**1 January 1779** A new contract is signed between Joseph Haydn (46) and Prince Nicolas Esterházy. This one is far more favorable to the composer than the first in remuneration and wording. Haydn may now disseminate, perform and publish his music wherever he wishes. See 1 May 1761.

*The History of Women, from the Earliest Antiquity, to the Present Time* by William Alexander is published.

William Crotch (3) plays organ before King George III and Queen Charlotte Sophia at Buckingham Palace.

*To arms, to arms ye sons of might*, an ode by William Boyce (67) to words of Whitehead, is performed for the first time, in the Great Council Chamber of St. James’ Palace, London. It is Boyce’s last court ode.

**7 January 1779** In Munich, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (22) is introduced to Elisabeth Auguste, wife of the Elector of Bavaria, by Christian Cannabich. He presents her with a copy of his recently published piano sonatas K.301-306.

**9 January 1779** The Marathas soundly defeat British forces at Wadgaon, 37 km north of Pune.

**13 January 1779** British and Marathas sign the Convention of Wadgaon. The British are required to return all their conquests since 1773. This agreement will be repudiated by the British in Bengal.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (22) departs Munich for Salzburg. He has been staying with the Weber family on his way back from Paris to Salzburg.

**14 January 1779** Paolo Renier becomes Doge of Venice.

**15 January 1779** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (22) returns to Salzburg after an absence of almost 16 months.

**17 January 1779** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (22) is named to the position of court organist by the Archbishop of Salzburg.

*Das Grab des Mufti, oder Die zwey Geizigen*, a comsiche Oper by Johann Adam Hiller (50) to words of Maissner after de Falbaire, is performed for the first time, at Theater am Rannstädter Thore, Leipzig.

Captain Cook and his expedition anchor off the island of Hawaii in Kealakekua Bay. They are immediately inundated with friendly islanders in canoes who are expecting the return of the god Lono. Cook has arrived, quite by accident, at the captial residence of the great chief Kalaniopuu.

**20 January 1779** David Garrick dies in London at the age of 63.

**30 January 1779** French forces retake their colony of Senegal, occupied by Britain since 1758.

**2 February 1779** *Samson*, an oratorio by Giuseppe Cambini (32) to words of Voltaire, is performed for the first time, at a concert spirituel, Paris.

**3 February 1779** British forces land and attack the fortress of Port Royal, near Beaufort, South Carolina. After 45 minutes, both sides run out of ammunition and are forced to withdraw.

**4 February 1779** After his application for membership in the Vienna Tonkünstler-Sozietät is accepted on condition he produce music for them on demand, Joseph Haydn (46) pens a withering reply demanding his deposit back.

**7 February 1779** William Boyce dies, possibly of gout, at his home in Kensington Gore, London, 67 years, four months and 27 days after his baptism.

**8 February 1779** After an all-night storm off Hawaii, Captain Cook discovers that his foremast has given way. He decides to return to Kealakekua Bay for repairs.

**11 February 1779** French forces occupy the British colony of Gambia.

Two Spanish ships, captained by Ignacio de Arteaga and Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra, set sail from San Blas (Nayarit), Mexico with orders to explore the Pacific coast as far north as 70°. They will reach as far as Prince of Wales Sound at 60° 30’.

**14 February 1779** *I filosofi immaginari*, a dramma giocoso by Giovanni Paisiello (38) to words of Bertati, is performed for the first time, at the Hermitage, St. Petersburg.

When Captain Cook and a detachment of Marines try to entice Chief Kalaniopuu on board a launch to take them to their ship, they are stopped by fearful islanders. Fighting ensues and Cook and several others on both sides are killed.

**16 February 1779** The earthly remains of William Boyce are laid to rest in the vault of St. Paul’s Cathedral. The funeral is sung by the combined choirs of St. Paul’s, Westminster Abbey and the Chapel Royal.

**18 February 1779** Charles Burney reports to the Royal Society on the prodigious musical abilities of William Crotch (3).

