

American Minute with Bill Federer
"AN APPEAL TO HEAVEN" Pine Tree Flag;
Origins of U.S. Navy, Marines, & Coast Guard "We'll
carry on 'til Kingdom Come, Ideals for which we've
died"

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When a lower court does not give you justice, you appeal your case to a higher court, and ultimately to the Supreme Court.

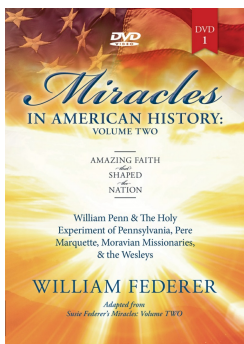


But what if the Supreme Court does not give you justice?

You appeal to Heaven!

This was the inspiration behind one of the first flags of America's navy -- The Pine Tree Flag ... [continue reading American Minute here ...](#)

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Why the Pine Tree?

Eastern White Pine Trees grew to a height of over 150 feet and were ideal for use as **masts on British ships**.

The **King** would send **forest surveyor agents** onto **colonial American farms** and **mark the best trees** as **belonging to the King**.

These pines contributed to the British navy becoming **the most powerful navy in the world**.

Colonists did not like **government agents** coming onto **their property**.

In 1734, there was a **Mast Tree Riot** where **men disguised as Indians** chased away the **King's forest surveyor**.

In 1772, New Hampshire had another show of resistance with the **Pine Tree Riot**.

The King sent agents to enforce **his claim to every tree** in New England over 12 inches in diameter.

In 1772, the sheriff came to South Weare, **New Hampshire**, to arrest those who had cut down some of **the King's trees**.

In retaliation, 30 men burst into the sheriff's room at the inn at night. With their faces blackened with soot to hide their identity, they **beat the sheriff sore with switches made from pine branches**.

The men were later arrested and forced to pay a fine.

This incident was a test of the King's authority and was **considered by some as the beginnings of the revolution**.

When the Revolutionary War started, General Washington's secretary, **Colonel Joseph Reed**, suggested in a letter, October 21, 1775:

"... **flag** with a white ground and a **tree in the middle**, the motto **AN APPEAL TO HEAVEN.**"

On July 26, 1776, the Massachusetts General Court chose it as the **flag** of the **state's navy**:

"...that the Colours be a white **Flag**, with a **green Pine Tree**, and an Inscription, '**APPEAL TO HEAVEN.**'"

It was also called the **Liberty Tree Flag**.

The **Pine Tree Flag**, or **Liberty Tree Flag**, was also flown in towns, churches, riverbanks, and at the nation's capital in Philadelphia.

The flag's phrase, "**An Appeal to Heaven**," was first used by **John Locke** in his ***Second Treatise on Civil Government***, 1690, regarding **the right of citizens** who have been denied justice **to go above the King's head**:

"Where the body of the people ... is deprived of their right ... **where there lies no appeal on earth** ... they have just cause to make their **appeal to heaven** ...

Where there is **no judicature (justice) on earth**, to decide controversies amongst men, **God in heaven is judge**. He alone, it is true, is Judge of the right ...

So in this ... he should **appeal to the Supreme Judge.**"

Patrick Henry referenced the phrase in his "**give me liberty or give me death**" speech at the Second Virginia Convention, March 23, 1775:

"**An appeal to arms and to the God of hosts** is all that is left us! ...

We shall not fight our battles alone.

There is a **just God who presides over the destinies of nations.**"

Massachusetts Provincial Congress stated April 26, 1775, following the **Battles of Lexington and Concord**:

"Appealing to Heaven for the justice of our cause, we determine to die or be free."

Thomas Jefferson helped draft **The Declaration of Causes and Necessity for Taking Up Arms**, July 6, 1775, which stated:

"We most solemnly, before **God** and the world ... resolved to **die freemen** rather than to **live slaves** ...

With an **humble confidence** in the mercies of the **Supreme and Impartial Judge and Ruler of the Universe.**"

The Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776, stated:

"Appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do ... declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right **ought to be Free and Independent States.**"

The **American navy** can be traced back to the **Massachusetts Navy**.

In June of 1775, **citizens** acting as **merchant mariners** captured the British schooner *HMS Margarett* around **Machias, Massachusetts** (present-day Maine).

That same month, **General George Washington**, with the help of merchant ship owner **Colonel John Glover of Marblehead, Massachusetts**, chartered and

outfitted several ships to interrupt the British supplies.

