

The Delafield Commission: Forerunner of the FAO Program

By LTC Lester W. Grau, Army, 48E (Retired)

Who was the first FAO? When did the US Army begin training officer/linguists who specialized in understanding the military of another nation? The United States did not begin assigning military attaches to embassies until late in the 19th Century. Still, there were US Army officers who studied and interacted with other militaries long before that.

After all, foreign officers such as Baron von Stueben, the Marquis de Lafayette, Casimir Pulaski, and Thadeus Kosciuszko were there at the start of the US Army and instrumental in its successes. The presence of the French fleet and army were instrumental in the victory at Yorktown.

After the War of 1812, the United States Army took steps to become a more professional army. The wartime performance of the militia forces and the successes of the regular forces provided a strong argument for a permanent standing army with a professional officer corps. Congressional legislation put the Army and the United States Military Academy (USMA) on a stronger footing. The evident threats to the United States were maritime invasion from Europe and the incessant Indian Wars in the interior. The Napoleonic Wars provided the model of modern warfare for study. Between the War of 1812 and the War Between the States, American officers traveled overseas over 150 times to study and gather military information. Trips to France, Britain, and Prussia were the most common. "Scientific Corps" (engineer, topographic and ordnance) officers

Who was the first FAO ?

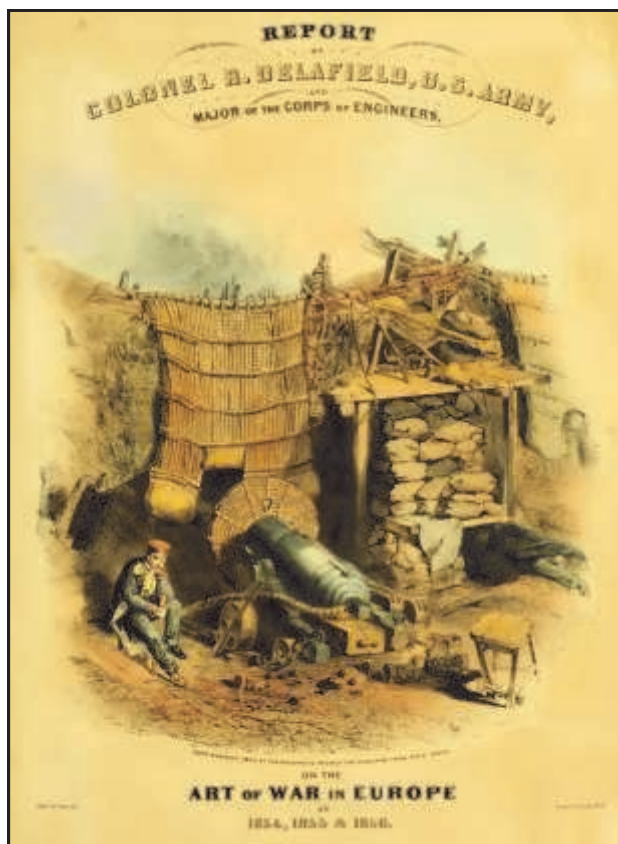
traveled to keep pace with developments in technology, usually at government expense. Line officers (infantry, cavalry, dragoon, and artillery) more often traveled at their own expense. Engineer, cavalry, artillery, and dragoon officers attended French military branch schools. While most American officers visited Europe, Major Henry C. Wayne visited Tunisia, Egypt, and Turkey to purchase camels for the experimental Camel Corps.

During this time, the United States sent two commissions abroad. In 1815, Major Sylvanus Thayer and Lieutenant Colonel William McRee

went to France for a two-year education commission tour during which they examined the fortifications at Lille, Cherbourg, and Brest; studied at the *l'Ecole Polytechnique*; and studied at the Engineering and Artillery school at Metz. These engineer officers purchased about 1,200 French books on mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, geography, military and civil engineering, natural history, military history, and military art and science—the basis of the USMA library. Sylvanus Thayer returned to become the Supervisor of the USMA. During his 16-year tour at Superintendent, he imprinted the French Military system on the corps of cadets. The French military was considered the military worth emulating. Napoleon

may have finally been defeated by the British and Prussians, but his military genius was undeniable. Every cadet studied French for two years at the academy and most of the French texts in the West Point library (which were the bulk of the library) were not translated.

After Napoleon's defeat in 1815, Europe settled into a long peace. But in late 1853, war broke



