

Revolutionary War

Important Events leading up to the Revolution:

The Albany Congress (June 1754) - Representatives from seven colonies met with 150 Iroquois Chiefs in Albany, New York. The purpose of the Albany Congress was twofold; to *try to secure the support and cooperation of the Iroquois in fighting the French*, and to *form a colonial alliance* based on a design by Benjamin Franklin. The plan of union was passed unanimously. But when the delegates returned to their colonies with the plan, not a single provincial legislature would ratify it.

French Indian War (1754-1763)- Leading up to the conflict between Britain and the Colonies was the French-Indian war. Conflicts between the French and British had been progressing since 1689, which led to an influx in the population of the Colonies. Growing from an approximate 200,000 to 1.2 million residents in 1750. Britain and France struggled throughout the conflict to maintain and gain primary control of the Colonies and North American regions. Britain eventually gained primary control of posts throughout the colonies, expending large amounts of their resources to do so.

Parliament sought to achieve two objectives; first, *to tax the colonies in order to recover monies expended on the battle over North America*, and second *to restore the profitability of the East India Company* in an effort to recover monies spent on the battle over India.

The colonies were primarily interested in overcoming the French in North America and appealed to the King of England, George II, for permission to raise armies and monies to defend themselves. George II was suspicious of the intentions of the colonial governments and declined their offer. Communities throughout the colonies began to question British authorities who would demand horses, feed, wagons, and quarters — but deny colonists the right to fight in defense of the Empire, a right which they considered central to their self-image as Englishmen.

Proclamation of 1763- This proclamation made by Britain, closed off the western frontier to colonial expansion. King George II and his council presented the proclamation as a measure to *calm the fears of the Indians*, who felt that the

colonists would drive them from their lands as they expanded westward. Many in the colonies felt that the object was to *pen them in along the Atlantic seaboard where they would be easier to regulate*. The proclamation provided that all lands west of the heads of all rivers which flowed into the Atlantic Ocean from the west or northwest were off-limits to the colonists.

The proclamation *also established or defined four new colonies*, three of them on the continent proper. Quebec, which was of course already well settled, two colonies to be called East Florida and West Florida — and off the continent, Grenada.

Sugar Act (1764)- Parliament passed a modified version of the Sugar and Molasses Act of 1733, which was about to expire. Colonial merchants had been required to pay a tax of sixpence per gallon on the importation of foreign molasses. But because of corruption, colonists mostly evaded the taxes and undercut the intention of the tax — that the English product would be cheaper than that from the French West Indies. This hurt the British West Indies market in molasses and sugar and the market for rum, which the colonies had been producing in quantity with the cheaper French molasses.

The Sugar Act reduced the rate of tax on molasses from six pence to three pence per gallon, The act also listed more foreign goods to be taxed including *sugar, certain wines, coffee, pimiento, cambric and printed calico, and further, regulated the export of lumber and iron*. The enforced tax on molasses caused the almost immediate decline in the rum industry in the colonies. The combined effect of the new duties was to sharply reduce the trade with Madeira, the Azores, the Canary Islands, and the French West Indies (Guadelupe, Martinique and Santo Domingo (now Haiti)), all important destination ports for lumber, flour, cheese, and assorted farm products. The situation disrupted the colonial economy by reducing the markets to which the colonies could sell, and the amount of currency available to them for the purchase of British manufactured goods.

The Currency Act (1764)- Parliament passed the Currency Act, *effectively assuming control of the colonial currency system*. The act prohibited the issue of any new bills and the reissue of existing currency. Parliament favored a "hard currency" system based on the pound sterling. This act effectively abolished any form of colonial currency.

The Stamp Act (1765)- The new tax was imposed on all American colonists and required them to *pay a tax on every piece of printed paper they used. Ship's papers, legal documents, licenses, newspapers, other publications, and even playing cards were taxed.* The money collected by the Stamp Act was to be used to help pay the costs of defending and protecting the American frontier near the Appalachian Mountains (10,000 troops were to be stationed on the American frontier for this purpose).