The marker at the base of **John Glover's statue** in Boston states:

"John Glover of Marblehead - A Soldier of the Revolution.

He commanded a regiment of **one thousand men** raised in that town known as **the marine regiment**, and enlisted to **serve throughout the war.**

He joined the camp at Cambridge, June 22, 1775, and **rendered distinguished service in transporting the army."**

On September 2, 1775, **George Washington** personally financed **America's first armed naval vessel**, the **USS *Hannah***, named for **John Glover's daughter.**

Less than a week later, on September 7, 1775, the **USS *Hannah*** captured the British ship *HMS Unity*, **the first prize taken by a U.S. naval vessel.**

Other ships were outfitted by **John Glover:**

- ***Franklin,***
- ***Warren,***
- ***Hancock,*** and
- ***Lee.***

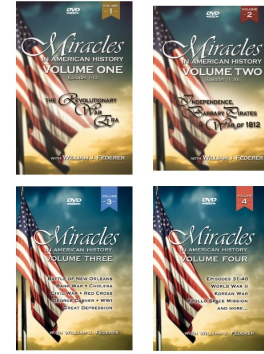
These ships had **crews** mostly of experienced **Massachusetts fisherman** who **defended American ports** and **raided British ships** transporting ammunition and supplies.

This **flotilla**, sometimes referred to as **Washington's fleet**, captured 55 British ships.

The American schooner **Lee** captured the British brig **HMS Nancy** on November 29, 1775, with its cargo of 2,000 Brown Bess muskets, 100,000 flints, 30,000 of artillery ammunition, 30 tons of musket ammunition, and a 13 inch brass mortar.

This was a tremendous benefit to the new **Continental Army** stationed near Boston.

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A **Continental Congress** resolution to create a navy was introduced October 13, 1775, but was tabled.

On December 22, 1775, the resolution passed, and the **Continental Congress** authorized a **Continental Navy**, consisting of:

- two 24-gun frigates, *Alfred* and *Columbus*;
- two 14-gun brigs, *Andrew Doria* and *Cabot*;
- three schooners, *Hornet*, *Wasp*, and *Fly*..

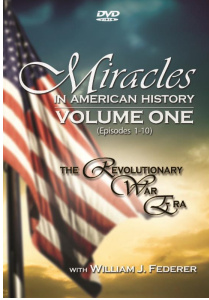
The **Continental Navy** was put under the command of **Esek Hopkins, Esq.**

Four captains were appointed:

Dudley Saltonstall, Abraham Whipple, Nicholas Biddle and John Burrows Hopkins.

Congress also commissioned **five first lieutenants**, one of whom was the future naval hero, **John Paul Jones**.

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1-10)

On August 27, 1776, **Washington** lost the devastating **Battle of Brooklyn Heights**.

The **entire American army** was **trapped against the water**.

The **Revolutionary War** would have **ended** there unless **Washington** could find a **way to evacuate his army**.

John Glover and his **Marblehead fisherman** saved the day by **rowing Washington** and the **entire Continental Army**, under a providential fog, to **escape** across the East River to Manhattan Island.

Glover's large Durham rowboats also ferried **Washington** and the **Continental Army** across the ice packed **Delaware River** for the surprise attack on the German Hessian troops at the **Battle of Trenton**, December 26, 1776.

Another early American flag was designed by **Brigadier General Christopher Gadsden**, a South Carolina delegate to the Continental Congress.

The flag had the words "**Don't Tread On Me.**"

Ben Franklin had made that phrase popular during the French and Indian War by printing it in his **Pennsylvania Gazette**, 1754, in a call to join the Albany Congress.

Ben Franklin and **John Adams** described **Gadsden's flag** in a letter to the Ambassador of Sicily, 1778:

"... a South Carolina flag with a **rattlesnake** in the **middle**

of thirteen stripes."

South Carolina congressional journals, February 9, 1776, recorded:

"Col. Gadsden presented to the Congress an elegant standard, such as is to be used by the commander in chief of the American Navy;

being a yellow field, with a lively representation of a rattlesnake in the middle in the attitude of going to strike and these words underneath, "Don't tread on me."

A version of the **Gadsden Flag** was called the **First Navy Jack**, and was flown by **Esek Hopkins**, the **first Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Navy**, on his flagship the ***USS Alfred***.

It was also flown by **John Paul Jones** and other Navy ships.

Where the **army** fought on **land**, and the **navy** fought at **sea**, a **special force** was created of **soldiers** who could **sail and fight with the navy** and also lead an **invasion and fight on land**.

