**1 January 1776** British soldiers in Boston send copies of the King’s speech of 26 October across to the colonial lines. The copies just recently arrived in the city. The King’s words fill the Americans with resolve and dash any hope of accommodation with the British. General Washington orders that the men surrounding Boston now be called the Continental Army.

Ships of the Royal Navy open fire on Norfolk, Virginia setting it alight. Over three days, one-third of the town will be destroyed.

*On the white rocks which guard her coast*, an ode by William Boyce (64) to words of Whitehead, is performed for the first time, in the Great Council Chamber of St. James’ Palace, London.

**2 January 1776** Empress Maria Theresia abolishes torture in Austria, Bohemia, Galicia and the Banat.

*La vera costanza*, a dramma giocoso by Pasquale Anfossi (48) to words of Puttini, is performed for the first time, in Teatro delle Dame, Rome.

**3 January 1776** *Le due contesse*, an intermezzo by Giovanni Paisiello (35) to words of Petrosellini, is performed for the first time, in Teatro Valle, Rome.

**5 January 1776** New Hampshire adopts a revolutionary constitution at Exeter.

**6 January 1776** Franz Joseph Haydn’s (43) new symphony (no.60) is performed, possibly for the first time, between the acts of Regnard’s play *Le distrait*, at the Kärntnertortheater, Vienna.

**9 January 1776** The expedition of Colonel Henry Knox departs the eastern shore of the Hudson River at Albany and begins the trek carrying 58 mortars and cannon over the Berkshires in the middle of winter.

**10 January 1776** Printer Robert Bell begins selling Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* in Philadelphia. It is a pamphlet laying out the arguments for immediate independence and the follies of monarchy. Within a few months it will sell 100,000 copies throughout the colonies.

**18 January 1776** Citizens of Georgia detain Royal Governor James Wright and place him under house arrest.

**24 January 1776** Colonel Henry Knox reaches Framingham, Massachusetts with 43 cannon and 16 mortars, having carried them overland from Fort Ticonderoga.

**25 January 1776** Tommaso Traetta’s (48) opera seria *La Merope* to words of Zeno is performed for the first time, in Teatro Ducale, Milan.

**8 February 1776** *Stella* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe is premiered in Hamburg.

**11 February 1776** Royal Governor James Wright of Georgia escapes to a British warship, *HMS Scarborough* in Savannah harbor.

**13 February 1776** Domenico Cimarosa’s (26) one-act comedies *I sdegni per amore* and *I matrimoni in ballo* are presented before King Ferdinando IV of Sicily in Teatro Nuovo, Naples. It is the first music of Cimarosa to receive a command performance.

**17 February 1776** The first volume of Edward Gibbon’s *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* is published.

By imperial decree, the Burgtheater in Vienna becomes the Hof-und National Theater, a home for German opera.

**20 February 1776** *La Contadina fedele*, an opera by Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf (36), is performed for the first time, in the Turm-Theater, Johannisberg, near Jauernig (Javorník).

**22 February 1776** *Phoebe at Court*, an operetta by Thomas Augustine Arne (65) to his own words after Lloyd, is performed for the first time, in the Little Theatre, Haymarket.

**23 February 1776** *Walder*, an ernsthafte Operette by Georg Benda (53) to words of Gotter after Marmontel, is performed for the first time, in Gotha.

**27 February 1776** News of the British Parliament’s Declaratory Acts of last December reaches Philadelphia.

Colonials surprise a British-Loyalist column at Moore’s Creek bridge (near Wilmington, North Carolina) causing heavy casualties.

**2 March 1776** The Continental Congress appoints Silas Deane as a secret envoy to France to assess whether that country would be likely to support the colonies in a fight for independence.

**3 March 1776** Colonial naval forces capture New Providence (Nassau), Bahamas and carry off its military stores.

**4 March 1776** During the night of March 4-5 3,000 colonial troops occupy the Dorchester Heights overlooking Boston setting up fortifications and gun emplacements with cannon and mortars from Fort Ticonderoga.

**5 March 1776** British troops in Boston begin operations to assault the colonial positions on the Dorchester Heights. A furious storm comes up and the plan has to be postponed.

