

Taxation Without Representation

Guide to Reading

Main Idea

The British government's actions after winning the French and Indian War angered American colonists.

Key Terms

revenue, writs of assistance, resolution, effigy, boycott, nonimportation, repeal

Reading Strategy

Classifying Information British actions created colonial unrest. As you read Section 1, re-create the diagram below and describe why the colonists disliked these policies.

British action	Colonists' view
Proclamation of 1763	
Sugar Act	
Stamp Act	

Read to Learn

- why the British faced problems in North America after the French and Indian War.
- why the American colonists objected to new British laws.

Section Theme

Civic Rights and Responsibilities The American colonists believed that new British laws denied their civic rights.

Preview of Events

1760

1763
Proclamation of 1763

1764
Parliament passes Sugar Act

1765

1765
Parliament enacts Stamp Act

1770

1767
Townshend Acts tax colonial imports



St. Edward's crown, worn by George III

AN American Story

Huron and Ottawa warriors silently peered from the woods. They watched about 100 British soldiers camped on Lake Erie's shore. The soldiers—sent by the British Crown—had just stopped to rest on their way to Fort Detroit. They were worried about rumors of Native Americans planning war.

Suddenly the warriors rushed from the forest. The British managed to escape in two boats. War raged on the frontier—and the British were in the thick of it!

Relations with Britain

After winning the French and Indian War, Great Britain controlled a vast territory in North America. To limit settlement of this territory, Britain issued the Proclamation of 1763. Parts of the land acquired through the Treaty of Paris became the provinces of Quebec, East Florida, West Florida, and Grenada (a combination of several Caribbean islands). Most importantly, the Proclamation prohibited colonists from moving west of the Appalachian Mountains.



Stopping western settlement provided several advantages for Britain. It allowed the British government, not the colonists, to control westward movement. In this way, westward expansion would go on in an orderly way, and conflict with Native Americans might be avoided. Slower western settlement would also slow colonists moving away from the colonies on the coast—where Britain’s important markets and investments were. Finally, closing western settlement protected the interests of British officials who wanted to control the lucrative fur trade. The British planned to keep 10,000 troops in America to protect their interests.

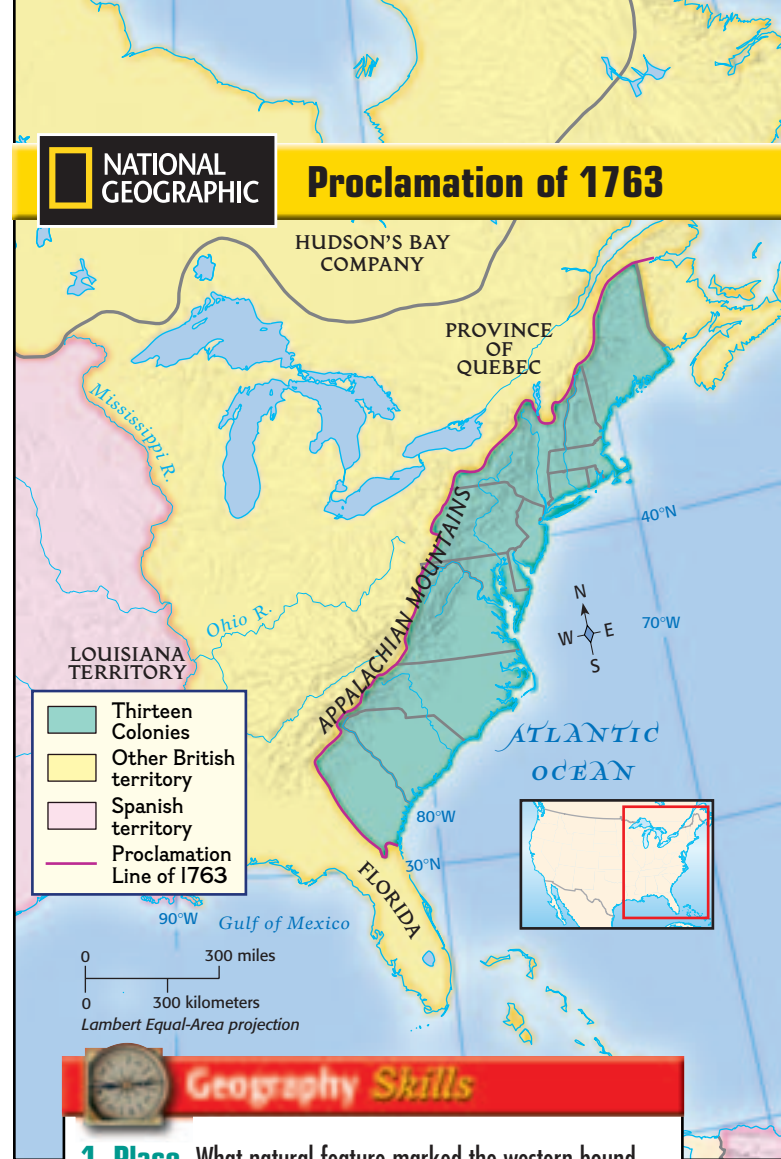
These plans alarmed the colonists. Many feared that the large number of British troops in North America might be used to interfere with their liberties. They saw the Proclamation of 1763 as a limit on their freedom. These two measures contributed to the feeling of distrust that was growing between Great Britain and its colonies.

