for immediate defense or contingency missions; and secondly, the maintenance of a reservoir of military knowledge in case of mobilization to meet a more formidable threat to the nation, most recently the Civil War. These officers were arguing that the nation needed a professional Army as an enduring institution to provide for national defense. Or phrased another way, their argument was for defense through preparation for a future, unforeseen conflict or contingency. This concept did not die with the defeat of the reform legislation in 1878 but continued to be espoused in various ways throughout the era. These two ideas, knowledge and preparation, would drive the reform movement during this period.¹⁰

In order to accomplish the first mission, that of immediate defense, while preparing for the second role, that of leader, trainer, model for the national forces, the progressive leadership of the Army proposed a variety of organizational changes. While unsuccessful in seeking

legislative support for the majority of these they were able, as already pointed out, to make many administrative changes. For instance, General Sherman had recommended in his testimony to the Burnside Committee the reduction of the Cavalry and Infantry Regiments to eight companies and the consolidation of posts once the Indian threat was eliminated. Both of these goals were near completion by 1898.

The testimony of various leaders before the Burnside Committee also included references to other organizational changes. Virtually every senior leader testifying proposed the organization of the regiment on the basis of three battalions of four companies each. Additionally, Artillery was highlighted as an area where the force structure needed to be maintained. As General Hancock put it, "much time, practice, favorable opportunity, and hard study are absolutely necessary to master and keep pace with it."¹¹ He then added that Artillery was not like the Infantry or even the Cavalry which could be provided by states forces (National Guard) adequately.¹² These statements show an emphasis on the need for education while accounting for the integration of non-regular forces.

Naturally, the Burnside Committee was not the only forum for organizational ideas. Among others General Sherman's memoirs also expressed some of his ideas on

reform, the last chapter extolling what the Army needed for the future. His vision for the future was:

Inasmuch as the Regular Army will naturally form the standard of organization for any increase or for new regiments of volunteers, it becomes important to study this subject in light of past experience, and to select that form which is best for peace as well as war.¹³

He then outlined what he saw as the ideal organization to secure the nation's future:

The Corps is the true unit for grand campaigns and battle, it should have a full and perfect staff, and everything required for separate action.¹⁴

A good staff is indispensable...¹⁵

The Division is the unit of administration...The Regiment is the family.¹⁶

...better subdivided into three Battalions of four companies each. This is an excellent form, easily admitting of subdivision as well as union into larger masses.¹⁷

General Sherman went on to discuss such subjects as commanded and control with the telegraph or heliograph, rail transportation, and the need for combat engineers. In short, he addressed the battlefield framework as he saw it in his day.¹⁸

The significance of the testimony, articles, and memoirs is that they give a window into the thoughts of the senior military leaders. These thoughts, although never laid out in a coherent program were modern and realistic. They showed an understanding of American military tradition and institutions that would be acceptable to society. A small standing Army for immediate defense and a system that prepared the Army to be the cadre of an expanded national force if needed.

It was the cadre concept that was of the most concern to Army leaders. They needed a way to create a trained Officer Corps that would be able to act as the leaders, trainers, and example for the non-regulars. The necessity of retaining an acceptable level of professional knowledge and military science implied a need for an institutional base. Schools and training would be needed to train those on active duty with a diminishing knowledge in the realities of war and control of large formations. The lack of expertise bemoaned by General Sherman in his earlier testimony had to be corrected or the nation would face the costly lessons of the Civil War again. To those who had experienced that carnage that possibility was to be avoided if humanly possible. General Sherman spoke for all veterans when he noted in his memoirs:

I cannot recall any of the most successful (volunteer officers) who did not express regret that he had not received in early life instruction in the elementary principles of the art of war, instead of being forced to acquire this knowledge in the dangerous and expensive school of actual war.¹⁹