*Zemire und Azor*, a komische Oper by Christian Gottlob Neefe (28) to words of von Thummel after Marmontel, is performed for the first time, in Leipzig.

**6 March 1776** With a fierce winter storm still raging in Boston, British commander General William Howe calls off the attack on Dorchester and orders the evacuation of Boston.

**7 March 1776** General Howe communicates to General Washington his willingness to evacuate Boston and not destroy the city, if the colonials do not molest them. With the urging of the Massachusetts leaders, Washington accepts.

**9 March 1776** *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith is published in Britain.

**14 March 1776** The Continental Congress votes to disarm the Tories, colonists opposed to the revolution.

**16 March 1776** Emperor Joseph II cancels the contracts of the opera buffa and ballet in the Imperial theatres, their performances having become so poor.

**17 March 1776** Empress Yekaterina II grants a monopoly to Prince Urusov to operate a theatre in Moscow. This is the beginning of the Bolshoy Theatre.

After a siege of eleven months, 6,000 British troops and 1,000 loyalists board ship in Boston and move off shore. Colonial troops begin entering the town.

Colonial naval forces end their occupation of the Bahamas.

A rondo, duet and aria buffa by Luigi Cherubini (15) are performed for the first time, at the Accademia degli Ingegnosi, Florence.

**20 March 1776** British engineers blow up Castle William in Boston harbor.

**23 March 1776** Baldassare Galuppi (69) leaves the service of the Ospedale degli incurabili in Venice.

Emperor Joseph II gives instructions about the management of the Nationaltheater, Vienna. Only one composer is mentioned by name: Antonio Salieri (25). He is to be paid an annual salary of 200 ducats.

The Continental Congress allows for privateers to attack British shipping.

**24 March 1776** John Harrison dies in London at the age of 83.

**25 March 1776** Rebel militia attack a community of escaped slaves on Tybee Island at the mouth of the Savannah River, Georgia, killing as many as they can find. The whites fear that the British will use the former slaves against them, as they have pledged to do.

New reaches Philadelphia of the British evacuation of Boston

**26 March 1776** Christian Gottlob Neefe’s (28) drama *Heinrich und Lyda* to words of “B.C. d’Arien”, is performed for the first time, in Berlin.

**27 March 1776** The British fleet carrying troops and loyalists from Boston sets sail for Halifax, Nova Scotia.

**28 March 1776** 247 Spanish colonists led by Juan Bautista de Anza arrive at the site of the present San Francisco and begin to establish a settlement.

**31 March 1776** *Litaniae de venerabili altaris sacramento* K.243 for solo voices, chorus, orchestra and organ by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (20) is performed for the first time, in Salzburg.

**2 April 1776** The Burgtheater, Vienna is proclaimed a national theatre by Emperor Joseph II.

**6 April 1776** The Continental Congress opens all ports in the 13 colonies to ships of all nations except Great Britain.

**12 April 1776** The North Carolina Assembly meeting in Halifax authorizes its delegation in Congress to support independence.

**13 April 1776** George Washington arrives in New York and begins making preparations for the defense of the city.

**18 April 1776** *Fragment on Government* by Jeremy Bentham is published in London.

**22 April 1776** The trial of Elizabeth Pierrepont, Duchess of Kingston before the House of Lords concludes. She is found guilty of bigamy. She will flee the country.

**23 April 1776** *Alceste*, a tragédie opéra by Christoph Willibald Gluck (61) to words of Calzibigi in a French translation by Lebland du Roullet, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra. The third act is not well received but the work will eventually succeed. See 26 December 1767.

**26 April 1776** Grand Duchess Natalia, wife of Grand Duke Pavel, heir to the throne, dies in childbirth in St. Petersburg.

*Cefalo e Procri*, a cantata by Johann Christian Bach (40) to words possibly by Bottarelli, is performed for the first time, at the Hanover Square Rooms, London.

**29 April 1776** The French government creates a Commission of Medicine to take information from doctors throughout the country which might help in dealing with epidemics.

**1 May 1776** *La Moda, o sia Gli scompigli domestici*, a dramma giocoso by Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf (36) to words of Cipretti, is performed for the first time, in the Turm-Theater, Johannisberg, near Jauernig (Javorník).

