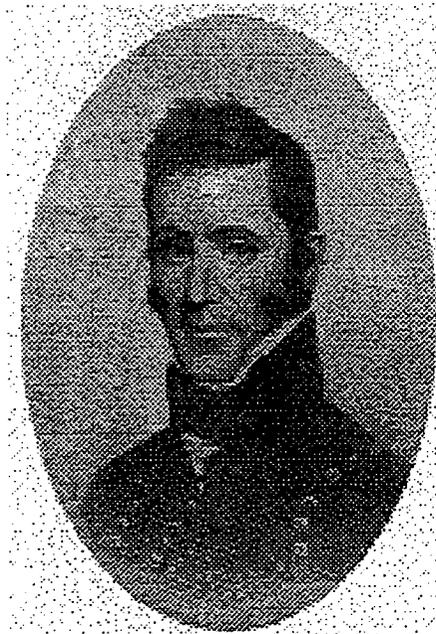


**“Under our happy form of Government standing armies
in time of peace cannot be maintained.”**

**The Essence of Military Education: Contributions of
Captain Alden Partridge
to the United States Military Academy
1806-1817**



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The contributions that Captain Alden Partridge made to the United States Military Academy have been greatly overshadowed by the court-martial and his subsequent relief as superintendent in 1817.¹ Despite the negative undertone surrounding his time as a member of the West Point staff, some believe that: "Partridge is probably the only one of the early Supts who wanted to be a Supt."² How did politics influence the administration in the early years of the Academy? What led to his reputation as a "Black Knight" in USMA's history? What was the essence of West Point under Captain Partridge that he took to Norwich, Vermont, in the establishment of the American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy (Norwich University)?

Captain Alden Partridge had a vision for West Point during his years as superintendent. He felt that the United States Government should train young leaders to serve the public during time of peace, while filling the officer ranks of the militia in times of war. With this in mind, he developed the atmosphere at West Point to support this vision, which can be referred to as the essence of military education. If one compares West Point during Partridge's superintendence to the American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy, it is clear that Partridge's vision did not change. Alden Partridge's contribution to both academies should be recorded as the essence of military education.

Throughout American history and especially during Captain Partridge's lifetime,

¹Joseph G. Swift to Alden Partridge, 1 February 1815, Tms (photocopy), Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Academy Library, West Point, New York. The question of whether Partridge was ever officially the Superintendent remains very controversial. Partridge and others often referred to him as the Superintendent of West Point, including Commanding Officer of the Corps of Engineers General Joseph G Swift in this letter.

²John K Robertson, "Some Preliminary Insights into the Formative Years at the United States Military Academy." (Presented to the Eisenhower Fellows, West Point, New York, 12 September 1991), 6.

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the nation's commitment to civilian control of military policy has manifested itself in a constant struggle in civil-military relations.³ This period of American history was filled with arguments on the need for a standing army and the threat of an oppressive government. This stemmed from the European countries, such as Great Britain, and the freedom Americans had fought for in the 1770s and in 1812. In short, the Federalists believed in a strong military whereas the Republicans feared the influence of a large standing army. With the political stage set and full of controversy, it is not difficult to understand how stories of poor discipline and administrative abilities overshadowed the contributions of this military leader.

During the early years of the Academy, without a clear mission statement, interpretation of the purpose of the Academy varied greatly depending on the political beliefs of the individual.⁴ The opinions of professionals, politicians, and military officers

³Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), xii. This is one of six themes of American military history that these authors refer to in their book.

⁴Larry R Donnithorne, "The Founding of West Point: Seeking the National Purposes in the First Federal Initiative in Higher Education," (West Point, New York), 8. Donnithorne offers several arguments toward the establishment of West Point:

1. West Point was to train officers for the army, doing so in a typical national military academy for officer preparation, such as one would find exemplified in European Countries.
2. West Point was to train only scientific officers, the engineers and artillerists (not the traditional arms), needed by the Army.
3. West Point was to be a scientific/technological seminary for military purposes.
4. West Point was to train officers for all branches of the Army, doing so specifically by teaching them civil engineering. (Corollary: West Point was to train civil engineers who could also serve as soldiers. *****)
5. West Point was to provide to officers and cadets professional, in-service, post-commissioning education of whatever form was needed for duty in the corps or regiment to which the officers and cadets were already joined.
6. West Point was to reduce or eliminate the need for a standing army as disseminating and diffusing military knowledge broadly among the citizenry, especially the militia, in readiness for military emergency.
7. West Point was to be an embodiment of the new meritocracy, even in cases of charity school.

varied greatly based on education level, background, and vision. The Academy's political climate was heated with difficulties defining the purpose, philosophy, and goals. Indeed, the early years at West Point were very difficult for politicians and administrators to understand. The Academy was an important issue, but clearly not considered a "Capital T"⁵ to the top officials of the nation.

