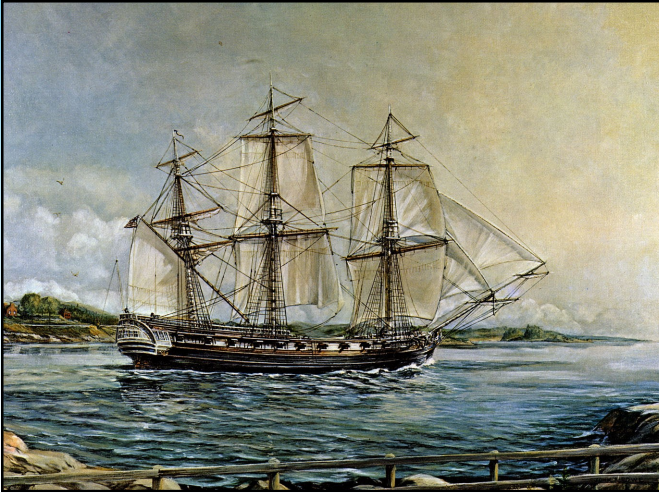


NH SHIP BUILDING DURING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Portsmouth was one of the most important ship-building centers in American during the Revolutionary War.



The U.S.S. *Ranger* was commanded by John Paul Jones, who became America's most famous naval captain during the war.

Why Portsmouth?

Portsmouth had a long history of building ships. English settlers started building ships there in the 1650s because Portsmouth had a deep harbor—one of the deepest in America—and there was lots of trees around that were used to make the ships. By the 1690s, the people of Portsmouth had a reputation for ship building. The British government hired them to start building warships for the British navy.

What was the U.S.S. *Raleigh*?

The ship builders in Portsmouth made the first American warship, the U.S.S. *Raleigh*. The *Raleigh* was launched in May 1776, before the Americans had even declared their independence from Great Britain! It had 32 guns on board, and it fought several British ships on the high seas. The *Raleigh* was the first American ship to fly the American flag in battle. It was the start of the American navy.



The *Raleigh* appears on the official state seal of New Hampshire. It was also on this shield created for America's 100th birthday.

Fun Fact:

Three U.S. warships were built in Portsmouth during the American Revolution: the U.S.S. *Raleigh*, the U.S.S. *Ranger*, and the U.S.S. *America*. Portsmouth also built hundreds of smaller ships that were used to fight the British, even though they weren't official part of the American navy.

