

THE SLOOP *KATY* BECOMES THE FIRST USS *PROVIDENCE*



"I know histhry isn't thru, Hinnissy, because it ain't like what I see ivry day in Halsted Street. If any wan comes along with a histhry iv Greece or Rome that'll show me th' people fightin', gettin' dhrunk, makin' love, gettin' married, owin' th' grocery man an' bein' without hard coal, I'll believe they was a Greece or Rome, but not befur."



– Dunne, Finley Peter,
OBSERVATIONS BY MR. DOOLEY,
New York, 1902

Today's *Providence*₆ is an 110-foot replica, built in 1976, of the square topsail commercial sloop *Katy* that had been built by the firm of [John Brown](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) and then renamed the *Providence* for purposes of revolution. That original *Katy*'s timbers are now at the bottom of the Penobscot River of Maine, near Bucksport, and there is an original cannon still near the site, although it is not necessarily one from that particular vessel. The *Katy* had been sailing the eastern seaboard and the Caribbean carrying cargo, whaling, and privateering, when Rhode Islanders burned the British custom schooner *Gaspee*. The British Navy dispatched a 20-gun frigate, the HMS *Rose*, to bring [Narragansett Bay](#) colonists back under control. The Rhode Islanders responded during June 1775 by leasing John Brown's *Katy* to begin their own two-ship navy. During October 1775, after the Continental Congress's meeting in Philadelphia, an American naval command absorbed the nascent Rhode Island fleet. The *Katy*, renamed the *Providence*, would function as the 1st command of [John Paul Jones](#). The end of this original vessel named *Providence*'s career would come in 1779 when her crew would scuttle her up the Penobscot River in order to avoid allowing her to become a prize of the British navy.



(But then there would be a *Providence*₂ (a Rhode Island [negrero](#)) and a USS *Providence*₃ and a USS *Providence*₄ and a USS *Providence*₅, and as above, a (replica) *Providence*₆. The USS *Providence*₃ would be a 28-gun frigate of 632 tons: length 126'6.5"; beam 33'8"; depth 10'5". The USS *Providence*₄₃ would be a gundalow: length 53'4"; beam 15'6"; depth 3'10"; complement 45; armament one 12-pounder; 29-pounders; 8 swivels. The USS *Providence*₅ would be a light cruiser (CL-82) of the class "Cleveland" of 13,755 tons displacement under full load: length 610'1"; beam 66'4"; draft 25'; speed 32 knots; complement 992; armament 12 6" guns, 12 5" guns, 28 40-millimeter guns, 10 20-millimeter guns, 2 catapults.)



THE *KATY*

USS *PROVIDENCE*

1775

June 12, Monday: The [Rhode Island](#) Assembly created the Rhode Island navy.

Joseph Brant, accompanied by Sir Guy Johnson and Colonel John Butler, addressed a council of 1,455 Iroquois at Oswego. Brant and the others explained the upcoming rebellion. The Oneidas under Steyawa refused to fight the colonial forces, but the other tribes prepare for possible war. Brant was appointed war chief, the 2d highest Iroquois office.



June 15, Thursday: While serving as delegate to the 2d Continental Congress, George Washington was appointed commander in chief of American armed forces.

CONTINENTAL CONGRESS

The [Rhode Island](#) General Assembly ordered the local Committee of Safety to fit out two ships to defend the colony's shipping, and appointed a committee of three to obtain vessels. The new committee immediately chartered the sloop [Katy](#), that had been one of [John Brown](#) of [Providence](#)'s "negreros," and the sloop *Washington*. The General Assembly appointed Abraham Whipple, who had won a certain amount of local recognition in the burning of the armed schooner HMS *Gaspee* in 1772, as the commander of the larger ship, *Katy*, and as commodore of the two-ship fleet. At about 6PM, the [Katy](#), Captain Abraham Whipple (for whom Whipple Street in [Providence](#) would be named), and the *Washington*, attacked a British patrol ship, the *Diana*, off [Jamestown](#) on Conanicut Island in Narragansett Bay. When the powder chest of the British exploded, the crew beached their vessel just north of Jamestown and fled into the woods. The Americans seized the *Diana* and took it to [Providence, Rhode Island](#).

HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

THE *KATY*

USS *PROVIDENCE*



[GO TO MASTER INDEX OF WARFARE](#)



September 12, Tuesday: Late in the summer of 1775, the shortage of powder among General George Washington’s troops besieging Boston had been so severe that they had no longer ben able to fire their cannon. Had the British gone on the attack, the riflemen would not have had enough powder to resist them. Therefore on this day the sloop *Katy* departed [Narragansett Bay](#) in an effort to assist the Continental Army by capturing some powder from the British magazine on the island of Bermuda. (By the time the ship would arrive, this powder would already have been captured and would already be enrouté to Philadelphia. In November, however, [John Brown](#) would manage to bring ashore in Rhode Island a shipment of high-grade pistol powder obtained in Suriname –he would offer this to General Washington at 6 s per pound delivered to Cambridge, a rate that the general would describe as “most exorbitant” because in October the powder had been obtainable for 4 s per pound– and would dispatch Elkanah Watson with a guard of six men to convey the war material securely overland in a covered wagon.)

ELKANAH WATSON

October 31, Tuesday: Soon after its return to [Providence](#) anchor, the sloop *Katy* was purchased by [Rhode Island](#).