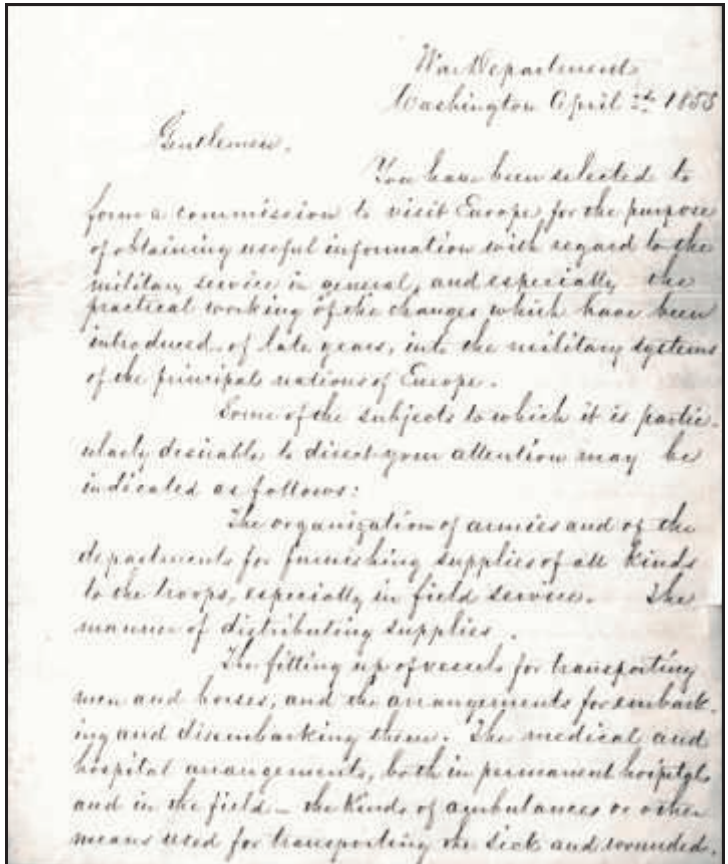
The opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not represent those of the US Army. The author has drawn deeply on the work of Matthew Moten, but his conclusions are not necessarily those of Dr. Moten.

out again. France, Britain, the Ottoman Empire, and Sardinia allied against Russia (the Crimean War). After bottling up the Russian Black Sea Fleet, British, French, and Turkish Armies laid siege to the Russian port/fortress of Sevastopol. The US Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis, decided that the United States Army needed to get observers to the Crimea to study the modern way of war and modern military technology. He dispatched the second military commission to Europe—the Delafield Commission. He considered five high-quality officers for the commission—all USMA graduates and all commissioned in engineer branch. They were Colonel John K. F. Mansfield, Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Lee, Major Richard Delafield, Major Alfred Mordecai, and Captain George B. McClellan. Colonel Mansfield and Lieutenant Colonel Lee declined or were unavailable, but the remaining officers took part in the effort. At the end of March 1855, Jefferson Davis summoned the Delafield Commission to Washington.

The Members of the Delafield Commission

Major Richard Delafield, the senior member of the commission graduated from West Point as the valedictorian in 1818. He was now 57 years old and already had a successful career behind him as an engineer and as the Superintendant of West Point from 1838-1845. Delafield was instrumental in the construction of Fort Monroe, Fort Calhoun, Fort Richmond, and the Cumberland Road. He was one of the army's most well-respected and experienced engineers. West Point remembered him as a stern disciplinarian. His foreign language was French.

Major Alfred Mordecai graduated from the USMA at the head of his class in 1823 and was commissioned in the engineer branch. After five years service, he was still a second lieutenant despite premier jobs and job performance. The army had no retirement system and so promotions were dependent on the resignation or death of more-senior officers. The army re-organization of 1832 expanded the ordnance branch. Mordecai immediately applied for a captaincy in ordnance and was accepted and promoted. His first ordnance tour was as Military Assistant to Secretary of War Lewis Cass. In 1833, Mordecai took a year's leave of absence and sailed to Europe for professional development. He visited military schools, fortresses and arsenals in France, England, Prussia, Italy, and Belgium, returning to become Commander of Frankford Arsenal, Pennsylvania. In 1839, Secretary of War Joel Poinsett created the Ordnance Board and selected Captain



Secretary of War Jefferson Davis' detailed letter of instruction to the Delafield Commission

Mordecai as a member. He would serve on this board for the rest of his career. Shortly after this selection, Captain Mordecai was back in Europe—on a delegation to study improvements in artillery. The delegation spent nine months touring England, France, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, Russia, and several German states. They observed maneuvers and visited forts, foundries and arsenals.

Captain Mordecai was a prolific writer with books, manuals and reports to his credit. In 1842, he began a 14-year tour at Washington Arsenal and was promoted to Brevet (temporary) Major during the Mexican War in recognition of his role in the production of weapons and ammunition. In 1853, Secretary of War Jefferson Davis sent him on a diplomatic mission to Mexico to investigate indemnity claims from the Mexican War. In 1854, after 23 years service as a captain, Mordecai was finally promoted to major. He was a recognized scientist; an author and member of leading professional societies and committees, but promotions were slow. He was 51 years old when selected for the Commission.

The final member of the commission was a mere 28 years old. Before George B. McClellan enrolled at West Point, he was fluent in French and Latin. He was 15 when he arrived at the USMA. He graduated second in the class of 1846 and became a brevet second lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers. He joined a newly-formed company of sappers and miners at West Point that soon deployed to Brazos Santiago, Texas near the mouth of the Rio Grande. In January 1847, his company led a column on a 400-mile march from Matamoras to Tampico where they joined General Winfield Scott's invasion force.

