

# Benedict Arnold

Benedict Arnold is the most famous Revolutionary War spy, though to Americans he is more commonly called a traitor.

His very name has become associated with being a traitor. How did this happen?

## Biography

Benedict was born January 14, 1741, in Norwich, Connecticut to Benedict and Hannah Arnold. As a young boy his father was a successful businessman. When the yellow fever came through their household it left only him and his sister Hannah alive out of the five children, his father drowned his sorrows in alcohol and their finances dwindled rapidly.

Benedict Jr. was pulled from school, and was apprenticed to some cousins on his mother's side who ran an apothecary.

He tried to join the militia once, but wasn't allowed, though he eventually did join the militia to fight against the French in the French and Indian War . When his mother died, he took on the responsibility of taking care of his father and sister.

In 1767 Benedict Arnold took Margaret Mansfield to be his wife. He worked for his cousin for a few more years, during which time he fathered three boys.

Then war came.

## Benedict Arnold, the Soldier

He joined the Army and became Captain of the Governor's guard.

He was very successful in the beginning of his career in war, but he was soon sent on a mission and illegally joined by a group that was very disagreeable in his eyes. The whole mission he grew angrier and angrier with them. When he returned congress did nothing with the men. This infuriated him but was just to be the beginning of his troubles.

Through the years his social status went down, his wife died, and his rank as an officer was demoted several times. He was constantly in disagreement with the congress, and they were constantly infuriating him.



He was assigned a task to serve at Ticonderoga. There he was second in command, and after three days he discovered that he and the general had very different ideas on how to fight. They argued over it for a while, then they both just gave it up.

The next day Arnold ordered his horse and charged into battle. Upon seeing this, the soldiers received inspiration and charged in to fight alongside him. Just when victory was at hand, Arnold's horse was shot in the breast. It fell and landed on Arnold's leg, crippling it permanently. He was then deported to Philadelphia.



Benedict Arnold's signature (public domain)

## Benedict Arnold:

### British Spy and American Traitor

In Philly Benedict met his second wife, Peggy Shippen. She was 18 years old and he was 38 when they were married. His marriage to Peggy raised his social status immensely. Soon after, though, the congress did one more thing to make him angry, and by that winter he had decided to secretly trade with the British.

He was very useful to them due to his closeness with Washington from all those years of fighting. After a while, though, his courier was found with a letter in his sock to the British general. The courier was brought before congress and beheaded.

### Benedict Escapes

When Arnold heard of this he escaped on the ship his courier was supposed to use, and he went to London.

He was rewarded very well for his services and received land for himself and his family to live on in Canada. He tried to become a ship merchant, but they had no use for a cripple. He never found an actual job, but he did not live much longer so his reward money sufficed until he died.

All in all I think the worst thing that was hurt about Benedict Arnold was his pride.

# Nathan Hale

Nathan Hale was cut out to be a military man. Five of his brothers fought at the battles of Lexington and Concord.

Young Nathan soon joined them. Having graduated with honors from Yale university at the tender age of 18, he was given the rank of 1st Lieutenant when he joined the Continental Army. In a matter of months, he was promoted to Captain and given command of a group of Rangers defending New York City.

In July of 1776, the British began building up troops on Staten Island. Because the British navy controlled the waters around New York, there was nothing the Americans could do to prevent this. On August 22, British troops, under the command of General William Howe landed on Long Island to begin their conquest of New York. The Americans lost the Battle of Long Island on August 27 and by September 15 the British were in full control of New York City.

## Nathan Hale, the Spy

Hale is not remembered for his success as a spy. He spent just over a week pretending to be a school teacher—his occupation before the war—then made his way back to an appointed meeting place at Oyster Bay. Seeing a boat arrive, he assumed it was his American compatriots and waved it down. Unfortunately, it proved to be a British frigate, and he was caught as he fled. Papers hidden on his person, with notes from his week of spying, proved his undoing. He was arrested and brought to General Howe.

The very next day, New York City burned. The English assumed that the Americans had set it on fire, though to this day no one knows whether that is true. Two hundred Americans were rounded up and jailed. Nathan Hale, proven to be a spy by the papers on his person, was sentenced to be hanged the very next day.

It is for this that he is remembered. His tragic end would inspire a nation, and he is remembered more as a martyr than as a spy.



## Captain Nathan Hale, the Patriot

The famous words, I only regret that I have but one life to give for my country, were just the start of Hale's bravery. Captain Montresor, an English officer, testified that after reading letters Nathan had written to his mother and an American officer, the British refused to send them. The reason, he said, was the the Provost Marshal did not want the Americans to know "that they had a man in the army who could die with so much firmness."

On the morning of hanging, Hale was given an opportunity to make a dying speech. By every account, it was moving.



- British officer Frederick MacKensie wrote in his diary, "He behaved with great composure and resolution." He added that Hale encouraged the spectators to "meet death in whatever shape it might appear."
- The Essex Journal reported: "He made a sensible and spirited speech." They quoted him as saying, "If I had ten thousand lives, I would lay them all down in defense of this injured, bleeding country."
- The Independent Chronicle and the Universal Advertiser reported him as saying: "I am so satisfied with the cause in which I have engaged, that my only regret is that I have not more lives than one to offer in its service."

Perhaps Edward Everett Hale, Nathan Hale's great nephew, summed up his legacy best: "Because that boy said those words, and because he died, thousands of other young men have given their lives to this country."

# Francis Marion

Francis Marion was a soldier in the French and Indian War who built up a militia whose undercover tactics and sneaky guerrilla warfare were so effective, he became known as "the swamp fox."

## Early Life

Francis Marion was born on February 26, 1732. He was one of six children born to Gabriel and Charlotte Marion. He was born on his parents' plantation in Berkley, South Carolina and lived there until he was five or six. Then his family settled on a plantation near Georgetown, South Carolina.