GO TO MASTER INDEX OF WARFARE

November: Late in the summer of [Providence](#) anchor, the sloop *Katy* was purchased by [Rhode Island](#). Washington’s troops besieging Boston had been so severe that they had no longer been able to fire their cannon. Had the British gone on the attack, the riflemen would not have had enough powder to resist them. Therefore the sloop *Katy* had been sent off in an abortive attempt to capture some powder from a British magazine on the island of Bermuda, although by the time the ship arrived, this powder had already been captured and was already on its way to Philadelphia. In this month, however, [John Brown](#) managed to bring ashore in [Rhode Island](#) a shipment of high-grade pistol powder obtained in Suriname, and, despite the fact that in October the powder had been selling at 4 s per pound, he offered it to General Washington in Cambridge at 6 s per pound –a rate the general described as “most exorbitant”– and dispatched Elkanah Watson with a guard of six men to convey the war material securely overland in a covered wagon.

ELKANAH WATSON



The war was still not declared, but already John had sold a ship to the new Rhode Island navy, and a cargo of gunpowder at a premium price. Practically overnight, John had become what is called in modern parlance a defense contractor.

Late November: Late in the month, the sloop *Katy* sailed from [Providence](#) for Philadelphia, transporting a group of seamen who had been enlisted for continental service by Commodore [Esek Hopkins](#).

December 3, Sunday: The sloop *Katy* was taken into Continental service and renamed the [USS Providence](#). John Hazard became its captain while Captain Whipple received a larger vessel, the *Columbus*. [Esek Hopkins](#)’s title became “Commander in Chief of the Fleet of the United Colonies.”

1776

GO TO MASTER INDEX OF WARFARE

January 8, Monday: People were trying to kill each other at Charlestown, Massachusetts.



In January, 1776, [Concord](#) provided 20 blankets, Bedford 12, Acton 10, and Lincoln 14. In November, 1777, and at several other times, the town [Concord] voted to provide for the families of those engaged in the continental army. 1,210 pounds was paid for this purpose before September 1779.¹

In [Providence, Rhode Island](#), at a tavern on Towne (Main) Street, there was the 1st meeting of [Stephen Hopkins](#)'s committee to build frigates for the Continental navy. The committee included Governor Nicholas Cooke, [John Brown](#) and some other members of the Brown family, John Smith (this was an American John Smith, not the John Smith who in this year in London was whistling up the signature tune "To Anacreon in Heaven"), Jabez Bowen, Daniel Tillinghast, the brothers Joseph Russell and William Russell, and John Innes Clarke and Joseph Nightingale of the Clarke & Nightingale firm. The drinks that evening were on John Brown. The group would plan to build a warship of 32 guns, the *Warren*, and another warship of 28 guns, the [USS Providence](#).

Early in January: Attempting to depart from Philadelphia, the [USS Providence](#) and her consorts were delayed by ice in the river.

1. [Lemuel Shattuck](#)'s 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD:...](#) Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: [John Stacy](#)
(On or about November 11, 1837 [Henry Thoreau](#) would indicate a familiarity with the contents of at least pages 2-3 and 6-9 of this historical study.)

USS PROVIDENCE

THE KATY

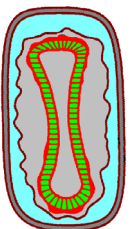
March 17, Sunday: Empress Ekaterina II granted a monopoly to Prince Urusov to operate a theater in Moscow. This was the beginning of the Bolshoi Theater.

A rondo, duet and aria buffa by Luigi Cherubini were performed for the first time, at the Accademia degli Ingegneri, Florence.

Colonial naval forces ended their occupation of the Bahamas. The munitions of Fort Montagne loaded aboard his ships, Commander in Chief of the Fleet of the United Colonies [Esek Hopkins](#) headed back toward New England.



During an outbreak of the [small pox](#), the regular army under General Howe (6,000 British troops) suddenly evacuated [Boston](#). When the revolutionary troops would march in, they would find only 2,719 Bostonians still there. The remainder had either previously fled to them on the mainland during the town's occupation by the



regular army — or had fled (1,000 loyalists) with the army.



For instance, the [Concord](#) antislavery Tory, Daniel Bliss, who had under threat removed his family from Concord to Boston, on this day evacuated with General Thomas Gage's army to Halifax.



