


# Chapter 8: America Secedes from the Empire (1775—1783)

## Congress Drafts George Washington

Recall	Notes
Why was George Washington selected as the army leader?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Second Continental Congress</b> selects George Washington to lead the improvised army in Boston<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• outstanding leadership and immense strength of character</li><li>• the people looked to him as a symbol and a rallying point</li></ul></li><li>• large New England army around Boston</li></ul>

 **The Second Continental Congress, this time with delegates from all 13 colonies, selected George Washington to lead the colonial army. They recognized his charm and ability to rally soldiers and placed him at the head of the army as the war began.**

## Bunker Hill and Hessian Hirelings

Recall	Notes
How were Americans split on the idea of independence?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• some Americans were remaining loyal to the king while others were picking up guns and shooting British soldiers<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• April 1775 to July 1776</li></ul></li><li>• May 1775 an American force under Ethan Allen captured British garrisons at Ticonderoga and Crown Point, taking priceless gunpowder and artillery for the siege of Boston</li></ul>
What lead up to the British victory at Bunker Hill?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• June 1775 the colonists seized Bunker Hill<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the British chose to launch a frontal attack instead of flanking the enemy</li><li>• 1500 entrenched Americans mowed down rows of redcoats</li><li>• Americans ran out of gunpowder and had to retreat in disorder</li></ul></li></ul>
How did the colonists try to negotiate for peace as war was breaking out?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• July 1775, the (second) Continental Congress adopted the <b>Olive Branch Petition</b>, begging the king to prevent further hostilities<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• after King George III saw what happened at Bunker Hill, he cut off all hope of fixing the colonies</li></ul></li></ul>
How did the king react?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• August 1775 King George III declared the colonies in rebellion and hangable on the offense of treason</li></ul>
Who were the <b>Hessians</b> ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• hired 6,000 German troops from Hesse<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Americans nicknamed them the <b>Hessians</b></li><li>• Hessians only wanted money and not service<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Hessian flies"</li></ul></li></ul></li><li>• deserted battle and remained in America as citizens</li></ul>



In 1775, the not-yet-Americans were still split on independence. On one hand, the Second Continental Congress was busy drafting the Olive Branch Petition, begging the king to stop fighting, while on the other hand, militiamen were picking up guns and shooting down redcoats at the Battle of Bunker Hill. When King George III saw the results of Bunker Hill, he declared treason on the colonies and hired 6,000 German troops to come fight for them.

## The Abortive Conquest of Canada

Recall	Notes
Why were the colonists looking to capture Canada?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>October 1775, the British burned Falmouth (Portland), Maine</li><li>rebels launched an invasion of Canada, hoping to add a fourteenth colony and cut off some British access to resources<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>contradicted the claim that the colonists were just fighting in defense</li><li>General Richard Montgomery, formerly of the British army, captured Montreal</li><li>General Benedict Arnold and his men marched through the Maine woods to Quebec, where the two joined</li></ul></li><li>an assault was launched on Quebec on the last day of 1775<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Montgomery was killed</li><li>Arnold wounded in one leg</li></ul></li></ul>
What led up to the declaration of war?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>January 1776 the British set fire to the Virginia town of Norfolk</li><li>March 1776 the British were forced to evacuate Boston</li><li>in the South, rebels won two victories against 1500 Loyalists at Moore's Creek Bridge in North Carolina and the British fleet at Charleston harbor</li></ul>



In 1775 and 1776, the British started burning down cities like Norfolk, Virginia and Falmouth, Maine. Rebels tried to take Canada in hopes of adding another colony to their war, but were scattered off by the French.

