



CHAPTER 4 THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

The American Nation:
A History of the United States, 13th edition
Carnes/Garraty

THE SHOT HEARD ROUND THE WORLD

- General Thomas Gage: commander in chief of all British forces in North America
 - Appointed governor of Massachusetts
 - Had 4,000 troops in Boston
- British did not believe other colonies would help Massachusetts
- House of Commons voted 270 to 78 against conciliating the colonies
- January 1775 Parliament decided to use troops but order did not reach Gage until April
 - Parliament voted new troop levies
 - Declared Massachusetts to be in rebellion

THE SHOT HEARD ROUND THE WORLD

- Massachusetts Patriots
 - Formed extralegal provincial assembly
 - Reorganized militia
 - Began training “minute men” and other fighters
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THE SHOT HEARD ROUND THE WORLD

- April 18: Gage sent 700 troops to collect arms stored at Concord
 - Paul Revere and others
 - 70 Minute Men at Lexington
 - Destroyed any supplies left at Concord
 - Redcoats picked off by militiamen on return to Boston
 - Gage obliged to send 1,500 more troops
 - British: 273 casualties; Americans: fewer than 100
- Massachusetts captured Fort Ticonderoga and Crown Point on Lake Champlain
- Other colonies sent reinforcements



Paul Revere's ride, Illustration. 208-FS-3200-5. National Archives

THE SECOND CONTINENTAL CONGRESS

- May 10, 1775: Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia
 - Group more radical than First Congress
 - Members included: John and Sam Adams, Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and Benjamin Franklin
- John Hancock chosen President of Congress
- Organized forces around Boston into Continental Army and appointed George Washington commander

THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL

- Actually Battle of Breed's Hill (June 17)
 - Redcoats marched up three times to unseat artillery (only succeeded because Americans ran out of ammunition)
- Colonists cleared out of Charleston peninsula
 - British lost more than 1,000 out of 2,500
 - Continentals lost 400
- Gage replaced with General William Howe
- Colonies proclaimed in rebellion
- Congress responded with "Olive Branch Petition" but quickly switched to Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms
 - Ordered attack on Canada
 - Created committees to seek foreign aid
 - Outfitted Navy

THE GREAT DECLARATION

- Colonists concerned about final break
 - Traditions, language, history, etc. tied them to Britain
 - Concerned what “lower” classes might do with independence
 - Concern over whether common people *really* could govern themselves
- January 1776: moved to break by two events
 - News British were sending hired Hessian soldiers
 - Publication of Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*
 - Called for complete independence
 - Attacked the very idea of a monarchy
 - Virtually everyone in colonies read it or heard it discussed

THE GREAT DECLARATION

- March 1776: Congress unleashed privateers against British commerce
- April: opened American ports to foreign shipping
- May: urged states to frame constitutions and establish state governments
- June 7: Richard Henry Lee introduced resolution stating that “these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States....”
 - Passed July 2
 - Committee: Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman, Robert Livingston

THE GREAT DECLARATION

- Slightly modified draft written by Thomas Jefferson adopted by Congress as Declaration of Independence on July 4
- Declaration had two parts:
 - First, introductory part justified the abstract right of any people to revolt and described the theory on which Americans based creation of new nation
 - Second section was a list of the injuries and injustices perpetrated by George III
 - Interference with the functioning of representative government in America
 - Harsh administration of colonial affairs
 - Restrictions on civil rights
 - Maintenance of troops in the colonies without their consent

1776: The Balance of Forces

- Factors in favor of Americans
 - British army was as inefficient and ill directed as rest of British government
 - Reluctance among British to engage in both violence and cost of war
 - Seemed risky to send best troops to America with European rivals still smarting from defeat



Washington taking command of the American Army at Cambridge. 1775. Engraving by C. Rogers from painting by M.A. Wageman. 148-GW-178 National Archives