Despite Partridge's obvious affiliation with the military, his vision was not necessarily supportive of a large standing army. Many argue that he was more of an academic with a philosophical view for the military needs of the newly formed nation. His supporters, such as William Ellis, praised his efforts, stating that "He was opposed to the policy of maintaining a large standing army as he felt such an army would be a menace to the Republic. He believed in a citizen-soldiery, and early advocated that the U.S. Government should thoroughly train the able-bodied citizens in the art of war."⁶

As a respected officer in the Army Corps of Engineers, Partridge supported the idea of the Academy producing young engineers dedicated to the development of the infrastructure of the nation. He felt that the Academy would best support the people if its purpose focused on improving the conditions of the nation during time of peace. He thought that the people would certainly support an academy designed for this purpose:

In a country like ours, for which nature has done so much and which is inhabited by a people as enlightened and enterprising as are the Americans, the spirit for internal improvements will not long be dormant. The construction of Roads,

8. West Point was to be a national university.

9. West Point was to make the republic safe from internal danger by training young Republicans to be army officers.

⁵Colonel James Johnson, referring to the capital T in Threat for the "Nation's Threat" which causes "Goosebumps" for the American public and demands immediate action.

⁶William A. Ellis, *Norwich University Her History, Her Graduates, Her Roll of Honor Volume 1, General History, 1819-1911* (Montpelier, Vermont: The Capital City Press, 1911), 2.

Canals, and Bridges, will ere long form a very important subject of legislation, and in that will engross much of the attention of the general Govt. To plan out and Superintend those works will require a large number of Engineers, and for furnishing those Engineers the Military Academy is the only Institution in this Country.⁷

He was also a strong believer that the military strength of the nation rested in the militia.

He said that, "Under our happy form of government standing armies in time of peace cannot be maintained."⁸

Many academics like the Republican USMA Professor of Natural and Experimental Philosophy Jared Mansfield, felt strongly that the nation needed a national university, not persuaded by the military officers of the Army.⁹ This would provide the nation with educated leaders for the young republic. Many like Mansfield felt that West Point was established under the Jefferson administration, as this "national university." Although initially the Academy was built for defensive purposes and education focused on the needs of the Army, he felt that the military or the Corps of Engineers should not control it.¹⁰ This would allow the military to influence too many young Americans and could lead to the establishment of a military-backed Federalist state. One could argue that Jared Mansfield may have taken his role in American history to ensure this did not happen. One thing is certain, his strong political ties in Washington would prove to be very

⁷Alden Partridge to General Swift, 9 March 1817, National Archives, quoted by Lester A. Webb, *Captain Alden Partridge and the United States Military Academy 1806-1833* (Northport, Alabama: American Southern, 1965), 101, n. 24.

⁸Alden Partridge to D. D. Tompkins, 8 August 1816, Tms (photocopy), Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Library, West Point, New York.

⁹Jared Mansfield, Andrew Ellicott, Cladius Berard, D.B. Douglass and Claudius Crozet, "Management of the United States Military Academy," transcript in the hand of Jared Mansfield, Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Library, West Point, NY.

¹⁰Ibid.

influential during his time as a professor at West Point. Had Jared Mansfield bought into Partridge's vision, the entire staff might have been pioneers in education. Instead, they arduously worked against him until Partridge moved on. They ran into similar problems with his replacement, Sylvanus Thayer, but their efforts were less successful.

Interestingly, their names appear to have been forgotten on the grounds of West Point.

