

# **Sons of the American Revolution**

## **250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

### **Event Planning Guide**



**The goal of this planning guide is to provide states and chapters with the tools and resources to support SAR 250 parallel events**

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**National Society Sons of the American Revolution  
Strategic Plan 2035 (FINAL – Approved 3/1/25)**

## **Strategic Objective 2A**

***Each state and chapter will support SAR 250 signature events with a parallel event they sponsor in partnership with local historical, veteran, and/or civic organizations***

## **Planning Guidelines for a 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ceremony**

**PURPOSE:** Provide suggested guidance for a SAR 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ceremony by Sons of the American Revolution Chapters and States.

### **Preparations:**

1. The first step to take is to correctly identify an event.
2. Locate a property for the commemoration and contact the individual responsible for the property to ensure a ceremony is allowed. Visit the property to determine if the event can be conducted.
3. Identify date and time of proposed ceremony.
4. Contact State Society to include the State President, State Color Guard Commander, Chapter leadership, Color Guard and Chaplain.
5. Determine what actions will commemorate the event.
6. After date/time are approved, prepare a draft agenda. Determine who will conduct the ceremony as emcee, lead the various pledges, conduct the commemoration and other needed presentations and participants. Below is a suggested format for the agenda.
7. Provide emergency operations by contacting local Fire & Emergency and Law Enforcement. Need to determine safe egress in case of detrimental actions. Need contacts in case of health emergencies. Let law enforcement know of musket firings.
8. Send invitations to local officials, media, the public, SAR, DAR and C.A.R. Chapter/Societies. Determine who desires to participate in the ceremony. Identify the presenters, color guard, musket squad and VIPs.
9. Finalize the Agenda.
10. Send directions to the site with parking instructions and provide the agenda to participants.
11. Arrange podium, seating and photography.

## **Conduct (agenda) of a Ceremony:**

1. Welcome and Greetings (emcee)
2. Presentation of the Colors (Color Guard)
3. Invocation (Chaplain)
4. Pledge of Allegiance (designated compatriot)
5. SAR Pledge by SAR Compatriots (designated compatriot)
6. Introduction of guests, dignitaries and descendants of the patriot (emcee)
7. Introduction of the assembly to the Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (designee).
8. Commemoration of the Event.
9. Presentation of wreaths (order as prescribed by National Policies) (representatives).
10. Presentation of suitable song (director) or music.
11. Musket Salute (fire 3 times) (musket squad).
12. SAR Recessional (designated compatriot)
13. Retire the Colors (color guard)
14. Present certificates of appreciation as desired. (emcee)
15. Benediction (Chaplain)
16. Closing remarks (emcee)

## **After the Ceremony:**

1. Clean up the area.
2. Provide appropriate appreciation to the responsible individual/organization for the cemetery and participants.
3. Send thanks to municipal organizations that participated
4. Provide Information to all chapters/compatriots attending the ceremony.
5. Send update report to the State Society, Americanism Chairs, provide the State Color Guard Commander with list of compatriots in colonial attire.
6. Send local media notifications. Send articles to the SAR National Magazine, National Color Guard Magazine, local media and State Society newsletters/bulletins.

## **Event Ideas**

Have FUN! SAR events should be fun for you and should be fun, engaging and enjoyable for your target audience – the PUBLIC!

Cosponsor the event with your local American Legion, VFW, Veteran, DAR, C.A.R., civic or historical groups. This will amplify your event and allow you to share the planning process.

Promote your 250 event to the local council, chamber of commerce, community and 250 commission

Army Events on or near June 14, 2025:

- Commemoration of George Washington as Commander in Chief
- Commemoration of Bunker Hill (Breed's Hill), which occurred on June 17, 1775
- Have a speaker on the Birth of the Army and George Washington as Commander in Chief
- Incorporate a Flag Day ceremony into the event to include Flag Folding, Flag Retirement or presentation of an SAR Flag Certificate
- Incorporate the Army Song (The Army Goes Rolling Along)
- U.S. Army 250 official theme is "This We'll Defend"

Navy Events on or near October 13, 2025:

