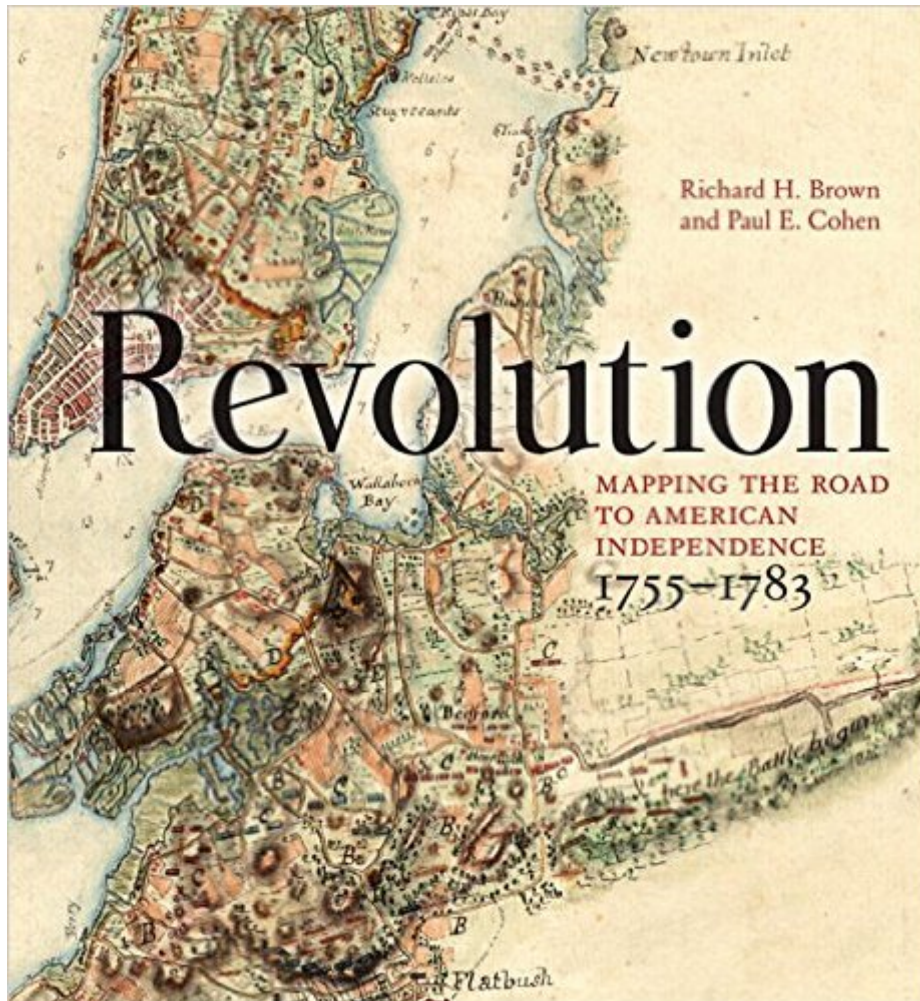


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Revolution: Mapping The Road To American Independence, 1755-1783



Synopsis

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

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This collection of antique maps and concise commentary is visually stunning and beautifully written. At a time when readers require reasons to purchase a book in hardcover rather than in digital form, this volume offers many. First of all, it is a very elegant work. Laura Lindgren, the jacket designer, uses an 18th C. full-color military map of New York City for the cover, the spaces for modern text provided by an artful fading of the map. The names of the authors are in the upper right, and the title is boldly printed across the center. The dust jacket is heavy polished paper. A ribbon of map (this time of the Fort George Area) tops the back cover above three reviews on burgundy background. One of these endorsements is by Ric Burns, the documentarian. The book is oversize in format, 12X13 inches, but is slender at 150 pages, more than enough space to cover thirty years of revolutionary history starting with the French and Indian War. The maps included have been rarely or never published before. Unlike many recent historical atlases, the focus in this volume is always on the maps. While the authors include many illustrations, they are always closely related to the maps. For example, the Anti-Gallican Map of North America (1755), published by a British anti-French club, is accompanied by an illustration of the badge of the President of the organization. It is a gorgeous rococo jewel which depicts St. George impaling the French flag with his spear. The map and badge clearly illustrate the British hostility to the French just before the onset of war. One of the reviewers on the cover, Jane Kamensky, notes that "the battle for (and against) American independence unfolded in space as well as in time.

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