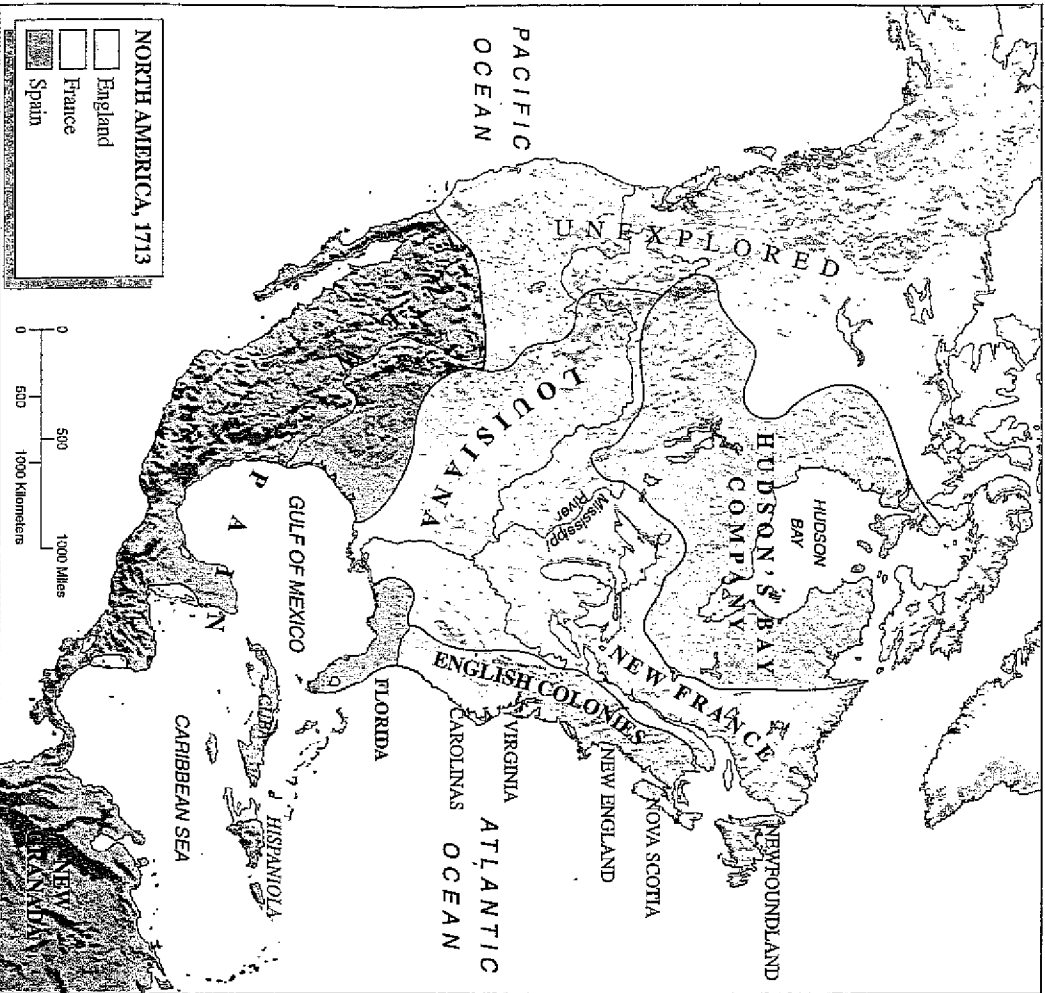
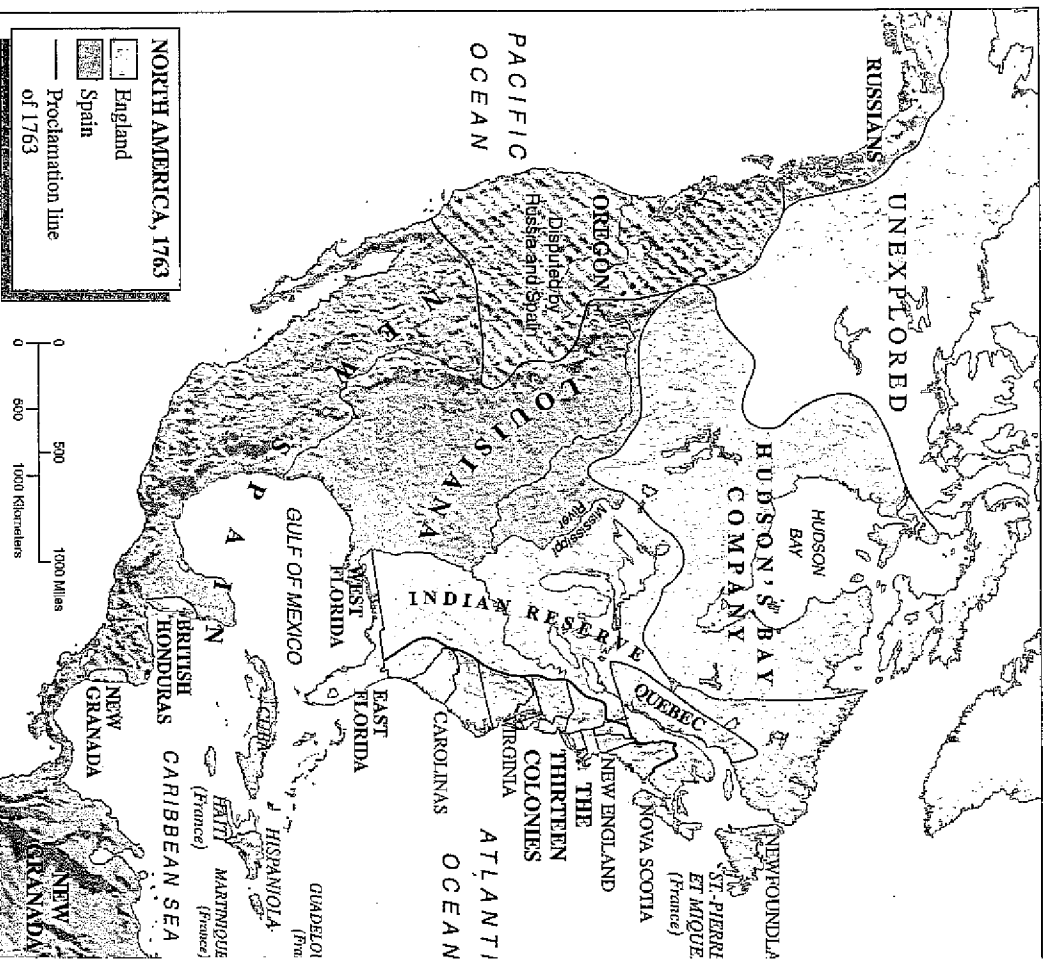


**THE TREATY OF PARIS** The Treaty of Paris, signed in February 1763, brought an end to the world war and to the French Empire in North America. In winning the long war against France and Spain, Great Britain had gained a vast global empire. Victorious Britain took all of France's North American possessions east of the Mississippi River: all of Canada and all of what was then called Spanish Florida (including much of present-day Alabama and Mississippi).



What events led to the first clashes between the French and the British in the late seventeenth century? Why did New England suffer more than other regions of North America during the wars of the eighteenth century? What were the long-term financial, military, and political consequences of the wars between France and Britain?

In compensation for its loss of Florida in the Treaty of Paris, Spain received the vast Louisiana Territory (including New Orleans and all French land west of the Mississippi River) from France. Unlike the Spanish in Florida, however, few of the French settlers left Louisiana after 1763. The French government encouraged the settlers to work with their new Spanish governors to create a Catholic bulwark against further English expansion. Spain would hold title to Louisiana for nearly four decades but would never succeed in erasing the territory's French roots. The French-born settlers



How did the map of North America change between 1713 and 1763? How did Spain win Louisiana? What were the consequences of the British winning all the land east of the Mississippi?

always outnumbered the Spanish. The loss of Louisiana left France with no territory on the continent. British power reigned supreme over North America east of the Mississippi River.

The triumph in what England called the Great War saw Americans celebrating as joyously as Londoners in 1763. Colonists were proud members of the vast new British Empire. Most Americans, as Benjamin Franklin explained, "submitted willingly to the government of the Crown." He himself proudly proclaimed, "I am a Briton."