**2 May 1776** King Louis XVI approves a secret loan of 1,000,000 livres to the cause of the American colonies.

**4 May 1776** The Rhode Island Assembly proclaims their colony the independent state of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. They authorize their delegation in Rhode Island to vote for independence.

**6 May 1776** The appearance of British reinforcements at Quebec causes the withdrawal of colonial troops.

Symphonie concertante in G, C45 by Johann Christian Bach (40) is performed for the first time in the Hanover Square Rooms, London.

**8 May 1776** For two days, two British ships attempt to run the river defenses on the Delaware, south of Philadelphia. They fail and depart.

**10 May 1776** Congress passes a resolution offered by John Adams and Richard Henry Lee that the colonies take full control of all governmental functions, and that, if they have no effective government, that they create new governments conducive to their situation.

**12 May 1776** King Louis XVI sacks his progressive Controller-General Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot. He replaces him with Jean Étienne Bernard Ogier Clugny. Turgot’s liberalizing reform of the economy will soon be repealed.

**15 May 1776** The Virginia Assembly instructs its delegation in Congress to propose independence.

The Continental Congress adopts a measure to suppress the powers of the crown and admit to no power in the colonies other than the people.

**23 May 1776** The transportation of prisoners to North American having become “inconvenient”, royal assent is given to the Hulks Act, which allows for the housing of prisoners on decommissioned warships in the Thames.

**4 June 1776** *Ye Western gales, whose genial breath*, an ode by William Boyce (64) to words of Whitehead, is performed for the first time, in the Great Council Chamber of St. James’ Palace, London, to honor the birthday of King George III.

**7 June 1776** Richard Henry Lee of Virginia introduces the following resolution in Congress. “Resolved: That these United Colonies are, and of a right ought to be, free and independent states, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved. That it is expedient forthwith to take the most effectual measures for forming foreign Alliances. That a plan of confederation be prepared and transmitted to the respective Colonies for their consideration and approbation.”

**8 June 1776** Colonial forces attack British and Canadians at Trois Rivières, halfway between Montreal and Quebec but are driven off with heavy losses.

A British army lands near Charleston, South Carolina.

**9 June 1776** Colonial forces evacuate Montreal.

**10 June 1776**  The Continental Congress decides to put off debate on independence until 1 July, giving southern colonies time to receive instructions. In the meantime, they appoint a committee to draft a declaration of independence. The members are John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Robert Livingston, and Roger Sherman.

**12 June 1776** *Le mariages samnites*, a drame lyrique by André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry (35) to words of de Rosoi after Marmontel, is performed for the first time, in the Comédie-Italienne, Paris.

**15 June 1776** The New Hampshire legislature instructs its delegation in Philadelphia to support independence.

The New Jersey legislature orders the arrest of royal governor William Franklin (illegitimate son of Benjamin Franklin). They appoint new delegates to the Continental Congress and order them to vote in favor of independence.

The General Assembly of Delaware suspends its connection with the British Crown.

**17 June 1776** British forces reoccupy Montreal.

**18 June 1776** The Divertimento K.247 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (20) is performed for the first time, for the name day of Countess Antonia Lodron (which is actually 13 June) in Salzburg.

**20 June 1776** The General Assembly of Connecticut declares its independence from Britain.

**22 June 1776** The legislature of New Jersey appoint new delegates to the Continental Congress and order them to vote in favor of independence.

**23 June 1776** Representatives from every county in Pennsylvania meet in Philadelphia and urge their delegation in Congress to vote for independence.

**27 June 1776** The Serenade no.501 by Luigi Boccherini (33) is performed for the first time, for the wedding of the Spanish Infante Don Luis to Doña Maria Teresa Ballabriga y Rosas.

**28 June 1776** British ships bombard the American fort at Sullivan’s Island South Carolina. A diversionary attack by land troops is unsuccessful. The naval action goes all day and after nightfall the British retire having lost three frigates aground and 420 casualties and making little dent in the colonial defenses.

After receiving instructions from numerous counties, the Maryland legislature instructs its delegation in Philadelphia to support independence.

