From the Bottom up: Isaac Craig and the Process of Social and Economic Mobility During the Revolutionary era

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From the Bottom up: Isaac Craig and the Process of Social and Economic Mobility During the Revolutionary era

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Introduction

The question of upward mobility has long been fodder for academic debate by early American scholars. On this subject, however, no concession has been reached. Traditionalists substantiate the claim that the unique environment found in early America gave birth and legitimacy to the self-made-man. Revisionist and new left historians, however, have dismissed the myth of upward mobility as an exceptional act for the lower class. An examination of the life of Isaac Craig, a Scots-Irish immigrant who catapulted from lower-class carpenter to affluent entrepreneur and land speculator, reveals that much of the analysis supported by both camps may be seen as accurate. Furthermore, the main objective of this project is to define the actual process of upward mobility so as to expose and promote understanding of the paradox presented in which the Revolutionary era was an exceptional time for successful social and economic mobility yet few men were able to accomplish it.¹

During the Revolutionary era the flood gate of opportunity for mobility and economic growth opened as it had not done before in early American history. That said, few men successfully climbed the social and economic ladder more than a few rungs. These two facts are true because upward social mobility encompasses a combination of increased social and economic prosperity.

¹ A substantial portion of this project stems from data collected in the underutilized Craig Collection, 1768-1868 housed in the Special Collections division of the Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh Pennsylvania. This collection boosts an astounding 16,000 pages which include personal papers, letters, receipts, deeds, military certificates, legal documents, journals, newspaper clippings, business ledgers, land warrants, indentures, business contracts, muster rolls, military orders, tax documents, business papers, checks. Similar papers, though to a lesser extent, from the Craig-Neville Family collection, held by the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania have also proved valuable. Due to the biases of Neville B. Craig his papers and sketch were used sparingly and with caution. Other primary sources utilized included government transcripts, newspaper ads, census data, the personal papers of multiple men, daybooks, military and other legal documents.
Historians that tout mobility’s existence isolate the economic prosperity from that of social standing which enables them to illustrate more cases of successful mobility than Historians who view mobility as also requiring social standing. While it is true that the era allowed for many men to gain more economically, as this case study demonstrates, there were still hindrances to social mobility. Difficulties were due to the process of both social and economic mobility being highly individualized complex and arduous process that included an almost endless list of both material and nonmaterial requirements. Many of these requirements included migration, networking, obtaining an officer’s commission if in a war, a dependable support system of socially and economically superior and inferior men, capital, timeliness, location, deception, good decision making skills, aptitude, risk taking, both the ability to recognize and seize opportunity, a likable character, personal drive, as well as both luck and sheer chance. As this lengthy list indicates, many of the factors that helped men increase their wealth were dependent on their increasing their social standing as well. In this, the inability to increase one’s social standing limited one’s economic standing. It should also be noted that many, if not most, of these necessary factors did not fall within any one man’s own control. Thus upward mobility was not an act fully within the agency of, or could be accomplished by, the sheer hard work of any one given man. Social mobility was not based solely upon competition but upon collaboration and cooperation.

The rapid economic growth that did take place during the Revolutionary era made economic mobility a predominant feature of American culture, identity, and presumable possibilities. The years following the Seven Years’ War witnessed vast economic growth based on expansion of trade and land. These offered large groups of lower and lower-
middle-class men increased opportunities to achieve personal independence and desire for larger roles in the growing economy. Subsequently, the rhetoric and ideology of the era and the Revolutionary War itself created the exceptional conditions needed to foster social mobility. Participation in the Revolutionary War provided lower and lower-middle-class men with unique situations that both allowed and called for reorganized relationships to new groups of socially and economically superior men. Moreover, it enabled some lower-class men to develop and demonstrate the required social characteristics believed to be inherently possessed by the supposedly natural aristocracy. Aside from monetary gains, these characteristics included gaining respect from others, demonstrating a strong public moral character and, most importantly in the case of officers, a title which placed men normally in socially similar ranks in positions whereby they received deference as enlisted men. The needs produced by the war ensured that the war could and would be used by lower and lower middle class men as tool that enabled some of them to achieve the final step to upward mobility required in an honor culture. Thus by utilizing a mixture of the revolutionary ideology and the war itself, men like Craig exploited the war in a manner which allowed them to take full advantage of the ongoing transformation of social hierarchy, from one based on rank to that of class.

In many ways successful mobility by men like Craig in the military may have assisted others as well. As men like Craig achieved socially advanced positions they brought with them a perspective that did not hold men to standards they themselves did not have, i.e. good breeding. Instead, men like Craig looked for men who offered skills

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It should be noted I have purposely refrained from using the term “working class,” although I agree with the general use of this term some of the frontier men used in this research are not employed in a traditional manner, i.e. squatters and fur traders. For this reason I have categorized the group of men this research focuses on by their more general status as members of the lower and lower middle class.
and hard work when they offered military promotions and business opportunities. Following the Revolutionary War, Craig and others who had successfully become mobilized utilized their new-found resources, networks, capital, skills, and social standing as means to continue their own mobilization both economically and socially in the new republic. In doing so men like Craig were often successful and in some cases such as Craig’s sparked the evolution of the frontier from ramshackle settlements to industrial gateways. To ensure their success and standing, one of their first postwar actions was to secure the very social transformation that had assisted in their mobilization through private groups and associations. In this, men like Craig attempted to re-form prewar social conditions and culture in the new republic. Having power, and therefore also many opportunities, was hinged on belonging to a near impenetrable class of elites. Craig built his off the work performed by the very best lower and lower middle class men, yet in cases were they themselves were able to become affluent they still remained on the outside of the upper class. Nothing, however, ultimately stopped the social change from occurring in the new republic or fixed social status to any group of men with real permanence. Although there came a time when deference ceased almost entirely to exist by that point many of the opportunities to amass great wealth had passed. Although the postwar environment greatly resembled that which had existed, before the war, slight changes made for large differences. In the wake that followed, some mobilization opportunities still existed, yet other required factors necessary to complete the process of mobilization did not.

As this research attempts to illustrate, in pursuing economic gain and seeking greater social status, Craig was not an exception from most men of the lower middle class ranks
in early American society. He was, however, exceptional in his success. While many men could spot opportunities, taking advantage of them was another matter. Craig knew how to take advantage of situations though. The trajectory of Craig’s life was not a vertical straight shot. There were stops and restarts, dead ends, and small mistakes with big and bad consequences, just as was the case for most men who chose to pursue upward mobility. If Craig had been a man of more emotion and diligent journal keeping it would not be surprising to have found multiple entries in which he had felt as though his grasp on mobilization had been lost. This would not only have been the way in which most men felt, but a common place reality. In this, Craig was both well prepared and lucky.

Craig was not an exception in what he sought, only in what he created, and because of this he becomes a case study which illuminates why men in large numbers could not have experienced such drastic upward mobility. In demonstrating the multitude of forces involved in propelling Craig from the lower class to the upper class it becomes clear that to other men it would have been like waiting for the planets to align. That said, at some point historians need to consider what exactly the majority of lower and middle lower class men were looking for in relation to what they did find. It seems likely that most men were not actually in search of owning the largest house on the block, but instead in simple competency. If America during the Revolutionary era was only ever “the best poor man’s country,” that alone may have been something for migrants especially to celebrate.³ It may be time that economic and class comparisons be done between lower-class men in North America and previous generations of other countries, preferably their country of origin. Results of this type of research may suggest that most

lower-class men were looking for independence in, and along with, providing necessities for their families, not in accumulating wealth.

For men whose families lived on the barest of necessities the question of rank, title, and class were really irrelevant as nonmaterial standing did not fill hungry bellies. Some men did aim for great success and prosperity, but most likely the majority of lower class-men had realistic material goals and attacked nonmaterial concepts that limited real world opportunities for them. In the search to understand the relationship between lower and lower middle class men and social mobility, social distinction seems to have been confused with the actual social-political plight of these men. Were these men not after all vying to end elitism? It was not so much the actual titles carried by these men but the deference they were forced to give, which they sought to end. It seems ironic, that historians insist on judging so much of their success, or lack thereof, by re-imposing social distinctions that the Revolution was then attempting to overthrow.⁴

Once the study of upward mobility is no longer hinged on social mobility, additional forms and amounts of economic mobility may be considered as upward mobility. New studies may begin to examine cases of economic mobility where subjects do not advance beyond their original class. Although this type of mobility may be restricted to a single class, it may illustrate that modest economic gains had the potential to drastically alter the quality of life for the individuals who experienced it. In order to fully understand both class and mobilization dynamics during the eighteenth century research should be extended to these types of individuals and their own struggles and economic coping strategies. In some ways the stories of “failed” social mobility, but

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successful economic mobility, may provide greater insight into the unique culture, identity, and experience of the lower and lower middle class in early America.

Historiography
In recent years many historiographical surveys of social history have placed Stephen Thernstrom as the patriarch of studies on social mobility. Much of this credit is due to Thernstrom’s 1964 work *Poverty and Progress*. In this text he debuted the term “social mobility” and then immediately proceeded to boldly declare that social mobility was myth. This myth stemmed from the idea that a free market society would be based on competition and not birthright. Thernstrom contended that this myth gave way to such a strong hope and drive that in some cases it became self-fulfilling prophecy. Simply believing it was possible enabled some people to become economically mobile, however that did not mean that already established people accepted them as such. Yet, as the case usually is, Thernstrom was not working from within an intellectual vacuum and thus was not the only historian to draw such a concept from the social and economic strife of the mid twentieth century, and in doing so alter the course of early American research. At about the same time E.P. Thompson published his instant classic *The Making of the English Working Class*. In it Thompson announced similar findings to Thernstrom while also demonstrating how the onset of capitalism had ended practical means of social mobility. These works, and many others published around the same time, represented the collective social consciences of the mid 1960’s and as such inspired an entire new generation of Revisionist and New Left social historians to reexamine history, in particular the political and economic unrest of the lower-class.

Although there is no arguing the transforming effect that Thernstrom and Thompson have had on early American history, they were not the first pioneers of social history. Long before the groundbreaking work of these historians, other early national

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historians had begun to explore social issues in their research. Fredrick Jackson Turner’s “Frontier Thesis” of 1893 discussed how limited opportunity for the lower-class, which took place along urban growth. As a Nationalist historian is unlikely that Turner would have done this as a means to create a negative debate with regards to opportunity in America, instead his ideas come off almost as an after thought to a career’s worth of research. Yet clearly in claiming that every generation in early America had been forced to seek its own frontier, he was also referencing the end of certain opportunities which limited mobilization.7

Turner’s argument may have been unintentional, but Charles A. Beard was doing anything but attempting to force issues of poverty, opportunities, class relations, and other social issues, into the debate with his 1918 An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States. Beard’s own historiographical survey stated that one of his intentions was to illustrate “the economic advantages which the beneficiaries expected would accrue to them-selves first, from their action.”8 His statement was not about the lower-class, but the upper-class, and does not reference social issues, but rather economic ones. It stands to follow, however, that if the members of upper-class were stacking the deck full of opportunities for themselves, then the deprivation of another group is implicated. Beard had targeted the founding fathers and illustrated that they had focused on their own elitist prosperity while creating the framework of the United States Constitution. Beard’s objective was too loaded and striking for proud Nationalist historians to accept fully. Those historians, like Carl Bridenbaugh, however, who picked

up the social torch, discussed the first middle-class Americans as a somewhat economically successful lot. That said, Bridenbaugh examined history through the socially limiting lens of his own era, leaving large groups of men, women, and minorities groups marginalized.  

While Bridenbaugh’s light and celebratory display of social issues was quite different from those of Thernstrom and Thompson, his 1955 work *Cities in Revolt: Urban Life in America, 1743-1776*, acted as necessary bridge between Nationalist and the burgeoning Revisionist school. The Revisionist school, combined with the social discord of the 1960s, tipped the triumphant scales of class mobility presented by Nationalists with their detailed examination of social injustice and oppression. Since that time historians have persistently renewed the debate as they find no definitive consensus. While the majority of Revisionist social historians stand by the fact that there was some class movement, the dispute continues as to who had the opportunity to become mobile and how they achieved it. Furthermore, as the study of social history has evolved, the definition of social mobility has undergone vast changes further undermining consensus between scholars.

Traditionally social historians placed social position as the cornerstone of mobility. People could obtain a significant fortune over their lifetime, but if they did not also acquire respect and standing within the upper class they would have been considered a failure in upward mobility.  

One of the most prominent social historians, Gordon S. Wood, depicted social mobility as a rare experience for most lower-class people.

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According to Wood the colonies had established a society that reflected European ideals such as birth being the central factor in determining class. According to Wood it was almost impossible for a poor man to ever gain enough wealth to join the well-bred elite.\textsuperscript{11}

Research conducted by Bernard Bailyn also placed success in the hands of the human psyche and drive. Bailyn put forth the theory that most immigrants to British North America came because of its reputation as the “best poor man’s country” and their refusal to accept fates as vagrant beggars in Europe.\textsuperscript{12} While Bailyn’s research found a higher standard of living across the board for the majority of migrants, he discounted it as full social growth. Due to local economic fluctuations Bailyn stated that their fate was determined based on what port they entered and where they eventually settled.\textsuperscript{13}

Revisionist historians had not only initiated the study of social mobility but created a framework and building blocks for the next generation of scholars. Given that these Revisionist historians were not breaking new ground but had footsteps to follow in, they were able to center their attention on expanding ideas and improving methodology. The most important difference between the two schools is the overhaul in methodology which took place. Revisionist research has largely been based on the collection of quantitative data. Edward Pessen described this change as an “[emulation] of sociologists,” in that Revisionist historians used quantitative data to create statistical information and did not use interpretations of sweeping generalities as historians had in the past.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{12} Susan E. Klepp and Billy G. Smith, eds., \textit{The Infortunate}, 89.
\textsuperscript{14} Edward Pessen, “Social Mobility in American History”, 171.
Another notable deviation between Traditionalist and Revisionist historians is that Revisionists tended to define social mobility by occupational success. Revisionists put birthright on the backburner and instead pose questions that ask how far a man could advance socially in one career path, or if changing careers had been far more profitable. Others asked what social, political, or economic forces restricted specific groups and how they tried to overcome them. These questions pushed historians to research the economic conditions and quality of life standards of specific groups and resulted in strong new studies that provide, new insight, about whole new groups of the lower class, some such studies, Marcus Rediker’s *The Many-Headed Hydra*, Alfred F. Young’s, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party*, and David Szatmary’s *Shay’s Rebellion*. Many of these projects came to similar conclusions with regard to the lack of opportunities by which men could become mobilized: mainly that the unstable economy created a unique environment, but near impossible mobility ensured a lower-class life for those who had been born within poverty.

With the acknowledgement of Traditionalist argument, but staying in line with the emphasis on occupation, Revisionists also argued that where a person lived and worked were also important factors of social mobility. Nash’s results, as well as the Revisionist research done by other historians, illustrate that the opportunities became available during an unstable economy because laborers were required to build new urban centers. Nash’s theory also includes the idea that the military needs created in support of the Seven Years War had generated new opportunities for the lower class in these cities. Additionally,

Nash’s research into the lower class further demonstrated that with greater opportunities for success came an equally greater chance for failure.\textsuperscript{16}

Steven Rosswurm described social mobility in even bleaker terms. Rosswurm stated that the Revolutionary War created opportunities, but specified that these opportunities were mainly for two limited groups of people. The first group was made up of the few lower class men who became officers, the second were craftsmen who were able to make short term high profits from the war effort.\textsuperscript{17}

Billy G. Smith joined the ranks of the social historians by combining thorough quantitative research with the writing style commonly used by Traditionalists.\textsuperscript{18} Smith’s extraordinary study of the “lower sort” is strongly inspired by the Revisionists and their quantitative nature. Smith, however, presents the grim reality that social mobility was an uncommon event. Smith does agree with both Bridenbaugh and Nash that craft demand, limited supply of labor, and location were keys to personal economic growth. Smith concludes however, that social advancement was only possible during times of war, when war preparations, supplies, and troops created opportunities. Smith concluded that these opportunities had been created by the war and closed quickly at the end of the Revolutionary War.

Gregory Knouff presents a somewhat more optimistic view. Knouff’s argument is that many lower class men viewed the military as an opportunity for advancement. Those who were able to gain an officer’s commission, not only made high wages during

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the war but were offered additional profitable opportunities after the war. Other encouraging historians include John McCusker, Russell Menard, and Marianne Wokeck. Just as the Traditionalist Bernard Bailyn had suggested, but in a more positive tone, these historians put forth the idea that by coming to North America people had greater opportunities to raise their standard in both numbers and quality of living. While most of those born into the lower-class would not die exceedingly well off, they would also not die in the depths of European poverty that they had left behind.

Following the lead of these scholars, this project continues the discussion of social mobility and “history from the bottom up” with the addition from the new military history that explores civil-military connections. While most early Revisionist historians had been forced to combat Nationalist school theories in order to prove that social mobility was far from common, this project has the luxury of working from a more recent Revisionist and New Left tradition and builds off the established theory of limited mobility. The objective of this project is to expand the Revisionist interpretation by explaining exactly why limited mobility existed for lower and lower middle class men, as well as the paradox of why social mobility did indeed find a home in Revolutionary era America.

Chapter 1: Migration Mobility and Regional Opportunities

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The story of Isaac Craig’s social and economic transformation from lower-class laborer to elite entrepreneur begins well over one hundred years before his birth in Scotland, a country in which he never set foot. According to Craig family history it was there and at that point that political and religious wars began to unravel the Craigs’ ability to become, or remain, economically prosperous by disrupting every facet of their daily lives. Throughout the early 1600s Scotland was an ideological battleground for religious and political discord as a group, known as the Kirk, fought to gain secular and spiritual power. The Kirk was a politically aggressive reformed sect of Presbyterians that based its teachings on that of John Calvin. By 1650 the Kirk found its greatest opponent in the military might of Oliver Cromwell who sought not only the Kirk’s forced obedience but assimilation to English ways. Times grew far worse for the Scottish Presbyterians when Charles II assumed power and began a campaign that came to be known as the “killing times” in which their form of worship was criminalized, religious leaders were arrested, and followers tortured and executed.\(^{21}\) Their killing times not only ended lives, it scarred the land, leaving bogs unfit for agriculture. It was then that the Craig family strategy, like that of many other lowland Scottish families, was created. The strategy was a semi-nomadic generational practice in which members migrated in search of opportunity laden regions. The Craigs found this kind of movement key to their prosperity, possibly even their survival.\(^{22}\)

\(^{21}\) James G. Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish: A Social History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), 102-105. While information pertaining to seventeenth-century Scottish history may seem a bit unnecessary, it is important in this case study because, for as will be demonstrated in future chapters, Craig’s Scots-Irish Presbyterian identity was an essential aspect to his social mobility. The Scots-Irish Presbyterians shared a unique and violent history of persecution that promoted a lasting sense of shared identity, camaraderie, and loyalty amongst them.

\(^{22}\) Jane Maria Craig, *Samuel Craig Sr. and His Descendents* (Greensburg: NP, 1915), 13.
In 1668 the Craigs settled just across the North Channel Ireland, within agriculturally based Ulster Plantation. As James Webb describes this early brand of Scottish pioneers, the Craigs were probably a typical family of farmers. After generations of fighting they were in all probability thick skinned, rebellious, hot tempered, highly religious, with a cultural acceptance of sexual transgressions. The Craigs almost certainly had little education, but they had become self taught skilled people. These were the kind of people who found honor in their loyalty to church, state, and family. What is more, when they migrated they would not have left their Scottish identity behind but carried it with them.\[^{23}\] This was one of the strongest draws to Ulster. After thirty years of Irish and English residents violently struggling to claim the region for themselves, the Presbyterian Scots had won and planted their rich culture in the area creating a stronghold for themselves.\[^{24}\] Had freedom to practice their religion been all the Craigs had been looking for they most certainly would have found it in Ulster, but religious freedom had not been their only push toward migration. The Craigs were looking to better themselves economically and their actions proved as much. Had the Craigs been looking for religious freedom they would have found it upon first arriving in Ireland. They were looking for something more material than religion, however, and discovered scarce and restricted economic mobility in Ireland. Thus, according to their family strategy, the Craigs began a one hundred year process of migration to British North America in search of opportunity.\[^{25}\]

\[^{24}\] Ibid., 88-89.
\[^{25}\] Craig, *Samuel Craig Sr. and His Descendants*, 13.
Almost seventy-five years later, in 1742, amidst rampant famine and heightened political disorder, Isaac Craig was born in the economically unstable town Ballykeel Artifinny, of the Hillsborough Parish in the County Down, Ireland. While his parents did not bear the full brunt of intolerance borne by Irish Catholics, they had begun to experience both social and legal discrimination as religious persecution raged across the country. Not only were cultural and political challenges standing between the Craigs and a comfortable life, but as the economic construction of Ireland changed more opportunities were withdrawn by landlords. English colonization and mercantile policies affected Ireland’s economy, Ulster’s in particular, by offering tax free trade on linen products to England and North America. Landlords with control over the land they rented forced many of their tenants into sheep herding and other wool and linen-oriented trades. In his early years, Isaac would have watched as an Irish enclosure movement began. That crowded out subsistence farming that had been the primary support of family.

During the second half of the 1750s these economic changes, combined with the increased population in Ulster, created housing problems associated with over crowding and limited land availability. Tenants had little control over rising rents and landlords who forced improvements tenants could not afford. This occurred while Great Britain’s demand for wool skyrocketed and landowners continued increasingly to encourage their tenants to shift land usage from tenant farming to pasturing sheep, a far more profitable

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26 C.W. Butterfield, ed., *Washington-Irvine Correspondence: the official letters which passed between Washington and Brig-Gen. William Irvine and between Irvine and others concerning military affairs in the West from 1781 to 1783; arranged and annotated, with an introduction containing an outline of events occurring previously in the Trans-Alleghany country* (Madison, WI: D. Atwood, 1882), 406.

enterprise for the limited tenants who could still partake in it. The result was wild economic growth for the wool and linen industries in particular but an economic plummet for the laboring class. Land sold for a premium. The small handful of families that could continue to buy land used it to produce goods for large-scale sale. These dramatic shifts displaced people and within twenty years the migration rates from Ulster to British North America increased from a little over a thousand a year to as much as 30,000 a year.

As he kept no known diary, or it did not survive his reinvention of his past in America, it is impossible to know exactly what Isaac Craig experienced in those early years. Speculation however, may be based upon the life of another young man, Robert Patterson, who was about the same age and from the same region.

Robert Patterson was born in 1743, in a town just outside Hillsborough. Like Isaac Craig, Patterson’s ancestors had also fled Scotland in the late 1600s. Patterson’s parents were respected Presbyterians and tenant farmers, but lived in poverty. Although

29 Ibid., 72.
31 According to Neville B. Craig’s “Sketch and Life and Services of Isaac Craig” (Pittsburgh: W.S. Haven, 1854), Robert Patterson and Isaac Craig were brothers. While the author was the son of Isaac Craig and this relationship might lend credence to the claim, it, along with many others, is incorrect. Patterson’s lineage is well documented in the Henry Dubois Collection in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, PA. Patterson does appear to have had a brother named Isaac Patterson, that said, his life in no way matches the life of Isaac Craig. Having used the same papers as Neville it is clear that Craig had genetic brothers referenced in letters that Neville chose to ignore and replace with Patterson, who is also referenced in letters as an intimate friend. This may have been done because Patterson’s successful life appealed to Neville. In connecting his family with the Patterson’s, he was substantiating the Craig’s standing in society. Furthermore in both the “Sketch and Life and Services of Isaac Craig” as well as William Du Bois’s A Record of the Families of Robert Patterson (the Elder) the early years of both men are presented in so similar a light the question must be raised if Neville had not used Patterson’s history as a filler for the gaps in his father’s. It will never be known exactly what Neville was thinking when he transformed his father’s close friend into his brother but, all things given, it appears that in Craig’s American reinvention he may have purposely left his past in Ireland and never shared it with his children. Later, as Neville faced many of the same social challenges that had caused his father to reinvent his identity, he turned to reworking his father’s life to the social benefit of the family.
32 “Obituary Notice of Robert Patterson, LL.D. The Late President of the Philosophical Society ; Robert Patterson, 1743-1824, PHMC Historical Marker File, 2003.
from early on Robert appeared quite gifted in mathematics, a trait that young Isaac was also noted for, his parents were unable to provide him with a proper education. While Craig began a carpenter’s apprenticeship, Patterson filled his days with militia training and his nights with star gazing which fulfilled his natural inclination toward mathematics.\(^{33}\) During his apprenticeship, Isaac would have earned meager, if any, wages while living under the same roof as his employer. While monetarily Robert probably did little better, he may have enjoyed more freedom with a life out from underneath a master’s roof and thumb. As both came of age each was noted as being above average, and having ambitious and driven characters.\(^{34}\) It may not have been coincidence alone that these two young men shared such similar backgrounds and upbringings. Instead, it may be seen as a genuine glimpse of what it may have been like to live in the eighteenth century as an Ulster boy of lower-class status, whose potential was held back by geography and birth, the type of people who recognized the need to move on in search of opportunity. It should also be noted that their similarities did not end there, as shall be seen throughout this case study and in comparison to several other men with strikingly similar stories.

As was the case for other poverty-stricken families of the time, there would have been little refuge for the Craig family from the economic crises that swept Ireland. The possibility for social mobility, even over generations, would have been dim. The result was a mass evacuation across the Atlantic Ocean, with impoverished Protestants in the

\(^{33}\) Robert Patterson, 1743-1824, PHMC Historical Marker File, 2003, PHMC.

\(^{34}\) Journal, Papers of the Craig-Neville Family, 1773-1865, 1, Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, (hereafter cited as Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP); Robert Patterson, 1743-1824, PHMC Historical Marker File, 2003, Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission. [hereafter cited PHMC]
majority in the eighteenth century. The high cost of passage may have prohibited the Craigs from leaving as a family or from sending their younger children, Isaac and Jane, at the same time as their eldest two John and James. Whatever the reason for remaining, the delay allowed young Isaac to complete his apprenticeship as a carpenter. In exchange for seven years work he learned skills that would be of value, regardless of where he went. Following his apprenticeship, he worked as a house joiner and ship carpenter earning enough money to enable him to make the passage free of an indenture.

As the Craigs endured these hard times in Ulster they were enticed by the news filtering back from Ireland’s coastal cities reported abundant opportunities in British North America. Some families may have even received word first hand from those who had gone ahead of them. This was probably the case for the Craigs, whose son James had become a journeyman under one of Philadelphia’s leading carpenters turned architects, Robert Smith. Under Smith’s direction James Craig may have assisted in the construction of Benjamin Franklin’s Philadelphia home and had definitely worked on the construction of the Third Presbyterian, or Pine Street Church, a substantial project.

Although a month-long sea voyage presented danger, risk, and deplorable conditions it was worth the chance. According to information gathered by John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, the British colonies in North American offered

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37 Isaac Craig Family Papers, folder 2 loose paper. Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. (hereafter cited as HSP)
substantial economic prospects.³⁹ Urban cities, including Philadelphia, had experienced vast economic growth both during and after the Seven Years War. Growing urban centers such as Philadelphia required carpenters and other craftsmen. The city needed hospitals, churches, government buildings, and homes to showcase the newly emerging elite’s new wealth. This surge in building created both stable employment and high wages for builders. In some cases, employment was so abundant that the occasional carpenter was able to work on two separate projects and thus collect two substantial incomes.⁴⁰ The Seven Years War itself had sent additional Philadelphian carpenters to Canada to build boats for the transport of supplies. It was not only artisans like James and Isaac who were motivated by this lure of economic opportunity but others like Robert Patterson, who believed he could find work as a teacher more easily in the colonies, joined in the new wave of Irish immigrants to embark on the transatlantic voyage. Regardless of their individual reasons for migrating, Patterson and the younger Craigs were following the traditions of their family and migrating as a means for social mobility.

It is impossible to know if Isaac and Robert were close friends in Ireland, it seems likely that they may have formed a lasting bond on a shared transatlantic voyage. Isaac may have even been the “fellow passenger [that Robert] shared his slender purse” with.⁴¹ If so, this would have made Robert the first of many men who invested in Isaac and thus was emblematic of the kinds of important relationships that Isaac required throughout his life in order to build opportunities and obtain resources. Craig’s relationship with

⁴¹ “Obituary Notice of Robert Patterson, LL.D: Late President of the American Philosophical Society.” *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 2 (1825), ix.
Patterson may also indicate that Craig began to make these kinds of relationships before he had even reached the colony. The year was 1768, one hundred years after the Craig family had first begun a strategy of geographic migration for economic mobility. With a letter of introduction in hand, the twenty-six-year-old Craig arrived in the British colonies’ largest port, Philadelphia.

*Hammer and Nails: A Carpenter’s Life in Philadelphia*

Coming to Philadelphia had been Craig’s first proactive step in building opportunities for himself. At the time there was no better place to be a carpenter. The sheer demand for such artisans placed them in the upper echelons of artisan craftsmen. Carpenters who specialized in house construction, such as Craig, were especially in demand in a city where the number of houses alone grew by fifty percent during the 1770s.\(^{42}\) Furthermore, carpenters had far greater control of the wages they could earn during boom times than other artisans. This was not only because of the high demand for their talents but also because they had created guild associations, the most important being the Carpenter’s Company.

While many European artisans had moved away from craft guilds, Philadelphia’s uniquely diverse immigrant population pushed for guilds.\(^{43}\) This shows that the colonies offered an environment that not only allowed for, but somewhat stimulated economic growth across class lines. This was done in part by streamlining prices, not only to customers but building suppliers for materials as well. This may seem insignificant until it is considered that the guild vote of well-established masters protected smaller or lower-

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\(^{42}\) Smith, *The “Lower Sort,”* 82.

ranking builders. Well-established masters directed a majority of the contracts and thus would have also been purchasing most of the building materials. It was then to no benefit for these masters to keep prices for materials high or cost for projects at lower rates. These after all were the men who were, overall, involved with most of the city’s projects and their objective would have been to cut costs on the building materials they used while also charging the highest possible price for the work that was being done. Thus in this specific case, by voting according to their own agendas as masters, they were simultaneously falling in line with the needs of lower-ranking carpenters. What is more by standardizing prices, room was made for smaller builders and companies who might ordinarily be outbid on projects or charged more for materials by not being able to purchase them in larger quantities.

In the economically volatile circumstances of colonial life, however success was never guaranteed, it was only merely possible.\textsuperscript{44} Outside of carpenters, house carpenters in particular, other craftsmen suffered at the hands of guild rules. For these men price and wage rate mediation worked in reverse as it tied back the competitive hands of domestic craftsmens from each other but did nothing to temper the real problem, foreign goods. There was no such import thereat to house carpenters, thus the Carpenters Company curtailed a good deal of unfair competition amongst its own men leaving only a small handful of competitors in the Friendship Company. Thus specifically being a house carpenter and participating in a guild association became factors that advanced the likelihood a man could advance economically.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{44} David Brody, \textit{In Labor’s Cause: Main Themes on the History of the American Worker} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 5.
Such possibilities and volatility defined Philadelphia. As the 1770s began Philadelphia slipped into an economic depression. While a handful of families emerged from the Seven Years War with new wealth, the majority of artisans experienced a downturn, which for some included impoverishment. According to historian Billy G. Smith, while carpenters may have engaged in substantial contracts and earned equally substantial wages, they did not have access to “resources” that would allow them to safeguard or invest these high wages. For the most part, they were unable to use their income as a generating force.\(^{46}\) Carpenters, as well as other craftsmen, experienced alternating periods of scarcity and relative wealth. Thus while money-earning opportunities were abundant, many Philadelphians found themselves destitute.

Philadelphia’s impoverished residents, however, never reached the depths of want that their European counterparts experienced. Although many historians have pointed out that the upper class amassed great wealth during the Revolutionary era, it is sometimes forgotten that this economic activity simultaneously improved the lives of the lower class as well.\(^{47}\) In most cases, it would have been hard for economic growth to occur in the upper class and not positively affect the lower class. New wealth or increased amassed wealth created demands for new more elaborate homes and furniture for the elite, which required laboring class carpenters whose talent was flexible enough to move with the trends.

Aside from having two older brothers in town, fighting abject poverty may not have been as difficult for Craig and other Scots-Irish Presbyterians, as it may have many other immigrant groups. In the Southwark district of Philadelphia alone there were at


\(^{47}\) McCusker and Menard, *The Economy of British America*, 54.
least three Presbyterian churches within short walking distance from each other. These were not merely houses of worship but networking centers which may have provided an economic safety net. One of the first places Robert Patterson sought out upon arriving to Philadelphia was a Presbyterian church. During his first visit he had one of the most memorable moments of his life, so much so that “he remembered it to his last moment with unceasing gratitude.” What had that church done that had touched him so greatly? Its members had welcomed him with open arms going so far as to offer him their own wages so that he might set up his own mercantile business. This experience demonstrates the viability of church based support and networking. Given the high percentage of Scots-Irish migrants that made up the city’s Presbyterian population, the common nationality and shared legacy of poverty, discrimination, and migration were most likely important facets of this support as well. This ready-made network made survival for some and mobility for others a little more possible. Patterson, however, had not come to be a merchant but a teacher. When he was unable to find this work he continued his migration to Bucks County.

Craig found abundant work and, as his later life proved, was not above taking startup money if offered. As Craig settled into his new life in Philadelphia, he became a member of the Pine Street congregation. In this church Craig found more than the generosity Patterson found, Craig’s membership placed him among several notable figures including Benjamin Rush, John Adams on an occasional visit, and by 1780 Henry Knox. These were not the only significant men Craig joined in worship, though the names of many others have since been forgotten, there were three additional members of

the Safety Committee, countless colonels, lieutenants, Navy captains, and College of Philadelphia (later known as the University of Pennsylvania) professors, as well as several other men who held high-end government contracts including the official state printer. Craig’s membership suggests that he was probably aware of the potential network, by association, that he could steadily build. His choice in congregations may also have been sentimental; his brother had been one of the church’s many builders. Then again, James himself does not seem to have been a member of the Pine Street Church congregation. This may be because James had chosen a congregation closer to his home on Second Street, one of the handful of Presbyterian Churches his younger brother may have passed on his way to the Pine Street Church. From where he lived on Water Street, in the Southwark district known as an area for vagabonds, sailors, and craftsmen. It was one of the poorest areas in Philadelphia, with many Southwark residents owning property valued at just over £10 and only a handful owned property valued over £100. His neighbors were not the same people who made up the first faculty of the University of Pennsylvania or held high ranking military positions.

Southwark residents were clearly different than the middling and upper-class members of the Old Pine Church, given that along with the nearby location of other Presbyterian alternatives, it must be at least considered that Craig had chosen that church for the makeup of the congregation. Craig may have done this to place himself intentionally amongst a group of higher ranking and economically better off people.

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51 Estate of Robert Allison, *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 17, 1792, *Accessible Archives*, This estate lists lots not owned by Allison in relation to Isaac Craig. [hereafter cited as AA]
After all, as a struggling hired laborer he would have found it difficult if not impossible to find any other means to travel socially in their circles. His beginning there may have sent out a subtle message of belonging within their circle and thus created a sense of camaraderie amongst them. This may have even been the point at which Craig began slightly tweaking his identity and claim having migrated from Antrim.\textsuperscript{53} This is a small detail, but perhaps indicated that Craig may have declared different origins thinking it might make a difference in his long-term transformation. This is especially compelling when it is also considered that Craig was the common surname of several upper-class families residing from Philadelphia to Kentucky. He would not have claimed these families outright as kin but that was not to say he did not place himself in such a way as to lead others to assumptions. There is no reason to believe that Craig did not take part in what Alfred F. Young describes as the “disguised filled air of the Revolutionary era.”\textsuperscript{54}

Expanding on the possible ulterior motives of Craig’s religious affiliations is not to claim that this had been Craig’s only reason for joining the church, for he was a strong believer in the scriptures and the church. In fact, one of his earliest purchases in Philadelphia was a brown leather pocket-sized King James Bible. The purchase of a Bible may not be a true indication of commitment to belief but that he carried this bible with him always may be. Additionally, years later following the battle of Princeton the Bible fell into a small creek as he and his men crossed a low bridge. Though the Bible was nearly ruined by the icy water and despite temperatures near 20°, Craig waded out into


the water to retrieve it before mending it on the road. With his devotion seemingly confirmed, it seems that Craig’s membership in the Pine Street Church is consistent with the complex multifaceted man he was. Craig was a devoted Presbyterian as well as a man attempting to build a better life and was willing to play by whatever rules determined the path.

Besides finding a church, Craig quickly found work as a journeyman, possibly under his brother’s mentor Robert Smith or the one-time partner of Smith and future partner to Craig, Robert Allison. Given the common practice of the time, Craig possibly spent seven years working as a journeyman before he finally became a master craftsman himself. Until then, the master craftsman who employed Craig became a close mentor and opened doors otherwise closed to Craig. Under his direction, Craig honed his carpentry skills and learned to manage business affairs. In addition to wages, Craig’s mentor may have provided him, as well as any other journeymen he had working for him, with a workshop, some tools, as well as food and housing. Depending on the master and his contract there may have been additional benefits. Allison, for instance, taught some of the illiterate men under his direction to read the Bible as well as to write. Men who seemed especially skilled in carpentry were taught additional and more advanced skills, which may have included more aesthetic detail oriented skills which sometimes made the difference as a master in gaining an invitation to join the Carpenters Company.

