

Derek W. Beck  
Storyteller & Co

= Menu =

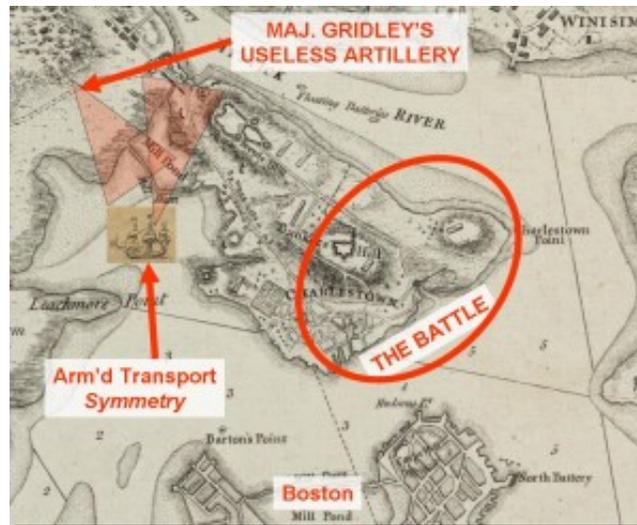
« The Courts-Martial following the Battle of  
Bunker Hill (Part 1 of 3)

The Courts-Martial following the Battle of  
Bunker Hill (Part 3 of 3) »

## *The Courts-Martial following the Battle of Bunker Hill (Part 2 of 3)*

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2012 | 1775

Following **the Battle of Bunker Hill**, Capt. Callender of the Massachusetts Artillery **was cashiered from the service for cowardice**, though he would soon after redeem himself. The charges of Callender's colleague, **Capt. Samuel Gridley**, were still not decided when the court convened to consider the latter's cousin, Maj. Scarborough Gridley, son of Col. Richard Gridley, that commander of the regiment.



Maj. Scarborough Gridley's useless artillery service at the Battle of Bunker Hill.<sup>2</sup> (click to enlarge)

Maj. Gridley had failed to cross Charlestown Neck during the battle and **instead took up position where he gave little service**, uselessly barraging the Armed Transport *Symmetry*. His court-martial seemed to go smoothly and without much opposition. His sentence appears in Gen. Washington's General Orders, Sept 24, 1775:

*Major Scarborough Gridley, tried at a late General Court-Martial, whereof Brigadier-General Greene was President, for “being deficient in his duty upon the 17th of June last, the day of the action upon Bunker’s Hill,” the Court find Major Scarborough Gridley guilty of a breach of orders. They do therefore dismiss him from the Massachusetts service; but on account of his inexperience and youth, and the great confusion which attended that day’s transaction in general, they do not consider him incapable of a Continental Commission, should the General Officers recommend him to his Excellency.*

*The General confirms the dismissal of Major Scarborough Gridley, and orders it to take place accordingly.*

My opinions on this come from my forthcoming book, 1775:

*Disobedience of a direct order during a critical battle is a serious charge, and the fact that Maj. Gridley was still eligible for a commission in the just forming Continental Army seems unfair in comparison with Callender’s sentence. But as his respected father, Col. Richard Gridley, commander of the artillery regiment, had announced his plans to leave the service back on July 3 (Force 4:2:1477–78), one cannot help but wonder if the softer sentence for Maj. Gridley was in part due to reverence for his father, whose favor and service the court hoped to retain. Familial connection and influence was still strong in the young American military. Of course, Maj. Gridley still needed a general officer to endorse him for future service, and whether none would or he never sought it, Scarborough seems to have never served in the Continental Army.*

Likewise, Col. John Mansfield, who had been ordered to reinforce the troops at Charlestown, but who decided he would instead keep his regiment near the artillery, to “support” Maj. Gridley’s position of safety, was court-martialed and cashiered from the service for dereliction of duty.

Finally came Capt. Samuel Gridley’s court-martial sentencing, this Gridley being the cousin of Scarborough and nephew to the colonel... (Final post of this 3-part series in 3 weeks!)



Derek

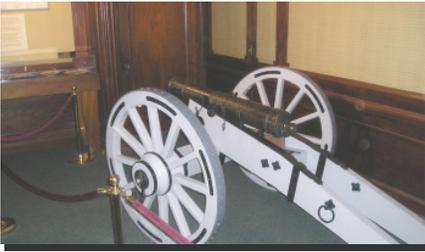


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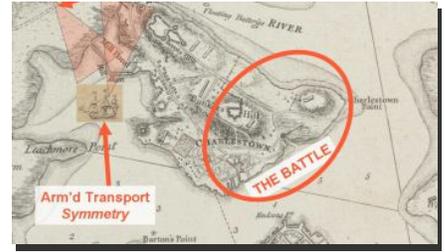
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In "1775"



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