Partridge's upbringing and experience shed his vision for the essence of military education. Alden Partridge was born to his parents, Samuel Partridge, Jr. and Elizabeth (Wright) Partridge, at Norwich, Vermont, on 12 February 1785.¹¹ His was an astute child who was determined to be educated, despite his upbringing on a small farm in New England. His family observed that Alden had a strong desire for

. . . the acquisition of learning beyond what his schooling in the [red] district schoolhouse, during the winter months furnished, and the acquisition of information obtained from the limited amount of printed matter at his home, which was after secured by the light from the fire in the huge fireplace under the parental roof, when the boy's work [work] was done and daylight had disappeared.¹²

The church influenced the young Alden Partridge to have the strong religious convictions that he carried throughout his lifetime. While attending the district school, a student remembered that, "He never knew Alden Partridge to utter a profane or vulgar word. And this [which] statement is readily accepted by those familiar with him in his after life. When he became a teacher of youth not anything angered him more readily than to hear young men utter such language."¹³ Later in his life, he would provide religious

¹¹Henry V. Partridge, "Manuscript Biography of Alden Partridge," (Date Unknown), Tms (photocopy), Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Library, West Point, New York, 1.

¹²Ibid., 1.

¹³Ibid., 2.

services for his students in the absence of clergy. His strict rules for worship and study on Sundays clearly defined his views on religion.¹⁴

While Partridge never explained why he entered the military, "It may have been because of the military spirit was alive in the family."¹⁵ Military heritage existed in Alden Partridge's family as his grandfather, Samuel Partridge, Sr., had received a commission as "Lieutenant of the fifteenth military company in the regiment of Militia Foot[?], in Norwich in the county of Cumberland in the Province of New York." His father and several uncles also participated in the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812.¹⁶

Alden Partridge first attended Dartmouth College from August 1802 until the fall of 1805 when he received an appointment, signed by President Jefferson, "to serve in the quality of a Cadet in the Regiment of Artillerists."¹⁷ He arrived at West Point on 5 February 1806 to begin his studies and was commissioned on 9 July 1806 as a cadet in the Engineer Corps. He graduated on 29 October of that same year after only nine months at the Academy and became the fifteenth graduate of the United States Military Academy. He was commissioned on 30 October 1806, a first lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers and promoted to captain on 23 July 1810.¹⁸

¹⁴F. G. Baird, "Petition by Cadets at USMA for Relief from Duties on Sundays." (End of 1814[?]) Transcript in the hand of F. G. Baird. Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Library, West Point, NY.

¹⁵Henry V. Partridge, 3.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁸*Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U. S. Military Academy*, (New York: J. F. Trow, 1850), 53. Alden Partridge received a direct commission to first lieutenant and never served as a second lieutenant or ensign. Four other students (Charles Gradiot, Eleazer D. Wood, William Partridge, and Prentice Willard) graduated the same day and received commissions as second lieutenants in the Corps of Engineers.

Alden Partridge spent his entire military career, eleven years total, stationed at West Point. He became professor of mathematics, professor of engineering, chief administrator, and finally the Superintendent.¹⁹ While there, he continued his own learning by conducting scientific research involving ballistics and the measurement of elevation.²⁰ As an educator, Alden Partridge focused on the education of cadets through a strict military academic program that prepared them for success in the public sector and military service in time of war. Possibly because many of the staff members, including Jared Mansfield, Andrew Ellicott, Cladius Berard, D.B. Douglass and Claudius Crozet, were not as interested in the military aspect of West Point, Partridge focused more on discipline and military subjects. However, this focus should not overshadow his views for an academic education that he saw as essential in the cadet's development. He wrote of a board of visitors, semester testing, and recitations.²¹

Alden Partridge played a critical role in the early years at West Point. During Partridge's tenure, he kept both Colonel Jonathan Williams and General Joseph G. Swift abreast of the goings on at West Point. He dictated the daily activities in detail and

¹⁹Ibid., 53. George W. Cullum compiled information on West Point for the *Register of Officers and Graduates of the U. S. Military Academy* in 1850 and 1879. The first listed Partridge as a Superintendent, while the second did not. In both however, Sylvanus Thayer is recorded as the Superintendent starting 28 July 1817, the day Thayer relieved Partridge at West Point.

²⁰Alden Partridge, "A Barometrical Calculation of the Heights of Mountains Near West Point, 16 June 1810," Manuscript in the New York Historical Society Library, quoted by Webb, *Captain Alden Partridge*, 29, n. 21; and Alden Partridge, "Report on Experiments in the Fire of Artillery and Infantry, 8, 17 November 1810, quoted by Webb, *Captain Alden Partridge*, 29, n. 22.

