



# Revolutionary Times



Containing the Latest News from the Sons of the American Revolution

## Hessians

At the start of the American Revolution, the British military was spread thinly across their global empire.

In 1775, in America, the total size of the British army, excluding militia, consisted of 48,647 soldiers. Of these soldiers about 39,294 were infantry, 6,869 were cavalry and 2,484 were artillery.

At least 50,000 soldiers fought in America, with many more serving in the West Indies, Europe, and India.

Britain struggled to meet these manpower needs with volunteer enlistments and soon turned to other means.

Despite having tens of thousands of troops in America throughout the war, it was still necessary to supplement their numbers by hiring foreign troops.

Landgrave (Prince) Fredrick II of Hesse-Cassel was the son in law of King George II, giving him a valuable family tie to the Hanovers.

It is also worth noting that the British brought in soldiers from other parts of the Holy Roman Empire.

However, because of the Landgrave's peacetime buildup of troops, political ties, and reputation, Hesse-Cassel was the main source of troops.

The colonists called them with the broad nickname 'Hessians.'

The German soldiers who came to fight were established soldiers in their national armies.

They were required by their country to serve; the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel himself pocketed the money.

The Declaration of Independence condemned the king for,

“transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.”

Washington crossed the Delaware to attack Hessians at Trenton.

Washington attacked the Hessian military base in Trenton, New Jersey, on Christmas Day 1776, inspiring new hope for the cause of the Patriot Army.

Once the Continental Army arrived onshore, the Hessians surrendered before morning and the Americans sustained few casualties.

In total, nearly 30,000 German soldiers fought for the British in North America.

Once there, they discovered a thriving German-American community of almost 200,000 people.

For many Hessians, the possibilities in this rich, new land with its growing German population was a great enticement to desertion - a fact that Americans worked hard to promote with promises of free land for Hessians willing to switch sides.

An estimated 5,000 Germans stayed in this country, when their fellow countrymen returned home.

This broadsheet is dedicated to the 250th Anniversary Celebration of the Declaration of Independence for more information visit the National Society Sons of the American Revolution website at: [www.sar.org](http://www.sar.org)

**Presented by: The Hawaii Society Sons of the American Revolution**  
<https://hawaiisar.org/> For more:  
<https://bit.ly/427ZXFO>