Chapter 4

The American Revolution
The American Revolution

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The Shot Heard Round the World
The Shot Heard Round the World

- General Thomas Gage: commander in chief of all British forces in North America
  - Appointed governor of Massachusetts
  - Had 4,000 troops in Boston
- British did not believe other colonies would help Massachusetts
- House of Commons voted 270 to 78 against conciliating the colonies
January, 1775: Parliament decided to use troops but order did not reach Gage until April

- Parliament voted new troop levies
- Declared Massachusetts to be in rebellion

Massachusetts Patriots

- Formed extralegal provincial assembly
- Reorganized militia
- Began training “minute men” and other fighters
April 18: Gage sent 700 troops to collect arms stored at Concord
  - Paul Revere and others
  - 70 Minute Men at Lexington
  - Destroyed any supplies left at Concord
  - Redcoats picked off by militiamen on return to Boston
  - Gage obliged to send 1,500 more troops
  - British: 273 casualties; Americans: fewer than 100
The Shot Heard Round the World (cont'd)

- Massachusetts captured Fort Ticonderoga and Crown Point on Lake Champlain
- Other colonies sent reinforcements
Two weeks after the battle of Lexington and Concord, Ralph Earl, a colonial militiaman from Connecticut, was ordered to make sketches and paintings of what had transpired.
The Second Continental Congress
The Second Continental Congress

• May 10, 1775: Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia
  ▪ Group more radical than First Congress
  ▪ Members included: John and Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and Benjamin Franklin

• John Hancock chosen President of Congress
The Second Continental Congress (cont'd)

- Organized forces around Boston into Continental Army and appointed George Washington commander
The Second Continental Congress (cont'd)

• **Continental army**
  - The regular or professional army authorized by the Second Continental Congress, mostly under the command of General George Washington during the Revolutionary War.
The Second Continental Congress (cont'd)

- Second Continental Congress
  - A gathering of American Patriots in May 1775 that organized the Continental army, requisitioned soldiers and supplies, and commissioned George Washington to lead it.
The Battle of Bunker Hill
The Battle of Bunker Hill

- Actually Battle of Breed’s Hill (June 17)
  - Redcoats marched up three times to unseat artillery (only succeeded because Americans ran out of ammunition)
- Colonists cleared out of Charleston peninsula
  - British lost more than 1,000 out of 2,500
  - Continentals lost 400
- Gage replaced with General William Howe
The Battle of Bunker Hill (cont'd)

- Colonies proclaimed in rebellion
- Congress responded with “Olive Branch Petition” but quickly switched to Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms
  - Ordered attack on Canada
  - Created committees to seek foreign aid
  - Outfitted Navy
On June 17, the British tried to dislodge Continentals from fortified (and concealed) positions atop Breed's Hill in Charlestown.
The Great Declaration
The Great Declaration

• Colonists concerned about final break
  ▪ Traditions, language, history, etc. tied them to Britain
  ▪ Concerned what “lower” classes might do with independence
  ▪ Concern over whether common people really could govern themselves
The Great Declaration (cont'd)

• January 1776: moved to break by two events
  ▪ News British were sending hired Hessian soldiers
  ▪ Publication of Thomas Paine’s Common Sense
    - Called for complete independence
    - Attacked the very idea of a monarchy
    - Virtually everyone in colonies read it or heard it discussed
The Great Declaration (cont'd)

- March, 1776: Congress unleashed privateers against British commerce
- April: opened American ports to foreign shipping
- May: urged states to frame constitutions and establish state governments
June 7: Richard Henry Lee introduced resolution stating that “these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States…."

- Passed July 2
- Committee: Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman, Robert Livingston
The Great Declaration (cont'd)

- Slightly modified draft written by Thomas Jefferson adopted by Congress as Declaration of Independence on July 4
The Great Declaration (cont'd)

• Declaration had two parts:
  - First, introductory part justified the abstract right of any people to revolt and described the theory on which Americans based creation of new nation
  - Second section was a list of the injuries and injustices perpetrated by George III
    - Interference with the functioning of representative government in America
    - Harsh administration of colonial affairs
The Great Declaration (cont'd)

• Declaration had two parts:
  - Second section was a list of the injuries and injustices perpetrated by George III
    - Restrictions on civil rights
    - Maintenance of troops in the colonies without their consent
Common Sense

