

## Live Free or Die

The state motto of New Hampshire is “Live Free or Die.” These famous words were first written by General John Stark in 1809 in a letter to fellow Revolutionary War veterans because he couldn’t attend their reunion. The motto means that freedom is so important it’s worth fighting for. New Hampshire officially adopted it in 1945, and you can still see it today on license plates and state signs.



## Home Sweet Home

John Stark said another famous line to his soldiers at the Battle of Bennington: “*There are your enemies. We will win today, or Molly Stark sleeps a widow tonight!*”

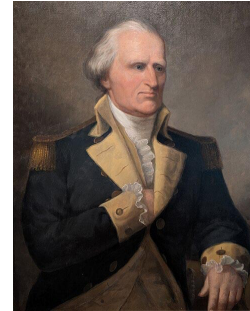
He was talking about his wife, Molly, to show how determined he was to fight for freedom. John and Molly had 11 children.

After the Revolutionary War, he went back to his family home in what is now Manchester, New Hampshire, where he and Molly farmed and raised their children.



## John Stark

Revolutionary War Hero



General John Stark was born in Londonderry, NH in 1728, but he moved with his family to Derryfield, NH when he was eight and spent the rest of his life there. Derryfield, NH is now Manchester, NH.



## When He Was Young

John Stark was born in 1728 and grew up loving the outdoors. As a young man, he learned to hunt, fish, and explore the forests, which helped make him strong, smart, and ready for a career in the army.

In 1752, while on a hunting trip along the Baker River, he was captured by Abenaki warriors and taken to Canada. He was briefly adopted by the tribe and spent the winter with them. In the spring, he was ransomed and returned home.

## Fighting With the British

John Stark first fought with the New Hampshire militia from 1754 to 1759 during the French and Indian War as part of Rogers' Rangers, first as a lieutenant and later as a captain.

Rogers' Rangers was a company of soldiers from the Province of New Hampshire led by Major Robert Rogers that served as part of the British Army during the French and Indian War.



Robert Rogers

## Fighting Against the British

When the American Revolution began, John Stark joined the Continental Army to help fight for freedom from Great Britain.

He is best known for leading the New Hampshire soldiers at the Battle of Bennington in 1777.

The British wanted to capture supplies and food stored near Bennington, Vermont. They sent soldiers, including German troops called Hessians, to take the supplies by force.

General Stark gathered a militia of local farmers and townspeople to stop the British. He inspired his men by saying, *"There are the Redcoats, and they are ours!"*



Stark's men surrounded the British forces from all sides. After a tough battle, the Americans won a big victory. They captured many enemy soldiers and protected the supplies. This victory gave Americans hope that they could win the war.