1776: The Balance of Forces

- Howe withdrew from Boston when Washington fortified Dorchester Heights
- General Richard Montgomery captured Montréal in November 1775
- Americans failed to capture Québec in December
- July 2: Howe landed 32,000 men at Staten Island while fleet under his brother, Richard, floated off the coast

1776: The Balance of Forces

British Advantages

- Population of 9 million compared to 2.5 million for colonists
- Large stocks of war materials
- Industrial capacity to increase war materials
- Mastery of the seas
- Well-trained and experienced army
- Highly centralized and ruthless government

1776: The Balance of Forces

American Disadvantages

- Money and tools of war were continually in short supply
- Soldiers had few weapons or proper uniforms
- Most did not want to conform to military discipline
- Washington had to create an army organization while fighting a war
- Supply problems were handled inefficiently and corruptly
- No knowledge about how to construct and maintain sanitary facilities

LOYALISTS

- John Adams' estimate: 1/3 ardent Patriots, 1/3 Loyalists, 1/3 neutral or flexible
- Historians think about 2/5 Patriots and 1/5 Loyalists
- Loyalists:
 - High proportion of those holding royal appointments and many Anglican clergymen
 - Pockets of Tory strength in rural sections of New York, in North Carolina back country
 - Among persons of non-English origin and other minority groups who tended to count on London for protection against local majority
 - Due to a distaste for change
 - Believed actions of British did not justify rebellion
- Tories lacked organization
- Feelings between Loyalists and Patriots were bitter

THE BRITISH TAKE NEW YORK CITY

- Battle of Long Island: Howe defeated Washington's Army but Howe hesitated and Washington escaped
- Howe attacked New York City and Washington withdrew to Harlem Heights and eventually New Jersey
- November and December 1776: Americans retreated to Pennsylvania
- Washington attacked Hessian troops at Trenton, New Jersey, on Christmas day and scored a morale boosting victory
 - Captured 900 Hessians
- Washington then outmaneuvered General Cornwallis to score another victory at Princeton



★ **New York and New Jersey Campaigns, 1776–1777**

SARATOGA AND THE FRENCH ALLIANCE

- April 1777: Washington had fewer than 5,000 men under arms
- Complicated plan to trap Patriots and isolate New England states was a fiasco
 - John Burgoyne's troops heading south from Canada (500 Indians, 650 Loyalists, 6,000 regulars, 2,000 women) bogged down
 - St. Leger left Fort Oswego late and was driven back by Benedict Arnold
 - Howe did not follow plan either, and Clinton turned back for reinforcements
- October 17, 1777: Burgoyne and 5,700 British troops surrendered at Saratoga

