



Revolution: Mapping the Road to American Independence, 1755-1783

Richard H. Brown, Paul E. Cohen

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The spectacular legacy and importance of early American cartographers.

Historians of the Revolutionary War in America have been fortunate in their resources: few wars in history have such a rich literary and cartographic heritage. The high skills of the surveyors, artists, and engravers who delineated the topography and fields of battle allow us to observe the unfolding of events that ultimately defined the United States.

When warfare erupted between Britain and her colonists in 1775, maps provided graphic news about military matters. A number of the best examples are reproduced here, including some from the personal collections of King George III, the Duke of Northumberland, and the Marquis de Lafayette. Other maps from institutional and private collections are being published for the first time. In all, sixty significant and beautiful cartographic works from 1755 to 1783 illustrate this intriguing era.

Most books about the Revolution begin with Lexington and Concord and progress to the British surrender at Yorktown, but in this rich collection the authors lay the groundwork for the war by also taking into account key events of the antecedent conflict. The seeds of revolution were planted during the French and Indian War (1755–1763), and it was then that a good number of the participants, both British and rebel, cut their teeth. George Washington took his first command during this war, alongside the future British commanding General Thomas Gage.

At the Treaty of Paris, the French and Indian War ended, and King George III gained clear title to more territory than had ever been exchanged in any other war before or since. The British military employed its best-trained artists and engineers to map the richest prize in its Empire. They would need those maps for the fratricidal war that would begin twelve years later. Their maps and many others make up the contents of this fascinating and beautiful book.

60 maps

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