**General US History Chapter 4**

**Section 1- The French and Indian War**

**ally**- a nation that joins with other nations for the same cause

**cede**- to surrender something

As more British settlers came to North America, they traveled farther west. By the middle of the 1700’s, they had pushed over the Appalachian Mountains into the Ohio River valley. However, France had already explored that region. Now two enemies from Europe- Great Britain and France- fought in those less settled areas of North America.

French explorers were some of the first Europeans to land in North America. However, the French explorers were not looking for gold. They were looking for furs. After building a settlement at Quebec, in Canada, French fur traders traveled in canoes across the Great Lakes and down the Ohio River to the Mississippi River.

Each year, fur traders paddled back to Quebec with canoes full of animal furs. The fur trade became important to France’s economy. French rulers hoped to control the Ohio River valley to continue their fur trade. This meant that British settlements would have to be limited to land along the Atlantic coast.

The fur traders got along well with many Native Americans. They traded fairly for furs and treated the Native Americans as equals. French traders set up many forts and trading posts along the Ohio River valley.

The French made a great deal of money from the fur trade. However, the fur trade did not bring large numbers of French settlers to North America. By 1754, about 65,000 settlers from France lived in the Ohio River valley. On the other side of the Appalachian Mountains, there were more than one million people in the 13 British colonies.

During the 1750’s, fur traders from Great Britain began to cross the Appalachian Mountains. Soon Great Britain claimed the land that the French had named New France. Both France and Britain wanted to control the valley. That led to war.

The **conflict**, or fight, between Great Britain and France began in 1754. The first fighting was in the Ohio River valley. The two nations also fought in Europe as well as in the British colonies. In America, some Native American groups were **allies** of the French. The Native Americans felt that it was better to trade with the French than to lose their lands to British settlers. For this reason, the war became known as the French and Indian War.

The two sides fought battles in different ways. British soldiers marched into battle in large groups to the beat of drums. They dressed in uniforms with bright red coats. The French and Native Americans fought differently. They used surprise attacks, shooting from hiding places. Their battle clothes were not easily seen. The French had learned the fighting style of the Native Americans.

At first, France seemed to be winning the war. In one battle, the French forces beat the colonial troops led by a young officer named George Washington. In another battle, French and Native American forces attacked and killed about 900 British soldiers.

Soon Great Britain began to send more troops and supplies to the colonies. Then, in 1760, British troops and colonists attacked the large French post in Quebec. The French lost control of Quebec.

By 1763, the fighting had ended. France’s power in North America was over. The British claimed the Ohio River valley. France had to **cede** other land east of the Mississippi River. Great Britain also took control of Canada.

**Section 2- The Colonists Unite**

**proclamation**- an official government announcement

**representative**- a person selected to act for others

**repeal**- to end

**declaration**- a public statement

**revolution**- a sudden, complete change of government

After the French and Indian War, King George III passed a law saying that colonists could not settle in the Ohio River valley. The king’s law was called the Proclamation of 1763. The colonists were angry. Other British laws would make them even angrier.

The Proclamation of 1763 was passed for two reasons. Great Britain did not want colonists moving too far west. British leaders thought colonists who moved west would not follow British laws or buy as many British goods. Great Britian would lose money. The colonists did not obey the proclamation. They settled and traded in the Ohio River valley anyway.

The Proclamation of 1763 was only the beginning of new laws. Over the next several years, British rulers passed four more acts or laws. These included the Sugar Act, the Stamp Act, the Quartering Acts, and the Townshend Acts.

*Complete the chart “British Acts against the Colonies” on page 64.*

Most of the money collected in taxes went back to Great Britain. The colonists wanted to use the money to improve life in the colonies.

The colonists protested, or spoke and acted against, the British acts. Some colonists refused to buy British goods. Others refused to pay the taxes. Protest groups called the Sons of Liberty were formed.

Colonial leaders, such as Patrick Henry and Samuel Adams, spoke out against the taxes. “No taxation without representation” became a famous saying. The colonists did not have **representatives** in the British government. The colonists had no way to vote against the tax laws.

Bad feelings soon became strong between colonists and British soldiers. On March 5, 1770, a crowd of colonists in Boston began to yell insults at a group of British soldiers. Someone began to throw snowballs.

Suddenly a British soldier was hit with a rock. Shots rang out. Five colonial men died in what became known as the Boston Massacre. A **massacre** is the killing of people who cannot defend themselves. The first to fall was Crispus Attucks, a runaway slave.

After the Boston Massacre, the British understood how angry the colonists were. The British decided to **repeal** most of the Townshend Acts. However, King George III said the tax on tea had to remain. It would remind the colonists that they were still under British control.

The colonists continued to grow angry with the British. The British passed a new law that said only a British company could supply the colonists with tea. This meant that colonial tea merchants would be put out of business. Colonists wondered how long it would be before other colonial businesses were closed. Many colonists refused to buy British tea.

