**1 January 1781** *Ask round the world, from age to age*, an ode by John Stanley (68) to words of Whitehead, is performed for the first time.

The first all-iron bridge is opened. It spans the River Severn at Coalbrookdale, Shropshire.

Pennsylvania troops quartered in Morristown, lacking all essentials of a modern army, mutiny. They are soon joined by men from New Jersey and Connecticut and are only held in check by threat of execution.

**2 January 1781** *Il pittore parigino*, an intermezzo by Domenico Cimarosa (31) to words of Petrosellini, is performed for the first time, in Teatro Valle, Rome.

**5 January 1781** British troops plunder Virginia’s revolutionary capital, Richmond.

**6 January 1781** About 1,000 French soldiers land on Jersey. Their attempt to take the island is thwarted by the British garrison there. Some 600 are captured. This is the last battle fought by foreign troops in the British Isles.

**7 January 1781** British forces under Brigadier General Benedict Arnold reach Richmond, Virginia, setting it alight, and withdrawing. American defenders under Governor Thomas Jefferson are powerless to stop them.

A combined force of British, Loyalist, Hessian, and Choctaw from Pensacola attack the Spanish garrison at Mobile. They are beaten off.

**10 January 1781** French mineralogist René-Just Haüy reads his first memoir on the crystallization of garnets and calcareous spars before the French Academy of Science. It is the beginning of the modern study of crystallography.

**15 January 1781** On the eve of his 53rd birthday, Niccolò Piccinni writes to Antoine Jean Amelot de Chaillou, a minister of King Louis XVI. He asks Amelot to outlaw any praise or criticism of his upcoming opera, *Iphigénie en Tauride,* until it receives twelve performances. He also asks for a gag on any comparison between his opera and Gluck’s (66) of the same name. Piccinni informs Amelot that there is a plan to perform his work and Gluck’s at the Opéra on successive nights. He asks that this be forbidden. Amelot favors the request but his committee thinks that fueling the rivalry will be lucrative for the Opéra. They deny his request.

**17 January 1781** 06:30 British regulars and loyalists Americans at Cowpens, South Carolina 315 km northwest of Charleston. By employing innovative tactics the Americans achieve an overwhelming victory in 40 minutes of fighting. One quarter of the entire British force in the south is either killed, wounded, or captured at a cost of twelve Americans killed, 60 wounded.

**23 January 1781** *Iphigénie en Tauride*, a tragédie lyrique by Niccolò Piccinni (53) to words of du Congé Dubreuil, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra. The less than successful fate of the opera is sealed at the second performance when the prima donna, Marie-Josephine Laguerre, arrives at the theatre drunk. At the suggestion of King Louis XVI she is confined in Fort L’Evéque for her crimes against opera. After two days in prison, and the intercession of the composer, Laguerre will resume her place on stage.

*Mitridate*, an opera seria by Antonio Sacchini (50) to words of Zeno, is performed for the first time, in King’s Theatre, London.

**26 January 1781** Leopold Mozart (61) and his daughter Nannerl arrive in Munich for the premiere of *Idomeneo*.

**29 January 1781** *Idomeneo, rè di Creta* K.366, a dramma per musica by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) to words of Varesco after Danchet, is performed for the first time, at the Residenz, Munich. It is very successful. Leopold Mozart (61) and Nannerl are in attendance.

**31 January 1781** Christoph Torricella begins printing music in Vienna. He will soon attract the interest of Joseph Haydn (48).

**1 February 1781** British forces capture Wilmington, North Carolina.

**2 February 1781** *Der Schuss von Gänzewiz oder Der Betrug aus Liebe*, a singspiel by Johann Rudolf Zumsteeg (21), is performed for the first time, in Stuttgart.

**3 February 1781** British naval forces capture the Dutch island of St. Eustatius along with 50 American merchantmen and 2,000 seamen.

**4 February 1781** British forces go on to occupy the Dutch islands of Sint Maarten and Sabá.

**11 February 1781** *Alessandro nell’Indie*, a dramma per musica by Domenico Cimarosa (31) to words of Metastasio, is performed for the first time, in Teatro Argentina, Rome.

**15 February 1781** Christian Gottlob Neefe (33) is named a candidate for court organist in Bonn. While there, he will be composition instructor to an aspiring young musician named Ludwig van Beethoven (10).

