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RISE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE*

1750-1775

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The seventeenth century was a period of active European colonization in the western hemisphere. Frenchmen, following the epoch-marking exploratory footsteps of Jacques Cartier, were busily engaged in establishing Quebec and Montreal in the St. Lawrence Valley and in pushing on into the west along the Great Lakes. By 1682 the two great governors of New France, Champlain and Frontenac, and their lieutenant explorers, particularly the intrepid, inspired and untiring Nicolet, Radisson, Marquette, Joliet, and La Salle, had found all the important water routes to the West, the Southwest, and the South. Traversing the Ohio, the Wabash, the Illinois, and finally the Mississippi to its mouth, these hardy explorers laid the foundations from Labrador to Louisiana for the vast empire of New France in North America. Far to the south, Spain moved with measured military assurance to consolidate and exploit the long-established explorations and conquests of Cortez in Mexico, Balboa in Darien, and Pizarro in Peru, while withdrawing annually from the mines and treasure troves of New Spain more than half a million ounces of fine gold to say nothing of other wealth and plunder.

Moved by these great and immeasurably successful continental adventures, England, recalling the discoveries of John Cabot, the daring Venetian sea captain, who, flying the British flag and the royal

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colors of Henry VII in 1497 and 1498, had explored and mapped the mid-Atlantic coast of North America, claimed all the land from Canada to Florida and westwardly from the ocean to the Mississippi. During the reign of James I, charters granted by this monarch to the London and the Plymouth companies resulted in the settlement of Virginia at Jamestown in 1607 and Massachusetts at Plymouth in 1620. Holland in the meantime had explored, taken possession of and settled the length and breadth of the Hudson Valley. A single outpost, Fort Orange, had been erected within the eastern realm of the blood-thirsty Iroquois nearly at the head of tidewater on the present site of Albany in 1614, and a decade later—in 1624—a village port was established at the southern tip of the now world-famous island of Manhattan, which soon acquired the name—New Amsterdam. Puritans from England settled the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1628, and Lord Baltimore and his Cavaliers, Maryland in 1634. By order of the English king, Charles II, his brother James, the Duke of York, took possession of the Dutch colony, New Amsterdam, and in 1664 established New York. William Penn, at what later became Philadelphia, set up the colony of Pennsylvania in 1681, the widely spread settlements of religious dissenters, chiefly from Virginia and Pennsylvania in the Albemarle country, were brought together as the Crown Colony of North Carolina in 1689 and, lastly, James Edward Oglethorpe founded Georgia in 1732.

Competition gradually developed between the English and the French for the possession of the Ohio Valley. The French king claimed the area on a basis of discovery by La Salle in 1669, the compass surveys by DeLery, 70 years later, in 1739, and the military tour of de Celeron in 1749, at which time engraved lead plates declaring the land the possession of France were buried in mounds and at the mouths of the principal rivers entering the Ohio. As a counter action the English king directed Sir William Johnson, his superintendent of Indian affairs for the British colonies, to establish a number of official outposts in Indian villages west of the Ohio River and push Indian traders as far to the west as possible. Thus the rival claims and activities in the Ohio Valley of the two greatest nations and military powers in Europe stood at the middle of the eighteenth century. Although there were many thousands of Dutch, German, Swedish, and French immigrants scattered through the thirteen British-American colonies, the common language, dominant culture, and principal grievances against the English kings and their Parliaments of the great majority of the colonists during the first fifty years of the eighteenth century tended constantly to bring them closer together. As the land filled up, connecting roads were built,

limited stagecoach lines were finally established, and post routes and riders between the larger towns, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Williamsburg, became the order of the day.

In the New England colonies where the Puritans dominated the scene, church members and landowners through their well-educated clergy controlled all public affairs. Marine fisheries and shipbuilding were the principal industries. In the South the Anglican Church was widely established but was not looked to for leadership. Wealthy Virginia and Maryland planters, remotely situated on thousands of acres of virgin soil and in many instances possessed of hundreds of black slaves, shaped local laws under more or less indulgent Royal Governors. In the middle colonies of New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, a mixed population of Dutch, English, Swedes, Welsh, Germans, and Scotch-Irish turned its attention principally to manufacturing industries and commerce with very light emphasis on agriculture and stock raising. In this area, no one class being dominant, religious tolerance became widespread and many widely differing churches and sects—Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish—were established and throve in peace and quietude while public affairs gradually attained to a rather free expression of the desire of the people.

