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American Revolutionary War

The **American Revolutionary War** was a war fought between Great Britain and the original 13 British colonies in North America. The war took place from 1775 to 1783 with fighting in North America and other places. The Continental Army (army of the colonies), led by George Washington and helped by France and other powers, defeated the armies of the British Empire.

After the war ended, the Thirteen Colonies became independent, which meant that the British Empire was no longer in charge of them. They together became the first 13 states of a new country called the United States of America.

Contents

Background and causes

The war started after years of problems between the British Empire and the colonists of North America after the French and Indian War. People in the Thirteen Colonies disliked many of the actions of the British Government, such as the Intolerable Acts. For many years the British government decided which countries could trade with the colonies, instead of the colonies deciding it themselves. Many colonists wanted free trade.

In 1765, the British Parliament needed money to pay back the debt for the French and Indian War. They passed a Law called the Stamp Act. This law said that colonists had to buy stamps for legal papers, newspapers, and even playing cards, as other British people did. The money from the stamps went to the King. The colonies did not follow this law. The colonies kept

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Clockwise from top left: Battle of Bunker Hill, Death of Montgomery at Quebec, Battle of Cowpens, "Moonlight Battle"

Date	1775–1783
Location	Eastern United States, Northwest Territories, central Canada, Hudson Bay, Atlantic Ocean, Mediterranean Sea, Gibraltar, Balearic Islands, Caribbean Sea, Central America, Indian Ocean
Result	Treaty of Paris
Territorial changes	Britain recognizes independence of the United States, cedes East Florida, West Florida, and Minorca to Spain and Tobago to France. Dutch ceded Negapatnam to Britain.

Belligerents

United States	Great Britain
France	Loyalists
Spain	Hesse-Kassel
Dutch Republic	Waldeck-Pyrmont
Oneida tribe	Brunswick-Lüneburg
Tuscarora tribe	Iroquois Confederacy

Commanders and leaders

George Washington	Sir William Howe
Nathanael Greene	Thomas Gage
Horatio Gates	Sir Henry Clinton
Charles Lee (POW)	Lord Cornwallis (POW)
John Paul Jones	Sir Guy Carleton
Tadeusz Kościuszko	John Burgoyne (POW)

refusing to do what the King wanted. The Boston Tea Party and Boston Massacre caused people to become more angry about the situation. The British sent more soldiers (Red Coats) to keep control of the colonies and they sometimes had to fight. In 1774, the British passed the Intolerable Acts.

Not all colonists wanted to leave the British Empire. The *Loyalists*, or Tories, stayed loyal to Great Britain. They were not going to change their views. The *Patriots*, or Whigs, wanted independence. Before the Revolutionary War, most people in America were Loyalists; but after it, most people were Patriots.

Many colonists wrote letters showing how they felt. Thomas Paine wrote *Common Sense*, a famous pamphlet about independence from Britain. Other colonial leaders, such as Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson wanted independence.

🇺🇸 Kazimierz Pułaski †	🇬🇧 George Eliott
🇺🇸 Benedict Arnold	🇬🇧 Banastre Tarleton (POW)
🇺🇸 Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben	🇬🇧 Francis Rawdon
🇺🇸 Richard Montgomery †	🇬🇧 Benedict Arnold
🇺🇸 Marquis de La Fayette	🇩🇪 Johann Rall †
🇫🇷 Comte de Rochambeau	🇩🇪 Wilhelm von Knyphausen
🇫🇷 Comte de Grasse	Friedrich Adolf Riedesel
🇫🇷 Bailli de Suffren	Joseph Brant
🇫🇷 Louis Guillouet d'Orvilliers	
Bernardo de Gálvez	
Luis de Córdova y Córdova	

Strength

27,000 Continentals, 13,500 French, 8,000 Spanish, Patriot militia (All figures peak strength)[1]	15,200 British regulars, 5,200 Provincial regulars, 10,765 German regulars,[1] 5,000 natives, Loyalist militia (All figures peak strength)

Casualties and losses

~25,000 killed (Americans)	~27,294 killed (Germans + British seamen)

Northern battles

The first battles of the American Revolutionary War were Lexington and Concord. One of the first major battles was the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775. After that, the British controlled Boston. Around that time, the Second Continental Congress sent an Olive Branch Petition to King George III (which he rejected) and named George Washington head of the army. Early in 1776, Washington's army drove the British out of Boston.

