

7th grade

Age of Exploration  
MPIC

## CHAPTER 1

# JUAN GARRIDO SPEAKS

Every history has to start somewhere, and since I was the first free black man to set foot in what is now the United States of America - in 1513, no less - you might as well start with me. My name is Juan Garrido - and I was a free African American, a baptized Catholic, and a Spanish conquistador.

Historians have tried to place my early life in all kinds of places. I was the son of a King. I came from the Congo. I somehow was freed. I bought my freedom. Back and forth they go, and what actually happened isn't really clear centuries later.

But some things are clear from written documents that have been left behind and the work of historians and researchers. Through their efforts, it's clear I worked with Ponce de Leon, who was the Governor of Puerto Rico. When Ponce de Leon left Puerto Rico in early 1513 on a treasure hunt, he took three ships - *Santiago*, *San Cristobal*, and *Santa Maria de la Consolacion* - and 200 men. I was one of the 200 men on board those ships.

While legend has it, we landed at present-day St. Augustine and were seeking a Fountain of Youth, neither of those things is true. Based on the work of Florida history researcher and nautical expert Douglas T. Peck, our first landing in what is now the present-day United States was proven to likely be further to the south, near present-day Melbourne Beach, Florida - possibly within eyesight of a relatively new Ponce de Leon statue, authorized by the National Park Service in recognition of the accuracy of Peck's research.

On April 2, 1513, Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de Leon set foot on land that is now the state of Florida. In fact, Ponce de Leon named it Florida, or "land of many flowers." He offloaded several people

from the ships to take part in a ceremony claiming the land for the King of Spain, and as his right-hand man, I set foot on land and became part of that ceremony.

We didn't stay long. I can't say if it was the mosquitos that made us leave early, but I can tell you that in later years, some soldiers wrote that the mosquitos were so bad in Florida (before "Mosquito Control") that they had to bury themselves in the sand, with only their heads showing, in order to be able to sleep.

By now, you might be saying, "Wow! A free black man was the first to set foot in America!" Some of you might view me as a hero - but there's more to my story, and you may not like all of it.



I was a Spanish conquistador, and that meant I served the King of Spain and did so for over 30 years of my life. I had a pretty long life for the time - born in 1487, died in the 1550s - and did a lot of things. I took part in Spanish attacks on the natives' present-day Mexico City, and became the right-hand man to Hernan Cortez, as the above drawing shows; I am standing next to him on his horse.

As a free man, who set my own course in life, I also captured natives and held several as my personal slaves for years. With their slave labor, I planted the first wheat crop in the Americas. I had a wife and three children and spent my later years on a plot of land granted to me by the King, outside of Mexico City.

Now the idea of the first free black man in America holding Native Americans as slaves (in present-day Mexico) may not make you comfortable. Tough. I was a Spanish conquistador. Gold, land, property, money, good standing with our King - these mattered, a lot. We did everything we did for the glory of Spain and in the name of our King. In 1518, the King of Spain's charter authorized the taking of slaves, starting a process that would impact over 12 million lives after me, across several centuries.

Actually, Native American lives did matter to us conquistadors. We wanted to get as much money as possible for the sale of our slaves, and we wanted them to be healthy, strong, and able to serve us for a long, long, long time.

A world map showing the distribution of the 100 most common countries by area. The map is divided into four quadrants by the equator and the Prime Meridian. The top-left quadrant (North Atlantic) shows countries like Canada, the United States, and Mexico. The top-right quadrant (Asia) shows countries like China, India, and Japan. The bottom-left quadrant (South Atlantic) shows countries like Brazil, Argentina, and Chile. The bottom-right quadrant (Indian Ocean) shows countries like South Africa, India, and Australia. The map is labeled with the names of the 100 countries and the four quadrants.

Most slaves of African origin were taken from the Gold Coast of Western Africa, but there were slaving enterprises set up all over the continent. These human beings were mistreated beyond what many people can imagine today, as they were taken away from their homes and families, could no longer speak their local language or practice their religion, and were forced to work for their entire lives with no compensation. These men and women were sold in the colonies to Europeans, who forced them to work on their land or in their homes for no payment. This form of slavery, which was practiced in the United States, is called "chattel slavery," which meant that human beings were treated like personal property by

an owner and thus could be bought and sold. Chattel slaves were slaves since birth. Though these men and women were sold into slavery and taken from their homes, they also practiced resilience, fostered their own culture, and survived in the colonies in several important ways.

