

Chapter 5

The Struggle for Independence



Chapter Preview

Terms: Proclamation of 1763, Stamp Act, Provincial Congress, Committee of Safety, Tory, Whig, Mecklenburg Resolves, Halifax Resolves, Declaration of Independence, constitution, bicameral, Declaration of Rights, amendment, Confiscation Act, Overmountain Men, neutral, pacifism, pardon

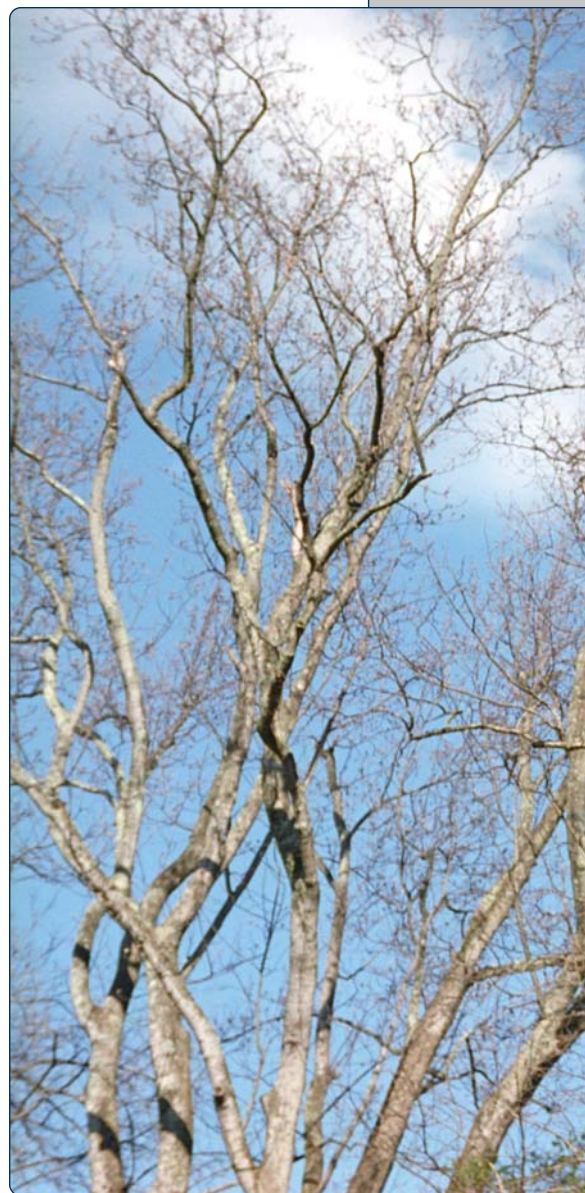
People: Penelope Barker, John Harvey, Cornelius Harnett, Richard Caswell, William Hooper, Joseph Hewes, John Penn, William R. Davie, Nathanael Greene, John Hamilton, David Fanning

Places: Moore's Creek Bridge, Ramsour's Mill, Kings Mountain, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse

Robert Henry was the youngest sentry on the Catawba River that cold, wet night in February 1781. The fifteen-year-old student had joined other North Carolinians in defending their homes from British invasion. In 1775, Robert had cheered the signing of the Mecklenburg Resolves, which prodded North Carolina on the road to independence. When the British came to North Carolina in 1781, Robert and his classmates had volunteered to fight alongside their schoolmaster, James Beatty.

The sentries heard the British splash into the flooded river well before dawn. By the time the North Carolinians could get into position, British troops were marching up the riverbank behind them. Some defenders fled immediately, but Robert stood to fire his musket. Mr.

Above: This tea pot monument in Edenton commemorates the famous Edenton tea party. **Opposite page, above:** Reenactors portray North Carolinians at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse. **Right:** This monument at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park honors General Nathanael Greene, the American commander.



Beatty, next to him, was shot in the leg. “Save yourself, Robert!” he shouted. As Robert stumbled up the hill, he saw General William Davidson shot off his horse. Both General Davidson and Mr. Beatty died that morning.

Robert Henry, no coward, found his way up the road from the river and took a position with other American soldiers behind a rail fence. He again fired and fled when the British scattered the refugees at Torrence Tavern. Determined to fight for liberty, Robert stayed with the American army. He fought at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse and helped send the British on the road to defeat at Yorktown in Virginia.

Years later, Robert Henry became the first lawyer in the new town of Asheville across the Blue Ridge. He lived to be eighty-five. For more than a half century, he was hailed as a true patriot when Asheville celebrated the great struggle that gained independence and created the state of North Carolina.





SIGNS OF THE TIMES

POPULATION

It was estimated that more than 200,000 people lived in the colony by 1775. The proportion of slaves grew from one-fifth of the population to one-fourth. Only New Bern and Wilmington had more than 1,000 people.

SCIENCE

Joseph Priestley, an English preacher, discovered oxygen in 1774, and Antoine Lavoisier, a French chemist, concluded that animals breathe in oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide. The Reverend James Hall taught these ideas in 1784 at Clio's Nursery in Rowan County, the first school to teach science in North Carolina.