A few months later the Continental Army and British troops under William Howe fought the New York and New Jersey Campaign. During the New York battles, the British started using Hessian troops, who were from Germany. Though the colonists lost New York (the British would hold it for the rest of the war), Washington was able to hold onto most of his army. Over Christmas, 1776-77, Washington crossed the Delaware River and defeated the Hessians at Trenton and the British at Princeton.

In 1777, the British attacked the city of Philadelphia, then the American capital. Two battles were fought over Philadelphia: Brandywine and Germantown. Again, the Americans lost a major city, but Washington was able to keep most of his army. Around this time, the Frenchman Lafayette joined the American Army. In 1778, the British left Philadelphia. Between 1778 and 1781, most battles between Washington and the British were inconclusive (they did not have any major effect militarily).

One of the most important battles was the Battle of Saratoga in 1777. American soldiers under Horatio Gates forced a British surrender under John Burgoyne. This led to France and Spain joining the war on the side of Americans. These powerful countries fought the British around the world. From 1778 to 1780, there was fighting in the West.

The American commerce raider John Paul Jones also won several naval battles over the British, but the French navy did most of the fighting at sea. The Americans tried to capture Canada several times.

Southern battles

In 1779 major fighting shifted to Georgia and South Carolina. As fighting spread northward, General Nathanael Greene led the Rebel campaign. He caused many people in the South to be Patriots instead of Loyalists, and won several battles against the British.

In 1781, Washington and French general Jean Rochambeau led an offensive against British troops in Yorktown, Virginia. This was called the Battle of Yorktown. When their soldiers lost this battle, the British surrendered.

The British continued to fight the French and Spanish for two years, winning in India, Gibraltar and elsewhere.

End of the war

The American Revolutionary War came to an end in 1783 when a peace treaty was signed in Paris, France. In the Treaty of Paris, the British King, George III accepted the independence of the colonies and recognized the newly created nation as the United States of America.

The treaty also gave all the land Britain said it owned which was west of the Appalachians as far as the Mississippi River to the new country. This land would eventually become part of the US, and lead to the creation of 35 new states (some of which later rebelled as part of the Confederate States of America) that now make up the contiguous United States. Many Loyalists fled to Canada.

Casualties

As usual for 18th-century wars, casualty figures (Killed/wounded/missing/captured) for the American Revolution are poorly known. Unlike American Civil War casualties which were published in newspapers, Revolutionary War casualty reports are found in local town histories;[2][3] total casualties of the Revolution are rough estimates.[4]

References

1. American Loyalists (http://www.redcoat.me.uk/battles.htm)
2. "Vital Records of Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, to the end of the year 1849". 1904. Retrieved 2018-5-20. Check date values in: |access-date= (help) Under the surname "Stone" of Shrewsbury Deaths:"Jonathan,[Jr.] Wounded Sept. 15, 1776, at the Excavation of New York, supposed to have died soon after [Leg Broken and captured by the British.]" .p.276
3. "The New England Historical and Genealogical Register, Volume 12". 1858.See page 63 for listing of 17 fatalities from Aug 12, 1776-Aug 6, 1778 ranging in age from 12 yrs to 55
4. See Edward H. Peckham "The Toll of Independence Engagements & Battle casualties of the American Revolution." 1974 which has two different sections one for Military and one for naval engagements-yet no section of civilian casualites...",

Other websites

- American Revolution, military history (http://en.citizendium.org/wiki/American_Revolution,_military_history) -Citizendium
- Rosters and Registers of the American Revolution (https://archive.org/search.php?query=subject%3A%22United+States+--+History+Revolution%2C+1775-1783+Registers%22)
- Roll of New Hampshire Soldiers in the American Revolution (https://archive.org/details/rollsofsoldiersi17hammrich)

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This page was last changed on 4 January 2019, at 15:32.