

John Paul Jones

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John Paul Jones

John Paul Jones (1747-1792), American Revolutionary War officer, was a great fighting sailor and a national hero.

Like any master mariner in the 18th century, John Paul Jones was in the fullest sense the captain of his ship. He ruled by authority as well as by skill and personality. The rigging, the navigation, the ordnance, and the internal discipline were all his concerns. He was a proud man, slight and wiry, intellectually alert, and as tough with rowdy seamen as he was suave and urbane with Parisian women.

Becoming a Mariner

Born in Scotland as John Paul, he was a seafarer by the age of 12. He turned up in Virginia and took the surname Jones, for disguise, after killing a mutinous sailor in self-defense in 1773. Because he was already a veteran merchant captain, the Continental Congress commissioned him a lieutenant in 1775 and promoted him to captain the next year. Cruising as far north as Nova Scotia, he took more than 25 prizes in 1776.

It was in the European area, however, that Jones won lasting acclaim. In 1777 he sailed to France in the *Ranger*, and in Paris he found American diplomat Benjamin Franklin sympathetic to his strategic objectives: hit-and-run attacks on the enemy's defenseless places and abduction of a prominent person to compel the British government to exchange American seamen rotting in English jails. If this master of a single cruiser was scarcely able to alter the course of the war, he was able to bring the impact of the struggle home to the enemy's civilian population. Early in 1778 Jones sailed boldly into the Irish Sea and also assaulted the port of Whitehaven, Scotland—not since 1667 had a British seaport suffered such humiliation; a second raid on St. Mary's Isle failed to bag Lord Selkirk as a hostage, for Selkirk was away from home.

Battling the *Serapis*

France became America's ally, but Jones had to be satisfied with a good deal less than he had hoped for in men and ships. With an old, clumsy vessel renamed *Bon Homme Richard* (in honor of Franklin) as his flagship, in the summer of 1779 Jones led a small squadron around the coasts of Ireland and Scotland, taking several small prizes. Then, off the chalk cliffs of Flamborough Head on September 23, he fell in with a large British convoy from the Baltic, escorted by the *Serapis* (50 guns) and the *Scarborough* (20 guns).

The most spectacular naval episode of the Revolution followed—a duel between the decrepit *Bon Homme Richard* and the *Serapis*, a sturdy, new, copper-bottomed frigate. After each captain, in standard tactical

fashion, sought unsuccessfully to get across his opponent's bow to deliver a broadside, Jones managed to lash his ship to the *Serapis* in order to grapple and board. Jones's sharpshooters soon drove the enemy from the *Serapis's* deck with their rain of musket and grenade fire, but below the deck the enemy cannon roared on, wrecking the *Bon Homme Richard's* topsides. The English captain's nerve gave way when his main mast began to tremble, and he struck his colors. Jones abandoned the sinking *Richard*, took over the *Serapis*, and along with the *Scarborough*, which had fallen to his other vessels, sailed to Holland.

Back in France, Jones was the toast of Paris. His personal life seems to have scandalized John Adams, who was shocked at Jones's suggestion that the taking of a French mistress was an excellent way to learn the language. Whatever his personal life, Jones's naval conquests were over.

Postwar Life

Most of Jones's postwar life was spent in Europe. He made a final visit to the United States in 1787, when Congress unanimously voted to award him a gold medal for his outstanding services. He was the only naval officer of the American Revolution so honored. Soon afterward he accepted a commission in the Russian navy and was put in command of a Black Sea squadron with the rank of rear admiral. That rank, which he had eagerly but unsuccessfully sought in America, was the bait that had lured him to Russia. He fought in the Linman campaign against the Turks, but the jealousies and intrigues of rival officers limited his effectiveness, and in 1790 he returned to Paris.

In 1792 U.S. Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson wrote to tell him that President George Washington had appointed Jones a commissioner to negotiate with Algiers for peace and the release of imprisoned American citizens. Jones, whose last years were pathetic, never lived to receive the letter. With few friends because he was a colossal egotist, Jones saw his health steadily decline before his death on July 18, 1792. He was buried in Paris. His remains were finally found in 1905 and brought to Annapolis, Md., where they are entombed in the crypt of the Naval Academy chapel.

"John Paul Jones." Encyclopedia of World Biography. 2004. *Encyclopedia.com*. (November 4, 2013). <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3404703375.html>

Haym Salomon (ca. 1740 - 1785)

by Bob Blythe

Salomon (sometimes written as Solomon and Solomons in period documents) was a Polish-born Jewish immigrant to America who played an important role in financing the Revolution. When the war began, Salomon was operating as a financial broker in New York City. He seems to have been drawn early to the Patriot side and was arrested by the British as a spy in 1776. He was pardoned and used by the British as an interpreter with their German troops. Salomon, however, continued to help prisoners of the British escape and encouraged German soldiers to desert. Arrested again in 1778, he was sentenced to death, but managed to escape to the rebel capital of Philadelphia, where he resumed his career as a broker and dealer in securities. He soon became broker to the French consul and paymaster to French troops in America.

Salomon arrived in Philadelphia as the Continental Congress was struggling to raise money to support the war. Congress had no powers of direct taxation and had to rely on requests for money directed to the states, which were mostly refused. The government had no choice but to borrow money and was ultimately bailed out only by loans from the French and Dutch governments. Government finances were in a chaotic state in 1781 when Congress appointed former Congressman Robert Morris superintendent of finances. Morris established the Bank of North America and proceeded to finance the Yorktown campaign of Washington and Rochambeau. Morris relied on public-spirited financiers like Salomon to subscribe to the bank, find purchasers for government bills of exchange, and lend their own money to the government.

From 1781 on, Salomon brokered bills of exchange for the American government and extended interest-free personal loans to members of Congress, including James Madison. Salomon married Rachel Franks in 1777 and had four children with her. He was an influential member of Philadelphia's Mikveh Israel congregation, founded in 1740. He helped lead the fight to overturn restrictive Pennsylvania laws barring non-Christians from holding public office. Like many elite citizens of Philadelphia, he owned at least one slave, a man named Joe, who ran away in 1780. Possibly as a result of his purchases of government debt, Salomon died penniless in 1785. His descendants in the nineteenth century attempted to obtain compensation from Congress, but were unsuccessful. The extent of Salomon's claim on the government cannot be determined, because the documentation disappeared long ago.

In 1941, the George Washington-Robert Morris-Haym Salomon Memorial was erected along Wacker Drive in downtown Chicago. The bronze and stone memorial was conceived by sculptor Lorado Taft and finished by his student, Leonard Crunelle. Although Salomon's role in financing the Revolution has at times been exaggerated, his willingness to take financial risks for the Patriot cause helped establish the new nation.

http://www.nps.gov/revwar/about_the_revolution/haym_salomom.html

Patrick Henry

Synopsis

Born on May 29 (May 18, Old Style), 1736 in Studley, Virginia, Patrick Henry was an American Revolution-era orator best known for his quote "Give me liberty or give me death." Henry was an influential leader in the radical opposition to the British government, but only accepted the new federal government after the passage of the Bill of Rights, for which he was in great measure responsible.