But Britain's spectacular military success also created future problems. Humiliated France thirsted for revenge against an "arrogant" Britain. Victory was also costly. Britain's national debt doubled during the war. The cost of maintaining the North American empire, including the permanent stationing of British soldiers in the colonies, was staggering. Simply taking over the string of French forts along the Great Lakes and in the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys would require 10,000 additional British soldiers. Even more soldiers would be needed to manage the rising tensions generated by continuing white encroachment into Indian lands in the trans-Appalachian West. And the victory required that Britain devise ways to administer (and finance the supervision of) half a *billion* acres of new colonial territory. How were the vast, fertile lands (taken from Indians) in the Ohio Country to be "pacified" of Indian conflict, exploited, settled, and governed? The British may have won a global empire as a result of the Seven Years' War, but their grip on the American colonies would grow ever weaker as the years passed.

**MANAGING A NEW EMPIRE** No sooner was the Treaty of Paris signed than King George III set about reducing the huge national debt caused by the prolonged world war. In 1763 the average Briton paid 26 shillings a year in taxes; the average American colonist paid only one shilling. The British government's efforts to force colonists to pay their share of the financial burden set in motion a chain of events that would lead to revolution and independence. That Americans bristled at efforts to get them to pay their "fair share" of the military expenses led British officials to view them as selfish and self-centered. At the same time, the colonists who fought in the French and Indian War and celebrated the British victory soon grew perplexed at why the empire they served, loved, and helped to secure seemed determined to treat them as "slaves" rather than citizens. "It is truly a miserable thing," said a Connecticut minister in December 1763, "that we no sooner leave fighting our neighbors, the French, but we must fall to quarreling among ourselves."

**PONTIAC'S REBELLION** American colonists were rabid expansionists. With the French out of the way and vast new western lands to exploit, they looked to the future with confidence. Already the population of America in 1763 was a third the size of Great Britain's—and was growing more rapidly. No sooner had the Seven Years' War ended than land speculators began squabbling over disputed claims to sprawling tracts of Indian-owned land west of the Appalachian Mountains.

The Peace of Paris did not in fact bring peace to North America. News of the treaty settlement devastated those Indians who had been allied with the French. Their lands were being given over to the British without consultation. The Shawnees, for instance, demanded to know "by what right the French could pretend" to transfer their ancestral lands to the British. In a desperate effort to recover their lands, Indians struck back in the spring of 1763, capturing most of the British forts around the Great Lakes and in the Ohio River valley—and killing hundreds of British soldiers in the process. They also raided colonial settlements in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, destroying hundreds of homesteads and killing several thousand people.

The widespread Indian attacks in the spring and summer of 1763 came to be called **Pontiac's Rebellion** because of the prominent role played by the charismatic Ottawa chief. The attacks convinced most colonists that all Indians must be killed or removed. The British government took a different stance, negotiating an agreement with the Indians that allowed redcoats to reoccupy the frontier forts in exchange for a renewal of the generous trading and gift giving long practiced by the French. Still, as Chief Pontiac stressed, the Indians denied the legitimacy of the British claim to their territory under the terms of the Treaty of Paris. He told a British official that the "French never conquered us, neither did they purchase a foot of our Country, nor have they a right to give it to you."

To keep peace with the Indians, King George III issued the Proclamation of 1763, which drew an imaginary line along the crest of the Appalachian Mountains from Canada in the north to Georgia in the south, beyond which white settlers ("our loving subjects") were forbidden to go. For the first time, American territorial expansion was to be controlled by royal officials—and 10,000 British soldiers were dispatched to the frontier to enforce the new rule. Yet the proclamation line was ineffective. Land-hungry settlers defied the prohibitions and pushed across the Appalachian ridges into Indian country. The Proclamation of 1763 was the first of a series of efforts by the British government to more effectively regulate the American colonies. Little did the king and his ministers know that their efforts at efficiency would spawn a revolution.

## REGULATING THE COLONIES

**GRENVILLE'S COLONIAL POLICY** Just as the Proclamation of 1763 was being drafted, a new British ministry had begun to grapple with the complex problems of imperial finances. The new chief minister, George Grenville, was a strong-willed accountant whose humorless self-assurance verged on pomposity. King George III came to despise him, but the king needed the dogged Grenville because they agreed on the need to cut government expenses, reduce the national debt, and generate more revenue from the colonies.

In developing new policies regulating the American colonies, Grenville took for granted the need for British soldiers to defend the western frontier. Because the average Briton paid twenty-six times the average annual taxes paid by Americans (the "least taxed people in the world"), Grenville—and most other Britons—reasoned that the "spoiled" Americans should share more of the cost of the troops providing their defense. He also resented the large number of American merchants who defied British trade regulations by engaging in rampant smuggling. So Grenville ordered to colonial officials to tighten the enforcement of the Navigation Acts, and he dispatched warships to capture American smugglers. He also set up a new maritime, or vice-admiralty, court in the Canadian port of Halifax, granting its single judge jurisdiction over all the American colonies and ensuring that there would be no juries of colonists sympathetic to smugglers. Under Grenville, the period of "salutary neglect" in the enforcement of the Navigation Acts was abruptly coming to an end, causing American merchants (and smugglers) great annoyance.

Strict enforcement of the Molasses Act of 1733 posed a serious threat to New England's prosperity. Making rum from molasses, a syrup derived from sugarcane, was quite profitable. Grenville recognized that the long-neglected molasses tax, if enforced, would devastate a major colonial industry. So he put through the American Revenue Act of 1764, commonly known as the Sugar Act, which cut the duty on molasses in half. Reducing the duty, he believed, would reduce the temptation to smuggle or to bribe customs officers. But the Sugar Act also levied new duties on imports into America of textiles, wine, coffee, indigo, and sugar. The new revenues generated by the Sugar Act, Grenville estimated, would help defray "the necessary expenses of defending, protecting, and securing, the said colonies and plantations."

The Sugar Act was momentous. For the first time, Parliament had adopted so-called external duties designed to raise *revenues* in the colonies and not merely intended to *regulate* trade. As such, it was an example of Par-

liament trying to "tax" the colonists without their consent. Critics of the Sugar Act pointed out that British subjects could only be taxed by their elected representatives in Parliament. Because the colonists had no elected representatives in Parliament, the argument went, Parliament had no right to impose taxes on them.

Another of Grenville's regulatory measures, the Currency Act of 1764, originated in the complaints of London merchants about doing business with Americans, especially Virginians. The colonies had long faced a chronic shortage of "hard" money (gold and silver coins, called *specie*), which kept flowing overseas to pay debts in England. To meet the shortage of specie, they issued their own paper money or, as in the case of Virginia planters, used tobacco as a form of currency. British creditors feared payment in a currency of such fluctuating value, however. To alleviate their fears, Grenville prohibited the colonies from printing more paper money. This caused the value of existing paper money to plummet. As a Philadelphia newspaper lamented, "The Times are Dreadful, Dismal, Doleful, Dolorous, and DOLLAR-LESS." The deflationary impact of the Currency Act, combined with new duties on commodities and stricter enforcement, jolted a colonial economy already suffering a postwar decline and a surge in population, many of them new immigrants—mostly poor, young, male, and hungry for opportunity. This surge of enterprising people could not be contained within the boundaries of the existing colonies—or by royal decrees.

**THE STAMP ACT** As prime minister, George Grenville excelled at doing the wrong thing—repeatedly. The Sugar Act, for example, did not produce additional net revenue for Great Britain. Its administrative costs were four times greater than the additional revenue it generated. Yet Grenville compounded the problem by pushing through an even more provocative measure to raise money in America: a stamp tax. On February 13, 1765, Parliament passed the Stamp Act, which created revenue stamps to be purchased and affixed to every form of printed matter used in the colonies: newspapers, pamphlets, bonds, leases, deeds, licenses, insurance policies, college diplomas, even playing cards. The requirement was to go into effect November 1, nine months later. The Stamp Act affected all the colonists, not just New England merchants, and it was the first outright effort by Parliament to place a direct—or "internal"—tax specifically on American goods and services rather than an "external" tax on imports and exports—all for the purpose of generating revenue for the British treasury rather than regulating trade.

That same year, Grenville completed his new system of colonial regulations when he persuaded Parliament to pass the Quartering Act. In effect it

was yet another tax. The Quartering Act required the colonies to feed and house British troops. It applied to all colonies but affected mainly New York City, the headquarters of the British forces. The new act raised troubling questions in the colonies. Why was it necessary for British soldiers to be stationed in colonial cities in peacetime? Was not the Quartering Act another example of taxation without representation, as the colonies had neither requested the troops nor been asked their opinion on the matter? Some colonists decided that the Quartering Act was an effort to use British soldiers to tyrannize the Americans.