## THE LANDS THAT WOULD FORM THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Before the United States became a country in 1776, it was a series of colonies, divided between European countries such as Spain, Great Britain, and France. Because Spain was the first country to begin sending missions and settlers to the present-day United States, it established some of the first towns. When the Dutch revolted against Spain and gained their independence, the New Netherlands was formed.

In 1609, the New Netherlands sent English explorer Henry Hudson to find new opportunities, looking for Asia, he stumbled upon territory along the Hudson River. In 1621, the Dutch West India Co. was created and with orders from the King of Holland, the Dutch West India Co. staked out their newly discovered, New Netherlands, territory, purchased additional territories and began settling their colony. The main settlement was New Amsterdam, better known today as Manhattan, other territories of the Dutch included New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Philadelphia and Delaware. There weren't enough colonists to do the work needed.

The Dutch quickly discovered they needed help to develop their new territories. The use of African slaves wasn't a new concept. Europeans were known to have purchased prisoners of war from African kings dating back to the 1400's.

In 1627, the Dutch West India Company brought the first slaves to New Netherland, and they worked to create settlements for the colony. "They cleared land, planted and harvested crops, and built houses, roads, and bridges. They built Fort Amsterdam, cut the road that became Broadway, and fortified a wall along a path that would later be known as Wall Street. Without their work, the colony of New Amsterdam might not have survived."

During the fifty years that the Dutch controlled the New Netherland territories, the legal and social status of the enslaved Africans was not clearly defined, as they followed the same laws as the white population, meaning they could own property, and were granted property for their labor, in addition they enjoyed many of the same civil rights as the whites. The roles of people overall were not so clearly defined, there were whites who weren't really free, many were either indentured servants under contract for several years, apprentices who were bound to a tradesman, and tenants farming land owned by a landlord. It

## AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

wasn't until when England took the Dutch Colony by force, in 1664, that slavery took a much different path. New Amsterdam was renamed Manhattan, slave trading vessels were soon granted port privileges, and a slave market was established on Wall Street near the East River docks. The lives of slaves became more regulated with laws being passed to control their behavior and status.

Many Europeans had a long standing belief that white Christian men were superior and that it was the natural order of things for them to rule the world. They believed it didn't matter if you were white or black, poor or rich one was born to a particular role and that they held that role for life.

During this time, Great Britain also rivaled Spain, often finding ways to try to best one another and gain more territory. France also battled the two countries, which became particularly important during the French and Indian War (1754-1763). This war was fought between the British and the French through their colonies. This conflict occurred because Great Britain began to infringe on France's colonial holdings. The British won because of the greater population of English colonists and soldiers living in New England, besting the French who had allied themselves with Native American populations, such as the Iroquois.

## THE EARLIEST EUROPEAN SETTLEMENTS IN THE PRESENT-DAY UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

In 1521, Ponce de Leon assembled a second voyage, this time to settle a point in Western Florida. Again, he brought several hundred men with him, tools, farm implements, and all the things needed to set up a colony. Unfortunately, he chose a region of Florida populated by the Calusa, one of the most aggressive Native American warrior tribes. The colony didn't last long, what with thousands of poisoned arrows raining down on them, on and off over a period of weeks. One of those arrows killed Ponce de Leon, ending his attempts at colonization.

But you couldn't fault the Spanish for lack of trying. The next settlement attempt was the 1526 voyage of Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon, who landed in present-day South Carolina taking, per researcher Douglas T. Peck, "six ships and around 600 persons, including women, children, and a number of black slaves. There were a few priests in the company but no soldiers, as this was to be a peaceful encounter with friendly Indians who were supposedly ready for conversion to Christianity... (and they also brought) cattle, sheep, pigs, and over 100 horses."

Everything that could go wrong did. The flagship *Capitana* crashed on a sandbar, losing much of its cargo, including some of the food. As the weeks went on, with the prospective settlers "wet, sick, and mosquito bitten," they eventually formed the village of St. Miguel de Gualdape by September 29. Then Ayllon died, and the slaves set fire to the house of his successor and in some cases escaped to hide among the Native Americans - making 1526 the year of the first successful slave rebellion in what is now the United States of America.