- Commemoration of Commodore John Barry, Father of the Navy, and John Paul Jones
- Conduct a Flag Raising Ceremony of the Grand Union Flag in honor of John Paul Jones raising the flag on the Alfred in December 1775
- Commemoration of the First Amphibious Assault, the Raid on Nassau, in March 1776
- Have a speaker on the Birth of the Navy
- Hold an event at a local lake or other body of water
- Incorporate the Navy Song (Anchors Aweigh)

## Marine Corps Events on or near November 10, 2025:

- Hold an event at a local tavern. The birthplace of the Marines is Tun Tavern in Philadelphia.
- Commemoration of the First Amphibious Assault, the Raid on Nassau, in March 1776
- Have a speaker on the Birth of the Marines
- Commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Marines Corps Birthday Ball, first held in 1925
- Read the remarks of Maj Gen John Lejeune, Commandant, during the first Birthday Ball
- Incorporate the Marines' Hymn
- Tie into local Veterans Day events

## Other event ideas:

- Hold events at the courthouse, church or town square where recruiting for military services would have occurred
- Present colors at a public event for the birth of the military forces
- Community engagement event with active service members and veterans
- Coordinate events with a local military base or military museum
- Recognize veterans of the respective services during the event
- Hold events at local veteran retirement homes and senior living facilities
- Present Blue Star flag cards / name tags for family members at events
- Serve a birthday cake at your event in honor of the military service
- Hold a 250 military service birthday dinner
- Incorporate music into your event, Fife & Drums, Bugle
- Luncheons / receptions in a restaurant / tavern
- Crafts / hands-on activities station or tent for youth and the public, to include demonstrations or giveaways
- Color Guard Interpretive engagement at station tent / table
- Youth activities–scavenger hunt, recruiting day, interpretative station
- Library based events – book reading for youth
- Plant and dedicate a 250 liberty tree or memorial bench

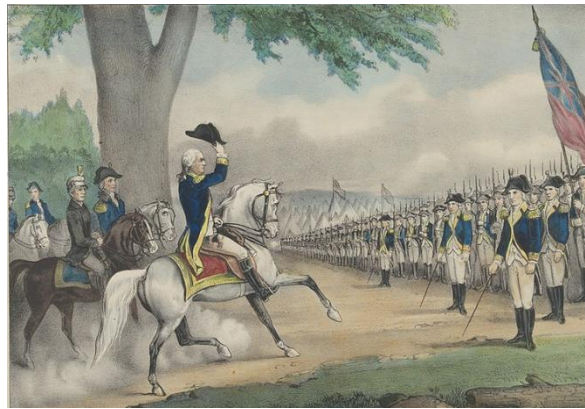
## Promotional Flyer: Adapt for Your Event

The Sons of the American Revolution

Invite you to Participate in the

250th Anniversary Commemoration

Founding of the U.S. Army



June 14, 2025, 2:00pm, Courthouse Square

Celebrate a Defining Moment in American History

Join us as we mark 250 years of the birth of our military forces that heralded a new nation. This commemorative event honors the courage, determination, and sacrifice that forever changed the course of history.

### Event Highlights

- **250<sup>th</sup> Ceremony:** Welcoming Remarks by the Mayor, Keynote Speaker, Patriotic Music, SAR Continental Color Guard, Commemorative Wreath Presentation
- **Historical Reenactments:** Watch dramatic commemorations and living history, complete with period costumes and authentic weaponry.
- **Interactive Exhibits & Artifacts:** Explore period artifacts and engaging displays that transform the revolutionary era into a tangible experience.
- **Family & Community Activities:** Enjoy colonial crafts, storytelling sessions, and interactive games designed to educate and inspire visitors of all ages.