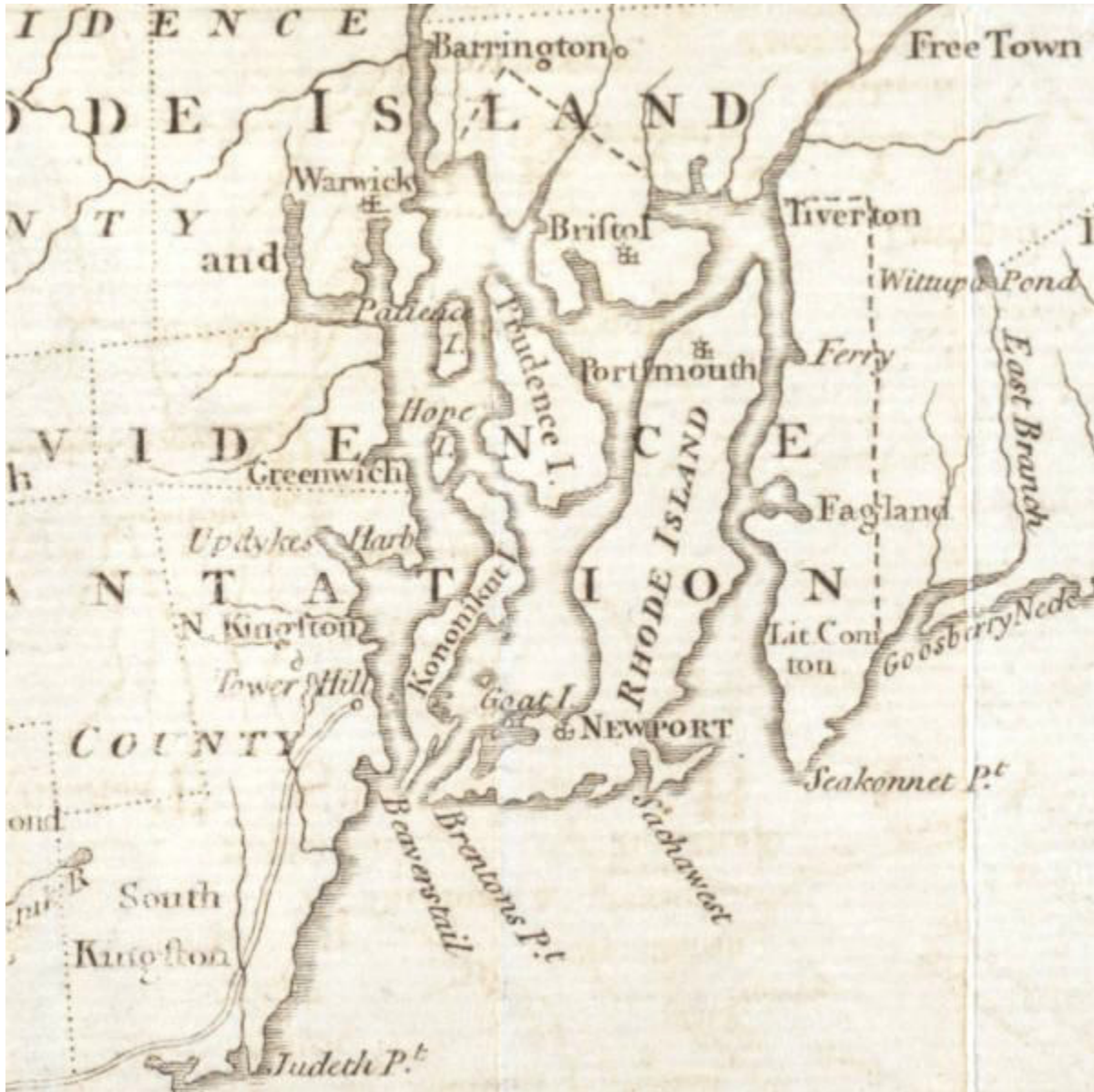
Distinguish between the Reverend Daniel Bliss (1714-1764) of [Concord](#), the father, and his son Daniel Bliss, Junior (1739-1805) the lawyer of [Concord](#) and then of Frederickton, New Brunswick.



USS PROVIDENCE

THE KATY

April 5, Friday: George Washington arrived in [Providence, Rhode Island](#).



Commander in Chief of the Fleet of the United Colonies [Esek Hopkins](#)'s ships took the brig *Bolton*, and then a brigantine and a sloop out of New-York, as prizes.

May 10, Sunday: [John Paul Jones](#) assumed command of the [USS Providence](#) with a temporary rank of Captain. Upon its return after a voyage to New-York returning to the Continental Army about 100 soldiers whom George Washington had lent to [Esek Hopkins](#) to help man the American fleet, the *Providence* was hove down at [Providence, Rhode Island](#) for a cleaning of its bottom.

The 2nd Continental Congress delegated John Adams, Richard Henry Lee, and Edward Rutledge to prepare the wording of a resolution, that the North American colonies were severing themselves from British crown rule. Note: this was a resolution, a political act, rather than a declaration; the [Declaration of Independence](#) would be thought of later on, not as a political act but as a mere printed broadside, a piece of street theater, public propaganda (the distinction being suggested here is a distinction between what is internal to government, the decision, and what is external to government, the publicity).²

In a later period the document created by the 2nd Continental Congress would be awarded by our nation an almost religious iconic significance. This would be accomplished, in part, by suppressing the fact that in actuality the document had not stood alone. There had in fact been at least ninety such declaration documents, issued at various times by various bodies.³ It was almost an art form of the period. On the following screen are some of the salient examples which have survived in our memory:

2. This wasn't the only piece of paper issued on this day. On this day also the Continental Congress began to issue paper money that they backdated to the 10th of May of the previous year. That's paper money as in "Not worth a Continental":



CONTINENTAL CONGRESS

USS PROVIDENCE

THE KATY

June 13, Thursday: While escorting the *Fly* to Fisher's Island at the entrance to Long Island Sound, Temporary Captain [John Paul Jones](#) of the [USS Providence](#) managed to save a brigantine bringing munitions from Hispanola from capture by the frigate HMS *Cerberus* — although how he managed pull this off with a vessel that was armed with but a dozen 4-pounder cannon is not made clear by the painting of the event:



3. In addition, there is at least one instance in which such a Declaration of Independence document failed of acceptance, in Barnstable, Massachusetts on June 25, 1776. You will interrogate many Barnstable citizens before you find anyone with any awareness of this episode in their town's history.

THE *KATY*

USS *PROVIDENCE*

August: The frigate *Warren* was built and fitted out in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) for the new American Navy. Together with a smaller sloop [USS *Providence*](#) (which had been [John Brown](#)'s square-topsail commercial sloop *Katy*, but was refitted for a dozen four-pounder cannon and a crew of 90 as it became the 1st vessel in the US Navy), she would have a reasonably successful career.



August 1, Thursday: A convoy of collier vessels arrived at Philadelphia, escorted by the [USS *Providence*](#).

People were trying to kill each other at Oconore and at Essenecca Town in South Carolina.

[GO TO MASTER INDEX OF WARFARE](#)

August 8, Thursday: On about this day Temporary Captain [John Paul Jones](#) of the [USS *Providence*](#) received his permanent commission as Captain.



August 21, Wednesday: Captain [John Paul Jones](#)'s [USS Providence](#) departed the Delaware Capes to begin an independent cruise. Shortly it would board a whaler, the *Britannia*, put on a prize crew, and send this brigantine into Philadelphia.

September 1, Sunday: Captain [John Paul Jones](#)'s [USS Providence](#) narrowly escaped the attentions of the British frigate *Solebay*.