British ships are sighted off Manhattan. At 130 ships, it is the largest fleet ever assembled by Britain before the twentieth century.

**29 June 1776** The Mission San Francisco de Asis is founded by Spanish missionary Father Francisco Palou 3,000 km northwest of Mexico City.

**30 June 1776** Great Britain reintroduces troops to the thirteen rebellious colonies as they occupy Staten Island, New York. Eventually there will be 32,000 soldiers on the island, larger than any city in North America.

**1 July 1776** The Continental Congress debates for nine hours Virginia’s resolution on independence from Great Britain.

**2 July 1776** The Continental Congress votes 12-0 for independence with one colony, New York, abstaining.

The colony of New Jersey grants suffrage to female citizens. This will remain in effect until 1807.

**4 July 1776** After two days of debate and amendments, the Declaration of Independence is approved by the Continental Congress and signed by the President of the Congress, John Hancock and the Secretary of the Congress, Charles Thomson.

**5 July 1776** The Philadelphia printer John Dunlap produces printed copies of the Declaration of Independence. Congressmen begin sending them throughout the country.

**6 July 1776** The *Pennsylvania* *Evening Post* becomes the first newspaper to print the Declaration of Independence.

**7 July 1776** Silas Deane arrives in Paris as the first representative of the United States to a foreign power.

**8 July 1776** The Declaration of Independence is read publicly for the first time, before the State House in Philadelphia. This is followed by general celebrations, bonfires, and parades. The royal arms are removed from the Supreme Court at the State House and placed on a large fire.

**9 July 1776** General Washington orders that the Declaration of Independence be read by brigade commanders to troops assembled on the New York Common (City Hall Park). After the reading, citizens of the city tear down the large equestrian statue of King George III and send it to Litchfield, Connecticut to be melted into musket balls.

The New York Assembly votes to support independence, thereby allowing its representatives to sign the document in Philadelphia.

**12 July 1776** Count Yelaguine writes to Giovanni Paisiello (36) in Naples, offering him the post of music director of the Italian opera company of Empress Yekaterina II in St. Petersburg.

James Cook sets sail from Plymouth on his third voyage to the southern oceans, aboard *Resolution* to be joined later by *Discovery*.

Five British ships proceed up the Hudson past the American shore batteries. They anchor unmolested at Tarrytown.

**14 July 1776** An emissary from General Howe meets with General Washington in New York with peace overtures. Washington politely but pointedly rebuffs the offer.

**17 July 1776** Joseph Haydn’s (44) house is once again part of a general conflagration in Eisenstadt. The town hall, two churches, a monastery, a brewery and 104 houses are destroyed. 16 people are killed. This time he is probably at Esterháza and not much music is within the house. Prince Nicholas will pay to have it rebuilt.

**21 July 1776** The Serenade K.250 “Haffner” by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (20) is performed for the first time, for the evening before the wedding of Franz Xaver Anton Späth to Marie Elisabeth Haffner in Salzburg.

**24 July 1776** *Il Genio della Russia e il Genio della Prussia* by Johann Friedrich Reichardt (23) to words by Landi, is performed for the first time, as a prologue to a performance of Carl Heinrich Graun’s (†16) *Angelica e Medoro*, in the Royal Opera House, Berlin.

**26 July 1776** The DivertimentoK.251 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (20) is performed for the first time, in Salzburg for the 25th name day of his sister, Nannerl.

**29 July 1776** Giovanni Paisiello (36) leaves Naples for St. Petersburg where he will take up duties as maestro di cappella to the Russian court.

*Daliso e Delmita*, an azione pastorale by Antonio Salieri (25) to words of De Gamerra, is performed for the first time, in the Burgtheater, Vienna.

**1 August 1776** Spain separates the Viceroyalty of Rio de la Plata (Argentina, Uruguay) from Peru.

**2 August 1776** A fair copy of the Declaration of Independence now being available (handwritten by clerk of the Congress Timothy Matlack), Congressmen sign the document without fanfare in Philadelphia. As John Hancock signs he says, “There must be no pulling different ways…We must all hang together.” To which Benjamin Franklin appends “or most assuredly we will all hang separately.”