Early Life

With his persuasive and passionate speeches, famed patriot Patrick Henry helped kickstart the American Revolution. He was born in Hanover County, Virginia, on a plantation that belonged to his mother's family. Unlike his mother, who had strong roots in the region, his father immigrated to the colony from Scotland.

The second oldest out of nine children, Henry received much of his schooling from his father, who had attended university in Scotland, and his uncle, an Anglican minister. He was a musical child, playing both the fiddle and the flute. He may have modeled his great oratory style on the religious sermons by his uncle and others. With his mother, Henry sometimes attended services held by Presbyterian preachers who visited the area.

At the age of 15, Henry ran a store for his father. The business didn't last, and Henry had his first taste of failure. He married Sarah Shelton, the daughter of a local innkeeper, in 1754. As part of his wife's dowry, Henry received some farm land. He tried growing tobacco there for three years, but he didn't fare well in this new venture either. In 1757, Henry and his wife lost their farmhouse to a fire. He then managed a tavern for his father-in-law and studied to be a lawyer. In 1760, he secured his law license.

Lawyer and Politician

As a lawyer, Henry developed a reputation as a powerful and persuasive speaker with the 1763 case known as "Parson's Cause." The Virginia Colony passed a law changing the way church ministers were paid, resulting in a monetary loss for the ministers. When King George III overturned the law, one Virginia clergyman sued for back pay and won his case. Henry spoke out against the minister, when the case went to a jury to decide damages. Pointing out the greed and royal interference in colonial matters associated with this legal decision, he managed to convince the jury to grant the lowest possible award—one farthing, or one penny.

In 1765, Henry won election to the House of Burgesses. He proved himself to be an early voice of dissent against Britain's colonial policies. During the debate over the Stamp Act of 1765, which effectively taxed every type of printed paper used by the colonists, Henry spoke out against the measure. He insisted that only the colony itself should be able to levy taxes on its citizens. Some in the assembly cried out that his comments were treason, but Henry was unfazed. His suggestions for handling the matter were printed and distributed to other colonies, helping to spur on the growing discontent with British rule.

American Revolutionary

An active force in the growing rebellion against Britain, Henry had the remarkable ability to translate his political ideology into the language of the common man.

He was selected to serve as a delegate to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia in 1774. There, he met Sam Adams and, together, they stoked the fires for revolution. During the proceedings, Henry called for the colonists to unite in their opposition to British rule: "The distinctions between Virginians, Pennsylvanians, New Yorkers and New Englanders, are no more. I am not a Virginian, but an American."

The following year, Henry gave perhaps his most famous speech of his career. He was one of the attendees of the Virginia Convention in March of 1775. The group was debating how to resolve the crisis with Great Britain—through force or through peaceful ends. Henry sounded the call to arms, saying, "Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? ... Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!"

Only a short time later, the first shots were fired, and the American Revolution was under way. Henry became the commander in chief of Virginia's forces, but he resigned his post after six months. Focusing on statesmanship, he helped write the state's constitution in 1776. Henry won election as Virginia's first governor that same year.

As governor, Henry supported the revolution in numerous ways. He helped supply soldiers and equipment for George Washington. He also sent Virginia troops—commanded by George Rogers Clark—to drive out British forces in the northwest. After three terms as governor, Henry left the post in 1779. He remained active in politics as a member of the state assembly. In the mid-1780s, Henry served two more terms as governor.

Henry held strong anti-Federalist views, believing that a powerful federal government would lead to a similar type of tyranny the colonists had experienced under Britain. In 1787, he turned down an opportunity to attend the Constitution Convention in Philadelphia. His opposition to this famed document did not waver, even after receiving a draft of the Constitution from George Washington after the convention. When it came time for Virginia to ratify the Constitution, Henry spoke out against the document, calling its principles "dangerous." He felt that it would negatively impact states' rights. Considering the strong support for Henry in Virginia, many Federalists, including James Madison, feared that Henry would be successful in his anti-Constitution efforts. But the majority of lawmakers were not swayed to Henry's side, and the document was ratified in an 89-to-79 vote.

Final Years

In 1790, Henry left public service. He chose to return to being a lawyer, and had a thriving practice. Over the years, Henry received numerous appointments to such positions as Supreme Court justice, secretary of state and attorney general, but he turned them all down. He preferred being with his second wife, Dorothea, and their many children, rather than navigating the world of politics.

(His first wife had died in 1775, after a battle with mental illness.)

Henry spent his last years at his estate, called "Red Hill," in Charlotte County, Virginia. In 1799, Henry was finally persuaded to run for office. He had switched political parties by this time, becoming a part of the Federalists. At the urging of his friend, George Washington, Henry fought for a seat in the Virginia legislature. He won the post, but he didn't live long enough to serve. He died on June 6, 1799, at his Red Hill home.

While he never held national office, Patrick Henry is remembered as one of the great revolutionary leaders. He has been called the "Trumpet" and "Voice" of the American Revolution. His powerful speeches served as a call for rebellion, and his political proposals offered suggestions for a new nation.

MLA Style

"Patrick Henry." 2013. *The Biography Channel website*. Nov 04 2013, 09:48
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Bernardo de Gálvez

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Bernardo de Gálvez

Bernardo de Gálvez (1746-1786), a Spanish colonial administrator, was captain general of Louisiana during the American Revolutionary War. His heroic exploits against the British during the war won him fame both in Spain and in America.

Bernardo de Gálvez was born in Macharaviaya in the province of Malaga on July 23, 1746. Though poor, the Gálvez family belonged to the Spanish nobility, and young Gálvez was able to pursue an active and successful military career. At the outbreak of the American Revolution, Gálvez was assigned the post of commandant of the Spanish troops stationed in Louisiana, with the rank of colonel. He soon became governor and intendant of that Spanish province, assuming office in February 1777. Two years later the Revolutionary War became a world struggle as Spain joined its forces with those of France in the battle against Great Britain. Spain refused to ally itself directly with the United States or to recognize American independence because of its own position as a colonial power. Nevertheless Spain supplied the Americans with secret aid and undertook a vigorous military campaign of its own in America under the leadership of Gálvez.

Even before Spain came into the war, Gálvez had been actively engaged in providing arms to the Americans in the Louisiana area. On Spanish entry into the war, however, Gálvez took direct action against the British, and in three brilliant campaigns drove them out of West Florida, thus securing control of the mouth of the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico for Spain. Of all his exploits in this period, the most famous was his daring conquest of Pensacola, in Florida, in May 1781. At the end of the war he returned to Spain to receive a hero's welcome; promotion to the rank of major general; appointment as captain general of Louisiana, East and West Florida, and Cuba; and elevation to the viceroyalty of New Spain.