September 3, Tuesday: Captain [John Paul Jones](#)'s [USS Providence](#) captured the Bermudan brigantine *Sea Nymph*, put aboard a crew, and sent this prize vessel with its cargo of [sugar](#), [rum](#), [ginger](#), and oil headed toward the port of Philadelphia.

[Dr. Josiah Bartlett](#) wrote to Colonel William Whipple to characterize the promises of Independence made by Lord Howe to the Continental Congress as “false” and “hollow.”

September 6, Friday: A peace conference was held at the Tottenville home of Loyalist Colonel Thomas Billopp, on Staten Island near New-York. General Howe demanded that the [Declaration of Independence](#) be revoked and the American commissioners –John Adams, Benjamin Franklin and John Rutledge– refused.

Captain [John Paul Jones](#)'s [USS Providence](#) captured the brigantine *Favourite* carrying sugar from Antigua to Liverpool (however, the HMS *Galatea* would recapture this prize before it could be brought into an American port).



September 20, Friday: Captain [John Paul Jones](#) had turned the [USS Providence](#) toward the north. On this day the vessel escaped the attentions of a British frigate.

[Cadwallader Colden](#) died at Spring Hill, near Flushing on Long Island.

September 22, Sunday: In New-York, Captain Nathan Hale had been denied a clergyman and was condemned to be hanged. Facing the prospect of being hanged is known to marvelously focus one's attention, and the condemned man was enticed to create a pithy remark that would go down in the pages of history alongside Woody Allen's "I don't want to live forever through my work, I want to live forever by not dying." What this condemned man perpetrated was a chauvinist version of that old "cats have nine lives" thingie: "I only regret that I have but one life to give for my country."

Captain [John Paul Jones](#)'s *USS Providence*, having escaped the attentions of a British frigate, on this day reached Canso in Nova Scotia where he might replenish his crew (having used so many of his previous crew to man their numerous prizes to take these vessels into safe ports). At the Canso harbor he would burn a British fishing schooner, sink another, and capture a third, and in addition would capture a shallop which he could use as a tender.

October 8, Tuesday: Captain [John Paul Jones](#)'s *USS Providence*, having relocated from Canso in Nova Scotia to Ile Madame, had taken additional prizes from among the vessels fishing there and had then ridden out a severe storm. Then, after the whaler *Portland* had surrendered to it, on this day the *Providence* sailed back into the Narragansett Bay of [Rhode Island](#). While the vessel was in its home port, Commander in Chief of the Fleet of the United Colonies [Esek Hopkins](#) would appoint Captain Jones as Commander of a larger vessel, the *Alfred*, which would serve as the Commander in Chief's flagship on the forthcoming expedition against the Bahamas (the *Providence* would be captained by Hoysted Hacker).

November 11, Monday: Captain [John Paul Jones](#)'s *Alfred* and Captain Hoysted Hacker's *USS Providence* got underway from the Narragansett Bay of [Rhode Island](#), headed for the Bahamas.



The Constitution of [Maryland](#).

READ THE FULL TEXT



November 21, Thursday: Captain [John Paul Jones](#)'s *Alfred* and Captain Hoysted Hacker's [USS Providence](#) captured the brigantine *Active*.

[Concord](#) budgeted for three months of the services in New York of 34 local soldiers at £340 each, over and above an incentive advance of £10.

TABLE OF REVOLUTIONARY CAMPAIGNS⁴

| WHEN REQUIRED | MEN | TIME | WHERE EMPLOYED | BOUNTY | AMOUNT |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----------|----------------|--------|--------|
| June 1776 | 19 | 12 months | New York | 10 | 190 |
| June 25, 1776 | 48 | 6 months | Ticonderoga | 9 | 432 |
| <p>Dr. John Cuming was appointed Commander in this [the above] expedition, but declined. The whole consisted of five thousand men. One company, consisting of ninety-four men, was commanded by Capt. Charles Miles, of Concord. Edmond Munroe, was Lieutenant; Matthew Hobbs, 2d Lieutenant; and Jonas Brown, Ensign. They were attached to Col. Jonathan Reed's regiment. His muster-roll give sixty-one from Concord, (differing from the report from which the above is compiled); Weston, twenty-seven; Lexington, four; and two from Tyconterage [?]. Being ready to march, they were paraded on the common in Concord, with several other companies from the adjoining towns, and attended religious services in the meeting-house. Rev. William Emerson preached from Job v. 20, and afterwards went as Chaplain, sacrificed his life to his patriotism, and never returned. Another Company, commanded by Capt. Asahel Wheeler, whose Lieutenant was Samuel Hoar, of Lincoln. Samuel Osburn was 2d Lieutenant, and David Hosmer, Ensign.</p> | | | | | |
| September 12, 1776 | 23 | 3 months | White Plains | 8 | 184 |
| <p>This [the above] embraced one fifth of the Militia under fifty years of age, not in actual service. The drafts from this county formed one regiment, which was commanded by Eleazer Brooks, of Lincoln. Rev. Moses Adams, of Acton, was Chaplain; Dr. Joseph Hunt, Surgeon; and Samuel Hartwell, of Lincoln, Quarter-master. Concord furnished twenty-three men; Lexington, sixteen, Acton, fifteen; and Lincoln, twelve, which formed one company, whose officers were Simon Hunt, of Acton, Captain; Samuel Heald, of Concord, Lieutenant; Ebenezer White, 2d Lieutenant. They were in the battle of White Plains. A return after the battle gives forty-two fit for duty, seven sick, four wounded, two of whom, David Wheeler and Amos Buttrick, belonged to Concord. Thomas Darby, of Acton was killed. Col. Brooks's Regiment behaved bravely on that occasion.</p> | | | | | |
| September 12, 1776 | 7 | | Dorchester | | |
| <p>These [the above] were part of a company of eighty-nine men, taken from nearly every town in this county, commanded by John Minott, of Chelmsford, and attached to Col. Dykes's Regiment. John Hartwell, of Lincoln, was Lieutenant. Acton furnished five; Lincoln, four; and Bedford, three.</p> | | | | | |
| November 21, 1776 | 34 | 3 months | New York | 10 | 340 |

