



West Point: An Intimate Picture of the National Military Academy and of the Life of the Cadet (Classic Reprint)

Robert Charlwood Richardson

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Excerpt from West Point: An Intimate Picture of the National Military Academy and of the Life of the Cadet

West Point played a great part in the gaining of American independence. It was strongly fortified as the key of the Hudson, and as long as it was held by the patriots of the Revolution the New England colonies could not be cut off from the others and conquered one at a time.

The lack of educated officers was greatly felt by the Generals of the Revolution, and this lack was but feebly supplied by trained officers from abroad.

It was mainly through the foresight and patriotism of Washington, Hamilton, and Knox that the Military Academy at West Point was founded, and their memory is still enshrined there.

The Academy had its inception in very small beginnings, first by the assignment of students to an Engineer regiment until the organic act of 1802 created an Academy with ten cadets. A firm establishment was not made, however, until the detail of Colonel Sylvanus Thayer in command in 1817, who laid down the fundamental principles which govern the Academy to this day.

The early graduates of the Academy suffered much from the jealousy of the old veterans of the Revolution who had no use for the educated soldier.

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