In 1784 Gálvez went back to America, where he acted as principal adviser to Diego de Gardoqui in preliminary negotiations with the new United States over the Florida boundary question, a treaty of commerce, and the right of Americans to free navigation of the Mississippi River; it was these negotiations that led to the Jay-Gardoqui treaty in 1786. In 1785 Gálvez was responsible for ousting from Natchez, in Mississippi, the Georgia commissioners who had come to establish Bourbon County. That same year, however, he won the thanks of the American government for his part in releasing American merchants being held at Havana. Gálvez died in Mexico on November 30, 1786.

"Bernardo de Gálvez." *Encyclopedia of World Biography*. 2004. Retrieved November 04, 2013 from Encyclopedia.com: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3404702374.html>

Warren, Mercy Otis (1728-1814)

American Eras | 1997 | Copyright

Mercy Otis Warren (1728-1814)

Sources

Historian, dramatist

Early Life. Born in West Barnstable, Massachusetts, Mercy Otis was the daughter of James Otis Sr., a merchant and lawyer who became a prominent figure in local politics. Her brother James Otis Jr. achieved even greater renown as a leader of the revolutionary resistance to [Britain](#). James Warren, whom she married in 1754, was also a leader in that struggle. Resisting traditional limits to women's public roles, Warren carried on the family tradition of political activism and eagerly took part in the political controversies of her day. An ardent supporter of the Revolution, like her brother and husband, she used writing as a vehicle to further her political views, seeking to win adherents to the revolutionary cause through her work as a playwright and propagandist.

Dramatic Works. Warren made clear her revolutionary sympathies in her first play, *The Adulateur: A Tragedy* (1773), which satirized the Tories as corrupt defenders of tyranny in contrast to the revolutionaries, who embodied virtuous patriotism. Warren followed this work with another play in a similar vein, *The Group* (1775). After the Revolution she continued writing plays, publishing two tragedies, *The Sack of Rome* and *The Ladies of Castile*, in her *Poems, Dramatic and Miscellaneous* (1790). Like her previous plays, these two works expressed her contemporary political opinions, in this case her concerns about the role of women in politics. In both plays she placed women at the center of political upheavals. Although she did not advocate formal political rights for women, she did not believe that women should divorce themselves from politics entirely. Through the characters in *The Sack of Rome* and *The Ladies of Castile*, Warren suggested that a healthy republic required politically conscious women who were willing to make sacrifices for the public good.

Historian of the Revolution. The culmination of Warren's literary efforts was her three-volume *History of the Rise, Progress, and Termination of the American Revolution* (1805). In this history Warren sought to do more than simply recapitulate the events of the Revolution. Embracing the didactic view of history that prevailed in the eighteenth century, Warren viewed her history as a source of moral examples that would influence the conduct of present and future generations. Concerned about what she saw as the postrevolutionary lapse from revolutionary principles, Warren hoped to provide historical models that would counteract this tendency. She analyzed the Revolution as a conflict between British corruption and American virtue, setting up an implicit contrast between the virtuous self-sacrifice of the revolutionaries and the degeneracy of her postrevolutionary contemporaries. Hoping this contrast would inspire them to imitate and revive the spirit that had effected the Revolution, she declared, "It is an unpleasant part of history, when 'corruption begins to prevail, when degeneracy marks the manners of the people, and weakens the sinews of the state.'" She added, "If this should ever become the deplorable situation of the

[United States](#), let some unborn historian, in a far distant day, detail the lapse, and hold up the contrast between a simple, virtuous, and free people, and a degenerate, servile race of beings, corrupted by wealth, effeminated by luxury, impoverished by licentiousness, and become the *automatons* of intoxicated ambition.”

Later Life. The contemporary response to Warren’s history was mixed. Her critical portrayal of him inspired [John Adams](#) observe to Warren that “History is not the Province of Ladies.” For the most part, however, Warren’s contemporaries neglected her history altogether, and her work received only one lackluster review from the *Panoplist*. The *History* was Warren’s last major literary production before her death in 1814.

"[Warren, Mercy Otis \(1728-1814\)](#)." *American Eras*. 1997. *Encyclopedia.com*. 4 Nov. 2013
<<http://www.encyclopedia.com>>.

James Armistead

James Armistead was born into slavery in Virginia around 1748. Armistead enlisted in the Revolutionary War under General Lafayette. Working as a spy, Armistead gained the trust of General Cornwallis and [Benedict Arnold](#), providing information that allowed American forces to prevail at the Battle of Yorktown. Armistead died in 1830, having successfully petitioned for his freedom in 1787.

Profile

Spy, revolutionary. Born into slavery to owner William Armistead around December 10, 1748, in New Kent, Virginia. In 1781, James Armistead volunteered to join the U.S. Army in order to fight for the American Revolution. His master granted him permission to join the revolutionary cause, and the American Continental Army stationed Armistead to serve under the [Marquis de Lafayette](#), the commander of allied French forces.

Lafayette employed Armistead as a spy, with the hopes of gathering intelligence in regards to enemy movements. Posing as a runaway slave hired by the British to spy on the Americans, Armistead successfully infiltrated British General Charles Cornwallis' headquarters. He later returned north with turncoat soldier [Benedict Arnold](#), and learned further details of British operations without being detected. Able to travel freely between both British and American camps, Armistead could easily relay information to Lafayette about British plans.

Using the details of Armistead's reports, Lafayette and General [George Washington](#) were able to prevent the British from sending 10,000 reinforcements to Yorktown, Virginia. The American and French blockade surprised British forces and crippled their military. As a result of the Lafayette and Washington's victory in Yorktown, the British officially surrendered on Oct. 19, 1781.

Despite his critical actions, Armistead returned to William Armistead after the war to continue his life as a slave. He was not eligible for emancipation under the Act of 1783 for slave-soldiers, because he was considered a slave-spy, and had to petition the Virginia legislature for his emancipation. The Marquis de Lafayette assisted him by writing a recommendation for his freedom, which was granted in 1787. In gratitude, Armistead adopted Lafayette's surname.

After receiving his freedom, he moved nine miles south of New Kent, bought 40 acres of land, and began farming. He later married, raised a large family, and was granted a \$40 annual pension by the Virginia legislature for his services during the American Revolution. He lived as a farmer in Virginia until his death on August 9, 1830.

<http://www.biography.com/people/james-armistead-537566>

BLACK REVOLUTIONARY ERA PATRIOT

Wentworth Cheswell

(1746-1817)

At WallBuilders we strive to “present America’s forgotten history and heroes, with an emphasis on our moral, religious, and constitutional heritage,” so Wentworth Cheswell (sometimes Chiswell or Cheswill) is a perfect subject for our attention.

