

June in the Revolution

1775

CANADA

JUNE 1ST. The Continental Congress resolves that "no further expedition or incursion ought to be made... against or into Canada. Three days later Ethan Allen expresses surprise that a reconnoitering party of his was fired on and pursued by Canadians. Word then came that the British governor of Canada was fortifying St John Canada while also lobbying the Iroquois nation for troops. At the end of the month Congress reversed itself and authorized the invasion of Canada on June 27th.

The Continental Army

June 2nd Massachusetts requests that the Continental Army assume responsibility for the New England troops surrounding Boston. The problem was, officially there was no Continental Army: Congress had only just created an Army pay department. On June 10th John Adams proposes the creation of a Continental Army to coordinate the military efforts of the 13 colonies. The proposal was accepted and on June 14th Congress established the Continental Army. The following day George Washington (depicted) was unanimously elected Commander-in-Chief. Then on June 16th Congress appoints four major generals and 8 brigadier generals to support and or assist Washington. Washington then accepts his position on June 17th and on June 23rd he leaves Philadelphia for Boston to assume command. Congress then adopts the Continental Articles of War on June 30th.



Virginia



On June 3rd three young men are injured by "surprise" gunfire while attempting to arm themselves from the Williamsburg public magazine. The people were so infuriated that two days later a mob stormed the magazine and made off with 400 muskets. No gunpowder was taken however, Lord Dunmore had previously sent the powder to a British ship. Soon after this on June 8th Lord Dunmore would flee the colony for the safety of the British ship HMS Fowley (depicted). He would eventually occupy Gwynn's Island off the coast of Virginia.

With the Governor fled, control of the colony fell to the House of Burgesses (the General assembly) who created a Committee of Safety. They also elected Thomas Jefferson to replace Peyton Randolph in Congress: He arrived in Philadelphia on June 20th.

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Boston

After almost two months of being besieged by Massachusetts militia, on June 12th British General Gage declares martial law in the colony of Massachusetts. The following day the Massachusetts Committee of Safety learned of British plans to take the Dorchester heights and fortify them. They immediately gave orders to fortify the heights and to also build defenses on Bunker Hill. Colonel Richard Gridley is appointed chief engineering officer with construction beginning the night of June 16th.

The British becoming aware at dawn of the Patriots activity but outside of some shelling by British ships the work continued until noon when the first British troops landed: The battle of Bunker Hill was underway by 3:00. It took three attempts, but by the end of the day the British had taken the defense line along Breeds Hill. A tactical victory but also a Pyrrhic victory given the large number of casualties the British incurred. It effectively ended any British plans to forcibly break the siege. It also strengthened resolve for independence, particularly in the southern colonies.

On June 19th General Gage orders all Boston residents to surrender their firearms or be deemed enemies of his majesty's Government.

1776

Canada

June 1st completely unwilling to admit defeat, Congress agrees to raise 6,000 militiamen to reinforce the army in Canada. The following day American Major General John Thomas dies of smallpox in Quebec. General Sullivan, now in command, orders a retreat to Fort Ticonderoga on June 14th. By June 18th what was left of the American forces had retreated back to New York. On June 21st General Friedrich Adolf Riedesel reported to the Duke of Brunswick that the British had recovered Canada and only a lack of ships prevented a rapid advance into the rear of the American colonies. On June 24th Congress appoints an investigative committee to "enquire into the cause of the miscarriages in Canada."

Charleston



On June 1st President Rutledge received intelligence that a fleet of 50 or more vessels were anchored north of Sullivan's Island. Two days later Colonel William Moultrie writes President Rutledge that a British landing is imminent, and vows to "make the best defense I can with what I have got." Three more days pass before British General Clinton, on-board the HMS Sovereign, issues a Proclamation to the people of Charleston; "to return to your Duty to our common Sovereign, and to the Blessings of a free Government, as established by law..." Finally, on June 8th Colonel Moultrie receives notice that

General Clinton has landed troops on the Southern tip of Long Island; Moultrie in turn orders American troops to occupy the northern part of Sullivan's Island. There they built Fort Sullivan (today's Fort Moultrie) using Palmento logs and sand.

