**1 January 1777** *Again imperial Winter’s sway*, an ode by William Boyce (65) to words of Whitehead, is performed for the first time, in the Great Council Chamber of St. James’ Palace, London.

A British force sent to retake Trenton occupies Princeton, New Jersey.

**2 January 1777** American troops halt the British advance towards Trenton.

**3 January 1777** American forces sweep around the advancing British and attack their rear guard at Princeton, New Jersey, defeating them.

**5 January 1777** Darendeli Cebecizade Mehmed Pasha replaces Dervis Mehmed Pasha as Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire.

*Günther von Schwarzburg*, a singspiel by Ignaz Holzbauer (65) to words of Klein, is performed for the first time, in the Mannheim Hoftheater. It is the first performance in this new building outside the palace.

**15 January 1777** The Electoral Residence in Bonn goes up in flames. Fire reaches a powder magazine which explodes. The fire goes on for two days and destroys most of the palace. Living next to the palace, the conflagration is witnessed by Ludwig van Beethoven (6) and his family.

Delegates to a convention in Windsor in the Hampshire grants vote to secede from both Great Britain and the United States. They call their new country New Connecticut.

**21 January 1777** *Germondo*, an opera seria by Tommaso Traetta (49) to words of Goldoni, is performed for the first time, in King’s Theatre, London. Traetta finds it tough going in London due to the great popularity of Antonio Sacchini (46).

**28 January 1777** *Nitteti*, a dramma per musica by Giovanni Paisiello (36) to words of Metastasio, is performed for the first time, at the Russian court, St. Petersburg. It is Paisiello’s first effort in Russia and is well received.

**4 February 1777** Giuseppe Lomellini replaces Fabrizio Giustiniani Banca as Doge of Genoa.

**8 February 1777** *Poems, Supposed to Have BeenWritten at Bristol, by Thomas Rowley, and Others, in the Fifteenth Century* is published anonymously in Britain. The poems were written by Thomas Chatterton, who died seven years ago.

**13 February 1777** The Marquis de Sade is arrested in Paris on an order by King Louis arranged by Sade’s mother-in-law. He is sent to the dungeon of Vincennes.

**24 February 1777** José, King of Portugal, dies in Lisbon and is succeeded by his daughter, Maria.

*A Trip to Scarborough* by Richard Brinsley Sheridan is performed for the first time, in London.

**26 February 1777** At the Concert des Amateurs in the Hôtel de Soubise in Paris, Joseph Boulogne, Chevalier de Saint Georges (31) conducts the third symphony of Simon Leduc who has recently died at the age of 33. In the middle of the adagio, Saint Georges, a close friend of Leduc, dissolves into tears. The performance has to be abandoned.

**27 February 1777** José Moñino, y Redondo, conde de Floridablanca replaces Pablo-Jerónimo de Grimaldi y Pallavicini, marqués de Grimaldi as Prime Minister of Spain.

**1 March 1777** Georg Christoph Wagenseil dies in Vienna, aged 62 years and one month.

*The State of the Prisons in England and Wales* by reformer John Howard is published this month.

**4 March 1777** The United States Congress adjourns in Baltimore.

**5 March 1777** The United States Congress convenes in Philadelphia.

**10 March 1777** James Aitken, aka John the Painter, is hanged from the mast of a Royal Navy vessel in Portsmouth harbor. After a life of crime in England, he emigrated to America and became involved in revolutionary politics. Returning to England he committed several acts of sabotage against naval installations.

*Amour pour amour*, a divertissment by André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry (36) to words of Laujon, is performed for the first time, at Versailles.

**14 March 1777** Leopold Mozart (57) petitions Archbishop Colloredo for leave to travel with his son. The Archbishop will refuse.

**15 March 1777** *Telemaco*, an opera seria by Tommaso Traetta (49) to words of de Seriman, is performed for the first time, in King’s Theatre, London.

