

The Native Americans withdrew. The British, not wanting war with the United States, refused to help them. The Battle of Fallen Timbers crushed Native American hopes of keeping their land in the Northwest Territory. Twelve tribes signed the **Treaty of Greenville** in 1795. They agreed to **cede**, or surrender, much of present-day Ohio as well as numerous ports and outposts in Illinois, Michigan, and Indiana to the U.S. government.

**Trouble in the Backcountry** In spite of the United States' success at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, Washington soon found it necessary to put another army into the field. This was in response to a conflict over a new tax.

To raise revenue, Treasury Secretary Hamilton had pushed through Congress a tax to be levied specifically on the manufacture of whiskey. The tax hit small, backcountry farmers the hardest. One of their major crops was corn. But whiskey made from corn was more profitable than raw grain, so whiskey became central to the Backcountry economy. Having little money with which to buy goods, small farmers used whiskey like money to trade for other goods. As well, whiskey was one of the few local products suitable for transport to markets across the Appalachians. When the whiskey tax was enacted, outraged farmers from Pennsylvania to Georgia resisted.

**Farmers Revolt** In the summer of 1794, a group of farmers in western Pennsylvania staged the **Whiskey Rebellion** against the tax. One armed group attacked and burned the home of the regional tax collector. Others threatened an armed attack on Pittsburgh.

Most backcountry farmers had a long tradition of independent living and resistance to authority. And backcountry rebelliousness had helped defeat the British. That same rebelliousness was now seen as a threat to the new republic, and Washington and Hamilton needed to keep order. They looked upon the Whiskey Rebellion as an opportunity for the federal government to show it could enforce the law along the western frontier. Hamilton scolded the rebels for resisting the law.

#### PRIMARY SOURCE

“Such a resistance is treason against society, against liberty, against everything that ought to be dear to a free, enlightened, and prudent people. To tolerate it were to abandon your most precious interests. Not to subdue it were to tolerate it.”

—Alexander Hamilton, *The Works of Alexander Hamilton*

In October 1794, General Henry Lee, with Hamilton at his side, led an army of 13,000 soldiers into western Pennsylvania to put down the uprising. As news of the army's approach spread, the rebels fled. After much effort, federal troops rounded up a group of about 20 accused leaders. Washington had proved his point. He had shown that the government had the power and the will to enforce its laws. Meanwhile, events in Europe gave Washington a different kind of challenge.

 **SUMMARIZE** Describe how Washington dealt with two early crises.

#### Connecting History

##### Individual Rights vs. Majority Rule

The Whiskey Rebellion marked the first major challenge to the authority of the federal government. When the armed rebels gathered in Pittsburgh in 1794, they were angry not only about the whiskey tax but also about their underrepresentation in the state legislatures.