As the British-American colonies became more and more the haven for various European peoples suffering religious persecution or economic oppression, the number of German, English, Welsh, and Scotch-Irish immigrants of small estate arriving in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, rapidly increased. With little money for property investment and no land worth having available near tidewater at any price, these unfortunate but courageous people gradually drifted into the western parts of these colonies where vast boundaries of wild, unclaimed but first-class land in the Conococheaque Valley of Pennsylvania, the Potomac of Maryland, and the Shenandoah of Virginia, were available for the taking and the holding. This was the colonial borderland. It lay west of the Blue Ridge and east of the Allegheny mountains. West of it lay the vast, inhospitable wilderness, the home and the hunting grounds of many warlike Indian tribes—Shawnees, Delawares, Mingos, Caughnawagas, Miamis, Maumees, Twighwees, Wyandottes, Hurons, and others.

In 1747 King George II, answering a petition of the Ohio Company (a group of leading Virginians of whom Laurence Washington was one), approved a grant of 500,000 acres of land in the Ohio Valley to be located between the Monongahela and Kanawha rivers. On instructions from the throne, this grant was made by the Royal Governor of Virginia. As the imminence of war with France be-

came more and more apparent, in an effort to induce settlers to occupy the eastern part of the Ohio Valley, the King authorized the Colonial Governor at Williamsburg to exercise liberality in the matter of western land. Accordingly the Governor in the course of a very few years granted many hundreds of thousands of acres of land, the largest being for 800,000 acres, in 1749 to the Loyal Land Company of Virginia. Dr. Thomas Walker was certainly an important member, if not the leading spirit of this group. In such manner many bold, hardy, and highly intelligent people were drawn into the valleys of the upper Potomac from every colony from Massachusetts to North Carolina.

Augusta County, embracing not only the famous valley of Virginia but a vast and rather vague terrain on to the west, was established in 1738. Settlement, however, in the eastern part of this area by a goodly number of rugged Scotch-Irish immigrant families had preceded this event by several years. A typical "cabin in the clearing" borderland, the settlers of this Appalachian Midland were perhaps the first Americans, for they faced the enemy, the French and the Indians, by common impulse without the aid of either colony or king. During the decade 1740 to 1750 they learned by bitter experience what a French-inspired rising of the Ohio Indians meant—the stealthy foray, the burning cabins and barns, the crashing tomahawk, the bloody scalping knife, the slaughter of children and innocent babes, torture and burning at the stake, and the unending horrors of captivity. All as volunteers, men and women, young boys and girls scarcely able to level a rifle, held the thin line of the straggling settlements from central Pennsylvania southwardly through all of western Virginia into the remote uplands of North Carolina. The story of these heroic people is epic; the theme is typically early American.

During these years of calculated English advance and settlement along the western colonial Borderland as it touched upon the Ohio Valley, genuine warfare against the French in Novia Scotia got underway in the East. Dislike and distrust of the French at Louisburg at the mouth of the St. Lawrence, generally conceded to be the strongest fort on the Atlantic coast of North America, was widespread and of long standing in New England. This feeling, due in large measure to much competition and many complications in the fishing industry, was more pronounced in Massachusetts than elsewhere, though other adjacent colonies in varying degree felt similarly. Finally Governor Shirley of Massachusetts early in 1745 proposed a co-operative colonial expedition to take Louisburg and put an end to the French menace on the north. After much discussion, the measure

was carried on January 25. Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire shortly joined the projected military and naval movement, the largest of its kind ever attempted by the English colonies, sending both men and money to bolster the enterprise. Command was given to William Pepperell, a wealthy merchant and former sea captain. The expedition got under way early in April and, as soon as the ice permitted, landed on Cape Breton Island and commenced the siege. Because of the inclemency of the weather much sickness among the troops developed, numerous poorly organized attacks failed, and many real hardships were endured, but the isolation of the massive fort was continued. At length French supplies failing, the commander of the fort capitulated on June 17. Under the terms of surrender, the French soldiers and about 1,300 town militia laid down their arms and were sent back to France. The island of St. John nearby presently submitted to the same terms and the English colonial forces, amazed at their own success, were in possession of the gateway to the St. Lawrence and all of Canada. The enterprise attracted much attention in England and throughout Europe, demonstrating as it did for the first time the strength and military solidity of the people of New England and the adjacent American colonies.