Education and training in military science would be required. Brigadier General John Pope urged the concentration of two or three regiments at Fort Leavenworth to provide a vehicle for instruction and exercises.²⁰ General Sherman philosophically supported the education of officers in military science and the Leavenworth school was born as previously outlined. Other proposals for military education and an advanced school

system had been offered to the 44th Congress by, among others, Colonel's James Oakes and Nelson A. Miles.²¹

Others also pushed for professional study. Major General John Scholfield, during his tenure as Superintendent of West Point, urged the cadets to study for:

It is the science of war in the broadest sense, not simply the Art of War, that we are to study.... observation, experience, and careful study of the experience of others who have gone before us.²²

It was not enough to simply study history, General Scholfield stated in a professional journal but officers:

...must intently study the history of military contests and endeavors therefrom to learn the facts... (and) ascertain what influence each of the ascertained conditions exercised in producing the known result.²³

Colonel Henry W. Closson added, in direct reference to the conditions encountered by the younger officers, that they should not waste time:

...chasing after the capture or search for trout, turkey, and antelope.... The science of war widens with all the rest (of the professions) and the preparation and conditions for success have elsewhere become more and more complex.... A few campaigns well studied and carefully reflected on will do more to develop a capacity....²⁴

The forward thinking senior officers sought to inculcate their ideas of professionalism further by establishing or actively supporting the establishment of professional organizations. These became quite popular during the period 1877-1898 and sponsored a variety of professional journals and essay contests to further the study of military science. In this way the senior

officers not only made a significant contribution to the literature supporting modernization, they also established a forum for junior officers to express their ideas as well.

The first of these professional organizations was the United States Military Service Institute established in the fall of 1878 with General Hancock as the first president, backed by General Sherman's full support. It experienced phenomenal growth and had 550 members at the end of one and a half years of existence. Its quarterly journal began publication in 1880 as a means of spreading the study of military science to a greater audience. General Scholfield was quoted as having said that the institute and its journal were "the constant means of widespread increase in the most advanced studies of science and art of war."²⁵ The institute also sponsored annual essay contests on professional subjects and served as the impetus for similar organizations.

Several other associations appeared during this period, often with a narrower focus on a specific area of the profession. For example, the Cavalry association was established in 1885 and began a journal to study Cavalry related military science and subjects. Eben Swift, the progressive minded coauthor of the Leavenworth school of application, served as the editor for the Cavalry Journal. Similarly, the Artillery (1892) and Infantry

(1893) sponsored associations and journals as forums for technical articles.

Another example of a medium used for military news and as a means to distribute reform ideology was The Army and Navy Journal. This weekly New York newspaper was devoted entirely to military related news or subjects and a large number of officers contributed a variety of articles. Nor were these publications the sole outlet for articles on military reform. Several civilian periodicals occasionally carried articles on aspects of the military debate. The most popular subjects for them were why America should have an Army and the role of the National Guard in the defense establishment.²⁶

Publishing articles in journals was effective to stimulate interest. However, progressive officers felt that post-graduate education was the means by which the Army would achieve its future. Education was not to be confined solely to the classroom, library, or intellectual forums. In the later part of this period a series of maneuvers and field exercises were conducted which rounded out the training. General Nelson A. Miles stated in his memoirs that his primary reason for conducting maneuvers was:

...to give the troops practice...(against) the Indians, yet it was also training invaluable to the officers in case they should be called upon for service in civilized warfare;...the same officers that might...be suddenly required to lead a division or a corps.... For these reasons I determined to give special attention to field maneuvers.²⁷

General Wesley Merritt's large-scale exercises during 1889 in the Indian Territory received widespread accolades from the participants. A participant, Hugh L. Scott, summed it up best noting that the exercise:

...had the salutatory effect of awakening a good many of us to the fact that the day of the Indian wars was over and that we must fit ourselves for war with civilized peoples.²⁸

These efforts by senior officers to establish methods and institutions for the promotion of professional knowledge were in direct response to the perceived need to prepare for a future war. The advanced education, libraries and lyceums, and field exercises were all designed to retain a diminishing reservoir of knowledge and military science.

