From Empire to Independence

- Colonies became more important for the British mainland economy
- Colonies experienced agricultural and commercial growth but remained diverse in composition and outlook
  - Generally adverse to cooperative efforts

The Heritage of War

- Most Americans submitted willingly to the English government due to their alliance in French and Indian War
  - However, American nationalism was building
    - Brutalities of English soldiers heightened sense of separate identity
    - English soldiers were inept at frontier fighting; initial respect for them was lost
    - English disrupted the colonies’ illegal but necessary molasses trade with the French West Indies
      - Writs of assistance (unspecific search warrants) and naval patrols
      - Boston merchants hired James Otis to fight writs of assistance; he lost but revealed that writs of assistance were like slavery
- Why was revenue needed?
  - Management and defense of new global possessions
  - Payment of war debt
  - Expansion of colonial administration and defense

British Politics

- Nearly every politician was a Whig: a name given to those who had opposed James II, led the Glorious Revolution of 1688, and secured Protestant succession
  - Champions of individual liberty and parliamentary supremacy
  - Whiggism drifted into complacency: dominant group of landowners became concerned with personal wealth
- George III wanted to limit Whigs so ousted William Pitt as prime minister and established “king’s friends”
  - Government became unstable. Ministries rose and fell usually because someone offended the king, etc.
  - Colonial policy remained marginal to the chief concerns of British politics. The result was inconsistency and vacillation followed by stubborn inflexibility.

Western Lands

- Royal Proclamation of 1763: issued by king, drew an imaginary line along the crest of the Appalachians, beyond which settlers were forbidden to go, in response to Pontiac’s Rebellion
  - also established new British colonies of Quebec and East and West Florida
  - proclamation line was ineffective; hardy settlers pushed across the mountains
Grenville and Stamp Act

**Grenville’s Colonial Policy**

- The new prime minister and first lord of Treasury, **George Grenville**, was much like the king: industrious, honest, hard-headed
  - He and king believed in same basic policies: **cutting government expenses, reducing national debt, generating more revenue from colonies to pay for defense**
  - Wanted to **keep a large army in America** to avoid rapid demobilization but too costly
  - British collection of taxes in America was ineffective: corruption and evasion were rampant
  - **Tightened enforcement in America and established maritime vice-admiralty courts**
  - **Under Grenville, salutary neglect ended**
  - **Molasses Act of 1733**: serious threat to New England, purpose was not to make revenue but to **prevent illegal trade**. Grenville realized that this would be ruinous so he established **Revenue Act of 1764 (Sugar Act)** which cut tax amount in half but put new duties on textiles, wine, coffee, indigo, sugar in order to pay for defense expenses. **First time taxes were specifically aimed at generating revenue.**

**The Stamp Act**

- **The Sugar Act failed to produce additional revenue.** Its administrative costs were four times greater than the revenue it generated.
- **Stamp Acts of 1765** were purposely implemented by Parliament to generate revenue
- **Quartering Act**: was another tax that required colonists to supply British troops with provisions; applied mainly to New York which was British force headquarters

**The Ideological Response**

- Cumulative effect of Grenville’s measures raised colonial suspicions
  - Minority “Real Whigs” slowly began to take hold in the colonies
    - Beliefs based on John Locke’s justification of the Glorious Revolution in *Two Treatises on Government*
  - It became clear that British troops were stationed in the colonies not to protect them, but to subdue them

**Policy in England vs. policy in America**

- Among fundamental rights of English people were trial by jury and presumption of innocence but **vice-admiralty courts in America excluded juries**.
- English citizens had the right to be **taxed only by their elected representatives, unlike those in America**

**Protest in the Colonies**

- “No taxation without representation.” —response to Stamp Acts
Unlike Sugar Act which affected mainly New England, the Stamp Act burdened all colonists who did any kind of business.

Colonial militants began to call themselves Sons of Liberty and met under “liberty trees.”

Mid-August 1765, three months before effective date of Stamp Act: revolts occurred
  - Stamp agents were hounded out of office
  - Loyalists, who supported Britain, reported violence

Americans began shutting off imports and boycotting British goods
  - Colonial unity was encouraged through revolts and boycotts

The Virginia House of Burgesses struck the first blow against the Stamp Act with the Virginia Resolves: a series of resolutions inspired by Patrick Henry, declared that Virginians were entitled to the rights of Englishmen and that Englishmen could be taxed only by their representatives.