Though the capture of the great French fort at Louisburg in 1745 and the simultaneous penetration and settlement of mid-western reaches of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina, by land-hungry colonists, gave certain indication of the birth of the true American spirit, it was not until the year 1750, when a series of events taking place in the Ohio Valley finally brought on the long and bloody French and Indian War, that the broad extent of this rising impulse of the people became fully apparent. In this great international struggle, the English colonies repeatedly gave evidence of a unity of feeling and a tremendous striking power when moved by a common purpose and objective. It was in this year of 1750 that Dr. Thomas Walker made his ne'r to-be-forgotten exploratory tour southwestwardly through the Valley of Virginia into what is now central Kentucky. He found and crossed the one passable gap in a high and forbidding mountain range 150 miles long. Impressed with the physiographic importance of this wall-like mountain and its principal pass, he named them after the Duke of Cumberland as significant landmarks to English discovery and occupation of the western part of Virginia. At length coming down upon a broad water course leading away from the great mountain into the rough hill land of the northwest, he continued the appelative honor and named this stream the Cumberland River.

When the bottoms of this stream widened near a "swan pond" some twenty-five miles beyond the lofty Cumberland Mountain, the good Doctor and his party, stopping long enough to comply with Virginia land grant regulations, built a log house. In the clearing surrounding the cabin he finally made a planting and thereby established the legality of possession and occupation of the 800,000-acre grant made by King George to the Loyal Land Company during the previous year. The Walker cabin was then thought to be and is still regarded as the first house built by white men of English descent in that part of the western reaches of Virginia now known as the Commonwealth of Kentucky. His orders fulfilled as to building and occupying a house, Dr. Walker moved to the north over the Warriors Path, and at length almost at the edge of the Blue Grass country, which unfortunately he did not see, he turned back to the East and after a difficult journey marked by many hardships he arrived safely at the house he had left some months previously. As he had seen no broad expanse of level, fertile country, his report to his associates in the Loyal Company was somewhat discouraging.

Early the following year Col. Christopher Gist, in the employ of the Ohio Land Company, explored what is now central, western, and southern Ohio. Possessed of letters of introduction and good will to the Indians, Gist passed from one tribe to another with native messengers who won for him not only personal safety but hospitality among the savages. Impressed by the "Big Knife," as they called him, who paid strict attention to his own affairs and treated them with great deference, they guided and guarded him well. At length he bade farewell to the last of his dark-skinned attaches—Shawnees from the village of Chillicothe on the Scioto—when he crossed the Ohio River into the land they called Kain-tuc-kee. Moving over well-worn aboriginal trails the Indians had described to him, he coursed the breadth of the gentle Blue Grass meadow land, selected a site on the limpid, crystal waters of the Elkhorn for the 500,000-acre grant of the Ohio Company and returned to his home in western North Carolina from whence he issued in due time the journal of his western explorations.

Colonel Gist evidently supplemented his written report with a verbal description of the attractive features he found in the area he had chosen in the Elkhorn Valley for the location of the Ohio Company's great survey and grant, and by one means or another, probably by word of mouth, for there is no printed record extant, the good news of the fine, broad, fertile upland plain now known as the Blue Grass region was obtained by Dr. Thomas Walker. This

gentleman, no doubt somewhat red-faced that he himself had not found this beautiful land, was nevertheless thrilled by what Colonel Gist told of the vast reaches of the new, rich, and level country. Straightway Dr. Walker formed a new exploratory party and in 1751 returned to "Kentuckee" through the Cumberland Gap and discovered the fine country lying on either side of Dick's River, a notable north-flowing tributary of the Kentucky, which he named for a friendly old Indian Chief whom he found in the neighborhood of this stream.