He was the grandson of black slave Richard Cheswell (who early gained his freedom and in 1717 and became the first black to own property in the colony of New Hampshire); and he was the son of Hopestill Cheswell, a notable homebuilder who built the homes of several patriot leaders, including John Paul Jones and the Rev. Samuel Langdon. Wentworth was named after the famous Wentworth family, from whom came several state governors, including Benning Wentworth – the governor at the time of Wentworth’s birth.

In 1763, Wentworth began attending an academy in Byfield, Massachusetts (30 miles from his home), where for four years he received an extensive education, studying Latin, Greek, swimming, horsemanship, reading, writing, and arithmetic.

In 1767, he returned home and became a schoolteacher, also marrying Mary Davis (they eventually had 13 children – 4 sons and 9 daughters). At the age of 21, he had already become an established and educated property owner and a stalwart in his local church, even holding a church pew.

The following year, Wentworth was elected town constable – the first of many offices he held throughout his life. Two years later in 1770, he was elected town selectman (the selectmen were considered the “town fathers” of a community). Other town offices in which he served included seven years as Auditor, six years as Assessor, two years as Coroner, seven years as town Moderator (presiding over town meetings), and twelve years as Justice of the Peace, overseeing trials, settling disputes, and executing deeds, wills, and legal documents. ([View](#) an 1813 document signed by Cheswell as justice of the peace.) For half a century – including every year from 1768 until 1817 – Wentworth held some position in local government.

In addition to his civic service, Wentworth was also a patriot leader. In fact, the town selected him as the messenger for the Committee of Safety – the central nervous system of the American Revolution that carried intelligence and messages back and forth between strategic operational centers. Serving in that position, Wentworth undertook the same task as Paul Revere, making an all-night ride to warn citizens of imminent British invasion.

In April 1776, he signed a document in which he pledged, “at the risk of . . . live and fortune,” to take up arms to resist the British, and in September 1777, he enlisted in a company of Light Horse Volunteers commanded by Colonel John Langdon (Langdon later became one of the 55 Founding Fathers who drafted the U. S. Constitution, then a framer of the Bill of Rights, and later the New Hampshire governor). Langdon’s company made a 250-mile march to Saratoga, New York, to join with the Continental Army under General Horatio Gates to defeat British General Burgoyne at the Battle of Saratoga – the first major American victory in the Revolution.

After returning from Saratoga, in the spring of 1778, Wentworth was elected to the convention to draft the state’s first constitution, but some unknown event prevented his attendance.

Wentworth also served as Newmarket’s unofficial historian, copying town records from 1727 (including the records of various church meetings) and chronicling old stories of the town as well as its current events. Additionally, having investigated and made extensive notes on numerous artifacts and relics he discovered in the region around Newmarket, he is considered the state’s first archeologist. Therefore, when the Rev. Jeremy Belknap published his famous three-volume *History of New Hampshire* (1784-1792), he relied on (and openly acknowledged) much information he gleaned from Wentworth.

In 1801, Wentworth helped start the town library to preserve and disseminate useful knowledge and virtue. His commitment to providing helpful information is not surprising, for not only had he become a school teacher in 1767 but in 1776 he was elected as one of five men to regulate and oversee the schools of Newmarket.

In 1817, in his 71st year of age, Wentworth succumbed to typhus fever and was buried on the family farm, where other members of his family were later buried. In fact, when his daughter Martha died (his last surviving heir), her will provided that any members or descendants of the family could forever forward be buried on the farm. Unfortunately, that family graveyard long lay in disrepair, but in recent years friends and family have managed to restore it.

The legacy of Wentworth Cheswell is a lasting one: a patriot, teacher, and church leader; an historian, archeologist, and educator; a judge and official elected to numerous offices (he is considered the first black American elected to office in America). He is truly one of our forgotten patriots but he is a laudable example for all Americans

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Abigail Adams

Synopsis

Throughout President [John Adams](#)' career, his wife, Abigail Adams, served as an unofficial adviser to him, and their letters show him seeking her counsel on many issues, including his presidential aspirations. Adams remained a supportive spouse and confidante after her husband became the president in 1797, and her eldest son, John Quincy, would become president 7 years after her death in 1825.

Early Life

Former first lady, writer. Born Abigail Smith on November 11, 1744, (by the Gregorian calendar we use today) in Weymouth, Massachusetts. Abigail Adams is best known as the wife of President [John Adams](#) and for her extensive correspondence. She was also the mother of John Quincy Adams who became the sixth president of the United States. The daughter of a minister, she was a devoted reader, studying the works of William [Shakespeare](#) and [John Milton](#) among others. Adams did not, however, attend school, which was common for girls at the time.

In 1761, she met a lawyer named John Adams. Three years later, the couple married and soon welcomed their first child, a daughter named Abigail, in 1765. Their family continued to grow with the addition of John Quincy in 1767, Susanna in 1768, Charles in 1770, and Thomas Boylston in 1772. Sadly, Susanna died as a toddler and later the family suffered another tragedy when Abigail delivered a stillborn daughter in 1777.

Marriage to John Adams

With a busy law practice, her husband spent a lot of time away from home. This situation only worsened as [John Adams](#) became an active member of the American Revolution and the Revolutionary War. As a result, the couple spent a lot of time apart. She was also left to carry much of the burden at home, raising their children and caring for the family farm. The couple remained closed by corresponding with each other. It is believed that they exchanged more than 1,100 letters.

Abigail Adams expressed concern about how the new government would treat women. In one of her many letters to her husband, she requested that he "Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands. Remember all Men would be tyrants if they could. If pertuculiar care and attention is not paid to the Laidies we are determined to foment a Rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation." Odd spellings aside, Abigail Adams often expressed her thoughts on political matters with her husband. Throughout his career, Abigail had served an unofficial advisor to him. Their letters show him seeking her counsel on many issues, including his presidential aspirations.

After the revolution, Abigail Adams joined her husband in France and later in England where he served as the first American minister to the Court of St. James from 1785 to 1788. When her husband became vice president the next year, Abigail Adams stayed with her husband in the capitol for only part of the time, often returning to Massachusetts to look after their farm and to tend other business matters.

While in the capitol, she helped First Lady Martha Washington with entertaining dignitaries and other officials.

Political Involvement

Adams remained a supportive spouse and confidante after her husband became the president in 1797. Some critics objected to Abigail's influence over her husband, calling her "Mrs. President." The nation's second first lady kept a busy schedule when she was in Philadelphia, the country's capitol at the time. Adams rose early to tend to family and household matters and spent much of the remainder of the day receiving visitors and hosting events. She still spent a lot of time back in Massachusetts because of her health.