**17 February 1781** *La fète de mirza*, a ballet-pantomime by François-Joseph Gossec (47) to a scenario by Gardel, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra.

Spanish forces capture St. Joseph (Mississippi) from the British.

**20 February 1781** Izzet Mehmed Pasha replaces Silahdar Seyyid Mehmed Pasha as Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire.

**22 February 1781** *Emilie, ou La belle esclave*, a comédie lyrique by André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry (40) to words of Guillard, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra.

**25 February 1781** *La fedeltà premiata*, a dramma pastorale giocoso by Joseph Haydn (48) to words after Lorenzi, is performed for the first time, to open the new Esterháza opera house. It is an enormous success.

American Cavalry under Colonel Henry Lee attack a Loyalist force attack Loyalist recruits at the Haw River, North Carolina. It is such a surprise that many of the Loyalists are unarmed. 90 Loyalists are killed and most of the remaining 300 are wounded. No Americans are lost. The action stops Loyalist recruiting in the area.

**1 March 1781** The second and third volumes of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* by Edward Gibbon are published.

Maryland ratifies the Articles of Confederation, the 13th and last state to do so, thus making them effective.

**8 March 1781** Marco Antonio Gentile replaces Giacomo Maria Brignole as Doge of Genoa.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) dates his concert aria *Misera! dove son...Ah! non son io* (to words of Metastasio) K.369. He has composed it in Munich for Countess Josepha von Paumgarten, the mistress of Elector Carl Theodor. Mozart wants the elector to hire him.

French warships along with troop transports carrying American forces depart Rhode Island making for Virginia.

**9 March 1781** A large Spanish expedition from Havana begins to land troops near Pensacola.

**11 March 1781** Emperor Joseph II announces a new censorship law which, while not lifting all the bans of his mother, significantly relaxes censorship.

Anton Philipp Heinrich is born in Schönböchel (Krasny Buk), Kingdom of Bohemia, the son of a merchant in textiles, wine, and finance.

**12 March 1781** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25), in Munich, is summoned to Vienna by his employer, the Archbishop of Salzburg. His Eminence is in Vienna during the celebrations surrounding the coronation of Emperor Joseph II, and to attend his seriously ill father.

**13 March 1781** German-English astronomer William Herschel discovers Uranus using a 15 cm telescope of his own design at his home in Bath. He names it Georgium Sidus, after King George III.

**15 March 1781** British and Loyalist troops defeat a superior American force at Guilford Court House, just north of Greensboro, North Carolina, but heavy losses force them to withdraw back to Wilmington.

**16 March 1781** 0900 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) arrives in Vienna from Munich. He performs at the Archbishop’s residence in the afternoon.

French and British naval vessels engage off the Delaware Capes. No ships are lost but considerable damage is done and many lives are lost. Both fleets withdraw, the British to Chesapeake Bay and the French to Rhode Island.

A mob angry about new taxes riots in Socorro, New Granada (Colombia). It begins a widespread revolt throughout the province known as the Comunero (commoners) Revolt.

**17 March 1781** A British force occupies the French Caribbean island of Saint Barthélemy.

**21 March 1781** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) dates is Rondo for horn, wind and strings K.371.

**22 March 1781** Admiral François Joseph Paul, Comte de Grasse sails with 20 warships, three frigates and 150 transports, making for the West Indies and eventually North America.

Pope Pius VI enters Vienna. He is there to meet with Emperor Joseph II to discuss the Emperor’s religious policies. The Pope feels he is being undermined in Austria.

Incas under Tupac Amaru attack a Spanish army at Cuzco.

**24 March 1781** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) dates his Violin Sonata K.372.

**25 March 1781** *Nachdem die Kinder* for chorus and strings by Johannes Herbst (45) is performed for the first time.

**27 March 1781** Johann Anton III von Zehmen replaces Raimund Anton Count von Strasoldo as Prince-Bishop of Eichstätt.

**29 March 1781** Immanuel Kant dedicates the first edition of his *Critique of Pure Reason* in Königsberg (Kaliningrad).

**1 April 1781** *Die Pilgrime auf Golgotha*, an oratorio by Johann Georg Albrechtsberger (45) to words of Zachariä, is performed for the first time, in the Kärntnertortheater, Vienna.