**22 March 1777** Oldenburg is made a duchy under Friedrich August of Holstein-Gottorp.

**24 March 1777** Antonio II replaces Gaetano as Prince of Piombino.

**1 April 1777** *Sturm und Drang* by Friedrich Maximilian Klinger is performed for the first time, in Leipzig.

**13 April 1777** Salomon II Adigo replaces Tekle Haymanot II Yohannes as Emperor of Ethiopia.

**15 April 1776** The trial of Elizabeth Chudleigh, Duchess of Kingston for bigamy opens in the House of Lords.

**22 April 1776** 119 Lords unanimously pronounce Elizabeth Chudleigh, Duchess of Kingston guilty of bigamy. She will flee to the continent.

**26 April 1777** 2,000 British and loyalists land and march to Danbury, Connecticut where they burn down the town.

**27 April 1777** Domenico Cimarosa marries Costanza Suffi Palante, stepdaughter of a secretary to the Holy Roman Consul, in the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, Naples.

As they head back to their ships from Danbury, Connecticut, British and loyalists are set upon by rebels. The British have the higher losses but manage an orderly evacuation.

**6 May 1777** On the first day free of ice on the St. Lawrence River, a ship carrying Major General John Burgoyne arrives at Quebec. Burgoyne informs General Carleton that he is replacing him as commander of the northern army. By all accounts, Carleton takes the news in a gentlemanly manner.

**8 May 1777** *The School for Scandal* by Richard Sheridan is first performed at Drury Lane Theatre, London.

**13 May 1777** The library of the University of Vienna is reopened after about 20 years.

**20 May 1777** Today is the first recorded public performance by Samuel Wesley (11), at Hickford’s Rooms, London in a concert organized by Johann Christian Bach (41).

**28 May 1777** Marquise Pablo Maruzzi, the Russian charges d’affaires in Venice, writes to Ivan Perfilyevich Yelagin suggesting that the allowance for Dmitry Stepanovich Bortnyansky (26) be cut off. His opera produced last November was a failure, he has not submitted it for revisions to Baldassare Galuppi (70), and he is not attending to his studies.

**29 May 1777** Christoph Willibald Gluck (62) arrives in Paris to produce *Armide*. He is granted an immediate audience with his most ardent supporter in France, Queen Marie Antoinette.

**4 June 1777** A convention at Windsor votes to change the name of New Connecticut to Vermont.

*Driven out from Heav’n’s etherial domes*, an ode by William Boyce (65) 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.

**13 June 1777** Today is the name day of Countess Maria Antonia Lodron. Sometime within the next week, Divertimento K.287 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) is performed for the first time, in Salzburg, composed for the occasion.

**14 June 1777** The Congress adopts a flag for the United States, thirteen white stars in a union of blue with thirteen alternating red and white stripes.

**15 June 1777** Marie Jean Paul Roch Yves Gilbert Motier, Marquis de Lafayette and Baron Johann de Kalb arrive in Charleston, South Carolina. They both have been promised the rank of major general in the Army of the United States.

**20 June 1777** Ships bearing the invasion force (3,981 British, 3,116 Germans) under General Burgoyne depart St. Johns, Quebec.

General Burgoyne issues a proclamation to the people of New York and the Hampshire Grants (Vermont). He promises fair treatment to all citizens who remain in their homes and provide food for his troops and animals. Any who impede the progress of his army will find Indians causing “devastation, famine, and every concomitant horror.” (Ketchum, Saratoga, 236)

**26 June 1777** A large British army in Canada begins pushing south, departing Crown Point (New York) today.

**27 June 1777** After a checkered career of bribery and debts, Anglican clergyman and author William Dodd is hanged at Tyburn for forgery. A public petition for royal clemency is unsuccessful.

**6 July 1777** British troops from Canada occupy Fort Ticonderoga, it having just been abandoned by the Americans.

**7 July 1777** *Cephalus und Prokris*, a melodram by Johann Friedrich Reichardt (24) to words of Ramler, is performed for the first time, in the Hamburg Gänsemarckt.

**8 July 1777** A constitution for the Republic of Vermont is adopted at a convention in Windsor. It abolishes slavery, indentured servitude for adults and it is the first state to adopt universal male suffrage.

**15 July 1777** A *Te Deum* by Luigi Cherubini (16) is performed for the first time, in Florence.

**19 July 1777** *Ernestine*, an opéra comique by Joseph Boulogne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges (31) to words of Choderlos de Laclos after Riccoboni, is performed for the first time, at the Comédie-Italienne. It is a flop.

