

ENCYCLOPEDIA  
OF THE

*New American Nation*

## *Editorial Board*

---

---

**Paul Finkelman**

*College of Law, University of Tulsa*

**Jan Ellen Lewis**

*Department of History, Rutgers University*

**Peter S. Onuf**

*Department of History, University of Virginia*

**Jeffrey L. Pasley**

*Department of History, University of Missouri*

**John Stagg**

*Department of History, University of Virginia*

**Michael Zuckerman**

*Department of History, University of Pennsylvania*

E N C Y C L O P E D I A  
O F T H E  
*New American Nation*

---

*The Emergence of the United States,  
1754-1829*

2

FAIRS to  
POVERTY

PAUL FINKELMAN, EDITOR IN CHIEF

**CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS**

*An imprint of Thomson Gale, a part of The Thomson Corporation*





**Encyclopedia of the New American Nation  
The Emergence of the United States, 1754–1829**

Paul Finkelman

© 2006 Thomson Gale, a part of the Thomson Corporation.

Thomson and Star Logo are trademarks and Gale is a registered trademark used herein under license.

*For more information, contact*

Thomson Gale  
27500 Drake Rd.  
Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3535  
Or you can visit our Internet site at  
<http://www.gale.com>

**ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

No part of this work covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means—graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, Web distribution, or information storage retrieval systems—with the written permission of the publisher.

This publication is a creative work fully protected by all applicable copyright laws, as well as by misappropriation, trade secret, unfair competition, and other applicable laws. The authors and editors of this work have added value to the underlying factual material herein through one or more of the following: unique and original selection, coordination, expression, arrangement, and classification of the information.

For permission to use material from this product, submit your request via Web at <http://www.gale-edit.com/permissions>, or you may download our Permissions Request form and submit your request by fax or mail to:

*Permissions Department*  
Thomson Gale  
27500 Drake Road  
Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3535  
Permissions Hotline:  
248-699-8006 or 800-877-4253 ext. 8006  
Fax: 248-699-8074 or 800-762-4058

Since this page cannot legibly accommodate all copyright notices, the acknowledgements constitute an extension of the copyright notice.

**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA**

Encyclopedia of the New American Nation : the emergence of the United States, 1754–1829 / Paul Finkelman, editor in chief.  
v. cm.  
Includes bibliographical references and index.  
ISBN 0-684-31346-4 (set hardcover : alk. paper)—ISBN 0-684-31347-2 (vol 1)—ISBN 0-684-31348-0 (vol. 2)—ISBN 0-684-31440-1 (vol 3)  
1. United States—History—Colonial period, ca. 1600–1775—Encyclopedias. 2. United States—History—Revolution, 1775–1783—Encyclopedias. 3. United States—History—1783–1865—Encyclopedias. I. Finkelman, Paul, 1949—  
E301.E53 2005  
973'.03—dc22

2005017783

This title is also available as an e-book.

ISBN 0-684-31469-X (set)

Contact your Gale sales representative for ordering information.

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



---

**FAIRS** Agricultural fairs were a minor part of agriculture and rural life in the early Republic. But their rise and fall from 1811 to 1830 marked the beginning of farmers' commitment to improve agriculture through such techniques as selective livestock breeding, crop selection, fertilization, and crop rotation.

The first agricultural societies and fairs appealed to elites. In 1785 educated gentleman farmers and planters organized societies in Philadelphia and Charleston, South Carolina, to discuss the application of science to agriculture. Members included merchants and professionals as well as such prominent citizens as Benjamin Franklin and George Washington. These societies offered premiums for the best essays on fattening cattle and the best experiments in wheat growing and pumping water. The city of Washington established a series of market fairs in 1804 and 1805. Organizers awarded premiums to the best examples of each type of livestock sold. In 1809 Washington-area residents organized the Columbian Agricultural Society, which held regular fairs and awarded prizes for the best livestock exhibited rather than sold. The agricultural societies and fairs of the early 1800s, however, were not popular with the majority of people who actually raised most of America's crops and livestock.

In September 1811 Elkanah Watson organized and established the first true farmers' fair at Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Watson was a promoter and entrepreneur who had begun to raise merino sheep, an imported breed noted for fine wool. He understood that the existing organizations dedicated to improving agriculture appealed only to urban elites, gentlemen farmers, and amateur scientists. Watson believed that the message of improvement would be more palatable to working farmers if accompanied by entertainment and camaraderie. Fairs needed to feature enough pageantry to "seize upon the farmer's heart" as well as his mind. The 1811 event began with a parade of members of the society adorned with wheat cockades in their hats, livestock, and a band. Exhibits consisted of livestock along with field and orchard crops, and the Berkshire Agricultural Society presented certificates, ribbons, and engraved silver pieces as awards. Over the next few years, Watson broadened the appeal of the fair by adding competitions for domestic manufacturers, a church service, and an Agricultural Ball.

The blend of education and entertainment accounted for the popularity of agricultural fairs into the 1820s. Watson even wrote a book to promote his vision, *History of Agricultural Societies on the Modern Berkshire System* (1820). Visitors observed the difference between common livestock and improved

breeds. Exhibitors displayed sheep with heavier and finer fleeces, stronger oxen, more prodigious hogs, cows noted for producing rich milk in large quantity, and prolific bulls. They wanted to attract those who wished to purchase breeding stock. Exhibits of domestic manufactures were common by the mid-1810s, reflecting the importance of homemade textiles in the years before factory cloth dominated. This new style of fair, dedicated to experiencing improvement rather than merely discussing it, appealed to farm families, especially those with access to New York City and urban markets in New England. Organizers in Fredericksburg, Virginia, conducted that state's first fair in 1823.

The message of improvement was powerful enough to convince some state legislatures to appropriate funds to support county agricultural societies and their fairs. In 1819 the New York legislature authorized payments to Allegany and Genesee Counties to support agricultural societies. Two years later the legislature appropriated money for Livingston and Monroe Counties. Each county was responsible for providing matching funds to be used for fair premiums. In 1819 the Massachusetts assembly provided an annual payment of two hundred dollars to be used for premiums to every incorporated society in the state with capital stock of one thousand dollars that served a county of twenty-five thousand people.

In the late 1820s the popularity of agricultural societies and fairs waned. Increasing production through improved livestock breeding, crop selection, and cultivation practices was difficult for farmers to accept during a period of low commodity prices. Most agricultural societies in Pennsylvania and Connecticut disbanded after 1825 and only one society remained by 1830 in New York, the home of the most societies and fairs. State legislatures also withdrew financial support. While a few agricultural societies sponsored fairs in the 1830s, only the return of agricultural prosperity in the 1840s contributed to a new interest in forming agricultural societies and conducting fairs following Watson's Berkshire plan.

*See also Agriculture; Livestock Production.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Kelly, Catherine E. "'The Consummation of Rural Prosperity and Happiness': New England Agricultural Fairs and the Construction of Class and Gender, 1810–1860." *American Quarterly* 49 (1997): 574–602.
- Kniffen, Fred. "The American Agricultural Fair: The Pattern." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 39 (1949): 264–282.

———. "The American Agricultural Fair: Time and Place." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 41 (1951): 42–57.

Mastromarino, Mark A. "Cattle Aplenty and Other Things in Proportion: The Agricultural Society and Fair of Franklin County, Massachusetts." *UCLA Historical Journal* 5 (1984): 50–75.

———. "Elkanah Watson and Early Agricultural Fairs, 1790–1860." *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 17 (1989): 104–118.

McNall, Neil Adams. *An Agricultural History of the Genesee Valley, 1790–1860*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1952.

Neely, Wayne Caldwell. *The Agricultural Fair*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1935.

Turner, Charles W. "Virginia State Agricultural Societies, 1811–1860." *Agricultural History* 38 (1964): 167–177.

J. L. Anderson

---

**FALLEN TIMBERS, BATTLE OF** By 1794, the northwestern Indian policy of the Washington administration was in crisis. Insisting upon the Ohio River as the southern boundary of their territory, Indians under the Miami chieftain Little Turtle routed expeditions led by Generals Josiah Harmar and Arthur St. Clair in 1790 and 1791, respectively. With the credibility of his administration at stake, Washington selected Anthony Wayne to command a third and final strike against the Indians.

Having spent the better part of two years raising and training his Legion of the United States, Wayne faced a delicate situation as he began his advance in July 1794. Not only were the Indians determined to resist, but they were armed and encouraged by British officials who operated out of Detroit and other posts that were supposed to have been abandoned to the United States under the terms of the Treaty of Paris (1783). Now, Wayne discovered that the British had recently rebuilt and garrisoned Fort Miami at the Maumee rapids, near present-day Toledo, a site that Wayne had targeted for his attack upon the Indians. To further complicate matters, John Jay was in London attempting to reach an agreement to avert the apparently inevitable war, resulting in Secretary of War Henry Knox's instructions to Wayne to avoid conflict with the British if at all possible.

On 20 August, Wayne's legion was attacked by the Miami Indians at a clearing called Fallen Timbers (because a tornado had uprooted many trees, leaving the wreckage scattered over the area), near Fort Miami. In a battle of only forty minutes, the legion

launched a bayonet charge that dispersed the Indians in disorder. Though both sides suffered about 150 casualties, the confidence of the Indians was broken. Even more dispiriting was the refusal of the British to allow refuge to the fleeing Indians inside Fort Miami or to offer any resistance at all as Wayne destroyed the Indian fields surrounding the fort.

The British had built Fort Miami at the Maumee rapids, a strategically important site. Fearing the imminence of war with the United States, the British had used the fort as a base from which to arm the Indians and encourage attacks upon the frontier. They gave every indication that they would fulfill their promises to support the Indians against attack by United States forces. Circumstances changed this situation, however, just at the time of Wayne's advance. With John Jay in London and the prospects strong for a peaceful resolution to the diplomatic crisis, British officials ordered the detachment at Fort Miami to avoid military conflict unless directly attacked (similar orders had been given to Wayne by Secretary of War Henry Knox). Thus, despite their promises to the Indians and provocative actions on Wayne's part, the British refused any assistance to the defeated Indians.

With British credibility shaken, the Indians had little choice but to come to terms with Wayne. In the Treaty of Greenville of 3 August 1795, the Shawnee, Delaware, and Miami tribes ceded three-fourths of modern Ohio and northeastern Indiana to the United States. This treaty, along with the final evacuation of British posts in the Northwest, as mandated by Jay's Treaty (1794), opened that region, particularly Ohio, to a flood of American settlement.

*See also American Indians: American Indian Resistance to White Expansion; American Indians: Old Northwest; Northwest; Ohio; Treaty of Paris.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Gaff, Alan D. *Bayonets in the Wilderness: Anthony Wayne's Legion in the Old Northwest*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004.
- Nelson, Paul David. *Anthony Wayne: Soldier of the Early Republic*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.

Daniel McDonough

---

**FAME AND REPUTATION** Early national concepts of fame and reputation differ greatly from their late-twentieth and early-twenty-first-century

equivalents. While today fame connotes little more than notoriety, in the early national period it encompassed an entire ethic. Similarly, reputation meant more than one's public image; an almost tangible possession, it encompassed a person's entire identity and sense of self.

The concept of fame had particular power among the early national political elite, though its roots reached back to the beginnings of western civilization; *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans*, by Plutarch (c. 46–after 119 A.D.) was a literal guide to gathering fame, describing and ranking a spectrum of heroes who had achieved immortal fame—the highest of goals. In the early American Republic, young gentlemen schooled to find models of personal behavior in Plutarch and other classical texts imbibed this idea from a young age. As Alexander Hamilton put it in *The Federalist No. 72* (1788), "the love of fame" was the "ruling passion of the noblest minds."

As suggested by Plutarch's panoply of great men, a man earned fame by doing great deeds for the state—an assumption that evokes fame's aristocratic cast. Francis Bacon (1561–1626) mapped out a hierarchy of such acts in his widely read *Essays* (1625), assigning fame to "fathers of their country" who reigned justly; "champions of the empire" who defended or expanded territories; "saviors of empire" who surmounted national crises; lawgivers who governed posterity through their laws; and—highest of all—"founders of states and commonwealths." For early national leaders engaged in the creation of a new nation, this sensibility infused their political efforts with a sense of lofty purpose as well as deep personal meaning. Seekers of fame wanted to make history and leave their mark on the world. America's founding generation assumed that they were doing just that. "We live in an important era and in a *new-country*," Benjamin Rush observed in 1788. "Much good may be done by individuals and that too in a short time."

Fame was considered a noble passion because it transformed ambition and self-interest into a desire to achieve great goals that served the public good. Even as fame fueled and inspired a man's ambitions, it reined them in; one could only achieve everlasting fame through public service. In essence, fame was a selfish virtue, enabling leaders to be simultaneously self-serving and public-minded; in a sense, it humanized the seemingly lofty and unreachable ideal of community-minded republican virtue.

Reputation was equally important, but to a broader range of people. Men and women of all ranks had a reputation, though its precise meaning differed

from group to group. For artisans, farmers, or merchants—people of business or productivity—it connoted reliability and honesty. For women, it was tied to concepts of personal virtue. For political leaders, it represented their political currency, gaining them office and influence; particularly before political parties were acceptable, it was reputation that won a man power and office.

There were many dimensions to the concept of reputation. Fame, rank, credit, character, name, and honor all played a role. Rank was a somewhat impersonal way of referring to a person's place within the social order. Credit was more personalized, encompassing a person's social and financial worth; people with good credit were trustworthy enough to merit financial risks. Character was personality with a moral dimension, referring to the mixture of traits, vices, and virtues that determined a person's social worth. Taken together, these qualities formed a name or reputation—an identity as determined by others. Reputation was not unlike honor, and indeed, early Americans often used those words interchangeably. Honor was reputation with a moral dimension. A person of good reputation was respected and esteemed; an honorable person was notably virtuous.

Although concepts of fame and reputation had a long-standing historical past, different cultures shaded and altered their meanings. In early national America, the gradual democratization of politics subtly altered their significance. Traditionally, European leaders worried about their honor and reputation among their peers. Increasingly concerned with gaining popular political approval, American leaders looked to a broader audience. A prime example of this was the American practice of advertising political duels in newspapers. By publishing detailed accounts of their encounters—signed by name, despite dueling's illegality—leaders attempted to prove their qualities of leadership to the public and gain political support. "Europeans must read such publications with astonishment," gasped a writer in an 1803 issue of *The Balance* (Hudson, N.Y.).

Eventually, the increasingly shifting and changeable nature of American society had its impact. Urbanization and the rise of manufacturing made cities and towns ever larger, more complex, and anonymous. It is no accident that the early nineteenth century marks the rise of the "confidence man" or "con man," a person who relied on his very lack of reputation for personal gain. Winning confidence through his genteel appearance and manners, he could cheat people in one town or city, then re-

make himself in another. In such a constantly changing world, even simple notoriety was a noteworthy accomplishment. Over time, this more democratic notion of fame grew to replace its more aristocratic forebear.

*See also Classical Heritage and American Politics.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adair, Douglass. "Fame and the Founding Fathers." In *Fame and the Founding Fathers: Essays*. Edited by Trevor Colbourn. New York: Norton, 1974. Reprint, Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Fund, 1998.
- Braudy, Leo. *The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and Its History*. New York: Vintage Books, 1997.
- Freeman, Joanne B. *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001.
- McNamara, Peter, ed. *The Noblest Minds: Fame, Honor, and the American Founding*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999.

*Joanne Freeman*

---

#### FAMILY LIFE *See Domestic Life.*

---

**FARM MAKING** In all regions, despite their differences, most colonists established farms from the beginning of settlement. Colonial settlers faced several obstacles as they acquired land for farms. Once land was obtained, either through a fee simple or quitrent process, farmers cleared it and determined how much would be in crops. Many farmers found the Indian method of slash-and-burn to be the easiest method to clear the land. Land was cleared of plants and small foliage and the undergrowth was then burned. This method made the land available for planting corn and other non-row crops in the Native American style. Farmers also removed trees by girdling their trunks. Using this method meant it took time for a tree to die, but over time, settlers would be able to clear their land for crops.

In the Northeast, colonists encountered rocky, acidic, clay soil that proved difficult to clear easily. Farmers spent years removing glacier rocks and other debris from the ground. These farmers established small-scale, general farms in which they raised a variety of crops and livestock. Wheat, rye, barley, corn, and other crops along with cattle, hogs, chick-



**Sheep Shearing.** This woodcut of a farm family shearing sheep illustrated the chapter covering the month of May in an American almanac published around 1810. © BETTMANN/CORBIS.

ens, and sheep were common across the region. By the end of the colonial period, however, farming had begun to decline in the upper Northeast. Lumber and naval stores as well as financial and manufacturing operations continued to be important in the nineteenth century. Farm size varied from state to state, but most farmers had fewer than two hundred acres. By the nineteenth century, agriculture in the Northeast had ceased to be the only occupation as farm families fell to roughly two-thirds of the population. In the nineteenth century, New England became a center for sheep production. At the same time that the South started to emerge as a center for cotton production, the New England states began exporting large quantities of wool each year to Britain and other manufacturing hubs.

In the mid-Atlantic states, agriculture developed around livestock raising and dairy and grain production. In the colonial period, Chesapeake Bay farmers raised tobacco for the British market, with production concentrated in Virginia rather than Maryland. Quickly dubbed the breadbasket of the colonies, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and later Maryland produced wheat and raised livestock. During this time, farmers began to move from the dual purpose cow and started distinguishing between those that produced large quantities of milk and those that were best for providing beef. The production of butter and cheese allowed farm women to sell their surplus in the Philadelphia and international markets. In proprietary colonies, farmers acquired land subject to quitrents, with an average-size farm at 135 acres. In the nineteenth century, mid-Atlantic farmers continued to improve and clear their lands. Wheat re-

mained an important commercial commodity, although most farmers raised corn for family and local consumption. The raising of livestock in Maryland and other locales became an important industry in places where tobacco was no longer planted.

In the southern states, commercial agriculture drove the economy and society from the start. Colonial settlers planted tobacco, hemp, rice, indigo, and other crops for export. Tobacco farming expanded quickly across Virginia during the colonial period. The development of the Carolinas and Georgia saw the emergence of rice, sugar, hemp, and indigo production. Southern crops, however, depleted the soil, and planters and farmers found it necessary to use field rotation practices. Planters ran large operations, while family farms remained small, with farmers placing only a portion of their land into staple production while the remainder was used to sustain self-sufficiency. Planters gained large land grants from headrights and generous grants from colonial governments. Initially, labor was performed by indentured servants, but by the 1680s slavery had spread across the South. Originally used to farm tobacco, rice, hemp, and indigo and to raise livestock, slaves in the nineteenth century were concentrated on cotton plantations. The development of the cotton gin changed the structure of farms across the South.

When farmers migrated to the new western states, they found a different climate, topography, and soil. As New England and mid-Atlantic farmers moved to the Old Northwest, the land flattened out and the soil became more productive. Crops that could no longer be grown in the East, such as wheat, flourished in what would later be called the Middle

West. Settlers found that clearing land required breaking the prairie. While this was time-consuming and costly, once it was broken, farmers did not spend years clearing and rebreaking the soil. In the nineteenth century, the Middle West became a region not just for wheat and other crops, but also for livestock raising and feedlots. European immigrants from northern and central Europe joined settlers from New England, the mid-Atlantic, and the Upper South in the Midwest after 1820.

*See also Agriculture; Cotton; Livestock Production.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Drache, Hiram M. *History of U.S. Agriculture and Its Relevance to Today*. Danville, Ill.: Interstate Publishers, 1996.  
 Hurt, R. Douglas. *American Agriculture: A Brief History*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1994.

Stephanie A. Carpenter



**Alice Lawrason Riggs.** Cephas Thompson painted this portrait of a fashionable American woman around 1815. The sitter, the wife of a prominent Baltimore merchant, wears a high-waisted Empire-style gown. THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND.

**FASHION** Both as a concept and a changing array of consumer goods and cultural practices, fashion served as an important means of social communication in eighteenth-century British America. Composed not only of objects and styles, but also of behaviors and the arenas in which such items and actions were displayed, fashion provided for connection as well as personal distinction. It possessed intensely local significance as a tool for distinguishing among and within social groups, yet also expressed participation in a cosmopolitan Atlantic world. While most inhabitants of the colonies recognized the symbols of power that fashion conveyed, they did not necessarily regard or respond to those markers in the same ways. Thus, fashion was a primary register of cultural and political contest.

For Anglo colonists, England was the locus and source of all things fashionable, although many modes actually originated in France. A burgeoning Atlantic trade made the adoption of European fashions, from fabrics and fans to teapots, possible, while waves of immigrants, many trained in the fashion trades, also spurred the transmission of modes. Newspaper advertisements for imports regularly deployed the adjective "fashionable" as a powerful selling point for the rising volume and selection of items that suffused even middling colonial households by the middle of the eighteenth century. Indeed, the British Empire's smooth operation depended on consumption of fashionable goods in colonial outposts

and the consumer appetites for novelty that changing fashions fed. As social critic Bernard Mandeville (1670–1733) observed, fashion was a "strange, ridiculous vice" that nonetheless "turned the trade." This trade reached across the Atlantic and into the heart of North America, as diplomatic and social relations on the frontier created amalgams of Indian, Anglo, and French fashions.

In contrast to more recent cycles, fashions in dress changed slowly during the eighteenth century, indicated by seasonal variety in fabrics and more glacial shifts in the widths of hoop-supported skirts or the cuts of sleeves—changes subtle enough to be acknowledged and adopted by the people "of fashion." Likewise, the display of fashionable practices, from dancing the minuet to drinking tea, the imperial good par excellence, and the social spaces in which those occurred (and in which fashionable dress could be displayed to great advantage) signified high status and participation in the empire. While fashion's appropriation and refashioning by slaves, servants, and other "lower sorts" due to theft and an underground trade in stolen and secondhand goods made it an un-



**Benjamin Franklin (1794).** Franklin donned the persona of a rustic American, along with the beaver hat and homespun suit that conveyed it, when appearing before the French court at Versailles to plead for French assistance. GETTY IMAGES.

stable marker of rank, other forms of social distinction, such as speech and carriage, countered fashion's democratizing potential. Thus was the very idea of fashion rife with contradiction: desirable as an expression of high rank, yet disdained as the province of mere pretenders to status; displaced onto consuming women, but avidly pursued by both sexes; connected to other celebrated concepts such as gentility, taste, and refinement, yet also suggesting luxury, appetite, and effeminacy; and fueling commerce through consumption, but creating a potentially uneasy dependence on markets.

#### FASHIONING A REVOLUTION

Due to its considerable influence, fashion served as a flashpoint for cultural and political contests during the revolutionary era. By the end of the Seven Years' War in 1763, some Anglo colonists and Indians alike, facing ailing postwar economies after more than a decade of increasing consumption, called for retrenchment and a lessening of dependence on foreign "luxuries," even as English bourgeois styles in dress

and furnishings grew more restrained. By 1764, when Britain's Parliament moved to diminish its war debt by collecting taxes on items such as sugar and French fabrics, the climate was ripe for calls to reject imports and the fashions they expressed. In response to the following year's Stamp Act, which levied a one-pence duty on all paper and paper transactions, merchants in the northern port cities of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia pledged not to import goods until the bill was repealed, and outraged colonists swore not to consume such articles. Supporters used the public prints to enforce the boycotts, promoting the virtuous behaviors of genteel "people of fashion" while attempting to create new "American" fashions, namely homespun cloth, domestic tea, and minimalist mourning garb. Yet after the Stamp Act's much-celebrated repeal, colonists jettisoned the new modes, never widely adopted but symbolically important nonetheless.

With Parliament's passage of the Townshend Act of 1767, designed to raise revenue through the assiduous collection of duties on certain items, including beloved tea, some colonists revisited boycotts. Resistance leaders called upon Anglo women in particular to discipline their appetites and thus prove themselves good female patriots, foregoing fashion's cultural power while gaining a new kind of visibility, yet also scrutiny. Extravagant display, from the form-fitting macaroni mode for men to high, ornamented hairstyles for women, characterized the period between the repeal of all Townshend duties except the tea tax in 1770 and 1773, demonstrating that many colonists had little use for asceticism and understatement. The Tea Act of 1773, which gave Britain's East India Company a monopoly on the sale of tea to the colonies, defined tea, once the hallmark of female-orchestrated gentility and participation in the empire, as a symbol of subjugation, and the colonists who consumed it complicit in a despotic, tyrannical regime. In 1774 the First Continental Congress's Association enacted colonywide nonimportation and nonconsumption resolutions, clamping down on appetites for all things fashionable in language that decried forms of "extravagance and dissipation," which undermined professed American values of virtue, simplicity, and sacrifice. Such regulation persisted through the onset of hostilities between Britain and the colonies in 1775, as hunting shirts and leather breeches joined traditional military uniforms. Benjamin Franklin himself donned the persona of rustic American, along with the beaver hat and homespun suit that conveyed it, when appearing before the French court at Versailles to plead for French assistance. Yet the American Revolution resolved little in

the battle over fashion, which shaped the contest not only between England and the newly created United States of America, but between Whigs (Patriots) and Tories (Loyalists), merchants and artisans, slaves and masters, men and women—all competing to see who would define fashion for the new nation.

### THE NEW NATION

Revolutionary leaders had cast fashion as a threat to the Republic while promoting an American antifashion stance that was itself a fashion, one that they often failed to adopt. The new nation and its leaders needed to appear legitimate in the eyes of the world, and European modes retained their ability to communicate power and status, locally and internationally. Many Anglo Americans continued to regard Europe as the seat of the *mode* (the fashionable) as goods flooded an American confederation of states powerless to enact national commercial policy in the mid-1780s. Social critics pinned the Republic's potential demise on appetites for fashionable "gewgaws."

Fortunately for Americans faced with the dilemma of signifying both prestige and virtue, European fashions themselves grew more understated in the final decades of the eighteenth century, the so-called age of democratic revolutions. The Empire-style gown that became popular in the 1790s served the image of American, republican simplicity well, projecting it onto white women clad in simple white gowns, standard-bearers of virtue, if not rights. Meanwhile, the displacement of Indians beyond the literal and figurative borders of the nation made the interpretation of Indian-influenced frontier dress as an American folk form possible, and unthreatening.

With the emergence of partisan politics in the 1790s, Democratic Republicans used fashion to attack ostensibly foppish, elitist Federalists. Whereas George Washington had donned a suit of homespun for his 1789 inauguration, in 1793 he appeared in velvet. The cut and cloth of a man's breeches, and the color of one's cockade—ribbons worn during the French Revolution—signified political allegiance, in fact, created it. The influx of refugees from the slave revolt in Saint Domingue to cities such as Charleston and Philadelphia helped create a distinct African American style that recalled the French Revolution's contagion of social upheaval. With Thomas Jefferson's election to the presidency in 1800, the fashion of genteel understatement triumphed; Jefferson would famously greet guests donned in a banyan (a robelike garment), the height of genteel fashion for the learned, leisurely set. Into the nineteenth century, Anglo American men traded knee breeches and bro-

cade for long trousers and somber cloth, while the high-waisted, corset-free Empire dress for women persisted into the 1810s. Indeed, men's and women's "fashionable" garb steadily diverged throughout the latter half of the eighteenth century, mirroring the rise of an ideology of separate "male" and "female" bourgeois spheres of influence as white men abandoned obvious ornamentation in favor of other representations of power available to them alone.

*See also Clothing; Consumerism and Consumption.*

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baumgarten, Linda. *What Clothes Reveal: The Language of Clothing in Colonial and Federal America, the Colonial Williamsburg Collection*. Williamsburg, Va.: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2002.
- Breen, T. H. *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Bushman, Richard L. *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities*. New York: Knopf, 1992.
- Carson, Cary, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter Albert, eds. *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1994.
- Haulman, Catherine Anna. "The Empire's New Clothes: The Politics of Fashion in Eighteenth-Century British America." Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 2002.
- Shannon, Timothy J. "Dressing for Success on the Mohawk Frontier: Hendrick, William Johnson and the Indian Fashion." *William and Mary Quarterly*, third series, 53 (1996): 13–42.
- Shields, David S. *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Kate Haulman

---

**FEDERALISM** As a form of government, "federalism" describes a system of divided powers, each sovereign within its limited realm but concerned with different spheres—one general, the other local. The federal system created by the United States Constitution is the first specimen of this type, though many other states have subsequently adopted federal forms.

Over time, federalism has come to convey a variety of meanings, some of them contradictory. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the meaning of federalism—like its related terms, federative system, federal union, federal state—is difficult to disassociate from a strong central government within a

single nation-state. In its eighteenth-century signification, however, a federal relationship meant compact, alliance, or treaty among independent sovereignties seeking a cooperative relationship. The federative power, as the seventeenth-century philosopher John Locke defined it, concerned those powers of war and peace, of treaty and alliance that commonwealths had need of in their transactions with other states. The formal compacts among equal parties resulting from the exercise of this power—written constitutions, treaties, alliances—were things to which the adjective “federal” might apply. European publicists could speak of the “federal constitution” of Europe as actually existing, and meant by the term the web of treaties, laws, and restraints that was to govern the relations of civilized states.

#### THE FEDERAL PRINCIPLE

At the root of the federal principle was the idea of a covenant or *foedus* (its etymological root). This and “synonymous ideas of promise, commitment, undertaking, or obligating, vowing and plighting one’s word,” as S. Rufus Davis has suggested in *The Federal Principle* (1978), were joined together with two other things: “the idea of cooperation, reciprocity, mutuality,” and “the need for some measure of predictability, expectation, constancy, and reliability in human relations” (p. 3). As important as each of these three concepts—commitment, reciprocity, predictability—is to human relations generally, when states and peoples had need of such values they made use of the term “federal.”

European colonists perched on the eastern rim of North America were not in fact the first inhabitants of the continent to make use of ideas recognizably “federal.” A recognition that strength lay in union and danger in discord; a pledge of perpetual peace within, and of concerted action toward enemies without; an understanding of how individuality might be preserved by common action; the vital significance attached to sworn oaths and plighted faith—all these hallmarks of the federal principle were reflected in the institutions and norms of various Indian confederacies, especially the great league of the Iroquois or Six Nations.

Such a constellation of ideas was also central to the Articles of Confederation formed among the American states in the aftermath of their 1776 Declaration of Independence from Great Britain. The experience of the Revolutionary War, however, showed how difficult it was for states to cooperate in an enterprise they all regarded as vital. When the framers of the Constitution met in Philadelphia in 1787 to ad-

dress the deficiencies of the Articles of Confederation, they had to find a solution that somehow avoided the extremes of “anarchy” and “consolidation”—what the Virginian James Madison termed “a perfect separation and a perfect incorporation, of the 13 States.” Neither alternative found significant support within the convention. As James Wilson noted in his important explication of the new Constitution, “consolidation” would demand “a system of the most unqualified and unremitting despotism,” whereas separation into “a number of separate states, continuous in situation, unconnected and disunited in government” would make the states “at one time, the prey of foreign force, foreign influence, and foreign intrigue; at another, the victims of mutual rage, rancor, and revenge.”

#### CONSTITUTIONAL INNOVATION

As an experiment in federal government, the U.S. Constitution was unique in creating a general government that could carry its laws into execution through a regular executive and judicial establishment, one that did not depend on requisitions or edicts to the states to do its legitimate business. Conscious that the states would have to give up some of their sovereignty, and conscious, too, of the impossibility of legislating for communities as opposed to individuals, the framers brought forth a new political edifice devoted to federal objects yet fashioned on the norms and institutions of constitutional government existing within the American states. Unlike the state governments, which generally claimed a plenary authority over the lives and liberties of their citizens, the federal government was one of enumerated and limited powers. The powers so granted, as James Madison emphasized during the ratification debates, were “few and defined” and would be exercised “principally on external objects, as war, peace, negotiation, and foreign commerce.” Supremacy was accorded neither to the federal government nor the state governments but to the Constitution itself, though the more perfect union was justified by Federalists as being an indispensable means to the preservation of both states and nation.

What were the limits of the powers respectively given to the federal government and the states under the Constitution? And where was the authority lodged to decide this delicate question? Those questions arose immediately with the formation of the new government in 1789 and remained of key importance.

The controversy pit “nationalists” like Alexander Hamilton, the first secretary of the Treasury, against

"State rights" or "compact" theorists like Thomas Jefferson, a clash that achieved its first great expression in the contrary opinions of Hamilton and Jefferson over the constitutionality of a national bank in 1791. Hamilton took an expansive view of the implied powers vested in the national government by the Constitution, a view later unfolded eloquently and authoritatively in a Supreme Court opinion of 1819, *McCulloch v. Maryland*. Chief Justice John Marshall acknowledged that the powers of the national government were limited and enumerated but nevertheless found that Congress enjoyed "the right to legislate on that vast mass of incidental powers which must be involved in the constitution, if that instrument be not a splendid bauble." Marshall continued, "Let the end be legitimate, let it be within the scope of the constitution, and all means which are appropriate, which are plainly adapted to that end, which are not prohibited, but consist with the letter and spirit of the constitution, are constitutional."

The contrary position of the "compact school," by contrast, held that the federal Constitution was a creature of the states, each of whom enjoyed the right to accede or not to the compact, and who, as the original parties, must ultimately retain the right to interpret the extent to which the compact was fulfilled. In cases not within the compact, wrote Thomas Jefferson in his draft of the Kentucky resolutions, the pretended legislation of Congress was "void, and of no force." Some, like John C. Calhoun, insisted that each state enjoyed a right to nullify a federal law within its jurisdiction that, in its judgment, was unconstitutional; others who subscribed to the compact theory, like John Randolph, were content with affirming a constitutional right of secession. According to this view, the national judiciary did not enjoy the ultimate authority to decide the line of partition created by the Constitution. That power instead lay with the original contracting parties, the people of the states.

In between these rival understandings of the Constitution lay a third view, one which was probably more expressive of the general consensus from 1789 to 1829 than either of the two extreme alternatives. The moderates saw a "partly national, and partly federal" system, though they were not always in agreement among themselves. Some carved out an ample dominion for federal power while also believing that it would be utterly contrary to the spirit of the constitution to preserve the Union by force, a position adopted by constitutional commentator William Rawle in 1825. Other moderates, by contrast, chastised secessionists for counseling action that was

patently unconstitutional. But they also believed that the theory of implied powers was equally destructive of the constitutional order, a position taken by James Madison. Despite these differences, the moderates were united in the conviction that to push either national or state powers too far would destroy the constitutional order, which they saw as a vital barrier against powerful tendencies toward anarchy or despotism.

### PRINCIPLE AND POLITICS

It is customary to associate the clash between national sovereignty and the compact school with North and South, but in the period from 1789 to 1829 the picture is more complicated. After Jefferson became president in 1801, his administration accepted a more expansive conception of federal power. By the same token, many northern Federalists brought against his administration the same charge of unconstitutionality that Republicans had made against the Federalists in the 1790s. The acquisition of Louisiana in 1803, they argued, went far beyond the implied powers claimed by the administrations of George Washington and John Adams from 1789 to 1801. They also claimed unconstitutional usurpation against Jefferson's Embargo of 1807–1809 and later against "Mr. Madison's War" of 1812, when several New England states refused to heed the president's call to mobilize their militia for national service. From 1815 to 1830, similar flip-flops occurred over the issues of internal improvements, the national bank, and the protective tariff, with leading political figures sometimes reversing their previous judgments of what was constitutional. The most contentious issue, temporarily put to rest by the Missouri Compromise, concerned the extension of slavery.

The elapse of three decades from the establishment of the federal government did not bring a greater consensus on the fundamentals, but rather a drift toward constitutional doctrines mutually antagonistic and irreconcilable. This lack of consensus regarding the basics of American federalism—the sense, as the statesman Henry Clay put it, "that we are as much afloat at sea as the day when the Constitution went into operation"—was felt to be profoundly threatening to the sustenance of the constitutional order. Thirteen years after Marshall's confident opinion in *McCulloch* he wrote despairingly to a close friend that his hopes for the Union were nearly at an end. "The union has been prolonged thus far by miracles; I fear they cannot continue."

*See also Anti-Federalists; Articles of Confederation; Bank of the United States; Federalist Papers; Federalist Party; Federalists; Hamilton, Alexander; Jefferson, Thomas; Madison, James; McCulloch v. Maryland; Missouri Compromise; War of 1812.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Beer, Samuel H. *To Make a Nation: The Rediscovery of American Federalism*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- Berger, Raoul. *Federalism: The Founders' Design*. Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987.
- Davis, S. Rufus. *The Federal Principle: A Journey through Time in Quest of a Meaning*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.
- Hendrickson, David. *Peace Pact: The Lost World of the American Founding*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003.
- Onuf, Peter S., ed. *The Federal Constitution*. Vol. 5 of *New American Nation, 1776–1820*. New York: Garland, 1991.
- Rakove, Jack N., ed. *Interpreting the Constitution: The Debate over Original Intent*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1990.

David C. Hendrickson

---

**FEDERALIST PAPERS** *The Federalist* (also known as the "Federalist Papers") is a collection of eighty-five essays on the U.S. Constitution written under the pseudonym *Publius* by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay. Hamilton conceived of the project as a means of countering anti-Federalists, opponents of the Constitution who were busily writing their own essays warning of the dangerous powers given to the proposed national government. Madison and Hamilton eventually wrote all but five of the essays, which appeared serially in New York City newspapers between October 1787 and August 1788. They were also published in book form in 1788.

Although the procedure for ratification required only nine states to approve the proposed Constitution, New York's support was crucial both because of the centrality of the state and because of its importance as a center of trade. If New York had voted against ratification, the Constitution would likely not have gone into effect, even with the necessary nine votes elsewhere. Ironically, *The Federalist* had little impact on ratification in New York. Although New York City elected representatives to the special

convention who favored ratification, rural New Yorkers were suspicious, and the final makeup of the state convention had a clear majority opposed to ratification. Hamilton and his supporters eventually wore down the opposition, though, and New York became the eleventh state to ratify the Constitution on 26 July 1788. Despite failing to influence many New York voters, *The Federalist* had a major impact beyond New York. The essays were reprinted throughout the states and served almost as a debater's handbook for the forces in favor of ratification at other state conventions.

*The Federalist* examined a number of major issues, such as the flaws in the Articles of Confederation (which governed the United States of America until the Constitution was ratified), the nature of federalism with its division of power between a national and state governments, and the powers of the various branches of government as well as why those powers were necessary. Although *The Federalist* does contain some innovative political philosophy (most famously, Madison's *Federalist No. 10*, with its novel argument that a republican government is safer in a large, not small, republic), it focuses mostly on practical considerations of how government should function. In this, the authors exhibit what would become a distinctly American, pragmatic attitude. Because nearly all agreed that America should have a republican government, the writers ignored many of the philosophical questions that had engaged Western political philosophy up to that time.

*The Federalist* also served an extremely important rhetorical function. The moment for such an ambitious series of political essays was brief. A few decades after 1787–1788, the essays would probably not have had a significant impact because of the explosion of newspapers. The essays themselves fostered a tone of civility in the debate and contributed to the larger discursive framework that the authors were attempting to establish. The well-wrought, carefully reasoned political essays became virtual enactments of the kind of deliberation the authors hoped the national government would foster.

*The Federalist* almost never mentioned specific anti-Federalist writers or essays, even though those attacks shaped the project. The invisibility of the anti-Federalists within the essays was part of *Publius's* rhetorical strategy to establish himself as a neutral commentator offering an unbiased overview, rather than as a partisan responding to specific charges. These tactics reinforced the overall thrust of *The Federalist*. Instead of trying to score every possible debating point, the authors attempted to shift the

entire realm of the debate away from considerations of competing interests to considerations of the public good, as they defined it.

They also argued themselves into a more reasonable position. Both Hamilton and Madison had argued vigorously for an even more powerful national government during the Constitutional Convention. Now called upon to defend the Constitution to people suspicious even of the powers that were given, they offered a moderate view of what the national government would actually be empowered to do.

Hamilton and Madison had read widely in political philosophy and drew upon a large range of historical and political writings in articulating their understanding of the Constitution. Perhaps most important, David Hume, the Scottish enlightenment thinker, influenced both men on a number of important issues.

*The Federalist* continues to have a significant role in the American political tradition. Not only do political scientists still turn to it as the most authoritative guide to the U.S. Constitution, but legislators, presidents, and U.S. Supreme Court justices continue to study its pronouncements in their efforts to understand the Constitution.

*See also Anti-Federalists; Constitution, Ratification of; Constitutional Convention.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adair, Douglass. *Fame and the Founding Fathers: Essays*. Edited by Trevor Colbourn. New York: Norton, 1974.  
 Furtwangler, Albert. *The Authority of Publius: A Reading of the Federalist Papers*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1984.  
 Wills, Garry. *Explaining America: The Federalist*. New York: Penguin Books, 1982.

Andrew S. Trees

---

**FEDERALIST PARTY** One of the first two U.S. political parties, the Federalists came into being, ironically, in the anti-party years of the early 1790s, when parties were thought to be dangerous factions undermining the Republic. Federalism had considerable early success, many significant achievements, and fleeting popular support. Federalists won the first three presidential elections, controlled Congress for most of the 1790s, established the new national government, and kept the nation at peace. Over time, however, the Federalists lost their popular support and with it, their grip on power. Out of power and

in opposition to their bitter rivals, the Jeffersonian Republicans, or Democratic Republicans, Federalists either tried to imitate and mirror their opponents or devolved into stinging and increasingly self-defeating attacks. But the Federalist Party had a significant if brief moment during the 1790s and helped to set the agenda for early American politics and government.

#### EMERGENCE OF PARTIES

The first federal elections of 1788–1789 were not conducted along party lines. Members of Congress were elected, much as representatives had long been chosen, based on reputation and renown. Since they were now the officers of the new federal government and since the great majority had supported the ratification of the new Constitution of 1787, these men appropriated the term *Federalist* to indicate their support for the Constitution and the new regime. But party identities and identification were weak in the early Republic. Not until 1792 was there a clear opposition group in place to challenge the policies of the administration and its allies in Congress. Furthermore, attitudes toward parties were still negative and neither side claimed to be one. Rather, Federalists considered themselves “the government” or “the nation” and branded their opponents as a “faction,” a term that had unhealthy, unrepresentative connotations. The Democratic Republicans also denied that they were a party and claimed instead to be protecting the Constitution from the depredations of the Federalist “party” faction that had improperly seized control of the government. Scholars have debated whether it is proper to speak of Federalists and Democratic Republicans as full-fledged parties or merely as loose alliances or proto-parties. No matter where one falls out on this question, it is clear that the competition between the two entities—whatever we may choose to call them—was as intense as any ever seen in American political history and reflected two radically different visions for the future of the nation.

#### LEADERS AND FOLLOWERS

The Federalists coalesced in the first several national Congresses and were comprised of a group of representatives and senators who supported the legislative initiatives of the administration of George Washington. Although President Washington and Vice President John Adams headed the administration, the party’s intellectual and political leader was Alexander Hamilton, who began his tenure as secretary of the Treasury in September 1789 and cultivated allies in Congress. Hamilton’s ambitious program—

creation of a national bank, assumption of state debts from the Revolution, imposition of an excise tax, the establishment of public credit, and encouragement of manufactures—sparked heated opposition and touched off the first party conflict.

Federalism appealed to merchants, many large landowners, those engaged in commerce, and the wealthy more generally. Federalists were concentrated in urban port towns (especially in the Northeast), in New England, and in parts of Virginia and the Carolinas (especially Charleston). In addition to Washington, Adams, and Hamilton, key party leaders included John Jay (New York), Fisher Ames (Massachusetts), John Marshall (Virginia), Rufus King (New York), Charles Cotesworth Pinckney (South Carolina), and Thomas Pinckney (South Carolina), along with newspaper editors such as Noah Webster, John Fenno, and Benjamin Russell.

#### **PROGRAMS AND ISSUES**

Federalists favored a strong central government and an activist state, stressing the energy and primacy of the executive branch. They favored a foreign policy of neutrality that would keep the United States out of the persistent conflict between Great Britain and France, though many Federalists sympathized with the British. Commercially, the Federalists sought to expand their trade networks with England and extend their shipping to other markets as well. Federalists also favored a loose construction of the Constitution, believing that whatever was not expressly forbidden could be fully legitimate and constitutional. Federalists seized on this interpretation to enact a powerful and sweeping vision of the United States, one that foresaw the country emerging under centralized authority as an industrial, financial, and military power to rival Britain.

These views were exemplified by Federalist actions on some of the major policy debates of the 1790s. In the Neutrality crisis of 1793, Federalists rejected Republican calls to aid France in favor of a strict impartiality so as not to antagonize Great Britain. In 1794, Federalists called out troops to suppress the Whiskey Rebellion among western Pennsylvania farmers angered over an excise tax. The next year the Federalist-controlled Senate approved the unpopular Jay's Treaty, a commercial agreement with England that—for all of its shortcomings—maintained the peace between the two nations.

#### **IDEOLOGY AND CULTURE**

Beyond programs and issues, the Federalist Party also was marked by an attitude or an ideology of un-

abashed elitism that defined the party at least as much as its policies and programs. That elitism did much to undermine the Federalists in their day and to stigmatize them in historical treatments since. Federalists generally subscribed to an older conception of politics that stressed deference by the people to their leaders. Federalists believed that once the tiny electorate had selected its duly chosen leaders (the "constituted authorities," in a favorite Federalist phrase), the public's responsibility between elections was to defer to the judgment of those leaders, not to try to influence officials toward alternative positions. The party was unprepared to operate in any system not premised on deference, since it lacked a grassroots (or even top-down) political organization. These beliefs led Federalists—most prominently George Washington himself—to vehemently denounce the Democratic Societies (popular clubs which met to discuss topical political issues and sometimes produced addresses and resolutions) as dangerous, extraconstitutional bodies of great potential mischief and to mock them as "self-created societies." This attitude did much to explain both the party's conception of governing and politics and its eventual downfall as these sentiments grew increasingly anachronistic in a democratizing society.

This attitude was also reflected in the political culture of the Federalists. The party centered its celebrations around Washington, especially his birthday of 22 February, which became the highest holy day of the Federalist calendar. The day was marked throughout the nation with parades, the firing of cannon, and dinners, toasts, and processions, all of which served to solidify in the public mind the link between Washington, the administration and its policies, and the Federalist Party. While Washington tried to remain above politics and party and govern as a disinterested national leader, he increasingly sided with Hamilton over Jefferson on political matters and behaved more like a partisan. By the end of his second term, Washington was acting as (and was seen by his opponents) as a strong Federalist despite his Farewell Address of 1796, which warned against domestic political divisions.

Federalist political culture mirrored its ideology by promoting deference. But despite their reservations and ambivalence, Federalists at times practiced popular politics and mobilized public opinion effectively on behalf of their measures. Federalists consistently and explicitly linked Washington's incomparable stature to support for party policy. By framing issues as a choice between supporting Washington and legitimate government or supporting some for-

eign or radical element (be it Citizen Genêt, the Whiskey rebels, the Democratic Societies, or opponents of Jay's Treaty), Federalists regularly rallied the public to their side. Federalists utilized newspapers, petition drives, sometimes even door-to-door campaigning to press their points and produce the desired results. Even though many Federalists were troubled by the use of such tactics, the party often wielded them to great effect, frustrating and defeating their opponents.

#### DECLINE

**Difficulties under Adams.** The Federalists began to lose their popular touch when Vice President John Adams succeeded Washington in 1797. Far less popular than Washington and much less adroit politically, Adams was also plagued by a disloyal cabinet and by a fierce division in Federalist ranks between those loyal to the president and those who took their marching orders from Hamilton, out of office but still highly influential. The party also lost its once-sharp political touch. In an ill-advised effort to stamp out the Democratic Republicans and their partisans in the press (all of whom Federalists considered illegitimate anyway), the Federalist Congress passed in 1798 the Alien and Sedition Acts, which were designed to curb the influence of recent immigrants and make criticism of government leaders or policies illegal. But these efforts backfired disastrously. Rather than destroying the opposition, the acts and the high-handed, arbitrary way they were carried out invigorated and revived the Republicans, especially the party newspapers. When he stood for reelection in 1800, Adams presided over a badly divided party and faced a furious and revived opposition. Matched against Jefferson and Aaron Burr, Adams lost the contest, winning sixty-five electoral votes to seventy-three each for his Republican rivals. After a protracted process, the House of Representatives ultimately selected Jefferson as president. When Adams returned to Massachusetts in a bitter fury, no one could know that the Federalists had had their last taste of the presidency.

**Elections of 1804 and 1808.** After Adams's narrow loss in 1800, younger Federalists in particular tried to regroup by appropriating the organizational tactics and campaign methods of the Republicans to build a national political party organization. Despite such efforts, Federalists never again came close to winning the presidency. Jefferson was reelected by a 162 to 14 margin in the electoral college in 1804, defeating Charles C. Pinckney, who carried only Connecticut and Delaware. In 1808 Federalists again ran

Pinckney, this time against James Madison. Federalist fortunes revived only briefly due to the unpopularity of Jefferson's embargo of 1807, which was designed to hurt Britain but which seemed to do the most damage to the American commercial economy. Even with this issue handed to them by the Jeffersonians, Federalists could do little better in 1808. Pinckney again ran strongly in New England, where opposition to the embargo was strongest and carried Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Delaware plus scattered electors from Maryland and North Carolina. Despite making a stronger showing than four years earlier, Pinckney nonetheless lost decisively, carrying just 47 electoral votes to Madison's 122.

**Election of 1812.** The closest the Federalists came to winning the presidency was in 1812 as a significant antiwar sentiment hindered Madison's reelection. Federalists tried to make common cause with anti-war Republicans and ran a fusion ticket that, while potentially adding new members to their base, also ran the risk of upsetting many Federalists who worried that an alliance with Republicans would undermine the party's independence and legitimacy. New York City mayor De Witt Clinton was nominated for the presidency with Pennsylvania's Jared Ingersoll as the vice presidential nominee. In the end, Madison prevailed by only 128 electoral votes to 89 for Clinton. Pennsylvania proved to be the key as Madison carried its 25 electoral votes. Had Clinton carried them, he would have won the election by a narrow margin.

**Hartford Convention.** Now thoroughly routed, losers of four consecutive presidential elections and increasingly becoming a regional party only, Federalists struggled with their future as the War of 1812 raged. In December 1814 and January 1815, delegates representing each of the New England states met at Hartford, Connecticut, to discuss their grievances. Some delegates urged secession of the New England states from the union. That proposal was defeated and the convention issued a moderate set of proposals (such as opposition to the three-fifths clause in the Constitution and to territorial expansion) designed to strengthen the power of the states and restoring the influence of New England Federalism. The Hartford Convention became, at best, irrelevant and, at worst, in the eyes of some, a near-traitorous gathering as news of the resounding victory of the Battle of New Orleans (8 January 1815) arrived and with it the prospect of peace. By merely discussing secession at Hartford, the Federalists finished themselves as a viable political party in many

minds. Rufus King was nominated for the presidency against James Monroe in 1816 but he lost badly, 183 electoral votes to just 34, as King carried only Connecticut, Delaware, and Massachusetts. The 1816 election marked the effective end of the Federalist Party at the national level. The party lingered for awhile in New England but never again nominated a presidential candidate. Some Federalists retreated into literary endeavors, hoping to redirect culture and society—a political project carried on by other means.

The Hartford Convention, the presidential election defeats, and the slow evaporation to extinction as a party stood in stark contrast to and marked a sad end to what had once been a visionary and vibrant party with many achievements to its credit. Federalists, it can be argued, served the nation well in their time but ultimately were too much at odds with the direction of the nation's political development to survive as a party.

*See also Adams, John; Alien and Sedition Acts; Democratic Republicans; Election of 1796; Election of 1800; Hamilton, Alexander; Hartford Convention; Jay's Treaty; Jefferson, Thomas; Newspapers; Washington, George; Whiskey Rebellion.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Banner, James M., Jr. *To The Hartford Convention: The Federalists and the Origins of Party Politics in Massachusetts, 1789–1815*. New York: Knopf, 1970.
- Ben-Artar, Doron, and Barbara B. Oberg, eds. *Federalists Reconsidered*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998.
- Elkins, Stanley, and Eric McKittrick. *The Age of Federalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Estes, Todd. "Shaping the Politics of Public Opinion: Federalists and the Jay Treaty Debate." *Journal of the Early Republic* 20, no. 3 (Fall 2000): 393–422.
- Fischer, David Hackett. *The Revolution of American Conservatism: The Federalist Party in the Era of Jeffersonian Democracy*. New York: Harper & Row, 1965.
- Foletta, Marshall. *Coming to Terms with Democracy: Federalist Intellectuals and the Shaping of an American Culture*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001.
- Kerber, Linda K. *Federalists in Dissent: Imagery and Ideology in Jeffersonian America*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1970.
- Newman, Simon P. *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997.
- Slaughter, Thomas P. *The Whiskey Rebellion: Frontier Epilogue to the American Revolution*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Waldstreicher, David. *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Todd Estes

---

**FEDERALISTS** The American Revolution, a struggle against encroaching British authority, left most Americans deeply distrustful of centralized power. Yet between 1787 and 1790 the Federalists achieved what had once seemed impossible: the fusion of thirteen disparate former colonies into a potentially powerful national union.

#### NATIONALISM IN 1787

During the 1780s, despite American mistrust of strong central government, many concluded that Congress's powers were inadequate under the Articles of Confederation. Faced with economic depression throughout the decade, many states were unable to deal with their Revolutionary War debts. The lack of a national commercial policy fueled a trade imbalance with Britain; consumer debt soared, leaving merchants vulnerable to creditors; debt and high state taxes threatened farmers with foreclosure. America's feeble diplomatic credibility, with diplomats such as John Adams and John Jay repeatedly humiliated by their vague and uncertain authority, made it nearly impossible to secure favorable treaties or trade concessions.

Americans were increasingly divided between what historians have labeled "cosmopolitans" and "localists." The former mostly included those with broad economic and social contacts—merchants, urban artisans, commercial farmers including southern planters—who wanted energetic state and continental governments to promote trade, stabilize the currency, and pay public debts. Localists, including farmers and rural artisans, wanted government kept small, seeking state debtor relief and paper money to deprecate individual debts and tax burdens.

Localists generally dominated state governments. Cosmopolitans looked to the central government, but the Confederation Congress was nearly impotent. With no taxation power, Congress failed to raise much revenue through requisitions upon the states; dangerous sectional divisions and separate state interests undermined foreign policy. Increasingly, cosmopolitans pondered a new national government to institute a single national trade policy and tariff and to block inflationary paper money.

George Washington's 1785 call for a conference between Virginia and Maryland, bypassing Congress to settle a dispute over the Potomac River, inspired former congressman James Madison of Virginia to call for a broader convention on trade at Annapolis. There, in September 1786, Alexander Hamilton of New York, once a distinguished officer on Washington's staff, urged that a general convention meet in Philadelphia the following May to revise the Articles and strengthen the union. Shays's Rebellion in Massachusetts and similar popular outbursts sparked by debt and taxes encouraged responses to Hamilton's call, especially when the Continental government proved unable to defend its Springfield arsenal from the Shaysite rebels. Perhaps most important, the disorders persuaded Washington himself to chair the convention. Congress endorsed the plan in February 1787, and every state but Rhode Island agreed to attend.

#### THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION AND THE EMERGENCE OF FEDERALISM

The Constitutional Convention was divided between those who wished merely to strengthen the Articles, and those who wished to replace them with a new national government. Leaders of the centralizing group included Madison, Hamilton, James Wilson, Gouverneur Morris of Pennsylvania, and Rufus King of Massachusetts, all delegates from large states with broad economic ties. Their main proposal was Madison's, calling for a bicameral legislature, with both houses proportional to population, that would choose a national executive and judiciary and have a veto over state laws. When the small states objected, the nationalists adjusted, accepting a compromise that preserved equal state representation in the Senate and dropping the veto on state laws. But federal laws were declared supreme, and the courts were expected to strike down incompatible state statutes. The centralizers achieved a genuine national government in federal balance with the states—the key, they believed, to preserving the republican legacy of the Revolution.

Despite some historians' long-standing arguments that the Convention was a virtual conspiracy to promote a particular economic interest, a remarkably heterogeneous group ultimately supported the new constitution. Of fifty-five delegates, four left in protest and three refused to sign the final document. At least forty-five, from large states and small, backed ratification. The ability of this compromise system to unite a wide range of viewpoints, backgrounds, and private interests was the key strength

of those who now began to call themselves "Federalists."

#### FEDERALIST CONSTITUENCIES AND THEIR PRIORITIES

The framers' decision to submit the Constitution to popularly elected state conventions transformed ratification into a broad public debate. The pro-Constitution stand of Washington and Benjamin Franklin, arguably the two most eminent men in America, helped sway opinion, but only to a point: Americans were wary of mere appeals to authority.

The pro- and anti-constitutional schism resembled the prior divide between cosmopolitans and localists. Federalists tended to be people with broader connections and interests: merchants, lawyers, and other educated professionals; clergy; and commercial farmers and planters. They found themselves faced mainly by yeoman farmers and rural leaders with mainly local connections, who feared broad new powers exercised by a distant elite. Those with entrenched interests in existing state powers were also frequently hostile. The Federalists branded their opponents "anti-Federalists," shrewdly tarring them with the stigma of a purely negative agenda.

In general, Federalists were concentrated in the east. Coastal areas, dependent on trade, linked economically, culturally, and intellectually to other states and other countries, favored a revitalized government that looked beyond their immediate localities. They viewed their generally inland, western opponents as ignorant backcountry rustics supported by self-interested state politicians.

Federalists enjoyed a key advantage in their overwhelming enlistment of printers, most of whom were eastern, commercially oriented, and cosmopolitan. A concerted Federalist campaign was mobilized in newspapers and pamphlets, where the "Federalist" label first emerged in print. Once a term for opponents of the nationalists, it was now used to invoke the layered system and emphasis on balanced powers that had emerged at Philadelphia. Federalist writers stressed the Constitution's preservation of popular sovereignty through the electoral delegation of authority and its steady equilibrium of powers. A pivotal argument, developed by Madison in the influential *Federalist Papers*, contradicted the traditional assumption that republics could function only on a small scale. Such republics, Madison observed, had invariably failed when factions achieved a majority and became tyrannical. In a large-scale government, the diversity of local interests would make control by a single majority interest impossible.

Anti-Federalists accused the Federalists of an elitist plot to remove power from ordinary citizens and create a moneyed aristocracy, a claim echoed by some modern historians. But the Federalists firmly defined themselves as the saviors of the Revolution and republicanism. The 1780s had, they believed, shown that myriad weak, local governments were undermining the achievements of 1776. Believing that a people as well as their government required checks and balances, the Federalists defended a careful delegation of authority to the best-known and ablest men, who would in turn be checked by their balanced constitutional powers. Yet the Constitution imposed no property qualifications for officeholding, and it was in fact the anti-Federalists who sought to restrict offices to professing Christians. And of course, anti-Federalists were often highly supportive of local elites.

The Federalists, however, were never monolithic. The Constitution's compromise nature attracted a wide range of supporters, giving the Federalists their strength and adaptability. But parties to a compromise are likely to interpret it according to their own desires: different Federalists inevitably understood the new system differently. Indeed, they did differ on the nature and role of elites. Some believed merit would rise; others assumed the socially prominent should govern; Hamilton stressed the interrelation of government with moneyed interests; others, such as Madison, were more concerned with the broad voice of the people, refined but preserved through constitutional delegation. The ratification struggle subsumed such differences. In time they would re-emerge.

#### FEDERALIST STRATEGIES FOR RATIFICATION

The Federalists enjoyed an initial wave of easy victories, with anti-Federalists stifled by the very localism, lesser education, and lack of broad connections that helped define them. Small states, mollified by equality in the Senate and eager to supplant the high-handed commercial policies of the large port states, rallied as Federalist strongholds. Delaware, New Jersey, Georgia (eager for federal aid in protecting its border), and Connecticut quickly and easily ratified. Later, Maryland and South Carolina would follow—though New Hampshire deadlocked, swayed by suspicion of the South and the fear of non-Christian officeholders, and Rhode Island refused even to call a convention.

Federalists realized the key battles would come in the large states. In Pennsylvania the Federalists, led by James Wilson, pushed ratification through before

the rural backcountry could mobilize. But ratification was increasingly faced with an articulate anti-Federalist opposition. The Federalist charge that the anti-Federalists lacked a positive agenda had some validity; the Constitution's foes knew what they opposed but were weak on specific alternatives—though most acknowledged the Articles were inadequate as they stood. But a key anti-Federalist objection to the Constitution, the absence of a bill of rights, resonated with many. Federalists denied the need, noting that the federal government would have only those powers specifically granted by the Constitution and warning that enumerating some rights could undermine others. But the issue persisted.

Rufus King and other Federalist leaders faced troubles in Massachusetts. Anti-Federalists had a clear majority, although their most experienced and articulate leaders were actually from coastal areas with Federalist majorities and thus were not elected to the ratifying convention. The anti-Federalists wanted the convention to ratify only on the condition that a bill of rights was added to the Constitution. Faced with defeat, the Federalists proposed that recommendatory rather than conditional amendments accompany ratification. The convention, they suggested, should ratify the Constitution and at the same time recommend amendments, on the understanding that the Federalists would then help to pass the amendments in the new Congress. Again, compromise succeeded in broadening Federalist support. John Hancock and Samuel Adams, influential local politicians who were uneasy about the Constitution, were reluctantly won over. Delegates from the coastal areas remained heavily Federalist, and the proposed amendments secured enough inland votes to narrowly win ratification.

Although the anti-Federalists, encouraged by their strength in the large states, were growing increasingly organized, this new Federalist strategy of recommendatory amendments began to undercut the opposition's main argument. In Virginia the heavily Federalist Tidewater region was faced with an overwhelmingly anti-Federalist majority in the rest of the state. Unlike in the North, where urban areas challenged the rural interior, here both sides were agrarian: in the virtual absence of cities, coastal planters with broad ties and interests faced inland farmers determined to preserve their independence. Madison skillfully led the Federalist minority in the state convention, urging recommendatory amendments and stressing the lack of concrete anti-Federalist proposals. Governor Edmund Randolph, who had refused to sign the Constitution in Philadel-

phia, wavered back to reluctant support. New Hampshire's second attempt at ratification had meanwhile succeeded: the nine states officially required to ratify the Constitution had adopted it. Federalists now warned that if Virginia rejected, the union itself might crumble. Enough inland votes were swayed to narrowly pass ratification.

Federalists were likewise a clear minority in New York, but again their opponents failed to offer clear alternatives. After Virginia ratified, Hamilton, backed by Madison, cautioned that the anti-Federalist plan to ratify on condition of future amendments might leave New York out of the union. Pragmatism, coupled with renewed Federalist assurances that a bill of rights would follow, again secured a slim majority for ratification.

#### THE LAST FEDERALIST CHALLENGE

It was by no means obvious that eleven ratifications signaled the end of the Federalists' struggle. All along, anti-Federalists had energetically sought a second constitutional convention, a scheme Federalists feared would unleash chaos. Yet important New York Federalists, courting anti-Federalist votes, had dismayed their own allies by endorsing a second convention to consider amendments. Some feared even a limited convention might go dangerously far, undermining federal authority and throwing power back to the states. Now North Carolina, one of the final two holdouts, adopted a scheme once proposed by Thomas Jefferson (who had meanwhile been persuaded by recommendatory amendments to back the Constitution): after most states had ratified, the remainder should hold out until a bill of rights was added. North Carolina's Tidewater Federalists were heavily outnumbered. The anti-Federalists kept control, refused to ratify, and demanded a second convention.

The call for a new convention proved abortive, but Federalists knew the climate could yet change. Madison and others also feared anti-Federalist attempts to elect a Congress that would annihilate itself and the Constitution. Such ideas certainly existed, and failed less decisively than is sometimes imagined. In the new Senate, twenty-four Federalists were in undisputed control, but the anti-Federalist legislature of powerful Virginia sent two firmly anti-Federalist senators. In the House, fifty-one Federalists outnumbered fourteen anti-Federalists. But two of eight representatives from Massachusetts, three of five from South Carolina, three of ten from Virginia, two of eight from Pennsylvania, and two of six from New York were anti-Federalist, and close elections in

the latter two states—extremely close in New York—narrowly prevented anti-Federalist majorities. Even Federalist representatives did not forget the misgivings of their constituents. As the first federal congress divided into blocs for and against the Washington administration, anti-Federalists unanimously went anti-administration—but many Federalist representatives from antiratification districts also joined the anti-administration party.

With the anti-Federalists in retreat but by no means gone, the need to pass a bill of rights was urgent. Madison, elected to the House from Virginia, led the fight; he had come to see genuine advantages in properly framed amendments and also knew they were a political necessity to complete the Federalist victory. He and his supporters acknowledged that a bill of rights could enhance the Constitution's safeguards against governmental abuses without returning important federal powers to the states, but they also knew how many influential men had backed ratification on the understanding that such amendments would follow. Even after Congress had passed the amendments, Virginia's anti-Federalist senators continued to press for a second convention. Most had been willing to wait and see what the new Congress would do, and after the Bill of Rights was added most anti-Federalists were willing to work within the new system. But had Congress repudiated the promises made in so many key conventions, a reinvigorated anti-Federalist movement might conceivably have yet toppled the new Constitution, destroying everything the Federalists had worked to achieve.

As it was, North Carolina conceded in late 1789 (though two of the five representatives it now elected were anti-Federalists), and Rhode Island, threatened with secession by its own coastal merchants, narrowly ratified in 1790. But as the Federalist majority turned to the actual business of setting up the new government and instituting policy, the compromise coalition inevitably began to come apart. The mercantile, monetary elitism of Hamilton and his backers drove them apart from Madison and many others, with their greater emphasis on popular participation and their suspicion of control by a moneyed interest. There was no neat transformation of Federalists into the Federalist Party of the 1790s, or anti-Federalists into Democratic Republicans. The diverging Federalists contributed constituencies and leadership to both parties.

*See also Adams, John; Articles of Confederation; Bill of Rights; Congress; Constitution, Ratification of;*

**Constitutional Convention; Constitutionalism; Federalist Papers; Federalist Party; Founding Fathers; Franklin, Benjamin; Government: Overview; Hamilton, Alexander; Jefferson, Thomas; Madison, James; Popular Sovereignty; Presidency, The: George Washington; Shays's Rebellion; Washington, George.**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Bailyn, Bernard, ed. *The Debate on the Constitution: Federalist and Antifederalist Speeches, Articles, and Letters during the Struggle over Ratification*. 2 vols. New York: Library of America, 1993.
- Farrand, Max, ed. *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787*. Rev. ed. 4 vols. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966.
- Jensen, Merrill. *The New Nation: A History of the United States during the Confederation, 1781–1789*. New York: Knopf, 1958; Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1981.
- Main, Jackson Turner. *Political Parties before the Constitution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973; New York: Norton, 1974.
- Rakove, Jack N. *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution*. New York: Knopf, 1996.
- Rutland, Robert Allen. *The Ordeal of the Constitution: The Anti-federalists and the Ratification Struggle of 1787–1788*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966; Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1983.
- Veit, Helen E., Kenneth R. Bowling, and Charlene Bangs Bickford, eds. *Creating the Bill of Rights: The Documentary Record from the First Federal Congress*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.
- Wood, Gordon S. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.

Jeremy A. Stern

---

**FICTION** There is an ongoing debate in the field of literary history about when a distinctly American literature emerged. Some scholars argue that American authors did not gain a voice separate from their British forebears until well into the nineteenth century. According to these critics, the form and voice of literature published in the early American nation was not distinctive enough to merit consideration as "American." In some opinions, an added detriment to anything that might be considered American literature is that nothing produced had literary merit. Books were expensive to produce, and pirating of already produced English works was more profitable

for printers than producing new works of fiction by American authors. Only about ninety American works of fiction were printed between 1789 and 1820, and few of these made a profit. No American author was able to make a living from writing until the 1820s, although certainly Susanna Rowson (1762–1824) and Charles Brockden Brown (1771–1810) tried.

Despite these facts, other scholars make the case for an American literature that emerged in the period of the ratification of the Constitution. These scholars believe that the early American novel, while it may not live up to some hard-to-define literary standards, was very American, reflecting the anxieties of nation building. The American Revolution (1775–1783) led to social, political, and cultural upheaval. Because of this, they argue, the genre of American literature was far from stable because it was reflective of an unstable society. While the form was British, the messages, scattered as they may have been, were American. These early novels grappled with the question of what it meant to be a citizen of the newly formed nation and whether or not independence was worth the disruptions that followed.

These experiments in an American fictional voice took place exclusively in the North. The American South did not engage in the creation of fiction. While southerners certainly helped to shape political discourse, novels and other fictional forms were produced by the pens of northerners. As white southerners tightened their defense of slavery after the American Revolution, they took a lesser part in the creation of an American national identity than the northerners who engaged in the questions of identity in both fiction and nonfiction. In addition, the contribution to American fiction was limited by race. For African Americans in all parts of the new Republic, racism and the concomitant poverty and lack of education of blacks kept them from writing. Although poetry of African American Phillis Wheatley (1753?–1784) was widely read, only four novels by African Americans were published before the Civil War, and none of these were published until the mid-nineteenth century.

**THE REVOLUTIONARY ERA**

While American writers did not break away from the literary forms of the British, there were several attempts to create a distinctly American literature. The Connecticut (or Hartford) Wits were among the first group of writers who consciously tried to do that. These men had been born in Connecticut and had attended Yale College. They believed that they could

create an American voice and advocate a political cause. The Wits were concerned about the emergence of democratic movements after the war. They wrote poems to honor stability and oppose Jeffersonian democracy. The Wits included John Trumbull (1750–1831), author of two popular satiric poems, *M'Fingal* (1776–1782) and *The Progress of Dulness* (1772–1773), and Timothy Dwight (1752–1817), the author of *The Conquest of Canaan* (1785), an epic poem about the American Revolution. The Wits put themselves in opposition to Philip Freneau (1752–1832), known as the "poet of the American Revolution," who embraced Jeffersonian democracy. Despite his ideological differences with the Wits, Freneau also believed in the importance of developing an exclusively American idiom. Although these early writers largely failed in their attempts to break from British forms, their attempts to create something truly American are noteworthy.

One of the first authors to explicitly attempt to define American character was J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur (1735–1813). A French immigrant who was married to a woman from a Loyalist family, Crèvecoeur was unable to choose a side during the American Revolution. After spending time in a British army prison in New York and then sailing to London, Crèvecoeur published the fictional *Letters from an American Farmer* in 1782. Taking the persona of James, a farmer without extensive schooling, Crèvecoeur asked, "What, then, is the American, this new man?" He answered his question by arguing that the American was indeed new, a mixture of ethnicities and beliefs, rising from a melting pot of European cultures. Crèvecoeur celebrated the American character, one that he believed had left behind the prejudices of Europe and defined itself by hard work and perseverance. However, Crèvecoeur did not leave the picture entirely rosy, but wrote of frontier dwellers who were less advanced than their eastern counterparts and of brutality in the slave system of the American South.

While other authors did not address the question as directly as Crèvecoeur had, the process of definition and differentiation from Britain was apparent in many of the early works of fiction. Much as Crèvecoeur had sought to define the American man as different from the European man, other early American writers sought to justify American independence or define American character. Francis Hopkinson (1737–1791), one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, was well-known for his political allegories, which helped make the case against Britain during the war. In his best-known piece, *The Pretty*

*Story* (1774), the colonists appeared as a farmer's sons fighting against mismanagement of their family farm. These political allegories helped set the stage for later American fiction. Early American playwright Royall Tyler (1757–1826) also worked to distinguish Europe and America. In *The Contrast* (1787), the first comedy play to be professionally produced on the American stage, Tyler pitted the republican American against the refined European, with the American triumphing in the end.

### THE NEW NATION

The fiction of the early American nation reflected the rapid changes brought about by the Revolution and the nation making that followed. The first American novels were about seduction, telling the stories of young women who lost their virtue to conniving men. Novels centered on the seduction of young women highlighted the dangers and upheavals of the new nation. Focused on an English novel, *Clarissa* (1747–1748), and nervous about the changes in the nation he helped to create, John Adams famously compared democracy to Lovelace, the immoral character who leads to Clarissa's ruin. He argued that democracy would lead to the ruin and death of the new United States, much as Lovelace had ruined Clarissa. While Adams called on an English example written before the creation of the United States, male and female American authors in the early American nation deliberately toyed with these same concerns.

By the end of the eighteenth century, Charles Brockden Brown had begun to publish his Gothic novels in which nothing was settled and the world seemed a very chaotic place. These early novels, like the poems, allegories, plays, and other forms of fiction in early America, were British in form. Yet they all spoke to the question of political unsettledness and the questions raised by the Revolution. Who had power? Who could speak? Had the republican experiment succeeded or failed? Who was an American citizen and what characteristics was that citizen to embrace? All of the early American novels advanced a theory of education, a topic that was much in the political and social discourse. Novelists like Charles Brockden Brown believed that their novels did nothing less than engage in the ongoing cultural dialogue about politics and society.

Despite Brown's defense of the novel, the form had many critics. Politicians and ministers railed against novels. These critics believed, or said they believed, that novel reading would lead to the downfall of the Republic. Critics wrote about these fears in magazines and newspapers. In their prefaces or in-

introductions, novelists condemned the very form in which they engaged. Novels, in the opinion of the critics, took readers away from the serious matters of citizenship. Instead of reality, readers would be so tied up with fantasy they would be unable to function in the virtuous ways necessary for maintaining the Republic. After all, the United States was new and fragile. Psychologically, novel reading was dangerous for other reasons as well. In the growing field of medicine focused on mental illness, doctors believed that mental health was maintained by control. Men or women who spent too many hours immersed in the fantasy world of novels would more easily lose their control and would be ill-prepared to deal with disappointment or shock. Reading history or essays led to rationality; reading novels led to irrationality.

#### WRITERS AND WORKS

It is generally agreed that the first American novel is *The Power of Sympathy, or the Triumph of Nature Founded in Truth* (1789), by William Hill Brown (1765–1793). The main story in *The Power of Sympathy* is of a doomed, incestuous love. Embedded within the story of Harriot and Harrington, who discover too late that they are brother and sister, was the real-life eighteenth-century story of Fanny Aphorp and her brother-in-law, Perez Morton. Morton had seduced Aphorp, and she became pregnant. In August 1788, Aphorp committed suicide, unwilling to make public accusations against Morton. In his book, Brown thinly disguised Aphorp as Ophelia in a vignette that briefly distracts the reader from the main story line. With such tales, “founded in truth,” Brown argued that his novel was a cautionary tale and therefore fit for reading, unlike other, frivolous works of fiction.

Other novels quickly followed *The Power of Sympathy*. The two best-selling novels in the early American nation were written by women. In *Charlotte Temple* (1791), by Susanna Rowson, young Charlotte is seduced by Montraville, carried from her native England to America, and then left to her ruin and death. The novel was so popular that it was surpassed in sales only after the mid-nineteenth century, by *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852). Second only to *Charlotte Temple* was *The Coquette; or, The History of Eliza Wharton* (1797), by Hannah Webster Foster (1758–1840). In this story Eliza Wharton chooses the path of coquetry, eschewing the life of virtue she felt would confine her too much. The consequence is death and dishonor, but the novel raised interesting questions about the nature of female roles in the new nation.

Other important writers emerged at the end of the eighteenth century. Hugh Henry Brackenridge (1748–1816), a Scottish immigrant and a friend of Philip Freneau, published several dramas based on events in the Revolutionary War. His most important work was a novel, *Modern Chivalry*, published in four volumes during the years from 1792 to 1815. In the republic of *Modern Chivalry*, men without qualifications are elected to office by ill-informed voters. In the text Brackenridge praised democracy but also worried about it. In a work written over more than a decade, a reader can see some of Brackenridge’s own shifting alliances.

The author who came closest to making a living as a writer in the period before 1820 was Charles Brockden Brown, although he was never able to fully support himself with his writing. With his Gothic novels, he emerged at the end of the eighteenth century as one of the most prolific writers of fiction. Brown’s first novel, *Wieland* (1798), is a story of madness. In his madness, Theodore Wieland eventually kills all four of his children, tries to kill his wife, and eventually commits suicide. Brown, engaging in the larger discourse about nationhood, believed this novel would be useful to his readers, particularly with regard to thoughts about “the moral constitution of man.” Without checks on liberty, anarchy would reign. He sent his novel to Vice President Thomas Jefferson, perhaps believing that he offered a solution to the problems of the new United States. Brown followed *Wieland* with *Ormond* (1799), *Edgar Huntly* (1799), and *Arthur Mervyn* (1799–1800).

While all of the published fiction in the early American nation was flawed, these works are reflective of a society born out of war, cut off from its colonial past, and experimenting with new forms of government. With this in mind, these publications can be seen as American publications. The writers adopted familiar forms and tropes but used these to comment on the new society, and in Charles Brockden Brown’s case, to push for change. For the new Republic to function and perhaps thrive, these authors believed, citizens needed to be educated. Female and male authors argued that this was true of women as well as men. And novelists, even those who—like Brackenridge—supported increased democracy, worried about what would happen if democracy was taken too far.

The new United States was far from united. Crime rose in the cities and disorder seemed to reign everywhere people looked. A myth about the American Revolution has developed over the centuries to the point where people now believe almost everyone

supported the cause and the consequences. The fiction of the time gives a more accurate picture of the debates, the upheavals, the disagreements, and the fears. While flawed as literature, it is utterly reflective of a time and place otherwise largely lost.

*See also African Americans: African American Literature; Authorship; Poetry.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Davidson, Cathy N. *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Fliegelman, Jay. *Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language, and the Culture of Performance*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1993.
- Stern, Julia A. *The Plight of Feeling: Sympathy and Dissent in the Early American Novel*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997.
- Tompkins, Jane P. *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction, 1790–1860*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Warner, Michael. *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990.

Sarah Swedberg

---

**FIREARMS (NONMILITARY)** Among the practices and prejudices English colonists carried with them to North America was the assumption that an armed population was normal and necessary. Few governments, then or since, have been prepared to trust the common people with weapons. Since "time out of mind," however, the English had preferred a citizen militia to a professional military force and depended on armed citizens to protect themselves and their neighbors by shouldering a host of local peacekeeping duties. Until the Glorious Revolution of 1688–1689, being armed had been more a duty than a right. But the English Bill of Rights of 1689, passed in the wake of that bloodless revolution, guaranteed Protestants, then some 90 percent of the population, what it described as their "true, ancient and indubitable rights," including the right to "have arms for their defence suitable to their conditions and as allowed by law." The English prejudices that favored an armed citizenry translated easily to America, where the dangers of the wilderness made such community peacekeeping and self-reliance especially urgent.

#### FIREARMS TECHNOLOGY

By 1754 the civilian use of firearms had been common in England for some three hundred years and in its American colonies from the outset. Over the centuries, technology had led to the replacement of cumbersome, heavy, and inaccurate military weapons by more reliable and smaller flintlock muskets and, in the eighteenth century, by the famous Brown Bess musket. Lighter fowling pieces and pistols were also available and popular for personal protection and hunting. By the mid-seventeenth century, well-to-do women had taken to carrying little "pocket pistols" that could fit in a purse. By the eighteenth century the handgun had also become the weapon of choice for duels and highway robbery.

#### PEACEKEEPING AND HUNTING

The American colonists, faced with an often hostile native population and the usual array of crimes, immediately instituted the familiar means of keeping the peace. Every colony passed legislation to establish a militia and towns created systems in which householders took turns standing watch. All men between the ages of sixteen and sixty were liable for militia service, with some exceptions for clergy, religious objectors, and blacks. The dangers were so great that not only militia members but all householders were ordered to be armed. Many of these laws remained in place well into the eighteenth century. Connecticut's 1741 militia act, for example, ordered all citizens, both those listed in the militia and every other householder, to "always be provided with and have in continual readiness, a well-fixed firelock . . . or other good fire-arms . . . a good sword, or cutlass" and a specific amount of gunpowder. In 1770 Georgia felt it necessary, "for the better security of the inhabitants," to require every white male resident "to carry firearms to places of public worship." In many colonies those who could not afford a firearm were set to work to earn one.

Firearms were valued for hunting as well as protection. Game was plentiful in the New World and, in contrast to common European practice that strictly limited those who could hunt, colonists were enticed to American shores with the promise of the "liberty of fishing and fowling." American firearm needs differed from European needs, however, since hunting was less a sport than a key to survival in the wilderness and a reliable gun was critical for self-defense. For these purposes Americans wanted a rifle that was light, shot light bullets that needed only a modest amount of powder, was easy to load, and had a flat trajectory that would make it more accurate. By 1735 a rifle that met these specifications had

been developed in Pennsylvania, although for some reason it was generally known as the Kentucky rifle. It quickly became popular throughout the country and proved effective in bringing down the larger animals in the American forests. Firearms expert Robert Held claims that until the last quarter of the eighteenth century, "there were no guns anywhere in the world which could shoot so far, so accurately and so efficiently" as the Kentucky rifle. A better weapon was developed in Britain but neglected by the British War Office, and so the Kentucky rifle remained the most accurate, and actually the only, long-range shooter until about 1840.

Travelers to America were struck by how common guns were. Charles Augustus Murray, who toured America in 1834, noted that "nearly every man has a rifle, and spends part of his time in the chase," while Alexis de Tocqueville, who visited America in 1831, described a typical "peasant's cabin" in Kentucky or Tennessee as containing "a fairly clean bed, some chairs, a good gun."

#### INDIANS AND BLACKS

Sensible restrictions were put in place on the use of firearms in crowded areas or with intention to terrify. But the emphasis of colonial and early national governments was on ensuring the populace was well armed, not on restricting individual stocks of weapons. For the security of white colonists, efforts were made to prevent Indians, and in some colonies black slaves, from acquiring firearms. Nevertheless, Indians managed to obtain firearms and quickly became excellent shots. Access of slaves and free blacks to guns varied. The New England colonies and New Jersey permitted blacks, both slave and free, to keep private firearms but usually excluded them from the militia. A Virginia statute of 1640, "Preventing Negroes from Bearing Arms," was one of the first acts to legally define slave status. Free blacks in Virginia and South Carolina were permitted to keep firearms, as could blacks, whether slave or free, living on the frontier. Georgia, however, insisted upon a license for even temporary use of a gun by a slave. In the eyes of the law, neither the Indian nor the slave was a citizen; therefore, neither was entitled to the rights of citizenship. During the 1820s and 1830s therefore, a wave of anti-black legislation throughout the country was able to curtail the ability of blacks to be armed.

In sum, Americans were expected to provide themselves with firearms for the protection of themselves and their colony. There is ample evidence that they did.

*See also Gunpowder, Munitions, and Weapons (Military); Militias and Militia Service.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bailyn, Bernard. *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967.
- Botein, Stephen. *Early American Law and Society*. New York: Knopf, 1983.
- Higginbotham, A. Leon. *In the Matter of Color: Race and the American Legal Process: The Colonial Period*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- Malcolm, Joyce Lee. *To Keep and Bear Arms: The Origins of an Anglo-American Right*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994.
- Shy, John W. *A People Numerous and Armed: Reflections on the Military Struggle for American Independence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976.
- Thorpe, Francis N., ed. *The Federal and State Constitutions, Colonial Charters, and Other Organic Laws of the States, Territories, and Colonies*. 7 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1909.

Joyce Lee Malcolm

---

**FIRE AND FIREFIGHTING** Fire was a serious and ongoing problem in colonial America and the new nation, especially in towns and cities. In an era before zoning regulations, flammable materials were regularly stored near the open fires necessary for heating homes and cooking food. As cities increased in size and density in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, catastrophic conflagrations became common occurrences. A candle in a New Orleans building set off a fire that destroyed over eight hundred buildings in 1788; three years later a Philadelphia fire spread easily through the wooden buildings on Dock Street, while an 1820 fire in Savannah, Georgia, became a conflagration after setting off a cache of gunpowder stored in one building.

Colonial fire codes required homeowners to be in possession of two buckets and prepared to transport water in them to the scene of any nearby fire. By the mid-eighteenth century municipal governments were taking a more active role in controlling fires. New Amsterdam taxed the citizenry to pay for chimney inspectors starting in 1646. In 1718 Boston citizens organized the first American volunteer fire company, complete with a small hand-operated pump fire engine, and uniforms for its members. In 1736 Benjamin Franklin organized, publicized, and participated in a Philadelphia volunteer fire company, set-



ting a standard for the participation of civic leaders in volunteer firefighting followed by George Washington, Aaron Burr, and Thomas Jefferson, among others. Fire companies were patriotic hotbeds in the 1770s, as firemen in cities including New York, Boston, and Philadelphia transformed their shared obligation to the preservation of public safety and order into active and outspoken support for the Revolution.

By the early nineteenth century, every American city was protected by volunteer fire companies, organized around small hand-operated fire engines, under the loose control of a municipal overseeing organization. Rural areas were also served by volunteer fire companies. All firefighting in the new nation was conducted by volunteers: paid fire departments were instituted only in the middle of the nineteenth century. Baltimore, for example, had three volunteer fire companies in 1790, six in 1800, and seventeen by 1843, and close to eight hundred active members in the 1830s. Philadelphia had seventeen volunteer companies by 1790. Early fire companies were selective in their membership and combined social activities with firefighting, including visits to firemen in other cities. One of the most notable characteristics of volunteer fire companies in the early nineteenth century was the occupational heterogeneity of their membership. Clerks, skilled laborers, and merchants fought fires side by side. Fire companies also provided early social services, including some of the first public lending libraries. Firehouses contained rooms for public use, and as early as 1792 fire departments set up widow and orphan funds to support dependents of injured or killed firemen. Volunteer firemen were not paid salaries but were absolved from jury and militia duty, and received an important public tribute and prestige for their actions. This prestige motivated firefighters to become active and outspoken in the Revolution, and sustained them in their belief that their public service revealed their civic virtue.

*See also City Growth and Development.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Carp, Benjamin L. "Fire of Liberty: Firefighters, Urban Voluntary Culture and the Revolutionary Movement." *William and Mary Quarterly* 58 (October 2001): 781–818.
- Greenberg, Amy S. *Cause for Alarm: The Volunteer Fire Department in the Nineteenth-Century City*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- Hazen, Margaret Hindle, and Robert M. Hazen. *Keepers of the Flame: The Role of Fire in American Culture, 1775–1925*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Amy S. Greenberg

**FIRST LADIES** The institution of the "first lady," meaning the role of the wife of the president of the United States, did not take its modern form in the era of the new American nation. However, some of the salient features that have historically surrounded presidential wives—popular interest, leadership of Washington society, and ambivalence about the status of these women—emerged in these years. In the case of Dolley Madison, the first celebrity assumed the position of wife of the president. Elizabeth Monroe and Louisa Adams did not, however, build on what Madison had done. The wife of the president in 1829 remained a potential source of political and cultural influence but had not yet emerged as a figure in her own right.

The first presidential spouse, Martha Washington, lived in New York and then in Philadelphia for the eight years of her husband's administrations. She conducted receptions for the president's guests each week on Friday evenings and otherwise was a practiced hostess on numerous social occasions. Martha Washington had some direct correspondence with the wives of diplomats and officials of foreign countries, most of which others drafted for her to send. Although she was a semipublic figure, she did little to satisfy any appetite of her fellow citizens to know about her or to have her reveal her private thoughts.

Abigail Adams is one of the most famous women in the nation's history, but the four years from 1797 to 1801 when her husband was president did not represent a high point in her life. She spent some time in Philadelphia in its last years as the capital, but she also returned to her Massachusetts home for extended periods. Abigail received numerous letters from office seekers and sought to publicize the president's achievements in the press. In 1800, as the Adams administration wound down, the family moved to Washington and took up residence in the still uncompleted presidential mansion. Her husband's defeat in the election of 1800 made her stay in the executive mansion a short one, but she has the honor of being the initial first lady to live there.

#### DOLLEY MADISON

Thomas Jefferson was a widower when he became president in 1801, and for eight years the nation did not have a first lady in the usual sense. During the Jefferson presidency, however, an important woman stepped onto the national stage. Dolley Payne Todd Madison was the wife of James Madison, the secretary of state. She was thirty-three years old in 1801 and had been married to Madison for more



**Dolley Madison (1768–1849).** The wife of President James Madison, in an engraving (1804–1855) based on a painting by Gilbert Stuart. © BETTMANN/CORBIS.

than six years. Jefferson did a minimum of entertaining on a large scale. As a result, the Madisons became surrogates for the president in a social sense. The couple lived two blocks from the White House. Dolley helped with official entertaining and became renowned for her skill as a hostess. In so doing, she helped to define a world of Washington society that lent a special style to the new American Republic. After Jefferson had served two terms as president, James Madison succeeded him in 1809. Now Dolley Madison had the task of putting her own stamp on the executive mansion.

Her work went forward in two areas. In the president's house itself, her husband gave Dolley Madison the authority to handle the task of decorating the new mansion. Working with Benjamin Latrobe, an architect for the government, she took the limited fund that Congress appropriated for that purpose and set to work. She emphasized the use of American-made furniture and avoided any taints of the aristocratic Federalist style that her husband's political party disliked. Madison succeeded in striking the right balance of simplicity and elegance that made the executive residence a testament to her good taste.

As far as formal entertaining was concerned, the Madisons held parties on a regular basis and sought to invite as wide a circle of guests from the Washington area as possible. The tradition of receptions that they established remained a distinctive feature of the presidency for one hundred and twenty years. These events enabled politicians and diplomats to meet on a neutral ground while allowing the president and his wife to create better relations with members of Congress. Some foreign diplomats chafed at the relatively simple style of these affairs, which lacked the rituals and formality of the European courts. Americans applauded Dolley Madison's ability to make all her guests feel at home. Under her direction, the practice of using the social aspects of the executive mansion for the political ends of the president began to emerge. The duties of her position were exacting and time-consuming, but she impressed the nation as the embodiment of what a president's wife should be.

The most famous moment of Dolley Madison's years as the first lady came during the summer of 1814. As the War of 1812 continued, British troops invaded and then moved toward Washington. As the military threat grew, Madison packed as much of the silver and as many of the other important possessions as she could and then dispatched the wagon to a nearby bank for protection. She also saw to it that the celebrated Gilbert Stuart portrait of George Washington was removed for safekeeping. Madison then left Washington while the British troops burned the mansion. In the wake of the British invasion, Dolley Madison played a large role in lobbying to retain the capital in Washington City. The presidential mansion was reconstructed during what remained of the Madison presidency and repainted white. James Monroe and his wife moved back into what was now the White House once the work was completed during 1817.

Dolley Madison's conduct during the war and her rescue of the Stuart painting became part of the personal legend that followed her until she died in 1849. She symbolized the era when the United States felt itself becoming a nation, and she embodied the distinctive republican style of the time. For the rest of the nineteenth century, she remained the most famous presidential wife.

#### ELIZABETH MONROE AND LOUISA ADAMS

The two women who followed Dolley Madison did not even approach having her impact on the institution of the first lady. Elizabeth Monroe was a far more reserved and less outgoing person than her pre-

decessor. Her experience as the wife of an American diplomat in European courts led her to adopt protocols for entertaining and receiving guests that relied more on formality and etiquette than had been Dolley Madison's practice. Uncertain health also disposed Elizabeth Monroe to limit her commitment to entertaining. These changes in style at the White House led to several social battles among women in Washington, including a boycott by Mrs. Monroe's critics in 1819 and 1820. The resulting tensions spilled over into the masculine world of politics. Eventually, the president's wife prevailed; her policy of limiting the number of visitors that she needed to receive proved enduring for future first ladies. Her worsening health reduced her public appearances still further during her husband's second term. During her eight years in the White House, the position of the presidential wife lost some of the luster that Dolley Madison had imparted to it.

Louisa Catherine Adams continued the downward trend of participation in social affairs during her husband's single term in office from 1825 to 1829. Her marriage to John Quincy Adams had had its rocky moments before he won the disputed presidential contest of 1824. Nevertheless, she had used her political skills effectively in his efforts to become president during the election and in the proceedings of Congress that resolved the election. Once in the White House, Louisa Adams did not do much entertaining, nor did she reach out to political Washington. Instead, she went into a shell, regarding the executive mansion more as a prison than as a place to make a reputation as a hostess. Her husband was preoccupied with the cares of office and devoted little time to his wife. The two became more distant from each other as the Adams presidency unfolded. They spent some months apart when they took separate vacations in 1826. Poor health, perhaps arising from menopause, dominated her existence.

In 1827 a newspaper friendly to Andrew Jackson, whom John Quincy Adams had defeated in 1824, attacked Louisa for her English origins and made her a target for political invective. In response, she authored an anonymous essay countering her critics and outlining her own virtues. That was a departure for a presidential spouse. Louisa hoped that her husband would be reelected in 1828, but the tide of support for Jackson sent the couple into private life. The four years of Louisa Adams left little impact on the issue of what a president's wife should do and how she should behave.

#### AFTER 1828

Over the next twelve years two widowers, Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren, occupied the White House. In the 1840s, interest in presidential wives revived with the presidencies of William Henry Harrison, John Tyler, and James K. Polk. However, with the new, more democratic politics of the mid-nineteenth century, the power of presidential wives receded. The first ladies of the new American nation from Martha Washington to Louisa Adams displayed some of the future roles of the institution—hostess; decorator of the White House; and in the case of Dolley Madison, political celebrity. They form part of the tradition of presidential wives that now stretches into the twenty-first century. If their contributions to the evolution of the position were modest, they worked hard in pursuit of the success of their husbands' administrations. They were all interesting women who helped to develop popular fascination with the relation of the president and his family to the rest of their fellow citizens. In that respect, their influence and example continues down to the present time.

*See also Presidency, The.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

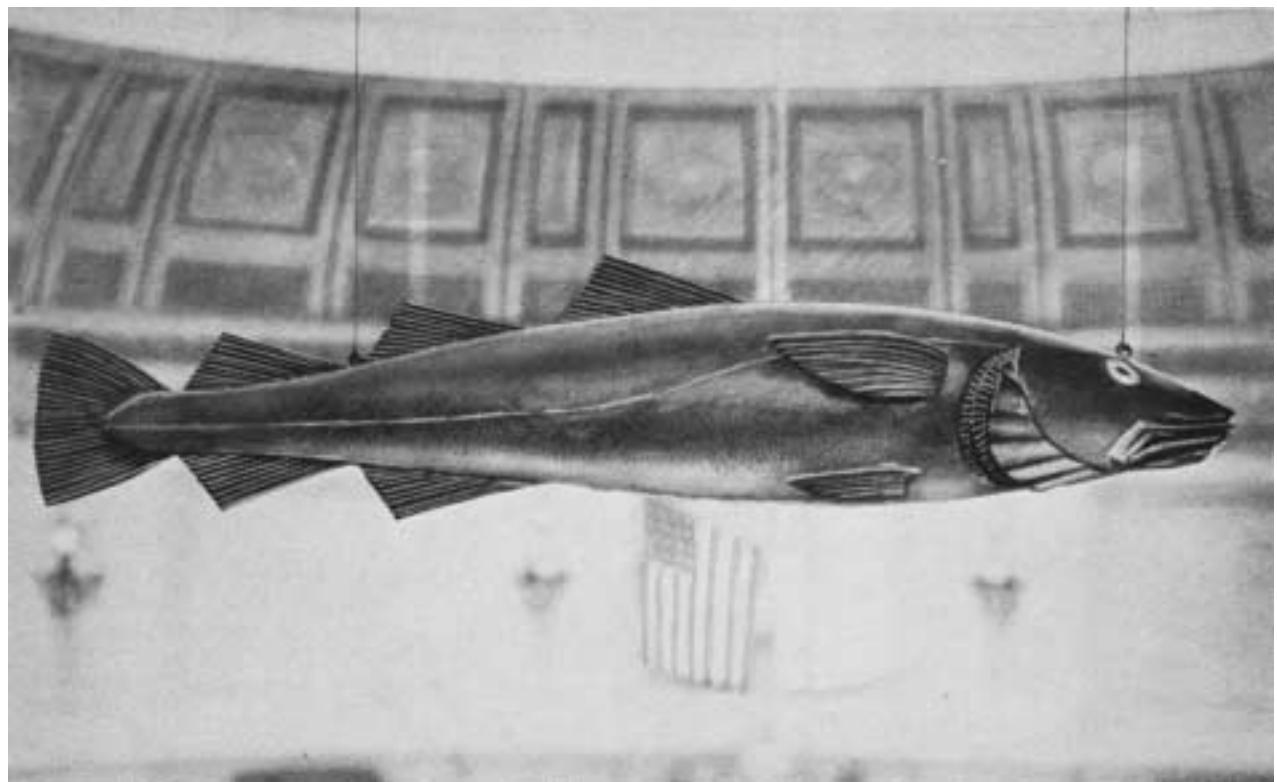
- Allgor, Catherine. *Parlor Politics: In Which the Ladies of Washington Help Build a City and a Government*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000.
- Caroli, Betty. *First Ladies*. Expanded ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Fields, Joseph E., comp. *Worthy Partner: The Papers of Martha Washington*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1994.
- Gould, Lewis L., ed. *American First Ladies: Their Lives and Their Legacy*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2001.
- Mattern, David B., and Holly Shulman, eds. *The Selected Letters of Dolley Payne Madison*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2003.
- National First Ladies' Library. Available at <http://www.firstladies.org>.

*Lewis L. Gould*

---

#### FISHERIES AND THE FISHING INDUSTRY

The fishing industry was one of the more important components of the American economy of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. However, there was significant regional variation in the type and quantity of fish caught, the nature of the market for those fish, and the importance of the industry to the regional economy.



**The Sacred Cod.** The New England cod fishery was the largest and most important of the fisheries in what became the United States. The importance of the industry in Massachusetts is symbolized by the "Sacred Cod," a carving that hangs in the Massachusetts House of Representatives in Boston. Jonathan Rowe, a Boston merchant, gave the carving to the state in 1784. © LAKE COUNTY MUSEUM/CORBIS.

#### NEW ENGLAND

The New England cod fishery was the first, the largest, and the economically most important of the fisheries in what became the United States. In the 1600s, fishing vessels from New England towns such as Gloucester and Marblehead joined ships from Portugal, Spain, France, and England in the cod-rich waters along the shores of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Labrador. In the first half of the eighteenth century, ships from France, Britain, and New England also began to fish for cod on the Grand Banks, a forty-thousand-square-mile portion of the North Atlantic off the southeastern coast of Newfoundland. The fish taken by these fishermen were salted, dried, and shipped across the Atlantic and to the Caribbean in quantities known as quintals—112 pounds of dried, salted cod. These quintals of cod formed one leg of the so-called Golden Triangle, in which fish from the northwestern Atlantic were sent to Europe, loads of slaves were transported from Africa to the Caribbean, and commodities such as sugar, molasses (a key ingredient in rum), and indigo were shipped from the Caribbean to New England and Canada. All the nations involved in the cod fisheries viewed them

as not only a source of commerce, but also as "nurseries" for their navies, in which men would learn the craft of sailing. During wartime, harvests declined as men were taken from the fishing fleets to serve on men-of-war.

When the Treaty of Paris of 1763, which ended the Seven Years' War, severely restricted French access to the Canadian fisheries, the New England fishermen and the British resident and cross-Atlantic fishermen, or "bankers," became the primary competitors for the cod. For the next sixty years, the fishermen from New England struggled to maintain their rights to catch and export cod while Parliament sought to prevent them from doing so through parliamentary acts (the Restraining Act and Palliser's Act, both of 1775) and treaty stipulations. The Treaty of Paris of 1783 maintained the access of American fishermen to the Grand Banks and to portions of the shore fishery in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, while restricting their access to onshore areas on which to dry their catch. This resulted in shorter fishing trips, or "fares," as the New Englanders had to return home to preserve their fish for export. A British act of that same year prohibited the sale of American fish

in the British West Indies, which forced the New Englanders to turn to the French West Indies as the primary market for their fish.

The War of Independence devastated the American fishery, as annual exports declined by nearly 30 percent, a reduction from the prewar level of 350,000 quintals per annum to 250,650 per annum after the war. The postwar recovery was slow, and exports did not return to their prewar average until 1790. In an effort to stimulate the industry, Congress in 1792 instituted a bounty system under which shipowners and operators would receive a certain amount according to the tonnage of their vessel, so long as they were engaged in cod fishing for at least four months in a given year. This system was altered several times to increase the bounty and include pickled cod. In 1807 the bounties were repealed, and this—in concert with the War of 1812 (1812–1815)—again decimated the fishery. The 1816 export of 220,000 quintals was the lowest since before the Revolution. In 1813 the bounties were reestablished, pending the end of the war.

When the War of 1812 came to a close, the rights of Americans to the British North American fisheries were again in dispute. The New Englanders maintained that the rights guaranteed in the 1783 treaty remained in operation, while the British asserted that the recent hostilities had annulled those privileges. The question was not settled until the Convention of 1818, which allowed New Englanders to catch and preserve fish on the southern and western shores of Newfoundland and the coast of Labrador. Elsewhere in British Canadian waters, American vessels could fish no closer than three marine miles from shore. Thereafter, the New Englanders' struggle for markets in which to sell their fish was part of a larger trade struggle with England in which each nation imposed tonnage and import duties and closed their ports to each other's ships.

#### THE CHESAPEAKE

The earliest explorers and settlers of the Chesapeake Bay area discovered abundant and diverse marine resources. Herring, shad, alewives, mullet, sturgeon, and many other species filled the rivers, estuaries, and bays. However, in spite of the rich fish resources, the fishing industry was relatively slow to develop in these waters. This delay was caused mainly by a lack of salt with which to preserve the fish caught in this warm climate. Locally produced salt was inferior and superior salt from the Mediterranean was unavailable in adequate quantities because of a prohibition by Parliament (in the seventeenth-century Naviga-

tion Acts) against the importation of salt directly to the Chesapeake colonies. This lack of salt and the resulting danger of fish spoilage resulted in a fishing industry that was primarily local. What fish was exported went primarily to the West Indies, where—like merchants from New England—those from the Chesapeake picked up molasses, coffee, sugar, and oranges.

#### THE GREAT LAKES

Commercial fishing in the Great Lakes developed somewhat later than in New England or the Chesapeake, due in large measure to the relative lateness of the region's settlement. Low population levels and lack of markets for fish impeded the industry's growth. It was not until the 1820s and 1830s that new markets opened up and the industry could expand.

Of the Great Lakes fisheries, the Atlantic salmon fishery of Lake Ontario was the first to be exploited commercially. By the 1790s, large numbers of these anadromous species (fish that grow to maturity in the lake's waters and swim upstream to reproduce) were being taken commercially in the Lake Ontario watershed. The fish's need to migrate to reproduce made them vulnerable to extensive harvesting as they made their annual spawning run upstream. Beginning in 1801, the New York legislature enacted a series of laws intended to extend some protection to the salmon, especially during the spawning season. By 1848 the state had enacted a total of twenty-four laws regulating salmon fishing in the state's waters.

The fishing industry on the other Great Lakes developed even later than that of Lake Ontario. In these waters, other species formed the base of the fishery: whitefish, sturgeon, lake trout, bass, pickerel, and herring, primary of these being the whitefish. Around 1812 these fish were being harvested commercially in the Saint Clair River and by 1815 in the Maumee River and Bay. In the early days of this commercial fishery, the catches were minuscule compared to those of New England's fishery. In 1817 approximately three thousand barrels of fish were taken from the lakes, only 2.7 percent of New England's prior year exports, which was a relatively small number for an industry still feeling the negative effects of the War of 1812.

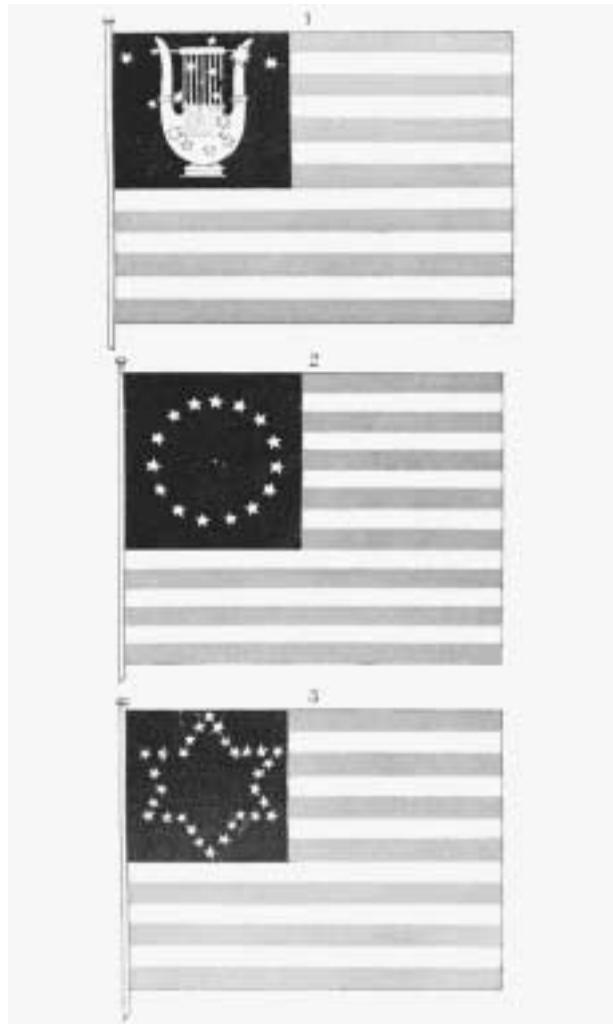
By 1830, the Great Lakes fishery was about to experience its first period of substantial growth. The population around the lakes had grown, creating new markets close at hand, while the advent of lake steamers and the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 created access to markets further afield.

*See also Treaty of Paris.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bogue, Margaret Beattie. *Fishing the Great Lakes: An Environmental History, 1783–1933*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000.
- Innis, Harold A. *The Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1940.
- Jefferson, Thomas. "Report on the American Fisheries by the Secretary of State." In *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*. Edited by Julian P. Boyd. Vol. 19. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974.
- Lear, W. H. "History of Fisheries in the Northwest Atlantic: The 500-Year Perspective." *Journal of Northwest Atlantic Fishery Science* 23 (1998): 41–73.
- Wharton, James. *The Bounty of the Chesapeake: Fishing in Colonial Virginia*. Williamsburg: Virginia 350th Anniversary Celebration Corp., 1957.

*Kevin L. Gooding*



**Early American Flags.** Top to bottom: the flag proposed in 1777; the flag approved in 1794; and the altered flag of 1818. © BETTMANN/CORBIS.

**FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES** As a product of the political struggle with Great Britain during the 1760s and 1770s, the American flag reflects in its design and concept the nation's revolutionary origins. Flags had long been familiar to the American colonists, especially those used to identify imperial powers such as England and France. New Englanders even crafted their own standard sometime in the late seventeenth century. The flag adopted the red cross of St. George from England's state banner and added a pine tree, which represented one of the region's most important natural resources. It was an important precedent. Not only did the New England flag illustrate the tendency of Americans to adapt traditional English designs for their standards, but it also supplied a potential model for later American flags.

Three popular designs emerged during the American Revolution to provide possible prototypes for a national flag. In 1775 and 1776, several Massachusetts privateers and Continental naval vessels flew modified pine tree flags that often substituted St. George's Cross with the words "An Appeal to Heaven." So-called Liberty Trees, usually American elms, were becoming popular symbols of the Revolution throughout the colonies, but this Pine Tree Flag was perhaps too narrowly identified with New England to serve as a national flag. Another common motif of Revolutionary flags was the timber rattlesnake, a creature indigenous to America. Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) had printed a segmented snake repre-

senting the colonies to persuade Americans to "Join or Die" during the French and Indian War (1754–1763), and while his efforts failed, they did establish the snake as a symbol of union in Americans' minds. The image was revived in the 1770s, appearing in newspapers as well as on numerous flags. The most enduring example is the Gadsden Flag featuring a coiled rattlesnake atop the ominous warning "Don't Tread on Me," a phrase that subsequently became embedded in the American lexicon. It was not unknown for the rattlesnake image to be superimposed upon either a Pine Tree Flag or a striped union flag, the third major design popularized by the Revolution.

The use of alternating red and white stripes, though later closely identified with the American flag, was in fact characteristic of some earlier English

banners. The pattern assumed new meaning in the context of the American Revolution, when Sons of Liberty in Boston and elsewhere employed it to suggest unity among the thirteen colonies. To express continued loyalty to the crown, however, the British Union Jack often appeared in an upper corner, creating what became known as the Continental Colors. It was this flag that flew over George Washington's camp during the siege of Boston in early 1776, and it was also the first "American" flag to be recognized by some of Britain's European rivals later that year. Yet the Continental Colors—whose stripes variously appeared as red, white, blue, and even green—had no official status as a national standard.

After declaring independence in July 1776, the Continental Congress set to work fashioning the symbols of a new American nation. Its first priority was an official seal that would identify the United States as a sovereign entity. Less attention seems to have been paid to the issue of a flag until the following summer, when Congress passed a resolution on 14 June 1777 stating, "That the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation." However, the function of the flag was as much utilitarian as it was nationalistic—to help distinguish Continental forces on land and, especially, at sea. The person generally credited with the design of the flag, which substituted a set of stars for the British Union Jack on the Continental Colors, is Francis Hopkinson (1737–1791), who served on the Continental Navy Board.

Standardization of the American flag was slow to develop. Not only did the use of rattlesnake designs and the Continental Colors continue for a time during the war, but also endless variations of the "stars and stripes" theme emerged on cloth and canvas in the following decades. The addition of new states in the 1790s touched off a debate in Congress about including them on the American flag. Although some argued that thirteen ought to be the permanent number of stars and stripes, federal legislation was passed in 1794 and in 1818 to allow for the alteration of the flag to include fifteen and then twenty stars respectively. The 1818 act also provided for the future addition of a single star for each state admitted to the Union, thus enabling the flag to keep up with the rapid growth of the nation.

*See also Music: Patriotic and Political; Patriotic Societies; "Star-Spangled Banner."*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Furlong, William Rea, and Byron McCandless. *So Proudly We Hail: The History of the United States Flag*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981.
- Zelinsky, Wilbur. *Nation into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.

*Jonathan M. Beagle*

---



---



---

**FLAGS** Nobody can be sure that Betsy Ross stitched the first version of the Stars and Stripes. She was accustomed to making flags, but her role regarding the initial U.S. flag was not proclaimed until 1870 and continues to be much debated. It is certain, however, that thirteen alternating white and red stripes below a blue rectangle set in the upper left-hand corner bespoke power in North America and the Malay Sea before either the United States or Malaysia was formed. Both have flags like that flown by the British East India Company's men-of-war well before the Continental Congress passed its resolution of 14 June 1777 "that the flag of the united states be 13 stripes alternate red and white, that the Union be 13 stars white in a blue field representing a new constellation." It is unclear whether they had Vermont in mind for the thirteenth state or Florida.

The first flag of the national army of the American Revolution was flown at the siege of Boston (1775–1776) but was replaced after it was mistaken for a flag of surrender. The second, bearing the impression of a serpent, had unpleasant implications for the biblically literal and was replaced in 1779. The green flag of John Houstoun McIntosh's East Florida Republic of 1811 was equally easy to misunderstand, for it depicted a bayonet-carrying Patriot wearing a tricolor hat with his pigtail flying behind his head. When the wind reversed, so did the pigtail, and the Patriot appeared to be retreating in haste.

Read from any direction, the Stars and Stripes meant Union and freedom as well. As such, it has been emulated by Uruguay, Venezuela, Chile, Taiwan, Thailand, Burma, Tonga, Western Samoa, Liberia, Togo, Greece, and the Netherlands Antilles. Single-starred emblems, on the other hand, have fissiparous associations. The Lone Star Flag of Fulwar Skipwith's Republic of West Florida of 1810 flew for a month or two as a symbol of defiance of the federal government. It was resurrected by the secession convention of Mississippi on 9 January 1861 to become the Confederacy's famous Bonnie Blue flag. The very similar Lone Star Flag of the Texas Republic of 1836



**The Gadsden Flag.** The timber rattlesnake, a creature indigenous to America, was a common motif on Revolutionary flags. The best-known example is the Gadsden Flag, featuring a coiled rattlesnake atop the warning "Don't Tread on Me." Christopher Gadsden was a Revolutionary leader from South Carolina and a delegate to the Continental Congress. PICTURE HISTORY.

drew the United States into the Mexican War (1846–1848), which produced the deepest divisions since President Thomas Jefferson's Embargo (1807–1809) and the War of 1812 (1812–1815). Albert Gallatin, Revolutionary War soldier and secretary of the Treasury for Presidents Jefferson and James Madison, later referred to the U.S. banner raised over Chapultepec in the war with Mexico as "slavery's flag." That was Gallatin's way, less inflammatory than that of the flag burners of a later era, of joining future president Abraham Lincoln and former president John Quincy Adams in calling upon the conscience of their fellow countrymen. Gallatin, Lincoln, and Adams regarded the Mexican War as being directed by President James K. Polk for the purpose of expanding the cotton-growing empire of his fellow planters, and they disapproved. The national flag has, therefore, been at most times the rallying point it provided George Washington's army after 1779, but at other times a symbol of sharp divisions in the American community.

*See also* Flag of the United States.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arthur, Stanley Clisby. *The Story of the West Florida Rebellion*. St. Francisville, La.: St. Francisville Democrat, 1935.  
 Kennedy, Roger G. *Burr, Hamilton and Jefferson: A Study in Character*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.  
 ———. *Mr. Jefferson's Lost Cause: Land, Farmers, Slavery, and the Louisiana Purchase*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Roger G. Kennedy

---

**FLETCHER V. PECK** Chief Justice John Marshall's 1810 decision in *Fletcher v. Peck* arose from the Yazoo Land Fraud, in which the Georgia legislature voted in 1795 to sell 35 million acres of land (in what is now Alabama and Mississippi) to four private companies. The Yazoo land, named after a major river running through it, was sold at bargain rates (less than two cents per acre). Many Georgia legislators had been bribed to offer such good terms: many of them received stock in one of the companies; others received cash payments.

U.S. Senator James Jackson of Georgia returned from the capital in Philadelphia to run for the state legislature and lead the fight against the Yazoo fraud. Angry Georgia voters turned the legislators who voted to sell the land out of office and the new legislature, at the instigation of Jackson, repealed the grant in 1796. In the interim, however, much of the land had been sold one or two times, and the new property owners—many of whom had paid as much as sixteen cents per acre—now claimed they were innocent victims of the Georgia legislature's repeal. But proponents of the repeal claimed that the subsequent purchasers had known about the circumstances of the fraud (the story was reported throughout the nation) and thus could not claim to be innocent purchasers.

The Yazoo fraud took on national dimensions when the purchasers asked Congress to compensate them from their losses. Federalists, who generally supported property rights more vigorously than Jeffersonian Republicans, opposed the repeal. Meanwhile, the four land companies that had purchased the land sought to challenge the repeal by concocting a lawsuit. John Peck, an investor in the New England Mississippi Company (one of the grantees in 1795), sold land to Robert Fletcher (another investor in the same company). In his lawsuit Fletcher presented

himself to the court as innocent of the wrongdoing and claimed that he was being deprived of his property rights. The repeal by the Georgia Legislature thus pitted subsequent purchasers against initial grantees.

Marshall's opinion invalidated Georgia's repeal, using two arguments: "Georgia was restrained, either by general principles . . . common to our free institutions" or by article I, section 10 (the Contracts Clause), of the U.S. Constitution (*Fletcher v. Peck*, 10 U.S. 87, 139 [1810]). The "general principles" included the idea that innocent subsequent purchasers should not be deprived of their property. As Marshall said, "He has paid his money for a title good at law, he is innocent, whatever may be the guilt of others, and equity will not subject him to the penalties attached to that guilt" (*Fletcher*, 10 U.S. at 133).

Marshall also broadly construed the Contracts Clause, which prohibits states from passing a "law impairing the obligation of contracts." The initial understanding of that clause appears to have been that states could not interfere with contracts among private parties; it seemed to have no bearing on contracts between the government and individuals. Thus when *Fletcher* proclaimed the power of federal courts to protect legislated contracts from interference, it marked an expansion of the Contracts Clause. In praise of the Contracts Clause, Marshall wrote, "The people of the United States, in adopting the instrument, have manifested a determination to shield themselves and their property from the effects of those sudden and strong passions to which men are exposed" (*Fletcher*, 10 U.S. at 138).

For Marshall and other Federalists, the Constitution was a support against the passions of legislatures. Subsequent cases, like *Dartmouth College v. Woodward* (1819) and *Ogden v. Saunders* (1827) applied the Contracts Clause to prohibit legislative interference in state charters and bankruptcy. The Contracts Clause thus became an important vehicle for judges (particularly those of the Federalist and later Whig Parties) to protect property rights.

*See also Land Policies; Land Speculation; Marshall, John; Property.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Fletcher v. Peck*, 10 U.S. (6 Cranch) 87 (1810).  
 Magrath, C. Peter. *Yazoo: Law and Politics in the New Republic, the Case of Fletcher v. Peck*. Providence: Brown University Press, 1966.  
 Siegel, Stephen. "Understanding the Nineteenth Century Contract Clause: The Role of the Property-Privilege Distinction and 'Taking' Clause Jurisprudence." *Southern California Law Review* 60 (1986): 1–108.

White, G. Edward. *The Marshall Court and Cultural Change, 1815–35*. New York: Macmillan, 1988.

Alfred L. Brophy

---

**FLOGGING** Flogging, defined as punishment by whipping according to forms prescribed by law, was a common practice at the time of the founding of the United States. It was one of a number of corporal punishments, including branding, the pillory, and the stocks that were in general use at a time when prisons were employed more as a means to hold people already in the process of judgment than to punish or to rehabilitate and when many offenders were too poor to make fining them worthwhile. Flogging was also the most common method of punishing slaves, though no slave was entitled to the protections and limitations of the practice to the extent that these were prescribed in law for civilians.

With the creation of national armed forces during the Revolutionary and early republican eras—in the form of, first, the Continental Army, and subsequently the U.S. Army and the U.S. Navy—flogging was the punishment of first resort to enforce subordination and the unquestioning obedience that were deemed essential for military operations. In drawing up articles of war in the Continental Congress in 1776, John Adams borrowed from the customs and practices of the British army and navy, though he also sought to prevent the excesses of the British codes, such as the naval ritual of flogging men round the fleet—a form of punishment administered to a man tied to a grate in a boat in which he received a dozen lashes alongside every vessel in the harbor—from entering into American law. Punishment for lesser offenses, such as drunkenness, were usually limited to a dozen lashes with a cat-o'-nine tails, to be ordered after only minimal or sometimes no judicial proceedings. More serious offenses, such as a first attempt to desert the service, could be punished with up to one hundred lashes after sentencing by a general court martial.

After the Revolution, flogging came under increasing criticism. In part, this was because it subjected the citizens of a new Republic that placed a high premium on the autonomy and dignity of the individual to a cruel form of punishment that was one of the defining characteristics of slavery. But it was also in part because of wider transatlantic changes, associated with the Enlightenment, in thinking about human nature and the causes of

crime and deviance. Philosophers, religious leaders, and administrators believed that offenders could be reformed through changes to their environment and by encouraging them to repent of their erring ways, provided they were not brutalized by degrading and disfiguring punishments. For rehabilitation to occur, a range of carceral institutions, including asylums, penitentiaries, orphanages, and workhouses were established to create the circumstances under which offenders could develop the character and self-discipline necessary to function as useful and virtuous citizens.

Consequently, from the 1780s to the Civil War the states of the Union, with the exception of South Carolina, restricted and ultimately abolished the practice of flogging offenders in public and replaced it with various forms of incarceration, accompanied by regular work regimes. This did not mean, however, that flogging actually ended as a means of either discipline or punishment. It merely moved indoors and out of public view as almost all carceral institutions in the early Republic continued to use whipping and other forms of corporal punishment to enforce discipline within the reforming institution itself. And in South Carolina, not only did the state not abandon corporal punishments in favor of the penitentiary, it also allowed masters to send offending slaves to the workhouse, where they could be flogged for the payment of a fee.

Flogging in the armed forces was only minimally and far more slowly affected by these changes. From time to time, Congress would revise the Articles of War, but flogging remained the first recourse for punishment, in the case of the navy up until 1850. In the army flogging was abolished on the eve of the War of 1812. The change was made not so much for humanitarian reasons as from a more pragmatic awareness that potential recruits under a voluntary system of military enlistment might be reluctant to leave their local militias, where flogging was not practiced, to subject themselves to harsher forms of discipline. This reform had only limited success, and after 1815, as the number of immigrants in the ranks increased along with the number of desertions, the army became convinced that only the restoration of flogging would improve discipline. Accordingly, in 1833 flogging for desertion was reintroduced and remained in force until the outbreak of the Civil War.

*See also* **Penitentiaries**.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ayers, Edward. *Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19th Century American South*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Glenn, Myra C. *Campaigns against Corporal Punishment: Prisoners, Sailors, Women, and Children in Antebellum America*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984.
- Hare, John S. "Military Punishments in the War of 1812." *American Military Institute Journal* 4 (1940): 225–239.
- Hindus, Michael S. *Prison and Plantation: Crime, Justice, and Authority in Massachusetts and South Carolina, 1767–1878*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1980.
- Meranze, Michael. *Laboratories of Virtue: Punishment, Revolution, and Authority in Philadelphia, 1760–1835*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1996.
- Valle, James E.  *Rocks and Shoals: Order and Discipline in the Old Navy, 1800–1861*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1980.

J. C. A. Stagg

---

**FLORIDA** Congress admitted Florida to the Union in 1845 as a slave state together with Iowa, a free territory, maintaining the balance between slave and free states. The United States acquired Florida in 1821 following Spain's concession, under the Adams-Onís Treaty (1819), of its colonies East and West Florida in lieu of a five-million-dollar debt to American citizens. Spain had controlled Florida from the settlement of St. Augustine in 1565 until the end of the Seven Years' War in 1763, when Britain took possession. The British occupation ended with the American Revolution and the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1783, which returned Florida to the Spanish. The War of 1812, the Florida campaigns of General Andrew Jackson, and the First Seminole War (1817–1818) convinced Spain that it could no longer protect its Florida possessions.

## WEST FLORIDA

The initial boundary of West Florida extended from the Apalachicola River in the east to the Mississippi River in the west, north approximately to present-day Vicksburg (Mississippi), and east to the Chattahoochee River. It included the cities of Mobile, Natchez, and, serving as its capital, Pensacola. Americans claimed that the territory above the northern border of present-day Florida at the thirty-first parallel belonged to the United States. Under the 1795 treaty negotiated by Thomas Pinckney, U.S. envoy to Spain, a militarily weak Spain ceded this territory, which included the lower parts of present-day Mississippi and Alabama, to the United States.

Spanish records indicate that the nonwhite population in 1795 was 8,390, among which were Spanish, English, French, and Americans. The colony recognized the Roman Catholic faith as the official religion, but perhaps 15 percent of the population was Protestant. The mainstays of the economy were timber, indigo, and tobacco, although competition from Mexico significantly reduced tobacco's economic potential. Probably the most lucrative endeavor was trading British-manufactured products with Indians in return for land.

Historians argue that the conflict in West Florida was an early expression of Manifest Destiny, the belief, which became widespread in the 1840s, that the United States was destined to expand across the continent. Spain maintained a generous land-grant policy that brought large numbers of Americans into the colony, mostly to the Baton Rouge area; eventually this policy led to Spain's loss of territory that came to be known as the Florida Parishes of Louisiana. In 1810 American insurgents captured Baton Rouge, declared it independent, and created the Republic of West Florida; under a flag bearing a single star, it became—before Texas—the first lone-star republic. At the insurgents' urging and despite Spanish opposition, the United States annexed the territory (now part of Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi) along the Gulf Coast between the Mississippi and Perdido Rivers (the present-day western boundary of Florida) into the Territory of Orleans.

#### EAST FLORIDA

East Florida included most of present-day Florida, with St. Augustine as its capital and only significant city. Following Spanish acquisition, the non-Indian population of East Florida dropped to below two thousand from a peak of approximately twelve thousand during British occupation. Yet with Minorcans, Greeks, Italians (all of whom the English had imported as laborers), British, Americans, Spanish, and Africans, the population remained diverse. A continually unstable economy revolved around timber, cattle, rice, and increasingly cotton. Seeking to end its financial dependence on Spain, East Florida instituted a liberal land-grant policy like that in West Florida, only to suffer similar consequences.

Encouraged by West Florida insurgents, self-professed East Florida patriots—Americans living in the colony and others who came down from Georgia—staged their own insurgency. They managed to seize Amelia Island, but when the United States declared war on Britain in 1812, it withdrew its support of the patriots. Seminoles, including many fugi-

tive slaves, then allied with the Spanish and helped defeat the patriots.

#### INDIANS, BLACKS, AND CESSION

Americans found Florida Indians an especial irritant because among them lived so-called black Seminoles, fugitive slaves from the British colonies and later the southern U.S. states. Beginning in 1693 Spanish Florida offered freedom to runaway slaves from the British colonies who pledged their loyalty to Spain and converted to Catholicism. That policy continued into the second Spanish period over the protests of American slaveholders, eventually strengthening congressional support for the acquisition of the two Floridas.

The climax in the struggle over Florida came during and after the War of 1812. During the war Jackson conducted forays against the British (allies of Spain) in Florida, capturing fortifications in Mobile, Pensacola, and St. Marks. When British forces withdrew after the war, they left Seminoles and blacks with provisions at a fort on the Apalachicola River just south of the Georgia border. Jackson ordered the destruction of the so-called Negro Fort for security reasons. Its demolition was soon followed by the Seminole War and the Spanish cession of its Florida provinces.

#### U.S. TERRITORY

The first territorial census in 1825, which is incomplete, counted less than 15,000 slave and free people living in Florida, almost all in the northern section and representing to a large degree the remnants, though culturally diverse, of the Spanish period. During the four decades following U.S. acquisition, Florida became increasingly Anglo and African as settlers and slaves, mainly from Georgia and South Carolina, flooded into the region. The census recorded 34,730 people living in Florida in 1830, 54,477 in 1840, 87,445 in 1850, and 140,424 in 1860. The slave population continually hovered around 40 percent, which in 1860 belonged to 5,152 slaveholders. Free blacks were legally prohibited from relocating to Florida, which kept their population below 1,000. Representing approximately one-half the total population and the majority of the slave population, middle Florida, between the Apalachicola and Suwanee Rivers, grew into the wealthiest and most politically powerful region.

The territorial capital was built in 1824 on the Indian fields of Tallahassee in middle Florida, which dominated Florida's agrarian economy. Although farmers grew rice, corn, and later sugarcane, the sta-

ples of a robust economy were cotton and timber. Middle Florida yeomen farmers (known as Crackers) and planters with their slaves produced 80 percent of the territory's cotton. By the 1850s, Florida's annual cotton crop represented the highest per-capita yield in the South with the highest dollar value. Timber—pine and oak—was extracted mainly from northeast Florida and shipped out of Jacksonville, the territory's largest city and busiest port. With more than twenty sawmills in operation along the St. Johns River in the 1850s, Jacksonville claimed to be the largest timber market in the South. Cattle raising by that time had emerged as a third major industry, with the export trade passing mainly through the port of Tampa.

#### SEMINOLE WARS

An estimated five thousand Indians occupied the territory at the time of U.S. acquisition. By the middle of the eighteenth century, disease and warfare had wiped out the original native population. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, continuing conflicts between whites and Yamasee, Cherokee, and Creek peoples in South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama forced a fresh influx of Indians into Florida, where the Spanish generally welcomed them as allies and trading partners. Beginning with the British, they became collectively known as Seminoles. In contrast to the expanding general population, wars with the United States would nearly eliminate their numbers.

White Americans generally regarded Indians as a threat to their safety and property. To that end, the First Seminole War followed after Secretary of War John C. Calhoun dispatched General Jackson to Florida to prevent Seminoles from conducting raids on homesteads in southern Georgia and providing sanctuary to runaway slaves. Lasting from 1835 to 1842, the Second Seminole War was the longest sustained conflict between the United States and a single Indian group. The war broke out after a treaty forced Indians out of middle Florida and other areas of white settlement and onto a reservation north of Tampa. Approximately three hundred Seminoles survived the war and evaded relocation to the Oklahoma territory, where nearly four thousand Seminoles had been sent. Minor conflicts continued between the remaining Seminoles and Florida whites, who demanded the Indians' execution or removal. War erupted again in 1855, lasting two years. About two hundred Seminoles escaped to the Everglades and the Big Cypress Swamp, where their descendants remain today.

*See also American Indians: American Indian Resistance to White Expansion; American Indians: Southeast; Jackson, Andrew; Louisiana Purchase; Seminole Wars; Spain; Spanish Borderlands; Spanish Empire.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Gannon, Michael. *Florida: A Short History*, rev. ed. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003.  
 Hoffman, Paul E. *Florida's Frontiers*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.  
 Landers, Jane. *Black Society in Spanish Florida*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999.  
 Tebeau, Charlton W. *A History of Florida*. Coral Gables, Fla.: University of Miami Press, 1971.

Jack E. Davis

---

**FOLK ARTS** An analytical category of cultural expression, "folk art" draws attention to traditional handiwork produced with aesthetic intent, typically crafted by and for ordinary people. Twentieth-century scholars began using the term to refer to a body of material produced outside of the worlds of academic art, and in the United States there has been a special interest in the relation of folk art as grassroots expression to the rise of distinctive American identities. Examination of folk art, found in great variety among the diverse communities in the new nation, expands the evidence of art in American everyday life and raises questions about the influence on cultural production of the country's broad social and physical landscape.

There are disputes among scholars about what should properly be included in the category of folk art for the purposes of cultural and historical analysis. Many collections emphasize painting and sculpture that appear to be naive, primitive, or plain by academic standards and that therefore are assumed to be crafted by ordinary citizens. There is a tendency to overstate the middle class as "common folk" and feature novel nationalistic expressions in such collections. Many of the images presented of common folk, for example, emphasize merchants and artisans who produced or consumed portraits and wares, sometimes in imitation of status symbols marking the elite who could commission professional artists. Scholars have noted that to establish a class identity that was merely derivative of European high style, but distinctive, merchants and artisans often underscored the home-grown source of their products



**Pennsylvania German Dower Chest (1799).** In Pennsylvania German communities it was common to give a wood dower chest, often painted with ethnic symbols, to newlyweds. © PETER HARHOLDT/CORBIS.

contributing to the rising national identity of “ordinary” Americans.

The use of “folk” as defined by folklorists, however, implies the significance of tradition in the transmission of skills and themes in diverse community contexts. The material included in folkloristic collections that is meant to illuminate continuities with native and Old World traditions typically comprises decorated craftwork such as ethnic-regional pottery, needlework, ironwork, basketry, calligraphy, and carving. Occupational traditions, especially in maritime trades along the expanse of America’s abundant shores, with sailors producing decorated scrimshaw and shipcarvings flourished. Further inland, the growth of lumber and textile industries included cottage operations producing decorative coverlets and rugs using hand-made wooden looms, wheels, and winders. Artisanship in traditional arts was encour-

aged by the absence of a protective European guild system in the new nation and a mobile population rapidly establishing new communities with craft needs. In addition, a can-do, self-sufficient (some say democratizing) spirit of vernacular free expression, represented by guides such as Benjamin Franklin’s *Poor Richard’s Almanack* (1732–1757), led Americans to believe that they could try their hand at various skills once reserved for elites.

The extent of connection to, and separation from, the Old World is not simply a matter of analyzing whether transplantation took root in the New World. Some distinctive conditions during the period of the emerging Republic affected the adaptation, hybridization, and emergence of many traditions on the American landscape. First was the presence of an indigenous population with skills and images that entered into the symbolic repertoire of many non-



**The Peaceable Kingdom (1826) by Edward Hicks.** Many folk renderings of William Penn's treaty with the Indians, including fireboards by Pennsylvania Quaker Edward Hicks, emphasize the mythological foundations of Penn's "holy experiment." © PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART/CORBIS.

native artists. Second was the diversity of languages, religions, and backgrounds in the nation, particularly in places like Pennsylvania, where—according to the 1790 census—one-third of the population spoke German and lived in homogeneous farming communities. This diversity included the significant presence of enslaved Africans, particularly in the South, many of whom incorporated African aesthetics when forced to take up British American crafts. There is also substantial evidence for the persistence of Africanisms in, among other things, ironwork, grave decoration, and basketry that informed hybrid American forms. In Louisiana, creole foodways and arts emerged from the racial mixing of blacks and whites and the ethnic fusion of Spanish, African, and French traditions. Regional cultures of New England, the mid-Atlantic, and the South, with their distinctive ethnic and religious mixtures, became en-

trenched as a result of diffusion emanating from several prominent ports of entry on the eastern seaboard and the Gulf Coast. Communities within these regions, often isolated by physical or social boundaries, maintained folk art traditions that symbolized their difference. In the Adirondacks, the pack basket became one such marker; in the South Carolina Sea Islands, it was the sweetgrass basket; in central Pennsylvania, the ryestraw basket.

The wide availability of land and the movable nature of the frontier in America contributed to the perception that a rooted peasant class associated with the folk art of European villages did not exist in the United States. But the openness of America's borders, the need for labor, and the promise of religious and political tolerance provided opportunities for separatist communities (e.g., Amish, Shakers, Harmonists) that produced distinctive artistic expressions.

With settlement moving toward the varied interior, some highland communities in the Appalachians, Ozarks, and Adirondacks evolved in relative isolation and developed localized folk cultures. Some maritime locations, such as the Eastern Shore of Maryland and northern "Arcadian" Maine, were also comparatively isolated and thus preserved colonial era folk arts well into the industrial era. In not-so-isolated urban areas, folk arts also took hold, especially for immigrant and religious communities that provided for ritual needs with specialized artisans. In New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, Jewish calligraphers, stonemasons, and metalsmiths produced ritual objects needed by the community.

Using folk art to construct a cultural history during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, one finds evidence of several themes emerging as the colonies gave way to a new nation. They were cultural expressions of nationalism and regional identity; ethnic-religious distinctions and continuities; and occupational, class, and craft consciousness.

#### NATIONALISM AND REGIONAL IDENTITY

As a revolutionary Republic, the United States needed icons that could be artistically expressed and ingrained in cultural traditions. In folk art, the construction of patriotic and heroic symbols for private domestic uses or public celebrations became an important aspect of nation building and regional identification. While eighteenth-century printmakers created a symbol of the thirteen colonies in the form of a fierce Amazonian Indian queen-huntress, colonists also fashioned a more Anglicized figure in the form of the more civilized, but nonetheless indigenous, Indian princess to pottery, trade signs, weather vanes, and statuary. The young, industrious maiden was usually adorned with a feathered headdress and skirt and thus represented a stylized image rather than an ethnographic portrayal of North American Indians. At the time of the protests against the Stamp Act of 1765, the figure became significant politically as the rebel daughter of the British "Britannia" and sometimes accompanied the Sons of Liberty on folk banners.

After the Revolution, the female symbol of America received a neoclassical makeover in folk expressions. She appeared as a Greek goddess in flowing robes, at least in part because of the linkage made between classical republics and the modern American nation. In folk art, the American classical icon may be accompanied by a flagpole, often with a tasseled liberty cap on top. In imitations of Edward Savage's popular engraving, *Liberty, in the Form of the Goddess*

*of Youth; Giving Support to the Bald Eagle* (1796), her tender, youthful image—festooned with a flower garland—is feeding the aggressive eagle from a cup. While the name Liberty is frequently applied to this Greek revival image, she also goes by Columbia (after Christopher Columbus) and was a favorite design for post-Revolutionary ship figureheads, tobacco-store trade figures, and weather vanes. The eagle often appears alone in carvings, scissors cuttings, illuminated manuscripts, and coverlets of the period. Sometimes a shield with the colors of the new nation covers the bird's breast. In many renderings of Liberty, she is holding a cornucopia for the abundance of the new land or a torch for providing a light to the world, well before Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi erected the Statue of Liberty, unveiled in 1886.

The liberty cap, often portrayed being hoisted on a pole, is especially prevalent in the period of the early Republic. A soft, conical hat, its symbolism of freedom and independence for Americans derives from the Roman custom of awarding it to freed slaves to wear on their shorn heads. In addition to being painted on banners and signboards as a patriotic symbol, carved and woven caps were paraded on top of poles in public processions and festivals during the early years of the nation. Among the most enthusiastic paraders were volunteer firefighters who showed their civic pride by fashioning elaborate hats, engine panels, and buckets with patriotic symbols for parades on Independence Day and other occasions.

The flag and its colors figured prominently in traditional forms marking the Americanness of their users. Among Pennsylvania Germans, for instance, patriotic eagles transformed ethnic crafts of *scherenschnitte*, or scissors cuttings, and *fraktur*, or illuminated manuscripts for baptism and weddings, into American forms. Painted furniture in "Dutchland," traditionally decorated with hearts, tulips, and rosettes, often had eagles and flags added to their design after the turn of the eighteenth century. Elsewhere, expressions of nationalism appeared to be especially evident in woven bed coverlets and table covers, hooked rugs, and quilts.

Although the United States did not claim a pantheon of gods comparable to European mythologies, the figure of George Washington arguably became mythologized as "father of his country" in folk art after his death in 1799. Schoolgirls stitched and painted memorial pictures in his memory, sign painters adopted his visage for trade shingles, and craftsmen forged weather vanes and carved cake boards and statuary with his likeness. Often shown with his horse, in uniform with period hat and

sword, Washington assumed a majestic pose and typically suggested a nation inspired to action.

Often less visible than the nationalistic symbols but nonetheless significant to the American heritage of simultaneous local-national loyalties, regional expressions also emerged as signs of American distinctiveness. Frequently, these expressions were in the form of landscapes recognized as "homeland." Perhaps prepared as an overmantel, fireboard, or wall mural, the landscapes tended to emphasize the prosperity of the settlement they depicted. Connecticut-born Winthrop Chandler (1747–1790), for instance, painted for his extended family members several overmantels featuring the shorescapes of booming New England. In the South, a number of anonymous paintings of plantations, probably commissioned by the plantation owners, show the extent of their holdings. In Pennsylvania, many folk renderings of William Penn's treaty with the Indians, including fireboards completed by Pennsylvania Quaker Edward Hicks (1780–1849), establish a mythological foundation for William Penn's Holy Experiment. Sometimes called "The Peaceable Kingdom" by the artist, the scene includes animals and cherubic figures looking at the scene of the treaty in the background. Hicks frequently surrounded the painting with text such as "The leopard with the harmless kid laid down, And not one savage beast was seen to frown, when the great PENN his famous treaty made, With Indian chiefs beneath the elm tree's shade."

#### **ETHNIC-RELIGIOUS DISTINCTIONS AND CONTINUITIES**

The practice of folk art was a visible way of expressing, reinforcing, and sometimes reformulating the identities of new settlers in new settings. In South Carolina, where African Americans were forced to cultivate rice, they created coiled baskets for fanning rice similar to those made in West Africa for that purpose. Often outnumbering whites in rice-producing regions, Africans were able to maintain craft traditions. Commonly made with hard rush plants by men during the early years of slavery, coiled baskets forming designs unlike those of Anglo-American baskets were later made with soft, pliant sweetgrass and tied with palmetto strips as reminders of African heritage. If the use of Africanisms by slaves was discouraged outside the home by masters, inside the home women retained African aesthetics in the strip quilt. Although the techniques of quilting are associated with British American tradition, the strip quilt for which long, narrow bands of cloth are assembled into quilt-top patterns harks back to West African textile techniques. The tradition of the strip

quilt persists as a distinctive African American form into the twenty-first century.

The German-speaking settlers who came in large numbers to Pennsylvania beginning in 1683 were hardly united, since they came from several source areas stretching from Holland down to Switzerland. But as they mixed together, a distinctive Pennsylvania German dialect and culture formed during the eighteenth century that stretched into the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia and western Maryland. The colorful designs of hearts, tulips, rosettes, and birds used on baptismal paper certificates, redware pottery, painted softwood furniture, fancy linens or "show towels," gravestones, and tinware stood in contrast with the subdued products of the politically dominant English Quakers. The Pennsylvania Germans resisted control of their German-speaking schools and institutions by English-speaking authorities, and were able to do so because of their entrenchment in often inaccessible valleys. As canals and roads reached into the Dutchlands, more traffic from Philadelphia westward brought more interchange with English-speaking citizens. Laws were passed to make the Germans conform to an English standard. In central Pennsylvania, many German schoolmasters and ministers ushered in a revival of traditional designs and skills in the early nineteenth century to proclaim Pennsylvania German ethnic identity within the new American nation. Graves stones were more highly elaborated than in earlier generations, before becoming less ethnically distinctive around the Civil War. Illuminated family registers, tracing generations in the American experience, announced the maintenance of an ethnic legacy within a growing nation-state.

While the Germans covered a large regional expanse in Pennsylvania and beyond, some groups formed small enclaves of believers who wanted to live separately from "the world" or to organize utopian experiments. William Penn's Holy Experiment of religious tolerance attracted many of these groups, including the Ephrata community, which created a renowned set of illuminated hymnbooks; Moravian villages known for their slip-decorated pottery; and Harmony, which produced illustrated plans of the built and natural environment. Outside of Pennsylvania, the most notable separatist community that spanned the Revolutionary and national periods was the Shakers, known formally as the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing. Persecuted in England, the Shakers formed seventeen communities in the United States between 1776 and 1810. But relations between the Shakers

and non-believers in America were often tense as they had been overseas, and arrests of its pacifist membership occurred during the Revolutionary War. They proclaimed their difference visually with inspirational drawings meant as "gifts of love" to one another. Among the designs were illustrated "rewards" shaped into hearts and fans; "sacred sheets" filled with motifs such as mystical circles, doves, angels, eyes, and hands; and colorful trees of life accompanied by commentaries about being led to the spirit world or messages from spirits often inspired by biblical passages.

#### **OCCUPATIONAL, CLASS, AND CRAFT CONSCIOUSNESS**

The expansion of communities inland along a movable frontier and their separation from European markets created localized or regionalized markets within America for many traditional artisans. In addition, the availability of land, especially in newer, more remote settlements, fostered the taking up by farm families of a variety of crafts, including smithing, pottery, and basketry, that might have been done on a more specialized basis in a more feudal-like system. Especially notable on the American landscape was an abundance of wood, which often surprised Europeans, whose forests had been depleted. A number of American arts made use of this resource in the making of such things as cigar-store figures, signs for shops and inns, ship figureheads and sternboards, weather vanes, bird decoys, toys and gameboards, gates, butter molds, dough trays, and cake boards.

By the time of the Revolution, furniture making was one of America's leading trades, and many examples of decorated chests, benches, tables, beds, and chairs enlivened domestic environments. In Pennsylvania German communities, it was common to bestow a decorated dower chest and bride's box, frequently painted with ethnic symbols, to newlyweds. Elsewhere, storage boxes made of wood for candles, knives, trinkets, and spices were constructed in households. Among the decorated furniture that announced rising economic status was the tall clock. Sometimes reaching as high as ninety-five inches, fancy clockworks were typically made by a special artisan, while the impressive case was made by someone else. The tall clock usually contained decorations on both the case and dial and would usually be kept in a prominent place in the hallway near the house's entrance. Indeed, one of the architectural developments in the late eighteenth century that fostered domestic arts was the idea of a "front-stage" hallway furnished with—in addition to the clock—

decorative items such as framed mirrors, benches, wall hangings, and floor coverings meant to convey status before visitors were taken "back-stage."

The enlargement of the whaling trade in the early nineteenth century gave rise to a distinctive American sailor's art in scrimshaw, namely, engravings and carvings on whale's teeth and bones. Many of the scenes illustrate occupational pride in the experiences of the voyage or expressions of love for those left home. Home ports in New England as well as scenes of exotic locations and adventures are depicted, showing pride in American sailing expertise. Sailors also created implements out of whale ivory, including pie crimpers and dippers that often had carved animal figures for handles.

Although the period of the young Republic has often been romanticized as being a golden pre-industrial age when American folk art flowered, traditions continued to evolve and emerge even as industrialization and urbanization spread. While folk art is not restricted to one period, the symbols and forms of grassroots production that took shape during the early national period bring into relief the ways that people expressed their separateness and unity within a broad American landscape.

*See also African Survivals; Art and American Nationhood; Communitarian Movements and Utopian Communities; Food; Furniture; Pennsylvania; Textiles Manufacturing.*

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Bishop, Robert, and Jacqueline M. Atkins. *Folk Art in American Life*. New York: Viking Studio Books, 1995.
- Christensen, Erwin O. *Early American Wood Carving*. Cleveland: World Publishing, 1952.
- Fox, Sandi. *For Purpose and Pleasure: Quilting Together in Nineteenth-Century America*. Nashville, Tenn.: Rutledge Hill, 1995.
- Harding, Deborah. *Stars and Stripes: Patriotic Motifs in American Folk Art*. New York: Rizzoli, 2002.
- Lipman, Jean, and Alice Winchester. *The Flowering of American Folk Art, 1776–1876*. New York: Viking, 1974.
- Lipman, Jean, Elizabeth V. Warren, and Robert Bishop. *Young America: A Folk-Art History*. New York: Hudson Hills, 1986.
- McManus, Michael. *A Treasury of American Scrimshaw: A Collection of the Useful and Decorative*. New York: Penguin Studio, 1997.
- Quimby, Ian M. G., ed. *The Craftsman in Early America*. New York: Norton, 1984.
- Sprigg, June. *Shaker Design*. New York: Norton, 1986.
- Swank, Scott T. *Arts of the Pennsylvania Germans*. New York: Norton, 1983.

Vlach, John Michael. *The Afro-American Tradition in Decorative Arts*. Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1978. Reprint, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Plain Painters: Making Sense of American Folk Art*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988.

Weekley, Carolyn J. *The Kingdoms of Edward Hicks*. Williamsburg, Va.: Abrams, 1999.

Simon J. Bronner

**FOOD** The story of American food in the mid- to late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries involves changes in production, trade, cuisine, and consumption. During these years, American settlers witnessed not only the birth of a nation but also the emergence of a national economy based on the circulation of such foodstuffs as wheat, corn, livestock, and rice. Overall, the period was a time of increased prosperity for settlers able to take part in the most lucrative forms of agriculture and trade. This prosperity was reflected in the diet of the wealthy, who chose from an abundant and diverse selection of foodstuffs.

Growth throughout the original colonies and new territories was not uniform, however, and settlers did not profit equally from the changes. In particular, many Amerindians and African slaves, whose knowledge, labor, and land proved essential to the success of the new nation, were excluded from the benefits of economic progress. Poorer white Americans also did not necessarily see a significant change in their standard of living. Indeed, economies and ways of life, including culinary customs, varied widely by racial and socioeconomic status, as well as by region. White ethnic groups also practiced unique traditions that contributed to regional habits.

A few commonalities did exist among groups, however; for instance, corn (often called Indian corn or maize) and pork remained staples well into the nineteenth century for virtually all. Additionally, women largely were responsible for food preparation, and scholars at the turn of the twenty-first century are particularly interested in examining American-authored cookbooks, first published in the late eighteenth century and often written by women, for information about women's lives and beliefs. In spite of these similarities, regional variations in the ways people produced, obtained, prepared, and consumed food in the early years of the nation are significant enough to merit separate treatment here.

## THE NORTH

Much of the wealth in New England during the colonial era derived from the shipping trade, which carried goods to Britain, Continental Europe, and the Caribbean, a major market for American foodstuffs. In particular, New England settlers produced and sent large quantities of dried fish to southern Europe and the Caribbean, which also received livestock, salt beef and pork, butter, and cheese. Some cheese and foodstuffs went to the American South as well.

In the earlier part of the eighteenth century, New England farmers supplied the Caribbean and southern Europe with wheat, corn, and flour, too, but by the latter half of the century, Maryland, Virginia, and the middle colonies, which included New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, had surpassed New England in the production of breadstuffs. Indeed, New England settlers as a whole came to depend on the middle colonies and the South for their own wheat as well. Inhabitants of the middle colonies also produced salted beef and pork for the Caribbean and southern Europe, which in the late eighteenth century experienced unusually bad harvests that drove up the price and demand for American wheat.

New England dietary habits have been studied in more detail than those of other regions, and research suggests that the seasonal diet of the early colonial period had given way by the late eighteenth century to a more diversified fare throughout the year. In colonial times, settlers subsisted mainly on breads made with corn, which Amerindians taught them how to grow and cook, as well as other corn-based dishes, such as hasty pudding and other cornmeal mushes or porridges. Colonists also made breads from a corn and rye mix. By the early nineteenth century, however, wealthier inhabitants were using wheat grain and flour.

Salt pork and beef were the most popular meats in New England, and New England settlers in general adhered to the English dietary preference for meat by consuming it in increasing quantities. Early colonists depended on wild game, but later inhabitants used it only as a supplement. The consumption of butter and cheese also increased, and by the nineteenth century, families of moderate means could eat it year-round.

The production of garden vegetables, such as pumpkins, squashes, beans, and peas—many of which also had Amerindian origins—had increased by the nineteenth century, too, and could be eaten year-round by the more wealthy. Peas and beans often were boiled with salt pork to form a kind of

porridge or stew; baked beans also were a popular dish. These one-pot meals were mainstays for poorer families, who also consumed turnips and, by the late eighteenth century, potatoes. On the other hand, well-to-do residents could partake of such imported luxuries as oranges, limes, coffee, and chocolate.

Archaeological research into the trash sites of homes shows further disparity between the foods consumed by wealthy and poor families. Although chickens were prevalent in New England, they were eaten more frequently by the wealthy. The wealthy also seem to have eaten more expensive cuts of meat, while poorer families depended more on fish and shellfish, which, however, were consumed by all classes. Settlers also grew apples across New England and used them in pies and cider, which along with beer was a ubiquitous beverage.

Some New England settlers thus experienced a significant increase in their daily standards of consumption in the late eighteenth century. The middle colonies, endowed with richer soils, may have been the site of less noticeable changes. In large port cities, such as New York and Philadelphia, the wealthy continued to eat better foods. However, the French Revolution, which began in 1789, had a profound impact on upper-class cuisine, which incorporated the ragouts, soups, and ice cream introduced by exiled cooks. These cooks also founded the first restaurants, a French invention, up and down the eastern seaboard and in New Orleans.

Among farmers, a simple if ample diet still reigned. The Dutch in New York and the Germans in Pennsylvania were especially known for eating a wide variety of dairy products, fruits, and vegetables, including cottage cheese, coleslaw, and sauerkraut. Among German immigrants, pork was popular and was turned into sausages, filled pig's stomachs, and scrapple, a boiled pudding of pork and buckwheat.

Less fortunate than the white settlers were the region's Amerindian inhabitants, who were gradually forced west, especially after the Louisiana Purchase (1803), in which the United States bought the Louisiana Territory from France. Although many Amerindians by the mid- to late eighteenth century were raising livestock and crops for consumption and trade, the United States government preferred strategies of removal to those of assimilation. Amerindians also faced food shortages by the late eighteenth century because of the depletion of game and other forest resources. Some Amerindians experienced shortages because of their increased focus on producing goods for trade. Although much Amer-

ican culinary culture can trace its roots to Amerindian practice, Amerindians themselves were not incorporated wholeheartedly into the United States.

#### THE SOUTH

Colonial-era planters depended on tobacco for their livelihood, but those in Maryland and Virginia increasingly began to grow corn, and more so wheat, by the late eighteenth century to supply the Caribbean and southern Europe, as well as New England. In the Carolinas, Georgia, and other parts of the South, rice became a major export crop during the eighteenth century and continued to be produced into the nineteenth. Some slaves, familiar with rice cultivation in Africa, contributed greatly to the rise of rice as a staple commodity by providing both technical knowledge and labor. Slaves also worked on sugar plantations established in the Lower Mississippi Valley during the late eighteenth century. By the early nineteenth century, other American markets were importing sugar from the lower Mississippi in significant quantities.

Slaves also transformed Southern cuisine by preparing most of the food on the plantations, as well as by using ingredients unfamiliar to white settlers. Barbecuing became a favorite method of food preparation adopted from Caribbean Indians by slaves. Okra, too, was a popular ingredient after arriving either directly from Africa or from Africa via the Caribbean. The wealthiest planters lived lavishly on elaborate breakfasts, dinners, and suppers of eggs, ham, fish, fowl, seafood, cheese, apples, cakes, pickles, marmalades, creams, sweetmeats, jellies, rum, and Madeira. The less moneyed planters may not have lived as luxuriously, but the wealthy did set a standard for lavish eating that others emulated.

Slaves and poorer whites lived on less exalted fare, depending on the staples of pork and corn. Corn was used to make breads, cakes, mush, hominy, and grits, all of which wealthier settlers ate, too. Sweet potatoes also occupied a paramount place in a less affluent diet, and for many, turkeys, rabbits, partridges, squirrels, opossums, and other wild animals provided an important supplement to pork. Some slaves were allowed to cultivate gardens, raise livestock, and hunt, but others did not receive adequate provisions or have the opportunity to produce their own food. Standard slave rations included corn and, in some areas, salted herring or, occasionally, meat. Those who had gardens produced cabbages, collard greens, turnips, and other vegetables. Some slaves also raised hogs and chickens, while others sold surplus goods to their masters and in markets.

Slaves around New Orleans, too, had opportunities to grow produce for the market, and Amerindians also grew and sold crops in what was perhaps the most cosmopolitan region of the time. There, French, Spanish, African, Amerindian, and, later, English influences mixed to produce a unique culture and cuisine that became known as Creole. Indeed, for most of the eighteenth century, European settlers in the area depended heavily on trade with Amerindians for basic foodstuffs, including cornmeal, bear oil, poultry, vegetables, fish, and game. Colonists also emulated Amerindians in using a mix of agriculture, hunting, gathering, fishing, livestock raising, and trading to supply their daily needs.

Lower Mississippi cookery had a similarly multiethnic provenance, and many settlers adopted Amerindian foods and methods of food preparation. *Sagamité*, or corn boiled in water with butter or bacon fat, was a popular dish among many settlers. African slaves also had an impact on the diet and incorporated rice into many of the region's dishes, including rice with red beans. Various types of fish and shellfish also formed the basis of bisques, gumbos, and jambalayas. The latter two dishes have names that could be of African, Choctaw, and French origin and represent the diversity that characterized the region overall.

#### THE WESTERN TERRITORIES

The western territories, which included western Pennsylvania, western Maryland, the land around the Appalachians, and much of the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys, were for most of the eighteenth century and beyond largely isolated from major centers of commerce. Significant routes of trade had opened up, however, by the early nineteenth century, so that corn, flour, and salted pork from the Upper Mississippi Valley, for example, were being sent downriver to New Orleans and thence to the Caribbean. Settlers in the Ohio Valley, Kentucky, and Tennessee had also begun transporting cattle and hogs to the east by the late 1820s. The opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 facilitated the shipment of grain and other provisions out of the Ohio Valley and presaged the important role the region would assume later in the production of wheat.

Although those participating in these profitable trades enjoyed a high standard of living, less wealthy, Backcountry settlers maintained a more subsistence-oriented diet and depended heavily on game, including bear, venison, rabbit, squirrel, opossum, woodchuck, and turkey. Settlers also consumed nuts, wild fruits, and wild honey. Bear's

grease comprised one of the principal flavorings and was often added to various dishes as shortening. Cornmeal made into bread or pone, mush, and porridge was a staple, as were pork and bacon. Whiskey, too, was a popular drink that allowed settlers to trade grain in portable form. A large number of Scots-Irish settlers populated the Backcountry as well and brought the use of potatoes with them. They also made a dish called *clabber*, which contained sour milk, curds, and whey, and partook of the basic fare that characterized much of the region as a whole.

Food in early America thus was a varied and complex affair. Although some feasted on elaborate preparations, many adhered to a simpler cuisine. A widespread plenty may have been emerging, but the terms also were set for distinctions in wealth and consumption that have continued into the twenty-first century.

*See also Agriculture: Overview; Domestic Life; Work: Domestic Labor; Work: Women's Work.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Benes, Peter, ed. *Foodways in the Northeast*. Boston: Boston University, 1984.
- Bidwell, Percy Wells, and John I. Falconer. *History of Agriculture in the Northern United States, 1620–1860*. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1925.
- Calloway, Colin G. *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.
- Gray, Lewis Cecil. *History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860*. 2 vols. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1933.
- Hooker, Richard J. *Food and Drink in America: A History*. Indianapolis, Ind.: Bobbs-Merrill, 1981.
- Hurt, R. Douglas. *Indian Agriculture in America: Prehistory to the Present*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1987.
- Littlefield, Daniel C. *Rice and Slaves: Ethnicity and the Slave Trade in Colonial South Carolina*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981.
- McMahon, Sarah F. "A Comfortable Subsistence: The Changing Composition of Diet in Rural New England, 1620–1840." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 42 (1985): 26–65.
- Theophano, Janet. *Eat My Words: Reading Women's Lives through the Cookbooks They Wrote*. New York: Palgrave, 2002.
- Usner, Daniel H., Jr. *Indians, Settlers, and Slaves in a Frontier Exchange Economy: The Lower Mississippi Valley before 1783*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992.

Julie Chun Kim

**FOREIGN INVESTMENT AND TRADE** The European settlement of British North America began as a series of business ventures. Though the Virginia and Plymouth joint-stock companies failed to reap large profits, they did provide the capital and organization through which permanent settlement began in the early seventeenth century. Even after these companies disappeared, the overseas trade they inaugurated grew in importance as British North America emerged as a primary supplier of raw materials and a major consumer of British finished goods. After independence, Britain remained a primary investor and partner in international trade, though the United States found new markets throughout Europe and the Western Hemisphere.

#### LATE COLONIAL PERIOD

The economic effects and even the meaning of mercantilism remain contested, but if nothing else the system tied colonists commercially to English, Scottish, Irish, and British West Indian markets. Nor was that relationship necessarily disadvantageous, as Americans profited mightily from the Atlantic trade. Inadequate evidence prevents definitive conclusions, but work on the period from 1768 to 1772 provides a glimpse into the nature of trade at the end of the colonial period. As Table 1 demonstrates, the British Isles were the primary source of trade for the thirteen mainland colonies. As a result of mercantilist legislation like the Navigation Acts, manufactured and luxury goods from the British Isles composed an estimated 79 percent of colonial imports. In exchange, the colonists exported 58 percent of their commodities—most notably tobacco, flour, rice, fish, wheat, and naval stores—to Great Britain. French and British planters in the West Indies consumed 27 percent of the mainland's exports, exchanging sugar and molasses for foodstuffs and lumber. In the 1760s demand for food in the Iberian Peninsula and the Mediterranean region broadened the market for American rice and wheat, making southern Europe a destination for 14 percent of total exports.

Statistical evidence regarding finance in early America, especially in the colonial period, remains scattered and imprecise. Nevertheless, economic historians have estimated that on the eve of the Revolution, Americans owed British investors around £2.9 million in commercial debt. In addition to this Mira Wilkins, in *The History of Foreign Investment in the United States to 1914* (1989), has estimated that there was an additional £1.1 million of long-term foreign investment in land, ironworks, and other ventures.

TABLE 1

<b>Estimated Average Amount of Annual Trade from Thirteen Continental Colonies, 1768–1772</b>		
Destination/Origin	Value of Exports	Value of Imports
Great Britain and Ireland	£1,615	£3,082
West Indies (British and Foreign Islands)	£759	£770
Southern Europe and Wine Islands	£426	£68
Other	£21	N/A
Total	£2,800	£3,920

**Source:** McCusker and Menard, Table 4.1, pp. 812–812.

At the end of the colonial period, Britain very much remained the center of American trade and finance.

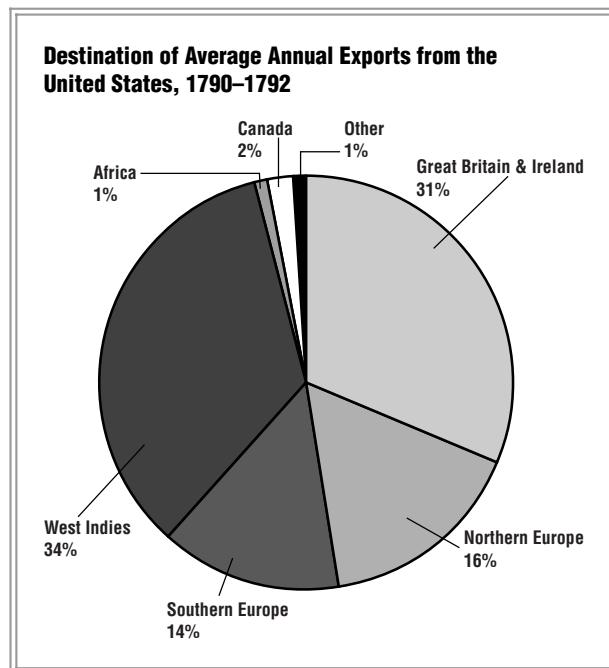
#### REVOLUTIONARY ERA, 1765–1789

Conditions of war notably altered and restricted trade while also raising the need for more foreign investment from new sources. The nonimportation agreements from late 1774 to April 1776 and Britain's wartime embargo curtailed foreign commerce considerably. The signing of a Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the French on 6 February 1778, and similar treaties with the Netherlands (8 October 1782) and Sweden (3 April 1783), did, however, facilitate the importation of goods from non-British nations. In addition, American privateering against British traders caused an estimated £18 million worth of damage and illegally brought confiscated goods into the United States.

The war shifted the sources of foreign trade somewhat. Though Britain reemerged in the early 1790s as the single most important trading partner of the nation (consuming 31 percent of American exports from 1790 to 1792), American merchants also dealt directly with northern European trading houses, especially in the Netherlands, Germany, and France, nations that consumed 14 percent of U.S. exports. (See Table 2.)

Generally speaking, the war and its immediate aftermath adversely affected exports more than imports, in part because of the need to purchase supplies for armies. To make up for the resulting trade deficit and to fund the war effort, Americans were forced to borrow large sums of money. In December 1776 the Continental Congress authorized the first of several loans from France, which by war's end totaled \$4.4 million. Dutch and Spanish allies contributed additional sums of \$1.8 million and \$200,000, respectively. Overseas investment and finance

TABLE 2



Source: Shephard and Walton, Table 3, p. 406.

changed during the Revolutionary period as Britain's rivals became the chief lenders to the new nation. Particularly important were the Dutch, who in 1782 floated the United States additional loans of around \$2 million. By the time Alexander Hamilton prepared his *Report on the Public Credit* (1790), the country's total federal debt at the end of 1789 had reached \$54 million, of which 21.6 percent (\$11.7 million) was held overseas. A portion of Virginia and South Carolina's state debts were also foreign-held, meaning that at least 29 percent of the public debt was held overseas, predominantly in the Netherlands and France.

#### EARLY REPUBLIC, 1790–1830

The implementation of Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton's financial system helped to stabilize the nation's public credit and attract increased European (especially British) investment in the federal debt and the stocks of the First and Second National Banks. By 1803, about 62 percent (or \$6.2 million) of the stocks in the First Bank of the United States were foreign-owned, including \$4 million by British firms like the prestigious House of Baring. In that same year, largely as a result of the loans necessary to pay for the Louisiana Purchase (1803), the percent of foreign investment in the federal debt reached its all-time high of 56 percent.

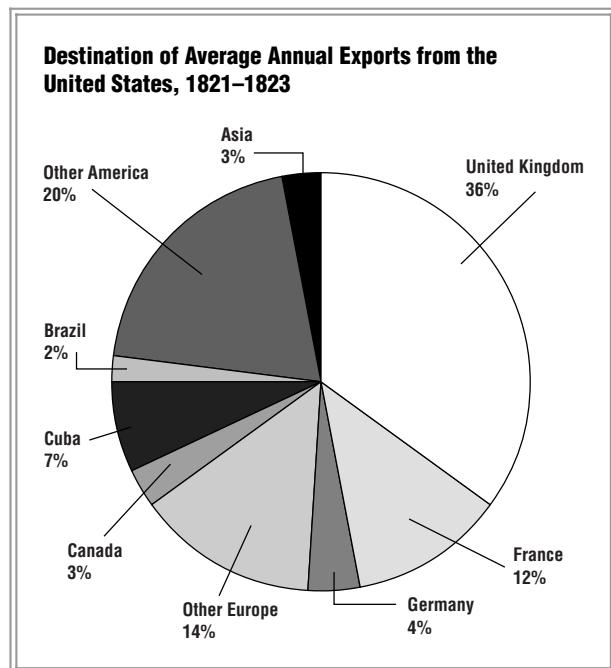
TABLE 3



Note: These statistics include gold and silver transfers and are taken from the *Historical Statistics of the United States, from Colonial Times to 1970*, U187–200, p. 886.

Better credit along with international circumstances made the period from 1793 to 1806 a time of considerable growth in foreign commerce. Direct trade with Europe remained an important part of American overseas trade, especially after Jay's Treaty (1794) secured peaceful relations between the United States and Britain. But with the outbreak of war in Europe in 1793, America's position as a neutral nation allowed it to profit from the reexport trade. American merchants and shippers indirectly transported sugar, coffee, cocoa, and pepper from French and British West Indian colonies to Europe, a carrying trade that contributed considerable wealth to northeastern port cities. By 1805 the reexport carrying trade of foreign goods was valued at slightly over \$53 million, while that of domestic products was only \$42 million. This trade's profitability, however, further embroiled the United States in European conflicts, leading to commercial retaliation under the administrations of Thomas Jefferson (1801–1809) and James Madison (1809–1817). (See Table 3.)

In December 1807 Congress passed, at Jefferson's request, a complete embargo or ban on American exports. Despite some smuggling, Jefferson's embargo and accompanying enforcement legislation dramatically reduced foreign trade. Total exports of U.S. merchandise dropped from an estimated \$49

**TABLE 4**

**Source:** *Historical Statistics of the United States, U317–334, p. 904.*

million in 1807 to \$9 million in 1808, while imports fell from record highs (\$139 million) to decade lows (\$57 million). The end of the embargo early in 1809 would briefly allow for a recovery of the export and to a lesser extent the import trade. However, the buildup to war against England in 1812 further restricted international commerce. The extended period of commercial and actual warfare from 1805 to 1815 would increase the nation's nascent manufacturing capabilities and provide some viable domestic sources for finished cloth and metal goods that previously had to be imported from Europe.

The return of peace in 1815 meant a decline in the significance of the reexport trade, but America's direct trade to Europe, and especially Britain, quickly rebounded. The industrial revolution in Britain and the emergence of cotton as a cash crop in the lower southern United States brought Anglo-American trade to new heights. By the 1820s cotton had risen to approximately one-third of total U.S. exports, most of which went to Britain and some of which was exchanged for finished cloth. Wheat and tobacco destined for Europe remained important segments of international trade. An important, if often neglected, part of American foreign commerce involved the growing trade within the Western Hemisphere, which included the sale of foodstuffs, naval stores,

and even some manufactured goods to the West Indian islands, Brazil, and Canada. (See Table 4.)

As the early national period progressed, foreign investment in the federal debt grew less significant, though British and Dutch interests would continue to invest in U.S. stocks, even after the War of 1812. In 1818, 26 percent of the \$99 million federal debt was held overseas, with the British holding \$12.6 and the Dutch \$11.1 million. British investors would play an important role in funding the second national bank (1816). Andrew Jackson, in his 1832 veto message blocking renewal of the bank's charter, claimed that 30 percent of the bank's private shares were held abroad, principally in Britain. Foreign investment grew in the 1820s as individuals and states turned increasingly to Britain to fund banking and internal improvement projects. By the 1820s American states such as Pennsylvania, Virginia, Louisiana, and Ohio had followed the lead of New York, which in 1817 sold state bonds for canal projects in London securities markets. In addition, during the 1820s European and particularly British investors were increasing their investments in various facets of the cotton trade. These post-1815 investments were a prelude to the rapid expansion of foreign investment and speculation in U.S. markets in the mid-1830s, a development believed by many to have contributed to the Panic of 1837.

*See also Bank of the United States; Embargo; Panic of 1819; Revolution: Finance; Taxation, Public Finance, and Public Debt.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Hancock, David. *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735–1785*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Jones, Alice Hanson. *Wealth of a Nation to Be: The American Colonies on the Eve of the Revolution*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1980.
- McCusker, John J., and Russell R. Menard. *The Economy of British America, 1607–1789*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985.
- Nettels, Curtis. *The Emergence of a National Economy, 1775–1815*. Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1962.
- North, Douglas. *The Economic Growth of the United States, 1790–1860*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1961.
- Pitkin, Timothy. *A Statistical View of the Commerce of the United States of America*. 1835. Reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint, 1967.
- Shephard, James, and Gary Walton. "Economic Change after the American Revolution: Pre- and Post-War Comparisons of Maritime Shipping and Trade." *Explorations in Economic History* 13 (1976): 397–422.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Historical Statistics of the United States, from Colonial Times to 1970*. New York: Basic Books, 1976.

Wilkins, Mira. *The History of Foreign Investment in the United States to 1914*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989.

Brian Schoen

**FORTS AND FORTIFICATIONS** In the 1770s, on the eve of the American War of Independence, the colonists already had an established "heritage of war." This heritage began in 1607 with the building of protective forts by the Jamestown settlers and continued in 1634 with the fortification of Boston by the Massachusetts Bay Company. The intervening skirmishes and campaigns aimed at maintaining European domination of its colonies around the world were part of the larger Euro-American heritage of war, which reached its conclusion in the War of 1812, the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

#### THE COLONIAL AND PRE-REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD

Native Americans and seventeenth-century settlers and colonists frequently surrounded their villages with palisades or stockades, interchangeable terms for protective rows of felled trees dug vertically into the ground. Musketeers and bowmen shot from ports or loopholes in the stockade or, occasionally, from a blockhouse or a bastion located on one or more corners (salients) of the square or rectangular fort. Some blockhouses and bastions were two stories in height for greater visibility and firepower. Buildings for cooking, eating, and sanitation and for storage of weapons, munitions, and food, as well as barracks, were protected within the palisade when space permitted.

During the French and Indian War (1756–1763), the colonists' opposition was a Western European nation with the capability for cannon and artillery and two centuries of experience and knowledge in the military arts. Thus the colonists' level of military technology took a necessary leap. Colonial fortifications became more complex than the simple palisaded outpost, incorporating earthworks based on European military models. Fortifications, such as those at Fort Stanwix in New York colony, were frequently strengthened several times. Dirt was added, or "thrown up," behind the palisade or stockade, resulting in an earthen rampart that provided a heavier shield of protection against a besieging force. Colo-

nists employed a "balanced job" construction technique, with the thrown-up dirt forming a ditch (or fosse) encircling the entire palisade; occasionally this ditch was filled with water to form a moat. Palisades with loopholes for firing *en embrasure* (from openings in the parapet) or with castellated parapets for firing *en barbette* (from a protected platform) were sometimes dug into the top of the rampart, adding height and visibility to the fort's firepower. In these cases, a banquette (an elevated way along the inside of a parapet) or terreplein (a level space behind a parapet) was formed for placement of defenders and cannons at a raised level. In some cases the wooden palisade was laid back at an angle on the earthen rampart, forming a revetment on the front slope of the rampart and above the scarp of the ditch. When cannonballs exploded on timber revetments, secondary projectiles of large wooden splinters were sometimes launched at both the attackers and the defenders. Trees were felled and bushes were cleared from the slopes surrounding a fort to provide better visibility; the products of this clearing activity were used to build additional elements of defensive works, including fascines (bound bundles of sticks), chandeliers (pairs of x-shaped sawhorses connected by a bar that supported fascines), fraises (long, pointed stakes projecting from the rampart at an angle) and abatis (obstacles formed by felled trees with sharpened branches).

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD THROUGH 1794

The term "fort" had a broad meaning in the North American colonies. It referred to stockades, palisades, blockhouses, redoubts, *redans* (v-shaped projections from a fortified line), detached works, rifle and artillery batteries, *flèches* (detached v-shaped defensive works in an open field), garrisons, outposts or camps, and even castles and fortresses. A fortified place, whether a log cabin with loopholes for rifles or a huge stone castle with a hundred or more guns in casemates (protected enclosures), went by the name "fort."

Generally, American Revolutionary War forts were temporary, hasty, and pragmatic earthworks set up to respond to a perceived military threat. These early earthworks contrasted sharply with the planned and permanent castles, forts, and walled cities of Europe based on British and French siege craft theory. European fortified places were considered Enlightenment works of art, like landscaped gardens; they served as physical symbols of man's rationality and his dominance over natural forces. European manuals described the fort-building process in great



**Fort Edgecomb.** This centerpiece of this fort is an octagonal blockhouse that was built about 1809 to protect the town of Wiscasset, Maine, then an important shipping center. © LEE SNIDER/PHOTO IMAGES/CORBIS.

detail, relying on geometry to provide lines of fire along all angles of the fort's curtain walls so as to prevent an enemy from climbing and breaching the defensive works.

Depending on the topographic and strategic situations, forts could be triangular (*fleches*, outer works, and detached batteries), square, rectangular, pentagonal, hexagonal, or star-shaped. There were almost as many shapes as there were practicing military engineers and architects. But the French and the British schools clearly dominated the stately art of siege craft. The dominance of French terms in naming parts of forts (many English words derive from these imported French terms) reflects the importance of the French militarists, especially Sébastien de Vau-ban (1633–1707).

In the North American colonies and the early republic through the War of 1812, the star fort was preferred for political and military reasons. Because the French preferred the star and the revolutionaries were politically allied with France, it quickly became the American favorite. Strategically, the star allowed

360-degree visibility across the open glacis and beyond. Each projection of the star fort was called a salient, and the point where two salients joined, near the central body of the star, was called a re-entrant angle. The star shape enabled enfilading fire, meaning that both faces of each salient could be covered by cannons and muskets from the face of the adjacent salient. The star's salient had faces looking toward the enemy as did a bastion, but no inward-facing flanks, the absence of which meant one less surface to protect with enfilading fire. The traces of star forts were probably easier to mark on the ground during construction than other polygons that included bastions. The six-pointed "Washington Star" forts were symmetrical and stylistically compatible with Georgian and Enlightenment ideals of balance and symmetry. In addition, the American Revolutionary forces preferred to place their earthworks on hilltops, a topographic situation favoring the panoptic, 360-degree views afforded by the star. By contrast, the British preferred to locate their fortifications to enable the control of roads; thus British forts required views of only 90 degrees to either side. Given that



**Fort McHenry.** Built in the 1790s on the harbor in Baltimore, Maryland, Fort McHenry was attacked by British warships in September 1814. Francis Scott Key was inspired to write the "Star-Spangled Banner" after witnessing the American defense of the fort. © PAUL A. Souders/CORBIS.

preference, the British had little use for the star form and little understanding of the American preference.

During the Revolution and later, Americans also commonly used linear, temporary, semitransportable breastwork constructions. These constructions, arranged linearly along a position, included gabions (baskets or cages filled with rocks used to build supports) and *chandeliers* that supported fascines. Such constructions snaked across the landscape at Valley Forge and Bunker Hill. They had right-angled projections, prototypical bastions, along their length, allowing the defenders enfilading fire along the face of the breastwork. These fieldworks derive historically from Vauban's system of parallels and approaches used by the besieging forces.

Just as the plan of a single fort was geometric, so was the arrangement of forts on the landscape. At Yorktown the British entrenchments consisted of two parallel arcs, with the first-built outer works set

up to impede Allied forces (the combined American colonials and French) and the subsequently built inner works to protect the town itself. The outer works incorporated the naturally swampy ravines adjacent to the York River into the entrenchment plan as a means of further impeding the Allied investments. The arc of the outer work was also continued in the shallow waters of the York River when the British scuttled twenty-nine ships.

The inner, main works was planned to consist of eight redoubts interspersed by eight land batteries and four water batteries, with several picket *redans*, traverses, and a hornwork. These works, together with an earth-backed, stockaded line without a ditch, were arranged concentrically around Yorktown. The powder magazine at Redoubt No. 4 had a fascine-type floor and a roof covered with fascines, dirt, and rawhide that were typical of the period.

Southern coastal fortifications displayed some variability in construction materials. As a rare half-bastioned redoubt, Fort Dorchester in South Carolina was simpler to construct than full bastions but was weaker because of its fewer flanks; moreover, the faces of the half-bastions could only be protected by enfilading fire from one side. Among the earliest southern campaign fortifications (c. 1775), it had tabby ramparts walls that were an amazing thirty-four feet thick and only the customary seven to eight feet high. Tabby was a building material composed of ground oyster shells, lime, and sand mixed with salt water. Other revolutionary forts in the southeastern United States, such as Fort Frederica in coastal Georgia, were constructed of tabby.

Fort Moultrie, part of a complex defensive works that Americans collectively called Charleston, was instrumental in the early colonial victory, preceding the Declaration of Independence, of 28 June 1776. The fort's ramparts were revetted with soft palmetto log cribwork filled with artillery-absorbing sand. Enclosed bunkers located beneath the cannon on the rampart were used as magazines, officers' quarters, or a casemated lower tier of cannon. Later versions of these bomb proofs were complete with chimneys for ventilation. Fort Moultrie was an unusual Revolutionary citadel because it was the colonial counterpart of a European walled city, serving to surround a town and its civilian inhabitants.

In the southern backcountry, troubled relations between the Cherokees and Creeks, the colonial settlers, and the British resulted in the building of many fortifications between the 1750s and 1800. For example, Fort Ninety-Six was originally built by the British in 1759 as a stockade against the Cherokees,

whose resistance was broken in 1761. The British used sandbags to raise the parapets by three feet and to shape the musket loopholes in the palisade. To occupy a fortification was to be on the defensive and to engage in passive practices; the British defenders waited, played games, drilled, and maintained fortifications, provisions, and equipment.

At Fort Ninety-Six in June 1781, the colonials, commanded by Lt. Col. Thaddeus Kosciusko, a skilled military engineer, unsuccessfully besieged the improved, British-held star and circular redoubts. The colonials attacked with sandbags, hooks, and ladders through almost a half-mile of excavated, underground features such as systems of parallels, approaches, saps, and mines. Aboveground, gabions served to protect the besieging colonials. The act of besieging required invaders to dig parallels and approaches in the dirt and build fascines and gabions, dissipating the strength of their offensive. A colonial innovation, the thirty-foot-high Mahan Tower topped with parapets for attacking colonial musket fire, offered a panoptic elevation to the planar landscape. The tower was built of green logs so the British hot shot would not ignite it. The British abandoned their fortifications in July 1781 because of their poor, isolated backcountry position; the War of Independence began to focus on the coasts and river near Yorktown. The Americans occupied the fortifications and used them as backcountry defenses against the British-allied Creeks and Cherokees for the rest of the eighteenth century and through their removal in the 1830s.

In the western backcountry of Appalachia, the Great Lakes region, and beyond to the Mississippi River, the colonial campaigns of 1778 and 1779 sought to break the British-Indian alliances. A string of earthen outposts and wooden stockades were built along the Ohio River system to protect the waterways that brought supplies and militia to the far western theater of operations. Fort Duquesne (renamed Pitt when under English control) is the most famous of these riverine forts, which also included Forts MacIntosh, Fincastle (Henry), and Randolph. The colonial populace frequently fled to these forts for refuge from, and retaliation against, British-inspired Indian attacks. Between 1784 and 1790 Indians killed or captured some fifteen hundred settlers in Kentucky alone. Many forts were captured by the British-Indian alliance. These forts, according to the terms of the Jay Treaty of 1794, were to be evacuated by the British by 1796.

#### THE FIRST SYSTEM, 1794–1801

After the Treaty of Paris ended the War of Independence in 1783, Americans were concerned that France and Britain would exploit the loyalty of Native American groups to block American westerly expansion. Also, the young American nation saw Britain's nautical mercantilism and France's Anglophobia as a threat to American rights of shipping and commerce on the high seas.

In response to these threats, the fledgling federal government instituted the First American System for the defense of its seacoast from British attack. As part of this system, in 1794 the government authorized \$76,000 in federal funds for the construction of coastal fortifications designed to protect fourteen geographically isolated seaports along the Atlantic Ocean from Maine to Georgia. The original authorization included another \$96,000 for armaments of the forts. The design of these defenses was not American but rather largely the product of French engineer-consultants. The small funding allocations of the First System generally allowed only for impermanent, earthen fortifications that could be easily thrown up without central planning. Some First System forts were revetted with stone.

Revolutionary battles frequently had two parallel command structures: a militarist held the overall command while an engineer was in charge of building the earthen defensive forts and excavating the offensive siege works (saps and mines, for example) for the attackers. An engineer, when present, or the military leaders commanded the sappers and miners. On 16 March 1802, Congress authorized the organization of an engineer corps, known as the Army Corps of Engineers, and the institution of a military academy at West Point, New York.

#### THE SECOND SYSTEM, 1807–1814

A renewed need for seacoast protection against the French, British, and Native Americans resulted in the Second American System of fortification of the seacoast, one of the first projects undertaken by the Army Corps of Engineers. Most Second System sea-coast forts were essentially completed by 1812. Multitiered architecture, with casemates at the levels of both the parade and the terreplein, first appeared in what Americans called the castles, such as Castle Clinton in New York City, of this Second American System. The Second System fortifications were generally intended to be masonry, although local exigencies and funding may have kept some of them as backcountry earthworks. The Second System was centralized and coordinated at the federal level, with

much less variability in form and method of construction than in the first. Local funding and volunteer assistance by state and other institutions, as at Dorchester Heights in South Boston, augmented the generous \$3 million federal allocation. A total of thirty-one new or rebuilt forts were part of this Second System and included defenses on the Gulf of Mexico. The works of many First System forts were improved during the Second System. When the War of 1812 broke out, every town of any magnitude on the coast was protected by at least one battery. Built in 1814, Fort Gratiot, located on Lake Huron on the American-Canadian border, is an example of American palisaded earthworks that were commonly found throughout the backcountry of the western frontier.

#### THE FLORIDA FRONTIER, 1817–1842

Diverse groups of Native Americans including Yamasees, Muscogulees, Seminoles, Cherokees, and Creeks settled in Florida throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The First Seminole War (1817–1818) involved raids, with the quasi approval of the president, by General Andrew Jackson's army against the forts and crops of Seminoles, "Seminole Negroes" (Africans enslaved by the Seminoles), and escaped slaves near and on the Florida panhandle. The U.S. government followed a civilization program in this period to contain the excessive land requirements of the Native mixed economies. Conflicts with white and Spanish settlers led to a reservation north of Tampa in inland areas established by the 1823 Treaty of Moultrie Creek (near St. Augustine) with the U.S. Government. Slave raiders attacked Creek and Seminole towns to recover escaped slaves and Seminole Negroes. Florida thus became caught up in the sectional contentions over slavery. Because of these land conflicts and slave raids, Americans felt that settlers needed protection; Cantonment Brooke (built in 1824 in modern Tampa) and Fort King (established in 1827 near Ocala) were established immediately after the treaty.

After the Native American groups learned of the new governmental policy of Indian removal of 1830, the Second Seminole War (1835–1842) erupted. Seminoles led by Osceola ambushed U.S. Army troops, led by General Wiley Thompson, outside the Fort King gate. Major Francis Dade's troops were attacked en route to Fort King from the U.S. Army headquarters at Cantonment Brooke. Fort King was a palisaded outpost with two full, square, two-story bastions on opposing corners. The palisade enclosed a magazine, a two-story blockhouse, and quarters

for officers and enlisted men. Other settlers' buildings located close to the palisade enjoyed the protection that the fortified garrison afforded. Fort King was abandoned in 1843 after the Second Seminole War ended.

*See also American Indians: American Indian Removal; Charleston; French and Indian War, Battles and Diplomacy; Frontier; Gunpowder, Munitions, and Weapons (Military); Military Technology; Revolution: Military History; Seminole Wars; War of 1812; Yorktown, Battle of.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Grant, Bruce. *American Forts, Yesterday and Today*. New York: Dutton, 1965.
- Greene, Jerome A. *The Allies at Yorktown: A Bicentennial History of the Siege of 1781*, Colonial National Historical Park, Virginia. Denver, Colo.: Denver Service Center, Historic Preservation Division, National Park Service, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1976.
- . *Ninety Six: A Historical Narrative*. Denver, Colo.: Denver Service Center, Historic Preservation Division, National Park Service, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1978.
- Holschlag, Stephanie L., and Michael J. Rodeffer. *Ninety-Six: Siegeworks Opposite the Star Redoubt*. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1976.
- Lewis, Emanuel Raymond. *Seacoast Fortifications of the United States: An Introductory History*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1979 (1993 printing).
- Lochée, Lewis. *Elements of Field Fortification*. London: T. Cadell, 1783.
- Muller, John. *A Treatise Containing the Practical Part of Fortification*, 2nd ed. London: Printed for A. Millar, 1765.
- Muller, John. *A Treatise Containing the Elementary Part of Fortification, Regular and Irregular*. 1746. Ottawa: Museum Restoration Service, 1968.
- Robinson, William B. *American Forts: Architectural Form and Function*. Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1977.
- Vauban, de, Sébastien LePrestre. *A Manual of Siegeworks and Fortification*. 1740. Translated by George A. Rothrock. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1968.

James W. Mueller

---

**FOUNDING FATHERS** The term "founding fathers" denotes the politicians, soldiers, jurists, and legislators who held leadership positions during the era of the American Revolution, the Confederation period, and the early Republic. Sometimes the term covers only the delegates to the Second Continental Congress (more usually known as "signers"), who in

July 1776 in Philadelphia's State House (now known as Independence Hall) declared American independence and adopted Thomas Jefferson's amended Declaration of Independence. More often it means the delegates to the Federal Convention, who met in the same building from May through September of 1787 and framed the proposed Constitution of the United States (more usually known as "framers"), and those who supported or opposed the Constitution during the ratification controversy of 1787–1788. At a minimum, the roster would include the seven key founding fathers named by Richard B. Morris, the eminent historian of the Revolution, in 1973: Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), George Washington (1732–1799), John Adams (1735–1826), Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826), John Jay (1745–1829), James Madison (1751–1836), and Alexander Hamilton (1755–1804).

But "founding fathers" is a protean phrase whose meaning has varied depending on who has used it and when. Some have used it to identify not only the usual cadre of elite white males but also the middling and common sorts who served in the American Revolution, voted for or against the Constitution, and helped to bring the new government into existence. Some historians have used the phrase "revolutionary generation"—although, depending on whom one includes, the founding fathers spanned three or even four generations, from Benjamin Franklin to Albert Gallatin (1761–1849). Some political writers have sought to remind Americans of the role of women in the nation's history, applying the term "founding mothers" to such women as Abigail Adams, Mercy Otis Warren, and Deborah Sampson. Significantly, however, with few exceptions the phrase has not included those who were not white, whether African American or Native American.

The core meaning of "founding fathers" remains constant, whatever the group's membership. It designates those who, by word or deed, helped to found the United States as a nation and a political experiment. Thus, the term includes those who sat in the Congress that declared American independence—even a delegate like John Dickinson of Pennsylvania, who opposed independence and refused to sign the Declaration but fought for the American cause in the Revolutionary War. It also encompasses others who fought for the American side in the war, or played important roles, as framers or ratifiers or opponents or subsequent effectuators, in the origins of the Constitution of the United States and the system of government it outlines.

### ORIGINS OF THE TERM

For a term so central to most Americans' understandings of their past, and so productive of legal, political, and historiographical controversy, "founding fathers" has a surprisingly short history—and an unexpected coiner. On 22 February 1918 Warren G. Harding, then a Republican senator from Ohio, was the featured speaker at the Washington's birthday commemoration hosted by the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution. Harding intoned, "It is good to meet and drink at the fountain of wisdom inherited from the founding fathers of the Republic." Pleased with how his words were received, Harding revived "founding fathers" in a speech accepting the 1920 Republican presidential nomination. Finally, on 4 March 1921, President Harding told the nation, in his Inaugural Address:

Standing in this presence, mindful of the solemnity of this occasion, feeling the emotions which no one may know until he senses the great weight of responsibility for himself, I must utter my belief in the divine inspiration of the founding fathers. Surely there must have been God's intent in the making of this new-world Republic.

Harding's coinage passed into general usage so swiftly and easily that its origins were soon forgotten. Not until the 1960s, when the speechwriter, journalist, and lexicographer William Safire posed the question to the Library of Congress's Congressional Research Service, was Harding identified as the inventor of "founding fathers." Given Harding's weak historical reputation, this two-word coinage may be his most enduring political and intellectual legacy.

### VENERATION OF THE FOUNDERS OVER TIME

Even before there was such a term, Americans expressed their reverence for the heterogeneous group of signers, framers, politicians, generals, polemicists, and jurists now known as the founding fathers. The tendency to see the elite national politicians of the 1770s, 1780s, and 1790s as a distinct group worthy of veneration began in the early decades of the nineteenth century. As the leaders of the Revolution and the early Republic retired and began, one by one, to die, their passing sparked growing anxiety among later generations of citizens and politicians. Those who had created the nation's constitutional and political order no longer would be present to guide its development and improvement.

Few captured this unease better than Abraham Lincoln, who in January 1838 delivered his first major political address, "The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions," before the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois. Lincoln spoke less than two

years after the death of the last surviving framer of the Constitution, James Madison, and less than six years after the death of the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence, Maryland's Charles Carroll. In his lecture Lincoln challenged Americans to preserve the form of free government created by those whom he hailed as "a once hardy, brave, and patriotic, but now lamented and departed race of ancestors," whom he dubbed "our fathers."

Lincoln's concerns resonated in many ways for decades thereafter, the most critical having to do with the vexed question of how to interpret the Constitution of the United States. As the nation expanded westward, issues of federal constitutional power entwined with various other questions of public policy confronting the United States: governance of the western territories; designing "internal improvements" (such as roads, bridges, and canals) to knit the nation together as a single economic and political unit; and the place of slavery in American life. All these matters raised issues of constitutional power and constitutional limitations, and in turn those issues raised the question of how properly to interpret the Constitution.

#### ORIGINAL INTENT

Increasingly, those embroiled in disputes over the scope and extent of powers conferred by the Constitution invoked the words and deeds of those who framed and adopted it as guideposts of authoritative constitutional interpretation. (Even while he was alive, the aged James Madison found his correspondence in the 1830s dominated by appeals for advice and guidance as to what he and his colleagues intended the Constitution to authorize or to prohibit.) Once all the "founders" were gone, polemicists and litigants on both sides of these contests ransacked newly published editions of the writings of such key figures as Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, and Hamilton; James Madison's *Notes of Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787* (sold by Madison's widow to the federal government following his death and the mandate of his will, and first published in 1840); and Jonathan Elliot's five-volume *Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Constitution* (originally published between 1827 and 1830, then revised and enlarged between 1836 and 1859). This hunt for authoritative guidance soon became known as the quest for the Constitution's "original intent" or "original meaning."

In 1857, when Chief Justice Roger B. Taney sought in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* to hand down an irrefutable, authoritative interpretation of the Constiti-

tution on issues of slavery in the western territories, he cast his opinion as a carefully considered, neutral sifting of the intentions of those who created the nation and its constitutional system. And in 1860, when Abraham Lincoln challenged the position staked out by Taney in *Dred Scott*, he too undertook his own massive research project into the "original intentions" of "our fathers, who framed the Government under which we live" and presented the results in a formidable speech delivered at New York's Cooper Union. The forensic duel between Taney and Lincoln fixed the quest for "original intent" at the core of all subsequent disputes about interpreting the Constitution.

#### THE FOUNDERS IN HISTORICAL MEMORY

Another reason why Americans' veneration of the founding fathers intensified was the need to create a "usable past" (a phrase coined by the literary historian Van Wyck Brooks in his 1915 book *America's Coming of Age*) for a young nation. Commemorations of the nation's origins in the Revolutionary War, including such anniversaries as the Declaration of Independence and the anniversaries of the births or deaths of such figures as Washington, Franklin, and Jefferson, helped to fix these revered figures in the nation's historical memory. In particular, the deaths on 4 July 1826 of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson appeared to Americans as some sort of divine sign of favor on the American experiment. One of the most powerful reasons for the continuing influence of the founding fathers is that they take on roles in the nation's cultural life played by ancestors in such cultures as Confucian China or Republican or Imperial Rome. Unlike so many nations, whose origins are lost somewhere in the misty past, the United States began as a political entity in a specific time and place, as the handiwork of specific individuals. In other words, the United States is a nation because it chooses to be, and it confers on those who created the nation the cultural roles, functions, and reverence associated with biblical patriarchs or patron saints.

To be sure, within the group known as the founding fathers the historical reputations of individual figures rose and fell with the changing fortunes of American politics and the ideas and principles with which they were identified. Thus, for example, from his death in 1826 until the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, Thomas Jefferson continued to be as controversial as he had been in life. Some extolled his commitment to liberty, equality, and the rights of man, whereas others denounced him as the intellectual godfather of nullification, secession, and

disunion. From the end of the Civil War in 1865 until the era of the Great Depression (1929–1941), Jefferson fell to his lowest historical ebb, due in part to the conclusion of many historians and politicians that he bore a great measure of responsibility for the Civil War and in part to the discovery by biographers and historians of the many inconsistencies between his public and private writings, which some saw as amounting to dishonesty. From the 1930s through the late 1960s, by contrast, Jefferson achieved apotheosis as a symbol of human rights, religious freedom, separation of church and state, and democratic revolution. Beginning in the late 1960s, however, his historical stock started to fall again, with new historical and public attention to issues of race, slavery, and civil rights, and Jefferson's conflicted and sometimes appalling views on the nature of race in general and African Americans in particular.

As Jefferson rose, Alexander Hamilton fell, and as Jefferson fell, Hamilton rose, their reputations rising and falling as functions of partisan and sectional conflict. All but forgotten, save as the leading author of *The Federalist*, in the years preceding the Civil War, Hamilton rose spectacularly in the late nineteenth century, as many politicians and scholars hailed him as the father of modern industrial, urban America. Again, as Jefferson rebounded in the era of the New Deal, Hamilton fell, dismissed as an apologist for wealth, power, and privilege—despite the arguments of such polemicists as Herbert Croly in *The Promise of American Life* (1909) and such politicians as President Franklin Delano Roosevelt that the best goal of American public life was to use Hamiltonian means to achieve Jeffersonian ends. Yet again, as Jefferson fell in the 1990s, Hamilton rose anew, as historians and journalists rediscovered him as a consistent and coherent advocate of vigorous national constitutional power and a tough-minded realist at home and abroad.

At the same time, however, historians in the middle and late twentieth century began to reconsider the centrality of the group known as the founding fathers to the era in which they lived and worked. The rise of social history, with its attention to the social, economic, and private lives of ordinary men and women, helped to shunt aside the profession's former preoccupation with "great dead white men." So, too, the growing attention to the histories of Native American nations and peoples and the history of both free and enslaved African Americans raised key questions about the founding fathers' lives and achievements. Some historians have taken this matter to extremes, rejecting attempts to study the lives,

thoughts, and deeds of the founding fathers as reactionary. Other historians, while continuing to study such men as Adams, Jefferson, Washington, Hamilton, and Aaron Burr, have restored them to their historical and political contexts. Key political figures, these historians argue, did not act in splendid isolation, but rather within a shifting field of expectations by and reactions from the people. They operated in the political realm in large part by reference to what they hoped or feared popular reaction to their policies and conduct might be.

Meanwhile, controversies over the jurisprudence of "original intent" ebbed and flowed throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. At first, conservative jurists used original-intent arguments to block such measures as federal regulations of interstate commerce or a federal income tax. In response, such historians as J. Allen Smith and Charles A. Beard criticized the antidemocratic cast of thought of the framers of the Constitution, pointing out that they might have framed the document to enshrine their own economic interests rather than as a high-minded exercise in constitutional statesmanship. Later, from the 1940s through the 1970s, liberal jurists and scholars sought to ground arguments for strict separation of church and state in the intent of the framers. In the mid-1980s the pendulum swung back, as Attorney General Edwin Meese III called for a "jurisprudence of original intent" that would anchor freewheeling judges to the text of the Constitution interpreted solely in the light of its origins. In response, constitutional scholars and historians such as Martin S. Flaherty, Jack N. Rakove, and James H. Hutson argued that original-intent jurisprudence fails on two grounds. First, it does not take account of the inadequacies of the historical evidence of original intent. Second, it fails to consider the historical and intellectual contexts of the origins of the Constitution and the ways in which those contexts differ significantly, often radically, from those of the present. Nevertheless, Rakove has argued, the advice of those who framed the Constitution, argued over its adoption, and put it into effect is valuable to us for two reasons: First, the framers were "present at the creation," and their discussion therefore sheds light on the origins of the constitutional system. Second, the framers were among the most learned and profound political and constitutional thinkers that this nation has produced; thus, even if we reject the binding force of original-intent jurisprudence, their wisdom often has persuasive value.

**CONCLUSION**

The founding fathers draw renewed attention not only from scholars but from Americans from all walks of life. Major constitutional crises, triggering acerbic dispute over whether and how "original intent" can resolve such crises, intersect with a sense of public uncertainty as to the lessons that the usable past ought to teach. In 1941, with the United States on the brink of entering World War II, the novelist and critic John Dos Passos observed in *The Ground We Stand On*: "In times of change and danger, when there is a quicksand of fear under men's reasoning, a sense of continuity with generations gone before can stretch like a lifeline across the scary present." Dos Passos's words apply equally as well to the state of mind of the American people in the wake of *Bush v. Gore* (2000) and the terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C., on 11 September 2001. In this era, many Americans questioned the constitutional system's ability to respond to grave national problems. Looking back into the nation's history, many Americans saw in John Adams a figure of reassuring toughness and in Alexander Hamilton a forthright, realistic champion of national interests in a hostile world. Despite sharp differences between scholarly and popular understandings of the era of the Revolution and the making of the Constitution, the appeal of a mythologized cadre of founding fathers became, once again, irresistible.

*See also Adams, John; American Character and Identity; Constitution, Ratification of; Constitutional Convention; Continental Congresses; Declaration of Independence; Fame and Reputation; Federalist Papers; Franklin, Benjamin; Hamilton, Alexander; Historical Memory of the Revolution; Jefferson, Thomas; Madison, James; Presidency, The; Washington, George.*

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Bernstein, Richard B. *Thomas Jefferson*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Commager, Henry Steele. *The Search for a Usable Past, and Other Essays in Historiography*. New York: Knopf, 1967.
- Craven, Wesley Frank. *The Legend of the Founding Fathers*. New York: New York University Press, 1956; Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983.
- Flaherty, Martin S. "History 'Lite' in Modern American Constitutionalism." *Columbia Law Review* 96 (1996): 523–590.
- Freeman, Joanne B. *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001.

Huang, Nien-Sheng. *Benjamin Franklin in American Thought and Culture, 1790–1990*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1994.

Kammen, Michael. *A Season of Youth: The American Revolution and the Historical Imagination*. New York: Knopf, 1978; Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988.

—. *A Machine that Would Go of Itself: The Constitution and American Culture*. New York: Knopf, 1986; New York: St. Martin's, 1994.

Knott, Stephen F. *Alexander Hamilton and the Persistence of Myth*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002.

McCoy, Drew R. *The Last of the Fathers: James Madison and the Republican Legacy*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Miller, Charles A. *The Supreme Court and the Uses of History*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1969.

Morris, Richard B. *Seven Who Shaped Our Destiny: The Founding Fathers as Revolutionaries*. New York: Harper and Row, 1973.

Pasley, Jeffrey L., Andrew W. Robertson, and David Waldstreicher, eds. *Beyond the Founders: New Approaches to the Political History of the Early American Republic*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.

Peterson, Merrill D. *The Jefferson Image in the American Mind*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960; new ed., Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998.

Rakove, Jack N., ed. *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution*. New York: Knopf, 1996; New York: Vintage, 1997.

—. *Interpreting the Constitution: The Debate over Original Intent*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1990.

R. B. Bernstein

---

**FOURTH OF JULY** The Fourth of July, the first American holiday, began as a way of celebrating Congress's vote for independence. The vote occurred on 2 July 1776, but the announcement of the action was spread on 4 July 1776. Americans mistakenly believed that the date on the newspapers and broadsides was the date of independence.

Fourth of July festivities followed an age-old pattern of celebratory rites. Since bells were rung and cannons fired to acknowledge a royal birth, the same signals were used to mark the nation's birthday at dawn. A military muster was often the first event of the day, providing much pomp and pageantry. The soldiers would then retire to drink and eat the traditional Fourth of July dishes of turtle soup and ice cream. Most Americans gathered late in the day, especially at night. Men and women attended plays, concerts, hot-air balloon demonstrations, horse



**Declaring Independence.** This illustration from *The New, Complete, and Authentic History of England* (London, c. 1783) by Edward Barnard depicts the manner in which the American colonists declared themselves independent of England: a man on horseback rides through town reading the Declaration of Independence to cheering crowds, while a notice reading "America Independent 1776" is posted on a wall. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

races, and fireworks exhibitions. Huge paintings depicted General George Washington and American military victories. Rowdies would occasionally set bonfires, but most activities were subdued. Rural areas did not participate.

The Fourth of July was not a benign celebration. During the Revolution, Independence Day observances inspired patriotic Americans to keep fighting and served to force out opponents of independence. British sympathizers were easily identified by their refusal to participate in toasts, parades, and other activities and were stigmatized as a result. Loyalists would typically keep their houses free of lights, and rock-throwing patriots often broke the darkened windows. In these years, when the war proceeded badly for the patriots, celebrations were muted or abandoned entirely, as was the case in 1780 and 1781.

When the Revolutionary War ended in 1783, the Fourth of July became a commemorative event. Communication and entertainment were viewed as more important than any practical result. Community after community made the day into an official holiday with barbeques, parades, and readings of the Declaration of Independence.

In the late 1780s control of Independence Day became hotly contested between political groups that attempted to direct the activities in a way which allowed them to promote their agendas. During the Adams presidency in the late 1790s, Republicans used the day to indicate their support for France and their distaste for the president. On festive occasions, American men in this era would commonly place a black rosette cockade in their hats. In response to Adams's unpopular French-aimed Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798, Republicans along the Eastern seaboard replaced the American cockade with a blue one symbolic of France. A few Federalists then physically removed the blue cockades. In the 1790s the Fourth of July became notorious for riotous behavior, and many Americans dreaded the coming of the day.

By about 1814, the Fourth of July had become a generally accepted day off from work because of politics. Prior to this time, Americans had a relatively uninterrupted work schedule with only the Sunday Sabbath as a rest day. Deprived workers were eager for a day of celebration. With both Federalists and Republicans seeing political advantages in promoting a vacation, the day became a holiday.

After the War of 1812 it was a holiday only for whites, however. African Americans were pushed out of Fourth of July celebrations by a mixture of intimidation and physical violence. Slaves typically did

not possess the right to congregate freely, to be unescorted at night, or to throw fireworks. Whites saw Independence Day as a holiday for Americans only and blacks did not qualify for citizenship.

During the War of 1812, Independence Day celebrations in southern cities served to boost enthusiasm for the war effort. In Boston, a city controlled by the Federalist opponents of the war, celebrations stopped. By halting the festivities, the Federalists hoped to awaken people to the dangers of losing to foreign invaders and to Republican mismanagement of the country. As the Federalist Party collapsed in the wake of the British defeat, partisanship in Fourth of July celebrations rapidly disappeared. Parades, speeches, and fireworks continued, but the focus was now entirely on nationalism.

The end of the war brought the end of celebrating Revolutionary goals. Images of prosperity replaced images of liberty. Lengthy orations focused on love of the land as well as America's beauty, abundance, and potential for material progress. In the 1820s women joined the festivities for the first time as active participants. Dressed in calico, they marched in front of flag-draped wagons filled with the goods of local merchants. The only discordant note came when female temperance advocates began staging Independence Day rallies against the heavy drinking that had become a part of the occasion in urban areas. By 1830, the Fourth of July had emerged as a nonpartisan national holiday to celebrate America.

*See also Flags; Music: Patriotic and Political; National Symbols; "Star-Spangled Banner."*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Davis, Susan G. *Parades and Power: Street Theatre in Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986.
- Detweiler, Philip F. "The Changing Reputation of the Declaration of Independence: The First Fifty Years." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, 19 (1962): 557–574.
- Newman, Simon P. *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997.
- O'Leary, Cecilia Elizabeth. *To Die For: The Paradox of American Patriotism*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Pencak, William, Matthew Dennis, and Simon P. Newman, eds. *Riot and Revelry in Early America*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002.
- Travers, Len. *Celebrating the Fourth: Independence Day and the Rites of Nationalism in the Early Republic*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.

Waldstreicher, David. *In the Midst of Perpetual Fêtes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Caryn E. Neumann

---

**FRANCE, WAR WITH** *See Quasi-War with France.*

---

**FRANKLIN, BENJAMIN** Benjamin Franklin is arguably the most beloved and the most disparaged of America's founding fathers. He is perhaps the least understood as well. A jack-of-all-trades and the master of many, he is a nearly impossible man to pigeonhole. He was a scientist and inventor, printer and publicist, brother and son, father and husband, diplomat and staunch—if somewhat belated—supporter of America's War for Independence. He was the most cosmopolitan founder, and yet people think of him as the most quintessentially American.

Franklin's career spanned nearly an entire century. Born in Boston on 17 January 1706 and dying in Philadelphia on 17 April 1790, Franklin never called one place home. He fled his native Boston when he was only seventeen. In Philadelphia, he suffered a series of failures. He tried unsuccessfully to begin his own printing business, relying on the false promises of Governor William Keith for capital that never materialized. He briefly worked as a clerk in a friend's general store, but returned to printing when his benefactor died. He even briefly considered becoming a swimming instructor. He seemed to flounder, drifting aimlessly from one project to another until he married Deborah Read in 1730. Soon thereafter he began his successful printing career, setting up a thriving shop on Market Street. He had three children. William, his illegitimate son, was born in 1731 to a woman whose identity remains unknown. He and Deborah had two children of their own. Francis Folger died of smallpox in 1736 at the age of four. Sarah, his only daughter, was born in 1743.

Franklin retired at the age of forty-two and entered the public arena with ill-disguised enthusiasm. With William, he conducted his famous kite experiment in 1752. His ability to prove that lightning was a form of electricity instantly garnered him international acclaim. He also embarked upon his political career, organizing Pennsylvania's militia during King George's War (1740–1748), winning a seat in



**Benjamin Franklin.** Franklin examines an electrical device in this eighteenth-century mezzotint by Edward Fisher after a painting Mason Chamberlin. A lightning bolt can be seen through the window at the right. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

the colonial legislature in 1751, and presenting his Plan of Union to the Albany Conference in 1754. At the same time, he was a pivotal player in his colony's effort to become a royal colony.

Franklin's involvement in Pennsylvania's effort to escape proprietary rule led him to spend some of his most important years on the other side of the Atlantic. He sailed to England in 1757 and again in 1764, remaining in London until 1775. No radical, he spent the decade looking for an accommodation between England and America, only gradually and reluctantly coming to the conclusion that accommodation was impossible to achieve. Thus, at the age of seventy, at a time when he had much to lose and little to gain, this once-proud member of the British Empire returned to Philadelphia determined to represent Pennsylvania in the Second Continental Congress and to persuade his compatriots to sever their ties with England. Thereafter, he was unrelenting in his efforts to secure colonial independence. He was a member of the committee that drafted what became known as the Declaration of Independence. Although Thomas Jefferson was the scribe on that committee, Franklin used his skills as an editor to tweak—gently and diplomatically—the Virginian's prose. With in-

dependence declared, he was soon in Paris, working indefatigably—and successfully—to secure French military and financial aid for the American war effort. At war's end he played a major role in negotiating his country's peace treaty with England. With the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1783, Franklin returned to Philadelphia. There, at the age of eighty-one, he was the oldest member of the Constitutional Convention of 1787. While his substantive contributions to the body were few, he constantly drew the delegates' attention to the republican principles of 1776. Although his colleagues usually rejected his suggestions, few could simply ignore the words of a man who had helped launch America's existence as an independent nation.

