

The Revolution in July

1775

Massachusetts

Cambridge, **July 3rd**. General George Washington takes command of the Continental Army and 17,000 troops in the Boston area. **On July 16th** Washington visits Abigail Adams who later writes "Dignity with ease, and complacency, the Gentleman and Soldier look agreeably blended in him." **On July 22nd** Washington organizes his army into three divisions under Generals Charles Lee, Artemus Ward, and Israel Putnam. The next day, noting the lack of uniforms for the Continental Army, Washington orders commissioned officers to wear cockades in their hats: pink or red for field rank, yellow or buff for captains, and green for subalterns. Sergeants are identified by a strip of red cloth on their right shoulder.

With these changes, **on July 25th** the First Continental Unit reaches Boston.

After meeting General Washington, **on July 25th** Dr. Benjamin Church becomes the first Surgeon General of the Continental Army. Congress then officially established the US Army medical department **on July 27th** and **on July 29th** the Army Chaplain Department and the Judge Advocate General Department.

Congress (War party)

July 4th, The Continental Congress approves a resolution denouncing the trade restraining acts as "unconstitutional, oppressive and cruel." **On July 6th** Congress then issues a "Declaration on the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms" detailing the colonists' reasons for fighting the British and states the Americans are "resolved to die free men rather than live as slaves."

Congress (Peace Party)

On July 5th Congress adopts the Olive Branch Petition, which expresses hope for a reconciliation with Britain, appealing directly to the king for help. A formal petition to King George offering reconciliation is adopted **on July 8th**.

London

On July 9th King George calls a petition of the London Common Council "most decent and moderate in words" but subversive in its denial of Parliament's authority to tax the colonies. Five days later John Wilkes, the Lord Mayor of London, and members of the Common Council offer a petition to King George calling for reconciliation with the colonies and an end to all military operations in America. The King later states that he "owed it to the rest of the law-abiding people to oppose the petition."



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Native Tribes

On July 13th The Continental Congress approves a speech to the Six Nations, urging the Indians "to remain at home, and not join either side, but keep the hatchet buried deep." Similar speeches are ordered for other tribes and **on July 19th** Congress appoints commissioners to seek peace with Indian tribes.

Conflict

On July 8th, A skirmish between Americans and British troops takes place in Roxbury, Massachusetts. **On July 12th** Fort Charlotte in S. Carolina falls to patriot forces. Six days later North Carolina Royal Governor Josiah Martin flees to a British warship when patriots occupy Fort Johnston.

Invoking the almighty

On July 7th Georgia patriot governor Wright calls for a day of fasting and prayer based on a request of the Provincial Congress. **On July 20th** New York observes a Day of Fasting and Devotion, in accordance with the recommendation by Congress.

The Minutemen

On July 17th the third Virginia Convention orders the formation of two regiments made up of both minutemen and militia companies. The next day Congress requests that all of the colonies establish minuteman units. As requested, **on July 26th** The Maryland Convention votes to support the Continental Congress and resolves to organize 40 companies of minutemen.

1776

Independence

July 1st. George Washington's letter of **June 29** is read to Congress. In it he announces the arrival of the British fleet in New York. Shortly thereafter, the Continental Congress approves Richard Henry Lee's resolution of respecting independence, but South Carolina delegates postpone determination by the entire house until **July 2**. On that day Congress formally adopts Lee's resolution for independence,

asserting that the "United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States; that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved." The vote is unanimous with only New York abstaining. The following day, **July 3rd**, John Adams writes his wife Abigail, "Yesterday the greatest Question was decided, which ever was debated in America, and a greater perhaps, never was or will be decided among Men..." Later that day Congress considers Jefferson's "Declaration" for independence, but decides to continue their examination at the next session. Finally, **on July 4th**, Jefferson's Declaration of Independence is adopted and signed by the appropriate parties.