**THE IDEOLOGICAL RESPONSE** Grenville's revenue measures outraged Americans. Unwittingly, he had stirred up a storm of protest and set in motion a profound exploration of colonial rights and imperial relations. From the start of English settlement in America, free colonists had come to take for granted certain essential principles and practices: self-government, religious freedom, economic opportunity, and territorial expansion. All of those deeply embedded values seemed threatened by Britain's efforts to tighten its control over the colonies after 1763. The tensions between the colonies and mother country began to take on moral and spiritual overtones associated with the old Whig principle that no Englishman could be taxed without his consent through representative government. Americans opposed to English policies began to call themselves true Whigs and label the king and his "corrupt" ministers as "Tories."

In 1764 and 1765, American Whigs decided that Grenville was imposing upon them the very chains of tyranny from which Parliament had rescued England in the seventeenth century. A standing army—rather than a militia—was the historic ally of despots, yet now with the French defeated and Canada under English control, thousands of British soldiers remained in the colonies. For what purpose—to protect the colonists or to subdue them? Other factors heightened colonial anxiety. Among the fundamental rights of English people were trial by jury and the presumption of innocence, but the new admiralty court in Halifax excluded juries and put the burden of proof on the defendant. Most important, English citizens had the right to be taxed only by their elected representatives. Now, however, Parliament was usurping the colonial assemblies' power of the purse strings. This could lead only to tyranny and enslavement, critics argued. Sir Francis Bernard, the royal governor of Massachusetts, correctly predicted that the new stamp tax "would cause a great Alarm & meet much Opposition" in the colonies. Indeed, the seed of American independence was planted by the fiery debates over the stamp tax.

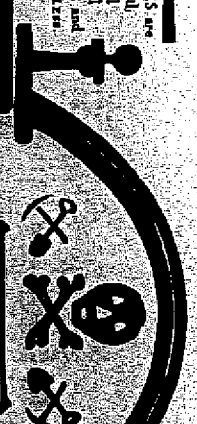
**PROTEST IN THE COLONIES** The Stamp Act aroused a ferocious response among the colonists. In a flood of pamphlets, speeches, and resolutions, critics repeated a slogan familiar to all Americans: "no taxation without representation." A Connecticut minister attributed the Stamp Act to a "selfish and venal spirit of corruption" that required more revenue solely "to add fuel to ungodly lusts . . . all manner of unrighteousness and oppression, debauchery and wickedness." Through the spring and summer of 1765, resentment boiled over at meetings, parades, bonfires, and other demonstrations. The protesters, calling themselves **Sons of Liberty**, met underneath "liberty trees"—in Boston a great elm; in Charleston, South Carolina, a live oak.

In mid-August 1765, nearly three months before the Stamp Act was to take effect, a Boston mob sacked the homes of the lieutenant governor and the local customs officer in charge of enforcing the stamp tax. Thoroughly shaken, the Boston stamp agent resigned, and stamp agents throughout the colonies were hounded out of office. By November 1, its effective date, the Stamp Act was a dead letter. Colonists by the thousands signed nonimportation agreements, promising not to buy imported British goods as a means of exerting leverage in London.

**Opposition to the Stamp Act**

In protest of the Stamp Act, which was to take effect the next day, *The Pennsylvania Journal* printed a skull and crossbones on its masthead.

The "TRINES" are  
**Personal**  
**Disseal**  
**Dealing** and  
**Dealing** 1765



Printed and  
 Published  
 by  
**WILLIAM BRADFORD**

Thursday, October 11, 1765

**PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL.**

A. D. B.

**WEEKLY ADVERTISER.**

**EXPIRING. In Hopes of a Reformation to Live again.**

AM Fort to be obliged  
 to request my Name  
 on that as the Stamp  
 Act, I should be able  
 to sign upon an other  
 Liberty of Westminster  
 that, I do, may be attend  
 I shall send every  
 (over) the Publisher of this Paper unable to

any Subscribers, many of whom have  
 been long misled, that they should  
 immediately Discontinue their Paper. At  
 same time, I may be able, not only to  
 support myself during the Interval, but  
 be better prepared to proceed again, with  
 the Paper, whenever an opening for that  
 purpose appears, which I hope will be  
 soon.

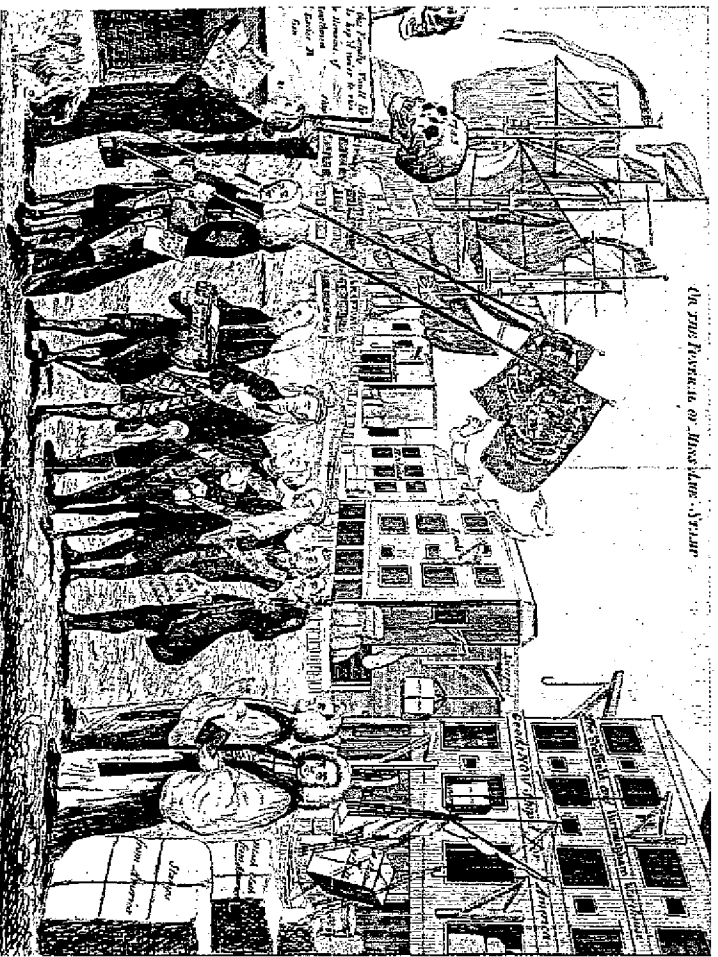
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The widespread protests involved courageous women as well as men, and the boycotts of British goods encouraged colonial unity as Americans discovered that they had more in common with each other than with London. The Virginia House of Burgesses struck the first blow against the Stamp Act with the Virginia Resolves, a series of resolutions inspired by the ardent young Patrick Henry. Virginians, the burgesses declared, were entitled to all the rights of Englishmen, and Englishmen could be taxed only by their own elected representatives. Virginians, moreover, had always been governed by laws passed with their own consent. Newspapers spread the Virginia Resolves throughout the colonies, and other assemblies hastened to copy Virginia's example.

In 1765 the Massachusetts House of Representatives invited the other colonial assemblies to send delegates to confer in New York about their opposition to the Stamp Act. Nine responded, and from October 7 to 25, 1765, the Stamp Act Congress formulated a Declaration of the Rights and Grievances of the Colonies. The delegates acknowledged that the colonies

### *The Repeal, or the Funeral Procession of Miss America-Stamp*

This 1766 cartoon shows Grenville carrying the dead Stamp Act in its coffin. In the background, trade with America starts up again.



owed a "due subordination" to Parliament and recognized its right to regulate colonial trade, but they insisted "that no taxes should be imposed on them, but with their own consent, given personally, or by their representatives." Parliament, in other words, had no right to levy taxes on people who were unrepresented in that body. The bonds connecting colonies and Mother Country were splaying. "The boldness of the minister [Grenville] amazes our people," wrote a New Yorker. "This single stroke has lost Great Britain the affection of all of her Colonies." Grenville responded by denouncing colonial critics as "ungrateful!"

**REPEAL OF THE STAMP ACT** The storm had scarcely broken before Grenville's ministry was out of office and the Stamp Act was repealed. For reasons unrelated to his colonial policies, Grenville had lost the confidence of the king, who replaced Grenville with Lord Rockingham, a leader of a Whig faction critical of Grenville's colonial policies. Pressure from British merchants who feared the economic consequences of the colonial non-importation movement convinced the Rockingham-led government that the Stamp Act was a mistake. The prime minister asked Parliament to rescind the Stamp Act. In 1766, Parliament repealed the Stamp Tax but at the same time passed the Declaratory Act, which asserted the power of Parliament to make laws binding the colonies "in all cases whatsoever." It was a cunning evasion that made no concession with regard to taxes but made no mention of them either. For the moment, however, the Declaratory Act was a face-saving gesture. News of the repeal of the Stamp Act set off excited demonstrations throughout the colonies. Amid the rejoicing and relief on both sides of the Atlantic, few expected that the quarrel between Britain and its American colonies would be reopened within a year.