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After spending three weeks moving his fleet past sandbars, on June 23rd Commodore Parker notifies General Clinton that he would land on the mainland by Fort Sullivan tomorrow on the flood tide if the wind was from the south. Fortunately for Col Moultrie the winds wouldn't be right for several days keeping Parker's fleet blocked by a final sandbar.

Finally, on June 28th at 10 am, Commodore Parker's squadron opens fire on Fort Sullivan. To the surprise of the British, the fort's palmetto log wall reflected the British shot instead of splintering, this prevented numerous injuries to the garrison troops. Equally, surprising is the accurate and effective fire directed by Colonel Moultrie at the British fleet. Their two largest warships suffered extensive damage and severe losses: Parker had 261 injured and dead vs 30 American casualties. With Clinton unable to cross from Long island to Sullivan's island to support Parker's landing, the attack failed forcing the British to withdraw in early July.

Independence



On June 6th Samuel Adams writes: "tomorrow a Motion will be made, and a Question I hope decided, the most important that was ever agitated in America." The next day Richard Henry Lee of Virginia introduces three resolutions calling on Congress to declare independence from Great Britain, form foreign Alliances, and prepare a plan for a colonial confederation. John Adams seconds the resolutions.

On June 10th Congress stops short of declaring "total independence" from Britain, but calls for a committee to prepare a declaration based on the premise: "That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown: and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved. The following day Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Philip Livingston comprise a committee chosen to prepare said declaration of independence. Jefferson is tasked with preparing the first draft and on June 21st he shows his first draft to John Adams and other members of Congress.

Prior to this, on June 14th, Connecticut issued new instructions to its delegates to propose independence. This was followed by the New Hampshire Provincial Congress instructing its delegation to join the other colonies by "Solemnly Pledging our Faith and Honor, that we will on our parts support the measure with our Lives and Fortunes...".

On June 18th the Pennsylvania delegation was authorized to declare for independence. Three days later and following the arrest of New Jersey's Royal Governor, William Franklin, the New Jersey provincial Congress then elects a new delegation with power to declare for independence. This left only Maryland and New York not committed to independence: and on June 30th the royal governor of Maryland, Robert Eden joined Lord Dunmore on Qwynn's island Virginia.

1777

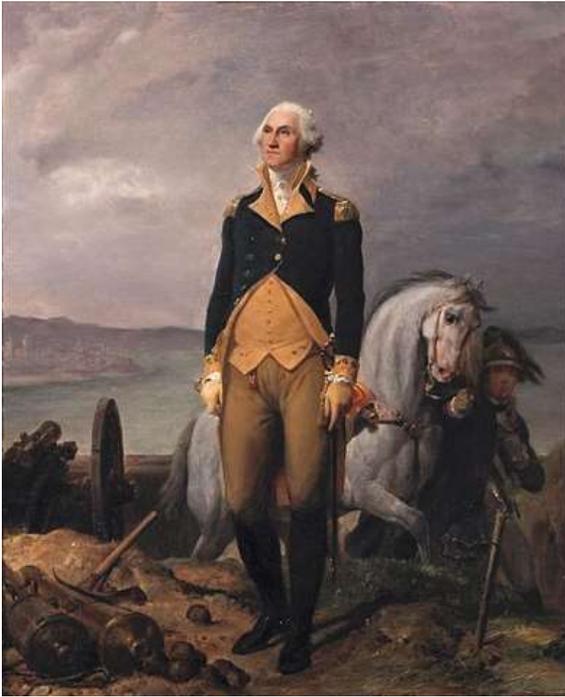
The Stars and Stripes

On June 14th Congress formally adopts the "stars and stripes" flag composed of thirteen stars and thirteen stripes, one for each of the original states, as the American flag. Before the revolution ends however there would be several variations that met the criteria: the Cowpens flag, the Bennington flag, the Guilford Courthouse flag, etc.

