

Different Perspectives: The American Revolution

British poet and author Rudyard Kipling published "The American Rebellion" in 1911. Below is the first part of the poem.

The American Rebellion

Before:

'Twas not while England's sword unsheathed
Put half a world to flight,
Nor while their new-built cities breathed
Secure behind her might;
Not while she poured from Pole to Line
Treasure and ships and men—
These worshippers at Freedom's shrine
They did not quit her then!

Not till their foes were driven forth
By England o'er the main—
Not till the Frenchman from the North
Had gone with shattered Spain;
Not till the clean-swept oceans showed
No hostile flag unrolled,
Did they remember that they owed
To Freedom—and were bold!

Kipling's Point of View

What is Kipling's point of view about the American Revolution in this part of the poem? Cite text examples to support your analysis.

Actual answers will vary. Correct answers will refer to Kipling's point of view as critical towards the American colonies. He makes the case that the colonies rebelled only after England had made the New World safe and secure. Citations may include the reference to England protecting the colonies from Spain and France, ("Not till the Frenchman from the North / Had gone with shattered Spain"); England's success at eliminating piracy, ("Not till the clean-swept oceans showed / No hostile flag unrolled,"); or how England kept the new country safe, ("Nor while their new-built cities breathed/ Secure behind her might").