*For more information, contact Chapter President at email address*

# **U.S. Army Founding History**

**The United States Army was founded on June 14, 1775  
General George Washington was appointed Commander in Chief on June 15,  
1775 and was commissioned on June 19, 1775, assuming command of the  
Continental Army at Cambridge, MA on July 3, 1775**

The Continental Congress authorized the formation of the Continental Army on June 14, 1775, to provide for the common defense of the colonies against British forces during the Revolutionary War. Prior to this date, each colony relied on its own militia of part-time civilian soldiers, to provide defense. However, the growing threat from British forces necessitated the creation of a professional army. On that date, the Congress incorporated patriot militia forces already in place outside Boston (22,000 troops) and New York (5,000) and authorized the additional enlistment of ten companies of expert riflemen to serve the united colonies for one year. Therefore, the first branch of the Army that was formed was the Infantry. The resolution read as follows:

*“Resolved, that six companies of expert riflemen be immediately raised in Pennsylvania, two in Maryland, and two in Virginia...that each company, as soon as completed, shall march and join the Army near Boston, to be there employed as light infantry, under the command of the chief Officer in that army.”*

The Virginia companies went to Daniel Morgan and Hugh Stephenson, who raised Morgan's Riflemen and the Berkeley County Riflemen in less than seven days. The resulting march to Boston, covering 600 miles in three weeks, became known as the Beeline March due to the rapid response of the two companies to reach Boston and augment the Continental forces. Pennsylvania organized nine companies of riflemen into the Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment. The two rifle companies from Maryland were led by Captains Michael Cresap and Thomas Price, both raised in Frederick County.

The first resolution creating the infantry was followed two days later by the formation of the Adjutant General's Corps, Corps of Engineers, Finance Corps and Quartermaster Corps. In late July, three additional special branches were added including the Army Medical Department, the Chaplains Corps and the Judge Advocate General's Corps. The Artillery was formed on November 17, followed by the Cavalry on December 12.

According to the Museum of the U.S. Army, over 231,000 men served in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. Of that number, no more than 48,000 men served at one time, and no more than 13,000 were deployed in one place. In addition to the number of men who served in the Continental Army, upwards of 145,000 men served in colonial militias that fought alongside the Army.



# **U.S. Navy Founding History**

**The United States Navy was founded on October 13, 1775  
John Barry was appointed Captain in the Continental Navy on March 14, 1776.**

The Continental Congress approved a resolution creating the Navy on 13 October 1775 and created an advisory committee that recommended the purchase of two vessels to be armed for the purpose of seizing British supplies, one with 10 guns and the other with 14 guns.

On October 30, Congress decided to add two more ships, one of 20 guns and the other slightly larger. The latter ship was purchased by the committee on November 4, 1775, and renamed the Alfred. It was a former merchant ship captained by John Barry, who assisted in her entry into the Continental service. Alfred was commissioned as a 24-gun frigate in Philadelphia, PA, on December 3, 1775, and served as the naval flagship.

On December 13, 1775, Congress authorized the building of thirteen frigates within the next three months, five ships of 32 guns, five with 28 guns and three with 24 guns.

John Paul Jones was appointed as a 1st Lieutenant of the new frigate Alfred on December 7, 1775, and had the honor of hoisting the first U.S. ensign, the Grand Union Flag, over the vessel. Alfred was the lead ship in the Raid of Nassau on March 3-4, 1776, the first naval amphibious operation, which captured guns, powder and other supplies for the Continental Army.

On March 14, 1776, Barry received a Captain's commission in the Continental Navy with command of the warship Lexington. He commanded the brig until October 1776, capturing several British vessels. He captured the British sloop Edward off the Virginia Capes on April 7, 1776, one of the first Royal Navy ships to be taken after a battle by the Continental Navy..

Jones commanded one of the most important Naval battles of the American Revolution, the Battle of Flamborough Head, on September 23, 1779, off the coast of England, between the USS Bonhomme Richard and the HMS Serapis. After sustaining significant damage during the engagement, the Richard was sinking. Asked to surrender, Jones uttered his famous words, "I have not yet begun to fight!" Jones then locked his ship onto the Serapis and cleared the British deck with his deck guns in a fierce battle. Jones boarded and took command of the Serapis, allowing the Richard to sink.

Barry served in the navy throughout the Revolutionary War, commanding several warships. He authored the first American navy signal book, published in 1780, to improve communications at sea among American vessels traveling in formation. He and his crew of the USS Alliance fought and won the last naval battle of the American Revolution south of Cape Canaveral, Florida on March 10, 1783.