In the late spring of 1752, the Royal Governor of Virginia, His Excellency, the Honorable Robert Dinwiddie, in an effort to win the support of the Indian tribes living on or near the main stream of the upper Ohio, sent out a call for a meeting with the principal chiefs at Loggstown, a native village on the Ohio River a little below where Pittsburgh now stands. Commissioners representing Virginia met here with the representatives of the Shawnees, the Delawares, and the Iroquois. Prompted by the French, the Shawnees and the Delawares complained about the growing settlements of the English near the Ohio. One Delaware chief, who apparently was greatly disturbed, opposed any conciliation with Virginia and Pennsylvania, saying: "The French claim all the land on one side of the Ohio, and the English claim all the land on the other. Where is the Indian land that came down to us from our forefathers?" After much wrangling, peace-pipe smoking, and many gifts, however, the objections of the Indians were overcome and a treaty was written, read, and signed in which they promised that the incoming settlers would not be annoyed or endangered. Like all Indian promises, however, it was poorly kept!

Governor Dinwiddie's hope for a peaceful penetration of English traders and settlers into the Ohio Valley, based on this treaty, was short-lived. Later in the summer, French soldiers from Detroit attacked a small party of Pennsylvania traders, killed a dozen or more Wyandotte and Miami Indians who sought to defend them, and then marched the traders as prisoners into Canada. As if this were not enough, in the mid-summer of 1753 news reached Governor Dinwiddie in Williamsburg that the French moving southwestwardly from their great fortification at Niagara and their lesser fort at Presque Ilse (near the city of Erie, Pennsylvania) had just completed and manned a new outpost which they called Fort Le Boeuf. It was located a few miles south of Lake Erie near the headwaters of French Creek, a tributary of the Allegheny River. Waterford, Pennsylvania, today encompasses the site of this old frontier bastion. Properly and tremendously alarmed, Governor Dinwiddie called upon a young, dar-

ing, and dependable officer of the Virginia Militia to carry a message of warning to the French Commander. The officer selected by Dinwiddie was Major George Washington, who was then only 21 years of age, knew little about war, but was well-framed and more at home in the wilderness than any other tidewater gentleman. Moved by a desire for recognition, the young planter agreed to go without compensation if the colony would meet all necessary expense. Dinwiddie agreed, handed him a sealed letter accompanied by his instructions and Washington left Williamsburg forthwith on October 31. Moving rapidly up the Potomac Valley in the saddle, the Royal messenger was joined by Colonel Christopher Gist at the mouth of Will's Creek (now Cumberland, Maryland) on November 14. Quickly forming a party of border men and Indian guides, he made his way horseback, afoot, and by canoe across the Alleghenies in mid-winter. The young English colonial officer delivered the message and was back in Governor Dinwiddie's "Palace" at Williamsburg in mid-January of 1754. He had experienced many hardships and had nearly lost his life in the icy floodwaters of the Allegheny River near "the Forks" but of all this he said nothing.

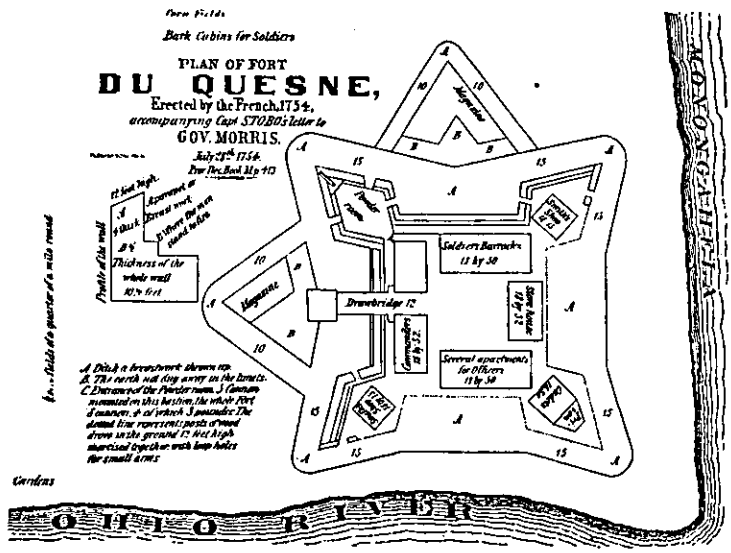
In plain but dignified French the Commandant at Fort Le Boeuf in his letter of reply informed the Governor of Virginia of his refusal to withdraw his troops. The messenger then added that the French had 200 canoes at Le Boeuf ready, when the spring rains came and the ice thawed, to carry their soldiers down stream to the Ohio. The English proposal to issue land grants of any size and any number and possess the valley of the Ohio by actual settlement had been met by the French scheme to plant a line of strong forts at strategic points down the river and thus shut the English out. Determined to put a stop to military occupation of the Ohio Valley by the French, Governor Dinwiddie called up two companies of Colonial Militia and named George Washington as Lieutenant Colonel in command. With but 159 men, most of them but lightly experienced in warfare, Washington undertook a forced march to the northwest and in a rocky glen on one of the eastern tributaries of the Monongahela River, the young tidewater Lieutenant Colonel carefully deployed his troops and surprised a maneuvering detachment of French troops. Early in the action, their leader, Lieutenant Joseph Coulon de Jumonville, was killed by a rifle ball, directly after which those who could quickly dispersed. A minor skirmish in the backwoods of Pennsylvania, it was in effect the very beginning of the fateful French and Indian War, which was destined to bind the English colonies still closer together, assure them of their own strength and power, and elevate George Washington by common consent to the position of