²¹There are several versions of Internal Regulations and Orders in the Partridge Papers at West Point that were written in Partridge's hand, presumably during the years of 1815-1817, after he was recognized as the Commander and Superintendent at West Point. Many of these are handwritten copies, so it is difficult to pinpoint exact dates of publication. They are offered to highlight the issues that Partridge confronted, although specific policies in place are unfound. He wrote of a board of visitors, semester testing, and recitations.

forwarded them for their understanding and use.²² Because the Academy was on the cutting edge of formal, higher-level education, many of the rules and regulations formed as situations arose. Partridge constantly revised the Internal Regulations that focused on changes in academics as well as cadet life and military training. The regulations covered items such as public examinations, general inspections, cadet behavior, and military duties.²³ In fact, early signs of the honor code slowly evolved before it was put formally into writing. It was present during Partridge's tenure, as he dismissed one cadet for lying in 1815.²⁴

Lieutenant Partridge wrote the first set of regulations for the Academy approved by the Superintendent and Commander of the Corps of Engineers Colonel Jonathan Williams and then published them on 31 March 1809.²⁵ In 1814, Captain Partridge produced "The Orders for USMA Formations and Duties" covering the administration of West Point, which Secretary of War John Armstrong approved.²⁶ The purpose behind these regulations was to define further the military education offered by West Point in support of the goals set by the Corps of Engineers and the Army. Captain Partridge later

²² Alden Partridge to Joseph G. Swift, 27 Sept 1815, transcript in the hand of Alden Partridge, Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Library, West Point, New York.

²³ Alden Partridge, "Internal Regulations for the Commons at the Military Academy at West Point," 1816[?], transcript in the hand of Alden Partridge, Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Library, West Point, New York.

²⁴ Alden Partridge to the Corps of Cadets, 17 April 1815, transcript in the hand of Alden Partridge, Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Library, West Point, New York.

²⁵ Alden Partridge, "Academy Orders," 8 November 1808, Partridge Papers, Norwich University Library, quoted by Webb, *Captain Alden Partridge and the United States Military Academy 1806-1833*, (Northport, Alabama: American Southern, 1965), 24, n. 9.

²⁶ Alden Partridge, "Orders for the Cadets," 1 April 1814, Partridge Papers, Norwich University Library quoted by Webb, *Captain Alden Partridge*, 28, n. 18.

formulated a list of "Internal Regulations for the Military Academy."²⁷ Partridge continuously revised the Internal Regulations for the Academy in an attempt to regulate the academic and student life at the Academy.

Life as a member of the Corps of Cadets under Partridge as the Chief Administrator and later Superintendent was very strict compared to today's standards, although many of the rituals and traditions are still alive. Cadets rose immediately after reveille and attended a formation for roll call. They quickly returned to their rooms to prepare for inspection before breakfast, when "The barracks[?] are to be swept out, beds made up and the furniture arranged in complete order."²⁸ They marched in silent files to breakfast, where "There must be perfect order at the tables – no talking (except what is absolutely necessary in asking for thing) – will be allowed and no conduct, but what is correct and gentle, manlike will be tolerated."²⁹ After breakfast, they stood another formation and went to class. Cadets who were not involved in formal instruction or performing military duties were required to study in their room. Partridge himself would inspect to ensure that the cadets studied as they were ordered.³⁰ "The time for drills and also for fencing are immediately after the roll call in the morning and at 4 o'clock in the afternoon."³¹ This provided the physical and military training for cadets, as well as a break

²⁷ Alden Partridge, "Internal Regulations for the Military Academy," 25 May 1810, Partridge Papers, Norwich University Library, quoted by Webb, *Captain Alden Partridge*, 25, n. 11.

²⁸ Alden Partridge, "Orders for USMA Formations and Duties," 1 April 1814, transcript in the hand of Alden Partridge, Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Library, West Point, New York.

²⁹ Alden Partridge, "Regulations for the Commons at the Military Academy at West Point," 1815, transcript in the hand of Alden Partridge, Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Library, West Point, New York.

³⁰ Alden Partridge to Joseph G. Swift, 27 Sept 1815.

³¹ *Ibid.*

from the long hours of study. Supper followed an evening formation at 2000 hours (1900 after 20 September) after which the cadets returned to their rooms to study until 2100 hours when they went to sleep.³² The rules prohibited the purchase of anything without permission from the Superintendent, gambling, alcohol in the barracks, and intoxication. The regulations of the Academy were very strict and controlled every aspect of the cadet's life.

Partridge focused the Academy's vision on what he felt was best for the individual cadet. He concentrated on tough military discipline and a challenging educational environment that allowed the individual to succeed at his own pace. This would result in the most efficient education system providing the nation with educated young leaders.