#### THE INDISPENSABLE MAN

The American story and Franklin's story seem to be one and the same. Beginning with his efforts to represent the colonies' interests during the Stamp Act crisis in 1765, Franklin was never far from the scene of action. His most important service to the new nation is the least celebrated. The stuff of diplomacy is not as dramatic or compelling a subject as the triumphs and sacrifices of soldiers on the field of battle. Yet America's military exploits, however valiant, would have been for naught had it not been for Franklin's endeavors. If it is true that America could not have defeated England without French military and financial aid, it is possible that such assistance would not have materialized without Franklin. He was not America's only representative in France. But no one else, not Silas Deane nor John Adams nor Arthur Lee, could do what Franklin did. Using his fame as the man who brought the lightning from the skies, taking advantage of the adulation in which the French intelligentsia already held him, he quickly became a court favorite. Judiciously balancing idealistic appeals with hard-headed arguments, cajoling, flattering, and even threatening, Franklin held his own and then some in a royal court riddled with international suspicion and intrigue. The French alliance he achieved made American independence possible, if not inevitable.

#### AMERICAN ICON

Benjamin Franklin was never the representative American that both his admirers and detractors have made him out to be. He was more at home in England and Europe than any other American—including Thomas Jefferson. Throughout the prewar years, he was more comfortable with his identity as a British American than any Patriot—and probably most

Loyalists. And yet it is as a "representative American" that most people think of him. We know him best through his *Autobiography*, first published four years after his death, and the pithy aphorisms of *Poor Richard's Almanack* (1732–1757). These two works—published, republished, analyzed, criticized, and admired—have made Franklin the creator not simply of a nation, but of a national identity. His life became synonymous with the "rags to riches" story that Americans like to claim as peculiarly their own. In part because of his humble origins, he is viewed as more democratic than any of the other founders, and thus as a man who would have been happy to tear down the class, racial, and gender barriers that Americans had erected in his own lifetime. Finally, Americans see him as the ultimate pragmatist, a man who eschewed ideological arguments that troubled fuzzy-headed intellectuals and instead practiced the art of the possible with grace and good humor.

Franklin used his own life as an object lesson, implying that his life was an especially American life, that his identity was America's identity, writ small. In his hands, that life and that identity were something of which all his countrymen could be proud. His experience proved, above all else, that America was the land of opportunity. He had entered the world as the son of a humble Boston candle maker and had ended it by dining with kings. Taking advantage of opportunities that existed for anyone with the intelligence and character to recognize them for what they were, he triumphed over adversity with seeming ease. Only in America, he implied, could such a success story be told.

In part because he was a "self-made man," a persona that is at the core of American mythology, he has also been designated as his century's spokesman for the egalitarian ideals upon which the new nation's independence was based. He seemed to revel in his ability to communicate with ordinary people and enjoyed even more the opportunity to cut an aristocratic pretender down to size. He valued life's simple pleasures and was even uncomfortable with the few luxuries—a china cup, a silver spoon—that his wife insisted upon purchasing for him. In his very old age, he became a champion of the nascent antislavery cause.

Franklin's admirers also see him as pragmatic and nonideological, willing to accept half a loaf as better than none, determined to achieve the possible rather than tilt at windmills. He was unfailingly optimistic, suffused by that "can-do" spirit which Americans like to claim as an intrinsic component of their character. He put his scientific bent to practical

ends, inventing a stove, a lightning rod, and bifocals, all designed to improve the everyday lives of ordinary men and women. Even at those rare moments when he failed to achieve his ends, he shrugged, made a joke—often at his own expense—and proclaimed that occasional “errata” were not such bad things. Errata could be corrected. People could learn from their mistakes.

#### THE “SNUFF-COLORED MAN”

Ironically, the attributes that have turned Franklin into the beloved founder are the very qualities that invite the most disdain from some quarters. While his detractors agree with those who see Franklin as a representative American, they see little in that characterization to admire. Intellectuals, in particular, view Franklin as the very essence of bourgeois Babble. In the classic lines of D. H. Lawrence, this “middle-sized, sturdy, snuff-colored Doctor Franklin” was a “dry, moral, utilitarian little democrat.” If he was the “first downright American,” that was no compliment—either to him or to his country (*Studies in Classic American Literature*, p. 21).

Smug, materialistic, and hypocritical, Franklin was, say some critics, above all the progenitor of American capitalism. His sunny disposition, his eternal optimism simply proved that he did not have the capacity to sympathize with those who failed to rise to his own level. His own determination to climb the social ladder turned him into a money-grubbing parvenu whose eye was always on the bottom line. His famous plan for self-improvement was little more than a reflection of his ledger book mentality.

Franklin was, moreover, no democrat. His own career was built on the backs of others. He drove more than one Philadelphia printer out of business and delighted in doing so. He was disdainful of the “unworthy poor” who refused to work and did not take advantage of the opportunities that at least in America beckoned at every turn. His treatment of women, especially his wife and surviving daughter, was far from admirable. No charming rogue, he was an unreconstructed womanizer who used women for his own purposes and discarded them once those purposes had been served. Far from being the one founder who recognized the evils of slavery, he was, for most of his life, peculiarly untroubled by the institution of bondage. He owned, bought, and sold slaves. He came to the antislavery cause very late in his life, and only then did so when it was politically safe.

Moreover, say some naysayers, Franklin’s much vaunted pragmatism is proof that he lacked depth.

He was multifaceted. He was a chameleon. He was an actor, a shape-shifter, and a confidence man. He was all things to all people, but ultimately he had no principles, no true essence. He was all means and no end. If historians have failed to penetrate his inner core, if they find him maddeningly elusive, perhaps there is a reason for their failures. This was a man who valued appearances above reality, who skimmed the surface of things, who was reluctant—perhaps unable—to plumb the depths.

Nor was this supposedly bright and practical man an especially astute politician. Even those historians who find much to admire in Franklin are puzzled by the many missteps he made throughout his long and varied career. His personal vendetta against the Pennsylvania proprietors made him blind to the dangers that his colony would have faced had it become a royal province. He was completely blindsided by the depth of the colonists’ anger at the beginning of the Stamp Act Crisis in 1765. When he first heard about the Boston Tea Party of 1774, he suggested that Massachusetts should pay for the tea that some Patriots had so unceremoniously dumped into Boston Harbor. While Franklin always seemed to land on his feet in the end, he was not an invariably prescient observer of his times.

#### EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MAN

The “real” Franklin is more complex and in some ways more admirable than the image he helped to create. He may have been the self-proclaimed exemplar of the rags to riches story, but he was not the avaricious materialist that modern observers would understand or recognize. He valued money as a means to an end, and he was bewildered by those who sought profit for its own sake. Like most Americans of his day, he craved the independence that money could bring rather than money itself. Without independence he could not serve his “public” effectively, nor could he enjoy the political career that became the central focus of his life after he retired.

Interestingly, Franklin’s meteoric career did not even achieve its ultimate goal. A man of his times, he sought royal patronage with unabashed fervor and longed to be a part of the upper reaches of British society. He eventually acquired money and position, but he could never completely escape his humble past, even though he spent nearly a decade in London trying to do just that. He moved easily in aristocratic circles in France and England. He failed to understand the disgust with which John and Abigail Adams viewed the “decadent” aristocracy they encountered at the court of Louis XVI. But despite his efforts, he

never managed to secure the royal favor he craved and thought he deserved.

Most important, Franklin was by no means invariably pragmatic or optimistic. He did not always walk the middle line, avoiding rigid intellectual systems and the extremists who devised those systems. He did not shrink from disputation, and many times he failed to see compromise as a worthy goal or even an acceptable option. Franklin was a passionate man who knew how to hate as well as how to smile and laugh. Not everyone in his own day found him amusing or likeable. He acquired any number of personal and political enemies throughout his life. He was a man who cared, and cared deeply, about the empire and about America's role in that empire. When he finally came to the conclusion that the colonies would be better off if they escaped English rule, he was single-minded and unrelenting in his efforts to secure independence. He could carry a grudge as well as anyone and never forgave his personal or political enemies. Franklin never even forgave his own son for remaining loyal to the king.

Partly because he lived so long, partly because he kept so much of himself to himself, historians have failed, despite their many valiant attempts, to capture Franklin's "true" identity. In an odd way, he was a tabula rasa who left it to future generations of Americans to project themselves—their darkest fears and their most cherished hopes about themselves and their nation—onto Franklin's persona. In the end, the mythical Benjamin Franklin tells us more about ourselves than he does about this quintessential eighteenth-century man.

*See also Albany Plan of Union; American Philosophical Society; Inventors and Inventions; Printers; Revolution; Diplomacy.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Conner, Paul W. *Poor Richard's Politicks: Benjamin Franklin and His New American Order*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965.
- Franklin, Benjamin. *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*. Edited by Leonard W. Labaree et al. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1964.
- Lawrence, D. H. *Studies in Classic American Literature*. New York: Viking Press, 1961.
- Lopez, Claude-Anne, and Eugenia W. Herbert. *The Private Franklin: The Man and His Family*. New York: Norton, 1975.
- Middlekauff, Robert. *Benjamin Franklin and His Enemies*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
- Morgan, Edmund S. *Benjamin Franklin*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2002.

Seavey, Ormond. *Becoming Benjamin Franklin: The Autobiography and the Life*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988.

Tise, Larry, E., ed. *Benjamin Franklin and Women*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000.

Waldstreicher, David. *Runaway America: Benjamin Franklin, Slavery, and the American Revolution*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2004.

Wood, Gordon S. *The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin*. New York: Penguin Press, 2004.

*Sheila L. Skemp*

---

**FREEDOM OF THE PRESS** By the late colonial period, the theory and practice of freedom of the press allowed for considerable political and moral debate. Laws against seditious libel (printed matter tending to threaten or undermine the authority of government) still existed, but the last trial for seditious libel, the case of John Peter Zenger, ended in acquittal in 1735. Some self-censorship, however, no doubt continued. Civil suits for private libel (publications defaming a private person or private characteristics) were not uncommon. Laws against blasphemy (words offending religious orthodoxy) were rarely enforced.

#### BEFORE AND DURING THE REVOLUTION

The most common threat to freedom of the press was the ability of colonial legislatures to jail an offender for a breach of legislative privilege (words offending a sitting legislature). Many colonists held the notion common among critics of the government that the people's liberty is always under threat from royal or ministerial power. Accordingly, the popularly elected lower houses of the various colonial legislatures came to be seen as defenders of the people's liberty against the royal governor and his allies. Criticizing a state assembly might be seen as simply freedom of the press, the right of individuals to voice their sentiments. But it might also be seen as an abuse of that freedom. Any criticism that undermined the people's faith in the assembly could be regarded as abusing one safeguard of the people's liberty (a free press) to undermine another (the popular branch of the legislature). Following this latter perspective, legislatures throughout the colonies reprimanded, fined, and even occasionally imprisoned their critics, though this became less common as the 1750s and 1760s wore on and virtually disappeared after the Revolution.

The Stamp Act (1765) taxed paper goods of all sorts and amounted to a type of censorship aimed particularly at opposition newspapers, which were less able to pay since they were less likely to profit from government printing contracts. These and other new laws seemed to reveal an unfolding conspiracy by the British ministry and its Tory allies in the colonies to promote arbitrary power. The people, led by outraged editors, actively and successfully opposed the Stamp Act.

As the wider crisis deepened in the late 1760s and early 1770s, the press flooded the colonies with provocative newspaper articles and political pamphlets on both sides. Limits on the press were still debated, but neither the royalist Tories nor the opposition Patriots could gain enough power to control it. Tories insisted that they defended an individual's right to print his political views. Patriots insisted that freedom of the press was properly used to protect the people's liberty from an overreaching government, as it always had been. The truth will prevail, the Patriots conceded, but only if there is a fair fight. With Tories propagandizing their way to complete tyrannical power, all of the people's liberties—including freedom of the press—seemed endangered. Rather than risk this, Patriots took to intimidating and even terrorizing Tory printers and authors.

With the commencement of open hostilities at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts, on 19 April 1775, the very real threat to the people's liberties from ministerial forces became unmistakable. Both sides took to allowing only their partisans to print on their side of the war front. But during the war, within a given side, press freedom largely existed. For example, Patriots threatened other Patriots who suggested, even sarcastically, the wisdom of surrender, yet they allowed a vigorous debate over independence.

#### AFTER THE REVOLUTION

After the Revolution new, more radical leaders took power and the common people entered into public life as never before. The voters, who now usually included white men of all social ranks, expected to have a greater say in the government. The first press provisions in Revolutionary America illustrated this expectation. George Mason's Declaration of Rights for Virginia (1776) employed the traditional theory that a free press is meant as the protector of the people's liberty from tyrannical power: "The freedom of the Press is one of the greatest bulwarks of liberty, and can never be restrained but by despotick Governments." But the early constitutions also voiced the

long-standing view that freedom of the press was simply a basic individual right to print what one pleased. Pennsylvania's constitution (1776) declared that "the people have a right to freedom of speech, and of writing, and publishing their sentiments; therefore the freedom of the press ought not to be restrained."

Having just started a war to rid themselves of what they took to be a tyrannical power, the former colonists were careful to emphasize that now the people, not a king or even the legislatures, were sovereign. Public officials were now "servants" and the people their "masters." These expansions of the theory of popular sovereignty occasioned new understandings of the role of the press and the nature of freedom of the press. Radical thought had long considered the press as a last resort should the more moderate safeguard provided by the representative legislature fail. With the advent of broad-based, annual elections for larger, more representative, and more powerful legislatures, the people's duty and the press's role increasingly centered on maintaining and shaping rather than simply defending the republics the former colonists had established.

As always, a crucial question was how far the press's liberty should go. The press clauses in the state constitutions did not specify any particular limit. The Massachusetts constitution (1780), for example, declared that "the liberty of the press is essential to the security of freedom in a State; it ought not, therefore, to be restrained in this commonwealth." But town meetings debating the clause read it to provide complete impunity, even for private libel.

**First Amendment.** Originally, the federal Constitution (1787), like the earlier Articles of Confederation (1781), included no protection for freedom of the press. Anti-Federalists criticized this absence repeatedly in the ratification debates, but the Federalists insisted that such protection was not needed because the new national government would only have those powers expressly given to it. Press liberty was thus beyond federal authority. Many anti-Federalists maintained the traditional view that governmental power continuously and inexorably struggles to expand; without a clear declaration protecting press freedom, they argued, the national government would soon seek to limit freedom of the press. Such a limitation, they feared, would undermine the more engaged oversight of the government that they expected of republican citizens.

Critics of the Constitution were more likely than its supporters to stress the advantages of an active press. The anti-Federalists admitted that publications

might contain abusive language and false claims, but said the advantages to the people outweighed the disadvantages. Moreover, they argued, the disadvantages of an unbounded political press simply had to be borne, since they were interwoven with the advantages. Federalists were more likely than their critics to stress the disadvantages of an unrestricted political press, in particular an ill-informed but empowered citizenry.

Though he was the “father of the Constitution,” James Madison came to see the importance of a bill of rights to protect basic liberties. After ratification, Madison proposed a number of amendments in Congress. He saw more clearly than anyone that while there still remained a threat that the government might tyrannize the people, the bigger threat was that a majority of the people would tyrannize over a minority of controversial printers and authors. Madison drafted, and the House of Representatives passed, two clauses protecting press liberty from the state and federal governments. The Senate, however, revised them into what became the First Amendment, which states in part: “Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press.”

**Federalists versus Democratic Republicans.** Differences over the proper interpretation of the vaguely worded press clause became heated as competing parties emerged. The Federalist Party spent the 1790s debating policy and exchanging newspaper attacks with the emerging opposition party, the Democratic Republicans (led by Madison and Thomas Jefferson). Newspaper impartiality—never pure or perfect—became a victim of increasing partisanship, and editors began ridiculing, for the first time, the very idea of impartiality. In 1798 the Federalists used the pretext of the Quasi-War (1798–1800) with France to pass a number of draconian measures, including the Sedition Act, which was intended to silence Republican printers and other critics of government.

The Sedition Act criminalized “any false, scandalous and malicious . . . writings against the government of the United States . . . or Congress . . . or the President . . . , with intent to defame . . . or to bring them . . . into contempt or disrepute.” The Federalists followed the standard established in the Zenger case (1735) by allowing evidence of the truth of the alleged libel to be presented and allowing the jury to issue a general verdict, not merely a “special verdict” on the fact of publication only.

Despite this break with the British common law tradition (in which truth was immaterial), the Sedition Act seemed tyrannical to many people. Federalist

Party leaders did not see themselves as despotic or even partisan, but rather as loyal to the elected government. Still, the political nature of the sedition legislation was evident from both its expiration date and its execution. The law was to expire not at the end of the international crisis with France, but at the end of Federalist president John Adams’s term on 3 March 1801. Moreover, only Republicans were indicted, and most of the major opposition papers and several minor ones were targeted before the election of 1800.

Republicans repeatedly insisted that the Sedition Act was unconstitutional. Federalists countered by claiming that the freedom of the press had historically allowed for laws against abuse of the press. Their theory of press liberty adapted traditional concerns about press abuse to their view of the new republican theory of government. To them, the Republican critics of government were not defending the people, but attacking them through their elected officials. Moreover, the Federalists maintained that America’s republican form of government made regulating the press even more important than in any other form of government, since elective government ultimately rested on a truthfully informed electorate. The general public’s limited information and education was good reason, Federalists maintained, to mandate constrained and decorous press discourse, lest the people be confused or deceived. For the Republicans, to the contrary, the people’s limited information meant more wide-open political debate was needed. A republican form of government did not rely merely on elections every few years, they contended, but on continuing debate of public men and measures.

That debate, Federalists observed, had led to a world of deceptive half-truths and outright lies. The political discourse of the 1790s was among the most vitriolic and partisan of any era in America. Republicans—like the anti-Federalists before them—conceded that the truth did not always immediately prevail, but they maintained that opinion, not truth, was what was really at issue in political debates. Factual truths that could be proven in a court of law were rarely if ever central to a seditious libel case; therefore, interpretations of freedom of the press that included protections for provable truth—such as the Sedition Act—were really despotic limitations on press liberty. Moreover, Republicans insisted that the liberty of the press and its licentiousness—its use and abuse—were inseparable: one simply could not separate and punish what was false and abusive without undermining the necessary and salutary critiques of a spirited, democratic press.

Republicans like James Madison, then, were formulating and defending a broad notion of press liberty that allowed for civil suits for private defamation but dispensed with the notion of public libel. Only actual, overt acts of violence or rebellion would be punishable crimes. This theory, however, was developed by the opposition party at its most extreme and embattled. Once in power, President Jefferson pardoned the victims of the expired Sedition Act but soon also encouraged the use of state seditious libel laws against critics of his administration. In one of these cases, *People v. Croswell* (1804), the Federalist Alexander Hamilton defended Jefferson's critic by espousing principles that were actually more restrictive than those in the disputed Sedition Act (though they were less restrictive than those of the Jeffersonian prosecutor). Hamilton's theory of seditious libel gave the jury uncontested authority to find a general verdict and made truth a justification only if published "with good motives and for justifiable ends." Hamilton lost the case, but this standard soon became law in New York and many other states. At the national level, *U.S. v. Hudson and Goodwin* (1812) rejected federal jurisdiction over the common law crime of seditious libel.

Struggles over the press continued. During the War of 1812, riots that centered on a Baltimore newspaper office left the office destroyed and many people dead. Yet, in the face of successful British attacks on American soil and arguably treasonous discussions of New England secession, the Madison administration made no attempt to enact federal restrictions on the press. Nevertheless, it was Hamilton's theory of freedom of the press, not Madison's, that was predominant and generally followed throughout the nineteenth century.

Reflecting on the late colonial and early National period, some scholars (e.g., Levy 1985) have placed all emphasis on official restrictions such as the Sedition Act. Others (e.g., Smith 1988) stress the opposition to seditious libel laws and the practical reality of an open and at times licentious political press. The American approach to press liberty during this period included both of these extremes and is perhaps best understood as an ambivalent tradition (Martin 2001).

*See also Alien and Sedition Acts; Anti-Federalists; Bill of Rights; Constitution, Ratification of; Democratic Republicans; Federalist Party; Madison, James; Newspapers; Stamp Act and Stamp Act Congress.*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bailyn, Bernard. *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967.
- Levy, Leonard W. *Emergence of a Free Press*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Martin, Robert W. T. *The Free and Open Press: The Founding of Democratic Press Liberty, 1640–1800*. New York: New York University Press, 2001.
- Pasley, Jeffrey L. *"The Tyranny of Printers": Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001.
- Rosenberg, Norman L. *Protecting the Best Men: An Interpretive History of the Law of Libel*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986.
- Schlesinger, Arthur M. *Prelude to Independence: The Newspaper War on Britain, 1764–1776*. New York: Knopf, 1958.
- Smith, Culver H. *The American Government's Use of Newspapers, 1789–1875*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1977.
- Smith, James Morton. *Freedom's Fetters: The Alien and Sedition Laws and American Civil Liberties*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1956.
- Smith, Jeffery A. *Printers and Press Freedom: The Ideology of Early American Journalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Robert W. T. Martin

---

**FREE LIBRARY MOVEMENT** Although tax-supported free libraries first appeared in the United States in the 1840s, various other institutions existed during the colonial and early national periods that were often dubbed "public libraries," the term designating any book collection not owned by a private individual. Wealthy colonial patrons sometimes established libraries through donations. Thus, in 1638 John Harvard left four hundred volumes in his will to establish the library at the college that would soon bear his name, and in 1656 Robert Keayne left his books and a large sum of money to establish a town library for Boston.

In 1690s Reverend Thomas Bray proposed a library for every Anglican parish in the American colonies. His Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (1701) helped establish more than thirty parish libraries, primarily in the southern colonies, ranging from as few as two to as many as eleven hundred volumes each. These "Bray Libraries," which focused upon theology but also included some history, science, and Latin classics, proved to be forerunners of the ubiquitous church libraries of the early Republic, when ministers or lay leaders often managed small collections of books that

could be borrowed by those who attended religious meetings. Similarly, nineteenth-century Sunday schools invariably included libraries of pious didactic reading material. The American Sunday School Union (1824) furnished books to thousands of auxiliary Sunday schools, mostly sets of short religious tracts but also such evangelical favorites as John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) and Jonathan Edwards's *Life of Brainerd* (1749).

The social library, essentially a joint stock company, constituted the dominant form of library in America from the 1730s through the 1840s. Social libraries could be proprietary collections, established by learned societies or private associations for the use of members, or subscription libraries, which were available to anyone able to pay the modest required subscription fee. Commonplace in England in the 1720s, social libraries appeared in the American colonies in the 1730s. The most famous, although not the first, colonial subscription library was the Library Company of Philadelphia, founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1731. Between 1730 and 1780 New England alone boasted at least fifty-one social libraries. Other important collections included the Charleston Library Society (1748) and the New York Society Library (1754). Unlike parish libraries, social libraries offered a broad range of nonsectarian titles, reflecting the diverse personal tastes and needs of the subscribers. Collections typically emphasized history and biography; political commentaries; and literary works by Shakespeare, Defoe, and Pope, as well as eighteenth-century novels such as Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1760) and Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771).

During the early national era, social libraries proliferated at a phenomenal rate, reflecting the democratization of American society and the greater affordability of books. Between 1790 and 1815 New Englanders established over five hundred subscription libraries, with another five hundred appearing before 1850. Social libraries flourished in every region of the young Republic. Many communities had subscription libraries open to all interested residents. In addition, countless private organizations established libraries or reading rooms for members. There were mercantile libraries, lyceum libraries, factory libraries, mechanics' libraries, apprentices' libraries, libraries for young men or women, and libraries associated with reform organizations. As a result, the majority of Americans in the new nation had access to the resources of one or more social library.

Prior to 1850 only a handful of publicly funded and controlled libraries existed for free general use.

Most of these were originally subscription collections later acquired by town meetings. In 1827, for example, the social library of Castine, Maine (1801), gave its collection to the town, which thereafter operated it as a free public library. The first town known to establish a publicly funded library was Peterborough, New Hampshire, where in 1833 the town meeting voted to use a part of the state literary fund for the support of schools instead to purchase books for a free town library. Several other New England towns took similar action in the following decade, but the practice seems to have been confined to the Northeast.

The free public library movement really began in 1849, when the New Hampshire legislature authorized towns to levy taxes for the establishment and support of public libraries. Massachusetts enacted similar legislation in 1851, and Maine followed suit in 1854. These early state initiatives did not spread to the rest of the nation until after the Civil War, however, when public libraries would rapidly displace social libraries as the dominant institution for the dissemination of books in the United States.

*See also Book Trade; Religious Publishing.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Davis, Donald G., Jr. "Bread upon the Waters: The Printed Word in Sunday Schools in 19th Century England and the United States." In *Reading for Moral Progress: 19th Century Institutions Promoting Social Change*, by Donald G. Davis Jr., David M. Hovde, and John Mark Tucker. Champaign: Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1997.
- Johnson, Elmer D. *History of Libraries in the Western World*. 2nd ed. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1970.
- Rohrer, James. "The Connecticut Missionary Society and Book Distribution in the Early Republic." *Libraries & Culture* 34 (1999): 17–26.
- Shera, Jesse Hauk. *Foundations of the Public Library: The Origins of the Public Library Movement in New England, 1629–1855*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949.
- Stevens, Edward. "Relationships of Social Library Membership, Wealth, and Literary Culture in Early Ohio." *Journal of Library History* 16 (1981): 574–594.
- Yeatman, Joseph L. "Literary Culture and the Role of Libraries in Democratic America: Baltimore, 1815–1840." *Journal of Library History* 20 (1985): 345–367.

James R. Rohrer

---

**FREEMASONS** Freemasonry, America's oldest and most important voluntary society, experienced

enormous change during the generation after the Revolution. The fraternity entered a period of unprecedented growth in prestige and popularity, but a powerful new movement opposing it in the 1820s led to a dramatic decline in membership.

#### ORIGINS AND THE REVOLUTION

An international fraternity of men using secret rituals and meetings open only to members to promote morality, charity, and fellowship, the modern order of Free and Accepted Masons developed out of British craft organizations. Details of this transition remain obscure, but the years surrounding the 1717 formation of a grand lodge in London were crucial. By the end of the 1720s, Masonry had assumed much of its distinctive form: a series of local lodges supervised by grand lodges; a secret ritual system made up of three levels known as degrees, augmented by a less well-defined series of further, "higher," degrees; metaphorical use of building tools to represent moral truths; and an ideal of brotherhood encompassing men of differing political, religious, national, and ethnic affiliations. This new "speculative" Masonry (so-called to distinguish it from "operative" builders) spread rapidly to the European continent and America. Lodges met in Philadelphia by 1730 and Boston by 1733. But the colonial fraternity remained small. Before the 1760s, it included only a couple of dozen lodges in coastal cities, made up primarily of well-to-do elites seeking to assert status as enlightened gentlemen.

The Revolutionary years brought major challenges. The break with England, the source of Masonic legitimacy, forced a reorganization that placed final Masonic authority in the hands of state grand lodges rather than in Britain or the national grand lodge some brothers favored. Issues of loyalty also caused problems. Barred by rule from discussing politics and religion, the fraternity took no official stand on the conflict itself, but individual brothers had to make choices. Many remained loyal to the king. Many others, however, became leaders in the Revolutionary cause, including Masonic officers Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere, and George Washington. The proportion of Masons at the Continental Congress that approved the Declaration of Independence and at the Constitutional Convention was far higher than their proportion in the general public. Of the fifty-six signers of the Declaration, nine (perhaps twelve) were Masons (at least 16.1 percent); twelve (perhaps fifteen) of the fifty-five members of the Constitutional Convention were Freemasons (at least 21.8 percent). The fraternity proved even more popular in the

Continental Army. Ten military lodges, generally limited to officers, met in its camps. About 42 percent of the army's generals were or later became Masons.

#### POST-REVOLUTIONARY MASONRY

These connections with the Revolution helped spur a generation of Masonic expansion. By 1806 New York alone had more than a hundred lodges; twenty years later, it had five times that many. A Masonic meeting in 1822 estimated national membership (conservatively) at eighty thousand. By then, lodges met in nearly every village, town, and city in the country. Post-Revolutionary brothers celebrated this growth as evidence of the fraternity's identification with the ideals of the Revolution and the new nation. Like the Republic, they proclaimed, the fraternity supported learning, education, morality, and non-sectarian Christianity. Its rituals and fraternal oversight provided a particularly effective means of teaching these values. As a Massachusetts minister, Preserved Smith, argued in 1798, Masonry was "the great instrument of civilization."

Such bold claims partly responded to anxieties about the problem of preserving the Republic. But they also spoke to continuing criticism of the fraternity, questions that focused primarily on Masonic secrecy and religious diversity (the exclusion of women also was a common issue). These doubts, however, remained secondary except in a few rural areas and some conservative religious groups. Even the attacks on the Illuminati first raised by the clergyman Jedidiah Morse and others in 1798, claiming that this subversive order had caused the French Revolution partly through infiltration of continental Masonic lodges, generally explicitly exempted the American fraternity. Ministers and church members often joined and led lodges. Churches even called on the fraternity to dedicate their buildings. Such cornerstone-laying ceremonies became popular for all sorts of public structures, including the United States Capitol (1793), the University of Virginia (1817), and the Bunker Hill Monument (1825).

More than public ideals made Masonry attractive. Membership also conferred private advantages. Lodges and grand lodges provided substantial charitable aid to needy brothers and their families. More important, Masonic affiliation also helped build contacts that could prove extremely valuable in business and politics. Members typically joined the fraternity in their twenties as they were moving into manhood, a pattern followed by such prominent leaders as New York governor DeWitt Clinton, Kentucky senator and U.S. secretary of state Henry Clay, and President

Andrew Jackson. Fraternal membership helped establish an honorable reputation and develop relationships with local and national leaders. According to the idea of "preference" that became widespread in these years, Masons were obligated to help and support brothers over similarly qualified non-Masons.

As Masonry grew both in size and significance, the fraternity itself changed as well. What had been a series of scattered lodges now became a well-organized institution with complex rules and organizations. Reform-minded brothers carefully revised rituals to make them more powerful and more uniform—and pressed for exact memorization of these new ceremonies. Higher degrees also became popular. Established in organizations outside the lodge, these new ceremonies included what would later become the Scottish Rite (founded in 1802, but relatively small until the twentieth century) as well as the York Rite (a system that included the degrees of the Royal Arch and the Knights Templar).

#### THE RISE OF ANTI-MASONRY

Success, however, also brought problems. Expansion sharpened tensions inherent in Masonry itself, between public and private goals, between inclusiveness and exclusivity, between adherence to religious ideals and acceptance of diversity. These fault lines were exposed when, in September 1826, a number of Masons, acting unofficially, kidnapped and possibly murdered William Morgan, a Freemason who had announced plans to publish a volume containing the rituals of both the original three degrees and some higher degrees. Morgan's disappearance, and an attempted cover-up by the fraternity, sparked a huge reaction. The anti-Masonic movement that emerged from this anger attacked the fraternity as a threat to both Christianity and republicanism. American Masonry was weakened in the South and nearly destroyed in the North. Membership began to revive only after 1840 with the weakening of anti-Masonic anger. This revival marked the start of another, even more substantial expansion lasting into the middle of the twentieth century.

*See also Anti-Masons; Continental Congresses; Franklin, Benjamin.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bullock, Steven C. *Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order, 1730–1840*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

Goodman, Paul. *Towards a Christian Republic: Antimasonry and the Great Transition in New England, 1826–1836*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Lipson, Dorothy Ann. *Freemasonry in Federalist Connecticut*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977.

Steven C. Bullock

---

**FRENCH** The establishment of the first permanent English settlement in North America at Jamestown in 1607 was immediately followed by the planting of the first permanent French colony in North America at Quebec in 1608. As colonists from both nations arrived in the New World, they brought with them the rivalries of the old, where their respective mother countries were emerging great powers in Europe whose interests more often collided with one another than coincided. Beginning with the War of the League of Augsburg (King William's War) from 1689 to 1697 and continuing through the Seven Years' War (French and Indian War) from 1756 to 1763, a series of massive conflicts between France and Britain raged, dominating the affairs of Europe. They also directly impacted the lives of their colonists in North America, who found themselves swept up into these wars. The Spanish were a major factor in North America as well, but their power declined steadily throughout this period and, after the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714) placed a Bourbon prince on the Spanish throne, the French and Spanish were allied in their conflicts against Britain, with the French serving as the dominant player in the coalition.

#### AMERICAN PERCEPTIONS OF FRANCE

In this Age of Reason, religious differences were becoming less of a factor in European politics, yet religion still exercised a heavy influence in defining cultural and political identity. Nowhere was this more true than in the North American colonies. The rivalry between Catholic and Protestant remained alive and well in North America, and much of the anti-French rhetoric that came from the British colonies was laced with anti-Catholicism. The colonists tended to equate Catholicism with despotism and viewed the French, with their powerful monarchical system of rule, as the very epitome of autocracy and the complete antithesis of the British with regard to individual rights and liberty and parliamentary government.

The feelings of animosity of most British colonists toward the French during this long period of warfare went far beyond traditional patriotism or religious belief, but rather were born from the



**Allegory of France Liberating America.** In addition to geopolitical and nationalistic reasons for supporting the United States, many French saw in the infant Republic the first real attempt to place the ideas of Voltaire and Rousseau into practice. This painting (c. 1784) by Jean Suau expresses this ideal symbolically as France takes the hand of liberty and presents him to the Americans. RÉUNION DES MUSÉES NATIONAUX/ART RESOURCE, NY.

unique situation and circumstances confronting the colonists in the New World. The French were the commercial rivals of the British colonists in the booming economic trade of the North American continent, and in particular in the lucrative fur trade over which the French exercised a powerful hold. French explorers were among the first to penetrate into the interior of North America, and while their settlements were small and scattered, they nevertheless established a claim to the land west of the Alleghenies, which effectively hemmed the British colonists into the Eastern seaboard and prevented their westward expansion. In the agrarian economy of the frontier, land represented money, power, and status to the colonists, and the French hold on the continent's vast interior was deeply resented.

Another major factor in colonial animosity toward France was the close relationship that the French established with Native Americans. Indeed, of

all the European powers to establish colonies in the Americas, none was more able to win the affection and loyalty of the indigenous peoples as the French was. The French worked to introduce Catholicism to the Indians, but their priests did so through peaceful persuasion rather than with the sword, in contrast to their Spanish coreligionists. Unlike their British rivals, the French were respectful of native culture, treated the tribes as sovereign nations, and established meaningful alliances with them. Frenchmen routinely married Indian women at a time when the Church of England heavily frowned upon interracial marriage. Whereas British colonists generally practiced a policy of exclusion toward the Indians, the French established ethnically diverse settlements in the midst of the various tribes they called their friends, and virtually every French town in North America included a sizable population of Native Americans living peacefully in and around the area.



#### **Benjamin Franklin at the French Court in Versailles.**

Benjamin Franklin, shown here in a 1784 engraving by Daniel Berger after the German artist Daniel Chodowiecki, became an instant celebrity after his arrival in France, where he traveled to solicit French support for the American cause. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

The British colonists viewed such behavior as not only morally abhorrent but threatening. Besides France, the great enemy the colonists faced in North America was the Indians, and throughout the long struggle for possession of North America, most of the major Indian tribes were allied with France. Indian war parties—armed, organized, and sometimes led by the French—terrorized the frontier during the colonial wars.

The Treaty of Paris in 1763, which ended the final Anglo-French colonial war in North America, resulted in the eviction of France from the continent and a sudden removal of the French as a menace to the American colonists. Ironically, the British government quickly replaced the French as a target of American ire, as it was now Parliament that restricted the colonists' westward expansion and even courted favor with the Indian tribes, who were still viewed with hostility and suspicion by Americans on the frontier. As relations between Britain and its American colonies deteriorated sharply during the

decade from 1765 to 1775, the image of France as an enemy sharply receded in the minds of many colonists, who now viewed the enemy as residing in London rather than Paris.

#### **A FRANCO-AMERICAN ALLIANCE**

The outbreak of the American Revolution in 1775 found the Continental Congress facing a full-scale war against Great Britain but lacking the most basic essentials for waging such a conflict. The Americans had no means of producing cannon or gunpowder and only a limited ability to manufacture small arms. The colonial militias had relied upon the mother country for these necessities, and with that source gone, a new means of procuring the implements of war had to be found quickly. In addition, the Continental Congress faced a chronic shortage of funds with which to procure weapons, uniforms, shoes, food, and other essential supplies for George Washington's Continental Army. Thus, the Americans were forced to look overseas for military and economic support from Britain's European enemies and France, with its vast treasury and massive armaments industry, was the natural choice. In 1776 the Continental Congress dispatched a diplomatic mission to Paris headed by Silas Deane (later to be joined by Benjamin Franklin and John Adams) to solicit French support for the American cause.

The French viewed the outbreak of the American Revolution with a certain pleasure as they saw the mastery of North America by their archenemy, Britain, threatened by its very own subjects. The news of American victories at Lexington and Concord in April 1775, as well as the heavy casualties suffered by the British at Bunker (Breed's) Hill in June 1775 had been greeted with wild jubilation in the streets of Paris. Thus, Deane was warmly received the following year at the court of the young King Louis XVI, and in particular by the king's influential foreign minister Charles Gravier, comte de Vergennes. The cunningly ambitious Vergennes believed that the American Revolution offered France many possibilities to avenge its humiliating defeat in the Seven Years' War, acquire valuable colonies in the West Indies and severely harm the power and prestige of its main rival, Britain.

In short order, Vergennes and Deane concluded an agreement by which the United States could purchase arms and munitions from France; in addition, Vergennes threw open French ports to American privateers. The materiel thus acquired from the French in 1776 and 1777 was indispensable to the American war effort and enabled the Continental Army to con-

tinue to remain an active force despite the best efforts of the British to destroy it. Even more importantly, the French government granted the Americans the diplomatic status of a belligerent nation, as opposed to viewing them as British rebels, which was an important first step toward establishing a formal relationship and, eventually, a military alliance between the two nations.

France initially avoided a direct confrontation with Great Britain while taking all steps short of war to provide aid to the Americans. The actions of the French government won wide approval throughout the kingdom, receiving the support of the nobility as well as the common people. The reasons for such widespread French backing for the American cause were deeply rooted in traditional Anglo-French hostility. While few believed in the opening stages of the conflict that the United States could actually win, many French hoped that a long and debilitating war would significantly weaken Britain, regardless of its final outcome. In addition to geopolitical and nationalistic reasons for supporting the United States, many French saw in the infant Republic the first real attempt to place the ideas of Voltaire and Rousseau into actual practice and thus believed for ideological reasons that the Americans should be supported in their rebellion.

French army officers were soon clamoring to serve in the American cause, an action encouraged by Vergennes to provide the Continental Army with badly needed professional officers as well as to increase French influence and control over the American war effort. Among the numerous French officers seeking a commission in the Continental Army was an idealistically romantic nineteen-year-old nobleman, the Marquis de Lafayette. Though he spoke little English and had virtually no military experience, the young man was politically well-connected at the court of Louis XVI, and the American representatives in Paris were impressed by this as well as his idealism and zeal for the American cause.

Lafayette arrived in America in June 1777 and soon attached himself to the staff of General George Washington. The dour and irascible Washington was besieged by foreign officers of all stripes seeking commands in his army, and consequently he was initially dismissive of the young marquis. But Lafayette's boyish enthusiasm for the cause and eagerness for battle against the British impressed Washington, and soon a close bond developed between the two men. Indeed, as time went by, Lafayette became like a son to Washington, and the former eagerly returned this paternal affection with a deep devotion

and fierce loyalty to the American leader. Lafayette served with distinction at the Battles of Brandywine (11 September 1777) and Germantown (4 October 1777) and endured the privations of Valley Forge in the winter of 1777–1778. His services were rewarded with command of a division, making him one of the principal field commanders of the Continental Army and one of the very few foreign officers with whom Washington entrusted American troops.

Shortly after his arrival in America, Lafayette had begun to bombard the French government with letters praising the Americans and their cause and appealing for King Louis XVI to enter the war at their side. Lafayette's reports added traction to the American diplomatic mission in Paris, which was now headed by the charismatic Benjamin Franklin. Already famous in France for his scientific discoveries and writings, Franklin had become an instant celebrity after his arrival at the French court, and his dalliances with the ladies of Paris soon became legendary. Yet he was also a forceful speaker and relentless diplomat who sought to turn French covert assistance for the American cause into an actual military alliance between the two nations.

Vergennes was eager for Franklin's proposals, but King Louis XVI still waited for some tangible sign that the American cause was worth supporting. That sign came in the autumn of 1777, when word arrived in Paris that the British army under General John Burgoyne had been defeated and forced to surrender in the field at Saratoga, New York, on 17 October 1777. The American victory sent shock waves throughout Europe. It was the worst defeat suffered by the British army in decades, and it had come at the hands of the "backward" and "ill-trained" Americans. King Louis XVI reasoned that if the Americans could pull off such a feat on their own, they could do far more with a real ally in the field alongside of them. With visions of restoring the lost prestige of France and wreaking a terrible vengeance on France's ancient enemy, Louis XVI informed Franklin that the French government would enter into a formal economic, political, and military alliance with the United States with the express aim of securing American independence from Great Britain. These agreements being signed, on 17 June 1778 France formally went to war against Britain and entered the American Revolution as a full ally of the infant United States.

**French military support.** The French immediately extended badly needed financial and military aid to their embattled ally and also dispatched an expeditionary force and powerful naval squadron under the command of Admiral Jean Baptiste d'Estaing to

North America. The French entry into the conflict forced Britain to reconsider its grand strategy, withdraw its forces from Philadelphia and other exposed outposts, and essentially go on the defensive for the rest of the war—except in the southern colonies, which they still believed could be retained under British rule.

Joint military operations between the Continental Army and French expeditionary forces were at first problematic. A Franco-American attack on Newport, Rhode Island, in August 1778 was initially successful but ultimately failed due to bad weather and poor cooperation between the Americans and French. In September 1779 d'Estaing's forces linked up with American troops under General Benjamin Lincoln for a joint attack on Savannah, Georgia. After a month-long siege failed to bring about results, d'Estaing ordered a full-scale assault; it was bloodily repulsed, with the French and Americans compelled to withdraw in defeat. Although the formal military forces sent by France failed to achieve initial successes, other French were proving their worth to the American cause. In 1779 Colonel George Rogers Clark began a desperate campaign to win control of the future Northwest Territory. Clark was ably assisted in this endeavor by the support of the French population of the region. The French were by far the most numerous nonnative population in the area, and their support for Clark and the American cause proved vital to the eventual American victory in this critical theater of the war.

By 1781 the French expeditionary forces in America had been reinforced and reorganized. A French army numbering approximately seventy-five-hundred men was under the command of the Comte de Rochambeau, while a powerful fleet under the Comte de Grasse, including twenty-eight ships of the line, was deployed to the West Indies. In the summer and autumn of 1781 Washington, Rochambeau, and de Grasse masterfully coordinated their allied forces in a campaign designed to isolate and destroy the British forces under Lord Cornwallis in Virginia. Admiral de Grasse defeated the British at the Battle of the Virginia Capes in September. Then Washington, with ninety-five-hundred Americans, and Rochambeau (who had placed himself under Washington's orders), with seventy-eight-hundred elite French troops, rapidly marched south from New York, trapping Cornwallis's army at Yorktown, Virginia. After a brief siege, Cornwallis surrendered his entire force on 19 October 1781. The British cause in America had been dealt a death blow. Negotiations began shortly afterward, and the Treaty of Paris was

ratified by Congress in 1783, bringing peace and independence to the United States.

### THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Just six years after the conclusion of the American Revolution, the French Revolution erupted with the storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789. Initial American reactions to the Revolution were almost universally positive, with many Americans embracing it as a natural outgrowth of their own revolt. Lafayette became a significant leader in the new French government and sent his mentor, President Washington, the key to the Bastille as a symbol of unity between the two revolutions. That unity was severely challenged, however, when the French Revolution entered upon a more radical phase under the leadership of the Girondins, replaced in June 1793 by the still more radical Jacobins. Attacks upon the nobility and clergy increased dramatically, and King Louis XVI was tried for treason and executed in January 1793. This action set off a wave of imprisonments and executions by the new French republic during the time known as the Terror, which would last into 1794. Lafayette himself, who was a member of the nobility, was accused by the Jacobin rulers of France of being an enemy of the republic and was forced to flee for his life.

As France became convulsed by internal turmoil, it was also invaded by the other great powers of Europe, who were intent on destroying the revolution in its cradle while simultaneously taking advantage of perceived French weakness to seize territory and enhance their own power and position. Faced with war against virtually all of Europe, the French republic invoked the terms of the Franco-American alliance and called upon the United States to wage war at its side as a sister republic. While no one in France believed the infinitesimal American military could wage war in Europe, it was hoped that the Americans could attack British and Spanish possessions in North America and thus pin down and distract the military forces of those nations. While substantial numbers of Americans, including Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, favored supporting France in its war on ideological grounds, cooler heads prevailed. President Washington refused to honor the alliance, claiming that it was no longer valid as it had been concluded with the government of King Louis XVI, not the French republic. Washington's decision was certainly in the best interest of the United States, which had little to gain and much to lose by launching into a major war so soon after independence, but the failure of the United States to honor the alliance

was seen by the French as a betrayal of their friendship.

**Deteriorating relations.** In an effort to secure American cooperation, the French Girondin government in 1793 dispatched a diplomatic mission headed by Edmond Genet to press Washington into some form of support for France in its hour of need, but Washington remained intransigent on the matter. Sensing quite correctly that, in spite of Washington's avowed policy, large numbers of Americans supported France, Genet took his cause directly to the American people. He helped stir up pro-French feelings as Democratic Republican clubs throughout the United States held demonstrations supporting and celebrating the triumphs of the French Revolution. Genet also issued letters of marque to American privateers, urging them to attack British merchant shipping while simultaneously attempting to organize a mercenary army of Americans to attack Spanish Louisiana, an idea that originated with American Revolutionary War hero George Rogers Clark. Genet's activities brought a formal protest from Washington and a demand that the French government recall him immediately. Before this could happen, however, the Jacobins overthrew the Girondins. Fearing for his life, Genet sought political asylum in the United States, which Washington granted.

Support for or opposition to the French Revolution increasingly became a major issue in the emerging rival political ideologies of the early Republic. Democratic Republicans favored the French while the Federalists were adamantly anti-French and desirous of better relations with Great Britain. Jay's Treaty of 1794 brought about a rapprochement between the United States and Great Britain, and this was followed by the ascension of the staunchly anti-French John Adams to the American presidency in 1797. The Directory, which had come to power in France during 1795, viewed the warming relations between its erstwhile ally America and its current enemy Britain with deep hostility and suspicion, and French privateers were given license to attack American ships. President Adams sent a delegation to negotiate an end to these attacks and a formal renunciation of the Franco-American alliance. The American diplomats were treated disrespectfully by the French foreign minister Charles Maurice de Talleyrand, who demanded a personal bribe under the table and a large loan for the French government before he would even begin negotiations. These demands were presented to the Americans by a group of agents known as X, Y, and Z. The American mission refused to pay the bribes and returned home without an agreement,

as American newspapers roared with indignation over the XYZ Affair and Franco-American relations reached their nadir.

Unable to reach a diplomatic agreement, President Adams authorized the U.S. Navy to protect American shipping from French depredations, and so the Quasi-War with France commenced in 1798. The conflict resulted in a few dramatic victories for the infant American navy and the seizure of a number of French merchant vessels, but French privateers continued to prey on American shipping and relations between the two republics remained hostile. A full-scale war, however, never broke out.

#### NAPOLEON AND AMERICA

In November 1799 General Napoleon Bonaparte seized power in France, proclaiming himself first consul, supreme head of the republic. Unlike the government he toppled, Napoleon had warm feelings for the United States and believed the Americans were a natural ally against his enemy, Great Britain. He was also an ardent admirer of George Washington, keeping a bust of the American general in his office and presiding over a special memorial service when he received news of Washington's death in 1799. Napoleon was also an ardent expansionist, and among his dreams for empire was the notion of resurrecting a French presence in North America which, after a halt in hostilities with Britain in 1801, seemed a real possibility. Toward this end he bullied his new ally, Spain, into ceding the Louisiana Territory to him in 1800. Spain acquiesced to Napoleon's demand, but only on the condition that he never allow the territory to fall into the hands of the United States. Napoleon's ardor for a new French empire in North America quickly cooled in the wake of a failed campaign by French troops to control the island of Hispaniola and the threat of a new war with Britain. With Britain's mastery of the seas, it would be impossible to maintain control of any overseas possessions, and Britain would be able to swoop down from Canada and grab the Louisiana Territory with ease.

**Louisiana Purchase.** As Napoleon contemplated these issues in 1803 a delegation arrived from the United States seeking to purchase the port of New Orleans and West Florida for \$10 million. He offered instead to sell the entire Louisiana Territory for \$15 million, a deal eagerly accepted by the Jefferson administration and formally concluded on 30 April 1803. The Louisiana Purchase was a mutually beneficial bargain, for not only did it almost double the size of the United States and open up the Mississippi River to American commerce, but it also prevented the terri-

tory from falling into the hands of the British who, like the Spanish, sought to prevent America's westward expansion. Napoleon received badly needed funds for his wars of conquest from the sale of territory he would have probably lost anyway, while simultaneously enhancing the power and prestige of the nation that he believed would frustrate Britain's colonial ambitions more than any other in the Western Hemisphere. In later years Napoleon would take great pride in the part he played in the growth of the United States.

**See also European Influences: The French Revolution; French and Indian War, Battles and Diplomacy; Fur and Pelt Trade; Louisiana Purchase; Quasi-War with France; Revolution: Diplomacy; Revolution: European Participation; XYZ Affair.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alsop, Susan Mary. *Yankees at the Court: The First Americans in Paris*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1982.
- Ammon, Harry. *The Genet Mission*. New York: Norton, 1973.
- Anderson, Fred. *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754–1766*. New York: Knopf, 2000.
- DeConde, Alexander. *The Quasi-War: The Politics and Diplomacy of the Undeclared War with France, 1797–1801*. New York: Scribners, 1966.
- Dull, Jonathan R. *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1987.
- Englund, Steven. *Napoleon: A Political Life*. New York: Scribners, 2004.
- Harrison, Lowell H. *George Rogers Clark and the War in the West*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001.
- Isaacson, Walter. *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2003.
- Kramer, Lloyd. *Lafayette in Two Worlds: Public Cultures and Personal Identities in an Age of Revolutions*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
- Kukla, Jon. *A Wilderness So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America*. New York: Knopf, 2003.
- Lefebvre, Georges. *Napoleon, from 18 Brumaire to Tilsit, 1799–1807*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1969.
- Morris, Richard B. *The Peacemakers: The Great Powers and American Independence*. New York: Harper and Row, 1965.
- Rice, Howard C., and Ann S. K. Brown, eds. and trans. *American Campaigns of Rochambeau's Army: The Journals of Clermont-Crevoceur, Verger, and Berthier*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1972.
- Scott, Samuel F. *From Yorktown to Valmy: The Transformation of the French Army in an Age of Revolution*. Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1998.

Stinchcombe, William C. *The American Revolution and the French Alliance*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1969.

Unger, Harlow Giles. *Lafayette*. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley, 2002.

White, Richard. *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Robert B. Bruce

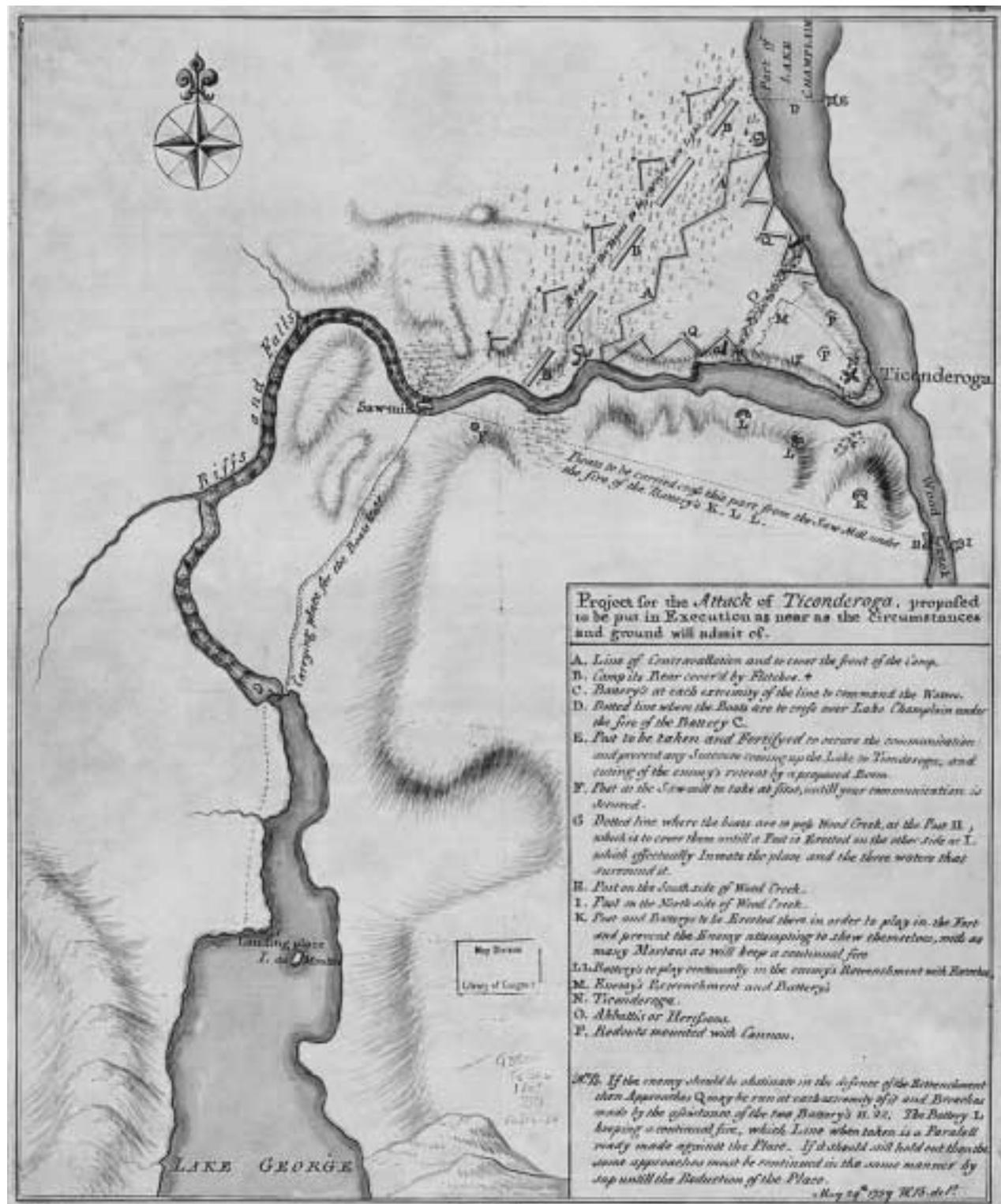
#### FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR, BATTLES AND DIPLOMACY

The French and Indian War (1754–1763) climaxed the 150-year Anglo-French contest for dominance of North America in trade, culture, and religion. The war was also part of two other persisting contests: the seven-century-old Anglo-French dynastic rivalry that had become global and the two centuries of American Indian resistance to European invasion.

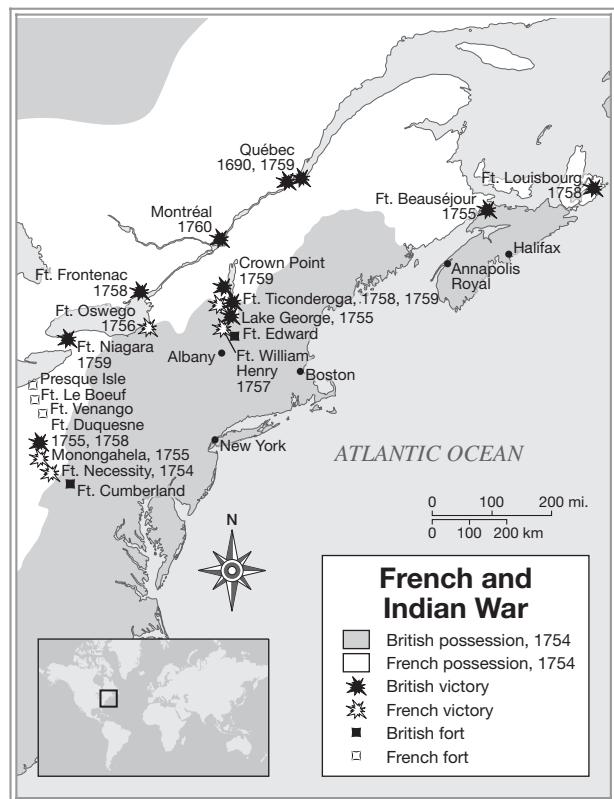
#### ORIGINS OF THE CONFLICT

The improbable flashpoint for this war was the Upper Ohio valley, an underpopulated borderland between Iroquois and Algonquian peoples that had been resettled from the 1720s onward by Shawnee, Delaware, and Iroquois hunter-farmers who traded furs and deerskins with both French-speaking Canadians and English-speaking Pennsylvanians. Although the main Canadian trade routes to Illinois country and to Louisiana passed north and west of this region, Canadians feared disruption and had evidence of Indian defection to the Pennsylvanians, who were expanding trade with the French-allied Hurons and Miamis in the 1740s. The Canadians responded with an armed diplomatic tour in 1749 that threatened English traders and planted plaques proclaiming French sovereignty. Canadians then began imprisoning what they regarded as illegal Pennsylvania traders and supported the Ottawa-Ojibwa destruction of the westernmost English trading base at Pickawillany in 1752. The following year the French governor of Canada sent an army of fifteen hundred to build and man forts between Lake Erie and the Allegheny River, forts that asserted French occupation, channeled trade, and effectively excluded their English rivals.

Initial resistance to this French escalation was lame. Three protests by Mingo chief Tanaghrisson, the Iroquoian "Half King" in the region, were dismissed by the Canadian commanders; most Indians of the region cautiously waited to see whether increased competition between the European rivals



**Project for the Attack of Ticonderoga.** This 1759 map, drawn by William Brasier, shows a British battle plan for the attack on the French near Fort Ticonderoga in New York. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.



might provide trade and diplomatic advantages. The Pennsylvania government increased gifts to its new Ohio Indian allies and urged unity among them, but the pacifist Quakers who dominated that colony's assembly had no intention of sending armed support. Like the French government, the British authorities were neither ready nor anxious for war but responded to Iroquois alarm by sanctioning a British intercolonial conference that finally met in Albany, New York, in June and July 1754. The Albany Conference placated the Iroquois with gifts and pioneered famous discussions about colonial unity, but it failed to achieve the intended diplomatic or military cooperation between colonies.

The Virginia elite, whose desire for western lands had been incorporated in the Ohio Company of Virginia (chartered in 1749), was willing to fight, but soon discovered its limitations. Virginia's initial protest, conveyed by a young Virginia militia officer and Ohio Company stockholder named George Washington, was dismissed by the Canadian commander of the new Fort Le Boeuf just as firmly, if more politely, as Tanaghrisson had been. The Ohio Company hurriedly built, and attempted to fortify, a storehouse at the forks of the Ohio River. In April 1754 more than five hundred Canadians, equipped with cannon, needed to fire not a single shot to prompt the surren-

der of forty-one Virginia workmen and soldiers. The victors promptly built Fort Duquesne on the site. Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie of Virginia, having secured British permission to use force against the Canadians, raised a motley 159-man Virginia regiment led by Washington. Guided by a dozen of Tanaghrisson's comrades, they ambushed a Canadian reconnaissance party, capturing twenty-one and killing ten, including ensign Joseph Coulon de Villiers de Jumonville. This peacetime assassination of Jumonville, as it was called by the French, eventually became a diplomatic weapon of France in Europe; more immediately, it prompted retaliation by some seven hundred French, Canadians, and Indians led by Jumonville's brother. Reinforced to number four hundred, Washington's force attempted to defend another hastily fortified Virginian storehouse, aptly named Fort Necessity, but Washington surrendered on 3 July 1754. This formal surrender, complete with hostages given to ensure adherence to the terms, escalated tensions but did not necessarily mean war between Britain and France.

#### BRITISH DEFEATS

The British government responded in 1755 with its own show of force to remove what it considered to be French encroachment on British-claimed frontiers. General Edward Braddock led two undermanned regiments of British regulars to Virginia, where they recruited colonials and attempted to accomplish part of an elaborate strategy in which four nearly simultaneous British and colonial expeditions were to capture French forts Duquesne, Niagara, St. Frédéric, and Beauséjour. Braddock's expedition against Fort Duquesne initially progressed well, building a road and hauling cannon through mountainous terrain, but the campaign ended disastrously just nine miles from its destination. On 9 July Braddock's advance column of 1,450 was halted by more than half as many Indians and Canadians. Under cover of the surrounding woods, Ottawa, Ojibwa, Wyandot, and Potawatomi warriors flanked the red-coats and fired on the exposed and confused column for more than three hours. Fully two-thirds of the English were killed or wounded in this humiliating defeat, a higher casualty rate than suffered by the defeated side in any major European battle of the era.

The other three English armies fared somewhat better, though only one of them accomplished its objective. Governor William Shirley of Massachusetts led an English army that stalled 150 miles from its target, Fort Niagara, and instead merely strengthened dilapidated Fort Oswego on Lake Ontario. Colo-

nel William Johnson led the third English army's fifteen hundred colonials and three hundred Iroquois, who failed to reach Fort St. Frédéric on Lake Champlain but won a hard-fought, defensive Battle of Lake George in August 1755. As this army cut a sixteen-mile woodland road and hauled siege guns north from Fort Edward, it was challenged by a fast-moving vanguard of 700 Indians, 600 Canadians, and 220 French grenadiers led by the newly arrived Major General Jean-Armand, baron de Dieskau, who had led irregular troops in Europe. Dieskau intended to cut Johnson's line of supply by capturing Fort Edward, only to find his Indians would not attack that fort. Dieskau then trapped part of Johnson's army, sent back to support Fort Edward, in a major ambush known as the Bloody Morning Scout, on 8 September 1755. Chasing the survivors back into Johnson's camp at Lake George, Dieskau was again stalled by Indian reluctance to face cannons, even though these were still being set up behind overturned boats and wagons. This artillery, ably managed by Captain William Eyre of the British army, was unsuccessfully attacked by Dieskau's grenadiers, although their discipline unto death so unnerved their opponents that they did not counterattack. Although Dieskau had displayed tactical brilliance and adaptability, he was defeated by differences between guerrilla war in Europe and in America. Wounded in the day's final battle, he became Johnson's prisoner-guest. Johnson became a baronet and a hero in a year when the English had few of them. His force had not reached its objective; it had built a road that exposed northern New York and was content to build a substantial fort to defend it, Fort William Henry.

The only English army to reach its objective in 1755 was a force of 2,000 New Englanders and 250 British regulars commanded by British colonel Robert Monckton. He quickly secured the surrender of Forts Beauséjour and Gaspereau on the Acadian isthmus; then his army was used to expel some six thousand Acadian neutrals who had been less-than-enthusiastic British subjects for more than forty years. New Englanders confiscated Acadia's farmlands and coal mines as well as consolidating what was already part of their trading empire. The British declared war on France the following year and, ignoring obvious lessons from 1755, sent nearly five thousand additional regulars to America, commanded by the able but impolitic John Campbell, earl of Loudoun, who could gain neither adequate colonial cooperation nor the military initiative.

Although outnumbered in population by twenty to one, Canada under native-born governor

Pierre-François de Rigaud, marquis de Vaudreuil, was able to take the military offensive between 1755 and 1757. Braddock's defeat had reinforced a widespread Indian preference for Canadian traders over American frontier farmers, and even the strong Iroquois hostility to the French abated after losses in the Bloody Morning Scout caused the Iroquois League to reassert its formal neutrality in the Anglo-French war. The war afforded the Indian allies of New France opportunities to avenge innumerable injustices and to roll back white encroachment by as much as two hundred miles in borderlands from Maine to the Carolinas. In independent raids, and in those where they were accompanied by Canadians, the Shawnee, Delaware, and Mingo Indians conducted a parallel war in which they captured nearly two thousand whites who were adopted to strengthen Indian communities, to blunt retaliation, or to be redeemed profitably. However, these raiders also killed at least twice as many as they captured and drove refugees from a swath of destroyed farms. British colonial militias, regiments, and governments became wholly preoccupied with the unsuccessful defense of vast woodland frontiers against surprise attack.

New France, as Canada was called by the French, gained more from its Indian allies than the distraction of its colonial enemies. Indians integrated well into Canadian offensive operations of 1756 and 1757. Fort Oswego had been a thriving English trading post on the southern shores of Lake Ontario, with vulnerable supply lines that reached 150 miles to Albany. Throughout the winter of 1755–1756, Indian and Canadian scouting parties took prisoners and burned boats, effectively isolating Oswego. In March 1756, Indians from mission settlements in Canada joined Canadian and French regulars in a surprise attack on a major supply depot at Fort Bull, New York, where they destroyed gunpowder, ammunition, and provisions intended for Fort Oswego, as well as burning wagons, boats, and Fort Bull itself. Dieskau's replacement as commander of the French regulars in Canada was a more conventional, maneuver-conscious General Louis-Joseph de Montcalm. He was apprehensive about Vaudreuil's planned siege of Fort Oswego, a diversion that left the Lake Champlain–Richelieu River corridor poorly protected in the summer of 1756, when British regulars were massing at Albany for a predictable push north. In August the siege of Fort Oswego was over as soon as Montcalm's first battery chanced to kill the garrison commander. The siege was so short that it failed to draw any British reinforcements from Albany, leading Montcalm to apologize to the French court

for a victory that had violated prevailing military conventions. Montcalm was clearly unwise in taking the captured garrison of 1,640 soldiers back to Canada, where another crop failure made it almost impossible to feed civilians, soldiers, and prisoners of war and also made it difficult to gather supplies for the next campaign.

The centerpiece of the Canadian offensive of 1757 was the siege of Fort William Henry at the south end of Lake George. A garrison commanded by the fort's architect, Major Eyre, had successfully withstood an attack in March, though boats and outbuildings were destroyed. Some eighteen hundred Indians from as far away as Acadia and the Mississippi valley were recruited to join more than six thousand Canadian and French regulars in Montcalm's second annual summer siege. Hundreds of Indian scouts led preliminary raids; cut the fort's communications; and killed, captured, or forced back all English scouting parties seeking information on French strength or movements. Even an English reconnaissance down Lake George by 350 men in a fleet of twenty-two whaleboats was trapped and destroyed by an armada of Ottawa, Ojibwa, and Menominee canoeemen who killed or captured 250. Indians and Canadians again formed the French army's van, isolating the fort and the adjoining entrenched camp and sustaining a small-arms battle while the first battery of French cannon was being prepared. The attackers had brought four mortars and thirty-six cannon, and siege preparations were shortened by ferrying each of these guns the length of Lake George on two lashed-together bateaux. The log-faced and sand-filled walls of the fort were as much as thirty feet thick, but the sleep-deprived defenders ran out of ammunition and usable cannon. Without reinforcement from Fort Edward, Lieutenant Colonel George Monro was compelled to surrender on 9 August.

#### THE TIDE TURNS

The capture of Fort William Henry marked the apex of Canadian fortunes in the war. Immediately afterward, however, there was evidence of a turning tide. To honor the bravery of his opponents and to avoid further aggravation of Canadian food shortages, Montcalm granted the defeated a military parole, the freedom to return to nearby Fort Edward in exchange for a promise not to fight in the subsequent eighteen months. Montcalm's Indian allies, who had joined the expedition on promises of scalps, prisoners, and captured goods, disrupted the retreat of the defeated; but of the 2,308 parolees, all but 308 were saved by the French and Canadians. Their suc-

cess in protecting or recovering so many of the parolees infuriated the victorious Indians. For this reason, and because they had carried a deadly smallpox epidemic back to their communities, these allies would not return in their previous numbers to support Canada again.

French strategy was shifting because of the French government's enthusiasm for Montcalm's successes, which increased his influence and led to the choice of conventional defensive preferences in place of Vaudreuil's more aggressive and more irregular strategy. This change may well have been inevitable, as British military efforts and fortunes improved. Loudoun's failed attempt in 1757 to besiege Louisbourg, on Cape Breton Island, had used much of the increased manpower Britain had sent to America. France, however, could not match these troop commitments because of the emergence of a major land war in Europe and the increasingly effective British naval blockade of French ports.

The British opened the 1758 campaign with a new government leader, the eloquent and efficient William Pitt, who was committed to providing more troops, more money, and new military commanders for the North American theater of war. In a strategy roughly parallel to the failed operations of 1755, though now focused on the conquest of Canada, the British again attacked four targets simultaneously: Louisbourg, Fort Carillon (Ticonderoga), Fort Frontenac, and Fort Duquesne. In July some thirteen thousand British regulars under Major General Jeffrey Amherst, supported by a fleet of thirty-nine ships and fourteen thousand sailors successfully besieged Louisbourg. Meanwhile, Major General James Abercromby hurriedly ordered a conventional frontal assault on Fort Carillon, located on Lake Champlain, in July; fifteen thousand attackers were unable to overcome a massive *abattis* of freshly cut trees with sharpened branches, ably reinforced by thirty-five hundred defenders under Montcalm. In the wake of this failure, Abercromby approved a successful surprise attack in August on Fort Frontenac, on Lake Ontario, by a force of three thousand colonial volunteers under Lieutenant Colonel John Bradstreet. Farther west that summer, seven thousand men under Brigadier General John Forbes built a fortified road, similar to those created in subduing Scotland a decade earlier, through Pennsylvania to Fort Duquesne. Indian allies from various tribes joined the Canadians repeatedly in challenging the road builders, but local Shawnees, Delawares, and Mingos eventually abandoned their French allies in the face of Forbes's army, and the French evacuated and demolished Fort Du-



**Fort William Henry.** Built during the mid-1750s at the south end of Lake George in New York, Fort William Henry became the focus of the Canadian offensive of 1757. Now a museum, the fort is shown here with modern flags in a photograph taken after 1970. © ROMAN SOUMAR/CORBIS.

quesne before the end of November. More than fifty-two thousand men had succeeded in three of four British offensives in 1758, whereas fewer than ten thousand had been defeated in three of four major engagements in 1755.

The British invasion of Canada in 1759 was cautious and methodical. Nearly one thousand Iroquois, lured from their uneasy neutrality, joined the British army that successfully besieged Fort Niagara in July 1759. During the same month, the French evacuated Forts Carillon and St. Frédéric ahead of British invaders, drawing their forces together for a final defense of Canada. While increasing numbers of Indians abandoned the French on sensing British victory, former Cherokee allies of the English were provoked into war with South Carolina in 1759. The Cherokees raided borderland settlements, harassed invading armies, and successfully besieged remote Fort Loudoun in August 1760. It would take three summers of punitive expeditions, which systematically burned evacuated Cherokee towns and vital crops, to provoke a negotiated peace.

#### QUEBEC AND MONTREAL

The celebrated British conquest of Quebec, the capital of New France, in 1759 was a fortunate conclusion to a three-month siege that was failing. Montcalm had refused to be drawn out of the town's natural and man-made defenses, and Brigadier General James Wolfe had been unable to deploy his larger amphibious forces successfully. A well-executed final gamble brought four thousand British troops up a steep, narrow passage to the Plains of Abraham early on the morning of 13 September, challenging the town's weaker landward defenses and cutting communication with Trois-Rivières and Montreal. Like Abercromby at Fort Carillon the previous year, Montcalm moved too hastily against an enemy he thought was not yet effectively deployed. The British won the brief but deadly battle that would kill both commanders and gained control of the city four days later. Control of New France's capital was not decisive; British defenders lost a remarkably similar second battle for the town the following April and were besieged within the town when a British fleet arrived to reverse fortunes in mid-May. That same navy had

sufficiently crippled its French counterpart the previous November, across the Atlantic at Quiberon Bay in Brittany, to ensure that a British rather than a French flag was flying from the first ships up the St. Lawrence River in the spring of 1760.

The British campaign of 1760 was a carefully planned accomplishment of the obvious. Early in September three British armies, totaling seventeen thousand men, approached Montreal from three directions, arriving within two days of each other. Governor Vaudreuil sensibly surrendered New France on 8 September, and that news was conveyed to the western trading posts without prompting any immediate resistance. The French and Indian War was over. At expense so great as to bring severe fiscal and political problems, British regulars had learned to fight in North America and Europeans had imposed enough of their martial culture so that the war ended in formal siege and surrender. The veteran British regulars were redeployed against the French and Spanish in the West Indies, taking Guadeloupe in 1759 and Martinique and Havana in 1762, all of which would be returned in the peace. Young George III had succeeded his grandfather as king of England in 1760 and strongly urged peace. In the Treaty of Paris, signed 10 February 1763, the diplomatically adept French court recovered the economic core of their Atlantic empire: sugar plantations, slaving stations, and access to the Newfoundland fishery. To regain these assets, the French accepted the British conquest of New France and ceded to the British all French rights to lands east of the Mississippi.

*See also Acadians; American Indians: Old Northwest; Canada; Diplomatic and Military Relations, American Indian; Forts and Fortifications; Washington, George.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, Fred. *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754–1766*. New York: Knopf, 2000.
- Gipson, Lawrence H. *The British Empire before the American Revolution*. 15 vols. Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton, 1936–1970.
- Jennings, Francis. *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, Colonies, and Tribes in the Seven Years' War in America*. New York: Norton, 1988.
- Middleton, Richard. *The Bells of Victory: The Pitt-Newcastle Ministry and the Conduct of the Seven Years' War, 1757–1762*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Steele, Ian K. *Betrayals: Fort William Henry and the "Massacre"*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Ward, Matthew C. *Breaking the Backcountry: The Seven Years' War in Virginia and Pennsylvania, 1754–1765*. Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003.

Ian K. Steele

#### FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR, CONSEQUENCES OF

The capitulation of Montreal to British troops in September 1760 ended the French and Indian War in North America but ushered in a host of new problems for the British Empire. Previously, when European powers ended wars they exchanged conquered colonial possessions with an eye to keeping a balance of power between their American empires. This war, however, was different. It had begun in North America in an Anglo-French dispute over control of the Ohio Valley. British colonists, who had expended far more blood and treasure in this war than any prior one, were anxious for Britain to seize control of French Canada so that they might expand westward without threat of foreign reprisals. In Britain some policymakers argued for restoring Canada to the French but keeping the Caribbean sugar colony Guadeloupe, which British forces had also taken during the war. Others argued that Canada was far more valuable than a sugar colony because of its fur trade and the access it would provide to the continent's interior.

When the Peace of Paris was finally signed in 1763, the advocates for the retention of Canada won out. By the terms of the treaty, Britain acquired all of France's North American possessions east of the Mississippi River. In addition, Britain acquired Florida from Spain. The balance of power in North America had shifted decisively in Britain's favor, but so too had the costs of governing and defending imperial possessions there. Before the French and Indian War, British policymakers had looked upon the North American colonies chiefly as self-sustaining commercial enterprises, to be governed as cheaply as possible through the regulation of their trade. After the Treaty of Paris, British North America became a vast imperial dominion containing British subjects, conquered foreigners, and Native Americans all in need of government and protection from each other and external enemies.

The chief consequence of the French and Indian War, therefore, was a reorientation in Britain's perception and administration of its American colonies. This reorientation unfolded over the next dozen years, as British policymakers grappled with the expanded responsibilities and costs of their American

empire. Their efforts fell into three broad categories shaped by the Peace of Paris: the maintenance of a North American army, the management of Indian affairs, and the government of new territories and peoples.

The acquisition of Canada and Florida made the maintenance of British troops in North America after the war a fait accompli. Colonial militias and provincial troops had proven themselves notoriously unreliable in garrison duty during the war, so British regulars were needed to police newly conquered subjects and to staff forts and posts abandoned by the French and Spanish. The British ministry planned to maintain about 7,500 British troops in North America, at an estimated annual cost of £350,000. This policy would add a substantial burden to a royal treasury already heavily indebted by the war effort. In 1764 Prime Minister George Grenville introduced the Sugar Act to Parliament, the first of a series of taxation measures pursued by the British ministry over the following decade designed to shift a portion of this financial burden onto the shoulders of the colonists, who, according to Grenville and his successors, could well afford to pay for it. The colonists, of course, saw it another way, and launched a series of protests, beginning with the Stamp Act riots in 1765, that condemned such measures as "taxation without representation."

Quarreling of troops was another issue that arose out of the decision to maintain regular troops in America after the war. When the effort to raise tax revenues in America stalled, Parliament passed Quartering Acts in 1765, 1766, and 1774 that required the American colonists to provide barracks and supplies for the troops. Quarreling had arisen as a point of contention during the French and Indian War in Massachusetts and New York, but local compromises and generous subsidies from the government ministry of William Pitt had helped paper over these differences. With the passage of the Quartering Act of 1765, the issue arose again, this time in the context of parliamentary efforts to tax the colonists without their consent. The colonial opposition to quartering intensified in 1768, when the ministry, in an attempt to cut expenses, ordered troops to vacate most western posts and relocate in eastern cities.

The administration of the army in North America after the French and Indian War was intertwined with British efforts to place Indian affairs under the centralized management of imperial officials. The French had maintained an extensive network of commercial and military alliances with Indian nations in the Great Lakes, Ohio, and Mississippi regions, play-

ing the role of a diplomatic "father" who supplied his "children" with presents of trade goods and helped mediate their relations with traders, missionaries, and other Indians. The British inherited this role but played it very poorly. General Jeffrey Amherst, commander in chief of the British forces in North America, regarded the Indians as conquered peoples rather than allies and ordered that the flow of diplomatic presents to them be stopped. In May 1763 Anglo-Indian tensions created by Amherst's high-handedness erupted into a widespread and devastating frontier war known, after the American Ottawa chief, as Pontiac's War.

The violence and cost of this war spurred the British Board of Trade to expand the powers and responsibilities of the two superintendents for Indian affairs the crown had appointed during the French and Indian War. According to a plan formulated in 1764, the Indian superintendents—William Johnson in the northern colonies and John Stuart in the southern colonies—would oversee all Indian land purchases, regulate the fur trade, and negotiate a boundary line between Indian and colonial territory. The implementation of this new policy was stymied by the colonists' reluctance to follow the dictates of the crown's Indian superintendents. In 1768 the ministry restored management of the fur trade to the individual colonial governments, which lowered the crown's expenses but also increased the exploitation and abuses that fueled Indian discontent along the frontier in the years preceding the American Revolution.

The British ministry's efforts to fund the army and pacify Indians in North America were directly related to the third major focus of policymaking initiated by the French and Indian War. The territorial acquisitions of the war opened a vast new frontier to American land speculators and squatters anxious to exploit territory west of the Appalachian Mountains. Even before the ink was dry on the Peace of Paris, settlers were pushing into the Ohio Country, over the objections of Indians who claimed that region as their own. In the Proclamation of 1763, the British ministry tried to stem this tide by temporarily prohibiting settlement west of the Allegheny Mountains. Over time, this injunction became more permanent as the Indian superintendents negotiated treaties to create a fixed boundary line between colonial and Indian populations. Squatters ignored such restrictions, and well-connected land speculators lobbied the crown for land grants to establish new colonies in the continent's interior.

The British effort to impose control over its new western territories in North America came to a head in 1774 with Parliament's passage of the Quebec Act. While the chief purpose of this legislation was to establish a plan of civil government in Canada, it extended the authority of the new Quebec government over the western territories ceded by the French in 1763. Various provisions in the Quebec Act curtailed liberties Anglo-American colonists considered their birthright, including trial by jury and local government by elected assemblies. Anglo-Americans interpreted these measures as an effort to impose French-style despotism over any new colonies established west of the Appalachians.

Historians have long argued over the significance of these policies in the coming of the American Revolution. Some assert that the origins of the American Revolution lay in the western policy pursued by the British ministry after 1760, because this policy generated the need for the taxes that proved so obnoxious to the colonists. Others discount the impact of such measures as the Proclamation of 1763 and Quebec Act, especially when compared to the widespread protests ignited by the Stamp Act, Townshend Duties, and Tea Act. Regardless, the French and Indian War fundamentally changed Britain's approach to governing its North American colonies. The efforts to maintain a North American army, centralize Indian affairs, and manage a vast and unruly frontier no doubt contributed to the souring of Anglo-American relations after 1763 and helped define the issues upon which the empire split apart in 1776.

*See also* **British Army in North America; British Empire and the Atlantic World; Canada; French and Indian War, Battles and Diplomacy; Pontiac's War; Proclamation of 1763; Stamp Act and Stamp Act Congresses; Sugar Act; Tea Act; Townshend Act.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, Fred. *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754–1766*. New York: Knopf, 2000.
- Dowd, Gregory Evans. *War under Heaven: Pontiac, the Indian Nations, and the British Empire*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.
- Gipson, Lawrence Henry. "The American Revolution as an Aftermath of the Great War for the Empire, 1754–1765." In *The American Revolution: Two Centuries of Interpretation*. Edited by Edmund S. Morgan. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965.
- Murrin, John M. "The French and Indian War, the American Revolution, and the Counterfactual Hypothesis: Reflec-

tions on Lawrence Henry Gipson and John Shy." *Reviews in American History* 1 (1973): 307–317.

Timothy J. Shannon

---

#### FRENCH REVOLUTION *See European Influences: The French Revolution.*

---

**FRIES'S REBELLION** Following Shays's Rebellion (1786–1787) and the Whiskey Rebellion (1794), Fries's Rebellion was the last in a trilogy of popular uprisings against taxing authorities after the American Revolution. The federal government had imposed its first Direct Tax in 1798 to fund a military program for defense against France during the Quasi-War. The French launched naval attacks upon America's Atlantic shipping after the United States in 1794 negotiated Jay's Treaty with Britain, with whom France was at war. The Direct Tax was a levy on lands, dwelling houses, and slaves, and the Federalist Adams administration appointed placemen to take the rates.

In eastern Pennsylvania, Federalist patronage fell to Quakers and Moravians, local minorities who had abstained from participation in the Revolution while their more numerous German Lutheran and Reformed neighbors had supported the Patriot cause. With the tax, the local ethno-religious political battle assumed national significance as resisters connected it with what they believed was a broader, Federalist Party assault upon the people's liberty that included the Alien and Sedition Acts (1798) and the creation of a peacetime standing army. John Fries and his neighbors believed they had learned valuable lessons from the mistakes of the Shays and Whiskey rebels. Fries and other leaders had marched westward under George Washington and Alexander Hamilton to suppress the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794. In 1798 they aimed to prevent what they perceived to be an unconstitutional tax through a combination of traditional and constitutional means. They drew upon the rituals of crowd action—affirmed during the imperial crisis and the Revolution—and nonviolently stopped the assessments while pleading with their representatives and petitioning Congress to repeal the tax law as well as the Alien and Sedition Acts. During the earliest days of the Republic, while James Madison and Thomas Jefferson were testing the the-

ory of state nullification, the Fries rebels were asserting that the people themselves retained that right.

The rebellion occurred when some resisters liberated their neighbors from a federal marshal in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, on 7 March 1799. The Adams administration quickly quashed the revolt with military force, but the story did not end there. Federalist mishandling of the affair accentuated existing intra-party divisions. While Adams had advocated the use of militia, the commanding general of the professional Provisional Army, Alexander Hamilton, and Secretary of War James McHenry had employed regular forces instead. When Adams pardoned John Fries just hours before his scheduled execution in May 1800, he alienated himself from most of his cabinet during a tight reelection campaign. The resisters went on to capture control of local government, help the Democratic Republicans win Pennsylvania, and throw the Keystone State to Jefferson in the Revolution of 1800.

*See also Shays's Rebellion; Whiskey Rebellion.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bouton, Terry. "A Road Closed: Rural Insurgency in Post-Independence Pennsylvania." *Journal of American History* 87 (December 2000): 855–887.
- Newman, Paul Douglas. *Fries's Rebellion: The Enduring Struggle for the American Revolution*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
- Sharp, James Roger. *American Politics in the Early Republic: The New Nation in Crisis*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993.

Paul Douglas Newman

---

**FRONTIER** "Frontier," one of many English words that took on new meanings in North America, has assumed as well a role in explaining the continent's history during the past five hundred years. In time the word has acquired other connotations, both positive and negative, and with that a power to kindle high emotions about the course and consequences of North American history.

In England and Europe, "frontier" has meant a border or boundary, usually between nations, and thus by nature is static. Across the Atlantic it became dynamic, referring to the outer edge of European settlement and influence intruding into the continent.

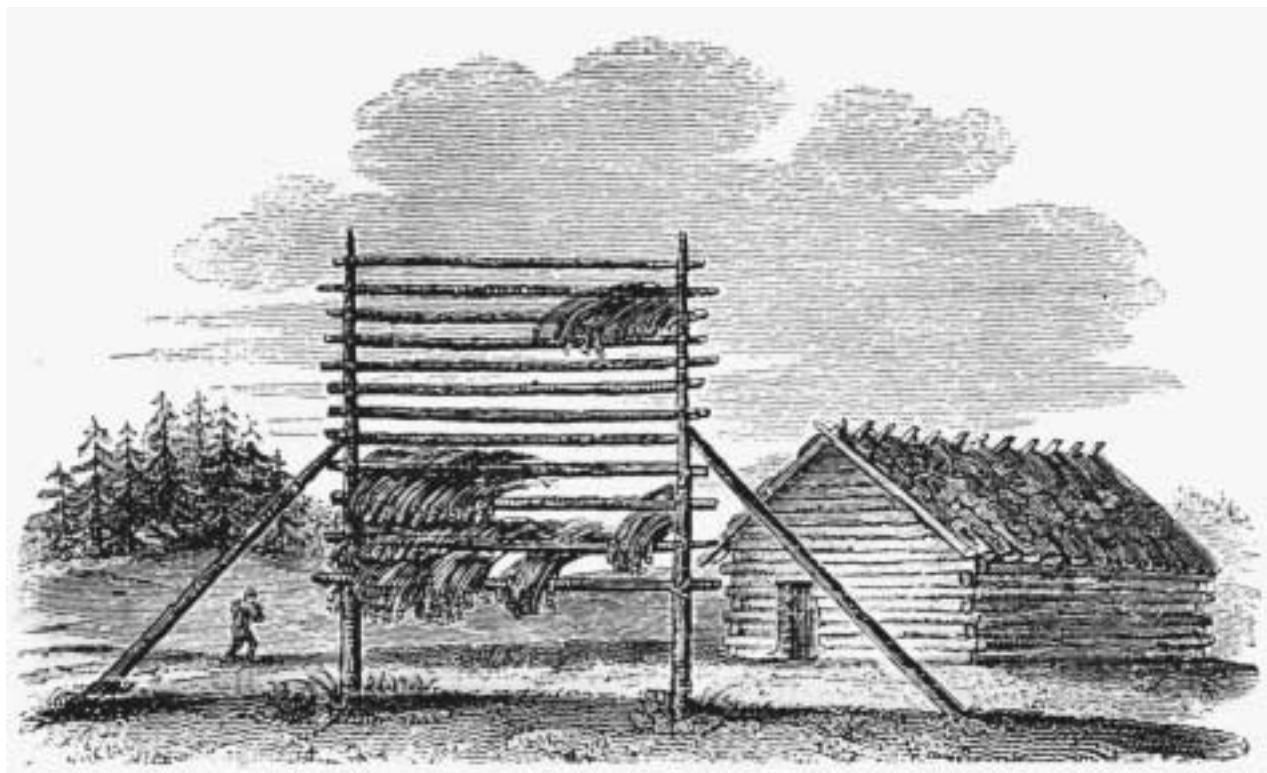
Among historians, the term "frontier" is most closely associated with Frederick Jackson Turner, whose essay "The Significance of the Frontier in

American History" profoundly influenced American historiography for forty years after its publication in 1893. Here and in subsequent essays Turner drew heavily for inspiration and examples from the early years of the American Republic and the frontier's advance from the Appalachian Mountains to just beyond the Mississippi River.

Reacting against historians such as his mentor, Herbert Baxter Adams, who considered American history essentially an outgrowth of British and European institutions, Turner argued that Old World customs and attitudes broke down and reformed in America's radically different physical and social environment. The prime site of that transformation was along the cutting edge of advancing settlement, "the line between civilization and savagery." First in England's Atlantic colonies and later in the United States, the opportunity of "free land" drew pioneers westward into settings that required them to modify or scrap entirely many of the institutions and values of their previous lives. The result was a "composite nationality," a distinctive culture and people. The frontier, as both a process and a condition, thus "explain[s] American development," Turner wrote.

The "frontier thesis" remained hugely influential until the 1930s. It jibed with several intellectual trends, including the evolutionary theories of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer and, by stressing how a people's material foundations shaped their values, the ideas of Karl Marx. Turner also reflected his generation's conflicted feelings about its nation. On the one hand his descriptions of evolving frontier societies after the Revolution thrummed with highly positive traits he considered essentially American—among others, a democratic individualism, inventiveness, toleration, and a restless striving. Thus in Turner's day the early Republic's frontier spoke both to a desire for unity, as the United States grew beyond the Civil War and its contentious aftermath, and to a growing pride as it emerged as a leading world power.

Turner also noted, however, that the frontier was coming to a close. As defined in the federal census, the frontier was a north-and-south line separating an area with two or more persons per square mile from one with fewer than two. The census of 1890 showed for the first time no unbroken frontier line across the nation. As the frontier came to an end, the process that had produced the American character presumably would no longer do its work. By implication the nation would enter a new era, perhaps one of decline. Turner's thesis expressed a nation's anxiety about its future as well as a pride in its past.



**Swedish Log Cabin.** The first American log cabins were modeled after the simple log homes of Scandinavian peasants. This engraving from 1824 shows a cabin built by Swedish immigrants to the New World. The wooden rack in the foreground was used to dry corn. THE GRANGER COLLECTION, NEW YORK.

#### THE PROGRESS OF THE MOVING FRONTIER

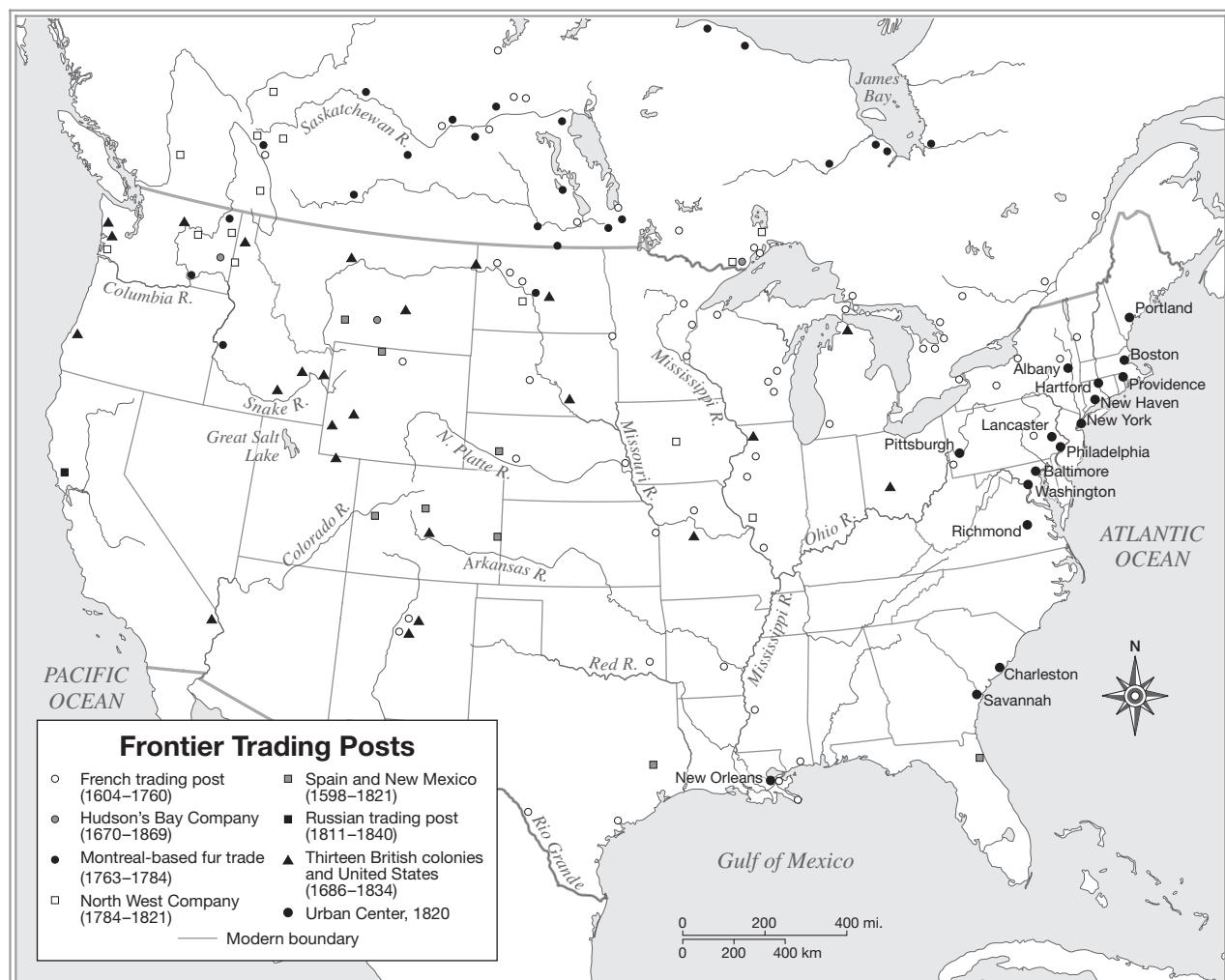
As Turner conceived and described it—a westward advance of settlement—the frontier began on the Atlantic coast with the first English settlements of the seventeenth century. By the time of the Revolution and the birth of the Republic it had moved across the Appalachians into Kentucky, Tennessee, and western Pennsylvania. By the 1820s it had rolled through the Ohio Valley and Gulf coastal region and across the Mississippi River into Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, and his own native Wisconsin. There it paused before jumping to the Pacific coast in the 1840s, then advancing from both east and west into the interior of the American West after the Civil War.

The frontier of the early Republic was predominantly agrarian. Most who moved west were families establishing small farms, although cotton plantations and slavery were a large part of the advance through the Gulf Coast region. By 1829 the quest for farmland had driven the frontier as well into eastern Texas and the first tier of states beyond the Mississippi River. Over the next two generations the same hunger would draw frontier farmers to western Oregon and central California, to Mormon settlements

near Utah's Great Salt Lake, and finally to the Great Plains.

In the earliest stage of frontier farming, settlers hacked out a clearing, built a rude dwelling, planted corn around tree stumps, and began the long process of clearing enough land for a working farm. They were subsistence farmers, producing only for themselves and neighbors. They borrowed heavily from Indian peoples, from clothing to such techniques as girdling to kill trees before felling them. In fact, early white frontier families lived as much by a hunting-gathering economy as did their Indian neighbors. As settlement thickened, more land was cleared and farms improved; settlers gradually turned to crops meant for distant markets. An exception to this pattern was on the Gulf Coastal frontier, a region beautifully suited for growing short-staple cotton to meet the voracious demand in English textile mills. Planters consequently established cotton plantations almost from the start as the southern frontier was opened to settlement after 1815.

Popular images of solitary frontiersmen to the contrary, the family was ubiquitous. Success, even survival, depended on all its members contributing



and cooperating. Wives performed not only household and nursing duties but also heavier labor, and children of both sexes worked at all but the most physically taxing tasks. As a result widows and widowers rarely remained single for long, and the birth rate was by most calculations far higher than in more settled parts of the nation.

Frontier farming should not be defined too narrowly. Cattle raising, linked in the popular imagination mostly with later frontiers in the far West, was crucial to the eastern agricultural frontiers before 1830, for instance. The term "cowboy" appeared first in the Carolinas, already with a tone of wild independence. Scots-Irish settlers of the Gulf Coastal frontier were especially accomplished at herding cattle; on plantations in many parts of the southern frontier, including the rich farming region of the Mississippi delta, slaves sometimes spent as much time tending cattle as cultivating cotton. Many of the techniques of cattle raising applied later on far-

western ranches evolved first on the southeastern frontier. Other animals were raised to be sold and slaughtered. Pigs, which prospered in the woodlands with little supervision, were especially popular. There are even accounts from the southern frontier of turkey drives, with hundreds of the large fowls herded to market.

The need for markets made towns and urban centers also a vital part of the moving frontier. Coming to life as trading and transportation centers, they further facilitated the westward flow of people and goods, supported farms and other settlements nearby and provided the ground where political, educational, religious, and cultural institutions could take root and grow. In these frontier towns appeared a region's earliest light industry, not only slaughterhouses—Cincinnati earned the nickname "Porkopolis" for all the swine processed there—but the manufacture of goods impractical to

import, such as glassware, barrels, rope, and flat-boats.

Towns most often sprang up along trade routes, and on frontiers of the early Republic that usually meant rivers. Pittsburgh first drew settlers because of the protection of Fort Pitt, then for its prime location at the headwaters of the Ohio River. Farther downstream Cincinnati and Louisville served as collecting and distribution points for trade north and south of the river. Several important urban centers were founded along water routes by England's imperial rivals, in particular France, which established St. Louis, Detroit, Natchez, New Orleans, Biloxi, Mobile, and many somewhat lesser towns to service its far-flung fur trading empire. In 1763 these passed to Spain and England, and by the 1820s all had been pulled within the expanding United States. Overland trade routes, typically following trails taken by Native American traders and warriors, produced some towns. The Wilderness Road connected the first frontier towns in the Kentucky interior to North Carolina. The Natchez Trace ran from Natchez, Mississippi, to Nashville, Tennessee, which in turn was connected by trails to the Ohio River at Maysville and via Zane's Trace across Ohio to Wheeling, West Virginia.

The importance of these arteries to commerce and life is a key to understanding the frontier's role in early American diplomacy. Concerns about interference with settlers' use of the Mississippi led to confrontations with Spain in 1795 and with France in 1803. The young Republic turned these crises to its advantage, particularly the conflict with France, which resulted in doubling the nation's size and propelling the frontier toward the Pacific.

#### **RESHAPING SOCIETY**

Without question frontier conditions did reshape society. People of many ethnicities and from a variety of places were tossed together. At first, institutions imported from mother cultures were poorly rooted or wholly absent. The tentative nature of settlements combined with a high rate of mobility to make for a social fluidity and a fuzziness of hierarchical order. With the notable exception of areas where the plantation system appeared early, there was considerable economic leveling. Turner argued that these and other conditions produced the admirable traits he cited as essentially American. The need to cope with unfamiliar challenges, plus a relative lack of tradition, bred an inventiveness and pragmatism. Greater individualism was a natural outgrowth of strangers thrown together, measuring one another by person-

al capacity rather than lineage or social position. With fewer economic and social distinctions, politics tended to be more democratic and innovative.

Although he emphasized the positive, Turner observed that the same conditions had less desirable effects. An unsettled society short on institutional controls promoted violence as well as individualism and democracy. The pressing demand to meet immediate physical needs brought a cultural atrophy and anti-intellectualism. Some critics stressed a theme that ran against Turner's argument—a strong conservative impulse on the frontier. Settlers often felt a powerful urge, even an obsession, to transplant what they considered cultural essentials. Because they had to create political forms almost on the fly, early governments were less likely to innovate than to copy what they knew from the past. In particular, constitutional forms often mimicked those of the East. The tension between change and tradition was played out in gender relations. Frontier conditions often required women to take on roles usually reserved for men, but the crushing load of work and the need for children made women's lives difficult and dangerous and left little room for individual fulfillment outside their labors.

#### **DEBATING THE ROLE OF THE FRONTIER**

By Turner's death in 1932, more fundamental critiques of his ideas were being heard. Some stressed that many other factors—among them patterns of immigration, American society's middle-class nature, and the ferment of ideas in eastern cities— influenced the national character at least as much as the frontier. Others argued that class divisions and social and economic hierarchies have been much more a part of American life than implied in the celebration of frontier-inspired egalitarianism. Still others found Turner unclear on the mechanisms of the frontier's influence and specifically questioned how an area by definition thinly populated could transform an entire society. In the 1980s and 1990s practitioners of the "new" Western history argued that, as the frontier's influence had been described thus far, it presented a doubly deficient narrative. It downplayed or ignored the terrible costs of expansion—dispossession and cultural destruction of native peoples, environmental calamity, dashed hopes, and an obsessive acquisitiveness. And as a story dominated by Anglo-Saxon males, it neglected the vital parts played by women and the many ethnic groups active in westward expansion.

The effect of these various critiques has been paradoxical. No longer considered the primary forma-

tive force on continental history, and thus narrower in influence, the frontier has been more broadly defined and its explanatory power has grown. An especially revealing line of research has explored the interactions among Europeans, Euro-Americans, and Indian peoples. Along the various frontiers there developed what the historian Richard White has called a "middle ground," syncretic cultures of overlapping customs and mutual borrowing in which all sides created new terms of understanding and exchange and new means of accommodation. One native response to frontiers was ethnogenesis—the creation of new collective identities. Many tribes assumed to have existed on the frontiers at the time of European contact, such as the Catawbas of the Carolinas, were in fact smaller related groups that merged and consolidated to meet the threats and opportunities posed by the newcomers.

A frontier in this sense was not a line dividing one condition from another, and certainly not a division between "civilization and savagery," but rather a place where peoples, ideas, cultures, and institutions came together and interacted on many levels, sometimes mixing and sometimes conflicting but always in mutual influence. The interaction included the environment. Clearing the land and introducing domestic animals and new farming methods, settlers set loose chains of environmental changes and undermined native economies. Drawn to opportunities of trade, Indians depleted populations of deer, beavers, and other animals. Perhaps the most profound environmental interaction came with the introduction of Old World pathogens and waves of epidemics that devastated native populations.

The frontier has proved most persistent as a term in popular culture summoning up images of opportunity, adventure, challenge, courage, danger, and innovation. The first such images emerged from the early Republic. By 1829 Daniel Boone stood as the nation's first paragon of frontier virtues. James Fenimore Cooper had created a wildly popular frontier character in his Leatherstocking tales. Upon his election to the presidency, Andrew Jackson's unprecedented political appeal was inextricably tangled with his image as backwoods hero. The frontier's mythic power has continued in forms as varied as Western novels and films, subgenres of science fiction, political rhetoric and slogans, and advertising, where its references are used to sell everything from computers and toothpaste to automobiles and tattooing. This allure is a reminder of the frontier's enduring hold on the imagination among scholars and the public at large.

*See also American Character and Identity; American Indians: American Indian Resistance to White Expansion; Americanization; Environment, Environmental History, and Nature; Expansion; Exploration and Explorers; Foreign Investment and Trade; Frontier Religion; Frontiersmen; Fur and Pelt Trade; Individualism; Livestock Production; Louisiana Purchase; Migration and Population Movement; Nature, Attitudes Toward; Town Plans and Promotion; Work: Women's Work.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barnhart, John D. *Valley of Democracy: The Frontier versus the Plantation in the Ohio Valley, 1775–1818*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1953.
- Grossman, James R., ed. *The Frontier in American Culture: An Exhibition at the Newberry Library, August 26, 1994–January 7, 1995*. Chicago: Newberry Library; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.
- Limerick, Patricia Nelson. *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West*. New York: Norton, 1987.
- Noble, David W. *Historians against History: The Frontier Thesis and the National Covenant in American Historical Writing since 1830*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1965.
- Nobles, Gregory H. *American Frontiers: Cultural Encounters and Continental Conquest*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1997.
- Taylor, George Rogers, ed. *The Turner Thesis Concerning the Role of the Frontier in American History*. 3rd ed. Lexington, Mass.: Heath, 1971.
- Turner, Frederick Jackson. *The Frontier in American History*. New York: Dover, 1996.
- White, Richard. *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Wrobel, David M. *The End of American Exceptionalism: Frontier Anxiety from the Old West to the New Deal*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993.

Elliott West

---

**FRONTIER RELIGION** The frontier of the new nation—extending from the Appalachian Mountains to the Mississippi River—was a region of intense religious activity by both Euro-Americans and Native Americans. Among Euro-American settlers of the region, the most important aspect of religious activity was the democratization of religion. Among Native Americans, on the other hand, it was resistance to Christianity and to its associated cultural elements.

The democratization of American religion had begun during the first Great Awakening (c. 1740–1760) and the American Revolution (1775–1783), but it accelerated dramatically during the Second Great Awakening (c. 1790–1830). The process was marked by the absence of established churches, an emphasis on the vernacular in the forms and language of worship, and a refusal to see clergy as a divinely ordained class apart from the laity.

The first Great Awakening had seen established churches from New England to the Carolinas lose much of their authority. Congregational and Anglican churches were divested of much of their power to coerce attendance or financial support, and many dissenting Protestants gained at least de facto toleration. The Revolution continued this trend, especially in Anglican colonies, where the Church of England was associated with discredited royal officials and where independence brought rising demands for its disestablishment. After the Revolution, the Northwest Ordinance (or Land Ordinance of 1787) set the tone for frontier religion. First among the “unalterable” characteristics that it mandated for the region was that no peaceable person ever be molested on account of religion, and none of the new territories and states that emerged west of the original thirteen ever had established faiths.

Frontier religion also perpetuated the first Great Awakening’s emphasis on “heart” religion. The Awakened had to feel God in their hearts, and the characteristic form of worship on the early national frontier was the revival, or camp meeting. The meeting held at Cane Ridge, Kentucky, in 1801 was the most celebrated example of this phenomenon. Thousands of men, women, and children spent a week at Cane Ridge, and during that time many demonstrated profound physical manifestations of their religious enthusiasm, such as jerking, dancing, barking, and falling down. Cane Ridge was unusual only in its size, though. Throughout the early national period, the two largest denominations on the trans-Appalachian frontier—Baptists and Methodists—held thousands of smaller such events. Baptist services, which had long been known for their enthusiasm, tended to be in established churches; Methodists, on the other hand, employed a cadre of itinerant ministers—circuit riders—to spread the word to any who would hear it.

Finally, frontier religion shattered the notion of the clergy as a separate, elite class. Baptists had always opposed any sort of church hierarchy, and their ministers were known more for the enthusiasm of their preaching than for their education or their

ability to split theological hairs. Methodists of the era were somewhat less democratic in that they had a church hierarchy, symbolized on the frontier by Bishop Francis Asbury (1745–1816), although they also relied on a host of lay preachers to serve the faithful. The most democratic of all may have been the Disciples of Christ, or the Christians. The Christian movement emerged in the late eighteenth century, when adherents of several faiths began to emphasize the ability of every man or woman to effect his or her own salvation through reading the New Testament. On the frontier, the most prominent leaders of the movement were Barton Stone (1772–1844) and Alexander Campbell (1788–1866), but neither claimed any special religious status. To the followers of Stone and Campbell, anyone who read the Bible had an equal claim to understanding the will of God.

While Euro-Americans on the frontier developed a more democratic version of Christianity in the region, Native Americans often resisted Christianity with increasing determination. Even those tribes that began to adopt the agricultural capitalism of white Americans often declined to adopt their religion. The Cherokee, for example, were perfectly willing to permit Moravian missionaries to establish schools and provide practical training but showed little interest in their faith. Indeed, by 1830 fewer than 10 percent of the Cherokee people had converted to Christianity, despite years of activity among them by Moravians, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Methodists. In other tribes, most notably the Shawnee and Muskogee (Creek), resistance to Christianity was even stronger. The cultural and demographic devastation that followed European expansion led Tenskwatawa (1775–1836), a Shawnee, to advocate a return to traditional ways in order to appease the Great Spirit and bring an end to white incursions. His message not only contributed to Tecumseh’s war against the United States (1811–1813), but also inspired traditionalists among the Muskogeans, known as the Red Sticks, to attack as well (1813–1814). Both wars ended in defeat, but Native Americans continued their effort to preserve traditional beliefs in the face of Christianity.

*See also American Indians: American Indian Religions; Baptists; Methodists; Revivals and Revivalism.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Dowd, Gregory Evans. *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745–1815*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.  
 Hatch, Nathan O. *The Democratization of American Christianity*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989.

LeBeau, Bryan F. *Religion in America to 1865*. New York: New York University Press, 2000.

Wigger, John H. *Taking Heaven by Storm: Methodism and the Rise of Popular Christianity in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Daniel Thorp

---

**FRONTIERSMEN** Adventurous. Rugged. Individualistic. Free of the oppression of institutions and the restraints of civil society. Living on the edge of danger, unsure of whether or not the day would be their last. These are all classic characteristics of the American frontiersman of western lore.

To be sure, men like Daniel Boone possessed a fanciful, adventurous side. Born in a log cabin in Pennsylvania, Boone spent much of his life on the western frontier of America, taking part in military campaigns, acting as a backwoods guide, embarking on extended hunting expeditions, fighting Indians, and establishing settlements deeper into the American interior. Yet men like Boone also exhibited a more "civilized" side. Both Boone and his frontier counterpart Davy Crockett served their fellow frontier settlers as state legislators, Boone in the Virginia Assembly and Crockett in Tennessee. Intermingling politics with business, Boone spent a good part of his time engaged in activities not characteristically associated with frontiersmen, such as contracting with the assembly to provide supplies to western militias, dabbling in business as the operator of a general store, speculating in land, and petitioning the Federal Land Commission and Congress to secure land grants in the West. Crockett found his way into national affairs as well, serving three terms in Congress as a U.S. representative.

Just as frontiersmen like Boone and Crockett were not quite as rugged as they were often portrayed, individualism did not characterize all of the activities taking place on America's western frontiers. Even the famed frontier historian Fredrick Jackson Turner, noted for his interpretation of the frontier as a definitive factor in the development of the American character, had to acknowledge that the transplanting of whole communities by opportunity-seeking easterners meant that many Americans living on the frontier skipped the primitive frontier phase of settlement almost entirely. Some enterprising businessmen even offered up for sale ready-made homesteads, cleared of timber, fenced in, and ready for seed, therefore eliminating much of the back-

breaking work and uncertainty often associated with frontier life.

Those living in the West built on a long tradition of communal activity and support, and the very nature of the frontier and the dangers present on it necessitated such cooperative behavior. The practice of traveling in wagon trains across the Great Plains, for example, grew in part out of the need to provide protection against hostile Indians, which these larger groups afforded, and which the mythical, Indian-fighting frontiersmen of lore would not have required.

Thus it was the rare individual who fit the frontier mold, and perhaps this rarity helped stimulate the attraction on the part of many Americans to the fiction of the rugged, individualistic frontier lifestyle. But if the life of the frontiersman in Boone's Kentucky and Crockett's Tennessee was not wholly the life of adventure and complete abandon, then when and where did this myth originate?

Many credit Daniel Boone's contemporary and fellow land speculator, John Filson, for introducing Americans to the archetypal "frontiersman" personified by Boone himself. In part attempting to attract interest in the west of the early Republic so as to bolster the value of his own Kentucky landholdings, Filson published *The Adventures of Col. Daniel Boon* in 1784 to much acclaim. In the book Filson presented Boone in an Enlightenment-inspired image, that of a "natural man," born of a simpler time and free of the apparent constraints and restrictions of civilized society.

Perhaps it is no coincidence that the myth of the American frontiersman, first invoked shortly after the ratification of the Constitution and the birth of the new American nation, accelerated during the first half of the nineteenth century. James Fenimore Cooper's "Leatherstocking Tales" (beginning with *The Pioneers* in 1823), Davy Crockett's autobiographical work, *A Narrative of the Life of David Crockett of the State of Tennessee* (1834), and Timothy Flint's *The First White Man of the West, or the Life and Exploits of Col. Dan'l. Boone, The First Settler of Kentucky* (1854), expanded on the concept of the American frontiersman as a unique element of the unexplored American West. This booming interest in the American frontiersman coincided almost seamlessly with the growing American belief in "Manifest Destiny," the idea that Americans were fated to spread their civilization across the entire North American continent. In this sense then, the myth of the American frontiersman was one of empire and civilization as much as a symbol of its rejection, and would remain so

throughout the twentieth century as Americans set their sights across the Pacific and toward Asia.

Born of speculation and profit and nurtured by the quest for a landed empire, the American frontiersman personified, and continues to personify, the American belief in the individualism of the American people and the exceptionalism of the American experience. Although perhaps more myth than reality, the memory of the American frontiersman remains a powerful force in the shaping of American identity.

*See also American Character and Identity; Expansion; Frontier; Individualism; Land Policies.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Faragher, John Mack. *Daniel Boone: The Life and Legend of an American Pioneer*. New York: Holt, 1992.

Hine, Robert V., and John Mack Faragher. *The American West: A New Interpretive History*. New Haven: Yale, 2000.

*Hugh Randall*

---

**FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW OF 1793** By the time of the Constitutional Convention in 1787, a division between slave and free states had begun to emerge. Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont (which would become the fourteenth state) had abolished slavery, while Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Rhode Island were in the process of doing so. Southerners at the convention feared that in the new nation, their slaves would escape to these free states and be forever lost. Thus, late in the convention, Pierce Butler of South Carolina proposed that the fugitives from justice clause, designed to facilitate the return of accused criminals, also provide for the return of fugitive slaves. The convention rejected this idea but a few days later adopted, without debate or vote, a separate provision for the return of fugitive slaves. The clause provided that "No Person held to Service or Labour in one State, under the Laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in Consequence of any Law or Regulation therein, be discharged from such Service or Labour, but shall be delivered up on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labour may be due."

#### FUGITIVE SLAVE CLAUSE

During the ratification debates, southern supporters of the Constitution used the clause to bolster their support for the document. At the South Carolina ratifying convention, for example, Charles Cotesworth

Pinckney, who had been a delegate at the Philadelphia convention, declared, "We have obtained a right to recover our slaves in whatever part of America they may take refuge, which is a right we had not before." Similarly, in Virginia, Governor Edmund Randolph and James Madison, who had also been delegates in Philadelphia, used the fugitive slave clause to show that the Constitution protected slavery.

The fugitive slave clause was placed in Article IV of the Constitution, immediately after the clause providing for the return of fugitives from justice. But the two clauses, although juxtaposed, differed significantly. The fugitives from justice clause was predicated on legal due process. It provided for the return of a fugitive who was "charged in any State with Treason, Felony, or other Crime." The term "charged" implied some sort of legal proceeding—such as a grand jury indictment—that established *prima facie* guilt. The fugitives from justice clause also provided a mechanism for returning alleged criminals. The clause said that "on Demand of the executive Authority of the State from which he fled," the fugitive from justice was to be "delivered up, to be removed to the State having Jurisdiction of the Crime." In other words, after an indictment the governor of the state would contact the authorities where the fugitive was hiding and request that the fugitive be arrested. The governor would then send someone to receive the prisoner and bring him back for trial.

The fugitive slave clause, on the other hand, provided no clear mechanism for the return of a fugitive slave. The clause declared the fugitive would be returned "on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labour may be due." Such language implied that the fugitive slave would normally be in the custody of someone, or even be working for someone as a slave. The fugitive was to be "delivered up on Claim" of the owner. But the clause did not indicate how that delivery was to take place, who was to pay for it, or what would be needed to prove that the "Claim" was legitimate.

Perhaps the most significant difference between the two clauses was their lack of symmetry. Each state had two strong interests in cooperating in the seizure and arrest of fugitives from justice. No state would want a criminal hiding within its boundaries. That alone was incentive enough to help return fugitives. In addition, however, all states would eventually seek the return of a fugitive from justice, and thus there was a strong incentive for mutual cooperation. This did not exist with fugitive slaves. The northern states had no strong need to prevent blacks

from escaping into their jurisdiction. Indeed, such fugitive slaves were likely to be highly motivated people who were determined to be successful in a free society. Nor could the free states expect any symmetry in this process. They would never seek to recover fugitive slaves because they did not have slavery.

#### FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW

In 1791 Pennsylvania sought the return from Virginia of three fugitives from justice who were accused of kidnapping a free black named John Davis and taking him to Virginia, where he was enslaved. The governor of Virginia refused to cooperate in the extradition of the three men, arguing that in fact Davis was a fugitive slave from Virginia, and that even if he was not, kidnapping a free black was not considered a felony in Virginia. The governor of Pennsylvania went directly to President George Washington for help. Congress responded in 1793 with a law that regulated both the extradition of criminals and fugitive slaves.

Although it covered both issues, the act was known as the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793. The law required that persons seeking runaway slaves obtain a certificate of removal from any federal judge or any state judge, magistrate, justice of the peace, or other judicial official. In order to receive the certificate, the claimant had to provide an affidavit, sworn before a judge in his home state, describing the alleged slave. The law provided a five-hundred-dollar penalty for anyone interfering with the return of a fugitive slave and also allowed a master to sue anyone who successfully helped his slave escape for the value of that slave. The law did not provide a criminal penalty for helping a slave escape. While many northerners did help fugitive slaves, before 1830 there were no known suits against them.

This procedure created a great danger for the growing free black population of the North. Because of abolition in upper New England and private manumission and gradual emancipation statutes in the rest of the North, by 1790, 40 percent of the blacks in the region were free. By 1800, 56 percent were free, rising to 83 percent by 1820. In 1830 there were over 125,000 free blacks in the Northeast but fewer than 3,000 slaves. Throughout the North, blacks and whites alike worried that southerners might fraudulently claim free blacks as their fugitive slaves, or that they might simply try to kidnap free blacks and take them to the South, where they could be sold. By 1829 a number of northern states, including New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, had passed personal liberty laws, which supplemented

the 1793 law by demanding greater proof before a black could be removed from a state as a fugitive slave. These laws typically required that claimants bring an alleged fugitive slave before a state magistrate or judge, who could consider the evidence before allowing a person to be removed as a slave. No known cases under the 1793 law reached the federal courts before 1830. There are few reported cases in which courts in the free states supported the claims of masters seeking to recapture their runaways, but by and large before 1830 the act of 1793 produced few cases and did little to help slave owners recover their runaway slaves. However, in the period from 1793 to 1829 there were scattered instances of free blacks, especially children, being kidnapped and taken south. While few in numbers, these kidnappings worried northern blacks, especially those who lived along the Ohio River, in port cities like New York and Philadelphia, or in southern Pennsylvania. Kidnapping was illegal and were not sanctioned by the Fugitive Slave Law, but free blacks saw little difference between the agent of the master armed with a certificate of removal and the kidnapper. Both intended to reduce African Americans to bondage.

*See also Abolition of Slavery in the North; Law: Slavery Law; Slavery: Runaway Slaves and Maroon Communities.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Finkelman, Paul. *Slavery and the Founders: Race and Liberty in the Age of Jefferson*. 2nd ed. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2001.
- Morris, Thomas D. *Free Men All: The Personal Liberty Laws of the North, 1780–1861*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974.

Paul Finkelman

---

**FUGITIVE SLAVES** *See Slavery: Runaway Slaves and Maroon Communities.*

---

**FUR AND PELT TRADE** The fur trade—the very phrase continues to conjure up the drama of the frontier, and for good reason. The pursuit of furs—referred to by some as “soft gold”—had an enormous impact on the exploration and colonization of North America. Reenactors dress up as *voyageurs* (the teamsters of the trade) and follow the paths of the fur trade in canoes along rivers and lakes, rediscovering

old portages (the carrying places in between water highways). Others dress up in buckskin outfits like the mountain men who trapped beaver in the central Rockies and gathered at a summer rendezvous to trade for supplies and goods. The image of the self-reliant, wilderness-savvy individual may appeal to some in the urbanized world of modern America, but the heyday of the mountain man lasted for only fifteen years, from 1825 to 1840. This particular strategy for gathering furs never seriously challenged the dominant mode of the trade, which revolved around trading posts, Euro-American merchants, and Native American producers and consumers.

#### SIGNIFICANCE AND PRACTICES

The real significance of the fur trade lay in the fact that, in contrast to the creation of small farms and cash crop plantations, it was an economic activity that required some measure of cooperation between indigenous peoples and Europeans. The real drama of this activity lay not in the tedium of paddling thousands of miles, but in the integration of North American products and economies with global markets, requiring merchants to keep track of currencies and goods from a bewildering diversity of places. A successful fur trader had to maintain a careful and continuous correspondence with wintering partners in Indian country and agents in Europe to calculate the prices of supplies and current values and demand for various furs. In truth, the "fur trade" is a convenient shorthand for a complex business that constituted a major economic force from the beginning of European involvement in North America, through the colonial period, and into the middle of the nineteenth century.

The fur trade began in the early sixteenth century as an adjunct to the cod fishing and whaling voyages off the coasts of Newfoundland and New England. A series of events occurred later in the century that cut off supplies of pelts from Siberia and stimulated the demand for North American furs. At the same time, Parisian hatters reintroduced beaver felt hats, which were superior to wool-felt hats and fetched a much higher price. (The European beaver stocks had become exhausted in the fifteenth century.) The short barbed undercoat of the beaver was perfect for the felting process. Ironically, beaver robes that had been worn by Native Americans for a year (greasy beaver, or *castor gras*, as opposed to *castor sec*, or dry beaver) were more valuable than fresh pelts. Since the long, outer guard hairs had worn off, the used robes required less processing by European hatters. The beaver remained the most im-

portant object of the trade until the 1830s, but other animals were sought after as well. Peltries (*pelleterie*), skins worn as furs or used for linings, constituted a smaller percentage of the trade. Marten, raccoon, and otter skins were preferred. Moose hides were used for leather, as were deerskins—the staple of the trade in the Southeast. Buffalo robes replaced beaver pelts as the most valuable component of the American fur trade in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

Indian men obtained the majority of furs through various hunting practices. Native women processed the furs—scraping, stretching, rubbing, curing, and sewing the products of the hunt. They also provided food for all involved in the trade and manufactured snowshoes, canoes, and various articles of clothing worn by both Indians and Europeans. Native people were equally important as consumers, since merchants often obtained more profits as importers, outfitters, and retailers of European goods than they did through the sales of furs in Europe, which were often handled by agents and companies located there. Finished fabrics were the principal category of imports, and the most important of these were duffels and strouds—woolen blankets that were as warm as furs but had the advantages of being lighter and of drying faster. Reds and blues were the preferred colors.

Other items of clothing exchanged included calico and linen shirts, leggings, and sleeves (*manches sauvages*). (Native consumers did not desire fitted clothes—especially breeches—which hampered their movements.) Metal tools were an equally important category of goods, though they constituted a much smaller percentage of imports. These labor-saving objects included copper kettles, axes, chisels, knives, fishhooks, and guns. The demand for such hard goods tended to be inelastic, as native communities often had limited carrying capacity. Brandy and rum made up a relatively small percentage of imports for the trade and were rarely a source of much profit; yet alcohol, then as now, facilitated commerce. Other imports included fashionable items such as tin rings, silver earrings, and gorgets manufactured in Germany specifically for the Indian trade, glass beads produced in Murano (a suburb of Venice), Chinese vermillion sold in small paper packets, Brazilian tobacco, mirrors or "looking-glasses," and even spectacles. In short, the fur trade was a global business, and historian James Axtell has suggested that the remarkable increase in native disposable income and consumption stimulated European production and might be described as the "first consumer revolution."

Other scholars have insisted that Indian societies had fixed needs and a nonmaterial conception of wealth that emphasized public redistribution of goods and an ethic of sharing. Economic activities, in short, were not viewed as separate from social activities and obligations. Exchange was conceived as mutual gift giving and used to reaffirm social ties, kinship (real and metaphorical), and political and military alliances. (Such practices and notions were not uncommon in Europe, of course, and economic activities continue to be shaped and conditioned by extra-economic factors.) Still, historians agree that Indian groups did act as intermediaries and were often shrewd bargainers, insisting on "good measure" in their transactions and aware of the impact of competition on exchange rates. We may fairly say that through the fur trade, preexisting Indian patterns of village-to-village exchange were linked to a more extensive Atlantic economy and developing capitalist world system.

The fur trade also changed over time. One rather consistent element of change was game depletion. This caused a search for new supplies and, at times, suppliers. Another factor that determined change was the tension between competition and monopoly. Because the trade involved a limited resource and required credit transactions due to the long delay between ordering goods and receiving payment in furs, there was a predictable tendency for merchants to try to limit their risk. This was done in various ways: buying out the competition; partnerships; restricting supplies; and being the first "in the field" to receive the products of the hunt. When profit margins increased through monopolistic practices, the temptation for independent traders to enter the field increased and the cycle began anew. A third factor that affected the trade was political rivalry. Access to hunting grounds often caused conflict between competing native groups. Trade alliances between Europeans and Indians often led to competing claims of sovereignty between empires or jurisdiction between colonies within the same empire. The interaction of these factors—ecological, economic, and political—helped to shape the course of fur trade history.

#### THE COLONIAL TRADE

When Samuel Champlain established a post at Quebec in 1608, he gave permanence to the French enterprise in North America and with it, a trading network centered on the St. Lawrence River and the waterways that connected it to the rich fur-producing areas of the Great Lakes. Over the next decade, the Hurons emerged as important intermediaries in the trade. They would gather as many as thirty thousand beaver pelts in peak years.

Serious competition for the French emerged shortly thereafter along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers, where the Dutch established Fort Orange (Albany) in 1614 and acquired aggressive trading partners in the Mohawks and the rest of the Iroquois Confederacy. This trading network also had access to wampum-producing native communities living along the coasts of Long Island, and wampum was used to obtain furs from inland tribes. When they faced a shortage of fur-bearing animals in their own hunting grounds, the Iroquois began a series of attacks on northern and western tribes to expand their territory and acquire new sources of furs. These Beaver Wars began in 1647 and resulted in the decline and dispersal of the Hurons and their allies, the Eries, Neutrals, and Petuns. Refugees migrated to the Ohio country and Great Lakes area (the *pays d'en haut*). With the English conquest of New Netherland in 1664, the French-Iroquois rivalry took on a new imperial dimension.

Although Canada seemed more than once to be poised on the brink of extinction, the French Crown assumed control of the colony in 1663 and sent an entire regiment to bolster its military strength. New native groups from the Great Lakes area joined the French side, and several of those, especially the Ottawas and the Ojibwas (Anishnaabe) replaced the Hurons as intermediaries in the trade. Montreal (1642), located at the junction of the two critical water routes (the St. Lawrence to Lake Ontario and the Ottawa River to Georgian Bay and Lake Huron) became the site of annual trading fairs.

A decade of calm between 1667 and 1677 allowed hundreds of unemployed French soldiers and veteran fur trade employees (*engagés*) to venture west. By 1680, encouraged by a new policy of guaranteed prices for beaver, over eight hundred illegal *courreurs de bois* (woodsmen) were operating in the *pays d'en haut* (upper country). A new phase in the fur trade had begun, with Europeans transporting goods to and from Indian country itself rather than relying on natives to make the trip to fixed posts in the East. Living in or near Indian villages, many French traders cemented their ties to their customers by marrying native women. By the end of the century, a growing Métis (children of mixed ancestry) population, constituting a distinctive fur trade society, had emerged. The fur trade had always encouraged an exchange of information between natives and Europeans. In addition to having a familiarity with each other's languages and customs, the French

and Indian inhabitants of this growing “middle ground” now added a network of personal relations that would provide some balance to British military and economic strength during the various imperial wars of the late colonial period. New fur trade centers—Michilimackinac and Detroit—also emerged in the western country, and the French opened a new trading zone in the Illinois country in the first two decades of the eighteenth century.

The English also developed several new fur-trading regions in this period. In 1670 the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) was granted a royal charter by King Charles II. Operating from fixed posts on Hudson Bay and James Bay, the company had access to a region rich in furs, and the Cree and Assiniboine people played a critical role as suppliers. The company faced little competition until French traders began moving into their territory from the Great Lakes in the 1740s. The company evolved away from the French pattern of geographical expansion and competition, opting instead for a tightly controlled structure run by salaried managers. The company also lowered risks by employing futures contracts with suppliers and a fixed unit of exchange (the Made Beaver) that standardized all transactions—though items had a range of markups—and simplified book-keeping. The company’s isolated position made it vulnerable to French attacks until the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) confirmed British possession of the bay.

In the Southeast, traders from Virginia pioneered the commerce in deerskins in the 1640s. Carolina-based traders later bypassed their colonial neighbors and became embroiled in several wars with coastal Indian communities. The Carolinians formed alliances with the Creeks, Catawbas, and Cherokees that produced an extensive commerce in both deerskins and Indian slaves. At the end of the century the French established their own deerskin trade network further west, centered around the Choctaws and several smaller tribes. By the 1750s, New Orleans (1718) and Charleston (1670) were exporting more than 100,000 pounds of skins annually.

The expansion of these various trading networks led to a series of confrontations during the eighteenth century in the Southeast and along the border between Canada and New York. The competition between French and British traders in the Ohio country led directly to the first battles of what would become the Seven Years’ War (1756–1763).

### THE AMERICAN TRADE

The fur trade after the Seven Years’ War was shaped by local, national, and international events. With the disintegration of French hegemony in 1763, the old Montreal-St. Lawrence trading system was increasingly dominated by a new group of traders (referred to by the HBC contemptuously as “pedlars”). Many were from Scotland—among them the McGills and the McTavish and McGillivray families. Various competing partnerships merged in 1784 to form the North West Company. By the end of the century, this combination of field partners and wholesale merchants had pushed westward to the Canadian Rockies, established itself in the Athabasca region, and even reached the Mackenzie River headwaters.

At the same time, the North West Company and other Montreal partnerships continued to operate in the Great Lakes region, south of the international border established by the Treaty of Paris in 1783 and finally made effective in 1796 following Jay’s Treaty of 1794. The United States, in an attempt to redirect the flow of American furs into Canada, set up government factories to conduct trade, starting in 1796. These government operations had limited success, hampered by restrictions that disallowed credit, liquor, and imported goods. Sensing an opportunity, a German immigrant, John Jacob Astor, began purchasing furs in his home base of New York City and in Montreal. When the Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815) disrupted traditional fur markets, Astor took advantage of American neutrality and shipped his stock directly to France and Germany. In 1808 he received a corporate charter for his new American Fur Company from New York State. After forming a brief combination with merchants from Montreal, Astor used the conditions created by the War of 1812 to drive out his competitors. British-Indian relations had turned sour, and Astor lobbied Congress to pass an act in 1816 that excluded British citizens from trading in American territory. Astor was less successful in the Pacific Northwest. After setting up a post, Astoria, at the mouth of the Columbia River that he hoped would anchor a tripartite trade between that region, China, and the East Coast, he was forced to abandon his plans, and the post was sold to the North West Company. Nevertheless, Astor and his son William created a powerful organization built on controlling the supply of furs in Indian country from their western headquarters in Michilimackinac and on careful anticipation of world markets from their offices in New York and Europe.

In Canada, the Hudson’s Bay Company had responded to the incursions of the North West Compa-

ny by establishing new inland posts. Several periods of intense and even bloody competition, spurred by game depletion, finally resulted in a merger of the two companies in 1821, and goods and furs gathered in the north flowed only through the bay. Montreal's long-standing connection to the trade was now lost.

Ironically, even as Scottish "pedlars" had taken over the top levels of the business from the French in the Montreal fur trade network after the Seven Years' War, a new group of French fur traders had emerged in what would become American territory after the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. St. Louis, founded in the winter of 1763–1764, stood on the international border between Spanish Missouri (Upper Louisiana) and the British-held Illinois country. Traders there shipped furs through both New Orleans and Montreal until the War of 1812 forced them to consider New York as an increasingly attractive alternative. The founding family of the city, the Chouteaus, monopolized the lucrative trade with the Osages, and a family partnership signed a marketing agreement with Astor in 1827. The Chouteaus and Astor had cooperated earlier in a lobbying effort that persuaded Congress to abandon the government factory system in 1822. Astor retired from the business in 1834 to devote his energies to managing his real estate interests. He sold his Western Department to the Chouteau family firm. By 1842, Pierre Chouteau Jr. and Company had become the American Fur Company, establishing its own marketing office in New York but maintaining its principal headquarters in St. Louis.

The Chouteau company, taking a clue from Astor, built a fur-trading empire on a grand scale. It built or acquired trading posts throughout the area drained by the Missouri River system, some of the most famous being Fort Union at the mouth of the Yellowstone, Fort Clark in Mandan country, Fort Pierre in the heart of Dakota territory, and Fort Laramie on the northern fork of the Platte River. Company steamboats reached Fort Union in 1832, and thereafter the company controlled the flow of information and goods in the American West. Through their affiliation with Bent, St. Vrain and Company, which dominated the southwestern trade from its post, Bent's Fort, on the Arkansas River in Colorado, the Chouteaus also gathered a share of the trade in New Mexico and the southern Rockies.

By the late 1830s, raccoon pelts and buffalo robes had replaced the beaver as the dominant furs in the American trade. And the fur trade had truly become a corporate enterprise dominated by several

large firms in the United States and Canada. Of more significance, in its final phase, the classic fur trade became more of an "Indian business." The Chouteau company and smaller firms profited from the federal government's desire to obtain Indian lands and remove tribal communities after 1830. Traders often enjoyed a position of political and economic influence within Indian communities and were more than willing to exploit that influence during the treaty-making process. Profits accrued to fur traders primarily by providing "annuity goods" promised by the government to various tribes in treaties and land cessions and by receiving money directly from the government in payment of Indian debts. In 1842 alone, traders' claims amounted to over \$2 million. Fur companies reinvested their profits, diversifying into areas such as land speculation, mining, and railroads. What had begun as a colonial enterprise that required cooperation between natives and Europeans and provided a conduit for material and cultural exchange became, in the end, a tool for dispossession. The fur trade had other dire consequences, providing a pathway into Indian villages for deadly diseases and alcohol and a commercial incentive for the decimation of fur-bearing animals across the continent.

*See also American Indians; Canada; French; St. Louis.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Axtell, James. *Beyond 1492: Encounters in Colonial North America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Foley, William E., and C. David Rice. *The First Chouteaus: River Barons of Early St. Louis*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983.
- Gilman, Carolyn, et al. *Where Two Worlds Meet: The Great Lakes Fur Trade*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1982.
- Lavender, David. *The Fist in the Wilderness*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1964.
- Phillips, Paul C., with J. W. Smurr. *The Fur Trade*. 2 vols. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961.
- Ray, Arthur J., and Donald B. Freeman. "Give Us Good Measure": *An Economic Analysis of Relations between the Indians and the Hudson's Bay Company before 1763*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978.
- Usner, Daniel H., Jr. *Indians, Settlers, and Slaves in a Frontier Exchange Economy: The Lower Mississippi Valley before 1783*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992.
- Van Kirk, Sylvia. *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670–1870*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983.
- White, Richard. *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Wishart, David J. *The Fur Trade of the American West, 1807–1840: A Geographical Synthesis*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979.

Jay Gitlin

**FURNITURE** Furniture made in the American colonies in the two decades prior to the American Revolution (1775–1783) was modeled after the prevailing style of furniture in Europe, namely the French or English rococo. The importation of European furniture and the immigration of European-trained craftsmen fostered the spread of this style to the colonies. Pattern books also had a profound influence on American furniture, particularly on the costliest furniture commissions in major urban centers. Among the pattern books available in the colonies were Thomas Chippendale's *The Gentleman's and Cabinetmaker's Director* (1754), William Ince and John Mayhew's *The Universal System of Household Furniture* (1762), and Robert Manwaring's *The Cabinet and Chair-Maker's Real Friend and Companion* (1765), all published in London. Although only a few surviving examples of American furniture are known to have been copied directly from engraved plates in these pattern books, much American furniture owes a debt to the stylistic features depicted in them, such as curvaceous forms, ornate foliate carving, and exotic motifs, which are hallmarks of the rococo style in furniture. Furniture made for average consumers also bears similar stylistic origins, although it typically appeared slightly later and generally used less costly materials than the most expensive furniture made in the colonies. Certain forms, such as Windsor chairs, were popular among all levels of consumers throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The major colonial population centers—Boston, Newport, New York, Philadelphia, Annapolis, and Charleston—developed distinctive regional furniture styles. Furniture makers in Philadelphia, the largest city in the American colonies in the second half of the eighteenth century, produced some of the most elaborately carved furniture in colonial America. One well-known set of examples is a matching suite of mahogany furniture made around 1770 for the Philadelphia townhouse of John Cadwalader, who later served as a general of the Continental Army, and his wife Elizabeth Lloyd Cadwalader, a wealthy Maryland heiress. Made under the direction of the Scottish-born cabinetmaker Thomas Affleck, who con-

tracted London-trained carvers James Reynolds, Nicholas Bernard, and Martin Jugiez, all recently immigrated to Philadelphia, the suite included among other forms sofas, card tables, chairs, and fire screens in the high-style London taste. Some of the wealthiest American colonists had the means to acquire fine furniture and other luxury goods directly from the merchant houses of Europe; however, most patronized local craftsmen for at least some of their furniture. The nonimportation movement prior to the Revolution encouraged colonists to support local craftsmen.

Not all furniture made in North America adhered to the cultural norms of the dominant Anglo society. Significant pockets of settlement by the Germans in Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, the French in Canada and Louisiana, the Dutch in New York and New Jersey, and the Spanish in Florida and far to the west in New Spain contributed to the diversity of furniture-making traditions in North America.

Following the Revolution, the economic disruption caused by the war soon gave way to increased prosperity as populations in cities grew and settlement into the hinterlands of North America created new customers for furniture. The lifting of the colonial-era trade restrictions imposed by the British allowed American craftsmen to seek international markets for their products. Woodworking craftsmen used valuable raw materials, including native woods such as maple, walnut, cherry, and pine, as well as fine imported mahogany and rosewood from the Caribbean, to produce marketable finished products for both local consumption and export. Some of the most successful American furniture makers became merchants or retailers of furniture.

In general, furniture made in America beginning in the last decade of the eighteenth century reproduced the new international style of neoclassicism in architecture and interior furnishings that was already popular in Europe. In furniture, this "antique" or "classical" style found expression in a wide variety of classically inspired forms and ornamentation. Derived in part from examples of classical architecture and decorative arts uncovered during recent archaeological excavations in Italy and Greece, the details of this style of furniture were thought to be more correct than earlier Renaissance interpretations of classical designs. This style of furniture often employed gilded and painted surfaces and inlays of wood and metal, which required specialized skills. The English-trained architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe designed a painted, Grecian-style klismos chair with incurvate



**Queen Anne Side Chairs.** Furniture made in the colonies in the decades prior to the American Revolution was modeled after the prevailing styles of furniture in Europe. These American Queen Anne style chairs, with their characteristic cabriole legs, were produced around the 1760s and would have been popular with wealthy Americans. © PETER HARHOLDT/CORBIS.

front and rear legs in 1809 for Dolley Madison to be used in the oval drawing room of the President's House. English pattern books continued to influence American craftsmen even after the Revolution. *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide* (1788), by George Hepplewhite, and *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing-Book* (1792), by Thomas Sheraton, promoted designs of classically inspired furniture. So did Thomas Hope in his book *Household Furniture and Interior Decoration* (1807), which introduced a mix of Roman and Egyptian motifs, and Thomas King in *Modern Style of Cabinet-work Exemplified* (1829). Despite international political tensions and a thriving market for locally produced furniture,

Americans continued to turn to European sources for this style of furniture, which was popular well into the 1830s.

*See also Work: Artisan and Crafts Workers, and the Workshop.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cooper, Wendy A. *Classical Taste in America, 1800–1840*. New York: Abbeville Press, 1993.  
 Green, Jeffrey P. *American Furniture of the 18th Century*. Newtown, Conn.: Taunton, 1996.  
 Heckscher, Morrison H., and Leslie Greene Bowman. *American Rococo, 1750–1775: Elegance in Ornament*. New York: Abrams, 1992.

Dennis A. Carr



---

**GABRIEL'S REBELLION** The slave known only as Gabriel was born in 1776 near Richmond, Virginia, at Brookfield, the Henrico County plantation of Thomas Prosser. By Virginia standards, Brookfield was a large plantation, with a population of approximately fifty laborers. The identity of Gabriel's parents is lost to history, but he had two older brothers, Martin and Solomon. Most likely, Gabriel's father was a blacksmith, the occupation chosen for Gabriel and Solomon. Status as a craft artisan provided the young blacksmith with considerable standing in the slave community, as did his ability to read and write. By the mid-1790s, as he approached the age of twenty, Gabriel stood "six feet two or three inches high." A long and "bony face, well made," was marred by the loss of two front teeth and by "two or three scars on his head." In later years, a legend arose which held that Gabriel wore his hair long in naive imitation of Samson, in hopes that his locks would give him extraordinary strength. Contemporary descriptions say only that his hair was cut short and was as dark as his complexion. According to the journalist James T. Callender, blacks and whites alike regarded him as "a fellow of courage and intellect above his rank in life."

In the fall of 1798 Gabriel's old master died, and ownership of Brookfield passed to twenty-two-year-

old Thomas Henry Prosser, who maximized his profits by hiring out his surplus slaves. Despite all of the work to be done at Brookfield, Gabriel spent a considerable part of each month smithing in Richmond for white artisans. Although still a slave under Virginia law, Gabriel enjoyed a rough form of freedom. Indeed, his ties to the plantation became so tenuous that several historians have identified him as a free man.

Emboldened by this quasi-liberty, in September 1799 Gabriel moved toward overt rebellion. Caught stealing a pig by a white neighbor, Gabriel wrestled him down to the ground and bit off the better "part of his left Ear." Under Virginia law, slaves were not tried as whites. They were prosecuted by special tribunals composed of five justices of the peace. Gabriel was formally charged with attacking a white man, a capital crime. Although found guilty, Gabriel escaped the gallows by pleading "benefit of clergy," which allowed him to avoid hanging in exchange for being branded on the thumb with a small cross, as he was able to recite a verse from the Bible.

Gabriel's branding and incarceration served as a brutal reminder that despite his literacy and privileged status, he remained a slave. By the early spring of 1800, his fury began to turn into a carefully considered plan to bring about his freedom, as well as the end of slavery in Virginia. Slaves and free blacks

from Henrico County would gather at Brookfield on the evening of 30 August to march on Richmond. If Governor James Monroe and the town leaders agreed to Gabriel's demands for black liberty and an equitable distribution of the property, the slave general intended to "hoist a white flag" and drink a toast "with the merchants of the city."

The conspiracy matured in the context of developments in the Caribbean and political affairs of the late 1790s. Since 1793, large number of refugees from the slave rebellion in French Saint Domingue had arrived in Virginia, many of them bringing their bondservants with them. Monroe worried, as he later expressed it in a letter to Brigadier General Matthews, that the "scenes which are acted in Saint Doming[ue], must produce an effect on all the people of colour" in the Chesapeake. But if the uprising in the Caribbean helped to inspire mainland rebels, it was the divisive election of 1800 that provided Gabriel with his opportunity. Rumors circulating around Richmond held that if Jefferson was victorious, the Federalists would not relinquish power, and one Federalist newspaper predicted an "ultimate appeal to arms by the two great parties." Most likely, Gabriel hoped not only to exploit this split among white elites, but also to throw his lot in with the side that would do the slaves the most favor in the coming civil conflict.

The planned uprising collapsed just before sunset on the appointed day when a severe thunderstorm hit the Richmond area. The chaos of the storm convinced two Henrico slaves that the revolt could not succeed. They informed their owner of the conspiracy, and he hurried word to Monroe. After hiding along the James River for nearly two weeks, Gabriel risked boarding the schooner *Mary*. Captain Richardson Taylor, a recent convert to Methodism, spirited Gabriel downriver to Norfolk. There, Gabriel was betrayed by an enslaved crewman, who had heard of Monroe's three-hundred-dollar reward for Gabriel's capture. Returned to Richmond under heavy guard, Gabriel was quickly tried and found guilty of "conspiracy and insurrection." On 10 October 1800, the young revolutionary died on the town gallows near Fifteenth and Broad Streets. He was twenty-four. In all, twenty-six slaves, including Gabriel and his two brothers, were hanged for their part in the conspiracy. Eight more rebels were transported to Spanish New Orleans; at least thirty-two others were found not guilty. Reliable sources placed the number of slaves who knew of the plot to be between five and six hundred.

In the aftermath, as was the case in the wake of most slave conspiracies, white authorities, as one newspaper put it, moved to "re-enact all those rigorous laws" that had been allowed to lapse after the Revolution. In late 1802, Monroe established the Public Guard of Richmond, a nighttime police force designed to protect the public buildings and militia arsenals. The state assembly passed a law ending the right of masters to hire out their surplus slaves, and in 1806 the legislature amended the state's Manumission Act of 1782 by requiring liberated bondspeople to leave Virginia or face reenslavement.

*See also Slavery: Slave Insurrections.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Egerton, Douglas R. *Gabriel's Rebellion: The Virginia Slave Conspiracies of 1800 and 1802*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993.
- Schwarz, Philip J. *Twice Condemned: Slaves and the Criminal Laws of Virginia, 1705–1865*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988.
- Sidbury, James. *Ploughshares into Swords: Race, Rebellion, and Identity in Gabriel's Virginia, 1730–1810*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Douglas R. Egerton

---

**GAMBLING** The early settlers of colonial America undoubtedly viewed their decision to migrate from Europe to be a major gamble. Crossing the Atlantic in a small sailing ship and establishing a foothold in the wilderness was fraught with danger. A strong adventurous spirit was required to tackle this first of many American frontiers, and so a willingness to take a chance, to risk everything, naturally emerged as a prominent American trait. By the mid-eighteenth century, a willingness to take risks in business and trade had become a defining American characteristic. It was only natural that gambling of many types would become an integral part of the American lifestyle, just as it had been in England. However, as gambling developed in the colonies it exhibited traits that deviated from the mother country, reflecting the open, democratic, aggressively capitalistic, equalitarian values of colonial life.

#### VIRGINIA

Gambling came to the colonies with the first settlers at Jamestown—a motley collection of misfits to be certain—who came unprepared for the hazards they faced and were disinclined to undertake the arduous

labor necessary to build shelters and grow food. One inspector from London in 1609 identified "idleness and other vices," specifically rampant gambling, as a major problem. Consequently, the expectations of investors in the Virginia Company were not met, and in near desperation they turned in 1612 to gambling as a means of saving the enterprise. They decided to raise much-needed capital by holding a lottery—a relatively novel idea at the time—and over the next decade several lotteries were conducted by the Virginia Company. These unique fund-raisers enabled the colony at Jamestown to survive, but ironically, at the same time that this form of gambling sustained the lifeline of supplies across the Atlantic, the officers clamped down on the Jamestown residents with strict prohibitions on gambling within the Jamestown settlement in an effort to get them to take their labors seriously.

By the mid-seventeenth century, the Tidewater region of Virginia had become transformed by tobacco—an unexpected but welcomed revenue producer—and the importation of slaves to do the arduous work that its cultivation required. The slave-owning planters dominated Virginia's economy and its political and social life. High-stakes gambling with the money earned from the labor of their slaves became an integral part of their lives. Men of substance found gambling an apt metaphor for their own lives as planters, where high economic risk was a constant. Their fortunes, however, were often established on fragile margins and were always in play, subject to the vagaries of weather, fluctuating commodity markets, work slowdowns by slaves, and violent weather at sea that could sink a year's money crop. One planter wrote a friend in England whose son was contemplating taking up the life of a Virginia tobacco grower with the warning that "even if the best husbandry and the greatest forecast and skill were used, yet ill luck at sea, a fall of a Market, or twenty other accidents may ruin and overthrow the best industry." In this turbulent economic environment, it was not unusual for a planter to wager an entire year's crop on a turn of the cards, a toss of the dice. A visiting Frenchman observed early in the eighteenth century that many members of the House of Burgesses began to gamble at cards immediately after dinner. One of the gamblers told him that he might wish to retire, "for it is quite possible that we will be here all night." Indeed, the next morning he arose to find the game still in session.

Virginia's slave-owning elite gambled heavily, risking large sums upon quarter horse races, cock-fights, dog fights, and table games. The historian El-

liott J. Gorn summarizes the gambling mania of the southern slave-owning gentry as a product of a "fiercely competitive style of living," wherein

individual status was never permanently fixed, [where] men frantically sought to assert their prowess—by grand boasts over tavern gaming tables laden with money, by whipping and tripping each other's horses in violent quarter races, by wagering one-half year's earnings on the flash of a fighting cock's gaff. Great planters and small shared an ethos that extolled courage bordering on foolhardiness and cherished magnificent, if irrational, displays of largess. (pp. 21–22)

Gambling was also a popular pastime of those southerners who did not own slaves. At the many small taverns that stood along the main traveled dirt roads, male members of the lesser classes convened regularly to drink, socialize, argue, and gamble. One frustrated Anglican clergyman complained in 1751 that the taverns had become a place of "rendezvous of the very dregs of the people. . . . Where not only time and money are vainly and unprofitably squandered away, but (as is yet worse) where prohibited and unlawful games, sports, and pastime are used . . . namely cards, dice, horse-racing, and cock-fighting, together with vices and enormities of every other kind."

#### THE NORTH

Such behavior would have produced severe retribution in New England. Unlike the southerners who sought to emulate the landed aristocracy of rural England, along the North Atlantic the dominant religious and social force was the new wave of Puritanism that had surfaced in urban England. To strict Calvinists, gambling served to undercut the established order, diminishing the work ethic by providing successful gamblers with monetary rewards that did not result from honest effort, stripping losers of their hard-earned income, and generally creating a social atmosphere not conducive to the earnest pursuit of an honest wage. Further, gambling tended to encourage other social misbehavior—excessive drinking and profaning the Sabbath among them. As the preeminent scholar of the Puritan ideology, Perry Miller, has explained, gambling tended to encourage idleness, but it also brought into play divine providence on trivial matters, because the toss of the dice or the turn of a card invited God to become involved in matters of little significance. Any game of chance "prostituted divine providence to unworthy ends." A leading Puritan theologian, Increase Mather (1639–1723), once commented, "God determines the cast of the dice or the shuffle of the cards, and we are not to

implicate His providence in frivolity." The all-powerful Puritan God, it was clear to Mather, had more important things to occupy his time.

Nonetheless, as the decades rolled by, gambling increased in New England as the forces of "declension" undercut authoritarian theocratic rule. At times gambling even constituted a positive social and religious force, as many a Puritan schoolhouse, public building, and church was paid for by seemingly omnipresent lotteries. Well into the nineteenth century, lotteries were a popular method of raising funds for public works and worthy projects; in the 1740s, for example, Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) organized a lottery to raise monies for military defense of the city of Philadelphia, and the Continental Congress launched a national lottery in 1777 as a means of financing the War for Independence. Those who purchased tickets were told that they could take patriotic pride in having "contributed . . . to the great and glorious American cause."

Lotteries naturally invited corruption by their organizers, however, and a series of sensational revelations led legislatures to abolish them in every state between 1820 and 1850. (They would inevitably make a comeback, however, beginning in 1963 when the New Hampshire legislature created a lottery as a means of raising revenue without raising taxes, and by 1990 thirty-six other states had followed suit.)

By the eve of the American Revolution, New England and the middle colonies tolerated gambling because it did not constitute a serious social problem. The relatively low number of laws and decrees regarding gambling and its influences in Massachusetts and Connecticut, for example, indicates that gambling was neither widespread nor widely popular in the region. Nonetheless, Puritan leaders kept a close eye on the practice because it could lead to unnecessary idleness and the profaning of God and the Sabbath. The Quakers in Pennsylvania held a similar view of gambling because it produced no social good and contributed to unsavory behavior. Nonetheless, card playing grew steadily throughout the middle and northern colonies as the decades passed. In Massachusetts, card games became a constant form of recreation, with games being played both in taverns and private residences. The historian Foster Rhea Dulles reports in *A History of Recreation* (1965) that during the years preceding the American Revolution, the popular card game of whist became a social passion for New Englanders of all classes. He reports that customhouse records revealed large quantities of cards being imported and that the game was often mentioned in diaries and correspondence. In New En-

gland, gambling at cards was widespread, but stakes were usually modest—one convenient way to keep score, in fact—and because this recreation was conducted in moderation, it was not considered a threat to society. The region's increasingly lenient leaders even permitted occasional organized horse racing because the crowds were well behaved, the wagering modest, and threats to the social order nonexistent.

The ambivalence of the Puritans is instructive. Although gambling posed a potential threat to their theocratic instincts, it also seemed to be a natural human endeavor given the dangers and risks that existed in colonial America—from the vagaries of unpredictable weather and disastrous epidemics to even an occasional marauding Indian tribe. Consequently, throughout the colonial period, and in fact extending to the twenty-first century, gambling in America has always been enshrouded in what the historian Ann Fabian, in *Card Sharks and Bucket Shops* (1999), calls "moral confusion." While investors speculated on wild land schemes, dubious issues of stocks and bonds, agricultural commodity futures, untested new business ventures, and other risky get-rich schemes, they were merely responding to the temptations of high returns in the liberated capitalist society that America had become by the time of the Andrew Jackson's presidency. But when individuals pursued these same risk-taking instincts at the gaming tables or while watching a cockfight, a bare-knuckled prizefight, or a quarter horse race, they were skating on thin moral ice. Thus, while the spirit of unfettered American capitalism emphasized serious risk taking and speculation, and those who practiced them successfully were rewarded with high social status and public admiration, many moralists were quick to condemn successful gamblers as slick shysters because they made a mockery of the traditional Calvinist virtues of thrift, the work ethic, and prudence.

#### THE WEST

The opening of the trans-Appalachian West in the 1790s introduced a new era in American gambling, especially in the southern slave states. No one American better exemplified this spirit than Andrew Jackson of Tennessee, who owned a stable of race horses and bet heavily (as much as \$6,500) on the outcome of a single race. He was also an avid card player. As a young man in his native North Carolina, he was known as "the most roaring, rollicking, game-cocking, horse-racing, card-playing, mischievous fellow that ever lived." In 1806 he killed young attorney Charles Dickinson and almost died himself from

wounds inflicted in a duel that stemmed from a disagreement over the settlement of a wager on a race involving Jackson's prize horse, Truxton. Jackson would become the first president known for his propensity for high-stakes gambling.

Of major importance in the evolution of gambling in America was the emergence of organized casino-style gambling in the Lower Mississippi Valley between 1800 and 1830. Men who became known as riverboat gamblers had often honed their skills as con men operating flim-flam land promotions. This wide-open frontier area was rampant with a myriad of suspicious investment schemes, and gambling naturally flourished in the fluid frontier social order. Gambling mimicked the staunch frenetic speculative economic climate of the era, as it did the frenzied entrepreneurial outlook of those who migrated into the area in hopes of making a fast fortune. By the time Jackson entered the White House in 1829, a commercialized gambling culture had become firmly entrenched along the Mississippi Valley from St. Louis to New Orleans. Professional gamblers adapted card and table games from Europe, modifying them to be attractive to their American clientele. The games of French origin were especially popular: faro, roulette, three-card monte, and *vingt-et-un* (twenty-one). Professional gamblers preferred them because of the decided odds favoring the house and because they could easily be manipulated by myriad forms of cheating; this was especially true of the scam of three-card monte.

However, by the early 1830s there had emerged the especially popular card game that best exemplified the raucous entrepreneurial atmosphere of the frontier: poker. Although its origins are murky, the wildly popular American card game of poker most likely evolved from the eighteenth-century French game of *poque* and entered the United States at the time of the French occupation of New Orleans. Others claim it is of Germanic origin. Whatever the case, its incremental betting system, the art of bluffing, and the optimism that it takes to attempt to fill an inside straight were apt reflections of the economic climate of the times. The game also afforded con men and cheats ample opportunities to ply their trade. Usually operating in pairs, professional gamblers were adept at skinning their victims with a wide range of scams. In fact, Jonathan H. Green, a one-time successful professional riverboat gambler who reformed in 1842 and launched an national antigambling lecture crusade, routinely referred to poker as "the cheating game."

As gambling grew in popularity in the early nineteenth century, philanthropic reformers sought to have the practice banned on the grounds that it undermined the economic order, that professional gamblers were nothing more than thieves and crooks, and that gambling threatened society by holding out false hopes and robbing naive individuals of their hard-earned wages. By 1830 many states, both North and South, had passed legislation making it illegal to gamble in public; these laws were designed in part as an attempt to control the lives of the working-class poor and to protect innocent travelers from professional cheats. At no time did any state attempt to ban private gambling. The laws seemed aimed not so much at gambling per se, but at the attendant vice, drinking, and public disorder. Never widely enforced, these laws might have revealed a moral intent but had little impact, unlike the actions of a group of "respectable" Vicksburg citizens in 1835 who, angered by the nefarious cheating of five itinerant professional gamblers, took the law into their own hands and lynched the gamblers.

The historian John Findlay has identified four centuries of Americans as a "people of chance" in a 1986 volume of that title. In writing about the period from 1750 to 1830, he concludes, "The culture of gambling . . . thrived in the relative fluid society on the frontier, amid footloose and acquisitive men. . . ." That forty-eight of fifty states in the year 2004 were home to many forms of legalized, and often state government-operated, gambling is no accident. Games of chance have been an integral part of the American heritage ever since Jamestown, and in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries they gained wide and popular acceptance, despite opposition from outnumbered and outflanked moral reformers.

*See also Recreation, Sports, and Games; Taverns.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Davies, Richard O., and Richard G. Abram. *Betting the Line: Sports Wagering in American Life*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2001.
- Dulles, Foster Rhea. *A History of Recreation: America Learns to Play*. 2nd ed. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1965.
- Fabian, Ann. *Card Sharps and Bucket Shops: Gambling in Nineteenth-Century America*. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Findlay, John M. *People of Chance: Gambling in American Society from Jamestown to Las Vegas*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

- Gorn, Elliot J. "'Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch': The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Back Country." *American Historical Review* 90 (1985): 18–43.
- Gorn, Elliot J., and Warren Goldstein. *A Brief History of American Sports*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1993.
- James, Marquis. *The Life of Andrew Jackson*. New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1938.
- Sasuly, Richard. *Bookies and Bettors: Two Hundred Years of Gambling*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982.

Richard O. Davies

---

**GAMES AND TOYS, CHILDREN'S** Play as a positive good was a novel idea in the early Republic. In the late-eighteenth-century era of revolution, childhood was redefined as a natural state, and the child became a symbol of freedom for Americans wishing to cast off the patriarchal power of monarchy. After the Revolution, for example, boys, particularly in New England, would instantiate the political principles of that event by seizing control of a schoolhouse and "barring out" the schoolmaster until he acquiesced to their demands for more rights and freedoms in the forms of less homework, more recess, and a withholding of the switch. Generally speaking, though, toys, the artifacts of play, and games, the activities that were bound by rules and limited by time and space, reflected cultural, if gendered, emphases on virtue, skill, work, and luck.

#### **CHILDREN'S PLAYTHINGS**

The same philosophers who influenced Anglo-Americans' Revolutionary political thought also underwrote Americans' shifting definition of childhood as a distinct life stage throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. John Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding* (1690) and *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) influenced Americans' concepts of childhood and child rearing, as did Jean-Jacques Rousseau's popular novel *Émile or, On Education* (1762). Although the two philosophers differed on several principles, both agreed, as did their followers and imitators in North America, that the child was malleable. Education and "playing as learning" were thus keys to creating responsible and compassionate adults in a republic; toys and games were lessons in this (extra) curriculum.

Perhaps all children everywhere throughout history consider all of the world's things as toys, all social interactions as games, without consideration of gender, race, and class. Parents, on the other hand,

adapt social prescriptions of gender and class in their child-rearing habits. Portraits, as social conventions, provide abundant evidence of this thinking and reflect well the prescriptions of advice writers for child rearing. Before 1750, the rare portrait of a child or children even more rarely showed playthings, evidence of the assumption that the life stage now termed "childhood" was neither distinct from nor defined against adulthood. Increasingly after 1750, and especially after 1770, children were portrayed with toys. Girls with parents of means held adult female fashion dolls made of wax or carved of wood. Girls dressed dolls, fussed over miniature furniture and tea sets, and even furnished dollhouses, all efforts to achieve the skills of womanhood. In 1759 and 1760 George Washington ordered from the London toy maker Unwin and Wigglesworth dolls and doll furniture for his stepdaughter, Patsy Custis. Girls with parents of lesser means enjoyed dolls made of rags or corn husks. In *Children in the House* (1992), the historian Karin Calvert notes that even "girls' imaginary games centered on imitating the activities of adult women" and included imitative spinning and knitting yarn and the other chores of keeping house.

Portraits depict boys with balls and whips, rolling hoops, miniature wagons and sleds, toy horses, and tin soldiers. Boys sledded and steered and rode in wheelbarrows, collected and shot taw (clay marbles), spun wooden tops, and fashioned bows and arrows. They perched and skedaddled on stilts, elevating themselves as they balanced and disciplined their bodies. Mastery over the elements was evinced by successful kite flying. Other toys that tested and improved skills included whirligigs and bilbo-catchers (cups and balls attached by a string), hobbyhorses, and toy drums. Boys' skills were also tested against luck in several games of chance, including chuck-farthing (penny pitching) and taw (marbles), which were means of socializing boys for their adult roles in the marketplace.

Slave children, particularly in the South, experienced many more limits to their play. Like their white counterparts, slave boys hunted, fished, swam, climbed trees, and shot marbles and played ball, while slave girls played with rag dolls and imitated domestic chores. Although several historians have pointed to such games as hide the switch and rap jacked—in which players are beaten—as indicative of slavery's brutality, the historians Lawrence W. Levine and Bernard Mergen point out that these games have earlier English origins. What seems clear, however, is that white children did not play these games.



**CHILDREN'S GAMES**

Boys more than girls played games of physical exertion, though some games engaged both sexes. Ball games seem to have been, through much of the era, the province of boys; stool-ball, cricket, fives (hand-ball), and several early forms of what would become the national pastime were played. Public forms of team play such as bowling and field hockey also were played. Other games, such as battledore and shuttlecock (badminton), thread the needle, tag, leapfrog, and hopscotch could be, and often were, played with members of both sexes. Given that the median age of the Revolutionary generation was sixteen, games provided a means through which sexual mores could be tested and learned. Charades, hide-and-seek, and blindman's bluff were popular heterosocial activities, but they were given moral intent by popular advice writers. John Newbery's *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book: Intended for the Instruction and Amusement of Little Master Tommy and Pretty Miss Polly*, first published in London in 1744, explained thirty-two games. Newbery appended a moral lesson to each game, and the book was reprinted numerous times through the rest of the century. By the first decades of the nineteenth century, physical activity for girls was condoned, and activities traditionally accorded to boys, such as jumping rope, became girls' fun.

**FAMILY GAMES**

Board games were enjoyed by child and adult, male and female alike. Chess, draughts (checkers), and pachisi (later Parcheesi) were centuries old when North America was being settled. Other board games, such as the English game Goose, were found in Virginia taverns. Dated to 1597, Goose featured a board painted with a circular track of sixty-three numbered small circles. Within the circles were pictures of a boat, tavern, church, maze, skeleton, horse, and chair. Geese were featured in every ninth circle. A similar game was created in France and appeared in English in 1790. Called The New Game of Human Life, it made its way into American family homes. The game offered a pathway through the seven periods of life. Players "traveled" the path in the hope of reaching a safe and happy old age, negotiating along the way penalties and rewards. (This board game anticipated the 1843 game, The Mansion of Happiness, and the 1860 game, The Checkered Game of Life, by Milton Bradley.)

The increasing popularity of children's cabinets of curiosities in the early decades of the nineteenth century spoke to a fascination with natural history. Yet this trend also pointed to American parents' reactions to increasing industrialization, a process that

would, after 1830—and with an increased emphasis on Christmas—bring into American middle-class homes a seemingly endless variety of manufactured toys and games. New England, that erstwhile bastion of Puritanism, would prove to be the center of toy making in the United States.

*See also Childhood and Adolescence; Children's Literature; Education.*

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Calvert, Karin. *Children in the House: The Material Culture of Early Childhood, 1600–1900*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992.
- Earle, Alice Morse. *Child Life in Colonial Days*. New York: Macmillan, 1899.
- Hewitt, Karen, and Louise Roomet. *Educational Toys in America: 1800 to the Present*. Burlington: Robert Hull Fleming Museum, University of Vermont, 1979.
- Levine, Lawrence W. *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Thought from Slavery to Freedom*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- McClintock, Inez, and Marshall McClintock. *Toys in America*. Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1961.
- Mergen, Bernard. *Play and Playthings: A Reference Guide*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1982.
- O'Brien, Richard. *The Story of American Toys: From the Puritans to the Present*. New York: Abbeville Press, 1990.
- Reinier, Jacqueline S. *From Virtue to Character: American Childhood, 1775–1850*. New York: Twayne, 1996.
- Wajda, Shirley Teresa. "And a Little Child Shall Lead Them": American Children's Cabinets of Curiosities." In *Acts of Possession: Essays on Collecting in America*. Edited by Leah Dilworth. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2003.

Shirley Teresa Wajda

**GENDER**

This entry consists of two separate articles: *Overview* and *Ideas of Womanhood*.

**Overview**

Historians use the concept of gender to analyze the socially constructed systems that order human experience based on perceived sexual difference. Gender structures relationships of power, not only between men and women, but also across other social divides. Scholarship on gender during the early Republic has long emphasized changing ideas about women. It now seeks a more complex understanding of the re-

lationships between masculinity and femininity and also between prescribed gender ideals and actual patterns of behavior. Gender norms help to define and demarcate other aspects of identity and social order, especially along the lines of race and class. Many gender norms remained consistent during the colonial, Revolutionary, and post-Revolutionary eras, whereas others changed as Americans adapted the intellectual currents of the late eighteenth-century Atlantic world to the needs of the new nation.

#### **CONTINUITY: HOUSEHOLDS AND MASCULINE AUTHORITY**

In the early Republic the household was the basic social, economic, and political unit. Society celebrated masculine and feminine traits that fostered and reproduced well-ordered households. The paradigmatic American household during this period was that of the independent yeoman farmer, an ideal derived from England. Revolutionary literature—particularly the writings of John Dickinson, Thomas Jefferson, and J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur—helped transform this English ideal into an American icon. The changes in this ideal between 1750 to 1830 illustrate the subtle shifts in dominant gender norms during this period.

For eighteenth-century households, independence was obtained through interdependence. The prototypical yeoman was a benevolent patriarch, whose status and power derived from his ability to govern his dependent wife, children, and perhaps also servants and slaves. His feminine counterpart was the “good wife,” who contributed to household prosperity through production, reproductive labor, and rational consumption, and who also modeled deference and submission for other dependents. The collective aim of a yeoman household was a comfortable “competence,” meaning enough wealth—and especially enough land—to keep the immediate family employed at home. Prosperity enabled a yeoman to become a patron to his poorer neighbors, giving them work and sustenance they could not provide for themselves; in return, he earned respect, rank, and authority in his community.

In its broad outlines, this pattern of patronage-based social hierarchy also applied to artisans and gentlemen. (In America even those who aspired to gentility usually had to acknowledge that their wealth and leisure had originated in the labor and values of ancestors of the middle sort.) Even the wealthiest independent households were not self-sufficient. Rather, they occupied a position of strength within the interdependent hierarchies and

patronage networks that made up the colonial social fabric. In all instances, the vaunted independence of the household head was predicated on the dependence of many others.

Contrary to the ideal of yeoman independence, in reality the majority of families were not fully self-supporting. Most white households found it necessary to send family members out into the service of others. Native Americans and African Americans faced formal legal barriers to their attempts to marry and form independent households, even when they were technically free. The denial of legal protection to the marriages and family ties of slaves rendered slaves permanent dependents in the households of others. White Americans seized on differing gender and kinship conventions—and invented differences when necessary—to justify their exploitation of people of color. African American men, they argued, were physically strong but morally weak, subject to childish passions that made them unfit for independence. Native American men might be valiant warriors, but they were too lazy to make good household governors. Moreover, the labor they expected of their women indicated their savagery. Women of color could perform physical labor that would exhaust European women, but they supposedly lacked the natural modesty and piety that made the latter virtuous wives and mothers.

#### **CHANGING IDEAS OF GENDER**

Basic assumptions about organization of household government, and its foundational place in the polity, did not change with the American Revolution. However, the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries did see subtle shifts in beliefs about the appropriate way to exercise masculine authority, in the meaning of masculine independence, and social tolerance for individual ambition.

Male household heads retained formidable legal powers over their dependents well into the nineteenth century, but during the era of the American Revolution they began to express reservations about how this authority should be used. Historians argue that a gentler, paternalistic ethos called into question the authoritarian prerogatives of household patriarchy. The sources of this shift included the Scottish Enlightenment’s celebration of “men of feeling,” political disavowal of monarchical despotism, and—perhaps—self-consciousness inspired by Americans’ own critique of “savagery” in the households of subject people of color. Most significantly, the 1780s saw an explosion in popular literature that idealized marriages based on affection and shared “sensibili-

ty." Sentimental writers turned the loving submission of a wife to the gentle guidance of her chosen husband into a metaphor for the virtuous citizen's consent to just government. Conversely, this literature condemned "rakes" and the "coquettes" as masculine and feminine manifestations of the arbitrary passions that fostered tyranny in households and in society at large. The impact of paternalistic rhetoric is difficult to measure concretely, but over time it opened new opportunities for social dependents to question masculine power.

The Revolutionary era also saw a reformulation of the concept of independence. It became a natural characteristic of individual white men, rather than a status attained through control of property. The masculine right to control dependent wives and children—not the economic resources needed to maintain that control—became a marker of sufficient independence for political privilege. In 1785, for example, an advocate of universal white male suffrage argued that "every man . . . has what is supposed by the constitution to be property: his life, personal liberty, perhaps wife and children, in whom they have a right, the earnings of his own or their industry." By emphasizing the enduring authority of male household heads, the writer recast poor white men as independent property holders and defended their claim to the vote. Such reasoning enlarged the electorate, but it also cemented women's political exclusion. New Jersey's 1808 revision of its voting requirements illustrates this point: the state reduced the property qualification for suffrage and at the same time denied propertied women and free blacks voting rights they had exercised since the Revolution.

The final noteworthy shift was in attitudes toward individual ambition. The patriarchal yeoman household was supposed to be self-replicating, with children following in the footsteps of, and adhering to the gendered ideals of, their fathers and mothers. Economic circumstance made this ideal unattainable for most families. In the early Republic, children could seek alternative means of support by pursuing education in newly available schools and academies, by moving to growing cities and towns, and by relocating to lands opening in the West. In particular, new educational opportunities for boys and girls encouraged them to aspire to wealth and gentility rather than mere competency, and to question the values of their parents. Loss of control over children ultimately led to a rebellion against the male's traditional authority in household government during the Civil War era.

*See also Domestic Life; European Influences: Enlightenment Thought; Gender: Ideas of Womanhood; Home; Manliness and Masculinity; Marriage; Revolution: Social History; Sentimentalism; Sexuality; Sexual Morality; Slavery: Slave Life; Women: Rights; Work: Women's Work.*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Dorsey, Bruce. *Reforming Men and Women: Gender in the Antebellum City*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2002.
- Opal, J. M. "Exciting Emulation: Academies and the Transformation of the Rural North, 1780s–1820s." *Journal of American History* 91, no. 2 (2004): 445–470.
- Scott, Joan Wallach. "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis." In *Gender and the Politics of History*. Rev. ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.
- Shammas, Carole. *A History of Household Government in America*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002.
- Smith-Rosenberg, Carroll. "Dis-Covering the Subject of the 'Great Constitutional Discussion,' 1786–1789." *Journal of American History* 79, no. 3 (December 1992): 841–873.
- Vickers, Daniel. *Farmers and Fishermen: Two Centuries of Work in Essex County Massachusetts, 1630–1850*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994.

Kirsten D. Sword

## Ideas of Womanhood

The early Republic gave rise to a feminine ideal that transformed women's duties in the home into the wellspring of public virtue. This new concept of womanhood changed the colonial ideal of the "good wife" in ways that at first seemed subtle, but which ultimately reshaped women's relationship to the state. The new feminine ideal also helped the white middle class define citizenship according to its own image and interests. Women of color were some of the first to challenge the notion of virtuous republican womanhood as a source of social inequality.

## WOMEN IN COLONIAL AMERICA

In early modern England and in colonial America, "good wife" described the female counterpart to the yeoman farmer. The term was also a polite form of address for a mature woman of middling status, regardless of whether or not she was married. A woman called Goodwife Smith might be the wife of John Smith, Yeoman, or she might be his unmarried sister. These usages indicate the strength of the expectation that women would become wives, and the degree to which gender norms were built around household roles.

### "A FRIEND TO THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEN AND WOMEN"

*As I am a real friend to the fair sex, as well as to good, strong, energetic family government, it has given me some concern to see the papers so generally silent about the RIGHTS OF WOMEN. Permit me, Mr. Printer, through the Museum, to state some few of the many essential rights and duties which belong to Women.*

1. Women by entering upon the marriage state, renounce some of their natural rights, (as men do, when they enter into the civil society) to secure the remainder. In the one instance, men obey the laws of their own making, so should women, cheerfully submit to the government of their own chusing.
2. While women are under the care of their parents it is their duty, and so should it be their wishes, to shew all filial respect to them—a desire for dress should not exceed their share of that income of the family which can be spared from the necessary domestic wants.
3. When a woman arrives to an age suitable to make a choice of a companion for life, she has an undoubted right to choose a husband: But this election should be cautiously made, and not without consulting those under whose care she may be at the time.
4. A single woman, who is the entire mistress of her own time, has a right of acquiring and possessing property—she also has an unquestionable right to invest the fruits of her earnings in gauzes, flounces, ribbons, and other baubles; But she would do wise to lay up savings, that she may exercise the right of bestowing them towards family support, when she alters her condition.
5. A married woman has a right, in common with her husband, to instruct her children in piety religion

and morality, and to instill in them the duties they owe to society, as well as what is due to the parent.

6. As it is a right, so it is a duty of every woman to be neat and decent in her person and family.
7. She has a right to promote frugality, industry and economy; but there is nothing in matrimonial contract to warrant her in the waste of time and property.
8. In family broils, the wife has a right to expostulate with temper: But when entreaty is unavailing, it is her duty to submit to the controul of that government which she has voluntarily chosen.
9. The wife has a right to manage the female department of the family, as long as her prudence and good sense are adequate to the task; and when her talents are superior (*which is frequently the case*) to those of the husband, she has a right to make use of female persuasion to engross the sole government of the home department into her hands.
10. As the men, living under a free constitution of their own framing, are entitled to the protection of the laws—so likewise has a woman a right to be protected by the man of her own choice.
11. If rebellion, insurrection, or any other opposition to a just, mild, and free political government is odious, it is not less so to oppose good family administration.
12. Good government in families creates domestic happiness, and tends to promote the prosperity of the state.

*(From The Weekly Museum [New York],  
16 March 1793.)*

As a cultural icon, the good wife encompassed contradictory ideas. She exemplified female industriousness and ability, while at the same time she dutifully submitted to masculine authority and acknowledged female inferiority. The ideal good wife was, above all, assiduously engaged in her household's effort to remain competent. She actively managed her domestic affairs and engaged with her community of neighbors. She participated in the production and exchange of household goods and labor, and she monitored the behavior—especially the moral and sexual behavior—of people in her cir-

cle. She was the pious backbone of her local church, using faith as the basis for her good works and for her "humble and modest" character. Her piety affirmed her spiritual equality with men, yet prescriptive literature also stressed that faith should make her "submissive from Choice, and obedient by Inclination."

Under ordinary circumstances, her activities followed a division of labor in which women's work was centered within the household. She produced food and goods for home use and local exchange. The

ability to work primarily in the service of her own household, rather than for others, was a sign of privilege and prosperity. At least in theory, the good wife left the public world of trade, travel, law, and politics to her household head. In that public realm, her identity was legally subsumed by that of her husband. She did not have the right to make independent contracts, to own property, or to serve in government.

Under extraordinary circumstances, however, many of these constraints might not apply. Colonial ideals emphasized role-specific duties rather than (supposedly) essential natural differences between women and men. This ideology not only acknowledged women's ability to perform masculine duties when the situation required, it made doing so the responsibility of a good wife. In the absence of masculine authority—through distance or death—it fell to women to act as "deputy husbands," carrying out duties a more rigid gender system would deem them incapable of performing. In this regard, colonial ideas of womanhood were more flexible than the reality of most women's lives.

#### **WOMEN IN THE NEW REPUBLIC**

During the American Revolution, Americans came to reject the power of monarchs in the government of nations, but they remained reluctant to do away with the analogous powers of fathers in the government of households. The Revolution did not substantially change the economic and legal structures that shaped most women's lives. It did, however, generate new ways of explaining women's relationship to the state and of justifying their subordinate political and social status.

In 1976, historian Linda Kerber coined the term "republican motherhood" to describe the feminine ideal that emerged in the early Republic. Her discussion of the topic has been extremely influential, although scholars now dispute the accuracy and usefulness of her key term. The new ideal elevated traditionally feminine duties into a form of public service, while at the same time providing a rationale for women's continued political exclusion. Popular periodical literature depicted women, in their role as nurturing mothers and chaste and loving wives, as the guardians of civic virtue. By promoting morals and manners in the private, domestic sphere, women curbed the corrupting influences that the public realms of government and business had on male citizens, protecting the integrity of the nation.

Many historians have come to see "republican motherhood" as an imprecise description of this ideology. They note that women's civic importance was

grounded in their loving influence on their husbands as well as on the young; motherhood was not the most significant element of the new rhetoric. And although scholars agree that this new attitude toward women's roles served political ends in the new Republic, they now emphasize that it was neither primarily republican nor even American in its origin. Rather, this new idea of womanhood was a transatlantic offshoot of the moral philosophy and political economy of the Scottish Enlightenment.

The dominant feminine ideal that emerged in the new American nation served conservative ends in the short term, but it also marked the beginning of several profound, long-term changes in American (and arguably international) concepts of womanhood. The celebration of feminine domestic virtue in the early Republic reordered older conceptions of the spheres of human action, shrinking the "private" into a narrowly defined domestic world. It also inverted classical understandings of the locus of virtue, which had seen household interests (and women in particular) as the primary source of vice in public life. The new feminine ideal emphasized claims about essential, natural female difference; this change eroded the more flexible ideology in which women could assume men's roles, enabling some colonial good wives to exert public power. At the same time, the revised idea of womanhood provided a potent new argument in favor of female education, for mothers could not inculcate civic virtue in their children if they themselves did not understand it. Finally, by recasting traditional female duties in the language of rights, it opened the door for later, more direct claims to the expansion of women's political and economic rights. The new Republic simultaneously created a rigidly defined, separate female sphere and provided new grounds on which women could mount challenges to the limits of that sphere.

#### **WOMEN OF COLOR**

For poor women and women of color, the dominant ideas about virtuous femininity were double-edged. The colonial good wife and early Republic's concept of feminine virtue were ideals shaped by and for the middle ranks of society, but which claimed universal applicability. The middle class offered these ideals as prescriptions for those of the lower sort who sought to better themselves. Yet they also served as a powerful justification for subordination based on class and race.

The logic here was circular (and not unique to this time and place). Poor women could be criticized for failing to be appropriately feminine, implying

that the shortcoming was something they could remedy. Simultaneously, their supposed lack of feminine propriety could be used to justify exploiting them for labor and for sex, thereby rendering it impossible for them to conform to the dominant ideals.

This tautology took on an added racial dimension in America. The creation of an ideal for white women that posited their natural virtue and modesty was accompanied by rhetoric about women of color that proclaimed their natural propensity for sexual vice. What in the early modern era had been seen as a universal characteristic of female weakness and inferiority became a specific racial trait. This can be sharply illustrated by the changing usage of the words "wench" and "nasty wench." Originally these terms could designate any woman of low status, especially if she was sexually promiscuous. By the late eighteenth century, however, they were used almost exclusively in reference to black women.

In daily life, Native American women often found themselves in the same exploitative bind that was the lot of African American women. The frequent Revolutionary-era use of the image of the Indian woman as an icon for the American nation is particularly ironic. As a woman and a member of a supposedly disappearing people, her image was deliberately not representative of any faction with a chance at political power. As white Americans confronted strong Indian resistance to their efforts at national expansion, they came to prefer the symbolism of Columbia, a white woman of perfect virtue.

Women of color argued and took action against the injustices and inconsistencies inherent in the early Republic's conceptions of women. Native American basket makers, for example, confounded their New England neighbors by conforming to Anglo-American ideas about respectable femininity for part of each year, only to take up the dress and habits of their forebears every autumn. As these women traveled about the countryside marketing their wares, they defied not only the women's roles assigned to them, but also the very notion of the vanishing Indian. Black women founded the nation's first female benevolent societies in the 1790s, using religious arguments to support a public female presence that was a force for virtue rather than vice. A new era in American gender ideology began with the arguments of a black woman, the antislavery activist Maria Stewart, who by 1831 clearly saw that racial and gender hierarchies reinforced each other and subverted America's professed allegiance to liberty and equality.

*See also American Indians: American Indians as Symbols/Icons; Domestic Life; Education: Education of Girls and Women; European Influences: Enlightenment Thought; Home; Manliness and Masculinity; Marriage; Revolution: Social History; Sexual Morality; Sexuality; Women: Female Reform Societies and Reformers; Women: Rights; Work: Women's Work.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bloch, Ruth H. *Gender and Morality in Anglo-American Culture, 1650–1800*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.
- Brown, Kathleen M. *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race and Power in Colonial Virginia*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
- Kerber, Linda K. *Toward an Intellectual History of Women: Essays*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
- Ulrich, Laurel Thatcher. *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650–1750*. New York: Vintage, 1991.
- . *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth*. New York: Knopf, 2001.
- Zagarri, Rosemarie. "The Rights of Man and Woman in Post-Revolutionary America." *William and Mary Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (1998): 203–230.

Kirsten D. Sword

---

**GEOGRAPHY** The United States in 1829 was a little more than seventeen hundred miles long from north to south and about the same distance (counting the Louisiana Purchase) from east to west. Beginning with Cape Cod and widening farther south was the Atlantic Coastal Plain, a low to gently undulating surface that, at the time, offered easy penetration of the interior. From Cape Cod north and immediately to the interior of the coastal plain farther south was the Appalachian System. The line of contact between the coastal plain and the Appalachian System is termed the Fall Line. It is here, at the head of deep water navigation, where many cities developed. On the other hand, New England's rocky coast was very irregular and encouraged the development of many ports. Two general regional terms used from Maryland south were Tidewater, for the easily penetrated coastal plain, and Piedmont, for the gently rolling approach to the mountainous Appalachians west of



**The British Colonies in North America.** An engraving, dated 1777, by the English cartographer William Faden. SNARK/ART RESOURCE, NY.

the Fall Line. West of the easily penetrated Appalachians lay a great Central Lowland, drained by the navigable Mississippi River system.

Western Europeans, in encountering the new environment, found many parallels with what they had known at home. Much of the animal life was similar. For what was not similar they adopted Native American names (raccoon, opossum, for example). The same followed for vegetation. Other than for Native American clearance, forest prevailed, until the grasslands of the Central Lowland were penetrated. In general the climate was more humid than in Europe, with many large rivers providing abundant waterpower sites, especially in New England. Atlantic America had a continental, rather than a mari-

time, climate, meaning that there were greater temperature differences between winter and summer than in Western Europe. Winters were more severe in New England and the northern interior and summers longer and much hotter in the South than was the case in Western Europe.

Soil fertility varied greatly. Much of the coastal plain and New England had relatively poor soils. There were, of course, exceptions. For example, the Black Belt of Alabama had fertile soils, as did river bottomlands in Mississippi and Louisiana. Large areas of excellent soils could be found in the Piedmont and Central Lowland, notably in Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, and Iowa.

**PEOPLE: 1754**

By 1754 people of African and European origin occupied a broad area in eastern North America. In the area controlled by the British in what would later become the United States, continuous coastal settlement could be found from present-day Maine through North Carolina. A short gap intervened between coastal North Carolina and South Carolina and Georgia. Navigable rivers, such as the Hudson in the North and Savannah in the South, had encouraged settlement toward the interior, and movement down the great interior valley of the Shenandoah was just beginning. Outliers of settlement to the interior included, in the North, French settlement at Detroit and, in the Illinois Country, along the upper Mississippi in the vicinity of St. Louis. In the Southeast, Spain had settled Saint Augustine and in the Florida panhandle. Spanish and French settlers also occupied a coastal strip around Mobile Bay in what later became Alabama. French and some Spanish settlement could be found at and near New Orleans on the lower Mississippi. To the interior were located various Native American tribal entities, among the most notable being the League of the Iroquois centered on New York's Mohawk Valley and the Creek Confederacy of the Southeast. There were considerable cultural differences between the European and African settled areas. Many of these continued well beyond 1829. New Englanders came disproportionately from the area of East Anglia in Great Britain, north and east of London. Congregationalism was the major religious following. Few held slaves. In New York and New Jersey people who were either Dutch in ethnicity or who had become Dutch in culture comprised an important segment of the population. Many held slaves, and the Dutch Reformed Church was regionally important. In southeastern Pennsylvania and nearby areas, English Quakers were dominant. Slavery was rare. Germans of various Protestant faiths had also settled in Pennsylvania as well as people from the north of Ireland, who generally arrived as Presbyterians but often, in the move to the frontier, became Baptists or Methodists. African slaves could be found in the Tidewater, in many cases making up more than half the population. Slave owners were from many parts of Great Britain and northern Ireland and often were communicants of the Anglican Church. French and Spanish settlement favored Roman Catholicism and, in the South, slavery.

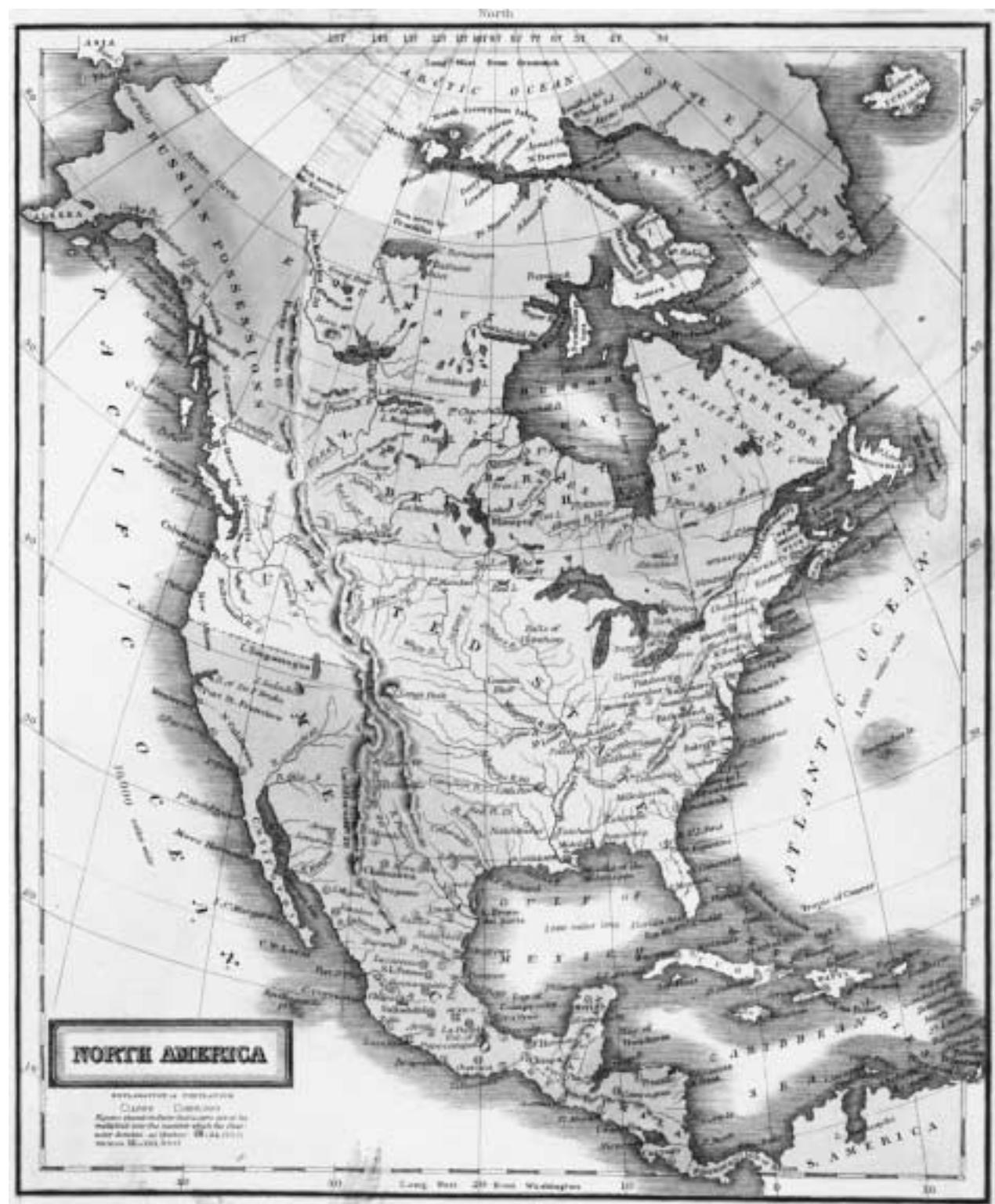
New England was the most heavily populated region, with about 400,000 people, overwhelmingly white. Virginia and the Tidewater country through North Carolina had almost as many people, but here

initially culturally diverse Africans from several areas in West Africa often dominated in numbers. The Hudson Valley and areas adjacent had about 100,000 people, southeastern Pennsylvania had about 230,000, and coastal South Carolina and Georgia had about 90,000, again with Africans in many places often outnumbering the whites. In addition to the contrasts in numbers and religion and ethnicity were differences in age and sex ratios. The frontier tended to have more white males than white females, whereas longer-settled areas tended to have the sexes in equal proportions or be slightly dominated by females because of the outmigration of some males to the frontiers. Where slavery dominated there were often severe differences in sex ratios as the focus of owners early on was for (preferably male) field laborers.

To the interior, the Native American population was also quite varied culturally, in language, subsistence, forms of dwellings, and many other things. Although there is no real agreement on their numbers, there is no question that by 1754 many had died of introduced European and African diseases. In the North, smaller villages prevailed, whereas in the Southeast some settlements reached several thousand inhabitants. In subsistence Native Americans varied from the largely hunting and gathering of northern New England, fishing along the coast of southern New England and Long Island and southern Florida and the Gulf Coast, to farming in much of the interior where a long growing season allowed cultivation of corn, beans, and squash. Dwellings were regionally quite varied, with examples such as the Quonset longhouse of the North, the domal wigwam of the mid-Atlantic and the hipped-roof, rectangular wattle-and-daub house of the Southeast.

**PEOPLE: 1829**

Decennial national censuses beginning in 1790 give a much better picture of population trends, at least in numbers. By the census of 1830, for example, the population had grown to almost 13 million. Over 18 percent of this population was African American, over 86 percent of whom were slaves. By 1830 natural increase had evened the ratio between the sexes among African Americans to about 102 males per 100 females. In newly settled slave states, the ratios of African Americans to whites was greatly different. In Mississippi, for example, almost half the population was African American, and of this half over 90 percent were slaves. Using New Jersey as an example, in 1830 only a little more than 6 percent of the population was African American, and of these only a little over 10 percent were slaves.



**North America.** A map of the North American continent, published in 1829 by D. F. Robinson and Company of Connecticut.  
© BETTMANN/CORBIS.

Nationally, among whites, the gender ratio was about 104 males to 100 females. These ratios among whites varied greatly with the length of settlement. In New Jersey, for example, an older seaboard state, there were 103 white males to 100 white females. In Michigan Territory, a newly developing area, the ratio was 138 to 100.

The growth in numbers by 1830 had come about largely by natural increase. Exceptions to this included the continuous flow, before the Revolution, of Scots-Irish from northern Ireland, through the port of Philadelphia, westward into Pennsylvania, and then southward to the interior. The other major exception was the displacement of thousands of French settlers after the Seven Years' War from Acadia (present-day Nova Scotia). Many of these people found their way to southwestern Louisiana and became the ancestors of the present Cajun population.

By 1829 Europeans and Africans settled portions of the United States had expanded into what are now the states of Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, most of Ohio, Missouri, Mississippi, Alabama, and Arkansas. Several events had allowed this to occur. The French threat had been removed by their defeat in the Seven Years' War. Thomas Jefferson's purchase of the Louisiana Territory from Napoleon in 1803 opened the vast interior to American settlement. There had also been several Indian wars. For example, the League of the Iroquois had sided with England during the American Revolution and had been defeated by the Americans. They were no longer a barrier, allowing New Englanders in particular to pour westward through New York's Mohawk Valley. A little later this was the route of the Erie Canal, begun in 1817 and completed in 1825, adding to the flow of settlement west and of produce east.

Possession of Florida began with accessing a portion of the present state of Louisiana (the Florida parishes) in 1819. This was completed in 1822. Further, Native Americans displaced westward, and improvements in transportation (for example, the National Road, the Wilderness Road through Cumberland Gap, and the great expansion of steam navigation in the 1820s) made westward migration much easier.

#### AGRICULTURE

In an economic sense, whether in 1754 or in 1829, agriculture, with several regional variations, ruled. New Englanders had originally come seeking religious freedom and planned agricultural villages like those in their homeland. Much of New England, however, proved to be hostile to agricultural endeavors, and many people increasingly turned to produc-

ing naval stores (turpentine, pitch, and resin) and timber for shipbuilding and to fishing the rich coastal waters for cod, which was salted and sent in large measure to the Caribbean and Mediterranean. The middle colonies of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania were known as the bread colonies, famed for production of wheat, which was milled into flour and exported in barrels to Europe and the Caribbean. Some areas had regional specialties. Southwestern New Jersey, for example, specialized in growing corn to feed hogs, the source of the hams that were exported through Philadelphia. Also in New Jersey were the small farms established by New Englanders that specialized in apples, which were transformed into the area's famed apple brandy.

The Tidewater country of Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina early turned to cultivating tobacco with the use of slave labor. North Carolina was especially known for producing naval stores. Indigo, which produces a blue dye, was grown on the coastal plain in North Carolina, especially in South Carolina, Georgia, Spanish Florida, and French Louisiana. Long-staple cotton was produced on the Sea Islands off the Georgia coast. Corn was raised everywhere. Cattle and swine were ubiquitous, roaming free.

Sheep characterized New England more than any other area. By the 1820s the agricultural regions had changed greatly. Farms were being abandoned in New England. Many farmers had left for the West (western New York to Michigan) or to sites where waterpower could be harnessed for manufacturing. The midwestern Corn Belt was in formation, with rapidly growing Cincinnati termed "Porkopolis."

In the middle states, farming remained viable, although there was a shift to livestock to provide protein for the growing cities. Indeed many farmers in this region as well left for the West. In the plantation South, with the introduction of Eli Whitney's cotton gin, upland, short-staple cotton became a major crop in the Piedmont. Cotton production had also moved to central Tennessee, the so-called Black Belt of Alabama, and the bottomlands along the Mississippi in Louisiana and Mississippi. Land worn out by tobacco farming had been abandoned, but wide areas in Virginia's Piedmont were still devoted to producing the crop. Tobacco was now also to be found in the Bluegrass region of Kentucky. Rice replaced indigo in coastal South Carolina and Georgia. In southern Louisiana's Red River and Mississippi bottomlands, sugar had become king.

**INDUSTRY AND MINING**

Overall, when compared to agriculture, industry was a very minor activity in 1754. Industry was mainly to be found from Maryland north and consisted of grist and saw milling, ironworks, shipbuilding, and distilling. Ironworks were especially to be found in Pennsylvania and New Jersey and the milling of grain especially in the middle colonies. Even by 1820 the use of waterpower for manufacturing outnumbered the use of steam engines by a factor of at least one hundred to one. Factory jobs were to be found in few locations, mainly southeastern Pennsylvania, coastal Connecticut, and eastern Massachusetts. The first major planned manufacturing center, based on textiles, was Paterson, New Jersey, planned in 1791, utilizing the waterpower of the Great Falls of the Passaic River. But it was places in New England, especially in Massachusetts (Lowell being the most commonly cited example), that were able to capitalize on the combination of humid climate, relatively great fall in water from place to place, people abandoning farms and moving to town, interested investors, ease of transport, and availability of cotton from the expanding plantations of the South.

In 1754 mining was quite limited, with iron ore being the major material sought. By 1829 iron mining and production were quite widespread and especially followed in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Shaft mining for copper began at North Arlington, New Jersey, in about 1712, interrupted by the Revolution, then continued well into the nineteenth century. The mining of glass sands began in southern New Jersey in 1739, and production there was still under way in 1829. Gold was found as early as 1799 in North Carolina, and mining activity was ongoing there and in Georgia in the 1820s. More important economically was the production of salt in the vicinity of Syracuse, New York. Clay was widely mined for pottery and bricks.

**TRANSPORTATION**

In both 1754 and 1829, the key to settlement and productivity, whether agricultural or industrial, was transportation. The seaboard settlements obviously had an early advantage, with immediate access to marine navigation. In 1754 Philadelphia was the major port, with, from north to south, Boston, Newport, New York, Charleston, Savannah, and New Orleans being of importance. By 1829 New York had eclipsed Philadelphia to become the leading port, partially owing to the opening of the Erie Canal.

New Orleans had become much more important owing to the settlement of the trans-Appalachian West and the development of steam navigation on the Mississippi. In 1754 overland transportation, initially along paths opened by Native Americans, was very poorly developed. Even in 1800, for example, overland travel from New York to Illinois took approximately six weeks. The Capital Turnpike, completed in 1795 between Philadelphia (which was then the capital) and Lancaster, set the stage for private investment in toll roads. Largely because of this, by 1828 the trip from New York to Illinois had shrunk to about three weeks. Where they existed, canals both speeded travel and made the movement of cargoes less expensive. Before the opening of the full length of the Erie Canal, for example, a wagon load took twenty days to reach Buffalo from Albany at a cost of a hundred dollars. After the canal opened, in 1825, the time was reduced to eight days and the cost to twenty dollars. After 1829, of course, the rapid expansion of canals, steam navigation, and the coming of the railroad further revolutionized transportation.

*See also Acadians; Agriculture: Overview; American Indians: American Indian Ethnography; Appalachia; Cartography; Environment, Environmental History, and Nature; Erie Canal; Exploration and Explorers; Frontier; Immigration and Immigrants: Overview; Imperial Rivalry in the Americas; Iron Mining and Metallurgy; Mid-Atlantic States; Mississippi River; New England; Northwest; People of America; Plantation, The; Railroads; Shipbuilding Industry; South; Steam Power; Trails to the West; Transportation: Canals and Waterways; Transportation: Roads and Turnpikes; Waterpower.*

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Brown, Ralph H. *Mirror for Americans: Likeness of the Eastern Seaboard, 1810*. New York: American Geographical Society, 1943; New York: Da Capo Press, 1968.
- . *Historical Geography of the United States*. General editor, J. Russell Whitaker. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1948.
- Ehrenberg, Ralph, ed. *Pattern and Process: Research in Historical Geography*. Papers and Proceedings of the Conference on the National Archives and Research in Historical Geography. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1975.
- Glassie, Henry H. *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968.

- Jordan-Bychkov, Terry G., and Matti E. Kaups. *The American Backwoods Frontier: An Ethnic and Ecological Interpretation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.
- Meinig, D. W. *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History*. Vol. 1: *Atlantic America, 1492–1800*. Vol. 2: *Continental America, 1800–1867*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1986, 1993.
- National Geographic Society (U.S.). *Historical Atlas of the United States*. Rev. ed. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1993.
- Paullin, Charles O. *Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States*. Washington, D.C., New York: Carnegie Institution of Washington and the American Geographical Society, 1932; Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975.
- Zelinsky, Wilbur. *The Cultural Geography of the United States*. Rev. ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1992.

Peter O. Wacker

**GEORGIA** Initially settled in 1733, for its first twenty years Georgia was a frontier colony. By 1760 the population was six thousand whites and thirty-six hundred blacks, outnumbered by neighboring Creek Indians with a population of thirteen thousand. With only two major towns, Savannah and Augusta, Georgia consisted of little more than a strip of land along the coast between the Altamaha and Savannah Rivers and some additional land inland along the southern bank of the Savannah. By the 1760s Georgia's economy, population, and territory had all begun to grow rapidly. Slavery was legalized in 1750, leading to the expansion of rice-growing coastal slave plantations. White immigrants were drawn by the promise of land. By 1775 the population had mushroomed to eighteen thousand whites and fifteen thousand blacks, but growth of this magnitude could only be maintained with cessions of land from the neighboring Creeks and Cherokees. Indian resistance to land cessions was overcome by misrepresentation, fraud, and the Indians' increasing dependence on trade. Between 1763 and 1773, six official conferences were held with the Creeks alone, five of which led to land cessions that quintupled the area of Georgia.

Initial responses to unpopular British imperial policies of the 1760s were muted. Active support for rebellion developed only after fighting broke out in Massachusetts in April 1775. In January 1776, the Council of Public Safety arrested royal governor James Wright, and in May 1776 the new state of Georgia sent a delegation to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia with instructions to support indepen-

dence. Aside from three unsuccessful invasions of British East Florida beginning in 1776, large-scale military operations in Georgia began with the surprise British capture of Savannah in December 1778. The war would drag on thereafter, with neither side able to win a decisive victory. The continuing warfare divided a countryside deeply between Loyalists and Patriots, the British withdrawing from Savannah only in July 1782.

With the end of the war, Georgia continued to seek additional Indian lands, and in 1785 and 1786 large cessions were obtained from the Creeks with fraudulent treaties. Fighting erupted as settlers flooding into the contested lands were met by Creek soldiers, but neither Georgia nor the Creeks proved strong enough to win uncontested control. The situation helped convince many Georgians of the need for a stronger central government, and delegates from Georgia played an active role in the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787. Georgia quickly ratified the new constitution by unanimous vote on 31 December 1787. Land hunger was the thread binding together Georgia's participation in the War of 1812 (1812–1815) as well. Georgians were behind an attempted invasion of Spanish Florida in 1812, and the state benefited from the Treaty of Fort Jackson (1814) that Andrew Jackson imposed on both Creek allies and enemies. The treaty forced the Creeks to part with over twenty million acres in Alabama and southern Georgia.

Georgia's population and economy continued to expand rapidly into the nineteenth century. The non-white population in particular grew in an economy increasingly based on large slave plantations growing cotton. According to the federal decennial census, there were 82,548 Georgians in 1790, and this number doubled by 1800 to 162,686. In 1810 it reached 251,407; by 1820 it was 340,989, and it reached 516,823 in 1830. In 1790, 36 percent of the population was black; in 1800 it was 37 percent, and from 1810 onward it remained at or slightly above 43 percent of the total population. Blacks were overwhelmingly slaves, as the free black population was always much less than 1 percent of the total state population and during this era around 1 percent of the black population (except for 1800 and 1810, when it approached 2 percent).

Concerns over territorial expansion also dominated Georgia politics. James Jackson established one of the most enduring political alliances of the era based on the popularity he gained by opposing Governor George Mathews during the Yazoo land fraud crisis of 1794–1795. The Yazoo crisis was sparked by

the taint of bribery and corruption that surrounded the government authorization of the sale of around thirty-five million acres of western lands for \$500,000, which was signed by Governor Mathews. Although the sale was overturned by Jackson's supporters, it remained a potent political issue in Georgia for decades to come.

Indian removal was the central theme of Governor Michael Troup's successful campaign to win the first popular election for governor in 1825. He influenced the fraudulent Treaty of Indian Springs of 1825, which extinguished the Creeks' title to all of their remaining lands. Creek resistance led President John Quincy Adams to an unprecedented step, the tearing up of a ratified treaty. Renegotiation resulted in the Treaty of Washington (1826), accepted by a people that recognized it had little choice. By 1827 the Creeks had been forced to cede their remaining land in Georgia, leaving only the Cherokees with sizable territory within Georgia's boundaries. The election of President Andrew Jackson in 1828 and the passage of his Indian Removal Act in the spring of 1830 signaled to Georgians that they would not have to wait long, and in 1838 the last of the Cherokees were rounded up by the army and sent west on their infamous Trail of Tears.

*See also American Indians: American Indian Removal; American Indians: Southeast; Cotton; Land Speculation.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Coleman, Kenneth. *American Revolution in Georgia, 1763–1789*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1958.
- . *A History of Georgia*. 2nd ed. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991.
- Gallay, Alan. *The Formation of a Planter Elite: Jonathan Bryan and the Southern Colonial Frontier*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989.
- Green, Michael D. *The Politics of Indian Removal: Creek Government and Society in Crisis*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982.
- Hall, Leslie. *Land and Allegiance in Revolutionary Georgia*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001.
- McLoughlin, William G. *Cherokee Renascence in the New Republic*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986.
- Reidy, Joseph P. *From Slavery to Agrarian Capitalism in the Cotton Plantation South: Central Georgia, 1800–1880*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992.
- Smith, Julia Floyd. *Slavery and Rice Culture in Low Country Georgia, 1750–1860*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985.

David A. Sicko

**GERMAN-LANGUAGE PUBLISHING** By the 1730s, the American colonies were home to a rising population of German speakers, with nearly 20,000 in Pennsylvania, a number that would increase to one-third of the population of 125,000 by 1776. These readers generated a high demand for newspapers, almanacs, and Bibles printed in their native tongue. The first newspaper in America printed in German was the *Philadelphische Zeitung*, started in 1732 by Benjamin Franklin. Unfortunately, Franklin, who was known for his anti-German political remarks, chose material for the paper carelessly; in addition, it was badly translated. As a result, the paper generated few subscribers and collapsed in 1733. More responsive presses directed by Christopher Sauer, located at the Cloister of Ephrata, the seat of communitarian religious leader Conrad Beisel, printed Bibles, a newspaper, and religious tracts for a German audience beginning in 1739. Sauer's press had the advantage, in 1744, of adding its own paper mill to supply printing material. The Sauer press expanded further in 1770, adding the first German type foundry in the colonies to its enterprise. Before this, type in German Gothic lettering had to be imported from Europe, adding cost and inconvenience to the printing process.

Meanwhile, enterprising German emigrants started newspapers in Philadelphia, like *Der Hoch-Deutsche pennsylvanische* in 1745, closely followed by the *Pennsylvanische Berichte germantauner Zeitung* in 1746. Editors with connections in the German states often received news unavailable elsewhere and printed it first in German for their readers, including updates on the Seven Years' War (1756–1763) and religious disputes. By 1751, five German-language Pennsylvania papers had circulations of nearly four thousand subscribers each, charging an average of three shillings a year and using both the mails and store sales for circulation. For new emigrants, these papers contained crucial information on land acquisition, sending money back to the German states, and avoiding local scams and pitfalls. After 1750, most papers included woodcut illustrations and substantial advertising sections. The British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (1701) even started a newspaper to Anglicize Germans but found little response.

