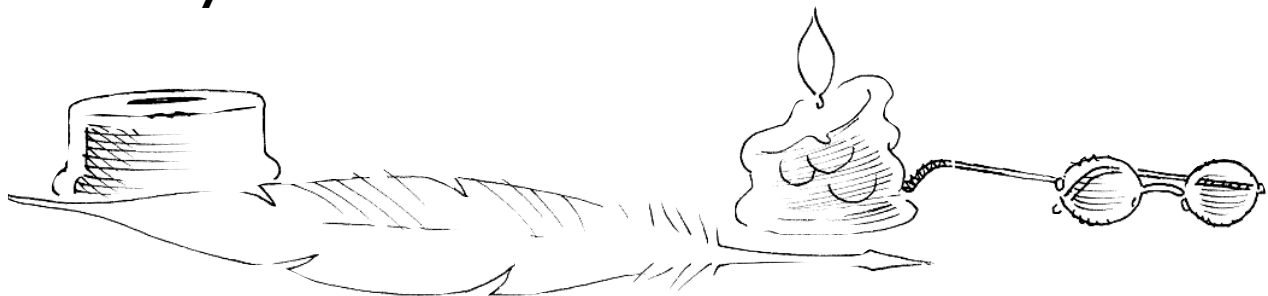


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Events Leading up to the Declaration of Independence

1760 October 26, following the death of King George II, his grandson, George III ascends to the British throne.

1764 April 5, Parliament passes the *Sugar Act*. The Sugar Act raises taxes on items being shipped into the American colonies such as sugar, wine, coffee, dyes and cloth. The act reduces taxes on molasses from the French Caribbean. The colonies protest.

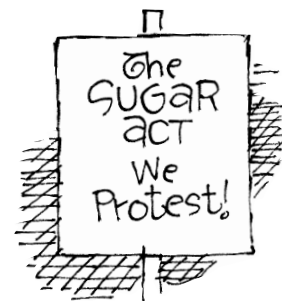
April 19, Parliament passes the *Currency Act* prohibiting the colonies from issuing paper money. Because silver and gold are not permitted to be imported into the colonies, it is difficult to conduct business.

1765 March 22, the *Stamp Act* becomes law. The Stamp Act imposes a tax on most paper goods—playing cards, newspapers, books, pamphlets—and all legal documents registered are taxed as well, such as wills, deeds and tax documents. Opposition to the Stamp Act is formed quickly. Open demonstrations take place. Protest groups form. Tax collectors are harassed and threatened. The Sons of Liberty organize to resist and to gain repeal of the Stamp Act.

May 15, Parliament passes the *Quartering Act* which orders the colonists to provide British troops a place to live and to provide them with certain provisions such as salt, blankets and candles.

October 7, the Stamp Act Congress meets. Delegates from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey, South Carolina, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York meet in New York to protest the Stamp Act and “taxation without representation.” The delegates craft a declaration of rights and grievances. The Stamp Act Congress adjourns October 25.

1766 March 18, under pressure from British merchants suffering from a depression and the colonial boycott of British goods, Parliament repeals the Stamp Act on the same day it passed the *Declaratory Act*. The Declaratory Act reaffirmed Parliament’s right to legislate for the colonies “in all cases whatsoever.”



1767

June-July, Parliament passes the *Townshend Acts*. The acts, the *Revenue Act* taxes glass, lead, tea, paper and painters' colors imported into the colonies and the *New York Restraining Act* suspends the New York legislature until the colony supplies and houses the British soldiers stationed there under the provisions of the *Quartering Act*. The troops are to be fed and housed in private homes, warehouses and public buildings. The *Townshend Acts* also establish a custom board of commissioners to be located in Boston to collect taxes and supervise trade. The customs officials in turn appoint deputies. All of these officials are paid from the taxes collected from the colonials.

1768

October 1, British soldiers arrive in Boston to enforce customs laws.

1769

Parliament passes a resolution allowing colonials accused of treason to be sent to Britain for trial.

1770

March 5, Boston Massacre occurs, five colonists killed by British troops.

April 12, except for the tax on tea, Parliament repeals the *Townshend Revenue Acts*.

1772

November 2, Samuel Adams and Joseph Warren of Massachusetts organize committees of correspondence.

1773

December 16, men disguised as Mohawks throw the tea on board three docked ships into Boston Harbor. This becomes known as the Boston Tea Party.

1774

May 13, General Gage arrives in Boston to command British troops stationed there.

May 20, the King gives his assent to the first two of four acts known as the *Coercive Acts*. The *Impartial Administration of Justice Act* gave the governor the power to move trials from Massachusetts to other colonies and to England. The *Massachusetts Government Act* virtually took all control of the colony from the legislative assembly to the royal governor. The act provided that all officers of the law be appointed by the governor and all town meetings be suspended without approval of the governor. Under this act, General Gage is appointed governor of Massachusetts.



March 31, the *Boston Port Act* moved the capital to Salem and established Marblehead as the port of entry. It also provided that the port of Boston would remain closed until the tea that had been dumped at the Boston Tea Party was paid for.

June 2, the *Quartering Act* passed by Parliament mandated that the colonists house and feed the British soldiers stationed in Massachusetts.

June 22, the *Quebec Act* passes Parliament granting Quebec large grants of land that the American colonists considered theirs for settlement.

September 1, Massachusetts's stock of powder at Charlestown is seized by General Gage and the British troops.

September 5, representatives from 12 of the colonies assembled in Carpenter's Hall in Philadelphia and organized the first Continental Congress. Only Georgia was not represented.

October 14, the Declaration of Rights and Grievances is adopted by Congress.

October 26, the First Continental Congress adjourns.

1775

March 30, the *New York Restraining Act* restricted trade between the colonies and any countries except England. The act also limited fishing rights in the North Atlantic.

April 18/19, Paul Revere and William Dawes take midnight ride to warn that the British are advancing. Revere is captured by the British and released the next morning.

April 19, the battles of Lexington and Concord take place. The first shots of the war were fired at the Battle of Lexington.

May 10, all 13 colonies send delegates to Philadelphia to the Second Continental Congress. The Congress meets at the Pennsylvania State House (which later becomes known as Independence Hall).

June 15, the Continental Congress appoints George Washington Commander of the Continental Army.

June 17, British victory at the battle of Bunker Hill (over 1,000 troops killed or wounded; more than 400 colonists killed or wounded).

July 8, Congress adopts a petition offering reconciliation to be sent to the king.

September 1, the congressional July 8 petition to the king is refused.