I wish to allow every cadet the liberty of completing the course as soon as he can. I am confident that this principle will be one of the most powerful stimulants of emulation, and exertion amongst them in acquiring knowledge, and in proportion as these are managed, in the same ratio will the institution become useful to the Country.³³

Partridge was a strong believer in the military education that West Point provided. He felt that it was the national government's responsibility to educate and train the leaders of America for times of peace and war. He therefore supported the establishment of a trained officer corps through this military style education, including leader development: "All duties of the Parade are performed by the cadets – they acting in succession as commissioned and noncommissioned officers."³⁴

³²Ibid.

³³Alden Partridge to General Swift, 3 March 1817, National Archives, quoted by Webb, *Captain Alden Partridge*, 101, n. 22.

³⁴Alden Partridge to Joseph G. Swift, 27 Sept 1815.

While administering the daily activities at the Academy, the Superintendent Alden Partridge attempted to revolutionize the education system of the United States with USMA as the leader. Partridge saw the need to expand the Academy to provide the Nation with an increased number of graduates. The number of students was greatly limited to the number of slots Congress was willing to allow each year.³⁵ Captain Partridge saw this as a great waste of time and resources and felt that the nation would best be served if the Academy educated as many young Americans as possible. He even proposed that some of the educated cadets in the graduating classes be kept at the Academy as instructors, hence, "The Academy would always be supplied with good young teachers." He suggested "the Institution be kept full, and let the Cadet have the privilege of completing the Course of Studies as soon as he can, and we shall be able to turn off enough well educated young men every year to supply the vacancies in every department where they can be of use."³⁶

Partridge saw the need for educated citizens able to lead the military, both regular and militia troops, of the United States in time of conflict as the goal of the Military Academy. In fact, Captain Partridge thought that West Point by itself could not provide all of the necessary leaders and supported further expansion of the military education system. In addition, Partridge was not a great advocate for all the graduates of a military education pursuing military careers and felt that the civilian population needed Academy

³⁵*Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U. S. Military Academy.* There were only 107 graduates from the Academy during Partridge's last six years, 1812 - 1817.

³⁶Alden Partridge to General Swift, 9 March 1817. In fact the *Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U. S. Military Academy* shows that graduates began to fill positions as acting assistant professors after Partridge left West Point.

graduates as well. In his plan for expanded military education, he stated:

I have, for a considerable length of time been convinced of the insufficiency of the present military academy at this place, to answer all the purposes which ought to be contemplated in the establishment of such an institution . . . I think we might reasonably calculate upon the following results:- 1st. The diffusion of military science generally throughout our country. By this means, whenever the country becomes again involved with war, it will be provided with all the requisite materials (independent of the existing military establishment) for offering any additional force that may be necessary. 2nd. The furnishing of the existing military with officers. 3rd. The furnishing the navy with well educated midshipmen, who could make scientific officers.³⁷

His vision included national institutions offering a military education to future career officers as well as civilian professionals who might benefit from the humility of the military lifestyle and perform military duties if the need arose. Partridge forwarded this theory to many politicians and received varying degrees of support.³⁸

Several members of the academic staff who did not share in his vision of this military style education opposed Captain Partridge. The differences were not only seen in the global decisions for the Academy but in less critical details as well. The staff petitioned to change the vacation time to summer because the winter was clearly the best time to study. Partridge made an argument based on

The fact that no cadet has died here since its establishment . . . I should suppose is sufficient proof of this position. . . fuel in the winter would increase expense . . . In our northern institutions of learning the longest vacations are in the winter. . . . It would be better for the Institution if there was no vacations at all than that it

³⁷Alden Partridge to Acting Secretary of War A. J. Dallas, 9 May 1815, William H. Crawford Manuscript Collection, Duke University Library, quoted by Webb, *Captain Alden Partridge*, 207. Letter which outlined a plan for additional military schools and the admission of paying students wishing to receive a military education.

³⁸R.M. Johnson to Alden Partridge, 10 June 1815, Tms (photocopy), Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Academy Library, West Point, NY. Discussing the expansion of federally supported military colleges.

should be so arranged as not to answer the purpose for which it was intended.³⁹

The disagreements led to two courts of inquiry (16 March 1816 and 21 October 1817) and the court martial on 21 October 1817.