There were other early Spanish explorations in the 1500s in what is now the United States, going as far as the lands of Kansas and Tennessee, and as far west as California. Then the French came and tried to secretly put a French settlement called Fort Caroline, Florida into the center of New Spain in 1565. Spanish leader Pedro Menendez de Aviles made sure that didn't last long but realized that Spain really needed a permanent settlement to both successfully claim and defend the land for Spain.

That led to the creation of St. Augustine in 1566, a city on the coast of present-day Florida, and the longest permanent European settlement in the United States of America. Slaves were a significant portion of the community, as the Spanish crown issued licenses to sell up to five hundred slaves. There are theories that Africans arrived with Sir Francis Drake as well in 1586.

Many historians argue incorrectly that 1619 was the first time slaves were brought to America because this was the first time that slaves were brought to the British colonies. The "20 or so African men and women" were brought to Jamestown, Virginia and became a part of the British colonial system. At the time, slavery was not the institution that came to exist in the United States and appears to have been more similar to indentured servitude, where slaves could work and buy their freedom. Later on, in 1662, slavery became a recognized aspect of colonial law.

However, there were many disputes about how to implement slavery. One interesting example is that during the time, in the British colonies, it was considered improper for a Christian to enslave other Christians. Racist legislation followed in the seventeenth century, such as the first anti-miscegenation law, meaning the first law that prohibited racial intermarriage. The period before 1776 offered an opportunity for many enslaved Africans to seek their freedom before the passage of the many laws that took away their freedom.

Meanwhile, before being forcibly taken from the ports along the coasts of African Kingdoms, slaves in Spanish possession were often baptized. In spite of this, many brought their many religions from their homes with them during the long and brutal crossing. Many Africans also worked alongside indentured

## AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

servants of European birth, who were commonly young men who could not afford life in the new colonies and traded their freedom for income. Indentured servants worked off their debt over the course of several years, exchanging their labor for debt reduction. They were unpaid until their debt was paid off. Some slaves worked in a similar fashion, earning money to eventually buy their freedom.

The culture of this early period was one of greater opportunity for African Americans, as much of the more oppressive structures of slavery had yet to be put in place by the United States Government. This is not to say that life was easy for African Americans but simply to note that buying freedom or converting to Christianity to avoid slavery were more common.

## CHAPTER REVIEW

1. Who were the main colonial powers in the United States?
  - a. Great Britain
  - b. France
  - c. Spain
  - d. All of the above
2. How did the enslaved Africans help to build Manhattan, New York City?
  - a. They cleared land, planted and harvested the crops that made the colony sustainable
  - b. They built and fortified Fort Amsterdam
  - c. They cut the road which became Broadway, and fortified the path for Wall Street
  - d. All of the above
3. What is false with how the enslaved Africans were treated by the New Netherlands, a Dutch, Colony?
  - a. They were granted their own land to farm
  - b. They enjoyed some of the same civil rights as the whites
  - c. They were often beaten or hanged if they demonstrated interest in improving their plight in life.
  - d. Their legal and social status was not clearly defined
4. Who fought the French Indian War?
  - a. Great Britain versus France and Spain
  - b. Spain versus Great Britain and Native Americans
  - c. Great Britain versus France and Native Americans
  - d. None of the above
5. What was the first city in the United States where African Americans arrived?
  - a. Saint Augustine, Florida
  - b. Jamestown, Virginia
  - c. Plymouth, Massachusetts
  - d. Port Orange, Florida