Other benefits that Allison offered, that were over and above the expectation of masters,

55 Craig Collection, 1768-1868, King James Bible, Special Collections Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. (hereafter cited as CL); David McWilliams Ludlum, Early American Winters, 1604-1820, (Boston: American Meteorological Society, 1956), 99-100.
57 Neville B. Craig, ed., “Sketch of the Life and Services of Major Isaac Craig.”
58 Brody, In Labor’s Cause, 12.
included a chance to obtain a real education. During winter months when business slowed down, Alison allowed at least one of his students, Robert Leach, to take evening classes for one term.\(^{60}\) In this the master-journeyman or apprentice relationship filled reciprocal needs.

Along with the good, or in some cases instead of it, came power struggles between a master’s lower ranking apprentices and journeymen. Allison was no exception to this rule. At least six of these struggles ended with a servant under his direction running away.\(^ {61}\) On at least two occasions, Allison sought to reclaim servants who had run away multiple times. John McClarty, an Irish servant around twenty years of age, ran away twice in less than one year. Four years later another “brogue tongued” servant, Bryan Neary, about twenty years old also fled Allison. After Neary’s return to servitude he did not wait more than three months before taking off once more.\(^ {62}\)

There is nothing to suggest that Craig had a strained relationship with his master, but rather the opposite. Craig, at least later in life, revered his master. This was an important element to Craig’s success for having to leave one master for another at best might increase the amount of time he spent as a journeyman before become a master. At worst, however, Craig’s character might have been tarnished forcing him to share the pooled reputation of most journeymen as “men of poor character, drunkards, and drifters.”\(^ {63}\) When Craig began looking for work in Philadelphia, the possibility of finding himself under an ambivalent or tyrannical master existed. Although Craig was not

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\(^ {61}\) *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 27, 1763, August 2, 1764, December 10, 1767, May 19, 1768, March 21, 1771, February 11, 1784, AA.

\(^ {62}\) *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 27, 1763, August 2, 1764, December 10, 1767, May 19, 1768, AA.

an un-free laborer, apprentice or indentured servant, if he wanted to become a master carpenter in the traditional sense he was not necessarily a wholly free laborer either. As a journeyman this meant working “twelve to sixteen hours a day,” and being subservient to a master’s rules and expectations, fair or not. Had Craig’s master been unreasonable in his demands or not paid him, he may have been forced to take the unstable route of the leaving and upward mobility may have been far more unlikely. Craig may have avoided this lot by choosing his master with extreme caution, paying close attention to the powerful word of mouth reputations that traveled among journeymen with regard to masters. In the fashion of another ambitious journeyman, Benjamin Franklin, Craig may have had a keen eye for separating the would-be winners from the losers. Franklin also lined up potential masters and played them against one another to his own advantage. Ultimately Craig may have learned a similar lesson to Franklin who recognized that more opportunities might be available under a master destined to fail, in that a weak master would empower him through dependency. In the same manner Craig may have purposefully accepted work with an ironfisted master. Craig might have easily won the trust and support of a master prone to a runaway staff by being an older more mature and loyal journeyman.

As a journeyman, Craig would have earned probably a little over £38 a month. During this time, Craig’s economic position was considered below the norm. He was not required to pay the occupation tax that was charged to men whom collectors had assessed at earning at least the average salary of their peer craftsmen. Nor was Craig responsible

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64 Ibid., 138.
This meant Craig owned no land or other taxable property. This does not mean, however, that Craig was among the destitute. An important fact about the first Philadelphia tax system was that, for that most part, it was based on the subjective opinion of the tax assessor. The system was subjective, for there was no formal standard followed by tax assessors. Another thing to consider is that while other journeymen with families may have struggled to make ends meet on a journeymen’s salary, Craig had life somewhat easier in that he had no wife or children to support. Based on statistics collected by Billy G. Smith, the estimated monthly food budget of a family of four in the mid-1770s was about £30, 75 percent of Craig’s income. The projected cost required to minimally clothe that same family of four would have been around £8 9 d. If Craig had been married, he would not have received “diet” or lived in the master craftsman’s home. Therefore, he would have been forced to set aside anywhere from £10 to £22 6d a year for rent alone. Upwards of £6 a year additionally would have been required to heat the home. Combined, the optimum budget to support a family was almost twice the actual yearly income of an average carpenter journeyman. For a time Craig may have even escaped the tax assessor’s eye as it was a general rule that single men were considered dependents and not counted as taxable. These facts together, show that social elements such as marriage and having children directly affected a person’s chances for social mobility. While it is true that lower-class families relied on the income of all able-bodied members, the fact that each of those able bodies, as well as those who were not yet able,

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needed to be clothed fed created more of an economic burden than help. Furthermore, men had far greater earning potential than women or children. Whatever extra income such dependents were able to generate was substantially less than that of male head of household. Remaining single enabled Craig to concentrate not only on his craft, but possibly even allowed him to save money to better his situation.  

*The Luck of the Draw, Craig Buys Land*

Craig did not have long to wait before finding a promising opportunity to invest his savings and procure his first piece of the American dream. When the opportunity to purchase land presented itself, Craig took it. That said, however, chance played a substantial role in Craig’s ability to participate in one of the Pennsylvania’s first large-scale land sales. In 1768 Lieutenant Governor Thomas Penn purchased property from the Mohawk, Onondaga, Seneca, Oneida, Cajuga, Tuscarora, Mingo of Ohio Shawnee, and Delaware, in the Treaty of Fort Stanwix.

This land strip extended from the top east corner of Pennsylvania and continued diagonally to the bottom west corner. In what was then called the New Purchase, Penn sold off the land at £5 per hundred acres and 10 pence per acre, ten times higher than the per acreage rate of more prosperous Virginia. Additionally there were limitations regarding how much land, and when each person could purchase. Over two thousand applications flooded the land office before the sale

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even began. As a direct result of the overflowing applications, applicants’ names were hand-drawn from a box in a blind lottery.\textsuperscript{72}

The sheer volume of applications and the fact that Craig’s application was one of the last received, means that had the Land Office not gone to a lottery system, Craig would not have been able to secure his first piece of property. As it was, Craig was chosen towards the end; there were only sixty-nine names chosen from the box after Craig’s name.\textsuperscript{73} What may have made the purchase of this land possible for Craig was that he did not need to pay for the land in full for up to a year.

Another condition of the New Land Purchase was that the land bought had to be surveyed within the first six months of ownership or the sale would become null and void. Craig, however, did not have his land surveyed for almost ten years; it is possible he was willing to take the risk of losing the purchase because he had only enough to purchase the land itself, but could not afford the additional survey.\textsuperscript{74} This may also account partially for why Clover Hill, the name of the tract, remained fallow for the next twelve years. Why Craig had chosen a plot of land that was immersed in Indian Country, over 300 miles west of Philadelphia and in a town that had a population of about 200 people was just as much based on chance as how he gained the land.\textsuperscript{75} Craig, as did other New Purchase land buyers, saw the potential in undeveloped towns. Philadelphia had already established a stable social hierarchy, so, it was time for Craig to leave Philadelphia in search of a place where opportunity had not run dry, or better yet a place

\begin{footnotes}
\item[74] Clover Hill Land Survey, October 1781, Land Deeds Folder, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
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were opportunities were about to hit. The economic upswing had settled and many craftsmen now filled the debtor’s prisons of large cities. The market for building had slowed leaving many higher ranking laborers unemployed. With few opportunities for men of higher stature and more experience, Craig rightly must have seen little room for someone like himself to do well and so once more look toward migration.

Small towns had exceptional room for growth and the potential to open countless increased opportunities on the western frontier as it had in Philadelphia. While Craig’s purchase may have been a long shot, it was an excellent investment. Eighteen years later, in 1786 when Craig made his next 300 acre land purchase, the price was eight times more from £15 to over £120, clearly exceeding natural inflationary trends. By the end of 1768, when full payments for land purchased were due the land office extended the due date. The land office also proved unable to track which of the lands that had been purchased had been surveyed. Incidentally, when the land finally was surveyed, Craig claimed an additional seventeen purchases he had not actually paid for. Even though much of Craig’s success can be attributed to hard work and an eye for opportunity, he did not seem afraid to seize as much as he could, even if it meant skimming a bit off the top or lying.

If Craig thought he could use his land purchase in the near future to begin a new life elsewhere he was mistaken. Despite the New Land Purchase development of the region encompassing Clover Hill was kept at a stand still, while speculators were stuck waiting for Virginia and Pennsylvania to resolve a borderline dispute. In the meantime much of the land had been sold twice. Furthermore, duplicate, though legitimate, land

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owners could do nothing, while squatters with no claim or right spilled into Western Pennsylvania until a resolution was reached in 1781. The situation probably appeared dire at best to Craig as he was now forced to remain in Philadelphia and continue working as a carpenter.

Craig Becomes a Master at Carpentry and His Own Fate

Around 1774, Craig became a master carpenter. Becoming a master craftsman was a feat of upward mobility that only 25 percent of journeymen achieved between 1767 and 1780. This transition, from journeyman to master carpenter, was an important economic leap for Craig. Craig gained not only immense personal independence; he was able to take on apprentices and journeymen and take a portion of their earnings. His own earning potential would have gone from around £38 14d a month to over £68 16d, a 75 percent increase. Craig was by no means a rich man at this point, but he was making more money and he owned property. In becoming a master carpenter he also became free of having a master, and gained deference from all those who carried titles of servitude. By definition together each of these changing aspects of Craig’s life are indications of social mobility.

Craig’s mobility to this point may not represent a significant jump from poverty to wealth but it cannot be dismissed as insignificant. If others had reached this point, this was where most of their journeys to a better life stopped. To say such mobility is not significant enough to count clouds the truth and triumphs within the history of the middling sort. Craig’s older brother James Craig may have been one example of such

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79 Smith, The “Lower Sort,” 142.
men. He had come to Philadelphia during the economic boom of the Seven Years War sometime in the early to mid 1760s. According to the Philadelphia directory, like Isaac and his eldest brother John, James was registered as a house carpenter. As stated previously he worked under the direction of leading Philadelphia carpenter/architect Robert Smith throughout a time when Smith’s men were busy building up Philadelphia’s churches, prominent homes, as well as the city’s government buildings. James’s training did not stop with Smith, but in 1785 he continued on to become an architect and purchased one of the first architecture books published in America, Abraham Swan's *The British Architect*, also known as *The Builder’s Treasury of Staircases*. With this book James had access to varying patterns and designs for traditional to high-end ornamental designs that had come into fashion. A combination of the information this book offered and persistent self education had the potential to make the difference between being a master carpenter and an architect and earning substantially more than a simple carpenter.

As occurred with all three of the Craig brothers, James’s career was interrupted by the Revolutionary War. Unlike his brother Isaac, James enlisted in the Continental Army as a private and received no officer’s commission. At the war’s end James returned to Philadelphia and carpentry. Although his skill was enough to gain him small notoriety on projects prior to the war, Philadelphia had peaked for the time being and although some

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building continued, large-scale projects had come to an end. This gave James little opportunity to prove himself and become the architect he dreamed of in Philadelphia. He had done well for himself earlier by purchasing a lot with two small frame buildings on Second Street between Spruce and Walnut in 1775. Of the two buildings, the one in which he lived stood three floors high. The other was considerably smaller and was just two stories but may have served as either a work shop or rental property. According to an insurance assessment neither building stood out in detail or design though, both buildings were freshly painted “inside and out” all together the lot was only worth £150. James was presumably comfortable living on the nicer side of Philadelphia away from the bottom of society and low-end artisans in Southwark, but his economic and social mobility ended with him firmly in the middle ranks. His life would have been hardly comparable to his brother John whose similar lot with two buildings was valued at £700 or John Penn’s home valued at £2,000, both of which were within a block of his own.  

Although he never became a member of the upper class, James’ life is just as much, if not more so, an example of social mobility as Isaac’s and a far cry better than the more common story shared by Craig’s sister Jane. Jane migrated to Philadelphia sometime after her brothers. Finding no opportunities she continued on to New York City where she found poverty before succumbing to Yellow Fever. Jane’s short life and death in New York echoed stories of many Scots-Irish migrants to Philadelphia as well. Death was a large part of life in the city and many died in their mid-twenties.  

86 Undated Loose Papers, folder 2, Craig Family Papers, Record Group 1451(hereafter cited as Craig Family Papers), HSP.
87 Smith, ed., Down and Out in Early America, 50.
majority of the middling and lower peoples residing in Philadelphia, death by accident, disease, and malnutrition were constant realities of life needless to say, early death was a sure mobility stopper.\textsuperscript{88} The comparable details of James, Isaac and Jane’s lives illustrate both mobility as well as the common limitations that halted mobility. It is important to note that those who, like Craig, were actively seeking social improvement did not always meet with success. As siblings, Isaac, James and Jane shared the same low beginning, yet each one of their stories moves and ends in different places on the continuum of class, rank, and social mobility. Despite her migration, Jane was unable to break free of her original status. James did well for himself, but did not become affluent. Isaac surpassed them both.

To Craig, like most others who became mobilized, increasing his rank from apprentice to master not only improved his chance at success but were necessary steps in the process of his ultimate mobility. After becoming a master carpenter Isaac Craig wasted little time in cultivating a partnership with two older, more established master carpenters, Robert Allison and James Bringhurst. Robert Allison appears to have been a Scots-Irish migrant to Philadelphia in the early 1760s. A successful master carpenter and aspiring architect, one of the first projects Allison won public credit for was the interior woodwork of Benjamin Franklin’s Market Street home. By 1773 he was voted a member of the Carpenter’s Company, and two years later he, along with James Bringhurst, was elected to the Carpenter’s Company committee.\textsuperscript{89} Bringhurst was one of the only partners or significant people in Craig’s life who was not of Scottish or Scots-Irish

\textsuperscript{88} Ibid., 43.
\textsuperscript{89} Smith, “Robert Allison,” 2; Tatman and Moss, eds., \textit{Biographical Dictionary of Architects}, 9.
decent, for he was born in America to a wealthy family of Philadelphia Quakers.\textsuperscript{90} Bringhurst was older than Craig by twelve years and had been voted a member of the Carpenter’s Company by 1763. According to the city directory Bringhurst was a registered ironmonger as well as a carpenter.\textsuperscript{91} That Bringhurst moved between being an ironmonger and carpenter hints of the flexibility that was sometimes required of artisans to maintain their standing. Although a Quaker, Bringhurst served in the Revolutionary War as a member of the Pennsylvania militia’s Sixth Battalion.\textsuperscript{92} Following the Revolution when carpentry was no longer profitable in Philadelphia Bringhurst, who had been born with a higher social and economic standing and therefore had no reason to leave, returned to ironmongery, became a “fancy-goods” merchant and maintained government contracts for hardware under President Thomas Jefferson.\textsuperscript{93} This is significant as later Craig followed along a similar path of career changes. As a member of the lower middle class, Craig may not have had much control over the economy’s wild swings but, neither did Bringhurst, an affluent man. The keys to success were agency and opportunity to work with shifting economic trends as opposed to working against them or hiding away and becoming stagnant.

From his partnership with Allison, Bringhurst and others who were willing to partner, invest, and take risks on him, Craig found substantial tools that he was able to utilize for his own mobility. In this, Craig, as a man of inferior rank, used and was dependent on other men of superior rank and their resources in similar ways to the

\textsuperscript{91} Philadelphia Directory, APS.
dependency of established men on the labor of lower class and un-freemen.\textsuperscript{94} Forming a partnership with Allison and Bringhurst, in about 1775, opened up new resources to Craig by allowing him to purchase property jointly with them at 130 Water Street along the Delaware River in Southwark.\textsuperscript{95} Establishing a building firm with these men also allowed Craig to participate in projects gained by his new partners’ pre-established reputation and membership and positions within the Carpenter’s Company. Due to this arrangement Craig was able to earn building profits that later allowed him to expand his joint purchases with Allison and Bringhurst to an additional lot on Water Street. All the while he was establishing his own reputation, which enabled him to purchase property on Wicacoe-lane (also known as Prime Street) with a much wealthier contractor John Gill.\textsuperscript{96} Gill’s 1780 valuation was assessed around £40,000, while the combined partnership of Allison Bringhurst and Craig was only £3,000 in 1780.

Craig’s direct participation in these enterprises was interrupted by his involvement in the Revolutionary War but, none the less, his partnership with Allison and Bringhurst continued profitably through the war to at least 1780. What may have helped the partnership was the mixed skills each partner offered, Bringhurst with his ironmongery, Allison’s work with decretive interiors, and Craig as a former house joiner. This enabled them to move away from house construction and ornamental interior work to military contracts which included fort reinforcement and construction.\textsuperscript{97}

\textsuperscript{96} \textit{Pennsylvania Gazette}, October 17, 1792, AA; Estate of Robert Allison.
\textsuperscript{97} Robert Allison to Craig, October 19, 1780, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
Much as the Seven Years War had, the Revolutionary War created new demand for laborers across the board. If war did not create an all-out labor shortage it certainly rebalanced the labor pool. Many men, including Craig, Patterson, Allison, Bringhurst, and both James and John Craig, left Philadelphia to fill the militia and serve the country’s new military forces. In turn, the war opened and redistributed artisan jobs amongst the men who remained. As a direct result, the wages of those who remained increased as masters competed for laborers. Competition for labor became so heated that in one instance, Craig’s partner, Allison, was accused and investigated by the Committee of Safety for having attempted to “[entice] workmen from public works” by offering aggressively higher wages if they would instead work under his direction.98 While a labor shortage may not appear to be a positive effect of the war, the fact that Allison was able to offer employees higher wages may also indicate he was earning high profits that enabled him to pay higher wages. In support of this claim are the updates Allison sent to Craig regarding his worries and reaffirming that the business was doing quite well.99 While it may have also been that Allison was unable to operate had he not begun to offer higher wages the key is that regardless of the reason he was able to pay the higher wages and the business did not collapse.

Within ten years of his arrival in Philadelphia, Craig had climbed from journeyman to master carpenter. He had increasingly found economic prosperity on his own as well as in becoming a partner in a successful building firm. Although it is unclear what his personal possessions, aside from his Bible, included, it is safe to say that in his purchase of Clover Hill and three joint property ventures in Philadelphia his material life

98 Steven Rosswurm, “Arms, Culture, and Class” Part. 2. (PhD diss, University of Pennsylvania, 1979), 342.
99 Robert Allison to Craig, October 19, 1780, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
had also advanced. Clearly Craig had already experienced a good bit of the mobility he had left Ireland to find.

If many Philadelphia builders, including Craig, benefited from a war-induced surge of business, why did Craig and so many of his counterparts leave this business to risk life and limb fighting Redcoats? The answer is that Craig, and other such men, were not only looking for economic prosperity alone but full blown social mobility, which included economic as well as social elements. Men like Allison, who as a carpenter gained applause for outstanding work in projects like the Franklin house, were not the same kind of men who were also socially called on by Franklin or any other leading man. Carpenters were laborers and artisans, not gentlemen. Although Craig’s rank had increased, he was still a member of the lower middling class. Like Craig, those who excelled to the top of their rank as masters were somewhat stuck below a glass ceiling of class that required social attributes to break that ceiling. The military provided Craig, and men like him, an alternative opportunity to continue on their journey of upward mobility.
Chapter 2: Craig, an Officer in the Making

Soon after Craig’s arrival in Philadelphia in 1768, the schism between colonies and the mother country widened. In the decade following the Seven Years War, Great Britain’s economic interests in its North American colonies heightened. In order to regain both an economic and authoritative hold, England initiated a string of increasingly aggressive policies, which culminated in the Coercive Acts, many other colonists had grown used to operating under loose or unforced regulations and so protested these. More importantly, as the work of Edmund S. Morgan attests, the colonists were a dangerous lot as they knew or at least believed they knew something about participatory politics, democracy, and their empowerment of the monarch. Having had no representative body in Parliament to prepare, accept or reject these acts, many colonists refuted their legitimacy outright. Searing debates for and against the Crown’s political and economic regulations ensued as the divide between British and American identity and culture grew.

Many colonists struggled to define their position during the early revolt and again later when revolutionaries announced the Declaration of Independence. Craig, on the other hand, appeared to have little trouble defining himself as a solid American Patriot. As a Scots-Irish migrant, British force and coercion had been significant factors in his family’s heritage and had likely been commonplace in his own experiences. This would have placed Craig at odds with the British crown and military early on, making Whig

102 Fred Anderson, A People’s Army: Massachusetts Soldiers & Society in the Seven Years War (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 223.
ideology all the more appealing. His artisan status also played a key role in where his alliance ultimately fell.

Though not educated in the traditional ways of the better sort, artisans had long been political beings. Aside from their politicization, artisans were compelled to act as unified men to connect and depend on each other through the marketplace. It is true that amongst individual crafts deference and rank were everything. No journeyman was equal to a master, and cobblers were not equal to goldsmiths, but as artisans they were all members of a dynamic economy that worked in such a way that prosperity for one group could mean prosperity for another. Thus, in a manner reflective of the development of class in the English established by E.P. Thompson, the environment created in the Revolutionary era required these men to act together as members of the same lower and lower middle class, as opposed to division in their traditional groupings based on rank. 103

That these men were in fact operating as a class is fundamental in understanding some of the changes in the traditional social hierarchy that took place during the Revolutionary era. This slow and evolving change from rank to a class system contributed to the shifts and flexibility in how men like Craig identified themselves as well as their ability to alter status. Furthermore, it assists in understanding what men like Craig were navigating in their attempts at upward social mobility.

With much the same sentiment described by Marcus Rediker in the coming together of sailors and slaves, it was then essential that craftsmen combine forces with groups that had both likeminded economic or social interests. 104 Due to their similar low

104 Marcus Rediker, “A Motley Crew of Rebles: Sailors, Slaves, and the Coming of the American Revolution,” in The Transforming Hand of the Revolution; Reconsidering the American Revolution as a
social status, they had to form an alliance to obtain economic protection. The 1770 Mechanics Committee, an artisan faction established in order to gain political power on behalf of several crafts, reflected these principals in the voting to support non-importation. By the mid 1770s, craftsmen considered the needs and prosperity of local merchants as equally connected with those of the artisan community, as demonstrated in the Boston Tea Party of 1773. In the words of an anonymous mechanic to the Pennsylvania Gazette in 1773, “Let us not be prevailed upon to suppose [the anti-Tea Act] will affect the merchants only...it will also very materially affect you, me, and every Member of the Community.”

Carpenters and other such builders, who were directly free from foreign competition, recognized the indirect threat found in the prewar tax and importation policies. After all, these builders had always been dependent on other craftsmen and merchants, from the ironmonger who made their nails as well as the merchant who then sold those as well as other materials. More directly, as the building bubble dwindled, many of these craftsmen had turned to more efficient practices in order to lower costs and maintain profits. These new practices had craftsmen taking on more stages of production including the importation and sale of supplies. Increasing tax and importation policies posed a threat to both the traditional and newer business roles that builders played. Individually, these men had no voice loud enough to compete against policies that threatened their place and economic well beginning. Acting together through the traditional actions of the lower class, (i.e. boycotts, raising of liberty poles, riots, parades,


106 Ibid., 170; Pennsylvania Gazette, December 3, 1773, AA.
and mob rule) they became a well organized “political engine” of their own administration.\textsuperscript{108} As a carpenter and member of this politically charged group of men, as well as a man who pursued ever increasing success with every stride, it is unlikely Craig would have gone against popular opinion at the cost of social exile. In this, Craig’s prewar support, as was the case for many craftsmen, was more out of economic necessity and survival than an exclusively political or patriotic gesture.

\textit{A Timely Decision}

On October 13, 1775, the Continental Congress established the Continental Navy. Within a month, on November 10, it authorized the Marines, and Craig immediately stepped forward and received an officer’s commission as a lieutenant captain in the Marines.\textsuperscript{109} It had been one thing to support the rejection of select British laws to protect one’s own pocketbook in daily business practices, or heated conversations over pints of ale, but leaving an increasingly successful career to join the military was a much more significant action with different implications, and applicable results. Yet by joining the newly formed military, Craig expanded his opportunities for economic and social growth. In going into the military, Craig was like many other men in his social position. What separated him from most other men was how he joined the service as well as what he took from it. During the Revolutionary War most military men, like Craig, were from the lower or lower middle classes.

\textsuperscript{108} Bridenbaugh, \textit{The Colonial Craftsman}, 174-179.
In a later letter to General Washington in 1782, Craig declared with zealous passion and pride, “I took up arms in defense of the rights of my country determined to lay them down with only my life or the establishment of our freedom.” Decades later his memoir carried the same tone, but it is doubtful that patriotism was the only reason he joined the military. That Craig used the word “freedom” is a red flag illuminating the difference between reality and a memory flawed with preference. How could Craig have entered the military vowing to fight for freedom when the goal of independence was only decreed ten months after he had accepted his commission? On the other hand fighting for rights was likely. During the almost eight years following the Declaration of Independence, Craig served for freedom. That said, exploring more likely reasons he originally joined the military builds an understanding of the motivations, and possibilities for Craig and the men like him but whose names and experiences have been forgotten. What is more, by considering the motivations of men who joined the military during the Revolution, the possible opportunities these men recognized is revealed, as well as the utility of the war and the military service.

Many historians stress monetary motivations as the main reason why men chose to join the military. It is unreasonable and unfair to believe that lower and lower middle class men were solely driven by economic desires, regardless of how pressing those desires may have been. Although money bought shelter, food, and clothing, it should not be thought that men like Craig from the lower and lower middle class were ruled by economic motivations alone. These men were multi-dimensional dynamic beings, who

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110 The fact the Craig uses the words “rights of my country” as opposed to the rights of himself, or men in general suggests he was referring to actual separation from the crown as opposed to the philosophical rights of man or other popular demands that he would have been familiar with prior to the Declaration of Independence. Craig to George Washington, February 23, 1782. George Washington Papers, 1741-1799: Series 4. General Correspondence. 1697-1799, Library of Congress (hereafter cited as LC).
generally read print materials of every kind, talked and listened on the street and in
taverns, and then formed individual opinions. Influences were many in a city where piety
and politics mixed at the pulpit. Men in search of temporal answers may have found it
difficult to sit through a sermon given by Craig’s own Reverend George Duffield, who on
one occasion called his congregation to action in a bellowing chant, “To Arms, To
Arms!” In another instance Duffield began and ended his sermon in two sentences,
“There are too many men here this morning. I am going to the front” he then left.111 This
is not to suggest weak-mindedness on the part of congregants who took meaning in these
mixed services but to note the power and importance ministers played in the lives and
agency of these men. One man was so thoroughly swayed by a service that equated the
Crown’s actions to that of the Pharaoh’s enslavement of the Jews in Exodus that
following the sermon he declared in a letter to his wife a changed heart. “Great Britain
has at last driven America to the last step, a complete separation from her; a total,
absolute independence, not only of her parliament, but of her crown.” That man was
John Adams.112 Of course most men who joined the military were not as economically
secure, educated, or politically involved as John Adams and because of this some
historians have over-looked the fact that these men may have simply favored war with
Great Britain.

Although their ideological motivations need to be recognized, it is true that
economic motivations played a significant role in rallying tradesmen into prewar support.
Economics may also have been the reason Craig and other artisans joined the armed
forces. Although by 1775 Craig had finally worked his way from journeyman to master

111 Faris, Old Churches and Meeting Houses, 57.
112 Ibid., 56.
carpenter, he had not reached the peak of his profession. His reputation as a carpenter had either not reached the notoriety required or his skill level had not yet met the standards required for Craig to be voted into the Carpenter’s Company. Yet, instead of continuing his pursuit of this, he chose to leave it. At first this may have been a temporary move, perhaps to confirm that opportunities were actually available and gauge how ascertainable they truly were. As it turned out, however, he stayed in service for the duration of the war. He may have remained in the military for patriotic reasons, but it may have been because he had found long-term economic and social prosperity in his new path. Had Craig not found a way to combine self interest and national interests, he probably would have returned to Philadelphia at the end of his first commission and stayed there, as a good many of the original men who had enlisted by 1776 had.\textsuperscript{113} He could have gone back to building his career and rising in the ranks of Philadelphia’s artisan community instead of in the military.

When Craig entered military service his economic status was so little that Philadelphia had considered him an un-taxable citizen.\textsuperscript{114} In order to meet the minimum requirement to be considered taxable in Philadelphia, a person needed to own property within the city limits.\textsuperscript{115} If a person did own such property, there was little to no standard or objective format used by tax assessors to determine valuation and thus taxability.\textsuperscript{116} As inefficient and subjective as the Philadelphia tax system seems to have been, it is

\textsuperscript{116} Smith, \textit{The “Lower Sort,”} 224-229.
improbable that Craig owned anything substantial and was able to escape a taxable judgment for eight years. It is more realistic to assume that he owned little of value in Philadelphia. In his early years Craig teetered around untaxable. During his later years, around the time he became a master carpenter, he had begun moving up toward the bottom tier or near bottom of the taxable range. In those first good years the valuation tax Craig owed, if the property had been purchased equally between he, Allison, and Bringhamurst, was a mere £3 4s, a low value for properties. There was definite room for both social and economic improvement on Craig’s part.117

Craig appears to have seen military service as a route to such improvement, but to achieve success, he knew he had to serve as an officer. A junior officer in the Navy Marines could look forward not only to good wages but also “interest pay,” additional money to offset the drastic inflation which took place during his service.118 This may not seem like much, but an artisan such as Craig would not have gotten interest pay. Instead he would have been forced to raise prices and watch as sales decrease as other Philadelphians struggled with inflation themselves. Indeed, the falling value of the Continental dollar later in the war, and after the purchase of their property, may have caused the closing of his building company with Allison and Bringhamurst all together. As both a Marine and more over, a privateer, Craig would also have expected to share in prize money from the sale of cargo from captured British vessels. During Craig’s commission, a ship’s company shared, according to rank, one third of all proceeds from such sales. With this extra compensation to supplement his standard officer’s pay, Craig

117 Tax and Exoneration Lists for Philadelphia County 1769, 1774, 1779, 1780. PHMC.
could save money for life after the war.\textsuperscript{119} As a Marine on a regular Navy vessel, opportunities to gain prizes may not have been prevalent as on a privateer, but prizes were the driving motivation of each and every mission, therefore increasing the likelihood of their actually being obtained.

In January of 1776, Craig’s military career officially began. That same moment a poster was hung in Tun Tavern on Water Street in Philadelphia that touted the benefits of service in an attempt to recruit men to join the Continental Marines. A young man need only “try his fortune,” for the seas were full of “PRIZE!” It tempted the already enticed Philadelphians who had watched the port with wanderlust and reminded them that men willingly joined privateers with no other benefit than the plentiful prizes that awaited them. The “Seventeen Dollars Bounty” would have attracted a number of those who made up the pool of ‘lower sort’ in Philadelphia. Given Billy G. Smith’s average food intake estimates, these men’s eyes may have swelled as they read over the long tempting list of victuals that included foodstuffs like “FRUIT,” an item which they may not have received regularly, and in cases like “BEEF” or “PO RK” the daily portions listed may have been doubled than the amount generally received by a lower class male.\textsuperscript{120} Aside from food was the guarantee that they each would be “comfortably and genteely CLOTHED.” Their daily needs and upkeep would all be taken care of to the extant that their regular pay could be sent home to support families or saved for the future. “RICHES” came complete with “GLORIES” and “HONOR,” the latter of which could

\textsuperscript{119} Bowling, DiGiacomantonion, and Bickford, ed., vol. VII., 435.
\textsuperscript{120} Smith, \textit{The “Lower Sort,”} 97-99.
mean a social step up. The offer lacked nothing for either a young man seeking fortune or an older man seeking security.\footnote{Continental Marines Recruiting Poster, January 1776, Marion Sturkey, \textit{Warrior Culture of the U.S. Marines: Axioms for Warriors, Marine Quotations, Battle History, Reflections on Combat, corps Legacy, Humor – and much more – for the World’s Warrior Elite} (South Carolina: Heritage Press International, 2003), 80-81.}

Although Craig’s outcome at the end of the war was quite different than most men, he had not been too different from many of the lower ranking enlisted men at the beginning. The best evidence to support this fact may be the very men he himself recruited. Of the forty-two men Craig recruited to serve under his direction in December of 1775, at least thirty-four of them reported demographical information that maybe used to demonstrate this fact. In 1775 Craig was about thirty-three years of age, just three years older than the mode average of those he recruited, like James Campbell and Simon Harwood. More generally, over 52 percent of the men Craig recruited fell between the ages of twenty-five-year old Isaac Dewees and forty-year-old Henry Frazier. Aside from age, Craig was also much like these men in nationality, 38 percent of Craig’s enlisted men were, like him, born in Ireland. A matching 38 percent were foreign born, mostly reporting birth in Great Britain, only the last 24 percent were originally from the colonies, mainly Philadelphia. Perhaps the best statistic connecting Craig with his own men was that 96 percent of them were artisans, 38 percent of which were builders.\footnote{Muster Roll, Lieutenant Isaac Craig’s Company of Marines, Philadelphia, December 19, 1775, in William Bell Clark, ed., \textit{Naval Documents of the American Revolution} (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1968), 3:175-176.}

Craig may have been doing somewhat better than his enlisted men, the rank of men to which the Tun Tavern poster had sought to appeal, but given the similarities between Craig and his enlisted men, it would have been attractive to him as well. To less fortunate young men it may have been a means of survival, to others a means to a better
life. To Massachusetts-born Jeremiah Greenman, joining the army seemed like a good alternative to becoming a seaman while also giving his wayward life direction.\(^\text{123}\) Robert Allison on the other hand had been a member of the Pennsylvania militia as far back as 1764, when he had gone after and caught members of the “Paxton Boys.” With the formation of the Continental Army, Allison had been able to use his past militia experience to obtain a commission as a lieutenant colonel.\(^\text{124}\) To Craig’s friend Robert Patterson, who was teaching at the Academy of Wilmington, the war for America’s Independence became a mobilizing interruption. Lacking pupils, the academy had been forced to close. By closing one door, the war opened what turned out to be a superior alternative in the Delaware militia. During his military career Patterson received a “hasty medical education” and became an assistant surgeon from which he remarked, “My pay [is] 18 Doll[ars] [per] month – I make out much better … than I did in teaching.”\(^\text{125}\) Patterson continued to do well for himself in the military and was promoted to brigade major by 1778.\(^\text{126}\)

For Craig the military became a way by which he could make more than what he was taking in as a civilian and created long-term opportunities. If Craig had been living in either one of the properties he co-owned, this space had rental value which after the


\(\text{125}\) Robert Patterson to Amy Patterson, September 9, 1776, Henry C. DuBois Collection, 1184, Box 1, Folder 16, HPS.

\(\text{126}\) William Ewing Du Bois, *A Record of the Families of Robert Patterson (The Elder), Emigrant from Ireland to America, 1774; Thomas Ewing, From Ireland, 1718, Connected by the Marriage of Uriah Du Bois with Martha Patterson, 1798*. (Philadelphia: John C. Clark, 1847), Henry C. DuBois Collection, 1184, HSP, 19.
war was placed at £29 12s a year.\textsuperscript{127} If this assumption is correct, Craig may also have been receiving rent. His partnership continued on without him and with essential needs filled all pay could be saved for postwar investment. Had this not been part of Craig’s original plan when he joined the Marines, it became so, as was demonstrated in his postwar business dealings.

*High “Seize” Adventure*

Before he could deal with postwar business, Craig had to deal with the business of war. Although Craig had received his commission in November it was not until December of 1775 that Craig boarded a Continental vessel. After receiving a £110.5.0 advance, Craig was assigned to the Navy’s *Andrew Doria*, a vessel in which he was the oldest lieutenant, a position that ensured his reaching the rank of captain before any other man aboard his ship.\textsuperscript{128} Prior to the Navy’s purchase, the *Doria* had been in a Philadelphia merchant’s service, now in its second life it left the boat yard under the command of Captain Nicholas Biddle and armed with sixteen six-pounders and twelve swivel guns.\textsuperscript{129} The *Doria* joined the *Alfred, Columbus*, and *Sebastian Cabot* as the first Continental Naval fleet. Amidst the pomp and clamor of saluting cannons, the rah of a gathering audience on the dock, and perhaps even the roar of a random “Hazah!” leapt off

\textsuperscript{127} Estate of Robert Allison, October 17, 1792, *Pennsylvania Gazette*. This assumption is made based on the description of the Craig, Allison, Br inghurst lot that stated that one of the structures on the lots was specifically owned only by Craig and had rental value as stated above.

