

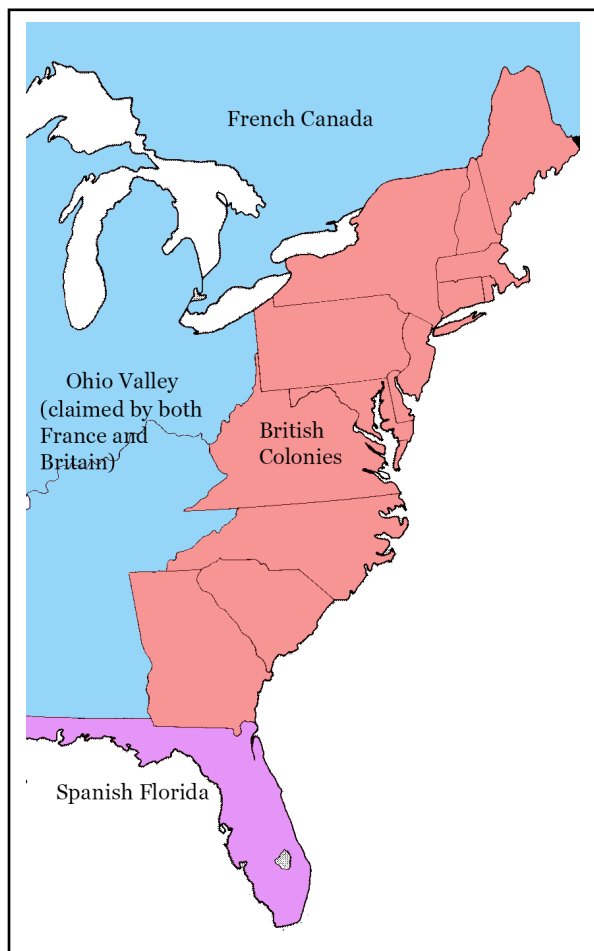
Chapter 3: Causes of the Revolution

1. French and Indian War

Global War

In 1754, Virginia Governor Dinwiddie ordered George Washington to take the **militia** into the Ohio Valley to tell the French to leave. Fighting broke out and Washington surrendered. This encounter led to the French and Indian War.

Britain fought France on every continent making this the first global war. In 1763, Britain defeated France. Under the treaty, Britain gained possession of all French territory in North America. However, the cost of the war left Britain without any money.



2. Taxation

The Stamp Act

Desperate for more money, in 1765, lawmakers in the British **Parliament** decided to tax the colonists to pay for the British military in North America. Colonists had to pay a **tax** on all printed materials: newspapers, licenses, playing cards, etc. This was the first time Britain had directly taxed the colonists.

The colonists protested the tax. Since the colonies had no representatives to speak for them in Parliament, protestors shouted: “No taxation without representation!” An action group called the Sons of Liberty formed to prevent the tax from being collected. In New York, nine of the thirteen colonies met and agreed to a **boycott** of all British goods until the act was repealed.

In 1766, British merchants who lost business due to the colonial boycott, convinced Parliament to **repeal** the act. However, Parliament passed the Declaratory Act stating that they had absolute authority over the colonies and could pass any laws they wanted.

The Townshend Acts

Still needing money, in 1767, Parliament passed the Townshend Acts, a number of taxes on glass, lead, paper, paint, and tea going into the colonies. In addition to raising money for Britain, Parliament hoped to use some of the money to pay the salaries of the royal governors who would no longer be dependent for personal income from the colonial assemblies. This threatened to shift power from the assemblies to the royal governors.

The colonists once again protested and boycotted British goods. As the British economy stumbled, Parliament repealed all of the taxes except the tax on tea. They left this tea tax to show the colonists Parliament could tax what it wanted.

3. Resistance

The Tea Act

The British East India Company was the largest company in Britain and it was going bankrupt. To save the company, Parliament passed the Tea Act in 1774 that allowed the company to sell tea in the colonies without paying the tea tax. This meant that the East India Co. could sell tea cheaper than the colonists that still had to pay the tea tax.

The colonists complained that this law was unfair. All the colonies banned the shipments of East India tea except for Massachusetts. When the tea ships arrived in Boston Harbor, the Sons of Liberty climbed aboard and dumped the tea into the water.

The Coercive Acts

When the king and Parliament heard about the Boston Tea Party, they had enough of colonial protests. Parliament passed the Coercive Acts (called the Intolerable Acts in the colonies) which closed Boston Harbor until the dumped tea was paid for and put General Thomas Gage and the British military in charge of Massachusetts to restore order.

The First Continental Congress

In 1774, twelve of the thirteen colonies met in Philadelphia to unite against

British policy. The Congress supported a boycott of British goods and demanded Britain repeal all offensive acts. They also called for all colonies to prepare their militias in case of trouble. Finally, the Congress agreed to meet the next year to discuss the situation with Britain.

4. Revolution

Lexington and Concord

Colonial militia in Massachusetts began storing weapons in the town of Concord. When General Thomas Gage heard about this, he had to act. On the evening of April 18, 1775, about 700 British soldiers marched from Boston toward Concord to get those weapons.

Patriot spies discovered the British plan early and sent alarm riders out to warn the countryside that the British were coming. As alarm rider Paul Revere was leaving the town of Lexington, he saw British troops arrive and face the militia. No one knows who fired the first shot, but it became known as “the shot heard round the world.” The American Revolution had begun and it would become a world war.

The British easily defeated the militia at Lexington and moved on to Concord. However, by the time the British arrived, the colonials had removed their store of weapons and more militia were pouring into town from the surrounding countryside. Outnumbered, the British began a retreat while both sides battled each other. The British took heavy losses with one-third of the soldiers becoming casualties by the time they reached Boston. There was no turning back from all out war.