THE "PRE-UNITED STATES" DAYS, 1513-1774

6. When were the first Africans most likely brought to the present-day United States?
  - a. 1521
  - b. 1776
  - c. 1619
  - d. 1565
7. Where were the majority of slaves taken from the continent of Africa?
  - a. Gold Coast (primarily Ghana) in Western Africa
  - b. Swahili Coast (primarily Zanzibar) in Eastern Africa
  - c. Ivory Coast (primarily Cote d'Ivoire) in Western Africa
  - d. Cape of Good Hope (primarily South Africa) in Southern Africa
8. Define the core element of "chattel slavery":
  - a. Debt bondage wherein a person uses their labor to pay off a loan
  - b. Working against one's will due to the threat of violence
  - c. Being owned as property, being bought and sold, by another person from birth
  - d. Being dependent on another person for all one's needs
9. In 1662, slavery became a recognized aspect of colonial law; prior to 1662, black slaves were more akin to indentured servants. Define "indentured servant":
  - a. Someone who works without pay for his/her entire life
  - b. Someone who works in a prominent household
  - c. Someone who works for pay
  - d. Someone who works off his/her debt over the course of several years
10. What event led to the first slave rebellion?
  - a. Explorers going west in search of profitable fur trade opportunities
  - b. The Spanish Crown issuing licenses to sell five hundred slaves
  - c. African Americans converting to Christianity
  - d. Crash of the Flagship "*Capitanna*"
11. Many African Americans were which combination of religions during this period?
  - a. Catholic and Protestant
  - b. Muslim and Catholic
  - c. A variety of African religions and Christianity
  - d. Atheist



*American Revolution  
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## CHAPTER 3

# HEROISM

There are several examples of African Americans participating in the conflicts that ultimately shaped the United States. One such example is the many slaves who participated in the Seven Years War and the aforementioned French Indian War, fighting on different sides.



African Americans were also leaders during this time of opportunity. One notable example is Jean DuSable's founding of the city of Chicago. DuSable, possibly originating from Haiti or French Canada, settled in the Great Lakes area as a trader and married an indigenous woman. He was known as a handsome and well-educated trader during his lifetime. He is credited with founding Chicago because he established a large settlement that became quite profitable, in what later became the city of Chicago.

## THE "PRE-UNITED STATES" DAYS, 1513-1774

Even though the territory was contested by the Spanish, French, and British, DuSable was able to establish his operations in a permanent fashion. He established trading posts that eventually became the city of Chicago, residing in the new city. Yet, the tensions over the new country affected him as well. He showed his loyalty to the new United States when he was arrested by the British military, who suspected him of being sympathetic to the colonial rebellion. DuSable was able to avoid any charges by the British military and continued to support independence.



Seizing opportunities and sacrificing for the political community that would become the United States, the lives of these men are remembered because of their bravery and strong spirits. Although some accounts depict European colonists as the only actors during this

period, there are countless African Americans who contributed to the infancy of the United States and ultimately shaped the present-day United States.

## CHAPTER REVIEW

1. Who was the founder of Chicago?
  - a. Chuck Attucks
  - b. Jean DuSable
  - c. Francis Drake.
  - d. John Bush
2. Who arrested Jean DuSable?
  - a. British soldiers
  - b. French soldiers
  - c. Spanish soldiers
  - d. Native American soldiers
3. TRUE OR FALSE: African Americans participated in the many wars that shaped what would become the United States.
  - a. True
  - b. False

4. Chicago was founded as a:
- a. Port
  - b. Series of trading posts
  - c. Colony
  - d. Center of agriculture

American Revolution  
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## CHAPTER 1

## CRISPUS ATTUCKS SPEAKS

**M**y name is Crispus Attucks, and I'm – for want of a better phrase – the dead black man in this story.

Now you can take a section out of almost any time period in American history, examine it, and the odds are rather good you'll find a dead black man somewhere in the story. "Tale as old as time," as Disney would say. So what makes me so special? I was the first dead black man at the start of the American Revolution. I even made it into a painting by Paul Revere.

My private life became public when I took a page out of American history and followed in the footsteps of thousands of African-American slaves that came before me: I escaped my captors and ran away, or so said this ad from *The Boston Gazette*, in their October 2, 1750 edition:

*Ran away from his master William Brown of Framingham on the 30th of Sept. last a mulatto fellow about 27 years of age, named Crispus, 6 feet and 2 inches high, short curl'd hair, his knees nearer together than common; and had on a light colour'd beaver skin coat, plain new buckskin breeches, blue yarn stockings and a checked woolen shirt. Whoever shall take up said runaway and convey him to his*



*aforesaid master shall have 10 pounds old tenor reward, and all necessary charges paid. And all masters of vessels and others are hereby cautioned against concealing or carrying off said servant on penalty of law.*

I like that ad. You don't often get actual details of what an African American wore. You do get those details in escaped slave ads when both who you were and what you wore were considered the slave owner's property.