With the declaration adopted, **on July 6th** John Hancock sends a copy to the New York Convention meeting in White Plains with a letter which closes "The important consequences to the American

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States from this Declaration of Independence, considered as the ground and foundation of a future Government, will naturally suggest the propriety of proclaiming it in such a manner that the people may be universally informed of it. Additional copies were also sent to all the other "States". **On July 8th** in Philadelphia, Committee member Christopher Marshall wrote "...in the presence of a great concourse of people, the Declaration of Independence was read by John Nixon. The company declared their approbation, by three repeated huzzas. The King's arms were then taken down in the Court Room and State House.

On July 13th Abigail Adams received John's letters from the 3rd and 4th as well as a copy of the declaration. "Nor am I a little Gratified when I reflect that a person so nearly connected with me has had the Honor of being a principal actor, in laying a foundation for its (the country's) future Greatness. May the foundation of our new constitution, be justice, Truth and Righteousness."

New York

Following arrival at New York Harbor, **on July 2nd** the British launch an attack on Washington's forces on Staten Island. British Captain Archibald Robertson reports on "The Rebels" he encountered, and notes how they "fired musquetry at the nearest ships without effect...Lucky for us the Rebels had no cannon here or we must have suffered a good deal." **On July 3rd** General Nathaniel Heard and his New Jersey Militia arrive in New York to reinforce Washington. And Washington needed reinforcement as he noted **on July 4th** that many Staten islanders are "too favorably disposed" to join the British.



On July 7th Washington writes to New York's Governor Trumbull: "The Situation of our Affairs calls aloud for the most Vigorous Exertions and nothing else will be sufficient to avert the Impending blow...General Howe has already about ten Thousand men." To rally his own men **on July 9th** Washington has the Declaration of Independence read to his troops. Following the reading a mob then converged on the statue of King George in the Bowling Green. After tearing it down it was melted down into 42,000 lead musket balls. These would have been used against the British troops if the bullets had not been

made in Connecticut.

Two days later Major General Artemus Ward sends Washington "73 Firearms, 60 Bayonets, 73 Bayonet belts, 73 Slings, 73 Shot Pouches, 50 Cartridge boxes, and 73 Knapsacks". **On July 14th** Congress asked the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety to send any available musket-cartridges and balls to the "Flying-Camp" and militia in New Jersey.

Amnesty

As supplies and men trickled into New York, **on July 14th** General Washington's aide, Colonel Samuel Webb recorded in his journal that he had refused a truce flag and letter delivered from Lord Howe. The letter concerned a meeting for presentation of Admiral Howe's offer of reconciliation. Two days later The New York Mercury reported that a second flag of truce was rejected, "for the same

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Reason as the former." On learning of Washington's refusal to accept Howe's misaddressed dispatches, Congress **on July 17th** asserted that the commander-in-chief "acted with a dignity becoming his station," and directed all American commanders to receive only letters addressed to them "in the characters they respectively sustain." **On July 21st** Benjamin Franklin, who had received a copy of the Peace Commission's circular letter and declaration, wrote and thanked Lord Howe, but expressed regret that the dispatch was nothing more than "offers of pardon upon submission." **On July 23rd**, Congress informed Washington that their "confidence in his judgment" was such that they will give him no direction on the disposition of troops in and about New York. .

Small Pox

Arriving at Crown Point, NY, **on July 2nd** General John Sullivan writes to John Hancock about his experience in Canada: "to give you a particular account of the miserable State of our Troops there and the numbers which Daily kept dropping in there beds and graves would rather seem like the effect of imagination than a history of facts." The following day, Army Doctor Lewis Bebe notes in his journal that "Since I have been writing, one more of our men had made his exit. Death visits us almost every hour."

On July 16th John Adams learned that his wife intended to undergo a smallpox inoculation with their children.