The American Revolution split the German population, a political trend reflected in the German-language press. The Sauer family, whose politics were pro-proprietor, pacifist, and anti-Revolutionary, published the *Pennsylvanische staats-*

*Courier* during the British occupation of Philadelphia in 1777–1778. The family was, however, bankrupted by the British evacuation and, because of the enormous hostility it faced, had to relocate after the Revolution to German neighborhoods of Baltimore. There, Samuel Sauer resurfaced in 1791 as the editor of *Der neue hoch deutsche americanische Calendar*. At the other end of the political spectrum, Heinrich Miller, a Moravian from Waldeck, set up a print shop in Philadelphia in 1762, where he published *Der wöchentliche pennsylvanische Staatsbote*. A pro-colonial paper, on 5 July 1776 it was the first to publish notice of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. Ironically, in 1768 the papers of both Miller and the Sauer family had printed German translations of John Dickinson's *Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer*, a protest against British taxation of the colonies.

In the generation after the American Revolution, German presses began to decline because there were no large waves of German-speaking immigrants. German was gradually replaced by English as a working language in German-dominated areas, and many second-generation German Americans were deeply self-conscious about the slangy language of the existing German newspapers, which they considered ignorant and derisive. The pacifist tradition informed *Der Friedensbote* (1812), a German newspaper in Allentown, Pennsylvania, edited by Joseph Ehrenfried and Heinrich Ebner, that opposed the War of 1812. Partisan political campaigning in the early Republic kept alive some other German papers through high-priced advertising aimed at German-speaking voters. German Americans generally voted against Federalists and nativists, as reflected in *Der Wahre amerikaner* (1804) of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, which was a pro-Jefferson campaign organ. In later campaigns, Democratic candidates such as Andrew Jackson appealed to German American voters, especially on anti-Masonic issues, through specially founded papers, including the Reading, Pennsylvania, *Readinger demokrat und anti-freimaurer Herold* (1826). These papers, however, were only successful when they were written in proper High German, employed German correspondents, and avoided exposing readers to ridicule through vulgar advertising or provincial content.

The religious and political turmoil of the 1830s in Europe spurred intellectual refugees to seek safety and careers in America, and they often gravitated toward existing German publishing. Johan Georg Wesselhöft of Frankfurt emigrated to Philadelphia, founding the high-toned *Alte und neue Welt* in 1834.

Frequently quoting Goethe and Hegel, the paper championed German-speaking small shopkeepers and skilled craftsmen while offering a taste of European cultural material. As Germans migrated westward, German papers followed them, appearing in Cincinnati in 1826, Louisville in 1841, and eventually in Galveston, New Orleans, Indiana and Wisconsin by the 1840s. When the Revolution of 1848 was suppressed in Europe, a new wave of German-speaking emigrants came to the United States, many finding work at German-language papers and carrying over their liberal political traditions into their editorial policies. In Wisconsin, for example, the German press fought a fierce battle against residency restrictions on voting and attacked the Whig Party for its anti-German slurs. Buoyed by new readers, these papers survived into the 1880s, especially in German-dominated regions of Pennsylvania and the Midwest.

*See also Immigration and Immigrants: Germans; Newspapers; Pennsylvania; Printers; Religious Publishing.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, Willi Paul. "German Translations of the Declaration of Independence." *Journal of American History*. 85 (1999): 1325–1349.
- Arndt, Karl J. R., and May Olson. *German-American Newspapers and Periodicals, 1732–1955*. New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1965.
- Wittke, Carl. *The German Language Press in America*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957.

Margaret Sankey

---

**GHENT, TREATY OF** Signed on 24 December 1814 and also known as the Peace of Christmas Eve, the Treaty of Ghent brought the War of 1812 to an end. This war was a by-product of the Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815). The United States had declared war on 18 June 1812 to force the British to give up certain maritime practices that grew out of the European war, particularly restrictions on American trade with the Continent, imposed by Orders-in-Council, and impressment, which was the forcible removal of seamen from American merchant ships. Although the British suspended the Orders-in-Council on 23 June 1812, they refused to give up impressment, and American attempts to force them to do so by conquering Canada failed. Hence, on 8 Au-

gust 1814 representatives of the two powers met in Ghent, in modern-day Belgium, to discuss terms for peace.

The American delegation, which was headed by John Quincy Adams and included Henry Clay and Albert Gallatin, was exceptionally strong, while the British relied on men of more modest accomplishments, most notably Henry Goulburn, an undersecretary in the colonial office. On more than one occasion, the American envoys outmaneuvered their British counterparts.

By the time the negotiations got under way, the United States had dropped its demand for an end to impressment, but the war in Europe now appeared to be over, which enabled the British to concentrate on the American war and thus put them in the driver's seat at Ghent. As a price for peace, the British insisted on significant American concessions: the creation of an Indian barrier state in the Old Northwest; the surrender of territory in northern Maine and Minnesota; the American demilitarization of the Great Lakes; and an end to American fishing privileges in Canadian waters.

Stunned by the scope of these demands, the American delegation refused to make any concessions and contemplated departing for home. The British, however, retreated to a proposal for making peace on the basis of *uti possidetis*, which meant that each side would keep any conquered territory. If this proposal were acceded to, each power would retain several forts on the other side of the frontier and the British would acquire eastern Maine. When the American envoys rejected this proposal, the British reluctantly agreed to return all conquered territory and establish peace on the basis of the status quo ante bellum (the state that existed before the war).

The treaty did not actually end hostilities. Fearing that the United States might demand changes before approving the agreement, the British insisted that the fighting should end only after both nations had ratified it. The crown ratified almost immediately, on 27 December 1814, but it took six weeks for the treaty to reach the United States. In the meantime, Britain suffered a major defeat—the worst of the war—at the Battle of New Orleans. It was not until 16 February 1815 that President James Madison, with the unanimous consent of the Senate, ratified it on behalf of the United States. Both sides immediately ordered an end to hostilities, although fighting continued for several months in remote parts of North America and in distant seas.

*See also* **New Orleans, Battle of; War of 1812.**

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Engelman, Fred L. *The Peace of Christmas Eve*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1962.

Hickey, Donald R. *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989.

Perkins, Bradford. *Castlereagh and Adams: England and the United States, 1812–1823*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964.

Donald R. Hickey

---

**GIBBONS V. OGDEN** More than three decades after the ratification of the Constitution, *Gibbons v. Ogden* (22 U.S. 1 [1824]) raised, for the first time, questions concerning the nature and scope of congressional authority in regulating interstate commerce. Chief Justice John Marshall, writing for a unanimous Supreme Court, held that Congress's power to regulate commerce extended to every species of commercial trade, including navigation, between the United States and foreign nations and between the states.

In 1798 New York granted to Robert R. Livingston and Robert Fulton the exclusive right of navigating the state's waters with steamboats. Livingston and Fulton subsequently granted Aaron Ogden the exclusive right to operate a ferry between New York City and several ports in New Jersey. The holders of this monopoly so dominated and energetically enforced it that other states threatened to pass laws in retaliation that would refuse to let steam-powered vessels from New York into their waters.

Thomas Gibbons, who possessed a federal permit under the 1793 Coastal Licensing Act, began to operate a service carrying passengers between New York and New Jersey. Boats belonging to Gibbons and his partner, Cornelius Vanderbilt, entered New York waters, attempting to gain as much business as possible. Ogden was successful in convincing the New Jersey courts to deny Gibbons the right to enter New York waters. Gibbons retained William Wirt, the U.S. attorney general, and Daniel Webster, the lawyer and congressman, to represent his interests at the Supreme Court.

In arguments before the Court that lasted four and a half days, Ogden's attorney, Thomas J. Oakley, held that navigation was not commerce under the meaning of the Constitution; thus intrastate commerce was left to the states to regulate. Wirt put forth the argument that the federal license issued to Gibbons took precedence over a state-granted monopoly. Webster went further, arguing that the

commerce clause of the Constitution gave Congress sole power over commerce and that the state-granted monopoly was in conflict with this clause.

The Court ruled in favor of Gibbons but did not go as far as Webster would have liked. The ruling that Gibbons's federal license nullified the New York grant of monopoly had both immediate and long-term consequences. The opinion held that commerce involves more than the buying and selling of goods. The decision was popular because it broke up the monopoly, prevented further conflict between the states, and left the power to regulate intrastate commerce to the states; this last provision kept states' rights advocates happy. Furthermore, the public welcomed the ruling because, in stating that Congress had the power to regulate interstate commerce, the Court allowed for the nation's economy to operate under one set of laws. The decision was broad enough to apply to new technologies in transportation and communications and to support federal regulation over banking, industry, and labor throughout the nation.

*See also States' Rights; Steamboat; Supreme Court; Transportation: Canals and Waterways.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Baxter, Maurice G. *The Steamboat Monopoly: Gibbons v. Ogden, 1824*. New York: Knopf, 1972.

J. Mark Alcorn

---

## GOVERNMENT

This entry consists of four separate articles: *Overview*, *Local*, *State*, and *Territories*.

### Overview

Government is a set of institutions with the legitimate right to use coercion within a given territory, and Americans understood the need for effective government from the beginning. Americans relied on government to keep the peace, defend the land, nurture prosperity, regulate the careless, and administer justice. The British Crown gave its American colonists considerable latitude to govern themselves. Colonial legislatures laid down a diverse mixture of taxes, imposed an assortment of rules on behavior, and defended their citizens against a wide array of foes. Massachusetts began to steer its economic de-

velopment in ways that mimicked mercantilism in Britain itself.

#### REPUBLICANISM AND STATE GOVERNMENTS

When America's separatists totally dissolved their political connection with the British government in 1776, they were forced to remake their governments. Whig ideas dominated their political thought. Whigs in Britain and America believed that the British government had departed from its true principles and become dominated by a corrupt court in London. Americans based their Revolution on the principle of John Locke (1632–1704) that legitimate government results from a social contract among people seeking authoritative protection of the right to life and liberty. In the Declaration of Independence and elsewhere, rebel leaders listed the British government's violations of this principle to justify political independence. They set out to reconstitute their governments according to republican ideals. Republican principles stipulated, first, that public policymakers should be the agents of the people. Second, republicanism demanded the separation of government powers to prevent the possibility of a single leader, such as a king, making laws, enforcing them, interpreting them, and punishing those who disagreed.

Fueled by passionate republicanism and resentment against the crown, each colony reinvented itself as an independent, self-governing republic. Each of these self-proclaimed states drew on written charters for their authority. Most of them crafted new constitutions for the purpose. Each state assumed the power to legislate tariffs, currency systems, property regulations, and rules concerning debts. State governments took control of millions of acres of lands formerly in British hands. The new American states grew adept at taxation, the foundation power of European nation-states. While individual states found it challenging to exercise control over the territory they governed, and many had to deal with British invasion and occupation during the Revolution, each was steadily consolidating power in the 1780s.

Born of Revolutionary fervor and facing the practical necessity of establishing their legitimacy, these new governments enthusiastically implemented republican ideals. They extended the voting franchise so that from 60 to 70 percent of adult white males in the United States had the right to vote by 1790. The states placed the preponderance of power in the hands of the popularly elected legislators. Each of the new governments also leashed its legislators to the voters with short terms of office, often adding term limits. Pennsylvania's constitution of 1776 em-

bodied Revolutionary republicanism in its purest form, vesting "supreme legislative power" in a unicameral house of representatives whose members faced annual elections and a term limit of four years. The new state governments experimented with a variety of schemes to separate powers, particularly to limit executive power. Ten states created bicameral legislatures, where an upper chamber (typically called a "senate" or "council") exercised some degree of influence over legislation from the lower house. To shield the courts and the legislature from executive manipulation, the state constitutions limited the power of the state executive (termed either a "governor" or "president"). Only four states allowed the governor substantial power to appoint public officials, and only three provided for an executive veto.

#### THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

By the mid-1780s, problems arising from state governance were building an increasingly broad constituency for fundamental reform of the national government. Without the unifying fact of British governance or the unifying spirit of Revolutionary idealism, the states' diverse cultures, religious traditions, political dynamics, and economic interests began to send them on conflicting paths of political development. The United States faced a dilemma of cooperation: the popularly elected state legislatures had strong incentives to resist imposing any sacrifice on their constituents, and each could gain more in the short term by acting independently than by cooperating to advance the long-term interests of the nation as a whole. Economic depression in the 1780s only intensified pressures on state legislatures to use their authority to protect the mass of their voting constituents, even at the expense of Americans elsewhere. Some state governments revived the paper money emissions used by their colonial predecessors, while others suspended debtors' payments. Massachusetts pursued a more conservative policy toward debts and money, but that course sparked the intense resentment that contributed to Shays's Rebellion (1786–1787). Meanwhile, states became bolder in using their power to slap fees on imports and exports from other countries or states. The thirteen states were pursuing different economic policies customized to their diverse economic and political interests, threatening economic elites and imperiling national commercial, currency, and other policies that some political elites desired.

**The Confederation government.** These circumstances prompted republican nationalists like James Madison to seek additional powers for the national

government to make it more capable of pursuing the nation's interests. The Continental Congress assumed some of the key functions of national sovereignty in the 1770s, particularly overseeing the conduct of the Revolutionary War. This jerry-built national government, however, had no constitutional authority until the states completed ratification of written Articles of Confederation in 1781. The Articles provided little more than a whisper of sovereign power to the central government. In the Confederation Congress each state, whether large or small, cast a single vote. Congress could not exercise any exclusive power over the nation's interior, any state's economic assets, or any state commercial powers. Congress had no taxing powers, but instead depended on the states to contribute national revenues according to a schedule of requisitions; not surprisingly, the states balked at filling these requisitions, causing overwhelming fiscal problems for the Confederation government. Even when the cumbersome national policy process produced a decision, the Articles made the policy hard to implement because there existed few national administrators and no national judges. By 1786, growing anxiety had created an opportunity for pathbreaking government reform.

**Madison and national powers.** Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and other nationalists had tried but failed to increase specific national powers incrementally in the 1780s. In 1786 they seized on the climate of opinion to engineer, first, a commercial convention at Annapolis, Maryland, and in turn the Constitutional Convention in 1787 to deliberate reforms more comprehensively. Drawing on an extensive study of past and present governments, Madison proposed a national government with broad powers, including the authority to tax, to regulate both interstate and intrastate commerce, and to veto state laws at will. Madison thought that the national government should "have powers far beyond those exercised by the British Parliament when the States were part of the British Empire." This expanded national authority would be lodged in a bicameral legislature, with a lower house elected directly by the people, an upper chamber selected by the lower house, and seats in both chambers apportioned on the basis of population. The two legislative houses would select the executive and the courts. Madison believed this process of "successive filtrations" would ensure that a national government rooted in popular sovereignty also would have the capacity to govern in the nation's interests.

**Large versus small states.** Because broad republican principles did not specify precisely how powers

should be separated, checked, and balanced, the Constitutional Convention became a protracted battle between the smaller states' demands for rules protecting their advantages and the larger states' desire for a government effective enough to promote their interests. Madison's scheme, presented as the Virginia Plan at the start of the Convention, posed a serious threat to the interests of smaller states. Delegates from these states had supported a few specific additions to national power, such as the regulation of interstate commerce. But these delegates viewed the equality of state representation in the Continental Congress as a compensation for their economic disadvantages relative to better-endowed, more populous neighbors. Large states would gain power if legislative representation were apportioned by size of population. The small states' alternative plan, the New Jersey Plan, proposed a limited set of added national powers, vested authority in the existing Continental Congress (thus protecting their equal weight in policymaking), and added a national executive and judiciary.

The battles between these interests shaped the Convention's decisions from start to finish. A balance of power was struck between the House of Representatives, based on representation proportioned to population, and the Senate, based on equal state representation. The executive was chosen by an electoral college invented to separate presidential selection from Congress and to give the smaller states some additional weight in choosing the executive. Slavery complicated both debates. The southern states successfully demanded that their slaves be counted for both representation and the election of the president. Indeed, during one crucial debate James Madison argued that the real difference between the states was not their size, but between the states where slavery was the basis of the economy and those where it was not. Judges and administrators would be chosen by the president with the Senate's consent.

**Division of powers.** In defiance of the conventional wisdom among legal authorities such as Sir William Blackstone, sovereignty was divided and parceled out to both the national and state governments. The Constitution enumerated national powers, left substantial policy authority to the states, and placed the burden of proof on advocates of future extensions of national authority. The national government would exercise the powers of a sovereign nation, such as war, diplomacy, coinage, and regulation of international trade. The states would continue to do most of the governing of everyday life in America, such as the regulation of capital, land, and labor, including

slave labor. The Constitution left ambiguous the boundaries between state and national power and between the powers of the national policymaking institutions.

#### THE CONSTITUTION'S CONSEQUENCES

No other country had deliberately put its governmental contract in writing, and no other had sought to establish the legitimacy of its fundamental law through special, temporary ratifying conventions. Disarmingly styling themselves "Federalists," Madison, Hamilton and other proponents of the Constitution endeavored to persuade citizens that the proposed government was logical and coherent. "Anti-Federalist" opponents asked whether government in such a vast area as the United States could remain republican and also questioned the proposed powers of the national government, as well as specific institutional arrangements. Immediately after a sufficient number of states approved the plan in 1788, the unifying power of the Constitution and popular ratification became apparent. In spite of intense conflicts over its ratification, nearly all the Constitution's opponents quickly acquiesced when the new national government started up in the spring of 1789. The Constitution became the most fundamental source of public authority in the United States. It also structured the most important battlefields of American politics.

Much of the subsequent history of the government of the early American Republic involved struggles to bring the Constitution to life and to define its ambiguous boundaries. True to his word, Madison, as floor leader in the first House of Representatives, successfully led the fight for a set of constitutional amendments establishing a bill of rights. President George Washington's steady leadership and Treasury Secretary Hamilton's ambitions for an active national economic policy established the independent vigor of the executive branch. Hamilton's program, in turn, animated alliances of officeholders across the nation. One aligned with Hamilton and became the Federalist Party, and another, led by Madison and Thomas Jefferson in opposition to Hamilton, became the Democratic Republican Party. The peaceful transition of power to Jefferson after the bitter presidential election of 1800 proved the new government's durability.

From 1801 until Andrew Jackson's presidential inaugural in 1829, these Democratic Republicans dominated the development of American government. Rather than alter the Constitution fundamentally, political leaders experimented with institution-

al powers and boundaries. President Jefferson actively directed Congress, but it grew more independent under Presidents Madison, James Monroe, and John Quincy Adams. Under the strong leadership of Speaker Henry Clay from 1811 to 1825, the House of Representatives developed twenty permanent committees and more actively investigated executive branch activities. Jefferson's electoral triumph in 1800 helped push the Federalist chief justice of the Supreme Court, John Marshall, to assert its power of judicial review, strengthening its ability to check and channel other parts of government. In this period, national expenditures grew, the national military was reorganized, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers became important in civil and military construction, and post offices grew exponentially. But presidents refused to commit the national government to a broad national program of internal improvements. This task, like most other tasks of internal governance, fell to state and local governments. Many of them extended suffrage. State and local taxation, regulation, and economic development continued to expand. State projects like New York's Erie Canal (1825) set the pace for the development of public infrastructure.

The American revolution in government set new precedents for the construction of governments and of politics. It established the model of a written constitution ratified indirectly by popular approval. As implemented, it established formally separated national powers, judicial review, and a form of federalism in which states and the national government shared sovereignty. It profoundly shaped American politics by creating new arenas for political combat and making the Constitution the foundation for legitimizing political positions. Its ambiguities displaced many substantive conflicts into battles over the definition of institutional powers. In the case of slavery, the struggle to resolve ambiguities about government put America on the path to civil war.

*See also* **Annapolis Convention; Anti-Federalists; Articles of Confederation; Constitution, Ratification of; Constitutional Convention; Constitutionalism; Democratic Republicans; Federalist Party; Hamilton's Economic Plan; Judicial Review; Madison, James; Shays's Rebellion.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Finer, S. E. *The History of Government from the Earliest Times*. Volume 3: *Empires, Monarchies, and the Modern State*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Hamilton, Alexander, James Madison, and John Jay. *The Federalist*. Edited by Jacob E. Cooke. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1961.

Kruman, Marc W. *Between Authority and Liberty: State Constitution Making in Revolutionary America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Novak, William J. *The People's Welfare: Law and Regulation in Nineteenth-Century America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

Rakove, Jack N. *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution*. New York: Knopf, 1996.

Robertson, David Brian. *The Constitution and America's Destiny*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

White, Leonard D. *The Jeffersonians: A Study in Administrative History, 1801–1829*. New York: Macmillan, 1951.

—. *The Federalists: A Study in Administrative History*. New York: Macmillan, 1961.

Whittington, Keith E. *Constitutional Construction: Divided Powers and Constitutional Meaning*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Wood, Gordon S. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969.

David Brian Robertson

#### Local

In a period of tumultuous political developments, the institutions of American local government exhibit surprising continuities across time: first, in the unit of jurisdiction (town or county) dominant in each state; second, in the nature of relations between local governments and the central government of their respective states; and third, in the ongoing role of English law. During the eighteenth century, as a result of the Great Awakening, the French and Indian War, and national independence, local government also experienced considerable change.

#### TOWNS AND COUNTIES

In states that began existence as chartered corporations—Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut—the unit of jurisdiction was the town; in those that began as proprietary colonies—New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware—or were first organized as royal provinces—Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Georgia—it was the county. New states followed a regional pattern: Vermont and Maine, the town; Kentucky, Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, the county; Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, a township-county arrangement that divided offices and services. Likewise early cities: Boston's represen-

tation in the Massachusetts assembly, for instance, was based on its identity as a town, not on its being the county seat of Suffolk County. New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Charleston were counties and represented as such.

In many respects counties performed functions parallel to towns and were everywhere the location of state courts. Still, the distinction was significant. Towns usually chose their own administrative officers, whereas most county officers during this period were appointed by governors and, later, by state legislatures. The town meetings of New England were attended by free male inhabitants of legal age, charged with duties of establishing schools, levying taxes providing for ministers, allotting lands, laying out roads, legislating by-laws setting the height of fences and the price of beer, and electing or appointing an exhaustive list of local officers—selectmen, clerks, overseers, inspectors, keepers, and measurers of every description. Suffrage and officeholder requirements were generally lowest at the local level. In Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Indiana, counties of-

ferred opportunities for participation and employment similar to those of towns.

Although counties, being larger, may have engendered a less parochial citizenry, they were on the whole the more problematic form. Because counties typically characterized less populous regions, county seats were often miles away from already isolated residents. Land policy in the Northwest and Southwest Territories strengthened this difference. In the Northwest, Congress set aside lots for schools that were attached to townships, and schools became a focal point of local public activity. In the Southwest, Congress allotted lands in large tracts, with adjacent counties sharing in them proportionally, with the consequences of slowing both civic and school growth. County lines, laid down centrally and in advance, were slow to keep pace with population, causing disproportionate representation in state legislatures. Indeed, reapportionment was a major issue of contention in all areas of frontier settlement, before and after independence. Without adequate representation, settlers were poorly situated to redress the

corruption that plagued the backcountry or to expand needed services.

#### **RELATIONS BETWEEN LOCAL AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENTS**

In South Carolina, where homesteads were far apart, the connection between local government and the central government of the state barely existed. Most court proceedings took place in Charleston; local justices of the peace were appointed by the governor and enjoyed little authority; tax assessors and collectors were appointed by the assembly. As the need arose, the assembly would appoint temporary commissioners to perform local tasks. After independence, the city of Charleston elected officers to measure wood, monitor fuel sales, and inspect goods for export, but these answered to the assembly, which paid their salary. In North Carolina, Kentucky, and Tennessee, governors appointed county courts of justices of the peace, nominated by the assembly, who in turn appointed most other county officers. In Virginia the balance leaned in favor of local government: although appointed by the governor, local justices enjoyed broad discretion, and court days, with their slave markets and horse races, were a high point of commerce and sociability. In Vermont the storied autonomy of towns was strengthened by short terms for governor and assembly and, until 1808, by moving assembly meetings from town to town. In New York and Pennsylvania, state legislatures themselves mirrored local factions, with members drawn from rival oligarchies and machines. In Massachusetts relations between the towns, jealous of their independence, and central institutions located in Boston were continually strained.

Central authorities, first royal governors and later usually assemblies, appointed most judicial officers—justices of the peace, judges, sheriffs, coroners, constables, as well as heads of the militia and special commissions—sometimes from lists drawn up locally. Because justices of the peace and sheriffs were frequently assigned administrative duties like supervising elections and collecting taxes, central control was also exerted by that route. As the period progressed, election of judicial officers other than judges became more common: sheriffs, for example, were elected in Maryland and New Jersey following independence and in Alabama, Indiana, and Illinois from statehood. Judicial appointment was more significant than it is today. At a time of little bureaucracy, when common law regulated the use of fields, keeping of animals, working hours, fences, fire prevention, family relations, and poor relief, judges were the primary instrument of public administra-

tion as well as ordinary law enforcement. Judicial officers staffed special commissions, conducting inquiries and arriving at policy in the style of petition-and-answer familiar today mainly in litigation.

#### **THE ROLE OF ENGLISH LAW**

The preeminent role of judicial officers invokes the third constant in local government during this period, which is the ongoing role of English law. The organization and responsibilities of towns and counties paralleled their English counterparts. The New England town meeting resembled the meeting of rate-payers in the English parish. The restrictions on sales and gifts of land, the registration of outsiders staying in colonial towns and their indemnification against damages, the regulation of lights-on and the night watch: all reproduced life in English localities. With minor adaptations, English laws or their redaction in colonial and state statutes governed the rights and duties of local officers. For instance, one can read court cases on the reimbursement of expenses to American sheriffs decided according to English precedents of a century earlier. Likewise, all local property transactions were scrutinized for their adherence to common law. The traditional regulations of English militia structured slave patrols in southern states. Another English import was holding more than one office at the same time; prompting charges of corruption, appointing officers often reserved coveted local positions for themselves.

Matters of religion constituted an important departure from English government. A primary reason for founding New England towns was the independent operation of individual churches within the framework of state establishment. In places where Anglicanism was established, county parishes governed by vestrymen and church wardens continued to perform many of the same secular functions as did English parishes, including caring for the sick and indigent, processioning land, and presenting moral offenders to court. The choosing of ministers and vestrymen, however, marked a major difference. In the absence of a North American bishop or other ecclesiastical authority, vestrymen elected by Anglican freeholders chose ministers in South Carolina, and vestrymen appointed by their own predecessors appointed ministers in Virginia. In Maryland, where the majority of offices were originally held by Calverts and other Catholics, vestrymen were chosen by all freeholders and confined to church functions. By 1820, all states but Massachusetts had disestablished churches, and counties took over parishes' public responsibilities—frequently to the detriment of schools, poor relief, and local finance.

**ERAS OF CHANGE**

A critical era of change for local government occurred midway through the eighteenth century, at the time of the Great Awakening, a series of religious revivals that spread through the colonies beginning in the 1730s, and the French and Indian War (1754–1763). These events exerted pressure on existing forms of government at all levels. The Great Awakening spawned religious factionalism wherever it took hold. The war increased insecurity as it heightened British anxieties about its cost. Together they spurred movements of resentment and revolt. Among the most sensational was the Paxton Boys' rebellion in Western Pennsylvania in 1763, starting with an attack on a nearby Indian encampment, proceeding to local resistance against colonial troops, and culminating in an armed march to Philadelphia to demand better representation of outlying settlements. Another was the Regulator movement in western North Carolina, where settlers, largely German Reformed and Presbyterian, organized against taxes and other predations administered by office-holders appointed from the eastern and Anglican parts of the colony. The Regulator movement continued in fits and starts until its defeat by an army of militiamen and the hanging of six of its leaders in 1771, but not before it had joined its grievances with those of other colonials seeking independence.

A second era of change was independence. As state after state wrote new constitutions replacing royal executive power with greatly weakened governors, the importance of localities increased alongside that of their representatives in the assembly. In Georgia, for example, in addition to naming most other state officers, including local sheriffs and constables, the assembly elected the governor. In Connecticut, the governor was given authority to appoint petty notaries and interim turnpike commissioners and little else. With even the upper house (Council) chosen by the assembly from a list of nominees drawn up by town meetings, a measure of central control was imposed by requiring that the meetings be conducted by justices of the peace or constables or persons designated by them. The new states of Ohio, Louisiana, Illinois, and Indiana all established weak governors. Only Mississippi deviated: its first constitution in 1817 limited assembly terms to one year and restricted local choice by requiring that members own three hundred acres of land or one thousand dollars in other real estate.

With independence, state governments were free to modify existing city charters and create new ones. States with counties as their basic political unit were more accommodating to the promotion of cities than

were states with towns. Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Virginia, and South Carolina had granted eleven new charters before New England granted any; of twenty-five charters granted by former colonies in the first dozen years after the Revolution, New England granted only six. Residents of towns, coming to decisions as a body, were well situated to defend the status quo. The Boston meeting defeated some five charter plans before the state constitution was amended to shift authority to the legislature. New York, a tightly regulated corporation since the seventeenth century, faced a different obstacle: a new constitution in 1777 provided a city council of popularly elected aldermen but left the appointment of thousands of city officers—including the mayor, who presided over the aldermen and the principal civil and criminal courts—to a Council of Appointment chosen by the assembly and controlled by the governor. Nevertheless, while Boston lagged, New York City saw a rapid loosening of old restrictions on commerce and other steps toward modernization.

*See also City Growth and Development;*

**Constitutionalism: State Constitution Making; Expansion; French and Indian War, Consequences of; Frontier; Law; State Law and Common Law; Revivals and Revivalism; Town Plans and Promotion.**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Beeman, Richard R. *The Varieties of Political Experience in Eighteenth-Century America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
- Daniels, Bruce C., ed. *Town and County: Essays on the Structure of Local Government in the American Colonies*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1978.
- Howard, George E. *An Introduction to the Local Constitutional History of the United States*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1889.
- Isaac, Rhys. *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740–1790*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Purcell, Richard J. *Connecticut in Transition, 1775–1815*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1963.

Karen Orren

**State**

The states of the United States of America are among the basic political units of the federal system as defined in the Constitution. They perform all of the domestic tasks usually assigned traditional nation-states in other parts of the world. Basic rights are given force of law in state constitutions and legislative form by state assemblies. State governments are

responsible for defining criminal and civil procedures for administering justice and settling disputes among citizens.

As the principal authority of a specific region, state governments fill a primary role in the provisioning and administering of internal improvements, such as roads, waterworks, and schools, either directly or indirectly (through counties and cities), as may be directed by the specific provisions of their respective constitutions. They may also grant articles of incorporation to both public and private enterprises. Their central role in local internal matters developed out of their existence as distinct political entities that predated the ratification of the Constitution in 1789. Their origins extend back to the colonial charters of the original thirteen colonies. Indeed, to properly understand the constitutional relationship of the states to the national government and the reasons for their dominance of local affairs, it is imperative to understand their earlier origins as colonies of the British Empire.

#### **COLONIAL ORIGINS OF THE STATES**

Each colony of British North America had its own distinctive history and motive for settlement. In each case the king recognized a legal existence through the granting of special articles of incorporation to either a company of men or a single proprietor. These articles of incorporation were called charters.

The earliest American colonial projects developed for many reasons, but from the perspective of the crown they were principally of a business nature. Even the Massachusetts Bay Company was to develop land and seek out commercially viable products for trade, though the merchants who formed the company were seeking religious freedom for their Puritan coreligionists. The Virginia Company was entirely commercial, focusing on the prospects for gold and mercantile development. In both cases, what began as an essentially private concern was transformed by the mid-eighteenth century into a public, political entity whose primary purpose was to administer a specific territory. This was typically accomplished through a mixture of representative assemblies, a council of advisors, and a governor appointed either by a proprietor in whose name the colony operated, or directly by the king. In each case the crown retained control of the appointment of governors, requiring proprietors to submit their nominations for approval before commissioning. That said, the legislatures of all the colonies were well developed by the early 1700s and possessed the major portion of influence in local affairs, even setting the salaries

of royal governors and magistrates. By 1750 friction between America and England would erupt along these very lines, setting royal governors against colonial assemblies.

#### **FROM COLONIES TO STATES**

Until the end of the Seven Years' War (or what was called in America the French and Indian War [1756–1763]), the colonies had been left largely to themselves. It was in this period that the colonies developed the habit of self-government, conducting most matters of a domestic nature on the basis of their own taxing powers, their own rules of local representation, and their own systems of adjudication. With the defeat of the French in North America in 1760, however, England turned its attention to its American possessions and, needing resources to extend its imperial objectives, looked to the colonies for those resources.

Opposition to various British measures designed to tax Americans formed in each colony and eventually galvanized into a unified opposition, setting the stage for the formation of what became the United States of America. Americans based their opposition on a very particular understanding of their constitutional relationship to the English king and Parliament. Like England, each colony had its own distinct representative institutions. These assemblies, according to the American Whig understanding, were in the same relation to the king as was Parliament. Their governors were still appointed or approved by him, and there was precedent for the king making direct requests to colonial legislatures for funds. Thus Richard Bland, a prominent member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, pointed out that when Charles II had sought to establish a permanent revenue "for the support of the Government in Virginia, the King did not apply to the English Parliament, but to the General Assembly [of that colony]." From this perspective, the executive of the empire was responsible to each legislature within the imperial domain, but no particular legislature could legislate for the others. Indeed, if one were to try, Thomas Jefferson contended, the king would be obliged to use his veto to oppose such a measure: "Let no act be passed by any one legislature which may infringe on the rights and liberties of another."

According to Americans, the rights of Englishmen included the right to be represented in a legislature capable of representing their interests. For Englishmen, however, the king had to remain under the strict control of Parliament; by this time even the monarchy would not broach the idea of an indepen-

dent royal jurisdiction in the colonies. By 1774 the conflict with America had become violent, and by 1776, reconciliation was unworkable. Having been commissioned the previous month to prepare a statement declaring the reasons for independence, Jefferson's Declaration of Independence was accepted with moderate revisions by Congress on 4 July 1776.

Prior to the congressional vote for independence, each state had issued its own formal instructions to delegates, which amounted to separate and distinct declarations of each colony. Congress's Declaration recognized something of the grievances of each and was thus a recognition of the united character of their opposition, but also the separate and distinct corporate existences of what were now explicitly called "states."

#### **FROM CONFEDERATION TO FEDERATION**

In their opposition, the colonies put into practice the theory they had used to describe the constitution of the empire. Internal affairs were governed by each colony separately, but external defense was to be co-ordinated from the Confederation Congress in command of the Continental Army. The relationship was formalized in the Articles of Confederation ratified on 1 March 1781.

The Articles empowered Congress to deal with foreign nations, make war and peace, negotiate disputes arising among the states, maintain an army and a navy, and regulate post offices and mail delivery across the United States. These were not inconsiderable powers, but they were made difficult to implement properly because of Congress's inability to raise an independent source of revenue.

Just as the colonies had distrusted the distant authority of Parliament to raise taxes from them, so they remained leery of even Congress's authority to collect excises and tariffs. Consequently the Articles required the unanimous support of all the states to pass legislation for levying a tax, and this proved ultimately unworkable. It was also clear that something had to be done about the power of the states to impede trade across their borders.

In a few instances states were engaging in their own foreign relations, imposing tariffs on the productions of other states, and interfering with the powers that supposedly had been delegated to Congress. Issues of paper money finance were also a major concern. Each colony had issued its own currency that competed with the continental issues, and although these did fare better because of the states' taxing powers, it was clear that some states were less

responsible in the discharge of their debts than others. As paper money depreciated in value over the course of the Revolution, contracts of all sorts, public and private, were imperiled. To address these concerns, a special Constitutional Convention was called by certain congressional leaders to meet in Philadelphia to propose revisions of the Articles that would provide the national government with effective powers to enforce its constitutionally delegated powers. The convention was composed of representatives appointed by the states and began business in May 1787. It did not complete its task until September. The result was far more than a revision—it was in fact an entirely new government.

During the Constitutional Convention, issues of how the state governments would be represented in Congress quickly came to the fore of political debate. Two plans were presented: The Virginia Plan called for a more centralized power, with the ability to override state laws and a legislature based on proportional popular representation. The New Jersey Plan gave Congress certain powers of taxation, but representation was to be equal among the states. In the end a compromise was reached whereby the larger and smaller states agreed to equal representation in the upper house, or Senate, and popular proportional representation in the lower house, or House of Representatives.

Other provisions were passed to define the powers of the legislative branch (Senate and House), the executive branch (the presidency), and the judicial branch (the Supreme Court). The end result was a government of limited delegated authority, with powers assigned to the national government for matters of foreign relations and relations among the states, and other powers being retained by the states or the people of the states. Those powers were considerable.

#### **STATE POWERS RETAINED**

**Religion.** Before the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment, in 1868, the First Amendment to the Constitution, only prohibited Congress from passing laws respecting the establishment of religious institutions and practices. Although most states recognized the freedom of worship and belief, many still retained some official relations with particular faiths. In Massachusetts, for example, the state imposed a tax on all residents for the support of the Congregational Church until 1811, unless one could show membership in some other incorporated religious body. New Hampshire would require public support of some religious institutions until after the Civil

War. Other states, such as Pennsylvania and Tennessee, required a belief in one God and a future state of rewards and punishments to qualify for office. Tennessee, and a few other states also prohibited members of the clergy from holding public office. Maryland pronounced atheists ineligible to serve on juries. Virginia, on the other hand, in a law written by Jefferson and guided through the legislature by Madison, secured a more thorough separation of church and state government through the passage of the Bill for Religious Freedom in 1786, well before the creation of the federal constitution. New York's first constitution created a complete separation of church and state, and full religious freedom for its citizens. However, the document also required that all aliens renounce allegiance to any foreign "potentates," a provision that seemed to discriminate against Catholics. There is no indication, however, that this provision was ever enforced.

**Suffrage and office holding.** States were also possessed of wide powers to regulate the right to vote and office holding. About half of the original states, as well as Vermont and Tennessee, allowed free blacks to vote on the same basis as whites. After 1800, however, no new state except Maine granted blacks suffrage until the Civil War era. After 1821 blacks in New York had to meet property requirement to vote that was no longer applied to whites. By 1830 blacks had completely lost the right to vote in New Jersey and Maryland. In the next decade, Jacksonian democracy would lead to black disfranchisement in Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and North Carolina. New Jersey allowed women to vote in its first constitution, but eliminated this right before 1812. Most of the states initially has some property requirements for voting, but by 1830 almost none did.

The states also had different requirements for office holding. Many of the states required officeholders to possess a set amount of property, and some, like New York, had a sliding scale, with members of lower house of the state legislature required to own less property than state senators or the governor. Eleven of the first thirteen states had some form of religious test for office holding. The New England states limited the privilege to Protestants, while the middle and southern states limited it to Christians. Delaware, in a unique provision, allowed only Trinitarians to hold public office. Most states abandoned these restrictions in the early part of the nineteenth century, although North Carolina and Maryland retained them into the 1820s.

The states experimented with different rules for office holding and different terms of office. Some preferred annual elections to the state legislature, while others had two year terms for the lower house and much longer terms for the state senates. Some governors had a veto power, others did not. While the founding generation tended to believe in rotation in office, most state constitutions did not have term limits.

**Education.** State governments also retained the power to legislate for the provision of basic public goods. Education was often assigned to localities—to cities and counties. A public school system was especially well developed in the New England states. New York City experienced considerable controversy during the 1840s over the integration of Catholic and Protestant students, and in 1842 the New York State Legislature took control away from the private Protestant Public Schools Society and established a Board of Education to govern the city's common schools.

**Internal improvements.** Roads and canals for the improvement of farming and commerce were a major focus of state governments. Although many were in fact built by private businesses, state funding was not uncommon; between 1817 and 1844 some four thousand miles of canals were constructed. Among the most notable was that undertaken by New York, the Erie Canal project under the direction of DeWitt Clinton in the 1820s.

**Direct taxation.** To go along with such internal projects, and for the funding of basic government expenditures, states possessed (and still retain) broad powers of direct taxation (e.g., property and income taxes). These could vary in form from state to state, but the chief tax was a property tax. Those who assessed the tax were appointed by local communities under general laws of the state.

**Incorporation.** Somewhat more controversial was the power to incorporate businesses. Articles of incorporation usually provided specific protection or limited liability to the owners of corporate shares in a particular enterprise. This was to encourage the development or performance of a specific area of business. Among the most controversial were banks. From 1791 to 1816 the total number of such institutions grew from 6 to 246. Each state regulated its banking system in its own way. Some prohibited branch banking, believing that capital should remain for local uses. Often banks were required to invest a certain portion in state or municipal bonds, and still others established various forms of insured deposits. By the 1840s a number of states had accepted the

idea of a "general law of incorporation," allowing fairly easy entry into the business of banking. Although the charge of wildcat banking was overblown, some institutions were run on very shaky foundations, especially in remote areas where branches were prohibited and banknotes were difficult to redeem.

#### TENSIONS OF A PARTLY NATIONAL AND PARTLY FEDERAL SYSTEM

Such sizable powers were in fact merely a continuation of the basic idea that differing communities ought to be allowed to govern themselves according to their own lights. Representation of the people was a principle of the Revolution, but the people were not the same from state to state. Rather than surrendering all authority to a single unified government, Americans chose to retain the most immediate powers of private and public regulation closer to home.

So where was the balance of power between the states and the national government? Was the United States primarily of a national or a federal character?

A national government derives its powers directly from the sovereignty of the whole people. A federal government takes its authority from the corporate powers of the states. As Madison famously observed in essay number 39 of the *Federalist Papers*, a series published in New York collaboratively with John Jay and Alexander Hamilton between 1787 and 1788, the new government was "a composite of both." This ambiguity was partly intentional and partly not. To some degree the authors of the Constitution wanted the state governments and the national government to check each other to ensure that neither would overstep their "constitutional" bounds. What was perhaps unintentional was the ambiguity that would become apparent when trying to interpret the document. Was the Constitution a compact among the peoples of the states, or was it fundamentally based on the people as a whole? Could the states secede if they believed the compact had been violated, or would the supremacy clause of the Constitution uphold all federal laws in all circumstances? And who would decide such questions? The federal judiciary? Each separate branch of the federal government? The states themselves?

The issue of slavery was mostly left to the states in the early national period. Some states, including Massachusetts, Vermont, and Ohio, prohibited slavery in their first Constitutions. Other Northern states tried to balance claims of liberty against claims of property, by the adoption of gradual emancipation laws and by encouraging private manumission. By

1830 slavery had all but disappeared in the North, where fewer than 3,000 slaves, mostly in New Jersey, could be found. Southern states did not take any steps to end slavery in the revolutionary period, but most allowed private manumission in the years immediately following the War. Support for such laws waned after 1800 and by 1830 Southern states were far more concerned with suppressing slave rebellions and controlling their free black population, than with ending human bondage in their midst.

Slavery also raised political issues at the national level, which impacted on state governments. The Northwest Ordinance (1787) prohibited slavery in the territories north of the Ohio river, but implied slavery would be permitted south of the river. Congress under the new constitution subsequently allowed slavery in those territories and after the purchase of Louisiana in 1803, did nothing to discourage slavery in the West. As the morality of slavery came into question in the North, Southern leaders began to aggressively defend the institution. This came to a head in 1819 when Missouri sought to enter the Union as a slave state. Northerners had never opposed the admission of a slave state before, but Missouri was north of the Ohio River, and northerners argued it should be free under the Northwest Ordinance. Southerners insisted that the people of Missouri should decide the issue for themselves. Two years of stalemate finally led to the Missouri Compromise in 1820, which brought Missouri in as a slave state and broke Maine off from Massachusetts to create a new free state. Under the Compromise Congress banned slavery in the territories north and west of Missouri. This Compromise delayed a cataclysmic crisis over slavery in the territories, but did not solve the problem.

For states the Missouri debates raised the issue of whether Congress could set preconditions for admission to the Union and enforce those conditions after statehood. Some northerners had wanted Missouri to guarantee the rights of free blacks in the state or adopted a gradual emancipation program before entering the Union. Most political leaders agreed, however, that once a state entered the Union it could not be bound by any preconditions set by Congress. This issue emerged in Illinois between 1822 and 1823 when proslavery forces tried to amend the state constitution to allow slavery. The proposal for a state convention failed, and thus there was no opportunity to consider whether the Northwest Ordinance, or any other federal law for the governance of a territory could limit the actions of a state after it entered the Union. But, the issue remained hovering over the de-

bates over new states in the next three decades. The issues over slavery would eventually be resolved by the Civil War, the Emancipation Proclamation (1863), and the Thirteenth Amendment (1865).

The controversies over secession and slavery would compel yet another examination into the tremendous local powers of states to define the rights of citizens. How much difference could be tolerated between states on basic questions of right and wrong within the same federal union? By the time of the conclusion of the Civil War, it would become obvious to some national leaders that a further revision of what states could do with respect to the deprivation of civil rights was in order. It was that sentiment that formed the basis for the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution.

That said, the states continue as the primary corporate entity for the resolution of domestic matters in law, both civil and criminal. They are also the primary distributor of funds, whether raised within their own jurisdictions or from Congress, and are the primary arena in which individual rights to life, liberty, and property are given legal form. Each state, having its own written constitution of specified and separate powers, was thought to afford Americans a double security for the rule of law both nationally and domestically—both at the federal and state levels.

*See also Antislavery; Articles of Confederation; Banking System; Congress; Constitution, Ratification of; Constitutional Convention; Constitutionalism: State Constitution Making; Currency and Coinage; Declaration of Independence; Education: Public Education; Erie Canal; Federalist Papers; French and Indian War, Consequences of; Internal Improvements; Jefferson, Thomas; Madison, James; Missouri Compromise; Slavery: Overview; Tariff Politics; Taxation, Public Finance, and Public Debt; Transportation: Canals and Waterways; Transportation: Roads and Turnpikes.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, Willi Paul. *The First American Constitutions: Republican Ideology and the Making of State Constitutions in the Revolutionary Era*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980.
- Banning, Lance. *The Sacred Fire of Liberty: James Madison and the Founding of the Federal Republic*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995.
- Border, Morton. *Jews, Turks, and Infidels*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984.

Bryce, James. *The American Commonwealth*. Vol. 1: *The National Government; The State Governments*. Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Fund, 1995.

Greene, Jack P. *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development in the Extended Polities of the British Empire and the United States, 1607–1788*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986.

Greene, Jack P., ed. *Colonies to Nation, 1763–1789: A Documentary History of the American Revolution*. New York: Norton, 1975.

Klebaner, Benjamin J. *Commercial Banking in the United States: A History*. Hinsdale, Ill.: Dryden Press, 1974.

Kruman, Marc W. *Between Authority and Liberty: State Constitution Making in Revolutionary America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Lutz, Donald S., ed. *Colonial Origins of the American Constitution: A Documentary History*. Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Fund, 1998.

Niven, John. *John C. Calhoun and the Price of Union: A Biography*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988.

Onuf, Peter S. *The Origins of the Federal Republic: Jurisdictional Controversies in the United States, 1775–1787*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983.

Schweikart, Larry. *The Entrepreneurial Adventure: A History of Business in the United States*. Fort Worth, Tex.: Harcourt College Publishers, 2000.

Hans Eicholz  
Paul Finkelman

#### Territories

Contention surrounding the ownership, organization, and administration of the territories west of the Appalachian Mountains plagued the United States from its very inception. Relying upon ill-defined colonial charters granting title to lands extending to the "western sea," many of the Atlantic seaboard states lay claim to vast tracts of western land; claims (many of which overlapped) that they sought to preserve in the nation's first instrument of government—the Articles of Confederation—drafted in 1777. A handful of eastern states, lacking western claims, argued that trans-Appalachian lands should be pooled into a national domain and placed under the direct control of the Congress. This disagreement, among others, delayed ratification of the Articles until 1781, at which time the states with western land claims, Virginia foremost among them, proposed to cede their claims to the Confederation Congress. The Treaty of Paris (1783), which brought the Revolutionary War to a close, firmly established the American claim to the western territory when Britain ceded all of the land between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River, north from Spanish Florida and Louisiana to the Great Lakes.

In order to pave the way for the sale of the land and its distribution to Revolutionary War veterans, the United States entered into negotiations with the six Iroquois nations regarding their claims in the West. The resulting Treaty of Fort Stanwix (1784) surrendered lands in western Pennsylvania and Ohio. Similar negotiations with western tribes led to more cessions in the region through the Treaty of Fort McIntosh (1785). Many Ohio country tribes, however, rejected the treaties and resisted the tide of settlers that soon flooded the region. The military suppression of the northwestern tribes would drag on until the end of the War of 1812.

#### **NORTHWEST TERRITORY**

In 1784 Virginia formally ceded its lands to the north and west of the Ohio River to the national government, retaining its claim to lands south of the river. The Confederation Congress quickly moved to bring order to the region, passing a series of ordinances in 1784, 1785, and 1787. The Ordinance of 1785 established an orderly and systematic pattern of land survey (based on rectilinear units) and sale that served as the foundation for American public land policy until the Homestead Act of 1862. Of equal consequence was the Ordinance of 1787, which created the nation's first organized territory, the Northwest Territory, encompassing more than 260,000 square miles of land west of Pennsylvania (which was given control over the headwaters of the Ohio River) and north and northwest of the Ohio River.

Among the ordinance's most important features were its guarantees of civil rights and basic freedoms for the region's settlers, its prohibition against slavery and involuntary servitude, and its encouragement of public education. The ordinance further provided that no fewer than three, or more than five, states would be carved out of the territory and that the states would be admitted "to a share in the federal councils on an equal footing with the original states." Additionally, it created a framework for territorial governance and outlined the necessary steps for statehood. In their initial stage, the territories were to be administered by a governor (assisted by a number of other officials) and judges (who concomitantly served as a legislative body) appointed by Congress. Once a population of five thousand inhabitants was reached, the settlers would elect a territorial legislature and be entitled to one nonvoting representative in Congress. After the population grew to sixty thousand inhabitants, the legislature was empowered to submit a constitution to Congress for its approval.

The Northwest Territory elected its first territorial legislature in 1798. Two years later, the territory was divided and the Indiana Territory was created, thereby shrinking the Northwest Territory to the present-day state of Ohio. In 1803 the territory ceased to exist when Ohio was admitted to the union. The remainder of the Old Northwest followed a similar path to statehood. Congress truncated the Indiana Territory in 1805, creating the Michigan Territory, which included the Lower Peninsula of Michigan and the eastern end of the Upper Peninsula. In 1809 the Indiana Territory was again divided and the Illinois Territory was created, encompassing present-day Illinois, Wisconsin, parts of Minnesota, and the western Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Indiana became a state in 1816 and Illinois in 1818. The remainder of the Illinois Territory then transferred to Michigan. Michigan would not achieve statehood until 1837, followed by Wisconsin in 1848 and Minnesota in 1858.

#### **THE OLD SOUTHWEST**

This blueprint for territorial organization and governance also served, with some notable modifications—most notably, the absence of a ban on slavery—as the basis for administering and admitting new states in the Old Southwest. In 1790 Congress, operating under the new federal Constitution, created the Territory South of the River Ohio (the Southwest Territory) out of lands ceded by North Carolina. The territory encompassed what became the state of Tennessee but did not include Kentucky, which remained a part of Virginia until 1792, when it entered the union as a state. Tennessee did not linger in the territorial stage for long, gaining statehood in 1796. Two years later, Congress established the Mississippi Territory out of lands previously claimed by South Carolina. The territory was expanded in 1804 to include lands surrendered by Georgia, and again in 1812, extending its boundaries from the Gulf of Mexico to Tennessee and from the western boundary of Georgia to the Mississippi River. In 1817, as the western portion of the territory prepared for statehood, the eastern section, only recently cleared of Indian title through the Treaty of Fort Jackson (1814), was established as the Alabama Territory. As cotton planters flooded onto Alabama's fertile lands, the territory quickly met the requirements for statehood as it entered the Union in 1819.

The acquisition of additional lands by the United States (Louisiana in 1803 and Florida in 1821) added vast new regions to the national domain. Relying upon the precedent for territorial organization al-

ready in place, the federal government moved quickly to establish administrative control over its new possessions. Louisiana was organized into two territories, the Territory of Orleans south of the thirty-third parallel and the Territory of Louisiana to the north. When the southern portion achieved statehood in 1812, assuming the name Louisiana, the northern territory was renamed Missouri. In 1819, in anticipation of Missouri's entrance into the Union two years later, the territory was again divided and the Arkansas Territory established. Florida's territorial stage lasted from 1822 until 1845.

*See also American Indians: American Indian Relations, 1763–1815; American Indians: American Indian Removal; Arkansas; Creek War; Illinois; Indiana; Louisiana; Michigan; Mississippi; Missouri; Northwest; Northwest and Southwest Ordinances; Ohio; Wisconsin Territory.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Hurt, R. Douglas. *The Ohio Frontier: Crucible of the Old Northwest, 1720–1830*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998.
- Onuf, Peter S. "Liberty, Development, and Union: Visions of the West in the 1780s." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 43 (1986): 179–213.
- . *Statehood and Union: A History of the Northwest Ordinance*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987.
- Rohrbough, Malcolm J. *The Trans-Appalachian Frontier: People, Societies, and Institutions, 1775–1850*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.

Martin J. Herschok

---

**GOVERNMENT AND THE ECONOMY** During the early Republic, both the federal and state governments played a large role in structuring the American economy. Following independence, the United States struggled to replace the British mercantilist system of closed markets, bounties, and limited development with a framework that emphasized economic growth and yet insured stability as well. Paramount to this goal was a preservation of individual liberty and property. Policymakers in the early Republic thus struggled to devise government institutions that would allow entrepreneurial activity to flourish while insuring that republican virtue still held sway in the Republic.

The period from 1789 to 1815 saw the establishment of many permanent institutions that would

continue to structure the nation's political and economic framework for most of the nineteenth century. There were two competing philosophies as to the proper role of government in economic growth. On the one hand, the Federalists, led by Alexander Hamilton (1755–1804), championed a strong central state and attempted to enact policies that would use the power of the federal government to encourage the development of agriculture, commerce, and manufacturing. An oppositional ideology, espoused by Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) and the Democratic Republicans, emphasized the role of government in the economy no less than the Federalists but stressed the participation of state, not federal, officials in growth. Republicans also tended to look westward into the interior of North America for the nation's future economic growth, whereas Federalists highlighted the commercial potential of the Atlantic world. Despite these contradictory tendencies, both parties influenced the shape and character of the federal government's role in the economy for years to come.

#### CREATING A NATIONAL ECONOMY

The Federalist–Republican debates had their origins in the earliest years of the United States. One of the biggest drawbacks of the Articles of Confederation was its creation of a decentralized economy in the United States. From 1781 to 1789 states had the power to set duties against the imports of other states, coin their own currency, set their own bankruptcy laws, and levy taxes all by themselves. The Constitution of 1787 remedied this problem by shifting the authority to regulate interstate commerce, protect patents and copyrights, set tariff rates, establish bankruptcy policy, coin currency and set monetary policy, and establish postal services to the new federal Congress. The Constitution was intentionally vague on the issue of slavery, but a compromise struck during the Constitutional Convention insured that the flow of slaves from Africa and the West Indies would remain unimpeded until 1808. The first few sessions of Congress, therefore, established many of the hallmarks of American political economy, for better and for worse. The Tariff Act of 1789, for example, passed easily and immediately established federal duties on certain goods, which would serve as the main revenue-raising device for the federal government for much of the nineteenth century. An excise tax on whiskey, on the other hand, provoked farmers in western Pennsylvania to rebellion in 1794. Regardless of the reception, the Constitution put federal authorities in charge of the basic foundations of the

American economy and established the parameters of a national market.

As the first treasurer of the United States, Alexander Hamilton made a significant imprint upon the political economy of the early Republic, and particularly in establishing an activist role for the new federal government in promoting growth. In his *Report on the Public Credit* (1790), Hamilton recommended that the new government establish financial stability by assuming all of the outstanding national and state debts from the American Revolution. Rather than discount the value of bonds, paper money, and other government issues, Hamilton recommended that the federal government pay face value for the \$80 million, in debt, which was about 40 percent of the nation's gross national product in 1790. Doing so, he argued, would legitimize the United States not only in the eyes of its internal creditors, but also in international markets. Hamilton and his Federalist followers believed in the power of a centralized federal state to encourage economic growth and promote international trade. The Federalists openly admired Great Britain's emergent industrial economy and hoped that the United States would one day develop a strong manufacturing sector of its own.

With this goal in mind, Secretary Hamilton recommended the creation of a national bank in order to establish a reliable national currency and to mobilize large amounts of capital for development loans. The bank would be chartered by Congress for a specified number of years; would collect, hold, and pay out government receipts; would hold the new federal bonds and oversee their payment; would be empowered by Congress to issue currency; and would be backed by the government bonds. The proponents of the Bank argued that it should be capitalized at \$10 million and that one-fifth of the capital would be provided by the federal government, which would also appoint one-fifth of its directors. Notes of the Bank of the United States would be used for all debts to the United States. The idea was to have the Bank serve the capital needs of both the new federal government and private investors. When the bank opened up for business in July 1791, Americans subscribed about \$8 million in the first hour, thus filling the private requirement. The following year, branches opened up in New York, Boston, Baltimore, and Charleston, and in 1805 there were branches in Norfolk, Washington, Savannah, and New Orleans. The first Bank of the United States thus became a centerpiece institution for the Federalist strategy of using the power of government to promote capital formation in the young nation.

The next phase of Hamilton's vision of American political economy was not, however, realized so successfully by the federal government. In December 1792 Hamilton released his *Report on Manufactures*, in which he advocated federal subsidies for manufactures wherever possible, directly through bounties and indirectly through taxes. Although the Federalists achieved many of their plans for a strong federal government, they were unable to involve it directly in the process of encouraging manufactures. Instead, states assumed the leadership role in encouraging growth in the manufacturing and transportation sectors, mainly through the creation of corporations.

#### THE REPUBLICANS LOOK WEST

A change in federal economic policymaking came with the ascendance of the Republicans, led by Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, to the presidency in 1801. Jefferson and his followers are often misrepresented as promoting a nation of farmers only, but their vision of America's future included a commercial and manufacturing community as well. In order to provide this threefold opportunity, especially as it related to land usage, Republicans favored westward expansion and the development of domestic industries rather than an emphasis upon the Atlantic trade. This vision led to the Louisiana Purchase (1803), in which the United States acquired about 800,000 square miles for \$15 million—roughly 3.5¢ per acre—from France. Jeffersonians also liberalized the sale of federal lands, which had already been established on rather easy terms by the Land Act of 1796. In 1804 they reduced the minimum tract for purchase by individuals to 160 acres, kept the price at about two dollars an acre, and offered a discount for cash purchases.

The Republican tendency to focus on domestic production rather than international trade pushed the federal government into new avenues of economic promotion. For example, Albert Gallatin (1761–1849), Jefferson's secretary of the Treasury, recommended that the federal government oversee the improvement of rivers that would create an inland water navigation from Massachusetts to North Carolina, building roads to cross the Appalachian Mountains and constructing canals that would link the seaboard with inland cities such as Detroit, St. Louis, and New Orleans. He estimated that this network would cost approximately \$16.6 million to build and recommended an additional \$3.4 million for smaller local improvements across the United States. Gallatin's plan never came to fruition, and the federal gov-

ernment played a limited role in transportation policy. Nonetheless, the expansionist land policy continued as the federal government sent a host of surveyors to explore the western territories of the United States and continued to sell public lands on easy terms. In 1820 the minimum price fell to \$1.25 an acre, and in 1832 the minimum tract size was sliced again to forty acres.

#### A LIMITED FEDERAL ROLE

The political tussle between Federalists and Republicans came to a close in 1815, but not before their debate over the proper role of the government in the economy became well engrained within the nation's political culture. The federal government remained active in economic affairs, but its role was always controversial and contested. The financial difficulties during the War of 1812 (1812–1815), for instance, led Congress to charter the Second Bank of the United States in 1816. The Second Bank succeeded in stabilizing the nation's financial system, but long-standing reservations about the concentration of power and wealth resulted in Andrew Jackson's famous campaign to "slay" the "monster Bank" in the 1830s. When New York State officials opened the 250-mile-long Erie Canal in 1825, they demonstrated the important role of government involvement in transportation projects. But throughout the antebellum period it was state governments, not federal officials, who aggressively pursued these types of projects.

*See also* **Bank of the United States; Hamilton, Alexander; Hamilton's Economic Plan; Internal Improvements; Land Policies; Tariff Politics; Taxation, Public Finance, and Public Debt.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ben-Artur, Doron S. *The Origins of Jeffersonian Commercial Policy and Diplomacy*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993.
- Larson, John Lauritz. *Internal Improvement: National Public Works and the Promise of Popular Government in the Early United States*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.
- McCoy, Drew R. *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980.
- Nelson, John R., Jr. *Liberty and Property: Political Economy and Policymaking in the New Nation, 1789–1812*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.
- Nettels, Curtis. *The Emergence of a National Economy, 1775–1815*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1962.

Sean Patrick Adams

---

#### GREAT AWAKENING *See Revivals and Revivalism.*

---

**GUNPOWDER, MUNITIONS, AND WEAPONS (MILITARY)** Firearms have played a significant role in America's history. The story of their evolution chronicles the development of industry and technology. Moreover, firearms were linked to early concepts of national defense. Hence, understanding the importance of firearms is critical to understanding America's civic and industrial beginnings.

#### FIREARMS

Two categories of firearms existed: civilian and military. Civilians kept shotguns, rifles, and pistols at home for hunting, sport, and self-defense. Most of these firearms were made by and purchased from local gunsmiths. Military firearms for national or state defense included muskets, rifles, carbines, and pistols. Unlike privately owned guns, military firearms were often manufactured at government-owned arsenals. In times of demand, however, contracts were given to private businessmen as a way to augment the government's output.

Firearm technology remained the same throughout much of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The standard ignition system was the flintlock. This mechanism, which was fitted to the side of the weapon, contained the hammer and steel (also called a frizzen). The hammer's jaws held a piece of flint; the steel was an L-shaped piece of metal that covered a depression called the pan. A small amount of gunpowder was placed in the pan and then covered by the steel, hinged to allow it to move back and forth. A pull of the trigger released the hammer, causing the flint to strike the upright arm of the steel and push it forward. The contact between the flint and steel produced a spark that ignited the powder in the now-exposed pan. Flame passed through a small hole in the gun's barrel, igniting the main charge that had been forced down the barrel by the ramrod. The system had drawbacks, as flintlock firearms were prone to misfire. In addition, wind, rain, and heavy dew often rendered flintlocks inoperable.

Firearms fell into two categories based on their design and use. Smoothbore weapons had a barrel that was smooth on the inside. These firearms, which were easy to load but lacked range, included muskets, shotguns, and most pistols. Rifles had spi-



**General Pickens's Sword.** This sword, presented to General Andrew Pickens, commander of the South Carolina militia during the American Revolution, carries the inscription ". . . to General Pickens, March 9th, 1781." © WILLIAM A. BAKE/CORBIS.

ral grooves (rifling) cut into the inside of their barrels, a feature that caused the bullet to spin as it left the barrel, imparting greater accuracy and range to the projectile. Although the military adopted a small number of rifled arms for use by soldiers, rifles were mainly used by civilians for hunting prior to 1850. The military preferred the higher rate of fire for the musket (three times a minute for a musket opposed to one time a minute for a rifle) and accepted the shorter range (one hundred yards for a musket opposed to three hundred yards for a rifle). Although

the frontiersmen with their rifles were credited with winning the Battle of New Orleans, in reality the muskets and artillery in the hands of the army saved the day for Andrew Jackson.

**A national militia.** On 8 May 1792, the U.S. Congress created a national militia that mandated gun ownership. The law declared that "each and every free-bodied white male citizens of the respective states, resident therein, who is or shall be of the age of eighteen, and under the age of forty-five years, (except as hereinafter exempted) shall severally, and respectfully, be enrolled in the militia." The law required each member of the militia to arm himself with either "a good musket" or "a good rifle" with the appropriate accouterment and ammunition. The prevailing notion was that the citizens of the Republic should form the nation's true military force. Moreover, a national militia, regulated by the states, would serve as a counterweight to the professional corps, which Congress deliberately kept small for fear of a standing army.

**Firearms manufacture.** The militia law directly stimulated the development of the firearms industry in the early Republic. Congress decreed that within five years of its passage, all muskets should be uniform in design. In 1794 Congress passed an act to facilitate the mandated standardization by establishing government arsenals to manufacture and repair weapons. That year Springfield, Massachusetts, was selected as the site of the nation's first arsenal, primarily because the Connecticut River town was already the location of workshops that had provided weapons during the American Revolution. In 1796 a second arsenal was established at the confluence of two rivers, the Shenandoah and Potomac, at Harpers Ferry, Virginia (later West Virginia). Production was slow at first with only 245 muskets manufactured at Springfield in 1795, but that number steadily rose. By 1810, the arsenal at Harpers Ferry was producing ten thousand muskets a year.

One inventor significantly contributed to the higher arsenal output. Eli Whitney, who is most remembered for his cotton gin, introduced the concepts of interchangeable parts and division of labor into arms manufacturing. Whitney, who received a contract in 1798 to privately manufacture ten thousand muskets, revolutionized the industry by separating production into a series of steps that could be performed by semiskilled labor. The change sped production because workers operated water-powered machines that made identical copies of each part. Interchangeable parts did not need to be hand fitted, saving time as well as eliminating the need for skilled

craftsmen. Although still in its primitive stage, Whitney's system used at his factory near New Haven, Connecticut, soon spread to other arsenals. Moreover, other industries adopted the system, further propelling the industrial revolution.

**Government procurement.** Although Congress created the national militia and decreed the appropriate type of weapons to be used, not until 1808 did it agree to supply states with those arms. Militiamen were expected to provide their own firearms, which Congress exempted from seizure for payment of debt. In the meantime, some states established their own arsenals or purchased firearms from contractors. Congress finally acted in the wake of the *Chesapeake-Leopard* naval encounter of 1807, when it appeared that the United States and Great Britain were headed toward war. The national government agreed to an annual allotment of \$200,000 to purchase arms for the national militia. In reality, the procurement system failed to work as intended for two reasons: (1) the federal government initially lacked adequate resources to meet the need, and (2) individual states routinely failed to send in their annual militia returns indicating how many weapons were required. By 1861, however, hundred of thousands of weapons had been distributed to the states, unintentionally arming the South in its attempt to break up the Union.

#### GUNPOWDER AND AMMUNITION

Firearms were of little use without gunpowder, ball, or shot. Civilians usually separated their bullets and gunpowder, keeping the projectiles in a leather pouch and the powder in a hollowed-out bull's horn or copper flask. Military ammunition, though, required the bullet and gunpowder to be rolled together in a paper wrapper, making it easier for the soldier to handle when loading. For years, hunters and soldiers had painstakingly poured molten lead into hand molds, plierlike devices that contained spherical cavities which formed the liquefied metal into bullets. New technology made hand casting obsolete when water-powered machines were developed that could press the soft metal into hundreds of balls at a time. By mid-century, one man operating a water-driven press could produce thirty thousand bullets in a ten-hour shift. It was also discovered that molten lead formed perfect spheres when poured from a height. Vertical shot towers soon became an efficient way to mass-produce bullets. The lead, which formed different size balls depending on the size of the droplet, landed on a cushion of sawdust. Once collected, the bullets passed through gauges that separated them

by caliber. Arsenal workers rolled and packaged cartridges on an assembly line, meaning that soldiers no longer had to prepare their own ammunition in the field.

Gunpowder production benefited from advances in technology. The basic composition of gunpowder (seventy-five parts saltpeter, fifteen parts charcoal, ten parts sulfur) had not changed since its discovery, but industrialization allowed the propellant to be mass-produced. Production created several side industries: mining for guano (nitrogen-rich bat dung) and sulfur and charcoal manufacturing. Once the ingredients were combined, the mixture formed hard slabs. Broken into pieces by tumbling or rolling, the fragments were passed through screens and sorted by grain size suitable for cannon, musket, rifle, or pistol. Although the national government operated its own powder mills, private mills sprang up to provide for the needs of the nation, both military and civilian. DuPont, the most successful of these private firms, was started in 1802 by the French émigré E. I. du Pont on the Brandywine River at Wilmington, Delaware. Du Pont's success with gunpowder placed his company in position to become a leader in the chemical industry.

The arms industry would see even greater changes by the middle of the nineteenth century. The invention of percussion caps, small brass cups filled with an explosive compound, made the flintlock obsolete. Moreover, inventor Samuel Colt (1814–1862) developed revolving pistols and rifles that allowed the shooter to fire multiple times without reloading. By the 1850s, inventors had found a way to combine the primer, gunpowder, and bullet into a self-contained metal cartridge. Thus, a century that began with single-shot, muzzle-loading firearms saw the rise of repeating rifles and pistols that "won the West."

*See also Arsenals; Firearms (Nonmilitary); Forts and Fortifications.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Callan, John F. *The Military Laws of the United States*. 2nd ed. Philadelphia: George W. Childs, 1863.
- Russell, Carl P. *Guns on the Early Frontiers: A History of Firearms from Colonial Times through the Years of the Western Fur Trade*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957.
- Scott, Henry. *Military Dictionary*. New York: Van Nostrand, 1864.

U.S. War Department. *Ordnance Manual for the Use of Officers  
of the United States Army*, 1841. Washington, D.C.: J.  
and G. S. Gideon, 1841.

*Richard Bruce Winders*



---

**HAITIAN REVOLUTION** Throughout the eighteenth century, the French island of Saint Domingue (the early name of Haiti) and the British North American colonies were tied together by trade. Although illegal until the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), and limited to only a few ports after that, exchanges between North American merchants and the planters of the thriving French colony were constant and lucrative: the by-products of sugar, particularly molasses, were traded for provisions desperately needed in the colony. There were other connections as well. During the American Revolution, a unit of soldiers of African descent recruited in Saint Domingue participated in the French mission to assist the rebels at Savannah. The victory against Britain in North America inspired some planters in Saint Domingue who dreamed of increased autonomy and who used the political opening of the French Revolution to clamor for it.

Between 1789 and 1791, planters and free people of color seeking an end to racist legislation and access to political rights pushed for reform from Paris and increasingly battled one another in the colony. Then, in August of 1791 a massive slave insurrection began in the northern plain of the colony. It became the largest and most successful slave revolt in history, leading to the abolition of slavery in the colony

in 1793, a decision ratified and extended to the entire French empire in 1794. The uprising sent waves of fear through the communities of slave owners of the United States, as well as inspiring some among the enslaved. North Americans could read regularly in newspapers of events in the Caribbean colony, and many came face to face with the impact of slave revolution as waves of refugees—the largest of them in late 1791 and in mid-1793—came into North American port towns such as Philadelphia and Charleston. Among these refugees were not only white planters and slaves but also free people of color. Many members of this latter group settled in Louisiana in the early nineteenth century, after being expelled from Cuba. They had a major impact on the demography and political culture of the region for generations.

Saint Domingue's slave revolution posed delicate problems for the leadership of the United States. After 1794 France pursued a policy of revolutionary emancipationism, using abolition as a weapon of war against the British, recruiting armies of former slaves, and encouraging uprisings in enemy colonies. France also outfitted and rewarded privateers in the Caribbean. Their crews were often populated with former slaves, and they regularly captured North American ships. French privateering led to a break in U.S.-French relations in the late 1790s. At the same time, however, the chaotic situation in the French

Caribbean provided an attractive opening for North American traders, who built on and expanded their long-standing links with the colony during the revolutionary years, profiting handsomely.

By the late 1790s Saint Domingue was under the control of General Toussaint-Louverture (c.1743–1803). Wary of the conservative direction of metropolitan French politics, which he rightly believed represented a threat to the policy of emancipation, Louverture adroitly cultivated alliances with both the British and North American governments. For the United States under the administration of John Adams, the link with Louverture represented an ongoing economic opportunity and a way to strike at the French. The consul Edward Stevens was sent to work with Louverture, and in 1799 the U.S. Navy supported him in his war against André Rigaud, who controlled the southern portion of the colony. Concerns about the possible “contagion” of the revolution in Saint Domingue to slaves in North America were superseded by the political and economic advantages of working with Louverture.

North American policies toward the revolution in Saint Domingue shifted dramatically with the election of Thomas Jefferson in 1800. Although trading continued—the French blamed the United States for supplying Louverture with his guns and ammunition—there was growing hostility to the regime in Saint Domingue, and the easing of relations with the French reduced the political value of an alliance with Louverture’s regime. Jefferson approved of the French attempt, in 1802, to wrest control of the colony from Louverture and his followers. He was right that the French mission would be to the advantage of the United States, though not for the reasons he expected. The decimation and ultimate defeat of the French mission at the hands of the former slave Jean-Jacques Dessalines in late 1802 and 1803 was the cause of Napoleon Bonaparte’s decision to sell Louisiana to the United States. The reconstruction of Saint Domingue had been the centerpiece of Bonaparte’s plans for the Americas, and once he lost the island colony, Louisiana became irrelevant to him.

Even as the purchase of Louisiana allowed for the expansion of slavery in the United States, the example of the Haitian Revolution resonated through the uprisings of Gabriel and, later, Denmark Vesey. But Haiti’s independence, declared 1 January 1804, went unacknowledged by the United States until the intervention of Senator Charles Sumner in 1862.

*See also* **Gabriel’s Rebellion; Slavery: Slave Insurrections; Vesey Rebellion.**

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Dubois, Laurent. *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Egerton, Douglas. “The Empire of Liberty Reconsidered.” In *The Revolution of 1800: Democracy, Race, and the New Republic*. Edited by James Horn, Jan Ellen Lewis, and Peter S. Onuf. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002.
- Geggus, David P., ed. *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001.

Laurent Dubois

---

**HAMILTON, ALEXANDER** Alexander Hamilton (1755?/57?–1804) was born on the West Indian island of Nevis and moved to St. Croix with his mother and older brother, James, in 1765. Poverty-stricken and illegitimate, he was sent to North America for an education through charitable contributions from a small group of supporters. After hasty preparatory work at an academy, Hamilton enrolled at King’s College (later Columbia University) in New York City and rapidly became involved in America’s burgeoning war with Britain, first as a pamphleteer and then as captain of an artillery company.

Leaving college without a degree in 1776, he led his company into action in New York and New Jersey, coming to the attention of General George Washington, who appointed him an aide-de-camp in 1777. Although desperate to earn glory on the battlefield, he served most of the war by Washington’s side, drafting letters, assisting in administrative duties, and acting as an emissary; his frustration with the powerlessness and inefficiency of the wartime Continental Congress spurred the centralizing focus of his later policies. Marrying Elizabeth Schuyler, the daughter of the wealthy New York landowner Philip Schuyler, in December 1780, he left Washington’s service a few months later, the result of a spat born of Hamilton’s impatience with his desk job and Washington’s frayed nerves. Washington finally granted him a field command storming a redoubt at Yorktown in 1781. Retiring from active service after the British surrender, he dedicated himself to developing a law practice in New York City.

Throughout this time, Hamilton gave much thought to the failures and flaws of the Articles of Confederation, devising detailed plans for reforming American government and finance. He was soon at the forefront of efforts to revise the Articles, and his

ardent nationalism was a driving force behind the calling of the Federal Convention of 1787. Outvoted by the other two New York delegates to the Convention—both opposed to the emerging Constitution—Hamilton forged ahead afterward, investing his full energies in New York's ratification debates. As part of this effort, he planned a series of newspaper essays in defense of the proposed Constitution, inviting James Madison and John Jay to join him. The resulting *Federalist* essays appeared in various New York newspapers from October 1787 to August 1788. Hamilton authored approximately fifty-one of the eighty-five essays.

With the launching of the new government in 1789, President Washington invited Hamilton to be the nation's first secretary of the Treasury; he was confirmed in the position on 11 September 1789. Here, Hamilton's dedication to fostering an energetic national government came to fruition. Given the enormous task of bringing order to the nation's disordered finances, he forged a national financial infrastructure through a combination of administrative organization and bold policies. His three-pronged financial program proposed the national assumption of state war debts, the creation of a National Bank, and national support of manufacturing; he also encouraged close economic ties with British manufacturers and trade. Amidst a population fearful of slipping back into despotism, Hamilton's policies provoked enormous controversy, ultimately contributing to the rise of national political factions.

Hamilton resigned as secretary of the Treasury in 1795 and returned to his law practice, but he remained at the center of the Federalist cause for several years, privately advising members of President John Adams's cabinet; during the 1798 Quasi-War with France, he ardently advocated building America's armed forces in preparation for war. Adams's peace efforts with France enraged Hamilton for reasons of both policy and personality, driving him to write an injudicious pamphlet attacking Adams's Federalist candidacy for president in 1800 and promoting Federalist Charles Cotesworth Pinckney in his stead. By dividing the Federalists, the pamphlet helped to raise Hamilton's two foremost political enemies—Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr—to executive power and destroyed his political influence.

Hamilton's final years were melancholy. In 1801, shortly before the completion of Hamilton's Upper Manhattan country home, the Grange—the first house that he owned—his family life was ripped apart when the oldest of his eight children, nineteen-year-old Philip, was killed in a duel defending his fa-

ther's name. Three years later, Hamilton opposed Burr's candidacy for governor of New York; after fifteen years of political opposition, Burr responded by challenging Hamilton to a duel. The two men met on the heights of Weehawken, New Jersey, on the morning of 11 July 1804. Mortally wounded, Hamilton died the next day. The nation mourned the passing of an ever-controversial but essential political leader whose policies and vision shaped the character and future of the American nation.

*See also* **Bank of the United States;**  
**Constitution, Ratification of;**  
**Constitutional Convention; Dueling;**  
**Election of 1800; Federalist Papers;**  
**Quasi-War with France.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- McDonald, Forrest. *Alexander Hamilton: A Biography*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1979.  
 Stourzh, Gerald. *Alexander Hamilton and the Idea of Republican Government*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970.  
 Syrett, Harold C. *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*. 27 vols. New York: Columbia University Press, 1961–1987.

Joanne B. Freeman

---

**HAMILTON'S ECONOMIC PLAN** In 1790 and 1791, Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton presented four major reports that dealt with the financial, social, and constitutional future of the United States. Three were public documents, presented to Congress as proposals for policies that Congress might enact. One of the reports was private, written for President George Washington, who was in a quandary about whether to veto one of those proposals. Taken together, the reports sketched out a coherent vision for the new Republic. Hamilton saw them all as continuing the work of establishing a coherent national economy that had begun with the adoption of the Constitution.

#### PAYING THE DEBT

One of his proposals received unqualified assent. This was to pay off at full value the principal and interest of the enormous foreign debt that the United States had built up during its struggle for independence. Hamilton, Washington, the president's other advisers, Congress, and the interested public all understood that any other course would destroy America's financial credibility. His other proposals, however,

provoked great controversy, both at the level of public policy and at the level of what the Constitution permits the government to do. The result was to open a gap among the very men who were responsible for the Constitution, beginning with Hamilton and his former close ally, James Madison. The friendship of those two highly talented thinkers came to an end; Hamilton and Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, never close, became bitter enemies, and political parties started to emerge.

Nobody doubted in 1790 that both the instruments of American finance and the structure of the American economy faced very severe problems. One aspect was the war debt. The old Confederation Congress had possessed absolutely no means to pay off what it owed, either abroad or at home. Federal taxing power under the new Constitution offered a means to solve that problem, but once the issue shifted from debts owed overseas to debts owed at home, grounds for dispute emerged. Some of the domestic debt was owed to the soldiers who had fought the War of Independence. Some was owed to farmers and artisans who had accepted paper in return for their wartime goods and services. Some of the debt was owed not by Congress but by the states. Virtually all of the debt was in the form of badly depreciated paper currency and certificates. Those certificates could be transferred, and many were in the hands of secondary purchasers, who had paid far less than face value to the original owners. Controversy centered on who should gain from the new government's apparent power to raise taxes and pay off what American institutions owed.

Hamilton's view was that the public debt could be a means for the new government to acquire the strength that he believed it should have. Overseas it would gain that strength by paying its debts off in full. Within the United States, he wanted the federal government to assume what remained of the wartime debts that the states had contracted. He wanted the domestic debt to be paid off as close to full value as possible, to whomever held the appropriate paper. Because of Confederation-era agreements about the level of interest, this would be at par rather than in full, so domestic creditors would receive less than their foreign counterparts. Nonetheless, the program of duties on imported goods and excise taxes on domestic products that Hamilton proposed would generate revenue that might well end up very far from the person who had suffered and sacrificed during the war. Hamilton dealt with foreign debt, domestic debt, and assumption of the state debts in his first *Report on Public Credit* of 9 January 1790.

### **CREATING A NATIONAL BANKING SYSTEM**

Hamilton wanted more, having in mind an American future that would resemble the reality of Britain in his own time. He had been instrumental in establishing America's first two banks, in Philadelphia in 1782 and New York in 1784. Though he never visited England, he carefully studied its system of privately held banks under the direction of a private-public Bank of England and proposed that there be a national bank in the United States on the same model, to serve the same goals. He wanted central direction for the financial sector, and he believed that the federal government had the power under the "necessary and proper" clause of the Constitution to create an institution that would bring that direction about. This was the subject of his second *Report on Public Credit*, which actually pre-dated the first report by a month.

Hamilton believed that a system of interconnected banks was necessary. Others, including Madison and Jefferson, regarded the idea with horror, particularly should the federal government become involved. They saw a banking system as a harbinger of the very corruption they thought their America had escaped thanks to the Revolution. Madison led ineffectual opposition in Congress. Jefferson, asked by President Washington for his opinion on signing the bill, objected on constitutional grounds. To his mind, no such power for establishing a bank existed. Hamilton replied with the third of his reports, arguing the case that the "elastic clause" should be broadly rather than narrowly interpreted. He won the battle for Washington's mind. But the dispute over strict and loose construction of the Constitution that he and Jefferson began continues into the twenty-first century.

### **PROMOTING MANUFACTURES**

Hamilton's final proposal did not become law, but it too set the terms of a continuing debate. He wanted to set the United States on a course of industrial development emulating Britain's. He did not submit his *Report on Manufactures* until December 1791. Within it he proposed a comprehensive program of protective taxes, government bounties, and federal public works, all with a view to nourishing the sprouts of industrialism that he could see emerging among the primarily northeastern, commercial-minded, well-off Americans with whom he felt most comfortable. As a program, it looked forward to the state-sponsored attempts at economic development of many late-twentieth-century countries. Historian John Nelson has suggested that Hamilton's ultimate goal was a neocolonial economy, subordinate to

Britain, rather than independent development. However that may be, Congress rejected the report entirely. American industrial creativity and energy, however, were not to be denied. By 1860 the United States was second only to Britain among industrializing economies. But not until the administration of President Abraham Lincoln would the federal government begin to assume the active, fostering economic role that Hamilton proposed in 1791.

*See also Bank of the United States; Hamilton, Alexander; Jefferson, Thomas; Madison, James; Presidency, The: George Washington; Taxation, Public Finance, and Public Debt.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Elkins, Stanley, and Eric McKittrick. *The Age of Federalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Hamilton, Alexander. *The Reports of Alexander Hamilton*. Edited by Jacob E. Cooke. New York: Harper and Row, 1964.
- Nelson, John R. *Liberty and Property: Political Economy and Policymaking in the New Nation, 1789–1812*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.
- Wright, Robert E. *Hamilton Unbound: Finance and the Creation of the American Republic*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2002.

Edward Countryman

---

**HAPPINESS** In the Declaration of Independence, published on 4 July 1776, Thomas Jefferson declared: "we hold these truths to be self evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." He thereby designated happiness the quintessential American emotion. Yet what did it mean to insert a seemingly private feeling into a public document? What were the personal and political meanings of happiness in the years from 1754 to 1829?

Jefferson's invocation of happiness reflected ideas and traditions well established by 1776. The English had long believed that promoting general happiness, in the sense of material well-being and prosperity, was one of the key functions of government. Many colonial charters made mention of this concept, from the Virginia charter of 1611, which promised to "tender" the "good and happy Success" of the colony "in Regard of the General Weal of human Society," to the Massachusetts Bay charter of

1691, which declared an intention to "incorporate" the king's subjects in the way "thought most conduc[ive]" to their "Welfare and happy State." In seventeenth-century usage, public happiness and the common good were more or less synonymous. Far from being a matter of personal fulfillment, happiness most often referred to the communal prosperity of country or kingdom.

By the eighteenth century, moral philosophers of the Scottish common-sense school began to focus on the problem of how to assure maximum happiness for the most people. In *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, published in 1725, Francis Hutcheson proclaimed, "that Action is best which accomplishes the greatest Happiness for the greatest Numbers." Following in Hutcheson's footsteps, philosophers like Adam Ferguson emphasized that happiness could have complementary private and public components. In *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), Ferguson explained, "if the public good be the principle object with individuals, it is likewise true that the happiness of individuals is the great end of civil society." By the time Jefferson wrote the Declaration, the idea that happiness involved individual satisfaction as well as common good had become entrenched in British America.

Practically speaking, the emerging eighteenth-century emphasis on happiness as an individual matter as well as a common concern meant that people began to focus as much on private sources of happiness as on public ones. Historians argue that the desire for happiness helped foster the eighteenth-century consumer revolution. In Britain only one-quarter of the population participated in this revolution, whereas in America as many as two-thirds of the people entered the market for such luxury staples as tea and sugar, as well as for fashionable items like tea sets, engraved prints, and fine imported fabrics. This process may have occurred more quickly in Virginia, where individualism sooner took hold, than in Massachusetts, where people clung longer to Puritan communalism. People in search of happiness also began to turn inward to family life as a source of personal satisfaction, focusing on nurturing deeper emotional ties with spouses and with smaller numbers of children.

By the early nineteenth century, the idea that happiness should relate to the common good had become almost entirely eclipsed by the quest for private gain. In one mark of the ever-increasing role of consumerism in the definition of happiness, Independence Hall, the statehouse in which Jefferson had first written the Declaration, found new use in the

1830s as a clothing store. To attract customers, the owner of the store published an advertisement announcing, "we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal—that [here] they can obtain Clothing as rich, as cheap, and as durable as at any other establishment in the nation." Happiness, understood as a public concept in the seventeenth century, had been almost entirely privatized by the nineteenth.

When Jefferson promised people the right to the pursuit of happiness, he offered them no guarantee of social equality. But he did pledge them the opportunity to strive for a social condition that would bring them contentment. He tried, in other words, to balance the public and private meanings of happiness. In the years after the Declaration, the understanding of happiness was rapidly further reduced from its origins as a social ideal for the common weal to an individual search for material riches. In the process, the concept of happiness became impoverished to the point that in the early twenty-first century it seems surprising to include such an emotion in a political text.

*See also American Character and Identity; Consumerism and Consumption; Declaration of Independence; Emotional Life; Founding Fathers; Jefferson, Thomas; Market Revolution; Sentimentalism.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Breen, T. H. *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Fliegelman, Jay. *Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language, and the Culture of Performance*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1993.
- Greene, Jack P. *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.
- Lewis, Jan. *The Pursuit of Happiness: Family and Values in Jefferson's Virginia*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Wills, Garry. *Inventing America: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002.

Nicole Eustace

---

**HARTFORD CONVENTION** The Hartford Convention was a gathering of leading New England Federalists during the War of 1812 (1812–1815). Held between 15 December 1814 and 5 January 1815 in

Hartford, Connecticut, it featured twenty-six attendees from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Its members included many of New England Federalism's leading lights.

#### BACKGROUND AND MOTIVES

This assemblage was many years in the making. It went back to the election of 1800, which swept Federalists out of power and installed Thomas Jefferson, the chief of the rival Democratic Republican Party, as president. After the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, Federalist strategists feared that this territory would add new states to the Democratic Republicans' power base in the South and West. Moreover, these states would enjoy added representation in the U.S. House of Representatives and, consequently, the electoral college, under the Constitution's clause counting three-fifths of the slave population. Despairing of ever regaining national power, leading Federalists adopted a sectionalist strategy, hoping to retain their strength in New England and make it the last bastion of Federalism. They appealed to a northern audience, seeking repeal of the three-fifths clause. Some talked of seceding from the Union to form a "Northern Confederacy." Yet in 1803 and 1804, only Connecticut and Massachusetts called for the abolition of slave representation, and the "Northern Confederacy" plot went nowhere.

Federalist popularity rose in 1808 after passage of Jefferson's embargo of trade with Britain, which proved devastating to the New England economy, but it was the War of 1812 that produced a formidable, organized opposition to the federal government in New England. For Yankee Federalists, the war was the latest and worst Republican measure meant to destroy their region's commerce and political power. They also believed that it was immoral, partly because the United States took the offensive by invading Canada. Furthermore, the British invaded New England early in 1814 and seemed poised to strike again even harder later in that year.

Faced with a defense crisis and burning with sectional and partisan antagonism, citizens organized town meetings throughout Massachusetts in 1814. These gatherings petitioned the state legislature to protect their towns in the federal government's place and to remedy the political ills that had produced the war in the first place. The petitioners called for an assembly of New England states to consider how to wrest the Constitution back from its usurpers, the slaveholders of the South and the upstarts of the

West. These remonstrances typified the charged atmosphere that produced the Hartford Convention.

Massachusetts state legislators heard this call. Acknowledging that they were responding to the town memorials, the lawmakers voted by large margins on 18 October 1814 to invite other states to a convention. Other state legislatures followed Massachusetts's lead, but they all appointed delegates who were calculated to cool the passions that produced the convention. The men they appointed were moderate Federalists unlikely to take rash measures despite the harsh rhetoric swirling around wartime New England.

#### THE REPORT

The Hartford Convention's main product was a report encapsulating New England's grievances and calling for constitutional amendments to redress them. Its introduction dwelt at length on matters of defense and introduced the proposed amendments as meant "to strengthen, and if possible to perpetuate, the union of the states, by removing the grounds of exciting jealousies, and providing for a fair and equal representation, and a limitation of powers, which have been misused" (*Dwight, History of the Hartford Convention*, p. 370). It rejected disunion, much to the dismay of some Federalist hotheads and the surprise of Democratic Republicans who had painted the secretive conference as traitorous.

The report proposed seven constitutional amendments. The first two sought to remove perceived structural supports for Republican power. The first abolished slave representation. This was in part a response to the Massachusetts towns, whose memorials consistently listed the abolition of the three-fifths clause first among their demands. The second required a two-thirds vote in Congress, rather than a simple majority, for the admission of new states. This proposal resonated with a long-standing Federalist complaint and was only aggravated by the admission of Louisiana as a state on the eve of the war.

The next few were aimed at specific Republican policies. The third and fourth limited embargoes to sixty days and required a two-thirds vote for their passage. The fifth made a two-thirds vote a condition for waging offensive war. The sixth barred those of foreign birth, even if naturalized, from holding any national office, including a seat in either chamber of Congress. This was a jab at the likes of foreign-born Albert Gallatin, longtime secretary of the Treasury under Republican presidents. The final amendment sought to prevent a repetition of the successive two-term presidencies of Virginians Jefferson and James

Madison, limiting presidents to one term and declaring that no two presidents in a row could hail from the same state. The report was sent out to all states as a means of starting the amendment process.

#### LEGACY

Both the end of the war and the stigma attached to the Hartford Convention weakened its political force. It adjourned just as word reached America of the Treaty of Ghent (December 1814), which ended hostilities. From beginning to end, the convention was so tied up with questions of defense and wartime grievances that word of peace halted its impetus. The legislatures of Connecticut and Massachusetts directed their states' congressional delegations to present the report to Congress. But they complied only perfunctorily, and Congress took no action.

Although the convention thus ended with a whimper, in the long term it became more like a hiss and a byword. Despite the relatively moderate nature of its report, the Hartford Convention became the symbol for sectionalism and disunionism. That disrepute sealed the national demise of the Federalist Party and lasted for decades. Well into the 1840s, northerners and southerners of all parties occasionally branded their antagonists with the Federalist label or compared their actions to that of the infamous Hartford Convention. The Hartford Convention, symbol and apex of New England Federalism, failed to enact any of its proposed amendments, at least until slavery was abolished and with it slave representation. But that hardly meant it had no impact, for Federalists and their convention stalked American politics long after their fall from the national stage.

*See also Embargo; Federalist Party; War of 1812.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, Henry, ed. *Documents Relating to New-England Federalism, 1800–1815*. Boston, Little, Brown, 1877. Reprint, New York: Burt Franklin, 1969.
- Adams, James Truslow. *New England in the Republic, 1776–1850*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1926.
- Ames, Herman V. *The Proposed Amendments to the Constitution of the United States during the First Century of Its History*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1897. Reprint, New York: Burt Franklin, 1970.
- , ed. *State Documents on Federal Relations: The States and the United States*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1906. Reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1970.
- Banner, James M., Jr. *To the Hartford Convention: The Federalists and the Origins of Party Politics in Massachusetts, 1789–1815*. New York: Knopf, 1970.

- Dwight, Theodore. *History of the Hartford Convention, with a Review of the Policy of the United States Government Which Led to the War of 1812*. New York: White, 1833. Reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1970.
- Fischer, David Hackett. *The Revolution of American Conservatism: The Federalist Party in the Era of Jeffersonian Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row, 1965.
- Hickey, Donald R. "New England's Defense Problem and the Genesis of the Hartford Convention." *New England Quarterly* 50 (1977): 587–604.
- . *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989.
- Mason, Matthew. "'Nothing Is Better Calculated to Excite Divisions': Federalist Agitation against Slave Representation during the War of 1812." *New England Quarterly* 75 (2002): 531–561.
- Morison, Samuel Eliot. *The Life and Letters of Harrison Gray Otis, Federalist, 1765–1848*. 2 vols. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1913.
- Stagg, J. C. A. *Mr. Madison's War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early American Republic, 1783–1830*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983.

Matthew Mason

---

**HEALTH AND DISEASE** Until the beginning of the twentieth century, infectious diseases were by far the most important causes of mortality; they took their greatest toll among infants and children. Indeed, if individuals managed to survive to the age of twenty, they could for the most part look forward to an additional forty years or more of life. High rates of infant and child mortality (as well as fertility) meant that the number of aged persons in the population would be correspondingly small. Hence, chronic and long-term diseases—many related to advancing age—were less important causes of mortality. To emphasize the significance of infectious diseases, however, is not to imply that their impact on populations was constant. Infectious diseases appeared and disappeared and were often dependent on the interaction of social, economic, behavioral, and environmental factors. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the history of health and disease in late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century America.

#### COLONIAL BACKGROUND

The first settlers who came to the North American continent in the seventeenth century faced a strange and unfamiliar environment. In the initial stages of settlement, there were extraordinarily high death rates from dysentery, typhoid fever, a variety of en-

teric diseases, and respiratory infections. Nutritional diseases, inadequate housing, contaminated water supplies, and deficient disposal of organic wastes further compounded health risks. New England and the mid-Atlantic or middle colonies adjusted to their new environment relatively quickly, and mortality rates declined rapidly. The rural character of these colonies also minimized the spread of epidemic and endemic infectious diseases. The environment of the Chesapeake and southern colonies, by contrast, was far more threatening to human life. In addition to gastrointestinal disorders, the presence of infected individuals and insect vectors made malaria one of the gravest health problems in these areas. High mortality rates made it difficult for the white population to sustain itself through natural growth. The overwhelming majority of individuals who lived through the vicissitudes of infancy and childhood and reached the age of twenty rarely survived to the age of fifty. Unlike their neighbors to the north, the residents of the Chesapeake and southern settlements continued to face an environment that posed severe health risks.

The native Indian population was hardest hit by the movement of Europeans to the Americas. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, their numbers declined rapidly because of the impact of imported diseases. Having never been exposed to many of the diseases common in England and Europe, they constituted a highly vulnerable population. High mortality from infectious diseases (notably smallpox), periodic famines, and the social dislocations that accompanied these crises also reduced fertility to such low levels that population recovery became impossible. From a high of three thousand in the late seventeenth century, the Indian population on Nantucket had fallen to twenty by 1792. Much the same was true for many other East Coast tribes.

#### EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY HEALTH PATTERNS

After the dangers posed by a new environment were surmounted, population began to grow rapidly. Between 1700 and 1770 there was a ninefold increase from 250,000 to an estimated 2.15 million. Health indicators in the Northeast and middle colonies improved dramatically during these decades. Nevertheless, increasing population density, the expansion of internal and external trade and commerce, the development of new forms of agriculture, and the transformation of the landscape began to alter health patterns. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, there was an increase in mortality from a variety of infectious diseases, particularly among infants and

children and residents of larger towns and urban port areas. In the seventeenth century the rural character of colonial society inhibited the spread of infectious epidemic diseases that had such a dramatic impact on societies in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. In the eighteenth century, by contrast, colonial port communities began to experience the ravages of infectious epidemic diseases. Although small if not infinitesimal by modern standards, they contained larger numbers of people living in close quarters. The maritime character of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston—the most important colonial ports—brought their residents into contact with each other and, more important, with Europe, the Caribbean, and Africa. These ports were also the entry points for both sailors and immigrants. Such population movements became the means of transporting a variety of pathogens capable of causing epidemic outbreaks. Moreover, the physical environment of port villages—crowded living conditions, crude sewage disposal, and stagnant or contaminated water—facilitated periodic epidemics. Many residents were susceptible to the invading pathogens and hence lacked antibodies that prior exposure would have produced. The large number of susceptible individuals facilitated the rapid spread of infectious diseases.

During the eighteenth century periodic smallpox epidemics became common in New England and the middle colonies. Despite efforts at containment, it was difficult to prevent the spread of the disease. The movement of people in trade and commerce provided a convenient means of transporting the virus. The war with the French in the 1760s merely exacerbated the problem. In Philadelphia, smallpox was the single largest cause of mortality during the third quarter of the eighteenth century. The disease was less significant in the Chesapeake and South because a more dispersed population and an agricultural economy inhibited the spread of the virus (which can only survive in human tissue). South Carolina was an exception, since Charleston was an important seaport and commercial center with links to the interior. It therefore served as a port of entry for infectious diseases. In 1760, 6,000 of 8,000 residents were infected with smallpox, and estimates of mortality ranged from a low of 730 to a high of 940.

Smallpox was by no means the only imported disease. Yellow fever (a viral disease) was another. Transmitted by an insect vector biting an infected individual, it flourished in moist tropical areas. During the first two-thirds of the eighteenth century, there were at least twenty-five outbreaks. The interrup-

tion of trade during the Revolutionary crisis caused the disease to disappear. But with the return of peace, yellow fever returned. In 1793 Philadelphia experienced an epidemic that threatened its very existence. A slave rebellion in French Saint Domingue (later Santo Domingo) brought two thousand refugees to the city, some of whom were infected. A hot and humid summer provided ideal conditions for the proliferation of the mosquito population. Perhaps half of the fifty-one thousand residents fled the city during the outbreak. Of those that remained, a large number became ill and between 9 and 12 percent perished. Nor was Philadelphia the only city to experience an epidemic. Between 1793 and 1822 yellow fever was also present in Baltimore, Boston, and New York. After the latter year it disappeared from New England and the mid-Atlantic states, where the climate was not conducive to the insect vector, while appearing periodically in the South, notably New Orleans, which had five epidemics between 1804 and 1819.

Spectacular periodic smallpox and yellow fever epidemics tended to overshadow other diseases that played a more important role in shaping population development. Indeed, the health advantages enjoyed by seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century settlements, once the period of adjustment passed, slowly began to diminish. In the eighteenth century infectious diseases traditionally associated with infancy and childhood became common. Many of these diseases were not indigenous to the Americas. When imported they affected the entire population, since adults as well as children were susceptible. Measles, for example, struck New England and the mid-Atlantic colonies; the Chesapeake and South were less affected. Mortality from measles was extraordinarily high, equaling modern death rates from cancer and cardiovascular diseases. Other infectious diseases, including diphtheria, scarlet fever, pertussis (whooping cough), and chickenpox, also resulted in high mortality.

Despite high mortality rates associated with periodic epidemics, certain endemic diseases—notably dysentery and malaria—took a far higher toll. In general, sporadic and spectacular outbreaks of epidemic diseases produced much greater fear than did endemic diseases that had a much greater demographic impact. Dysentery was undoubtedly the most significant disease in eighteenth-century America. Outbreaks were especially common in such towns as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston. These ports were the entry points for ships bringing thousands of immigrants to the colo-

nies. Conditions aboard vessels were conducive to outbreaks of dysentery, and infected immigrants disseminated the causative pathogens upon their arrival. Infants and children were especially vulnerable, since there was no understanding that dehydration could lead to rapid death. Local data revealed that during an epidemic, perhaps half of a community's population would become infected and that one of every six or seven would perish.

Malaria had the same endemic characteristics as dysentery. Although important south of the Mason-Dixon line, it had its greatest impact in South Carolina, where the cultivation of rice and indigo created ideal conditions for the breeding of the anopheles mosquito. The colony acquired a deserved reputation as a graveyard. High mortality among whites provided a rationale for the introduction and spread of slavery, since they believed that Africans were better equipped physiologically to labor in a sunny, hot, and humid climate.

Most eighteenth-century respiratory disorders were endemic and seasonal in character. But the growth of population and expansion of trade rendered the colonies somewhat more vulnerable to influenza pandemics and epidemics. By the time of the American Revolution, the newly independent colonies had become part of a larger disease pool. In 1781–1782 and 1788–1789, influenza appeared in pandemic form, affecting millions of people in both Europe and America. Nevertheless, case fatality rates remained low, although it did pose a mortal threat to elderly and chronically ill persons.

During these decades, tuberculosis and other pulmonary disorders also emerged as important causes of mortality. They were most prevalent in more densely populated areas, although rural areas were affected as well. The critical element was not total population, but household size. Many households contained from seven to ten inhabitants, thus permitting the dissemination of the tubercle bacillus and other pathogens. Moreover, relatively inefficient heating led inhabitants to seal windows and doors. Behavioral patterns thus facilitated the spread of the infection within households.

Nowhere was the complex relationship between pathogens, humans, and the environment better illustrated than during war. In the American Revolution a large number of recruits came from rural areas and had never been exposed to many common communicable diseases. Crowded camp quarters and contaminated water supplies from both human and animal wastes, inadequate diets, and the absence of personal hygiene provided ideal conditions for the

spread of infectious diseases. Perhaps 200,000 served in the military (comprising the total of all American armed forces, including militia). About 7,100 were killed in military engagements, 10,000 died in camps, and 8,500 perished as prisoners of war. Deaths in camps and among prisoners resulted from a variety of diseases, notably dysentery and respiratory disorders. A similar situation prevailed during the War of 1812. About two and half times as many soldiers perished from disease or accident as were killed in battle.

### THE EARLY NATION

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, mortality from infectious diseases began to increase. In New England and the mid-Atlantic regions, this increase did not appreciably affect population growth. Mortality, however, was not equally distributed. After 1760 health indicators improved among the white middle and upper classes. Among the poor—both white and black—mortality rose. Philadelphia—a center of commerce and immigration—proved to be a dangerous place. Its mortality rates, particularly among recent immigrants, exceeded many European cities. Despite high fertility, Philadelphia's growth was made possible only because of migration from rural areas and immigration of younger people.

Mortality rates in the South remained excessive even by the standards of that age. South Carolina presented the greatest risks to life; the Chesapeake region and North Carolina followed. Without a constant supply of immigrants to replenish a population devastated by extraordinary mortality rates, these areas would not have developed economically and their very survival as societies would have become dubious. Neither wealth nor status conferred a distinct advantage insofar as survival was concerned. Mortality rates, admittedly unequally distributed, remained high among all groups, both white and black.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the health advantages that Americans had enjoyed after the initial period of adjustment had begun to diminish. Rapid population and economic growth created conditions conducive to the spread of infectious diseases. In succeeding decades, health indicators would begin to fall. Ironically, the increase in mortality and decline in life expectancy occurred at a time when the standard of living was rising.

Although the United States was still a predominantly rural nation, cities were growing in number, size, and importance. Their growth, together with the simultaneous acceleration in economic activity,

magnified the risks from infectious diseases. Municipal governments moved relatively slowly in protecting health. There was little provision for safe and accessible water supplies or removal of wastes. Because horses were used for transportation, streets were covered with manure. Housing standards were virtually unknown; there were no provisions for drainage or ventilation in most structures. The accumulation of organic wastes and rising odors caused inhabitants to keep their windows shut, thus preventing the circulation of fresh air and facilitating the dissemination of infectious organisms. The movement of large masses of immigrants and susceptible individuals from rural areas only served to magnify the impact of infectious diseases.

In these urban areas, tuberculosis and pulmonary diseases took a high toll. Nearly a quarter of all deaths in Boston between 1812 and 1821 were due to "consumption" (a generic category that included tuberculosis and other pulmonary diseases). Native-born whites had the lowest mortality rate, African Americans the highest, and foreign-born individuals fell between the two. The circumstances of urban life—crowding and the absence of facilities to bathe and wash clothes, among other things—led to the emergence of such infectious diseases as typhus, which at times could result in a mortality rate of 50 percent in adult populations. Other infections—diarrheal and respiratory diseases, diphtheria and croup, measles, whooping cough, and scarlet fever—added to the burden of disease. Mortality was largely a function of age: infants and children were at highest risk. In 1830, 1,974 deaths were recorded in Baltimore. Of these, 406 were under the age of 1 and 932 under 10. Suicide, homicide, accidents, and occupational diseases also contributed to total urban mortality. To emphasize that infectious diseases were the major element in urban morbidity and mortality patterns is not to suggest that such chronic and long-duration diseases as cancers, cardiovascular and renal diseases, and diseases of the central nervous system were absent. Their incidence and prevalence, however, were low, because high mortality rates among the young meant that the older cohort constituted a relatively small percentage of the total population.

Rural areas had lower mortality rates than their urban counterparts. For the nation as a whole in 1830, about 54 percent of those alive at age 5 survived to 60. In rural areas the figure was 57.5 percent, as compared with 43.6 in such small towns as Salem, Massachusetts, and New Haven, Connecticut, and 16.4 in the large cities of Boston, New York, and

Philadelphia. Nevertheless, the increase in mortality that set in toward the end of the eighteenth century was not confined to cities; the same occurred in rural areas.

Aggregate data reveal the magnitude of the decline. In the period from 1800 to 1809, a white male and female age 20 could expect to live an additional 46.4 and 47.9 years, respectively; by 1850 to 1859 the comparable figures were 40.8 and 39.5. Declining life expectancy was also accompanied by a decline in height as well. By the American Revolution, Americans had achieved heights not fundamentally different from their twentieth-century successors; during and after the 1820s heights declined, reflecting a comparable decline in health. In these decades the standard of living rose, calling into question the familiar generalization that health indicators rise with increasing affluence.

What accounts for the declining health of Americans, a decline that lasted beyond the Civil War and was not reversed until the end of the nineteenth century? The answer to this question remains somewhat murky. Whatever the reasons, it is clear that economic development negatively affected health. The beginnings of a national transportation network increased both internal migration rates and interregional trade and thus contributed to the movement of pathogens from urban to rural and semirural regions where more susceptible populations resided. The movement across the Appalachian Mountains after the War of 1812 enhanced the significance of such debilitating and fatal diseases as malaria and various forms of dysentery, to say nothing about the health risks in a new and undeveloped environment. The rise of artisan workshops and factories concentrated employees in surroundings conducive to the spread of infectious diseases. The advent of large-scale migration of poor immigrants exacerbated the prevailing disease environment, particularly in urban areas. Fundamental changes would be required to alter an environment in which infectious diseases flourished.

*See also Epidemics; Malaria; Smallpox; Water Supply and Sewage.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Caulfield, Ernest. "Some Common Diseases of Colonial Children." *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts* 35 (1951): 15–24.
- Coclanis, Peter A. *The Shadow of a Dream: Economic Life and Death in the South Carolina Low Country, 1670–1920*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Duffy, John. *Epidemics in Colonial America*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1953.

- . "The Impact of Malaria on the South," pp. 29–54, in *Disease and Distinctiveness in the American South*. Edited by Todd L. Savitt and James Harvey Young. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988.
- Estes, J. Worth, and Billy G. Smith, eds. *A Melancholy Scene of Devastation: The Public Response to the 1793 Philadelphia Yellow Fever Epidemic*. Canton, Mass.: Science History Publications, 1997.
- Fenn, Elizabeth A. *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775–82*. New York: Hill & Wang, 2001.
- Gillet, Mary C. *The Army Medical Department, 1750–1818*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981.
- Grob, Gerald N. *The Deadly Truth: A History of Disease in America*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002.
- Meindl, Richard S., and Alan C. Swedlund. "Secular Trends in Mortality in the Connecticut Valley, 1700–1850." *Human Biology* 49 (1977): 389–414.
- Sokoloff, Kenneth L., and George C. Villaflor. "The Early Achievement of Modern Stature in America." *Social Science History* 6 (1982): 453–481.
- Steckel, Richard H. "Heights and Health in the United States, 1710–1950," pp. 153–170. In *Stature, Living Standards, and Economic Development: Essays in Anthropometric History*. Edited by John Komlos. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- Vinovskis, Maris A. "Mortality Rates and Trends in Massachusetts before 1860." *Journal of Economic History* 32 (1972): 184–213.

*Gerald N. Grob*

---

**HEATING AND LIGHTING** In early modern Anglo-American housing culture, people with the means to have ostensibly comfortable houses did not necessarily build them. When Governor William Bradford referred to the early houses of Plymouth Colony as "small cottages," he was employing a historical association of "cottage" with substandard housing. After all, these structures lacked foundations and had wooden chimneys, thatched roofs, earthen floors, unglazed or small-paned casement windows, and wattle-and-daub walls. In England inhabiting a cottage marked people as lacking sufficient landholdings to support a household, but in early America there were many more cottagers than cottagers. Most American households held sufficient land to provide livelihoods for their members, so they were not cottagers in the sense of living in a dwelling owned by someone else. The term "cottage" nearly passed out of usage in colonial America, although most Americans lived in houses that looked like cottages. Through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries housing in America lacked the close architec-

tural association with social standing that it had in Britain. Spending on fashionable architectural designs for heating, illumination, privacy, and hygiene—in other words, physical comfort—had a relatively low priority in colonial Anglo-America.

The analysis of physical comfort—self-conscious satisfaction with the relationship between one's body and its immediate physical environment—was an innovation of eighteenth-century Anglo-American culture. It indicated a disposition to criticize traditional material culture and to improve upon it. In the first chapter of *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), the Scottish economist Adam Smith identified candles as one of the "necessaries" of life, by which he meant "not only those things which nature, but those things which the established rules of decency have rendered necessary to the lowest rank of people." Considering candles as a necessity was part of the Enlightenment's developing attention to physical comfort.

As the value of physical comfort became more explicit and desirable, the technology of its improvement gained intellectual prestige. Here Benjamin Franklin was the paragon among eighteenth-century *philosophes*, with his interest in the history, anthropology, and science of basic household comforts. He identified himself with members of a scientifically enlightened subculture who criticized the priority of fashion over comfort in the domestic environment. He promoted candles made of spermaceti (a waxy substance derived from sperm whale oil) for their steady, clean illumination; he suggested that people experiment with the ventilation of their sleeping quarters to improve their sleep; and his name became synonymous with smoke-free and draft-free heating. He appreciated that the obstacles to improving comfort were more cultural than technical, and to remove these obstacles he urged his readers to question expert authority on material culture and to transcend their adherence to the customs of their ethnic group regarding the domestic environment.

In Pennsylvania Franklin could consider a range of ethnic alternatives in domestic comfort. He was particularly attentive to the Dutch and German use of stoves that entirely enclosed the fire and used it only for heating purposes. Franklin contrasted the clean warmth of these stoves with that provided by the two fireplace types popular among English colonists: a large traditional fireplace in which people could sit warmly within the hearth space itself, and fashionable smaller fireplaces whose classicized designs were the focus of interior decoration. From

Franklin's perspective both of these chimney fire-places required an invidious trade-off between comfortable heat and smoky discomfort: the more heat, the more smoke.

Rather than leave such technical problems aside once he had established a transatlantic scientific reputation, Franklin became the Enlightenment's authority on smoky chimneys. He drew on his scientific work in physics to dissociate the fire's elements of smoke, heat, and light. To reduce drafts, Franklin designed a stove that cut off the air for ventilation from that for combustion by piping the latter directly to the fireplace from outside the house. Because such stoves provided draft-free warmth throughout a room, members of a household would be freer to spend time together out of choice rather than from physical necessity for the fire's heat and light. At the same time they would be able to pursue their individual activities in a uniformly heated space. Or so he hoped. In fact, his original design was difficult to retrofit and too complicated to be frequently installed in new construction. What came to be known as the Franklin fireplace was basically a cast iron version of the genteel open fireplace, with its trade-off of smoke and heat.

Franklin was also attentive to the relationship, developing throughout the Anglo-American world, between genteel domestic culture and improved artificial illumination. People wanted more light. Interest in the improvement of domestic lighting was especially keen in America. Americans had a near monopoly on the new spermaceti industry, extracting from sperm whales an oil that flowed well in temperate climates and also provided a new candle material, spermaceti wax, which burned cleanly and gave a reliably bright light. Franklin promoted the spermaceti candle for these qualities, and experimented with multiple-wick oil lamps in order to determine the most efficient arrangement for a bright light.

Thomas Jefferson's design and furnishing of his home at Monticello epitomized the new attention to comfort, as he sought to improve the heating, ventilation, illumination, privacy, and hygiene of conventional architecture. For insulation the north-facing tea room had triple-glazed windows and double sliding glass doors, and he installed a Rumford stove for heating. Jefferson also promoted Aimé Argand's (1750–1803) design of an oil lamp whose cylindrical wick produced a bright light, and sent examples from France to James Madison and others. Jefferson never elaborated on what he meant by "the pursuit of happiness," but given his lifelong obsession with the improvement of convenience and comfort, it

seems reasonable to infer that he believed their successful pursuit would result in happiness.

But the efforts of Franklin, Jefferson, and other *philosophes* to improve comfort had little effect on most Americans' priorities for their domestic environments. At any one time in the late eighteenth century, a large proportion of the American population (outside New England) still lived in houses of quickly worked local materials, usually logs. According to the 1798 Direct Tax Assessments, windows, and even more so windowpanes, were the chief architectural improvements, adding more value than material of construction, floor area, or number of stories. In the countryside, glazed windows were a luxury, but living in a house built of logs did not preclude such refinement, nor was sheer affordability the main constraint. The plans, amenities, and finish of the houses in which most Americans lived at the end of the eighteenth century—room-and-loft house plans, wood and clay chimneys, few and small windows, and construction from local raw materials—would still have earned them the derogatory designation "cottages" in England.

*See also Technology.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bushman, Richard L. *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities*. New York: Knopf, 1992.
- Crowley, John E. *The Invention of Comfort: Sensibilities and Design in Early Modern Britain and Early America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.
- Larkin, Jack. *The Reshaping of Everyday Life, 1790–1840*. New York: Harper and Row, 1988.
- Nylander, Jane C. *Our Own Snug Fireside: Images of the New England Home, 1760–1860*. New York: Knopf, 1993.
- Rybaczynski, Witold. *Home: A Short History of an Idea*. New York: Viking, 1986.

John E. Crowley

---

**HESSIANS** The Hessians were a group of German auxiliary soldiers hired by the British Crown in 1776 to assist them in putting down the American colonial rebellion. In all, approximately 30,000 "Hessians" would eventually serve in North America during the course of the American Revolution. Although the term "Hessian" was commonly used by contemporary Americans of the day and later historians, the title actually identifies only those from the German principalities of Hesse-Hanau and Hesse-Cassel. In fact, these soldiers were recruited from a wide variety

of locales across Germany during the course of the war. However, of the 30,000 troops sent, the Landgraf of Hesse-Cassel provided well over half (18,970) of all German troops who would fight in the war. The next-highest contingent came from Brunswick (about 5,723), followed by Hesse-Hanau at 2,422, Hannover at 2,373, Anspach-Bayreuth at 2,353, and Waldeck at 1,225. Owing to its tiny home army, the smallest amount was provided by Anhalt-Zerbst at 1,152 (Fischer, *Washington's Crossing*, pp. 53–54).

The first contingent of Hessians (about 8,000 officers and men) arrived off New York City in mid-August 1776. Crossing over to Long Island on 22 August 1776, the Hessians played an instrumental part in the rout of General George Washington's Continental Army during a series of engagements in and around New York City, White Plains, and Fort Washington, where they captured over 2,800 Continental soldiers.

Having driven Washington and his army across New Jersey in the late fall and early winter of 1776, a large Hessian contingent of about 1,000 men, located at Trenton, New Jersey, under the command of Colonel Johann Gottlieb Rall, was subsequently attacked in a surprise Christmas Day raid by Washington, and the first large contingent of Hessians became prisoners of war.

During this time, Hessians assisted British troops in the bloodless capture of the city of Newport, Rhode Island, and later, in August 1778, helped repel an American attempt to retake the city by force. Accompanying William Howe to the Philadelphia area in the summer of 1777, Hessian forces participated in the British victories at Brandywine and Germantown only to become victims of a stinging defeat at the Battle of Red Bank, New Jersey. Another Hessian contingent, commanded by Major General Friedrich Adolph von Riedesel, formed part of the army led by General John Burgoyne that was defeated at Saratoga in October 1777. Another sizeable contingent of nearly 6,000 Hessians (mainly from the Brunswick and Hesse-Hanau regiments) were taken prisoner.

During the latter years of the war, Hessian soldiers formed part of the British force that seized the southern cities of Savannah and Charleston from the Americans and Pensacola from the Spanish. A large Hessian contingent was also captured along with the rest of Lord Cornwallis's British army at the decisive battle of Yorktown, Virginia, and became the third large Hessian force to have surrendered during the war. In all, it is estimated that nearly half of the total Hessian contingent did not return to their native Germany. Some became either American or Canadian

citizens by discharge or desertion, and others were killed or died of disease during their long years of service during the Revolution.

*See also Saratoga, Battle of; Soldiers; Trenton, Battle of; Yorktown, Battle of.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Atwood, Rodney. *The Hessians: Mercenaries from Hessen-Kassel in the American Revolution*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980.
- Dabney, William M. *After Saratoga: The Story of the Convention Army*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1954.
- Döhla, Johann Conrad. *A Hessian Diary of the American Revolution*. Translated and edited by Bruce E. Burgoyne. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989.
- Ewald, Johann. *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal*. Translated and edited by Joseph P. Tustin. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1979.
- Fischer, David Hackett. *Washington's Crossing*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Ketchum, Richard M. *Saratoga: Turning Point of America's Revolutionary War*. New York: Henry Holt, 1997.
- Lowell, Edward J. *The Hessians and the Other German Auxiliaries of Great Britain in the Revolutionary War*. 1884. Williamstown, Mass.: Corner House, 1970.
- Neimeyer, Charles Patrick. *America Goes to War: A Social History of the Continental Army*. New York: New York University Press, 1996.

Charles Patrick Neimeyer

---

#### HISTORICAL MEMORY OF THE REVOLUTION

Even before the American Revolution officially ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1783, the battle over the memory and meaning of the Revolution had begun. Particularly in the early years of the Republic, every group attempted to establish its legitimacy and gain popular support by laying claim to the Revolution. Thus memories of it became hotly contested terrain and played a central role in shaping the political life of the nation. Virtually every important political battle in the early Republic was also a battle over the memory and the meaning of the American Revolution.

The complicated relationship of memory, myth, tradition, and history became even more tangled in this highly charged atmosphere. By 1811 John Adams, the first vice president and second president of the United States, was so disgusted by how political conflict had distorted the history of the Revolution that he begged a friend to write a treatise on "the



**Bunker Hill Monument.** The Battle of Bunker Hill is commemorated with a 221-foot granite obelisk that stands on Breed's Hill, the actual site of the battle. The obelisk was completed in 1842, replacing a smaller monument placed in 1794. © KEVIN FLEMING/CORBIS.

corruption of history," arguing that "both tradition and history are already corrupted in America as much as they ever were in the four or five first centuries of Christianity, and as much as they ever were in any age or country in the whole history of mankind."

#### REMEMBERING THE DECLARATION

Perhaps nothing better illustrates both the centrality and the contentiousness of memories of the Revolution than the history of the Declaration of Independence. Today, the Declaration stands as one of the country's foundational documents, and no American would question its importance to the nation's political tradition. But it did not always have such a secure place in the hearts and minds of citizens. At first, the Declaration was almost entirely forgotten by Americans, and Jefferson's authorship was not common knowledge. Then, as Democratic Republi-

cans and Federalists waged an increasingly fierce political contest in the 1790s, the Republicans attempted to elevate the historical significance of the Declaration as a means of burnishing Jefferson's reputation and, consequently, bolstering the party's popularity. In the nineteenth century memories of the Declaration continued to prove changeable, as other Americans attempted to reshape the memory of the American Revolution. In the Gettysburg Address in 1863, President Abraham Lincoln did not mention the Constitution but chose to concentrate instead on the Declaration's promise of equality so as to change the meaning of the Civil War from a political struggle to a much more profound battle to create equality. Lincoln gave the document a fresh historical twist and, in the process, reshaped the memory and meaning of the Revolution once again. Of course, even though the founders had never imagined that the declaration's principles applied to anyone but white males, women and African Americans were quick to seize on its revolutionary implications for themselves almost from the moment it was first published.

#### POLITICS AND MEMORY

The Declaration of Independence is only one example of the ongoing struggle among different groups over the memory of the Revolution. Every important debate in early American history was also a battle over the memory of the Revolution. For example, the intense fight over ratification of the Constitution pitted two opposite understandings of the Revolution against one another. Anti-Federalists and Federalists both used memories of the American Revolution to justify their arguments. The capaciousness of Revolutionary experience allowed the two sides nearly equal validity. Anti-Federalists recalled the origins of the Revolution as an assertion of local self-government over the imposition of imperial, centralized control and argued that the proposed Constitution would erase those hard-won freedoms. Federalists pointed to the increasing unity of the colonies, including greater centralized control, as essential not just to winning the war but to surviving as a nation and saw the Constitution as the only means of preserving the gains of the Revolution.

Ratification failed to end the contest. The debate grew even more ferocious as Federalists and Republicans opposed one another in the 1790s. Was Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton's financial scheme a brilliant rescuing of national finance or a usurpation of state power? Once again, disagreements about the memory of the Revolution were



**The Sesquicentennial International Exposition.** This poster by Dan Smith promoted an exposition held in 1926 in Philadelphia to mark the 150th anniversary of the signing of Declaration of Independence. © SWIM INK/CORBIS.

central to this debate. Other questions—whether the United States should lean toward England or France in foreign policy, how democratic politics should be—also revolved around memories of the Revolution.

#### **POPULAR MEMORIES OF THE REVOLUTION**

The battle over how to remember the Revolution was not simply fought among elites—there was a popular front as well. A variety of quasi-political events, such as Fourth of July celebrations, served as arenas in which groups who were frequently excluded from political life, such as women and men with little property, could offer their own symbolic understanding of the Revolution and contest elitist conceptions of political life. The Revolution itself always remained open to reinterpretations that challenged the status quo. For example, even African Americans found resources within memories of the Revolution to challenge slavery, despite the founders' refusal to include them as part of a new political order ostensibly based on liberty and equality. At an event commemorating the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1852, the abolitionist Frederick Douglass recalled the American Revolution not to praise it but to challenge it, openly contesting the contented celebration of the Revolution by white citizens. "What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July?", he asked, reminding his audience that the truly revolutionary aspects of the war for independence remained unfulfilled for some. "This Fourth July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn," he said. In coming years Douglass's challenge would be taken up by others to expand the promises of the Revolution to groups never imagined by the founders. Even today, memories of the Revolution continue to prove elastic and capacious and are used by groups who want to expand the boundaries of American politics.

#### **THE REVOLUTION AS REMEMBERED BY TODAY'S SOCIETY**

With the victory of the Republicans in 1800 and their increasing dominance of national politics during the subsequent years, the passionate debates about how to remember the Revolution began to cool, allowing the memory of the Revolution to serve as a force for national unity rather than division. Of course, politicians still recognized the importance of associating themselves with the Revolution. Thomas Jefferson referred to his election as the "revolution of 1800" so as to present himself as the embodiment of the "true" meaning of the American Revolution. Increasingly, however, Americans began to remember the Revolu-

tion as a source of national, rather than partisan, pride.

The best example of this transformation is George Washington, the preeminent man of the Revolution. As the first president of the United States, Washington had become a deeply politicized figure, serving as the Federalists' most important weapon and as the Republicans biggest obstacle. In the early 1800s, Mason Locke Weems wrote an astoundingly popular—and not altogether factual—biography of Washington that restored his national popularity by draining him of his political specificity and repositioning him as an American hero. It proved to be a winning formula; indeed the nation's current celebrations of the Revolution revolve largely around entertainment, not politics, which represents perhaps both a loss and a gain. The political apathy that afflicts a significant percentage of the electorate is nothing to celebrate, yet that apathy is a sign that the nation no longer has to fear dissolution.

Some contemporary commentators complain that today's Americans hardly bother to remember the Revolution at all, that the country suffers from a kind of collective historical amnesia. Even this problem can be traced to the Revolution. The break with Great Britain also promoted a break with tradition. As many writers at the time exhorted their fellow citizens to look to the future, rather than the past, the entire historical project of remembering the Revolution could seem suspect. There remains a powerful strand of American thought that continues to question the relevance of the past. Perhaps this explains why the country has frequently been slow to commemorate its own Revolutionary past. For example, the construction of the Washington monument was not begun until 1848 and not completed until 1885.

Memories of the Revolution remain at the center of American national identity, although not perhaps in the way that they once did. Today, most Americans have an uncritical and even worshipful attitude toward the founders. When towns and cities across the country hold their annual Fourth of July parades, it is difficult to remember that these memories once served to divide, rather than to unite, the nation.

*See also American Character and Identity; Anti-Federalists; Citizenship; Declaration of Independence; Democratic Republicans; Election of 1800; Federalists; Founding Fathers; Fourth of July; Hamilton's Economic Plan; Holidays and Public*



**Washington as a Mason.** George Washington, depicted as a Mason in a lithograph printed in 1867, remained for many years the main American symbol of military and republican virtue. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

## Celebrations; Jefferson, Thomas; Washington, George.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Kammen, Michael. *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture*. New York: Knopf, 1991; New York: Vintage Books, 1983.
- . *A Season of Youth: The American Revolution and the Historical Imagination*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988.
- Maier, Pauline. *American Scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence*. New York: Knopf, 1997.
- McDonald, Robert M. S. "Thomas Jefferson's Changing Reputation as Author of the Declaration of Independence: The First Fifty Years." *Journal of the Early Republic* 19, no. 2 (summer 1999): 169–195.
- Peterson, Merrill D. *The Jefferson Image in the American Mind*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960; Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998.
- Travers, Len. *Celebrating the Fourth: Independence Day and the Rites of Nationalism in the Early Republic*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999.
- Trees, Andrew S. *The Founding Fathers and the Politics of Character*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004.

Andrew S. Trees

---

**HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY** Over the period 1750 to 1830, the writing of history in America emerged as a discipline intended to illustrate truths about human behavior and the natural world that would enable people to comprehend the present. Although historians and biographers scrupulously pursued an ideal of objectivity, their accounts of the past possessed an unmistakably didactic quality. Historians sought to persuade readers to embrace certain behaviors and ways of living; they also hoped to persuade government leaders to adopt specific policies. Histories written in this period, consequently, illustrate both the evolving practice of a scholarly discipline and the larger political, cultural, and social disputes of the era.

As a result of the growing influence of the Enlightenment, with its emphasis on exploring causation through documentation and observation, American historians began to investigate primary sources (such as governmental records, court cases, and individual recollections) to provide readers with an accurate account of the past. Such accounts, they believed, would reveal the larger principles that governed human behavior, for both better or worse. Following independence, these efforts culminated in the

establishment of libraries and historical societies to preserve the raw material on which contemporary and future authors could draw to write regional and national histories. Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and New York were the first states to establish such societies in the 1780s and 1790s, and by 1830 they could be found in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Tennessee, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan.

### COLONIAL HISTORIES

As the colonies grew both in material prosperity and intellectual sophistication, colonial authors sought to validate their cultural, social, and political institutions to interested, and often skeptical, European observers. At the same time, their own anxiety about the viability of colonial communities prompted them to instruct their fellow Americans in manners and sensibilities. Thus history writing and biography joined rational observation and objective analysis with a political and cultural agenda.

Several colonial authors used the official records of their colonies to illustrate the failings of imperial policies and chart various paths for reform. These include William Smith, Jr., *History of the Province of New York* (1757); Samuel Smith, *History of the Colony of Nova Caeseria, or New Jersey* (1765); and William Stith, *History of the First Discovery and Settlement of Virginia* (1747). Robert Beverley, in *History and Present State of Virginia* (1705), combined his less thoroughly researched but equally passionate criticisms of imperial policy with an ethnographic discussion of Native American culture intended to refute charges that societies degenerated in North America. In *Chronological History of New England* (1736), Thomas Prince used the diaries and recollections of the founders of Massachusetts and Plymouth colonies to remind readers, and particularly the royal governor, of the debt the present generation continued to owe to the ideals of these first Puritan settlers. Thomas Hutchinson, in *History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts Bay* (1764, 1767), used official records and the recollections of a wide array of observers of Massachusetts Bay Colony to persuade his readers that its development into a cosmopolitan community was an improvement over its Puritan origins.

### POST-REVOLUTIONARY HISTORIES

The same didactic and partisan tone reappeared after the American Revolution. Concerned over the fragility of republics in general and eager to answer European skepticism about the effects of the New World

on human development, historians began a concerted effort to mold the character of their fellow citizens. In every region of the new nation, histories appeared that presented the development of particular states or the experiences of the nation as a whole—particularly during the American Revolution—and prescribed republican values. The exclusive purpose of biographies of the era was to provide young Americans with models of republican virtue to emulate.

Despite the historians' universal ambition to present accurate accounts of the past free of party politics, few histories lived up to that ideal. The Federalist sympathies of David Ramsay, in *History of the American Revolution* (1787), and Jeremy Belknap, in *History of New Hampshire* (1785–1791), were thinly veiled, as were the Democratic Republican sentiments of James Sullivan, in *History of the District of Maine* (1794), and Samuel Williams, in *Natural and Civil History of Vermont* (1794). The most partisan accounts, reflecting the time in which they were written, were Mercy Otis Warren's *History of the Rise, Progress and Termination of the American Revolution* (1805) and John Marshall's *Life of George Washington* (1804–1808). Warren freely criticized what she saw as the corruption of the body politic through the spread of commercial interests at the expense of patriotic sentiment. She also warned of the monarchial aspirations of several leading figures in the Washington and Adams administrations. Marshall wrote from the opposite perspective. He used his life of Washington to illustrate the naivete of those who feared a strong central government and vigorous commercial economy. His account of the political turmoil of the 1790s offered tempered but unmistakable criticism of the Democratic Republican opposition and praise for the individuals in the Washington and Adams administrations, as well as the policies they pursued.

Some authors tried to avoid the political controversies of the age. The most famous and successful in this regard was Mason Locke Weems, whose *Life and Memorable Actions of Washington* (1800) celebrated his character as an exemplar of republican virtue but paid scant attention to partisan politics. It is from Parson Weems's enormously successful biography that we have received many of the myths surrounding Washington, notably the story of young George chopping down the cherry tree.

#### CULTURAL POLITICS

The first historians of the United States were also embroiled in the cultural politics of their time. Sullivan,

weighing in on the debate over the role of religion in a republic, praised the privileged place that the founders of Massachusetts Bay had given religion in their communities. On the other hand, William Gordon, in *History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States* (1788), reminded readers that people with no identifiable religious affiliation had not only served in Pennsylvania's government but had done so with distinction. John Lendrum, in *Concise and Impartial History of the American Revolution* (1795), offered scathing criticism of both the institution of slavery and those who defended it; Marshall carefully pointed out the institution's centrality to the economic viability of the South. Hannah Adams, in *Summary History of New England* (1799), and Warren used their accounts to call for a greater role for women in the public life of the nation. Most authors, notably Williams, sought to find a place for Native Americans in the new Republic, usually arguing for their transformation into members of Euro-American society.

The historians and biographers of the colonial and post-Revolutionary eras were important players on the political and cultural stage of the new nation. These authors reflected the anxieties of the young Republic and sought to strengthen it by promoting particular values among its citizens. In the process of recording the emergence and development of the United States, they laid the groundwork for the modern discipline of history.

*See also American Character and Identity; Autobiography and Memoir; Historical Memory of the Revolution; Public Opinion; Rhetoric; Sensibility; Women: Writers.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cohen, Lester. *The Revolutionary Histories: Contemporary Narratives of the American Revolution*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980.
- Leder, Lawrence, ed. *The Colonial Legacy*. 4 vols. New York: Harper and Row, 1971–1973.
- Lowenberg, Bert James. *American History in American Thought: Christopher Columbus to Henry Adams*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972.
- Ramsay, David. *The History of the American Revolution*. Edited by Lester H. Cohen. Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Classics, 1990.
- Shaffer, Arthur. *The Politics of History: Writing the History of the American Revolution, 1783–1815*. Chicago: Precedent Publishing, 1975.
- . *To Be an American: David Ramsay and the Making of the American Consciousness*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1990.

Van Tassel, David. *Recording America's Past: An Interpretation of the Development of Historical Studies in America, 1607–1884*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960.

Warren, Mercy Otis. *History of the Rise, Progress, and Termination of the American Revolution: Interspersed with Biographical, Political, and Moral Observations*. Edited by Lester H. Cohen. Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Classics, 1988.

Peter C. Messer

## HOLIDAYS AND PUBLIC CELEBRATIONS

Guy Fawkes Day, King George III's crowning, the British evacuation of New York, the Battle of Yorktown: these were some of the most popular events commemorated in the colonies and the new nation. Celebrations of these events often involved whole communities and were marked by public sermons, toasts, and parades. Public commemorations of holidays served as a way to both express and inculcate a shared identity, first as British subjects and then as citizens of a new nation.

Prior to the Revolution, colonists celebrated a series of British events centered on the Crown. When word of George III's accession reached the colonies, colonists paraded in the streets and expressed with gusto their fealty to the monarch. These celebrations occurred throughout the colonies, binding colonists together as British subjects. They celebrated other traditional secular holidays that reaffirmed the colonists' British heritage, such as the monarch's birthday, the Restoration, and Guy Fawkes Day (called Pope's Day in Boston).

Although virtually all colonists shared in commemorating these events, celebrations were local. Philadelphians, for example, had little if any knowledge of what Bostonians were doing. Instead, they celebrated their heritage as members of a separate colony that was part of a broader Atlantic world directed toward London. The mustering of militias, followed by tavern-going and toasting, marked many of these secular celebrations. Guy Fawkes Day (5 November), the holiday commemorating the failed plot by a group of Catholic radicals to blow up Parliament and assassinate James I, became a holiday with both regional and class distinctiveness. The holiday was a particularly raucous event among mechanics and artisans in Boston and New York, whereas royal festivals in other regions were orchestrated by the elites and thus more subdued and standardized.

Celebrations of religious holidays were less formal and less public. The traditional Christian liturgical calendar was seldom observed outside the pages of almanacs; Christmas, in particular, was little celebrated except in German- and Dutch-speaking communities. Although colonists shared many secular holidays, local exigencies shaped religious celebrations. Churchgoing itself in the Northeast was a communal affair, with tightly knit towns congregating in a central parish to worship. In colonies with less centralization, particularly in the South, churchgoing was less frequent, serving as a special occasion for the community to gather and socialize. Congregational New England and Anglican Virginia practiced state-mandated fasts more often than the more pluralistic and expansive colonies like New York and Pennsylvania. Colonists fasted as a form of penance intended to influence God's will. In Pennsylvania during the Seven Years' War, for instance, casualties were attributed to the colonists' profligate ways, and the governor declared fasts to appease God. The fasts usually lasted for a day and restricted people from performing "servile labor"; instead, they were to devote a day to public prayers and sermons.

## AFTER THE REVOLUTION

In the immediate aftermath of the Revolution, citizens needed to create new holidays that would help cement a national bond. The Fourth of July was one of the most popular holidays, but citizens also celebrated other dates, now forgotten, with almost as much fanfare. Battles fought in distant colonies became the subject of parades and toasts. Newspapers throughout the country reported on these celebrations, helping to create a shared memory among widely scattered and previously unconnected people. As a new shared identity as American citizens took shape, the celebration of holidays reinforced the sense of collective nationhood and citizenship. Celebrating the battles also recast the Revolution, not as a bitter, divisive, bloody, and closely fought battle, but as a moment of national ascendancy and union.

As the nation became more partisan, especially following the debates about the Constitution's ratification in the late 1780s, celebrations of secular, civil holidays became politicized. Political parties realized that owning the commemoration of popular national events was a potent strategy for gaining power. Rather than the raucous, rebellious celebrations during Revolutionary days, the national culture began adopting more formal, prosaic, and sentimental displays of memory, which were nonetheless highly contested by the dueling parties. For a brief time, Fed-

eralists successfully used public celebrations to reaffirm their ascendancy. They promoted Washington's birthday as a holiday according to the tradition of celebrating the king's birthday. Anti-Federalists recognized the Federalists' success late and slowly, and then unsuccessfully tried to co-opt these same events for their cause.

Party politics inspired new kinds of commemorations. Republicans, the opposition party, began commemorating the French Revolution in the 1790s as a way to critique what they viewed as the growing elitism and aristocracy of the Federalist Party. Federalists, on the other hand, bitterly fought over the right to own the commemoration of George Washington's death.

Formal, public celebrations of religious fasts and thanksgivings were eclipsed by the increasingly contested but popular secular holidays. After Independence, the Continental Congress often endorsed fasts, in some respects linking God's will to the outcome of the Revolution. However, with the ratification of the Constitution, Federalist attempts—and then those of President Washington—to decree a day of thanksgiving met with widespread opposition. This day of thanksgiving was not a formal remembrance of a specific event like the modern Thanksgiving, but rather a day to give thanks to God for the success of the Revolution and creation of the federal government. Washington's successor, John Adams, decreed two national fast days during the Quasi-War with France and couched these declarations in explicitly Christian terms. Although individual states often celebrated a day of thanksgiving in the early Republic, it was not until Sarah Josepha Hale, a prominent writer, successfully lobbied Abraham Lincoln in 1863 to create a national holiday that commemorated the Pilgrims' original feast.

Although fasts and public religious celebrations were few, sermons at secular events were common, especially during the Federalist period (1789–1800). Newspapers, broadsides, and pamphlets disseminated many of these sermons throughout the country, which allowed celebrants in different states to share a common bond as citizens. In this respect, even civil events had an air of sanctity. The strength of the Democratic Republicans and the Jeffersonian victory in 1800 brought another partisan change to celebrations. Sermons receded as secular orations about political, local, and patriotic heroes assumed a more prominent role. Although holidays were still hotly contested, both parties used orations to link their cause to the Revolution.

Partisanship may have marked the public performance of holidays, but the very nature of the celebrations—public events that often involved all members of a community as either spectators or participants—helped create a sense of national unity and identity in the new nation. Both Democratic Republicans and Federalists saw themselves as the proper inheritors of the Revolution's mantle, but the centrality of the Revolution in both camps' public celebrations helped create and reinforce a shared national identity.

*See also Almanacs; American Character and Identity; Democratic Republicans; Fourth of July; Federalist Party; Federalists; Franklin, Benjamin; Nationalism; National Symbols; Quasi-War with France; Religious Publishing; Taverns; Washington, George.*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, Fred. *A People's Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years' War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984.
- Newman, Simon. *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997.
- The Papers of George Washington*. The Thanksgiving Proclamation. Available at <http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/thanksgiving/transcript.html>.
- Pencak, William, Simon Newman, and Matthew Dennis. *Riot and Revelry in Early America*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002.
- Waldstreicher, David. *In the Midst of Perpetual Fêtes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Patrick Spero

---

**HOME** As much a mental as a physical construct, "home" is a place we dwell on as well as dwell in. The emergence of home as we understand it in the early twenty-first century began in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The modern notion of home ultimately replaced the older idea of household, a slow, almost imperceptible process but one of huge significance for the future of American society, for the shift from household to home was paralleled by the rise of the idea of "homeland," a key concept in the founding of the new American nation.

At the mid-eighteenth century, the subjects of European monarchies living on the North American continent, both free and enslaved, dwelled in places

universally described as households. The household was not only the basic residential unit, but also the fundamental political, economic, and social organization. In many of the New England colonies, everyone was obligated to live in a household. These were organized in a hierarchical manner, with the royal household at the pinnacle. The household of each royal subject was ruled by a patriarchal master, who exercised authority over all the inhabitants: family members, kin, servants, slaves, even guests. No distinction was made between family and household. Indeed, the term "family" applied equally to all living under the one roof. In the big houses of slave plantations, masters talked of their families as including both black and white members.

The household was a functional unit to which few of the sentiments that we now associate with home were attached. Membership of the household changed frequently, and people felt at home in a particular region rather than in a particular house. There was little interest in roots or the history of particular residences, and no sense of sacredness attached to domestic space as such. When people talked of going home, they were referring to a place of destination rather than of return. In the journey, the prevailing metaphor of Christian life, the ultimate home was in heaven rather than on earth. Households were mere way stations, and too great a fondness for worldly places was considered an obstacle to salvation among both Protestants and Catholics. Neither faith spiritualized the household in the ways that later generations would do.

The time and space of the household was not significantly different from the times and spaces of the world at large. Its rhythms were dictated by the work and leisure patterns of its inhabitants. It was more communal than private and was heterogeneous with respect to age, race, and gender. As long as each resident adhered to her or his assigned place in the household hierarchy, they mingled quite freely, sharing rooms, even beds. There was little concern for personal privacy; and the household was as much men's space as it was women's. Indeed, in this patriarchal society it was more his than hers.

#### **INVENTION OF THE HOME**

There is no precise date by which to mark the transition from the eighteenth-century notion of household to the nineteenth-century idea of home. The shift was the product of changes in social and economic conditions, of religious transformations, but also of the American Revolution, which replaced the ancient notion of royal sovereignty with the idea of

the sovereign nation defined as a people sharing a certain bounded territory. The Revolution displaced not only the figure of the royal father but the royal house, replacing them with republican fathers and republican homes. The old hierarchy of households was replaced with an imagined landscape of single-family homes, congruent with the Jeffersonian vision of a nation of small farmers, artisans, and shopkeepers, each with a wife and children. The result was a radically new sense of both domestic space and domestic time that gradually established itself as the middle-class norm by the mid-nineteenth century.

By the early nineteenth century, the household had begun to lose its place at the core of American life. It shed its economic functions when paid work was relocated to the shop or the factory. Apprenticeship was replaced by wage work, and it became less common for employees to live in the houses of their masters. Servants remained, but they were now quartered apart from family members. In time, the household would also lose its educational role to the school, and in the new republican nation-state, powers once vested in the head of the household were relocated to the courts and governmental agencies. By the middle of the century, there was a clear separation of the private and public spheres. To the former belonged women and children; to the latter belonged the free, property-owning males who were now employed in offices and factories and who, as citizens, exercised power in the new nation. This process proceeded fastest in the industrializing Northeast, in cities rather than on farms. A clear distinction between family and household emerged first among the urban middle classes there. In the plantation South, older forms of household persisted, and among the working classes, heterogeneous households were still common.

Among the middle classes of the Northeast, a new kind of feminized domesticity was emerging, reflected in the gendered concept of the "homemaker." It came to be assumed that only a woman, preferably a mother, could create a proper home. Previously honored for their domestic skills, fathers were now defined by their prowess as breadwinners. The patriarch-centered house gave way to the matri-centered home. Thus, while the residence remained for women a place of work, it became something very different for middle-class men. For them, it became a retreat, a place of rest and relaxation. It was said that "with fond longings does he turn toward that bright paradise, his home. . . . With what refreshing gladness does he retire from the noise, and strife . . .

into this *sanctum sanctorum* of the world's vast temple" (Boydston, *Home and Work*, p. 146).

#### NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Home had begun to take on a meaning once associated only with heaven. This transition was slow and uneven, but in the course of the early nineteenth century a shift in religious sensibilities initiated by the evangelical Protestant middle classes spiritualized domesticity, giving it a sacramental quality that it had not had earlier. Catholics were slower to sacralize the home, but they too would eventually sanctify it. The first step in this process was to erect new boundaries between home and world. The house, previously a semipublic space, was gradually becoming an entirely private sphere. Entry into the *sanctum sanctorum* took on a ritualized formality it had not previously had. But because most middle-class households had servants, internal space was differentiated in such a way as to segregate those rooms (the parlor, dining room, and bedrooms) that belonged to the family and those (kitchen, stables, and "below stairs") reserved for strangers. The single-family house, located at the edges of eastern cities, was becoming the norm of middle-class family life. This private way of life was mirrored in a private way of death, with new cemeteries laid out in family plots with tombs that looked like suburban houses. Heaven itself came to be imagined as a pleasant suburb filled with nuclear families.

Time was also used to set home apart from house. A series of daily, weekly, and annual family-centered rituals came into existence, separating the newly invented notion of "family time" from work and public time more generally. Christmas, previously a public event, came to be the archetypal family occasion, a moment of homecoming that had no precedent in earlier centuries. The idea of home, usually the maternal home, as a place of return reinforced its temporal as well as spatial mystique. Home came to be associated with personal or familial past, an object of intense nostalgia. In an era of rapid change and frequent movement, when Americans—both native and immigrant—were beginning to move westward in massive numbers and would never go back to their place of birth again, the symbol of home took on enormous meaning. Home became for many, and especially for middle-class men, both a dream of future success and a memory of lost paradise. Home was to become an ideal, often at odds with the places people actually lived in.

#### MYTH OF THE AMERICAN HOME

The ideal of the American home emerging in the early nineteenth century should not be confused with the residential life even of the Protestant middle classes who invented it. It is wrong to think of housewives as ladies of leisure. Their toil, vastly increased by the elevated standards of Victorian homemaking, was portrayed as a labor of love. Yet married women were in many ways worse off than single women, who at least had access to their own earnings. Motherhood, also idealized, was no paradise either. High infant and maternal death rates made it a cause of intense anxiety and real distress. No wonder many women put off marriage and considered alternative living arrangements. Children were perhaps the chief beneficiaries of the newly established home life. Among the middle classes they were coming to be regarded as innocent creatures, in need of protection from the world. Withdrawn from work and increasingly confined to school, they were, however, still subject to whims of adults and were much less independent than their age-mates among the working classes.

For the vast majority of Americans, home was nothing more than a dream. A freestanding house was beyond the reach of most wage workers. Slaves, who were a part of their masters' household property, were not allowed to own their own houses. Immigrants might aspire to homeownership, but most were too poor to attain their goal. And even among the rising middle classes, the ever-increasing standards of a middle-class home—fashionable furniture, fine art, good food and drink—always seemed just beyond reach, a spur to constant striving, a source of anxiety, and in the case of those who failed to earn enough, a cause of shame. Home had become a generator of gender and generational differences. It was also to become a marker of class division.

The Protestant middle-class concept of home did not go unchallenged, however. Most Americans lived the best they could, ignoring and even defying its standards. In the early nineteenth century, inner-city slum dwellers as well as people on the expanding frontiers put together their own heterogeneous residential arrangements. The various utopian communities that proliferated in this same period offered a variety of alternative living arrangements which were explicitly aimed at coping with the well-known shortcomings of the private home and nuclear family. Experiments ranging from polygamy to celibacy attracted many adherents; at places like Oneida community in New York State, communal dining rooms and shared child care proved very popular. In the South, slaves, forbidden to marry, performed their

own nuptials, which allowed them to have some measure of family and domestic life.

Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) was particularly uneasy about the new homes and private cemeteries he saw being built all around Walden Pond. He worried that the sanctification of domestic life reflected in their architecture produced a poorer rather than richer spiritual life. Invoking an earlier tradition in which the house was a mere way station on a grander journey, he wrote: "We no longer camp as if for a night, but have settled down on earth and forgotten heaven. . . . We have built for this world a family mansion, and for the next a family tomb" (Chandler, *Dwelling in the Text*, p. 40). In this respect, Thoreau was a prophet, anticipating developments that continue to shape the American landscape into the twenty-first century.

**See also Architecture: Vernacular; Gender: Overview; Gender: Ideas of Womanhood; Parenthood; Work: Domestic Labor; Work: Women's Work.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Boydston, Jeanne. *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Chandler, Marilyn R. *Dwelling in the Text: Houses in American Fiction*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.
- Clark, Clifford Edward, Jr. *The American Family Home, 1800–1960*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986.
- Hayden, Dolores. *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth*. New York: Pantheon, 2003.
- McDannell, Colleen. *The Christian Home in Victorian America, 1840–1900*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.
- Sobel, Mechal. *The World They Made Together: Black and White Values in Eighteenth-Century Virginia*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- Van de Wetering, Maxine. "The Popular Concept of 'Home' in Nineteenth-Century America." *Journal of American Studies* 18 (1984): 5–28.

John R. Gillis

---

**HOMOSEXUALITY** In the late colonial and early national eras, same-sex sexual behavior was at times still seen as a discrete sinful act unrelated to a person's identity. Only over time did the notion develop that homosexual acts unquestionably indicated an overall sexual identity.

In the new nation the penalty for sodomy was death, but prosecutions for same-sex behavior were

rare. (Some, like Thomas Jefferson, proposed changing the penalty from death to castration.) The numbers of sodomy cases heard by the courts had declined through the colonial period. The overall lack of court cases, although notable when compared with much of Europe in the same period, does not mean that homosexuality was virtually unknown in early America. Society was generally intolerant of explicit same-sex sexual behavior and especially condemned such behavior when linked to gender non-conformity.

Newspapers and imported literature poked fun at men interested in sex with other men and, with ribald humor, derided their character. A variety of eighteenth-century print genres viewed same-sex sexual behavior as indicative of moral corruption, and some publications endorsed executing men convicted of committing sodomy. Only very rarely did print sources even broach the subject of lesbianism.

The term "Boston Marriage" did not come into public use until after the publication of Henry James's 1886 novel *The Bostonians*, in which an early feminist develops a strong attachment to a young woman from a prominent Boston family. But the relationship the term describes—a romantic friendship between two women, usually expressed through correspondence—had been known since the mid-eighteenth century. In the 1750s, for example, Sarah Prince and Esther Burr wrote letters to each other expressing mutual support and their intense passionate interest in each other. When Burr died Prince compared her love for her friend to that she felt for her husband. In the mid-nineteenth century, the literary critic and reformer Margaret Fuller expressed similar emotions in her description of falling in love at the age of thirteen with an Englishwoman. Such intense female friendships became socially acceptable and allowed some women to live together in partnerships.

Men's diaries and correspondence from the late eighteenth century also reveal passionate and romantic male friendships. The Bostonians Joseph Dennie and Roger Vose wrote to each other about building a "permanent friendship." Their letters reveal an intensity of emotion that may or may not have included physical intimacy when the two men were together in private. The essayist and poet Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) wrote in his journal a poem expressing the despair caused by his deep feelings for a classmate named Martin Gay.

#### NATIVE AMERICANS

European travelers had long noted sodomy in Native American communities. Missionaries of the Moravi-

an Church, for example, traveling in Pennsylvania, New York, and North Carolina, wrote of "unnatural sins"—a broad term that usually suggested same-sex sexual behavior. Travelers and missionaries noted the presence of the *berdache*, individuals who appeared to be men dressed as women and performing women's social roles. Many of these individuals were believed to occupy a special spiritual realm. The *berdache* made an impression on European travelers and missionaries not only because of their gender ambiguity, but also because they were understood to engage in sodomy. Jesuit priests noted homosexual behavior among *berdache* while on journeys throughout California. Father Pedro Font, who recorded observing such individuals while traveling in 1775–1776, said he was told that such men were "not men like the rest"; he concluded that they were hermaphrodites and called them "sodomites." The *berdache*, according to European accounts, was known among many indigenous communities in North America well into the modern era.

In the new American nation same-sex sexual behavior and desire had not yet been psychologized and medicalized. Although sodomy was a capital crime, interest in same-sex sexual behavior and romance was not yet considered distinct from other sensual tendencies. Homosexual behavior was not seen as indicating exclusive homosexuality, and homosexuality itself was not yet conceived of as a determining factor in an individual's identity. Thus intense romantic relationships between members of the same sex could flourish without necessarily being reproached as a form of moral degeneration.

*See also American Indians: American Indian Religions; Erotica; Gender: Ideas of Womanhood; Manliness and Masculinity.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Crain, Caleb. *American Sympathy: Men, Friendship, and Literature in the New Nation*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.
- History Project, comp. *Improper Bostonians: Lesbian and Gay History from the Puritans to Playland*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1998.
- Katz, Jonathan Ned. *Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the U. S. A.—A Documentary*. Rev. ed. New York: Meridian, 1992.
- Williams, Walter L. *Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1992.

*Thomas A. Foster*

---

**HORSESHOE BEND, BATTLE OF** On 27 March 1814, a force of twenty-seven hundred U.S. soldiers, Tennessee militiamen, Cherokee cavalry, and one hundred "friendly" Creek Indians, all led by General Andrew Jackson, defeated the Red Stick faction of the Creek Nation in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. Jackson's victory ended the Creek War (1813–1814) and thrust him into national prominence. It also marked the last serious armed resistance of southeastern Indians against the United States.

The battle's name came from a loop in the Tallapoosa River in Alabama. The Red Sticks, a segment of Creeks who wished to return to traditional social and religious practices, built a fort across the base of the bend in the stream. During 1813, the Red Sticks suffered a series of setbacks at the hands of the American militia and regular troops. The defenses on the Tallapoosa initially proved successful, allowing the Creeks to repel Jackson's first attack on 21 January 1814. However, harsh winter weather, food shortages, and a dearth of firearms made the Indians situation precarious by early spring. Over 1,000 Creek warriors, along with 350 women and children, were inside, hoping to hold off the American and Indian force of over 2,700.

At the start of the fight, General Jackson's Tennessee militia and regular army troops built a barricade across the base of the peninsula. Then Jackson opened fire on the fort with two cannons. However, the general hesitated to order a frontal assault on such a strong position. The Cherokees and Euro-American militia troops took up positions on the opposite bank of the river, across from the undefended side of the Red Sticks' camp. During the artillery bombardment, some Cherokee warriors swam the river and stole the Red Sticks' canoes. They then used the craft to bring more Cherokees and militiamen over to the Creeks' camp to engage the Red Sticks. When Jackson heard the sound of gunfire from inside the fort, he ordered his men to charge the Creeks' defensive works. The assault worked; the Euro-Americans and the Cherokees completely defeated the Red Sticks, killing nearly 600 Creek warriors. In addition, approximately 250 Red Sticks drowned in the Tallapoosa trying to escape. The losses suffered by the Creeks at Horseshoe Bend made it the single bloodiest day in the history of Native American warfare.

The remnants of the Red Sticks, under the leadership of Red Eagle, surrendered soon afterward. Andrew Jackson negotiated the Treaty of Fort Jackson on 9 August 1814 without federal authorization. Its

terms required the Creeks to give up half of their territory. Ironically, most of the land came from the Upper Creek Towns, the same people who fought alongside the Euro-Americans at Horseshoe Bend.

**See also American Indians: Southeast; Creek War; Jackson, Andrew; War of 1812.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ethridge, Robbie Franklyn. *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and Their World*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Piker, Joshua. *Okfuskee: A Creek Indian Town in Colonial America*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Saunt, Claudio. *A New Order of Things: Property, Power, and the Transformation of the Creek Indians, 1733–1816*. Cambridge Studies in North American Indian History. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

George Edward Milne

ly Philadelphia's Pennsylvania Hospital and New York City's New York Hospital. The idea for the former originated with Dr. Thomas Bond, who subsequently enlisted the aid of Benjamin Franklin. The need to provide suitable accommodations to care for poor and sick individuals (as compared with those with resources to pay for private care), as Franklin noted, seemed pressing. Moreover, he was concerned with the fate of inhabitants "who unhappily became disorder'd in their Senses, wander'd about, to the Terror of their Neighbours, there being no Place (except the House of Correction) in which they might be confined." After receiving a charter and a modest subsidy from the provincial assembly, the Pennsylvania Hospital received its first patient in 1752. The idea of creating a hospital in New York City originated with Dr. Samuel Bard, who believed that such an institution would facilitate medical education and elevate standards of medical practice. Receiving a royal charter in 1771, the New York Hospital had no sooner opened in 1775 when a fire destroyed the building. The ensuing war prevented its reopening until 1791.

During the American Revolution, military hospitals proliferated to provide care for wounded and sick soldiers, but they were short-lived. In 1798 Congress passed legislation that provided for the establishment of marine hospitals in seaports; they furnished temporary relief for sick and disabled seamen. After 1800 the pace of hospital founding began to accelerate. In 1811 the Massachusetts legislature, following the lead of elite Bostonians, passed an act of incorporation that created the Massachusetts General Hospital, which opened in 1821. A decade and a half later, a comparable institution was created in New Haven, Connecticut, to serve the needs of the Yale Medical School.

The few hospitals that existed before 1830 differed in fundamental ways from their modern counterparts. Individuals with resources would never be found in a hospital unless insane, taken sick during an epidemic, or involved in an accident while in a city away from home. Nor did hospital therapeutics differ from what could be done in a home. Indeed, the hospital was an institution created by elites to serve the needs of the less fortunate. Power within these institutions did not reside in medical hands; prominent laypersons played a dominant role in both admissions and the shaping of policy. The overwhelming majority of patients paid no fees; the costs were borne by philanthropic contributions. A small number of patients paid for their board and were provided with more comfortable quarters. In general, given

**HOSPITALS** In eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century America, birth, sickness, and death took place in the home. Furthermore, medical care was not dominated by physicians. Indeed, the small number of physicians found in such communities as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston were not the sole or even the major providers of health care. Ministers, midwives, wives, and a variety of other laypersons played important roles in caring for the sick and dying.

Many of the "hospitals" that existed prior to 1830 bore little or no resemblance to their modern counterparts. The majority, particularly those in urban areas, originally were associated with welfare and penal institutions. Philadelphia, for example, established a pesthouse to confine sick immigrants and thereby prevent epidemics. Indigent residents who were ill or insane were cared for at the municipal almshouse, which later evolved into the Philadelphia Hospital. A similar situation prevailed in other urban areas. In New York City, the House of Correction, Workhouse, and Poorhouse that opened in 1736 became Bellevue Hospital in 1816. Combining the functions of almshouse, workhouse, and penitentiary, these institutions provided some semblance of care for sick and disabled inmates, most of whom were indigent and dependent. The existence of such institutions also provided physicians with opportunities to learn their craft and to train younger men.

As late as 1800, only two institutions in the entire nation provided inpatient care for the sick, name-

the lower-class makeup of the patient population, these institutions possessed a paternalistic character.

When the Pennsylvania and New York Hospitals were founded, the care of the insane was one of their primary responsibilities. By the early nineteenth century, however, separate institutions for the insane had become more common. Claims by such figures as Samuel Tuke in England and Philippe Pinel in France that environmental changes (that is, moral or psychological therapy) could reverse the course of the debilitating condition of insanity provided a rationale for institutionalization. Quakers played important roles in establishing the Friends Asylum in Pennsylvania in 1813 and the Bloomingdale Asylum as a separate part of New York Hospital in 1821. The McLean Asylum for the Insane (a division of Massachusetts General Hospital) opened in 1818, followed by the Hartford Retreat for the Insane in 1824.

Yet the structure, financial base, and goals of these private institutions were such that they could not become the foundation of a comprehensive system of hospitals serving the entire community. Consequently, during the 1820s and 1830s a movement to create public mental hospitals gained momentum. The first such institution, at Williamsburg, Virginia, had opened in 1773. By the 1820s South Carolina, Kentucky, and Maryland had created their own institutions. But the most important event was the establishment of the Worcester State Lunatic Asylum in Massachusetts. Opened in 1833, it set the stage for a phenomenal expansion of public mental hospitals throughout the United States. Indeed, the population of these institutions was considerably larger than those found in private and voluntary hospitals for much of the nineteenth century.

If anything symbolizes the contemporary American health care system, it is the modern hospital and its commitment to technology. Two centuries ago, however, the hospital was a fundamentally different institution, providing care for destitute, disabled, and dependent persons whose very survival was at risk. The emergence of the hospital in its modern form would have to await the scientific and technological changes that transformed America in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

*See also Medicine; Mental Illness; Penitentiaries; Poverty; Professions; Physicians.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dowling, Harry F. *City Hospitals: The Undercare of the Underprivileged*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Eaton, Leonard K. *New England Hospitals, 1790–1833*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1957.

Grob, Gerald N. *Mental Institutions in America: Social Policy to 1975*. New York: Free Press, 1973.

Rosenberg, Charles E. *The Care of Strangers: The Rise of America's Hospital System*. New York: Basic Books, 1987.

Gerald N. Grob

---

**HOUSING** Out of all the building types that combined to form the built environment during the second half of the eighteenth and the first decades of the nineteenth century, houses provide the most considerable insights into the lives of the nation's citizens and illuminate the diverse complexion and provincial nature of the Republic. Numerous variables, among them ethnicity and geographic location, helped shape the native house and created the broad range of types and traditions that are encountered and studied in the early twenty-first century.

#### A DIVERSITY OF INFLUENCES

In the decades immediately following the Revolution, the new Republic remained largely what it had been before, a collection of disparate regions with diverse cultural traditions. Within these regions distinctive building customs had been fostered and cultivated, shaped by economic and social variables, the strength of tradition, technology, climate, and geographic location. Dwelling forms, floor plans and room functions, heating and cooking arrangements, and construction materials and techniques were as varied as the nation's ethnic and socioeconomic composition. In certain instances dwellings reveal clear architectural precedents, that is, transplanted characteristics of foreign forms; in other cases the derivation of particular types is less pronounced if not altogether muddled. While high-style examples proclaimed, among other things, the prominence of their owners, vernacular manifestations often reflected more mundane and practical considerations. Some areas of the nation with distinctive ethnic traditions were, during the identified period, experiencing an influx of new influences that permeated established customs and created hybrid forms. House design and construction remained predominantly the domain of the master builder and mason; they drew foremost upon established building practices and tradition, tempered by local conditions.

**House plans.** Dwellings constructed from 1754 to 1829 can be broadly classified within two sub-



**Carroll Mansion.** This staircase spirals up three stories in Baltimore's elegant Carroll Mansion, a late-Federal-style house built circa 1811. The house served as the winter home of the family of Charles Carroll, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. © LEE SNIDER/PHOTO IMAGES/CORBIS.

groups, freestanding or attached. Freestanding houses encompass a broad range of types, both rural and urban; attached dwellings, those built with shared walls, were more common in denser population centers. Among those plans to be found during this study period were modest one-room types, single cell and half house; two-room examples, like the hall-and-parlor house—the hall offering a mixed-use cooking and dining area and the parlor or “best room” denoting a formal capacity—and various three- and four-room types, often a story-and-a-half or two stories in size. Bedchambers might be found in finished areas on the primary or upper story, or accommodation found in unfinished garret space or a bed niche. Larger dwellings included the center chimney house, with the hall, parlor, and a rear kitchen occupying the primary floor with bedchambers above, and center-passage houses with end-wall fireplaces. Center-passage layouts became increasingly common as the eighteenth century progressed. More sophisticated dwellings, such as the eighteenth-century Georgian-style houses of

Virginia and the Federal-style houses of the early-nineteenth-century Atlantic seacoast, boasted fully developed multistory plans, often of the center-hall type. Earlier houses were sometimes subsumed or augmented as part of subsequent expansion phases.

**Heating and cooking.** Among the foremost concerns in the conception of a dwelling in colder climates was heating, which was achieved through the fireplace and the stove. Wood-burning fireplaces were by far the predominant heating feature of houses in this period, and they included both jambled fireplaces such as those built by the English and jambless open hearths that were losing favor as the eighteenth century progressed. Stoves were likewise finding increased application in American dwellings in the eighteenth century, including five-plate cast iron examples and ceramic types. Among the more ingenious arrangements for heating was that utilized by people of Germanic descent: from the large kitchen hearth, a small opening allowed hot coals to be pushed to a five-plate iron or ceramic stove situated behind in the adjacent parlor or “stove room.” By the



**The Gardner-Pingree House.** A first floor bedroom in the Gardner-Pingree House, designed by Samuel McIntire for John Gardner, a prominent merchant, and built in 1804 in Salem, Massachusetts. © ANGELO HORNAK/CORBIS.

end of the third decade of the nineteenth century, earlier advances such as the six-plate Franklin stove had begun to undermine the practicality of wood-burning fireplaces and coal, too, was gaining increased popularity as a fuel. As with heating, cooking was often conducted in large wood-burning fireplaces, yet by the end of the period cast-iron cooking stoves were beginning to replace the open fire. Beehive ovens facilitated bread baking. Food storage was accommodated in cellars and root cellars, pantries, and garrets. Indoor plumbing had yet to make any impact on domestic architecture, and people remained largely bound to privies, chamber pots, and hand pumps.

#### REGIONS, TYPES, AND TRADITIONS

In the rural, English-settled regions of Massachusetts Bay and the Connecticut River valley, a tradition of heavy frame construction evolved during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that had its roots in southeastern Britain. These houses were

sturdy and largely conceived in practical terms, though not without attention to aesthetic interests. By 1750 an important change governing the house plan was taking place in these dwellings, which were typically associated with Massachusetts and Connecticut but were also found in the larger environs of New England: the abandonment of the center chimney, hall-and-parlor arrangement for a center-hall layout with end-wall fireplaces. In rural Maine and parts of New Hampshire, where winters were fierce, houses of this type were built as components of attached farm complexes—the “big house, little house, back house, barn” interconnected arrangement—to shield human activity from the harsh climate. Other distinctive New England regional forms included the Cape Cod cottage common to coastal areas, which utilized a three-room plan like the above center-chimney type.

**The Hudson Valley and Pennsylvania.** New York State's Hudson Valley region witnessed a convergence of building traditions and cultures within the

time frame in question. Settled in part by Dutch, French Huguenot, and Palatine immigrants, this area gave rise to a tradition of native stone construction that helped define the vernacular spirit of the region for well over a century. These houses, particularly the earlier ones, were often built as single-room units with jambless fireplaces and unfinished garrets, expanded in linear fashion over the generations to accommodate growing family units. By 1750 the influence of English building practices was becoming increasingly prevalent in the Hudson Valley region; by the last quarter of the century, the largely insular Dutch had begun to incorporate distinctly English features such as the center-hall floor plan, the jambled fireplace, and the symmetrical arrangement of fenestration into their dwellings. By the conclusion of the 1820s, many of the distinctive hallmarks of the Dutch craft tradition had been eroded. Further to the south, in present-day Staten Island and Brooklyn, Dutch and Flemish settlers developed a tradition of frame dwellings peculiar to that region.

Similarly, Pennsylvania witnessed the convergence of multiple ethnic groups, among them Germans from the Rhine Valley, English Quakers who settled Philadelphia, and the Swiss. In parts of eighteenth-century Pennsylvania, which like the Hudson Valley fostered a tradition of stone construction, three-room plans were common with both Germanic peoples and the English. Here, too, the influence of the Georgian tradition with its formal overtones was initiated near the midpoint of the eighteenth century and from that point forward began to transform the established subtypes.

**The South.** The American slave population's diminished place in society was reflected in its housing. In the South particularly, slave housing provided a stark contrast to the grand houses of large plantation owners. Slave houses were utilitarian in concept, predominantly of log or crude frame construction, often with dirt floors, and expressing little or no pretense to architectural fashion. Multiple units were often housed within a single freestanding building. In the North it was not unusual for slaves to reside in their owner's dwellings, in quarters segregated from family areas such as a garret, not unlike farmhands.

Conversely, in the English-settled areas of Virginia and Maryland, the social and economic elite had constructed for them houses of great sophistication and pretense, echoing the prevailing Georgian manner of the mother country. Nowhere was the transplantation of high-style architectural trends from England more pronounced than in the mid-

eighteenth-century Georgian houses of this region. The hall-and-parlor and center passage frame houses of the Tidewater region accommodated those more modestly disposed. In the South kitchens were often relegated to a separate freestanding building. Elsewhere, other distinctly vernacular adaptations, such as the French-inspired Creole dwellings of the Mississippi River valley and the log houses of the mid-Atlantic Swedes, suggest the diversity to be found in the Republic's domestic architecture. The tradition of log construction introduced by the Swedes and Pennsylvania Germans, incidentally, was subsequently picked up by Scots-Irish settlers and transplanted in North Carolina and upland Virginia. Here the distinctive "dog trot" and "saddlebag" forms developed.

**Urban centers.** In densely populated areas like Philadelphia, Boston, and New York, the row house—an attached dwelling built as an integral part of a larger group—was emerging as the predominant housing form. Built to maximize efficiency in construction and to meet increasing demands for housing, row houses had—by the end of the period in places such as New York—assumed a generally standardized layout to conform to the dimensions of subdivided urban parcels. Often constructed on speculation by enterprising builders, row housing accommodated both the wealthy and the middling classes, finding expression in examples of varying quality and scale. The row house form emerged in the late seventeenth century in Philadelphia, first in the traditional half-timbered manner and later in masonry, and was derived from contemporary English examples. By the end of the period it represented the predominant urban housing type, in its most common manifestation laid out with a basement kitchen, a side-hall plan with double parlors on the primary story, and bedchambers on the story or stories above. The earliest identified examples in Philadelphia were quite modest in concept and scale and employed one-room plans.

*See also Architectural Styles; Architecture; Construction and Home Building.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Architecture and Landscape of the Pennsylvania Germans, 1720–1920.* Vernacular Architecture Forum, 2004.
- Foster, Gerald. *American Houses: A Field Guide to the Architecture of the Home.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.
- Glassie, Henry H. *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968.
- Hubka, Thomas C. *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England.* Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1984.

- Kelly, J. Frederick. *The Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1924.
- Kimball, Fiske. *Domestic Architecture of the American Colonies and the Early Republic*. New York: Dover, 1966.
- Morrison, Hugh. *Early American Architecture: From the First Colonial Settlements to the National Period*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1952.
- Pierson, William. *American Buildings and Their Architects: The Colonial and Neoclassical Styles*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1970.
- Reynolds, Helen Wilkinson. *Dutch Houses in the Hudson Valley before 1776*. New York: Dover, 1965.
- Vlach, John Michael. *Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993.

William Krattinger

**HUMANITARIANISM** “Humanitarianism” is the term retrospectively applied by historians to the benevolent reform movement that swept through western Europe, England, and North America after 1750. The term itself did not come into use until the middle of the nineteenth century, although by the late medieval period, “humanity” had become a synonym for compassion, the inclination to treat other human beings and even animals with kindness and to relieve their distress.

#### PRINCIPLES

Both the philosophical bases of humanitarianism and its first applications can be traced to the late seventeenth century. Latitudinarians rejected Calvinist notions of innate depravity and Hobbesian ones of self-interest, instead arguing for an inherent impulse toward benevolence. The third earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713) developed the notion of “natural affection.” He also developed its negative corollary, writing that “to delight in the torture and pain of other creatures,” whether “native or foreigners, of our own or another species, kindred or no kindred,” was unnatural. Hence, to feel for the suffering of others defined one as human. The Scottish philosophers Francis Hutcheson (1694–1746), David Hume (1711–1776), and Adam Smith (1723–1790) developed these ideas further. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the idea of irresistible compassion was so widely accepted that Smith could begin his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) with the proposition that “how selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and ren-

der their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is pity or compassion, the emotion which we feel for the misery of others.” Humanitarianism presumed that, as the Philadelphia physician Benjamin Rush (1745–1813) put it, “Human nature is the same in all ages and countries.” Hence, “all the differences we perceive . . . may be accounted for from climate, country, degrees of civilization, forms of government, or accidental causes” rather than fundamental depravity or innate differences. Sharing in the Enlightenment’s optimism, humanitarians believed that both the environment and human beings were malleable. Indeed, the alleviation of suffering could serve as both cause and effect: a person who was treated kindly would in turn act with kindness. On the other hand, cruelty only begot more cruelty, while torture produced not truth but lies. As Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) argued in 1778 when proposing a new penal code for Virginia, “The experience of all ages and countries hath shewn that cruel and sanguinary laws defeat their own purpose.” In the words of Pennsylvania’s James Wilson (1742–1798), “A nation broke to cruel punishments becomes dastardly and contemptible.”

#### PRACTICES

Such principles easily entered the wider culture through magazines such as the *Spectator*, in England, and the *New-England Courant*, where Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), using the pen name Silence Dogood, observed in 1722 that “from a natural Compassion to my Fellow-Creatures, I have sometimes been betray’d into Tears at the Sight of an Object of Charity.” The effect of the new humanitarian sensibility can be seen as early as 1689 in the English Bill of Rights’ prohibition on “cruel and unusual punishments,” although it took several decades more before humanitarian reform movements emerged. After the Revolution, Americans joined together in countless benevolent societies, many of which sought to alleviate suffering. The Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons (1787) worked for penal reform, while the same city’s Magdalen Society (1800) attempted to reintegrate prostitutes into society. The New York Manumission Society, founded in 1785, opened a school for free black children two years later.

Humanitarian reform focused on those institutions or practices where the infliction of pain was particularly obvious: torture, flogging, and other physical punishments and modes of interrogation; capital punishment; and slavery. The humanitarian

impulse can also be seen in the efforts to alleviate the suffering of the mentally and physically ill.

**Punishment.** In response to the new humanitarian ethos, both the Bill of Rights and many state constitutions banned “cruel and unusual punishment.” Applying the arguments of Cesare Beccaria (1738–1794) and the Baron de Montesquieu (1689–1755), penal reformers argued that punishment must be proportionate to the crime. Post-Revolutionary revisions of state penal codes eliminated numerous physical punishments and reduced the number of capital crimes. Pennsylvania’s Act Amending the Penal Laws (1786), for example, eliminated capital and corporal punishments for a host of crimes ranging from robbery to sodomy and horse theft, while reducing the maximum sentences for many noncapital offenses. Eight years later the state divided murder into two degrees, while other states defined as many as eight different degrees of homicide, effectively restricting capital punishment for those murderers who seemed wholly depraved. While some humanitarians, such as Thomas Jefferson, supported the death penalty for murder, others, such as Benjamin Rush, were beginning to advocate its elimination. The move to abolish capital punishment met with some success in the antebellum period. Pennsylvania eliminated public executions in 1834, and Michigan abolished the death penalty entirely in 1847, with Rhode Island following in 1852 and Wisconsin in 1853. Despite concerted efforts in other states, particularly New York, Massachusetts, and Ohio, the reform movement was turned back everywhere else.

**Slavery.** Reformers also turned their attention to slavery. As early as 1754, the Quaker John Woolman worried about the effects of slavery on both slaves and their masters, “For while the Life of one is made grievous by the Rigour of another, it entails Misery on both.” He argued both for the abolition of slavery and its amelioration where it existed, and these were the two approaches taken by humanitarians in the following decades. Their efforts were instrumental in achieving the abolition of slavery in states such as New York and eliminating some of the most horrific punishments for slave crimes, such as breaking on the wheel, burning at the stake, and displaying the dismembered body parts of executed slaves. Historians debate whether slavery itself became milder after the Revolution; southerners liked to think that it did.

#### RESULTS OF REFORM

Historians debate too the efficacy of humanitarian reform. Some argue that it merely hid forms of cru-

elty that once had been public, replacing public executions, for example, with private hangings and lengthy incarcerations. Others point to unintended and ironic consequences. An intense preoccupation with pain could produce its own kind of pornographic pleasure; it is no accident that the age of benevolence was also the age of the Marquis de Sade (1740–1814). And ameliorating slavery may have made it more tolerable, at least to slaveholders, whose consciences were eased. Finally, as the age of Enlightenment gave way to that of romanticism, some humanitarians may have derived more pleasure from feeling another’s pain than actually alleviating it. When one considers, however, the abuses that the humanitarians struggled to correct, it is hard not to appreciate their achievements, imperfect though they may have been.

*See also Abolition Societies; Antislavery; Capital Punishment; Corporal Punishment; Crime and Punishment; European Influences: Enlightenment Thought; Quakers; Reform, Social; Slavery: Slavery and the Founding Generation; Welfare and Charity.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Fiering, Norman S. “Irresistible Compassion: An Aspect of Eighteenth-Century Sympathy and Humanitarianism.” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 37 (1976): 195–218.
- Halttunen, Karen. “Humanitarianism and the Pornography of Pain in Anglo-American Culture.” *Journal of American History* 100 (1995): 303–334.
- Haskell, Thomas L. “Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility.” *American Historical Review* 90 (1985): 339–361, 547–566.

*Jan Ellen Lewis*

---

**HUMOR** The humor of the colonial and early national periods featured indigenous American character types, some of whom were progenitors of what Louis D. Rubin Jr., in his introduction to *The Comic Imagination in American Literature* (1973), has defined as the “great American joke”—the difference between what people are and what they should be. In colonial America and in the early days of the Republic, this disparity was often treated satirically, satire being an import appropriated from Great Britain. Many of the practitioners of eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century American humor cast their mocking barbs at various character types, manners, and social concerns endemic to the American experience. Their

comedy also often displayed a strong democratic tendency, which would become a key recurring ingredient in what Walter Blair has called, in his book of the same title, native American humor.

#### COLONIAL WORKS

Acknowledged as the father of American humor, Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) introduced several comic types who have enjoyed long and prominent currency in American culture. In several of his most memorable comic works, Franklin adopted democratic voices who spoke in a direct, amusing, and sometimes even self-deprecating manner and who expressed essential values for living. Through Silence Dogood, a loquacious New England countrywoman, Franklin spoke forthrightly and practically, deriding Boston manners, education, religion, government, and male idleness in the *Dogood Papers*, fourteen essays written in a manner imitative of the *Spectator* papers of Joseph Addison (1672–1719) and Richard Steele (1672–1729) and published anonymously in his brother James's newspaper, the *New England Courant*, between 2 April and 8 October 1722. Richard Saunders, the wise fool of Franklin's perennially best-selling *Poor Richard's Almanack* (1733–1758), was both entertaining and moralistic, conveying gems of wisdom in jokes, light verse, comic predictions, and satiric pronouncements—all of which were intelligible to practical-minded common people. A conservative voice, a purveyor of witty advice or, as Walter Blair has classified it, "horse sense," Richard is remembered for his comically didactic and plainspoken aphorisms, such as "He's a fool that makes his doctor his heir," "Men and melons are hard to know," and "Tongue double, brings trouble."

Throughout the eighteenth century, in the competitive almanac market that *Poor Richard's Almanack* helped to spawn, humor became a major staple. And as Robert K. Dodge observes in *Early American Almanac Humor* (1987), almanac humor served as a barometer of "what early citizens of the United States considered funny" (p. 4), which included attitudes toward women, relations between the sexes, and attitudes toward immigrant minorities and Native Americans. One of Franklin's most famous comic pieces, "The Speech of Miss Polly Baker" (1747), uses as a female persona a woman of easy virtue who naively and reasonably defends her promiscuity by criticizing the double standard of sexual morality and justifies her sexual behavior by innocently claiming that she was merely following nature and "nature's God," the God who said "increase and multiply."

Another dimension of Franklin's humor, a dark and sinister side, is manifested in his pre-Revolutionary and Revolutionary War political satires—"Rules by Which a Great Empire May Be Reduced to a Small One" (1773), "An Edict by the King of Prussia" (1773), "A Method of Humbling Rebellious American Vassals" (1774), and "The Sale of the Hessians" (1777)—each caustically ridiculing oppressive British policies. In them Franklin creates personae, fashions them in the blatantly ironic manner of Daniel Defoe (1660–1731) and Jonathan Swift (1667–1745), and employs them as his mouthpieces, adopting the point of view that he is attacking, pretending to support it while actually carrying this view to an absurd extreme, thereby making a mockery of his subject.

Franklin continued this practice in "On the Slave Trade" (1790), an expression of his opposition to American slavery. Adopting the form of a fictitious letter from Moslem Sidi Mehemet Ibrahim that he enclosed with his own letter to the editor of the *Federal Gazette* under the signature of Historicus, Franklin, who belonged to a society dedicated to improving the conditions of African Americans, employed Ibrahim's letter as an ironic response to Georgia Congressman James Jackson's defense of slavery. In assuming the guise of Ibrahim, Franklin pretended to defend the continuation of slavery, drawing on some of the same political and economic arguments of Jackson. Although, his actual intent in exposing Moslem pirates' capturing of Christian white people along the African coast, a situation closely analogous to the slavery system in America, was to ridicule the irrationality of Jackson's proslavery stance.

The versatile Franklin also created one of the first American political cartoons, "Join or Die," published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* in 1754, depicting a snake severed into eight parts, representing all of the American colonies except Georgia and Delaware. Franklin likewise used this cartoon as part of his "Plan of Union" presentation to the Albany Congress in New York to persuade the leaders of the colonies to unite in order to survive. Another famous political cartoon, Elkanah Tisdale's "The Gerry-Mander" published in the *Boston Weekly Messenger* in 1812, depicts a political district as a salamander in protest of Massachusetts Governor Elbridge Gerry's effort to restructure the state's voting districts to prevent the election of members of the opposing political party.

Humor as a vehicle for political protest can also be found in Thomas Paine's (1737–1809) widely influential pamphlet *Common Sense* (1776), his spirited and rational plea for ending all attempts at reconcili-

ation and for immediate independence from Great Britain. Sarcasm was among the strategies that Paine effectively employed in *Common Sense* to persuade his readers to embrace his political agenda, particularly in the section, "Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession," where he debunked the monarchy, particularly the British crown. In attacking the practice of hereditary succession, which he states is "a degradation and lessening of ourselves" and as "an imposition on posterity," Paine sardonically writes that "one of the strongest natural proofs of the folly of hereditary right in kings, is, that nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule by giving mankind an ass for a lion." He further caustically observes that persons "so weak" to believe in "the folly of hereditary right . . . let them promiscuously worship the ass and lion, and welcome. I shall neither copy their humility, nor disturb their devotion." Paine also turns his invective to the notion of the "honorable origin" of monarchy, cynically denying the possibilities of any noble origins of kingship. Instead, what one would discover, he points out, is "the first of them [is] nothing better than the principal ruffian of some restless gang, whose savage manners or preeminence in subtlety obtained him the title of chief among plunderers."

Another national leader, the future U.S. president, John Adams (1735–1826), also turned to humor, beginning in 1763, in a series of six epistolary satires, written in the vernacular dialect of Humphrey Ploughjogger, a New England farmer. He was an early exemplar of the rustic Yankee who commented critically on political and social issues, including the Stamp Act (1765), and who would reappear in numerous reincarnations in American humor of the late eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries.

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY ERA

The three most prominent humorists of the American Revolution were John Trumbull (1750–1831), Mercy Otis Warren (1728–1814), and Royall Tyler (1757–1826). One of the Hartford Wits, Trumbull was the author of a two-part mock-heroic poem, *M'Fingal* (1776, 1782), which satirized both British Loyalists and American Patriots. Warren was a Patriot who anonymously authored five satiric closet dramas between 1773 and 1779, the best-known of which is *The Group* (1775). In *The Contrast* (1787), Tyler introduced to the American stage the character of Jonathan, the comic Yankee, creating in him a discernible American identity. In *The Group*, which employs comedy as a tool for propagandistic ridicule,

Warren uses derogatory and ridiculous names such as Meagre, Hateall, Crusty Crowbar, and Dupe to expose and accentuate the greed, self-serving motives, and hypocrisy of Tory sympathizers. For his part Tyler, also a Patriot, employed the strategies of British Restoration comedy in *The Contrast* to juxtapose the simplicity, virtue, and innocence of Jonathan, a country bumpkin, and the artificial and pretentious manners and speech of urban sophisticates like Dimple, a Europeanized American. Tyler's play, which clearly privileged the virtuous and naïve Jonathan and which offered a corrective to a potentially false, supercilious, standard of America's national manners, afforded the audience the opportunity to examine itself honestly and to determine what manners, fashions, and values to adopt.

The antithesis of Tyler's promotion of a democratic ideal of the innocent and virtuous farmer in *The Contrast* is found in New England Federalist mock pastorals of the 1790s. In courtship poems like Thomas Green Fessenden's (1771–1837) "Peter Periwinkle to Tabitha Towzer" (1798), they express antagonism toward democratization, mocking the common man by comically denigrating the rural Yankee.

#### FURTHER DEMOCRATIZATION OF HUMOR

*Modern Chivalry: Containing the Adventures of Captain John Farrago and Teague O'Regan, His Servant* (1792–1815), by Hugh Henry Brackenridge (1778–1816), is a comic picaresque novel and double-edged satire directed against both the common people, depicted as fools, and the educated, presented as impractical. In this work Brackenridge exposes the excesses and dangerous tendencies inherent in a democratic system of government such as existed on the Pennsylvania frontier in the eighteenth century. He focuses on the misadventures of the ignorant and unrefined Teague O'Regan, an Irish servant and the main object of the novel's humor, who repeatedly exposes his ineptitude when trying to pursue responsible vocations for which he is unqualified.

Despite Brackenridge's negative attitude toward democracy, the frontiersman began to emerge as a significant comic figure in America in the early nineteenth century. Mason Locke Weems (1759–1825), book peddler, preacher, and author of a biography of George Washington, also wrote *The Drunkard's Looking Glass* (1812). It comprises his humorous observations of and anecdotes about his travels on the southern frontier, graphically capturing in print the vernacular voice of the southern frontiersman and some of his rollicking activities, such as boasting,

drinking, and fighting. Weems's contemporary, James Kirke Paulding (1770–1860), composed *Letters from the South* (1817), based on the author's travels in Virginia. It features epistles recounting some of the humorous manners and customs he observed among Virginia backwoodsmen. He subsequently incorporated this subject matter into *The Lion of the West* (1830), his popular play that features the bravado of Nimrod Wildfire, a tall-talking backwoodsman from Kentucky.

While both Weems and Paulding were important trailblazers in opening up the southern frontier as a rich source of humor, Washington Irving (1783–1859) was the pivotal force in popularizing and expanding the comic possibilities of the character of the backwoodsman. His *History of New York, from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty* (1809) was notable for its foolish pedant, Diedrich Knickerbocker; its pseudocomic history; and its robust and earthy humor. More important, however, in the story called "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" (1820), Irving created a paradigm for merging the two American comic types—the Yankee and the frontiersman. Ichabod Crane, a genteel, ambitious Yankee schoolmaster, intrudes on the quiet, settled, rural hamlet of Sleepy Hollow, where he cultivates a design to marry a rich farmer's daughter and then, with her father's money, to migrate to the frontier. But Ichabod's rival suitor, Brom Bones—a rural ruffian known for his marksmanship and roguish, humorous pranks—foils and vanquishes Ichabod through trickery and deception. The eponymous hero of "Rip Van Winkle" (1820) is Irving's other major character creation. A likeable frontiersman, he avoids work by spending his time playing games with the village children or going on long hunts in the Catskill Mountains. In the mountains he escapes both civilization and his termagant wife, an advocate of a staunch work ethic. In "Rip Van Winkle" Irving also fabricated a comic plot formula, the tale beginning on a factual basis, then proceeding into the realm of the fanciful or incredible, and concluding

with a return to a realistic semblance. Though derived from German folk sources, Irving's two classic tales are noteworthy for privileging the common man and his way of life and for popularizing several scripts featuring clashes of urban and rural values, lifestyles, and manners and a readily adaptable plot structure. These features would, beginning in the 1830s, be appropriated and reconfigured by the South's amateur frontier humorists and subsequent generations of professional American humorists, including Mark Twain.

*See also Fiction; Frontiersmen; Newspapers; Satire; Theater and Drama.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bier, Jesse. *The Rise and Fall of American Humor*. New York: Octagon Books, 1981.
- Blair, Walter. *Horse Sense in American Humor, from Benjamin Franklin to Ogden Nash*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942.
- Blair, Walter, and Hamlin Hill. *America's Humor from Poor Richard to Doonesbury*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- Dodge, Robert K. *Early American Almanac Humor*. Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1987.
- Dorson, Richard. *America in Legend: Folklore from the Colonial Period to the Present*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1973.
- Leary, Lewis. "Benjamin Franklin." In *The Comic Imagination in American Literature*. Edited by Louis D. Rubin Jr. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1973.
- Nickels, Cameron C. *New England Humor: From the Revolutionary War to the Civil War*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1993.
- Piacentino, Ed. "'Sleepy Hollow' Comes South: Washington Irving's Influence on Old Southwestern Humor." In *The Humor of the Old South*. Edited by M. Thomas Inge and Edward J. Piacentino. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001.
- Rubin, Louis D., Jr. "Introduction: 'The Great American Joke.'" In *The Comic Imagination in American Literature*. Edited by Louis D. Rubin Jr. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1973.

Ed Piacentino



---

**ICONOGRAPHY** The creation and promotion of symbols to represent the United States of America was a process that started with the Continental Congress in 1776, which issued a Declaration of Independence from Great Britain and charged a committee with designing an official seal for the nation. A complex effort ensued to create usable symbols that would communicate unity of purpose, core principles, and sovereignty. Participants in committees and competitions for designs—for everything from buildings in the federal city to flags, holidays, and currency—drew from familiar European forms to fashion symbols that would serve as reminders of ancient republics and recall revolutionary unity and sacrifice. But the creation of symbols to represent the nation and the people of the United States was not solely a governmental process. Artists, writers, and ordinary citizens also participated in creating symbols and rituals that expressed their vision of the new nation and its future.

#### **REVOLUTIONARY UNITY**

Many symbols that were to become national had their origins in local efforts to instill revolutionary unity. The "liberty tree" or "liberty pole" became both a symbol of resistance and a physical location for planning that resistance during the war. Follow-

ing the Revolution, partisan politics surrounded these symbols as they became a rallying site for dissent. In the 1790s inflamed Federalists described them as "sedition poles" to cast the actions associated with them (especially those of Democratic Republicans) not as dissent but as dangerous or even treasonable activities. Likewise, the "liberty cap," derived from the Phrygian cap worn by freed Roman slaves, had a limited life after the Revolution in part because of contemporary politics. Revived in the early 1790s during the initial excitement over the French Revolution, the classically inspired figure of Liberty on the half-cent coin took on a martial appearance complete with liberty cap. As the violence of the French Revolution became distasteful to the wary American government, overt symbols of revolution fell from favor.

#### **IMAGES AND HOMAGES**

The figure of "Columbia," sometimes called "America" or "Liberty," was created deliberately to represent the nation. Traditionally Europeans, and particularly the British, had used the figure of an Indian to represent alternately the former North American British colonies or the entire New World. Like the new national figures, the Indian was usually female, with feathered skirt, bare breast, and bow and arrow. The inclusion of a crownlike headdress hinted at the idea

of a native aristocracy as personified in the Indian princess. As an American symbol, the Indian figure quickly became relegated to marginal official items such as the Indian Peace Medal, first struck in 1800. Such an item was meant only to be presented to Indians themselves as a mark of formal treaties with the United States; its supposedly Indian features were depicted in a hand clasped in "peace and friendship" below a crossed hatchet and peace pipe. The central image on the medal was that of the current president. After the Revolution, as the nation looked for representative figures, the Indian became undesirable. The founding generation of race-conscious Anglo-Americans looked to symbols they could more readily identify with and that could stand against similar European symbols. In such images Americans sought to reinforce their European origins and keep any lingering provincial insecurities at bay.

The choice of Columbia as the central figure honored Christopher Columbus. Variations on the name "Columbus" appeared everywhere in the 1780s and 1790s. Colleges and towns were named in his honor, and Columbus was a popular subject in poems and

songs. The names of scores of newspapers and periodicals such as the *Columbian Magazine* and *Monthly Miscellany* and *The Columbian Sentinel* also paid homage. The new federal city would be housed in the Territory of Columbia, and schoolbooks signaled American authorship and content by choosing names like *The Columbian Reader*.

The search for symbols that might easily communicate the principles and character of the nation went far beyond formal allegorical figures. To counterbalance the feminine figures, the masculine eagle was borrowed from the iconography of the Roman empire to remind all of the link to ancient republics. The committee charged by Congress in 1776 to create a symbol for the nation initiated a six-year process resulting in a Great Seal that held the motto "E Pluribus Unum" (out of many, one) and a central figure of an eagle. The eagle's vigilant stance suggested power and, in the inclusion of a red and white striped shield for a breastplate, an aggressive and even individualistic posture. To mark the number of original colonies, the image included thirteen leaves on the olive branch clutched in one claw and thirteen

arrows in the other. The centrality of the motif of thirteen carried over to the national flag. In the version adopted on 14 June 1777 by the Continental Congress, thirteen red and white stripes beside thirteen white stars on a field of deep blue signified the colonies in revolt and, more important, their presumed relationship to one another as equals.

#### **DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE**

Read or "proclaimed" in cities and towns in the summer of 1776, the Declaration of Independence achieved its own iconic status. Bonfires, gun salutes (observing the ritual number of thirteen shots), parades, and toasts (again, thirteen) celebrated the document. In the 1790s Democratic Republicans used the Declaration in their own Fourth of July rallies and based their claims to authority on issues of government not only on the document itself but on the party membership of Thomas Jefferson, its author. Under the party system that emerged in the 1820s, both Jacksonian Democrats and Whigs claimed descent from the party of Jefferson and so too a particular guardianship of the Declaration's principles. In 1818 John Trumbull's paintings for the Capitol included the popular and widely reproduced *Declaration of Independence*, depicting the fateful proceedings at the Continental Congress as imagined by the artist. As the generation who fought the Revolution was dying off, a wave of nostalgia and filial piety swept the nation. Lafayette's visit in 1824, the dedication of the Bunker Hill Monument in 1825, and the twin deaths of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson on 4 July 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration, inspired commemorative fervor. Jefferson himself asked to be remembered for only three things on his gravestone. The first was his authorship of the Declaration of Independence.

#### **THE CAPITAL**

Many Americans fervently desired a capital city to rival those of Europe. That the capital was to be located in the new, independent Columbia Territory (later the District of Columbia) was itself symbolic, because the city would neither depend on nor favor any single state. By 1790 the long, complicated process of designing the city, which would be fraught with competing visions through several administrations, was under way. Pierre Charles L'Enfant, a veteran of the Continental Army and a member of the Society of the Cincinnati, developed a city plan that emphasized large lots and wide boulevards to frame imposing buildings, whose design borrowed freely from ancient Roman and Greek architecture.

L'Enfant's vision called for numerous allegorical figures to adorn the facades of buildings, but President John Adams found these figures too "pagan" for his simple republican and Christian tastes.

The architect Benjamin Latrobe, whom Thomas Jefferson appointed in 1803 as surveyor of public buildings, modified L'Enfant's designs. Latrobe emphasized classical architectural forms, reduced the allegorical figures that so distressed Adams, and increased the number of eagles, stars, and representations of the Constitution. A primary element of building design in the federal city was symbols of the individual states of the union. The visiting citizen was to be reminded directly of the power of the nation and its component states rather than only abstract ideals. Where Latrobe did retain classical figures, such as the one of Justice and a winged youth, he added eagles in a watchful position and a copy of the Constitution in the youth's hand.

#### **HOLIDAYS**

Ritual observance of holidays injected the symbols of the nation into public activities. First celebrated in Philadelphia on 4 July 1777, the Fourth of July became the preeminent national holiday. In 1778 George Washington ordered a double ration of rum for troops to mark the day; by 1783 Boston had enacted legislation officially declaring the day a holiday. The memory of the Revolution was the critical factor in shaping nationalism and political culture. Speeches, sermons, songs, poetry, and newspapers all focused on the ideas of shared sacrifice, heroism, and dedication to the principle of liberty. Grounding Independence Day festivities in tributes to those qualities of national character and founding principles created emotional bonds among citizens as well as to the nation itself. By 1800 public figures across the nation were taking advantage of local Fourth of July celebrations to lend authority to their political positions.

#### **GEORGE WASHINGTON AND POPULAR SYMBOLS OF THE NATION**

Building new traditions on old foundations was often precarious. Washington's position as architect of the military victory in the Revolution and then as its first elected president went beyond simple celebrity and approached the divine. The popularity of and affection for Washington created a climate that was dangerously reminiscent of monarchical cults of personality. In Europe celebrations of the king's birthday were important public holidays; Washington's birthday was celebrated in Virginia in the years after

the Revolution and by the 1790s was widely and popularly celebrated across the nation. Upon his death in 1799, following two terms as president and his principled rejection of a third, extravagant public displays of grief included simulated funerals, memorials, needlepoint tributes, and reams of obituaries, songs, and poems. A move was made to bury him within an elaborate tomb in the Capitol itself, but dissenters to this plan included Washington's own family. Another idea floated was to put Washington's face on the penny, but, like the burial plan, this too smacked of monarchical practices.

Ultimately, the penny featured the eagle, and Washington was buried, according to his own wish, at his Mount Vernon home. But the impulse to raise George Washington to the pantheon of the gods found its expression in numerous illustrations, in Horatio Greenough's statue of the president in a Roman toga at the Capitol, in the federal holiday marking his birthday, and in the countless reproductions in schoolrooms across the nation of Gilbert Stuart's famous portrait. Although George Washington was among the elite, the force that propelled his fame and the celebration of his birthday was a product of popular will.

#### **PERSONIFICATION OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE**

Although powerful figures—politicians, presidents, newspaper editors—attempted to shape the symbolic elements of nationhood, popular symbols emerged and endured. The personification of the American people and, later, the American government was the natural outgrowth of a society born out of the words "We the People" and whose unfettered press drove political culture.

A prime example of personification is Yankee Doodle. For British soldiers stationed in the American colonies, "Yankee Doodle" was a term of derision that mocked the bumpkin colonists. But during the war the Patriots transformed Yankee Doodle into a symbol of American pride. The high point in this process was the victory over the British at Yorktown, where the troops played the "Yankee Doodle" song at the surrender ceremony to ask, in musical fashion, Who should be ridiculed now?

Following the Revolution, Brother Jonathan arose to fill the need for a figure illustrative of the new citizen of the new United States of America. This character appeared in stage plays and humorous newspaper pieces from the mid-1770s until the mid-nineteenth century. A figure of both energy and common sense, Brother Jonathan looked toward the future and always got the better of the confidence

man or elitist who tried to trick or shame him. Northeastern, middle-class, and relentlessly entrepreneurial, Brother Jonathan eventually became less useful as a national figure. As sectional divisions deepened in the 1830s, Jonathan became a victim of politics. Southern periodicals began to use him as a symbol not of an American type but of a despised Yankee type. The figure of Jonathan gradually melded with that of Uncle Sam, who is first found in soldiers' jests during the War of 1812. With a wiry build, large hat, and striped trousers, Uncle Sam shared physical traits and costume with Brother Jonathan. A common element of political cartoons, Uncle Sam was American but less representative of the American people than of the American government itself.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The United States of America, in its unique position as the first popularly created nation, promoted nationalism and sovereignty by means of the images that symbolized its principles. So that individual citizens would identify their interests with both the nation and their fellow citizens, the government needed to forge the affective ties of patriotic devotion. For the uneasy new states, fearing by the late 1780s that they had traded a royal master for a federal master, the constant reassurance that the foundation for the federal government was the individual state was key to binding the states to a common purpose. To the world beyond its borders, the new nation communicated unity of purpose, strength, stability, and, above all, sovereignty by means of its symbols. Thus American iconography contributed not only to its developing culture but to its standing in the eyes of the world.

*See also American Character and Identity; American Indians: American Indians as Symbols/Icons; Architecture: Public; Art and American Nationhood; Bunker Hill, Battle of; Congress; Continental Congresses; Declaration of Independence; Democratic Republicans; European Influences: The French Revolution; Federalists; Flag of the United States; Fourth of July; Holidays and Public Celebrations; Lafayette, Marie-Joseph, Marquis de; Liberty; Magazines; Music: Patriotic and Political; National Symbols; Newspapers; Washington, D.C.*

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Kammen, Michael G. *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture*. New York: Knopf, 1991.
- Maier, Pauline. *American Scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence*. New York: Knopf, 1997.
- Marling, Karal Ann. *George Washington Slept Here: Colonial Revivals and American Culture, 1876–1986*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- Morgan, Winifred. *An American Icon: Brother Jonathan and American Identity*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1988.
- Newman, Simon Peter. *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early Republic*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997.
- Purcell, Sarah J. *Sealed with Blood: War, Sacrifice, and Memory in Revolutionary America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002.
- Rourke, Constance. *American Humor: A Study of the National Character*. Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1986; New York: New York Review Books, 2004.
- Schlereth, Thomas J. "Columbia, Columbus, and Columbianism." *Journal of American History* 79, no. 3 (1992): 937–968.
- Smith-Rosenberg, Carroll. "Dis-Covering the Subject of the 'Great Constitutional Discussion,' 1786–1789." *Journal of American History* 79, no. 3 (1992): 841–873.
- Travers, Len. *Celebrating the Fourth: Independence Day and the Rites of Nationalism in the Early Republic*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.
- Waldstreicher, David. *In the Midst of Perpetual Fêtes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
- Wood, Gordon S. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969, 1998.
- Zelinsky, Wilbur. *Nation into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.

Gretchen A. Adams

**ILLINOIS** The southernmost of all midwestern states, Illinois also borders on Lake Michigan. Laced with navigable rivers and relatively short portages, Illinois provided relatively easy passage from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River basin. Bounded by the Mississippi River to the west and the Wabash and Ohio Rivers to the east and south and situated opposite the mouth of the Missouri River, Illinois benefits from navigable rivers that link it directly to Pennsylvania, other midwestern states, states west of the Mississippi River, and the Gulf of Mexico. The Erie Canal, completed in 1825, the Illinois and Michi-

gan Canal, completed in 1848, and other canals and river improvements greatly augmented water transportation to and from and within Illinois.

Illinois is located in the prevailing westerlies belt and in warm months the Gulf of Mexico pumps huge amounts of moisture-laden winds into the Lower Midwest, generally guaranteeing adequate precipitation at critical times of the year and enabling Illinois to grow a wide variety of fruit and vegetables. Freezing winter blasts from Canada help retard soil leaching and ensure rich, black soil throughout much of the northern two-thirds of the state. In addition, the state enjoys rich alluvial soil, especially along the American Bottom, a region that stretches along the Mississippi River's eastern bank for one hundred miles south of Alton. Growing seasons lasting over half the year in the south and about half a year in the north sustain agricultural variety.

**FRENCH, BRITISH, AND INDIANS**

Before French voyageurs and missionaries arrived in 1673, Iroquois Indians and others attacked and disrupted Indian societies, especially in northern Illinois, and drove some Indians over the Mississippi. French explorers found Cahokia, a former residence of mound-building Indians, virtually abandoned and relatively few Indians remaining in the region altogether. Establishing their first permanent settlement at Cahokia in 1699, the French generally established mutually beneficial ties with most Indians, intermarrying, providing via trade such goods as iron objects and other desired material culture, and exchanging ideas and understandings that fostered a "middle ground" culture, one that incorporated both French and Indian ways. By 1720 the French also had introduced slavery to Illinois.

After a series of wars with Britain in which local Indians generally sided with France or stayed neutral, France lost control of all of North America in 1763. The vast region west of the Mississippi was transferred to Spain. British occupation of Illinois was slow, difficult, and light, with only a handful of British and British colonists moving to the region before the American Revolution erupted in 1775. Britain tried to placate or even win over both the French and Indian populations of Illinois and surrounding regions, but were largely successful only with Indians in northern Illinois.

**AMERICAN CONQUEST AND SETTLEMENT**

Small units fighting in Illinois and north of the Ohio River brought spectacular results. In 1778 George Rogers Clark commanded about 150 Virginians;

they conquered French settlements in Illinois and then subdued the British fort at Vincennes on the Wabash. Although the American grip on lands north of the Ohio was frail, it gave Americans a claim to these lands. The entry of Spain into the war complicated the conflict for the British, and Spanish attacks against British posts from St. Louis reached northeast as far as Michigan. Peace in 1783 gave the United States not just the lands immediately north of the Ohio, but lands all the way to Lake Superior, a stunning accomplishment for the young nation.

The war introduced into Illinois a stream of settlers from Virginia and other southern states, many of whom had either served in Illinois or had relatives or friends who had served there. This migration gave Illinois powerful cultural, political, and economic links to the South and encouraged some efforts to make Illinois a slave state. In most instances, the French and the southerners coexisted reasonably well among or near each other.

The Ordinance of 1785 required that public lands be surveyed before sale, producing the familiar checkerboard land pattern common throughout the Midwest and elsewhere. This orderly method of sale avoided the tangled, bitter land disputes that flared in Kentucky and other states, inhibiting sales and cloaking social and economic developments in uncertainty. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 was even more significant. It broke historical patterns of creating colonies from conquered lands and, instead, created a steady but radical system of allowing Illinois and the other states of the Old Northwest a measure of self-government as territories and then the right to enter the Union as full states. It also banned slavery in the region, although this had little impact on the hundreds of slaveowners and their slaves living in the region.

By 1810, the year after the Territory of Illinois was formed, trickles of migration boosted Illinois's non-Indian population to about 12,300. Its Indian population probably exceeded 14,000, many of whom kept in touch with British officers in Canada and British traders and agents around the Great Lakes. The War of 1812 triggered destruction and uncertainty, causing some settlers to flee the territory, but after peace in 1815, settlement surged. Many Indians had sided with the British during the war, leaving their cultures in tatters, and a great number of native groups left the state. The federal government continued via treaties to purchase lands from Indians who had claims to possession. A large stretch of land between the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers was designated the Military Tract and was offered as

reward to military veterans. Although many veterans throughout the country never settled in this tract, they sold their rights to the land and others came to settle.

#### **STATEHOOD, TRANSPORTATION, AND NEW SETTLERS**

In December 1818, Illinois achieved statehood. This was done with a wink and a nod, for the population of the new state was only perhaps thirty-five thousand, far below the required level. Moreover, just before statehood, astute Illinois politicians and friends pushed the northern boundary upward from the southern tip of Lake Michigan, giving Illinois the town of Chicago, the route for the Illinois and Michigan Canal, valuable lead mines at Galena, and a region that now includes fourteen of the state's 102 counties, a region in which the vast majority of Illinois's early-twenty-first-century population lives. Kaskaskia had served as territorial capital, but the capital moved to Vandalia with statehood.

Despite sluggish national economic conditions during the 1820s, the Erie Canal opened in 1825, which did much to transform Illinois. Before the Erie Canal and the advent of predictable and inexpensive Great Lakes shipping, most flour, beef, honey, hides, and other goods shipped from Illinois were shipped downstream as far as the Gulf of Mexico, upstream transportation being prohibitively expensive and time-consuming for all but the most valuable commodities. With the Erie Canal, however, farmers and others in the northern quarter of the state and along the Illinois River could transport goods a relatively short distance to Lake Michigan, across the Great Lakes and the Erie Canal, and down the Hudson River to New York and other burgeoning cities on the East Coast. This did much to reorient Illinois economic ties from a north-south axis along the Mississippi River to an east-west axis via water and later via rail. The arrival of steamboats at St. Louis in 1817 and at Chicago in 1832 accelerated this reorientation. Land sales boomed into the mid-1830s, ten federal land offices by 1834 selling and recording orderly transactions. As the last sales from Indians occurred in the 1830s and as settlement pushed northward, the need for the state's capital to be more centrally located became apparent, and in 1839 Springfield became the capital.

Chicago became the state's largest city by the late 1830s, but the need for a canal to connect the Illinois River to Lake Michigan at Chicago became increasingly apparent, and construction on the Illinois and Michigan Canal started in 1836. The great national

depression that began in 1837, however, slowed work, delaying its completion until 1848, just several years before railroads would lace Illinois.