**3 April 1781** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) performs publicly in Vienna for the first time since he was a boy, at the Kärntnertortheater. A symphony is performed, probably K.297 as well as the *Variations on Je suis Lindor* K.354. “I had to start all over again, because there was no end to the applause.” Among the audience is Emperor Joseph II.

**6 April 1781** The Inca attack on Cuzco, launched last month is finally defeated by the Spanish.

**8 April 1781** Archbishop Colloredo of Salzburg forbids Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) to perform for Emperor Joseph II at the home of Countess Thun. Mozart would have earned an amount equal to half his annual salary. In the evening, new works by Mozart are performed for the first time for the Archbishop, including the Concerto-Rondo for solo violin, two oboes, two horns and strings K.373, Sonata for violin and piano K.379 and the Rondo for soprano and orchestra *A questo seno deh vieni…Or che il ciel* K.374. The Concerto-Rondo was completed six days ago. The Sonata was composed last night, with Mozart writing down only the violin part. He plays the piano part from memory.

**12 April 1781** Archbishop Colloredo orders his servant, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25), to leave Vienna on 22 April and return to Salzburg with all the court musicians. Mozart will not leave Vienna on 22 April.

**17 April 1781** French naval forces defeat the British off St. Lucia.

**19 April 1781** Spanish forces begin a siege of the British inside Fort George near Pensacola.

**22 April 1781** British and Indian residents of Natchez rise against their Spanish conquerors and force their surrender.

**25 April 1781** British troops attack Americans at Hobkirk’s Hill near Camden, South Carolina. The American lines are broken but heroic actions saves them from annihilation.

Remaining British forces in the south under Lord Cornwallis begin to move north out of Wilmington, North Carolina heading for Virginia.

**26 April 1781** Violin Concerto in D by Samuel Wesley (15) is performed for the first time, in London, the composer as soloist.

**27 April 1781** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) gives his last concert in the employ of the Archbishop of Salzburg, in the presence of His Eminence in Vienna.

**28 April 1781** Admiral de Grasse’s fleet reaches Martinique.

**29 April 1781** British and French warships engage off Martinique. Several British ships are damaged, 37 people are killed, 125 wounded. The French take possession of Fort Royal.

**30 April 1781** *Der Rauchfangkehrer, oder Die unentbehrlichen Verräther ihrer Herrschaften aus Eigennutz*, a musikalisches Lustspiel by Antonio Salieri (30) to words of Auenbrugger, is performed for the first time, at the Burgtheater, Vienna, a year after it was commissioned by Emperor Joseph. It is Salieri’s first singspiel.

**2 May 1781** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) moves into the house of the Weber family in Vienna.

**4 May 1781** John Adams presents a memorial to Baron van Lynden van Hemmen, President of the States-General of the Netherlands, at the Hague. He calls on the two republics to join together in common purpose, politically and commercially.

*Gesegnet bist du* for chorus and strings by Johannes Herbst (45) is performed for the first time.

**8 May 1781** A Spanish cannon shot hits the magazine of Queen’s Redoubt at Pensacola, destroying it and killing 76 British soldiers. The Spanish immediately occupy the ruins. The British commanders sue for peace.

**9 May 1781** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) argues with Archbishop Colloredo of Salzburg and requests to be discharged from his duties. “I am so sure of my success in Vienna that I would have resigned even without the slightest reason...I want to hear nothing more about Salzburg. I hate the Archbishop to madness.” (Marshall, 42)

Symphony no.53 by Joseph Haydn (49) is performed, perhaps for the first time, at the final Bach (45)-Abel (57) concert, Hanover Square Rooms, London.

**10 May 1781** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) meets with Count Arco, the chamberlain to Archbishop Colloredo, in Vienna and gives him his resignation and the advance for travel expenses from the Archbishop. The count accepts neither.

British forces abandon Camden, South Carolina.

Spanish forces complete their conquest of West Florida by taking Pensacola.

**15 May 1781** French troops capture Fort Royal, St. Lucia.

**16 May 1781** French Director General Jacques Necker petitions King Louis XVI for entry into the State Council, in effect, placing him above the other ministers. Louis refuses and Necker immediately resigns.

**17 May 1781** *So ruhe nun in Jesu* for female voices and strings by Johannes Herbst (45) is performed for the first time.

