

The American War of Independence: 1775-81

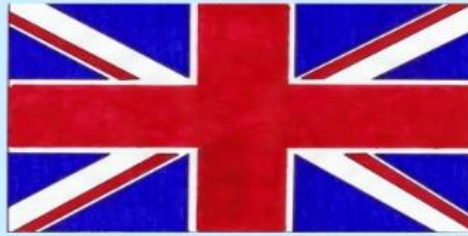


THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION OR WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE



13 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

VS



GREAT BRITAIN



- The **American Revolutionary War** (1775–1783), also referred to as the **American War of Independence** and the **Revolutionary War** in the United States, was an armed conflict between Great Britain and thirteen of its North American colonies that after onset of the war declared independence as the United States of America.



Causes of the American Revolution:



1. The Enlightenment:

- During **the mid-eighteenth century** educated people **in Europe** came up with **new ideas**.
- Ideas such as the idea that **people should rule their own country**.

2. The Question of Taxes:

- **The British sent armies to America to defend the colonists from the attacks of American Indians and French forces in Canada.**
- The forces helped to defeat the American Indians and drove the French out of Canada.
- **Britain believed that the colonists should help to pay for this military support.**
- The British Parliament passed **laws** such as the Stamp Act.
- **Taxes were placed upon American documents such as newspapers and wills.**

• Stamp Act (1765):

-England places a tax on all legal documents: bills of sale, contracts, wills, newspapers, cards.

-Americans are angry with tax: Say the tax is unfair: "No Taxation Without Representation."

-Americans begin to organize and protest the taxes.



3. AMERICAN COLONISTS TAKE ACTION:

- **“No Taxation Without Representation”**

-Colonists very angry over new taxes and laws. Colonists felt that Parliament and the king did not have the right to tax the colonists without colonial representation in Parliament.

How it worked:

5. All taxes and laws are made by the King of England and Parliament.
6. Only people living in England may elect members to Parliament.
7. If Americans cannot elect members to Parliament, then they have no representation there.
8. These Americans say the taxes are unfair and refuse to pay them. They say that they have the same rights as Englishmen and want representation.

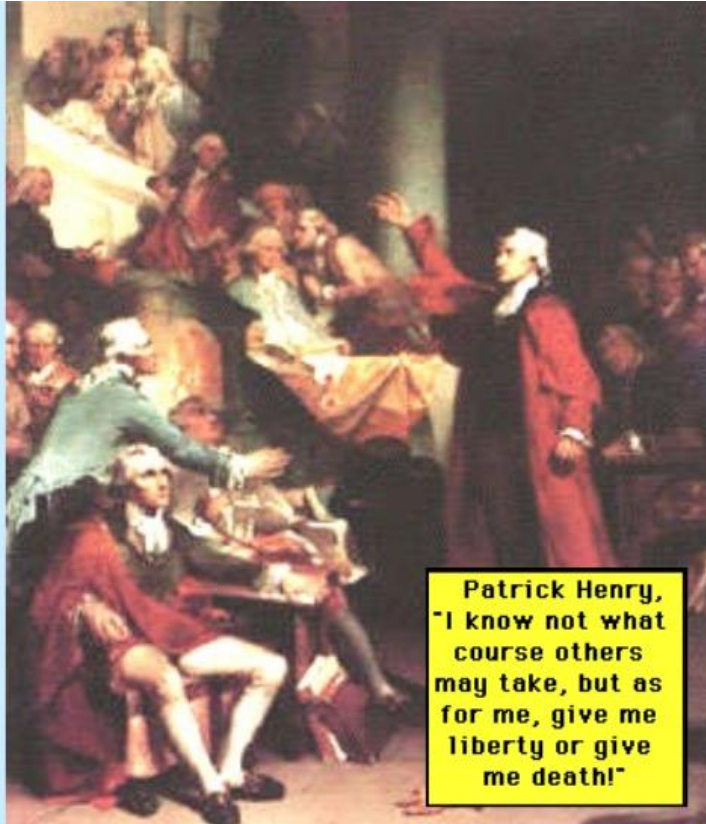


• **Stamp Act Congress**
(1765):

-9 colonies sent delegates to NY to discuss Stamp Act.

-Wrote a petition and sent to British government.

-Stated that Parliament did not have the right to tax colonies, only the colonial assemblies had the right.



Patrick Henry,
"I know not what
course others
may take, but as
for me, give me
liberty or give
me death!"

3. **The Boston Massacre 1770:**

- A group of local people were protesting against taxes in Boston.
- They jeered and threw stones at British soldiers.
- The soldiers opened fire and killed five people.
- Anger spread through the Colonies which forced the British to cancel some of the taxes they had put in place.