#### **NEW IMMIGRANTS, EDUCATION, AND REFORM**

Increased immigration to the United States and improved transportation to Illinois changed the state's population. Settlers from the Middle Atlantic states and from Ohio and New England dotted the landscape in increasing numbers. Cultural differences between them and the earlier southern settlers ignited clashes and disputes, including some friction over slavery and antislavery activities. In 1823 and 1824 Governor Edward Coles helped defeat an attempt to legalize slavery in the state. Settlers from the Northeast became involved in education and reform movements, and graduates of Yale College were responsible for the founding of the state's first institution of higher education, Illinois College, in 1829. Reform movements, including antislavery efforts, brought progress, but they also sparked political strife in the 1830s and beyond.

By 1860 the Illinois population stood at 1,711,951, perhaps about forty-five times the population at the time of statehood in 1818 and ranking it the fourth-largest state in the country. Its railroad track totaled nearly 2,800 miles, second in the country.

*See also Abolition Societies; American Indians; American Indian Relations, 1763–1815; Erie Canal; Northwest; Northwest and Southwest Ordinances; Steamboat.*

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Davis, James E. *Frontier Illinois (History of the Trans-Appalachian Frontier)*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998.
- Etcheson, Nicole. *The Emerging Midwest: Upland Southerners and the Political Culture of the Old Northwest, 1787–1861*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996.
- Franke, Judith A. *French Peoria and the Illinois Country, 1673–1846*. Springfield: Illinois State Museum Society, 1995.
- Simeone, James. *Democracy and Slavery in Frontier Illinois*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2000.

James E. Davis

---

#### **IMMIGRATION AND IMMIGRANTS**

This entry consists of twelve separate articles: *Overview*, *Canada*, *England and Wales*, *France*, *Germans*, *Ireland*, *Scots and Scots-Irish*, *Anti-Immigrant Senti-*

*ment/Nativism*, *Immigrant Experience*, *Immigrant Policy and Law*, *Political Refugees*, and *Race and Ethnicity*.

#### **Overview**

"Whence came all these people?" wrote Frenchman Michel-Guillaume-Jean de Crèvecoeur about the American population in his *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782). Crèvecoeur, who immigrated to New York in 1759 and in 1783 became French consul in New York, noted: "They are a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans and Swedes. From this promiscuous breed, that race, now called Americans, have arisen." As the British American colonies expanded and the new American Republic emerged, individuals and families left the European Continent, coerced by circumstances at home and drawn by opportunities abroad. They sought new homes that offered economic security and nurturing environments for their respective cultures and religions. At the same time, European slave traders forcibly brought thousands of enslaved Africans to serve as the labor force that sustained the colonial economy and contributed to the livelihood of the new American nation. Through these multiple streams of migration, the American Republic took shape.

#### **SOURCES AND EXTENT OF IMMIGRATION**

Records of immigration to the British colonies and the early American nation are extremely spotty, thus making it difficult to describe accurately the extent of the period's migration. Compared to the mass migrations of the mid- to late nineteenth century, however, relatively few people came to America during the 1700s. From five thousand to ten thousand individuals, including slaves, arrived annually in the colonies and the American nation from the mid-1700s through the early 1800s.

The successes of the colonies and the attractiveness of the new Republic led to increased promotion of immigration. Newspaper advertisements and articles encouraged individuals with enterprising dispositions to settle America's fertile lands and those seeking work to pursue the numerous available labor opportunities. Immigrants responded to new inducements following the founding of the United States, including letters from family and friends, appeals by land companies, and recruiting efforts by manufacturers and state governments. Businesses involved in the emerging "immigrant trade" also played a significant role in stimulating and facilitating the migration of Europeans.

Immigrants of the period originated in northwestern Europe—the British Isles, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and France—and were predominantly Protestant. British immigrants settled throughout the colonies, solidifying the crown's hold on its territorial claims in North America, expanding the transatlantic trade, and laying the social and cultural foundations of a future republic. Families constituted a growing portion of the overall immigration stream, while African slaves gradually replaced the indentured servants that had been a critical component of the earlier colonial labor force.

More people (Celtic Irish, English Irish, and Scots-Irish) emigrated from Ireland than from Britain itself during the period. They came in two main waves, around 1754–1755 and 1770–1775, totaling some forty thousand, in response to high population density, subdivision of lands, and growing specialization within the Ulster linen industry. Mostly Presbyterian in religion, they settled in Pennsylvania, the Piedmont of North and South Carolina, and the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

Germans journeyed to America in reaction to harsh economic, political, and religious conditions. They established themselves as farmers, farm-workers, and artisans in the mid-Atlantic region. Most Germans were members of the Lutheran or Reformed Church, though dissenting groups like Mennonites and Dunkards were also present. The Scots, Dutch, French, and Swedes—groups that had arrived early in the colonial period—maintained distinct settlements in America, though migration streams were small.

The first census of the United States, taken in 1790, illustrated the migration streams that shaped the nation. More than three-quarters of the white population were of English stock.

An estimated 250,000 people arrived in America between 1783 and 1815. The origins of European migrants, however, are more easily defined after 1820 as the sending nations and the receiving nation began to gather more specific information on those making the transatlantic trek. Between 1820 and 1830, over 151,000 people came to the United States, more than two-thirds of whom originated in the British Isles. Of that number, the Irish contributed 54,338 immigrants, or approximately one-third; the English constituted about one-fifth of the migration.

Throughout the late colonial and early national periods, events in both the Old and New Worlds affected the waves of immigration, influencing individuals and families who sought to pursue dreams of freedom and economic opportunity and to follow the

encouragements of those who had preceded them to the New World. The Seven Years' War halted immigration from 1756 to 1763. The years surrounding the American Revolution (1775–1783) brought immigration to a literal standstill. The turmoil accompanying the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars, lasting from 1789 to 1815, kept yet another generation from migrating. Finally, the political uncertainty surrounding the new American Republic, the War of 1812 (1812–1815), and the Panic of 1819 discouraged immigration to America, thus limiting much of the nation's growth in its formative years to natural increases among the resident population. For nearly half a century, therefore, immigration to the new nation was but a trickle compared to later nineteenth-century migration waves.

#### ATTITUDE TOWARD IMMIGRATION

The British considered immigration to be the principal means of securing labor for the colonies, which in turn strengthened their territorial claims and control of Atlantic commerce. Americans also possessed a favorable attitude toward immigration, viewing the colonies (and eventually their new nation) as an asylum for the oppressed of the world, open to all those who sought economic opportunities, freedom from persecution at home, or adventure in the American wilderness. There were, however, those who voiced concerns over the increasing diversity of the colonial population, considering regional clustering and resistance to Americanization by the minority non-English-speaking populations as a threat to the British colonies. Benjamin Franklin, writing in his *Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind* (1751), criticized what he perceived as the growing influence of German immigrants in Pennsylvania:

Why should the Palatinate Boors be suffered to swarm into our Settlements, and by herding together establish their Language and Manners to the Exclusion of ours? Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a Colony of Aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our Anglifying them? (Daniels, *Coming to America*, pp. 109–110)

Starting in the 1760s, Britain rejected colonial demands for more open immigration policies. Thomas Jefferson, writing in the Declaration of Independence, expressed the Americans' pro-immigration stance by criticizing the king for preventing "the population of these States" by refusing to recognize naturalization acts passed by colonial assemblies. In *Common Sense* (1776), Thomas Paine acknowledged the importance of immigration on the grounds that America was "the asylum for the persecuted lovers

of civil and religious liberty from every Part of Europe. . . . Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America."

With the Revolution behind them and the challenge of forming a new nation ahead, Americans had to confront issues of immigration policy themselves. Members of the Constitutional Convention of 1787 debated the issue. New York's Alexander Hamilton claimed immigrants would contribute to the well-being of the new nation. George Mason of Virginia favored an "open door" policy, but was hesitant about allowing "foreigners . . . to make laws for us and govern us." Others expressed fears that immigrants would retain the principles of despotic countries, which could undermine the American Republic.

From the founding of the United States, Americans saw their nation as a noble experiment in freedom, a place that would share its benefits, blessings, and opportunities with all who sought freedom. George Washington described the importance of immigrants to the new nation, noting that

the bosom of America is open to receive not only the opulent and respectable stranger, but the oppressed and persecuted of all Nations and Religions; whom we shall welcome to a participation of all our rights and privileges, if by decency and propriety of conduct they appear to merit the enjoyment. (LeMay, *From Open Door to Dutch Door*, pp. 7, 9)

While Americans proclaimed their new Republic to be a symbol of freedom and an asylum for the world's oppressed, there was a growing nativist attitude among certain groups. The belief in the supremacy of Anglo-Saxon institutions and principles and a need to restrict the influence of non-English immigrants led the Federalists and President John Adams to adopt various Alien Acts in 1798. These acts, which targeted recent Irish and French immigrants who supported the Jeffersonian Republicans, extended the time of naturalization and imposed restrictions to monitor and govern the behavior of aliens. Opposition to immigration at this time was based primarily on ideological grounds rather than on the ethnic or religious grounds of later years. Congress repealed or amended the Alien Acts after Jefferson became president.

In the early decades of the American Republic, the federal government did little to supervise, control, or regulate immigration, leaving immigration policy to state authorities. Not until 1820 did the U.S. government begin to record the number of immigrant entrants annually by requiring a complete list of all ships' passengers.

The early immigrants were, on the whole, successful. That fact, and the emergence of shipping and recruiting agencies, laid the foundation for the mass immigrations to the United States that began in the 1830s.

*See also Alien and Sedition Acts.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bailyn, Bernard. *Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution*. New York: Knopf, 1986.
- Daniels, Roger. *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*. New York: HarperCollins, 1990.
- Hansen, Marcus Lee. *The Atlantic Migration, 1607–1860: A History of the Continuing Settlement of the United States*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1940; reprint, New York: Harper Torchbook, 1961.
- Jones, Maldwyn Allen. *American Immigration*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960.
- LeMay, Michael C. *From Open Door to Dutch Door: An Analysis of U.S. Immigration Policy since 1820*. New York: Praeger, 1987.
- Thernstrom, Stephan, ed. *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980.

*David G. Vanderstel*

#### Canada

Before the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, New France—subsequently Canada—was the neighbor of the United States not only to the north but also to the west. The colonial settlers in the vast and once contiguous area known as New France were overwhelmingly French as opposed to the inhabitants of the thirteen original states who were mainly of British extraction.

It is important to realize, however, that French colonization in North America, which was sparse except along the St. Lawrence River and in a few other areas—chiefly along the Mississippi River, notably New Orleans—came to an end with the British conquest in 1760. (Quebec assumed its modern boundaries by royal proclamation in 1763.) In Quebec, areas surrounding it, and a few enclaves in the rest of Canada, the early French settlers and their descendants have managed to preserve their ethnic identity into the twenty-first century, while those everywhere else in North America have largely been assimilated. Cajuns—descendants of Acadian colonists who were deported beginning in 1755 from what later became known as the Maritime Provinces and began arriving

in Louisiana in 1760—constitute an exception, although two and a half centuries later the group's cohesion and numbers are disputed. (Cajuns are sometimes lumped with the offspring of the original French settlers, the French planters who later emigrated from Haiti, and the latter's French-speaking slaves.). Meanwhile, in 1765, Acadian deportees were allowed to return to their homeland. Many did although they did not always settle in the same areas of Canada.

Migration between Canada and the United States has been a continuous phenomenon since the earliest times. Until the 1830s, however, Canadian immigration to the United States was slack and stood in sharp contrast to movement in the opposite direction. Afterward, however, the pendulum swung the other way.

During the American Revolution and especially in 1783 and 1784, some one hundred thousand Loyalists, American colonists who supported the British cause, left the United States. About half of them relocated to Canada, their preferred destinations being Montreal; Quebec City; Sorel; and above all, the Eastern Townships of Lower Canada and Nova Scotia. The Maritime Provinces admitted more than thirty thousand Loyalists, notably in the St. John River valley, and, in 1784, largely due to this influx, Nova Scotia was divided and its northern and western section became a separate province called New Brunswick. In the next two decades, perhaps as many as fifteen thousand other Americans, discouraged by poor economic conditions in the United States and seeking work and cheap land to homestead, followed in their footsteps, settling in the same areas and also in Ontario.

However, in the late 1830s, Canada was beset by political turmoil and business stagnated while prosperity returned to the eastern states. At the same time, vast new lands became readily available in the Mississippi Valley. As a consequence, American immigration to Canada dropped off sharply and the tide of immigration turned southward.

*See also Acadians; Canada; Louisiana; Louisiana Purchase; Loyalists.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brault, Gerard J. *The French Canadian Heritage in New England*. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1986.
- Hansen, Marcus Lee, and John Bartlet Brebner. *The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1940.

*Gerard J. Brault*

#### England and Wales

The English and Welsh immigrants who crossed the Atlantic did so for a variety of optimistic reasons. Yorkshire farmers, London merchants, Monmouth tradesmen, and Brecon miners who embarked from ports in London, Liverpool, and Bristol were vital to the shaping of American identity.

English and Welsh emigration reached its peak during the last half of the eighteenth century, when it appeared as though all able-bodied young men were headed for port cities, intent on departure. Overcrowding and a weakened economy, particularly in the northern agrarian sections, caused many to look for relief in the American colonies. The population of the typical English village was already mobile, as a majority of young men had left home by the age of nineteen; this itinerant attitude made the prospect of an Atlantic move less daunting than for other European emigrants.

Middlemen on both sides of the Atlantic helped the process along, with promises of overseas fortune hung in notices in pubs and on shop windows. In some cases unscrupulous "crimbs" encouraged seamen and laborers to run up large debts of ale, food, and clothes, and then called in the debt by presenting the choice of debtors' prison or indentured service across the Atlantic.

London was by far the most popular departure point, as almost a quarter of pre-Revolution emigrants claimed the city as residence. Seventy percent of English and Welsh emigrants left from its port, some coming from four hundred miles away. The remainder sailed from the ports of Liverpool, Hull, Bristol, and smaller harbors such as the Isle of Man. Yorkshire was a significant source of emigrants to Nova Scotia and the upcountry of New York, driven by an increasing scarcity of land and increase in rents. Yorkshireman John Wetherhead, who left Leeds in the 1760s, became one of the new breed of land speculators, scouting territory in northern New York and vigorously promoting purchases for new immigrants by promises of fertile land, easy access to river trade routes, and family safety.

Young men such as Wetherhead were by far the majority of emigrants. Over half of all English emigrants were men under the age of thirty, with many of those under twenty-five. Although they spanned all classes, the typical emigrant was a metropolitan skilled tradesman or artisan who had completed an apprenticeship in a skilled trade and felt his value would be realized in America. Clergymen and agrarian families, mostly from the North, hoped to settle

in a more fruitful situation as well. Less than 20 percent were described as being "the enterprising sort," namely merchants and entrepreneurs. Those who were settled in comfortable professions in England did not feel the pull to leave, and only a very small percentage of immigrants claimed to be upper-class.

The number of immigrants varied widely from decade to decade, increasing through the eighteenth century until the Revolution. It peaked at some 125,000 between 1764 and 1776, prompting Parliament to consider a bill banning North American emigration entirely. The glut of new arrivals soon spread farther to the American interior, greatly extending the possibilities on the continent away from the port cities.

Emigrants were drawn to certain regions based on available opportunities. Young urban men settled in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, colonies with labor markets in need of experienced tradesmen. Rural families were drawn to Nova Scotia, New York, and North Carolina, farming regions where settlement, not fortune, was the goal. Familiarity played a role as well. Many preferred districts that resembled the areas they had left behind; thus, for instance, Welshmen populated the mining towns of Pennsylvania and English merchants the port cities of New England and the mid-Atlantic.

The ten- to thirteen-week Atlantic crossing was made by merchant ships, which picked up a few emigrants for the free labor they provided on the trip, and larger vessels dedicated to ferrying as many emigrants in as little space as possible. One ship in the mid-eighteenth century spent twenty-two weeks at sea and cast seventy-five bodies overboard during the crossing; the *Essex*, bound for the northern provinces in 1720, was taken by pirates, who terrorized the passengers and diverted the ship to Newfoundland. The sad fate of the *Nancy*, a Sunderland brig overloaded with settlers which embarked from Britain in 1773, meant for the northern wilderness of New York, was not unusual: after a brutal crossing, during which disease and storms claimed the lives of one-third of the passengers, the weak and emaciated remainder were submitted to a strict quarantine by unsympathetic customs officials in New York harbor.

Some made the crossing almost by accident. John Harrower left the Shetland Islands in 1773, seeking any employment in Britain, and his travels took him southward through Scotland, Newcastle, and Liverpool. Down to his last shilling, he walked eighty miles to London and accepted the first employment he found—passage to America as a servant

on the steamship *Planter*. In the end, he was luckily enlisted as a tutor to a Virginia merchant, avoiding the toils of fieldwork.

As the Revolution approached, new arrivals pushed westward with remarkable speed. By 1770 the Great Wagon Road stretched from Philadelphia some eight hundred miles through rocky and swampy terrain to Augusta, Georgia; via this route, migrants spread through the south and west by the thousand. Absentee land speculators in England, who had never even set foot in the province of "West Florida," enticed settlers with fantastic descriptions of plentiful game and fertile ground—which settlers quickly discovered was just so much swampland.

As many as half the male emigrants from England came across as indentured servants. They met the costs of emigration by reaching agreement with a ship captain or broker, who paid their transit in exchange for a period of service of anywhere from one to four years. Such indentures could be sold or bartered, and the servant was legally bound for the period of his contract. Though most served out their terms, there were many cases of escape. Londoner John Watts fled from his brass-making master in 1775 and was sought with the offered reward of five pounds and "reasonable charges" of capture; the former convict William Chase was hunted with the warning that he was a villain.

For those who came for the promise of open land, the West held limitless potential. Taking advantage of existing networks of trade and agriculture, wealthy British squires imagined potential estates that would dwarf the size of their lands at home. The earl of Dartmouth's tracts totaled 100,000 acres near present-day Miami. Absentee landlords like Dartmouth needed immigrants to cultivate and protect their lands, and found no shortage of Britons ready to cross.

While few families emigrated together in America, and those who did were frequently only a husband and wife with no children, emigration had a profound effect on family life in America. The greatest concentration of families settled in New York, and Nova Scotia, and quickly tried to re-create the family and gender roles they had in England. Colonial life forced changes in those roles, however, as both men and women assumed previously unfamiliar duties—particularly for women, in fieldwork and paid labor. While the traditional family structure survived, it was forced to adapt and become less rigidly defined than before. The large numbers of young, able men caused the structure of courtship and marriage to change as well; men and women married a few years

later, on average, in the colonies than in England, and also had fewer children.

Welsh emigration to America was quite small compared to that from England, but uniquely Welsh settlements were formed in many parts of colonial America. Welsh Quakers were by far the largest group of immigrants to Pennsylvania, and by 1700 they accounted for approximately one-third of the colony's estimated population of twenty thousand, reflected today in a legacy of Welsh place names like Bryn Mawr and Cardiff. Welsh miners, the most skilled in Europe, came to Pennsylvania because of the opportunities in the mines; they found better working conditions and a better chance of owning property. In the ironworks of Maryland, in scattered but close-knit communities in New York and Connecticut, in later migrations of Baptists to South Carolina, and in small settlements like the community of Calvinist Welshmen who settled in Jackson County, Ohio, in the mid-eighteenth century, Welshmen brought their cultural identity and guarded it in North America.

Perhaps because of their own conflicted colonial relationship with England, Welshmen were also more likely to ally themselves with American Revolutionary ideals. Fourteen generals of the Revolutionary army were Welsh, as were eighteen of the men who signed the Declaration of Independence. Men like James Davies, originally from Carnarvon, earned distinction as a militia captain during the time of the Whiskey Rebellion.

The polyglot mixture of emigrants in America was nothing like the ordered social world, with its defined strata, in England from which the immigrants came. Although many struggled to cope with the challenges of the colonial world, as a whole the English and Welsh showed a remarkable resilience. They established homogenous and integrative networks and practices with remarkable speed. Immigrants from England and Wales managed to retain their national identity even as they forged a new, American presence.

*See also Expansion; Iron Mining and Metallurgy; Quakers; Work: Indentured Servants.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bailyn, Bernard. *Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution*. New York: Knopf, 1986.
- Bailyn, Bernard. *The Peopling of British North America: An Introduction*. New York: Knopf, 1986; New York: Vintage, 1988.

Campbell, Mildred. "English Emigration on the Eve of the American Revolution." *American Historical Review* 61 (Oct. 1955): 1–20.

Dublin, Thomas, ed. *Immigrant Voices: New Lives in America 1773–1986*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993.

Dunaway, Wayland F. "Early Welsh Settlers of Pennsylvania." *Pennsylvania History* 12 (October 1945): 251–269.

Fogleman, Aaron S. "The Transformation of Immigration in the Era of the American Revolution." *The Journal of American History* 85, no. 1. (June, 1998): 43–76.

Hancock, David. *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735–1785*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

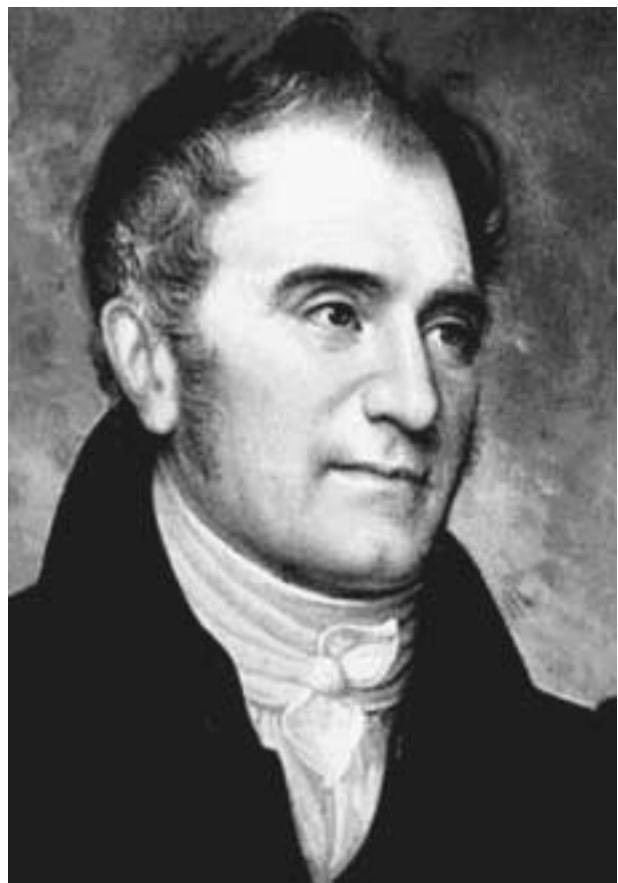
Kulikoff, Allan. *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.

Wright, Louis B. *The Dream of Prosperity in Colonial America*. New York: New York University Press, 1965.

Doug Krehbiel

#### France

Migration of French men and women to the new American nation followed two distinct, successive patterns between the 1780s and the 1820s. Setting aside the few individuals who fought alongside the Americans during the Revolutionary War and remained in the United States afterward, a first group included sizable contingents of migrants who reached the United States during the 1790s and 1800s, usually as a consequence of the French and Haitian Revolutions. Beginning in 1790–1791 and accelerating in 1792–1794, some ten thousand émigrés arrived in the United States from metropolitan France. Most were royalists. Others were moderate republicans who fled the increasing Jacobin radicalization of the revolutionary process. At the same time, the slave revolt in Saint Domingue led to a significant emigration of white and mulatto colonists—along with some of their slaves. Many of the white colonists had only arrived in the prized sugar island during the 1770s and 1780s. They now reinforced the French communities in the United States. One of the largest, albeit belated, population movements took place in 1809, when former Saint Domingue colonists who had resettled in Cuba were expelled from the island by the Spanish authorities as a consequence of Napoleon's invasion of Spain. Some eight thousand of these refugees fled to New Orleans, whose French-speaking population they doubled within a few months. Last and quantitatively least significant during these decades were the migrants, often of republican and later Napoleonic persuasion,



**Éleuthère Irénée du Pont.** A French immigrant to the United States, Éleuthère Irénée du Pont (1771–1834), shown here in a portrait by Rembrandt Peale (c. 1790), established a gunpowder company in 1802 in Wilmington, Delaware. This firm was the forerunner of the DuPont chemical company.

who fled Napoleon's imperial and Louis XVIII's Restoration France during the 1800s and 1810s.

Quite different from these diasporic movements linked to the French and Haitian Revolutions were the migrations that developed when peace returned to Europe after 1815. Like other Europeans at the time, some French women and men were attracted to the United States by economic motives. Fewer individuals left France than other areas of Europe in the late 1810s and 1820s because the country's lesser demographic growth alleviated population pressure and helped maintain France's pattern of small farms and small industry in the countryside, where many small farmers were also part-time laborers in the local mill or mine.

But France did not escape the migratory temptations that were common in the British islands and western continental Europe at the time. During the

1820s several thousand left France every year and many others dreamt of following their examples. The Río de la Plata, Mexico, and the United States were on the mental map of many Frenchmen hoping for a different future. Aside from Paris, most of those who chose the United States came from the peripheral regions of France: Alsace and Lorraine in the northeast, the southwest from Bordeaux to Toulouse to the Pyrenees, or the mountain regions of central France.

The different groups of immigrants and exiles who went to the United States between the 1780s and the 1820s created lively communities in the new American Republic, particularly in the capital at Philadelphia and in New York, Baltimore, Charleston, Norfolk, and New Orleans after the Louisiana Purchase (1803). During the 1790s Philadelphia was host to thousands of French men and women of contrasting political persuasions, ranging from Jacobin supporters of the French Revolution to royalist exiles.

In general, and although individual situations could be very different, continental émigrés and Saint Domingue refugees were mobile populations in uncertain circumstances. They crowded the seaports' boardinghouses and attempted to make do by using whatever social networks of the past might be available or by founding new ones. They created French ethnic societies and more than ten newspapers, which—while often short-lived—brought them news from home and provided space for political debates. More often than not, they disagreed in their assessments of the political situation in France and the events in Saint Domingue. Some émigrés left the seaports and relocated in rural America, becoming farmers in Pennsylvania or planters in Alabama or Virginia. Once the political situation quieted down in France in the late 1790s, many continental exiles returned to France. But others stayed. The arrival of the Saint Domingue refugees from Cuba in 1809 reinforced New Orleans's post-Louisiana Purchase pre-eminence as the most important concentration of French—indeed, the only one where French speakers were a majority.

Therefore, French economic migrants of the late 1810s and 1820s did not arrive in a vacuum. They built on migratory traditions within the French Atlantic that went back to the eighteenth century. Entering the United States through the ports of New Orleans or New York City, some decided to stay and reinforce what had become the two largest French communities in the United States. New Orleans's city directories of the 1820s testify to the number of

French natives who became merchants, clerks, artisans, or teachers and attempted to take advantage of the port's extraordinary growth. Like their predecessors in the 1790s, French migrants of the 1820s developed ethnic institutions in New Orleans and New York, including the *Courrier des États-Unis*, which was created in New York in 1828 and soon became the longest-lasting and most influential French newspaper in the United States. Perhaps the greatest moment of visibility for French migrants took place when Lafayette traveled to the United States a last time in 1824 and 1825 as "the guest of the nation" and met with his countrymen and women, some of whom had left the seaports and attempted to better their lots in rural America—in the Ohio and later the Mississippi Valley or in rural Louisiana.

With the exception of the later migration to California, the migratory patterns of French people to the United States between the 1780s and the 1820s remained in place for much of the nineteenth century. The relative weight of French migrants within the total European migration, however, became less significant.

*See also French; Haitian Revolution; New Orleans.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brasseaux, Carl, and Glenn R. Conrad, eds. *The Road to Louisiana: The Saint-Domingue Refugees (1792–1809)*. Translated by David Cheramie. Lafayette: Center for Louisiana Studies, 1992.
- Childs, Frances S. *French Refugee Life in the United States, 1790–1800: An American Chapter of the French Revolution*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1940.
- Geggus, David P., ed. *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001.
- Greer, Donald. *The Incidence of the Emigration during the French Revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951.

François Weil

#### Germans

At the start of the American Revolution people of German background represented roughly 10 percent of the 2.5 million inhabitants of the British colonies. Nearly half of them lived in Pennsylvania and most of the others in New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. Significant numbers of Germans lived also in the Carolinas and Georgia, and a smaller number in New England.

German migration to North America began early in the seventeenth century when Germans accompa-

nied English, Dutch, and Swedish colonizers in ventures along the Atlantic coast, but the settlement of Germantown, near Philadelphia, in 1683 is commonly regarded as the beginning of major German migration to what became the United States. From that year to the start of the Revolution, perhaps more than 110,000 German speakers left their homes in Europe to settle in America.

Most of the immigrants entered America through the port of Philadelphia, although other ports, such as New York, Baltimore, Annapolis, and Charleston, provided points of entry as well. Some of the immigrants settled in or near the port cities where they landed; many others migrated inland to more distant locations. Thus major German settlements developed along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers in New York, along the Delaware River in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, along an arc stretching from southeastern Pennsylvania through the Shenandoah region of western Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, and in Savannah, Charleston, and the Carolina Piedmont.

For four decades starting in 1776, the stream of German immigration to the United States narrowed but never stopped. On average, less than one thousand German immigrants arrived in each of those forty years. The reduced immigration, however, combined with natural increase to maintain a significant percentage of people of German background within the American population. In 1790, the year of the first federal census, when the total population of the United States was approaching four million, estimates of the number of Germans and German descendants living in the country still represent roughly 10 percent of the total.

Areas of concentrated German settlement established in the colonial era continued as such in the early national period. Pennsylvania remained home to nearly half of all Germans living in the United States. In 1790 Germans represented 38 percent of Pennsylvania's white population. Some Pennsylvania counties had populations that were more than 50 percent German; in Pennsylvania's Lancaster County the figure was perhaps 70 percent.

Yet Germans also participated in the westward migration of American people that led to the development of new states and the geographic expansion of the nation. From established areas of earlier settlement in the original thirteen states, Germans pressed over mountains, along rivers, and through valleys to help settle new areas such as Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri.

### CULTURE AND RELIGION

The most reliable indicator of German background among inhabitants of the early Republic was the use of German language. German-speaking immigrants to America included people from Switzerland, Alsace, and the Netherlands, as well as territories inside Germany itself. The German language provided a mark of common identification for a diverse population of immigrants who otherwise differed from one another in many respects.

Germans who remained in the urban areas surrounding their port of initial entry, or migrated to other urban centers, tended to assimilate into the larger culture around them. Germans who settled in the countryside beyond the cities tended to form ethnic communities with other Germans. In both cases the German language served as social currency. In the cities a German-language print industry developed, providing German speakers a medium for the exchange of ideas and information in their native language. The urban centers of southeastern Pennsylvania radiating from Philadelphia hosted numerous print shops established by Germans, as did the Maryland cities of Baltimore, Frederick, and Hagerstown, and other locations such as New Market, Virginia, and Salisbury, North Carolina. Some of the production of German print shops served outlying rural areas, but in the countryside the German language also helped to maintain a degree of separation from the larger culture. A common motive for much of the German migration to and within America in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was economic opportunity, and many Germans found such opportunity in the purchase and cultivation of farmland; the use of the German language helped to assure that the farming communities established by German settlers provided not only economic opportunity but also an integrated culture embracing all aspects of life and mitigating the pressures of assimilation.

Religion was a central aspect of an integrated culture for many Germans in America. Some German communities were founded on experimental religious blueprints. Examples include the Ebenezer settlement established by Salzburger refugees near Savannah, Georgia; the Moravian communities of Salem, North Carolina, and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania; and the Ephrata cloister near Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Most religious Germans in the early Republic were Protestant, although there were also some Jews and enough Catholics to organize a German parish in Philadelphia in 1787. Among Protestants, the majority of Germans in early America were either Lutheran or Reformed. Missionary ministers of both

denominations helped to organize local congregations among Germans in the cities and the countryside, although religious freedom in America meant that such efforts depended on the voluntary support—and often the initiative—of lay people. In many places Lutheran and Reformed congregations shared the same church building while maintaining separate denominational identities. Both denominations also worked to organize local congregations into larger cooperative networks known as synods, which later established colleges and seminaries. Renowned among the leaders of the German churches in the early Republic were the Lutheran missionary pastor Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (1711–1787) and the Reformed minister Michael Schlatter (1718–1790). Besides the Lutheran and Reformed majority, German Protestants in the early Republic also represented a number of traditions associated with the so-called Radical Reformation and Pietism. Groups of Mennonites, Moravians, Amish, Dunkers, Schwenkfelders, and Waldensians had migrated to America before the War of Independence, seeking freedom from the persecution they often experienced as outlaw religions in Europe.

The episodes of religious revival that occurred in America in the mid-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries appealed to many Germans. The dramatic expansion of Baptist and Methodist churches during the early national period occurred in part because of Germans who exchanged their previous religious affiliation, or indifference, for the pioneer spirituality of the fast-growing evangelical denominations. Germans who wanted an evangelical alternative to their traditional Lutheran and Reformed churches also formed new denominations such as the United Brethren (founded by Philip William Otterbein), the Evangelical Association (founded by Jacob Albright) and the Church of God (founded by John Winebrenner). In spite of such developments, however, traditional German churches continued to thrive as the German population increased and expanded. Wherever they went, German settlers usually established churches, which served as the predominant institutions of German culture.

In association with churches Germans also established schools for the religious instruction and elementary education of young people. The prevalence of schools in German communities contributed to a high degree of literacy among the German population and further promoted the integrity of German culture.

### POLITICS AND LEADERSHIP

Despite their cultural distinctions in the early American Republic, Germans embraced the ideals and opportunities of the new nation and contributed to its vitality. On 5 July 1776 the Philadelphia printer Henrich Miller published a notice concerning the Declaration of Independence in his semiweekly newspaper, the *Pennsylvanische Staatsbote*. The next issue of the paper included a German version of the entire Declaration. Miller's eagerness to publicize in German the actions of the Continental Congress indicates the degree of interest Germans felt in the affairs of the Revolution and the new nation being established.

Though some Germans in America remained loyal to the British crown, the majority—including many religious pacifists who would not bear arms—supported the Revolution. Thousands served as ordinary soldiers; a few became distinguished officers. Notable among the latter was John Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg (1746–1807), the eldest son of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg. At the start of the Revolution, Peter Muhlenberg, then serving as a minister in Virginia, was named to a local committee helping to organize that state's involvement in the war. He rose quickly through the ranks of command, becoming a brigadier general in 1777 and a major general in 1783.

The war itself brought many Germans to America. The British crown purchased the military service of nearly thirty thousand German troops from the princes of several German states; because the majority of the troops came from Hesse-Cassel, they have usually been referred to simply as "Hessians." The crown's money was ill spent: more than one-third of the contracted troops abandoned the British army either by simple desertion or enlistment with the American forces, later settling within German communities in Pennsylvania and other states. Congress actively enticed such desertions with offers of American citizenship and free land. Some Germans came to America enticed by the Revolution itself and eager to aid the patriots in their struggle. Perhaps the most famous was Friedrich von Steuben (1730–1794), a Prussian aristocrat in search of adventure who met Benjamin Franklin in Paris in 1777 and offered his services. Baron von Steuben aided Washington in the training and organization of the American forces. After the war he received American citizenship and retired to New York. Another notable German who fought for the Americans was Johann Kalb (1721–1780), a native Bavarian known as Baron de Kalb (although he was not in fact a baron). Kalb came to America in 1777 with Lafayette and was wounded

and captured by the British in South Carolina, where he died.

Some Germans served the new nation in high political office. Frederick Augustus Conrad Muhlenberg (1750–1801), younger brother to Peter Muhlenberg, was elected in 1779 to serve as a Pennsylvania delegate to the Continental Congress. He later supported Federalist efforts to ratify the Constitution and was named Speaker of the House during the First (1789–1791) and Third (1793–1795) Congress, during which terms his brother Peter also served as a member of the House. David Rittenhouse (1732–1796), a native of Germantown, became the first director of the United States Mint in 1792. In 1808 Simon Snyder (1759–1819) became the first German American to serve as governor of Pennsylvania, serving three terms in that office.

Outside Pennsylvania, where they represented a large percentage of the state's population, Germans were not often elected to high office at the state or federal level in the early national period. More frequently, they held positions of local leadership within ethnic communities at the county or township level. The German conception of American law and liberty emphasized individual rights and local autonomy over against centralized authority. For this reason, although Germans never constituted a homogeneous political bloc, most of them preferred the Republican Party of Thomas Jefferson to the Federalist Party of John Adams. In the 1790s Frederick Muhlenberg shifted his own affiliation from the Federalists to the Republicans, and German support for Jefferson in 1800 helped to decide the election.

Preference for local autonomy shaped the attitudes and responses of Germans to a variety of issues in the early Republic. For example, Germans largely opposed various plans to establish public schools in Pennsylvania, preferring their own traditional parochial schools. When John Fries, a German in eastern Pennsylvania, led an armed opposition to federal tax assessors who were commissioned by the Adams administration in the late 1790s, many Germans sympathized with the rebellion as a necessary resistance to centralized encroachment over local autonomy. On the other hand, during the 1820s, when some evangelicals agitated to prohibit the government from delivering mail on Sunday, many Germans objected that the reformers were trying to establish unwarranted hegemony over the affairs of the nation, thereby usurping the authority of Congress. Ironically, one of the most enduring legacies of German emphasis on local preference is the national observance of a Christmas holiday in the contemporary

United States, which is due in part to German resistance to government workdays scheduled on 25 December and 26 December.

*See also Education; Public Education; German-language Publishing; Hessians; Moravians; Printers.*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arndt, Karl John Richard, and Reimer C. Eck, eds. *The First Century of German Language Printing in the United States of America: A Bibliography Based on the Studies of Oswald Seidensticker and Wilbur H. Oda*. Compiled by Gerd-J. Bötté and Werner Tannhof. 2 vols. Göttingen: Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen, 1989.
- Fogleman, Aaron Spencer. *Hopeful Journeys: German Immigration, Settlement, and Political Culture in Colonial America, 1717–1775*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996.
- Lehmann, Hartmut, Hermann Wellenreuther, and Renate Wilson, eds. *In Search of Peace and Prosperity: New German Settlements in Eighteenth-Century Europe and America*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000.
- Moltmann, Günter. *Germans to America: 300 Years of Immigration, 1683–1983*. Stuttgart: Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations in Cooperation with Inter Nations, 1982.
- Nolt, Steven M. *Foreigners in Their Own Land: Pennsylvania Germans in the Early Republic*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002.
- Splitter, Wolfgang. *Pastors, People, Politics: German Lutherans in Pennsylvania, 1740–1790*. Trier, Germany: Wissenschaftlicher, 1998.
- Trommler, Frank, and Joseph McVeigh, eds. *America and the Germans: An Assessment of a Three-Hundred Year History*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985.

Paul A. Baglyos

## Ireland

Immigrants from Ireland played a critical role in the development of the new American nation. As indentured servants, they formed the backbone of the labor force that allowed the colonies to thrive. As artisans, tradesmen, merchants, and patriots, they made the foundation of the United States possible. The first census of the United States in 1790 found 3.17 million Americans of European descent, of which 400,000 to 517,000, or 14 to 17 percent, were of Irish origin. In 1820, the year when the Department of State began collecting statistics about immigrants and their country of origin, the Irish accounted for almost half of the total number of immigrants.

For the years 1820–1830, the Irish were the largest group of immigrants entering the country, consistently outnumbering the second-place British by a factor of at least two to one. As these figures indicate, the Irish formed a significant portion of the American population well before the great immigration waves of the mid-nineteenth century. However, unlike the later influx of Irish Catholics during the Famine, the Irish immigrants of the mid-eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries were predominantly Protestant. Their American contemporaries grouped all immigrants from Ireland under the label "Irish," but among themselves the Irish had more subtle distinctions based largely on religious affiliation.

Although it is a trap to view the conflict among the peoples of Ireland as solely based on religious differences, religious labels were often used as shorthand to indicate deeper cultural and political identities. Catholicism was the religion of the oldest groups in the country: the native Irish and the descendants of the twelfth-century English conquerors who had adopted the customs of Gaelic culture. Descendants of English colonists of the Elizabethan era, the self-named Protestant Ascendancy, were members of the Church of Ireland. The last significant religious grouping was that of Dissenters, Protestants not affiliated with the Church of Ireland. This group included Quakers, Methodists, and, most significant to Irish immigration, the Ulster Scots—Presbyterians of Scottish descent who colonized Ulster during the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras. In the past, the historiography of Irish immigration was heavily influenced by Irish nationalism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a process that envisioned Irish immigrants as a homogenous, predominantly Irish Catholic whole. However, scholarship of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries favors a more nuanced treatment of the different immigration patterns of the Protestant and Catholic Irish.

## IMMIGRATION BEFORE THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Eighteenth-century Irish immigration, especially before the American Revolution, was dominated by Protestants, particularly the Ulster Scots. It is estimated that between 250,000 and 400,000 Irish Protestants arrived in America during the eighteenth century, 75 percent of whom were Presbyterians from Ulster. In the pre-Revolutionary period, there were two significant waves of Ulster Scots immigration, in 1754–1755 and 1771–1775, with large numbers originating in the northern counties of Antrim, Derry, and Down. Faced with pressures in Ireland created by landholding practices, economic decline,

and a degree of religious intolerance, Ulster Scots saw emigration to America as an increasingly attractive opportunity for bettering the fortunes of their families and communities.

Most Ulster Scots were tenant farmers who survived by a mix of cultivation, livestock breeding, and either linen or wool production. Changes in landholding practices had the deepest-felt and most immediate impact on this lifestyle. In the early part of the eighteenth century, the original leases granted to Scottish Presbyterians for the colonization of Ulster began to come due. The implementation of the Ulster Plantation was rather successful, and the Anglo-Irish landlords no longer felt the need to keep a population of Scottish settlers as a buffer between themselves and the native Irish. Leases were renewed with shorter terms and higher rates (a process known as rack-renting), some leases were auctioned to the highest bidder (canting), and large renewal fees were tacked onto the transaction. As a result of these practices, access to land grew more restricted and competitive. The Ulster Scots found themselves up against native, Catholic Irish families who were willing to pay the high rents in order to live on their ancestral lands. As their access to land diminished, the Ulster Scots farmers discovered they had a way to obtain ready passage money; by a practice known as the "Ulster Custom," tenants were reimbursed by their landlords at the end of their lease for any improvements they made to the land during their tenancy.

Many may not have chosen to immigrate because of higher rents. However, several economic factors increased the pressure on the northern tenant farmers' incomes. As their rents increased, the Ulster Scots also faced higher food prices, at the same time finding they could no longer make as much money producing textiles. The linen industry declined in the second half of the eighteenth century, going into full recession during the 1770s. A currency and capital shortage placed stress on other crafts, creating a lull in trade overall. Agrarian violence rose as it became more and more difficult to make a living off the land, with such notable outbreaks as the Oakboys in 1764 and the Steelboys in 1770–1771. As Dissenters, Ulster Scots also bore a measure of religious intolerance—being required to tithe to the Church of Ireland in addition to supporting their own presbyteries—that may have increased their desire to leave the Anglican-run establishment of Ireland. Given all these factors, and the exacerbation of an ever-growing population, many tenant-farmers opted to accept their reimbursement and take their chances overseas.

The majority of Ulster Scots emigrated in groups, either with their families or with their local church community. The majority also relied on the Ulster Custom to pay their passage in advance; however, during the recession of the 1770s, the majority traveled as indentured servants or "redemptioners" who had to repay their ship's captain within a certain period of disembarking. A symbiotic shipping relationship between Ireland and America in the eighteenth century encouraged the flow of raw materials to Ireland and passengers to America. Departing from the ports of Belfast, Newry, Derry, and Larne, with occasional departures from the southern Irish ports of Dublin, Waterford, and Cork, Ulster Scots immigrants landed principally in Newcastle, Delaware, and Philadelphia. A portion of Ulster Scots, those with artisanal skills or a surplus of capital, remained on the American seaboard and made their living as trades- or craftsmen. In general, though, Ulster Scots immigrants continued to make their living by farming, becoming pioneer settlers in the backcountry of early America; in the South they also raised cattle and helped create the cattle economy. From Newcastle and Philadelphia they moved to where land was available, first in the Delaware Valley, then to the Cumberland Valley and beyond. By the 1760s the Ulster Scots fanned out into the South Carolina piedmont, into western Pennsylvania, and across the Cumberland Gap into Tennessee and Kentucky. Initially, their lives were full of hardship. They endured around-the-clock labor on isolated frontier farms, housed in rough log cabins; the women bore tremendous workloads on the frontier. The Ulster Scots focus on acquiring more land often placed them in contact and conflict with surrounding Native American tribes. In America the transplanted Ulster Scots found themselves acting as a buffer between British and Native Americans, much as their ancestors had served as a boundary between the Anglo-Irish and native Irish. With time and good fortune, the Ulster Irish were able to increase their standing in America. The seaboard merchants and professionals made their mark in American politics, medicine, law, and finance, speculating on the further development of the west. The backcountry pioneers eventually were able to move up from log cabins to respectable farmhouses.

Nearly 100,000 Irish Catholics immigrated to America in the eighteenth century. It is especially difficult to get a clear picture of those who made the journey in the pre-Revolutionary period. Unlike the Ulster Scots, they tended to travel singly, and it is assumed they were wanderers—underclass servants, migrant workers, and transported criminals—with

few ties to their ancestral lands in Ireland. In addition to the increased competition for resources created by Ireland's rapidly growing population, economic factors forced these immigrants from their homeland. Southern Ireland experienced a famine in 1740–1741, a potato failure in 1765, and a grain failure in 1766–1767. Cottage textile production was hurt by a handloom weaving collapse in Cork in 1769 and the linen depression of the 1770s. Living at the very margins in Ireland, this free-floating group of Irish Catholics felt that it was preferable to live as indentured servants in America, hoping for better opportunities once their terms of indenture were up. These immigrants followed the same shipping patterns as the Ulster Scots, landing predominantly in Newcastle and Philadelphia.

Around 20 percent of Irish Catholic servants worked for merchants, artisans, or tradesmen in cities like Philadelphia and Baltimore. The majority of Irish Catholic indentured servants became agricultural laborers. Those working in the middle colonies of Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey worked as farmhands. Although they had to endure harsh adjustments to America's more variable climate and a corn-based diet, their masters tended to treat them relatively humanely. Servants in the South encountered a more exploitative environment, driven by the aristocratic tastes and heavy debts of the planter class. Indentured servants on plantations found their masters treated them as property, whereas northern masters only laid claim to their time. In both the North and South conditions were far from easy as shown by a disproportionately high percentage of advertisements for Irish-born runaway indentured servants. Those Irish who did successfully serve out their contracts were given "freedom dues" of clothing, tools, seed, and provisions, but rarely land. With this new stock, they often went on to become farmers or pioneers farther inland from their place of indenture, or wandering farm laborers. A minority became workers in towns and cities.

#### **IRISH AMERICANS AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

The period of the American Revolution saw a marked decline in immigration from Ireland. The war, with its closure of sea lanes, disrupted shipping and the passenger trade along the Atlantic. In addition, any potential passengers were hesitant to risk the danger of being taken up from their journey abroad and impressed into the British military. However, even as the tide of incoming Irish stemmed to almost nothing, the Irish who had immigrated in the earlier years

of the 1770s took on a significant role in the violent birth of the new American nation.

By the middle of the 1770s, many Ulster Scots immigrants had established themselves firmly enough in their new land to have moved beyond the constant labor and hand-to-mouth existence of frontier life. Ulster Scots found themselves intensely interested in the Revolutionary crisis precisely because they were more established; their financial and physical security was tied up in their American colleagues and contacts and depended heavily on the outcome of the war. They were also quick to adopt the republicanism espoused by the proponents of the Revolution, exposed as they were in their Presbyterianism to the radical republican ideals of the Scottish Enlightenment. In general, the Ulster Scots immigrants were pro-Revolutionary. As a result, the American armies of New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania had a disproportionately high number of Ulster Scots soldiers. Ulster Scots were especially prominent in the Revolutionary Pennsylvania government, with such men as Thomas McKean as chief justice, Joseph Reed as president of the executive council, and George Bryan as vice president.

Although evidence is sketchy, it is believed that Catholic Irish immigrants were more conservative and slower to choose sides between the British and American causes. Some may have felt the Revolution was a chance to prove their loyalty to the crown by serving in royalist forces against the rebels. However, dissatisfaction with the British handling of Irish affairs along with the lure of advancement within American society may have won over many. Indentured servants among Catholic Irish immigrants may have been most attracted to military service, which could very well reward them with an early termination of the indentures, business connections, and the possibility of land grants out west.

In the long run the service of Irish immigrants in the American Revolution earned the Irish in America better living conditions than those Irish living under British rule. As members of the early Republic, the Irish gained access to civil and military offices, voting, and membership in the professions of law and medicine. Even Irish Catholics benefited. Although there were still legal barriers to Catholic office-holding in some states, they did win other rights not held before. There was even an increased toleration for Catholic religion, which contributed to the solid establishment of the Catholic Church in America by 1790. The Irish Catholic immigrant John Carroll was consecrated the first bishop of Baltimore in this period.

**IMMIGRATION FROM 1783 TO 1829**

Patterns of immigration changed markedly in the postrevolutionary period. America was now a competitive market, no longer providing the benefits of common British membership, and Irish shippers were forced to diversify their goods and broaden their geographic range. Immigrants now had greater opportunities to sail into ports in New York and New England, as well as Delaware and Philadelphia. There was also a sharp decline in the practice of indentured servitude in the 1780s. The American Revolution questioned the morality of both indenture and slavery, and captains were suspicious of the willingness of American courts to uphold articles of indenture. As the new American nation found its feet, other types of work were advertised that did not require indentures. By 1800 Irish indentured servants were no longer a factor in immigration from Ireland. Shipping agents preferred the security of paying passengers, such as farmers, artisans, small businessmen, schoolmasters, and physicians.

The end of the eighteenth century also saw a rise in the number of Catholic Irish entering America, although they were still outnumbered by Irish Protestants. The failed 1798 Rebellion of the United Irishmen forced many surviving Protestants and Catholics to flee prosecution or subsequent sectarian violence in Ireland. The United Irishmen themselves, with their classical republican tradition, turned to America as a natural sanctuary. Their skills in political organization and newspaper publishing along with the timing of their arrival had a significant impact on the debate between Federalists and Jeffersonian Republicans. Irish Protestants and Catholics united behind the Republican banner in opposition to the Federalists' implementation of the Alien and Sedition Acts and their attempts to keep United Irishmen out of America. The United Irishmen immigrants, such as the successful newspaperman Matthew Carey, pushed for a wider political franchise and a more egalitarian and accessible legal system. Their ideas became the hallmarks of what Americans proudly called democracy by the end of the War of 1812. The post-Revolutionary period saw increasing numbers of Irish and those of Irish descent successfully involved in American politics. Some became influential in local and regional party politics, especially in Philadelphia and New York, while others like the Scots-Irish Andrew Jackson and John C. Calhoun were elected to the highest national offices.

After 1800 the competition for Irish land coupled with the increased commercialization of agriculture pushed more and more Catholics out of Ireland. The era of Irish Catholic immigration had begun, with

the numbers of Catholic immigrants doubling every twenty years—a full forty years before the Great Famine. By the 1810s Irish Societies were appearing in major American cities to help new immigrants find housing, jobs, and community. Ulster Scots adopted the label "Scotch-Irish" in this period to distinguish themselves from the growing enclaves of Catholic Irish immigrants. However, this was the most overt sign of sectarian differences. It seemed for the brief period of the 1820s, up through the inauguration of President Andrew Jackson, that the Irish in America would be able to put aside the religious and cultural differences that had marked them so profoundly in Ireland. This time of relative peace was broken by a mass southern Irish migration in the 1830s that sparked Irish sectarian differences and further fueled the rise of the anti-immigrant, anti-Irish Catholic hatred known as nativism.

*See also Alien and Sedition Acts; Anti-Catholicism; Boston; Catholicism and Catholics; Democratic Republicans; Farm Making; Federalists; Jackson, Andrew; Livestock Production; Presbyterians; Work: Agricultural Labor; Work: Artisans and Crafts Workers, and the Workshop; Work: Indentured Servants.*

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Bric, Maurice J. "Patterns of Irish Emigration to America, 1783–1800." *Eire-Ireland* 36, nos. 1–2 (spring–summer 2001): 10–20.
- Chepesiuk, Ronald. *The Scotch-Irish: From the North of Ireland to the Making of America*. Jefferson, N.C., and London: McFarland, 2000.
- Connelly, S. J. "Ulster Presbyterians: Religion, Culture, and Politics, 1660–1850." In *Ulster and North America: Transatlantic Perspectives on the Scotch-Irish*. Edited by H. T. Blethen and Curtis W. Wood, Jr. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1997.
- Doyle, David Noel. *Ireland, Irishmen, and Revolutionary America, 1760–1820*. Dublin: Mercier Press, 1981.
- . "The Irish in North America, 1776–1845." In *A New History of Ireland*, Volume 5: *Ireland under the Union, I, 1801–1870*, edited by W. E. Vaughn. Oxford U.K.: Clarendon Press, 1989.
- Eid, Leroy V. "No Freight Paid So Well: Irish Emigration to Pennsylvania on the Eve of the American Revolution." *Eire-Ireland* 27, nos. 1–2 (spring–summer 1997): 35–59.
- Kenny, Kevin. *The American Irish: A History*. New York: Longman, 2000.
- Miller, Kerby A. *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Miller, Kerby A., ed. *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: Letters and Memoirs from Colonial and Revolutionary*

- America, 1675–1815.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Wilson, David A. *United Irishmen, United States: Immigrant Radicals in the Early Republic.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998.

Jennifer Stiles

### **Scots and Scots-Irish**

The relationship of Scots and Scots-Irish immigrants to North America—the latter principally Presbyterians from Ulster in the north of Ireland, predominantly of Scottish background and connections—is among the most complex of migration stories. At one time it was common to treat migrants from those two places as a single people deriving from a common ethnic “stock.” But in recent years, as historians came to shun the use of racialist characterizations, they began to emphasize instead the distinctions between migrants from Scotland and from Ulster, who had been separated by many miles of water and a century of divergent development before the transatlantic migrations of either group began in earnest in the early part of the eighteenth century.

That approach has proved no more satisfactory than the first. The more that is learned about the extensive movements of peoples within the Atlantic world during the early modern era, the more difficult it is to establish such clear separations. In the case of the inhabitants of Scotland and Ulster, there was simply too much movement back and forth between the locales, and too many persistent connections, to permit the rapid establishment of distinct identities among their populations. While Scots began moving to Ulster at the beginning of the seventeenth century, for most of that century the north of Ireland and the west of Scotland were less separate societies than alternate locations to which populations flocked at different times in the face of religious and political conflicts and economic woes. Thus, while twenty thousand or more Scots settled in Ulster during the early plantation years, a large portion of them fled to Scotland during the civil war years in Ireland at mid-century. Some then returned to Ireland with the Restoration of Charles II in 1660 and the return of Ireland to Protestant control. The greatest period of Scots migration to Ulster was undoubtedly during the famine years of the 1690s, a mere two decades before the start of substantial transatlantic migration from that province. Thus, Ulster’s first migrants to America were hardly the products of a wholly separate society.

Several kinds of links continued to connect the inhabitants of Ulster and the west of Scotland thereafter. Ulster Presbyterians continued to travel to Scotland for their educations; in many respects, Glasgow served as their cultural capital. Moreover, they were linked by the process of migration itself; emigration vessels departing Scotland, for example, sometimes called at northern Irish ports along the way, and Scots traveling to America sometimes sailed from Ulster ports. It is often difficult to determine whether a particular group of immigrants had departed from Scotland or Ulster, or where they had lived before arriving at the point of departure.

### **EARLY MIGRATION PATTERNS**

One feature common to the experiences of those settlers was a strong migratory tradition. For centuries, Scots—coming from an impoverished land on the outskirts of Europe with few natural resources—had been among the most mobile people on that continent. Long before they began moving to America, Scots had traveled extensively within Europe, to the Baltic and Scandinavia and the Low Countries in search of opportunity in the army or in trade; the seventeenth-century movement to Ulster was one manifestation of that tradition. Moreover, the necessity of finding opportunities abroad had meant that migration among the Scots affected an unusually broad spectrum of the population, extending well beyond the desperately poor to include merchants, scholars, and clergymen in substantial numbers.

Early Scots and Scots-Irish migration to America was influenced by those traditions. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, relatively few Scots traveled across the Atlantic, even though they continued to move abroad in large numbers. That was largely because they were too well connected in Europe to be interested in transatlantic migration. The frequency of out-migration, including the massive movement to Ireland during the famine years of the 1690s, left Scotland rather underpopulated at the outset of the eighteenth century, with numbers at a level not much different from the century before. Thus, the overall rate of out-migration from Scotland declined in the eighteenth century. By contrast, the north of Ireland, which had attracted so many migrants, became a fertile source of emigrants, and from the 1710s men and women from Ulster began crossing the Atlantic in ever-larger numbers.

The immigration of Scots and Scots-Irish falls into three distinct phases. The first, lasting until the outbreak of the Seven Years’ War (1756–1763), saw modest Scots migration coupled with the beginning

of substantial movement from Ulster. The second phase took place between the Seven Years' War and the American Revolution (1775–1783), during which time emigration from both Scotland and Ulster became increasingly prominent phenomena and closely connected movements. The final phase followed American independence and led once again to the development of distinct patterns in Scots and Scots-Irish migration.

While there had been occasional migrants from both Scotland and Ulster to North America from the beginning of English colonization, the movement began in earnest in the second decade of the eighteenth century, heading first to New England but then, increasingly, to Philadelphia. In the peak year of 1729, close to six thousand persons may have left Ulster for the Delaware Valley. That movement was a response to several forces: the relatively high population levels carried over from the Scots migrations of the late seventeenth century; fluctuations in the linen trade, a staple for Ulster Scots; and the disadvantaged position of Presbyterians as dissenters from the established Church of Ireland. Over four decades, as many as thirty thousand persons departed Ulster ports for North America, the great majority heading for the Delaware Valley towns of Philadelphia and Newcastle. As many as one-third of Ulster migrants during this period may have traveled as indentured servants. Migration from Scottish ports during this period was much less, owing in part to stagnant population levels resulting from the considerable migrations to Ireland and Europe the century before. The principal exception was a growing movement to the colonies of persons from the commercial and professional classes that included merchants, doctors, clergymen, and public officials of all sorts.

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY ERA

Scots-Irish migration continued and even accelerated in the second phase, as the end of the Seven Years' War opened up new lands to settlement and attracted new immigrants. At least thirty thousand and perhaps as many as fifty thousand emigrants headed to North America over the next fifteen years, still concentrating in the Delaware Valley, although increasing numbers moved west and south from there into the opening backcountry regions of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, and into the New York backcountry as well. What was new in the second phase was a dramatic increase in migration directly from Scotland, also amounting to upwards of thirty thousand persons. During this phase, migrations from the two places often over-

lapped, as ships from Ulster carried migrants from Scotland, while emigration promoters in Scotland advertised and enlisted agents in the north of Ireland as well.

The second phase of migration included a significantly broader spectrum of the population than had traveled before, especially from Scotland. Where earlier immigrants had come disproportionately from the educated classes, almost all from the Scottish Lowlands, they were joined after 1763 by increasing numbers of farmers and artisans. Where earlier movements had originated predominantly in the Scottish Lowlands, in the second phase nearly half of the migrants were Highlanders, and the proportion increased until the outbreak of hostilities between Britain and the colonies in 1775. Rather than concentrating in the eastern cities, as earlier migrants had done, they fanned out into the backcountry and into the underdeveloped but rapidly growing colonies of North Carolina and New York. Especially among the Highlanders, the great majority came in families and traveled as free passengers, with only a few single migrants or indentured servants among them.

Another new feature of the second phase of Scots and Scots-Irish emigration was the place it attained in public discussion. During this period Samuel Johnson (1709–1784) and James Boswell (1740–1795), touring the western islands of Scotland, saw the rising "emigration mania" wherever they went. During that time also, panicked Highland landlords asked the British government to place controls on emigration, fearing the depopulation of their estates. On the other side, political and religious dissenters cited a rising level of emigration as evidence of the need for the reform of Britain's economic and political systems, and they played leading roles in the creation of Scotland's first organized emigration companies. All of that encouraged writers and newspapers to publicize and quite probably exaggerate the movements to the point that it is difficult to separate fact from fiction in their accounts or to gauge the numbers involved.

In addition to those newcomers, the American colonies continued to attract more than their share of Scots with professional educations during this period. Among those were two who would be members of the Continental Congress and signers of the Declaration of Independence: John Witherspoon (1723–1794), minister of the Church of Scotland, who became president of the Presbyterian College of New Jersey at Princeton and de facto head of the Presbyterian Church in America, and James Wilson (1742–1798), Pennsylvania lawyer and leading political

thinker, an influential member of the Constitutional Convention, and a justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

#### AFTER INDEPENDENCE

The outbreak of war between America and Britain in 1775 halted the migration flow; when it resumed the following decade, there was a new United States. One result was to divert many migrants to the remaining British colonies in Upper Canada and the Maritime provinces, which in succeeding years became the principal destination for Scottish emigrants, especially from the Highlands, in numbers that sometimes exceeded the peak years of 1774–1775. Montreal and Quebec and Halifax now succeeded New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston as trading points for Scots merchants.

Migration from Ulster was less affected by American independence. By the third phase of emigration, the migration histories of Scotland and Ulster were less intertwined than they had been before, possibly because by this time the Ulster community had established a more stable identity than previously. As was the case with Scots migrants, movement from Ulster to North America resumed and even accelerated during the 1780s, in their case much of it to the new United States—as many as 5,000 arrivals per year. Migration declined during the Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815), but accelerated afterward. Overall, perhaps 200,000 people moved from the north of Ireland to North America between 1783 and 1835, some to the Canadian provinces, some directly to the United States, and some to the new nation by way of the northern provinces.

Among Scots, the one kind of migration that continued in earnest after American independence was that of merchants and professionals. Clergymen continued to migrate, as would physicians and educators. One group of Scots who were increasingly noticeable in particular were those with industrial and technical skills in mining and textiles who would play a considerable role in transferring the technology of industrialization to the United States. They would include Robert Dale Owen (1771–1858), son of the pioneer of the model industrial community of New Lanark in Scotland and founder of the utopian community of New Harmony in Indiana; in his utopianism, Owen would be matched by his partner, Frances Wright (1795–1852). Technicians and inventors and engineers would be followed by entrepreneurs investing in all facets of American development, of whom the most renowned would be Andrew Carnegie (1835–1919).

Another kind of immigrant who arrived in the new nation from both Scotland and Ulster was the political refugee. The 1790s was a decade of political reaction in Britain and Ireland, and those who supported political reform in Britain or the campaign of the United Irishmen—led first by Ulster Presbyterians—found themselves confronting prison and exile. Among those who fled to America were political journalists, such as the Scotsman James Thomson Callender (1758–?), and the future ornithologist Alexander Wilson (1766–1813). Most would support the Jeffersonian party or later democratic movements.

One thing that particularly distinguished Scots and Scots-Irish immigration from that of most ethnic groups was their relatively easy adjustment into American society as white, English-speaking Protestants from the United Kingdom—despite occasional outbursts against the allegedly uncivilized Scots-Irish of the backcountry or “Scotch mercenaries” at the time of the American Revolution. Thus, they never faced the discrimination encountered by Catholic migrants from southern Ireland. They have been called invisible immigrants for their ability to fit in. Moreover, the Presbyterianism of the largest number of these migrants was often more in keeping with the American religious mainstream even than the predominant Anglicanism of the majority of newcomers from England.

Their relatively easy adaptation was facilitated also by their migratory traditions. From early on, both Ulster Scots and Scots Highlanders were regarded as a valuable resource for settling backcountry lands, where they could serve as a buffer for eastern settlers against Indian attacks. Their history of venturing abroad in search of commercial opportunities also made them well suited to promoting the commercial development of the backcountry, where Scots traders established a powerful and disproportionate presence. And, having established some of the Western world’s leading programs in the sciences and technology during the eighteenth century, and as a result of the long-standing willingness of trained and educated Scots to travel, Scots, along with the Ulster natives who flocked to their universities, played critical roles in bringing technical expertise and inventiveness to the new nation.

*See also Demography; Denominationalism; Frontier; Frontier Religion; Frontiersmen; Presbyterians.*

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Aspinwall, Bernard. *Portable Utopia: Glasgow and the United States, 1820–1920*. Aberdeen, Scotland: Aberdeen University Press, 1984.
- Bailyn, Bernard, with Barbara DeWolfe. *Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution*. New York: Knopf, 1986.
- Brock, W. R., with C. Helen Brock. *Scots Americanus: A Survey of the Sources for Links between Scotland and America in the Eighteenth Century*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1982.
- Dickson, R. J. *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, 1718–1775*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966.
- Durey, Michael. *Transatlantic Radicals and the Early American Republic*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997.
- Graham, Ian Charles Cargill. *Colonists from Scotland: Emigration to North America, 1707–1783*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1956.
- Griffin, Patrick. *The People with No Name: Ireland's Ulster Scots, America's Scots Irish, and the Creation of a British Atlantic World, 1689–1764*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001.
- Landsman, Ned C., ed. *Nation and Province in the First British Empire: Scotland and the Americas, 1600–1800*. Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 2001.
- Miller, Kerby A. *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Woceck, Marianne S. "Irish Immigration to the Delaware Valley before the American Revolution." *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 96 (1996): 103–135.

Ned C. Landsman

***Anti-Immigrant Sentiment/Nativism***

Nativism during the first half century of American nationhood played nothing like the part it did in the second. No movement to define nationality in a restrictive way coalesced sufficiently to produce local political movements like New York City's Native American Democratic Association of the mid-1830s, much less putatively national organizations such as the American Party of the 1850s. At the end of the third decade of the nineteenth century, there were still no colorful nativist fraternities like the Order of United Americans or the Sons of the Sires of '76. There were no convent burnings, lurid public exposés of the "licentiousness" of the Roman Catholic confessional, street battles between immigrant and "native" fire companies, or employers' windows posted with "No Irish Need Apply" notices. There was only a hint of the mass immigration from Europe that later offered nativists their foils, the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon (1793–1815)

and the United States's own economic doldrums providing little encouragement to transatlantic migrants.

**THE QUESTION OF NATIONALITY**

Yet the roots of the robust nativist movement that spawned a major third party political insurgency at mid-century, played a role in the remaking of the American political landscape, and had a prominent and enduring cultural impact lasting into the twentieth century were nurtured in the decades before 1830. It should not be at all surprising that a movement about defining nationality had its origins in a period of nation building.

The opportunity for a nativist movement was provided by the unprecedented character of the American nation itself. The preexisting European definitions of "nation" did not seem to fit this new creation. The United States neither drew identity from association with a historic "people," with cohesion in common traditions, values, culture, or "blood," nor from time-tested institutions nor even long-established territorial boundaries in the ways to which Europeans were accustomed. To be sure, the United States had established political and legal structures, but the notion that they operated by the voluntary subscription of the citizenry rather than as the inheritance of monarchical authority or feudal obligation was uncontested.

European doubters regularly reminded Americans that they might not be a nation at all, certainly not one calculated to endure. Americans were disposed to have their own doubts. Political rhetoric inherited from eighteenth-century Britain posited that republics faced endemic internal threats. The rich and powerful might come to dominate as oligarchs or the poor and ignorant might fall to the sway of demagogues and tend to anarchy. Consequently, the central requisite for a republican citizen seemed to be what was then called "independence" or what later might be called "autonomy." The only reliable citizen was one with the freedom of mind to resist manipulation and the material possessions or prospects to avoid domination. This outlook encouraged scrutiny of others, and a conventional ethnocentrism directed attention to those who looked, talked, or lived differently. But, as important, it encouraged judgment of self. For if citizens fell into dependency of almost any sort, not only was the nation in peril, but their very identity as Americans was threatened. Nativists, or in the period from 1789 to 1829, protonativists, were those for whom anxieties about both self and nation became particularly intense.

### ALIEN AND SEDITION ACTS

Authentic nativism and the beginnings of organized nativist activism should not be confused with the nascent party politics behind the four pieces of legislation passed by the Federalist leadership in Congress in the summer of 1798, which collectively came to be known as the Alien and Sedition Acts. Particularly vexing to hard-line Federalists was the enthusiastic participation in press and politics of small numbers of Irish expatriates whose experiences with nationalist organizations like the United Irishmen had inclined them to take their ideological cues from revolutionary France rather than conservative Britain. Finding outlets in the Philadelphia *Aurora* and the publications of the Carey brothers, Mathew and James, the group included such outspoken anti-Federalists as James Callender, William Duane, and John Daly Burk. While three of the four measures were directed at the foreign-born, the legislation was much less about nationality than about the uncertainties of political party formation, doubts over legitimate political opposition, and a neocolonial outlook which suspected that the Republic remained a pawn of the European Great Powers. Suspicious of revolutionary France, eager for commercial alliance with Britain, and observing that neither the French in the United States nor many recent arrivals from the British Isles were likely friends of Federalism and the administration, Federalist votes in Congress supported a "Naturalization Act," an "Act Concerning Aliens," an "Act Respecting Alien Enemies," and an "Act for the Punishment of Certain Crimes" (the Sedition Act). The first extended the probationary period for naturalization from five to fourteen years; the second and third—never enforced—created conditions for the punishment or deportation of politically troublesome aliens in either peace or war; and the final act, of which a congressman and several prominent Republican newspaper editors were the chief victims, outlawed publicly shared "false, scandalous, or malicious" words about the government or officers of the government. While political enemies did not hesitate to castigate the Irish origins of Republican Congressman Matthew Lyon of Vermont, the most visible public figure convicted under the Sedition Act for "libeling" President Adams, the issue was not nativity or nationality but ideology. The chief consequence of the acts was not an enduring nativism but the solidification of the Republicans as an opposition party.

### PROTONATIVISM

Actual protonativism originated with groups that established themselves to promote citizens' parti-

pation in republican government and the autonomy that permitted them to be reliable repositories of self-rule. Mechanics societies that sprung up in New York and Baltimore during the 1780s and 1790s lobbied for a just wage and economic competency for the laborer or craftsman, while promoting oratorical and debating skills considered essential to participation in public affairs. New York City's Tammany Society, founded in the late 1780s, sought to encourage effective participation in republican government for those without the wealth or connections of aristocracy. It endorsed free public education and the cessation of imprisonment for debt. Although a later version of Tammany would be closely associated with Irish American politics, its earliest incarnation actually had free-thought and anti-Catholic tendencies. Democratic Republican societies, which emerged in 1793–1795 in the tradition of the Revolution's Committees of Correspondence, not only supported public schools as training grounds for republicans but scanned the political horizon for evidence of republican degeneration and instituted mutual benefit insurance for members as a way of promoting autonomy and, accordingly, political reliability. This was a tradition sustained in New York City by the Washington Benevolent Society, founded in 1808, with a more Federalist temper.

These bodies organized to guarantee the ability of members to function as citizens but also to watch carefully for those who might imperil republican self-government by undermining citizens' autonomy. There was a pattern to whom they watched most closely. The conventional Anglo-American view of Roman Catholics as priest-drilled and ill-educated raised the specter of an organized bloc of dependent voters. The poorest among foreign-born arrivals attracted attention as prospectively devaluing labor and throwing American workers into dependency. Ethnocentrism suggested that these might have a capacity for living at a low living standard, a capacity that the self-respecting American republican lacked. In fact, any collection of persons that could be regarded as clannish or under some form of uniform direction could be regarded by protonativist groups with suspicion.

### THE 1820S: A TRANSITIONAL DECADE

Conditions in the mid-1820s set the stage for the eruption of a real nativist movement. The death of the last of the Republic's founders underscored latent anxieties about the future. Franchise reform, such as that which increased the size of the New York City electorate by 30 percent, reawakened fears of depen-

dent voters. The recession that had begun in 1819 ended and was succeeded by an agricultural boom, an emergent factory system of production, and a canal craze. All encouraged European immigration, and the foreign-born became more widely dispersed around the nation. Disfranchisement of small free-holders in Ireland in the mid-1820s, followed by landlord consolidations and dispossession of homes and livelihoods put Irish Catholics on the move to both England and America. These were the kind of people bound to impress anxious republicans as habitual dependents. Immigration figures, which had been running from 6,000 to 10,000 annually during the first half of the decade, increased to nearly 150,000—almost 51,000 of them Irish—by the end of the 1820s. Roman Catholics, who numbered only 35,000 nationwide in 1790, by 1830 made up nearly 75,000 residents of the New England states alone. (There would be 660,000 nationwide ten years later.) In 1829 a Provincial Council of American Catholic bishops specifically called for parochial education, which suggested to those of suspicious mind clerical thought control on the one hand and an affront to culturally unifying (and culturally hegemonic) public schooling on the other.

Nativism, appropriately associated with the decades of mass immigration following 1829, with the tensions of a growing and sectionally diverse nation, as well as with the stresses of urbanization and early industrialization, was, however, fundamentally about defining nationality. Its luxuriant growth in the antebellum period would have been impossible without the public debates and private anxieties about national character that were so prominent in the early American nation.

*See also Alien and Sedition Acts; Catholicism and Catholics; Nationalism.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Archdeacon, Thomas J. *Becoming American: An Ethnic History*. New York: Free Press, 1983.
- Bennett, David H. *The Party of Fear: From Nativist Movements to the New Right in American History*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.
- Knobel, Dale T. *America for the Americans: The Nativist Movement in the United States*. New York: Twayne, 1996.
- Murrin, John M. "A Roof without Walls: The Dilemma of American National Identity." In *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity*. Edited by Richard Beeman, Stephen Botein, and Edward C. Carter II. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987.

Dale T. Knobel

#### Immigrant Experience

Immigration was a consistent theme and formative force in the creation of the British colonies and the new American Republic. Streams of people from different nations left their homelands at different times and for various reasons, carrying their distinct cultures, beliefs, and institutions to the shores of a new land. They first came in small numbers, populating the colonies and helping to build the transatlantic trade. As the reputation of America spread, the flow of immigrants swelled, though economic and political conditions affected the actual periods and rates of migration. British officials and colonial leaders, ship and land companies, merchants, and others had to address the means of transporting, receiving, and accommodating this new population. Following the creation of the United States, American leaders addressed immigration policy, usually to ensure the ongoing flow of people that had helped to create the Republic and to guarantee the rights of those who sought asylum and freedom. During the Quasi-War with France (1798–1800), however, Congress in 1798 passed three Alien Acts that limited naturalization and provided for the deportation of immigrants.

#### REASONS FOR COMING TO AMERICA

Immigration was a complex process that required an individual, family, or group to assess conditions in their homelands, decide whether relocating would be advantageous for them, and ultimately take the risk of packing up and moving to an unfamiliar location. In the late nineteenth century, British social scientist E. G. Ravenstein sought to explain this process through his "laws of migration." He posited that migration was a selective process whereby "push factors" impelled individuals to migrate and "pull factors" attracted immigrants to specific locations. Ravenstein concluded that each nation, region, and time period ultimately had its own distinct "push-pull factors" which shaped the streams and rates of migration.

Throughout the colonial and early national periods, there were numerous push factors that led to emigration from Europe. Between 1750 and 1850 the European population doubled in size, which contributed to significant economic and social changes across the continent. Skilled handworkers in the English textile industry were replaced by power looms. Farmers faced the enclosure of lands and the reorganization of the rural economy. High taxes and land rents along with increased poverty inspired individuals to migrate. Political circumstances, wars, and even the desire to escape military service led others to

leave their homes, while persecution of religious minorities caused others to depart.

There were also many pull factors that fostered emigration to America. Most common was the belief that America was "the promised land," a "land of liberty," and an asylum for the persecuted or the less fortunate. The colonies and eventually the new states attracted people by touting their flourishing settlements through pamphlets and newspapers. Ship companies, land companies, and labor brokers announced the many employment opportunities abroad. Clearly, the pursuit of economic opportunity was key for many as German and Scots-Irish farmers sought land and displaced English and Irish textile workers pursued employment in the developing textile industry in Philadelphia and New England. The American states, as they embarked upon internal improvements programs, recruited immigrant laborers to assist in the construction of roads and canals that would bind the new nation together. Likewise, the presence of distinct ethnic communities established by earlier immigrants encouraged individuals and families, often from the same region, hometown, or parish, to emigrate. There were even occasional instances of Americanized immigrants who returned home (known as Newlanders among the Germans) to promote the benefits of emigration.

One of the strongest motivating forces were written accounts, often called "America letters," sent back home by immigrants. These accounts brought families separated by the Atlantic together with news about economic conditions, cultural life, descriptions of daily life, and comparisons with previous conditions in the homeland. The letters often encouraged the recipients to relocate to America; some even included prepaid passage. Several foreigners also wrote travel accounts about their experiences in America, which were published in their homelands. Book-length works such as Englishman Morris Birkbeck's *Letters from Illinois* (1818) and German Gottfried Duden's *Bericht über eine Reise nach den westlichen Staaten Nord Amerika's* (1829, *Report on the Journey to the Western States of North America*) not only provided detailed information about life in the new nation but offered additional reasons and inspiration for migration. These letters and narratives provided potential immigrants with the rationales for leaving their homes and created images of expectations that shaped their visions of America well before they had departed home.

Observing the growing popularity of independent America, England imposed restrictions on emigration. In 1788, fearing the loss of workers to the

growing American employment market, England banned the emigration of skilled artisans. The British Passenger Act of 1803 reduced the number of passengers that ships could carry, thus making it unprofitable for ship companies to seek immigrants as west-bound cargo and hampering the flow of immigrants.

#### **FINANCING AND TRANSPORTATION**

Immigrants generally financed their own trips to America from savings or sale of property. Some, however, received prepaid passages from family members or were recruited by American businesses. Another way of covering passage was becoming a redemptioner. Unlike thousands of early immigrants who were forced into indentured servitude, whose service contracts were at the disposal of the ships' captains or the owners' agents, a redemptioner voluntarily entered into a labor agreement, probably as a means of escaping undesirable conditions at home. Individuals actually executed two agreements, either before departure or after arriving—one with the ship captain, guaranteeing payment for passage upon arrival, and the other with the purchaser in America, specifying the terms of service.

Those departing Europe traveled from their hometowns by road or river to reach the principal ports of London, Belfast, and Londonderry, where they secured passage for America. As immigration increased and attracted a diversity of groups, the ports of Le Havre, Bremen, Hamburg, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, and Liverpool became more important in handling the Continent's immigrant flow. Sailing ships transported the immigrants to the principal American ports of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Charleston, and later New Orleans.

Ships participating in the regular transatlantic trade were critical to the emerging immigration trade. Departing the colonies, the ships carried assorted goods to England and the European Continent; on the return trip, unoccupied space was made available to immigrants, thus allowing merchants and shipowners to gain from the return trip. Following the War of 1812 (1812–1815), ship companies introduced packet ships with regular sailings between New York and Liverpool, Le Havre, and other European ports. Steerage rates dropped from ten to twelve pounds in 1816 to five pounds in 1832, making travel more affordable for the common person.

Upon arriving in the port cities, the immigrants faced the challenges of getting situated in America. They might have been greeted by family members or encountered recruiters seeking laborers for local businesses. If the immigrants were redemptioners,

they faced the scrutiny of individuals, often Americanized immigrants, who would buy their services. For some groups there were benevolent associations, such as the German Society of Maryland, that addressed the needs of distressed Germans arriving in the country.

### **SETTLEMENT**

Immigrants responded to their new environments generally by settling in distinct ethnic enclaves, which allowed them to maintain their sense of community and cultural identity. Most transplanted the familiar institutions and cultural surroundings of the homeland—building houses and farms like the ones at home; adopting similar agricultural techniques; and establishing churches, schools, and social organizations. While British immigrants easily blended into the English-based society, other groups like Germans and Scots-Irish carved out distinct areas of settlement in Pennsylvania, the North and South Carolina Piedmont, and the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, for example, where their cultural influences were clearly evident. Though many immigrants found a new life in America's growing cities, most acquired some of the abundant agricultural lands and established farms, thereby distinguishing themselves from the next major migration of immigrants, which would be heavily urban in residential concentration.

### **ASSIMILATION AND RESISTANCE TO ASSIMILATION**

All immigrants, regardless of origin and period of migration, had to come to terms with life in America as well as with their separation and isolation from home. Their ability and willingness to adapt or assimilate varied, depending much upon their socioeconomic status, the extent to which their group's traditional cultural had been transplanted in the regions where they settled, and the number of people within their communities.

The transition of immigrants from the British Isles was generally easier, given the predominance of English culture and institutions within the American colonies (though the Scots-Irish continued to maintain hostility toward all things English and sought to maintain a separate existence). There were, however, reservations among many English people about the increasing diversity of the American population, which, they believed, could undermine the colonies. Some feared the threat of Catholicism to the American experiment. Others, like Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), expressed a concern that Pennsylvania

would become "a Colony of Aliens" and that the growing German population would eventually "Germanize us." Germans tended to cluster and were consequently more visible than other non-English immigrant groups as an "unassimilable bloc." As a result, according to the historian John Higham, fear of Germans represented the first ethnic crisis in American history. With the slowing of immigration due to world events in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, many of the earlier non-English immigrant groups—Dutch, Germans, Swedes—were not reinforced by regular arrivals of new immigrants to maintain the strength of their cultures. The first generation traditionally retained much of its ethnic identity; intermarriage, education, and contact with American society, however, led the second generation to become increasingly assimilated, which often strained the ethnic community. Frenchman Michel-Guillaume-Jean de Crèvecoeur, writing in the 1780s, argued for assimilation and called upon immigrants to "cast off the European skin, never to resume it. They must look forward to their posterity rather than backward to their ancestors."

Following the American Revolution and the creation of the American nation, immigrants, in their letters and books about life in the United States, affirmed America as a land of opportunity and a sanctuary for the oppressed. Not only did these attitudes intensify the desire to emigrate, but they also elicited a growing sentiment among the resident immigrant population to associate more strongly with the American nation.

### **NATURALIZATION**

The British Parliament enacted a naturalization law in 1740 that permitted foreigners in America to acquire "subjectship" in their colonies of residence, provided they proved residence in any colony continuously for seven years, professed Christianity, had taken the sacrament in a Protestant congregation, and swore allegiance to the king. In 1761 Parliament permitted the British army to naturalize those foreign Protestants who had served in the military for two years in the colonies. Americans, however, believing that the colonies should exercise their own control, passed their own naturalization laws until the king nullified them in 1773 and prohibited colonial governors from approving such laws. Writing in the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson charged the king with obstructing immigration and the naturalization process of foreigners.

With independence won, the new American states took control of naturalization policies, which essentially required a public oath of allegiance to the state government, a period of residency, and a disavowal of allegiance to foreign sovereigns. The first Congress of the United States adopted a naturalization statute in 1790 that allowed any "free white person" who had resided in the country for two years to be naturalized. Fearing the growing political power of the Jeffersonian Republicans and the strength of ethnic voters as well as responding to the Napoleonic Wars in Europe and a military crisis with France, the Federalists raised the residency requirement to five years in 1795 and to fourteen years in 1798 as part of the Alien and Sedition Acts. After Jefferson's election as president in 1800, the Republican-controlled Congress, opposing his proposal to grant immediate citizenship to all newcomers, returned the residency requirement in 1802 to five years.

As immigration resumed following the War of 1812, the Naturalization Law of 1802 governed the process of becoming a citizen. It required individuals to submit their applications at local courts, declare their intention three years prior to naturalization, reside for five years in the United States, and renounce allegiance to foreign rulers. All naturalization laws in this period restricted citizenship to white aliens. Despite these guidelines, there were some native-born Americans and Americanized immigrants who called upon Congress to simplify the citizenship process, seeking to encourage greater immigration to the United States.

*See also Alien and Sedition Acts; Work: Indentured Servants.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bailyn, Bernard. *Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution*. New York: Knopf, 1986.
- Daniels, Roger. *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*. New York: HarperCollins, 1990.
- Dublin, Thomas, ed. *Immigrant Voices: New Lives in America, 1773–1986*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993.
- Hansen, Marcus Lee. *The Atlantic Migration, 1607–1860: A History of the Continuing Settlement of the United States*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1940.
- Jones, Maldwyn Allen. *American Immigration*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960.
- Kamphoefner, Walter D., Wolfgang Helbich, and Ulrike Sommer, eds. *News from the Land of Freedom: German Immigrants Write Home*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991.

LeMay, Michael C. *From Open Door to Dutch Door: An Analysis of U.S. Immigration Policy since 1820*. New York: Praeger, 1987.

Leyburn, James G. *The Scotch-Irish: A Social History*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962.

Miller, Kerby A., et al., eds. *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: Letters and Memoirs from Colonial and Revolutionary America, 1675–1815*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970*. 2 vols. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of the Census, 1975.

David G. Vanderstel

#### Immigrant Policy and Law

The Naturalization and Alien Acts of 1798 were part of the Federalist program to insulate the United States from the radical principles of the French Revolution, which seemed to have infected both newly arriving immigrants and the political opposition, headed by Thomas Jefferson. The Naturalization Act's fourteen-year residence requirement would, given eighteenth-century life expectancies, completely disenfranchise most adult immigrants. The Alien Act gave the president the power to deport any foreigner he deemed dangerous. Both of these acts violated America's Revolutionary principles and previous practice.

In 1776 the American colonies declared themselves independent states—free of a British government that had been corrupted by its abuse of power. By renouncing allegiance to the British crown, the American rebels created a new form of volitional citizenship: Americans were no longer perpetual subjects, by birth, of hereditary monarchs but rather citizens, free to choose and change their allegiance. The American Republic also broke new ground by creating a single class of citizens. In the Old World, naturalization (or denization) never conferred the full rights of natural-born subjects; foreigners could become only second-class citizens, forever subject to economic, political, and religious disabilities. Eight years of war finally forced British recognition of American independence. However, the British government continued to deny its subjects the right of peaceful expatriation and volitional citizenship well into the nineteenth century.

After declaring independence, the American states invited the oppressed subjects of Old World tyranny to join in the battle to preserve liberty and to enjoy the fruits of free republican government. Initially, full citizenship was readily bestowed on



**Congressional Brawl.** The Naturalization and Alien Acts of 1798 fueled opposition to the Federalist Party, and issues related to immigration led to political conflict. This 1798 cartoon depicts a fight that broke out on the floor of the United States House of Representatives between Matthew Lyon (center), an Irish immigrant and Republican congressman from Vermont, and Roger Griswold (right), an American-born Federalist from Connecticut. © BETTMANN/CORBIS.

foreigners who supported the American cause. The Continental Congress and individual states rewarded foreign soldiers with lands and citizenship and offered similar grants to those who deserted from the British army. The path to citizenship was even easier for noncombatants. Several states required only evidence of commitment to the American cause, by oath (or affirmation) of allegiance and renunciation of all other governments or potentates. For states with residency requirements, one or two years were the norm; all states provided access to full civil and political rights.

As the war progressed, some states, especially those that had endured years of occupation by the British army, enacted more stringent naturalization requirements and increased the economic and political disabilities imposed on aliens. In the mid-1780s New York, Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia all passed laws to bar American Loyalists from political office and to prevent British traders from regaining their economic stranglehold on American markets.

Yet at the same time states such as Connecticut, New Jersey, and Delaware publicized their eagerness to welcome and enfranchise the Loyalists and foreigners shunned by other states.

By the end of the Revolution, the American naturalization process was a confusing amalgam of disparate practices that varied over time and place. In Pennsylvania the oath administered by justices of the peace in the 1770s to ferret out British sympathizers was used in the 1780s to naturalize foreign-born immigrants. From Massachusetts to Georgia state legislatures conferred citizenship on immigrants seeking asylum, foreigners hoping to perfect land titles or escape customs duties, and repentant Tories. In 1783 Benjamin Franklin, then in France to negotiate a peace treaty with Great Britain, drew up and administered an oath that naturalized the Scottish-born father-in-law of Franklin's grand-nephew.

In the summer of 1787, delegates to the Constitutional Convention recognized the need to rationalize the motley assortment of state procedures into a

single national avenue to U.S. citizenship. However, the daunting magnitude of that task was soon revealed. Rather than grapple with yet another divisive issue, convention delegates handed Congress the mandate to create a uniform code of naturalization. In 1790 the First Congress elected under the new Constitution did create a unique, national mode of naturalization—requiring a two-year residence, an oath of allegiance, and proof of good character. However, this national procedure did not supersede state law but was merely added to the mix. In 1795 Congress finally overcame states' rights arguments and enacted a new national, and exclusive, naturalization code. All free, white foreigners arriving after June 1795 would be required to meet the same naturalization requirements, including a five-year residence and a declaration of intent to seek citizenship at least three years prior to naturalization.

Although the Naturalization Act of 1795 barely had time to take effect before being replaced in 1798, its provisions became the foundation of American policy. The laws of 1798 fueled, rather than squelched, opposition to the Federalist Party and helped to secure the presidency for Thomas Jefferson in 1800. The so-called Revolution of 1800 returned the nation to its more liberal stance on alien rights and American citizenship. After the expiration of the Alien Act in 1800, Congress made no attempt to resurrect the extraordinary presidential power over America's immigrants. In 1802 Congress repealed the Naturalization Act of 1798 and reinstated, in essence, the citizenship requirements enacted in 1795.

*See also Alien and Sedition Acts; Constitutional Convention; Constitutionalism: State Constitution Making; Continental Congresses; Election of 1800; Federalist Party; Federalists.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baseler, Marilyn C. "Asylum for Mankind": *America, 1607–1800*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998.  
 Kettner, James H. *The Development of American Citizenship, 1608–1870*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978.  
 Smith, James Morton. *Freedom's Fetters: The Alien and Sedition Laws and American Civil Liberties*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1966.

Marilyn C. Baseler

#### Political Refugees

"Freedom hath been hunted round the globe," Thomas Paine wrote in *Common Sense* (1776). "[Asia and

Africa] have long expelled her, [Europe] regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart." The American people must "receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind." Paine (1737–1809) had been in the United States for less than two years, but his call resonated with his American audience, many of whom were recent arrivals.

Immigrants seeking economic opportunity had come to the new world in great numbers after 1750. In the Revolutionary years, aristocratic idealists like the Marquis de Lafayette or the Polish officers Casimir Pulaski and Thaddeus Kosciusko had come to offer their services. After the war, politically active Europeans fled to America to escape political oppression at home. Drawn by the promise of creating a haven for liberty, political immigrants helped to create the American political system.

Among them were Albert Gallatin (1761–1849) and Matthew Carey (1760–1839). Gallatin, born in Geneva, arrived in America in 1780. After briefly teaching French at Harvard and accompanying Massachusetts troops to the coast of Maine, he settled in western Pennsylvania where he quickly became involved in politics, serving in the state convention in 1789, and the legislature in 1790 and 1791.

Carey had been driven from his native Dublin for his political views. An apprentice printer and bookseller, Carey at age nineteen (1779) found himself in deep trouble for his pamphlet "To the Roman Catholics of Ireland." In it he urged Irish Catholics to throw off the "tyrannical bigots" who ruled them: "At a time when America, by a desperate effort, has nearly emancipated herself from slavery," Irish Catholics should seize their natural rights. Protestants and even Catholic leaders who accepted British rule denounced him (Dublin's archbishop wanted the pamphlet burned). Fearing for his safety, Carey escaped to France, where a Catholic priest introduced him to Benjamin Franklin. Franklin set him up printing American tracts and introduced him to Lafayette. A year later Carey returned to Ireland, but he continued to provoke the authorities. When the Irish House of Commons called for his arrest in 1784, Carey fled to Philadelphia. After Lafayette, then in America, learned that the "Dublin printer" was also there, he gave Carey four hundred dollars to start a newspaper. Two years later Carey published a "Philosophical Dream," a vision of the United States in the year 1850, when the thirty states of the union stretched to the Mississippi. Canals connected the prosperous land, and Americans had even built a canal through central America linking the Atlantic and Pacific. Slav-

ery had been eliminated, and the freed slaves repatriated to a thriving free Africa. The most serious crime to be found was that of a man who failed to send his son to school.

When the French Revolution came, Carey and Gallatin welcomed it. So did other political refugees and some native-born Americans. In Paris, Lafayette and the American minister Thomas Jefferson drafted proposed constitutions for the French Republic, and Thomas Paine served in the French Assembly. But the revolution drove a wedge between moderates and radicals. As the revolution became increasingly radical and moderates (like Lafayette and Paine) were imprisoned or executed, some Americans, who saw the French Revolution as an extension of their own, now worried that France's anarchy would spread to the United States.

Edmond Genet (1763–1834) came to America not as a refugee or immigrant. The French Republic sent him to reaffirm the Franco-American treaty of 1778. When, in April 1793, he arrived in Charleston, South Carolina, Citizen Genet, as he called himself, was greeted as a hero. When President Washington declared America neutral between France and England, Genet turned to the American people to support the French cause against the English and their own president. He encouraged citizens and French exiles to form Democratic Republican Societies, modeled on the Jacobin Clubs that toppled France's monarchy. Jamaican immigrant Alexander J. Dallas launched the first society in Philadelphia on 4 July 1793. Genet's meddling in American politics so infuriated Washington that the president demanded Genet's recall. By this time a more radical faction had overthrown Genet's government in France, and, realizing that the guillotine awaited him, he chose to remain in America. He married the daughter of New York Governor George Clinton and settled down on a farm in Rensselaer County. Genet avoided politics for the rest of his life, but he had helped to create a political movement.

The Democratic Republican Societies spread—opposing the pro-British drift of the Washington administration and championing the French Revolution. The number of French and British political refugees in these societies alarmed some political leaders. Connecticut Congressman Oliver Wolcott warned in 1794 of "great numbers of violent men who emigrate to this country from every part of Europe." Abigail Adams's son-in-law wrote her, "Let us no longer pray that America may become an asylum to all nations."

France reacted to the U.S. peace with England in 1795 by attacking American ships on the high seas. In 1798 Congress created a navy and a provisional army, and it passed a series of laws to prepare for a looming conflict with France. The Naturalization Act extended the time an alien must reside in the United States before becoming a citizen from five years to fourteen. The Alien Enemies Act permitted the president to deport any alien from a nation at war with the United States. If the alien hailed from a country at peace with the United States but was a threat to American security, the Alien Friends Act permitted his deportation. And finally, the Sedition Act punished any editor, writer, or speaker who brought "contempt, hatred, or ridicule" upon the president or Congress.

Secretary of State Timothy Pickering became the chief enforcer of the Sedition Act, and he understood how the Republican press operated. Ideas and opinions percolated out of the Democratic Republican Societies through a national network of papers. It was said that a jibe at the Federalists would make "its way into the beer houses in the evening, to the *Aurora* in the morning, and to a large portion of the Democratic papers throughout the Union in due course." To cut off the flow of such ideas, Pickering could shut off the source of sedition—immigrants. Five of the fourteen or fifteen individuals charged under the Sedition Act were foreigners: Congressman Matthew Lyon of Vermont was born in Ireland, and a Federalist paper said he spoke "a gibberish between Wild Irish and vulgar American." Philadelphia *Aurora* editor William Duane, though born in 1760 near Lake Champlain, New York, had spent his childhood in Ireland (he had also spent some years editing a newspaper in Calcutta, and his attacks on the British East India Company led to his imprisonment there). John Daly Burk had been expelled from Ireland in 1796 for his political activities. Journalist and scandalmonger James T. Callender was a Scot, and Thomas Cooper was an English radical. Callender had been jailed for sedition in England, and on his arrival in America in the early 1790s had worked as a reporter for the *Federal Gazette*. But his verbatim coverage of Congress, showing the incomprehensible ramblings of its members, led to his being fired. Callender attacked not only Congress, but venerated figures like Washington, accusing him of the "foulest designs against the liberties of the people." The pro-administration *Gazette of the United States* warned that the country should not become "a receptacle for malevolence and turbulence, for the outcasts of the universe," and Francis Hopkinson (author of the anthem "Hail Columbia") noted with alarm that "this foreign leaven"

had "fermented the whole mass of the community" and "divided the country into contending political parties."

Though no enemy aliens were deported, French philosophé Abbe Constantin François Volney left voluntarily, and French General Victor Collott dodged prosecution until the Alien Enemies Act expired. The Philadelphia *Aurora* speculated that "Cremona fiddles are to be ordered out of the kingdom under the *Alien Bill*," as their tones were "calculated to bring the *constitutional* music of organs and kettle-drums into contempt."

William Duane (1760–1835), editor of the *Aurora*, joined with Dr. James Reynolds to solicit signatures against the Alien Acts outside St. Mary's Church in Philadelphia in February 1799. As some parishioners gathered in the churchyard after mass to sign the petitions, Federalist parishioners objected to having "Jacobins" outside the church and tried to push Reynolds from the churchyard. When Reynolds drew a pistol, parishioners panicked, and he, Duane, and two others were arrested for provoking a "united Irish riot," bringing "terror and torment to America." Federalists hoped to silence Duane, but Alexander J. Dallas so ably defended him that the jury only deliberated half an hour before acquitting.

During the election of 1800, Duane helped to expose the Ross Election Bill, which many said was a Federalist plot to prevent Jefferson's election. Duane reported that Federalist senators were preparing a plan to create a Grand Council to judge the validity of electoral votes, and thus prevent Thomas Jefferson's election as president. Duane's publication of the plan outraged Republicans, and Federalists charged Duane with breaching Senate privilege. Cooper and Dallas handled Duane's legal defense, delaying an indictment until October 1800 and delaying the trial for another year. By then the Grand Council had been squelched, and Jefferson had become President.

Jefferson pardoned the men sentenced under the Sedition Act and restored the immigrant to a place of trust in American society. French immigrant Stephen Girard, a Philadelphia ship-owner, donated gunpowder to celebrate Jefferson's inauguration. Albert Gallatin, a Swiss émigré who by now led the Republicans in Congress and who was regarded by the Federalists as a French agent, became Secretary of the Treasury and one of the most powerful men in the administration. Duane moved with the *Aurora* to Washington, and his son later became secretary of the Treasury. Carey's publishing empire grew, and his son became one of the first American economists. Jefferson even brought Thomas Paine back from his

European exile, to live out his days in the new land Paine and other political refugees had helped to create.

*See also Aurora; Alien and Sedition Acts; Freedom of the Press; Paine, Thomas; Politics: Political Parties and the Press; Press, The.*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abbott, Edith. *Historical Aspects of the Immigration Problem: Select Documents*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1926.
- Bowen, Marjorie. *Peter Porcupine: A Study of William Cobbett, 1762–1835*. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1935.
- Carey, Matthew. *Autobiography*. Brooklyn Research Classics, no. 1, 1942. First published, *New England Magazine*, 1833–1834.
- Durey, Michael. *Transatlantic Radicals and the Early American Republic*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997.
- Smith, James Morton. *Freedom's Fetters: The Alien and Sedition Laws and American Civil Liberties*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1956.

Robert J. Allison

## Race and Ethnicity

British North American society was defined by race and racial divisions in the eighteenth century. The colonists understood each other as being white and part of a superior race of Europeans. Close contact and intermixing notwithstanding, Africans (called Negroes) and American Indians were consigned to separate racial categories. Racial attributes were considered biological and racial differences placed the members of nonwhite races at a greater or lesser distance to civilization as whites understood it. While the societies of Spanish and French North America were based on the mutual assimilation of Indian and white cultures, the English colonies of North America experienced such mixing only at the edges, on the Upper Midwest frontier and parts of the frontier South.

By the time of the American Revolution (1775–1783), the general Enlightenment view of Indians, which regarded them as people of the earth whose less acquisitive and more primitive way of life was destined to fade or even merge with that of whites, bore little relation to Indians' struggles in the North American colonies for land and resources. The erosion of power of even the larger Indian tribes and federations toward the late eighteenth century further contributed to the whites' belief that Indians lacked

civilizing force and were doomed. The expulsion of Indians from their lands beginning in the 1820s only seemed to confirm the view that even "civilized tribes" could not resist the power of the European race.

Africans in the colonies were a diverse group in terms of their cultural and geographic origins. Blacks born in North America, slaves born in the West Indies and sold to North American colonists, and African-born men and women all intermingled, especially in the southeastern part of North America, and formed communities of slaves for whom their different cultural origins diminished in importance. Regardless of their specific origins, blacks were deprived of rights as a result of their racial designation. Over 80 percent were unfree, and their enslavement was associated with their race—though not yet justified by it. Resistance, including some open slave revolts, as well as flight and intermingling with native Indians also characterized the relationship of African-origin immigrants to whites.

Whites in the English colonies were not a very diverse group in terms of their origins. Over 80 percent of colonial settlers were of English origin, an even higher percentage was English speaking (English people, Scots, and Protestant Irish). Germans and remnants of Dutch and Swedish colonists on the Atlantic seaboard were among the more visible non-English-speaking whites, but with the exception of the Germans, their number declined in the pre-Revolutionary era. Though in 1751 Benjamin Franklin expressed misgivings about the "Palatine Boors" among his fellow Pennsylvanians, such hostile comments on distinct immigrant subcultures remained rare in pre-Revolutionary times.

Race was one of the ideas that structured the Revolution and the new Constitution (1787). The Declaration of Independence (1776) offered an inclusive vision of the new nation, declaring that "all men are created equal," but this Enlightenment vision of the innate right to freedom for people of all races remained a theoretical premise not met by the political and constitutional realities that followed. In 1775 the Continental Congress prohibited blacks from joining the Revolutionary forces. Indians were suspected as collaborators with the enemy by both Loyalists and Revolutionary forces.

Indians were largely situated outside the Constitution. Unless they were taxed members of a white community, they were not considered to be citizens of the United States. The Constitution was silent on the issue of black citizenship except in Article I, which counted free blacks as full citizens but slaves as just

three-fifths of a person for purposes of congressional apportionment. While African immigrants and their descendants were not explicitly denied American citizenship, the Naturalization Act of 1795 specified that U.S. citizenship could only be acquired by whites. This racialization of American citizenship would become one of the cornerstones of ideologies of race and ethnicity in the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century.

Increasing immigration from Europe in the early nineteenth century, especially after 1815, heightened the awareness of cultural differences among European immigrants. While older groups (Dutch, Swedes, Huguenots) became subsumed in the English-speaking majority cultures, newer immigrants (Irish, Scots, and Germans) arrived in sufficient numbers to increase ethnic diversity among white Americans in the early nineteenth century. Ethnic awareness in the modern sense, however would not emerge until the large-scale immigration of Irish Catholics throughout the Eastern seaboard that began in the 1830s.

*See also Citizenship; Racial Theory.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Archeacon, Thomas J. *Becoming American: An Ethnic History*. New York: Free Press, 1983.  
 Galloway, Colin G. *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.  
 Jordan, Winthrop. *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550–1812*. New York: Norton, 1977.

Dorothee Schneider

---

**IMPERIAL RIVALRY IN THE AMERICAS** The struggle of the United States for independence and post-Revolutionary development occurred in the context of a contest between the European imperial powers to achieve geopolitical, commercial, and cultural dominance in the Western Hemisphere. Once independent, the United States became an actor in this larger drama of imperial rivalry.

#### EUROPEAN EMPIRES IN THE AMERICAS IN THE MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the contest for the Americas primarily occupied three of the great European powers—the kingdoms of Spain, France, and Great Britain. Spain claimed the largest empire—all of South America except Brazil and the

Guyanas, all of Central America, all of modern-day Mexico, most of what is today the western United States, Florida and the Gulf coast, and the largest Caribbean islands (Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico). France laid claim to most of the eastern half of modern-day Canada, the Great Lakes basin, the Ohio-Mississippi-Missouri drainage, and a few islands in the Caribbean, including modern-day Haiti, then called Saint Domingue. Great Britain held the thirteen American colonies, Nova Scotia, the area around Hudson Bay, the islands of Jamaica, Barbados, and the bulk of the Lesser Antilles in the Caribbean, in addition to the Mosquito Coast of Nicaragua and modern-day Belize.

In addition, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Russia all claimed territories in the Americas: the Dutch in Guyana and the Caribbean, the Portuguese in Brazil, and the Russians in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. These powers were minor players in the contest between European empires in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

In all of the European empires, the amount of territory claimed exceeded the amount of territory actually controlled. In North America especially, the indigenous population retained control of much of the land and its resources. Much of the rivalry between empires played out in a contest of Europeans trying to win political and commercial alliances with the various communities of American natives.

The American Indians of North America were a numerous and diverse lot, and it is difficult to generalize about them. Language, political organization, and culture varied among different tribes and nations. Modes of subsistence tended to vary by region, with temperate-region nations being more sedentary and arid-region nations being more mobile, although there are important exceptions even to this rule. By the middle of the eighteenth century, nearly all American Indian communities had been transformed by contact with the Europeans.

The American Indian communities that survived the onset of Old World diseases and had not been displaced by settler colonies gradually worked out a set of customs and practices with their European neighbors that facilitated cross-cultural interaction. These relationships were centered around commerce—one historian has characterized the European empires of the early and middle eighteenth century as “empires of trade.” American Indian hunters provided furs and hides—generally of deer, beaver, or buffalo, depending on the region—in exchange for European-made metal goods, firearms, and alcohol. The contest among the Europeans through the middle of the

eighteenth century was over who would dominate access to these trading arrangements.

#### THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR

The Seven Years’ War (1754–1763), or the French and Indian War as it was known in America, was a continuation of the conflict Britain and France had fought in America during the War of Austrian Succession (1740–1748). British colonial subjects desired to bring the Indians of the trans-Appalachian region into their commercial orbit and expand the frontiers of their settlement. The French hoped to pull British-allied Indian nations into their orbit and check British settler expansion. British traders had crossed the Allegheny Mountains in the mid-1740s, attempting to open trading relationships with the Algonquian-speaking communities of the Ohio Valley and Great Lakes basin. In 1749 a French expedition under the command of Céloron de Bienville officially claimed the Ohio Valley for France, and a subsequent French expedition destroyed British trading posts. In 1754 an expedition from the British colony of Virginia under the command of Colonel George Washington attempted to counter the renewed French military presence in the Ohio Valley and touched off the war in America.

From Virginia northward, the war pitted the French and their predominantly Algonquian allies against the British (both colonials and the regular army) and their predominantly Iroquois allies. Initial French success, under the command of Louis-Joseph de Montcalm, was soon checked. The emergence of William Pitt the Elder as head of the British government in 1757 transformed the British war effort. Pitt saw the North American theater as crucial. Pitt directly paid the American colonies for the goods and troops he requisitioned, spent the British government into debt, and appointed new and more competent field commanders. Under James Wolfe, the British consistently won on American battlefields, his campaign culminating in a daring and successful attack on the city of Quebec in 1759. Success continued the next year when Jeffrey Amherst took Montreal and drove France from North America.

King Charles III of Spain formed an alliance with Louis XV of France in 1762. Yet Spain fared no better than France. The British Royal Navy took Spanish ports in Havana and the Philippines, as well as nearly all of France’s island possessions in the Caribbean.

The Seven Years’ War ended in 1763 with the Treaty of Paris. The peace settlement transformed the geopolitical dynamic of North America. Britain ceded Havana back to Spain and Guadeloupe back to

France. Britain retained all of Canada and the Ohio Valley and was awarded the two Floridas by Spain. Spain acquired the Louisiana Territory, the western drainage of the Mississippi. Of course, these claims were still more notional than real, as Europeans still had to negotiate with Indians for the land they claimed. In the immediate aftermath of their victory, the British commanders in North America, notably Amherst, forgot this and downplayed the need to conciliate the Indians. As a result, warfare between the Algonquians of the Great Lakes basin and the British regulars (Pontiac's Rebellion) erupted and ensued for nearly two years. The late 1760s found North America contested by only two major European empires—Great Britain and Spain.

#### THE ERA OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

The new geopolitical situation proved unstable. The French government resented the loss of its empire. The Comte de Vergennes, foreign minister to the new French king Louis XVI, was committed to returning France to the preeminent position it had once held in Europe and the Americas. Vergennes began preparing for a new war with Britain, which he viewed as inevitable. In 1775 the prospect of a rebellion by Britain's American colonies offered Vergennes and the French government the opportunity to strike a blow at their mortal enemy.

The American Revolution would not have been successful had the American movement for independence not enmeshed itself in the larger European rivalries. When the thirteen North American colonies declared their independence from Great Britain and called themselves "the United States," their leaders knew that they needed recognition and assistance from other European powers. Under Vergennes, France provided the United States with clandestine assistance (materiel and financing) during the first two years of the war. Following the American victory at Saratoga in 1777, France openly allied itself with the United States in early 1778. A French expeditionary army under the Comte de Rochambeau aided George Washington's Continental Army upon its arrival in America in 1780, and the French navy under the Comte de Grasse defeated the British navy off Hampton Roads to ensure the American-French victory at Yorktown.

It was Vergennes and the French, not the Americans, who turned the other European empires to the American side. Vergennes signed a treaty of alliance with the Conde de Floridablanca, the Spanish foreign minister, at Aranjuez in April 1779. The French-Spanish alliance did not explicitly include the Ameri-

cans, and Spain did not recognize the United States until after the war. But Spain was fighting Britain, thus weakening the overall British position. The Netherlands too entered the war as a French ally, but unlike Spain, the Dutch government recognized American independence and offered the Americans financial assistance. The peace settlements of 1783 ended the American war, granted the United States independence, and returned the Florida territories to Spain.

Even before the 1783 Treaty of Paris formally ended the American Revolutionary War and secured American independence, the United States became an actor in the ongoing imperial rivalry for the Americas. The United States contested the right to navigate the Mississippi River with Spain, and Great Britain retained alliances with American Indian communities that were technically inside the borders of the United States. In 1778–1779, Virginian George Rogers Clark had led a militia expedition down the Ohio River that captured British posts at Kaskaskia, Cahokia, and Vincennes. While some Indian communities, such as the Kaskaskia and the Delaware, allied themselves with the United States, others, notably the Shawnee, did not. Britain continued to trade with Indian communities in the Northwest, and Spain continued its trade with the Indians in the South. This unstable border situation was a key impetus behind the American states' coming together to strengthen the Union by ratifying the Constitution of 1787. Although the United States was still a weak power, it had the military and diplomatic muscle to rival Spain, France, and Britain for access to trade and alliances with the American Indians.

#### THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND THE NAPOLEONIC WARS

The outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789 transformed the political balances in Europe, affecting the Americas as well. The greatest changes occurred following the arrest of King Louis XVI by the Paris Commune in August 1792. Soon the radical National Convention replaced the National Assembly as the head of the French government. With the new regime's public execution of the king in January 1793, the vast majority of European monarchies declared war on revolutionary France. The War of the French Revolution quickly became a world war. France required materiel from the Americas to support its war effort, and it hoped at the same time to disrupt the flows of materiel to its British enemy. The National Convention's minister to the United States, Edmond Charles Genêt, actively (and controversially) sought out American citizens to embark on priva-

teering raids against British merchantmen. The administration of George Washington did not want European politics brought into the Americas in this manner and publicly declared the United States neutral in the conflict.

As the War of the French Revolution escalated, the polities of the Americas were drawn deeper into the conflict. Great Britain sought to interdict all commerce bound for France, and even seized the ships of neutral nations, notably the United States, that were trading with belligerents in the war. The preponderant power of the Royal Navy led to two important outcomes. First, it induced the United States to negotiate a commercial accord with Britain that tended to favor British interests. This commercial treaty, known in America as the Jay Treaty, was ratified in 1795. Perceived closeness between Britain and the United States alienated France, and the Directory, which replaced the radical National Convention after a 1794 coup, began seizing American ships. A low-scale, undeclared naval war (the Quasi-War) between France and the United States ensued between 1797 and 1800.

At the same time, the French Revolution and resultant war wreaked havoc in the Caribbean. In August 1791 the African slaves of the French colony of Saint Domingue, hearing of the Revolution, rose in rebellion, and aided by Spanish forces on the island, demanded their liberty. The National Assembly responded by granting full citizenship to Saint Domingue's free blacks and mixed-race population. The National Convention abolished slavery in 1794. Saint Domingue remained a French province, with prominent people of color, notably Toussaint Louverture and Jean-Jacques Dessalines, in charge of its civil and military affairs. The image of former slaves wielding political and military power shocked many Anglo-Americans and Europeans.

In November 1799, with the coup of 18 Brumaire, Napoleon Bonaparte became First Consul of France. At the head of the French state, Napoleon transformed French foreign policy. He ended the Quasi-War with America in September 1800 and, with the Peace of Amiens (1802), the long war with Great Britain. Even before peace in Europe, Napoleon sought to expand France's empire in the Americas. By the secret Treaty of San Ildefonso (1800), France reacquired the vast Louisiana Territory. In November 1801, Napoleon ordered General Victor Leclerc and a large army to Saint Domingue. Leclerc carried orders that provided for the re-enslavement of large portions of the black population on Saint Domingue. Plans also existed for the colonization of the Louisi-

ana Territory: settler farms in Louisiana would feed the slave plantations of the French Caribbean. These plans came to nothing when disease and defeat decimated Leclerc's army. In April 1803 Napoleon sold the Louisiana Territory to the United States and abandoned the colonial project in Saint Domingue. That colony declared its full independence as the Republic of Haiti in 1804. France's role in the imperial rivalry for the Americas ended.

In Europe, the war between France and the rest of the European powers began again in 1803, and it too spread to the Americas. After Napoleon defeated Prussia, Austria, and Russia and knocked each power out of the war, only Britain remained in the fight. After the Battle of Trafalgar (1805), the Royal Navy had complete control of the Atlantic, and the British government sought to restrict the flow of New World goods to France and its allies. The British government resumed seizing neutral ships bound for the European mainland, with most of these seizures being of American ships. Similarly, the British impressed sailors of suspected British origin into service in the Royal Navy. This affront to American sovereignty was deeply humiliating. The combination of these policies led to war between the United States and Great Britain in June 1812. The War of 1812, or Anglo-American War, lasted until the early weeks of 1815. Though essentially a draw, the War of 1812 did confirm the dominant position of the United States vis-à-vis the American Indian communities within its borders.

#### AFTER THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA

With the Restoration of the European monarchies at the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815) and the conclusion of the War of 1812, the United States became the preeminent player in the imperial rivalry for the Americas. The United States forcibly annexed West Florida from Spain in 1810 and acquired East Florida from Spain in 1819. At the same time, Spain and the United States concluded the Transcontinental Treaty, which fixed the boundary between New Spain and the United States, from the Sabine River to the Pacific Ocean. Between 1815 and 1820 the United States and Great Britain concluded a series of treaties. The Rush-Bagot Agreement (1817) essentially demilitarized the Great Lakes, while two Commercial Conventions (1815, 1818) resolved the commercial issues that had caused the War of 1812 (except impressment) and fixed the U.S.–Canada border (except for the Maine boundary).

The final point of contention was how the United States and the European powers would respond to

the disintegration of the Spanish Empire. Gran Colombia, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Peru, and the United Provinces of Central America all declared independence between 1815 and 1825, and the United States recognized these states between 1822 and 1826. When it appeared that Spain and its European allies might attempt to reconquer these new states, British foreign minister George Canning offered to make a joint statement with the United States standing against European intervention in the Americas. American Secretary of State John Quincy Adams and President James Monroe decided that it would be better for the United States to make such a statement by itself. Their statement, the Monroe Doctrine, told the world that the United States would resist European attempts to interfere in the political life of the Americas. Though born from the European imperial rivalry for the Americas, the United States presumptuously declared the rivalry to be at an end.

*See also European Influences: The French Revolution; European Influences: Napoleon and Napoleonic Rule; French and Indian War, Battles and Diplomacy; French and Indian War, Consequences of; Quasi-War with France; War of 1812.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Broers, Michael. *Europe under Napoleon, 1799–1815*. London: Arnold, 1996.
- Deconde, Alexander. *The Quasi-War: The Politics and Diplomacy of the Undeclared War with France, 1797–1801*. New York: Scribners, 1966.
- Dull, Jonathan. *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.
- Elliott, John H. *Spain and Its World, 1500–1700*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.
- Hinderaker, Eric. *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673–1800*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Horn, James, Jan Ellen Lewis, and Peter S. Onuf, eds. *The Revolution of 1800: Democracy, Race, and the New Republic*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002.
- Langley, Lester D. *The Americas in the Age of Revolution, 1750–1850*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.
- Lewis, James E., Jr. *The American Union and the Problem of Neighborhood: The United States and the Collapse of the Spanish Empire, 1783–1829*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- . *The Louisiana Purchase: Jefferson's Noble Bargain?* Charlottesville, Va.: Thomas Jefferson Foundation, 2003.
- Onuf, Peter S., and Nicholas Onuf. *Federal Union, Modern World: The Law of Nations in an Age of Revolutions, 1776–1814*. Madison, Wisc: Madison House, 1993.

Stagg, J. C. A. *Mr. Madison's War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early American Republic, 1783–1830*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983.

Taylor, Alan. *American Colonies*. New York: Viking, 2001.

White, Richard. *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Leonard J. Sadosky

---

**IMPRESSIONMENT** Impressionment, the unsystematic seizure of men by a state to fill the ranks of its military machine, had provided warriors long before the opening volleys of the War of 1812. From the peasant spearmen of ancient Egypt to the superbly trained soldiers of Frederick the Great (1712–1786), monarchs had forced men from fields and city streets to battle the foe. In England, heads of state since Alfred the Great (849–899) had pressed men for army and navy alike, and impressionment would provide 75 percent of the Royal Navy's crews during the Anglo-French wars of 1793–1815.

Conflict with France meant a global struggle for far-flung colonies and trade routes. As the Royal Navy added new vessels to its list, manning requirements climbed from a prewar low of 10,000 to 85,000 in 1794 and 140,000 by 1812. Attrition by disease, accident, desertion, and combat reduced crews and required constant replacements. At the same time, the ranks of the army had to be filled. But whereas a soldier could be trained in a matter of weeks, a sailor needed years of experience to become proficient in nautical skills—and at least one-third of a ship's crew needed to be able seamen to avoid shipwreck or destruction at the enemy's hands. Britain's Quota Act of 1793 ordered each county to provide a percentage of the navy's manpower, but few of those men possessed any seafaring skills. Skilled seamen could be acquired in a number of ways, such as by taking them from passing merchantmen, though laws exempted many sailors and fishermen from service lest the economy collapse. Quite often, captains coerced foreign nationals into serving by threatening the latter with becoming prisoners of war. Also, coercion was frequently applied when the foreigners were regarded as actually being British citizens. For the Royal Navy, the definition of citizenship was quite clear. Any man born on English soil was and would always be a subject of the crown and thus subject to impressionment. This included most American citizens born before 1783.

The impressment of American citizens, whether naturalized or not, began with the outbreak of war in Europe during 1793. The United States attempted to protect its seamen by issuing warrants or "protections" attesting to citizenship, but the ease of forgery and the British definition of citizenship made them ineffective. Even American warships proved unable to resist the Royal Navy: the USS *Baltimore* lost fifty-five of its crew to impressment in 1798, and the USS *Chesapeake* was fired upon and then stripped of four crewmen in 1807. Merchant vessels suffered more cruelly, the Department of State reporting in January 1812 that 9,991 American seamen had been impressed since 1796. The exact number of Americans pressed to crew the Royal Navy may well have exceeded twenty thousand. Despite continuous efforts of American presidents from George Washington through James Madison to end this threat to Americans and to American sovereignty, Britain—its very survival threatened by France—ignored them. Thus Madison, in his war message of 1 June 1812, listed impressment as the first justification of conflict. As the War of 1812 continued, abandonment of the practice of impressment would be the last American condition dropped for a negotiated peace.

*See also Chesapeake Affair; War of 1812.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Dudley, William S., ed. *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History*. Vol. 1. Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center, Department of the Navy, 1985.
- Hutchinson, J. R. *The Press-Gang Afloat and Ashore*. New York: Dutton, 1914.
- Lavery, Brian. *Nelson's Navy: The Ships, Men, and Organization, 1793–1815*. Rev. ed. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1994.
- Mahan, Alfred Thayer. *Sea Power in Its Relations to the War of 1812*. 2 vols. London: Low, Marston, 1905.
- Zimmerman, James. *Impressment of American Seaman*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1925. Reprint, Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1966.

Wade G. Dudley

---

**INDENTURED SERVANTS** *See Work: Indentured Servants.*

---

**INDEPENDENCE** Independence was a central keyword of politics in the eighteenth century. For in-

dividuals as well as the United States in 1776, independence—the ability to dictate one's own course without outside reference—was a goal that in theory was worth striving for, but in reality was difficult to attain.

#### THE CONCEPT OF INDEPENDENCE

Personal independence was an important concept for many eighteenth-century Americans. Independence was the notion that a person was entirely free from all entangling obligations, the ability to be self-sufficient in all political, economic, and social relationships. A person free from any dependence on another, most Americans agreed, epitomized an ideal citizen, the perfect guarantor of liberty. Independence was synonymous with happiness, comfort, ease, a trouble-free life. Eventually—although not easily—the concept of individual or personal independence would become a national ideal as well; independence, in other words, became the model for Independence.

True independence, though, was built on contradiction. Although self-sufficiency was the goal, this end was highly compromised. Gendered male, the "independent" patriarch was in fact actually reliant on the labor of those in his household who were by definition dependents, including women, children, and slaves. Also, the social standing of elites depended on the consumption of an increasing variety of consumer goods, and as a result many so-called independent Americans were rarely free of debts owed to British merchants. As members of an empire ruled by a monarchy, Americans were politically dependent on the king. Although they did not view this as complete dependence—colonists insisted the relationship was reciprocal and that their allegiance was contingent on the king's ability to provide for their protection—they were still subjects of the crown.

Personal independence, then, was largely evanescent. Although the concept was consensually agreed upon as the goal for happy individuals and a healthy community, it was seldom realized. Still, aspiring Americans believed the freedom to pursue independence, as Jefferson intimated, to be a closely guarded right, one that sat at the epicenter of the imperial crisis of the 1760s and 1770s. Throughout their controversy with Great Britain, colonists protested that their ability to achieve independence was under increasing assault by an insidious and grasping imperial administration. Their reaction reflected the desire to eliminate all forms of dependence. Economic boycotts, political maneuvering to control imperial

agents, and the promotion of virtue all addressed the issue of American independence.

One of the primary tactics Americans employed to protest British policies was to boycott imported goods. Seeing their purchasing power as a lever with which to pressure Parliament, American leaders administered nonimportation boycotts to varying degrees of success in response to the Stamp Act (1765), Townshend Duties (1767), and Coercive Acts (1774). Americans' concept of personal independence lay at the heart of the boycott movement. Because nonimportation naturally reduced consumption, the measure also had a side benefit of limiting debt. With the nonimportation boycott, personal independence from consumer debt suddenly became a patriotic act; personal virtue and the public display of political principles were now one and the same. Americans who protested British policies further drove home the connection between economic independence and political resistance by labeling virtuous the consumption of domestic manufactures, such as homespun clothing. Wearing a suit of clothes stitched by a person in one's own household played on many different levels of independence: it reduced the influence of British merchants; it rejected the notion that Britain could take away individual liberties; and it served as a totem that this individual was his own person not beholden to anyone.

Ideas about the dangers of dependence also fed into American concerns about the arrangement of political power in the British Empire. While they nominally declared their dependence on the crown (albeit with reserved rights), colonists worried about the independent status of the king's agents in America. Throughout the eighteenth century, imperial officials had depended on American assemblies to pay their salaries and expense accounts. This leverage, colonial leaders argued, was a vital check that safeguarded American rights. When Parliament attempted to consolidate its authority in the years after the Stamp Act, one of its most pressing concerns was the wresting away of the ability to control the livelihood of British colonial officials. Parliament, in other words, wanted to ensure that its representatives in the colonies would be dependent on its authority only. Colonists, especially in Massachusetts, reacted in horror; they protested that if the interests of imperial agents were independent of the colonies they administered, tyranny would directly ensue, followed, inevitably, by slavery.

Concepts of personal independence—whether political, economic, or social—mobilized increasing numbers of Americans to resist British policies. But

the incorporation of ideas about personal or individual independence did not naturally or easily lead to calls to cut all ties with Britain. The road from independence to Independence was indeed long and tortured.

#### THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE

With the Treaty of Paris in 1763, American feelings of patriotism and attachment to the British Empire overflowed. Believing they were fully vested partners in the defeat of France, Americans saw themselves as belonging to a "Greater" Britain. Independence from Britain and the king was far from their minds at the beginning of the imperial crisis. Throughout the 1760s and 1770s, even as they protested British policies as an abridgment of their rights, American petitions continually pledged allegiance to the king. The major statements that underscored the American position, from the Stamp Act Congress in 1765 through Thomas Jefferson's *Summary View of the Rights of British Colonies* in 1774 to the Olive Branch Petition of 1775, each denied that the colonies desired their own independence. They begged the king to take up his role as protector and act on their behalf by reining in a runaway Parliament and ministry. While they insisted that colonial legislatures should have sovereignty over provincial laws, most revolutionaries adamantly denied that they should cut ties with the British monarchy as well.

*Common Sense* (1776) in large part changed this. Thomas Paine's pamphlet spoke directly to the possibilities of Independence. Paine argued that continued attachment to Britain would drag America into war, destruction, and tyranny. The first to "kill" the king, *Common Sense* became a literary phenomenon throughout the colonies in the early months of 1776; the forty-six page pamphlet convinced thousands of Americans that hereditary monarchy was corrupt and that an immediate declaration of national independence was in their best interest. But as powerful as the argument was, even Paine's sensational rhetoric did not spur Congress to action. Even after news reached America in early 1776 that the king had withdrawn his protection from the colonies, the question of Independence remained controversial. By the first anniversary of the Battle of Lexington of April 1775, only a few colonial assemblies had authorized their representatives to concur if Congress were to hold a vote on Independence. As of May 1776, no delegate had permission to initiate debate on the issue.

The deepening exigencies of war, however, would ultimately trump the colonists' attachment to

the monarch. In the spring of 1776, war continued throughout the colonies from Canada to the Carolinas. Rumors of British efforts to supplement their invasion force with foreign mercenaries, from either Russia or the German principalities, had been rampant throughout America since the previous fall. Throughout the first two weeks of May 1776, American newspapers were filled with reports from ship captains that testified to seeing a transport fleet filled with British and German soldiers en route to New York. The simultaneous arrival of official transcripts of the king's treaties with the German states for mercenaries confirmed the reports. Congress reacted immediately. On 15 May 1776, it ordered a de facto independence by instructing every colony that had not yet done so to draft its own republican constitution. At the same time, proponents of Independence dispatched Richard Henry Lee to Virginia to secure instructions from that critical province to bring up the issue on the floor of Congress. Lee returned on 7 June with a resolution from Virginia that instructed Congress to vote on whether "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved." Congress agreed to consider Lee's resolution and, on 11 June, appointed a committee of five delegates—John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Robert R. Livingston, and Roger Sherman—to draft a declaration of independence.

After taking a three-week recess for the remainder of June, Congress debated Independence on 1 and 2 July, a huge step made only more difficult by word that the vanguard of the impending British invasion fleet had indeed arrived off New York City a few days previously, on 29 June. With twelve colonies supporting the measure (New York lacked instruction and therefore abstained), the vote for Independence passed on 2 July. Congress spent the next two days editing the language of the draft declaration of independence written by Jefferson and the other members of the "Committee of Five." On 4 July 1776, Congress approved the final version of the Declaration of Independence and sent the copy to Philadelphia printer John Dunlap for its publication. The concept of independence—the republican ideal of complete self-sufficiency—had finally come full circle. Ideas about personal independence into which the revolutionaries had tapped in order to mobilize support for resistance to British policies had become national Independence.

*See also Continental Congresses; Declaration of Independence; Jefferson, Thomas; Paine, Thomas; Politics: Political Thought; Stamp Act and Stamp Act Congress.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Breen, T. H. *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Bushman, Richard L. *King and People in Provincial Massachusetts*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985.
- Holton, Woody. *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves, and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Lewis, Jan. *The Pursuit of Happiness: Family and Values in Jefferson's Virginia*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Ragsdale, Bruce A. *A Planters' Republic: The Search for Economic Independence in Revolutionary Virginia*. Madison, Wis.: Madison House, 1996.
- Rakove, Jack N. *The Beginnings of National Politics: An Interpretive History of the Continental Congress*. New York: Knopf, 1979.
- Wood, Gordon S. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969.

Robert G. Parkinson

---

#### INDEPENDENCE DAY *See Fourth of July.*

---

**INDIANA** The territory and state of Indiana emerged from conflict between Native American and European peoples and the eventual victory of American colonists over British domination.

Native Americans (including Miamis, Weas, Piankesaws, Kickapoos, and Potawatomis) were the first to occupy the Indiana country. The Frenchman René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, arrived in 1679, opening the way for the French to establish the fur trade and erect fortified trading posts at Fort Miami (renamed Fort Wayne, 1715), Fort Ouiatenon (renamed Lafayette, c.1718), and Fort Vincennes (1732). As British colonies in the East expanded, Great Britain and France contested the American interior and sought to protect their respective interests in trade and land. By winning the French and Indian War (1756–1763), Britain, through the Treaty of Paris (1763), gained control of lands east of the Mis-

sissippi. The Proclamation of 1763 prevented white settlement west of the Appalachians until Britain acquired Indian lands and established an orderly system for settlement. Native Americans challenged British authority, resulting in Ottawa chief Pontiac's failed effort in 1763–1764 to expel the British.

During the American Revolution Native Americans, recognizing that American colonists posed a greater threat to their lands, sided with the British against the Americans. In 1777 Lieutenant Colonel George Rogers Clark, sponsored by the Virginia General Assembly, launched a campaign to gain control of the Ohio River Valley. He captured several posts in the Illinois country and, after a long wintry trek, recaptured Fort Sackville at Vincennes to force a British surrender (1779). The British continued to resist, however, until their eventual defeat in October 1781. The Treaty of Paris in 1783 led to British recognition of American independence and cession of all lands up to the Mississippi River, including the Indiana country, to the United States.

Unsettled Indiana benefited when Congress, under the Articles of Confederation, adopted two ordinances for the economic and political organization of the newly acquired western lands. The Land Ordinance (1785) prescribed a survey and public auction of lands. The Northwest Ordinance (13 July 1787) organized lands north of the Ohio River as the Northwest Territory, established a three-stage process for achieving statehood, and adopted a standard of civil rights, including the prohibition of slavery. In a further effort to weaken Indian control of the interior, President George Washington sent General Anthony Wayne against the tribes. Wayne's victory at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794 led to the Treaty of Greenville (1795).

On 7 May 1800, the U.S. Congress approved the division of the Northwest Territory into two separate governments, which led to the formation of the Indiana Territory. The white population of Indiana at this time was 5,641. President John Adams appointed William Henry Harrison as territorial governor, and Vincennes became the territorial capital. The population grew steadily, and in 1805 the Indiana territorial legislature convened to adopt territorial laws, including laws allowing indentured servitude. The Indiana Territory was decreased in size when the Michigan Territory split off in 1805 and the Illinois Territory in 1809. By 1810 the Indiana population, including 237 slaves, numbered 24,520.

As territorial governor, Harrison pursued an aggressive policy of land acquisition. He negotiated land cession treaties with tribes, sometimes using

military intimidation, to chip away at Indian possessions and effect the demise of native culture. Seeking to regain their dwindling land, Shawnee leader Tecumseh and his brother "The Prophet" Tenskwatawa established a confederacy of tribes to attack Indiana settlements. Continued tensions led to the Battle of Tippecanoe (7 November 1811) near Tecumseh's village of Prophetstown, where the confederacy was damaged. The subsequent death of Tecumseh at the Battle of the Thames (1813) in Canada marked the demise of Indian resistance in Indiana.

After enduring the War of 1812, the territorial legislature convened in December 1815 at Corydon, which had succeeded Vincennes as capital in 1813, to draft a petition for statehood. With the approval of Congress, the representatives wrote a constitution, and on 11 December 1816 Indiana became the nineteenth state of the Union. Although the Northwest Ordinance prohibited slavery, there were unsuccessful efforts during both the territorial and early statehood stages to reintroduce slavery to Indiana. Jonathan Jennings, an opponent of slavery who was instrumental in drafting the constitution, became the first governor.

With Native Americans still occupying most of the central and northern parts of Indiana, the first decade of statehood witnessed numerous treaties that gradually removed the Indians, making way for settlers migrating primarily from the upland South. The Treaty of St. Mary's (1818), or the "New Purchase," opened the central third of the state to white settlement, and by 1820 the population had increased to 147,178. In that year the General Assembly chose a centrally located capital on the White River, and in January 1825 the legislature convened at the new capital of Indianapolis.

The new state quickly pursued policies of economic development by chartering a state bank (1817), encouraging agriculture and manufacturing, and promoting a system of internal improvements. As the state prospered the population grew, totaling 343,031 in 1830. Towns such as Madison, located on the Ohio River, profited as improved transportation spawned increased migration and continued economic growth for the Hoosier state.

*See also American Indians: American Indian Removal; American Indians: American Indian Resistance to White Expansion; Expansion; Fallen Timbers, Battle of; Northwest and Southwest Ordinances; Thames, Battle of the; Tippecanoe, Battle of.*

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Barnhart, John D., and Dorothy L. Riker. *Indiana to 1816: The Colonial Period*. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau and Indiana Historical Society, 1971.
- Carmony, Donald F. *Indiana, 1816–1850: The Pioneer Era*. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau and Indiana Historical Society, 1998.
- Cayton, Andrew R. L. *Frontier Indiana*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996.
- Madison, James H. *The Indiana Way: A State History*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, and Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1986.
- Voegelin, Erminie W. "Indians of Indiana." *Indiana Academy of Science Proceedings* 50 (1941): 27–32.

David G. Vanderstel

---

**INDIANS** See **American Indians**.

---

**INDIVIDUALISM** A powerful ideal that signifies the preeminence of the self as an autonomous, rights-bearing entity, individualism first emerged as a national ethic during the half-century after the American Revolution. Elements of individualistic thought reach back to ancient Greece and Renaissance Europe. Over the centuries, various writers have used individualistic themes to express and proclaim all sorts of agendas and convictions. All of these efforts, however, strive to locate the singular person within—or atop of—the social institutions that standardize life. Individualism is, at root, a relational idea, one that responds to and rejects its foils: anonymity, passivity, conformity. As such it has often borne a defensive or embattled posture. This was certainly true in early national America. For some, individualism helped to define the Republic against its ancien régime enemies; for others, individualism menaced both public order and personal morality.

**ROOTS OF AMERICAN INDIVIDUALISM**

The concept of individualism grew from religious, political, and economic roots in early America. Protestant Christianity, practiced in some vein by most Euro-Americans, rejected the symbolic and institutional props of Catholicism in favor of a more intimate link between the seeker and God. The personalized thrust of Protestantism inhered in Puritan diaries, through which the writer catalogued his or her search for salvation, and in Quaker meetings,

during which men and women silently accessed their "inner light" of faith. The conversion experiences of eighteenth-century Evangelicals also underlined this personal connection to God. American individualism also derived from liberal political theory, especially from John Locke's precept that an individual's rights preceded the formation of governments. According to Locke, all men—women were subsumed by their fathers or husbands—bore inherent entitlements to life and property that the state had to respect. Finally, the concept of individualism issued from the market economy that developed throughout the North Atlantic world during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In light of this new economic setting, some philosophers celebrated the "natural" workings of trade and commerce. When each person pursued his own interests, they argued, every person benefited. Mercantilist or paternalistic controls on self-interest (and, by extension, self-awareness) thereby lost some of their cultural legitimacy.

**THE INDIVIDUAL VS. DUTY, OBLIGATION, AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST**

As powerful as these experiences and belief systems were in colonial America, they cut against the grain of early modern thought and culture. In both Europe and North America, most of those in power as well as most philosophers understood society as an organic whole, a "body politic" of unequal but interdependent parts. No one but Robinson Crusoe lived alone or unattached; all people bore duties and obligations to those above and below them on the "great chain of being." In Revolutionary America, political radicals who called themselves "republicans" found these old ideas increasingly hollow. Haughty aristocrats who curried favor with the crown did not appear to uphold their responsibilities to the commonweal. Yet such radicals did not seek an alternative to monarchical "corruption" in the ascension of the individual. On the contrary, republicans exhorted would-be citizens to sacrifice their private interests for the sake of the political community. "Every man in a republic," declared the physician and Revolutionary Benjamin Rush, "is public property. His time and his talents—his youth—his manhood—his old age—nay more, life, all belong to his country" (Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic*, p. 61). Thus, neither the monarchical precepts that Americans rejected nor the republican philosophies they embraced during the Revolution celebrated (or even tolerated) the free-floating, autonomous individual.

Nonetheless, the American Revolution propelled individualistic thought toward its eventual enshrinement as a (not *the*) national ethic. Historians often

argue that the Revolution bequeathed a dual legacy of republican and “liberal” tendencies to American culture, and that the latter eventually won out. Individualism is often taken as the end product of liberal capitalism and liberal democracy. Early national Americans, however, would have puzzled over the term “liberalism.” Many, perhaps most, explicitly invoked or implicitly embraced Christian and republican virtues of self-sacrifice and public service. Yet others discerned a fresh potential for self-fulfillment within the cultural topography of the new Republic. They celebrated “emulation”—creative tension between an individual and a certain goal or another person—as the key to such fulfillment. Teachers, ministers, and other local notables argued that emulation pushed people, especially youth, to “excel” their peers in learning or virtue, tapping reservoirs of personal energy that monarchy had kept frozen. Some even lauded the long-feared passion of “ambition”—the personal desire for honor and preeminence—as a potential virtue, an emotional “fire” to be harnessed rather than stamped out. Such beliefs intersected with hero-worship of Revolutionary figures (“which one of you will be the next Washington?” asked one academy preceptor) and manifested in everything from school spelling-bees to debate societies. For the first time, the cultivation of the self for a distinct role in “the grand theater of the world” gained widespread legitimacy.

Again, though, such ideas ran counter to vital currents of thought and experience. Even as Americans moved toward a popular and competitive rather than an elitist and consensual political culture, and even as they participated in an ever-expanding commercial economy, they remained enmeshed in household and neighborhood obligations. The family economy, in which women and children worked for household heads, survived the Revolution. In fact, it adapted to and helped to propel a burgeoning of commerce in the early nineteenth century. Farmers and artisans enhanced labor demands on their wives and children and used republican citizenship to affirm their authority within the household. Many an “ambitious” farm lad found his aspirations thwarted by his father’s wishes. Ironically, proponents of emulation often assailed such fathers as litigious, greedy, and selfish—in other words, as individualistic. Protestant views of the self as depraved and worthless also retained their power over the new nation’s religious culture.

#### A CELEBRATION OF SELF-DEFINITION

The term “individualism” finally emerged in national discourse during the 1820s, as those who inherited

the Revolution and its new grammar of personal potential gained civic, cultural, and economic power. The word, and the social types associated with it, celebrated personal discovery and self-definition, not (or not just) personal gain and self-interest. The appearance of the term coincided with the rise of the autobiography as a popular genre. The first of the so-called “self-made men” in America were those who had left the farm, admired and imitated some hero or ideal type, and then invented a special vocation or niche—a “career”—in society. They included itinerant ministers, factory founders, Western explorers, and college professors; they also included many who went bankrupt and a few who struck it rich. Women faced even greater obstacles to self-definition. Effectively marginalized from the world of commerce, ambitious women sought distinction and personal fulfillment in reform movements like temperance, antislavery, and, of course, women’s rights. All of the early autobiographers conveyed a sense of struggle—with physical disabilities, with financial hardships, and with the provincial mores and local commitments that fettered the self.

By the 1830s, the language of individualism helped to portray the United States as a hurried and “bustling” place, one where the demands of money-making and self-making intersected and collided. Yet no sooner had individualism established itself in the American vocabulary than it provoked new criticisms and alternatives. The French traveler Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859), for example, believed that the America he toured in 1831 was degenerating into individualism, which he called “a calm and considered feeling which disposes each citizen to isolate himself from the mass of his fellows.” Many middle-class commentators, who now worked in offices or shops rather than at home, praised that very tendency. The middle-class home, by design, provided a gentle retreat from the callous world of work. But many worried that this withdrawal hindered the civic engagement and public spirit that made republics better than monarchies. Tocqueville also noted that the prevailing sense of self-interested busyness actually suffocated personal creativity and self-expression. Individualism was, in a sense, its own worst enemy.

Even as it became the nominal core of the democratic, capitalistic world of nineteenth-century America, individualism remained a controversial and complex notion. As home and work divided in the industrial age, more and more Americans took for granted the need to exercise one’s ambition, to find one’s unique place in the wide world. Competition

and the disciplined pursuit of wealth and status became organizing principles of American society—at least, of its bourgeois elements. But the formation of a full-blown market economy and democratic polity only sparked a new quest for authentic freedom and self-determination. Transcendentalists like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau sought a more satisfying form of autonomous experience than industrial society, or conventional ideas of individualism, would allow. Thoreau found his in the solitude of Walden Pond outside Concord, Massachusetts; Emerson, in the introspective faith he called “self-reliance.” Religious perfectionists, moral reformers, and factory workers all invented new kinds of associations to combat the anonymity and inequity of nineteenth-century America. And the vexed career of individualism stretches to the present day, underscoring the multiple and conflicting legacies of the American Revolution.

*See also Autobiography and Memoir; Democratization; Home; Industrial Revolution; Market Revolution; People of America; Quakers; Reform, Social; Religion: Overview; Temperance and Temperance Movement; Women: Rights.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Appleby, Joyce. *Inheriting the Revolution: The First Generation of Americans*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2000.
- Bellah, Robert N., ed. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.
- Tocqueville, Alexis de. *Democracy in America*. 2 vols. 1835, 1840. Translated by George Lawrence, edited by J. P. Mayer. New York: HarperPerennial, 2000.
- Wood, Gordon S. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.

J. M. Opal

Nevertheless, it remains a useful concept for understanding the great changes of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

#### ORIGINS

The concept is probably most applicable to late-eighteenth-century England, where the rapidity of the onset of industrialization, particularly in the textile and metal industries, was very much remarked upon by contemporaries. The crux of this revolution was in the transformation from handicraft work performed at home or in an artisan’s shop to factory work, performed by wage laborers and characterized by a highly developed division of labor and reliance upon automated machinery, such as the spinning jenny of James Hargreaves (d. 1778), the water frame (an automated spinning machine) of Richard Arkwright (1732–1792), and the power loom of Edmund Cartwright (1743–1823). Initially, this machinery was most frequently powered by hand or water, but as the century progressed, the steam engine of James Watt (1736–1819) became increasingly important. While undoubtedly innovative, these developments built upon a long history of textile manufacture in England reaching back at least to the Norman Conquest of the eleventh century. The seventeenth century saw a marked rise in interest in manufacturing by so-called projectors, who began all sorts of new initiatives. By the first half of the eighteenth century, England had entered a transitional phase variously described by historians as an age of manufactures or as protoindustrialization, during which manufacturing began to be performed much more widely and on a broader scale in large, factorylike settings that, nonetheless, had not yet attained the extent of mechanization and division of labor that characterized the industrial revolution.

The United States lacked this long engagement with manufacturing. Before the American Revolution, most colonists remained content to make money through agriculture and commerce while importing manufactures from Britain. Furthermore, mercantilist legislation such as the Wool Act (1699), Hat Act (1732), and Iron Act (1750) made many forms of large-scale manufacturing illegal. After the Revolution, however, Americans became very interested in ending their dependence on British manufactures for political and economic reasons. Without a rich manufacturing heritage they found themselves at a disadvantage. Often the solution was to rely on skilled immigrants and to steal British technology. Immigrants such as the German glassmaker John F. Amelung (1741–1798), the British cloth dyer John

---

**INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION** The “industrial revolution” is a term coined in the nineteenth century to describe the rapid rise of the modern factory system and the related economic, social, and cultural effects. It is a phrase that to some extent began to fall out of favor in the latter part of the twentieth century as the factory no longer seemed quite so central to western society and as historical research began to question whether the rise of the factory system was quite as revolutionary and rapid as it once seemed.

Hewson (1744–1821), and most famously Samuel Slater (1768–1835), who smuggled plans for Arkwright's machinery out of England, brought established European technologies to the new nation.

Americans also developed some innovations of their own. They were particularly adept at creating automated machinery, a necessity in a country where labor costs remained relatively high. Oliver Evans of Delaware invented an automated gristmill (1784) that allowed Americans to grind wheat into flour with very little human labor. Jacob Perkins's nail-making machine (1795) automated that process and rapidly drove the price of nails down by more than 60 percent. David Wilkinson cleverly automated the machine shop at Slater's Rhode Island mill, creating instruments such as a power-driven lathe (1794). By the early nineteenth century, precision machine tools allowed Eli Whitney (1765–1825) to develop his system of interchangeable parts, which came to be known as the American System of Manufactures and which opened the door to mass production.

While industrialization was relatively late and derivative in the United States, demand for manufactures was quite high from the colonial period onward. From the first seventeenth-century settlements, Anglo-Americans were highly disposed to purchase fine manufactured goods on the world market, and by the eighteenth century many were avid participants in a consumer revolution that was connected to the increasingly widespread availability of manufactured goods from industrializing England. Additionally, well before the onset of industrialization, Americans were participating in what has been described as an "industrious revolution" characterized by increased household production of agricultural and manufactured goods by families hoping to improve their income in order to purchase new manufactures such as inexpensive, factory-made china. Thus, developments that once were described as effects of the industrial revolution—increased consumption and increased productivity—are now seen to have preceded industrialization in the United States and Europe.

#### THE PROCESS OF INDUSTRIALIZATION

The textile industry followed the industrial revolution model more closely than any other early national American economic sector. Before the American Revolution, virtually all domestic-made textiles were manufactured in the home. With the onset of the Revolutionary crisis and the demonization of British manufactures during the American boycotts, Patri-

ots attempted to construct textile factories in Philadelphia, Boston, and New York City. The Philadelphia project, commonly known as the American Manufactory (1775), was the most successful. It employed several hundred workers, many of them women, to produce wool, linen, and cotton cloth before disbanding due to the British occupation of Philadelphia in 1777. Many new textile factories emerged in the decade following the war in the mid-Atlantic and New England states, including the famous Almy, Brown, and Slater mill (1790) in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. While these early operations all anticipated the modern factory in employing some automated machinery, usually powered by water, they also continued earlier traditions of hiring large numbers of outworkers, usually (although not exclusively) women who spun thread or sewed fabric in their own homes.

Between 1808 and 1830 the textile sector began to industrialize in earnest, prompted in large part by difficulties in importing products during President Thomas Jefferson's embargo (1807–1809) and the War of 1812 (1812–1815). One of the first and largest projects was the heavily mechanized Union Manufacturing Company established in Baltimore in 1808 and initially fitted with between six and eight thousand spindles. It was followed by a number of other sizable textile mills clustered in Baltimore, New England, and western New York. The largest and most famous were the Waltham-Lowell factories in Massachusetts, founded in 1812 by the so-called Boston Associates using technology pirated from England by the merchant Francis Cabot Lowell (1775–1817) and modified by Paul Moody (1779–1831), a skilled mechanic.

The Boston Associates' establishments were the first fully automated, vertically integrated factories in the United States. Their factories at Lowell performed all the functions of textile manufacturing—spinning, weaving, finishing, printing, and packaging—under a single roof housing impressive amounts of water-powered machinery. By 1836 the Boston Associates had invested more than \$6.2 million in these establishments.

Although immensely important in the development of American industry, the Lowell pattern was not the only one followed by early national industrialists. In Philadelphia, manufacturers created a different model that came to be known as "proprietary capitalism." Unlike their corporate counterparts in Massachusetts, these individual proprietors invested in numerous smaller, specialized textile firms that lacked the efficiencies of scale of the vertically inte-

grated Massachusetts firms but had the advantage of flexibility, which allowed them to retool rapidly and produce only those products currently in high demand.

Other manufacturing sectors followed still different paths. Iron making was one of the few large-scale colonial industries. By 1775, America's iron foundries produced one-seventh of the world's iron, frequently relying upon the labor of enslaved African Americans. The technology and scale of this industry changed very little during the early Republic, although after 1830 a switch to anthracite coal would have important ramifications. Shoe manufacturing grew very rapidly during the same period in places such as Lynn, Massachusetts, where output rose from 100,000 pairs in 1788 to nearly 1.7 million by 1830. This increase was made possible through increased division of labor and centralization of production under the control of market-oriented merchants. Unlike the textile industry, the shoe industry underwent virtually no mechanization before 1830. Similarly, New York City became increasingly industrial despite a relative absence of mechanized factories. This pattern, sometimes called "metropolitan industrialization," was marked by relatively small manufactories composed of twenty or more workers performing traditional craft processes as wage workers, who generally had less expectation of becoming a master than in earlier generations. But metropolitan industrialization, like early industrialization generally, was difficult to define because it was characterized by diversity rather than typicality.

#### **IMPACT OF INDUSTRIALIZATION**

Although the heaviest industrialization would come later in the nineteenth century, the labor force of the United States was already showing signs of transformation in the early Republic. As late as 1810, nearly thirty times as many Americans worked in agriculture as in manufacturing. By 1840 that ratio had dropped to seven to one. Even more important, as a result of industrialization the nature of those jobs shifted. Earlier, most manufacturing workers labored in small shops within a craft system of masters, journeymen, and apprentices, with some expectation of attaining a "competency," a comfortable living as a master, by the latter stages of their careers. By 1830, laborers more frequently worked for wages within a factory or a larger shop in which the artisanal system was breaking down and in which hopes for advancement were less realistic. In short, a more clearly defined working class was now emerging.

Workers increasingly expressed dissatisfaction with the emerging labor system. In the early 1790s a number of journeymen actions—at least six in New York City alone between 1791 and 1793—protested the declining wages and loss of workplace control already developing as the craft system began to weaken. In the well-known Philadelphia cordwainers' strike of 1805, journeymen who struck against lower wages were imprisoned, charged, and convicted of conspiracy to restrain trade, thereby setting a precedent allowing courts to break up subsequent strikes as illegal conspiracies. Despite this setback, in the 1820s workers began a new phase of intense organization during which they formed workingmen's societies that called for ten-hour days and more educational opportunities for laborers. The unions of the 1820s published twenty newspapers and attracted up to 300,000 members.

Early industrialization also led to important shifts in gender roles. The Boston Associates initially employed women, many of them New England farm girls, as operatives in their mills. Although many of these young women planned to work only a short time before leaving to get married and have a family, they nonetheless came to resent their low wages, typically below those of the lowest-paid male workers, and by the 1830s they, like their male counterparts, began to strike for better pay. Even the women who remained at home saw their roles altered by early industrialization. The home had been the most important workshop for American manufacturing throughout the eighteenth century, but by 1830 home manufacturing was in precipitous decline as the factory began its ascendency. As a result, the role of middle-class women could now be increasingly directed away from producing goods and toward raising children in the more intensive fashion of the Victorian era.

Although the greatest period of immigration would not begin until the 1840s, in the years before 1830 industrialization was already attracting a steady stream of immigrants to the United States. Many early entrepreneurs such as Samuel Slater emigrated to the new nation expressly because they saw an opportunity to profit from the emerging manufacturing sector. Of the fifty-three thousand Irish immigrants arriving in Philadelphia between 1789 and 1806, an estimated 30 to 40 percent were skilled artisans and their families.

Finally, early industrialization also led to an acceleration of urbanization and the growth of the market economy. Some new mill towns quickly became urban centers. The population of Lowell, for

example, ballooned from twenty-five hundred in 1826 to more than twelve thousand by 1833. Established population centers such as Philadelphia and Baltimore also grew rapidly. Because early factories were generally powered by streams and rivers, many rural areas were also affected. For example, largely agricultural Oneida County in western New York contained fourteen textile factories by 1832. Rural people there became more closely tied to markets as they purchased factory goods and sold farm goods to factory workers. More generally, the widespread availability of inexpensive manufactured items coupled with better and cheaper transportation of goods in the canal age were important factors in the great market revolution of the early nineteenth century.

*See also Economic Development; Labor Movement: Labor Organizations and Strikes; Manufacturing; Manufacturing, in the Home; Technology; Textiles Manufacturing; Work: Factory Labor.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ben-Atar, Doron S. *Trade Secrets: Intellectual Piracy and the Origins of American Industrial Power*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2004.
- Bezis-Selfa, John. *Forging America: Ironworkers, Adventurers, and the Industrious Revolution*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2004.
- Dublin, Thomas. *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826–1860*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1979.
- Licht, Walter. *Industrializing America: The Nineteenth Century*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.
- Mantoux, Paul. *The Industrial Revolution in the Eighteenth Century*. Rev. ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.
- Meyer, David R. *The Roots of American Industrialization*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.
- Peskin, Lawrence A. *Manufacturing Revolution: The Intellectual Origins of Early American Industry*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.
- Scranton, Philip. *Proprietary Capitalism: The Textile Manufacture at Philadelphia, 1800–1885*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Lawrence A. Peskin

---

**INFRASTRUCTURE** *See Internal Improvements.*

---

**INHERITANCE** Despite some changes, at Independence the law of inheritance, which the English jurist Sir William Blackstone described as “the double preference given by our law, first to the male issue, and next to the firstborn among the males,” retained the imprint of its feudal origins. In every society the rules governing inheritance—the principles by which property descends to an heir—embodied economic structures, social norms, and cultural preferences. As Blackstone correctly pointed out, English law had developed its rules of succession at a time when a monarch had to identify and sustain those on whom he counted for military aid: “the ability for personal service was the reason for preferring males at first in the direct lineal succession.”

Among these rules was that of primogeniture, according to which land held by a person who died without a will went in its entirety to the eldest son. Consistent with their reformist impulses, every New England colony abolished it and replaced it with a biblically inspired rule dividing lands among all children—sons as well as daughters—equally, except that a double portion went to the eldest son. This rule of “partible inheritance,” established in the Puritan colonies, followed religious impulses; but it also reflected a distributive ideal of spreading property broadly to produce a society of numerous independent households. A significant number of New Englanders drafted wills providing for all their children with some legacy of property. Outside New England, by contrast, all but the Quaker colonies of Pennsylvania and West New Jersey retained primogeniture, with its traditional English dynastic ideal of keeping property consolidated within a male bloodline. Widows were not heirs of their husbands: a widow was entitled only to her “dower” rights of one-third of her husband’s personal property and the use of one-third of his real property during her lifetime, after which the property went to the husband’s legal heirs. Such rules, which Blackstone described as “intended for [a married woman’s] protection and benefit,” also barred her from bequeathing any of her own land to her husband. In practice, many men left real property to their widows or made them executors in charge of their estates. Mortality left many a widow but also many an orphan, and Maryland created courts to assure the proper use of assets left to minors.

The limited abolition of primogeniture marked the limits of colonial inheritance reform. All the colonies continued English rules that gave priority to male heirs and allowed them to preserve their lands

undivided by converting them into "fee tail" estates passing to "the heirs of my body." Because title to the land could pass to no one else, these heirs could not sell or mortgage it. As in England, ending an entail was costly and time-consuming, and Virginia, where many estates were entailed, made it even more so in 1705. Tradition held out, therefore, supported by social ideology and enforced by English authority when challenged, as the Privy Council made clear in 1728 when it invalidated Connecticut's law on parible inheritance.

Independence provided the opportunity to reshape inheritance law consistent with the goals of the Revolution. As a type of property law, the rules governing succession were left to the states; but the shared impulses of creating republican societies produced some general patterns of change in state statutes of distribution. Because Virginia's laws governing succession were particularly retrogressive, the reform efforts of Thomas Jefferson and others stand as noteworthy attacks on an *ancien régime* of law that protected huge landed properties. "The transmission of this property from generation to generation in the same name," he wrote, "raised up a distinct set of families who, being privileged by law in the perpetuation of their wealth were thus formed into a Patrician order, distinguished by the splendor and luxury of their establishments." His proposals to abolish primogeniture and entail provoked fierce opposition among conservatives, one of whom said that only a "mid-day drunkard" would think of doing so. Nevertheless, reformers persisted in using law instrumentally to create what Jefferson called "a system by which every fibre would be eradicated of antient or future aristocracy; and a foundation laid for a government truly republican." Their goals went beyond the political and envisioned a reform of social behavior as well. The entailment of estates, Jefferson argued, was "contrary to good policy" because it deceived lenders, discouraged improvement, and emboldened children to disobey their parents.

Despite its defenders, entailment aroused powerful opposition as a bulwark of privilege and obstacle to economic growth. Jefferson believed that each generation held its property as "usufruct"—a term describing land possessed for use only—and that entailment denied a people's right to determine its own policies. Virginia abolished entail in 1776, and in the process crippled the dynastic tool of the "strict settlement" that had also been used to tie up property for generations. Massachusetts, acting in 1791, was among other states following suit in abolishing entailment.

In 1777 Georgia became the first southern state to end primogeniture, followed by North Carolina in 1784. Virginia, to Jefferson's embarrassment, did so only in 1785. Massachusetts, which had replaced primogeniture with its double-portion rule in the seventeenth century, finally ended even that discrimination by making all shares equal in 1789. In any event, as more and more people made wills in the post-Revolutionary era, such a rule governing intestacy was of diminishing practical importance.

As a Connecticut judge commented, inheritance was "not a natural, but municipal right," and the powerful force of Revolutionary positivism overcame resistance and propelled legislatures across the new nation to reform the law of succession. Statutes weakened the paternalistic and aristocratic English system and in its place made inheritance law an instrument of creating responsible property-holding citizens. Where English law had served to preserve an aristocratic family bloodline by excluding half-brothers and half-sisters from inheriting, for example, Virginia abolished the discrimination and allowed them legacies. Although statutory change stopped short of expanding the inheritance rights of women, they benefited from the expanded use of practical methods that allowed families to create legal settlements in the form of trusts or chains of future interests.

*See also Death and Dying; Domestic Life; Jefferson, Thomas; Legal Culture; Marriage; Property; Wealth; Wealth Distribution; Widowhood; Women: Rights.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brewer, Holly. "Entailing Aristocracy in Colonial Virginia: 'Ancient Feudal Restraints' and Revolutionary Reform." *William and Mary Quarterly* 54 (April 1997): 307–346.
- Ditz, Toby L. "Ownership and Obligation: Inheritance and Patriarchal Households in Connecticut, 1750–1820." *William and Mary Quarterly* 47 (April 1990): 235–265.
- Katz, Stanley N. "Republicanism and the Law of Inheritance in the American Revolutionary Era." *Michigan Law Review* 76, no. 1 (November 1977): 1–29.
- Orth, John V. "After the Revolution: 'Reform' of the Law of Inheritance." *Law and History Review* 10, no. 1 (spring 1992): 33–44.

David Konig

---

**INSURANCE** Despite receiving scant scholarly attention, the creation of a domestic insurance sector was an important factor in the commercial and eco-

nomic development of the early United States. The first and most consequential form of insurance in the period between 1750 and 1830 was marine insurance, developed after 1720 in colonial port towns by American merchants who sought to lower the risk of their growing overseas commerce and benefit from a financial intermediary that could mobilize capital and spur greater economic development. The first fire and life insurance enterprises appeared in the 1750s and 1790s respectively, but they remained less important (and profitable) than marine insurance until after 1815, when the centrality of overseas commerce to the U.S. economy declined and American cities began growing more rapidly. Along with commercial banks, insurance companies represented a significant source of capital accumulation and credit for early American entrepreneurs and also, because of generally low share prices and strong returns, an accessible and reliable investment opportunity for both small and large investors.

#### MARINE INSURANCE

In the early eighteenth century, American merchants purchased marine insurance largely from British sources, most frequently from agents of Lloyd's of London, who set up shop in American ports. However, the difficulties of obtaining insurance from foreign sources—the high commissions paid to agents and the problems of providing proof of loss and collecting claims—convinced colonial merchants that they needed their own sources of insurance. All the early American firms operated along the same principles as Lloyd's. A broker drew up policies for shippers and a variety of local underwriters were invited to subscribe for whatever portion of the policy they wished. Insurance firms employing this model appeared in Boston (1724), Charleston (1739), Philadelphia (1748), and New York (1759). Prior to the American Revolution this type of private, informal, and unregulated insurance expanded the supply and lowered the cost of insurance for small shippers and provided more established merchants an important investment opportunity—though British sources of insurance remained important for American shippers into the early nineteenth century.

The Revolutionary War, however, deeply disrupted American shipping, raised insurance rates exorbitantly, and made British insurance nearly impossible to obtain. The war experience convinced American merchants that they needed to develop additional domestic sources. Moreover, the problems associated with private insurance—the ease of fraud, the low capital reserves of individual underwriters,

and the need to launch multiple lawsuits when underwriters refused to fill claims—led merchants to develop the corporate form of insurance. The first such U.S. company was Philadelphia's Insurance Company of North America, established in 1792 and incorporated by the Pennsylvania legislature in 1794. The key figure in the creation of this company was Samuel Blodget Jr., an inveterate entrepreneur and early statistician. He began the enterprise as a tontine association—that is, a scheme in which all subscribers received an annuity during their lives, with the last survivor enjoying the whole income—but when it failed to attract enough investors, the cash raised provided the capital for the new insurance company.

Despite these inauspicious beginnings, incorporated marine insurance companies began appearing in every major U.S. port. In 1800 there were eleven such firms in the United States, and in 1809 the chairman of Lloyd's of London estimated that there were forty-four marine insurance companies in America. Their creation was largely in response to the Napoleonic Wars (1799–1815), which provided lucrative opportunities for neutral American merchants who shipped goods to Europe and the West Indies. The era's conflicts, however, also posed great hazards to American shippers as both British and French vessels attacked U.S. merchantmen with impunity. Indeed, so great were the risks that during the War of 1812 a number of American insurance companies ceased issuing policies. Nonetheless, marine insurance played an important role in the economic development of the early Republic. It helped stabilize the commercial environment and permitted direct access to overseas markets for American commodities, thereby sparking increased domestic production. Equally significant, it supplied a regular source of credit to merchants because premiums did not have to be paid until after the voyage was complete, and most companies possessed the power to lend—though this aspect of their business has remained murky. Finally, marine insurance companies invested their assets heavily in the stocks of other financial intermediaries such as commercial banks, providing capital that fueled economic growth.

#### FIRE AND LIFE INSURANCE

The Napoleonic Wars had a second important impact on the insurance business: they convinced many firms to concentrate more heavily in the field of fire insurance. The nineteenth-century growth of U.S. towns and cities had a similar effect. Though early attempts were made to establish fire insurance asso-

ciations in Boston (1728 and 1748) and Charleston (1736), the first enduring firm, the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire, appeared in 1752, with the support of Benjamin Franklin.

Like early marine insurance efforts, the Contributionship was based on English models, and Philadelphia merchants Joseph Saunders and John Smith, who were heavily involved in marine insurance, played key roles. In 1768 the Contributionship was incorporated by the Pennsylvania legislature, but heavy losses in the early years resulted in slow growth, and the expansion in the fire insurance business did not occur until after the Revolution. Between 1786 and 1800 some twenty firms were incorporated by the states, and in 1804 Samuel Blodget Jr. estimated that there were forty insurance firms of all types in the new nation, with capital in excess of \$10 million. In subsequent years the number and size of insurance companies continued to rise rapidly; by

1830, for example, New York City alone had twenty-eight insurance firms with capital in excess of \$10.8 million, \$7.8 million of which was in fire insurance.

In contrast, life insurance founded in the early Republic. Noah Webster noted that some financial intermediaries were authorized to insure lives, but the "business . . . is novel in this country and of small value to the insurers." For instance, when chartered in 1794 the Insurance Company of North America was empowered to insure lives and the company appointed a committee to establish a business plan. However, the firm seems to have drawn up only a few short-term policies, usually for the life of an individual during the duration of a voyage. Slow growth continued throughout the period. By 1814 there were only four active life insurance companies in the United States, a number that had risen to only seventeen (with a total capital of \$2.8 million) in 1836. Not until the 1840s would life insurance be-

come an important part of the insurance business in the nation.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Buel, Richard, Jr. *In Irons: Britain's Naval Supremacy and the American Revolutionary Economy*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998.
- Davis, Joseph Stancliffe. *Essays in the Earlier History of American Corporations*. 2 vols. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1917. Reprint, New York: Russell & Russell, 1965.
- Fowler, John A. *History of Insurance in Philadelphia for Two Centuries (1683–1882)*. Philadelphia: Review Publishing and Printing, 1888.
- Krooss, Herman E., and Martin R. Blyn. *A History of Financial Intermediaries*. New York: Random House, 1971.
- Ruwell, Mary Elizabeth. *Eighteenth-Century Capitalism: The Formation of American Marine Insurance Companies*. New York: Garland, 1993.

*A. Glenn Crothers*

ington, for example, promoted a survey of the Potomac and James Rivers to explore the possibility of connecting them with the Ohio River and the Great Lakes. In 1785 Virginia's legislature responded to Washington's idea by passing charters for the Potomac Company and the James River Company. The Potomac Company later declared bankruptcy, but the James River Company thrived during the post-Revolutionary decades. It had no problem finding subscribers for the initial capitalization of \$100,000, of which the Commonwealth was entitled to purchase \$20,000. In 1790 the company completed a short section of the canal and improved navigation linking Westham to Richmond; in that year it also successfully petitioned the legislature for permission to raise an additional \$20,000 in private subscriptions plus another \$20,000 in state-held stock. Although it never lived up to the ambitious designs of its founders, the James River Company is an excellent example of the mixed enterprises typical of early internal improvements.

Canals figured prominently in the nineteenth century, but at its beginning, turnpikes were the most common type of internal improvement. These toll roads were sometimes built on existing paths but in other cases blazed entirely new trails through the countryside. Most turnpikes were privately owned companies with routes of from fifteen to forty miles, although many received subsidies from local or state governments. The National Road, a federally funded turnpike, was the most ambitious road project of the early Republic. Federal engineers planned for this gravel-topped road to link Baltimore on the Chesapeake Bay to the Ohio River and ultimately to the Mississippi River. Although some hoped that the National Road could serve as a shining example for federally funded turnpikes, the vast majority of toll road construction occurred under the authority of private firms with only limited public investment. From 1800 to 1810, states chartered 398 turnpike companies—more than five times the amount during the previous decade. Meanwhile, construction on the National Road languished until the first major section, which connected Baltimore and Wheeling, Virginia (later West Virginia), was finally opened in 1818. Although the federal government spent \$1.6 million dollars on the National Road over the next six years, it suffered from rockslides and erosion that made it almost impassable. When it finally reached Columbus, Ohio, in 1833, the grandiose plans for the federal turnpike had all but disappeared.

Internal-improvement boosters nonetheless continued to agitate for a larger role for government in

---

**INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS** The term "internal improvements" came into popular usage in the United States during the 1780s and originally referred to most economic, educational, and engineering programs undertaken by federal and state governments. Over the next few decades, the idea of internal improvements narrowed to include state-sponsored transportation projects such as improvements in navigation of existing rivers, turnpike roads, canals, and railroads. Although all could agree that innovations in the nation's transportation network were a positive goal, the extent of public funding and administration quickly served as a focal point of a political debate that lasted throughout the antebellum period. The federal government had several opportunities to take the lead in promoting a national system of internal improvements, and in each instance it failed to overcome political opposition grounded in a states' rights approach to the Constitution. Individual states briefly seized the initiative during the canal boom of the 1830s, but they eventually withdrew from massive public works programs. In the end, private firms assumed the major responsibility for American transportation networks, although often with financial backing from public institutions.

#### EARLY EFFORTS

Early attempts at internal improvement often blended public and private initiative. George Wash-

transportation projects in the United States. In 1807 the Senate instructed Albert Gallatin, Thomas Jefferson's secretary of the treasury, to make a report on the need for further public improvements in the United States. Gallatin's *Report on Roads, Canals, Harbours, and Rivers*, issued in 1808, set out a plan for a nationwide series of federal projects aimed at improving the transportation and communications network of the young nation. Gallatin recommended that the federal government oversee the construction of canals and improvements to rivers that would create an inland water navigation from Massachusetts to North Carolina and build roads to cross the Appalachian Mountains and link the seaboard with inland cities such as Detroit, St. Louis, and New Orleans. He estimated that this network would cost approximately \$16.6 million to build, and in addition, he also recommended \$3.4 million for smaller local improvements across the United States. The revenue from tariffs would pay for this very ambitious scheme. Gallatin argued that the project was aimed at the development of both the seaboard and interior and that therefore it was the duty of the federal government to embark upon such a program. Despite the extensive nature of this plan, opponents denounced the use of public funds for projects that would benefit only those in the projects' immediate area.

The War of 1812 (1812–1815) put an immediate stop to Gallatin's plan, but it was revived in 1817 when John C. Calhoun of South Carolina suggested that a \$1.5 million chartering bonus along with any future stock earnings from the newly created second Bank of the United States be used to create a permanent fund to "bind the Republic together with a perfect system of roads and canals." The debate in the House over Calhoun's so-called Bonus Bill revolved around an all-too-familiar question: Should the federal government pay for projects that did not benefit all of the states? Nationalists argued that the federal government should allocate funds to roads and canals that would have the greatest impact upon the economy; states' rights advocates countered that such a plan would funnel massive amounts of money for pet projects that would reflect political, not economic, agendas. In the end, opponents of Calhoun's plan stated, the federal system would be corrupted beyond repair. The Bonus Bill narrowly passed Congress, but President James Madison sided with the states' rights approach to the matter and vetoed the legislation in 1817.

#### STATE GOVERNMENTS TAKE CHARGE

With the federal government temporarily out of the picture, state governments picked up the internal improvements torch. New York was the first state to undertake a massive internal improvement project with its own public funds. In 1817 the legislature authorized the construction of the Erie Canal, to run from the Hudson River to Buffalo on Lake Erie, under the watchful eye of the state's governor, DeWitt Clinton. Critics of the plan thought that it would never succeed and referred to the project as "Clinton's Big Ditch." But in 1825, only eight years after work on the project had begun, the Erie Canal was finished. The fruits of the endeavor were both impressive and immediate. In the first year of its operation, toll revenues on the Erie Canal surpassed the annual interest on the state's construction debt as traffic on the improvement ranged from heavy freight including lumber and wheat to small manufactured valuables to passengers utilizing the canal for both speedy transportation and leisure. By 1837 the revenues from the Erie Canal had erased New York's construction debt completely—only twelve years after beginning operation. The waterway shortened the time and expense required for the transportation of both bulk and high value commodities considerably and also effectively opened up New York's western counties to development; the growing cities of Buffalo, Syracuse, and Rochester all prospered from bordering the Erie Canal. Moreover, as a public works project constructed by New York's state government, the Erie Canal demonstrated the potential benefit that a state-funded internal improvement networks could provide.

Many states rushed to copy New York's success with the Erie Canal. During the 1820s the state of Virginia took over the James River and Kanawha Canal project, which was designed to cross the mountains and enrich the inland counties along the way. In 1826 Pennsylvania decided to build a state-wide system of trunk and branch canals, commonly known as the State Works. Even states west of the Appalachian Mountains such as Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois rushed to build systems of their own, and during the 1830s a full-blown canal boom gripped the United States. But as quickly as many of these projects were begun, they began to see diminishing returns. Because many canal projects were inspired more by political expediency than by an actual prospect of improved economic efficiency, they lost money.

In addition to building these roads themselves, states also chartered transportation companies that provided funding for other ventures. Probably the

most famous example of this is the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. In 1827 a group of Baltimore merchants met to discuss ideas about a central line of improvements for Maryland. They looked at the case of New York and Pennsylvania to the north and Virginia to the south and saw that these states were all planning massive canal systems to aid the development of their interior counties. Since Maryland had no sizable river system to expand upon like the Hudson River in New York or the James River in Virginia, they decided to experiment with a new form of transportation known as the railroad. These merchants petitioned the legislature for a charter, and in February 1827 the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad was created with a capital stock of \$3 million. But more important, of the company's thirty thousand shares of \$100, the state subscribed to ten thousand, for \$1 million. In exchange for the rights of eminent domain and exemption from taxation, the Maryland legislature received the right to set passenger and freight rates. Railroads, like turnpikes, would be built by private firms, but often with limited public financial backing.

#### THE RISE OF LAISSEZ-FAIRE

A final attempt to involve the federal government in supporting internal improvements occurred in 1830 during the administration of President Andrew Jackson. Although a proposed national road linking Buffalo to New Orleans failed to pass Congress, several bills authorizing the federal government to subscribe to the stock of private canals and turnpikes passed. One such project, the Maysville Road, was a planned route from the Ohio River to Lexington, Kentucky. Jackson vetoed federal funding for the Maysville Road and seized the opportunity of his veto message to make a statement about the appropriateness of the federal government's role in internal improvements. In his message Jackson argued that the Maysville Road was of "purely local character" and that he wanted to "keep the movements of the Federal Government within the sphere intended." Thus, like James Madison before him, Andrew Jackson constricted the federal government's role in regard to internal improvement programs.

Following the heady canal boom of the 1830s, individual states showed signs of withdrawing their support for massive public works. As construction and operational expenses rose and revenues dwindled, state officials reconsidered their support for canal construction. The Pennsylvania State Works, for example, was completed in 1835 and cost an estimated \$12 million. But toll revenues never lived up

to expectations and the State Works dragged Pennsylvania into a deep financial crisis. In 1844 the legislature authorized the sale of the Philadelphia to Pittsburgh route for \$20 million, a price that no private concern was willing to pay for a line of navigation that had proved both unpopular and unprofitable. In the end, the State Works were sold to the Pennsylvania Railroad over the course of the 1850s, but in the process, the idea that state-built internal improvement projects were not just expensive, but were by their nature an unwise move, became popular. The idea of laissez-faire began to take hold in many states. Railroads—the next great innovation in transportation in the United States—would depend mainly upon private firms for their construction and operation.

Internal improvements thus went through several distinct stages. At first, it seemed as if the federal government would replicate its sponsorship of the National Road and branch into other endeavors. After it failed to do so, state governments responded with ambitious but unwieldy canal programs to provide needed links between market centers. The failure of these programs caused a withdrawal of administrative, if not financial, support for internal improvements by state governments.

*See also Economic Theory; Erie Canal; Railroads; States' Rights; Transportation.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Friend, Craig Thompson. *Along the Maysville Road: The Early Republic in the Trans-Appalachian West*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2005.
- Goodrich, Carter. *Government Promotion of American Canals and Railroads, 1800–1890*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1960.
- Klein, Daniel B., and John Majewski. "Economy, Community, and Law: The Turnpike Movement in New York, 1797–1845." *Law & Society Review* 26 (1992): 469–512.
- Larson, John Lauritz. *Internal Improvement: National Public Works and the Promise of Popular Government in the Early United States*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.
- Majewski, John. *A House Dividing: Economic Development in Pennsylvania and Virginia before the Civil War*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Shaw, Ronald E. *Canals for a Nation: The Canal Era in the United States, 1790–1860*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1990.
- Sheriff, Carol. *The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress, 1817–1862*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1996.
- Taylor, George Rogers. *The Transportation Revolution, 1815–1860*. New York: Rinehart, 1951.

Sean Patrick Adams

**INTERRACIAL SEX** Judging by the laws and rhetoric of early Americans, the notion of sex across the color line struck them as repulsive, unnatural, and intolerable. White concern over the act of interracial sex can be traced to seventeenth-century colonial America. Criminalization of interracial sexual relations stood as a monument to white society's commitment to maintaining the "purity" of the white race.

The ideal of racial purity proved elusive, however, as conditions in the very early years of colonial settlement simply did not permit the absolute sexual separation of the three races: indigenous Indians, African slaves, and Europeans. The dire scarcity of European women in some regions, especially in the southern colonies, left many European American men partnering with non-European women, some merely for sex, but others in marriage. Also, during this time racial categories had not yet fully formed, so there was greater fluidity across racial lines. Some colonial historians have even claimed that full-blown racism, long associated with the American South, was inchoate in colonial America, permitting a certain degree of tolerance of interracial sexual relations that continued through the Civil War.

In 1662, however, the first clear statutory legal proscription against interracial sexual relations was adopted. The Virginia law reflected a new, harsher racism that had taken hold in the Chesapeake as African slaves began significantly to supplant European indentured servants as the chief labor source. This law, which punished only whites for broaching the color line to have sex, seems to have emerged primarily in response to a social conundrum in the New World: What to do with mixed-race children in a society that was increasingly associated with racial slavery? Prohibitions against interracial marriage soon followed. Antimiscegenation laws, as they were known, continued throughout much of the United States well into the twentieth century.

By the eighteenth century, lawmakers' aversion to racial mixing was shored up by an emerging ideology that cast sexual intimacy across the color line as abominable. Clearly the notion of interracial sex offended the sensibilities of many whites, signifying underlying fears of racial difference and worries that a mixed-race population could undermine slavery and confuse the social and racial order. Famously, Thomas Jefferson decried "amalgamation" or the "mixture of colour," which he equated with the degradation of whites. Less famously, countless Americans voiced their disgust with the possibility of racial

mixing. James Wilson, a Pennsylvania delegate at the Constitutional Convention, announced to the gathering that he, like his constituents, responded to stories of racial miscegenation with "disgust."

Based on pronouncements like Jefferson's and Wilson's, as well as the statutes denouncing and punishing interracial mixing, historians long believed that actual cases of miscegenation were infrequent. Because of the public antipathy toward interracial sex, of course, few whites would risk social opprobrium by publicly acknowledging they had traversed sexual and racial boundaries. Hence, traditional sources of evidence failed to reveal a pattern of extensive racial mixing. However, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, social historians relying on different kinds of historical sources (for example, local court transcripts rather than statutes) have asserted that miscegenation was common, even ubiquitous, at some times and in some places.

Few Americans at the beginning of the twenty-first century are unaware that the founding father and third U.S. president, Thomas Jefferson, likely had a long-term intimate relationship with his slave, Sally Hemings, that produced several children. Journalist James Callender, Jefferson's chief political enemy, first publicized allegations of the affair to a mass audience in 1802, but neighbors near Jefferson's Monticello home had long been aware of such rumors. While the nature of the relationship continues to be debated by historians, scientists, and laypersons, the larger truth is that Jefferson's purported relationship with Hemings was hardly an isolated or even an unusual episode in the early American slave South. Sexual relations between master and slave, which took many forms including rape and other forms of nonconsensual sex, as well as long-lasting, loving concubinage, were relatively common.

Not only was interracial sex rather common in early America, but much of society tacitly if begrudgingly tolerated such relations in their communities. If the offending interracial couple acted discreetly, not flaunting the taboo relationship, it was not uncommon for southerners to look the other way, in much the same way as turn-of-the-century Virginians seemed nonplussed at Jefferson's rumored relationship with one of his slaves. This pattern is documented throughout early America.

While sexual relations between black men and white women were less common, they nonetheless occurred with regularity. White women's sexual relations with slaves were especially policed in nineteenth-century America, in large measure because of



**A Philosophic Cock** (c. 1804). In this satirical cartoon by James Akin, President Thomas Jefferson appears as a rooster courting a hen with the face of Sally Hemings, one of Jefferson's slaves. Jefferson's political opponents sought to weaken his presidency with charges of promiscuity and interracial sex. COURTESY, AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY.

worries about the economic welfare of the offspring whose fathers might be enslaved, but also to enforce the fiction of racial purity that permeated much of early America, including the area outside the South. While sporadic attempts were made to outlaw interracial sex in the North, the policing was never as strict as in the slave South. Slave fathers obviously could not provide for their mixed-race children. Still,

white women—especially of poor and middling rank—had frequent contact with men of color, free and slave. They sometimes worked as servants alongside slaves. Or sometimes they traveled on errands with little or no protection, making them susceptible to sexual assault. White women without husbands or fathers to support them and their families may have engaged in sexual bartering or ex-

change with blacks occasionally or regularly. As with master-slave sexual relations, suspecting neighbors typically ignored such activities unless a pregnancy or an accusation of rape forced the community to deal openly with the relationship.

*See also Jefferson, Thomas; Rape; Sexuality.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bardaglio, Peter W. "'Shamefull Matches': The Regulation of Interracial Sex and Marriage in the South before 1900." In *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History*. Edited by Martha Hodes. New York: New York University Press, 1999.
- Clinton, Catherine, and Michele Gillespie, eds. *The Devil's Lane: Sex and Race in the Early South*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Gordon-Reed, Annette. *Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings: An American Controversy*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997.
- Higginbotham, A. Leon, Jr., and Barbara K. Kopytoff. "Racial Purity and Interracial Sex in the Law of Colonial and Antebellum Virginia." *Georgetown Law Journal* 77 (1989): 1697–2029.
- Hodes, Martha. *White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the Nineteenth-Century South*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1997.
- Jennings, Thelma. "'Us Colored Women Had to Go through a Plenty:' Sexual Exploitation of African-American Slave Women." *Journal of Women's History* 1 (1990): 45–74.
- Jordan, Winthrop D. *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550–1812*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968.
- Lewis, Jan Ellen, and Peter S. Onuf, eds. *Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson: History, Memory, and Civic Culture*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999.
- Rothman, Joshua D. *Notorious in the Neighborhood: Sex and Families across the Color Line in Virginia, 1787–1861*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Sommerville, Diane Miller. *Rape and Race in the Nineteenth-Century South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2004.

Diane Miller Sommerville

in Massachusetts. By doing so, Parliament inspired widespread resistance in North America to its policies, including the meeting of the first Continental Congress later in 1774 and the actions at Lexington and Concord the following year.

The Boston Port Act closed and blockaded the city's harbor beginning 1 June 1774. Boston could neither ship outward nor import any goods (with the exception of supplies for the British armed forces and fuel or food via the coastal trade). The blockade would not be lifted until the townspeople had repaid the East India Company for the tea that had been destroyed. The Massachusetts Government Act altered the colony's cherished charter by directing that the king could appoint members of the council and that the royally appointed governor could appoint judges and county sheriffs, who in turn selected jurors; Parliament sought effective law enforcement by ridding these offices of men with Whig sympathies. In addition to stripping the House of Representatives of these powers, the act also curtailed the incidence of town meetings. The Administration of Justice Act allowed the Massachusetts governor to transfer the trials of certain persons (magistrates, those suppressing riots, and customs officials) to another colony or to Great Britain, particularly in the case of capital offenses. The law was intended to protect British officials and supporters of the crown, who believed they could not get a fair trial in front of a Boston jury. The law's detractors believed (erroneously) that soldiers might now kill Massachusetts people with impunity. The Quartering Act, which applied to all the colonies, allowed British officers, in conjunction with governors, to demand suitable billeting in uninhabited buildings.

The colonists also associated the Quebec Act of 1774 with the Intolerable Acts, though it was not intended as a response to the Boston Tea Party. The bill expanded the boundaries of Quebec to include the land north of the Ohio and Illinois Rivers, allowed French Catholics the free exercise of their religion, recognized French civil law (which did not include trial by jury) in Canada, and established a council appointed by the king in lieu of an elected legislature. To the Protestant colonists south of the St. Lawrence River, many of whom feared ecclesiastical control, the Quebec Act was a provocation: the establishment of an arbitrary, tyrannical government filled with Catholic subjects menacing their borders and blocking westward expansion. To the north, however, the Act effectively helped Parliament retain Canadian loyalty to the British Crown.

---

**INTOLERABLE ACTS** The Parliament of Great Britain passed the Intolerable Acts, also known as the Coercive Acts, in 1774 in response to the Boston Tea Party of December 1773. Angry with the "dangerous commotions and insurrections" that had roiled Boston, the British ministry passed these acts in Parliament for the "reestablishment of lawful authority"

Though most of the Intolerable Acts were aimed solely at Massachusetts, people throughout the colonies recognized them as setting a dangerous precedent for the subversion of constitutional rights and liberties. Parliament was testing its supremacy against the autonomy of colonial legislatures, and it was clear which side most Americans favored. Arguments against the Intolerable Acts spread through newspapers and committees of correspondence across North America. Though the colonies had often bickered over boundaries and other issues, the acts motivated them to unite. Boston became a martyr, suffering for the cause of all America. Americans sent aid to the blockaded city, and twelve colonies sent delegates to the first Continental Congress at Philadelphia in September 1774. These delegates soon endorsed the Suffolk Resolves, passed by Boston and its surrounding towns, which proclaimed the Intolerable Acts unconstitutional and called for a boycott of British goods. The Continental Congress enumerated the Intolerable Acts as grievances and asserted the Americans' rights as citizens under the British constitution. The Intolerable Acts provoked a striking unanimity and assertiveness among the delegates.

Meanwhile, the king had appointed General Thomas Gage, commander of His Majesty's forces in America, to serve as governor of Massachusetts. When Gage attempted to enforce the Intolerable Acts by appointing sympathetic judges and suspending town meetings, he met with anger and resistance. General Gage, therefore, believed it prudent to seize the colony's stores of arms, powder, and ammunition. In each instance, New Englanders rose to stop his movements. Gage sent one such expedition of seizure to Concord on 18 April 1775, and the next day British troops exchanged fire with Americans for the first time. Boston became a city under siege. Thus, the Intolerable Acts mobilized military and political action in ways that united the colonies in their resistance to Great Britain. The execution of the acts had failed, just as these laws had misfired as tools of persuasion and authority.

*See also Boston Tea Party; Lexington and Concord, Battle of; Quartering Act; Revolution: Military History.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ammerman, David. *In the Common Cause: American Response to the Coercive Acts of 1774*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1974.
- Bushman, Richard L. *King and People in Provincial Massachusetts*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985.

Reid, John Phillip. *Constitutional History of the American Revolution: The Authority of Law*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993.

Benjamin L. Carp

---

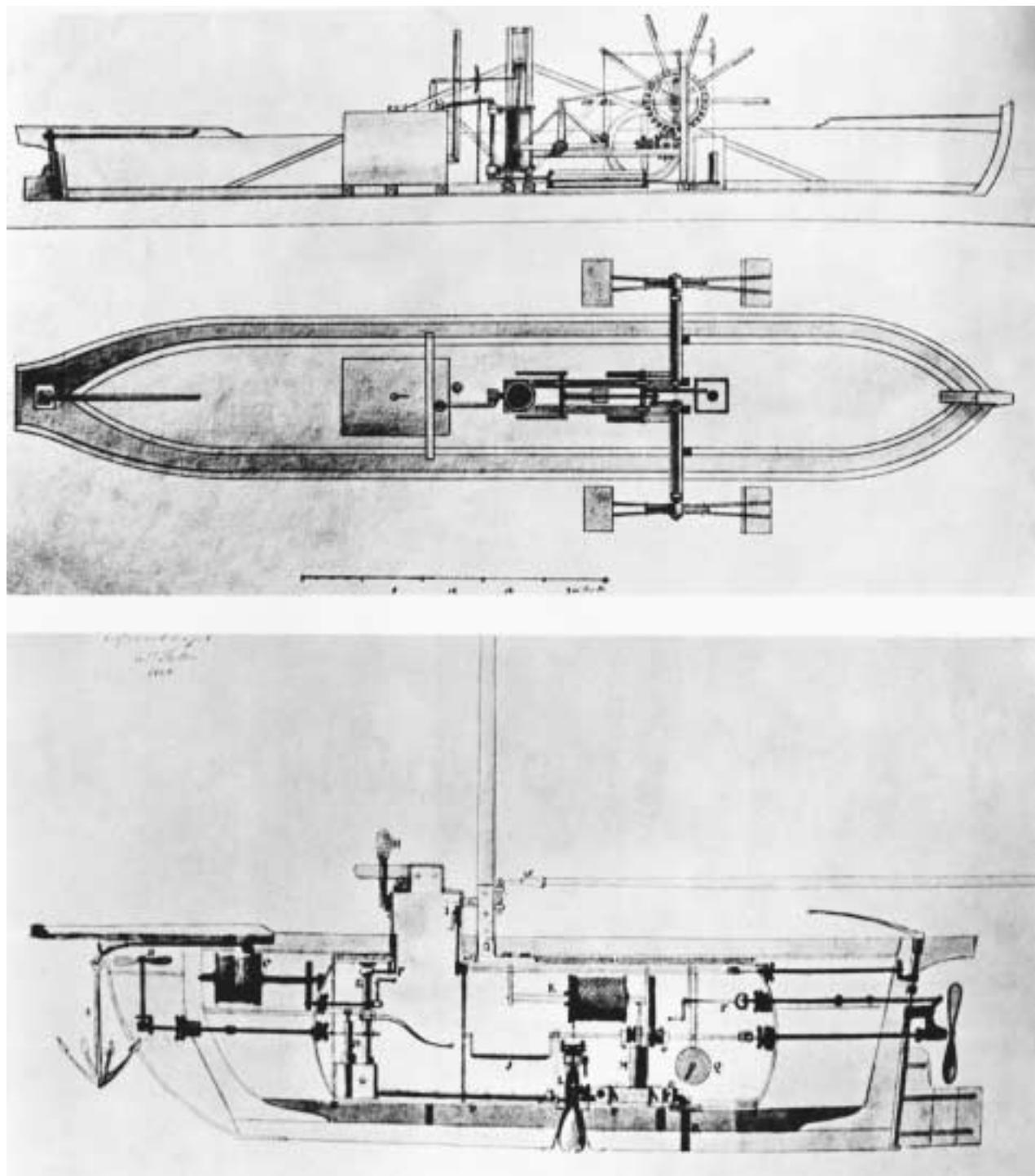
**INVENTORS AND INVENTIONS** Rapid and extensive technological change was not one of the hallmarks of the colonial era, but the pace increased noticeably during the early national period. Except for the evolution of the American felling axe and Benjamin Franklin's promotion of an efficient heating stove (1742) and lightning rod (1752), notable contributions by Americans had to wait until the era of the Revolution. Then, energized by the example of British inventions in manufacturing and fired by the ideals of American independence, entrepreneurs, inventors, and legislators aggressively promoted innovation.

True, most innovations came from the workbenches of now-anonymous workmen and nearly all were the product of incremental change rather than the inventor's mythical "eureka!" moment of inspiration. Still, in the early decades of the nineteenth century, individual innovators multiplied in numbers, expanded their range of work, transformed the material conditions of society, and earned an international reputation for their storied "Yankee ingenuity."

#### PROMOTION OF LEARNING

In his *Proposal for Promoting Useful Knowledge among the British Plantations* (1743), Benjamin Franklin wrote of encouraging studies that would increase the power of men over matter and multiply the conveniences and pleasures of life. Most of the earliest learned societies, such as the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, promoted practical knowledge as much as literary, philosophical, or scholarly pursuits. Recognizing that their members commonly pursued multiple enterprises, occupations, and intellectual interests, these societies supported the Enlightenment ideal of useful learning.

A proliferation of local societies for the promotion of agriculture, natural history, and arts and sciences culminated with the establishment at Philadelphia in 1824 of the Franklin Institute and its journal specifically for the increase and spread of practical knowledge. The Institute became a de facto public-private research laboratory, bureau of standards, and educational institution.

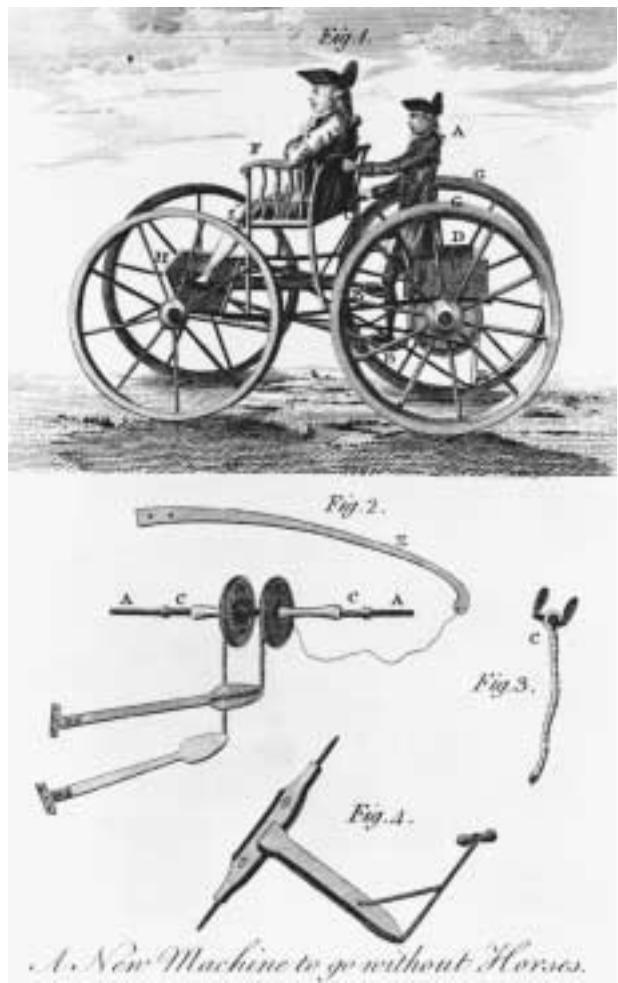


**Fulton's Steamboat and Submarine.** Although Robert Fulton did not invent the steamboat, he was the first to dramatically illustrate its financial potential. He designed his first experimental steamboat (top) in 1803 to travel the Seine River in France. Fulton also designed submarines (bottom). © BETTMANN/CORBIS.

#### ENCOURAGEMENT OF INVENTIONS

The colonists found themselves in an ambiguous situation, subject to British mercantile restrictions on manufacturing but anxious to improve the colonial

economy. A handful of colonies passed legislation offering incentives such as bounties and subsidies for profitable inventions. Some colonies, prominently Connecticut and South Carolina, offered monopolies



**"A New Machine to Go without Horses."** A 1774 version of a horseless carriage. © CORBIS.

or land grants for the establishment of new industries such as ironworks. The situation was difficult for inventors since they had to obtain a patent in each colony in order fully to protect their rights.

After the Revolution several state governments, following the theories of Alexander Hamilton and Tench Coxe, actively promoted innovations by granting patents or monopolies. Most often these monopolies were offered as much to promote economic development for the state as a whole as to reward individual achievement, a distinction worth noting. In the 1790s Georgia established a commission to promote the invention of a device to remove the seeds from cotton. Still, the lack of a uniform patent system frustrated inventors and created difficulties for economic promoters.

The framers of the Constitution debated a number of incentives for authors and inventors, but ultimately included in Article I, section 8, congressional

power to grant them "the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries" for a limited period of time. While disliking monopolies, the framers felt the need for a uniform system covering all the states. Enacted in 1790, the first patent law proved cumbersome, since each application had to be examined for originality and utility by a commission headed by Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. Substantially revised in 1793, the new system required no examination or proof, only the inventor's assertion that the idea was original and useful, leaving the courts to decide which claims were justified. Further, this law required that patents be granted only to native-born citizens, a significant limitation given the number of talented immigrants arriving from more technologically sophisticated England and Europe. Not until 1836 was the patent system revised again, this time putting it upon the solid basis of professional patent examiners. By this time, just 9,957 patents had been granted, only a small fraction of which actually proved useful.

#### SIGNIFICANT INVENTIONS AND NOTABLE FAILURES

The impact of the continent's vast forests on American inventiveness cannot be overstated. As early as the late seventeenth century, Americans excelled in constructing water-powered sawmills since nearly every community near a suitable waterway had one. The American felling axe is a classic case of anonymous technical evolution. No one invented it, but over time its handle was given a curve and length to fit the individual user rather than the standard European straight shaft. The iron cutting-edge was made shorter than the European versions while the poll or flat edge was longer. This balanced the axe and made it three times as efficient as its European cousins, a fact of no small consequence.

Jacob Perkins's water-powered nail-making machine, patented in 1795, was said to be capable of producing 200,000 nails a day and helped lower the cost of nails by 85 percent over the next thirty years. The introduction in 1819 of Thomas Blanchard's copying lathe for the production of rifle stocks was a landmark of American armory practice that contributed to the manufacture of interchangeable parts. By 1829 America was a leading producer of woodworking machinery—saws, planers, lathes.

Intrigued by the complaints of Georgia plantation owners, Yale-educated Eli Whitney in 1793 devised a simple mechanical device to remove seeds from short-staple cotton. His problem-solving approach was practical, not theoretical; his machine

was easy to build and to operate by hand. Exports of cotton increased by a multiple of fifty to nearly twenty-one million tons in less than a decade.

In the mid-1780s Oliver Evans developed an automatic flour mill in which grain was ground into flour without any human intervention. The mill was the most dramatic early illustration of automation, replacing human labor with machinery, and it encouraged flour production around the nation.

While Robert Fulton did not invent the steamboat, in 1807 he was the first to dramatically illustrate its financial potential and social impact. Earlier, between 1787 and 1790, John Fitch had designed from scratch, constructed, and operated a steamboat on the Delaware River. Fulton's demonstration on the more heavily traveled Hudson River proved more financially successful and more inspiring to others seeking to improve inland transportation, the sine qua non for westward trade and expansion.

There were any number of unsuccessful inventions, some developed by the unknown and some by the famous. David Bushnell, a renowned mechanic, attempted to construct a submarine during the Revolutionary War. Thomas Paine, the Revolutionary pamphleteer and author of *Common Sense* (1776), proposed using incendiary arrows to attack warships and patented a prefabricated iron bridge. Charles Willson Peale (1741–1827), the painter, experimented unsuccessfully with a telescopic sight for rifles. Oliver Evans developed an ineffective machine for inserting wire spikes into a leather pad used to unsnarl wool or cotton fibers. In 1813, Philadelphian George E. Clymer produced the first hand printing press made of iron, the patriotically ornamented and named Columbian Press. Weighty, awkward to move, and elaborately decorated, it never found favor in the United States but was popular in England and Europe for more than fifty years, a testament to the peculiar requirements for success in the new nation.

#### **INFLUENTIAL INVENTORS**

In 1744 Benjamin Franklin, a printer by trade, published *An Account of the New Invented Pennsylvanian Fire-Places*, beginning an extraordinary career as a promoter of technical innovation. Franklin's original cast-iron stove was based on scientific principles but was technologically unsound and filled many a room with smoke. Later, he and others modified the original design and the misnamed "Franklin stove" became a common household device. Franklin began his experiments with electricity at about the same time and in 1753 published directions for construct-

ing lightning rods to protect houses, a practical application of his scientific experiments. He later developed bifocal eyeglasses and promoted technical improvements in papermaking and printing.

Thomas Jefferson was less an inventor than an enthusiastic polymath interested in all sorts of intricate devices and technical improvements. His one public invention, a moldboard plow he devised in 1788 and introduced at his Monticello plantation in 1793, found little favor among the yeomen farmers he championed. Though wary of the social impact of manufacturing and cities, Jefferson was a significant promoter of technological innovation in the new nation.

Benjamin Banneker (1731–1806), an African American, was not technically an inventor. But his mathematical skills, his construction of a self-designed clock, and his publication of an almanac rank him among the most celebrated innovators of his time. Banneker's abilities directly challenged Thomas Jefferson's assumptions about racial inferiority and induced him to a grudging recognition of the intellectual potential of some blacks. Thomas Jennings, a free black resident of New York City, may have been the first black to receive a patent, granted him in 1821 for a dry cleaning process.

Oliver Evans, the prototypical ingenious mechanician, repeatedly demonstrated the economic benefits of mechanization, the substitution of mechanical for human labor. His automatic gristmill, his improvements in machine shop practice, his application of steam engines to manufacturing and transportation, and his well-read publications on these nascent industrial practices make him one of the most significant technologists in American history.

Robert Fulton may be best known for his successful demonstration of the steamboat on American rivers. But he also developed a rope-making machine, underwater bombs (torpedoes), and an inclined plane for moving barges from one level of a canal to another. Indeed, his description in 1796 of the inventor as a poet combining old mechanisms into new ideas stands as an early, signal description of inventive creativity.

Though historians question his claims for originality and success with both the cotton gin and interchangeable parts, Eli Whitney remains one of the most important technologists in American history. Whitney's optimism, practical approach to innovation, and very public promotion of interchangeability mark him as an early advocate of technological progress.

Samuel Slater (1768–1835) invented little of note but represented a significant source of technological innovation, the transfer of technology from England and Europe to the United States. Slater's success at bringing new technical ideas into use in the textile industry marked the beginnings of the industrial revolution in the United States.

*See also American Philosophical Society; Franklin, Benjamin; Military Technology; Paine, Thomas; Patents and Copyrights; Steamboat; Textiles Manufacturing.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Hindle, Brooke. *Emulation and Invention*. New York: New York University Press, 1981.
- Hindle, Brooke, and Steven Lubar. *Engines of Change: The American Industrial Revolution, 1790–1860*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1986.
- McGaw, Judith A., ed. *Early American Technology: Making and Doing Things from the Colonial Era to 1850*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994.
- Mokyr, Joel. *The Lever of Riches: Technological Creativity and Economic Progress*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Oleson, Alexandra, and Sanborn C. Brown, eds. *The Pursuit of Knowledge in the Early American Republic: American Scientific and Learned Societies from Colonial Times to the Civil War*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976.
- Pursell, Carroll. *The Machine in America: A Social History of Technology*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

William S. Pretzer

---

**IRON MINING AND METALLURGY** Iron mining, refining, and manufacturing were at the core of early American industrial development. The iron industry was both the most capital-intensive to develop and the most potentially lucrative business venture in the British colonies of North America. Interest in locating deposits of iron, extracting the ore, smelting it, and refining it was evident in the earliest permanent settlements. Small amounts of ore were found in Virginia in 1608 and sent back to England for refinement. A bloomery (a small, enclosed kiln used for roughly smelting iron) was established in the colony at Falling Creek by 1622, although it was destroyed in the Powhatan rising in the same year. In 1641 John Winthrop, Jr., proposed the construction of a complete ironworks in Massachusetts, including a blast furnace (where iron ore was initially smelted into liquid and turned into large bars, called

pigs), fineries (a large hearth where pig iron was reheated into a softened mass called a "half-bloom," from which larger impurities were hammered and chipped out manually or by means of a trip-hammer), and chaferies (a smaller hearth where the iron was again heated and drawn into thinner bars, which were continually rubbed and redrawn until all visible impurities were eliminated). By 1643 a company was formed in London to finance the Massachusetts works. In 1644 construction of the works on the Saugus River began, and more than one hundred experienced ironworkers were imported to carry on the operations.

In the 1650s and 1660s ironworks were established in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Delaware. But these iron companies were expensive to build and maintain. Because the cost of transatlantic transportation in the period was high, with few local markets available, all of these early operations fell into severe financial difficulties and eventually failed. The first profitable iron company in the English colonies was founded by Lewis Morris at Tinton Falls, New Jersey, around 1680, followed by others in Maryland and Pennsylvania. By the turn of the eighteenth century, establishing a viable and profitable iron industry in the colonies became easier for several reasons. First, the settlement and stabilization of more than fifteen colonies from New England to the West Indies after 1630 created a much larger market network in the Americas that could support iron manufacture. Second, after 1660 more ships were built for transatlantic shipping and regulation increased, greatly reducing shipping costs and making exportation of pig iron from the colonies to England at least minimally profitable. Third, the expansion of trade under the English mercantile system beginning in the mid-seventeenth century aided in enriching a significant number of colonial merchants and their families. These merchants, seeking to diversify their interests, had the capital to finance the building and expansion of dozens of new ironworks. Fourth, and perhaps of the greatest importance, local populations grew rapidly in the colonies, continually expanding local markets for iron and iron goods. These local and regional markets along the Atlantic coast were keys to the profitability of the iron industry, as nearly 80 percent of the iron produced in the British colonies of mainland North America was sold on the mainland.

Not all iron manufacturing operations were successful. At a cost of between £10,000 and £50,000 in the eighteenth century, depending on the size and complexity of the ironworks, problems with resources, labor, transportation, weather, competi-

tion, or any combination of these factors could spell disaster. Nearly half of the ironworks established in the six decades prior to the American Revolution failed less than twenty years after they were founded. Others, however, would last nearly a century.

#### LAND AND RESOURCES

Iron ores, including red and brown hematite, magnetite, and carbonate can be found throughout southern Virginia through western and northern Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, and in the colonial period could be found widely across the land's surface. The visible abundance of iron deposits, as well as limestone deposits (used as flux in charcoal iron manufacture), were the first indicators that profitable extraction and refining were possible. But iron ore and limestone deposits were not enough. Fueling even a small ironworks required a large area of forest, as charcoal production was a necessary step preliminary to the smelting process. A colonial blast furnace produced approximately 400 tons of pig iron per year (2 tons of ore could be smelted into 1 ton of pig iron), with each ton requiring between 100 and 120 cords of wood as fuel. Hardwoods burned hottest and were most efficient, softwoods less so. An acre of forested land yielded an average of 20 usable cords of wood, and would take a minimum of twenty years to replenish, if conservation was followed. An iron plantation needed 4,000 to 5,000 acres of forested land in order for production to continue for more than twenty years. The average iron company operated on 5,400 acres.

#### MINING

The availability of much surface ore in the early eighteenth century kept mining operations fairly basic before mid-century. Miners dug shallow trenches, following the visible lines of ore and extracting the most accessible iron. Under these conditions four to six miners could dig a sufficient amount of ore per day (three to four tons) to keep a furnace in operation. The deeper the trenches were cut, the more labor was necessary, as impacted ore was harder to extract and required additional workers to hoist the ore out of deeper trenches and keep the pits clear of water.

Although technologies did not change, by 1750 most iron companies that had been in operation for two decades or more were operating what could be more accurately called mines. Mine holes forty to fifty feet deep required eight miners to produce the same daily tonnage as six had done from a surface

trench, and at least one winch operator was needed to hoist water from the hole. By the 1770s and 1780s, long-established operations were beginning to move toward shaft mining to access deeper veins of ore. This was more costly and dangerous, as it required more labor as well as blasting. Shaft mines had to be shored up by wooden palisades in order to prevent regular collapses. Accidents were still fairly regular and the narrow shafts, typically less than a hundred feet deep, did not allow for rescues of men trapped by flooding waters or cave-ins.

Miners in the last quarter of the eighteenth century were typically skilled both in locating profitable veins deeper in the earth and the art of gunpowder blasting. Men whose higher wages were based on skill were called masters, and laborers who actually did the digging were often called helpers. Higher wages for skilled workers and the need for more labor increased the cost of production after the mid-eighteenth century. Britain still needed American iron, but its value decreased as its production costs increased. Parliament, through regulation, tried to keep colonial iron competitive with Russian and Swedish iron sources, but this became more difficult over time.

#### BRITISH REGULATION

Many Americans viewed the British mercantile system as restricting, and at times it was, but it was always intended to benefit both the home country and the colonies. In the field of iron production, parliamentary allowances were historically generous. Parliament routinely voted down bills that would have raised the import duties for pig and bar iron and outlawed the manufacture of ironware in the colonies. This policy allowed for colonial iron to enter England competitively compared to foreign exporters' iron. Also, owing to the prohibitive cost of establishing and running a blast furnace in the colonies, to prevent ironmasters from refinement beyond initial smelting or a prohibition on ironware manufacturing would have eliminated any profit incentive for colonial entrepreneurs.

In 1750, however, a new iron act was passed in reaction to the great expansion of ironware manufacture in the colonies, which was drastically reducing imports from England. Pot ware (kettles, pots, pans), wrought iron, and stove plates of colonial manufacture covered almost all of the American market; of even greater concern, the proliferation of steel furnaces, plate mills (producing sheet iron), rolling and slitting mills (producing rods), naileries, and wire mills were eliminating local need from Brit-

ish manufacturers. In exchange for elimination of all duties on American iron brought into England, the Iron Act of 1750 banned the new construction of any of these operations in the colonies.