*Les romans*, a ballet héroïque by Giuseppe Cambini (30) to words of Bonneval, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra.

**3 August 1776** A Mass by Luigi Cherubini (15) is performed for the first time, in Comagnia di San Niccolò, Florence.

**8 August 1776** Upper Peru (Bolivia) and Paraguay are transfered to the Viceroyalty of Rio de la Plata.

**10 August 1776** News of the Declaration of Independence reaches London.

**16 August 1776** The first British publication of the full text of the Declaration of Independence appears in the *London Chronicle.*

**22 August 1776** Prussia and Poland settle their disputed frontier. Prussia evacuates all land on the left bank of the River Netze (Notec).

British troops begin making the five km journey from Staten Island to Long Island. They immediately set up a beachhead.

**25 August 1776** David Hume dies in Edinburgh at the age of 65.

**27 August 1776** Sunrise. 10,000 Hessians and British troops begin a frontal assault on the American defenses on the Brooklyn Heights. The line holds but the 10,000 British already on the march manage to get around American troops through the Jamaica Pass. They attack the Americans from behind. The American force on the heights disintegrates but 2,000 manage to escape. The Americans lose 300 killed and 1,100 wounded or captured, while the British and Hessians lose 380. American Generals Alexander Lord Stirling and John Sullivan are both captured. At the end of the day, however, the British do not press their advantage, and 80% of the American army on Long Island survives the day.

**29 August 1776** During the night of August 29-30, American forces secretly withdraw from Long Island across the East River to Manhattan. In one of the most remarkable military maneuvers, Washington saves his 9,000-man army to fight another day.

*Lobsinget dem Herrn* for chorus by Johannes Herbst (41) is performed for the first time.

**31 August 1776** *Wo euer Schatz ist* for female voices and strings by Johannes Herbst (41) is performed for the first time.

**4 September 1776** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (20) sends his *Misericordias Domini* K.222 to Giovanni Battista Martini (70) in Bologna, following instructions to keep him informed of his progress in composition. The accompanying letter is written by Leopold Mozart (56).

**5 September 1776** Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (62) writes to Charles Burney, thanking him for sending the first volume of Burney’s *A General History of Music.*

**6 September 1776** A hurricane strikes Guadeloupe, Martinique, and St. Christopher. Hundreds of French and Dutch ships are sunk. 6,000 people are killed.

The first submarine attack in military history takes place when Ezra Lee sails the *Turtle*, built by David Bushnell of Saybrook, Connecticut, into New York harbor and attaches a time bomb to the hull of Admiral Howe’s flagship. The bomb drifts free before it explodes and no damage is done. Lee survives.

**7 September 1776** *Ich bin der Herr* for chorus and strings by Johannes Herbst (41) is performed for the first time.

**9 September 1776** The Continental Congress adopts the name United States of America for their new country.

**10 September 1776** British troops from Long Island occupy Montresor’s Island at the mouth of the Harlem River.

**11 September 1776** A delegation from the US Congress, consisting of Benjamin Franklin, John Adams and Edward Rutledge, meets with Admiral Lord Richard Howe on Staten Island. He tells the Congressmen that accommodation can be reached along the lines laid out in the Olive Branch Petition. They inform the Admiral that it is too late for that. As a result, nothing productive comes of the meeting.

**14 September 1776** General Washington moves his headquarters north to the Harlem Heights, where most of his army is now encamped.

**15 September 1776** British and German troops land at Kip’s Bay, Manhattan sending the Americans in headlong flight to the rear. The British go on to occupy New York City. Loyalists in the city welcome them with great celebration.

**16 September 1776** The British pursuit of American forces on Manhattan Island is halted by an unexpected counterattack on the Harlem Heights. The British and Hessians retreat in disorder back towards New York, then regroup with a larger force and counterattack. Washington leads his army north to safety, effectively ending American resistance in New York city.

**September 21, 1776** 01:00 A fire of unknown origin breaks out and goes on to destroy about one-quarter of New York City. Several alleged arsonists are arrested by British troops while a few others are lynched on the spot by enraged citizens. 60% of the houses in the city are lost. Virtually all of the buildings west of Broadway are destroyed.