military leadership in the south and years later to the Supreme command of the military forces of the United Colonies.

The year 1754 witnessed the last minute strengthening of their respective positions by the French and the Canadians on the one side and the English and their Colonials on the other. As previously, certain Indian tribes supported the French, the same being true of others toward the English, but the savages were wary fighters, only to be depended upon if a battle could be fought with surprise and superior numbers on their side. If the opposite developed even after mortal combat began, they instinctively gave ground, slipped away individually into the forest and were heard from no more. Of the many hotly contested engagements that took place during the widely spread "Seven Years War," very few indeed record where the Indians of any tribe stood up to the end with either the French or the English in an even fight. Yet their aid and assistance, usually dearly bought with guns, ammunition, knives, blankets, and rum, was considered important and they played their part, miserable as it was, in this heartbreaking, bloody war. Indians from Canada, Ohio, and parts of New York in motley groups accompanied and guarded the French during the building of Fort Duquesne at the Forks of the Ohio River in 1754. The same Indians, generously provisioned by the French with arms, powder, ball, and knives, sequestered behind rocks, trees, and overturned stumps, were a very effective part of the French force which in the summer of 1755 successfully ambushed 2,000 English soldiers and many Colonials under the superior-minded General Edward Braddock on the Monongahela within a few miles of Fort Duquesne. What had been considered by their commander an invincible English army, within a few short minutes became a dismayed, disordered, panic-stricken column, their leader and many of his officers shot and either dead or dying. Colonel Washington's heroic attempts to rally the English troops and stay the wild rout were ineffective. "Braddock's Defeat" became a watchword with the surviving Colonial officers and soldiers among whom, besides George Washington, there were Horatio Gates and Daniel Morgan, whose baptism of blood in the western wilderness marked them for great military roles a quarter of a century later in the American Revolution.

The English recoiling in abject humiliation at the news of the defeat and decimation of Braddock's army in the West, soon recovered themselves and with renewed energy put more men, ships, and materials into the war with France on the high seas and in North

America. While a new campaign was being designed to capture Fort Duquesne, attention was turned to the northeast and in 1756 the war in which Colonial troops played their part increased with great intensity, but without success by the English. In June, 1758, General Amherst leading 14,000 English and Colonial troops laid siege to Louisburg, which had some time since been returned to the French, and captured the great fortress after severe fighting. In the northwest Colonel Bradstreet with 3,000 men late in August crossed Lake Ontario and captured Fort Frontenac. On the Ohio General John Forbes with 7,000 men was entrusted with the campaign to reduce Fort Duquesne. Cutting a new road toward the Fort through the wilds and over the mountains of Western Pennsylvania, after many disheartening set-backs he succeeded in reaching Duquesne, a smoldering ruin, late in November. The French commander, short of men and supplies and properly alarmed by the great military force his Indian spies day after day reported moving nearer and nearer upon him, had abandoned and burned the French fort to the ground and