No one on either side of the Atlantic was satisfied with the 1750 act. British manufacturers wanted existing colonial mills shut down, and colonial entrepreneurs saw the regulation that barred them from tapping into an expanding market for goods as unfair. In the end, the inability of the British government to enforce the act made it essentially moot. American iron manufacturing had come too far in the half-century prior to 1750 to stop cold. Colonial ironmasters took the stance that, rather than fighting for the repeal of the act, they would ignore it. Not only were preexisting iron mills underreported by at least 75 percent, between 1752 and 1775 five new steel furnaces, five naileries, four slitting mills, three plate mills, and three wire mills were built in Pennsylvania alone. In the mainland colonies as a whole, more than sixty operations made illegal by the Iron Act of 1750 were constructed in defiance of parliamentary regulation.

Independence requires both a belief and a practical demonstration that one can stand on one's own. In the business of iron manufacturing in British America, that belief and demonstration began to appear soon after 1750.

In many ways, both independence and available resources hampered technological expansion in the U.S. iron industry in the half-century after the Revolution. By the early 1790s, Congress regularly passed tariff legislation to protect the iron industry from foreign competition. This kept the price of iron and iron products high enough in the domestic market for U.S. companies to maintain profitable businesses, but most were unwilling to invest capital in newer technologies before the 1840s. The application of steam power technology, expanding in other U.S. industries, was universally ignored in the iron industry for decades. U.S. iron manufacturers held to charcoal blasts long after coke was employed as a cheaper fuel source internationally. The rationale for this was based on the availability of seemingly endless forests on the western frontier. Iron manufacturers generally abandoned older works situated one hundred miles or less from the Atlantic coast and set up newer works to the west—in upstate New York, the Alleghenies of Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio, the northwestern counties of Virginia, and eastern Tennessee—still applying seventeenth- and eighteenth-century techniques.

This attitude damaged the ability of U.S. iron manufacturers to compete effectively in the international iron and steel markets. It was only the rapidly expanding domestic market that allowed iron makers to profit. One of the highest rates of natural increase in the world and high immigration figures swelled the population in the early nineteenth century. Urbanization, particularly after 1815, expanded markets for iron goods for construction as well as potware and utensils.

U.S. iron manufacturers might have continued for decades longer without change had it not been for the advent of railroads. Between 1835 and 1850, it became clear in the first flurries of railroad building that the quantity and quality of U.S. iron was insufficient to meet the needs of expansion. The needs of railroads to tie the growing United States together, along with the realization that forests were a finite resource, forced iron makers to modernize.

*See also Manufacturing; Work: Overview; Work: Unskilled Labor.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bining, Arthur C. *British Regulation of the Colonial Iron Industry*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1933.
- . *Pennsylvania Iron Manufacture in the Eighteenth Century*, 2nd ed. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1973.
- Bruce, Kathleen. *Virginia Iron Manufacture in the Slave Era*. New York: Century Company, 1930.
- Paskoff, Paul F. *Industrial Evolution: Organization, Structure, and Growth of the Pennsylvania Iron Industry, 1750–1860*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983.
- Temin, Peter. *Iron and Steel in Nineteenth-Century America: An Economic Inquiry*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1964.

Michael V. Kennedy

---

**IROQUOIS CONFEDERACY** In the 1750s the Iroquois Confederacy (or League) comprised 8,500 individuals spread across some forty-five villages and hamlets west of Albany in New York and in northern Pennsylvania. Despite their modest numbers, the Iroquois were powerful players in the struggles for control of the Great Lakes region and enjoyed more success in preserving their cultural viability and territory than most aboriginal societies did south and east of the lower Great Lakes before the War of Independence. Yet, in its wake, Americans forced them

onto reservations in an effort to assimilate the tribespeople and open their lands for Euro-American settlement.

#### SIX NATIONS SOCIETY

The confederacy began to form around 1450, primarily to end intertribal strife among five member nations, and secondarily to engage in common foreign policies. However, achieving league-wide agreements in external affairs was difficult. Decisions arose out of a consensual political process that incorporated the opinions of most adults, with the result that agreements regularly could not be achieved above the village level, where regional relationships with the outside world dominated people's views.

In the mid-1700s the league embraced the five original confederates—Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas—plus the Tuscaroras, an Iroquoian people who fled settler persecution in North Carolina in the 1710s to settle among the Five Nations and become the confederacy's sixth nation in 1722 or 1723. Other aboriginal refugees, such as the non-Iroquoian Tutelos and Delawares, settled among or near the Iroquois and fell under league suzerainty. Beyond tribal divisions, confederacy communities were multicultural: as a result of intermarriage, in-migration, and the adoption of prisoners, various red, white, and black people entered Six Nations society, typically as full members, although some were treated as inferiors. In addition to immigration into Iroquois territory, people emigrated to New France, beginning in the mid-1600s, to live in mission communities along the Saint Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers. Along with other natives, they formed the Seven Nations of Canada, of whom fifteen hundred were Iroquois in the 1750s. Beginning in the 1720s other Iroquois moved west to the Ohio country to form the Mingo nation, which had five hundred to six hundred people by 1750.

Iroquois people primarily were horticulturists who also fished, hunted, gathered, and traded. Through contact with Euro-Americans, they grew foreign crops in addition to such indigenous plants as corn, beans, and squash. Some individuals in the 1700s adopted animal husbandry or worked for wages in the fur trade and in other realms of white-native interaction. The importance of these new activities increased after the American Revolution, and people in the late eighteenth century also turned to lumbering and milling.

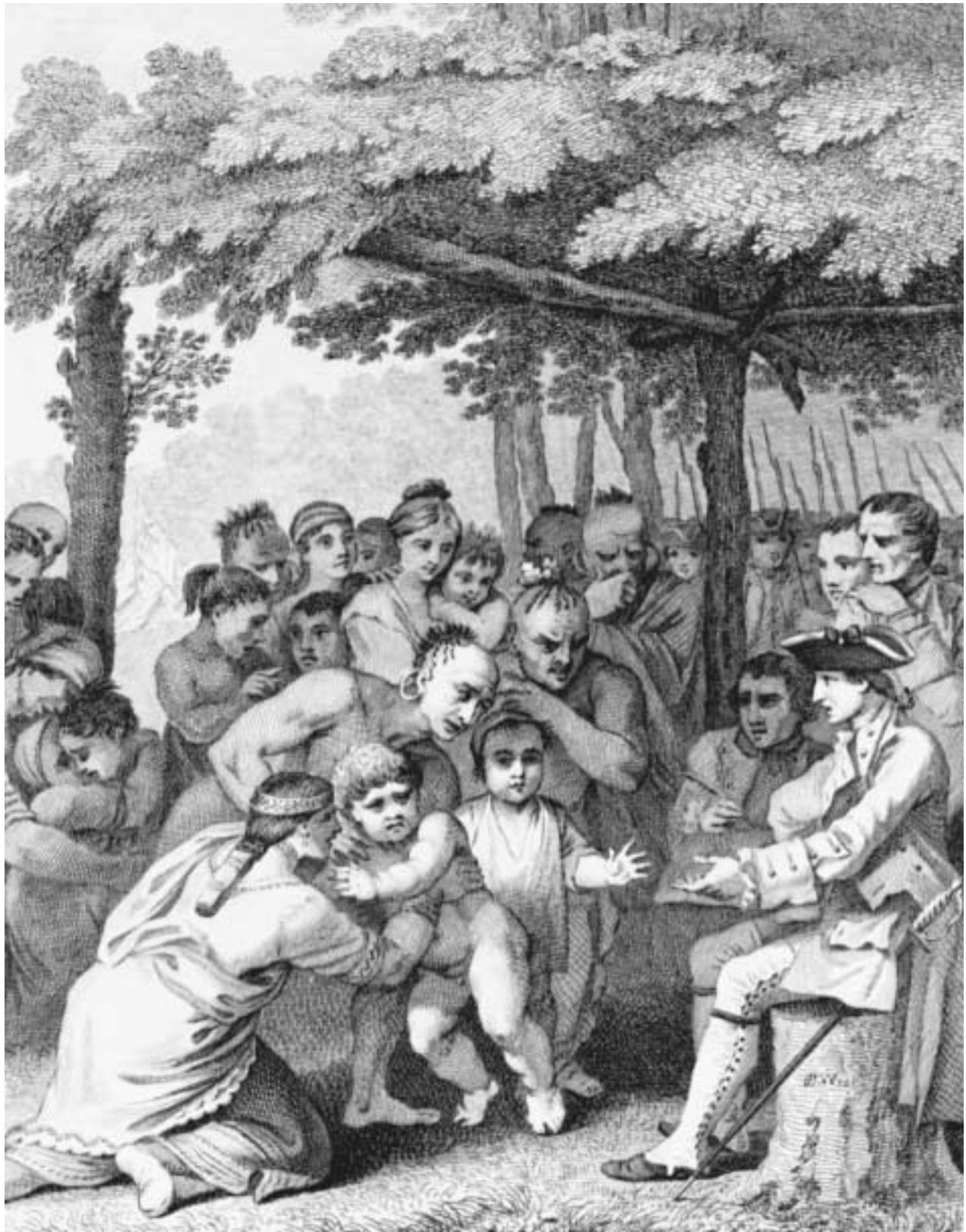
By 1750 most Iroquois no longer lived in the stockaded villages of earlier times. Instead they occupied less dense settlements, typically spread out

along waterways. Many individuals, especially toward the east, had begun a process, which would encompass almost all Iroquois by 1800, of abandoning longhouses for smaller, often single-family dwellings that outwardly (and sometimes inwardly) resembled the homes of white settlers. Although the externals of material culture changed dramatically during the colonial and early national periods, core interior beliefs and customs remained strong, with the majority of Iroquois embracing traditional faith and social practices. Nevertheless, Christianity made inroads, particularly among Mohawks, Oneidas, and the Seven Nations of Canada.

#### COLONIAL STRUGGLES, 1754–1774

In their relations with other natives and with Euro-Americans, the Iroquois wanted to preserve their land, independence, and culture, prevent outsiders from monopolizing their trade (and acquire large quantities of gifts from colonial powers), and exercise some control over other indigenous peoples to prevent them from becoming threatening rivals. They pursued these goals during the first half of the eighteenth century mainly through diplomacy rather than war. For instance, while serving as intermediaries between the crown and the natives of the Ohio country, they gained privileges from the British and inhibited the power of other tribes to compete against the league.

In the Seven Years' War (1754–1763 in America; 1756–1763 in Europe), the Iroquois adopted a military approach to defending their security, especially the Mohawks and Senecas who sided early in the conflict with the British and French respectively because of trade and other associations that they had built up with them over previous decades. However, the British succeeded in improving their standing with the Iroquois during the conflict, largely through the efforts of the crown's superintendent to the Six Nations, Sir William Johnson (c.1715–1774), who worked from his Mohawk Valley estate to cultivate Anglo-aboriginal alliances. Then in 1758 the confederacy as a whole allied with Great Britain, primarily to harness ascending British power to exercise suzerainty over native people in the Ohio country who resented Six Nations interference in their lives and whose emerging regional alliance posed a challenge to Iroquois ambitions. Thus Six Nations forces, including Senecas, participated in the British capture of Fort Niagara in 1759 and in the subsequent move against Montreal that led to the capitulation of Canada in 1760. (As New France foundered, the formerly French-allied Iroquois of the Seven Nations negotiat-



**Returning Captives.** In this illustration from circa 1766, a party of Indian warriors returns captives after Colonel Henry Bouquet marched up the Ohio River to put an end to Pontiac's rebellion in 1764. © CORBIS.

ed treaties with the British to defend their rights and independence.)

In Pontiac's War (1763–1764) many Senecas, and closely allied Delawares, participated in the wider rising against the growing British colonial menace to aboriginal aspirations in the wake of France's expulsion from North America. In contrast, the Mohawks helped white forces suppress the native alliance while the other confederates generally stayed neutral. For their hostility, the Senecas lost land along the Niagara River to enable the crown to secure communications between Lakes Ontario and Erie. Then in the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix, the confederacy united with the British to sell the territory of tribes south of the Ohio River, especially the Shawnee, which had risen in the late war and which had resisted Iroquois efforts to manage its foreign affairs. To make this transaction possible, the Six Nations claimed the region through a tenuous ancient conquest, which white officials agreed to acknowledge. Aside from giving the Iroquois the proceeds of the sale, the treaty opened the region south of the confederacy's heartland for white settlement and thereby reduced the pressure to alienate league homelands, although some losses did occur at the eastern end of the Six Nations territory in New York.

#### **AMERICAN REVOLUTION, 1775–1783**

At the outbreak of the Revolution, many Mohawks sided with the crown because of their connections to loyalists through such individuals as the Mohawk matron, Molly Brant (c.1736–1796) and her half-brother, the war and diplomatic chief, Joseph (1743–1807). However, the rest of the confederacy adopted a neutralist stance. Then, in January 1777, an epidemic killed three important league chiefs, which brought confederacy business to a halt until new leaders could be "raised up" to replace them. This problem, combined with the degenerating wartime situation and pressure from the white combatants to join their respective causes, led the confederacy to "cover" its great league council fire and free the member nations to choose their own course of action. The Onondagas opted for neutrality, the majority of Tuscaroras and Oneidas sided with the revolutionaries, and the Cayugas and Senecas joined the Mohawks in a Loyalist alliance. Logic suggested that, as most of the threats to Iroquois liberties came from people associated with the rebellion, the crown offered a better future. London promised to protect aboriginal property and freedom in return for help in suppressing the revolt. Nevertheless, the Tuscaroras and Oneidas, influenced by their pro-rebel missionary, Samuel

Kirkland (1741–1808), chose to support the revolutionaries.

Divisions among the Iroquois had a brutal impact when pro- and anti-Loyalist warriors fought each other at the battle of Oriskany in August 1777. In subsequent campaigning—raiding rebel districts in New York, Pennsylvania, and the Ohio country alongside Loyalist forces to destroy crops and settlements—the crown-allied Six Nations had the greater influence on the course of events. In response, revolutionary armies invaded Iroquois territory in 1779 to knock the confederacy out of the war by burning most of its villages (including those of the neutral Onondagas). Yet even as the rebels forced people to flee from their homes, warriors continued to fight effectively until 1782, when hostilities wound down. During the latter part of the conflict, most Iroquois ended up in squalid refugee camps, with the pro-revolutionaries concentrated at the eastern end of their traditional homelands, and the pro-Loyalists sheltered around Fort Niagara in the west. (Most Seven Nations Iroquois had negotiated peace with the rebels when they controlled Montreal in 1775; but when crown forces reasserted their dominance along the Saint Lawrence River in 1776, most then entered the war on the Loyalist side. The Mingos helped the Loyalists, although they had fought against the British during Pontiac's War.)

The Treaty of Paris of 1783, which ended the Revolutionary War and created the current Canadian-American border, put Six Nations land inside the United States. One-third of the Iroquois in New York chose not to live in the new Republic but moved to Canada, beginning in 1784, to settle at Tyendinaga on Lake Ontario and along the Grand River north of Lake Erie. Modest numbers of others moved to Ohio, either to join the Mingos or to form a separate "Sandusky Seneca" community. (The Iroquois in Ohio later participated in the frontier war of 1790–1795 against the Americans; the rest of the Iroquois fundamentally stayed aloof, believing they would only suffer if they fought the United States.)

#### **THE NEW RESERVATION SOCIETY, 1784–1829**

Within a year of the Treaty of Paris, Americans began to force the Iroquois in the United States to give up land and move onto reservations. Tragically, it was the pro-Revolutionary Tuscaroras and Oneidas who first were dragooned into signing away substantial territories. By 1797 all of the Iroquois in New York and Pennsylvania had been restricted to reservations that encompassed only a tiny fraction of their former homelands.

Aside from acquiring territory for settlement, Americans hoped that confining the Iroquois to reservations would lead to assimilation: surrounded by newcomers, the natives would be forced to adopt Euro-American ways of life in a rapidly changing environment. The result was the opposite: reservations, with their small but concentrated populations, became heartlands of aboriginal identity and resistance. Yet they also became economically desolate places where intense levels of alcohol abuse and family violence erupted, symptoms of the oppression and poverty their residents suffered in the 1780s and 1790s.

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, reformers within Six Nations society—and missionaries from without—offered ways for the Iroquois to overcome their problems and make their way in the shifting environment. The most famous reformer was the Seneca prophet Handsome Lake (1735–1815). Beginning in 1799 he demanded that people renounce alcohol, witchcraft, and other vices and exercise moral restraint within a rekindled but reformed indigenous faith. He also promoted Euro-American farming and craft production, not so his people could assimilate (as the missionaries wanted), but so they could achieve economic independence and thereby reject unwanted white influences on their lives. He also preached that Six Nations interests lay in standing aloof from any future hostilities that might occur between Britain and America. Through his and other people's work, the Iroquois rebuilt their society after 1800 to regain some of the prosperity and self-esteem that they had lost since 1775.

In the War of 1812, the Six Nations again pursued actions that they thought best protected their interests. Except for the Mingos, who joined the British, most Iroquois in the United States allied cautiously with the Americans, although many of Handsome Lake's followers remained neutral. In Canada both Six and Seven Nations warriors fought, mainly on the British side, and made an important contribution to defending Canada from U.S. annexation.

After 1815 the Iroquois in both the United States and Canada continued to be pressured to give up land and assimilate. The problem was worse in the United States, where powerful land interests, a flood of newcomers, and the construction of New York's Erie Canal (opened 1825) combined to force the loss of more territory as well as the removal of many Iroquois to British territory or to the West between the 1820s and the 1850s. Yet others hung on, physically and culturally. As a result, Iroquois communities survive not only in Quebec, Ontario, Wisconsin, and Oklahoma, but also in New York, thus making the Iroquois one of the few aboriginal peoples to occupy land in their traditional territory in what is now the eastern United States.

*See also American Indians: British Policies; American Indians: Middle Atlantic; American Indians: Northern New England; American Indians: Southern New England; Canada; New York State; Pontiac's War.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abler, Thomas S., ed. *Chainbreaker: The Revolutionary War Memoirs of Governor Blacksnake, as told to Benjamin Williams*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989.
- Benn, Carl. *The Iroquois in the War of 1812*. Toronto and Buffalo, N.Y.: University of Toronto Press, 1998.
- Fenton, William N. *The Great Law and the Longhouse: A Political History of the Iroquois Confederacy*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998.
- Graymont, Barbara. *The Iroquois in the American Revolution*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1972.
- Hauptman, Lawrence M. *Conspiracy of Interests: Iroquois Dispossession and the Rise of New York State*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1999.
- Kelsay, Isabel Thompson. *Joseph Brant, 1743–1807: Man of Two Worlds*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1984.
- Seaver, James E., comp. and ed. *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1990. (Seneca adoptee's memoir, first published 1824.)
- Wallace, Anthony F. C. *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca*. New York: Knopf, 1970.

Carl Benn



---

**JACKSON, ANDREW** Born 15 March 1767 on the rural frontier region called the Waxhaws, located on the borders of North and South Carolina, Andrew Jackson did not represent what many expected in a president. His Scots-Irish immigrant origins, lack of education, and virtual poverty all destined him for the affairs of average men. He was, however, anything but average. With a fiery temper and vaulting ambition, the young Jackson stood out among his peers. Orphaned at the age of fifteen, he could easily have become lost. Instead, Jackson looked to the upper class and strove to join society's elite. He ultimately succeeded and as a result symbolized the possibilities for self-made men.

By the age of thirteen, Jackson had learned the meaning of struggle, duty, sacrifice, and Union because of the American Revolution's impact on his family. Both of his brothers and his mother (his father had died before Jackson's birth) were killed during the conflict. In the war's aftermath Jackson wandered for a time but ultimately settled on the study of law, realizing that it was an entrance to the upper class. While studying, Jackson made important connections that resulted in an offer to serve as public prosecutor for the western district of North Carolina. In 1788 he accepted and traversed the Appalachian Mountains into a new territory that came to be the

state of Tennessee. It was here that Jackson achieved his initial goal of wealth and society. In 1791 he joined the Donelson clan by marrying Rachel Donelson Robards and in doing so aligned himself with a well-respected, landowning family.

In 1795 Jackson served as a delegate to the Tennessee constitutional convention and the next year was elected as the state's first representative to Congress. He served as a U.S. senator in 1797–1798 and then, in 1798, was elected to the judgeship of Tennessee's superior court. In 1802 Jackson achieved election as major general to the Tennessee militia, a position that signified social standing and prestige. It was as military leader that he gained his greatest fame and ultimately opened the door to the presidency.

When the United States declared war on England in 1812, Jackson eagerly awaited his opportunity to repay the injuries he had received during the Revolution. Yet his first actions as commander were not against the British, but the Creek Indians who had utilized the timing of the war to stop American expansion into the Old Southwest. In a series of battles in 1813–1814, Jackson revealed his skill and courage. Subsequently promoted to the rank of major general in the U.S. Army, he proved victorious against the British at the Battle of New Orleans (1815) and in doing so raised himself to the heights

of everlasting fame. The battle itself was won against overwhelming odds. The disciplined, veteran English forces were some of the same troops that defeated Napoleon, and many in both Britain and America expected a swift defeat for the rather meager defenses at New Orleans. Jackson, however, won the day and in doing so achieved the greatest military victory in the young nation's history up to that time. The people sang Jackson's praises and recognized him as a symbol of American greatness.

Just a few years later, in 1818, Jackson was once again ordered to defend the nation's borders, this time against Seminole Indians who engaged in raids on American citizens in Georgia. Jackson's subsequent invasion of Spanish Florida caused controversy because the action violated Spanish sovereignty. Nevertheless many Americans once again heralded Jackson's defense of the nation. His popularity greater than ever, Jackson entered the presidential race of 1824. He was narrowly defeated by John Quincy Adams during a runoff election in the House of Representatives but charged corruption when Henry Clay, who had orchestrated the House voting, was appointed secretary of state. Jackson and his supporters immediately began preparations for the election of 1828, campaigning on a platform of reform and arguing that Jackson was robbed of the presidency. As a man from humble origins who had struggled to gain fame and fortune, Jackson's victory was a symbol of what common men could achieve.

During Jackson's two terms as president, from 1829 to 1837, he oversaw the dismantling of the aristocratic, deferential governmental system created by the founding fathers. He believed that any man of intelligence could serve in governmental office. Such ideas, along with expanding voting rights throughout the nation, ushered in the era of the common man. Jackson continually argued that he was the elected representative of the people and that his job was to protect their interests. Jackson championed his famous veto of a bill to recharter the second Bank of the United States (1832) in such terms, and he beat down South Carolina's attempts at nullification by stressing the importance of Union and the Constitution for the people.

Not everyone loved Jackson, however. Some viewed him as a dangerous military chieftain who threatened the very liberties that he himself heralded. His invasion of Florida violated international law and exceeded orders. His veto of the bank and subsequent removal of federal deposits was viewed as tyrannical. The fact that he vetoed more bills than all of the pre-

vious presidents combined revealed tremendous and, some argued, aggressive power. Even his defense of Union during the Nullification Crisis bordered on mania, charged opponents. The Whig Party called Jackson "King Andrew" and fought what they viewed as dangerous, monarchical power.

Even after his retirement from the presidency, Jackson wielded significant political influence. The masses continued to love him as the nation's hero and at the time of his death on 8 June 1845, cities throughout the nation mourned his loss with the largest outpouring of veneration and respect America had ever witnessed.

*See also Creek War; Election of 1824; Election of 1828; New Orleans, Battle of.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Booraem, Hendrick. *Young Hickory: The Making of Andrew Jackson*. Dallas, Tex.: Taylor Trade Publishing, 2001.  
Coles, Donald B. *The Presidency of Andrew Jackson*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993.  
Remini, Robert. *Andrew Jackson: The Course of American Freedom, 1822–1832*. New York: Harper & Row, 1981.  
———. *Andrew Jackson: The Course of American Democracy, 1833–1845*. New York: Harper & Row, 1984.  
Robin, Michael. *Fathers & Children: Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian*. New York: Knopf, 1975.

Matthew Warshauer

---

**JAY, JOHN** Born on 12 December 1745, John Jay was an active leader of the Revolution and a key figure in the founding of the nation. During the period of the early Republic he served in Congress, as a diplomat, as chief justice of the United States, and as governor of New York. He was also a co-author of the *Federalist Papers* and president of the New York Society for the Manumission of Slaves.

Jay's grandfather was a Huguenot who had been imprisoned in France before escaping to America. His father, Peter Jay, was a successful merchant; his mother, Mary Van Cortlandt, came from a Dutch patroon family in the Hudson Valley, one of the most aristocratic families in the American colonies. Jay graduated from King's College (now Columbia University) in 1764 and was admitted to the bar four years later. By the eve of the Revolution, he was a prosperous and effective lawyer, who, unlike most New York attorneys, and most members of the wealthy landed gentry, was a committed Whig. In

1774 he increased his status and access to power by marrying Sarah Livingston, daughter of one of the leading families in New Jersey, whose father, William, would be a signer of the Constitution and a governor of his state. The couple would have seven children, including William Jay, a future judge and abolitionist.

In 1774 Jay was elected to New York City's Committee of Correspondence and later as one of the colony's five delegates to the First Continental Congress. Jay was relatively conservative within the Congress, but went along with, and supported, the more radical members who denounced acts of Parliament as "unconstitutional" and urged local militias to arm themselves. Jay drafted the *Address to the People of Great Britain*, which Congress used to justify its radical moves. Here he rejected the idea that Parliament could tax the colonists or subordinate them within the imperial economy. Americans, he asserted, would never become the "hewers of wood or drawers of water" for their English cousins.

Jay had returned to New York by early 1776 and was a member of the colonial legislature. In that position he opposed declaring independence but after July 1776 was fully committed to the Revolution and independence. He helped obtain munitions for the troops, investigate traitors, and organize spies. More important, in 1777 he helped write New York's first constitution. Like many others in the founding generation, Jay had experience with constitution-making well before the United States wrote its constitution in 1787. The New York document of 1777 was the only constitution of the period to have no religious tests for officeholding, reflecting his French Huguenot background and his respect for religious freedom. On the other hand, the constitution also required that foreigners seeking naturalization as citizens of New York renounce allegiance to any foreign "prince or potentate," an anti-Catholic measure that reflected his Huguenot ancestry and his family's memory of Catholic persecution.

With the adoption of the New York Constitution, Jay became chief justice of the state's Supreme Court while at the same time serving as a delegate to the Continental Congress. He was elected president of the Congress in 1778 and helped negotiate the treaty that led to the French alliance. In 1779 Congress made him minister plenipotentiary to Spain, where he arrived with his wife in 1780. This first diplomatic mission for Jay was mostly a failure. Spain refused to give him diplomatic status, recognize the new American nation, or acknowledge Americans' navigation rights on the Mississippi. The government in

Madrid feared—correctly, as it would turn out—that American independence would be the first step leading to the destruction of Spain's New World empire.

In the spring of 1782 Benjamin Franklin asked Jay to come to Paris to help negotiate the treaty of peace with England. Jay declined to formally meet with the English envoys, however, because their credentials directed them to meet with representatives of the American "colonies" and not with the United States. Franklin ultimately joined Jay in taking this position, and the British acquiesced, getting new instructions from London. This position put him at odds with America's French allies, who urged a more speedy negotiation. Jay soon came to suspect that France was attempting to negotiate a separate peace with England, and on his own, without consulting Franklin, contacted an official in Britain to derail this possibility. Ultimately, Jay, Franklin, and John Adams, who had just arrived from the United States, negotiated a separate peace with England that recognized American nationhood and secured rights to all British possessions on the continent south of Canada, including all territory bordering the Mississippi River. The skillful negotiations of Jay, Adams, and Franklin led in 1783 to the comprehensive Treaty of Paris signed by Britain, France, Spain, and the world's newest nation, the United States of America.

Jay triumphantly returned to his homeland and was immediately appointed secretary for foreign affairs in the government under the Articles of Confederation, which had been ratified in his absence. This made the American ministers to France (Thomas Jefferson) and England (John Adams) his subordinates. Despite the weakness of the Confederation government, in 1786 Jay negotiated a trade agreement with Spain, known as the Jay-Gardoqui Treaty, in which the United States agreed to give up any navigational rights on the Mississippi for thirty years. This was perhaps Jay's greatest mistake in this period, because it infuriated Southerners, who believed the New Yorker had sacrificed their vital interest in access to the Mississippi in return for trading rights that helped only the Northeast. Congress did not ratify the treaty, but Southerners continued to mistrust Jay for the rest of his career.

Throughout the convention period Jay remained frustrated by the weakness of the national government. Thus he enthusiastically supported the Constitutional Convention of 1787, although he was not a delegate. After the convention he joined James Madison and Alexander Hamilton in writing essays to gain support for the new Constitution in New York. These became *The Federalist Papers*. Jay became

ill shortly after the project began and wrote only five of the essays. When the Constitution was ratified, the new president, George Washington, nominated Jay to be the first chief justice of the United States. He held that post until 1795, but his legacy was minimal. His most important decision, in *Chisholm v. Georgia* (1793), in which he interpreted the Constitution to allow a citizen of one state to sue another state, outraged almost all the states and led to the Eleventh Amendment (1798), which reversed this ruling.

More significant than his jurisprudence was Jay's diplomacy. In 1793 he drafted Washington's Proclamation of Neutrality as war broke out in Europe. In 1794 he went to England at Washington's request and successfully negotiated what became known as Jay's Treaty. Under this treaty England finally vacated forts on the American side of the Great Lakes; the treaty also helped the United States obtain British support for access to the Mississippi. However, the settlement signaled a tilt toward Britain in its emerging conflict with France, and supporters of Jefferson attacked it as pro-British and pro-North. Ultimately, however, the Senate ratified most of the treaty.

While in England Jay had been elected governor of New York, and when he returned to the United States he resigned from the Supreme Court to become chief executive of his home state. He held this position for two terms, retiring in 1801. While governor he signed into law a gradual abolition act (1799) that led to the end of slavery in the state. In 1800 he refused to follow Hamilton's suggestion that he alter the way the state chose its presidential electors, in order to secure the electors for Adams. The end result was that New York, and the election, went to Jefferson. The lame duck Adams offered the chief justiceship to Jay, but he declined. Adams then gave the position to John Marshall. Jay then retired to his home in Westchester County, after more than twenty-five years of public service at home and abroad. He died 17 May 1829.

*See also Abolition of Slavery in the North; Adams, John; Articles of Confederation; Chisholm v. Georgia; Constitution; Ratification of; Constitutional Convention; Constitutionalism: State Constitution Making; Emancipation and Manumission; Federalist Papers; Founding Fathers; French; Hamilton, Alexander; Jefferson, Thomas; Jay's Treaty; Madison, James; Supreme Court; Treaty of Paris.*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Combs, Jerald A. *The Jay Treaty: Political Battleground of the Founding Fathers*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970.
- Monaghan, Frank. *John Jay: Defender of Liberty*. New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1935; New York: AMS Press, 1972.
- Morris, Richard B., Floyd M. Shumway, Ene Sirvet, and Elaine G. Brown, eds. *John Jay*. Vol. 1: *The Making of a Revolutionary: Unpublished Papers, 1745–1780*. Vol. 2: *The Winning of the Peace: Unpublished Papers, 1780–1784*. New York: Harper and Row, 1975–1980.

Paul Finkelman

---

**JAY'S TREATY** Negotiated and signed in 1794, Jay's Treaty attempted to resolve several diplomatic and commercial issues between the United States and Great Britain. As Britain and France warred with each other beginning in 1793, the United States found itself being drawn into the fray although it tried to remain neutral, maintaining trade with both belligerents. Britain secretly disrupted and seized over three hundred U.S. ships and a furious America demanded a diplomatic mission to that nation. In April 1794 Chief Justice John Jay was appointed envoy with instructions to seek indemnification for British seizures of American ships, fulfillment of all the unfulfilled elements—especially the evacuation of western posts—of the 1783 Peace of Paris treaty, and a more liberal interpretation of neutral rights. Some southerners wanted Jay to request compensation for slaves that had been carried off by the British during the Revolutionary War. Jay and the administration of President George Washington believed they were negotiating from a position of weakness and so could not press too hard on any of these points. Negotiations continued sporadically throughout the spring and summer of 1794 until a treaty was signed on 19 November 1794.

The treaty's twenty-eight articles addressed most of the issues the mission was designed to accomplish. The second article secured British troop withdrawal from the western posts on or before 1 June 1796 as had been promised in the 1783 treaty. The treaty also established four commissions to investigate and resolve disputed issues, such as the debts owed to British merchants by American citizens and compensation for losses for U.S. ships seized by the British. Most problematic was article 12, which granted the United States access to the West Indian trade but only in vessels of seventy tons or less, an almost insulting condition that would severely restrict and limit trade.

Jay believed that he had obtained the best terms possible at the time and subsequent historians, while noting the weaknesses, have largely agreed. The United States was unable to force compliance from the British and unwilling to risk a serious rupture between the two nations. The treaty failed to gain recognition of America's neutral rights in shipping or compensation for slaves carried off during the Revolution, and it did not address the matter of impressment or compensation for slaves. Still, comparing Jay's instructions to the final product, he did reasonably well.

The treaty was sent to the Senate, which debated it in secret, rejected the controversial twelfth article, and on 24 June 1795 ratified the document by a 20 to 10 vote, exactly meeting the required two-thirds majority. Before the administration could publish the treaty, Republican anti-treaty newspapers had printed an extract of the leaked document and then the full text. Publication provoked furious, sometimes violent, protests by opponents who charged that the treaty was a sellout to Britain, willingly placed the United States in a subservient position to that nation, and further solidified American ties to a country many believed to be corrupt and dangerous. Despite the public protests, President Washington signed the treaty in late August 1795 and many of the protests died down. They were revived in the spring of 1796 when the House of Representatives took up the matter of funding the commissions created by the treaty. After several weeks of intense debate and against a backdrop of petitions cascading into the House—most of them now favoring approval of the treaty—the House acted in a series of close votes on 30 April 1796 to fund the treaty.

As its negotiators had hoped, the treaty strengthened commercial relations between the United States and Britain and preserved peace between the two nations even as it intensified partisan politics in the former. However, it infuriated the French, who felt betrayed by the U.S. decision to side with Britain against its Revolutionary War ally. Consequently, it was the French who stepped up attacks on U.S. ships and violations of American neutrality in the late 1790s, heightening tensions between the erstwhile allies and culminating in the Quasi-War with France in 1798.

*See also Treaty of Paris.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bemis, Samuel Flagg. *Jay's Treaty: A Study in Commerce and Diplomacy*. 2nd ed. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1962.

Combs, Jerald A. *The Jay Treaty: Political Battleground of the Founding Fathers*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970.

Elkins, Stanley, and Eric McKittrick. *The Age of Federalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Horsman, Reginald. *The Diplomacy of the New Republic, 1776–1815*. Arlington Heights, Ill.: Harlan Davidson, 1985.

Todd A. Estes

---



---

**JEFFERSON, THOMAS** Thomas Jefferson (13 April 1743–4 July 1826) was the most gifted writer among the founding fathers. He was, among other things, the principal author of the Declaration of Independence, governor of Virginia, minister to France, secretary of state, vice president, president, founder of the University of Virginia, president of the American Philosophical Society, naturalist, architect, and philosopher of democracy. A sentence from his prologue to the Declaration has become a sacred text for Americans and many others: "We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."

Jefferson's father, Peter, was a pioneer of Albemarle County, Virginia, a successful planter, surveyor, lieutenant of militia, and member of the General Assembly. He died when Thomas was fourteen, leaving a fine estate, a small library, and an example of personal distinction. Less is known about the talents of his wife, Jane Randolph, who belonged to one of the most prominent families in Virginia. Young Thomas was blessed with advantages and opportunities available to very few of his contemporaries. What set him apart even among those few was the remarkable use he made of them. Well prepared through his own appetite for study and the guidance of the Reverend James Maury, Jefferson in 1760 entered the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. His wide learning, musical abilities, polished manners, and active mind won him the friendship of the lieutenant governor and de facto governor, Francis Fauquier and two outstanding teachers, William Small (mathematics) and George Wythe (law).

After college, Jefferson returned often to Williamsburg, studying and then practicing law. Beginning in 1769 he sat in the House of Burgesses. In 1772 Jefferson married a young widow, Martha Wayles Skelton, who brought land and slaves in abundance, but also debts that would plague Jeffer-



**Thomas Jefferson.** The third president of the United States, in an engraving by Charles Balthazar Julien Févret de Saint-Mémin. Jefferson sat for this portrait by Saint-Mémin in 1804. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

son for the rest of his life. The newlyweds settled in a cottage on the little mountain near Charlottesville that would eventually be world famous as Jefferson's Monticello. Martha Jefferson died after ten years of marriage and six children. Three daughters survived her: Martha (Patsy) and Mary (Polly, Maria), who would live to marry and have children, and Lucy, who lived less than three years.

#### JEFFERSON AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Jefferson's political fame spread beyond Virginia in 1774 with the publication of his pamphlet, *A Summary View of the Rights of British North America*. He argued, powerfully if not quite accurately, that England's colonists had settled, developed, and defended their American homes with their own lives and treasure and were under no obligation to accept taxation from an imperial government already enjoying great profits from commerce with the colonies. Jefferson's literary powers earned him membership in Virginia's delegation to the Second Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia in 1775. Before departing he helped draft a plan for organizing the militia of Virginia and wrote a firm reply to Lord North's proposal for peace, based on submission to parliamentary taxation. In Philadelphia he collaborated with John Dickinson on *A Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms* (1775). In June 1776 he became the principal draftsman of the Declaration of Inde-

pendence. Benjamin Franklin and John Adams modified it slightly; the full Congress eliminated an entire section that denounced the slave trade and blamed the King of England for continuing it. Historically the charge was doubtful, and many members of Congress owned and traded slaves.

For the next several years Jefferson labored in Virginia. Resuming membership in the House of Burgesses, he served with George Wythe and Edmund Pendleton in undertaking a thorough revision of the laws of Virginia. Jefferson succeeded immediately in abolishing the entailing of landed estates, a practice tending toward hereditary aristocracy. He also moved to abolish primogeniture, but that reform had to wait several years before Madison and other allies accomplished it. That was also true of Jefferson's Statute for Religious Freedom (1786), which completed the disestablishment of the Church of England in Virginia and guaranteed that all religious organizations would be voluntary and separate from government. The assembly rejected Jefferson's proposals for universal public education, for reducing suffrage requirements, and for representation on the basis of population. He succeeded, however, in liberalizing the criminal code. Though Virginia's slave code remained much as it had been in colonial times, the state did outlaw the further importation of slaves in 1778. Jefferson also reported, in his book *Notes on the State of Virginia*, completed and first published in France in 1785, that he drew up a proposal for the gradual emancipation and deportation of Virginia's slaves. But this proposal never came before the assembly.

In June 1779 Jefferson followed Patrick Henry as governor. Virginia's constitution gave very little independent authority to its governor, whom the General Assembly elected for one-year terms, with three consecutive terms the maximum allowed. During his two terms, Jefferson was able to support George Rogers Clark's military successes in the West and managed to send some Virginia forces to the defense of the Carolinas. Unfortunately, a series of British invasions overtaxed the resources of the state. Jefferson spent much of his time searching for arms, supplies, and manpower while moving state papers and military supplies from one place to another, trying to evade British troops. Considering that his fellow Americans had been unable to hold New York City, Philadelphia, Charleston, or several other key positions, Jefferson's military failures were fairly typical of the Revolutionary War, but some legislators demanded an inquiry into his actions. Vindication

ed but still offended, Jefferson refused the third year offered to him.

Jefferson's retirement in June 1781 proved relatively brief and was marred by the death of his wife in September 1782. Though immobilized with grief for several weeks, Jefferson soon agreed to serve again in the Continental Congress. In only five months his legislative achievements were remarkable. He worked out the plan for U.S. currency that has been the basis of American money ever since: a decimal system based on the Spanish dollar. He developed plans for the survey and future government of the western territories ceded by various states. His two ordinances of 1784—Congress adopted one, concerning local self-government and the means toward statehood, but rejected the second, dealing with land surveys and sales—were changed in many details by the Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, both written when Jefferson was in France. But most of the essential principles originated with Jefferson, including the rights of people to form states that, once admitted to the Union, would be equal to the original thirteen. Jefferson, following a suggestion from Timothy Pickering, wished to prohibit slavery in all western territories after 1800; the Northwest Ordinance prohibited slavery immediately, but only north of the Ohio River.

#### **MINISTER TO FRANCE**

In July 1784 Jefferson left for France to assist in the drafting of commercial treaties with European powers. In 1785 Congress made him U.S. minister to France; Benjamin Franklin, seventy-nine and in declining health, was eager to return home. In Paris, Jefferson enjoyed a commodious dwelling, a French cook, a growing circle of political and philosophical friends, and sufficient leisure to travel. He completed his only book, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, intended for European philosophers and printed privately in an edition of two hundred copies. A pirated edition appeared in Philadelphia in 1788, somewhat embarrassing the author for its severe strictures on slavery and slaveholders. Jefferson also enjoyed a long flirtation with an English painter, educated and steeped in Italian culture, Mrs. Maria Cosway. As a diplomat Jefferson tried vigorously to advance the interests of the United States, but was frustrated by the fact that neither he nor the Congress could bind individual states to commercial agreements with foreign nations. He was also furious that Congress, lacking a navy, had to pay protection money to Morocco and other Muslim states in North Africa to permit Amer-

ican merchant ships to sail in the Mediterranean Sea. Corresponding with friends in the United States, Jefferson criticized certain aspects of the Constitution of 1787. However, his experience in France caused him to advocate a far stronger government for the United States, with powers to pass and enforce commercial regulations and a power of taxation sufficient to build and maintain a navy as well as guarantee the security of western territories. Before leaving France in October 1789, Jefferson enjoyed witnessing and playing an advisory role in the early stages of the French Revolution. His close friendship with the Marquis de Lafayette enabled Jefferson to contribute advice on the Declaration of the Rights of Man (1789) and other matters.

#### **SECRETARY OF STATE AND VICE PRESIDENT**

Expecting to return to his diplomatic post in the spring of 1790, Jefferson was surprised when President George Washington nominated him secretary of state in September 1789. Jefferson accepted and, assuming the post the following March, became an actor in most of the great political events and controversies of the next eighteen years. The new government began its career in New York City, where Jefferson joined his friend Madison in brokering a political deal in mid-1790: a few less Virginia votes against the assumption scheme of Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton (the federal government would assume responsibility for all state debts incurred during the Revolution) in exchange for a few Pennsylvania votes supporting the permanent location of the U.S. capital on the Potomac River. Before moving to the Potomac, however, the government would settle in Philadelphia for ten years.

Jefferson and Madison came by degrees to oppose the policies of Hamilton, who they believed exerted an improper influence on Washington. In fact, Hamilton's view of things had long been more in harmony with Washington's than with theirs. When Hamilton late in 1790 asked Congress to charter a National Bank, Jefferson argued that the Constitution gave no such authority to Congress. Hamilton advocated conciliatory diplomacy with Britain; Jefferson preferred strengthening the alliance with France while taking a tough line against Britain and Spain. In 1791 Jefferson hired Philip Freneau as a translator in the State Department, but his real job was editing an anti-Hamilton—and eventually an anti-Washington—newspaper, the *National Gazette*. Jefferson shared confidential papers with Freneau and ghostwrote some of his material. This was part of a larger policy of organizing an opposition party,

the Democratic Republicans, from whom Jacksonian Democrats later claimed direct descent.

Following the creation of a French republic, Jefferson advocated immediate recognition and meeting scheduled debt payments, while Hamilton urged delay and caution. President Washington took Jefferson's position, maintaining diplomatic relations with France. However, when France declared war on England, Washington issued a Proclamation of Neutrality (1793). In Jefferson's view, this gave protection to Britain without requiring any reciprocal concessions. The energetic new French diplomat, Edmond Charles Genet spent much of 1793 using the United States as a base for attacks on Spanish territory and British shipping. This was too much even for Jefferson; he had to spend much of his last year as secretary of state restraining Genet and trying to repair the damage done to Franco-American relations. He hoped that his final *Report on Commerce* would move Congress to take a firmer line against British trade restrictions, and encourage increased trade with France.

Jefferson resigned at the end of December 1793, weary of partisan politics and eager to look after his family and estates. Since 1784 he had spent but a few months of vacation at his beloved Monticello. He maintained an extensive political correspondence, however, and in 1796 became his party's candidate for president against Federalist John Adams, Washington's vice president. Under the terms of the Constitution in its original form, the odd result was Jefferson's serving a full term as vice president under his increasingly bitter rival, Adams, having received the second-highest number of electoral votes. Jefferson was discreet about his opposition. Many years passed before the world learned that he had written the Kentucky Resolutions of 1798, claiming the right of a state to nullify acts of Congress that were unconstitutional—in this case the Alien and Sedition Acts (1798). In public, he was a model vice president, systematizing the Senate's procedures with rules that are still in use.

#### PRESIDENT

The election of 1800 produced an unexpected result when Jefferson and Aaron Burr received the same number of votes in the electoral college. This threw the election into the lame-duck, Federalist-controlled House of Representatives. Burr, whose probably treasonable acts were still in the future, appeared a preferable candidate to many Federalists, so a deadlock persisted from 11 February to 17 February 1801. Finally, on the latter date, two Federalists—

possibly influenced by Hamilton—stopped voting for Burr, permitting Jefferson's victory. Hamilton had the satisfaction of seeing Jay's Treaty (1794) honored until its term (and Hamilton himself) had expired. Jefferson also retained the Bank of the United States, which established additional branches under the new secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin of Pennsylvania.

Jefferson's first term was extremely successful. Trade expanded, Ohio entered the Union as a state in 1803, the Indiana Territory grew, revenues improved, and expenditures were reduced. A serious crisis in relations with France ended spectacularly when Napoleon sold the vast Louisiana Territory to the United States (1803). Instead of continuing the practice of paying bribes, Jefferson sent a small fleet to the Mediterranean in 1801, eventually forcing the pasha of Tripoli, by a treaty in 1805, to leave American commerce alone. The Lewis and Clark Expedition (1803–1806), originally conceived as military reconnaissance, turned into a valuable exploration of new U.S. territory. Congress repealed the tax on distilled liquors and the Federalists' lame-duck Judiciary Act of 1801, which created judgeships for many otherwise unemployed politicians. The Twelfth Amendment, ratified in 1804, provided that the president and vice president should be elected separately. During the same year, Congress removed an incompetent federal judge, John Pickering of New Hampshire, by impeachment in the House and conviction in the Senate. An attempt to remove a justice of the Supreme Court, Samuel Chase of Maryland, failed. Chase had proved anything but impartial when presiding over a trial under the Sedition Act. But while he was impeached late in 1804, early the next year his opponents failed to muster two-thirds of the Senate to convict. Meanwhile, Jefferson was not amused by Chief Justice John Marshall's assertion of the Supreme Court's right to nullify federal laws (euphemistically known as judicial review) in *Marbury v. Madison* (1803).

Jefferson won the election of 1804 in a landslide victory, with fair hopes for a second term as successful as his first. It was not to be. At war once more, France and Britain each tried to prevent the United States from trading with the other. Because thousands of British sailors sought safer and higher-paid employment with the commercial ships of the United States, the British navy increasingly stopped American ships on the high seas and impressed sailors they identified, correctly or not, as British subjects. Failing to secure recognition of neutral rights from the belligerents and following the attack of a

British warship on the new, not fully fitted United States frigate *Chesapeake* (22 June 1807), Jefferson resorted to an embargo, lasting from 22 December 1807 to 15 March 1809. Unfortunately the United States suffered more from this measure than either France or Britain. Another distraction was Aaron Burr's western conspiracy, his arrest in 1807, and his trial for treason later that year, at which he was acquitted. Historians still dispute Burr's intentions, if indeed he ever had a distinct plan. However, it is known that he proposed to a gullible British minister a plan for separating the western states from the United States and sought money from Spain to engineer a coup d'état in Washington, D.C. John Randolph of Virginia, a pillar of strength in the House of Representatives during Jefferson's first term, became a caustic and persistent critic of the administration during the second. Nevertheless, James Madison easily won the election of 1808.

#### THE SAGE OF MONTICELLO

Jefferson enjoyed an active retirement. He continued to maintain an extensive correspondence, notably with a reconciled John Adams. Perfecting Monticello occupied him, as did designing an elegant, new, octagonal house for his Poplar Forest plantation. Jefferson wished his grandson Francis Eppes, the only child of Polly, who had died young, to inherit Poplar Forest; he designated Monticello for the most accomplished of Patsy's children, Thomas Jefferson Randolph. The University of Virginia was Thomas Jefferson's last major achievement. He cajoled funds from the General Assembly, chose the location in Charlottesville, designed the buildings, and recruited faculty. The nation noticed with awe that Jefferson and John Adams died on 4 July 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

Jefferson opposed any sort of hereditary privilege or established religion; he also advocated the free exchange of ideas, natural science, universal education, and political democracy. In other respects he was not so progressive: he thought freedom would last only so long as Americans owned and worked their own farms; he thought himself a friend of Native Americans, but ran them off their land as fast as any president before or since; he wrote eloquently about the evils of African American slavery, but did nothing effectual to limit its growth after 1800, let alone to begin its unwinding. There was one notable exception: he secured from Congress and promptly signed a law as soon as the Constitution permitted outlawing the importation of foreign slaves (1808).

Recent DNA evidence has given added credence to the story that Jefferson was the father of the children of his slave Sally Hemings. Although Jefferson brushed the charge off when it was first made in 1802 by the journalist James Thomson Callender, it long circulated in abolitionist circles and in the black community, as well as among those who claimed descent from Jefferson and Hemings, including one of Hemings's sons, Madison, who told his family's story in his 1873 memoirs. Sally Hemings was the half-sister of Jefferson's deceased wife and both the daughter and granddaughter of white men. Her children with Jefferson were seven-eighths white, making them legally white at the time, but still legally Jefferson's slaves. Presumably in accordance with the pledge he made their mother, Jefferson freed Hemings's four surviving children when they reached the age of twenty-one, and after his death, Jefferson's daughter Martha quietly freed Sally Hemings as well.

#### LEGACY AND ICONOGRAPHY

Thomas Jefferson's incomparable phrases have been repeated for over two centuries: by Whigs and Democrats, by the new Republicans of 1854 and by the founders of the Confederate States of America, by capitalists and communists, and by segregationists and integrationists. His benign pronouncements can be claimed by virtually anyone. On other points his messages remain clear. He favored reason over revelation, feared religious establishments, promoted natural science, advocated education at all levels, and favored the fine arts. His actual practices regarding freedom of the press were no better than those of his contemporaries, but his pronouncements in favor of intellectual freedom ring through the ages.

The spirit of Jefferson illuminates his restored mansion and plantation at Monticello and the buildings he designed for the University of Virginia, two miles away in Charlottesville. Poplar Forest has also been restored and is now open for visitors; it is located near Lynchburg. Jefferson sat for many portraits, which have been reproduced in countless books and prints. Among the finest are those of Mather Brown (1786; National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution); Charles Willson Peale (1791; Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia); Rembrandt Peale (1800; White House); Gilbert Stuart (1805; Colonial Williamsburg); and Thomas Sully (1821; American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia). Jean-Antoine Houdon executed a fine marble bust in 1789 (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston). On the bicentennial of Jefferson's birthday, 13 April 1943, the United

States dedicated the Jefferson Memorial on the banks of the Potomac River in Washington, D.C. John Russell Pope captured Jefferson's own style in the architecture, and Rudolph Evans executed an imposing bronze statue, nineteen feet tall. Jefferson's likeness is rarely seen on paper money: someone assigned him to two-dollar bills. This neglect is redeemed by the five-cent coin, with its fine profile of Jefferson on one side and his home at Monticello on the other.

**See also Alien and Sedition Acts; Declaration of Independence; Democratic Republicans; Election of 1796; Election of 1800; Embargo; Federalist Party; Hamilton, Alexander; Hamilton's Economic Plan; Louisiana Purchase; Madison, James; Politics: Political Parties; Politics: Political Thought; Presidency, The: George Washington; Presidency, The: Thomas Jefferson; Virginia; Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Appleby, Joyce. *Thomas Jefferson*. New York: Times Books, 2003.
- Bernstein, R. B. *Thomas Jefferson*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Gordon-Reed, Annette. *Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings: An American Controversy*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1997.
- Kennedy, Roger G. *Mr. Jefferson's Lost Cause: Land, Farmers, Slavery, and the Louisiana Purchase*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Levy, Leonard. *Emergence of a Free Press*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Onuf, Peter S., ed. *Jeffersonian Legacies*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993.
- Peterson, Merrill D. *The Jefferson Image in the American Mind*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960.
- . *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation: A Biography*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.

Robert McColley

---

**JEWS** There were few Jews in the early Republic. They numbered between thirteen hundred and three thousand in 1790, and only seven communities—Newport, Rhode Island; New York City; Philadelphia and Lancaster, Pennsylvania; Richmond, Virginia; Savannah, Georgia; and Charleston, South Carolina—had the requisite minyan, or ten men, to hold services. By 1830 the Newport and Lancaster congregations had gone out of existence, and the Jewish

population had risen only slightly, numbering between four and six thousand. Many Jews converted to Christianity since they could not marry outside the faith and retain it. An astonishing 40 percent never wed. Other Jews were isolated merchants in smaller towns or were frontier traders.

By the 1790s Jews could vote in all states and hold public office in most states. Maryland explicitly granted them that right in 1826. They ensured this through service in the Revolution and their subsequent endorsement by George Washington. When the synagogues congratulated him on his election as president, he responded that "it is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. . . . The Government of the United States gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance." Prominent Revolutionary Jews were Mordecai Sheftall (1735–1795), who headed Savannah's Revolutionary committee; Major Francis Salvador (1747–1776) of South Carolina, killed early in the war, who served in the Provincial Congress; and Haym Salomon (1740–1785) of New York and later Philadelphia, who gave large sums of money to the new Republic and negotiated much of its foreign exchange. A brigade from Charleston, South Carolina, that included twenty-six Jews ("Lushington's" or "the Jews' brigade) acquitted themselves nobly when the British besieged Savannah in 1779. David Salisbury Franks was an aide to General Washington and later negotiated the United States' first treaty with Morocco.

Anti-Semitism far out of proportion to the presence of Jews was a feature of American political life before 1800. Foreign-born clergy and newspaper publishers whose loyalty to the nation was suspect were leaders in projecting their own marginality onto Jews. During the 1790s, anti-Semitism shifted from anti-Federalist to Federalist hands, as the Jews almost unanimously supported the French Revolution, which granted them full equality, and hence Jefferson's party, which supported that revolution. Jews joined and were leading members of the Democratic Societies and later the Republican Party in several cities. Even practicing Christians, such as Israel Israel and his son John, two prominent Pennsylvania leaders, were objects of anti-Semitism, since it was thought that they could abandon Judaism as a faith but not their Jewish ethnicity. With Jefferson's election to the presidency in 1800, anti-Semitism died out in public debate. Jefferson appointed Jews to office, although he despised Jews who clung to the formalities of a religion he considered superstitious.

Although they were few in number, by the early 1800s German and Central European Jews (Ashkenazim) had established separate synagogues in several cities. Largely poorer immigrants who came to America after 1760, they chafed under the power of the earlier, wealthy Jewish communities that followed the Sephardic ritual and perpetuated their leadership through self-selection of ruling elders. The newcomers differed in appearance, wearing beards and robes, from the assimilated elite whose numerous portraits are indistinguishable from those of gentiles.

Both groups, however, strictly observed rituals and holidays, performed lengthy services in Hebrew that few could understand, and restricted burials to members in good standing. Young, secularized men in the new Republic sought the religious self-government and comprehensible ritual of their Protestant neighbors: the first Reformed Jewish congregation was founded in 1824 by Isaac Harby (1788–1828), although few followed before the Civil War. Like Americans in general, Jews—wherever they were sufficiently numerous—also established charitable and fraternal orders. The most visible Jew of the early Republic was Manuel Mordecai Noah (1785–1851). A controversial figure who served as consul to Tunis and high sheriff of New York City, he fought a duel in Charleston, tried to combat anti-Semitic stereotypes with his plays on the New York stage, was an early Zionist, and planned a rural colony for Jews on Grand Island, south of Niagara Falls, that never attracted his urban coreligionists. Naval captain Uriah Levy (1792–1862) also fought a duel and was a focus of attention for his ultimately successful campaign to abolish flogging. Merchant Judah Touro (1775–1854) of New Orleans was one of the nation's leading philanthropists; he donated ten thousand dollars to help finish the Bunker Hill Monument and gave hundreds of thousands to numerous Christian as well as Jewish charities throughout the nation. Philadelphia's Rebecca Gratz (1781–1869) and her Christian beloved, Samuel Ewing, refused to marry outside their respective faiths; she became the model for Rebecca in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819) and was known throughout Europe and America for her beauty as well as her philanthropy. In the early Republic, Jews were so few in number compared to other groups like the Irish and Germans that following the Federalists' defeat, they attracted little attention until large numbers began to arrive in the 1840s.

*See also Architecture: Religious; Judaism; Religion: Overview; Religion: The*

## Founders and Religion; Religious Publishing; Religious Tests for Officeholding; Theology.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Faber, Eli. *A Time for Planting: The First Migration, 1654–1820*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.  
Sarna, Jonathan D. *American Judaism: A History*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2004.

William Pencak

---

**JUDAISM** A minute percentage of the population of early America, Jews settled primarily in seaport towns, New York, Philadelphia, Newport, Charlestown, and Savannah during and after the colonial era and Richmond and Baltimore during the late 1700s and early 1800s. A handful resided in rural sections of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. In each of the towns in which they settled, their first communal religious action was the acquisition of land for a cemetery. Traditional Jewish religious law requires burial in ground surrounded by a wall or a fence, thereby creating an enclosure in which only Jews are interred. In New Amsterdam, mainland North America's earliest Jewish colonists acquired land for a cemetery in 1656 and twenty-six years later, in 1682, the reappearance of a small Jewish presence in New York necessitated purchase of cemetery land a second time. Subsequently, wherever a new Jewish community took root, consecration of a cemetery connoted the permanent appearance of the Jewish religion in that new location.

### SYNAGOGUES AND RITES

By contrast, synagogues were constructed long after a Jewish presence developed. Because traditional Jewish law permits communal worship in virtually any location, congregations gathered at first in private homes or in homes rented for services, waiting many years, or until the community deemed itself sufficiently well established, to build houses of worship. In New York, for example, services were held in a private home as early as the 1690s, and they continued to be held privately for a generation. It was not until 1728 that the congregation embarked upon construction of a synagogue, dedicating it for use in 1730 and subsequently adding a ritual bath, a school, quarters for a hired caretaker, and a booth for the autumnal festival of Sukkoth (Festival of Booths). Similarly in Philadelphia, a Jewish commu-

nity began to form during the late 1730s, but its members did not construct a synagogue until 1782, while in Charleston and Savannah synagogues were not erected until 1794 and 1820, respectively. In Newport, however, action was swifter. A new Jewish community emerged there during the 1740s and early 1750s, and it had formulated plans for a synagogue by 1754; it broke ground for the synagogue in 1759 and began to worship in it in 1763, although the congregants were unable to complete the structure until 1768.

Whether within the private home or later in the synagogue, the Sephardic rather than the Ashkenazic rite was the one that the congregations followed. Most of the Jews who settled in the colonies during the seventeenth century were Sephardim, that is, the descendants of Jews who originated in Spain and Portugal. While Ashkenazim, or Jews who originated in central and eastern Europe, also appeared in America during the seventeenth century, the small population was preponderantly Sephardic. Consequently, the Sephardic rite became the American rite, and it continued to prevail until the 1820s, despite the fact that, as early as 1720, Jews of Ashkenazic descent were in the majority. Notwithstanding their larger numbers, the Ashkenazim accepted the Sephardic system of worship in keeping with another fundamental principle of religious law, namely, that established custom has the status of law as long as the custom in question conforms to the norms of Jewish *halacha* (traditional religious law). The Ashkenazim may well have maintained their own customs and traditions within the privacy of their homes, but at communal worship they adhered to the Sephardic rite. Signs of conflict among early American Ashkenazim and Sephardim surfaced in Charleston and Philadelphia late in the eighteenth century and again in New York around 1820, leading in 1825 to the creation of the first congregation in North America to follow the Ashkenazic rite. The Ashkenazic ritual became the norm thereafter throughout the United States, owing to a large influx of Jews from central and eastern Europe after 1820, although the congregations that dated to the colonial period continued to adhere to the Sephardic tradition.

#### **TRADITION: ENFORCEMENT AND DEVIATION**

In their spiritual lives and in questions pertaining to the legal and customary requirements of normative, traditional Judaism, early American Jews did not have the guidance of trained rabbis. Unlike their counterparts in the Caribbean colonies belonging to

Britain (Jamaica and Barbados) and the Netherlands (Curaçao), Jews in mainland North America did not secure the employment of ordained rabbis, and there is no indication in surviving records that they even attempted to obtain such expertise. Save for several brief visits by rabbis from abroad, and with the additional exception of requests for rulings that were directed to rabbinic authorities in London and Amsterdam, the Jews of North America were largely on their own. Judaism in early America was therefore almost entirely defined and maintained by laypersons.

That they endeavored to enforce compliance with traditional Jewish beliefs and practices is evident from the disciplinary methods the leaders of the Jewish community employed. These ranged from a simple admonition to withholding honors in the synagogue, expulsion from membership, and denial of the right to burial in the community's cemetery. In theory, the leadership could also have imposed the *herem*, or excommunication, a severe penalty that required members of the community to shun the punished individual not only in the synagogue but outside as well, commercially and socially. In practice, however, the sanction of excommunication appears to have been rarely invoked.

The fact that such disciplinary methods were believed to have been necessary reflected the extent to which some American Jews as early as the mid-eighteenth century deviated from tradition in their private lives. There were no organized attempts to reform Jewish law and practice prior to 1824, when a group within the community in Charleston proposed to revise the synagogue service and then, between 1825 and 1833, congregated separately and formulated a prayer book that introduced a number of theological reforms. Moreover, there is little to suggest that Enlightenment skepticism and rationalism provoked dissent from Orthodoxy (a term that was not employed until the late nineteenth century). Nevertheless, tendencies to abandon strict Sabbath, festival, and dietary laws did exist, although many early American Jews were scrupulous in their fidelity to tradition. Deviations that occurred among the traditionalists are attributable not to intent but, rather, to the absence of rabbinic authorities in America who could resolve questions of Jewish law and who could provide adequate instruction to a Jewishly undereducated laity.

*See also Jews; Religion: Overview.*

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Blau, Joseph L., and Salo W. Baron, eds. *The Jews of the United States, 1790–1840: A Documentary History*. 3 vols. New York: Columbia University Press, 1963.
- Faber, Eli. *A Time for Planting: The First Migration, 1654–1820*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.
- Marcus, Jacob Rader. *The Colonial American Jew, 1492–1776*. 3 vols. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970.
- Sarna, Jonathan D. *American Judaism: A History*. New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 2004.

Eli Faber

**JUDICIAL REVIEW** In the years preceding the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), Americans gradually came to accept the notion that courts could in certain instances strike down laws as contrary to a constitution. They formulated a rationale for *judicial review* (a term coined in the twentieth century) that drew upon several interrelated ideas, including fundamental law, written constitutions, popular sovereignty, and the separation of powers. Eighteenth-century Americans firmly believed that the acts adopted by their legislatures should conform to some unwritten "higher" or "fundamental law," variously referred to as divine or natural law; the immutable standards of reason, morality, and justice; or the principles embodied in the British constitution. Unwritten fundamental law was not the kind of law that judges were particularly qualified to enforce, however, because it was too general and amorphous to accommodate itself to judicial interpretation. After 1776, however, Americans began to identify fundamental law with the written constitutions that accompanied the establishment of their new state governments. These constitutions provided the concreteness and specificity of written documents that were the staple of judicial exposition. In time, written American constitutions, including the U.S. Constitution, came to be framed and adopted by conventions elected for the purpose. A constitution so formed was perceived to be more than a plan of government but a "law" enacted by the supreme legislative power, the sovereign people. It was a law of superior obligation, imposing limits upon government that were to be obeyed in the same way citizens obeyed ordinary laws.

The concept of supreme law as the original and deliberate act of the people was the indispensable basis for a theory of judicial review compatible with popular government. In the emerging American doc-

trine of separation of powers, legislature, executive, and judiciary were joined together in an equality of subordination to the people. The judiciary, in consequence, could plausibly claim that to uphold a constitution was to preserve and enforce the people's permanent will. To void an act as contrary to a constitution was not an encroachment upon legislative power but a legitimate exercise of the judiciary's province to declare the law.

Before 1803 state and federal courts explicitly or implicitly endorsed the doctrine of judicial review; for example, *Bayard v. Singleton* (1787), a North Carolina case, and *Hylton v. U.S.* (1796), in the U.S. Supreme Court. The most articulate defense, however, was undertaken by Alexander Hamilton. Writing as Publius in *The Federalist No. 78* (1788), Hamilton set forth the essential elements of the doctrine: the Constitution was a written fundamental law enacted by the people; courts were the peculiar guardians of the Constitution, trustees acting on behalf of the people; the refusal to uphold a law contrary to the Constitution did not imply judicial superiority over the legislative power but "only supposes that the power of the people is superior to both"; and choosing between Constitution and statute was an act of discretion wholly within the scope of judicial power, no different in kind from that exercised in ordinary cases of determining between two contradictory laws. This argument was effective in persuading Americans that judicial review was both a sound theory and a practical means of insuring that popular government would also be orderly and constitutional government.

*See also Marbury v. Madison; Marshall, John.*

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Hamilton, Alexander [Publius, pseud.]. "The Federalist No. 78." In *The Federalist Papers*. Edited by Clinton Rossiter. New York: New American Library, 1961.
- Snowiss, Sylvia. *Judicial Review and the Law of the Constitution*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1990.
- Wood, Gordon S. "The Origins of Judicial Review Revisited, or How the Marshall Court Made More out of Less." *Washington and Lee Law Review* 56 (1999): 787–809.

Charles F. Hobson

**JUDICIARY ACT OF 1789** The Judiciary Act of 1789 established a three-tiered hierarchy of federal courts. Article III of the U.S. Constitution provides that the judicial power "shall be vested in one su-

preme Court and such inferior [federal] Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish," but the number and nature of those courts is not specified. At the top of the structure established by the 1789 Act was the Supreme Court, with five associate justices and one chief justice. Down one level were the circuit courts, composed of two itinerant U.S. Supreme Court justices for each of the three geographical "Circuits," who would sit with local district court judges. At the base were the one-judge district courts, one each for eleven of the original thirteen states and two in Massachusetts and Virginia. The act gave the district courts jurisdiction in matters of admiralty and revenue collection, while it gave the circuit courts jurisdiction over other commercial cases and jurisdiction over "all crimes and offenses cognizable under the authority of the United States." Article III gave the Supreme Court original jurisdiction in cases "affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, and those in which a State shall be a party" and appellate jurisdiction in all other federal cases.

Some opponents of the proposed Constitution of 1787 had argued that federal courts were unnecessary and might usurp the jurisdiction of the state courts. Because of this fear, complete jurisdiction over cases "arising under the laws and Constitution" of the United States was not given to the lower federal courts. Further, section 29 of the act required that the federal District Courts follow the trial procedures in use in their particular states, and section 34 provided "that the laws of the several states, except where the constitution, treaties or statutes of the United States shall otherwise require or provide, shall be regarded as rules of decision in trials at common law in the courts of the United States in cases where they apply."

Nevertheless, one purpose of the federal courts was to ensure that cases that arose between citizens of different states would be decided without prejudice, and since it was assumed that state courts might tend to favor citizens of their own states, the 1789 act gave circuit courts jurisdiction over disputes between citizens of different states or between a citizen of the United States and an alien, as long as the amount in controversy was more than five hundred dollars. The system of having Supreme Court justices "ride circuit" to sit with the district court judges was designed to keep those justices in touch with the needs of the American people, but circuit riding proved to be a difficult hardship for the justices. It was abolished by the Judiciary Act of 1801, but reinstated by the Judiciary Act of 1802 and not

permanently ended until after the Civil War, when full jurisdiction over matters of interpretation of federal law was also extended to the inferior federal courts.

*See also Constitutional Convention; Judiciary Acts of 1801 and 1802; Supreme Court.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Goebel, Julius, Jr. *History of the Supreme Court of the United States*. Vol. 1, *Antecedents and Beginnings to 1801*. New York: Macmillan, 1971.

Ritz, Wilfred J., Wythe Holt, and Lewis H. LaRue. *Rewriting the History of the Judiciary Act of 1789: Exposing Myths, Challenging Premises, and Using New Evidence*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990.

Stephen B. Presser

---

**JUDICIARY ACTS OF 1801 AND 1802** The Judiciary Act of 1801, commonly referred to as the "Midnight Judges' Act," was passed at a time following the Republicans' election victories in 1800 but before the Jeffersonians actually took office. It has been traditionally viewed by historians as an attempt by the outgoing Federalists to secure the judiciary, since they had lost their control of the executive and legislative branches of government. The act created sixteen new federal judgeships, each of which was filled with a Federalist appointee. These judges were to be members of newly constituted circuit courts, which were to be given an expanded jurisdiction to handle cases arising under "the Constitution and laws of the United States." The circuit courts had existed prior to the passage of the 1801 act, although with narrower jurisdiction and without specially appointed judges. The Federalists argued that their act was nonpartisan, as there was an objective need for expanded federal jurisdiction and for specially constituted circuit courts, with their own judges. There was some merit to their argument, as the circuit courts' dockets were crowded and since, more often than not, it was difficult, if not impossible, to have more than one justice sit with a district court judge.

The practice under the Judiciary Act of 1789 had been for two justices from the U.S. Supreme Court to sit on the circuit courts with a local district court judge. However, riding circuit, as it was called, proved to be onerous, given the frailty of the Supreme Court justices and the precarious state of overland transportation in the country. From the beginning, the justices had argued in vain for an end to the

practice. At least one justice, James Iredell of North Carolina, is supposed to have gone to an early grave, dying at the age of forty-eight, exhausted by the practice. Two years after Iredell's death, the 1801 Act abolished circuit riding for the justices. Nevertheless, since the incoming Jeffersonians regarded the appointment of Federalist judges as anathema, because they believed that there was merit in the system of circuit riding since it kept the Supreme Court justices in closer contact with the people, and since they favored state over federal court jurisdiction, as their first legislative act the Jeffersonians in 1802 used their new congressional majority to repeal the 1801 act. They thus reinstated circuit riding, restricted federal jurisdiction, and abolished the freestanding circuit courts created by the 1801 act.

The Constitution provided no means for removal of federal judges other than by impeachment for treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors. Article III vested the judicial power "in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish," and the Jeffersonians read this provision as giving them authority to abolish as well as to create federal courts. They argued, in other words, that they were not removing judges, only courts, but the sixteen new Federalist circuit judges were still out of their jobs. Many Federalists and at least one Supreme Court justice, Samuel Chase, viewed the repeal of the 1801 act as unconstitutionally removing judges without benefit of impeachment; he wrote Chief Justice John Marshall that the Supreme Court should make that declaration. The constitutional terms were certainly ambiguous, but since only a simple majority was required in both houses of Congress to abolish courts, and an express two-thirds majority of the Senate to remove judges by impeachment, it would seem that Chase and the Federalists had the better argument.

In order to avoid an adverse Supreme Court decision immediately regarding the Judiciary Act of 1802, the Republicans postponed the Court's next term until February 1803. That term saw John Marshall make a powerful statement supporting the power of judicial review of congressional and executive acts in *Marbury v. Madison* (1803). In that case, he declared that the Jeffersonians had wrongly failed to deliver a commission to a Federalist appointee pursuant to a statute, passed contemporaneously with the 1801 Act, creating several new Federalist justices of the peace. But since Marshall declared unconstitutional a provision of the 1789 judiciary act that gave the Supreme Court jurisdiction to issue a mandamus

compelling that the commission be granted, he held that he was without power to act, thus avoiding a battle with the Jeffersonians and signaling that the Court was not likely to overrule the repeal of the 1801 Act. When the Court had the opportunity directly to rule on the issue, in *Stuart v. Laird* (1803), the Court, as expected, upheld the repeal act. The restrictions on federal jurisdiction remained in effect until well after the Civil War, and thus the lower federal courts were not particularly important to the development of the nation for many years.

*See also Judiciary Act of 1789; Supreme Court.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Haskins, George L., and Herbert A. Johnson. *History of the Supreme Court of the United States*. Vol. 2, *Foundations of Power: John Marshall 1801–1815*. New York: Macmillan, 1981.  
 Turner, Kathryn. "Federalist Policy and the Judiciary Act of 1801." *William and Mary Quarterly* 22 (1965): 3–32.  
 Whichard, Willis P. *Justice James Iredell*. Durham, N.C.: Carolina Academic Press, 2000.

Stephen B. Presser

---

**KENTUCKY** A forty-thousand-square-mile region of grassland and forest bounded by the Appalachian Mountains and the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, Kentucky derives its name from Iroquois and Shawnee words for "grassland" and "dark and bloody ground." While the area had few permanent Native American settlements during the era of European colonization, it was a favorite Shawnee and Cherokee hunting preserve and the junction of several major Indian paths.

In 1750 Virginia explorers led by Thomas Walker discovered the Cumberland Gap, which allowed regular overland travel from Virginia to central Kentucky. Surveyors and hunters from Pennsylvania and Virginia, including Daniel Boone (c. 1734–1820), followed Walker's party in the 1760s and 1770s, despite a royal proclamation of 1763 forbidding white settlement west of the Appalachians. These adventurers' reports encouraged Virginia speculators to claim and sell Kentucky lands and white farmers to establish permanent settlements there, beginning with Harrodsburg in 1774.

The Ohio Valley Indians resisted the intruders, and skirmishes between warriors and settlers led to Dunmore's War (1774), whereby Virginia laid claim to the Kentucky region. During the Revolutionary

War the Shawnees and other British-allied Woodland Indian warriors ambushed white travelers, plundered flatboats, and besieged frontier outposts in Kentucky. The Indian confederates renewed their guerrilla war in the 1780s and maintained it until 1794 in an effort to bar white farmers from the Ohio Valley. White Kentuckians built blockhouses, organized punitive raids, and in 1779 captured the British post of Vincennes, but ultimately they could not secure their settlements without outside assistance. They finally received it in the 1790s, when the U.S. Army broke the Northwest Indians' confederacy at the Battle of Fallen Timbers on 20 August 1794.

Migration from the eastern states to Kentucky continued in spite of the war, encouraged by a liberal Virginia land law of 1779 that opened Kentucky lands to white settlement and allowed old settlers to buy land at a discount. Kentucky's non-Indian population increased over 900 percent in the 1780s, and with the end of Indian warfare and Spain's opening of the Mississippi River to American shipping in the 1790s, immigration surged. In 1790 the total population of Kentucky was 73,677 and its slave population was 12,430. These figures grew to 220,955 and 40,343 in 1800; 406,511 and 80,561 in 1810; 564,317 and 126,732 in 1820; and 687,917 and 165,213 in 1830.

Kentucky's economy concurrently changed from a subsistence culture to a commercial one. Farmers in the Bluegrass raised wheat, tobacco, hemp, cattle, and horses for export to the Lower South and New Orleans. The villages of Lexington and Louisville had grown into booming cities by 1830. Businessmen financed ropewalks, sawmills, and gristmills and opened dozens of private banks. In fact, Kentucky chartered one-third of the approximately four hundred American banks that opened between 1815 and 1820.

Economic growth had some adverse social costs. Many planters increased their profits by employing African American slaves, particularly on the state's hemp and tobacco plantations. Hard work, harsh punishments, and unstable family life were norms for Kentucky slaves, though opportunities for escape were greater than in other southern states because of the North's proximity. The spread of the institution of slavery, the growth of a cash and credit economy, and frequent litigation stemming from inaccurate land surveys concentrated wealth in the hands of planters, merchants, and lawyers. Thousands of less successful families, like that of Thomas and Nancy Lincoln, the parents of the future president, left Kentucky after 1800 in search of better opportunities.

Educational opportunities were limited in early national-era Kentucky, and private academies remained the sole source of schooling until the 1830s. Religious institutions, however, experienced explosive growth during a series of Protestant revivals that produced tens of thousands of converts. The Cane Ridge Revival of 1801 drew over twenty thousand attendees, and membership in Baptist and Methodist churches tripled within a few years. The Presbyterians and Disciples of Christ also used revivals to increase their membership. Kentucky Evangelicals later took the lead in establishing the state's first temperance society in 1830 and transforming Transylvania University into an eminent institution of higher learning.

Kentuckians' political outlook remained localist and populist throughout the period. Kentucky settlers denounced the never-consummated Jay-Gardoqui Treaty of 1785–1786, opposed the federal Constitution of 1787, and refused to pay the Federalists' whiskey excise of 1791. Kentucky's admission to the Union as the fifteenth state in 1792 did not improve its relationship with the federal government, and in 1798 the legislature threatened to nullify the Alien and Sedition Acts as unconstitutional. In national elections Kentuckians voted for the Democratic Republican Party, then in the 1820s, when that party splintered into factions, supported the presidential candidacy of Henry Clay (1777–1852). Clay, a native Virginian and lawyer, moved to Lexington in 1797 and successively served in the Kentucky General Assembly, the U.S. Senate, and the U.S. House of Representatives. He became Speaker of the House in 1811, and later served on the commission which negotiated the Treaty of Ghent and crafted the legislation that resolved the Missouri Controversy. Clay's reputation suffered, however, after he helped engineer the election of President John Quincy Adams in 1824 and became Adams's Secretary of State. Meanwhile, a state controversy over banking, debtor relief, and judicial reform from 1823 to 1825 led many Kentuckians to transfer their political allegiance to Andrew Jackson in 1828.

*See also* **Alien and Sedition Acts; American Indians: American Indian Resistance to White Expansion; Fallen Timbers, Battle of; Frontier; Frontier Religion; Northwest and Southwest Ordinances; Revivals and Revivalism; Ohio.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aron, Stephen. *How the West Was Lost: The Transformation of Kentucky from Daniel Boone to Henry Clay*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.

Friend, Craig Thompson. *The Buzzel about Kentuck: Settling the Promised Land*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999.

Hammon, Neal, and Richard Taylor. *Virginia's Western War, 1775–1786*. Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole, 2002.

Rohrbough, Malcolm J. *The Trans-Appalachian Frontier: People, Societies, and Institutions, 1775–1850*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978. Reprint, Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1990.

*David A. Nichols*



---

**LABOR MOVEMENT: LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AND STRIKES** Labor organizations appeared in the half century after the Revolution, responding primarily to the stratification of the artisan trades in eastern seaboard commercial and manufacturing cities. Before then, the trades had been predominantly communities of independent petty producers. On completing their training, apprentices would simply set up as sole traders rather than become journeymen wageworkers. After the mid-eighteenth century, the incidence of wage labor began to increase. In Philadelphia, from 30 percent to 50 percent of the city's shoemakers and tailors can be found hiring themselves out to master craftsmen, the actual numbers fluctuating by decade. In Boston and New York, the preponderance of independent tradesmen was greater. In Boston during the 1790s, there were still eight master carpenters for every journeyman. By 1815, however, the journeymen were in a majority. By then, journeymen also outnumbered masters across all trades in Philadelphia, and decisively in New York.

#### **TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT**

The turn to wage labor meant friction over terms. How the price and hours of labor should be set and enforced became the object of intense debate from the

1780s onward, accompanied by resort to association on both sides and competing declarations of standards for a trade throughout a given locality. Journeymen enforced their declarations by "turn outs"—refusals to work except on the terms they prescribed or with any person not part of their fraternity. These tactics earned them indictment, and usually conviction, for conspiracy. Between 1806 and 1815 at least half a dozen conspiracy trials took place in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York. The depression of 1819 put a halt to journeymen's organizing activities, but another cluster of prosecutions came between 1823 and 1829 as the economy revived. Shoemakers and tailors were the most frequent defendants, but urban textile workers—spinners and weavers—were also indicted. Though concentrated in the artisan trades of the seaboard cities, trials spread to inland centers, such as Pittsburgh (1814) and Buffalo (1824), and as far south as New Orleans (1826). More trials came in the mid-1830s, at the peak of the Jacksonian labor movement, and in the early 1840s, when for the first time indictments were returned against rural factory workers.

Journeymen's associations recapitulated traditions of craft organization with roots deep in the English past and with scattered precursors in the colonies. They were, however, certainly not the new nation's only expression of concerted labor action.

Riots and strikes over working and living conditions also occurred among unskilled workers: canal diggers, mostly working in rural areas (particularly as the economy began to improve after 1825); waterfront workers on several occasions in the second half of the 1820s; and New York's building laborers (1816). Strikes also occurred among urban female tailors (New York, 1825) and among rural textile factory workers—the first in Pawtucket, Rhode Island (1824), another at the Slater Mills in Dudley, Massachusetts (1827).

#### DEVELOPMENT OF A LABOR MOVEMENT

More significant than who was organizing and striking was when. It is the coincidence of action among different groups that signifies the beginnings of a full-fledged labor movement.

Before the late 1820s, a labor movement as such did not exist. The journeymen's associations of the previous forty years were not a movement. They were trade-specific combinations organized within a particular locality, asserting quasi-corporate or quasi-municipal rights of regulation, not a nascent collective bargaining mentality. There was little communication among them, far less any explicit attempts at translocal organization. Combinations among unskilled workers, meanwhile, tended to be spontaneous and short-lived.

This situation began to change in the mid-1820s. Economic recovery brought renewed organization across a broad front of trades in all the eastern cities, accompanied by wage conflicts and agitation for the ten-hour day, notably the Boston house carpenters' strike of 1825. Simultaneous stirrings among the new classes of factory workers and strikes among canal workers suggest generalized grievance. Different segments of working people appeared to share a common understanding of the extent of economic transformation that had occurred since the end of the War of 1812: decomposition of the artisan mode of production in the cities, growing concentration of wealth, and the spread of entrepreneurialism and "free market" rhetoric, all accompanied by growing stratification in the employment relationship. The result was the first attempt to create more general forms of organization. Beginning in Philadelphia, journeymen joined with factory hands not only to organize unions but also confederations of unions as well as workingmen's political parties that quickly assumed an active role in local and state politics. Establishment in 1827 of the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations, the first citywide federation of journeymen trade societies in the country, led to in-

dependent organized participation of workingmen in the 1828 city and state elections. In 1829 and 1830 Working Men's parties developed in New York and Massachusetts.

Notwithstanding that this was a movement founded in the first instance on journeymen's associations, the Working Men's parties showed little programmatic commitment to trade unionism. Particularly in Massachusetts, the Working Men's parties transcended a specifically urban base, attracting support from rural artisans and farmers. Eclectically radical, they are best considered representative of a "catchall" popular anxiety about the course of the polity. All articulated broad programs of republican reform, and all were shaped by a diversity of influences—middle-class intellectuals and Jeffersonian agrarians, not just plebeian radicals. Frontiers between the Working Men's parties and factions in the mainstream parties were highly permeable.

In the fifty years after the Revolution, "labor" had emerged amid the expansion and reorganization of the new nation's economy as an increasingly separate and identifiable interest. But its organizational manifestations were eclectic and brief, its politics undefined. Strikes had become commonplace, but periods of agitation were easily snuffed out by economic downturns. The 1830s saw more of the same, but with the crucial addition of a growing emphasis on permanent trade unions as the only basis upon which working people could expect to have any impact upon the polity. Federations of urban craft unions were established in all the eastern seaboard centers during 1833 and 1834 and remained active for several years. Ultimately, they too would prove vulnerable to economic downturn and depression after the Panic of 1837. But their appearance lent real definition to labor activity in the 1830s, proving what had still been uncertain as late as 1829: that the new nation now had a labor movement.

*See also Economic Development.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Pruke, Jonathan. *The Coming of Industrial Order: Town and Factory Life in Rural Massachusetts, 1810–1860*. New York and Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Tomlins, Christopher L. *Law, Labor, and Ideology in the Early American Republic*. New York and Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Way, Peter. *Common Labour: Workers and the Digging of North American Canals, 1780–1860*. New York and Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Wilentz, Sean. *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788–1850*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.

Christopher L. Tomlins

**LAFAYETTE, MARIE-JOSEPH, MARQUIS DE (1757–1834)** The Marquis de Lafayette (born Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier) became the most influential non-American commander in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War and an important foreign contributor to the emergence of American nationalism. He was born into a prominent noble family in the rugged, remote south-central French province of Auvergne. His father was killed in battle (in 1759) during the Seven Years' War, and his mother died (in 1770) while he was still at the Collège du Plessis in Paris, where Lafayette received most of his formal education. Like most other noble boys in eighteenth-century France, he studied ancient history, prepared for a military career, and collected income from his family's landed estates. His wealth and noble status attracted the attention of the powerful Noailles family, and they arranged for Lafayette to marry the youthful Adrienne de Noailles (1759–1807) in 1774. This marriage gave Lafayette a position in the prestigious Noailles Dragoons and set him on course for a successful military career.

Soon, however, he developed a political interest in the American colonists' declaration of independence from Britain. In December 1776 Lafayette received the promise of a military commission from the American representative in Paris, Silas Deane. Lacking official permission to leave his French regiment, Lafayette secretly bought a ship and sailed to the New World with several other military officers in April 1777. This flight from the privileges of European nobility later became a popular American story, in part because it displayed Lafayette's commitment to America's Revolutionary cause and in part because it exemplified a familiar American desire to break with the constraints of the Old World.

#### LAFAYETTE'S ROLE IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Although some Americans opposed the appointment of French officers in the Continental Army, George Washington accepted Lafayette as an unpaid major general whose family connections at the French court might be useful for the development of a military alliance. Lafayette quickly gained Washington's



**The Marquis de Lafayette.** The most influential non-American commander in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War, in a portrait (c. 1825) by Matthew Harris Jouett. THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

personal respect and trust when he demonstrated both courage and military skill in battles at Brandywine and Barren Hill, both in Pennsylvania. The friendship between Washington and Lafayette grew into a kind of father-son attachment in which Lafayette deferred to the older man's judgment and Washington expressed his appreciation of a young European noble "who acts upon very different principles than those which govern the rest." These principles included Lafayette's willingness to listen to Americans (rather than just to give them instructions) and his support of the political objectives of the Revolutionary War.

Lafayette's military role in the American Revolution developed in several different spheres. He provided valuable military leadership as he helped to train, organize, and supply the American brigades that he commanded. Equally important, he constantly urged the French government to send more supplies and military support after France entered into a formal alliance with the American Continental Congress, and he became an energetic cross-cultural mediator when French naval forces and a French army

arrived in Rhode Island. Finally, Lafayette commanded American forces with exceptional skill in Virginia during the decisive campaign there in the spring and summer of 1781. This campaign required careful political negotiations as he gathered supplies for his small, ragtag army and imaginative military strategies as he closed the trap around the British army at Yorktown. Although Lafayette could not gain a decisive victory until the Comte de Rochambeau and Washington arrived with the main French and American forces, his strategic maneuvers prepared the way for the final French-American siege.

#### LAFAYETTE'S AFFIRMATION OF AMERICAN NATIONAL IDENTITY

His leadership of the complex Virginia campaign and his close friendship with Washington were important enough to give Lafayette an enduring reputation in American history, yet his political affirmations of the emerging national identity may well have contributed even more to the American cause than his notable military achievements. Lafayette was the first famous foreigner to affirm the new national narrative of America's exceptional achievements, political ideals, and historical destiny. He described Americans as they liked to describe themselves. Lafayette always assured his American friends that their struggle for national independence had the broadest possible historical significance. When he was elected to the American Philosophical Society in 1781, for example, he noted in his acceptance letter that America promoted the rights of mankind on a more liberal basis than any other country in the world. Such public praise for the Revolution reinforced what American leaders already believed about the moral superiority of their national cause, but the statements of a disinterested European nobleman added welcome international credibility to the American claims.

Lafayette's useful and symbolic role as America's best European friend later paved the way for an equally significant role as a leading symbol of American national ideas in France. When the French launched their own revolutionary movement in 1789 to promote the "rights of man" and establish a new constitutional government, most Americans interpreted Lafayette's leadership of the new French National Guard as evidence that France wanted to adopt enlightened American principles of freedom and legal equality. When the French rejected Lafayette in 1792 (he fled for his life and spent five years in Austrian and Prussian prisons), Americans had new reasons to believe that they had a unique national mission: only the United States truly under-

stood and defended the commitment to freedom and order that Lafayette had carried home from the New World.

Lafayette eventually returned to France after Napoleon seized power in 1799, but he rejected Napoleon's authoritarian policies and viewed Jeffersonian America as the main refuge of liberty in the modern world. He continued to praise the American political system as the Napoleonic Empire gave way to a restored French monarchy and to the political conservatism that spread across Europe after 1815. Challenging the ascendancy of conservative regimes wherever he could, Lafayette supported liberal national movements in Spain, Greece, and Poland—all of which he compared to the earlier American struggle for national independence and political freedom. Yet, the powerful conservative tide blocked the progress of liberal nationalisms and his own political career, so he welcomed an invitation from Congress and President James Monroe to return to the United States for a triumphal national tour.

This thirteen-month tour of every American state in 1824–1825 became Lafayette's final important contribution to early American nationalism. He was welcomed everywhere as a living connection to George Washington and the heroic Continental Army. Traveling through a nation engaged in a bitter conflict between the supporters of Andrew Jackson and John Quincy Adams, Lafayette became a unifying messenger from the generation of the founders. He assured uncertain Americans that they were carrying forward the vision of their Revolutionary ancestors, and he reaffirmed, as always, the nationalist belief in America's world-historical significance. He also praised the unique success of the American Revolution, celebrated the superior achievements of America's constitutional government, and interpreted America's rapid economic development as a remarkable consequence of the nation's freedom and republican institutions.

In response, Americans hailed Lafayette as the greatest and wisest man in Europe. Newspapers reprinted his speeches, musicians composed songs to describe his accomplishments, and artists portrayed his image on souvenir dishes, handkerchiefs, and in published illustrations. The celebration of Lafayette became also a celebration of America's national history, political accomplishments, and economic progress. Towns, streets, and schools were named in his honor, and even his occasional references to the dangers of sectionalism or the injustices of slavery could not diminish the nationalist rituals that his tour evoked.

Lafayette later returned to political prominence in the French Revolution of 1830, and he continued to support national independence movements in Poland, Italy, and Greece until his death. Yet these later campaigns for French political reforms and liberal nationalisms never led to the kind of decisive victories he had witnessed at the conclusion of the American Revolution. In the end, therefore, it was the Americans who offered the highest praise for the European who first embraced their cause in 1776 and reaffirmed the central beliefs of American nationalism throughout his long life. At a joint session of Congress in 1834 John Quincy Adams gave a eulogy for Lafayette in which he asserted that no one "among the race of merely mortal men" could rival Lafayette "as the benefactor" of mankind. Though modern historians have questioned such nineteenth-century claims for Lafayette's achievements, the rhetoric points to his exalted status in a new nation that yearned for foreign affirmation of its emerging national identity and historical significance.

*See also Nationalism; Revolution: Military History.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Gottschalk, Louis. *Lafayette and the Close of the American Revolution*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965.
- Idzerda, Stanley J., et al., eds. *Lafayette in the Age of the American Revolution: Selected Letters and Papers, 1776–1790*. 5 vols. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977–1983.
- Idzerda, Stanley J., Anne C. Loveland, and Marc H. Miller. *Lafayette, Hero of Two Worlds: The Art and Pageantry of His Farewell Tour of America, 1824–1825*. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1989.
- Kramer, Lloyd. *Lafayette in Two Worlds: Public Cultures and Personal Identities in an Age of Revolutions*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
- Unger, Harlow Giles. *Lafayette*. Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley and Sons, 2002.

*Lloyd Kramer*



Combined with the U.S. Army victory at the Battle of the Thames or Moraviantown on 5 October 1813, it insured the retention of the modern states of Michigan and Wisconsin within the American national boundary.

After the surrender of Detroit on 16 August 1812, President James Madison began a major effort to reclaim lost territory. Many recognized that the key to such an endeavor was the attainment of naval superiority on Lake Erie, a crucial line of communications. After a winter ground offensive against Detroit failed, Major General William Henry Harrison began construction of Fort Meigs at the Maumee River rapids (now Perrysburg, Ohio) and awaited naval superiority on the lake before moving northward.

The Navy Department appointed Captain Isaac Chauncey commodore of the Great Lakes, and he secured Master Commandant (modern commander) Oliver Hazard Perry for the almost nonexistent Lake Erie squadron. Ably assisted by shipwright Noah Brown, Perry supervised the construction of two brigs—*Lawrence* and *Niagara*—and four schooners at Erie, Pennsylvania. After some delay in securing sailors, Perry led his squadron onto the lake on 12 August 1813 and, after conferring with General Harrison, established his base at Put-in-Bay on South Bass Island.

Suffering from a decided logistical disadvantage at their naval base at Amherstburg, Ontario, near the Detroit River's mouth, in 1813 the British construct-

**LAKE ERIE, BATTLE OF** The Battle of Lake Erie, which took place on 10 September 1813, was a critical naval engagement in the War of 1812. It allowed the American reconquest of much of the Michigan Territory lost earlier in the war, relieved Ohio and Indiana Territory from Native American raids, contributed to the destruction of the Tecumseh Indian confederacy, elevated the martial reputation of the U.S. Navy, and made Oliver Hazard Perry a national hero.

ed only the ship *Detroit*. The ship augmented a small squadron that had previously given the Royal Navy dominance on the lake. Commander Robert H. Barclay led a British squadron carrying 64 guns throwing 905 pounds total weight of metal and 496 pounds in broadside. The U.S. flotilla mounted 54 guns with a total weight of metal of 1,536 pounds and broadside of 936. Barclay brought six vessels into his line of battle, Perry nine.

Once a wind shift allowed Perry to close with the HMS *Detroit*, the battle's outcome seemed obvious. But Jesse Duncan Elliott, captaining the *Niagara*, failed to engage his designated foe, and the British concentrated their fire on Perry's flagship, the *Lawrence*. For over two hours the ship fought gallantly until completely disabled. About this time Elliott brought the *Niagara* forward, and Perry transferred his flag to that undamaged vessel. He sent Elliott to bring up the trailing gunboats while he commanded the *Niagara*, which broke the British line and forced the entire Royal Navy squadron to surrender.

Perry's report to General Harrison—"We have met the enemy and they are ours"—was an immediate sensation and his battle flag's inscription—"Don't Give Up the Ship"—became an unofficial navy motto. The controversy over Elliott's behavior remained a cause célèbre in the U.S. Navy until his death in 1845.

*See also War of 1812.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Friedman, Lawrence J., and David Curtis Skaggs. "Jesse Duncan Elliott and the Battle of Lake Erie: The Issue of Mental Stability." *Journal of the Early Republic* 10 (1990): 493–516.
- Mackenzie, Alexander Slidell. *The Life of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1843.
- Mahan, Alfred T. *Sea Power in Its Relations to the War of 1812*. 1905. Reprint, New York: Haskell House, 1969.
- Malcomson, Robert, and Thomas Malcomson. *HMS Detroit: The Battle for Lake Erie*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1990.
- Skaggs, David Curtis, and Gerard T. Altoff. *A Signal Victory: The Lake Erie Campaign, 1812–1813*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1997.
- Welsh, William Jeffrey, and David Curtis Skaggs, eds. *War on the Great Lakes: Essays Commemorating the 175th Anniversary of the Battle of Lake Erie*. Kent, Oh.: Kent State University Press, 1991.

David Curtis Skaggs

---

**LAND POLICIES** During the early history of the United States, land and the policies governing its distribution, disposition, and transferal from public to private ownership were of great national interest. Land policies were crucial to a range of nation-defining issues including federal Indian policy, westward expansion and settlements, the spread of democracy, and the development of a strong national agricultural economy. Geographically, they imposed a rational order upon the land, most notably in the form of a grid-pattern, geometric landscape that was devised by politicians, marked and drawn by surveyors, and domesticated by the western farm people.

#### STATE CLAIMS TO WESTERN LANDS

The 1783 Treaty of Paris that ended America's Revolutionary War left unresolved the matter of state claims to western lands north and south of the Ohio River that stemmed from old royal charters. Considering the political advantages afforded to larger states, smaller states without western land claims, such as Maryland, held out and refused to ratify the Articles of Confederation until states gave up their western lands. When Virginia, the largest state, gave up its claims in 1784, others followed. By 1786 all state claims to Old Northwest lands had been ceded to the federal government in return for the creation of a vast public domain that encompassed more than 230 million acres. This public domain represented both a veritable windfall of untapped land revenues for a cash-strapped fledgling government and a seemingly boundless western space for a land- and agriculturally minded nation to grow. Additional land cessions followed: North Carolina in 1790 and Georgia in 1802.

Although states ceded their rights to western lands, other claims and contingencies on the public domain existed for the government to handle. Numerous states retained a considerable amount of lands for their own disposal, whereas Virginia and Connecticut held on to "reserves" so as to meet their obligations to holders of military bounty land warrants issued to Revolutionary War soldiers. Far more complicated and vexing to the government was the process of confirming private claims to land granted to settlers by prior French, Spanish, and English authorities. More important with respect to land policy, however, was the government's active and aggressive securing of land cessions and the extinguishing of tribal claims from Native Americans, whether through warfare, deception, or trea-

ties. From the beginning land policy was predicated on the dispossession of the native peoples.

#### THE EMERGENCE OF LAND POLICIES

Given the unique American circumstances, early government land policies reflected the tentative, innovative, and idealistic nature of the new Republic, and some practices persisted and became distinctive features of U.S. land policy. A national land disposal policy emerged in 1784–1785 only after lively congressional debates had taken place over such fundamental issues as whether Virginia's system of indiscriminate location with surveys following was more expedient than New England's orderly course of surveying and sectioning townships prior to land sales, along with reserving lots for churches and schools. The latter won out (minus the church lots) and formed the basis of the Land Ordinance of 1785. It bore a significant measure of Thomas Jefferson's influence and his interest in surveying. Among the stipulations was that Indian titles must be extinguished before surveys were done; herein also were the beginning stages of an administrative process of record-keeping to legitimate and safeguard land transactions.

The survey was important for a number of reasons. Besides the appearance of security, familiarity, and a simple grid pattern, the rectangular survey was an exercise in rationality. The land ordinance specified that a presidentially appointed geographer, in this instance Thomas Hutchins, would oversee a corps of surveyors and chain carriers whose job was to mark off the land, by way of recorded descriptions and actual markings on trees, into townships that were six miles square and then into sections of 640 acres each. These were numbered from south to north beginning in the southeastern corner. After seven ranges of townships had been surveyed, the geographer would convey a scaled diagram of this tract, called a plat, to the Board of the Treasury in advance of a public sale minus reserves for public schools (sixteen in each township) and military bounty lands.

The Seven Ranges represented the first of these organized surveys and was inaugurated where the Ohio River crosses into Ohio from Pennsylvania. This method, however, proved slow and costly, especially in the opinion of Congress, which noted that by February 1787 only four ranges had been completed. That fall, Congress acted at variance with the Land Ordinance and auctioned off the four completed ranges at one dollar per acre with disappointingly low sales. Although the land parcels and price failed

to attract the average yeoman farmer, speculators and land companies, including the Ohio Company, the Scioto Company, and John Cleves Symmes, received Congress's blessing for one-million-acre purchases in the hopes that they would generate federal revenue and encourage settlement. With organized settlement Congress sought to diminish the chronic appearance of squatters on the public domain who it believed were robbing the federal Treasury of land revenue and whose illegal settlement also precipitated Indian hostilities. Nevertheless, as land historian Paul Gates observed, squatters' persistence on the landscape influenced land policy by constantly bringing the matter of preemption (a squatter's "right" to first consideration in gaining title to land he and his family have worked by being allowed to circumvent competitive bidding for it at the public auction) to Congress's attention such that it was finally sanctioned by law in 1841. Altogether, as fellow land historian Malcolm Rohrbough contends, the Land Ordinance fostered a break from the Old World's feudalistic landholding patterns by instituting a large-scale, democratic system of land ownership in the new American Republic.

#### THE NORTHWEST ORDINANCE

The question of how the public domain would yield politically functioning territories and ultimately add new states to the Union was answered by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. Integral to U.S. land policy, this ordinance of governance was considered vital to the success of speculative land company enterprises such as the Ohio Company. Moreover, it provided for the creation of three to five territories northwest of the Ohio River, from which the present-day states Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin would emerge. Concurrent with national expansionist objectives, the land area comprising the public domain expanded with the federal acquisition of additional territories, including the Louisiana Purchase (1803), Florida (1819), Texas (1845), Oregon (1846), and the Mexican cession (1848).

Land disposal policies underwent constant revision in the quest to generate more federal revenue to apply against the national debt. Added incentive came through a series of Indian land cession treaties that followed hostilities and afforded the opening up of more land for sale and settlement, including the 1795 Treaty of Greenville. At this point, Pennsylvania Democratic congressman Albert Gallatin took a leading role in reformulating what would become the Land Act of 1796. Policymakers debated whether it was more profitable to tailor prospective land sales

to settlers or to speculative groups, who would then presumably sell to those settlers; the terms of sale reflected the most substantive policy reform. The minimum purchase size remained at 640-acre tracts, although the minimum price was raised from one to two dollars per acre. Modest credit was now extended so that a purchaser could put down one-twentieth of the price, one-half within thirty days, and the rest within one year. However, this translated to \$1,280, a considerable amount for the average settler. Cash purchases were discounted by 10 percent, but this was still out of reach for many. Additionally, the act called for more detailed surveys, and it made the receipt of land sales monies the responsibility of the new secretary of the treasury, Oliver Wolcott. Although western settlers benefited from the designation of two convenient points of sale (Pittsburgh and Cincinnati), overall sales were low and the act failed to achieve anything close to revenue objectives.

#### **EVOLUTION OF LAND POLICIES**

Almost immediately Congress recognized the need to liberalize its land policies in order to compete for sales against the major land companies in Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania as well as with large investors. Many of the private landholders had acquired military bounty lands so cheaply that they offered settlers many more advantages than the government could: the best prices, smaller lots, longer credit, payment in produce and livestock, local agents, as well as developing tracts that encompassed towns, roads, and improvements. Ohio Territorial delegate William Henry Harrison was keenly aware of these circumstances and figured prominently in the drafting of what became the Harrison Land Act of 1800. This act finally facilitated increased revenues, largely because it met the needs of western settlers by reducing the minimum purchase tract to 320 acres, creating four western land office districts (Marietta, Cincinnati, Chillicothe, and Jeffersonville), and by extending favorable credit terms to meet the retained minimum two-dollar-per-acre price. The terms allowed the purchaser to pay in fourths: one-fourth of the price within forty days, another within two years, another within three years, and the final fourth within four years. The unpaid balance incurred 6 percent interest. If the tract was not fully paid within five years, it was subject to forfeiture. However, pleas from delinquent purchasers led Congress to suspend this clause and pass numerous relief measures that granted additional time during the next two decades.

By 1820 the West was taking shape in the form of spreading land offices north and south of the Ohio

River as well as in the admission of new states to the Union—from Ohio (1803) to Illinois (1818) on the one hand, and Mississippi (1817) to Alabama (1819) on the other. The General Land Office was established in 1811. Yet the experiment with credit sales had a ruinous effect on the economy as evidenced by the Panic of 1819, a time when western land buyers owed the government more than \$24 million. Through the Land Act of 1820, Congress abolished credit sales, mandating that land must now be paid in full with cash on the day of purchase, although the minimum price was reduced to \$1.25 per acre and the tract size to eighty acres. Predictably, land sales plummeted to nothing; the government, on the other hand, succeeded in reducing the land sales debt to just over \$6 million by 1825. This act seriously hurt western pioneers—as much by denying them much-needed credit as by not incorporating preemption, which at least would have given them some means of acquiring a farmstead without credit. One consequence was a greater visibility of squatters' claims clubs in places such as Iowa during the 1830s. These clubs operated as self-protection associations to prevent competitive bidding by speculators against farmers' interests at public auctions.

Despite the hardship to settlers caused by ending credit land purchases and insisting on cash, Congress recognized that it had a revenue interest in reforming land policies to further the transfer of as much of the public land into private ownership as possible. The graduation of land prices represented one of these reforms. Between 1820 and 1854 the issue consistently appeared before Congress, usually at the urging of its chief proponent, Missouri Democratic senator Thomas Hart Benton. The Graduation Act, passed in 1854, addressed the problem of undesirable lands that stayed unsold because the government minimum prices were too high, leaving potentially workable land unimproved and untaxed. As a result of the act, the price of public land that had been on the market for ten years, with some exceptions, would be reduced to graduated levels. For example, the price for land that had been unsold for ten to fifteen years would now be valued at one dollar per acre, and valued even lower, at seventy-five cents per acre, if unsold for fifteen to twenty years. Policymakers hoped that by imposing a 320-acre limitation on the purchase size, broad speculation of these lands would be difficult. According to Gates, however, the act prompted substantial abuses and runs on land. Less than a decade after the Graduation Act, Congress passed its most liberal, ambitious, and optimistic land reform in the Homestead Act of 1862, a pivotal policy that would define America to many and en-

courage land-hungry immigrants to flock to the United States. Prospective farmers could enter 80- or 160-acre tracts at the nearest land office, pay nothing more than the ten-dollar filing fee and the four-dollar commissions, and take five years to "prove up," after which the land belonged to them.

#### **LAND AS NATIONAL SYMBOL**

From the beginning, Americans invested complex national meanings in the public domain. Although flawed and constantly revised, early American land policies simultaneously generated revenue and provided a means to gain access to the soil for the predominant agricultural populace as well as for the land entrepreneurs. They were also inherently bound up with national expansionist goals and Native American dispossession. Equally important were the seeds of republican ideals, which were transplanted and widely spread as the public domain was progressively marked, surveyed, sectioned off, and sold. As townships were laid out, the lot reserved for education aimed to ensure—with poor results in this period—that the new American Republic would contain an educated populace, while the Northwest Ordinance stipulated that the West would be fashioned after republican principles of governance. Americans' beliefs in "progress" and in the benefits of a market economy were evident in land policy as well, particularly in the area of land grants to states for internal improvements in roads and canals—which also served to raise land values. Indeed, railroads were given grants totaling 127 million acres. Land policies, then, embodied the broad aspirations of an ambitious early American Republic.

*See also Expansion; Frontier; Land Speculation; Northwest and Southwest Ordinances; Surveyors and Surveying; Trails to the West; West.*

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Dick, Everett. *The Lure of the Land: A Social History of the Public Lands from the Articles of Confederation to the New Deal*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970.
- Gates, Paul W. *History of Public Land Law Development*. Washington, D.C.: Zenger Publishing, 1978.
- Johnson, Hildegard B. *Order upon the Land: The U.S. Rectangular Land Survey and the Upper Mississippi Country*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976.
- Opie, John. *The Law of the Land: Two Hundred Years of American Farmland Policy*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987.
- Robbins, Roy M. *Our Landed Heritage: The Public Domain, 1776–1970*, 2nd ed., rev. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1976.

Rohrbough, Malcolm J. *The Land Office Business: The Settlement and Administration of American Public Lands, 1789–1837*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1968.

Ginette Aley

---

**LAND SPECULATION** British North America appeared to its colonizers as a land of boundlessly rich natural resources, unworked and thereby unclaimed by its Native American inhabitants. Thus, even before the end of the Revolutionary War (1775–1783), to an extent unknown in Europe, land became a commodity to be granted, traded, bought, and sold, and land speculation became an outlet for Americans' drive for self- and community improvement. While land speculation was at first the province of highly placed elites, the Revolution marked a major disjuncture, with social uncertainty providing an opportunity for new men to make—and lose—quick fortunes through land trading. Later, during the period of the market revolution, land sales were inextricably tied up with Americans' general excitement over the development of canals, roads, cities, and later, railroads, but the tensions between eastern land speculators and western settlers were always acute.

#### **THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY**

It is ironic that the enthusiasm about America's natural resources contributed greatly to the loss of Britain's American empire. A group of noteworthy Virginia planters, including George Washington, had created the Ohio Company in 1747 in hopes of speculating in land west of the Appalachian Mountains. Having secured a large tract, they began to survey it in 1750. In the course of exploring a disputed area of the tract in 1753, they collided with the French, who were also hoping to exploit the tract for settlement and fur trading. Attempts at diplomacy failed, and the resulting Battle of Great Meadows in 1754 touched off the eighteenth-century equivalent of a world war and ultimately resulted in a permanent estrangement between Britain and its North American colonies.

Eighteenth-century land speculation was undertaken by companies arranged on the joint-stock model as well as by individuals. In the immediate aftermath of the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), for example, veterans of the conflict who had been granted lands as military bounties formed into the Military Company of Adventurers to find and map out their claims. Those who speculated in land this early were in every sense adventurers, having to

trudge through trackless wilderness and, like George Croghan (1720–1781), parlay with Indians in order to find and mark out the limits of settlement. The rewards could be totally disproportionate, however. Croghan was able to pay for tens of thousands of acres of land with bonds secured by mortgages on the same land—a circuitous method of payment that ensured that the Indians he bought it from would receive nothing in return.

Whether companies or individuals like these were seeking to buy and populate military bounty lands or other lands held in reserve by the existing states, their success depended on their political connections. The modern idea of “conflict of interest” was more or less absent in this period of patronage. This enabled men like William Duer (1747–1799), secretary to the Board of Treasury, to enrich themselves through land speculation. Duer negotiated on behalf of the Ohio Associates for Congress to sell to military veterans of the Revolutionary War five million acres of land at a good price in return for U.S. debt certificates. At the same time he negotiated this contract, Duer and two of his friends formed a private company, the Scioto Associates, to benefit from the contract and receive the majority of the land. After an abortive attempt to settle French emigrants on the Scioto company’s land, Duer’s company failed, dragging the military veterans’ company down with it. Duer’s land speculations numbered among his many dodgy enterprises before an attempt to corner the New York stock market in the 1790s landed him in debtor’s prison.

Eighteenth-century land speculators also depended on the ability to exploit multiple jurisdictions and conflicting surveys. Only after the Land Ordinance of 1785 initiated a the rectangular survey system for the Northwest Territory was the process of land survey and auction regularized, and even then there were still opportunities to bend the rules. The case of the acquisition of the Otsego patent in 1786 in upstate New York by William Cooper (1754–1789) illustrates various actions that might today be considered fraud, including ignoring existing boundaries, the deliberate failure to publicize a land auction, and the holding of an auction in disregard of a legal injunction against it. Cooper’s career as a land speculator also shows, however, that after the Revolutionary War the land business provided great opportunities for self-fashioning, enabling a poor and unlettered son of an artisan to climb into the ranks of gentlemen. Cooper was able to buy land with no fortune of his own by selling his land off in large tracts as soon as he bought it. Although many of the

tract holders themselves failed, the land defaulted back to Cooper, and he was able to sell it to new farmer-speculators.

#### THE EARLY REPUBLIC

Most people who purchased land in the early Republic intended to reap a return on their investments, although many would not have thought of themselves as speculators. Some purchasers were farmers hoping to buy more land than they needed to finance the development of their own farms by selling off part of their newly acquired tracts at a higher price. Bankers, judges, legislators, and other professionals speculated in land as a sideline. Land was a great investment, providing about a 40 percent return; but it also contained hidden dangers. Many eastern speculators proved unappreciative of the hardships of western settlers, including Indian attacks, lack of transportation, and lack of access to markets, and were often more concerned with reaping paper profits than with actual settlement. Thus, while the Connecticut Land Company, formed in 1795 to sell lands in the Western Reserve, foundered, the Holland Land Company, a group of Dutch developers who speculated in New York lands, succeeded because the company refused to allow land sales until it had developed sufficient infrastructure, including a modicum of government and educational opportunities, for prospective settlers.

The actual process of land purchase depended on both time and geography, because throughout the early Republic, lands for sale included state and federal lands and land that was priced as part of improvement districts (a way of making public improvements by assessing through taxes those private properties standing to benefit), all of it for sale under different rules. Vast tracts of land were sometimes purchased at auctions that lasted only half an hour, and other tracts lay open for twenty years at a time. This was possible because the price of land sold at land offices—unlike lands resold by speculators—often did not vary with supply and demand. Prices could be set by state land offices without anyone having actually assessed the quality of the land, which resulted in artificially high prices and, therefore, few sales. On the other hand, states might offer deep discounts on the official price of lands; Ohio offered a 75 percent discount per acre to actual settlers willing to swear out an affidavit that they planned to live on and cultivate the land. Under these circumstances, land prices could fall to as low as 12.5 cents per acre.

Federal and state governments actively promoted the transfer of public lands to private citizens in several ways. Veterans of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 (1812–1815) were given warranty claims to western lands as payment. The granting of these bounty lands fueled speculation, since to the extent that these lands were far from the line of existing settlement, grantees sold their plots to speculators, sometimes for less than they were worth. In the wake of the Panic of 1819, the government reduced the minimum price of its public lands from \$2 to \$1.25 per acre, with a minimum farm size of 80 acres rather than 160. Auctions were advertised three months before the opening of sales and were opened for two weeks; then, any unsold lands were kept on sale at the minimum price, making farms widely available for around \$100. Missouri U.S. senator Thomas Hart Benton (1782–1858) campaigned in favor of graduation laws that would gradually drop the price of unsold lands to as low as 25 cents an acre. By the late 1820s states then in the far West, like Arkansas and Indiana, were giving tracts of land to settlers who agreed to live there, develop towns, and serve as a buffer zone against Indian encroachments.

#### SPECULATION: BENEFICIAL OR HARMFUL?

One of the main concerns of historians, when discussing land speculation, is the degree to which rampant speculation held back or promoted national development. It seems fairly clear that land speculation promoted the settlement of the West by making more land available more cheaply than did the state or federal governments and by offering potential buyers a choice of land tract sizes and easier credit terms than did government. The picture is mixed in relation to the impact of speculation on taxation. In contrast to war veterans, who were not immediately responsible for taxes on their land grants, land speculators were responsible for taxes. This was beneficial in that speculators who did not live on the western frontier helped to subsidize infrastructure for the settlers who did live there. But it also had a downside. Larger speculators depended on the success of smaller ones or on tenants who failed to pay, defaulted, or renegotiated contracts. Speculators who found themselves overextended often lost their lands to confiscation for nonpayment of taxes, which created a good deal of churn in the land market.

Even once the process of land purchase in the early Republic had become fairly regularized, it was rife with corruption, which explains in part the bad reputation that land speculators had. Land receivers

were known to have engaged in a number of corrupt practices, among them arranging for land surveys that included notes describing the land's quality, maintaining their own maps of sold land, and allowing their silent partners to purchase land before and in greater quantities than other buyers. Even the wholesale bribery of legislators was possible, as in the Yazoo land fraud of 1795, which resulted in the sale of tens of thousands of acres owned by Georgia to four land companies. Despite the scandalous behavior of the Georgia legislators, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Yazoo contracts in *Fletcher v. Peck* (1810), which seemed to illustrate that it was better to apologize later than to ask permission at the start. Elites were also able to establish banks in order to finance their land purchases, a fact that led to widespread popular distrust of banking.

Land speculation has often been implicated in the boom-and-bust cycle of the nineteenth-century economy; and while it was not the cause of economic depression, it certainly contributed to the general air of instability. The Panic of 1819 began with falling prices for American grain, meat, and cotton in foreign markets. This fall in prices was exacerbated by the high level of land-related indebtedness at every level of society. Land speculation also contributed to a feeling of being exploited among western settlers, who languished in frontier settlements without infrastructure and under the threat of Indian attacks while promoters made money at a distance. Given the importance of widespread landholding to a Jeffersonian republic, the checkered history of land speculation would lead to calls later in the nineteenth century for a more equitable and transparent distribution of lands through homesteading.

*See also Frontier; Frontiersmen; Land Policies; Panic of 1819; Pioneering.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bronstein, Jamie L. *Land Reform and Working-Class Experience in Britain and the United States, 1800–1862*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999.
- Feller, Daniel. *The Jacksonian Promise: America, 1815–1840*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.
- Harte, Brian. "Land in the Old Northwest: A Study of Speculation, Sales, and Settlement on the Connecticut Western Reserve." *Ohio History* 101 (1992): 114–139.
- Jones, Robert F. "William Duer and the Business of Government in the Era of the American Revolution." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, 32 (1975): 393–416.
- Shannon, Timothy J. "The Ohio Company and the Meaning of Opportunity in the American West, 1786–1795." *New England Quarterly* 64 (1991): 393–413.
- Swierenga, Robert. "Land Speculation and Its Impact on American Economic Growth and Welfare: A Historio-

- graphical Review." *Western Historical Quarterly* 8 (1977): 283–302.
- Taylor, Alan. *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic*. New York: Knopf, 1995.

Jamie L. Bronstein

seacoast inlet. American spelling also came to be very different from English spelling. Because printers in the Northeast were prepared to adopt Noah Webster's more economical spellings, Americans now write "color" and "labor" instead of the English "colour" and "labour." Aside from being simpler, these spellings saved printers money by reducing the amount of costly metal type required for printing.

---

**LANGUAGE** What is meant by "language" in the context of the early Republic? Do we mean simply the English language, the dominant spoken and written language in the early United States? If so, does it make sense to speak of one "language"? After all, there were (and are) many "Englishes." For instance, there is the language spoken by New Englanders and then there is the one spoken in the Smoky Mountains. We may choose to define these as separate dialects, implying that English speakers in these regions can easily understand each other. But for linguists, levels of mutual intelligibility are not necessarily meaningful. After all, the English spoken in northern Maine differs significantly from that spoken in the Smoky Mountains. And the reason for this is partly the very real difference in the character of these varieties of English: they had (and have) distinct vocabularies, distinct syntax, and widely differing pronunciation.

#### VARIETIES OF AMERICAN ENGLISH

The various types of English in the new United States had their origins in patterns of immigration during the colonial era. Settlers from different regions of England and Britain carried with them distinct patterns of speech. Settlers in Virginia came primarily from the East Midlands of England. Those who traveled to New England came from London as well as the East Midlands. The British migrants to Pennsylvania and the Delaware Valley were primarily from the North and North Midlands. And through the eighteenth century Irish and Scottish migrants settled regions adjoining the Blue Ridge and Appalachian Mountains. As these initial foci of settlement expanded to the West, North, and South, they carried with them their regional English.

Although the varieties of American English had their origins in British English, by the early nineteenth century they had acquired distinctive American qualities. Americans, for example, came to prefer "fall" to "autumn," and they came to use the term "creek" to mean small stream or brook, whereas in Britain the term refers more specifically to a small

#### NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGES

Beyond simply the varieties of English spoken in the new nation was the variety of other languages that were heard. German was a virtual official language in parts of eastern and central Pennsylvania; French, Spanish, Dutch, Swedish, Greek, Portuguese, and Ladino were among those also present in the early national years. As long as African slaves continued to be imported into the country—and for at least a generation after—native speakers of dozens of distinct African languages lived in the early United States. Similarly, Native Americans continued to speak several hundred distinct, mutually unintelligible languages and dialects in North America. To this mix of languages we might add the dozens, perhaps hundreds (given their evanescent nature, the exact number is unknown), of Creoles, pidgins, and trade jargons that combined elements of different languages.

It is also important to note that spoken languages—contrary to the wishes of lexicographers and authors such as Samuel Johnson (1709–1784) and Noah Webster (1758–1843)—are constantly mutating and evolving. Like culture itself, language cannot be fixed. Hence, the prevalence of Native American loan words such as *caribou*, *moose*, *pow-wow*, *bayou*, and *tepee* or African words such as *banana*, *yam*, *cola*, and *goober* (peanut) in American English. And in much the way that the computer revolution has transformed modern English, so the industrial revolution transformed nineteenth-century English. Words such as *factory*, *mill*, and *engine* acquired meanings that would have been almost totally unfamiliar to English speakers in eighteenth-century America. Much like vocabulary, whole languages themselves come and go. From the colonial era to the early nineteenth century, European languages—usually some variety of English or French—and various pidgins and Creoles supplanted an untold number of non-European languages and dialects. In the South Carolina low country, for example, Gullah, a New World Creole combining elements of English and a variety of African tongues, became the dominant language among some African slaves.

Any complete assessment of language in the early United States must also account for the fact that language is not necessarily a spoken medium. Hence, although elite young American men learned Latin and Greek and possibly Hebrew, few actually knew them as spoken languages. Similarly, a variety of symbol systems and sign systems that themselves might be characterized as languages were used during the period. Native peoples of the Great Plains had developed an elaborate sign language to serve as a sort of lingua franca in that vast, diverse part of North America. In the late 1820s, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, the principal of the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb in Hartford, Connecticut, announced the creation of a new sign language designed to allow the deaf to communicate. Several years later Samuel F. B. Morse devised the system of coded dots and dashes subsequently called Morse Code.

#### LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Finally, "language" does not necessarily mean specific systems of speech. It can also refer to that collection of thoughts, sentiments, values, or assumptions that allow certain behavior (sometimes involving speech or writing; sometimes not) to have a specific meaning in a specific time and place. To modern Americans, for instance, the "tweaking" or twisting of a nose has little real meaning. But to politicians in the early United States, such an act carried with it very specific and widely recognized implications: it was one man's way of accusing another of being a liar and a coward. In other words, those distant figures—Aaron Burr or Alexander Hamilton or Andrew Jackson—understood a very different language of politics from the one that would be familiar to us. Instead of discipline and party loyalty, the governing values—some might even say the "grammar"—of their political language was personal honor and reputation. Indeed, every profession or social grouping uses a distinct language—a language sometimes involving speech, sometimes centering on gesture or comportment, sometimes having to do with clothing or insignia.

Insofar as we can generalize about language in the early United States, we can thus say that language was many, many things to many, many people. Much like the values or customs or cultural habits of the early United States, so the languages of the nation reflected a vast array of social, ethnic, and economic imperatives.

#### A NATIONAL LANGUAGE

For some members of the founding generation, much as for some Americans in the early twenty-first century, this was a disturbing reality. A nation of many and diverse languages would—in their minds—be a weak, incoherent nation and as such a nation prone to the sorts of corruption and conflict that appeared to plague the bodies politic of the Old World. Indeed, the entire philosophical project of the American Enlightenment (and, really, everything we call the Enlightenment) was founded on faith in the idea that human speech, and its accrued conventions, obscured truth and, in doing so, produced human conflict. Whether Patrick Henry's oratory or the social facts and statistics in Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785) or Noah Webster's lexicon—all sought more transparent, less historically inflected modes of communication. Human beings, they believed, needed to find ways to communicate and discover truths unhindered by the cumulative effects of politics and self-interest that left language a cloudy, imprecise, and deeply flawed medium.

Although everyone who gave the issue any thought at all assumed all language to be flawed and opaque, they also believed that some languages were simply better than others (a notion that has no currency among turn-of-the-twenty-first century linguists). The thinking went something like this: as human creations, languages bore the imprints of the minds that fashioned them. Crude minds would thus fashion crude tongues. Hence, among Americans inclined to think about such things, there was no doubt that some form of English, the product of the most historically advanced society on earth, would be the language of the United States. Because the language had been fashioned by people achieving the highest known levels of literacy and social development, it would be well suited to the needs of a modern republic. As such, it would inevitably displace minority languages, whether those of native peoples, African slaves, or non-English-speaking Europeans.

Contrary to what is occasionally asserted, no one ever seriously proposed German or any other European tongue as an alternative language for the new nation. Noah Webster and others may have believed that English would have to be improved to adequately serve the new Republic, but no one ever seriously proposed that America be anything other than an English-speaking country.

It is one thing to envision an English-speaking nation, and another to create one. Noah Webster may have envisioned a simplified, standardized idiom bringing the republican people of the United States

together, and he may have believed his lexicon and his spelling texts could produce such a result. But he was profoundly mistaken. Languages become national not because of the interventions of pedants and grammarians. Of far greater importance has been the growth of mass media such as cheap newspapers and magazines. Still, even with the regularizing influence of print, one has to feel for those purists among us making usually futile efforts to protect American English from neologisms, regionalisms, and other developments that they might call "corruptions." For most linguists, language change represents neither corruption nor improvement. It simply is. It is an inevitable facet of that ever-fluid and endlessly adaptive thing called language.

*See also European Influences: Enlightenment Thought; German-Language Publishing; Immigration and Immigrants.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Algeo, John, ed. *The Cambridge History of the English Language*. Volume 6: *English in North America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Cmiel, Kenneth. *Democratic Eloquence: The Fight over Popular Speech in Nineteenth-Century America*. New York: Morrow, 1990.
- Fliegelman, Jay. *Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language, and the Culture of Performance*. Stanford Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1993.
- Gray, Edward G. *New World Babel: Languages and Nations in Early America*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Howe, John R. *Language and Political Meaning in Revolutionary America*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003.
- Lepore, Jill. *A Is for American: Letters and Other Characters in the Newly United States*. New York: Knopf, 2002.
- Mencken, H. L. *The American Language: An Inquiry into the Development of English in the United States*. 4th ed. New York: Knopf, 1965.
- Romaine, Suzanne. *Language in Society: An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Simpson, David. *The Politics of American English, 1776–1850*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Sollors, Werner, ed. *Multilingual America: Transnationalism, Ethnicity, and the Languages of American Literature*. New York: New York University Press, 1998.

Edward G. Gray

America, most notably with the Spanish Caribbean, grew to considerable proportions. Sugar, molasses, cocoa, and coffee were imported through New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. In exchange, North American merchants supplied the Spanish colonies with foodstuffs, lumber, and manufactured goods despite Spanish officials' efforts to enforce decrees to restrict this commerce. Trading was accompanied by the keen interest of a small group of scientific men—many from the American Philosophical Society—in Latin American civilization. Philadelphia became the capital of Hispanic studies in the United States. Prominent Philadelphia publishers helped publicize the writings of Spanish American exiles living in the city. These publications, mostly of a revolutionary nature, provided a utopian picture of American democracy and highlighted Spanish Americans' capability for establishing reliable, democratic governments. Yet the general public in the United States remained skeptical, for it considered its neighbors politically inept and culturally backward.

From 1810, the revolutions in the Spanish American colonies generated broad sympathy and interest among American political leaders and pro-revolutionary enthusiasts for the cause of liberty on the continent. Their interest was mainly focused on Spanish America, as in Brazil the revolution began later and ended with the establishment of a monarchy under strong British influence. The *Philadelphia Aurora* and the *Richmond Enquirer* promoted the independence of the colonies and the *Weekly Register* regularly published news from Spanish America.

In Washington there was much discussion about the economic benefits the United States would reap from the disruption of the Spanish commercial monopoly. Until then, most North American merchandise got to Spanish America either as contraband, or was allowed in by the occasional trade treaty with Spain. Consuls were sent to the main South American seaports to collect information on the new trading possibilities. Yet reports that Spanish America could offer more markets for U.S. agricultural produce and more supply of specie (Spanish American gold and silver) and facilities (the use of Spanish American ports on the Pacific coast by American vessels trading with the East Indies) for trade with the East Indies did not convince all Americans. Eastern merchants were more concerned about protecting their well-established trade with Cuba, which was firmly under Spanish control. Southern planters were worried that their crops would face strong competition from Spanish American produce. On the other hand, western farmers were enthusiastic about

---

**LATIN AMERICAN INFLUENCES** During the eighteenth century, North American trade with Latin

trading with the southern continent via the Mississippi River and New Orleans.

From 1817 to 1825, the revolutions in Spanish America had a considerable effect on the debate over foreign policy. First, the U.S. policy of strict neutrality regarding all foreign conflicts was challenged. From Congress, Henry Clay—a fervent supporter of the revolutionists—claimed that neutrality was consistent with immediate recognition of the independence of the Spanish colonies. Secretary of State John Quincy Adams opposed recognition on the grounds that it would be dangerous to back up unstable governments. Second, the role of the United States in the Western Hemisphere was discussed extensively. The United States was either to take up a leading position in the continent, as Clay hoped, or remain aloof from hemispherical affairs, as Adams favored. The section of President James Monroe's message to Congress in 1823 known as the Monroe Doctrine cast the United States as defender of the Western Hemisphere against European intervention. Yet the debates on U.S. participation in the Panama Congress of 1826, organized by the Latin American countries, clearly show that Americans were unenthusiastic about involvement in the hemisphere.

*See also Latin American Revolutions, American Response to; Monroe Doctrine; Panama Congress; Presidency, The: James Monroe.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bernstein, Harry. *Origins of Inter-American Interest, 1700–1812*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1945.
- Griffin, Charles Carroll. *The United States and the Disruption of the Spanish Empire, 1810–1822: A Study of the Relations of the United States with Spain and the Rebel Spanish Colonies*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1937.
- Johnson, John J. *A Hemisphere Apart: The Foundations of the United States Policy toward Latin America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.
- Lewis, James E., Jr. *The American Union and the Problem of Neighborhood: The United States and the Collapse of the Spanish Empire, 1783–1829*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- Simmons, Merle. *La revolución norteamericana en la independencia de Hispanoamérica*. Madrid: MAPFRE, 1992.
- Weeks, William E. *John Quincy Adams and American Global Empire*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1992.
- Whitaker, Arthur P. *The United States and the Independence of Latin America, 1800–1830*. New York: Russell & Russell, 1941.

Monica Henry

**LATIN AMERICAN REVOLUTIONS, AMERICAN RESPONSE TO** The centuries-old Spanish and Portuguese Empires in the New World had experienced upheaval long before the French emperor Napoleon I tried to extend his sway over the Iberian Peninsula in 1807. But it was his decision to replace the Spanish king with his brother, Joseph Bonaparte, that sparked the events that resulted, fifteen years later, in the independence of Portuguese Brazil and all of Spain's mainland colonies in the Western Hemisphere.

In late 1807, with French troops poised to enter Spain, the Portuguese royal family decamped to its largest American colony, Brazil. The following June, Napoleon installed his brother on the Spanish throne. Very quickly, a revolution broke out in Spain in support of the king (Ferdinand VII) and the Junta Central (later, the Cortes) that ruled on his behalf. In most of Spain's colonies, the local authorities initially declared their loyalty to the Junta. But by 1810 true independence movements had begun to emerge across the Spanish colonial mainland. Neither Joseph nor the Cortes were in a position to address the colonial crisis. Some of these revolutions were suppressed by local authorities; others managed to establish independent governments.

With the defeat of Napoleon and the restoration of Ferdinand VII in 1814, most of the early independence movements collapsed. But the seeds of instability remained. The Portuguese king (João VI) stayed in Brazil, which he elevated to the status of a kingdom within his empire (the equivalent of Portugal itself) in 1815. And a new group of revolutionaries, including Simon Bolívar and José de San Martín, organized forces and made plans for renewed action. In July 1816 Buenos Aires declared its independence. In 1817, Bolívar in the south and San Martín in the north won major victories. Over the next few years, they proceeded to establish military and political control over most of Spanish South America.

During the early 1820s Latin America was transformed. In April 1821 the Portuguese king returned to Lisbon, leaving a prince regent (Pedro I) to rule in Rio de Janeiro. Eighteen months later he declared Brazil independent. In the summer of 1821, major revolutionary victories in Peru and Mexico finally broke Spain's hold over its mainland colonies. By early 1822 six independent nations—Mexico, Central America, Colombia, Peru, Chile, and Buenos Aires (the United Provinces of the Río de la Plata)—had replaced the old Spanish colonies.

**EARLY RESPONSE TO REVOLUTION**

From the beginning, American public opinion tended toward enthusiastic support for the revolutionary movements to the south. While there were always skeptics, the signs of support were everywhere. Letters and essays in newspapers and journals championed revolutionaries who often claimed the Americans' own anticolonial and republican revolution as their model. Private citizens showed their views, illegally, by joining filibustering incursions into neighboring Spanish colonies or outfitting privateering expeditions against Spanish shipping. Following the War of 1812, this popular interest fueled frequent efforts on behalf of the revolutions in Congress, led by Speaker of the House Henry Clay.

Until early 1822, however, administration opinion generally lagged behind that of the public and Congress. Thomas Jefferson and James Madison had initially viewed the turmoil in Spain and the Spanish Empire with a combination of hope and fear. If it resulted in republican governments that were independent of all of Europe (not just Spain), it would certainly advance American economic and strategic interests. But if it instead ended with a powerful France or, even worse, Great Britain replacing a weak Spain throughout the hemisphere, American interests would clearly suffer. Between 1808 and 1812, Jefferson and Madison had offered some encouragement to the revolutionaries, particularly in Mexico and South America. At the same time, they had tried to guard against the spread of British influence in the region, especially in the neighboring colonies of East and West Florida, Mexico, and Cuba. With the start of the Anglo-American War of 1812, American policymakers received little information from, and devoted little attention to, the Spanish Empire beyond their immediate borders.

With the end of the war in early 1815, President Madison and Secretary of State James Monroe labored to shape policies toward the region that balanced threats and opportunities. They crafted a neutrality policy that they hoped would prevent a conflict with Spain and, thus, with Spain's Native American and British allies, while still opening American markets to the revolutionaries. Their definition of neutrality fully satisfied no one—not Spain, which complained about lax enforcement of the existing laws, and not the patriots or the American public, which expected more encouragement for revolutions that seemed so like the American Revolution. The War of 1812, however, had convinced the administration not to risk another war until its wide-ranging preparedness efforts had been completed.

**DECIDING ON RECOGNITION**

After the spring of 1817, the principal issue confronting the new Monroe administration was whether to extend formal diplomatic recognition to Buenos Aires, which had declared its independence the previous year. Both supporters and opponents of recognition squared their position with American neutrality. Supporters argued that the United States was not neutral if it failed to recognize states that had secured their independence because recognition would confer rights Spain already enjoyed. Opponents insisted that the government would abandon neutrality if it recognized any of the rebellious states, since that would effectively announce that the revolutionaries had won. Speaker Clay led the congressional pressure for recognition. Secretary of State John Quincy Adams made the strongest counterargument. President Monroe sought ways to recognize the new states without risking war. Between late 1817 and early 1821, Clay tried at every session of Congress to introduce a resolution or bill in support of recognition. Adams worked quietly to defeat them or, at least, to water them down.

Then, in early 1822, the administration quickly reversed its position. Monroe and Adams continued to worry about the Spanish and European response. They continued to doubt that the United States was ready for war. And they continued to wonder whether the Spanish Americans could establish independent, republican governments. But the military successes of the preceding summer had left no doubt that the revolutions had succeeded throughout the Spanish mainland colonies. Any further delays, they worried, would only poison their relations with the new governments. By recognizing the governments and exchanging ministers with them, moreover, Monroe and Adams hoped to encourage the emergence of truly republican governments, the adoption of nondiscriminatory trade policies, and the rejection of close political or diplomatic ties to Europe. In early 1822 the New World seemed to have reached a decisive moment. It would either replicate—or extend—the European political, economic, and diplomatic system or reproduce the very different U.S. system. The former would seriously threaten American economic and strategic interests; the latter would probably promote them. Recognition might help decide in favor of the latter.

**MONROE DOCTRINE**

Having recognized five Spanish American nations in March 1822, Monroe and Adams found themselves in a difficult position eighteen months later, when European developments threatened a new effort by

Spain, aided by the anti-republican Holy Alliance, to reconquer the rebellious colonies. The British foreign minister proposed a joint Anglo-American statement to discourage such a multipower enterprise and to disavow any interest in acquiring Spanish colonies for themselves. The cabinet discussed the new European threat and the surprising British proposal at length in the fall of 1823 (while the British dispelled the danger through quiet negotiations with the French). The result of these deliberations was a public statement of American concern in the president's annual message to Congress in December 1823 and new instructions for the American ministers in Great Britain, France, and Chile. In time, three crucial paragraphs in Monroe's message would be known as the Monroe Doctrine. Taken together, they asserted that the New World was closed to new colonization, that the European powers should not intervene in New World affairs, and that the United States would not interfere in European affairs. This bold stance was undercut by the reserve expressed in the instructions and other contemporary documents. Largely ignored in Europe, the message was well received within the United States and by the new Spanish American governments, some of whom hoped that it embodied the commitment to the success of their revolutions that they had expected from the United States years earlier. Monroe and Adams were quick to dispel this misconception.

#### **RELATIONS WITH THE NEW NATIONS**

In 1825 President Adams and Secretary of State Clay seized a new opportunity to shape Latin America in the United States' image by accepting an invitation to the Panama Congress. First proposed by Bolívar, the Panama Congress would bring together all of the independent American governments in the summer of 1826. Adams and Clay hoped to secure multilateral agreements at Panama that would solidify republican government, liberal commerce, and diplomatic isolation throughout the hemisphere. Fierce domestic opposition to attendance at Panama foiled these hopes. Delayed by congressional attacks, the U.S. delegates missed the Congress, which accomplished very little in any case.

By the end of the 1820s, developments in Latin America—the emergence of military governments and the descent into recurrent warfare, in particular—had left American policymakers untroubled by and uninterested in the new states. Only the United States' immediate neighbors, Mexico and Cuba (which remained a Spanish colony), still captured its attention.

*See also Adams, John Quincy; European Influences: Napoleon and Napoleonic Rule; Latin American Influences; Monroe, James; Monroe Doctrine.*

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Anna, Timothy E. *Spain and the Loss of America*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983.
- Griffin, Charles Carroll. *The United States and the Disruption of the Spanish Empire, 1810–1822: A Study of the Relations of the United States with Spain and with the Rebel Spanish Colonies*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1937.
- Johnson, John J. *A Hemisphere Apart: The Foundations of United States Policy toward Latin America*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.
- Lewis, James E., Jr. *The American Union and the Problem of Neighborhood: The United States and the Collapse of the Spanish Empire, 1783–1829*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- Lynch, John. *The Spanish American Revolutions, 1808–1826*. New York: Norton, 1973.
- Whitaker, Arthur Preston. *The United States and the Independence of Latin America, 1800–1830*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1941.

James E. Lewis Jr.

---

#### **LAW**

This entry consists of four separate articles: *Federal Law*, *Slavery Law*, *State Law and Common Law*, and *Women and the Law*.

---

#### **Federal Law**

Federal law in the early national period was limited by both the U.S. Constitution and the perceptions of what politicians in the founding era thought should be federal law. At the time of the ratification of the Constitution, most Americans understood that the Constitution created a government of limited powers. Anti-Federalists feared the powers were not limited enough, while Federalists argued the government was properly limited. Shortly after the new government went into effect, James Madison proposed a series of constitutional amendments that became the Bill of Rights. These amendments further limited the power of the national government. Thus, in the early national period most congressional legislation was limited to the business of running the government. Rarely did Congress pass legislation that would today be seen as of a social nature. No one at the time envisioned an activist federal government

that could regulate vast aspects of American life. Economic policy was mostly limited to tariffs and expenditures, although some economic matters, such as protective tariffs, internal improvements, and the Bank of the United States, went beyond the simple business of government.

#### THE BUSINESS OF GOVERNMENT

With the Constitution ratified, the new government needed laws under which to operate. Most of the laws passed by Congress from 1789 until 1800 were about the business of government.

The first law Congress passed regulated "the time and manner of administering certain oaths." If the national government was to have officers and officials, they had to be properly sworn into their office. Three of the next four acts Congress passed involved collecting duties on imported goods and other forms of revenue collection. The government could not be run without money—and at last, for the first time since the Revolution began, the national government had the power to tax. Congress then set about creating a government, passing laws to establish the State Department, the War Department, the Treasury Department, and the courts. All together, during its first session in 1789, Congress passed twenty-five laws. All were housekeeping measures, tax laws, or acts to create government institutions. The most creative was the Judiciary Act of 1789, which set up an elaborate court system. The least innovative was the law that reenacted the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, making it applicable under the new Constitution and the new government.

Statutes passed in 1790 were similarly mundane, but also vital to the new nation. Congress passed a law to take the national census, "create a uniform rule of naturalization," establish a patent office, institute copyright regulation, regulate the army, and buy land to establish a fort at West Point. That year Congress also passed various laws to pay salaries of government officials. In addition, it adopted a rudimentary criminal code for those few areas where Congress could punish crimes. Most criminal law remained with the states at this time, but piracy, other crimes on the high seas, treason, counterfeiting, and forgery, as well as more mundane crimes committed on federal land, could be punished by the national government.

In 1791 Congress, at the request of the Washington administration, passed legislation to charter the first Bank of the United States. Representative James Madison believed the law was unconstitutional because Congress did not have authority, under the

enumerated powers listed in Article I, section 8 of the Constitution, to charter a bank or any other company. A majority of Congress, however, accepted the rationale, set out by Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, that Congress had implied powers to pass laws under the necessary and proper clause of Article I, section 8. This was the first important statute that did not deal with the mechanics and business of government, foreign policy, or trade. It represented an activist and creative use of the law by the federal government. It was also the most controversial act passed by the early Congress. Also controversial were laws to fund the debt and pay off all remaining state debts from the Revolution. In 1793 Congress passed a law to regulate fugitives from justice" and "fugitives from labour." Although not controversial at the time, the second part of this law, dealing with fugitive slaves, would ultimately become quite controversial. More controversial would be the Alien and Sedition Acts, passed in 1798, which attempted to suppress criticism of President John Adams. While clearly unconstitutional by modern standards, their unconstitutionality was less clear at the time. Politically, however, the Sedition Act was a mistake. When it expired in 1801, no one suggested renewing it.

Throughout the first decade under the Constitution, Congress was generally circumspect and cautious in its legislation. Most of the controversial legislation, such as the bill to create the Bank of the United States, was initiated by the executive branch. Federal law thus developed in response to political initiatives by the president.

#### FEDERAL COMMON LAW

Beyond statutory law, however, was the question of common law. The United States had inherited its legal structures from Britain. While the Constitution limited the kinds of laws Congress could pass, it did not say anything about common law. Did the United States inherit the common law of England? If so, then federal law would include a huge body of private and public law that was not codified. Most of the state constitutions of this period declared that English common law, as it existed on 4 July 1776, was part of their law, except as modified by the state constitutions and statutes. The U.S. Constitution did not have such a provision. Did that mean that English common law was not part of federal law? There was no clear answer to this question at the founding.

Some Federalists, including Chief Justice Oliver Ellsworth and Associate Justices Bushrod Washington, James Iredell, and James Wilson, believed that

English common law was part of federal law. In the 1790s there were a number of federal prosecutions under common law. These included the prosecution of Gideon Henfield in 1793 for helping a French ship to capture a British vessel on the high seas, a prosecution of a diplomat from Genoa for extortion, a prosecution for an attempt to bribe a public official, prosecutions for counterfeiting currency issued by the Bank of the United States, and charges of sedition against publishers who criticized the U.S. government. Congress had not passed any statutes criminalizing these acts when they were committed, and thus the U.S. government brought these prosecutions under common law.

Jeffersonians opposed the idea of a common law of crimes. They believed that the Constitution did not merely limit the power to Congress to legislate, but also limited the power of the federal government to those laws that Congress could, and did, pass. As St. George Tucker noted in his American edition of *Blackstone's Commentaries* (5 vols., 1803), if the common law applied to the federal government, then the power of the national government would be "unlimited."

Despite this position, when Jefferson became president he had a new appreciation for using the common law as a political and legal tool. In 1798 Congress had passed the Sedition Act, which eliminated the need for common law prosecutions for the crime of criticizing the government. The law had been very unpopular, as the Adams administration used it to persecute the president's critics, who were Jefferson's supporters. The law expired by its own terms on 3 March 1801, the day before the new president took office. Shortly after his inauguration Jefferson pardoned all those convicted under the law, and Congress ultimately passed a law to remit their fines. Jefferson, however, soon discovered that he too did not like criticism. In 1806 the U.S. attorney in Connecticut instituted a common law sedition prosecution against various critics of the president, including two editors of the Connecticut *Courant*. The cases were delayed for a variety of reasons and did not reach the Supreme Court for six years. In *United States v. Hudson and Goodwin* (1812), the Court ruled that there was no federal common law and that all criminal prosecutions by the national government had to be under an existing statute.

#### THE ECONOMY

The charter for the first Bank of the United States expired in 1811, and neither Congress nor the executive branch had any interest in extending it. James Madi-

son had opposed the bank in Congress in 1791, and as president he had no interest in continuing it. But the War of 1812 (1812–1815) changed Madison's mind, because during that conflict the government lacked a sound financial institution to help pay for it. In 1816 Congress, at Madison's urging, passed legislation to charter the Second Bank of the United States. Congress also passed a law, known as the Bonus Bill, to use excess federal revenues, including money that the United States received from profits of the Bank of the United States, to build roads and canals and to support other internal improvements. Madison vetoed this bill in 1817 on the grounds that it violated the Constitution. He urged that Congress propose a constitutional amendment allowing it to pass laws to fund internal improvements that were not directly related to lighthouses, post roads, and military fortifications.

Congress regulated foreign trade with tariffs and embargoes, but these had a direct effect only on coastal towns and shippers. An act of 1801 banned the African slave trade as of 1 January 1808, and laws of 1818 and 1819 further enforced the ban. This was both an economic act and a rare example of social legislation. So too was the Missouri Compromise (1820), which banned slavery in the territories north and west of the new slave state of Missouri. But social legislation was rare. Most legislation dealt with more mundane aspects of the government or the economy. In 1828 Congress passed a new tariff, which was soon called the Tariff of Abominations because it greatly increased import duties. This, along with the bank charters, was the most conspicuous example of federal activism in the early national period. The tariff led to the nullification crisis a few years later and was ultimately replaced with a less extreme tariff.

#### DAILY LIFE

For most Americans in the early national period, the federal government was a distant entity and federal law had little impact on their lives. It was possible to spend an entire lifetime never encountering any federal official except the local postmaster. Federal law regulated some aspects of trade and commerce. Ship captains obtained coasting licenses, cleared ports, and entered them under the watchful eyes of federal customs officials, and they depended on federally funded lighthouses and other coastal installations and landmarks when they traveled. Merchants paid tariffs on imported goods and passed those costs on to consumers. Western settlers depended on federal law to organize the territories, create the first rudimentary

governments, and supervise the sale of federal land. Indeed, it was possible that western settlers would go years without encountering any representative of the federal government except the federal land agent. These settlers also expected the army to protect them from Indians, the British, and the Spanish. But these settlers rarely had to think much about the content of the laws that created the army, established forts, or paid the salaries of Indian agents. Rather, they were the beneficiaries of laws appropriating money to create and pay the army, but the settlers were not usually directly involved in the implementation of these laws. Even in wartime, as during the War of 1812, most soldiers served in their state militias, not the national army. War veterans and their widows depended on federal laws to fund their pensions, and special acts to grant pensions where records were uncertain or missing can be seen as one of the few forms of social legislation of the period. Federal law was so unimportant to the lives of most Americans that even residents of federal jurisdictions might be only marginally governed by federal law. The governments of the federal territories adopted laws from the existing states to regulate their young societies. The federal territories were not governed, on a day-to-day basis, by federal law. Similarly, the District of Columbia, created by Congress as the national capital, was not directly governed by acts of Congress. For the most part, Washington, D.C., merely adopted the laws of Maryland and Virginia.

A majority of Americans of the time probably agreed that it was best to leave most law making to local governments, which reflected the goals, desires, fears, prejudices, and even hatreds of themselves and their neighbors. A generation later a civil war and three constitutional amendments began to change the nature of federal law.

*See also Alien and Sedition Acts; Bank of the United States; Constitutional Law; Fugitive Slave Law of 1793; Judiciary Act of 1789; Missouri Compromise; Patents and Copyrights; Slavery: Slave Trade, African; Tariff Politics.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Crosskey, William W. *Politics and the Constitution in the History of the United States*. 3 vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953–1980.

Levy, Leonard W. *Jefferson and Civil Liberties: The Darker Side*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963.

Urofsky, Mel, and Paul Finkelman. *A March of Liberty: A Constitutional History of the United States*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Paul Finkelman

#### Slavery Law

Slavery was not recognized in English common law, but by the mid-eighteenth century, systems of slave law had been established through legislation and adjudication in each of Britain's North American colonies. Slave laws varied in each colony, but everywhere they supported slaveholders' property interests and the racial basis of slave society by denying the legal personality of the slave in civil cases and providing minimal protection for the humanity and due process rights not only of slaves but also free blacks.

In response to the great political, cultural, social, and ideological upheavals of the time, the law of slavery evolved throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The most important changes were in criminal law, manumission, the regulation of free blacks, and the determination of racial identity. Despite the Revolutionary rhetoric of liberty and equality, changes to the law did nothing to undermine slavery in the southern states, and even in the North, where gradual abolition commenced in the 1780s, the law continued to deprive free blacks of basic civil rights.

#### CRIMINAL LAW

When slaves charged with felonies against person and property appeared before legal authorities, they were treated very differently from whites by a justice system that was swift, severe, and paid scant regard to legal due process. In Virginia, slaves were not entitled to trial by jury like whites, but instead were examined, judged, and sentenced by a panel of justices of the peace in what were termed courts of oyer and terminer. There were few checks on the magistrates' discretionary decision-making power and no provision for verdicts to be appealed to a higher court. Yet during the colonial period, similar trial systems in which slaves were tried by magistrates and freeholders were established in other colonies, including South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Louisiana, and Pennsylvania.

Virginia retained its oyer and terminer system until 1865, and South Carolina and Louisiana did not abolish their slave courts until the late antebellum era. However, in other states, particularly in the

North and the Border South, there was a trend toward greater formalism in slave trials after the Revolution. Pennsylvania abolished special courts for slaves in 1780, and in the following decades Delaware, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky also provided for slaves charged with felonies to be tried by a jury and in the same courts as whites. Other states did not go so far in providing equal trial procedures for black and white felony defendants. Trial by jury was extended to slaves in Georgia in 1811; however, in contrast to white defendants who were tried in superior courts, slave trials took place in inferior courts until the 1850s. Meanwhile, a variation of the *oyer and terminer* system was established in Mississippi in the 1820s. In practice, the absence of common law due process in slave trials resulted in higher conviction rates for slaves than whites, although when slaves were tried in regular courts the proceedings were marked by a surprising degree of fairness, and appellate courts in particular often protected slaves' procedural rights.

The movement toward greater due process in slave trials was accompanied by changes in slave punishments. Although whipping and hanging remained commonplace, more extreme forms of physical punishment such as branding, maiming, castration, and burning at the stake gradually disappeared from the statute books in the early national period.

When slaves committed minor criminal offenses, they were usually punished informally and summarily by their owners, overseers, or slave patrols that policed slave conduct off the plantation. The functions of the patrols included searching for runaways and tracking stolen goods, and often they were empowered to enter both black and white properties without a warrant and to inflict summary punishment on slaves and free blacks. In southern cities, where many slaves lived and worked with a substantial degree of autonomy, the patrols were gradually replaced by municipal police forces in the nineteenth century. The specific content of municipal slave codes varied, but commonly urban slaves were prohibited from hiring themselves out, gathering together in groups, and moving about the city at night without a permit from their owner or employer. By the 1820s many cities held daily court sessions to ensure the rapid examination and punishment of slaves who flouted the municipal codes, but enforcement remained sporadic and did little to restrict slave autonomy. The public regulation of slaves also placed restrictions on whites who were required to serve on patrols and prohibited from selling liquor to slaves, aiding slave runaways, and marrying and engaging

in sexual relationships with blacks, although this last prohibition was rarely enforced.

#### **CRIMINALIZING THE MURDER OF A SLAVE**

In the colonial period, slaves had little legal protection from white violence, particularly when perpetrated by their owners. In Virginia and South Carolina, statutes protected slaveholders from prosecution for killing a slave through excessive punishment, and in the latter colony slave murder was not a capital offense when perpetrated by any free person. In other southern colonies the law regulating slave murder was uncertain or unclear. In practice, few slaveholders were ever prosecuted for slave homicide, although on rare occasions in mid-eighteenth-century Virginia, whites were executed for murdering another person's slave. In addition, slaveholders could sue for damages for nonfatal assaults perpetrated against their slaves.

From the late 1780s there was a gradual shift toward greater protection of slaves from white violence. In 1788 Virginia upgraded the killing of a slave during punishment from manslaughter to murder and most other southern states followed suit through legislation, constitutional provisions, or judge-made law by the early 1820s. However, in most states slaveholders remained exempt from prosecution if they killed a slave who had committed an act of resistance or insurrection, and it was rather nonslaveholding whites who were the primary target of the new legislation. Not only were nonslaveholders more often convicted for murdering slaves by the 1820s than they had been in the colonial era, they were also subject to criminal prosecution for nonfatal attacks on slaves. Rather than concern for slaves' humanity, therefore, these legal developments reflected the rising value of slave property and the growing threat to their slaves' life and labor that slaveholders perceived from nonslaveholding whites. Laws protecting slaves from murder or other harms, however, were limited by the fact that no slave or free black could ever testify against a white in the South.

#### **MANUMISSION**

The law placed few restrictions on the master-slave relationship, but the right of private manumission was limited by legislation. In early-eighteenth-century Virginia and North Carolina, manumission could only occur as a reward for public service and had to be approved by the governor and council. Similarly, South Carolina only permitted manumission as a reward for slaves who killed or captured an

enemy "in time of alarms," and from 1722 slaveholders were required to provide means for freed slaves to leave the colony within twelve months of receiving their freedom. In 1735 the time allowed for departure from the colony was reduced to six months, and any former slave who returned within seven years could be reenslaved. Restrictions were also placed on manumission in some northern colonies. In Pennsylvania, for example, as in Virginia and Delaware, slaveholders had to post a bond for the good conduct of former slaves and to ensure that those who were unable or unwilling to work would not become a burden on the public purse. In Massachusetts, however, all blacks had the right to sue for their freedom.

After the Revolution, manumission laws were relaxed across the South. In Virginia, slaves under age forty-five could be granted their freedom by will or deed from 1782, and a similar policy was enacted in Delaware in 1787 and Maryland in 1790. However, as humanitarian and ideological concern with issues relating to African American liberty waned in the early nineteenth century, and as fear of the free black population increased at the same time, there was a renewed clampdown on manumission. In Virginia, for example, slaves freed after 1806 had to leave the state within twelve months on pain of reenslavement.

#### **EMANCIPATION IN THE NORTH**

Laws were never passed specifically to establish slavery in the American colonies, but in the early national era the northern states used legal and constitutional means to bring about slavery's abolition. Vermont ended slavery by constitutional amendment in 1777, while in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, abolition proceeded gradually through judicial rulings and individual acts of manumission. In the mid-Atlantic states, legislation provided for the gradual abolition of slavery. In 1780 Pennsylvania passed an act for its gradual abolition, according to which all slaves born after 1 November 1780 would be freed on reaching the age of twenty-eight. Gradual emancipation laws were also introduced in Connecticut and Rhode Island in 1784, but in New York, where slavery was a more integral part of the economy, a similar law was not passed until 1799. The New York law stated that children born to slave parents had to serve their mother's owner until age twenty-five if female and twenty-eight if male. Children born under these conditions had to complete their period of service even after New York finally abolished slavery in 1827. The final northern state to legislate for gradual emancipation was New Jersey in 1804.

#### **LAWS REGULATING FREE BLACKS**

In the colonial period, free blacks held an ambiguous legal status. In many cases they were treated as slaves, but at times they were entitled to the rights of white citizens, including in some colonies trial by jury and the right to vote. In the southern states, where slavery was most entrenched, the growth of the free black population after the Revolution led to even greater restrictions on free blacks' legal rights, civil liberties, and freedom of movement. By the 1790s, only in North Carolina and Tennessee were free blacks permitted to vote and hold public office, while free black felony convicts were subject to similar corporal punishments as slaves in all states except Virginia and Maryland, where they were imprisoned alongside whites in the penitentiary. Throughout the South, free blacks were required to register at the local courthouse and carry papers attesting to their liberty. Legislation also prohibited free blacks from entering the states of Virginia and South Carolina, and in many states free blacks could be sold into servitude for offenses including defaulting on their taxes, vagrancy, and harboring a runaway slave.

Another threat to free blacks' liberty was South Carolina's Negro Seaman's Act. Passed in 1822 in response to Denmark Vesey's rebellion, the act required free black seamen on board ships entering South Carolina's ports to be imprisoned until their vessel departed. If the ship's captain refused to pay the costs of imprisonment or to remove a seaman from the state, the seaman could be sold into slavery. Under pressure from Britain and the northern states, the provision for enslavement was replaced within a year with a requirement that black sailors leave the state, but this policy was reversed in 1835 and similar legislation regarding black seamen was enacted in other Deep South states in the 1830s and 1840s.

In the northern colonies, too, the legal rights of free blacks were less than those of whites. In Pennsylvania, free blacks were tried in the same special courts as slaves, could be sold into slavery for marrying a white person, and were subject to corporal punishment for a wider range of criminal offenses than whites. In addition, free black children born after 1726 could be bound out for service until age twenty-one for women and twenty-four for men. With the introduction of emancipation legislation in Pennsylvania in 1780, free African American defendants were accorded the same trial rights as whites, but they continued to be denied other legal privileges, including the right to vote. Free blacks' rights were more extensive in New England, where the black population was smaller and abolition was enacted more swiftly after the Revolution than in other

northern states. In Massachusetts, for example, the Declaration of Rights (1780) made all men eligible to vote and hold elective office irrespective of race.

#### RACIAL IDENTITY

Although race was central to the law of slavery in all of the American colonies, there was little agreement on how race as a legal concept should be determined. In Virginia the law was vague and changed over time. In the colonial era, a person with one-eighth African ancestry was defined as a mulatto, a category legally indistinct from black. Subsequently, the degree of "black blood" that signified mulatto status was raised to one-quarter, implicitly expanding the definition of whiteness. Statutes defining race in terms of fractions of black blood were enacted in all southern states except Delaware, Georgia, and South Carolina, but nowhere was it made clear what evidence was required to prove an individual's racial identity. In practice, therefore, determining who was black and who was white was never a simple task, and although courts never failed to assign an individual to a particular racial category, the process by which they did so was often inconclusive and revealed the fallacy of a simple division between black and white on which the law of slavery was based. Since the laws on slavery and race overlapped imperfectly, and with slave status determined by the mother, a person could—at certain times and places—be both slave and white. As with all aspects of the law of slavery as they functioned in practice, therefore, the determination of race at the local level articulated tensions between slaveholders' interests and the law of slavery that were not evident in the law as it stood on the statute books.

*See also Abolition of Slavery in the North; African Americans: Free Blacks in the North; African Americans: Free Blacks in the South; Emancipation and Manumission; Slavery: Slave Patrols.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Berlin, Ira. *Slaves without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South*. New York: Pantheon, 1974.
- Finkelman, Paul. *The Law of Freedom and Bondage: A Casebook*. New York: Oceana, 1985.
- Gross, Ariela J. "Litigating Whiteness: Trials of Racial Determination in the Nineteenth-Century South." *Yale Law Journal* 108 (1998): 109–188.
- Higginbotham, A. Leon, Jr. *In the Matter of Color: Race and the American Legal Process: The Colonial Period*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- Morris, Thomas D. *Southern Slavery and the Law, 1619–1860*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

Schwarz, Philip J. *Twice Condemned: Slaves and the Criminal Laws of Virginia, 1705–1865*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988.

Waldrep, Christopher. *Roots of Disorder: Race and Criminal Justice in the American South, 1817–1880*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998.

James Campbell

#### State Law and Common Law

Americans of the Revolutionary generation approached the common law with the ambivalence inherent in the dual nature of the common law itself. In resisting British encroachments on their liberty, the colonists had claimed the common law as a source of liberties guaranteed to them as their birth-right. The First Continental Congress had asserted Americans' entitlement to "the common law of England"; but when delegates met in Philadelphia thirteen years later to draft a federal constitution, they carefully avoided including the term in their final product. Those in 1774 had embraced the common law as a body of fundamental rights that existed above statute and royal prerogative, such as the right to a speedy trial and a trial by jury, to habeas corpus, or to be subject to no ex post facto laws. So understood, the common law allowed legal writers to import many "higher law" doctrines into practice and to oppose acts of the legislature or executive. Chancellor George Wythe of Virginia thus could declare void a state law discharging a private debt because the act was contrary to "unwritten or common law, that is, of the law of nature, called common law, because it is common to all mankind. . . . They are laws which men, who did not ordain them, have not power to abrogate." Indeed, states under the Articles of Confederation had set the common law against acts of the Confederation government, which they said were merely acts of an ordinary legislature.

At the same time, however, the common law was a body of unwritten law based on the steady accretion of procedures and definitions used by common law courts, and based on the ancient system of writs, commissions, and trial process. Such practices had developed over time in England, shaped by a discretionary judicial methodology that applied old principles to new cases and maintained the spirit of the common law by retaining its reasoning and rules. In this way, each colony's courts had developed and followed their own usages and their own ways of interpreting and applying age-old principles and procedures. Each colony thus had developed its own variant forms, creating its own common law alongside its particular statutory law.

The common law was a reliable source of law for new state courts at the crucial moment of rejection of British sovereignty. State legislatures knew that it would "take a considerable time to compile a body of laws suited to the circumstances of the country," declared the Virginia assembly in 1776 when it adopted the common law, "and it is necessary to provide some method of preserving peace and security in the mean time." To James Madison, the common law provided continuity and stood as a barrier against the idea "that the separation from G[reat] Britain threw us into a State of nature, and abolished all civil rights and obligations." Even so, as the newly independent states set about revising their legal systems, they recognized that the common law had to be purged of "what was inapplicable or unsuitable to us," as Thomas Jefferson described the process undertaken in Virginia in 1776. It was for this reason that the Constitutional Convention would not include the term "common law" in the new federal Constitution. As James Madison explained to George Washington, "if they had in general terms declared the Common law to be in force, they would have broken in upon the legal Code of every State in the most material points: they would have done more, they would have brought over from G[reat] B[ritain] a thousand heterogeneous and antirepublican doctrines, and even the *ecclesiastical Hierarchy itself*, for that is part of the common law." The states acted with the same caution.

Wary of the antirepublican influences in England's common law, therefore, only nine states expressly adopted the common law, either by statute or constitutional provision. The new states chose selectively from among the fundamental guarantees of the common law (such as criminal trial by jury) and from the writs, commissions, and procedures of its courts. The Massachusetts constitution of 1780, for example, avoided the term "common law" when it retained those "laws which have heretofore been adopted, used and approved in the province, Colony or State of Massachusetts Bay, and usually practiced on in the Courts of law." Others, such as New York and Pennsylvania, limited their reception of the common law to what had been adopted already. Virginia in 1776 included the common law among those laws declared to "be the rule of decision, and . . . in full force, until the same shall be altered by the legislative power," but all were to "consist with" rules, decisions, and resolutions already made by the Revolutionary convention.

As state law reformers undertook to revise their legal systems, they found in the common law many

of the basic principles and procedures needed to make Americans a "people free, contented and united" under law and a terminology with settled meanings that would ensure consistency. How to separate these useful elements from their antirepublican features, and to make them "consist with" Revolutionary goals, was the reformers' challenge. Jefferson, who distrusted common law methods of adjudication that gave great authority to unelected judges in interpreting the law, was a member of a committee that considered a plan in 1776 to "reduce the common law, our own, and so much of the English statutes as we have adopted, to a text," or code. The group decided against the idea, recognizing that new terminology would only lead to more uncertainty and possibly the very ills they were trying to eradicate. A comprehensive new code, he wrote, would "have retained the same chaos of law lore from which we wished to be emancipated, added to the evils of the uncertainty which a new text and new phrases would have generated." Instead, the committee worked three years to produce a preliminary list of suggested bills, only a portion of which were enacted. Not until 1785, nine years after beginning its work, did it make a complete report, but only a third of its proposed laws were accepted. In doing so the legislature made some major revisions of particular common law rules (such as abolishing primogeniture and entail), but the force of tradition, the needs of continuity, and the association of the common law with fundamental rights had conferred on the common law a staying power there as in other states.

Despite the torrent of post-Revolutionary legislation and the absence of any uniformly explicit reception of the common law by the states, the common law remained a powerful force in state law. The system of common law adjudication, so distrusted by many, actually allowed judges to adapt the common law to the new needs of the new states. When Jesse Root of Connecticut wrote the introduction to his state's law reports in 1798, he pointed to judicial decision making as a way of "forming a system of jurisprudence congenial to the spirit of our own government." Root was referring to Connecticut's own government, just as the Virginia assembly in 1776 was referring to itself when it spoke of "the circumstances of the country" as the guide for lawmaking. Through case law made in state courts, the common law was reformed and given new meaning and legitimacy. The publication of such case law in law reports, moreover, made these decisions accessible to a wider public and diminished the sense of mystery once attached to the work of judges. Although state

judges were hesitant about citing English common law in their decisions, its presence was evident. Congress, in fact, recognized the legitimacy and utility of state common law in the Judiciary Act of 1789, which made the "laws of the several states"—including the common law—the rules for decision in civil cases.

State common law thus weathered its first challenges in the new nation, but new challenges appeared in the 1800s. The common law was criticized for its alleged obscurity, foreignness, technicality, and slowness, all protected by an elitist judicial establishment said to stand against popular change. Many legal reformers in the first decades of the nineteenth century thus revived the demand for a comprehensive system of codification. Despite—or because of—these calls, defenders of the common law absorbed these criticisms and adjusted to many of them through statutory revision, pleading reform, and decisional rule making, and made the common law accessible through treatises and law reports. As their predecessors had done in the past, common law judges were able to respond to opponents by recasting doctrines while maintaining that they were only finding and extracting principles from the past. The abolition of common law writs in pleading by many states before the Civil War did not change the substance of state common law, which survived to offer the states not only a guide for conducting their legal systems, but for protecting them against incursion by the federal government.

*See also Constitutionalism; State Constitution Making; Legal Culture; Liberty.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, Willi Paul. *The First American Constitutions: Republican Ideology and the Making of the State Constitutions in the Revolutionary Era*. Expanded ed. Translated by Rita Kimber and Robert Kimber. Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001.
- Cook, Charles M. *The American Codification Movement: A Study of Antebellum Legal Reform*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981.
- Finkelman, Paul, and Stephen E. Gottlieb, eds. *Toward a Usable Past: Liberty under State Constitutions*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991.
- Marcus, Maeva, ed. *Origins of the Federal Judiciary: Essays on the Judiciary Act of 1789*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Miller, F. Thornton. *Juries and Judges versus the Law: Virginia's Provincial Legal Perspective, 1783–1828*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994.

Miller, Perry. *The Life of the Mind in America: From the Revolution to the Civil War*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1965.

David Konig

#### Women and the Law

In the Revolutionary era, Americans prided themselves on their superiority to "barbaric" nations in which women were little better than slaves. "Matrimony, among savages," Americans told themselves, had "no object but propagation and slavery" and hence "is a very humbling state for the female sex" ("The Influence of the Female," pp. 153–154). Indeed, the enviable position of women in the new nation was one of the markers of the Revolution's triumphs, they believed, an indication of American moral and political superiority.

This admiration for women brought into question women's historic legal disabilities. Under English common law, when a man and woman married they became legally one person—the husband. Americans learned this formulation from the *Commentaries* of English jurist William Blackstone (1723–1780), the first American edition of which in 1771 sold out quickly and remained influential well into the nineteenth century. As Blackstone put it, "The very being of legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage, or at least is incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband; under whose wing, protection, and cover, she performs everything; and is therefore called . . . a *feme covert*." The principle of coverture, as it was called, shaped not only the law of marriage and domestic relations, but also that of property, business, and even criminal law. With few exceptions, a married woman had no legal existence apart from her husband's.

Such restrictions on female agency fit badly with Revolutionary notions of equality, not to mention sentimental ones of women's moral worth. Yet changes in the law came slowly, and the federal nature of the new government, which left all domestic law, as well as most property and criminal law, to the states, meant that change was piecemeal as well. Changes in one state were not binding on other states, nor did state laws fall into conformity. With a few exceptions, dramatic changes in women's legal status did not come until the middle of the nineteenth century, although their way was paved by more modest achievements—and retarded by other contradictions in both precept and practice—earlier in the century.

### **WOMEN AND THE CONSTITUTION**

Although the Constitution nowhere mentions women explicitly, records of the debates in the Constitutional Convention make it clear that women were to be included when congressional representatives were apportioned and hence that women, even though they could not vote or hold office, were to be represented by the new government. Likewise, the First Amendment rights, such as freedom of religion, assembly, speech, and trial by jury, all applied to (free) women. At the same time, as the scholar Linda K. Kerber has shown, women were not allowed to perform the duties of citizenship, not only (with the exception of New Jersey) voting and holding office, but also serving in the militia or on juries. Moreover, judicial pronouncements on female citizenship in this period, particularly for married women, were anything but consistent.

### **COVERTURE AND CITIZENSHIP**

The principle of coverture, which subsumed a married woman's legal identity in that of her husband, came into direct conflict with Revolutionary ideals of individual accountability in several cases in which questions of property were caught up in discussions about women's competing obligations to their husbands and the state. In the 1805 case of *Martin v. Massachusetts*, James Martin, the son of Loyalist parents who had fled the country after the Revolution, sued to recover the confiscated property of his deceased mother. The case turned on whether Anna Martin had had any choice but to follow her Loyalist husband. The states generally recognized that both women and men could commit both treason and misprision of treason (concealing an enemy plot), and Massachusetts law expressly mentioned males and females both. Applying the contract theory of government, the state argued that its confiscation statute implicitly included women, for "surely a *feme-covert* can be an inhabitant in every sense of the word. Who are the members of the body-politic? Are not all the *citizens*, members; infants, idiots, insane, or whatever may be their *relative* situations in society?" James Martin's lawyer countered that "a *feme covert* is not a member; has no *political* relation to the state any more than an alien." The court agreed, refusing to penalize Anna Martin (or her son) "because she did not, in violation of her marriage vows, rebel against the will of her husband." The principle of coverture remained intact, although it is perhaps as important that it faced a serious, if unsuccessful, challenge from a more liberal vision of women's relationship to the state.

Twenty-five years later, in *Shanks v. Dupont*, the Supreme Court backed off so confining a notion of coverture. Once again the issue was one of property, in this case, who was to inherit the property of Ann Scott Shanks, an American woman who had married a British officer during the Revolution and returned with him to England at the war's end. The logic of *Martin* would have suggested that as a married woman she could not choose her own national allegiance, but here the Supreme Court, on relatively narrow grounds, disagreed. It distinguished between the "incapacities" of married women that "apply to their civil rights, and are for their protection and interest" and married "political rights, [which] . . . stand upon the general principles of the laws of nations." This was a limited concession to women's citizenship, and one with little practical implication, but it was a concession nonetheless.

### **MARRIAGE**

It was in the area of marriage and divorce that liberal ideas about contract and sentimental ones about the family had the greatest impact on the law. Marriage became much easier to enter and somewhat easier to exit. Early modern law had placed a number of hurdles in front of couples who wanted to marry in order to prevent fraudulent marriages, for fraudulent marriages interfered with the orderly transmission of property within families—at the time, one of the chief purposes of marriage. The law increasingly defined marriage as a private contract between two consenting individuals and diminished the state's role in regulating who could marry and how. In order to make a marriage valid, "the consent of the parties is all that is required," wrote the influential legal commentator James Kent in 1826. States even recognized common law marriage; the key case was *Fenton v. Reed* in New York (1809). The sentiment was in favor of marriages, even those entered into irregularly or informally. As the historian Michael Grossberg has noted, the law increasingly set aside the family as a separate legal sphere, one outside the state and, ideally, free from the state's intervention. As a consequence, the law was reluctant to intrude into families.

Still, changing attitudes ran ahead of legal practices, and both the prescriptive literature and legal treatises began to criticize domestic violence. Blackstone had said that a man could legally chastise his wife (as well as other members of his household), although he criticized domestic violence as a practice only of "the lower rank of people." By the early nineteenth century, legal commentator Tapping Reeve

had doubts about the applicability of this doctrine in the United States; he thought that "the right of chastising a wife is not claimed by any man; neither is any such right recognized by law." Nonetheless, courts routinely ruled in favor of wife-beaters, and it was not until at least the middle of the century that the practice met with significant opposition.

One arguable exception to the law's laissez-faire approach to marriage concerns breach of promise, although, to be sure, it regulated only the entrance into the institution. In line with the contractual view of marriage, courts proved increasingly willing in the post-Revolutionary era to let jilted lovers sue for breach of promise. Almost without exception, however, this was a woman's action, for "a deserted female" would find "her prospects in life . . . materially altered by the treachery of the man to whom she had plighted her vows" (Grossberg, p. 36). Not until mid-century, however, were courts generally willing to award additional damages for seduction. Until then the law tended to treat men and women as relative equals when contracting to marry, the era's pervasive gender inequality notwithstanding.

#### DIVORCE

Before the Revolution only the New England colonies granted divorce, with Connecticut granting one thousand divorce petitions before 1789, primarily for desertion or adultery. In the other colonies separations could be obtained through colonial courts but divorce only by petitioning Parliament. However, in 1773 the Privy Council determined that subsequently "Acts of Divorce in the Plantations" would be "either Improper or Unconstitutional." In the face of so restrictive a legal regime, countless men and women engaged in self-divorce and pseudo-remarriage, and when no property was at stake, the law looked the other way.

After the Revolution most states hurried to bring order to this messy situation. By 1800 divorce was legal in twelve states and the Northwest Territory. This rapid transformation in the law is all the more remarkable when compared to the slow pace of change in Britain, where between 1670 and 1857 only 325 divorces were granted, just four of which went to women. In the United States, federalism meant that each state established its own grounds, ranging from New York, which permitted it only for adultery, to Indiana, whose grounds were so expansive that it became the divorce mill of the day. Only South Carolina denied divorce altogether. With so much variety, there was a certain amount of migratory divorce—moving to another state temporarily

for more lenient grounds—and tailoring the "facts" to meet the grounds. Scholars debate the extent to which post-Revolutionary divorce was a woman's remedy. In the most common scenario, a woman went to court to bring closure to a marriage already effectively terminated by her husband's decampment. Rarely did she receive alimony. Yet divorce proceedings allowed women to enter court to assert their identity and to bring order to their lives.

#### PROPERTY AND ESTATES

In the realm of property and estates, significant change would not occur until the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Following the principle of coverture and common-law practices adopted in the colonies, when a woman married she lost all control of her property. The principle of coverture dictated as well that a married woman could not enter into contracts or conduct any business except as her husband's agent. She could not sue or be sued, nor could she dispose of her realty without her husband's consent. Although there were some variations from colony to colony, in general there were only two major limitations on the husband's right to control his wife's property. The first, a reciprocal obligation on the husband insured that if he died first, his widow would inherit a life-interest in, typically, one-third of his estate (which, after her death, would pass to his heirs). This was the widow's "dower" right, and even during the marriage, her husband could not dispose of this property without her consent.

The other big exception was the wife's "separate estate." From the late sixteenth century on, English law had provisions for setting up a trust for a woman before, or even during, her marriage, which preserved the property for the woman and kept it out of the hands of her husband or his creditors. Such separate estates were typically created for wealthy women by their fathers, and they preserved a woman's connection to her family of origin. Perhaps only 1 or 2 percent of married couples made use of them, although there was some increase during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Legal change after the Revolution brought some limited gains for women. The abolition of primogeniture and the double-share of the inheritance for the eldest son worked to women's advantage. In some states married women gained expanded rights to enter into business, and in 1808 married women in Connecticut secured the right to bequeath real estate. But there were setbacks as well, making for a complex and contradictory picture. In 1804, in *Dibble v. Hutton*, a Connecticut court refused to recognize a

contract between a man and his wife. If husband and wife were "considered as one person in law . . . the . . . husband and wife cannot contract with each other." Although some scholars see an erosion of women's dower rights and hence their economic power in post-Revolutionary decades, others note that women's share of the national wealth remained essentially unchanged. In this period social and legal opinions about women's property rights were unsettled. Equity could seem either an aristocratic relic or a means to protect women and hence the family from dissolute husbands. Women's property rights might appear to set wife and husband against each other, by giving them separate interests, or they might seem a way to preserve part of the family's wealth in a tumultuous economy. Not until the middle of the century would law and society begin to sort these contradictory views out and craft out of them married women's property acts that were consistent with emerging patterns in the economy and family.

*See also Citizenship; Constitutional Law; Divorce and Desertion; Domestic Life; Education: Education of Girls and Women; Marriage; Property; Widowhood; Women: Overview; Women: Female Reform Societies and Reformers; Women: Political Participation; Women: Rights.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Basch, Norma. *In the Eyes of the Law: Women, Marriage, and Property in Nineteenth-Century New York*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1982.
- . *Framing American Divorce: From the Revolutionary Generation to the Victorians*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
- Grossberg, Michael. *Governing the Hearth: Law and the Family in Nineteenth-Century America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985.
- "The Influence of the Female Sex on the Enjoyments of Social Life." *The Columbian Magazine* (March 1790): 153–154.
- Kerber, Linda K. *No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1998.
- Salmon, Marylynn. *Women and the Law of Property in Early America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986.
- Shammas, Carole. "Re-Assessing the Married Women's Property Acts." *Journal of Women's History* 6 (1994): 9–30.
- Siegel, Reva B. "'The Rule of Love': Wife Beating as Prerogative and Privacy." *Yale Law Journal* 105 (1996): 2117–2206.

VanBurkleo, Sandra F. *"Belonging to the World": Women's Rights and American Constitutional Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Norma Basch  
Jan Ellen Lewis

---

**LEATHER AND TANNING INDUSTRY** The leather and tanning industry began in the American colonies as a local industry for personal and local consumption. The tanners used local hides, local tanning bark, and hand techniques essentially the same as those used for centuries. Pioneer settlers tanned hides as just one of many tasks needed on the farms. As communities grew, a tanner who focused solely on tanning began to take farm goods in exchange for tanning or took half of the tanned leather from hides that a farmer brought to him.

Virtually every town in the colonies had a tannery. American settlements needed leather for shoes, boots, aprons, clothes, and more. Eventually, the demand for leather expanded beyond immediate local needs to include transportation (horse saddles and bridles, ships' rigging), communication (book bindings), and industry (cards for carding machines in the textile industry and belts for machinery). The leather and tanning industry developed rapidly in the middle and northern colonies, particularly Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

The colonial legislatures promoted the industry through legislation. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, many colonies passed laws forbidding the export of hides to promote local tanning and the production of finished products. Some colonies followed these prohibitions with export duties on raw hides.

The development of the U.S. industry benefited from the availability of large quantities of tanning bark and cattle hides. However, the abundant use of cattle hides may have also impeded further development. Cattle hides could take over a year to properly tan (unlike sheepskins and goatskins). This long time hindered development toward larger tanning establishments and mechanization.

As the industrial revolution and mechanization came to the United States in the early nineteenth century, the leather and tanning industry did not experience much change. Tanners, it turned out, were slower to use power-driven machinery than other artisans. However, the machines used in those other

industries often used leather as belting in the machines.

No radical change in tanning methods occurred in the early nineteenth century. Inventors patented machines and improvements in cleaning and treating hides, and a few large tanneries used machinery. However, the majority of tanners continued to use the age-old methods. Most of the proposed methods and machines were neither labor saving nor time saving for the average tanner. Part of the problem remained the lack of a scientific understanding of tanning on the part of local tanners.

In two areas, however, some of the industry adopted minimal mechanical improvements. Machines to "split" a hide divided a skin into two layers, grain and flesh. The grain is the outside skin with the hair follicles. The flesh is the inner layer with no grain marking. This process produced leather of a practically uniform thickness and of high quality. However, local tanneries could not afford these machines, and some began to sell their rough product to the few larger tanneries for finishing. Larger firms also began to use bark mills for grinding the tanning bark, although many of them remained horse-powered rather than steam-powered well into the nineteenth century. The number of small tanneries continued to grow and to far outnumber the large ones.

The few large tanneries appeared in the middle states, particularly New Jersey and New York, and this region became a center of the industry. New York City merchants devised new business strategies, such as contract tanning. The merchant provided financing to the tanner as well as negotiating services for the purchase of raw materials and the marketing of finished goods. The tanner paid fees, commissions, interest, and profits to the merchant. With this arrangement the merchants began to dominate the tanners, many of whom eventually became little more than skilled craftsmen or technicians in the employ of the merchants. The industry began a slow shift from sole proprietorships to partnerships and eventually corporations. The merchant provided financing to the tanner as well as negotiating services for the purchase of raw materials and the marketing of finished goods. The tanner paid fees, commissions, interest, and profits to the merchant. With this arrangement the merchants began to dominate the tanners, many of whom eventually became little more than skilled craftsmen or technicians in the employ of the merchants.

The involvement of the merchants also brought an international dimension to what had been a local

and domestic industry. Around 1825 the larger tanneries shifted away from using domestic hides as the merchants contracted for shipments of hides from South America. The first half of the nineteenth century also brought efforts to improve the quality of U.S. leather, which became more competitive on international markets.

In 1830 the leather and tanning industry was one of the four leading industries in the United States. Cattle hides remained the major source of leather. Most towns continued to have a tannery, but larger establishments grew in number. Developments after the Civil War, including the discovery of ways to address the long time required for tanning, resulted in a permanent shift from many local tanneries to large centralized tanning companies by the 1890s. In 1860 the nation had about 7,500 leather and tanning firms. By 1914 the number had been reduced to 750.

*See also Industrial Revolution.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ellsworth, Lucius F. "Craft to National Industry in the Nineteenth Century: A Case Study of the Transformation of the New York State Tanning Industry." *Journal of Economic History* 32 (1972): 399–402.
- Weiss, Harry B., and Grace M. Weiss. *Early Tanning and Curying in New Jersey*. Trenton: New Jersey Agricultural Society, 1959.
- Welsh, Peter C. *Tanning in the United States to 1850: A Brief History*. Washington, D.C.: Museum of History and Technology, Smithsonian Institution, 1964.

Linda Eikmeier Endersby

---

**LEGAL CULTURE** The transition from colonial to national status had, at least initially, little effect on American legal culture. The American bar at the time of the Revolution was relatively small and much dependent on its English brethren both for legal precedent and for legal texts. Although the Revolution brought about significant changes to the status of English precedent, it did little to change the intellectual life of the bar.

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, American lawyers did not occupy a place in the intellectual hierarchy equal to that of the clergy. There were no domestic law schools until the second decade of the nineteenth century, and there were few lawyers in the United States who could claim to be "learned" in the same manner as their ecclesiastical

friends. American law publishing was very much in its infancy, and for the most part books that were published in the United States were published by local printers and tended to be practice manuals and the occasional text on local law. Even well into the first half of the nineteenth century, the American law book market was dominated by reprints of English legal texts as well as by imported English legal treatises. Most American states began early programs to publish state statutes, but few analytic treatises on these statutes were published to accompany them. Indeed, until the reformation of the U.S. postal system in the 1830s, lawyers outside major eastern or southern cities were hard pressed to obtain law books at reasonable prices.

Although native legal culture, narrowly defined, was not highly sophisticated in the new nation, it would be unfair to say that all lawyers themselves during this period were uncultured. Indeed, many lawyers, particularly in cities such as Boston, Philadelphia, and New York, were highly cultivated men who took part in the intellectual life of the day. Diaries of these lawyers show frequent entries for purchase of subscriptions to lecture series and concerts. Lawyers were among the most stalwart of public speakers on holidays and at civic events. A number of lawyers maintained substantial libraries of nonlegal materials. Indeed, by the early nineteenth century lawyers had made strides toward achieving their goal of being considered a learned class.

A few examples are helpful. Daniel Webster, of course, was one of the most noted—and erudite—public orators of his day. The printed versions of his lectures, speeches, and courtroom arguments are filled with references to classical literature. His library was large and its holdings of literary works substantial. Rufus Choate amassed one of the greatest classical libraries of his day, superior even to those owned by most American colleges. Theophilus Parsons, Sr., who became chief justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, was noted not only as a lawyer and judge but as a scientist. He contributed a section on the calculation of astronomical orbits to a standard work on celestial navigation and designed an improvement for cooking stoves.

In the literary realm many antebellum lawyers were renowned for their achievements. Justice Joseph Story wrote poetry throughout his life, as did a number of other prominent lawyers of his time. Indeed, a significant number of the poets whose works are excerpted in Rufus Griswold's *The Poets and Poetry of America* (1845), one of the first anthologies of American poetry, were lawyers by training or trade.

Indeed, legal prose was considered by many critics to be a literary genre, as witnessed by the inclusion of the legal writing of men such as Story in Griswold's *The Prose Writers of America* (1847).

Although a native American legal literature was slow to develop in the period immediately after the Revolution, by the beginning of the nineteenth century this had changed. A number of jurists of this generation began to emerge as legal treatise authors of a level equal to or exceeding that of the English. Chancellor James Kent of New York revolutionized American legal writing with the publication of his *Commentaries on American Law* (1826–1830). With its publication Kent earned the sobriquet "the American Blackstone." St. George Tucker, a Virginia jurist, became known as the "Virginia Blackstone" for his annotated edition of Blackstone's *Commentaries*. Justice Story not only served as a justice of the United States Supreme Court and, from 1829, as the Dane Professor of Law at Harvard, but also edited and authored a series of treatises on subjects such as constitutional law, equity, bailments, agency, and conflicts of law. These were admired not only in the United States but in Britain and throughout Europe both for their scholarship and their wide-ranging knowledge of common and civil law. Other less prominent authors also made major contributions to American legal literature. Nathan Dane's *General Abridgement and Digest of American Law* (1823) helped to rationalize American case law and produced enough profit to endow Story's chair.

Along with the growth of a native legal literature, American legal culture also benefited from the founding of several law schools. Although several eighteenth-century universities such as the College of William and Mary and the University of Pennsylvania had law departments or law professors, it was only in the early nineteenth century that fully developed, university-affiliated law schools were founded, beginning with the Dane Law College at Harvard in 1817. The establishment of these law schools meant that future lawyers could have a period of time in which to learn law systematically as a "science." They also provided an environment in which men like Story and Simon Greenleaf at Harvard and George Robertson and Daniel Mayes at Transylvania would have the time and resources to devote to treatise writing. The University of Virginia also had a strong law program at an early date. The Litchfield Law School, a judge-run law school in Connecticut also trained a number of prominent lawyers of the antebellum period.

As a result of these various early developments, American legal culture obtained a high degree of sophistication by the time of the Civil War. In effect, American law went from being a colonial backwater to an internationally recognized leader in legal thought within only three generations. By the early 1840s, when the British Parliament held an inquiry into the state of legal education and legal learning in Britain, American legal culture had come so far that Story and James Kent were asked to testify about American law schools so that they could serve as a model for British reform efforts.

*See also Law: Federal Law; Law: State Law and Common Law; Professions: Lawyers.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cohen, Morris L. *Bibliography of Early American Law*. Buffalo, NY: W. S. Hein & Co., 1998.
- Ferguson, Robert. *Law and Letters in American Culture*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984.
- Hoeflich, M. H. *Roman and Civil Law and the Development of Anglo-American Jurisprudence in the Nineteenth Century*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997.
- Miller, Perry. *The Life of the Mind in America: From the Revolution to the Civil War*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1965.

Michael Hoeflich

---

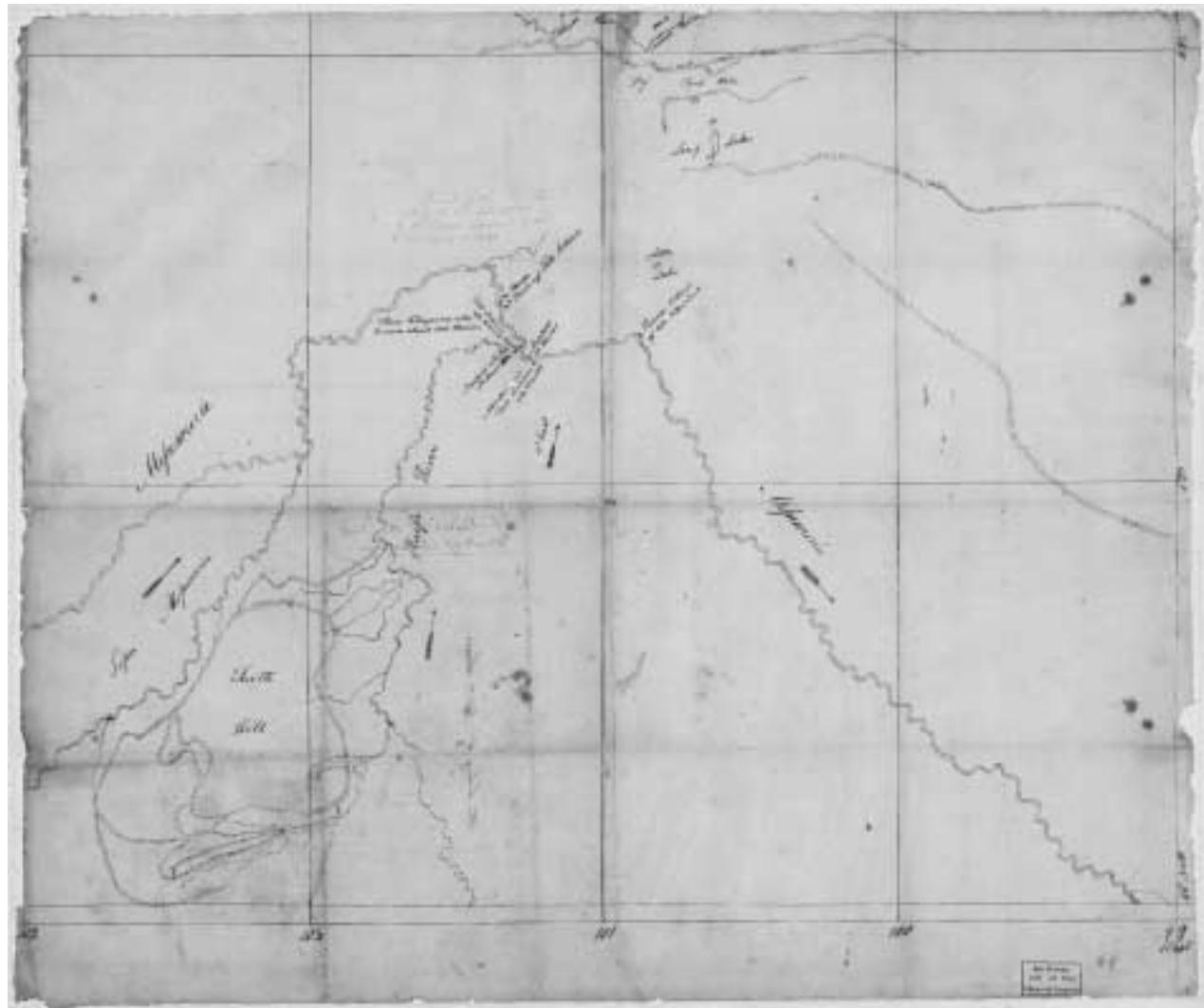
**LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION** On 18 January 1803, President Thomas Jefferson delivered a secret message to both houses of Congress. "As the continuance of the act for establishing trading houses with the Indian tribes will be under the consideration of the Legislature," he advised, "I think it my duty to communicate the views which have guided me in the execution of that act." Jefferson complained that Indian tribes increasingly grew "uneasy at the constant diminution of the territory they occupy" and that they refused "all further sale, on any conditions." To peaceably "counteract this policy of theirs," Jefferson wrote, "and to provide an extension of territory which the rapid increase of our numbers will call for, two measures are deemed expedient." First, he advised Congress to "encourage them [the Indians] to abandon hunting" and to take up the plow "and thereby prove to themselves that less land and labor will maintain them." Second, toward this end he urged Congress "to multiply trading houses among them, and place within their reach those things which will contribute more to their domestic comfort, than the possession of extensive, but

uncultivated wilds." The government should operate these trading posts to "undersell private traders, foreign and domestic."

Later that year Jefferson revealed his full intentions when he instructed William Henry Harrison, territorial governor of Indiana, to "push our trading uses" upon the Indians, "because we observe that when these debts get beyond what the individuals [Indians] can pay, they become willing to lop them off by a cession of lands." In the secret message of January, Jefferson revealed even larger aims when he suggested this policy for "the river Missouri, and the Indians inhabiting it" since it afforded "a moderate climate, offering, according to the best accounts, a continued navigation from its source, and possibly with a single portage from the Western Ocean . . . to the Atlantic." He requested that twenty-five hundred dollars be appropriated "for the purpose of extending the external commerce of the United States" by sending a military expedition to "explore the whole line, even to the Western Ocean, have conferences with the natives on the subject of commercial intercourse, get admission among them for our traders . . . agree on convenient deposits for the interchange of articles, and return with the information acquired, in the course of two summers." This was all part of Jefferson's plan to make the United States into an "Empire of Liberty." Indians would be acculturated to white ways and together with whites would secure the property necessary for republican citizenship. He planned imperialism through absorption rather than colonization, ending in citizenship instead of subjection.

Three months after the January message, Jefferson shocked Congress with the Louisiana Purchase from France, doubling the size of the nation with the acquisition of the entire Missouri River watershed for pennies an acre. Indians could now "lop off their debts" by selling land in the territories between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River; then they would move to Louisiana, where government traders and missionaries would have the time to inure the natives to white ways and ideas while facilitating America's international commerce via a transcontinental water route.

Meanwhile, Jefferson's plan for an exploration party called the Corps of Discovery was already well under way. He had chosen his personal secretary, a fellow Virginian and veteran soldier Meriwether Lewis, to lead the expedition. Captain Lewis chose William Clark as his "co-Captain," and together they led more than thirty soldiers, a French interpreter and his teenage Shoshone wife, Sacagawea (a guide),



**The Missouri River.** Before embarking on their expedition, Lewis and Clark collected the best cartographical information available at the time. This map of the midsection of the Missouri River in North Dakota was transcribed by Lewis from a map drawn by Canadian cartographer and explorer David Thompson in 1798. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, GEOGRAPHY AND MAP DIVISION.

and Clark's black slave, York, in an expedition along the Missouri and Columbia Rivers to the Pacific and back between 1803 and 1806. They pursued Jefferson's instructions of 20 June 1803 to "explore the Missouri . . . for the purposes of commerce" while taking "observations of latitude & longitude, at all remarkable points on the river." They were to gather knowledge of all the Indian tribes along the way, as "the commerce which may be carried on with the people inhabiting the line you will pursue, renders a knowledge of those people important." Jefferson also instructed them to collect knowledge of the flora and fauna, to explore the Missouri's tributaries and the land they drained, to treat the natives "in the most friendly and conciliatory manner" to convince them to sign peace treaties with their enemies and with the

United States, and finally to report on the feasibility of the fur trade at the Pacific. The president charged Lewis with recording all of this information in a journal to be published at the mission's conclusion.

The Corps of Discovery failed to find an all-water route to the Pacific. The explorers also failed at conciliatory diplomacy among the Indians. The Lakota never made peace with their Mandan or Arikara neighbors, and the U.S. Army would war with them for the rest of the century, eventually subjugating and herding them onto reservations. The Corps did succeed in coming home alive, with only one exception. It also brought back valuable maps; discovered new species of animals and plants, such as prairie dogs, the white-rumped shrike, and "prickly-pears";

and obtained valuable information about the richness of the land and Indian ethnography. But here too it actually failed. Lewis never published his journals. He committed suicide a few years after returning, and the journals remained unpublished and in unusable form for almost a century. This failed expedition cost the nation's taxpayers \$38,722.25, more than fifteen times the original congressional allocation. The Corps of Discovery did succeed in capturing the imagination of the American people, who eagerly read reports in newspapers and awaited the explorers' return. They feted Lewis and Clark with balls and toasts in 1806 as trappers, traders, and settlers rushed up the Missouri River, settling the territory, clashing with Indians, and gradually dispossessing them of their hunting grounds and homes. Instead of using absorption methods, the U.S. Army and state militias conquered and colonized the West. For the Indians, the Lewis and Clark Expedition foreshadowed old-fashioned imperialism, not an "Empire of Liberty."

*See also Louisiana Purchase; American Indian Policy, 1787–1830; American Indian Relations, 1763–1815; American Indian Removal; Presidency, The: Thomas Jefferson.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ambrose, Stephen E. *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.
- Barth, Gunther, ed. *The Lewis and Clark Expedition: Selections from the Journals, Arranged by Topic*. Boston: Bedford, 1998.
- DeVoto, Bernard, ed. *The Journals of Lewis and Clark*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997.
- Ronda, James P. *Lewis and Clark among the Indians*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984.

Paul Douglas Newman

---

**LEXINGTON** Since its founding in 1779, Lexington has been one of Kentucky's major urban areas. Surveyors working along South Elkhorn Creek identified the site for a town in the spring of 1775. Tradition states that upon learning of the American victory in April of that year over the British at Lexington, Massachusetts, they vowed to return and establish a town named in honor of that historic battle of the American Revolution. Four years later Robert Patterson, who had been one of the surveyors, led a party of settlers from nearby Harrodsburg to the site and

founded Lexington. Once the Revolutionary War and significant Indian hostilities came to an end, town leaders set about improving the town. Located in the heart of Kentucky's Bluegrass region and being its population center, Lexington thrived as a major intersection for roads through the state and was its fastest-growing town. When Fayette County was formed in 1780, Lexington was named its seat. Although Lexington was not selected as Kentucky's capital, the first state legislature assembled in the town during June 1792. By 1800 Lexington had become Kentucky's major urban center, boasting fine homes and estates, manufacturing and mercantile businesses, a university, a newspaper, and cultural attractions.

The combination of population, economic growth, and cultural and educational attainment resulted in town leaders proclaiming Lexington the "Athens of the West." In 1789 Transylvania Seminary (chartered in 1780 and originally opened in Danville, Kentucky) held its first classes in Lexington. In 1798 its name was changed to Transylvania University. It is the oldest university west of the Appalachians. The school struggled in its early years, but from 1818 to 1825 it thrived under the leadership of the Reverend Horace Holley. Its law and medical schools were among the best in the nation. Among its students during this period were future U.S. senator Henry Clay, future vice president John Breckinridge, and future associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court Thomas Todd. Lexington also had the first mental hospital west of the Appalachians. Incorporated in 1816 as Fayette Hospital, eight years later it became the state-funded Eastern Lunatic Asylum (later Eastern State Hospital), the second state-funded mental institution in America.

This climate of learning and public works was supported by an active publishing business. On 11 August 1787, the first issue of the *Kentucky Gazette*, Kentucky's first newspaper, appeared. From the *Gazette* office a variety of books, pamphlets, and broadsides were published in addition to the newspaper, including the *Kentucky Almanac* and early editions of the *Acts* and the *Journals* of the state legislature.

Business also thrived in Lexington. Its central location made it a major marketing and supply source for both agricultural, livestock, and manufactured products. In 1802 it boasted printing houses, powder mills, ropewalks, factories, stores with fine goods from the East, skilled artisans, and bustling inns and taverns. Some of Kentucky's earliest livestock, agricultural, and mechanical fairs were held in Lexington. The wealth and education centered in the town,

together with its prosperity, fostered the establishment of a library, theater, dancing school, churches, and other institutions.

Lexington's importance was reflected in its rapid population growth. The ethnic composition of Lexington's population was primarily English, Scots-Irish, German, and Irish. African Americans also constituted a significant proportion of the population. The U.S. census for 1790 listed Lexington's population as 834. Ten years later it had increased to 1,795 (including 462 African Americans [439 of whom were enslaved], or 24 percent of the population), and in 1810 it was 4,326 (including 1,594 African Americans [of whom 1,509 were slaves], or 35 percent of the population). Growth continued, but albeit at a slower pace, over the next two decades to a reported 6,026 in 1830. This total included 2,286 African Americans (2,065 of whom were enslaved), or 34 percent of Lexington's population. The town's central Bluegrass location, in the heart of Kentucky's highest slave concentration, resulted in its becoming a major slave-trading center. The decades following 1830 witnessed Lexington's continued success and importance, although it lost its standing as Kentucky's preeminent town.

*See also* **Kentucky; Mental Illness.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Staples, Charles R. *The History of Pioneer Lexington, 1779–1806*. Lexington, Ky.: Transylvania Press, 1939. Reprint, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996.  
 Wright, John D., Jr. *Lexington: Heart of the Bluegrass*. Lexington, Ky.: Lexington-Fayette County Historic Commission, 1982.

James J. Holmberg

---

#### LEXINGTON AND CONCORD, BATTLE OF

During the late evening hours of 18 April 1775, General Thomas Gage, commander in chief of all British forces in North America, ordered a raid to capture military stores then known to have been gathered by colonial forces in the town of Concord, Massachusetts. Gage selected a group of soldiers led by Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith and had them quietly rowed across the Charles River to begin their nearly twenty-mile march from Boston to Concord. However, the Patriot leader Paul Revere, spying a lantern warning hung in the steeple of Boston's Old North Church, rowed across the river ahead of the British landing force and quickly traveled by horseback,

along with other alarm riders, to warn the Middlesex countryside that the British regulars were out in force. Revere was ultimately captured and later released by British patrols but other alarm riders were able to warn the entire countryside within a few hours of the British beginning their march on the town of Concord.

Arriving at the village of Lexington near dawn, the van of Smith's force spotted the militia company of Captain John Parker in loose formation on Lexington Green. A British officer ordered Parker and his men to lay down their arms when a shot rang out. No one knows for sure which side fired the "shot heard round the world." The British responded by firing a volley into the ranks of Parker's militia, ultimately killing eight townsmen.

Continuing toward the village of Concord, Smith placed a company to guard the North Bridge while other components searched for military stores. About four hundred colonial militia then marched on the bridge and, in a sharp action in which several British soldiers were killed, routed the British company guarding the bridge. Sensing that the countryside was now in a full state of alarm, Smith quickly reformed his force and began a rapid retreat toward Boston. Ambushed at frequent locations on the long road back, Smith's command would have been nearly destroyed had it not been for the timely arrival of Lord Hugh Percy's relief column, which met Smith and his men near Lexington. Even so, the now united British force found itself in heavy combat with Massachusetts militia units for the rest of the day. Casualties were considered heavy on both sides, but the Patriot side claimed the day as a great victory for their cause. In all, 49 militiamen had been killed along with 39 wounded. British losses for the day were 73 redcoats killed and 174 wounded. With this battle, American resistance to British policies shifted from political protest to armed belligerence, and the Revolutionary War commenced.

*See also* **Revolution as Civil War: Patriot-Loyalist Conflict; Revolution: Military History.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Andrews, Joseph L. *Revolutionary Boston, Lexington and Concord: The Shots Heard 'Round the World!* 3rd ed. Beverly, Mass.: Commonwealth Editions, 2002.  
 Brooks, Victor. *The Boston Campaign: April 1775–March 1776*. Conshohocken, Pa.: Combined Publishing, 1999.  
 Fischer, David Hackett. *Paul Revere's Ride*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.  
 Forbes, Esther. *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1942.

- Galvin, John R. *The Minute Men: The First Fight—Myths and Realities of the American Revolution*. 2nd rev. ed. Washington D.C.: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1989.
- Gross, Robert. *The Minutemen and Their World*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1976, reprint 2001.
- Martin, James Kirby, and Mark Edward Lender. *A Respectable Army: The Military Origins of the Republic, 1763–1789*. Arlington Heights, Ill.: H. Davidson, 1982.
- Shattuck, Lemuel. *History of the Town of Concord: Middlesex County, Massachusetts, from Its Earliest Settlement to 1832*. Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Concord, Mass.: J. Stacy, 1835.

*Charles Patrick Neimeyer*

---

**LIBERIA** The establishment of the American colony of Liberia in 1822 marked the culmination of five decades of argument about whether whites and blacks could live together in a free society. Debate had begun in 1773, when the Reverend Samuel Hopkins of Newport, Rhode Island, a vigorous opponent of slavery, proposed an ambitious plan to send freed slaves as missionaries to Africa. While he won the support of some New England African Americans keen to emigrate, Hopkins trained only two would-be Evangelicals before the Revolutionary War intervened and the plan had to be abandoned.

It was not until the 1810s, when the number of freed blacks topped 200,000, that many Americans, both black and white, again paused to consider the future of this problematic population in a slaveholding society. This time, many groups saw advantages in the emigration of these blacks to Africa. White missionaries and antislavery activists such as Samuel Mills and the Presbyterian minister Robert Finley, as well as free black New Englanders such as Paul Cuffee, saw black emigration as an opportunity to elevate an oppressed segment of the American population while also bringing Christianity and enlightenment to the "Dark Continent." Some southern slaveholders supported emigration schemes to remove the divisive influence of free black communities and thereby prevent slave rebellions.

Drawing on bipartisan support for the plan from political leaders including Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Henry Clay, and John Randolph, leaders from all three communities came together in 1816 to form the American Colonization Society (ACS). In 1819, after lobbying from the ACS, President James Monroe backed a law facilitating the resettlement of free blacks in West Africa. The following January the ship *Elizabeth* sailed from New York with eighty-six

African American men, women, and children and several government agents on board. This first expedition ended in failure, with the colonists unable to find fresh water and soon being forced to evacuate to the nearest British settlement. A second and third group departed America for Africa in 1821 and 1822 to settle a permanent colony on land purchased from the local inhabitants of Cape Mesurado, west of Grand Bassa. The colonists named their first mainland settlement Monrovia in honor of their presidential patron.

Those early years were marked by incredible hardship and internal dissension as the colony struggled to organize and provide for itself. A ragged coast and dense inland vegetation made communication with sponsors and trade with neighbors difficult, and to make things even harder, malaria ravaged the population. Only half of the 4,571 black Americans who arrived in Liberia during the first twenty-three years of settlement were still alive by an 1843 census.

Open revolts over how to run the settlement, as well as frequent disputes between settlers and the native population, continued to hinder the colony's economic independence. Yet little support was forthcoming from the ACS at home. By the 1840s the society had been crippled by financial mismanagement and accusations of racism from radical abolitionists such as William Lloyd Garrison. With the society rendered impotent, the Liberian colonists were effectively stranded.

Direct control of the colony's administration thus passed from the floundering ACS to the settlers in 1847, marking the official birth of Liberia, Africa's oldest republic. Joseph Jenkins Roberts, a freedman from Virginia, was elected as the first president. Yet despite political independence, Liberia was battered by further financial insecurities and continued to rely on foreign aid until the 1950s.

*See also African Americans: Free Blacks in the North; African Americans: Free Blacks in the South; Colonization Movement.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Clegg, Claude A., III. *The Price of Liberty: African Americans and the Making of Liberia*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.
- Miller, Floyd J. *The Search for a Black Nationality: Black Emigration and Colonization, 1787–1863*. Urbana: University of Illinois, 1975.

Shick, Tom W. *Behold the Promised Land: A History of Afro-American Settler Society in Nineteenth-Century Liberia*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980.

*Richard J. Bell*

---

**LIBERTY** In the eighteenth-century English and American political vernacular, no word or concept was as important as "liberty." Celebrated by political theorists, pamphleteers, politicians, and the clergy, English people and Americans often boasted that they possessed greater liberty than anyone else. For all the Anglo-American celebration of liberty, however, the concept was often ill defined.

#### POLITICAL LITERATURE

Liberty was a common theme in many of the important English and American political treatises of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By far the most common form of literature to discuss liberty was the pamphlet. As historian Bernard Bailyn has pointed out, pamphlets were cheap to produce, easy for publishers to turn out, and—since they normally ran from only five thousand to twenty-five thousand words—easy to finish quickly, which meant that the ideas contained within them could be rapidly disseminated throughout society. Some of the most important and influential political writings of the Revolutionary period were pamphlets, including John Dickinson's *Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer* (1767–1768), John Adams's *Novanglus* (1775), and the most famous of all, Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* (1776).