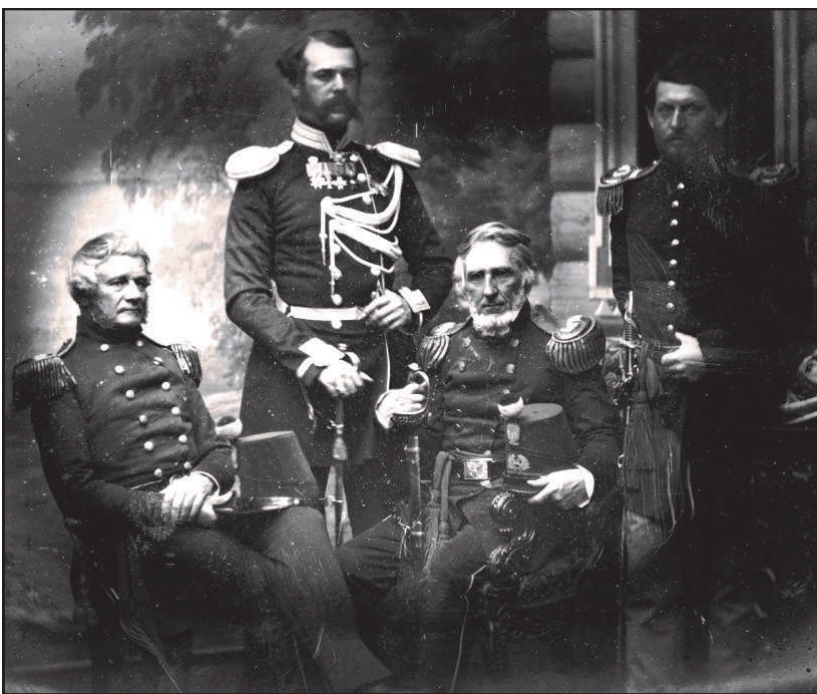
Brevet Second Lieutenant McClellan was with one of the first groups ashore at Vera Cruz, Mexico. Although he was the most-junior engineer officer at the siege of Vera Cruz, he soon earned a reputation as a fire-eater and would frequently be found in the thick of the action.

After the fall of Vera Cruz, Scott's force moved on toward Mexico City. At Contreras, McClellan had two horses shot from under him. During the fighting, he assumed command of an artillery section and then the entire battery after all of its officers were wounded. McClellan was mentioned in dispatches for his actions at Contreras and Churubusco and promoted to brevet first lieutenant. At Chapultepec, McClellan aided Robert E. Lee in employing artillery batteries and then led engineer troops in an infantry assault on Mexico City. During this last battle, McClellan won a promotion to brevet captain.

After eight-month's occupation duty in Mexico City, McClellan and his company returned to West Point. He continued to serve with his company while performing additional duties as Assistant Professor of Engineering. While at West Point, McClellan translated a French manual on bayonet combat and taught it to his company. The US Army adopted his translation as a manual in 1852.

In 1851, McClellan became the assistant engineer in the construction of Fort Delaware. During this time, he also taught himself German. In 1852, he joined an expedition to explore the Red River and Palo Duro Canyon in Texas. He became the chief engineer in the Department of Texas and surveyed the rivers and harbors of the Texas coastline. In 1853, he conducted an independent survey of the Washington Territory coastal area through the Cascade Mountains. In 1854, Secretary of War

Jefferson Davis hand-picked now-Regular Army First Lieutenant McClellan for a secret mission that surveyed the Dominican Republic's harbors for a suitable American naval port. After successful completion of this mission, McClellan did a survey of the nation's railroads for Davis. Davis had convinced Congress to create two new infantry and cavalry regiments. McClellan applied for a captaincy in the cavalry and was accepted. A few days after his selection, he was summoned to Washington to serve on the Delafield Commission.



1855 Daguerreotype photo of Major Albert Mordecai, Russian Lieutenant Colonel Obrezkov, Major Richard Delafield, and Captain McClellan

Preparations for the Mission

On 5 April, 1855, Jefferson Davis summoned the three officers for an interview and told them that he had personally selected each of them for a study of modern war and armies in Europe. He issued a detailed list of military subjects that they were supposed to pursue dealing with organization, technology, logistics, equipment, fortifications, and even the use of camels for transport. They were not limited to the usual tour of France. They were to get to besieged Sevastopol, the center piece of the Crimean War, as rapidly as possible and then visit military facilities in Russia, Prussia, Austria, France, and England. They were supposed to return by the start

of November 1855, but had the latitude to extend their tour for extenuating circumstances. He placed his reliance "on your judgment and discretion to conduct your movements in such a manner as to give no reasonable ground for suspicion or offense to the military or other government authorities with who you may have intercourse."

Major Mordecai was appointed treasurer for the commission and provided funds and a letter of introduction to the State Department's banker in London. The commission was provided letters to the US ambassadors in Europe asking them to assist the commission in any way possible. Secretary Davis hosted a dinner for the commission and the ambassadors from England, France, Russia, Prussia, and Austria and asked the ambassadors for letters of introduction to their governments. All, but the French Ambassador, complied. On 11 April, the commission sailed from Boston-six days after notification. There were a lot of loose ends and issues still to be resolved—and these would have to be resolved by the commission members and their force of personality and persuasion.