## Thomas Paine Preaches Common Sense

Recall	Notes
Why were the majority of Americans against independence?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>most Americans were still denying intention of independence<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>loyalty to the empire was deeply ingrained</li><li>considered Britain their mother country</li><li>rebels were hanged, drawn, and quartered</li></ul></li></ul>
Who starts to push the idea of American freedom?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1776 Thomas Paine publishes <b>Common Sense</b>, a pamphlet calling out Britain's mistakes and how it should've been seen as "common sense"<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>"their just powers from the consent of the governed"</li><li>why should Britain, an island, control America, this vast open land?</li></ul></li><li>without independence, the colonies would never properly reconcile with Britain</li></ul>



Thomas Paine came from England to the colonies and published a pamphlet called *Common Sense*, detailing how obvious Britain's mistakes were and that America would've flourished just the same if they weren't under Britain's rule. At the time when most Americans were still neutral or against the idea of independence, Paine helped sway more colonists to his side for freedom.

## Paine and the Idea of "Republicanism"

### Recall

Why were New Englanders generally more supportive of independence than everyone else?

### Notes

- Paine wanted to create a "republic"
- a republican government was first introduced by Greeks and Romans
  - it was revived in the Renaissance and had been used by British politicians who were critical of the king and his advisers
- New Englanders had already practiced a republic-like democracy in their town meetings and elections
- most Americans consider citizen "virtue" fundamental to a successful republican government
  - individuals needed to sacrifice self-interest to the public good
- some conservative republicans feared that liberty would overwhelm the social order, so they wanted to keep a loose hierarchy of the classes
  - didn't like how poor farmers, tenants, and laboring classes benefited from this



Paine had the idea of creating a new American government as a republic. New Englanders, who had already started their own self-government, generally supported Paine's idea of independence.

## Jefferson's "Explanation" of Independence

### Recall

When was the Declaration of Independence officially approved?

What role did the phrase "all men are created equal" play in the declaration?

### Notes

- June 7, 1776, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia moved that "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states."
  - adopted on July 2, 1776
- the passing of Lee's resolution was the formal "declaration" of independence
- Thomas Jefferson was appointed to prepare a formal statement of separation
  - the **Declaration of Independence** was formally approved by Congress on July 4, 1776
    - referred to as the "shout heard round the world" and inspired many other revolutions
  - Jefferson was making "the world's greatest editorial"
  - he owned many slaves so the sentence "all men are created equal" haunted him and his citizens for generations
  - Lafayette hung a copy on his wall and later a French **Declaration of the Rights of Man** would be born



On June 7, 1776, Richard Henry Lee moved to formally separate from England. After a month's worth of debate, it was adopted on July 2. Two days later, Congress formally approved the Declaration of Independence and sent it to England.

# Patriots and Loyalists

## Recall

Who were the **Loyalists** and who were the **Separatists**?

How was the Revolution treated by colonists?

Who tended to be Loyalist?

Why was there lack of Loyalists in New England?

## Notes

- **Loyalists**, who were still loyal to the British king, fought **Patriots**, who wanted independence
- rebels still fought redcoats
- Loyalists were called "Tories", after the dominant political faction in Britain
- Patriots were called "Whigs", after the opposing faction in Britain
- *"A Tory is a thing whose head is in England, and its body in America, and its neck ought to be stretched."*
- the American Revolution was a minority movement
  - many colonists didn't care
  - opposing forces contended for allegiance and support of the civilians
- 16% of the population were Loyalists
  - many people of wealth, education, culture, and caution
  - mostly older generation people
- *"Give me liberty or give me death!"*
- Loyalists also included the king's subjects, members of the Anglican Church, parts of aristocratic New York City, Charleston, and Quaker Pennsylvania
- Loyalists were least numerous in New England, where self-government was already strong and respected



Even when the war broke out, many Americans still didn't care. Loyalists, who made up 16% of the population, stayed with the king. They were mostly older people who were educated and wealthy. Patriots fought for independence and popularized the cry of "give me liberty or give me death!"

# The Loyalist Exodus

## Recall

How were Loyalists treated in America?

What role did Loyalists play in the war?

