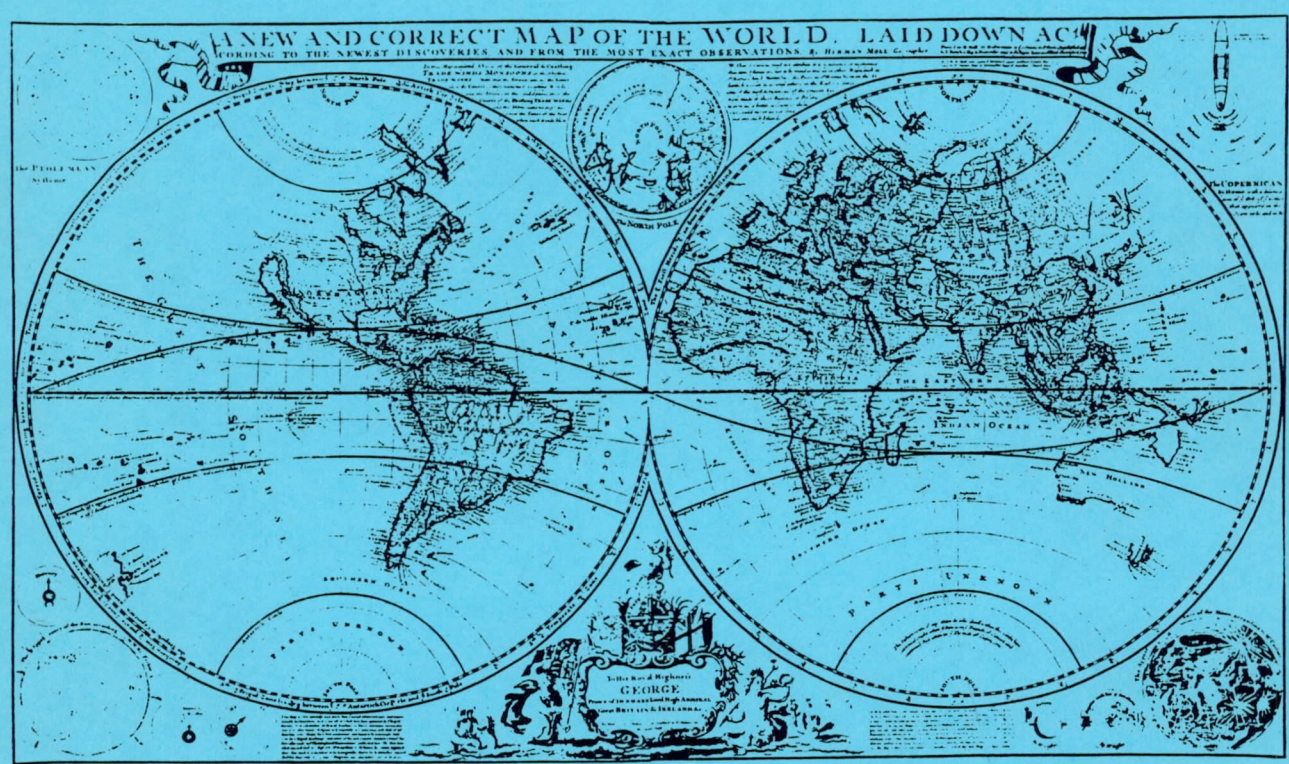


Mark Hunter

Becoming Americans
Our Struggle to Be Both Free and Equal

Chronology 1754-1784



A Choosing Revolution Resource

A New and Correct Map of the World. Laid Down According to the Newest Discoveries,
and from the most Exact Observations, by Herman Moll, Geographer.
(Acc. # 1968-434)

INTRODUCTION

This chronology was produced as a reference tool for those involved in "Choosing Revolution" programming. The chronology was created with two objectives in mind: (1) to provide as full a linear account of relevant events as possible, from the Seven Years' War through the end of the American Revolution and (2) to help program planners and interpreters to put local events within a wider context. To accomplish these goals, the chronology includes world events, as well as events in Great Britain, North America, Virginia, and Williamsburg.

May 1996

CHRONOLOGY
WORLD (W), GREAT BRITAIN (GB), NORTH AMERICA (NA),
VIRGINIA (VA) & WILLIAMSBURG (WLM)

W-1754

- The future French King Louis XVI born.

GB-1754

- Henry Fielding, English novelist, dies.
- Thomas Chippendale publishes "The Gentleman and Cabinetmaker's Directory".
- William Hogarth publishes satirical print "The Election".
- John Woolman publishes "Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes".
- St. Andrews Royal and Ancient Golf Club, Scotland, founded.

NA-1754

- **May 28** French and Indian War begins in North America with skirmish near Great Meadows.
- King's College, New York founded; renamed Columbia University in 1784.
- **June** Albany Congress meets.
- Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island constructed (oldest surviving synagogue building in North America).
- Jonathan Edwards, colonial theologian, publishes "A Careful and Strict Inquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notions of Freedom of the Will".

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W-1755

- Marie Antoinette born.
- Lisbon, Portugal earthquake kills 30,000 people.
- Montesquieu, French political philosopher, dies.

GB-1755

- Samuel Johnson publishes "Dictionary of the English Language".

NA-1755

- **January 11** Alexander Hamilton, American statesman, born.
- **July 9** British army under General Braddock defeated by French near Fort Duquesne (modern Pittsburgh).
- **September 24** John Marshall, future U.S. Chief Justice of Supreme Court, born.
- **December 3** Gilbert Stuart, American artist, born.

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W-1756

- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart born.
- First chocolate factory opens in Germany.

CHRONOLOGY 1756-1759

GB-1756

- Britain declares war on France in the Seven Years War.
- Thomas Rowlandson, English caricaturist, born.

NA-1756

- **February 6** Aaron Burr, Vice President of the United States, born.
- Henry (Light-Horse Harry) Lee, Revolutionary commander, born.

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W-1757

- Lafayette born.
- Frederick the Great of Prussia defeats Austrians at Prague and is defeated by them at Kolin.
- Battle of Plassey in India: British defeat French.

GB-1757

- William Blake, English poet and artist, born.
- Ministry of William Pitt, the Elder, begins.
- "The London Chronicle" is first published.

NA-1757

- John Woolman, Quaker religious leader and reformer, writes his *Journal* (published in 1774), citing his belief in racial equality and social justice.

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W-1758

- Robespierre, French revolutionist, born.
- Pope Benedict XIV dies; succeeded by Pope Clement XIII.

GB-1758

- Horatio Nelson, British admiral, born.
- Samuel Johnson publishes weekly periodical, "The Idler".

NA-1758

- **April 28** James Monroe, fifth President of the United States, born.
- **July 26** British take Louisburg, Nova Scotia, Canada.
- **October 16** Noah Webster, American lexicographer, born.

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W-1759

- King Ferdinand VI of Spain dies; succeeded by Charles III.
- Expulsion of Jesuits from Portugal.
- Georg Frederick Handel, musician, dies.
- Voltaire publishes "Candide".

CHRONOLOGY 1759-1762

GB-1759

- William Pitt, the Younger, born.
- Robert Burns, Scottish poet, born.
- British Museum opens.
- William Wilberforce, British politician, abolitionist, philanthropist, born.
- "The Public Ledger," London daily paper, appears.

NA-1759

- **September 18** British gain Quebec from French; French General Montcalm and British General Wolf killed in action.

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W-1760

- Russians occupy and burn Berlin.
- Dutch explorer Coetsee advances beyond Orange River in South Africa.
- Marie ("Madame") Tussaud born.

GB-1760

- King George II dies and is succeeded by his grandson, George III.
- Laurence Sterne publishes "Tristram Shandy," vols. 1 and 2.
- Josiah Wedgwood establishes pottery factory at Etruria, Staffordshire, England.
- Botanical Gardens at Kew, London, open.
- Thomas Clarkson, English antislavery agitator, born.

NA-1760

- John Singleton Copley begins to develop portrait style in Boston.

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W-1761

- Ballet "Don Juan" by Gluck performed in Vienna.
- Haydn appointed Kapellmeister to Prince Esterhazy.
- First French veterinary school founded at Lyons, France.

GB-1761

- Collection of works of Voltaire printed in London.
- Oratorio "Judith" by Thomas Arne performed in London.

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W-1762

- Czarina Elizabeth of Russia dies: succeeded by Peter III who is assassinated; succeeded by Catherine II (the Great) who rules for 34 years.
- British capture Martinique, Grenada, Havana, and Manila.
- Petit Trianon built by Louis XV for Mme. DuBarry.

CHRONOLOGY 1762-1763

- Mozart, age six, tours Europe as musical prodigy.
 - Rousseau's masterpieces "The Social Contract" and "Emile" are published.
- GB-1762**
- Lord Bute, friend and advisor to the King, named Prime Minister.
 - Stuart and Revett publish "Classical Antiquities of Athens," vol. 1, inspires neoclassical movement.
 - At Carron Ironworks in Stirlingshire, Scotland, cast iron converted for first time into malleable iron.
 - Beau Nash, Englishman, dandy and master of ceremonies at Bath, dies.
- NA-1762**
- Benjamin Franklin improves the harmonica, turning it into a practical musical instrument.
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- W-1763**
- **February 10** The Treaty of Paris ends the Seven Years' War. Britain gains Canada, all of French Louisiana east of the Mississippi River and Spanish Florida. Spain acquires New Orleans and French Louisiana west of the Mississippi.
- GB-1763**
- Whig George Grenville (brother-in-law of William Pitt) forms a ministry.
- NA-1763**
- **May 7** Pontiac's War begins when Ottawa Indians initiate a five-month siege of the British garrison at Fort Detroit.
 - **May** Pontiac's supporters capture Fort Sandusky (Ohio), Fort Saint Joseph (Mich.), and Fort Miami (Ind.).
 - **June 22** Pontiac's followers begin besieging Fort Pitt.
 - **June** Pontiac's followers gain control of Fort Venango (Pa.), Fort Mackinac (Mich.), Fort Presqu'Isle (Pa.), Fort Le Boeuf (Pa.), and Fort La Baye (Wis.).
 - **August 5-6** Colonel Henry Bouquet's Highlanders and Royal Americans decisively defeat Indians at Bushy Run, (Pa.).
 - **August 10** Colonel Bouquet relieves Fort Pitt.
 - **October 7** The Proclamation of 1763, forbidding English settlement west of the Appalachian crest, issued.
 - **November 16** General Thomas Gage arrives in New York City to assume his new assignment as Commander-in-Chief of the British army in America.
 - **December 14-27** In retaliation for Indian raids, residents of Paxton, Pa. murder 20 peaceful Conestoga Indians.
 - First Chambers of Commerce formed in New York and New Jersey.

CHRONOLOGY 1763-1764

VA-1763

- **December 1** In the Parson's Cause, before the Hanover County Court, Patrick Henry delivers his argument challenging the Crown's right to nullify laws desired by the people.

WLM-1763

- **May 19-31** The General Assembly meets at the Capitol in Williamsburg. Lieutenant Governor Francis Fauquier announces the signing of the Treaty of Paris ending the Seven Years' War.

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W-1764

- Jesuits suppressed in France.
- Mozart, age eight, writes his first symphony.
- Madame de Pompadour dies.

GB-1764

- **March 9** Prime Minister George Grenville proposes stamp duties on American colonies to help pay costs of war.
- **April 5** Britain replaces the Molasses Act of 1733 with the Sugar Act, a maritime tax designed to raise revenue from the colonies. Though it was a revision in the regulations of trade, its purpose was made clear in the preamble, which stated it was "just and necessary, that a revenue be raised, in your Majesty's said dominions in *America*." Part of its provisions violated traditional civil rights of accused smugglers by denying them jury trials (because they were to be tried in admiralty courts) and presuming them guilty until proven innocent.
- **April 19** George III signs the Currency Act, prohibiting the colonies to alleviate their shortage of hard money by issuing paper currency without the Privy Council's permission.
- Literary Club founded in London by Dr. Johnson and friends.
- William Hogarth dies.
- J.C. Bach gives recitals in London.
- James Watt invents the condenser, a first step toward the steam engine.
- London introduces practice of numbering houses.

NA-1764

- **January 24** Several hundred armed Pennsylvania frontiersmen assemble outside Philadelphia and threaten to burn it because they felt the government had failed to protect them from Indian attacks. They left only after Benjamin Franklin reasoned with them.
- **August 12** Most Great Lakes Indian tribes abandon Pontiac and sign a peace treaty with Colonel John Bradstreet.

CHRONOLOGY 1764-1765

- **November 9-14** Colonel Henry Bouquet negotiates a truce at the Muskingum River in Ohio with the local Indian allies of Pontiac and obtains the release of white prisoners captured since the previous year.
- Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island founded.
- First permanent settlement at St. Louis.

WLM-1764

- **January 12** The General Assembly meets at the Capitol in Williamsburg.
- **January 21** The General Assembly adjourns.
- **October 30** The General Assembly meets in Williamsburg.
- **December 18** In response to threats of a stamp tax on the colonies, Virginia's General Assembly pens an address to the king and memorials to the upper and lower houses of Parliament. These documents stated Virginia's opposition to the tax on the grounds that the British constitution protected its subjects from taxation without their consent, and that Virginia's charters and past practice gave the House of Burgesses the sole right to tax Virginians. They also cite the economic suffering such a tax would impose on the colony.
- **December 21** The General Assembly adjourns.

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W-1765

- Emperor Francis I of the Holy Roman Empire dies; succeeded by his son Joseph II co-regent with his mother, Marie Theresa.
- Formation of British colony of Senegambia, West Africa (ended in 1783).
- Potato becomes most popular European foodstuff.

GB-1765

- **March 22** George III signs the Stamp Act, to take effect November 1. This was the first internal (nonmaritime) tax imposed upon the colonies. It required taxes upon fifteen classes of documents used in court proceedings (including the licenses of attorneys), the papers used in clearing ships from harbors, college diplomas, appointments to public office, bonds, grants and deeds for land, mortgages, indentures, leases, contracts, bills of sale, articles of apprenticeship, liquor licenses, playing cards, dice, pamphlets, newspapers and newspaper advertisements, and almanacs. Violators could be tried in either common-law courts or admiralty courts, at the decision of the prosecutor. Again, this abridged the right to trial by jury, and it extended the authority of admiralty courts beyond maritime concerns.
- **May 15** George III signs the Quartering Act, requiring certain colonial legislatures to provide barracks and supplies for the army.
- Charles Wentworth, Marquess of Rockingham, succeeds Grenville as prime minister.
- Horace Walpole writes Gothic novel "The Castle of Otranto"

CHRONOLOGY 1765

NA-1765

- Lord Nelson's future flagship "Victory" launched.
- **June 8** The Massachusetts House of Representatives sends out a circular letter inviting the legislatures of the other colonies to meet in a congress at New York in October to "consider of a general and united, dutiful, loyal and humble Representation of their Condition to His Majesty and the Parliament; and to implore Relief."
- **June/July** Copies of Patrick Henry's Stamp Act Resolves published in their entirety outside of Virginia, establishing Virginia's and Henry's reputation as strong proponents of colonial liberties.
- **August 15** Andrew Oliver, the Massachusetts collector of the stamp taxes, resigns following an attack on his Boston home by an enraged crowd the previous night.
- **August 26** James McEvers, collector of the stamp taxes in New York, resigns.
- **August 28** Angus Johnston, the distributor of stamps for Rhode Island resigns after the "Sons of Liberty" wreck his Newport home the day before.
- **September 2** William Coxe, collector of the stamp taxes in New Jersey, resigns, though he had not been personally threatened.
- **September 2** A mob pulls down the house of stamp distributor Zachariah Hood of Maryland, forcing him to flee to New York.
- **September 15** Jared Ingersoll, Connecticut's stamp distributor, resigns when a mob accosts him and prepares to lynch him.
- **September [30]** George Meserve, New Hampshire's distributor of stamps, resigns.
- **October 7** John Hughes, stamp distributor for Pennsylvania and Delaware, resigns.
- **October 7-25** The Stamp Act Congress meets in New York with nine colonies participating. New Hampshire declined to participate, but approved the proceedings after it was over. Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia were not represented because their governors refused to convene the assemblies to elect delegates. The governors of Delaware and New Jersey likewise did not call the assemblies, but the assemblymen informally elected their own delegates, and the New York Assembly's Committee of Correspondence nominated themselves as delegates to the congress. The Stamp Act Congress drew up a statement of "Declarations of our humble Opinion, respecting the most Essential rights and Liberties of the Colonists . . . ," in which they took the position that Parliament had no right to tax the colonies. These opinions were expressed in a petition to the King, a memorial to the House of Lords, and a petition to the House of Commons.
- **October 20** Caleb Lloyd, stamp tax agent for South Carolina, flees for his life before a mob and takes refuge at Fort Johnson.

CHRONOLOGY 1765-1766

- **October 29** Both Caleb Lloyd and George Saxby, Inspector of Stamps for North Carolina, South Carolina, and the Bermudas, agree to suspend their duties until the petitions of the Stamp Act Congress had been received and acted upon by Parliament.
- **October 31** New York merchants initiate nonimportation movement by agreeing to boycott British goods.
- **November 16** North Carolina's stamp distributor William Houston is required to resign when he arrives in Wilmington to claim his letter of appointment from the Stamp Office.
- **November 26** A New York mob forces the resignation of Maryland stamp distributor Zachariah Hood, who had fled there in September.
- First professional training in medicine offered by the College of Philadelphia.

VA-1765

- **September 24** Westmoreland County, Va., justices resign in protest against Stamp Act.

WLM-1765

- **May 1** The General Assembly begins its session at the Capitol in Williamsburg.
- **May 29** In the House of Burgesses, Patrick Henry introduces resolves against the Stamp Act, five of which are approved by the Committee of the Whole.
- **May 30** In support of the Virginia Stamp Act resolves, Patrick Henry delivers his "Caesar-Brutus" speech. They are approved by the House, the fifth by only a narrow margin. The next day, in Henry's absence, the members retract the fifth resolve because of its radical nature.
- **June 1** Virginia's Lieutenant Governor Francis Fauquier dissolves the General Assembly because of their passage of the Stamp Act resolves.
- **October 30** Virginia stamp agent Colonel George Mercer arrives in Williamsburg and is set upon by an angry mob, which disperses at the intervention of Lieutenant Governor Fauquier.
- **October 31** Mercer resigns. Because there were no stamps available, courts and other public business came to a near standstill until the act was repealed.

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W-1766

- Czarina Catherine the Great of Russia grants freedom of worship.
- Haydn composes "Great Mass in E flat no. 4 with organ".
- Louis de Bougainville on voyage to Pacific discovers Tahiti, the Solomon Islands, and New Guinea.

CHRONOLOGY 1766

GB-1766

- **March 18** George III signs both the Stamp Act's repeal and the Declaratory Act, which denied that the colonists were exempt from any Parliamentary taxes or laws.
- **July 30** William Pitt (Earl of Chatham), a strong opponent of the Stamp Act, becomes Britain's prime minister as Lord Privy Seal.
- **November 1** Parliament reduces the Sugar Act's rates by half.
- Oliver Goldsmith writes novel "Vicar of Wakefield".
- Theatre Royal opens in Bristol (oldest British theater still in use).
- First paved sidewalk laid in Westminster, London.

NA-1766

- **January 4** Georgia's stamp distributor George Angus, the only colonial distributor who was not a native of America, arrives by ship at Tybee and is whisked away to the Governor's house before his arrival is generally known. He takes his oaths of office and distributes the stamp papers, but flees before he has been in the colony for two weeks.
- **July 23-31** Sir William Johnson negotiates a treaty at Fort Oswego, N.Y., that formally ends Pontiac's War.
- John Street Church, first colonial Methodist Church, is established in New York City.
- Mason-Dixon Line marking boundaries between Pennsylvania and Maryland drawn by Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon.

VA-1766

- **February 11** Northampton County Court declares the Stamp Act unconstitutional and states that it "does not bind, affect or concern the Inhabitants of this Colony."
- **February 27** Freeholders of Westmoreland and nearby counties sign Richard Henry Lee's articles of association in protest of the Stamp Act. The articles contained a pledge "at every hazard, and, paying no regard to danger or to death . . . to prevent the execution of the said Stamp Act in any instance whatsoever within this Colony."
- **March 7-14** Richard Bland publishes *An Inquiry into the Rights of the British Colonies*, a pamphlet setting forth the colonies' constitutional position in opposing the Stamp Act.
- **March 31** Sons of Liberty meet in Norfolk to adopt resolutions protesting the Stamp Act.
- **June 3** Col. John Chiswell is brought before Cumberland County Court for the murder of Robert Routledge. The court refused bail. When he is subsequently brought to Williamsburg, three General Court justices grant him bail, creating a furor throughout Virginia.