Finally, colonists took matters into their own hands. One night in December 1773, colonists dressed as Native Americans boarded British ships in Boston Harbor. The ships were loaded with tea. The colonists threw all the tea overboard. This action, led by Samuel Adams of Boston, became known as the Boston Tea Party.

British leaders punished Boston by passing even stricter laws. Colonists were no longer allowed to hold public meetings. Boston Harbor was closed and more. British soldiers were sent to the city. The colonists called the British laws that were passed after the Boston Tea Party the Intolerable Acts.

In 1774, colonial leaders met in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. George Washington, Samuel Adams, and Patrick Henry were among the leaders.

This meeting was the First Continental Congress. Representatives from every colony except Georgia came to the meeting. Those who met sent a Declaration of American Rights to Great Britain. The **declaration**, listed all the unfair treatment that the colonists faced. The declaration did not change the actions of the British government. At that point, colonists began to think of the idea of **revolution**.

**Section 3- The War for Independence**

**militia**- an army of citizens used in emergencies

**blockade**- an action to keep supplies from getting into or out of an area

**Loyalist**- a colonist who remained loyal to Great Britain

**Patriot**- a colonist who wanted independence from Great Britain

**neutral-** not favoring either side in a quarrel or war

The problem between Great Britain and the colonies did not get better. Angry feelings grew throughout the colonies. In one speech, Patrick Henry demanded freedom from Great Britain. He ended his speech by crying out, “Give me liberty or give me death!” Those words rang throughout the colonies.

Patrick Henry was not the only colonist ready to die for freedom. In Massachusetts, groups called the Minutemen were formed in most towns. These colonists, between the ages of 16 and 60, could be ready to fight at a minute’s notice. The Minutemen began to store guns and bullets in Concord, a town about 20 miles outside of Boston.

British General Thomas Gage heard about the guns being stored in Concord. He ordered his troops to march from Boston in a surprise raid to destroy the guns.

On the night of April 18, 1775, about 700 British soldiers marched out of Boston. They did not know that they were being watched. Colonists had come up with a plan to warn the Minutemen of a British attack. Lanterns in the tower of a Boston church would be lit as a warning signal. One lantern meant the British were heading north by land. Two lanterns in the tower meant they were heading north by sea.

One lantern lit the tower. The Minutemen had to be warned! A colonist by the name of Paul Revere jumped onto his horse and galloped into the darkness. He rode 16 miles, crying out the warning “The Redcoats are coming!” When he reached Lexington, Revere was joined by William Dawes. The two men rode toward Concord shouting the alarm.

Revere and Dawes were captured. However, Samuel Prescott continued the ride. He warned the other towns.

On the morning of April 19, 1775, the British arrived at Lexington Green. Seventy men were waiting to stop the large British force. American Captain John Parker gave orders. “Stand your ground. Don’t fire unless fired upon. But if they want war, let it begin here!”

No one knows who fired the first shot. But within a few minuted, eight colonists lay dead. One British soldier had been hurt. The Minutemen scattered in defeat. General Gage’s troops marched on to Concord.

However, the colonists were not beaten. As the British reached North Bridge in Concord, they were met by a large force of Minutemen. More than 450 farmers, shopkeepers, and others had rifles ready. They charged across North Bridge, forcing the British to turn back to Boston.

Along the road, more Minutemen joined the fight, shooting at the British from behind trees and stone walls. By the time Gage’s men reached Boston, 300 British soldiers were dead or wounded. The colonists had 90 men killed or wounded.

About a month after the battles of Lexington and Concord, colonial leaders met again in Philadelphia. The meeting was called the Second Continental Congress. War had not yet been declared between Great Britain and the colonies. Many leaders at the meeting did not want war.

However, the colonial leaders also knew that since fighting had begun, war could easily follow. They decided to ask Great Britain to help find a peaceful solution to their problems. The solution the colonists offered the British was called the Olive Branch Petition. At the same time, the colonial leaders decided to prepare for war. They chose George Washington, a Virginia planter, as their military leader. Washington had fought bravely as a military leader during the French and Indian War.

While the Second Continental Congress was meeting in Philadelphia, more fighting was breaking out in Boston. Since the first battles in April, British forces had remained in the city. In June, British leaders ordered the troops to break out of the city. To do that, they would have to defeat the colonial **militia**. The colonial militia was camped on Bunker Hill and Breed’s Hill in the city.

After a bloody battle, British forces took Bunker Hill on June 17, 1775. The British lost twice as many soldiers as the colonists. The colonists felt that even though they had lost the battle, they might win a war against Great Britain.

The British losses shocked King George III. He ordered the British navy to keep all supply ships from reaching the colonies. He also hired German soldiers called Hessians to help control the colonists.

When colonial leaders learned of King George’s actions, they knew that war would probably occur. Great Britain had set up a shipping **blockade**. The British sent 30,000 more troops to the colonies. The colonists felt it was time to declare their independence from British rule.

In January 1776, Thomas Paine published a pamphlet called *Common Sense*. In it he said that colonists should rule themselves by setting up their own government. He said kings only brought misery to their people and should be overthrown. Congress read Paine’s pamphlet, and many of the members agreed with his ideas.