\textsuperscript{128} December 1775, Continental Naval Committee in Account with James Reed, Clark, ed., *Naval Documents*, 3:961; Letter from J. Mattock March 7, 1780, Box 56. Craig Family Papers 1769-1865, WPHS.

the mouth of a Veteran of the British army, the *Doria*’s first navel launch began.\(^{130}\) The *Doria* carried 130 sailors, and 42 marines, 36 of whom Craig had personally recruited.\(^{131}\) In the last act of pageantry before crowd and commanders “John Paul Jones raised the first [American flag] on board a man-of-war.” The morning was January 4, 1776, and in the bitter cold the fleet began its journey.\(^{132}\)

The fleet’s destination and missions were to be kept a “profound secret” as not to besmirch the reputation of the revolutionaries, who were not yet in a position to actually send these men off to battle in the ocean. As the Continentals were deficient in munitions, Congress called on this fleet to obtain them. This first fleet, which was followed by at least thirteen other vessels, were given special commission establishing them as privateers. As such these vessels were not made up of traditional military men but of government commissioned privateers or uniformed pirates.\(^{133}\) Later naval fleets concentrated on more traditional campaigns against the British Navy. The objective of this fleet, commanded by a once retired privateer Ezekiel Hopkins was to capture munitions from any British vessel for use in both land and sea battles. This was especially important at the onset of war when it was one of the only sources the revolting colonies had to build up their military stores. Continental commissioned privateers also assisted in interrupting and limiting the British access to their own supplies and munitions. In some ways the use of these kinds of privateers had been better than those who had simply been issued marques and given no restrictions. Unregulated privateers

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\(^{133}\) Intelligence Regarding the Naval Force at Philadelphia, February 16, 1777., Clark, ed., *Naval Documents*, 3:1322; Coggins, 26; Allen vol. 1, 52-53.
sometimes caused unneeded problems as they were prone to attacking all ships, including non-enemy targets in their zealous pursuits of prize.\textsuperscript{134}

Initially there was no fear that the \textit{Doria, Alfred, Cabot, or Columbus} would become prize happy. Before their mission started all four vessels fell prey to icy conditions.\textsuperscript{135} In late February, however, the ice trap melted, the river was at last navigable, and two more ships, \textit{Fly} and \textit{Providence} joined the fleet as it entered the Atlantic. What came next was a serendipitous windfall for the military that owed much to Commodore Hopkins’ complete disregard to head to the coastal portion of the Chesapeake region.\textsuperscript{136} Hopkins had worked for the British during the Seven Years War and recalled that a large quantity of military stores had been hoarded away on the island of New Providence in the Bahamas. More importantly Hopkins and some of the Safety Committee believed that these stores included gun powder, a supply that was so scarce that nothing troubled General George Washington as much as its lack. Hopkins thus ordered the fleet further south not to raid a boat, but an entire island.\textsuperscript{137}

On the third of March the fleet landed 200 marines and 50 sailors on New Providence Island, and with that Craig’s first campaign officially began. Although the Marines were prepared to fight if need be, the bulk of the raid turned siege played out in words, which included the American’s promise that no harm would come to any of the island’s occupants. In fact the most threatening device used that day was the sheer presence of the Marines, almost one fourth of them Craig was leading. In little time the Marines were able to take Fort Montague, followed by the island’s largest city and

\begin{footnotes}
\item[134] Allen, vol 1, 48 & 59.
\item[136] Allen, vol 1, 14-115.
\end{footnotes}
second fort, Nassau. In one day, and with no loss of human life, the island succumbed to the Americans. Future strikes did not come as easily, and had New Providence Governor Montfort Brown not been able to transport over a hundred and fifty barrels of gunpowder off the island the previous evening, it is unlikely he would have submitted to the Americans with such ease. The island raid was an unquestionable victory that resulted in the capture of Governor Brown and “another British official” along with the seizure of “88 cannon[s], ranging from nine-pounders to thirty-sixers, 15 brass mortars, 5,458 shells, 11,077 cannon ball,” as well as many other necessary munitions including 24 casks of powder.

Craig’s participation in the New Providence capture and other such successful operations were essential to his overall advancement both socially and economically. With every prize captured he was awarded additional pay, over and above his regular pay. Furthermore, under the Articles of Enlistment for the Continental Navy, the commanders of the Doria, Alfred, Cabot, Columbus, Providence, and Fly had agreed that all prizes seized were to be shared amongst all five vessels regardless of their individual roles or location. In one instance Craig received £7 from a prize won by Providence. This was almost one third of the almost £20 that he had been paid for a prize that had been captured by the Doria during another campaign. When his collective prize money in this one instance is examined, almost £30, it becomes clear that prize money made up a significant amount of earnings and had probably been a strong selling point in Craig’s decision to join the Marines as opposed to another outfit of the armed services. Aside

138 Craig Family Papers 1769-1865 Journal, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP; Allen, 96-99.
from his regular salary as a marine, this prize money alone was substantially higher than the salary of an average journeyman.\(^{141}\)

A more long-term effect of his role in the campaign’s success was that it caught the attention of superior officers. The military and its bureaucracy comprised a relatively small and overlapping group of men, so when Craig received recognition from his superiors, the impact was significant to his overall reputation. These high-level superiors, a mere handful in number, were personally involved with the day-to-day operations of this part of the military and thus aware of individual officer’s actions. These were the men who later promoted Craig, and when he later petitioned the government for an increase in pay or for reimbursement of expenses, they granted his requests. In one such instance in the early summer of 1776, Craig participated in a siege that recovered large sums of “hard money” from the enemy. Under naval and prize court regulations, Craig and the other crew members were entitled to split one-third of these funds amongst themselves. However, the Continental treasury was in greater need of it, prompting John Hancock, the President of the Continental Congress, to appeal to the men to make a gift of it. When they did, he praised their “[Public] spirit.”\(^{142}\) Less than four months after this event, Hancock played a significant role in promoting Craig to Marine captain.\(^{143}\) In this same situation Craig’s good reputation was further attested to by the fact that the money was also placed in his charge by superior, Colonel Daniel Roberdeau.\(^{144}\)

Instances like these may have fixed Craig as a man of good character and esteem in the...
minds of influential men. In this, the war was not only building up his pocketbook but offered him the opportunity to build his reputation.

The prizes captured in the New Providence campaign had been so great that another vessel, the *Endeavour*, was commandeered for the sole purpose to help transport the goods back to the states. The task of filling both new and old vessels took the better part of two weeks.\textsuperscript{145} What free time was left was spent in true pirate style as the men pillaged and looted the island for both military and personal gain. With little order, a free-for-all ensued in which a majority of both sailors and Marines turned to heavy drinking and general carousing. Before leaving the island, many of the men who had indulged their gluttony, had been stricken with tropical fever. These men were of no use to the military or the “Cause” and delivering the New Providence Prize was the last stop in their military careers.\textsuperscript{146}

Craig and the others whose health remained intact were called to duty to defend both life and prize as they approached the waters around Rhode Island. Just a month after their first victory, the fleets, which had begun to fall out of formation, ran into two British vessels, the schooner HMS *Hawk* and brigade *Bolton*. Both vessels surrendered after little more than a few shots had been fired in their direction.\textsuperscript{147}

It was just after one o’clock in the morning of April 6, 1776, when the sails of the HMS *Glasgow* were sighted across the moonlit dark waters. Hopkins and his men, eagerly escorting their prizes to Providence, Rhode Island, were taken completely off guard as the *Glasgow* took aim and fired on them. In what would become the first “fleet

\textsuperscript{145} Allen, vol. 1, 100.
\textsuperscript{147} Allen, vol. 1, 101.
action” of the Continental Navy, the British threatened to steal the fleet’s prize. The battle lasted over an hour and a half as continuous fire filled the night sky with fire and smoke. Although its numbers had been diminished by fever, the fleet was able to hold her ground by cooperating and moving into an offensive position. It was only due to a sudden change in the wind that the Glasgow and her crew were able to escape to safety. As an American held captive on the ship later reported, the Glasgow had been riddled with fire and had ”10 shots through her mainmast, 110 holes in her mainsail, 88 in her foresail, 53 in her mizzen staysail, some spars carried away, and her rigging cut to pieces.”¹⁴⁸ Seventeen American men lost their lives and the Glasgow got away, but the consolation was that the Glasgow had not taken any of the Continental fleet or its prizes with her. Two days following the Glasgow attack, the fleet arrived at Providence, Rhode Island, in need of repair and new men. Despite the losses, the fleet arrived victorious, bearing booty that allowed its men the right to parade with pride as a small group of early heroes, delivering munitions desperately needed.¹⁴⁹ This, however, was not the end of the Doria’s prize winning days.

Munitions and supplies were still in demand, so the Doria and Cabot were remanned and shipped out within two weeks while the remainder of their fleet stayed behind for necessary repairs.¹⁵⁰ Despite the shortage of men, the two vessels paced the waters off the coast of Rhode Island and in less then three days captured two more

¹⁴⁸ Morrison, John Paul Jones, 50-51.
vessels, the *John and Joseph*, a private schooner owned by Nathaniel Shaw that had been first captured by the British near Georgia, and a British frigate, the *Scarborough*.\[151\]

Just two months later, in June, the *Doria* took two more vessels, the *Oxford* carrying Scottish Highlanders and the Loyalist transport *Crawford*. Over two hundred weapons were retrieved from the *Oxford*, which was then loaded with the Loyalist passengers from the *Crawford*. Both weaponry and the *Crawford* were then taken as prizes. It was also during this trip that the *Doria* was able to recapture the privately owned ship of Jonathan Hudson, which had been taken seven months earlier by Lord Dunmore’s fleet.\[152\] The ship’s luck continued from June through September 1776 as the *Doria* and *Cabot* acted the part of state-sponsored pirates, roaming the Atlantic in search of ships and cargo to capture for Continental use. Together both boats captured a string of vessels beginning with a merchant vessel, *Nathaniel and Elizabeth*, that was fully loaded with sugar and rum. Following this, they recaptured the *Molly*, a supply ship carrying 15,000 bushels of wheat destined for British troops and the 110 ton brigadier *Lawrence*, packed with rum, and sugar, among other merchant goods. Aside from these ships, the *Doria* had stopped and looted the brig *Thomas*, laden with artillery and bound for New York City, then the *Maria, Besty*, and *Peggy*, passenger ships of the Loyalist exodus.\[153\]

In the *Doria*’s last mission, she returned to the West Indies, this time to St. Eustatius Island in November of 1776. The objectives were to obtain, protect, and deliver military stores supplied by the Dutch to the Continental Army in Philadelphia.\[151\] James L. Mooney, ed. *History of American Naval Fighting Ships*, vol. 1, Andrew Doria (Naval History Division, 1959)\[152\] August 15, 1776, Letters of Delegates to Congress, vol. 4, U.S. Congressional Document and Debates, 1774-1875, LC.\[153\] Secret Committee Minutes of Proceedings, May 25, 1776, LC; Ibid, Sept 20, 1776, LC; Mooney, vol. 1.
The mission was difficult but successful. Just off Puerto Rico the *Doria* entered a two-hour battle with the British ship *Racehorse*. The *Doria* was the victor, capturing the ship along with the sixty men aboard her as prizes.\(^{154}\)

Such a string of victories paid off for Craig and other participants as both officers and crew shared a bounty of 1,360 dollars.\(^{155}\) Furthermore, they experienced what was probably the first official salute to the American flag. Interestingly enough as she began to exit the port at St. Eustatius her flag was given a nine-gun salute, the first salute ever given to it in a foreign port.\(^{156}\) This was a symbolically significant moment, for the Dutch had given them the respect befitting a nation at war. Just as Craig, and many other young men, had joined the war as a means to earn respect and advance their standing so had the states they had fought for.

*A Means to a Social End*

The situation Craig entered by joining the military encouraged mobility as it introduced Craig to well connected and socially superior men such as General John Neville.\(^{157}\) This was a prize relationship in and of itself. Not only did this personal connection continue the rest of his life, but it directly contributed to some of Craig’s significant economic gains. Surrounding himself with wealthy and influential friends greatly helped Craig’s mobility. Friends who held socially superior positions also had the accompanying superior influence and power that could be used in support of Craig’s own

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154 April, 23, 1777, Journals of the Continental Congress, LC; Allen, vol. 1, 160.
155 April, 23, 1777, Journals of the Continental Congress, LC.
156 Allen, vol. 1, 159.
social climbing in a way that he could not have done alone. Of course it also helped that through his own military career Neville was able to gain high ranking government positions after the Revolution, placing him in a far greater situation to offer Craig better opportunities than either Allison or Brinughurst. This was a golden relationship that helped to pave Craig’s way to the top.

Many men believed that going to war and declaring independence not only empowered the states but empowered themselves. They may have seen this as their only means of gaining a small voice in the political arena as well. This is especially true in cases involving migrants. Irish migrants, in particular, had arrived in North America with a strong dislike of the British and had all the more reason to fight against them. Even before the war had begun these Scots-Irish migrants did not sit passively but filled pages of the militantly anti-British *Freeman’s Journal* with poignant articles about British actions against both Ireland and the colonies.\(^{158}\)

Other men saw themselves as socially stuck in a lower class that did not allow them to control their own lives or act on their individual agency in the public forum. This group included servants. Of Craig’s men, twenty-three-year old Swiss servant Henry Javet fits this description.\(^{159}\)

Military pay was not so different. Many of the fringe benefits were the same, and if anything, the military offered an aspect of danger that regular labor, in most cases, did not. Yet still these men enlisted, in search of a social liberty.\(^{160}\) Many of these men felt that once the colonies had secured their independence, they as former solidiers would automatically gain some

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power in the new country. Many of these men may have believed that they were already witnessing this transformation. Three decades after the war, a Robert Patterson eulogist wrote, “So ignorant were they of everything like military art, that every person who could perform the common manual exercise, became a man of consequence, and was looked up to by his neighbors.”¹⁶¹ This coincides with this heightened respect the lower class men understood Whig rhetoric to promise. They were helping to not only create a new country, but it would be a country in which they would have equality and be able to act publicly for the good of themselves as well as the community.¹⁶²

In some ways, Craig was looking for this same equality and the “leveling” of social barriers that many other lower class men sought. Yet his actions illustrate that his objective was skewed slightly. Craig was seeking a more extreme and personal means to become socially mobile. Other lower and lower middle class men fought, or claimed to fight, to close the divide between the lower and upper classes that minimized their influence in popular politics.¹⁶³ Craig also was attempting to find a way around exclusion, but at the same time he was trying to maintain social hierarchy as an institution for he aspired to climb the ranks. Had Craig been attempting to tear down the walls that sustained social hierarchy he would not have fought so hard to scale them and then build a life within them.

That Craig was attempting to propel himself socially higher is established in how he joined the military as an officer. How was it that a man with no military background or social status entered the newly established Marine Corps and received an officer’s commission? While the British army reserved such commissions for men of high social

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¹⁶¹ Du Bois, 19.
¹⁶² Knouff, The Soldiers’ Revolution, 38.
¹⁶³ Morgan, Inventing the People, 292-293.
status or those with good connections and demonstrations of ability in a few cases, the American system was, out of necessity, willing to be more flexible at times. Generally speaking, craftsmen were the candidates most likely to be voted into the position of lieutenant and captain in the early militia. Carpenters in particular were chosen for their experience managing large groups of men on the job. Having had militia experience would have given many of these men better chances at later opportunities in the armed forces. Craig, however, had no previous military experience. For the most part, established men directed the lower class and middling men that composed the lower ranks of the early American armed services. That said, knowing exceptions did occur, lower class and middling men recognized obtaining an officer’s commission might lead to social mobility, so many of these men sought out these positions. In this, as in many wars, the American Revolution did provide opportunity for social mobility.

What made the Revolution especially unique in providing opportunities for social mobility was due to the colonies being in rebellion and to a small and insufficient number of militia men from which to create an army. As the colonies moved into war, the urgent need for men to fill out regiments as well as men to lead them grew. The sense of urgency lessened the social quality required of men that were needed to fulfill the demand for bodies. Thus timeliness created commissions for officers that traditionally would have been closed. This environment allowed skill, as opposed to status or money, to dictate some of the commissions given out.

Furthermore, even if Craig’s lack of military skills worked against him, his ethnicity served him well, for when the military had difficulty filling out uniforms with

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165 Knouff, *The Soldiers’ Revolution*, 82.
166 Edmund S. Morgan, *Inventing the People*, 300-301.
their first choice, respected gentlemen, their second preference fell on Scots-Irish men. Even more importantly, Craig did show the initiative to recruit men, thereby increasing his odds of gaining a commission. If he had been offered the £3 per additional man recruited, as was advertised around the same time, the forty-two men Craig recruited to follow him into the Marines would have been worth around £126.168

Using the opportunities offered to them through these commissions, some men in the lower and lower middle classes were able to climb the social ladder. Such military opportunities were however restricted to within a relatively short timeframe, in other words while demand lasted. From Craig’s actions, it seems he recognized this and purposefully used time and demand to his own advantage when he joined the Marines Corps. Not only had he obtained the officer’s commission, but having joined at the onset of war he also earned seniority he would not have otherwise had or deserved over more traditional officers. This was clearly demonstrated in a 1782 dispute over rank when he used these very facts as a basis to argue a promotion that had been given to Francis Proctor, the brother of a superior officer.169 Craig was not alone in his belief that timing made a difference. Less than a decade later, when the United States established its first professional standing army, a similar demand for military men was created. Just as Craig had done at the beginning stages of the Revolution, Jeremiah Greenman attempted to take advantage of the situation and “get in on the ground floor.” Although unsuccessful,

167 Neimeyer, America Goes to War, 78.
168 Continental Marines Recruiting Poster, January 1776, Sturkey, Warrior Culture, 80-81.
Greenman’s attempt went as far as petitioning his past commanding officers, including General Washington, to recommend him for a commission as captain.\textsuperscript{170}

Becoming an officer in and of itself assisted Craig in his social reinvention. Events such as the Seven Years War had generated wealth for new groups of men during the mid to late eighteenth century. Following the tradition set in Europe with the rise of the first merchant class, social restrictions tightened and acquiring an elevated social standing depended on more than accumulated wealth. Even those men who had recreated and mobilized themselves understood and reinforced the notion that a true status change took more than economic factors, it required real respect and an increased collective deference. In the eyes of a former runway apprentice Benjamin Franklin, public persona was just as important as actual wealth. Additionally there was the belief that only specific groups, which generally excluded much of the Irish, could or should ever rise to the top of the social ladder.\textsuperscript{171} These kind of views made it all the more difficult for men of untraditional origins and means to become truly socially mobile. At the same time it also made it slightly easier for men like Craig who followed a military path. Other men would have had few opportunities in day-to-day trade to prove themselves a member of the natural aristocracy. This is what made the Marine recruitment poster’s promise of “HONOR” so lucrative to the lower and lower middle class. Honor, defined by Joanne B. Freeman as “reputation with a moral dimension and an elite cast,” had to be earned by this group of men.\textsuperscript{172} Gaining an officer’s commission enabled Craig to begin to gain honor, and other social elements necessary to complete his reinvention. At the very least,

\textsuperscript{170} Bray and Bushnell, eds., \textit{Diary of a Common Soldier}, xxii.
\textsuperscript{171} Waldstreicher, \textit{Runaway America}, 97, 147-148.
they provided him the opportunity and packaging to combat socially held conceptions in a way few other occupations could have. Additionally by being an officer during wartime, Craig was able to demonstrate his skills, earn respect, and widen the groups of men who deferred to him.

As an officer, Craig had a title with more impact and status than any artisan’s more subjective title. More importantly, the title of an officer acted as a clear line of division, which placed enlisted men into a defined lower rank below Craig and other officers, while simultaneously placing Craig in a group of officers, a collectively superior group of men. As an officer in the Marines and later in the Pennsylvania State forces and Continental line, Craig most likely had worn one if not three officer’s uniforms during his career. The first uniform worn by officers in the Marines entailed a “green coat faced with white and with a silver epaulette on the right shoulder, white waistcoat and breeches and black gaiters.” In the Continental army however, officers donned “blue coats faced with red lapels, blue breeches, and red waistcoat”\(^\text{173}\) As an officer in the artillery this last uniform may have differed in having yellow buttons stamped “USA” and buttonholes outlined by “gilt lace.”\(^\text{174}\) Regardless of which uniform Craig wore, an officer’s uniform may also have helped bolster his reputation. As suggested by Alfred F. Young, uniforms were “costumes” that created an “illusion” in which the wearer’s own identity was masked by a standardized identity. According to Young, an enlisted man’s uniform had the power to transform him from common rabble into a solider. There is reason to assume that a similar transformation occurred to help a carpenter of simple sorts become an officer and a gentleman. If, as Young also states, the power of a uniform was so strong

\(^{173}\) Allen, vol. 1, 30.  
that men might simply assume a young woman, as in the case of Deborah Sampson, was actually a young man because she was wearing a uniform that was customarily only worn by a man, men may have also assumed Craig held a higher status then he had in reality.\footnote{Pawlikowski, 73}

Furthermore the symbolic nature of uniforms then, as it does now, helped to shape the manner in which other people interacted with its wearer. In Craig’s case, the officer’s uniform not only denoted authority but may have also empowered him with that authority.

*Three Misleading Letters*

Craig’s understanding of the new possibilities that an officer’s title might present him in his drive to obtain status in civilian life may have been so substantial that he was willing to mislead or even go as far as forging documents to ensure them. Beginning in 1777 Craig’s military documents and papers listed his name and title as “Isaac Craig, Esquire.”\footnote{Military papers B-G, Box 56, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.} Though few documents have survived from his prewar life, it seems highly unlikely that Craig used this title beforehand. Craig was a master carpenter, but he had not been voted a member of the Carpenter’s Company. Moreover it does not seem that the significant men in Craig’s life, James Craig and Robert Allison, who along with greater means were older, more established, members of the Company had been confirmed as Esquires. For all intents and purposes, there is nothing else in all of Craig’s personal or business papers which reflect any legal studies or authenticate him as a lawyer. The letter of introduction he carried from Ireland to verify his identity and document his apprenticeship makes no claims to him having any formal education aside

\footnote{Young, *Masquerade*, 102.}
from carpentry. Most suspiciously, except for his official military documents, Craig did not use the title of “esquire” again on any of his documents until 1791, when he became a Notary Public. In addition, when Craig’s early life is placed on a timeline there was simply no time for him to have had any former successes in which he was offered this social step up. Finally, it was also on his military papers Craig claimed to have been from the County Antrim, not the slightly less prosperous County Down. Although there is no significant difference between Antrim and Down, that Craig chose to falsely represent himself suggests that he was attempting to detach wholly from his past in order to reinvent himself. If this were the case, he chose Antrim simply because it was not Down.

It may seem as though these details are small and without consequence, but pieced together, they show a man who over time tweaked his identity. Seeing an opportunity for economic advancement, Craig presented himself, in appearance and character, in the best light he could muster. He may have claimed to have had an education, but more likely he never made such a bold and untrue statement but instead demonstrated being educated. Craig, much like Benjamin Franklin, allowed others to take their own meaning and draw their own inferences from actions, double talk, and silence. As long as the meaning they came to suited the situation and advanced Craig’s overall plan, there was no reason to make corrections. Perhaps the first time Craig added “Esq.” it was in small letters at the end of his large artful signature, or perhaps he said it

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177 Letter of Introduction from Trevor Benson for Isaac Craig, 1765. Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
178 Notary Public contract, April 13, 1791. Record Group 8 B. Craig Collection. CL. Carnegie library, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, hereafter cited as Craig Collection CL.
180 Waldstreicher, Runaway America, 87.
quickly in a low voice and no one laughed, either way it stuck. Whether done without ill-intent, purposefully dubious, or accidental, it came to be that in joining the new military with an officer’s title played a critical role in Craig’s earnings as well as his social and professional network. Thus Craig had begun to slip through centuries old social boundaries and continued his career of social climbing.
Chapter 3: Captain Craig in the Continental Army

By November of 1776, New York City was overrun, and upon the fall of Fort Lee, New Jersey was slipping quickly out of Continental control. After the fall of Fort Washington to British General Sir William Howe, General Washington was in retreat. Furthermore, he did not have enough men and what men he did have, for the most part, were poorly trained and ill-equipped. To make matters worse, those who had enlisted had done so under short terms. Some enlistments had lapsed two months earlier, forcing Washington to offer a ten dollar bounty to each man who reenlisted. It was a sum the government could ill afford, but with no other viable alternatives, it was paid none the less. Worse yet, many more enlistments were due to end before the campaign’s completion. As Washington declared in confidence, “In a word my dear Sir, if every nerve is not strain’d to recruit the New Army with all possible expedition, I think the game is pretty near up.”

Into Philadelphia and into this situation sailed the victorious Andrew Doria, her men, and a shipment of Dutch artillery. Craig, along with many of the other men he had served with, had met their original service commitment and most likely were happy to be headed home. Privateers were still in demand, and this necessity was preventing General Howe from taking Philadelphia. This was a task that required Continental soldiers to secure New Jersey and thus to impede Howe’s mission to take Philadelphia. Although the Doria’s men had not taken part in the New York battles, it is likely they had heard of Manhattan’s destruction.

If men were unwilling to fight for the general cause of the war, Thomas Wharton, President of the Safety Council, pushed recruiters to remind men to “step forth, otherwise they may shortly expect a plundering Enemy at their own doors.” They were to enlist so as to challenge Howe in New Jersey and protect their city. The Doria’s men heard the call, for a majority of her Marines returned to land only to join the Fourth Continental Artillery under Colonel Thomas Proctor.

Craig, on the other hand, had not bothered to wait until his first commission had ended before accepting another. Craig had accepted a new commission during a brief furlough during the previous summer, long before the Doria had even set her sails for St. Eustatius. In exchange for receiving a captain’s commission, Craig agreed to join the Continental Army on his return from the West Indies, which he believed would come in early September. This was an action strikingly similar to Craig’s timeliness at the beginning of the war. In this case, the strategy assisted him in gaining a higher ranking commission. In acting early Craig believed he was demonstrating patriotism that could be used later to gain more influence and add weight to his character. By this point, Craig had also begun to build up his own bargaining power through his service record on the Doria and was now considered by the Council of Safety a man of “undoubtable character.” Due to such regard, Craig had strong reason to believe he was capable of gaining higher rank. That said, so did many of the Marines of similar or higher rank with whom he served. This gave Craig all the more reason to arrange his next commission

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184 Muster Roll, Capt Isaac Craig’s Company of the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment March 1, 1778, General return of the Pennsylvania State Regiments of Artillery, Craig Collection, ORSC; Although this group is sometimes listed as a “State Regiment,” it was in fact, a Continental unit beginning in October 1776, and was officially renamed as such on September 3, 1778, Trussell, Pennsylvania Line, 205.
185 Arrangement of Officers Appointed by Council of Safety, September 16, 1776, Pennsylvania Archives, ser. 5 vol. III.
before his first campaign had concluded, thus beating out those who waited until the end, the traditional time in which men willing to reenlist or be re-commissioned acted.

Waiting until then may have created a greater supply of equally qualified officers and lessoned Craig’s own chances. As Craig’s future commanding officer in the army was Philadelphia’s own Irish-born master carpenter Colonel Thomas Proctor, Craig may have been able to use his network in the artisan community as well as his being Scots-Irish as additional leverage in this exchange.\(^{187}\)

Unfortunately for Craig, the war had a timeline of its own and the chance encounter with the *Racehorse* off Puerto Rico had thrown the *Doria* off her schedule. Craig arrived in Philadelphia almost a month late and was forced to accept the commission of a second lieutenant while the matter of his rank was straightened out. As soon as the situation had been resolved, Craig promptly requested to be paid the salary difference between lieutenant and captain, to cover the time he had spent as a second lieutenant yet also for the extra time he had spent on *Doria* as a lieutenant as well.\(^{188}\) This was yet again an example, much like his deals over Clover Hill, of Craig using the system to try and get everything he could.

*Payment for Service*

Just as joining the Marines had offered Craig, and others like him, an array of benefits and opportunities, so too did joining the army. After becoming a captain, Craig

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\(^{188}\) Letter from Isaac Craig to President Moore, February, 21 1782. Samuel Hazard, ed., *Pennsylvania Archives* ser. 1 vol. IX 1782 (Philadelphia: J Severs 1856), 497; Royster, 51. When Craig’s salary was back issued his commission was also back dated. Although some sources state that Craig was a Marine captain he was not. Originally Craig’s commission’s captain was to begin on September 16, 1776 to coincide with the beginning of his career in the Continental Army. In reality Craig did not receive his captain’s commission until March, 14, 1777 at which point it was back dated to September 1777.
received over three times as much pay per month. Not including the prizes, Craig collected £110.5.0 salary for his eleven-month campaign in the Marines as a lieutenant roughly £10 a month. That had been a rate comparable to that earned by Thomas Wiggins, a sergeant serving under Craig in the army. As a captain, Craig earned a salary of £33.30.00 per month. As had been the case in the Marines, regular pay was not the only means to make money in the army. In order to keep the ranks filled, a multitude of different bonuses were offered at different times to attract men. For an enlisted man the first of these was the bounty, which he received at the time he joined. When Craig joined the Marines the bounty offered had only been seventeen dollars, a year later the army recruiters were offering a twenty-dollar bounty. Other offers extended to both officers and soldiers included land, tax forgiveness, and slaves. Depending on where they were serving, enlisted men might sometimes also expect to receive random goods and supplies that their companies received in excess. These items often included food, goods, and clothing and were then distributed among the men who then had the opportunity to keep, sell, or trade them.

Some historians have questioned whether these benefits were significant enough to counter the fact that the army sometimes had difficulty paying men their traditional salaries. The answer is complex and subjective in terms of time, place, and company, as, for example, in the case of the winter of 1777 at Valley Forge. The image of Valley Forge calls to mind troops shivering, huddled, hungry and left unpaid by a government that was either unable or unwilling to take care of its men. From such events the

189 Continental Naval Committee in Account with James Read, 1775, Clark, ed., *Naval Documents*, 3: 961; Payroll Pa Regiment Artillery for Detachment of Artillery Artificers Commanded by Major Isaac Craig for the month of February 1782.
conclusion is drawn that this was the general condition of the Continental Army. Yet images like this are not an accurate archetype for the Continental Army as a whole, let alone throughout the entire Revolutionary War. This is not to dismiss the fact that at times the conditions were horrible for the army, but to point out that there were also bad times for civilian colonists who did not serve. Not being paid for services rendered was not exclusive to the army, but a reality that artisans of every rank dealt with from time to time. In either case, however, these men were better than those who were outright unemployed. As E.P. Thompson maintained, survival became a main objective of the poor men and women who remained in the cities as the Revolution raged elsewhere. This was corroborated by men like “Long Bill” Scott who fled from the city to the army to stave off paucity. In Philadelphia’s Southwark district, residents who remained in the city were forced to live vulnerable conditions, exposed to disease and harsh elements. So similar were both soldiers and citizens that just as the soldiers at Valley Forge became mutinous when pushed past their limits so too did citizens in the more than thirty bread and price riots that took place during the first four years of the war.\textsuperscript{192}

Troubled were the times for most people of lower and lower middle class social status during the Revolutionary War, which is why when Thomas Paine tried to rally soldiers and citizens together in his “The American Crisis” he began with the line, “\textit{THESE are the times that try men’s souls}.”\textsuperscript{193} Yet, soldiers were in some cases better off as they had something the ordinary man did not. When times became unbearable, the poor man begging or stealing bread did not have an officer who could act as his advocate.

\textsuperscript{192} Gary B. Nash, “Poverty and Politics in Early America,” in Smith, ed., \textit{Down and Out in Early America}, 24-25, 43; Simon Newman, “Dead Bodies: Poverty and Death in Early National Philadelphia.”

Usually, when specific regiments went without pay or provisions, their senior officers could and did put in ardent requests for them. This was not always a case of compassion but of practicality, for men who were happy listened to orders and performed better. In one such request, in 1781, General Richard Butler justified a list of demands that not only included pay but also soap, more apple brandy, and “30 fife and drums” by stating his troop’s morale had taken a drastic turn. On top of miserably hot weather, news had reached them that Charleston had been sacked. This combination had induced a contagious melancholy among his troops. If his men were kept content, defined by Butler as paid, clean, and given spirits and music, they would be more responsive to orders and thus the campaign might be more successful. As it was, Butler’s troops were falling into disorder. Despite orders to remain uniformed they had at first sworn off the wearing of shoes and later their shirts. Butler feared these acts of civil disobedience would continue and his troops “[would] be naked if they [did not] get [the] support request.”

Lower-ranking officers also took to the pen for the sake of their men and in doing so some became vital factors as to whether or not the Revolutionary War provided enlisted men with opportunity for social mobility. In 1783 Colonel John Gibson’s men went without pay and he chose or simply did not think of doing anything on their behalf. That said, according to a letter Colonel Gibson had sent Craig, Captain Uriah Springer had been successful in a petition on behalf of both Gibson’s men as well as his own Virginia troops. Although Craig as an officer expected to be supplied, better than his men, he also understood that having men under his direction was not exclusively about

194 General Richard Butler to Irvine, July 8, 1781, Craig Collection, ORSC.
195 John Gibson to Craig, November 19, 1783, Craig Collection ORSC.
receiving privileges and deference. He had the reciprocal social and military obligation to assist in their care. For this reason, Craig also joined in petition writing as a means to meet his men’s needs. In 1780 Craig requested his men be paid and supplied enough provisions prior to marching over two hundred miles to Pittsburgh from Carlisle. According to the tone of Timothy Pickering’s reply, he had been accustomed to receiving such requests. During a similar situation, much later in 1798, in which the troops of another man had gone unpaid, Craig intervened with the impassioned anger of a man who had been personally mistreated. He did not just ask for the men to be paid but stated, outraged, that it was a “very serious disappointment” that the company has gone unpaid. He was “mortified” about that and about the fact that he was left to “beg” for immediate help from pay and quartermaster Samuel Hodgdon “to use every possible means of obtaining payment [for] the company as well as the account on former claims.” As Craig was a man who generally refrained from committing strong emotion or opinions to paper, this was a significant act. Men who corresponded with him often, such as Hodgdon, knew Craig well enough to have seen it as such.

As had been noted before, the question of pay was complex and as Craig’s experience illustrates, the issue of location was predominant with regard to whether or not men were regularly paid. At the end of the war General William Irvine remarked to Craig that his and Craig’s stationing at Fort Pitt had been a godsend, they had not been forced to go without supplies and pay as had many of the men stationed elsewhere. As will be discussed in the next chapter, where men were stationed and what campaigns they were chosen for had to do with a combination of skill and chance. However, that location

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197 Craig to Hodgdon, May 11, 1798, Craig Collection, ORSC.
played a part in pay and the ability of military service in social mobility reveals that receiving payment for service was an issue, but not necessarily for everyone.

From these kinds of scenarios it can be understood that taking advantage of even the most traditional benefit offered by the army may have been difficult for enlisted men to obtain. Enlisted men were especially dependent on other elements, which including the uncontrollable actions of others. Although Colonel Gibson was happy his men were going to be paid, had Captain Springer not stepped in, it seems unlikely that Gibson would have. That said, although many men were forced to go unpaid by the Continental army, as these situations suggest, Craig and his troops, as well as other aggressive officers and their troops, may not have shared in this hardship.

The common soldier may have been better situated for economically fragile times than those who had not joined the military. Trying as the times were, the men of the armed forces could expect things might change for the better, such as that their pay, though late, would come at some point. Moreover, when paid they were paid better than any other military in the world at that time. This may have also been true of provisions, which were generally better than those of their enemy. After all, their provisions did not need to cross the privateer infested Atlantic Ocean as some of the British provisions did. What is more, when they were paid late, American soldiers also received interest to compensate them for the delay. It should not be overlooked that in some ways receiving pay late may have helped some of the lower class men that Billy G. Smith had described as unable to save or invest their high wages in order to create later opportunities for themselves. Receiving their pay late may have been a means of forced savings for these men, especially when they were able to receive the added benefit of interest.

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Furthermore, in the army just as had been the case in the Marines, some men chose not to collect their salary on a regular basis anyway, so being paid late would not have mattered to them. To a certain point, it did not matter to these men if the army paid on time or not, their money was being saved up to be used after they left the service. Although an officer, Craig also did not to collect his pay regularly. His necessities were supplied by the army and therefore he did not always need the income immediately. Furthermore, just as Craig’s bachelor status had helped him meet ends and save as a struggling carpenter, it assisted him as captain in the army. Back in Philadelphia, he had no family to support, and his carpentry business, even as late as 1780, could have supported him in the absence of army pay. In 1784, he finally collected the entire amount as a lump sum, with interest, using it to set up a business.

On this same issue, it is commonly suggested that inflation further hurt soldiers who were either paid late or chose not to collect their pay regularly. Postwar inflation did devalue pay, but it did not always strip soldiers of their ability to improve their economic circumstances, especially after the war, in 1780 Congress agreed to pay the military an additional sum to counter the negative impact of high inflation.\textsuperscript{200} Even if the war caused inflation, its impact was not contained to the army as it was a significant factor that sent colonists into bread and price riots outside of the war, but there was no extra pay to pad their salaries.