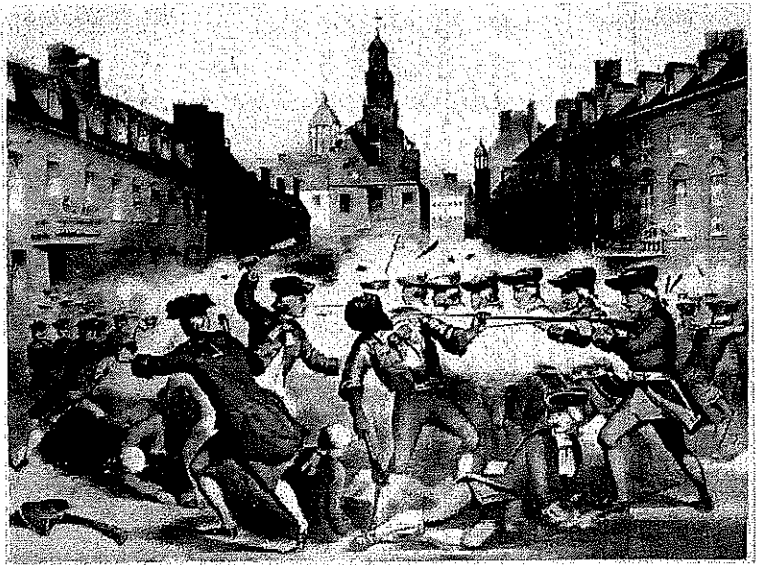
Like many black men that came before and after me, I was just in the wrong place at the wrong time. Or I felt I was in the right place, doing the right thing when

things just went wrong. You weren't there on Monday evening, March 5, 1770. There's no real way to know. Even the artists don't always get it right. Always keep in mind that what we see as history often depends on who is writing it.

But some have to get it right, like those taking notes in a court of law. At the trial of those British soldiers who murdered me in the Boston Massacre, November 27, 1770, they said under oath that the wound that killed me was six inches deep and one inch wide, and killed me instantly.

Centuries later, a PBS documentary about me said I and about 30 others "began taunting the guard at the custom house with snowballs, sticks, and insults. Seven other redcoats came to the lone soldier's rescue, and Attucks was one of five men killed when they opened fire." When John Adams defended the soldiers in the trial, he said I was the leader.

And maybe I was. At 6'2", I always stood out in a crowd, at a time when the average white man was 5'4". Adams said in court that with one hand, I held one soldier's bayonet, while with my other free hand, I knocked another soldier down. He doesn't say which of these two armed soldiers, or the others lined up with them, fired and



promptly killed me at close range. Thanks to John Adams, who later became second President of the United States, history tells us one thing, clearly: each of the five white soldiers on trial was acquitted, of killing me and the others. As I said earlier, "tale as old as time."

I had a background as a seaman, hired by ships on and off for some 20 years before my life ended in Boston, and I was a free man when I was killed.

Each year leading up and into the American Revolution, there was a ceremony to remember me and the others who died that evening in Boston. My name was Crispus Attucks. It sounds pretty close to "Attack Us," which makes it easy for you to remember. Just remember this, too - they didn't just "attack us." Time and again, we African-Americans fought back - and often, triumphed.

## THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

In the way that World War I later set the stage for World War II some 25 years later, the French and Indian War set the stage for the American Revolution. The British mainland put a series of increasing taxes on its British citizens in America, in a series of acts: The Stamp Act, the Intolerable Acts, and more. Colonists complained of impositions, both personal and financial, with little reward for them. These communities began to protest their treatment through boycotts and action, such as the infamous Boston

