

# HISTORYSCAPES

AN AGES AND ERAS PERIODICAL

VOLUME I

JULY 4, 2021

ISSUE 1





# HISTORYSCAPES

ENTERTAINING | HONEST | EDUCATIONAL

VOLUME 1

JULY 4, 2021

ISSUE 1

Corey T. Ertz  
Editor in Chief

~

Jordan T. Ertz  
Executive Producer

~

Tera Ertz  
Editor at Large

~

Kenneth Jorgensen  
Guest Contributor

Historyscapes is an  
Ages and Eras  
Periodical

© 2021  
Quinton, VA

## ~ CONTENTS ~

Women in the Continental Army

The Boston Massacre:  
Unlearned Lessons 200 Years Later

Zealous for the Lord:  
The Impact of Religiosity in the United States  
Then and Now

America's Buck and Ball

The Boston Massacre:  
Provoked Self-Defense or Justified Riot

~ KINGDOM COME ~  
Religion of the Founding

~ FUN WITH FOOD ~  
The Humble Pumpkin

~ DRESSING OUT ~  
The Hunting Shirt and Hunting Frock:  
An American Fashion

~ CT PAPERCLAD ~  
USS Barrataria

# WOMEN IN THE CONTINENTAL ARMY

by Corey T. Ertz



Picture of Molly Pitcher on base of Columbus statue in front of courthouse in Freehold, NJ.

When a nation went to war in the late 18th century the setting was different than it would be even 80 years later. It was quite common for officers and men to bring their wives, and sometimes children, along with them on the march. Sometimes this was simply for the protection of the family members, whose towns might be under threat from the enemy. Other times it was simply for companionship, work, or duty. When the Continental Army was at camp for the winter, or on the march in the spring, it was accompanied by hundreds of women. We know to what degree women accompanied the men due to returns concerning rations drawn for the women with the army. It seems that so long as the women proved to do some form of work for the army, they were entitled to draw the same rations as the men. This paper trail seems to

indicate that women made up an average of 3-4% of the army's total strength throughout the war.<sup>1</sup> This work included washing clothes, cooking, caring for the sick, and even driving wagons and pack mules to relieve men for frontline duty.

Only a limited amount is known about these women, other than that they represented the same crosssection of society that the men represented. However, some officer's wives also chose to camp with their husbands, and for many of the same reasons. General Henry Knox, the Continental Army's Chief of Artillery, was accompanied by his newlywed wife, Lucy, through the harsh winter at Valley Forge. In fact, she was close friends with Kitty, the wife of General Nathaniel Green. And Martha Washington did not miss a single winter with her husband, camping each year in the snow with him. And like the enlisted men's wives, the officers' wives also cared for the sick and wounded.<sup>2</sup> As many as 400 women went into encampment at Valley Forge in 1777.<sup>3</sup> Whether poor, wealthy, white, free black, enslaved, or Native American, the women faced the same hardships on the march, and in camp, and drew the same rations as their husbands. And a very few would also face battle.

Perhaps the most famous instance of a female fighting in the Continental Army in petticoats is the character of "Molly Pitcher." It is the welltold story of "Molly" who was serving water from a pitcher on a hot battlefield, who saw her husband go down and bravely stepped in to serve in his position on the cannon. It does seem that such an incident, mythologized over time, did indeed happen, not once but twice. At the battle of Monmouth, in June of 1778, Mary Hays was serving water to her husband's gun crew when her husband went down, likely due to heat exhaustion. Mrs. Hays stepped in to serve the gun in her husband's stead. Joseph Plumb Martin, a witness to the scene, described the events, "A woman whose husband belonged to the artillery and who was then attached to a piece in the engagement, attended with her husband at the piece for the whole time. While in the act of reaching a cartridge and having one of her feet as far before the other as she could step, a cannon shot from the enemy passed directly between her legs without doing any other damage than carrying away all the lower part of her petticoat."<sup>4</sup>