### FANNING THE FLAMES

Meanwhile, King George III continued to play musical chairs with his prime ministers. In July 1766 the king replaced Rockingham with William Pitt, the former prime minister who had exercised heroic leadership during the French and Indian War. Alas, by the time he returned as prime minister, Pitt was so mentally unstable that he deferred policy decisions to the other cabinet members. For a time in 1767, the guiding force in the ministry was the witty but reckless Charles Townshend, chancellor of the exchequer (treasury), whose "abilities were superior to those of all men," said a colleague, "and his judgment below that of any man." Like George Grenville before

him, Townshend held the "factious and turbulent" Americans in contempt, was surprised by their resistance, and resolved to force their obedience. The erratic Townshend reopened the question of colonial taxation and the more fundamental issue of Parliament's absolute sovereignty over the colonies. He took advantage of Pitt's debilitating mental confusion to enact a new series of money-generating policies aimed at the American colonies.

**THE TOWNSHEND ACTS** In 1767, Townshend put his ill-fated revenue plan through the House of Commons, and a few months later he died at age forty-two, leaving behind a bitter legacy: the Townshend Acts. With this legislation, Townshend had sought first to bring New York's colonial assembly to its senses. That body had defied the Quartering Act and refused to provide beds or supplies for British troops. Parliament, at Townshend's behest, had suspended all acts of New York's assembly until it would yield. New Yorkers protested but finally caved in, inadvertently confirming the British suspicion that too much indulgence had encouraged colonial bad manners. Townshend had followed up with the Revenue Act of 1767, which levied duties on colonial imports of glass, lead, paint, paper, and tea. The Townshend duties increased government revenues, but the intangible costs were greater. The duties taxed goods exported from England, indirectly hurting British manufacturers, and had to be collected in colonial ports, increasing collection costs. But the highest cost came in the form of added conflict with the colonists. The Revenue Act of 1767 posed a more severe threat to colonial assemblies than Grenville's taxes had, for Townshend proposed to use these revenues to pay colonial governors and other officers and thereby release them from financial dependence upon the assemblies.

The Townshend Acts surprised and angered the colonists, but this time the storm gathered more slowly than it had two years before. Once again, colonial activists, including a growing number of women calling themselves Daughters of Liberty, resolved to resist. They boycotted the purchase of imported British goods, made their own clothes ("homespun"), and developed their own manufactures. While boycotting direct commerce with Great Britain, the colonists expanded their trade with the islands in the French West Indies. The British sought to intercept such trade by increasing their naval presence off the coast of New England. Their efforts to curtail smuggling also included the use of search warrants that allowed British troops to enter any building during daylight hours.

**SAMUEL ADAMS AND THE SONS OF LIBERTY** As American anger bubbled over, loyalty to the mother country waned. British officials

could neither conciliate moderates like Dickinson nor cope with firebrands like Samuel Adams of Boston, who was emerging as the supreme genius of revolutionary agitation. Adams became a tireless agitator, whipping up the Sons of Liberty and organizing protests at the Boston town meeting and in the provincial assembly. Early in 1768 he and the Boston attorney James Otis formulated a letter that the Massachusetts assembly dispatched to the other colonies. The letter's tone was polite and logical: it restated the illegality of taxation without colonial representation in Parliament and invited the support of other colonies. British officials ordered the Massachusetts assembly to withdraw the Adams-Otis letter. The assembly refused and was dissolved by royal decree. In response to an appeal by the royal governor, 4,000 British troops were dispatched to Boston in October 1768 to maintain order. Loyalists, as the Americans who supported the king and Parliament were called, welcomed the soldiers; Patriots, those rebelling against British authority, viewed the troops as an occupation force intended to quash dissent.

In 1769 the Virginia assembly reasserted its exclusive right to tax Virginians, rather than Parliament, and called upon the colonies to unite in the cause. Virginia's royal governor promptly dissolved the assembly, but the members met independently and adopted a new set of nonimportation agreements that sparked a remarkably effective boycott of British goods.

Meanwhile, in London the king's long effort to reorder British politics to his liking was coming to fulfillment. In 1769 new elections for Parliament finally produced a majority of the "king's friends." And George III found a new chief minister to his taste in Frederick, Lord North. In 1770 the king installed a cabinet of the "king's friends," with the stout Lord North as first minister.

**THE BOSTON MASSACRE** By 1770 the American nonimportation agreements were strangling British trade and causing unemployment in England. The impact of colonial boycotts had persuaded Lord North to



**Samuel Adams**  
Adams was the fiery organizer of the Sons of Liberty.

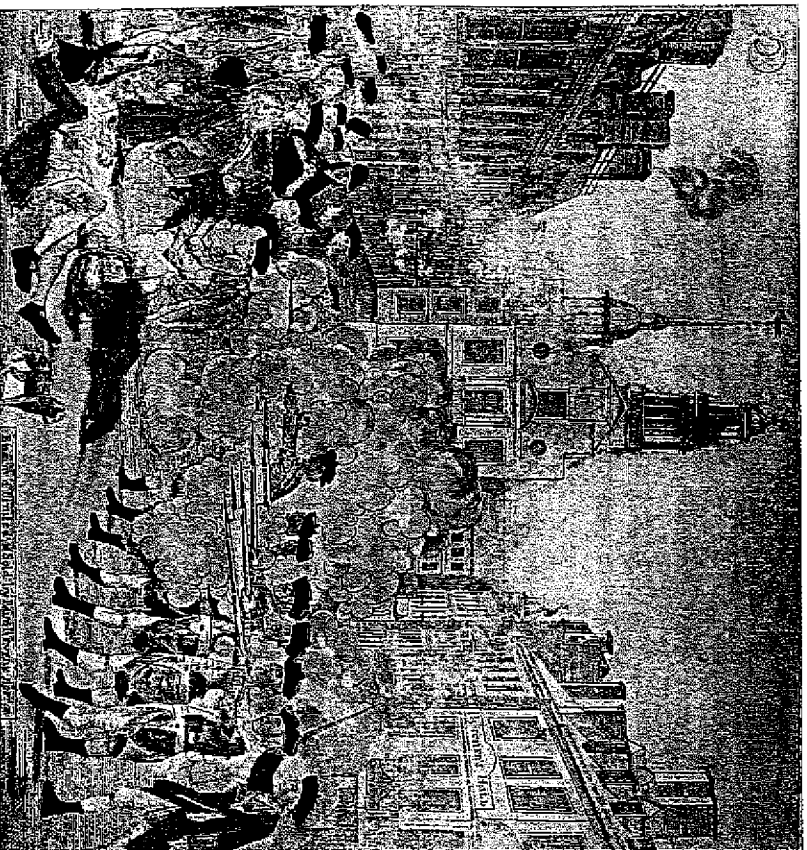


modify the Townshend Acts—just in time to halt a perilous escalation of tensions. The presence of 4,000 British soldiers (“Jobster backs”) in Boston had become a constant provocation. Crowds heckled and ridiculed the red-coated soldiers, many of whom earned the abuse by harassing and intimidating colonists.

On March 5, 1770, in the square outside the Boston customhouse, a group of rowdies began taunting and hurling icicles at the British sentry. His call for help brought reinforcements. Then someone rang the town fire bell, drawing a larger crowd to the scene. At their head, or so the story goes, was Crispus Attucks, a runaway Indian–African American slave. Attucks and others continued to bait the British troops. Finally, a soldier was knocked down; he rose to his feet and fired into the crowd, as did others. When the smoke cleared, five people lay dead or dying, and eight more were wounded. The cause of colonial resistance now had its first martyrs, and the first to die

### *The Bloody Massacre*

Paul Revere's partisan engraving of the Boston Massacre.



was Crispus Attucks. The British soldiers were indicted for murder. John Adams, Sam's cousin, was one of the defense attorneys. He insisted that the accused soldiers were the victims of circumstance, provoked, he said, by a “mottley rabble of saucy boys, negroes and mulattoes.” All of the British soldiers were acquitted except two, who were convicted of manslaughter and branded on their thumbs.

The so-called Boston Massacre sent shock waves throughout the colonies—and to London. Late in April 1770, Parliament repealed all the Townshend duties except for the tea tax. Angry colonists insisted that pressure be kept on British merchants until Parliament gave in altogether, but the nonimportation movement soon faded. Parliament, after all, had given up the substance of the taxes, with one exception, and much of the colonists' tea was smuggled in from the Netherlands (Holland) anyway.

For two years thereafter, colonial discontent remained at a simmer. The Stamp Act was gone, as were all the Townshend duties except that on tea. But most of the Grenville-Townshend innovations remained in effect: the Sugar Act, the Currency Act, the Quartering Act. The redcoats had left Boston, but they remained nearby, and the British navy still patrolled the coast. Each remained a source of irritation and the cause of occasional incidents.