Beyond pamphlets of the Revolutionary era, British and American political actors and thinkers could rely on a host of book-length works that discussed liberty. Works from diverse authors such as Plato (c. 428–348 B.C.) and Cicero (106–43 B.C.) in the ancient world to Algernon Sidney (1622–1683), James Harrington (1611–1677), James Gordon (d. 1750), and John Trenchard (1622–1723) in the early modern era—to name only a few—lined the shelves of personal libraries. For colonial readers, at least, these works were a sine qua non of proper political thought, and it would be difficult for a well-educated American Revolutionary to be considered a true republican without familiarity with some, if not all, of these works.

#### POLITICAL THEORY BEFORE THE REVOLUTION

Despite the apparent vagueness of the concept of liberty, historians have established what it meant in the

eighteenth century. Considering the various writings of political philosophers such as Harrington, Sidney, Gordon, Trenchard, John Locke (1632–1704), Robert Molesworth (1656–1725), Baron de Montesquieu (1689–1755), and James Burgh (1714–1755) as well as political pamphlets, personal letters, state documents, and sermons, liberty by eighteenth-century standards can be said to have had two distinct definitions. According to the first, which has been largely forgotten, liberty, or public liberty, was the right of the people to establish and maintain some form of self-government. Many English and American political theorists believed that if the people created and served in government, liberty could not be usurped. As a result, public liberty was the most important form of liberty during the eighteenth century. The second definition of liberty concerned the rights of individual citizens, with the most common being property rights and religious freedom. It is this second definition of liberty, the one concerned with individual freedom, or personal liberty, which is more familiar.

Because the two definitions of liberty were distinct, a natural tension existed between them. Unfortunately, historians have compounded this natural tension by separating the two concepts into divergent and exclusive intellectual traditions. The creation of self-government is defined as the "republican," or "civic-humanist," concept of liberty. This republican concept required not only citizen participation in government, but also a citizenry possessed of virtue and disinterestedness. On the other hand, historians have often labeled the concern for individual freedom as the "liberal," or "Lockean liberal," concept of liberty.

However, eighteenth-century Americans were able to easily reconcile the duality and tension of liberty. Neither English people nor Americans defined personal liberty as it later became known, namely personal autonomy or the restraint of government upon civil liberties such as freedom of speech or the press, or freedom from illegal search and seizure. Personal liberty in the eighteenth century had to conform to the norms of society and, more important, to the rule of law. Thus, to most eighteenth-century English people, liberty was the law. This negative form of liberty was often characterized not as the freedom to act, but as freedom from arbitrary government actions. Furthermore, private liberty had to work in tandem with public liberty; one could not be paramount over the other. As long as a proper balance remained between governmental authority and private rights, English and Americans argued, liberty



**Liberty Displaying the Arts and Sciences (1792).** In this painting by Samuel Jennings, liberty is personified as a white woman surrounded by symbols of knowledge. She presents books to African Americans, while a group of freed slaves dances in the background. THE GRANGER COLLECTION, NEW YORK.

could exist. Making the natural tension of both concepts of liberty easier to accommodate was the belief that both types of liberty derived from the same source, nature itself. Because humans were endowed with free will, they were afforded certain freedoms naturally. It is important to note, however, that most theorists did not fully explain which liberties were taken from nature. This theory held that once people entered into a contract to create a government, only those liberties surrendered for the creation of the society were lost; all other freedoms remained.

Often, in the works on the political philosophy or other political writings, liberty was juxtaposed to two other concepts, tyranny and licentiousness. Since tyranny or arbitrary power was defined as the unlimited power of the executive and licentiousness

as the absence of order, liberty was seen not as the average of the extremes but as the perfect, if somewhat fragile, balance between the two. For the English to possess liberty, freedom and order had to peacefully coincide. English and colonial writers warned that when either tyranny or licentiousness became too dominant in politics and society, liberty ended and political slavery began. This need for constitutional balance was also found in ideas about English and colonial society. Theorists argued that society was divided into monarchy, aristocracy, and commons—or the one, the few, and the many—and that so should be government. With the monarch stationed in the executive, the aristocracy in the House of Lords, and the commoners in the House of Commons, they would balance each other and ensure that one branch did not obtain too much au-

thority. Theorists further maintained that each branch was responsible for certain functions of government. The monarch was responsible for the energy and dispatch of government, the House of Lords was responsible for deliberating on important issues and applying wisdom to its decisions, and the House of Commons was responsible for maintaining through legislation the protection of liberty and the public good.

Closely related to the need for a balance in the creation of liberty was the need to defend liberty from its antagonist, power. When discussing the dichotomy of liberty and power, liberty was portrayed as a hapless victim, vulnerable to the assaults of an aggressive, self-aggrandizing foe: arbitrary power. Whenever governmental power increased, usually in the form of a power-lusting executive, theorists held that the natural outcome was a decline of the people's liberty. This outcome could be staved off, theorists argued, only if the people remained ever-vigilant against and jealous towards encroachments upon their liberty.

Another term closely linked to liberty in the pre-Revolutionary era was property. As with so many terms in English and American political theory of the eighteenth century, property held several meanings. The most common definition was material goods, but in connection with the concept of liberty, property moved beyond mere materialism. In the eighteenth century, property in the form of land brought personal independence.

#### **POLITICAL THEORY IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC**

Although, broadly speaking, English concepts of liberty continued to carry tremendous significance in the early American Republic, during the era of the American Revolution, and especially during the adoption and early implementation of the Constitution (ratified 1788) and the Bill of Rights (ratified 1791), subtle changes in the concept of liberty began to develop in America. The first of these shifts in the concept of liberty was in connection with the need for representation in government. Beginning with the famous phrase "no taxation without representation," American theorists argued that only when the people were represented in Parliament, and later in state and national governments, could liberty flourish. The people's representatives, this argument ran, would insure the protection and security of liberty through their power to accept or reject proposed laws and taxes. To be sure, the English House of Commons, the body of the English government most accountable to its subjects, did possess the ability to

consent to or reject legislation. American theorists argued, however, that having direct representation instead of the English system of virtual representation (the belief that Parliament represented all the English people whether or not they actually elected a member) meant that liberty would be more secure because the government would be more accountable to the citizenry.

Another subtle change in the concept of liberty occurred with the creation of the state and federal constitutions and the various federal and state bills of rights. Since these documents were the fundamental law of the states and the nation, governmental authority was formally defined and, in most cases, curbed. Thus, for the first time governments would have clear, distinct outlines of their responsibilities. Furthermore, most of these constitutions, including the federal Constitution along with its Bill of Rights, protected many of the rights associated with traditional definitions of liberty: the right to trial by jury; the right to be free of standing armies; the right of habeas corpus; the right to be protected against arbitrary search and seizure. With this constitutional protection of rights and limitation of power, what began to take shape was a more modern definition of liberty wherein government is forbidden to violate particular, specified liberties. Just as important as the establishment of governmental authority was the creation of the constitutions themselves. In creating these documents, the people were exercising public liberty.

Closely linked with the development of constitutions was another shift in the American concept of liberty. With experimentation in public liberty and the crises of the 1780s came the realization that virtue and disinterestedness, which English and European theorists had argued were needed to sustain republican governments, could be achieved only with difficulty, if at all. From this awareness came the redefining of tyranny, which, in turn, meant the redefining of liberty. Tyranny now, unlike before, could come from any branch of government, including the populace itself. Efforts were made to curb this new tyranny, as well as the excesses of liberty that, as a result of events such as Shays's Rebellion, many thought were occurring in the 1780s. These efforts took the form of the federal Constitution of 1787, ratified the following year, and the Bill of Rights, ratified as constitutional amendments in 1791. Through this redefining and tempering of tyranny, the emphasis upon public liberty began to wane. Evidence of this changing understanding of the sources of tyranny, and along with it the changing concept

of liberty, can be found in the Constitution's sanctioning of the separation of powers. Before, European and English political theorists had surmised that the people could not threaten liberty and therefore could be trusted with governmental authority. However, the events of the 1780s caused many American political thinkers to reexamine that belief and conclude that only by constitutionally separating governmental power into distinct branches could liberty be safeguarded.

The crises of the 1780s also demonstrated that the traditional arguments regarding the clash of power and liberty needed recasting. No longer did American theorists view power as the automatic antithesis of liberty. Instead, they developed a new theory which argued that governmental power does not necessarily translate into a loss of liberty. As long as laws were enacted by a government of the people, the people themselves remained ever vigilant towards their liberty, and the people sanctioned a constitution that officially limited government responsibilities and authority, power could be entrusted to the government. This new political theory received its greatest confirmation in the federal Constitution of 1787.

Even more important than the addition of representation, constitutionalism, and the separation of powers to the concept of liberty was the intertwining of liberty and equality. Before the American Revolution, equality and liberty were seldom, if ever, linked, but by the time the American Republic was established, the two concepts were becoming inseparable. The enslavement of hundreds of thousands of blacks during this period makes this linkage appear hypocritical, but when the revolutionaries referred to equality as liberty, they did not mean that the law should force the equality of people. Instead, they desired the equal application of the law. Although modern Americans have become accustomed to a government that legally enforces the equality of people, to eighteenth-century American political theorists, who harbored a deep distrust of governmental power, government could not be trusted to create or enforce such equality. To be sure, associating liberty with the equality of people was becoming part of the American concept of liberty, but this change did not fully emerge until well into the nineteenth and then the twentieth century.

#### POLITICS, 1765–1820

The concept of liberty played an important role in the politics of the Revolutionary period. Beginning with the Stamp Act of 1765 and ending with the Declaration of Independence of 1776, the colonies justified

their resistance to parliamentary measures by claiming to defend their liberty. Although the colonies made continual attempts to reconcile with Britain, each rejection only reinforced the colonists' belief that their liberty was threatened. Seeing no alternative method of securing their liberty, they formally declared independence.

After the Revolution, liberty continued to play an important role in the politics of the new nation. The decade after the Revolution was filled with a series of crises that threatened to overtake the fragile country. In each crisis, whether concerning the financial situation of the states and the nation or the growing power of the states, the concept of liberty played some role. That was particularly so in regard to Shays's Rebellion of 1786–1787 and the Constitutional Convention along with the ratification debates. When disgruntled debtor farmers from western Massachusetts revolted against heavy taxation, among other things, they claimed they were defending their liberty from tyrannical actions of the state legislature. Most political figures disagreed, however, and the rebellion was quickly suppressed. At the Constitutional Convention and the ratification debates, securing liberty was a great concern of every participant. Although concepts of liberty were undergoing change at that very time, the older conceptions remained and were an important element in both the defense of and attacks on the Constitution.

During the Federalist period from 1789 to 1801, and then the Jeffersonian revolution of 1800, liberty was the dominant feature of the political landscape. Nearly every controversial measure during this period, including Alexander Hamilton's financial program, the Jay Treaty (1794), the Alien and Sedition Acts (1798), the Louisiana Purchase (1803), the Embargo Act (1807), the War of 1812, and even the Missouri Compromise (1820), were all judged by whether or not they threatened liberty. Even the rise of political parties in the 1790s is due in large measure to the fact that both Federalists and Republicans believed that the other side threatened liberty and that only their side could defend and protect it.

#### CULTURE AND SOCIETY

American society remained deferential during the eighteenth century in the sense that those with better social and economic standing were expected to lead government and society. However, there were increasing strains upon this traditional order of things. Because of the ideas of liberty promulgated during the imperial crisis and the termination of monarchical and aristocratic government with victory in the

American Revolution, the idea of equality under the law began to take root. Taking the place of hierarchical arrangements was a culture that began to celebrate the natural equality of people with the argument that liberty should create a level playing field for all individuals and allow those with natural talent to rise to the top levels of their fields of endeavor. This new meaning of liberty was in its embryonic form in the early Republic and excluded both slaves and women, but later events greatly furthered the cause of equality.

*See also Alien and Sedition Acts; Anti-Federalists; Bill of Rights; Constitutional Convention; Constitutionalism; Democratic Republicans; Federalists; Politics: Political Pamphlets; Politics: Political Thought; Shays's Rebellion.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Appleby, Joyce. "Republicanism in Old and New Contexts." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, 43 (1986): 20–34.
- Bailyn, Bernard. *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967.
- Banning, Lance. *The Jeffersonian Persuasion: Evolution of a Party Ideology*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978.
- . *The Sacred Fire of Liberty: James Madison and the Founding of the Federal Republic*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995.
- Kammen, Michael G. *Spheres of Liberty: Changing Perceptions of Liberty in American Culture*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986.
- Maier, Pauline. *From Resistance to Revolution: Colonial Radicals and the Development of American Resistance to Britain, 1765–1776*. New York: Knopf, 1972.
- McDonald, Forrest. *Novus Ordo Seclorum: The Intellectual Origins of the American Constitution*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1985.
- Read, James H. *Power Versus Liberty: Madison, Hamilton, Wilson, and Jefferson*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000.
- Reid, John Phillip. *The Concept of Liberty in the Age of the American Revolution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.
- Robbins, Caroline. *The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman: Studies in the Transmission, Development, and Circumstance of English Liberal Thought from the Restoration of Charles II until the War with the Thirteen Colonies*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959. Reprint, Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Fund, 2004.
- Rossiter, Clinton. *Seedtime of the Republic: The Origin of the American Tradition of Political Liberty*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1953.
- Wood, Gordon S. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969.

—. *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*. New York: Vintage, 1991.

Aaron N. Coleman

---

**LITERATURE** See **African Americans: African American Literature; Children's Literature; Fiction; Nonfiction Prose; Poetry; Religious Publishing; Theater and Drama; Women: Literature.**

---

**LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION** Most colonial American livestock was raised for home consumption. After 1754, cattle remained the most important farm animal, providing meat and hides, tractive power in the form of a yoke of oxen (the preferred team for plowing in New England), and dairy products. With the elimination of predators, hogs freely grubbed roots and browsed on acorns and beechnuts in woodlands in the North and South. Most colonial farmers also kept a small flock of sheep for mutton and wool. Various poultry, including chicken, geese, ducks, and turkeys, were also found on eighteenth-century farms and plantations, providing fresh meat, eggs, feathers, and entertainment in the form of cockfighting, especially in the South.

Colonists in Rhode Island and Connecticut had raised horses and mules for the West Indies trade long before 1754. Horses were key to colonial land transportation. Three northern breeds are particularly noteworthy: the Narragansett pacers of Rhode Island; the Conestoga horses of Pennsylvania; and the Morgan horses, which originated in Vermont in the 1790s. Mules became important draft animals in the South only in the nineteenth century, despite George Washington's early efforts to popularize them. Henry Clay imported a jenny and jackass into Kentucky from Spain in 1827 and 1832. The South led the nation in horse raising before the mid-nineteenth century, and Kentucky became the center of horse breeding and mule raising.

Market-oriented cattle raising had also existed in America before 1754. Backcountry farmers in Pennsylvania and the uplands of Virginia and North Carolina drove range cattle to the Philadelphia market. Shenandoah Valley farmers sold their cattle in Fredericksburg and Petersburg, Virginia. Charleston, South Carolina, served as a market for the significant West Indies meatpacking trade. Eastern New Jersey

farmers raised cattle on bog meadows and marshes for sale in New York City, a market that was also served by stock driven from the northern New England hill country. Farmers in the Connecticut River valley of Massachusetts, the first region to specialize in cattle raising, early perfected stall-feeding animals for the Boston market. Windham and Litchfield Counties in Connecticut produced cheese in large quantities for export to the South and to the West Indies. The Narragansett country in Rhode Island developed as a specialized grazing region.

Military provisioning and wartime shortages during the American Revolution (1775–1783) created high prices for meat that spurred livestock production, and the postwar period saw the beginning of an age of improvement. Earlier, communal pasturing of animals on New England commons, with private ownership identified by a system of brands and earmarks, had prevented selective breeding and other progressive practices. Poor whites in the piney woods and the southern backcountry made a living from grazing livestock on poorer lands unclaimed by rich planters, who also practiced a system of woods ranching. Their slaves built cow pens near savannas or other good grazing and forage land and managed the herds far from their home plantation, driving the stock into the forest and rounding it up at selling time. Free-range stock raising was inefficient and unsustainable, however. By the mid-1700s, some farmers in New England and Pennsylvania were creating artificial meadows by seeding tilled uplands with English grasses, but the practice, which provided rich pasture and dependable winter fodder, did not spread until after the Revolutionary War, when improved European animals were increasingly imported by gentlemen farmers. English Shorthorns became the most popular breed of beef cattle in the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century.

An important development in American animal husbandry in the early 1800s was the rise of the sheep industry. Wolves, hard winters, the poor quality of native stock, mercantilist bans on wool exports, and lack of domestic markets all prevented colonial sheep husbandry from expanding beyond household production. But patriotic promoters like Chancellor Robert R. Livingston of New York, David Humphreys of Connecticut, and Elkanah Watson of Massachusetts began building woolen manufactures and importing and promoting fine-fleeced Spanish merino sheep in 1802. American factories created a market for wool that survived the failure of the merino speculation in the late 1810s. The crossbreeding of merinos with common sheep greatly im-

proved the quality of fleeces, as did the importation in the 1820s and 1830s of Saxonies, New Leicesters, Cheviots, and Cotswolds. The center of American sheep husbandry would later move westward, but in the late 1820s it was still located in western Massachusetts and Vermont. Protective tariffs on woolens, passed in 1812, 1824, 1828, and 1832, made possible the expansion of the sheep industry.

The growing population of eastern cities created a greater demand for beef and pork than could profitably be supplied by regional farmers with increasing production costs. Many converted their operations to dairy production, providing milk, cheese, and butter to the growing urban centers. Increasingly unable to compete against western wheat production, the Mohawk Valley of New York shifted from a wheat-growing region after the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, and New York became America's first dairy state. As early as the 1810s, cattle and swine were being driven to Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York from the Ohio Valley. The Bluegrass country of Kentucky and the Scioto Valley of Ohio were two of the earliest important feeder areas (to be superseded in the 1850s by the prairies of Illinois and Indiana). The advent of railroads only facilitated western dominance of American cattle raising by the mid-nineteenth century; it did not create that ascendancy. For example, the stock business in New York State peaked about 1825, a quarter of a century before the New York and Erie Railroad and then the New York Central Railroad first brought livestock to eastern stockyards and later flooded the market with cheaper western meat packed in Cincinnati and Chicago.

*See also Agriculture; Dairy Industry; Food.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, Virginia DeJohn. *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Connor, L. G. "A Brief History of the Sheep Industry in the United States." Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1918. 2 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1921.
- Skaggs, Jimmy M. *Prime Cut: Livestock Raising and Meatpacking in the United States, 1607–1983*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1986.
- Thompson, James Westfall. *History of Livestock Raising in the United States, 1607–1860*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1942.

Mark A. Mastromarino

**LONDON** The colonial period was the only time in American history when America looked to Europe for its principal city. But London was America's capital city in a far broader sense than as the seat of imperial government. Georgian London was the center of the English-speaking world for trade, finance, and banking; the empire's biggest port; the fountain of art and literature; the center of scientific endeavor; the chief nursery of music and theatre; the leader in journalism and print culture; the model of fashion and good taste. It was also the biggest shopping center in the British Atlantic Empire, with shops whose numbers and goods outrivaled even those of Paris. The sheer size of London added weight to its influence. In the eighteenth century, it was one of the largest cities (with a population of approximately 700,000) in the world. London towered above the provincial cities of Britain and America. It was more than twenty times the size of America's largest, Philadelphia. It was the model for provincial cities throughout the British Empire as they aspired to acquire the new leisured urban culture of Georgian England.

What all the American colonies had most in common was their British heritage, but by the late colonial period it was really London, as opposed to England or Britain, that most colonists knew something about. Americans in the colonial period knew from afar London's best-known features and its most famous citizens. Colonial newspapers fed a continuous American appetite for London news, including not only politics and trade, but also court functions, stage gossip, London crime, and other everyday events in the Great City. Essays from *The Spectator*, with their colorful descriptions of the life of London town, were frequently reprinted in the colonial papers of the day. Material evidence of London's cultural preeminence could be encountered everywhere in the colonies. The works of the galaxy of authors who formed Dr. Samuel Johnson's famous Literary Club (1764) were widely read. The trinity of George Handel, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and David Garrick were held up as the standards in music, painting, and theatre, respectively. The productions of the London stage were easily the most popular shows in the infant theatres of the colonies. London fashions were eagerly copied, even in the American countryside. The vast majority of colonists who traveled to Britain were either destined for London or passed through it.

#### CENTER FOR THE PROFESSIONS

With its unrivaled concentration of talent and ability, London was the center of creative excellence within the English-speaking world. Therefore, it drew ambitious colonists from all walks of life: newspapermen, artists, scientists, botanists, poets, novelists, anyone who aspired to reach the top of their profession. Exposure to London standards could have more value than any provincial training. Benjamin Franklin's first trip to London (1724–1726) was as a printer's apprentice. Colonial artists came to London to study under Pennsylvanian Benjamin West (1738–1820). West helped to found Britain's Royal Academy of Arts in 1768 and became historical painter to the king in 1772.

Throughout his career, West offered support to aspiring American artists in London. For this he came to be seen as the father of American art. Britain's foremost scientific institution, the Royal Society of London (1660), was the most important clearinghouse for the collection and dissemination of scientific knowledge in the English-speaking world, facilitating the exchange of knowledge throughout the British Empire and between British, American, and European scientists. It was the inspiration for the American Philosophical Society (1744). Its news and publications were followed in the colonies. In the two decades preceding American independence, American memberships in the society increased under the patronage of Benjamin Franklin (resident in London in 1757–1762, 1764–1775) and Dr. John Fothergill. Although Edinburgh was the foremost university for medical studies in eighteenth-century Britain, London's hospitals were still considered as an integral part of a thorough medical training. The first medical school in America, at the University of Pennsylvania, was established in 1765 with the assistance of Dr. Fothergill, a London philanthropist.

Throughout the colonial period, the bishop of London was the Head of the Church of England for America. There were no American bishops until after the War of Independence. All Anglican clergymen from the colonies had therefore to go to London for ordination.

#### CENTER FOR EDUCATION

Even with the approach of the American Revolution, an English education was considered to be the best apprenticeship for genteel colonial society. An indeterminate number of children of wealthy colonists—mostly boys—were sent to English schools. Many of these schools were in or near London. Colonial youths who attended Oxford or Cambridge came to

London to visit, tour, and get into trouble. Wealthy colonists sent their sons to study law at London's Inns of Court. Between 1755 and 1775, over one hundred mainland Americans registered to study at the Inns, a substantial increase over the earlier colonial period. Most of these were from Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, and South Carolina. An equal number of West Indian youths (still counted as Americans prior to American independence) also attended. Absentee planters and their families from the southern mainland colonies and the West Indies were a conspicuous presence in London by the late colonial period. At any one time from 1763 to 1775, at least one thousand resided there. This made London the foremost meeting place in the empire for the rich and powerful from Britain's many American colonies.

#### THE SORDID SIDE

But London also represented the worst of the Old World to American visitors. Its slums (almost non-existent in the largely rural colonies), its conspicuous extremes of rich and poor, empty consumerism, and appalling death rates suggested to some that Britain's greatness was on the verge of decline. This was hardly an exclusively American insight, but particularly with the approach of the Revolution, Americans contrasted London's sordid side with their own supposedly purer provincial lifestyles. The political career of John Wilkes in the city during the 1760s also brought into focus American fears of corruption in metropolitan politics. When Wilkes was denied his seat in Parliament after his election by Middlesex County in 1769, the disaffected in the colonies drew parallels between Parliament's infringement of voters' rights in England and its attempt to deny the colonies the right to be taxed by their own representatives.

In the thirty years following American independence, London in many respects remained America's financial and cultural capital. The United States was never to have a single dominant metropolis like London or Paris, but by the latter half of the nineteenth century, New York, Boston, and Washington had overtaken London's place as America's financial, cultural, and political centers.

*See also Americans in Europe.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Flavell, Julie M. "The 'School for Modesty and Humility': Colonial American Youth in London and their Parents, 1755–1775," *Historical Journal* 42 (1999): 377–403.  
—. *Benjamin Franklin's London*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2005.

Silverman, Kenneth. *A Cultural History of the American Revolution: Painting, Music, Literature, and the Theatre in the Colonies and the United States from the Treaty of Paris to the Inauguration of George Washington, 1763–1789*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987

Temperley, Howard. *Britain and America since Independence*. New York: Palgrave, 2002.

Julie Flavell

---

**LOUISIANA** During the period 1754 to 1829, ownership of Louisiana was transferred from the French to the Spanish in the Treaty of Paris (1763), ceded back to the French in the Treaty of San Ildefonso (1800), and then sold to the United States in 1803. Not only did Louisiana's ownership change but also its boundaries. They ranged from the vast area of the Louisiana Purchase (stretching from the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian border and the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains) to the smaller area of the Territory of Orleans (1804 to 1811), which did not include the Florida Parishes (the section of Louisiana between the Mississippi and the Pearl River) and which had an unresolved border with Spanish Texas. The addition of the Florida Parishes, after the 1810 West Florida rebellion severed this region from Spain, and the passage of the 1819 Transcontinental Treaty, which established the Sabine River as the state's western boundary, determined Louisiana's modern-day borders.

#### POPULATION

Although the region's borders fluctuated, its population steadily increased from an estimated 11,000 people in 1771 to 76,556 in 1810, 152,923 in 1820, and 215,739 in 1830. During the period of Spanish control, between 2,600 and 3,000 Acadian refugees, who had earlier been expelled from Maine and eastern Canada by the British, arrived in the region; their descendants are often called Cajuns. Additionally, approximately 10,000 people (including 3,000 slaves) emigrated from Saint Domingue (Haiti) after a successful slave revolt there. Most of these refugees came to Louisiana in 1809 and 1810, following their expulsion from Cuba. Finally, after the Louisiana Purchase and especially after 1820, settlers from elsewhere in the United States helped further increase the population. Much of this growth occurred in New Orleans, the capital of Louisiana and the South's foremost commercial center. With a population of 46,082 in 1830, it ranked as the nation's fifth-largest city.

**LOUISIANA PURCHASE**

Aware of the economic importance of having access to the mouth of the Mississippi River, President Thomas Jefferson offered to purchase New Orleans and its surrounding area from France. Initially, the French leader Napoleon Bonaparte ignored Jefferson's negotiators. In 1803, however, Napoleon, fearing that he could not protect Louisiana, needing money for his European military campaigns, and having already suffered defeat in Saint Domingue, suddenly changed his mind and sold all of Louisiana (approximately 830,000 square miles, comprising territory which became all or part of thirteen states) for \$15 million (\$11.5 million payment plus the assumption of \$3.5 million in French debts). In 1804 Congress established the Territory of Orleans and appointed William C. C. Claiborne as governor. The region remained a territory under Claiborne's jurisdiction until 30 April 1812, when Louisiana became the eighteenth state.

In 1806 former Vice President Aaron Burr, apparently hoping to capitalize on Louisianans' discontent with the United States government, traveled to the region with clandestine designs. His goals remain unclear, but some speculate that he was organizing a separatist movement. Whatever its aims, the Burr conspiracy quickly collapsed, in part because Louisianans refused to participate in it.

**CONFLICT AND COOPERATION**

The development of Louisiana during this period is often portrayed as a conflict between people of different cultures, languages, religions, and legal traditions. In this view, Americans saw the people of Spanish and French origin as incapable of participating in a democracy because of their monarchical and Catholic heritage. (Some historians describe these Louisiana-born Europeans as Creoles, but *Creole* can also be used to describe people of mixed race, anyone born in Louisiana, or to distinguish between European and Louisiana-born French or Spanish citizens. Thus, the term often confuses more than illuminates an understanding of Louisiana history.) According to this conflict argument, Spanish and French residents considered the Americans to be money-grubbing, uncultured invaders. Law provided one of the most important arenas of disagreement. The Americans promoted common law, with its emphasis on jury trials and precedent, whereas the Spanish and French advocated civil law, with its emphasis on educated judges rendering decisions based on a strict reading of the law. Generally, common law triumphed in the criminal code, while civil law remained the standard in the civil code. Other historians see cooperation

among Louisianans rather than conflict. In their view, all residents, in the wake of the Louisiana Purchase, sought to ensure their incorporation into the United States as equal citizens as well as the prosperity of the region. Toward those ends, they downplayed ethnic tension and took part in a growing network of cross-cultural kinship, while maintaining a shared commitment to white supremacy.

**SLAVERY AND PEOPLE OF COLOR**

Because of its French and Spanish heritage, Louisiana was less rigidly divided along racial lines than other sections of the United States. Under Spanish law slaves could purchase their freedom with or without their owner's consent, interracial liaisons were greeted with greater tolerance, and the offspring of these relationships were often freed. Additionally, among the refugees from Saint Domingue were more than three thousand free people of color. After the Louisiana Purchase this population struggled to maintain its unique position in society. Although never able to achieve equality, these men and women had greater rights than free African Americans elsewhere. Concentrated primarily in New Orleans, they numbered 16,710 in 1830.

In addition to its free people of color, Louisiana had a significant slave population, which increased from 34,660 in 1810, to 69,064 in 1820, to 109,588 in 1830. Because of improvements in agriculture, including the invention of the cotton gin and an improved process for refining sugar, Louisiana had an almost insatiable desire for slaves. The alluvial lands along the Mississippi River were among the best cotton lands in the nation, and south-central Louisiana had the only land in the United States where sugar-cane could be grown profitably (with the help of a tariff on imported sugar). The growth of the slave population outpaced the growth of white Louisiana. In 1830 slaves comprised 50.8 percent of the population, whites 41.5 percent, and free blacks 7.7 percent. This slave majority, particularly when combined with the belief that slaves from Saint Domingue had brought rebellious ideas with them, fueled fears of slave revolts. A major conspiracy was uncovered at Pointe Coupee in 1795. Although historians disagree on its extent and on the involvement of free blacks and poor whites, they concur that the government acted swiftly and forcefully, executing twenty-three slaves and sentencing thirty-four more to jail terms. In 1811 a revolt led by a slave on the Deslondes plantation began near Laplace, in St. John the Baptist Parish. In what is considered the largest slave revolt in United States history, between two hundred and five

hundred slaves marched downriver toward New Orleans; despite their numbers, they were quickly defeated, with as many as sixty-six slaves slain in battle and twenty-one later executed.

#### THE BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS

Only a few months after Louisiana achieved statehood, the United States declared war on Great Britain in the War of 1812. Landing on the state's coast in 1814, the British army expected to meet a fractured society eager to throw off the yoke of American rule. Instead, they faced General Andrew Jackson and an army comprised of regular troops, militia from several states including Louisiana, Native Americans, free people of color, and Baratarian pirates. Jackson and his men, with a strong defensive position and superior artillery, inflicted a tremendous defeat on the British at the Battle of New Orleans on 8 January 1815. This victory made Jackson a national hero and helped solidify Louisiana's place in the Union. Although the state remained unique in terms of its demographic composition, its legal code, and its cultural traditions, by 1830 Louisiana had much in common with its fellow states, particularly those in the slaveholding South.

*See also Acadians; British Army in North America; Burr Conspiracy; French; Haitian Revolution; Jackson, Andrew; Jefferson, Thomas; Mississippi River; New Orleans; New Orleans, Battle of; Slavery: Slave Insurrections; South; Spanish Empire; Transcontinental Treaty; War of 1812.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brasseaux, Carl A. *The Founding of New Acadia: The Beginnings of Acadian Life in Louisiana, 1765–1803*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987.
- Dargo, George. *Jefferson's Louisiana: Politics and the Clash of Legal Traditions*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975.
- Din, Gilbert C. *Spaniards, Planters, and Slaves: The Spanish Regulation of Slavery in Louisiana, 1763–1803*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1999.
- Kastor, Peter J. *The Nation's Crucible: The Louisiana Purchase and the Creation of America*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2004.
- Tregle, Joseph G., Jr. *Louisiana in the Age of Jackson: A Clash of Cultures and Personalities*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999.

John M. Sacher

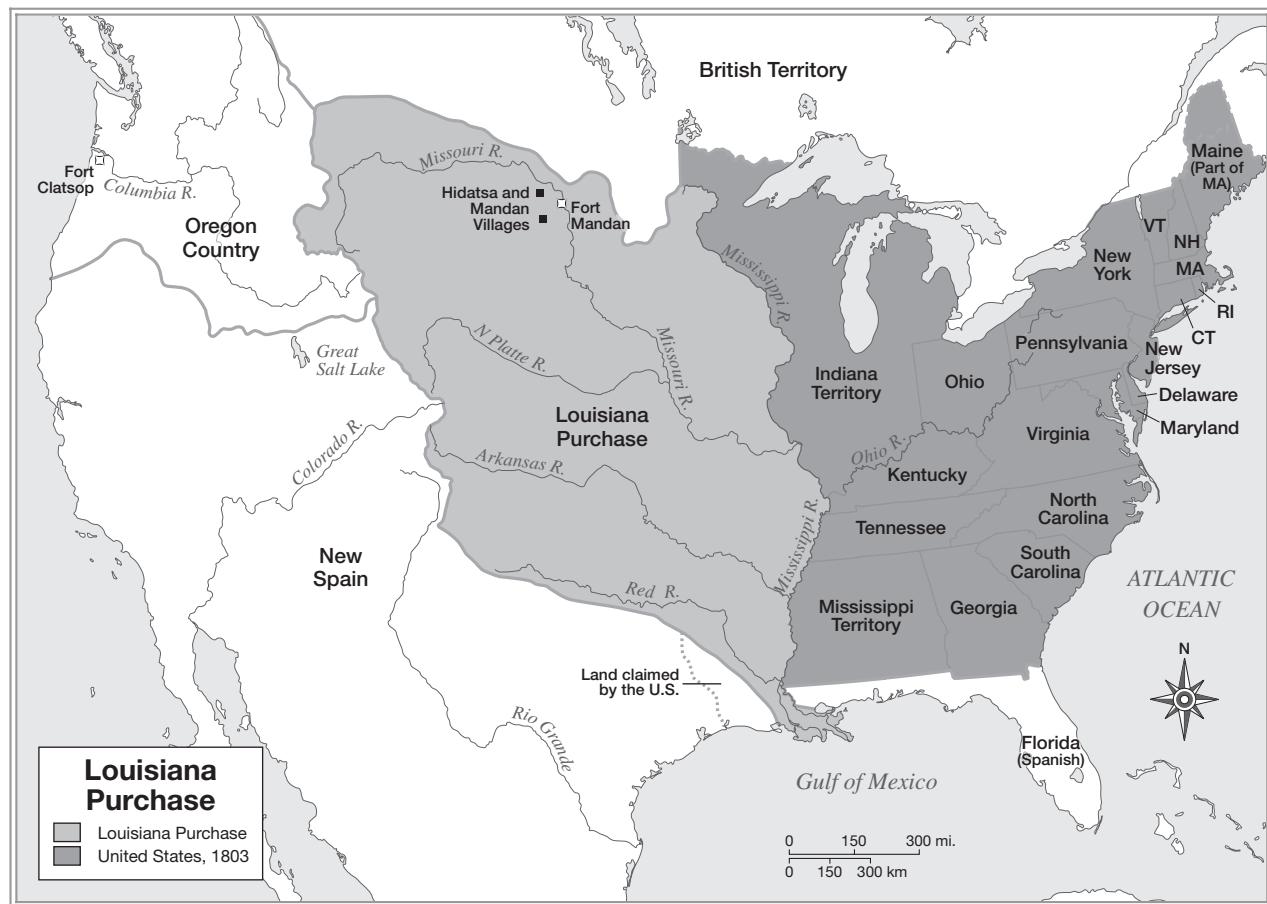
**LOUISIANA PURCHASE** On 30 April 1803, French and American negotiators completed work on the Louisiana Purchase. For a pricetag of close to \$15 million, the United States acquired territory totaling 828,000 square miles. Eventually, fifteen states—Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Oklahoma, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Texas, Wyoming—joined the United States, either in whole or in part, through the Louisiana Purchase. It was, ironically, exactly the sort of deal that the United States had *not* sought in 1803, but which became an event that Americans eventually described as a godsend for reasons very different from the motivations that initially drove federal policymakers to pursue the Purchase.

#### DIPLOMACY OF THE PURCHASE

The French had established a vaguely defined colony called Louisiana before ceding that territory to Spain following the Seven Years' War (1756–1763). By the time the United States secured its own independence, however, the extent of European control remained limited to the Mississippi Valley itself, with Spanish officials governing a predominantly Francophone population. Meanwhile, Indians continued to wield power further west.

Foreign control of the Mississippi made policy-makers in the United States worry about their own ability to secure trade down the river. This concern transcended region or party. Americans were therefore uniformly dismayed to learn that a secret agreement in 1800 had transferred Louisiana from Spain to France, followed soon after by news that the Spanish intendant in New Orleans had imposed restrictions on American trade and that Napoleon had dispatched a vast army to the Americas. In response to a situation that Americans began discussing as the Mississippi Crisis, the Jefferson administration and its allies in Congress sought to acquire New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. Their goal remained simple: to consolidate federal sovereignty east of the Mississippi River, not to expand further west.

The Americans proved unsuccessful in negotiating a resolution of the crisis in Paris because the French regime had other concerns. When Napoleon was not attempting to secure dominance in Europe, he was focusing on efforts to reestablish white power in the Caribbean colony of Saint Domingue, the site of an increasingly successful revolt of slaves and free people of color. The army that American observers worried would go to Louisiana was in fact



bound for Saint Domingue. When the French military expedition collapsed through disease and military defeat, Napoleon abandoned his hopes for Saint Domingue (in 1804 leaders of the revolt declared independence for the Republic of Haiti). Louisiana, which Napoleon had acquired to provide supplies and security for Saint Domingue, immediately lost its value to France. Well aware of the Americans' eagerness for a resolution to the Mississippi Crisis, Napoleon ordered his own diplomats to negotiate the sale of Louisiana in its entirety. Although much of the wording of the subsequent treaty followed a template developed by President Thomas Jefferson and Secretary of State James Madison, the scope and timing of the treaty reflected Napoleon's decisions. The agreement itself required the United States to pay \$11.5 million and to forgive \$3.5 million in French debts.

#### RESULTS OF THE PURCHASE

The reaction in the United States was one of relief, not because the new nation had acquired additional territory, but rather because the Purchase had achieved a peaceful settlement of the Mississippi Cri-

sis. Nonetheless, Americans worried about what they should make of the treaty and its ramifications. The absence of clearly defined boundaries immediately created intense disputes between the United States and Spain. Some members of Congress expressed ongoing doubts that the president had the constitutional power to negotiate a treaty that redefined national boundaries. Although the treaty itself was quickly ratified by the Senate, debates over how best to govern the territory continued for months. Many in Congress questioned whether the United States possessed the resources to govern such a vast terrain, and those concerns crossed party lines.

Establishing federal sovereignty west of the Mississippi would be among the greatest challenges in both foreign and domestic policy during the decades that followed. The United States and Spain repeatedly came close to war over the boundaries of Louisiana. It was not until 1821 that the United States and Spain ratified the Transcontinental Treaty, which finally established boundaries acceptable to both nations. Meanwhile, the federal government devoted unprecedented resources to securing the loyalty of

white residents and preserving racial supremacy over Indians, slaves, and free people of color.

Settling these foreign and domestic affairs was a prerequisite for creating states from the Louisiana Purchase. The first of those states, Louisiana, entered the Union in 1812 after a brief congressional debate. But less than a decade later the second state, Missouri, unleashed disagreements that brought the expansion of slavery to the center of national politics. And the Purchase guaranteed the issue would not go away, for as Purchase territories petitioned for statehood in the decades that followed, Americans were repeatedly forced to reargue the issue. Nonetheless, the successful integration of new states and territories also led Americans to conclude that territorial expansion was possible, and by the antebellum era those successes were contributing to the spirit of Manifest Destiny, which argued that expansion was not only viable but essential.

The new territories carved from the Purchase were uniformly Jeffersonian in their national politics, but each one became home to unique local political systems. With the collapse of the Jeffersonian coalition, the states and territories of the Louisiana Purchase became the site of bitter disputes between Whigs and Democrats. But the primary political division was sectional. Northern states and territories became both antislavery and, in 1861, strongly pro-Union. The southern states of Louisiana and Arkansas became strongly proslavery before joining the Confederacy. States and territories in the middle—most notably Missouri and Kansas—became the sites of their own internal civil wars.

Although creating states from the Louisiana Purchase fueled the disputes causing secession, the Civil War ironically helped complete the Purchase. Only the creation of a large modern army in the Civil War provided the means for the United States to complete its conquest of the Northern Plains. It was over a half a century after negotiators signed the Louisiana Purchase before the United States could claim that it truly controlled the territory.

*See also* **Haitian Revolution; Jefferson, Thomas; Mississippi River; Missouri Compromise; Spanish Empire; Transcontinental Treaty.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brugger, Robert J., et al., eds. *The Papers of James Madison: Secretary of State Series*. Vols. 3–5. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995–2000.
- DeConde, Alexander. *This Affair of Louisiana*. New York: Scribners, 1976.

Kastor, Peter J. *The Nation's Crucible: The Louisiana Purchase and the Creation of America*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2004.

Kukla, John. *A Wilderness So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America*. New York: Knopf, 2003.

Peter J. Kastor

---

**LOUISVILLE** Louisville was founded in 1778 at the Falls of the Ohio River. The falls (actually a series of usually navigable rapids extending for about two and one-half miles) are the only serious obstacle to navigation on the almost one-thousand-mile length of the Ohio. Virginia surveyors working in Kentucky had identified the site as an ideal location for a town as early as 1773. On 27 May 1778, Lieutenant Colonel George Rogers Clark landed on an island at the falls with a force of approximately 175 Virginia militiamen and 50 settlers. Crude cabins and a fortification were constructed, a corn crop planted, and the militia trained on what was named Corn Island. In late June, Clark launched his Illinois Campaign, the successful completion of which helped secure the Old Northwest Territory for the United States at the conclusion of the American Revolution. The settlers remained behind, moving to the south bank that autumn, where they built cabins and a fort. In 1779 the settlement was named Louisville in honor of King Louis XVI of France and the Franco-American alliance against Britain. It received its town charter in 1780.

Louisville's early growth was slow. As the most westerly American settlement, it was exposed to Indian attack and the threat did not end until the conclusion of the area's Indian wars in the mid-1790s. Because of its strategic location at the falls, Louisville's future success depended on the burgeoning river traffic and trade. It became a major jumping-off place for those going farther west (and often north and south). Explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark met in Louisville in October 1803 to form their historic partnership, and the first permanent members of their Corps of Discovery were enlisted at the falls, thus forming the all-important foundation of the historic trek to the Pacific. The acquisition of New Orleans and the securing of free navigation of the Mississippi River in 1803 provided a significant boost to Louisville's fortunes. By the early 1800s thousands of flatboats and other river craft were landing at Louisville loaded with immigrants and goods. In 1811 the *New Orleans*, the first steamboat to ply the western waters, landed at Louisville. In 1815 the En-

terprise, moving upstream, arrived from New Orleans. With significant upriver steamboat traffic now added to the well-established downriver trade, Louisville boomed. In 1830 the Louisville and Portland Canal opened, thus bypassing the obstacle of the falls and assuring an easier and more reliable transit time for river craft.

This economic activity reflected the growth of Louisville's population. From recorded totals of 200 in 1790 and 359 in 1800, Louisville's population almost quadrupled in the next decade to 1,357. By 1820 its population had almost tripled to 4,012, and in 1830 it was 10,341, making Louisville the largest city in Kentucky and the fourteenth largest in the nation. The ethnic composition of Louisville in its early years was primarily English, Scots-Irish, and German, with a small but prominent French community. By 1830 an increasing number of native-born Germans and Irish began arriving. Also among Louisville's earliest settlers were African Americans, the vast majority of them enslaved. Their numbers increased as Louisville's population grew. In 1800 there were 77 African Americans, only one of whom was reported as being free. In 1810 there were a reported 495 African Americans (36 percent of the population) living in Louisville, only 11 of whom were free. The 1820 federal census reported 1,124 African Americans (28 percent of the population, of whom only 93 were free) living in Louisville. By 1830 there were 2,638 African Americans (232 of whom were free) living in Louisville, 25 percent of the population. Although never the major slave market that Lexington was, Louisville was an active slave-trading center. It also was increasingly a magnet throughout the antebellum period for runaway slaves hoping to lose themselves in the city and eventually make their way across the Ohio River to freedom.

Louisville's bustling river trade was supplemented by surrounding farms that raised livestock and a variety of crops. Stores, taverns, inns, warehouses, factories, mills, shipyards, distilleries, and other businesses all proliferated. The growth of population and of business activity encouraged the establishment of newspapers, churches, schools, a library, and a theater. The numerous ponds in and around Louisville that were a breeding ground for mosquitoes and disease were largely filled in during the 1820s, thus improving the health of the area and removing a factor prohibitive to future growth. In 1828 Louisville was granted city status, the first community to be granted that designation, with its greater level of independence, by the Kentucky legis-

lature. As the fourth decade of the nineteenth century began, Louisville was a major western city poised for even greater growth.

*See also Kentucky; Lexington; Mississippi River; Slavery: Slave Trade, Domestic.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Kleber, John E., ed. *The Encyclopedia of Louisville*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001.  
 Thomas, Samuel W., ed. *Views of Louisville since 1766*. Louisville: *Courier-Journal Lithographing Co.*, 1971.  
 Yater, George H. *Two Hundred Years at the Falls of the Ohio: A History of Louisville and Jefferson County*. Louisville, Ky.: The Heritage Corporation, 1979.

James J. Holmberg

---

**LOYALISTS** The old cliché that winners write the history is applicable when discussing the domestic losers of the American Revolution, the Loyalists. Found in every colony, Loyalists were those American colonists who sided with the British throughout the entire imperial crisis, including the Revolutionary War. Too often, Loyalists are classified as those Americans who supported Britain during the Revolutionary War; actually, however, Loyalists were those who supported Britain from the Stamp Act of 1765 through the Revolution. Historians are unsure of the actual percentage of colonists who considered themselves Loyalists, but the fact that approximately eighty thousand people fled the country after the American victory in 1783 suggests that a large number of people remained loyal to the crown during the entire conflict.

#### LOCATION AND STRENGTH OF LOYALISTS

John Adams once remarked that the American people could be broken into thirds regarding their feelings on the Revolution, with one-third in support, one-third against, and the other third neutral. An educated guess at best, historians view Adams's remarks with some skepticism. In all likelihood, but with no certainty, there were greater numbers who either opposed the Revolution or remained neutral. What is known is that the Loyalists were most numerous and politically powerful in New York and South Carolina. This concentration of Loyalists in New York is attributed to the diverse ethnicities of its inhabitants, many of whom believed that Britain and its empire offered a greater degree of liberty and religious toleration than an American republic likely

would, while those in South Carolina embraced and supported the empire for the commercial success that it made possible. Loyalism also persisted in the frontier regions of the colonies, especially the frontiers of the southern colonies from Georgia to North Carolina. In part, loyalism there, as in New York, can be attributed to the ethnic and religious diversity of the frontier and the protection from a dominant Anglo-American culture they thought the empire could provide. Finally, the Iroquois nation can be labeled as Loyalist, for it too supported the British cause.

#### **REASONS FOR SUPPORTING BRITAIN**

Loyalists could be found among all socioeconomic classes, but the best-known and most vocal opponents of the Revolution came from the elites of the respective colonies. Indeed, if the American colonies can be said to have had any form of aristocracy, it consisted primarily of persons who became Loyalists. Most of the elites owed their political position to royal appointments to office, although many of the elite Loyalists were also lawyers or merchants. For example, perhaps the most famous Loyalist, Thomas Hutchinson (1711–1780) of Massachusetts, was not only a wealthy merchant, but was also the crown-appointed governor of his colony. Hutchinson's attorney general, Samuel Sewall, owed his position to not just his ability but also to connections within the British government. Even William Franklin (1731–1813), governor of New Jersey, owed his appointment to his famous father, Benjamin, who used his political connections to secure the post for his son. Thus, many of the Loyalists in the colonial political elite owed their social standing to the British monarchy. The many colonial leaders who received support from the British government were reluctant to address colonial grievances, which only further angered the colonists. Ironically, however, the Loyalists never formed an organized, cohesive body of opposition to the revolutionaries. One of the consequences of the Revolution was the crumbling of the Loyalists' political power, which created a power vacuum that the revolutionaries filled.

Along with the political connections that tied the Loyalists to Britain, those Loyalists outside of politics, namely merchants, remained loyal because, in their estimation, the empire provided the best protection of their livelihoods. The mercantile system of the empire, as well as the strength of the British navy, afforded merchants opportunity for wealth and protection of their wares. Even those Loyalists who were neither politicians nor merchants remained loyal to England, in part because of the protection the British

army provided on the frontier. In other cases, Loyalists did not embrace the republicanism of the revolutionaries or simply wished to remain British subjects.

Support for the British came from places and people beyond the cities and the elites. In the frontier regions of the colonies, support for Britain ran high. It is important to note that frontiersmen did not necessarily disagree with the arguments of the Patriots. Rather, they supported the British for two simple and self-interested reasons. First, they feared the further encroachment of settlers into the frontier regions. Only the British, they believed, would be able to halt westward expansion past the Appalachian Mountains. Second, they believed that only British troops could protect them from the various Indian tribes on the frontier.

A final reason for supporting Britain lies in ethnicity. Too often, the natural assumption of both historians and laity is that Loyalists were either English born or of English heritage. Such an assumption, however, is incorrect, as a very large number—the exact percentage is unknown—of Loyalists belonged to non-English ethnic groups. Among the more prominent groups that for the most part supported Britain in the Revolution were the Dutch, Germans, and Scots. To find precise motives for their loyalty is difficult, yet it is not unreasonable to assume that they sought British protection from what would be an Anglo-American cultural majority in an American nation. They may have also understood that minorities were more likely to be protected in a larger empire than in a smaller nation controlled by local majorities.

#### **LOYALIST IDEOLOGY**

Along with the socioeconomic and political reasons, ideological reasons guided loyalism. Generally, and in part because they never formed an organized resistance, Loyalists did not have the same overarching ideology that guided the revolutionaries. There were, however, common threads of thought. The most common characteristic of Loyalist thought was its conservatism. Nearly all Loyalists of any consequence believed in the political status quo. Undoubtedly, this conservatism stemmed in part from a desire to preserve political power, but Loyalists also believed that any disruption of the traditional political arrangement was hazardous to the body politic. Furthermore, Loyalists tied their commitment to the status quo to their belief in aristocracy and deference. Many Loyalists believed that society could function only with an established and ruling aristocracy—not

one that was necessarily hereditary or titled but elite nonetheless—with each level of society deferential to those above it.

Further evidence of Loyalists' conservative ideology was their use of history in arguments over politics, society, and human nature. Whereas many revolutionaries relied on the theories of philosophers such as David Hume (1711–1776) or John Locke (1632–1704) to justify not only rebellion but also human nature, Loyalists ignored theorists, relying instead on historical precedents or incidents to argue against revolution and to demonstrate an innately corrupt human nature. From their use of history and beliefs about human nature, the Loyalists argued that the revolutionaries were a self-seeking political faction bent on disrupting the status quo by attempting to establish a democratic or mob government based on a majoritarian tyranny.

Much like their Revolutionary counterparts, the Loyalists embraced the traditional view of liberty as being freedom from arbitrary power. Where the two camps separated was on the degree of order needed to maintain liberty. Many revolutionaries believed that order, while necessary for liberty to flourish, must be kept to a minimum; otherwise, it would result in tyranny. Loyalists, again exhibiting their conservative ideology, argued that order was the fundamental ingredient needed for liberty to thrive. Loyalists did not embrace absolutism; far from it, they insisted that political society must first acknowledge and then follow a clearly defined rule of order before liberty could exist. This belief in order explains why so many Loyalists were shocked and terrified at the numerous instances of mob action during the imperial crisis leading up to the Revolution, labeling such action as lawlessness or licentiousness. Ironically, many Loyalists believed that the colonists had genuine grievances, especially regarding the Stamp Act and other revenue-garnishing measures. Yet because Loyalists also believed in the enforcement of law and order, they risked their social and political standing by supporting the enforcement of such measures. Thomas Hutchinson is perhaps the best example of the risk many Loyalists placed themselves under. Although Hutchinson, the lieutenant governor of Massachusetts at the time, opposed the Stamp Act, he nonetheless believed in the enforcement of the act. Although he was not a tax collector and played no enforcement role, protesters stormed his family home and then ransacked and set fire to it.

#### AMERICAN TREATMENT OF LOYALISTS

The destruction of Hutchinson's house is perhaps the most extreme example of what some Loyalists underwent during the imperial crisis. Yet during the Revolutionary War, many of them suffered persecution at the hands of the revolutionaries. Each state governments passed a Test Act requiring persons to take an oath forswearing allegiance to King George III. Anyone who refused the oath could face several penalties, including imprisonment, disenfranchisement, additional taxes, land confiscation, and banishment. In November 1777, the Continental Congress recommended that the states confiscate Loyalists' property. The recommendation came somewhat late, as most of the states had already confiscated large amounts of Loyalists' land. Also, by 1777 most states had passed legislation that declared loyalty a treasonous act. Pennsylvania, for example, drew up a list, known as the "black list," containing the names of 490 Loyalists who were convicted of treason for supporting the British. Although the Pennsylvanian governor pardoned a number of these Loyalists, some executions occurred. Not surprisingly, those states where Loyalists were the strongest, such as New York and South Carolina, had the most stringent anti-Loyalist legislation, as well as the heaviest level of enforcement.

The confiscation of land and other legislative measures were not the only methods by which the Patriots made the Loyalists suffer. More often than facing formal, legal punishments, Loyalists had to bear informal consequences such as becoming social outcasts in their own neighborhoods or being forced to leave their communities by extralegal committees. Other such consequences were losing servants, being denied services, or losing customers. Violent extralegal punishments included tarring and feathering, often followed by forced "rides" on a rail—a painful punishment in which the victim, always male, had a ragged and often splintered rail scooted between his legs.

Perhaps the harshest punishment many Loyalists (along with revolutionaries) underwent was the splitting of their families over the war. As in every conflict with a civil war dimension, families were sometimes torn asunder, with family members taking opposite sides. The American Revolution was no different. The most notable example is Benjamin Franklin and his son William. A fervent revolutionary, Benjamin suffered humiliation over the fact that his son, the last royal governor of New Jersey, remained a strong Loyalist. So angry was Benjamin at his son's refusal to become a revolutionary that Franklin disowned William. Despite several attempts

by William after the war to reunite with his father, the two never reconciled.

Because of all their ill treatment at the hands of the Americans during the war as well as their fidelity to the crown, approximately eighty thousand Loyalists fled America. While a number of states forced the exile of some Loyalists, the overwhelming majority fled on their own accord. Some traveled to London and other parts of England in hopes of either settling down or influencing the government in its conduct of the war. Others traveled to Jamaica or elsewhere in the British Caribbean seeking a new life under British rule. A large number of Loyalists sojourned to Upper Canada, where they settled in areas such as southern Ontario. The overwhelming majority of exiled Loyalists, however, traveled to Nova Scotia, where they lived the rest of their lives in settled communities. During the 1780s, some exiled Loyalists returned to America, where they were reintegrated into society.

The Treaty of Paris of 1783 concerned itself with American treatment of Loyalists in three of its ten sections. Article 4 allowed the Loyalists' American creditors to attempt recovery of any contracted debt owed to them. Article 5, among the longest sections of the document, required the Continental Congress to recommend to the states that all confiscated land and other property of Loyalists be returned to them and that any law that targeted Loyalists be reconsidered and revised. The article also ensured the physical protection of Loyalists who returned to the country to retrieve any confiscated property. Article 6 of the treaty was the last to deal with the Loyalists. It prohibited any further confiscation of Loyalist property and called for the release of any Loyalists imprisoned because of their loyalty.

During the 1780s, a large number of Loyalists, including those who returned to their homeland as well as a smaller number who remained abroad, attempted to regain their confiscated property as provided for by the treaty. Not surprisingly, these attempts led to a great deal of litigation in the states. Much of it went on well into the nineteenth century, with the Loyalists most often meeting with some success. Perhaps the most well-known court cases concerning the recovering of property were the those of *Fairfax's Devisee v. Hunter's Lessee* (1812) and *Martin v. Hunter's Lessee* (1816). These related cases, decided during the tenure of Chief Justice John Marshall, originated in Virginia within five years of the treaty and were decided in favor of the Loyalist, Lord Fairfax.

#### BRITISH TREATMENT OF THE LOYALISTS

In those areas controlled by the British army, the Loyalists obviously did not suffer the violence that beset those in Patriot-held territory. But while the British army afforded protection, the Loyalists often complained that it ignored them, either by not listening to their advice or by not trusting them enough to allow them to join the army. Although there is some indication that the British intended to organize Loyalists, such plans were never more than plans, as the British made no serious attempt to form them into a fighting force. Loyalists were also quick to criticize the inept campaigning of some British generals and the failure of the British to restore civil government in areas under their control. In sum, while the British in North America did not treat the Loyalists with violence, as the Patriot side often did, their conduct was, nevertheless, inept.

Those Loyalists who fled to London were at first welcome guests of the British government. Many of the more prominent Loyalists received audiences with high-ranking members of the British government. Thomas Hutchinson, for example, met with King George III. Soon, however, as the number of exiles increased, their novelty wore off. Many American Loyalists, even those of high standing in the colonies, were treated with disdain and were often cheated out of money and other possessions. A good number of Loyalists who fled to England were disgusted with what they believed to be the decadence and luxury of London. This shock at London's size and perceived decadence, coupled with homesickness, caused many English exiles to attempt to return to their homes in America.

*See also Revolution as Civil War: Patriot-Loyalist Conflict.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bailyn, Bernard. *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974.
- Brown, Wallace. *The Good Americans: The Loyalists in the American Revolution*. New York: Morrow, 1969.
- Calhoon, Robert M. *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America, 1760–1781*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973.
- , ed. *The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989.
- Calhoon, Robert M., Timothy M. Barnes, and George W. Rawlyk, eds. *Loyalists and Community in North America*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994.
- Nelson, William H. *The American Tory*. Oxford, U.K.: Clarendon Press, 1961.
- Norton, Mary Beth. *The British-Americans: The Loyalist Exiles in England, 1774–1789*. London: Constable, 1974.

Potter-MacKinnon, Janice. *The Liberty We Seek: Loyalist Ideology in Colonial New York and Massachusetts*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983.

Aaron N. Coleman

**LUMBER AND TIMBER INDUSTRY** America's vast forests were the most distinctive and impressive feature confronting settlers in the New World. The ubiquity of timbered lands greatly influenced the cultural and economic development of the American landscape. Whether providing fuel for frontier homes or masts for navy ships, the Eastern Woodlands of North America shaped the course of settlement and were central to the creation of a uniquely American identity. The numbers of products dependent on lumber production were many and varied, and the seemingly inexhaustible supply of timber quickly inspired the erection of mills, kilns, and other facilities to process cut timber into various products for domestic use and export to Europe and the Caribbean. In this latter respect, British attempts to maintain control over the "king's forests" in America through taxes and harvest restrictions played a crucial role in fomenting Revolutionary discontent in the 1760s and 1770s.

The ever-present forest was generally considered a bane more than a boon to most Americans, who viewed it with disdain as an impediment to progress and with fear as a haven for evil spirits. Prior to 1830, these attitudes in many ways kept the timber industry driven by a patchwork of full-time farmers and part-time loggers. For Americans in this period, clearing away the forests was requisite for the establishment of "civilization" in the New World—a sentiment that remained salient over commercial designs until the mid-nineteenth century. The arduous process of clearing the land, however, did provide settlers the materials to build their homes in addition to preparing agricultural lands. Dwellings and fencing, particularly the uniquely American zigzag fences, used tremendous amounts of lumber and could be easily constructed with roughly hewn unprocessed timber. Trees used for these purposes were either chopped down or girdled, a common method of killing trees by gouging out a band around their base that inhibits the flow of sap. Girdling was far less labor intensive, but rotting trees proved hazardous as they fell and produced far less timber for construction and fencing.

### POTASH AND CORDWOOD

The clearing of land for agriculture created the two most prevalent commercial timber by-products in early America: potash and fuelwood. The number of trees cut in the process of clearing the land far surpassed local needs and excess timber was usually burned off. For the frontier settler, the resulting ashes provided an important source of cash that helped to defray the costs of clearing the land. Potash and the more refined pearl ash were valuable components in many industrial processes. Also, lye—the liquid form of potash—was widely used in the production of soap, glass, and gunpowder and in various cleaning and tanning processes. Because the soft and resinous forests of the South produced inferior ashes, potash and lye production was primarily limited to the hardwood forests of the Northeast. There, ashes of oak, maple, and other hardwood trees were processed at local asheries, which were frequently the first commercial establishments built on the frontier north of the Chesapeake.

Fuelwood, meanwhile, was another essential by-product, particularly in the colder climes of New England. A household in early America required from twenty to thirty cords (1 cord equaling a 4-by-4-by-8 foot pile, or 128 cubic feet) of wood per winter, an amount easily harvested by rural homeowners. For the growing cities along the eastern seaboard, however, supplies had to be hauled in from the hinterlands, creating another source of income for frontier settlers. Brought in by boats or sleds, the consumption of cordwood was impressive. Between 1770 and 1810, American households warmed themselves with approximately 650 million cords of wood.

In the realm of industry, the advent of the steam engine along with the commercialization of iron and textile production led to increasing demands on cordwood supplies. Charcoal furnaces dominated the industrial landscape of early America, surviving there long after European factories had turned to coal. It required four tons of wood to produce one ton of charcoal, but Americans preferred the stronger iron produced from charcoal-fired blast furnaces, while the sheer magnitude of available timber rendered a turn to coke and anthracite impractical. It was not until the eve of the Civil War, when local resources had been exhausted and transport costs had become a significant consideration, that coal began to supplant charcoal as the predominant industrial fuel.

### SAWMILLS

An early accompaniment to most settlements, sawmills produced a variety of products for domestic use

and export. Nearly all mills were located on rivers, which provided both a source of power and avenues of transportation for logs. These enterprises existed primarily to provide materials for local use, though some surpluses were exported to larger settlements downriver. Unfinished timber for furniture, construction, farming implements, and any number of other products comprised the greatest output of the lumber industry. In the South, many mills concentrated on the production of shingles and staves out of the cypress and cedar forests that predominated there. Staves were an important export commodity, often returning from the Caribbean via barrels filled with molasses, sugar, and rum. They also served the maritime industries by providing containers for fish and brine production.

The difficulty of overland transport meant that mills rarely extended their harvests more than five miles from the mill site. By the late eighteenth century, however, the practice of rafting huge numbers of logs tied together down major waterways was commonplace. Larger mills along these watercourses, particularly the Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers above Philadelphia and Baltimore, processed the raw timber of the interior for burgeoning metropolitan markets. By the 1830s these operations began to supplant the more locally focused farmer-logger as the dominant producer of commercial timber products.

#### **NAVAL STORES**

The British very early placed a premium on the production of masts, planking, turpentine, pitch, and tar sealants used in shipbuilding, which were known collectively as naval stores. The forests of the Baltic region had long been the source of these materials (and indeed, of most other timber products as well), in large part because they were much closer than those of America and therefore cheaper to transport.

By the mid-eighteenth century, however, frequent warfare and periodic scarcity made the Baltic supplies an untenable commodity, rendering American production a necessity for the British navy. In the Caribbean, the economics of transportation were far more balanced than with the precarious Baltic sources, and a robust exchange between American ports, Cuba, and the West Indies continued well into the nineteenth century. In economic terms, the production of naval stores constituted a mere fraction of commercial forest exploitation compared to fuel-wood and general lumbering operations. Nevertheless, the strategic and political importance of shipbuilding materials was paramount in the timber industry. The center of pitch, tar, and turpentine production was located amongst the longleaf pines of the Carolinas, while the larger trees and more developed network of mills in New England provided the majority of American masts and planking. Production and export of naval stores under the control of the crown peaked on the eve of the American Revolution (1775–1783). Following a nadir during that conflict, American production was quickly reestablished and rose steadily throughout the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

*See also Construction and Home Building; Nature, Attitudes Toward.*

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Cox, Thomas R., et al. *This Well-Wooded Land: Americans and Their Forests from Colonial Times to the Present*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985.
- Foster, Charles H. W., ed. *Stepping Back to Look Forward: A History of the Massachusetts Forest*. Petersham, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998.
- Williams, Michael. *Americans and Their Forests: A Historical Geography*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

*Bradley J. Gills*



---

**MADISON, JAMES** James Madison was born 16 March 1751 in Port Conway, Virginia, the first child of James and Nelly Conway Madison. His father owned a large plantation in Orange County, Virginia, and it was there at Montpelier that Madison grew up. At the age of eleven he went to boarding school and at sixteen returned home to continue his studies with a tutor. Madison entered the College of New Jersey at Princeton in 1769. He completed the four-year course in two years, graduating in 1771, and spent the following year in graduate studies in the classics, reading Greek and Latin writers, and in natural and moral philosophy, in which modern thinkers like Michel de Montaigne, John Locke, and David Hume figured prominently.

Back home at Montpelier, Madison passed through a period of career indecision that coincided with the political turmoil leading up to the American Revolution. He played a prominent role in local politics as a member of the Orange County Committee of Safety (1774) and as colonel of the county militia (1775) and was elected a member of the Virginia Convention of 1776. At the convention Madison made a significant contribution by inserting language in the state constitution that upheld the free exercise of religion as a right and not a privilege. Defeated for election to the newly created General As-

sembly in 1777, Madison was selected as a member of the Council of State, an executive body that advised the governor. Madison served through 1779 under the governorships of Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson.

In December 1779 Madison was elected to represent Virginia in the Continental Congress, where he served until 1783. Madison took his duties seriously, participating vigorously in debates, immersing himself in committee work, and taking copious notes of the proceedings. These notes, published in the modern edition of the *Papers of James Madison*, are a valuable source for the proceedings of Congress. Madison, while upholding the interests of Virginia, was among those members who fought for expanded powers for the Confederation Congress to support the Continental Army, including a federal government tax on imports. Although this measure failed, Madison left Congress with a reputation for intelligence, hard work, and integrity.

From 1784 to 1786 Madison served in the Virginia House of Delegates, where he was instrumental in gaining passage of a portion of Jefferson's law reform measures, including the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom. He also helped defeat an attempt by Henry to provide for state support of religious teachers, in the process formulating a Memorial and Remonstrance (1785) that remains a ringing state-



**James Madison.** The fourth president of the United States, in a miniature watercolor by Charles Willson Peale. Peale painted this portrait in Philadelphia in 1783 when Madison was in his early thirties. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

ment of the essential value of the separation of church and state.

In 1786 Madison attended a convention at Annapolis, Maryland, to discuss interstate trade issues. The convention called for a general convention of delegates from all the states to discuss measures to enhance the powers of the federal government. At home in Virginia Madison lobbied heavily for such a meeting and to compose a slate of distinguished Virginians to attend. He was instrumental in convincing George Washington that his presence was essential for the success of such a convention.

In the meantime, Madison undertook two research projects. The first involved reading widely in the history of ancient republics and confederacies and studying the reasons for their collapse. The second was an examination of the "Vices of the Political System of the U.S." Both projects yielded notes and memoranda that formed the basis for Madison's contributions to the Constitutional Convention.

In February 1787 Madison took his seat as a delegate in the Confederation Congress at New York. During the spring session Madison drafted the plan

of a system of government that was adopted by the Virginia delegation to the Constitutional Convention as the Virginia Plan. The plan scrapped the Articles of Confederation and proposed a national government that operated directly on its citizens.

In May 1787 the Philadelphia Convention quickly adopted the Virginia Plan as the framework for discussion. Madison took a central role in the debates that followed and took detailed notes of the proceedings. Despite the defeat of two important parts of his plan—proportional representation in both houses of Congress and a federal veto over state laws—Madison's contribution to the U.S. Constitution was such as to earn him the title "Father of the Constitution."

Once more in Congress, Madison made sure the drafted constitution was sent to the states for ratification. He joined forces with Alexander Hamilton and John Jay to write a series of essays for a New York newspaper explaining and defending the new constitution. These eighty-five essays, of which Madison wrote twenty-nine, were subsequently published as *The Federalist* and have ever since been read as a guide to the constitutional thought of the founding generation.

In 1788 Madison returned home to attend the Virginia Ratifying Convention, where he successfully defended the draft constitution against the anti-Federalists led by Patrick Henry. Virginia became the tenth state to ratify. Blocked by Governor Henry from a seat in the U.S. Senate, Madison ran against James Monroe and won a seat in the House of Representatives.

In the First Federal Congress, Madison took a leading part as legislators created a revenue system, executive departments, and a federal court system. Madison also advised President Washington on matters of protocol and procedure and drafted a number of the president's speeches. Madison's most important contribution in this period was the drafting of a series of nineteen amendments to the Constitution, culled from more than two hundred suggested by the states, answering the most vociferous criticisms of the document. Madison insisted that Congress take up this issue, ensuring the debate that sent twelve amendments to the states for ratification. Ten were finally adopted to become the Bill of Rights.

Madison lost influence with the president as Washington turned to his newly appointed cabinet for advice. Perhaps the most powerful voice in the new administration belonged to Hamilton, the secretary of the Treasury, whose financial plans for the new Republic were distinctly at odds with those of

Madison. The Virginian opposed Hamilton's policies on assumption of the states' Revolutionary War debt, on his plans to fully fund U.S. securities despite rampant speculation, and on Hamilton's pro-British trade slant. The divide between the two men only grew larger in subsequent Congresses as the full extent of Hamilton's financial system became apparent. Madison, along with Secretary of State Jefferson, considered the system, modeled on that of Great Britain, a betrayal of the original principles of the American Revolution and an attempt to subvert the intent of the framers of the Constitution. Their opposition laid the foundation for the first party system and divided the country into Jeffersonian Republicans and Federalists.

The divide was further embittered by the European conflict that arose in the wake of the French Revolution. Madison and the Republicans expressed sympathy for France, which they felt was the legitimate heir of their own revolution, whereas Federalists recoiled at the violence and excesses there. Despite treaty ties with France, Washington issued a neutrality proclamation in 1793, which Madison considered unconstitutional. He attacked the proclamation in a series of essays signed "Helvidius," but to no avail. The tilt toward Great Britain continued with the negotiation and ratification of Jay's Treaty in 1794–1795, which brought an end to a number of conflicts at the price of significant concessions. Madison considered these concessions to be so humiliating that he tried to block House appropriations to implement the treaty. Once again his efforts failed. With the election of Federalist John Adams in 1796, Madison took his leave of the House of Representatives in March 1797.

In his Montpelier retirement, Madison responded to the Quasi-War with France and Adams's domestic policies. In 1798 the Virginia legislature accepted a number of his resolutions, with his authorship concealed, in response to the passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts. The Virginia Resolutions called for the states to protest federal infringements on personal liberties. In 1799 he wrote two essays, also anonymous, for the newspapers: "Foreign Influence" examined British influence on the United States, and "Political Reflections" discussed France and the nature of republican government. In that same year he sought and won a seat in the state legislature, determined to defend the Virginia Resolutions from attacks by other states. His *Report of 1800*, adopted by the Virginia assembly, set forth the case for the unconstitutionality of the Alien and Sedition Acts and eloquently defended the right of free speech.

With Jefferson's election to the presidency in 1800, Madison became secretary of state, serving from 1801 to 1809. Madison's tenure was distinguished by the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France, which effectively doubled the size of the United States. Madison's greatest trial was maintaining U.S. neutrality in the face of British and French depredations on American commerce. His meticulously researched book, *An Examination of the British Doctrine, which Subjects to Capture a Neutral Trade, Not Open in Time of Peace* (1806), demonstrating how Great Britain's maritime practice contravened international law, proved to no avail. The embargo enacted in 1807, employing Madison's favorite weapon, economic coercion, was an equal failure.

Elected president in 1808, Madison tried other economic measures to stop European depredations on U.S. commerce and seamen. None proved successful, and Madison undertook measures to prepare the country for war. In June 1812 he laid out the rationale for hostilities with Great Britain, and a declaration of war by Congress followed.

Madison was the first president to serve as commander in chief under the U.S. Constitution. The war effort was hampered by poor leadership at every level—national, state, and in the armed forces—and political opposition from the New England states. The administration's Canada strategy was a fiasco, and the British campaign in the Chesapeake, including the burning of Washington, D.C., was a humiliation. Only the single ship combats on the high seas and the naval victory at Lake Erie provided a modicum of success. The skill of the U.S. negotiators at Ghent and the victory at New Orleans provided a happy ending to what might have been a political disaster.

Upon leaving office, Madison returned to his Montpelier plantation, where he edited his public papers for posthumous publication and assisted Jefferson in the creation of the University of Virginia. He served as the university's second rector from 1826 to 1833. His last public appearance was at the 1829 Virginia Constitutional Convention.

*See also Alien and Sedition Acts; Anti-Federalists; Articles of Confederation; Bill of Rights; Congress; Constitution; Ratification of; Constitutional Convention; Continental Congresses; Democratic Republicans; Election of 1800; Embargo; European Influences: The French Revolution; Federalist Papers; Federalist Party; Federalists; Ghent, Treaty of; Hamilton, Alexander; Jay's Treaty;*

**Jefferson, Thomas; Lake Erie, Battle of; Louisiana Purchase; New Orleans, Battle of; Presidency, The: James Madison; Quasi-War with France; States' Rights; Virginia; Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom; War of 1812; Washington, George.**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Banning, Lance. *The Sacred Fire of Liberty: James Madison and the Founding of the Federal Republic*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995.
- Brugger, Robert J., Mary A. Hackett, and David B. Mattern et al., eds. *The Papers of James Madison, Secretary of State Series*. 6 vols. to date. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1986–.
- Hutchinson, William T., and William M. E. Rachal et al., eds. *The Papers of James Madison*. Vols. 11–17, Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1977–91.
- Ketcham, Ralph. *James Madison: A Biography*. New York: Macmillan, 1971; Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1990.
- McCoy, Drew R. *The Last of the Fathers: James Madison and the Republican Legacy*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Rakove, Jack. *James Madison and the Creation of the American Republic*. Edited by Oscar Handlin. New York: Longman, 2002.
- Rutland, Robert A., and J. C. A. Stagg et al., eds. *The Papers of James Madison, Presidential Series*. 5 vols. to date. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1984–.
- Stagg, J. C. A. *Mr. Madison's War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early American Republic, 1783–1830*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983.

David B. Mattern

---

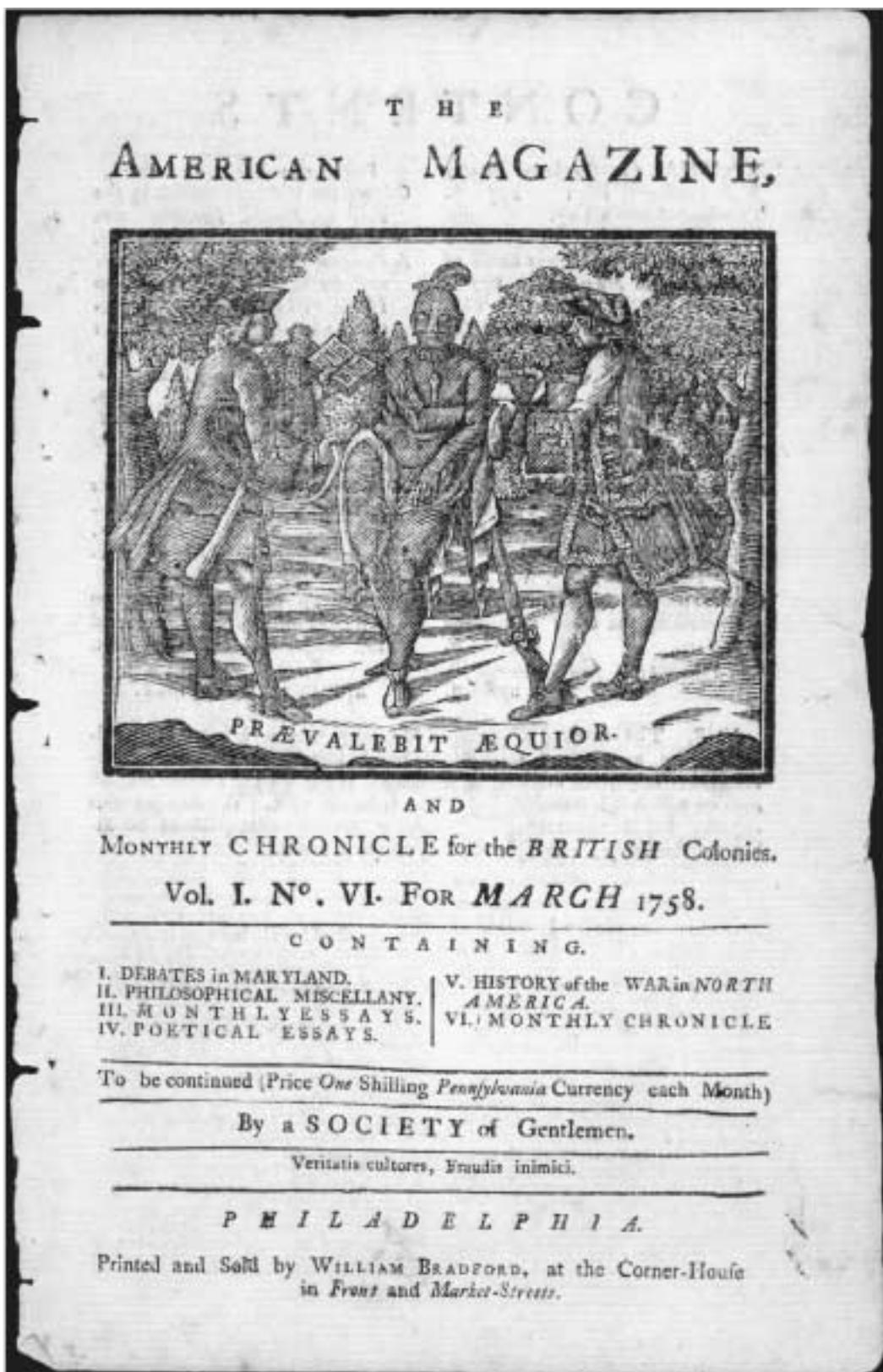
**MAGAZINES** Magazines in the colonial era faced significant challenges. Paper and printing presses were in short supply and expensive, and the existing transportation and postal systems did not facilitate widespread distribution of periodicals. Also in short supply were readers with enough leisure time and surplus money to support magazine ventures. Nor were there enough authors available to craft the stories, essays, sketches, and poems required by periodical publishers. By 1829 none of these obstacles had been completely overcome, but the industry was poised on the brink of an era in which the number, variety, and readership of magazines grew exponentially and authors could make a living by their pens. Thus the periodical made only intermittent contributions to the political, economic, and cultural fabric of

the colonial and early national periods; the story is rather one of gradual growth and laying the groundwork for a periodical boom in the antebellum years.

The birth of the American magazine can accurately be traced to February 1741, when rival Philadelphia printers Andrew Bradford and Benjamin Franklin introduced the *American Magazine* and the *General Magazine*, respectively. Both were monthlies that took as their models the English *Gentleman's Magazine* and *London Magazine*. They attempted to fill a publishing niche between two already popular formats, the newspaper and the almanac. Though neither lasted more than six months, Bradford and Franklin provided the organizational model for the colonial magazine: print shop proprietors founded the majority of the approximately seventeen magazines attempted between 1741 and 1776. Articles in early magazines tended toward sober essays on subjects such as government legislation, economics, and European military campaigns. Often, little distinguished magazines from early newspapers other than their greater length (the *General Magazine* averaged seventy-five pages) and less frequent issue. However, newspaper, pamphlet, and broadside publishing thrived during the era, whereas no American magazine lasted more than three years and most folded within a year. Conditions were not yet right for longer, more expensive periodical experiments.

The magazine also played only a small role in the Revolutionary era, when material constraints were, if anything, more pronounced than in colonial years. The Boston-based *Royal American Magazine* (1774–1775) was founded by the most successful printer in early America, Isaiah Thomas, and featured copper engravings by Paul Revere. It combined Patriot politics with a miscellany of original and reprinted fiction, advice columns, and essays on history, agriculture, literature, and religion. In Philadelphia, Thomas Paine served as editor and primary contributor to printer-bookseller Robert Aitken's *Pennsylvania Magazine* (1775–1776). Though Paine's Revolutionary ardor was prominently featured, so too were articles on love, marriage, and the rights of women. That the *Pennsylvania Magazine* attained some fifteen hundred subscribers—large for its time—suggests that its domestic leanings were a sign of things to come.

Two important early American magazines were the *Columbian Magazine* and the *American Museum*, both published in Philadelphia. Mathew Carey, the prominent printer, helped found the *Columbian Magazine* with three others in 1786. In 1787, Carey, upset by the frustrations of co-ownership, began the *American Museum*. Both magazines lasted until 1792



**The American Magazine.** The cover woodcut from the March 1758 issue of *The American Magazine and Monthly Chronicle for the British Colonies* was printed and sold in Philadelphia by William Bradford (nephew of Andrew Bradford). LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

and thus constitute the first successful American periodicals. They featured topical and historical essays, short narratives, poetry, and one or two engravings per issue. Much of the material was reprinted from other newspapers and magazines, from America and abroad, but they also included original texts when possible. Charles Brockden Brown and William Byrd contributed articles to the *Columbian Magazine*, while Benjamin Franklin and the poets known as "the Connecticut Wits" appeared in the *American Museum*.

Two other influential periodicals prior to 1800 were Noah Webster's *American Magazine* (1787–1788) and the *New York Magazine* (1790–1797). Both contributed to a characteristic magazine ethos—that of a cultivated forum in which an educated aristocracy adjudicated republican virtue and taste. The elite tone persisted through the first quarter of the nineteenth century in magazines such as Joseph Dennie's *Port Folio* (1801–1827), the longest-lived periodical of the era. The *Port Folio* began as a staunch advocate of conservative Federalist politics, but by 1809 eschewed politics for a literary agenda of short fiction, poetry, book reviews, and author biographies to assert its claim to cultural stewardship.

The *Port Folio* was never financially prosperous, a fate it shared with most of its peers. However, several developments during the early national period boded well for the growth of the industry. The practice of unsigned or pseudonymous publishing began to wane, which allowed authors to establish their names as recognizable commodities. Authors began to be paid for their efforts, and Washington Irving (1783–1859) built on his periodical experience to become the first American to earn a living as a writer. Magazines devoted to single subjects—such as medicine, agriculture, or humor—appeared as the industry took tentative steps to market specific products to segmented reading audiences.

Women played only a small role during this era as owners, editors, or writers, but they began to make their presence felt as readers. Much of the material provided for their consumption consisted of fashion, domestic advice, and sentimental fiction, but some articles did cover larger issues such as suffrage, the need for equitable education, and the right to enhanced legal stature.

*See also Book Trade; Fiction; Newspapers; Nonfiction Prose.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Clark, Charles E. "News and Opinion in the Popular Press." In *The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*. Edited by Hugh Amory and David D. Hall. Cambridge, U.K., and

New York: Cambridge University Press; Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 2000.

Mott, Frank Luther. *A History of American Magazines*. Vol. 1: 1741–1850. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958.

Nord, David Paul. "A Republican Literature: Magazine Reading and Readers in Late-Eighteenth-Century New York." In *Reading in America: Literature and Social History*. Edited by Cathy N. Davidson. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.

Peter Molin

---

**MAINE** For most of the eighteenth century, Maine was a sparsely settled frontier appendage of Massachusetts. The French and Indian War removed threats to settlers and helped to spur migration to Maine. From a total of roughly 10,000 white inhabitants in 1750, Maine's population grew to 42,241 by 1777, numbered 96,540 in the first census of 1790, and 151,719 in 1800. The American Revolution marked a turning point in Maine's early history. The burning of Falmouth (Portland) early in the war and the 1779 occupation of Castine at the mouth of the Penobscot River convinced many that Maine should seek independence from Massachusetts. The supporters of separation were often yeomen farmers in the district's interior, many of whom lacked title to their land. Coastal merchants and creditors generally opposed statehood. Conflict over these issues dominated the political landscape until after the War of 1812.

The British conquest of eastern Maine in 1814 during the War of 1812 was the catalyst for Maine statehood. Mainers overwhelmingly voted in favor of separation in the spring of 1819. The ensuing Maine Constitution would be one of the most democratic in the nation, embracing freedom of religion, extending both the franchise and the right to hold state offices to all adult males regardless of race or property ownership, and instituting annual elections of state representatives. Maine's entry into the Union was delayed by the Missouri controversy. When Northern legislators sought to prevent Missouri from entering the Union as a slave state, Southerners held Maine's application for admission hostage to prevent an imbalance between free and slave states. Many Mainers were willing to forgo statehood to prevent the expansion of slavery, but ultimately the pro-statehood arguments overwhelmed antislavery principles, and Maine was admitted as the twenty-third state on 15 March 1820.

Maine had 298,335 inhabitants in 1820, an increase from the 1810 figure of 228,705. Most of the newcomers to this overwhelmingly rural state were farmers who had come from other parts of New England. The great majority of Maine residents were white: only 929 Mainers were nonwhites (Native Americans were not included in the census), and only 1,680 were unnaturalized immigrants. Over 90 percent of the population was either Congregationalist or Baptist. Lumber, shipbuilding, and commerce were important in Maine's few towns, the largest of which was Portland, with just 8,581 inhabitants. During the 1820s the population grew by roughly 10,000 a year, increasing from 298,335 in 1820 to 399,455 in 1830. Much of the growth resulted from migration into the interior. Although Maine's economy did not dramatically change during this period, lumber and land sales became increasingly prominent facets of the local economy.

After Maine achieved statehood, several details of the separation remained unresolved. The most pressing issue was the status of Maine's northern border. The Treaty of Paris following the American Revolution offered an imprecise description of the U.S.-Canada border. Initial efforts to resolve this issue failed, and the resulting boundary dispute would dominate state politics for a generation.

*See also Constitutionalism: State Constitution Making; French and Indian War, Consequences of; Lumber and Timber Industry; Massachusetts; Missouri Compromise.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Banks, Ronald F. *Maine Becomes a State: The Movement to Separate Maine from Massachusetts, 1785–1820*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1970.
- Greenleaf, Moses. *A Survey of the State of Maine in Reference to Its Geographical Features, Statistics and Political Economy*. 1829. Augusta: Maine State Museum, 1970.
- Hatch, Louis C., ed. *Maine: A History*. 4 vols. New York: American Historical Society, 1919.
- Judd, Richard W., Edwin A. Churchill, and Joel W. Eastman, eds. *Maine: The Pine Tree State from Prehistory to Present*. Orono: University of Maine Press, 1995.
- Leamon, James S. *Revolution Downeast: The War for American Independence in Maine*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993.
- Taylor, Alan. *Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: The Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760–1820*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990.

*J. Chris Arndt*

**MALARIA** Both European and African immigrants introduced malaria, a mosquito-borne parasitical illness that produces alternating cycles of fevers and chills, to North America. From the British Isles, the early colonists brought vivax malaria, the great debilitator, that was known as "the ague." It became established in the British North American colonies, although outbreaks were only sporadic in the more northern territories, where human populations were low and adult mosquitoes died during the winter. The African captives brought falciparum malaria, the great killer. Falciparum became established in regions of the southern and middle colonies, alongside vivax malaria.

Both forms of malaria were prevalent in tidewater, marshy, riverine, and low-lying regions of the British North American colonies and are best considered as endemic. In the middle colonies, most malarial infections seem to have been vivax, with its low (characteristically, 1 to 2 percent) rate of mortality. In the southern colonies, both falciparum and vivax infections were common, particularly during the summer months.

The patterns of infection varied greatly, however, between Africans and Europeans. Almost all Africans were unable to contract vivax malaria, owing to a genetic mutation of a hemoglobin antigen known as red blood cell Duffy negativity. Europeans, on the other hand, were fully susceptible to vivax malaria, and because the vivax parasite could lie dormant in the liver, Europeans were subject to malarial relapses even without additional infection. Africans and Europeans also had differential responses to falciparum infections. Many Africans carried a genetic hemoglobin mutation known as hemoglobin S or sickle-cell that afforded considerable protection against the great killer. Europeans had no such genetic defense, and mortality during the first year of falciparum infections could run as high as 50 percent. The differential response to both vivax and falciparum underwrote European American convictions that the European and African "races" were biologically different and thus helped to rationalize the institution of racial slavery.

Malaria was, however, not only a disease of the eastern seaboard. As European American migrants opened up new territories beyond the Appalachian Mountains and began the great deforestations of the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys, malaria insinuated itself into the newly converted biomes. On soils broken by the plow, hoof, and wheel, rainfall puddled and produced ideal conditions for mosquito breeding. A

frontier of malaria moved with the migrants, pushing westward a zone of endemic malarial infection.

The only effective cure during the eighteenth century was to ingest powdered bark from the cinchona tree, which grew high in the Andes. In 1820 pharmacists in France succeeded in isolating the anti-malarial alkaloids from cinchona bark, and within a few years their techniques became known in the United States. In the early 1820s a new quinine industry took root in Philadelphia, and a national market developed. Quinine relieved suffering, but until the late nineteenth century the alkaloid remained expensive and its use was never sufficiently universal to break the chains of infection. Malaria continued to plague the nation into the late nineteenth century and, in some southern regions, the first half of the twentieth century.

*See also Epidemics; Health and Disease; Medicine.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ackermant, Erwin H. *Malaria in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1760–1900*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1945. Reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1977.  
 Kiple, Kenneth F., and Virginia H. King. *Another Dimension to the Black Diaspora: Diet, Disease, and Racism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

James L. A. Webb Jr.

**MALE FRIENDSHIP** Male friendships during the early Republic played an important role in its politics. The bonds between the Lees of Virginia and the Adamses of Massachusetts, between George Washington and James Madison, between James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, and between Thomas Jefferson and John Adams are often noted even in brief biographical sketches. On the other hand, intimate male friendship—enshrined in Western myth and honored in Western history as ennobling and virtuous since classical times—has generally been ignored in studies of the politics and culture of the period. Until its last decade, twentieth-century historians confronted by the devotion and anguish of the love letters that such friends wrote each other have veiled their meaning with a dismissive remark about the flowery language of the times. In fact, intimate male friendship seems to have flowered in the early Republic, fueled in part by the cultural role of the Continental Army and the male bonding inherent in war, but also perhaps by the need to define republican citizen-

ship differently than colonial citizenship. Consequently, it was not shocking in 1826 that George Washington Parke Custis published newspaper articles identifying Robert Morris as the man whom George Washington really loved and who “had the privilege of his heart,” or comparing the relationship between his step-grandfather and General Nathaniel Greene to that of Alexander the Great and Hephaestion.

These intimate male friendships did not generally occur in the absence of women; indeed many of the men married or had sexual relations with women. Nevertheless, the question of whether there was a genital sexual component to any of these relationships is raised by the passionate and—to modern ears—homoerotic language of the letters and diaries, as well as by the argument that intimate male friendship was one of the roots that gave rise to homosexual culture in the twentieth century. We may never know the answer because in the early Republic sexuality was seldom the subject of the written discourses on which historians rely, the exception being political attacks such as those suffered by Jefferson and Hamilton.

#### NOTABLE EARLY AMERICAN INTIMATE MALE FRIENDSHIPS

While early American historians have only begun to discover and study these friendships in and of themselves or within the social context in which they existed, the source materials are rich.

Peter Charles L'Enfant and Swedish Consul Richard Soderstrom began living together in Philadelphia in 1794 when the planner of Washington, D.C., moved to the city to build a mansion for Robert Morris. Ten years later the relationship ended in federal district court. The emotionally charged self-defense that the French-born American put on paper, and kept all of his life, indicates that the lawsuit is better described as palimony rather than settlement of accounts.

Two hours before being blown up in Tripoli harbor, United States Navy Captain Richard Somers gave fellow naval hero and soon-to-be-inconsolable Captain Stephen Decatur a gold ring engraved “Tripoli 1804” on the outside and “R.S. to S.D. 1804” on the inside. A better documented though unexplored military friendship was that between William Clark and Meriwether Lewis. Built on mutual respect and trust, the relationship was strong enough to support a voluntarily shared command over a United States Army unit that explored the North American conti-

ment from the mouth of the Missouri River to the mouth of the Columbia River from 1804 to 1806.

Another well documented intimate friendship was that among former Continental Army General Frederick Steuben and his two aides, Colonels William North and Benjamin Walker. Steuben had come to manhood in a Germanic culture that, as Stephen Jaeger notes, was experiencing the revival of passionate male friendships rooted in admiration of the male physique. North, who believed that the three veterans should live together and that his and Walker's wife should submit to the situation, stood at the center of the triad, comfortably expressing love to both men while at the same time struggling to understand the meaning of the friendship.

Other examples of intimate male friendships include Alexander Hamilton and John Laurens, George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette, Robert Fulton and Joel Barlow, William Wirt and Dabney Carr, Rep. George Thatcher and Thomas B. Wait of Maine, the abolitionists Theodore Dwight Weld and Charles Stuart, the South Carolinians Jeffrey Withers and James Hammond, the Brown University students Virgil Maxy and William Blanding, and, in fiction, Natty Bumppo and Chingachook.

#### INTERPRETATION

E. Anthony Rotundo, who finds little evidence of male friendship in the late eighteenth century outside of the Continental Army, sees the phenomenon throughout the nineteenth century as a rather commonplace bonding between young adult males during the transition between their childhood and marriage. He discusses several such intimate relationships, concluding that most resembled a marriage in which genital sexual activity was not allowed but caressing, kissing and other forms of physical affection in and out of bed was.

Donald Yacovone argues that American fraternal love was modeled on classical tradition and particularly on *agape*, the love of the early Christian Church inspired by Christ's love for humanity and the twelve disciples' love for Christ. Thus, a man's character was measured by his ability to be gentle and affectionate as well as strong. Fraternal love was, according to Yacovone, a remarkably constant and pervasive cultural ideal from the Puritan settlement until the second decade of the twentieth century.

In the most sophisticated study of the subject to date, Caleb Crain mentions or explores several intimate friendships, including those of Daniel Webster and James Bingham and Charles Brockden Brown and various men. John Mifflin and James Gibson re-

corded their relationship in shared diaries in 1786 and 1787, the sources from which Crain so ably, and in such detail, reconstructs their intimacy. That Mifflin's mother and her neighbor Mary Norris both welcomed the older Gibson into their sons' beds is shown to be quite ordinary. Crain suggests the thesis that male romantic friendship was better suited as a metaphor and model for republican citizenship than the filial parent-child metaphor that had defined the relationship between the American colonies and England, or even a marital metaphor because women were not full citizens in the early Republic.

While some attempt has been made to categorize these friendships as egalitarian or dependent, all such categories—other than older/younger—seem to fall apart. Was the Hamilton–Laurens relationship egalitarian given the class distinctions? Was the French aristocrat Lafayette, whose support Washington desperately needed, really the dependent partner? How long, if ever, was the L'Enfant–Soderstrom relationship egalitarian?

Crain argues that democracy's assault on the culture of sympathy and sensibility at the close of the early Republic wounded intimate male friendship, citing Tocqueville's observation that the direct expression of love between men was becoming stigmatized in the United States by 1831. That the wound was not mortal can be seen in the relationship between Abraham Lincoln and Joshua Speed, and, most strikingly, in the many surviving photographs of male friends. The gradual adoption of the concept of homosexuality in the United States after World War I (the word entered the English Language in 1892), and the resulting concern of males that they not be so targeted finally struck the death blow.

*See also Manliness and Masculinity.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bowling, Kenneth R. *Peter Charles L'Enfant: Vision, Honor and Male Friendship in the Early American Republic*. Washington, D.C.: The Friends of The George Washington University Libraries, 2002.
- Crain, Caleb. *American Sympathy: Men, Friendship and Literature in the New Nation*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001.
- Dietcher, David. *Dear Friends: American Photographs of Men Together, 1840–1918*. New York: Abrams, 2001.
- Halperin, David M. *How to Do the History of Homosexuality*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 2002.
- Jaeger, C. Stephen. *Ennobling Love: In Search of a Lost Sensibility*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999.

Rotundo, E. Anthony. *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era*. New York: Basic Books, 1993.

Yacovone, Donald, "Surpassing the Love of Women." In *A Shared Experience: Men, Women, and the History of Gender*. Laura McCall and Donald Yacovone, eds. New York: New York University Press, 1998.

*Kenneth R. Bowling*

**MANLINESS AND MASCULINITY** Concepts of manliness in the dominant culture of eighteenth-century British North America came largely from England. Independence and honor were vital components of manliness in all the colonies of British North America. Independence was probably the more important of the two in the northern colonies, while honor was generally more significant in the southern colonies. "Manly independence" referred to the economic autonomy that came with the ownership of property, generally land. Independence also referred to candor ("manly frankness"); in this era of hierarchy and deference, speaking honestly to one's superiors was a brave act worthy of a man. "Honor" referred to reputation in a face-to-face society, a reputation that had to be maintained in the view of one's (usually male) peers. A man's good name had to be preserved at all costs ("saving face").

A third component of manliness, reason, was considered a defining difference between men and women. "Manly reason," it was thought, enabled men to control their feelings in a way that women could not. This fundamental difference had roots both in the Bible (Adam and Eve) and science (the theory of the humors). From both of those perspectives, men and women were seen as having the same fundamental nature, with men being a superior version of that nature. The idea of superiority provided justification for men's power over women in the eighteenth century.

Age also played a crucial role in the understanding of manliness. A man could control his passions, the thinking went, whereas a boy could not. A boy—and a man lacking self-control—were considered effeminate. Both within the colonial apprenticeship system and in the farming society of early New England, it was important for a teenage boy to live with a man (his father, or his master within the apprenticeship system) from whom he could learn the self-restraint of a man. At the same time, the youth would learn occupational skills from the adult male that in the future would enable him to achieve "a

competence"—a reference both to a set of skills and to an ability to support a family competently.

In the mid- to late 1700s, republican ideals became a part of the period's essential understanding of manliness. In many ways, the ideology of the Revolution gave preexisting ideas about manhood a new language and a vital political framework. When republican theory defined "virtue" as a readiness to put the general interest above self-interest, it echoed the concern with "social usefulness" that was already a manly ideal in the face-to-face communities of British North America. The republican concept of "effeminacy" as luxury and self-indulgence was a short step away from the existing idea of effeminacy as a boyish lack of self-control.

A transformation took place in concepts of manliness in the decades surrounding 1800. One fundamental change was in the understanding of how maleness and femaleness differed. No longer seen as better and worse versions of the same substance, men and women were now viewed as fundamentally different in nature. To be manly was to be active, ambitious, rational, and independent. To be womanly was to have keen moral, spiritual, and emotional sensibilities and a strong sense of interdependence. The traditional understanding that men should have power over women remained; however, that power was justified on new grounds. Common wisdom now held that women were naturally domestic and submissive, whereas men—strong, rational, energetic—were naturally dominant.

At the same time, regional differences that already existed in concepts of manliness sharpened. The North during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was emerging as a commercial region in which farmers and artisans produced increasingly for broader markets. The South remained wedded to a semifeudal, single-crop economy based on plantation slavery. In the new commercial milieu of the North, (white) manliness was understood in the context of open competition for wealth, status, and power—indeed, popular belief held that men were "self-made." The ideal man was someone who possessed the aggressive, self-advancing qualities to succeed in the competition for power and reward. This competition meant that the regard for the social good built into colonial concepts of manhood declined. In its place came a new gender-based model for maintaining the social good. According to this doctrine of "separate spheres," men sought their personal good in the harsh, amoral public arena ("the world"), while women maintained the domestic arena ("the home") as a nurturing place where

women revived the moral and spiritual sensibilities of their husbands and instilled them in their children. Aiding women in their role as moral exemplars and teachers were the values of the Second Great Awakening, which impressed many northern men with demanding notions of piety and restraint (notions that would become secularized later in the century as "character").

The solidification of the southern planter class and of race-based slavery led to notions of manhood that reflected imaginings of chivalry and feudal social structure. Where northern men imputed sexual purity to women and saw it as a force that could save men from "natural" lust, southern men imagined women's sexual purity not as something that would protect them but as something that they as men should protect. While early modern notions of honor faded in the North, they flourished in the South. A man's reputation and those of his family and his wife were central to manly notions of honor that were invigorated in this period among all classes of white men. But there were significant class differences. For the planter class, the ultimate proof of honor lay in the duel, which wrapped anger and violence in elaborate, formal ritual. Yeomen farmers and poor backwoodsmen proved their honor in a different fashion, ritualized but far less formal and restrained. They engaged in eye-gouging and no-holds-barred wrestling as customary practices that proved manly honor.

White southern men were held together across class lines by a common sense of superiority and fear in relation to African American men. White men cast them as ignorant, uncivilized, and sexually dangerous, and these qualities provided a convenient rationale for the system of bondage. Because African Americans were scarce in the rural North, they played little role in notions of ideal manhood there. Nevertheless, many white workingmen in the burgeoning cities of the North imagined African American men as libidinous and uncivilized. These notions arose in the context of economic friction stemming from competition for work between white and African American artisans and laborers in the early nineteenth century.

Although our knowledge of African American manliness as a category of "otherness" is extensive, we know little about African Americans' own concepts of manliness in this era. To the extent that African Americans absorbed or adapted to white concepts of manliness (such as independence and "competence" as economic providers), they were dealing with a standard that they were denied resources to

attain. During the early nineteenth century, freedom (and the act of standing up for it) became known as "the manhood of the race," a term that applied to the behavior of both men and women in pursuit of freedom. But in general we know less about concepts of manliness in this era than we do about many other aspects of African American culture.

*See also Courtship; Domestic Violence; Dueling; Male Friendship; Marriage; Parenthood; Rape; Seduction; Sexual Morality.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Gorn, Elliott. "'Good-Bye Boys, I Die a True American': Homicide, Nativism, and Working-Class Culture in Antebellum New York City." *Journal of American History* 74 (1987): 388–410.
- Greenberg, Kenneth S. *Honor and Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts, Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, the Proslavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, and Gambling in the Old South*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- Lombard, Anne S. *Making Manhood: Growing Up Male in Colonial New England*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003.
- Rotundo, E. Anthony. *American Manhood: Transitions in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era*. New York: Basic Books, 1993.

E. Anthony Rotundo

---

**MANNERS** The story of manners in the new nation is one of increasing opportunities for social equality for some, but not all, Americans. Manners, like many revolutions that mark the era, underwent an unfinished or partial revolution. Trends in behavior codes were transatlantic, and American independence did not greatly influence the pace or substance of change. Yet changing expectations for face-to-face behavior do suggest how the larger political and economic revolutions reverberating through Western civilization were enacted in daily encounters.

Diaries and letters provide glimpses of early American manners, but we discover a broader picture of contemporary expectations in the advice literature written by elites to teach certain behaviors to the middling and lower classes. Conduct literature in colonial America consisted mostly of imported English translations and imitations of Renaissance courtesy works and, especially in New England, local sermons. The courtesy works were nearly all intended for elite men, whereas the sermons were elite efforts to teach the lower sort how to defer.

The mix of advice books, sermons, treatises on family government and other published discussions of proper behavior began to change in the Revolutionary era. New works, generally of British authorship, were written by and for the rising middling sort. In addition, whereas most of the earlier literature had been intended for gentlemen, after 1750, and especially at the end of the century, there was a great deal of discussion of proper behavior for women. Notions of proper behavior in youth also underwent change. In all three cases—the middling, women, and youth—these groups whose status was rising in Anglo-America were given advice similar to that previously reserved for elite adult men. This advice generally consisted of how and when to exercise bodily self-control. To a greater extent than ever before, the concern was with proper behavior in encounters with equals. The lower sort and children were still asked to defer to their superiors.

The era's most popular and influential book of manners was Lord Chesterfield's *Letters to His Son*. Widely castigated for the worldliness of some of his advice—he told his son that the best shortcut to polished behavior was to take up with Parisian ladies of fashion—his work was nevertheless a runaway best seller after its posthumous publication in 1776. Although he was an aristocrat, Lord Chesterfield wrote advice that reflected the rapidly changing social scene of mid-eighteenth-century Britain. He told his son not to make the mistake of looking down on the rising middling sort. More important, his advice revived for an English audience the continental tradition of exacting particulars for deportment—"Remember the Graces!" was his constant plea. The specifics of how to stand, sit, and enter a room provided a ticket of entry into the newly empowered but self-conscious bourgeoisie. His work and that of many imitators formed the core of Anglo-American etiquette for nearly a century.

Chesterfield began to compose advice to his son when the latter was in his mid-teens and entering society while making a tour of the Continent. He was entering the world of adults and was expected to behave like one. Chesterfield and other authors whose work circulated in Anglo-America between 1750 and 1820 adopted a new stance toward standards of behavior for youth. Previously, youth had been taught an only slightly watered-down version of the deference repertoires children were taught to perform in the presence of their elders (or an even stricter repertoire should they happen to be positioned as servants). After 1750 youths were treated more as young adults than as older children. Expectations for

children's behavior remained the same except for the recommendations of the philosopher John Locke, who urged parents to rule a bit more gently than in the past. But even Locke made clear distinctions between the handling of youth and the handling of young children.

Much of the advice to women in the era was a simple extension of the bodily self-control taught to youth and the middling sort. As the culture began to grapple with the meaning of equality in the case of relations between men and women, arbiters of behavior were no longer comfortable lumping women with other inferiors. But nor were they comfortable with sameness in expectations for male and female behavior. Thus began their first tentative steps toward the "ladies first" system of etiquette that would flourish in the nineteenth century. Rather than continue to call women men's inferiors, the new system would turn the world upside down and call them men's superiors—in the social realm. Chesterfield's disparaging of women while urging his son to cater to their needs hints at the reality behind this new kind of deference. It was not the old deference to the strong, but a new compensatory form accorded women who were increasingly deprived of power in the political and economic realms. After 1820, however, these realities were increasingly disguised in such a way as to make "ladies first" an axiom of modern manners until the late twentieth century.

Because manners are first and foremost the stuff of urban culture, these new expectations appeared first in the cities of the eastern seaboard. The books that codified these expectations gradually made their way to the countryside and went west with the ambitious. Many dissenters from the new behavior codes sprang up. Southern planters, for example, clung to the older exclusive aristocratic code longer than did their Yankee and British counterparts; it bolstered their claims to all forms of leadership through the early national period. But the power and utility of the bourgeois code for creating and maintaining a fictional theater of equals served the American Republic at least until the late nineteenth century, when great fortunes and great inequality could no longer be denied.

*See also Childhood and Adolescence; Class: Rise of the Middle Class; Dueling; Equality; Women: Rights.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bushman, Richard. *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities*. New York: Vintage Books, 1993.

- Hemphill, C. Dallett. *Bowing to Necessities: A History of Manners in America, 1620–1860*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Rozbicki, Michal. *The Complete Colonial Gentleman: Cultural Legitimacy in Plantation America*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998.
- Schlesinger, Arthur M. *Learning How to Behave: A Historical Study of American Etiquette Books*. New York: Cooper Square, 1968.

C. Dallett Hemphill

---

**MANUFACTURING** The turn toward manufacturing was one of the most notable economic developments of the early national period. From a series of agricultural and mercantile colonies in the 1750s, the United States had begun to evolve into an important manufacturing power by the 1820s.

#### BEFORE THE TRANSFORMATION

The growth of manufacturing would have been very difficult to predict in the years before the Revolution. Although Benjamin Franklin half-jokingly wrote an English correspondent in 1764, "As to our being always supplied by you, 'tis a folly to expect it," the reality was that during the colonial era the colonists' manufactured goods were supplied primarily from overseas. British mercantilist legislation such as the Wool Act (1699), Hat Act (1732), and Iron Act (1750) was intended to prevent large-scale colonial manufacturing. Colonists for the most part were satisfied with this situation, provided that British merchants continued to pay good prices for American raw materials such as rice, tobacco, wheat, naval stores, and fish. Although some types of commercial manufacturing—such as iron forges—flourished, and some regions, particularly New England, developed a number of manufacturing establishments, the vast majority of Americans were content to stick to agricultural or mercantile pursuits throughout the colonial period. The dearth of manufacturing did not by any means signify a lack of goods; in fact, Americans participated in a consumer revolution during the eighteenth century as the number, types, and quality of imported manufactures grew exponentially.

The American Revolution brought an end to this colonial economic configuration. Most obviously, it destroyed the legal basis of British mercantilism. But several other related developments proved to be at least as significant. During the years of conflict in the 1760s and 1770s, the colonists turned toward eco-

nomic protest as a means to coerce the British government into repealing obnoxious legislation such as the Stamp Act (1765) and Townshend Duties (1767). The most important weapon in their arsenal was the boycott used against British manufactures. Consequently, nonconsumption of British manufactures and production of domestically made articles became patriotic and profitable, spurring many Americans to begin manufacturing projects of their own. Some of these manufactories were built by individual entrepreneurs, while others, such as Philadelphia's so-called American Manufactory, were the products of patriotic civic committees. The boycotts also politicized for the first time America's artisans, who became very active in urban committees, such as the Sons of Liberty, that took it upon themselves to enforce the boycotts. Finally, the war itself impelled a certain level of economic independence as the British army and navy impeded Americans from importing goods as readily as they had during times of peace.

#### POST-REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENTS

Enthusiasm for domestic manufactures and economic independence continued to grow after the war, and many sorts of people lobbied the national and state governments to encourage manufacturing. The newly politicized artisans initially led the movement. In most of the major cities they formed umbrella organizations that pushed the states to implement protective legislation. They were most successful in Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania, all of which enacted significant tariffs on foreign manufactures in the years before the ratification of the Constitution. Some merchants also saw the potential profits from manufacturing. In many cities they formed manufacturing societies that sponsored fairly large-scale textile factories to raise interest in the potential possibilities for domestic manufactures. Some, such as the Pennsylvania Society for the Encouragement of Manufactures and the Useful Arts, were briefly profitable. Merchant members of these societies also joined with mechanics to lobby for government encouragement of manufacturing. Finally, a number of agricultural societies also publicized home manufacturing and larger-scale textile manufacturing as a means of stimulating new markets for agricultural products.

The most famous attempt to promote manufacturing during these years, Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton's *Report on Manufactures* (1791), owed much to these efforts. Co-written with Tench Coxe, assistant treasurer of the United States and founder of the Pennsylvania Society for the Encour-

agement of Manufactures and the Useful Arts, the report urged greater investment in factory production and more government encouragement to manufactures, especially in the form of bounties. Although the report died in Congress, it did spawn the Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures, a multifactory corporation in Paterson, New Jersey, that resembled a larger version of the earlier manufacturing societies, attracted many of the same wealthy investors, and which benefited from a valuable package of incentives from the state of New Jersey.

Technological change and new legal developments were two other factors stimulating manufactures in the early Republic. The industrial revolution was already well under way in England, where factory technologies were zealously guarded. However, new technologies seeped into the United States along with heavy immigration of skilled Europeans—both free men and servants. Samuel Slater, alerted to America's need for industrial technology by the propaganda of one of the manufacturing societies, is perhaps the most famous example of an immigrant who smuggled detailed information into the United States. Slater, credited with establishing modern textile-producing technology in American mills, was not an isolated example; in fact, it was often government policy during the early Republic to encourage such technology piracy. The most important indigenous technological development was Eli Whitney's system of interchangeable parts, which came to be known as the "American System" of manufacturing and which made possible the widespread development of mass production. Additionally, the early national legal system increasingly encouraged manufacturing. Many states offered various forms of pecuniary inducements to manufacturers. Although their exact role is now debated, corporate charters issued by state legislatures encouraged manufacturing companies by providing them a solid legal foundation and, in some cases, state subsidies. Finally, the emerging doctrine of "creative destruction," most famously elaborated in the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Charles River Bridge v. Warren Bridge* (1837), made it easier for industrial projects to proceed, despite claims from local landowners (often farmers whose lands were flooded by mill dams) that such development impinged on their right to enjoy their own property.

By 1808 a new set of concerns further encouraged manufacturing. The immediate catalyst was the challenge to American shipping by the Napoleonic Wars (1799–1815). President Jefferson's Embargo

of 1808 was intended to coerce Britain and France to respect American neutrality at sea. It ultimately failed, but by cutting off all foreign imports it had the largely unintended effect of further encouraging American manufacturing. The War of 1812, which ensued when economic coercion failed, also acted as a continuing incentive for domestic manufacturing by further isolating America from European imports. With the end of the war, many American manufacturers and their political allies forcefully argued for the need to pass new legislation to protect America's emerging factories, resulting in the tariffs of 1816, 1824, and 1828. The last of these acts, sometimes derided as the Tariff of Abominations, proposed to raise many tariffs well above the 25 percent mark and nearly precipitated civil war during the Nullification Crisis of 1832.

#### THE TRANSFORMATION

All of these factors led to a significant rise in manufacturing by 1830. The most notable sector was textiles. Cotton production capacity, for example, increased from 8,000 spindles in 1808, to 80,000 by 1811, an estimated 350,000 by 1820, and 1.2 million by 1830. The most famous of all the textile projects was the large, vertically integrated factories created in Waltham and Lowell, Massachusetts, by corporations founded by wealthy merchants retrospectively known as the Boston Associates. The Waltham-Lowell factories were typical insofar as they relied on pirated technology and were begun when the War of 1812 offered protection from competing imports. They initially employed large numbers of young farm women from the surrounding rural areas, many of whom lived in company boarding-houses. By 1836 Lowell alone could boast of twenty textile mills employing nearly 7,000 workers, for an average of 350 workers per mill.

Further to the south, Philadelphia also was a major manufacturing center by 1830, but without large, vertically integrated factories. Instead, manufacturing there was characterized by proprietary capitalism, a flexible mixture of small, highly specialized, generally privately owned firms. Well over one thousand workers labored in the thirty-nine Philadelphia textile firms that responded to the census of 1820, for an average of fewer than thirty workers per manufactory. Factories also flourished in the countryside, usually near likely sources of waterpower. For example, Oneida County, New York, lightly settled and almost entirely agricultural in the 1790s, supported twenty-one textile factories producing a total of half a million dollars worth of goods by 1832.

But textile factories, while having a high profile, were only one aspect of the rise of manufactures. The years just after the Revolution witnessed the growth of many sorts of nonmechanized manufacturing establishments such as sugar refineries, ropewalks, and small shoe manufactories. New York City was moving toward "metropolitan industrialization," characterized by growing numbers of nonmechanized manufactories using traditional technologies but often employing wage laborers rather than the traditional configuration of master, journeyman, and apprentice. Home manufacturing grew, too. One contemporary estimated that New England farm families manufactured twice as much in 1790 as they had twenty years earlier. However, by 1820 factory production was beginning to be accepted as the new standard. While the 1810 census of manufactures had included all sorts of manufacturers—nonmechanized, factory, and household—the 1820 census generally assumed that manufacturing would be performed outside the home by wage workers rather than by apprentices or family members.

By the time of the Civil War, the United States would be on the verge of becoming one of the world's largest manufacturing economies. It was not quite there by 1830, but it had advanced a very long way from the dependent, agricultural, colonial economy of sixty years earlier.

*See also British Empire and the Atlantic World; Hamilton, Alexander; Manufacturing, in the Home; Textiles Manufacturing; Work: Artisans and Crafts Workers, and the Workshop; Work: Factory Labor.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ben-Artar, Doron S. *Trade Secrets: Intellectual Piracy and the Origins of American Industrial Power*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2004.
- Bezís-Selfa, John. *Forging America: Ironworkers, Adventurers, and the Industrious Revolution*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2004.
- Dublin, Thomas. *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826–1860*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1979.
- Jeremy, David J. *Transatlantic Industrial Revolution: The Diffusion of Textile Technologies between Britain and America, 1790–1830s*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1981.
- Licht, Walter. *Industrializing America: The Nineteenth Century*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.
- Peskin, Lawrence A. *Manufacturing Revolution: The Intellectual Origins of Early American Industry*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.

Scranton, Philip. *Proprietary Capitalism The Textile Manufacture at Philadelphia, 1800–1885*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Wilentz, Sean. *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788–1850*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1984.

Lawrence A. Peskin

---

**MANUFACTURING, IN THE HOME** Historians once viewed home manufactures as part of a golden age of rural economic isolation and self-sufficiency. More recently, they have viewed home manufacturing as a vital link in the economy of early America. It connected the rural economy to the urban economy at the same time that it tied the private world of the household to the public world of the marketplace.

Home manufacturing became increasingly important during the late colonial era and much of the early national period because of political and economic factors. Politically, home manufacturing played a central role in the protests leading up to the Revolution. Most famously, the Daughters of Liberty held highly publicized "spinning bees" at which they demonstrated their support for a nonimportation movement that, in calling for a boycott of British textiles, temporarily bolstered the symbolic and economic importance of homespun products. Others, such as volunteer firefighters, the graduating classes of both Harvard and Yale, and elite politicians such as Benjamin Franklin and George Washington also patriotically supported homespun.

As the colonies moved to separate themselves from the British Empire, economic circumstances again thrust home manufacturing into the limelight. Throughout the colonial period, home manufacturing processes such as cabinetmaking, leather tanning, and potash making held important places in regional economies. But after the colonies declared independence and the British navy blockaded their harbors, colonists increasingly were also forced to manufacture war materiel, ranging from gunpowder to textiles, within their households.

After the war, home manufacturing continued to prosper. By one estimate, New England farm families doubled their manufacturing output between 1770 and 1790, and as late as 1810, census figures showed "blended and unnamed cloths and stuffs," primarily home manufactures, as America's leading manufactured goods. Some entrepreneurs attempted

to promote new home manufactures on a broader scale; for example, William Cooper and Henry Drinker tried to convince upstate New York farm families to produce maple sugar as a substitute for imported West Indian sugar in the early 1790s. To the south, enslaved African Americans continued to manufacture many necessities for their owners' plantations and surrounding farms. For a time in the 1790s, for example, Thomas Jefferson turned a tidy profit from a slave-run nailery at Monticello. Other farm families continued to make finished items, such as candles, and processed foodstuffs, such as cider and cheese. But textiles, ranging from simple thread to high-quality woven products, remained the most important home manufactures. Agricultural societies promoted them by offering prize medals and publicizing them at country fairs. New York's state legislature even offered fifteen thousand dollars in prizes for homespun cloth made from domestic wool between 1809 and 1814.

Home textile manufacturing followed different patterns in different regions. In seventeenth-century New England and Maryland, male artisans had performed many cloth-making functions, but by the late colonial period all aspects of the process—from spinning to weaving—were generally performed by women in the New England household. By contrast, in early national Pennsylvania, women usually were responsible for spinning, but male weavers, some trained in Europe, still generally performed the final stages of manufacture on their looms. Far from destroying home manufacturing, early industrialization initially stimulated it in both Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, beginning in the 1790s. Because this early factory production of textiles was only partly mechanized, women outworkers became a crucial aspect of the new factory system. As a result, women's work was increasingly brought into the marketplace.

This situation did not last long, however. Just as women's work became more profitable, home manufacturing began to decline. One can see the beginnings of this shift as early as the War of 1812, when patriotic literature was more inclined to laud new factories than to praise the female spinners who followed in the footsteps of the Daughters of Liberty. The industrial revolution played an important role in this decline. As more fully automated factories such as those in Lowell, Massachusetts, became more common by the 1820s, there was less demand for women to do outwork at home. Additionally, the concomitant market revolution led to a greater supply of all sorts of inexpensive goods to replace many

of the products previously made at home. Thus, by 1830 or so, home manufacturing had begun a precipitous decline from which it never recovered. This decline altered family structures in important ways. In some rural families, women who might once have spun thread or woven cloth on the farm were now employed outside the home in new mechanized factories rising up along rural and urban waterways. Other rural women found new opportunities to sell processed agricultural goods such as butter to workers in nearby factories. Many middle-class women increasingly shifted their labor away from production and toward consumption and the more intensive child rearing characteristic of the Victorian era, reversing the earlier trend toward female market participation through home manufacturing.

*See also Home; Manufacturing; Work: Women's Work.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Hood, Adrienne D. *The Weaver's Craft: Cloth, Commerce, and Industry in Early Pennsylvania*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003.
- Tryon, Rolla Milton. *Household Manufactures in the United States, 1640–1860: A Study in Industrial History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1917.
- Ulrich, Laurel Thatcher. *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth*. New York: Knopf, 2001.

Lawrence A. Peskin

---

**MARBURY V. MADISON** On Friday, 27 February 1801, John Adams signed the bill for the governance of the District of Columbia. He had but five days left in his administration to appoint a series of judicial officers, including justices of the peace for five-year terms for the District's two counties. Over the weekend, the nominations for justices of the peace were completed and on Monday, 2 March, the president dispatched to the U.S. Senate nominations for twenty-three justices of the peace for Washington County and nineteen for Alexandria County. The Senate approved the nominations the following day, the last in Adams's administration. That night, after the president had signed the commissions and returned them to the Department of State, the chief justice of the Supreme Court, John Marshall, affixed the seal of the United States to the commissions and left it to his chief clerk to deliver and have them recorded in the department's record book of appointments.

The next day, while Thomas Jefferson was being inaugurated as the country's third president, James Marshall, brother of John and circuit court judge of the District of Columbia, delivered some of the commissions to justices of the peace in Alexandria County. But William Marbury's commission for Washington County was not among them. Other appointees, too, did not receive their commissions. The following day, Thomas Jefferson visited the State Department, almost certainly having inside information of what had happened, and "discovered" the undelivered commissions. He ordered them to be withheld and later issued his own appointments.

Later in the year, Marbury and some others appointees brought suit, asking the Supreme Court to issue a writ of mandamus to Secretary of State James Madison to compel the delivery of the commissions. Marbury brought his suit directly to the Supreme Court under section 13 of the Judiciary Act of 1789, which gave the Supreme Court "original" jurisdiction in cases where a writ of mandamus (an order to perform a function) was requested against an executive official. The suit was part of a Federalist Party counterattack against the Jefferson administration. When the case finally came to trial before the Court in early 1803, John Marshall as chief justice, refused to be drawn into the political contest on the side of his Federalist Party compatriots. Instead, in a unanimous opinion, Marshall established the moral basis for the judicial review of unconstitutional legislation and removed the Court from partisan politics.

Marshall held that, as a matter of law, Marbury was entitled to his commission because his appointment as justice of the peace had been completed when President Adams signed the commission; delivery of the commission was not necessary for Marbury's assumption of office. The commission was merely evidence that Marbury had been appointed, as would a record of his appointment in the record book of the Secretary of State. But because he was validly appointed, Marbury was entitled to the evidence of his appointment. It followed logically from Marshall's opinion that President Jefferson could appoint new justices of the peace (there was no limit to the number under the law) but could not deny the position to those already appointed.

Marshall took pains to point out that he was acting solely as a judge in a court of law, and that the Supreme Court had no business interfering in the president's political or discretionary powers. But since the appointment had been completed, the secretary of state was legally bound to deliver the evidence of that appointment. Even at the trial, Marshall went

out of his way not to embarrass Jefferson. He allowed Attorney General Levi Lincoln to refuse to answer the question, "What had been done with the Commission?" The answer, as everyone knew, would have been, "The president ordered me to destroy it," an act that would have been illegal. Marshall in effect was telling the president that the Supreme Court would no longer be involved in partisan politics (as it had been), and by implication was telling the president not to interfere with the judiciary. For his part, Jefferson did not accept the offer and continued, through intermediaries, to attack the Federalist judiciary for years to come.

Yet Marshall did not issue the writ of mandamus to Madison. The chief justice found that the Constitution had already defined the extent of the Supreme Court's original jurisdiction and that Congress could not expand it. The Court could only hear such cases on appeal. Marbury had brought his suit to the wrong court and Marshall dismissed it.

In this first instance of declaring part of an act of Congress unconstitutional, Chief Justice Marshall was careful to avoid saying that the Court could overrule Congress. Rather, Marshall pointed to his moral obligation under his oath of office as justice to enforce only that which was truly law. The Constitution was the superior law to this particular act of Congress, and Marshall, in order to fulfill his office under the Constitution, could not enforce what was not, in fact, valid law. He thus grounded the separation of powers in the different functions each branch performs and the moral obligation of members of each branch to perform their assigned functions and no others.

*See also Adams, John; Judicial Review; Marshall, John; Supreme Court; Supreme Court Justices.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Clinton, Robert Lowry. *Marbury v. Madison and Judicial Review*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1989.

Forte, David F. "Marbury's Travail: Federalist Politics and William Marbury's Appointment as Justice of the Peace." *Catholic University Law Review* 45 (1996): 349–402.

Nelson, William E. *Marbury v. Madison: The Origins and Legacy of Judicial Review*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000.

David F. Forte

**MARINES, U.S.** Created by Congress in 1798, the United States Marine Corps is one of the two services of the Department of the Navy and one of the four American military services. Its legislative legitimacy as a separate service was made clear in the Marine Corps Act of 1834.

The Marine Corps measures its unofficial historic existence from the American Revolution (1775–1783). The marines copied from their British Royal Marine counterparts, serving aboard U.S. Navy vessels for several reasons: intimidate the sailors into obedience; serve as bodyguards for U.S. naval officers; become naval gun crews in desperate gunnery engagements; serve as on-board snipers and grenadiers; and spearhead boarding and landing parties. Ashore, marines lived in barracks in navy yards in east coast port cities. "Marine Corps towns" were Boston, New York, Baltimore, Washington, Norfolk, Charleston, and New Orleans. The marine enlisted force came from uneducated rural and urban British Americans and Irish and German immigrants. Non-whites were banned from the Marine Corps by law to avoid fraternization with multiracial sailors the marines policed. Marine officers tended to be West Point and Annapolis dropouts, ambitious Celtic and German immigrants with some education, displaced southern gentry, and educated and unemployed youths influenced by bright uniforms and tales of exotic foreign adventures.

The U.S. Marine Corps had two predecessor organizations, four regiments of three thousand colonials recruited for a Royal Navy expedition to Cartagena (in contemporary Colombia) in 1741 and the Continental marines of the Revolution. The first unit, known as "Gooch's Marines" since it was raised by William Gooch, royal governor of Virginia, became too sick to play any role in Admiral Edward Vernon's failed campaign. Only three hundred of these marines returned to the colonies; the rest deserted or died of tropical fevers. The Continental marines, raised directly by Congress for shipboard service, may have numbered two thousand officers and men over the course of the Revolution. Other groups of seagoing soldiers served as state troops; these marines served on coastal and inland waters as widely separated as the Ohio River, Lake Champlain, Chesapeake Bay, and along the Atlantic seaboard.

The Continental marines, like the Continental navy, never grew large enough to challenge the British forces but performed well enough in isolated sea battles and limited raids ashore. The most memorable successful Continental marine operations were a

raid on New Providence in the Bahamas in 1776 and two single-ship victories in 1776 and 1778. Marines also fought well in several ship-to-ship defeats and participated in the failed Penobscot Bay expedition in Maine during 1779. By war's end only five Continental navy ships had marine detachments, and the corps dissolved in 1783.

Reborn to man the six frigates authorized by the Naval Act of 1794, the U.S. Marine Corps served principally in sea battles as marksmen in the rigging and tops and as boarding parties. The ships guards, no more than one or two officers and fifty enlisted men, also participated in raids from the sea. The marines of the 1798–1812 era fought French privateers and warships in the Caribbean, pirates in the same area, and the Barbary corsairs of the Mediterranean and in 1805 spearheaded a mercenary force led by the American William H. Eaton that captured Derna (in contemporary Libya) and displaced the bashaw of Tripoli, a corsair sponsor. This action is commemorated in the Marine's hymn with the words "to the shores of Tripoli."

The War of 1812 provided the marines with more opportunities for distinguished service that, however, had little effect on the war with Great Britain or even on the engagements in which they participated. In a war marked by repeated American strategic and tactical errors and lack of ardor, the marines made a commendable impression as steadfast fighters. Marines fought aboard the frigates *Constitution*, *United States*, *Essex*, *Chesapeake*, and *Lawrence* and other warships in sixteen sea battles. In battle ashore, marine companies from the naval stations at Washington, Baltimore, and New Orleans joined extemporized American armies that failed to save the capital but repulsed major British expeditions sent to seize two of the most valuable ports of the United States.

The postwar Marine Corps of thirty-five officers and 1,200 enlisted men (compared to 2,700 authorized men during wartime) continued to serve primarily as "soldiers at sea." In 1820 President James Monroe appointed Archibald Henderson, a thirty-seven-year-old Virginian, as the corps's colonel commandant; he went on to serve for thirty-eight years. A combat veteran and driving commander, Henderson used his long tenure as commandant to set much stricter standards of dress, training, and discipline than were common in the army and navy of that era. He advocated a larger and better navy and created firm bonds between the Marine Corps and Congress. Essentially, Henderson created the foundation of the modern Marine Corps.

*See also* **Barbary Wars; Revolution: Naval War; War of 1812.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Heinl, Robert D., Jr. *Soldiers of the Sea*. 2nd ed. Baltimore: Nautical and Aviation Publishing, 1991.
- Millett, Allan R. *Semper Fidelis: The United States Marine Corps*. Rev. ed. New York: Free Press, 1991.
- Millett, Allan R., and Jack Shulimson, eds. *Commandants of the Marine Corps*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2004.
- Moskin, J. Robert. *The U.S. Marine Corps Story*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977.
- Simmons, Edwin Howard. *The United States Marines: A History*. 4th ed. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2003.

Allan R. Millett

**MARITIME TECHNOLOGY** From the earliest period of settlement, colonial Americans took advantage of cheap, available timber resources to build ships for fishing, commerce, and trade. Shipbuilding was particularly strong in New England, where, by the time of the Revolution, one new vessel was being launched every day. For most of the eighteenth century, ships were built according to traditional English construction practices, with few innovations. Shipping was dominated by smaller, slow-sailing carriers differentiated only by the number of masts, rigging plan, and size of hull. During the Revolution, construction of privateers provided shipbuilders with experience in designing faster, sleeker vessels. The post-Revolutionary economic recovery and explosive growth in trade created a need for fast, reliable means of shipping goods. In the 1790s a "mania for speed" seized shipbuilders and triggered a wave of experimentation with sail plans and hull design.

Answering the need for speed, many builders modeled their ships after the "Baltimore clipper," a late-eighteenth-century Chesapeake design that maximized the amount of sail and cut through the waters with sharp ends and a deep keel. The deep keel proved problematic, as many ports had only shallow harbors. The solution was the centerboard, or "drop-keel," which could be moved up and down in a watertight case to give the vessel a deep keel for fast sailing or a shallow draft for navigating in port. The centerboard had been invented in the 1770s, but problems with the watertight case kept it from general usage until it was perfected in 1814. The War of 1812 again provided shipbuilders with opportunities to design fast ships for privateers. After the war,

high-risk ventures such as slaving, opium smuggling, and coffee and fruit trading kept shipbuilders competing to build faster ships with greater cargo capacities. This competition kept the fast-ship building tradition alive and proved crucial in establishing the basic designs for the great clipper ships of the 1840s.

#### AIDS TO NAVIGATION

Beyond the ships themselves, several innovations helped support maritime enterprise in the early national period. The first lighthouse had been built in Boston Harbor in 1716, but by the time of the Revolution only fifteen lights had been built on the entire coast. In the following four decades, lighthouse construction efforts intensified, extending inland to the Great Lakes in 1819 and southward to the Gulf Coast in the 1820s. Experiments with wicks and lenses increasingly magnified the whale-oil lights, and eventually resulted in the 1840 invention of the powerful and effective fresnel lens.

In the 1750s Englishman John Harrison solved the problem of determining longitude by developing a marine chronometer capable of keeping precise time. The clocks, however, remained too expensive for most mariners, and a ship's position was most often determined by a complex set of calculations based on astronomical observations and published tables. The sextant, invented in 1757, was in popular use by 1800 and provided mariners with much more precise astronomical measurements than had been previously available. The tables used in computing longitude were published in British marine almanacs starting in the mid-eighteenth century but were filled with errors. In 1800 Nathaniel Bowditch, a Salem shipmaster, corrected the eight thousand errors in the British tables and published the results in 1802 as *The New American Practical Navigator*. Just six years earlier, another Massachusetts ship captain, Edmund Blunt, published *The American Coast Pilot*, which contained instructions for entering ports along the eastern seaboard. Both texts quickly became the essential technical works for American navigation; their publication, with annual updates, has continued to the present day.

#### STEAM POWER

The first commercially viable steamboat, the *Clermont*, was built by Robert Fulton in 1807 for use on the Hudson River. By 1815 Fulton had fifteen steamboats in operation, Nicholas Roosevelt had run his steamboat *New Orleans* from Pittsburgh to New Orleans, and twenty steamboats were making regular

trips on the Ohio River. Steamboats burned an enormous amount of timber, which had to be stored onboard, thus adding to the boat's weight and using up valuable space. In 1817 the *Chancellor Livingston* was fitted to burn coal as fuel, and by the mid-1820s most steamboats were equipped to burn both wood and coal. Using the much more compact coal meant a savings in space and weight that allowed steamboat designers to add not only more passengers and cargo, but amenities like dining saloons and private cabins.

Steamboats were great commercial successes on the inland waters, but it was only after the move to coal that ocean steamers could provide services to compete successfully with sailing packets. In 1819 the sailing ship *Savannah* was retrofitted with a steam engine and paddle wheels and was the first ship to cross the Atlantic partly under steam. Later the same year the *Robert Fulton* became the first steam vessel built specifically for ocean travel. Steam was still unreliable, though, and most of the seaborne steamships retained masts and sails. The steamship *President*, built in 1829, was the first to abandon sails entirely, but most steamships combined sail and steam power through the 1880s.

#### NAVAL VESSELS

The navy also experimented with steam, hiring Robert Fulton to build the *Demologos* in 1814. Prior to that time developments in naval technology had largely been limited to design improvements that balanced the weight of guns, structural integrity, and speed. One advance had been the invention of the carronade, a small cannon that could throw a full-size shot, but with limited range. The carronade was invented in the 1770s and quickly adopted by naval shipbuilders, as it allowed the clustering of firepower at the vulnerable bow and stern of the ship. Fulton's *Demologos* was a paddle-wheeler equipped with five-foot wooden sides for defense and twenty guns for offense, but was so heavy that it could only make five knots under full steam. Overweight, underpowered, and propelled by vulnerable above-water paddlewheels, the steamboat remained unviable as a naval craft until improvements in boiler technology and the replacement of paddle wheels with screw propellers in the 1840s cleared the way for the development of a steam-powered navy.

*See also Naval Technology; New England; Revolution: Naval War; Shipbuilding Industry; Shipping Industry; Steamboat; Steam Power; Transportation: Canals and*

#### Waterways; War of 1812; Work: Sailors and Seamen.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Chappelle, Howard I. *The History of American Sailing Ships*. 1935. New York: Bonanza Books, 1982.
- Fowler, William M., Jr. *Jack Tars and Commodores: The American Navy, 1783–1815*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984.
- Labaree, Benjamin W., et al. *America and the Sea: A Maritime History*. Mystic, Conn.: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1998.
- Post, Robert C. *Technology, Transport, and Travel in American History*. Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 2003.
- Richter, William L. *The ABC-CLIO Companion to Transportation in America*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio, 1995.

David R. Byers

---

**MARKET REVOLUTION** In the decades following the American Revolution, the American economy underwent many changes. As the agricultural frontier expanded westward, farmers were more eager to participate in the market than ever before. They lobbied for greater availability of money both to facilitate trade and to invest in production. Legislatures controlled by Democratic Republicans chartered companies to build roads and dig canals to connect the seaport towns with the countryside. Manufactures, once an item solely of household production, began to move into mills where producers could divide labor among wageworkers and utilize machines to produce goods in greater quantity and at lower cost than before. These changes comprise what historians have called the market revolution.

The market revolution did not occur uniformly across the United States, nor did it equally engage all its people. It was acutely felt in the North and the trans-Appalachian West, and it specifically excluded Native Americans, many of whom had participated in localized exchange economies on the frontier. In the South, plantation owners increasingly invested capital and ideological energy in a slave labor force rather than in the transportation and credit networks developed in the North and the West, leaving penurious farmers at a comparative disadvantage to their counterparts in the North.

Still, there was a genuine change in the behavior and goals of a large number of Americans by 1829. The first and second generation of Americans born after the Revolution largely accepted the idea that agriculture should be produced for profit rather than

solely to guarantee the subsistence of their families. They were more likely to use their savings (or obtain loans) to buy land or improve their tools to increase their yield. They were more willing than their ancestors to buy goods manufactured outside the home. This transformation in their economic mindset, realized in the extensive economic changes in banking, transportation, and manufacturing in the early Republic, produced a market revolution.

#### **DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMY**

Although the American Revolution was not fought principally on economic grounds, independence unleashed tremendous commercial-capitalist energy. Farmers and speculators had long wanted to settle the trans-Appalachian West, which the British Proclamation of 1763 had prohibited, at least by law. The Ohio Indians also resisted this settlement, but their defeat at the Battle of Fallen Timbers (1794) cleared the path for concerted migration. Between 1800 and 1820 nearly two million European Americans crossed the Appalachians to settle in the Old Northwest.

Demographic expansion and migration cannot by themselves explain why agricultural output in the North and trans-Appalachian West increased in the early Republic. To achieve more output per capita, farmers had to undertake to change their economic practice from subsistence to market production. Several factors aided this change. There was a large demand in the West Indies for a variety of food-stuffs that American farms could easily produce. The consistently rising price of grain on the Atlantic market between 1772 and 1819 provided further incentive for farmers to adopt crop rotation to improve yield, and in some cases partially specialize in a cash crop to maximize profits.

Although marketing agricultural surpluses became more attractive, the lack of an adequate money supply made investment and marketing difficult, and the poor quality of the transportation network isolated much of the hinterland. Both these issues would become intertwined with democratic politics in the early Republic. In the 1790s Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson articulated two very different economic visions for the future. Hamilton sought to develop manufacture in the seaport towns and prevent capital from dispersing across the western frontier. His plan for the first Bank of the United States fulfilled these goals by creating an attractive and secure investment opportunity that would make capital available only to large industrial projects.

Jefferson and the Democratic Republican Party opposed Hamilton's program of centralization and worked to dismantle it after Jefferson assumed the presidency in 1801. Jefferson appointed Albert Gallatin secretary of the Treasury, a post he would hold under both Jefferson and Madison until 1814. Gallatin sold the government interest in the Bank of the United States, repealed direct taxes, and relied on import duties to reduce the national debt.

The effect of Gallatin's program was to decentralize capital. In 1798 there were only twenty-one banks in addition to the first Bank of the United States, most serving the mercantile elite of the seaports. Eager to obtain capital for agricultural and small-scale manufacturing enterprises on the frontier, Democratic Republican legislatures in Vermont and Kentucky chartered banks in 1806 expressly to provide money and loans to its citizens. Other states quickly followed suit, and many citizens formed insurance companies and other depositories that extended credit. By 1810 there were over one hundred banks across the United States. By 1820 there were over three hundred, and by 1830 over two thousand.

#### **TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS**

One use to which Americans put this new capital was improvements in transportation systems, often demanded by farmers who wanted better access to the seaports so as to sell their surplus agricultural products. In the 1790s and 1800s, mid-Atlantic and New England legislatures appropriated money to build turnpikes that would connect seaport towns to each other and to the hinterland. They built roads of plank wood and stone overlaid with gravel, complete with drainage ditches to protect roads during inclement weather.

Turnpikes improved communication between seaport towns, but hauling grain and other goods overland to market was expensive. The preferred method was by water. Small canals connected some farming communities with major waterways and seaport towns, and several small projects were carried out in the 1790s and 1800s. The longest canal in this period, the 27.25-mile Middlesex Canal, was built between 1795 and 1803 to connect New Hampshire with Boston Harbor via the Merrimack River.

Infrastructure improvements became a matter of national politics after the War of 1812. Henry Clay (1777–1852), Speaker of the House of Representatives, advanced a plan for building a national economy that included a tariff on manufactured goods to encourage native industry, a national bank to stabilize currency for a national money market, and in-

frastructure improvements. Some Jeffersonian Republicans balked at this ambitious national program, including Presidents James Madison and James Monroe. Although Madison approved the second Bank of the United States in 1816, he vetoed a bill to devote federal funds to transportation improvements in 1817. Madison could accept that the second U.S. bank served the public good by creating a kind of national currency, but he drew the line at funding transportation improvements, which he believed should be left to the states. Monroe vetoed a similar bill in 1822. Andrew Jackson would veto a bill to devote federal funds to help finance the Maysville Road in 1830. It would be up to the states to build the nation's infrastructure.

The most ambitious project began in 1817, when Governor DeWitt Clinton of New York signed a bill appropriating seven million dollars in bonds for construction of a canal that would connect Albany with Lake Erie. Portions of the Erie Canal were open for use as early as 1819; the entire canal, 363 miles long, 40 feet wide and 4 feet deep, was opened on 26 October 1825. Tolls collected on the canal quickly paid off the debt New York had contracted to build it. The Erie Canal, connecting with the Hudson River in Albany, opened up the Great Lakes and their tributaries to New York City and cut the cost of transportation by over 90 percent. Encouraged by the success of the Erie Canal, other states jumped to build their own, resulting in a boom. By 1840 there were over 3,300 miles of canals in the United States.

The South lagged in building canals and turnpikes. Large plantation owners held a major share of the South's wealth and invested in slave labor to maximize production of the cotton and rice cash crops, leaving little in the way of available capital to develop a transportation network. With 40 percent of the South's population enslaved, there was a conspicuous absence of a local consumption market for agricultural or manufactured products. Small farmers in the South maintained a traditional subsistence economy, marketing small surpluses to large, cotton-exporting plantations.

#### MANUFACTURING

Improved transportation did more than just bring the raw materials of the hinterland to the port cities; it took manufactured goods from the Northeast into the hinterland. Most manufactures during this period were small-scale family operations that served local markets, although after the Revolution manufacturers responded to increased internal demand for high-quality finished products by expanding opera-

tions. In New England, mills became profitable investments because cheap manufactured goods could pay for inexpensive grain from the mid-Atlantic and the West. In 1791 Samuel Slater assisted a mercantile partnership in Providence, Rhode Island, in establishing a yarn mill at Pawtucket. His small mills were replicated and established in numerous New England towns by 1815.

Industry expanded across the Northwest at a time when labor was still a scarce commodity in most of the United States. New England's intensifying person-to-land ratio, however, left part of its workforce idle. To supplement family income, family farms sent women and children—their reserve labor—to earn wages in the mills. Industry also grew up in Philadelphia, where immigrants arriving from Europe looked to wages in order to survive. Although family agriculture would continue to dominate the economy, wage labor became important to cost-conscious industry.

In 1813 Francis Cabot Lowell and his Boston Manufacturing Company started a textile mill in Waltham, Massachusetts, that introduced the power loom to North America and the mass production of cotton cloth. Lowell's mills integrated the economic processes of spinning, weaving, bleaching, and dyeing (and in some cases printing) and mechanized the labor process. Lowell also built dormitories to house young female laborers.

Large factories were rare in the early Republic, as most industry was small-scale, relied on labor expertise rather than mechanization, and could not afford to integrate different aspects of the production process under one roof. But owners of small manufactures consciously worked to increase profits by investing capital and streamlining the productive process, particularly through more efficient divisions of labor. By dividing up tasks, manufacturers could increase output and reduce costs.

All of these changes were indicative of and fueled by a new entrepreneurial spirit in the early Republic. Although elements of the traditional, subsistence-based economy survived into the early Republic, noticeably in the South, the country as a whole was remarkably different by 1829. Farmers, tradesmen, merchants, and manufacturers increasingly devoted more resources to investment in their productive processes. They clamored for easy credit to expand operations and built roads and canals to integrate seaports and the hinterland. All this signaled a widespread acceptance of the aggressive pursuit of profit, making the market revolution a reality for the people of the early Republic.

*See also Agriculture: Agricultural Improvement; Agriculture: Agricultural Technology; Bank of the United States; Class: Development of the Working Class; Cotton; Cotton Gin; Currency and Coinage; Democratic Republicans; Economic Development; Economic Theory; Election of 1800; Erie Canal; Expansion; Fallen Timbers, Battle of; Farm Making; Federalists; Hamilton's Economic Plan; Jackson, Andrew; Manufacturing; Manufacturing, in the Home; Material Culture; Plantation, The; Presidency, The; James Madison; Presidency, The: James Monroe; Presidency, The: Thomas Jefferson; Proclamation of 1763; Revolution: Impact on the Economy; Transportation: Canals and Waterways; Transportation: Roads and Turnpikes; War of 1812; Work: Agricultural Labor; Work: Factory Labor; Work: Women's Work.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Appleby, Joyce O. *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s*. New York: New York University Press, 1984.
- Foster, A. Kristen. *Moral Visions and Material Ambitions: Philadelphia Struggles to Define the Republic, 1776–1836*. Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2004.
- Gilje, Paul A. *Wages of Independence: Capitalism in the Early American Republic*. Madison, Wis.: Madison House, 1997.
- Lamoreaux, Naomi R. "Rethinking the Transition to Capitalism in the Early American Northeast." *Journal of American History* 90 (2003): 437–462.
- Sellers, Charles G. *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815–1846*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Taylor, George R. *The Transportation Revolution, 1815–1860*. New York: Rinehart, 1951; Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1989.

H. Robert Baker

**MARRIAGE** In the period from 1754 to 1830, marriage was defined in a relatively constrained and uniform way. Among Euro-Americans, who almost universally married, it meant a monogamous, consensual legal union between a man and a woman. Men were obligated by law to provide for and govern their wives, while women were to obey and aid their husbands. Love and affection were encouraged and often expected in the relationship; law, religion, and



**Eighteenth-Century American Wedding Dress.** An elaborate yellow bridal gown dating to around 1764. © MICHAEL FREEMAN/CORBIS.

community standards dictated that sexual relations be kept within its bounds. Marriage was thus both a public institution shaped by the larger society through law and societal expectations and a private relationship influenced by the interaction and negotiation of the couples themselves.

#### MARRIAGE LAW

Marriage law was set by the individual colonies (and later the states). These laws regulated who could marry and when, what obligations spouses lived under, who could officiate in ceremonies, and when and how marriages could be terminated. During the period from 1750 to 1830, the beginnings of a social and legal shift gradually increased individual choice and diversity in marriage. In the pre-Revolution Chesapeake region, for example, many people entered into common-law marriages largely because of the scarcity of Anglican priests; new laws eventually allowed magistrates also to conduct ceremonies, giving Tidewater residents more opportunity to marry legally if they so chose. Divorce also became slightly more available in many states by 1830. An exception

to this loosening of legal control was the maintenance of statutes restricting sex outside of marriage (despite growing nonconformance to this standard) and interracial marriage.

#### THE REVOLUTION AND RIGHTS IN MARRIAGE

The Revolutionary War's impact on the demographics of marriage was limited—there were more widows and a slightly higher number of divorces and desertions. However, the war did contribute to a dialogue about the nature of marriage and marriage law. Commentators influenced by Enlightenment ideas of contractualism began writing less about hierarchy and more about union and consent. This trend later contributed to the passage of mid- to late-nineteenth-century laws liberalizing divorce and guaranteeing married women's property. Colonial marriage entailed the serious inequity of coverture: upon marriage, a woman's legal identity was subsumed or "covered" by her husband's, and she ceased to exist as a legal being. She could not own property, make contracts, testify against her husband, file suit, and so on. These restrictions show that during this time marriage law allowed men to exercise considerable power over wives. Still, the rhetoric of the Revolution contributed to a language and dialogue that eventually was used to challenge coverture.

#### COMPANIONATE MARRIAGE

A corollary development to the changes in law and legal thinking about marriage was the rise of the middle-class companionate marriage. In the flux of complex social and economic changes shaping the new nation, families lost many of their economic and social functions on the path to becoming middle class. Marriage became less about the transfer of property and more about emotional fulfillment. By 1830 middle-class parents were allowing their children to make their own choices in marriage. Parents might steer children away from undesirable suitors of the wrong social group, but couples made their own choices based on mutual attraction and esteem. Companionate marriages also often included family limitation. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, births per white woman began a gradual decline that continued through the century, from 7 in 1800 to 3.5 in 1900. This revolution had immense implications for marriages, ranging from improved health for women to changes in child rearing and the role of the provider.

Ceremonies surrounding marriage reflected the companionate ideal. The practice of publishing banns (public announcements of marriage) died out, and

church weddings with more elaborate rituals, including the exchange of rings, became more common. In the South elaborate marriage celebrations became signs of rank to separate the elite from the lower classes.

#### AFRICAN AMERICAN AND NATIVE AMERICAN MARRIAGES

For most African Americans during this period the constraints of the institution of slavery dominated marriage. Slaves lacked the freedom to express consent, and thus owners theorized that slaves could not legally enter into the contract of marriage. More important, the cold economics of slavery required the absence of any legal marriage contract that would hinder the owner's ability to sell a slave. Therefore, the laws of most colonies, and later states, did not recognize slave marriage. Most slaves, however, wedded unofficially, using ceremonies conducted by preachers or by their own word, often ritually "jumping the broom." That these marriages had weight with both blacks and whites is evidenced by the fact that many slaves remained with the same spouse till death. Still, slavery prevented African Americans from fulfilling the male and female roles traditionally held in either African or white American society. Slave men, for example, could rarely provide for their wives or protect them from abuse by owners. Many slave women had no choice but to neglect children and home to cook and clean in the big house or labor in the fields. Neither could ultimately protect a child or spouse from sale and separation. Ironically, because of these disruptions to traditional roles, slave marriages were probably more egalitarian than white marriages during these years.

Among Native Americans there was a greater diversity of marriage practices than among whites or blacks. Although most men and women lived in monogamous relationships, most groups allowed men to marry more than one wife. Among Plains groups and West Coast tribes, for example, polygamy was fairly common. Some tribes placed no restrictions on premarital sex, and a few allowed married men sexual relations outside of marriage while their wives were pregnant or nursing. Widows often married a brother of their deceased husbands, and some widowers were expected to marry an unmarried sister of their deceased wives. Native Americans also tended to marry earlier than whites—women as early as twelve to fifteen years old and men generally in their late teens and early twenties. Perhaps the most striking difference was the number of matrilineal societies. Hunting-oriented groups, like the Sioux and Cheyenne, tended to be patrilineal, passing property

and authority through male lines, but among tribes where women did much of the essential work of farming, matrilineality was common. Among the Iroquois and the Pueblos, for example, marriage for a man meant moving into his wife's extended family. Divorce was generally available among most groups, often requiring nothing more than the decision of one spouse to terminate the marriage. By 1830, however, many native marriage practices were lost to the pressures of Euro-American encroachment.

*See also African Americans: African American Life and Culture; Childbirth and Childbearing; Courtship; Law: Women and the Law; Manliness and Masculinity; Parenthood; Sexuality; Sexual Morality; Women: Rights.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cott, Nancy F. *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000.
- Godbeer, Richard. *Sexual Revolution in Early America: Gender Relations in the American Experience*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.
- Hartog, Hendrik. *Man and Wife in America: A History*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000.
- Jabour, Anya. *Marriage in the Early Republic: Elizabeth and William Wirt and the Companionate Ideal*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.
- Mintz, Steven, and Susan Kellogg. *Domestic Revolutions: A Social History of American Family Life*. New York: Free Press, 1988.

Shawn Johansen

---

**MARSHALL, JOHN** John Marshall, the greatest chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, was born on 24 September 1755 in Fauquier County, Virginia, and was the oldest of fifteen children. He married Mary Ambler in 1783 and they had ten children.

Prior to his appointment to the Supreme Court by President John Adams early in 1801, he had distinguished himself in numerous areas of public service. Marshall was a successful lawyer, practicing in the area of Richmond, Virginia, and specializing in debt cases. He argued, unsuccessfully, one case before the Supreme Court—*Ware v. Hylton* (1796). He was a soldier in the American Revolution, served several terms in the Virginia legislature, and was a diplomat to France. He refused several offers to serve in government, most notably as U.S. attorney general and as an assistant Supreme Court justice. He served

in Congress from 1799 to 1800 and then briefly as President John Adams's secretary of state.

When Adams sent Marshall's nomination to the U.S. Senate in January 1801, the Federalists were still in control, but most were not enthusiastic about the nomination; this caused some delay in confirmation. Nevertheless, Marshall assumed his duties on 5 March 1801, becoming the highest-ranking Federalist in the new Democratic Republican era that began after 1800. For the first time in the nation's history, the Democratic Republicans controlled the House, the Senate, and the presidency. Federalists thought the country would never survive Republican governance. The Republicans, on the other hand looked unfavorably upon the federal judiciary as the last stronghold of Federalist influence. The feelings of the Republicans were only strengthened by the last-minute passage of the Judiciary Act of 1801, which was an attempt by Federalists to put their party in firm control of the judiciary after having lost control of the other two branches of the government. This put Marshall, just as he arrived on the Court, right at the center of President Thomas Jefferson's assault on the federal judiciary.

Marshall worked quite hard and, for the most part, was successful in persuading the Court to produce single "opinions of the court"—except for dissents—so the Court's decision would be clear, strengthening the Court. To further this goal he convinced the rest of the Court to cease the practice of *seriatim* opinions by which each justice had written his own opinion for each case. To have one Court opinion and usually to have unanimity in support of that opinion was one of the many things Marshall did to help the Court achieve equal footing with the other two branches of government. In most of the unanimous opinions, at least in the significant cases, it was Marshall who wrote the opinion of the Court.

Most, if not all, of Marshall's noteworthy opinions increased the power of the federal government at the expense of the states. One case that does not fit this description but the one for which, perhaps, Marshall is best known, is *Marbury v. Madison* (1803). His opinion gave the first clear articulation of the principle of judicial review by the Supreme Court. This opinion was carefully crafted, keeping in mind Jefferson's battle with the courts and attempting not to give him more ammunition in his effort to check the influence of the judiciary.

Marshall used a case-by-case approach in attempting to strengthen the federal government. In *Fletcher v. Peck* (1810) his opinion furthered the goal

of judicial nationalization, using the contract clause of the Constitution as the instrument.

His opinion in *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819) used federal supremacy as its dominant theme. This opinion restrained the actions of state legislatures, but it also freed Congress by giving judicial approval to the loose construction of the Constitution, particularly Article I, section 8, clause 18, the necessary and proper or elastic clause.

Marshall and the Court issued a strong justification and defense for judicial review in upholding the right of the Supreme Court to review decisions of state courts in *Cohens v. Virginia* (1821). In *Gibbons v. Ogden* (1824) Marshall's opinion held that Congress had the power to regulate interstate commerce. His opinion was written broadly so that his opinion and its findings would not become antiquated.

Marshall's greatest period of influence was the first ten years of his tenure. From 1811 to 1823 his importance declined, in part due to the personnel on the Court with him—Justices Joseph Story and William Johnson, for instance—being great justices in their own right. After *Gibbons*, Marshall's influence on the Court, particularly in conference (meetings of the justices alone), began declining further, reaching a low point in the early 1830s. Marshall died 6 July 1835.

*See also Fletcher v. Peck; Gibbons v. Ogden; Judiciary Acts of 1801 and 1802; Marbury v. Madison; McCulloch v. Maryland; Presidency, The: John Adams; Presidency, The: Thomas Jefferson; Supreme Court; Supreme Court Justices.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Newmyer, R. Kent. *John Marshall and the Heroic Age of the Supreme Court*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001.
- Smith, Jean Edward. *John Marshall: Definer of a Nation*. New York: Holt, 1996.

J. Mark Alcorn

---

**MARTIN V. HUNTER'S LESSEE** The case of *Martin v. Hunter's Lessee* (1816) helped shape the jurisprudence of the early Republic by confirming the power of the U.S. Supreme Court to review decisions of state courts. In this case the U.S. Supreme Court reversed a decision by Virginia's highest court. The issues in the case involved the Constitution and the Judiciary Act of 1789, which was one of the first acts

passed by Congress. Article VI of the U.S. Constitution provided that the Constitution itself and all laws and treaties made under it "shall be the supreme Law of the Land" and that "the Judges in every State" were obligated to enforce the Constitution, laws, and treaties. Section 25 of the Judiciary Act empowered the U.S. Supreme Court to review cases from the highest courts of the states if those cases involved a federal law or treaty. In *Martin v. Hunter's Lessee*, the Supreme Court upheld and implemented this provision of the Constitution over the objections of the state of Virginia.

The case involved tens of thousands of acres of land in Virginia that belonged to Thomas, Lord Fairfax, before the Revolution. Fairfax fled to England during the conflict and died there in 1781. His estate went to his nephew, Denny Martin, who was a British citizen. Lord Fairfax required that to claim this land, Martin must change his name to Fairfax, which he readily did. In 1782, with the Revolution still raging, Virginia passed legislation to take the Fairfax lands from the family on the grounds that aliens could not inherit land in the state. David Hunter subsequently bought some of these lands from the state and began a suit to force Fairfax's heirs to vacate the lands. By this time the land had passed to Denny Fairfax's brother, General Philip Martin, who argued that under the Treaty of Paris (1783), which ended the Revolution, and Jay's Treaty (1794), Virginia was obligated to return the lands to their rightful owners. By the time the case reached the Supreme Court, Martin had sold some of his interest in the land to a group of investors that included Chief Justice John Marshall. Thus, the chief justice did not participate in the case.

In *Fairfax's Devisee v. Hunter's Lessee* (1813), the Supreme Court upheld Martin's claim. However, the Virginia Court of Appeals refused to accept this result and issued an opinion declaring the U.S. Supreme Court had no jurisdiction to review the decision of a state court and that the judges of Virginia were not obligated to obey the Supreme Court. In 1816 the case was back before the Supreme Court as *Martin v. Hunter's Lessee*. At this point the case was deeply tied to both Virginia politics and the politics of the early nation. Judge Spencer Roane of Virginia, who was the most important figure on his court, despised John Marshall and was a close ally of Thomas Jefferson. His challenge in refusing to accept the Supreme Court's decision was not just legal, but personal and political as well.

With Marshall not participating, Justice Joseph Story of Massachusetts wrote the opinion of the

Court. Unlike Marshall, Story was not a Federalist but, rather, had been a Republican congressman appointed to the bench by Jefferson's close friend and ally, James Madison. The Court also included William Johnson, who had been appointed by Jefferson and three other justices appointed by Jefferson or Madison. The political leanings of the justices had no effect on the outcome of the case. All agreed that the Constitution was the "supreme Law of the Land" and that Virginia had to obey the Constitution and the treaties made under it. In a lengthy opinion Story bitterly denounced the states' rights position of the Virginia court. He accused it of resorting to the same antinationalist doctrines that extreme Federalists had invoked just a few years before in resisting the War of 1812. He also exposed the absurdity of the Virginia court's claim that state courts were free to interpret the U.S. Constitution and federal laws as they wished. This would have led to legal anarchy and, as Story put it, "the public mischiefs that would attend such a state of things would be truly deplorable." America's constitutional system required that "the absolute right of decision, in the last resort, must rest somewhere" and that "somewhere" was the U.S. Supreme Court.

Story's opinion in this case is generally considered one of the most important in Supreme Court history. He rejected the states' rights "compact theory" of the Constitution and emphatically endorsed the idea that the U.S. Supreme Court was indeed the final arbiter of the Constitution and the laws and treaties made under it.

*See also Constitutional Law; States' Rights; Supreme Court.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Newmyer, R. Kent. *Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story: Statesman of the Old Republic*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985.

*Paul Finkelman*

---

**MARYLAND** Founded as a refuge for Catholics in 1632, Maryland was one of the oldest English colonies in America. By the 1750s, however, many Marylanders had grown tired of British rule. The British practice, instituted in 1717, of transporting convicts deeply angered the colonists by establishing one convict for every ten adult males in Maryland by 1757. Partly as a result, Maryland strongly supported the Revolution and played an integral role in

the hostilities. During the war, Maryland privateers severely crippled British commerce. The captured supplies of powder, arms, and clothing greatly helped the American forces. Congress moved to Baltimore for the winter of 1776–1777 when the British threatened Philadelphia. On 28 April 1788 Maryland became the seventh state to ratify the new Constitution, and the colony seemed poised for prosperity. Over the next four decades, the state's white population grew and its slave population declined steadily. Suffrage was expanded, and the state became increasing involved in the market economy.

In the federal census of 1790, Maryland had a population of 319,728. In 1800 the population rose to 341,548 despite Maryland's 1791 gift of territory to form the federal District of Columbia. The state's population continued to increase, with 380,546 people in 1810; 407,350 in 1820; and 447,040 in 1830. The state's major city, Baltimore, was the fourth-largest urban area in the nation in 1790, with 13,500 people. Baltimore's population, consisting of German Americans, French Acadian refugees, Anglo-Americans, and African Americans, continued to grow over the succeeding decades. Western and northern portions of Maryland grew modestly.

Maryland's growth is deceptive. Although much of the state expanded, in the national era the counties with the highest number of slaves steadily lost population. When land no longer supported a planter's family and slaves, many Marylanders left the state rather than lose their status as slave owners. Other planters facing economic ruin sought out-of-state buyers for their slaves. Such sales were common enough that bills were introduced in the state assembly to prevent the breakup of black families, but none of the legislation ever became law. Giving freedom to slaves also proved a popular way for slave owners to escape financial burdens. In 1796 Maryland permitted voluntary slave emancipation while also forbidding the import of slaves for sale. The legislation dramatically affected the black population. In 1790 Maryland had almost thirteen times as many slaves as free blacks. By 1810 the ratio was about three to one as the number of free blacks swelled to thirty thousand. In 1830 Maryland had nearly fifty thousand free blacks.

As the numbers of free blacks rose, fearful whites attempted to maintain control by reducing the rights accorded to blacks. After 1796 free African Americans could not testify in court cases involving the question of blacks being free or slave. A later law permitted slaves to testify against free blacks. In 1806 the Maryland Assembly revealed white fears of slave

uprisings by restricting the rights of free blacks to assemble and by requiring African Americans to obtain a permit to own a firearm or a dog.

As blacks lost rights, poor white men and Jews gained privileges. In 1802 the Assembly approved a state constitutional amendment removing property qualifications for adult white males voting in local and state elections. In 1810 the state extended the ballot to federal elections and abolished property qualifications for would-be state officeholders. Jews were permitted to hold public office with legislation passed in 1826.

Maryland also experienced economic changes. By 1815 most farmers had abandoned tobacco as a cash crop because its repeated cultivation had depleted necessary nutrients from the soil. Additionally, European conflicts had made the market unpredictable. Many of the tobacco farmers switched to wheat, but attacks by the Hessian fly consumed thousands of baskets of grain and prompted major importers of Maryland wheat to close their docks to Maryland products.

The poor state of the agricultural economy prompted Maryland to focus more on trade and industry. In 1790 the Bank of Maryland formed to issue paper money and make capital available for investment. Some of these investments went into transportation. After five years of construction, the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal opened in 1829. Eager to profit from western trade, Maryland chartered the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in 1827. State leaders thought that railroads would overtake canals as the preferred routes to the western markets. By 1830 Maryland was shifting its focus away from agriculture to commerce.

*See also Agriculture: Overview; Constitution, Ratification of; Currency and Coinage; Emancipation and Manumission; Mid-Atlantic States; Plantation, The; Railroads; Slavery: Overview; Slavery; Slave Insurrections; Transportation: Canals and Waterways.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brugger, Robert J., with Cynthia Horsburgh Requardt, Robert I. Cottom, Jr., and Mary Ellen Hayward. *Maryland: A Middle Temperament, 1634–1980*. Edited by Robert G. Merrick. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.

Walsh, Richard, and William Lloyd Fox. *Maryland: A History, 1632–1974*. Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1974.

Caryn E. Neumann

---

**MASSACHUSETTS** Mid-eighteenth century Massachusetts was an overwhelmingly white, English, Congregationalist colony, with a population of about 175,000, second only to Virginia. In the years since the landing of the Pilgrims, the colonists had created two rather distinct worlds—a culture of small farms and small towns in the interior, and a maritime culture along the Atlantic coast.

Typical inland farmers produced largely for their households rather than for markets and relied on family, neighbors, and town for their protection and nurture. Devoted to the republican ideal of a virtuous moral community, they placed the common good ahead of individualism and were suspicious of commercial society. Yet markets and a cash economy existed in the countryside, and a different, liberal ideal, stressing the rights of individuals and capital, was gaining ground.

The liberal ideal was more advanced in the seaports, where merchants were making profits in the British trading system. Their ships arrived regularly with tea, fish, molasses, whale oil, and manufactured goods and left with rum, dried fish, lumber, and other products. Massachusetts led all colonies in distilling, sugar refining, ship building, and tonnage of incoming and outgoing ships. In 1750 Boston was the largest port on the Atlantic coast.

The steady hum of commerce fostered a cosmopolitan culture that was less homogeneous and more individualistic and refined than in the backcountry. In 1775 the seaports had almost as many dissenting churches as Congregational. A large nonfarming population, including some African Americans, both slave and free, created a widening gap between poor laborers and rich merchants like John Hancock, who in 1771 had savings of 16,000 pounds earning interest. Boston boasted four newspapers, four marine insurance offices, and a major royal post office. It was also known for its handsome Georgian-style buildings, the portraits of John Singleton Copley, and, across the Charles River, Harvard College (founded 1636).

The provincial government of Massachusetts dated back to the royal charter of 1691. A powerful governor, appointed by the king, had absolute authority to appoint judges, veto bills from the legislature, and dissolve the House of Representatives. There was no religious test for voting and only a moderate property qualification. Congregationalism was the established religion, supported by town taxes. The system worked well, but most colonists



**The Massachusetts State House.** Designed by Charles Bulfinch and adorned with a famous gold dome, the Massachusetts State House on Boston's Beacon Hill was completed in 1798. Several later additions extended Bulfinch's original structure. © DAVID SAILORS/CORBIS.

considered town government more important than provincial government.

Despite its established position, Congregationalism was under attack. In 1740 the eloquent English revivalist George Whitefield warned large crowds in Boston that no one could be saved without having undergone a deep, personal religious experience. His sermons buttressed a similar message from Jonathan Edwards and other American revivalists. The Great Awakening, as the movement was called, drew many Congregationalists away from the orthodox church.

After the French and Indian War (1754–1763), the British Parliament began to levy heavy taxes on the colonies. The new policy triggered a sharp reaction in Boston, where friction already existed between a royal party led by Lieutenant Governor Thomas Hutchinson and an opposition championed by men such as John Hancock, Samuel Adams, and James Otis, who had influence over the Boston workingmen. When Parliament passed the Stamp

Act in 1765, mobs of workers destroyed Hutchinson's home.

From then on Massachusetts was on the leading edge of the American Revolution. The Massachusetts legislature sent out the first circular letter, the Boston Massacre inflamed public opinion, and the Boston Tea Party brought on the war. Parliament made it almost inevitable that the war would start in Massachusetts when it closed the port of Boston, sent in troops, and restricted the holding of town meetings. Ironically, the fighting began, not in the seaport where the controversy had flourished, but in Lexington and Concord, two country towns. In the months that followed, a Massachusetts leader, John Adams (cousin of Samuel) played a dominant role in the Continental Congress, chairing many committees and persuading the Congress to issue the Declaration of Independence.

#### TRANSITION, 1775–1789

Adams also drew up the new Massachusetts state constitution (ratified 1780), the first ever adopted by

**Total Population of Massachusetts**

Year	Total Population	Black Population	Native American Population
1750	c. 175,000	c. 4,500 (of which, slaves c. 2,000)	c. 1,500
1770	235,000	—	—
1790	379,000	5,463	—
1800	423,000	—	—
1810	472,000	—	—
1820	523,000	—	—
1830	610,000	7,049	—

Note: Figures given here do not include Maine, which was governed by Massachusetts until 1820 but is not covered by this article.

a specially elected convention and ratified by the people. The constitution was a conservative document. The governor, who was given limited power to veto and appoint, was stronger than governors in other states. The property qualification for voting was retained and was not removed until 1821. African Americans, however, were allowed to vote, and slavery was abolished. The constitution failed to end the establishment of religion, but it protected the rights of all denominations. The document was a setback for the interior because it established a powerful central government that would overshadow the towns and gave the large coastal towns proportionately more representation in the lower house than the small interior towns.

Another setback for the interior came in 1786–1787 when the governor used the power of the state to suppress Shays's Rebellion, a farm movement in central Massachusetts demanding relief from foreclosures and high taxes. The rebellion was a fruitless attempt to maintain the republican ideal of a moral economy regulated by the towns. The failure of the rebels reflected the steady gains of liberal ideas.

A year later, when a Massachusetts convention met to consider the United States Constitution, a majority of the delegates were opposed to ratification, especially many from the interior who resisted the idea of a strong national government. But again the seacoast had its way, and, despite a better than two-to-one vote against it by the delegates from the inland counties, the Constitution was ratified by a tiny majority.

**IN THE UNITED STATES, 1789–1829**

For the next twenty-five years, the Federalists, who had supported the Constitution, dominated Massa-

chusetts politics. They controlled the major seacoast counties of Essex and Suffolk as well as Hampshire County in the Connecticut River Valley and represented the powerful Congregational, maritime, and financial interests of the state. Their opponents, the Republicans, won the support of religious dissenters and the counties west and south of Boston. After 1800 some of the Massachusetts Federalists became so frustrated with national Republican policies that they started a sectional resistance. In 1803–1804 Essex County Federalists tried unsuccessfully to form a Northern Confederacy to secede from the Union. Later the Federalists opposed the War of 1812 and called the Hartford Convention (1814–1815), which, again unsuccessfully, proposed states' rights amendments to the Constitution.

In the 1820s the Federalists merged with centrist Republicans to form a state party, led by John Adams's son, John Quincy Adams. Partisan Republicans reorganized under the banner of Andrew Jackson. In the presidential election of 1828, in which the Adams party carried Massachusetts but Jackson won the presidency, Massachusetts was again out of step in national politics.

But not in the economy. The movement of people into western Massachusetts and the spread of a market economy brought changes that blurred the distinction between seacoast and interior. Labor and investment capital were now available in the west as well as the east. New turnpikes had been built connecting Boston with Albany and New York City. Canals were dug between the Merrimack River and Boston and between the inland town of Worcester and Narragansett Bay.

The changing face of the interior was one of the elements in the rise of cotton manufacturing. Between 1790 and 1812 entrepreneurs built scores of tiny cotton mills between Worcester and Rhode Island. But large-scale manufacturing did not begin until trade restrictions prompted seacoast merchants to look for new forms of investment. In 1813 Francis Cabot Lowell and Patrick Tracy Jackson of Boston raised the enormous sum of \$400,000 and organized the Boston Manufacturing Company. Within a year they had set up a factory in Waltham, near Boston, where for the first time in America the entire process of manufacturing cotton textiles took place under one roof.

Eight years later Jackson and others founded a new town on the Merrimack River, named Lowell, which would devote itself solely to textile manufacturing, with young farm women running most of the machines. By 1834 six companies were operating

nineteen cotton mills at Lowell, and Massachusetts had become the leading cotton manufacturing state in the Union.

Meanwhile the spread of Methodist and Baptist churches and the rise of Unitarianism had accelerated the decline of the Congregational Church. The struggle with Unitarianism came to a head in 1805–1806 when Harvard College, where Congregational ministers were traditionally educated, selected Unitarians as Hollis Professor of Divinity and president of the college. In Boston church after church went over to Unitarianism, and the orthodox Congregationalists were forced to found a seminary at Andover in Essex County. The official end of Congregational dominance came in 1833, when a constitutional amendment did away with an established religion.

The overturning of the Congregational churches took place during the rise of a new Boston under the leadership of the architect Charles Bulfinch, who served as chairman of the selectmen between 1799 and 1817. Bulfinch left an indelible mark with his Massachusetts State House (1800), his graceful street patterns, and his plans for filling in coves to increase the available land mass. Boston grew from a town of eighteen thousand in 1790 to a city of sixty thousand in 1830.

In less than a century Massachusetts had made the transition from an agrarian, maritime British colony culturally divided between seacoast and interior to an American state in which all sections were becoming increasingly involved in manufacturing.

*See also Abolition of Slavery in the North; Adams, John; Adams, John Quincy; African Americans: Free Blacks in the North; Architecture: Public; Boston; Boston Massacre; Boston Tea Party; Bunker Hill, Battle of; City Growth and Development; Congregationalists; Constitutional Convention; Constitutionalism: State Constitution Making; Cotton; Election of 1828; Federalist Party; Federalists; French and Indian War, Consequences of; Hartford Convention; Lexington and Concord, Battle of; Loyalists; Manufacturing; New England; Revivals and Revivalism; Revolution as Civil War: Patriot-Loyalist Conflict; Shays's Rebellion; Shipping Industry; Stamp Act and Stamp Act Congress; Tea Act; Unitarianism and Universalism.*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brooke, John L. *The Heart of the Commonwealth: Society and Political Culture in Worcester County, Massachusetts, 1713–1861*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Brown, Richard D. *Massachusetts: A Bicentennial History*. New York: Norton, 1978.
- Clark, Christopher. *The Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780–1860*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990.
- Dalzell, Robert F. *Enterprising Elite: The Boston Associates and the World They Made*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987; New York: Norton, 1993.
- Formisano, Ronald P. *The Transformation of Political Culture: Massachusetts Parties, 1790s–1840s*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.
- Handlin, Oscar, and Mary Flug Handlin. *Commonwealth—A Study of the Role of Government in the American Economy: Massachusetts, 1774–1861*. Rev. ed. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969.
- Rothenberg, Winifred Barr. *From Market-Places to a Market Economy: The Transformation of Rural Massachusetts, 1750–1850*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Donald B. Cole

---

**MATERIAL CULTURE** Material culture refers to the pattern of tangible, human-made forms as an indicator of cultural ideas and traditions. While architecture, art, craft, food, and dress are genres represented in material culture, the emphasis in material culture analysis is upon discerning patterns, landscapes, symbols, and behaviors that cross these genres and characterize the built environment. Material culture often refers to social relations among people mediated by objects and, therefore, involves connections to intellectual and social systems in communities and regions.

The period of the new American nation, sometimes referred in historical material culture typologies as the Federal period, is particularly significant for material culture analysis because of the development of a national design alongside the ongoing regional and ethnic folk cultures, often formed out of the hybridization of transplanted traditions and responses to the new environment. The Eastern seaboard that Europeans and Africans encountered was filled with natural wonders, but there were few of the ancient ruins and remains that characterized the Old World. As settlement pushed the frontier westward and crossed natural as well as social borders, residents formed cultural landscapes for a new land and nation. Into the nineteenth century, migrant set-

over the landscape. The English conception of time and age was linear, and English settlements were permanent and arranged on a grid with privately owned properties. Indian settlements were mobile and often arranged in circular patterns, their conception of time and age was cyclical, and tribal architecture was based less on human dominance than on a relationship with nature.

Both groups practiced agriculture, and much of the cultural borrowing that occurred between them seems to have been in various forms of food, including tobacco, corn, and maple syrup. The dugout canoe used by European Americans was indebted to Indian technology, but the Europeans did not adopt the crooked knife of the Indians, held in one hand and used by cutting away from the body; Europeans preferred the shaving knife, held in two hands and used by cutting toward the body. Some architectural exchange apparently took place in lumbering areas, where building in bark was borrowed from Indian sources.

Enslaved Africans in the American South were forcibly acculturated to European American material systems, but strong signs of ethnic maintenance are evident in privatized areas of house interiors, crafts, dress, and foodways. An example is the African American head wrap, a cloth tied around the head that emphasized the upward vertical extension of the head, in contrast to the European American scarf and bonnet that was fastened to extend down the back of the neck. Africans adapted the British American quilt form of symmetrical blocks to show the African aesthetics of textile strips across the blanket, often with irregular designs. Evidence of cultural exchange also includes the spread of the Deep South's front porch and long shotgun house, American developments of African origin. African influences are particularly evident in American instrument making. The African *banjar*, with a skin stretched over a deep gourd, and the instrument's distinctive feature of a plucked short drone string on the neck entered into general American culture during the 1830s.

Settlers shaped the New World's environments; they were cognizant of their traditions but willing to reshape them for the new land and a sense of community. As citizens of the new American nation, many settlers indeed asked whether a national architecture, art, and food could possibly unite the wide expanse of the American cultural landscape from the commons, maple syrup, and connected farmsteads of New England to the plantations and sorghum of the Deep South.

#### NATIVE AND AFRICAN INFLUENCES

Drawing on early American historical experience, an assessment of material culture can draw contrasts between American Indian, northern European, and African influences on the landscape. In colonial New England and Virginia, according to this perspective, different material culture systems came into conflict when English settlers confronted Native Americans. Observers noted that the English system was built on the formation of lines and rectangles, while many Indian tribes relied on a base concept of the circle. English architecture was organized on a rectangular foundation and therefore emphasized human control

#### REGIONS OF MATERIAL CULTURE

The persistence of westward movement through the nineteenth century has informed the idea that the distinctive characteristics of American material culture which developed in that century were based on the clearing of the forested wilderness and a reliance on wood as the primary component of construction. This movement westward helped shape a new national identity, assimilate immigrant groups into the aesthetics of a pioneer American society, and encour-



**Gardner-Pingree House, Double Parlors.** The Federal-style Gardner-Pingree House in Salem, Massachusetts, was designed by Samuel McIntire and built in 1804 for John Gardner, a wealthy merchant. The elegant furnishings of its double parlors befit the Federal vision of the new Republic. © TODD GIPSTEIN/CORBIS.

age the removal of indigenous peoples. Particularly for groups that did not plan to return to Europe but, rather, were making a fresh start with a commitment to making a home or establishing a religious or political haven in the New World, settlement was more than just a matter of transplanting the Old World to the New. As can be seen by the migration of log construction from a core area in the mid-Atlantic to the South and West or the wide adaptation of Native American foodways, there was an openness to technologies that fit the environment while conforming to familiar aesthetics and traditions. Nonetheless, the first permanent European settlements in the American experience effectively determined the future course of material culture development and the formation of regions in the new American nation.

Material culture regions emerged from settlements on the Eastern seaboard around four main ports of entry and subsequent migrations. Scholars frequently use the metaphor of a "hearth" to describe the central sustaining influence of settlement pat-

terns through these ports of entry on cultural formation. The New England hearth, with its strong English stamp, was based in the Cape Cod area and from there material culture patterns established by English settlers spread north to New Hampshire and Maine and westward across New York and Michigan. The Chesapeake-Tidewater hearth influenced the movement of material culture across Maryland and Virginia into the upland South. The lowland South hearth, featuring a strong African influence, worked its way through South Carolina and Georgia into the Deep South. The last hearth to form was in Pennsylvania, where Palatine Germans, Swiss Anabaptists, English Quakers, French Huguenots, and Scots-Irish influenced the formation of a plural society and a strong inland Pennsylvania-German culture subregion that spread into the Midwest. While the Pennsylvania cultural hearth is considered to show the most hybridization out of the multiple ethnic influences in the settlement, each of the hearths reveals some cultural hybridization, giving rise to a distinctive American material culture.

**New England.** In New England, a noticeable settlement pattern brought from England was the town common, or green. It was not prevalent in other regions, and was influenced in New England by the Puritan idea of mutual aid and meeting undergirding a community, stated in documents such as the Mayflower Compact (1620). In some New England towns the common was called the “meetinghouse lot” because it lay near the chief public structure. Originally intended as a common space for grazing the livestock owned by townspeople, it came to signify the corporate spirit that shaped space and structure. Around the green emerged separated, individualized houses, often single-bay, story-and-a-half structures meant for nuclear families; but the green and meetinghouse gathered people together and centered the town. Houses and fields took shape according to community will; land committees assigned acreage and town meetings arranged the placement of mills and blacksmith shops as well as controlling the activities of millers and blacksmiths. Graveyards were often established as common space where the elite as well as ordinary townspeople were buried. The pattern of community spirit and town meetings continued into the founding of the new nation as communally built roads, bridges, and jails multiplied and the tradition of common land became a sign of the new democratic Republic.

The ordinary New England house and barn took advantage of the abundance of forested land to build in wood with an abandon unknown in England. One sign of the new landscape was the replacement of thatch as a roofing material by wooden shingles. The Cape Cod house, consisting of a central chimney and central doorway with a kitchen on one side of the hearth and front and back rooms on the other, was an adaptation of the English hall house. With a lean-to on the back to allow an extension, the house took the shape of a saltbox and became known as a standard regional type. Not far from the house, the English barn reflected the symmetry of the house and was used as a threshing floor and a location for social dances. It had a central entrance on the nongable end and was built flat on the ground. Toward northern New England, one could find connected farmsteads that brought house and barn together in a linear pattern. Not simply a reaction to the cold and snow of harsh New England winters, the line of connected buildings sheltered a south- or east-facing work yard, called the dooryard, from north or west winter winds. It developed even more as a response to multipurpose agricultural production, including a mixed husbandry system of working with a variety of crops and animal products and involvement in home

industry for non-agricultural sources of income (e.g., lumbering, clothing, and basketry).

As New Englanders moved west across New York State, the connected farmstead gave way to a dispersed farm-building layout, but the tradition of the workyard remained. A distinctive material landscape emerged particularly in towns along the Erie Canal. There, cobblestones were used as building materials in public and private buildings. In the Hudson Valley, Dutch building skills from the seventeenth century continued in many families and could be discerned in the rise of New World Dutch barns, noticeable in their open interior space and steep-pitched roofs. The farmstead might also have another distinctive form marking a New World Dutch identity: a hay barrack, usually smaller than its Old World counterpart. Consisting of a movable roof resting on four posts, it provided flexible hay storage and reminded English neighbors of ethnic differences in agricultural building design.

**Pennsylvania.** In Pennsylvania and the Delaware Valley, a varied combination of English Quakers and Anglicans, Scots-Irish Presbyterians, German Mennonites and Reformed, and Lutherans, among others, participated in William Penn’s Holy Experiment, which promised religious tolerance and entrepreneurial opportunity in wooded and mountainous areas thought to be a barrier to settlement. Germans and Scots-Irish enthusiastically sought farmland and put distance between themselves and Quaker control. Visitors remarked on the isolated, self-contained, German-speaking “Dutchland” forming inland and the migration of Scots-Irish and Germans into Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley to help form the hardscrabble Appalachian region. The region’s mountain dulcimer, for example, was derived from the German zither and was used to accompany old British ballads. The “pot pie” (actually appearing to be more of a stew with dumplings and chicken) associated with Pennsylvania-German cuisine maintained the heavy dough and gravy diet of Central Europe while borrowing the terminology of the British “pie.” Farmlands were at first devoted to wheat, but later a corn-pig complex was developed by which corn supplied a grain for baking as well as food for livestock. Many Pennsylvania foods that spread beyond the German population, including sausage, scrapple, and corn mush, relied on this complex. Probably best-known of the German American traditions that spread widely into American material culture were the holiday customs of the indoor Christmas tree, the Easter bunny, and decorated egg tree.

Most notable on the Dutchland landscape was the large, two- or three-level Pennsylvania barn, which featured a German-looking forebay hanging over a sublevel on one side and an inclined bank leading to an entrance on the nongable side. It departed, however, from the forms of many lower Rhineland barns in its nongable entrance, perhaps adapted from English barns. The German house also went through an Anglicization and later an Americanization process. Known for its asymmetrical *flurkuchenhaus*, or continental German type of dwelling, the house of Rhineland settlers in Pennsylvania usually had an entrance that led on one side directly into the kitchen hearth, which extended to the back of the house. On the other side were a wide front room, or *Stube* (literally the "stove room"), and the sleeping chamber, or *Kammer*. The chimney was therefore off center in the house, and befitting the dough cuisine, it often contained an exterior bread-baking oven. In some areas, the oven was in a separate structure. With the spread of English political influence in urbanizing areas, many houses took on more of the symmetry of the Georgian high-style exterior while often retaining the long kitchen and two side rooms. A folk type that developed out of this hybridization throughout the mid-Atlantic region used two front doors and the German-type interior in contrast to the central hallway and four evenly spaced rooms of the Georgian plan. Although the German type persisted into the nineteenth century in many rural areas of the state and in several communal societies such as Ephrata, Bethlehem, and Harmony, the central passage and decorative architectural features of eagles and classical pediments were increasingly in evidence on the two-story, two-room-wide, two-room-deep mid-Atlantic house. The eagles and classical features even appeared on furnishings (e.g., painted dower chests) and illuminated manuscripts (e.g., *Taufscheine*, or baptismal certificates) alongside the traditional German symbols of the heart, tulip, and *distelfink* (an ornamental bird design deriving from the German for "goldfinch;" it is often used to represent good luck and happiness and is sometimes shown as two attached birds facing away from each other).

**The Chesapeake Tidewater.** In the source area of the Chesapeake Tidewater, running from Baltimore down to the coast of North Carolina and inland to the Blue Ridge Mountains, settlers developed a material culture based largely upon the cultivation of tobacco. By the end of the eighteenth century, householders had developed specialized barns for curing their tobacco with loosely jointed sideboards to allow air to flow among the hanging leaves. Barns, dwellings,

and fences reflected the transiency of their builders. The tobacco barns and small stables of the Tidewater region appeared astonishingly flimsy to visiting Europeans and northern farmers. If not cultivating tobacco, many southern planters erected log double-crib barns based on a type found in Central Europe; these barns were found especially further inland into the Tennessee Valley at the beginning of the nineteenth century. As storage needs grew, they expanded into a New World form of the four-crib barn with a central passageway (one of its two passageways was blocked off to provide additional stabling), thus forming a transverse-crib barn.

The settlers in the Tidewater understood themselves as southerners by the contrast of their built landscapes to the corn-pig complexes and multipurpose agricultural systems further north. With wood being plentiful, they created a building style adaptable to an agricultural crop that exhausted the soil and forced them frequently to move on to new arable land. Their "worm" fences, made from split rails heaped loosely upon one another in self-supporting zigzag patterns enclosing their fields, could easily be dismantled as well as erected. These fences appeared to waste vast amounts of wood, but they had the advantage of needing no posts or post-holes, thus allowing for quick mobility and expansion.

The most distinctive folk house-type to emerge in the Tidewater and spread outward through the South was the one-room-deep hall and parlor house, which developed into the two-story, one-room-deep "I house." Frequently built of wood rather than brick, the hall and parlor were fashioned largely after the English original but were frequently adapted to the hot, humid climate of the South. It had a raised foundation to avoid water damage to the first floor; external chimneys to maximize heat loss; a deep, shady front porch; and frequently a breezeway or central passageway that allowed air to flow through. A peculiarly southern terminology emerged for variations of its two-room-wide, one-room-deep structures that developed in the early nineteenth century, including "dogtrot," "saddlebag," and "double-pen" houses. Some observers have noted that unlike the sturdy bay or room of the North, the southern pen connoted impermanence as well as an adaptation to the expansiveness of the southern landscape. This pattern fostered an American material culture of mobility, which included the development of large-wheeled vehicles, use of wood for road coverings, and clothing such as lightweight fabrics and protective bonnets for women and durable broadcloth pants



**Gardner-Pingree House, Entry.** Fanlights and sidelights surround the front door of the Gardner-Pingree House. Such embellishments are characteristic of Federal architecture. © TODD GIPSTEIN/CORBIS.

and riding boots for men. Scholars have speculated whether this mobility also fueled an increased taste for consumer goods, since people on the move demanded ready-made domestic products.

**Deep South and Louisiana Purchase.** The development of plantations for cotton and rice in the Deep South, meanwhile, included the common layout of the big house and slave cabins behind the big house. In South Carolina the line of slave cabins was known on the rice plantations as "the street" with a white overseer's house at its end. The slave houses exemplified British house-types, typically single-story or hall and parlor cabins with symmetrical fenestration. Some observers have noted that African American carpenters built broad front porches unlike those in Europe and thereby taught their masters about adapting to a hot climate. Slave women learned quilting from European American tradition but applied quilt patterns, especially the ubiquitous strip or string quilt characteristic of West African textiles. Outside the cabin, slaves continued the African tradition of having dry gardens by sweeping dirt to form aesthetic patterns in front yards. In death, African

American cemeteries featured mounded dirt graves with shells and broken crockery in keeping with African funerary practices.

Hybridization in New World material culture was particularly noticeable to Americans in the southern portion of the Louisiana Purchase (1803), previously colonized by France and Spain. Along the Mississippi River into New Orleans and the Louisiana bayou, Afro-Caribbean influences could be discerned in the early nineteenth century; along with French and Spanish colonial cultural exchanges, they created a distinctive Creole society. Especially conspicuous on the built landscape was the "shotgun" house, reminiscent of Haitian and West African building styles of one room behind another and a front porch, in contradistinction to the two-room-wide, one-room-deep pattern of British folk house-types. On the American landscape, a third and even fourth room was added. (The kitchen was typically in the rear, the front or common space in the front, and sleeping areas in between.) Characterized by a narrow facade and extreme length, the shotgun might be constructed with wood or brick or with infilling

between vertical posts, following French tradition. In keeping with African tradition, the front-to-rear arrangement of the house lacked privacy and encouraged socialization. One American response was the development of the double shotgun house to provide a two-room-wide structure with two front doors reminiscent of the double pen. A room on one side might be removed to create a deep corner porch and main entrance through the social space of the porch, as was common in northern Louisiana. Metal grave-markers commonly seen in cemeteries also derived from French tradition, but some black Creoles shaped the crosses into heads and animals following Afro-Caribbean tradition.

#### THE FEDERAL STYLE

While strong ethnic cultural sources and migration patterns influenced the development of America's regional differences into the nineteenth century and beyond, the creation of the new nation also inspired high-style architecture and furnishings, primarily urban, befitting the Federal vision of a new Republic. Often the Federal period in material culture is known for a classical revival, particularly between 1780 and 1830, leading to the Greek Revival in town naming and architecture between 1820 and 1860. Federal architecture derived from the high-style emphasis on symmetry and order from 1700 to 1780 in the British Georgian style that was commonly used in large civic buildings in the English colonies. Georgian architecture had a rectangular plan, often with symmetrical wings flanking each side. Many American architects who had been abroad celebrated its geometric rationality. Over time the facade and interior decorations became more elaborate and often signified imperial excess. The architecture often had a pedimented gable, frequently with a projecting central pavilion or a portico with two-story columns emphasizing authority and power. Brick walls were commonly laid in a fancy Flemish bond pattern. Also influencing the Federal style were the royal architects Robert Adam (1728–1792) and James Adam (1730–1794), who refined the Georgian style with elegant lines and design motifs including fan ornaments, festoons, urns, wreaths, leaves, and petals.

Although echoes of the Adam style are clearly discernible in the Federal style, the American version is often distinguished by emphasis on classical features, extensive use of glass (glass manufactured in the United States was less expensive than that imported from England), and elegantly elaborate doorways. The Federal style also extended from civic and commercial buildings to brick and brownstone

urban row houses in both South and North. Federal taste, promoted by celebrated American figures such as Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826), Charles Bulfinch (1763–1844), and Robert Mills (1781–1855) favored giant entrance porticos, sometimes domed; a fan-shaped light; a central pediment; and a cupola with arched openings. Exemplary Federal buildings, such as the U.S. Custom House and Public Stores in Salem, Massachusetts, built in 1819, reflected a trend of locating a large, nationalistic eagle on or over the central pediment. The U.S. Capitol, completed in 1827, exemplified the symbolic qualities of the style for the nation. It announced in its classical designs the revival of the Republic; while it owed its inspiration to Europe, it contained distinctive American features such as the neoclassical Statue of Freedom with a Native American crest of an eagle's head, feathers, and talons and a shield with thirteen stripes.

Decorative moldings, friezes, pilasters, and quoins used in the large civic buildings were also adopted in ordinary houses, especially in highlighting the pediment, fanlight, and pilasters around the door. In fancier houses, Federal buildings have side-gabled, center-gabled, or hipped roofs, often enclosed or partially enclosed with a balustrade at the line of the cornice. Furniture also exhibited Federal taste, especially in the stylistic treatment of chairs, chests of drawers, and bookcases in inlaid mahogany with shield designs and central wheat sheaves or urns and plain, tapering legs. Although Windsor chairs are known in England as well as America, American craftsmen during the Federal period developed the fanback style among others and had a fondness for the rocking chair that spread in vernacular forms. Other decorative arts taking on a Federal look included mirrors topped with eagles; brass eagle door knockers; classically inlaid tall and banjo clocks; weathervanes with Columbia and other patriotic symbols; neoclassical dresses featuring a high-waisted bodice; carved pilastered mantelpieces; and silver boxes, pots, and bowls festooned with classical wreaths and plumes. In public places and private interiors, particularly in eastern cities for a rising middle class, the Federal style was expressed materially through classical design and American iconography. It influenced the spread southward and northward from America's midland of the design of America's courthouse on the square and the outlying classical "temple" form of the vernacular upright and wing house. As the Federal building marked America's national aspirations in capital cities, the courthouse square and upright and wing house became hallmarks of the American small town in the new nation.

*See also African Survivals; American Indians; American Indian Ethnography; Architectural Styles; Architecture; Cemeteries and Burial; Clothing; Farm Making; Food; Furniture; Housing; Immigration and Immigrants; Washington, D.C.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Benes, Peter, ed. *House and Home*. Dublin, N.H.: Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife, 1988.
- Bronner, Simon J. *Grasping Things: Folk Material Culture and Mass Society in America*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986.
- Cohen, David Steven. *The Dutch-American Farm*. New York: New York University Press, 1992.
- Ensminger, Robert F. *The Pennsylvania Barn: Its Origin, Evolution, and Distribution in North America*. 2nd ed. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.
- Foster, Helen Bradley. *New Raiments of Self: African American Clothing in the Antebellum South*. Oxford, U.K.: Berg, 1997.
- Garrett, Wendell. *Classic America: The Federal Style and Beyond*. New York: Rizzoli, 1992.
- Garrison, J. Ritchie, Bernard L. Herman, and Barbara McLean Ward. *After Ratification: Material Life in Delaware, 1789–1820*. Newark: University of Delaware, 1988.
- Glassie, Henry H. *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968.
- Hubka, Thomas C. *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England*. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1984.
- Hutchins, Catherine E., ed. *Everyday Life in the Early Republic*. Winterthur, Del.: H. F. du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1994.
- Jakle, John A., Robert W. Bastian, and Douglas K. Meyer. *Common Houses in America's Small Towns: The Atlantic Seaboard to the Mississippi Valley*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989.
- Jordan, Terry G. *American Log Buildings: An Old World Heritage*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985.
- Joyner, Charles W. *Down by the Riverside: A South Carolina Slave Community*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984.
- Kirk, John T. *American Furniture and the British Tradition to 1830*. New York: Knopf, 1982.
- Price, Edward T. "The Central Courthouse Square in the American County Seat." *Geographical Review* 58 (1968): 29–60.
- Puig, Francis J., and Michael Conforti, eds. *The American Craftsman and the European Tradition, 1620–1820*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 1989.
- Quimby, Ian M. G., ed. *The Craftsman in Early America*. New York: Norton, 1984.
- St. George, Robert Blair, ed. *Material Life in America, 1600–1860*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988.

- Stilgoe, John R. *Common Landscape of America, 1580 to 1845*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1982.
- Vlach, John Michael. *The Afro-American Tradition in the Decorative Arts*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978. Reprint, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990.
- . *Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993.

Simon J. Bronner

**MCCULLOCH V. MARYLAND** U.S. Supreme Court chief justice John Marshall's opinion in *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819) ranks, along with his opinion in *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), as one of his two most important opinions. It is the most important and persuasive assertion of the supremacy of the Constitution and Congress in the period before the Civil War. The case involved the constitutionality of the federal legislation creating the Second Bank of the United States. Marshall wrote an opinion that resembles a state paper or an essay on constitutional and political theory. It is a magisterial essay on the powers of the national government and the meaning of the Constitution. In it he upheld the constitutionality of the bank.

In 1791 Congress had given the Bank of the United States a twenty-year charter over the objections of Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson and U.S. Representative James Madison. The charter expired in 1811, when Madison was president and his allies firmly in control of Congress and just as firmly opposed to the bank. Thus, the first Bank of the United States ceased to exist. However, the War of 1812 (1812–1815) forced Madison and his party to rethink their position. Without a central bank it was difficult for the government to function, especially in a time of crisis. Thus, in 1816 Congress chartered a new bank and Madison happily signed the legislation creating the Second Bank of the United States. The bank was initially popular, but public support diminished as a growing financial crisis led to the Panic of 1819. In 1818 Maryland passed a law to tax notes of all banks "not chartered by the legislature." The only bank that fit this description was the Baltimore branch of the Bank of the United States. James W. McCulloch, the head of the Baltimore branch, refused to pay the tax and was subsequently sued by the state. He appealed his conviction to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Arguments in the case lasted nine days as Daniel Webster, Attorney General William Wirt, and Wil-

liam Pinkney, one of the most prominent lawyers in the nation, defended the bank's interests. Maryland's legal team was led by Luther Martin, who had been a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in 1787.

Marshall, speaking for a unanimous Court, based his opinion on the "necessary and proper" clause of the U.S. Constitution. He established that the bank was necessary for the smooth operation of the national government. He showed that it was proper for the government to control its finances and have a place to deposit tax revenues. He demonstrated that nothing in the Constitution prohibited Congress from establishing a bank. Thus, he concluded: "Let the end be legitimate, let it be within the scope of the constitution, and all means which are appropriate, which are plainly adapted to that end, which are not prohibited, but consist with the letter and spirit of the constitution, are constitutional." He noted that the Tenth Amendment declared that the "powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution" were reserved to the states or the people. But he pointed out that the amendment, unlike the language in the Articles of Confederation, did not use the term "expressly delegated." He rejected the idea that the Constitution was like a legal code, spelling out all the powers of Congress. Such a document "could scarcely be embraced by the human mind." He reminded readers they must "never forget that it is a *constitution* we are expounding," and that it was "a constitution intended to endure for ages to come." Thus, it had to be "adapted to the various crises of human affairs." This flexible approach to the Constitution allowed Congress to pass all laws and create all institutions that were necessary and proper for implementing the functions of government, as long as the Constitution did not specifically prohibit such actions.

He then turned to Maryland's attempt to tax the bank. He noted that the "power to tax involves the power to destroy," and that if Maryland could tax the bank created by Congress, it could destroy that bank. But no state could destroy what Congress legally and constitutionally created, because "the great principle" of the American nation was "that the constitution and the laws made in pursuance thereof are supreme." If Maryland could tax the bank, it could tax the customhouse, the mails, military installations, and in effect destroy the national government. "This," Marshall was certain, "was not intended by the American people."

Marshall's opinion deeply angered states' rights advocates, especially those in Virginia who feared a strong national government. Judge Spencer Roane,

Judge William Brockbrough, and former U.S. senator John Taylor (known as John Taylor of Caroline) attacked the decision in Virginia's newspapers. Marshall replied to these attacks on his opinion, first under the *nom de plume* "A Friend of the Union," but the Philadelphia paper that published these essays gnarled them and left out complete paragraphs. Thus, he republished corrected versions in an Alexandria, Virginia, paper under the name "A Friend of the Constitution." The newspaper debate did not settle the issue, and in 1832 Andrew Jackson would dismantle the bank. But Marshall's opinion endured as the Supreme Court's most powerful and authoritative analysis of the inherent flexibility in the Constitution and the supremacy of both the Constitution and Congress.

*See also Bank of the United States; Marshall, John; Panic of 1819; Presidency, The; James Madison; States' Rights.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Gunther, Gerald, ed. *John Marshall's Defense of McCulloch v. Maryland*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1969.

Newmyer, R. Kent. *John Marshall and the Heroic Age of the Supreme Court*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001.

Paul Finkelman

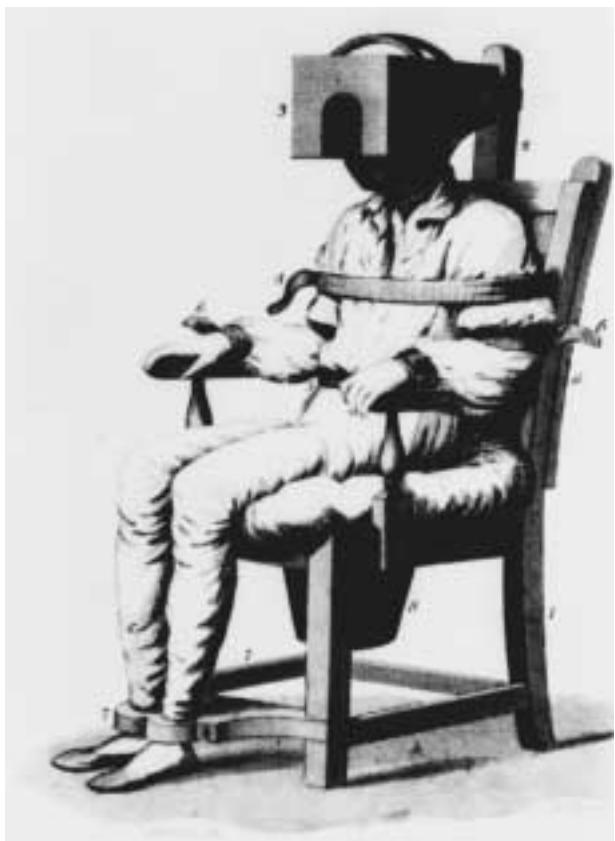
---

**MEDICINE** Between 1754 and 1829, medicine in what would become the United States passed through three stages. All of the stages originated in Europe, and American medicine remained in a colonial relationship with that continent, regardless of what was going on in politics and economics.

#### STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

At first, physicians and educated people who knew medical texts tended to think in very traditional terms and formulations that had been honored since the time of Galen in the second century A.D. People fell ill because of an imbalance in the humors—black bile, yellow bile, phlegm, and blood. To this basic scheme were added alchemical ideas, folk wisdom, and sometimes ideas about the body as a chemical or physical organism.

The second stage came in the late eighteenth century, when a number of physicians took up Enlightenment teachings. The most conspicuous and important was Benjamin Rush, a physician and teacher in



**Tranquilizing Chair.** Designed by Benjamin Rush around 1800, the tranquilizing chair was used in the treatment of mental illness. The chair restrained the body with straps and a box-like apparatus that fit over the head. Engraved by Benjamin Tanner after John James Barralet. © CORBIS.

Philadelphia. Rush based his ideas on those of William Cullen of Edinburgh, who in turn inspired John Brown, also of Edinburgh, where a significant number of American physicians studied. All three of them taught highly rational systems of medicine, as was appropriate to the Age of Reason. Disease in their eyes represented either too much or too little irritability or excitability. Rush in particular held that pathology grew out of a morbid tension in the walls of the arteries.

After the War of 1812, leading American physicians began to study in France. By 1830 the French clinical school was deeply influencing the way physicians viewed and treated ill health. By correlating symptoms with local lesions found during autopsy, and by introducing a measure of skepticism concerning traditional therapies, French clinicians gave a small but growing number of American physicians a sense that empirical investigation could lead to much better understanding of disease.

#### IDEAS ABOUT DISEASE

Except for the theories of Rush and others, and then the slow incursion of notions of localized pathology, ideas of what a disease was did not change greatly in the two-thirds of a century after 1763. Epidemics were sent by God, but individuals had some control over their own health. Something, it was held, went awry with "the system," a more or less mechanical entity that nevertheless had a vital spirit infusing it and was sensitive to the ordinary inputs of eating and sleeping and the more ominous influences from the environment (often airborne "miasmas"). Because the ideas of both the human system and inputs and environments were vague and contested, medicine remained at best an inexact science and one that was difficult to explain in that time or this. Certain features did stand out, however.

While a few diseases were distinctive, such as syphilis, cancers, stroke, and smallpox, most acute diseases were just varieties of general categories, chiefly fluxes (that is, diarrheas) and fevers. And that was what practitioners ordinarily saw the most of. But fever could come in many varieties, such as long fever (typhoid), malarial fever, putrid sore throat, and the like. In general, diseases were classified by symptoms. One of the most common diseases, for example, tuberculosis of the lungs, was described in a term suggesting the way patients wasted away: consumption.

What people at the time especially noted was how illnesses varied with season and geography. The measles of one year would be different from that of the next. Even epidemics came at different seasons—everyone knew that malaria was a disease of hot weather, that respiratory and arthritic ailments were worse in the winter. Moreover, there was serious doubt that the disease of one place was the same as that of another. It was a surprise in 1800–1801, for example, that the smallpox of New England would respond to vaccination just as would the smallpox of Old England.

As sectional identities began to develop, sectional differences appeared among physicians. Southerners encountered diseases such as malaria and yellow fever that were seldom found in the North. Northern physicians had to deal with diseases of cold weather, not only frostbite but arthritic disorders, which appeared in young as well as older adults. The trans-Appalachian West even acquired a significant disease, first described in 1809–1811. Called the milk sick, it later was found to be poisoning that came when cattle ate a common weed, white snakeroot, so that the illness was both geographical and seasonal. As set-

tlers filtered into the West, the milk sick was a serious and sometimes epidemic disease. (The mother of Abraham Lincoln died of the milk sick in 1818.) On the basis of these different types of illnesses, physicians began to describe special regional medicines, especially southern medicine.

### TREATING ILLNESSES

To a remarkable extent, the therapies available then were general, designed to set the system back onto a natural course so that it had humors in balance or the amount of irritability or tenseness balanced. There could not be a specific cure until there was a specific disease to be cured. From an earlier period, there was a specific cure for the disease of syphilis: mercury. And in the 1730s, Europeans started using cinchona bark, which contained quinine, a specific for malaria. But since the bark affected one fever, many physicians used it for all fevers, since "fever" was the working category. Then, beginning in 1785, foxglove (containing digitalis) was imported from England, where it was discovered to counter dropsy (congestive heart failure). Thus, the list of specifics was a very short one, without significant additions until after 1830.

Physicians often prescribed very powerful drugs—usually herbs, including opium. Each practitioner had his or her favorites. Diet and other, more homely, devices were also used. Sweating was common. The gastrointestinal system was kept as active as possible, and stimulating medications were administered from both ends of the GI system, causing diarrheas and vomiting. "Trust in God, and keep the bowels open," was common wisdom.

Treatments were described in general terms according to the effects that they had on the system. There were stimulants (people most importantly and incorrectly imagined that alcohol was a stimulant). There were depletives, of which the most commonly employed was bleeding. And there were alteratives, such as violent purges that wracked the system and left it in a new rhythm or state after the effects had run their course.

Physicians and people practicing on themselves utilized other techniques as well. In addition to bleeding, a variety of instrumentalities existed to produce running sores and pus by means of which the body would throw off "moribific matter" or undesirable elements in the blood. The skin could be blistered with irritants such as cantharides (Spanish fly) or cupping (burning paper in a cup applied to the skin and creating a vacuum). "Issues" could be created by inserting a pea or bean under the skin to obtain a dis-

charge. Or a seton could be made: a thread was run under the skin and then coated with an irritant and pulled back and forth, which usually produced a satisfactory discharge (done in the neck for headache, for example).

Since treatment modalities tended to persist from the late eighteenth into the nineteenth century, the style of treatment rather more than the specific details defined changes in medicine. Beginning in the 1790s, and especially under the leadership of Benjamin Rush, who thought his extreme measures had some effect against the yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia in 1793, so-called heroic medicine flourished in the United States. The more serious the symptoms, the more powerful were the treatments. "It is but trifling with the life of a man to give him less of a remedy than his disease calls for," wrote a southern physician in 1828.