CHRONOLOGY 1766-1767

WLM-1766

- **May 2** News of the repeal of the Stamp Act is first published in the *Virginia Gazette*.
- **May 9** William Rind announces that he will begin publishing his newspaper in Williamsburg.
- **May 11** The death of John Robinson, longtime speaker of the House of Burgesses and treasurer of the colony, reveals widespread political scandal. Robinson had failed to retire over one hundred thousand pounds of paper currency as required by law, and had instead loaned it to Virginia gentry and officeholders in financial straits.
- **June 9** Lieutenant Governor Fauquier proclaims the repeal of the Stamp Act.
- **June 13** The repeal of the Stamp Act is celebrated in Williamsburg with a ball at the Capitol and general illumination. The ball was attended by the Governor, several members of the Council, and "a large and genteel company." Loyal and patriotic toasts were drunk.
- **October 30** The freeholders of James City County publish an address to their burgess Lewis Burwell, Esq., instructing him to vote for the separation of the offices of speaker and treasurer. The address begins: "We a majority of the freeholders of this his Majesty's most ancient country in Virginia, thinking ourselves to have an indisputable right of directing our Members to vote according to our own sentiments, when any thing material is to be offered to a General Assembly . . ."
- **November 6** General Assembly meets at the Capitol.
- **November 12** The House separates the offices of speaker and treasurer in response to the Robinson scandal. Peyton Randolph is elected speaker, and Robert Carter Nicholas is named treasurer.
- **December 16** The General Assembly adjourns.

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W-1767

- Siam invaded by Burma.
- Chaos in India; Robert Clive leaves.
- Jesuits expelled from Spain, Parma, Sicily.
- Georg Philipp Telemann, German composer, dies.
- Karl Philipp Emanuel Bach becomes Telemann's successor as director of church music in Hamburg.

GB-1767

- **March** Charles Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer, assumes leadership of Parliament from William Pitt, who has fallen very ill.

CHRONOLOGY 1767-1768

- **May 13** Charles Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer, pushes through an act imposing duties placing taxes on tea, glass, paper, and dye stuffs in the American colonies.
- **June 29** George III signs Townshend's Revenue Act, which taxes specific imports entering North America. He also signs the American Board of Customs Act, which tightens the enforcement of import duties.
- **July 2** George III signs the New York Suspending Act, which denies New York's right to pass its own laws if it does not comply with the Quartering Act. Because New York has already done so, the act is not implemented.
- Augustus Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton becomes prime minister.
- Rousseau settles in England and receives pension from George III.
- Laurence Stern completes "Tristram Shandy".
- Allan Ramsay appointed court painter to George III.

NA-1767

- **March 15** Andrew Jackson, seventh President of United States, born.
- **June 6** New York complies with the Quartering Act.
- **July 11** John Quincy Adams, sixth President of the United States, born.
- **October 1** New York Assembly suspended for initially refusing to support quartering of British troops.
- **November 5** John Dickenson's "Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania to the Inhabitants of the British Colonies" (12 essays) calling the Townshend duties unconstitutional first appear in *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* and are critical in galvanizing opposition to the Townshend duties.
- **December 30** House of Representatives of Massachusetts Bay challenges the constitutionality of Townshend duties.
- David Rittenhouse, Philadelphia instrument maker, builds first colonial apparatus (orrery) for demonstrating the phases and motions of the planets in the solar system.

WLM-1767

- **March 12** General Assembly meets at the Capitol in Williamsburg.
- **April 11** General Assembly adjourns.

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W-1768

- Canaletto, Italian painter, dies.

GB-1768

- A separate British Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Earl of Hillsborough, appointed.
- Founding of the Royal Academy in London with Joshua Reynolds as president.
- British explorer, James Cook, begins his voyage around the world.
- **November 8** In a speech George III condemns lawlessness in Massachusetts.

CHRONOLOGY 1768

NA-1768

- **February 11** The Massachusetts Assembly denounces the Townshend duties in a letter to all of the other colonies. In April Lord Hillsborough demands that Americans repudiate the circular, but his demand instead generates strong support for Massachusetts.
- Massachusetts Assembly dissolved for refusing to assist in the collection of taxes.
- **June 10** Rioting erupts at Boston's docks, following the seizure of John Hancock's ship *Liberty*. Customs officials subsequently flee the city.
- **June 15** The governor of Massachusetts requests British troops to protect the customs service.
- **October 1** British troops arrive in Boston to enforce customs laws.
- **October 14** The Cherokee and John Stuart, superintendent of Indian affairs for the southern department, sign a treaty at Hard Labor, South Carolina, intended to fix the boundary established by the Proclamation of 1763. The specified border, following that negotiated the year before by Governor William Tryon, from Tryon Mountain to Chiswell's Mines in southwestern Virginia and then continued to the mouth of the Great Kanawha on the Ohio River.
- **November 5** The Treaty of Fort Stanwix is signed between the Six Nations of the Iroquois and related tribes, and Sir William Johnson, superintendent of Indian affairs for the northern department. The Indians concede lands southeast of a border running from Fort Stanwix to Fort Pitt, and from there following the southern bank of the Ohio river to the mouth of the Tennessee River. This treaty opens up large areas for settlement along the frontiers of New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.
- Proclamation of 1763 modified to allow Proclamation line to be moved west as Indian treaties are negotiated and land purchased.
- New York tailors strike demanding higher wages.
- Daniel Boone, starting from North Carolina, makes his first exploration west of the Appalachians.

WLM-1768

- **January 7-March 31** Alexander Purdie publishes in the *Virginia Gazette* "Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania to the Inhabitants of the British Colonies," written by John Dickinson and originally printed in Philadelphia. These were a straightforward statement of the colonial opposition to the Townshend Acts on constitutional grounds.
- **March 3** Lt. Gov. Francis Fauquier dies.
- **March 3-April 28** Arthur Lee's "Monitor's Letters" are published in William Rind's *Virginia Gazette*. "Monitor's Letters" suggested nonimportation agreements in protest of the Townshend Acts.

CHRONOLOGY 1768-1769

- **March 4** John Blair, president of the Council, becomes acting governor.
- **March 31-April 16** The General Assembly meets in Williamsburg.
- **April 14-16** General Assembly endorses the Massachusetts circular letter.
- **April 16** To protest the Townshend Acts, the General Assembly adopts memorials to the king and both houses of Parliament, and inform other colonial assemblies of its actions.
- **October 26** The new governor, Norborne Berkeley, Baron de Botetourt, arrives in Williamsburg.
- **October 27** General Assembly dissolved according to custom upon the arrival of the new governor. (General Assembly is not sitting at this time.)

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W-1769

- The future Emperor Napoleon I born in Corsica.
- Pope Clement XIII dies; Pope Clement XIV ascends the papal throne.
- First lightning conductors placed on high buildings.
- Alexander Humboldt, German naturalist, born.

GB-1769

- **January 27-February 9** Parliament calls for trial of American agitators in Great Britain.
- Privy Council decides to retain tea duty in American colonies.
- Joshua Reynolds knighted.
- "The Morning Chronicle" issued in London.

NA-1769

- **July 22** Charleston, S.C., becomes the last major port to adopt a nonimportation agreement.

VA-1769

- Virginia Assembly dissolved after protesting against colonial treason trials held in Westminster.
- Five women sign Virginia nonimportation agreement against Britain--Lucy Randolph, Anne Randolph, Mary Starke, Christian Burwell, and Rebecca Watson.

WLM-1769

- **May 8** General Assembly meets in Williamsburg, new elections having been held since Botetourt's arrival.
- **May 16** The House of Burgesses adopts resolutions that reassert its exclusive right to tax Virginians and condemn Parliament's proposal to transport colonists accused of treason for trial in England.
- **May 17** The House adopts an address to the king based upon the previous day's resolutions. Lord Botetourt dissolves the General Assembly. Most of

CHRONOLOGY 1769-1770

the burgesses adjourn to the Raleigh Tavern. They elect Peyton Randolph moderator and a committee to consider George Mason's proposal for an association that would bind all associators from importing specified English goods or purchasing those imports after September 1, or from importing slaves after November 1.

- **May 18** The association is signed by eighty-eight burgesses, who take copies home to their constituents.
- **October 21** Thirty-one Cherokee and Catawba Indians come to Williamsburg to protest encroachments on their lands.
- **November 7** Following summer elections, the General Assembly meets in Williamsburg. Lord Botetourt announces the British ministry's intention to seek repeal of the Townshend Duties, except that on tea, at the next session of Parliament.
- **December 13** The Speaker and the House of Burgesses give a ball at the Capitol "for the entertainment of his Excellency Lord Botetourt," where "the same patriotic spirit which gave rise to the association of the Gentlemen on a late event, was most agreeably manifested in the dress of the Ladies on this occasion, who, to the number of near one hundred, appeared in homespun gowns."
- **December 21** The General Assembly adjourns.

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W-1770

- Dauphin of France marries Marie Antoinette, daughter of Empress Maria Theresa of Austria.
- Hegel, German philosopher, born.
- Beethoven, German composer, born.
- James Bruce, Scottish explorer, discovers the source of the Blue Nile.
- James Cook discovers Botany Bay, Australia.
- First public restaurant opens in Paris.

GB-1770

- **January 31** Lord North becomes head of the British government.
- **April 12** Lord North's government repeals all Townshend duties on paper, glass, and dyestuffs, but retains duty on tea, and Quartering Act is allowed to expire.
- William Wordsworth, English poet, born.
- Edmund Burke publishes "Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents".
- Gainsborough paints "The Blue Boy".
- Civil liberties, international free trade, textile machines, and steam power lead to an industrial revolution in England.
- Visiting cards are introduced in England.

CHRONOLOGY 1770

NA-1770

- **January 19** British troops attack Sons of Liberty in New York City with bayonets, wounding several in the "Battle" of Golden Hill. This incident followed several days of excitement after the British soldiers had cut down the liberty pole.
- **March 5** The Boston "Massacre" is the culmination of rioting in front of the customs house. British guards fire into the mob, killing five and wounding six.
- **May 1** Harvard College ceases ranking entering students according to the social prominence of their fathers.
- **October 18** The Treaty of Lochaber, South Carolina, is signed between the Cherokee and Superintendent John Stuart. Because the treaty signed at Hard Labor had left some white settlements in Indian territory, this treaty established a more westerly boundary running from the Holston River near the border of Virginia and North Carolina in a straight line to the mouth of the Great Kanawha. (When Virginia's representative Col. John Donelson ran the line the next spring, he moved it westward to the Kentucky (then Louisa) River, opening up more than half of Kentucky to Virginians.)
- **October 30** A Boston jury finds all of the soldiers involved in the Boston Massacre innocent, except two found guilty of manslaughter, who were then discharged on a technicality.
- "The Massachusetts Spy" begins publication.

WLM-1770

- **May 21** The General Assembly meets in Williamsburg.
- **June 22** A new agreement to prevent importation of British goods is signed by the burgesses and leading merchants in Williamsburg. It replaces the association of 1769. Committees in each county were to publish the names of violators. When most of the Townshend Duties are repealed, support for the association wanes.
- **June 27** The House of Burgesses comes to unanimous agreement to petition the king to exert his authority to prevent Parliament from enacting taxes for America.
- **June 28** General Assembly adjourns.
- **October 15** Lord Botetourt dies. William Nelson of Yorktown becomes president of the council and acting governor upon the resignation of John Blair.
- **December 14** Meeting of Associators adjourns because attendance too sparse.

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CHRONOLOGY 1771

W-1771

- Russia and Prussia agree about the partition of Poland.
- Russia completes conquest of the Crimea.

GB-1771

- John Montagu, Earl of Sandwich, appointed First Lord of the Admiralty (through 1782).
- Thomas Gray, English poet, dies.
- Walter Scott, Scottish novelist, born.
- Encyclopaedia Britannica, first edition, published.
- Robert Owen, English social reformer, born.
- Benjamin West paints "The Death of Wolfe".
- Richard Arkwright produces first spinning mill in England.

NA-1771

- **May 16** Governor William Tryon of North Carolina and 1,300 of the colony's militia (mostly from the eastern counties) defeated 2,500 Regulators (westerners opposing corrupt officials) at the Battle of Alamance near Hillsboro. There were about 300 casualties, and seven Regulators were later executed.
- New York Hospital founded.

WLM-1771

- **June 4** The Reverend James Horrocks, commissary of the Bishop of London in Virginia and president of the College of William and Mary, convenes a meeting of Virginia's Anglican clergy to discuss a petition for the appointment of an American bishop. Only eleven clergy attend, and just seven support the idea of a bishop in America. The House of Burgesses publicly thank the Reverend Thomas Gwatkin and the Reverend Samuel Henley, both of the College faculty, for their public protest of an American bishopric. Despite the slight support, debate over the issue continues for years.
- **June 20** The Reverend Mr. Horrocks leaves for England.
- **July 11** The General Assembly meets in Williamsburg.
- **July 15** Association discontinued.
- **July 20** The General Assembly adjourns.
- **September 25** The new governor, John Murray, fourth Earl of Dunmore, arrives in Williamsburg.
- **October 12** Dunmore dissolves the Assembly and orders new elections. (The General Assembly is not sitting at this time.)

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CHRONOLOGY 1772-1773

W-1772

- First partition of Poland by Russia, Prussia, and Austria.
- Inquisition abolished in France.
- Emanuel Swedenborg, Swedish scientist and theologian, dies.
- First German performance of Handel's "Messiah".
- Haydn composes "Six symphonies, opus 20".
- Explorer James Bruce traces the Blue Nile to its confluence with the White Nile.

GB-1772

- Earl of Dartmouth succeeds Hillsborough as Secretary of State for the American Colonies.
- Robert Clive defends his administration in India before the House of Commons.
- Samuel Taylor Coleridge, English poet, born.
- Flight and Kelly, London firm of organ builders, produce first barrel organ.
- Daniel Rutherford and Joseph Priestley independently discover nitrogen.
- James Cook leaves England on second world voyage.
- Judge William Murray in the Somerset case declares that a slave is free on landing in England.

NA-1772

- **June 9** Merchant John Brown and eight boat loads of followers attack and burn British revenue schooner *Gaspée*, aground off Providence, R.I.
- **September 2** Royal commission is appointed to investigate *Gaspée* affair and is given authority to transport suspects to Great Britain for trial.
- **October 28** Boston's Town Meeting issues a call for all towns in Massachusetts to form committees of correspondence.
- **November 2** Samuel Adams forms first Committee of Correspondence in Massachusetts.

WLM-1772

- **February 10** The General Assembly meets in Williamsburg.
- **April 1** House of Burgesses writes address to king opposing slave trade.
- **April 11** The General Assembly adjourns.

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W-1773

- Prince Klemens von Metternich, Austrian statesman, born.
- Goethe's first version of "Faust" published.
- Pope Clement XIV dissolves the Jesuit Order.
- Joseph II expels Jesuits from the Holy Roman Empire.
- The waltz becomes fashionable in Vienna.

CHRONOLOGY 1773

GB-1773

- **May 10** Parliament passes the Tea Act, designed to prevent the East India Company's bankruptcy and to reduce American resistance to buying taxed tea. It reduced taxes on East India tea, enabling it to undersell smuggled tea.
- Oliver Goldsmith's comedy "She Stoops to Conquer" debuts.
- First cast-iron bridge built at Coalbrookdale, Shropshire, England.
- Phillis Wheatley's first book of poems published in London.

NA-1773

- **May 7** Rhode Island establishes a committee of intercolonial correspondence, the first colony after Virginia to do so.
- **August 13** Lord Dunmore arrives at Pittsburgh, where he consults with westerners over the contest between Virginia and Pennsylvania for title to the Pittsburgh area.
- **October 11** When Pennsylvania creates Westmoreland County, the Virginia Council ups the ante in the conflict with that colony by creating the overlapping district of West Augusta. Dunmore's instructions had prohibited the creation of new counties in Virginia.
- **December 16** A group organized by Samuel Adams boards ships in Boston harbor and throws overboard over three hundred chests of tea, the "Boston Tea Party." This action leads to the British Coercive Acts (or "Intolerable Acts") of 1774.
- Philadelphia Museum founded.

VA-1773

- **February 9** William Henry Harrison, ninth United States President, born.

WLM-1773

- **March 4** The General Assembly meets in Williamsburg.
- **March 12** The House of Burgesses establishes a Committee of Correspondence to communicate with other colonies' legislatures about matters of concern, specifically the appointment of a British court of inquiry to investigate the burning of the *Gaspée* in June 1772. Virginia was the first to propose this intercolonial link.
- **March 13** The Virginia Committee of Correspondence and Inquiry holds its first meeting.
- **March 15** The General Assembly adjourns.
- **March 19** Peyton Randolph requests the speakers of the lower houses of the other English colonies of North America to establish committees of intercolonial correspondence.
- **July 8** Lord Dunmore leaves Williamsburg for Pittsburgh.
- **August 19** William Rind dies.
- **August 21** William Rind's funeral.
- **September 7** Lord Dunmore returns to Williamsburg.

CHRONOLOGY 1774

W-1774

- Louis XV of France dies; succeeded by his grandson Louis XVI.
- Goethe writes novel "The Sorrows of Werther".
- Pope Clement XIV dies.
- Jesuits expelled from Poland.

GB-1774

- **March 31** George III signs the Boston Port Bill, which ordered the closing of the city's harbor on June 1, if compensation had not been made by that date for the tea destroyed December 16, 1773. This was the first of the so-called Intolerable Acts, which also included the Administration of Justice Act, the Massachusetts Government Act, the Quebec Act, and the Quartering Act.
- **May 20** George III signs the Administration of Justice Act, which allowed that in cases like that of the soldiers charged with the Boston Massacre, trials could be held in any colony or in Britain. Colonists called this the Murder Act.
- **May 20** George III signs the Massachusetts Government Act, which ended the election of jurymen and members of the upper house of the legislature. It required also that every town obtain the governor's permission to hold more than one town meeting annually.
- **June 2** George III signs the Quartering Act, which allowed governors to send troops to quell riots and quarter them in private buildings unoccupied by civilians.

1774

- **June 22** George III signs the Quebec Act, granting religious toleration to French Canadians and extending Canadian boundaries south to the Ohio River. This cut Virginia out of the territory it had claimed to the northwest. The act dispensed with both legislative government and English civil law in the former French colony.
- Robert Clive, ex-governor of Bengal, India, dies.
- Lord Chesterfield's "Letters to his Son" published.
- Oliver Goldsmith dies.
- Edmund Burke presents his "On American Taxation".
- John Cartwright publishes "American Independence: Glory and Interest of Great Britain"
- The rules for the game of cricket first drawn up.

NA-1774

- **January 24** Dunmore's representative, Dr. John Connolly, arrested by Pennsylvanians when he attempts to raise a militia under a commission from Virginia.
- **March 14** New Jersey establishes a committee of intercolonial correspondence, the last of the thirteen colonies to do so.
- **April** Dr. John Connolly and a group of armed followers confront the Westmoreland County Court of Pennsylvania."

CHRONOLOGY 1774

- **May 13** Bostonians meet at Faneuil Hall and resolve on a total boycott of British goods, calling on other colonies for assistance.
- **May 17** General Gage lands in Boston to assume his duties as governor of Massachusetts in addition to his position of Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in America.
- **May 17** Rhode Island makes a recommendation for the first intercolonial meeting since the Stamp Act Congress be held to consider a response to the Boston Port Bill.
- **May 26** The Delaware Committee of Correspondence indirectly requests that Virginia propose a general congress.
- **June 1** Port of Boston closed to trade.
- **June 16-July 28** Thomson Mason's *Letters of the British American*, nos. IV-IX, are published. They contend that no act of Parliament since 1607 is binding to colonies.
- **September 1** General Gage seizes Massachusetts stock of powder at Charlestown, across the Charles River from Boston.
- **September 1** Fighting was narrowly averted during the "Powder Alarm," when hundreds of armed colonists confront British troops taking possession of arms and ammunition from a Cambridge, Massachusetts, militia depot.
- **September 5** The first Continental Congress meets in Philadelphia with all colonies (except Georgia) represented. Peyton Randolph is elected president.
- **September 7** First Continental Congress approves Suffolk Resolves. This had been drafted at a meeting in Suffolk County, Massachusetts, and declared the so-called Intolerable Acts to be unconstitutional, urged Massachusetts to set up an extra-legal government until those acts were repealed, urged the people to arm themselves, and recommended economic sanctions against Great Britain.
- **September 28** Joseph Galloway presents to Congress a plan for union between the colonies and Great Britain.
- **October 5** Massachusetts Assembly meets in Salem.
- **October 7** Members of Massachusetts Assembly adjourn to Concord, where they reorganize as the Provincial Congress, which continues to govern Massachusetts outside of Boston. John Hancock presides.
- **October 10** The Shawnee under Chief Cornstalk are defeated by Colonel Andrew Lewis of Augusta County in the Battle of Point Pleasant.
- **October 14** First Continental Congress adopted Declaration of Rights and Grievances summarizing colonial arguments of protest and denying Parliamentary jurisdiction over the American colonies, except for regulation of colonial commerce and strictly defined imperial affairs.
- **October 19** Dunmore's War ends as Chief Cornstalk agrees to the treaty of Camp Charlotte (in modern Ohio), recognizing Virginia's claims in the upper Ohio River Valley.
- **October 19** At Annapolis, Maryland, the owner of the ship *Peggy Stewart*,

CHRONOLOGY 1774

which arrived with tea aboard upon which the tax had been paid, is forced to burn the vessel to prevent a mob's doing so.

