

# *The Courage of “Molly Pitcher”*

*by Karen S. Hopkins*

It was the end of June 1778. The 13 colonies that made up America were in the middle of a daring war. The colonists wanted freedom from the harsh laws imposed by England’s king. The British soldiers were ordered to keep them from winning that freedom. But the colonists had already proclaimed their independence, and the Revolutionary War was on.

At Monmouth, New Jersey, a fierce battle was raging. General George Washington had ordered his men to drive the British soldiers out of the area. The fighting must not stop until the enemy withdrew! One soldier, John Hays, had an important job to do. He was to help fire one of the huge cannons that was pulled from battle to battle.

John’s wife, 23-year-old Mary Hays, was at the battle too. In those days, wives could accompany the army from camp to camp. Mary and the other wives cooked and washed clothes for the soldiers.

On this day, the hot, June sun was blazing. As the fighting wore on, the temperature neared 100 degrees. Hundreds of soldiers fell down, exhausted from the heat. Mary knew what to do. Grabbing a pitcher, she quickly filled it with water from a nearby stream. She ran onto the battlefield and gave drinks to the thirsty soldiers. Soon, more men were shouting, “Molly, pitcher!” Molly was a nickname for Mary. Mary refilled the pitcher again and again.

Suddenly, Mary’s husband collapsed near the cannon. Mary ran to help him, but he was too weak to get up. Mary knew the cannon could not remain silent. She stepped up to take John’s place without thinking of her own safety. She helped fire the cannon many times. It has even been said that a shot from the enemy passed directly between her legs that day. Mary stayed with the cannon until dark when the fighting stopped. The battle was over, but the story of Mary’s bravery would go on.

Mary, soon known everywhere as “Molly Pitcher,” was considered a heroine for what she had done. George Washington thanked her in person and praised her for the courage she had shown. When John recovered, Mary and he continued to fight for the cause of freedom.

By 1783, the British were defeated, and the colonists had won their independence. Mary and John went home to Pennsylvania.

Many years later, when Mary was nearly 70 years old, she was honored again for what she had done at the Battle of Monmouth. Pennsylvania lawmakers awarded Mary a pension of \$40 a year for her bravery.

Only a few women actually fought in a Revolutionary War battle. Mary Hays had been one of them. The courageous spirit of people like “Molly Pitcher” had helped to transform 13 colonies into the United States of America.

**22** According to the article, what was a wife's usual role in the Revolutionary War?

- A** to cook food and wash clothes for the soldiers
- B** to build shelters and hunt food for the soldiers
- C** to help move and fire cannons on the battlefield
- D** to carry sick or exhausted soldiers off the battlefield

**23** How did John Hays **most likely** feel right after the Battle of Monmouth?

- A** He felt proud of Mary for fighting.
- B** He felt his job had become unimportant.
- C** He was afraid to continue fighting in the war.
- D** He was pleased Mary received a \$40 pension.

**24** What did most people think of Mary's actions at the Battle of Monmouth?

- A** They thought she was foolish and should be sent home.
- B** They thought she was skillful and should continue fighting.
- C** They thought she was courageous and had acted like a heroine.
- D** They thought she was reckless and had endangered the soldiers.

**25** How was Mary rewarded for her actions during the Battle of Monmouth?

- A** She was allowed to join the army.
- B** She was given the name “Molly Pitcher.”
- C** She was thanked by George Washington.
- D** She was able to go home to Pennsylvania.

**26** How did Mary Hays show her courage at the Battle of Monmouth? Use at least two details from the article to support your answer.

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**STOP**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Common, Proper, and Collective Nouns

**Directions** Write the proper noun from the box that matches each common noun. Add capital letters where they are needed.

empire state building      mount everest      aunt lucinda  
*the dark is rising*      ms. simpson

**Common Noun**

**Proper Noun**

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 1. teacher  |  |
| 2. building |  |
| 3. mountain |  |
| 4. book     |  |
| 5. relative |  |

**Directions** Rewrite each sentence. Capitalize all proper nouns.

6. Americans in new york had good train service.

\_\_\_\_\_

7. People in san francisco and other parts of california needed better transportation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

