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*Important battles of the War for Independence took place along the western frontier, at sea, and in the South.*

## Fighting in the West

### ***How did the war in the West develop?***

The Revolutionary War was of great interest to many Native American groups living in and around the 13 states. Some Native Americans helped the Patriots. More sided with the British. For them, the British seemed less of a threat than the Americans, who lived in their midst and took their land.

West of the Appalachian Mountains, the British and their Native American allies raided American settlements. Mohawk war chief Joseph Brant led a number of brutal attacks in southwestern New York and northern Pennsylvania. Farther west, Henry Hamilton, British commander at Detroit, paid Native Americans for settlers' scalps. This practice earned him the nickname, the "hair buyer."

Virginia militia leader George Rogers Clark set out to end attacks in the West. In July 1778, Clark led a force of 175 westward down the Ohio River and over land. The Patriots captured a British post at Kaskaskia (ka • SKAS • kee • uh) in present-day Illinois. They then took the British town of Vincennes (vin • SEHNZ) in present-day Indiana. British troops under Hamilton recaptured Vincennes that December. Clark vowed to get it back. In February 1779, Clark and his troops braved harsh winter conditions to surprise the British and force their surrender. Clark's victory strengthened the American position in the West.

**Summarizing** What victories did the American forces win in the West?

## The War at Sea

### ***What was the result of the war at sea?***

The Revolutionary War also took place at sea. Here Great Britain's powerful navy enjoyed a major advantage. British vessels formed an effective blockade (blo • KAYD), keeping ships from entering or leaving American harbors. The blockade limited delivery of supplies and troops to Patriot forces.

### **Privateers**

To break the blockade, Congress ordered 13 warships, but only two of the ships made it to sea. Several others were quickly captured by the British. The American navy was too weak to operate well.

Congress also authorized some 2,000 ships to sail as privateers. A privateer (pry • vuh • TEER) is a privately owned merchant ship outfitted with weapons. The goal of the privateer is to capture enemy merchant ships and cargo.

Finding crews for these ships was not difficult. Sailors from the whaling and fishing ports of New England signed on eagerly for the profitable privateering trade. During the war, privateers captured more British ships than the American navy did.

### **An American Naval Hero**

The war at sea produced one of the war's great heroes. A daring American naval officer, John Paul Jones, won his first successes raiding British ports. Near the coast of Great Britain in September 1779, Jones's ship, *Bonhomme Richard*, met the British warship *Serapis*. The *Bonhomme Richard* and the *Serapis* fought for hours. The British captain asked whether Jones wished to surrender. Jones is said to have answered, "I have not yet begun to fight."

In the end, it was the *Serapis* that surrendered. The naval victory made John Paul Jones a hero to the Patriots.

**Describing** How did privateers contribute to the American war effort?

## Fighting in the South

### ***What was the result of the war in the South?***

In the early years of the war, the Americans had won several battles in the South. In 1776 Patriot forces crushed Loyalists at the Battle of Moore's Creek, near Wilmington, North Carolina. They also saved the key port of Charles Town, South Carolina, from the British. Although this was a small battle, its impact on the rest of the war was great.

By 1778, these results, along with Patriot victories such as Saratoga, had convinced the British that bringing their old colonies back into the empire would not be easy. As a result, the British came up with a new plan to finish the war.

The new British plan focused on the South, where there were many Loyalists. The British hoped to use sea power and the support of the Loyalists to win important victories in the Southern states. At first, the strategy worked.

### Early British Success

In late 1778, British general Henry Clinton sent 3,500 troops from New York to take Savannah, Georgia. The British occupied the coastal city and controlled most of the state.

Clinton himself led a force into the South in early 1780. In May, he led a second British attack on Charles Town. This time the South Carolina city surrendered, and the British took thousands of prisoners. It marked the worst American defeat of the war.