No one had a master plan, the effort at reform was scattered instead of single-mindedly pursued. The individual efforts of senior leaders to satisfy the defense needs of the nation led to institutional reforms and growth in professionalism. It was left to others to enumerate a philosophy that the Officer Corps could collectively espouse and pursue. Colonel Emory Upton, General Sherman's protege, became that officer. By capturing the various initiatives of the senior leaders and adding his own observations of foreign armies, Colonel Upton synthesized a comprehensive military policy. His ideas became, after his death, the leading example of systematic reform in the late nineteenth century.

Immediately following the Civil War Emory Upton pursued a variety of projects which he felt would reduce the waste he had observed during the war. He developed the first American system of Infantry tactics which incorporated masses of skirmishers and a rudimentary form of fire and movement. This system was published as Infantry Tactics: Double and Single Line. It received widespread acclaim and COL Upton was called upon to head a board of officers which adapted Cavalry and Artillery tactics to similar systems. As previously noted, he was sent on a world observation tour as part of a board of officers. Upon his return Upton published an exhaustive report of his observations, The Armies of Asia and Europe.

In this volume, COL Upton had not developed a coherent policy, rather elements of his later proposals were submerged in the travelog. For example, on the education issue he wrote, "We should establish schools, with similar constitution, for the Infantry and Cavalry - one to be located at Atlanta, and the other at Fort Leavenworth."²⁹ Other recommendations found throughout the book, most in the section on Germany, addressed contemporary issues:

- The three battalion Infantry regiment.
- Alternate service between the staff and line.
- Examinations for promotion.
- Reports to track officers.
- Pre-commissioning qualifications.

Encouraged by his superiors, COL Upton began work on his last book, The Military Policy of the United

States, while serving as the commandant of the Artillery School of Application. It has been noted as the first critical study of the subject in America. The book unfortunately reflected COL Upton's admiration of the Prussian system and failed to take into account American military tradition and history. He attacked civil control of the military and the use of non-regulars among other issues. This departure separated COL Upton from his more realistic superiors who understood the constraints placed on the profession by society.

In 1881 Colonel Emory Upton shot himself for reasons that are still not clear but involved severe head pains and depression. The unfinished manuscript was compiled and circulated among the senior levels of the Army. Then in 1885 Peter S. Michie published, The Life and Letters of General Emory Upton, which allowed general knowledge of the manuscript and discussed some of its tents. Publication was to come after the turn of the century but much of the manuscript received widespread dissemination among the younger officers.

Upton's influence was far reaching as his program addressed many of the issues underlying the frustrations of the younger officers. Past failures of the Army could be explained by civilian control and the use of untrained non-regulars. This was to be prevented in the future by the use of Prussian methods, extremely popular in military circles, applied to the Army. Additionally the inequities

between line and staff would be corrected and the expertise of officers recognized. These changes were very attractive to the younger officers seeming to embody the solution to the surface problems they were enduring. Most of them lacked an appreciation of American institutions and societal issues.³⁰

Much of this reform program would be found in the scattered change of the period and later in the Root Reforms following the turn of the century. The administrative changes, legislative actions, Upton's recommendations, and the views of senior officers on professionalism became the heart of the reform movement of the period 1877-1898. However, what was the effect of this reformist impulse on the Officer Corps at large? It is obvious that the senior leadership of the period were vitally interested in the effort. To what level did professionalism gain support throughout the Officer corps, if at all?