Many colonists showed no interest in the disputes over British regulatory policies raging along the seaboard. Frontier folks' complaints centered on the lack of protection provided by the British. As early as 1763 near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, a group of frontier ruffians took the law into their own hands. Outraged at the unwillingness of Quakers in the Pennsylvania Assembly to suppress marauding Indians, a group called the Paxton Boys took revenge by massacring peaceful Susquehannock Indians. Moving eastward, the angry Paxton boys chased another group of peaceful Indians from Bethlehem to Philadelphia. Benjamin Franklin talked the Paxton Boys into returning home by promising more protection along the frontier. Farther south, settlers in the South Carolina backcountry complained about the lack of protection from horse thieves, cattle rustlers, and Indians. They organized societies called Regulators to administer vigilante justice in the region and refused to pay taxes until they gained effective government. In 1769 the assembly finally set up six circuit courts in the region and revised the taxes, but it still did not respond to the backcountry's demand for representation in the colonial legislature.

Whether in the urban commercial centers or along the frontier, there was still tinder awaiting a spark, and the most incendiary colonists were eager to provide it. As Sam Adams stressed, “Where there is a spark of patriotick fire, we will enkindle it.”

## A WORSENING CRISIS

In 1772 a maritime incident further eroded the colonies' fragile relationship with the mother country. Near Providence, Rhode Island, the *Gaspee*, a British warship, ran aground while chasing smugglers, and its hungry crew proceeded to commandeer local sheep, hogs, and poultry. An angry crowd from the town boarded the ship, shot the captain, removed the crew, and set fire to the vessel. The *Gaspee* incident reignited tensions between the colonies and the mother country. Ever the agitator, Sam Adams convinced the Boston town meeting to form the Committee of Correspondence, which issued a statement of rights and grievances and invited other towns to do the same. Similar committees sprang up across Massachusetts and in other colonies. A Massachusetts Loyalist called the committees "the foulest, subtlest, and most venomous serpent ever issued from the egg of sedition." The crisis was escalating. "The flame is kindled and like lightning it catches from soul to soul," reported Abigail Adams, the wife of future president John Adams.

**THE BOSTON TEA PARTY** Lord North soon provided the colonists with the occasion to bring resentment from a simmer to a boil. In 1773, he tried to help some friends bail out the East India Company, which had in its British warehouses some 17 million pounds of tea it desperately needed to sell. Under the Tea Act of 1773, the government would allow the grossly mismanaged company to send its south Asian tea directly to America without paying any duties. British tea merchants could thereby undercut the prices charged by their colonial competitors, most of whom were smugglers who bought tea from the Dutch. At the same time, King George III told Lord North that his job was to "compel obedience" in the colonies; North ordered British authorities in New England to clamp down on American smuggling.

The Committees of Correspondence, backed by colonial merchants, alerted colonists to the new danger. The British government, they said, was trying to purchase colonial acquiescence with cheap tea. They saw the reduction in the price of tea as a clever ruse to make them accept taxation without consent. Before the end of the year, large shipments of tea left Britain for the major colonial ports. In Boston irate colonists decided that their passion for liberty outweighed their love for tea. On December 16, 1773, scores of Patriots disguised as Mohawks boarded three British ships and threw the 342 chests of East India Company tea overboard—cheered on by a crowd along the shore. John Adams applauded the vigilante action. The destruction of



*The Able Doctor, or America Swallowing the Bitter Draught*  
This 1774 engraving shows Lord North, the Boston Port Act in his pocket, pouring tea down America's throat and America spitting it back.

the disputed tea, he said, was "so bold, so daring, so firm, intrepid and inflexible" that it would have "important consequences." Indeed it did.

The Boston Tea Party pushed British officials to the breaking point. They had tolerated abuse, evasion, and occasional violence, but the destruction of so much valuable tea convinced the furious king and his advisers that a firm response was required. "The colonists must either submit or triumph," George III wrote to Lord North, who decided to make an example of Boston to the rest of the colonies. In the end, however, he helped make a revolution that would cost England far more than three shiploads of tea.

**THE COERCIVE ACTS** In 1774 Parliament enacted a cluster of harsh measures, called the Coercive Acts, intended to punish rebellious Boston. The Boston Port Act closed the harbor from June 1, 1774, until the city paid for the lost tea. A new Quartering Act directed local authorities to provide lodging in the city for British soldiers. Finally, the Massachusetts Government Act made all of the colony's civic officers appointive rather than elective, declared that sheriffs would select jurors, and stipulated that no town meeting could be held without the royal governor's consent. In May, Lieutenant-General Thomas Gage, commander in chief of British forces in North America, became governor of Massachusetts and assumed command of the 4,000 British soldiers in Boston.



The Coercive Acts were designed to isolate Boston from the other colonies. Instead, they galvanized resistance across the colonies. If these "Intolerable Acts," as the colonists labeled the Coercive Acts, were not resisted, they would eventually be applied to the other colonies. Further confirmation of British "tyranny" came with news of the Quebec Act, also passed in June of 1774. It established a royal governor in Canada with no representative assembly and abolished the cherished principle of trial by jury. The Quebec Act also extended the Canadian boundary southward to include all lands west of the Ohio River and encouraged the Catholic Church to expand freely throughout the Canadian colony. The measure seemed merely another indicator of British authoritarianism.

Indignant colonists rallied to the cause of besieged Boston, raising money, sending provisions, and boycotting, as well as burning, British tea. In Williamsburg, when the Virginia assembly met in May, a young member of the Committee of Correspondence, **Thomas Jefferson**, proposed to set aside June 1, the effective date of the Boston Port Act, as a day of fasting and prayer in Virginia. The royal governor immediately dissolved the assembly, whose members then retired to the Raleigh Tavern and resolved to form a Continental Congress to represent all the colonies. As George Washington prepared to leave Virginia to attend the gathering of the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia, he declared that Boston's fight against British tyranny "now is and ever will be considered as the cause of America (not that we approve their conduct in destroying the Tea)." The alternative, Washington added in a comment that betrayed his moral blind spot, was to become "fame and abject slaves, as the blacks we rule over with such arbitrary sway."

Washington's reference to slavery revealed the ugly contradiction in the inflamed rhetoric about American liberties. The colonial leaders who demanded their freedom from British tyranny were unwilling to give freedom to enslaved blacks. Amid the heightened resistance to British tyranny and the fevered rhetoric about cherished liberties, African Americans in Boston submitted petitions to the legislature and governor, reminding officials that they were being "held in slavery in the bowels of a free and Christian Country." When the legislature endorsed their cry for freedom, Thomas Hutchinson, the royal governor, vetoed it. Not to be deterred, slaves in Boston in September 1774 approached Hutchinson's successor, General Thomas Gage, and offered to serve the British army if they would be armed and thereafter awarded their freedom. They stressed that they had "in common with all other men a natural right to our freedoms." Gage showed no interest, but the efforts of slaves to convert American revolutionary ardor into an appeal for their own freedom struck Abigail Adams as a legitimate cause. She confessed to her husband John, then serving in Philadelphia with the Continental Con-

gress, that she found it hypocritical of Revolutionaries to be "daily robbing and plundering from those who have as good a right to freedom as we have."

**THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS** On September 5, 1774, the fifty-five delegates making up the First Continental Congress assembled in Philadelphia. Their mission was to assert the rights of the colonies and create collective measures to defend them. During seven weeks of meetings, the Congress endorsed the *Suffolk Resolves*, which declared the Coercive ("Intolerable") Acts null and void and urged Massachusetts to resist British tyranny with force. The Congress then adopted a Declaration of American Rights, which proclaimed once again the rights of Americans as English citizens, denied Parliament's authority to regulate internal colonial affairs, and proclaimed the right of each colonial assembly to determine the need for British troops within its own province.

Finally, the Continental Congress adopted the Continental Association of 1774, which recommended that every community form committees to enforce an absolute boycott of all imported British goods. These elected committees became the organizational and communications network for the Revolutionary movement, connecting every locality to the leadership and enforcing public behavior. Seven thousand men across the colonies served on the committees of the Continental Association. The committees often required colonists to sign an oath to join the boycotts against British goods. Those who refused to sign were ostracized and intimidated; some were tarred and feathered. The nonimportation movement of the 1760s and 1770s provided women with a significant public role. The Daughters of Liberty again resolved to quit buying imported British apparel and to make their own clothing.