- **Tea Act (1773):**

- British Parliament passes law which lowers the price of tea, but still leaves the tax on the tea.

- Colonists see law as a way of hurting American merchants.

- In several cities, the Sons of Liberty did things to protest this law. In Boston, the Sons of Liberty held the **Boston Tea Party**.

7. Boston Tea Party (1773):

- Sons of Liberty, dressed as Mohawk Indians, boarded ships in Boston Harbor. They dumped crates of tea into harbor as a protest against Tea Act.



4. The Boston Tea Party:

- The American colonists wanted to avoid paying tax on tea.
- They often smuggled tea into America.
- Many colonists made a lot of money through smuggling tea.
- In November 1773, English ships arrived at Boston port.
- They carried tea that was taxed but it was still cheap enough to make smuggling unprofitable.
- On December 16th a group of colonists arrived at the port disguised as Indians.
- They dumped the tea into the harbour.



What action did the British government take?



- ❧ The British closed the port and city of Boston.
- ❧ They replaced locally-elected councils with officials in London.

5. The First Continental Congress:

- In 1774, delegates from the thirteen Colonies met in Philadelphia for this important meeting.
- The Congress called for an end to British taxation and for the return of elected councils.
- It asked each Colony to raise an army to fight against the British.

The Battles of Lexington and Concord 1775:



- ↻ The British Parliament and Crown could see that the Americans colonists were moving into a state of rebellion.
- ↻ King George III believed that the colonists were hiding a large amount of weapons in the town of Concord near Boston.
- ↻ He sent his British troops to the town in April 1775 to destroy the ammunition.

- ❧ The colonists were told of the British troops arrival by a number of **spies** such as Paul Revere.
- ❧ A large group of colonists gathered in the town of Lexington as the British soldiers approached.
- ❧ A violent battle emerged between the two sides leaving **many casualties for both sides** in the town of Lexington.
- ❧ The British troops reached **Concord** and **destroyed** what **weapons and ammunition** they could find.
- ❧ The **fighting continued upon the North Bridge** which forced the British troops to retreat back to Boston.
- ❧ By this time, almost **thousands of American colonists had emerged** to engage in the conflict.
- ❧ **This marked the beginning to the War of Independence!**

Timeline:



1. The war began in April 1775 when the American colonists clashed with British troops at Lexington and Concord near Boston.
2. At Bunker Hill near Boston the British defeated the Americans but suffered heavy casualties.
3. The Second Continental Congress meets in May 1775 and appoints George Washington as Commander in Chief of the American army.
4. The Continental Congress meet for the third time on the 4th July 1776 to create the American Declaration of Independence.
5. The British claim victories in New York and Philadelphia but the Americans defeat them at the battle of Saratoga in 1777.
6. The American army spent the winter of 1777-78 in training at Valley Forge. They lived in terrible conditions which meant many died or ran away.

7. After the American victory at Saratoga, France decides to enter the war and join the colonists' side. French intervention was a major reason for an American victory.
8. With the help of the French troops the Americans surrounded the British army at Yorktown in October 1781.
9. The British army were forced to surrender.

The Americans had won their War of Independence!



The American Declaration of Independence - 4th July 1776:



- It declared that the “United States of America” was “free and independent” of Britain.
- It declared equality for all the men of America.
- It declared that an elected president would rule a free United States of America.

George Washington

1732-1799



The United States of America



- ☞ The American colonists decided they should form a single state, the United States of America.
- ☞ The individual states wanted independence too.
- ☞ The Constitution of the United States of America was drawn up in a Congress meeting in Philadelphia.

The Bill of Rights



- œ The Constitution also contains a **Bill of Rights and Amendments** that lay down basic rights that cannot be taken away from a citizen.

- œ **Examples:** The right to free speech, to practise religion, to a fair trial and not to suffer 'cruel and unusual punishments'.

- œ However, **this did not apply originally apply to slaves or women.**

- œ **The American Revolution created the most powerful country in the world.**

- œ The success of the Revolution showed that ordinary people could take control of their own country.

- œ **The American Revolution influenced** other countries:
 - œ The French Revolution 1789
 - œ Revolution in Ireland 1798
 - œ South America during the 1800s

The Importance of the American Revolution



- ☞ In America, the power belonged to the people:
 - ☞ NO ROYAL FAMILY!
 - ☞ NO ARISTOCRATS!

- ☞ During the 19th Century, the USA expanded towards the Pacific Ocean.

- ☞ It bought territory from French, Spanish, Mexicans, British and Russians.

- ☞ It conquered territory from the Mexicans and the Native Americans.

America Now

50 States in America



American Flag



- ❖ 13 horizontal stripes (Red & White together) representing 13 American Colonies
- ❖ 50 Stars represent 50 States of America