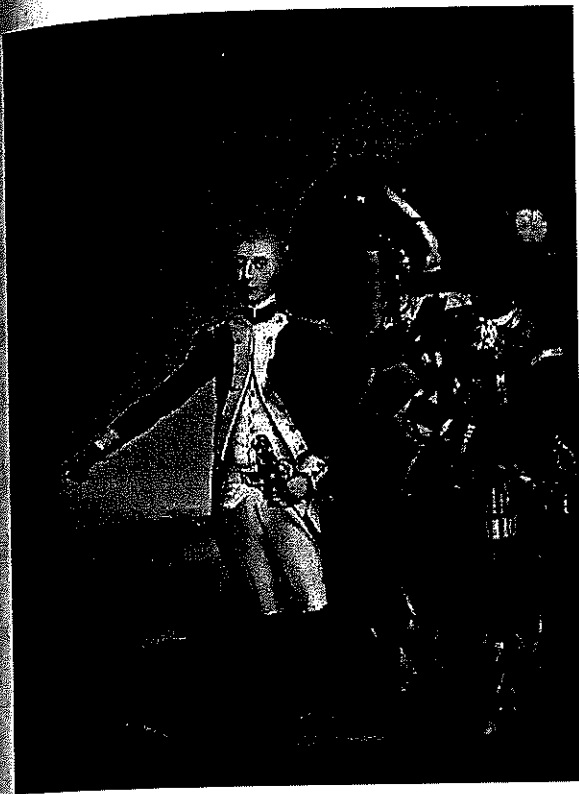
Tea Party when the colonists threw tea into the sea, challenging the British monarchy. During this time, the colonies became divided between royalists, who maintained their loyalty to the crown, and the patriots, who began to advocate for independence and the establishment of their own country.

There were several sparks that launched the American Revolution - the Boston Massacre, Lexington & Concord - but it was the writing of the *Declaration of Independence* by Thomas Jefferson, and its oral reading in many cities - that declared the colonies as free and independent states, and opened with this provocative idea in the second sentence:

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.*

It was written as "all men" because women were considered property at the time. African Americans often blame Thomas Jefferson for not ending slavery and not ensuring their equality at the time. In actuality, Jefferson did try to end slavery in the *Declaration of Independence*, and wrote this (where "He" below refers to King George III):

*He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating & carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian King of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where Men should be bought & sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he has obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the Liberties of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.*



Unfortunately, the representatives of all 13 colonies would not agree to the inclusion of this passage in the final version of the *Declaration of Independence*. According to the website blackpast.org, "Decades later, Jefferson blamed the removal of the passage on delegates from South Carolina and Georgia and Northern delegates who represented merchants who were at the time actively involved in the Trans-Atlantic slave trade."

The above passage on ending slavery, which Jefferson wrote for inclusion in the *Declaration*, was omitted and replaced with this (again, where "He" below

refers to King George III):

*He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.*

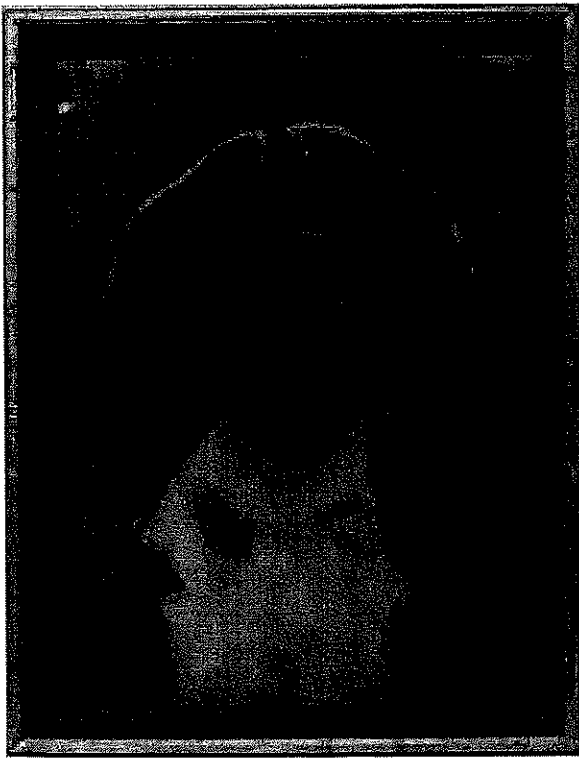
The priority was set, and the damage was done. First, the colonies of Great Britain would declare their independence and become the United States of America. Later, at some future point, the issue of slavery would be revisited.

Once the American Revolution broke out, George Washington was appointed to lead the armies of the colonists in fighting the monarchy. A series of early defeats led to great discouragement amongst the colonists, but they quickly recovered and captured several cities, such as present-day Trenton and Princeton, New Jersey.

