

British victory at Bunker Hill proves costly

BRITISH FORCES won the Revolutionary War's first major conflict yesterday, but their victory in the Battle of Bunker Hill, at Charlestown, has proven costly, *writes our war reporter, June 18, 1775.*

The battle left about one thousand British dead or wounded—more than double the number of American casualties—after the redcoats made several attacks.

Earlier, patriots had dug in on Breed's Hill, but after the British forces overwhelmed them, the men were forced to retreat to Cambridge on the other side of Bunker Hill. British military leaders knew they had to win the battle, as defeat could prove to be a decisive loss by the British Empire in America. But they failed to cut off the patriots' retreat, which would have delivered a devastating blow to colonial forces. The Americans showed a thirst for battle, but could not overcome the British, whose soldiers are among the best trained in the world.

The battle has confirmed the need for the Continental Army, created several days ago by the Continental Congress—a convention of delegates from the American colonies. George Washington of Virginia, who fought alongside the British in the French and Indian War, has been chosen to lead the newly created army, whose troops are mainly from New England. He is expected to assume command in Cambridge. His challenge will be to turn an inexperienced citizens' army into a formidable fighting force.