Young Francis received his first thrill of adventure at the age of 15, when he set out as a crewman aboard a schooner headed for the West Indies. On the return voyage, a whale struck the schooner, and sank it. It took seven days for the crew to reach shore on the life boat, but two of the men died from the lack of food and water on the way. After that experience, he elected to stay on land.

## The French and Indian War

Shortly before his 25th birthday, he was recruited to the military to fight in the French and Indian War. He worked hard in the military and rose through the ranks.

His time in service during The French and Indian War gave Marion a lot of battle experience and also inspired his later actions. Fighting the Cherokee Indians, he couldn't help but notice the way they hid themselves in battle and gave themselves the advantage of cover rather than lining up conveniently in bright red coats that couldn't be missed.

About 20 years later, he would remember these ambushes and use them to his own advantage against the British.

## The Revolutionary War

After the French and Indian War, Francis Marion went back to farming and bought his own plantation. He was elected to the South Carolina Provincial Congress which commissioned Marion as captain of his own regiment after battles of Lexington and Concord. His first assignment was building Fort Sullivan in Charleston, SC where he and his regiment were posted.



It was customary to lock the doors when toasting to American victory in order to avoid being seen during "treasonous" acts. During a dinner party, Marion, who was not a heavy drinker, felt the drinking was getting out of control, and to get away, jumped out of a second story window, breaking his ankle. He had to leave town for medical attention.

In the spring of 1780 while Marion was still gone getting his ankle tended to, the British invaded and overthrew Charleston. Although his injury left him unable to even walk, Francis Marion formed a unit of 50 men who opposed the British in the city of Charlestown and attacked an encampment. They were able to free 150 Americans. Charleston was won back later in The Battle of Sullivan's Island.

## The Swamp Fox

His sneaky, guerrilla style of warfare was so effective, The Marion Militia were soon hated and feared by the British troops. Marion himself earned the nickname "Swamp Fox" due to his stealth and cunning. Finally, the British troops in the area could take no more and sent Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton to track down Francis and his men. However, he despaired after chasing the militia 26 miles through swampy paths to no avail. He exclaimed in exasperation, "As for this damned old fox, the Devil himself could not catch him."

His chance to really prove himself came at the Battle of Camden when he set out to join Major General Horatio Gates. However, Gates had no faith in Francis, so he assigned him to take command of the Williamsburg Militia and go on scouting missions. Although he missed the battle, Marion took advantage of his opportunity and led his militia to many victories. The Marion Militia would rarely engage with enemies in head-on warfare. They were stealthy and defeated many larger enemy groups. Because of this, Marion is known as one of the fathers of modern guerrilla warfare.

After his time in the service he returned home to find his plantation had been burned down during the fighting. He was receiving a salary of \$500 per year and found himself a new home. He finally married at 54 years old to his 49 year old cousin. He worked hard to protect the Tories who were being tortured and abused for their continued loyalty to the crown. Francis Marion died in his estate at the age of 63 in 1795.

# Robert Morris

As a wealthy merchant, Robert Morris was one of the main financiers of the American Revolutionary War. He was also a signatory of the Declaration of Independence and a delegate to the Second Continental Congress.

## Early Life

Robert Morris was born on January 31, 1734 in Liverpool, England. In 1747, Morris moved to America to live with his father, who worked at a tobacco factory in Maryland. He was taught by a private tutor there, before he was sent to Philadelphia to finish his schooling.

In Philadelphia, he lived with a family friend, who ended up raising him to adulthood after his father died in a work accident.

Charles Willing, Morris' guardian, brought him up along with his own son and taught them both his trade as a merchant. When Charles died, his son inherited his company, and made Robert Morris his partner at age 24. Their partnership lasted until 1779, and both boys became extremely wealthy from it.



## Revolution

Due to their large business, when the British started taxing goods, Robert and Thomas were both very upset. They started rallying people together to boycott British goods. In 1765, Robert joined a group of merchants who banded together to oppose the Stamp Act. This was the start of his public career.

The merchants went to the public tax collector and threatened to literally tear down his house "brick by brick" if he carried out his orders from the king. At this point, Morris was still loyal to Britain, but was very upset with the taxation. Robert Morris was a bay warden during the time of the Boston Tea Party.

When they heard of the British ship carrying the taxed tea, he released orders saying the ship would not be brought to port. When the ship came anyway, all the wardens met with the ship captain, who agreed to leave Philadelphia without unloading the taxed teas. Later that week, they found out how Boston had handled the same situation and the mess that has ensued, and Morris was furious with their lack of professionalism.

## Funding the War

As time went on, Morris started sending money to help the Americans pay for councils, such as the First Continental Congress. He hoped that by being able to have the delegates meet, that the Americans might be able to act rationally and as a whole. It was Morris' financial contribution which supported the Continental Army since the currency notes from Congress no longer held any value. He personally lost a large private navy to privateers, though he never requested reimbursement from the fledgling new government.

In 1775, Morris was elected to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety. The following year he was elected to the Pennsylvania legislature. Then finally, he was elected as delegate for Pennsylvania to the Second Continental Congress.

On July 1, 1776, Morris voted against independence. He did not feel comfortable with it yet. This made Pennsylvania, 4-3 against Independence. The next day, however, feeling that presenting a united front was more important than his own feelings, he convinced one of the other loyalist delegates to abstain with him, and thus allowed Pennsylvania to be in favor. Later that year, Morris signed the Declaration of Independence, saying "I am not one of those politicians that run testy when my own plans are not adopted. I think it is the duty of a good citizen to follow when he cannot lead."