Finally, Craig also benefited from pressures put on Congress by officers for pensions and was so entitled to half pay for life. Later, when the government understood

it could not meet the financial burden of such a pension, it was no longer offered. The only men who received a pension were those who had joined when it was originally offered. While the pension plan changed over time, at the end of the war most officers were able to petition the government for an annual payment of half their yearly income. Some officers received this pension for ten years while others enjoyed it for life. At the war’s end, Craig promptly exchanged his half-pay certificate for a “Commutation of 5 [years] Full Pay in Lieu Of ½ Pay For Life.” This decision proved fortuitous for Craig. Many officers had a difficult time collecting on the certificates as no specific date was given as to when funds would be dispersed to them. By 1787, as the country slipped into an economic downturn, the majority of half-pay certificates were nearly worthless. Almost forty years passed before the government was in a position to make good on its promise to them. Meanwhile, men who had not been officers were forced to wait until new pension bills were passed in 1818 and 1832 to receive recompense, at which point most of the Revolutionary war veterans had begun to pass on. It should not be forgotten that had Craig not joined the armed forces as an officer, he would not have received a pension. No other career path offered a standard pension at that time.

Joining the armed services provided Craig and other risk-taking, timely, well-placed, lucky men, with a safety net among other benefits that no other career offered. Of course this is not to say that men who followed other paths from the lower class did not end up with improved lives, some did, but many did not. Although mobilization,

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201 Saffell, ed., 409, 416.  
202 Ibid, 443.  
204 Saffell, ed., Records of Revolutionary War, 442.  
through the military, was a complex, long, and risk filled process this should not suggest that the process was so convoluted that it made for a comparatively bad career path. The reverse is true. All things considered, joining the military was still, for those who became officers, one of the best careers moves of the Revolutionary era. The issue then becomes, how did the lower and middle lower class men become such and from the rank of officer how they create further opportunities for themselves and possibly some of the men below them.

*The Importance of Men*

In November 1776 Craig began his career in the Fourth Continental Artillery. Aside from the economic implications, this experience proved quite different and more beneficial to his social transformation than that of being a Marine. The army ordered Craig to many regions, battlefields and forts, exposing the new “gentleman” and captain to a wealth of powerful men including generals George Washington, Henry Knox, William Irvine, and colonels Edward Hand, John Gibson and Stephen Bayard, as well as the men he answered directly to, Colonel Thomas Proctor and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Forster. As a Marine, Craig had been stationed in the Atlantic Ocean, away from the war’s main action. The distance resulted in introductions through the scantily written letters and reports from his superiors. They had been important to forming Craig’s character among his superiors, but his reputation rested too much on second-hand information. In the army Craig shared the same battlefields with these high-ranking superiors, which gave Craig the opportunity to demonstrate his character and prove himself, as a leader directly before them. Additionally, as Fred Anderson has noted about
military life, fighting a war together brings and binds groups of men together in a unique and lasting manner that extends long after a war’s conclusion.\textsuperscript{207} In a similar manner, Craig may have been pulled further into a pool of exclusivity as an officer. Another factor which may have assisted in Craig’s transition from artisan to officer was that many of his superior officers shared the same Scots-Irish background he did.

Men like General Edward Hand and Colonel Thomas Proctor had come to the colonies sharing the long harrowing heritage that came with being Scots-Irish. As Irish men and Protestants they had most likely also faced the same social discrimination in mobility that Craig did. Fighting in campaigns with these kinds of men may have made it much easier for Craig as they might not have had the same social expectations as men like General Washington, and they could build off of their shared backgrounds. In one of these ethnically bonding moments Lieutenant Colonial Adam Hubley recorded in his journal that following several significant victories during the Sullivan Campaign in 1780 word reached camp that the King of Spain, Carlos III, had agreed to become an allied force with France, and thus the men believed Spain would become an ally to Americans as well. During the commemoration of this event a feast was enjoyed by the artillery officers, including commanders General Edward Hand and Colonel Proctor. The evening was celebrated with “fatted bullock…five gallons of spirits…and drums and fife.” The predominately Irish officers sat together on the ground, almost as equals in “jovial…mirth and jollity.” Although they were of different ranks they were able to enjoy each other’s company without the stunting of deference. Their bond most likely had come from being united members of a successful artillery regiment as well as the fact that at least ten of these officers were proud Irish men by birth. This fact may be

\textsuperscript{207} Anderson, \textit{A People’s Army}, 24.
observed in that they included Ireland in their merriment and toasted her, hoping she too would soon throw off the tyrannical chains of Great Britain and form a union with America as the fourteenth state.  

Any and all factors that helped to further tighten the bonds between Craig and his superior officers helped him obtain both social and economic mobility opportunities during the war through promotions and special missions, and following the war in business opportunities. Thus understanding Craig’s actual war-time experience becomes essential in order to understand the overall opportunities that the Revolutionary War created for some of the men who were willing to serve.

Although superior officers played a strong role in advancing Craig’s career, so too did the thirty enlisted men under his direction. How his troops acted reflected Craig’s ability to lead. Only one of his men Timothy Lane, participated in mutiny, his troops were never decimated, and as a company they had a strong battle record. It only took a small handful of men who did not follow orders to make an entire company appear disorderly and appear to be the kind of rabble that General Washington deplored. Men who did not listen might also put their fellow soldiers’ lives in jeopardy. Men who continuously bickered over rank lowered morale, disrupted cohesion, and wasted the time of senior officers who had more important matters to consider, such as conducting the war.

The men who fell in under Craig did not appear to be the kind of troublemakers that undermined missions. This is most likely indicative of a mixture of Craig’s ability to

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wield authority as well as the concentration of the Scots-Irish found in Craig’s company. Of the thirty men in Craig’s first artillery company, forty-five percent were born in Northern Ireland. Having had the same regional nationality it may be safe to assume that many of these men were also Presbyterians and may have had similar backgrounds as Craig, just as had been the case with Craig’s company in the Marines. These details may have created a strong sense of camaraderie that did not crumble under the weight of exceptionally taxing situations. This shared identity may have contributed significantly to their sense of loyalty to each other and the cause, not to mention the trust put in Craig as their leader. Their loyalty in turn and over time assisted in making them a more competent company. Of the Scots-Irish men in Craig’s company, seven, or half of them served under Craig through the duration of the war. Furthermore, at least one of these men, Patrick Crawford of Limerick, Ireland, had been recruited by Craig and fought with him on the Doria. Having had seven men for the better part of eight hard years meant that Craig had a strong core of men who were well trained and seasoned in the ways of

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209 Muster Roll Capt Isaac Craig’s Company of the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment of Artillery March 1, 1778, General return of the Pennsylvania State Regiments of Artillery, Craig Collection, ORSC, and Commanded by Colonel Thomas Proctor, Esq. Taken April 3, 1779, PA Archives, vol. 1, ser. 5, 397. The second largest group of men had been born in the colonies and made up 28 percent of Craig’s men. With names like Riley and Dunn it is possible that some of these men were also Scots-Irish, but because ethnicity may have played such an important role, I have decided to discuss only those people in Craig’s life that are without a doubt of the same ethnic background. Men born in the colonies may have, for one reason or another, been disconnected from factors that united men who had been born in.

210 Muster Roll Capt Isaac Craig’s Company of the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment of Artillery September 1, 1778 Muster Roll Capt Isaac Craig’s Company of the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment of Artillery, January 1, 1779; Muster Roll Capt Isaac Craig’s Company of the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment of Artillery February 1, 1779; Return of Capt. Isaac Craig’s Company of Artillery at Fort Pitt, March 30, 1781; Musters of a detachment of the Fourth Penn’s regiment of artillery, and a detachment of artillery artificers, commanded by Maj. Isaac Craig, February 1, 1782; Musters of a detachment of the Fourth Penn’s regiment of artillery, and a detachment of artillery artificers, commanded by Maj. Isaac Craig December 1, 1782; Musters of a detachment of the Fourth Penn’s regiment of artillery, and a detachment of artillery artificers, commanded by Maj. Isaac Craig March 1, 1783. Craig Collection, CL; Muster Roll, Lieutenant Isaac Craig’s Company of Marines, Philadelphia 19th December, 1775, Clark ed., Naval Documents, 4:174.
This was especially useful to artillery companies whose work was challenging and required much time and training to learn the skills necessary, let alone gain competency.

The importance of having well trained men was of considerable importance as demonstrated by the problems and fears General Washington experienced in the early stages of the war. Later, during the Indian Wars of the 1790’s, whole regiments met with disastrous ends due to turnstile enlistments. In the reverse, Craig had a company of men that fought successfully and demonstrated soldierly conduct, elements which only bolstered his reputation.

On the Battlefield

Craig’s wartime record and contacts are crucial to understanding how Craig’s reputation was improved and his chances of becoming socially mobile increased. There is no evidence stating when significant contact between General Washington and Craig first occurred. However, one of the first places both men’s military careers overlapped was in December of 1776. At that time Craig’s detachment was ordered to join General Washington’s forces along the Delaware River. General Washington had been defeated in New York, but his spirit had not been crushed. In the following short months he called in the troops of generals Nathaniel Greene, Horatio Gates, and John Sullivan. The Philadelphia “Associaters” and the Pennsylvania militia had also joined, along with the General Knox and the artillery, forming an army of about 2,400 men. It was with these forces that Washington planned to attack the 1,400 Hessian troops stationed at Trenton,

\[211\] Charles Royster, A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783, 48, 51.
\[212\] Trussle, Pennsylvania Line, 200.
In late December Craig and his men arrived and crossed the Delaware River into New Jersey with Washington. Once in New Jersey Washington personally led Craig and his men in the surprise attack against the Hessians.

The greater surprise, however, was had by all when the weather turned. The temperature fell to around 20° and at least two feet of wet sleet and snow fell on the troops, disabling their muskets. Due to this chance circumstance, the artillery was given center stage and its men became the heroes of the day. They launched their attack during the early hours of December 26, giving the Hessians hardly enough time to wake and dress let alone form a retaliatory plan. The battle lasted an hour and a half, with Craig’s company in particular supplying the bulk of fire directly in front of the enemy. This allowed other troops to secure the area and thus end the battle. Thirty Hessians fell and 918 were captured, yet not one soul was lost on the Continental side and six new brass cannons and many muskets were seized by the artillery. After so many losses, this victory empowered the Continental Army. Although many men needed shoes and new jackets, the mood had changed and hope had been restored. For Craig, this win meant much more, as his leadership and participation had captured General Washington’s attention.

Moments like these were priceless for Craig as an ambitious officer, but they may have helped enlisted men as well. Reporting back to his commander, Colonel Proctor, after the attack on Trenton, Lieutenant Patrick Duffy remarked, “[I] can assure you the

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artillery got Applause.” Proctor’s companies had been recognized, but the body of the artillery was made up of bombardiers, gunners, and matrosses (the lowest ranking gun crew). These men also sought promotions. It is unlikely that the day of glory at Trenton was owned by the officers alone. As spaces opened in higher ranks, enlisted men could use the reputations they earned to get ahead, as Craig had done. Examples in Craig’s own company include John Harris and Timothy Lane. Both men began their careers as matrosses, yet by 1781 Harris was serving as a corporal. The rank of corporal did not have carried the same authority or social weight as that of a commissioned officer but it was title given that designated a man’s position of authority over regular enlisted men. In an era when social status and deference played such significant rules these types of promotions cannot be dismissed entirely. Lane had been a bombardier, and by 1782 was serving as a corporal.

Additional insight into exactly how a man might be promoted from an enlisted man to an officer was illustrated in a letter written by the first Lieutenant colonel Thomas Forrest. Following the victory at Trenton, Forrest informed Proctor, “Mr. [Robert] McConnell has passed with me as an Officer, and has behaved as such, therefore, as I absolutely stand in need of one, [would] be glad you’d dispatch him.” McConnell had been chosen for his past “behavior” and promoted to second lieutenant by the following march he become a first lieutenant.

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217 Muster Roll Capt Isaac Craig’s Company of the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment of Artillery September 1, 1778; Return of Capt. Isaac Craig’s Company of Artillery At Fort Pitt, March 30, 1781; Musters of a detachment of the Fourth Penn’s regiment of artillery, and a detachment of artillery artificers, commanded by Maj. Isaac Craig. February 1, 1782, Craig Collection, CL.
218 Thomas Forrest to Thomas Proctor, December, 29, 1776, ser 1. vol. v, 143; Return of Officers in the Pennsylvania State Regiment of Artillery Commanded by Thomas Proctor ESQ With date of Commission Promotion Resignation Taken ditto ditto Taken March the 13th 1779, Craig Collection CL.
McConnell’s own military career sheds further light on the possibilities which existed for enlisted men who worked hard and demonstrated officer like qualities in their character to their superiors. In December of 1775, Scots-Irish Robert McConnell had enlisted in Company A of Proctor’s regiment as a gunner before being promoted to a bombardier. During the time that lieutenant colonel Forrest stayed, McConnell had “passed” as an officer, but at the time had only been a sergeant. What is more, McConnell not only received the commission that Forrest had petitioned for as second lieutenant but within three years he had been promoted again in June of 1779 to first lieutenant. From gunner to first lieutenant, McConnell’s pay would have increased from about £3 to £33, an increase of one thousand percent. While it does not seem McConnell surpassed the status of a junior officer before his service was over, his story is certainly a reflection of some of the mobility found by enlisted men.219

Some junior officers were blocked for promotion because of how they behaved during battle. This had been the case of First Lieutenant Worsley Emes. In February 1777, Colonel Proctor made recommendations for promotions based on seniority but pointedly excluded Ames from this list until “he clears up his Character[.] [I]n the action at Trenton, as he is charged [with] neglected duty.” Proctor went on to say that the men he was listing, which included Craig, were, “Gentleman that I have selected from personal Knowledge of their Behavior.”220 In army actions behavior and character were everything on both individual and group levels.

Success marked Craig’s military resume. By early January Craig and his men had been involved in a handful of successful small scrimmages with troops under Lord Cornwallis, leading up to the Battle of Princeton. In the early stages of this battle the artillery was again used as the frontline. As other soldiers scrambled for safety and clear shots, the artillery held back redcoats aggressively trying to regain the upper hand. All the while, most of the American army had taken over a hall at the University of New Jersey, and was firing from within its fortified walls. Those troops remaining outside followed a strategy similar to that of Trenton, moving to surround and capture the enemy. The battle was swift and highly effective, over a hundred Regulars were killed or wounded and 230 captured.\footnote{221 Henry B. Carrington, \textit{Battles of the American Revolution 1775-1781} (New York: Promontory Press, 1881), 288-289.}

By late January 1777 officers and troops alike turned into winter quarters at Morristown. By February, having led an undefeated company, Craig was selected to train two new companies of artillery in weaponry. This was an assignment in which he proved to be very talented.\footnote{222 Journal, 3, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.} His abilities applauded, this project may have helped ensure the approval of his original captain’s commission and back pay. Craig’s success in training may have also assisted him in being selected for laboratory training the following year. Overall, the fact that Craig was being singled out in positive ways shows that he was building his reputation as a leader and someone that higher ranking officers could depend on, whether it be in battle or in the training of men. Craig served as a trainer for almost eight months.

Craig did not face combat again until September 11, 1777. By then Craig and his artillery company were attached to generals Anthony Wayne, Nathanael Greene, and
John Sullivan at Chadd’s Ford, along the Brandywine Creek. It was there that Craig’s luck ran out. Generals Washington and Sullivan had misjudged the situation and taken too great a risk. Battle erupted on three sides of the Continentals as they were overpowered by droves of British regulars, Queens Rangers, and Hessians in numbers so great that a full one third never needed to enter battle. Low-settling fog, confusion, disorder, and death were the prevalent elements of this conflict, as sixty Americans, and around 130 Hessians and Regular troops were killed just after its onset. Under orders, terror-stricken men fled for their lives, including members of the artillery, abandoning their weapons as they ran. Though it was later reported that Proctor’s artillery had “bravely maintained position,” many of his men, including Craig had been terribly wounded. The casualties were so numerous that General Washington later remarked that so many of the artillery’s matrosses had fallen or been wounded that it had left a gaping deficit of men in the regiment.\footnote{223\textit{Pennsylvania Archives}, ser. 2, vol. XI, 191; Journal, 3. Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP; Trussell, \textit{Pennsylvania Line}, 206-207; Carrington, \textit{Battles}, 369-373.}

This deficit was clearly illustrated less than a month later on October 4, 1777. Despite their recent wounds, Craig and his men fought at the Battle of Germantown. By all accounts this was a tactical blunder. On a foggy covered morning Washington, Knox, Sullivan, and Green marched their men through pitch darkness to the British encampment just outside Philadelphia. Unfamiliar with the area, the Hessians and British infantry were at a stumbling loss in the opening stages of the battle, leading most of the these troops to retreat quickly. The advantage was lost as retreating British troops led by Colonel Thomas Musgrave hid themselves in the abandoned house of Chief Justice Benjamin Chew until the Continentals were within their reach before opening fire. Although the
return fire of both the infantry and artillery had little impact on the stone garrison, the Continentals continued for hours, until their ammunition supply was depleted. By afternoon, exhausted Continentals collected their dead, 600 in all compared to the 535 British killed, and retreated to treat the wounded, including at least three members of the Fourth Continental Artillery, in Philadelphia. Just as victory could be owned, so too could defeat. Blame was spread amongst the disagreeing generals. General Adam Stephen was court-martialed just days following the battle for having led while intoxicated. Despite the immense loss of life, Washington refused to see it as an outright defeat but instead considered it a nearly missed victory.\textsuperscript{224} The Battle of Germantown soiled Craig’s perfect record in the army. Although a loss like this had little to do with Craig’s leadership or his men, more losses might have ruined his exceptional record and in turn limited his long term opportunities for social mobility. Due to Craig’s rank he was forced to rely on the strategies and commands of senior officers just as he had also been forced to rely on his troops in the execution of those strategies. Craig’s saving grace in this instance may have come in the fact that General Washington placed blame on a disorganized strategy and therefore generals like Knox could not put the blame on men like Craig, who were below them.

Where Craig served after October is a mystery, suggesting any number of things. Just days after the defeat at Germantown, General Howe took Philadelphia, at which point it is unlikely he would have been offered or accepted furlough. The most likely scenario is that Craig was actively engaged in trying to prevent further ground loss in Philadelphia. Most of Washington’s troops escaped the city in a necessary retreat to avoid

the loss and capture of any more troops. Other men, like Robert Allison, helped in the removal of items that could be taken by the British for their own purposes. So that they could not be melted and reworked into musket balls, Allison and David Evans took charge of the State House bells. Craig may also have participated, like Allison, in the quick recruitment of new men just prior to the fall of Philadelphia. 225 Another possibility may relate to the wound Craig had received at Brandywine. With the high number of wounded men at Germantown, he may have also been re-injured or physically taxed and in need of recovery time. As it was, General Greene, who was unwounded, had been so exhausted during his retreat from Germantown that he had gone to sleep in his saddle as his troops disassembled a fence that his worn horse had been unable to clear.

Combating Social Hierarchy off the Field

In the winter of 1777-1778, Craig was among the half-naked, and starving troops camped at Valley Forge. Reflecting back decades later, Craig contended that the conditions he faced were almost as bad as those endured by his enlisted men; he too had gone days without so much as bread to eat. 226 It may have seemed a bad winter at the time due to the lack of provisions, but according to temperature reports there was nothing drastic about it. From December 18 to January 18 the temperature only dipped below 30° fifteen times. Of these fifteen times the temperature had fallen below 20° only four times. This is not to suggest that Craig, along with the many men who shared this memory were purposefully embellishing the conditions and weather of that winter, yet

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226 Journal, 3. Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
their shared memory of hardship may be indicative of another form of social mobilization.

The winter at Valley Forge may have been a significant event emblematic of Fred Anderson’s theory of wartime bonding. As seen at Brandywine and Germantown, the battlefield was a place of chaos. Winter quarters like Valley Forge, however, offered men like Craig a place with little activity aside from busy work and plenty of bonding time. During these times, men could exchange and revive their tales of triumph in war, reminding those around them of their skill and dedication, possibly even reinforcing their reputation. They were also able to find common ground in commiseration. Both things were important to men like Craig who needed their social position solidified by actual acceptance. Officer solidarity occurred in forming an alliance of exclusive opposition, in other words commiseration and general shared dislike. This could be accomplished in many ways, including the general murmurs against the newly founded Commissary, the Safety Committee, the weather, or other higher ranking officers. One example of this is the case of Thomas Conway. Conway, an Irish-born brigadier general had come to Valley Forge with an arrogant attitude and spent much of his free time directing his superiors, including General Washington, on how they might run a better army. Although many high ranking officers had already found much to dislike about Conway, he was suddenly promoted to major general which outraged the other officers, including Washington, and prompted them to form an alliance against him. A mutual enemy in any form helped to bridge gaps between officers of different rank. Time spent in places like Valley Forge may have helped to open doors for Craig, and men like him, by

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228 Ibid., 125-126, 131.
providing superior officers with the time and ability to find common ground in their
subordinates. Occasions like these may have provided a more personal and effective
opportunity for lower ranking officers to not only be seen but be noticed in a unique way
that was not possible during the panicked rush of battle.

Having passed the winter in just these conditions, Craig emerged in the spring,
having been personally chosen Washington and Knox both to be trained and then to train
troops in the army’s first course in laboratory. Laboratory entailed the “scientific”
production and stockpiling of munitions. This was a pet project of the two generals to
improve the efficiency of the army. Before the army began to establish its own
laboratory, it had been dependent on British munitions left over from colonial stockpiles
or seized during the early stages of the revolution. The army was also forced to import
munitions from abroad. It was important to both Washington and Knox that the
experiment become a success because both men had petitioned Congress for it. The
reality was that the military stores desperately needed to be restocked. Success for the
Continental Army partially depended on its ability to be more self sufficient. With that,
the fact that these two men chose Craig as one of three men to head the project indicates
that they respected him and believed he would be successful.

When Craig arrived in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, for training it quickly became
apparent that he had been well chosen. For the most part, the other men assigned to
training refused to perform such arduous and dirty work. To these men, manning a

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229 Henry Knox Correspondence 1791-1792, Folder 3. Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
230 John Newton Boucher, ed., A Century and a Half of Pittsburgh and Her People, vol. 1. (New York,
Lewis Publishing Company, 1908), 10.
103-105.
powder magazine or laboratory was beneath them. To Craig, it was just a task like many others, something that simply needed to be done. Craig mastered all aspects of laboratory and became a captain in the First Artillery Regiment of the United States.\textsuperscript{233} One man in particular, Captain Isaac Coren, who had been chosen as the directory of the laboratory, outright refused to participate in the training. Soon after Coren’s protest, he became the subject of investigation. His character was not only questioned due to his failure to perform an essential duty but he was also court-martialed.\textsuperscript{234} With Knox supervising him, Craig gave his all. Craig then trained and led a company of skilled artificers, which included Coren’s Company and maintained the army’s artillery park.\textsuperscript{235} This skill was in great demand, but so few men were willing or able to do it that thirty-two years later the army asked Craig to come out of retirement, at the age of seventy, to build up munitions stores for the War of 1812.\textsuperscript{236}

Craig’s hard work brought him to the attention of other notables besides Knox and Washington. General Horatio Gates wrote Craig that he would reap the benefits from completing such a laborious task. He believed Craig’s willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty was a trait commonly found in great men.\textsuperscript{237} Craig’s willingness to do what other men would not was a tremendous example of his work ethic and skill. He did whatever was needed, and he did it well. It is understandable that a man with such a work ethic shone, even among men of higher rank. Although Craig may have had a different social background from Gates and Washington, they all shared the common

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{233} Journal, 3, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
\item \textsuperscript{234} John Blair Linn and William H Egle, ed., \textit{Pennsylvania in the War of the Revolution, Battalions and Line, 1775-1783}, vol. 2 (Harrisburg: Lane S. Hart, 1880), 231.
\item \textsuperscript{235} Wright, \textit{The Continental Army}, 104.
\item \textsuperscript{237} Document K, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
\end{itemize}
goal, an independent United States. For men who dubbed the war the “Glorious Cause,” there was no other job nobler. This in and of itself, gave a far greater worth to Craig’s dedication. Some men may have been able to temporarily lay aside his social stature for the greater good of the nation. In doing so, Craig continued to capture the attention of great men who would assist him later on in his career. Not only did his relentless efforts to learn a difficult and dirty task result in higher pay, later in his military career it ultimately earned him the respect that translated into higher social standing outside of the military.

These same sentiments were strongly illustrated in an address written by General Gates to the artillery park officers, which included Craig, on April 28, 1778. In this letter, Gates clearly stated the overall magnitude of the position they held as artillery officers, as well as the long-term mobility possibilities of this position. What makes this letter more interesting is that he provided insight into the reality understood by Craig and men like him, that the military did offer opportunities for social mobility. The rules which governed traditional social hierarchy were not always present in the military. Outside of a military career, true gentlemen were not employed in hard or dirty labor. Craig as an artisan was a laborer. Prior to the military, the fact that Craig worked with his hands in an occupation where at times he may have gotten dirty were factors that may have always kept him from becoming a solid member of the upper class, let alone a gentleman. Yet in the military, he was rewarded by increasing promotions for his willingness to do exactly that, work hard and get dirty. Yet, in his address Gates made it quite clear that in the military hard work and completing tasks successfully, regardless of what they required, was key to greatness. Furthermore, although Coren was later found innocent in his court-
martial, the fact that there had been a court martial for his unwillingness to perform laboratory, is suggestive of the fact that Gates was not making these statements for the purpose of getting men to work harder, but that he truly believed them. Gates also illustrated his point by comparing laboratory officers and their work with some of the great historical military leaders placed in similar situations as he noted, that “The great Turenne carried a Musket for a twelve month, and the Czar Peter was not satisfied with seeing a ship build, but employed himself as a common laborer in the lowest and most laborious Parts of the Business.”

Thus the military provided exactly the right kind of mobility that Craig, and men like him of modest birth, having a strong work ethic, and high ambition, required. Men like Craig banked on this when they left their lives and everything they had to join. General Gates stressed this point throughout his address and the sentiment was strongest in his closing lines. “We have, from an anxious Desire that you should gain every possible Knowledge of the Laboratory Art, gone farther into this Subject that was necessary, more especially as you were selected by his Excellency General Washington’s express Directions, as Persons who would diligently attend to the Matter you have undertaken. The Board, therefore, can have no Doubt that you will use ever Exertion, as the Eyes of so many are upon you.” Of course, as Knox later reminded Craig, that failure or the incompletion of a task could cost him his well built reputation as “both a soldier and a man of honor.”

Aside from the attention of his superiors, Craig gained other benefits in the artillery. These included an increase in the number of men who deferred to him. His

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238 General Gates to the Artillery Officers, April 28, 1778, *PA Archives*, vol. 11 ser. 2, 198.
239 General Gates to the Artillery Officers, April 28, 1778, *PA Archives*, vol. 11 ser. 2, 199
new company would have included around fifty men, twenty more than had previously been the case and included new ranks, sergeants, cadets, and artificers.\(^{241}\) There were monetary benefits as well. The pay Craig received for the successful completion of laboratory training was $408.00.\(^{242}\) This meant that aside from the traditional pay he received for his time spent in training, he was also awarded a sum equivalent to what he would had been paid for more than three months of service as a captain. From that point forward, Craig was entitled to extra pay, set at £16 a month for commanding artillery. This was a considerable bonus as it was over three times the pay of some of Craig’s gunners and almost twice as much as the total monthly pay of his corporals and matrosses.\(^{243}\) From this it can be seen that having been chosen for laboratory training had been quite beneficial for Craig, socially and economically.

Having finished his work in Carlisle by May of 1779, Craig waited for new orders as the commander at Philadelphia’s Mud Island or Fort Mifflin.\(^{244}\) Much had changed, Craig was no longer a man struggling to shake off the chains of a carpenter’s identity. Instead he had become a man capable of commanding a significant post such as Fort Mifflin. Craig was now a respected officer, and his skill and capability as a leader meant others kept him in mind for promotions such as the vacancy created by the death of Lieutenant Colonel John Martin Strobagh. General Knox understood that protocol required he submit the name of the next oldest major to General Washington to fill Strobagh’s position so he submitted the name of Christian Holmer, a major in the First

\(^{241}\) Return of Capt. Isaac Craig's Company of Artillery at Fort Pitt, March 30, 1782, Craig Collection, CL.  
\(^{242}\) December 10, 1778 Papers of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789, LC.  
\(^{243}\) Payroll Pa Regiment Artillery for Detachment of Artillery Artificers Commanded by Major Isaac Craig for the month of February 1782; Craig Collection CL. While this source is dated four years after Craig became commandant of artillery, and has Craig listed as a major, it is applicable none the less as written directly beside the extra pay it states that the authorization of this pay was given in March 1778 by Congress.  
\(^{244}\) Board of War to President Reed, May 13, 1779, PA Archives, vol. 7, ser. 1, 397.
Continental Artillery. Knox, however, afterwards informed General Washington he was unable to recommend Holmer other than by age due to his “universal character, which places his qualifications as an officer far below mediocrity.” Seeing that Washington was willing to override seniority, Knox recommended Craig. General Washington, however, awarded the commission to Thomas Forrest.

Had this move been successful, Craig would have skipped two ranks in the process. It should be noted that Craig was not the eldest captain in his regiment. Although Craig was forced to wait at least two more years before his next promotion, eyes were already upon him. Instances such as these illustrate the conflict between rank and class taking place at that time. As had been the case before, Craig’s skill had convinced Knox to adopt a new outlook, above what was traditional, on whom was worthy of promotion. The opinions of men like Knox, who were also from and lower middle class did not see things as black and white as men like General Washington. The rationale behind a stringent rank system where seniority ruled over skill did not make sense to men like Knox. Furthermore, the fact that there were some officers that had come from the lower and middle lower class, like Knox and Craig, may have helped disperse opportunities to junior officers and enlisted men who demonstrated exceptional skill. Men like General Washington were intent on recreating old world ways in the military’s institutional framework. This is not to suggest that General Washington was unyielding to new ways, he believed in rewarding merit, but he preferred to promote men of substantial social standing to senior ranks. The unique environment created by the

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245 George Washington to Continental Congress War Board, May 18, 1779; George Washington to Continental Congress War Board, June 6, 1779, George Washington Papers, 1741-1799, LC.
Revolution, however, placed tradition at odds with the actual need for skilled men, and created opportunities for lower and lower middle class men.

*Long Knives and Loud Cannons*

It was not merely the men or the social rules which governed them that were changing, but the war itself had also begun to change. Understanding these changes is essential in order to recognize the importance of the campaigns Craig and his men were selected for and the overall significance their success held to the war effort. During the summer of 1779, the Continental Army defensively began to move west. As part of this move, Craig and his men received marching orders and left for Fort Pitt, on the edge of Indian country to await further instructions. Fort Pitt had become headquarters for the western theater of the Revolutionary War. At the time, it was the closest American fort to the British western posts of Detroit and Fort Niagara. From Fort Niagara, the enemy had been distributing horses, guns, and ammunition along with other supplies throughout the Indian nations of the Ohio Country, western Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Kentucky. These native warriors made up the majority of British fighting power in the West and were highly successful in carrying out raids. For the British, the native warriors proved valuable in attacking supply trains as well as raging vehement and brutal attacks on civilian settlements. With the greatest portion of American munitions supplied to eastern forces, the army was unable to keep any western military posts fully supplied, let alone adequately protect civilian settlements. It was for these reasons that in April 1779 General Washington ordered General John Sullivan to launch an assault against the Six Nations of the Iroquois. The objective of Sullivan’s assignment was to create a buffer
zone between settlements and Indian nations as well devastate individual tribes so
completely that they could no longer continue to cripple the Continental Army.\textsuperscript{246}

General Washington’s orders were short and direct, destroy the crops, villages, and men
of the Six Nations tribes.

Though General Washington’s orders may have seemed extreme, the fact of the
matter was that many of the tribes that formed the Six Nations were connected with the
British. These nations did have their own vested interest in attacking settlements
throughout these regions, namely forcing Europeans off their land. Yet, because they
fought alongside, or at the behest of the British, as well as in strategic campaigns that had
been assigned by the British, and accepted goods for the payment of these services, they
were in active military alliance with Great Britain. Thus when the Continental Army
attacked specific groups, it was not only out of racial hate but as a military action against
a deliberate enemy. The preceding year the western frontier had witnessed a campaign of
terror launched by the Seneca in particular. The slaughter of civilians and the destruction
of countless settlements, including the Wyoming Valley massacre, had not just been
carried out by Six Nation warriors alone, but by warriors led by British officers including
Majors Joseph Brant and John Butler under the British flag.\textsuperscript{247} What made a
counterattack all the more necessary was the fact that information from Canada reported
that much larger attacks would be sweeping the frontier within the coming year.\textsuperscript{248}

With each western battle fought more ground was lost. According to the American’s strategy

\textsuperscript{246} George Washington to John Sullivan, September 15, 1779, Cook, 383. In this letter Washington
reiterates Sullivan’s orders because of their importance, by the date it is obvious that campaign had
already begun by that point.

\textsuperscript{247} Glenn F. Williams, \textit{Year of the Hangman: George Washington’s Campaign Against the Iroquois}
(Yardley, Pa.: Westholme, 2005), 92-96.

\textsuperscript{248} Ibid., 204.
time to act was at hand and the orders given were as extreme as the acts to which they retaliated. The Sullivan campaign was not an attack against Native Americans but a wartime strategy directed at enemy forces. While individual men and, in some cases, companies may have taken matters into their own hands and attacked neutral Natives, this was not necessarily the objective of the official military campaign.

It was under these circumstances that Craig and his men set out with a collected force of over 3,500 men, under Colonel Proctor and General Edward Hand. They moved up the Allegheny River with a train of 120 boats carrying the artillery, supplies, and some infantry. With only six six pounders, six four pounders, four three pounders, field guns, two five and half inch howitzer, and a cohorn mortar, the function of the artillery during the march to Niagara was to provide support to the land troops as well as provide them cover in the event of retreat. While the artillery had to ensure that munitions did not fall into enemy hands, their abilities and importance was demonstrated during battle.

The artillery’s impact is best seen in the similarities and differences recorded in the journal entries of Dr. Jabez Campfield, Lieutenant Colonel Henry Dearborn, Lieutenant Colonel Adam Hubley and Lieutenant Erkuries Beatty, men who shared the battlefield with Craig and his company during the battle at Newtown in late August 1779. Piecing together the individual information given by each man, the artillery’s significance can be seen as having almost as much impact as it had at Trenton. On August 29, the Continental army had gone up against an army of between 800 and 1,000 men, made up mostly of Indian warriors. The battle commenced when these warriors began “fire[ing] on [the infantry] as they raised the Indian yell or war whoop” and charged the

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Continental Army. The riflemen instantly responded by firing upon the rushing warriors, only managing to create a “scattered” buffer zone between themselves and the enemy. Although “heavy fire ensued…little damage was done on either side.” The warriors had little fear as though they regarded the showering musket balls as little more than an annoyance. That said, as soon as the artillery had taken its position at the core of the formation, the tide turned as it was the “cannonade that immediately” sent the warriors running to the wooded hills. They fled so quickly that they left without taking a good deal of their own supplies. The battle was over with few casualties and Craig and his men were once again heroes of the day. The artillery had not only been at the core of the strategy and formation but was seen as a substantial power in this campaign.

Proctor and his men were significant in the first victory of the Sullivan campaign, the battle of Newtown, but Proctor and his men had also destroyed the town of Newtynchanning. Though this action may rightly be looked on as an atrocity now, in terms of Craig’s goal to obtain social mobility these types of triumphs were important. When General Washington received word of this first victory, he would have been quite pleased with Craig and other members of Proctor’s regiment. Less than three months following Newtown, with only forty casualties the Sullivan campaign destroyed forty-one

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256 Appendix to the Address of Rev. David Craft, Ibid., 380.
of the forty-three Iroquoian towns between Wyoming and Niagara, including the western Iroquois capital at Geneseo, and over 160,000 bushels of vegetables.  

*The Sled Strike*

With a new list of victories to tout, Craig and his men retired for the winter most likely near or at the artillery park in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. While Craig may have used previous downtime to build his reputation with higher ranking officers, this winter was spent with some of those very same officers calling on Craig for aid. Around the same time Craig had settled in for winter, General Washington and General Knox, along with the twenty-five-hundred troops, had turned into their winter quarters at Morristown, New Jersey. Morristown, however, was a weather-beaten camp in which food was scarce. If there had ever been a horrible winter for the Continental Army, this was it. In January temperatures registered over 19° only once, and in eleven days the temperature fell below zero. Without provisions, troops would continue to go hungry and be vulnerable to an enemy attack. As these conditions worsened, so did the weather. Two nor’easters pummeled the Morristown troops, blocked passages, and imprisoned what little supplies remained under four feet of snow. In the face of calamity, the troops did not stay sitting ducks but looked to the large British encampment seemingly cut off from all communication on Staten Island.

Although settling in to winter quarters was normally an indication that fighting would not resume until the thaw, this situation called for immediate action, and so on

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January 14, 1780, General Knox called on a man he could count on for help, Isaac Craig. The orders were of such a pressing nature that Knox feared that the smallest leak of information would ruin the entire campaign and so forbade Craig from discussing it with anyone but his next contact. Craig and his company, along with their artillery, were to report to Elizabethtown, New Jersey, around twenty miles from Morristown, to embark on a secret mission under Major General William Alexander, also know as Lord Stirling. As the temperatures continued to drop, the Hudson and East River were frozen still. Using this meteorological nightmare to their benefit, the secret mission went into action. Craig led the artillery and Stirling led the infantry in a strike via sleds across the iced-over bay to capture supplies.