| WHEN REQUIRED | MEN | TIME | WHERE EMPLOYED | BOUNTY | AMOUNT |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|------------------------------|--------|--------|
| <p>This [the above] was one fourth of the Militia in Middlesex County, and formed one Regiment of six hundred and seventy men, commanded by Col. Samuel Thatcher, of Cambridge. Cyprian How, of Marlborough, was Lieutenant-Colonel; Joseph Bryant, of Stoneham, Major. Concord furnished thirty-four; Weston, eighteen; Lexington, fourteen; Acton, thirteen; Lincoln, thirteen, which composed one company. John Bridge, of Lexington, was Captain; Jacob Brown, of Concord, Lieutenant; and Josiah Stearns, of Weston, 2d Lieutenant; William Burrows, Orderly Sergeant. They marched to New-York and New-Jersey before they returned, and were stationed at Woodbridge. Dissolved March 6th.</p> | | | | | |
| December 1, 1776 | 8 | | Boston | | |
| <p>It appears from a roll of this company in the Secretary's office, that Capt. John Hartwell was commander of it [the above]. Thirteen in this and six in other companies were from Lincoln. They were attached to Col. Dykes's Regiment.</p> | | | | | |
| December 1776 | 6 | | Rhode Island | | |
| <p>These [the above] were attached to the Artillery.</p> | | | | | |

November 22, Friday: Captain [John Paul Jones](#)'s *Alfred* and Captain Hoysted Hacker's [USS Providence](#) took the armed transport *Mellish*, which was carrying winter uniforms and military supplies for the British Army.

December 16, Monday: Jane Austen was born.

Captain [John Paul Jones](#)'s *Alfred* and Captain Hoysted Hacker's [USS Providence](#) captured the snow *Kitty*.



- [Lemuel Shattuck](#)'s 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD:...](#) Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: [John Stacy](#)
 (On or about November 11, 1837 [Henry Thoreau](#) would indicate a familiarity with the contents of at least pages 2-3 and 6-9 of this historical study.)



December 17, Tuesday: People were trying to kill each other at Springfield, New Jersey.

That night, Captain Hoysted Hacker's [USS Providence](#) needed to head back for [Rhode Island](#) on account of persistent leaks that had developed during bad weather.

December 19, Thursday: Captain Hoysted Hacker's [USS Providence](#), troubled by persistent leaks, arrived at [Newport](#) harbor in the [Narragansett Bay](#) to find that the island was under the control of British forces. Together with other American vessels, it would retire up the [Providence](#) River.

[Thomas Paine](#) prepared his 1st "American Crisis" essay, the one in which he wrote that "These are the times that try men's souls."

[READ THE FULL TEXT](#)

1777

February: Under the command of Lieutenant Jonathan Pitcher, the [USS Providence](#) ran the British blockade of the [Narragansett Bay](#). After putting into [New Bedford](#), the vessel cruised to Cape Breton and captured there a transport brig loaded with stores and carrying in addition to its crew two officers and 25 men of the British Army. Under command of Captain J.P. Rathbun, the *USS Providence* then would make two cruises on the coast.

Some sort of crazy influence battle was fought in [Rhode Island](#) over the issue of which was to come first, winning American freedom or making money off the revolutionary fighting. The battle was waged by proxies, and was ostensibly over whether obtaining crews of sailors for the Continental navy's publicly financed warships should have priority over obtaining crews of sailors for privately financed privateering expeditions, but eventually it became clear that attacks on [Esek Hopkins](#)'s loyalty to his nation had been being encouraged by the chauvinistic war profiteer [John Brown](#):



John's attack on Esek Hopkins marks him as a man of calculation and influence, and of overweening pride. With the frigate committee disbanded and his privateers returning a stream of riches, John might have contented himself to count his loot and enjoy the mounting problems confounding his grizzled old shipmaster. Instead he plotted, patiently, until he finally had the pieces in place to sabotage the one man in Rhode Island who had dared to cross him....

As the war progressed, many fortunes were lost in Providence and throughout America, but John only prospered. At the outset of the war he owned or shared interest in more than seventy-five ships, and while many were lost to the enemy -ten were seized in 1777 alone- John more than covered his losses with prize ships and returns from trade. Combined with earnings from the Hope Furnace and from his contracts with Congress, John managed to turn the war into a personal bonanza.

His phenomenal gains are evidenced by his investments. During the course of the war, John and his brother Nicholas banked heavily on securities issued by the states and by the Continental Congress. The prices of these bonds fluctuated



wildly, but long experience trading in a variety of foreign currencies had honed their skills in arbitrage, and together the brothers amassed the largest single stake in government debt in Rhode Island. Around the same time, beginning in 1780, John went on a real-estate buying spree, purchasing a large waterfront tract on Aquidneck Island outside Newport and an eight-hundred-acre farm on Prudence Island. On the east shore of Narragansett Bay he obtained a lovely, grassy estate on a promontory near Bristol known by the Indian name Poppasquash, which he renamed Point Pleasant; on the west shore, he bought from the Greene clan five hundred well-watered acres at Namquit point south of Patuxet, overlooking the spit of land that had grounded the Gaspee a decade before. This he dubbed Spring Green Farm, and it alternated with Point Pleasant as a summer retreat for the family.

Most of the properties John obtained were bargains. Some of the estates were confiscated from Tory sympathizers -the farm on Prudence Island formerly belonged to Joseph Wanton- and were resold at a discount by the wartime government. And farmland valuations were especially low. But John had had ample cash reserves to skim the cream off the depressed market. There is little question that, by the end of the Revolution, John had emerged as the richest man in Rhode Island.

