

# SECTION 1 The Early Years

## Guide to Reading

### Main Idea

The British and the Americans each had advantages and disadvantages as they faced one another in war.

### Key Terms

neutral, mercenary, recruit

### Reading Strategy

**Classifying Information** As you read the section, re-create the chart below and describe British and American advantages and disadvantages in the spaces provided.

	Advantages	Disadvantages
British		
American		



### Read to Learn

- why some Americans supported the British.
- how the Battle of Saratoga marked a turning point of the war.

### Section Theme

**Groups and Institutions** Although British forces won several battles early in the war, Patriot victories slowed their progress.

### Preview of Events

♦ 1776

**July 1776**

American colonies declare independence

♦ 1777

**December 1776**

Patriots capture Hessians at Trenton

**October 1777**

Burgoyne surrenders at Saratoga

♦ 1778

**1778**

African American regiment forms in Rhode Island

## AN American Story



British cannon

The mighty British troops sailed to America, confident that they would quickly and easily crush the rebellious colonists. A British officer wrote to his friend, describing a military skirmish:

September 3, 1776

We landed on Long-Island. . . [I]t was a fine sight to see with what [eagerness] they dispatched the Rebels with their bayonets after we had surrounded them so that they could not resist. . . The island is all ours, and we shall soon take New-York, for the Rebels dare not look us in the face. I expect the affair will be over [after] this campaign. . .

## The Opposing Sides

Following years of disagreement and negotiation, the tensions between the colonies and England had reached a critical point. After the colonies declared independence from England in July 1776, the war for freedom was unavoidable.

Both the British and the Americans expected the war for independence to be short. The British planned to crush the rebellion by force. Most of the Patriots—Americans who supported independence—believed the British would give up

after losing one or two major battles. Few Patriots believed John Adams when he predicted in April 1776:

“We shall have a long . . . and bloody war to go through.”

At first glance the British had an overwhelming advantage in the war. They had the strongest navy in the world; an experienced, well-trained army; and the wealth of a worldwide empire. Britain also had a much larger population than the United States—over 8 million people in Britain compared to only 2.5 million in the United States.

The colonists suffered serious disadvantages. They lacked a regular army and a strong navy. American soldiers also lacked military experience, and weapons and ammunition were in short supply. Many Patriots belonged to militia groups—local forces—but they were volunteer soldiers who fought for short periods of time before returning home.

The Patriots faced another obstacle. Not all Americans supported the struggle for independence. Some people were **neutral**, taking neither side in the conflict. The Quakers, for example, would not participate in the war because they opposed all armed conflict. Still other Americans remained loyal to Britain.

### The Loyalists

Those who remained loyal to Britain and opposed the war for independence were called Loyalists or Tories. At least one American in five was a Loyalist—perhaps as many as one in three. Some people changed sides during the war, depending on which army was closer. Loyalist strength varied

# TWO VIEWPOINTS

## The War Between Americans

The American Revolution was not only a war between the British and the Americans. It also divided Americans themselves. While American Patriots fought passionately for independence, Loyalists fought just as fiercely for their British king.

### Loyalist Views

#### The Congress—1776 song

Ye Tories all rejoice and sing  
Success to George our gracious King,  
The faithful subjects tribute bring  
And [denounce] the Congress.

Prepare, prepare, my friends prepare  
For scenes of blood, the field of war;  
To royal standard we'll repair,  
And curse the haughty Congress.

Huzza! Huzza! and thrice Huzza!  
Return peace, harmony and law!  
Restore such times as once we saw  
And bid adieu to Congress.

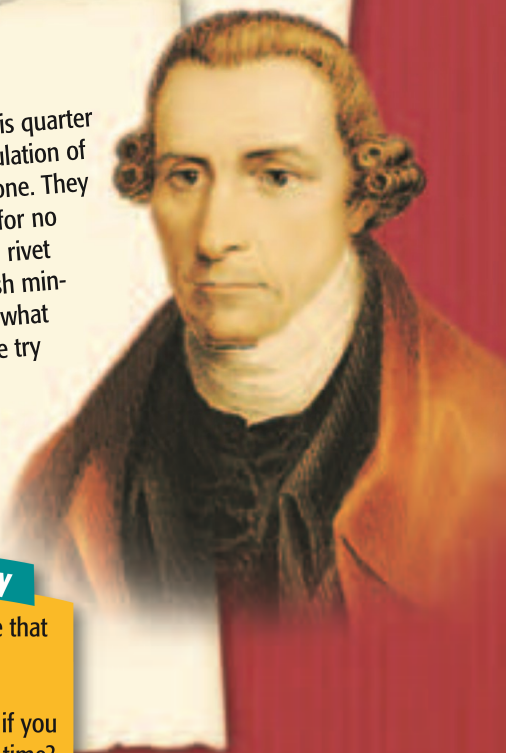
### Patriot Views

#### Patrick Henry of Virginia, 1775 —

“Has Great Britain any enemy in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us; they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years . . . I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!”