African Americans, some of whom were freedmen but many of whom were slaves to the colonists, played a significant role in the conflict on both sides. The British army recruited the slaves of colonists,



offering freedom in return. In reaction to the shortage of troops, George Washington lifted an ongoing ban on the enlistment of African Americans in the Continental Army and also promised freedom in return. Several all-black units were formed in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. As many as 5000 African American soldiers served the patriot cause during the Revolutionary War. James Armistead, an American spy and double agent, Peter Salem, and others became American patriots and Sons of Liberty. Washington's initial skepticism about permitting African Americans into the ranks of the Continental Army turned to admiration as he saw black men fighting for the same cause he did along with white soldiers. Washington's sentiment towards slavery changed after the war. In 1799, at Mount Vernon where Washington lived and before his death, he arranged for all 123 of the slaves owned by him and Martha to be emancipated after Martha's death, as the slaves were part of their estate and would be handed down to heirs of the estate like other pieces of property. He was the only founding father to do so.



Peter Salem (1750-1816), an African American man held as a slave from Massachusetts, was one such soldier. During the war, he was freed in order to serve in the militia fighting against the British. He served for five years and became a hero due to his service at the Battle of Bunker Hill. He is credited with fatally shooting the British Major John Pitcairn. His service earned him a shining reputation as he reenlisted each year to serve in the militia until the war was won. After the American Revolution, when he had won his freedom, he settled in Salem, Massachusetts and married, ultimately living a

long and satisfying life.

The American Revolution ran from 1775-1783, ending with the United States of America being formally recognized as free and independent of British rule. When the American Revolution was finally won, it took seven years for the central government to get cooperation from states, but the *United States Constitution* was finally ratified in 1788, founding the country and establishing George Washington as the first president.

However, in a second major setback to African Americans after the failure of the Declaration of Independence to ban slavery, the same failure happened in the writing of the *United States Constitution*. Furthermore, Washington reneged on his promise to grant all of the African Americans who served in the war their freedom. Under his governance, many African American soldiers were forced to return to their owners. Even the British, who held New York as their final piece of terrain, disagreed with this and negotiated for the freedom of all the African American men who served with them during the war.

Yes, even back then, there were white people - including very prominent ones - who fought for the equality and freedom of African Americans. Marquis de Lafayette - American war hero, right-hand man to General George Washington, and the guy who helped bring France and major finances in to help win the American Revolution - had this to say, on learning the new U.S. Constitution would not ban slavery: "Had I known, I would never have raised my sword in defense of America."

The American Revolution was over, and the United States of America was formally founded - all setting the stage for what would happen with the still-unresolved issue of slavery.

## CHAPTER REVIEW

1. Which states represented in Congress were furious that Jefferson wanted to abolish slavery in the US Constitution and refused to ratify until the anti-slavery statements were removed?

- a. George
- b. South Carolina
- c. Northern delegates who participated in the Slave Trade
- d. All of the above

2. Who promised freedom to the slaves if they fought in the American Revolutionary against Brittan and later reneged?
- a. Thomas Jefferson
  - b. King George III
  - c. George Washington
  - d. None of the above
3. Referring to King George III, who said, "*He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating & carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither.*"
- a. James Armistead
  - b. Marquis de Lafayette
  - c. Peter Salem
  - d. Thomas Jefferson
4. How many African Americans served in the Revolutionary War on the side of the patriots?
- a. 50
  - b. 500
  - c. 5,000
  - d. 50,000
5. Who was the first American president?
- a. George Washington
  - b. Thomas Jefferson
  - c. The Marquis de Lafayette
  - d. John Adams
6. What is known about Peter Salem?
- a. He became a hero due to his service as militia fighting at the Battle of Bunker Hill
  - b. He enlisted in the war for five years until the war was won
  - c. He won his freedom, married, and lived a long, satisfying life
  - d. All of the above

*American Revolution  
MP 3*

## CHAPTER 3

# HEROISM

**D**uring this tumultuous early period, there were many opportunities for African Americans to become heroes in the newly formed United States. As the country began to determine its own identity and its laws, African Americans played an influential role in these early conversations.