In 1765 Massachusetts House of Representatives invited delegates to confer in New York on appeals for relief from king and Parliament.
  - Stamp Act Congress issued expression of sentiment: a Declaration of the Rights and Grievances of the Colonies—a petition to the king for relief and a petition to Parliament for repeal of the Stamp Act.

Repeal of the Act

Grenville was kicked out of office due to disagreement with king regarding government appointments.

Charles Watson-Wentworth appointed as new minister—leader of the “Old Whig” faction (Britons who sympathized with the colonies)
  - British merchants who were afraid of colonial boycott encouraged repeal of the Stamp Act
  - William Pit wanted repeal
  - In 1766, Stamp Act was repealed but Declaratory Act was established, which asserted the full power of Parliament to make laws binding the colonies “in all cases whatsoever.” It reinforced distinction between internal and external taxes on trade.

Fanning the Flames

For a time in 1767, Charles Townshend was the guiding force in the ministry. Like Grenville, he was determined to force obedience of the colonies.
  - He reopened the question of colonial taxation, and asserted that external taxes were tolerable to the colonies.

The Townshend Acts

With Townshend Acts, Townshend sought first to bring the New York assembly to its senses
  - Parliament suspended all acts of New York’s colonial assembly until it would yield
  - Revenue Act of 1767 (Townshend Acts) established duties on glass, lead, paint, paper, and tea imports.
  - Board of Customs Commissioners was set up at Boston, the colonial smuggling headquarters.
  - Admiralty courts were reorganized; Halifax, Boston, Philadelphia, Charleston

Although Townshend acts increased revenue, collection costs were increased.

Revenue Act was more severe threat to colonial assemblies than Grenville’s taxes.

Dickinson’s “Letters”
• John Dickinson hoped to resolve the latest dispute by persuasion.
  o Asserted that Parliament might regulate commerce and collect duties incidental to that purpose, but had no right to establish taxes for revenue
• He was considered moderate

_Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty_

• Samuel Adams was emerging as the supreme genius of revolutionary agitation, more vehement than Dickinson
  o He insisted that Parliament had no right to legislate at all for the colonies and that Massachusetts must return to the spirit of its Puritan founders
  o With James Otis, he wrote an article politely characterizing Parliament’s illegality in establishing taxes
    ▪ It’s withdrawal from circulation was ordered by earl of Hillsborough (British secretary of state).
    ▪ Massachusetts Assembly was dissolved for refusing.
• Colonial issues still aroused marginal interest in England
  o In 1769, King’s Friends has majority in Parliament
  o Frederick, Lord North replaced Townshend (who died before Townshend Acts were fully established)
  o Lord North became minister; the king favored him

_The Boston Massacre_

• Nonimportation agreements in the American colonies were strangling British trade and causing unemployment in England
  o Lord North modified Townshend Acts just in time
• Rowdy colonists began harassing redcoat > reinforcements called > more attention gathered when fire bell is rung > a soldier fired into the crowd >Crispus Attucks dies first (mulatto) > soldiers acquitted and branded, resolution > Townshend Acts repealed in 1770 (except for tea) > British grip significantly loosened, but remained
  o Those involved were indicted for murder but John Adams defended them by saying they were victims of circumstance
• Period of peace

_Discontent on the Frontier_

• Vermont was created in 1777 due to land dispute between New York, New Hampshire, and Green Mountain boys (led by Ethan Allen) (Vermont formally became part of the Union in 1791)
• Paxton Boys in Pennsylvania were outraged by lack of protection during Pontiac’s Rebellion and took revenge by massacring peaceful Susquehannock Indians—Ben Franklin pacified them by submitting their ideas to assembly
• People of South Carolina also complained of lack of protection
• Backcountry residents organized societies called Regulators to administer vigilante justice in the region and refused to pay taxes until they gained effective government
• In North Carolina, protest was over the abuses and extortions by govt. appointees. Farmers were oppressed by government’s refusal to issue paper money
  o Efforts of Regulators to protest was met with a bill that made rioters guilty of treason
  o Governor William Tryon defeated 2,000 ill-organized Regulators in Battle of Alamance
• This instability in the colonies convinced the British that firmer oversight, including military force, was necessary to ensure civil stability.

