

## The Treason of Benedict Arnold



The Yorktown Campaign. Dearborn's entries.

"September 25, 1781. Treason of the blackest day - is this day fortunately discovered. Major John Andre, Adjutant General of the British Army taken within our lines in disguise acting as a spy, upon which Major General Arnold immediately deserted from his Command of West Point on board a British sloop of war that lay in the River below King's Ferry, being convinced his hellish plot would soon be brought to light and his only safety was in flight. The plan was as follows: he had agreed to put the enemy in possession of the Important Post called West Point together with the stores and garrison this night, and a body of the enemy was embarked at New York for the purpose - and had not a superintending providence almost miraculously interposed in our behalf by Major Andrew into our possession after he thought himself quite secure, and out of reach, the enemy would undoubtedly soon been in possession of our most important Post, which would have been a capital loss to America; - as soon as this plan was

discovered two brigades were detached and sent to West Point.

September 26th. One, Joshua Smith, was taken up on suspicion of being an accomplice of Arnolds.

September 29th. A Board of General Officers sits today for the trial of Smith.

October 1st. Major Andre was ordered to be hanged at 5 o'clock P.M. but in consequence of a Flag from the enemy, the execution was put off.

October 2nd at 12 o'clock this day Major Andre was executed. He discovered great firmness and candor on the occasion; he was one of the most promising young gentlemen in the British Army, had been an Aid-de-camp to General Clinton, and was lately appointed Adjutant General to the British Army in America."

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Source: Revolutionary War Journals of Henry Dearborn 1775-1783 (1971).  
pp 205-206.