After Clinton's victory, he returned to New York. He left General Charles Cornwallis in command of British forces in the South. The Continental Congress sent forces under General Horatio Gates to face Cornwallis. The two armies met at Camden, South Carolina, in August 1780. The British won this first encounter. Yet Cornwallis soon found that he could not control the area he had conquered. He and his troops faced a new kind of warfare.

### Hit-and-Run Tactics

The British had counted on strong Loyalist support in the South. They received less help than expected. Instead, as British forces moved through the countryside, small forces of Patriots attacked them. These bands of soldiers appeared suddenly, fired their weapons, and then disappeared. This hit-and-run technique caught the British off guard.

Francis Marion was one successful Patriot leader. Marion, who was known as the "Swamp Fox," operated out of the swamps of eastern South Carolina. He was quick and smart. One British colonel grumbled that "the devil himself" could not catch Marion.

### Spain's Help

Great Britain also found itself with another new enemy. Spain declared war on Britain in 1779. The Spanish governor of Louisiana, Bernardo de Gálvez (GAHL • ves), had tons of supplies and ammunition shipped up the Mississippi River to American troops in the Northwest Territory. It was with this help that George Rogers Clark captured the key posts of Kaskaskia and Vincennes. Gálvez also raised an army to fight the British. Gálvez's forces drove the British out of the Gulf of Mexico region.

### American Successes

After their victory at Camden, South Carolina, the British moved northward through the Carolinas in September 1780. Along the way, the British warned the local people to give up the fight for independence and join the British. If they refused, the British threatened to "hang their leaders, and lay their country waste . . ."

The Americans who received this warning were mountain people. Fiercely independent, they had been neither Patriots nor Loyalists until the British warning angered them. They formed a militia army and set out to force the British from their land. At Kings Mountain, the American militia force killed or captured a British-led Loyalist force of about 1,000. The Patriot victory brought new support for independence from Southerners.

In October 1780, Nathanael Greene replaced Gates as commander of the Continental forces in the South. Rather than lead one attack on Cornwallis's forces, Greene split his army in two. In January 1781, one section defeated the British at Cowpens, South Carolina. Another section joined Francis Marion's raids. Greene combined his forces in March. Then, he met Cornwallis's army at Guilford Courthouse, in present-day Greensboro, North Carolina. Greene's army was forced to retreat, but the British sustained great losses in the process. General Cornwallis gave up the campaign to conquer the Carolinas.

### Cornwallis Retreats

Cornwallis realized the British had to act quickly to win the war. More French troops were coming to North America, and the Patriots held Virginia. Troops and supplies were moving south.

In April 1781, Cornwallis marched north to Virginia. His troops carried out raids throughout the region. General Washington sent Lafayette and General Anthony Wayne south to push Cornwallis back. Meanwhile, Cornwallis took shelter at Yorktown, on the Virginia coast. The battle for the South was entering its final phase.

**Evaluating** What effect did the Patriot victory at Kings Mountain produce?

#### Florida CONNECTION

##### Battle at Pensacola

In 1781, Spanish forces fought the British at Pensacola, Florida. The Spanish victory captured the British fortifications at Pensacola and helped the American cause by diverting British troops from other fronts of the war.

## LESSON 3 REVIEW

### Review Vocabulary

1. Use each of the following words in a sentence about the Revolutionary War.

a. blockade b. privateer

LAFS.68.RH.2.4

### Answer the Guiding Questions

2. **Describing** Which side did most Native Americans support during the war in the West?

SS.8.A.3.4

3. **Identifying** Who was John Paul Jones, and what was his significance in the war?

SS.8.A.3.6

4. **Summarizing** What happened during the British campaign in the South?

SS.8.A.3.6, LAFS.68.RH.1.2

5. **ARGUMENT** You read about several military leaders in this lesson. Which leader do you think most helped the Patriot cause? Write a short essay to explain your answer.

SS.8.A.3.4, SS.8.A.3.6, LAFS.68.WHST.1.1, LAFS.68.WHST.2.4, LAFS.68.WHST.4.10