One such example is the life of Lemuel Haynes (1755-1833). His parents were indentured servants, his father African American and his mother white. Lemuel spent most of his childhood as an indentured servant and later a clergyman and a veteran who served during the Revolutionary War. Haynes was the first African American man in the United States to be ordained as a minister. Although Haynes was born in Connecticut but spent his childhood working as an indentured servant in Massachusetts. During this time, he

attended church regularly and began to preach his own sermons.

As he matured and when he was finally freed from his indentured servitude, the American Revolution broke out, and Haynes went on to serve during the war in the militia. His most notable military service was when he was a part of recapturing Fort Ticonderoga, where he remained on garrison duty until he became ill with typhus. During his service, he began to write about slavery and the slave trade, preparing sermons and theological works while also criticizing the enslavement of other humans. *He described how the colonists had felt in bondage to Great Britain and longed for freedom in the same way as black communities throughout the newly formed country. He wrote, "Liberty is equally as precious to a black man, as it is to a white one, and bondage is equally intolerable to the one as it is to the other."* Upon completing his militia service, he studied theology and became the first African American preacher to receive his preaching license and to preach to a white congregation. His writings and advocacy against slavery became an early foundation combatting the institution. Haynes blazed an important trail for many African Americans to follow.



James Forten (1766 -1842) learned the value of work, at an early age securing his first full-time job at the age of nine years old. He began working on ships at the age of fourteen, traveling twice to Europe before finally settling in Philadelphia in 1790. Here he became an apprentice to sail-maker Robert Bridges, working in a loft where large ship sails were cut and sewn. After the death of Mr. Bridge, Forten purchased the loft. With his keen sense of business and equipment he himself developed, he became one the wealthiest Philadelphians in the city. His business was

located on the busy waterfront of the Delaware River, in an area now called Penn's Landing. Forten used his wealth and social standing to work for civil rights for African Americans in both the city and

nationwide. He was among the signers of a petition to the U.S. Congress calling for the end of the slave trade and the modification of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793.



There were also many African American heroes during the fighting of the Revolutionary War. There was Austin Dabney who fought for George, Lambert Latham a member of the Continental Army and over nearly five thousand other African Americans who served with distinction for the American cause from the opening engagements at Lexington and Concord to the climactic siege of Yorktown eight years later, with the help of the 1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment, the British surrendered and the war came to an end.

It was during the winter at Valley Forge that General Washington faced chronic shortages of manpower. Rhode Island general James Varnum proposed a possible solution - he suggested that Rhode Island recruit an all-African American regiment to serve in the Continental Army. The 1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment became known as the "Black Regiment" with 140 of the 220 men consisting of slaves and free black men, producing the first African American military regiment. The 1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment was also one of the first integrated regiment, starting out with segregated units and slowing becoming fully integrated.

Corpus Crispy was the first to die of any race for freedom in the Revolutionary War. James Armistead Lafayette was a spy. The most famous mixed-race fighting unit on the Patriot side was the 1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment.

## CHAPTER REVIEW

1. Lemuel Haynes was known for:
  - a. Serving as an African American in the Revolutionary militia
  - b. Becoming the first African American to receive his preaching license
  - c. Preaching to both black and white audiences
  - d. All of the above
2. Lemuel Haynes wrote about what staggering comparison:
  - a. Religion in Brittan and religion in the newly formed country
  - b. Growing up in slavery and growing up in indentured servitude
  - c. The bondage experienced by the colonists in Great Britain and blacks in communities throughout the newly formed country.
  - d. Living in America and living abroad
3. James Foren is known for:
  - a. Being an individual who used his business talents to become one of the wealthiest men in Philadelphia.
  - b. Using his wealth and social standing to work for civil rights
  - c. Petitioning the U.S. Congress for an end to slavery in 1793
  - d. All of the Above
4. James Armistead Lafayette is remembered for:
  - a. Becoming the first African American to receive his preaching license
  - b. Preaching to both white and black audiences
  - c. Serving as a spy during the Revolutionary War
  - d. Recapturing Fort Ticonderoga
5. Who was the most famous mixed-race regiment helping to win the battle at Yorktown in 1781, which caused the British to surrender and to end the Revolutionary War?
  - a. The 24<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts regiment
  - b. The 1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment
  - c. The North Carolina Regiment
  - d. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Virginia Regiment