



▲ American colonists protest taxes levied by the Stamp Act.

WITNESS HISTORY AUDIO

A Voice for Freedom

In March 1775, the 13 colonies were on the brink of war with England. Delegates from across Virginia met to debate their options. Should they give Britain another chance to resolve the problem peacefully? Or were the colonists ready to fight for their freedom? Then, Patrick Henry urged the Virginia convention to prepare for war in a speech that roused the delegates. Based on recollections of men like Thomas Jefferson, Henry's biographer, William Wirt, included the text of the speech that is attributed to Patrick Henry.

“Gentlemen may cry peace, peace—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! . . . Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? . . . Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? . . . I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!”

—Patrick Henry, March 23, 1775

The American Revolution

Objectives

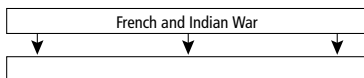
- Describe the European colonial presence in North America.
- Trace the development of democratic ideals in Europe and America.
- Identify the causes of the American Revolution.
- Discuss the results of the American Revolution.

Terms and People

House of Burgesses	Enlightenment
Mayflower Compact	Great Awakening
Magna Carta	Thomas Jefferson
English Bill of Rights	George Washington

NoteTaking

Reading Skill: Recognize Sequence Note the sequence of events that led to the American Revolution by making a series-of-events chain.



Why It Matters European nations explored the Americas and began establishing colonies. England established 13 colonies along the mid-Atlantic coast of North America. Eventually, these colonies would declare their independence from England and become a new nation: the United States of America. **Section Focus Question:** What important ideas and major events led to the American Revolution?

European Colonies in the Americas

Wealth flowed into Spain from its colonies in Mexico, Central America, and South America. Population was thin and life harder in the borderland regions in the present-day Southwest and Florida. In an effort to encourage settlement and protect these outposts, Spain established presidios, or forts. Priests and nuns established dozens of missions to convert Native Americans to Christianity.

The French established colonies in Canada along the coast of Nova Scotia and the St. Lawrence River. Besides exploiting rich fishing off the coast, they found a fortune in furs. American Indians were eager to exchange beaver pelts for European-made metal axes, knives, and kettles. During the 1690s, the French founded Louisiana, along the Mississippi River valley and the Gulf Coast.

England Establishes Colonies in Virginia In 1607, the English established their first enduring settlement, Jamestown, in Virginia.

ROOTS of DEMOCRACY

Although the United States is more than 200 years old, the ideas of democracy and representative government are far older. The roots of democracy reach back to civilizations in southwest Asia and Europe.



JUDEO-CHRISTIAN ROOTS ▲

The values found in the Bible, including the Ten Commandments and the teachings of Jesus, inspired American ideas about government and morality.



THE ENLIGHTENMENT ▲

Two Enlightenment philosophers who influenced American ideas about government were John Locke and Baron de Montesquieu. Locke stated that all people have natural rights and that if a monarch violates those rights, then the people have the right to overthrow the monarch. Montesquieu declared that the powers of government should be clearly defined and limited.



ENGLISH PARLIAMENTARY TRADITIONS ▼

Two key English documents inspired Americans. The Magna Carta (1215) and the English Bill of Rights (1689) guaranteed certain rights to citizens, including the right to trial by jury. The ideas of a two-house lawmaking body and voting rights also influenced Americans.



GRECO-ROMAN ROOTS ▼

Ancient Greek democracy and Roman republicanism have influenced American government.



Thinking Critically

- 1. Draw Conclusions** How does government in the United States reflect English Parliamentary traditions?
- 2. Make Inferences** How might John Locke's ideas about natural rights lead to revolution?

History Interactive*

For: More about the roots of democracy
Web Code: ncp-0114


Despite enormous losses to disease, to starvation, and to war with the Indians, the English expanded around the Chesapeake Bay. The colonists prospered by raising tobacco for export. Claiming the political rights of Englishmen, the Virginia planters elected a legislature, known as the **House of Burgesses**. It governed the colony in partnership with a royal governor appointed by the king of England.

New England Colonies To the north, the English established more colonies, which they called New England. The first colonists were devout Protestants called “Puritans,” who hoped to create model moral communities. They settled first in 1620 at Plymouth, where they adopted the **Mayflower Compact**, which provided a framework for self-government. By 1700, New England had four colonies: Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Hampshire.

Adapting to the cold climate and short growing season, the New Englanders supplemented farming with lumber harvested from the forests and fish taken from the seas. By building ships, they were able to trade with the other colonies and with Europe.

