

Crossing The Delaware

By M.C.



The Revolutionary War

The American Revolutionary War began in 1775 and ended in 1783. The American colonies initiated the Revolutionary War for many reasons. Taxation without representation was a main cause.

The British taxed the colonies because they needed money to pay for the French and Indian War.

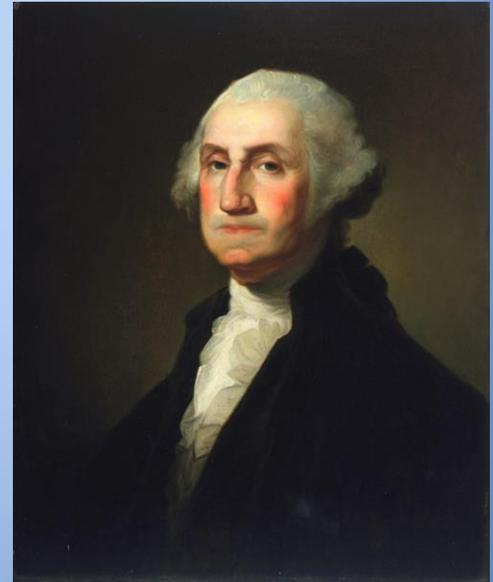


The Revolutionary War

There were many other things that made the colonies angry with the British. One was the Navigation Acts; these limited the colonies to only trade with England. On July 4, 1776, The Declaration of Independence was written, (mostly by Thomas Jefferson) informing the British that the colonies were an independent country.

George Washington

George Washington was born on February 11, 1731 in Virginia. Washington served as a general and commander-in-chief of the colonial armies during the American Revolution. He was later elected as the first president of the United States. He died in December of 1799, at the age of 67.



Background

In 1776, the British troops pushed George Washington and his men out of New York and occupied the city. The British set up Hessian troops in Trenton, New Jersey. They chased Washington's army in to Pennsylvania.

Washington's army was getting smaller and weaker.

Hessian Soldiers

The Hessian soldiers were from Germany. They were hired by the British to fight for them. During the Revolutionary War they made up a third of all the British troops that were sent to America. About 30,000 Hessians served in North America.



Crossing The Delaware

Having packed food, weapons, and ammunition, George Washington and his army crossed the icy Delaware River on the night of December 25–26, 1776. They were going to attack the English Hessian troops in Trenton, New Jersey. The weather was terrible and it started raining and snowing. Washington had 5,400 troops when he was crossing the Delaware, but only 2,400 made it to their destination on time.

Crossing the Delaware

At 8:00 a.m. on the morning after Christmas, Washington split his troops, leaving himself and General Greene in charge of one group and General Sullivan in charge of the other. They were ready to attack the Hessian soldiers. By 9:30 a.m. the same day, they had surrounded the Hessian soldiers.

Crossing The Delaware

Although a few hundred Hessians escaped, Washington had captured almost 1,000 of the Hessian soldiers and had only lost four of his own men. After the battle Washington said, "This is a glorious day for our country." After their victory, the American army faced an even more difficult crossing back over the Delaware taking their captives with them.

The Painting

The famous painting **Washington Crossing The Delaware** was painted by a German American artist named Emanuel Leutze. The image is considered more symbolic than historically accurate. The painting is now an icon of America's fight for liberty.



How this Affected America

This event was the push that the colonies needed to fight the war with Britain and eventually win their independence! It also helped George Washington to become known among the people. His reputation would help him to become the first president of the newly formed United States of America.