# **U.S. Marines Corps Founding History**

**The United States Marine Corps was founded on November 10, 1775  
Capt. Samuel Nicholas, Commandant, was commissioned on November 28, 1775**

On November 10, 1775, the Second Continental Congress authorized the formation of two battalions of Marines for service as landing forces with the naval fleet, marking the birth of the United States Marine Corps. The first and only Commandant of the Continental Marines was Samuel Nicholas, commissioned a Captain on November 28, 1775, and promoted to Major on June 25, 1776. By tradition, Tun Tavern in Philadelphia is considered the birthplace of the U.S. Marine Corps as its first recruiting post. The proprietor of the tavern was Robert Mullen, who led recruiting efforts and received a commission as Captain in June 1776.

Only one battalion was formed by December, with five companies and about 300 men. Capt. Nicholas assumed command of this first detachment of marines on board the naval flagship USS Alfred, which led the Raid of Nassau in the Bahamas on March 3-4, 1776. This marked the first amphibious operation by the new naval and marine forces, which captured two forts, occupied Nassau and seized large stores of supplies.

When returning from the Bahamas, the crew engaged in a naval battle with the British frigate HMS Glasgow on April 6, 1776, off the coast of New York City. In that engagement, Lieutenant John Fitzpatrick became the first Continental Marine killed in combat. Four marines were wounded and seven were killed in that battle. Later that month, John Martin was recruited to serve aboard the USS Reprisal, making him the first of at least 13 African Americans to serve as Marines during the Revolutionary War.

On September 5, 1776, the naval committee published the uniform standards for the Continental Marines that specified green coats with white facings and a black leather high collar to protect the neck against slashes. The new uniform standards served to distinguish Marines from the blue coats of the Continental Army and Navy. In January of 1777, Continental Marines took part in their first land battle when they joined with the Continental Army to defeat the British at the Battle of Princeton in New Jersey.

The Marines were involved in many major engagements throughout the war. In March of 1783, the Marines took part in the Last Naval Battle of the American Revolution off the coast of Florida. This was a decisive American victory for Captain John Barry and his crew on the USS Alliance, which was transporting Spanish silver to support the Continental cause. In all, over the course of the war, the Continental Marines had only 49 men killed and just 70 wounded, out of a force of roughly 130 Marine Officers and 2,000 enlisted.

## Sample Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, the Sons of the American Revolution, organized in 1889 and federally chartered in 1906, are celebrating the 250th anniversary of the founding of America, and have proclaimed 2023 to 2033 as the “Decade of the American Revolution.”

**WHEREAS**, the American Legion having been federally chartered on September 16, 1919 as a wartime veterans organization based on the four pillars of Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth; and

**WHEREAS**, the Sons of the American Revolution honors our Revolutionary War patriot ancestors by promoting patriotism, serving our communities and educating and inspiring future generations about the founding principles of our Country.

**WHEREAS**, the American Legion and The Sons of the American Revolution declare their goals and objectives are complimentary

**WHEREAS**, the United States Army was created June 14, 1775, the United States Navy was created October 13, 1775 and the United States Marines were created November 10, 1775, and each date should be celebrated as the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation/birth of the respective branches,

**WHEREAS**, the Sons of the American Revolution and the American Legion will take steps to recognize the creation of the United State Armed Forces by means outlined by their respective organizations and by presenting a signed copy of this resolution at each other’s National Congress/Convention, and

**NOW, THEREFORE**, (We,I), \_(Name)\_\_\_\_\_, (City Council, Mayor, Position) of the (City, County, State)\_\_\_\_\_ encourage all Citizens to join with the Sons of the American Revolution, the American Legion and other patriotic, community, and veterans organizations, on \_\_\_(Day)\_\_\_, \_\_\_(Date)\_\_\_, \_\_\_(Year)\_\_\_ to commemorate this important event in the history of our great country.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I (We) hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the (City, County, State) this \_\_\_(Day)\_\_\_, \_\_\_(Month)\_\_\_, \_\_\_(Year)\_\_\_,

(Seal)

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(Name)  
(Title)

## Promotional Postcard – Army

Upload and order this postcard design (front and back) on Vistaprint



### Our Mission

The Sons of the American Revolution honors our patriot ancestors by promoting patriotism, serving our communities, and educating and inspiring future generations about the founding principles of our country.