During the Revolutionary War, Morris continued to keep his shipping business going so that he could keep paying money to the American Revolution. He paid more to the Revolution than any other American, and not just money. Robert gave his own ship The Black Prince to Congress in service of the war. It was renamed The USS Alfred and became the first ship in the U.S. Navy. After the war, he was elected to the Constitutional Convention. President Washington asked Morris to be Secretary of the Treasurer in 1789, however Morris refused, recommending Alexander Hamilton, an admirer of his previous work "On Public Credit" and a supporter of his economic and financial ideals. That same year he was elected a United States Senator, a post which he served until 1795. After that, Morris started several small businesses as minor hobbies. He dabbled in other things (including launching a hot air balloon from his own garden) until he died on May 9, 1806.



# Betsy Ross

"I can make a five pointed star in one snip," Betsy Ross commented to George Washington, George Ross, and Robert Morris.

They had met to make the first flag for their newborn nation one fateful day in late May or early June of 1776.

## Betsy Ross' Childhood and Marriage

Elizabeth (Betsy) Griscom was born on January 1, 1752 into a Quaker family of 19. After many years in public school during her childhood, her father sent her to apprentice under a local upholsterer. It was at this job that she fell in love with another apprentice named John Ross.

However, because John Ross' family was part of a Christian Church, her parents would not allow the two to be married. Quakers greatly opposed inter-denominational marriages such as this, and it would disgrace her family. One November night in 1773, Betsy eloped with John Ross. Taking a ferry across the Delaware River, they were married in New Jersey.

Before two years passed, John and Betsy Ross started an upholstery business together.

Since Betsy could not rely on her Quaker family to support her anymore, the two went to Christ Church. There, they sat in the twelfth pew regularly, which was adjacent to George and Martha Washington's pew.

## Betsy Ross and George Washington

Betsy and John Ross came to know George and Martha Washington as close friends. Betsy would fix George Washington's uniforms for Martha.

When war began to break out in mid-January of 1776, the couple found it hard to continue their fabric business. To help in the war effort, John joined the Pennsylvania militia. He was killed during an explosion. Though Betsy tried nursing him back to health, her attempts were in vain. He died on January 21st.

As a widow, she halfway returned to her Quaker life. Whenever free or fighting Quaker spirits were aroused, she was standing with them fighting.

## The First American Flag

Betsy Ross is credited for making the American Flag, though there is still some speculation as to whether or not she was the one who actually did. Oral history passed down through her family claims that not only did she make the flag, but that she made suggestions (such as 5-pointed stars instead of six-pointed) to the pattern that George Washington drew up a sketch in her back room to her specifications.

The flag had alternating red and white horizontal stripes and 13 white stars on a blue background in the corner representing the thirteen colonies and the circle to represent the equality of the colonies.

The red is said to represent valor and hardiness, white is for innocence and purity, and blue for vigilance, perseverance, and justice. This is not an official perspective, but Congress' guess when the same pattern of colors was used to make the Great Seal of the United States of America.



## Second and Third Marriages

In 1777, Betsy married again, this time to a sea captain named Joseph Ashburn in Philadelphia. During the winter of '77, Betsy was forced to share her house with British soldiers. Meanwhile, the Continental Army was suffering greatly in Valley Forge.

Betsy and Joseph had two daughters, Zilah and Elizabeth. When Zilah died a few years after her birth, Betsy was heartbroken.

Months after Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, Virginia, her husband died while imprisoned by the British. In May 1778, Betsy married the final time to John Claypoole, an old friend of hers.

John was convinced by Betsy to abandon the sea life and do something on land. So he agreed to work with her in upholstery. They had five children, one who died at 9 months. All together, only five of the seven children she bore lived to adulthood.

## Betsy Ross' Final Years

When John Claypoole died in 1817 from health issues, Betsy remarried no more. She went on to continue upholstery until 1827. She finally died January 30, 1836.

Since then, her body has been buried in three different locations. A major Philadelphia bridge still stands that was named in honor of what she has done for our nation.

Source: <http://www.revolutionary-war.net/betsy-ross.html>

# Marquis de Lafayette

The Marquis de Lafayette was a French aristocrat who joined the American Revolutionary War at his own request, becoming one of America's most successful leaders in combat and General George Washington's most loyal companion.

Lafayette was the son of a general in the royal navy, and his father died when he was not yet two. His mother passed away when he was twelve. His grandfather passed away when he was fourteen. Thus he inherited a large fortune and was a rich, independent young man at the age of fourteen. At sixteen he married a relative of the British king, and gained even more social status than he already possessed.

## The Marquis de Lafayette in the Revolutionary War

When he heard of the American Revolution he was inspired and decided to go over and help where he could. He had no idea that he was going to become one of America's greatest leaders.

The Marquis de Lafayette became friends with General George Washington very quickly. That friendship never died out. His first battle was the Battle at Brandywine, where he performed very well and showed great courage. He was an excellent person to have by your side while fighting.



During the Battle of Brandywine, he was wounded, the Army was forced to retreat. Lafayette organized the retreat, in spite of his wounds. That day he was partly responsible for getting the all the men out safely. Washington commended him on this greatly and sent a letter to the Congress recommending him for a promotion.

Soon after this, the Marquis showed great initiative in following orders and in being responsible in battles. Due to this, he began climbing in rank and looking better and better in the eyes of his superiors, especially George Washington. Lafayette continued at this rate until, soon, he had been given a command in the American army. He was the most noble and loyal soldier there was. There was not a man alive more loyal to Washington than the Marquis de Lafayette.

He had, by this time, become one of Washington's closest and most trusted friends. He was one that Washington could rely on to do things correctly and to make good decisions for the American Army. Lafayette looked up to and trusted Washington so much that some would say George Washington was Lafayette's role model. And indeed Lafayette did aspire to be like Washington.

## The Invasion of Canada and the Conway Cabal

Washington recommended to Congress that Lafayette lead an invasion, which Thomas Conway had suggested, into Canada. Congress adopted this idea with great pleasure.

Lafayette was soon asked to lead the invasion. He reluctantly accepted under the persuasion of Washington and began preparing for battle.

