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★ *“Mad” Anthony Wayne* ★  
*AN AMERICAN MILITARY GENIUS*



**Born January 1, 1745- Died December 15, 1796**

**“Issue the orders Sir, and I will storm hell!”**

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Anthony Wayne was one of the most colorful Commanders-in-Chief of the army of the United States. Some have acclaimed him as the first native-born military genius, whose greatness as an organizer of troops and military affairs is only now beginning to be recognized. Due to his brilliant exploits during the American Revolution, he was regarded as a military hero in his own time, but his greatest achievement came after the Revolution. In 1792, he was bestowed with the responsibility of organizing a new army, which was named the Legion of the United States (1792-1796). Following an intensive two-year training period, Wayne defeated the Miami Indian Confederacy at the decisive Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794. The Treaty of Greene Ville, signed the following year, was a landmark peace treaty negotiated by General Wayne. This effectively put an end to military activities and opened the Northwest territory to settlement. In 1796, Wayne’s Legion accepted formal surrender of the British garrisons along the Great Lakes, essentially ending the American Revolution.

Born in Chester County, Pennsylvania, Anthony was the only son of Isaac and Elizabeth (Iddings) Wayne and was named for his grandfather, Captain Anthony Wayne, a veteran of Marlborough’s campaigns. After emigrating from Ireland in the 1720’s, the elder Wayne built a structure that later became known as Waynesborough. The homestead, where the future general was born, has been preserved and is located near the small village of Paoli, Pennsylvania. Young Anthony’s school record was far from outstanding. The most remarkable incident of his schooldays was a sham battle in which Wayne led his classmates in a re-enactment of the capture of Fort Ticonderoga in 1759. He was punished for this escapade, but it showed his awareness of what was going on in the world as well as his inclination toward a military career. The schoolmaster wrote to Anthony’s father, stating that, “maybe your parental affection has blinded you to your son’s talents. He is certainly not a scholar, perhaps a soldier.”

In school young Anthony learned enough mathematics to make him a competent surveyor and in 1765, when he was twenty years old, a land company sent him to look after the surveying of lands in Nova Scotia. This job was given to him by Benjamin Franklin. He later returned to Philadelphia and married Mary Penrose, the daughter of a local merchant. The Nova Scotia land venture failed in 1766, and Wayne went back to Chester County to run the family farm and tannery in partnership with his father.

His father's death in 1775 made him a man of means and social standing. Despite his wealth and comfortable situation, General Wayne did not hesitate when the issues leading to the American Revolution were drawn. In his county he became a leader of the people who objected to British efforts to tighten control over the colonies. He presided over committees, which framed resolutions of protest against the British, and enforced the agreement against the importation of British goods. In 1775, he represented Chester County in the Pennsylvania General Assembly.

On January 3, 1776, he accepted a commission as colonel of the Fourth Pennsylvania Battalion and began his military career. Anthony Wayne has been called the "trouble shooter of the Revolution" by a recent biographer, Harry Emerson Wildes. This phrase well describes his services in the Continental Army. He seemed to be everywhere at once: recruiting, drilling, disciplining, fighting, and raising supplies. Difficult assignments, insuperable tasks, and dangerous feats were the stock in trade of this energetic and self-reliant soldier. The sobriquet "Mad", which is said to have originated in the drunken babbling of a disgruntled soldier, reflects his quick temper. Wayne was impetuous and swift to action, but he was not rash or foolhardy. As a commander he was cautious, and even his most glamorous deeds were based upon careful and painstaking plans.

In the spring of 1776, Wayne and his battalion went with the Pennsylvania brigade to reinforce the Canadian expedition, through which Congress had hoped to gain another colony for the American cause. By his personal bravery and leadership, Wayne held his troops together to cover the retreat of the entire American army after the defeat at Three Rivers on the St. Lawrence River. Congress abandoned the effort to win Canada, and Wayne was placed in command of Fort Ticonderoga. Here he had for the first time the thankless task of maintaining discipline among troops from various states who were disinclined to follow the orders of a Pennsylvania colonel. Commanding Fort Ticonderoga was not as enjoyable as his childhood game of fighting for it.

In February 1777, Anthony was made a brigadier general, and in April he left Ticonderoga to join Washington at Morristown, New Jersey, and take command of the famed Pennsylvania Line. After a period of drilling and training, during which Wayne showed his customary concern for the proper equipment and uniforming of his men, they were sent to fight in the campaign against the British occupation of Philadelphia. After the British army landed in Maryland and marched north, Wayne and his troops joined the Colonial Army in the attempt to stop them at Brandywine Creek. His troops held the center of the defense at Chadd's Ford.