### Won't You Join Us?

This country was founded by brave men and women who were willing to sacrifice everything in order to create the country we love today.

Do you have what it takes to carry on that legacy?

Where does your American story begin?

**Let us help you find out.**

Connect with us online

[www.sar.org](http://www.sar.org)





## Promotional Postcard - Navy

BIRTH OF THE NAVY - October 13, 1775



USS Alfred (December 03, 1775) - W. Nowland Van Powell

WHERE DOES YOUR AMERICAN STORY BEGIN?

### Our Mission

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### Won't You Join Us?

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Do you have what it takes to carry on that legacy?

Where does your American story begin?

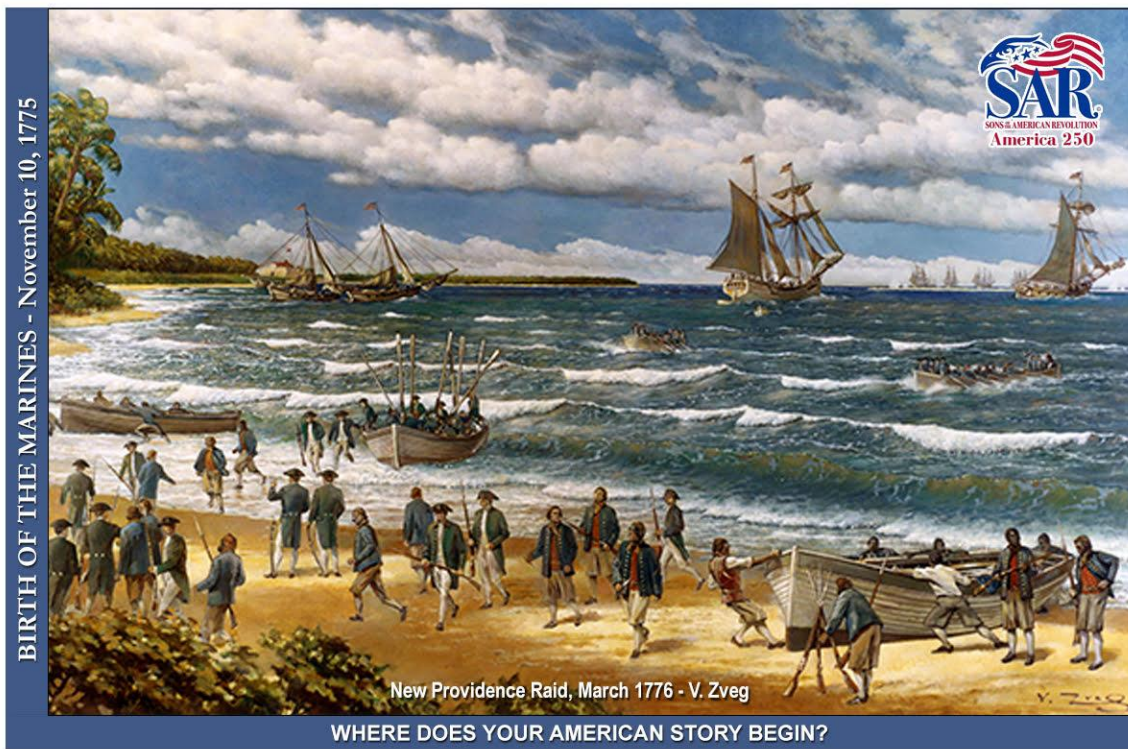
**Let us help you find out.**

Connect with us online

[www.sar.org](http://www.sar.org)



## Promotional Postcard - Marines



### Our Mission

The Sons of the American Revolution honors our patriot ancestors by promoting patriotism, serving our communities, and educating and inspiring future generations about the founding principles of our country.

### Won't You Join Us?

This country was founded by brave men and women who were willing to sacrifice everything in order to create the country we love today.

Do you have what it takes to carry on that legacy?

Where does your American story begin?