ECONOMICS

In 1776, Adam Smith, a Scottish college professor, wrote *The Wealth of Nations*, which argued for a market system free of the king's control. The same year, North Carolina helped lead the effort to have the thirteen colonies break away from the Crown and control their own markets.

INVENTIONS

During the American Revolution, English miller Edward Cartwright invented the "power loom," a machine that harnessed water power to turn yarn into cotton cloth. Cartwright's invention helped launch the Industrial Revolution. North Carolina's first cotton mills would use the same machine.

EDUCATION

Despite the dangers of the War for Independence, Presbyterian ministers like David Caldwell of Greensboro and James Hall of Statesville continued to teach in "academies," schools that prepared young men for college. In Wachovia, the Moravians continued schools for both boys and girls.

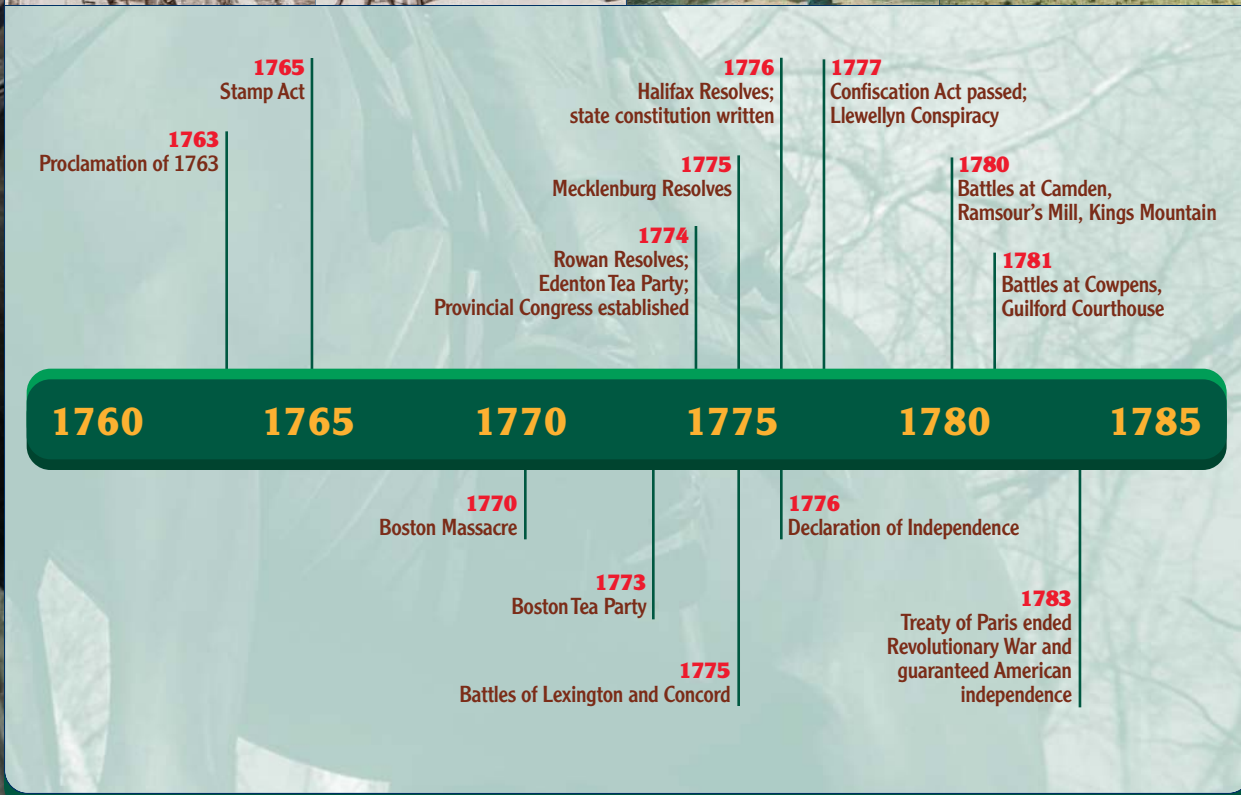
SPORTS

Golf was first played in America at a course established in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1786. Pinehurst was not dreamed up in the Sandhills for more than a century.

FASHION

Both men and women in the state continued to dress as close to European style as they could. Tri-cornered hats were worn by gentlemen, and wealthier women had their hair curled and stacked in the “French manner.”

Figure 8 Timeline: 1760–1785



TARGET READING SKILL

Sequencing

Defining the Skill

Sequencing is the ordering of events. In history, sequencing often addresses the order in which events occurred. Creating a timeline is one useful way to illustrate a number of events that took place over a given period of time.

Practicing the Skill

Look at the timeline on page 155. Using the information on the timeline, answer the questions that follow.

1. How many years does the timeline cover?
2. What happened in 1765?
3. When did the Boston Massacre take place?
4. Which came first, the Edenton Tea Party or the Battle at Concord?

After you have answered the questions, copy the timeline found here on blank notebook paper. Then, read Sections 1 and 2 in Chapter 5 and record at least six events found in the reading on your timeline.

Timeline

1760

1765

1770

1775

1780

1785