Abigail and John Adams did not always see eye to eye on matters of policy. During her husband's presidency, the United States had some problems with France. Once a great ally, France was in the midst of revolution when Adams became president. The country was being run by a five-man executive group known as the Directory along with a legislative body. The Directory had stopped trade with the United States and refused to meet with any U.S. envoys. In 1798, Adams was told that the French officials would hold talks for substantial bribes. This attempt at extortion did not sit well with John Adams and he told Congress about the incident. The documents related to the incident were published, and the whole situation became known as the X, Y, Z Affair as Adams had only used letters to identify the French officials instead of names. Abigail thought war should be declared while John sought out a peaceful, less costly solution.

The couple did, however, agree on the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. The three alien acts were aimed at immigrants and increased the waiting period for naturalization, allowed the government to detain foreign subjects, and permitted the deportation of any alien deemed dangerous. The Sedition Act federalized the ban against malicious antigovernment writings and other works inciting opposition to Congress or the president. An ardent champion of her husband, Abigail thought those who published lies about John should be punished. Under the act, penalties included fines and jail time. John Adams signed these acts into law and has since been rebuked by historians for this anti-immigrant, anti-free speech legislation.

Later Life

Around the time her husband was defeated by Thomas Jefferson in the 1800 election, the Adams learned of the death of their second son Charles, which was related to his alcoholism. With great sadness, the Adams soon moved to the country's new capitol, Washington, D.C., where they became the first residents of the White House. Abigail Adams wrote many letters to family around this time, shedding light on the early days of the new capital and complaining about the unfinished state of their new home. A few months later, after John Adams left office in 1801, they returned to their family farm.

With John now retired, the couple was able to spend more time together.

She continued to run the farm and to care for the family members, including their eldest child, Nabby (young Abigail's nickname), who died of cancer at their home in 1814. Struggling with her own health for decades, Abigail Adams had a stroke in October 1818 and died at home with her family on October 28, 1818.

MLA Style

"Abigail Adams." 2013. *The Biography Channel website*. Nov 04 2013, 10:40
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Crispus Attucks

Synopsis

Crispus Attucks is believed to have been born around 1723, in Framingham, Massachusetts. His father was likely a slave and his mother a Natick Indian. A 1750 ad in the *Boston Gazette* sought the recovery of a runaway slave named "Crispas," but all that is definitely known about Attucks is that he was the first to fall during the Boston Massacre on March 5, 1770. In 1888, the Crispus Attucks monument was unveiled in Boston Common.

Early Life

Born into slavery, Crispus Attucks was the son of Prince Younger, a slave shipped to America from Africa, and Nancy Attucks, a Natick Indian. Little is known about Attucks's life, or his family, who resided in Framingham, Massachusetts, just outside Boston.

What has been pieced together paints a picture of a young man who showed an early skill for buying and trading goods. He seemed unafraid of the consequences for escaping the bonds of slavery. Historians have, in fact, pinpointed Attucks as the focus of an advertisement in a 1750 edition of the *Boston Gazette* in which a white landowner offered to pay 10 pounds for the return of a young runaway slave.

"Ran away from his Master William Brown from Framingham, on the 30th of Sept. last," the advertisement read. "A Molatto Fellow, about 27 Years of age, named Crispas, 6 Feet two Inches high, short curl'd Hair, his Knees nearer together than common: had on a light colour'd Bearskin Coat."

Attucks, however, managed to escape for good, spending the next two decades on trading ships and whaling vessels coming in and out of Boston. Attucks also found work as a ropemaker.

Revolutionary Hero

As British control over the colonies tightened, tensions escalated between the colonists and British soldiers. Attucks was one of those directly affected by the worsening situation. Seamen like Attucks constantly lived with the threat they could be forced into the British navy, while back on land, British soldiers regularly took part-time work away from colonists.

On March 5, 1770, a Friday, a fight erupted between a group of Boston ropemakers and three British soldiers. Tensions were ratcheted up further three nights later when a British soldier looking for work entered a Boston pub, only to be greeted by a contingent of furious sailors, one of whom was Attucks.

The details regarding what followed have always been the source of debate, but that evening, a group of Bostonians approached a guard in front of the customs house and started taunting him. The situation quickly escalated. When a contingent of British redcoats came to the defense of their fellow soldier, more angry Bostonians joined the fracas, throwing snowballs and other items at the soldiers.

Attucks was one of those in the middle of the fight, and when the British opened fire he was the first of five men killed. His murder made him the first casualty of the American Revolution.

Trial After the Boston Massacre

Quickly becoming known as the Boston Massacre, the episode further propelled the colonies toward war with the British.

Flames were fanned even more when the soldiers involved in the incident were acquitted on the grounds of self defense. John Adams, who went on to become the second U.S. president, defended the soldiers in court. During the trial, Adams labeled the colonists an unruly mob that forced his clients to open fire.

Helping to lead the attack was Attucks, Adams charged, though debate has raged over how involved he was in the fight. One account claims he was simply "leaning on a stick" when the gunshots erupted.

Legacy

Even so, Attucks became a martyr. His body was transported to Faneuil Hall, where he and the others killed in the attack lay in state. City leaders even waived the laws around black burials and permitted Attucks to be buried with the others at the Park Street cemetery.

In the years since his death, Attucks's legacy has continued to endure, first with the American colonists eager to break from British rule, and later among 19th century abolitionists and 20th century civil rights activists. In his 1964 book, *Why We Can't Wait*, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. lauded Attucks for his moral courage and his defining role

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<http://www.biography.com/people/crispus-attucks-9191864>.

General Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, comte de Rochambeau

General Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, comte de Rochambeau was born in 1725, the third son of a wealthy family with strong military tradition. Rochambeau, as was expected by the third son of French noble families, studied for the clergy. When his elder brother died, 15-year-old Rochambeau embarked on a military career. In 1756, Rochambeau's valor during the Seven Years' War was rewarded with the promotion to brigadier general. His new position allowed him to witness how jealousies between officers were undermining the military effectiveness of the French army. Rochambeau consciously removed himself from rivalries, gaining praise and recognition which led to the appointment of major general. Rochambeau was promoted to Maréchal de Camp and Inspector General of the French infantry.

By 1771, Rochambeau was again recognized for his personal integrity and was offered the position of Minister of War. He declined this offer, and looked to concentrate on addressing much needed military reforms. Rochambeau was chosen in 1778 to lead an invasion of Great Britain. The objective was to take advantage of Britain's weakened defenses, since such a large portion of the British troops were sent to America. The invasion was planned for 1779 but soon fell apart due to factors of poor naval planning and disease.

However, France had recognized America as an independent nation and was committed to helping her new allies. The French army under Rochambeau had benefitted from reform and preparation for the British invasion. The French forces would change their objective and instead fight alongside the Americans. Lafayette had recently returned to France to help plan the deployment of French forces in America and emphasized that the commander of these forces must be sensitive to the challenges of American leaders.

Rochambeau was chosen to command the new expedition and promoted to Lieutenant General. The French Foreign Minister, comte de Vergennes directed Rochambeau to place himself subordinate to General George Washington. Rochambeau set off on the expédition particulière with 5,500 men in May 1780.