Middle and Southern Colonies The English developed a third cluster of colonies between Maryland and New England. They conquered Dutch New Netherland and renamed it New York, then added New Jersey and Pennsylvania, a haven for Quaker immigrants. The Middle Colonies offered religious toleration and a prospering economy based on exporting wheat.

South of Virginia, the English developed a fourth cluster of colonies. The Southern Colonies consisted of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. The colonists raised rice on coastal plantations and cattle on farms in the backcountry. The plantations relied on the labor of enslaved Africans.

 **Checkpoint** What were the major economic activities of the English colonies in America?

North America, 1753



Colonial America

Three European nations controlled vast amounts of territory in North America in the mid-eighteenth century. *Which nation controlled territory that bordered the Pacific Ocean?*

Democratic Ideals in the American Colonies

The English colonists brought ideas about democracy and republican government with them to America. Some of these ideas were from Southwest Asia while others came from Europe.

English Traditions As English citizens, the colonists believed that they were entitled to the same rights as English citizens in England. Many of these rights were contained in two important documents: the Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights. The **Magna Carta**, signed by King John in 1215, limited the power of the English monarch. It protected the right of people to own private property and guaranteed the right to trial by jury. The **English Bill of Rights**, signed by King William and Queen Mary in 1688, was a written list of freedoms that the government promised to protect. The English Bill of Rights required Parliament, England's lawmaking body, to meet regularly. It also stated that the monarch could not raise taxes or build an army without Parliament's consent.

The Enlightenment and the Great Awakening During the 1700s, ideas based on the **Enlightenment** circulated among well-educated American colonists. The Enlightenment was a European intellectual movement. Enlightenment philosophers believed that all problems could be solved by human reason. Frenchman Baron de Montesquieu and Englishman John Locke were two thinkers who applied reason to government and politics.

Vocabulary Builder

philosophy—(fih LAHS uh fee) *n.* theory or logical analysis of the fundamental principles of human conduct, thought, knowledge, and the nature of the universe

Enlightenment philosophy affected religious beliefs in the colonies. Colonists who admired these ideas wanted a religion that was less emotional and more rational. At the same time, attendance at worship services was in decline.

During the 1740s, concern about these trends led to a religious movement called the **Great Awakening**. Evangelical preachers such as Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield toured the colonies promoting revivals where people felt a direct and transforming contact with an overwhelming Holy Spirit. The Great Awakening led to the birth of new churches. This eventually increased tolerance of religious differences. Many colonists also came to believe that if they could decide how to worship God, they could also decide how to govern themselves.

The Enlightenment and the Great Awakening would later combine to influence the American Revolution. The Enlightenment informed the writings of the political leaders, while the Great Awakening inspired the common people.



Checkpoint Which democratic ideas were expressed by Enlightenment thinkers?

Causes of the American Revolution

The tradition of a limited English monarchy, experience with self-government, and exposure to Enlightenment ideas were important ideas in the minds of leading American colonists. A war and a spirit of independence in the colonies prompted Americans to action that would change the course of world history.

Between 1689 and 1763, the British and French fought a series of wars in Europe. These conflicts spread to America and involved the French and English colonists and their Native American allies.

The last of these wars, called the French and Indian War, erupted in 1754 and ended in 1763 with a British victory. The peace treaty gave Canada, Florida, and a portion of French Louisiana to Britain. British colonists were eager to move into Louisiana, but Britain wished to keep peace with the Indians who lived on this territory. British limits on westward expansion angered the colonists.

Taxes and Traditional Rights The British victory was expensive, nearly doubling Britain's national debt. During the 1760s, the British Parliament asserted that the colonists should pay new taxes to help the empire. The proposed taxes and tighter trade regulations shocked the colonists. Valuing the prosperity and protection of the empire, they did not immediately seek independence. Instead, they wanted to remain part of the empire that had for so long produced so many benefits at so little cost to them.

In resisting the taxes, colonists cited the traditional rights of Englishmen. They cited the Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights, which blocked the king from levying taxes without the permission of Parliament. During the 1760s, their problem was with Parliament, rather than with King George III. Professing loyalty to the king, the colonists hoped to be free from Parliament's efforts to tax them. They would pay taxes levied only by their own elected assemblies in the colonies.

Colonial Resistance To pressure Parliament, colonists boycotted British goods. Local committees enforced this boycott, which threatened the British economy. Angry crowds harassed colonists who helped to collect the new taxes. Colonists who refused to honor the boycotts or who spoke out in favor of the taxes were considered Loyalists. Representing a large minority, the Loyalists preferred to pay the taxes and honor Parliament and the king. They also feared that the resistance would lead to a war that Britain seemed certain to win.