A Worsening Crisis

• British schooner, Gaspee, accidentally ran aground and its crew proceeded to commandeer sheep, hogs, and poultry
  o Angry crowed boarded the ship, removed the crew, and set fire
  o Governor Thomas Hutchinson told the Massachusetts Assembly that his salary would thenceforth come out of customs revenues
    ▪ Judges of the Massachusetts Superior Court would be paid from the same source and would no longer be dependent on Assembly for income
    ▪ Sam Adams convinced Boston town meeting to create Committee of Correspondence to issue statements of rights and grievances; these Committees sprung up everywhere
  o Development of discussion on British encroachment regained momentum.

The Boston Tea Party

• If Britain could liberate 17 million pounds of tea from the mismanaged East India Company, they could undercut their colonial competitors, including the Dutch
• Committees of Correspondence realized that Britain was trying to buy their subjugation with cheap tea.
  o On December 16,1773, a group of 16 men disguised as Mohawks boarded 3 ships and threw the 342 chests of East India Tea overboard
    ▪ May have lowered the impression of radicals
    ▪ Many Americans were aghast; Ben Franklin was displeased
  o Britain reached its limit

The Coercive Acts

• In 1774 Parliament enacted four harsh measures, collectively the Coercive Acts (Intolerable Acts), designed by Lord North to discipline Boston
  o Boston Port Act: closed the harbor until tea was paid for
  o Act for the Impartial Administration of Justice: let governor transfer trial of any convicted British official to Britain/British courts
  o New Quartering Act: directed local authorities to provide lodging for British officials
  o Massachusetts Government Act made the colony’s council and law-enforcement officers all appointive rather than elective
    ▪ Thomas Gage became governor of Massachusetts and assumed command of military
• Coercive Acts were designed to isolate Boston and make an example of it but instead, they bolstered colonial resistance
• Quebec Act: further exemplified British tyranny; the act provided that the govt. in Canada would not have a representative assembly and would instead be led by an appointed governor and council, Catholic Church was given privileges since French Catholics were on the other side of the Appalachians
• Calls to create a Continental Congress were first heard from Thomas Jefferson in Virginia’s Committee of Correspondence
Similar calls could be heard from many colonies; meeting was to be held in Philadelphia

**The Continental Congress**

- 1774: First Continental Congress assembled in Philadelphia
  - 57 members representing 12 colonies, all but Georgia, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and the Floridas
  - Peyton Randolph of Virginia was elected President and Charles Thompson (the Sam Adams of Philadelphia) became secretary
- The Congress endorsed the **Suffolk Resolves**: declared the Intolerable Acts void, urged Massachusetts to arm for defense, and called for economic sanctions on British commerce
  - Declaration of American Rights: conceded only Parliament’s right to regulate commerce, denied Parliamentary authority
  - Constitutional Association of 1774: recommended that every county, town, and city form committees to enforce boycott of all British goods—these committees became Revolutionary networks
- Efforts to gain economic self-sufficiency helped bind the diverse colonies by ropes of resistance
- King and Parliament decided the force was the only option
  - Lord North’s Conciliatory Resolution: Parliament would refrain from using any measures but taxes to regulate trade and would grant to each colony the duties collected within its boundaries, provided that the colonies would contribute voluntarily to a quota for defense
  - Patrick Henry: “Give me liberty, or give me death.”

**Shifting Authority**

- Britain had lost control of the colonies
- Loyalists were unorganized and threatened by Revolutionaries
- Militia began training for an imminent war

**Lexington and Concord**

- British Major John Pitcairn and General Thomas Cage received secret orders to stop the open rebellion in Massachusetts
  - They decided to arrest leaders of the Provincial (city) Congress and seize the militia’s supply depot at Concord
  - Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith and Pitcairn gathered 700 redcoats on Boston Common and set out to Lexington.
  - Paul Revere and William Dawes were sent by Boston Committee of Safety to spread the news
  - Prescott joined them in Lexington
- Captain John Parker and 70 Minutemen plan on silent rebellion in Lexington but are dispersed by redcoats > redcoats continue to Concord > American militia forced redcoats out of Concord > Redcoats head back to Boston but are sniped at along the way