The Mission Begins

On 22 April 1855, the steamer *Asia* arrived in Liverpool. The commission traveled to London with the hope of quickly arranging permission to visit British forces in the Crimea. American Ambassador James Buchanan arranged an audience with Lord Clarendon, the British Foreign Secretary on 27 April. He explained that they must first be presented to the Queen. Once they had been presented, their petition stood a better chance of favorable consideration. During two weeks in Britain, they toured the shipyard at Blackwell and the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich, met with leading officers who had served in the Crimea and attended a lecture on operations in the Crimea. Their presentation to the Queen worked and they received permission from the Foreign Office to go to the Crimea without restriction.

On 6 May, 1855, the commission sailed for Calais and arrived in Paris on the seventh. Meetings with the ambassador disclosed that the French Foreign Minister had just resigned and no other French officials would help the commission. The ambassador persuaded the officers to wait until the new minister

would speak to them. They waited over two weeks and were not allowed to visit French military facilities while they waited. Finally, on 24 May, Count Walewsky, the new foreign minister saw them. Walewsky informed the commission that they might visit the French works in the Crimea only if they promised not to visit any Russian camps afterward. The commission's plan had been to travel from Paris to Marseilles and then sail for the Crimea. Now, they would have to get Russian permission to visit their side first. The best solution appeared to travel to Berlin, Prussia where there was a Russian embassy and seek guidance about the best way to Sevastopol. The commission prepared to leave, but then their departure was delayed by another five days, since they were then invited to meet the Emperor, Napoleon III.

The European rail system moved the commission rapidly to Berlin. They arrived on Friday, 1 June and met with US Ambassador Peter D. Vroom the next morning. He took them directly to the Russian Ambassador who already had letters prepared introducing them to the Russian Governor in Warsaw. The Russian ambassador ensured them that they had government permission to go to the Crimea and that the Russian Governor of Poland would expedite their travel. The American Ambassador then took the group to meet Prussian Foreign Minister Baron von Manteuffel, who gave them permission to visit all military installations in Prussia. After England and France, Prussia and the Russians were a welcome change. The officers were in a hurry to get to



Warsaw and then on to Kiev and down the Dnieper River to Crimea. Consequently, they spent little time in Prussia before boarding a train to Warsaw, 4 June.

Arriving in Warsaw on 6 June, they called on several government offices. Unfortunately, the Russian Governor, Marshal Prince I. F. Paskievitch, was on a hunting trip. Two days later, when he returned, he treated them graciously, entertained them well and assigned an escort officer. They toured the Modlin fortress, participated in a Cossack cavalry regiment review held in their honor and toured a military hospital in Warsaw. But there was bad news. Despite the assurances of the Russian Ambassador to Prussia, the Governor did not have the authority to allow the commission to proceed to the Crimea. They would have to travel to St. Petersburg for this!

At this time, the group learned that the Allies had attacked Sevastopol on 7 June and carried the southern redoubts. The fighting might be over before they ever go there! They left for St. Petersburg on 13 June. Much of the 783-mile trip between Warsaw and St. Petersburg was by horse-drawn coach. It took six days.

25th. After the meeting, the commission received an imperial invitation to attend a military review on the Field of Mars where they sat next to Prince Vasiliy Andreyevich Dolgorukov, the Russian Minister of War. He assigned Lieutenant Colonel Obrezkov, his aide-de-camp, as their escort. At the end of the review, the commission was presented to Tsar Alexander II, who invited them to tour the Kronstadt naval base and fort. The Russian reception was overwhelming and the Francophile orientation of the commission changed to Russophile. But Russian permission to travel to the Crimea was slow in coming. McClellan, who was quick at languages, learned passable Russian during their time there—although French was the language of the Russian court and most Russian officers spoke passable French.

The commission toured the Baltic Sea fortress of Kronstadt several times. The Crimean War was fought both in the Crimea and in the Baltic Sea. The British fleet was blockading Kronstadt, so the commission was present in one theater of war, although most of the fighting occurred 1,100 miles away in the Crimea. The commission visited military schools, hospitals and arsenals.

The reason for the Russian delay became apparent. Prince Gorchakov, the new commander in the Crimea, did not want the American commission within the besieged city. The Tsar granted most of their other requests, but would not override his commander's wishes. On 19 July, the commission took an eight-day excursion to Moscow by train where they visited the Kremlin and numerous schools, arsenals and hospitals. Finally, on 2 August, the commission again boarded a horse-drawn coach and returned to Prussia.