1776: The Balance of Forces
1776: The Balance of Forces

- Factors in favor of Americans
  - British army was as inefficient and ill directed as rest of British government
  - Reluctance among British to engage in both violence and cost of war
  - Seemed risky to send best troops to America with European rivals still smarting from defeat
- Howe withdrew from Boston when Washington fortified Dorchester Heights
1776: The Balance of Forces (cont'd)

- General Richard Montgomery captured Montréal in November 1775
- Americans failed to capture Québec in December
- July 2: Howe landed 32,000 men at Staten Island while fleet under his brother, Richard, floated off the coast
• British Advantages:
  - Population of 9 million compared to 2.5 million for colonists
  - Large stocks of war materials
  - Industrial capacity to increase war materials
  - Mastery of the seas
  - Well-trained and experienced army
  - Highly centralized and ruthless government
1776: The Balance of Forces (cont'd)

- American Disadvantages:
  - Money and tools of war were continually in short supply
  - Soldiers had few weapons or proper uniforms
  - Most did not want to conform to military discipline
  - Washington had to create an army organization while fighting a war
• American Disadvantages:
  ▪ Supply problems were handled inefficiently and corruptly
  ▪ No knowledge about how to construct and maintain sanitary facilities
  ▪ John Adams’ estimate: 1/3 ardent Patriots, 1/3 Loyalists, 1/3 neutral or flexible
  ▪ Historians think about 2/5 Patriots and 1/5 Loyalists
Loyalists
Loyalists

• High proportion of those holding royal appointments and many Anglican clergymen
• Pockets of Tory strength in rural sections of New York, in North Carolina back country
• Among persons of non-English origin and other minority groups who tended to count on London for protection against local majority
Loyalists (cont'd)

- Due to a distaste for change
- Believed actions of British did not justify rebellion
- Tories lacked organization
- Feelings between Loyalists and Patriots were bitter
Loyalists (cont'd)

• Sometimes called Tories, the term for American colonists who refused to take up arms against England in the 1770s.
The British Take New York City
The British Take New York City

- Battle of Long Island: Howe defeated Washington’s Army but Howe hesitated and Washington escaped.
- Howe attacked New York City and Washington withdrew to Harlem Heights and eventually New Jersey.
- November and December 1776: Americans retreated to Pennsylvania.
Washington attacked Hessian troops at Trenton, New Jersey, on Christmas day and scored a morale boosting victory:
- Captured 900 Hessians

Washington then outmaneuvered General Cornwallis to score another victory at Princeton.
New York and New Jersey Campaigns, 1776

- Battle (British victory)
- Battle (American victory)

Events:
- White Plains Oct. 28, 1776
- Fort Lee Sept. 16, 1776
- Brooklyn Heights Aug. 22, 1776

Other locations:
- New York
- New Jersey
- Atlantic Ocean
Emanuel Leutze

Washington Crossing the Delaware (1851)
Saratoga and the French Alliance
Saratoga and the French Alliance

- April 1777: Washington had fewer than 5,000 men under arms
- Complicated plan to trap Patriots and isolate New England states was a fiasco
  - John Burgoyne’s troops heading south from Canada (500 Indians, 650 Loyalists, 6,000 regulars, 2,000 women) bogged down
  - St. Leger left Fort Oswego late and was driven back by Benedict Arnold
Saratoga and the French Alliance (cont'd)

• Complicated plan to trap Patriots and isolate New England states was a fiasco
  - Howe did not follow plan either, and Clinton turned back for reinforcements
• October 17, 1777: Burgoyne and 5,700 British troops surrendered at Saratoga
Saratoga and the French Alliance (cont'd)

• American victory at Saratoga led to French backing, which probably would have come anyway
  ▪ May 1776: French had authorized 1 million livres for munitions for America and added more the next year
  ▪ Spain contributed because of hatred of British
When news of victory at Saratoga reached France, Louis XVI recognized the United States and Comte de Vergennes and American commissioners drafted a commercial treaty and a formal treaty of alliance.
Saratoga and the French Alliance (cont'd)

