Chapter 5
Wars for Independence
1764-1783

The English clamp down
• Writs of Assistance permit random searches.
• The Sugar Act authorizes a trial without jury.
• Economic turndown followed end of war.
• Colonists who were free while England was at war now have taxes and laws imposed.
• 1765--The Stamp Act is Passed
• Stamp Act is repealed

What’s Going On
• England had defeated Spain ending its’ role as an international superpower.
• In Europe, both France and England were each maneuvering to isolate the other.
• England had defeated the French in Canada in what was called “The French & Indian War.
• With France now in check the English could focus on reigning in the colonies.

Seeing the Colonies Up Close
• The French and Indian War had brought attention to the whole issue of the colonies.
• British soldiers sent to the colonies to fight the French reported back to England.
• This had political repercussions.
• The Colonists fought along side the English and began to doubt their competence.

Unintended Outcomes
• History is full of what can only be described as “unintended outcomes.”
• Increased interaction with the colonists by the English point out differences to both sides.
• Washington seeks to be made a full-fledge English officer; a general who dies agrees.
• Washington is rebuffed in an officer promotion system favoring the English elite.

Parliament strikes back
• Passes Townshend Acts (1767).
• Benjamin Franklin tells Parliament that Americans oppose only direct taxes not tariffs as long as there was no representation
• Colonists are forced to pay for the cost of keeping soldiers in the colonies.
• Colonists oppose Townshend Acts.

Ben Franklin
• Unconventional in every conceivable way Franklin was one of the early intellectual giants of our revolution.
England Doesn’t Understand

- British are shocked and humiliated by ungrateful colonist's response.
- English did not understand Scots-Irish hatred.
- The Scots-Irish may not have wanted taxes, more importantly they wanted nothing to do with the English who had used them as pawns in Ireland and persecuted their Presbyterianism.
- The most powerful nation in the world will not know how to deal with humiliation.

Ireland As An Example

- Both the English and the colonial leaders will look to England’s treatment of Ireland as an example.
- The English will feel that allow the Irish some freedom led to open rebellion.
- The American colonists will see the oppression in Ireland as something they will not tolerate if impose upon them.

The English Make Things Worse

- The English troops will become aggressive in New England angering the general population.
- Boston Massacre-British troops fire on a mob killing five; one was a freed slave.
- Smuggling which began during Townshend Acts continues afterwards.

Back to the brink

- Internal politics of England encouraged renewed confrontation.
- Political opposition says government was too soft in dealing with the colonists.
- The political party in power fears losing power with their tenuous hold on a majority.
- The Boston Tea Party; a moderate response.
- England passes Intolerable Acts.
- The instability of Parliamentary system.

Colonists Strike Back

- Response to Boston Tea Party.
- Angers many who would not have joined in.
- Colonists call the First Continental Congress (1774).
- Original colonies (except Georgia) meet in Philadelphia to discuss Intolerable Acts.
- Approve boycott of British goods.
- Advises Massachusetts’ colonists to arm.

The Shot Heard Around the World

- British housed in Boston move on Rebel arms cache.

Overreacting Leads to More Problems

- England overreacts to colonists relatively mild display of insubordination.
• The reaction results in making more supporters of independence not less.
• England, like most imperial powers, will make things worse through heavy-handed response to manageable insubordination.

**Armed Conflict**
• British troops move on weapons storage sites in New England.
• Paul Revere's ride warning of movement.
• He didn’t say “The British are Coming!”
• “Shot Heard Around the World”
• Second Continental Congress prepares for war with England.

**Paul Revere’s Ride**
• He was really one of two or three riders-Ne ver said “British are Coming!”

**How Wars Often Get Started**
• Throughout history many, if not most, wars are based on such profound misconceptions.
• In the American Revolution both sides base policy and strategy on misconceptions about their adversary

**The Colonist’s View**
• Colonist thought that the English didn’t have the stomach for a battle across the ocean.
• 10-12 weeks sailing time across Atlantic.
• England had defeated all enemies.
• Pride in avoiding defeat anywhere.
• Americans had seen them fight in the French and Indian War.
• They could be beaten.

**The English View of the Situation**
• The English saw the colonists as *bumpkins*
• The most powerful army in the world couldn’t lose to a group of ragtag farmers.
• The size of the English Army was advantage enough to defeat any foe.
• English Generals were some of the most experienced tacticians in the world.
• Loyalists could be counted on for support.

**The Loyalists**
• American history textbooks overlook, even deliberately minimize at the expense of accuracy, the number of American colonists who remained loyal to the King.
• Canada initial non-French European inhabitants are all former Loyalists.
• In the South Loyalists will form military units and fight along side the English.
The Revolution Divided Families

• Benjamin Franklin’s son, William, was a Loyalist whose political position estranged him from his father for both their lives.

