



CANNONEER

Newsletter of the *Fernando de Leyba Chapter*

Sons of the American Revolution

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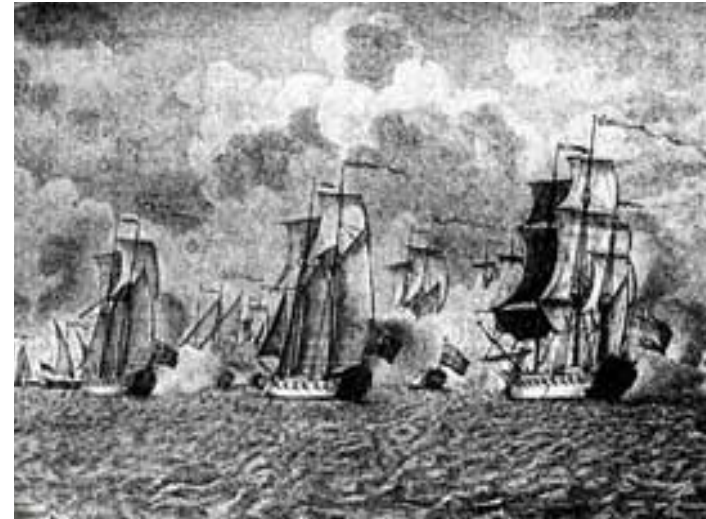
Meets 2nd Monday of every month (except July and August) at
Culpepper Restaurant in St. Charles, MO

On This Day: October 11, 1776

The Battle of Valcour Island

October 11, 1776 at Valcour Bay, New York

The Battle of Valcour Island, also known as the Battle of Valcour Bay, was a naval engagement in a narrow strait in Lake Champlain, between the New York mainland and Valcour Island. It is generally regarded as the first naval battle fought by the U.S. Navy. Although the outcome of the battle was the destruction of most the American ships, the overall campaign delayed the British attempt to cut the colonies in half by a year and eventually led to the British military disaster at the Battle of Saratoga in 1777.



American Forces Commanded by
[Brig. Gen. Benadict Arnold](#)

Strength	Killed & Wounded	Missing / Captured
650	80 / 11 ships lost	120

British Forces Commanded by
[Gen. Guy Carlton](#) and Capt. Thomas Pringle

Strength	Killed & Wounded	Missing / Captured
1,670	40 / 3 ships lost	?

Conclusion: British Victory
[Canadian theater, 1775-1776](#)

Following the failed American invasion of Canada, the British Navy launched a counteroffensive intended to gain control of the Hudson River Valley, which extends southward from Lake Champlain. Control of the upper Hudson River would have enabled the British to link their Canadian forces with those in British-occupied New York City, dividing the American colonies of New England from those in the South and Mid-Atlantic, and potentially finishing the revolution.

Access to the river's source was protected by American strongholds at Crown Point and Fort Ticonderoga, and elimination of these defenses would require the transportation of troops and supplies from the British-controlled St. Lawrence Valley to the north.

Roads were either impassable or nonexistent, making water transport over Lake Champlain the only viable option, but the only ships on the lake were in American hands, and even though they were lightly armed, they would have made transport of troops and stores impossible for the British. The two sides therefore set about building fleets; the British at St. Johns in Quebec and the Americans at the other end of the lake in Skenesborough. The British had adequate supplies, skilled workmen, and prefabricated ships transported from England, including a 180-ton warship they disassembled and rebuilt on the lake. All told, the 30-ship British fleet had roughly twice as many ships and twice the firepower of the Americans' 16 vessels.

[U.S. Army battle map, The Battle of Valcour Island, 11 October 1776](#)



Brig. Gen. Benedict Arnold's flagship was initially the USS Royal Savage, a 2-masted schooner, but he transferred to the USS Congress, a row galley. Arnold's fleet included USS Revenge and USS Liberty, also schooners, as well as the USS Enterprise, a sloop, and 8 gondolas: USS New Haven, USS Providence, USS Boston, USS Spitfire, USS Philadelphia, USS Connecticut, USS Jersey, USS New York, and the galley USS Trumbull.

Facing them were the ships of the British Royal Navy constructed in Quebec: The flagship HMS Inflexible; the schooners HMS Maria, HMS Carleton, HMS Royal Convert, the ketch HMS Thunderer, as well as over 20 gunboats armed

with a single cannon. Arnold shrewdly chose to force the British to attack his inferior forces in a narrow, rocky body of water between the coast and Valcour Island, where the British fleet would have difficulty bringing its superior firepower to bear.

The British fleet took up positions at noon around 300 yards in front of the American battle line with the small gunboats forward, and the five main ships around 50-100 yards behind the gunboats. The British then opened up a huge broadside against the American ships which continued for the next 5 hours.