- **October 20** First Continental Congress approves Continental Association, based upon Virginia's, but it extends the date for prohibiting the importation of British goods to December 1, 1774, and for ending exportation to Great Britain to September 10, 1775. Congress resolves to meet again on May 10, 1775.
- **October 22** Congress rejects Galloway's plan.
- **October 24** Congress recommends that local governments ban plays and other public entertainments as frivolous distractions from the political crisis.
- **October 26** First Continental Congress adjourns.
- **December 9-10** Americans seize ordnance at Newport, Rhode Island, and carry it to Providence.
- **December 12** Maryland delegates meeting at Annapolis resolve that the colony be armed for defense, an action that influences Virginia.
- **December 14** Americans in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, seize 100 barrels of powder and some ordnance from Castle William and Mary, an act of war.

VA-1774

- **May 19** News of the Boston Port Act arrives in Virginia.
- **June 1** The day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer observed by many Virginians, including citizens of Williamsburg.
- **July 18** George Washington presides over a Fairfax County committee which adopts resolutions in support of Boston and calling for a continental congress. In addition, the committee proposed an association that would bind subscribers not to import from Great Britain after September 1, 1774, or to export to Great Britain after November 1, 1775, and a moratorium on the collection of British debts.
- **July 26** Freeholders of Albemarle County meet and adopt a resolution by Thomas Jefferson that proposed "an immediate stop to all imports from Great Britain" until the repeal of the Boston Port Act and other objectionable acts.
- **November 7** Yorktown citizens throw a "tea party," boarding the ship *Virginia* and dumping into the York River two half chests of tea sent by John Norton and Sons of London to John Prentis and Company of Williamsburg.

WLM-1774

- **January 6** Purdie and Dixon's *Virginia Gazette* publishes news of the Boston Tea Party.
- **February 26** Lady Dunmore arrives in Williamsburg.
- **April 12** The act setting the fees for certain court officials in Virginia expires. Dunmore dissolves the General Assembly before another could be enacted, resulting in the closing of the colony's courts. (Local county courts reopened and admiralty court established in 1776; courts reopened 1778)
- **May 5** The General Assembly meets in Williamsburg.

CHRONOLOGY 1774

- **May 23** Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, Francis Lightfoot Lee, and others determine to introduce a resolution to declare a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer in response to the news of the Boston Port Act.
- **May 24** The House of Burgesses resolves that June 1, 1774, the day the port of Boston will be closed, is to be observed as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer.
- **May 26** The House's resolution is printed, and Lord Dunmore dissolves the Assembly. (The House's action prompted John Randolph's pamphlet *Considerations on the Present State of Virginia*, which was answered by Robert Carter Nicholas in *Considerations on the State of Virginia Examined*.)
- **May 26** The Burgesses give a ball at the Capitol in honor of the arrival of Lady Dunmore.
- **May 27** Eighty-nine members of the House of Burgesses meet at the Raleigh Tavern to form an association calling for a boycott of tea and all other goods imported by the East India Company, with the exceptions of saltpeter and spices. They also issue a call for delegates from each colony to meet yearly in a "general congress," one of the first appeals for a continental congress. They state that "an attack, made on one of our sister colonies, to compel submission to arbitrary taxes, is an attack made on all British America."
- **May 28** The Committee of Correspondence transmits the previous day's resolution to the other colonies.
- **May 29** The letter of May 13 from the Boston Committee of Correspondence arrives in Virginia. It proposes ceasing all trade with Great Britain, both imports and exports.
- **May 30** The twenty-five burgesses who remained in Williamsburg (or who could return quickly) met to discuss the letter from Boston. Although sympathetic to the proposal, the burgesses determined that they did not have the authority to decide and agreed to summon a convention on August 1 to discuss the boycott. (Later, Dunmore also issued writs for the election of a new General Assembly to convene on August 11, although he prorogued it before the time came.)
- **May 30** The inhabitants of Williamsburg meet and agree with the actions of the burgesses in calling for a convention.
- **June 1** The day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer observed by many Virginians, including citizens of Williamsburg.
- **July (early)** John Randolph publishes (anonymously) *Considerations on the Present State of Virginia*, advocating moderation.
- **July 1** James City County freeholders meet at Isham Allen's and resolve to support nonimportation, to take up a subscription for the relief of Boston, and to treat Robert Carter Nicholas (one of their burgesses--Lewis Burwell, esq., having declined to stand again for election) on election day.

CHRONOLOGY 1774

- **July 8** A large number of Williamsburg's inhabitants meet at the Courthouse and address Peyton Randolph, asking that he not treat at the coming election, but be treated by the voters. They wish to set an example against treating the voters and to assure him that he merits the "unbought suffrages of a free people."
- **July 10** "Dunmore's War" begins. Dunmore sets out from Williamsburg both to fight the Shawnee, who had killed settlers in the upper Ohio Valley, and to bolster Virginia's claim to the region.
- **July 13** After returning Peyton Randolph to office, the electors of Williamsburg entertain him at the Raleigh.
- **August 1-August 6** The first Virginia Convention meets in Williamsburg. It agrees to an association based upon the Fairfax County resolves, but forbids the importation of British goods or slaves after November 1, 1774, and the exportation of goods to Great Britain after August 10, 1775. Named as Virginia delegates to Congress were Peyton Randolph, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Richard Bland, Richard Henry Lee, Benjamin Harrison, and Edmund Pendleton.
- **ca. August 8** Thomas Jefferson's intended instructions to the Virginia delegation to Congress are published (anonymously) as *A Summary View of the Rights of British America*.
- **August 10** Peyton Randolph initiates a meeting of the inhabitants of the city of Williamsburg at the courthouse, where they contribute "most generously for the Relief" of their "distressed Fellow Subjects at Boston, both in Cash and Provisions."
- **ca. August 25** Robert Carter Nicholas's anonymous pamphlet *Considerations on the Present State of Virginia Examined* rebuts John Randolph's pamphlet.
- Virginia's House of Burgesses calls for a Continental Congress.
- **November 9** In Williamsburg, approximately five hundred merchants sign the Continental Association, which they present at the Capitol to Peyton Randolph and other congressional delegates.
- **November 25** James City County freeholders meet at Isham Allen's and approve the Continental Association. They also elect a committee to enforce it. The committee consists of: Robert Carter Nicholas, esq., chairman; Mr. William Norvell, Col. Philip Johnson, Maj. Dudley Richardson, Mr. William Spratley, Col. Richard Taliaferro, Mr. John Cooper, Col. Nathaniel Burwell, Mr. Lewis Burwell, junr., Mr. Champion Travis, Mr. Joseph Eggleston, Maj. Thurston James, Mr. John Stringer, Capt. Charles Barham, Capt. Richardson Henley, Mr. Thomas Cowles, Capt. John Walker, Mr. Hudson Allen, Mr. Cary Wilkinson, Mr. Edward Harriss, Mr. John Harris, Mr. William Barrett, Mr. John Warburton, Mr. Sylvanus Prince, Mr. Robert Higginson, Mr. William Hankin, Capt. John Lightfoot, and Mr. Thomas Doncastle. Mr. John Nicholas, Jr., was chosen clerk.

CHRONOLOGY 1774-1775

- **December 4** Dunmore returns to Williamsburg from the west.
- **December 6** Dunmore issues commissions for a court of the district of West Augusta, furthering the border dispute with Pennsylvania, because that colony's Westmoreland County already had a court at Hanna's Town.
- **December 12** The James City Committee is the first to order an auction of imported British goods.
- **December 23** The freeholders of Williamsburg elect a committee for the City: The Hon. Peyton Randolph Esq., Robert Carter Nicholas, Benjamin Waller, John Dixon, James Cocke, William Pasteur, James Southall, Benjamin Powell, James Hubbard, George Wythe, Thomas Everard, John Tazewell, Robert Nicolson, John Carter, and John Minson Galt.

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W-1775

- Pope Pius VI ascends papal throne.
- Asante empire in Central Africa becomes powerful.
- Decline of Kingdom of Benin in East Africa.

GB-1775

- **February 9** Parliament declares Massachusetts to be in rebellion.
- **March 30** George III signs New England Fisheries Bill, restricting trade of northern colonies.
- **April 13** George III signs bill restricting trade of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina.
- **August 23** King George III issues proclamation declaring colonies to be in a state of rebellion.
- **September 1** George III refuses to receive final petition of the Continental Congress.
- **October 26** Parliament reconvenes and hears George III's promise to crush the rebellion in America.
- **November 17** House of Commons defeats motion to treat with Congress.
- Britain hires 29,000 German mercenaries for war in America.
- Edmund Burke delivers speech on conciliation with America.
- George Romney becomes fashionable in London as portrait painter.
- J.M.W. Turner, English painter, born.
- James Cook returns from second voyage to the Pacific.
- Digitalis used for first time as diuretic in dropsy by William Withering of Birmingham.
- Joseph Priestley discovers hydrochloric and sulfuric acid.
- Jane Austin, English novelist, born.
- James Watt perfects his invention of the steam engine.

CHRONOLOGY 1775

NA-1775

- **February 26** British troops go by sea via Marblehead to destroy ordnance gathered by patriots at Salem, Massachusetts, resulting in a confrontation with Salem militia, in which the first bloodshed occurred between British troops and militia.
- **March 10** Daniel Boone is sent by the Transylvania Company to establish a trail (the Wilderness Road) through Cumberland Gap to Kentucky bluegrass country.
- **March 17** The Treaty of Sycamore Shoals, between the Cherokee and Richard Henderson and the Transylvania Company of North Carolina, concludes the purchase by the company of all land between the Kentucky and Cumberland rivers. This area comprises modern central and western Kentucky and north central Tennessee.
- **April 6** Boone founds Boonesborough.
- **April 14** America's earliest abolitionist organization, the Society for the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage, is organized in Philadelphia.
- **April 15** In Boston, 23 flank (light infantry and grenadier) companies of 11 British regiments then composing a garrison were detached, ostensibly for separate training.
- **April 18** In late evening, British assemble flank companies in Boston for an expedition to destroy colonial stores at Concord. Paul Revere and William Dawes ride with this news to arouse militia and minutemen in towns along the proposed line of march.
- **April 19** British troops and minutemen and militia engage in battles of Lexington and Concord.
- **April 19** Secret committee in Charleston, South Carolina, seizes mail arriving on British packet ship *Swallow*, which discloses Britain's intention to coerce colonies into submission. This information gives timely warning to patriots in Georgia and the Carolinas, and gives Second Continental Congress clear warning of British intentions.
- **April 19** Patriot forces begin besieging Boston. This action continues for nearly a year.
- **April 20** Massachusetts Committee of Safety, acting on behalf of the Provincial Congress, calls out the colony's entire militia.
- **April 21** Patriots in Charleston, South Carolina, seize all powder from public magazines.
- **April 23** Massachusetts Provincial Congress resolves that New England should raise a volunteer army of 30,000, to which Massachusetts would contribute 13,600.

CHRONOLOGY 1774-1775

- **April 25** Upon hearing the news of Lexington and Concord, Philadelphians agree to associate "for the purpose of defending with arms, their lives, their property, and liberty."
- **May 1** People of New York City choose Committee of One Hundred to "stand or fall with the liberty of the continent."
- **May 10** The Second Continental Congress convenes in Philadelphia. Delegates from all colonies but Georgia are present. Peyton Randolph is again elected president.
- **May 10** Fort Ticonderoga, New York, is captured by forces led by Ethan Allen and Colonel Benedict Arnold.
- **May 11** Patriots in Savannah, Georgia, seize powder from the public magazine.
- **May 12** Americans capture Crown Point, New York, a British post on Lake Champlain ten miles north of Ticonderoga, and its ordnance stores.
- **May 15** By request of the City and County of New York, presented through the colony's delegates, the Continental Congress appoints a committee to determine military posts and the number of troops needed to man them in New York, the first step in absorbing New York forces into a Continental army.
- **May 17 and 18** St. Johns, Canada, on Richelieu River east of Montreal, is occupied briefly by Colonel Benedict Arnold and on the next day by Than Allen and the Green Mountain Boys.
- **May 24** Peyton Randolph succeeded as president of Continental Congress by John Hancock, when Randolph returns to Williamsburg to preside over General Assembly.
- **May 25** Major Generals John Burgoyne, Henry Clinton, and William Howe arrive in Boston as part of reinforcements for General Gage.
- **May 25** Based on the committee report, the Continental Congress resolves that posts are needed at Kings Bridge, Hudson Highlands, and Lake George in New York, which should be manned by not more than 3,000 men, with action by New York provincial Congress "until further order is taken by this Congress."
- **May 27** Americans attack Noddle's (now East Boston) and Hog Islands in Boston harbor and destroy British schooner *Diana*.
- **May 29** Continental Congress adopts address to Canadians, inviting them to join with the other colonies in common cause.
- **May 31** Mecklenburg Resolves (Mecklenburg County, North Carolina) declare British laws null and void.
- **May 31** North Carolina's governor Josiah Martin flees New Bern for Fort Johnson on Cape Fear.
- **June 2** Massachusetts requests the Continental Congress to take over regulation and direction of the New England Army, because it had been raised for the general defense of American rights.

CHRONOLOGY 1775

- **June 2** Provincial congress of South Carolina declares the citizens of the colony "ready to sacrifice their lives and their fortunes" for the American cause.
- **June 9** The Continental Congress advises the Massachusetts Provincial Congress to establish a government independent of British authority.
- **June 12** Americans aboard the Massachusetts ships *Diligent* and *Machias Liberty* seize British armed cutter *Margaretta* at Machias, Maine. The captain of the vessel is killed.
- **June 14** The Continental Congress establishes the Continental army by appointing a committee to draft regulations for it and authorizing the addition of companies of riflemen from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia.
- **June 15** George Washington is unanimously chosen by Congress to be the commander in chief of the Continental Army.
- **June 16** George Washington accepts the position of Commander in Chief. Continental Congress appoints for the Continental Army two major generals, eight brigadier generals, Adjutant General, Quartermaster General and deputy, Commissary General of Stores and Provisions, Commissary of Musters, Paymaster General and deputy, and Chief Engineer and two assistants.
- **June 17** Battle of Bunker Hill follows overnight American fortification of Breed's Hill, in front of Bunker, overlooking Charlestown, Massachusetts, and results in British victory but with heavy losses on both sides, especially the British.
- **June 19** Dr. John Connolly begins meeting with some of the Indian tribes who took part in Dunmore's War to finalize the treaty signed by the governor in 1774. In 1774, the Indians had given up hostages to the whites, which were to have been returned in the spring of 1775, after the ratification of the treaty by the Assembly, when the Governor was again to have met with the Indians. Because of the difficulties in Virginia in the spring of 1775, this meeting had not occurred, and the Indians were becoming restless and discontented at the delay in returning the hostages.
- **June 21** In the midst of negotiations with the Indians, Connolly is kidnaped by the Pennsylvanians. He was rescued by Virginians before June 29.
- **June 22** The Continental Congress resolves to issue \$2,000,000 in bills of credit--the first Continental currency.
- **June 23** George Washington leaves Philadelphia for Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- **June 25** Washington names Major General Philip Schuyler commander of the Northern Department.
- **June 27** Congress directs Schuyler to go to Ticonderoga and Crown Point and, if practicable and "agreeable to the Canadians," to take possession of St. Johns, Montreal, and other parts of Canada.

CHRONOLOGY 1775

- **June 30** Congress approves rules and regulations for governance of Continental Army.
- **July 2** Washington arrives in Cambridge, Mass.
- **July 3** Washington assumes command of Continental Army forces besieging Boston.
- **July 5** Congress adopts John Dickinson's "Olive Branch Petition," which reiterates grievances of the colonists, but also professes their attachment to the king and desire for reconciliation and avoidance of further hostilities. George III refuses to receive it.
- **July 6** Connolly concludes the treaty with the Indians.
- **July 6** Congress adopts the Declaration of the Causes and Necessities of Taking Up Arms, which endorses further resistance by force rather than unconditional submission to Great Britain, and threatens dissolution of colonial ties with Great Britain if no just resolution of differences is forthcoming.
- **July 8** Congress adopts the address to "Inhabitants of Great Britain."
- **July 8** Georgia Provincial Congress votes to send delegates to Continental Congress, bringing the number of colonies represented to thirteen.
- **July 9** Colonel James Wood of Winchester, sent by the House of Burgesses to watch over Connolly's negotiations, arrives at Pittsburgh after the conference is over. He concludes that Connolly conducted the affair properly "in the most open and candid manner," without unduly furthering the Crown's purposes.
- **July 10** Georgia sends out the first American vessel commissioned for naval warfare.
- **July 15** Captain Daniel Morgan of Frederick County and his rifle company cross the Potomac at Harper's Ferry on their way to join George Washington at Cambridge.
- **July 18** Congress recommends that colonies adopt a uniform organization and equipment of militia, that one-fourth of it be segregated into separate minuteman organizations, that each colony appoint a committee of safety to direct its defense, and that each provide armed vessels to protect its harbors and coastal navigation.
- **July 18** Governor Josiah Martin of North Carolina leaves Fort Johnson and boards the British sloop *Cruzier* in Cape Fear River.
- **July 18-August 11** After meeting with the Indian chief Cornstalk, who had also arrived in Pittsburgh after treaty negotiations were over, Col. James Wood leaves for the Ohio country to invite other Indians who had not attended to meet with the commissioners appointed by Congress and Virginia. He found British agents active among the Indians. He returned to Pittsburgh August 11.
- **July 19** Congress authorizes Washington to appoint Commissary-General of Military Stores.

CHRONOLOGY 1775

- **July 20** Americans raid and seize the royal stores at Turtle Bay, Manhattan Island, and send the stores to American forces at Boston and on Lake Champlain.
- **July 21** Americans successfully raid Nantasket Point in Boston harbor and destroy equipment on adjacent Light-House (Great Brewster) Island.
- **July 24** The Earl of Dartmouth, secretary of state for the colonies, instructs Colonel Guy Johnson, northern Indian agent, to cause the Indians to fight Americans.
- **July 25** The first of the rifle companies authorized by Congress on June 14, that led by Captain Michael Doudel of York County, Pennsylvania, reaches the Continental force besieging Boston.
- **July 26** Congress establishes a post office department, with Benjamin Franklin as the postmaster general.
- **July 27** Congress authorizes "hospital" or medical service for the army headed by a "Director General and Chief Physician."
- **July 29** Congress authorizes monthly pay for chaplains then in Continental service.
- **July 29** Congress authorizes monthly pay for Army Judge Advocate and elects William Tudor, Esquire, to this position.
- **July 31** Americans again attack Great Brewster Island in Boston Harbor, destroying repair work and capturing the marine guard and workmen.
- **August [early]** Connolly meets with Dunmore to propose that the governor lead an expedition up the Potomac River in the spring, to meet up with a force of British and Indians that Connolly would lead from Detroit. This action would split Virginia from the northern colonies. Dunmore agrees that Connolly should go to Boston to obtain consent and troops from General Thomas Gage.
- **August 6** Morgan's company arrives at Cambridge.
- **August 8-9** British sloop *Falcon* pursues American schooner into harbor at Gloucester, Mass., but intense shore fire drives the British ship away without a prize.
- **August 14** Patriot ships raid Bermuda, capturing forts and powder.
- **August 15** The Convention resolved that no one should purchase land under the Privy Council's new regulations until the committee appointed by the second Convention reported regarding the legality of the policy change. The committee never reported.
- **August 18** New York provincial Congress recommends that the Hudson River Highlands be fortified immediately and appoints a commission to supervise construction on Constitution Island (opposite West Point).
- **August 28** American invasion of Canada from Lake Champlain begins from Ticonderoga under Generals Philip Schuyler and Richard Montgomery.

CHRONOLOGY 1775

- **August 30** British naval bombardment of Stonington, Connecticut, kills two and destroys a number of houses.
- **September 5** An advanced detachment of General Schuyler's force is ambushed near St. Johns, Canada, by an Indian force under loyalist leadership, and eight are killed before the Indians are driven off.
- **September 11** Colonel Benedict Arnold's march to Quebec begins from Cambridge, Mass.
- **September** ___ Peyton Randolph returns to Continental Congress.
- **September 13** Second Continental Congress reconvenes in Philadelphia.
- **September 15** South Carolina's governor Lord William Campbell, takes refuge on British sloop *Tamar*.
- **September 16** American troops under General Montgomery begin siege of St. John, Canada, key to defense of Montreal.
- **September 25** Ethan Allen leads an impulsive and premature attack on Montreal and is captured with about forty of his men.
- **October 6** Congress authorizes seizure of Dunmore.
- **October 7** In the first of a series of marauding attacks in the Narragansett Bay area, a small British fleet operating out of Newport bombards Bristol, R.I., until its inhabitants provide forty sheep for the British army.
- **October 7-19** Andrew Lewis, Adam Stephen, Thomas Walker, and James Wood, commissioners from Virginia, and Lewis Morris of New York and James Wilson of Pennsylvania, commissioners from Congress, meet with Indians of the Ohio country to conclude a treaty settling Dunmore's War, following the collapse of John Connolly's plan to raise an Indian and British alliance to cut the colonies in two by taking Virginia. Dr. Thomas Walker, appointed a commissioner by both Virginia and Congress, presides, and Arthur St. Clair of Pennsylvania is secretary. Cornstalk and the other chiefs reaffirm the agreement they had made in 1774. They would not molest white settlements south of the Ohio if the whites left the Indians alone to the north.
- **October 10** General William Howe replaces General Gage as Commander of British Army forces in Boston.
- **October 13** Congress authorizes the fitting out of two vessels to intercept ships carrying warlike stores and other supplies to British forces, and appointed a "Marine Committee" to administer this action.
- **October 18** Governor William Tryon of New York takes refuge on the British warship *Halifax* in New York harbor.
- **October 18** Two British warships bombard and burn West Falmouth (now Portland), Maine, destroying about eighty percent of its buildings and burning or capturing fifteen ships.
- **October 19** Surrender of British fortress at Chambly, Canada.
- **October 22** Peyton Randolph dies in Philadelphia.

