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King George III

by Janelle Pavao

King George III is most well known for being the King of England during the American Revolutionary War. Throughout his life he suffered from a disease called Porphyria which caused him to have temporary lapses in judgment and episodes of insanity. He had a very loving and devoted wife who would stand by his side through it all. However, the constant warring began to grate on him, and finally, after losing the [American Colonies](#) and the respect of not only the foreign nations but also his own, even his wonderful wife was not enough to keep him from going insane before his death.

King George III was born on June 4, 1738. He was the son of Frederick, Prince of Wales and the grandson of King George II of England. While he was still a boy, his father died. This caused him to inherit the throne from his grandfather at age 23, making him one of the youngest kings of his time.

While he was growing up, George had a learning disability. This made it extremely hard for him to do his studies and he did not even learn to read until he was 11. His tutors, however, were always extremely pleased with how hard he was willing to work.

When he was a teenager, he met a young woman by the name of Lady Sarah Lenox. They fell in love and swore they would be married one day, but when George suggested the match, many of the people close to him disapproved. He then wrote to Sarah and told her "I am born for the happiness or misery of a great nation, and consequently must often act contrary to my passions."

By the time George became king in 1760, Britain had been in the "[Seven Years War](#)" with France for four years. At this time, they were still fighting over who the leading colonial power of that day and age was. Britain had a large advantage, because its royal navy could not be matched.

During all of this, George continued to search for a wife of whom everyone would approve. His mother suggested that he marry Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. He agreed and was married on September 8, 1761. Although he did not meet her until his wedding day, he vowed to love her and be good to her for the rest of his life, and he did. He was completely devoted to her and their fifteen children who would come later.

By 1763 Britain had emerged from the turmoil of war on top as the highest colonial power. Although this victory was great, George's government wasn't very stable and it was in major debt. As a result of this, he decided to raise the taxes on his American colonies. He also began taxing things such as tea, stamps, and papers.

This outraged the colonies. They began writing letters to him, expressing their disapproval of being taxed without their consent. Most of these letters were simply tossed aside, or sent to the waste bin. Almost none of them were actually read.

Soon after, the colonies began to boycott British goods and buy only from other countries. The King wouldn't stand for this, so he ordered his sales men that were bound for America to make sure all the tea was unloaded and sold on American ground. When a young ship merchant tried to follow these orders, a group of colonists dressed as American Indians ran on board and dumped all the tea in the water, turning this scene from a simple sales interaction into the famous [Boston Tea Party](#).



King George III in his coronation robes painted by Allan Ramsay
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This drove the king half mad and brought on one of his episodes of insanity. He then imposed the [intolerable acts](#) on the people, and it didn't take long for this to turn into the start of the American Revolutionary War.

King George really couldn't afford another war, but, even more, he couldn't afford to lose the colonies. By 1776, The Americans [declared themselves free](#), but George kept the war going until the signing of the [Treaty of Paris](#) in 1783.

The loss of the American Colonies was tremendous, and it not only took its toll on England, but on George himself. His episodes became more frequent, and the doctors didn't know how to help him. It was commonly known that George had a learning disability and he was not bright. On top of this, he failed to intimidate people. When foreign ambassadors came to speak with him, they left unimpressed. People thought of him as unfit for his position.

Soon after his loss in power and stature, the French rebelled again, and this time it was not as easy to overtake them. In the end, Britain once again established rule, but they had then sunk too far into debt. All the wars had taken their toll, and George was only barely sane at this time. His wife and children stood by his side through everything, but when he died in January of 1820, he died angry, bitter, and half mad.

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