Six days later they arrived at the Prussian fortress-city of Konigsburg. They toured the new fortress, which was under construction, and spent three days with Prussian officers before boarding a train. They spent two weeks touring yet more fortresses, coastal defenses, and a cavalry school as they travelled through Danzig, Posen,

Schwinemunde, and Schweldt. On 25 August, the delegation returned to Berlin. From Berlin, they



Post battle sketches of the Russian Fort Malakoff produced by the commission. They show masonry fortifications with the addition of field works as well as artillery positions within field works

They arrived on 19 June and met with US Ambassador Thomas H. Seymour who arranged a meeting with Foreign Minister Nesselrode on the

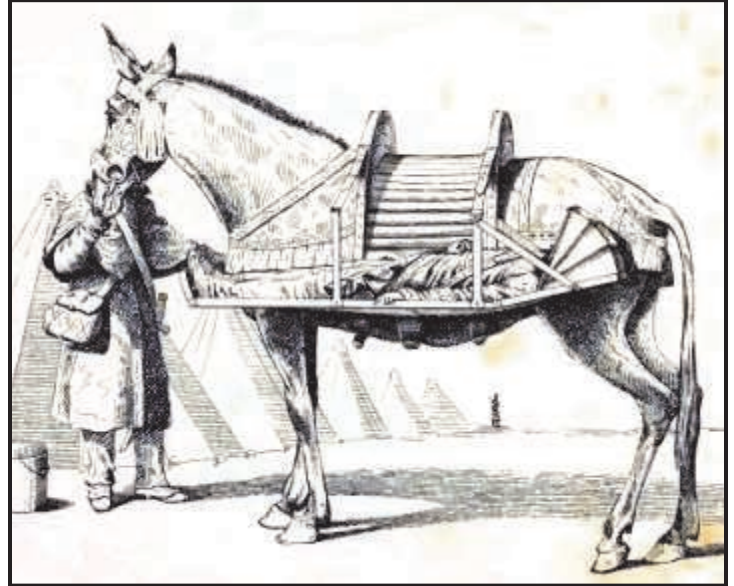
again requested French permission to visit the Crimea, noting that they would not enter Sevastopol. They waited two weeks for a reply that did not come. They were still waiting in Berlin on 4 September 1855 when the French successfully stormed Fort Malakov, forcing the Russian evacuation of the southern side of Sevastopol. The war was mostly over. The men had missed their main mission.

On 12 September, the commission left by train traveling through Dresden and Prague to Vienna. They spent two days in Dresden touring an armory, an arsenal, a military school, and a military museum. The officers arrived in Vienna on 16 September and received Austrian government permission to visit Austrian military establishments. They toured the Vienna arsenal and the Napoleonic battlefields of Essling and Wagram, then arrived in Trieste on 20 September. The next day, they boarded the *Adria* steamer for Constantinople arriving on 30 September, and called on Rashid Mustapha Pasha, the Ottoman Minister of War. They also called on Ali Pasha, the Grand Vizier. But even though they had met the two most powerful men in the Ottoman Empire, the officers were still no closer to the Crimea. After six months of travel, the commission had little to show for its effort.

Crimea at last!

On 6 October, the commission finally found passage on the British Royal Navy's steamer, *Prince of Arabs* and arrived at Balaklava two days later. The British took good care of the Americans and the British Commander, General Sir James Simpson, saw to their needs with quarters, escorts, and access; as they toured all the battlefields and both sides of the southern Sevastopol trench works. The Russians still held northern Sevastopol and artillery duels continued. The commission worked frantically to make up for lost time gathering data on artillery, rifled small arms, ammunition, field fortifications, and the like. Major Mordecai succumbed to diarrhea, which stopped his efforts and ended with his evacuation to a British field hospital in Balaklava, where he was tended by Florence Nightingale.

The French were far less hospitable than the British. The commission was unable to meet with the French Commander and was not afforded any special privileges, although they received a general permission to visit the French trenches. Major Delafield had a rewarding conversation with the French chief engineer. On 31 October, the commission boarded the British steamer *Brandon*



French, English, and Sardinian medical evacuation system for two wounded soldiers or one wounded and a mounted attendant. The mule-mounted litter was jointed to adjust for horizontal or seated casualties. During the Soviet-Afghan War, the Soviets resurrected this litter system for high-altitude evacuation.



and after two days at anchor, they steamed for Constantinople. They had three major conclusions.