Conway wanted to replace General Washington with Horatio Gates as part of his plan to separate Washington from Lafayette, because the Marquis de Lafayette was such a strong support to Washington. Conway knew Washington would ask Congress to send Lafayette, and he planned to request Washington's removal while Lafayette was away.

General Lafayette did not think the trip would be a success, but he would go since Washington had asked him.



Before he left he got wind of General Conway's plan, later known as the Conway Cabal, and warned Washington. He was instructed to go anyway and proceed with the mission. Washington would watch out for Conway's plan, which, as you may have guessed, went awry (by Washington's doing) and never came to fruition; in fact, Gates and Conway were put out of their positions entirely.

Lafayette proceeded with the mission.

On the way to Canada they were to meet with a group of reinforcements which never arrived. Also, they had a serious lack of financial support and food. They were now in no position to wage war with the Canadians, who were used to the harsh winter climate. Lafayette was sure they would all die if they continued, so he wrote a letter of complaint to Washington, who called off the mission. This was a major relief to the Marquis de Lafayette, who didn't want to go through the trauma of losing an entire battalion of men and possibly his own life on a suicide mission.

## Valley Forge

He retreated to Valley Forge with the men. That winter, 1777-1778, was one of the harshest winters they were to face. There was an attack on Valley Forge—known as the Battle of Valley Forge despite the fact that there was no actual fighting—which left them so desolate in the cold that it was said that "they looked like skeletons."

When the army emerged in the spring they were a new and better one. They had survived Valley Forge, and victories at the Battle of Saratoga had turned the war around. This heartened the French and encouraged them to join the war.

Lafayette had a large role in persuading the French army to come over and help. With the French on their side the Americans were ready to go back into battle and face the British.

## The Battle of Barren Hill

When winter had ended, the Marquis de Lafayette was sent from Valley Forge by General Washington to check on the British forces in Philadelphia. While he was encamped at Barren Hill, later named Lafayette Hill, a British General, William Howe, learned of Lafayette's presence on the hill. General Howe decided to capture Lafayette, due to his position and the fact that he was an icon for the French patriots (the alliance between France and America).

The British sneaked up on Lafayette's troops and attacked. The Marquis' army immediately scattered, but General Lafayette quickly marshaled them and had them retreat in groups.

Lafayette's strategy was beautifully thought out, considering how quickly it was thrown together. He had some of his soldiers go up on the hill and fire down at the British every once in a while. Meanwhile he got other men out. He was then able to lead his last troops out safely. General Howe was very disappointed at his loss.

## Final Years

Lafayette fought a few more battles in the war, but it ended soon after. He then returned to France, where he helped lead the French revolution a few years later. After that, he lived a few more happy years, and died a successful hero to both this country and his own.

We are extremely grateful to the man who was willing to risk his life, family, and outstanding potential for a country that was not even his own. Without him, we may not have become the country we are now.

# *Frederich Von Steuben*

Baron von Steuben was a German-born officer in the Prussian army who volunteered his services in the Continental army. His "blue book" and training methods revolutionized the American army's methods.

## Early Life & Military Background

Frederick Wilhelm Ludolf Gerhard Augustin von Steuben (known simply as Baron Von Steuben) was born September 17, 1730 in Germany to a Prussian Army officer. He was educated in a Jesuit school. His military training began at the age of 14, when he volunteered in the Austrian Succession War alongside his father. He officially joined the Prussian army at 16.

He served with distinction through the Seven Years War, suffered two injuries, and eventually was promoted to first lieutenant. He was taken prisoner of war, and upon his release, was promoted to quartermaster general and adjutant general. In this capacity, he was an aide-de-camp to Frederick the Great, the military genius of his time. In 1763, he was discharged as a captain from the army; he blamed his discharge on "an inconsiderate step and an implacable personal enemy."



He became Grand Marshall at the court of Hohenzollern-Hechingen, a post he held for almost 10 years. In 1771, he was made a baron. He tried to find employment in several foreign armies, but had no luck, presumably due to the circumstances surrounding his discharge from the Prussian army. He heard that Benjamin Franklin was in France and he might have a chance to join the American Continental Army.

In Paris during the summer of 1777, Baron von Steuben was introduced to Benjamin Franklin by the French Minister of War. At first, Franklin was hesitant to accept von Steuben's services. America was tired of foreign officers volunteering their services and demanding high ranking positions in the army and high pay. If von Steuben wanted a position in the Continental Army, Franklin told him, he'd have to volunteer for little or no pay.

Von Steuben left these talks and went back to Prussia, however, his reputation was under fire following his discharge from the army, and whether the allegations against him were true or not, his reputation was irrevocably destroyed. After a few more discussions, Silas Deane and Benjamin Franklin vouched for Steuben with the American Congress and sent him with a letter of introduction to America.

## American Revolution

He arrived in Portsmouth in December of 1777. He volunteered himself to Congress, agreeing to serve without rank or command, asking only for reimbursement for his expenses and to be paid at the end of the war however much Congress felt his contribution was worth. "The object of my greatest ambition is to render your country all the service in my power, and to deserve the title of a citizen of America by fighting for the cause of liberty," he told them. Congress readily accepted and sent him to General Washington in Valley Forge.

He didn't speak any English, so General Nathanael Greene and Washington's aide's John Laurens, and Alexander Hamilton served as translators. Because of his military background, Washington assigned Baron von Steuben the task of overseeing training of troops.

The soldiers didn't have any any official uniforms, but Baron von Steuben marched up and down in his full military dress uniform, swearing and yelling in both German and French (and having swear words translated to English). With the help of Washington's aides, he wrote a training outline, called "The Blue Book" which stayed in use through the Mexican war in the 1800's.