**23 July 1777** 267 British ships carrying 18,000 troops sail out of New York making for Chesapeake Bay.

Casimir Pulaski arrives at Marblehead, Massachusetts. He carries a letter of introduction from Benjamin Franklin and hopes to join the cause of the United States.

**25 July 1777** 350 British regulars and 1,650 loyalists depart Fort Oswego and move up the Mohawk River towards Albany.

**27 July 1777** Marie Jean Paul Roch Yves Gilbert Motier, Marquis de Lafayette and Baron Johann de Kalb arrive in Philadelphia to aid the revolution.

A scouting party of five militiamen are killed, scalped, and their bodies mutilated near Fort Edward. Not far away, Indians also capture two women and carry them off. One, Jane McCrae, is engaged to a loyalist officer serving with Burgoyne. The Indians kill and scalp her, carrying their prize to General Burgoyne. In camp, her fiancé recognizes her hair and the situation is reported to Burgoyne. No punishment will ever befall the killers. Within days, wildly embellished accounts of her death appear in newspapers throughout New England and New York.

**1 August 1777** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) (actually written by Leopold (57)) petitions Archbishop Colloredo to be dismissed so that he may seek his fortune elsewhere.

**2 August 1777** British forces driving east from Fort Oswego lay siege to Fort Stanwix near Rome, New York.

**3 August 1777** *Il mondo della luna*, a dramma giocoso by Joseph Haydn (45) to words of Goldoni, is performed for the first time, at the Esterháza Palace to celebrate the wedding of Prince Nicholas Esterházy’s second son, Nicholas, to Maria Anna, Countess von Weissenwolf.

**5 August 1777** About 400 Loyalists and Indians intercept 800 New York militia commanded by Brig. Gen. Nicholas Herkimer coming to the relief of Fort Stanwyx at Oriskany, New York, just west of Utica. In brutal, hand-to-hand fighting, the relief column is driven back, losing over half its strength, but the fort remains in American hands.

**16 August 1777** American militia defeat a mostly German force near Bennington, Vermont. 230 people are killed. 700 British and Hessians are taken prisoner.

**21 August 1777** The British fleet from New York enters Chesapeake Bay.

**22 August 1777** Under American pressure, and the disappearance of their Indian allies, the British lift their siege of Fort Stanwix, New York and retreat west.

**24 August 1777** 15,000 British troops land at Head of Elk, Maryland on Chesapeake Bay. In four days they will begin a march on Philadelphia.

**28 August 1777** Four weeks after their latest petition to travel was written, Leopold (57) and Wolfgang Amadeus (21) Mozart are informed by Archbishop Colloredo that they are dismissed.

**29 August 1777** *Dis ist ein Tag* for female voices and strings by Johannes Herbst (42) is performed for the first time.

**5 September 1777** In a lecture to the French Academy, Antoine Lavoisier says, “I shall henceforward designate dephlogisticated air or eminently respirable air in the state of combination and fixity, by the name of acidifying principle, or if one likes better the same meaning in a Greek word, by that of le principe oxygine.” Oxy-from the Greek for acid, gen-from the Greek, to beget.

**8 September 1777** The Bath and West of England Society is established in the City of Bath “for the Encouragement of Agriculture, Manufactures, Commerce, and the Fine Arts.” The goal is to connect scientists and intellectuals with farmers and manufacturers.

**10 September 1777** Philipp II replaces Wilhelm as Count of Schaumburg, Count and Lord of Lippe.

**11 September 1777** British troops defeat Americans at Brandywine, Pennsylvania, pushing them east, back into Philadelphia.

**13 September 1777** The British army from Canada finally crosses the Hudson River, making for Albany.

**15 September 1777** The United States Congress creates Casimir Pulaski a brigadier general and places him in command of the cavalry.

**16 September 1777** British and United States forces engage in Chester County, Pennsylvania. The day goes badly for the Americans but they are saved from annihilation by an enormous cloudburst. It is known as the Battle of the Clouds.

**18 September 1777** The United States Congress adjourns in Philadelphia. With the urging of General Washington, the Congressmen begin to flee the city.