**25 February 1779** After their Indian allies desert them, the British surrender Vincennes (Indiana) to the Americans.

**26 February 1779** *Carmen saeculare*, an oratorio by François-André Danican-Philidor (52) to words of Horace, is performed for the first time, at Freemason’s Hall, London. It is extremely successful.

**3 March 1779** After taking Augusta, Georgia, a force of British and Loyalists is met by advancing Americans at Briar Creek, Georgia. They defeat the Americans and turn towards Charleston. However, the appearance of a large rebel force will send them back to Savannah.

**4 March 1779** Giacomo Maria Brignole replaces Giuseppe Lomellini as Doge of Genoa.

**11 March 1779** Louis René, Prince de Rohan-Guémenée replaces Louis Constantin, Prince de Rohan-Guémenée as Prince-Bishop of Strasbourg.

**15 March 1779** The soprano Luigia Polzelli and her husband, violinist Antonio Polzelli, are hired by Prince Nicholas Esterházy. Soon, she will become the mistress of Franz Joseph Haydn (46), a position she will hold until her departure in 1790.

**18 March 1779** Franz Ludwig von Erthal replaces Adam Friedrich Count von Seinsheim as Duke-Bishop of Würzburg.

**21 March 1779** Mediated by the French ambassador, representatives of Russia and the Ottoman Empire sign the Treaty of Aynalikavak in Istanbul. They agree not to interfere in the Crimea and remove their troops from the area.

**23 March 1779** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (23) dates his Mass in C K.317 in Salzburg.

**25 March 1779** *Enea e Lavinia*, an opera seria by Antonio Sacchini (48) to words of Bottarelli, is performed for the first time, in King’s Theatre, London.

**31 March 1779** Volume I of *Lives of the Most Eminent English PoetsLives of the Most Eminent English Poets* by Samuel Johnson is published in London.

Washington orders General John Sullivan and a force of about 4,000 into the Iroquois territory of western Pennsylvania and New York to “lay waste all the settlements around…that the country may not be merely overrun but destroyed.” (Ferling, 353)

**3 April 1779** Spain demands Gibraltar from Great Britain in return for neutrality in their war against France. Britain will reject the ultimatum.

**4 April 1779** The Mass in C “Coronation” K.317 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (23) is performed for the first time, in the Salzburg Cathedral.

**6 April 1779** Tommaso Michele Francesco Saverio Traetta dies in Venice, aged 52 years and seven days. His mortal remains will be buried near the Ospedaletto.

**8 April 1779** A Quartet for keyboard, oboe,violin and cello B67 by Johann Christian Bach (43) is performed for the first time, in the Hanover Square Rooms, London.

**11 April 1779** Louise Reichardt is born in Berlin, daughter of Johann Friedrich Reichardt (26) and Juliane Benda.

**12 April 1779** France and Spain conclude a treaty of alliance against Great Britain.

**14 April 1779** The extensive music library of William Boyce (†0), which includes the music library of Maurice Greene (†23), is auctioned by Christie and Ansell in London.

**21 April 1779** Ivan Perfilyevich Yelagin writes to Dmitry Stepanovich Bortyansky (28) in Italy, congratulating him on his successes and pointing out that they prove he is no longer in need of instruction. He is to return to Russia.

**24 April 1779** *Rose et Carloman*, a comédie héroïque by Giuseppe Cambini (33) to words of Dubreuil, is performed for the first time, at the Hôtel de Montalembert, Paris.

**25 April 1779** *La vera costanza*, a dramma giocoso by Joseph Haydn (47) to words of Puttini, is performed for the first time, at Esterháza.

**26 April 1779** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (23) dates his Symphony K.318 in Salzburg.

**2 May 1779** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (23) takes lodgings in Vienna with the mother of Constanze Weber.

**4 May 1779** *So spricht der Herr Zebaoth--Das ist unbeschreiblich* for tenor, chorus and strings by Johannes Herbst (43) is performed for the first time.

**8 May 1779** British forces occupy Gorée Island off Senegal.

**10 May 1779** A Quartet for keyboard, oboe, violin and cello B68 by Johann Christian Bach (43) is performed for the first time, in the Hanover Square Rooms, London.

The Royal Navy bombards and destroys Portsmouth, Virginia.