Such efforts to gain economic self-sufficiency helped bind the diverse colonies by ropes of shared resistance. Thousands of ordinary men and women participated in the boycott of British goods, and their sacrifices on behalf of colonial liberties provided the momentum leading to revolution. For all of the attention given to colonial leaders such as Sam Adams and Thomas Jefferson, it was common people who enforced the boycott, volunteered in "Rebel" militia units, attended town meetings, and increasingly exerted pressure on royal officials in the colonies. The "Founding Fathers" (a phrase coined in 1916) could not have led the Revolutionary movement without such widespread popular support. As the people of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, declared in a petition, "We have always believed that the people are the fountain of power."

In London the king fumed. He wrote Lord North that "blows must decide" whether the Americans "are to be subject to this country or independent." In early 1775, Parliament declared that Massachusetts was "in rebellion" and



**Patrick Henry of Virginia**

Henry famously declared "Give me Liberty, or give me Death!"

prohibited the New England colonies from trading with any nation outside the empire. There would be no negotiation with the rebellious Continental Congress; force was the only option. British military leaders assured the king that the colonies could not mount a significant armed resistance. On February 27, 1775, Lord North issued a Conciliatory Proposition, sent to the individual colonies rather than the unrecognized Continental Congress. It offered to resolve the festering dispute by eliminating all revenue-generating taxes on any colony that voluntarily paid both its share for military defense and the salaries of the royal governors.

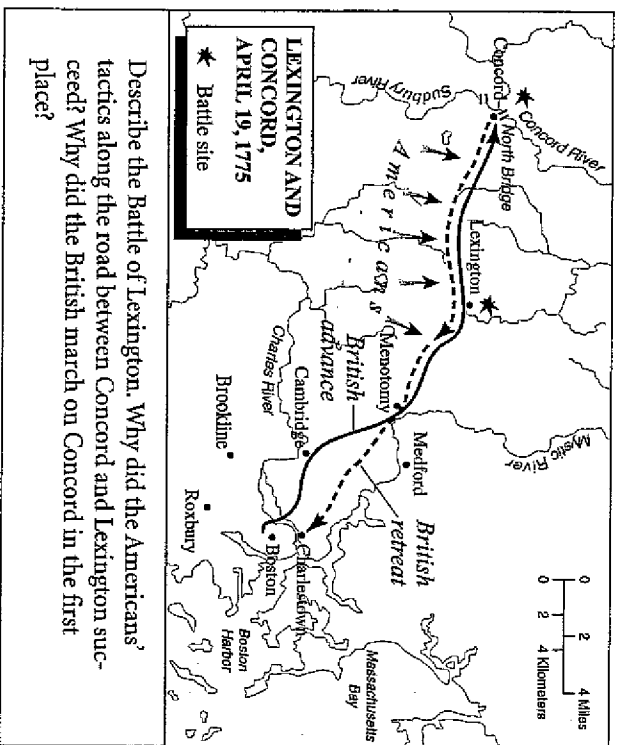
But the colonial militants were in no mood for reconciliation. In March 1775, Virginia's leading rebels met to discuss their options. While most of the Patriots believed that Britain would relent in the face of united colonial resistance, the theatrical Patrick Henry decided that war was imminent. He urged Patriots to prepare for combat. The twenty-nine-year-old Henry, a former farmer and storekeeper turned lawyer who fathered eighteen children, claimed that the colonies "have done everything that could be done to avert the storm which is now coming on," but their efforts had been met only by "violence and insult." Freedom, the defiant Henry shouted, could be bought only with blood. While staring at his reluctant comrades, he refused to predict what they might do for the cause of liberty. If forced to choose, he shouted, "give me liberty"—he paused dramatically, clenched his fist as if it held a dagger, then plunged it into his chest—"or give me death."

### SHIFTING AUTHORITY

As Patrick Henry had predicted, events during 1775 quickly moved beyond conciliation toward conflict. The king and Parliament had lost control of their colonies; they could neither persuade nor coerce them to accept

NEW REGULATIONS AND REVENUE MEASURES. IN DUBIOUS, VENERAL GAGE WARNED HIS British superiors that armed conflict with the Americans would unleash the "horrors of civil war." But British politicians scoffed at the idea of any serious armed resistance. Lord Sandwich, the head of the navy, dismissed the colonists as "raw, undisciplined, cowardly men." Major John Pitcairn agreed, writing home from Boston in 1775, "that one active campaign, a smart action, and burning two or three of their towns, will set everything to rights."

LEXINGTON AND CONCORD Major Pitcairn soon had his chance to suppress the resistance. On April 14, 1775, the British army in Boston received secret orders to stop the "open rebellion" in Massachusetts. General Gage decided to arrest rebel leaders and seize the militia's gunpowder stored at Concord, about twenty miles northwest of Boston. After dark on April 18, some seven hundred redcoats gathered on Boston Common, marched on cobble streets to the Long Wharf, boarded thirteen barges, crossed the Charles River after midnight, and set out west to Lexington, accompanied by American Loyalists who volunteered to guide the troops and "spy" for them. When Patriots got wind of the plan, Boston's Committee of Safety sent Paul Revere and William Dawes by separate routes on their famous ride to warn the rebels. Revere reached Lexington about midnight and alerted rebel





*The Battle of Lexington*

Amos Doolittle's impression of the Battle of Lexington as combat begins.

leaders John Hancock and Sam Adams, who were hiding there. Joined by Dawes and Samuel Prescott, Revere rode on toward Concord. A British patrol intercepted the trio, but Prescott slipped through and delivered the warning.

At dawn on April 19, the British advance guard of 238 redcoats found Captain John Parker, a veteran of the French and Indian War, and about seventy "Minutemen" lined up on the Lexington town square. Parker apparently intended only a silent protest, but Major Pitcairn rode onto the green, swung his sword, and yelled, "Disperse, you damned rebels! You dogs, run!" The greatly outnumbered militiamen had already begun backing away when someone, perhaps an onlooker, fired a shot, whereupon the British soldiers, without orders, loosed a volley into the Minutemen, then charged them with bayonets, leaving eight dead and ten wounded.

The British officers hastily brought their men under control and led them along the road to Concord. There the Americans resolved to stop the British advance. The militant Reverend William Emerson expressed the fiery determination of the Patriots when he told his townsmen: "Let us stand our ground. If we die, let us die here." The Americans inflicted fourteen casualties, and by noon the British had begun a ragged retreat back to Lexington, where they were joined by reinforcements. By then, however, the narrow road back to Boston had turned into a gauntlet of death as hundreds of rebels fired from behind stone walls, trees, barns, and houses. Among the

Americans were Captain Parker and the reassembled Lexington militia, some of them with bandaged wounds from their morning skirmish. By nightfall the redcoat survivors were safely back in Boston, having suffered three times as many casualties as the Americans. A British general reported to London that the Americans had earned his respect: "Whoever looks upon them as an irregular mob will find himself much mistaken."

During the fighting along the road leading to Lexington from Concord, a British soldier was searching a house for rebel snipers when he ran into twenty-five-year-old Patriot James Hayward, a school teacher. The redcoat pointed his musket at the American and said, "Stop, you're a dead man." Hayward raised his weapon and answered, "So are you." They fired simultaneously. The British soldier died instantly, and Hayward succumbed to a head wound eight hours later.

**THE SPREADING CONFLICT** The Revolutionary War had begun. When the Second Continental Congress convened at Philadelphia on May 10, 1775, the British army in Boston was under siege by Massachusetts militia units. On the very day that Congress met, Britain's Fort Ticonderoga, on Lake Champlain near the Canadian border, fell to a Patriot force of "Green Mountain Boys" led by Ethan Allen of Vermont and Massachusetts volunteers under Benedict Arnold. Two days later the Patriots captured a smaller British fort at Crown Point, north of Ticonderoga.

The Continental Congress, with no legal authority and no resources, met amid reports of spreading warfare. On June 15, it unanimously named forty-three-year-old George Washington commander in chief of a Continental army. Washington accepted but refused to be paid. The Congress selected Washington because his service in the French and Indian War had made him one of the most experienced officers in America. That he was from influential Virginia, the wealthiest and most populous province, added to his attractiveness. And, as many people commented then and later, Washington looked like a leader. He was tall and strong, a superb horseman, and a fearless fighter.

On June 17, the very day that Washington was commissioned, Patriots engaged British forces in their first major clash, the inaccurately named Battle of Bunker Hill. On the day before the battle, colonial forces fortified the high ground overlooking Boston. Breed's Hill was the battle location, nearer to Boston than Bunker Hill, the site first chosen (and the source of the battle's erroneous name). The British reinforced their army with troops commanded by three senior generals: William Howe, Sir Henry Clinton, and John Burgoyne.



*View of the Attack on Bunker Hill*

The Battle of Bunker Hill and the burning of Charlestown Peninsula.