8. A group of workers from china was led by mr. charles crocker.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

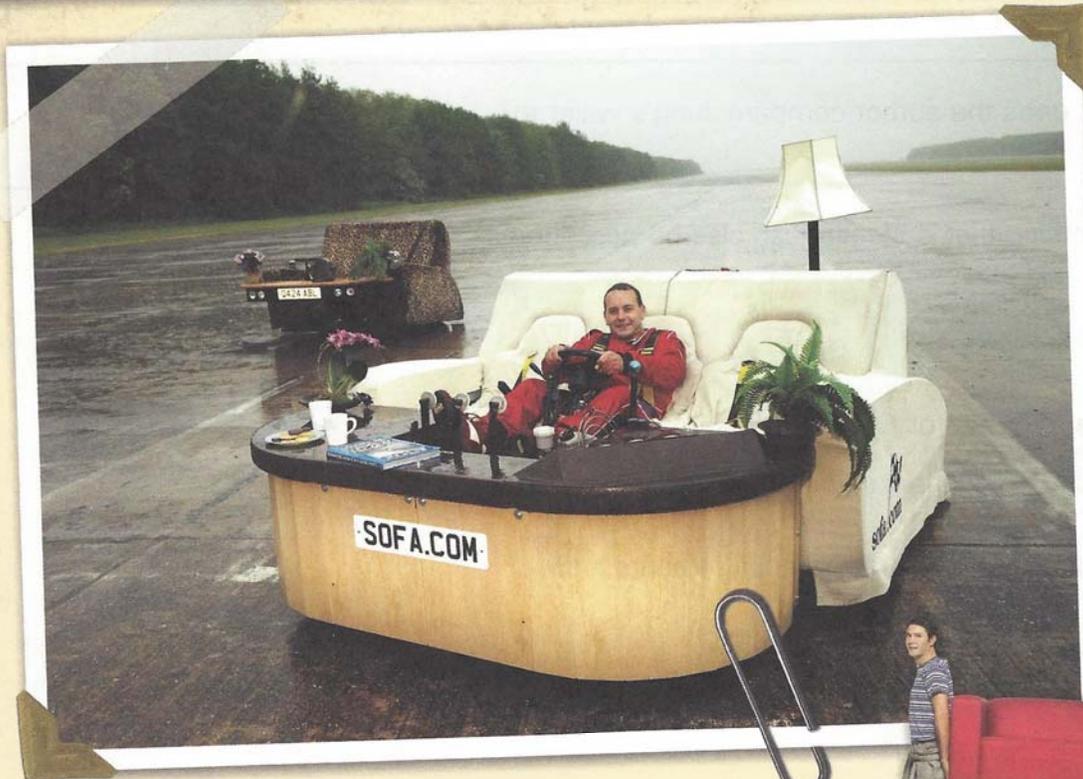
9. The eastern and western tracks were joined in promontory, utah, on may 10, 1869.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

10. The tracks met near aunt joan's house: 491 e. 1st st., ogden, ut 84404.

\_\_\_\_\_  
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## SPEEDY SOFA



■ **Read the passage.**  
**Fastest Furniture, May 11, 2007**

This couch has no place in a living room. It was made for the road! Edward China created the speedy sofa. It holds the Guinness World Records™ record for Fastest Furniture. Marek Turowski (United Kingdom) is the couch potato who won the opportunity to drive the sofa. It went 92 miles (148 km) per hour.

Turowski is 38 years old. He is a gardener and lives in London. An online auction was held for the chance to drive the sofa. Turowski won the auction. The money raised from the auction went to a foundation for medical research.

Edward China, also known as Edd, is 35 years old and has built many **extraordinary** vehicles. He has made a moving garden shed, a moving bathroom, and an alien spacecraft. He started a business that rents out some of the vehicles. A bed called the Street Sleeper is a popular item.

Edd China has broken other records. He built the largest motorized shopping cart. The cart is 12 feet (3.5 m) tall. He also built the world's Fastest Office. The office included a desk, four chairs, a computer, and a water cooler. It reached a speed of 87 miles (140 km) per hour.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



■ **Answer the questions.**

1. How did Marek Turowski get to drive the motorized sofa?

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2. What other vehicles has Edd China built?

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3. The prefix *extra-* means "beyond" or "in addition to." What is probably the definition of **extraordinary**?

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4. Circle *T* for true or *F* for false.

A. Marek Turowski invented the speedy sofa. T      F

B. Edd China has built only one record-breaking vehicle. T      F

5. What do you think it would be like to take the sofa out for a drive? How do you think people driving cars would react to the sofa?

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■ **Choose one extension activity.**

A. Write a song about what it must have been like for Marek Turowski to drive the record-breaking sofa.

B. Imagine that you are Edd China. What would you like to put on the road? Design and draw your own interesting motorized vehicle.