The financial problems of Great Britain complicated the situation. The French and Indian War left Britain with a huge public debt. Desperate for new **revenue**, or incoming money, the king and Parliament felt it was only fair that the colonists pay part of the cost. They began plans to tax them. This decision set off a chain of events that enraged the American colonists and surprised British authorities.

Britain’s Trade Laws

In 1763 **George Grenville** became prime minister of Britain. He was determined to reduce Britain’s debt. He decided to take action against smuggling in the colonies. When the colonists smuggled goods to avoid taxes, Britain lost revenue that could be used to pay debts.

Grenville knew that American juries often found smugglers innocent. In 1763 he convinced Parliament to pass a law allowing smugglers to be sent to vice-admiralty courts. Vice-admiralty courts were run by officers and did not have juries. In 1767 Parliament decided to authorize **writs of assistance**. These legal documents allowed customs officers to enter any location to search for smuggled goods.



Geography Skills

- 1. Place** What natural feature marked the western boundary of British territory?
- 2. Analyzing Information** Who controlled the Louisiana Territory in 1763?

The Sugar Act

With a new law in place to stop smuggling, Grenville tried to increase tax revenue. In 1764 Parliament passed the **Sugar Act**. The act lowered the tax on molasses imported by the colonists. Grenville hoped the lower tax would convince the colonists to pay the tax instead of smuggling. The act also let officers seize goods from smugglers without going to court.

The Sugar Act and the new laws to control smuggling angered the colonists. They believed their rights as Englishmen were being violated. Writs of assistance violated their right to be secure in their home. Vice-admiralty courts violated their right to a jury trial. Furthermore, in trials at vice-admiralty courts, the burden of

proof was on defendants to prove their innocence. This contradicted British law, which states that the accused is “innocent until proved guilty.”

These measures alarmed the colonists. **James Otis**, a young lawyer in Boston, argued that

“no parts of [England’s colonies] can be taxed without their consent . . . every part has a right to be represented.”

In his speeches and pamphlets, Otis defined and defended colonial rights.

Reading Check Analyzing Why did Parliament pass the Sugar Act?

The Stamp Act

In 1765 Parliament passed another law in an effort to raise money. This law, the **Stamp Act**, placed a tax on almost all printed material in the colonies—everything from newspapers and pamphlets to wills and playing cards. All printed material had to have a stamp, which was applied by British officials. Because so many items were taxed, it affected almost everyone in the colonial cities. The Stamp Act convinced many colonists of the need for action.

Opposition to the Stamp Act centered on two points. Parliament had interfered in colonial affairs by taxing the colonies directly. In addition, it taxed the colonists without their consent. In passing the Stamp Act without consulting the colonial legislatures, Parliament ignored the colonial tradition of self-government.

Protesting the Stamp Act

A young member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, **Patrick Henry**, persuaded the burgesses to take action against the Stamp Act. According to tradition, when he was accused of treason, Henry replied,

“If this be treason, make the most of it!”

The Virginia assembly passed a **resolution**—a formal expression of opinion—declaring it had “the only and sole exclusive right and power to lay taxes” on its citizens.

In Boston **Samuel Adams** helped start an organization called the **Sons of Liberty**. Members took to the streets to protest the Stamp Act. People in other cities also organized Sons of Liberty groups.

Throughout the summer of 1765, protesters burned **effigies**—rag figures—representing unpopular tax collectors. They also raided and destroyed houses belonging to royal officials and marched through the streets shouting that only Americans had the right to tax Americans.

The Stamp Act Congress

In October delegates from nine colonies met in New York at the **Stamp Act Congress**. They drafted a petition to the king and Parliament declaring that the colonies could not be taxed except by their own assemblies.

In the colonial cities, people refused to use the stamps. They urged merchants to **boycott**—refuse to buy—British and European goods in protest. Thousands of merchants, artisans, and farmers signed **nonimportation** agreements. In these agreements they pledged not to buy or use goods imported from Great Britain. As the boycott spread, British merchants lost so much business that they begged Parliament to **repeal**, or cancel, the Stamp Act.