The Patriots were spoiling for a fight. As Joseph Warren, a dapper Boston physician, put it, “The British say we won’t fight; by heavens, I hope I shall die up to my knees in blood!” He soon got his wish. With civilians looking on from rooftops and church steeples, the British attacked in the blistering heat, with 2,400 troops moving in tight formation through tall grass. The Americans watched from behind their earthworks as the waves of British troops in their beautiful but impractical uniforms, including bearskin hats, advanced up the hill. The militiamen, mostly farmers, waited until the attackers had come within fifteen to twenty paces, then loosed a shattering volley that devastated the British ranks.

The British re-formed their lines and attacked again. Another sheet of flames and lead greeted them, and the redcoats retreated a second time. Still, despite the appalling slaughter, the proud British generals were determined not to let the ragtag rustics humiliate them. On the third attempt, when the colonials began to run out of gunpowder and were forced to throw stones, a bayonet charge ousted them. The British took the high ground, but at the cost of 1,054 casualties. American losses were about 450 killed or wounded out of a total of 1,500 defenders. “A dear bought victory,” recorded a British

The Battle of Bunker Hill had two profound effects. First, the high number of British casualties made the English generals more cautious in subsequent encounters with the Continental army. Second, the Continental Congress recommended that all able-bodied men enlist in a militia. After the Battle of Bunker Hill, the two armies, American and British, settled in for a nine-month stalemate as the two opposing forces waited on diplomatic efforts.

On July 6 and 8, 1775, the Continental Congress, still eager for a resolution of the conflict with the mother country, issued an appeal to the king known as the Olive Branch Petition, written by Pennsylvanian John Dickinson. It professed continued loyalty to George III and urged the king to seek reconciliation with his aggrieved colonies. When the Olive Branch Petition reached London, George III refused even to look at it. On August 22, he declared the American rebels “open and avowed enemies.”

In July 1775, while the Continental Congress waited for a response to its Olive Branch Petition, authorized an ill-fated offensive against Quebec, in the vain hope of rallying support among the French inhabitants in Canada, Britain’s fourteenth American colony, and also winning the allegiance of the Indian tribes in the region. One Patriot force, under General Richard Montgomery, headed toward Quebec by way of Lake Champlain along the New York–Canadian border; another, under General Benedict Arnold, struggled west through the dense Maine woods. The American units arrived outside Quebec in September, tired, exhausted, and hungry. A silent killer then ambushed them: smallpox. As the deadly virus raced through the American camp, General Montgomery faced a brutal dilemma. Most of his soldiers had signed up for short tours of duty, many of which were scheduled to expire at the end of the year. He could not afford to wait until spring for the smallpox to subside. Seeing little choice but to fight, Montgomery ordered a desperate attack on the British forces at Quebec during a blizzard, on December 31, 1775. The assault was a disaster. Montgomery was killed early in the battle and Benedict Arnold wounded. Over 400 Americans were taken prisoner. The rest of the Patriot force retreated to its camp outside the walled city and appealed to the Continental Congress for reinforcements.

The smallpox virus continued attacking both the Americans in the camp and their comrades taken captive by the British. As fresh troops arrived, they, too, fell victim to the deadly virus. Benedict Arnold warned George Washington in February 1776 that the runaway disease would soon lead to “the entire ruin of the Army.” By May there were only 1,900 American soldiers left outside Quebec, and 900 of them were infected with smallpox. The British,

Patriots on a frantic retreat up the St. Lawrence River to the American-held city of Montreal and eventually back to New York and New England. The sick and wounded soldiers were left behind, but the smallpox virus travelled with the fleeing Americans. Major General Horatio Gates later remarked that "every thing about this Army is infected with the Pestilence; The Clothes, The Blankets, the Air & the Ground they Walk on."

Quebec was the first military setback for the Revolutionaries. It would not be the last. In the South, British forces armed Cherokees and Shawnees and encouraged their raids on white frontier settlements from Virginia to Georgia. As the fighting spread north into Canada and south into Virginia and the Carolinas, the Continental Congress negotiated treaties of peace with Indian tribes, organized a network of post offices headed by Benjamin Franklin, and authorized the formation of a navy and Marine Corps. But the delegates continued to hold back from declaring independence.

**COMMON SENSE** The Revolutionary War was well underway in January 1776 when Thomas Paine, a recent English emigrant to America, provided the Patriot cause with a stirring pamphlet titled *Common Sense*. Until his fifty-page pamphlet appeared, colonial grievances had been mainly directed at the British Parliament; few colonists considered independence an option. Paine, however, directly attacked allegiance to the monarchy, which had remained the last frayed connection to Britain. The "common sense" of the matter, he stressed, was that King George III bore the responsibility for the rebellion. Americans, Paine urged, should consult their own interests, abandon George III, and assert their independence: "The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'TIS TIME TO PART." Only by declaring independence, Paine predicted, could the colonists enlist the support of France and Spain and thereby engender a holy war of monarchy against monarchy.

## INDEPENDENCE

Within three months more than 150,000 copies of Paine's pamphlet were circulating throughout the provinces, an enormous number for the time. "*Common Sense* is working a powerful change in the minds of men," George Washington reported. Meanwhile, in Boston, the prolonged standoff between Patriot and British forces ended in dramatic fashion when a hardy group of American troops led by Colonel Henry Knox captured the strategic British Fort Ticonderoga in upstate New York. Then, through a herculean effort across hundreds of miles of snow-covered, mountainous terrain, they

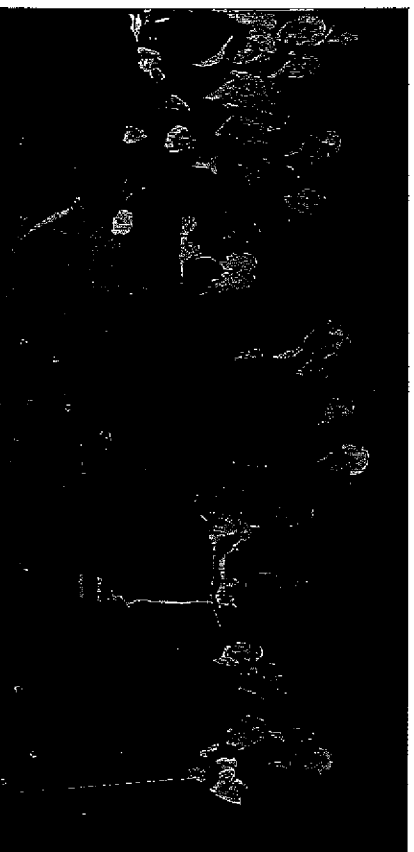
brought back with them to Boston sleds loaded with captured British cannons and ammunition. The added artillery finally gave General Washington the firepower needed to make an audacious move. In early March 1776, Patriot forces, including Native American allies, occupied Dorchester Heights, to the south of the Boston peninsula, and aimed their newly acquired cannons at the besieged British troops and their "Tory" supporters in the city.

In March 1776 the British army in Boston decided to abandon the city. The last British forces, along with 2,000 panicked Loyalists ("Tories"), boarded a fleet of 120 ships and sailed for Canada on March 17, 1776. By the time the British forces fled Boston, they were facing not the suppression of a rebellion but the reconquest of a continent. In May 1776 the Second Continental Congress authorized all thirteen colonies to form themselves into new state governments. Thereafter, one by one, the colonies authorized their delegates in the Continental Congress to take the final step. On June 7, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia moved "that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states." Two weeks later, in South Carolina, a British naval force attacked Charleston. The Patriot militia there had partially finished a fort made of palmetto trees on Sullivan's Island, at the entrance to Charleston harbor. When the British fleet attacked, on June 28, 1776, the spongy palmetto logs absorbed the naval fire, and the American cannons forced the British fleet to retreat. South Carolina would later honor the resilient palmetto tree by putting it on its state flag.

The naval warfare in Charleston gave added momentum to Richard Henry Lee's resolution for independence. The Continental Congress finally

### The coming revolution

The Continental Congress votes for independence, July 2, 1776.



took the audacious step on July 2, a date that "will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America," John Adams wrote to his wife, Abigail. Upon hearing the dramatic news, George Washington declared that the "fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on the courage and conduct of this army." The more memorable date, however, became July 4, 1776, when the Congress formally adopted the Declaration of Independence as the official statement of the American position.