1778

January 15, Thursday: At about this point the [USS Providence](#) sailed from Georgetown, [North Carolina](#), again heading toward the island of New Providence in the Bahamas but this time sailing alone.

January 27, Tuesday: The crew of the [USS Providence](#) went ashore to spike the guns of the forts overlooking New Providence (Nassau) in the Bahamas of the Caribbean, in the process discovering military stores including 1,600 pounds of powder, and rescuing 30 American prisoners. They recaptured five prize vessels which had been brought in by the British, and seized a 16-gun British vessel.

Roland, a tragédie lyrique by Niccolò Piccinni to words of Marmontel after Quinault, was performed for the initial time, at the Paris Opéra. This was Piccinni's first French opera. The rehearsals had been so horrendous that Piccinni had made plans to leave for [Naples](#) on the following day. As it turned out, the performance, attended by Queen [Marie Antoinette](#), was a success. Reviews would be generally positive.

January 30, Friday: The prize vessels captured by the [USS Providence](#) at Nassau were loaded with cargo and manned and sailed away. The *Providence*, accompanied by her 16-gun prize, would put into [New Bedford](#).



1779

Early April: During the early part of this month, [USS Providence](#) was being taken for a short cruise in Massachusetts Bay and along the coast of Maine. Later the vessel would be sailing south of Cape Cod.

May 7, Friday: The [USS Providence](#) captured the HMS *Diligent*, a brig of 12 guns, off Sandy Hook. During this engagement the vessel absorbed two broadsides and there had been in addition a volley of muskets, and its mast, rigging, and hull had been chopped up pretty badly. The crippled vessel would be assigned to Commodore Saltonstall's squadron which would sail out of Boston harbor on July 19th and enter Penobscot Bay on July 25th.

July 19, Monday: Commodore Saltonstall's squadron sailed out of Boston harbor and would enter Penobscot Bay on July 25th. With this squadron sailed the badly damaged [USS Providence](#).

July 25, Sunday: Commodore Saltonstall took his squadron of American warships into Penobscot Bay — this would turn out to be a serious tactical error as this was a body of water from which the squadron would be unable to extricate itself, as soon as all the entryways were blockaded by ships of the British fleet, without being helplessly destroyed piecemeal. With this ill-led squadron was sailing the badly damaged [USS Providence](#).

August 14, Saturday: The [USS Providence](#) was destroyed by her crew in the Penobscot River, along with other trapped American vessels, in order to prevent their falling into the hands of the British.

September 23, Thursday evening and night: The defeat of HMS *Serapis* under Captain Person in the North Sea by the *Bonhomme Richard* under Captain [John Paul Jones](#), with the moon almost full⁵ (a manly action per LEAVES OF GRASS, "SONG OF MYSELF," 35-36 pornography):

Would you hear of an old-time sea-fight?
Would you learn who won by the light of the moon and stars?
List to the yarn, as my grandmother's father the sailor told it to me.

Our foe was no skulk in his ship I tell you, (said he,)
His was the surly English pluck, and there is no tougher or truer, and never was, and never will be;
Along the lower'd eve he came horribly raking us.

We closed with him, the yards entangled, the cannon touch'd,
My captain lash'd fast with his own hands.

We had receiv'd some eighteen pound shots under the water,
On our lower-gun-deck two large pieces had burst at the first fire, killing all around and blowing up overhead.

Fighting at sun-down, fighting at dark,
Ten o'clock at night, the full moon well up, our leaks on the gain, and five feet of water reported,
The master-at-arms loosing the prisoners confined in the afterhold to give them a chance for themselves.

The transit to and from the magazine is now stopt by the sentinels,
They see so many strange faces they do not know whom to trust.

Our frigate takes fire,
The other asks if we demand quarter?
If our colors are struck and the fighting done?

5. It seems Walt Whitman was exercising a wee bit of poetic license, as the moon would not be completely full until September 25th.



THE KATY

USS PROVIDENCE

Now I laugh content, for I hear the voice of my little captain,
We have not struck, he composedly cries, **we have just begun our part of the fighting.**

Only three guns are in use,
One is directed by the captain himself against the enemy's mainmast,
Two well serv'd with grape and canister silence his musketry and clear his decks.

The tops alone second the fire of this little battery, especially the main-top,
They hold out bravely during the whole of the action.

Not a moment's cease,
The leaks gain fast on the pumps, the fire eats toward the powder-magazine.

One of the pumps has been shot away, it is generally thought we are sinking.

Serene stands the little captain,
He is not hurried, his voice is neither high nor low,
His eyes give more light to us than our battle-lanterns.

Toward twelve there in the beams of the moon they surrender to us.

Stretch'd and still lies the midnight,
Two great hulls motionless on the breast of the darkness,
Our vessel riddled and slowly sinking, preparations to pass to the one we had conquer'd,
The captain on the quarter-deck coldly giving his orders through a countenance white as a sheet,
Near by the corpse of the child that serv'd in the cabin,
The dead face of an old salt with long white hair and carefully curl'd whiskers,
The flames spite of all that can be done flickering aloft and below,
The husky voices of the two or three officers yet fit for duty,
Formless stacks of bodies and bodies by themselves, dabs of flesh upon the masts and spars,
Cut of cordage, dangle of rigging, light shock of the soothe of waves,
Black and impassive guns, litter of powder-parcels, strong scent,
A few large stars overhead, silent and mournful shining,
Delicate sniffs of sea-breeze, smells of sedgy grass and fields by the shore, death-messages given in charge to survivors,
The hiss of the surgeon's knife, the gnawing teeth of his saw,
Wheeze, cluck, swash of falling blood, short wild scream, and long, dull, tapering groan,
These so, these irretrievable.