On November 10, 1775, the **Continental Congress** passed a resolution creating two battalions of **Continental Marines**.

The first **marines** were recruited at **Tun Tavern in Philadelphia**, and served under the command of **Captain Samuel Nicholas**.

The **first Marine amphibious assault** was on March 3, 1776, when they sailed to the **Bahamas** and captured a British ammunition depot and naval port, **Fort Montagu** and **Fort Nassau**.

America's first navy grew to **over 40 vessels**.

When the Revolutionary War ended, the **Navy** and **Marines** were **disbanded**.

On August 4, 1790, **Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton** recommended the creation of the **Revenue Marine**, later called **Revenue Cutter Service**.

It consisted of **10 ships** charged with **stopping smuggling** and **French privateers** from **operating in American waters**.

The **Revenue Marine's** first seven masters (captains) were commissioned by **President George Washington** on March 12, 1791.

The **Revenue-Marine** was the **only armed maritime service of the United States** till the **Department of the Navy** was created in 1798.

During the **U.S.-French Quasi War of 1798-1801**, eight **Revenue Cutter vessels** were among the 45 American ships that served in combat.

The **Marines** were recommissioned on July 11, 1798.

The **Marines** fought in the **Barbary Wars**, "**to the shores of Tripoli**," against the Muslim pirates of North Africa, 1801-1805, 1815.

Marines fought courageously in future American conflicts, as in the **War of 1812**, where they firmly held the center line of defense at the **Battle of New Orleans**, under the command of General Andrew Jackson.

The United States Revenue-Marine ships began intercepting **slave ships** from North Africa after the U.S. Government passed the **Slave Trade Act of 1794**.

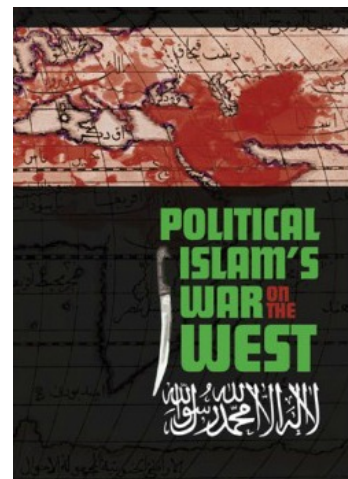
Captured **Africans** had been sold at **Arab Muslim slave markets** since the 7th century, notably in **Morocco, Algiers, Tripoli, Cairo** and **Zanzibar**.

Beginning in the 15th century, **Arabs sold African slaves** to **Portuguese merchants**, followed by **Spanish, Dutch, French** and **English** merchants.

Arabs made slaves of European captured at sea or coastal towns.

The **Ottoman Empire** captured and sold about 2 million **Russians and Polish-Lithuanians** as **slaves**, most notably at slave markets in **Caffa (Feodosia)** on the Black Sea.

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A 19th century account of the **Arab-African slave trade** was given by missionary **David Livingstone**.

"We passed a slave woman shot or stabbed through the body and lying on the path ... an **Arab** who passed early that morning had done it in anger at losing the price he had given for her, because she was unable to walk any longer.

... We passed a woman tied by the neck to a tree and dead ...

We came upon a man dead from starvation ...

The strangest disease I have seen in this country seems really to be broken heartedness, and it attacks free men who have been captured and made slaves."

David Livingstone estimated that each year **over 80,000 Africans died** before reaching the **Muslim slave markets**, writing to the editor of the *New York Herald*:

"If my disclosures regarding **the terrible Ujijian slavery** should lead to the suppression of the **East Coast slave trade**, I shall regard that as a greater matter by far than the discovery of all the Nile sources together."

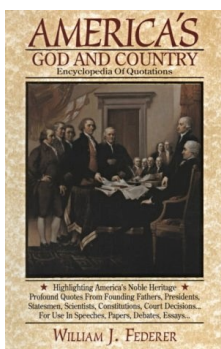
On **January 1, 1808**, exactly 55 years before **Republican President Abraham Lincoln** issued the Emancipation Proclamation, **Congress closed all U.S. ports to the importation of slaves.**

The **U.S. Revenue Cutter Service** intercepted **slave ships** coming from **Africa** and **freed nearly 500 slaves.**

One such **slave ship**, the *Antelope*, was captured by the **U.S. Revenue-Marines** on June 29, 1820, off the coast of Florida.