President James Monroe's dismissal of Captain Alden Partridge from West Point continued to be a very controversial subject. Supporters of Partridge advocated the existence of an abominable plot against him generated by several professors at the Academy and condoned by General Joseph G. Swift.⁴⁰ Partridge's enemies stated that his was a "misrepresentatious and audacious management" while he served at the Academy.⁴¹ Of course, the details of the events surrounding the court-martial vary greatly depending on the source.

How did the situation at West Point so quickly get out of control? Couldn't the Superintendent Captain Alden Partridge and Commander of the Corps of Engineers General Joseph G. Swift control their subordinates? During the early 1800s, formal lines between members in the chain of command were often broken. Even Partridge was guilty, for in 1814 he submitted changes to the Secretary of War to the regulations governing the United States Military Academy without General Swift's complete support. General Swift showed great opposition to this, and the Secretary of War rescinded the previously approved changes. Partridge was scorned for this act of insubordination. However, the members of the West Point staff (Mansfield and others) wrote several documents directly

³⁹Alden Partridge to William H. Crawford, 2 August 1816, National Archives quoted by Webb, *Captain Alden Partridge*, 99, n. 17.

⁴⁰Webb, *Captain Alden Partridge*.

⁴¹Jared Mansfield to the Secretary of War, 30 August 1817, transcript in the hand of Jared Mansfield, Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Library, West Point, New York.

to the Secretary of War and the President of the United States with neither Partridge's nor Swift's support.⁴² Leaders accepted this type of behavior, and did not necessarily consider it out of order. Their works proved very damaging to the integrity of the Academy and more specifically, to Captain Partridge himself. One may deduce that he became the scapegoat for the politics revolving around the existence of the fifteen-year old Academy.

Captain Partridge was not perfect in his administrative duties or as a leader at West Point. He failed to understand the repercussions of his inability to control the members of the academic staff. He thought that his hard work and focus on performing his job as superintendent and emphasizing the need for additional schools like West Point were sufficient. He thought that looking after the best interests of the cadets was enough to earn him the respect and support of his superiors. He was wrong, and for this, he was court-martialed and relieved from duties as the Superintendent at West Point. History does not highlight the political scene at West Point nor the two courts of inquiry that served as unfounded witch hunts derived from the academic staff's desire to rid themselves of Partridge's philosophy. His many accomplishments following his service at West Point should indicate that his reputation as the "source of problems at the Academy" was unfounded and unjust.

Captain Partridge left the United States Army very bitter over his loss of influence

⁴²Jared Mansfield, Andrew Ellicott, and W. Zoeller to the Secretary of War, 2 Jan 1815, transcript in the hand of Jared Mansfield, Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Academy Library, West Point, New York; Jared Mansfield, Andrew Ellicott, Cladius Berard, D.B. Douglass and Claudius Crozet, "Management of the United States Military Academy," transcript in the hand of Jared Mansfield, Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Library, West Point, New York; Jared Mansfield, to the President of the United States, June 1817, transcript in the hand of Jared Mansfield, Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Academy Library, West Point, New York; and Jared Mansfield to the Secretary of War, 30 August 1817.

on the cadets at West Point. He would later denounce the Academy because he felt that its goals had separated from those that he tried to institutionalize during his superintendence.⁴³ Shortly after his dismissal, he began to formulate plans to establish a private institution that capitalized on his lessons as the administrator and Superintendent at West Point. In 1819, Alden Partridge founded the American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy and began preparation for students in the town of Norwich, Vermont. On September 4, 1820, the "Academy" was open for registration, and the school began the education of 100 cadets from eleven states and one foreign country.⁴⁴ Partridge later founded other military schools at Portsmouth, Virginia in 1840, Pembroke, New Hampshire in 1847, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania in 1850, and Brandywine, Delaware in 1853.⁴⁵

The significance of Alden Partridge's venture to establish additional military schools should not be taken lightly. He felt strongly about his plan for expanded military education that he had drafted while serving as the Superintendent for West Point. Although he lacked the government's support, he felt that the people of this nation would endorse his vision. His plan, strangely enough, centered on the Academy at West Point that he had recently left. One may easily establish that Capt. Partridge's center of gravity was the essence of military education, which he had spent a third of his lifetime

⁴³Alden Partridge, "Long Paper Defending USMA," Tms (photocopy), Partridge Papers, Special Collections, United States Military Library, West Point, NY.

