

## *Transcript: Part Three, Episode One- Rebellion*

I'm Matthew and I'm Mike. Welcome back to Keep Liberty Alive. In our last episode, the American Revolution had begun with the Battles of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775. Shortly after that on June 17, 1775, the Battle of Bunker Hill took place. Hostilities between the British and the American Colonists were in full swing. Now it was all out war. This is Part Three, Episode One, Rebellion.

After the Battles of Lexington and Concord, the Americans pushed the British back to Boston, where they had significant naval support from the British Navy. Boston was occupied by the British while the surrounding area and hillsides were occupied by American forces. The Americans found out that the British were going to send troops to occupy the hills around Boston, so they decided on June 16, 1775, to build fortifications on Breed's Hill, which was located on the Charlestown Peninsula, in order to stop the British from occupying it. At the time, both Boston and Charlestown were on peninsulas in the bay. This is how the British were able to defend Boston proper with naval forces. Since that time, much of the areas around Charlestown and Boston have been filled in with dirt, gravel, and old building materials to form new land. The fortifications built by the Americans on the Charlestown Peninsula did not go unnoticed by the British and on June 17 they attacked the Americans on Breed's Hill. The Americans were commanded by Colonel William Prescott, and they were low on ammunition. So, he commanded them, as legend has it, "Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes." After allowing the British to come very close, the Americans fired on them, killing many troops. The British retreated. They reformed and attacked again, with the same result. The British attacked a third time, by which time the Americans were basically out of ammunition, and the British took Charlestown Peninsula. While the British won the battle that day, they had many casualties, many more than the Americans. This gave the Americans hope in the battle against the Red Coats and forced the British to change their battle tactics, which in the end, helped the American forces. This battle has become known as the Battle of Bunker Hill, even though the fighting actually took place on Breed's hill.

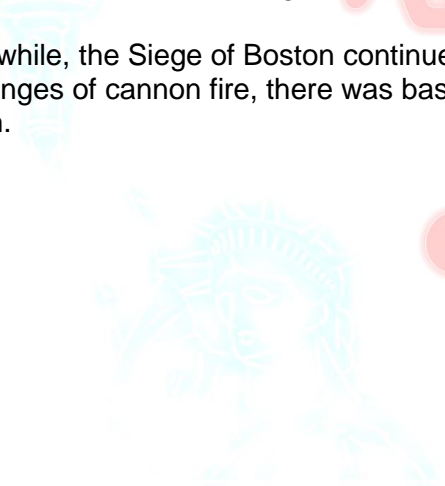
On July 5, 1775, after those battles were fought, the Second Continental Congress created what is known as the Olive Branch Petition, which petitioned King George III to make peace with the colonies and to avoid further war. However, in August 1775, with the Proclamation of Rebellion, the king rejected the Petition without reading it and declared the Americans to be traitors. As a result, the colonies ejected all British officials and loyalists from government positions and created their own constitutions and governments and began referring to themselves as states instead of colonies.

Right before the Battle of Bunker Hill on June 14, 1775, the Continental Congress created a Continental Army, and George Washington, who was nominated by Sam and John Adams, became Commander in Chief. On June 15, Congress unanimously appointed him to that position. Right after the Battle of Bunker Hill on June 22, 1775, Washington was ordered by Congress to take control of the forces surrounding Boston. The British occupied Boston but were trapped by Continental forces all around, which basically resulted in a standoff. This became known as the Siege of Boston. After arriving on July 2, 1775, Washington found a very undisciplined and poorly supplied army. He began removing incompetent officers and replacing them with more effective ones. Men like Israel Putnam, known as Old Put, a farmer and tavern keeper from Connecticut and a veteran of Bunker Hill, Nathanael Greene from Rhode Island, and Henry Knox, a bookstore owner from Boston, who taught himself the ins and outs of war.

Washington with the help of these men imposed strict regimens and drills to train the army. Being poorly outfitted was a theme that would carry on for some time. Washington was constantly asking Congress for more supplies for the army. It should be noted that there were already, at that time, prejudices between the South and the North. Washington himself held a low opinion of Northern troops. Also, there were men from Native tribes in the North and freed black men who wanted to fight for freedom against the British as well, but Washington refused to allow them to do so. However, later in the war when it became necessary to have every man possible to win the war, Washington changed his mind.

Also in June 1775, Washington and Congress decided to attack the British in Canada. British Parliament, having passed the Quebec Act of 1774, guaranteed religious freedom for Roman Catholics and laid claim, for Quebec, to the lands of the Ohio Valley, among other areas. This didn't sit well with the Americans. They sent General Richard Montgomery and 1700 militia troops in September 1775 to capture Fort Ticonderoga and Crown Point in New York and Fort Chambly in Quebec. Montgomery also took Fort St. Jean outside of Montreal in November. As of November 28, his forces occupied Montreal. They also sent General Benedict Arnold and approximately 700 men to Quebec in December where they were joined by Montgomery and about 300 more men. On December 31, they attacked Quebec and were defeated with great losses. Montgomery was killed, Arnold was wounded in the rout. General Arnold attempted to lay siege to the town through the winter, but when Spring brought 4,000 more British reinforcements, the surviving Americans retreated back to New York.

Meanwhile, the Siege of Boston continued throughout the winter, and other than occasional exchanges of cannon fire, there was basically a stalemate between the Americans and the British.



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