Canada

On the **fourth of July** Army Doctor Lewis Bebe writes regarding the troops, "The Capts and Subs may generally be found at the grog shops, the soldiers either sleeping, swimming, fishing, or cursing and swearing most generally the Latter." Given these discipline issues, **on July 7th** General Schuyler (depicted) withdraws his Northern Army from Crown Point and moves toward Ticonderoga.



But Congress was still in denial of the disaster the invasion of Canada had become. **On July 12th**, concerned about the regions around the Great Lakes, Congress directed General Schuyler to order the construction of galleys to protect Lake Ontario. Congress also sought to establish how large a naval force would be necessary to secure Lake Erie.

On July 26th word arrives at Ticonderoga of the Declaration of Independence. Two days later Colonel Arthur St. Clair read the document to the troops and when he read, 'God save the free independent States of America' the Army manifested their joy with cheers. St Clair later wrote, "It was remarkably pleasing to see the spirits of the soldiers so raised, after all their calamities; the language of every man's countenance was, Now we are people; we have a name among the States of this world."

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On the Run

As Washington awaits an attack by General Howe, Patriot forces in Virginia attack former Royal Governor Lord Dunsmore on Gwynn's Island **on July 9th**. The Virginia Gazette writes: "His Lordship (Dunmore) lost his china by a double-headed shot, and it is said he himself was wounded in the leg by a splinter. The British ships were driven off without water; and although they have plenty of prize flour, there is not a biscuit on board." **On July 15th** two boats from the force Dunmore had escaped with, appeared off St. George's Island in the mouth of the Potomac River. Both boats were plague ships, their crews infected with small pox.

Miguel Antonio Edwards was among those found on the plague ships. In his diary it was revealed that the ships of Lord Dunsmore had headed Southward to join General Clinton's force at Charleston. Little did they know that **on July 19th**, following the failed landings at Charleston, British General Henry Clinton had sailed with his troops for Staten island to join General Howe.

POWs and the Rules of War.

After a year of war the Patriots had captured so many British troops it had become a serious issue. **On July 5th** George Washington requests to move prisoners from New York to a safer place in the country. In New Jersey, that colony's Convention requests that Congress provide for the removal of prisoners because they were causing dissension by ridiculing the Congress and the American army. The Pennsylvania Convention follows **on July 14th** with a request that British officers being held in Philadelphia be transferred to various interior places. Finally, **on July 30th** General Washington informed General William Howe that Congress had authorized a "General Exchange of Prisoners...for those of equal rank...Soldier for Soldier, Sailor for Sailor and Citizen for Citizen." A particular mention, he noted, was made of Col. Ethan Allen who would be exchanged for any British officer. He was eventually exchanged for Colonel Archibald Campbell (depicted) in May 1778.



Articles of Confederation

On July 22nd Congress, sitting as a committee of the whole, considered the printed draft of John Dickinson's "Articles of Confederation." **On July 25th** Congress discussed the boundaries of the thirteen states. Jefferson believed all Indian lands should be immediately bought and that Congress should in no way fix state borders. Others, Samuel Chase and James Wilson among them, disagreed, setting the stage for later debate. The next day Article XVIII was discussed, which granted Congress the power of "regulating the Trade, and managing all Affairs with the Indians." **On July 30th** debate begins on the subject of voting in Congress. Dr. Franklin believed that for the smaller colonies to have an equal vote, they should have to give equal money and men." John Witherspoon (NJ), however, feared that "smaller states will be oppressed by the great ones." It would be an issue that would go

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unsettled until the creation of the Constitution in 1790.

Native Tribes



Cherokee territory and began a campaign that would ultimately destroy 32 Indian towns and villages.

On July 1st the Cherokee go on the warpath against the Patriot Congress in Charleston. The Cherokee were fully supported by the British Indian Agent and had Loyalist within their ranks. Further north at a conference at Fort Pitt, PA, **on July 6th** a Mingo chief, just returned from a meeting at Niagara, advised the Virginians and Pennsylvanians that the Indians did not wish to fight but would prevent either the English or Americans to cross their lands.