He began with marching exercises, then he taught them to carry arms, load, aim, fire by platoon, and charge bayonets, a tool that no one knew how to use previously. He formed an honor guard for General Washington that he personally drilled twice a day, and that also served as a demonstrative group for the rest of the soldiers. Within two weeks, they were admirably in sync, knew how to march, wheel, and form a column. They, in turn, trained other smaller groups, until he had created an entire division.

Congress appointed Steuben Inspector General of the army. He began to enforce keeping exact records and strict inspections. His record-keeping saved the army thousands of muskets and dollars. He also enforced camp sanitation. Formerly, men simply relieved themselves wherever they wished, tents were set up in no apparent order, and animal carcasses leftover from meals were left to rot in the middle of camp. Steuben arranged to have rows of tents, an officers' row, and downhill latrines on the opposite side of the camp from the kitchen. His camp layout and sanitation plans were still in effect over 100 years later.



The success of his training became apparent at the Battle of Monmouth, when General Charles Lee's haphazardly retreating troops were brought to a halt by Steuben. He turned their retreat into an orderly line. Furthermore, at the Battle of Stony Point, thanks to Steuben's training, General Wayne's troops were able to take Stony Brook without firing a shot, using only their bayonets.

## After the War

After the war, Baron von Steuben resigned from the army with a pension from the army and an honorable discharge in 1784. In his retirement, he drew up plans for a future military academy. Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York offered him property, and he stayed in the states and became a citizen. He never married. He died in 1794.



# John Laurens

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John Laurens was a soldier and a diplomat in the Revolutionary War. He was also an abolitionist who spent a lot of time and effort trying to get Congress and South Carolina legislature to approve a regiment of black soldiers. He died in a small skirmish at the end of the war.

## Early Life

John Laurens was born in 1754 in Charleston SC to Eleanor Ball and Henry Laurens, a member of the South Carolina legislature. He was the fourth of 13 children, though many died as children. He was raised in an atmosphere of luxury thanks to his father's lucrative business in the slave trade.

Henry Laurens was both one of the wealthiest men in the country and highly esteemed in state and country political circles, and was later elected to serve as president of the Continental Congress.

## Education in Europe

After their mother died, John and his brothers were sent to Geneva, Switzerland for their education. It was there he was introduced to the libertarian ideals he later kept about slavery.

The Laurens boys then traveled to England to study law.

Common Sense, the pamphlet by Thomas Paine, that was wildly circulating the colonies sparked his interest in the war effort at home.

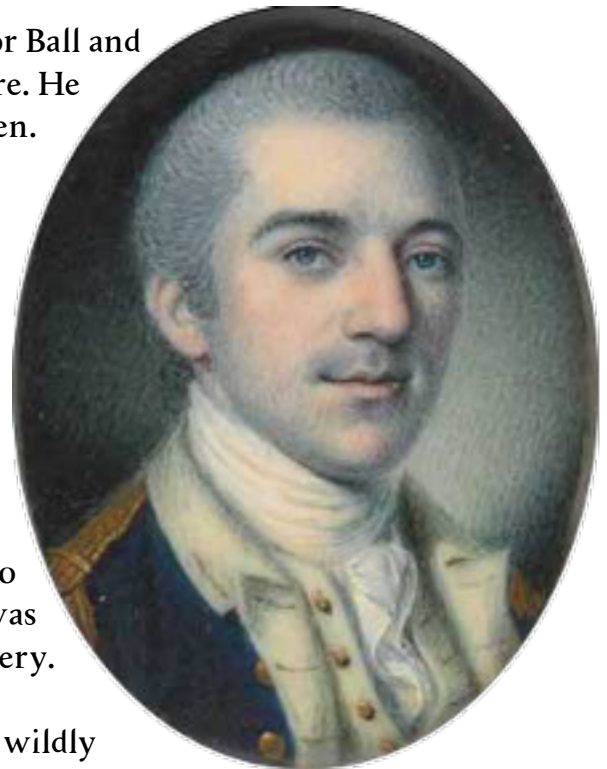
He wrote to his father asking to return home, and in spite of his father's refusal, John determined to return.

He traveled home via France, where he met and married Martha Manning, the daughter of one of Henry Laurens' London agents. His marriage to Miss Manning was an honor match. She was nearly five months pregnant at their wedding, and he never returned for her or met his daughter. She did try to meet with him while he was serving as special envoy to France, but her plans fell through.

## American Revolution

### Battle of Brandywine

Resigned to his son's decision, Henry Laurens used his influence to at least keep him a little safer by securing him a volunteer position on General George Washington's staff in August 1777. John



Laurens saw action almost immediately at the Battle of Brandywine. The Marquis de Lafayette wrote about Laurens, "It was not his fault that he was not killed or wounded[,] he did everything that was necessary to procure one or t'other."

### Battle of Germantown

In October 1777, Laurens took part the Battle of Germantown with the same level of reckless daring Lafayette had commented on. He earned himself a musketball to the shoulder while trying to set fire to a stone mansion where the British were holed up. Laurens earned himself a reputation as a brave but reckless soldier, a quality that drew concern from his close friends, and Washington made him an official aide-de-camp. Thanks to his education in the French language, he worked closely with the Marquis and Alexander Hamilton, another aide to Washington. Laurens and Hamilton were very close friends.

As an aide to Washington, Laurens did a lot of work transcribing letters and keeping records. He also served as a liaison of sorts between his father, the president of the Continental Congress, and General Washington, helping to pass information between the two and keep Congress apprised of the state of the Continental Army. Both Laurens men held General Washington in high esteem, and supported him almost unconditionally, as was evident during the Conway Cabal.