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- **October 26** Congress resolves that exceptions be made in the Continental Association in exchange for war material from West Indies.
- **October 30** Congress authorizes construction of four armed vessels "for the protection and defense of the United Colonies" and thus provides first ships for Continental Navy.
- **November 2** British post of St. Johns, Canada, surrendered with its garrison.
- **November 4** Continental Congress approves reorganization of Continental Army before Boston, effective at the new year. It is to consist of 20,372 officers and men enlisted through the year 1776. A uniform ration for the army is also established.
- **November 9** Benedict Arnold's American forces reach Quebec.
- **November 10** Continental Congress directs that two marine battalions be raised, appropriately officered, and placed under Washington's command. Congress also resolves that Virginia be encouraged to expedite saltpeter manufacture.
- **November 17** Colonel Henry Knox is appointed to command Continental Regiment of Artillery.
- **November 19** American forces blocking the St. Lawrence River near Sorel, Canada, capture three British armed vessels and eight smaller craft with their crews and cargoes, and also the British Montreal garrison, except General Carleton and one or two officers, who escaped.
- **November 19** John Connolly captured as a loyalist in Hager's Town, Maryland. Incriminating documents were found in a secret compartment of his luggage. He remained in prison for most of the war.
- **November 19** Benedict Arnold, after laying siege to Quebec, withdraws to Point aux Trembles, in the face of a threatened British sortie with superior force.
- **November 22** Almost without bloodshed, an American force of more than 4,000 overcomes a smaller loyalist force at Reedy River, S.C., leading to the capture of principal loyalist leaders and collapse of armed loyalist opposition in that colony.
- **November 22** Congress resolves that Bermuda be provided with produce in exchange for salt and war material.
- **November 27** Captain John Manley, master of American armed schooner *Lee* captures British ordnance brig *Nancy* at entrance of Boston harbor, the most notable of a number of American captures of British vessels in the fall and winter of 1775-1776.
- **November 29** Continental Congress appoints a five-man Secret Committee of Correspondence to develop foreign contacts and support.
- **November 30** Dunmore requests more aid from Boston to retake Virginia.
- **December 2** The first of General Montgomery's troops join Arnold's at Point aux Trembles and the combined forces totaling about 800 begin siege of

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Quebec, defended by about 1,800 British regulars and British and French-Canadian militia.

- **December 3** The first raising of an official U.S. flag on the USS *Alfred* in the Delaware.
 - **December 4** Congress authorizes Virginia to form new government.
 - **December 10** Connecticut men in Washington's army, whose enlistment runs out this date, depart for home.
 - **December 13** Congress authorizes the construction of thirteen ships for the Continental Navy.
 - **December 22** Congress appoints Esek Hopkins commander of Continental Navy.
 - **December 26** Congress votes issuance of \$3,000,000 in bills of credit and requests colonies to take censuses.
 - **December 28** Congress votes to take six Virginia regiments into Continental service.
 - **December 31** The American assault on Quebec, led by brigadier generals Richard Montgomery and Benedict Arnold, leads to disastrous defeat. Montgomery is killed. Among those captured are Captain Daniel Morgan and many of his Virginia riflemen.
 - First surgical textbook in America "Remarks on the Treatment of Wounds and Fractures" written by John Jones, personal physician to both Benjamin Franklin and George Washington.
 - *Pennsylvania Evening Post* (Philadelphia) becomes first daily newspaper in America; by this date there are 37 newspapers in the colonies (politically divided into 23 patriot, 7 loyalist, 7 neutral).
 - Colonial iron manufacture is producing one-seventh of the world supply.
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- **March 20** The second Virginia Convention meets in St. John's Church, Richmond, considered a more secure location than Williamsburg.
 - **March 23** Patrick Henry delivers his famous "Give me liberty or give me death" speech, supporting a resolution to put the colony in a "posture of defence."
 - **March 25** The Convention accepts a committee report proposing the establishment of a volunteer company of cavalry or infantry in every county. The Convention elects Peyton Randolph, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, Edmund Pendleton, Benjamin Harrison, and Richard Bland delegates to the Second Continental Congress.
 - **March 27** The Convention answers Dunmore's land proclamations by appointing a committee to investigate whether the Crown had the right to change land distribution policy.
 - **March 27** The second Virginia Convention adjourns.
 - **May 2** Patrick Henry persuades the Hanover County Committee to support a

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march to Williamsburg and dispatches militia officer Parke Goodall with several men to the King William County home of Richard Corbin, the receiver-general, to take him hostage. Henry sets out for Williamsburg.

- **May 9** Spotsylvania County committee calls for meeting of third Virginia Convention.
- **June 26** Peyton Randolph issues call for third Virginia Convention to meet at Richmond 17 July 1775.
- **July 17-August 26** The Third Virginia Convention meets at St. John's Church Richmond. Peyton Randolph is elected president.
- **July 21** Connolly's treaty is submitted to the Virginia Convention.
- **July 25** Connolly's treaty with the Indians is confirmed by the Convention.
- **August 5** After a bitter debate about his lack of military experience, the Virginia Convention elects Patrick Henry colonel of first Virginia regiment and commander in chief of Virginia's forces.
- **August 11** Virginia Convention elects Peyton Randolph, Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Harrison, Thomas Nelson, Jr., Richard Bland, and George Wythe to represent Virginia at Continental Congress.
- **August 15** The Virginia Convention elects Francis Lightfoot Lee in place of Richard Bland, who declined to serve.
- **August 16** The Virginia Convention authorizes dissenting clergy to hold worship services and preach to soldiers of their persuasion who are mustered under Convention authority.
- **August 17** Robert Carter Nicholas succeeds Peyton Randolph as president of the Convention. Randolph is in ill health.
- **August 17** Virginia Convention elects Committee of Safety: Edmund Pendleton, George Mason, John Page, Richard Bland, Thomas Ludwell Lee, Paul Carrington, Dudley Digges, William Cabell, Jr., Carter Braxton, James Mercer, and John Tabb.
- **August 21** Convention enacts ordinance for defense and protection of colony, including the raising of two regiments. Each district was to raise a company. The legislation also provided for minute and militia service. The counties of Elizabeth City, Warwick, York, James City, Charles City, and New Kent, and the City of Williamsburg comprised a district.
- **August 24** The Convention enacts the creation of the Committee of Safety to act as an executive body between sessions, the members having already been elected.
- **August 25** The Convention provides for taxes and emission of bills of credit.
- **August 25** The Convention provides for the annual election of delegates and election of local committees.
- **August 26** Third Virginia Convention adjourns.
- **August 26** First meeting of the Virginia Committee of Safety, in Richmond.

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- **August 28-September 27** Officers of regulars and minutemen are nominated by military district committees for commissioning by Virginia Committee of Safety.
- **September 2** Hurricane causes great damage to tidewater Virginia.
- **September 11** The Hampton committee asks for force to help protect Hampton from the insults of Captain Squire, who seeks retaliation for king's stores taken from one of his tenders that ran aground. One hundred men volunteered.
- **September 11** Captain John Neville and his company from Winchester occupy Fort Pitt for Virginia.
- **September 18-22** Virginia Committee of Safety meets at Hanover Town.
- **September 18** Virginia Committee of Safety issues commissions to Colonel Patrick Henry and other officers of Virginia's two-regiment army.
- **October 12** Captain Samuel Leslie leads a British raid near Norfolk.
- **October 18** Captain Samuel Leslie leads a sortie to Kemp's Landing. The Virginians remove a large store of powder just in time.
- **October 19** The British raid the vicinity of Norfolk.
- **October 20 and 21** More British raids in the Norfolk area.
- **October 24** In response to the British raids near Norfolk, and after much debate about the choice of commanders, the Committee decides to send Colonel William Woodford (because he had more military experience than Patrick Henry) and the 2nd Virginia regiment to counter Dunmore's actions.
- **October 25-27** Under orders from Dunmore, Captain Matthew Squire sets out with five ships to burn Hampton. The barricade of sunken ships in the harbor delays them long enough that reinforcements from Williamsburg can get to Hampton, and the attackers are driven off.
- **October 26** Virginia Committee of Safety announces land blockade of Norfolk and Portsmouth.
- **November 7** Dunmore signs his Emancipation Proclamation. It declares martial law and "all indented Servants, Negroes, or others (appertaining to the Rebels) free, that are able and willing to bear Arms, they joining His Majesty's forces." He decides to wait for another victory before issuing it.
- **November 9** *The King Fisher* sloop of war cannonades the ferry house and storehouse at Burwell's Ferry, after their boat is driven away from another boat by a rifle guard.
- **November 23** Dunmore officially occupies Norfolk, and sets British forces to fortifying it.
- **November 25** Woodford and the 2nd Virginia Regiment arrive and take up position on the south branch of the Elizabeth River opposite Dunmore's fort at Great Bridge.

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- **December 1** The Fourth Virginia Convention meets in Richmond for one day and then adjourns to Williamsburg. Edmund Pendleton is elected president. (The Convention lays the foundations for a Virginia navy, establishes county commissions to try loyalists who bear arms, extends the Committee of Safety for another year, and orders construction of salt works and powder mills to relieve acute shortages of these commodities.)
- **December 9** At Great Bridge, Virginia, Captain Samuel Leslie and 120 British attempt to assault Woodford's forces by crossing the causeway over the Elizabeth River. They are repulsed, with several killed and wounded.
- **December 13** Convention agrees to raise seven new regiments of regulars.
- **December 14** With reinforcements from North Carolina and Williamsburg, the Americans occupy Norfolk.
- **December 15** Virginia Convention elects new Committee of Safety.

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- **January 14** The *Virginia Gazette* (Dixon and Hunter) publishes news of Lord Dartmouth's circular letter (dated October 19) to colonial governors informing them that the Crown had forbidden the export of arms and ammunition from Britain to the colonies. It also contained orders to "take the most effectual measures for arresting, detaining, and securing any Gunpowder or any sort of Arms or Ammunition which may be attempted to be imported into the Province under your Government."
- **January 19** Peyton Randolph issues a call for the election of delegates to a second Virginia Convention.
- **January 19** Dunmore prorogues the Assembly.
- **February 7** Lord Dunmore officially acknowledged receipt of Lord Dartmouth's circular letter.
- **February 13** James City County committee resolves to offer premium to anyone who will settle in the colony and manufacture cotton and wool cards.
- **March 21** When Dunmore issues proclamations against the activities of the Transylvania Company in Kentucky, he brings to light the Privy Council's directive of February 3, 1774. The directive introduced a new land policy calling for advance surveys of one hundred- to one thousand-acre tracts for sale at auction and an increase of quit rents.
- **March 30** Responding to the king's order of January 14, Dunmore issues a proclamation forbidding the election of delegates to the congress.
- **April 21** Royal marines, by command of Lord Dunmore, take fifteen half-barrels of powder from the magazine in Williamsburg during the night.
- **April 22** Dunmore threatens to arm the slaves.
- **April 28** News of Lexington and Concord reaches Williamsburg.
- **April 29** Hugh Mercer, commander of the volunteer company in Fredericksburg, calls for men, and about 600 men rally there to march on Williamsburg. Three riders travel to and from the capital overnight, returning

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in the morning with a plea from Peyton Randolph to avoid violence. Congressional delegates George Washington, Edmund Pendleton, and Richard Henry Lee also appeal to the men to remain quiet. After debating all day, the company goes home.

- **May 3** Since Corbin was at a Council meeting in Williamsburg, Goodall meets up with Henry's troops at Doncastle's Ordinary, about fifteen miles from Williamsburg. There Corbin's son-in-law Carter Braxton meets with Henry to allow a truce while Braxton arranges to pay for the powder.
- **May 4** Braxton brings Henry a bill of exchange for three hundred thirty pounds. Henry promises to account for it at the next convention. He offers to guard the treasury in Williamsburg, but treasurer Robert Carter Nicholas refuses. Henry dismisses his men, and sets off for the Continental Congress.
- **May 4** Captain George Montagu of the *Fowey* threatens Yorktown with bombardment if citizens hinder sailors and marines from going to Williamsburg.
- **May 6** Dunmore declares Henry an outlaw, and several counties promise to protect him from arrest. Three volunteer companies then escorted him to the Maryland border.
- **May 12** Dunmore issues proclamation for General Assembly to convene June 1 to consider Lord North's reconciliation proposal.
- **May 12** Call for election of delegates to third Virginia Convention is issued.
- **May 24** Peyton Randolph succeeds as president of Continental Congress by John Hancock when Randolph returns to Williamsburg to preside over General Assembly.
- **May 25** Williamsburg volunteer company meets and resolves to "march, on the smallest warning, to any part of the continent, where the general cause of American liberty may demand their attendance," provided that they do not leave their own country defenseless. They also resolve that they will consider the landing of foreign troops "in this country" a dangerous attack on liberty. If supported by their fellow countrymen they will resist such measures "at the expense of life and fortune."
- **June 1** Called by Lord Dunmore in response to Lord North's conciliatory proposal of February 27, the General Assembly meets in Williamsburg for the first time since May 1774. Lord North's proposal promised not to tax the colonists if they would agree to tax themselves in accordance with quotas sent from London. Peyton Randolph is elected speaker.
- **June 2** Williamsburg Troop of Horse leaves for Ruffin's Ferry to escort Peyton Randolph home from there on his journey from the Continental Congress. The Company of Foot meets them on their way back, about two miles from Williamsburg, and all escort Randolph to his house.

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- **June 3-4** Breaking into the magazine in Williamsburg at night, three youths are wounded by a spring gun, prompting an exchange between Dunmore and the burgesses.
- **June 5** House of Burgesses unanimously approves actions of the second Virginia Convention.
- **June 6** James City County Committee meets and discusses the *Molly*, Capt. Mitcheson, which has arrived in James River with a cargo for Messrs. Eilbeck and Ross, merchants at Norfolk and Petersburg. They resolve to prevent the cargo from being landed or disposed of within the county. They also resolve to extend thanks to Patrick Henry and the "Gentlemen volunteers" from Hanover and other counties for obtaining satisfaction for the gunpowder taken from the magazine.
- **June 8** Lord Dunmore leaves the Palace and takes refuge aboard the British ship *Fowey* in the York River.
- **June 10** The General Assembly rejects the conciliatory proposal of Lord North.
- **June 21** The Council joins the House of Burgesses in rebuking Lord Dunmore for abandoning the seat of government and impeding the transaction of public business.
- **June 23** Peyton Randolph convenes a meeting of Williamsburg's inhabitants "to consider of the expedience of stationing a number of men here for the publick safety, as well as to assist the citizens in their nightly watches, to guard against any surprise from our enemies." The citizens unanimously agreed to invite from a number of counties, 250 men. In the meantime, surrounding counties are furnishing guards.
- **June 24** Having appointed commissioners to treat with the Indians of the Ohio valley, the General Assembly adjourns to October 12, but never meets again with a quorum.
- **June 27** James City County volunteers guard Williamsburg.
- **June 29** Lady Dunmore and the governor's children set sail for England aboard the *Magdalen*.
- **June 29** New Kent volunteers send a party to guard Williamsburg.
- **June 30** New Kent and York volunteers guard Williamsburg.
- **July 26-29** Independent companies of volunteers at Williamsburg send out parties to seize the king's revenues.
- **September 11** Shooting in and around Williamsburg is prohibited because it "greatly incommodes and disturbs the soldiers."
- **September 11** The district committee chooses officers for the regular service: Mr. George Nicholas, captain; Mr. Beverley Dickson, lieutenant; Mr. Thomas Russell, 2d lieutenant, and Mr. Merritt Moore, junior ensign. They chose the following officers for the minute service: Champion Travis, esq., colonel; Hugh Nelson, esq., lieutenant-colonel; Mr.

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Samuel Harwood, major; Mr. Robert Anderson, captain; Mr. Humphrey Harwood, lieutenant; and Mr. William Rowsay, ensign.

- **September 12** Williamsburg's 100 volunteers set out for Hampton.
- **September 17** James City County Committee meets and determines that Mr. William Holt, merchant, of Norfolk has not violated the Association by supplying men-of-war with bread and flour from his mill in the county, but that he should not continue to supply them, since "the exports from this continent will in a few days be shut up."
- **September 26-November 15** Virginia Committee of Safety meets at Williamsburg.
- **September 30** Motivated by attacks in the *Norfolk Gazette* that had enraged Dunmore and his officers, Captain Matthew Squire of H.M.S. *Otter* sends ashore a squad of men who seize the press and two workers. John Hunter Holt, the printer, eludes capture. Dunmore uses the press to publish his own version of the *Gazette* until spring.
- **October 3** District committee reviews Captain George Nicholas's company of regulars and accepts them.
- **October 5** Williamsburg's committee reviews and accepts Captain Robert Anderson's company of minute-men.
- **October 7** At Williamsburg, Colonel Patrick Henry assumes command of Virginia's army.
- **October 12** For lack of a quorum, the General Assembly adjourns to March 7, 1776.
- **November 6** Betty Randolph returns to Williamsburg from Philadelphia.
- **November 9** The following men are chosen a committee for Williamsburg: James Southall, Robert C. Nicholas, John Tazewell, James Geddy, Robert Nicholson, William Pasteur, Alexander Craig, Humphrey Harwood, George Wythe, Benjamin Powell, Thomas Everard, Gabriel Maupin, James M. Galt, Edward Charlton, Joseph Prentis, Joseph Hornsby, James Hubbard, William Goodwin, Robert Anderson, John Blair, and John Fergusson.
- **November 16** Robert Carter Nicholas issues summons for Virginia Convention to convene in Richmond December 1.
- **November 19** Headquarters issues a general order to the troops quartered in Williamsburg "to be careful and guarded in their conduct, so that all offence be avoided toward the citizens."
- **December 5-January 20** Fourth Virginia Convention meets in Williamsburg.
- **December 11** William Pasteur, mayor of Williamsburg, issues thanks to Colonel Henry and his troops for their good conduct in town and urges citizens to behave well toward the soldiers.
- **December 15** Virginia Convention elects Carter Braxton delegate to Congress to replace Peyton Randolph, deceased.

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W-1776

- China's Manchu Emperor Ch'ien-lung's armies defeat rebel tribes in the mountains of Szechwan.
- Civil war rages among the Vietnamese.

GB-1776

- Edward Gibbon publishes "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire"
- David Hume, Scottish philosopher and historian, dies.
- Adam Smith publishes "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations"
- John Constable, English painter, born.
- Cook's third voyage to the Pacific launched.
- Actor David Garrick gives a series of farewell performances at Drury Lane Theatre.

NA-1776

- **January 1** American forces besieging Boston are reorganized according to the Continental Congress's plan of last November, making this portion of the army "Continental in every respect." Only about 5,500, however, are present and fit for duty. In recognition of this reorganization, the first patriot flag bearing seven red and six white and six white stripes was raised at Cambridge, Mass.
- **January 5** New Hampshire adopts a new written constitution to replace its colonial charter, the first of the thirteen colonies to do so.
- **January 5** The Continental Congress orders work on Constitution Island (opposite West Point) suspended and emphasis placed on Fort Montgomery.
- **January 10** Governor Josiah Martin of North Carolina, from aboard the British sloop *Scorpion*, urges loyalists to gather near Wilmington to collaborate with a forthcoming British Army offensive in the South.
- **January 12-14** Sailors from British ships stationed at Newport, Rhode Island, raid Patience, Hope, and Prudence Islands in Narragansett. On Prudence Island they engage militia from Bristol and Warren for three hours.
- **January 15** The first edition of Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* is printed.
- **January 20** American General Philip Schuyler forces Sir John Johnson and about 700 other loyalists to surrender, crippling loyalist resistance in the Albany area and assuring neutrality of Indians in the area for some time.
- **January 20** General Henry Clinton leaves Boston to lead British expedition against the Carolinas.
- **January 23** American group from Elizabethtown (now Elizabeth), N.J., led by William Alexander (a.k.a. Lord Stirling) and Elias Dayton, capture British supply ship *Blue Mountain Valley* forty miles off Sandy Hook.
- **January 24** Colonel Henry Knox returns to Cambridge from Ticonderoga with 55 guns.