On July 15th Cherokee and Loyalists tried to take Ft Lindley SC but were repulsed. **On July 27th** The Massachusetts Council directed Captain John Lambert of the schooner Diligent, to transport a Francis Shaw and the "Indians now under his care" to St. Johns River in Nova Scotia. Lambert was then to return to Watertown with "any Indians he may enlist into the Service of the United States." **On July 29th** to discourage a reported Indian alliance with the British, troops from Virginia, North and South Carolina invaded

1777

Burgoyne's Column

After General Burgoyne places cannons on Mount Defiance, which over looks Ft Ticonderoga, on the



night **of July 5th** American Brigadier General Arthur St. Clair evacuates leaving substantial supplies behind. Burgoyne takes control the following day, continuing his pursuit of St. Clair **on July 7th** when Hessians and British troops under the command of German General Friedrich von Riedesel and British General Simon Fraser defeated the retreating Americans at Hubbardton, Vermont. The next day British forces capture boatloads of supplies as well as invalids of the American rear guard retreating from Skenesborough. However, the British do not achieve their main objective, which is to cut off the retreating American forces. St. Clair successfully reaches Fort Ann and from their Fort George.

Burgoyne intended to rest his troops until **July 10th** when he would move against Fort

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George. But American General Schuyler now began using his secret weapon, the axe. His men felled trees, destroyed bridges and even dammed streams to make them flood. Instead of taking two days Burgoyne took until **July 29th** to reach Fort George. And even when he arrived it was only to see the Americans burning their fort and escaping further south down the Hudson River.

Native Tribes

After fighting patriot forces for a year, **on July 4th** Cherokee Indians relinquish contested lands to North Carolina and Virginia in the Treaty of Long Island. Later in the month, **on July 26th** British Colonel Barry St. Leger's leads a force of 875 British, Tory, and Hessian troops (plus 1,000 Indians under Joseph Brant) out of Oswego. Their target is Fort Stanwix and then down the Mohawk River to Albany.

Philadelphia

As Burgoyne's column moved south, **on July 8th** Washington learned that General Howe's was loading his 15000 troops onto ships at Perth Amboy. This move perplexes Washington who could not believe Howe intended to sail up the Hudson River to Albany, given the many forts along the river. But that meant he was planning to go somewhere else, Philadelphia or perhaps Charleston. All Washington could do was wait until **July 23rd** when Howe finally set sail with his 260 ships. And even then all it told him was Howe was not heading North up the Hudson.

Washington ordered his units how to march to Philadelphia in the hope they would arrive in time. But Six days later Washington, now at Trenton, learned Howe's fleet had not entered the Delaware River for Philadelphia. Had Howe doubled back and was heading for Burgoyne, or was he heading for Charleston. What ever was happening Washington had been prevented from sending units to Albany to engage Burgoyne

1778

Native Tribes



On July 3rd a mixed force of British and Indians, numbering 900, and commanded by Major John Butler, launched an attack against Patriot militia in the Wyoming Valley, Pennsylvania. Caught in the open, the militia is massacred: over 300 colonials lose their lives and scalps at a cost of 3 deaths in the combined Loyalist forces. The attack launched a mass exodus of settlers from the Wyoming and Lycoming valleys.

As North Eastern Pennsylvania burned, **on July 4th** George Rodgers Clark captured Kaskaskia, Illinois (Ohio Country) without a shot fired. **The next day** Cahokia falls to Captain Joseph Bowman, who is dispatched by George Rodgers Clark. In both cases the majority of the inhabitants are French and will not fight for Britain. As for the British Garrison, they had been withdrawn to Fort Detroit.