Checkpoint Why did many American colonists object to paying taxes imposed by Parliament?

Vocabulary Builder

assert—(uh SERT) *v.* to state positively; declare; affirm

The American Revolution

Geography Interactive

For: Interactive map
Web Code: ncp-0105



- Original 13 colonies
- Other British territories
- American victory
- British victory



Conflict With Great Britain

The American colonists opposed “taxation without representation”—or taxes levied by a Parliament to which the colonists had elected no representatives. Patriot leaders staged boycotts and anti-British propaganda campaigns in order to win support for independence.

Map Skills The American Revolution was fought in battles along the east coast of North America and along the Mississippi River in the West. This map shows the war’s major battles in the fight for American independence from Great Britain.

1. Locate: (a) Saratoga, (b) Brandywine, (c) Yorktown

2. Place Which battles were fought along the Mississippi River?

3. Synthesize Information Based on the dates that appear on the map, in which region were the earlier battles fought? In which region were the later battles fought?

Roots of the American Revolution

1763 French and Indian War ends with a British victory. King George III signs the Proclamation of 1763, ending colonial expansion west of the Appalachian Mountains.

1764 To pay off war debt, Parliament passes the Sugar Act, imposing duties on imported sugar and other goods that colonists import from England.

1765 Stamp Act is passed by Parliament, directly taxing all legal documents, almanacs, and other items in the colonies. Colonists form the Sons of Liberty and the Daughters of Liberty to organize protests. One year later, the Stamp Act is repealed.

1767 Parliament passes the Townshend Acts, taxing a number of items the colonies import. Colonists boycott British goods.

1770 Boston Massacre results in death of five colonists. Townshend Acts are repealed.

1773 Protesting the tax on tea, colonists stage the Boston Tea Party, dumping crates of British tea into Boston Harbor.

1774 Parliament passes the Intolerable Acts, imposing harsh measures on the colonies. The First Continental Congress meets.

1775 First shots of the American Revolution are fired at Lexington and Concord.

The War for Independence

In 1774, leading colonists held a convention, called the First Continental Congress. Delegates appealed to the British government to stop taxing the colonies. The British government refused.

Americans Declare Their Independence In 1775, war began when British troops tried to seize arms and ammunition stored at Concord, Massachusetts. The New Englanders quickly organized an army, which the Continental Congress adopted as the army for all the colonies.


In 1776, Congress adopted a Declaration of Independence drafted by **Thomas Jefferson** of Virginia. This declared American independence and expressed Enlightenment philosopher John Locke's ideas about the natural rights of people. The Declaration stated that certain truths were "self-evident."

Primary Source

"That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. . . ."

—Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776

The War Is Fought During the war, the British made many military mistakes because they underestimated the Patriots, who were highly motivated and benefited from the leadership of **George Washington**. Beginning in 1778, the Patriots also received military assistance from France. In 1781, a French fleet trapped the British army at Yorktown in Virginia, where Washington's army completed the victory. The treaty of Paris, signed in 1783, gave the new nation very favorable boundaries: Florida on the south; the Great Lakes to the north; and the Mississippi River to the west. The British retreated to Canada, and the Spanish claimed Florida and everything west of the Mississippi.

 **Checkpoint** What risks did declaring independence pose for the colonists?



Minuteman

This sculpture reminds Americans of the sacrifices made by minutemen, members of the Patriot militia who were ready to fight for freedom at a moment's notice.

SECTION

2 Assessment

Progress Monitoring Online

For: Self-test with vocabulary practice
Web Code: nea-0106

Comprehension

1. Terms and People For each term and person below, write a sentence explaining how each contributed to the development of U.S. democracy or to the Revolution.

- House of Burgesses
- Mayflower Compact
- Enlightenment
- Great Awakening
- Magna Carta
- English Bill of Rights
- Thomas Jefferson
- George Washington

2. NoteTaking Reading Skill:

Recognize Sequence Use your series-of-events chain to answer the Section Focus Question: What important ideas and major events led to the American Revolution?

Writing About History

3. Quick Write: Identify Effects

Make a list of one or two effects of each of the following events: the French and Indian War, the British decision to tax the colonists, the colonial boycott of British goods, and the American Revolution.

Critical Thinking

4. Make Inferences What Enlightenment values are reflected in the Declaration of Independence?

5. Draw Conclusions What effects did the Great Awakening have on American thought?

6. Analyze Information How did the peace treaty that marked the end of the American Revolution change the boundaries of the United States? Which countries controlled territory on the borders of the new nation?