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- **January 26** The Continental Army appoints Fr. Louis Eustace Lotbiniere its first Catholic chaplain. He is appointed to serve the French Canadians who enlisted in Colonel James Livingston's regiment.
- **February 11** Governor Sir James Wright flees Savannah, Georgia, and takes refuge on British warship.
- **February 12-18** Dunmore occupies Tucker's Point on the Elizabeth River.
- **February 13** Congress appoints field officers for six regiments of Virginia Continentals.
- **February 26** Sir Henry Clinton sails for the Carolinas.
- **February 27** Continental Congress resolves to establish separate Middle and Southern Departments of the Continental Army. The Middle includes New York through Maryland, and the Southern Department includes Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia.
- **February 27** Loyalist force advancing toward Wilmington, North Carolina to join up with the British army under Clinton is ambushed at Moore's Creek Bridge, North Carolina, about fifteen miles north of Wilmington, with heavy loyalist losses.
- **February 28** Patrick Henry resigns when Congress passes him over for promotion to brigadier general. The 1st Virginia regiment riots. He spends the night in their camp to keep them from mutiny.
- **March 2** Heavy American bombardment of Boston begins.
- **March 3** Secret Committee of Correspondence decides to send a "commercial" agent to France to purchase military supplies. Congress selects Silas Deane of Connecticut to go.
- **March 3-4** American sailors and marines attack New Providence (modern Nassau) in the Bahamas, capturing 100 cannon and mortars and a large quantity of other military stores.
- **March 4-5** On this night darkness conceals Washington's occupation of Dorchester Heights and emplacement there of artillery from Ticonderoga.
- **March 6** Georgia governor Sir James Wright returns to Savannah with naval reinforcements, captures eleven merchant ships loaded with rice, and threatens to attack Savannah from Hutchinson's Island.
- **March 7** Counterattack by Americans at Savannah drives off British and leaves Americans in control of Savannah for three years.
- **March 17** Siege of Boston ends when General Howe evacuates Boston, the American emplacements on Dorchester Heights having made the British position untenable. He takes with him about 1,000 loyalists and removes to Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- **March 23** The Continental Congress authorizes privateering, resolving "that the inhabitants of these colonies be permitted to fit out armed vessels, to cruise on the enemies of the United Colonies."

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- **March 25** Samuel Chase of Philadelphia, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and Benjamin Franklin leave Philadelphia for Canada, having been chosen as envoys to negotiate with the Canadians towards unification with the thirteen colonies in rebellion.
- **March 25** Congress takes 7th, 8th, and 9th Virginia regiments into Continental service.
- **March 26** South Carolina adopts a constitution and removes restrictions on voting for independence from delegates to Congress.
- **April** General William Howe replaces General Gage as commander-in-chief of British Army forces in the United Colonies.
- **April 5** Georgia lifts restrictions on voting for independence from congressional delegates.
- **April 6** The Continental Congress, in effect nullifying the British Navigation Acts and Prohibitory Act of December 1775, opens ports of United Colonies to trade of all nations, except with British dominions and in British goods, and except for importation of slaves.
- **April 6** A ship bearing dispatches from London to Maryland's governor Robert Eden is captured in the Chesapeake. They reveal that though he outwardly appeared conciliatory, he expected military force to quench the rebels.
- **April 12** Provincial Congress of North Carolina is the first colonial government to instruct its delegates in Continental Congress to vote for independence.
- **April 13** General Washington arrives in New York, following most of the Continental forces that had besieged Boston.
- **April 16** Congress orders General Robert Eden of Maryland, and his papers seized.
- **ca. April 18** John Adams's *Thoughts on Government* published in Philadelphia.
- **May 2** France secretly allots Americans munitions from the royal arsenals valued at one million livres.
- **May 4** The Rhode Island General Assembly passes an act that, although it does not specifically mention independence, denies the king's authority, and authorizes Rhode Island delegates to accept any Congressional measures they deem prudent and effectual.
- **May 6** Americans under General John Thomas retreat from their siege of Quebec, continued after the attack upon the city in December.
- **May 8-9** Thirteen Pennsylvania galleys attack two British warships in Delaware River and drive them downriver.
- **May 10** Massachusetts General Court orders congressional delegates to vote for independence.

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- **May 15** Congress recommends that all colonies adopt new forms of government.
- **May 16** An American force of four hundred surrenders almost without resistance at The Cedars, Canada (about thirty miles below Montreal on the St. Lawrence River).
- **May 19** Near Nantasket, Massachusetts, long boats from British men-of-war attempt to board American ships *Franklin* and *Lady Washington*, but are driven off with heavy British losses. The captain of the *Franklin* is killed.
- **June 4** Two thousand British troops under General Clinton and nine warships under Admiral Sir Peter Parker arrive off Charleston, South Carolina. Also arriving this day to direct defenses is General Charles Lee, commanding the Southern Department.
- **June 7** As instructed by the Virginia Convention, Richard Henry Lee moves in Congress: That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved.
- **June 8-9** After retreating from Quebec, Americans attack heavily reinforced Three Rivers, halfway between Montreal and Quebec, and are defeated, ending American hopes of controlling the St. Lawrence valley.
- **June 9** American forces under Benedict Arnold evacuate Montreal.
- **June 11** The Continental Congress appoints a five-man committee to draft a declaration of independence.
- **June 12** The remnants of American forces defeated at Trois Riveres, having been and ambushed several times along the way, arrive at base at Sorel, Canada.
- **June 12** Congress resolves to establish the Board of War and Ordnance, to consist of five of its members.
- **June 14** The remaining American troops in the St. Lawrence valley, under General John Sullivan, begin removing from Sorel, Canada, in advance of British forces. The arrival of the Americans at Crown Point, N.Y., in early July ended the Americans' Canadian campaign of 1775-76.
- **June 15** The settlers of Harrodsburg in Fincastle County (in modern Kentucky) reject the claim of Richard Henderson and the Transylvania Company to the Kentucky area. They petition the Convention to accept George Rogers Clark and John Gabriel Jones as delegates.
- **June 25** General William Howe arrives off Sandy Hook, N.J., with a small British force. By 12 August, however, it would be the single largest military force in America during the Revolution--32,000 men encamped on Staten Island, N.Y.
- **June 28** Loyalist Thomas Hickey, part of General Washington's personal guard, is executed in New York City for "sedition and mutiny," after

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- discovery of a plot allegedly to assassinate Washington and other American generals.
- **June 28** Attempts by British forces to gain control of Charleston defeated. British naval forces attacked Sullivan's Island in an effort to gain the harbor, but were unable to do so. A coordinated land attack by Clinton's troops failed because of deep water. This ended the British effort at a southern invasion for nearly three years.
 - **July 2** The Continental Congress adopts Richard Henry Lee's resolution for independence.
 - **July 2** General Howe lands unopposed on Staten Island, N.Y., with about nine thousand troops.
 - **July 2** New Jersey adopts the first state constitution that did not exclude women from voting. Few women actually voted until a 1790 election law specifically used "his and her" in reference to electors. Women were disenfranchised in New Jersey in 1807.
 - **July 4** Congress adopts the Declaration of Independence drafted by Thomas Jefferson.
 - **July 16** Lord Dunmore lands some of his force on St. George's Island, Maryland, near the mouth of the Potomac River, but is driven off by local militia.
 - **August 2** All Congressional delegates except John Hancock, who had signed July 4, and Mathew Thornton of New Hampshire, sign the Declaration of Independence.
 - **August 22** British disembark 15,000 troops on Long Island, N.Y. Over the next several days, Washington sends reinforcements to Long Island.
 - **August 27** Some twenty thousand British forces attack about ten thousand Continental troops on Long Island, N.Y., in the Battle of Long Island. British casualties were about 400, compared to the Continentals' 1300. Two American generals were captured. The Americans were pushed to Brooklyn Heights.
 - **August 28** Militia detachment under American General Nathaniel Woodhull is overwhelmed by a much larger British force at Jamaica, N.Y.
 - **August 29-30** Washington preserves the remainder of his troops on Long Island by a night withdrawal to New York City.
 - **September 6** In David Bushnell's *Turtle*, an underwater vessel, Sgt. Ezra Lee launched the first submarine attack against the flagship of British admiral Lord Howe off New York City. It failed to sink the flagship.
 - **September 9** Congress orders that the nation be referred to as the United States, rather than the United Colonies.
 - **September 11** A delegation from Congress consisting of Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge discussed possibilities of peace with Admiral Lord Richard Howe on Staten Island, N.Y., but Howe had only the

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- power to refer proposals to London, not to directly negotiate.
- **September 12** Captain Nathan Hale of Connecticut volunteers to spy within the British lines on Long Island.
- **September 15** The British drive American forces from Kip's Bay and enter New York City.
- **September 16** After withdrawing his troops to the heights of northwestern Manhattan Island, Washington sends out a small reconnaissance force. Both British and Americans add reinforcements once contact has been made, resulting in the Battle of Harlem Heights. The Americans successfully hold off the British.
- **September 16** Congress resolves that 88 battalions of Continental Army troops, apportioned among the states according to population, should be quickly enlisted for the duration of the war. This resolution was critical because Continental enlistments were due to expire at the end of 1776.
- **September 20** Congress adopts Articles of War, "rules and articles to govern the armies of the United States."
- **September 21** About 300 buildings are destroyed by fire in New York.
- **September 22** Lieutenant William Linn leaves New Orleans to return up the Mississippi with nine thousand pounds of powder. Captain George Gibson is detained by Governor Unzaga to placate the British.
- **September 22** The British hang Captain Nathan Hale of Connecticut as a spy. His dying words, that he regretted that he had "but one life to lose" for his country, made him a national hero.
- **September 23** American force of about 240 attempts to recapture Montresor's (now Randall's) Island, N.Y., but is repulsed.
- **September 26** Congress appoints Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Thomas Jefferson as commissioners to court of France. Jefferson declines to serve, and Arthur Lee is appointed instead.
- **[October]** Captain George Gibson is permitted to sail to Philadelphia with gunpowder from New Orleans.
- **October 11-13** Naval battle at Valcour Island, N.Y., between Benedict Arnold and the British leads to American defeat, but the presence of Arnold's ships on Lake Champlain from June through October barred a British invasion from Canada in 1776.
- **October 12** General Howe's attempt to land British at Throg's Neck (and thereby begin a flanking movement against Washington on Manhattan) is repulsed by Americans.
- **October 14** General Carleton's British troops are enabled by the defeat of Arnold's flotilla to occupy Crown Point, N.Y.
- **October 18** After defeat at Throg's Neck, General Howe tries Pell's Point. In action at Pelham, N.Y., Americans delayed British advance, assisting

CHRONOLOGY 1776

Washington's withdrawal of the main Continental force from Manhattan to White Plains.

- **October 22-23** A Continental attempt to surprise Major Robert Rogers' "Queen's American Rangers," stationed at Mamaroneck, N.Y., and cut them off from the main British army was overly ambitious. The Continentals did take almost forty prisoners, however.
- **October 27** British unsuccessfully attacked Fort Washington, N.Y., from both land and water, with heavy losses.
- **October 28** Howe attacks Washington's main force at White Plains, N.Y., having failed to flank it. Washington withdrew his army northward after the battle. The British suffered heavier losses and failed in their attempt to trap and annihilate the American army.
- **November 3** General Carleton's British troops withdraw to Canada, due to American strength at Ticonderoga and the approaching winter.
- **November 9-10** Washington crosses the Hudson with part of his army and moves it into northeastern New Jersey.
- **November 13-29** Americans from Machias, Me., and the Bay of Fundy region, attack and besiege Fort Cumberland, Nova Scotia, in an attempt to get the New England settlers of Acadia aligned with the American cause. They were repelled when reinforcements arrived from Halifax.
- **November 16** The British under Howe take Fort Washington, N.Y., with heavy American losses.
- **November 18** Fort Lee, across the Hudson River from Fort Washington, is abandoned to the British with heavy losses in material. (After American forces evacuated Fort Lee, N.J., across the Hudson from Fort Washington, the Continental Army left New York to the British and began recreating across New Jersey, from which it entered Pennsylvania.)
- **November 21-December 7** After loss of Fort Lee, Washington leaves New York to the British. With 4,000 troops, he retreats across New Jersey and Delaware River into Pennsylvania. Some of Howe's forces under General Cornwallis followed in close pursuit to Delaware.
- **December 8** Prevented from crossing the Delaware by the Continental Army's appropriation of all small boats that might have been used to follow them across, Howe's forces occupy Trenton, N.J.
- **December 12** Congress establishes a regiment of light dragoons and appoints Elisha Sheldon of Connecticut as its commander, the beginnings of the U.S. Cavalry.
- **December 13** American General Charles Lee is captured at Basking Ridge, N.J.
- **December 19** Best known for the lines beginning, "these are the times that try men's souls," Thomas Paine's *The Crisis* is published in Philadelphia.
- **December 20** Congress meets in Baltimore.

CHRONOLOGY 1776

- **December 25** Washington's forces take Trenton, N.J., having surprised the Hessian garrison.
- **December 26** General Clinton and Admiral Parker with 6,000 British troops occupy Newport, R.I.
- **December 27** Because of the critical situation of the war, Congress resolves to grant General Washington almost absolute power over military affairs for the next six months, including authority to recruit twenty-two additional battalions.
- **December 29-31** Having escorted the captured Hessians across the Delaware, Washington reoccupies Trenton, N.J.

VA-1776

- **January 1** British ships open fire on Norfolk, Va.
- **January 2 and 3** Frustrated Virginia and North Carolina troops destroy over two-thirds of Norfolk before being brought under control. The British were blamed for the destruction, however.
- **January 27** North Carolinians defeat a force of Scottish loyalists at Moore's Creek Bridge.
- **February 6** Norfolk abandoned by Americans by direction of the Committee of Safety. Most of the remaining houses were destroyed to prevent the British from using it as a base.
- **February 8** Americans burn Gosport, Va.
- **February 17** British general Sir Henry Clinton arrives in Chesapeake Bay on his way from Boston to the Carolinas.
- **March 9-13** British sloop *Otter* sailing up Chesapeake Bay is attacked and driven away by Maryland ship *Defense* and two Maryland militia companies stationed at Chariton Creek, Northampton County, Va.
- **ca. April 14** General Lee orders Councilor Ralph Wormeley seized for expressing loyalist sentiments.
- **April 22** Cumberland County, Va., committee instructs convention delegates to vote for independence.
- **ca. April 28** General Lee burns homes of loyalists in Portsmouth.
- **May 15** Virginia becomes the first colony to direct its delegates to Congress to introduce a motion for independence when, following two days of vigorous debate, the Convention adopts a resolution calling for the same. The convention also appoints a committee to draft a declaration of rights and a state constitution for Virginia.
- **May 22** To obtain powder from the Spanish, the Virginia Committee of Safety sends Captain George Gibson and Lieutenant William Linn down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans.
- **May 26** Dunmore evacuates Tucker's Point for Gwynn's Island at the mouth of the Piankatank River.

CHRONOLOGY 1776

- **May 29** Convention countermands order to march minutemen to aid of North Carolina.
- **June 7** Convention authorizes mobilization of militia for defense of frontier.
- **June 12** The first Declaration of Rights adopted in America is passed by the Virginia Convention. It was drafted mainly by George Mason and emphasized individual liberty and self-government. Convention also agrees to issue one hundred thousand pounds in treasury bills.
- **June 20** Virginia Convention elects George Wythe, Thomas Nelson, Jr., Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson, and Francis Lightfoot Lee delegates to Continental Congress.
- **June 29** The fifth Virginia Convention adopts the new state constitution, after much debate and modification of George Mason's original proposals. The constitution provided for a governor with very limited powers, elected annually by the legislature. The government also included an executive Council, a bicameral legislature (the lower house of which would predominate), and a separate judiciary.
- **June 29** Patrick Henry is chosen the first governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, by the Convention.
- **July 5** The fifth Virginia Convention adopts the seal for the Commonwealth of Virginia and adjourns. The Virginia Committee of Safety is dissolved.
- **July 6** Patrick Henry is inaugurated governor, and four members of the Council of State take office.
- **July 9** American gunners drive Lord Dunmore and the British off Gwynn's Island.
- **July 23** Lord Dunmore, in sailing up Potomac River, destroys several plantations and turns into Occoquan Creek. At the fall line, he destroyed a mill before being driven off by Prince William County militia.
- **July 25** Governor Patrick Henry officially proclaims the Declaration of Independence.
- **August 5** Dunmore sails through the Virginia Capes on his way to New York.
- **August 23** After some hesitation, Governor Patrick Henry and the Council grant the request of George Rogers Clark for five hundred pounds of powder to defend Kentucky.
- **October 23** The Virginia House of Delegates passes Jefferson's bill to abolish entail.
- **November 1** The Virginia Senate passes Jefferson's bill to abolish entail.
- **November 25** The House of Delegates passes a bill that blocks the claims of Richard Henderson and the Transylvania Company, who, it was thought, sought to detach the Kentucky territory from Virginia. The bill divided Fincastle County into Kentucky, Montgomery, and Washington counties.

CHRONOLOGY 1776

- **December 5** The House of Delegates passes a bill exempting dissenters from supporting the Episcopal Church.
- **December 7** The Senate passes the bill dividing Fincastle County.
- **December 9** The Senate passes the bill exempting dissenters from Episcopal Church support.
- **December 14** The House of Delegates passes a bill to establish a Court of Admiralty, only one of several bills proposed by Jefferson relating to the judiciary.
- **December 16** The Senate passes the bill establishing the Court of Admiralty.
- **December 18** The House of Delegates determined that the governor and Council should order natives of Great Britain who are agents of or in partnership with British merchants to depart Virginia as soon after the following January as practicable. The exceptions are those who "heretofore uniformly manifested a friendly disposition to the American cause, or are attached to this country by having wives or children here."

WLM-1776

- **January 12** Fourth Virginia Convention elects field officers for new Virginia regiments of regulars.
- **January 20** Fourth Virginia Convention adjourns.
- **January 21** New Virginia Committee meets at Williamsburg.
- **January 22** Committee of Safety issues instructions and warrants for recruiting expenses of seven new regiments.
- **January 27** Dunmore initiates peace negotiations.
- **February 2** Portions of Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* are published by Alexander Purdie in the *Virginia Gazette*.
- **February 3** Excerpts from *Common Sense* are published in John Pinckney's *Virginia Gazette*.
- **February 19** Virginia Committee of Safety rejects Lord Dunmore's offer to negotiate.
- **March 7** General Assembly adjourns to May 6 for lack of quorum.
- **March 29** Major General Charles Lee arrives in Williamsburg and establishes quarters in the Governor's Palace. He had been sent south by the Congress to counter Sir Henry Clinton's invasion of the southern colonies. During his stay he attempted to improve discipline among the Virginia troops.
- **April 1-30** Virginia freeholders elect convention delegates for one-year terms.
- **April 10** Virginia Committee of Safety orders evacuation of Norfolk and Princess Anne Counties.
- **April 24** James City County freeholders meet at Allen's Ordinary and agree to instruct their delegates Robert Carter Nicholas and William Norvell, to "exert your utmost ability, in the next Convention, towards dissolving the connexion between America and Great Britain, *totally*, finally, and irrevocably."

CHRONOLOGY 1776-1777

- **May 3** Virginia Committee of Safety modifies order to evacuate Norfolk and Princess Anne Counties.
- **May 6** Before the meeting of the Fifth Convention, forty-five delegates who are also burgesses meet at the capitol and "neither proceed to Business, nor adjourn, as a House of Burgesses."
- **May 6** The fifth Virginia Convention meets in Williamsburg and elects Edmund Pendleton president.
- **May 10** Virginia Convention orders two battalions of minutemen to march to aid of North Carolina.
- **May 13** Major General Charles Lee departs Williamsburg for the Carolinas.
- **May 23** Virginia Convention votes to create corps of cavalry.
- **May 29** Convention countermands order to march minutemen to aid of North Carolina.
- **July 18 or 19** News of the Declaration of Independence reaches Williamsburg.
- **July 19** The opening of a soap and candle manufactory in Williamsburg is announced.
- **August 13** Colonel George Weedon's 3rd Virginia Regiment leaves Williamsburg for New York, to join Washington's army.
- **August 23** Williamsburg Manufactory Society announces building of works.
- **October 7** The first General Assembly under the new constitution meets in Williamsburg. Edmund Pendleton is elected speaker of the House of Delegates and Archibald Cary speaker of the Senate.
- **December 21** The first meeting of the General Assembly adjourns.

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W-1777

- Future Czar Alexander I of Russia born.
- Haydn composes "Symphony No.63 in C major ("La Roxolane").
- Lavoisier proves that air consists mainly of oxygen and nitrogen.

NA-1777

- **January 2** Washington retreats from Trenton in the face of Cornwallis's larger force. The Americans cross Assunpink Creek south of town and prevent the British from crossing the creek.
- **January 3** Washington's forces attack and defeat British rear guard at Princeton, N.J.
- **January 6** Washington moves into winter quarters at Morristown, N.J.
- **January 10** The British withdraw all troops from New Jersey, except at Brunswick and Amboy, which covered winter quarters in and around New York City.