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July of 1779

New York



In June General Clinton began a series of raids against patriot strong points North and East of New York City. His goal was to draw Washington into a fight on terrain beneficial to Clinton's troops. As part of these raids **on July 2nd** British Lt Colonel Banastre Tarleton, commanding a force of 200 mounted Loyalists, attacked Pound Ridge located 20 miles northeast of White Plains. Pound Ridge was defended by the 2nd Continental Dragoons, commanded by Major Ebenezer Lockwood, and some 200 local militias. Casualties were light on both sides although Tarleton is elated at capturing the colors of the 2nd Continental Dragoons that are discovered in Major Lockwood's home. What he didn't appreciate were the letters also found with intelligence from the Culper Spy Ring. Several homes and two churches were burned before the British withdrew.

As Tarleton withdrew back to New York, General William Tryon, (the last royal governor of New York) arrives at New Haven, Connecticut **on July 4**. Tryon leads a force of 2,600 men, which quickly overwhelms the 150-man strong local militia. Tryon burns a number of homes and ships in the harbor before moving on to Fairfield, Norwalk, and Green's

Farms. But as militia musters against him to the size of 1,000 men, Tryon withdrew back to New Haven and from there back to New York **on July 11th**.

July 16, 1779

Having not impulsively moved his troops to counter Clinton's raids, Washington now attacked on his terms. General Anthony Wayne had put forth a plan to take back Stoney Point, seized by General Clinton in early June. Washington had studied the location and even used information from spies to determine the right time for Wayne, at the head of 1,200 soldiers, to make the attack. The British believed Stoney Point was an impregnable position: but in 25 minutes Wayne took it losing only 15 killed and 83 wounded to the British 94 killed and wounded and 472 captured. Two days later, Wayne, now dubbed "Mad Anthony" destroyed the fortifications and evacuates the area before Clinton can respond.

July 19-August 24, 1779

The Penobscot expedition

As Washington was defeating General Clinton, Massachusetts, without authorization, launches a 4,000-man expedition to take Maine from the British. The force is commanded by Commodore Dudley Saltonstall and Generals Peleg Wadsworth and Solomon Lovell (and Paul Revere). Their objective is an 800-man British garrison at Penobscot Bay and its ten support ships. The expedition is a total failure with the British warships destroying or capturing nearly 50 American ships. Several American officers are later court-martialed because of this fiasco, including Paul Revere, who is acquitted.

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July 15-22 1779

Fighting in the Delaware Valley, New York.

On learning that patriot forces under Casimir Pulaski had been sent to Charleston SC, Mohawk Indian Chief Joseph Brant, leading a mixed force of 87 Loyalists and Indians, launched attacks against settlers in the Delaware valley. First he drives the settlers from their land and then he attacks and burns Fort Decker in what is today Peenpack NY. When the survivors reached Goshen NY, the colonial militia was quickly mustered under the command of Lieutenant Colonel (Dr.) Benjamin Tusten. Tusten hoped to ambush Brant at Minisink Ford, but a musket shot tipped Brant to the militia's presence. In a savage fight the patriots were overwhelmed, with Tusten and approximately 45 others killed in the battle and ensuing massacre. Only 29 men managed to escape to Warwick NY.

July of 1780

In the South



In **early July**, Captain Christian Huck, a prominent Loyalist attorney exiled from Philadelphia, leads a mixed force of British dragoons and Loyalists stationed at Rocky Mount S. Carolina. Huck, a German by birth, loathes the Scotch-Irish of the Carolinas and lets his troops do as they please to anyone believed to be a Patriot. For days he runs amok burning property, seizing cattle, assaulting women and gathering five prisoners he planned to hang at the Williamson's Plantation **on July 12th**.

A militia force of 150 men under Col William Bratton launched a surprise attack at dawn inflicting complete defeat on the British forces. Caught completely by surprise, British losses are variously given at 25-50 killed, including Huck who was shot in the head as he mounted his horse. The five prisoners were rescued unharmed. In the weeks to follow, men of both South Carolina and Tennessee learned of the defeat and rallied to the patriot cause.