The Colonials, however, were outflanked by a British force which crossed the Brandywine upstream. In the fierce fighting which followed, Wayne's troops held the stream crossing until the rest of the army was out of danger. General Washington retired north of the Schuylkill

River, and sent Wayne to circle around and harass the British in order to delay their advance on Philadelphia. This led to the greatest disaster of Wayne's military career.

In a pre-dawn attack on September 20, 1777, the British fell upon his force of 1,500 men encamped at Paoli, not far from his home. The British had learned the position of his camp from Tory spies. Wayne himself was warned by an old tanner of the approach of the British, but not soon enough to get his men ready. The British moved up under the cover of darkness and bayoneted more than two hundred men.

Anthony Wayne would never forget this loss, and would revenge his men at Stony Point in 1779, in a strikingly similar bayonet attack. He asked for a court-martial in regard to the Paoli incident and was acquitted unanimously.

In the career of almost every great military leader, similar disasters can be found, caused by sheer bad luck or an unforeseen combination of circumstances, but the measure of Wayne's greatness was his ability to meet disaster. The British had occupied Philadelphia after the battle of Brandywine, and Washington planned a surprise attack on elements of the British forces stationed at Germantown, five miles from the city.

The Americans lost this battle because of the stubborn British defensive perimeter. Again, General Wayne and his troops were the rear guard covering the retreat of the army. During the bitter winter at Valley Forge, Wayne kept "the esteem and confidence" of his men, and led foraging expeditions to gather grain and cattle to feed the army. This action gained Wayne yet another of his many nicknames, "the Drover." On one occasion in southern New Jersey, he and the Polish general, Count Casimir Pulaski, with 600 men attacked and frightened away a British force of 4,000. When the news reached Valley Forge of the British retreat toward New York City, Wayne's troops were among the first to leave the winter encampment in pursuit of the enemy.

At the Battle of Monmouth, the Pennsylvania Line was in the spearhead of the American attack. Their valor was paramount in forcing the British from the field. In the spring of 1779, He was placed in command of a separate corps of light infantry, which was formed of picked units from various states. With this corps on July 16, 1779, he carried out his most famous exploit, the surprise and capture of the British post at Stony Point. This British garrison was a serious threat to travel on the Hudson River. General George Washington felt that it was imperative to destroy this post. He understood that it would be a dangerous undertaking. Stony Point was protected by a 200' cliff face, and was strongly fortified. Washington, knowing how important this battle would be, saw Wayne as the only choice. It is reported that when asked to accomplish this difficult feat, he stated, "Issue the orders Sir, and I will storm Hell."

In a fixed bayonets only attack, the Pennsylvanians assaulted the British fortress at night. This daring move was successful, resulting in the capture of over 500 British prisoners. Leading the attack was the general himself. Felled by a British musketball, which grazed his head, Wayne was carried over the parapet. Stony Point would become a rallying point for the American public in a war that had seen few successes by its military. Congress presented a medal to him for this victory. In 1780 his corps was stationed in the lower Hudson Valley, to hinder the British in New York City from gathering cattle and other supplies. When Benedict Arnold turned traitor and there was danger that West Point might fall to the British, he marched his men 16 miles at night in four hours and prevented the loss of this important post. The

Pennsylvania troops mutinied in December 1780 because of grievances over pay and terms of service. Wayne helped to restore order and persuade the Pennsylvania government to take care of their complaints. In 1781, he recruited new Pennsylvania troops and served under LaFayette in the Yorktown campaign against the British.

During this service in Virginia on the lower James River, Wayne was ordered to attack what was supposedly only a detachment of the British army, but which was really Cornwallis' entire army. In a seemingly hopeless situation, outnumbered nearly ten to one, Wayne ordered a charge into the British army, a bold move which was so unexpected that his men got safely away. After the Yorktown campaign had been successfully concluded by the surrender of the main British army, Wayne was sent to Georgia where the British Loyalists, and hostile Indians were still virtually in control. As his forces and supplies were inadequate, his service there was a series of disappointments, but he held the field and defeated the Creek Indians in June, 1782. On July 12, his troops marched into Savannah as the British army sailed away and after that he helped to restore order in that war-ravaged state. In 1783, he retired from the army with the brevet rank of Major-General.