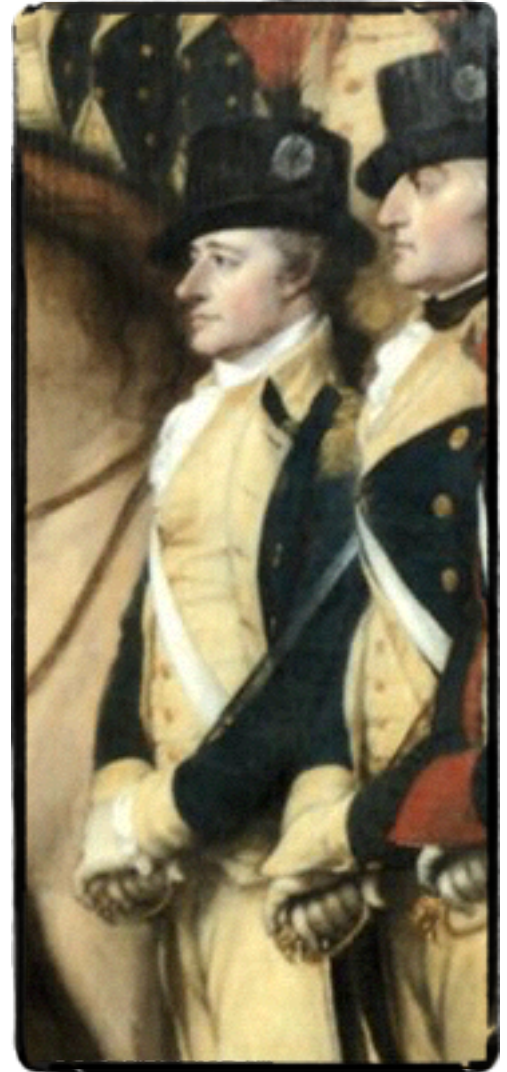
Later, John Laurens would challenge General Charles Lee to a duel for his disrespect towards General Washington during Lee's court-martial following the Battle of Monmouth. (Laurens was unharmed, but Lee suffered a graze on his side. Lee was impressed with Lauren and even admitted to a grudging respect for the younger man afterwards.)

### Fall of Charleston

Charleston fell in May, and John was captured along with several other men while trying to retake Savannah. As a prisoner of war, he was granted quite a bit of freedom, likely due to his father's wealth and position. His parole contained him to the state of Pennsylvania, and he was forbidden to take part in the war.

## Diplomat

He was eventually exchanged in November of 1780 and sent to France as an emissary along with Thomas Paine. His job was to help Benjamin Franklin get loans for America. Like John Adams, he was an impatient and unorthodox diplomat. When 6 weeks and several meetings went by with no results, he took matters into his own hands and went directly to the king of France. At a royal reception where guests were expected to do little more than pay their respects to the French monarch, Laurens asked for a loan. He upset a few people, but secured the money. By August of



1781, he returned bearing two ships full of military supplies and 10 million lives, just in time for the Battle of Yorktown.

Laurens was one of the men chosen to carry out the surrender negotiations with the English. The Americans demanded that the British surrender as unconditional prisoners of war, leave without flying their flags, etc. The British hesitated, but Laurens insisted that it was no more than they had demanded of Charleston. They conceded and Laurens returned triumphantly.

## Death

However, the war wasn't over as far as Colonel Laurens was concerned. He returned to South Carolina where he assisted General Nathanael Greene in driving out the remainder of the British forces and gathering intelligence through a spy network. He pushed one more time for his slave regiment, but in spite of General Greene's support, he failed one final time.

On August 27, 1782, Laurens was riding at the front of his troops, ordered to maintain a defensive position to stop British foraging parties along the Combanhee River. He was ambushed, and, with his customary courage and recklessness, he chose to attack back rather than retreat. On the second British volley, he was struck and fell from his horse, dying on the field. He was buried the following day on a nearby plantation.

On hearing of his death, General Washington wrote, "in a word, he had not a fault that I ever could discover, unless intrepidity bordering upon rashness could come under that denomination; and to this he was excited by the purest motives." Henry Laurens had him reburied in the Laurens family cemetery, engraving "Sweet and fitting it is to die for one's Country" on his tombstone.

# John Paul Jones

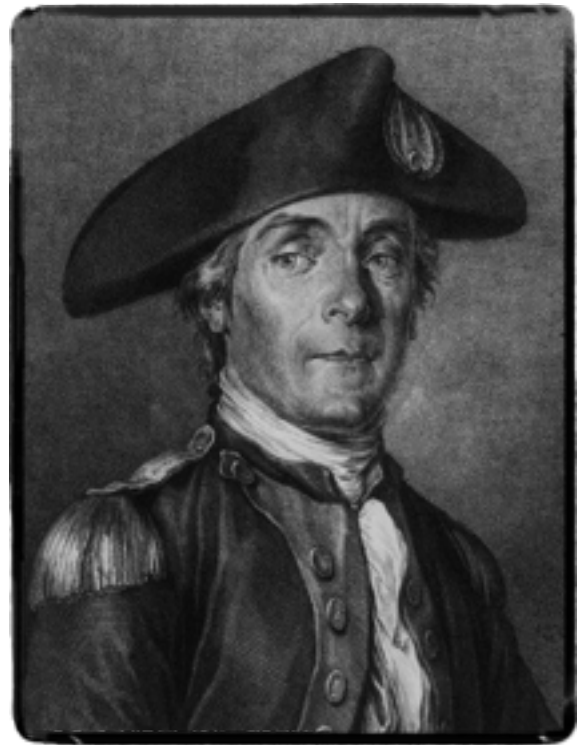
John Paul Jones is remembered as one of the greatest and bravest officers in the Continental Navy. He was born John Paul (he added Jones later) in Scotland in 1737 to farmer parents. He entered into an apprenticeship to a merchant ship captain at 13 years old.

During his apprenticeship, he sailed to England, America, the West Indies, and Africa. He went on at least three slaving voyages to Africa and developed a strong dislike of traffic in human cargo, eventually sacrificing his position as first mate on a trip to Jamaica to drop off slaves. He found his own way back to Scotland and took a different position.