⁴⁴American Literary, Scientific and Military Academy. "Catalogue of the Officers and Cadets Together with the Prospectus and Internal Regulations of the American Literary, Scientific and Military Academy at Middletown, Connecticut, 1826," Special Collections, United States Military Academy Library, West Point, New York. Norwich history has established 1819 as the year it was founded, despite the fact that it did not officially receive any students until 1820.

⁴⁵*Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U. S. Military Academy*, 53.

developing. This essence served as a theme for Partridge's vision and can be seen in his thoughts and actions throughout the rest of his life.

Alden Partridge delivered a speech on education in 1820 that presented his views on the defects of the education system in this country. It was significant because he highlights many of the characteristics of West Point and suggested that this method of education was clearly superior to traditional schooling. In assessing traditional education, he stated that: "First: it is not sufficiently practical, nor properly adapted to the various duties an American citizen may be called upon to discharge."⁴⁶ This referred to the responsibility for every citizen to take arms in the defense of the nation in time of need. West Point had been focused on this for eighteen years when Partridge presented this. "Second: Another defect in the present system is the entire neglect in all our principal seminaries of physical education, or the cultivation and improvement of the physical powers of the student."⁴⁷ Partridge incorporated long marches, fencing, and other activities focused on physical development while at West Point. "Third: Another defect in our system is the amount of idle time allowed the student."⁴⁸ Partridge was a strong advocate of self-paced instruction, allowing the student to excel at the fastest pace possible, maximizing the amount learned while at the Academy. Cadets not attending class or conducting an official duty were required to be studying, to include Sundays after religious services. Furloughs and long vacations were certainly not the norm and highly discouraged at the United States Military Academy. "Fourth: A fourth defect is the

⁴⁶Alden Partridge, "Lecture on Education," 1820, quoted by Ellis, *Norwich University*, 2.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid.

allowing of students of the wealthier class too much money, thereby inducing habits of extravagance and dissipation highly injurious to themselves and also to the Seminaries of which they are members.”⁴⁹ Both Academies would regulate the purchases made by cadets as outlined in the Internal Regulations. In fact, initially the American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy collected all monies from incoming cadets and maintained them until the Academy released the cadet. “Fifth: Is the requiring all students to pursue the same course of study.”⁵⁰ Parents of students at the American Literary Scientific and Military Academy could send a list of subject matter that they wanted their cadet to study during their time at the Academy. “Sixth: is the prescribing the length of time for completing as it is termed, the course of education. By this means the good scholar is placed nearly on a level with the sluggard, for whatever may be his exertions, he can gain nothing with respect to time, and the latter has, in consequence of this, less stimulus for exertion.”⁵¹ Partridge felt that this incentive was essential to encourage the student to perform at his best while minimizing the time he was actually at the Academy.

One can see the influence that the military education offered at West Point had on Partridge’s views of education. Despite the fact that Captain Partridge (as he was referred to even after his resignation from the Army) lost his influence on the Nation’s development of a trained officer corps when he was relieved as the Superintendent at West Point, he refused to admit defeat. In fact, this appears to be one of the driving forces that

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid. This was his view at West Point and the American Literary, Scientific and Military Academy, although it was a source of disagreement at West Point.

Constitution of the United States.”⁵⁴ He felt that once established, the military education system would serve as the cornerstone of this great nation. The United States needed respect among the nations of the world, possessing military might to project foreign policy (westward expansion) and protect against foreign invaders (European nations.) Such had proven true twice thus far in America’s short history, and the expansion westward would have a price. He, therefore, thought that

By the wise provisions of this instrument and the laws made on purpose thereof, the grand military defense of our favored country, both against external invasion and internal insurrection, is vested in the great mass of American Citizens, from eighteen to forty five years of age. These constitute the grand military force of the nation; a force whose feelings and interests are identified with those of the great body of the people, and which, while it forms an impregnable barrier around the constitution and liberties of the country, is in no respect dangerous to either.⁵⁵

It is clear that Partridge’s views were focused on citizen soldiery and educating leaders to develop the young nation of the United States. Partridge saw this as the “Essence of Military Education” during his superintendence at West Point, and advocated the application of the principles he established while serving there. If the American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy was to contain this same essence, then it would have to be modeled after West Point. To possess the same “essence,” the schools must be similar in their daily routines, academic goals, and military training. Alden Partridge possessed a similar vision for both academies. In fact, such a comparison may provide some insight into the source of policies, procedures, and traditions at West Point during

⁵⁴Ellis, *Norwich* , 5.