**Let us help you find out.**

Connect with us online

[www.sar.org](http://www.sar.org)



# Army, Navy & Marines 250 Event Report

**Event Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapter/State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Brief Description:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participating Organizations:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Total Number of Participants:** \_\_\_\_\_

**# of Public Participants:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Media Coverage:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Proclamations:** \_\_\_\_\_

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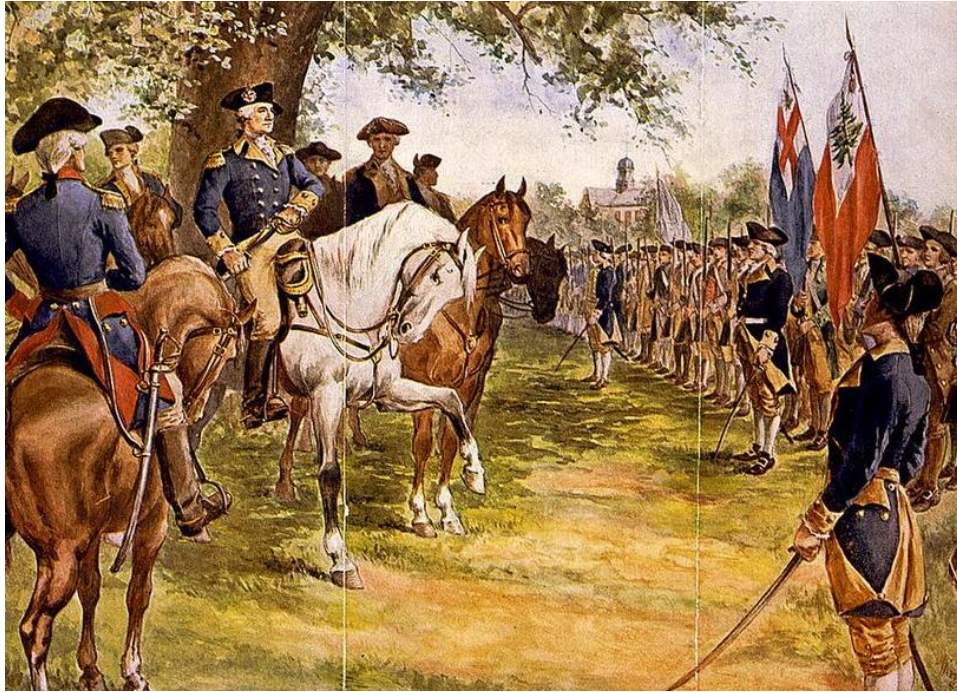
**SAR Postcards at Event (Y/N):** \_\_\_\_\_

*Send this report and photos to the America 250 Committee at [SAR250Events@gmail.com](mailto:SAR250Events@gmail.com)*



## APPENDIX – Public Domain Images

### Army



Washington Taking Command of the American Army under the Old Elm at Cambridge, circa 1908  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Washington\\_taking\\_command\\_of\\_the\\_American\\_army\\_under\\_the\\_old\\_elm\\_at\\_Cambridge\)\\_\\_-\\_Merrill\(%3F\)\\_LCCN93511447.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Washington_taking_command_of_the_American_army_under_the_old_elm_at_Cambridge)__-_Merrill(%3F)_LCCN93511447.jpg)



Washington Taking Command of the American Army – At Cambridge, MA, July 3rd, 1775, Circa 1876  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Washington\\_Taking\\_Command\\_of\\_the\\_American\\_Armey%E2%80%93At\\_Cambridge,\\_Massachusetts,\\_July\\_3rd,\\_1775\\_MET\\_DP853566.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Washington_Taking_Command_of_the_American_Armey%E2%80%93At_Cambridge,_Massachusetts,_July_3rd,_1775_MET_DP853566.jpg)





Battle of Long Island, August 27, 1776  
 National Guard Heritage Painting by Domenick D'Andrea, 2004  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:BattleofLongisland.jpg>



The Death of General Warren at the Battle of Bunker's Hill by John Trumbull, 1786  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The\\_Death\\_of\\_General\\_Warren\\_at\\_the\\_Battle\\_of\\_Bunker%27s\\_Hill.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Death_of_General_Warren_at_the_Battle_of_Bunker%27s_Hill.jpg)



