

## **Background: A Frigid Descent**

As winter began to set in during 1776 the year drew to a close, the American rebels from their homeland of England found themselves extremely outmatched and outmaneuvered by the British. Washington's troops who were extremely demoralized and depressed, retreated across New Jersey with the British forces in hot pursuit. The cause and effect of this retreat were palpable by the colonial dream of independence now in the frigid winter seemed now like sick distant fantasy, flickering and fading like the campfires that Washington colonial forces struggled to stay lit.

## **Chapter 1: The Set-Up Hope Against Hope**

The stage was set in the bleak winter landscape of Pennsylvania, just across the icy Delaware River. Washington at the time was acutely aware of his army's desperate state but like most great leaders of history didn't show it. Washington understood that a bold action was necessary. His soldiers pre paid enlistments were due to expire at the end of the year which was rapidly approaching. This in turn, would leave him and his captains virtually without an army. In this dire scenario, Washington made a judgment that would define his legacy, he boldly planned a daring assault on the British held town of Trenton, New Jersey to the south.

## **Chapter 2: The Cause; Desperation and Decision**

The cause for Washington's audacious plan stemmed from a crucial need to invigorate the rebel cause and instill hope in the hearts of his disheartened men. Trenton, New Jersey was fiercely guarded by British troops known across the Northeast Colonial landscape for their ruthlessness but also their fondness for Christmas celebrations. The fondness was seen as weakness by Washington and he seized on this presented opportunity. Washington's plan was predicated by his understanding of both the enemy's bloated pompadour disposition of living indoors with wood heat while he and the army he commanded was living in tents with the sheer weakness of his own forces at this time. He had to act this was a flashbulb moment at the end of December of that year.

## **Chapter 3: Disruption; A Treacherous Crossing**

On the night of December 25, 1776, Washington and his army commenced a water crossing that would become an iconic event, image and personification of the time in American history. The crossing of the Delaware River was extremely risky, with dangerous ice floes like tiny icebergs moving at a swift current and extremely freezing temperatures. Worst of all the most important threat, the threat of discovery by the British forces. This sink or swim moment was the effect of Washington's cause laid out to bare, as men pushed through these extremely hypothermic conditions, driven by the sheer force of will and the trust in their commander, George Washington.

## **Chapter 4: The Judgment – On the Banks of Destiny**

Having now successfully crossed the river to the New Jersey side of the Delaware, Washington faced the action of his plan. With his men lined up on the freezing frigid banks of New Jersey, the general made his judgment known to his troops shivering at attention. They would march silently into Trenton and launch a surprise attack. His decision was made clear and carried the sheer weight of consequences to reignite the revolutionary cause or to face the collapse of the entire Continental Army. His troops were in we of this plan and all hoped they would be able to sleep that night in a captured British barracks with wood heat.

## **Chapter 5: The Battle of Trenton**

The attack by George Washington and his troops on Trenton was swift and decisive. The British, caught completely and utterly off guard and still groggy from the previous night's festivities of Christmas were quickly overwhelmed by the advancing continental force that surrounded the small town of colonial Trenton New Jersey. Washington's troops captured the town with minimal casualties, securing a much needed victory that stunned both the American and British people. This victory in New Jersey marked a transformation not only in the war's momentum but also in the morale of the American forces which fixed the enlistment woes Washington was facing before the capture of Trenton on the cold night before the crossing of the Delaware.

## **Epilogue: The Predictable Outcome of an Unpredictable Leader**

The victory at Trenton had predictable outcomes, it revitalized the American effort and convinced many soldiers to re-enlist. It also proved that the revolutionaries could defeat a formidable enemy albeit by surprise attack the case was made and there was a proof of concept demonstrated by Washington, he was a fit leader and could turn the tide of war easily solely by himself. More importantly, it cemented Washington's reputation as a leader of extraordinary intelligence and unwavering courage against the worlds strongest Army at the time, the British