In June 1776, the Second Continental Congress gave a young colonist from Virginia an important job. His name was Thomas Jefferson. He was added to write a declaration explaining why the colonies should be free from British rule.

In the declaration, Jefferson tried to speak for all colonists. He said that colonists believed in equality. He said that colonists believed in equality. He said that colonists believed they had the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Finally, on July 4, 1776, all the members of the Second Continental Congress signed the Declaration of Independence. The colonists who signed it told Great Britain, and the world, “that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent states.” The 13 colonies had declared independence.

Some colonists wanted to remain part of Great Britain. A colonist who remained loyal to Great Britain was called a **Loyalist**. Some Loyalists fought on the side of the British. Others were forced to go to Canada by colonists who wanted freedom.

The colonists who wanted independence from Great Britain called themselves **Patriots**. Some Patriots joined the colonial army. Others served in their local, or town, militia.

There were also colonists who did not care which side won the war. At the beginning of the war, about one of every three colonists was **neutral**. That meant these colonists did not favor either side in the war.

The colonists were fighting against one of the toughest and best-trained armies in the world. George Washington knew that his best chance of defeating the stronger British forces was with surprise attacks.

The War for Independence, which is also called the Revolutionary War, was a hard-fought war. It ended in victory for the Americans. These are the major battles of the War for Independence.

***Summer 1776: Battle of New York***

A powerful British **fleet**, or group of ships, sailed into New York Harbor and sent thousands of troops ashore. General Washington was badly outnumbered. He ordered a retreat. If not for the retreat, colonial forces could have been destroyed and the war would have quickly been lost.

***December 25, 1776: Battle of Trenton***

On Christmas Eve, Washington ordered a surprise attack on Hessian soldiers in Trenton, New Jersey. American troops crossed the Delaware River in the dark of night. They marched to Trenton and captured more than 900 Hessians. Only four Americans were wounded. Trenton was the first American victory since independence had been declared. It raised the hopes of Patriots everywhere.

***October 17, 1777: Battle of Saratoga***

A force of American volunteers met a large British force in Saratoga, New York. The battle was fought off and on for several weeks. Finally, British forces surrendered to the Americans.

This battle was called the turning point of the war because it sent an important message to other countries. France, one of Great Britain’s enemies, started to believe that Americans could win the war. The French began to send supplies to the Americans.

At Saratoga, General Benedict Arnold led the American troops. But Arnold soon became a traitor to the Americans. A **traitor** is a person who secretly helps the enemy. Arnold joined the British forces and gave away American military secrets.

***Winter 1778: Valley Forge***

A few months after the victory at Saratoga, American forces hit their lowest point, in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. While the British troops were safe and warm in nearby Philadelphia, thousands of Americans froze to death in the cold. Americans had no shoes, no blankets, and very little food or shelter.

Washington spent the winter at Valley Forge too. “You can tell where the American army has been,” he said, “by the footprints of blood in the snow.”

***February 1778: France enters the war***

After the American victory in Saratoga, Benjamin Franklin went to France to get help for the United States. He worked with French leaders to put together a treaty between the United States and France. The French were then ready to join the American fight for independence.

A French nobleman, Marquis de Lafayette, had come to Virginia to join the Americans a year earlier. When French troops arrived , he led them against British forces in the South.

***1778: Other nations follow France***

Once France decided to help the American side, it opened the way for other countries to join the war. Spain and Holland lent money to help the Americans. The German military leader Baron von Steuben served as a leader for American troops. So did military leaders from Poland, including Count Pulaski and Thaddeus Kosclusko.

*Complete the Map Study “Major Battles of the Revolutionary War page 74*

***Fall 1781: Battle of Yorktown***

British General Lord Cornwallis marched through the South. Finally he was trapped on a piece of land near Yorktown, Virginia, that was surrendered on three sides by the water. The French navy blocked British ships from rescuing Cornwallis’s troops. The British were trapped. On October 19, 1781, Cornwallis surrendered.

King George III could have gone on fighting, but he saw that the British people had become tired of the war. A group of Americans met British leaders in Paris to prepare a treaty to end the war. Finally, in 1783, the Americans and the British signed the Treaty of Paris. Under the treaty, Great Britain agreed to recognize the colonies as an independent nation.

The United States of America was now a free country. Americans had fought and defeated the most powerful country in the world. The cause of freedom had been won after a long and hard fight.

Have you ever considered how your country got its name? The people of the United States often name countries after military heroes and civilian heroes.

George Washington’s name is the most popular name for countries in the United States. There are 31 states with counties named Washington. Naming a county after Washington honors his service during the War for Independence.

Foreign heroes from the War for Independence have also had U.S. counties named in their honor. For example, 17 counties are named for Marquis de Lafayette. He was a French officer who fought with the colonists.

*Read “Voices From The Past: Thomas Jefferson” on page 77. Complete the questions.*