

## *America, America, God Shed His Grace on Thee*

### America the Beautiful

O Beautiful for Spacious Skies,  
For Amber Waves of Grain,  
For Purple Mountain Majesties  
Above the Fruited Plain!  
America! America!  
God Shed His Grace on Thee  
And Crowned Thy Good with  
Brotherhood  
From Sea to Shining Sea!

### The Path to INDEPENDENCE

**1754-1763** – French & Indian War

**1755** –

July 9 – Battle of Monongahela

**1759** –

Sept 12 – Battle of Quebec  
(Plains of Abraham)

**1765** –

March 22 – Parliament passes Stamp Act  
Oct 7-25 – Stamp Act Congress (New York)

**1766** –

March 18 – Parliament repeals Stamp Act

**1767 & 1768** – Townsend Acts

**1768** –

June 9 - John Hancock's ship Liberty seized

**1770** –

March 5 - Boston Massacre

**1772** –

June 9 – Gaspee Affair (Providence, RI)

**1773** –

Dec 16 - Boston Tea Party

**1774** –

June 1 – Port of Boston closed  
Sept 5 – First Continental Congress

**1775** –

April 18 – Paul Revere's Ride  
April 19 – Battles of Lexington / Concord  
May 10 - Second Continental Congress  
May 10 – Fort Ticonderoga captured  
(Ethan Allen & Benedict Arnold)  
June 17 - Battle of Bunker Hill (Boston)  
June 19 - Washington appointed C-I-C  
July 2 - Washington arrives in Boston  
The Canada Expedition begins  
Nov 13 – Montreal captured  
Nov 17 – Knox Expedition begins  
Dec 31 – Patriots fail to take Quebec City

**America the Beautiful** - written by Katherine Lee Bates (1893)

- Daughter of a Congregational minister
- Taught English literature at Wellesley College
- Hosted gatherings at her home for students and literary guests, including **Robert Frost, Carl Sandburg** and **William Butler Yeats**.
- Wrote **America the Beautiful** following a trip to Pikes Peak in Colorado Springs, CO in 1893 ... *"Some of the other teachers and I decided to go on a trip to 14,000-foot Pikes Peak. We hired a prairie wagon. Near the top we had to leave the wagon and go the rest of the way on mules. I was very tired .... But when I saw the view, I felt great joy. All the wonder of America seemed displayed there, with the sea-like expanse."*

### **"It's a God-thing!"**

Have you ever used this phrase to explain some event or opportunity that came your way? Or have you ever referred to "your guardian angel" when you felt protected from a dangerous situation or injury?

During the founding era and the War of Independence, numerous events occurred for which the Founders had no explanation – they could only attribute their good fortune to a superior being, and they regularly used several words and phrases to describe His help:

- o "divine protection"      o "the Invisible Hand"      o "Providence"
- o "the Supreme Judge"      o "favours He has bestowed"

### **The Bullet-proof George Washington**

**French & Indian War – Battle of Monongahela, July 9, 1755 (Wilderness Road)**

- Washington served as an Aide to British General Braddock, leading a force of 1300, building a wilderness road, to capture French Fort Duquesne near modern-day Pittsburgh, PA
- Ambushed by French & Indian force and defeated; all officers killed or injured.
- General Braddock mortally wounded (died 6 days later); Washington takes command and organizes retreat; British forces decimated.

**A British survivor reported:** *"I expected every moment to see him [Washington] fall. Nothing but the superintending care of **Providence** could have saved him."*

Following the battle, **Washington wrote to his brother**, John A. Washington on **July 18, 1755:** *"But by the all-powerful dispensations of **Providence**, I have been protected beyond all human probability or expectation; for I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me, yet escaped unhurt, although death was leveling my companions on every side of me."*

**Washington meets the Indian Chief – 1770**

- Washington and his close friend, Dr. James Craik, went to view some lands they had purchased across the mountains in modern day West Virginia.
- They met a trader and a party of Indians, with an aging chief who had been at the Wilderness Road battle.
- *...[when] I first beheld this chief [Washington], I called to my young men and said, 'mark yon tall and daring warrior! He is not of the red-coat tribe – he hath an Indian's wisdom and his warriors fight as we do – himself is alone exposed. Quick, let your aim be certain and he dies.' Our rifles were leveled, rifles which, but for him, knew not how to miss – 'twas all in vain, a power mightier far than we shielded him from harm. He can not die in battle .... the **Great Spirit** protects that man and guides his destiny."*