Heroic treatment consisted of the usual therapies carried out with more than usual vigor and dosage. "Copious bleedings" took place—to an extent that scandalized later generations. Although extremely violent purgatives were used, "the Samson of the material medica" was mercurous chloride, or calomel. Calomel was used as a stimulant, and it did stimulate the gastrointestinal system. Calomel also caused classic symptoms of mercury poisoning. The mouth could turn ash gray, ulcers of the oral area appeared, and teeth could become loosened. Patients often took calomel until they "salivated"—another sign of mercury poisoning.

Heroic treatment spread most famously to the West and South. The practice of many New Englanders and other physicians was often relatively restrained and mild—and empirical. But already by the 1820s, a popular reaction had set in, and many lay people as well as medical practitioners were criticizing heroic styles of practice. At the same time, an active stance regarding an individual patient's disease was part of a professional identity.

### SURGERY

In colonial medicine, physicians, even those trained in England as surgeons, did only limited kinds of surgery. Since there was no anesthesia, and since infection almost invariably followed cutting into the body, only in urgent cases would anyone resort to surgery. A competent practitioner would set a simple fracture or correct a dislocation. He would lance abscesses and extirpate growths on the skin. He might couch a cataract. In a case of a compound fracture, or in warfare when a bullet broke the skin, amputation of the limb was called for. Infection otherwise

would almost certainly kill the patient. The only generally accepted procedure that involved cutting below the skin on the body or head came when a patient was dying with bladder stones that prevented urination. Then a physician could "cut for stone"—often with considerable success.

Occasionally some foolhardy or desperate practitioner would attempt to intrude into the thorax to cut a dangerous growth or condition, though such incidents became more common in the nineteenth century. The most famous instance was that of Ephraim McDowell, a practitioner of Danville, Kentucky, who in 1809 operated on a woman with a large ovarian tumor. He subsequently repeated the operation successfully, reporting his cases in 1817. And all through the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, many practitioners ingeniously invented or copied new and better surgical instruments, many of which have survived in museum collections.

#### MEDICAL PRACTICE AND SELF-TREATMENT

Almost all practice was carried out in patients' homes or, to a lesser extent, the physician's home office. Charitable hospitals appeared only slowly. The Pennsylvania Hospital had been founded in 1751 (and the New Orleans Charity Hospital in 1736), and others came and went. But no one would willingly choose a hospital over home care. Nursing, either institutional or domestic, was carried out by servants or relatives.

Because of the isolated life of many settlers, and because a large and growing proportion of the population was literate, many Americans avoided the expense of seeking medical advice and used their own means to treat their illnesses. Sometimes family recipes or folk healing sufficed. A growing number of advice books was available, either imported from Europe or printed in America in pirated editions. Throughout the period, almanacs like those compiled by Benjamin Franklin contained medical advice. Most notably, proprietary or "patent" medicines, offered commercially, attracted many customers. Newspaper ads for English preparations first appeared in significant numbers during the 1750s, and by the 1820s Thomas Dyott of Philadelphia, a former bootblack, was becoming one of the richest men in the country by marketing nostrums.

In 1830 American medicine was poised for great changes. For the first time, Americans would be contributing significantly to world medicine. (The physiology of digestion, surgical anesthesia, and landmark therapeutic skepticism all came in the 1830s.)

Cholera, which terrorized the population and stimulated changes in medical practice; health reform movements; and the railroad, which enabled professionals to organize, all lay in the future. Meantime, in the 1820s, many signs of the future were already in place. Sulfate of quinine—in place of "bark"—came in. A national pharmacopeia appeared in 1820, with a promise of revision every ten years. The Philadelphia College of Pharmacy was established in 1821. The first state mental hospital to signal a wave of reform that swept the country, the Eastern Lunatic Asylum (later Eastern State Hospital), was established in 1824 in Lexington, Kentucky. And by 1829, 105 American physicians had returned from studying in Paris. Of course, they still had to practice right alongside a very large number of practitioners of various degrees of education, apprentice training, self-education, and simple commercial cupidity.

*See also Asylums; Epidemics; Health and Disease; Malaria; Mental Illness; Pain; Patent Medicines; Professions: Physicians; Smallpox.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Estes, J. Worth. *Hall Jackson and the Purple Foxglove: Medical Practice and Research in Revolutionary America, 1760–1820*. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1979.
- Estes, J. Worth, Philip Cash, and Eric H. Christianson, eds. *Medicine in Colonial Massachusetts, 1620–1820*. Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1980.
- Gevitz, Norman, ed. *Other Healers: Unorthodox Medicine in America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.
- Kett, Joseph F. *The Formation of the American Medical Profession: The Role of Institutions, 1780–1860*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1968.
- Reiss, Oscar. *Medicine in Colonial America*. Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2000.
- Rothstein, William G. *American Physicians in the Nineteenth Century: From Sects to Science*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972.
- Shyrock, Richard Harrison. *Medicine and Society in America, 1660–1860*. New York: New York University Press, 1960.
- Warner, John Harley. *The Therapeutic Perspective: Medical Practice, Knowledge, and Identity in America, 1820–1885*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997.

John C. Burnham

---

**MENTAL ILLNESS** The understanding and treatment of mental illness changed radically between

1754 and 1829. Two major, related trends can be discerned: a move towards a more benevolent, non-theological approach to persons considered insane and the establishment of the first institutions in British North America designed to treat mental illness.

#### **1754–1790s**

By the 1750s, colonists in British North America who were influenced by the European Enlightenment increasingly questioned Calvinist concepts of the innate evil of mankind and pessimism about human life, as well as age-old Christian beliefs that demonic possession and sinful natures caused insanity, for which the insane deserved punishment. On the European continent, optimistic Enlightenment views that human nature was malleable and that nature could be controlled by knowledge-based action fostered a secular approach to mental disorders. Although not new, the idea that mental afflictions were diseases, natural phenomena, and thus subject to medical treatment, became more common in British North America and began to be expressed institutionally. The colonists wanted to emulate Europe in establishing enlightened institutions in North America. Furthermore, population growth and urban development, especially in the northern colonies, produced fears of deranged persons wandering freely in the community.

The Pennsylvania Hospital, the first hospital in the colonies, established by Quakers in Philadelphia in 1754, accepted mental patients. In support of that policy, Benjamin Franklin—preeminent civic activist, creator of institutions, and promoter of the hospital—pointed to London's venerable Bethlem Royal Hospital (“Bedlam”) for the mentally ill, where two-thirds of patients reportedly recovered (an exaggerated claim). At the Pennsylvania Hospital more than a generation later, Dr. Benjamin Rush—scientist, reformer, and “father of American psychiatry”—advocated humanizing the care of mental patients. However, his heroic therapeutic techniques, most notably extensive bloodletting and dosing with chemicals, did not work. Rush and his contemporaries could accurately describe symptoms of mental illness, but they had limited scientific understanding of it, and their physical remedies were minimally effective.

Another early institutional model was the first publicly supported hospital exclusively for mental patients in the colonial capital of Williamsburg, Virginia. Opened in 1773 as a secular, humane institution, it demonstrated to the governor and other elite

founders the advanced state of their civil society (slavery notwithstanding).

Throughout the colonies, though, most “insane” persons—often chained in basements or attics at home, languishing in almshouses and jails, or roaming about neighborhoods—remained untreated, and physicians, however enlightened, lacked verifiable knowledge of the etiology of mental disorders, the physiology of the brain, and the nature of the “mind” and its relationship to a soul assumed to be immortal.

#### **1790s–1829**

By the end of the eighteenth century new approaches to the nature and treatment of mental disorder emerged in Europe and found their way to the United States. In revolutionary France Dr. Philippe Pinel, famous for removing chains from insane patients, initially considered insanity to be a self-limiting disorder that could be ameliorated by physically shocking the patient. When this technique failed, he adopted a “moral” treatment, whereby patients were managed primarily with compassion and moral suasion.

In England the Quaker leader Samuel Tuke independently devised and introduced a somewhat similar system in 1792 in a small new sectarian asylum. Tuke’s example influenced fellow Quakers in the United States to open the Friends Asylum outside Philadelphia in 1817. Subsequently, Friends elsewhere were involved in founding several well known nonsectarian hospitals following the same therapeutic philosophy. They stressed humane care and occupational therapy, in a comfortable, friendly setting in bucolic surroundings, with patients away from their families, the cares of ordinary life, and fire and brimstone religious sermons—all believed to contribute to, if not cause, mental illness. While physicians visiting the facilities continued dosing and bleeding patients, the emphasis at the new institutions was on trying to affect the psyche through a benevolent, communal environment and training in self-control. Exactly how these techniques affected the mind was not made clear: these early British and American lay reformers were motivated by pragmatic and humanitarian concerns rather than medical science.

American physicians—like Pinel, whose psychiatric writings became available in English translation in 1806—considered insanity to be an essentially somatic (physical) disease. They viewed moral treatment, however humane, as nonmedical in nature and therefore incapable of curing insanity, although they had little else to offer and were stymied by the traditional mind-body dichotomy.

By 1829 the high recovery rates reported in moral-treatment hospitals seemed to justify therapeutic claims for the system. But only a relatively few mentally ill persons could benefit from such hospitals, as these institutions tended to cater to (white) families able to pay the fees. Physicians and laypeople both assumed that the sensitive upper classes were most likely to succumb to insanity, while lower-class white people were much less susceptible and blacks and Indians least so. In fact, there was no evidence for most contemporary notions about the prevalence or incidence of insanity. By the mid nineteenth century, when state mental hospitals for the public proliferated, views about susceptibility reversed: now poor people, immigrants, and non-whites were considered more apt to become insane and harder to treat. As before, social and class prejudice, combined with unsophisticated and erroneous statistics, influenced "scientific" attitudes.

Still, some of the early hospitals, by gathering patients together in an optimistic hospital environment, gave local communities experience with the insane to counterpose against traditional pessimistic, superstitious, and theological lore about mental illness. This change, together with an American belief in progress and overoptimism about curability (spawned by the presumed effectiveness of moral treatment), would help to inspire the later full-scale movement (beginning in the mid-nineteenth century) to build state mental hospitals, many with moral treatment as a goal. To be sure, an additional major consideration was always the perceived need to protect society, and at lowest cost. The difficulty of sustaining moral treatment, an expensive therapy, plus the intractability of much of mental illness and the failure of physicians to discover a somatic basis for it, dimmed the early high hopes and eventually alienated most advocates of moral treatment from the medical establishment. Cycling between psychological and somatic theories—the old mind-body split—continued through the years and is still used today, in practice if not in theory. The moral-treatment movement faded from history until the mid-twentieth century, to be rediscovered in a new era of reform, serious historical study of psychiatry, and radical critiques of medical concepts of mental illness and its treatment. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, contrary to revisionist writers like Michel Foucault (1926–1984), who viewed all societal efforts to improve the lot of the mentally ill as inherently exploitative, most historians would agree that moral treatment, its limitations notwithstanding, was a social advance.

*See also Franklin, Benjamin; Health and Disease; Hospitals; Professions; Physicians; Quakers.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Dain, Norman. *Concepts of Insanity in the United States, 1789–1865*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1961.
- Grob, Gerald N. *The Mad among Us: A History of the Care of America's Mentally Ill*. New York: Free Press, 1994.
- Jimenez, Mary Ann. *Changing Faces of Madness: Early American Attitudes and Treatment of the Insane*. Hanover, N.H.: Published for Brandeis University Press by University Press of New England, 1987.
- Micale, Mark S., and Roy Porter, eds. *Discovering the History of Psychiatry*. Parts 4–5. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Scull, Andrew, ed. *Madhouses, Mad-Doctors, and Madmen: The Social History of Psychiatry in the Victorian Era*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981.

Norman Dain

---

#### MERCANTILISM *See Economic Theory.*

---

**MERCHANTS** In eighteenth-century parlance, a "merchant" was a wholesaler who traded in foreign markets. Residing in seaport cities, with their businesses and even their homes usually located conveniently close to the wharves, merchants played key roles in the early American economy. Merchants arranged for farm products to move from the countryside to seaports, imported manufactured necessities and luxuries for colonists' consumption, and shipped cargoes of raw materials and produce to Europe, the West Indies, and Africa.

In a precarious business world, merchants had to be flexible and versatile. Besides buying and selling goods, they served as bankers by extending credit and transferring funds, and acted as insurance underwriters. Because communications were slow and unreliable, merchants used agents in foreign ports to purchase and ship their orders of merchandise and to find buyers for their shipments from America. Alternatively, merchants might consign goods to a ship's captain or associate known as a supercargo, who traveled with the shipment and handled its sales. Merchants often hedged their investments by putting funds in business or real estate. Among New

York merchants, land was the preferred investment; others owned shares of companies such as iron furnaces. A trader could specialize in dry goods (textiles, notions, and certain items of clothing), meaning that his main contacts were in Great Britain, or in wet goods (rum, molasses, coffee, and other imported groceries), in which case he did business in many ports. Generally, dry goods dealers were the more prosperous of the two groups.

It is customary to refer to a "merchant class," implying a coherent, wealthy group that wielded political and economic clout. But in fact merchants varied widely in their ethnicity, politics, religion, and income. In all the major seaports—Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston—some merchants were among the elite, upper ranks, but by no means were all merchants in that class. Philadelphia traders, for example, included wealthy merchants as well as middling ones whose income was equal to that of a shopkeeper or artisan. (Even struggling merchants enjoyed a higher social status than that of artisans or mechanics, however, because they did not work with their hands.) Most merchants who did reach the upper strata worked their way up rather than relying on inherited wealth; they did not have time for politics while they were active in business. Thomas Hancock, for example, the son of a Puritan minister, began as a bookseller in Boston and made his fortune by supplying British troops during the Seven Years' War. He left a substantial business to his nephew, John Hancock, who succeeded him in the House of Hancock; John, however, found he had more aptitude, interest, and success in politics than he enjoyed as a merchant, and his business suffered as a consequence.

In the Lower South the status of upper-tier merchants was comparable to that of wealthy planters; merchants sometimes owned plantations as well as city businesses, and they intermarried frequently with planter families. Charleston, the fourth-largest (and wealthiest) city in the colonies, had the largest concentration of merchants in the South. By the late colonial period, Charleston merchants conducted 75 percent of the region's overseas trade; they did most of their business with British firms, with whom they formed close business and social ties.

The two principal ports of the middle colonies, New York and Philadelphia, had sizable merchant communities. In Philadelphia before the Revolution, about fifty men (or 10 percent of the total number of merchants) handled half of all the city's shipping. These top Philadelphia merchants were among the wealthiest men in America, and, though not rich by

European standards, they lived in aristocratic fashion. Merchants such as Robert Morris and Joshua Fisher resided in three-story, elegantly furnished brick townhouses and frequently built countryseats outside the city.

In New England, Boston was the main port, but it competed for trade with lesser places, including Newburyport, Marblehead, Salem, Newport, Providence, and Portsmouth. Here too, certain families—the Faneuils, Hancocks, and Boylsts of Boston, and the Browns of Providence—rose to prominence, rising above the lesser merchants to form a wealthy, near aristocratic, class. Although he came to relish hobnobbing with the common man, John Hancock lived extravagantly, including riding in a coach with liveried servants.

Some merchants were actively engaged in the cause of liberty, whereas others were lukewarm. Hancock was popular among the working classes in Boston because of his Patriot stance and his association with Samuel Adams. When Hancock was placed under arrest for smuggling (evading duties was everyday practice for Boston shippers), a mob dragged a British custom boat through the streets, then burned it in protest. South Carolina merchant Christopher Gadsden was so ardent for the rebellion that he was known as a Southern Samuel Adams. Prominent Rhode Island merchant John Brown was among the locals who wounded the captain of the British customs boat *Gaspée*, then set it on fire in 1772. In Newburyport, Massachusetts, merchants supported the radical movement wholeheartedly, perhaps because they had fewer ties to Britain than merchants in other cities. In some cases merchants may have supported the periodic boycotts of British imports for economic reasons; it is possible that boycotts gave merchants a chance to unload the accumulation of dry goods that the British merchants had dumped on the American market, or that some merchants saw nonimportation as a way to drive competitors out of business.

In other instances merchants were cautious and conservative when it came to rebellion. Like their more zealous counterparts, they, too, worried about British infringement on American rights, and some were even willing to sacrifice for the cause. However, there was no sustained support among all merchants for nonimportation. In Philadelphia and New York, traders were reluctant to jeopardize business by cutting ties with British firms. Sometimes merchants supported boycotts under duress; in 1773 Philadelphia merchants James Abel and Henry Drinker anticipated a healthy profit when they agreed to sell tea

for the British West India Company. They had to give up the commission when visited by a "tar and feather committee" enforcing the boycott against the Tea Act. Even in Boston, where there were major protests, including the Boston Tea Party, merchants were not united. The historian John Tyler found that, of 392 Boston merchants whose sentiments can be determined, 42 percent were Patriots and 39 percent were Loyalists. Loyalists tended to be Anglican dry goods traders with ties to British exporters, while most Patriots were Congregationalists who dealt in a variety of goods.

Sectional interests also played a role. When the Continental Congress decided to ban exports to Great Britain in response to the Coercive Acts, South Carolina insisted and Congress acquiesced that it continue exporting rice, a clear indication that neither all colonies nor all merchants were united in a course of action. The rice trade aside, Congress warned merchants that violators of the sanctions would be considered "enemies of American liberty." Because colonists were increasingly directing their resentment not only toward what they saw as British oppressors, but also at merchants and others in positions of power and wealth at home, mob rule continued to keep reluctant merchants in compliance.

Merchants may have had good reason to question rebellion, considering that after the war the nation plunged into a depression that lasted until the 1790s. Although they sought new markets in distant places, merchants were hampered by Britain's punitive trade restrictions and by lack of imperial protection. British merchants also dumped goods on the American market and then demanded payment in scarce specie (money in coin) rather than paper money, so that American merchants, in turn, pressed customers for payment and caused resentment among citizens already affected by the depression and inspired by the rhetoric of liberty. Moreover, wealthy creditors, including some merchants, pressed Congress to repay war loans and bonds, with interest and in specie, while ordinary citizens agitated for paper money and tax relief. When tensions between upper-class creditors and working- and middle-class debtors erupted in Shays's Rebellion in Massachusetts, merchants helped finance the militia that quelled it. Wealthier merchants and businessmen merchants were thus clearly aligned with the educated elites who believed that too much government in the hands of ordinary people was dangerous. They were also among the nationalists who backed the movement to craft a new Constitution that would

strengthen the federal government and allow it to regulate trade, impose taxes, and raise a standing army, as well as rein in state and individual powers.

Throughout the nineteenth century northern merchants attempted to reduce the nation's reliance on imports by investing in factories. Indeed, by the antebellum era New England had become the nation's most industrialized region. New York and Baltimore continued to grow, while Philadelphia declined in relation to the other ports. By 1800 Baltimore merchants were siphoning off trade from the Eastern Shore and western Pennsylvania and leading the nation in flour exports. New York trade surpassed that of Philadelphia in the early nineteenth century, and Philadelphia merchants made the transition from being leaders of American commerce to holding important positions in banking, manufacturing, mining, and coastal trade. Southern planters and businessmen, rather than expand into manufacturing, continued to put their emphasis on agriculture.

*See also* **Boston; Boston Tea Party; Charleston; Constitutional Law; Consumerism and Consumption; Currency and Coinage; Government and the Economy; Industrial Revolution; Insurance; Manufacturing; Material Culture; New York City; Philadelphia; Plantation, The; Shays's Rebellion; Shipping Industry; Taxation, Public Finance, and Public Debt; Tea Act; Wealth; Wealth Distribution.**

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baxter, W. T. *The House of Hancock: Business in Boston, 1724–1775*. New York: Russell and Russell, 1965.
- Dalzell, Robert F., Jr. *Enterprising Elite: The Boston Associates and the World They Made*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987; New York: Norton, 1993.
- Doerflinger, Thomas M. *A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise: Merchants and Economic Development in Revolutionary Philadelphia*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986.
- Jensen, Arthur L. *The Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin for the Department of History, University of Wisconsin, 1963.
- Labaree, Benjamin W. *Patriots and Partisans: The Merchants of Newburyport, 1764–1815*. New York: Norton, 1975.
- Matson, Cathy. *Merchants and Empire: Trading in Colonial New York*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.
- Nash, Gary B. *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979.

- Papenfuse, Edward C. *In Pursuit of Profit: The Annapolis Merchants in the Era of the American Revolution, 1763–1805*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975.
- Schlesinger, Arthur M. *The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution, 1763–1776*. 1918. New York: Atheneum, 1968.
- Tolles, Frederick Barnes. *Meeting House and Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia, 1682–1763*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1948.
- Tooker, Elva. *Nathan Trotter, Philadelphia Merchant, 1787–1853*. Harvard Studies in Business History 19. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1955; New York: Arno Press, 1972.
- Tyler, John W. *Smugglers and Patriots: Boston Merchants and the Advent of the American Revolution*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1986.

Diane Wenger

**MESMERISM** When he arrived in Paris in February 1778, the Austrian physician Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815) introduced a new healing art that rapidly became a transatlantic sensation. Theorizing that all natural bodies were permeated by a rarified fluid akin to electricity or magnetism, Mesmer argued that illness was the product of obstructions in the flow of this fluid. The task of the physician, then, was to manipulate these fluids by massaging and manipulating the bodily “poles” to overcome blockages and restore the natural electromagnetic flow. Sometimes en masse, patients responded dramatically to mesmeric treatment, falling into convulsive fits (the “crisis”) that signaled the cure.

Mesmerism’s authority stemmed from its mingling of the science of electrical theory with familiar notions of bodily balance. Although it developed a strong following among the French elite and among social reformers, it remained controversial. Worried by its reputed connection with political radicals, a skeptical Louis XVI appointed a commission of eminent scientists in 1784 to investigate its claims. Headed by Benjamin Franklin, the commission ultimately concluded that although some patients had indeed improved, the phenomena were merely a product of the “force of imagination.” When asked by his grandson whether this report would be the end of mesmerism, however, Franklin was doubtful. “Deceptions as absurd,” he wrote, “have supported themselves for ages.”

As Franklin predicted, mesmerism flourished despite the verdict, diversifying in theory, practice, and

application. Even as many practitioners clung to some version of a universal fluid that was analogous (or equivalent) to electricity and magnetism, others charted new theoretical terrain. By the 1820s almost the only feature uniting mesmerists and their peers, animal magnetists and electrical physicians, was the contention that the mind was capable of sympathetically exerting influence on other bodies and minds. In the United States, mesmerism found particularly fertile ground. From the time that the Marquis de Lafayette delivered a paper on the subject before the American Philosophical Society in 1781, it swelled in popularity, reaching its apex during the 1830s and 1840s.

Instead of crises, however, American somnambules (the subjects of animal magnetism) exhibited a range of remarkable phenomena that seemed to confirm the reality of the universal fluid predicted by Mesmer. Some were brought into a cataleptic state so profound as to permit them to undergo surgery without experiencing pain. Others entered a state of mutual sensation with their mesmerists, and still others exhibited the capacity to read thoughts, to experience religious ecstasy, to see and diagnose illnesses within others, or to make clairvoyant voyages to other cities or planets. Most famously, the “Poughkeepsie seer,” Andrew Jackson Davis (1826–1910), experienced visions of the afterlife and other worlds while mesmerized that echoed the visions of the Swedish scientist and philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772). Davis would become an important figure in the Spiritualist movement of the 1850s. In short, mesmerism promised a world of unseen sympathetic connections between individuals and became a powerful means of conceptualizing nature and society and the relations of individuals within society.

The antebellum years, however, also marked a significant juncture in the history of animal magnetism. Although it remained enormously popular, it was increasingly marginalized by the medical community, its practices coopted and incorporated into the new field of hypnotism.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Darnton, Robert. *Mesmerism and the End of the Enlightenment in France*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1968.
- Taves, Ann. *Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Winter, Alison. *Mesmerized: Powers of Mind in Victorian Britain*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Robert S. Cox

**METHODISTS** In 1776 the Methodist movement and the new American Republic existed in uneasy tension. By 1829 the two seemed to share a common destiny, so closely did Methodists identify with the new Republic. By the opening salvos of the Civil War, Methodist churches of varying identities would claim the largest proportion of American churchgoers, the largest numbers of ministers, and the largest numbers of church structures of any American denomination. Regarding the religious culture of the new Republic, it may be said, as went Methodism so went the nation.

This great American church's origins could not have been more improbable. Methodism emerged from the reforming impulses of early Anglicanism, seized upon by the brothers John and Charles Wesley in their experience as Anglican missionaries to American Indians in Georgia. Methodism's emphases on missionary outreach, moral reform, and later episcopal structure all owed their ancestry to the Church of England. John Wesley, the movement's chief theologian, organizer, and advocate, conjoined a powerful focus on religious conversion with a "connection" (loose hierarchy) of unordained itinerant preachers to produce what he considered a return to the values of early or "primitive" Christianity. But Wesley's free will theology, emphasizing the experience of sanctification (also called spiritual perfection), was distinctly at odds with the largely Calvinist revivals in the American colonies, led by the Wesleys' former fellow Oxford comrade and competitor, George Whitefield.

Conditions for the introduction of Methodism improved in the 1760s, when Methodist adherents migrated to the middle colonies. Wesley was inspired to appoint two itinerants to a new "American circuit" in 1769, just before Whitefield's death. The Patriot movement was well under way, but the rising numbers of American-based itinerants remained nonpartisan or Loyalist in keeping with Wesleyan instructions. In Britain, contrary to his reformist tendencies, Wesley published strongly worded condemnations of the Patriot movement. Conversely, the Methodists' liberal strain appeared early in their path-breaking recruitment of African slaves and free people, also encouraged by Wesley's antislavery publications. Because few of the Patriots espoused emancipation of slaves, this ambition further removed many Methodists from the greater cause of the Revolution.

With American independence and intensification of the Revolutionary War, Wesley's itinerants scat-

tered, some back to Britain, some into British-occupied territory, others dangerously into Whig neighborhoods. The future leader of the American movement, British-born Francis Asbury, took sanctuary in Delaware. Methodism's fate was left in the hands of novice preachers, mostly American recruits. Among their main concerns was appealing to followers without attracting the attention of Patriot authorities and state legislatures.

#### THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND ITS FIRST MEMBERS

The Methodists' change in fortunes came with the end of the war and Wesley's decision to permit the American preachers to form their own connection. At the Christmas Conference (24 December 1784–2 January 1785), Asbury and Wesley's emissary, Thomas Coke, went one step farther, persuading the American itinerants to create the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC), in part to keep pace with the Anglicans and the formation of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The Methodist order of the ministry was established, and Coke, already ordained as "superintendent" by Wesley, officiated over Asbury's ordination as his co-bishop, the apostolic title preferred by the Americans. (By contrast, the connection in Britain remained a part of the Church of England until Wesley's death in 1791.) In 1785 the first Methodist discipline condemned slaveholding as "contrary to the Golden Law of God . . . and the unalienable Rights of Mankind."

Initially centered in Philadelphia and New York City, the new church's informal headquarters swiftly moved to Baltimore at the northern tip of a rapidly rising Methodist population in Delaware, Maryland, and northern Virginia. The itinerants now recruited a wide array of Americans into their movement. A large percentage of Methodist followers before 1800 were women—as much as two-thirds of the early city congregations. Many of these women were young and unmarried, part of a new post-Revolutionary generation bound less by family ties than voluntary association. Many were slaves and former slaves. Others, especially in the Baltimore and urban areas, were wealthy patrons and confidantes of the traveling ministers. The movement provided unprecedented opportunities for women to lead public prayer groups and to support the itinerants. The correspondence between the preachers and their female adherents is replete with expressions of mutual admiration. Women's presence in the church continued strong after 1800. As she notes in *Strangers and Pilgrims* (1998), the scholar Catherine A. Brekus discovered as many as twenty-nine self-appointed fe-

male Methodist preachers, black and white, in the years before the Mexican-American War (1846–1848). Among them was African Methodist Jarena Lee, who published her spiritual memoir in 1836.

Methodist outreach to black members was the movement's most distinctive social characteristic. By 1800, 21 percent of America's 64,000 Methodists were black, slave and free. A small Methodist congregation in Wilmington (Delaware), the pioneering African Methodist Episcopal congregation under Richard Allen in Philadelphia, and the African Methodist Zion congregation in New York City asserted their independence as separate denominations in 1813, 1816, and 1821 respectively. All these groups placed special emphasis on the "African"—African American—identity of their members and sought full ordination of their ministers, refused to them by the MEC. By contrast, Baltimore's black Methodist presence, forming up to 35 percent of the city congregation in and around 1800, remained within the larger church. Although most of Baltimore's black worshipers likely met in their own chapel building, the Baltimore Methodist churches may be described as the first significant multiracial organizations in the United States.

The white men who came to the church in its first years were also socially diverse—laborers, artisans, professionals, middling merchants, and assorted industrial capitalists in the cities; slaves, farmers, and varying orders of gentry in the countryside. After the MEC was organized in 1784, urban and rural local elites alike began to form boards of trustees to sustain the building of hundreds of Methodist chapels across the states and into the territories.

Young, single men especially discovered the vocation of the traveling preacher in the church's formative years. Between 1769 and 1806, Jesse Lee, the first Methodist historian, calculated that 990 men comprised the first generation of licensed Methodist preachers. They were a sacrificial lot: committed to traveling a different, and often enormous, circuit every six months, as mandated by church discipline and dictated by the bishops. The early Methodist clergy's feats of itinerancy were legendary. Bishop Asbury traveled sixty times across the Appalachians and twenty-nine times to the Lower South, covering over a quarter of a million miles on the American continent before he died in 1816. He probably met more Americans face-to-face than any single figure in the early Republic. The itinerants' lives were often cut short by their labors, and their obligations ran the gamut from delivering sermons to delivering health care. In some areas, the preachers were seen

as shamanlike figures, capable of magical acts of redemption and personal healing. But the older denominations often typecast the itinerants as uneducated upstarts, who, in the words of one Anglican minister, "set themselves up as teachers of those above them."

Other churches had reason to fear Methodist growth. By the 1790s Methodist circuits were being surveyed in especially large numbers in New York, New England, and the Upper South, and Methodist itinerants were moving quickly into new territories and states west of the Appalachians. In New England the MEC challenged the standing order of the Calvinist Congregational Church. In the South they eventually overtook the Anglicans and posed the first significant competition for the Baptists.

#### THE METHODIST AGE

The later years of the Second Great Awakening (1800 through the 1830s) have also been called the Methodist Age by religious scholars, and with good reason. Although conservative Evangelicals were convinced that freethinker Thomas Jefferson's election as president marked a low point in American religious influence, many Methodists were encouraged by the Democratic Republicans' support of the separation of church and state. The Methodists' success in Jeffersonian America corroborated the liberal (Wesleyan) evangelical belief that religious freedom would serve newcomer churches well.

Membership in the MEC skyrocketed in the decades after 1800: from 64,000 in 1800 to 175,000 in 1810, 257,000 in 1820, and nearly 500,000 in 1830. The church's message was assisted by an eastern innovation, the camp meeting. These initially interdenominational revivals further popularized the Methodist style: preacher, hymnbook in hand, exhorting expectant listeners to receive the Holy Ghost and convert to primitive Christianity. The huge meeting in Cane Ridge, Kentucky, in 1801 marked the starting point of evangelical dominance in the West, but also the beginning of Methodism's massive influence on the style of worship of other American churches.

Less easily determined is Methodism's political character after 1800. In Great Britain, in response to the French Revolution, the royal government's crackdown on radicals—traveling preachers among them—compelled the Methodist leadership to steer a conservative course. The long association between the Methodist establishment and Victorian values began early in the century, although working-class Methodists also developed strong ties with the trade

unionist movement in Britain's emerging industrial centers.

In the United States, historians disagree on the fundamental nature of Methodist political culture. The historian Christine Leigh Heyrman argues in *Southern Cross* (1997) that evangelical preachers across the South, hundreds of Methodists among them, succeeded in controlling the region's religious future only after they abandoned their early allegiance with women and African Americans and adopted the gender and racial norms of southern white men. Southern Methodism and Baptism consequently, and rapidly, veered away from early emphases on emotionality and the equality of all Christians to a masculine mastery that has come to define American evangelicalism. Heyrman's thesis is supported by the rapid movement of southern Methodists away from the church's original antislavery teachings. In 1804, the church no longer urged its southern members to abandon slaveholding. By the 1820s, black Methodists in the south were strongly discouraged from forming their own congregations.

Similarly, in the North other studies show that the book agent Nathan Bangs eagerly encouraged Methodists to pursue gentility, while he transformed the Methodist publishing house into a thriving capitalist enterprise with publications like the *Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review*. Methodist women, the Magazine's avid readers, were urged to devote their missionary energies to their families, and Methodist women increasingly complied. Pew rents became customary in many Methodist churches. In 1820, New York Methodists objected to replacing the downtown meetinghouse with a neoclassical edifice as a departure from "the primitive simplicity of Methodism." Gothic-style Methodist structures would help define the American Victorian landscape.

Taking the opposing view, in *The Democratization of American Christianity* (1989) the scholar Nathan O. Hatch portrays Methodism as one of the great democratic mass movements in United States history, notable for its unorthodox preaching, indifference to established ecclesiastical authorities, and all-embracing religious populism. Evangelical preachers were passionate insurgents, Hatch argues, determined to reinstate primitive Christianity in America and strikingly unconcerned with respectability. Black Methodist preachers were likewise proud of their lack of sophistication. Typically American, the Methodist clergy also made the most of a burgeoning capitalist economy to advertise their spiritual wares and whereabouts.

Certainly, the scale of Methodist expansion—federal in structure, multiracial in composition, propelled by troops of charismatic and energetic itinerants into every region of the country—prompts irresistible comparisons to the democratic Republic: experimental, expansive, young, and vibrant. As the historian Richard Carwardine has shown, in *Transatlantic Revivalism* (1978), the competitive political culture of the Republic also drew many Methodist men away from their espousals of nonpartisanship into enthusiastic participation in electoral politics. Methodists were pro-Federalist in Delaware and pro-Jeffersonian in Ohio. Methodists soon appeared in the ranks of state legislators, judges, and even governors. By the 1820s the Methodist ministerial calling attracted westerners like Peter Cartwright who identified with the American revolutionaries, American political virility, and American expansion. The historian Mark A. Noll, in *America's God* (2002), describes Methodism's spiritual practice, evangelical mobilization, and sheer size as providing the bonds for national cohesion, linking together religion and republicanism in fundamentally new ways.

Whether interpreted as conservative or democratic, political or more strictly spiritual, John Wesley's missionary movement was a thoroughly Americanized institution by the beginning of President Andrew Jackson's first administration in 1829. As such, Methodists were divided by the same issues, particularly the conflict over slavery, that divided the country. In 1844 the MEC split into two halves, northern and southern, a breach that would not heal for more than a hundred years.

Methodism's unorthodox influence remained strong nonetheless. While Frederick Douglass condemned the hypocrisy of southern Methodist slaveholders, he was a Baltimore Methodist when he made his escape to the North in the late 1830s. Women remained strong advocates of Wesley's teachings and took leading roles in the formation of Methodist offshoot denominations, among them the Primitive Methodist and Methodist Protestant churches. The Methodist preachers' rejection of Calvinist predestination and embracing of free will theology and sanctification fundamentally altered the aim and tone of American Christianity. For the Republic, the legacy of the Methodist age was deep-seated, multilayered, and long-lived.

*See also African Americans: African American Religion; Baptists; Bible; Camp Followers; Catholicism and Catholics; Denominationalism; Presbyterians; Professions: Clergy; Religion: Overview;*

## Religion: The Founders and Religion; Religious Publishing; Revivals and Revivalism.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Andrews, Dee E. *The Methodists and Revolutionary America, 1760–1800: The Shaping of an Evangelical Culture*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Brekus, Catherine A. *Strangers and Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America, 1740–1845*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- Carwardine, Richard. *Transatlantic Revivalism: Popular Evangelicalism in Britain and America, 1790–1865*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978.
- Hatch, Nathan O. *The Democratization of American Christianity*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989.
- Heyrman, Christine Leigh. *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*. New York: Knopf, 1997.
- Lyerly, Cynthia Lynn. *Methodism and the Southern Mind, 1770–1810*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Mathews, Donald G. *Religion in the Old South*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1977.
- Nash, Gary B. *Forging Freedom: The Formation of Philadelphia's Black Community, 1720–1840*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- Noll, Mark A. *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Richey, Russell E. *Early American Methodism*. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1991.
- Schneider, A. Gregory. *The Way of the Cross Leads Home: The Domestication of American Methodism*. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1993.
- Wigger, John H. *Taking Heaven by Storm: Methodism and the Rise of Popular Christianity in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Dee E. Andrews

---

**MEXICO** Mexico had undergone nearly three hundred years of Spanish rule by the eighteenth century's end. Although the occupation failed to erase Mexico's indigenous culture and customs, it indelibly marked the region with Spain's stamp. In the end, Spanish insistence on strict control over its overseas holdings drove Mexico to seek independence.

### UNDER SPANISH RULE

The arrival of Spanish conquistadors in 1519 began Mexico's domination by Europeans. However, indigenous groups that had assisted Spain in defeating the Aztecs found special favor. The Spanish Crown rewarded men like Hernando Cortés (1485–1547) and

their native allies with grants and titles. Within a short time, Mexico's new ruling class had begun the process of re-creating in New Spain life as they had known it on the Iberian Peninsula.

A caste system developed in Mexico that persisted well after independence. *Peninsulares*, Spaniards born in Spain, occupied the top rung of the social ladder and received the most important government and ecclesiastical positions. *Peninsulares* also controlled the trading houses and industrial endeavors such as mining. Second in importance were the *criollos*, or Mexican-born Spaniards. *Criollos* occupied an inferior station to *peninsulares* solely because of the location of their births. Below Mexican-born Spaniards were *mestizos*, people of mixed Spanish and Indian ancestry. Other classes, such as *zambos* (children of African and Indian parents) and *mulattos* (children of Spanish and African parents), were looked down upon by the pure-blood Spanish. Although the families of some indigenous people who had assisted in the Spanish conquest of New Spain had been given the title and prerogatives of nobility, the majority of Mexico's indigenous population made up the lowest class of colonial society.

Spain tightly regulated colonial Mexico's economy. Nations with colonies expected their overseas holdings to provide resources and serve as markets for their industrial output. Thus, Mexican silver and other minerals traveled eastward to Spain and Spanish goods sailed westward to Mexico. Fortunes could be made in trade, and the *peninsulares*, with ties to friends and relatives in Spanish ports, made the most of their connections. To ensure Spanish dominance of industry and agriculture, the Spanish government published an extensive list of products that could not be manufactured or grown in Mexico. Strict restrictions spawned smuggling, an activity that became endemic within New Spain's economy.

Spanish and indigenous cultures coexisted in colonial Mexico. Important cities—Jalapa, Puebla, Mexico City, Guadalajara—dotted the road across central Mexico that connected Vera Cruz and Acapulco. Other important towns grew in the north due to the mining wealth that came from the ground near Zacatecas, Guanajuato, and Durango. These communities were home to Mexico's ruling and working classes. The countryside, however, was still home to the vast majority of Mexicans, an indigenous population that continued to farm the land of their ancestors. The major change to the life of these men and women was the tax and labor burden levied on them over the years by the Spanish.

A change in Spain's royal dynasties from the Habsburgs to the Bourbons occurred in 1700 when the childless Charles II selected his French nephew, Philip V, to take his place on the Spanish throne. The move resulted in the War of the Spanish Succession (1702–1713), which upheld the Bourbons' right to rule Spain. The consequence for Mexico was that the Bourbon desire for administrative reform was applied to New Spain. Bourbon reformers believed that a rational approach to government administration would make Spanish bureaucrats more efficient, meaning that more revenue could be raised for the crown. Officials analyzed Mexico's political divisions and economic practices and recommended improvements. Although these changes increased Mexico's contribution to its own upkeep as well as Spain's, it did little to alleviate the growing rift developing between the *peninsulares* and the rest of Mexico's population, which increasingly felt overburdened and slighted.

#### FIGHTING FOR INDEPENDENCE

Events in Europe ultimately led to Mexico's independence. The eighteenth-century Enlightenment (the movement that had produced the Bourbon reforms) had weakened absolutism by proposing alternatives to the traditional relation between rulers and their subjects. Monarchs and their supporters viewed with alarm the formation of the United States and its adoption of a federal, republican form of government. They had reason to fear, because in 1793 the French populace revolted and ultimately executed many of the ruling class, including its own king and queen. A brief flirtation with republicanism gave way to the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte and a new French empire. In 1808 Napoleon deposed the Spanish king and gave the throne to his own brother. This action severed the ties between the Spanish Crown and its overseas possessions, giving these colonies their first opportunity to experience self-government.

Mexico responded to these events as did other Spanish colonies, establishing *juntas* that claimed to rule in the name of the king. The turmoil brought the underlying tension between the *peninsulares* and other Mexicans into sharp focus. *Criollos* contemplated not just freedom from Spain but freedom from the grasp of the *peninsulares*. The latter held the upper hand through their control of the army, church, and commercial enterprises, but they feared that without continued support from Spain, they would lose their dominant position in society.

The first step in Mexico's road toward independence came on the evening of 16 September 1810. Many parish priests, themselves *criollos*, sympathized with Mexico's mixed-blooded population. Although their plight was not as severe, their own Mexican birth prevented advancement within the church hierarchy. One village priest, Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, plotted a revolt with other *criollos*. The plot discovered, Hidalgo went to his church at the village of Dolores and rang the bell to assemble his parishioners. There he issued the Grito de Dolores, a call for protection of the church and an end to "bad government." News of the revolt spread quickly, and within days thousands of *mestizos* and Indians had flocked to Hidalgo's banner.

Many *criollos* desired a reordering of Mexican society but were shocked by the turn of events initiated by Hidalgo's pronouncement. The revolt took on the tone of a race and class war when his mixed-race army attacked both *peninsulares* and *criollos*. Hidalgo's followers seized Guanajuato and plundered the city, killing more than three hundred royalists who had sought refuge from the mob in a public granary. Forced by circumstances to ally with the *peninsulares*, *criollos* joined with royalists to put down the insurgency that threatened to destroy Mexico's social order. Hidalgo and his army were defeated in 1811, and the priest along with his lieutenants were captured as they made their way to Texas; their severed heads adorned posts outside the granary at Guanajuato as a warning to would-be rebels.

The Spanish, however, were not able to stamp out the revolt. Allies of Hidalgo and his supporters took to the forests and hills and waged a guerilla campaign against the royalists. Leaders included another parish priest, José María Morales. In 1815 the Spanish captured Morales and executed him, depriving the insurgency of a popular and effective leader, but others continued the insurgency.

Rebellion was not confined just to the heart of Mexico. In 1811 the garrison at San Antonio de Béxar in the province of Texas revolted against the Spanish and seized the governor and other officials. The revolt crumbled but discontent remained. In 1812 Mexican republicans, supported by American filibusters, crossed into Texas from Louisiana and confronted the Spanish. By April 1813 the expedition had defeated local forces and occupied San Antonio. That summer, however, a royalist army arrived in Texas to reclaim the province and to punish the insurgents. The republicans were routed at the Battle of the Medina outside San Antonio. The brutal suppression of the revolt, which included hundreds of

executions of rebels and mistreatment of the Tejanos, further depopulated an already sparsely settled region. The need for a stable population led Spain to invite colonists like Moses Austin from the United States to settle in Texas.

Events in Europe once again rocked Mexico and resulted in its independence. In 1820, liberal army officers forced the Spanish king to reinstate popular governmental reforms. The news was received with alarm because Mexico's upper classes feared a renewal of class warfare. The royalists finally lost control because *criollos* worked out a power-sharing agreement with *mestizo* insurgents by adopting three principles that all Mexicans could support: independence from Spain, equality for all Mexicans, and protection of the church.

#### INDEPENDENT MEXICO

The year 1821 brought political independence but failed to mark an end to Mexico's problems. The new nation inherited an economy and infrastructure that had been wrecked by ten years of civil war. European leaders looked to establish a strong presence in the former Spanish colony and gladly extended credit to Mexico, trapping it in a web of foreign debt. An aggressive neighbor, the United States, eyed Mexico's northern territory from Texas to California. Internal political factions struggled for control of Mexico's new government and the chance to shape the country's future. Civil war, invasion, and dismemberment awaited Mexico as the nineteenth century progressed.

*See also Latin American Revolutions, American Response to; New Spain; Spain; Spanish Borderlands; Spanish Empire.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anna, Timothy E. *Forging Mexico, 1821–1835*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998.
- Chipman, Donald E. *Spanish Texas, 1519–1821*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992.
- Knight, Alan. *Mexico: The Colonial Era*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Lafaye, Jacques. *Quetzalcóatl and Guadalupe: The Formation of Mexican National Consciousness, 1531–1813*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.
- Miller, Robert Ryal. *Mexico: A History*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985.
- Véliz, Claudio. *The Centralist Tradition in Latin America*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980.

*Richard Bruce Winders*

**MICHIGAN** Remote from eastern settlement, Michigan was initially set off as part of the Indiana Territory in 1796. In 1805 Congress established the Michigan Territory, which included all of present-day Wisconsin and part of what became Minnesota in addition to the two peninsulas that constitute what became the state of Michigan. The territory remained a sparsely populated hinterland into the 1820s, with a diverse collection of British and French-Canadian fur traders, Métis, and various Indian peoples, but few American settlers. Popular perceptions of the territory as an impenetrable swamp in the south and a sterile, rocky wilderness in the north offered little incentive to potential settlers compared to the favorable soils, greater accessibility, and milder climates of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. Not until the introduction of steamships into the Great Lakes in 1818 and the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 did any substantial American migration penetrate the isolated peninsulas.

In 1810 Michigan's Anglo population of 4,762 was concentrated in and around Detroit and outposts in Michilimackinac and Sault Sainte Marie in the Upper Peninsula. Founded by the French in the early eighteenth century, these military and trading posts passed to the British following the Seven Years' War (1756–1763). The British ceded their Old Northwest claims in 1783, although French Canadian and British traders continued to operate in the Territory. Detroit and Michilimackinac played significant strategic roles in the Seven Years' War, the American Revolution, and the War of 1812. At the onset of the War of 1812, the British seized Michilimackinac and Detroit, but these victories proved temporary. Following its recapture in 1813, Detroit served as an important base for the American invasion of Canada. The Treaty of Ghent in 1815 firmly established the boundaries of Michigan, and the trickle of settlement into the territory slowly expanded. Yet growth remained gradual, and in 1820 census takers still counted only 8,896 non-Indians in the entire territory. By 1830 that number had grown to a mere 31,639—a population that paled in comparison to the nearly one million inhabitants of Ohio to the south and east.

Unlike Ohio, however, Odawa (Ottawa), Ojibwa (Chippewa), and Potawatomi villages populated both peninsulas, with approximately fourteen thousand Indians living in the Lower Peninsula and two to three thousand in the Upper Peninsula in 1830. Their presence posed a significant barrier to the spread of white settlement outside of Detroit, making land-

cession treaties with the various bands a preeminent concern of Michigan's early leaders. One of Michigan's most vigorous boosters was Lewis Cass, territorial governor for thirteen of the sixteen years between 1813 and 1829. Cass directed the acquisition of approximately two-thirds of the Lower Peninsula via treaties with the Odawa and Ojibwa in 1819 and 1821 and engineered the funding and building of a government road that finally connected Michigan with Ohio in 1827. Cass's tireless efforts to erase the negative image of Michigan encouraged the spread of settlements across the southern Lower Peninsula, but it was not until 1836 and 1842 that the remainder of the new state was transferred from Indian control, following which American settlers began to populate the northern wilderness.

*See also American Indians: American Indian Removal; Erie Canal; Fur and Pelt Trade; Ghent, Treaty of; Northwest; Pontiac's War.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Gilpin, Alec R. *The Territory of Michigan (1805–1837)*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1970.
- Lewis, Kenneth R. *West to Far Michigan: Settling the Lower Peninsula, 1815–1860*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2002.
- Russell, Nelson Vance. *The British Régime in Michigan and the Old Northwest, 1760–1796*. Northfield, Minn.: Carleton College, 1939.

Bradley J. Gills

---

**MID-ATLANTIC STATES** The British middle colonies were constructed, between 1664 and 1720, from the remnants of Dutch New Netherland in the Hudson River Valley and Scandinavian New Sweden on the Lower Delaware River. The defining element of their character was population diversity, beginning with these non-English seventeenth-century foundations and continuing with major German and Scots-Irish migrations to the region during the mid-eighteenth century. By 1750, the mid-Atlantic region included members of a dozen or more religious denominations, including Anglicans, Lutherans, German and Dutch Reformed Calvinists, Presbyterians, and sectarian Pietists, as well as Jews and Catholics.

The region's architects included royal agents and proprietary stakeholders working from the top down and diverse colonists operating at ground level.

English officials by 1682 had carved the territory into New York; New Jersey; and Pennsylvania, including its Lower Counties below Philadelphia (later Delaware). New Jersey split into two proprietary entities, called East and West New Jersey. Settlers and Indians across the Hudson and Delaware watersheds acted as if these imperial and political designations were irrelevant. They traveled, traded, farmed, and built families across the vague borders of the region. Royal officials after 1685 tried to reassemble a greater New York, resembling the original footprint of New Netherland, but proprietary interests, led by William Penn, resisted this project. Between 1720 and 1760, imperial and proprietary activism receded, and the bonds of region were private trade, extended family dynamics, and complex interprovincial political networks. The durable geopolitics of Indian diplomacy—anchored in an entity in western New York known to ethnohistorians as Iroquoia—reinforced regional cohesion. None of these processes generated any broad consciousness of collective identity among the area's people. Unlike in New England or the southern colonies, "region" here was more a behavioral than a subjective phenomenon.

The American Revolution destroyed the main structural pillars of the region—the hub of royal government at New York, the proprietary hearth in Philadelphia, and the lynchpin of European-Indian relations in Iroquoia. Defeated redcoats sailed from New York Harbor in 1783, leaving a toothless socket of British imperial power. The Penn family was the biggest Loyalist claimant on royal largesse. The Six Nations, or Iroquois Confederacy, having benefited from both imperial military power in New York and war aversion in Pennsylvania, were driven by American treaty expansionism into Canada and the Great Lakes country. The adhesive strength of private behaviors is suggested by the fact that—as the institutional scaffolding of the region collapsed—the mid-Atlantic complex retained so much of its shape and its functional utility.

Economic processes in the late colonial era contributed to both the survival and the modest warping of the mid-Atlantic's outer boundaries. The bulwark of great landlord power in the Hudson Valley kept New York underpopulated, and—with help from British troops in the 1760s—pushed Yankee settlers north along the Connecticut River and into coastal Maine. Mason's and Dixon's Line was barely surveyed in the 1760s, defining a political border between Pennsylvania and Maryland, when the loss of planter confidence in tobacco culture eroded the economic edges of the region. Farmers on the Delmarva

Peninsula and in northern Maryland shifted to grain cultivation and much of the area joined Philadelphia's economic hinterland. With this shift, the families of talented lawyers like John Dickinson and Joseph Galloway came into that city's political orbit. By 1776 they embodied the at-best ambivalent response of elite middle colonists to the risks and opportunities of independence.

#### **RESISTANCE AND REVOLUTION**

Geographical convenience made New York and Philadelphia the respective meeting places of the Stamp Act Congress in 1765 and the first Continental Congress in 1774. From 1765 until 1783, members of the Continental Congress from New England were described as being from the "Eastern" colonies or states, while the rest lacked focused regional identities. The overlapping hinterlands of New York and Philadelphia were harder to herd into effective cooperation against British imperial change, or to mobilize into resistance, than the more united societies of Massachusetts, Virginia, and South Carolina. This caution initially assured a local stability that was fruitful of deliberative creativity. As the crisis of empire intensified in the 1770s, however, it meant that opposition to British measures was forced on many communities and enforced in others. It was not accidental that a Pennsylvania moderate like Dickinson presided over political deliberations at the Stamp Act Congress in New York in 1765 and remained influential in Philadelphia a decade later. When he and the conservative Whigs who supported him retreated in 1776—opposing separation until after adoption of the Declaration of Independence—radical Patriot forces had to steer the Revolution from places that had been wracked by intense internal upheaval and divisive change for more than a decade.

The mid-Atlantic's cautious approach toward rebellion and then its explosive embrace of it grew from factors that had made the region vibrant, prosperous, and turbulent for a century. Cultural and religious pluralism bred a pragmatic toleration that was not conducive to boycotts or active resistance. The royal hub in New York and the proprietary hearth at Philadelphia established rooted patronage circles in the hinterlands of both towns that grew together in New Jersey. The mundane commodities that the region made—grains, meats, timber, glass, and even bar iron—escaped the regulatory embrace of mercantilist imperial managers and found Atlantic markets that enriched their makers within the strictures of the English Navigation Acts. This fostered what Thomas Doerflinger has called a "logic of moderation" that persistently muffled radicalization.

When war intruded into the region between 1776 and 1779, it galvanized these circumstances. Washington fought unsuccessfully in late 1776 to defend the islands at the mouth of the Hudson River. Repeated defeats sent his army retreating across New Jersey, while that colony's pragmatic civilians seemed to embrace the ascendant British side. When this momentum unexpectedly reversed after Christmas 1776, their mercurial loyalties did too. The British withdrew into New York City, which they kept as a headquarters garrison until late 1783. The Continentals tried to police the Hudson and Delaware watersheds. The territory between the two forces became a no-man's-land where corrupt and violent freelance conflict between civilians often followed patterns of prewar ethnic and religious enmity and amity. When General William Howe invaded Pennsylvania in late 1777 and occupied Philadelphia, similar dynamics emerged there, complicated by that polity's Quaker culture. The British abandonment of Pennsylvania in 1778 froze this crazy-quilt pattern of strengths and weaknesses into place there.

The war was neither won nor lost in the mid-Atlantic, but the Revolution showed its kaleidoscopic character there as vividly as anywhere in America. Native American-European hostilities, although arriving belatedly after 1750 in the one English place that had been buffered from them by Iroquoian diplomacy and Quaker restraint, continued into the Revolutionary era. Washington's effort to end this problem decisively with a destructive invasion of Iroquoia under General John Sullivan in 1779 loosened the hold of Indians on the region and hastened their removal from it during the 1780s and 1790s. The multiethnic European populations of the Mohawk, Raritan, Schuylkill, and Brandywine Valleys—almost as prolific demographically as New Englanders—were freed to expand into the western parts of the older colonies.

#### **THE EARLY REPUBLIC**

The mid-Atlantic was both an exporter and importer of population in the early Republic. The manorial wall along the Hudson River broke after 1790 and restless Yankees "hived" west into the spaces evacuated by retreating native nations. Across the Finger Lakes region, and especially in the Genesee country, they hoped to create a newer New England, but smaller transsecting streams of settlers moving north from Pennsylvania and New Jersey subverted that design. The British seizure of Fort Duquesne in 1758 made Pennsylvania a cultural filter for postwar American settlement of the Ohio Valley and the Old

Northwest. The mid-eighteenth-century flow of German and Scots-Irish Presbyterian migrants into the Valley of Virginia likewise fashioned a Greater Pennsylvania portal to the upper parts of the trans-Appalachian South. Although Frederick Jackson Turner's 1893 claim probably overstated the case, a new and distinctly "American" society seemed to be emerging between a temporarily exhausted and in some ways a culturally fragmenting New England hearth and a still-incipient South that had yet to achieve any real integration or coherence.

During the generation after 1787, the mid-Atlantic traded its fortuitous Revolutionary-era position of national political centrality for one of continental economic and then industrial hegemony. This advantage was not built on internal unity, or even internal coherence, as the polar tendencies latent in the region since the 1630s reasserted themselves. New York political leaders mobilized British capital and new immigration between 1817 and 1825 to drive a canal west from the Hudson Valley to Lake Erie during those years. The success of the Erie Canal in the 1820s positioned New York to become a dominant force in the nation's economy for the next century. By "improving" the natural sea-level path of the Mohawk River, they welded the Great Lakes and Ohio Valley agricultural hearth and eventual industrial belt to their Atlantic metropolis. Pennsylvania's efforts to match this achievement with an awkward combination of turnpikes, canals, railroads, and inclined planes over the Appalachian Mountains seemed more inspired than ingenious. By mid-century, however, the Pennsylvania Railroad pierced that barrier. Then the subterranean accident of anthracite and bituminous coal deposits could redress the advantage. Pittsburgh became the heavy manufacturing citadel of an industrializing America while Philadelphia built a diversified and resilient light industry and skilled-craft economy. That city's port, although farther from the Atlantic than New York City's and prone to winter disruption, held its share of the Northeast's import and export traffic. New York City became the financial engine of a capitalist national economy and displaced Philadelphia as the port of entry for the torrential streams of Europeans who transformed the nation in the nineteenth century.

In the generation before the Revolution, the mid-Atlantic colonies built prototypes for a modern political system that stabilized a dynamic plural society, ameliorating its conflicts and harnessing its energies into productive channels. While those state-based machines failed under the pressures of imperial crisis,

and while governments in the region were maintained by the sword rather than by consensus during the Revolution, the underlying culture of political pragmatism survived the trauma. By 1787, Philadelphia again seemed a safe enough place for national constitutional delegates to gather. The document that they produced received some of its most challenging ratification tests in the region. While planning began almost immediately for the national capital to move south along the balance beam of free and slave systems, and while Virginia and Massachusetts would dominate the American presidency for a generation after the Revolution, New York and Pennsylvania remained laboratories of state and metropolitan political experimentation. Indeed, New Jersey—by allowing women to vote until 1807, however inadvertently—even more fully anticipated the ultimately democratic political future.

*See also Agriculture: Overview; Constitution, Ratification of; Delaware; Economic Development; Erie Canal; Iroquois Confederacy; Loyalists; New Jersey; New York City; New York State; Pennsylvania; Philadelphia; Revolution: Military History.*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Countryman, Edward. *A People in Revolution: The American Revolution and Political Society in New York, 1760–1790*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981.
- Doerflinger, Thomas M. *A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise: Merchants and Economic Development in Revolutionary Philadelphia*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986.
- Jensen, Joan M. *Loosening the Bonds: Mid-Atlantic Farm Women, 1750–1850*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1986.
- Jonas, Manfred, and Robert V. Wells, eds. *New Opportunities in the New Nation: The Development of New York after the Revolution*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1982.
- Nash, Gary B. *Forging Freedom: The Formation of Philadelphia's Black Community, 1720–1840*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- Taylor, Alan. *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic*. New York: Knopf, 1995.

Wayne Bodle

---

**MIDWIVES** *See Childbirth and Childbearing; Work: Midwifery.*



**MIGRATION AND POPULATION MOVEMENT** By 1754, most of the choice lands between the Atlantic Coast and the Appalachian Mountains had been settled by European colonists who, looking westward, pressed colonial governments to acquire and provide new lands. As early as 1747, Virginia planters interested in land speculation and the fur trade organized the Ohio Company to explore and open the Ohio River valley to settlement and economic exploitation. The French viewed the company's activities as a challenge to their imperial claims, which in part led to the Seven Years' War (1756–1763). When the war ended, however, rather than open the Ohio River valley to colonists, the British—hoping to avoid further conflict with the Indians—barred settlement in trans-Appalachia in the Proclamation of 1763.

Throughout the 1760s and early 1770s, pressures for new lands escalated. Over 125,000 emigrants arrived in the colonies from the British Isles. Many found jobs in urban areas along the coast, but most sought land and, unable to acquire large farms along the seaboard, began looking to the backcoun-

tries. By the outbreak of the Revolutionary War (1775–1783), settlers (large numbers of whom were German, Scots, and Scots-Irish) streamed into New York's Mohawk River valley and the Pennsylvania mountains and along the Great Wagon Road into the Virginia and North Carolina backcountry.

Yet Europeans were only the most conspicuous populations on the move. The migrations of slave-owning colonists created a forced migration of African Americans, particularly in the southern colonies. As whites and blacks moved into new areas, they displaced Native Americans who consequently relocated into other regions and uprooted other peoples. This pattern of peoples bumping into each other characterized American migrations throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The pattern pertained as well to Europeans, who—as Bernard Bailyn in *The Peopling of British North America* (1986), David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly in *Bound Away: Virginia and the Westward Movement* (2000), and others had demonstrated—were of such vast cultural, if not ethnic, diversity that their migrations often challenged the cultural ways of previous settlers.

The Revolutionary War accelerated these patterns by eliminating imperial impediments to migration and by giving rise to a sense of providential destiny. Migration had been among the causes of revolution; British western land and Indian policies were among the grievances listed in the Declaration of Independence. Under the Treaty of Paris (1783), the Confederation of American states gained all the territory east of the Mississippi River between Canada and Florida. And among the most significant acts of the Confederation Congress of the 1780s was a series of ordinances organizing the Old Northwest that opened territories north of the Ohio River to settlement.

#### THE TRANS-APPALACHIAN WEST

Dr. Thomas Walker was the first American to discover the Cumberland Gap in 1750, but it was not until the impediments to migration disintegrated with the Revolutionary War that the gap became a primary gateway to the West. Throughout the late 1770s and 1780s, increasing numbers of backcountry peoples from the Carolinas and Virginia flowed through it, moving southward into the Holston settlements of Tennessee or following the Wilderness Road into central Kentucky. The other major route into the West was along the Ohio River, which remained under the watch of Native Americans well into the 1790s. Migrants from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the Northeast arrived in Pittsburgh and chartered flatboats down the Ohio to landings at Maysville, Fort Washington (Cincinnati), and Louisville.

The majority of white migrants, whether German or Scots-Irish or traveling along the Wilderness Road or the Ohio River, journeyed either alone or in small family groups. The cost and burden of travel made the transport of households difficult for the wealthiest of travelers, so many migrants left extended kin networks behind, along with most of their belongings. Still, the draw of the West was for many more powerful than attachments to family and possessions. By 1790 Kentucky had some seventy-three thousand occupants, and Tennessee's population grew tenfold between 1790 and 1796, when it had sixty thousand residents.

In comparison to furniture and elderly parents, slaves were less of a problem to transport, and the postwar migrations evidenced large-scale displacement of black Americans. First, the Shenandoah Valley, western North Carolina, and the South Carolina and Georgia up-countries became new slave societies. Then, slaves were forced into Tennessee and Ken-

tucky. The uprooting of slaves disrupted the fragile kin networks that provided stability to black life on the plantations, and the Appalachian Mountains created a barrier that made escape and reconciliation nearly impossible.

#### THE OLD NORTHWEST AND OLD SOUTHWEST

The opening of Tennessee and Kentucky encouraged leaders of the new nation to expand westward, evidenced in two of the Confederation Congress's most impressive accomplishments: the Ordinances of 1785 and 1787. The earlier law provided for the survey and sale of lands in the Old Northwest (later the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and part of Minnesota). The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 forbade slavery and outlined the process for statehood.

Yet the Old Northwest was occupied by numerous Indian nations, all assured by the government that their rights and interests would be protected. White and black migrants into Kentucky and Tennessee, however, had already bumped into these Native Americans, inciting an Indian war north and south of the Ohio River. Despite several military victories, the Indians' defeat at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794 forced them to concede much of what later became Ohio in the Treaty of Greenville (1795) and to migrate collectively farther northwestward. The trickle of American settlers that characterized migration into the Old Northwest in the 1780s and early 1790s became a flood as migrants from Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New England flowed into Ohio. By 1800, over forty-five thousand Americans had migrated into the territory.

Between the 1770s and 1790s, therefore, the patterns of white migration, forced black migration, and Native American displacement and migration that had formed in the colonial era became more evident and ingrained in American western development. As the Old Southwest opened in the late 1790s, these patterns and their consequences became even more dramatic.

Most whites who migrated into the Old Southwest (later western Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and the Florida panhandle) came from Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia in search of rich soils and agricultural opportunity. They were small, nonslaveholding farmers, just as in the Old Northwest. But a planter elite also migrated westward, expanding the institution of slavery as well. Determined to open up the territory for cotton agriculture, they pushed for federal intervention with the Native Americans and with the Spanish who still controlled Florida. In

1818 Andrew Jackson occupied West Florida and virtually conquered East Florida, forcing the Spanish to cede the territory to the United States through the Adams-Onís Treaty (1819). By 1840, Florida's population had reached fifty-four thousand, half of whom were slaves.

More than one million African American slaves went from the slave states to the Old Southwest, which soon became the largest cotton-producing region in the world. Especially after the War of 1812 (1812–1815), when commercial ties were reestablished with Great Britain, the cotton boom lured settlers rapidly toward the Mississippi River and beyond.

While rapid expansion into both the Old Southwest and the Old Northwest strained relations with Native Americans, the War of 1812 ended Native American military resistance to white settlement in both regions. The Shawnees under Tecumseh, who had formed an alliance with Britain against the United States, were defeated at the Battle of the Thames in 1813. Meanwhile, in 1814 Andrew Jackson conquered Red Stick Creeks at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in Alabama and forced all the Creeks to cede lands to the United States. Again, Native Americans were on the move, migrating westward and joining with other Indian groups for survival. This set the stage for the final removal of Native Americans from the Old Southwest in the 1830s, when the Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles would be taken, most by force, into the Indian Territory of what subsequently became Oklahoma.

The War of 1812 also opened up the northwesternmost reaches of the Old Northwest to American settlement. Migration into Michigan boomed following the war, as did the movement of miners into the lead deposit regions of Wisconsin.

#### ACROSS THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER

By the turn of the nineteenth century, American migrants were moving into most of the lands east of the Mississippi River, and both the federal government and the citizenry began to look even farther westward. Interest in expansion into the trans-Mississippi West had begun simultaneously with the first migrations into the Old Northwest. In 1792, for example, Robert Gray explored the mouth of the Columbia River by sea, mapping much of the Pacific Coast and strengthening the claim of the United States to the far Northwest. Eleven years later, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark embarked on their expedition into the northern reaches of the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase and then on to the Pacific

Ocean, gathering a vast amount of geographic and scientific information, establishing diplomatic and trade relations with Native American tribes, and further establishing an American claim to the West. They were followed by other government-sponsored expeditions: Zebulon M. Pike in 1805 and Stephen H. Long in 1820 explored the central Great Plains and eastern hills of the Rocky Mountains.

On the heels of these explorers came American migrants. The cotton boom of the Old Southwest spread into Louisiana and swelled its population to seventy-eight thousand by 1810. The confluence of the Mississippi River, the Oregon Trail, and the Santa Fe Trail at St. Louis drew migrants into Missouri, the population of which reached over sixty thousand by 1820. Missourian Moses Austin organized and his son Stephen F. Austin led three hundred families to eastern Texas, opening the way for further migration into the region in the 1830s. As American migrants traversed the Mississippi River, they took with them the patterns that had characterized American migration for over one hundred years: the bumping-in-to-each-other process, forced black migration, and Native American displacement.

*See also American Indians: American Indian Removal; Exploration and Explorers; Northwest; Northwest and Southwest Ordinances; Pioneering; Trails to the West; West.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bailyn, Bernard. *The Peopling of British North America: An Introduction*. New York: Knopf, 1986.
- Cashin, Joan E. *A Family Venture: Men and Women on the Southern Frontier*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Finger, John R. *Tennessee Frontiers: Three Regions in Transition*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001.
- Fischer, David Hackett, and James C. Kelly. *Bound Away: Virginia and the Westward Movement*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000.
- Hurt, R. Douglas. *The Ohio Frontier: Crucible of the Old Northwest, 1720–1830*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996.
- Mitchell, Robert D. *Commercialism and Frontier: Perspectives on the Early Shenandoah Valley*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977.
- Rohrbough, Malcolm J. *The Trans-Appalachian Frontier: People, Societies, and Institutions, 1775–1850*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.

Craig Thompson Friend

**MILITARY TECHNOLOGY** Revolutionary Americans fought the War of Independence (1775–1783) with a munitions industry that they pieced together as they went. They achieved no notable innovations in production techniques or products made. With readily available supplies of wood and iron, experience in colonial warfare, and gunsmiths scattered throughout the colonies, they had the foundation for a munitions industry but only learned through bitter experience how difficult and expensive it was to equip large numbers of men in the field. Powder mills built for the French and Indian War (1754–1763) rotted in disrepair. Gunsmiths were more accustomed to repairing old than making new weapons. Many of those guns and most if not all of their flintlock firing mechanisms came from Europe—and primarily from England, ironically enough.

**SUPPLY SHORTAGES DURING THE REVOLUTION** Americans were short of firearms and gunpowder throughout the Revolution. If not for large quantities of both imported from Europe, their difficult circumstances would have been dire. A deal struck between the Continental Congress and a French firm to make small arms and artillery somewhere in the middle states fell through, an opportunity lost not only for short-term supply, but for long-term development of an American munitions industry with closer ties to continental production methods. The American procurement system was fundamentally the same as that of the British—by contract through small shops, but the revolutionaries had to create that system at the same moment they were forming a nation that divided political authority under a federal arrangement and divided military organization into militia and Continental units, all of which institutionalized confusion and internal competition for scarce munitions. Almost all American artillery came from abroad, except for a few scattered pieces from private forges and foundries and congressionally funded magazines at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and Springfield, Massachusetts. Munitions production in any form underwritten by individual states rarely lasted long, so private provisioners dominated the industry.

Developing new weapons and weapons tactics for an impoverished army that grew and shrank with the campaign season was next to impossible. Initially, George Washington had thought that he could use rifles to advantage, given their superior range over muskets, and he was an enthusiastic supporter of riflemen units raised in frontier areas dur-

ing the early stages of the Revolution. Before too long he saw that riflemen were better adapted to light infantry duty than linear tactics, and by war's end the Continentals were trained and equipped very much like British regulars, insofar as supplies and finances allowed.

Muzzle-loading, smoothbore muskets, ideally issued with socket-style bayonets, were therefore the most common weapons for all troops in the war. Skilled laborers, the most likely source of innovation, sometimes received exemptions from military service, not to experiment with new weapons but to keep production from falling short. The Board of War had been authorized by the Continental Congress to set up "laboratories" for munitions production, but Congress did not have the resources for much more than simple purchase and repair. Systematic research and development did not yet exist in either the private or public sectors. There was no enforceable, standardized weapons design and little chance of interchangeability. Even so, because firearms were sophisticated tools, emphasis on improved design and more specialized labor—precursors to modern factory techniques—was intrinsic to the trade. Some muskets were patterned after the British Brown Bess, others followed French specifications, and all were manufactured (in the pre-industrial sense of being made mostly by hand) in small lots, with repair ad hoc, on-site, weapon-by-weapon. Wilder schemes, such as the proposal by Thomas Paine, the Revolutionary pamphleteer, for steel crossbows to shoot fire arrows the breadth of the Delaware River or Joseph Belton's rapid-fire musket, understandably garnered little interest. While in large part this was a function of scarce resources, it was also a reflection of the military's preference for the inexpensive, simple, and reliable, which explains why the British did not suddenly embrace a bayonet-fitted, breech-loading rifle designed by Major Patrick Ferguson and Americans did little to encourage the submarine experiments of David Bushnell.

#### SLOW PROGRESS AFTER THE REVOLUTION

Independence did not in and of itself bring much change. The Hamiltonian program of the early 1790s included plans to make the new nation more self-sufficient in the weapons of war. National arsenals at Springfield, Massachusetts, and Harpers Ferry, Virginia, supplemented by contracts with individual gunmakers, were supposed to supply both the regular army and the state militias. Failure by either to do so adequately as an undeclared war (1798–



**Revolutionary War Cannons.** These Revolution-era cannons now stand at the French Soldiers and Sailors Memorial in Yorktown, Virginia. © LEE SNIDER/PHOTO IMAGES/CORBIS.

1800) loomed with France explains the contract offered to Eli Whitney in 1798, who had made cotton gins but not firearms. Despite promises to deliver improved, standardized muskets (following the popular French Charleville 1763 pattern) by using newly designed machine tools, Whitney's guns did not have interchangeable parts and were late in coming; more expensive than projected; and, overall, of rather poor quality. Among private contractors, pistol maker Simeon North produced perhaps the best weapons at the turn of the century.

Ultimately, the United States went to war in 1812 against Britain with a woefully inadequate munitions industry. In the years leading up to the war and during the war itself, various inventors approached the national government with plans for improved weapons, but nothing came of these schemes, and most were reminiscent of failed proposals put forward during the Revolution (including Robert Fulton's "torpedoes," which were essentially naval mines). Americans were fortunate that the fighting was intermittent and small scale and that

they had managed to reduce their dependence on imports. Although it is not clear if American gunmakers drew from the practices of French gunsmith Honoré Blanc that so impressed Thomas Jefferson in the 1780s, it is clear that the gunpowder industry benefited immensely from operations begun by French émigré Éleuthère Irénée du Pont along the banks of Delaware's Brandywine River in 1802. In 1813 Simeon North had ambitiously contracted to deliver twenty thousand pistols in five years, all of them with truly interchangeable parts. He failed but came much closer than had Whitney. By war's end the Springfield Armory led the way in quality musket production, making use of better tools and more specialized labor than other arms producers.

Postwar developments were more notable still, marked by Thomas Blanchard's stockmaking machinery at the Springfield Armory and John Hall's model 1819 breech-loading rifle at Harpers Ferry. Hall, who began as an independent contractor, personified the blending of entrepreneurial inventiveness with the War Department's quest for standardized

weapons. At the same time, the War Department's reluctance to put aside muzzle-loading muskets because of its desire to have one inexpensive, easily produced weapon that could be used by militiamen as well as regulars demonstrates that inventions can succeed or fail as technological innovations for non-technical reasons. Moreover, change came incrementally and gradually. There was no sudden transformation from shop techniques to factory-based machine production, even in the so-called armory practice pioneered by Hall and Blanchard.

*See also Army, U.S.; Arsenals; Continental Army; Gunpowder, Munitions, and Weapons (Military); Revolution: Supply.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bellesiles, Michael A. *Arming America: The Origins of a National Gun Culture*. New York: Knopf, 2000.
- Brown, M. L. *Firearms in Colonial America: The Impact on History and Technology, 1492–1792*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1980.
- Cochran, Thomas C. *Frontiers of Change: Early Industrialism in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.
- Hounshell, David A. *From the American System to Mass Production, 1800–1932: The Development of Manufacturing Technology*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984.
- Smith, Merritt Roe. *Harpers Ferry Armory and the New Technology: The Challenge of Change*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977.
- York, Neil Longley. *Mechanical Metamorphosis: Technological Change in Revolutionary America*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985.

Neil L. York

---

**MILITIAS AND MILITIA SERVICE** The United States of America emerged from the War of Independence in 1783 with two decidedly conflicting images of the militia and the role it should play in the new nation. One side saw the militia as the bulwark of American liberty and freedom, a force of citizen soldiers investing their very lives in their new Republic. The other saw the war as having been won through the skill of the regulars and despite a bumbling and incompetent militia. Too much reliance on the militia could result in disaster.

Those that saw the militia in a positive way strongly believed that a standing army was an unmitigated threat to freedom and liberty. True, America lived in a hostile world still dominated by autocratic monarchs. And there was no guarantee that

the Atlantic Ocean could contain the troubles of Europe or that the English to the north and the Spanish to the south would respect American independence. But supporters of the militia argued that a standing army could not possibly traverse the vast expanses of territory to adequately defend the new nation from foreign enemies. Instead, they chose to rely on the citizens themselves to protect and defend their country.

To veteran commanders of war, George Washington foremost among them, the militia performed poorly on the battlefield and could not be given the sole responsibility of defending the nation. In April 1783 the Continental Congress appointed a committee that asked Washington for a formal report on the future of the American military. Washington recommended the establishment of a regular army that would pull troops from state-organized militia forces. Under Washington's plan, the militia forces would receive from twelve to twenty-five days of training annually. In essence, his proposal called for a permanent standing army in the mold of the Continental forces during the war. Congress, however, failed to enact his plan. In 1784 an army was created to go into the Northwest Territory; its seven hundred troops had been culled from the militias of New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Connecticut.

A tax revolt known as Shays's Rebellion in western Massachusetts in 1786–1787 proved to many that the militia was unreliable. Massachusetts called up local militia and sent it to restore order and protect the courts, but the militiamen defected to the rebels. When Shays and his men marched on the Springfield armory to gain more weapons for their growing forces, a private army consisting of militiamen and others raised mainly in unsympathetic eastern Massachusetts and financed by merchants dispersed the rebels in a short battle, ending the revolt. The incident in Massachusetts played a leading role in motivating Americans to adopt a stronger national government. The Constitution looked to federal-state cooperation in the militia through its grant of authority in Article I, Section 8 to Congress to call out the militias in cases of invasion or domestic insurrection and to restore law and order when needed, and later, with the Second Amendment and its guarantee of the right to bear arms as a way of promoting militia efficiency.

After the ratification of the Constitution, the militia continued to play an important role in the defense plans of the United States. In 1790 and 1791 President George Washington dispatched militia forces into the Northwest Territory to battle Native

Americans. Twice the force was defeated with embarrassing results. Washington learned his lesson and in 1794 dispatched a force made up of regular troops led by General Anthony Wayne, who defeated the Native Americans at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794.

#### **UNIFORM MILITIA ACT OF 1792**

In 1792 Congress passed the Uniform Militia Act of 1792, a compromise measure that left President Washington dissatisfied. He advocated a plan put forth by Secretary of War Henry Knox in 1790. The Knox plan divided the national militia into three grades based on age and physical condition. The youngest group of approximately thirty-two thousand men would provide an immediate reserve force for the standing army after going through a basic training program to last two weeks. Knox wanted to tie the right to vote to successful completion of the training program. The older groups would be called up in case of grave national emergency. Knox's plan and its \$400,000 annual price tag was too controversial for Congress. Instead, the Uniform Militia Act assigned responsibility for organizing and maintaining the militias to the states with almost no standards, minimum training requirements, or federal oversight. White men aged between eighteen and forty-five were required to serve and supply their own weapons and equipment. (The law prohibited free blacks from serving in the militia.) States were asked to turn in a report to the adjutant general on the status of their militia, but most ignored this provision. The Uniform Militia Act did nothing to create an adequate defense force and set the stage for subsequent failings. On the whole, Washington and the Federalist Party lost any faith in the militia and sought to build up the regular army.

The state-organized militias varied in many aspects. Some states had muster dates written into their laws, while others left it to local captains to call their men. Some had fines for failing to show up to the mandatory musters, others did not. Some provided for elected officers all the way up to commander of the state militia, but others gave the governor wide latitude in appointing officers. Most states allowed the men themselves to vote on their immediate officers. Some provided weapons, others required the militiamen themselves to supply their own firearms and accoutrements. In general, units varied in size and were not interchangeable with those from other states.

President Washington did secure from Congress a law that gave the president the power to call out

the militia. The new executive power was first used to summon up the militias of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, and New York to suppress the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794. Over 12,900 men responded to the call. However, there was widespread resistance, including riots in Philadelphia that led to the unpopular drafting of men. As in Shays's Rebellion, local militia forces supported the rebels, attacking and capturing a small contingent of regular army troops. Although Washington had a low opinion of the militia, he preferred the citizen soldiers to restore order because it was politically less controversial than using the regular army, especially with the support of the governors. As Washington had hoped, the overwhelming display of force ended the rebellion.

In 1798 President John Adams had less success with the militia in suppressing a domestic insurrection known as Fries's Rebellion. Following the creation of new federal taxes on property to finance the Quasi-War with France, rebellion spread through Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Once again the militia sided with the rebels and attacked the federal tax assessors. Adams was forced to use regular troops to restore order. To make matters worse, Virginia made some moves towards preparing its own militia to fight against the federal government, because the state opposed the unpopular Alien and Sedition Acts (1798). This was not the first time a state looked to its militia to defend itself against the federal government. In 1794 the Georgia militia and the regular army had almost come to blows over Indian policy.

If the Federalists of the 1790s distrusted the militia and praised the value of the standing army, Thomas Jefferson strongly held the opposite beliefs. When he became president in 1801, Jefferson greatly curtailed the size of the army and navy and placed more reliance on the militia to defend the nation. Small gunboats consisting of a single cannon and coastal fortifications manned by militia replaced reliance on large naval frigates. During the Embargo of 1807–1809, Jefferson assigned the unenviable task of enforcement to the militia. As with other militia operations, general disorganization and confusion prevailed. Several states refused Jefferson's request to allow the federal government use of their militias to enforce the law. Despite a renewed interest in the militia, little was done to improve efficiency. The one exception occurred in 1808, when Congress voted to provide \$200,000 a year to supply militiamen with weapons.

### MILITIA SERVICE

A carnival-like atmosphere, more than a martial one, dominated militia musters. In general, musters occurred only four times a year to train on the local commons or the courthouse grounds. After gathering in some sort of formation, the captain inspected the men, who were dressed in their regular clothes. Some did not have weapons. When they were armed, there was no uniformity in their firearms, which ranged from rifles to muskets to shotguns, all in varied calibers and conditions. Sometimes target practice and drilling followed inspection. On other occasions, the men voted to adjourn early. In any event, training never lasted more than a couple of hours, after which the men visited the many tables hosted by salesmen who peddled all varieties of products, including alcohol. Drunkenness became a significant problem and something of a running national joke prominent in the literature of the day. Women baked pies and cooked food. There were games of chance, races, and other sporting events. Politicians flocked to the militia musters to build support for their upcoming electoral bids. A militia officer's commission was a valuable asset in politics. Their popularity as militia commanders catapulted Andrew Jackson and William Henry Harrison all the way to the presidency.

Not all states had a mechanism to enforce attendance at muster. Also, in states that had a fine, those who could afford to pay it did so and tended to stay home or provide a substitute to take their place. Quakers and other conscientious objectors avoided service in this manner. The Uniform Militia Act provided for some exempt occupations and states added to the list. Generally, these included lawmakers, teachers, tradesmen, and ministers, among others.

### WAR OF 1812

The true test of the militia as a defensive force came during the War of 1812. Much like contemporaries of that conflict, historians are not in agreement in their assessments of the erratic performance of militia. To some, the militia was a complete failure as a defensive force. To others, these failures were caused largely at the political level. When the war began there were technically 100,000 militiamen available for service, but disorganization at the state level and poor morale and training made them of dubious value. On the eve of war, Congress strengthened the courts-martial system to better discipline the militia and required militia forces to serve six months from the time they met at their gathering points.

The militia performed best when led by a commander who could motivate them and did not expect

much from them. General Alexander Smyth had no faith in his militiamen and his public statements to that effect got him run out of western New York. The most successful was General Jacob Brown, who used the militia skillfully to defeat the British at the Battle of Sackett's Harbor in May 1813. The militia also served well at the Battles of Baltimore (1814), Horseshoe Bend (1814), and New Orleans (1815).

In many other battles, however, the militia performed poorly and at times disgracefully. The Battles of Detroit (1812), Queenston (1812), and Bladensburg (1814) were the lowest points. Poor battlefield performance was only one part of the general failings of the militia system during the war. Only Massachusetts had a peacetime quartermaster general for the militia. Other states had problems supplying their men. Kentucky marched 2,300 militiamen all the way to New Orleans with less than one-third armed, for example. Moreover, the militia was often poorly led by officers who were either political appointees or were elected by their men without regard to their ability to lead. Even before the battles, the militiamen were notorious for not answering their mobilization. When New York State called out its militia in 1813 to defend Plattsburgh, only 300 showed. With the nation's capital under attack in 1814, only a few thousand militiamen out of the 93,500 called to service were present, and they fled the battlefield as soon as they arrived. Failure to get enough volunteers to fight against the Creek Indians in the Old Southwest required a draft of militiamen. Such a measure, however, did not solve the problem, and entire companies refused to show up at their gathering points.

Cooperation was also hampered by partisan opposition to the war. Federalist governors did not support what was often called "Mr. Madison's War." In New England there was a tendency to retain militia units for use in their own states. Connecticut, for example, used its militia to man coastal fortifications. Rhode Island federalized one company, but would not allow it out of the state. Although Massachusetts provided more volunteers for the regular army than any other state except New York, the militia forces were kept in the commonwealth. This was a severe blow to the war effort, since Massachusetts had the best-trained militia in the United States. New York militia units were willing to fight alongside the federal forces to defend their state but refused to cross over to Canada even in the middle of battle.

In general, the militiamen presented a disciplinary problem as well. Commanders feared that the rowdiness and ill will of the militia would contami-

nate their regulars. Militia felt the federal government took advantage of them. Army volunteers received 160 acres for their service (later raised to 320 acres), yet militiamen were generally paid only a few dollars a month, and in many cases they did not get paid for several months at a time. Some states provided bounties and bonuses, others did not. When their service was up, militia simply left, marching out as a unit. Even a strong-willed leader such as Andrew Jackson eventually had to yield and allow his militia to march back home in the middle of a campaign. These depletions made it difficult for Jackson or any other commander to keep an offensive force in the field.

#### **REGULAR VERSUS VOLUNTEER MILITIA**

After the war, the Army Reduction Act of 1815 limited the size of the army and shifted the primary responsibility of defending the nation from the militia to the regular army. Between 1816 and 1835 the various presidents asked Congress no less than thirty-one times to reform the militia, but no substantive action was taken. In 1820 Secretary of War John Calhoun recommended the creation of an expandable army and the phasing out of the militia, but this plan was not acted upon. In 1826 Calhoun's successor James Barbour created a board chaired by General Winfield Scott to examine the state of the militia. The board recommended that the federal government enforce a standard table of organization for the militia, appoint an adjutant general at the War Department specifically for the militia, distribute drill manuals, and operate a ten-day mandatory training camp at federal expense. Despite the soundness of these proposed reforms, they were never acted upon. In fact, the militia became increasingly ineffective. The militia also became a target for social reformers who saw it as a burden on the workingman that was avoided by the wealthy.

Neglect caused the regular militia to fall out of use. By 1850 nine states had ended mandatory militia service and four more had lifted any penalties for failing to be present for muster. Volunteer, privately organized militia companies picked up the slack. Although the oldest volunteer militia was formed in Boston in 1638, most were formed after the War of 1812 ended. Made up predominately of the middle class and the well-to-do, the volunteers spared no expense, presenting a marked contrast to the regular militia. They drilled in elaborately decorated and colorful uniforms. Their equipment was often the best and most extravagant that money could buy. They took their drilling seriously and met on a much more

frequent basis than the regular militia did. Often there was competition between the many volunteer companies in a city. In New Orleans, which had ten volunteer companies in 1843, the most common form of competition was a marksmanship contest. States could and did integrate the volunteers into the regular militia and occasionally paid them as well. It was the municipal level, however, that came to rely most heavily on the volunteers, as they were called upon to perform a wide range of duties from guarding prisoners, providing honorary color guards at important events, marching in parades, manning fire brigades, and suppressing riots.

#### **THE SOUTH**

The situation in the South was a little different because the regular militia was called on to act in slave patrols. Much like every other aspect of militia service, the assignment of this duty varied from state to state. Some states and localities placed this responsibility in the hands of the volunteer militia and others in the hands of the police, but in most, the regular militia took on this burden. Each militia company provided two volunteers, who served two nights a week for three to four months during which they patrolled in groups of four. In some areas, slaveholders compensated the patrollers. The duties of the slave patrols included searching slave quarters for contraband, breaking up meetings of slaves, hunting down fugitives, and checking traveling slaves for passes. In urban areas, militias acted as sentries for courthouses and other important public buildings. The patrols had authority to carry out summary punishment and whipped slaves who violated the law. The greatest fear in the South remained slave insurrections. Both volunteer and regular militia forces were called out during threats of slave revolts. Militia troops played an important role in suppressing both the Denmark Vesey (1822) and Nat Turner (1831) revolts.

*See also Continental Army; Fries's Rebellion; Shays's Rebellion; Slavery: Slave Patrols; War of 1812; Whiskey Rebellion.*

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Coakley, Robert W. *The Role of Federal Military Forces in Domestic Disorders, 1789–1878*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1989.
- Cooper, Jerry M. *The Militia and the National Guard in America since Colonial Times: A Research Guide*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1993.
- Crackel, Theodore J. *Mr. Jefferson's Army: Political and Social Reform of the Military Establishment, 1801–1809*. New York: New York University Press, 1987.

- Cunliffe, Marcus. *Soldiers and Civilians: The Martial Spirit in America, 1775–1865*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1968.
- Doubler, Michael D. *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War: The Army National Guard, 1636–2000*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003.
- Franklin, John Hope. *The Militant South, 1800–1861*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956.
- Kohn, Richard H. *Eagle and Sword: The Federalists and the Creation of the Military Establishment in America, 1783–1802*. New York: Free Press, 1975.
- Mahon, John K. *The American Militia: Decade of Decision, 1789–1800*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1960.
- . *The War of 1812*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1972.
- . *History of the Militia and the National Guard*. New York: Macmillan, 1983.
- Skeen, C. Edward. *Citizen Soldiers in the War of 1812*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999.
- Stagg, J. C. A. *Mr. Madison's War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early American Republic, 1783–1830*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983.

Gregory J. Dehler

---

**MILLENNIALISM** Millennialism is the belief, based on an interpretation of Revelation 20, that there will be a distinctive one-thousand-year period (the millennium) before the Last Judgment. This belief was especially popular in America from the 1750s to the 1840s.

Because the Book of Revelation is written in highly figurative language, believers differ over the details of the millennium. One fundamental point of difference is whether it will be ushered in by a fiery apocalypse, with only a faithful remnant saved to reign with Christ for one thousand years (premillennialism), or if it will be a peaceful interlude that precedes the Second Coming of Christ (postmillennialism).

The significance of this distinction is that postmillennialists are generally more optimistic about human progress: human agency through the reform of societal ills can help bring about the millennium. Premillennialists are generally more pessimistic about the ability of human agency to effect the millennium and therefore are more likely to focus on cultivating their own spirituality. Protestants were drawn to both kinds of millennialism in unprecedented numbers during the era of the new nation. According to Nathan O. Hatch in *The Democratization of American Christianity* (1989), "the first generation

of United States citizens may have lived in the shadow of Christ's Second Coming more intensely than any generation since" (p. 184).

Although interest in the millennium in America goes back to the first generation of Puritans, throughout the colonial period most of that interest was confined to ministers. Ordinary laymen and -women wrote next to nothing in their spiritual journals concerning the millennium. The Seven Years' War from 1756 to 1763 ushered in a period of increasingly widespread interest in the millennium. That war pitted Protestant Great Britain against Catholic France and included a great many battles in the American colonies, where it became known as the French and Indian War. Some ministers in the colonies, in keeping with a 250-year Protestant tradition, argued that the Antichrist mentioned in the Book of Revelation was in fact the Roman Catholic Church. Thus, the Seven Years' War was a war against the Antichrist and the defeat of France might help usher in the millennium. Because thousands of American colonists fought in this war, the ministerial rhetoric seems to have touched a nerve among the populace.

After the American Revolution (1775–1783) and the ratification of the U.S. Constitution (1787), millennial interest increased. What was once the preserve of learned ministers became a concern for many laymen and -women. In the new Republic, most Protestants were optimistic postmillennialists, believing that if they worked to rid the nation of sin they might help initiate the millennium. This partly accounts for the connection between religion and reform in this period. Many churchgoers participated in reform movements such as abolition and temperance; a large number of them did so with one eye toward the future, hoping their efforts might help begin Christ's reign on earth. But most mainstream Protestants, though hopeful that the millennium would someday arrive, believed that that day was nonetheless far off. Many in the new Republic still followed the computations of Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), who had calculated that the millennium would begin around the year 2000.

But there were smaller, more radical groups of premillennialists, many of whom believed the Second Coming of Christ was imminent. Not only was the Second Coming near at hand, but when it came only true believers would survive the fiery apocalypse. The Shakers and Free Will Baptists of northern New England, for example, believed that the millennium was imminent. Indeed, before the death of their founder Ann Lee in 1784, the Shakers had believed that Lee was the messiah, returned to earth to initiate

the millennium. Throughout the early national period, this strain of millennialism persisted, reaching its peak in the Millerite movement of the early 1840s. Followers of William Miller, a Baptist preacher from New York, believed that an apocalyptic Second Coming of Christ was going to occur in 1843 or 1844. The radical possibilities of millennial belief can be glimpsed in the Millerites' openness to female preaching: since they felt that the end times were so near, it seemed imperative for all believers to spread the word, whether they were male or female.

Ultimately, of course, the Millerites were disappointed. Christ did not return in 1844. Indeed, at the time people referred to their situation as the Great Disappointment. But even among mainstream Protestants, active speculation regarding the millennium declined after the 1840s. In two thousand years of Christian belief, interest in the millennium has waxed and waned. Rarely has that interest captured the imagination of a people as it did during the era of the new nation.

*See also Religion: Overview.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brekus, Catherine A. *Strangers and Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America, 1740–1845*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- Hatch, Nathan O. *The Democratization of American Christianity*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989.
- Holifield, E. Brooks. *Theology in America: Christian Thought from the Age of the Puritans to the Civil War*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2003.

Erik R. Seeman

---

**MINT, UNITED STATES** During the colonial and Revolutionary periods, foreign coins of many denominations circulated in America. In 1782 superintendent of finance, Robert Morris, initiated the first concrete efforts to found a U.S mint. On 15 January 1782, he sent Congress a plan drafted by his assistant, Gouverneur Morris, for the establishment of an American coinage and a mint to produce it. After Congress approved the proposal in principle, Morris hired metallurgist Benjamin Dudley to create the needed machinery and produce sample coins, which he submitted to Congress in April 1783, along with a request that Congress take action on his coinage proposals. Morris's proposed coinage was the world's first official decimal-based coinage plan, although Thomas Jefferson had earlier suggested the

idea. Morris's plan was based on multiples of a small abstract monetary unit called the mill, equivalent to 25 percent of a grain of silver or .069 percent of a dollar. The unit was designed to facilitate mathematical conversions without leftover fractions between the new monetary system and the old state currencies. When Congress failed to act on the plan, lack of funding forced Morris to suspend his mint operations.

In 1785 Congress approved a decimal-based system but rejected the small monetary unit in favor of the dollar as recommended by Thomas Jefferson, chairman of the committee to which Morris's coinage plan was referred. Congress also authorized the creation of a mint, but except for a private production of copper coins under contract with the Board of Treasury, no action was taken until after the new federal government was established in 1789. On 15 April 1790, the new U.S. Congress directed secretary of the treasury, Alexander Hamilton, to submit a new plan for a mint. In April 1792 Congress, overcoming objections to the expense of a mint and its potential for partisan patronage, approved a bill based on Hamilton's 28 January 1791 report. The bill reaffirmed the dollar as the monetary unit, authorized the creation of a mint in Philadelphia, and required that the design of the new coins bear an image of liberty. Debates in Congress during 1791–1792, when Robert Morris chaired the Senate committee responsible for mint legislation and helped produce sample coins bearing the bust of Washington, led the House of Representatives to reject as too "monarchical" the idea of placing a portrait of any incumbent president on U.S. coins. Pattern silver half dimes were produced in October 1792, reportedly using silver obtained from Washington's household.

The Pennsylvania scientist David Rittenhouse, who had advised Dudley on the design of mint machinery in 1782, became the first director of the U.S. Mint in 1792 and served to 1795. The Mint was initially under the jurisdiction of Thomas Jefferson's State Department. Housed on Seventh Street near Arch in the first building erected for the federal government, the Mint opened in 1793 and delivered its first circulating coins, copper cents and half cents, in that year. Silver coins were first produced in 1794 and gold coins in 1795, using bullion privately deposited at the Mint. With silver overvalued in the coins, most large coins were exported. In 1806 President Jefferson banned production of any coins larger than a half dollar, and no silver dollars were produced for thirty years. The Mint's primary early contribution was therefore relieving the problem of

a shortage of money in low denominations for use in the small transactions in which most Americans were involved. Despite its efforts, a continuing coin shortage meant bank notes, scrip, and lightweight foreign coins continued to circulate to meet the need for small change.

In 1794 a congressional investigative committee led by Elias Boudinot challenged the high cost and low production of copper coins at the Mint, noting that such coins had been produced at far lower cost in New Jersey, Boudinot's home state. Next, Jeffersonian polemicist James Callender attacked the mint as a symbol of Federalist excesses and patronage and claimed that a thousand tons of cents could be struck at Birmingham, England, for the same cost. On his last day in office in January 1795, Hamilton also commented on the Mint's inadequacies, blaming poor management and recommending its transfer to the Treasury Department. When Boudinot's committee reported in February 1795, it recommended various procedural adjustments in the weight of coins, in receiving deposits, and in vending coins. Although the report exonerated the ailing David Rittenhouse from blame, he soon resigned as director. His successor, Henry William De Saussure, quickly resigned. Even after Boudinot took over as director, opposition to the Mint continued, with further complaints of Federalist patronage abuse and proposals for less expensive contract coinage. In 1800 a Senate committee recommended abolishing the Mint; the Senate proposed contracting with the Bank of the United States for coins, but Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin, who took office in 1801, opposed placing coinage in the hands of a private corporation. A copper shortage and decline in bullion deposits resulted in periods of idleness at the Mint, leading to another round of debates in 1802, during which the Mint was again depicted as a "Federalist creation," monarchical, unproductive, expensive, and an embodiment of centralized power. Nevertheless, plans for contracts with the Bank of the United States or with Matthew Boulton's firm in Birmingham failed, and the Mint continued in operation.

Henry Voight was named first chief coiner, Albion Cox was recruited in England to serve as chief assayer, and Robert Scot was hired as engraver. John Jacob Eckfeldt, case-hardener of dies for Morris's sample coins of 1783, established a family dynasty at the Mint. His son, Adam Eckfeldt, began constructing tools and machinery for the mint in the 1790s and rose to chief coiner in 1814; other family members worked there continuously until 1929. Benjamin Rush served as treasurer of the mint from

1797 to 1813, and was succeeded by his son James, who served until 1830. Another long-term employee was assayer Joseph Richardson of Philadelphia, who succeeded Cox in 1795, served for thirty-six years, and was succeeded briefly by his son John, who had been in the department for over ten years. On the other hand, in the 1790s Philadelphia's yellow fever epidemics periodically shut down the mint and quickly claimed the lives of several of its employees, including engraver Joseph Wright, assayer Joseph Whitehead, and mint treasurer Nicholas Way.

In 1799 the mint was made an independent agency in Philadelphia, reporting directly to the president; not until 1873 was the headquarters moved to Washington and placed under the Treasury Department. Until 1816, when steam-operated machinery was introduced, horses or oxen powered the metal sheet-rolling machinery. Planchets were hand fed into the screw coining presses to produce the coins, a hazardous process, but in 1793 Adam Eckfeldt invented a device for automatically feeding and ejecting them. In 1838, branches of the U.S. Mint were opened in Louisiana, Georgia, and North Carolina, and as gold and silver were discovered in the West, various branches and assay offices were established there.

*See also Barter; Currency and Coinage.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Stewart, Frank H. *History of the First United States Mint*. Camden, N.J.: private printing, 1924. Reprint, Lawrence, Mass.: Quartermain, 1974.
- Taxay, Don. *The United States Mint and Coinage*. New York: Arco Publishing, 1966. Reprint, New York: Durst, 1983.

Elizabeth M. Nuxoll

---

#### MISSIONARY AND BIBLE TRACT SOCIETIES

Voluntary societies were central to American missionary endeavors during the colonial and early national eras. Most of these organizations were affiliated with a denomination and led by prominent church officials, but they relied on the labor and contributions of both ministers and laity. In spite of occasional competition, they often welcomed interdenominational cooperation in the service of the propagation of Christianity. Usually, they raised money by distributing published texts, such as letters from missionaries, in metropolitan areas of North America and Britain.

The first society devoted to missions in British America was the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England, established by the Long Parliament in 1649. In 1662 King Charles II granted a new charter to the organization, renamed the Company for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England and the Parts Adjacent in America. Known as the New England Company, it supported the work of Puritans among Algonquian tribes of New England. After the American Revolution this group shifted its focus to Canada.

In 1698 Thomas Bray founded the Church of England's Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK), which distributed religious books throughout Britain and its colonies while building charity schools in the British Isles. In 1701 he founded the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG). Although focused on providing ministers to colonists and their slaves, the SPG also launched several missions to Indians, which had the most success with the Mohawks. At the outbreak of the Revolution, it turned its attention to Canada. The Associates of Dr. Bray, founded in 1717, assisted with the Church of England's efforts to convert slaves.

In 1709 the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands and the Foreign Parts of the World (SSPCK) was chartered. It employed missionaries such as David Brainerd, who preached to Indians in New England, New York, and New Jersey. It also helped organize the visit of Samson Occom, a Mohegan Indian and Presbyterian minister, to Britain from 1766 to 1768. The SSPCK continued to fund missions to the Iroquois and other tribes after the Revolution.

The United Brethren, or Moravians, began American missionary work in 1735. They were very successful in converting Indians, especially of the Delaware tribe. The Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel, which existed from 1741 to 1764, raised money for Moravian missions. When it was established in 1795, the Friends' Indian Committee of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting also organized some missions, building on the earlier work of individual members of the Society of Friends, or Quakers.

While the first Great Awakening of the 1740s invigorated missionary efforts in already-existing institutions, the Second Great Awakening inspired the creation of new societies in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Statewide organizations appeared first, such as the New York Missionary Society in 1796 and the Connecticut Missionary Society in 1798. The first women's missionary organiza-

tion, the Boston Female Society for Missionary Purposes, was established in 1800. Many "Female Cent Associations," in which members contributed one cent a week for missionary endeavors, also were founded in this era. These local groups were focused mostly on missions to both whites and Indians in frontier regions such as western New York, southern Ohio, and Kentucky. In 1826 most of them were absorbed into the American Home Missionary Society, which was officially nondenominational but predominantly Congregationalist. Because their reliance on itinerant preachers had already met with much success in frontier areas, the Methodists developed missionary organizations later than other Protestant denominations, founding the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1820.

Many local Bible societies, which distributed free or inexpensive Bibles, also were founded in this era, beginning with the Philadelphia Bible Society in 1808 and the Connecticut Bible Society in 1809. They were combined into the American Bible Society in 1816. Likewise, regional tract societies, such as the New England Tract Society, founded in 1814, were absorbed into the American Tract Society in 1825. Other groups connected with missionary projects, moral reformation, and what is sometimes called the Benevolence Empire were founded in this era, including the American Education Society in 1815 and the American Sunday School Union in 1817.

The emergence of national voluntary societies devoted to foreign missions often is connected with the leadership of Samuel J. Mills Jr., Gordon Hall, and other members of the so-called Haystack Band, who—when they were students at Williams College in 1806—committed themselves to missionary work while conducting a prayer meeting under a haystack in a rainstorm. Their initiative led to the founding in 1810 of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), a multidenominational Protestant organization that sent its first missionaries to Calcutta in 1812. It then sent missionaries to Hawaii and to Syria in 1819. After two ABCFM missionaries became Baptists while en route to India, the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions (also known as the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions or the Triennial Convention) was founded in 1814. Missionary goals also provided some of the impetus for the American Colonization Society (ACS), which was founded in 1816 to resettle free African Americans in Africa. In 1818 the ACS commissioned Samuel J. Mills and Ebenezer Burgess to visit England and Sierra Leone in an effort to pur-

chase land for a colony. In 1822 the ACS obtained land in Liberia and sent its first settlers there, along with its hopes that African American colonists would help spread the gospel throughout the African continent. Through organizations such as the ACS and the ABCFM, the United States became a source as well as an object of missionary outreach.

*See also* **Bible; Frontier Religion; Liberia; Religious Publishing; Revivals and Revivalism.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bays, Daniel H., and Grant Wacker, eds. *The Foreign Missionary Enterprise at Home: Explorations in North American Cultural History*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003.
- Goodykoontz, Colin Brummitt. *Home Missions on the American Frontier, with Particular Reference to the American Home Missionary Society*. Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton, 1939.
- Stevens, Laura M. *The Poor Indians: British Missionaries, Native Americans, and Colonial Sensibility*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
- Szasz, Margaret Connell. *Indian Education in the American Colonies, 1607–1783*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988.

Laura M. Stevens

---

**MISSISSIPPI** The United States acquired most of the land that became the state of Mississippi (with the notable exception of the Gulf Coast) in 1795 through the Treaty of San Lorenzo. The primary purpose of this agreement was to normalize trading relations between the United States and Spain, but the result was the first major acquisition of new territory since the Revolution and, eventually, the creation of a distinct subregion within the slaveholding South.

In 1798 Congress created a governance plan for the new Mississippi Territory that drew heavily on the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, with the notable exception of permitting slavery. In the years that followed, cotton began to emerge as the major agricultural product. The largest European settlement was Natchez, located on the eastern banks of the Mississippi River approximately 150 miles north of New Orleans. Originally fostered by the Spanish, Natchez was a rough trading outpost that served as the home to the local Creole elite, an aspiring polyglot population of French, Spanish, and British ancestry that had established its wealth primarily through commerce down the Mississippi River or through the Indian

trade. Outside the emerging plantation region along the Mississippi, Indians—most notably the Chickasaw, Choctaw, and the Creek—successfully resisted most European and Anglo-American efforts to extend either settlement or political influence.

Undermining Indian power, promoting white settlement, and eliminating Spanish threats to American security became interconnected goals of federal policy in the Mississippi Territory. The collapse of the Spanish Empire and the War of 1812 (1812–1815) created the pretext by which the United States seized portions of the Gulf Coast. These successes against the Spanish helped the U.S. Army conquer the Mississippi Indians, eventually forcing them to accept peace on American terms, which included major land cessions.

The number of Anglo-American settlers and African Americans grew in direct proportion to the death or eviction of Indians and the ejection of Spanish authority. In 1800 the Mississippi Territory had approximately 8,850 non-Indian residents. By 1810 the total had increased to just over 40,352. Almost 40 percent of the population was enslaved. Meanwhile, the white population was emerging in two distinct cultural regions. Western Mississippi, especially the Mississippi Delta, continued to be a center of wealth emanating from plantation agriculture. Much of the region eventually became home to a slave majority. In sharp contrast, many of the settlers in eastern Mississippi were of more modest means, establishing farms with few or no slaves. Different economies and folkways increasingly distinguished the eastern and western portions of the territory. When Congress permitted the first steps toward statehood, it divided the territory along these lines. The western portion entered the Union in 1817 as the state of Mississippi. The eastern portion entered two years later as the state of Alabama. The population in both states continued to surge. By 1820, Mississippi had over seventy-five thousand non-Indian residents.

Despite their differences, the white populations of Mississippi and Alabama remained united in their defense of slavery. Into the antebellum era, the two states carved from the Mississippi Territory developed some of the most repressive racial regimes. Accordingly, they fostered a political culture that responded with increasingly shrill defensiveness to any criticism of slavery or efforts to limit its expansion.

*See also* **American Indians: Old Southwest; Cotton; Northwest and Southwest Ordinances; Slavery: Overview.**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Libby, David J. *Slavery and Frontier Mississippi, 1720–1835*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004.
- Morris, Christopher. *Becoming Southern: The Evolution of a Way of Life, Warren County and Vicksburg, Mississippi, 1770–1860*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Skates, John Ray. *Mississippi, A Bicentennial History*. New York: Norton, 1979.

Peter J. Kastor

---

**MISSISSIPPI RIVER** The Mississippi River and its basin are vital components of America's natural environment. In addition, they have had a vital shaping influence upon the history of North American Indians, exploration, military campaigns, pioneering and settlement, politics, folk and high culture, civil rights, and economic development.

The Mississippi River drains the North American continent from its headwaters in Lake Itasca, Minnesota, to the Gulf of Mexico. Home to diverse and distinctive species of flora and fauna, it was first civilized between 500 AD and 1500 AD by agrarian, mound-building Mississippian Indians. Beginning in 1541, European explorers, traders, and adventurers traversed the Mississippi Valley in the service of Spain; France; Britain; and later, the United States. Before losing the Upper Mississippi Valley and Canada to Britain in 1763, France briefly delivered its claims to the Louisiana Territory to Spain. France regained Louisiana in 1802, only to sell it to the Americans in 1803. The Louisiana Purchase ended an eighteen-year dispute, at last opening the rich port city of New Orleans to American rivermen and seaman.

From the Revolution onward, the Mississippi River witnessed a microcosm of American history. Revolutionary militia general George Rogers Clark fought at Kaskaskia, in Illinois country, in 1778; Lewis and Clark wintered on the Mississippi in 1803–1804 on their way to explore Thomas Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase; Andrew Jackson defeated the British at New Orleans in 1815; the Missouri Compromise debate of 1819–1821 over the status of slavery west of the river polarized America into proslavery and antislavery forces; Chief Black Hawk's 1832 defeat in Illinois, followed by the forced march of the Cherokees across the frozen Lower Mississippi, marked the extirpation of America's woodland Indians; Mormon prophet Joseph Smith was murdered at Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1844; Ulysses S. Grant turned the tide of the Civil War at Vicksburg, Mississippi, in 1863; and American life was forever marked by the

eras of Mississippi Valley slavery, the Jim Crow laws there, and the civil rights revolution of the 1950s and 1960s.

The economic history of the Mississippi River is one of technological innovation, beginning with Indian canoes and frontier keelboats and flatboats, moving into the steamboat age, and culminating in the twentieth-century development of diesel-powered towboat and barge commerce along the mighty river's banks. The first Mississippi rivermen were Indians, paddling their sleek, wooden canoes and crude "bulbous" up and down its waters. Immediately following the American Revolution, keelboatmen steered sleek, prowed, sixty-foot-long craft swiftly downstream and then worked very hard to inch cargoes of coffee, sugar, and other trade goods upstream. The introduction in 1811 of steamboats on the western rivers, however, quickly ran the keelboats out of business.

Interestingly, the crude, inexpensive nonsteam flatboat (introduced in the late 1700s) endured well past the advent of steam power and the Civil War. Flatboats were flat-bottomed, box-shaped craft averaging fifty feet in length and twelve feet in width. Flatboats carried pork, corn, furs, hardy fruits and vegetables, and whiskey downstream only. Having sold their loads and boats (as scrap lumber), flatboatmen walked home along the dangerous Natchez Trace route or, after 1811, purchased deck passage aboard northbound steamers.

The keelboat and flatboat workers did not always conform to the rough, tough "alligator horse" image portrayed in folktales and published stories about Mississippi River heroes like Davy Crockett (1786–1836) and Big Mike Fink (1770?–1823), the "king of the river." Many early boatmen were coarse and violent frontiersmen, but as time progressed a boating workforce emerged, characterized by more civilized family men and young farm boys. The average nonsteam riverman was a white Ohio and Mississippi Valley male of English or Celtic ancestry, averaging twenty-eight years of age. Antebellum and postbellum lumber raft crews—navigating large log assemblages down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers—fit most of this description except that this group included more Scandinavian American raftsmen.

The workaday Mississippi steamboat was a small (approximately three-hundred-ton) craft exhibiting little gilt or fancy trappings. As with flatboat and keelboat commerce, peak steamboat shipping time was during high water; the high waters of late fall and early spring greatly reduced the chances of running aground. At those times, the Mississippi

was dotted with steamers, crewed by both white and African American boatmen and carrying pork, whiskey, lead, tobacco, cotton, and ticketed passengers. By the 1850s, however, the railroads had proved the steamboat's economic undoing. The steamers were ultimately succeeded in 1903 by screw-propellered, steam- and, later, diesel-powered "towboats" pushing fleets of lashed river barges up and downstream.

In the realm of American culture and arts, the Mississippi River valley has proved seminal to the work of authors ranging from Mark Twain (1835–1910) to William Faulkner (1897–1962). Its environment, wildlife, and working folk have been painted by George Caleb Bingham (1811–1879), John James Audubon (1785–1851), and Karl Bodmer (1809–1893). And every indigenous form of American music—gospel, blues, country, jazz, and rock and roll—was born along the banks of, and aboard, the boats plying this great river.

Twain, once a steamboat pilot, referred to the Mississippi River valley as "the heart of America." In all aspects of American culture, the Mississippi River and its people reflect the core of the American experience.

*See also Blount Conspiracy; Environment, Environmental History, and Nature; Frontier; Louisiana Purchase; New Orleans; Revolution: Diplomacy; Spanish Conspiracy; Steamboat.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allen, Michael. *Western Rivermen, 1763–1861: Ohio and Mississippi Boatmen and the Myth of the Alligator Horse*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990.
- Baldwin, Leland D. *The Keelboat Age on Western Waters*. Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1941.
- Hautes, Eric F., James Mak, and Gary M. Walton. *Western River Transportation: The Era of Early Internal Development, 1810–1860*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975.
- Hunter, Louis C. *Steamboats on the Western Rivers: An Economic and Technological History*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1949. Reprint, New York: Dover Publications, 1993.
- Saxon, Lyle. *Father Mississippi*. New York: Century, 1927.
- Twain, Mark. *Life on the Mississippi*. Boston: Osgood, 1883. Reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Michael Allen

system made it both a popular place for settlement and a contested region. In the mid-eighteenth century approximately fifteen hundred French Creoles and African slaves occupying a handful of riverine villages on both sides of the Mississippi coexisted in relative peace with their Indian neighbors, even as rival European powers vied to control their destinies. France's defeat in the French and Indian War (1754–1763) momentarily dashed that nation's imperial ambitions in North America and forced it to relinquish its territories there. The Treaty of Paris (1763) confirmed the placement of Canada and the lands east of the Mississippi under British control and the cession of Louisiana to Spain. The change of regimes did little to alter the fundamental character of Upper Louisiana (present-day Missouri). To the contrary, an influx of Francophone newcomers fleeing British rule reinforced French ways of life in Ste. Genevieve (c.1750) and St. Louis (1764).

Under Spanish rule French remained the common tongue. The Creole villagers were Catholic, communal, deferential, cosmopolitan, reliant on trade and commerce, and generally respectful of Indian customs and sovereignty. More than one-third were slaves. Agriculture, fur trading, lead mining, and salt making produced the commodities of exchange that fueled Upper Louisiana's colonial economy.

The province's sizable Indian populace constituted another vital element. They were the principal suppliers of the valuable pelts that made St. Louis, Upper Louisiana's capital city, a major hub in the international fur trade. The Osage, Upper Louisiana's dominant resident tribe, forged a powerful and mutually beneficial commercial alliance with St. Louis's founding family, the Chouteaus. Members of several other Indian tribes, including the Missouri, Ioway, Sauk, and Fox tribes, also lived or hunted in Upper Louisiana. During and after the American Revolution they were joined by bands of eastern émigré Indians who moved westward to escape the ravages of conflict in their homelands.

Spanish officials primarily viewed Louisiana as a buffer that would protect their valuable possessions in New Spain (Mexico) from British encroachment. Although Spain governed Louisiana for nearly four decades, few Spaniards chose to live there permanently. With limited resources at their disposal, Spanish policymakers sought to strengthen their hold on the sparsely populated and poorly defended province by enticing Anglo-Americans from east of the Mississippi to settle there with offers of free land. The scheme was predicated on a belief that over time

---

**MISSOURI** Missouri's strategic location at the confluence of North America's great central river

they could be transformed into Catholic subjects loyal to the Spanish king. But the English-speaking Protestants who accepted the offer were a different breed. Independent-minded and self-reliant, they shunned the existing communal French villages in favor of scattered and isolated farmsteads. They looked on land as the primary measure of wealth and, in contrast with their Creole neighbors, were predisposed to view Indians as menacing savages.

Napoleon Bonaparte's attempts to resurrect the French nation's imperial designs for the Western Hemisphere culminated in Spain's agreement in 1800 to retrocede Louisiana to France; but more urgent imperatives elsewhere soon dashed those dreams. To the Spaniards' chagrin, the French ruler unexpectedly changed course and offered to sell the sprawling western province to the United States. President Thomas Jefferson accepted the offer, and the Louisiana Purchase (1803) ushered in a new era.

When U.S. officials took charge in St. Louis in March 1804, Upper Louisiana's total population probably exceeded 17,000. That figure included more than 10,000 Euro-Americans, perhaps 1,800 African American slaves, a handful of free people of color, and 5,000 Indians divided almost equally between immigrant and indigenous groups. Americans, including famed pioneer Daniel Boone, who had flocked to the territory during the Spanish regime's waning days already outnumbered the old French inhabitants.

The new U.S. authorities faced a daunting task as they set out to build a stable and prosperous society grounded on republican principles in a place that Washington Irving later described as "more motley than Mackinaw." President Jefferson briefly flirted with the notion of temporarily closing Upper Louisiana to further settlement, but that quixotic scheme was quickly cast aside. The decision to place the region under the control of officials in the Indiana Territory drew howls of protest from local residents of all stripes, and in 1805 Congress authorized creation of the Louisiana Territory, not to be confused with the lower parts of Louisiana then called the Territory of Orleans.

Louisiana's first governor, the controversial and self-serving General James Wilkinson, succeeded in exacerbating tensions between longtime residents and incoming Americans eager to make their mark. Competing claims for the territorial lands pitted holders of large Spanish concessions against land-hungry newcomers. The outbreak of the War of 1812 compounded the challenges of defending exposed settlements in the Missouri Territory (renamed

in 1812 when Louisiana became a state) and added to local uncertainty. The end of that conflict doomed Missouri's steadily declining Indian population to further dispossession and relocation and hastened new settlement in the booming Boonslick Country adjacent to the Missouri River.

Of Missouri's territorial governors, William Clark, in office from 1813 to 1820, proved to be the most adept as he steered the fractious territory through the perils of political and economic transformation that prepared it for statehood. In his failed attempt to become the state's first elected governor, the celebrated explorer and scion of Virginia's old republican order fell victim to a populist political dynamic that championed the common man while embracing Indian relocation and removal. Newly elected U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton and many other aspiring Missouri politicians quickly acknowledged the new realities and hitched their political fortunes to this rising national tide soon to be dubbed Jacksonian democracy. Missouri's 1818 bid to become a slave state unleashed a contentious national debate over slavery extension that was temporarily resolved with passage of the Missouri Compromise (1820), a measure that paved the way for its admission to the Union as a slaveholding state in 1821.

In the post-statehood era, Missourians were well positioned to capitalize on the looming opportunities of a dawning industrial age. St. Louis, already a major fur trade entrepôt and outfitting place for western explorers, traders, and overland travelers, took advantage of a developing road system and the advent of the steamboat era to become a major manufacturing, wholesaling, and commercial center and the nation's dominant inland city.

To accommodate the new migrants filling up Missouri's unoccupied interior spaces, officials moved the state's capital to centrally located Jefferson City. The opening of the Santa Fe trade in 1821 provided a new economic boost and made places like Franklin, Arrow Rock, and Independence way stations and outfitting places. The trade also presaged Missouri's future as the primary point of departure for the great western trails. Settlers from the Old South reinforced the state's slave base and Southern identity even as a vanguard of German and Irish immigrants along with a small cadre of Yankee businessmen provided added leavening to the border state's already diverse mix. The 1830 U.S. Census listed Missouri's population as 140,455, seventy times greater than the 1791 Spanish count. Official enumerations of all inhabitants (excluding Indians) conducted by Spain in 1791 (2,111) and 1800

(7,125) and the United States in 1810 (19,783), 1820 (66,586), and 1830 (140,455) detailed that growth, but they barely hinted at what lay ahead for a state clearly in its ascendancy.

*See also American Indians: Plains; French; French and Indian War, Consequences of; Fur and Pelt Trade; Jefferson, Thomas; Louisiana Purchase; Mississippi River; Missouri Compromise; Pioneering; Santa Fe; Slavery: Overview; Spanish Empire; St. Louis; Steamboat; Transportation: Roads and Turnpikes; War of 1812.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ekberg, Carl J. *French Roots in the Illinois Country: The Mississippi Frontier in Colonial Times*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998.
- Faragher, John Mack. "More Motley than Mackinaw: From Ethnic Mixing to Ethnic Cleansing on the Frontier of the Lower Missouri, 1793–1833." In *Contact Points: American Frontiers from the Mohawk Valley to the Mississippi, 1750–1830*. Edited by Andrew R. L. Cayton and Fredrika J. Teute. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- Foley, William E. *The Genesis of Missouri: From Wilderness Outpost to Statehood*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989.
- Gitlin, Jay L. *Negotiating the Course of Empire: The French Bourgeois Frontier and the Emergence of Mid-America, 1763–1863*. Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 2002.
- Kastor, Peter J., ed. *The Louisiana Purchase: Emergence of an American Nation*. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2002.

William E. Foley

---

**MISSOURI COMPROMISE** The Missouri Compromise (actually a set of congressional acts passed in 1820 and 1821) settled the sectional crisis triggered by Missouri's application to join the Union as a slave state. It permitted this while prohibiting slavery in the rest of the Louisiana Purchase north of 36° 30'. This legislation established the policy for the admission of future states for the next thirty years.

The crisis began when, on 13 February 1819, about three weeks before the adjournment of the Fifteenth Congress, New York Representative James Tallmadge introduced an amendment to the Missouri statehood bill to bar the importation of new slaves and emancipated at adulthood those already in the territory. Tallmadge's amendment sparked an explosive reaction from southern congressmen, particu-

larly from border states, such as Virginia, which looked to the new territories as a market for their dangerous surplus of slaves. This outburst surprised many Northerners, who had accepted at face value Southern, and especially Virginian, avowals of anti-slavery sentiment. After an intense debate employing nearly all the arguments that would be made for and against slavery until the Civil War, the House, by a narrow margin, passed the Missouri bill with the slavery restrictions on 16 February 1819. New York Congressman John W. Taylor's proposal to restrict slavery in the adjacent territory of Arkansas was defeated three days later, and his subsequent proposal to bar slavery in the territory north of 36° 30' never received a vote. The Senate struck out the antislavery provisions of the Missouri bill, but the House stuck by them, leaving the question unresolved when Congress adjourned on 4 March.

Despite the fury of the congressional debates, the Missouri dispute initially attracted little attention in the nation at large, being overshadowed by the Supreme Court's decision in *McCulloch v. Maryland* and a sharp economic recession. Spurred by Federalist activists, including New York editor Theodore Dwight and venerable New Jersey philanthropist Elias Boudinot, Northern antislavery (and anti-Southern) sentiment strengthened over the subsequent months. Incited by anti-Missouri meetings throughout the free states, virtually all Northern state legislatures voted—usually unanimously—to instruct their congressional delegations to oppose the expansion of slavery. Public opinion in the South, on the other hand, was much more muted.

When Maine (then part of Massachusetts) applied for statehood, Virginia Senator James Barbour sought to use it for leverage in brokering a compromise. On New Year's Day 1820, President Monroe and Barbour explained the plan to Maine congressman John Holmes, who reported to Maine's top political leaders that administration leaders felt that "the Mother should have twins this time." However, the proposed linkage detonated explosive responses in both North and South. Maine's citizens were outraged by their representatives' apparent acquiescence to a move to tie the admission of their state to the extension of slavery, while Virginia leaders angrily reacted to the suggestion floated by President Monroe that he might endorse the proposal by Indiana senator Jesse Thomas to bar slavery in the Louisiana Territory north of 36° 30'—the identical line proposed the year before by antislavery advocate Taylor, now Speaker of the House.



In the face of this surge of outrage from both sections, Monroe abruptly backed away from expressions of compromise, avowing privately to Virginians that he would give up the presidency before supporting restrictions on slavery and explaining his earlier stance as a desperate response to extreme danger to the Republic. Monroe and his associates began to advise receptive Southerners and stalwart Northern Republicans that the campaign to restrict slavery in Missouri was really a cynical ploy by Federalists to regain power by appealing to Americans' humanitarian impulses. Cabinet officials and other influential administration allies, most notably Thomas Jefferson, spread the message that only the selfless statesmanship of anti-restrictionist politicians, such as Maine's Holmes, could save the Union from the machinations of northern conspirators. New York governor DeWitt Clinton and Senator Rufus King were portrayed as the architects of an electoral coup that would oust Monroe from the presidential mansion and close the West to slavery, thus insuring that Upper South planters would be "damned up in a land of slaves," as one Virginian put it. This fanciful sce-

nario gained some plausibility from the facts that Clinton was a cousin of Tallmadge, author of the restriction amendment, and that King's half-brother and two sons, all of whom had close ties to Republican leaders, implicitly endorsed the damaging charges against their kinsman by their silence.

The deadlock in Congress continued through February, although restrictionist unity showed growing cracks. While their constituents overwhelmingly continued to oppose the admission of Missouri with slavery, Northern congressmen began to waver in the face of charges of Federalist plotting, Southern threats to withdraw from the Union, and "the influence of the Palace." To secure support from recalcitrant Northerners, the president and his associates employed moral suasion, bullying and removals, political favors and lucrative public offices. A close reading of contemporary accounts reveals James Monroe as a master of persuasion, but most discreet. Despite his activism, Monroe's historical image remains that of a cautious strict constructionist.

On 12 February, when pro- and anti-restriction sentiment reached a fever pitch, Senator Rufus King took the floor of the Senate and delivered an antislavery speech so stinging that, according to John Quincy Adams, slaveholders "gnawed their lips and clenched their fists as they heard him." King repudiated "all laws and compacts" supporting slavery as "absolutely void, because contrary to the law of nature." Thus did he solidify his reputation as the South's most dangerous foe. Four days later the Senate approved the Thomas Amendment, barring slavery above 36° 30'. On 2 March, after three weeks of furiously escalating rhetoric and action (including fervent nationalist Henry Clay's declaration that he would "go home and raise troops, if necessary"), the House voted 90 to 87 to strike the slavery restriction from the Missouri statehood bill, and 134 to 42 to accept the compromise line. "I consider myself and associates as conquered," Rufus King lamented. "The slave States, with their free corps, have subdued us." Charles Pinckney of South Carolina, an opponent of compromise, nonetheless exulted that the South considered it "a great triumph." Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, after a discussion with Secretary of War John C. Calhoun, portentously observed of slaveholders, "The discussion of this Missouri question has betrayed the secret of their souls."

However, not all opponents of slavery were mournful, nor perhaps had slaveholders betrayed all their secrets. Speaker Taylor wrote to his wife, "We have gained all that was possible, if not all that was desired," calling the outcome "an ample recompense for all the time and labour it has cost us." The author of the original restriction, James Tallmadge, wrote his colleague Taylor that news of the vote "gives great Joy," adding, "You have in this business a monument to your fame." After receiving a unanimous opinion from his cabinet that the bill passed constitutional muster, President Monroe signed it on 4 March 1820.

Many Northerners, however, continued to oppose statehood for Missouri, and the July 1820 draft constitution of the territory, which barred free blacks and mulattos from the state, gave opponents the grounds they needed to reopen the controversy: they viewed the measure as an unconstitutional violation of the rights of black citizens of other states under the rights and privileges clause (Art. IV, Sec. 2) of the Constitution. The opening of the Seventeenth Congress witnessed another fractious stalemate, mirroring the previous year's discord. In the end, Henry Clay led a hand-picked joint House-Senate committee in drafting a deliberately ambigu-

ous resolution declaring that the antiblack clause in Missouri's constitution should never be construed as violating the constitutional rights of any citizen. Though in fact designed to be construed differently in different sections, this language, if interpreted consistently, implied that either Missouri's restriction was in fact unconstitutional or black citizens of other states affected by it were not citizens of the federal government. Although, as a New Hampshire newspaper bitterly observed, "a child might penetrate the flimsiness of the evasion" inherent in the compromise language, the exhausted House members narrowly adopted Clay's compromise on 26 February 1821 and a week later voted to admit Missouri to statehood.

It is not clear how much the election of John Quincy Adams in 1824 was influenced by the controversy. The election of Andrew Jackson in 1828 and the rise of the Democratic Party constituted setbacks to the policy of containing slavery, which the compromise was designed to promote. Yet the Arkansas statehood bill (1836) generated a nearly equal sectional showdown between the House and Senate, as did the Wilmot Proviso a decade later, demonstrating the continued explosiveness of the slavery issue. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise by the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854 galvanized antislavery sentiment and spurred the formation of the Republican Party. The Supreme Court's decision in *Dred Scott* that the compromise was unconstitutional helped to trigger the Civil War. Thus if the short-term impact of the Missouri Compromise is difficult to assess, in the long run it must be viewed as a decisive setback to slavery and the cornerstone of a later free-state majority.

*See also Abolition of Slavery in the North; Antislavery; Election of 1824; Election of 1828; Presidency, The: James Madison; Proslavery Thought; Slavery: Overview; Slavery: Slavery and the Founding Generation.*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brown, Everett S. *The Missouri Compromises and Presidential Politics, 1820–1825: From the Letters of William Plumer, Jr., Representative of New Hampshire*. St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society, 1926.
- Brown, Richard H. "The Missouri Crisis, Slavery, and the Politics of Jacksonianism." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 65 (winter 1966): 55–72.
- Dangerfield, George. *The Era of Good Feelings*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1952.
- Fehrenbacher, Don E. *The South and Three Sectional Crises*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980.

- Forbes, Robert P. "Slavery and the Meaning of America, 1819–1833." Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1994.
- Moore, Glover. *The Missouri Controversy, 1819–1821*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1953.
- Shoemaker, Floyd. *Missouri's Struggle for Statehood, 1804–1821*. Jefferson City, Mo.: Hugh Stevens, 1916.

*Robert P. Forbes*

---

**MONEY** *See Currency and Coinage.*

---

**MONROE, JAMES** James Monroe (1758–1831) was a soldier, lawyer, state legislator, ratification convention delegate, governor, diplomat, U.S. representative and senator, secretary of war, secretary of state, and fifth president of the United States. Monroe was born on 28 April 1758 in Tidewater Virginia's Westmoreland County to respectable but not prominent parents. He was fortunate, however, in his maternal uncle, Joseph Jones. This childless uncle stood alongside the other Patriot leaders of the colonial House of Burgesses and ultimately sat in the Continental Congress and on Virginia's highest court. He took young James under his wing and encouraged the nephew's political inclinations.

**EARLY POLITICAL CAREER**

Monroe attended the finest school in the colony, Rev. Archibald Campbell's Campbelltown Academy, beginning at age eleven. He then became the first in his line to attend the College of William and Mary when he matriculated in 1774, but his schooling was interrupted by the Revolution. Monroe enlisted in the American forces along with many of his classmates.

Monroe's service in the Revolution earned him respect as a war hero. Particularly noteworthy was his role in the Battle of Trenton on 26 December 1776, during which he helped lead a cavalry charge that captured enemy guns well positioned to command the chief road into town. Monroe received a severe wound in helping to ensure one of the Americans' most conspicuous victories of the entire war.

Upon returning to the College of William and Mary in 1780, Monroe began to read law under Governor Thomas Jefferson. Their personal association would reach fruition in the late 1790s, when Monroe bought a plantation two miles from Monticello.

In 1782 Monroe entered the House of Delegates, which elected him to the Confederation Congress the



**James Monroe.** The fifth president of the United States, shown in a lithograph (c. 1828) based on a portrait by Gilbert Stuart. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

following year. Much of Monroe's attention in Congress was devoted to issues related to Virginia's western lands claims. Although he grew sympathetic to nationalists' demands that the Confederation government be strengthened, from early on his attachment to the United States included a tincture of the states' rights creed that he, Jefferson, and James Madison later would elevate into the centerpiece of their party's dogma.

Monroe's support for federal reform left him disappointed in the Virginia General Assembly's omission of his name from its distinguished roster of Constitutional Convention delegates at Philadelphia in 1787. Close attention to Virginia's interests, particularly in regard to the western lands and to the apportionment of the new U.S. Senate, drove him into opposition in the Virginia ratifying convention of 1788. It was Monroe who wrote after the state's convention that George Washington's influence had narrowly won the day for the Federalists. Attempting to secure membership in the first U.S. House of Representatives, Monroe lost a hard-fought election to his friend James Madison, the intellectual leader of the new Constitution's advocates in the Old Dominion.

### BECOMING A REPUBLICAN

By the end of 1790, Monroe had been elected by the General Assembly to the U.S. Senate, where he soon became one of the leaders of the developing opposition to Alexander Hamilton's Federalist program. At the same time, Monroe staked out a position of strong support for the French Revolution. Thus, when the French government requested the recall of Gouverneur Morris, the U.S. minister to France, President Washington nominated Monroe to replace him in 1794.

In France, Monroe made notorious statements in support of a revolution that had become a bloody debacle. Secretary of State Timothy Pickering of Massachusetts finally insisted that he be recalled, and Washington did so in September 1796.

On his return, Monroe found himself quite popular among Republicans. Defensively, Monroe published a volume of official papers with a self-exculpatory introduction; he also took the opportunity to attack Federalist foreign policy.

In 1799 Monroe was required for his dutiful Republicanism when, on Madison's nomination, the General Assembly elected him to the first of three consecutive one-year terms as governor. As governor, he presided over the delicate work of limiting the political impact of Gabriel's Rebellion, the largest known slave conspiracy in Virginia history until that time, which broke out in the capital of Richmond in the run-up to the pivotal election of 1800. Monroe also prepared the Virginia militia to intervene in case the presidential imbroglio of 1800 did not turn out in Jefferson's favor.

### DIPLOMAT AND CABINET MEMBER

In 1803 Monroe was one of two negotiators who exploited Napoléon Bonaparte's unexpected willingness to part with his North American empire by accepting the proffered region that became the Louisiana Territory. The resulting treaty is usually regarded as Jefferson's foremost achievement as president, but in actuality diplomatic brilliance had little to do with it. It simply fell into the Americans' lap.

Before his return to America in 1807, Monroe conducted fruitless negotiations with Spain in 1805; he and fellow negotiator William Pinkney concluded a treaty with Great Britain in 1806, but Secretary of State James Madison considered it inadequate (as did President Jefferson). Monroe believed that Madison and Jefferson's purpose was to deny Monroe the acclaim he believed the treaty would have brought him, and he allowed dissident Virginia Republicans to promote his presidential candidacy in preference to

Madison in 1808; his candidacy, though, came to naught.

Early in his administration, Madison offered Monroe the governorship of Louisiana Territory, which Monroe refused. Instead, Monroe returned to the General Assembly in 1810 and was elevated to the governorship again in January 1811. In March 1811 Madison appointed Monroe secretary of state. When the War of 1812 broke out, Monroe and his political allies were certain that Madison's rejection of his treaty with Britain underlay most of America's diplomatic troubles, but Monroe soldiered on.

Secretary of State Monroe personally scouted the Chesapeake region to ascertain British troop movements in 1814, which symbolized the disaster that Republican foreign and defense policy had become. When the secretary of war resigned in the wake of Washington's capture by British forces, Monroe became secretary of war in 1814; soon thereafter, he was reappointed secretary of state as well. Resigning the secretary of war position in 1815, he considered himself Madison's logical successor.

### PRESIDENCY

Monroe took office in 1817 after carrying all but three states—Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Delaware—in the 1816 election. He appointed a very talented group of cabinet secretaries, headed by Secretary of State John Quincy Adams and, in time, Secretary of War John C. Calhoun. His administration was notable for five developments: the Missouri Crisis, the Monroe Doctrine, the Transcontinental Treaty of 1819, the Supreme Court's decision in the 1819 case of *McCulloch v. Maryland*, and the virtual demise of the Federalist Party.

The Missouri Crisis of 1819–1821 found Monroe and Calhoun playing the unusual role of southerners willing to compromise the issue of slavery in the territories. While southern members of Congress nearly unanimously opposed the eventual Missouri Compromise, Calhoun and Monroe both considered it a positive development. Their primary interest lay in ending the dispute over slavery in the western territories rather than in ensuring the prospects for slavery in the enormous Louisiana Territory that Monroe had helped to purchase from France.

The Monroe Doctrine, central to American foreign policy since it was proclaimed, warned European powers to keep their hands off New World territories. It was issued in response to assertions of independence by Spain's former colonies in mainland Latin America. The Monroe Doctrine demonstrated boldness and daring. The United States had first re-

jected a British proposal for a joint statement of policy. Then, although it had no power to enforce its position at the time, the United States issued the Monroe Doctrine alone. From that day onward, the United States would feel free to intervene in opposition to European involvement in American territory south of Canada.

Finally, Federalism, long in decline and extremely weak in the election of 1816, virtually disappeared from the national stage by 1820. Monroe secured re-election with all but one electoral vote, and it seems that that elector's anti-Monroe stance flowed rather more from personal animus than from political opposition. Little could Monroe have realized at the time that his second term would be marred by the contest for the presidency.

All of Monroe's cabinet secretaries, the Speaker of the House, and General Andrew Jackson—America's war hero du jour—fancied themselves his successor. Their political maneuvering went so far as coordinating obstruction of each other's policy proposals in Congress. Monroe, meanwhile, believed himself barely suited to his high charge, confiding at a private dinner at Jefferson's Monticello that he was not intellectually fit for the post.

#### RETIREMENT

When Monroe retired from the presidency, he returned to Virginia in relative poverty. Therefore, he became a symbol of republican rectitude for those, such as Calhoun, who thought that the succession in 1825 ultimately had been decided by what he and others called a "corrupt bargain." Monroe's political retirement was interrupted only when he served as the titular president of the Virginia Constitutional Convention in 1829–1830. There, in an echo of his performance during the Missouri Crisis, he stood for compromise between Virginia's warring democratic and aristocratic sections.

James Monroe's death on 4 July 1831 came on an appropriate day, exactly five years after that of his political mentor, Jefferson. Monroe was both the last president to have played a part in the American Revolution and the only anti-Federalist to serve as president. While he was always a more practical, less philosophically inclined man than either of his two immediate predecessors (and in this he resembled the other Revolutionary warrior who held the presidency, George Washington), he was certainly a more successful president.

*See also Anti-Federalists; Democratic Republicans; Madison, James; Missouri*

#### Compromise; Monroe Doctrine; Virginia; War of 1812.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ammon, Harry. *James Monroe: The Quest for National Identity*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971.
- Cunningham, Noble E., Jr. *The Presidency of James Monroe*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996.
- Egerton, Douglas R. *Gabriel's Rebellion: The Virginia Slave Conspiracies of 1800 and 1802*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993.
- Horn, James, Jan Lewis, and Peter S. Onuf, eds. *The Revolution of 1800: Democracy, Race, and the New Republic*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002.
- Sutton, Robert P. *Revolution to Secession: Constitution Making in the Old Dominion*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989.

Kevin R. C. Gutzman

---

**MONROE DOCTRINE** From a historians perspective, President James Monroe's proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine—consisting of three paragraphs in his annual message to Congress of December 1823—was perhaps one of the most important moments in nineteenth-century American diplomacy. At the time, however, its significance was not obvious. Within just a few years, it had been largely forgotten, and it would not be taken up again until the 1840s, when it was first referred to as the "Monroe Doctrine."

President Monroe and Secretary of State John Quincy Adams crafted the doctrine as the American response to recent European developments. In the spring of 1823 French troops, authorized by the Holy Alliance of European monarchs, had entered Spain to topple the three-year-old constitutional government and restore King Ferdinand VII to absolute rule. It seemed likely that the Holy Alliance would continue to support Ferdinand by providing military and financial assistance to help him resubjugate his rebellious American colonies. Some Americans even worried that the allies' wars against republican government would eventually extend to the United States. In August, the British foreign secretary, George Canning, proposed to the American minister in London, Richard Rush, an Anglo-American declaration opposing any allied assistance for Spain against its colonies and disavowing any interest in acquiring Spain's colonies for themselves. Over the same months, moreover, evidence mounted that Russia intended to extend its colonial presence along the Pacific Coast of North America.

Rush's report of Canning's proposal reached Washington in early October and formed the principal topic for often-divisive cabinet discussions during November. Historians have offered various explanations of the divisions within the cabinet over the appropriate response to the European developments and the British proposal, ranging from conflicting assessments of the real danger to competing aspirations in the approaching presidential election of 1824. According to Adams's diary (the only internal account of the cabinet meetings), President Monroe and Secretary of War John C. Calhoun leaned toward accepting the British proposal in some form because they genuinely feared an allied assault upon Spanish America. Adams, in contrast, pressed for a unilateral response that would preserve American freedom of action, both in the current crisis and in the future. By taking its stand in the message to Congress rather than through a joint statement with Great Britain, the administration adopted, at least publicly, a position more consistent with Adams's views.

The Monroe Doctrine included three key points. In a section that was directed primarily at Russia, it asserted that the Western Hemisphere was closed to further colonization. Two other paragraphs warned that the European powers should not interfere in New World affairs and pledged that the United States would not interfere in European affairs. By responding to the European threat and the British proposal unilaterally, the administration avoided either entangling the United States with Great Britain or foreswearing future expansion at Spain's expense, particularly in Cuba. It also preserved the diplomatic position enjoyed by the United States in the New World as the only established nation that had formally recognized the independence of the rebellious colonies.

Monroe's message was wildly popular at home and among the new nations of Spanish America. But it was largely ignored in Europe, where quiet Anglo-French diplomacy had already defused the crisis even as Monroe's cabinet debated its response. While European developments never required a decision about whether and how to make good on the doctrine, some of the Spanish American governments viewed it as a new pledge of American commitment on their behalf and called upon the administration for assistance. Colombia, and later Mexico, hoped to use Monroe's message to leverage military support—probably aid rather than ships or troops out of the United States—as well as diplomatic support. They pointed to the continuing Spanish denial of their independence and, in the case of Colombia, to French

diplomatic pressures. Monroe and Adams quickly and quietly backed off from their bold stance as they responded to these calls for assistance. When Adams's secretary of state, Henry Clay, referred to Monroe's "memorable pledge" in diplomatic correspondence regarding Mexico, he triggered a fierce backlash in Congress. By the end of Adams's presidency in March 1829, the doctrine had been abandoned.

Scholars have differed over the significance of the Monroe Doctrine in the minds of those who shaped it, describing the doctrine as little more than an attempt to curry favor with American voters; one element of a complex and flexible response to international developments; or a bold blueprint for American empire in the New World. Ultimately, it neither prevented a European invasion nor checked British influence in Spanish America nor established American dominance in the New World. It did, however, testify to a deep fear that the spread of European influence, institutions, and principles in the New World would threaten the United States.

*See also Adams, John Quincy; Monroe, James.*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Combs, Jerald A. "The Origins of the Monroe Doctrine: A Survey of Interpretations by United States Historians." *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 27 (1981): 186–196.
- Lewis, James E., Jr. *The American Union and the Problem of Neighborhood: The United States and the Collapse of the Spanish Empire, 1783–1829*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- May, Ernest R. *The Making of the Monroe Doctrine*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975.
- Perkins, Dexter. *The Monroe Doctrine, 1823–1826*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927.

James E. Lewis Jr.

---

**MONUMENTS AND MEMORIALS** Historical monuments, particularly those erected publicly rather than on family plots in cemeteries, not only tell their manifest stories but also reveal something of the ideas dominant when they went up. In the new nation monuments went up slowly at first, revealing either an ideological bent against such memorials—Americans having toppled the statue of King George III in New York City during the Revolutionary War—or perhaps a shortage of sculptors. Fewer than twenty



**The Washington Monument in Baltimore, Maryland.** Baltimore's monument to George Washington, designed by Robert Mills, was built between 1815 and 1829. Enrico Causici designed the sculpture of Washington that stands on the top of the tower. © RICHARD T. NOWITZ/CORBIS.

ty public monuments built before 1830 appear in the Smithsonian Inventory of American Sculpture, admittedly an incomplete list.

#### REMEMBERING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

Americans were slow to commemorate the soldiers and sailors of the Revolution, compared to the dispatch with which they put up monuments after the War of 1812, the Civil War (Union side), the Spanish American or Philippines Wars, and World War I. On Beacon Hill in 1790, Bostonians erected a Doric column designed by Charles Bulfinch and topped by a golden (wooden) eagle, but they had to take it down twenty-one years later because they had removed too much of the hill as landfill. Joseph Warren, who fell at Bunker Hill, got a Tuscan pillar in 1794, but it too did not last. The Bunker Hill obelisk, 221 feet

of granite, begun in 1823, was not dedicated until 1843.

The first monument to bear the names of ordinary enlisted men who fell was at Lexington, Massachusetts. During the war, two to four times as many men died on board twenty-two prison ships in New York harbor as died in battle throughout the conflict. In 1808 the Tammany Society finished a vault holding some of these remains, and a century later the Society of Old Brooklynites put up a monument to these victims of war in Fort Greene Park.

#### REMEMBERING THE FOUNDERS

More early monuments honor George Washington or the War of 1812. Probably the first statue of Washington was by William Sullivan in wood in 1792. Brightly painted, it stood in Bowling Green Square in lower Manhattan until 1843, adorned a barbershop for a while, and eventually moved to the Delaware Historical Society. In the 1820s statues of Washington appeared at the state capitols of Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Virginia, and atop the Washington Monument in Baltimore. Now they are everywhere, often put up by Masons. Perhaps the silliest Washington monument, at least to modern eyes, was Horatio Greenough's oversize 1830s sculpture showing Washington semi-nude and built like a Greek god. By 1908 it had become an embarrassment and was removed from the Capitol grounds to the basement of the National Museum of American History.

In 1792 a life-size marble statue of Benjamin Franklin went up in Philadelphia; around this time, the Italian sculptor Giuseppe Ceracchi began a series of busts of other founders. A marble Italianate column commemorating America's naval war with Tripoli went up in Washington, D.C., in 1807, but wound up at the Naval Academy. In the 1820s other Italians sculpted classical statues of *War*, *Peace*, and *The Genius of America* for the Capitol. As the century wore on, American sculptors began to get more of these commissions, previously monopolized by Italians and other Europeans.

In the 1840s and 1850s more monuments were erected, honoring national founders including Virginia's Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, and George Mason, but also local heroes such as the Palmetto Regiment in South Carolina and King Gambrinus, the Patron of Brewing, in of course Milwaukee. At about this time, ethnic groups began literally to make their appearance on the landscape, each choosing their hero from among Revolutionary War figures. Thus Casimir Pulaski, a Polish nobleman, is memorialized

in Savannah, Georgia, where he died of wounds, by a monument whose cornerstone was laid by Lafayette during his triumphal 1824–1825 tour of America; in Washington, D.C., by a monument put up by Polish Americans; and in Buffalo, Philadelphia, and Meriden and Hartford, Connecticut—all with sizable Polish American populations. Thaddeus Kosciusko, a Polish Patriot, is on the landscape at West Point (1829) and Saratoga, where he served, and Chicago, the last surely owing to that city's Polish population. Baron von Steuben, a Prussian captain, made an appearance in 1870 in Utica, New York (where he died after the war), in Washington, D.C., at the site of the Battle of Monmouth in New Jersey, where he played a major role, and at Valley Forge, where the National German American Alliance rather desperately tried to connect Americans and Germans in 1915.

Similarly, Irish Americans supported a monument to Commodore John Barry in Philadelphia and African Americans supported one to Crispus Attucks in Boston. Today we take for granted the glorification of Attucks as the “first casualty of the American Revolution.” In 1888, however, when the black community of Boston after decades of struggle sparked the erection of the Boston Massacre monument, members of the Massachusetts Historical Society declared him “not a fit candidate for monumental honors.” Attucks was a rebel, but more African Americans sided with the British, who offered them freedom; it seems nothing on the landscape tells their story.

Christians also latched onto the founders, sometimes distorting history in the process. The Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge, begun in 1903, is dominated by two matched sets of stained-glass windows—one depicting the life of Jesus Christ, the other the life of George Washington. In the central opening over the door, Washington kneels in prayer at Valley Forge. In the early twenty-first century some fundamentalist Christians claim the United States was founded as a Christian nation, whereas others acknowledge that Franklin, Jefferson, and some other founders were more Deist or Unitarian than Christian.

#### CONTROVERSIES

Monuments seem silent, consensual, and faithful—history written in stone. But some monuments commemorating early American figures or events, like their late-twentieth-century counterparts in eastern Europe, have been scenes of turbulence. In 1879 transatlantic-cable magnate Cyrus Field erected a monument to Major John André, a British spy in the

Revolutionary War, in Tappan, New York, where he was executed, but angry patriots toppled it three times. An 1889 statue of an earlier founder, John Mason, adorned the site in Mystic, Connecticut, where he led British colonists in exterminating the major village of the Pequots, but in the 1990s remnants and supporters of the Pequots finally got it removed to a less offensive location near his original home site. A zinc obelisk to Tom Quick, erected because he killed perhaps ninety-nine Native Americans to avenge the 1756 death of his father, stood in Milford, Pennsylvania, until vandalized with a sledgehammer in 1997.

Other monuments of the early nation need some turbulence. On both sides of Lake Champlain, a standing Samuel de Champlain towers over a kneeling Native American. These monuments exemplify “hieratic art”—“hier” as in hierarchy—for Champlain is fully clothed with cloak and cape, while the Indian is almost naked. Depending on the weather on that spring day in 1609 when Native Americans showed him the lake he “discovered,” either the Indian was shivering or Champlain was sweating. Of course, it never happened that way; the clothing is simply a way to contrast “primitive” (naked) and “civilized” (clothed).

A 1929 monument in Aurora, New York, commemorates Sullivan’s Raid: “Routes of the armies of Gen. John Sullivan and James Clinton, 1779, An Expedition against the hostile Indian nations which checked the aggressions of the English and Indians on the frontiers of New York and Pennsylvania, extending westward the dominion of the United States.” In reality, “the aggressions” were largely American. Washington instructed Sullivan “that the country may not be merely overrun but destroyed. . . . You will not by any means, listen to any overture of peace before the total ruin of their settlements is effected.” Afterward, Sullivan reported, “We have not left a single settlement or field of corn in the country of the [Iroquois] Five Nations.” Perhaps New York might encourage Native Americans to erect a historical marker nearby, providing some of these details.

#### ABSENCES

Enormous gaps in the public history of America’s early years remain. For example, up to 80 percent of the budget during Washington’s presidency was consumed by Indian warfare, especially the Ohio wars, yet it is hard to glean an inkling of these campaigns from the landscape. Although Abigail Adams gets a cairn and statue in Quincy, Massachusetts, and Martha Washington gets on the landscape in

several places, the roles women played in the forming of the nation are not well memorialized. In Zionsville, Indiana, for example, a state historical marker reads, "Patrick H. Sullivan, 1794–1879, was the first white settler in Boone County, 1823, and built the first log cabin." In reality, Sullivan entered what is now Boone County accompanied by his wife. Most assuredly, since the first thing a man needs when building a log cabin is someone on the other end of the log, *they* built the first log cabin. Such distortions make a difference: even in the postfeminist era, we still do not typically think of women as log-cabin builders. Yet they were.

With the rise of organized labor in the late nineteenth century have come monuments and memorials put up by unions. By contrast, the working class in the early nation goes largely uncommemorated. Massachusetts has erected two monuments to Daniel Shays and his revolt, in Sheffield and Pelham.

Perhaps the hardest single thing for Americans to face in all their storied past is slavery. Everywhere monuments honor slave owners, but the s-word usually goes unwritten. Also nearly invisible is the role of the slave trade, domestic or international, including the triangular trade, which included New England. A small stone titled "Old Slave Block" in Fredericksburg, Virginia, is one of the few sites across America that recognizes a place where people were bought and sold. New Orleans marks no slave auction site, although in some years more people went on the block there than anywhere else in the United States. No memorial reminds Americans that until 1850, slaves were sold in several public areas in Washington, D.C., including at what is now Union Station. In Lower Manhattan a historical marker tells where the first stock market stood, but no marker mentions the first slave market, which stood just across the street. In downtown Philadelphia a historic marker does tell of the slave market at the London Coffee House. Charlottesville, Virginia, has a plaque indicating that an auction block had stood nearby, and a memorial in Charleston, South Carolina, marks the slave market.

In the aftermath of the Revolution, Congress did face slavery, banning it from the Northwest Territory, but that prohibition had loopholes and was not well enforced. Shortly after Illinois became a state, proponents of slavery tried to amend its constitution to allow slavery. Had they succeeded, American history might have been very different, for the free states would have been blocked from the West by slave states stretching from Lake Michigan to the Gulf of Mexico. Governor Edward Coles, a planter

turned abolitionist, organized the opposition, defeating the referendum in 1824. A monument south of Edwardsville erected a century later commemorates Coles, "who by steadfastness and courage kept slavery out of the constitution of Illinois."

Some Americans think the founders banned the international slave trade in the Constitution; actually, they did just the reverse, guaranteeing it against abolition until 1808. In that year Congress did ban the trade, but for the next fifty-three years, to 1861, law enforcement officials in many parts of the country turned a blind eye. As with Prohibition or the later drug trade, the criminalization of slave importation, coupled with erratic enforcement, ensured that it would be profitable by increasing the price differential of slaves in the United States compared to West Africa or Cuba. Tucked away next to a vending machine in a side room at Fort Gaines, Alabama, is almost the only spot on the American landscape that acknowledges the illegal international trade: some timbers from the *Clotilde*, which entered Mobile Bay with an illicit cargo in July 1860. Except for these timbers, a mess kettle on display at Georgia's Jekyll Island State Park from the *Wanderer* (a slave ship that landed there in 1858), and increasing attention to *Amistad* in coastal Connecticut, monuments and memorials ignore this trade.

Slave revolts also go largely unremarked. Possibly the largest single revolt in United States history began on 8 January 1811, near Laplace, Louisiana, west of New Orleans. African Americans killed at least two whites and marched down the river road toward New Orleans, pillaging and killing as they went. At every plantation others joined until they numbered in the hundreds. Two days later, U.S. troops attacked with muskets and cannon, killing at least sixty-six resisters in the fighting or the aftermath. The event has no memorial, however, and Laplace refused to put up a historical marker mentioning it as suggested by the state.

#### SLAVERY AND PUBLIC HISTORY

In 1848 construction began on America's tallest single monument to a person, the Washington Monument in the capital. Its scale implies the greatness of the nation. Work stalled in 1854, however, not to resume until the end of Reconstruction. The stoppage line, still visible, is emblematic of America's waning ability to unite behind major undertakings as the Civil War approached. A nearby landmark, "Freedom," the bronze woman atop the Capitol, also bears witness to the growing division. The sculptor's prototype wore a "Liberty Cap," worn by freed slaves in

ancient Rome. As a slave owner, Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, the power behind the Buchanan administration, objected. He suggested stars overlaid by an eagle's head and feathers; most tourists infer she is a Plains Indian.

One of America's most famous monuments received its iconic name in the late 1830s. The bell that hung in the Pennsylvania State House when the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence bore a Bible verse: "Proclaim LIBERTY throughout all the Land unto all the Inhabitants thereof." Delighted by the verse, abolitionists christened the bell the Liberty Bell. During the 1840s and 1850s they adopted the bell as a symbol, to the discomfort of those who wished the issue of slavery would go away. The movement for black freedom inspired America's other iconic monument, the Statue of Liberty. Its creation in 1886 stemmed from connections forged during the Civil War between American abolitionists and the French Anti-Slavery Society. Hence her name, and hence the broken chains at her feet.

The Jefferson Memorial, constructed during the presidency of Democrat Franklin Delano Roosevelt, also shows distortion resulting from conflict over slavery. Its third panel of quotations, which the National Park Service describes as "devoted to his ideas on freedom of the body and to his beliefs in the necessity of educating the masses of the people," is a hodgepodge of quotations from widely different periods in Jefferson's life. The effect of this medley is to create the impression that Thomas Jefferson was very nearly an abolitionist. In their original contexts, the same quotations reveal a Jefferson conflicted about slavery—at times its critic, often its apologist. Neither the memorial's designers nor the Park Service in its videos and handouts seem willing to accurately present Jefferson's views on slavery.

#### CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

After more than two centuries, Americans are still revising their views of the events and individuals that shaped the new nation. Voices of women, African Americans, and Native Americans, often not heard when early memorials were built, now vie for attention. Americans continue to change how they commemorate these events and individuals on the landscape. Von Steuben's monument at the Battle of Monmouth was dedicated in 2004, for example. Also in 2004, Milford, Pennsylvania, announced it would reerect its monument to Tom Quick. A National Slavery Museum is planned for 2007 near Fredericksburg, Virginia; it will perhaps fill some of the

gaps in the treatment of the slave trade in the new nation. Controversies over the public history of the nation will not soon abate, and surely these debates make Americans better informed about their past.

*See also American Character and Identity; Architecture: Public; Art and American Nationhood; Cemeteries and Burial; Founding Fathers; Revolution: European Participation; Shays's Rebellion; Slavery: Slave Insurrections; Washington, D.C.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cray, Robert E., Jr. "The John André Memorial: The Politics of Memory in Gilded Age New York." *New York History* 77, no. 1 (January 1996): 5–32.
- Goode, James M. *The Outdoor Sculpture of Washington, D.C.: A Comprehensive Historical Guide*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Press, 1974.
- Loewen, James W. *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong*. New York: New Press, 1999.
- Mayo, James M. *War Memorials as Political Landscape: The American Experience and Beyond*. New York: Praeger, 1988.
- Piehler, G. Kurt. *Remembering War the American Way*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Press, 1995.

James W. Loewen

---

**MORAVIANS** After an aborted colonizing effort in Savannah, Georgia, in 1735, the Moravians came to British North America in 1741 to stay. In that year, this Saxony-based pietistic sect founded Bethlehem in Pennsylvania, a communal town that became the center of an ambitious missionary effort in America.

This effort had two components. One was to introduce the gospel of Jesus Christ to Indians and slaves. The second was to reenergize Christianity by bringing the "new birth" to both the churched and unchurched.

Followers of the reformer Jan Hus founded the Moravian movement in Lititz, Moravia, in 1457. Disillusioned with a Catholic Church they saw as corrupt, they sought to emulate the early Christians by living a life of simple piety. Membership totaled more than 200,000 on the eve of the Counter-Reformation. The Moravian Church, also known as the *Unitas Fratrum* (Unity of Brethren), grew so large in Moravia and Bohemia that it became a threat to the Roman Catholic Church and was driven underground. In 1722, refugees from Moravia arrived

at the estate of Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf in Berthelsdorf, Germany; under the guidance of Zinzendorf, the Moravian movement revived and prospered, becoming the largest pietistic sect in the Western Hemisphere and leaving its mark in architecture, in music, in education, and on Wesleyan Methodism.

In 1727, the Moravians began sending missionaries to Europe, Greenland, Africa, the Caribbean, and the Americas for work among blacks, Indians, and whites. The "Diaspora," Zinzendorf's term for the effort to win over Christians to "heart" religion, was at the center of the count's ecumenical vision. Fanning out from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Moravian missionaries attracted a following of nearly two thousand people in the northern colonies by 1760, and Moravians there established congregations as far south as Carrollton Manor, Maryland, and as far north as Broadbay, Maine. In 1753, the Moravians established a southern colony as well: a 98,895-acre community in backcountry North Carolina called Wachovia.

The Moravian movement consisted of two settlement types. The first was known as *Ortsgemeinen*, or congregation towns, where church leaders restricted residency to full-time church members and expected inhabitants completely to devote their lives to Jesus and the church. The church owned the land and tightly controlled the economy and the residents' social lives. The second settlement type was the *Landgemeinen*, or farm congregations. In the *Landgemeinen*, diverse groups of German- and English-speaking settlers from a variety of religious backgrounds lived on dispersed family farms with less oversight from church authorities. By 1800, Wachovia's population totaled twelve hundred pilgrims, 88 percent of whom were German speakers from Lutheran, Reformed, and Moravian traditions. The remaining 12 percent were Anglo-Americans, Scots-Irish, Irish, and others.

The ecumenicalism of the Moravian movement produced complex cultural change in the early Republic. The conversion experience enabled "reborn" brethren to forge close friendships with members of different ethnicities that led to intermarriage and the lessening of ethnic and social differences. Religiously inspired intermixing, in turn, set off a wave of cultural change among German and English speakers that resulted ultimately in the Americanizing of German-speaking members.

*See also* **Communitarian Movements and Utopian Communities; Immigration and Immigrants: Germans; Methodists; Pietists.**

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Rohrer, S. Scott. *Hope's Promise: Religion and Acculturation in the Southern Backcountry*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005.

Smaby, Beverly Prior. *The Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem: From Communal Mission to Family Economy*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988.

S. Scott Rohrer

---

**MORMONISM, ORIGINS OF** Although the Mormon church, officially known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was not founded until 6 April 1830, many of its formative events occurred in the 1820s, a decade that saw major social, economic, political, and religious changes in the new nation. Joseph Smith Jr., the founder of the new religion, experienced many of these as an impressionable youth. Born 23 December 1805 in Sharon, Vermont, young Joseph joined his family in their move to a farm near Palmyra, New York, in 1816 in search of economic opportunity. This region of western New York, soon to be traversed by the Erie Canal, came to be known as the "Burned-over District" because of its intense religious revivals. The Smith family experienced these enthusiasms, which touched the village of Palmyra in the early 1820s, with the Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and the Society of Friends (Quakers) competing for the allegiance of the residents. Young Joseph, in his early teens, found the conflicting claims of the various denominations confusing. His mother, Lucy Mack Smith, attended Presbyterian services, while his father, Joseph Sr., avoided all religious affiliation. Unable to make up his mind, the boy retreated to a grove on his father's farm, and in a simple prayer asked God for help. In his report to his parents of what transpired in the grove, he said that he was astonished by a pillar of light in which he beheld a divine personage, of whom he inquired what church he should join. Joseph Jr. received the answer that he should not affiliate with any, all of them having turned away from the gospel and having failed to keep the commandments of the Lord. Several years passed before young Smith had another revelation. In 1823, when he was seventeen, an "angel" who called himself Moroni told Joseph about a record on plates of gold containing the history of ancient inhabitants of North America. Although the plates, Joseph was told, were buried in a hill near his father's farm, it was not until four years later, on the night of 22 September 1827, that he was allowed to remove them along with instructions for

### AUTHORSHIP AND SOURCES OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

Virtually from the day of its publication, the authorship and sources of the Book of Mormon became issues of controversy. Alexander Campbell (1788–1866), a founder of the Disciples of Christ, charged that the book was a figment of Joseph Smith's imagination, comprising within a fanciful story a pastiche of many of the religious opinions of his time—an interpretation supported by prominent biographer Fawn M. Brodie in *No Man Knows My History* (1945). Others charged that the Book of Mormon was plagiarized—either from an unpublished work by Solomon Spaulding dealing with the Israelite origins of the American Indians or from a story by Ethan Smith, *Views of the Hebrews; or, The Ten Tribes of Israel in America* (1823). Modern scholars have rejected the charge of plagiarism, concluding that Smith was indeed the author of the Book of Mormon.

Those unable or unwilling to believe in its divine origins have advanced a number of theories regarding the sources Smith might have used to produce the book—virtually all of them conceding the author's fertile imagi-

nation. Brodie suggested that the work was a kind of veiled autobiography, an idea pursued by a number of scholars near the turn of the twenty-first century. In *The Refiner's Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644–1844* (1994), Joseph L. Brooke has documented occult and hermetic influences that can be traced to the New England ancestry of the Smith family, while Clyde R. Forsberg Jr.'s *Equal Rites: The Book of Mormon, Masonry, Gender, and American Culture* (2004) has argued that the Book of Mormon can be read as a Masonic monitor of the Templar persuasion. An interpretation by a non-Mormon scholar that has been embraced by many Mormons is that of Jan Shipps in *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* (1985). Shipps has shifted the focus from the "prophet or fraud" debate to the way the Book of Mormons is understood by believers, who see in it the replication of the biblical story, which was part of nineteenth-century American culture.

Klaus J. Hansen

their translation. With divine aid he dictated the translation, first some short passages to his wife, Emma, thereafter the major portion to a young schoolteacher, Oliver Cowdery. In March 1830 the Palmyra newspaper announced the publication of the Book of Mormon. The founding of the church followed shortly thereafter.

The essential message of the Book of Mormon was that God had revealed himself to the inhabitants of the New World as well as those of the Old. Analogous to the Bible in style and message, the book appealed to a people familiar with a biblical culture, while bringing certainty to an age in which religious pluralism caused confusion and insecurity to many, such as the Smith family. According to the Book of Mormon, Christ appeared to the inhabitants of the American continent after his crucifixion, teaching the Gospel to the ancestors of the modern Indians. The German church historian Peter Meinhold has suggested that the Book of Mormon was the folk expression of an American historical consciousness. Historian Mario DePillis has argued that Mormonism represented a search for religious authority. In

the opinion of some leading scholars, evangelical religion—by encouraging religious pluralism—was the logical expression of a democratic culture and compatible with an emerging "market revolution." However, many people found such changes disorienting and threatening. Some may have sought refuge in the certainties of Mormonism. These may have been among the reasons why Mormonism became the most successful new religion originating in early nineteenth-century America.

*See also Religion: Overview.*

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bushman, Richard L. *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois, 1984.

Hansen, Klaus J. *Mormonism and the American Experience*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago, 1981.

Shipps, Jan. *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois, 1985.

Klaus J. Hansen

## MUSEUMS AND HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

In October 1784 the dyspeptic painter Robert Edge Pine (1730–1788) opened a gallery in Philadelphia where for twenty-five cents admission, his great allegorical canvas, *America*, along with depictions of scenes from Shakespeare, could be seen. Recently arrived from England, Pine intended eventually to expand his gallery to include portraits of political and military heroes of the new United States and historical paintings of “the most illustrious scenes of the late Revolution.” His efforts met with a warm reception. With the patronage of Samuel Vaughan, he was soon awarded rent-free rooms in the State House, a tacit acknowledgment of the value of his works to the nation.

### MUSEUMS

Pine’s short-lived gallery was among the first in a burgeoning number of museums and historical societies that sprang up during the first fifty years of the Republic, a period in which Americans sought to construct and reconstruct memories of their new nation. Motivated by commercial gain, self-promotion, nationalism, and a desire to promote civic virtue and a stable social order, Americans converged on the idea of collecting, preserving, and displaying their past and present for public consumption.

During the colonial era, “cabinets” of natural curiosities and “philosophical apparatus” were largely private affairs, though some could be found at colleges or were associated with scholarly organizations. None of these cabinets, however, adopted the broad educational aims or nationalist aspirations of the museums that came in the wake of the Revolution. The quintessential museum of the early national period, and one of the earliest museums in America, was founded in 1786 by the artist, scientist, and Revolutionary veteran Charles Willson Peale (1741–1827). Like Pine before him, Peale established his Philadelphia Museum as a commercial enterprise featuring portraits of Revolutionary heroes, designed not only to commemorate the events of the war, but to propagate the patriotism and values of that generation.

An ardent republican, Peale aimed to “instruct and amuse” all classes of society, high and low, using his exhibits to limn a narrative of the new nation as uniquely virtuous, powerful, and expansive. By 1796, after he had moved his museum into rented spaces on the top floor of Philosophical Hall (headquarters of the American Philosophical Society), Peale’s ambitions had expanded to include all the nat-

ural world, the contemplation of which he believed, as did many of his contemporaries, would exert a moral influence over young minds. Although the museum included objects collected from around the world (some obtained through Peale’s peers in the American Philosophical Society), his emphasis lay on the distinctive productions of the continent that he believed reflected the American character. In a menagerie behind Philosophical Hall, he kept grizzly cubs and other American beasts, and inside he arranged wildlife, plants, and Indian artifacts in an exhibition based upon the Great Chain of Being, with white humanity at the head.

The museum added other distinctly American displays, including specimens collected by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark during their transcontinental expedition (1803–1806) paired with a life-size wax model of Meriwether Lewis (1774–1809) himself, decked out in buckskin and fringe. The centerpiece at Peale’s museum, however, requiring a separate twenty-five-cent ticket, was the mounted skeleton of a mastodon unearthed in New York state in 1801, an animal that was a natural hymn for the new nation. Prior to the American Revolution the French naturalist, George Louis LeClerc, comte de Buffon (1707–1788), had wounded the pride of American naturalists by theorizing that the North American environment was so impoverished that it could support only a weak and degenerate fauna. The mastodon, called the Mammoth, was the American response, proof positive of native vigor.

High toned and low, museums proliferated in the wake of Peale’s, with a relatively small group of entrepreneurs spreading them throughout the states. The Peale family, for example, established a second branch in Baltimore in 1813, while the industrious wax modeler Daniel Bowen followed the creation of his museum in New York (1789) by opening another in Philadelphia (1792–1794) and then the Columbian Museum in Boston (1795–1803). While many were regional in focus, the nationalist elements that distinguished Peale’s were common. Even Nathan Dunn’s Chinese Museum in Philadelphia had implications for the nation, displaying the material goods reaped from America’s first commercial forays into Asia. After the turn of the nineteenth century, museums also flourished as adjuncts of a growing number of lyceums and scientific societies and, building from rudimentary teaching collections and the private cabinets of faculty members, a few collegiate collections became noteworthy. The faculty at Harvard, Bowdoin, Dickinson, and Yale built important mineralogical collections, for example, while Princeton

pursued a different course, purchasing a private collection in 1805 to form the core of its new museum of natural history.

#### HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

Paralleling the proliferation of museums was an equal proliferation of historical societies, which merged some of the functions of museums, learned societies, and public archives. One of the key factors fostering the growth of these societies was the wave of nostalgia, peaking in the years around the War of 1812, for the supposed unity and virtue of the Revolutionary generation and the desire, while still possible, to capture the memory of the founding generation. Atypical in many regards, the American Antiquarian Society (1812) was the offspring of Isaiah Thomas (1749–1831), the printer and Revolutionary veteran, who was convinced of the central position of the United States in the providential history of the world and wanted to preserve the written record of the Revolutionary generation and make it available to future Americans.

The earliest historical society in the United States, the Massachusetts Historical Society, was founded in 1791 to collect "things which will illustrate the history of our country." "Things" initially signaled a hodgepodge of artifacts and curios, but within a decade, the society began increasingly to focus on the written record. Following the Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS), the merchant John Pintard (who had helped found the American Museum in 1790) in 1804 led a group of ten in organizing the New-York Historical Society. It had a mission similar to the MHS: to "collect and preserve whatever may relate to the natural, civil, or ecclesiastical History of the United States in general." These words were echoed by the seven young Philadelphians who established the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1824, which made a special effort to document Indian cultures. After an array of federal institutions began to preserve documents of national importance during the early nineteenth century, historical societies like those in Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania adopted a more strictly regional focus.

*See also Art and American Nationhood.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Griffith, Sally F. *Serving History in a Changing World: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania in the Twentieth Century*. Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 2001.
- Orosz, Joel J. *Curators and Culture: The Museum Movement in America, 1740–1870*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama, 1990.

Sellers, Charles Coleman. *Mr. Peale's Museum: Charles Willson Peale and the First Popular Museum of Natural Science and Art*. New York: Norton, 1980.

Robert S. Cox

---

#### MUSIC

The entry consists of four separate essays: *African American*, *Classical*, *Patriotic* and *Political*, and *Popular*.

#### *African American*

The student of African American music of the early national period is immediately confronted with two fundamental challenges. First, compared to many other historical subjects, there is a significant dearth of evidence describing black music of the era. Much that does remain was recorded in passing by white observers who may not have understood or cared about what they heard. Therefore, conclusions about the sound and scope of African American music often must remain speculative. Second, a tension exists within the phrase "African American music." Scholars have used the phrase to describe music that is unique to, and shared by, the African American population. This definition enables scholars to identify a strong musical tradition and heritage maintained by African Americans, yet it can obscure both differences within the African American population and the extent to which black artists were integral to the development of all aspects of American music.

#### AFRICAN TRADITION

Many of the unique aspects of African American music derived from the instruments, attitudes, and styles that enslaved Africans preserved across the Middle Passage. African music was very diverse, boasting sophisticated traditions featuring drums, stringed instruments, horns, solo or group vocal performance, and dance. Despite such diversity, African music often shared some conceptual characteristics. First among these was a tendency to understand music as a process rather than a product, a verb rather than a noun. The broad participatory experience of music could foster commonality among participants and blur distinctions between performers and listeners. Often African music emphasized functional purposes, likewise diminishing the division between performance and everyday life. Specific songs or styles often were associated with work, child rearing,

festivals, worship, or other activities. Scholars also have argued that African music often displayed a number of aural characteristics that distinguished it from the musical cultures of Europe. They emphasize the common appearance of rhythmic contrasts and complexities, call-and-response patterns between groups of participants, a valuation of improvisation, and the use of a pentatonic scale in which some pitch values (particularly thirds and sevenths) are ambiguous, falling between the major and minor tonalities common in European tradition.

#### MAINTAINING TRADITION

North American slave communities maintained African music traditions to varying degrees, depending on several factors: the number of newly enslaved people arriving from Africa or the West Indies (particularly prior to the 1808 ban on the transatlantic slave trade but continuing afterward); the variable strength of oral traditions; the ratio between African and European residents; the level of repression of slave musical practices (including the banning of drums, dancing, or religious services); and amount of exposure to European or Native American repertoires and instruments. Compelled by personal determination or the violent demands of owners, some slaves learned and excelled at the composition and performance of European-derived music, even participating fully in the diverse musical world of the colonies. Yet slaves also fostered a collective memory of African music (and other cultural forms) to articulate a common heritage, to counteract slave owners' attempts at cultural deracination and assimilation, and to resist the institution of slavery as a whole.

#### THE REVOLUTION

The era of the American Revolution (1775–1783) was a watershed for African American music. Paradoxically, it saw both a growing African American exploration of European musical forms and the institutionalization of distinct African American musical practices. During the Revolutionary War approximately five thousand black soldiers fought against the British, most in integrated units. A common designation for African American soldiers was that of drummer, and many contributed to the martial drum-and-fife music that led the Continental Army into battle, celebrated its victories, and mourned its fallen. Black soldiers sang many of the same songs popular within the white ranks and introduced many white soldiers to African American singing styles.

#### THE DECLINE OF NORTHERN SLAVERY

With the gradual decline of slavery in the northern states, music flourished among free African Americans, who now found somewhat improved access to musical instruments, education, and professions. Some became featured church organists or prominent conductors. Others were in demand as private teachers. Many more fostered a love for the hymn tradition of the major Christian denominations. The era also witnessed the proliferation of institutions founded and supported by African Americans. Black Christian congregations (including Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal) increased in number during the early national era. Often African American churches fell under the governance of local white congregations and ministers. Nevertheless, separate services enabled black congregations some autonomy to worship and sing as they pleased. Many used the same denominational hymnbooks as white congregations, and a significant overlap existed in the songs sung in white and African American churches. This shared tradition expanded with the interracial worship common at camp meetings during the early years of the Second Great Awakening.

#### NEW REPERTOIRE AND STYLES

Yet African American congregations developed a new religious repertoire which differed significantly from that of white congregations. At the center of this new repertoire was the spiritual. The spiritual tradition that developed in the early nineteenth century combined expanded themes from the Bible and denominational hymnbooks with the tradition of the ring shout. The shout, descended from African traditions, was a religious service featuring singers intoning repeated refrains while dancers moved around a ring in a slow shuffle. Shouts could last a long time, moving participants into a state of religious devotion and excitement. Spirituals, while devotional, could also be used to communicate coded messages among the slaves about plans for secret religious services or even escape from bondage.

African American slaves developed a number of secular styles. Slaves performed dance music for each other—and often for slave owners—using the fiddle and predecessors of the modern banjo, as well as by patting their own bodies in rhythm with the dance. They also developed unique calls and hollers as methods of singing greetings, news, and other information loudly across farms and fields as they worked.

African Americans, in slavery and freedom, established rich musical traditions in the early years of the American Republic. Even as historians struggle to

determine the specific sounds of the era's music, most agree that those years witnessed the concerted preservation of African elements; the emergence of new African American styles; an increasing integration of African, European, and American music; and a significant African American participation in the musical life of the new nation.

*See also African Americans: African American Life and Culture; African Americans: Free Blacks in the North.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Epstein, Dena J. *Sinful Tunes and Spirituals: Black Folk Music to the Civil War*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977.
- Floyd, Samuel A., Jr. *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Radano, Ronald. *Lying Up a Nation: Race and Black Music*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- Southern, Eileen. *The Music of Black Americans: A History*. 3rd ed. New York: Norton, 1997.

Karl Hagstrom Miller

#### Classical

Though growing rapidly, the thirteen colonies had only 1.2 million people in the mid-1750s. By 1829 they had grown to twenty-four states and almost 13 million people. Music could be heard everywhere throughout this period, but in far more variety, and often with far greater expertise, by 1829. This was certainly true of classical music, here defined as music written out with internationally recognized methods of notation and performed by professionals or by talented and experienced amateurs for audiences who listen attentively. Such music requires cities with stores to sell sheet music and instruments, churches willing to pay professional organists and choirmasters, families willing to pay for children's music lessons and audiences willing to pay for, and even subsidize, productions of oratorios, operas, and symphonies. Many of North America's classical musicians were European-trained immigrants performing European music or composing music in America that conformed to European styles. Professional musicians supported themselves with various jobs that included performing, teaching, organizing, composing, publishing, and selling. New music, usually ephemeral but sometimes of high quality, was often commissioned for theaters, dancing schools, and public events.

During this three-quarters of a century, the chief support for classical music in Europe shifted from the high officers of church and state (cathedrals and courts) to the urban middle classes; in British North America the middle classes (including southern planters convening for political and artistic seasons in Charleston, Williamsburg, or Annapolis) supported classical music from the beginning. Opera, ballet, recitals, concerts, and plays with musical interludes were no longer the exclusive privileges of a ruling class; they were open to anyone who could afford the price of a ticket, and impresarios learned how to scale the cost of their tickets so that almost anyone could afford the poorest seats in the house. Meanwhile, classical music itself grew in complexity and expressive power; traditional ideals of form and balance were increasingly subordinated to intensity of feeling, personal expression, and heroic virtuosity—in short, musical romanticism.

Before the American Revolution, small ensembles flourished in coastal cities from Charleston, South Carolina, to Boston, Massachusetts, and in French New Orleans. Domestic music making reached high levels among connoisseurs such as Francis Hopkinson, Thomas Jefferson (a proficient violinist), and Benjamin Franklin, all signers of the Declaration of Independence. Franklin even invented an ingenious instrument, the glass armonica, which consisted of glass discs of varied shape, all arrayed on an axle in a trough that kept them both wet and turning, so the player could draw tones from them with his fingers. One tightly knit religious community, the Moravian Brethren of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and Salem, North Carolina, maintained skilled orchestras, choruses, soloists, and composers. Theirs was essentially German sacred music, transplanted to the North American frontier.

Notable among the European professional musicians who settled permanently in the eastern cities of the United States between 1770 and 1800 were William Selby (1738–1798), Rayner Taylor (1747–1825), Alexander Reinagle (1756–1809), George K. Jackson (1757–1822), Benjamin Carr (1768–1831), and James Hewitt (1770–1827), all from England. From Germany by way of England came Johann Christian Gottlieb Graupner (1767–1836). Most settled in Philadelphia, New York, or Boston, which maintained leadership in high culture throughout the nineteenth century. The Northeast also produced over two hundred native composers, mostly self-taught and part-time singing masters, whose typical work was creating, collecting, and publishing thousands of hymns, anthems, and settings of the

Psalms. Some produced music now considered classical in quality and significance, as well as having vernacular authenticity. The most famous of these composers, William Billings (1746–1800), was based in Boston; the great majority, however, were located in small towns of the hinterland.

A major figure rediscovered in the 1970s was Bohemian merchant Anthony Philip Heinrich (1781–1861), who determined at age thirty to make the United States his home and music his career. Settling in Kentucky, he contributed to Lexington's musical life, then took a sabbatical to create *The Dawning of Music in Kentucky; or, the Pleasures of Harmony* (1820). This book contained forty-six original compositions for piano, vocalists, and small ensembles and drew favorable notices in the East. Heinrich moved to New York City, where he composed and performed for several decades. He was the first U.S. composer to exploit extensively American literary, geographic, and ethnic themes in his work.

By 1829 American musicians had performed and American audiences had heard major compositions by George Frideric Handel, Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven, Gioacchino Rossini, Carl Maria von Weber and many other European composers. New York City enjoyed its first full season of opera in 1825–1826, provided by Manuel García's Italian Opera Company. There were eighty performances, among them Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (1787), whose librettist, Lorenzo Da Ponte (1749–1838)—then professor of Italian at Columbia College—was a proud sponsor. Most of the musical organizations of the young nation, whether for teaching, performing, or publishing, lasted but a few years, but those that failed were soon replaced, and new enterprises were always appearing. Among the notable exceptions for endurance was Boston's Handel and Haydn Society (1815), specializing in large-scale oratorio (especially Handel's *Messiah* [1742] and Haydn's *Creation* [1798]). The Society's fame spread across the growing nation with the publication of its *Collection of Sacred Music* (1822, and many subsequent revisions), edited by Lowell Mason (1792–1872), composer, businessman, and promoter of musical education.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Chase, Gilbert. *America's Music, from the Pilgrims to the Present*. 3rd ed. Urbana: University of Illinois, 1987.  
 Nicholls, David, ed. *The Cambridge History of American Music*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Temperley, Nicholas. *Bound for America: Three British Composers*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003.

Robert McColley

#### Patriotic and Political

American patriotic music in the Revolutionary and Federal periods was heavily influenced by the presence of traditional British military bands during the colonial era. Besides the small squads of fifers and drummers that the British army used for signaling troop movements and duties, separate regimental bands were often subsidized by officers for concerts and entertainment. These bands consisted of wind instruments such as bassoons, clarinets, oboes, and horns and played more sophisticated music than the fife and drum corps. American musicians were familiar with, and influenced by, these bands in their midst. For example, Timothy Swan of Connecticut, one of New England's late-eighteenth-century composers of psalmody, was said to have learned to read music from a British fifer. The outbreak of hostilities between England and the American colonies in early 1775 prompted the establishment of similar bands attached to colonial troops, but only six American regiments had bands. The musicians attached to the Fourth Regiment of Continental Artillery from Pennsylvania, one of the best of the bands, entertained General Washington on his birthday in 1778 at Valley Forge. The move toward independence also elicited the first nationalist tunes such as the instrumental march, "The Road to Boston."

Parody played a large part in Revolutionary-era American song writing as well-known British patriotic tunes were given lyrics that turned their original meaning on its head. The traditional text of "The British Grenadiers" compared these English shock troops with Alexander the Great and Hercules. The American version to the familiar tune, "A Song on Liberty," is attributed to Boston Patriot Joseph Warren, who died in 1775 at Bunker Hill:

Proud Albion bow'd to Caesar,  
 And numerous lords before,  
 To Picts, to Danes, to Normans,  
 And many master more;  
 But we can boast Americans  
 Have never fall'n prey,  
 Huzza! huzza! huzza! huzza!  
 For free America.

"The Liberty Song," written by John Dickinson of Pennsylvania in 1768, took its melody from the English "Heart of Oak," written by London actor

David Garrick in 1759 to celebrate victories over the French in the Seven Years' War (1756–1763). Dickinson's lyrics stopped short of advocating open conflict but reflected the confrontational spirit engendered by the Townshend Acts:

Come join hand in hand, brave Americans all,  
And rouse your bold hearts at fair liberty's call;  
No tyrannous acts shall suppress your just claim  
Or stain with dishonor America's name.

In a musical repartee, annoyed British soldiers stationed in Boston countered with "Parody upon a Well-known Liberty Song—Come Shake Your Dull Noddles," printed by the *Boston Gazette* later in 1768:

Come shake your dull Noddles,  
Ye pumpkins and bawl,  
And own that you're mad at fair Liberty's Call;  
No scandalous Conduct can add to your Shame,  
Condemn'd to Dishonor  
Inherit the fame.

"Yankee Doodle," a British lampoon of American soldiers that probably dated from the Seven Years' War, had many textual variants that strayed from patriotic fervor into bawdy camp commentary. It was updated for the American rebellion when it was printed in England in 1780 as "Yankee Doodle, or (as now Christened by the Saints of New England) The Lexington March" and had instructions for "The Words to be Sung thro' the Nose . . ." in imitation of an American accent.

Singing sacred music in this period was a prevalent pastime and a few patriotic hymns became popular. William Billings's "Lamentation Over Boston," published in 1778, connected the Patriot cause with religious enthusiasm and, specifically, the 137th Psalm:

By the Rivers of Watertown we sat down and  
wept,  
when we remember'd thee, O Boston.  
As for our Friends, Lord God of Heaven,  
preserve them, defend them, deliver and restore  
them unto us.

Billings's "Chester" became the spontaneous anthem of American troops when he rewrote the text for one of his own hymns with words of martial inspiration:

Let tyrants shake their iron rod,  
And Slav'ry clank her galling chains,  
We fear them not, we trust in God,  
New-England's God for ever reigns.

The years immediately after the war brought new verses that celebrated the new nation and its heroes, either with new music or older melodies, but no longer relied on parody. New England composer Abraham Wood's "Hymn on Peace" encouraged

turning "swords to plowshares" while praising God for the success of the American cause. The expanded notion of individual rights was underscored by "The Rights of Woman," printed in Providence in 1793:

Woman aloud rejoice exalt to thy feeble voice in  
cheerful strain.  
Let woman have a share, nor yield to slavish fear  
Her equal rights declare and well maintain.

The near deification of General Washington even before he became the first president found expression in music. Two popular songs were "Washington's March" and "He Comes, the Hero Comes!," celebrating Washington's return to New York in 1783. Philip Phile, a former Hessian soldier who led the pit orchestra in Philadelphia's theater in the late 1780s, wrote "The President's March" in 1789. Possibly played at Washington's first inauguration, the tune was very popular, and when Joseph Hopkinson wrote lyrics for it in 1798, it became "Hail! Columbia," America's unofficial national anthem for most of the nineteenth century. Other paeans to American ideals came from theater musicians, such as Alexander Reinagle's "America, Commerce, and Freedom," written in Philadelphia in 1794. The death of Washington in 1799 prompted the publication of memorials. "Funeral Dirge" by I. Decker was played by the Alexandria Band at his funeral, while "Funeral Dirge on the Death of General Washington" by Peter Von Hagen was played at the Stone Chapel in Boston.

By the mid-1790s political divisions between Federalists and Jeffersonian Republicans were finding expression in song. "Hail! Columbia" originated as a stridently pro-Adams, anti-French exhortation to present a united national front:

Firm—United—Let us be,  
Rallying 'round our Liberty  
As a band of brothers joined,  
Peace and Safety shall we find.

"Ode on Science," written by Deacon Janaziah in 1798 and a very popular tune during the nineteenth century, tried to find a middle ground in resisting both British and French threats to American sovereignty:

The British yoke, the Gallic chain,  
Was urged upon our necks in vain,  
All haughty tyrants we disdain,  
And shout, Long live America.

Other composers tried to appeal to followers of both of the emerging parties with medleys that switched back and forth in allegiance. Perhaps the best-known is Benjamin Carr's "Federal Overture," presented in New York in 1794, which included "Marseilles," "Ca Ira" (both Republican, Francophile

anthems), "O Dear What Can the Matter Be" (a comment on the current political strife) "Rose Tree," "Carmagnole," "President's March," and "Yankee Doodle" (the last two were Federalist favorites). Band leader Carr was rewarded for his lighthearted attempt at inclusion with a near riot and physical assault.

Musical political invective only became sharper with Jefferson's presidency. Set to a martial tune, "Jefferson and Liberty," a response to the earlier "Adams and Liberty," was a celebration of the overthrow of the Federalists. The first two lines refer to the Alien and Sedition Acts and the rest of the Federalist national security panic of 1798–1800:

The gloomy night before us flies, the reign of  
Terror now is o'er,  
Gags, Inquisitors and Spies, its herds of Harpies  
are no more.  
Rejoice! Columbia's Sons, rejoice! To tyrants  
never bend the knee,  
But join with heart and soul and voice, for  
Jefferson and Liberty.

The War of 1812 brought a reappearance of anti-British compositions. Francis Scott Key's "The Star-Spangled Banner" was written in 1814 using the melody from "To Anacreon in Heaven," an old British drinking song, but did not become the official national anthem until 1931. Andrew Jackson's victory in New Orleans in 1815 added lyrics and a fiddle melody to American folk music; "The 8th of January," or "The Battle of New Orleans," became a hit song for early rock-and-roller Johnny Horton in the 1950s. Humorous, satirical songs flourished during the presidential campaign of Andrew Jackson, a new brand of politician. In 1822 supporters of Jackson's first presidential campaign sang "The Hunters of Kentucky," which reminisced about the general's victory. Opponents of his second term in office who had been put off by his autocratic style and allegations of corruption sang "King Andrew" in 1834:

King Andrew had an itching palm to finger the  
nation's cash;  
Most of 'em thought 'twas just the thing but  
some thought it'd be rash  
The General took his cook's advice and hurried  
away the Rhino;  
But where it went, aye there's the rub, I'll be  
damn'd if you or I know.

Although patriotic songs remained steady sellers throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, electoral satire set to music became a permanent art form in American politics, even if the lyrics were by nature ephemeral.

*See also Democratic Republicans; Election of 1800; Election of 1824; Federalist Party; Humor; Jackson, Andrew; Jefferson, Thomas; Poetry; Satire; "Star-Spangled Banner"; Townshend Act; Washington, George.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Camus, Raoul F. *Military Music of the American Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976.  
Lowens, Irving. *Music and Musicians in Early America*. New York: Norton, 1964.  
Nathans, Heather S. *Early American Theatre from the Revolution to Thomas Jefferson: Into the Hands of the People*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.  
Sonneck, Oscar G. *Francis Hopkinson, the First American Poet-Composer, 1737–1791*, and James Lyon, Patriot, Preacher, Psalmody, 1735–1794. New York: Da Capo Press, 1967.

#### Discography and Liner Notes

- George Washington, Music for the First President*. David and Ginger Hildebrand. Liner notes by David Hildebrand. Hildebrand CD 105, 1999.  
*Liberty Tree*. The Boston Camerata with Joel Cohen. Liner notes by Joel Cohen. Erato CD 3984-21668-2, 1998.  
*Music of the American Revolution: The Birth of Liberty*. The American Fife Ensemble and the Liberty Tree Wind Players. Liner notes by Richard Crawford. New World Records CD 80276-2, 1996.  
*Music of the Federal Era*. The Federal Music Society. Liner notes by Richard Crawford. New World Records CD 80299-2, 1994.  
*Tippecanoe and Tyler Too: A Collection of American Political Marches, Songs, and Dirges*. The Chestnut Brass Company and Friends. Liner notes by Jay Krush. Newport Classic Premier NPD 85548, 1992.

Peter Leavenworth

#### Popular

American music in the late colonial and early national periods depended greatly on styles, publishing, and performers from England. With various rich traditions of many types of music and a range of venues for performance, Great Britain supplied English-speaking colonists with the cultural elements of three basic categories of music.

#### SACRED MUSIC

The most widespread form of music found in early America was psalmody, which was used by nearly all Protestant branches and sects. Adhering to the Reformation belief in full participation by congrega-

tions in singing, colonial Americans sang in worship services, including Congregationalists in New England, German Lutherans in the mid-Atlantic region, and Anglicans and Scots-Irish Presbyterians in the Virginia Tidewater and the Deep South. Puritans and other dissenting sects believed in using only scriptural verses from the Psalms of David for services rather than hymns by composers who were their contemporaries, and they also eschewed the use of choirs and instruments as trappings of Catholic excess that distracted from the purpose of worship. These principles began to give way during a century of changes in sacred music that emanated from England beginning around 1720. Sacred music was so important to colonial culture that America's first published book was the Bay Psalm Book in Boston in 1640, a Puritan revision of psalms translated from Hebrew. In New England, colonists sang psalm tunes outside of church while they worked or at midweek gatherings where secular songs might also be sung.

In the mid-Atlantic colonies and the South, German Pietists and Anglicans had no such injunction against instruments or choirs, but organs and bell rings were rare until later in the eighteenth century because of their cost. Throughout the Revolutionary and early national periods, the insular German Moravians in Pennsylvania and North Carolina enjoyed a string of composers trained in Germany who were especially fond of incorporating brass ensembles into their services. Anglican churches used organs in the largest northern cities, but in the South, only the refinement of Charleston, South Carolina, attracted such compositional talents as Charles Theodore Pachelbel (1690–1750, son of Johann), Henry Purcell (1742–1802), Peter Valton (1740–1784), and J. H. Stevens (1750–1828). By the 1760s, the "regular singing" reforms initiated earlier in New England were slowly being adopted by parishes throughout the Northeast and in the South as well. These transitions included moving away from the seventeenth-century practice of "lining out," in which a deacon or preceptor spoke or sang a line that was then repeated by the congregation, a practice necessitated by illiteracy or a lack of psalm books. It gave way to using separate choirs trained to read music in weekly singing schools for at least part of the service. There was also an expansion in the use of hymns (in which Scripture is only paraphrased or referenced), aided by the waves of revivals in England and America in the 1740s. The use of hymns was championed by English religious lyricists like Isaac Watts (1674–1748) and the brothers John Wesley (1703–1791) and Charles Wesley (1707–1788). Stringed instruments such as violins, bass, and tenor viols began to accom-

pany choirs that were increasingly seated apart in galleries above the congregation. Finally, a more florid, ornamented, and dynamic style of sacred music composition, influenced in part by English theater, found its way to America originally through imported tunebooks and musicians. While indigenous American hymnody had been meager, the Revolutionary period ushered in a dramatic escalation in sacred music composition and publishing that focused mainly in the Northeast. Beginning with the *New England Psalm-Singer* (1770), by William Billings (1746–1800), which contained 127 of his own pieces and no imports, a host of amateur singing masters and composers began a publishing frenzy that continued into the early nineteenth century. The percentage of American compositions in all publications went from less than 5 percent in 1770 to nearly 70 percent in 1800. At the same time, the total number of pieces printed increased by a factor of ten during the same period, from approximately 1,460 to 15,770. Enjoying wide popularity during the Revolution and until the turn of the nineteenth century, these Yankee tunesmiths were almost exclusively rural storekeepers and tradesmen without formal musical training. A few of the more popular hymns had overtly patriotic themes, such as "Lamentation over Boston" (Billings), "Bunker Hill" (Andrew Law, 1748–1821), and "Bennington" and "Trenton" (Daniel Read, 1757–1836). Billings's "Chester" was more popular with the Patriot troops than was "Yankee Doodle," and the funereal "China," by Timothy Swan (1758–1842), was the standard, rather than Chopin's sonata, at American memorial services for much of the nineteenth century. A popular characteristic of this first American style of music composition was the choral device of "fuguing." American fugues, as distinct from much more complicated European fugues, were simply sections of staggered, overlapping phrases sung by the different parts of the choir as in singing rounds. Often rendering the words of worship unintelligible, the style was deemed by some critics to be sacrilegious and indicative of moral failing. A final wave of reform in sacred music occurred after 1800, originating in the major urban centers of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. Influenced by recently arrived European professional musicians and a conservative reform component of the Second Great Awakening, the indigenous American style of folk hymnody came under attack as lacking both sophistication and sufficient reverence. The careening melodies and simplistic use of "fuguing" seemed to a new generation of Americans anachronistic and too oriented toward the enjoyment of singing for its own sake. Advocating strict

attention to European standards of harmonic composition, a younger cohort of American sacred music composers including Lowell Mason (1792–1872), Thomas Hastings (1784–1872), and Samuel Dyer (1785–1835) espoused a simpler, more accessible genre epitomized by Hastings's classic "Rock of Ages." Hymnody remained an immensely popular type of music throughout the nineteenth century and continued to be the predominant way in which most Americans participated in making music.

#### **THEATER MUSIC AND STAGE SONGS**

Music from the colonial theater did not initially have a large public audience, but by the second decade of the nineteenth century, musical entertainment generated by the stage commanded an enormous following. The period from the Revolution through the first third of the nineteenth century witnessed a gradual legitimization of public theater in America that brought with it an increasingly significant variety of popular music.

Each of the three largest colonial cities—Boston, New York, and Philadelphia—hosted attempts at establishing venues for performing British drama earlier in the eighteenth century. These entertainments, which often took place in taverns, were met with opposition by Quakers in Philadelphia and Puritan sensibilities in Boston. Disapproval of the theater in colonial New York was more politically based and dramatic productions flourished only during the nearly continuous British wartime occupation. As traditional political structures changed and antagonism to British exports waned in these cities in the postwar period, so too did resistance to professional theaters. During the 1790s, each major city eventually had at least two theaters in operation, with satellite circuits of smaller venues in outlying towns. Funded by proprietors drawn from new merchant ranks, theater companies were imported wholesale from the vibrant comic-opera scene in England as scores of professionally trained musicians and singers relocated to America. In addition, during the 1790s émigrés from the French Revolution and the Haitian slave revolt brought French aristocratic talent to these urban centers as well.

This rapid influx of trained European musicians employed in theaters generated a taste, and a market, for music that required instructed accomplishment and reflected the classical and Romantic styles then current in Europe. Music in early national theaters consisted of performances by pit bands before and after plays as well as accompaniment during musical dramas. The selections came from a wide assortment

of styles, from European composers to vernacular ballads and patriotic pieces. Within two decades after the war, music played in a refined manner went from being the province of gentleman dilettantes emulating their European counterparts to a widely available style made accessible through expanding theatrical circuits. The British comic-opera tradition was similar in many respects to modern musicals, and after 1800, favorite songs from especially popular plays gained favor with the public. This development was further promoted through intercity tours by solo European and American male and female actors who were also accomplished singers. These performances were more profitable and easier than participating in dramatic productions and focused public attention on the individual careers of the "stars." (The use of the word "star" to denote singer and actor celebrities began in late-eighteenth-century England.) Urban circuses, stationary but feeble structures in Philadelphia and New York, competed with theaters in presenting popular entertainments, including music, that lacked the pretense to gentility that theaters strove to offer. This cultural dualism between vernacular and cultivated taste was presented together within single shows in the early national period to American audiences that reflected a broad social spectrum. Later nineteenth-century developments in American fine arts increasingly separated the loci of performances for these parallel tastes. Favorite songs lingered even further in the attention of the public through sheet music-publishing in major American cities. As American printing and publishing expanded exponentially during the 1790s, so too did music publication. Popular songs, including selections from well-known ballad operas like *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), *Love in a Village* (1762), and *The Poor Soldier* (1783) (George Washington's favorite), received attention on a national basis as music publishers in different cities traded best-selling sheet music among themselves. Relatively inexpensive single offprints of popular tunes appealed to increasing numbers of owners of the new pianoforte, a keyboard instrument that had been replacing the harpsichord as a popular instrument in prosperous households since the Revolution. After 1800 new generations of aspiring young middle-class ladies were encouraged to acquire the rudiments of singing and piano playing as part of a matrix of social distinction. The Bohemian immigrant composer A. P. Heinrich (1781–1861) commented that his real income came from "teaching little misses on the pianoforte, for small quarter money, often unpaid." Popular subgenres abounded, including patriotic tunes, sentimental songs, and music borrowed from European countries.

Airs from Ireland and Scotland became very fashionable after the turn of the century, prompting compositions like *Six Ballads from the Poem of "The Lady of the Lake"* (1810), by Benjamin Carr (1768–1831), taken from Sir Walter Scott's just-published epic. By the 1820s the theater had increasingly become a venue for an assortment of music-centered entertainments that featured comic skits, famous scenes from plays, and various types of dance. This variety format moved easily into the minstrelsy phenomenon in music hall circuits that dominated American popular entertainment later in the nineteenth century.

#### **VERNACULAR AND FOLK MUSIC**

This ephemeral genre of popular songs has been variously referred to as "folk" or "oral" traditional music and usually ascribed to rural or working-class practitioners. However, late-twentieth-century revisions by musicologists have shown that ballads formerly believed to have been circulated through a shared cultural memory, predicated on illiteracy, were actually often recorded and learned through print and manuscript as well as through oral transmission. In addition, they were enjoyed by all levels of society. Later nineteenth-century conceptions of folk authenticity, deeply colored by Victorian notions of class and gender, have to varying degrees persisted into the beginning of the twenty-first century. Children's songs, often didactic and moralistic, endured as a consistent subgenre for many generations, intertwined with stories and fairy tales. Public singing was often associated with taverns, which were known to have repositories of broadsides and chapbooks containing lengthy verses about tragic and current events. By the second half of the eighteenth century, Americans were recreating ballads in the British traditional style, but with Americanized meanings and words.

One of the earliest known indigenous American ballads is "Springfield Mountain," or "The Death of Timothy Merrick." Originally a memorial for the untimely death of a young man bitten by a rattlesnake in Wilbraham, Massachusetts, in 1761, the ballad was eventually sung to children as an instructive lullaby. By the 1830s, versions of the song that satirized its rusticity spread in print and appealed to an audience several generations removed from the tragedy and inured to the ballad's sentimental roots. Thus, vernacular songs in this period could be transformed according to contexts that complicated simple entertainment: spreading sensational news, warnings to children, and self-deprecating humor. Vernacular instrumental music such as dance melo-

dies on the fiddle or military music for the fife were still transmitted by ear, but even these tunes were formalized in printed songsters that created "official" versions. African Americans, free and enslaved, influenced this colloquial music idiom to greatest effect through self-taught proficiency on European instruments played with African sensibilities. Diaries, letters, and journals abound with anecdotes describing public "street" music in general as well as black practitioners in particular.

Popular music after 1800 began to reflect social changes taking place elsewhere in American society, especially in regard to a lay rejection of artistic expertise and acquiring direct access to new music. Ballad lyrics published in newspapers, magazines, or broadsides invoked well-known melodies that sidestepped any requirements of musical training. While this strategy had long been in use, the rapid expansion of inexpensive print sources after 1790 meant greater selection. Shape-note music, invented in the 1790s, became widespread in the ensuing decades. Also known as "dunce" notes or "patent" notes (for the different notational systems copyrighted), shape-notes relied on note-heads of squares, triangles, diamonds, and circles to represent relative tones in a given key that sidestepped the need for sharps and flats (or even a staff in some systems). This simplification of notational literacy was reviled by many urban commentators, but it remained popular and widely used in regions west of the Atlantic seaboard as the country expanded.

This democratization within popular music worked against the increasing sophistication of taste that the influence of trained European musicians introduced to American music, and it contributed to the gradual bifurcation of venues within public music later in the nineteenth century. It should be emphasized that these categories of sacred, stage, and vernacular music intersected and that all reacted with the others to create a lively national music soundscape.

*See also Religious Publishing; Theater and Drama.*

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Cockrell, Dale. *Demons of Disorder: Early Blackface Minstrels and Their World*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Crawford, Richard. *The American Musical Landscape: The Business of Musicianship from Billings to Gershwin*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.
- . *America's Musical Life: A History*. New York: Norton, 2001.

- Hitchcock, H. Wiley. *Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 2000.
- Lowens, Irving. *Music and Musicians in Early America*. New York: Norton, 1964.
- Nathans, Heather S. *Early American Theatre from the Revolution to Thomas Jefferson: Into the Hands of the People*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Porter, Susan L. *With an Air Debonair: Musical Theatre in America, 1785–1815*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1991.
- Silverman, Kenneth. *A Cultural History of the American Revolution: Painting, Music, Literature, and the Theatre in the Colonies and the United States from the Treaty of Paris to the Inauguration of George Washington, 1763–1789*. New York: Crowell, 1976.
- Stevenson, Robert. *Protestant Church Music in America*. New York: Norton, 1966.
- Southern, Eileen. *The Music of Black Americans: A History*. New York: Norton, 1971.

Peter Leavenworth

political philosopher Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, popularized an image of Muslim political authority as an illegitimate empire of passion that negated the ideals of republicanism. The perverse excesses of male Islamic despots who replaced the moral home with the sexualized seraglio symbolized a social order in which the virtue of liberty had degenerated into the vice of passionate license. Montesquieu's compatriot, Constantin François de Chassebouef Volney, saw Ottoman despotism as causing the social ruin of Mediterranean culture by replacing free inquiry with fatalism. His influential work *The Ruins, or a Survey of the Revolutions of Empires* was first translated into English in 1792 and again, ten years later, by Thomas Jefferson when he was serving as president. During the early years of the Republic, images of Muslim despots included the Turkish tyrant, the Barbary pirate, the Algerine spy, and the treacherous Malay. Americans thought Muslim societies were infested with a host of behaviors associated with public vice—not only political tyranny, but also ambition, corruption, covetousness, ostentation, sensuality, and cruelty—all dangers fatal to the viability of a virtuous republic.

The most sustained American contact with Muslim lands took place during a succession of conflicts between the United States and the North African regencies of Algiers, Tripoli, and Tunis. In 1785 Algerian corsairs sailed out of the Straits of Gibraltar and captured two American vessels no longer protected by British treaties. The plight of these captives attracted public attention in late 1793 when nine more ships and their crews were taken into captivity. A treaty signed on 12 July 1796 with the Dey of Algiers resolved this crisis at a humiliating cost of ransom and tribute. The Pasha of Tripoli's demand that tribute be paid to him as well led to the Tripolitan War of 1801–1805, which was eventually resolved through the successful exploits of the newly developed U.S. Navy. The presence of Tripolitan prisoners in New York and the six-month tour of a reckless Tunisian ambassador in 1805–1806 helped to deflate images of the fearsome Muslim despot. Widely read works of literary fantasy celebrated how the female virtue and male valor of early nationals converted Muslims from despotism to democracy through the expression of a vigorous American example.

In the crisis of American captivity in Barbary, early abolitionists viewed Muslim practices as a mirror of the dangers that slavery posed to democratic civilization. Benjamin Franklin, less than a month before his death in 1790, satirized a Georgia congressman's support of the slave trade by assuming

**MUSLIMS, CONCEPTS AND IMAGES OF**  
Early American understandings of Muslims were shaped by the political power of the Ottoman Empire, the geographical expanse of the Islamic world, and the aura of the exotic found in *A Thousand and One Nights*. New nationalists of varied backgrounds found the Islamic world to be a distant site of oriental opposition and licentiousness. By contrast, Americans saw the destiny of their new nation as joining religious and republican worldviews in a majority vision of Christian patriotism. When the Constitution in 1787 protected the religious freedom of office-holders, anti-Federalists feared the opening of American government to "Jews, Turks, and Infidels."

Early American religious views of Islam as anti-Christian stemmed from the heritage of the Crusades, which cast Muhammad as a false prophet who attracted adherents by appealing to carnal desires and coercing belief through violence. Interpretations of the Books of Daniel and Revelation featured Islam as the smoke from the bottomless pit resulting from the corruption of Christianity. American missionaries in the eastern Mediterranean after 1819 viewed Muslims as cursed followers of a dark delusion whose removal was a promised sign of the coming millennium.

Americans were also influenced by the Enlightenment's equation of Islamic government with systematic despotism. The eighteenth-century French

the persona of an Algerian courtier who supported North African slavery on the grounds that Christians were needed to cultivate its lands. The only Muslims living in the United States during the founding period were Africans uprooted from Islamic cultures in West Africa whose heritage, although destroyed by the slave system, helped individuals to deal with the indignities of bondage.

During the Greek War of Independence from the Ottomans (1821–1828), many Americans emphasized the barbarity of Turkish despotism in their eagerness to see democracy exported back to the land of its origin. The victory of the Greeks and the decline of Turkish power in the Mediterranean after 1830 led

to an increase in travel that fostered more romantic images of Muslims, including those of the natural freedom of Arab life.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allison, Robert J. *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World, 1776–1815*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Parker, Richard B. *Uncle Sam in Barbary: A Diplomatic History*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004.
- Sha'ban, Fuad. *Islam and Arabs in Early American Thought: The Roots of Orientalism in America*. Durham, N.C.: Acorn Press, 1991.