# Navy



The Action Between the Frigates Bonhomme Richard (Capt John Paul Jones) And HMS Serapis, During The Battle Of Flamborough Head, 1779. Oil on canvas by Richard Paton, 1780.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The\\_action\\_between\\_the\\_Serapis,\\_capt.\\_Pearson,\\_the\\_Countess\\_of\\_Scarborough,\\_and\\_Paul\\_Jones%E2%80%99s\\_Squadron.\\_R.Paton\\_-\\_K325.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_action_between_the_Serapis,_capt._Pearson,_the_Countess_of_Scarborough,_and_Paul_Jones%E2%80%99s_Squadron._R.Paton_-_K325.jpg)



Serapis and Bonhomme Richard

Engraving by Balthasar Friedrich Leizelt based on painting by Richard Paton, circa 1780-1790

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Serapis\\_and\\_Bonhomme\\_Richard.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Serapis_and_Bonhomme_Richard.jpg)



Continental Ship Alfred, depicting Lieutenant John Paul Jones raising the first American flag as Alfred was placed in commission at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 3 December 1775. Alfred was flagship of Commodore Esek Hopkins' Continental Navy flotilla during the remainder of 1775 and the first four months of 1776. Oil painting by W. Nowland Van Powell  
Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NH\\_85212-KN.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NH_85212-KN.jpg)



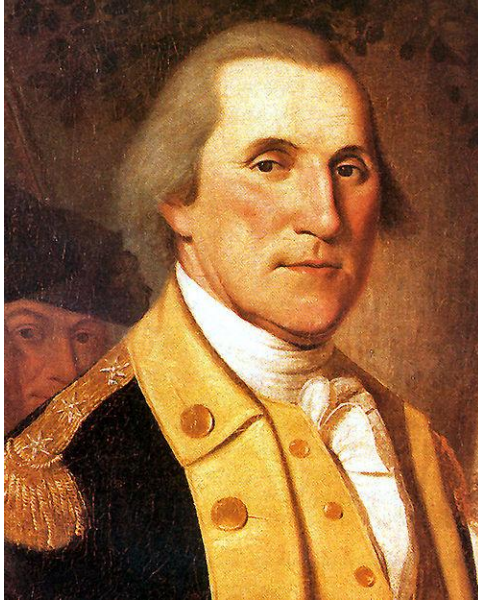
First Recognition of the American Flag by a Foreign Government", 14 February 1778  
Painting in oils by Edward Moran, 1898. It depicts the Continental Navy Ship Ranger, commanded by Captain John Paul Jones, receiving the salute of a French squadron.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:First\\_Recognition\\_of\\_the\\_American\\_Flag\\_by\\_a\\_Foreign\\_Government.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:First_Recognition_of_the_American_Flag_by_a_Foreign_Government.jpg)



## Marines



The Battle of Nassau, March 1776, the first amphibious operation by the Continental Marines. Oil on canvas painting by V. Zveg, 1973, depicting landing on New Providence Island, Bahamas.  
Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Battle\\_of\\_Nassau.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Battle_of_Nassau.jpg)



George Washington, Commander in Chief  
James Peale, after Charles Willson Peale, circa 1787-1790  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:George\\_Washington\\_as\\_CIC\\_of\\_the\\_Continental\\_Army\\_bust.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:George_Washington_as_CIC_of_the_Continental_Army_bust.jpg)



Major Samuel Nicholas, Founding Commandant of the Continental Marines  
by Maj. Donna J. Neary, USMCR, 1989  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Portrait\\_of\\_First\\_Leader\\_of\\_Marines,\\_Maj.\\_Samuel\\_Nicholas.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Portrait_of_First_Leader_of_Marines,_Maj._Samuel_Nicholas.jpg)



Commodore John Barry  
Father of the U.S. Navy  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John\\_Barry\\_by\\_Gilbert\\_Stuart.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John_Barry_by_Gilbert_Stuart.jpg)



John Paul Jones  
by Charles Wilson Peale, c1781  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John\\_Paul\\_Jones\\_by\\_Charles\\_Wilson\\_Peale,\\_c1781.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John_Paul_Jones_by_Charles_Wilson_Peale,_c1781.jpg)

Use these images on programs or other event promotional materials