Unfortunately, due to inaccurate information and frostbitten troops, the assignment was not as successful as had been hoped. Strategically, the attack fell through due to inaccurate information and outward mutiny. Some of the unpaid troops stationed at Morristown refused to fight until an agreement was reached regarding their pay. While the attack did not achieve the desired results, the determination on Craig’s part had not faltered. Although this mission is seen by most historians as a failure, it was somewhat successful. Due to the destitute state that the winter had created, Washington’s only goal for this mission had been to raid supplies, he had not intended on gaining ground or retaking Staten Island. In gaining some provisions this mission was in fact successful and should not be minimized, especially considering that the troops executing the orders marched over the river with stomachs full of air or at best bark, leather, and

263 Journal, 7, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
264 Journal, 7, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
other items absent in nutritional value and guns loaded with some of the last ammunition available. While some historians have placed failure on the fact that the plunder had been small, it may be argued that anything was better than the nothing they had on hand.  

For Craig there was a definite success to celebrate. If anything, his use on this mission had illustrated that he had proven himself a good leader to the superior officers who called on him. While Washington was unable to get his men to act on their own behalf, Craig did. Craig’s men may have even been forced to leave a much more comfortable situation to march from Pennsylvania to New Jersey and then Staten Island through deplorable conditions all the while. Furthermore, as some other artillery companies from the same regiment were experiencing pay problems, Craig’s men may have been as well but did not rebel against their leader. Instead, they followed him into a winter wasteland, to retrieve the supplies of troops and superior officers who had demonstrated their own trust and respect of Craig in choosing him for this mission.

The high regard in which senior officers held Craig proved critical in expanding the opportunities he found. This respect in turn made the selection of Craig and his men for imperative missions increasingly important to Craig’s social mobility. As demonstrated in the following chapter, the success of these special campaigns continued to help Craig as they showcased Craig’s skill and in doing so enabled him to earn promotions and increase his pay.

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265 George Washington to James Caldwell, January 21, 1780, George Washington Papers, 1741-1799: Series 3b Varick Transcripts, LC,
Chapter 4: Opportunities on the Western Front

In 1780 a short phase of reorganization followed the brutal winter and mutiny scandal at Morristown. Due to their good conduct and having had not participated in the mutiny, Craig’s men, were rewarded by General Knox with a short furlough in Philadelphia as well as a chance to get their affairs in order. Following the Sullivan campaign, violence had erupted in an increased burst of white and Indian savagery in the Ohio Country. Although substantial battles were still being fought along the eastern seaboard, the western frontier had increasingly become a major stage of action. The previous winter, just as Craig and his men were sledding across the Hudson River, a small band of Natives and British officers, Alexander McKee, Matthew Elliot, Simon, and James Girty had been trekking through the wilderness, visiting Shawnee and Mingo towns to ensure that Native warriors still planned on maintaining their British alliance for attacks in the coming spring. With the promise of goods in return for their participation, both the Shawnee and Mingo reasserted their intentions to destroy the rebels for the British army and simultaneously regain their land. This was a serious threat to the war effort as well as any plans for antebellum expansion.

For the British, North America was important as it provided a plentitude of raw goods and resources, yet for many lower and lower middle class colonists North America represented social independence in land ownership. Winning the war but being restricted east of the Alleghenies was not an option. On top of this, fighting Native Americans presented new challenges. Therefore, the western front created a new demand for a select group of men like Craig and his company, who had a strong track record of campaign success and a strong foundation in the artillery. Native warriors despised the explosive
quake of the cannons and large artillery guns, making companies like Craig’s the most effective to fight the British allied Natives and defend the civilian settlements on the frontier. Thus the war, which was already being fought in two theaters, in the East and South, spilled full force into the West.  

For this reason in April 1780, by orders of General Washington, Craig got ready to lead his weathered men back to Fort Pitt in the wilderness of western Pennsylvania.  

This move offered Craig considerably more opportunities. In the earlier phase of the war Craig had fought alongside many men of high rank. The fact that these men were capable of creating and offering Craig opportunities to advance had been a sure advantage. That said, there had also been a down side to serving in the eastern theater. At any given time Craig had been surrounded by dozens of officers of equal rank, all competing for the attention of the same small group of senior officers. In Craig’s regiment alone there had been nine other companies with their own captains. This had watered down Craig’s individual importance. For most of the early campaigns Craig’s personal significance had been little, he was in fact a cog, like the soldiers, in a nicer uniform perhaps, but replaceable nonetheless. Even so, he had done well for himself, as he had caught the eye of senior officers and demonstrated he was worth the promotions, artillery training, and the move to Fort Pitt.

Craig could do better at Fort Pitt, a place where at most there were ten other officers stationed at any one given time. In such a situation, Craig at times contacted superior officers like General Washington directly. In this, being moved to Fort Pitt

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provided Craig the choice to demonstrate his skills in a fashion that continued to open opportunities to him. Sharing an outpost with a relatively small number of superior officers, Craig may have created an environment that helped to foster closer relationships between ranks. Just as Craig’s Scots-Irish heritage may have been a binding force during the eastern campaign it also may have helped him bond with the senior officers stationed at Fort Pitt. The majority of these officers were also Scots-Irish Presbyterians and included generals Edward Hand, William Irvine, and Richard Butler. In addition to these men Craig was still reporting to more senior, then himself, Scot-Irish Presbyterians, General Knox and Colonel Proctor.

Aside from being a Scots-Irish Presbyterian, Craig also belonged to the first Freemason military lodge in western Pennsylvania. By 1784 Craig, General Hand, and Colonel Proctor had all served as Worshipful Master of the lodge, whose membership was considered quite large. That each of these men held a different military rank but also served in that role suggests that they viewed each other as members of the same class, a much less structured grouping than rank. If these men were still operating, wholly, under the social system of rank, deference would have made it unlikely, if not impossible, for a man of lower rank to reign over superiors, in a social association. This may point to the fact that society was moving from a hierarchy based on rank to that of class during the Revolution. This may also explain why Craig, as a captain, had been able to do more than interact with, but befriend, and gain respect from the superior officers he served with at Fort Pitt. Furthermore, membership in the Freemasons may have assisted officers like Craig by providing a social outlet and network opportunity in active fellow Mason members like General John Sullivan. This would have been especially true during the
time Craig had been voted in to serve as lodge master. In this position, Craig was placed in an office higher than all other lodge members, which included men with both better social and economic standing. Being a Mason alone signified equality among all members but the fact that Craig had been voted to lead them may also demonstrate the high regard he had earned from his superiors. Craig’s membership as a mason may have even provided an almost instant brotherhood amongst members, similar to that which Robert Patterson had found among his Philadelphia brethren.268

An Officer and a Speculator

Preparing for the march west, Craig saw to the needs of his company. Although Timothy Pickering informed Craig that funds were low yet again and that he could not provide enough provisions for the trip, he was able to issue the company their pay. He said that provisions were to be provided along the march by forced purchase or seizure from the civilian population. Craig also received authorization to add eight additional men to his company.269 At over two hundred miles, the march was physically demanding as well as dangerous. The trails, passes, and roads that Craig had to travel in order to transport the artillery were well known to both the British troops and Native warriors and thus the journey was dangerous. As it was, during his march a group of around thirty Wyandot warriors had been seen skulking in the region just outside of Fort Pitt.270

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These warriors, and other groups like them, had been terrorizing Fort Pitt and the outlying area, pushing the commander of the fort, Colonel Daniel Brodhead, to urge Craig to make good time: “as the enemy are very troublesome to the settlement, and it is become highly expedient for me to counteract their designs by some offensive operation, I must request you to exert yourself as much as possible to reach this point before the 1st of June.”

Brodhead’s particularly troublesome enemies were the Shawnee and Wyandot. Between March and April of that year over forty settlers on the Ohio River near Pittsburgh had fallen victim to Indian attacks. The relentless Indian attacks of that spring had forced settlers in Pittsburgh and the outlying region to head for protection in already overcrowded forts that did not have enough munitions to defend themselves. Colonel Brodhead had high spirits and a biting desire to retaliate, but ego and want did not make up for his lack of artillery. General Brodhead was forced to wait for Craig’s reinforcements before his Indian troubles could be resolved.

On June 29, 1780, loaded down with cannons and forage Craig delivered his men, and their artillery safely to Fort Pitt. Fort Pitt had been built by the British during the Seven Years’ War in 1759 and may have been the largest British fortification built in North America. Aside from the more mobile fur traders, during the twenty-one years after the fort had been built, the region proved too unstable for any real population growth. When Craig arrived in Pittsburgh in the summer of 1780 the settlement had roughly less than four hundred residents, many of whom lived in crude earthen floored

271 Brodhead to Craig, May 13, 1780, PA Archives, vol. 11, ser. 2, 204.
272 Butterfield, ed., Washington-Irvine Correspondence, 47.
Pawlikowski, 117

Pittsburgh offered little comfort or luxury in those early days, still Craig recognized the seeds of potential there and made the decisions that at the war’s conclusion, he would not return to Philadelphia but stay in Pittsburgh.

Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Bayard, who became Craig’s first postwar business partner, may have played some role in Craig’s decision to relocate. Bayard, who had been orphaned from a middling Huguenot family of merchants in Maryland, was one of the first people Craig met on his return to Fort Pitt. As one of the first relationships Craig established in Pittsburgh, it became symbolic of the many relationships Craig built with men of higher standing and greater power to wield. At their introduction Bayard was second in command of the fort, yet as business and campaigns took commanding officers from the fort regularly, Bayard’s rank was given considerably more weight than normally would have been the case.

On the surface Philadelphia and Pittsburgh offered similar opportunities. Craig had strong, even powerful relationships with several men in Philadelphia, including his business partners Allison and Bringhurst. Although Craig was still unable to use his Clover Hill tract, technically he did own land in both areas. Land in urban Philadelphia, however, was already developed making additional tracts harder to obtain. Pittsburgh on the other hand was almost a clean slate. The actions taken by Craig soon after his arrival in Pittsburgh, suggests that the availability of land was the deciding factor for his postwar relocation. Craig had been given insider information with regard to the Pennsylvania-Virginia borderline dispute. This was significant information, especially if Craig received

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275 Journal, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.

it before the general public had. Craig seemed to understand the opportunities of timeliness. Although he was still actively leading an artillery company he began to cultivate investment opportunities, beginning with the land.

Even before settling the land he already owned, Craig contacted Allison in Philadelphia with the proposition of speculating land in what was then considered Westmoreland County. The Pennsylvania-Virginia border dispute and “Indian problem” were negligible issues in comparison to the potential of abundant affordable land. As revealed in their exchange of letters, it was obvious that both men understood the problems and risks associated with purchasing land at the beginning stages of settlement, yet both were interested and excited in spite of them. In one emotionally charged letter, Allison extended his sympathies to Craig, who was in fact expecting to be attacked by warriors at any moment. Aside from that, Allison was happy to inform Craig that he might have already lined up a buyer for land outside the fort’s walls. In closing however, Allison noted he had heard nothing new with regard to the fate of the land dispute, so no clear end was in sight. This was an interesting note indicating that if Craig had received insider information, it was in limited circulation. Allison, himself, was in close contact with a member of the Penn family, James Allen, whose own interests had been caught in the fate of the boundary line, yet he knew nothing.277

The fact that neither man saw Natives or the borderline dispute as problems large enough to squelch business perspectives or impact the value of the land may illustrate the high risk involved in frontier speculation. Neither Pittsburgh nor Philadelphia offered stable investment opportunities. Pittsburgh may have had Natives, but Philadelphia had its own share of problems, which according to Allison included the war, inflation, and

277 Robert Allison to Craig, October 19, 1780, ORSC; Robert Allison to Craig, January 20, 1781, CL.
Regardless of location, during the Revolution people had to cope with chaos and instability. Opportunity coexisted with destabilizing factors and getting ahead meant choosing the problematic situation more likely to be resolved in one’s own favor. Men like Craig may have been able to see themselves gaining control in situations that pitted them against a group they considered socially and ethnically inferior, namely Native Americans. Yet as previously stated, in large urban cities men like Craig faced powerful adversaries such as the upper-class politicians and businessmen who had an edge in competition. These were problems that men like Craig recognized and knew could not be resolved with force.

Following his proposition to Allison, Craig used most of the $1,540 he had withdrawn from his account in Philadelphia in order to have Clover Hill surveyed. It is important to note, however, that this money had probably included money earned from his carpentry business, and the prize money he got as a Marine. If Craig had not had this combination of funds to spend on the survey, he would have lost the tract of land and the investment opportunities it presented when the Land Office finally settled the boundary dispute with Virginia in 1781. Men less fortunate than Craig, who for whatever reason were unable to save money or were waiting on late pay had nothing with which to invest. Little or no capital meant these men had less of a chance to create opportunities for themselves. The timeliness of prewar or end-of-war speculation was lost to these men. This factor alone prevented mobilization for these men and they did not have the options

278 Ibid.
279 Letter from Charles Levit January 15, 1779, List of surveys made and returned to the office of the Late Col William Crawford amount of fees due on Each Survey Sept 25 1786 West Augusto, according to these surveys similar sized tracks cost about $1,300. Craig Collection, CL. Harper, *The Transformation of Western Pennsylvania*, 9.
Craig did. For Craig his earlier work had begun to payoff. By using the money he had previously earned, he was also able to begin creating more opportunities for himself.

Trying to conduct business while fighting a war was complicated to say the least. The necessary individuals, surveyors, attorneys, and the land office were scattered across great distances, making communication slow and difficult. Making matters worse, Craig was forced to leave Pittsburgh on campaign. In the meantime, however, the surveyor, Robert Dulls, examined Clover Hill in much the same manner of the many other surveys he had completed. When he was done he drew up two land surveys. One of which was sent to John Lukens at the Land Office and the other to Mr. Bentley, the proxy Craig used to handle his affairs while he was absent. In a letter describing the survey, Mr. Bentley reiterated Dull’s findings to Craig. Dull had described the land as overgrown with brush and had yet to be developed. He had located a small spring, along with a few other natural landmarks and used them to describe the boundaries of Craig’s tract. He also suggested where roads should be laid down and relayed to Craig that Jonathan Lane, one of Craig’s own matrosses, owned the only adjoining property. Lastly Mr. Bentley, in a tone similar to that of a modern-day home inspector who had found termites, reported that Dull had found a small infestation of squatters residing on Craig’s land, namely Edward Richardson and the family of Thomas Hamilton. Craig might have been able to take action against these squatters, but that probably would have been long and impractical. So as a business man, he resolved the issue through a deal that benefited at least one of the squatters as well as himself.

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280 Letter from Mr. Bentley to Isaac Craig, August 2, 1783. Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
281 Land survey by Richard Dull, filled 1782, Clover Hill, Property Folder 2, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
As Craig was still in the army and fighting a war, he could not personally develop that land. On the other hand, if he allowed it to be cultivated by squatters, he could lose the rights to the land. Yet the squatters were not in a position to purchase their own land, hence the reason they had been squatting on his land in the first place. Thus Mr. Bentley drew up and offered a mutually binding indenturement to each man. Though both Richardson and Hamilton both agreed to the indenture, only Hamilton ended up signing the contract. Through this agreement Hamilton was to have the use of two hundred and fifty acres of the land for five years. In return for not having to pay rent, Hamilton was to clear and fence off a portion of the tract to be rented by a John Williams. On the cleared section he would begin to grow corn from seed purchased by Craig. While most of his harvest would go to Craig, Hamilton was free to do as he chose with the rest. As part of his contract Hamilton agreed to work during the off season for another man, Timothy Meadows, who would be renting off of Craig on another section of the same tract. With what little free time Hamilton might have had left, the rest of the land was his to use and develop freely. If Hamilton failed to meet these obligations he could be forced to leave the land and all he had grown immediately. If Hamilton met his obligations to Craig in five years, he would own one hundred and fifty acres of the land with the option to buy more land. Throughout the rest of Craig’s life he replicated this same pattern in Pennsylvania and New York, purchasing land, finding squatters, and indenturing them with great success.

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282 Indenture. April 1781. Folder 4, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
283 Articles of Agreement between Isaac Craig, John O’Hara and Jacob Goodwin, May 2, 1802, Deny-O’Hara papers MSS# 0051 Box 9, Folder 2, HSWP; Abbot and Scott Families, Judgment, June 10, 1811, Deny-O’Hara papers MSS# 0051 Box 9, Folder 2, HSWP; Articles of Agreement, James Ohara, Isaac Craig, John McClain Neal McClain, April 2, 1802, Deny-O’Hara papers MSS# 0051 Box 9, Folder 2, HSWP; Isaiah Jones Agreement, June 4, 1824, Deny-O’Hara papers MSS# 0051 Box 9, Folder 2, HSWP; John Bevins to Craig, January 12, 1798, Craig Collection, CL; John Bevins to Craig, January 19, 1798,
In his first business transaction on the frontier, Craig joined the ranks of the majority of frontier land owners and became a landlord. This relationship begs the question: as Craig transitioned further into becoming a business man was he simply exploiting others as he contracted for their labor or was he creating economic opportunities for others? The answer is both. Craig had created a situation by which his land was being taken care of, as well as being developed, while he was stationed at Fort Pitt. Through indentures Craig guaranteed, somewhat, labor for five years. This benefited Craig who was then able to concentrate on the war, but it restricted Hamilton’s flexibility, agency, and in turn the opportunities he was able to accept during his five-year indenture. Craig was also providing land for Hamilton to utilize for both monetary gain as well as self subsistence. By becoming indentured, Hamilton was brought into the bounds of social conformity and a proper economic relationship. Hamilton was protected by the contract he had signed with Craig. He could not be ejected from the property, whereas, as a squatter he risked losing everything by developing land he did not legally own. The option to buy more land was also in Hamilton’s favor as he would be purchasing it at a rate that had been fixed five years earlier than when he actually purchased it. Men who participated in land speculation banked on the fact that the land they purchased was going to increase in value. By successfully completing his indenture, Hamilton was guaranteed that even if the value of land did increase, he had at least one opportunity to pay for it at a discounted rate. It should also be noted that Craig and

Craig Collection, CL; Craig to John Bevins, February 3, 1798, Craig Collection, CL; Craig to Benjamin Montgomery, February 1798, Craig Collection, CL; Craig to William Peck, February 12, 1798, Craig Collection, CL; Craig to Alexander Addison, March 1798, Craig Collection, CL; Craig to William Peck, September 30, 1798. Craig Collection, CL.
Hamilton’s relationship did not seem tense or strained for over the years Hamilton and other members of his family were employed seasonally by Craig. Furthermore, Hamilton eventually did well for himself. By 1798, along with Craig, he was managing a large city project to build piers on the Allegheny River.284

Craig, like other frontier entrepreneurs, used the workforce regionally available to him. Increasingly, Craig’s own ability to become socially and economically mobile became hinged on the work that his labor force did. Hamilton’s work supplemented Craig’s wages as well as helped Craig move closer to being able to achieve his larger goals. That said, Craig’s larger goals required a larger workforce that included mixed groups of laborers, including slaves, hired help, hired-out help, and indentured laborers, in these arrangements labor was exploited unevenly at different levels. Just as the master carpenter over Craig had been dependent on Craig’s abilities to supplement his own income, within the next few years the corn, and later wheat, Hamilton supplied Craig allowed Craig to begin perfecting his recipes for whiskey and gin. This enabled Craig to eventually open up a large commercial distillery. Just two years later in January of 1784 Craig was employing at least eleven other people for wages that totaled more than he Craig himself was making for two months of services as a major in the Army.285 This arrangement not only assisted in social mobility, it also demonstrated a strong reciprocal dependence between superiors and subordinates in social and labor relations.

Farther Into the Woods

285 1784, Receipt for Payment. Miscellaneous 1773- 1868, and Undated Folder 9, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
As Hamilton began working Craig’s farm, General Washington made continued use of Craig’s abilities for the war effort. In March of 1781, due to Craig’s past laboratory training, General Washington sent Craig to Carlisle to restock Fort Pitt’s depleted munitions. On his return to Fort Pitt, Craig found that Washington had personally selected him to accompany George Rogers Clark on a campaign from Pittsburgh to Detroit. According to the intelligence sent to Fort Pitt by way of David Zeisberger, a Moravian missionary living among the Ohio Country Delaware, British Indian Agent Matthew Elliott was in command of 250 warriors and aimed at attacking forts Pitt, Henry, and McIntosh. The main objective of Clark’s campaign was to end such attacks by capturing Detroit. Detroit was a strategic target because it was the British central hub for arming Natives who then terrorized the frontier. Thus this expedition could prove an essential victory for the western theater of the Revolution.

Deeming the objective vital, General Washington made every attempt to see the campaign fully supplied with men and provisions. For this express purpose Craig was sent back to Carlisle to acquire more trained artificers and military stores. When Craig was unable to obtain all he that was needed there, he was authorized to collect additional stores in Philadelphia. Although Craig’s direct superior, Colonel Brodhead, disagreed

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287 Craig to Washington, April 15, 1781; Washington to Craig, April 25, 1781, The George Washington Papers 1741-1799, LC
288 Fitzpatrick, 241 and 431.
289 General Clark to Craig, March 23, 1781. Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL
290 Craig to Washington, April 15, 1781; Washington to Craig, April 25, 1781, The George Washington Papers 1741-1799, LC
with the campaign strategy, General Washington ordered Brodhead to release Craig and his men to Clark on their return from Carlisle.\textsuperscript{291}

One of the most crucial requests General Washington made was for funds through the Board of War. Although funding issues continued to plague the war effort, the board approved $19,024 for munitions and other supplies as well as the payment of Craig and the men he was to lead down the Ohio with Clark. What makes this request all the more important, however, is the reason given for its approval. If the troops Craig needed were forced into a campaign without being paid, the board feared that these enlisted men would simply “refuse to march.”\textsuperscript{292} In some ways this consideration may be seen as a mark against Craig’s leadership, as it indicates he may not have been able to push his men into action for an expedition without pay. Craig understood when and how far he was able to push his men before they would rebel. This demonstrates that once again Craig had earned, due to his skill as a leader, recognition as a preferred officer and thus Craig was selected to lead the artillery in significant campaigns.\textsuperscript{293} This was an empowering position for both Craig and his men, who were then able to negotiate for their pay. Just as enlisted men had the ability to earn recognition during the battle at Trenton, Craig’s company was now in a position to experience more battlefield notoriety. Furthermore, participating in important campaigns may have also entitled Craig to higher quality soldiers as his company increased in numbers. As has already been discussed, having a company built of skilled men in many instances was the difference between success and failure.

\textsuperscript{291} Edgar W. Hassler, \textit{Old Westmoreland; A History of Western Pennsylvania During the Revolution} (Baltimore:Clearfield,1999), 132.
\textsuperscript{292} Papers of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789, May 8, 1781, LC.
\textsuperscript{293} George Rogers Clark to Craig, March 23 1781. CL.
Besides being needed for an essential mission deemed especially dangerous, belonging to a successful company may have also helped Craig’s troops as well. For all the funding and supply problems the Board of War had from 1780 through 1782, Craig’s men were issued their annual supplies seemingly with no problem. In many cases additional items were needed. As was common for most companies, troops under Craig regularly went through three or four pairs of shoes in a year. They also needed replacement for other equipment as John Wilkes lost his canteen, and both James Burn and Peter Tybout needed new linen vests. These items were routinely replaced without hardship for Craig’s while at the same time General Irvine complained that he was having difficulties shoeing his troops. As it was, the officer in charge of supplying clothing to the regiments, Francis Swaine, bitterly protested Craig’s, who due to cut backs was now also over seeing military supplies, ability to procure goods for his troops. He had been directed by President Joseph Reed to furnish only artillery officers with new clothing, not their troops. Yet General Arthur St. Clair had trumped this directive and Craig, whom Swaine claimed was commanding Proctor’s regiment himself, had come to claim his troop’s supplies. What seemed to anger Swaine all the more, and further illustrates that Craig was being treated differently from the rest of the artillery, was that after the incident Proctor had bragged about the matter. In addition to this special treatment, the Board of War had found a way to pay troops they might not have been planning on paying right away. What also might be taken from this is well supplied and paid troops are also troops that are more willing and able to work more efficiently than those who have been forced to go without. In the end these troops together may have outperformed

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294 Return of Clothing Delivered to a Detachment of the Pennsylvania Artillery under Craig 1780, 1781 and 1782. Craig Collection, CL. William Irvine to Joseph Reed, February 6, 1780, PA Archives, vol. VIII ser. 1.

295 Francis Swaine to Joseph Reed, January 6, 1780, PA Archives, vol. VIII, ser. 1.
other companies and earned a reputation for success. This reputation in turn reaffirmed the skill and character of leaders like Craig.

It was under these circumstances in August 1781 that the Clark campaign set out from Fort Pitt. Craig led his artillery company, now about sixty men, as well as men from the Pennsylvania militia, and Joseph Crockett’s Virginia militia, including the Greenbrier militia under Clark to Louisville. As had become standard practice, the objective of Craig and the artillery was first to protect the armaments that they were transporting and second to protect the expedition as a whole. This was no easy task as the British-paid Native warriors stalked the troops throughout the campaign. Craig’s men required alert keen eyes as well as an intimidating presence to keep these warriors at bay. In one instances, as the expedition passed the mouth of the big Miami River, 90 warriors led by Joseph Brant and George Girty were just beyond the sandbar waiting for them. It was nearing midnight and in the darkness Brant watched on as the long presentation of boats drew closer. Yet right at the moment Brant began to single the men into attack the artillery fired a cannon which startled the warriors so much that they refused to move from their hiding spots.

As far as the Miami River in Kentucky, Craig and his company were successful in keeping the expedition safe, but the campaign itself was wrought with problems. According to a scathing letter written by Clark to then Governor of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson, Clark blamed Jefferson for a good deal of the campaign’s failure. According to Clark, Jefferson, like Colonel Brodhead, had never supported the attack on Detroit and had pulled his support mid-campaign. The result was that the Greenbrier militia left, and

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296 Butterfield, ed., Washington-Irvine Correspondence, 55.
297 Fitzpatrick, Wilderness War on the Ohio, 420-422.
the campaign became deficient in troops. Clark may have faulted Jefferson all the more had he also known that in abandoning the mission, some of the Greenbrier militia had been captured by a Shawnee war party and had given the natives information pertaining to the number of men Clark had as well as his plans to wait for additional men before attacking in the coming year.

The next problem came when some of the reinforcements and provisions that Clark had expected never arrived. The troops Clark had been waiting for, led by his close friend, Colonel Archibald Lochry, were actually not far behind Clark. According to General Irvine, Lochry’s men had been considered “100…of the best men of Westmoreland County, including Captain Stockely and his company of rangers.” That said, they had not been able to defend themselves from the hiding warriors. Lochry had traveled the same route as Clark but without same the protection offered by Craig and his men. As a result he had fallen directly into a Shawnee ambush. Although he and his men had quickly surrendered, they were savagely slaughtered and scalped, many while still alive.

Unaware of the tragedy that had befallen Lochry, Clark believed that like the Greenbrier militia, the reinforcements had quit the campaign all together and in response he began to change his plans. Once he understood Lochry’s true fate, however, Clark abandoned his dream and objective of taking the British at Detroit. Craig, on the other hand, was “anxious” for another go at it. He felt that the campaign’s only problem was

299 Fitzpatrick, 438.
301 Fitzpatrick, 439.
the lack of men and that could easily be fixed by going back to Pittsburgh and recruiting more men. This helps in painting Craig’s personality, one of the qualities that his superiors may have recognized and liked about him. Even in the face of failures and retreat, his attitude remained optimistic. Even in the face of defeat Craig was not one for giving up. Attitude may not have counted alone for much, but discontented men with negative attitudes, like General Benedict Arnold, did not remain popular for long.

Another Step up the Economic and Social Later

Craig arrived back at Fort Pitt at the end of December 1781 to find that in his absence the previous October he had been promoted to major of the Fourth Regiment Artillery. Craig’s superior, the temperamental Colonel Proctor, had become increasingly argumentative with regard to his own rank. With “injured sentiment,” Proctor had finally threatened resignation, which General Washington had quickly accepted. Proctor’s resignation had opened up a position for Major Craig. As this illustrates, for mobility in the military required that Craig not only have both the skills and character of a major before it was offered, but that he also needed to be the oldest captain. Promotions also required a good deal of waiting. Someone needed to die or resign or be dismissed in dispute for an opening to occur. In this, military mobility was an odd and complex system that relied on several combining variables, both in and out of the control and agency of officers. When these variables coincided when a spot opened up, an officer like Craig moved one step further up in the military chain of command and

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302 Document G: Certificate from the United States of America in Congress Assembled, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
303 Thomas Procter to George Washington, April 9, 1781; George Washington Papers; George Washington to Thomas Procter, April 20, 17811741-1799: Series 4. General Correspondence. 1697-1799, LC
by extension in social status. With officers reshuffling into new positions it was
inevitable that more junior officers were also needed. That, in turn, provided
opportunities for other civilian volunteers to move in and up, or in a few cases enlisted
men might fill these positions, as was sometimes the case in Craig’s own company.

With this move Craig did better economically. According to the army’s payrolls
the promotion to major meant Craig now made £62.45 per month, an increase of over 200
percent from the average income Craig could have expected as a master carpenter, and
almost twice as much as he had earned as a captain. In addition to his increased salary,
Craig also continued to receive £16 per month for commanding the artillery. This
promotion entitled Craig to twice as much land, 600 acres, as he would have been
rewarded if he had retired as a captain. In reality, due to a simple error in paperwork
Craig did not receive the 300 additional acres of donation land owed to him as a major
until 1791.\(^\text{304}\) It should be noted, however, when Craig recognized a mistake had been
made he simply petitioned the men that he had formed close relationships with, Generals
Knox and Neville, and the problem was corrected. Soldiers like Jeremiah Greenman, in
contrast, struggled to have their petitions addressed, let alone resolved.\(^\text{305}\)

By becoming a major of the fourth Pennsylvania Artillery, Craig also increased
his social standing.\(^\text{306}\) Though his personal company did not increase the group of men
who deferred to Craig did widen to include all captains, lieutenant captains, and
companies of troops in the artillery. The amount of respect and responsibilities Craig

\(^{306}\) Trussel, 193n.
received also expanded. Though he was not the highest ranking officer stationed at Fort Pitt in the coming months Craig was repeatedly chosen to reside as president over several of the courts-martial held there and was also chosen to command the fort during tumultuous times on the frontier.\footnote{January 5, 1782, Fort Pitt Orderly Book, Draper Papers 2, 201; January 12, 1782, Fort Pitt Orderly Book, Draper Papers 2, 206-207.}

American-Native tensions had swelled far past their limits throughout the spring and summer of 1782. The winter which followed witnessed the beginning stages of some of the bloodiest battles fought on the western theater of the Revolution between civilian settlers, militiamen and the Shawnee, Wyandot, Delaware, and Moravians of western Pennsylvania. Early on, random and grisly attacks increased in and near the Pittsburgh area settlements. Panicked residents became misguided vigilantes and demanded militia support. Yet because they were unsure of which specific tribes were to blame they launched haphazard attacks on sweeping groups of Natives. Meanwhile, British agents Mathew Elliott and Simon Girty along with Wyandot warriors robbed and punished peaceful Natives for maintaining good relations with the Americans.\footnote{Fitzpatrick, 450-456; Hassler, \textit{Old Westmoreland}, 176-180.} Due to the fact that there had never been strong clear lines defining friend or foe amongst these groups disorder was quickly at hand. Friendly Natives were pitted against Americans, and both American civilian and militia groups sponsored attacks on one-time Native allies. The point of no return on either side came after a group of mixed natives tribe kidnapped six male settlers in early March. One of these men, John Carpenter, survived the ordeal and returned to Pittsburgh. His story incited Colonel David Williamson to take 160 men to attack the Christian Natives of the Moravian village, Gnadenhutten. Although, to this day it continues to remains unclear exactly which tribe had been attacking Pittsburgh.
residents, by the end of Colonel Williamson’s campaign almost 100 Christian Natives had been herded into a small building and clubbed to death with mallets.\textsuperscript{309} The March 1782 Gnadenhutten massacre sparked a campaign of retributive attacks on settlers who acted in kind for well over a decade.

Upsetting already unstable ethnic relations had been a horribly successful and well-played ploy on the part of the British. The battles fought between the civilians, militia, and Natives were no longer military strategies but campaigns acted out of emotion, namely hate and revenge. Craig was disgusted by such tactics and did not participate in them, going so far as to call attacks like these “murder.” Craig was a-by-the-books officer, who understood that right and wrong were as clear as black and white and stayed within these well-marked boundaries. He was willing to wage war against enemy tribes, but it was of no use to the Cause to provoke new enemies from old alliances. Rarely did he record speculations and almost never subjective opinions so that it is impossible to know how he actually felt about Native Americans. What is evident however, is that Craig was forward looking and understood that in order for frontier opportunities to work, stability if not peace were a must.\textsuperscript{310}

Craig’s calm and logical temperament may have been exactly what General Irvine was considering in September 1782 when he prepared for an important expedition down the Sandusky River. Despite increased problems in and around Pittsburgh the general was needed to lead a campaign against the Shawnee, Delaware, Wyandot towns and end what

\textsuperscript{309} Hassler, \textit{Old Westmoreland}, 146-152.
General Irvine called an “Indian war.” General Irvine’s objective was to keep the Delaware and Wyandot tribes’ attention while George Rogers Clark launched an attack on the Shawnee nation of Kentucky. Without their two key allies the Shawnee power would be considerably less, this would assist in Clark’s victory. ³¹¹

Understanding that rash officers like Colonel Williamson were a liability, General Irvine placed full command of Fort Pitt with Craig. This occurred even though Craig was not the highest ranking officer stationed there, something that General Irvine easily justified to General Washington describing Craig as “[more dependable]” and stating that his skills were “on the spot.”³¹² This demonstrates that Craig’s reputation and skill were enough to bypass even General Washington’s preferred rank and file system of seniority. Furthermore, placing him in command General Irvine was stating that he considered Craig to be the most capable to command Fort Pitt during the troubled times that he anticipated would soon befall the fort. General Irvine’s expectations came not only from the fact that Pittsburgh had become a hot spot for violent attacks but from information circulating that an attack from the west was imminent. Worse yet, General Irvine informed Craig that he was quite worried about mutinous sentiments which had accumulated within the fort’s very walls. He was concerned that a growing faction of troops was contemplating forming “a new state” and that it seemed most likely to General Irvine that these men might try and take advantage of his absence to launch their own

campaign. Just as Irvine was preparing to leaving he received word that the campaign had been called off as the British had “called in” their native warriors.

_White Men Skulking_

The first summer Craig spent as a major passed by quietly and instead of commanding troops Craig kept his men busy tending to the structure of Fort Pitt itself. This made the arrival of a Canadian informant in November 1782 all the more exciting. According to his intelligence the British had advanced and were building a fort on the Cuyahoga Creek. There was no time to spare and General Irvine, the new commander at Fort Pitt, ordered Craig to lead seven men on a secret mission to substantiate these claims. Once at the mouth of the Cuyahoga the group was ordered to remain undetected and capture a prisoner and return with him to the fort. If the British were truly building at the creek, General Irvine felt that this would prove an important expedition. This was especially true if Craig was successful in capturing a prisoner who could then be forced to provide intelligence on the enemy’s plans. General Irvine was sure he had chosen well in selecting Craig, remarking to him, “[I] know your zeal will excite you to go lengths, perhaps even beyond your own judgment, in order to effect the purposes of your excursion.”

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313 Irvine to Lieutenant Colonel Wuibert, September 13, 1782, Irvine to Major Isaac Craig, September, 1782, Butterfield, ed., _Washington-Irvine_, 130.
315 Orders for Major Craig, November 11, 1782, Butterfield ed., _Washington-Irvine_, 138. It should be noted that this citation conflicts with a dated source found on page 205 of the Pennsylvania Archives ser. II, vol. 11. This source is the exact same in all ways except for the fact that date which is November 11, 1780. This date is not correct as Irvine was not at Fort Pitt until May 6, 1781. Furthermore, a letter from Washington to Irvine, December 11, 1782, Butterfield, ed., _Washington-Irvine_, 141, also places the expedition in 1782 and not 1780.
Over the next few days Craig led seven men, including Lieutenant John Rose, on an expedition to the mouth of Cuyahoga River. With only a small amount of provisions on their backs, the men walked well over a hundred miles through thick and dangerous woods only to reach the Cuyahoga and find no trace of the British. Turning back toward Fort Pitt the men faced additional hazards as the temperature plummeted and the rain turned to snow showers in the span of a day. By the time the expedition reached the Conequenessing it had nearly frozen over. His men needed to cross and perhaps General Irvine’s encouraging words came back to Craig. Or maybe he was the sort of leader who thought well on his feet and solutions were always quick at hand. Either way, his men were able to cross without consequence by building a considerable fire, and shedding their uniforms. Following a leader who carved out a path from the ice in front of them, the men walked through the water with arms high above the near frozen water line holding up their clothing and blazing torches. Although this must have been an absolutely grueling event, by doing so they were able to don dry clothing and instantly reset a fire upon reaching land. In this the transportation of fire had been another ingenious maneuver that assisted in Craig and his men returning to Fort Pitt with their health intact.317

The expedition had not been a complete loss. Although the British had not occupied the area, General Irvine requested Craig to assess the area’s potential for a post. If the area proved to be a spot that the British might eventually want to build on then Irvine wanted to beat them to it. This had been another reason General Irvine had selected Craig to lead the Cuyahoga expedition. In the work Craig had done at Fort Pitt

317 James Harrison Kennedy, A History of the City of Cleveland it’s settlement rise and Progress, 1796-1896 (Cleveland: Imperial Press, 1896), 12.
the previous summer Craig’s craftsmanship in drafting and design as well as his direction of builders, had greatly impressed General Irvine. In his communications with General Washington, General Irvine had described some of the projects Craig had worked on: “A new row of picketing is planted on every part of the parapet where the brick revetment did not extend, and a row of palisading nearly finished in the ditch; so far, also, with sundry other small improvements; but, above all, a compete magazine, the whole arched with stone. I think I may venture to assert, it is a very elegant piece of workmanship as well as [a] most use full one.”