In the past, taxes and duties on colonial trade had always been viewed as measures to regulate commerce, not to raise money. The Stamp Act, however, was viewed as a *direct attempt by England to raise money* in the colonies without the approval of the colonial legislatures.

The Quartering act (1765)- Once the war had ended, the king's advisors decided that some British troops should remain in North America, to defend the colonies. Since the war had left Britain with a large national debt, it also was especially important that the *colonies should pay their share of the costs of keeping these men in America.* This required colonial governments to provide and pay for *feeding and sheltering any troops stationed in their colony.* If enough barracks were not made available, then soldiers could be housed in inns, stables, outbuildings, uninhabited houses, or private homes that sold wine or alcohol.

The Declaratory Act (1766)- Stated that the British Parliament's *taxing authority was the same in America as in Great Britain.* Parliament mollified the colonists by repealing the distasteful Stamp Act, but actually hardened its principle in the Declaratory Act by asserting its complete authority to make laws binding on the American colonies "in all cases whatsoever."

Townshend Revenue Act (1767)- imposed taxes on *British china, glass, lead, paint, paper and tea* imported to the colonies. By December of 1767 there was an active boycott of British goods.

In response to protests and boycotts, the British sent troops to occupy Boston and quell the unrest. By 1769, more than 2,000 British troops had arrived in Boston to restore order—a large number considering only about 16,000 people lived in Boston at the time.

Boston non-importation agreement (1768)- collective decision made by Boston based merchants and traders *not to import or export items to Britain*. The agreement, essentially a boycott, was a series of agreed upon commercial restrictions the colonists put in place with regard to trade with the mother country.

Boston Massacre (1770)- Tensions between the colonists and British troops finally boiled over on March 5, 1770, when British soldiers shot into an angry mob, killing five American colonists.

Gaspee Affair (June 9th 1772) - A local vessel out of Newport was under way to Providence when its captain baited the HMS Gaspee and led Duddington into shallow waters near Warwick. The Gaspee ran aground at a place that is now known as Gaspee Point. News of the grounding quickly reached Providence and a party of fifty-five, led by a man named John Brown, planned an attack on the ship. The following evening they surrounded and boarded the Gaspee, wounding Duddington and capturing the entire crew. All were hauled ashore and abandoned, to watch as the Gaspee was looted and then burned.

The Tea Act (1773)- designed to prop up the East India Company which was financially burdened with eighteen million pounds of unsold tea. *This tea was to be shipped directly to the colonies, and sold at a bargain price*. The Townshend taxes were still in place, however, and the radical leaders in the colonies found *reason to believe that this act was a maneuver to buy popular support for the taxes already in force*. The direct sale of tea, via British agents, would also have undercut the business of local merchants.

Colonists in Philadelphia and New York turned the tea ships back to Britain. In Charleston the cargo was left to rot on the docks. In Boston the Royal Governor was stubborn and held the ships in port, where the colonists would not allow them to unload. Cargoes of tea filled the harbor, and the British ship's crews were stalled in Boston looking for work and often finding trouble. This situation led to the Boston Tea Party.

The Boston Tea Party (December 16th 1773)- After allowing three ships carrying tea to enter Boston Harbor, radical townspeople stormed the ships and tossed 342 chests of tea into the water. Disguised as Native Americans, the offenders could not be identified.

The Boston Port act (1774)- was designed to punish the inhabitants of Boston, Massachusetts for the incident that would become known as the Boston Tea Party, by discontinuing the landing and discharging, lading or shipping, of goods, wares, and merchandise at the town, and within the harbor, of Boston. One of the first “Intolerable acts”

Administration of Justice act (1774)- This act allowed trials involving British officials charged with capital offenses, including murder, *to be moved to England or another colony*. Many colonists believed that relocating the trials would guarantee acquittals for the accused. Another one of the “intolerable acts”

Massachusetts Government Act (1774)- effectively *revoked the Massachusetts Charter of 1691* of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, and gave its royally-appointed governor wide-ranging powers. Another “intolerable act”

Quartering Act (1774)- Reinstatement of the quartering act in order to make provisions for British troops to be given food and shelter at the expense of the American colonists, Another “intolerable act”

Quebec Act (1774)- instituted a permanent administration in Canada replacing the temporary government created at the time of the Proclamation of 1763. It gave the French Canadians complete religious freedom and restored the French form of civil law. The Thirteen Colonies considered this law one of the Intolerable Acts, for it nullified many of the Western claims of the coast colonies by extending the boundaries of the province of Quebec to the Ohio River on the south and to the Mississippi River on the west.