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New Jersey

On June 9th General Howe begins a major misdirection campaign against Washington. He marches nearly his entire Army of 11,000 men from Staten Island



towards New Brunswick. Washington's spies have told him he is not bringing boats to cross the Delaware River, but he has to move to confront this force. So he sends forward Daniel Morgan and his corps of Riflemen.

General Howe arrives at Somerset Courthouse on June 14th and digs in. Three days later his men began dropping as Morgan's riflemen began taking their toll. Howe stayed two more days but then withdrew back to Perth Amboy. Morgan followed along with other continental units and by June 22nd New Brunswick was completely in colonial hands. But again, this was Howe's trap, and it had yet to be sprung. All it needed was a minor action to fully

pin Washington to New Jersey. And that came on June 26th when Howe started a battle with militia under the command of Lord Sterling (General William Alexander).

And now the trap is sprung. The goal was to force Washington to withdraw into the mountains near Middlebrook. Once Howe was sure Washington was well entrenched he quick marched his troops back to Staten Island. By June 30th he had effectively abandoned New Jersey and his troops were boarding ship. Where he was going, Washington had no idea.

1778



Europe, June 17, 1778

With France officially declaring war against Great Britain in March 1778, the two great Navies of Europe were now poised for open combat. On June 17th Vice Admiral Augustus Keppel orders his ships to fire on two French frigates off the coast of England. The engagement marks the official start of the Anglo-French war of 1778.

Unfortunately for Britain, Admiral d'Estaing had already left Toulon for the Americas. He would arrive in Delaware Bay in July with 12 Ships-of-the-Line

Philadelphia

June 18th General Clinton begins evacuating Philadelphia as per orders sent by London. Watching this was the Marquis de Lafayette who immediately sent word to Washington. As

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Lafayette maintained contact with the British, Washington led his troops out of Valley Forge in pursuit on June 19th.



Intelligence had told him that Clinton had divided his Army into two divisions. The group under the command of Cornwallis, 10,000 strong was the in-land unit, effectively screening the 2nd division from Lafayette. This second division contained the Hessian troops and the baggage train.

Within days Washington's vanguard was within a few miles of the British. Lafayette was overly eager for battle and Morgan's riflemen were already harassing the British columns. On June 27th Washington conferred

with the senior officers of the vanguard. Though he wanted to avoid a major battle, he knew it was time to fight. Thus he ordered general Lee and his troops forward. The battle of Monmouth would start the next morning at 8:00 as American Militia engaged the Queens Rangers. It would end over ten hours later in a draw, the longest battle of the revolution.

Monmouth would see the end to General Lee's hopes to replace Washington as commander-in-chief. It would see the first major action of the Marquis de Lafayette as well as the rise of such later men as Nathanael Green, Morgan and Anthony Wayne. It would give America the legend of Molly Pitcher and destroy the image of British military superiority. But most importantly it was the last major battle in the Northern colonies. From this moment on the revolution lived or died in the south.

1779

Hudson River

One June 1st troops under the orders of General Clinton capture the incomplete fort at Stony Point and the nearby town of Verplanck's point. This is the beginning of a campaign to clear the Hudson River to Albany.

June 20, 1779

Battle of Stono Ferry, South Carolina

A force of 1,500 Continental soldiers and south Carolina Militia, led by Major General Benjamin Lincoln, attempts to halt the retreat of General Provost back to Georgia by taking Stono Ferry from the 900-man British rearguard commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John Maitland. The Battle is a poorly run affair with American losses at 146 killed and wounded and 155 missing in action. The British lose only 23 killed and 104 wounded. Provost continues his retreat until he reaches Savannah.

