

TEASER

EXT. GERMAN STREET - NIGHT

A man in his early 40s, square faced, barrel-chested, whose eyes emit a sharp intellect even though he's already drunk, stumbles up to a large wooden door: the entrance of a pub.

SUPER: GERMANY, 1777

The man, BARON DE STEUBEN, wears a military jacket, on which shines a large, white 8-pronged star over his left chest. The rest of the jacket's been mended so often it's patchwork.

Steuben collects his confidence and pulls the door open.

INT. GERMAN PUB - CONTINUOUS

Steuben takes in the scene: the pub is hopping.

MONTAGE: accordion players goad on drunken singing to a rhythm of glass clinks and boot stomps. Bartenders rush to meet the patrons' demand. Dirndls and lederhosen everywhere.

Steuben's face glows in the lamp light. From Steuben's face

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. BRANDYWINE CREEK, PA - MORNING

CLOSE ON GEORGE WASHINGTON, 45-years-old, a man whom we instantly recognize. His blondish white hair pulled back to a loose ponytail under his tricorn hat.

His caterpillar eyebrows furrow-- the most we can expect from his characteristic stoicism.

SUPER: PENNSYLVANIA, 1777

Horseback on a hill overlooking the battlefield, Washington sees the loosely formed rows of American soldiers line the Delaware River. Their filthy brown, mismatched farmers' outfits make them a sad sight.

The continental soldiers stretch out along the shore, their guns ready to shoot across the river.

Washington rides down the hill, General THOMAS CONWAY, 42, in tow. As they gallop:

CONWAY

Sullivan returned. Right flank's clear. We're holding the left.

WASHINGTON

Casualties from your men?

CONWAY

None so far.

WASHINGTON

The British will ford the river. We have men at every crossing?

CONWAY

Yes sir.

At the bottom of the hill, Washington breaks from Conway and speeds along in front of the line of troops. He and his horse reflect off the Delaware River.

He shouts to the soldiers, swinging his sword above his head:

WASHINGTON

At last, *this* is the turning point, men! We win here, we win the war!

Washington slows down, turns to face the New Jersey side of the river. He waits a moment until...

In the distance, a very small number of British soldiers in their red coats and white breeches make their way through the trees, out into the open.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Take aim and ready!

His eyes dart left and right.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. GERMAN BAR - LATER

Steuben's eyes dart left and right. He stands at the bar with a stein of his own and surveys the pub. He locks eyes with a gorgeous man in his 30s: PETER BURDETT, a British map maker with the darkest hair in the pub.

Peter looks down and up-- Flattered. Interested. Coy.

Steuben smiles, satisfied-- he's got him.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. BRANDYWINE CREEK, PA - DAY

Washington smiles, satisfied-- he's got them.

He watches the Americans shoot at the British attempting to cross the river.

Only a handful of British soldiers wade through the river. The Americans pick them off with ease. We hear SHOUTS followed by the PLOPS of their bodies hitting the water.

Behind Washington, General Conway's horse gallops toward him at breakneck speed.

CONWAY

(out of breath)

Sir, these men are decoys. General Howe crossed further up-river.

WASHINGTON

There are no fords up-river.

Conway rides up against Washington, gets up in his face.

CONWAY

(through gritted teeth)

They're coming at us from above. It's a pincer formation.

Just a quick flash of panic in Washington's eyes. He kicks his horse's side and tears off.

CONWAY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

General Washington!

CLOSE IN on Washington's face, hard, determined, bouncing up and down with the horse's gait.

He reaches the apex of a hill. From his new vantage point he looks out and sees thousands of uniformed British in professional military echelons marching toward him.

ZOOM IN on the British soldiers swarming the unsuspecting American troops along the river bank.

MONTAGE: The MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, a 20-year-old French import to the American cause and Washington's favorite soldier, is shot in the leg;

next to him in rapid succession, an American's head is blown off;

a row of British fire their muskets in unison;