First Continental Congress (September 5th- October 26th 1774)- meets in Philadelphia and issues declaration and resolutions.

The Association (1774)- universal prohibition of trade with Great Britain. Though it made a handful of exceptions, it prohibited import, consumption, and export of goods with England.

Galloway’s Plan of Union (1774)- proposed a popularly elected *Grand Council* which would represent the interests of the colonies as a whole, and would be a continental equivalent to the English Parliament. After a sincere debate, it was rejected by a six to five vote on October 22, 1774.

Paul Revere's Midnight Ride- Paul Revere and several other men go ahead to warn the Colonists of the imminent British attacks.

Key Battles:

Battles of Lexington and Concord (April 19th, 1775)- The Battles of Lexington and Concord, kicked off the American Revolutionary War. On the night of April 18, 1775, hundreds of British troops marched from Boston to nearby Concord in order to seize an arms cache. Paul Revere and other riders sounded the alarm, and colonial militiamen began mobilizing to intercept the Redcoat column. A confrontation on the Lexington town green started off the fighting, and soon the British were hastily retreating under intense fire.

Battle of Bunker (Breed's) Hill (June 17th, 1775)- The British defeated the Americans at the Battle of Bunker Hill in Massachusetts. Despite their loss, the inexperienced colonial forces inflicted significant casualties against the enemy, and the battle provided them with an important confidence boost

Battle of Saratoga (September 19th + October 7th 1775)- The Two Battles of Saratoga were a turning point in the American Revolution. On September 19th, British troops achieved a small, but costly victory over American forces. In another battle at Bemis Heights on October 7th, the British Attacked American troops this time suffering defeated and forced to retreat. The American victory convinced the French government to formally recognize the colonist's cause and enter the war as their ally.

Valley Forge (1777-78)- the site of the 1777-78 winter encampment of the Continental Army.

Battle of Yorktown (Sep 28, 1781 – Oct 19, 1781)- a decisive victory by a combined force of American Continental Army troops led by General George Washington and French Army troops.

Key Terms:

Sons of Liberty- The Sons of Liberty, a well-organized Patriot paramilitary political organization shrouded in secrecy, was established to undermine British rule in

colonial America and was influential in organizing and carrying out the Boston Tea Party.

The Colonies (Colonials, Colonists, etc.)-The British owned and settled land that stretched the eastern seaboard and those people who had settled in this region.

Patriot- those colonists of the Thirteen Colonies who rejected British rule during the American Revolution and declared the United States of America as an independent nation in July 1776.

Treaty- A compromise for the sake of peace on behalf of two or more nations/groups.

Articles of Confederation- Original U.S. Constitution

Declaration of Independence- Document formally stating the freedom of the thirteen colonies from British rule, written by Thomas Jefferson and published in July 1776.

Continental Congress- a meeting of delegates from each of the thirteen American colonies. These delegates served as the government during the Revolutionary War.

Join or die-The cartoon appeared along with Franklin's editorial about the "disunited state" of the colonies, and helped make his point about the importance of colonial unity. It became a symbol of colonial freedom

Tarring + Feathering- The practice of applying hot tar and a coating of feathers to one's opponents was practiced on Tories in order to promote Colonial loyalty.

Redcoats- British soldiers

Loyalists (Tories)- Men and women who remained loyal to the royal crown

Minutemen- civilian colonists who independently organized to form well-prepared militia companies self-trained in weaponry, tactics, and military strategies from the American colonial partisan militia

Pence- a plural of penny; used in referring to a sum of money rather than to the coins themselves

Militia - Citizens who were prepared to fight. They held drills a few times a year and had their own weapons and gear.