- British were willing to give in to colonial demands of 1775 to prevent French alliance but peace commissioners did not reach Philadelphia until June 1778, a month after Congress ratified French treaty
  - While peace commissioners were in Philadelphia, war broke out between Britain and France
After losing Philadelphia to Howe in September 1777, Washington had settled into winter camp at Valley Forge:

- Supply system collapsed
- Soldiers suffered hunger and cold
- Continental army melted away during winter
- Those who remained became a seasoned professional army
The War Moves South
The War Moves South

- May 1778: Howe replaced as commander with General Clinton, who transferred base to New York
  - Washington attacked him during move and claimed victory in an indecisive battle at Monmouth Court House
- British strategy changed:
  - Fighting in northern states degenerated into skirmishes and small unit clashes
• British strategy changed:
  - British concentrated their efforts in South Carolina and Georgia
    - Based on sea power, the supposed presence of many Tories and anticipated help from slaves
• Late 1778: Savannah fell to British
• 1779: most of settled parts of Georgia were overrun
The War Moves South (cont'd)

• 1780: Clinton attacked Charleston which surrendered in May
  ▪ 3,000 colonial soldiers were captured
• Clinton left General Cornwallis and 8,000 troops and returned to New York
• Callous behavior of British troops spurred spots of resistance throughout occupied areas
The War Moves South (cont'd)

- Spanish Victories:
  - 1779: Spanish Governor of Louisiana defeated British troops in Florida
  - 1780 and 1781: captured British-held ports of Pensacola and Mobile
The War Moves South (cont'd)

- June 1780: Congress put Horatio Gates in charge of southern army, consisting of irregular militia and hard core of Continentals transferred from Washington’s command
  - His failure led to replacement by General Nathanael Greene
The War Moves South (cont'd)

- Greene divided troops and staged a series of raids on scattered points
- January 1781: Battle of Cowpens, British suffered painful defeat
- Cornwallis chased Greene but lost again at Battle of Guilford Courthouse
The War Moves South (cont'd)

- When Cornwallis withdrew to Wilmington, North Carolina so could be re-supplied by navy, Greene regained control of Carolina backcountry
Victory at Yorktown
Victory at Yorktown

- Cornwallis marched north to Virginia where he joined forces with troops under Benedict Arnold who had defected to the British in 1780
- Clinton ordered Cornwallis to establish base at Yorktown where he could be supplied by sea
• In 1781, Washington worked with Comte de Rochambeau and his French troops in Newport, Rhode Island, and Admiral François de Grasse and his West Indian Fleet to bottle up Cornwallis at Yorktown.
• De Grasse defeated the British fleet under Admiral Thomas Graves.
Victory at Yorktown (cont'd)

- Washington tricked Clinton into thinking he was attacking New York then headed south and reached Yorktown in September
  - There he joined with troops under Lafayette and troops from de Grasse’s fleet to total 17,000 troops
• October 17: Cornwallis asked for terms and surrendered his 7,000 troops on October 19
The Yorktown Campaign, April to September 1781

Atlantic Ocean

British movements
French movements
American movements
Negotiating a Favorable Peace
Negotiating a Favorable Peace

- British gave up trying to suppress American rebellion
- France and U.S. had promised not to negotiate a separate peace
Congress appointed John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, Thomas Jefferson, and Henry Laurens as peace commissioners

- Supposed to rely on advice of Comte de Vergennes, who turned out to be more interested in France than in U.S.
- Franklin sought to achieve a rapprochement with Britain, not drive the hardest bargain possible
Congress appointed John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, Thomas Jefferson, and Henry Laurens as peace commissioners

- Americans hinted to British they would be willing to negotiate a separate peace if it was a generous one
- November 1782 preliminary treaty was signed
• British Agreements:
  ▪ Britain agreed that the United States was independent
  ▪ Boundaries were set at Great Lakes, Mississippi River, and 31° north latitude (roughly northern boundary of Florida, which British turned over to Spain)


• British Agreements:
  
  ▪ Britain recognized right of Americans to fish on the Grand Banks off Newfoundland and dry their catch on unsettled beaches in Labrador and Nova Scotia
  
  ▪ Agreed to withdraw troops with “all convenient speed”
Negotiating a Favorable Peace (cont'd)