During the exchange of cannon fire, the Revenge was heavily hit and abandoned. The Philadelphia, was also heavily hit and sank later at around 6:30 P.M. The Royal Savage, ran aground and was set on fire by the crew to prevent the ship from falling in British hands. The Congress, and Washington were heavily damaged, and the Jersey and New York, were also badly hit. On the British side, casualties began mounting too. The HMS Carlton was heavily hit as it tried to land a boarding party on the grounded Royal Savage and was forced to withdraw under heavy fire. One small gunboat, commanded by Lt. Dufais, blew up and sank from a direct hit. Most of the other small gunboats were also hit, forcing them to withdraw and reform their battle line 700 yards from the American line. Two of the gunboats were so heavily damaged that they were forced to be scuttled after the action.

On October 11, the battle was not going well for the Americans when the sun set. Aware that he could not defeat the British fleet, Arnold decided to withdraw. He managed to sneak his fleet past (and through) the British fleet during the night and attempted to run for the cover of the shore batteries

situated at the American-held fort at Crown Point at the south end of the lake. Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate, and the Americans were caught short of their goal.

On October 12, after sailing only 8 miles, Arnold drove one ship, the Providence ashore in the shallow water of Buttonmold Bay off Schuyler Island where the heavier British ships could not follow, and the American ship was then stripped of guns, powder and everything else of use. The New Jersey also ran aground while the crew from the Lee did likewise.

On October 13, the British fleet finally caught up to the American fleet off Split Rock where the Washington was captured and the Congress sank attempting to flee. Arnold led about 200 men from the lost ships on foot to Crown Point where the remaining ships Trumbull, Enterprise, Revenge, New York, and Liberty finally reached safety. Arnold was forced to burn his remaining ships and withdrew further towards Ticonderoga. Although the British had cleared the lake of American ships, establishing naval control, snow was already falling as Arnold and his men reached Ticonderoga on October 20. The British commander, Gen. Guy Carleton, had no choice but to defer the attacks on Crown Point and Fort Ticonderoga and withdrew to a winter camp in Canada by early November, a decision with profound consequences.

The next year, a better-prepared American army would eventually stop the British advance at Saratoga and bring France into the war on the American side.

Next meeting will be on Oct. 08, 2012 and we will meet at Culpeppers 6:30 PM.

Treasurer's report as of April 30, 2012:

Beginning Balance = \$2,292.38 – Ending Balance = \$2,238.39

Genealogist report as of June 11, 2012:

At National:

9 New Prospects for Membership:

- Pat Jefferson (2 supplements)
- John Wilson (1 supplement)
- Charles Lilly (1 more supplement)
- Mike Dollard & Son's

At Chapter:

- Guy Young (New member)
 - John Lincoln Post (New member)
 - Martin White
 - Steve White
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At the September 10, 2012 meeting:

Meeting Opens 7:02 pm

Introductions: David Hoffman, George Smith, Patrice & Gary Hood, Vince Nicosia, Michele Nicosia.

1. **Fernando de Leyba Chapter** – Large Chapter Winner of the "JOSIAH FOGG" Award 2011.
2. Charles Lily: Care Packages to Service Men.
3. David Christian : National Gold Star Mothers Day – WWI featured at the Missouri History Museum.
4. Dennis Hahn: 25,000.00 Gift for Advancing American Heritage.
5. Charles Lily: Desendants of Washington's Valley Forge.
6. Steve Baldwin: SAR Chapters (Contact with the Community). SAR State (Help Chapters with Needs) Sar Districts (Germany, France, Spain).
7. Paul Smith: Motion to Donate (4) Wreaths to Jefferson Barracks in remembrance of Chapter Family Members.

Old Business: NASSAR 122 Congress will be in Las Vegas N.V. July 6-11.

WWW.sar2012congress.com

Revolutionary War Quotes

New Business:

Charles Lilly – Motion to buy a table at the Columbus Day Trivia Night Oct. 6 2012 - PASSED

C.L. Loyd Yearbook Award Of Excellence.

Millan Paddock – Potential Member of FDL.

John Soucy – Military Service Medal.

Norn Haglon – Missouri Society Service Medal.

6 Members – 15 Years of Service.

Meeting Closed at 8:22 P.M.

Program: Michele B. Nicosia – “Aging, Health & Wellness”.

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34 Members and Guest in Attendance:

Steve Baldwin, Norman Haglon, Mary Haglon, Martin White, Mimi White, John Wilson, David Hoffman, Dale Wiseman, George Smith, Patrice Hood, Gary Hood, Jim Borgman, Diane Borgman, J.D. Kirtlins, Pat Kirtlins, Mishele Nicosia, Vince Nicosia, David Christian, Charles Lily, Bill Grote, Sylvia Grote, Kieth Morris, Barbra Morris, Chuck Simms, John Rush, Charles Jefferson, Bob Raines, Vera Raines, Dennis Hahn, Joan Koechig, Marvin Koechig, John Soucy, Steve ?, Paul Smith,

"A general dissolution of principles and manners will more surely overthrow the liberties of America than the whole force of the common enemy. While the people are virtuous they cannot be subdued; but when once they lose their virtue then will be ready to surrender their liberties to the first external or internal invader."

Samuel Adams

"I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy."

John Adams

*Fernando de Leyba
Chapter*

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Yesterday is History. Tomorrow is Mystery?? Today is a Blessing!!!

Looking forward to seeing everyone on Monday...

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