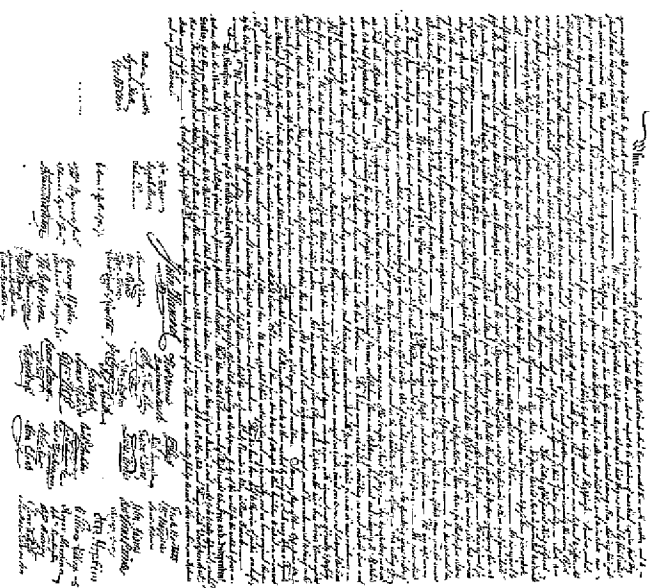
**JEFFERSON'S DECLARATION** In June 1776 the Continental Congress appointed a committee of five men—Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Robert Livingston of New York, and Roger Sherman of Connecticut—to write a public rationale for independence. The group asked Adams and Jefferson to produce a first draft, whereupon Adams deferred to Jefferson

### The Declaration of Independence

The Declaration in its most frequently reproduced form, an 1823 engraving by William J. Stone.

IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,



because of the thirty-three-year-old Virginian's reputation as an eloquent writer.

Jefferson shared his draft with the committee members, and they made several minor revisions before submitting the document to the Congress. The legislators made eighty-six changes in Jefferson's declaration, including the insertion of two references to God and the deletion of a section blaming the English monarch for imposing African slavery on the colonies (delegates from Georgia and South Carolina had protested that the language smacked of abolitionism).

The resulting Declaration of Independence introduced the radical concept that "all men are created equal" in terms of their God-given right to maintain governments of their own choosing. This represented a compelling restatement of John Locke's contract theory of government—the theory, in Jefferson's words, that governments derive "their just Powers from the consent of the people," who are entitled to "alter or abolish" those governments that deny people (white people, in Jefferson's eyes) their "unalienable rights" to "life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." Parliament, which had no proper authority over the colonies, was never mentioned by name. The stated enemy was a king trying to impose "an absolute Tyranny over these States." The "Representatives of the United States of America," therefore, declared the thirteen "United Colonies" to be "Free and Independent States."

General George Washington ordered the Declaration read to every unit in the Continental army. Benjamin Franklin acknowledged how high the stakes were: "Well, Gentlemen," he told the Congress, "we must now hang together, or we shall most assuredly hang separately." The Declaration of Independence converted what had been an armed rebellion—a civil war between British subjects—into a war between Britain and a new nation.

**"WE ALWAYS HAD GOVERNED OURSELVES"** So it had come to this, thirteen years after Britain had defeated France and gained control of North America with the Treaty of Paris in 1763. The Patriots were willing to fight for their freedom against the most formidable military power in the modern world. Joseph Martin, an enthusiastic young Connecticut farmer who joined George Washington's army in 1776, expressed the naïve confidence of many Patriots when he said that "I never spent a thought about [the greater] numbers [of British military resources]. The Americans were invincible in my opinion."

In explaining the causes of the Revolution, historians have highlighted many factors: the excessive British regulation of colonial trade, the restrictions on settling western lands, the growing tax burden, the mounting debts



to British merchants, the lack of American representation in Parliament, the abrupt shift from a mercantile to an "imperial" policy after 1763, class conflict, and revolutionary agitators.

Each of those factors (and others) contributed to the collective grievances that rose to a climax in a gigantic failure of British statesmanship. A conflict between British sovereignty and American rights had come to a point of confrontation that adroit diplomacy might have avoided, sidestepped, or outflanked. The rebellious colonists saw the tightening of British regulations as the conspiracy of a despotic king—to impose an "absolute Tyranny."

Yet colonists sought liberty from British tyranny for many reasons, not all of which were selfless or noble. The Boston merchant John Hancock embraced the Patriot cause in part because he was the region's foremost smuggler. Paying British taxes would have cost him a fortune. Likewise, South Carolina's Henry Laurens and Virginia's Landon Carter, wealthy planters, were concerned about the future of slavery under British control. The seeming contradiction between American slaveholders demanding liberty from British oppression was not lost on observers at the time. The talented writer Phillis Wheatley, the first African American to see her poetry published in America, highlighted the hypocritical "absurdity" of white colonists' demanding their freedom from British tyranny while continuing



*I am very often made your friend  
Phillis Wheatley  
Boston November 1774.*

### Phillis Wheatley

An autographed portrait of Phillis Wheatley, America's first African American poet.

to exercise "oppressive power" over enslaved Africans. Wealthy slave owner George Washington was not devoid of self-interest in his opposition to British policies. An active land speculator, he owned 60,000 acres in the Ohio Country west of the Appalachians and very much resented British efforts to restrict white settlement on the frontier.

Perhaps the last word on the complex causes of the Revolution should belong to an obscure participant, Levi Preston, a Minuteman from Danvers, Massachusetts. Asked sixty-seven years after Lexington and Concord about British oppressions, the ninety-one-year-old veteran responded by asking his young interviewer, "What were they? Oppressions? I didn't feel

them." He was then asked, "What, were you not oppressed by the Stamp Act?" Preston replied that he "never saw one of those stamps . . . I am certain I never paid a penny for one of them." What about the tax on tea? "Tea-tax! I never drank a drop of the stuff; the boys threw it all overboard." His interviewer finally asked why he decided to fight for independence. "Young man," Preston explained, "what we meant in going for those redcoats was this: we always had governed ourselves, and we always meant to. They didn't mean we should."

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

- **Mercantilism** The Navigation Acts decreed that enumerated goods had to go directly to England and discouraged manufacturing in the colonies. Raw materials were shipped to the mother country to be processed into manufactured goods. These mercantilist laws were designed to curb direct trade with other countries, such as the Netherlands, and keep the wealth of the empire in British hands.
- **"Salutary Neglect"** Tax administration by the mother country allowed the colonies a measure of self-government. The dynastic problems of the Stuart kings aided the New England colonists in their efforts to undermine the Dominion of New England. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 resulted in a period of "salutary neglect." The American colonies pursued their interests with minimal intervention from the British government, which was preoccupied with European wars.
- **The French and Indian War** Four European wars affected America between 1689 and 1763 as the British and French confronted each other throughout the world. The Seven Years' War (1754–1763), known as the French and Indian War in the American colonies, was the first world war and was eventually won by the British. A plan to unify all of Britain's American colonies, including those in Canada, proposed by Benjamin Franklin at the Albany Congress, failed to gain colonial support.
- **The Effects of the Seven Years' War** At the Peace of Paris in 1763, France lost all its North American possessions. Britain gained Canada and Florida, while Spain acquired Louisiana. With the war's end, Indians were no longer regarded as essential allies and so had no recourse when settlers squatted on their lands. The Treaty of Paris set the stage for conflict between the mother country and the American colonies as Britain tightened control to pay for the colonies' defense.
- **British Colonial Policy** After the French and Indian War, the British government was saddled with an enormous national debt. To reduce that imperial burden, the British government concluded that the colonies ought to help pay for their own defense. Thus, the ministers of King George III began to implement various acts and impose new taxes.
- **Road to the American Revolution** Colonists based their resistance to the Crown on the idea that taxation without direct colonial representation in Parliament violated their rights. Colonial reaction to the Stamp Act of 1765 was the first intimation of real trouble for imperial authorities. Conflict intensified when the British government imposed additional taxes. Spontaneous resistance led to the Boston Massacre; organized protesters staged the Boston Tea Party. The British response, called the Coercive Acts, sparked further violence. Compromise became less likely, if not impossible.

## CHRONOLOGY

1608	Samuel de Champlain founds Quebec
1660	Restoration of the Stuart monarchy—King Charles II
1673	The French explore the Mississippi River valley from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico
1684	Dominion of New England is established
1688	Glorious Revolution
1754	Albany Congress adopts Plan of Union
1754–1763	French and Indian War
1763	Pontiac's Rebellion
1764	Parliament passes the Revenue (Sugar) Act
1766	Parliament repeals the Stamp Act and passes the Declaratory Act
1767	Parliament levies the Townshend duties
1770	Boston Massacre
1773	Colonists stage the Boston Tea Party
1774	Parliament passes the Coercive Acts; colonists hold First Continental Congress
1775	Battles of Lexington and Concord
1775	Colonists hold Second Continental Congress
1776	Thomas Paine's <i>Common Sense</i> is published; Declaration of Independence is signed

## KEY TERMS & NAMES

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