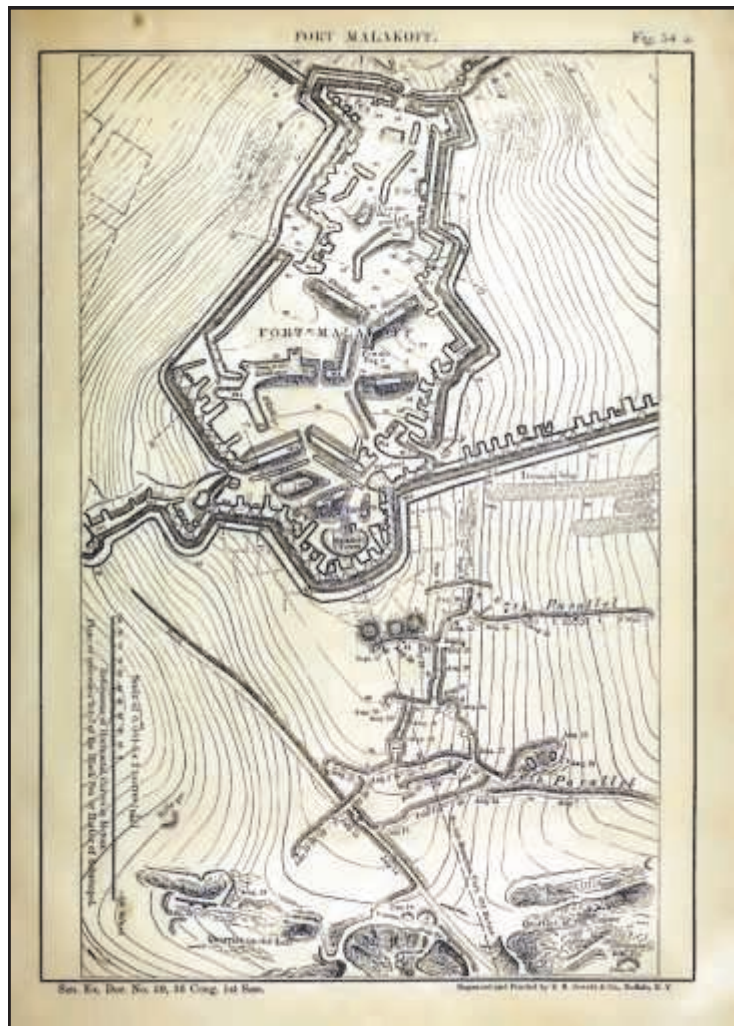
First, the scale of warfare had changed dramatically due to steamships that allowed many more men, horses and guns to move and subsist in a distant war. Europe was devoting national treasure and attention to building a threatening military capacity. Second, Britain and France were no friends of the United States and might cooperate in an attack on America. Third, American coastal fortification work needed to be finished quickly. American's threat was from the sea.

The return route went through the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the commission did a thorough job touring barracks, hospitals, riding schools, arsenals and academies. On 9 January 1856, they were presented to the Emperor Franz Josef. Their reception on their return to France was no better than before, but Prussia opened all doors to them. They toured the armaments city of Liege, Belgium and the Waterloo Battlefield. They also revisited the United Kingdom, but they were kept from military sites so they became tourists. Finally, they boarded the steamer *Persia* on 19 April 1856 and sailed to New York. On 29 April, they were home after traveling almost 20,000 miles in just over a year.

The job's not done until the paperwork is finished

The commission reported back to Secretary of War Jefferson Davis who wanted the commission to get their reports out soon. The commission members, following a year's close—and not always friendly—association, preferred to work from home. Delafield worked from New York, Mordecai from Washington, DC, and McClellan worked from Philadelphia with Delafield concentrating on engineering matters, Mordecai on ordnance, and McClellan on cavalry. They maintained an office and library in Washington, DC for the hundreds of books, papers, maps and sketches that they brought back.

Delafield resumed command of New York harbor defenses and in September of 1856, returned to the USMA for a second tour as Superintendent. Mordecai was put to work revising the army's regulations and in February 1857, he became Commander of the Watervliet Arsenal in Troy, New York. McClellan's work went faster as this was now his sole duty. McClellan finished his report in January 1857, Mordecai finished in March 1858, and Delafield finished in November 1860. The reports focused on Jefferson Davis' detailed list of military subjects and technical details. Wider issues of the scope of modern war were not fully addressed and there was no effort to produce a single report from their efforts.



Fort Malakoff: An example of commission topographic drawings submitted to Congress

Instead, the commission's report was published in separate volumes. The reports are thick and detailed. McClellan's report was published in 5,000 copies by Congress in 1857 and republished commercially along with his *Regulations and Instructions for the Field Service of the US Cavalry in Time of War* in 1861. The Delafield and Mordecai reports were published in 30,000 copies in 1860 and 1861.

Their impact was immediate. The engineer, ordnance and cavalry branches were the primary beneficiaries with much of the information reaching the branches before the reports were published. Major Mordecai advocated adoption of the French "light 12-pounder gun, Model of 1857"—the "Napoleon" gun-howitzer that became the most effective artillery piece on both sides in the looming

War Between the States. Further, his advocacy of wrought-iron carriages for fixed artillery (fortress) guns was adopted before the Civil War. Captain McClellan translated the Russian Cavalry manual that became the unofficial United States Army *Regulations and Instructions for the Field Service of Cavalry in Time of War*. He also consulted French texts from the French Cavalry School at Saumur and used French and Russian experience in his “Report on the United States Cavalry.” McClellan made many suggestions in the equipment and organization of the cavalry branch. He urged the adoption of a Hungarian-designed Prussian saddle which he modified. US mounted troopers rode on the McClellan saddle until horse cavalry disappeared in 1943.