The monotony of the frontier environment experienced by these officers has previously been addressed. It is clear that a majority of the officers so engaged choose billiards, cards, and liquor over the study of military science. Many of the older officers, either company grade or more senior discouraged, the study of war. Their feeling was that the younger officers should learn as they had, by actually fighting. Under the banner of "why change what worked," this conservative population

was suspicious of the idea of scientific training in military science. Colonel T. T. Munford represented this faction well when, in the Cavalry Journal, he stated:

...soldiers are born and bred, but circumstances and opportunity do more than science, and wisdom far more than learning.³¹

Older officers scoffed at book learning as nothing compared to the experience of war. Many of the younger officers were impressed by this dictum, the majority having fairly recently graduated from the unreformed treadmill of West Point education. Some of these hated the sight of books after that experience and only a minority read or studied. Lieutenant E. H. Plummer echoed COL Munford's view in the Journal of the Military Service Institute, writing that the "best military instruction didn't come from books but from actual practice."³² This, of course, ignores the fact that there was precious little opportunity to practice. Those officers that did read seldom picked up anything more weighty than The Army and Navy Journal.

This traditionalist backlash is understandable but stood as the primary roadblock to the emerging professionalism of the period. The number of graduates from the schools of application was initially small and their relative rank left them without much influence. Their impact was reduced even farther when faced with the skepticism of the many of their superiors. This did not remove the professional thought they had been taught, nor

did it prevent them from utilizing the available outlets to express themselves. Time and future events would remove this roadblock to reform and put progressive officers in the position to have a lasting impact on the Army.³³

This being a transitional time for the United States Army, there were obviously different groups of officers. Most notable was the cleavage between the older, Civil War veterans, and the younger, inexperienced officers. Further, as the post-graduate school system evolved different generations of officers were created. Junior officers of the 1890's spent more time in better schools and in staff assignments than did their contemporaries in the 1870's. Other officers had increased opportunity for exposure to professional growth. This could be due to assignment to a more technical branch, such as Artillery, or to a locality. During the period 1877-1898 officers assigned to but not present for duty in line regiments averaged 19%. These included officers on extended leave, traveling in Europe, or recruiting. Also covered in this category were those officers on detached service as military attaches, advisors to the National Guard, and those assigned as instructors teaching military science at land grant colleges. It is fairly obvious that there was disparity between assignments in the level of opportunity for study and professional growth.³⁴

Resources were available to those who sought the opportunity to expand their knowledge. William H. Carter, an officer during this period, reported in 1903 that officers who wanted to could readily find an outlet for the study of military science. In his words there was no "period of American military history when so much attention and study was given to improvements in arms, drill, etc...."³⁵

This study and attention found expression in the articles filling the pages of the various professional journals. Officers in the rank of major or lower are credited with producing almost 50% of the articles on military reform appearing from 1880-1898. This apparent involvement must be tempered with two other considerations. First, the officers serving in those ranks made up almost 90% of the Officer Corps. Put another way that means that 10% of the population, the senior officers, accounted for more than 50% of the articles. Secondly, some officers were constant contributors who consistently accounted for the majority of the junior officer input. John Bigelow, a West Point graduate assigned to the 10th Cavalry, was a good example. He had numerous contributions to various journals and two books, Careful Studies of "Mars-la-Tour and Gravelotte" and Chancellorsville and The Principals of Strategy. These are especially noteworthy as studies of campaigns directly applicable to the

American experience. Truly remarkable also is that the majority of these works were done while John Bigelow was commanding a Troops of the 10th Cavalry in the west.

Another indefatigable writer was Arthur L. Wagner, already mentioned in connection with the Leavenworth School, who won the Journal of the Military Services Institute of the United States (JMSIUS) essay contest in 1883-1884. He went on to write numerous articles and the books previously mentioned.