Rochambeau landed in America in an uncomfortable position. He was on unfamiliar land and allied with those who had been enemies of France less than 20 years prior. He also discovered that American forces were far less prepared and supplied than the French had expected. Rochambeau placed himself under General George Washington's command and through tact, charm, and wisdom was able to win over his former enemies. The French General and his disciplined forces were able to win over the American people, the Continental troops, and General George Washington himself. Rochambeau was more experienced than Washington and therefore impressed Washington with skill and respect. The logistical maneuvering and siege of Yorktown was Rochambeau's greatest military achievement. The importance of the victory at Yorktown is often overlooked by French military history because it greatly benefitted his allies, the Americans, and not France itself.

After Yorktown, General Washington had to head northward in case further military action was needed. General Rochambeau and his forces spent the winter quartered in and around Williamsburg, Virginia. He met Washington in Philadelphia in 1782, and again at Washington's Hudson River camp to celebrate the anniversary of the Yorktown victory. Rochambeau sailed for France in January of 1783.

Upon his return to France, Rochambeau was awarded the Cordon Bleu of the Order of the Saint Esprit. He was appointed commander of the Northern Military District, stayed active in the Society of the Cincinnati, and exchanged letters with Washington over time. Unfortunately, peace did not last long for Rochambeau. In 1789 he found himself in the midst of the budding French Revolution. He witnessed army mutinies, riots, and soldiers creating political associations. By 1791, France was expecting an attack from Austria and the new Minister of War made Rochambeau a Marshal of France and handed him command of the northern armies.

Rochambeau was ill, and found the military planning of a war with Austria inadequate and futile. Rochambeau resigned and went home as a citizen, only to find his house ravaged, friends killed, and locals increasingly hostile. In 1794 Rochambeau was arrested and taken to the Conciergerie in Paris. His illness had worsened, requiring hospitalization. His medical care delayed his execution and only days before Rochambeau was scheduled for the guillotine, the Reign of Terror ended.

Rochambeau was released and retired to his home. In 1796 he wrote his last letter to Washington. Rochambeau met Napoleon in 1801 and received the Legion d'honneur in 1804. General Rochambeau died in 1807 at the age of 83, a decorated military asset of France and an American hero.

<http://www.nps.gov/waro/historyculture/general-rochambeau.htm>

François Joseph Paul Grasse, comte de

Grasse, François Joseph Paul, comte de (fränswä' zhôzëf' pöl kôNt də gräs) [[key](#)], 1722–88, French admiral. In 1781, in command of a French fleet sent to cooperate with the Continental forces in the American Revolution, he defeated a British naval force under Admiral Hood and captured Tobago. Then he came N to Virginia at the request of generals Washington and Rochambeau. There he used his fleet to blockade the York and James rivers, thus bottling up General Cornwallis at Yorktown. He outmaneuvered and defeated a British force under Admiral Graves, and men from his ships also took part in the land fight. His efforts led to the great victory of the [Yorktown campaign](#). After the Revolution was won, Admiral de Grasse was severely defeated (1782) by the British under Admiral Rodney in the West Indies.

<http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/people/grasse-francois-joseph-paul-comte-de.html>

Steuben, Friedrich Wilhelm Von (Baron)

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Steuben, Friedrich Wilhelm Von [Baron] (1730–1794), Revolutionary War general. Born at Magdeburg, Friedrich Steuben followed his father's path into the Prussian Army, eventually serving as an infantry officer, staff officer, and aide under Frederick the Great. Court life lured the young captain from the army in 1764, but the American [Revolutionary War](#) drew him back to military service. In 1777, the self-proclaimed Lt. Gen. “Baron von” Steuben—who was neither a general nor a nobleman—arrived in Philadelphia and requested a commission in the [Continental army](#). Americans soon found that if the Prussian had misrepresented his credentials, he did not exaggerate his talents.

After Congress accepted Steuben's offer to serve without rank in January 1778, he found the beleaguered Continentals at Valley Forge lacking the skill and knowledge of European regulars. Steuben consequently developed a system of drill that customized European methods to American needs, demonstrated its effectiveness on his personally trained “model company,” and eventually published its principal elements in [Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States](#) (1779). By May 1778, he became inspector general, with the rank of major general. Though he also served in the field, Steuben's most significant military contribution remained the greater degree of professionalism he gave to Continental forces.

John Whiteclay Chambers II. "[Steuben, Friedrich Wilhelm Von \(Baron\)](#)." [The Oxford Companion to American Military History](#). 2000. *Encyclopedia.com*. 4 Nov. 2013 <<http://www.encyclopedia.com>>.

Francis Marion

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Francis Marion

Francis Marion (1732-1795), one of the great partisan leaders of the American Revolutionary War, was known as the "Swamp Fox" because of his craftiness in eluding pursuers in the Carolina swamps and his brilliant guerrilla operations.

Francis Marion was born in Berkeley County, S.C. He had little education and remained semiliterate to the end of his life. As a boy of 15, he went to sea for a year. After that, he turned to farming on the family land. In 1761 he took part in the war against the Cherokee Indians as a lieutenant of militia. He made something of a reputation by leading a successful attack against a strong Indian position. More importantly, he became familiar with the very special tactics of guerrilla warfare—using small forces, hitting and running, dispersing troops in one place and reforming them in another, and employing the element of surprise. When the campaign ended, he returned to farming, at first on leased land and then, in 1773, on a plantation of his own, Pond Bluff, near Eutaw Springs, S.C. Two years later he was elected to the provincial legislature and also accepted appointment as a captain in the second of two infantry regiments South Carolina raised at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War.

In the first several years of the war, Marion saw service in and around Charleston, S.C. In September 1775 he led his company in capturing the forts in Charleston harbor from the British. In the summer of the next year he joined in repulsing the English attempt to retake Charleston. Meanwhile he had been promoted to major in February 1776 and to lieutenant colonel in November. He spent the next two years skirmishing in the Charleston area and drilling militia troops. In November 1778 he took command of the 2nd Regiment; in November 1779 he led the regiment in an unsuccessful attack on Savannah. The following year was a disastrous one for the colonial cause. In May 1780 British forces retook Charleston, and in August they shattered the American army under Gen. Horatio Gates at the battle of Camden. This ended organized resistance by the Americans in South Carolina.

Marion now took to the swamps and to guerrilla warfare. With a small mobile force of 20 to 70 men, he embarked upon harassing operations, hitting British supply lines and cutting communications between their posts. "Fertile of stratagems and expedients" and moving like a phantom, he roamed the area between Charleston and Camden and along the Santee and Peedee rivers. In August 1780 he rescued 150 American prisoners being transported by the British; in September he scattered a force of Tories; in December he shot up a column of British replacements. Every effort to capture him failed. In the fall of 1780 Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton, one of England's ablest cavalymen, pursued Marion relentlessly but could not catch him. After a 7-hour chase through 26 miles of swamp he said, "But as for this damn old fox, the devil himself could not catch him." Another pursuer, Lt. Col. John W. T. Watson, who searched for Marion in March 1781, explained his failure by concluding that Marion "would not fight like a gentleman or a Christian."