## Notes

- before the Declaration of Independence in 1776, Loyalists were only mildly persecuted
  - tarred and feathered, banished from town
- after the Declaration, Loyalists were treated harsher
  - imprisoned, some hanged,
- 80,000 supporters of George III were driven out, but several thousand mild Loyalists were allowed to stay
- Loyalists had their property confiscated and then sold to help fund the war against Britain
- 50,000 Loyalist volunteers fought in the colonists for the British

- served as spies, kept Patriots home, inciting Indians



**Loyalists were not very welcome among those who were desperate for freedom. Before war broke out, they were treated pretty badly, but after the war started, Loyalists were imprisoned and hanged for supporting the king.**

## General Washington at Bay

### Recall

Why did the British choose to settle in New York City?

How did Washington lead his army to a small victory after defeat at the **Battle of Long Island**?

### Notes

- British focused on New York as a base of operations
  - British fleet appeared in July 1776
    - 500 ships, 35,000 men
- George Washington only had 18,000 ill-trained troops
- outgeneraled and outnumbered, Washington's troops were quickly overwhelmed at the **Battle of Long Island** and they had to retreat to Manhattan Island
  - crossed Hudson River to New Jersey, then Delaware River
- Washington re-crosses Delaware River again on December 26, 1776 and surprised and captured a thousand Hessians who were sleeping for Christmas celebration
- a week later, Washington defeats a smaller British army at Princeton



**The British choose New York City as their target and bring in a fleet of 500 ships with 35,000 soldiers. They quickly overrun Washington's army and light the city on fire. Washington crosses the Delaware River to escape but re-crosses it a few nights later to capture an army of Hessians. Although the victory was small, it helped boost the morale of Washington's army.**

## Burgoyne's Blundering Invasion

### Recall

How did England plan to start the war?

Who were the generals involved?

How did Burgoyne struggle to move South from Canada?

What happened to Howe in Philadelphia?

### Notes

- London officials created a plan to take the Hudson River valley, which would cut off the New England colonies from the rest of the colonies
  - General John "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne would push down Lake Champlain from Canada
  - General Howe would lead his troops up the Hudson to meet Burgoyne in Albany
  - Colonel Barry St. Leger would lead his troops from the west by Lake Ontario and Mohawk Valley
- General Burgoyne started his invasion with 7,000 troops
  - encumbered by heavy baggage and the wives of his officers
  - axe-men had to chop paths through the forest
- General Howe went to attack Philadelphia instead of joining up with Burgoyne
- General Washington sent his troops to Philadelphia, where they were defeated in two battles, one at Brandywine Creek and another at Germantown
- General Howe settled in Philadelphia and left Burgoyne by himself in the woods

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benjamin Franklin said that, "Howe had not captured Philadelphia but that Philadelphia had captured Howe."</li> <li>General Washington retreated to Forge Valley <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>army whipped into shape by Prussian drillmaster Baron von Steuben</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
What happened to Washington's army after retreating to Valley Forge?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Burgoyne was trapped by American militiamen and General Arnold was shot in the leg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burgoyne surrendered his entire command at <b>Saratoga</b> on October 17, 1777</li> <li>made it clear to France that the colonies needed foreign aid</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
What did the surrender of Burgoyne's army at <b>Saratoga</b> mean?	



England planned to send their army through the Hudson River valley, cutting off the New England colonies from the rest of America. General Burgoyne, who was in charge of marching South from Canada, encountered dense forest which made it hard for his army to cross through. General Howe decided to attack Philadelphia instead of meeting up with Burgoyne, and then decided to stay there. After Burgoyne's army finally got through their forest, they were forced to surrender at Saratoga as they didn't have enough troops to win the following battle.

## Revolution in Diplomacy?

### Recall

What was France's motive to participate in the war?

What did Americans want out of the war?

How did Benjamin Franklin approach the French?

What did England offer America while they were negotiating with France?

