



Volume 22

Number 016

**America's Revolution (109) – Second
Continental Congress – Early Months – III**

Lead: In the 1700s the United States broke from England. No colony in history had done that before. This series examines America's Revolution.

Intro: *A Moment in Time with Dan Roberts*

Content: As the Second Continental Congress settled into business in summer 1775, it was faced with the uncomfortable fact that war was creeping ever closer.

Shortly after convening it received compelling information from Massachusetts describing the fighting at Lexington and Concord. Congress ordered that story to be printed and distributed. When Joseph Warren, president of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress wrote pleading that a “powerful army” be created so that the colonies could fight in unity, Congress quietly tabled the suggestion for future consideration. It was clear Congress was not ready at that point to do anything that would provoke a wider conflict.

Circumstances however began to force Congress in the direction of reality. New York asked what it should do when an expected arrival of British troops landed. Congress replied that as long as the soldiers behaved themselves, the colony should behave peaceably. If, however, the British became aggressive or attempted to cut off

New York from the rest of the colonies, then they should be repelled “by force.” Of far greater import was the news that Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold had taken Fort Ticonderoga, an act that the British would see as extremely provocative. Congress ordered that the Fort be abandoned and that the munitions and supplies taken there should be inventoried in anticipation of reconciliation. Alan and Arnold emphatically rejected these instructions. Next time: a slow painful change of heart.

At the University of Richmond’s School of Professional and Continuing Studies, I’m Dan Roberts.

Resources

Brooke, John. *King George III*. New York, NY: Constable Publishing, 1972.

Brown, Wallace. "An Englishman Views the American Revolution: The Letters of Henry Hulton, 1769-1776." *Huntington Library Quarterly*. 36 (1972).

Burnett, Edmund Cody. *The Continental Congress*. New York, NY: Macmillan, 1941.

Christie, Ian and Benjamin W. Labaree. *Empire of Independence, 1760-1776, A British-American Dialogue on the Coming of the American Revolution*. Oxford, UK: Phaidon Press, 1976.

Henderson, H. James. *Party Politics in the Continental Congress*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1974.

Higgenbotham, Don. *The War of American Independence*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1971.

Jensen, Merrill, ed. *English Historical Documents, Vol. IX: American Colonial Documents to 1776*. London, UK: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1964.

Jensen, Merrill. *Founding of the American Nation: A History of the American Revolution, 1763-1776*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1968.

Knollenberg, Bernhard. *Origin of the American Revolution*. New York, NY: Macmillan, 1960.

Middlekauff, Robert. *The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution, 1763-1789*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Rakove, Jack N. *Beginnings of National Politics: An Interpretive History of the Continental Congress*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982.

Watson, J. Steven. *The Reign of George III, 1760-1815*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1960.

Copyright 2018 Dan Roberts Enterprises, Inc.