### Learning From History

1. Why did Patrick Henry believe that war was necessary?
2. Which argument—Loyalist or Patriot—would convince you if you had been an American at this time? Explain your answer.



# Thinking Past & Present

## Women in War

Molly Pitcher and Deborah Sampson were two of the few women who actually fought in the Revolution. Other colonial women, along with their families, followed the armies to cook and clean for their husbands. Today women make up nearly 15 percent of the active-duty armed forces in the United States. During the twentieth century,

**Past**  
Molly Pitcher

women served in every war as well as in peacekeeping missions around the world. One of every seven U.S. soldiers serving in the Iraq War in 2005 was female.

**Present**  
Women marines served in the Gulf War in 1991.

from region to region. In general it was strongest in the Carolinas and Georgia and weakest in New England.

Loyalists supported Britain for different reasons. Some remained loyal because they were members of the Anglican Church, headed by the British king. Some depended on the British for their jobs. Many feared the disorder that would come from challenging the established government. Others simply could not understand what all the commotion was about. No other country, one Loyalist complained, “faced a rebellion arising from such trivial causes.”

The issue of independence disrupted normal relations. Friends and families were divided over their loyalty to Britain. For example, William Franklin, son of Patriot Benjamin Franklin, was a Loyalist who had served as a royal governor. As one Connecticut Loyalist observed:

“Neighbor was against neighbor, father against son and son against father. He that would not thrust his own blade through his brother’s heart was called an infamous villain.”

## African Americans in the War

Some African Americans also sided with the Loyalists. At the start of the war, the British appealed to enslaved Africans to join them. Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia, announced that enslaved people who fought on the British side would be freed, and many men answered his call. Eventually some of them ended up free in Canada, and others settled the British colony of Sierra Leone in Africa.

## Patriot Advantages

The Americans possessed some advantages. They were fighting on their own ground and fought with great determination to protect it. The British, on the other hand, had to wage war in a faraway land and were forced to ship soldiers and supplies thousands of miles across the Atlantic Ocean.

The makeup of the British army in America also helped the Patriots. The British relied on **mercenaries**—hired soldiers—to fight. The Americans called the mercenaries **Hessians**, after the region in Germany where most of them lived. To gain support for the war effort, Patriots compared their own troops, who were fighting for the freedom of their own land, to the Hessians, who fought for money. The Patriots had a much greater stake in winning the war than the hired soldiers did. This personal stake gave the Americans an edge over the Hessians in battle.

The Americans’ greatest advantage was probably their leader, George Washington. Few could match him for courage, honesty, and determination. The war might have taken a different turn without Washington steering its course.

## Raising an Army

The Americans placed great value on liberty and personal freedom for citizens. After throwing off the rule of the British Parliament, they

were unwilling to transfer power to their own Continental Congress. In some ways the American Revolution was really 13 separate wars, with each state pursuing its own interests. As a result Congress experienced difficulty enlisting soldiers and raising money to fight the war.

Although the militia played an essential role in the Patriots' forces, the Americans also needed a regular army—well-trained soldiers who could fight anywhere in the colonies. The Congress established the Continental Army but depended on the states to **recruit**, or enlist, soldiers.

At first soldiers signed up for one year of army service. General Washington appealed for longer terms. "If we ever hope for success," he said, "we must have men enlisted for the whole term of the war." Eventually the Continental

Congress offered enlistments for three years or for the length of the war. Most soldiers, however, still signed up for only a year.





Women also fought with the Patriot forces. **Margaret Corbin** of Pennsylvania accompanied her husband when he joined the Continental Army. After he died in battle, she took his place. Mary Ludwig Hays McCauley also accompanied her husband in battle. The soldiers called her "Moll of the Pitcher," or **Molly Pitcher**, because she carried water pitchers to the soldiers. As a teenager, **Deborah Sampson** of Massachusetts watched her brothers and their friends go off to war. Moved by a sense of adventure, she disguised herself as a boy and enlisted.