He took command of his first ship when he was 21 years old. The Captain and first mate contracted yellow fever and died, and John Paul safely returned his ship and crew to port in Scotland.

There the owners of the ship gratefully made him master of the ship and gave him 10 percent of the cargo.

In an unfortunate incident, he flogged a crew member so hard the man eventually died. Jones' reputation was destroyed and he spent some time in prison before being released on bail. He took command of a different vessel, and during a mutiny over wages, killed a crew member. Certain he would not get fair trial, he added "Jones" to his last name and went to take care of the affairs of his late brother in Fredericksburg, Virginia.



He arrived during the rapidly growing discontent over British taxation, when the colonies were on the brink of the Revolutionary War.

Having first-hand knowledge of how underhandedly Scotland was treated by Great Britain, Jones' sympathies were with the Americans. He left for Philadelphia soon after his arrival to volunteer for the Continental Navy. It was recently established, and suitable officers and captains were in great demand.

Jones was appointed a 1st Lieutenant of the 24-gun frigate Alfred in 1775.

Thanks to support from a North Carolina Congressman, John Paul Jones was given command of a slightly smaller ship, Providence, with which he promptly defeated 16 ships in one voyage.

He took on a larger mission which involved trying to establish rights as prisoners of war for captured American sailors. As the King didn't recognize America as a nation, captives were treated as treasonous criminals and were forced to work in British mines. While Jones didn't change the laws, the fact that he could attack so close to home shook the confidence of the Brits.

He changed command several times and occasionally had trouble with crew members, some of whom would rather be privateering than fighting for the Navy. In spite of this, John Paul Jones' reputation grew.

In between voyages, he also developed a close friendship with Benjamin Franklin, whom he greatly admired.

He is most well-known for his defeat of the British ship *Serapis* in his Bonhomme Richard (Named in French after Franklin's "Poor Richard"). He managed to get the ships tied together and they unloaded their cannons into each other. The captain of *Serapis* asked Jones if he would surrender to which Jones gave his famous reply, "I have not even begun to fight!"

Bonhomme Richard was destroyed, but Jones' crew won the fight, even though another ship joined the fight against them. He took both ships triumphantly home as a prize.

After the War, the Navy was disbanded, and Jones joined the Russian Navy for a distinguished career during their war with the Turks. He finally traveled to France and eventually died there.

# Molly Pitcher

There is some debate among historians as to who the "real" Molly Pitcher is. Most believe that the title is a composite character of all of the women who fought in the Continental Army.

## Mary Ludwig Hays McCauley

The actions of Molly Pitcher are usually attributed to one Mary Ludwig Hays McCauley. (The nickname "Molly" was common for women named "Mary".) Mary Ludwig was born to a German family in Pennsylvania circa 1744. Details of her childhood are not widely known, though it is believed that her father was a butcher, she had several siblings, and that she was not taught to read or write.

She married William Hays, a barber, in 1769. Hays was a Patriot involved in the 1774 boycott of British goods that arose as protest for the unfair tax being placed on the colonies.

In 1777, Hays enlisted in the Continental Army and was trained as an artilleryman. Mary followed and joined a group of camp followers led by Martha Washington. They took care of the troops, washed clothes, made food, and helped care for the sick or injured soldiers.

In the Battle of Monmouth in June of 1778, Mary Hays carried water from a spring to the thirsty soldiers under heavy fire from the British. When her husband collapsed (sources claim either heat stroke or injury) and was carried off of the battlefield, Mary Hays took his place at his cannon. Once, a cannon ball came so close, that it actually went between her legs, ripping her petticoat. She is only known to have said something along the lines of, "Well, that could have been worse," and went back to firing her cannon.

The nickname "Molly Pitcher" is believed to have come from the soldiers' cry, "Molly! Pitcher!" when they were thirsty or when their overheated cannons needed to be cooled down.

We are lucky that a certain Private Joseph Martin thought to record this detail in his journal later on, so the bravery of this woman was not lost to history.



A woman whose husband belonged to the artillery and who was then attached to a piece in the engagement, attended with her husband at the piece for the whole time. While in the act of reaching a cartridge and having one of her feet as far before the other as she could step, a cannon shot from the enemy passed directly between her legs without doing any other damage than carrying away all the lower part of her petticoat. Looking at it with apparent unconcern, she observed that it was lucky it did not pass a little higher, for in that case it might have carried away something else, and continued her occupation.

Legend has it that she was thanked personally by General Washington.

After the war, her husband died and she remarried to John McCauley. He spent nearly all of her money and then disappeared. She died at 78.

## Margaret Corbin

Others believe that "Molly Pitcher" is really Margaret Corbin, wife of John Corbin who was also an artilleryman in the Continental Army. Her story is very similar to that of Mary Ludwig Hays McCauley.

John Corbin enlisted and Margaret joined a group of camp followers so she could take care of him. In 1776, stationed at Fort Mifflin, John was killed in the Battle of Fort Mifflin, leaving his cannon unmanned. Margaret took over and fired his cannon until she was very badly injured. The British won that fight, but they released her as the equivalent of a wounded soldier.

Margaret went to Philadelphia, completely disabled from her wound and unable to work. She is the first woman to receive a government pension as a wounded veteran, though it was not the same amount the men soldiers received.

There are other women, including Deborah Samson, who showed incredible bravery on the battlefield. The legend of "Molly Pitcher" could apply to them just as easily, which is why it is still unclear who Molly Pitcher was.

# Hercules Mulligan

An unsung hero, a man who risked his life to save General George Washington. Twice. A man who helped convert Alexander Hamilton from a Tory to a Patriot. A man who successfully ran his own business and used that business to live among the British, befriending them and covertly acquiring information while overtly tarnishing his reputation with the Patriots. That's right, Hercules Mulligan.

