

Following the winter and spring at their encampment at Valley Forge, the Continental Army was trained and refreshed. Commander-in-Chief of Continental forces, George Washington, had learned that British forces had planned to evacuate Philadelphia and return to New York in fear of a naval blockade. The 100-mile march from Philadelphia to New York would occur largely through the state of New Jersey. Washington saw the evacuation as a perfect opportunity to strike at the British to prevent them from reaching New York.

On the blistering afternoon of June 28, 1778, Washington ordered a detachment of 5,000 men to strike at the British rear guard as they departed Monmouth Courthouse, New Jersey, on their way to New York. The strike was initiated to delay the British until the main American force could engage them. Patriot General Charles Lee was in charge of the initial attack, which failed miserably and resulted in a disorganized retreat. An enraged General Washington reportedly reprimanded Lee before taking command of the retreating soldiers. Placing himself in the line of fire among the retreating Continentals, Washington rallied the soldiers who regrouped and held the British in check until the main American force could arrive. The battle raged throughout the entire day with neither side gaining a decisive advantage. Only the arrival of dusk silenced the muskets and cannon. Although Washington wanted to resume the battle in the darkness, British forces had withdrawn from the area to continue their march to New York City. Patriot forces suffered approximately 500 casualties in the battle while British forces suffered as many as 1,000. Dozens, if not, hundreds of soldiers died of heat stroke rather than from combat. The battle is historically seen as a tactical draw, although the Patriots did not stop the British march to New York. The Patriots, did however, prove they could successfully battle the British in open combat.

Monmouth was the last major battle waged in the Northern Theater. British forces would soon turn their attention to the Loyalist-friendly southern colonies.

1. Why were British forces marching to New York?

- A. To escape the Continental Army
- B. To attack and capture New York
- C. To sail back to England
- D. They feared a naval blockade in Philadelphia

- 2. Why did Washington make the decision to strike at the rear guard of the British army?**
- A. He wanted to surprise them
 - B. He thought he could attack the British where they were weakest
 - C. He put Charles Lee in charge of initiating the attack
 - D. He wanted to delay the British so that the main part of his army could attack them
- 3. Which of the following is not true about Washington's initial attack?**
- A. It involved a detachment of 5,000 soldiers
 - B. It would occur in New York
 - C. It would be led by Charles Lee
 - D. The attack failed miserably and resulted in retreat
- 4. As the day moved on, which of the following best describes the scene?**
- A. The Americans gained the advantage
 - B. The British gained the advantage
 - C. Neither side gained an advantage
 - D. The British began to retreat
- 5. What was Washington's main objective at Monmouth Courthouse?**
- A. To prevent the British from marching to New York
 - B. To prove his army could succeed in a fight against the British
 - C. To save his soldiers from heat stroke
 - D. To withdraw from the battlefield and continue the fight for a second day
- 6. What is not true about Monmouth Courthouse?**
- A. It was last major battle to occur in the north during the Revolutionary War
 - B. During the battle, George Washington placed himself in the line of fire to rally the retreating Continentals
 - C. The battle raged on through the night and only the coming of the morning silenced the guns and cannons
 - D. The battle is historically seen as a draw
- 7. Why did the British change strategies after Monmouth Courthouse?**
- A. They thought they would have better luck in New York
 - B. They thought they would have better luck in the southern colonies
 - C. They thought they had already defeated the Patriots in the Northern Theater
 - D. They wanted to get away from George Washington and the newly trained Continental Army