CHRONOLOGY 1777

- **January 17-25** A force of militia and Continentals under General William Heath attempt to take Fort Independence, which guards approaches to New York. Heath's troops were finally driven off.
- **February 7-9** Loyalist force defeats Americans at Fort McIntosh (now in Georgia).
- **March 12** Congress meets again in Philadelphia.
- **March 17** Roger B. Taney, future Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, born.
- **March 23** American supply base at Peekskill, N.Y., is attacked by British raiding party.
- **March 24** Americans counter-attack at Peekskill, driving off the British, but a large quantity of Continental Army supplies had already been destroyed.
- **April 13** Two thousand British troops under Cornwallis attack American outpost at Bound Brook, N.J. American General Benjamin Lincoln is able to withdraw his force of 500 men with the loss of only about 35.
- **April 14** Congress approves establishment of magazine and laboratory in Springfield, Mass., the beginnings of Springfield Arsenal and Springfield Armory.
- **April 25** British raiding force of about 2,000 from New York land near Fairfield, Conn.
- **April 26** British raiding force attacks patriot supply point at Danbury, Conn., and is unopposed.
- **April 27** British raiding force harassed by militia at Ridgefield, Conn.
- **April 28** British raiding force is engaged by militia at Compo Hill, Conn., before embarking.
- **May 2** Lieutenant William Linn reaches Wheeling with his cargo of powder from New Orleans.
- **May 10** American General Adam Stephen attempts to surprise the British Highland regiment at Piscataway, N.J., but is repulsed.
- **May 20** In the Treaty of DeWitt's Corner, the Cherokee surrender all claims to territory in South Carolina.
- **May 23-24** At Sag Harbor, N.Y., Americans from Guilford, Conn., surprise British foraging party and destroy 12 vessels. They take many prisoners and withdraw without loss.
- **May 29** Washington moves army from winter quarters at Morristown into position to oppose any movement of Howe toward Philadelphia.
- **June 13** The Marquis de Lafayette and Johann Kalb, arrive at Georgetown, S.C.
- **June 14** Congress adopts the flag's modern design: "thirteen strips alternate red and white; that the Union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation."

CHRONOLOGY 1777

- **June 17** General John Burgoyne launches an invasion of New York with about eight thousand British troops, beginning at St. Johns, Canada.
- **June 22** In pursuit of the British on their way to Staten Island to embark for Philadelphia, Washington's advance forces attack the rear guard at Brunswick, N.J.
- **June 26** General Howe attacks General Alexander's division at Metuchen, N.J. The Continentals suffer only small loss.
- **June 27** Burgoyne reaches Crown Point, N.Y.
- **July 1** Burgoyne reaches Ticonderoga.
- **July 2** Vermont adopts the first state constitution to forbid slavery and to allow all adult men to vote without property restrictions.
- **July 6** British occupy Fort Ticonderoga after American defenders are forced to abandon it. The British attack the withdrawing Americans at Skenesboro (modern Whitehall), N.Y., forcing Americans to burn shipping and supplies.
- **July 7** Part of American force retreating from Ticonderoga is routed in a surprise attack at Hubbardton, Vt.
- **July 8** Though greater in number, an American force at Fort Anne, N.Y., abandoned the fort after a skirmish with the British, and fell back to Fort Edward.
- **July 9-10** American raiding party captures British General Richard Prescott at Newport, R.I. He was exchanged the next year for General Charles Lee.
- **July 20** After a year of intense fighting on the southern frontier, the Cherokee Indians make peace with Virginia and North Carolina at the signing of a treaty on Long Island in the Holston River, N.C. They gave up all their lands east of the Blue Ridge and north of the Nollichucky River.
- **July 23** General Howe and 15,000 troops depart Staten Island for campaign against Philadelphia.
- **July 26** British Lt. Col. Barry St. Leger departs Oswego, N.Y., for an intended meeting with Burgoyne's force near Albany. St. Leger's force consists of about 2,000 men, about half of them Indians.
- **July 27** Advance group of Indians from Burgoyne's force take two loyalist women from Fort Edward, N.Y., and murder and scalp one named Jane McCrea on their way back to Burgoyne's base at Fort Anne. American propaganda about this incident spurred the gathering of the militia that helped lead to Burgoyne's defeat.
- **July 29** Burgoyne reaches Fort Edward, N.Y.
- **July 30** Date usually recognized as the beginning of the Saratoga Campaign.
- **July 31** The Marquis de Lafayette receives rank from Congress as a major general in the Continental Army.
- **August 3-23** Siege of Fort Stanwix. Fort Stanwix was the American defense post at the head of navigation on the Mohawk River and the key to advance

CHRONOLOGY 1777

down it to the Hudson River. The approach of a relief force under General Benedict Arnold ended the siege.

- **August 4** Congress appoints General Horatio Gates to succeed Gen. Philip Schuyler as commander of the Northern Army. General Washington had written Congress that he wished to be "excused from making the appointment of an officer to command the northern army." The appointment of Gates encouraged the participation of large numbers of New England militia, who had distrusted Schuyler, in the campaign against Burgoyne.
- **August 6** Iroquois and loyalist forces ambush about 800 militia under Nicholas Herkimer at Oriskany, N.Y. The militia lost about 150 men before the Indians and loyalists withdrew. They had been on their way to relieve Fort Stanwix, but turned back after this action.
- **August 14** The British general William Howe enters Chesapeake Bay for an amphibious assault on Philadelphia.
- **August 16** At Bennington, Vt., Vermont militia under John Stark overruns a foraging party of about 800 Hessians from Burgoyne's army.
- **August 19** General Gates takes over command of the Northern Army from General Schuyler at Stillwater, N.Y.
- **August 22** Colonel Barry St. Leger abandons his siege of Fort Stanwix, N.Y., upon the approach of a force under Benedict Arnold, and is prevented from reinforcing General John Burgoyne's troops.
- **August 22** General Sullivan's division raids Staten Island, N.Y. The Americans captured about 130 British, but were stopped and then forced to withdraw.
- **August 25** Howe disembarks his troops at Head of Elk, Md. (British forces under General John Burgoyne were marching down from Canada to the upper Hudson River Valley to cut off New England, expecting help from Howe if needed.)
- **September 3** Near Cooch's Bridge, Del., a light infantry corps sent by Washington to delay Howe's advance from Head of Elk are attacked by German troops and driven back, with about equal losses on each side.
- **September 11** The British under General Howe inflict a major defeat upon George Washington's forces, as they attempted to block the British advance at Brandywine Creek, Pennsylvania.
- **September 12** Gates's Northern Army begins to fortify Bemis Heights, below Saratoga, N.Y.
- **September 16** Cornwallis engages Washington's army near White Horse Tavern, Pa., (near modern West Chester). The British have the advantage when a torrential downpour wets the powder and stops the battle.
- **September 18** Americans raid in vicinity of Ft. Ticonderoga, taking about 300 prisoners and recovering some 100 American prisoners.
- **September 19** Congress flees Philadelphia.

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- **September 19** Burgoyne sends out strong reconnaissance to test the American defenses firmly established at Bemis Heights and is engaged primarily by Arnold and Morgan. The British held their position, but suffered great losses, including many officers. (This battle is called any of several names: First Freeman's Farm, Bemis Heights, Stillwater, or Saratoga).
- **September 21** Near Paoli Tavern, Pa., five thousand British under Major General Charles Grey launch an early morning surprise attack against Brigadier General Anthony Wayne's 1,500 Americans. Because the British attacked by stealth and with bayonets only, the action became known as the Paoli "massacre." About 150 Americans were killed or wounded. British losses were negligible.
- **September 23** Howe crosses the Schuylkill River at Flatland's Ford near Valley Forge. He had diverted Washington from a position commanding the river by marching the British army up the river, and then countermarching at night after Washington had followed. Howe's crossing of the river here put him in a position between Washington and Philadelphia.
- **September 25** The British under General Howe occupy Philadelphia.
- **September 27** Congress meets at Lancaster, Pa.
- **September 30** Congress meets at York, Pa.
- **October 4** Although the battle was initially in their favor, fog and confusion cause Americans to suffer another defeat by General Howe at the battle of Germantown, Pa. The entire Virginia 9th Regiment is captured.
- **October 6** General Sir Henry Clinton with 3,000 British, German, and loyalist troops attack and take Forts Clinton and Montgomery, N.Y., which guarded the Highlands at the Hudson River narrows. Both sides suffer about equal losses. The action was in part a diversionary measure to help Burgoyne by moving up the Hudson River from the south. The British then attacked American ships from the forts.
- **October 7** Burgoyne again sends out reconnaissance to test American defensive strength at Bemis Heights, but is outflanked and suffers heavy losses. He withdraws to Saratoga. (This battle is variously called Second Freeman's Farm, Bemis Heights, Stillwater, or Saratoga.)
- **October 8** General Sir Henry Clinton's British forces occupy and destroy Fort Mifflin on Constitution Island (opposite West Point), N.Y.
- **October 11** British gunners begin bombardment of Fort Mifflin, Pa. This fort and Fort Mercer, N.J., on the other side of the Delaware River, blocked the water route to British forces in Philadelphia, so that the troops there could not be supplied by sea.
- **October 16** Part of Sir Henry Clinton's force attacked and burned Esopus (modern Kingston), N.Y.
- **October 17** The Americans under General Horatio Gates force the capitulation of General John Burgoyne's army at Saratoga, N.Y. He

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had been surrounded and under heavy artillery fire. Gates, however, accepted Burgoyne's suggestion of a "convention," rather than a surrender, in which the Americans were to allow the British to return to England in exchange for a promise that they would not again fight in the war. Congress later annulled this agreement, and the "convention troops" were ultimately encamped in Virginia.

- **October 22** Hessian troops attack Fort Mercer, N.J. and are repulsed. Two British warships attempting to aid them run aground, and one is burned by the Americans, the other by the British.
 - **November 10** The British open a full-scale bombardment of Fort Mifflin, Pa.
 - **November 15** Fort Mifflin is abandoned by the Americans.
 - **November 15** Congress approve's John Dickinson's proposed constitution, the Articles of Confederation, and asks the states to ratify it.
 - **November 20** The loss of Fort Mifflin makes Fort Mercer, N.J., untenable, and it is abandoned by the Americans, opening the Delaware River to British shipping.
 - **November 25** At Gloucester, N.J., an American force of about 300 under Lafayette won a skirmish with a larger group of Hessians.
 - **December 5** Vanguard of Howe's army clashes with 600 militia at Chestnut Hill, Pa., with heavy firing on both sides. Americans retreat.
 - **December 7** Howe sorties from Philadelphia to attack the American camp at Whitmarsh. They skirmish in what becomes known as the Battle of Edge Hill, but Howe decides the American position is too strong to press a full attack. Howe retreats to Germantown.
 - **December 10** American raid from Connecticut to Long Island, N.Y., is foiled by British warships. Colonel Samuel B. Webb and his regiment are captured.
 - **December 11** Washington's army, on its way to winter quarters at Valley Forge, skirmishes at Mason's Ford, Pa.
 - **December 17** Washington's army takes up winter quarters at Valley Forge, Pa.
 - **December 17** After receiving news on 4 December of Burgoyne's surrender, French Foreign Minister promises American commissioners in Paris that France will recognize American independence.
 - American engineer David Bushnell invents the torpedo.
- VA-1777
- **August 31** Fort Henry, Va., (modern Wheeling, W.V.), is attacked by 400 Indians.
 - **September 1** Fort Henry relieved by reinforcements.
 - **December 15** The House of Delegates unanimously authorizes Virginia ratification of the Articles of Confederation.
 - **December 16** The Senate concurs with authorizing Virginia's delegates to Congress to ratify the Articles of Confederation.

CHRONOLOGY 1777-1778

WLM-1777

- **March 20** Linen from the Williamsburg Manufactory is offered for sale.
- **May 5** The General Assembly meets in Williamsburg. George Wythe is elected speaker of House, replacing Edmund Pendleton, injured by a fall from a horse. Archibald continues as speaker of the Senate.
- **May [30]** Forty members of the Cherokee nation visit Williamsburg to negotiate peace and new boundaries.
- **June 28** General Assembly adjourns.
- **August 5** Martha Washington arrives in Williamsburg from the home of her brother-in-law Burwell Bassett in New Kent. She was saluted with cannon and small arms fire, presented with a gold medal for her husband, and accepted freedom of the city for her husband. She remained a few days.
- **October 20** The General Assembly meets in Williamsburg.
- **October 30** Word reaches Williamsburg of the defeat of General Burgoyne by the Americans at Saratoga. Governor Henry proclaimed a holiday and ordered a gill of rum for every soldier. Troops were paraded, and everyone in the guardhouse, except deserters, was freed. The celebration included illumination of buildings and the ringing of bells.
- **December 10** George Rogers Clark presents to Governor Henry his plan for the conquest of the Illinois country. Of especial interest was the taking of the main British base at Detroit, which lay within the territory claimed by Virginia.

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W-1778

- **March 20** Louis XVI of France formally receives American commissioners Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee.
- **July 27** Naval battle off Ushant, Brittany, opens hostilities between Great Britain and France.
- **December 28** In the first major Anglo-French operation in the West Indies, the French island of St. Lucia surrenders to the British.
- Rousseau dies.
- Voltaire dies.
- Beethoven (at eight) presented by his father as an infant prodigy.
- La Scala, Milan, opened.
- James Cook discovers Hawaii.
- Franz Mesmer, Viennese doctor, practices "mesmerism" in Paris.

GB-1778

- **March 9** In an effort to dissuade Americans from ratifying the treaty with France, Parliament approves Lord North's proposals for reconciliation,

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including suspension of all acts passed since 1753 to which Americans objected.

- **April 23-24** John Paul Jones, commanding the USS *Ranger*, raids Whitehaven, England, and St. Mary's Isle off Scotland, then engages and defeats HMS *Drake* off Belfast.
- William Pitt the Elder, Earl of Chatham, dies.
- William Hazlitt, English author, born.
- Thomas Augustine Arne, English composer, dies.
- Joseph Bramah from Yorkshire constructs improved water closet.

NA-1778

- **January 3** The House of Delegates establishes a High Court of Chancery and a General Court, as per the second and third of Jefferson's bills on the judiciary. Jefferson's bill concerning the General Court was greatly modified.
- **January 9** The Senate agrees to the establishment of a High Court of Chancery.
- **January 11** Navy Captain James Willing leaves Pittsburgh to raid loyalists on the lower Mississippi. His vessel is a keelboat called the USS *Rattletrap*.
- **January 19** The Senate agrees to the establishment of a General Court.
- **January 25** Washington orders West Point to be fortified.
- **January 27** Marines and seamen from U.S. Navy sloop *Providence* raid New Providence (now Nassau), Bahamas, and seize forts.
- **February 6** French recognize American independence by signing a treaty of alliance and of amity and commerce. France otherwise remains neutral in the war until summer.
- **February 19** Captain James Willing plunders Natchez, Miss.
- **February 23** Captain James Willing sacks Manchac, La.
- **February 23** Prussian officer Friedrich von Steuben arrives at Valley Forge, where he instituted training that vastly improved military abilities of the Continental Army.
- **February 26** Congress initiates first national draft when it requests each state to institute drafts from their militia for nine month Continental service in order to fill their respective regiments.
- **March 18** American foraging party trapped by British party at Quinton's Bridge, N.J.
- **March 21** Loyalist force fiercely attack militia at Hancock's Bridge, N.J., and kill some loyalists in the process.
- **March 21** Final orders issued to Sir Henry Clinton, who is to relieve Howe as British commander in North America, to send 5,000 men to the West Indies and 3,000 to Florida. The rest he is to withdraw from Philadelphia to New York.
- **April 30** A great chain is stretched across the Hudson River between West Point and Constitution Island to impede the British from going upriver.

CHRONOLOGY 1778

- **May 1** British force of 700 attacks an American outpost with much smaller strength at Crooked Billet Tavern, Pa., with heavy American losses.
- **May 4** Congress ratifies treaties of alliance and of amity and commerce with France.
- **May 5** Congress approves Washington's plan for an organized inspectorship and appoints General von Steuben Inspector General.
- **May 18** The British Army sends off its commander Sir William Howe with an extravagant festival, "The Mischianza," in Philadelphia.
- **May 20** Learning that the British were preparing to evacuate Philadelphia, Washington sends out a 2,200-man reconnaissance force under Lafayette. A British force of 5,000 tried to trap them at Barren Hill, Pa., but after only minor skirmishing, Lafayette withdrew back across the Schuylkill with minor losses.
- **May 24** British raiding party based in Newport, R.I., wreak havoc in nearby Warren and Bristol.
- **May 25** General Howe departs for England from Philadelphia. He is succeeded by General Sir Henry Clinton as British Commander-in-Chief.
- **May 27** Congress approves new establishment for Continental Army, including reorganization of infantry, artillery, and cavalry units, establishment of provost corps and three engineer companies.
- **June 6** Carlisle Peace Commission, bearing Lord North's conciliatory proposals, arrive in Philadelphia.
- **June 13-17** Congress (at York, Pa.) receives Lord North's conciliatory proposals. They inform the Carlisle Peace Commission that they will negotiate with Great Britain only from a position of an independent nation for a treaty of peace and commerce comparable to that into which they had already entered with France.
- **June 18** General Sir Henry Clinton evacuates Philadelphia on way to New York, and Washington's army leaves Valley Forge in pursuit.
- **June 28** Washington's army attacks Clinton's forces at Monmouth Court House, N.J. British withdraw, leaving the Americans holding the field. Several died of heat stroke on both sides. British losses were greater than American by several hundred.
- **July 2** Congress meets again in Philadelphia, following British evacuation.
- **July 3-4** Loyalist and Indian force defeat patriot defending force in Wyoming Valley, Pa., plunder upper valley, and massacre prisoners before withdrawing to New York.
- **July 4** George Rogers Clark and his men approach Kaskaskia, Ill., and take it late at night without a struggle. The commandant is Sieur de Rocheblave, who is captured in bed. Upon being assured that France is now allied with the Americans against the British, the inhabitants seem content with the turn of events.

CHRONOLOGY 1778

- **July 6** Accompanied by a group of citizens of Kaskaskia, Major John Bowman occupies Cahokia, sixty miles to the north, without resistance.
- **July 8** First direct French military assistance of Americans arrives. Admiral Jean Comte d'Estaing arrives off Delaware Capes with sixteen ships and 4,000 troops. With the fleet is Conrad Gerard, the French minister to the United States, the first diplomatic representative to this country.
- **July 11** D'Estaing's fleet moves to Sandy Hook in hopes of attacking Lord Richard Howe's smaller British fleet. An attack is prevented by a sandbar between the fleets.
- **July 14** Father Pierre Bibault led a group to Vincennes (modern Indiana) to urge the populace there to surrender quietly to the Americans, too.
- **July 18** Indians led by Joseph Brant sack and burn Andrustown, N.Y.
- **July 20** English post at Vincennes, Ind., shifts to American allegiance without resistance.
- **July 22** D'Estaing sails for Newport, R.I.
- **July 29** D'Estaing arrives at Point Judith, R.I., and begins to arrange with American General John Sullivan for attack on Newport.
- **August 5** French Admiral Suffren forces Sakonnet (East) Passage at Newport, destroying several British ships and opening way for French ship to move up Middle Passage to land troops.
- **August 8-9** Sullivan's American troops move into position and some French troops land for attack on Newport.
- **August 10-11** D'Estaing re-embarks French troops to engage Admiral Richard Howe's fleet off Newport. Fleets were damaged by a storm before they could do damage to one another. D'Estaing refused, upon return to Newport, to disembark troops to assist Sullivan.
- **August 21** D'Estaing sails for Boston for repairs, leaving Sullivan's troops without assistance at Newport, despite pleas from Sullivan and Lafayette to remain for a few days.
- **August 28-29** Having been forced to abandon the siege of Newport, Sullivan's troops are attacked at Quaker Hill as they attempt to withdraw to the northern portion of Rhode Island. British and American losses were both heavy, but Americans managed to retreat to safety. This engagement is known as the Battle of Rhode Island. A regiment of black soldiers from Rhode Island distinguished themselves in this battle.
- **September 4** The United States and The Netherlands sign treaty of amity and commerce.
- **September 5-6** British raid near New Bedford results in destruction of 70 vessels and many buildings. Moving to Fairhaven, the British destroyed mills and houses.
- **September 8** The same British raiding force attacks Martha's Vineyard, Mass., destroying shipping and seizing livestock.

