



# The American Revolution

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## Battle of Bunker Hill: Article 2 of 3

Burgoyne commented, “The untrained colonial rabble would be no match for His Majesty’s trained troops,” and their flank easily turned. Howe agreed, the attack was set to begin immediately, concentrating on the undefended colonial left flank. Meanwhile, Governor Gage along with Abijah Willard, a Loyalist, were observing the colonial works. Willard’s brother-in-law, Colonel Prescott, was clearly visible among the colonial forces. Gage inquired, “Will he fight?” Willard replied, “As for his men, I cannot answer for them, but Colonel Prescott will fight you to the gates of hell.” It would take eight long years for the British to learn about and appreciate Americans like Colonel Prescott and fathom the misperceptions of men like General Burgoyne.

Immediately turned out to be six hours. Howe’s men were rowed over to the peninsula at Moulton’s Point. Brigadier General Robert Pigot’s force was deployed by boat against the colonial right flank at Bunker Hill. It was 2:00 PM and Howe had 1,500 men deployed along the east front in position for his attack. He observed the colonial activity on Bunker Hill, and believed the colonials to have been reinforced. Howe called for reinforcements, and ordered his light infantry into attack position, thus signaling the colonials as to his strategy and attack intentions. Inexplicably, he then ordered the

troops to stand down for lunch and await the reinforcements.

Back in the colonial camp, Colonel Prescott, seeing the British position, ordered a crude dirt wall erected down the colonial left flank, topping it with fence rails and hay bales. Behind this make-shift defense, Prescott positioned the newly arrived 1st and 3rd New Hampshire Regiments led by Colonels John Stark and James Reed. These intrepid



*The Battle of Bunker Hill  
American Positions in Blue and British Positions in Red*

200 men were to play a decisive role in the coming contest. During Howe's lunch, the colonial left flank had become strongly fortified. Even when low tide exposed the beach



along the Mystic River, Stark's men were quick to extend the dirt wall and fence rails to the water's edge, preserving the colonial left flank. Colonel Stark walked 30 yards out from his defensive line and drove a stake in the ground. He told his men up and down the line to make the same measurement. Stark said something remarkably revealing about his experience and leadership, "Men do not fire until the enemy has passed these stakes." This order ensured maximum lethal effect of the colonial muskets. He further instructed, "Brace your musket on the rails, aim for the enemy's belt line and fire only when commanded." Colonel Stark directed colonial fire in such a manner, that it would come upon the British as a cloud of lead, and its direction would compensate for the down hill angle. The British would be shooting up hill, and have a tendency to over shoot their targets.

The British 47th Foot and 1st Marines reinforced Howe at 3:00 PM. General Pigot's force gathered south of Charlestown Village, where they took heavy casualties from colonial snipers. General Howe called for incendiary bombardment of the town, which produced thick smoke and interfered with sniper shots. Under the smoke, British General Pigot led the 5th, 38th, 43rd, 47th, and 52nd Regiments in a faint attack on Bunker Hill and the colonial right flank. To be Continued!