Craig had directed other projects as well: gates, a drawbridge and other “outworks.” In these instances Craig had relied on the skills of his past life as an artisan and won the praise of Irvine and Washington in a way that it does not seem likely he would have received had he been an enlisted carpenter doing similar work. What is more, he had not only built up the fort, staying within what little funding there had been, but in doing so he inadvertently prevented a large-scale attack. Not knowing that Craig had reinforced the station, the British Army had created a mixed detachment of well over eight hundred men, mostly warriors, for the specific purpose of attacking Fort Pitt under the leadership of Colonel John Connolly. When the group gathered in Canada their intelligence informed them of Craig’s fortifications, including the addition of a magazine, and the attack was never launched. Although the campaign was never completed intelligence of the attack was made known to General Irvine by British deserters, which then surely spread to top ranked men of the army.

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318 Irvine to Washington, October 29, 1782, Butterfield, ed., Washington-Irvine, 139-140.
320 n1, Butterfield, ed., Washington-Irvine, 140.
Unfortunately for the civilian residents of western Pennsylvania, when the British gave up their plan to attack Fort Pitt, many of the warriors that had been recruited for the campaign, mostly Seneca, refused to return to their towns without scalps. The British, wanting to ensure that they would be able to call on these warriors again, kept them occupied with scalping raids in settlements throughout western Pennsylvania. As General Irvine described it, the surrounding region had been struck by two weeks of attacks including the devastation of Hannastown that had threatened an “evacuation of the country.”

**Independence**

Rumors of peace and independence had made their way to the backcountry by the winter of 1782-1783. Like most of the information received in Pittsburgh however, it had been passed with unsure credit across the state by word of mouth and outdated letters, remaining questionable for quite some time to the troops stationed at Fort Pitt. While Craig had already begun to engage in post-war activities, enlisted men were forced to maintain their war positions, unable to take steps toward building a post war life while they waited for corroborating orders. As was best summed up by Craig’s brother James Craig, “We are accustomed here to many Contradictory reports, that [we are] not all surprised at hearing a report perhaps currant in the morning and contradicted before breakfast time.” Participating in the exchange of information, James, who was stationed in the East, added that he had heard, that the

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Articles of Peace had “just arrived” in Philadelphia. 322 Exactly one month and a day after James Craig had written his brother the Continental Congress declared that at last the Revolutionary War was over.

James Craig had not been the only one to write to Craig, for General Irvine, who had been sent to Carlisle, had also written. His letter was filled with elation congratulating Craig on the “glorious end of the war.” It was a letter filled with a sense of strong camaraderie and “we,” both implicit and explicit. Despite the difference in rank between a general and major it was clear General Irvine saw the war as a victory he and Craig had earned and shared together. He was eager and excited to know Craig’s thoughts on the war, on victory, and on the future republic. Craig held back his enthusiasm. Instead he began his letter with reservation and stated, “we have almost every day accounts of families being murdered or carried off.” Settlers from all over were fleeing, in fear of war parties and raids, from the land so many had fought for. And in a tone that foreshadowed the Indian wars to come Craig replied, “[p]rospects of peace on this side the mountains seem to vanish.” Not giving in to celebration, Craig’s letter read as though peace was not even a talking point. He discussed the provisions and supplies needed by the artillery before the next expedition against enemy natives began. He added, “I hope I shall have the pleasure of battering the Wyandot blockhouse in the course of the ensuing summer.” Craig understood that while the Revolution may have begun a war between colonists and crown it had also engendered war against the natives. A peace agreement meant a majority of the British Army would be sailing home, but their

322 James Craig to Craig, Feb 10 1783, CL
Native allies were already home and the war to decide exactly whose home it now had just begun.\footnote{Craig to Irvine, April 5, 1783, Butterfield, ed., \textit{Washington-Irvine,} 410-411.}

\textbf{Chapter 5: The Fruits of Labor: A New Republic}

In the eight years that followed the first shots of the Revolutionary War, a great deal changed. Not only had Great Britain’s North American colonies severed ties with the most powerful monarchy in the world, the event fostered additional social and economic changes which had long been on the horizon. In part, some of these changes represented the struggle of lower-and-lower-middle-class men to redefine their place in an already transforming economic system. Additionally, the war itself had offered some opportunities to lucky, socially deceitful men like Craig whose work ethic and drive challenged the traditionally limited system based on rank and economic standing. When the Treaty of Paris ended the war in the spring of 1783, once inferior colonies economically restricted by a mercantile system, emerged as a new free market nation. Having taken opportunities as they presented themselves, as well as actively creating them for himself, by the war’s end Craig’s economic and social position had also evolved considerably.

This is not to suggest, however, that either the country or the man had completed their respective transformations. The market revolution had firmly taken hold of the infant nation but full fledged capitalism had not been wholly realized yet. At forty-one, Craig was no longer an economically struggling laborer but a well respected officer. Craig had been welcomed into a select network of men that would help his promising business ideas to come to fruition. Both money and social standing needed to be
maintained, if not increased, in order for Craig to continue his climb in the new republic. Craig was at an optimal position for this to occur, for had been fortunate, whereas most other men did not end the Revolutionary war so well placed.

James Craig left the military having only reached the rank of lieutenant captain, a junior officer. He returned to Philadelphia only to find that the market for new house construction had all but dried up. Despite this, James Craig continued on as a house carpenter and throughout the 1780s probably witnessed the increasing unemployment rates for all skilled labor trades. Most likely, at points James Craig struggled financially to make ends meet. At other points he may have done well for himself, at least for a time. He had in fact, at some point done well enough to make significant improvements to his property and in doing so had increased the value four times over to £800. In addition, following the war James Craig was able to establish himself socially amongst the artisan community, for in 1787 he was voted into the Carpenters Company, and presumably enjoyed some social benefits by belonging to that class of elite artisans. By 1793 however, work may have become increasingly difficult for James Craig to gain. It became necessary for him to sell an interest in his house to William Miller and Lydia Gilpin, who became co-owners of his property. Then in the fall of 1798, when Philadelphia paid endured to its third outbreak of yellow fever that decade, James Craig died. James Craig had fallen short of becoming the architect he had aspired to be and left little to no lasting mark on the city. He had risen only modestly in social rank. Perhaps the greatest restrictions to his mobility had been that he returned to dead build market and

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324 James Craig 1775-1798, Carpenter’s Company Directory, Carpenters Hall, Philadelphia, PA.
that he never found the success and financial backing that supported members of an elitist upper class.  

As a master carpenter in Philadelphia, Robert Allison’s life had been, with some exceptions, similar to James Craig’s. Allison, however, became a member of the Pennsylvania militia in 1777. As an affluent man with a background in leading men he was voted to lieutenant-colonel and served until 1780 in order to turn his attention to extensive military contracts. What separated Allison from James Craig even more was the fact that Allison was well connected with some of Philadelphia’s leading men, a connection which may have accounted for his having received military contracts. With these contracts, Allison profited greatly and worked on such large projects as fortifying Fort Liberty, now known as Fort Adams. The 1780s were an economic roller coaster for Allison. By 1788 he had done well quite well for himself and he expanded his property to include four more lots in Philadelphia although he went bankrupt in the same year. For Allison this was a pattern that repeated itself again. By the time of his death in 1811, he was living off of the generosity of the Carpenter’s Company.

Jeremiah Greenman’s fate was different from those of both Isaac and James Craig and Robert Allison, however. For him, there were few, if any economically prosperous moments. Greenman had joined the army with nothing and after eight years of service, he actually owed the military for debts incurred during the war. As an enlisted soldier, Greenman had faced multiple injuries and enemy captivity. Just as Isaac Craig had

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326 Receipt, May 23, 1776, Council of Safety Papers Miscellaneous, box 15 E, HSP; Receipt, January 6, 1776, Shippen Papers, vol. 7, HSP, 145; June 20, 1776, Robert Allison to Biddle and Clymer, Stauffer Collection, HSP.
always worked on becoming a man of honor, so too had Greenman. But to Greenman, unlike Craig, this had meant not applying for disability pay after being injured. Injuries had furthered stifled Greenman’s social and economic mobility as his absence from the battlefield had cost him the ability to earn promotions and opportunities to build close connections with his superior officers. Greenman had joined the army at a time when pensions were not being offered. He even claimed to know another man who had served only briefly, but had been paid a bounty, higher wages, and a pension. Following the war, Jeremiah Greenman had chosen to remain on the frontier, but in Ohio. That said, he had unwisely chosen a small town that remained small and relatively underdeveloped. In the end Greenman was forced to take the career path he had hoped to avoid by joining the military: he became a seaman.\(^{328}\)

The lives of James Craig, Robert Allison, and Jeremiah Greenman reflect the antebellum reality that existed for most men who had served in the military. This is not to discount instances of upward mobility like that of Isaac Craig, which had been a direct result of the Revolutionary War. Craig, had been able to use the changing social and economic environment in combination with an expanding frontier as a means to move up socially. Having received officer’s commissions, many men were able to utilize the military to achieve this with far greater ease. Yet according to Harry M. Ward, the social and economic standing of men in other career paths was also advanced. Business men, privateers, merchants, and artisans, supplied the war effort in financing, goods, and structures. In some cases the men who participated in these ventures rose from little and amassed great wealth; but in other cases they lost preexisting wealth or, as with Allison,

\(^{328}\) Jeremiah Greenman to the Pension Office, September 21, 1821, Bray and Bushnell, ed., *Diary of a Common Soldier*, 297-301.
they toggled between both extremes.\textsuperscript{329} The social and economic reorganization that occurred as a result of the Revolutionary War created a unique environment which, though begrudgingly, allowed for new groups of men like Craig to not only earn higher social and economic standing but actually become members of the upper class. That these men were able to do so successfully helped to usher in the final stage of America’s social transformation from rank to class, the beginning of a culture based slightly more on actual merit as opposed to honor. This was a process of change that took another full generation to complete. Oddly enough, men like Craig, who had done well for themselves during the war and after, struggled to recreate inheritable ranks and fortify their own position in the new republic.

\textit{Society of the Cincinnati}

Following the end of the Revolutionary War, Craig and men like him sought out ways to maintain, secure, and extend their social standing. In an almost overnight fashion, private groups and associations for men became the rage and stayed overwhelmingly popular for the next thirteen years. Associations legitimized the social standing of a new group of men, like Craig, who had successfully begun to mobilize themselves during the war.\textsuperscript{330} As an officer Craig, as did many of these men, had received a title that carried weight through the deference of large visible groups of lower ranked men. With peace however, much of the army had been disbanded and, somewhat due to this group of men’s mobilization, social distinctions had become all the more


\textsuperscript{330} Ibid., 231, 235.
unclear. In response to this, many former officers joined newly formed restrictive associations like the Society of Cincinnati.

The Society was named after Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus, an ancient Roman Consul in the mid-400s B.C. Cincinnatus’s unquestionable character and agrarian background had made him the only man in Rome capable of ruling it. By definition Society members sought to reflect true republican values through their membership, so in keeping with this spirit, membership was exclusive to officers who reflected superior qualities. These qualities included having a “high rational” and “strong moral character.” The original charter read as a who’s who of the War for Independence. Defining themselves as elites they acted also to define people outside of their group as inferior. The language of their original charter is the best illustration of this: “as the mutual friendships which have been forced under the pressure of common danger, and in many instances cemented by the blood of the parties, the officers of the American army do hereby, in the most solemn manner, associate constitute, and combine themselves into one SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, to endure as long as they shall endure” Craig took full advantage of this elitist bond. Craig’s membership also indicated that as long as he could maintain his new station in life he would be welcome into the circle of post-war elites.

The Society was a tool for Craig, and others, in that it was a means of generating an inheritable title that acted as a synthetic birth right of superiority for future generations. Craig, for instance, could give future generations of the Craig family something that acted as means of putting them into a superior social station from birth. This was important to men like Craig who joined the Society and in part explains why 80

332 Ibid., 472.
333 Ibid., 485.
percent of the original members of the Pennsylvania chapter of the Society were junior officers. The second largest common denominator amongst these members was that they were foreign born.\textsuperscript{334} They, like Craig, were working from what they knew and had understood of class structure in Europe. Their membership may also shed light on their understanding that a new republic required the building of every institution, both physical and social. While the layout of these institutions was borrowed directly from old European ways they had allowed for a new social dynamic in which a new group of men could belong a higher rank.

That associations like the Society had been created for the purpose of strengthening of social status may be further demonstrated in the general public’s reactions to these groups. The formation of the Society, in particular, met quickly with hostility for the men who had been placed into an inferior status by the group’s restrictive membership criteria. In one attacking pamphlet, author Aedandus Burke, warned that the creation of such a society, created a new nobility. Burke noted that upon joining members donned a striking gold medal on a red and white ribbon that was uncomfortably similar to how the “French and British nobility [wore] their stars and ribbons the insignia of their peerage.”\textsuperscript{335} Burke continued to condemn the society as having created “a hereditary peerage, a nobility to them and their male issue”\textsuperscript{336} Burke, however, missed the fact that men like Craig needed to secure their spot in the upper class and thus sought out this old war tradition, whereas truly established men like Washington held only


\textsuperscript{335} Aedanu Burke, \textit{Considerations on the Order of the Cincinnati” Proving that it creates a Race of Hereditary Patricians or Nobility}, (Philadelphia: Webster, 1783), 4.

\textsuperscript{336} Ibid., 5.
symbolic memberships and were for the most part placed on the membership rosters by other men who used these phantom memberships to bolster their own standing.

Burke was quite right in his fear that these men were trying to import a class system from Europe that would reinforce deference and class standing. Men like Craig depended on it. The uniqueness of the Revolutionary War had allowed them to join a elite group of men that would otherwise have been denied them. But now that the war was over and they had been successful, an end to social rank watered down their new stance in society. Although in the end they would not end the full transformation to open ended flexible social classes, men like Craig attempted to stifle it by strengthening their own situation and so denied easy access to many men in the lower and lower middle class. These associations, especially the Society, had the power to legitimize the social status of men who had even surpassed Craig in mobility, such as Alexander Hamilton.

Hamilton had also risen from poverty by his own efforts and through making the right kind of connections. During the Revolutionary War, Hamilton had received several promotions and become a lieutenant colonel, serving on General Washington’s staff. Maintaining the network of powerful men that had befriended him during the war, Hamilton became a prominent politician and was appointed as the first Secretary of the Treasury. Hamilton had become a powerful man, yet whatever he had made of himself could never erase that he had been born poor and illegitimate. Not having the breeding of a gentleman, Hamilton, like Craig, needed to further justify his social status. In one attempt Hamilton, a leading man in national politics, followed the path that Craig had and joined the Society. With successful men like Hamilton attempting to draw power

337 Ibid., 6.
338 Freeman, Affairs of Honor, 161, 163, 254-255
from associations like the Society, it is clear to see why men like Craig, of less standing, must have flocked to join in its early stages.

_Cashing Out of the Army…and Cashing In_

Although Craig enjoyed a profoundly better situation at the war’s end, he could not rest his future mobility on his reputation or the savings he had accumulated, he needed to continue to build his capital. When Craig entered the armed forces he had only just reached the pinnacle of his field in becoming a master carpenter, the position for which every carpenter strived. Yet Craig had been wise to leave Philadelphia and carpentry behind him. The economic changes that had occurred during the war had changed the face and operation of most crafts in large urban centers. While carpenters had previously charged clients on a fee-for-service or piece-work basis they began to produce for later sale. Rates which had once been basic and flat were formulated secretly behind the closed doors of companies such as the Carpenter’s Company, a company that had not yet invited Craig to join.339 Other industry changes would not have been to his benefit at all. As Labor historian David Brody shows, with the rise of the factory came the production of standard building materials and building plans.340 This in itself dulled down the skills required to perform most building tasks. In some cases those who had spent less time developing their craft were used in large numbers for lower incomes and thus displaced higher ranked masters. Before the Revolution, an average carpenter could have expected little more than one dollar per day, but in the unstable decade between 1796 and 1806 the average daily wage rate was at only ever as high as about $1.50

339 David Brody, _In Labor’s Cause_, 29-35.
340 Ibid., 34.
Instead of fighting the changing tide, Craig opted to work within it. He reshaped the business skills he had learned into tools that would help him profit in the new economy.

Once the peace treaty had been ratified and the army disbanded, Craig closed one of his bank accounts in Philadelphia by withdrawing $5,124.26. One month later he exchanged his pension for five years pay an amount totaling more than $6,154.00. At first Craig attempted to purchase a distillery near Pittsburgh already in production, however when the owner refused to sell, Craig’s plan took on a new and larger direction.

Craig, Bayard & Company: Stores, Land, Boats, and Booze

Following the closure of his bank accounts, with money in hand, Craig formed a business partnership with Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Bayard dealing in real estate, whiskey, and moving merchant goods to the frontier. While stationed at Fort Pitt, Craig, as had others including George Washington before him, recognized the three rivers outlining Pittsburgh as an economic power station for trade and business. Many men from the lower ranks of the newly disbanded army found little opportunity in Philadelphia. They began to look for a means to establish themselves in Pittsburgh. Additionally, new settlers started to make their way from the coastal cities for the possibility of land in and

342 Notarized Bank Withdrawal, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
343 Register of Depreciation Certificates, PDA.
345 Journal, 12, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
around Pittsburgh. The ten years which followed the war were a busy time of construction and production on the western frontier.

Craig was not the only one embarking on such ventures. The Revolution had created a great deal of excitement about business opportunities on the frontier. Officers like Craig who acted quickly collecting money owed to them by the army were able to use their military earnings to make investment purchases and therefore started off ahead of the game. In doing so they had far greater buying power than the men who waited until the 1790s to collect, when inflation striped the dollar of most of its worth. Wealthy Loyalists who had found themselves on the losing side of the war, in turn, were not only exiled socially from the upper class, but also found themselves impoverished and unable to take advantage of the post-war situation. Not only were a good deal of Loyalist properties confiscated but they were then sold off below their value. While some men in Craig’s position benefited from buying up Loyalist properties, others benefited more from the openings left in the economy. Demands for consumer and construction goods became great. The only need was for men able to fill them.

Furthermore, the distribution of money along with other resources had changed. In post-war reconstruction, men such as Craig suddenly found themselves in a position to take advantage of opportunities to generate real wealth. With money in hand, Craig was able to form a small business partnership with Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Bayard. Together the two men formed Craig Bayard & Company.

348 East, 212-224.
349 Journal, 12, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
When Craig looked out over the lush earth, he envisioned a vast variety of grain and corn growing under his direction. It was not just the corn, grain, or alcohol that he wanted to sell. Craig also wanted to ship in much of the products settlers would need to build a new city from the ground up. The three rivers, which so uniquely wrapped around the heart of Pittsburgh, would be used to disperse Craig’s goods throughout the new country as the Ohio River flowed on to the Mississippi River. That said, the chief goal of Craig & Bayard Company was to purchase lots quickly. If Pittsburgh were to become a hot bed for land speculation, then being in control of the land would not only be profitable but empowering.

In his journal, Craig recorded the visions he saw not only for himself, but also for the land around him. The undeveloped open land was hearty, fertile and most importantly available for purchase and development. The prime portions of this property would not stay available long. Craig and Bayard were not only the first purchasers of land in Pittsburgh, but in January, 1784, they strategically purchased the river banks at the intersection of the Monongahela, Allegheny, and Ohio rivers for £411 5d.

This first purchase had the potential to monopolize the water ways and the transportation of goods on them. Unfortunately, at the same time Colonel George Woods was drawing up the town’s layout for the Penn family. Woods’ plan directly confuted Craig and Bayard’s purchase, but when all was said and done, the two partners ended up making out on what originally looked like bad luck. Craig and Bayard were jointly given

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thirty-two lots, which included most of the three original acres they had purchased. Moreover, the reason they could not have their entire original purchase was to make way for roads. Yet Craig was already collecting on the gamble he had originally made, for Pittsburgh was truly moving from a settlement to an actual town. Furthermore, because Craig and Bayard planned to turn the land into an industrial site, the land not being continuous did not hurt their plans, if anything the roads which now interrupted the flow of land assisted them all the more. Roads helped to lower transportation costs, as well as entice more people to come. The people who would come would bring needs to be fulfilled by Craig and Bayard, leading to profit.

The Pittsburgh lots were not the only land purchases Craig made. For men like Craig who were willing to live outside of “civilization” on the frontier, purchasing and selling land was a profitable practice. If Craig had waited to act he would have watched as Pittsburgh’s population swelled and lots both in and around the area were purchased. Officers that Craig had served with were beginning to receive extensive land tracts for their service. While some, like General John Neville, kept them for themselves, many others were attempting to sell them, including General John Gibson. Since Gibson lived in Baltimore, he turned to Craig for help unloading the land. Craig was a man he loved as a brother. Gibson trusted Craig so much he asked Craig to judge for himself the value of the land and set prices as he saw fit. Gibson was not alone in this. In time, General William Irvine and President Washington also asked Craig to sell off portions of their land for them at prices he set. In establishing relationships with these men during the

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354 John Gibson to Craig, October 20, 1783; Craig Papers, ORSC; John Gibson to Craig, Nov 19, 1783
355 William Irvine to Craig, June 2, 1787, Frederick M. Dearborn Collection, The Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge Massachusetts; George Washington to Craig, February 13, 1796; Craig to
war, Craig had placed himself in a unique position to scoop up prime properties before they were offered to the general public.

In one such instance, General Irvine, who had already been solicited to sell a specific parcel of his land, had agreed to the sale some of his land to David Duncan, yet once Craig became involved in the land sale he bought the lot for himself, and purchasing it along with another for a little over £22. It was a good investment. As Pittsburgh developed, this lot was located on one of the nicest streets. To Duncan, however, Craig’s advantage had been profoundly unfair and he continued to fight the purchase decades later, going so far as to include the matter in his will so that the next generation of Duncans could pursue the land.356

Craig and Bayard’s interests did not lay in real-estate alone, far there were far too many business opportunities just waiting in the frontier to be tapped. By simultaneously taking part in multiple ventures, Craig and Bayard were able to increase their profits across the board. Land was easier to sell if settlers had merchants they could rely on, and goods were easier to sell as the population grew in and around Pittsburgh. Due to the business skills Craig had learned as a journeyman, he understood that a good business required a certain amount of stability. He understood that grain and corn in particular, would be sound staple crops that a business could rely on. The production and disbursement of grain or corn based alcohol had the right potential on which to base a stable business. Even during hard times lower-class Americans continued to buy and consume alcohol as a part of their regular diets. Rum in particular was consistently a part

of an average family’s budget, as they spent about £3 a year on it.\textsuperscript{357} By the nineteenth century, Americans drank more distilled liquor than at any other time in history.\textsuperscript{358} It should also not be forgotten that whiskey was the drink of choice by the majority of people in general, especially on the frontier. On the frontier good fresh drinking water was generally rare. Not all settlements were located near abundant water supplies. Moreover, settlers preferred to build on high ground, away from springs and streams that they feared also would attract Native Americans. Also, many believed that water was actually dangerous to drink so they turned to whiskey as a “healthier and safer” alternative.\textsuperscript{359} Lastly, whiskey was also the only agricultural product that was cost effective and profitable to transport across the state due to high transportation costs.\textsuperscript{360}

As is always the case, a business was only as good as the products it shipped. While Craig already ran a very small distillery, the small amount of whiskey it produced was very good and thus he contemplated expansion for he knew he could sell it in larger quantities. That said however, a quality product without a solid business prospect to support it would not have gotten off the ground. As Craig exchanged letters with William Turnbull and Perrier Marmie, Craig outlined his reasoning behind choosing whiskey. Craig recognized he would be able to sell it for upwards of 60 shillings a gallon. By growing grain, the main ingredient, on his farm, they could heavily reduce their production costs. For a man with no real structured business training, Craig was suggesting an efficient and cost cutting practice, vertical integration. This was a concept

\textsuperscript{357} Smith, \textit{The Lower Sort}, 107.
\textsuperscript{359} Ibid., 95-99.
in efficiency that would not become a commonly held business practice until the late 1800s. Craig put it into practice when he used his sawmill as a way to provide timber for boat construction, to sell as well as use in his own business.

The major costs were from paying laborers, which Craig estimated he could do at about $3 a week per man.\footnote{The actual monetary value given in this document was £3 but Craig was most likely writing Pounds when he meant Dollars, there was such a limited supply of currency like Pounds, which kept its value it seems unlikely that Craig would have been handing it out to lower class workers. Letter to Trumbull and Marmie from Isaac Craig, July 28, 1784. Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.} Not only was Craig able to sell high volumes of alcohol, but he also did a good bit of trading with it as well. Craig traded whiskey with Native Americans for animal furs and skins. In one letter to Philadelphia he explained that for just “three barrels of whisky and one of rum” he would be able to get all of the skins and furs he needed.\footnote{Letter to Philadelphia 1884, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.} Craig’s spirits were not only good for bartering with Natives but was also quite popular among settlers and in constant demand.\footnote{Letter to Craig and Bayard from French Creek, April 23, 1785, Letter to Craig from Venango July 21, 1785, Letter to Craig from Salt Springs, July 24, 1785, Letter to Craig from Fall Lick, August 7, 1785, Letter to Craig from Venango, September 19, 1785, Letter to Craig from Venango April 18, 1785, Letter to Craig Venango, December 10, 1785, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.} Craig and Bayard’s next small venture was building stores located on the Monongahela River and Redstone Creek specializing in the selling of “Dry goods, Hardware and Groceries.”\footnote{April 12, 1788., \textit{Pittsburgh Gazette}, 35; Buck, Solon, J. Book Review, \textit{William Turnbull, 1751-1822, With some Account of Those Coming After}, WPHM vol. 17, no. 1 (March, 1934), 59.} Craig also used these stores to sell the whiskey and later, cordials, gin, rum, and other kinds of alcohol from his distillery.

Had Craig not been timely, Pittsburgh would have certainly grown into a busy town without him. Just as the buildings were constructed, so too were the town’s economic, political, and social institutions and they all would have developed without him. Yet, due to the fact that Craig’s business plans were long in the making, and that he
had the financial means and network that enabled him to act on these plans, he was able to grow with a profit from the expanding town.

Expansion of Opportunities

After the war Craig continued to oversee the military supplies for Fort Pitt, Craig began a more personal correspondence with three men in regard to business opportunities on the frontier. They were Philadelphia merchants and future business partners, William Turnbull, Stephen Holker, and Perrier Marmie. In their letters they discussed a shared prediction for the post-Revolution market and how they could make the most of it. Their first goal was to build a sawmill. For they believed that the frontier population was about to explode and lumber would be in great demand. The second goal was to secure any high quality brick or fire stone that Craig might come across, especially from forts that might be torn down. Lastly, the correspondence focused on the location of natural deposits of high quality clay for the construction of a new, bigger, and better distillery than the one Craig and Bayard were already running. Craig had already been on the move looking for natural deposits in and around Pittsburgh. He had not only looked, but he had found resources such as clay and coal in abundance. At the time these resources were generally widely available as the land in which they were located had not yet been claimed. Beginning his business when Pittsburgh was still a fledgling settlement had provided Craig and men like him, easier and less expensive startup costs as many of the resources they required could be had simply by finding them in the wild.

365 Turnbull and Marmie to Craig and Bayard, September 23, 1784; Craig to Edward Smith, October 8 1784. Craig Collection 1768-1868, ORSC.
Craig used his keen eye and business sense to run his business with as much efficiency as possible, and thus to create a solid foundation for other endeavors. Proof of his abilities, along with the 140 gallons of whiskey he had delivered as a “sample” to Turnbull, Holker, and Marmie in Philadelphia, may have also been the critical factor in his attempt to convince the well-established company in Philadelphia to partner with him. Either way, as he looked across the intersection of the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio rivers he could not help but envision his fully loaded flatboats sailing to new cities. Not only did Craig foresee his success, he believed that Pittsburgh itself was on the cusp of becoming a thriving boom town in its own right. Craig was not far off. In one season alone, the Allegheny River saw over two hundred and fifty boats filled with upwards of twenty tons of “people, live stock, and furniture” headed toward new settlements.

In 1785 Craig and Bayard officially became business partners with William Turnbull, Pierre (also called Peter) Marmie, and John Holker, as the five business men all recognized post-Revolutionary Pittsburgh as a place ripe for business opportunity.

William Turnbull was a Scottish immigrant who had arrived in Philadelphia in 1770. Prior to the Revolution, Turnbull had established an extensive mercantile business specializing in both the wholesale and retail sale of imported goods from London,

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366 Craig to Trumbull and Marmie, September 1, 1784. Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
367 Small Day Book Kept by Isaac Craig, July 25, 1784. Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
368 Charles Dahlinger, "Fort Pitt", 104.
369 While family historian Archibald Turnbull has written that a long fight to buy out Craig had transpired before Craig had joined the Turnbull and Marmie Company partnership, this is not so. Correspondence and legal documents confirm that originally an eager and healthy business relationship had developed between all parties. Craig and Bayard’s location in Pittsburgh filled the location gap that none of the Turnbull Company members had. Turnbull, Holker, and Marmie, however, had the capital to invest, which Craig did not have. Turnbull, William Turnbull, 1751-1822, 20-30.
Liverpool, and Glasgow. By 1779 Turnbull was also purchasing flour for the Pennsylvania Commissary, at which point he became acquainted with Marmie and Holker. Both Holker and Marmie were well respected and independently wealthy men. Holker had come to Philadelphia as the French Consul and would later become a large money lender to Robert Morris. During the Revolutionary War, Marmie had come to America as the secretary to the Marquis de LaFayette. Aside from the individual side projects that these three men were involved with during the Revolution, the group met and formed Turnbull and Marmie Company. According to Robert Morris, this was one of the largest and most profitable merchant companies in Philadelphia. Due to their elevated social standing, it may be assumed that the first contact between these men and Craig was related to the war, the only common ground all four of the men shared. For Craig, the addition of three powerful business men allowed him, as a socially and economically inferior man, to realize his dream of expansion into new and larger enterprises. Craig may have already had some of these ideas, but they would have been near impossible without investors with hefty pocketbooks.

As a direct result of partnering with the Turnbull and Marmie Company, Craig and Bayard were able to participate in many new industries. The group built a gristmill, salt works, two sawmills, and a substantially larger distillery. In setting up these specific types of businesses, Craig and his partners’ intuition paid off in profits and success. A gristmill not only meant Craig and his company could grind their own grain

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370 March 22, 1775, PA Gazette.
371 East, Business Enterprise in the American Revolutionary Era, 136.
373 Journals, 12, Craig Neville Papers, HSWP; Turnbull, Marmie Company, to Craig Philadelphia December 16, 1786, CL.
for the production of whiskey but for other commonly used products such as wheat, flour, and corn. Having these products locally lowered the production and transportation cost for the company as well as the consumer. In addition to lowered prices, these products could be readily had as opposed to other products which needed to shipped in from outside towns. The sawmill had also been an important investment. The average cost to build a sawmill was only about $1000, yet once put into production, its output was around 1,000 feet of lumber a day.\textsuperscript{374} By 1787, Craig was receiving orders for lumber to build houses from up and down the river.\textsuperscript{375} Less than two years after the sawmill had begun, lumber in eastern Pennsylvania was in such demand that at least one of Craig’s past relations in Philadelphia was ordering planks and nails from him.\textsuperscript{376} Pittsburgh’s growth and development continued for the following eleven years as thirty-seven manufacturers opened in Pittsburgh and 10,032 people settled in Allegheny County.\textsuperscript{377}

The downside to having socially and economically superior business partners was that in partnering with them, Craig was forced to forgo having substantial control and input relating to which investments the company decided to pursue. In some cases their refusal to accept Craig’s proposals may have cost considerable profits. In one instance, the company had been using one of Pittsburgh’s rivers to power a water mill that generated energy for the operation of the gristmill and sawmill. However, the harsh winter climate made the river unreliable for energy year-round. From Craig’s privateer days in the West Indies, he understood that wind could be used to generate energy and so he wanted to tap into this relatively new resource in America through windmills.

\textsuperscript{374}Nettels, \textit{The Emergence of a National Economy}, 1775-1815, 277-278.
\textsuperscript{375}Letter to Isaac Craig, from D. Bradford, May, 2 1787. Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
\textsuperscript{376}Letter from James Craig to Isaac Craig, July 15, 1786. Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
Although Craig drew detailed plans for the windmills and how they would be utilized to keep the mills running year round, his partners did not share Craig’s vision and refused to invest in the improvement. Although Craig’s ideas had been innovative and industrious his hands were tied.\textsuperscript{378}

The Philadelphia partnership did, however, assist Craig and Bayard in expanding. Not only did their Fort Pitt distillery become Pittsburgh’s first large production distillery, but their small mercantile business also grew. This enabled them to set up stores in four more locations including farther down the Monongahela River and at Salt Springs. The company also received a license allowing them to trade with Native Americans at trading posts they built.\textsuperscript{379} The expansion of these stores had considerable impact not just on Craig’s social and economic standing but in the general growth of the region. From Pittsburgh, Craig shipped clothing, alcohol, tobacco, flour, sugar, and other goods to posts where they were exchanged for animal furs. Natives were not the only people with whom Craig’s company traded. The frontier operated on a mixed economy, with little specie. Much of their market interactions took place through bartering. As a result Craig allowed his frontier customers to pay with specie, English pounds, credit, and in many instances the trade of goods, like home turned butter, which in turn were resold or traded to other customers.\textsuperscript{380}

Additionally, he was also able to sell these same items as well as household goods, furnishings, cloth, shoes, and some luxury items to families who had come to settle in western Pennsylvania. Material goods not only smoothed the rustic edges of frontier life but they also helped draw lines of class division. This was especially true

\textsuperscript{378} Letter to Trumbull & Marmie from Isaac Craig, July 29, 1784. Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
\textsuperscript{379} Dahlinger, “Fort Pitt,” 100; Dahlinger, History of Allegheny County, 152.
\textsuperscript{380} General Merchandise Accounts, July 1785. Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
with the expansion of import products that Craig was able to obtain through the Philadelphia partnership.\textsuperscript{381} By 1785 his business had grown from serving less than twenty people to having well over 230 regular customers. Using the business skills he had learned from his first employer in Philadelphia, Craig kept meticulous records and although he was not operating the individual posts, he was overseeing them regionally.\textsuperscript{382}

In order for Craig to be successful in his many ventures he could not rely solely on his own industriousness or the investment of more affluent men; He also required skilled lower class workers. Craig depended on three people in particular; his former artillery gunner John Wilkins, a woman by the name of Jessica McLelland, and a Native American simply referred to as “Peter the Indian.” Wilkins and McLelland managed the stores. They attentively ordered goods based on the needs of the local settlers and Native American nations as well as the travelers and migrants who frequently passed through. With Wilkins and McLelland operating outside of Craig’s view they needed to be people he could depend on as well as trust. At any one time these two managers had a significant amount of goods in their care that Craig and Bayard had paid for, plus money from the sale of items. In addition to this, the considerable communications lag between Craig and his managers gave them more autonomy and power with regard to day-to-day operations. Important decisions such as how much credit to extend a customer, when to call in debts, and what exactly was an even trade were all decisions Wilkins and McLelland faced.\textsuperscript{383}

\textsuperscript{381} List of goods to be purchased by Turnbull, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
\textsuperscript{382} Receipts for Payment, 1785, Miscellaneous 1773-1868, Folder 9, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
\textsuperscript{383} Return of Clothing Delivered to a Detachment of the Pennsylvania Artillery under Craig 1780, 1781, and 1782; Wilkins to Craig, September 19, 1785; Jessica McLelland to Craig, July 24, 1785; Wilkins to Craig, July 21, 1785. Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL. Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
Wilkins, Peter, and occasionally Marmie, also handled the fur trade with the local Seneca tribes as well as other regional tribes. The fur trade was conducted with little if any actual input from Craig or Bayard and required a great deal of on hands-on knowledge. Wilkins and Peter had come to know the tribes personally and thus knew best how to approach them and haggle. They also understood the seasonal movements of these groups and both where and when they hunted game. In this, Wilkins was also able to predict the goods tribes would be looking for as well as the amount of furs they might bring back. All said and done, these shops were quite profitable for Craig, so much so that he had difficulty keeping them fully stocked. In addition to the shops, the trading posts also did well and brought in furs of all sizes by the hundreds each season. In the spring of 1785, the Venango post alone brought in well over four hundred furs, a majority of which were of considerable size and may have been worth about fifteen dollars a piece.\textsuperscript{384}

Wilkins and Peter were also flexible in a way that Craig, a man actively involved with several industries, may not have been able to have been. Much of Wilkins and Peter’s time was divided across the region serving different areas specific to their peak seasons. In order for Craig and Bayard to profit, these men needed to move around regionally following the seasonal patterns of specific tribes, who were following the wildlife. In some ways this would have hampered their own access to opportunity yet in other ways it offered them some social mobilization as it placed them higher in the chain of command from laboring men like Sam Harris and Alexander Downey. Not only did

\textsuperscript{384} Wilkins to Craig and Bayard, April 23, 1785; Wilkins to Craig, July 20, 1785; Wilkins to Craig July, 21, 1785; Jessica McLelland to Craig, July 24, 1785; Wilkins to Craig, August 7, 1785, Wilkins to Craig, September 19, 1785; Wilkins to Craig April 18, 1785; Wilkins to Craig, December 10, 1785, , Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
Wilkins, McLelland, and Peter have substantial control over these middle men, but as managers their jobs relied more on knowledge-based tasks as opposed to this lower group of men whose jobs revolved around physical labor and the transport of goods.\textsuperscript{385}

Although Craig had probably invested the least amount of start-up money, he invested the most energy in overseeing the general management of each location. Craig also served as a middle man between the Philadelphia partners and the stores, maintaining communications with regard to expansion and ordering goods that he could not otherwise obtain. Craig was diligent in making sure that goods were distributed productively, a key aspect of which was listening to input given by employees like Wilkins. Goods such as silver and gunpowder did not sell at high or profitable prices at their Salt Spring location. This location, however, was a prime trading post for Natives as it received ample deer, otter, raccoon, beaver, bear, wolf skins, and furs for shipment elsewhere.\textsuperscript{386} In addition to Craig’s business sense he never let go of the carpentry skills that had originally provided his living. Craig designed the mills and distillery his company built.\textsuperscript{387} He was also known for designing and constructing special wooden orders, including small pieces of furniture, from his own lumber, prized by his customers.\textsuperscript{388} Craig also designed and built many of the boats utilized for moving goods. While Craig did not have the final say in many of the large business decisions, he was in charge of employing managers, setting sale prices for various goods sold locally as well

\textsuperscript{385} Wilkins to Craig, September 19, 1785; Jessica McLelland to Craig, July 24, 1785, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
\textsuperscript{386} Fall Lick to Craig, July 24, 1795, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
\textsuperscript{387} Mill Blueprint sketch and dimensions, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
\textsuperscript{388} Letter to Craig from J. Clark, July 31, 1781. Letter to Craig from Mr. Lacassagne, 1794, Receipt, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
as those being transported. In this the superior Philadelphian partners relied heavily on Craig, just as he too relied on socially and economically inferior men.