June 21, 1779

Spain declares war against Great Britain

France induces Spain to declare war on the British by promising to assist the Spanish in recovering Gibraltar and Florida. But Spain refuses to recognize or enter into an alliance with the United States. Instead, Spain commences joint naval operation with the French and this assists the American cause. Spanish ships now protect French ports in the Caribbean, releasing French ships to directly support American forces.

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June 28, 1779

Engagement at Hickory Hill, Georgia

American forces commanded by Colonel John Twiggs are attacked by 40 British grenadiers of the 60th Royal American Regiment. Twiggs was camped at the Butler Plantation with 34 men: the rest of his troops were foraging for supplies. The British forces under-estimated the Americans who first repelled their assault and then killed the British commander, Col Jacob Muller. Following the death of their officer the remaining British troops surrendered.

1780

The Carolina's

On June 3rd, General Clinton abrogates the articles of Charleston's surrender. He requires that all male residents of Charleston (and essentially all men of South Carolina) take an oath of allegiance to the Crown. He also demands that they take up arms against their former comrades.

This set off a string of violent acts between Patriots and Tories, a civil war among the citizenry. On June 6th a group of patriots broke up a Tory gathering at Bechamville. Two days later many of these patriots were at Mobley's Meeting House to disrupt a second Tory meeting place. These small actions continued to grow until by the end of the summer these small groups had concentrated under the command of men such as Andrew Pickens, Thomas Sumter and Francis Marian.



As patriot units were forming in South Carolina, in North Carolina a Tory force was gathering at Ramsour's Mill. Bouyed by the victory at Charleston and the Waxhaws, these loyalists now gathered in the open: against the orders of General Cornwallis. By June 21st some 1,300 Tories were at the mill, planning the hanging of a captured patriot. It was then that 400 Patriot infantry and cavalry arrived.

Even though the patriots were out numbered three to one, the Loyalists were defeated. It marked the end of Tory resistance in North Carolina: even when General Cornwallis arrived in September it was nearly impossible to recruit any North Carolina loyalists.

The Battle of Connecticut Farms and Springfield New Jersey.

With both Generals Clinton and Cornwallis in South Carolina, control of all British forces in New York was vested in General Wilhelm von Knyphausen. In early June he received word from spies that Washington's forces at Morristown had been reduced to 3,500 by desertions and disease. Feeling he had to strike immediately, and without consulting General Clinton, he launches an attack with his 6,000 troops. In the evening of June 6th he moved his forces out of Elizabethtown towards Morristown. By morning New Jersey Militia was coming out against his troops. By dusk General Washington himself had arrived to take command.



Unable to reach the Hobart Gap that led to Morristown, Knyphausen retreated back to New York on June 8th. Two weeks later on June 23rd he launched a second assault against Morristown. But

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this attack had the approval of General Clinton. Clinton believed Washington would attack against Knyphausen right flank. Thus Clinton sent 6,000 men up the Hudson River with the plan they would then strike Washington in his left flank and rear.

But the battle did not go as Clinton planned. This time General Greene and some 1,500 Continentals, plus an undetermined number of militia, met the British at Connecticut Farms and the Vauxhall Bridge. The running defense the Patriots did back to Springfield both bled and slowed the British assault to the point they only reached Springfield by nightfall. Again they failed to reach the Hobart gap and gain access to Morristown. Again they withdrew, burning Springfield to the ground to vent their frustration.

1781

Siege of Ninety Six, South Carolina

On June 19th 1781, the siege at the town of ninety-six ends. Ninety Six was manned by 550 Loyalists, commanded by Colonel John Cruger, and the main defenses are Fort Holmes and the Star Redoubt. With only 1,500 men General Greene had been laying siege to the fort since late May, but as a British relief column approached, on June 8th he made a direct assault. This failed, forcing Greene to withdraw. The following day he learned the British had abandoned the fort and was heading back to Charleston.