**18 May 1781** Spanish draw and quarter the Inca leader Tupac Amaru. They also execute his wife and son, as well as many other followers.

**20 May 1781** General George Washington meets Lieutenant General Comte de Rochambeau at Wethersfield, Connecticut to plan joint strategy.

**24 May 1781** French troops disembark on Tobago.

**26 May 1781** The Bank of North America is incorporated in Philadelphia. It is the first chartered bank on the continent.

**2 June 1781** Troops from a French fleet capture the British island of Tobago.

**4 June 1781** *Still does the war prevail?*, an ode by John Stanley (69) to words of Whitehead, is performed for the first time, to honor the birthday of King George III.

Thomas Jefferson narrowly escapes capture by British troops as they reach his home near Charlottesville, Virginia.

The government of New Granada agrees to the demands of the Comunero Revolt: the dismissal of Inspector General Juan Francisco Gutiérrez, repeal of all new taxes and greater participation of the Comuneros in the government. Upon this, most rebels disperse.

**5 June 1781** After a six-week siege, Americans capture Augusta, Georgia from the British.

**8 June 1781** The Chief Steward of the Archbishop of Salzburg, Count Arco, notifies Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) that he is discharged from the service of His Eminence “with a kick on the arse, by order of our worthy Prince Archbishop.” (Glover, 94)

During a performance of Gluck’s (66) *Orfeo ed Euridice*, the Paris Opéra at the Palais Royal catches fire. Among the audience are Benjamin Franklin and his grandson Temple. “Had it happened 15 minutes earlier, the pandemonium would likely have prevented the safe exit of a large number of spectators, and we would have been grilled.” The building burns to the ground. (Schiff, 279)

**22 June 1781** A French force from New Orleans puts down the British and Indian uprising at Natchez.

**1 July 1781** British forces defeat Haider Ali at Porto Novo, 180 km south of Madras, thus saving the city for the British.

**5 July 1781** American and French armies join forces at White Plains, New York, as a prelude to an attack on New York City.

**10 July 1781** Thomas McKean replaces Samuel Huntington as President of the Congress of the United States.

**14 July 1781** After deliberating for eight minutes, a London jury finds François Henri de la Motte guilty of passing British naval information to the French. He is sentenced to hanging, disemboweling, and quartering.

**19 July 1781**  Michael Haydn (43) dates his Symphony MH302 P.15 in Salzburg.

**27 July 1781** François Henri de la Motte is executed by hanging as a French spy at Tyburn. After hanging for almost an hour, the body is decapitated and the heart removed and thrown on a fire.

**30 July 1781** Gottlieb Stephanie hands Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) the libretto to *Die Entführung aus dem Serail.*

**1 August 1781** British forces occupy Yorktown, Virginia.

Antonio Sacchini (51) is presented to Parisian society at a ball given by Queen Marie Antoinette. Also present is the Queen’s brother, Emperor Joseph II of Austria, who had urged her to bring Sacchini to Paris.

**5 August 1781** British and Dutch warships engage in the North Sea at Dogger Bank. 250 people are killed. After three hours, the British retire. No ships are lost.

Admiral de Grasse sails from Cap-Français, Hispaniola (Cap-Haïtien) for North America with three regiments and 28 ships.

*O selig bist du!* for chorus and strings by Johannes Herbst (46) is performed for the first time.

**11 August 1781** Prince Franz Josef I of Liechtenstein dies and is succeeded by his son Alois I.

**15 August 1781** Bolstered by the arrival of 500 Spanish regular troops in Bogotá, Viceroy of New Granada Manuel Antonio Flores Maldonado declares the agreement of 4 June to be void.

**17 August 1781** In a letter to the Viennese publisher Artaria, Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf (41) outlines his plan for a set of symphonies based on Ovid’s *Metamorphoses.*

**19 August 1781** American and French forces break camp in Phillipsburg, New York and make for Virginia.

**20 August 1781** The Swedish man-of-war *Princess Sophia Albertina* strikes ground and breaks up near Texel, the Netherlands. Over 500 men are lost. Only 20-25 are saved.

**25 August 1781** French and American warships and troop transports depart Newport, Rhode Island making for the Chesapeake Bay.