Wayne's civilian life from 1782 to 1792 was less happy than his military career had been. The State of Georgia granted him an estate for his Revolutionary services. He ran into debt to improve it and lost it by foreclosure. He ventured into politics again both in Pennsylvania and Georgia without much success. In Pennsylvania, he served in the General Assembly and the Council of Censors, where his party failed in an attempt to revise the State Constitution. Wayne was elected to Congress from Georgia, but in a few months lost his seat because of charges of irregularity in the election. The treaty of peace with Great Britain in 1783 had left unfinished business: actual establishment of United States authority over the western lands. The British still garrisoned a string of forts along the Great Lakes. Agents of the British government, as well as the military incited the Native populace to resist the influx of western settlers.

The fledgling United States government tried to bring these Indians under control and to open the Northwest Territory, first by peaceful means through treaties, and later by military expeditions. The first expedition under Colonel Josiah Harmar was soundly defeated by Chief Little Turtle, a Miami Chieftain. The second expedition, mounted in 1791, was even more disastrous. President Washington, underestimating this army and the fighting capabilities of Native Americans, sent the army west in November of 1791. On November 3, 1791, General Arthur St. Clair and his army encamped on the Wabash River in Ohio. In a classic encircling maneuver, Little Turtle surrounded the army at night. In a daylight attack on the American army, over 690 men and women were killed. Over 39 high-ranking officers were killed, including a Major-General.

This brilliant victory stands today as the single worst defeat of American arms by the Native Americans. Custer's defeat pales in comparison, yet Little Turtle's battle is lost in history. After hearing the news of St. Clair's Defeat, Washington was livid. It was the biggest crisis of the Washington administration. Secretary of War Henry Knox told Washington that the reason behind the defeat was that we did not have a professional standing army. Washington agreed and on March 5, 1792, the United States Militia Act was passed. This act basically set the foundation for the modern United States Army.

The new army was to be known as the Legion of the United States. After great difficulty and serious contemplation, Washington chose his old reliable war-horse, Anthony Wayne as Commander-in-Chief. He accepted and headed to the newly built Fort LaFayette in Pittsburgh. The new recruits were formed into four Sub-Legions which were given distinct colors. The First Sub-Legion was to be black and white; the Second red and white; the Third black and gold, and the Fourth green and white. The new uniforms were to be sharp and Wayne demanded spit-and-polish. He wanted these new troops to be confident and professional. After the army had grown too large, it headed downriver to a new camp called Legion Ville.

There this new army trained incessantly for their mission. Training was nonstop and brutal. Court martials and lashing were commonplace. Wayne would not lose this next battle. From November 1792 to April 1793, this army marched, fired, fought sham battles and was honed into a capable fighting machine. In six months time, this army had become as one historian noted, "...the fightenest army the United States has ever had..." In April, the army began the campaign into the west. It was an entirely new United States Army that headed into the Ohio country. Wayne bragged that the new Legion molded at Legion Ville could beat anybody on the field of battle.

After building a chain of over ten forts, Wayne arrived in the heart of Miami Country. On August 20, 1794, General Wayne and his Legion of the United States, defeated the Miami Confederacy in the pivotal Battle of Fallen Timbers. The following year he forced the Treaty of Greene Ville, which brought peace. In 1796, the Legion of the United States accepted formal surrender of the British posts along the Great Lakes. In essence, it was the true end of the American Revolution. General Anthony Wayne was headed back to Pittsburgh in December of 1796 and became ill. He died in the Erie Blockhouse and was buried beneath the flagpole. Thus ended a career that spanned 21 years of service to the United States.

A stranger twist of the Wayne tale took place in 1809 when his son came to Erie to take his father's remains to Philadelphia. When Wayne was exhumed, he was perfectly preserved. Isaac Wayne had a doctor deal with the problem. Unknown to him, the doctor boiled the flesh off the bones in a cauldron and re-interred the flesh at the blockhouse. He then gave the bones to Isaac to take back to St. David's Church in Radnor, Pennsylvania. A public ceremony was held at the grave on July 4, 1809, with many famous people in attendance. LaFayette himself sent a sword to be buried with Wayne. The note said, "Mon Ami, the boy...". The cauldron that he was boiled in is proudly displayed at the local historical society in Erie.

Thus even in death, Wayne was an enigma. He has the illustrious title of being the only American general buried in two places.

Today this great and colorful soldier is remembered in numerous place names throughout the United States, especially in Pennsylvania and the states formed from the Northwest Territory. In Pennsylvania alone, a county, nine townships, and the boroughs of Wayne, Waynesboro, and Waynesburg bear his name, and fifteen other states have Wayne Counties.

*Information from a website by DREAM PROMOTIONS*