**19 September 1777** British and German troops encounter the American force at Freeman’s Farm near Saratoga, New York. After fighting through the afternoon, the battle ends only with dusk. Both sides suffer heavy casualties but the British hold the field.

**20 September 1777** Over the night of September 20-21, the British overwhelm American forces at Paoli, Pennsylvania, 30 km west of Philadelphia.

**23 September 1777** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21), accompanied by his mother, departs Salzburg for Munich. Both Leopold (57) and Nannerl are distraught at the parting, Nannerl to the point of vomiting.

*Armide*, a drame héroique by Christoph Willibald Gluck (63) to words of Quinault after Tasso, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra. It is received blandly by the audience.

**24 September 1777** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) and his mother arrive in Munich from Salzburg.

**26 September 1777** Archbishop Colloredo of Salzburg withdraws his dismissal of Leopold (57) and Wolfgang Amadeus (21) Mozart. They were sacked for asking for another leave to travel.

British troops enter and occupy Philadelphia.

**27 September 1777** The United States Congress convenes for one day in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 100 km west of Philadelphia.

**29 September 1777** Incidental music to Voltaire’s play *Zaïre* by Michael Haydn (40) is performed for the first time, in Salzburg.

**30 September 1777** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) is received by Elector Maximilian III of Bavaria in Munich.

The United States Congress convenes in York, Pennsylvania, 130 km west of Philadelphia.

**1 October 1777** A preliminary peace treaty is signed between Spain and Portugal at Santo Ildefonso. Spain gives Portugal the Amazon basin but maintains Banda Oriental (Uruguay). Spain receives Fernando Po and the Annabon Is. from Portugal.

Divertimento K.287 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) is performed for the first time, in Munich.

**3 October 1777** Lt. Gen. Henry Clinton and 3,000 troops depart New York up the Hudson.

**4 October 1777** American forces assault the British at Germantown, ten km north of Philadelphia, but are thrown back with heavy losses.

**6 October 1777** British and Germans assault and capture Forts Montgomery and Clinton on the Hudson River, but suffer heavy losses.

**7 October 1777** The British invasion force attacks again at Bemis Heights near Saratoga but American counterattacks cause their lines to disintegrate. Over 300 people are killed.

British and Hessians capture Fort Constitution, near West Point on the Hudson River.

**11 October 1777** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) and his mother travel from Munich to Augsburg.

**12 October 1777** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) is introduced to the Governor of Augsburg, Jakob Langemantel, by his uncle, Franz Alois Mozart.

**16 October 1777** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) performs a concert in Augsburg.

**17 October 1777** Their retreat north cut off, the British invasion force of 5,985 surrenders to the Americans near Saratoga, New York, ending their plan to sever New England from the other colonies.

**22 October 1777** Concerto for three pianos K.242 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) is performed for the first time, in Augsburg, the composer at one keyboard.

A German attempt to free the Delaware River below Philadelphia fails when their attack on Fort Mercer, New Jersey is beaten back with heavy losses. They settle in for a siege.

**26 October 1777** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) and his mother depart Augsburg for Mannheim.

**30 October 1777** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) and his mother arrive in Mannheim from Augsburg.

**31 October 1777** At the Mannheim court, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) goes to hear a rehearsal of *Messiah* directed by Vice-Kapellmeister Georg Joseph Vogler (28). Vogler, however, directs his own music for more than an hour. Mozart gives up and leaves.

**1 November 1777** *Missa Sancti Hieronymi* for chorus, oboes, bassoons, trombones and organ by Michael Haydn (40) is performed for the first time, in Salzburg.

Henry Laurens replaces John Hancock as President of the Congress of the United States.

**3 November 1777** *Matroco*, a drame burlesque by André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry (36) to words of Laujon, is performed for the first time, at the home of the Prince of Condé.

**4 November 1777** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) writes from Mannheim to his father, “Deputy-Kapellmeister Vogler (26), who had composed the mass which was performed the other day, is a dreary musical jester, an exceedingly conceited and rather incompetent fellow. The whole orchestra dislikes him. But today, Sunday, I heard a mass by Holzbauer (66), which he wrote twenty-six years ago, but which is very fine. He is a good composer, he has a good church style, he knows how to write for voices and instruments, and he composes good fugues.” (Anderson, 356)

**6 November 1777** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) performs at a fete celebrating the name day of Elector Karl Theodor in Mannheim.