**Internal vs external taxes = within the colonies vs on imports**
The Spreading Conflict

- Revolutionary War has begun
- **Second Continental Congress** met in 1775
  - Same day, **Fort Ticonderoga** fell to a force of Green Mountain Boys and two days later, Crown Point was claimed by colonial forces. Continental Congress met amidst warfare.
  - **George Washington** was named commander in chief of a Continental army
    - Why him? Experience from French and Indian War, he was from Virginia (wealthiest and most populous colony), looked like a leader
- **Battle of Bunker Hill** was the first major colonial and British brawl
  - British reinforcements included three major generals: **William Howe, Sir Henry Clinton, John Burgoyne**
  - Battle location was actually **Breed’s Hill**, near Boston, not Bunker Hill. Americans were on top of hill.
  - Americans were eventually ousted, although they caused the British to retreat twice and 1,054 casualties. **British won**.
  - Two major effects: (1) English generals become more careful and (2) Congress recommended that all able-bodied men enlist in a militia. No more middle ground: you’re either a Patriot or Loyalist.
- American forces occupied Dorchester Heights, forcing General Howe to retreat
- Continental Congress pursued peace and produced two major documents:
  - An appeal to the king known as the **Olive Branch Petition** was written by John Dickinson. Professed loyalty to King George III but begged to restrain further hostilities.
  - Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms: also largely Dickinson’s work, denounced Britain’s unprovoked assault of Lexington
  - King ignored
- Congress authorized attack of Quebec; led by **Richard Montgomery and Benedict Arnold**, the venture failed when they decided to continue, despite having smallpox among them
  - Quebec was the first military setback for the Revolutionaries
- Virginia’s governor led a Loyalist force, including slaves who were promised freedom, but it was defeated.
- In North Carolina, Loyalist Highland Scots, joined by former Regulators, lost battle with Patriot force at **Moores Creek Bridge**.
  - British commanders decide to attack Charleston but are forced to retreat due to use of palmetto logs
- As fighting spread, Continental Congress appointed commissioners to negotiate peace with Indian tribes, organized Post Office Department, with Ben Franklin as postmaster general, and authorized formation of a navy.
- In 1775, a **Prohibitory Act** declared the colonies closed to all commerce. Parliament ignored those who warned that reconquest of America would not only be costly, but also might lead to another great war with France and Spain.

Common Sense

- **Thomas Paine’s pamphlet: Common Sense**, directly attacked allegiance to the monarchy, common sense of the matter was that King George III bore responsibility (not Parliament), American’s should not be hesitant about declaring independence
Independence

- Henry Lee’s resolution to declare independence was passed on July 2, and on July 4, Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence, a statement of political philosophy that was directed at the king and still retains dynamic force.

Jefferson’s Declaration

- Continental Congress appointed five men to develop a public explanation for the reasons for colonial discontent and to provide a rationale for independence: Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Robert Livingston and Roger Sherman
  - Jefferson intended his words to serve as “an expression of the American mind, and to give to that expression the proper tone and spirit called for by the occasion.”
  - Jefferson drew upon two sources: Virginia’s Constitution (also written by him), and Virginia’s Declaration of Rights (written by George Mason)
  - Congress corrected errors: included references to God, removed portion that rejected slavery, 86 changes were made
  - Based on John Locke’s unalienable rights and right to revolt against those that breached these rights

“We Always Had Governed Ourselves”

- 13 years after Treaty of Paris, it had come to this
- Historians’ beliefs about the causes of the Revolution:
  - Excessive regulation of trade
  - Restrictions on settling Western lands
  - Tax burden
  - Mounting debts to British merchants
  - Growth of national consciousness
  - Lack of representation in Parliament
  - Ideologies of Whiggery and the Enlightenment
  - Abrupt shift from mercantile to an “imperial” policy after 1763
  - Class conflict
  - Revolutionary conspiracy
- Revolution could have been avoided; irresolution and vacillation of British ministry contributed to Revolution
- Individual motives for the Revolutionaries:
  - Necessity of preserving freedoms
  - Smuggling
  - Preserve slavery; prevent future of slavery under British control
    - Hypocrisy did not go unnoticed
  - Unwanted restriction of settlement beyond the frontier

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