

Message on the Anniversary of the Battle of Chippawa

July 5, 2026

Today our Nation commemorates the Battle of Chippawa, the historic victory in which American forces decisively defeated the British Army on July 5, 1814. During the early days of our young Republic, American soldiers met the seasoned ranks of the British Army in open battle and prevailed.

As the war raged on, America set out to forge an Army worthy of the great Republic itself, entrusting that vital mission to the legendary American Generals Winfield Scott and Jacob Brown. These bold commanders drilled the disorganized and disheveled United States Army into a unified, disciplined, and battle-ready fighting force fit to face the finest soldiers of the age. Month after month of grueling training in New York hardened raw recruits into professional regulars, and by the summer of 1814, they were prepared to march to the Niagara, cross the river onto Canadian soil, and launch a daring offensive to seize British territory and force peace on American terms.

When battle commenced on July 5, British columns advanced against American troops drawn up on the plain south of the Chippawa River in Upper Canada. The valiant American regulars surged forward to meet the enemy head-on, striding across the field through a storm of shot and cannon fire with unceasing resolve. Instead of the standard blue uniform, American soldiers wore gray coats, leading the British to mistake them for inexperienced militia and to expect an easy victory.

Holding firm beneath the opening volleys, American regulars answered with a steady fire of their own and advanced in perfect order through the drifting smoke, their lines closing on the British with a precision few had thought possible. As his certain victory dissolved before his eyes, commanding British General Phineas Riall famously exclaimed, "Those are regulars, by God!" By then it was far too late, and the American forces pressed their advantage, pouring hellfire into the British ranks and forcing them to retreat from the field.

The American triumph at Chippawa proved once and for all that the United States Army could overcome the mightiest forces on Earth and beat them in open battle. And from that hard-won legacy emerged a tradition of excellence that endures today in our Armed Forces. As we celebrate 250 years of glorious American Independence this year, we draw strength from the immortal heroes of the Battle of Chippawa, whose courage amid the cannon's roar proclaimed for all time that a free people would never bow to tyranny. That same indomitable American spirit endures in our people even now, and the fire our forebears kindled that day burns brighter still, lighting the way for our Nation, destined to stand forever strong, forever proud, and forever free.

Categories: Letters and Messages : Battle of Chippawa, message on anniversary.

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