SARATOGA AND THE FRENCH ALLIANCE

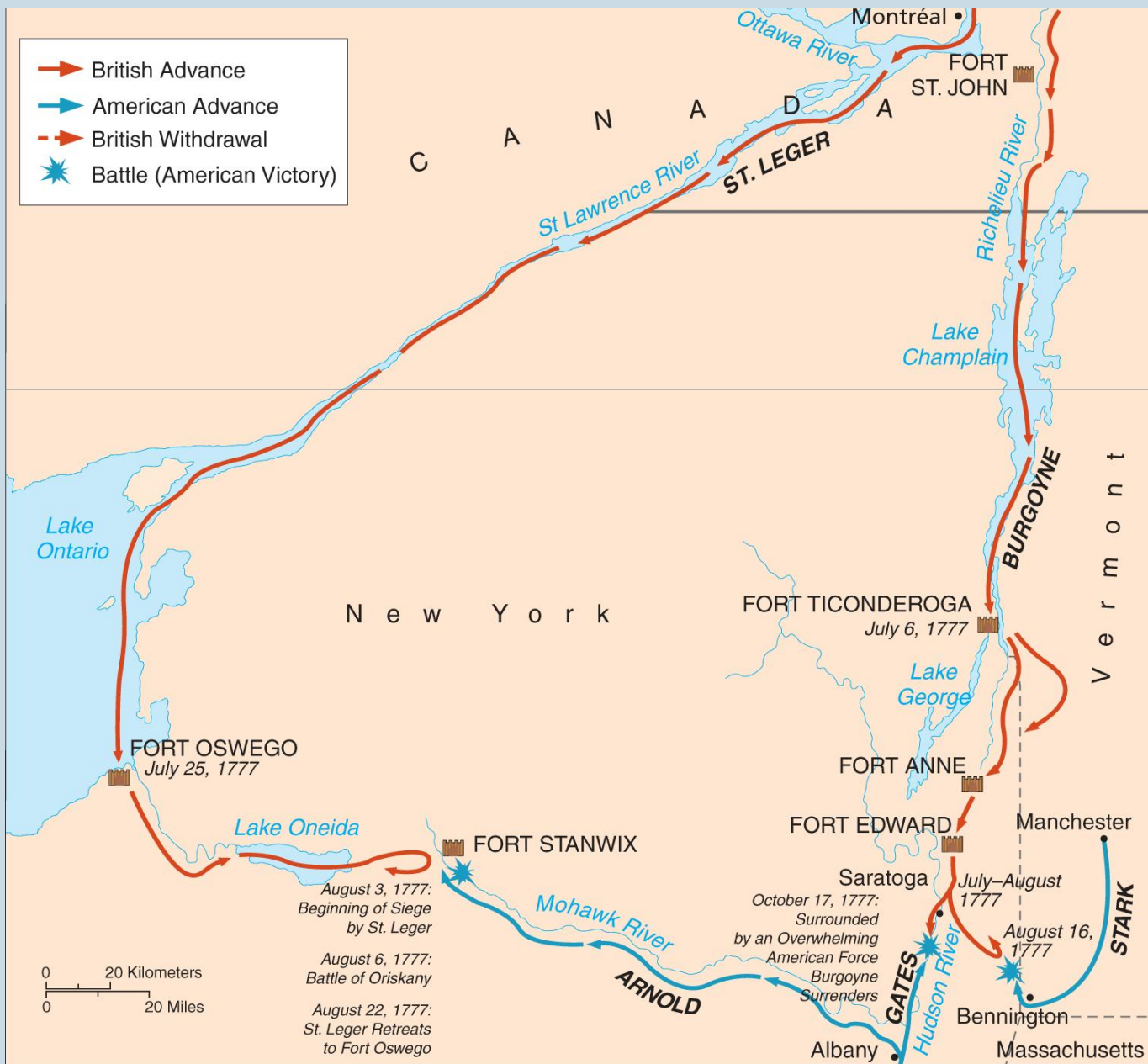
- American victory at Saratoga led to French backing, which probably would have come anyway
 - May 1776: French had authorized 1 million livres for munitions for America and added more the next year
 - Spain contributed because of hatred of British
- When news of victory at Saratoga reached France, Louis XVI recognized the United States and Comte de Vergennes and American commissioners drafted a commercial treaty and a formal treaty of alliance
- British were willing to give in to colonial demands of 1775 to prevent French alliance but peace commissioners did not reach Philadelphia until June 1778, a month after Congress ratified French treaty
 - While peace commissioners were in Philadelphia, war broke out between Britain and France

SARATOGA AND THE FRENCH ALLIANCE

- After losing Philadelphia to Howe in September 1777, Washington had settled into winter camp at Valley Forge
 - Supply system collapsed
 - Soldiers suffered hunger and cold
 - Continental army melted away during winter
 - Those who remained became a seasoned professional army



George Washington and a Committee of Congress at Valley Forge. Engraving, 1866, from painting by W.H. Powell. 148-GW-184 National Archives



