

The War for Independence Timeline

Road to Revolution

1763 – Proclamation of 1763

1764 – Sugar Act; Currency Act; End of British Salutary Neglect (Boycott in America)

1765 – Stamp Act passed (Reaction: Stamp Act Congress)

1765 – Quartering Act

REACTIONS: Patrick Henry of the Va. House of Burgesses – only local assembly may tax

Sons and Daughters of Liberty

Non-importation agreements

New York refuses to comply with the Quartering Act

1766 – Stamp Act repealed; Declaratory Act passed

1766 – New York Assembly suspended over Quartering Act issues

1767 – Townshend Revenue Acts passed (Reaction: boycotts)

1768 – “No taxation without representation” – Samuel Adams (propaganda)

1768/1769 – From colonial adoptions of Adams’ circular letter, royal governors in Massachusetts and Virginia dissolve assemblies

3/5/1770 – Boston Massacre

1770 – Townshend Acts repealed; *Gaspee* affair (customs schooner attacked by colonists off shore of Rhode Island)

1772/1773 – Committees of Correspondence are formed

1773 – Tea Act is passed in May; In December, the Boston Tea Party occurs

1774 – Responding to the Boston Tea Party, the Coercive Acts are passed in Parliament

March 1774 – Boston Port Bill closes the harbor

September 5 to October 26, 1774 – **First Continental Congress** (and the Association)

Declaration and Resolves: Responds to Quebec Act, Coercive Acts, and further measures

Early 1775 – Massachusetts declared in state of rebellion / Patrick Henry’s famous speech: “Give me liberty or give me death!”

Revolution

April 18, 1775 – General Gage to send 700 British soldiers to Lexington and Concord

Paul Revere rides to warn the colonists / face off with colonists on April 19th

SIG: British troops must retreat, news spreads, ignites war

April 23, 1775 – Provincial Congress begins war effort to siege British control of Boston

May 10, 1775 – Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold capture Ft. Ticonderoga in New York

May 10, 1775 – Second Continental Congress convenes

John Hancock, President; George Washington, Commander-in-Chief of Continental Army

June 17, 1775 – Battle of Bunker Hill (Breed’s Hill)

Huge losses for British army – over 1,000 casualties

July 5, 1775 – Olive Branch Petition is sent to King George III (King refuses to read)

November 28, 1775 – United States Navy is established by Congress; Resolution for a secret committee to seek foreign aid

January 5, 1776 – New Hampshire State Constitution (first for the US)

January 1776 – Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* is circulated

March 1776 – British troops evacuate Boston, Washington moves to New York City

May 1776 – France commits arms and munitions (King Louis XVI)

June 1776 – General Howe (GB) arrives in New York with large regiment of troops, munitions, and supplies

June 5, 1776 – Lee's Resolution in Congress for Independence

July 2, 1776 – Draft of the Declaration of Independence is presented to Congress
Drafting Committee: Thomas Jefferson; Benjamin Franklin; John Adams; Robert Livingstone; Roger Sherman

July 4, 1776 – *Declaration of Independence* is formally adopted by Congress

August 1776 – Battle of Long Island (series of retreats by Washington to avoid disaster of defeat – greatly outnumbered; Strategy is successful in retaining the army)

September 1776 – Ben Franklin leaves for France to set-up financial and military aid

October to December 1776 – Series of losses for American military: British take Manhattan; Washington to abandon New York, moves west to Delaware River (New Jersey)

December 25-26, 1776 – Famous crossing of the Delaware River by Washington, surprise attack on British troops (and Hessian mercenaries) at Trenton, NJ

SIG: Boost of American Morale which had been low from early losses to GB

January 1777 – Harsh winter for Washington's Army at Morristown, NJ

April 1777 to June 1777 – 13 stars and stripes flag adopted; John Paul Jones; Burgoyne to link with Howe to cut off New England from the rest of the United States

July 6, 1777 – General Burgoyne captures Fort Ticonderoga – drop in US morale

July 1777 – Howe to Chesapeake to threaten Philadelphia; Burgoyne south to Hudson River

September 1777 – Howe's occupation of Philadelphia (Congress meets in Lancaster, Pa.) after American defeat at the Battle of Brandywine Creek and at the Battle of Germantown (Oct. '77)

October 7, 1777 – American Victory at Saratoga (turning point)

Gen. Gates and Gen. Benedict Arnold defeat Burgoyne's army

SIG: France recognizes United States Independence

November 1777 – Articles of Confederation are adopted by Congress; will not be ratified until 1781

December 1777 to February 1778: Washington in winter quarters at Valley Forge

1777 – 1779 – **George Rodgers Clark's** Campaign on the Ohio River (captures Native American belligerents at Kaskaskia, Cahokia, and Vincennes)

SIG: Secures Ohio River region for the Americans (will be conceded by British in 1783)

May 1778 – Clinton replaces Howe as commander of British troops in America

June 27-28, 1778 – Battle of Monmouth, New Jersey – indecisive despite Washington’s attacks at retreating British troops, British escape to New York

December 1778 – British southern campaign begins with attacks at Savannah and later Augusta, Georgia

September 23, 1779 – John Paul Jones captures British frigate / “I have not yet begun to fight!”

September 27, 1779 – John Adams appointed by Congress to negotiate peace

May 12, 1780 – US surrender of Charleston, SC – large defeat for American military and morale
SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN BEGINS: Gen. Horatio Gates (US) vs. Gen. Charles Cornwallis (GB)

September 1780 – US General of West Point, Benedict Arnold, is caught conspiring with the British and flees to *Vulture* on Hudson River – Arnold will now fight against the Americans

October 1780 – Gen. Nathaniel Greene replaces Gates as commander of the Southern Army
SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN: Cornwallis suffers unexpected defeats, slows march north to Virginia

August 1781 – Cornwallis to Yorktown, Virginia for rest; Washington changes plan to attack New York and focuses effort on Yorktown – French fleet arrives in Chesapeake Bay off of Yorktown

October 19, 1781 – Gen. Cornwallis surrenders to Washington

1782 – Loyalist exodus from America; House of Commons votes against further war; Lord North resigns as Prime Minister; Peace talks begin in Paris with Ben Franklin and Britain’s Richard Oswald; British troops begin to evacuate

The Peace

April 11, 1783 – Revolutionary War declared officially over by Congress

September 3, 1783 – Treaty of Paris is signed

January 14, 1784 – Ratified by Congress

December 23, 1783 – Washington resigns his commission (**SIG**)

PEOPLE TO KNOW

John Adams

Abigail Adams

Samuel Adams

James Otis

Richard Henry Lee

Thomas Jefferson

George Washington

Benjamin Franklin

Patrick Henry

Paul Revere

John Hancock

John Paul Jones

George Rodgers Clark

Thomas Paine

Lord North

General Howe

General Cornwallis

Benedict Arnold

General Horatio Gates

General Nathaniel Greene

MBroach, September 2004