• American Agreements:
  ▪ Americans said Congress would recommend states reimburse Tories for their seized properties
  ▪ Promised to prevent further property confiscation and prosecutions of Tories
  ▪ Agreed not to impede collection of debts owed British subjects
U.S. achieved terms because representatives were shrewd diplomats and because Britain was concerned with European rivalries.
National Government under the Articles of Confederation
National Government under the Articles of Confederation

- Early attempts at a constitution floundered
  - Larger states objected to equal representation
  - States with large western land claims refused to cede them to the government
- November 1777: Articles of Confederation submitted to states for approval (must be unanimous)
  - Approval of all states was needed but Maryland held out until 1781
National Government under the Articles of Confederation (cont'd)

- Each state was to have one vote and union was a “league of friendship”
- Central government lacked the authority to impose taxes and had no way of enforcing powers it did have
Articles of Confederation

- The charter establishing the first government of the United States, ratified in 1781. The Articles placed the coercive powers to tax and regulate trade within the individual state governments; the national government, widely criticized for being weak, was superseded by the government established by the Constitution of the United States, effective in 1789.
The United States under the Articles of Confederation, 1787
Financing the War
Financing the War

- Congress and states carried on war cooperatively
  - General officers appointed by Congress, lesser ones by states
  - Continental Army supported by Congress, militias by states
Financing the War (cont'd)

- States spent $5.8 million in hard currency and met Congress’ demands for beef, corn, rum, fodder, and other military supplies.

- Congress raised large sums by borrowing:
  - Sold $7 to $8 million in bonds
  - Borrowed $8 million from foreign governments (mostly France)
  - Congress issued $240 million in paper money and states issued $200 million
Financing the War (cont'd)

• Congress established Departments of Foreign Affairs, War, and Finance
• Robert Morris was head of Finance
  ▪ Set up efficient method of obtaining food and uniforms for the army
  ▪ Persuaded Congress to charter a National Bank of North America
  ▪ Got the country on a hard money basis
  ▪ Obtained new foreign loans
State Republican Governments
State Republican Governments

• By 1777, all but Rhode Island and Connecticut had written state constitutions
• All provided for:
  ▪ An elected legislature
  ▪ An executive
  ▪ A system of courts
State Republican Governments (cont'd)

• Powers of governor and courts were limited
  ▪ Governor had no voice in legislation and little in appointments
  ▪ Pennsylvania eliminated office of governor and replaced with elected council of 12
State Republican Governments (cont'd)

- Power was concentrated in legislature which could
  - Declare war
  - Conduct foreign relations
  - Control the courts
  - Perform many other essentially executive functions
State Republican Governments (cont'd)

• Voters had to be property owners or taxpayers
• People were citizens
• Most state constitutions contained a bill of rights that protected the people’s civil liberties
Combined British respect for status, fairness, and due process, with American stress on individualism, and healthy dislike of too much authority.
Social Reform and Antislavery
Social Reform and Antislavery

- Primogeniture, entail, and quitrents were abolished
- Steps toward greater freedom of religion were taken
- Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Virginia, and other states reapportioned legislative seats to give western districts their fair share
  - Some states moved tentatively against slavery
• Slavery
  - November 1775: Lord Dunmore, royal governor of Virginia, proclaimed freedom for all slaves who fought for British
    - In actual fact treated them like captured property
    - Some ended up in West Indies, still slaves
    - Some wound up in Canada and were liberated
    - Some settled in Sierra Leone in West Africa when it was founded in 1787
Social Reform and Antislavery (cont'd)

• 5,000 blacks served in the Patriot army and navy
• Beginning with Pennsylvania in 1780, the northern states abolished slavery
  ▪ Though due to structure of law there were still 3,500 slaves in northern states in 1830
Social Reform and Antislavery (cont'd)

• All states prohibited slave importation from abroad
• Except for South Carolina and Georgia, states removed barriers to owners freeing their slaves
  - Virginia between 1782 and 1790, as many as 10,000 blacks were freed
Changes in Society

- In the way they dressed, in their manner of speech, in the way they dealt with one another in public places, Americans paid at least lip service to equality
  - Denounced granting of titles of nobility
- No major social redistribution of wealth
- New governments were more responsive to public opinion
Women and the Revolution
Women and the Revolution