★ **Saratoga Campaign, September 19–October 17, 1777**

THE WAR MOVES SOUTH

- May 1778: Howe replaced as commander with General Clinton who transferred base to New York
 - Washington attacked him during move and claimed victory in an indecisive battle at Monmouth Court House
- British strategy changed:
 - Fighting in northern states degenerated into skirmishes and small unit clashes
 - British concentrated their efforts in South Carolina and Georgia
 - Based on sea power, the supposed presence of many Tories and anticipated help from slaves

THE WAR MOVES SOUTH

- Late 1778: Savannah fell to British
- 1779: most of settled parts of Georgia were overrun
- 1780: Clinton attacked Charleston which surrendered in May
 - 3,000 colonial soldiers were captured
- Clinton left General Cornwallis and 8,000 troops and returned to New York
- Callous behavior of British troops spurred spots of resistance throughout occupied areas

THE WAR MOVES SOUTH

- Spanish Victories:
 - 1779: Spanish Governor of Louisiana defeated British troops in Florida
 - 1780 and 1781: captured British-held ports of Pensacola and Mobile
- June 1780: Congress put Horatio Gates in charge of southern army, consisting of irregular militia and hard core of Continentals transferred from Washington's command
 - His failure led to replacement by General Nathanael Greene

THE WAR MOVES SOUTH

- Greene divided troops and staged a series of raids on scattered points
- January 1781: Battle of Cowpens, British suffered painful defeat
- Cornwallis chased Greene but lost again at Battle of Guilford Courthouse
- When Cornwallis withdrew to Wilmington, North Carolina so could be re-supplied by navy, Greene regained control of Carolina backcountry



★ Campaign in the South, 1779–1781

VICTORY AT YORKTOWN

- Cornwallis marched north to Virginia where he joined forces with troops under Benedict Arnold who had defected to the British in 1780
- Clinton ordered Cornwallis to establish base at Yorktown where he could be supplied by sea
- In 1781, Washington worked with Comte de Rochambeau and his French troops in Newport, Rhode Island, and Admiral François de Grasse and his West Indian Fleet to bottle up Cornwallis at Yorktown



★ The Yorktown Campaign, April–September 1781

VICTORY AT YORKTOWN

- De Grasse defeated the British fleet under Admiral Thomas Graves
- Washington tricked Clinton into thinking he was attacking New York then headed south and reached Yorktown in September
 - There he joined with troops under Lafayette and troops from de Grasse's fleet to total 17,000 troops
- October 17: Cornwallis asked for terms and surrendered his 7,000 troops on October 19



Surrender of Cornwallis. Painting by John Trumbull. 16-AD-60 National Archives

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NEGOTIATING A FAVORABLE PEACE

- British gave up trying to suppress American rebellion
- France and U.S. had promised not to negotiate a separate peace
- Congress appointed John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, Thomas Jefferson, and Henry Laurens as peace commissioners
 - Supposed to rely on advice of Comte de Vergennes, who turned out to be more interested in France than in U.S.
 - Franklin sought to achieve a rapprochement with Britain, not drive the hardest bargain possible
 - Americans hinted to British they would be willing to negotiate a separate peace if it was a generous one
 - November 1782 preliminary treaty was signed

NEGOTIATING A FAVORABLE PEACE

BRITISH AGREEMENTS

- Britain agreed that the United States was independent
- Boundaries were set at Great Lakes, Mississippi River, and 31° north latitude (roughly northern boundary of Florida, which British turned over to Spain)
- Britain recognized right of Americans to fish on the Grand Banks off Newfoundland and dry their catch on unsettled beaches in Labrador and Nova Scotia
- Agreed to withdraw troops with “all convenient speed”

NEGOTIATING A FAVORABLE PEACE

AMERICAN AGREEMENTS

- Americans said Congress would recommend states reimburse Tories for their seized properties
- Promised to prevent further property confiscation and prosecutions of Tories
- Agreed not to impede collection of debts owed British subjects
- US achieved terms because representatives were shrewd diplomats and because Britain was concerned with European rivalries

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT UNDER THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