**Reading Check Summarizing** What disadvantages did the Patriots face?



## The Revolutionary War, 1776–1777

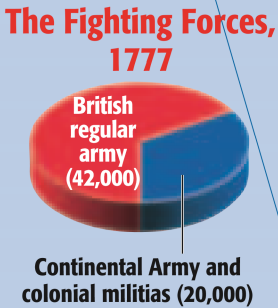


-  British capture New York City, 1776
-  Americans attack Trenton and Princeton, 1776–77
-  Howe captures Philadelphia, 1777
-  Burgoyne surrenders at Saratoga, 1777



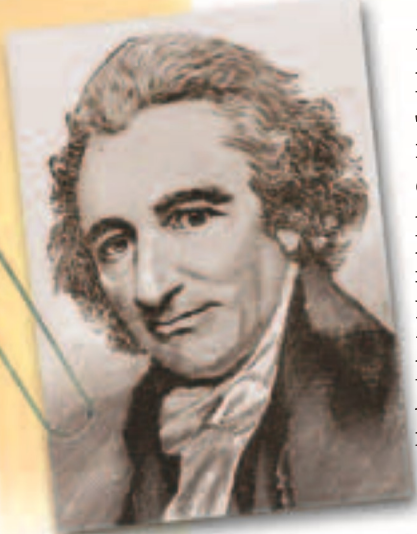
British and American forces fought many battles in the North.

- 1. Location** Who won the battles at Trenton and Princeton?
- 2. Analyzing Information** What was the outcome of the Battle of Saratoga?



# People In History

Thomas Paine 1737–1809



In early 1776 Thomas Paine published a pamphlet titled *Common Sense*. The pamphlet moved many American colonists toward independence. After taking part in the retreat across New York and New Jersey, Paine published another pamphlet to help boost Americans' lagging spirits. In *The American Crisis*,

written in December 1776, he warned: "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will in this crisis shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now deserves the love and thanks of man and woman."

He reminded Americans that "the harder the

conflict, the more glorious the triumph."

Washington had Paine's stirring words read to his troops to inspire them to continue the fight for independence. Throughout the colonies people passed copies of *The American Crisis* from hand to hand and discussed Paine's patriotic ideas.

## Fighting in New York

Most of the early battles involved few troops. At Bunker Hill, for example, about 2,200 British soldiers fought 1,200 Americans. The British had not yet won a decisive victory over the Patriots, however, and they realized they would need more troops to end the war quickly.

During the summer of 1776, Britain sent 32,000 troops across the Atlantic to New York. The British commander, **General William Howe**, hoped the sheer size of his army would convince the Patriots to give up. He was soon disappointed.

## Defeat on Long Island

Although Washington and the Patriots had fewer than 20,000 troops, they were determined to fight. In late August the two sides clashed in the **Battle of Long Island**. Outnumbered and outmaneuvered, the Continental Army suffered a serious defeat at the hands of the British forces.

One Patriot, **Nathan Hale**, proved himself a hero at Long Island. A teacher from Connecticut, Hale volunteered to spy on British troops and disguised himself as a Dutch schoolteacher. The

British discovered his true identity, however, and hanged him. According to tradition, just before his hanging, Hale's last words were,

“I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country.”

Although the Americans showed bravery, they ran short of supplies for the army. In the autumn of 1776, a British officer wrote that many of the Patriot soldiers killed on Long Island had not been wearing shoes, socks, or jackets. "They are also in great want of blankets," he said, predicting that the rebels would suffer greatly when "the severe weather sets in."

After the defeat on Long Island, Washington retreated to Manhattan, pursued by the British. By late November, the Continental Army had retreated across New Jersey into Pennsylvania.

## A Low Point

In the winter of 1776–1777, the Patriots' cause was near collapse. The size of the Continental Army had dwindled. Some soldiers completed their terms of service and went home. Other soldiers ran away.

Washington wrote his brother that, if new soldiers were not recruited soon, “I think the game is pretty near up.” Still, Washington could not believe that the fight for liberty would truly fail.

**✓ Reading Check Describing** Why was the total number of soldiers in the Continental Army decreasing?

## Patriot Gains

Washington pleaded with the Continental Congress for more troops. He asked the Congress to enlist free African Americans. Early in the war, the Southern states had persuaded the Congress to not allow African Americans in the Continental Army. Many white people in the South felt uncomfortable about giving guns to African Americans and allowing them to serve as soldiers. In Southern states with large enslaved populations, whites feared revolts.

### African Americans Join the Fight

As the need for soldiers grew, some states ignored the ban and enlisted African Americans. Rhode Island raised an all-African American regiment in 1778. By the war’s end, every state except South Carolina enlisted African Americans to fight.

Historians estimate that as many as 5,000 African Americans joined the Patriots. Among them were **Lemuel Hayes** and **Peter Salem**, who fought at Concord. African Americans fought for the same reasons as other Americans. They believed in the Patriot cause or they needed the money. Some soldiers were enslaved Africans who had run away from slaveholders. Others fought to earn their freedom.

### American Victories in New Jersey

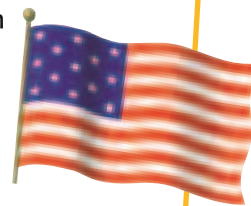
The British army settled in New York for the winter of 1776, leaving some troops in New Jersey at **Trenton** and **Princeton**. Armies usually called a halt to their wars during the winter, and the British did not expect to fight.