- Trend in western world toward increasing legal rights for women, strengthened in U.S. by Declaration of Independence
  - Easier for women to obtain divorces
  - Still paternalistic outlook—courts did not take action against Tory women on grounds had to follow husbands
Women and the Revolution (cont'd)

• Influence of women was increased
  ▪ Took over management of businesses and farms while husbands in army
  ▪ Contributions to winning of independence made them conscious of their importance
  ▪ Rhetoric of equality affected their outlook
• Women’s role training the next generation of citizens necessitated female education
Growth of a National Spirit
Growth of a National Spirit

- Nationalism was a result of independence
- By middle of 18th century colonists had begun to think of themselves as a separate society distinct from Britain
- Local ties remained predominant
- Nationalism arose from
  - Common sacrifices
  - War caused many people to move from place to place
Growth of a National Spirit (cont'd)

• Nationalism arose from
  ▪ Practical problems in wake of war that demanded common solutions brought them together
  ▪ Economic developments had unifying effect
Growth of a National Spirit (cont'd)

• **Nationalism**
  - An affinity for a particular nation; in particular, a sense of national consciousness and loyalty that promotes the interests and attributes of that nation over all others.
The Great Land Ordinances
The Great Land Ordinances

• Land Ordinance of 1785
  ▪ Provided for surveying of western land in grid pattern of 6 mile square townships
  ▪ Townships divided into 36 sections of 640 acres (1 square mile) each with section 16 reserved for school support
  ▪ Charged $1 per acre, which favored speculative land development
  ▪ Sale by central government was nationalizing force
The Great Land Ordinances (cont'd)

- Northwest Ordinance of 1787
- Area bound by Ohio, Mississippi, and the Great Lakes was to be carved into not more than 5 and not less than 3 states
  - Created political structure for territories and phased process for achieving statehood
  - Congress appointed: territorial governor, secretary, 3 judges
Area bound by Ohio, Mississippi, and the Great Lakes was to be carved into not more than 5 and not less than 3 states

- When reached 5,000 adult males those with 50 acres of land could vote for legislature (whose laws subject to veto of governor)
- Once had a population of 60,000 could draft constitution and apply for statehood
- Had to have “republican” government and could not allow slavery
• **Northwest Ordinance**
  
  A 1787 measure of the Continental Congress, passed according to the Articles of Confederation, to provide for governance of the region north of the Ohio River and the eventual admission of up to five territories—ultimately the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. The ordinance also prohibited slavery in the region and reserved lands for Indians.
Today's Midwest, as seen from an airplane, resembles a patchwork quilt of forty-acre squares, as in the section of Kansas shown here.
National Heroes
National Heroes

- Nationalism fostered by common heroes
  - Benjamin Franklin
  - George Washington
- Anglican church became Episcopal Church and other churches became independent of European ties
- Noah Webster and an “American” language
William Ranney's painting, The Battle of Cowpens (1845)
Mel Gibson as Patriot leader Benjamin Martin with Jason Isaacs as Colonel Tavington, a barbarous British officer.
# Chapter Review

## Milestones

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<th>Year</th>
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| **1774** | Thomas Jefferson writes *A Summary View of the Rights of British America*  
General Thomas Gage, commander-in-chief of British army in North America, is named governor of Massachusetts |
| **1775** | Colonists fight British in Battles of Lexington and Concord  
Second Continental Congress names George Washington commander-in-chief (of Continental army)  
Gage is replaced as British commander by General Sir William Howe after the Battle of Bunker Hill |
| **1776** | Thomas Paine publishes *Common Sense*  
Washington’s troops occupy Boston  
Second Continental Congress issues Declaration of Independence  
Washington’s troops are defeated in Battle of Long Island  
Washington evacuates New York City  
Washington’s victory at Battle of Trenton boosts morale |
| **1777** | Washington’s troops win Battle of Princeton  
American victory at Saratoga turns the tide and leads to alliance with France  
British occupy Philadelphia after the Battle of Germantown |
| **1777–1778** | Continental army winters at Valley Forge |
| **1778** | British capture Savannah  
British capture Charleston  
States ratify Articles of Confederation  
General Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown |
| **1781** | Great Britain recognizes independence of United States by signing the Peace of Paris |
| **1783** | Congress passes the Land Ordinance of 1785  
Northwest Ordinance establishes governments for the West |