The Act Is Repealed

In March 1766, Parliament gave in to the colonists’ demands and repealed the Stamp Act. Yet the colonists’ trust in the king and Parliament was never fully restored.

While the colonists celebrated their victory over the Stamp Act, Parliament passed another act on the same day it repealed the Stamp Act. The **Declaratory Act** of 1766 stated that Parliament had the right to tax and make decisions for the British colonies “in all cases.” The colonists might have won one battle, but the war over making decisions for the colonies had just begun.

Reading Check Evaluating What role did Samuel Adams play in colonial protests?

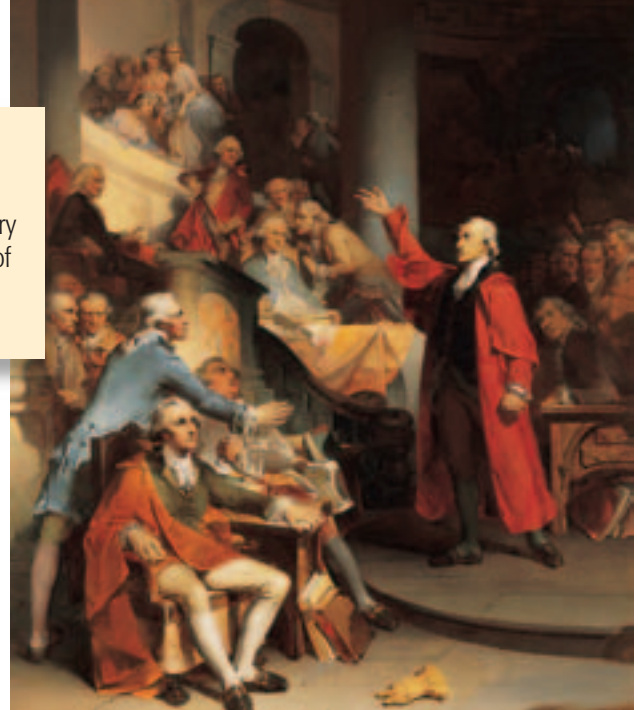


Revenue stamp



History Through Art

Patrick Henry Before the Virginia House of Burgesses by Peter F. Rothermel Patrick Henry gave a fiery speech before the Virginia House of Burgesses in 1765. **Why did Henry deliver the speech?**



New Taxes

Soon after the Stamp Act crisis, Parliament passed a set of laws in 1767 that came to be known as the **Townshend Acts**. In these acts the British leaders tried to avoid some of the problems the Stamp Act caused. They understood that the colonists would not tolerate internal taxes—those levied or paid inside the colonies. As a result the new taxes applied only to imported goods, with the tax being paid at the port of entry. The goods taxed, however, included basic items—such as glass, tea, paper, and lead—that the colonists had to import because they did not produce them.

By this time the colonists were outraged by *any* taxes Parliament passed. They believed that only their own representatives had the right to levy taxes on them. The colonists responded by bringing back the boycott that had worked so well against the Stamp Act. The boycott proved to be even more widespread this time.

Women took an active role in the protest against the Townshend Acts. In towns throughout the colonies, women organized groups to support the boycott of British goods, sometimes calling themselves the **Daughters of Liberty**. They urged Americans to wear homemade fabrics and produce other goods that were available only from Britain before. They believed this would help the American colonies become economically independent.

✓ Reading Check Comparing How did the Townshend Acts differ from the Stamp Act?

SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

- Key Terms** Write sentences or short paragraphs in which you use the following groups of terms correctly: (1) **revenue** and **writs of assistance**; (2) **resolution**, **effigy**, **boycott**, **nonimportation**, and **repeal**.
- Reviewing Facts** State two reasons for the deterioration of relations between the British and the colonists.

Reviewing Themes

- Civic Rights and Responsibilities** Why did the colonists think the writs of assistance violated their rights?

Critical Thinking

- Identifying Central Issues** Why did British policies after the French and Indian War lead to increased tensions with colonists?
- Determining Cause and Effect** Re-create the diagram below and describe the effects of these British actions.

British Actions	Effects
Sugar Act	
Stamp Act	
Townshend Acts	

Analyzing Visuals

- Geography Skills** Review the map on page 133. Why did the British government want to halt western movement?

Interdisciplinary Activity

Persuasive Writing Write a letter to the editor of a colonial newspaper in which you attempt to persuade fellow colonists to boycott British goods. Use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure and punctuation.