1780

[Benjamin Franklin](#) appointed [John Paul Jones](#) to command the *Alliance*.



And in this year Franklin opined that “The rapid progress **true** science now makes occasions my regretting sometimes that I was born too soon.”

1783

August 26, Tuesday: America had won its struggle for liberty and it was time to get back to business as usual. In [Providence, Rhode Island](#), John Innes Clarke and Joseph Nightingale of the firm of Clarke & Nightingale were fitting out yet another [negrero](#), the *Providence*^{2, 6}, for a voyage to the coast of Africa. Hearing of this, [Friend Moses Brown](#) visited them and received their reassurances.



MOSES BROWN

Yes, they were indeed fitting out a vessel for a trading voyage to the coast of Africa, but they would be trading their cargo of New England's triple-distilled rum brandy not for [slaves](#) but merely for ivory, for beeswax, and for gold dust. The [international slave trade](#)? –No, Heaven forbid!

Actually it was as obvious as a wart on the tip of your nose the size and color of a small cherry, what was going on here:

He learned soon after that Clarke had misled him; that the ship fitting for Africa was in fact a slaver. Moses promptly sat down and wrote a lengthy plea to Clarke and Nightengale [*sic*], asking that they "give orders to the captain not to suffer any negroes to be brought on board." Where his other tracts against slavery, addressed to legislators and to the public, stressed the iniquities of the trade and the ordeal of the slaves, in this letter Moses was more personal, asking his merchant friends to consider their own consciences, to save their own souls. Moses said that his own decision, years before, to engage in the trade despite "averse convictions," had led to "the most uneasiness, and has left the greatest impression and stain upon my mind of any if not all my other conduct in life." His remorse was especially acute, Moses wrote, when he paused to think how his conduct might appear in judgment before God. Moses felt moved, then, by "some engagement for your preservation from so great an evil as I have found the trade to be." He implored them to reconsider, "that you may avoid the unhappy reflections which I have had."

If that was not prodding enough, Moses added an audacious dig to jar the merchants' sensibilities close to home. One of their own bondsmen had approached him some time ago, Moses confided, seeking release from "the burden of slavery." Moses said he

6. Note well that this particular vessel named *Providence*, being merely a [negrero](#) like the original *Katy*, does not fit well into our normative sequence of the Godly warlike national vessels USS *Providence*₁, USS *Providence*₃, USS *Providence*₄, and USS *Providence*₅, which had begun with the previous Rhode Island negrero *Katy*. (The reasons why it does not fit well is that we like our history to be served to us Whiggish style, with noticeable progress toward perfection between the generations. –We tend not to appreciate the sort of historical tale that is, more realistically merely stupid thing after stupid thing endlessly perpetuated!)



counseled the slave to be patient, but he asked the merchants to consider, if a slave sought relief from their own kind treatment, how much worse must be the anguish of those slaves sold to a life of toil in the tropics.

1792

July 18, Wednesday: [John Paul Jones](#) (born John Paul; “Jones” had been a mere pseudonym originally adopted in order to escape legal charges of murder) died, still relatively youthful. Since his body would be buried wrapped in tinfoil in alcohol in a securely sealed lead casket in a special Parisian cemetery for foreign non-Catholics, and has been subsequently retrieved, we know exactly what he looked like (as per the photographic image on the following page: the marks across the countenance are those of the corpse’s winding sheet).

1906

April 24, Tuesday: President Teddy Roosevelt had sent four US warships to France to fetch the mummified body wrapped in tinfoil and preserved in alcohol of [John Paul Jones](#), interred on July 20, 1792 in the St. Louis Cemetery for Foreign Non-Catholics in a securely sealed lead coffin (over the centuries the dead of this cemetery had come to lie beneath a Paris street). At this point a celebratory service was held in Annapolis, Maryland. A suitable sepulchre would be prepared beneath the chapel at Annapolis, and in 1913 the lead coffin would be lowered into this final receptacle.

DIGGING UP THE DEAD

THE *KATY*

USS *PROVIDENCE*



USS PROVIDENCE

THE KATY



“Stack of the Artist of Kouroo” Project



THE KATY

USS PROVIDENCE

PROVIDENCE₃

Gundalow: length 53'4"; beam 15'6"; depth 3'10"; complement 45; armament 1 12-pounder; 29-pounders; 8 swivels.

This 3d *Providence*, a gundalow, was built by the Continental Army at Skenesboro, New York, a town on Lake Champlain, during 1776 for Brigadier-General Benedict Arnold's freshwater fleet. Under the command of Captain Simonds, a Revolutionary Army officer, on October 11, 1776 the ship participated in the engagement between Arnold's vessels and a British squadron at Valcour Island. After this battle, with their ammunition nearly exhausted, the Americans retreated toward Crown Point with the enemy in pursuit and on the morning of the 12th at Schuyler's Island this *Providence*, being badly damaged, was scuttled to prevent capture.



PROVIDENCE₄

28-gun Frigate: tonnage 632; length 126'6.5"; beam 33'8"; depth 10'5".