**Marriage Mobility**

In 1785, at forty-three years of age, Craig entered an additional, though different, legal partnership when he married Amelia Neville, the twenty-three-year-old daughter of Pittsburgh’s wealthiest land owner, fellow Mason and Cincinnati Society member General John Neville. By the time of Craig’s marriage to Amelia, affectionately know as Millie, General Neville had set up a substantial plantation, Bower Hill, just outside Pittsburgh. Although when exactly Craig had met Millie is unclear, his partner, Pierre Marmie may have assisted as Amelia’s brother, Presley Neville, had served with Marmie during the war as a aide-de-camp to Lafayette. Living on the frontier, and sharing prominence with only a small handful of men, had increased Craig’s value as an eligible bachelor. As Philadelphia correspondent James Hodgdon alluded, in cities like Philadelphia this would hardly have been the case. To Hodgdon, Craig was certainly a “lucky dog” who had given away his “eye t[oo]th” for such an “[un dimming] purse.” According to Hodgdon, Craig was not the only man on the frontier who socially and economically benefited from marriage. Craig’s partner Bayard was “clever” enough to follow in Craig’s “tract” and left the partnership to move south of Pittsburgh in order to court Elizabeth Mackay. Much like Craig’s bride, Mackay was also considerably younger than Bayard and the daughter of the higher ranking and more established,

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390 James Hodgdon to Craig, August 16, 1785, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
Colonel Aeneas Mackay. Although Bayard and Craig continued to share their mercantile partnership, Bayard concentrated his business efforts on purchasing land and building boats. Bayard was quite successful and later was considered the founder of Elizabeth Township, named after his wife.

It should not be forgotten that marriage also served as a form of networking and a way to consolidate economic power. In marriage, Craig had not only won a place in the region’s wealthiest family, but also had access to several other families of superior economic and social standing that were connected to the Nevilles through marriage. Outsiders dubbed this network of wealthy families, with great animosity, the “Neville Connection.” John Neville’s own marriage to Winifred Oldham connected Craig to the Oldham fortune of Virginia as well as Penn land agent George Wood and investor, Major Abraham Kirkpatrick, who had compiled a fortune of over $100,000 by the time of his death. Craig’s network was also extended in 1782 when his would-be brother-in-law, Presley Neville, married the daughter of General George Morgan. Marriage not only connected men but their business partners as well. In Neville’s case, this also connected the Ormsby, Brison, Day, and O’Hara families, along with other leading business, agriculture, and industrial leaders to Craig.

Marriage consolidated wealth and opportunities to a core group of families. In this instance, the “Neville Connection” encompassed the early founding families of Pittsburgh. The families connected to the final settling of Pittsburgh included the

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Nevilles, Kirkpatricks, O’Haras, Butlers, Wilkinses, Bayards as well as the Craigs. All were men who had been higher ranking officers stationed at Fort Pitt at the end of the war, knew the town well enough from their military experience, and were more established at the beginning of the war. Due to their higher rank, they earned more money and land by the war’s end. Marriage and the creation of business partnerships tightly connected these men to Craig in a successful network. As John Neville’s generation died off, estates passed on, further consolidating monetary power into a small group of men that included Craig. With John Neville’s death in 1812, half of his substantial land holdings and estate were transferred to Craig and his wife. Later when Craig hit hard times, he was able to sell parts of the five thousand acre lot left by Neville. Yet it was chance that the war had placed Craig not only in Pittsburgh, but alongside other officers in an unsettled area. It was an essential ingredient in the recipe for success.

*Taming the Wild*

Just as Craig had foreseen, by 1785 a city was sprouting up all around him. The business ventures in which Craig participated had contributed to the transition of Pittsburgh as a settlement to a full-fledged town. The stores and mills had helped to make daily life easier for prospective new residents. In addition to this, Craig’s desire for more efficient business practices had assisted in the development of the first consistent postal service to and from western Pennsylvania. Following the war, the army mail

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395 April 28, 1845, Mr. Biddle to Draper, Draper Papers 9, 146.
396 Land Transfer from John Neville to Isaac and Amelia, August, 3 1812. Box 56, Property Folder 2 Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
service to the region abruptly stopped. As a result information traveled incredibly slowly and made conducting business between settlements inefficient at best. Businessmen were not the only ones to suffer. Pittsburgh’s post-war population had few second-generation families and was made up mostly of immigrants and former soldiers. Having left whole families behind in their birth cities, these settlers were dependent on the willingness and efficiency of others to fill their need for correspondence to maintain family ties.398

Directly following the war Craig had noted the need for a postal service and attempted to establish a post-rider to Philadelphia in 1784. When this project failed, he postponed his next attempt until after his businesses developed. Craig’s own needs for an expedient and reliable postal service pushed him to create such a system for the use and benefit for the entire region.

His second attempt was far more successful. On September 13, 1786, Craig established the first privatized regular postal services between Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.399 For the first time since the war’s end Pittsburgh residents could conduct business and enter contracts with Philadelphians more easily. Residents could also use the service to exchange personal letters across the state and in only a week’s time. Even so, Craig had far greater enterprises in the works and was not interested in becoming a professional postmaster for life. Once he had gotten the postal service established and working regularly, he stepped aside and placed family friend and editor of the Pittsburgh Gazette, John Scull at the helm. In time the post would become another essential facet of life in Pittsburgh and with this demand it was necessary for the mail to go by stage coach as opposed to a post rider. As the country expanded to the west and south of Pittsburgh

398 Buck and Buck, 256-259.
new routes were added. With his own business interests at stake, Craig continued to
tweak the enterprise from the sidelines. He returned to the industry with a new partner
seven years later to establish a combination of boat and post riders that made daily
delivers to locations including Wheeling. 400 In the following two years, however, Craig
was heavily involved in creating other business and society-building institutions. He
assisted in the design of Pittsburgh’s first market house on the “Northeast corner of
second and market streets,” was elected to the board of directors for First Presbyterian
Church, and became the treasurer to the newly chartered Pittsburgh Academy, the
predecessor of the University of Pittsburgh. 401 These were not only solid positions for
Craig to hold, but the mere fact that they existed further helped in the establishment of
Pittsburgh, and Craig’s position within it. Establishment of a postal service, Presbyterian
Church (due to the substantial influx of Scots-Irish to the area), stores, market house,
distilleries, and mills were the beginning staples of civilization and were considerable
improvements to Pittsburgh. They were also strong deciding factors for those looking to
settle on the frontier. In this, improvements were not only good for Craig, but in drawing
settlers as consumers to the area, were good for business as well.

By 1787 an article described the town of Pittsburgh as having an abundance of
natural resources, rich earth and ready for “quick establishment.” The article also
explained a new plan to establish the outlying area around Pittsburgh. The plan had been
drawn out in which 750 lots would be laid out and sold for ten dollars a piece. 402 Lots
considered in the town of Pittsburgh were 60 by 240 feet in size, while outlaying lots

400 Buck and Buck, 257-258; Leland D. Baldwin, The Keelboat Age on Western Waters (Pittsburgh:
University of Pittsburgh Press, 1980), 177.
402, February 20, 1788, Pittsburgh Gazette
were only five to ten acres in dimension. James O’Hara, a future business partner of Craig, was the largest purchaser of these lots, buying a track consisting of 312 acres.\footnote{Munger, Pennsylvania Land Records, 168.}

The United States government was selling the lots in order to pay off the Revolutionary War debt owed mostly to France. Craig had grown to such prominence that his home was used to present the original layout for Pittsburgh to the general public. Anyone wishing to purchase land would have had to meet with either Craig or a handful of other men.\footnote{February 20, 1788, Pittsburgh Gazette}

Securing a reputation and a place among the elite respectable leading men of Pittsburgh was important to Craig. This is reflected in his involvement with smaller institutional projects and his interest in joining increasingly exclusive private associations, such as the American Philosophical Society.\footnote{“Back Matter” Proceedings of American Philosophical Society vol. 19 no. 109 (June 1881), 14.} Had Craig’s old friend Robert Patterson not become secretary of the Society this may have been an association still socially out of his reach. For men like Craig these memberships not only represented common view points but protected their standing. Men like William Fennimore Cooper, who had risen from journeyman to wealthy land speculator and later congressman, found enemies in their success. Although they also would have made enemies of men who had failed to mobilize as they had, men like Craig and Cooper had a right to fear equal or superior men in their peer groups who placed their self-made standing in question.

Having come up through channels, similar to Craig’s such as land speculation and an expanding mercantile business. Cooper’s success was mocked by enemies like George Croghan and the bastard son of Benjamin Franklin, William Franklin who referred to Cooper as a “shopkeeper” and “Land Jobber,” refusing to acknowledge the respect owed
to Cooper as both a successful merchant and large land speculator.\footnote{406} Craig faced similar social attacks. In one instance, attorney and future Supreme Court Justice Hugh Henry Brackenridge publicly humiliated Craig by using him as the model of Teague O’Reagan in his novel *Modern Chivalry*. O’Reagan, one of the main characters created by Brackenridge, was a bumbling Scots-Irish servant, whose election to the state legislature was used by Brackenridge to demonstrate the dangers of limitless democracy among commoners.\footnote{407} Attempting to stave off these types of attacks, men like Craig strived to further cement their standing and moved into public and private service positions.

As settlements turned into towns and eventually cities, these types of men needed to gain power in the form of real positions of authority and documented titles that would enable them to control and wield power over their own lives as well as others. From positions of power they could direct the course for Pittsburgh and in doing so ensure that the course of Pittsburgh fell along the same needs of their own interests. Just as had been the case in getting an officer’s title, in purchasing frontier land, and in starting business, timeliness was essential. If these men had waited to gain power until Pittsburgh had become a functioning town, with all the markers of burgeoning city, they would have lost the chance to be founders of the new city, more importantly the leading power holders. This also worked to consolidate power in the hands of a small number of families just as in the state building process of the early republic. New government jobs were numerous and it was common for those newly created jobs to be filled by friends and family of

elites. In this, Pittsburgh and her group of men were a microcosm of what was taking place in other locales as well as in the national political arena. They were staking claim on power over the destinies of socially and ethnically inferior men, as well as the direction of the republic.

The year 1787 was one of the most important years in Pittsburgh’s early history, not because of what occurred in Pittsburgh or the surrounding region, but because of national events in state building that became a catalyst for city building. Craig’s son, Neville Burgoyne Craig, nostalgically summed up these events and their lasting effects best when he stated that “[the] most Noble and important measures, which, no doubt, contributed greatly to our prosperity, as well as to the growth and happiness of the whole country [were] the Constitution of the United States, and the glorious, Ordinance for the government of the North Western Territory. The former [gave] the country a firm national government, gave assurance and tranquility, and the later [placed] near us a free, thriving and industrious population, secured to our infant manufactories, a large body of valuable customers.”

Those who had taken the early gamble and had journeyed west were now well assured they were going to be rewarded. As state building at the national level had come to an end the business men of Pittsburgh now had an institutional framework that would not only strengthen their own power but simultaneously help the entire region. Together these men, including Craig, gathered to petition the new government to form Allegheny County from land that formerly had been in Westmoreland and Washington Counties.

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At first glance this may seem like the next step in development for Pittsburgh, and in many ways it was; However, when examining the reasons these men gave for wanting a new county business oriented motivations are clear. With the formation of Allegheny County, these business motivations were realized and men, including Craig, benefited exactly as they had intended when they outlined the establishment of the county in the first place. The primary reason given by these men had been blunt. It would enable Pittsburgh business owners to generate more revenue. If the county were defined by smaller parameters it would be easier to conduct business for all residents as the area would be condensed. People would live closer to the goods they required. Moreover, the residents would not need to travel out of the region to conduct their legal business within the court systems. This, they believed, would attract people, including those with wealth, toward the county. A higher population would in turn raise the value of land, something that speculators like Craig, who had by himself and with partners purchased over 831 lots of land in Pittsburgh area alone, counted on to make a profit.409 Boldly they stated that the county would have Pittsburgh as its center and residents would be less likely to spend their money elsewhere. Thus they could fill their consumer needs in the conveyance of Pittsburgh.410


410 Petition Addressed to the General Assembly of Pennsylvania Asking for the Creation of Allegheny County, WPHM, vol. 9 no. 1, (January, 1921), 85.
Moreover, the petition to create Allegheny County stated the general feeling these men held about the region and the future as well as their place within both. With statements a mixture of business and provincial thinking the petitioners declared, “Pittsburgh the Capital of the western country is intended by nature for a place of consequence from its situation at the confluence of two large Rivers that glide through an extensive and fertile country.”\textsuperscript{411} They petitioned the government to allow them to begin state building regionally and bring Pittsburgh into its eventual own, in the tone of the religious groups of their day attempting to bring on the millennium. Although Craig had been accepted into their league through the military, most of the petitioners were well bred members of the natural aristocracy. They were the men born to be in power, and they were therefore the men to oversee this process. These not too distantly former settlers would not be living on the cusp of Indian Country and civilization forever. They were attempting to set up a situation that would enable ever increasing profits. People would come and settle there and others would pass through by the boat load, yet both would be consumers. Production would rise along with profits. With these hopes in mind it is no surprise that the first signers to this petition were some the most prominent business men in Pittsburgh including John Neville, Abraham Fitzpatrick, Josiah Tannehill, John Ormsby, Richard Butler, John Ross, John Scull, John Gibson, Hugh Ross, William Butler, Pressley Neville, and Stephen Bayard.

In transforming Pittsburgh from a trade post into a manufactory, these names were found time after time associated with the institutions and major building projects in early Pittsburgh as well as filling the first county government positions. Later these

\textsuperscript{411} Petition Addressed to the General Assembly of Pennsylvania Asking for the Creation of Allegheny County, WPHM, vol. 9 no. 1, (January, 1921), 85.
actions, by many of the same men, were replicated when Pittsburgh was incorporated as a borough in 1794. As one resentful early Pittsburgh resident claimed, the “[Neville Connection, which] consisted of four wealthy families, monopoliz[ed] public offices, and [was] closely united in interest and relationship.” Of the thirteen positions created upon the borough’s incorporation, Craig held at least three. He and William H. Beamont were elected as the Surveyors, or Regulators, the day after incorporation. Another position created by incorporation was Chief Burgess, a position equivalent to modern-day mayor, and the Burgess Council. As the highest local political position in the region, this same group of powerful men vied to fill it and some, including Craig, Pressley Neville, and James O’Hara did.

These men must have felt sure secure that their petition to create Allegheny County would be accepted as many of these very same men, including Craig, had come together to purchase a large block of land directly outside of Pittsburgh, on the north bank of the Ohio River. Pittsburgh’s major attraction was that it was on the farthest edge of the frontier, a bridge between many other developing areas both west and south yet this new area was even farther suggestive of the expansion mindset of antebellum migrants as well as the land speculators who sought to encourage their migration.

The new settlement, roughly around 33,600 acres, or about 52 square miles, was divided, by investors, into 750 lots ready for immediate settlement and sale to the general public at least eight months prior to the acceptance of their petition. Each lot ranged

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414 February 20, 1788, *Pennsylvania Gazette*. 
between “44 to 47 feet front, and 220 feet in depth public use.” Lots sold for ten dollars a piece, and anyone purchasing ten lots or more were also “entitled to five acres out.” What makes this sale an interesting example of land speculation was the great anticipation of expansion and development even before one lot were sold. When Craig had first purchased land on the frontier he was buying into a gamble and every settler was for himself. In this new settlement roads and lots had been cleared and established before the first lot had been sold. Each lot also had an adjoining lane, and 100 acres within the settlement had been set aside for the use of establishing churches, schools, and other city building essentials. The settlers who migrated there were different from those who had come earlier to the wilderness. They were migrating to a growing town. Craig and men like him were not simply dealing in land they were building a whole town, just as they had done in Pittsburgh. They were similarly attempting to profit from every aspect of its development and again from its anticipated population. Craig and this group of developers were not the only ones thinking in these terms. As William Cooper began the beginning stages of developing Cooperstown, New York he unknowingly followed these steps, including Craig’s early business ventures, exactly.\textsuperscript{415} Craig reproduced this very same mixed speculation and town building again in 1808 when he and Amos Janney founded Pekin, Ohio.\textsuperscript{416}

Additionally, it seems Craig and future partner James O’Hara, may have also been thinking in these same terms when they drew up indentures that included land not yet connected to settled areas. Throughout the late 1790s and early 1800s these men required first and foremost that every indenture include a clause requiring specific improvements

\textsuperscript{415} Taylor, Alan, \textit{William Cooper’s Town}, 97-102.
\textsuperscript{416}Janice E. Lane, \textit{Carroll County; A Place to Call Home}, The Making of America Series, (Charleston: Arcadia, 2003), 30.
to occur on the land. In this it seems that the interest and benefit in offering indentures was not goods or rent payments as much as it was making the tracts functional. A 1792 agreement between Jacob Goodwin, Craig and O’Hara promised Goodwin 150 acres of a 400 acre plot, with the option to purchase an additional 50 acres at a dollar per acre under the expressed agreement he “immediately provide the maters for the erecting a wing dam, do all the mill Wright work, and erect and complete a Saw Mill a [grist] Mill and other building.” Under such an agreement tenants needed to possess skills as well as the ability to purchases one third of the materials for these improvements.

In another instance in 1798, Craig partnered with John Bevins to purchase land in the five ranges of Ohio. In working out the details of how the land would be sold, Craig insisted on selling land on credit at higher “[prices] bearing interest and a condition amended of certain improvements being made in the given time for the payment of the whole purchase.” In the same month Craig also sent letters to managers, Benjamin Montgomery, Alexander Addison and William Peck, of two indentured-squatter communities he owned at Mingo Bottom, stating that although new “squatters” had come he was no longer accepting indentures for that area. Instead, Craig had drawn up plans to establish a town and was about to advertise the sale of lots there as well. He reminded them not to use his natural resources that were found in the area and of the improvements that were still in order, which may have been the Granary and grain hallow which were then constructed. That improvements were a key aspect of Craig’s arrangement with squatters and tenants was also demonstrated in the fact that he had hired a man, Robert Ainsley, for the sole purpose of certifying that contracted improvements had not only been constructed but of were of the right quality. In Craig’s later agreements with Isaiah
Jones, and both John and Neal McClain, vast acres of land needed to be cleared and fenced. Homes that were “fit for men” needed to be built, and a stipulation added that Craig and or O’Hara could add additional improvements as they saw fit.  

Through these exchanges it is clear that Craig’s expectations and needs, which he had in purchasing land and then offering these types of indentures, had changed. Land speculation was not simply the purchase and resale of land for one kind of profit. Land speculation for people like Craig and William Cooper was ensuring that land went up in value. This was done before drawing large volumes of new settlers that they could then service in an all encompassing manner, almost tantamount to the nineteenth century company store and town mentality. This change also marked a lessening of opportunities to those who could not make this investment. For the Abbot and Scott families, squatters living on land Craig had received as part of his military service in northwestern Pennsylvania and Southwestern New York, this change may have been detrimental to the Abbot and Scott family’s downward mobility. As squatters, they had already improved the land but were possibly unable to continue improvements or Craig felt that no other improvements, were necessary. Despite the fact that Craig was offered another tract of 300 acres elsewhere he instead chose, a he legally could, to remove these two families from the land, and in doing so both families lost everything.

417 John Bevins to Craig, January 12, 1798, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; John Bevins to Craig, January 19, 1798, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; Craig to John Bevins, February 3, 1798, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; Craig to Benjamin Montgomery, February 1798, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; Craig to William Peck, February 12, 1798, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; Craig to Alexander Addison, March 1798 Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; Craig to William Peck, September 30, 1798 Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; Articles of Agreement, James O'hara, Isaac Craig, John McClain Neal McClain, April 2, 1802, Deny-O’Hara papers MSS# 0051 Box 9, Folder 2, HSWP; Isaiah Jones Agreement, June 4, 1824, Deny-O’Hara papers MSS# 0051 Box 9, Folder 2, HSWP

418 Articles of Agreement between Isaac Craig, John O’Hara and Jacob Goodwin, May 2, 1802, Deny-O’Hara papers MSS# 0051 Box 9, Folder 2, HSWP; Abbot and Scott Families, Judgment, June 10, 1811, Deny-O’Hara papers MSS# 0051 Box 9, Folder 2, HSWP.
Chapter 6: Big Business

Although personal conflicts had begun to loom over Craig and his Philadelphian partners, they had not only been quite pleased with the profits of their earlier joint ventures with Craig but were utilizing these very profits to expand into new industries. As a result they continued to expand their frontier business projects following Craig’s land speculation. In 1788 they began the construction of the Alliance Iron Works in continued cooperation with Craig. This was not only the largest project for the group in the region but the forge came to be the wealthiest business and land owner as well. An interesting note about this first iron works in western Pennsylvania was that, although the majority of projects Craig worked on were in the vicinity of Pittsburgh the iron works was built east of its largest customer base in Tyrone, Pennsylvania. This location may hint that Craig and his partners were thinking in the long term and with the expansionist spirit of the era. A more centralized location between several cities would have proven more profitable than one located in the town. Furthermore the location may have blocked off greater consumer territory for their iron work and discouraged competition from building close by. The choice of location may also suggest that Pittsburgh’s development had begun to take on a more refined metropolitan feel, placing stores and more white-collar workers within the heart of activity and pushing heavy industry, as it had already done to agriculture, out to surrounding areas.

Alliance Iron Works went into operation in November of 1789 amidst renewed Native-settler violence. As the only iron forge west of the Alleghenies, it was able to

419 R. Eugene Harper, *The Transformation of Western Pennsylvania*, 50,
supply the frontier military with bullets, cannon balls, firearms, and other artillery essentials with a quickness that no other iron forge could match. In gaining the frontier military contracts for iron goods, Craig and his Philadelphian partners had also gained additional food stuff military contracts.

The furnace was not only providing munitions to the army but a vast array of iron goods for the general population. Although it may seem that the Indian Wars of Ohio and Indian country should have stunted the population growth in western Pennsylvania, Craig and other businessmen like him ensured that it did not. By the late 1780s the first great American migration west had begun. While in the past, smaller popular influx to the region had come and gone in response to the escalating violence with Native Americans, this new brand of settlers and squatters did not scare off as easy. Instead this group had few qualms about escalating violence with the Natives, or for that matter, anyone who questioned their claim’s to land that had been closed for settlement.\(^{421}\)

Due to groups like these, the Alliance Forge became one of the most significant industries Craig would be involved with as it was capable of making numerous essential items for frontier life such as “nails, spikes, brads, tacks, and wire: shovels, spades, hammers, and hoes; horseshoes, bits, and stirrups; edged tools (axes, chisels, handsaws, knives, scythes, mill saws); anvils, anchors, and canon; stoves, skillets, kettles, and other hollow ware; and the iron parts of mill machinery, engines, firearms, wagons, harrows, and plows.”\(^{422}\) The forge was capable of producing an almost endless list of items that could not only be used locally but could be exported to other settlements via the local rivers with ease.

\(^{421}\) Richard White, *The Middle Ground*, 418.

\(^{422}\) Nettels, *The Emergence of a National Economy, 1775-1815*, 270.
Having these goods available for the first time west of the Allegheny Mountains was a considerable advancement for Craig economically and socially. That said, Pittsburgh also gained considerably. Craig’s business ventures were not only building up his pocketbook but to a much larger extent they were also contributing to Pittsburgh’s own development. According to research conducted by historian Gregory H. Nobles, establishing these kinds of industries and businesses was the first step toward settling a town by ensuring closer, if not local, means for settlers to gain and replenish their necessities. According to Nobles this was a common trend. In the first years following the American Revolution, western towns grew into prosperous and large cities because they made settlement much easier and therefore attracted people from the overcrowded cities in the East. For the most part settlers could only bring what they could carry on wagons and horses, as well as their own backs. In most instances a good part of what they brought was just enough of the dry goods they needed to take in order to make the journey alone. When new settlers arrived they had a great number of needs in order to rebuild their lives. Craig and men like him filled these needs.

This created a chain reaction development as more people moved into an area, the larger it became. The larger a settlement became the more people there were to defend it during Native attacks which would continue to stabilize the area. As the labor population grew the town was able to support larger amounts of various economic activities, initiate further industrial development and thus become an actual city.

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423 Perkins 489.
As the furnace burned hot at that the Alliance Forge, actual business relationships among its owners began to smolder. Personality conflicts divided the already tenuous partnership. Five years before, Marmie had taken to the bottle and began quarrelling with local tribes. Although he maintained his economic contribution to the partnership, information relating to his actual participation no longer appeared in any of Craig’s regional communications.425 As Craig was left with insufficient help, partner William Turnbull moved to Pittsburgh to assist in management of the business in 1790. Although Turnbull had overseen larger companies in Philadelphia, running a large business on the frontier required much more personal interaction. Possibly making matters worse was the drastic difference in social standing between the higher ranking and Craig. As they began stepping on each others managerial toes, Craig withdrew his partnership in the forge.426 Craig had most likely foreseen the end result of Turnbull’s poor management, for shortly thereafter the iron works closed.427

The group’s military contracts started to become more of a nuisance than a profit. Early on, contracts to provide foodstuff to the army seemed a good move. By 1790 sporadic frontier conflict between settlers and Natives had become all-out warfare. A new confederacy of Ohio Native nations, including the Miami, Shawnee and Delaware, had formed and were being led by the Miami leader, Little Turtle. In response to the growing threat posed by this confederacy the numbers of military campaigns increased across the West. The military needed supplies and so, seeing an opportunity, Craig

425 Letter to Craig and Bayard from French Creek, April 23, 1785, Letter to Craig from Venango, September 19, 1785. Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
attempted to fill it. That said, problems arose almost immediately due to the unorganized nature of the army campaigns. This was not the Revolutionary War, officers had little to work with, as most soldiers with experience had already fought their war. With out the patriotic call to duty, as had been present during the Revolution, most men who fought during the Indian wars did so begrudgingly, in short stints, and with no training. In many instances Craig’s company had been contracted to supply food to soldiers on campaign against the Ohio Confederacy. While this generally worked, the army was mobile and did not always keep to the arrangements that had been made with Craig. As a result, Craig’s attempt to supply the military with fresh foodstuffs was not always well coordinated with the actual location of the army. The food spoiled, and worse yet, the army refused to pay Craig for it. Although Turnbull faulted Craig for much of these problems there were much larger issues at hand. Their company had foolishly underbid the food supply contract during the bidding war and instead of attempting to cut cost by becoming more efficient they had cut both the quantity and quality of the provisions they were supplying and lost the contract within three years.\footnote{Erna Risch, \textit{Quartermaster Support of the Army; A History of the Corps, 1775-1939}, (Washington D.C. Center of Military History, 1989), 79. Turnbull. \textit{William Turnbull, 1751-1822}, 18-25}

Although there was little Craig could do to save this ill-fated attempt at government contract service, his status as a well-respected man in society placed him in the position to secure future government contracts. Following the annihilation of General Arthur St. Clair’s army in November 1791, Craig along with eighteen other influential were appointed to a committee for the purpose of petitioning the Governor of Pennsylvania, Thomas Mifflin, for the creation of a strong, stable military to safeguard
the West. While history has given General Anthony Wayne most of the credit for the military improvements which followed, the petitions written by this group of men indicate otherwise. In their petitions to Mifflin, they outlined several requests were outlined that bore a strong resemblance to the military improvements that became realities under Wayne, leading to the end of the Indian Wars of the early 1790s. The petitioners believed that the only solution was a stable and stronger army. This meant recruiting men who were not drafted for short durations but men who would look at the military as a career, and something in which that they could benefit economically from by doing their best. They argued that the new army should not be disbanded on a whim but maintained. The new military was to be built of well trained and supplied men who served under the direction of highly skilled “experienced” officers. These men also required higher pay than what was currently being offered, as well as what had been paid to enlisted men during the war, at no less then fifty shillings. Only once these changes had taken place could the military “[meet] the enemy upon equal terms.” In response to this petition, Mifflin sent a positive reply to the petitioners request which led them to believe that plans were under way for the full protection of the area. In this, as in other instances, Craig had helped to create his own customer base, which would include a strong stable army stationed in fixed spots with regular supply shipments. Craig, and other men involved in military supply, which included Turnbull, John O’Hara, John Wilkins, and Presley Neville, had shaped the needs of the West in a profitable manner for themselves.

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429 Pittsburgh Committee to Thomas Mifflin, December 28, 1791, *Pennsylvania Gazette.*
430 Pittsburgh Committee to Thomas Mifflin, January 4, 1791, *Pennsylvania Gazette.*
431 Pittsburgh Committee to Thomas Mifflin, January 11, 1791, *Pennsylvania Gazette.*
At the outset, these changes could not save Craig and his Philadelphia partnership. Turnbull accused Craig of making “unwarranted advances” and in August 1791 sued him for it.\textsuperscript{433} Placing full blame for the military food supply fiasco on Craig, Turnbull believed Craig owed him over £2,800. Problems became much worse for Craig when Turnbull then claimed to own much of the land Craig had purchased with Bayard, before his partnership with Turnbull had even began. Perhaps the only thing to soften the blow was that cross-state business transactions and legal action still took considerable amounts of time. Craig benefited from the lengthy proceedings by continuing to collect profits as the process to dissolve the partnership and the lawsuit took the better part of five years.

Legal action threatened the loss of substantial land as well as the investments Craig had made to the land through improvements. These were the kinds of events that sent men to debtor’s prison, destroyed them irrevocably, or both. Investing on the frontier was risky in and of itself, aside from overly demanding business partners who sued with little cause and for more than what they were owed. This development could have brought a more prosperous man than Craig to his knees. Instead, Turnbull took capital that had taken Craig at least fifteen years to build, the dissolution of the company allowed Craig to start anew. This time, however, he was not starting off as a carpenter’s apprentice and that would make all the difference.\textsuperscript{434}

\textit{As One Door Begins to Close, Nepotism Opens Another}

\textsuperscript{433} Turnbull to Craig, July 19, 1787, Craig Collection 1768-1868; Turnbull, Marmie, and Holker, to Craig, October 9, 1787, Craig Collection 1768-1868, Notarized Letter to Isaac Craig from the Turnbull Marmie Company, February 10, 1791. Personal Correspondence Folder 2, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP; Turnbull to Craig, August 06, 1791, Craig Collection 1768-1868.

\textsuperscript{434} Turnbull, Marmie Company to Craig, October 9, 1792, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; Clara E. Duer, ed. 
All was not lost for Craig. He had most likely sensed the coming storm with Turnbull’s arrival in Pittsburgh in 1790. Leaving his home, an old redoubt of Fort Pitt with extensive additions, he moved to higher ground. Although he could not predict exactly how bad the Turnbull partnership would end, Craig did know he was unlikely to fall too far down the social ladder. By the early 1790s Craig had a sound network of established men that he could turn to for assistance. They included men from the socially superior, and now equal, men he had served with during the Revolutionary War to the more recent “Neville Connection.” Short term, however, Craig’s saving grace may have been that if he fell socially, he would have dragged down his wife Millie and the first three Craig children, Neville B. Matilda, Presley Hamilton and Henry Knox, and the Neville family would not allow that. Craig aside, for the descendants of John Neville, Pittsburgh’s wealthiest land owner and a Pennsylvania Assemblyman, to live in squalor would have been scandalous. This was a benefit to marrying up and a safety net that, if Craig knew was secure, may have even allowed him to make some of his fortune earlier by overtly taking risks. In this, John Neville’s “dimmless purse” and social standing made a resource that gave light amidst darkness. The first glimmer of that came as Craig settled on a back portion of Neville’s extensive and beautiful estate, Bower Hill. Craig continued his position as Notary and Tabellin Public, a position which John Neville had personally appointed him."

Residing with Presley Neville on John Neville’s land, Craig was able to take some time and cultivate his network of resources and plan for the future, leaving the routine chores of daily life to the attendance of others, namely his eight slaves. In the early 1790s Craig was among the largest slave owners in Allegheny County, the largest being

435 PA Archives, ser. 9, vol. 1, 67.
John Neville, his father in law, who owned eighteen slaves, and his brother-in-law who owned nine. Surviving documentation regarding Craig’s ownership of slaves is limited, and almost nonexistent among his personal papers. As a diligent record keeper it is probable that this information did at one time exist, prior to the historical cleansing of page-tearing descendants who wished to purify their history. Thus, how Craig first gained his slaves is unknown. He may have received them as partial compensation for the eight years of service he had given the country, or as wedding present from John Neville, or by having purchased them off the block. No matter how they were obtained, they were of great value to Craig. This was illustrated by the fact that when one his slaves, Toby, ran away he posted a $15 reward for his capture and return. Craig also offered to pay for any expenses incurred for the catching and holding of Toby. In the description of Toby, Craig relayed that Toby had only one eye, was knock kneed, and was slow from an illness. The fact that Craig was willing to pay for an ad, reward, and other charges for the return of what could easily be considered a less than productive slave illustrates the extreme value he placed on them. He may have even paid these charges for Toby, as in a list of “property” Craig inventoried in 1815, he listed “1 Negro male, lame, 42 years old.”

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437 May 21, 1802, Pittsburgh Gazette. It was tempting to draw attention to Toby’s physical limitations and question if these injuries had not befallen him at the hands of Craig and what that might suggest as far as labor and class relations. This issue would have been addressed except for two facts which indicated that any exploration into this specific instance would have led to weak speculation. The first fact is that in all accounts of the attack on Bower hill during the Whiskey Rebellion, it was the slaves who protected both the family and property with loaded guns. It seems unlikely that overly abusive master would ever willingly place guns in the hands of those which they physically enslaved to the point of maiming. The second issue is that Toby’s main injury is that he had only one eye, a loss which may have been caused by a number of things, including the ever popular Pittsburgh past time in the era the eye gouging game, which sadly, out of want for entertainment left many a gamer with only one eye. Donald R. Rettig, Jr., ed. Observations on the American Backcountry, 1728-1836. (Waterville, OH: Smoke and Fire Company, 1998), 104-108.
438 List of Property, June 1, 1815, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
In general, the value of Craig’s slaves would have risen in the preceding two years, as An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery had passed. This made the purchase of new slaves illegal in Pennsylvania and thus it would have been more difficult for Craig, or anyone else, to obtain additional slaves. This however did not stop Craig, who like many others after 1808, found alternative means to purchase slaves. In June of 1815 he “obtained Negro Deborah for $66.23 from [the] jail.”