**30 August 1781** Admiral de Grasse arrives from the Caribbean and anchors in Lynnhaven Bay off Cape Henry, Virginia, blockading the James and York Rivers.

**31 August 1781** 19 British warships sail from New York for Chesapeake Bay.

**2 September 1781** American and French forces reach Philadelphia on their march south.

French troops land near Jamestown, Virginia where English settlers landed 174 years ago.

**4 September 1781** El Puebla Nuestra Señora la Reina de Los Angeles de Porciuncula is formally founded, over 2,500 km northwest of Mexico City, by the Spanish governor, Felipe de Neve.

**5 September 1781** An engagement by British and French ships off Chesapeake Bay is inconclusive but it allows the French to strengthen the blockade of Yorktown. The British will retreat to New York.

**6 September 1781** Loyalist troops destroy New London, Connecticut.

**7 September 1781** *Funeral Music for F. Doormann* by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (67) is performed for the first time, in Hamburg.

*Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied!* for chorus and strings by Johannes Herbst (46) is performed for the first time.

**8 September 1781** Americans attack British positions at Eutaw Springs, South Carolina. Although they repulse the attack, the British lose over a third of their strength and withdraw to Charleston.

**10 September 1781** *La serva padrona*, an intermezzo by Giovanni Paisiello (41) to words of Federico, is performed for the first time, at Tsarskoye Selo, near St. Petersburg.

The Inca uprising in Peru, originally led by Tupac Amaru, ends when the leaders accept a Spanish amnesty.

**12 September 1781** American and French forces reach Baltimore.

**14 September 1781** American and French troops reach Williamsburg, Virginia where they meet regiments off the ships of Admiral de Grasse.

**18 September 1781** American and French forces take up positions outside Yorktown, Virginia.

**23 September 1781** Johann Simon Mayr (18) registers at the University of Ingolstadt to study theology and Canon Law.

**29 September 1781** The British in Yorktown give up their outer defenses in order to concentrate their forces.

**6 October 1781** American and French forces lay siege to Yorktown.

**9 October 1781** Austria declares armed neutrality in the war between Great Britain and the United States.

American siege guns open fire on the British defenders of Yorktown. They will be joined by the French tomorrow.

**11 October 1781** A French night attack against British and Hessians at Yorktown gains two outer redoubts. The defenders are now completely encircled.

**12 October 1781** The first recorded Highland piping competition takes place in Falkirk, Scotland.

**13 October 1781** Emperor Joseph II proclaims the Patent of Tolerance. Certain specifically named Christian religions are freed from official persecution in lands ruled by the Habsburgs. Among those religions are Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Orthodoxy. Roman Catholicism continues to be the state religion.

**15 October 1781** Andrew Law (32) petitions the Connecticut legislature for “an exclusive patent for printing and vending the tunes following…” Within two weeks it will be granted. Someone has been trying to pirate his *Select Harmony*. He is thus one of the first to receive a copyright in the United States.

Serenade in E flat K.375 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) is performed for the first time, in Vienna. It was composed for St. Theresa’s Day.

**16 October 1781** A British assault on allied lines at Yorktown makes initial gains but they are beaten back by a French counterattack.

**17 October 1781** The British in Yorktown request and gain a cease-fire to discuss surrender terms.

A British army boards ship in New York City to relieve Yorktown.

**19 October 1781** The British command at Yorktown surrenders 7,000 British, German, and Loyalist soldiers to 16,000 Americans and French.

**20 October 1781** The Theater in der Leopoldstadt (now in Vienna) opens, directed by the playwright and actor Carl Marinelli.

Robert Livingston is appointed the first Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the United States.

**23 October 1781** *Iphigenia auf Tauris*, a tragic singspiel by Christoph Willibald Gluck (67) to words of von Alxinger and the composer after Guillard, is performed for the first time, in the Vienna Burgtheater. See 18 May 1779.

**24 October 1781** The British relief force arrives off Cape Charles and being informed of Cornwallis’ surrender, returns to New York.

**27 October 1781** The newly rebuilt Paris Opéra reopens with a free concert celebrating the birth of the Dauphin. The inaugural work is the premiere of *Adèle de Ponthieu*, a tragédie lyrique by Niccolò Piccinni (53) to words of des Rasins de Saint-Marc. It is moderately successful.