Musket - A smooth bore gun with a long barrel that fired lead balls.

Powder horn - A hollowed out horn with a cap used to carry gunpowder.

Ramrod - A long thin rod that pushed gunpowder down the barrel of a musket.

Volley - When a large number of muskets is fired at once.

Whigs - Another name for the patriots who fought against the British government for independence.

Regulars - A name that referred to British soldiers during the Revolutionary War.

People to Know:

King George III- King of Great Britain from 1760-1820. Ruled through both American and French revolutions. Longest reigning British monarch until Queen Elizabeth.

Patrick Henry- Writer and Orator who most famously stated “Give me Liberty or give me death” while trying to prepare native Colonists for war with Britain. First Governor of Virginia

George Washington- Nation’s first president 1789-1797, served as commander and chief Continental forces during the Revolution.

Benjamin Franklin- Owner of the Pennsylvania Gazette, created the first published political cartoon in U.S., invented the lightning rod, aided the repeal of the Stamp Act of 1765, and assisted in the drafting of the declaration of independence.

John Hancock- President of the Second Continental Congress from 1775 to 1777, signer of Declaration of Independence, from 1780 to 1785 Hancock was the first governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Thomas Paine- Political philosopher and writer. Author of Common Sense, The Rights of Man, and The Age of Reason.

Paul Revere- Paul Revere was a silversmith and ardent colonialist. He took part in the Boston Tea Party and was principal rider for Boston's Committee of Safety. In that role, he devised a system of lanterns to warn the minutemen of a British invasion, setting up his famous ride on April 18, 1775.

Thomas Jefferson- Writer of the Declaration of Independence, Served as the 3rd president of the United States.

James Madison-Father of the Constitution, served as secretary of state under Thomas Jefferson.

John Adams- Second president of the United States

Samuel Adams- Helped organize the Boston Tea Party, Signee of the Declaration of Independence

Abigail Adams- Wife of a John Adams, constant advisor for John Adams, known for her consistent correspondence with her husband regarding numerous presidential issues.

Mary Ludwig Hays (Molly Pitcher)- reportedly brought water to the troops at the Battle of Monmouth and worked the cannon after her husband was wounded. Historians say that “Molly Pitcher” is a fictional woman who represented the many women working on the battlefields.

Betsy Ross- Upholsterer during the American Revolution, known for making the first American flag.

Phillis Wheatley- Brought to Boston, Massachusetts, on a slave ship in 1761 and was purchased by John Wheatley as a personal servant to his wife. The Wheatleys educated Phillis and she soon mastered Latin and Greek, going on to write highly acclaimed poetry. She published her first poem in 1767 and her first volume of verse, Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral.

East Tennessee's Influence in the Revolution:

Towards the beginning of the Revolution only eastern Tennessee had been settled by the colonists. This meant that Tennessee's impacts on the war were slim.

However, pioneers of what would come to be known as Tennessee helped with the war efforts in the east.

Following the battles of Saratoga the British were forced to head south in order to gain more traction within the Colonies, and stand a chance throughout the life of the war. After claiming both Charleston and Savannah the British headed west in attempts to sweep back through the colonies and On September 25, 1780, several hundred men gathered at Sycamore Shoals in Carter County to move against Ferguson's loyalist and British force. Militiamen from Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, and South Carolina joined the **Overmountain men from Tennessee** and their numbers swelled to around 900 men. Commanded by John Sevier, Isaac Shelby, Benjamin Cleveland, Joseph Winston, James Williams, and under the overall command of William Campbell, these frontiersmen moved against Ferguson. Mainly moving on horseback and armed with rifles, the Overmountain men soon surrounded Patrick Ferguson's force of approximately 1,000 men encamped atop King's Mountain in Western South Carolina.

The Overmountain men achieved a stunning and important victory at King's Mountain. The battle changed the course of the war in the Southern Theater. These victories within the backcountry pushed Gen. Cornwallis North, eventually leading the British to their defeat.