This contribution to the body of professional knowledge is one indicator of professionalism among junior officers. Obviously it was not a sweeping phenomena and is difficult to quantify exactly. However, one survey of the West Point classes of 1870-1879 stated that approximately 25% of these officers published articles or wrote books on military subjects. This gives us an impression of the involvement of this segment of the junior leaders. More officers were encountering the evolving education system towards the end of this period. Increased exposure to institutional professionalism may well have spurred greater involvement by those officer commissioned in the 1880's and 90's.³⁶

The topics addressed in the articles which appeared in the journals and periodicals were varied. They ranged from limited technical issues to the best military system for the United States. Several articles discussed educational reform or the necessity of the study of

military science. For example, Lieutenant Elmer W. Hubbard's 1895 article in the JMSIUS on "The Military Academy and the Education of Officers" recommended a school system based on the peculiar needs of America.³⁷ This opposed diametrically an earlier article by Lieutenant E. H. Plummer who had urged the wholesale adoption of the Prussian system.³⁸

In 1884, Alexander Webb wrote an article that proposed that learning on the battlefield was no longer acceptable. He felt that an officer had an "absolute necessity of studying and reading in the Art of War...and for their constant reading at that."³⁹ Perhaps another measure of the progress of professional thought during the period was the 1897 article by Captain James S. Pettit in which he flatly stated that the study of military history "is the foundation of our art, the basis for our profession."⁴⁰

A good example of the Uptonian influence in the later part of the 1880's and early 1890's was an article in United Services entitled "One view of the Army Question" by Captain William Carter, 6th Cavalry, which was an exposition on the Uptonian system.⁴¹ This article was an expression of the line officer's desire to have an impact on Army administration. To Carter and others, adoption of the Uptonian package was the only answer.⁴²

Many issues of current interest in society, previously discussed, appeared in articles in the professional literature. One example was Lieutenant J. C. Hubbard's article on the expansible Army concept (Uptonian) in relation to Social Darwinism.⁴³ In the early 1880's Army writers were addressing defense issues in light of the Chilean and British bombardments of coastal cities. They suggested that these events implied a distinct need for improved coastal defense and an increasing possibility of American involvement.⁴⁴

Having an understanding of the poor state of America's Army, some professional officers cautioned against an aggressive policy towards Spain. Those officers who spoke against such a policy gave realistic appraisals of our unpreparedness for such an action. The majority of the articles put the emphasis on the disarray of the non-regulars and the lack of experience with large formations.⁴⁵

Naturally, the numbers of articles written on the subjects covered are not conclusive proof of expanding professionalism. As has been shown, the vast majority of the articles were the work of a distinct minority of junior and senior officers. Perhaps a more convincing indicator of professional commitment can be found by examining officer retention. Retention of officers indicates the adoption of the profession of arms as a life long pursuit, a key ingredient in professionalism. During the period

1830-1860, approximately 54% of the West Point graduates remained in the Army. Resignations held at around twenty per year out of 550-1100 officers or 2-4%. During the period of this study retention of West Point graduates rose to 81%, while resignations for 14 of the 21 years under consideration were less than 1%. The reasons for this change are complicated but were focused on the institutional and professional reform of the Army.⁴⁶

None of the information in this study is conclusive separately. However, taken as a whole there was a definite pattern of professional growth. The institutional reforms gradually adopted led to the individual professionalism of portions of the Officer Corps. The leadership of this progressive movement came from the senior leadership of the Army who were trying to establish an enduring, American institution. The movement towards education and military science coupled with the perceived need to be ready for future conflict nurtured professional growth. The resultant intellectual ferment, in conjunction with an evolving education system, eventually provided the junior officers with a set of common values. These values became a professional ethic which promoted expertise, autonomy, and service to insure national security. This process of evolution into a true profession was not a smooth, uninterrupted process. Rather, it was a series of individual steps. Late

nineteenth century professionalism existed, the groundwork for expansion was laid. However, professionals were not in the majority, especially in the junior officer ranks. But there are clear indicators of a rising interest in the profession of arms as the period progressed. All of the divergent effort was to coalesce after the turn of the century to produce an American professional Army for the twentieth century.