CHRONOLOGY 1778

- **September 13** A loyalist and Indian force raid German Flats (present Herkimer), N.Y., taking livestock and burning most of the buildings. Residents were able to get inside the fort, so that casualties were few.
- **September 14** Congress appoints Benjamin Franklin minister plenipotentiary to France.
- **September 23** Congress appoints General Benjamin Lincoln commander of the Southern Department, and requests that Virginia and North Carolina expeditiously send men and supplies to the aid of South Carolina and Georgia.
- **September 24** Washington sends out small parties to harass two foraging expeditions under Cornwallis and Knyphausen, moving up the Hudson River from New York City.
- **September 28** At Old Tappan, N.J., the British surprise a sleeping force of about 100 Continentals. The British bayonet 30 and capture 50.
- **October 6-7** An American privateering base near Great Bay, N.J., is heavily damaged by a force of 400 British.
- **October 6-8** Unadilla, N.Y. is raided by a Continental detachment. Joseph Brant had established a base there after settlers left due to threats by Indians.
- **October 12** Congress again recommends that local governments ban plays and other public entertainments.
- **October 15** British force that had raided Great Bay, N.J., surprised infantry under General Casimir Pulaski. The British killed about 40 Americans before withdrawing to their ships.
- **November 4** Sir Henry Clinton detaches 5,800 men under General James Grant to attack St. Lucia in the West Indies.
- **November 11** Loyalists and Indian force attack Cherry Valley, N.Y., killing about 30, including noncombatants, and taking about seventy prisoners.
- **November 27** British force of 3,500 leaves New York to attack Georgia. Clinton now has about 17,000 men in New York.
- American engineer David Bushnell invents the torpedo.
- **December** Americans first employ mine warfare against ships supplying British-occupied Philadelphia. Then send David Bushnell's floating explosives down the Delaware.
- **December 12** The House of Delegates passes a bill establishing a Court of Appeals for Virginia. The Court consisted of the judges of the General Court, of the High Court of Chancery, and of the Court of Admiralty. An amendment providing for the Assembly to elect three assistant judges was repealed in June 1779.
- **December 14** The Senate adopts the bill establishing a Court of Appeals for Virginia.
- **December 17** The British under Lieutenant Governor Henry Hamilton of Detroit, together with some Indian allies, retake Vincennes.

CHRONOLOGY 1778-1779

- **December 29** British troops seize Savannah, Ga., with heavy American losses.
- Act of Congress prohibits import of slaves into the United States.

WLM-1778

- **January 2** Virginia Governor Patrick Henry, with the knowledge of the Council, secretly instructs George Rogers Clark to outfit and expedition at Pittsburgh and proceed down the Ohio River, for the purpose of securing the Illinois country.
- **January 22** The General Assembly passes Jefferson's sequestration bill, which provided that state commissioners could take over and manage the estates of loyalists, and pay the earnings that exceeded the expenses to the Continental Loan Office.
- **January 24** The General Assembly adjourns.
- **May 4** The General Assembly meets in Williamsburg. Benjamin Harrison is elected speaker of the House, and Archibald Cary speaker of the Senate.
- **May 8** Dixon and Hunter's *Virginia Gazette* carried news of the signing in Paris of the treaty of alliance with France on 6 February 1778.
- **June 1** The General Assembly adjourns.
- **October 5** The General Assembly meets in Williamsburg.
- **December 19** The General Assembly adjourns.

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W-1779

- **June 21** Spain declares war on Great Britain, but as an ally of France, without recognizing U.S. independence.
- British attack French Senegal, West Africa, gain Goree.
- French forces take St. Vincent and Grenada, West Indies.
- British war against Mahrattas in India.
- Explorer James Cook murdered in Hawaii.

GB-1779

- David Garrick, English actor, dies.
- Thomas Moore, Irish lyric poet, born.
- Thomas Chippendale, English master cabinetmaker, dies.
- First children's clinic established in London.
- The Derby established at Epsom racetrack, Surrey, England, by 12th Earl of Derby.

NA-1779

- **January 5** First casualties resulting from mine warfare in the Delaware River when four bargemen are killed.
- **January 5** Stephen Decatur, United States naval hero ("My country, right or wrong"), born.

CHRONOLOGY 1779

- **January 9** Sunbury (Fort Morris), Ga., and its Continental defenders are captured after a three-day siege by British and Indians from St. Augustine, Fla. The British are commanded by General Provost.
- **January 29** Following capture of Savannah, British occupy Augusta, Ga., with almost no resistance.
- **February 3** At Beaufort, Port Royal Island, S. C., Americans under General William Moultrie defeat British force with heavy British losses.
- **February 14** At Kettle Creek, Ga., 350 Americans under Colonel Andrew Pickens defeated a group of 700 loyalists from Carolina, who were marching to join the British in Georgia. Loyalist losses were heavy, and this action dampened loyalist enthusiasm in the Carolinas.
- **February 18** Congress establishes the Department of Inspector General. Von Steuben is first head of this department.
- **February 24** Lieutenant Governor Henry Hamilton of Detroit surrenders Fort Sackville at Vincennes to George Rogers Clark after a two-day siege.
- **February 25** Congress authorizes enlistment of corps of five companies of rangers to protect settlements on Pennsylvania's frontier.
- **February 26** Royal Governor William Tryon of N.Y. leads a raid with 600 troops and easily defeats General Israel Putnam's 150 militiamen at Horseneck Landing (West Greenwich), Conn.
- **March 3** A force of 1500 Americans, mostly militia from North Carolina, force British out of Augusta. Nine hundred British troops under Lt. Col. James Provost surprise them with a counterattack at Briar Creek, Ga., inflicting heavy American losses with few British casualties.
- **March 29** Congress recommends that South Carolina and Georgia raise a force of 3,000 blacks because of shortage of whites. This force is to be commanded by white commissioned and noncommissioned officers. Owners of each slave are to be paid up to \$1,000, and each slave that serves faithfully until the end of the war is to be emancipated and paid \$50.
- **March 29** Congress ordered that regulations prepared by von Steuben be observed by U.S. troops.
- **April 10** Col. Evan Shelby of Virginia sets out with an army of nine hundred men from Virginia and North Carolina to surprise the Cherokee at Chickamauga. Within a few weeks he destroyed eleven Indian towns, but chief Dragging Canoe removed his followers to Lookout Mountain.
- **April 19** Patriots under Gose van Schaick raid and destroy Onondaga Castle, N.Y.
- **May** Benedict Arnold begins treasonous negotiations with British.
- **May 11-12** General Benjamin Lincoln's Continentals leave South Carolina to reoccupy Augusta. In the meantime, British approach Charleston, but withdraw to Stone Ferry, south of the city, at news of Lincoln's imminent return.

CHRONOLOGY 1779

- **June 1** British capture American forts at Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, N.Y., strategic crossing points on the Hudson River.
- **June 18** General John Sullivan begins expedition from Easton, Pa., against the New York Indians.
- **June 20** At Stone Ferry, S.C., Americans attack British and Hessian rear guard. American losses are twice those of British. Americans withdraw.
- **June 23** Because of the ill success of the sequestration law passed in January 1778, the House passed an act allowing the confiscation of loyalist property outright.
- **June 24** The Senate passed the bill allowing confiscation of loyalist property.
- **July 2** At Poundridge, N.Y., Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton's 360 men defeat 90 Americans.
- **July 5-6** British troops from New York attack New Haven, Conn.
- **July 8** The British that attacked New Haven move to Fairfield, Conn., burning most of the town.
- **July 9** Same British raiders burn village of Green's Farms, Conn.
- **July 11** The British raid Norwalk, Conn., which suffers extensive damage.
- **July 16** General Anthony's Continentals (Virginians and Pennsylvanians) surprise British garrison at Stony Point, N.Y. Because Washington's army could not also take Verplanck's Point, Americans soon withdrew, and British reoccupied Stony Point fortifications.
- **July 19** Mohawk Indian Chief Joseph Brant led Indians and loyalists on night raid of Minisink, N.Y.
- **July 22** Near Point Jervis, militia pursuing Indian raiders of Minisink were overwhelmed and only about 30 of 160 survived.
- **July 25-August 13** Massachusetts expedition to attack British post at Penobscot Bay ends in failure when powerful British force arrives from New York. Americans lost far more men than British.
- **August 11-September 14** Colonel Daniel Brodhead leads force up Allegheny River valley and destroys several Indian villages in northern Pennsylvania. This expedition was intended to complement Sullivan's.
- **August 19** Henry (Light Horse Harry) Lee leads surprise attack on British garrison at Paulus Hook, N.J. There were few American losses, but virtually all of British-Hessian garrison was killed, wounded, or captured.
- **August 19** General James Clinton joins Sullivan in campaign against the Indians.
- **August 27-31** Border dispute between Virginia and Pennsylvania is settled by commissioners from both, meeting in Baltimore. The present border is agreed upon. Pennsylvania ratified immediately. Virginia delayed to settle titles in the area received by Pennsylvania.
- **August 29** Gen. John Sullivan defeats Iroquois under Joseph Brant at Newtown, near Elmira, N.Y.

CHRONOLOGY 1779

- **September 5** Americans from Shippan Point, Conn., surprise 500 loyalists at Lloyd Neck, N.Y., capturing most of them, without loss.
- **September 11-12** Admiral D'Estaing's fleet (having come from the West Indies), begins to debark troops at Beaulieu, about 15 miles south of Savannah, Ga.
- **September 16** Siege of Savannah begins. Fifteen hundred Americans under Benjamin Lincoln and over 5,000 French from D'Estaing's fleet faced about 3,200 British regulars.
- **September 21** Bernardo Polinar de Galvez captures the British post and garrison at Baton Rouge, La., and capitulation stipulated surrender of Natchez, Miss., and other posts on the Mississippi River.
- **September 23** John Paul Jones's *Bonhomme Richard* defeats the British warship *Serapis*, though his ship sank a day later. He uttered his famous words, "I have not yet begun to fight," during this battle.
- **October 9** D'Estaing's concern for safety of the French fleet prompt French and Americans to attack British at Savannah. They are repulsed with great loss.
- **October 15** Sullivan's Indian campaigns ends after battle near Elmira and destructions of Indian towns and crops. The Indians were driven into Canada.
- **October 25** Three thousand British troops at Newport, R.I., are sent to support British campaign in southern colonies.
- **October 28** Congress establishes Board of Admiralty.
- **December 1** Washington's army goes into winter quarters at Morristown, N.J.
- **December 26** General Clinton sails from New York with 8,700 British troops with intent to capture Charleston, S.C.
- Joel Poinsett, United States diplomat (poinsettia named after him), born.

VA-1779

- **January** The Convention troops arrive at their quarters at Ivy Creek, northwest of Charlottesville. These were English and German troops, commanded by Major General William Phillips and Baron von Riedesel, who were taken prisoner at Saratoga. They were called "Convention" troops because they had capitulated under "Articles of Convention" rather than "Articles of Surrender." They had spent a year in Massachusetts before undertaking their four-month journey to Virginia.
- **May 8-24** The British under Major General Edward Mathew, and supported by Commodore Sir George Collier, conduct a series of raids at Portsmouth, Gosport, Norfolk, Kemp's Landing, and Suffolk, ultimately destroying vessels, tobacco, supplies, and arms worth about two million pounds.

CHRONOLOGY 1779

WLM-1779

- **May 3** The General Assembly meets in Williamsburg. Benjamin Harrison continues as speaker of the House, and Archibald Cary continues as speaker of the Senate.
- **June 1** The General Assembly elects Thomas Jefferson governor.
- **June 5** The House of Delegates passes the act for the removal of the capital to Richmond.
- **June 12** The Va. Senate agrees to the removal of the capital.
- **June 12** Lieutenant Governor Henry Hamilton of Detroit (also called the "hair buyer") is brought to Williamsburg and ensconced in the public prison.
- **June 17** The House of Delegates passes a bill establishing a land office for Virginia. Jefferson had introduced the bill in 1778, but speculators had opposed it. The final version was less encouraging to small farmers. Senate concurs five days later.
- **June 18** The committee appointed to revise Virginia's laws in 1776 submits its report--126 bills. The work was completed by George Wythe and Thomas Jefferson because Thomas Ludwell Lee had died, Edmund Pendleton was in ill health, and George Mason had resigned.
- **June 26** The General Assembly levies a tax. For every man and for every female slave over sixteen, a quantity of grain, hemp, or tobacco was to be paid for four years beginning in 1780.
- **June 26** The General Assembly adjourns.
- **July 15-16** In an effort to curb runaway inflation, Williamsburg citizens meet and resolve to set prices on goods and to prevent large amounts of goods from leaving the city. They elect a committee of inspection and observation to enforce their resolves: Samuel Beall, James Innes, James Southall, Humphrey Harwood, Henry Tazewell, Samuel Griffin, Robert Anderson, John Minson Galt, Benjamin Powell, Champion Travis, the Reverend Robert Andrews, John Dixon, Edward Archer, James McClurg, and John Boush.
- **October 4** The General Assembly meets in Williamsburg. Nathaniel Harrison replaces Archibald Cary, who is ill, as speaker of the Senate.
- **November 30** To meet increasing demands upon Virginia for foodstuffs for the armies in the North and South, Governor Jefferson invokes a law the Assembly enacted in October 1778 to ban exportation of meats and grain. The prohibition was repeatedly extended through 1781.
- **December 4** Thomas Jefferson and the other visitors and governors of the College of William and Mary determine to reorganize the College, establishing professorships of natural philosophy, moral philosophy, modern languages, law and police, and anatomy and medicine.
- **December 24** The General Assembly adjourns.

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CHRONOLOGY 1780

W-1780

- **February 29** Russia issues proclamation of Armed Neutrality. It contained principles for protection of neutral commerce in wartime and resulted in European continental nations aligning against Great Britain and the involvement of the Netherlands in the war.
- **December 20** The Netherlands enters the war against Britain.
- Serfdom abolished in Bohemia and Hungary.
- Empress Maria Theresa dies; succeeded by her son Joseph II.
- Rebellion in Peru against Spanish rule.
- Spanish dance "bolero" invented by dancer Sebastiano Carezo.
- Sebastien Erard (Paris) makes first modern pianoforte.
- Haydn composes "Toy" Symphony.
- Scheller constructs first fountain pen.

GB-1780

- Henry Grattan demands Home Rule for Ireland.
- William Pitt the Younger enters Parliament.
- "The British Gazette" and "Sunday Monitor," first Sunday newspapers, appear in London.
- First Sunday School is organized by Robert Raikes.

NA-1780

- **February 11** Sir Henry Clinton's forces land at Simmons Island and begin moving toward Charleston.
- **February 25** Due to lack of resources, Congress resolves to call upon the states for specific supplies and supplies quotas for the same, to support the army.
- **March 1** Pennsylvania becomes first of the thirteen original states to emancipate slaves by declaring all children born of slaves after that date to be free.
- **March 14** Governor Bernardo Polinar de Galvez captures British Fort Charlotte (Mobile, Ala.), West Florida.
- **April 1** British begin siege of Charleston.
- **April 14** At Monck's Corner, S.C., Colonel Banastre Tarleton surprises Continentals and militia guarding supply depot and routs them, cutting off last outside link of Americans besieged in Charleston, S.C.
- **April 24** Americans sortie from Charleston and overrun first line of British siege works, but could do no more to break out of the siege.
- **May 6** American group of cavalry is surprised by Tarleton's dragoons at Lenud's Ferry with heavy American losses, but few British casualties.
- **May 7** Fort Moultrie, S.C., which guards the entry to Charleston harbor, is taken by British without resistance.
- **May 12** After almost two months of siege, Charleston, S.C., is surrendered by American forces under Major General Benjamin Lincoln to the British

CHRONOLOGY 1780

under General Sir Henry Clinton. Virtually the entire Virginia continental Line under Brigadier General William Woodford was captured. He was taken prisoner to New York.

- **May 25** At Morristown, N.J., two Connecticut regiments briefly mutiny because of cuts in rations and five months without pay.
- **May 26** British regulars and Indians from Ft. Michilimackinac, Mich., attack Spanish settlement at St. Louis, Mo., and are driven back.
- **May 29** Near Waxhaws, S. C., Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton virtually annihilate Colonel Abraham Buford's regiment, one of the two remaining in the Virginia Continental Line, which had been marching to Charleston. The British massacred many Virginians after they surrendered.
- **May 29** Loyalists near Winnsboro, S.C., defeated by patriot irregulars, indicating patriot resurgence in that colony.
- **June 7** British raid near Morristown upon word of Continental disaffection there. At Connecticut Farms, N.J., American defense holds and British are turned back. British burn the town.
- **June 20** At Ramsour's Mill, N.C., Americans defeated loyalists gathered to join upcoming invasion of North Carolina. This weakened loyalist support when Cornwallis finally did invade.
- **June 23** British raid at Springfield, N.J., and burn the town, but are forced to turn back. This ends this British offensive in New Jersey. Burning of these towns dampens loyalist enthusiasm in N.J.
- **July 10** General Jean Comte de Rochambeau, with an army numbering 5,500, lands in Newport, R.I.
- **July 12** Col. Thomas Sumter's militia inflict heavy losses on enemy (including some of Tarleton's cavalry) at Williamson's Plantation, S.C.
- **July 13** Congress unanimously resolves that Major General Horatio Gates should command the Southern Department, and sets up a five-man committee to plan southern defense.
- **July 21** Washington sends a force under General Wayne to attack a blockhouse at Bull's Ferry, N.J. They were unsuccessful.
- **July 30** Loyalist garrison at Fort Anderson, S.C., surrenders without resistance.
- **August 1** Colonel Thomas Sumter unsuccessfully attacks British fortifications at Rocky Mount, S.C.
- **August 1** In a prelude to King's Mountain, Major Ferguson's loyalists skirmish with Americans and are driven back.
- **August 2** Joseph Brant and a large party of Indians and loyalists unsuccessfully attack Fort Plank, N.Y., but burn Canajoharie settlement and take several women and children prisoners.
- **August 3** General Benedict Arnold assumes command of West Point, N.Y., with intention of allowing its capture by the British.

CHRONOLOGY 1780

- **August 6** Colonel Thomas Sumter's forces defeat loyalist garrison at Hanging Rock, S.C.
- **August 8** George Rogers Clark's men defeat Ohio Indians and destroy their town on Little Miami River.
- **August 15** Colonel Thomas Sumter's men capture British garrison at Wateree Ferry, S.C., along with supplies intended for Cornwallis.
- **August 16** The Americans under General Horatio Gates, are defeated at Camden, S.C. Gates precipitously leaves battle.
- **August 18** Tarleton surprises Sumter's partisan forces, killing 150, capturing 300, and taking back the prisoners and supplies captured at Wateree Ferry.
- **September 21-22** Benedict Arnold meets Major John Andre, Adjutant General of the British Army, in the woods on the banks of the Hudson to arrange final details of Arnold's treason.
- **September 23** Major John Andre captured near Tarrytown, N.Y., in disguise and in possession of papers detailing the defenses of West Point.
- **September 23** Pennsylvania agrees to title settlements in the border agreement with Virginia.
- **September 25** General Benedict Arnold flees to a British ship in the Hudson upon learning that his treasonous contacts with the British had been disclosed.
- **September 26** Cornwallis occupies Charlotte, N.C., after skirmish with militia.
- **October 2** Major Andre is hanged as a spy at Tappan, N.Y.
- **October 3** Congress reduces authorized strength of the Continental Army to 58 regiments--49 infantry, 4 artillery, 4 cavalry, 1 artificer--and made other provisions for its organization and state contributions to it.
- **October 5** Congress approves principles of Russia's Declaration of Armed Neutrality.
- **October 7** At King's Mountain, S.C., North Carolina and Virginia frontiersmen under William Campbell, Isaac Shelby, John Sevier, Benjamin Cleveland, and Charles McDowell decimate the loyalist force under Major Patrick Ferguson that had been sent by Cornwallis to terrorize the countryside along his western flank. Ferguson was killed, and the Americans executed several loyalists after they surrendered.
- **October 14** At Congress's request, Washington replaces Gates with General Nathaniel Greene as commander of the Southern Department.
- **October 30** Congress approves Greene's appointment as commander, orders Henry Lee's and von Steuben's forces southward, and assigns all units from Delaware and states south of it to the Southern Army.
- **November 9** Cornwallis sends detachment to meet Sumter's militia force. They blunder into each other at Fishdam Ford, S.C., and the British are defeated.
- **November 13** Brigadier General William Woodford dies in New York.

CHRONOLOGY 1780

- **November 20** At Blackstocks, S.C., Sumter's militia defeat Tarleton's smaller force of dragoons. Sumter was badly wounded.
- **November 22** The British invasion force is recalled to reinforce Cornwallis after the British defeat at King's Mountain.
- **December 3** General Nathaniel Greene takes command of the Southern Department at Charlotte, N.C.
- **December 24** Forces under Colonel John Sevier of the Tennessee territory and Colonel Arthur Campbell of Virginia occupy Chote, the principal town of the Overhill Cherokee. They subsequently destroy it and other towns. Sevier had previously defeated the Cherokee in the French Broad River valley.
- American Academy of Sciences founded in Boston.