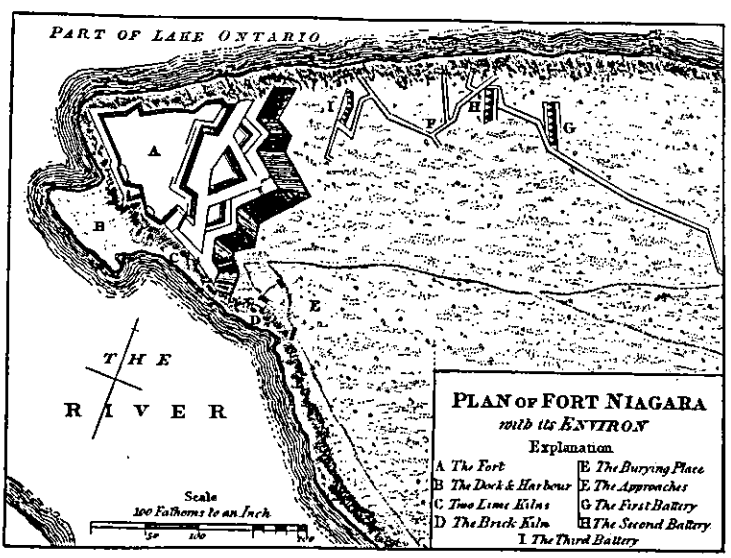


THE FRENCH OHIO VALLEY FORT DU QUESNE

It was built on the point of land at the juncture of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers in 1754. From this impressive fortification was launched the mid-summer ambush attack which soon brought about the defeat of General Edward Braddock and his army of 2,500 to 3,000 men at a point in the Monongahela Valley about 8 miles distant in 1755. Du Quesne fell before the advance of General John Forbes and about 7,000 troops on November 25, 1758. It stood in what is the heart of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, today.

moved off down the Ohio. Immediately the English erected a new large blockhouse, which they called Fort Pitt in honor of the new English Prime Minister, William Pitt, whose interest in the Colonies was widely recognized in both England and America. This wilderness bastion of 1758 and the land about it is, as every one knows, the Pittsburgh of today.

Scarcely a year later General James Wolfe, returning from England with a powerful fleet and some 8,000 men, moved without obstruction up the St. Lawrence and encamped on the Island of Orleans before the lofty citadel of Quebec. This towering stronghold was garrisoned and defended by the Marquis of Montcalm with about 14,000 men—French regulars, Canadians, and Indians. A bold, natural fortification, much improved by the works of man, Quebec at first glance appeared impregnable, but General Wolfe finally found a desperately successful way to scale its rocky heights and on the early morning of September 13, 1759, he lined up his troops on the Plains of Abraham and gave bloody battle to the French, whose numerical superiority was rendered ineffective by their surprise. In this great



THE GREAT FRENCH BASTION—FORT NIAGARA

It was designed and constructed by the French-Canadian military engineer, M. Chaussegros DeLery during the period 1725-27. Thereafter it was the source of food, munitions, guns, and troops for all French military establishments and movements on the Great Lakes and in the Ohio Valley for about 30 years until it fell in the old French and Indian War to Colonial forces led by Sir William Johnson in 1759.

and fateful engagement, among the thousands who fell were both Commanders, Wolfe and Montcalm. Victory, coming to the English at an early hour, brought with it as a prize all of Canada, for in the preceding mid-summer Ticonderoga and Crown Point had surrendered to General Jeffrey Amherst, and Fort Niagara on the southwestern shore of Lake Ontario had fallen to forces led by Sir William Johnson. American Colonial troops in large numbers from Massachusetts to North Carolina had participated effectively in each of these successful campaigns. From the Ohio to the St. Lawrence, Colonial soldiers, officers, and men of the line had found a new and worthwhile objective to fight for in the common destiny of all the Colonies. They exhibited it at Duquesne on the Ohio, at Niagara on the Great Lakes, at Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain, at Louisburg on the Atlantic, and at last at Quebec on the St. Lawrence. Strong, resolute, growing ties of love and affection for this new, this wonderful, this boundless homeland filled these Colonial soldiers with pride, admiration, and enthusiasm. When they returned to their homes and firesides they came not only with heroic deeds behind them but an inspiring vision before them of the new land, the wonderful country they had so ably and so courageously defended. Surely and unmistakably, the broadly flung campaigns and the far-reaching conquests of the French and Indian War had laid firm foundations from the Penobscot to the Hudson, to the Potomac and the Savannah, for the rise of the American people as a free and independent nation destined to flash the beacon of liberty into the most remote places in a darkened world!