ENDNOTES

¹ To examine the state of the Officer Corps see: Gates, "The Alleged Isolation," Parameters, 10, pp. 32-45; James L. Abrahamson, America Arms for a New Century, New York: The Free Press, pp. 33-34; Edward M. Coffman, The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898, New York: Oxford University Press, 1986, pp. 285-286; Timothy K. Nenninger, The Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army: Education, Professionalism, and the Officer Corps of the United States Army, 1881-1918, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1978, pp. 13-15; and Russell F. Weigley, Towards an American Army: Military Thought from Washington to Marshall, New York: Columbia University Press, 1962, pp. 137-144.

² Every source on this period cites General Sherman as a great reformer, a partial list is below: Graham A. Cosmas, An Army for an Empire: The U.S. Army in the Spanish American War, Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971, p. 6; Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State, New York: Vintage Books, 1957, p. 230; Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America, New York: The Free Press, 1984, pp. 255-258; Marc B. Powe, Emergence of the War Department Intelligence Agency, Manhattan: MA/AH Publishing, 1975, pp. 13-14; Robert M. Utley, Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indians, 1866-1891, New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1973, p. 44; and Russell F. Weigley, History of the U.S. Army, New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1967, p. 273.

³ Walter Millis, American Military Thought, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1966, pp. 172-176.

⁴ Ibid., p. 169.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 175-177.

⁷ Ibid., p. 170.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 170-171.

⁹ Ibid., p. 171.

¹⁰ Some excellent sources on this concept are: Bois, "Our National Guard," Harpers, LX, May 1880, p. 918; Kautz, "What the U.S. Army Should Be," Century, XXXVI, Oct 1888, pp. 935-936; Sherman, "Address to the Class of 1880," Army and Navy Journal, XXVI, 17 Aug 89, p. 1046;

Annual Report to the Secretary of War (ARSW), 1882, Vol. II, Part 1, p. 5; Abrahamson, America Arms for a New Century, pp. 36-39; Coffman, The Old Army, pp. 285-287; Nelson A. Miles, Serving the Republic, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1911, p. 267; Millis, American Military Thought, pp. 163-179; and Robert M. Utley, The Contribution of the Frontier to the American Military Tradition, Colorado Springs: U.S. Air Force Academy, 1977, p. 6.

¹¹ Millis, American Military Thought, p. 174.

¹² Ibid., pp. 163-179.

¹³ William T. Sherman, Memoirs of William T. Sherman, New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1904, p. 383.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 385.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 389.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 385.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 383-384.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 398-401.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 386.

²⁰ (ARWS), 1877, Vol. 1, pp. 62 and 64.

²¹ Nenninger, The Leavenworth Schools, pp. 15-23.

²² Scholfield, "Introductory Remarks," JMSIUS, 11 Oct 1877, p. 6.

²³ Scholfield, "Inaugural Address," JMSIUS, XV, 1879, p. 6.

²⁴ Closson, "A Paper on Military Libraries," JMSIUS, XV, 1894, p. 1123.

²⁵ As quoted in Coffman, The Old Army, p. 277.

²⁶ For information on these associations and journals see: Abrahamson, America Arms for a New Century, pp. 35-36; Coffman, The Old Army, pp. 277-278; Karsten, "Armed Progressives," Towards an Organizational Society, pp. 203 and 217-219; Nenninger, The Leavenworth Schools, p. 13; and Weigley, Towards an American Army, pp. 144-146.

²⁷ Nelson A. Miles, The Personal Recollections of General Miles, New York: DaCapo Press, 1896, pp. 538-539.

²⁸ As quoted in Abrahamson, America Arms for a New Century, pp. 45-46.

²⁹ Emory Upton, The Armies of Asia and Europe: Embracing Official Reports on the Armies of Japan, China, India, Persia, Italy, Russia, Austria, Germany, France, and England. Accompanied by Letters Descriptive of a Journey from Japan to the Caucaus., New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1878, p. 366.

