

Chronology

- 1763** At the end of the French and Indian War, Great Britain becomes the premier political and military power in North America.
- 1764** The American Revenue, or Sugar Act places taxes on a variety of non-British imports to help pay for the French and Indian War and cover the cost of protecting the colonies.
- 1765** The Stamp Act places taxes on all printed materials, including newspapers, pamphlets, bills, legal documents, licenses, almanacs, dice, and playing cards.
- 1766** The Stamp Act is repealed following riots and the Massachusetts Assembly's assertion that the Stamp Act was "against the Magna Carta and the natural rights of Englishmen, and therefore . . . null and void."
- 1767** The Townshend Revenue Acts place taxes on imports such as glass, lead, and paints.
- 1770** British soldiers fire into a crowd in Boston; five colonists are killed in what Americans call the Boston Massacre.
- 1773** Colonists protest the Tea Act by boarding British ships in Boston harbor and tossing chests of tea overboard in what came to be called the Boston Tea Party.
- 1774** Intolerable Acts—passed in retaliation for the Boston Tea Party—close the port of Boston and suspend civilian government in the colony. In September, the First Continental Congress convenes in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Congress adopts a Declaration of Rights and Grievances and passes Articles of Association, declaring a boycott of English imports.
- 1775** *February:* Parliament proclaims Massachusetts to be in a state of revolt.

March: The New England Restraining Act prohibits the New England colonies from trading with anyone except England.

April: British soldiers from Boston skirmish with colonists at the Battles of Lexington and Concord. News of the fighting rallies "Friends of American Liberty" in all the colonies.

May: The Second Continental Congress meets in Philadelphia. Delegates resolve to unite the troops of the several colonies into a single Continental army.

June: Congress unanimously elects George Washington general and commander in chief of the Continental army.

July: Washington takes command of the Continental army, which has surrounded British troops in Boston. Congress issues a Declaration on the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms, asserting that they are "resolved to die free men rather than live as slaves."

August: Great Britain's King George III declares all the colonies to be in open rebellion.

December: Congress responds to King George III's declaration of rebellion.