### Notes

- France wanted to get revenge on Britain
- Americans had revolutionary ideas about international affairs
  - free trade, an end to mercantilism and colonialism
- when the Continental Congress drafted the **Model Treaty**, they noted that there was to be no political or military connection between American and France, only commercial
- when Benjamin Franklin arrived in Paris to discuss a treaty with France, he decided his appearance should represent the diplomatic approach the Americans were trying to achieve
  - no ceremonial sword, just a walking stick
  - no fancy white wig, just a plain fur cap
  - the royal court was shocked but the spectators loved it
- after defeat at Saratoga, Parliament offered Americans home rule within the empire
  - that was what they had been asking for, minus the independence
- Franklin played onto the fears of Anglo-American reconciliation
- with the agreement to France's treaty, both parties were now officially involved in war until the United States had its freedom and they both came to terms with Britain



After defeat in the Seven Years' War, France wanted to get revenge on Britain. They allied themselves with the Americans to help them win the war. At the time, Americans wanted to negotiate over mercantilism and stated that they only wanted a commercial connection with France after the war was over. England, witnessing the defeat at Saratoga, offered America everything they wanted except absolute independence.



## The Colonial War Becomes a Wider War

### Recall

What other countries entered the Revolutionary War?

What were attitudes towards Britain like?

How did the French help Americans win the war?

### Notes

- France officially declared war against Britain in 1778
  - Spain and Holland followed in 1779
- Catherine the Great of Russia lead the **Armed Neutrality** act, which put all remaining neutrals in Europe at a passive hostility towards Britain for controlling the seas so hard
- saying that America won its own war is incorrect
  - they kept it up until 1778 with French aid
  - but the global war involving other European countries was too big for Britain to handle
- French entering the war changed strategy in America
  - French warships stopped British ships from blockading colonial coast and commanding the seas
    - British evacuated Philadelphia and strengthened New York City
- June 1778 retreating British were attacked by General Washington at Monmouth, New Jersey
  - men retreated back the New York, but about of the third of the Hessians deserted
  - Washington remained in the New York area from thereafter



**In Europe, England wasn't very well liked at the time so other countries joined the conflict between them and America. With the help of French aid, American kept up the war until 1778 until conflicts with other countries became too hard for England to handle.**

## Blow and Counterblow

### Recall

What were tensions like between the Americans and the French?

What happened to General Arnold?


How did the British plan to take over the colonies?

### Notes

- summer 1780, French army of 6,000 commanded by Comte de Rochambeau arrived in Newport, Rhode Island
  - dancing parties and French gold and goodwill were enough to melt previous tensions between the French and the colonists
  - British prepared for a Franco-American attack on New York
- American morale lowered when General Arnold turned traitorous
  - plotted to sell the Hudson River stronghold for 6,300
    - detected in the nick of time
    - Arnold fled to the British
- British devised a plan to roll up the colonies starting with the South, where Loyalist support was strong
  - Georgia was overrun in 1778—1779
  - Charleston, South Carolina fell in 1780
- Patriots now fought their Loyalist neighbors
- tide turned in favor of Americans after 1781, when American riflemen wiped out a British detachment at King's Mountain, then later defeated a smaller force at Cowpens

How did the colonial army take back Georgia and South Carolina?

- General Nathanael Greene created a strategy of delay where he would stand ground then retreat to exhaust his enemy
- he took back Georgia and South Carolina from the British



**Tensions between the Americans and the French were still heavy as they had just fought against each other in the Seven Years' War. However, gold and goodwill were enough for the two to get to know each other. General Arnold, after not getting any credit for his previous achievements, defected to the British out of anger. The British had planned to capture the colonies starting in the South, where Loyalist support was strong. They took Georgia and Charles, South Carolina, but General Nathanael Greene managed to take both colonies back a year later.**

## The Land Frontier and the Sea Frontier

### Recall

What role did the Native Americans play in the war?  
What happened after England lost the war?