**September 24, 1776** Nathan Hale is executed by the British as a spy in Manhattan. He was one of several sent by Washington to find out the strength and disposition of the British forces.

**25 September 1776** *Romeo und Julie*, an ernsthafte Oper by Georg Benda (54) to words of Gotter after Shakespeare and Weisse, is performed for the first time, in Gotha.

**26 September 1776** The Continental Congress appoints Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson to join Silas Deane as emissaries to Paris. Jefferson will decline.

**7 October 1776** Grand Duke Pavel of Russia, heir to the throne, marries Princess Sophia Dorothea of Würtemberg in St. Petersburg.

**9 October 1776** Three British warships force their way past Fort Washington and Fort Constitution on the Hudson River, although sustaining a good deal of damage.

**11 October 1776** The British fleet sails past American ships hiding in a cove at Valcour Island on Lake Champlain. The Americans attack the British from the rear and a day-long engagement ends in a draw. However, the British are able to bottle up the American fleet and wait for more favorable winds. Later, Arnold’s ships are able to sneak past the British in fog.

**12 October 1776** *Sophonisbe*, a musikalisches Drama mit historischen Prolog und Choren by Christian Gottlob Neefe (28) to words of Meissner, is performed for the first time, in Leipzig.

**13 October 1776** Arnold divides his forces, sending ten ships to Crown Point while he fights a holding action with his remaining forces. Carleton catches up to him at Split Rock. The British gain the advantage and Arnold orders a retreat to Buttonmould Bay, ten miles from Crown Point, landing there and removing his men and the wounded. He sets his ships afire. His men reach Crown Point just ahead of Indians sent in pursuit by Carleton. Arnold orders the destruction of the fort at Crown Point and retreats to Ticonderoga. 80 Americans are killed in the last three days with 120 taken prisoner. Although the British are victorious in the battle, their planned invasion of New York will have to wait until next year.

The Continental Congress orders the building of two small, fast ships. This, essentially, begins the United States Navy.

**17 October 1776** General Washington orders the evacuation of Manhattan, except for Fort Washington.

**18 October 1776** As thousands of British troops land at Pell’s Point, a small number of Americans on the scene fight a successful holding action through the day until falling back.

Polish general Tadeusz Kosciuszko is given a commission in the United States Army.

**20 October 1776** Fiume is transferred from Venice to Croatia.

**25 October 1776** Georg Joseph Vogler (27) receives a contribution from Elector Palatine Karl Theodor to found the Mannheimer Tonschule.

**28 October 1776** 13,000 British and German troops attack the Americans on Chatterton’s Hill south of White Plains, New York, 40 km north of New York. In heavy fighting, they take the American positions and Washington orders a retreat north of White Plains. Both sides take over 300 total casualties.

**1 November 1776** The American army sets up defensive positions across the Bronx River to wait for a British attack which never comes.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is founded by Spanish missionaries 2,400 km northwest of Mexico City.

**5 November 1776** British troops facing the American army in White Plains begin moving south.

**9 November 1776** The Naples Cappella Reale grants Niccolò Piccinni (48) a one-year leave of absence. He has been urged to go to Paris by the Neapolitan ambassador to France.

The Neues Theater opens in Pressburg (Bratislava).

**12 November 1776** The syndicate of Johann Christian Bach (41), Carl Friedrich Abel (52) and Giovanni Andrea Gallini dissolves, partly because of a rival concert series. Gallini becomes the sole owner and begins renovations to the Hanover Square Rooms.

**16 November 1776** Niccolò Piccinni (48) and his wife depart Naples for his new appointment in Paris.

British and German troops capture Ft. Washington, New York and its garrison of 2,800 troops. Owing to the high casualties among the Germans, their troops carry out atrocities after the surrender of the fort, stopped only by the intervention of their officers. Witnessing the events on the New Jersey shore, General Washington is seen by his aides to weep.

As the American vessel *Andrew Doria* enters the harbor of St. Eustasius in the West Indies, the Dutch garrison fires a ritual salute. It is the first recognition of American sovereignty by a foreign power.