In December 1780 Marion, having been made a brigadier general of militia by the governor of South Carolina, began recruiting a brigade and establishing a base at Snow's Island at the confluence of the Peedee and Lynches rivers not far from the North Carolina border. From this place he operated in support of Gen. Nathanael Greene, who had come south to replace Gates in October and to restore American supremacy in the Carolinas. Marion took part in several operations in the summer of 1781 while continuing his guerrilla action. That September he reached the peak of his career at the battle of Eutaw Springs. In this fight, which ended with the British forces in retreat to North Carolina, Marion commanded the American right wing; this was the largest number of troops he ever commanded. His men, whom he had trained, fought superbly, and he led them with courage and coolness. To Congress, Greene reported, "the militia gained much honor by their firmness."

After Eutaw Springs, Marion went to the South Carolina Legislature as an elected representative in the session of 1781. He was reelected in 1782 and 1784. Between times, he returned to his brigade, leading it in several engagements. At the end of the war he married a wealthy cousin, Mary Videau, and settled down at Pond Bluff, where he died on Feb. 26, 1795.

"[Francis Marion](#)." *Encyclopedia of World Biography*. 2004. *Encyclopedia.com*. 4 Nov. 2013 <<http://www.encyclopedia.com>>.

Pitcher, Molly

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Pitcher, Molly (1744?/1754?–1832), Revolutionary War heroine. The legend of “Molly Pitcher” is based at least in part on the actions of Mary (Molly) Ludwig Hays McCauley; the nickname may have applied to her alone, or may have been used collectively to describe all female [“camp followers”](#) who assisted the [Continental army](#).

The daughter of German immigrants who settled in [New Jersey](#), by 1769 Mary Ludwig was a servant of Dr. William Irvine in Carlisle, [Pennsylvania](#). In that year she married a barber, John Casper Hays. He initially served in Col. Thomas Proctor's First Pennsylvania Artillery (1775–76), then reenlisted, in January 1777, as a private in Dr. (now Col.) Irvine's Seventh Pennsylvania Regiment. Sometime later, Mary joined him in camp.

On 28 June 1778, Mary Hays made a name for herself in the [Battle of Monmouth](#), in New Jersey. She had been carrying buckets, or pitchers, of water to her husband's [artillery](#) crew; when he fell wounded, she replaced him at the cannon, helping to serve the gun for the remainder of the engagement.

John Hays died several years later, and Mary Hays married another veteran, John (possibly George) McCauley, around 1792. After being widowed a second time and experiencing increasing financial difficulties, she petitioned for a soldier's widow's pension; the Pennsylvania legislature on 21 February 1822 instead awarded her a \$40 annuity in recognition of her own services during the Revolution. After her death she became a legendary figure, and a monument was later erected at her burial site in Carlisle.

John Whiteclay Chambers II. "[Pitcher, Molly](#)." [The Oxford Companion to American Military History](#). 2000. *Encyclopedia.com*. 4 Nov. 2013 <<http://www.encyclopedia.com>>.

Ethan Allen

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An American Revolutionary War soldier and Vermont leader, Ethan Allen (1738-1789) achieved a place in history by capturing Fort Ticonderoga in 1775. He championed Vermont's drive for statehood.

Ethan Allen was a distinct type of frontier soldier. His influence on the settlers of Vermont was comparable to that of John Sevier on the inhabitants of Watauga, East Tennessee, and of Thomas Sumter on the up-country men of South Carolina. Frontier people possessed clanlike loyalties, and they looked to strong men to lead them. Allen had all the credentials. Tall and broad-shouldered, he had great physical strength, along with "rough and ready humor, boundless self-confidence and a shrewdness in thought and action equal to almost any emergency." When Vermonters were threatened by New York authorities who claimed the area and denied the validity of their land titles, they formed in 1770 a military association, an unauthorized militia which Allen commanded. The members were mostly rough, roistering young men, and they called themselves the Green Mountain Boys.

Allen was born in 1738, the eldest son of a substantial farmer in Litchfield, Conn. His father's early death left him with the responsibility of caring for his mother and seven other children, and it brought his schooling—he was preparing to enter Yale College—to a permanent end. Allen, however, had a genuine intellectual bent, and he was to write a number of pamphlets on such diverse subjects as the taking of Ticonderoga, Vermont's controversies with New York, and religion.

Revolutionary Career

From 1770 to 1775 Allen and his Green Mountain Boys harassed the New York surveyors, sheriffs, and settlers who had invaded Vermont, which was then commonly known as the Hampshire Grants. Allen himself speculated in lands, forming a company to sell tracts along the Onion River. As "chieftain of the Grants," his authority uncontested, Allen sympathized with the colonists elsewhere in their opposition to British imperial policy, although the position of the Vermonters was complicated by the fact that they were currently petitioning the King to be reannexed to New Hampshire.

Even so, Allen felt the need to take British Fort Ticonderoga in case Anglo-American hostilities should erupt. The once-mighty fortress at the juncture of Lake Champlain and Lake George was now a crumbling and lightly garrisoned structure, but New York governor William Tryon had suggested that it be used as a base for bringing Vermont to heel. Moreover, Allen recognized that any large-scale effort by Britain to win an American war would undoubtedly include a southward invasion from Canada along the Lake Champlain-Lake George route.

According to Allen, word of the battles of Lexington and Concord "electrified my mind, and fully determined me to take part with my country." When Allen, with the financial support of Connecticut, proceeded with his plan to grab Ticonderoga, he discovered that Massachusetts had commissioned Benedict Arnold to do the same thing. Allen and his men agreed to let Arnold join them, though it is

doubtful that they recognized Arnold as joint commander, as Arnold subsequently claimed. The fracas over authority and the boat trip across the dark, squall-ruffled waters of Lake Champlain to the western shore were more troublesome to the Americans than the Redcoat garrison: 45 officers and men who were "old, wore out, and unserviceable." Just before daylight on May 9, 1775, Allen easily overwhelmed the sleepy garrison "in the name of the great Jehovah and the Continental Congress," or so he later said in describing his ultimatum to the British senior officer. The capture of Ticonderoga's heavy guns, sledged eastward the next winter to Washington's camp, hastened the British evacuation of Boston in 1776.

Soon afterward Allen appeared in Philadelphia and persuaded the Continental Congress to authorize the organization of a regiment of Green Mountain Boys under such officers as the citizens of Vermont should elect. Allen's further advice on the advantages of an invasion of Canada seems to have added some impetus to Congress's order to Gen. Philip Schuyler to advance northward from Ticonderoga against Montreal and other parts of the province. At a public meeting in Vermont, however, Allen's former subordinate Seth Warner was chosen instead of Allen to raise the regiment of Green Mountain Boys—because, according to Allen, the older settlers constituted a majority of the voters at the meeting, and they considered him to be headstrong and radical.