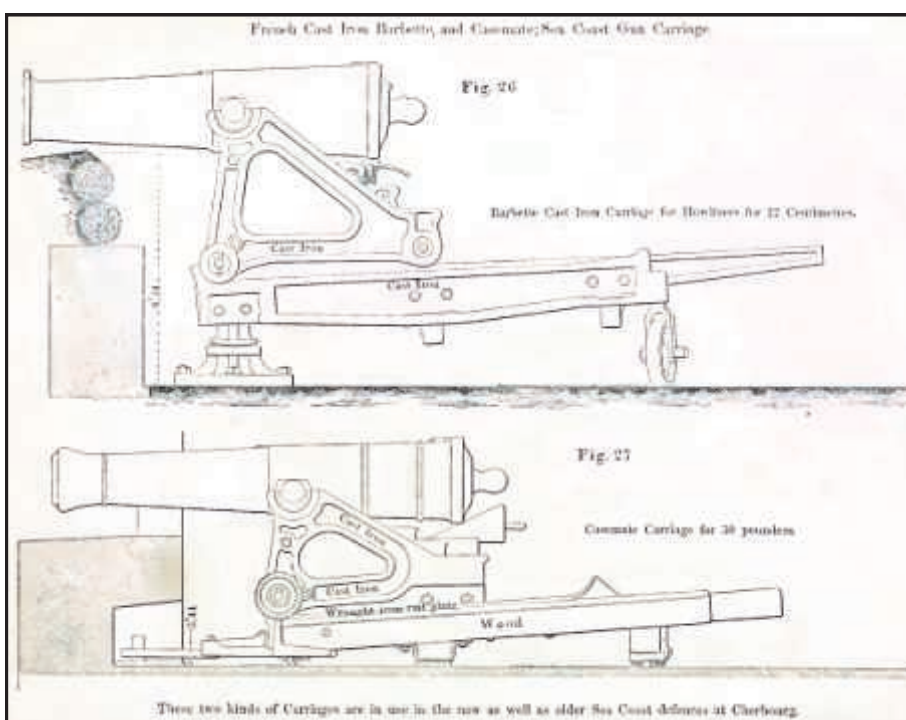
Major Delafield provided much material on fortresses and sea coast defense and his report is replete with hundreds of sketches of fortresses, battlefield maps and photographs. Delafield took a close look at the logistics in the Crimea, particularly military medicine, hospital ships and ambulances. He provided a detailed report on iron-clad gun boats. He emphasized that steamships had greatly transformed the logistics of war. Another of his studies, “Theory and Practice of Modern Systems of Fortification,” relied heavily on the work of a Spanish engineer and the fortifications of the German states that the commission visited.

The gathering storm

“Bleeding Kansas” began before the commission left and continued after their return. The nation was fracturing. The main threat to the United States was not foreign invasion or the interminable Indian Wars. Much of the commission’s work would soon be put to practical use. Still, its members did not get everything right. The Crimean War was primarily an artillery war and a large number of artillery pieces were deployed by both sides in the battles and siege. The rifled musket and other rifled small arms were used, but the bulk of the infantry still used smooth-bore muskets. Consequently, the commission focused on the artillery and failed to see the impact of rifled weapons on tactics and the infantryman’s need to go to ground in trenches and foxholes. Consequently, the North and the South went to war using Brevet Lieutenant Colonel William J. Hardee’s 1855

Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics; For the Exercise and Manœuvres of Troops when acting as Light Infantry or Riflemen as their bible. Volunteer and state militia officers studied the book from cover-to-cover. Hardee had studied tactics in France in 1840 and his book reflected Napoleonic experience using smooth-bore muskets, but the Crimean war employed enough rifles to force the troops to dig in. After initial bloody encounters during the War Between the States, infantrymen on both sides learned that their best friend was not their weapon, but their shovel.

Although the telegraph and railroad were used in the Crimean War, their impact was modest. Their impact was colossal during the Civil War. The



One of hundreds of technical drawings produced by the commission

logistics effort—and its failures—during the Crimean War were obvious to the commission. The logistics demands in the coming war would be much greater.

Secretary of War Davis later became the President of the Confederate States of America. Major Delafield became the Chief of Engineers of the Union Army with the rank of Major General. Major Mordecai was from North Carolina and was offered the position of Chief of Ordnance for the Confederate States of America and a similar position in the Union Army. He did not want to abandon his country, but did not support the Federal government’s attack on

states' rights. He resigned his commission to teach mathematics in Philadelphia. His son, Alfred Mordecai Jr., graduated from West Point and fought for the Union at Bull Run. Captain McClellan's rise was meteoric. He became a Major General commanding the Army of the Potomac and served as the General-in-Chief of the Union Army. Following his unsuccessful Peninsular Campaign in 1862, he was relieved of command as both general-in-chief and Commander, Army of the Potomac. McClellan ran for President against Lincoln in 1864 on the Democratic Party anti-war ticket.

So who was the first FAO?

There is no easy answer, but the experiences of the Delafield Commission duplicate many of the experiences of contemporary FAOs. First, FAOs must negotiate the top tiers of United States and foreign governmental bureaucracy to accomplish their missions. Matters that initially seem to be resolved at mid-level bureaucracy, keep getting moved higher. The commission had to meet the crowned heads of Europe just to watch artillery batteries in action. It took six months to get to the Crimea.