⁵⁵Alden Partridge, “Excerpt from an announcement in the Windsor Journal.”

the years, as well as those following Partridge's Superintendence at West Point.

The American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy published its second Catalogue and Prospectus in 1826. This document listed the faculty, students, courses of study, and the internal regulations offered to cadets. This provided an extensive explanation of the rigid discipline expected of cadets before they arrived. Of particular interest was the requirement to surrender all moneys and "contraband" upon entry, to ensure that no cadet has nothing more than that which was issued. Everything from paper to candle wax was provided by the Academy, and cadets were not allowed to purchase additional supplies without permission from the Superintendent.⁵⁶ The rigid military environment that existed at West Point was carried over to the private seminary that had no affiliation with the Army or the United States government.

In the establishment of his new academy, there were many factors to consider. The engineering theme that was present at West Point was transferred over to the American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy. The theme of both academies was a scientific application of mathematics in the form of civil and military engineering, as well as a strong area of military skills and application. The course of study included "Planometry, Mensuration of heights and distances . . . , Surveying and Leveling, use of the barometer, with its application to measuring the altitude of mountains . . . ; Mechanics, Hydraulics, Civil Engineering, including the construction of roads, canals, locks, and bridges."⁵⁷ Also similar to the policy at West Point, on Sundays, the cadets were required

⁵⁶American Literary, Scientific and Military Academy. "Catalogue of the Officers and Cadets Together with the Prospectus and Internal Regulations of the American Literary, Scientific and Military Academy at Middletown, Connecticut, 1826.

⁵⁷Ibid.

to attend religious services and immediately return to their rooms to study their schoolwork or the Holy Scriptures.⁵⁸ The daily formations mirrored those found in the 1815 Regulations of West Point:

The morning roll call will be fifteen minutes after reveille beating. Immediately after roll-call, the rooms occupied by the cadets must be swept out, the beds made, and the furniture arranged in perfect order, ready for inspection. – Within twenty minutes after roll-call, the Inspector will inspect the rooms, examine minutely into their condition, and make out a certified report . . .⁵⁹

The Cadets at the American Literary, Scientific and Military Academy had strict rules and regulations to adhere or risk dismissal. The regulations covered:

Police, &c., Public Worship, Military Duties and Instruction, Examinations, Dress, Military Inspections, Trading, &c., Vacations, Furloughs, &c., Money, Accounts &c., Arrangement of Quarters, Terms of Admission, Qualifications, &c., Instructors, Personal Department, &c., Arms, Accoutrements, Bedding, &c., Punishments, Board, &c., Expenses, and promiscuous Regulations.⁶⁰

Many of the themes of the regulations can be found in the documents written by Partridge while at West Point, since, the fundamentals that existed at United States Military Academy existed at the American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy.

The main differences between the two academies lay in the administration and operational procedures for the staff and faculty. For instance, the academic staff fell under his control, and the departments were not as autonomous as those found at West Point. The regulations at the American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy clearly stated the responsibility of the faculty members to follow the orders of the Superintendent.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid.

Captain Partridge did not want the division of military and academic education to occur again, as it had during his superintendence at West Point.⁶¹

Captain Alden Partridge left West Point with many lessons learned and a vision for the education of citizen-soldiers. Although his accomplishments as a West Point Superintendent will forever be overshadowed by a story of a mutiny in 1817, his efforts as an educator are not forgotten. One should view his accomplishments at West Point in the developing the essence of military education at West Point during his years as an instructor and Superintendent and carried on in the years following his relief. In assessing the contributions that Alden Partridge made to the United States Military Academy, there are some factors that one must keep in mind. First, the political climate surrounding the establishment and existence of West Point was clearly controversial. This may be the true source of the differences experienced between Partridge and the professors at the Academy. Second, long before the establishment of the American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy, Partridge had advocated the expanding of military education in the interest of providing the militia with trained officers. Finally, Partridge's academy at Norwich, Vermont, appeared to possess the essence of West Point that existed during Partridge's superintendence. Since the two academies possessed similar climates, both were guided by Partridge's essence of military education.

⁶¹The argument of separation of military and academic efforts at West Point may continue to exist at West Point. Still a very controversial subject, military and academic borders rumor to meet at Thayer Road, with USCC and the barracks on the west side and the academic buildings on the east.

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