After the Peace of Paris had been signed in 1763, by the terms of which France ceded all of Canada to England, except an island or two off the Gulf of St. Lawrence, George III, who had become King shortly after the fall of Quebec, looking about for ways and means to reduce the national debt piled up by his grandfather, George II, in his long and costly wars with France, turned his greedy eyes toward his lusty and rapidly expanding American Colonies. With Lord Grenville, the new Prime Minister as his personal agent, and a working majority in the Parliament which he maintained continuously with his private purse, the ill-informed monarch set in motion a policy calculated to make the Colonists realize their obligations to the Empire by obeying all Acts and Statutes, and paying their share of the expense of the government. That the Colonies had no representation in the Parliament made no difference to the stupid and unscrupulous King. In 1764 the Act forbidding Colonial trade with the West Indies was passed and put into effect. A year later, 1765, the

despised Stamp Act, requiring that Government stamps of varying price be placed upon all deeds, leases, bills of sale, pamphlets, newspapers, advertisements, mortgages, wills, contracts, and other legal papers, became effective. Resistance to these measures in Massachusetts and throughout all the Colonies could be forcefully subdued, he thought, by 2,000 regular troops which he sent to Boston Harbor aboard the Warship *Romney* in 1768.

But Lord Grenville and his short-sighted Royal Highness, George III, miscalculated the temper of the Colonists. Their acts merely stirred up a hornet's nest of opposition from Portsmouth to Savannah. The soldiers of the *Romney* when landed at Boston, far from coercing the people of the town, brought down on the head of the unpopular Monarch, his Prime Minister, and his Royal Governor the odium of the "Boston Massacre" of 1770 and the castigating Parliamentary speech of the deeply touched Edmund Burke. In the House of Burgesses in Virginia it gave the eloquent Patrick Henry an opportunity to speak at length of "taxation without representation" and to utter in a burst of patriotic fervor and personal abandon the immortal line "Give me liberty or give me death!" Responsive at last to the pressure of resistance in America where Colonial disfavor of the Stamp Tax was so great as to make it impossible to enforce it, Lord North, who had succeeded Grenville as Prime Minister, acted quickly and secured its repeal. In the abolishing process, the Parliament at the insistence of the King, left a small tax of three pence a pound on tea. At Charleston, Philadelphia, and New York the captains of the tea-laden ships experienced difficulty in landing their cargo and some were persuaded to return to England without unloading. In Boston, in 1773, an impassé between the custom and port officials brought on the famous "Tea Party," by a group of public-spirited men, who, masquerading as Indians, boarded the ships, opened the tea chests and dumped their contents into the waters of the harbor. The reply of King George III to this insult to government and throne came promptly in an act of Parliament closing the Port of Boston and other quickly following intolerable acts.

The spirit of freedom, love of country, and urge to a common destiny which had been burning low but constantly since 1760 when George III came to the throne, then flamed high across the land and finally found expression in a popular and representative Colonial Assembly, the First Continental Congress, which met early in September, 1774, at Carpenters Hall in Philadelphia—then the largest city in America. Less than a twelfth month later, the movement of 1,000 English infantrymen from Boston to Concord by General Gage, under

the cover of darkness, to destroy a quantity of Colonial arms and ammunition, brought on armed resistance by patriotic farmers and villagers—the "Minute Men" of the neighborhood. Forewarned by Paul Revere and William Dawes, who had ridden all through the night "to every Middlesex village and farm" to bring the news of the oncoming troops, at Lexington commons in the gray of the morning of April 19, a skirmish ensued and eight resolute, freedom-loving minutemen were killed. A few miles farther on in the village of Concord, hatless and coatless, other courageous "Minute Men" of the Colony of Massachusetts formed a thin, rugged line barring the passage of the red-coated soldiers of King George. With uplifted muskets in their hands and a prayer to Heaven on their lips, in the timeless words of Emerson

> "By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
> Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
> Here . . . the embattled farmers stood,
> And fired the shot heard round the world."