Stationed across the Delaware River from the British camp in New Jersey, Washington saw a chance to catch the British off guard. On Christmas night 1776, Washington took 2,400 troops



## America’s Flags

**First Stars and Stripes, 1777–1795** On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress designed the first Stars and Stripes. The Congress determined that “the Flag of the United States be 13 stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union be 13 stars, white in a blue field representing a new constellation.” For Americans past and present, the color red symbolizes courage; white, purity of ideals; and blue, strength and unity of the states.



across the icy river and surprised the enemy at Trenton the next day. The Americans captured more than 900 Hessians. The British sent reinforcements under Lord Charles Cornwallis, but Washington led his troops away from Cornwallis’s men. Washington then marched the army to Princeton, where they drove away the British. One discouraged British soldier wrote in his diary,

“A few days ago [the Americans] had given up the cause for lost. Their late successes have turned the scale and now they are all liberty mad again.”

**✓ Reading Check Explaining** What was the outcome of the battle at Trenton?

## A British Plan for Victory

The British worked out a battle plan for 1777. They would take Albany, New York, and gain control of the Hudson River. This would separate New England from the Middle Colonies.

The plan involved a three-pronged attack. General John Burgoyne would lead nearly 8,000 troops south from Canada. A second force, under Lieutenant Colonel Barry St. Leger, would move east from Lake Ontario. A third group, under General Howe, would move north from New York City. The three British forces would meet at Albany and destroy the Patriot troops.

## The British Capture Philadelphia

Howe planned to take Philadelphia, the American capital, before marching to Albany. After winning battles in September 1777 at Brandywine and Paoli near Philadelphia, Howe's troops captured the city itself, forcing the Continental Congress to flee. In early October Washington attacked the main British camp at nearby Germantown, but he was forced to withdraw. Howe postponed the move north to Albany and decided to spend the winter in Philadelphia.

## Patriots Slow the British

Meanwhile problems delayed the British plans to take Albany. In August American soldiers halted St. Leger's advance at Fort Stanwix, New York. Led by **Benedict Arnold**, the Americans forced the British to retreat.

General Burgoyne's army was not making much progress toward Albany either. In July Burgoyne captured Fort Ticonderoga, but trouble followed. Burgoyne, a dashing general who enjoyed good food and fine clothes, traveled with 30 wagons of luxury goods. Loaded down with this heavy baggage, Burgoyne's army moved slowly through the dense forests. To make matters worse, the Americans blocked the British by chopping down trees across their path.

In need of food and supplies, Burgoyne sent 800 troops and Native Americans to capture the American supply base at Bennington, Vermont.

The British troops' brightly colored uniforms made the soldiers easy targets in the woods. A local militia group, the **Green Mountain Boys**, attacked and defeated them. Having lost part of his army and desperately short of supplies, Burgoyne retreated in October to the town of **Saratoga** in New York.

## The Battle of Saratoga

At Saratoga Burgoyne faced serious trouble. He expected British forces from the west and south to join him, but they had not arrived. The Americans had stopped St. Leger's army at Fort Stanwix, and Howe's forces were still in Philadelphia. In addition, American troops under the command of **General Horatio Gates** blocked his path to the south. Burgoyne found himself surrounded by an army about three times as large as his own. Burgoyne made a last desperate attack on October 7, but the Americans held firm.

On October 17, 1777, General Burgoyne surrendered. As a Patriot band played "Yankee Doodle," over 5,700 British soldiers handed their weapons to the Americans. The British plan to separate New England from the Middle Colonies had failed. Soon afterward, General Howe resigned as commander of the British troops in America. He was replaced by General Henry Clinton.

 **Reading Check Analyzing** Why was the Battle of Saratoga an important victory for the Americans?

## SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT



**Study Central™** To review this section, go to [tarvol1.glencoe.com](http://tarvol1.glencoe.com) and click on **Study Central™**.

### Checking for Understanding

- Key Terms** Write a short paragraph in which you define the following terms: **neutral, mercenary, recruit**.
- Reviewing Facts** Compare the strengths of the British and American military forces.

### Reviewing Themes

- Groups and Institutions** What problems did the Continental Congress face in raising an army to fight during the American Revolution?

### Critical Thinking

- Analyzing Information** Explain why African Americans were willing to enlist in the Continental Army.
- Organizing Information** Re-create the chart below and describe each battle, including its outcome, in the space provided.



Battle	Description
Long Island	
Trenton/Princeton	

### Analyzing Visuals

- Geography Skills** Examine the map on page 165. Which event came first—the British capture of New York or the British capture of Philadelphia?

### Interdisciplinary Activity

**Descriptive Writing** Write a newspaper article that describes the Battle of Saratoga. Include details about British and American strategies and troop movements.