Yet what is most important about the fact that Craig owned slaves is not found in their monetary value as much as their symbolic and personal value to Craig. Craig would not have thought his ownership of people was exploitative. In fact, other than their oversight, Craig probably thought little of his slaves at all. If anything, when the household ran smoothly, Craig probably took them and the work they preformed for granted. They most likely kept the house clean, the estate well manicured, the horses fed and clean, cooked and served the families meals, nursed and then looked after each of the twelve Craig children as they were born. In reality these slaves allowed Craig to focus all of his attention on other matters. In enslaving others, Craig and many men like him, found freedom; freedom to exercise his own agency without the disruption of domestic daily life. In owning slaves, a man like Craig could and in this case did, spend a good portion of his time building himself up socially and economically with one investment opportunity, scheme, or public office after another.

By the time Turnbull had decided to pursue Craig in a court of law his military network had come through and Henry Knox handed him an opportunity that assisted in his social maintenance and economic rebuilding; the position of Deputy Quarter Master.

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General and Keeper of the Military Stores under Quarter Master General John O’Hara. The irony was that Knox offered it to Craig knowing full well that Craig was being sued for poor performance with the same types of skills required as Deputy Quarter Master General. Knox’s, however, was thinking forward and need a well round skilled man. The Legion of the Untied States, was about to be formed in the heart of the west and an anticipated 5,120 men would need a great many supplies. While the creation of Legionville, the training facility for the newly styled Legion, marked a much needed opportunity for Craig it also somewhat marked the end of the military’s role in providing opportunities for Craig as it had during the Revolution. With the creation of Legionville and a professional standing army, officer’s commissions would not be handed out to unqualified candidates. Instead, standards were built into the army’s new structured system. That said, because of the tradition begun in the Continental Army, officer’s commissions would never be entirely held exclusivly for the upper class in the United States Army. It also marked the end of the era when frontier heroes could rise in power because of their skill in settlement protection.

On the Coattails of Others

The Deputy Quarter Master position offered considerable economic mobility for Craig specifically, but any other man may not have faired as well. At the beginning of Craig’s service as Deputy Quarter Master the pay only started at about $30 per month, with the standard pay for a Quarter Master General at about $100. Craig most certainly must have recognized that this was not sufficient pay for a man of his caliber, let alone

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440 Henry Knox to Craig, February, 15, 1791. Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
maintain his life style. Regardless, he accepted the position and worked with no qualms for fifteen months, all the while demonstrating his talents and worth. Like much of Craig’s life, he was working out of a crafted strategy. He had demonstrated just enough to General Knox so that when he approached his direct superior, O’Hara, for a raise he would send him into a frenzy to obtain it. As with many of Craig’s strategies, it worked. O’Hara recognized all that he would lose if Craig left the Deputy Quarter Master position, when he claimed that he longed to return to Philadelphia, a place that had nothing but a brother that he barely kept in touch with. Playing into Craig’s hand perfectly, O’Hara dispatched a message to Knox informing him he was only authorized to increase Craig’s pay by $10 and yet his “punctuality, fidelity and industry are such as to be of particular importance in the place where he is, as he has the charge of receiving and distributing all the public stores.” Craig received not one but two raises, and within six years he was earning considerably more than the average Deputy, for his pay had more than doubled to $99 a month. The fact that Craig made a dollar shy of $100 may have been symbolic of the fact that it was just below that of his superior, but importantly, it was below him none the less.\footnote{Henry Knox to Craig, June 15, 1792, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; January 1, 1800, Entry, Ledger Book August 9, 1797-May 1, 1800, ORSC; July 1, 1798 Entry, Ledger Book August 9, 1797-May 1, 1800, ORSC; Mary Carson Darlington ed. \textit{Fort Pitt and Letters from the Frontier}, (Pittsburgh: J.R. Weldin & Co, 1892), 247-248}

While it might be thought that the long-standing friendship of Knox and Craig may have assisted in such increases, Knox’s statements suggest that perhaps their relationship was based on the quality each man found in the other, and the increases in Craig’s pay had followed such sentiments. Knox commended him, saying, “I [have] perceived your conduct since you have been in office [, you] will bear the finest
execution, I have often had the pleasure to approve it and I hope this pleasure will be often replicated. I am convinced the compensation stipulated is inadequate for your services, and I shall Endeavour that it shall be satisfactory to you, as far as my power extends.” It certainly helped Craig that he was held in such high esteem by a friend who was also in a position to increase his salary. Had Knox not known or liked Craig, he may not have approved such increases. Thus it seems Craig’s work ethic and skills were responsible for the increase in his pay, but perhaps personal attachments affected the exact value of such an economic gain. Thus the Deputy Quarter Master, a position which came with a heavy work load for any man, was discriminately profitable. Craig had earned the reputation of a hard worker, which initially entitled him to economic rewards, but having friends with power and influence was what made the actual difference.443

Craig rode on the coattails of others in the early stages of his career, and he continued to do so. As Deputy Quartermaster General, Craig was also able to pull from both his background in the military as well as a businessman. The reality of this opportunity for Craig stems from the compilation of the opportunity created by the war, friendship, and the knowledge base he had developed over the past decade. Regardless of how he gained the quartermaster position it is equally important to know that in serving in this position he maintained records as detailed of those he had kept for his business. Not so much as one nail was used without Craig documenting its cost and or use.444 Craig not only acted on opportunities but used them to prove his capabilities and in turn enable future opportunities. These were the exact types of post-war opportunities lower and middling men had tried to create for themselves by joining the Continental Army. While

443 Ibid
444 Memorandum Book, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.
these opportunities did not drop into the laps of most men, they sometimes did. For instance, Craig’s friend Robert Patterson was quite surprised when in 1805 a letter arrived from a wartime friend, Thomas Jefferson, offering Patterson the position of United States Mint director.\footnote{Douis Du Bois, \textit{A Record of the Families of Robert Patterson (the Elder)}, 21.}

Aside from his regular salary Craig made his quartermaster position an exceedingly lucrative one. As had been the early plan of Craig and many other men in Pittsburgh involved in the military supply business, Pittsburgh had become the central location for regional distribution of the western frontier. As the details of Craig’s business were mired in lengthy legal affairs with his past Philadelphian partners, Craig continued to take part in profits made from the land, buildings, and goods made by the group.\footnote{Henry Knox to Craig, February, 1791, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; Henry Knox to Craig, March 24, 1791, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.} As the Deputy Quartermaster, Craig needed warehouse space for the military stores as well as waterway access to ship provisions in and around Pittsburgh. Craig as the business man had land, buildings, and boats, all for rent. Craig was his own best resource on both sides of the arrangement and would use his warehouse, land, as well as his flat and keelboats for the housing and transportation of soldiers and goods.\footnote{Journal, 14, Craig-Neville Papers, HSWP.} Craig was still collecting additional payment, aside from his income, for the military’s use of his property until Turnbull and Marmie and Company won legal action against Craig for the property.\footnote{Henry Knox to Craig, March 24, 1791, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL. \& August 16, 1794, \textit{Pittsburgh Gazette}.} That said, Craig may have been able to continue to collect these profits
as far as 1795, the point in which Craig was legally forced to sign over his first land holdings to Turnbull, Marmie and Company.\textsuperscript{449}

Deputy Quartermaster, Hero

By the winter of 1791-92 the frontier erupted in crisis as Native-settler violence reached its height, creating a need for forts and supply lines across the frontier. Thus, for Craig a new and time-sensitive opportunity developed dependent on his carpentry skills, knowledge in munitions, and fortifications. He was selected to superintend the building of at least five forts in a chain across Western Pennsylvania and down the Allegheny and Ohio rivers at locations including Waterford, Beaver, Big Beaver, and Wheeling. The largest however, had been constructed in the heart of Pittsburgh’s business district. Fort Fayette was a project that cost over $2,000 in material and for which Craig was paid at least $500. By giving Craig these building contracts his superiors demonstrated their trust in his ability to select key defensive locations, as well as to predict the areas an enemy was likely to try and breach. At the same time, Craig also had to think of the transportation of supplies and efficiency.

In addition to these qualifications, a well-pleased General Knox had often added that Craig had the right “character” and “zeal to promote the [public’s interest]” that Knox personally entrusted to him. Knox’s compliments did not cease when Craig exceeded his construction budget for Fort Fayette. Instead, Knox, who had carefully inspected the detailed list that Craig sent relating to the cost, reassured Craig that his “integrity” was without question. Although Knox thought Craig was going to build a

small blockhouse, he had instead built a considerable fort complete with several  
blockhouses, barracks, palisades and a magazine. Knox was not displeased, for he had  
placed his “trust” in Craig. According to Knox, Craig knew better than anyone what the  
public needed and thus he did not question that these were indeed “necessary”  
expenditures. What further substantiates Craig’s abilities was that both Knox and Wayne  
were pleased with Craig’s structures, so much so that six years later Wayne hand-picked  
Craig to design and oversee the building of two more large structures and supply posts at  
Le Boeuf and Presque Isle, two projects Craig and Thomas Butler had suggested years  
earlier.  

In the building of Fort Fayette alone, Craig’s social status and reputation had been  
elevated to such a degree he had become a regional hero. For almost a year Pittsburgh  
residents had feared that increasing and intensified Native American attacks would hurt  
the development of Pittsburgh and the surrounding counties. By pushing civilians back  
to the large coastal cities. Such a “depopulation” would in turn pull troops from the local  
forts, placing those who chose to stay at far greater risk. Craig understood the volatile  
nature of Pittsburgh, and so when the opportunity had presented itself he not only  
accepted a contract that might deter Native raids, but had gone over budget to ensure he  

450 Henry Knox to Craig, December 23, 1791, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; Henry Knox to Craig,  
December 29, 1791, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; Henry Knox to Craig, January 17, 1792, Craig  
Collection 1768-1868, CL; Henry Knox to Craig, January 27, 1792, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL;  
Henry Knox to Craig, March 2, 1792, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; Henry Knox to Craig, February 25,  
1792 Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; Anthony Wayne to Thomas Butler, June 28, 1796, Memoranda  
Book 1795-1798, CL; Supply Purchase Request “New Fort,” Fort Fayette, Fort Washington, Craig  
Collection 1768-1868, CL. Although General Anthony Wayne has historically gained most of the credit for  
these structures letters from Henry Knox as well as the petitions of the leading men in the region before  
hand suggest that Wayne, as so often is the case, was merely a figure head for the organization and  
strengthening of the United States Army. In reality, men like Craig, who knew the area and the needs of  
the area better are collectively more responsible for the improvements which took place throughout the  
1790s. Just as Craig gained the credit for “building” structures that had actually been constructed by the  
labor of men socially below him, Wayne has been given the credit for having fortified the west.  
Series 4. General Correspondence. 1697-1799.
had built a fort that would actually assist in protecting the most populated area in the region. This action combined with the fact that Craig directed the supply of munitions and goods to the military in at least eleven different forts had earned Craig a certain amount of popularity as a guardian over the region.452

In many ways, Craig’s Deputy Quartermaster position and his new heroic image not only well placed but further mobilized Craig socially in a manner that no other accomplishment did. Within two years Native-settler conflict continued with unceasing acrimony. By the summer of 1793 men like Craig, O’Hara, General Wayne, General Knox and Indian Affairs agent Timothy Pickering unsuccessfully attempted to negotiate peace with Iroquois, Shawnee, Seneca, and Delaware nations.453 When it appeared that the Seneca were willing to agree to terms with the United States, it was Craig who was able to obtain the necessary 38,760 wampum beads necessary to complete the treaty. This was no small task as, about the same time, Knox was scouring the country for 8,000 wampum beads.454 By the end of August 1793 the United States had offered to give back the land gained in the Treaty of Fort Harmar. The confederacy refused to accept anything short of all the land past the Ohio. Upon this refusal, the United States ended negotiations. The Indian wars resumed and sadistic attacks on citizens across the frontier followed.455

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452 Deputy Quarter Master General Book, June 1797-November 1801, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
453 Craig to Timothy Pickering, May 15, 1793, Timothy Pickering Papers, 1790-1796 on Indian Affairs Mss 645, APS.
454 Craig to Timothy Pickering and Henry Knox, June 8, 1793, Timothy Pickering Papers, 1790-1796 on Indian Affairs Mss 645, APS; B. Lincoln, B. Randolph, T. Pickering to Craig, May 26, 1793, Indian Affairs, American State Papers; Documents, Legislative and Executive, of the Congress of the United States From the First Session of the First to the Third Session of the thirteenth Congress, March 3, 1789 – March 3, 11815, vol. IV, (Washington D.C: Gales and Seaton, 1832), 1793.
455 Downes, 323.
Although Craig was only Deputy Quartermaster, the fact was O’Hara’s role as Quartermaster was more of a ceremonial figurehead as opposed to being in charge of the western commissary. O’Hara was invited to attend treaties and balls and in some cases he was even invited at the behest of the tribes themselves. Craig on the other hand managed more frequent contact and mediation with tribes, forts, and residents. When O’Hara received feverish letters like that of David Mead, commander of Fort Le Boeuf, who declared, “The period is now at hand that this settlement must Absolutely evacuate if no support can be had,” he forwarded then to Craig. Craig was only too happy to quickly fill supply requests. In an act that brought him considerable amounts of extra pay, he had partnered with O’Hara and taken over the food, whiskey, and other supply contracts from around 1793 to at least 1801. In filling supplies quickly as well as adequately Craig became the savior of most western settlements. In another instance, Craig’s refusal to accept and distribute military goods may have saved Pittsburgh residents. In August 1793 he received a shipment of clothing which had been exposed to Yellow Fever. Before accepting the goods, Craig forced General Knox and Commissary of the Military Stores, Samuel Hodgdon to consult a medical professional with regard to the clothing’s safety. As a result the clothing was smoked, aired, marked, and placed in storage for over a year. Pittsburgh was not going to share the same fate as tens of thousands of Philadelphians who perished that year, not under Craig’s watch.

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456 Thomas Mifflin to James O’Hara, July 19, 1794; Thomas Mifflin to James O’Hara, August 1, 1794, Deny-O’Hara Collection; John Adlum to James O’Hara, August 31, 1794, HSWP. Deny-O’Hara Collection, Box 1 fl 4, HSWP
457 June 10, 1799, Entry, Ledger Book August 9, 1797-May 1, 1800, CL
458 David Mead to James O’Hara August 11, 1794, Deny-O’Hara Collection, Box 1 fl 4, Box 1 fl 4, HSWP.
459 Henry Knox to Craig, August 30, 1793, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; Craig to Henry Knox August 30, 1793, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL; Samuel Hodgdon to Henry Knox, August 31, 1793, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
In these actions, Craig’s popularity surpassed that of the far more wealthy other members of the “Neville Connection.” In the political heat of the summer of 1794 the leading upper-class families, which were divided by political ideology into camps of Republicans and Federalists, utilized building class antipathy and the tax rebellion of the lower class as a means of social warfare against each other. Gaining power from the mob of violent lower class residents, the Republicans led by Hugh Henry Brackenridge turned against John Neville, the regional tax inspector, and threatened to exile him and his “scoundrel” Federalist associates, namely the “Neville Connection.” Despite his own diehard Federalism and upper-class social status, Craig’s position as Deputy Quartermaster, as well as the reputation he had gained in this position rescued them. The Republican committee assigned to decide the fate of the “Neville Connection” could not justify the banishment of Craig, a source of protection against the Natives, from the city. In being allowed to stay, Craig was able to act as a mediator and advocate for the “Neville Connection.” He also secretly attempted to use his authority as the Deputy Quartermaster to call in the Pennsylvania Militia to control the Whiskey Rebels. Publicly however, Craig’s economic aspirations shaped his demeanor, just as they did in his dealings with Native Americans, and in doing so he assisted himself socially while simultaneously saving the Neville clan.

Craig’s success had always been dependent on vast numbers of unsuspecting men, having enemies would have proven quite costly to his goals. This was especially true when he had built his economic empire on a weak social foundation that could be challenged. While Craig certainly supported social and political issues that helped his economic mobility he would not allow them to hurt his fate or force him into duels, as
men like Alexander Hamilton did. Instead, Craig was forced to walk a fine line and use logic and mediation to resolve social and political conflict, an approach that was far more effective than playing out the drama publicly as the “Neville Connection” and their opposition did in weekly articles they posted in *Pittsburgh Gazette*. In this Craig was refrain ed from the common practice of mudslinging via newspapers and self published pamphlets. Only in the privacy of a journal did he allow himself to vent, spewing counter-arguments with the fury of an emotionally-caged man. 460 Thus a combination of Craig’s actions as Deputy Quartermaster and the continued Native attacks on the region, and Craig’s popularity as a military defender of the frontier had elevated Craig’s regional social status to above that of many of the very people for whom he owed much of his later economic prosperity.

Interestingly enough, following the Whiskey Rebellion the Neville clan took refuge under Craig’s own roof before moving into almost complete isolation on Neville Island at the fringe of Pittsburgh. Craig on the other hand relocated to Water Street, which was considered by most visitors to the area the most refined street in Pittsburgh, as well as the only paved street in town. 461 Although the “Neville Connection” slowly rebuilt its status, four years later Neville relative and attorney John Woods, asked Craig if he would not mind sending out a petition “in support of the Bank of the Allegheny.” Woods believed that “a number of the citizens of Pittsburgh look[ed] up to Craig as their principal advocate.” 462 Socially, Craig out-ranked the Nevilles. In this, the Whiskey Rebellion had acted as a catalyst for Craig’s social mobilization allowing his social status

462 John Woods Esq to Craig February 2, 1798, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
to exceed his economic standing. This was a considerable moment for Craig, as in no other position had his social standing trumped that of the men on whom he had depended. He had never been invited to join the Carpenter’s Company as his partners had, he had never been promoted past the rank of Proctor or Knox, and he had always been a junior partner in the business ventures he participated in.  

_The Price of Opportunity Rises: The $30,000 Glass Bottle_

By the late 1790s Craig had reached his social apex and was not far behind economically as well. While the true last step of this journey would be inheriting 50 percent of the Neville fortune, and the 1,000 acre estate at Neville Island, Craig’s last capital building action was, as had often been the case, the taking on of a new business partner. Not just any partner would do, and now was certainly no different, and Craig kept to his former method in choosing James O’Hara. O’Hara appeared like many of the socially and economically superior men Craig had depended on previously: he had been born in Ireland, and served in the British and later Continental armies rising through the ranks from ensign to general before settling in Pittsburgh. O’Hara had not only achieved a superior military rank than Craig, but, as was the case with Craig’s previous business partners, he was considerably wealthier than Craig. In real estate investments alone O’Hara had spent over $58,000 for land and developments. O’Hara had owned such a vast amount of real estate, buildings, and businesses that O’Hara’s obituary read

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464 July 31, 1818, _Pittsburgh Gazette_

that he had “almost created a city himself.” O’Hara additionally focused on the “salt trade, tanning and milling, brewing, shipbuilding, and iron manufacturing.” As Quartermaster General from 1791-1796 O’Hara had gotten to know Craig and his work habits well enough to have recognized the potential Craig offered as a business partner despite his inability to match O’Hara’s investments. Thus in 1796, as O’Hara left the Quartermaster General position in search of a new capital venture. It was a logical next step for his partnership with Craig to expand from military supply to large-scale industry such as glass manufacturing.

In that year Craig was fifty-four years old, and finding it harder to create opportunities in Pittsburgh than it had been on his arrival seventeen years earlier. Pittsburgh was no longer a small clearing amongst thick woods but a busy metropolis with businessmen, politicians, newspapers, churches, political factions, luxury, culture, big and small business, farms of all sizes, and so much large-scale industrialization that within four years Zadok Cramer’s almanac, The Navigator, described Pittsburgh’s skyline as “enveloped in thick clouds of smoke, which even affect respiration; the appearance of the houses is dark and gloomy, from the general use of coal particularly in the numerous manufactories which send into the air immense columns of smoke.”

Pittsburgh’s evolution was starting to constrict opportunities for social mobility, while many new groups of migrants continued to arrive most merely passed through as they made their way farther out west to the new frontier. Getting in on the ground floor had been an essential aspect of Craig’s strategy, but those days were numbered in Pittsburgh. This fact was clear to men, like Craig and Cooper, who scrambled to purchase land.

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467 Zadok Cramer, The Navigator, (Pittsburgh, 1800), 64.
further west in places like Ohio and Kentucky. In Pittsburgh Craig’s only hope to stay ahead of the grid, was to raise the bar for Pittsburgh industry again. In opening up the first glass manufactory west of the Allegheny Mountains, Craig and O’Hara were doing just that, but the price would be considerable.

Throughout the 1790s, the price for land in Pittsburgh increased drastically as the availability of land decreased. For the most part the land that was available was located outside of the actual borough and sold upwards of forty cents an acre. Lots located within Pittsburgh may have cost as high as ten to twenty dollars per foot. In the sale of land, these higher prices benefited men like Craig who had speculated early on. In one instance Craig made $6,000 in one land transaction for a small but well developed lot he owned on Water Street, an area in which most of lots he had originally purchased in 1786 sold for less than £20 each. By the turn of the decade men who had not already purchased land, or were just arriving were more likely to be paying rent to men like Craig than becoming men like Craig. By 1811 there was not much land sale activity, and landlords could expect to profit off of long-term tenants. According to Zadok Cramer’s “Navigator” rents had risen by 10 percent in the previous year and were considered quite high for the time at about 100 dollars a month. Zadok also stated that “a genteel private family [could] scarcely obtain a good dwelling under three or four hundred dollars.” Although men like Craig benefited from these changes, they also signified the end of an era where landownership and mobilization had been possible for a larger group of men.

469 Cramer, Zadok, *The navigator*, 64.
470 March, 10 1786, Land Warrant; Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL Checks drown on Planters Bank of New Orleans and the insurance bank of Lexington July 15 1816. signed Rees E Fleeson & company, land sale to Christopher Cowan, Craig Collection 1768-1868, CL.
Although some historians may argue that the country had doubled in size with the
Louisiana Purchase, thus opening up more land to property-less, the unique environment
created by the Revolutionary War no longer existed. Although the War of 1812 came
quickly on the heels of independence the fact that the United States now had a well
organized and trained army lessened the likelihood that men from the lower class would
be given the social and economic opportunities that Craig had been given, and therefore
unable to purchase land and profit from it in the same manner.

Gaining raw natural resources also proved to be a new difficulty. At the time the
two partners were willing to pay $100 to anyone who could locate high quality clay able
to withstand the heat of a glass furnace.⁴⁷² Years earlier, when Craig had stumbled across
high quality resources it had been as easy as a hike up the hill. Craig was a much older
man now, much of the local resources had already been picked dry, and he could not
spend his days traipsing about the region as he had businesses to run. Craig’s sons may
have been spry young lads but they had been raised as members of the elite, boys whose
hands would never be worn in the ways of their father. Even had Craig been able to
locate local resources they would not have been easy to obtain. Directly following the
Revolution, Craig, and men like him, had been able to find and take natural resources
freely. In a 1786 petition to Congress, seventy-five men, presumably new land owners,
had lodged a complaint against William Irvine, Stephen Bayard, John Findley, David
Duncan, Robert Elliot, and Craig for having stripped un-owned land of its natural
resources for their own profit before the government had taken over and begun to sell

⁴⁷² May 21, 1802, Pittsburgh Gazette.
By 1796 that land, and the resources, were legally owned by either private owners or the federal government. In the mid 1780s Craig had been able to take coal and clay from Coal Hill at no cost. Now, he and O’Hara were forced to purchase three tracts, which totaled less than one acre of land for £90 in order to obtain the resources. Thus, due to development and changing conditions many of the resources and opportunities that had enabled men to climb socially and economically a decade beforehand had been pushed further out of reach for lower and lower middle class men.

That is not to say that continued opportunity as a whole was unavailable to men like Craig, who had already been welcomed into the fellowship of elite gentlemen as well as having achieved substantial economic mobilization. In order for Craig to maintain or further his social and economic position, he was forced to depend, more so than before, on other men. Higher prices for land, equipment, and other goods required greater investments, which meant greater risk. In many ways finding a partner who was willing to also carry the financial burden then became a further limitation. In this, as had always been the case, Craig needed to find men who were willing to exercise their own agency in a way that would benefit him. Thankfully, most of the economically superior men Craig could look to in Pittsburgh had known him for sometime. Craig’s character, history of success, and more importantly his flexibility, skills, and ingenuity, were traits that sold themselves in the new environment. Craig, after all was not the only one who was forced to adapt to the changes that had taken place. These men were now also excluded from many bottom-floor opportunities and in order to maintain or increase profits their

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473 Memorial on Behalf of the Inhabitants of Pittsburgh, and others living on or near the waters of the Rivers Monongahela, Alleghany, and Ohio, National Archives, Washington D.C.
474 May 17, 1796, Land Warrant, Lukens-Lenox Papers, vol. 9I, PSA; Buck and Buck, The Planting of Civilization, 35.
business needed to combat competition by changing to meet market trends, become more efficient, and expand. Craig was a man with ideas, good ideas, but not enough capital to see them through on his end. As O’Hara began building his glass house Craig stepped forward and by sharing his ideas on how to glass could be made with more efficiency with O’Hara he demonstrated his ability. It was a risk; O’Hara might have simply used Craig’s ideas but not partner with Craig, in doing so Craig’s ideas would have lost all value. Fortunately for Craig he did not. O’Hara cut his losses on his first project at $10,000 and began listening to Craig.  

By 1797 Craig was overseeing the construction of a new glass house. It was not only the first glass house west of the Allegheny Mountains, it was also the first glass house to be fueled by coal. Most glass factories of their day were still utilizing wood fires to run their furnaces. While O’Hara had recognized that wood would not allow the partners to produce the variety of glass he wanted, Craig’s initiative wisdom and always tinkering with ways to make business more efficient, devised a plan that would include coal instead of wood. This plan also allowed the men to expand their initial production to not only green common glass but the higher quality white glass as well. With coal the primary source of fuel, Craig worked in another piece of efficiency. Instead of rebuilding on the site O’Hara had intended on using, Craig insisted the new house built directly beneath Coal Hill so that neither time nor money would be lost in the transport of fuel to the house. The techniques utilized to manufacture glass were also resourceful. By using one furnace and eight clay pots the company was able to make different types of

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glass that were then used to produce a larger variety goods at one time. Lastly, the glass scraps known as cullet were returned back to a pot to be re-melted. These methods were highly effective and efficient, keeping production costs down and in doing so allowed for higher profits. Although these alterations carried Craig’s demand for ever increasing efficiency they had not been his idea. Instead Craig had done the legwork in researching glass manufacturing in order to build a factory that would open and run at full kilter.

Craig did not stop there but for years recruited skilled workers to man the house, starting with Joseph Eichbaum, the superintendent and specialized glass cutter of Philadelphia’s Schuylkill Glassworks.

On January 29, 1798, Pittsburgh Glass Works finally went into full production and James O’Hara entered “To-day we made the first bottle, at a cost of $30,000.00” into his accounting book. The investment had been huge for those days. Of this initial investment Craig had only contributed about $11,250. Consequent to this sharp difference in investment each man received a matching portion of the profits throughout their partnership. Oddly enough, however, on the deed of sale for the ten lots purchased jointly by the men, they did not list any type of addendum giving the majority of ownership to O’Hara.

Glass was now available for direct purchase on the frontier. Much like the first iron forge had been, this was a considerable advantage to local residents. Glass was not only fragile but bulky, making transportation to the interior of Pennsylvania a costly

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478 Craig to James O’Hara, August 1800; Dorothy Daniel, “The First Glass House West of the Alleghenies,” WPHM, vol. 32, no. 3 and 4, (September-December, 1949), 100-101, 104.
burden. With a local glasshouse, however, glasswares could be had for significantly less. According to ads listed in the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, Craig and O’Hara accepted orders for window glass in person or through stores like Prather & Smilie, located in the busy downtown area.\footnote{February 29, 1800, *Pittsburgh Gazette*.} At first hollowware, bottles, and vases were all that were being distributed by the company, yet by the end of Craig’s involvement the company was producing glass in a wide variety of shapes, sizes, from practical goods to more ornate high end products.\footnote{March 1810, *Pittsburgh Gazette*; Dorothy Daniel, “The First Glass House West of the Alleghenies,” WPHM, vol. 32, no. 3 and 4, (September-December, 1949), 106.} Their output list had increased dramatically to include “porter and claret bottles, gallon bottles, half gallon bottles, quart bottles, jars, flasks, pint flasks, gallon pitchers, and apothecary jars.” Just as Craig had relied on the talents and skills of the socially and economically inferior men he had hired in past projects Craig did with the glasshouse. In recruiting men out from underneath some of the world’s best glass manufacturing experts Craig’s company imported technology considered rare in glass houses and expanded to “blue, ,black, white, amber, and many other colors.”\footnote{Edward Ensell to Craig, March 1801, Dorothy Daniel, “The First Glass House West of the Alleghenies,” WPHM, vol. 32, no. 3 and 4, (September-December, 1949), 107.} This type of expansion allowed Craig and O’Hara to stay above the competition as other glasshouses opened up in the area.

In success the company’s prices increased considerably as well, from a dollar per dozen bottles to three dollars. In fact, the only product still selling in the dollar range per dozen were half pint tumblers.\footnote{Dorothy Daniel, “The First Glass House West of the Alleghenies,” WPHM, vol. 32, no. 3 and 4, (September-December, 1949), 110.} The addition of a glasshouse not only fed the residents appetite for goods to create, and recreate, culture, identity, and class but by filling the windows of plain and crudely built homes the borough herself transformed socially as she
took on a more polished appearance. The Glass Works produced an average of 300 square feet of window glass per day, such a high production suggest that the glasshouse was serving a significantly larger customer base of upper and upper-middle class people outside of its immediate region. By 1804, the year he left the partnership, Craig may have made as much as $28,000 in the glasshouse venture with O’Hara. It can be seen that as opportunities became fewer and more restrictive for men who were economically and socially inferior to Craig his past success in mobilization had essentially become resources by themselves. By way of providing Craig with start up capital and by the social network of investors, like O’Hara, Craig was able to maintain his social status and continue to increase his capital. At sixty-two years of age, regardless of the turbulent times that lay ahead for both country and man in the nineteenth century, the level of social and economic mobility Craig had achieved was such that despite changing conditions he had the resources to combat and maintain his situation.

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Epilogue: The Lost History of Upward Mobility

On May 14, 1826, quietly and in the comfort of his stately farmhouse, Isaac Craig passed away at the age of eighty-four. Although at the time of his death Craig was considered quite affluent, he was far from being the richest man in town. That said, in mobilization, a process that in some cases had literally been a journey, Craig had been quite successful. It is hard to believe that the young Craig who first arrived in Philadelphia would not have thought the types and magnitude of social and economic strides he later accomplished were examples of successful mobility. It might even be safe to imagine in his final days or last moments of life that Craig, a man who had so often sought organization in orderly list making, may have even inventoried his life. He may have reviewed his large home with window panes, drapes, carpets and furniture in every room, the rolling hills of his estate, the white and black hands tending to hemp, corn, rye and wheat fields, perhaps a stack of rent payments ready for the bank, or calling cards left by well wishing elites. Yet, Craig may have thought that the greatest mark of his success was to be found in his children. As members of the Neville-Oldham line, the nine Craig children who had survived infancy had at birth started life socially superior to that of their father at death. With this membership to old money and American elitism the Craig children inherited opportunity, along with general resources that, as demonstrated in Craig’s life, were as valuable if not more so than actual money and property. This, of course, was aside from the everyday luxuries from which the Craig children had benefited. Unlike their father’s, theirs had been a childhood of doodling in Craig’s old Deputy Quartermaster books, taking pleasure from their own lavish and increasingly artful signatures over and over again. Unlike Craig, who had worked away his childhood
as a carpenter’s apprentice, this next generation of male Craigs, but possibly also female Craigs, had gone to school. They had not been instructed in crafts or production but in how to manage production, laborers, and contracts.\textsuperscript{488} Craig had not only mobilized himself but had established a means of mobilization for the future generation of Craigs. The generational impact Craig had on his family was a fact that was well recognized by at least his son, Neville, who stated that Craig’s “grandchildren [were] all now in full enjoyment of all those privileges for which he toiled and suffered.”\textsuperscript{489}

Just as the process of Craig’s mobilization had not begun with his birth it did not end with his death either. In the mid 1800s, writing in the same spirit as Parsons Weems, Neville B. Craig took to the somewhat creative reconstruction of history in his “Sketch of the Life and Services of Isaac Craig: Major in the Fourth Regiment of Artillery during the Revolution War.” Neville claimed to have put the sketch together as a gift for his family, yet he had taken several blatant liberties, especially with regard to Craig’s family history. William Fennimore Cooper had made similar claims of personal use only for his novel \textit{The Pioneers}. Although, Cooper’s book was a fictional work according to historian Alan Taylor, it played strongly on Cooper’s family. After his father was fatally caned, an act of social inferiority, Cooper had attempted to reestablish his father’s social standing.\textsuperscript{490}

Neville, like Cooper, was using a claim of personal use as a means to substantiate his own version of history in which he had supplanted unknown information with a grandfather who had worked directly for the Earl of Hillsborough and had implanted the line of Robert Patterson. Patterson, whose own history appears to have been retouched,

\textsuperscript{488} Ledger Book August 9, 1797 to May 1 1800, CL; Math Workbook of Henry Knox Craig May 30, 1810. CL.
\textsuperscript{489} Neville B. Craig, “Sketch of the Life and Services of Isaac Craig: Major in the Fourth Regiment of Artillery during the Revolution War,” HSWP, 5.
\textsuperscript{490} Alan Taylor, \textit{William Cooper’s Town}, 415, 418; Freeman, \textit{Affairs of Honor}, 172.
had become quite prominent in his achievements as president of the Philosophical Society, Vice Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, Director of the United States Mint, and had played a crucial role in the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Neville was clearly attempting to strengthen his father’s background and legitimacy as a member of the natural aristocracy. By doing so he was attempting to reflect themes of his day, which combined proto-eugenics and the idea that God’s wielding compass of destiny guided social elites to their rightful places of power.

Neville had also illustrated his father as a self-made man and Revolutionary War hero. Neville had shaped his father into a character that fit all of the popular concepts of the American identity in the early republic. Isaac Craig had been a patriot and hard worker, who had come from good stock. Two out of three traits had not been good enough for Neville. He, as did many other historians and family writers of the day, recognized that his father had escaped the odds and become fully mobilized; he had achieved the American myth. It was a wonderful and wretched thing all at once as it celebrated the claims of a developing national identity, but was in somewhat striking contrast to the desires of the American upper class. Thus the kind of mobility which had existed during the Revolutionary era and created rags-to-riches Revolutionaries like Henry Knox, Benjamin Franklin, Robert Patterson, James O’Hara, and Craig, had become a dirty little secret. These men had not just worked hard or lucked out, these men had always shown signs that hinted at their own inevitable destinies. If their intermediate family had not been well off, they could stake their claim on an invented distant family

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491 Neville B. Craig, “Sketch of the Life and Services of Isaac Craig: Major in the Fourth Regiment of Artillery during the Revolution War,” HSWP; “Obituary Notice of Robert Patterson, LL.D, The Late President of the; Robert Patterson, 1743-1824, PHMC Historical Marker File, 2003, PHMC; Philosophical Society,” Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, vol. 2 (1825), 1.
member or reshape the character of their family to reflect the ideals and morals of the elites. To fit this new socially acceptable ideal, Craig needed to have had all of the necessary social elements of mobility all along. In order to take his rightful spot as an elite and simply misplaced member of the natural aristocracy Craig had also needed to prove himself through hard work and dedication to the patriot cause. What mattered most in these types of identity-creating histories was that the moral of the story remained the same: the right people, reflected by their breeding, actions and success, would always come up on top it was their destiny. These types of histories shared in the expansionist sentiment of the day, “Manifest Destiny.” With reason this term had gained wide popularity for both explaining and ensuring the fate of the republic and her people.

To have presented the fact that the Revolutionary war had actually mobilized men was not only dangerous but called American elites, those vying for power in the new republic, into comparative question with social inferiors. In forging a new history based on little white lies the country's identity the elite would always take their rightful position. It was an idea that gave just enough to make the working class hope and thus work harder, as Stephen Thernstrom has presented, but not enough to empower an actual class to believe they were fit to run the country politically or socially. In this, the first generations of Americans were also barrowing from a long British tradition of fictional writing which invoked a sense that rank, and then class, were natural and inescapable orders. Yet men like Neville Craig were not writing fiction, they were reworking history. Thus, in death the true history of Isaac Craig, and the small group of men like him, had to be martyred for the sake of their children if not the social balance of the republic as a whole. The reality, that someone could become socially mobile by way of specific
environment pressures, such as war or the full onset of a market economy (which would limit economic mobilization), was destroyed while in its place economic mobility was celebrated. Unknowingly, it is from this hand in which many historians still play, falling for the sleight of hand where men in the Revolutionary era had little hope to achieve social and economic mobility. As the life of Isaac Craig illustrates, social mobility, which may be seen as a form of social revolution, had existed in the Revolutionary era.\textsuperscript{492}

\textsuperscript{492} Neville B. Craig, “Sketch of the Life and Services of Isaac Craig: Major in the Fourth Regiment of Artillery during the Revolution War,” HSWP.
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