**13 May 1779** Peace between Prussia and Austria is concluded at Teschen (Cieszyn) with the help of Russian and French mediators. A tiny portion of Bavaria is allotted to Austria while Bayreuth and Anspach go to Prussia on the death of their childless ruler. The Palatine is united with Bavaria.

**16 May 1779** *Il vago disprezzato*, an opera buffa by Niccolò Piccinni (51), is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra.

**18 May 1779** *Iphigenie en Tauride*, a tragedy by Christoph Willibald Gluck (64) to words of Guillard after Guymond de La Touche after Euripides, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra. The work enjoys an immediate success.

**26 May 1779** Joseph Philipp Graf von Spaur replaces Ignaz Joseph Graf von Spaur as Prince-Bishop of Brixen.

**1 June 1779** British forces from New York capture the forts at Stony Point and Verplanck’s Point on the Hudson River.

**4 June 1779** *Let Gallia mourn! th’insulting foe*, an ode by John Stanley (67) to words of Whitehead, is performed for the first time, to honor the birthday of King George III.

**7 June 1779** Friedrich III replaces Philipp Joseph as Prince of Salm-Kyrburg, Prince of Åhaus and Bocholt, Wild-und Rheingraf, Count von Renneberg.

**15 June 1779** The publication of Muzio Clementi’s (27) six keyboard sonatas op.2 is announced in the *Morning Post*, London. Also announced is the publication of Clementi’s op.3 containing three duets for piano four hands and three accompanied keyboard sonatas.

**17 June 1779** French forces capture the island of St. Vincent in the Caribbean.

**21 June 1779** Spain declares war on Great Britain in alliance with France but not the United States. Soon they lay siege to Gibraltar. The siege will not be lifted until February 1783.

**24 June 1779** A second version of *Demetrio*, a dramma per musica by Giovanni Paisiello (39) to words of Metastasio, is performed for the first time, in Tsarskoye Selo.

**3 July 1779** The Counts of Leiningen are made Princes of the Holy Roman Empire.

**4 July 1779** French forces capture Grenada in the Caribbean from the British.

**5 July 1779** British troops land at New Haven, Connecticut to a barrage of musket fire from forewarned Americans. Overwhelming numbers allow the British, despite losses, to ransack, pillage and burn the town. They go on to burn Fairfield and Norwalk before returning to New York.

**6 July 1779** The French defeat the British in naval action off Grenada.

*La morte di Didone*, a dramma per musica by Ignaz Holzbauer (67) to words of Metastasio, is performed for the first time, in the National Theater, Mannheim.

**8 July 1779** British forces destroy Fairfield, Connecticut.

**9 July 1779** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (23) completes his Symphony K.319 in Salzburg.

**10 July 1779** In Egypt, John Antes (39) writes to Benjamin Franklin in Paris enclosing six quartets which he has “lately composed.”

**11 July 1779** *Lampedo*, a melodrama by Georg Joseph Vogler (30) to words of Lichtenberg, is performed for the first time, in the Hoftheater, Darmstadt.

British forces destroy Norwalk, Connecticut.

**16 July 1779** Americans capture the fortress of Stony Point on the Hudson north of New York but abandon it within two days.

**20 July 1779** Tekle Giyorgis I Yohannes replaces Salomon II Adigo as Emperor of Ethiopia.

*L’infedeltà fedele*, a commedia per musica by Domenico Cimarosa (29) to words of Lorenzi, is performed for the first time, at the opening of Teatro del Fondo, Naples.

**22 July 1779** James Wright resumes his position as Royal Governor of Georgia.

The Spanish expedition up the Pacific coast of North America anchors at Hinchinbrook Island, Alaska, which they name Magdalena.

**30 July 1779** While preparing *Echo et Narcisse* for the Paris Opéra, Christoph Willibald Gluck (65) suffers his first stroke. He will recover. Rehearsals for the opera are cancelled until early September.

**3 August 1779** The Royal Portuguese Naval Academy is founded in Lisbon.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (23) dates his Serenade K.320 in Salzburg.