**19 November 1776** Just before midnight, 5,000 British troops led by Earl Cornwallis cross the Hudson. They march single file up the New Jersey Palisades just north of Fort Lee.

**20 November 1776** British forces capture Ft. Lee, New Jersey, across the Hudson River from Manhattan. It has been abandoned by the Americans.

**21 November 1776** The United States Army begins retreating south across New Jersey.

**23 November 1776** Washington’s army of 5,410 reaches Newark. The New Jersey militias do not turn out to help him and local citizens do not come to his aid. Travelling with the army, Thomas Paine begins work on a new essay to be called *The American Crisis*.

**25 November 1776** A British army departs New York in pursuit of the fleeing Americans, whom they outnumber over 3-1.

**26 November 1776** *Creonte*, a dramma per musica by Dmitry Stepanovich Bortnyansky (25) to words of Coltellini, is performed for the first time, in Teatro San Benedetto, Venice.

**30 November 1776** Admiral Lord Howe and General Sir William Howe issue a proclamation of reconciliation to Americans. In return for their oath of allegiance to the King, they will grant a pardon. Thousands of New Jersey residents will seek out the British army to swear allegiance.

**1 December 1776** In (New) Brunswick, New Jersey, George Washington loses about one-half of his army as enlistments in the New Jersey and Maryland militia expire and the men go home. The rest of the army retreat towards Trenton as the British cross the Raritan River and occupy the town.

**6 December 1776** Thomas Augustine Arne’s (66) dramatic poem *Caractacus* to words of Mason is performed for the first time, at Covent Garden, London.

**7 December 1776** After pausing six days in (New) Brunswick, New Jersey, the British resume the pursuit of Washington. At the same time, the American army is crossing the Delaware River to Pennsylvania.

**8 December 1776** British forces occupy Newport, Rhode Island.

**11 December 1776** The American army crosses the Delaware River into Pennsylvania.

Thomas Arne’s (66) dramatic poem *Caractacus* receives a special performance “by Command of Their Majesties.”

**12 December 1776** With British forces in Trenton, New Jersey, 45 km to the northeast of Philadelphia, Congress invests General Washington with dictatorial powers and flees to Baltimore.

**13 December 1776** A small detachment of British soldiers manages to capture General Charles Lee at a tavern near Morristown, New Jersey. At the same time, General Howe decides to suspend his advance in Trenton until the Spring.

**14 December 1776** General Howe leaves his army in Trenton and returns to New York. He establishes a line of outposts across New Jersey to protect his gains.

**18 December 1776** Padre Giovanni Battista Martini (70) responds to the letter of 4 September and accompanying compositions by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (20). He gives them high praise.

**19 December 1776** The first installment of *The American Crisis* by Thomas Paine is published in the *Philadelphia Journal*, beginning with the words “These are the times that try men’s souls.”

**21 December 1776** Benjamin Franklin arrives in Paris. Frenchmen line the streets hoping to see him.

**23 December 1776** *The American Crisis* by Thomas Paine is published in pamphlet form in Philadelphia. Paine insists that it be sold for two pennies which will only cover the cost of printing.

**24 December 1776** The Cook expedition reaches the Kerguelen group in the south Indian Ocean. Cook records, “Perhaps no place...under the same...latitude, affords so scanty a field for the naturalist as this barren spot.”

**26 December 1776** During the night of December 25-26, General Washington and 2,400 men cross the Delaware River and attack Hessians at Trenton, New Jersey at dawn. 22 Hessians are killed, 948 captured. Americans lose two dead (frozen to death), five wounded. They retreat back across the Delaware.

**27 December 1776** The American Congress votes to give General Washington dictatorial powers for six months.

**28 December 1776** In secret circumstances in Paris, Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee meet the French Foreign Minister, the Comte de Vergennes.

**30 December 1776** The American Congress votes to send envoys to Austria, Prussia, Spain and Tuscany.

**31 December 1776** The man perceived to be the most important rival of Christoph Willibald Gluck (62), Niccolò Piccinni (48), arrives in Paris. He is to be a director of a singing school for the next three years.

General Washington manages to salvage 50% of his army by offering them a cash bonus of ten dollars if they reenlist for six weeks.

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