## An American Patriot Living Among the British

Hercules was born in Ireland in 1740. He and his family immigrated to New York when he was about 6 years old. In 1774 he opened a clothing emporium catering to the crème de la crème of New York society. He also catered to wealthy British businessmen and high-ranking British military officers. He employed several tailors but preferred to greet his customers himself, taking the customary measurements and building rapport among his clientele. His business thrived, and he established a solid reputation with the gentleman of the upper class and with the British officers. It was his associations within these circles that made it acceptable for him to marry the niece of Admiral Sanders of the Royal Navy.

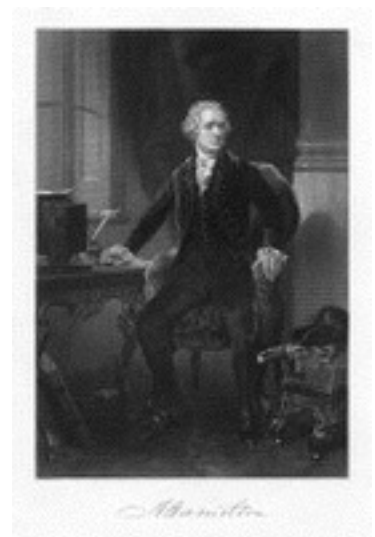
Hercules harbored no allegiance towards the British despite his wife's lineage or the demographics of his customers. In fact, he was a member of the Sons of Liberty, a secret society created to protect the rights of the colonists. He was also a member of the New York Committees of Correspondence and Observation, a group opposing the British through written communications. Hercules's patriot tendencies were established a good ten years before the start of the Revolutionary War.

## Hercules and Alexander Hamilton

In 1773 Hercules opened his doors to a young student named Alexander Hamilton who was in New York to complete his studies. The two had been introduced by Hercules's older brother Hugh. Hamilton took up board with Hercules while attending King's College (now Columbia University). It was during this time that Hercules, along with several others, had a profound impact on Hamilton.

Originally, Hamilton supported British rule over the colonies. He then began to develop his pro-Patriot views from a variety of sources, among them New Jersey Governor William Livingston (one of the signers of the US Constitution) with whom he lived in New Jersey before attending Kings College.

Hamilton then moved in with Hercules in New York and they had many late night discussions, further influencing Hamilton's views. Hamilton soon joined the Sons of Liberty and, at age 18, he





wrote a persuasive essay defending the case for independence. His letter was one of many essays instrumental in hastening the Revolution, especially in New York.

The Revolutionary War began in April 1775. After Washington was defeated at Long Island, Hercules tried to leave New York. He was stopped the next day by a party of Tory militiamen who captured him and dragged him back to the city. He reluctantly returned and carried on outfitting the British officers. When General Washington mentioned to Alexander Hamilton, now Washington's aide-de-camp, that he was looking for a spy on the inside within New York City, Hamilton recommended his old friend Hercules Mulligan. Hercules excitedly agreed.

### A Spy Is Made

Hercules continued to provide service for British officers, collecting their measurements and secrets alike. He played to the officer's vanities, stroking their egos to elicit statements of speculation. When officers requested repairs to their uniforms, he would ask the date they needed them back. When customer after customer gave the same date, he could surmise the day of their next movement. He would then dispatch his African-American slave, Cato, to Washington's headquarters in New Jersey to share the information on the redeployment of a particular unit.



### Saving George Washington

Late one evening an excited and flustered British officer called upon Hercules to provide him with a coat. Hercules complied and inquired about the late hour for such a request. The eager officer all too readily responded that he was departing on a mission to capture General Washington within the day. After hurrying the officer from his store, Hercules immediately dispatched Cato to alert Washington of his impending capture. The British had learned the location where Washington would be meeting with his troops and had planned an ambush. Thanks to the acquisition of this information, General Washington was not captured the following day.

Two years later, Hercules was again afforded the opportunity to save the life of General George Washington. In February 1781, British General Sir Henry Clinton learned of Washington's plans to travel to Rhode Island via the Connecticut shoreline. He ordered 300 troops onto transport boats to intercept Washington. And who was responsible for loading these boats with provisions for the journey? None other than Hugh, Hercules's older brother. Hugh promptly advised Hercules of the plan. Hercules dispatched Cato, and Washington immediately rerouted his course and arrived safely in New England.

Hercules and Cato did not survive the war unscathed. Cato was once captured and beaten on a return trip to New York after passing intelligence to Washington's headquarters. Hercules was suspected by the British on several occasions and even spent time in jail before using his Irish charm to slip away back to his emporium.

### Clothier to General Washington

The greatest danger came to the pair following the end of the war in 1783. Hercules had appeared too close with the British officers despite his true intentions, and he feared tarring and feathering or some other act of revenge. Anyone who supported the British was in danger.

General Washington, however, had not forgotten his confidential correspondent. He paid a visit to Hercules's house after attending an "Evacuation Day" parade in New York. He had breakfast with Hercules and then went shopping in his store, alleviating any doubts as to which side Hercules had been on during the war. After becoming president, Washington continued to update his wardrobe from the Irish tailor. Hercules took advantage of this unique public relations opportunity and changed the sign outside his shop to say: "Clothier to Genl. Washington."

### Hercules's Legacy

Hercules's business remained a success for years to come. He and Hamilton became two of the 19 founding members of the New York Manumission Society, an early American organization founded to promote the abolition of slavery. He retired when he was 80 years old and died five years later. Hercules is buried in New York's Trinity Church, next to his friend Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton had been killed by Vice President Aaron Burr. The vice president had challenged Hamilton to a duel. Burr's shot mortally wounded Hamilton who died the following day.



Hamilton was one of America's Founding Fathers, he was the first Secretary of the Treasury, appointed by George Washington. He distinguished himself as one of New York City's most prestigious attorneys, and he convinced New Yorkers to agree to ratify the US Constitution. It was the late night discussions with Hercules Mulligan that set him on this path.