**1776 –**

Jan 27 – Knox's cannons arrive in Boston

**March 4 – Dorchester Heights occupied**

March 17 – British evacuate Boston

June - Washington fortifies New York City

**July 4 – Declaration of Independence**

July 9 – Declaration read to troops in NYC

**Aug 27 - Battle of Brooklyn**

Sept 22 – Nathan Hale executed as spy

Sept-Dec – Continental Army retreats

Dec 26 – Crossing the Delaware

Battle of Trenton, NJ

Dec 28 – Battle of Princeton, NJ

**1777**

**Sept 11 - Battle of Brandywine**

Sept 26 - British Occupy Philadelphia

Oct 17 – Burgoyne surrenders at Saratoga

Dec 19 – Continental Army in Valley Forge

**1778**

Feb 23 – Baron von Steuben arrives at

Valley Forge to train troops

**Spring – The “miracle” of the Shad**

June 18 - British evacuate Philadelphia

June 28 - Battle of Monmouth, NJ

Dec 28 – British capture Savannah, GA

**1779 –**

Sept 23 – John Paul Jones victory at sea

**1780 –**

May 12 – British take Charleston, SC

Aug 16 – Battle of Camden, SC

Sept 21 – Treason at West Point

Oct 2 – British Maj. John Andre executed

Oct 7 – Battle of Kings Mountain

**1781 –**

January 17 – Battle of Cowpens

March 15 – Guilford Courthouse, NC

Oct 19 – British surrender at Yorktown, VA

**1782 –**

April – Peace Negotiations begin in Paris

(Ben Franklin, John Adams, John

Jay, Henry Laurens)

Nov 30 – Treaty of Paris drafted

**1783 –**

Sept 3 - Treaty of Paris signed

Nov 25 – British Army leaves New York City

**1787 –**

May 25-Sept 17 - Constitutional Convention

**1788 –**

Jun 21 – Constitution ratified by the States

**1789 – April 30**

George Washington elected President

## **Washington at Battle of Princeton – January 3, 1777**

- General Hugh Mercer, commanding the Continental Army, was mortally wounded during an attack by General Cornwallis' troops. His men and the reinforcing militia began to flee. Washington, rode up and took command of the battle, rallying the fleeing troops and leading an attack.
- Riding at the head of his troops on a huge white horse as they marched toward a well-formed British line, Washington rode halfway between both lines encouraging his troops
- His aide, Richard Fitzgerald, watching from the rear, covered his eyes with his hat so he would not see his commander fall, as both lines opened fire.
- Smoke obscured the view. When it cleared, fallen soldiers lay on both sides of the field and Washington, unscathed, stood up in his stirrups to urge his troops forward to victory.

## **Washington at Battle of Brandywine – September 11, 1777**

- Washington was conducting a reconnaissance with just one aide, when he was spotted by British Major Patrick Ferguson, a celebrated British marksman and leader of a sharpshooters patrol of four, concealed nearby. Ferguson decided to capture the unknown officers and shouted for them to dismount, but Washington boldly stared him down, calmly turned his horse, and rode off.
- Ferguson later said: *“I could have lodged a half dozen balls in him before he was out of reach, but it was not pleasant to fire at the back of an unoffending individual who was acquitting himself very coolly of his duty – so I let him live.”*

## **The Storm on Dorchester Heights, Boston**

### **The Siege of Boston – 1775-1776**

- November 17, 1775 – Washington approves a plan by Henry Knox to bring 54 British cannon captured at Fort Ticonderoga in New York to Boston.
- Using 42 sleds drawn by oxen, Knox moves 62 tons of cannon and munitions over the Allegheny Mountains to Boston – a near impossible journey of over 225 miles lasting 56 days – and arrives on February 27, 1776.
- The cannon are secretly installed on Dorchester Heights under cover of darkness on the evenings of March 2 & 3. On the morning of March 4, Washington fires a cannon over the British ships in the harbor.
- Later that day, the British attempted to storm the Heights from the sea and dislodge the Americans, but an unexpected and unusual storm sprang up and prevented the British from reaching the shore.
- On March 6, 1776, General Howe gives the order to evacuate Boston and all British troops leave by March 17, which is called Evacuation Day in Boston.

## **Escape from Long Island after Battle of Brooklyn**

### **August 29, 1776**

- Washington and 9,000 Continentals are trapped on Long Island with their backs to the East River after General Howe outflanks them in the Battle of Brooklyn. When the British attack in the morning, Washington and the American Army could be wiped out.
- Colonel John Glover and his Marblehead Regiment, made up mostly of Atlantic fishermen, secure boats along the East River to transport the troops across the river, which is controlled by British warships.
- A fog rolls in, very unusual for that time of year, and all 9,000 troops are ferried across safely, without the British knowing.

## **God Shed His Grace on America. How Has He Blessed You?**

**Celebrating 250 years of Independence – 1776-2026**

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