Allen then joined Schuyler's army as a volunteer and was sent to operate behind the British lines with a body of Canadian recruits. He and John Brown, who was leading a similar group, decided to surprise and capture Montreal on their own. Unfortunately for Allen, word got to the town that "Ethan Allen the Notorious New Hampshire Incendiary" was at hand. When Brown's men failed to show up, Allen was easily overwhelmed. "Mr. Allen's imprudence," as Schuyler noted, had brought about his defeat and capture.

Vermont Leader

Following a nearly 3-year captivity spent mainly in England and New York City, Allen was exchanged, but he never again had an active role in the Revolution. During his absence Vermont had declared itself free and independent and had unsuccessfully petitioned Congress for recognition as a state. Allen also failed to bring results, largely because of the opposition of New York and also New Hampshire, which disputed the claims of some Vermonters to lands on the east side of the Connecticut River. Between 1780 and 1788 Allen and his brothers Ira and Levi flirted with British agents in an effort to compel Congress to recognize Vermont's aspirations to statehood. If that body would not, they held up the possibility of conducting a separate peace or, after the war, uniting with Canada. Nothing came of these threats, though Vermont did not become the fourteenth state until 1791, 2 years after Allen's death. Allen is also remembered for authoring the only extended statement of deistic religious principles ever written in America, *Reason the Only Oracle of Man* (1784). Although vigorously condemned by orthodox Christian clergymen, the work probably had little influence at the time since all but a few copies were destroyed in a fire.

"[Ethan Allen](http://www.encyclopedia.com)." [Encyclopedia of World Biography](http://www.encyclopedia.com). 2004. *Encyclopedia.com*. 4 Nov. 2013 <<http://www.encyclopedia.com>>.

Gates, Horatio

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Gates, Horatio (1727/8–1806), Revolutionary War general. Born in Old Malden, Surrey, to an unlettered English customs official and the housekeeper of the duke of Bolton's mistress, Gates was commissioned a British army lieutenant in 1745, through Bolton's influence. In the [French and Indian War](#), after being wounded at Monongahela in 1755, he rose to the rank of major, but eventually barred from further advancement, he retired in 1769. Living in Virginia at the outbreak of the [Revolutionary War](#), Gates was appointed adjutant general by the [Continental Congress](#), and he helped [George Washington](#) organize the Continental army. Popular with New Englanders, he replaced Philip Schuyler as commander of the northern army after the loss of Fort Ticonderoga. At the two [battles of Saratoga](#), he employed his numerical superiority to force the surrender of British Gen. [John Burgoyne](#)'s entire army on 17 October 1777.

Gates planned to follow up by invading [Canada](#), but Washington blocked the expedition. A hero after Saratoga, Gates became Washington's rival, but in 1778 was discredited on the spurious charge that he had plotted with the “Conway cabal” to elevate himself over Washington. Assigned to command the Continentals in [South Carolina](#) in 1780, he undertook a rash offensive with ill-prepared troops and was disastrously defeated at the Battle of Camden by Gen. [Charles Cornwallis](#). In 1783, he was associated with, but took no active part in, the officers’ aborted [Newburgh “conspiracy”](#) to coerce Congress into giving them backpay. A novel combination of professional and populist, Gates managed short-term militia unusually well, and was a generally competent, if ultimately flawed, commander.

John Whiteclay Chambers II. "[Gates, Horatio](#)." [The Oxford Companion to American Military History](#). 2000. *Encyclopedia.com*. 4 Nov. 2013 <<http://www.encyclopedia.com>>.

Marquis de Lafayette

Synopsis

The Marquis de Lafayette was born on September 6, 1757, in Chavaniac, France. He served the Continental Army with distinction during the American Revolutionary War, providing tactical leadership while securing vital resources from France. Lafayette fled his home country during the French Revolution, but the "Hero of Two Worlds" regained prominence as a statesman before his death on May 20, 1834.

Early Years

Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roche Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, was born into a family of noble military lineage on September 6, 1757, in Chavaniac, France.

Lafayette's father was killed in battle during the Seven Years War, and his mother and grandmother both died in 1770, leaving Lafayette with a vast inheritance. He joined the Royal Army the following year, and in 1773 married 14-year-old Marie Adrienne Françoise de Noailles, a member of another prominent French family.

Colonial Ally

Inspired by stories of the colonists' struggles against British oppression, Lafayette sailed to the newly declared United States in 1777 to join the uprising. He was initially rebuffed by colonial leaders, but he impressed them with his passion and willingness to serve for free, and was named a major-general in the Continental Army. His first major combat duty came during the September 1777 Battle of Brandywine, when he was shot in the leg while helping to organize a retreat. General [George Washington](#) requested doctors to take special care of Lafayette, igniting a strong bond between the two that lasted until Washington's death.

Following a winter in Valley Forge with Washington, Lafayette burnished his credentials as an intelligent leader while helping to draw more French resources to the colonial side. In May 1778, he outwitted the British sent to capture him at Bunker Hill, later renamed Lafayette Hill, and rallied a shaky Continental attack at Monmouth Courthouse to force a stalemate.

After traveling to France to press [Louis XVI](#) for more aid, Lafayette assumed increased military responsibility upon his return to battle. As commander of the Virginia Continental forces in 1781, he helped keep British Lieutenant General Lord Cornwallis' army pinned at Yorktown, Virginia, while divisions led by Washington and France's Comte de Rochambeau surrounded the British and forced a surrender in the last major battle of the Revolutionary War.

Post American Revolution

Known as the "Hero of Two Worlds" after returning to his home country in December 1781, Lafayette rejoined the French army and organized trade agreements with [Thomas Jefferson](#), the American ambassador to France.

With the country on the verge of major political and social upheaval, Lafayette advocated for a governing body representing the three social classes, and drafted the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. Named commander of the Paris National Guard as violence broke out in 1789, Lafayette was obligated to protect the royal family, a position that left him vulnerable to the factions vying for power.

He fled the country in 1792, but was captured by Austrian forces and didn't return to France until 1799.

Lafayette maintained a low profile while Napoleon Bonaparte took power as emperor of France, but he was elected to the Chamber of Deputies during the Hundred Days and vehemently argued for Napoleon's abdication following the defeat at the Battle of Waterloo in July 1815.

After Charles X was overthrown during the July Revolution in 1830, Lafayette was presented with the opportunity to become dictator. The aging statesman demurred to let rule pass to Louis-Philippe, and instead was reestablished as commander of the National Guard. Following a battle with pneumonia, he died on May 20, 1834.

MLA Style

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<http://www.biography.com/people/marquis-de-lafayette-21271783>.