This 4th *Providence* was built by Silvester Bowes at Providence, Rhode Island by order of the Continental Congress and was launched during May 1776. After being blockaded in the Providence River for more than a year, this new frigate, under the command of Captain Abraham Whipple, ran the British blockade on the night of April 30, 1778, returning the heavy fire of the British ship *Lark* and damaging that vessel and then fighting a running battle with another vessel of the British blockading force. The ship sailed directly for France, arriving at Paimboeuf on May 30, 1778 to procure guns and supplies for Continental Navy vessels under construction. The ship sailed from Paimboeuf on August 8, 1778 and six days later joined the frigate *Boston* in the port of Brest. The two ships sailed back to America on August 22, 1778. They took 3 prizes on the return voyage and the *Providence* arrived in the port of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on October 15, 1778. Transferred to Boston to seek a crew, this *Providence* sailed from Boston on June 18, 1779 as the flagship of Commodore Abraham Whipple, cruising eastward in company with *Ranger* and *Queen of France*. In an early morning during mid-July, the squadron was in a dense fog off the banks of Newfoundland when it fell in with a Jamaican fleet of some 150 sails. These vessels remained with the enemy fleet all day without any alarm being sounded. They were able to capture 11 prizes, many by quietly sending boats to take possession. Then this squadron of American vessels slipped away with their prizes during the night. They sent 8 of the prizes, valued together with their cargo at over \$1,000,000, into Boston and Cape Ann. The squadron returned to Boston and on November 23, 1779 sailed from Nantasket Roads, first cruising eastward of Bermuda, and finally arriving at Charleston on December 23, 1779 to participate in the defense of that port city. This *Providence*, with other ships of Commodore Whipple's squadron, remained at the defense of the port of Charleston and was one of the ships taken by British when that city fell on May 12, 1780. Subsequently the vessel saw service in the British Navy, until sold during March 1783.



PROVIDENCE₅

Light Cruiser, CL-82: displacement 13,755 (full load); length 610' 1"; beam 66' 4"; draft 25'; speed 32 knots; complement 992; armament 12 6" guns, 12 5" guns, 28 40-millimeter guns, 10 20-millimeter guns, 2 catapults; class: Cleveland.

The keel of this 5th *Providence* was laid down on July 27, 1943 by Bethlehem Steel Company of Quincy, Massachusetts, the vessel was launched on December 28, 1944, and the ship was commissioned as the CL-82 on May 15, 1945, with Captain W.B. Jackson being placed in command. He took the vessel out of Boston harbor on June 13, 1945, for a shakedown cruise out of Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. Upon arrival at Newport, Rhode Island on September 4, 1945, the ship began to train prospective cruiser and carrier crews, until October 6, 1945. Departing again from Boston harbor during November, the ship visited Piraeus, Greece during December, visited Istanbul along with the *Missouri* (BB-63) from April 5 to 9, 1946, and visited Alexandria, Egypt during May 1946. Leaving the Mediterranean on June 16, 1946, the ship arrived at Philadelphia on the June 25, 1946. Following departure from the Delaware Capes during October and training out of Guantánamo Bay and Norfolk, Virginia, the ship left Hampton Roads for the Mediterranean on February 3, 1947. After exercises and port visits in the Mediterranean the ship departed Athens, Greece, during May 1947, and arrived in Boston harbor later that month.

Departing Newport, Rhode Island, during November 1947, the ship operated in the Mediterranean from November 20, 1947 to March 2, 1948, visiting Naples during December 1948, Taranto during January 1949, and Trieste and Venice during February 1949, returning to Newport during March 1949. Sailing from Newport during September 1948, the ship served the 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean from September 23, 1948 to January 14, 1949, visiting Thessalonika during October 1949, Marseilles during November 1949, Trieste and Venice during December 1949, and Oran during January 1950, returning to Newport later during January 1950. The ship was decommissioned at Boston on June 14, 1949, by being transferred to the Atlantic Reserve Fleet.

This *Providence* was reclassified as the CLG-6 on May 23, 1957, and commenced conversion to a guided missile light cruiser at Boston during June 1957. Provided with modern missiles, command ship facilities and a nuclear weapons capability, the vessel was recommissioned on September 17, 1959, and Captain Kenneth L. Veth was placed in command. Following a shakedown cruise out of Guantánamo Bay, the ship arrived at her new home port of Long Beach, California on July 29, 1960. After a six-month tour of duty with the 7th Fleet, the ship returned to Long Beach on March 31, 1961.

Following exercises off the West Coast, the ship arrived at Yokosuka, Japan during May 1962, and there relieved the *Oklahoma City* (CLG-5) as flagship of the 7th Fleet. During 1962 and 1963, the ship participated in 7th Fleet exercises. During a three-day visit to Saigon in January 1964, the ship hosted South



USS PROVIDENCE

THE KATY

Vietnamese and American dignitaries, and delivered more than 38 tons of Project Handclasp materials to local humanitarian organizations. Departing Yokosuka during July 1964, the ship returned to Long Beach during August 1964. During October 1964, the ship began exercises in the Eastern Pacific. During January to June 1965, modern communications equipment was installed. Spending the remainder of 1965 off the West Coast with the 1st Fleet, the ship participated in exercises and visited various West Coast ports.

Deployed to WestPac on November 12, 1966, the ship again relieved the *Oklahoma City* as flagship of the 7th Fleet on December 1, 1966 at Yokosuka, Japan. The ship contributed to a major bombardment of enemy positions in Vietnam on April 1, 1967. The ship dueled with an enemy shore battery off the DMZ on May 25, 1967. During July, the ship provided gunfire support for amphibious operations. The ship bombarded enemy storage areas south of Da Nang on October 10, 1967.

During 1968, the ship provided gunfire support off Vietnam every month except June and December. Responding to the enemy's Tet offensive during February 1968, gunfire from the *Providence* produced an important breach in the wall of an enemy strongpoint at Hue. During 1969 the ship operated with the 1st Fleet off the West Coast. During 1970 this vessel was still active with the Pacific Fleet.

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"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

– Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST





THE *KATY*

USS *PROVIDENCE*

Prepared: September 18, 2013

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT
GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, upon someone's request we have pulled it out of the hat of a pirate that has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (depicted above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of data modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture. This is data mining. To respond to such a request for information, we merely push a button.



THE KATY

USS PROVIDENCE

Commonly, the first output of the program has obvious deficiencies and so we need to go back into the data modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and do a recompile of the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process which you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place your requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>.
Arrgh.