

government as contrary to the principles of the Revolution. Washington intercepted a second letter, signed by "Brutus" that indicated a place and time when the leadership of the mutiny would convene on March 15, 1783. Washington spent the intervening three days preparing an oration that would explain how the mutiny was an assault on the principles of the Revolution and hence, a personal assault on him.

Following his unexpected arrival at the mutineers' leadership meeting, General Washington delivered his remarks. He realized that he had not dissuaded them from their course of action, and attempted to strengthen his case by reading a Congressman's letter lauding the troops. The venerated, heroic Commander in Chief's failing eyes were unable to discern the fine print of the letter, so he took out his recently acquired spectacles. The officers could withstand no more. The revelation that the aging Washington had sacrificed as much as any of them during the Revolution eradicated the thought of engaging in mutiny while in Washington's army.

The power and eloquence of Washington's oration, in conjunction with the respect and admiration elicited from his officers, thwarted the Newburgh Conspiracy. Historians have referred to this event as the "last temptation of Washington"¹. Washington's refusal to take the path of other revolutionary leaders such as Julius Caesar and Oliver Cromwell, who marched their republics into military dictatorships, established an American tradition of military submission to civilian authority that persists to the present day.

THIS DAY IS HISTORY FEBRUARY 21, 1777 - George Weedon is promoted to brigadier general

On this day in 1777, George Weedon is promoted to the rank of brigadier general of the Virginia Regiment of the Continental Army.

Weedon was an innkeeper in Fredericksburg, Virginia, at the outbreak of the Revolutionary

War, but had previously served as a lieutenant under George Washington in western Virginia during the French and Indian War. As the revolution began, Weedon was commissioned lieutenant colonel of the Third Virginia Regiment under Hugh Mercer in 1775. On August 13, 1776, he acceded to Mercer's command as colonel of the 3rd Virginia Regiment. In the fall and winter of 1776, Weedon marched with his troops of the Virginia Regiment alongside General George Washington and the Continental Army in campaigns against the British in New York and New Jersey, including the Battles of Trenton, Brandywine and Germantown. He also commanded Pennsylvania and Virginia regiments in Nathanael Greene's division at Valley Forge.

Weedon resigned the post he was given on this day in history one year later when, at Valley Forge, Congress promoted a rival Virginian and French and Indian War veteran, William Woodford, to a position outranking him. Although he never returned to full duty in the Virginia regiment, Weedon continued his service to his country by leading a brigade of Virginia militia during the Battle of Yorktown in October 1781. Woodford was captured during the siege of Charleston and died in captivity in 1780. Weedon lived to see the new nation established; he died in 1793.

Weedon's orderly book--his record of orders and battle plans--from Valley Forge remains in the holdings of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia. - www.history.com