- Early attempts at a constitution floundered
 - Larger states objected to equal representation
 - States with large western land claims refused to cede them to the government
- November 1777 Articles of Confederation submitted to states for approval (must be unanimous)
 - Approval of all states was needed but Maryland held out until 1781
- Each state was to have one vote and union was a “league of friendship”
- Central government lacked the authority to impose taxes and had no way of enforcing powers it did have



★ **The United States Under the Articles of Confederation, 1787**

New York and Virginia gave up their claims to the vast area that became the Northwest Territory and thus set a precedent for trans-Appalachian land policy. By 1802 the various state claims had been ceded to the national government. The original Northwest Territory (the Old Northwest) was bounded by the Ohio and Mississippi rivers and the Great Lakes.

FINANCING THE WAR

- Congress and states carried on war cooperatively
 - General officers appointed by Congress, lesser ones by states
 - Continental Army supported by Congress, militias by states
- States spent \$5.8 million in hard currency and met Congress' demands for beef, corn, rum, fodder, and other military supplies
- Congress raised large sums by borrowing
 - Sold \$7 to \$8 million in bonds
 - Borrowed \$8 million from foreign governments (mostly France)
 - Congress issued \$240 million in paper money and states issued \$200 million

FINANCING THE WAR

- Congress established Departments of Foreign Affairs, War, and Finance
- Robert Morris was head of Finance
 - Set up efficient method of obtaining food and uniforms for the army
 - Persuaded Congress to charter a National Bank of North America
 - Got the country on a hard money basis
 - Obtained new foreign loans

STATE REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENTS

- By 1777 all but Rhode Island and Connecticut had written state constitutions
- All provided for
 - An elected legislature
 - An executive
 - A system of courts
- Powers of governor and courts were limited
 - Governor had no voice in legislation and little in appointments
 - Pennsylvania eliminated office of governor and replaced with elected council of 12

STATE REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENTS

- Power was concentrated in legislature which could
 - Declare war
 - Conduct foreign relations
 - Control the courts
 - Perform many other essentially executive functions
- Voters had to be property owners or taxpayers
- People were citizens
- Most state constitutions contained a bill of rights that protected the people's civil liberties
- Combined British respect for status, fairness, and due process, with American stress on individualism, and healthy dislike of too much authority

SOCIAL REFORM

- Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Virginia, and other states reapportioned legislative seats to give western districts their fair share
- Primogeniture, entail, and quitrents were abolished
- Steps toward greater freedom of religion were taken
- Some states moved tentatively against slavery

SOCIAL REFORM

SLAVERY

- November 1775: Lord Dunmore, royal governor of Virginia, proclaimed freedom for all slaves who fought for British
 - In actual fact treated them like captured property
 - Some ended up in West Indies, still slaves
 - Some wound up in Canada and were liberated
 - Some settled in Sierra Leone in West Africa when it was founded in 1787

SOCIAL REFORM

SLAVERY

- 5,000 blacks served in the Patriot army and navy
- Beginning with Pennsylvania in 1780, the northern states abolished slavery
 - Though due to structure of law there were still 3,500 slaves in northern states in 1830
- All states prohibited slave importation from abroad
- Except for South Carolina and Georgia, states removed barriers to owners freeing their slaves
 - Virginia between 1782 and 1790, as many as 10,000 blacks were freed

SOCIAL REFORM

CHANGES IN SOCIETY

- In the way they dressed, in their manner of speech, in the way they dealt with one another in public places, Americans paid at least lip service to equality
 - Denounced granting of titles of nobility
- No major social redistribution of wealth
- New governments were more responsive to public opinion

EFFECTS OF THE REVOLUTION ON WOMEN

- Trend in western world toward increasing legal rights for women, strengthened in U.S. by Declaration of Independence
 - Easier for women to obtain divorces
 - Still paternalistic outlook—courts did not take action against Tory women on grounds had to follow husbands

Madison, Mrs. James (Dolley). Engraving (¾ length) from painting by Gilbert Stuart. 148-GW-936 National Archives