Second, study of a language and culture puts the FAO in danger of becoming an advocate for that country. The Delafield Commission left the United States as convinced Francophiles. Only French actions changed their orientation to Russophiles.

Third, host nation support is wonderful, but it can also mask the truth. The Delafield Commission was convinced of the might, efficiency and potential

of the Russian Army by the units that they visited around St. Petersburg and Moscow. These were the best units in the Russian Army that were stationed there in the event of an Anglo-French invasion of Russia from the Baltic Sea. The escort officers assigned to the commission, particularly Lieutenant Colonel Obrezkov, did a good job of presenting a positive image of the Russian Army, one that survived the Russian defeat in the Crimea.

Fourth, mastery of a language does not equate to mastery of a culture. This only comes from living there. The commission could communicate in French, German, Russian and English, but they still did not always understand what was in front of them as they travelled. This was particularly true in Russia proper, where the autocratic nature of the state did not make an impression on the commission. The commission usually interacted with the higher echelons of a society.

Fifth, the final value of a FAO's product might have little to do with the original mission guidance. Britain and France did not jointly invade the United States, although the French Foreign Legion and the Federal Army came close to fighting along the Rio Grande after the Civil War. But, England and France also did not recognize the Confederate States of America—a recognition that was probably prevented by the Emancipation Proclamation and actions of a friendly Russian government. Russian fleets arrived almost simultaneously in both New York harbor and San Francisco harbor while Britain and France were considering formal recognition of the Confederacy.



Major Albert Mordecai

Journal Submissions - Writing Guide -

Your Journal needs your submissions ... interesting items of all lengths.

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All submissions are subject to minor editing for format, brevity and grammar as required.

Email submissions to editor@fao.org

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The actions of the Delafield Commission contributed to a closer harmony between the Russians and Americans—a harmony that continued to the Russo-Japanese War.

The Delafield Commission was drawn from the active army—and returned to the active army. Today's FAOs are specialists, no longer part of the main-stream army. This specialization permits more time for the FAO to learn about his country and region, but it means that the FAO's experience in the day-to-day army is not current. The Delafield Commission wrote primarily for their branches and helped their branches stay abreast of European developments. Today's FAOs leave their branches and seldom return.

My candidate for the first FAO is Alfred Mordecai. This Jewish southerner married a northerner and raised a Unionist son, although he declined to fight on principle for either side during the Civil War. He made multiple serious study trips abroad although he was violently prone to seasickness. He was comfortable in a variety of cultures and was a keen observer of his surroundings. The Delafield Commission, and his impressive report for it, proved the capstone of his FAO career, but his contributions from FAO-like activities started long before the commission and continued long after his resignation. His impact on the ordnance and artillery branches was particularly noteworthy. Mordecai was a serious linguist, scientist and military professional.

US soldiers who spoke foreign languages and understood foreign cultures have had a major impact on the successes of our military and nation. We are their heirs and as we FAOs look to the present and future, we should learn from our past. Alfred Mordecai and the Delafield Commission are an important part of that past.

About the Author:

Lester W. Grau is a Senior Analyst for the Foreign Military Studies Office at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Defense Language Institute (Russian) and the US Army's Institute for Advanced Russian and Eastern European Studies. He retired from the US Army in 1992 at the grade of Lieutenant Colonel. His military education included the Infantry Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the US Army Command and General Staff College and the US Air Force War College. His Baccalaureate and Masters degrees are in International Relations, and his doctorate is in Military History. He served a combat tour in Vietnam, four European tours, a Korean tour and a posting in Moscow. He has traveled to the Soviet Union and Russia over forty times. He has also been a frequent visitor to the Asian sub-continent, especially Pakistan and Afghanistan. He is a recent CENTCOM Fellow.



Les has published over 125 articles and studies on tactical, operational and geopolitical topics. His book, *The Bear Went Over the Mountain: Soviet Combat Tactics in Afghanistan* was published in 1996. *The Other Side of the Mountain: Mujahideen Tactics in the Soviet-Afghan War* (co-authored with Ali Jalali) was published in 1998. *The Soviet-Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost* was published in 2001. *The Red Army's Do-It-Yourself, Nazi-Bashing Guerrilla Warfare Manual, Passing It On: Fighting the Pushtun on Afghanistan's Frontier* and *Mountain Warfare And Other Lofty Problems: Foreign Ideas On High-Altitude Combat* were published in 2011. *Operation Anaconda: America's First Major Battle in Afghanistan* is scheduled for 2011 publication.

USAF Launches New Language / Region / Cultures resource –

The Air Force Culture and Language Center (AFCLC) recently announced the launch of its newly revamped public website. The site features all of the language, region and culture information and resources you have used in the past, but they have been organized in a way that the AFLCL hopes users will find both more useful and easier to navigate. The address is www.culture.af.mil. Check it out and send them your feedback with any additional recommendations. Send your e-mail afclc.pa@maxwell.af.mil.

The AFCLC's digital outreach effort also now extends into the twitter-sphere, so you can follow developments and releases on through their twitter feed, www.twitter.com/afclc, to keep up with the latest news and events from the AFCLC.