



**Molly Pitcher (1754–1832).** Mary Ludwig Hays was a dedicated army wife whose husband, John Hays, enlisted as a gunner in the Pennsylvania artillery. Following him onto the field at the Battle of Monmouth, she occupied herself toward the comfort of the soldiers—washing, mending, cooking, nursing, and bringing vessels of water to the thirsty men, which earned her the good-natured

nickname. According to stories, when her husband collapsed from a wound, Mary Hays courageously took his place at the gun and continued his work at the cannon until the Battle of Monmouth was won. For her heroic actions, the military awarded her a \$40 annual pension until her death.