

The American Revolution (1775-1783)

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Thesis

The Revolutionary War, also known as the American Revolution, was a colonial government rebellion against Great Britain between 1775 and 1783. A skirmish between the colonial soldiers and British troops in Lexington and Concord during April 1775 led to a major conflict that included arms and weapons ("Revolutionary War – American Revolution"). The disagreement was followed by a rebellious full-scale war against Great Britain in order to seek Independence. The interest of the French resulted in them helping the colonists to overthrow the British power, which made the Civil War an international conflict and one of the most significant events in American history (Bailyn).

What leads to the Revolution?

Tensions between the British and the colonists had been growing a decade before the revolt. This was ignited by the major changes by the British to take maximum advantage of the American land, exploiting their rights (Bailyn).

The Sugar Act

- The Sugar Act, also known as the Revenue Act, was the first tax imposed on the American colonies by the British authority.
- The purpose of the Act was to raise revenue generated from the customs services of the colonies and increase the power of the British customs agents who exploited the Americans.
- Customs laws were enforced on the people's importation of foreign goods such as wine, silk, coffee, and a few other luxury items.
- The colonists believed that the Act came from the British to exploit them and snatch them away from their rights.
- This led to some colonial leaders being alarmed and angered as their privileges were violated.
- The main issue was with the taxation without representation, including the British's authority to try the colonists unjustly for irrelevant crimes and stealing away their right to stand in front of a jury (*The Sugar Act*).
- New trial procedures were introduced that were not appreciated by the colonists.

The Stamp Act

- The Sugar Act alarmed a handful of leaders of the colony but the [Stamp Act](#)'s declaration led to the rebellion.
- The Stamp Act of 1765 was another attempt by the British to generate maximum revenue from the American colonies and maintain control over them.
- It was the first step towards British direct taxation imposed on American colonists, charging taxes on all activities of the local newspaper, advertisements, leases, licenses, and legal documents.
- The British Empire was reported to have been great debts due to the Seven Years' War during 1756 to 1763. Since they couldn't arrange on their own they relied on tax revenue generated from American colonists, which led them to exploit the resources of North America.
- This angered the colonists and argued that the Act was meant to steal away their rights and was illegal, hence, they turned to mob violence to force the tax collectors to resign.
- However, the parliament ignored the angered colonists and reassured the Stamp Act, including the introduction of the Declaratory Act, which gave more power to the British and the tax collectors.
- Patrick Henry, an American colonist, rose his voice against the British and encouraged a protest which his speech for liberty and freedom ("Stamp Act – American Revolution").

The Tea Act

- Another desperate attempt by the British to save its boat from sinking debts and bailing out the East India Company
- They gave the East India Company a monopoly over the distribution of tea in the colonies and charged high taxations.
- This led to serious tensions between the British and the colonists.
- The colonists showed their anger by destroying EIC boats of tea inventory, causing them major losses. The British reacted violently ("Tea Act – American Revolution").

Boston Massacre

- The Boston Massacre took place in March 1770, when British soldiers got involved in a violent strike by the workers who had lost their jobs and blamed the British.
- Shots were fired, and three persons were killed.
- The British officer, Capt. Thomas Preston was charged with manslaughter along with his team of eight men.
- The Boston Massacre marked in history as beginning a new wave of patriotic sense among the colonists to stand together for their rights ("Boston Massacre – American Revolution").

The Involvement of Guns and Weaponry

- The use of arms and guns is always the main cause of a rebellion.
- The incident of the Boston Massacre increased serious tension among the American colonists and the British Empire due to uncalled-for shootings.
- The British always carried their arms with them which alarmed the colonists of their intentions of scaring them and keeping control forever.
- Muskets were the primary weaponry used by the colonists to stand against the British. They were mostly stolen from the British.
- The British's attempt to seize the cannons and other arms proved to be an invitation for a rebellion.

The Road to Independence

- Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson initiated the formation of a Continental Army that was led by Washington as a commander in chief.
- The first official and major battle occurred in June 1775, at Breed's Hill in Boston, which resulted in many casualties, including the Americans and the British soldiers, who eventually won.
- By June 1776, the revolutionary war was at a peak with more and more colonists being a part of it to fight for their rights and independence from the British Empire.
- On July 4th, the Continental Congress considered the Declaration of Independence.
- However, the British didn't give up their control easily and in order to crush down the revolt, they sent a large fleet of 34,000 troops to New York.

Turning Point (Saratoga)

- The British applied their strategy to destroy the rebellion completely in 1777 with attacks on New England.
- Their attempts resulted in failing due to their armies losing in Saratoga to the colonial army of General Gates (*Battle of Saratoga - American Revolution - HISTORY.Com*)

French Involvement

- The involvement of the French in supporting the colonists in overthrowing the British Empire marked the significance of the event and motivated the Americans.
- The Americans immensely benefitted from the skills and knowledge of the French commanders who had fought major battles before.
- Henry Clinton failed in his war against the colonists but was able to return his army safely, while the French fleet attacked the British, joining the colonists.

- The British still stood a strong ground after major jolts, until the American army won the war at South Carolina in January 1781.

The Closing of the Revolutionary War

- The war came to an end, with the American army under Greene's leadership overthrew the forces of Cornwallis.
- Supported by the French army, Washington was able to move his 14,000 soldiers and 36 French warships to trap the British and force them to surrender.
- The British officially recognized the independence of America in the Treaty of Paris.

Conclusion

The continuous attempts of the British Empire to exploit the American colonists with the introduction of the Sugar Act, Stamp Act and other new laws and policies has to lead to a revolt. It was the massacre that occurred in Boston, which fueled the already angered colonists. It marked the use of arms and guns, which led to manslaughter and violence.

Guns and weaponry played a major role in supporting the colonist soldiers to overthrow British rule. The violent and harsh attempt by the British soldiers also ignited the situation.

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