**4 August 1779** *Ino*, a musikalisches Drama by Johann Friedrich Reichardt (26) to words of Brandes, is performed for the first time, in Leipzig.

**19 August 1779** American forces capture the fort on Paulus Hook, New Jersey opposite New York City. They withdraw from the fort but the victory greatly aids American morale.

**21 August 1779** *Il talismano*, a dramma giocosa by Antonio Salieri (29) to words of Goldoni, is performed for the first time, at the opening of the Teatro Cannobiana, Milan. Only Act I is performed today. Acts II and III, with music by G. Rust and words by da Ponte, will be first performed on 10 September 1788.

**22 August 1779** Silahdar Seyyid Mehmed Pasha replaces Kalafat Mehmed Pasha as Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire.

Michael Haydn (41) dates his Symphony MH284 P.14 in Salzburg.

**29 August 1779** American forces defeat loyalists and Indians on the Chumung River (at Newton) New York. They will go on to destroy many Indian villages in the Genessee River valley.

*Höret alle die ihr--Deine Missethat* for soprano, chorus and strings by Johannes Herbst (44) is performed for the first time.

**6 September 1779** French forces begin landing at Tybee Island at the mouth of the Savannah River.

A combined French-Spanish force captures the British Fort Manchac near Baton Rouge.

**14 September 1779** The Spanish expedition to explore the Pacific coast reaches San Francisco Bay on its return journey. They are able to rest and resupply themselves. Here they will learn of the declaration of war between Great Britain and Spain.

**15 September 1779** Johann Friedrich Peter (33) moves from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania to a new post as record keeper and clerk in Lititz, Pennsylvania.

**16 September 1779** Combined American and French forces begin a blockade of Savannah, Georgia.

**20 September 1779** *Pygmalion*, a monodrama by Georg Benda (57) to words of Rousseau, is performed for the first time, in Gotha.

**21 September 1779** Spanish and French from Louisiana capture the British garrison at Baton Rouge. The surrender includes Natchez and other British ports on the Mississippi.

**23 September 1779** The *USS Bonhomme Richard* defeats *HMS Serapis* in a three-hour battle in the North Sea off Flamborough Head, Yorkshire.

**24 September 1779** The *USS Bonhomme Richard* sinks. Its crew takes refuge on the ship they captured yesterday, *HMS Serapis*.

Christoph Willibald Gluck’s (65) drame lyrique *Echo et Narcisse* to words of Tschudi after Ovid, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra. It will fail after only nine performances.

**28 September 1779** Samuel Huntington replaces John Jay as President of the Congress of the United States.

**3 October 1779** *HMS Serapis*, under an American crew from the *USS Bonhomme Richard*, limps into the Texel, Netherlands.

French and American forces besieging Savannah begin to bombard the British defenses.

**4 October 1779** Mobs in Philadelphia attack the home of James Wilson, signer of the Declaration of Independence. Wilson has successfully defended almost two dozen Tories from property seizure by the radical government of Pennsylvania. Wilson joins 35 others in barricading his home and in the fighting six people are killed and over 15 wounded. Only the intervention of troops stops the “Battle of Fort Wilson.”

**6 October 1779** *Resolution* and *Discovery*, ships of the third and last expedition of Captain James Cook, anchor at Deptford, England.

**9 October 1779** A combined French and American force attack British troops in Savannah, Georgia. They are soundly repulsed. The French suffer ten times the casualties of their British counterparts.

**11 October 1779** British forces begin a two-week evacuation of Rhode Island.

**12 October 1779** *Experiments upon Vegetables, Discovering Their great Power of purifying the Common Air in the Sun-shine, and of Injuring it in the Shade and at Night. To Which is Joined, A new Method of examining the accurate Degree of Salubrity of the Atmosphere* by Dutch scientist Jan Ingenhousz is published in London. In it he describes photosynthesis.

**17 October 1779** British forces assault the Spanish fortifications at Omoa, Honduras but are defeated.

**18 October 1779** American and French forces lift their siege of Savannah, Georgia.

**20 October 1779** British forces finally take the Spanish fortifications at Omoa, Honduras.

**1 November 1779** *Il matrimonio inaspettato*, a dramma giocoso by Giovanni Paisiello (39) to words after Chiari, is performed for the first time, in Kammeniy Ostrov, St. Petersburg.