EFFECTS OF THE REVOLUTION ON WOMEN



Jay, Mrs. John. Engraving (¾-length profile) from painting by R.E. Pine. 148-GW-918. National Archives

- Influence of women was increased
 - Took over management of businesses and farms while husbands in army
 - Contributions to winning of independence made them conscious of their importance
 - Rhetoric of equality affected their outlook
- Women's role training the next generation of citizens necessitated female education

GROWTH OF A NATIONAL SPIRIT

- Nationalism was a result of independence
- By middle of 18th century colonists had begun to think of themselves as a separate society distinct from Britain
- Local ties remained predominant
- Nationalism arose from
 - common sacrifices
 - war caused many people to move from place to place
 - practical problems in wake of war that demanded common solutions brought them together
 - economic developments had unifying effect

THE GREAT LAND ORDINANCES

- Land Ordinance of 1785:
 - provided for surveying of western land in grid pattern of 6 mile square townships
 - townships divided into 36 sections of 640 acres (1 square mile) each with section 16 reserved for school support
 - charged \$1 per acre which favored speculative land development
 - Sale by central government was nationalizing force

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36

THE GREAT LAND ORDINANCES

Northwest Ordinance of 1787

- Area bound by Ohio, Mississippi, and the Great Lakes was to be carved into not more than 5 and not less than 3 states
 - Created political structure for territories and phased process for achieving statehood
 - Congress appointed: territorial governor, secretary, 3 judges
 - When reached 5,000 adult males those with 50 acres of land could vote for legislature (whose laws subject to veto of governor)
 - Once had a population of 60,000 could draft constitution and apply for statehood
 - Had to have “republican” government and could not allow slavery

NATIONAL HEROES

- Nationalism fostered by common heroes
 - Benjamin Franklin
 - George Washington



A NATIONAL CULTURE

- Anglican church became Episcopal Church and other churches became independent of European ties
- Noah Webster and an “American” language
- John M’Culloch published first American history book
- King’s College became Columbia in 1784
- Jedidiah Morse published *American Geography*
- American Academy of Arts and Sciences founded in Boston
- Writers and painters used patriotic themes

MILESTONES

Milestones

- 1774 Thomas Jefferson writes *A Summary View of the Rights of British America*
General Thomas Gage, commander-in-chief of British army in North America, is named governor of Massachusetts
- 1775 Colonists fight British in Battles of Lexington and Concord
Second Continental Congress names George Washington commander-in-chief (of Continental Army)
Gage is replaced as British commander by General Sir William Howe after Battle of Bunker Hill
- 1776 Thomas Paine publishes *Common Sense*
Washington's troops occupy Boston
Second Continental Congress issues Declaration of Independence
Washington's troops are defeated in Battle of Long Island
Washington evacuates New York City
Washington's victory at Battle of Trenton boosts morale

- 1777 Washington's troops win Battle of Princeton
American victory at Saratoga turns the tide and leads to alliance with France
British occupy Philadelphia after Battle of Germantown
- 1777–1778 Continental Army winters at Valley Forge
- 1778 British capture Savannah
- 1780 British capture Charleston
- 1781 States ratify Articles of Confederation
General Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown
- 1783 Great Britain recognizes independence of United States by signing Peace of Paris
- 1785 Congress passes Land Ordinance of 1785
- 1787 Northwest Ordinance establishes governments for the West

WEBSITES

- Colonial and Revolution Songs

<http://www.mcneilmusic.com/rev.html>

- Loyalist Institute Home Page

<http://www.royalprovincial.com/index.htm>

- The American Revolution

<http://revolution.h-net.msu.edu>

- University of Georgia's Rare Map Collection

<http://scarlett.libs.uga.edu/darchive/hargrett/maps/colamer.html>

<http://scarlett.libs.uga.edu/darchive/hargrett/maps/revamer.html>

- Canada History

<http://www.civilization.ca>