### Notes

- Indians allied with George III hoping to drive British colonizers away
- 1777, Oneidas and Tuscaroras sided with Americans; Senecas, Mohawks, Cayugas, Onondagas sided with the British
- 1784, the pro-British Iroquois were forced to sign the **Treaty of Fort Stanwix**, ceding most of their land to the colonists
- westward expansion still happened during war
  - Lexington, Kentucky was named after the battle
  - Louisville, named after America's new ally, Louis XVI
- British were especially vulnerable in Illinois
- George Rogers Clark floated down the Ohio River with 175 men and captured forts Kaskaskia, Cahokia, and Vincennes
  - arguably said he forced the British to cede north Ohio River to the United States
- America didn't have a navy so ships were commanded by daring officers
  - hard-fighting young Scotsman, John Paul Jones had his tiny naval force destroy British merchant ships so they couldn't bring supplies to the British in America
  - Congress authorized **privateers** were legalized pirate ships that preyed on enemy ships
- privateering took the effort away from the war on the front, but it brought gold and harassed the enemy
  - insurance rates skyrocketed for British ships
  - had to travel in convoys
  - manufacturers called to Parliament to end the war on honorable terms

What was the American navy like?

How did privateering affect the war?



**Native Americans had allied themselves with the British in hopes of driving American colonists off of their land. When England lost the war, natives were forced to cede their territory to the colonists. America never had a navy, so private ships were hired to attack British supply ships. Privateering took effort from the American front of the war, but brought in gold and harassed British ships.**

## Yorktown and the Final Curtain



## Recall

What was the economic state of America during the war?

How did the French navy deny the British enough supplies to win at Yorktown?

## Notes

- during 1780—1781, inflation had screwed the colonial government so bad that they decided to only pay debts back at 2.5 cents per dollar
  - unity withered, army mutinous
- British general Cornwallis was walking into a trap
  - operations in Chesapeake Bay didn't work out
  - waiting at **Yorktown** for reinforcements
  - assumed British navy would deliver
- happened to be one of the brief periods where Britain did not have naval superiority
- French Admiral de Grasse joined with Americans in Yorktown with a powerful fleet from the West Indies
  - General Washington joined Rochambeau's French army and beat at the British from land
  - the British were unable to retreat by sea due to the French fleet
  - Cornwallis surrendered his army of 7,000 men
- King George III refused to surrender
  - still had 54,000 troops in America
- Washington was essential for keeping the cause of battle alive



**During the war, the economic state of America was in ruin. Right as the colonial army was declining in unity, the French navy achieved naval superiority for a brief time and held off the British ships long enough that they couldn't retreat by water. General Cornwallis surrendered his army of 7,000 men at Yorktown.**

## Peace at Paris

### Recall

What forced the British to negotiate peace terms with America?

Who went to Paris to negotiate with France?

What did John Jay do while he was in France?

What were the effects of Britain after the war ended?

### Notes

- British were ready to come to peace
  - suffered in India and the West Indies
  - island of Minorca in the Mediterranean had fallen
  - Lord North's ministry collapsed leading to a Whig ministry replacing the Tory regime
- Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and John Jay went to Paris to negotiate peace
- France schemed to coop the United States east of Allegheny Mountains
  - wanted to promote French interests and policy
    - John Jay said no
    - thought that the treaty would not satisfy agreements to Spain
    - negotiated with London secretly and signed a preliminary treaty of peace in 1782
- British formally recognized the independence of the United States through the **Treaty of Paris** in 1783
  - granted generous boundaries
- British rebuilt its army and navy and win against Napoleon later



After suffering in India, the West Indies, and in England, the British were ready to surrender to the newly-formed America. John Jay initially went to France to negotiate peace terms, but he refused to play into their games and settled with Britain instead, who were eager to rebuild its army and navy. England formally recognized the independence of the United States in 1783.

## A New Nation Legitimized

### Recall

What effect did the Treaty of Paris (1783) have on France?

### Notes

- Britain wanted to separate America and France as much as possible
  - reopen trade channels, prevent future wars
- France was relieved at not having to follow through with Spanish promises and ending the costly conflict over seas
  - savored the defeat of Britain but soon went bankrupt and turned towards revolution



America had finally won its independence and was on its way as a new country. France savored British defeat but then had its own conflicts which would eventually result in a French revolution years later.