First two years of the Revolutionary War

• Bold moves catch the English off guard.
• Benedict Arnold leading the Green Mountain Boys seize canons from Fort Ticonderoga
• Move canons overland to Boston.
• Position on heights overlooking Boston.

Battle of Bunker Hill

• English move to break American rebel’s siege of Boston.
• Battle of Bunker Hill
• Actually took place on Breeds Hill
• Facts don’t always become history
• Colonists aimed at officers
• Knew enlisted men were reluctant soldiers.

British Strategy

• Divide the colonies.
• Occupy the major cities.
• Recruit Loyalists as support in the same way colonists fought along side the British in the French & Indian War.
• Blockade the coastline.

Flaws in English Strategy

• Great Britain’s political and economic power were concentrated in one locale, London and its environs; an island that could be isolated.
• The colonies had multiple centers of political and economic power; they were a continent.
• The colonists could move freely away from the coastal plains that England sought to dominate; colonists didn’t need the sea.
• Enough natural resources on the American continent to keep the colonies going for a while.

In the South

• The Loyalist rise up as planned.
• British regulars defeated and abandon Loyalists. (A classic English pattern.)
• Poor leadership in British Army in the South; remember competence was a factor in only some of the English army promotions.
• Those who supported independence more relied on guerilla warfare.
In the Middle Colonies

- Hold New York City, though a major port it was not vital to more than three colonies.
- Hold Philadelphia; many Loyalists there.
- They think in terms of London as to the colonial cities importance. This a grave error.
- Loyalist do make life in Philadelphia easy for the British Army.
- Valley Forge more of a symbol than a military threat.

The Importance of George Washington

- Bold and inventive—never giving up.
- Experienced soldier but not traditionalist.
- Skeptical about English invincibility.
- Personally motivated to show them up.
- Still bitter over the rebuff years earlier.
- Remembered impact of Indian’s tactics.

England’s Plans for Victory

- Isolate the New England colonies.
- Move south from Canada via Lake Champlain
- Move north from New York City; up the river.
- Move east from Oswego thru Mohawk valley
- Plan thwarted by Colonial victory at Saratoga.
- Benedict Arnold shows valor and innovation with counter attack with frustrates English.

Valley Forge

- More of a symbolic victory
- Soldiers going home to be with families
- German merchants not sympathetic
- Germans will not sell supplies to Americans
- Washington lived better than soldiers
- The British hold Philadelphia
- Refusing to surrender was most important
- Resolute in their desire to defeat English.

Impact of victories

- Europe changes opinion of Revolutionaries; especially after Saratoga victory.
- French consider helping the colonists.
- England offers to repeal Intolerable Acts.
- Colonists sense victory is near.
• Spain and Holland recognize the U.S.
• Hatred of English in European nations plays a significant role in American support.

The Public Opinion
• Not all colonists supported independence.
• Large Loyalist population in each colony.
• Many were neutral, particularly the Germans.
• Many supported England if not the tax.
• A minority fought and won independence.
• Some historians speculate that it was 1/3 for independence, 1/3 against, 1/3 neutral.

Stalemate
• Indians supporting the British attacked the colonial frontier; many civilians slaughtered
• Adds to anti-Native American sentiment
• French back away from aggressive support.
• Stalemate exists until British army leaves safety of New York for the South
• The war drags on even after spectacular Saratoga victory falsely suggests quick victory.

Victory at Yorktown.
• Washington and French coordinate attack
• British cornered in Yorktown.
• French fleet block escape.
• British are forced to surrender.
• The war is over

Diplomatic Triumph at Paris.
• John Jay
• Benjamin Franklin
• John Adams
• Not everything is resolved or observed
• British hold on to fortresses in the west despite agreeing to abandon them

The results of independence
• Religion
• Southern states end official religion.
• Government
• Most colonial governments become states
• Rights
• Rights change only slightly
• Freedoms held in British absence become the law.
Chapter 5

**Slavery**
- Nothing is changed about slavery.
- Northern colonies begin process of ending the practice.
- The southern elite so controlled the Southern colonies that there would have been no union without accepting slavery.
- Fewer than 15% of Southerners own slaves.

**Victory At Yorktown**
- The English move the battle to the South where there are more Loyalists.
- After some success the English are cornered at Yorktown on the James River.
- The French fleet shows up and blocks the English retreat.
- Political repercussions in England will be significant.

**Treaty of Paris**
- Tentatively approved November 30, 1782
- Officially signed September 3, 1783
- English agree to leave peaceably
- English agree not to take slaves with them.
- Americans gain fishing rights off Canada.
- Americans & English agree to honor all contracts among citizens of both nations.

**Some Terms Not Honored**
- Americans will not reimburse Loyalists for properties that were confiscated during conflict; no funds in American treasury.
- In return, England will not abandon forts in the Ohio valley.
- This crisis results in the abandonment of the Articles of Confederation.
- Plays a role in the War of 1812.