³⁰ For additional information on Emory Upton and his work see: Ambrose, Upton and the Army; Peter S. Michie, The Life and Letters of Emory Upton, Colonel of the Fourth Regiment of Artillery, and Brevet Major-General, U.S. Army, New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1885; Millis, American Military Thought, pp. 179-193; Nenninger, The Leavenworth Schools, pp. 11-17; Weigley, Towards an American Army, pp. 103-104 and 125; Weigley, History of the U.S. Army, pp. 275-280; Upton, The Armies of Asia and Europe; and Emory Upton, The Military Policy of the United States, Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1917.

³¹ Munford, "A Confederate Cavalry Officer's View," Cavalry Journal, 4, 1891, p. 198.

³² Plummer, "Practice Versus Theory," JMSIUS, XIV, 1893, p. 1020.

³³ For additional information on the backlash to education and reform see: Cosmas, An Army for Empire, p. 29; Allan R. Millett, The General: Robert L. Bullard and Officership in the United States Army, 1881-1925, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1975, p. 61; Nenninger, The Leavenworth Schools, Intro. and pp. 2 and 16-17; Parker, The Old Army, pp. 23-24; and Carol Reardon, The Study of Military History and the Growth of Professionalism in the U.S. Army Before World War I, Bowling Green: University of Kentucky, 1987, pp. 26-27.

³⁴ For more on the idea of varying opportunity see: Gates, "Alleged Isolation," Parameters, 10, p. 33; Millett, The General, p. 11; and James Parker, The Old Army Memories, 1872-1918, Philadelphia: Dorrence and Co., 1929, p. 18.

³⁵ As quoted in Parker, The Old Army, p. 49.

³⁶ Sources which discuss the involvement of junior officers in professional writing are: Edward M. Coffman, The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898, New York: Oxford University Press, 1986; Peter Karsten, "Armed Progressives," Building the Organizational Society: The Military Reorganizes for

the American Century, New York: The Free Press, 1972, pp. 203 and 217-219; and Weigley, Towards an American Army, pp. 93-95.

³⁷ Hubbard, "The Military Academy and the Education of Officers," JMSIUS, XVI, 1895, p. 2.

³⁸ Ibid., XIV, 1895, p. 1022.

³⁹ Webb, "The Military Service Institute," JMSIUS, V, 1884, p. 4.

⁴⁰ Pettit, "The Proper Military Instruction," JMSIUS, XX, 1897, p. 20.

⁴¹ Carter, "One View of the Army Question," United Services, II, 1889, p. 576.

⁴² The Uptonian Connection is discussed best in: Millett, The General, pp. 71-73 and Weigley, Towards an American Army, pp. 143-146.

⁴³ As quoted in Weigley, Towards an American Army, p. 147.

⁴⁴ Expanded on in detail in Abrahamson, America Arms for a New Century, p. 15.

⁴⁵ Two good examples of the articles written against involvement in a war with Spain are: Dapray, "Are we a Military People," JMSIUS, XXIII, 1898, pp. 371-391 and Russell, "What is the Use of a Regular Army in This Country," JMSIUS, XXIV, 1899, pp. 216-231.

⁴⁶ Discussed in detail in Coffman, The Old Army, p. 283.

⁴⁷ These issues are discussed in greater detail in: Gates, "Alleged Isolation," Parameters, 10, pp. 31-36; Abrahamson, America Arms for a New Century, Intro.; Millett, The General, pp. 64 and 71-72; and Nenninger, The Leavenworth Schools, p. 17.

CHAPTER IV

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the period 1877-1898 and discover if there was a concerted effort to promote professionalism in the Officer Corps. If so, to what extent was this concept grasped by the officers of the late nineteenth century? In order to accomplish this task three areas were examined; first, the effect of the environment on the growth of professionalism; second, the efforts of the Army leaders to reform the organization itself; lastly, if and how the growth of professionalism was encouraged.