**1 November 1781** Emperor Joseph II issues the Serfdom Patent, abolishing serfdom in Habsburg lands.

**5 November 1781** John Hanson replaces Thomas McKean as President of the Congress of the United States.

**13 November 1781** British forces capture the Dutch settlement of Negapatam (Nagappattinam), India 250 km south of Madras.

**14 November 1781** Johann Christian Bach (46) draws up his will in London.

**15 November 1781** The *Independent Chronicle*, Boston reports as “just published” William Billings’ (35) collection *The Psalm-singer’s Amusement*.

**16 November 1781** Archduke Maximilian III of Bavaria presents Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) to Duke Friedrich Eugen of Württemberg in Vienna. He performs for both of them.

Swedish scientist Peter Jacob Hjelm writes to his countryman Carl Wilhelm Scheele describing his discovery of the element molybdenum

**18 November 1781** British forces evacuate Wilmington, North Carolina.

**21 November 1781** Muzio Clementi (29) arrives in Munich on his way from Paris to Vienna.

**23 November 1781** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) and Josepha Barbara Auernhammer give the first performance of the Sonata for two pianos K.448 at a private concert at her residence in Vienna.

In Amsterdam, John Adams learns of the British defeat at Yorktown.

**25 November 1781** News of the defeat at Yorktown reaches London.

Johann Adam Hiller (51) directs the first performance in the newly built Gewandhaus in Leipzig.

French naval forces capture St. Eustatius from the British.

**26 November 1781** French forces having disembarked yesterday, surprise the British at Sint Eustasius and overwhelm the garrison, taking 700 prisoners. Forces are sent to retake nearby Sint Maarten and Sabá.

**27 November 1781** King George III opens Parliament. In his speech he urges the continuation of the war “to restore my deluded subjects in America.” (Ferling, 541)

**28 November 1781** Emperor Joseph II declares Austrian monastic orders independent of Rome. He will spend the next eight years dissolving one-third of the monasteries in Austria.

**29 November 1781** Captain Luke Collingwood of the British slave ship *Zong* decides to throw his cargo overboard to collect the insurance. 133 people are killed. The claim will never be collected because Collingwood’s claim that he jettisoned the slaves because of lack of water will be disproved because he could have taken on water on Jamaica on 1 December. No one will ever be charged with murder in the case.

**3 December 1781** The Naples Cappella Reale formally dismisses Niccolò Piccinni (53). He has been living in Paris since receiving a one-year leave of absence in 1776. This has been renewed annually until now. The Cappella decides that he is not returning. Giuseppe de Magistris, who has been doing the job for half-salary, is formally appointed second organist.

**8 December 1781** The *Wiener* *Zeitung* announces the publication of six violin sonatas K.296, 376-380 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) by Artaria & Co. They are the first works of Mozart to be published.

**12 December 1781** British and French naval forces engage off Ushant in the English Channel. The British capture French troops ships headed for the West Indies.

*Erwin und Elmire*, a singspiel by Georg Joseph Vogler (32) to words of Goethe, is performed for the first time, in Darmstadt.

**15 December 1781** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) informs his father Leopold (62) that he intends to marry Constanze Weber.

**23 December 1781** John Antes (41) departs Cairo, where he has been a Moravian missionary for the last twelve years, to return to Germany.

**24 December 1781** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (25) and Muzio Clementi (29) take part in a piano playing contest before Emperor Joseph II and Grand Duke Pavel of Russia (later Tsar Pavel I) and the Grand Duchess. They are both required to improvise and play some of their own music. The Grand Duchess then requests that they play at sight sonatas by Paisiello (41). Mozart is judged to be the winner, but not by much. It is the first time the two composers meet.

**25 December 1781** Some or all of the String Quartets op.33 by Joseph Haydn (49) are performed publicly for the first time, at the Vienna home of Countess von Norden. They may have been performed earlier at Esterháza.

Today begins a seven-day campaign by the local militia against Cherokees in Tennessee. Ten large Cherokee towns are destroyed, 1,000 homes burned, 29 people killed, 17 imprisoned.

**29 December 1781** Artaria announces the forthcoming publication of Franz Joseph Haydn’s (49) String Quartets op.33. Haydn is astonished since he has not yet sold subscription copies. He breaks off all contacts with Artaria, but the matter will be smoothed over.

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