VA-1780

- **April 24** Government operations resume in Richmond.
- **May 1** The General Assembly meets in Richmond.
- **June 10** To meet the urgent need for provisions, the House of Delegates enacts a provision law allowing commissioners to compel individuals to sell to the state at set prices provisions above the owner's immediate need.
- **June 20** The Senate agrees to the provision law.
- **June 23** Virginia ratifies border settlement with Pennsylvania.
- **July 7** The House of Delegates accedes to congress's plan of March 18, which sought to stop the runaway depreciation of Continental paper currency by recalling it for a new issue at 40 to 1 in specie.
- **July 11** The Senate agrees to Congress's currency plan.
- **July 14** The General Assembly adjourns.
- **October 16** The General Assembly meets in Richmond.
- **October 20** A British invasion force under Major General Alexander Leslie lands in the Hampton Roads area.
- **November 20** Major General Nathaniel Green appoints Major General Baron von Steuben the Continental commander in Virginia.
- **December 30** Now a British brigadier general, Benedict Arnold sails into Chesapeake Bay, catching Virginians completely unprepared.
- Virginia women participate in the Ladies Association for the Revolution, a group getting women involved in the war effort. Martha Jefferson encourages her friends to gather donations from colonial churches

WLM-1780

- **April 7** The capital moves from Williamsburg to Richmond.
- **October [?]** Lieutenant Governor Henry Hamilton was released from prison in Williamsburg and paroled to New York.

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CHRONOLOGY 1781

W-1781

- Dutch settlement at Negapatam, Madras, captured by British.
- Joseph II grants patent of religious tolerance and freedom of press in Austria.
- Moses Mendelssohn, German philosopher, publishes "On the Civil Amelioration of the Condition of the Jews"
- Immanuel Kant, German philosopher, publishes "Critique of Pure Reason," fundamental work of modern philosophy.
- Serfdom abolished in Austrian dominions.

GB-1781

- William Herschel discovers the planet Uranus.
- **August 5** British defeat Dutch fleet in battle of Dogger Bank in North Sea.
- **December 12** In Second Battle of Ushant off Brittany, the British defeat French and Spanish.
- Clarendon Press, Oxford, established.

NA-1781

- **January 1** The Overhill Cherokee, with the exception of Chief Dragging Canoe, sue for peace.
- **January 1-10** Pennsylvania Continentals mutiny, demanding discharge because three-year enlistments had expired, and back pay.
- **January 17** At Cowpens, S.C., Brigadier General Daniel Morgan, commanding Georgia, North and South Carolina, and Virginia militia, obtains a brilliant victory over Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton's Legion.
- **January 20** Inspired by the mutiny of the Pennsylvania troops, 500 New Jersey Continentals mutiny at winter quarters at Pompton, N.J.
- **January 22** George Rogers Clark's second expedition against Detroit leaves Richmond. Due to a lack of cooperation from the Continental commander at Pittsburgh, the campaign had to be abandoned for lack of manpower by August.
- **January 27** New Jersey Continental mutineers surrender, and two leaders are hanged.
- **February 1** British force under Major James Craig occupies Wilmington, N.C.
- **February 3** British capture Dutch island of St. Eustatius, conduit for contraband trade between Europe and America since early in the war.
- **February 7** Congress replaces Board of War with the Department of War under a single Secretary. No one is appointed to fill the position.
- **February 14** A French naval squadron from Newport, R.I., and under the command of Captain Arnaud de Tilly, sails into the Chesapeake Bay in an attempt to catch Benedict Arnold at Portsmouth. The large French ships were unable to go far enough up the Elizabeth River, however.
- **February 14** Greene and Morgan escape from pursuit by Cornwallis's army across the Dan River. They left the British far from their supply bases.

CHRONOLOGY 1781

- **February 20** Captain de Tilly sails back to Newport.
- **February 20** Congress appoints Robert Morris Superintendent of Finance.
- **February 25** Having recrossed the Dan into North Carolina, Lt. Col. Henry Lee's continentals and local militia trapped loyalist militia at Haw River, N.C., dampening loyalist support of Cornwallis.
- **March** The Marquis de Lafayette is appointed the Continental commander in Virginia, replacing von Steuben.
- **March 1** The Articles of Confederation take effect, following ratification by all of the states.
- **March 2** The Second Continental Congress becomes "The United States in Congress Assembled."
- **March 2** Henry Lee's force and British advance guard under Tarleton skirmish at Clapp's Mill, N.C.
- **March 6** At Wetzell's Mill, N.C., Tarleton's cavalry and British infantry attack Greene's army, and American withdraw.
- **March 9** Spanish begin siege of Pensacola, W. Fla.
- **March 14** Having left his troops at Annapolis, the Marquis de Lafayette lands at Yorktown to meet with Baron von Steuben. Lafayette has been ordered south by Washington to cooperate with the French against Arnold.
- **March 15** The Americans under Major General Nathaniel Greene are defeated by General Cornwallis at Guilford Courthouse, N.C. Heavy British losses, however, convince Cornwallis to abandon the Carolinas and join the British forces in Virginia.
- **March 16** The French fleet under Admiral Destouches, arriving from Newport, R.I., to reinforce Lafayette, meets a British squadron under Admiral Marriot Arbuthnot off the Virginia Capes. The French are forced back to Rhode Island for repairs, while the British enter the Bay.
- **March 27** Lafayette sets out to return to his Continental troops at Annapolis.
- **April 16-June 5** Americans besiege Augusta, Ga., and capture its strongest fortification.
- **April 23** Americans take Fort Watson, S.C., and its loyalist garrison.
- **April 25** Lord Rawdon attacks General Greene's army, driving them from Hobkirk's Hill (north of Camden), S.C.
- **April 30** The British burn tobacco warehouses and about twelve hundred hogsheads of tobacco in Manchester.
- **May 10** British abandon Camden, S.C.
- **May 10** Spanish under Bernardo de Galvez take Pensacola, and all of West Florida is surrendered to Spain.
- **May 11** Sumter's partisan forces take British post at Orangeburg, S.C.
- **May 12** Henry Lee and Francis Marion take British Fort Motte, S.C.
- **May 15** Fort Granby, S.C., surrenders to Henry Lee.

CHRONOLOGY 1781

- **May 21-22** Washington and Rochambeau meet at Wethersfield, Conn., to discuss joint operations.
- **May 22-June 19** Americans under Green besiege British post at Ninety-Six, S.C. He made an unsuccessful assault upon it as a relief force approached.
- **May 23** Colonel Banastre Tarleton raids Chesterfield Courthouse, capturing the militia.
- **June 4** Baron von Steuben leaves behind valuable stores at Point of Fork as he withdraws before the force of Colonel John Simcoe.
- **June 14** Congress accepts mediation proposed by Empress of Russia and "Emperor of Germany," and appoints five ministers plenipotentiary to negotiate peace treaty with Great Britain.
- **July 6** Rochambeau's and Washington's armies join at White Plains, N.Y.
- **July 17** At Quimby's Creek Bridge, S.C., the retreating garrison of Monck's Corner meets Marion's advance corps. The Americans had to withdraw.
- **August 1-19** Major James Craig conducts raids from Wilmington to New Bern, N.C., and enters New Bern on August 19.
- **August 24** Near modern Aurora, Ind., Joseph Brant and his Indian force virtually annihilate a group of Pennsylvania volunteers on their way to Kaskaskia to join George Rogers Clark.
- **September 6** Benedict Arnold leads raid against New London, Conn., and captures Fort Griswold across the river.
- **September 8** Americans under Greene are defeated at Eutaw Springs, S.C., but the British were so weakened that they had to retreat to the coast, leaving most of the state in the hands of the Americans.
- **September 10** Admiral de Barras, his fleet, and siege guns arrive in the Chesapeake from Newport, R.I.
- **September 12** Loyalists take North Carolina capital of Hillsboro, capturing Governor Thomas Burke. Withdrawing loyalists were attacked by Continentals at Cane Creek.
- **October 25** At Johnstown, N.Y., British force that had ravaged the Mohawk Valley is attacked by militia and forced to withdraw.
- **October 30** Patriot militia pursues this British force and engages it at Jerseyfield, N.Y. This is the last significant action on New York's border.
- **October 30** General Benjamin Lincoln is appointed Secretary at War in new government.
- **November 18** British evacuate Wilmington, N.C., moving to Johns Island, near Charleston, S.C.
- **November 25** French retake St. Eustatius.
- **November 27** Militia under Colonel Isaac Shelby and Colonel Hezekiah Maham, capture British post at Fair Lawn, S.C.
- **December 1** Greene leads Americans against British at Dorchester, S.C., who withdraw to area near Charleston.

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VA-1781

- **December 13** Day appointed by Congress as a day of thanksgiving and prayer in gratitude for victory at Yorktown.
- Franciscan monks settle at Los Angeles.
- **January 2** Virginia's General Assembly agrees to cede to Congress its claims to land north of the Ohio River, except for a relatively small proportion of land to pay military bounties. One of the conditions stipulated was that Congress not recognize prior purchases from Indians in the area.
- **January 2** The General Assembly adjourns.
- **January 5 and 6** Arnold inflicts great damage to Richmond. He fell back to Westover until January 10, before moving to winter quarters in Portsmouth.
- **January 8** At Charles City Court House, forty mounted rangers from Arnold's force surprise and defeat the local militia.
- **March 26** Major General William Phillips arrives in Lynnhaven Bay, replacing Benedict Arnold in command of British troops in Virginia.
- **March 29** Governor Jefferson and the Council refuse to weaken Virginia's defenses by agreeing to Baron von Steuben's strategy to send two thousand militia into North Carolina to lure Cornwallis out of Virginia. Their rejection of his plan causes tension between von Steuben and the Virginia leadership.
- **April 18** Generals Phillips and Arnold move out of Portsmouth up the James River.
- **April 20** Colonel John Simcoe lands at Burwell's Landing and forces the retirement of James Innes and the local militia from Williamsburg.
- **April [22]** Chickahominy River shipyard burned by the British, along with the ship *Thetis*.
- **April 24** The British land at City Point, Va.
- **April 25** The British meet the militia at Blandford, where von Steuben and the militia were defeated. Petersburg is captured, and 4,000 hogsheads of tobacco are burned by the British.
- **April 27** A British force under Arnold burned or captured all of Virginia's nine naval ships, as well as twelve private vessels, at Osborne's Wharf.
- **April 28** The British raid Chesterfield Courthouse.
- **April 29** Lafayette and his Continentals reach Richmond.
- **May 2** The British leave Bermuda Hundred to head back downriver.
- **May 7** In response to orders from Cornwallis to meet him in Petersburg, Phillips's fleet had to turn around just after they had passed Burwell's Landing. They land at Brandon on this day.
- **May 7** Legislature meets and adjourns in Richmond for lack of a quorum.
- **May 8** Phillips re-enters Petersburg.
- **May 15** Major General William Phillips dies of a fever in Petersburg, and Arnold resumes command until the arrival of Cornwallis.
- **May 20** Cornwallis joins Arnold at Petersburg.

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- **May 21** Reinforcements from Clinton in New York arrive, bringing the British forces in Virginia to 7,000.
- **May 24** The British evacuate Petersburg to pursue Lafayette.
- **May 24** The General Assembly meets in Charlottesville.
- **May 27** Outflanking Lafayette, Cornwallis forces American evacuation of Richmond.
- **June 2** Jefferson's term as governor legally ends, but the legislature puts off election of a successor until the 4th.
- **June 4** Captain John Jouett, Jr., sees Colonel Banastre Tarleton's troops on the march in Louisa County and races to Monticello, where he arrives just before daybreak, to warn Jefferson. He then continues on to Charlottesville to warn the General Assembly. Jefferson and all but seven legislators escape.
- **June 5** Cornwallis sends force to attack main American supply depot at Point of Fork, Va. They are successful.
- **June 7** Enough of the lower house meets in Staunton to allow it to proceed to business. The Senate does not have a quorum, so that a governor cannot yet be elected.
- **June 7** Cornwallis abandons his pursuit of Lafayette at the North Anna River and encamps at Elk Hill near Point of Fork.
- **June 10** General Anthony Wayne's Pennsylvanians (about eight hundred in number) join Lafayette at the South Anna River, and the two units follow Cornwallis south.
- **June 12** Thomas Nelson, Jr., is elected governor of Virginia. He is with Lafayette, and does not arrive to be sworn in until June 18.
- **June 13** Cornwallis withdraws from Elk Hill.
- **June 13** The House of delegates agrees to Congress's request for a 5 percent impost on the value of almost all imported goods.
- **June 14** The Virginia Senate agrees to the impost.
- **June 16** Cornwallis arrives in Richmond.
- **June 19** von Steuben's men join Lafayette and Wayne, so that those under Lafayette's command now total nineteen hundred Continentals and about three thousand militia.
- **July 5** Cornwallis begins to transport his heavy equipment across the James, but leaves most of his force on the northern bank.
- **July 6** Lafayette sends Anthony Wayne with eight hundred men to attack what he thinks is the British rear guard. Instead, at Green Spring, Wayne attacks the main British army, who inflict heavy casualties on the Americans before withdrawing across the James River.
- **July 9-24** From his base at Suffolk, Cornwallis conducts raids along south side of the James River as far west as Bedford County.
- **July 20** Cornwallis receives orders from Clinton countermanding his order to send three thousand troops to New York, and ordering Cornwallis to fortify

CHRONOLOGY 1781

Old Point Comfort as a base for naval operations in the Chesapeake. Cornwallis is also to establish an outpost at Yorktown.

- **August 2** Cornwallis, finding that the soil of Old Point Comfort will not sustain heavy fortifications, and that its harbor is not deep enough, occupies Yorktown instead, having secured Gloucester Point the day before.
- **August 19** Washington begins moving his own and the Comte de Rochambeau's army from the north toward Virginia, upon the intelligence that the French admiral, the Comte de Grasse, is sailing with three thousand men from the West Indies for the Chesapeake.
- **August 26** The Comte de Grasse arrives in Chesapeake Bay.
- **September 2** The Comte de Grasse disembarks three thousand troops under the command of the Marquis de St. Simon at Jamestown.
- **September 5** Outside the Virginia Capes, de Grasse meets a smaller British fleet commanded by Admiral Thomas Graves and gains the upper hand. The damaged British fleet is forced to return to New York.
- **September 29-October 17** Siege of Yorktown
- **October 1** The General Assembly meets in Richmond.
- **October 3** Near Gloucester, Va., French cavalry attack a foraging party under Tarleton and pushes them back. Additional French forces and Virginia militia begin siege of Gloucester Point, which helps block any overland escape by Cornwallis.
- **October 19** Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown.
- **November 30** Benjamin Harrison is elected governor to replace Thomas Nelson, who had resigned because of ill health. John Tyler, Sr., of Charles City County replaces Benjamin Harrison as speaker of the Senate.
- **December 12** The Virginia House of Delegates suspends their acceptance of the impost, pending unanimous agreement of all states.
- **December 15** The Te Deum was sung on account of the taking of York. The garrison moved out to parade, and gave three salutes, followed by "Vive le Roi," accompanied by a volley from the artillery. Rochambeau invited the most prominent citizens of Williamsburg to a large banquet, which was followed by a ball.
- **December 17** The Virginia Senate suspends acceptance of the impost.
- **December 28** The General Assembly adjourns.

WLM-1781

- **January** The College of William and Mary closes.
- **June 25** Cornwallis arrives in Williamsburg. He receives Clinton's orders to send half his army in Virginia to New York.
- **June 26** Lafayette reaches Bird's Tavern, about ten miles from Williamsburg, and advanced detachments under Col. Richard Butler and Maj. William McPherson skirmish with Simcoe's Rangers at Spencer's Ordinary, about five miles from Williamsburg.

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- **July 4** Cornwallis and his troops evacuate Williamsburg. He moves his army to Jamestown, as he prepares to withdraw from the peninsula.
- **September 14** Washington and Rochambeau arrive in Williamsburg from the north, before their troops arrive.
- **September 22** Washington and Rochambeau return to Williamsburg after conferring with de Grasses aboard his flagship.
- **September 26** The American and French troops under Major General Benjamin Lincoln and Baron de Viomenil arrive in Williamsburg.
- **September 28** The American and French armies leave Williamsburg for Yorktown.
- **December** The President's House at the College, occupied by French officers, burns.

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W-1782

- Spanish capture Minorca from British.
- Pope Pius VI in Vienna fails to persuade Joseph II to rescind program of tolerance.
- J.C. Bach dies.
- Nicolo Paganini, Italian composer and violinist, born.

GB-1782

- British Admiral Howe relieves Gibraltar.
- Fanny Burney publishes novel "Cecilia"
- Joseph Priestley publishes "A History of the Corruptions of Christianity"
- Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, founded.
- James Watt invents double-acting rotary steam engine.

NA-1782

- **March** Pennsylvania militia under Colonel David Williamson massacre a peaceful community of Delaware Indians at a Moravian missionary settlement.
- **March 18** John C. Calhoun, United States congressman, Senator, and Vice President, born.
- **June 4-5** A force of loyalists and Indians under the command of British Captain William Caldwell and loyalist leader Simon Girty rout an expedition of Virginia and Pennsylvania frontiersmen under Colonel William Crawford as they approach the Shawnee and Wyandot villages in the upper Sandusky River valley in Ohio. In retaliation for the massacre of peaceful Indians in the spring, Crawford and others are tortured to death.
- **July** The largest single body of Indians mustered during the war--about eleven hundred under Captain William Caldwell--approach Wheeling (in modern West Virginia) with intent to attack it, but the fear of counterattack by George Rogers Clark's forces convinced Major de Peyster, commander at Detroit, to

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call off the attack. A splinter group of about three hundred, under Caldwell, Simon Girty, and Alexander McKee, head for Kentucky.

- **August 19** Indians and loyalists under Caldwell, Girty, and McKee overwhelm a smaller force of frontiersmen under Daniel Boone and other local leaders, who attacked the larger force without waiting for reinforcement at Blue Licks, Ky. Over a third of the Kentuckians were killed in about five minutes.
- **November 10** George Rogers Clark attacks and destroys Chillicothe (in modern Ohio) and four other towns, as well as the British trading post at the portage of the Miami River. Most of the Indians escaped, but the destruction of the towns and supplies ended further British and Indian threats to the frontier.
- **December 31** Bank of North America established in Philadelphia.
- Spain completes conquest of Florida.
- *Letters From an American Farmer* published by Frenchman, J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur.
- First Catholic parochial school in U.S. is built by St. Mary's Church in Philadelphia.

VA-1782

- **January 5** General Assembly adjourns.
- **May 6** The General Assembly meets in Richmond. John Tyler, Sr., and Archibald Cary continue as speakers of the House and Senate.
- **June 14** The General Assembly adjourns.
- **October 21** The General Assembly meets in Richmond.
- Virginia's General Assembly passes an act allowing private manumission of slaves by written document rather than by petition to the legislature
- **December 28** The General Assembly adjourns.

WLM-1782

- **July 1** The French army begins to leave Williamsburg.

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W-1783

- Emperor Joseph II enforces use of German language in Bohemia.
- Simon Bolivar, Latin American soldier-statesman, born.
- Moses Mendelssohn, publishes "Jerusalem", a plea for freedom of conscience.
- Famine outbreak in Japan.
- Potemkin conquers the Crimea for Russia.
- Beethoven's first compositions printed.
- Mozart composes "Mass in C Minor"

CHRONOLOGY 1783

GB-1783

- **September 3** Britain signs the Treaty of Paris ending the American Revolution.
- William Pitt, the Younger, forms a ministry.
- William Blake publishes "Poetical Sketches"
- William Herschel publishes "Motion of the Solar System in Space"
- John Broadwood, English pianoforte maker, patents his piano pedals.
- Bank of Ireland founded.

NA-1783

- **April 3** Washington Irving, American author, born.
- **April 26** 7000 Loyalists in New York, fearing American vengeance after evacuation of British army, leave.
- **September 3** Britain signs the Treaty of Paris ending the American Revolution.
- **September 13** Congress agrees to accept Virginia's ceding of its claims to the area north of the Ohio River. Congress did not endorse Virginia's claim to the Kentucky region or repudiate earlier purchases from the Indians in the ceded area, as Virginians had demanded.
- **December 4** Washington's farewell to his officers at Fraunces' Tavern, New York.
- **December 23** Washington presents himself to Congress and resigns his commission as commander-in-chief.
- Society of Cincinnati, an elite American Revolutionary group, founded.
- Massachusetts Medical School founded in Boston.
- Benjamin Franklin invents bifocal spectacles.
- Noah Webster publishes his "American Spelling Book"
- Congress estimates the U.S. population at 2,389,300 (a drop of 211,000 since 1774 due to war deaths and Loyalist emigration to Canada and England.)

VA-1783

- **May 5** The General Assembly meets in Richmond. John Tyler, Sr., and Archibald Cary continue as speakers of the House and Senate.
- **June 28** The General Assembly adjourns.
- **December 19** The House of Delegates accepts Congress's terms for the cession of Virginia's lands north of the Ohio. The fact that no other state claimed Virginia's land south of the Ohio, and that Congress tacitly agreed not to recognize prior claims to the ceded lands made it easier for Virginia to accede to Congress's proposal.
- **December 20** The Senate agrees to the cession of western lands.

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CHRONOLOGY 1784

- 1784
- **February 3** Official word of the ratification of the treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States reaches Virginia.

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