**5 November 1779** *HMS Quebec* and the French ship *La Surveillante* engage off Brest. After over six hours of close struggle the *Quebec* blows up but *La Surveillante*, completely demasted, has to be towed to port.

**11 November 1779** *Les événemas imprévus*, an opéra-comique by André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry (38) to words of d’Hèle, is performed for the first time, at Versailles.

**15 November 1779** American missionary John Antes (39) is beaten by servants of Osman Bey in Cairo and transported to prison.

**18 November 1779** A fire at Esterháza guts the “Chinese ballroom.” The *Pressburger Zeitung* will report: “Two beautiful clocks; the magnificent theatrical costumes; all the music collected at great effort and expense; the musical instruments, including the beautiful harpsichord (Flieg) of the famous kapellmeister Haiden (sic) and the concert violin of the virtuoso Lotsch (Luigi Tomasini)-were all lost to the flames which reached their height at 8:00 a.m.” Joseph Haydn (47) loses most of his marionette operas, some of his Italian operas and the orchestral parts of all his Esterhazy symphonies.

*Mirza*, a ballet by François-Joseph Gossec (45) to a story by Gardel, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra.

**21 November 1779**  The Spanish expedition to explore the Pacific coast, led by Ignacio de Arteaga and Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra, reaches its home port of San Blas, Mexico. In nine months they have explored and mapped the coast of North America as far north as Alaska.

**28 November 1779** A Spanish relief force arrives from Guatemala and the British who recently took Omoa, Honduras are obliged to withdraw.

**29 November 1779** Domenico Cimarosa (29) is appointed organist for the Royal Chapel, Naples, with no salary.

**6 December 1779** Joseph Haydn’s (47) azione teatrale *L’isola disabitata* to words of Metastasio is performed for the first time, at Esterháza for the name day of Prince Nicolas Esterházy. The production occurs in the marionette theatre since the opera house burned down on 18 November.

**7 December 1779** Seven months after his call home, Dmitry Stepanovich Bortnyansky (28) crosses the border into Russia on his way from Italy to St. Petersburg.

**14 December 1779** *Amadis de Gaule*, a tragédie lyrique by Johann Christian Bach (44) to words of de Vismes du Valgay after Quinault, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra, before Queen Marie Antoinette. It is his last complete opera, and a failure.

**16 December 1779** Jan Ladislav Dussek (19) appears in public for the first time as a pianist in Malines (Mechelen).

**18 December 1779** A ceremony lays the foundation stone for a new Esterházy Theatre. The Symphony no.70 of Joseph Haydn (47) is performed for the occasion.

**22 December 1779** *La partenza inaspettata*, an opera by Antonio Salieri (29) to words of Petrosellini, is performed for the first time, in Teatro Valle, Rome. It is a complete triumph.

**23 December 1779** King George III grants royal assent to an act granting free trade to Ireland.

The court martial of Benedict Arnold begins in Morristown, New Jersey. He is charged with war profiteering.

**24 December 1779** With the approval of King Pedro III, the Royal Academy of Sciences is founded in Lisbon.

**26 December 1779** Leaving 10,000 men in New York to counter Washington, General Clinton sails with a British fleet and 7,550 men, making for Savannah. To preserve secrecy, none of the ships’ captains are told their destination until they are at sea.

**28 December 1779** *L’italiana in Londra*, an intermezzo by Domenico Cimarosa (30) to words possibly by Petrosellini, is performed for the first time, in Teatro Valle, Rome, the composer directing from the harpsichord. It is a triumph.

**30 December 1779** *Aucassin et Nicolette, ou Les moeurs de bon vieux tems*, an opéra-comique by André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry (38) to words of Sedaine after de la Curne de Sainte-Palaye, is performed for the first time, at Versailles.

**31 December 1779** A British squadron fires on a Dutch convoy bound for France and arrests the captain. This causes the Dutch States-General to vote for unlimited support of France.

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