

## A timeline of the American Revolution from 1763 - 1787

From the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1763 to the Constitutional Convention in 1787

### 1763

#### **10 February: Signing of the Treaty of Paris**

Ending the Seven Year's War, also known as the French and Indian War in North America. France ceded all mainland North American territories, except New Orleans, in order to retain her Caribbean sugar islands. Britain gained all territory east of the Mississippi River; Spain kept territory west of the Mississippi, but exchanged East and West Florida for Cuba.

#### **7 October: Proclamation of 1763**

Wary of the cost of defending the colonies, George III prohibited all settlement west of the Appalachian Mountains without guarantees of security from local Native American nations. The intervention in colonial affairs offended the thirteen colonies' claim to the exclusive right to govern lands to their west.

### 1764

#### **5 April: Sugar Act**

The first attempt to finance the defence of the colonies by the British Government. In order to deter smuggling and to encourage the production of British rum, taxes on molasses were dropped; a levy was placed on foreign Madeira wine and colonial exports of iron, lumber and other goods had to pass first through Britain and British customs. The Act established a Vice-Admiralty Court in Halifax, Nova Scotia to hear smuggling cases without jury and with the presumption of guilt. These measures led to widespread protest.

### 1765

#### **22 March: Stamp Act**

Seeking to defray some of the costs of garrisoning the colonies, Parliament required all legal documents, newspapers and pamphlets required to use watermarked or 'stamped' paper on which a levy was placed.

#### **15 May: Quartering Act**

Colonial assemblies required to pay for supplies to British garrisons. The New York assembly argued that it could not be forced to comply.

#### **30 May: Virginian Resolution**

The Virginian assembly refused to comply with the Stamp Act.

#### **7-25 October: Stamp Act Congress**

Representatives from nine of the thirteen colonies declare the Stamp Act unconstitutional as it was a tax levied without their consent.

### 1766

## **18 March: Declaratory Act**

Parliament finalizes the repeal of the Stamp Act, but declares that it has the right to tax colonies.

## **1767**

### **29 June: Townshend Revenue Act (Townshend Duties)**

Duties on tea, glass, lead, paper and paint to help pay for the administration of the colonies, named after Charles Townshend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. John Dickinson publishes Letter from a Philadelphian Farmer in protest. Colonial assemblies condemn taxation without representation.

## **1768**

**1 October: British troops arrive in Boston in response to political unrest.**

## **1770**

### **5 March: Boston Massacre**

Angered by the presence of troops and Britain's colonial policy, a crowd began harassing a group of soldiers guarding the customs house; a soldier was knocked down by a snowball and discharged his musket, sparking a volley into the crowd which kills five civilians.

**12 April: Repeal of the Townshend Revenue Act.**

## **1772**

### **10 June: Burning of the Gaspee**

The revenue schooner Gaspee ran aground near Providence, Rhode Island and was burnt by locals angered by the enforcement of trade legislation.

## **1773**

### **July: Publication of Thomas Hutchinson letters**

In these letters, Hutchinson, the Massachusetts governor, advocated a 'great restraint of natural liberty', convincing many colonists of a planned British clamp-down on their freedoms.

### **10 May: Tea Act**

In an effort to support the ailing East India Company, Parliament exempted its tea from import duties and allowed the Company to sell its tea directly to the colonies. Americans resented what they saw as an indirect tax subsidising a British company.

### **16 December: Boston Tea Party**

Angered by the Tea Acts, American patriots disguised as Mohawk Indians dump £9,000 of East India Company tea into the Boston harbour.

## **1774**

### **May to June: Intolerable Acts**

Four measures which stripped Massachusetts of self-government and judicial independence following the Boston Tea Party. The colonies responded with a general boycott of British goods.

## **September: Continental Congress**

Colonial delegates meet to organise opposition to the Intolerable Acts.

## **1775**

### **19 April: Battles of Lexington and Concord**

First engagements of the Revolutionary War between British troops and the Minutemen, who had been warned of the attack by Paul Revere.

### **16 June: Continental Congress appoints George Washington commander-in-chief of Continental Army**

Issued \$2 million bills of credit to fund the army.

### **17 June: Battle of Bunker Hill**

The first major battle of the War of Independence. Sir William Howe dislodged William Prescott's forces overlooking Boston at a cost of 1054 British casualties to the Americans' 367.

### **5 July: Olive Branch Petition**

Congress endorses a proposal asking for recognition of American rights, the ending of the Intolerable Acts in exchange for a cease fire. George III rejected the proposal and on 23 August 1775 declared the colonies to be in open rebellion.

## **1775-1776**

**Winter: Invasion of Canada by Benedict Arnold.**

## **1776**

**9 January: Thomas Paine's Common Sense published anonymously in Philadelphia.**

**2 May: France provides covert aid to the Americans.**

**4 July: Continental Congress issues the Declaration of Independence.**

**August - December:**

### **Battles of Long Island and White Plains**

British forces occupy New York after American defeats.

**26 December: Battle of Trenton, New Jersey, providing a boost to American morale.**

## **1777**

### **2-3 January: Battle of Princeton, New Jersey**

General Washington broke camp at Trenton to avoid a British advance, attacking the British rearguard and train near Princeton and then withdrawing to Morristown.

**13 October: British surrender of 5,700 troops at Saratoga**

Lacking supplies, 5,700 British, German and loyalist forces under Major General John Burgoyne surrender to Major General Horatio Gates in a turning point in the Revolutionary War.

**1778**

**6 February: France recognizes US Independence.**

**1780**

**16 August: US Defeat at battle of Camden.**

**1781**

**1 March: Ratification of the Articles of Confederation.**

**5 September: Battle of the Clouds, denying British reinforcements or evacuation.**

**18 October: Surrender of British forces under Cornwallis at Yorktown.**

**1782**

**5 March: British Government authorises peace negotiations.**

**1783**

**3 September: Treaty of Paris, formally ending the Revolutionary War.**

**1786-1787**

**Shays's Rebellion**

Massachusetts rebellion led by the Revolutionary War veteran Daniel Shays against high taxes.

**1787**

**25 May: Constitutional Convention**

Adoption of the American Constitution.

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