**7 November 1777** Britain learns of the engagement of 19 September at Saratoga.

**8 November 1777** British forces abandon Fort Ticonderoga and retreat north.

**14 November 1777** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) writes to his father after seeing Ignaz Holzbauer’s (66) *Günther von Schwarzburg* in Mannheim that “Holzbauer’s music is very beautiful. The poetry doesn’t deserve such music. What surprises me most of all is that a man as old as Holzbauer should still possess so much spirit; for you can’t imagine what fire there is in that music.” (Anderson, 374)

**15 November 1777** The Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union are adopted by the United States Congress as a framework for governing the country.

**16 November 1777** Under a Royal Navy bombardment, Americans abandon Ft. Mifflin, south of Philadelphia and row across the Delaware to Ft. Mercer.

**18 November 1777** William Pitt, Earl of Chatham speaks in the House of Lords: As to conquest, therefore, my lords, I repeat, it is impossible. You may swell every expense and every effort still more extravagantly; pile and accumulate every assistance you can buy or borrow; traffic and barter with every little pitiful German prince that sells and sends his subjects to the shambles of a foreign prince; your efforts are for ever vain and impotent—doubly so from this mercenary aid on which you rely; for it irritates, to an incurable resentment, the minds of your enemies, to overrun them with the mercenary sons of rapine and plunder, devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty! If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms—never—never—never.

**20 November 1777** In the face of overwhelming odds, US forces abandon Ft. Mercer, New Jersey on the Delaware River below Philadelphia and destroy it. This opens the river to the British as far as Philadelphia.

**27 November 1777** The Continental Congress names John Adams to join Benjamin Franklin and Arthur Lee as a commissioner to France to win a French alliance.

**1 December 1777** Friedrich Wilhelm Augustus von Steuben arrives in the United States at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. He comes at the urging of Benjamin Franklin and will be highly valuable in turning the United States Army into an organized fighting force.

**2 December 1777** The news of the “total annihilation…of Burgoyne’s army” at Saratoga reaches London in a dispatch from Guy Carleton.

**4 December 1777** News of the British surrender at Saratoga reaches Benjamin Franklin in Paris. He spends the night drafting a communiqué and printing it on his letter copier to be delivered in the morning to foreign embassies.

**6 December 1777** M. Gérard of the French Foreign Ministry meets Benjamin Franklin in Paris to draft a treaty of friendship and trade.

**8 December 1777** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) learns that he will not be receiving an appointment from the Mannheim court.

**12 December 1777** Serious treaty negotiations begin between the American commissioners and the Comte de Vergennes.

**16 December 1777** *Vittorina*, an opera buffa by Niccolò Piccinni (49) to words of Goldoni, is performed for the first time, in King’s Theatre, London.

**17 December 1777** Emperor Joseph II decrees the creation of a Singspiel company in Vienna tied to the company producing spoken plays at the Burgtheater. It will be directed by Ignaz Umlauf. See 17 February 1778.

France recognizes the independence of the United States of America.

**19 December 1777** George Washington and the Army of the United States enter their winter quarters at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, 30 km northwest of Philadelphia.

**21 December 1777** A Missa brevis in B flat K.275 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) is performed for the first time, in St. Peter’s, Salzburg.

**25 December 1777** Captain Cook reaches Christmas Island (Kiritimati, Kiribati), so named because of the date of its discovery.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (21) dates his Flute Quartet K.285 in Mannheim.

**29 December 1777** Leopold Mozart (63) writes to his son Wolfgang (21) that Michael Haydn (40) has been appointed organist in Salzburg. “Everyone is laughing. He will be an expensive organist; after each litany he swills a quart of wine.”

**30 December 1777** Elector Maximilian III of Bavaria dies of smallpox in Munich, succeeded by Karl Philipp Theodor, Elector Palatine. This results in the transfer of most of the Mannheim orchestra to Munich.

©2004-2015 Paul Scharfenberger

3 December 2015