As the men begin volunteering, **on July 25** General Horatio Gates arrives at Coxe's Mill North Carolina to take command of the Southern Army from General Johann De Kalb. The Americans number about 1,200 regulars that are severely debilitated by hunger and are in need of equipment. His militia forces however are nearly twice as large, thanks to the new recruits. De Kalb remains with the force as commander of the Maryland division. **On July 27th** Gates then begins marching into South Carolina: his target, Camden.

July 20-21, Action at Bull's Ferry, New Jersey

Following the military actions of June by General Wilhelm von Knyphausen, Washington orders General Anthony Wayne to take 2 brigades of Pennsylvania militia and 4 artillery pieces and attack a fortified blockhouse located approximately 4 miles north of Hoboken. The blockhouse defended British woodcutting and cattle operations in that area making it a target. But the cannons Wayne was given were too light to breach the walls, allowing the 70 Loyalists within to hold on despite the best

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efforts of the Americans. The Patriot losses amount to 18 men killed and 46 wounded in this unsuccessful assault.

1781

July 3rd, Action at King's Bridge, New York

After being paroled back to Washington's forces in New York, General Benjamin Lincoln is given the task of taking this bridge. Though isolated at Spuyten Duyvil Creek separating Manhattan and the Bronx, it's strategically important for the British in New York City. Unfortunately the attack is called off the element of surprise is compromised.

July 6, Battle of Green Spring (Jamestown Ford), Virginia

After taking command of all British forces in Virginia, General Cornwallis had been trying to bring to battle the Marquis de Lafayette and his troops. After being ordered to abandon Williamsburg and return to Norfolk, he sets up an ambush at the ferry crossing the James River. Lafayette did not fall into Cornwallis's trap, but Anthony Wayne and his 900 men did. Only by the audacity of Wayne and the intervention of Lafayette were the patriots able to retreat in disciplined order while facing Cornwallis's 7,000 soldiers.

July 10, Action at Sharon Springs Swamp, New York

While at Fort Plank, **On July 9th** Colonel Marinus Willett observes smoke rising from Currytown located four miles south of his position. He leads a force numbering approximately 150 against a combined Loyalist and Iroquois Indian band of 300 commanded by John Doxtader. Using superior tactics, Willet draws the enemy into a trap in the Sharon Springs Swamp. In the ensuing engagement, 40 Loyalist and Indians die while Patriot losses total five dead and nine wounded or missing.

July 17, Engagement at Quinby's Bridge, South Carolina

As General Greene rests his troops at the High Hills of the Santee, militia General Thomas Sumter leads a force to attack Monk's Corner. In addition to Sumter's own troops, Generals Henry Lee, Francis Marion (the "Swamp Fox"), and Thomas Taylor have contributed men for this operation. British Lieutenant Colonel John Coates commanded a mixed force of the 19th Regiment and some South Carolina Rangers: they had withdrawn across the Santee River and were using Biggin's Church as a depot.

Sumter was asleep in Monk's Corner when he was awakened with news that Coates was withdrawing, burning the church and supplies as he left. Sumter sent Henry Lee's cavalry after him, taking the Wadboo Bridge and then catching Coates rear guard as they approached Quinby's bridge. At Quinby however Coates had already begun demolition when Henry Lee's cavalry arrived. Without even considering the situation the American's charged with the horses jumping the gap in the bridge planking. The British then fled to the nearby Shubrick Plantation, which gave them a strong defensive position. There the American attack failed and on the morning Sumter was forced to withdraw back to the bridge. Eventually all American forces returned to General Green encampment at the High Hills of the Santee.

1782

July 11, British Governor Sir James Wright, along with several civil officials and military officers, flees the city of Savannah and goes to Charleston. Another group consisting of British regulars led by

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General Alured Clarke proceeds to New York, while Colonel Thomas Brown leads a mixed group of rangers and Indians to St. Augustine, Florida. The remaining British soldiers are transported to the West Indies aboard the frigate *HMS Zebra* and the sloop of war *HMS Vulture*.