It is clear that the environment faced by the Officer Corps during this period was challenging. There was not one factor impacting on the Army but several with divergent influences. On the one hand the ferment in society with the change towards an urban industrial society promoted reform and the growth of professions. At the same time the senior leaders of the Army desired reform of the military to avoid the problems recently encountered in the Civil War. However, frontier conditions and Congressional antipathy retarded their efforts at reform.

Many efforts to rectify the problems enumerated by the leaders with the institution eventually came to fruition. During this period an advanced school system was evolved, the Army began a program of consolidation,

and new tactics and organizations were adopted. Additionally, entrance requirements into the profession were established and the officer personnel system was revised. Finally, the quality of life for the Army experienced a persistent improvement in the last portion of this era.

The above improvements encouraged the growth of professionalism within the Officer Corps. This was further enhanced by the establishment of the various professional associations and journals during this time. These associations in conjunction with the emphasis on the study of military science spread the pursuit of theory. The limited exercises and maneuvers encouraged the transformation of theory into practical application.

The leaders of the Army sought to further national security by pursuing a course consistent with American military history. Their effort was directed at preparing the Army for a future conventional war with modern equipment and trained leaders. This small standing Army's role would be to lead and train a large national force if mobilization occurred. To perform both these roles properly, the Officer Corps would have to be educated and prepared.

The movement towards professionalism was not wholly accepted by all officers, many rejected the concept outright. It was a course, once begun and consistently supported by the leadership, which ultimately became

irreversible. The growth of a military profession was an evolutionary process in which younger officers gained exposure to professional ideas at the same time society began to promote the growth of professions. This solid foundation led to extensive reform of the military system of the United States after the turn of the century.

During the period 1877-1898 most of the attributes of a profession were realized by the Officer Corps. A distinct expertise was supported with the establishment of a formal education system with both theoretical and practical study. Military art and science became prominent during this period. A military ethic was formed and officers moved towards its ultimate adoption. Pursuit of the profession of arms as a life long calling became more common. Finally, in the late nineteenth century Congressional action on reformist legislation began to signal a growing recognition of the military as a profession. Slowly the military would be granted limited autonomy consistent with our democratic system.

Professional socialization during this time was, as can be expected, more obscure. The statements and actions of senior officers show a commitment to a social obligation. There can be little doubt that a value system was evolving within the Officer Corps. However, its full adoption would be gradual as the institutional changes came to shape the individuals.

Was there a concerted effort towards professionalism in this period? No, but there was without a doubt a tremendous effort to prepare the Army for a perceived role in America. In preparing the Army to accomplish the tasks envisioned, the institutions and values of professionalism were promoted and established.

How widespread was the ideal of professionalism in the Officer Corps? This is obviously debatable. However, a trend of growth can be deduced. Professional activity such as writing and a clear vision for the future was stronger among the senior officers. Their efforts were guided by a desire to serve and protect the country while avoiding the costly mistakes of the previous war. Younger officers also were active but their's was an evolutionary growth of contact with institutions that developed professional attributes. Clearly the basis for a professional Officer Corps was established in rudimentary form on the threshold of the twentieth century in 1898.

What is the application for today? There are many similarities between the period studied and events occurring today. The Army's traditional mission appears to be fading away, the cost and size of the force are receiving increasing scrutiny. The role of the United States Army in America is being reconsidered and new missions embarked upon. The differences are just as dramatic. Today the Officer Corps is a complex institution which displays the attributes of a profession.

Two things stand out. First, whatever happens officers must pursue a clear vision of the future role of the Army in America. That envisioned role must be consistent with the framework of American society and institutions. Secondly, officers must continue to put effort into the study of the profession of arms. The quest for, and application of, knowledge must continue if the Officer Corps is to remain prepared to meet the challenge. If the American Army is to continue to make a viable contribution to the security of the nation professional study must be emphasized. Above all else service to the nation must come first.

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