To free the slaves, Francis Scott Key fought legal battles in their defense, spending his own time and money for seven years, **arguing for the slaves' freedom** all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Francis Scott Key also gave legal help to **John Quincy Adams** in his 1841 fight to free slaves from the ship *La Amistad*.



[America's God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations](#)

The **U.S. Revenue Cutter Service** defended the United States in many major conflict, including the:

- **Quasi War with France;**
- **War of 1812;**
- **Counter-Piracy operations;**
- **Mexican-American War;**
- **Civil War,**
- **Spanish-American War,**
- **World Wars I and II.**

In 1915, the **U.S. Revenue Cutter Service** was merged with the **U.S. Lifesaving Service** to form the **U.S. Coast Guard**.

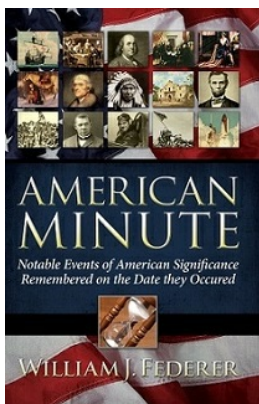
The **original anthem** of the **U.S. Coast Guard** was:

"To sink the foe or save the maimed,

Our mission and our pride,

We'll carry on 'til Kingdom Come,

Ideals for which we've died."



[American Minute-Notable Events of American Significance Remembered on the Date They Occurred](#)

In 1939, the **U.S. Lighthouse Service** was merged into the **U.S. Coast Guard**, as was the **Steamboat Inspection Service** and **Bureau of Navigation** in 1946.

In 1967, the **U.S. Coast Guard** was transferred to the **Department of Transportation**.

President John F. Kennedy remarked aboard the **U.S. Coast Guard Training Barque "*Eagle*,"** August 15, 1962:

"This is a very ancient service in our country's history.

Its first father ... **Alexander Hamilton, began the Coast Guard** as a **revenue collecting service**, asked the Congress of the United States for appropriations for 10 vessels ...

... The first ***Eagle*** was one of our most distinguished warships, and in **actions against privateers of France**, captured over five vessels, and recaptured seven American vessels ..."

Kennedy ended:

"This is the oldest continuous seagoing service in the United States, stretching back to the beginning of our country."

Acknowledging that **protecting the borders** was a **primary reason** for the **creation of the Federal Government**, **President Herbert Hoover** stated December 27, 1929:

"A further proposal ... is the definite expansion of the **Coast Guard** ... in the matter of **border patrol**."

Included in the list of casualties at the WWII Battle of Okinawa, **President Truman** stated, June 1, 1945:

"Navy and Coast Guard losses were 4,729 killed and 4,640 wounded."

At the **U.S. Coast Guard Academy** in New London, September 20, 1952, **President Truman** stated:

"I was just reading ... about the **Coast Guard's icebreaker** that has been closer to the **North Pole** than any other ship in delivering food and supplies to a station up there ...

That, my young friends, is what makes this country great."

President John F. Kennedy continued his address aboard the **U.S. Coast Guard Training Barque "Eagle,"** August 15, 1962:

"You serve our country in peacetime, on ice patrols and weather patrols, in protecting the standards of the merchant marine, in protecting safety at sea ... and in time of war you, with the American Navy, as you did in World War II and at the time of Korea."

At the **U.S. Coast Guard** commencement in New London, June 3, 1964, **President Lyndon Johnson** remarked:

"Winston Churchill once said: '**Civilization will not last, freedom will not survive, peace will not be kept, unless mankind unites together to defend them and show themselves possessed of a power before which barbaric forces will stand in awe**' ...

In every area of national strength **America today is stronger than it has ever been before** ...

It is stronger than the combined might **of all the nations in the history of the world.** And I confidently predict that strength will continue to grow ..."

President Johnson continued:

"No one can live daily, as I must do, with the dark realities of nuclear ruin, without **seeking the guidance of God to find the path of peace.**"

We have built this **staggering strength not to destroy but to save**, not to put **an end to civilization** but rather to try to **put an end to conflict.**"

At a **U.S. Coast Guard** commencement, May 18, 1988, **President Reagan** stated:

"It's **our prayer** to serve America in peace. It's **our commitment to defend her in war.**"

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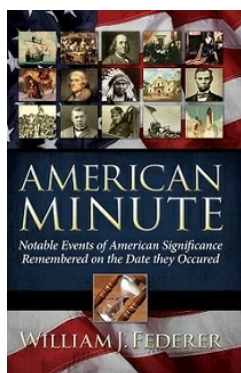
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wjfederer@gmail.com

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