Timothy W. Marr



---

**NAMING OF THE NATION** Although the Declaration of Independence marked the first official usage of the name “United States of America” to designate the new nation, the name was not entirely novel in 1776. Its constituent elements had evolved over time in response to changing circumstances in the colonies. Europeans since the early sixteenth century had recognized “America” as a geographic region, owing to the efforts of cartographers such as Gerard Mercator. The term increasingly acquired political connotations after colonization. During the French and Indian War, an abortive attempt to construct a colonial union signaled a growing identification among British Americans. This identity would ultimately be forged in opposition to England during the Revolution, when it became common to refer to the “United Colonies.”

As the crisis with England deepened in the 1770s, some revolutionaries began referring to the colonies as “states,” a word that did not convey the same sense of dependence. Royal officials such as Thomas Hutchinson, the governor of Massachusetts, noted the changing terminology, but its meaning became evident only with the Declaration of Independence. The Continental Congress’s instructions to have the Declaration reprinted and read aloud helped popularize the phrase “United States of America.” And its

subsequent usage in both the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution solidified its status as the official name of the Republic by the end of the 1780s.

Not everyone in the new nation was satisfied with the name, however. The tercentennial of Columbus’s first transatlantic voyage prompted some in the 1790s to suggest renaming the country in his honor. It had not been unusual in earlier centuries to call the New World “Columbia,” and Americans in the post-Revolutionary period were adopting the term for everything from colleges to state capitals. Patriotic clubs even began making toasts to “the United Columbian States.” Members of the newly formed Massachusetts Historical Society would especially champion the cause of Columbia. To them, the name not only provided a new, non-English (yet still European) identity for the nation, but also righted a historical wrong. Early mapmakers, they argued, had mistakenly attributed the discovery of the Americas to Amerigo Vespucci. Well into the nineteenth century, other historical societies would similarly propose to correct the error by removing Vespucci’s name from the country’s official title. The New-York Historical Society recommended “The Republic of Washington,” while the Maryland Historical Society preferred “Allegania.” Yet neither name captured the popular imagination.

Perhaps no single person expended greater effort to change the country's name than did Samuel Latham Mitchill, a congressman and later senator from New York. Mitchill's thoughts on the issue reflected both his patriotism and his embrace of Enlightenment rationalism. He found the term "United States of America" uninspiring because it merely reflected a formal political arrangement rather than capturing the spirit of freedom that animated the new nation. He accordingly proposed the name "Fre-don" or "Fredonia," which he loosely translated as "house of liberty." Despite Mitchill's lobbying efforts among such luminaries as Noah Webster and President Thomas Jefferson in 1803, the name never gained much currency outside of his native New York.

**See also American Character and Identity; Articles of Confederation; Continental Congresses; Declaration of Independence.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aberbach, Alan David. *In Search of an American Identity: Samuel Latham Mitchill, Jeffersonian Nationalist*. New York: Peter Lang, 1988.
- Schlereth, Thomas J. "Columbia, Columbus, and Columbianism." *The Journal of American History* 79, no. 3 (December 1992): 937–968.
- Zabriskie, George A. "Why We Are Called Americans." *New-York Historical Society Quarterly* 27 (October 1943): 79–86.

Jonathan M. Beagle

---

**NAPOLEON** See **European Influences: Napoleon and Napoleonic Rule.**

---

**NATIONAL CAPITAL, THE** In the months leading up to the American declaration of independence from Great Britain, colonists could look to two capitals, or centers of political activity: London and Philadelphia. London was the largest city in Europe as well as the hub of the British Empire. It was home to England's primary political, financial, and cultural institutions, and by implication it represented the imperial capital to the British colonists of North America. Independence necessarily severed the American connection to London.

Then there was Philadelphia. The capital of Pennsylvania, centrally located on the Atlantic seaboard,

and the most populous city in the colonies in 1776, Philadelphia was also the seat of the Continental Congress. By default, it became the national capital when on 4 July Congress issued the Declaration of Independence. In the midst of a revolutionary war, Americans never deliberated on the appropriateness of Philadelphia as the capital city for the fledgling nation, nor would they for at least another decade. Few Americans took notice when the British occupied Philadelphia in 1777; the rump Congress simply fled to Lancaster, some forty miles to the interior. Over the ensuing seven years the Continental and then Confederation Congress met in York, Baltimore, Annapolis, Princeton, Trenton, and again in Philadelphia. After adjourning on Christmas Eve in 1784, the peripatetic Confederation Congress finally removed to New York City, where it met for the remainder of its existence.

New York City thus became the national capital of the nascent United States. Through the 1780s the Confederation Congress conducted the nation's business in lower Manhattan. In 1787 it called for a convention to meet in Philadelphia "for the sole and express purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation." By the end of the summer, the Continental Congress was on its way out to be replaced by a new government. The people of the several states ratified the United States Constitution in the course of the next year, and in 1789 a new national government convened in lower Manhattan. On the steps of the Federal Hall on Wall Street, Chancellor of New York Robert R. Livingston administered the oath of office to George Washington as the first president of the United States. Among its numerous provisions, the new Constitution stipulated that Congress purchase from the several states an area of land no larger than one hundred square miles on which to erect a permanent "seat of government."

The symbolic and strategic importance of the location of the national capital was not lost on the members of the First Congress. A fierce debate raged from September 1789, when the issue was broached, until the final House vote on 9 July of the following year. Congressmen deliberated on some sixteen possible sites. In addition to New York City, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, a number of smaller locations were put forward in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland. James Madison proposed the creation of an entirely new city to house the capital, to be erected on the shores of the Potomac River. Ultimately, the final form of the Residence Bill embraced Madison's idea, providing for a new city to be constructed on territory between Maryland and Virginia. In the ten

years it would take to complete construction, the government would reside in Philadelphia.

How Madison's bold proposal became a reality is the stuff of legend. Virginia's and Maryland's gain was New York's and Pennsylvania's loss. No one knows precisely why New Yorkers agreed to forfeit the city's prospect of becoming the permanent capital of the United States. Most contemporaries agreed that Alexander Hamilton, the New Yorker serving as Washington's Treasury secretary, had traded it away in exchange for gaining Madison's tacit agreement to his plan for national assumption of state debts. Known as the Compromise of 1790, this remarkable political horse-trading allegedly transpired over dinner at Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson's residence at 57 Maiden Lane. In order to save his funding and assumption plan then languishing in Congress, Hamilton assented to using his influence to have the nation's capital, its putative heart, shifted several hundred miles to the south. As for the supporters of the various Pennsylvania locations, they were rather easily won over. Not only were they assured of gaining the capital for ten years, but the prospect of its never moving to the mosquito-infested shores of the Potomac River was very great indeed. What one Congress could give, another most likely would take away. Passage of the 1790 Residence Bill was not likely to be the last word.

Fully cognizant that the Potomac location was both unpopular and impractical, Madison and Jefferson sought to distance Congress as far as possible from the entire process. Madison effected this brilliantly by persuading the legislature to recuse itself from virtually all subsequent decisions concerning the capital in favor of the executive. President Washington would be charged with oversight. Despite reservations, including a conflict of interest—Washington actually owned some of the land ultimately settled upon—the president agreed to the terms of the Residence Bill. In subsequent years, he took great interest in and expended a great deal of energy on the plans to create a capital city, which all knew would ultimately bear his name.

What Jefferson and Madison did not know was whether the Compromise of 1790 was worth the price. In 1792 Jefferson confessed that the trade had been a political blunder of the first order. By the time the government actually removed itself from Philadelphia to its new home on the Potomac eight years later, Jefferson had changed his mind. As the first president inaugurated in Washington, D.C., Jefferson already in 1801 could perceive the symbolic, political, and even historic significance of situating the

nation's capital in the South. In the ensuing decades Washington took on the atmosphere of a southern town, with slavery and slave markets, torrid summer heat and humidity, and a leisurely pace that inevitably had an impact on national policy and politicians.

Far more significant than where the capital was placed, perhaps, was from whence it came. By effecting the removal of the capital from New York and Philadelphia, Jefferson uniquely invested his agrarian ideal into American political culture. At the heart of the Jeffersonian vision, which would predominate at least through the nineteenth century, rested the conviction that cities like New York and Philadelphia were "sores on the body politic," full of vice and corruption, and utterly unbefitting a nation of farmers and freeholders. Ensconced on the banks of the Potomac River, the bucolic American seat of government might stave off the type of corruption that plagued European courts. In America, it would seem, "country air makes free."

Even as President John Adams reluctantly and ruefully removed from Philadelphia to Washington in the winter of 1800, where he would shortly turn over the ship of state to Jefferson, a deep irony was at work. It took many decades, but as Washington expanded around the wonderfully symmetrical design of Pierre Charles L'Enfant, it increasingly became the symbol of an emerging empire. In 1814 the capital was still sufficiently inconsequential that its burning by the invading British army had negligible impact on either the outcome of the War of 1812 or the Madison administration. Washington never rivaled New York or Philadelphia as the locus of cultural or financial might, but by mid-century it stood for central power utterly antithetical to the American agrarian ideal that had spawned its birth in the first years of the Republic.

*See also Articles of Confederation; Congress; Continental Congresses; Founding Fathers; Hamilton, Alexander; Jefferson, Thomas; Madison, James; New York City; Philadelphia; South; Washington, Burning of; Washington, D.C.; Washington, George.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bowling, Kenneth R. *The Creation of Washington, D.C.: The Idea and Location of the American Capital*. Fairfax, Va.: George Mason University Press, 1991.

Bryan, Wilhelmus B. *A History of the National Capital: From Its Foundation to the Period of the Adoption of the Organic Act*. New York: Macmillan, 1914.

Elkins, Stanley, and Eric McKittrick. *The Age of Federalism: The Early American Republic, 1788–1800*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Padover, Saul K., ed. *Thomas Jefferson and the National Capital*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946.

Young, James Sterling. *The Washington Community, 1800–1828*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1966.

Peter S. Field

---

**NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER** Although the *National Intelligencer* began as a party newspaper, the talents, principles, and government connections of its editors soon helped it to develop into one of the nation's most influential periodicals, a position it maintained for much of its early history. In the summer of 1800 Thomas Jefferson and Albert Gallatin encouraged the Philadelphia printer Samuel Harrison Smith to follow the federal government to Washington to start a Republican newspaper. Smith, a strong Jefferson supporter, readily complied, and on 31 October 1800 the first issue of the tri-weekly *National Intelligencer and Washington Advertiser* appeared.

After Jefferson's 4 March 1801 inauguration, Smith and his wife, Margaret Bayard Smith, became members of the Republican government social circle, dining with the president and members of the cabinet and Congress. Smith's political and social access to Congress and the administration led to profitable contracts for government printing as well as insights into the views of the president and the department heads. The *National Intelligencer* was soon known as the "court paper" of the Jefferson administration. Smith supported administration policies but avoided the strident tone of many of his contemporaries, striving for a moderate and balanced presentation of domestic and international affairs. Because of this evenhanded approach, the *National Intelligencer's* detailed reports of congressional debates and executive activity quickly became source material for editors across the country.

After Jefferson's retirement to Monticello in 1809, Smith left publishing for finance, selling the *Intelligencer* in 1810 to his employee Joseph Gales, Jr. Two years later Gales entered into a partnership agreement with his brother-in-law, William Seaton. Gales and Seaton continued Smith's policy of high-minded editorial comment combined with detailed reports of congressional happenings and maintained amiable relations with the Madison and Monroe administrations. Because of the *Intelligencer's* support

for President James Madison and the War of 1812, the British destroyed the newspaper's offices on 25 August 1814 during the invasion of Washington, dealing a severe blow to the partners' finances. To improve their still unstable financial situation, they began publication in 1825 of the *Register of Congressional Debates*, a detailed compilation in book form of the debates of each congressional session. Gales and Seaton's support for the Bank of the United States, to which they were deeply indebted, and for Henry Clay's "American System" led to estrangement from Andrew Jackson and his supporters.

After Jackson's election to the presidency in 1828 they no longer enjoyed close relationships with the administration and received far fewer government contracts. In 1834 they began publication of the *American State Papers*, followed by the *Annals of Congress*, two editions that not only preserved the executive, administrative, and legislative history of the early Republic but also contributed to the prestige of the *Intelligencer*. As the nation became more polarized politically in the decades leading to the Civil War, Gales and Seaton's moderate, compromising style fell out of favor. The paper came to be regarded as respectable but stodgy, and readers drifted away. Gales died in 1860, and in 1864 Seaton sold the *National Intelligencer* to a firm that moved the paper to New York, where it expired.

*See also* **Jackson, Andrew; Jefferson, Thomas; Newspapers; Press, The; Print Culture; Printers; War of 1812.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ames, William E. *A History of the National Intelligencer*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972.

Ritchie, Donald A. *Press Gallery: Congress and the Washington Correspondents*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991.

Smith, Culver H. *The Press, Politics, and Patronage: The American Government's Use of Newspapers, 1789–1875*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1977.

Mary A. Hackett

---

**NATIONALISM** On 4 July 1776, the Continental Congress charged a committee consisting of John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson to devise both a motto and a seal for the newly declared nation. The motto, approved during the 9 September 1776 meeting that also gave the United States of America its name, was "E Pluribus Unum" or "Out

of Many One." The motto was an expression more of hope than of reality. The newly united thirteen states faced a task unique to the world: to create a government whose primary affective ties were voluntary. The very idea of creating loyalty to the nation based not on kinship or ethnicity but on ideas was as revolutionary as the form of governance Americans were proposing. The Declaration of Independence from Great Britain issued that same July in Philadelphia by the delegates to the Continental Congress was one that not only called forth a nation but a war. The priority therefore was rallying domestic support through unity of purpose to defend their political actions on the field of battle. Making the principles outlined in the Declaration manifest was critical to obtaining that domestic support. To do the work of creating not only a nation but a people, it was imperative to forge bonds that would link far-flung Americans to each other and to the new nation-state. Only through the creation and inculcation of an American sense of nationalism could the Congress hope to create a durable state. The project was immense and the solutions often ingenious as the leaders of the Revolutionary effort sought to reshape old allegiances into new patterns. Institutions, rituals, and symbols by which kingdoms had created identification and loyalty in their subjects were reinvented to reflect new ideas about the relationships of citizens to one another and to their government.

The priority in the summer of 1776 was building a cohesive sense of national purpose to fight the war provoked with Great Britain. The Stamp Act Crisis of 1765 and the Townshend Act of 1767 had taught the colonists some important lessons about unity and resistance. The formation of the Sons of Liberty during those earlier crises created an organizational network that gathered around landmarks renamed "liberty trees"; where no suitable tree was available, poles were erected that were similarly dubbed "liberty poles." Used for signals and gathering places, the British searched them out and destroyed them, creating in the process a symbol. The Sons of Liberty were often controversial in their methods of organizing mob actions and enforcing boycotts, but they were effective. Unity was also promoted by ministers who mingled republicanism with millennial Christianity. Casting the Revolution as a sign of Christ's imminent thousand-year reign, various Protestant denominations supported the cause, which resulted in a distinctive cast to American political culture and to American Christianity. Broadsides and pamphlets poured out of the presses instructing the former colonists in the theory and benefits of republican government and shaping an

idea of liberty that drove the engine of popular support.

After the Revolution, campaigns related to the ratification of the Constitution provided an opportunity for public outpourings of political sentiment as supporters of a federal system framed arguments in nationalist terms. The campaign over the ratification itself signaled a shift to a national political culture that functioned through parties whose interests extended beyond the local area and issues. Despite the often bitter battles in the individual states, news in June 1788 that the needed nine states would ratify before Independence Day set off a flurry of planning in Philadelphia. The 4 July 1788 Grand Federal Procession in Philadelphia involved every class, every organization, and every bit of ritual that the evolving nation had to offer. The political culture was public, participatory, and self-conscious, a symbolic enactment of the process of creating the political nation. The frictions of class, gender, and race or of local politics were subsumed in a celebration of an anticipated future. The centerpiece was the Grand Federal Edifice, consisting of a dome supported by thirteen columns adorned by thirteen stars. The democratic spirit was evident to Benjamin Rush, who later wrote that "rank for a while forgot all its claims."

#### INCULOCATING NATIONALISM

Remembrances of the Revolution in holidays and commemorations assumed a new importance in the early nineteenth century as the Revolutionary generation, with its concrete unifying experience of sacrifice, gave way to a generation whose national ties were more abstract. Monarchical governments had long understood the need for events that reinforced allegiance to and identification with the monarch. Holidays as well as symbols assisted in the process of encouraging people to imagine themselves as part of something larger. Sermons, songs, speeches, and monuments focused on the ideas of sacrifice and heroism in service of principle. The idea of nation was reflected in official and unofficial rituals of remembrance at such moments as the death of George Washington in 1799; the dedication of the Bunker Hill Monument in 1825; and in the ultimate in symbolism, the twin deaths of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams on the fiftieth anniversary of independence itself, 4 July 1826, were all directed to that same end.

**Independence Day.** The preeminent national holiday was Independence Day, celebrated first on 4 July 1777 in Philadelphia to mark the first anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. The Continental

Army camp under the command of Washington was issued a double ration of rum to celebrate the day in 1778. The celebration of 4 July helped create a needed sense of unity that was bolstered by other spontaneous celebrations at the news of American military victories. After the war, the celebration of the day focused both on the birth of the political nation and on local partisan politics. Substituting political debate and demonstrations for potentially violent conflicts over local politics, Independence Day helped domesticate the Revolutionary impulse. But Independence Day did more than provide the citizen with a sense of political participation in the nation: it gave the disenfranchised a political presence. By joining in demonstrations for or against an issue, a candidate, a party, or even non-citizens were given a voice in the public discussion. Such activities provided a general sense of investment in the political future of the nation, even if tangible participation was at best a distant dream. In performing such rituals of respect, they too were participating in a performance of nationalism.

**National symbols and newspapers.** Visual representations of the nation were an important facet of the ongoing project of promoting a sense of nationalism. National symbols chosen to reinforce the idea of one nation with a unifying set of underlying principles and unique character were under design from the moment of creation. The Great Seal of the United States, whose central figure was an eagle symbolizing strength and vigilance, was adopted by Congress on 20 June 1782. Likewise, a flag to stand as a symbol for the nation both on and off the battlefield was critical. Here the desire to incorporate the idea of thirteen colonies united in common cause resulted in a flag of thirteen red and white stripes to the right of a circle of white stars on a field of deep blue, which was adopted by Congress on 14 June 1777. A federal city where government would be housed and the full force of national iconography would be displayed was designed specifically to be outside of the influence or control of any one state. There, the architecture celebrated ancient republics and the union of the thirteen original colonies.

Newspapers provided a public sphere of their own where editors and printers shaped political culture through their accounts of celebrations, letters from citizens, and selection of items from other newspapers. Ballads, broadsides, and orations all provided reinforcing ideas about the practices of the new national citizenship and its appropriate expression. Popular figures such as Brother Jonathan appeared in stage plays and in newspapers as a repre-

sentative American man who was somewhat rural, more than a bit innocent, but possessed of a combination of optimism, entrepreneurial spirit, and native common sense that bested every confidence man or elitist who tried to get the better of him. Following the War of 1812 (1812–1815), Uncle Sam emerged from soldiers' jokes about the government to become a staple of the proliferating political cartoons. Less a representative man than a symbol of government personified, Uncle Sam dressed in clothing that echoed the iconography of the American flag, hectored citizens into patriotic behavior, and acted as the eternal booster of nationalism.

**Educational texts.** Noah Webster believed "language as well as government should be national" and set out to create an "American language." But his desire went beyond the simple idea of casting off anything British. Webster stated bluntly in the introduction to his famous speller in 1783 that education was critical to instill in youth "an inviolable attachment to their own country." "A Federal Catechism" was included in some editions so that the future citizen could imbibe stories of patriotism and the principles of republican government as he or she learned to spell. But there were lessons in nationalism even for the literate adult citizen. A critical issue for many whose universe had been decidedly local was the need to understand the parameters of the new nation. Jedidiah Morse, a minister and schoolteacher turned author, had great success with his *American Geography* (1789). Geographies like Morse's helped new citizens envision the boundaries of their new country and, within the discussion of the customs of those Americans in faraway regions, acquaint themselves with their fellow citizens.

**The arts.** The creative arts too were involved in the cultural work of nation building. Joel Barlow's epic poem, *The Vision of Columbus* (1787), presented the voyage of Columbus as a divinely inspired mission linked directly to the later creation of the American nation. The production of portraits of leading men combined with dramatic commemorative scenes from the Revolution enjoyed wild popularity while reinforcing ideas about sacrifice and unity. In 1786 John Trumbull completed his panoramic painting, *The Death of General Warren at the Battle of Bunker Hill*, which enjoyed healthy sales in prints and in painted copies. Trumbull's *The Declaration of Independence*, finished the following year, also won popular acceptance and, beginning in 1817, was copied onto the rotunda of the Capitol building. Gilbert Stuart of Rhode Island painted George Washington from life in 1797. Full of symbolic trappings such as eagles and

representations of the founding documents, it too was widely copied and sold. The original was the only artwork saved by First Lady Dolley Madison in the 1814 burning of the White House by the British army during the War of 1812, a tribute to its symbolic importance. It became the iconic staple of the elementary-school classroom for over one hundred years. The inculcation of nationalism was as participatory as the political culture.

### CONTESTED NATIONALISM

Tests of national unity came early. In the early 1790s, farmers in western Pennsylvania were incensed over a tax they considered unfair because it applied to grain distilled into alcohol but not to grain carried to market in other forms. In 1794 they staged what became known as the Whiskey Rebellion. This test of federal authority was met head-on by George Washington, who sent more than twelve thousand federalized troops to Pennsylvania, not knowing whether the farmers would back down or the countryside would rise up in support. Washington's gamble—or his reputation—paid off as word of the approaching army defused the rebellion. The aborted revolt reminded many that the same energy that fueled the Revolution also resisted full domestication. The most serious crises that threatened the Union in the first decades of its existence came not from the feared uprisings of citizens but from the bridling of states under federal authority.

In his Farewell Address of 1796, President Washington showed that he had no illusions about the nation's potential problems. The valedictory on his eight-year presidency described anything but a triumphant and stable nation. Washington expressed an "apprehension of danger" from both foreign and domestic sources. Internal dangers included division into competing factions that might look to self-interest rather than to the Constitution and the commonweal. Only in devotion to the Constitution, he warned, would the "sacred ties" of unity protect the nation. As Washington entered retirement, he took with him not only the gratitude of the nation but its affections. By establishing a working government, he set the standard for the office of the president and demonstrated that constitutional government could work. But in his final public words there are pragmatic worries that would play out in the next generation as party politics created factions and crises arose over whose interpretation of the principles of the Revolution and the balance of power in government would prevail.

Just two years later Kentucky and Virginia raised the issue of states' rights in reaction to the Alien and Sedition Acts under Federalist president John Adams. The *Marbury v. Madison* opinion of 1803 by Chief Justice John Marshall asserted that the right of final review to determine the constitutionality of all legislation lay in the Supreme Court. Virginia's chief justice Spencer Roane held that the states were the final arbiter of debates on constitutionality, and between 1810 and 1821 the two debated the point bitterly. Roane became a moving force in the creation of both the *Richmond Enquirer* (to advocate in print the Republican position) and the Richmond Junto. The Richmond Junto, with its membership of elite Virginians, was a political machine just as much as Tammany Hall in New York City. Hoping to influence and strengthen the Republican agenda nationally, the battle was not over whether the United States should cease to exist but under what terms. The same debates arose in New England during the War of 1812. Federalists, hostile toward perceived constitutional inequities favoring the western and southern states, met in convention in Hartford, Connecticut in 1814–1815. Connecticut governor Roger Griswold directly challenged the federal government by refusing to surrender the state militia to federal authority. The case reached the Supreme Court, which affirmed the authority of the president to requisition troops from the states. The most radical element involved with the Convention was known as the Essex Junto. It took an extreme position that included favoring a separate peace with Great Britain. The demands, reduced by moderates to a call for the resignation of President James Madison and a list of grievances, were delivered by a delegation to Washington, D.C., in time for the delegates to see the celebrations of the American victory in the Battle of New Orleans (1815). Retreating in humiliation, the Federalists would never recover as a party. The foreshadowing of the nullification crisis at the end of the 1820s and the secession crisis that would split the Union between 1860 and 1861 underscored the ways in which this initial project of creating a sense of nationalism in the American people was, at best, a limited success.

*See also Alien and Sedition Acts; Flags; Hartford Convention; Monuments and Memorials; Music: Patriotic and Political; National Symbols; Poetry; Whiskey Rebellion.*

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Allgor, Catherine. *Parlor Politics: In Which the Ladies of Washington Help Build a City and a Government*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000.
- Anderson, Benedict R. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Rev. ed. New York: Verso, 1991.
- Craven, Wesley Frank. *The Legend of the Founding Fathers*. New York: New York University Press, 1956.
- Kammen, Michael G. *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture*. New York: Knopf, 1991.
- Newman, Simon P. *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early Republic*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997.
- Onuf, Peter S. *Jefferson's Empire: The Language of American Nationhood*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000.
- Pasley, Jeffrey L. "The Tyranny of Printers": *Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001.
- Purcell, Sarah J. *Sealed with Blood: War, Sacrifice, and Memory in Revolutionary America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002.
- Travers, Len. *Celebrating the Fourth: Independence Day and the Rites of Nationalism in the Early Republic*. Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.
- Waldstreicher, David. *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
- Wood, Gordon S. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969.
- Zelinsky, Wilbur. *Nation into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.

Gretchen A. Adams

---

**NATIONAL REPUBLICAN PARTY** The National Republican Party flourished between 1827 and 1833, though it did not take that name until the last months of 1830. It originated from the coalition that elected John Quincy Adams president in February 1825, and supported his administration and his unsuccessful reelection bid in 1828. It led the opposition to Andrew Jackson's presidency after 1828 and ran Henry Clay as his main opponent in 1832. In the last forty years, historians have tended to deny that National Republicans constituted a real party, but in many states they created the organization and voter support that the Whig party used to oppose the Jacksonian Democrats after 1833.

**GENESIS**

The term *national republican* was often used after 1815 to delineate those Jeffersonian Republicans who wished to see an active federal government pursuing a positive economic policy. In particular, representatives of the farming majority in the middle Atlantic, border, and northwestern states advocated strengthening the home market and national self-sufficiency through federal appropriations to build roads and canals and through high protective tariffs to encourage domestic industry. Supporters of this American System divided in the 1824 presidential election between Henry Clay and Andrew Jackson. By contrast, Adams gained most of his support from the urge of New Englanders—whether living in the Northeast or in recently settled areas farther west—to secure a president who was not a southern slaveholder. Though New England was still associated with the traditional Atlantic economy, early in 1825 Adams privately committed himself to Clay's policy, attracted Clay's "national republican" supporters, and so won the critical House election of 9 February 1825.

Opposed from the start by the supporters of the disappointed candidates, who gradually rallied behind Jackson's cause, the administration advocated an ambitious program of internal improvements. Under Adams, Congress voted far more money for roads and canals than under all previous presidents put together, though the voting on particular measures often reflected regional as much as partisan support. Despite losing control of the House of Representatives after the midterm elections of 1826–1827, the administration forces pushed through the most protective tariff of the entire antebellum period in 1828, though only with the last-minute assistance of northern Jacksonians. Adams men could reasonably claim that their ranks in Congress had shown a degree of commitment to the American System far surpassing that of the sectionally divided Jacksonians.

In the presidential election of 1828, the Adams men demonstrated a party discipline and organization challenging that of the Jacksonians. From March 1827 a small central committee in Washington organized the interchange of information, raised money to finance the press campaign, and established a campaign paper in Washington titled *We The People*. In twelve states the Adams men used a state delegate convention to name their electoral ticket and legitimize a state management committee, and organized congressional elections along national party lines. They spread the mantle of popular approval over their People's Ticket, stressed the interests of "la-

boring men," and scurrilously damned Jackson for his bloodthirstiness and immorality. Their campaign successfully expanded the Adams-Clay votes of 1824 and 1826, but they were overwhelmed by a massive shift to Jackson among new voters in some critical northern states.

#### PARTY PERSISTENCE

Under Jackson, the disillusioned Adams men slowly transformed themselves into a major opposition party, as marked by their adoption of the title National Republican in 1830. They seized on the fact that while in 1828 Jackson had been portrayed in each state as supporting whatever policies were locally popular, once he was in power he revealed a pro-southern bias. The opposition rightly portrayed his Maysville Road Veto of 1830 as a betrayal of the American System and condemned his Indian Removal Act of 1830 as both an immoral refusal to maintain the United States' treaty obligations toward native peoples and a corrupt effort to expand the slave economy. When in 1832 he came into conflict with the U.S. Supreme Court and then vetoed the bill chartering the second Bank of the United States, his opponents severely criticized both his disregard for established constitutional principles and his irresponsible attack on the nation's prosperity.

By this point, however, National Republicans were suffering from a major cleavage in their ranks. A fervent crusade against Freemasonry had taken hold in New England-settled constituencies, and those most aroused began to demand the exclusion of all Masons from public office. Before 1829 this demand had been subordinated to the need to reelect Adams, but thereafter it divided his supporters. Some National Republicans were Masons; many more were suspicious of Freemasonry, but objected to political discrimination based on religious or private affiliations and opposed a crusade that distracted attention from national issues. As a result, the anti-Masons had to pursue their political objectives by forming a third party, which in many northern states became the bitter opponent of the National Republicans in state and local elections. Since the anti-Masons were in part objecting to the aristocratic advantages that Masons supposedly enjoyed in law and politics, the National Republicans inevitably became associated with elite privilege in a way that their broader record entirely repudiated.

This cleavage did not greatly weaken the National Republican campaign in the 1832 presidential election, simply because most anti-Masons who had opposed Jackson in 1828 were unwilling to assist his

reelection. Only in Massachusetts and Vermont, where the Jacksonians stood no chance of winning, did statewide anti-Masonic and National Republican tickets run against each other. In the three electorally powerful states of New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, the anti-Masons and the National Republicans agreed on a coalition: in return for a free run in the state elections without National Republican opposition, the anti-Masons agreed to support amalgamated electoral tickets that would vote in the electoral college for the candidate most likely to defeat Jackson.

Buoyed by these arrangements, the National Republicans in 1832 resorted once more to the machinery used in 1828, calling state and district nominating conventions. At the national level they organized the first national convention ever designed exclusively as a nominating device, which in December 1831 produced the first keynote address, the first nominating speech, and the first floor demonstration, all on behalf of Henry Clay. In May 1832 they generated the first formally issued party platform, which laid down the principles upon which the Whig Party would operate in the two decades after 1834. Their vigorous newspaper and broadside campaign, making innovative use of political cartoons, helped draw out a popular vote that correlated very closely with that they had received in 1828, but Jackson won even more heavily in the electoral college.

#### WEAKNESS

The failure of the National Republicans in both presidential campaigns resulted primarily from the fact that the anti-southern issues that gave them life restricted their reach. They appealed powerfully in twelve states stretching from Maine and Vermont to Maryland and Kentucky, always carrying at least seven of them and challenging closely in at least three others; together, these states elected 53 percent of U.S. Representatives and represented a clear majority in the electoral college. The party won its largest majorities in New England and regularly secured about half the vote in the large states of New York and Ohio, though not in Pennsylvania. The National Republicans also found extensive support in some parts of the South—in the border states, in sugar-growing Louisiana, and in Appalachia—but did disastrously in most of the older seaboard South, in the Cotton Kingdom, and on the farthest frontiers of Missouri and Illinois. This exclusion from much of the South explains why they found national success so elusive: the Jacksonians had so many more safe congressional seats and so many assured electoral college votes

that the National Republicans had to win virtually all the marginal constituencies while the Jacksonian Democrats needed only a few for national victory.

After 1832 it became clear that the name "National Republican" was a major liability, even as Jackson's renewed attack on the national bank in September 1833 brought on a crisis that emphasized the urgency of strengthening the anti-Jacksonian opposition. Anti-Masonry was already losing its force as the number of Masonic lodges declined, but political anti-Masons saw National Republicans as their major opponents in state contests, despite their common stance on national issues. Similarly the appearance of an opposition movement within the South in the wake of the nullification and bank crises created the opportunity for a genuinely national opposition party, but only if the National Republicans could shake off their identification with anti-southernism. Hence the name "Whig" became widely used in 1834 to describe all elements of opposition, but in the states where the anti-Jacksonians of the years 1827 to 1833 had been competitive, the new party used the organizational experience of its predecessor and called upon the same body of popular support. The Whig Party became the major national party opposing the Democrats for the next twenty years, but in twelve states its ideological identity and voter base can be traced back to at least 1828, under another name.

*See also Adams, John Quincy; Anti-Masons; Election of 1824; Election of 1828; Jackson, Andrew.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Chase, James S. *Emergence of the Presidential Nominating Convention, 1789–1832*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973.
- Howe, Daniel Walker. *The Political Culture of the American Whigs*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.
- Ratcliffe, Donald J. "Antimasonry and Partisanship in Greater New England, 1826–1836." *Journal of the Early Republic* 15 (1995): 199–239.
- . *The Politics of Long Division: The Birth of the Second Party System in Ohio, 1818–1828*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2000.
- Watson, Harry L. *Liberty and Power: The Politics of Jacksonian America*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1990.

Donald J. Ratcliffe

simply building the structures of government. A universe of images needed to be created both to represent the nation to the wider world as a sovereign entity and to promote the inculcation of nationalism among the populace. Devising symbols was a complicated and lengthy process. Formal symbols to represent the nation, including flags, seals, and the buildings that would house the government and its leaders, would arise from the efforts of charged committees and commissioned individuals. Building on old traditions from Europe and symbols of resistance during the decade leading up to the American Revolution, common popular use of such symbols as the liberty tree or liberty pole would also come to represent the nation and build unity as the Revolution progressed and the nation came into being.

#### MOTTO, SEAL, AND FLAG

On 4 July 1776 the Continental Congress charged a committee consisting of John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson to devise both a motto and a seal for the newly declared nation. The motto, approved during the 9 September 1776 meeting that also gave the United States of America its name, was "E Pluribus Unum," or "Out of Many One." The eagle, which became the central symbolic element in the Great Seal of the United States, emerged only after three committees spent six years attempting to distill a wide variety of ideas into one effective visual symbol. The eagle was incorporated in each of the designs. First as a detail representing Germans as one of the six primary immigrant groups to arrive in America, next as a small central figure among several in Philadelphia attorney William Barton's drawings, and finally as the centerpiece of the seal's design as described by Secretary of Congress Charles Thomson. Thomson's report combined elements from each of the committees. He specified that the centerpiece of the seal be a distinctly "American Eagle." Critical to this design was a large shield emblazoned with the colors of the flag across the breast of the eagle and standing without supporting figures. Thomson wrote in his report to Congress that he meant the arrangement to portray the United States as standing alone and relying only "on their own virtue." The eagle, which suited the predominance of classical motifs adorning buildings in the designs for the capitol because of its own associations with ancient Rome, symbolized both strength and vigilance. Congress approved the design on the same day it was presented, 20 June 1782. A flag to stand as a symbol for the nation both on and off the battlefield was perhaps the most immediate need. Here the desire to incorporate the idea of thirteen states united

---

**NATIONAL SYMBOLS** The creation of an independent nation in 1776 required much more than

in common cause resulted in a flag of thirteen red and white stripes to the right of a circle of white stars on a field of deep blue. This iconic ancestor of the present-day flag was adopted by Congress on 14 June 1777.

#### LOCAL INITIATIVES

In the immediate wake of the Declaration of Independence, the project of creating national sentiment was largely local and designed to rally the population to continue its resistance. The liberty tree or liberty pole, which originated during the Stamp Act protests of 1765, was reborn as a critical location for organizing resistance up and down the eastern seaboard. The importance of the liberty poles as a symbol was not lost on the British army, which cut them down almost as soon as they rose up. Holidays to replace those like the King's Birthday, which acted as a reminder of allegiances, also got their start in local Revolutionary festivities. Philadelphia chose 4 July 1777 to mark the first anniversary of independence and in 1783 Boston declared the day an official holiday. The creation of a holiday to mark the birth of the political nation served during the war as a rallying point for the development of a truly national sense of purpose. Following the war, the holiday marked national commemoration of the deeds of founding while retaining its political character in the mixing of contemporary politics in local celebrations.

#### PERSONIFYING AMERICA

Personification of the nation and of its ideals was a more complicated issue. America had long been represented in the Western world by Indian figures, often shown juxtaposed in the British press with the classical female figure Britannia and frequently used as ornamentation on such things as colonial seals, book endpapers, and maps. Portrayed as bare breasted and dressed in feathered skirt and headdress, the Indian was designed to project an "uncivilized" image in contrast to the "civilized" Britannia and was disliked by the former colonists. In its place, an American Revolutionary elite promoted allegorical classical symbols in order to incorporate the authority of ancient republics and desirable national virtues such as independence, strength, and unity into visual terms. Columbia, most commonly used to represent a female "America," made a bow to the discoverer of the New World. Americans preferred classical, or classically inspired figures like "Liberty" or "Columbia" as appropriate representations within which they could invest their own identity and which were deemed appropriate to take their place

with similar European figures. Columbia was chosen to pay homage to Christopher Columbus as the discoverer of America. In Columbus virtues of independence, individualism, and courage could be incorporated into a mythos and a history for a nation with only a dependent colonial past. The immediate post-Revolutionary decades saw writers like Joel Barlow in *The Vision of Columbus* use Columbus as a central figure. "Columbus," "Columbia," and "Columbian" appeared in the name of everything from colleges to towns, newspapers, and the proposed new federal district. By 1829, Washington Irving's romantic biography of the explorer as divinely guided and prevailing against the odds to discover America itself suited a burgeoning sense of American exceptionalism.

#### VERNACULAR SYMBOLS

The side-by-side development of those formal symbols of the nation and the rise of vernacular symbols fulfilled different cultural needs. Brother Jonathan, his progenitor Yankee Doodle, and his descendant Uncle Sam were used for everything from political commentary to sales advertising. They stood in variously for the average American (the "people") or the government itself. They evolved over time to express certain ideas about who Americans were. Yankee Doodle began his cultural life as a derisive term for colonists by British soldiers. Reclaimed in military victory during the war, he was gradually transformed into Brother Jonathan, a naïve, albeit full of common sense, representation of the new citizen in his new nation. During the War of 1812, Uncle Sam emerged from soldiers' jokes. Uncle Sam represented less the common man than the government itself—a sort of booster and nag regarding duty as the federal government consolidated its power institutionally and culturally. The symbols coexisted for varying periods of time within the newspapers and periodicals of their day.

The emergence of the United States of America came with a series of formal political actions: adopting the Declaration of Independence in 1776; fighting the Revolution; concluding the Treaty of Paris in 1783; and ratifying the Constitution in 1788. To make the principles underlying those actions manifest was critical to obtaining the domestic support necessary to defend the nation, first in war and later in the contentious peace that left competing factions all seeking to define the nation in their own terms. It was crucial to do the work of creating not only a nation but a people with affective bonds that linked far-flung Americans in a sense of interdependent union.

To the wider and more skeptical world, the assertion of sovereignty through the use of well-known symbolic motifs signaled that there was indeed "a new constellation" in the heavens as the Continental Congress formally proclaimed in approving the design of the national flag.

*See also Flags; Monuments and Memorials; Music: Patriotic and Political; "Star-Spangled Banner."*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bushman, Claudia L. *America Discovers Columbus: How an Italian Explorer Became an American Hero*. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1992.
- Kammen, Michael G. *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture*. New York: Knopf, 1991.
- Marling, Karal Ann. *George Washington Slept Here: Colonial Revivals and American Culture, 1876–1986*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- Morgan, Winifred. *An American Icon: Brother Jonathan and American Identity*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1988.
- Newman, Simon P. *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997.
- Olson, Lester C. *Emblems of American Community in the Revolutionary Era: A Study in Rhetorical Iconology*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991.
- Purcell, Sarah J. *Sealed with Blood: War, Sacrifice, and Memory in Revolutionary America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002.
- Rourke, Constance. *American Humor: A Study of the National Character*. Tallahassee: University Presses of Florida, 1986.
- Schlereth, Thomas J. "Columbia, Columbus, and Columbianism." *Journal of American History* 79 (1992): 937–968.
- Smith-Rosenberg, Carroll. "Dis-Covering the Subject of the 'Great Constitutional Discussion,' 1786–1789." *Journal of American History* 79 (1992): 841–873.
- Travers, Len. *Celebrating the Fourth: Independence Day and the Rites of Nationalism in the Early Republic*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.
- Waldstreicher, David. *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
- Zelinsky, Wilbur. *Nation into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.

Gretchen A. Adams

---

**NATIVE AMERICANS** See **American Indians**.

---

**NATIVISM** See **Anti-Catholicism; Immigration and Immigrants: Anti-Immigrant Sentiment/Nativism**.

---

**NATURAL DISASTERS** A number of major natural disasters struck during the late colonial and early national periods. The various impacts of these calamities reflected both the nature of the event and the particular social circumstances in which they occurred. Americans interpreted disasters as "acts of God," but the meaning attached to that idea shifted as educated elites increasingly argued that calamities arose from natural, rather than supernatural, processes. Sporadically, disaster victims received various forms of relief to ease suffering or mitigate losses.

#### EARTHQUAKES, HURRICANES

Earthquakes and hurricanes constituted the most terrifying disasters Americans experienced. Numerous earthquakes rattled the continent during this period, but the most significant occurred in 1755 and 1811–1812. On 18 November 1755 an earthquake shook residents from New England through the Chesapeake. Hundreds of chimneys in Boston collapsed, but there were no deaths and overall damage was minimal, especially compared to the great earthquake that had devastated Lisbon seventeen days earlier. Some viewed the different levels of destruction as a signal of God's favor for Protestant New England over Catholic Portugal, but others highlighted more mundane social factors: Boston's numerous flexible wooden buildings withstood the shocks better than the more rigid brick and stone structures common in Lisbon. A far stronger series of earthquakes struck in the winter of 1811 and 1812. Among the most powerful in American history, the New Madrid earthquakes (named for the nearby Mississippi River town) began in December 1811 and continued through March of the next year. Over 1,800 tremors shook an area of 956,250 square miles, ranging from Detroit to New Orleans to Charleston. Most were only minor, but three tremors, all likely measuring above 8.0 on the modern Richter scale, hit on 16 December 1811, 23 January 1812, and 7 February 1812. The earthquakes destroyed the town of

New Madrid and plunged more than 150,000 acres of forest into the Mississippi River. The force of the 7 February shock elevated the riverbed below New Madrid and temporarily reversed the river's current. At least eleven people died from the earthquakes; the total number of casualties is unknown and likely much higher. Although powerful, the tremors struck a sparsely settled region, limiting damage and losses.

Hurricanes struck more often and with greater impact. Dozens of hurricanes and tropical storms pounded the Atlantic coast during this period. Hurricanes were a distinctly American phenomenon—the word itself is derived from the Native American word *hurakan*. By the second half of the eighteenth century, the storms had become an accepted part of life, especially in the Lower South where they struck most frequently. South Carolina planters anticipated hurricanes each year; Henry Laurens warned business correspondents that "there is no depending upon our produce before the Hurricane Season and Harvest are fairly over" (Hamer, *The Papers of Henry Laurens*, p. 511). Storms routinely destroyed buildings, sank ships, and ruined cotton, tobacco, and rice crops, resulting in significant economic losses. Because of the complex infrastructure involved in production and their low-country locations, rice plantations were especially vulnerable to the storms. In addition to economic damage, it was common for hundreds of individuals to perish in major storms, including many African American slaves. Seventy slaves drowned on one sea-island estate during a storm in September 1804. More than three hundred died in South Carolina during a hurricane on 27 and 28 September 1822. In the wake of the disaster, many planters in the Santee Delta constructed hurricane towers (short circular buildings) to provide shelter for slaves on their coastal plantations. The storms also occasionally wrought havoc farther north. A major hurricane pummeled Long Island and New England on 23 September 1815, the worst storm in the region's history until the 1938 tempest. Another storm struck states from North Carolina through Massachusetts in early September 1821, flooding parts of New York City and blowing down church steeples throughout New England.

Other calamities at times threatened individuals and their livelihoods. An infestation of the Hessian fly and market forces that encouraged shipments out of the region combined to limit wheat supplies in 1788 while an unusually cold winter and spring (linked to volcanic eruptions in Iceland and Japan in 1783) delayed spring planting the next year. Panic

set in, exacerbated by eastern merchants who hoarded supplies hoping to profit from the increased demand. As a result, during the spring and summer of 1789 residents of several northern states, the St. Lawrence River Valley in Canada, and Native American villages faced shortages of provisions and hunger. Concern about food shortages also emerged in 1816, the "year without a summer." Frosts struck as far south as Virginia three times during June, July, and August. The unusually cold weather (again linked to earlier volcanic eruptions) and reoccurring periods of drought threatened crops from Vermont through South Carolina and dramatically drove up the price of flour and other provisions.

### INTERPRETATIONS

As they had done throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Americans spoke of natural disasters in providential language, as "acts of God," and local officials routinely called for days of fasting or thanksgiving in the wake of calamities to encourage reflection on sin and judgment. Providential interpretations of disasters remained common, especially among Evangelicals energized by the mid-century series of religious revivals known as the Great Awakening, who maintained the belief that disasters signaled divine displeasure. The fear generated by large-scale calamities pushed many terrified victims into churches during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Methodist churches in the western territories hardest struck by the New Madrid earthquakes experienced a 50 percent increase in membership between 1811 and 1812, compared to just a 1 percent increase among Methodist congregations in eastern states during the same period. Some Native Americans interpreted the earthquakes as a sign to join a pan-Indian alliance, led by the Shawnee chief Tecumseh, attempting to resist further white expansion into the West. The severe cold and drought of 1816 also brought forth proclamations to set aside days for fasting.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, however, arguments based on new scientific understandings of the universe and reflecting unease with the "enthusiasm" associated with the revivals challenged traditional providential interpretations. Although God remained the primary cause of all events and disasters continued to elicit calls for recognition of divine power, many educated elites, including some ministers, increasingly rejected the idea that disasters were supernatural events and argued instead that most arose from natural, or "secondary" causes. Hurricanes in particular lent themselves to such in-

terpretations. The frequency and seasonality of hurricanes and the common belief that various natural signs preceded them all suggested that the storms were part of the natural order rather than terrifying deviations from it. A sense of awe at the majesty of God's creation, rather than fear of his wrath, constituted the proper response to calamities. Indeed, some Americans argued optimistically that despite the devastation that accompanied them, hurricanes and earthquakes actually served the larger good. Harvard professor John Winthrop wrote in 1755 that more people benefited from earthquakes than suffered from them, although he offered few specifics. The southern naturalist Lionel Chalmers suggested in 1776 that hurricanes increased rainfall and purified the air, and that a lack of storms over an extended period was a "great misfortune" to residents (Chalmers, *An Account of the Weather and Diseases of South Carolina*, p. 11).

Despite such confident assertions of natural causation, the actual mechanisms at work in hurricanes and earthquakes remained a mystery. Some theories about earthquakes posited that underground fires or volcanoes were responsible for the tremors. Others suggested that electrical fluid was the prime cause. Not until the latter part of the nineteenth century did the modern science of seismology emerge. The causes of hurricanes, likewise, remained elusive, but by the late 1820s some understanding of the mechanics of the storms had developed. By the middle of the eighteenth century, Benjamin Franklin had ascertained that the movement of storms differed from the direction of their winds. In 1804 a Mississippi planter, William Dunbar, speculated that hurricanes were circular storms that revolved around a central vortex. Credit for this scientific advancement, however, usually goes to William Redfield, who provided evidence to support the theory by noting the different directions in which trees fell in various parts of Connecticut during a hurricane in 1821.

#### RELIEF

Some disaster relief existed to aid victims of calamities. Private and public efforts to raise money or supplies were most common in the wake of fires, but victims of other disasters also occasionally received assistance. The State of New York donated food to Native American tribes during the 1789 shortages. New York also purchased food to distribute among hungry settlers, although officials expected reimbursement and the amount of assistance paled compared to that offered by the British government to Canadian settlers. In 1815 the federal government

granted new land to victims of the New Madrid earthquakes whose property was destroyed in the disaster. Many, however, lost their claims to speculators. Congress earlier had appropriated \$50,000 to aid victims of an earthquake in Venezuela in 1812, but they did not appropriate any financial assistance for New Madrid victims. Direct financial assistance from the federal government remained minimal during the nineteenth century.

*See also Environment, Environmental History, and Nature; Nature, Attitudes Toward.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Chalmers, Lionel. *An Account of the Weather and Diseases of South Carolina*. London: Edward and Charles Dilly, 1776.
- Clarke, Charles. "Science, Reason, and an Angry God: The Literature of an Earthquake." *New England Quarterly* 38 (1965): 340–362.
- Errington, Sara. "Wonders and the Creation of Evangelical Culture in New England, 1720–1820." Ph.D. diss., Brown University, 2000.
- Hamer, Philip, ed. *The Papers of Henry Laurens: Vol. 3, 1759–1763*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1972.
- Landis, Michele. "'Let Me Next Time Be Tried by Fire': Disaster Relief and the Origins of the American Welfare State 1789–1874." *Northwestern University Law Review* 92 (1998): 967–1034.
- Ludlum, David. *Early American Hurricanes, 1492–1870*. Boston: American Meteorological Society, 1963.
- Murphy, Kathleen. "Prodigies and Portents: Providentialism in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake." *Maryland Historical Magazine* 97 (2002): 397–421.
- Penick, James L., Jr. *The New Madrid Earthquakes*. Rev. ed. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1981.
- Skeen, C. Edward. "'The Year without a Summer': A Historical View." *Journal of the Early Republic* 1 (1981): 51–67.
- Taylor, Alan. "'The Hungry Year': 1789 on the Northern Border of Revolutionary America." In *American Disasters*. Edited by Steven Biel. New York: New York University Press, 2001.
- Winthrop, John. *A Lecture on Earthquakes*. Boston: Edes and Gill, 1755.

Matthew Mulcahy

---

**NATURAL HISTORY** Natural history—encompassing a suite of subjects now considered distinct, including botany and zoology, paleontology, geology, mineralogy, and ethnography—was the most American of sciences during the early national period and the first in which American scientists other than

Benjamin Franklin attained international stature. It also served as a means for European Americans to conceptualize racial differences.

European gardeners and botanists were eager for specimens of the flora and fauna from exotic North America, and some American botanists exploited this opportunity for tidy profits from the wilderness. By the mid-eighteenth century, the Quaker botanists John Bartram (1699–1777) and his cousin Humphry Marshall (1722–1801) were scouring the colonies from Florida to New York for rare plants for use in agriculture, gardening, and science; were studying Indian uses of plants for new uses in medicine; and were using religious, commercial, and social networks to distribute plants and seeds abroad. Though initially viewed as little more than merchants, Bartram gained respect for his acuity in introducing and describing new species, and Marshall for employing the high science of Linnaean systematics (the Linnaean system of classification) in his *Arbustum Americanum* (1785), the first treatise on American trees written by an American. Indeed, for most practitioners in early national America, natural history was largely a utilitarian exercise, with taxonomy (rarely systematics) enjoying the greatest prestige but economic utility providing the impetus.

As a result of the influence of Bartram and Marshall, Philadelphia became a center of botanical interest and education. In 1789 the University of Pennsylvania appointed Benjamin Smith Barton (1766–1815) as professor of *materia medica* and later professor of botany, becoming the first American institution of higher learning to dedicate a position to the natural sciences. Barton's students and peers created an extensive network of researchers based on correspondence and exchange of specimens, and supported by the botanical gardens founded by David Hosack (1769–1835) in New York and André Michaux (1746–1802) in New Jersey and South Carolina, as well as by private collections such as William Hamilton's in Philadelphia. Natural history continued to attract Americans. According to many practitioners, natural history offered peculiar advantages over other sciences, requiring little in the way of complex apparatus or theoretical acuity. Moreover, Americans enjoyed a proximity to nature unavailable in settled Europe, and these scientists took the botanical description of America as a national project and point of national pride. Meriwether Lewis (1774–1809) and William Clark (1770–1838), naturalists as well as explorers, collected some of the most distinctly American plants of all, yet ironically and to the dismay of American botanists, the German

botanist Frederick Pursh (1774–1820) absconded with some of Lewis's specimens and published descriptions of them in London, scooping his American colleagues.

The wilderness exerted a formative, though not always positive, influence on the American character. Americans' daily lives brought them into contact with both American Indians and Africans—a situation made possible by slavery and continental conquest and providing a unique empirical basis from which to explore racial biology. Indeed, by the 1790s, race had become a central concern of American natural history. Benjamin Rush (1745–1813), Samuel Stanhope Smith (1750–1819), Charles Caldwell (1772–1853), and Samuel George Morton (1799–1851) systematically delineated how and why different racial types differed, and they used anatomy and behavior to order the races on a linear gradient of social and cultural "development." In the generations of natural historians extending from Rush to Morton, the center of gravity of scientific opinion shifted from viewing phenotypic differences as a product of the environment to viewing them as an innate and unalterable division marked in body, mind, and character.

*See also Botany; Environment, Environmental History, and Nature; Lewis and Clark Expedition; Medicine; Patent Medicines.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cronon, William, ed. *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1995.
- Gomez, Alicia M. "Making American Nature: Scientific Narratives of Origin and Order in Visual and Literary Conceptions of Race in the Early American Republic." Dissertation, Stanford University, 2000.
- Porter, Charlotte M. *The Eagle's Nest: Natural History and American Ideas, 1812–1842*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1982.
- Welch, Margaret. *The Book of Nature: Natural History in the United States, 1825–1875*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998.

Robert S. Cox

---

**NATURAL RIGHTS** Together with the companion ideas of the state of nature and the social compact, the idea of natural rights exerted great influence during the Revolutionary era and remained extremely potent in the years of the early Republic, and in somewhat modified form, it remains important even into the twenty-first century.

**PREVALENCE OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF RIGHTS**

The best-known example of a doctrine of rights is, of course, the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence, but it is impossible to read very far in other documents and writings of the new nation without finding similar invocations of the philosophy of natural rights and the social contract. Thus Samuel Adams in his 1772 draft of "The Rights of the Colonists" begins with "The Natural Rights of the Colonists as Men." The 1774 Declaration and Resolves of the First Continental Congress declared in its first resolution the familiar triad of rights to "life, liberty and property"—rights said to be held under "the immutable laws of nature." Thomas Paine in his widely read pamphlet *Common Sense* (1776) appeals to "the equal rights of nature" to prove that hereditary monarchy cannot be a legitimate form of government. Some years later, during the French Revolution, Paine wrote another essay, *The Rights of Man*, devoted to defending the doctrine of natural rights against the critique leveled by Edmund Burke. The constitutions of the Revolutionary states contained clear references to natural-rights philosophy, with George Mason's draft of the Virginia Declaration of Rights of June 1776 being perhaps the most significant and most widely copied in the other states. Mason's version affirmed "that all men . . . have certain inherent natural rights . . . , among which are the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety." This list is obviously very close to the better known triad affirmed in Jefferson's Declaration of Independence: "that all men . . . are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Although the U.S. Constitution does not contain a comparable recitation of the philosophy of rights, the reason for that is not that the drafters of the Constitution no longer thought natural rights important, but that the Constitution was a union of preexisting states that had already committed themselves to theses of natural rights in their constitutions and bills of rights. When James Madison drew up the draft for the federal Bill of Rights, he proposed that there be "prefixed to the Constitution" a statement patterned after Mason's Virginia Declaration of Rights. This proposal was not accepted, only because it was decided to append the Bill of Rights as a series of amendments following the original constitutional text, rather than, as in many of the state constitutions, to begin with a statement of principle prefacing the Constitution.

**ON THE NATURE OF RIGHTS**

Although those who appealed to the philosophy of natural rights were otherwise as different from each other as Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson, George Mason and James Wilson, Thomas Paine and John Adams, there was a great deal of consensus on how to understand natural rights. All agreed that some rights were natural, that is to say, not derived from any human agreement, act, or law. The rights preceded law and established claims that could be raised against existing law and government, as the Americans did in their struggle against Britain. These rights were thus deemed inherent and inalienable. The rights inhered in human beings and thus did not come from an external source. Because the rights were inherent, they could not be alienated, that is, given up or taken away. These rights were also often said to come from God ("endowed by their creator . . ."). This phrase is not meant to deny that the rights are natural or inherent; rather, it means that the rights come to individuals with their creation, with their coming into being within a created order.

Natural rights were frequently said to derive from natural law. Nonetheless, Americans of the early national period were heirs of a conceptual evolution sponsored by the political philosophers who had developed the philosophy of rights—the Dutch philosopher Hugo Grotius and the English thinkers Thomas Hobbes and John Locke in particular—an evolution that had produced a firm theoretical distinction between a law and a right. Laws set down what must or must not be done. They are clearly directive. Rights, however, are permissive and discretionary. They establish a sphere of liberty and choice for the bearer of rights. Such rights were thus frequently spoken of as liberties. The right of free speech, to take an easy example, means that one has liberty to speak or not, as one chooses. A society organized around rights tends to be a liberal society, in the sense of leaving large areas of discretion for individuals to act as they choose.

**THE TABLE OF NATURAL RIGHTS**

There was also general agreement on the specific natural rights possessed by individuals, as evidenced by the similarity of lists of rights generated at the time. The first right cited in all these formulations was the right to life, the right to what is most one's own. Since life depends on the body, the right to life implies a right to bodily security, the right not to have one's body seized, invaded, controlled, or harmed by others.

The right to liberty extends the right to life. One not only possesses a right against others' interfering

with one's body; one also possesses a right to exercise one's bodily and mental faculties. Liberty is in part a means toward securing life, but more than that it is the way humans express their ability to appropriate their bodies and invest them with purpose. The right to liberty expresses the self-directed nature of being human. A corollary of this right is the responsibility individuals have for their actions and for the foreseeable consequences of those actions.

The right to property involves an extension from rights in the sphere of one's own life, body, and actions to rights in the external world. It is the legal expression of the ability of individuals to make the external their own, just as they can make their bodies their own. In the context of the Revolution and early Republic, the right to property was particularly important, as can be seen in the overwhelming demand for constitutional guarantees of representation for those subject to taxes. This constitutional demand derives support from the natural right to property, since the right of others (even kings) to take property without the consent of the property owners was understood to be a violation of the right to property.

These rights together amount to an affirmation of a kind of personal sovereignty, a right to control one's person, actions, and possessions in the service of one's broader purposes. When seen as an integrated system of immunities and controls, the specific rights sum to a comprehensive right to pursue happiness, to pursue a way of life chosen by the agent as a path to happiness. Of course, this right, like all rights, is not absolute; the rights of others and the common good serve as valid limitations on personal rights.

There was also great, if not universal, agreement on who were the bearers of these rights. As the Declaration of Independence says, the truths about rights apply to "all men." This term was understood almost universally to include women and individuals of other races. In the early years of the nation it was widely recognized that slavery was a violation of natural rights, and for this reason there was a substantial movement to abolish slavery. It was also recognized that the denial of voting rights to women, for example, did not imply that women lacked natural rights. The philosophy of rights distinguished natural from civil and political rights. The first set of rights belongs universally to all humans, but the other two sets do not necessarily belong to them. It was thought that relevant to the bestowal of the latter rights were considerations other than mere personhood or membership in the species, considerations like the organization of civil society.

### IMPLICATIONS OF RIGHTS

Natural rights were understood to have a number of important corollaries. The first is natural equality. Since all persons have the right to pursue happiness, to order their lives as they see fit, there can be no question that anyone possesses a natural right to rule over others. All are equal in that no one naturally has authority over another. This natural equality was also spoken of in the literature of the day as the state of nature, that is, as a state lacking any relations of legitimate authority. Authority must therefore derive from "the consent of the governed." Consent was understood to be equivalent to what was also called the social contract. Consent applied in the first instance to the formation of government and the origin of political authority, rather than to the ongoing conduct of politics. The requirement of consent derives from the primal rights, and consent to authority is given primarily to protect those rights. A further implication, then, is that if an authority does not secure but rather threatens rights, it has gone beyond its proper warrant and may be altered or abolished. From this idea flows the right of Revolution, which the colonists affirmed when they revolted.

The philosophy of rights and the ideas of a state of nature and a social contract together had a great impact on political thinking and acting in the new nation. The doctrine served as a general criterion of legitimacy, to be applied not only to the British Empire that Americans rebelled against but also to the new governments they were establishing. Under the tutelage of Thomas Paine, Americans quickly drew the conclusion that only a republican form of government could be legitimate. They concluded that all sovereign power originated in the people and must ultimately remain in the hands of the people (popular sovereignty). Beyond that, Americans perceived that many aspects of society required reordering, although they proceeded cautiously and unevenly in their efforts at reform. The American who perhaps gave the most serious thought to what would be required for a republic founded on natural rights was Thomas Jefferson, who set off to reform the laws of Virginia in a comprehensive way but was only partly successful. His proposals for revising the laws stands as the most thoroughgoing effort at effecting the implications of natural rights for the ordering of society. In his proposals he advocated abolishing slavery (because it violated natural rights), securing republican or popular government, providing basic public education for all and higher education for the most talented, allowing freedom of conscience, and abolishing feudal land laws. This list gives a brief indication of some of the grand implications that were

seen to follow for society at large from a philosophy of natural rights.

#### **FOUNDATIONS OF RIGHTS**

There was much less consensus on the basis of natural rights than on the rest of the philosophy of rights. There were a number of competing theories about the grounds of rights. Some theories derived natural rights from the moral sense; others from natural theology. Still others looked to self-ownership or human autonomy or the natural order of the passions. The disagreement over foundations became important later, but it was no impediment to agreeing on rights and their corollaries in the early years of the nation.

*See also Antislavery; Bill of Rights; Declaration of Independence; Jefferson, Thomas; Paine, Thomas; Property; Proslavery Thought; Radicalism in the Revolution; Slavery: Slavery and the Founding Generation; Women: Rights.*

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the State of Virginia*. New York: Norton, 1954.
- Locke, John. *Two Treatises of Government, and a Letter concerning Toleration*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2003.
- Paine, Thomas. *Rights of Man; Common Sense; and Other Political Writings*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Strauss, Leo. *Natural Right and History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953.
- Tierney, Brian. *The Idea of Natural Rights*. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1997.
- Tuck, Richard. *Natural Rights Theories: Their Origins and Development*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1979.
- Zuckert, Michael P. *Natural Rights and the New Republicanism*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- . *The Natural Rights Republic*. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996.

Michael P. Zuckert

---

**NATURE, ATTITUDES TOWARD** Nature serves a cultural function as both a window and a mirror: it allows us to look into a physical world that transcends human limitations, but it also reflects the values, assumptions, ambitions, and fears we bring to our perception of it. Significant changes in American attitudes toward nature between 1754 and 1829

reflected larger changes, such as those brought by population growth, improved transportation, land ordinances and agricultural development, shifting relationships with Native American peoples, and westward expansion and exploration. Changes in how Americans viewed nature served as a leading cause, as well as a leading effect, of the growth of the nation.

By the mid-eighteenth century the American view of nature was characterized by a duality that, arguably, still exists: on the one hand, Americans were proud that the wilderness of North America was vast, lovely, and rich; on the other, they prided themselves on their ability to subdue, control, and transform nature to suit their own economic and political goals. Although Americans of this period had in some ways moved beyond the adversarial relationship to nature that had characterized their predecessors, they were deeply committed to a concept of progress that simultaneously celebrated and destroyed the natural world. As Thomas Hallock notes in *From the Fallen Tree* (2003), descriptions of "republican landscapes" commonly reveal this tension, demonstrating that Americans of the period had to grapple with the "paradoxes of expansion" (pp. 5, 4). As Americans intensified their subjugation of the North American wilderness, so too did they heighten their praise of nature and, by extension, their faith in nature as the agent of a great national destiny.

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, three major cultural forces were especially important in changing American attitudes toward nature. First, older traditions of natural history were being displaced by a newly secularized and professionalized practice of scientific inquiry. Second, a rising tide of nationalism was claiming American nature as a cultural resource that would ensure the prospects of the young nation. Third, the European landscape aesthetics of the beautiful, sublime, and romantic took root in America, profoundly influencing the ways Americans understood and described nature on their side of the Atlantic.

#### **THE RISE OF SCIENCE**

For colonists living before the mid-eighteenth century, religion was the dominant cultural framework within which nature was understood. But whereas in 1721 the Puritan minister Cotton Mather (1663–1728) could argue that comets were created by God as a place to keep sinners for an eternity of punishment, by 1754 the influential Swedish botanist Linnaeus (1707–1778) had already published early editions of his *Systema Naturae* (1735)—a revolutionary

text that set forth a comprehensive system of taxonomic nomenclature and thus encouraged the professionalization of scientific practice. The rationalism at the heart of the American Enlightenment also helped push nature out of the shades of folk superstition and into the light of reason then being focused by the lens of science.

Before the rise of professionalized science in the mid-eighteenth century, misconceptions about American nature were surprisingly common. Because the complexities of bird migration were not understood, for example, many believed that swallows hibernated underwater or even, as some had it, on the moon. Some scientifically incorrect folk beliefs—such as the widely held view that snakes captured their prey by use of a paralyzing gaze—persisted into the late eighteenth century. As science professionalized, errors were corrected, new species discovered, known species better understood, and the mechanisms of migration, feeding, and breeding clarified. There were also substantial changes in how the mechanisms of the cosmos were understood. For example, while Professor John Winthrop (1714–1779) was strongly criticized for introducing the ungodly system of Newtonian science at Harvard College in the 1740s, in 1769 American astronomer David Rittenhouse (1732–1796) was celebrated for accurately recording the transit of Venus across the Sun using an instrument of his own design.

Although Meriwether Lewis (1774–1809) and William Clark (1770–1838) were not professional scientists, their approach to natural history reflected the new attitudes toward nature that characterized American thinking at the turn of the nineteenth century. In sending the Corps of Discovery on its transcontinental voyage in 1804, President Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) had instructed that “your observations are to be taken with great pains and accuracy,” and he prioritized the methodical collection of data concerning minerals, fossils, flora, fauna, and weather. Despite their lack of scientific training, Lewis and Clark were able to provide a treasure trove of new information, including descriptions of many previously unknown species such as the grizzly bear, bighorn sheep, coyote, and jackrabbit. The observations of plants, animals, and minerals they recorded ultimately made their journals a national epic—one that helped persuade Americans that nature would be at the core of their nation’s future.

#### NATURE'S NATION: AMERICAN NATIONALISM

Perhaps no cultural force was as powerful as nationalism in changing the way nature in America was

perceived during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Even after winning independence from England and establishing a new government, Americans remained insecure about their national identity, with many continuing to identify strongly with British culture into the nineteenth century. As it became increasingly clear that political sovereignty was necessary but not sufficient to inspire a unique cultural identity, Americans began to search their home landscape, history, and customs for material that was distinctively American and might therefore help unify the new nation. Americans soon realized that while their nascent arts and sciences could not compete with the long-established traditions of European culture, they did have one resource that Europe did not have and could not acquire: the vast wilderness of the American continent. Consequently, Americans began to see nature in their homeland—the powerful rivers, oceanic prairies, and lofty mountains—as something promising, rich, and uniquely American. They began to believe that national character was shaped by contact with wilderness and that national prospects could be measured by wilderness, and, paradoxically, the subjugation of it.

The assumption that nature would provide a foundation for a great culture was not, however, widely accepted—especially among Europeans, who had a stake in maintaining the inferiority of the upstart Americans. Instructive in this regard is a famous disagreement between the influential French naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (1707–1788), and Thomas Jefferson. Buffon asserted his “theory of degeneration,” which claimed that American plants and animals (including, by implication, humans) were no more than degenerated and degenerating versions of their European counterparts. Jefferson, who was keenly aware not only of the bias and inaccuracy of Buffon’s theory but also of its damaging implications for a budding American culture, explicitly challenged the theory in his book, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785). Here Jefferson used the tools of Enlightenment science to carefully document the impressive sizes of American animals and to compare them to their (almost invariably) smaller European counterparts. Rejecting Buffon’s implication that American prospects were weak because American nature was weak, Jefferson argued instead that the impressive diversity and size of American animals actually prophesied the bright future of the young country. America, he argued, would be a great nation long after the “wretched philosophy” that would have ranked its people among “the degeneracies of nature” was forgotten. Jeffer-

son's nationalist science was endorsed by Charles Willson Peale, the curator of the first American museum of natural history, who spoke from the leading edge of American natural philosophy when he claimed that "natural history is not only interesting to the individual, it ought to become a NATIONAL CONCERN, since it is a NATIONAL GOOD."

#### THE ROMANTIC WILDERNESS

Changes in the American attitude toward nature were also conditioned by evolving environmental aesthetics, including new ideas that entered popular culture through landscape painting, literature, and philosophy. Among these important new landscape aesthetics was Edmund Burke's 1756 distinction between the beautiful and the sublime. The beautiful, according to Burke, described emotions stirred by pastoral landscapes, while the sublime characterized the ennobling feeling of awe inspired by the grandeur of wilderness. Because America was the land of the mighty Mississippi and Niagara Falls, the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains, Americans were quick to embrace the aesthetic of the sublime as a means to valorize the wild expanses of their country. Following Burke's idea to its American conclusion, they further asserted that the American sublime—a mode of enthusiasm and inspiration specific to the grandeur of the American land—would also have an ennobling effect upon American character and civic institutions.

No eighteenth-century American writer expressed the beauty and sublimity of the American land more eloquently than did Quaker botanist William Bartram (1739–1823), whose *Travels* (1791) described his observations of nature during four years of solitary wandering in the American wilderness. Although trained as a naturalist, Bartram was a gifted writer whose perceptions of the natural world were filtered through the appreciative landscape aesthetics Burke helped introduce to America. "If we bestow but very little attention to the economy of the animal creation," wrote Bartram, "we shall find manifest examples of premeditation, perseverance, resolution, and consummate artifice." And the range of *Travels* is remarkable: Bartram captures both the delicate beauty of rare flowers and the sublime roar of bellowing alligators; he describes plants and animals using the precision of the scientist but animates his descriptions with the lyricism of the poet. Bartram prefigured important changes in the American attitude toward nature in that his approach to the natural world was based in science but inspired by a deep belief in the spiritual, ethical, and aesthetic power of nature.

That belief in the power of nature also signaled the ascendancy of romanticism, a literary and philosophical movement that began in Europe but had, by the turn of the nineteenth century, struck roots in American soil. Romanticism celebrated individualism, imagination, and nature, and thus complemented the new cultural values Americans embraced as the Jacksonian era dawned. The Romantic enthusiasm for wilderness also demonstrated how radically American attitudes toward nature had shifted during the past century. While they still worked with plow and saw to bring nature to the yoke, by 1829 Americans were creating a vibrant nationalist culture that identified nature as the locus of divinity for a new national religion—a secular faith that would dominate American cultural production up to the Civil War.

*See also Environment, Environmental History, and Nature; European Influences: Enlightenment Thought; Lewis and Clark Expedition; Natural History; Romanticism.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bartram, William. *Travels through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida . . .* New York: Penguin, 1996.
- Hallock, Thomas. *From the Fallen Tree: Frontier Narratives, Environmental Politics, and the Roots of a National Pastoral, 1749–1826*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the State of Virginia*. Edited by William Harwood Peden. New York: Norton, 1982.
- Lewis, Meriwether, and William Clark. *Journals of Lewis and Clark*. Edited by Frank Bergon. New York: Penguin, 1989.
- Peale, Charles Willson. "Introduction to a Course of Lectures on Natural History." In *Reading the Roots: American Nature Writing before Walden*. Edited by Michael P. Branch. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004.

Michael P. Branch

---

**NAVAL TECHNOLOGY** Technological developments during the latter half of the eighteenth century allowed sail-driven warships to reach their apogee. Ironically, within another three decades an invention would end the Age of Sail. In a time of tremendous innovation, billowing canvas would begin to give way to clouds of soot, naval mines would first be seeded, and Americans would take the first tentative steps toward destroying their enemies from below the waves.

### TECHNOLOGY AND SAILING WARSHIPS

By 1754, warship design seemed to have reached the limit of existing materials. If hulls were lengthened much beyond two hundred feet, they tended to hog (sag at each end), reducing the seaworthiness of a vessel or even breaking its keel. Hull width was a matter of function, with room to operate the iron cannon evenly spaced along each side of a warship to hurl broadsides at an enemy (with a "chaser" or two at bow and stern) and space to store the supplies and munitions for an extended voyage weighed against the need to keep a low width-to-length ratio for the sake of speed. Similarly, the thickness of the beams and planks armoring a vessel, the size of its cannon, and the weight of its top-hamper (mass at the top of the ship) had been optimized to prevent the capsizing of the ship. Though a myriad of mast and sail plans existed, they had become quite standardized within ship classes.

No matter the correctness of design, all warships suffered deterioration while at sea. Though strategy and tactics could somewhat compensate for the vagaries of wind, current, and tide, they could not stop sea life—barnacles and weeds—from attaching themselves to the bottom of a vessel in warmer waters. Within a few weeks, long strands of weed reduced the speed of a ship to the point of ineffectiveness. The only cure was to dock or careen the vessel and manually scrape the barnacles and weeds from the hull. Each careening took days from sailing and carried the risk of damaging the vessel as it rested on the sand, listing to port or starboard so the crew could reach its bottom. Aside from reducing a vessel's speed, many forms of sea life, especially the shipworm *Teredo navalis*, actually bore into the wood, thus reducing the overall life of a wooden vessel by years.

The continual battle against wind and sea also wore upon the human component of ships. Communicable diseases ripped through the crowded and less-than-hygienic decks. Scurvy, caused by a shortage of vitamin C, ravaged entire fleets, debilitating and killing sailors by the thousands. Water quickly turned green in wooden barrels, spreading the "bloody flux" among crews. During the French and Indian War (Seven Years' War in Europe) of 1754–1763, any admiral keeping ships at sea for more than a few weeks found losses to natural causes in both ships and men constantly mounting. The lessons of the French and Indian War would lead to technological change as surely as that war led directly to the American Revolution of 1775–1783.

The rebellion in thirteen of its North American colonies challenged the Royal Navy even before France, Spain, and Holland joined the conflict. With few secure naval bases (notably Halifax, New York, and Jamaica) in or near the colonies the hundreds of ships of the Royal Navy and its supply train quickly began to suffer from foul bottoms. In the early 1770s, the British Admiralty had ordered experiments with coppering, a process introduced in the civilian sector to increase the speed and lengthen the life of ship hulls. The process of coppering called for a layer of forty-eight-inch by twelve-to-fourteen-inch thin copper sheets to be overlapped and fastened to the bottom of the hull. The copper, poisonous to aquatic plants, slowed the growth of seaweed, while the thin metal protected the wood from shipworms. Though the process proved very expensive, its benefits outweighed the cost, and so the Admiralty ordered all new warships to be coppered and began refitting existing vessels. Because of the need to increase the production of copper sheets, the refitting did not approach completion until the end of the war. Though Britain's enemies quickly began to copy the new technology and though it would become standard in all navies after 1783, the Royal Navy gained a brief advantage over its enemies.

A second technological breakthrough, this time in armament, provided unexpected benefits to Britain. The Carron Iron Company of Falkirk, Scotland, designed a gun that the Admiralty adopted in 1779. The carronade was a third of the weight of similar cannon while firing the same size shot. It required a much smaller crew and less powder per round. Though its range was only two-thirds of the equivalent cannon, it could fire faster and with the same deadly effect at that range. These smaller "smashers," as the Royal Navy called them, found a deadly place on the upper decks of larger warships. More important, when placed on smaller warships, they not only reduced the number of crew needed for gunnery, but carried the broadside of a ship two to three times their size. Though the United States would adopt the carronade, it would not prove popular with other European nations.

With the addition of coppering and carronades, the Royal Navy managed to better than hold its own against the rebellious colonies and their European allies. In action after action from 1779 onward, logs and journals alluded to the British superiority in both maneuvering and gunnery, while small warships, coppered and armed with "smashers," ravaged American coastal traffic in the last year of the war. Though the United States won its freedom, the new

technology, coupled with advances in naval medicine (the use of citrus fruits to prevent scurvy, as well as improvements in shipboard hygiene and quarantine procedures) gave the Royal Navy the extended cruising time and the heavily armed small ships to institute year-round blockades of its enemies and to defeat France in wars that spanned the years from 1793 to 1815.

In 1794 the U.S. government saw the need to create a navy to protect its constantly expanding merchant marine as well as its right to remain neutral in the worldwide conflict then raging between Britain and France. It commissioned Joshua Humphreys (1751–1838) to design six forty-four-gun frigates for its navy. Four of these frigates—the *Philadelphia*, *Constitution*, *United States*, and *President*—would eventually be built, incorporating the last major design improvements of the late Age of Sail. Humphreys used extremely close framing as well as stress-bearing diagonal riders and thick, load-bearing planks to strengthen his ships. Between framing and oaken planks, some thirty inches of wood guarded their sides. The strength of the frame allowed the gangways that connected the quarter-deck to the forecastle on most frigates to be replaced by a spar deck capable of carrying the weight of additional cannon. In fact, though rated for forty-four cannon, these vessels often carried as many as fifty-six guns. The *Philadelphia* ran aground and was burned in 1803 during the first Barbary War and the *President* fell prey to a British squadron in the last days of the War of 1812, but the *Constitution* and the *United States* shocked the British people with a string of impressive victories against the Royal Navy, including its seemingly invincible frigates. The Royal Navy quickly copied Humphreys's design from the captured *United States* in order to build its own "superfrigates."

#### SUBMARINES AND MINES

The American David Bushnell (1742–1824), a graduate of Yale, invented a submersible vessel dubbed the *Turtle* in 1775. Driven by a hand crank connected to a simple propeller and featuring dials lit by phosphorescent witch moss, its single crewman used a periscope to guide the partially flooded craft to an enemy ship. Ideally, he would then use a hand drill to attach a torpedo (a keg of powder with a time fuse) to the bottom of the vessel. Sergeant Ezra Lee attempted to do just that on 7 September 1776, but the hull of his target proved too hard for the drill. (Some accounts blame this on the coppering, but the sixty-four-gun *Eagle* was probably not refitted by that date.) After

releasing the torpedo, which created consternation if not harm when it exploded one hour later, Lee made a successful escape. Subsequent missions of the submarine would also fail, but the concept had been firmly planted.

Robert Fulton (1765–1815), a leading inventor of the early American nation, designed and built a submersible in 1801. With a folding mast and sail to travel on the water and a propeller hand-cranked by its two-man crew while submerged, the cigar-shaped *Nautilus* is evocative of modern submersibles. Fulton demonstrated his vessel to both the British and the French navies. When they refused to purchase the machine, he abandoned the concept for more lucrative pursuits.

During the War of 1812, Fulton designed naval mines with both timed and contact fuses. Though the American government found the torpedoes to be barbaric, numerous local governments and private individuals thought otherwise and numbers of the mines appeared protecting local harbors or aimed at British warships. The Royal Navy called these devices "Fultons," and though none ever damaged a ship, they certainly increased the anxiety of British admirals.

#### THE COMING OF STEAM WARSHIPS

Fulton also designed the *Clermont*, the first American steamship, which opened operations on the Hudson River in 1807. Though Great Britain had developed and refined the steam engine, in 1814 the American government commissioned Fulton to build the world's first steam warship, the *Demologos*, in New York Harbor. Thirty thirty-two-pounders provided a powerful broadside, while wooden sides five feet thick and the placement of its vulnerable paddle wheel between two catamaran-style hulls protected the vessel. However, the *Demologos* proved chronically underpowered, and eventually lateen-rigged masts supplemented its steam engine. Completed shortly after the War of 1812 and renamed the *Fulton* in honor of its inventor, the warship had never fired a shot in anger when a powder explosion destroyed it in 1829.

As civilian use of steamships increased, only the first captain of the *Fulton*, veteran commander David Porter (1780–1843), seemed to realize the military potential of steam power. In 1822, he convinced the navy to allow him to purchase the one-hundred-ton Hudson River steamer *Sea Gull* for an anti-piracy squadron. Mounting three guns, its dual paddle wheels allowed the vessel to capture or destroy pirate craft with ease. The *Sea Gull* was the first steam war-

ship used in combat by a navy. On 30 March 1824, the *Sea Gull* justified its purchase by recapturing the schooner *Pacification*.

It would be the 1830s before American interest in steam warships revived. By that date, rapid advances in ship design, protection, ordnance, and propulsion made possible by the industrial revolution would make the changes of the years before 1830 seem tiny by comparison.

*See also Barbary Wars; Revolution: Naval War; Shipbuilding Industry; Steamboat; War of 1812.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Buel, Richard, Jr. *In Irons: Britain's Naval Supremacy and the American Revolutionary Economy*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998.
- Dudley, Wade G. *Splintering the Wooden Wall: The British Blockade of the United States, 1812–1815*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2003.
- Dudley, William S., ed. *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History*. Vol. 1. Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center, Department of the Navy, 1985.
- Gardiner, Robert, ed. *Navies and the American Revolution 1775–1783*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1996.
- Hagan, Kenneth J., ed. *In Peace and War: Interpretations of American Naval History, 1775–1984*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984.
- Keegan, John. *The Price of Admiralty: The Evolution of Naval Warfare*. New York: Viking, 1988.
- Lavery, Brian. *Nelson's Navy: The Ships, Men, and Organization, 1793–1815*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1994.
- Martin, Tyrone G. *A Most Fortunate Ship: A Narrative History of Old Ironsides*. Rev. ed. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1997.
- Tunstall, Brian, and Nicholas Tracy. *Naval Warfare in the Age of Sail: The Evolution of Fighting Tactics, 1650–1815*. London: Conway Maritime Press, 1990.

Wade G. Dudley

---

**NESHOBIA** *See Communitarian Movements and Utopian Communities.*

---

**NEWBURGH CONSPIRACY** One of the Revolutionary War's most dramatic scenes occurred at the Continental Army camp near Newburgh, New York, on 15 March 1783. Five days earlier, an anonymous

letter had urged officers to take bold action against the Continental Congress for its delay in fulfilling promises of pay and pensions. George Washington quickly forbade a meeting toward that end and instead called a general officers' meeting while implying that he would not attend. Just after it began, however, Washington appeared and requested the floor. Speaking from a slightly raised platform, he read a prepared statement that excoriated the anonymous author and reminded officers that the army's steadfastness and acknowledgment of congressional authority had earned it universal respect. Rather than abandon the country or turn against Congress in its own cause, it should rely on his and Congress's pledged faith. Apparently thinking his reception cool, he began to read from a congressman's letter but paused, then reached for eyeglasses few knew he needed. "Gentlemen," he remarked offhandedly, "I have grown gray in your service, and now I am going blind." The emotional pull of this famous, and perhaps spontaneous, aside dissolved the Newburgh Conspiracy.

The conspiracy's real extent and intent remain murky in the absence of much direct evidence, but the army's widely known discontent lends support to some dire suspicions. Continental soldiers had long-standing grievances over arrears of pay, and officers additionally feared for pensions that Congress had promised but for which it had never made provision. Given its dilatory record, officers were surely unhappy at Washington's constant admonitions to trust Congress. Worse, rumors circulated widely in early 1783 of an imminent peace treaty, which would remove any urgency in Congress about the officers' claims and perhaps fatally tempt state governments to ignore Congress's very weak condition, fiscal and otherwise. The country had survived war, but its ability to survive peace looked doubtful, a bitter thought for men who tended to believe that only stronger national government could preserve what their sacrifices had earned. These issues were widely discussed in a nearly idle winter camp; at the same time, Washington's close associate and artillery chief, Henry Knox, was drawing up plans for an association of demobilized officers as he talked up the related problems of pay, pensions, and governmental weakness. But the conspiracy coalesced around Horatio Gates, the victor at the Battle of Saratoga (1777), a senior general and sometime rival of Washington; Gates's aide, John Armstrong, was in fact the author of the anonymously circulated letter of March 10 and another circulated on March 12. Scorning further moderation, the inflammatory first letter proposed that the army refuse to disband and

either march on Congress for satisfaction or, if war continued, retreat to the wilderness and abandon the country to its fate. It was these notions that Washington targeted.

The conspiracy's usefulness to the intrigues of nationalists in Congress, however, raises suspicions that officers were either manipulated or instigated by players in a larger game. These nationalists, led by congressional finance chief Robert Morris, desperately wanted the states to agree to a dependable congressional revenue. That would enable Congress to function as an effective national government and pay its creditors, including officers; without it, Congress might only wither away and the nation face an uncertain future of squabbling among effectively independent states. But nationalists' hopes seemed to recede as a final peace came closer, and by late February they were also being blocked from pushing through a last-ditch compensation plan for the army. Morris and fellow nationalists looked for dramatic strokes to force reluctant hands. Approaches were made in February to Knox, who—though strongly nationalist—finally rebuffed apparent suggestions to use the army to face down Congress. At the same time, rumors of uncertain origin circulated in Philadelphia about the officers' desperate intentions and Morris, the indispensable linchpin of congressional finances, decided to heighten the pressure by announcing his resignation.

Contact seems to have been made between the Philadelphia nationalists and Gates at about this time, and the first Newburgh letter appeared within a few days. Earlier, however, Alexander Hamilton had written to Washington from Congress about rumored plotting among his officers. Washington was on the alert and ready with a response.

Officers and congressional nationalists shared many goals, but opinions vary whether the army plotters were merely pawns or seriously intended a coup, and it is unclear what they would, or could, have done had Washington not stepped in. Congress finally approved compensation shortly afterward, but the states still refused it a dependable revenue; other troops later menaced Congress directly but gained nothing. Nationalists, including many former Continental officers, acted through the Annapolis and Philadelphia Conventions within a few years to achieve the broader goal that had earlier linked Philadelphia and Newburgh.

*See also* **Continental Army; Continental Congresses; Washington, George.**

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Flexner, James Thomas. *George Washington in the American Revolution, 1775–1783*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1968.
- Kohn, Richard H. "The Inside History of the Newburgh Conspiracy: America and the Coup d'État." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 27 (1970): 187–220.
- Rakove, Jack N. *The Beginnings of National Politics: An Interpretive History of the Continental Congress*. New York: Knopf, 1979.

Marc L. Harris

---

**NEW ENGLAND** As one of the distinct cultural and political hearths of colonial settlement in British North America, New England played a decisive role in the shaping of the new American Republic. From the area's initial colonization through the early nineteenth century, New Englanders developed and maintained a strong regional identity that helped give rise to various nationalistic visions, but in many cases they also were a local counterpoint to such larger allegiances. Yet this idea—this sense of identity, of "New Englandness"—operated not only as a defining element of New Englanders' identification with the new American nation, but as a powerful part of their critique of the Republic when they perceived their place within it challenged and threatened. In a somewhat ironic demonstration of the dynamic and evolving nature of the new Republic's nationhood, New England's regional distinctiveness served first to bolster, but then often critically to examine the bonds of union in the early American Republic.

## COLONIAL ERA

New England was the second major region of English colonization in North America. Unlike the preceding Chesapeake colonies, the New England settlements were, socially and culturally, initially more stable and homogenous. Founded primarily as Puritan enclaves, these colonies possessed a greater collective identity and sense of purpose than most of their counterparts in England's American domain. This Puritan-inspired sense of mission was summed up most famously by John Winthrop, governor of Massachusetts Bay (founded 1630). Winthrop exhorted his fellow Puritan settlers that they must be "a City upon a Hill. The eyes of all people are upon us." The Puritan "errand into the wilderness," meant to provide a beacon of reform for the unregenerate mainstream of the Anglican Church, ultimately proved a failure, however. Subsequent colonies in the region were founded by dissenters from this ortho-

doxy, testimony to the increasing divergence of views within the larger Puritan colonial community.

Most significantly, the Puritan mission of Massachusetts Bay became a victim of the colony's success. The thin, rocky soil of New England was unsuitable for agriculture beyond the scale of small family farming. But the extensive lumber supplies, rich fisheries, and numerous harbors of the region provided a path to economic growth that looked seaward through such pursuits as shipbuilding, naval stores, whaling, fishing, and commerce. As Boston became a preeminent center of Atlantic trade, the colony's economy grew significantly. This in turn attracted new settlers, many of whom did not share in the original Puritan ethic. Economic growth begat new social and cultural priorities; by the 1660s, Puritan ministers were preaching jeremiads lamenting the increasing worldliness of their flocks, which ultimately threatened the success of the Puritan experiment. These lamentations proved prescient—by the end of the century, New England resembled the other English colonies much more closely in its more secular nature. Most symbolic of this transformation was the crown's reorganization of its American colonies in the wake of the Glorious Revolution of 1688–1689. The new royal charter of 1691 for the colony of Massachusetts combined the original Puritan colonies of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay into one unit and tied political participation to property ownership rather than membership in a Puritan congregation. Despite the failure of the reformist mission articulated by such figures as Winthrop, the Puritan identity continued to exert a profound influence on the cultural and social development of New England. Much of New England's regional identity in the Revolutionary and early national periods arose from the Puritan legacy.

#### **REVOLUTIONARY AND EARLY NATIONAL ERAS**

Bolstering this sense of regional importance was New England's primary role in the events and debates leading to the Revolutionary War and American independence. Boston emerged as the center of colonial resistance to British policies in the years following the Seven Years' War (1756–1763). Many of the prominent figures associated with this colonial resistance were New Englanders. James Otis (1725–1783) first articulated the colonists' constitutional arguments about taxation and representation. Samuel Adams (1722–1803) was the mastermind behind many of Boston's displays of resistance, as well as an early advocate of the Revolutionary Committees of Correspondence. His cousin, John Adams (1735–

1826), was a prominent leader in Boston's Sons of Liberty, as was the silversmith Paul Revere (1735–1818). The wealthy merchant John Hancock (1737–1793) lent wealth and social prominence to the movement, and he served as president of the Continental Congress when it ratified the Declaration of Independence. Many key events along the road to revolution occurred in Boston and elsewhere in New England. Boston was the site of the largest protests against the Stamp Act (1765), protests which set the pattern of popular participation and agitation that would become a hallmark of the era. The Boston Massacre (1770), the Boston Tea Party (1773), the Battles of Lexington and Concord (April 1775) and Bunker Hill (June 1775)—the coming of American independence seemed to be charted by events in Boston and its environs. No other region produced as many of the events and figures associated with the Revolutionary movement in the public imagination.

During the American Republic's first decades, New Englanders—like many other Americans—reckoned with exactly what their Revolution had wrought. Revolutionary ideals of republicanism and liberty eroded many of the norms that had characterized colonial society. Deferring to one's "bettters" was no longer accepted protocol, for example; urban centers like Boston saw groups such as merchants, laborers, and even blacks and women lay claim to participation and acceptance within the larger public sphere. Assertiveness by traditionally subordinate groups could turn threatening, and even violent, in the eyes of traditional elites. Shays's Rebellion in western Massachusetts (1786–1787) seemed to embody the uncertain and contested nature of the Revolutionary legacy. The institution of slavery quickly receded throughout the northern states for these same reasons. Leading the way was Massachusetts, whose supreme court (in the celebrated Quok Walker case) declared slavery unconstitutional in 1783. By the end of the decade, slavery had been abolished throughout New England. This "first emancipation" would be a primary reason for New England's becoming the hearth of the abolitionist movement in later years.

After the ratification of the Constitution (in 1788) New England became a consistent base of political support for the Federalist presidential administrations of George Washington (1789–1797) and John Adams (1797–1801). Federalist policy favored the interests of commerce and manufacturing, both of which played central roles in the region's economy. The opposition, led by Virginians Thomas Jefferson and James Madison and dubbed the Demo-

cratic Republicans, did not make much of an inroad into New England until the early 1800s. New England solidly supported native son John Adams in the controversial election of 1800, but Thomas Jefferson won the presidency. Many New Englanders ascribed the Federalist defeat to extra Republican votes gained from the slave population through the operation of the Constitution's "three-fifths" compromise. Without these "slave votes," New England Federalists argued, Jefferson would have lost. The resentment over these issues of slavery and sectional power formed an important part of the emerging New England critique of Democratic Republican rule.

#### **FROM CENTER TO PERIPHERY**

Though the Democratic Republicans would control the region's state governments by early 1804, Federalist opposition remained a significant force. New England Federalists decried what they saw as the Republicans' insensitivity to the commercial interests of their region. Key events during the presidencies of Jefferson (1801–1809) and Madison (1809–1817) only served to reinforce this belief. The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 doubled the nation's size, threatening to render New England an even smaller minority in the national government. Indeed, in the wake of the purchase, a group of New England congressmen—led by Massachusetts Senator Timothy Pickering—attempted to put into motion a plan whereby New York and the New England states would secede from the southern-dominated Union and form an independent "northern confederacy." The conspirators even cultivated Vice President Aaron Burr, a native New Yorker, as a gubernatorial candidate in an attempt to win the spring 1804 election in his home state. If Burr had won, they planned to begin the process of secession that would culminate in the confederacy desired by these New Englanders. Burr, however, lost the election (blaming his defeat on Alexander Hamilton, he issued a challenge which led to the notorious duel between Burr and his longtime political nemesis) and the Federalists suffered general reverses in the spring elections throughout New England. In the wake of these defeats, the plans of Pickering and his cohorts evaporated. However, despite the failure of this specific plan for a northern confederacy, anti-Republican and anti-southern sentiment in New England remained strong, awaiting only another threat to the region's interests to fan it into full flame.

Commercial disputes with Britain and France, eventually leading to the War of 1812, created resentment in New England, as various Republican re-

taliatory measures (embargo and commercial nonintercourse) decimated the New England economy and led many in the region to accuse the Republicans of a larger anti-commercial—and anti-New England—animus. The protests emanating from New England had taken on an increasingly sectional tone by this point, a significant contrast to earlier decades. During the War of 1812 itself, New England remained essentially neutral—financiers refused to lend the government necessary funds, governors withheld militias from federal service, and grassroots opposition to a highly unpopular war culminated in a special convention at Hartford, Connecticut, which opened in December 1814. The Hartford Convention, however, was not only the height but the end of New England's sectionalism. The convention demanded constitutional amendments to restrict southerners' political powers and protect what it saw as New England's interests. News of Andrew Jackson's smashing victory at New Orleans (January 1815) and the Treaty of Ghent (signed December 1814) effectively rendered the Hartford Convention moot. New England's Federalists were now seen as opponents to what had become, in the eyes of most Americans, a smashing national triumph, and thus they became tainted in the public mind with an aura of disloyalty and treason.

This remarkable transformation in New England's standing—from the heart to the fringes of the American mainstream—reflected not only the rapid growth of the Republic, but the sense of national consciousness that was evolving beyond regionally centered definitions of "American," like those of New England. New England possessed, throughout this period, a strong and coherent sense of identity. This identity, however, occupied a much different place and served much different purposes by the 1820s than it had during an earlier generation.

With the decline of the Federalists in the wake of the ill-fated Hartford Convention, New England's regional consciousness and self-definition was no longer tied to a specific partisan identity. Taking the place of political agendas was the emerging manufacturing sector of New England's economy, which had its beginnings around the turn of the century in the textile mills of the Rhode Island coast and the Merrimack River valley of Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire. Since the region was never ideally suited for farming on any scale beyond that of the individual family, there was a surplus of population in terms of what was required for farm work; this surplus became a ready-made labor force available for work in the quickly growing enterprises. As

manufacturing spread into other parts of the region, and other types of production, towns like Lowell and Lynn, Massachusetts, and Pawtucket, Rhode Island, became the earliest centers of the United States' emergent industrial economy. The rise and steady growth of New England's manufacturing economy would put the region on a much different path than other sections of the United States, and ultimately play a significant role in a later generation's sectional divisions and conflicts. As the factory operative and "Yankee trader" became increasingly representative cultural types in New England, a clear contrast emerged with the rural, agrarian South of yeomen farmers and slave owning planters. Ultimately, as the American Republic matured, the very real sense of a distinctive New England culture and identity—though it now came from different antecedents—continued to be an important factor in the Republic's collection of regional identities, just as it had been from the earliest days of American nationhood.

*See also Adams, John; Adams, John Quincy; Congregationalists; Connecticut; Democratic Republicans; Embargo; Federalist Party; Hartford Convention; Massachusetts; New Hampshire; Presidency, The; Rhode Island; Textiles Manufacturing; War of 1812.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bushman, Richard L. *From Puritan to Yankee: Character and the Social Order in Connecticut, 1690–1765*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967.
- Gross, Robert A. *The Minutemen and Their World*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1976.
- Heyrman, Christine Leigh. *Commerce and Culture: The Maritime Communities of Colonial Massachusetts, 1690–1750*. New York: Norton, 1984.
- Kerber, Linda K. *Federalists in Dissent: Imagery and Ideology in Jeffersonian America*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1970.
- Rutman, Darrett B. *Winthrop's Boston: Portrait of a Puritan Town, 1630–1649*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965.
- Sharp, James Roger. *American Politics in the Early Republic: The New Nation in Crisis*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993.
- Sheidley, Harlow W. *Sectional Nationalism: Massachusetts Conservative Leaders and the Transformation of America, 1815–1836*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998.
- Waller, George M., ed. *Puritanism in Early America*. 2nd ed. Lexington, Mass.: Heath, 1973.
- Young, Alfred F. *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1999.

Kevin M. Gannon

**NEW HAMPSHIRE** New Hampshire in 1750 was a tiny British colony with a population of about 28,000, almost all of English descent. More than half of the settlers lived on or near the seacoast, where they farmed, fished, or worked in the shipyards; most of the rest farmed and lumbered in the forests and river valleys of the interior. Great Britain valued the colony because it provided masts and ships for the Royal Navy. Portsmouth, the largest town and colonial capital, was already a cultural and commercial center with a newspaper, public library, and handsome Georgian-style homes, as well as its shipyards and fishing docks.

The government and the society of New Hampshire were dominated by a mercantile, landed aristocracy, headed by Governor Benning Wentworth, who used patronage and the veto power to control the assembly. Wide gaps separated the Wentworths and their friends at the top of society from the artisans and farmers in the middle, and the poor laborers and some four hundred blacks, one-half of them slaves, at the bottom. Only colonists with estates worth at least fifty pounds could vote, and the inhabitants of each town, regardless of their faith, were required to support an established church—in most cases Congregational. On the outside were perhaps five hundred Algonquian Indians, primarily Pennacooks and Abenakis, all that remained of native groups that had once numbered more than four thousand.

By the eve of the Revolution domestic migration had increased the population to 75,000, many of whom had grown restless under British rule. Late in 1774 a mob attacked the royal fort guarding Portsmouth, and in the summer of 1775 the rebels ousted Governor John Wentworth (Benning's nephew) and established an independent government.

Reforms followed the Revolution. The state constitution in 1784 included a lengthy bill of rights. Although property and religious qualifications were retained for officeholders, all adult males were given the right to vote. The constitution did not abolish slavery, but judges interpreted the opening words to mean that anyone born after 1783 was free. Years later the legislature passed the Toleration Act (1819), granting all Christian denominations the right to be supported by taxes.

New Hampshire was also moving toward market capitalism and democratic politics. Until 1805 there were only two banks in the state; then suddenly there were ten. To get goods to market, entrepreneurs dug canals around the falls of the Connecticut

**Total Population of New Hampshire**

Year	Total Population	Black Population	Slaves
1750	27,505	c.400	c.200
1770	62,396		
1790	141,885	788	157
1800	183,858		
1810	214,460		
1820	244,161		
1830	269,328	607	3

River and set up scores of road and bridge companies. By 1820, 14 percent of workers in New Hampshire were engaged in manufacturing, and a decade later the state had about one-tenth of all cotton spindles in the United States. Many of the workers in the cotton mills were young women, who were paid less than fifty cents a day for twelve hours of work and lived in company boardinghouses. When the cotton mill in Dover cut wages in 1828, more than six hundred women went on strike, but the strike failed.

Soon after New Hampshire ratified the United States Constitution (1788), party politics began to appear. The turnout for elections was high—81 percent in 1814 and 77 percent in 1828. Federalists controlled the state until 1805, when Republican John Langdon defeated perennial Federalist governor John Taylor Gilman. Although the Federalists regained power during the War of 1812, they were badly beaten in 1816. As soon as the Republicans took over, they passed a bill changing Dartmouth College, which was traditionally Federalist, into a state university. The college trustees, however, won back control of the institution, when Chief Justice John Marshall declared the state legislation unconstitutional (*Dartmouth College v. Woodward*, 1819). By this time the Federalist party had collapsed. In the factional struggle that followed, the newspaper editor Isaac Hill organized a state party that supported Andrew Jackson and won the state election of 1829. The New Hampshire Jacksonians played a major role in the rise of the national Democratic Party.

With its increased democracy, its new industrialization, and its involvement in national politics, New Hampshire was becoming an integral part of the new American nation.

*See also Constitutionalism: American Colonies; Constitutionalism: State Constitution Making; Democratic Republicans; Federalist Party; Industrial Revolution; Market Revolution; New England;*

**Religion: The Founders and Religion; Work: Women's Work.****BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Cole, Donald B. *Jacksonian Democracy in New Hampshire, 1800–1851*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970.
- Daniel, Jere R. *Experiment in Republicanism: New Hampshire Politics and the American Revolution, 1741–1794*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970.
- Turner, Lynn Warren. *The Ninth State: New Hampshire's Formative Years*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983.

*Donald B. Cole*

**NEW HARMONY** *See Communitarian Movements and Utopian Communities.*

**NEW JERSEY** New Jersey became a royal province in 1702 when the proprietorships of East Jersey and West Jersey were brought under the control of the English crown. The white population of the colony at the time of the merger was fifteen thousand inhabitants, and by 1750 it had quadrupled to roughly sixty thousand. Most of the population farmed in Hunterdon, Burlington, Monmouth, and Essex Counties along the widely traveled corridor connecting New York City and Philadelphia.

Throughout the colonial period New Jersey remained one of the most diverse colonies in British America. While the largest ethnic group in the colony remained the English, Dutch remnants of the colony of New Netherland were spread out across the New York City hinterland counties of Bergen and Somerset. Scots-Irish settled in large numbers in Morris County and Germans occupied the northwestern counties of Hunterdon and Sussex. The southern portion of the state was largely English Quaker with a smattering of Swedes, Germans, and non-Quaker English in the mix.

On the eve of the American Revolution, the diminishing numbers of Delaware (Lenni-Lenape) Indians were confined to the sparsely populated Pine Barren region where they were ministered to and educated by Quakers and Presbyterian missionaries such as John and David Brainerd. In 1775 New Jersey had ten thousand slaves, most of whom worked for masters in the northern counties. This made New

Jersey the second-largest slaveholding colony north of Maryland, trailing only New York in this category.

New Jersey became a state of the United States of America when its new constitution was put into practice officially on 17 July 1776. After over a decade of internal conflict in the colony between the royal governor William Franklin and the largely Patriotic assembly, the revolutionaries gained control of the colonial government, ousted Franklin from office in June 1776, threw their support behind the Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia, and began to frame a new constitution. Though New Jersey and its delegates did not take a leadership role in the Continental Congress, the state would play an important part in the Revolutionary War. Several major battles of the war were fought on New Jersey soil, including the much-celebrated conflicts at Monmouth, Princeton, and Trenton. During the war, the Continental Congress met in Princeton in 1783 and in Trenton the following year.

New Jersey established a government with a two-house legislature (known as the General Assembly) and invested most of the state's political power in this branch. The powers of the governor's office were severely limited by the framers because of fears, common in most former British colonies, that strong executive branches were prone to tyranny. It is noteworthy that the New Jersey Constitution was the only state constitution in the United States that offered limited suffrage to women. Single women (married women were represented by their husbands) who owned property were permitted to vote until this right was revoked by the state legislature in 1807.

Following the war New Jersey would play a pivotal role in the framing of the United States Constitution. The state was the first to appoint delegates to the Constitutional Convention in 1787 and was the third state to ratify the new Constitution. During the convention, William Paterson, a member of the New Jersey delegation, proposed what became known as the "New Jersey Plan" for the organization of the United States legislature. The plan, which was eventually rejected, gave each state in the Union equal representation in both houses of the federal Congress.

In 1790 the total population of New Jersey (white men and women and slaves) stood at 184,139. In 1800 the population was 211,149; in 1810 it was 245,562; in 1820, 277,575 persons resided in the state; and in 1830 the population had reached 320,823. The most concentrated area of pop-

ulation remained the central corridor connecting New York City and Philadelphia. New Jersey's population growth in this period occurred more through natural increase than through in-migration to the state, although this trend would change considerably later in the century.

Roughly 90 percent of New Jersey's population was of European ancestry. Most residents lived on medium-sized farms of less than two hundred acres. From the colonial period through the beginning of the nineteenth century, agriculture drove the New Jersey economy. New Jersey agriculture was quite diverse, but grain production and the rearing of livestock were most prevalent. New Jersey residents farmed for subsistence purposes, but the majority of landholders oriented their agricultural practices to meet the demands of markets in Europe and the West Indies.

In 1800 there were just over 12,000 slaves in New Jersey, but that number began to decline rapidly after the passage of the 1804 law that initiated the process of gradual emancipation in the state. By 1820 free blacks outnumbered slaves and by 1830 only 2,246 slaves resided in New Jersey. The Native American population had dwindled to only a few hundred by the turn of the nineteenth century.

*See also Constitutional Convention; Constitutionalism: State Constitution Making; Continental Congresses; Quakers; Trenton, Battle of.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Clemens, Paul G. E., and Peter O. Wacker. *Land Use in Early New Jersey: A Historical Geography*. Newark: New Jersey Historical Society, 1995.
- Gerlach, Larry R. *Prologue to Independence: New Jersey in the Coming of the American Revolution*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1976.
- McCormick, Richard P. *New Jersey: From Colony to State, 1609–1789*. Rev. ed. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1981.
- Pomfret, John E. *Colonial New Jersey: A History*. New York: Scribners, 1973.
- Wacker, Peter O. *Land and People: A Cultural Geography of Pre-industrial New Jersey Origins and Settlement Patterns*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1975.

John Fea

---

**NEW MADRID EARTHQUAKE** *See Natural Disasters.*

**NEW ORLEANS** New Orleans was founded in 1718 as the capital of the French colony of Louisiana, which embraced a territorial expanse of more than 500 million acres stretching from the Gulf of Mexico to the Great Lakes. The settlement's situation near the mouth of the Mississippi River lent itself to the effective defense of that great continental waterway against European interlopers, and its port linked the capital to the Caribbean economic hub. The French ruled Louisiana until 1763, when the colony was ceded to Spain in the treaty that ended the Seven Years' War (1756–1763). The colony's secret retrocession to France in 1800 was barely made public before the territory's sale to the United States in 1803. The port of New Orleans provided a crucial conduit for the products of the antebellum South's Cotton Kingdom at the same time it supported the expansion of agriculture in the Midwest.

#### ECONOMIC AND POPULATION GROWTH

For most of the colonial period, New Orleans was more frontier outpost than capital city, with a population of barely 5,000 in 1791. Its population of just over 8,000 in 1805 had more than doubled by 1810, when it reached 17,242 inhabitants. Its population in 1820 stood at 29,865, and in 1830 at 46,310.

The city's population growth was intimately linked to its economy, and neither the city nor the colony enjoyed economic success until late in the colonial period. Successive attempts to identify a profitable cash crop in the Lower Mississippi Valley failed, and inhabitants under both the French and Spanish regimes relied substantially on a frontier exchange economy with Indians fueled by deerskins and on grain cultivated by settlers in the Illinois country well into the 1780s. Two roughly simultaneous developments transformed the colony's capital. Post-Revolutionary expansion of American settlement into the trans-Appalachian West made the utilization of the Mississippi and the port of New Orleans an essential element in the young Republic's economic progress. Even before the Treaty of Paris of 1783 gave the United States a basis for claiming navigation rights on the Mississippi, prescient American entrepreneurs had immigrated to the incipient commercial center. Spanish objections to the Americans' presumptive navigation rights were settled with Pinckney's Treaty in 1795, which guaranteed full navigation rights and a period of tax-free right of deposit at the port. The opening of the port to American commerce coincided with the rise of southern Louisiana's sugar economy, which was indebted to the

outbreak of the Haitian Revolution in 1791. Sugar production on France's wealthiest possession was disrupted for more than a decade, allowing sugar planters in Louisiana to claw out a niche in a market that had long been dominated by the Caribbean colony. Louisiana's sugar industry benefited tangibly, as well, from the arrival of more than ten thousand Haitian refugees who immigrated to the city between 1791 and 1810, bringing both expertise and an experienced labor force of enslaved cane field workers. When Toussaint Louverture's black troops triumphed over Napoleon's final attempt to quash the Haitian Revolution in 1803, Louisiana's utility as a provisioning colony for the Caribbean sugar enterprise vanished and France offered the territory and its port for sale to the United States.

The Louisiana Purchase (1803) and the transfer of New Orleans to American hands, in large part the product of a triumphant slave revolt, ironically marked the emergence of the city as a center of both plantation wealth and the slave trade. During the colonial period, the city competed with limited success against more lucrative Caribbean destinations for shipments of newly enslaved Africans. An initial infusion of Africans imported into the city and its environs during the early French colonial period was followed by the near absence of shipments during the 1740s, 1750s, and 1760s. Senegambians, who were particularly well represented in the early wave of captives, are thought by some scholars to have encouraged the development of a distinctive Afro-Creole culture that influenced both black and white New Orleans even after the resumption of a significant transatlantic slave trade under the Spanish in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The impact of both Spain's attention to supplying the colony's labor force and the Haitian Revolution's incubation of Louisiana's sugar industry is evident in the growth of the city's enslaved population between 1790 and 1805, when it increased from 1,789 to 3,105. More than three thousand enslaved people arrived with a large contingent of Haitian refugees in 1809, providing a sudden and dramatic growth spurt in the slave population in and around the city. The burgeoning slave population, together with the coercive methods increasingly employed to raise productivity in the cane fields, fueled a revolt of some five hundred slaves just upriver from New Orleans in 1811.

#### FREE BLACKS

The Spanish colonial period contributed a notable feature to the composition of the city's population

through its manumission laws. In addition to providing a simple emancipation process that required only a notarized declaration, Spanish law guaranteed a slave's right to self-purchase, known as *coartación*. The result of these practices was the growth of a sizeable free black population, numbering 862 in 1791, and rising to 1,566 by 1805, when free people of color made up nearly one-fifth of the city's total population and almost one-third of its free population. During the colonial period, the practice of *méttisage* (interracial sexual relationships) produced a significant number of mixed-race individuals who came to constitute a significant proportion of the free black population. Free blacks did not enjoy either de facto or de jure equality with inhabitants of unmixed European descent in either the Spanish or the American periods. Many, however, exercised influence and leadership in some of the city's most prominent institutions. A free black militia was commissioned by the Spanish and survived into the American period, though in diminished form. Free black women, as well as enslaved women, assumed leadership in the religious education and conversion of people of African descent in the city's Catholic Church. A free woman of color, Henritte Delille, founded a Catholic order of religious sisters for women of African descent in the early 1830s.

#### A HETEROGENEOUS SLAVE COMMUNITY

The free black population constituted one of the city's major Francophone constituencies in the early decades of the nineteenth century, when free and enslaved Anglophones poured into the city. Congress's closing of the international slave trade in 1808 not only ended the influx of native Africans, but also stemmed the steady trickle of slaves from the French and Spanish Caribbean. On the other hand, New Orleans became a center of a burgeoning domestic slave trade that brought thousands of men, women, and children from the Upper South to the city. They were set apart from the city's Afro-Creole population not only by the English language, but also by the evangelical Protestant Christianity to which many had previously been converted. Yet another religious tradition, voodoo, was established and spread by the Haitian refugees who arrived between 1791 and 1810. The city's black population was perhaps the most heterogeneous in the country, differentiated into free and enslaved, Francophone and Anglophone, and divided among Protestant, Catholic, African, and voodoo religious traditions.

#### BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS

The Battle of New Orleans, won by troops under the leadership of Andrew Jackson on 8 January 1815, is often recognized as the event that sealed the city's claim to an American identity and a place in American national memory. An army of French and Spanish Creoles and free men of color joined troops from Kentucky and Tennessee to defeat a much larger British force, effecting a psychological confirmation of the statehood that had been conferred in 1812. The dramatic victory, despite being won after a treaty of peace had been signed in Europe, confirmed America's power at a crucial moment in the young Republic's history and made the reputation of Jackson, which ultimately won him the presidency in 1828.

*See also African Americans: Free Blacks in the South; Haitian Revolution; Louisiana; Louisiana Purchase; Mississippi River; New Orleans, Battle of; Slavery: Slave Insurrections.*

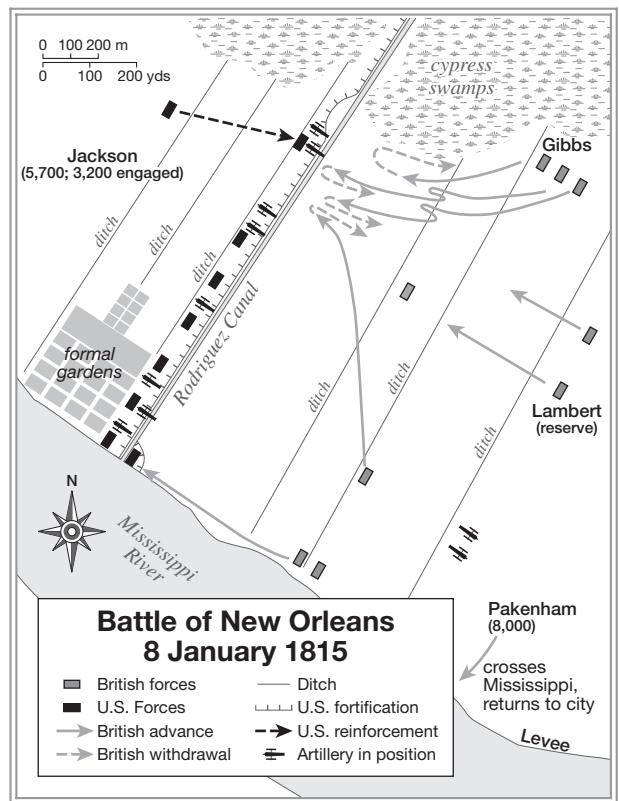
#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Hall, Gwendolyn Midlo. *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992.
- Hanger, Kimberly S. *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places: Free Black Society in Colonial New Orleans, 1769–1803*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997.
- Hirsch, Arnold R., and Joseph Logsdon, eds. *Creole New Orleans: Race and Americanization*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992.
- Ingersoll, Thomas N. *Mammon and Manon in Early New Orleans: The First Slave Society in the Deep South, 1718–1819*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999.

Emily Clark

---

**NEW ORLEANS, BATTLE OF** On the morning of 8 January 1815, a sea of red coats rushed toward the American lines defending New Orleans. Within a few short hours the extent of General Andrew Jackson's victory over the British was clear. Americans sustained a mere 6 casualties with an additional 7 wounded. The British troops under the command of Sir Edward Michael Pakenham suffered upwards of 2,500 deaths and injuries, with Pakenham among the dead. The victory was the greatest in the nation's brief history and sparked a rampant nationalism that helped to erase the rather pathetic American military record during the War of 1812. The battle also launched Andrew Jackson to overnight stardom. Known as a rough-and-tumble Indian fighter, the



general suddenly became the people's hero. Most historians agree that the gates of New Orleans led Jackson directly to the White House. His popularity was second only to George Washington's.

The actual "battle" of New Orleans was in reality the final assault in a larger campaign. The British had arrived secretly via a bayou leading from Lake Borgne and positioned themselves just miles below the city. Jackson engaged in a risky night attack on 23 December, and the two armies exchanged considerable cannon fire on New Year's Day. The 8 January battle was the last attempt to break through Jackson's line, which ran from the edge of the Mississippi River on the west to an impenetrable cypress swamp on the east. Pakenham knew that the advance guard had chosen a horrible logistical position with absolutely no possibility to engage in a flanking maneuver, but nevertheless attempted to carry the day through sheer force of numbers. Hurling against Jackson's ragtag army thousands of Britain's famed Peninsular veterans, the men who had defeated Napoleon, Pakenham hoped that a well-coordinated attack under the cover of a dense fog would carry his troops to victory. American cannon under the direction of Jean Lafitte's notorious pirate "banditti" proved the British general wrong.

The soldiers on both sides of the engagement were awestruck at the level of carnage. A largely militia army had soundly defeated Europe's greatest fighting force. Many Americans, including Jackson, viewed the victory as a sign of Providence and an acknowledgment that freemen fighting in defense of liberty were equal to the armies of monarchs and despots.

Perhaps the most ironic aspect of the battle is that it occurred after the Ghent peace negotiations had been signed on Christmas Eve 1814. The war did not officially end until the U.S. Senate and British Parliament ratified the agreement in February, however; thus, the battle did occur during the official war. In many respects the history of the War of 1812 would have been quite different had the New Orleans victory never occurred. The battle certainly allowed America to hold its head high even though the nation's capital had been burned in August 1814. Moreover, though historians disagree on this point, there is some argument to be made that had the British taken New Orleans they would have kept it. They had never been terribly pleased with the Louisiana Purchase and officers for an entire civil government were on board their warships.

*See also Ghent, Treaty of; Jackson, Andrew; War of 1812.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Pickles, Tim. *New Orleans 1815: Andrew Jackson Crushes the British*. Oxford: Osprey, 1993.
- Reilly, Robin. *The British at the Gates: The New Orleans Campaign in the War of 1812*. New York: Putnam, 1974.
- Remini, Robert V. *The Battle of New Orleans: Andrew Jackson and America's First Military Victory*. New York: Viking, 1999.

Matthew Warshauer

---

**NEW SPAIN** The viceroyalty of New Spain included all of the territory claimed by Spain in North America and the Caribbean from the conquest of the Aztec Empire in the 1520s until the final assertion of Mexican independence in 1821. Although never fully settled or controlled by Spain, this area included the entire modern nation of Mexico, and Central America north of what is now Panama. New Spain also encompassed Florida and much of the western portion of what became the United States, including California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas.

### COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION AND SOCIETY

In 1528 the creation of a high court, the *audiencia*, marked the first step in a long and ultimately incomplete effort to establish Spanish royal authority throughout the region, followed by the appointment of a viceroy in 1535 to oversee royal interests from the capital of Mexico City. Along with its southern counterpart, the viceroyalty of Peru, New Spain was subject to the legislation of the Council of the Indies, a body of from six to ten royal councilors in Seville overseeing the entirety of Spanish holdings in the Western Hemisphere. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Spanish administration of New Spain centered on the mining of silver, the defense of the colony from other European powers, and the evangelization and assimilation of Native American peoples into the Spanish colonial system.

In addition to the earlier, better-known waves of conquistadors and missionaries, New Spain attracted numerous colonists and bureaucrats eager to exploit the mineral wealth of the New World and the labor of its indigenous inhabitants, known in New Spain as *indios*. Early European conquistadors and settlers established the *encomienda* system, in which individual Spaniards received the right to collect labor or tribute or both from specific *indio* communities. In areas of intensive silver mining, such as Guanajuato and Zacatecas, a separate system of forced labor known as the *repartimiento* required indigenous communities to make a minimum number of laborers available for hire as miners.

Africans had been present in New Spain since the earliest expeditions of exploration and conquest, participating as both conquistadors and enslaved laborers and personal servants. Over the course of the colonial period, New Spanish elites brought in some 200,000 African slaves to supplement an indigenous labor force that had been drastically reduced through diseases like smallpox and yellow fever. While the majority of the enslaved African population in New Spain remained located near the Caribbean and Pacific coasts, individual Africans of both free and enslaved status spread throughout the viceroyalty, establishing themselves in larger cities and municipalities, serving in militias, settling among indigenous communities, and participating in the silver mining booms.

Over time, members of New Spanish society formed new ethnic identities as Spaniards intermarried with Native Americans and Africans. A subtle castelike system developed, with *peninsulares* (natives of Spain) at the top of the social hierarchy. Creoles (individuals of Spanish descent born in the

Americas) also formed part of the colonial elite, while mestizos (people of both Spanish and *indio* ancestry) and *castas* (people of a variety of mixed European, African, and indigenous ethnicities) tended to be excluded from many powerful positions. Although each separate racial classification carried specific privileges and restrictions, all groups had access to the courts. Social mobility for people of mixed ethnic ancestry was limited but possible, as wealth and occupation also played an important role in social status.

During the eighteenth century the population of New Spain grew as mining and agricultural production increased. With the exception of remote missions and military outposts in New Mexico, Spanish settlement of the northern frontier portions of New Spain had remained slow throughout the colonial period. These territories were home to numerous indigenous peoples who often resisted evangelization and "pacification" efforts, and forced labor systems like the *encomienda* and *repartimiento* were never successfully introduced there. Europeans made little effort to colonize these regions until the late seventeenth century, when French explorer and fur trader René-Robert Cavelier de LaSalle landed at Matagorda Bay in 1685. Although his colony was destroyed by disease and warfare with nearby indigenous groups, Spanish authorities from nearby Coahuila responded to the threat of French expansion into New Spain by sending their own expedition into Texas. In the early 1700s the French set up an outpost at Nacogdoches in eastern Texas, and the Spanish responded in kind with a new mission settlement of their own in San Antonio. New missions also appeared in California during this time.

### BOURBON REFORMS

During the second half of the eighteenth century, New Spain underwent a series of reforms implemented by the Bourbon dynasty. Spanish monarchs and their administrators attempted to overhaul the machinery of empire and revitalize royal control over the empire's American colonies. These Bourbon Reforms included the curtailment of ecclesiastical power, reapportionment of colonial territory, restructuring of colonial military forces, and new efforts to increase royal revenues.

Roman Catholic clergy had participated in the colonization of New Spain from the very beginning, with secular clergy (not members of a particular religious order) serving Spanish colonists in towns and cities and regular clergy establishing convents in settled urban areas and missions on the cultural frontier among newly evangelized indigenous communities.

By the mid-eighteenth century the church was increasingly coming into conflict with the interests of the crown, resulting in efforts on the part of the Bourbon monarchs to reduce the power and influence of the clergy, and especially of the regular ecclesiastical orders. The best-known royal action of this sort was the expulsion of the Jesuit order from Spanish territories in 1767. While this banishment was carried out swiftly and without much resistance in many areas of Spanish America, New Spain experienced a period of intense protest following the action.

In order to rule more efficiently their American empire, the Bourbons created a new jurisdictional system in the colonies. In 1776 King Charles III authorized the reorganization of the northern frontier region into a separate semiautonomous administrative district known as the Provincias Internas (interior provinces). Northern districts like Texas, New Mexico, and the Californias were all governed by a military commander based first in Arispe, Sonora, and later in Chihuahua. In 1786 Charles III divided the rest of New Spain into twelve intendancies (administrative districts governed by an intendant, or royal governor). These political reforms increased the visible presence of royal administrators in the everyday life of the inhabitants of New Spain and disrupted traditional social relations in many areas of the viceroyalty. Additionally, the fact that most of the officials appointed to oversee these many districts of colonial government were peninsular (born in Spain) rather than Creole led to increased resentment on the part of the colonial Creole elite.

The Bourbons also felt it necessary to restructure colonial militias as a safeguard against aggression from other European powers and internal social unrest. The crown's desire to cut expenses limited its ability to furnish peninsular units for protection and control of the colonies. Thus, permanent Creole regular army units, *ejércitos fijos*, were established, and colonial militias expanded to include free blacks, mulattos, Indians, and mestizos. These military reforms led to increased social status for both *castas* and Creoles in New Spain and eventually provided the basis for the armies of independence. This provided a new degree of social and ethnic mobility and a social base for future revolutionary leadership. In order to fund the formation of these new militias and pay for imperial expenses in Europe, the Bourbons intensified tax collection efforts. Ultimately, their reforms disrupted traditional social relations within the colonial system and contributed to favorable conditions for independence movements.

#### RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

After the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), Spain was forced to cede Florida to Britain but received the massive Louisiana Territory from France in return. In the interim, between 1763 and the start of the American Revolution, settlers from British colonies in North America began moving southward into Florida and westward into Louisiana. During this period Spain gave Euro-American merchants the right of deposit in New Orleans, allowing them to use the port for their trade goods. In 1779 Spain joined France in supporting the American Revolution against Britain, and the Treaty of Paris on 3 September 1783 returned Florida to the Spanish Empire. Spanish authorities, concerned about the growing influence of Euro-American traders in Louisiana, attempted to close the Lower Mississippi River valley to U.S. trade from 1784 to 1788 and imposed tariffs on American imports and exports through New Orleans from 1788 to 1795. After the United States and Spain signed the Treaty of San Lorenzo (Pinckney's Treaty) in 1795, the Spanish governor of West Florida required high duties from Americans shipping goods via the Mobile River. Euro-Americans living in the borderlands also resented Spain's failure to resolve disputed land claims in the area, and they accused Spanish authorities of instigating Indian attacks. Although these actions created resentment toward the Spanish among Euro-Americans, settlers and traders from the United States continued to move into Spanish-controlled territory during the last years of the eighteenth century.

With the increased Euro-American settlement in Spanish territory and the increased tensions resulting from Spanish trade and land policies, Euro-American interest in New Spain took on a new form after the turn of the nineteenth century. As a result of the low population density in the northern regions of New Spain, Spanish officials were unable to maintain a regular schedule of border patrols. Spain's North American holdings, particularly the Floridas, seemed to lack enough troops and loyal subjects to repel independent, privately led American invasions, or filibusters. A group of businessmen in New Orleans organized themselves into the Mexico Society with the aim of eventually annexing northern portions of New Spain to the United States. From 1804 to 1807 Aaron Burr (vice president from January 1802–March 1805), disgruntled with his lack of political success in the East, conspired to form a separate nation out of portions of northern New Spain and the newly acquired Louisiana Territory of the western United States. His attempt failed from lack of support and betrayal by a co-conspirator, General

James Wilkinson, but other filibustering expeditions soon followed.

#### MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE

After Napoleon invaded the Iberian Peninsula in 1808, a crisis of political legitimacy occurred throughout Spanish America. In 1810 a parish priest, Miguel Hidalgo, initiated the independence struggle in New Spain by raising a force of peasant soldiers to wrest control of the viceroyalty from peninsular Spaniards. Thousands of *indios*, *castas*, and even Creoles joined the insurrection, which experienced sporadic success during the subsequent decade. After initial large-scale battles including tens of thousands of rebels, the independence struggle settled into bitter guerrilla warfare in which individuals often changed their loyalties midstream. This chaotic political atmosphere attracted further filibustering expeditions from the United States and the Louisiana Territory as enterprising and idealistic individuals attempted to take advantage of Spain's predicament and capture Texas.

As Mexico's war for independence drew toward its close, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams signed the Transcontinental Treaty on 22 February 1819, fixing the boundary between the United States and New Spain. The treaty surrendered American claims to Texas but arranged for the United States to acquire Florida in 1821. On 24 February 1821 former royalist commander Agustín Iturbide, a Creole, joined forces with the Mexican insurgents and proclaimed the independent empire of Mexico. Iturbide's empire only lasted two years before succumbing to proponents of a republic, but 1821 marked the end of over three hundred years of Spanish dominion in North America. The new Mexican republic continued to claim jurisdiction over the former territory of New Spain, including Texas, but the border between the two new nations would remain porous for years to come.

*See also Latin American Revolutions, American Response to; Mexico; Religion: Spanish Borderlands; Spain; Spanish Borderlands; Spanish Empire; Transcontinental Treaty.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Archer, Christon I., ed. *The Birth of Modern Mexico, 1780–1824*. Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 2003.
- Burkholder, Mark A., and Lyman L. Johnson. *Colonial Latin America*. 5th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Chipman, Donald E. *Spanish Texas, 1519–1821*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992.

Gerhard, Peter. *The North Frontier of New Spain*. Rev. ed. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993.

Hamnett, Brian R. *Roots of Insurgency: Mexican Regions, 1750–1824*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Meyer, Michael C., and William L. Sherman. *The Course of Mexican History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Rodríguez O., Jaime E., ed. *Mexico in the Age of Democratic Revolutions, 1750–1850*. Boulder, Colo.: Rienner, 1994.

Tutino, John. *From Insurrection to Revolution: Social Bases of Agrarian Violence, 1750–1940*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986.

Weber, David J. *The Spanish Frontier in North America*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992.

Barry Matthew Robinson

---

**NEWSPAPERS** The local newspapers of the early American Republic are extremely unimpressive specimens to modern eyes. They are even less impressive than their equally simple but rather elegantly presented colonial forebears, such as Benjamin Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette*. Physically they were usually only four pages long; if the paper was successful, half or more of those pages were advertisements. There were no maps, no cartoons, usually no illustrations of any kind besides a few stereotyped woodcuts in the advertisements featuring crude drawings of ships, runaway slaves, or stud horses. (Political cartoons did exist, but only as separately published prints.) Sometimes a printer of unusual visual ambition procured a custom woodcut for his masthead, perhaps illustrating the name of the journal. The Pittsburgh *Tree of Liberty* featured a tree with some little faces at bottom, barely discernible to the naked eye, that were meant to represent the people but looked more like a pile of severed heads. More typical was a clichéd American eagle, or nothing at all.

#### NOT NECESSARILY THE NEWS: THE LIMITATIONS OF THE EARLY AMERICAN NEWSPAPER

There was not much in early American newspapers that a modern reader would recognize as news. Because a typical newspaper's entire staff consisted only of the printer in whose shop it was published along with his journeymen and apprentices—all of whom were too busy with ink and type and paper to do much but print—no active reporting or systematic news gathering was done. Particularly successful printers in the major towns might hire an editor or pay a writer, but it was much more common

for a printer to publish whatever he was handed by the local amateur literati (especially lawyers and other politicians), even if someone stuck it under his door, unsigned, in the middle of the night. Indeed, some political material was purposely delivered this way so that the printers could avoid prosecutions for seditious libel by asserting that they did not know the author and had not actually even read the libellous material, which they printed only to fill up space in the paper.

News was printed as it happened to come to the printer, ideally but by no means universally in the form of a letter that he or one of his neighbors received from a friend or traveling local who had seen or heard something. (This was the original, literal meaning of the term "correspondent" as applied to news reporting.) Sometimes the printer simply jotted down and printed bits of hearsay he picked up in the street or tavern. Thus the *Northampton Farmer* of Easton, Pennsylvania, "covered" a possible change in British foreign policy by clipping a paragraph from a Philadelphia newspaper reporting the opinions of one Mr. Lyman, a passenger on a ship that had just arrived from Boston. The great Lyman expected "a speedy restoration of good understanding" between Great Britain and the United States and was "incredulous as to the report of an approaching peace between Great Britain and France."

Most news and other editorial material in most early American newspapers was simply copied from other newspapers, especially from the "exchange papers" that printers could mail each other for free. The resulting content was the raw material of news as we know it today: not "stories" written by reporters, but speeches, government documents, political essays, and programs of recent community celebrations. Only occasionally, in the case of foreign events (on which the typical early American newspaper was far more informative than local or domestic happenings) would there be any effort to provide a summary or narrative of the news.

Printers' arrangements of their papers compounded the difficulty of reading them. Headlines in the modern sense were nonexistent, and the reports and documents were usually classed not according to their subject or importance, but according to where the material was found. Thus, if you were perusing a copy of the *Northampton Farmer*, you might look under the heading "Philadelphia" and find news of a naval battle in the Caribbean. Someone in New York had gotten a letter saying that the French and the British navies had fought a battle near the port of Santo Domingo in the Caribbean; but because the

Easton printer clipped the item out of a Philadelphia newspaper, there it was listed. In terms of placement, only two elements of newspaper design in the early Republic were generally consistent: general interest material (poetry, songs, stories, agricultural advice) went on the back page, and locally produced material, if any, appeared on the second or third page under a heading listing the town of publication. Otherwise items were placed at random or wherever convenient.

These shortcomings were noticed at the time. "I have . . . often been surprised that the most valuable communications in our papers should be in illegibly small type, while news from Leghorn, accounts of rare reptiles and thunderstorms are in long pica," wrote Connecticut politician and newspaper writer Abraham Bishop, noting that it was usually difficult for the reader "to form some idea, when he has closed one subject and begun on another." Even Thomas Jefferson, a tremendous supporter of the press who once opined that he would rather have newspapers without government than the reverse, was exasperated by the low quality of the information he found in the newspapers of his time. "I look with real commiseration on my fellow citizens," the president wrote, "who, reading newspapers, live and die in the belief that they have known something of what has been passing in the world." The dissemination of commercial information, through price lists, ship notices, and advertisements, was about the only thing the press did to general satisfaction. The rise of "penny press" newspapers, with large staffs of reporters gathering the racy news of the nineteenth-century city, did not even begin until the 1830s.

Before the 1830s, small-town weeklies outnumbered urban dailies 10 to 1 throughout the period. Almost all were sold chiefly by subscription, at a price of a few dollars per year. Circulations ranged from a few hundred to a few thousand. Newspaper bibliographer Clarence S. Brigham estimated that the average circulation was six hundred to seven hundred. The absolute peak was four thousand or so, claimed by the Boston *Columbian Centinel* and the *Albany Argus*, among very few others. Limitations on printing, papermaking, and transportation technology made higher figures nearly impossible to achieve. Someone still had to press every page of every copy.

#### "IMMENSE MORAL AND POLITICAL ENGINES"

Yet the physical and organizational limitations of early American newspapers are only part of the story, and not the most important part. Collectively,

seemingly pathetic little sheets like the *Northampton Farmer*, *Tree of Liberty*, and their ilk were considered an unstoppable force, especially in politics. "The newspapers are an overmatch for any government," growled one conservative Federalist after his candidate, John Adams, lost the election of 1800. The paradox was symbolized by the Troy (N.Y.) *Northern Budget*'s masthead illustration: a crudely rendered Benjamin Franklin holding a tiny newspaper labeled with the words, "This is the basis of liberty."

What did the *Northern Budget*'s woodcut artist mean? As the early Republic's main form of wide publicity, newspapers filled a tremendous gap in the constitutional scheme of republican government. The whole system failed if voters could not hold elected officials accountable for their performance at a later election. The need for some lines of communication between the people and the rulers led the framers of state constitutions and the federal Bill of Rights to give special constitutional protections to the press. Later legislation and court decisions gave newspapers additional special privileges, including discounted postage rates. Simply put, the media were granted a special place at the political table because their publicity allows democracy to function. The particular means by which this was accomplished was left open. In the early Republic, with the "objective," news-gathering commercial media far in the future, newspapers performed their democratic functions by acting as working parts of the emerging party system—a convergence that might be called "newspaper politics."

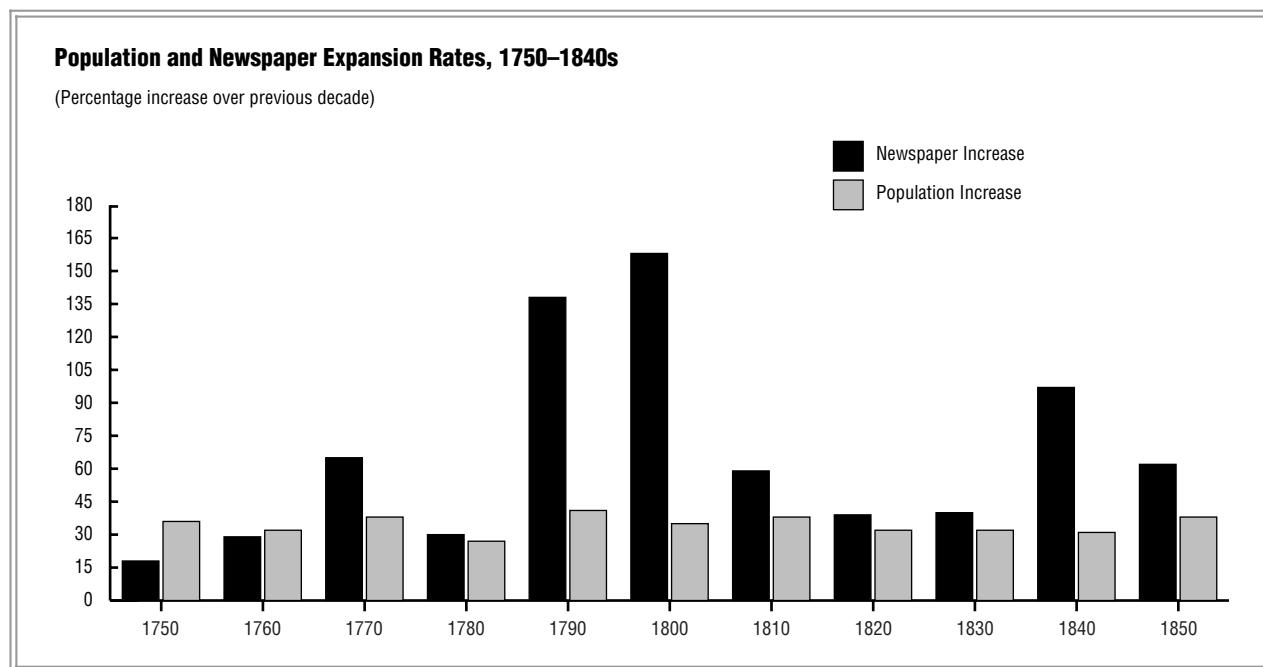
The Reverend Samuel Miller's *Brief Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century* (1803), a respected compendium of the century's achievements, observed that "political journals," as he headed his chapter on newspapers, had revolutionized their place in American society. Once "considered of small moment," Miller wrote, newspapers had become "immense moral and political engines" in which "the principles of government, the interests of nations, the spirit and tendency of public measures are all arraigned, tried, and decided." (Like many later press critics, Miller went on to bitterly attack the incompetence and immorality of the people who ran these all-powerful institutions.) As Miller saw it, newspapers had revolutionized the arts of political persuasion and organization. Formerly, "to sow the seeds of political discord, or to produce a spirit of union and co-operation through an extensive community, required time, patience, and a constant series of exertions." The advent of "the general circulation of Gazettes" had ushered in a new political era, in which "impressions could

be made on the public mind . . . with a celerity, and to an extent of which our ancestors had no conception." The effect of this had been to inculcate the habits and values of democratic citizenship in the populace: "to keep the public mind awake and active . . . confirm and extend the love of freedom . . . promote union of spirit and of action among the most distant members of an extended community."

What was the evidence for the powerfully democratizing and politicizing effects of newspapers? That the basic practices, institutions, and values of the world's first democracy came together during this period of the political newspaper. At the time Miller wrote, it was generally accepted that the press had been instrumental in fomenting the break between America and Great Britain, especially by persuading the public that the British ministry and army were out to persecute and enslave America. The *Federalist* and hundreds of other newspaper essay series had sold the public a new Constitution that few initially wanted. Newspapers had helped create an opposition political party, the Democratic Republicans (ancestors of today's Democrats), which brought down the Federalist supporters of George Washington, John Adams, and Alexander Hamilton in the world's first peaceful transfer of power. Across the ocean, the press had been a powerful player in the revolution that toppled the French monarchy, by many measures Europe's strongest. All those who wanted to build support for an idea or group concluded that newspapers were absolutely indispensable to their cause. Any serious political party, or faction within a party, or presidential candidate, wanted newspaper representation in as many places as possible, and had to be willing to spend money to get it. Following an old colonial practice that took on an increasingly partisan dimension in the early Republic, one method of financing new newspapers was steering profitable government printing contracts toward friendly printers willing to publish newspapers.

Under this sort of pressure for growth, the newspaper press became one of the most expansive institutions in American society. U.S. population growth was one of the wonders of the world in this time because of heavy immigration and high birth rates, but the growth of the press far outstripped it (see Figure 1).

Political crises and transformations coincided frequently with the establishment of large numbers of new newspapers, with the pace of newspaper creation spiking in such periods as the Revolution, the election of 1800, and the political crisis leading up to

**FIGURE 1**

#### Newspaper Growth Outstrips Population Growth

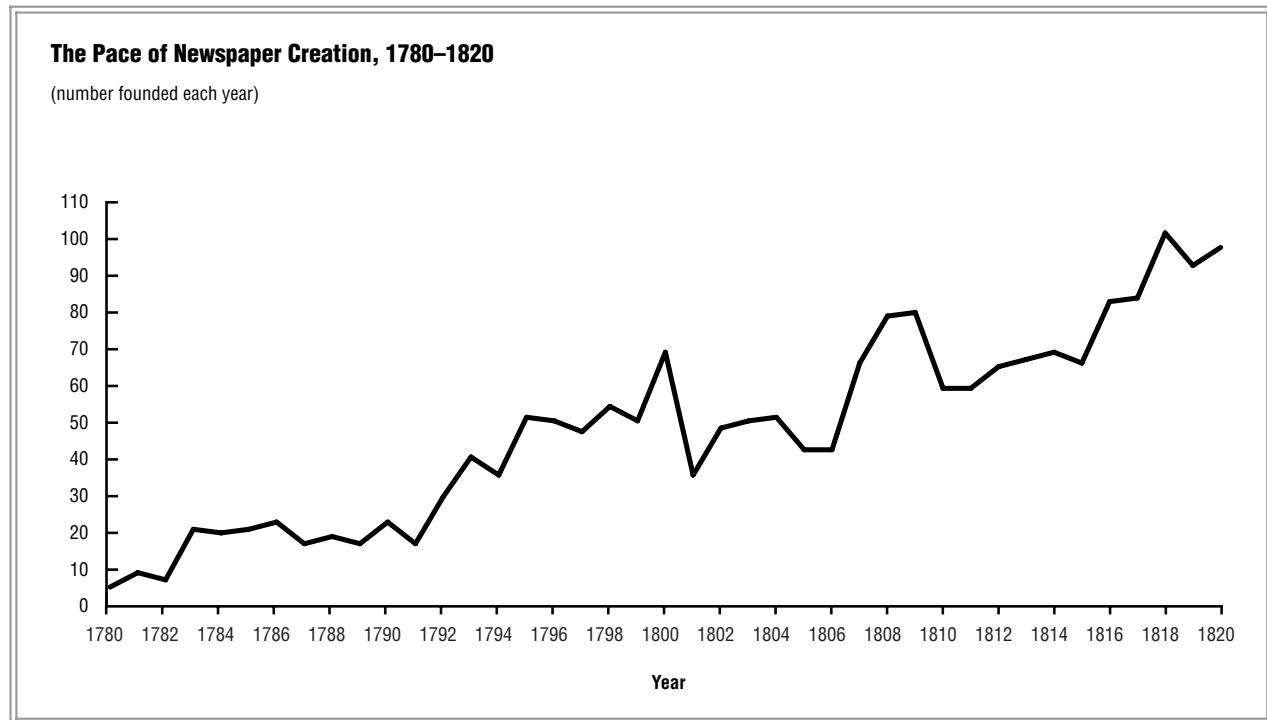
the War of 1812, when the defeated Federalists enjoyed a comeback across the northern states (see Figure 2). Similarly the rates of expansion shown in Figure 1 were greatest in decades of political upheaval, especially the 1780s, 1790s, and 1830s.

Obviously multiple factors were involved in the expansion of the American press. Population movements carried the press west over the Appalachians during this period and spread it across the interior. At the same time, the newspaper press of the early Republic was highly diversified, with many purely commercial newspapers and around one hundred religious journals by the 1830s. There were also a significant number of newspapers that served particular ethnic communities, such as the extensive German-language press, and beginning in the late 1820s, newspapers published by and for African Americans (*Freedom's Journal*, 1827) and the Cherokee nation (*Cherokee Phoenix*, 1828). Yet it was clearly politics in its broadest sense—public, associational life—that drove much of the press's expansion in this period. Even the religious and ethnic publications often had clear political orientations, like the *Readinger Adler* of Reading, Pennsylvania, whose editor was whipped by Federalist soldiers for his fiery Democratic Republicanism.

#### CIRCULATION IN THE EXTREMITIES

Echoing the judgment of most other foreign and domestic observers, Samuel Miller concluded that the ubiquity of newspapers was one of the most distinctive features of the American scene. Never before, anywhere, was the number of newspapers “so great in proportion to the population of a country as at present in ours.” This was true in 1802, and the trend grew more pronounced afterward. As shown in Figure 3, in 1800 there were almost 4.5 newspapers per 100,000 citizens, and by 1840, more than 8. In other words, the equivalent of a city of 100,000 people, roughly the size of present-day Topeka, Kansas, would have had 4 to 8 newspapers in this period. These would have represented not the “general public” or the local business community, as do twenty-first century monopoly newspapers, but multiple points in the local political and social spectrum. The situation on the ground was actually a bit more polarized. New York City had thirteen newspapers in 1810, when its population was just under 100,000. Reading, Pennsylvania, and Trenton, New Jersey, with populations around 3,000 each, both had two papers, one Republican and one Federalist. So did even smaller places such as Augusta, Georgia, Annapolis, Maryland, and Worcester, Massachusetts.

The wide distribution of newspapers greatly enlarged the number of people, including many who

**FIGURE 2**

### Newspaper Creation

had never been part of the political class in any previous society, who could be informed about and participate intelligently in the political life of the community. The United States, Miller wrote, "has exhibited a spectacle . . . without parallel on the earth . . . not of the learned and the wealthy only, but of the great body of the people; even a large portion . . . of that class of the community which is destined to daily labour, having free and constant access to public prints, receiving regular information of every occurrence, attending to the course of political affairs, discussing public measures." Massive voter turnouts and foreign travelers' accounts of America testify to the accuracy of Miller's conclusions. Passing through the backwoods of Ohio, the Transylvanian bureaucrat and reformer Alexander Bölöni Farkas marveled as the stagecoach driver hurled out settlers' newspapers right and left as they passed remote cabins along the road. "No matter how poor a settler may be, nor how far in the wilderness he may be from the civilized world," Farkas wrote, "he will read a newspaper."

In hindsight, one may want to take such claims with a grain of salt. Newspapers could reach only literate citizens, who were most likely to be white and male, and only a tiny educated elite would have been

able to fully grasp everything they read. Many working families probably could not afford a yearly subscription to a newspaper in any case.

Yet there were many channels through which the press could breach these limits and reach a percentage of the population that was almost certainly higher than the overall levels of newspaper readership in the twenty-first century. Newspapers were kept on hand in many public gathering places, especially taverns, coffeehouses, and hotels, where they were often read aloud or in groups. Neighbors often shared newspapers with each other, or even subscribed jointly. Information and ideas contained in newspapers moved by word of mouth, and passed hand to hand in clippings and letters. In a time when most people still conducted most of their daily affairs through face-to-face exchanges, even a few newspaper subscribers were enough to spread the word to entire neighborhoods. Even if one assumes that most early Americans would have been unable or unwilling to read the lengthy political essays and documents that dominated the political journals of this period, there were multiple paths that political arguments could take, many of them following what communication scholars call the two-step flow of political communication.

**FIGURE 3**

Newspapers Per 100,000 Population, 1730–1850	
Year	Newspapers
1730	1.07
1740	1.35
1750	1.16
1760	1.12
1770	1.36
1780	1.40
1790	2.34
1800	4.43
1810	5.12
1820	5.31
1830	5.56
1840	8.23
1850	9.93

Although the leading “penny press” dailies that appeared after 1830 far outstripped the newspapers of the early Republic in terms of individual circulations, this may reflect as much a concentration of readership as an expansion. Decentralization was one of the hallmarks and great strengths of the early Republic’s press system. Whether serving a political party, religious denomination, a social movement, or simply sharing commercial information, early American newspapers operated as networks of small, independent outlets tailored to the locality, beliefs, and interests of their readers. As a collectivity, early American newspapers outstripped their individual limitations and produced a vast amount of original material. Moreover, the networks showed an impressive ability to move information and arguments around the country.

During the election of 1800, Federalists and other observers were amazed at how quickly and effectively themes, arguments, information, and particular articles moved back and forth across the Democratic Republican press network. The Irish radical refugee William Duane’s Philadelphia *Aurora* was the clear ideological leader and chief source of information for the others on politics at the seat of government. It seems to have taken from two weeks to a month for *Aurora* material to get over the mountains to the network’s extremities in Kentucky and western Pennsylvania, but only a few days to a week to get as far away from Philadelphia as Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and Raleigh, North Carolina. This

was blinding speed by eighteenth-century standards. Duane’s newspaper was “the heart, the seat of life” of the Democratic Republican Party, argued the Federalist *Connecticut Courant*. “From thence the blood has flowed to the extremities by a sure and rapid circulation. . . . It is astonishing to remark, with how much punctuality and rapidity, the same opinion has been circulated and repeated by these people from high to low.”

The *Courant*’s metaphor was a little misleading. To borrow a computer term, the newspaper networks were “peer-to-peer” networks in which all the individual units supplied each other with material rather than taking it from a single, central source. Lateral or upstream exchanges (between hinterland newspapers, or from the hinterlands to the major cities) were just as common as items flowing down from the centers of government and culture. One of the most damaging scandals of the 1800 campaign was the saga of Republican congressman Matthew Lyon’s imprisonment (because of the Sedition Act) in a “loathsome dungeon,” a story that emanated from the press in Vermont. The *Aurora* and other big-city journals like the Boston *Independent Chronicle* and the New York *American Citizen* were the most heavily copied in the Republican press, but these journals copied just as much from each other and from smaller journals in the countryside.

Although social scientists tend to regard centralized command and control as indicators of a strong political organization, partisan newspaper networks thrived and drew some of their effectiveness from their very decentralization. The party’s general message could be filtered or adjusted to suit local predilections. Southern Democratic Republican newspapers tried to justify and refine the states’ rights principles of the 1798 Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions, for instance, while northern Republican journals largely avoided the topic. Perhaps responding to Federalist rhetoric about being ruled by Virginia slave lords, northern Republican editors openly expressed their antipathy to slavery despite their leader Thomas Jefferson’s undeniable Virginia slave-lord status.

The major exception to this decentralization was the rise of so-called presidential “organs” in the new national capital of Washington, D.C. Beginning with Thomas Jefferson’s *National Intelligencer* in 1800, there was always a newspaper in the capital that was regarded as the voice of the administration, essentially performing the functions of the modern White House press secretary and a major national newspaper at the same time. The practice began simply, with Jefferson inviting young Philadelphia printer Samuel

Harrison Smith to start a newspaper in Washington, as a counterbalance to the cantankerous *Aurora*. From there, the presidential organ mushroomed into a prominent but much-resented national institution. While these spokesspapers were not public entities or officially connected to the presidency, they originated most official statements and documents the president wished to release. In exchange, the publishers received the lion's share of the major government printing contracts. Thanks to the efforts of longtime *National Intelligencer* proprietors Joseph Gales Jr. and William Seaton, the presidential organ also usually had the franchise for compiling and publishing the records of proceedings in Congress. The *Intelligencer* held its position until 1829, when newly elected president Andrew Jackson, who had been criticized in the paper for years, anointed Duff Green's *United States Telegraph* as his favorite. From there the presidential organ became a political football that changed hands if a new faction or administration came to power. In a White House version of the sort of factional struggle over newspapers that went on everywhere in the political culture of the early Republic, the rivalry between Jackson and his vice president, John C. Calhoun, took out the Calhoun-friendly *Telegraph* as well. Francis Preston Blair was brought in from Kentucky to start the *Washington Globe* and quickly became one of the leaders of Jackson's "Kitchen Cabinet" of advisors. The presidential organ system lasted until scandals forced the creation of the Government Printing Office in 1860. "Newspaper politics" more generally lasted for the rest of the century, albeit with increasing rivalry from other models of publishing and politics.

*See also Antislavery; Aurora; Bill of Rights; Constitutionalism: State Constitution Making; Democratic Republicans; Election of 1800; Federalist Papers; Federalist Party; Freedom of the Press; Jackson, Andrew; Jefferson, Thomas; Magazines; Niles' Register; Politics: Political Pamphlets; Politics: Political Parties and the Press; Post Office; Press, The; Print Culture; Printers; Printing Technology; War of 1812.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alexander, John K. *The Selling of the Constitutional Convention: A History of News Coverage*. Madison, Wis.: Madison House, 1990.
- Ames, William E. *A History of the 'National Intelligencer'*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972.

- Baldasty, Gerald J. *The Commercialization of News in the Nineteenth Century*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992.
- Brigham, Clarence S. *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690–1820*. 2 vols. Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1947.
- . *Journals and Journeymen: A Contribution to the History of Early American Newspapers*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1950.
- Clark, Charles E. *The Public Prints: The Newspaper in Anglo-American Culture, 1665–1740*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Copeland, David A. *Colonial American Newspapers: Character and Content*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1997.
- Hamilton, Milton W. *The Country Printer: New York State, 1785–1830*. 2nd ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1964.
- Hench, John B. "The Newspaper in a Republic: Boston's 'Centinel' and 'Chronicle,' 1784–1801." Ph.D. diss., Clark University, 1979.
- Humphrey, Carol Sue. *The Press of the Young Republic, 1783–1833*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1996.
- John, Richard R. *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995.
- Lathem, Edward Connery. *Chronological Tables of American Newspapers, 1690–1820*. Barre, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society and Barre Publishers, 1972.
- Lee, Alfred McClung. *The Daily Newspaper in America: The Evolution of a Social Instrument*. New York: Macmillan, 1937.
- Leonard, Thomas C. *The Power of the Press: The Birth of American Political Reporting*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- . *News for All: America's Coming-of-Age with the Press*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Levy, Leonard W. *Emergence of a Free Press*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Miller, Samuel. *A Brief Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century*. 2 vols. New York: T. and J. Swords, 1803.
- Mott, Frank Luther. *American Journalism: A History, 1690–1960*. 3rd ed. New York: Macmillan, 1962.
- Nerone, John. "The Mythology of the Penny Press." *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 4 (1987): 376–422.
- Pasley, Jeffrey L. *"The Tyranny of Printers": Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001.
- Perdue, Theda, ed. *Cherokee Editor: The Writings of Elias Boudinot*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983.
- Schlesinger, Arthur M. *Prelude to Independence: The Newspaper War on Britain, 1764–1776*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1980.
- Schudson, Michael. *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers*. New York: Basic Books, 1978.
- Silver, Rollo G. *The American Printer, 1787–1825*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1967.

Sloan, William David. "The Early Party Press: The Newspaper Role in American Politics, 1788–1812." *Journalism History* 9 (1982): 18–24.

Smith, Culver H. *The Press, Politics, and Patronage: The American Government's Use of Newspapers, 1789–1875*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1977.

Stewart, Donald H. *The Opposition Press of the Federalist Period*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1969.

Jeffrey L. Pasley

---

**NEW YORK CITY** While the population of New York City at the beginning of the French and Indian War (1756–1763) was just under fourteen thousand, slightly trailing its two rival seaports, Boston and Philadelphia, it would not have been difficult to predict that this community would prosper. New York was fortunate to possess the best natural harbor of the colonies. Protected by the Verrazano Narrows, Manhattan Island offered sheltered docks along both the North (Hudson) River and the East River. It was centrally located among the colonies. Founded in the 1620s by the Dutch as New Amsterdam, the center of their North American trade, it had a unique heritage of commerce and cosmopolitanism that neither Pennsylvania nor Massachusetts could match. The English conquest in the 1660s did not decrease the city's devotion to commerce, and it remained a mixture of nationalities known for its tolerance of minorities, though dominated by the Dutch and increasingly English population.

The French and Indian War was a turning point in the city's history. The decision of William Pitt to drive the French out of North America led to an immense influx of wealth into the city. The British stationed 25,000 soldiers in North America and a fleet that included 14,000 sailors, all of whom had to be provisioned. In addition, New Yorkers could now legally capture French and Spanish ships and keep the spoils. Merchants such as Peter Livingston and Oliver De Lancey made fortunes unheard of prior to the war.

New York too became the center of British trade with North America, now worth 50 percent of its exports to the thirteen colonies, sending flour and livestock and a variety of foodstuffs to the islands in return for molasses for the growing sugar refining industry and bills of exchange. By 1762 its population had reached eighteen thousand. Hanover Square grew famous for its retail wares, and coaches—once a rarity—crossed the city's streets regularly. Numerous elegant mansions arose, such as that of Captain

Archibald Kennedy, with its grand staircase and fifty-foot parlor.

Aside from the city's mercantile elite, New York had a large artisan population, ranging from the elite trades of silversmith and carriage maker to the lower trades of tailoring and shoemaking. There were also a number of white unskilled laborers, including cartmen who hauled goods from ship to shore, and the largest black and slave population of all the colonies outside the South, constituting about 16 percent of the population. The wealthy tended to live in the center of town on Broadway and around Bowling Green, while the artisans and laborers lived in the outer wards, nearer the rivers.

#### REVOLUTIONARY NEW YORK

Following the end of the French and Indian War, the British enacted legislation to tighten the organizational structure of their empire and increase their income. The Sugar Act (1764), Stamp Act (1765), and Tea Act (1773) met with resistance in all seaports where the tea was sent. Tensions in the street between soldiers at the British army garrison and citizens remained high, resulting in violence at the Battle of Golden Hill in which a seaman was killed when the British tried to prevent construction of a liberty pole. In addition, during the riots caused by passage of the hated Stamp Act, New Yorkers refused to allow the distribution of the dreaded stamps; attacked the home of British commander, Major Thomas James; and held their own tea party in 1774. The artisan population was central to resistance, demanding radical measures against the British, much to the chagrin of the more conservative merchants who, while opposing British measures, were focused on reconciliation. The Sons of Liberty, men who enforced anti-British measures, was composed largely of artisans or merchants of nonelite background such as Alexander McDougall, John Lamb, and Isaac Sears.

As British rule collapsed, two separate committees emerged, a Mechanics Committee and a governing Committee of Fifty-One, that worked together, though not without tension. While artisans did not dominate the governing committee, their pressure for more radical action had to be considered, because their votes held the keys to political power. Their shift of support from the mercantile De Lancey bloc to the landholding, Presbyterian Livingston faction reflected the Livingstons' Revolutionary stand as the De Lanceys moved steadily toward loyalism and exile.

A year after war broke out in April 1775, New York became the center of action. Following Bunker

Hill in June 1775, the British shifted their attention to the middle colonies, attempting to divide New England from the rest of their dependencies. Their first move would be an invasion of New York City. General Charles Lee had constructed a series of forts, batteries, and interior barricades for the Americans early in 1776, but there was no way to fully defend the many approaches to Manhattan Island. In March 1776 Washington moved his army from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to New York and divided it between the city and Brooklyn, across the East River. Brooklyn was protected by its hilly topography, with only a few passes that would permit an army to advance.

The British brought a major show of force to New York. It included 32,000 soldiers, 14,000 seamen, two men of war, and twenty-four frigates. Washington had 23,000 men and no navy to speak of. In August 1776 the British attacked Brooklyn in an all-night march, going through the virtually unguarded Jamaica Pass to the east and forcing Americans to withdraw to Brooklyn Heights, where a final retreat was cut off by the East River. Had Admiral

Richard Howe quickly moved his ships into the river, cut off the troops, and forced their surrender, he might have dealt a mortal blow to the army. But he hesitated, and Washington moved his troops back to the city on the night of 29–30 August. Once again, Howe could have trapped the army by blockading the island through a quick landing of troops, but once more he hesitated, and the American army retreated, eventually into New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The British made New York their headquarters from September 1776 to the end of the war.

The city remained under harsh martial law throughout the war, enforced by a British administration characterized by considerable corruption and ineptitude. The occupation was made all the worse by a major conflagration that destroyed five hundred buildings and created a constant housing shortage for British soldiers, Loyalists, and slaves who had come in search of freedom. British cruelty was sadly apparent in the treatment of the thousands of American prisoners held captive in the city, most appallingly in leaky ships in the harbor including the noto-

rious Jersey, almost all of whose inmates died of disease or starvation. The last city to be freed of British rule was New York; the British pulled out on 25 November 1783, a day that would be a major civil holiday for the next hundred years.

#### **REPUBLICAN NEW YORK**

After the British exodus, republican government was established in New York City, an urban center of just over 33,000 inhabitants by 1790. It was a conservative republican tide that held sway, however. Tory lands were confiscated, especially the De Lancey holdings, but most of these lands were bought by wealthy merchants. The new president of Columbia College (formerly Kings College) was William Samuel Johnson, son of the college's first president and a quiet revolutionary. New York was the home of one of the nation's strongest antislavery associations, the Manumission Society, founded in 1785, headed by John Jay and including prominent citizens such as Alexander Hamilton. Even so, in the 1790s the absolute number of slaves in the city increased by 25 percent: the number of white homes using some form of black labor tripled. Artisans continued to use slaves during the 1790s, but their use gradually decreased from one in eight to one in seventeen by 1800.

New York played a central role in the political life of the new nation. It was a focus of debate over the new federal Constitution. As opposed to upstate farmers, its residents were largely in favor of a strong central government that would protect commercial interests and uphold national honor; the *Federalist Papers*, the most important defenses of the new Constitution, were published in New York. It was also the nation's first capital; George Washington was inaugurated on 30 August 1789 on the steps of City Hall, which was converted into the first federal building.

Washington spent a year in New York before the capital was moved to Philadelphia in 1790 as part of a political deal between Jefferson and Hamilton. But although New York was no longer the political capital, Hamiltonian economic policy—which the deal preserved—and the monetary capital and commercial expertise of the city's astute mercantile elite allowed the city to remain the nation's financial hub. Gotham, as the city was dubbed, became the home of the country's first stock exchange in 1792 and its center of trade. It housed the nation's most banks and largest credit capabilities (fourteen banks and \$35 million in capital in 1825), the most reliable insurance brokers (\$16 million in capital in 1827), the

most dependable harbor, and the most reliable packet service. British merchants had their best contacts in New York, and as early as 1810, one-fourth of the nation's cotton trade moved through the city. By 1825 New York's exports (\$175 million) nearly equaled those of Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore combined. Merchants residing in the city included the likes of John Jacob Astor (1763–1848), Anson Phelps (1781–1853), and Arthur (1786–1865) and Lewis (1788–1873) Tappan. Trade grew so rapidly that wide new streets, West Street and South Street, were built from landfill. Shipbuilding flourished, and it was on the Hudson River that Robert Fulton put his steamboat, the *Clermont*, on display and into operation in 1807.

American republicanism meant new economic horizons for all classes. Artisans expanded their businesses, arranged credit, and sponsored their own banks; a number, including cabinetmaker Duncan Phyfe (1768–1854), became major entrepreneurs. Yet economic growth also meant a greater stratification of wealth. New York was a venue for the growth of the American labor movement as the increasingly large number of long-term wage earners engaged in citywide walkouts, demanding a republican wage, a salary commensurate with American citizenship.

Opponents of slavery, influenced by the Revolution's republican legacy, gained passage of New York's Gradual Emancipation Act in 1799, a decade after the launching of the new government. Although it did not grant immediate release, most bondsmen were now able to purchase their freedom; the number of slaves dropped precipitously as the free black population increased. Blacks did the city's most difficult and undesirable work, including emptying privies and sweeping chimneys, but they also worked in a number of artisan crafts, formed their own churches, newspaper (*Freedom's Journal*), and theaters, and exercised republican rights, including the right to vote—until the Democratic Republican Party disenfranchised most of them in 1821.

Republicanism meant change in municipal government. In the colonial era, the Corporation of the City of New York acted as a private body concerned with real estate and waterfront tracts. The new Common Council aggressively pursued the interest of the city's entire population. So that it could do so, the state granted it the power to tax its citizens. A new city hall was erected, the grandest structure in town, built with sandstone and marble on a Palladian, classical republican, plan. The city took on its future design, initiating the famous grid plan, based on



**Winter Scene in Brooklyn.** A painting by Francis Guy depicting a bustling neighborhood in Brooklyn as it looked in the 1817 to 1820 period. © FRANCIS G. MAYER/CORBIS.

the idea of reason and order, that gave modern New York its shape. The city supported the poor in a three story Almshouse (1797), then built a new Bellevue complex on the East River in 1816 that included an almshouse and pesthouse, soon to be a hospital, and was responsible for local courts and constables. It paved streets and collected garbage (though the pigs left to roam often did a better job in the poorer neighborhoods); it allocated water supply to a private firm, the Manhattan Company, that proved more adept at banking than pipelines, leaving the city with chronic plumbing and water shortages.

With two elections each year, one for federal and state office, one for city offices, political conflict was nearly constant. The two parties, the Hamiltonian Federalists and Jeffersonian Democratic Republicans, fought for competing legacies of the Revolution. Ultimately, the egalitarian Jeffersonians triumphed over the deferential expectations of the

mercantile Federalists among the pivotal electoral bloc: artisans and young, ambitious merchants. The key victory came in 1800, when the city's ballots brought New York State's electoral votes into the Jeffersonian column, making possible Jefferson's victory. Making the political fights even more intense were the conflicts with France and Britain as they engaged in the Napoleonic Wars. America's quest for freedom of the seas, leading to the War of 1812, was echoed in the streets and on the docks of New York, as the harbor was refortified for the first time since 1776.

With the aid of immigrants from Ireland and the city's hinterlands, New York's population grew to just under 100,000 residents by 1810 and to a metropolis of 197,000 by 1830, dwarfing every other American city. By then, it housed the nation's most elegant residences on Broadway and Park Place, while seeing the growth of severe areas of poverty,

including the Five Points. It became a mecca of the arts with a lively theater scene, hosted numerous musical concerts, and housed the New York Academy of Fine Arts (soon called the American Academy of Fine Arts), headed by the noted painter John Trumbull. With the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825, New York became the portal for immigrants of the coming generation and the center of the country's import and export trade. It was the only world-class metropolis in the new American nation.

*See also Abolition of Slavery in the North; Abolition Societies; City Growth and Development; Cotton; Economic Development; Labor Movement: Labor Organizations and Strikes; Penitentiaries and Prisons; Work: Slave Labor; Sons of Liberty; Water Supply and Sewage.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Albion, Robert Greenhalgh. *The Rise of New York Port, 1815–1860*. New York: Scribners, 1939.
- Blackmar, Elizabeth. *Manhattan for Rent, 1785–1850*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989.
- Burrows, Edwin G., and Mike Wallace. *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Hartog, Hendrik. *Public Property and Private Power: The Corporation of the City of New York in American Law, 1730–1870*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983.
- Hodges, Graham Russell. *Root and Branch: African Americans in New York and East Jersey, 1613–1863*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Kouwenhoven, John A. *The Columbia Historical Portrait of New York City: An Essay in Graphic History*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1953.
- Monaghan, Frank, and Marvin Lowenthal. *This Was New York: The Nation's Capital in 1789*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1943.
- Nash, Gary B. *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979.
- Rock, Howard B. *Artisans of the New Republic, The Tradesmen of New York City in the Age of Jefferson*. New York: New York University Press, 1979.
- Schecter, Barnet. *The Battle for New York: The City at the Heart of the American Revolution*. New York: Walker, 2002.
- Stokes, I. N. Phelps, comp. *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498–1909*. 6 vols. New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1915; reprint, 6 vols., Union, N.J.: Lawbook Exchange, 1998.
- Tiedemann, Joseph S. *Reluctant Revolutionaries: New York City and the Road to Independence, 1763–1776*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997.

Young, Alfred F. *The Democratic Republicans of New York: The Origins, 1763–1797*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967.

Howard B. Rock

---

**NEW YORK STATE** At independence New York was a second-tier colony, more important for its strategic location than for its population or its economy. New York City was just a colonial port. New York's boundaries with both New England and Indian country were uncertain. The Six Iroquois Nations loomed large in New York affairs. By 1830, however, New York had become the Empire State, first in population and dominant economically over the Northeast, the emerging "Great West," and in some ways even the South. New York City had become the American metropolis and was on its way to world standing. Many Iroquois had departed and the remnants were struggling to hold on to scraps of land. In 1775 New York had the largest slave population outside the South; by 1830 only seventy-five slaves remained in the state, the last sufferers of a quirk in its gradual abolition law. Nearly 45,000 black New Yorkers were free. Yet both in 1776 and in 1830 New York was a raucous place where people of all sorts mingled and jostled.

#### REVOLUTIONARY NEW YORK

New York's Revolutionary leaders did not accept independence until 9 July 1776, making it the very last of the founding thirteen to break with Britain. Part of what they called New York, the counties of Cumberland and Gloucester, was about to declare its own independence as Vermont. Until 1791 New York's leaders called Vermont a "pretended state," and its people "revolted subjects." But the state had lost the Green Mountains, as it had lost its weak claim to western Massachusetts and western Connecticut.

But New York did not yet have its familiar shape. Reporting to London in 1774, the last royal governor invoked an Indian treaty of 1702 to claim the Niagara Peninsula, in modern Ontario, and the country beyond Detroit. An official British map, drawn about 1775 and published in 1779, showed western New York ending much farther east, at the "line of property" where the country of the Six Iroquois Nations began. To the Six Nations, that line remained in effect even after the Revolutionary War. Massachusetts claimed part of the Iroquois country under its royal charter. The matter was not resolved until a treaty between it and New York at Hartford, Connecticut,

in 1786. The borders with New Jersey and with Pennsylvania were clear on official documents but had not been completely surveyed. Like much of the rest of Revolutionary America, New York's boundaries and extent were anything but certain.

Its early political life as a state was equally uncertain. The Revolutionary leaders did not proclaim a new constitution until April 1777. They never offered the document for ratification, simply announcing that it was taking effect. By then Manhattan, Long Island, Staten Island, and southern Westchester were in British hands. Loyalism was rife in the Hudson Valley. Civil war raged where white settlement met Iroquois country. Four of the Six Nations (the Mohawks, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas) chose the British side, whereas the Oneidas and most of the Tuscaroras were with the Americans. In 1779 the Iroquois put out their Council Fire, the symbol of a League of Peace and Power that had endured for centuries. Their white neighbors were equally divided.

Even among white Patriots dispute raged. A small group of young men who stemmed from the old colonial elite, including Philip Schuyler, John Jay, Gouverneur Morris, and Robert R. Livingston, expected to take control. But the votes of soldiers gave outsider George Clinton the first of five three-year terms as governor, and in the late 1770s and the 1780s a populist political party came together around him. This party's rule was so successful that New York held off on ratifying the federal Constitution till 1788 (becoming the eleventh state to do so), joining only after it was clear that the Constitution would take effect and that New York City might secede and ratify on its own.

### THE EMPIRE STATE

Despite the war's disruptions, New York grew rapidly. Governor William Tryon estimated New York's population in 1774 at 182,000. By the 1790 federal census, that figure had nearly doubled, to 340,241. In 1800 it was 586,182, and in 1810, 959,049. New York City had outstripped Philadelphia by then—96,000 to 91,000—but Pennsylvania remained the most populous state, in 1820 outnumbering New York, 1,549,458 to 1,372,812. Not until 1830 did New York have the largest population, with 1,918,608 people. Of these, 202,589 lived in New York City. By then Newburgh, Poughkeepsie, and Kingston had passed the urban threshold to small city status. Albany had become the permanent capital, and Utica, Rome, Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo marked waypoints and industrial centers along the Erie Canal.

These numbers do not include Indians, despite New York's claim that the Six Nations, the Shinneocks, the Montauks, and others within its now-firm boundaries "belonged" to it. The censuses did count African Americans. Governor Tryon reckoned that, in 1774, 21,549 New Yorkers were black, almost all of them part of the largest slave population north of Chesapeake Bay. Slavery weakened by 1790, when 4,782 black New Yorkers were free. More than 21,000 remained enslaved, however. The state finally began gradual abolition in 1799. The census in 1800 showed 10,374 free black New Yorkers and 20,613 slaves. By 1810 the numbers were tilting, with 25,333 free people and 15,017 slaves. In 1820 there were 29,279 free of slavery, but 10,088 remained in chains. New York's leaders adopted 4 July 1827 as the day for slavery to end. In 1830 the free black population was 44,870.

### DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

Creating the Empire State required destroying what historians now call Iroquoia. At the end of the Revolutionary War the state maintained that the four Iroquois nations that had sided with the British had forfeited their land. It could not make that claim stick; nor could it claim the land of the pro-American Oneidas and Tuscaroras. Both the state government and the Confederation Congress maintained their claim to sovereignty in relation to the Indians and their right to purchase the land. To complicate matters, so did Massachusetts. Congress aside, the Treaty of Hartford gave legal sovereignty to New York but allowed Massachusetts the right as a private purchaser to preempt Indian land west of Seneca Lake. By the time the federal Constitution took effect in 1789, Massachusetts and New York believed they had negotiated treaties to purchase most Iroquois land. The federal Non-Intercourse Act of 1790 supposedly ended separate state purchases of Indian land, and in 1794 federal negotiators worked out a major treaty with the Six Nations at Canandaigua, in the central Finger Lakes region. Between then and 1846, New York State negotiated a long series of treaties for virtually all the remaining Indian land. Because those treaties did not conform to federal requirements, their legal status has remained open to litigation and is not fully resolved at this writing.

Nonetheless, settlers poured into western New York, which the state was dividing into counties and townships without regard to Indian title. Even colonials had seen that New York possessed a unique opportunity at the Oneida Carrying Place, where the Mohawk River, flowing toward the Hudson, comes

within a mile of Wood Creek, flowing toward Lake Ontario. Build a canal across that low ridge, and a few others around the Mohawk's rapids and falls, and the two water systems would join. Nowhere else between the St. Lawrence and the southern tip of the Appalachian Mountains was such a link possible. By the early nineteenth century some were thinking in bigger terms, proposing a canal from Albany to Lake Erie. Rochester flour dealer Jesse Hawley apparently had the idea first, but credit for the Erie Canal goes to DeWitt Clinton, who pushed the idea ceaselessly as mayor of New York City, governor, and federal politician, including a run for the presidency in 1812. (Not until Martin Van Buren's election in 1836, however, would a New Yorker win the White House.)

Clinton sought federal support, but when President James Madison vetoed a bill in 1816 New York embarked on the project alone. Construction began in 1817, and the canal opened in 1825. It was so successful that it needed enlargement by 1836. It gave New York City access to the whole northern interior, ensuring its primacy over rivals Philadelphia and Montreal. Cleveland, Detroit, and Chicago all became part of New York's system. Land values along the canal soared.

The canal's completion was part of the high tide of white male democracy in New York, as property requirements for voting and officeholding came to an end. But democratic opportunity led straight to machine politics, of which Van Buren was a pioneer, and was joined directly to the exclusion of most black male voters, to whom property requirements for voting still applied. Moreover, the canal's very success brought unrest along its route. Central and western New York were so overrun by religious revivals and reform movements that the region became known after 1830 as the "Burned Over District." Militant abolitionism, prison reform, temperance, women's rights, and the emergence of the Latter-Day Saints as a uniquely American religion all were among the results.

*See also Abolition of Slavery in the North; Albany; Constitutionalism: American Colonies; Erie Canal; Hartford Convention; Iroquois Confederacy; Loyalists; New York City; Revivals and Revivalism; Temperance and Temperance Movement; Women: Rights.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Blackmar, Elizabeth. *Manhattan for Rent, 1785–1850*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989.

Countryman, Edward. *A People in Revolution: The American Revolution and Political Society in New York, 1760–1790*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981; New York: Norton, 1989.

Hauptman, Laurence M. *Conspiracy of Interests: Iroquois Dispossession and the Rise of New York State*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1999.

Ryan, Mary P. *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790–1865*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Sheriff, Carol. *The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress, 1817–1862*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1996.

White, Shane. *Somewhat More Independent: The End of Slavery in New York City, 1770–1810*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991.

Wilentz, Sean. *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788–1850*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1984, 2004.

Edward Countryman

---

**NILES' REGISTER** Known as the "News Magazine of the Nineteenth Century" to later generations, *Niles' Weekly Register* was one of the first periodicals in America to systematically gather and organize all the major news of the week. As such, it was widely read by the opinion leaders of its time and became a valuable source for later historians, especially on politics, government, and the economy.

Considerably longer than the newspapers of its era at sixteen pages, the *Register* was the brainchild of Hezekiah Niles (1777–1839), a Quaker printer from Pennsylvania. Having previously tried his hand at several types of publications, including a conventional Democratic Republican newspaper, the *Baltimore Evening Post*, Niles promised readers "Something New" in his 1811 prospectus for the *Register*, and for the most part he delivered. While the *Register* employed no reporters and printed the same basic types of material as all the newspapers of this period—political essays, texts of speeches, letters, official documents, and extracts from other newspapers—Niles made his selections much more carefully, comparing various accounts for accuracy and often summarizing the information or setting the reports and documents in context with commentary of his own. Niles also distinguished the *Register* by refusing to use it for "electioneering purposes," banning the anonymous contributions and personal attacks that dominated many party journals and printing material on both sides of many issues.

While Niles was indeed the "honest chronicler" that the Shakespeare quotation on his masthead seemed to promise, the *Register* was far from nonpartisan. Setting a pattern for later advances in news reporting, the *Register* rose to prominence by chronicling a major war, the War of 1812 (1812–1815), to which it was deeply committed. Niles was ferociously anti-British and bitterly critical of the war's many domestic opponents. As he saw it, the United States was fighting the "most profligate and corrupt government in the universe, administered by the most finished villains in the world, who make a boast of bribery, laugh at fraud, and cherish all sorts of whoredoms." Niles also became one of the most influential exponents of the American System of fostering domestic industry through internal transportation improvements and protective tariffs. He stuffed the *Register* with arguments and data in support of protectionism and did not shrink from bitter political invective on the topic. The "free trade party" (code for the Jacksonian Democrats) was full of "British agents" and wanted to "send the laborer 'upperless to bed,'" Niles warned in 1831. Given that the American System was the signature policy agenda of Henry Clay and the Whig Party, *Niles' Register* should be counted as a vociferous fellow traveler of that party even if the editor technically kept his promise not to promote candidates in his pages.

A judicious editor, skilled writer, and confirmed workaholic, Niles produced the *Register* until his health failed in 1836. He then turned the reins over to his son, William Ogden Niles, who moved the paper from Baltimore to Washington, D.C., and changed the name to *Niles' National Register*. William's tenure as editor was cut short in 1839 when his widowed stepmother sold the paper out from under him. The publication ended up in the hands of Hezekiah's old friend Jeremiah Hughes, longtime editor of the Annapolis *Maryland Republican*, who ran the *Register* until his retirement in 1848. Hughes sold out to novice editor George Beatty, who moved the office to Philadelphia and tried selling advertising in it for the first time, but mismanaged the famous publication to an early death in 1849.

*See also Magazines; Newspapers.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brigham, Clarence S. *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690–1820*. Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1947.
- Luxon, Norval Neil. *Niles' Weekly Register: News Magazine of the Nineteenth Century*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1947.

Mott, Frank Luther. *American Journalism: A History, 1690–1960*. 3rd ed. New York: Macmillan, 1960.  
*Niles' Weekly Register, 1811–1835*.

Jeffrey L. Pasley

---

**NONFICTION PROSE** Nonfiction prose in the period from 1754 to 1829 is marked by a shift from Calvinist introspection and a preoccupation with spiritual salvation to a focus on the public sphere in which attempts are made to define what an American is and what the American continent is like for curious Europeans and future immigrants. Those already living in America saw in this literature a guide to fashioning a distinctively American political, social, and cultural identity. Thus, the project of description and analysis of America had both a domestic as well as an international audience. Among the modes of expression most suited to this enterprise were autobiographies (of model Americans) and scientific writings describing the natural landscape as well as observations about the American character by recent immigrants. Added to these were popular advice books about how one might succeed in the American environment through rigorous domestic (household) economy and practical (farmer's) almanacs. And finally, among the characteristic nonfiction prose forms were histories of the American Revolution and political writings about the best modes of governance, supplemented by dissenting polemical writings (orations, sermons, dialogues, and published letters) about the overlooked capabilities of women, Native Americans, and African slaves.

This is not to suggest that intimate, personal writings disappeared, for certainly correspondence was the main form of communication and offered alternative perspectives on the new nation by less public voices, such as those of women (as seen in the correspondence between Abigail and John Adams). Nor is this to suggest that religion had founded, for there were many revivals that followed the Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s, and diverse denominations flourished in the latter half the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century. Furthermore, spiritual autobiographies, as exemplified by that of Quaker Elizabeth Ashbridge (1713–1755) continued to be written. Rather, it is to suggest that John Winthrop's vision of America as God's "city upon a hill" was adapted and naturalized in the descriptions of America by Thomas Jefferson in *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785) and in William Bartram's *Travels* (1791). Similarly, spiritual autobiog-

raphies, like Jonathan Edwards's *Personal Narrative* (1765) and Cotton Mather's *Bonifacius* (1710; later reprinted as *Essays to Do Good*) were modified into a moral, secular, and national memoir in the *Autobiography* (1818) of Benjamin Franklin. America remained an exceptional nation, but its exceptional basis as God's chosen people was less immediately the topic of discussion, replaced by the practical exigencies of how to form a distinct and sustainable nation in the eyes of the world. The emphasis had shifted from predestination and God's sovereignty to scientific discovery and human craftsmanship—of the political state, of society, and of cultural artifacts.

#### AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND THE NATION

Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography* is in many respects a document of the nation's history, written at important junctures in Franklin's and the nation's development and from the vantage of a global perspective. The earlier parts were written in England (in 1771), where Franklin was engaged in discussions with Parliament, and in France (1784), where he stayed on as minister after the Treaty of Paris (1783) with Great Britain was signed; the last part was written in Philadelphia (in 1788) after the Constitutional Convention. The narrative documented his own attainment of personal independence (just a few years before the nation achieved its own) and his method for building a character of discernment and good judgment, which broadened into ever-widening circles of civic-mindedness, public service, and autonomous identity. The *Autobiography* was partly indebted to spiritual autobiographies that registered a journey through trials to achieve grace (for example, John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* [1678]) and guides to moral conduct (for example, Mather's *Bonifacius*).

Franklin's *Autobiography* focuses, however, not upon the intractable stain of human sin in the eyes of God, but rather upon the (metaphoric) printer's errata, which can be corrected for each new readership. For Franklin, human agency is effective, and self-improvement means that others can learn from his example. His is a self-consciously rhetorical enterprise: a record of his life in the style that he taught himself from Joseph Addison and Richard Steele's *Spectator* (1711–1712), a style that is "smooth, clear, and short: For the contrary Qualities are apt to offend, either the Ear, the Understanding, or the Patience" (Franklin, "On Literary Style," 2 August 1733). Unlike his Puritan predecessors, he did not dwell on his own imperfections but was willing to accept some limitations and vices. Clearly, what he sought most was not to avoid God's wrath. Rather,

it was—in the famous words of Jefferson's Declaration of Independence—"Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness" that this self-made man most desired, "for in Proportion as a Man is vicious he loses the Favour of God and Man, and brings upon himself many Inconveniences, the least of which is capable of marring and demolishing his Happiness" (Franklin, "A Man of Sense," 11 February 1735"). Franklin's *Autobiography* is a document, then, of a man who felicitously rose to international status through self-improvement and self-discipline, just as his nation had done. Franklin included a letter by Benjamin Vaughan (31 January 1783) urging him to publish his life story because there was a parallel between a wise and upwardly mobile Franklin and the new nation's rise to independence and success; "All that has happened to you is also connected with the detail of the manners and situation of a rising people," Vaughan wrote. Franklin's life story is also the nation's history.

Similarly, Thomas Jefferson's "Autobiography," written in 1821, suggests the deep intertwining of his life with the evolution of the nation, perhaps most clearly revealed in the original draft of the Declaration of Independence, included in the "Autobiography." Unlike the final document, which was heavily revised by Congress and has the qualities of a timeless, universal statement representing a consensus of the American people, the original version reveals Jefferson's passionate anger and exasperation in the historical moment. In the changes that are visible in the deletions and emendations, we see the shift from a heated, polemical, and in many respects personal letter to a heavily negotiated and debated document fashioned into a public performance for a broader, international audience. The meaning of the revisions and the final document are still being debated by scholars. In *Inventing America* (1978), Garry Wills suggests that the phrase "all men are created equal" means that they all possess a moral sense that is equal to all other men's in seeking the beauties of virtue, whereas in *The Lost World of Thomas Jefferson* (1948; 1981), Daniel Boorstin suggests that the original phrase ("all men are created equal and independent, that from that equal creation they derive rights inherent and inalienable") derives its sense of equality from Jefferson's scientific interests in the facts and perfection of God's creation. Indeed, from that supreme design Jefferson infers the human potential for crafting the state and the importance of perfecting the governmental design.

### FLORA, FAUNA, AND AMERICANS

To a European audience, America still represented the exotic New World and was one more clue to the entirety of God's diverse and perfect design. Thomas Jefferson wrote *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785) in response to a request from the French government in 1781. A careful description of the flora, fauna, rivers, mountains, laws, manufactures, religions, and populations of Virginia, *Notes* offers a scientist's and perhaps an anthropologist's analysis of one section of America. In fact, significant sharing of scientific information much like this regularly moved back and forth across the Atlantic. Jefferson's emphasis in his descriptions was upon the landscape's orderly design, its natural wonders, and its virtuous people who derived their grace from their proximity to the land. His descriptions are frequently comparative to the Old World and were measured with a scientist's interest in accuracy. One should not forget Jefferson's—not to mention Franklin's—scientific interests and their roles in a scientific community that included Benjamin Rush (doctor and medical scientist), Benjamin Barton Smith (botanist), David Rittenhouse (astronomer), Charles Willson Peale (museum creator), and Joseph Priestley (the chemist who discovered oxygen).

William Bartram's *Travels Through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida . . .* (1791) was the work of a botanist who described himself as "impelled by a restless spirit of curiosity, in pursuit of new productions of nature." Compared to Jefferson's, his descriptions of America are more vivid and sensuous and verge on the poetical as he discovered New World novelties. In fact, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth were known to have gleaned descriptions from Bartram's *Travels* for their poetry, ranging from the terrifying roar of alligators ("it most resembles very heavy distant thunder, not only shaking the air and waters, but causing the earth to tremble") to the never-ending blossoming of a tree ("with large milkwhite fragrant blossoms . . . renewed each morning . . . in such incredible profusion that the Tree appears silvered over with them and the ground beneath covered with the fallen flowers"). Bartram combined the sort of autobiographical narrative that public figures like Jefferson wrote with the scientific explorer's interest in the exotic and the poet's interest in the lyrical. Besides offering up a landscape of enchantment to Europeans who hungered for such fare, Bartram hoped to be "instrumental in discovering, and introducing into my native country, some original productions of nature, which might become useful to society."

In many respects these descriptive narratives of America, and many others of a more exaggeratedly positive nature, functioned as propaganda to entice immigrants to this country. There was, in fact, a genre of emigration promotion pamphlets that so inflated the benefits of America that Franklin spoofed them in his essay, "Information to Those Who Would Remove to America" (1782), addressed to those who might be gullible enough to believe that in America roofs were tiled with pancakes and "fowls [that] fly about ready roasted, crying *come eat me!*" J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, an immigrant from France to New York, however, wrote a more balanced series of essays titled *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782). The best known, Letter III, or "What Is an American," paints a picture of America as a pastoral land and as refuge for the beleaguered European: "We have no princes, for whom we toil, starve, and bleed: we are the most perfect society now existing in the world." Compared to the Old World, America was open and abundant. "Every industrious European who transports himself here, may be compared to a sprout growing at the foot of a tree; it enjoys and draws but a little portion of sap; wrench it from the parent roots, transplant it, and it will become a tree bearing fruit also." Crèvecoeur presents America as an orderly, self-regulated agrarian landscape and as a peaceful melting pot made up of an internationally "promiscuous [mixed] breed . . . now called Americans."

Although not all his reflections on his adopted country are so unqualified in their praise, and although he was hostile to the forces of progress that came increasingly to characterize the country, Crèvecoeur does explore the process of forging an American identity and thus stands as a significant precursor to Alexis de Tocqueville, whose later observations in *Democracy in America* (1835) characterized America for Europeans. For those who came to this country, there was ample advice in the form of almanacs, the best-known and most popular of which was Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac*, published annually between 1732 and 1757. A work of wisdom and humor, it made Franklin's name a byword in the colonies. For women, too, there was advice on domestic economy, including that of Lydia Maria Child's *The Frugal Housewife* (1829), where the rising middle-class woman could learn to make do with thrift, resourcefulness, and diligent economy.

### POLITICS, PERSUASION, AND HISTORY

Political pamphlets, newspaper essays, orations, and histories, particularly as they related to the Revolu-

tion, were another among the chief forms of expression in nonfiction prose. Among the pamphleteers, Thomas Paine is perhaps the best known. His series of patriotic and eloquent letters, *The American Crisis* (1776–1783), and his incendiary and highly influential pamphlet in favor of independence, *Common Sense* (1776), earned him the epithet “spark plug of the American Revolution.” In his earlier writings for the *Pennsylvania Magazine* (1775), Paine had advocated for the freedom of slaves and for the rights of women. But others, too, advocated on behalf of women and against slavery, and for Native Americans as well. Using the gently suggestive form of a Socratic dialogue, Charles Brockden Brown wrote *Alcuin; A Dialogue* (1797) on behalf of the legal, economic, and political freedom of women. In “Remarks Concerning the Savages of America” (1784), Benjamin Franklin insisted that Native Americans were not barbarians, as many had portrayed them, but rather a civilized people whose advanced code of etiquette was misinterpreted as simplicity and naïveté. In 1700 Samuel Sewall wrote *The Selling of Joseph*, the first tract in America to denounce slavery, but late in the eighteenth century, many African American voices began to be heard on their own behalf. Benjamin Banneker, in a letter to Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson that was published in 1792, advocated for the freedom of his brothers in slavery by reciting back to Jefferson his own words from the Declaration of Independence and reminding Jefferson of the latter’s own feelings under the tyranny and servitude of an exploitative king. Similarly, William Hamilton’s “Oration Delivered in the African Zion Church on the Fourth of July, 1827, in Commemoration of the Abolition of Domestic Slavery in this State [New York]” (1827) highlighted the contradiction between the republican ideals in the Declaration of Independence and the institution of slavery, for which he called Thomas Jefferson “an ambidexter philosopher.” And while men were active on the stage of politics, elite female historians with access to relevant documents wrote patriotic histories of the events, as exemplified by Mercy Otis Warren’s *History of the Rise, Progress, and Termination of the American Revolution* (1805).

By the early nineteenth century, however, with political independence behind them, Americans faced more squarely the challenge to achieve cultural independence from Britain, a challenge heightened by Sydney Smith’s taunt in the *Edinburgh Review* (1820): “In the four quarters of the globe who reads an American book? Or goes to an American play? Or looks at an American picture or statue?” Partly in answer to this call, Washington Irving wrote his gen-

tel and much-loved *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent* (1820), a series of stories set in colonial America along with travel sketches of England. But it would be the writers of the 1830s through the 1850s, including Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Herman Melville, who sought to forge a distinctively American literature that was neither an imitation of English modes nor the crude and provincial writing that had provoked the negative characterization by Sydney Smith. These authors more than answered the call to create an American literature in what has come to be known as the American Renaissance of the 1850s.

*See also Almanacs; Declaration of Independence; Franklin, Benjamin; Jefferson, Thomas; Paine, Thomas; Religious Publishing; Satire; Travel Guides and Accounts.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baym, Nina. *American Women Writers and the Work of History, 1790–1860*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1995.
- Boorstin, Daniel J. *The Lost World of Thomas Jefferson: With a New Preface*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948. Reprint, 1981.
- Hoffman, Ronald, Mechal Sobel, and Fredrika J. Teute, eds. *Through a Glass Darkly: Reflections on Personal Identity in Early America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
- Kerber, Linda K. *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980.
- Looby, Christopher. *Voicing America: Language, Literary Form, and the Origins of the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Patterson, Mark R. *Authority, Autonomy, and Representation in American Literature, 1776–1865*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988.
- Warner, Michael. *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990.
- Wills, Garry. *Inventing America: Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1978.

Robin Grey

---

**NORFOLK** Norfolk, Virginia, was established in 1680, making it one of the first towns established in the colony. It received a royal charter in 1736, making it an independent borough with local governance and allowing property holders to elect a representa-

tive to the assembly. During the decades leading to the American Revolution, Norfolk was a primary commercial port for the colonies. Because of its geographical location and spacious harbor as well as its many docks, warehouses, and commercial agents it dominated the colonial trade with the West Indies. Products such as beef, pork, tobacco, lumber, and especially grains such as wheat and corn were exported through Norfolk.

In 1791 the town's total population was 2,959, with 1,604 whites, 1,294 slaves, and 61 free blacks. By the turn of the nineteenth century, Norfolk's population had surged to 6,926 residents, including 3,850 whites, 2,724 slaves, and 352 free blacks. In 1810 the population increased to 9,193, with 4,776 whites, 3,825 slaves, and 592 free blacks. Over the next decade, the number of Norfolk inhabitants decreased to 8,608, comprising 4,748 whites, 3,261 slaves, and 599 free blacks. In 1830 the borough could boast of 9,814 residents, including 5,130 whites, 3,756 slaves, and 928 free blacks.

During the Revolutionary era, Norfolkians protested the Stamp Act of 1765, formed their own Sons of Liberty, and in 1774 established a committee of public safety in response to the Intolerable Acts of that year. Support for the Patriots had diminished by the fall of 1775, however, when Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia, took control of the borough with little resistance as thousands pledged their oath of allegiance to the king. But at the Battle of Great Bridge, eight miles south of Norfolk, Virginia militiamen on 9 December 1775 defeated the British under Dunmore's command and forced their evacuation from the borough. Seeking revenge, on 1 January 1776 Dunmore bombarded the port. Before leaving Norfolk, militiamen set fires to Loyalist businesses and houses, contributing to the destruction of 90 percent of the town.

By the turn of the century the citizens had rebuilt Norfolk, maintaining its place as the largest town in Virginia and prospering in what was a primary commercial port. In 1801 the federal government established a navy yard at nearby Gosport. Navigation, nonintercourse, and embargo laws over the next two decades damaged Norfolk's economic prosperity by restricting trade to foreign ports. In the years following the War of 1812, Norfolk's role in the national economy markedly diminished, with New York emerging as the country's dominant commercial port. Although Norfolk would not regain its colonial trade preeminence, residents worked to expand the city's economic fortunes with internal improvements by investing in railroads, completing the

Dismal Swamp Canal in 1829, and building the first dry dock in America at the Gosport Naval Yard in 1833.

*See also City Growth and Development.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bogger, Tommy L. *Free Blacks in Norfolk, Virginia, 1790–1860: The Darker Side of Freedom*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997.

Parramore, Thomas C., Peter C. Stewart, and Tommy Bogger. *Norfolk: The First Four Centuries*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994.

Squires, W. H. T. *Through the Years in Norfolk: Historical Norfolk—1636–1936*. Norfolk: Norfolk Advertising Board, 1936.

*John G. Deal*

---

**NORTH CAROLINA** In 1790 residents of North Carolina lived in five geographic regions: the planter-controlled eastern counties, the Piedmont, the western mountains, and the trans-Appalachian Watauga and Cumberland districts. Collectively, they had rejected the new federal Constitution in 1788, but fear of economic and political isolation led them to reconsider and join the Union in 1789. In 1790 the legislature ceded the trans-Appalachian land to the federal government with the provision that it guarantee land titles, protect the institution of slavery, and otherwise establish a territory under the provisions of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. This area became known as the Territory of the United States south of the River Ohio, and in 1796, the state of Tennessee.

North Carolina had an extant but not well-developed two party system in the early national period. A limited number of elite families helped establish a Federalist coalition in the 1790s, and party cohesion was strong enough that John Adams obtained electoral votes both in 1796 and 1800. Petitions supporting the Federalist agenda, moreover, made their way to President Adams in 1798. As late as 1808, Federalist presidential candidate Charles Cotesworth Pinckney received three electoral votes out of fourteen. Even so, Federalism was generally limited to eastern counties, persisting longest in the upper Cape Fear Valley, and was undermined by an increasingly organized Jeffersonian coalition. Though present by 1796, it became particularly influential after concerns emerged over the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. By the early nineteenth century, Republicans would dominate the political structures of the state.

A new political division eventually emerged out of North Carolina's economic condition. Cotton became a dominant crop in eastern and southern counties, although some profitable plantations existed as far west as Buncombe County. Also notable were the naval stores and lumber trades. Yet most people engaged in general farming, and modest remunerative value meant that North Carolina generally was not an economic powerhouse during the early national period. Its lingering reputation for "backwardness" led Archibald Debow Murphy, a state senator, and other prominent men to propose internal improvements, commercial innovation, and state-supported public education as early as the 1810s. Many North Carolinians remained unconvinced by such measures, however, and after 1830 more formal opposition helped usher in the Second American Party System, a term that refers to the two-party competition that developed between the Democratic and Whig parties.

Gradual population growth did little to enhance the state's relatively limited economy. Numbering 350,000 at the outbreak of the Revolution, in 1790 population was just over 395,000. By 1800 the number had grown only to 478,103, and in 1810 to 555,500. In 1820 the number grew to 638,829, and in 1830 North Carolina had a total population of 737,987. Enterprising North Carolinians understood by 1830 that greater opportunities lay in westward migration. For boosters, outward migration seemed serious enough that they feared it might undermine the state's efforts at improvement.

An important element in this gradual population growth was the high number of African Americans. Despite the state's relatively modest economic status, the institution of slavery nevertheless maintained a powerful presence. In 1790 there were 100,783 slaves in North Carolina, along with 5,000 free people of color. By 1800 the number had grown to 133,296, with 7,073 free blacks; in 1810 there were 168,824 slaves and 10,266 free blacks. In 1820, 205,017 slaves lived in North Carolina, along with 14,612 freedmen. In 1830 the state held 245,601 slaves as well as 19,543 free blacks.

Early nineteenth-century North Carolina is best described as a master-race society—one that became increasingly democratic for that race but remained tyrannical for subordinate groups. Perhaps the North Carolina Supreme Court case *State v. John Mann* best encapsulates the nature of this society. Mann was charged in the 1820s with assault and battery on a female slave whom he had hired. On appeal, the court ruled that Mann had the same rights

as the slave's owner, and therefore could not be prosecuted for cruelty. As Chief Justice Thomas Ruffin wrote in the decision, "the power of the master must be absolute to render the submission of the slave perfect."

Although also subject to this oppressive culture, the state's small free black population held a significant advantage over those in most other slave states: because of a loophole in North Carolina's constitution, they maintained the right to vote. This unusual right was taken away in 1835, when a convention altered the constitution in response to Nat Turner's slave rebellion and the emerging abolitionist movement in the North.

North Carolina also maintained a noticeable American Indian presence. More sizeable in the early eighteenth century, by the early national years the remaining population mostly lived in the western mountains. The Cherokees were the major, although not the only, tribe. Between 1790 and 1830 Cherokees struggled to maintain their land and autonomy against an onslaught of white speculation, settlement, and attempts at "civilization." They finally were compelled to migrate across the Mississippi River in 1838, leaving behind only a small population in the Smoky Mountains.

*See also American Indians: Southeast; Antislavery; Northwest and Southwest Ordinances; Proslavery Thought; Slavery: Slave Insurrections; South; Tennessee; Town Plans and Promotion.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Franklin, John Hope. *The Free Negro in North Carolina, 1790–1860*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1943, 1995.  
 Tushnet, Mark V. *Slave Law in the American South: State v. Mann in History and Literature*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003.  
 Watson, Harry L. *Jacksonian Politics and Community Conflict: The Emergence of the Second American Party System in Cumberland County, North Carolina*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981.

Kristofer Ray

---

**NORTHWEST** In late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century parlance, the term "Northwest" referred to the American region north and west of the Ohio River. This area became the states of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and a portion of eastern Minnesota.

The territory comprising what became known by the mid-nineteenth century as the "Old Northwest" was ceded to the newly independent United States by Great Britain in the Treaty of Paris (1783). The region had long attracted the attention of land-starved eastern farmers and speculators. Intent upon an orderly and structured settlement of the area and hoping to compensate Revolutionary War veterans with land for their largely unpaid service, the Confederation Congress convinced the eastern seaboard states to abandon their numerous historical claims to western territory and to create a national domain in the region. Moreover, the fledgling government entered into negotiations with native tribes to gain undisputed control over the land. Though some of these negotiations bore fruit, witness the Treaties of Fort Stanwix (1784) and the Treaty of Fort McIntosh (1785), many other native groups repudiated the land cessions and openly resisted settler encroachment upon their homelands, armed resistance that would wax and wane until 1815. With title to the land secured (in principle), Confederation officials passed laws establishing a systematic pattern of land survey (based on rectilinear units) and public sale (Ordinance of 1785) and organized the region as the Northwest Territory, creating in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 a framework for territorial governance and outlining the necessary steps for the region's eventual statehood and full equality with the existing states.

In spite of ongoing tensions with local natives, settlers from the North and South alike streamed across the Appalachian Mountains and began carving out settlements and farmsteads along the Ohio River and its tributaries. In the face of increasing pressure, native resistance in the Northwest stiffened and the federal government was forced to dispatch large armies into the region to protect settlements and to quash the Indians. After a series of early military disasters, the eventual defeat of the northwest tribes by General "Mad" Anthony Wayne's Legion at the Battle of Fallen Timbers (1794) and the ensuing Treaty of Greenville (1795) opened the region to full-scale settlement. By 1798 the Northwest Territory's population surpassed five thousand, and it elected its first territorial legislature that year. In 1803 Ohio, the first state carved out of the Northwest Territory, was admitted to the Union. The remainder of the Old Northwest followed a similar path to statehood with Indiana admitted in 1816, Illinois in 1818, Michigan in 1837, Wisconsin in 1848, and Minnesota (including additional territory obtained through the Louisiana Purchase of 1803) in 1858.

#### A REGION OF AMERICAN VIRTUES

Although the Northwest attracted a wide array of settlers (New England "Yankees," migrants from the mid-Atlantic, upland southerners, and immigrants from abroad), shared experience and a common political origin under the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 enabled a collective regional identity to develop quickly. Indeed, regional boosters, such as James Hall of Illinois and Lewis Cass of Michigan, argued that the Northwest's diverse population forged a discernable "western," yet undeniably national, culture.

For many self-titled westerners, their region and the culture that it spawned fully embodied the republican values of limitless opportunity, unfettered freedom, independence, and selflessness that had driven the Revolutionary movement. According to this view the Northwest, as the nation's first experiment in "colonization," was a vehicle for the dissemination of the blessings of liberty into the wilderness. The Northwest—through the Northwest Ordinance and the principles embedded within it—further institutionalized the ideals of the Revolution and the promise of self-government. Furthermore, many believed that the Northwest and its settlers were defined as the most "American" of all regions by virtue of the selfless cession of western land claims by the eastern states, the democratic access to land via public sale to all comers, the area's orderly progress toward self-rule and full equality as states, the freedom of religion and basic rights guaranteed by the Northwest Ordinance, the promotion of public education, and the banning of slavery from the region. The region's fertility, bountiful and relatively inexpensive land, and developing connections to broader markets also induced many westerners to embrace an emerging middle-class, Protestant ethos of capitalistic self-improvement and material gain. This soon became one of the alleged hallmarks of the northwestern persona.

#### THE DARKER SIDE

This self-constructed identity, however, belied a more complex reality. Though many spoke in terms of a collective "western genius," a large number of the region's inhabitants found themselves at odds with its basic precepts or were forced to lead lives on the periphery of western society. Land, the basis for independent living, remained beyond the reach of many. Others, for varied reasons, rejected the Northwest's burgeoning capitalist ethos and clung to a tradition of self-provisioning agriculture. The region's vaunted hostility to slavery was also not uniformly shared. Many upland southern settlers harbored no animosity toward the "peculiar institution" and

some went so far as to push for the repeal of its exclusion from the states being carved out of the Northwest Territory. Likewise, the Northwest Ordinance did not free those individuals already enslaved in the region as of 1787, and thus the institution continued to linger on into the nineteenth century, with some slaves held in Illinois into the 1840s. Similarly, the spread of "American" ideals into the West did not proceed smoothly or peacefully and left in its wake many casualties. In the end racism, greed, and prejudice relegated the area's African American and indigenous residents to marginal existences. Additionally, many "westerners" resented their region's ongoing subordination and dependency. Protracted territorial status, contentious admission to statehood (Michigan being a prime example), and political powerlessness left many westerners chafing at their perceived inequality and eastern domination.

The Northwest spent many of its formative years as a shadowy western dependency of the established states. Isolated from direct access to the east coast by the formidable Appalachian Mountains, the region's economic and cultural link to the rest of the nation was the Ohio-Mississippi River system. Unfortunately, during the Confederation era and on into the first years of the nineteenth century, Spain controlled the all-important port of New Orleans and the mouth of the Mississippi River. Spanish closure of the port to American trade and the Confederation's inability to change Spanish policy produced reoccurring separatist movements in the Northwest until the American acquisition of the river's mouth through the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. Equally galling to "westerners" was the continued British presence on American territory down to the late 1790s and the inept military policy of the federal government in response to the threat posed by the western tribes. Even with the British gone, the Indian threat diminished, and American control over the Mississippi River ensured, northwestern settlers remained wedded to the region's river valleys and the area remained an economic satellite of the expanding American South.

#### BECOMING A POWERHOUSE

In the decade of the 1820s, however, the Northwest began to flex its muscle and the region emerged as a national powerhouse. The construction of the National Road and the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 provided the region with direct and speedy links to the Atlantic seaboard and the world. Moreover, the development of steam travel on the Great Lakes and western rivers enabled trade to move in an

economical and efficient manner. Consumer goods flooded into the region and the bounty of western lands flowed east to fuel an economic boom. Northwestern farms rapidly surpassed the output of older farms in the Northeast, and the region became the breadbasket for the nation and much of Europe. Likewise, the abundant natural resources of the Northwest—its lumber, fish, and minerals—attracted eastern capital and found ready markets in the East, sparking the birth of new industries. The population of the Northwest also grew dramatically during the decade, jumping from roughly 785,000 in 1820 to over 1.4 million by 1830, which paved the way for the subsequent emergence of the region as a dominant political force.

*See also American Indians: American Indian Resistance to White Expansion; Illinois; Indiana; Jay's Treaty; Michigan; Ohio; Wisconsin Territory.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barnhart, Terry A. "'A Common Feeling': Regional Identity and Historical Consciousness in the Old Northwest, 1820–1860." *Michigan Historical Review* 29 (2003): 39–70.
- Cayton, Andrew R. L., and Peter S. Onuf. *The Midwest and the Nation: Rethinking the History of an American Region*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- Cayton, Andrew R. L., and Susan E. Gray, eds. *The American Midwest: Essays on Regional History*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001.
- Etcheson, Nicole. *The Emerging Midwest: Upland Southerners and the Political Culture of the Old Northwest, 1787–1861*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996.
- Finkelman, Paul. *Slavery and the Founders: Race and Liberty in the Age of Jefferson*. 2nd ed. Armonk, N.Y.: Sharpe, 2001.
- Gray, Susan E. *The Yankee West: Community Life on the Michigan Frontier*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

Martin J. Herschock

---

**NORTHWEST AND SOUTHWEST ORDINANCES** The Northwest Ordinance and its successor acts outlined the organization of government for the territories created from the land ceded to the U.S. government by some of the original thirteen states, allowed for the admission of new states on an equal basis with the original thirteen, and prohibited slavery in the region north of the Ohio River.

### **NORTHWEST ORDINANCE**

The Northwest Ordinance, passed on 13 July 1787, was the single most important act of Congress under the Articles of Confederation. It created the territorial government and outlined the progression of steps toward statehood for the region north of the Ohio River. The Ordinance served as the basis for organizing other western territories.

Under the Ordinance, Congress appointed a government for the territory consisting of a governor, a secretary, and three judges. The governor was the commander of the militia; a majority of the governor and judges were to create the laws in the territory. When the population reached five thousand "free male inhabitants," a legislature could be assembled. The Ordinance did not require that these citizens be white. The legislature was to have an upper house, the legislative council, and a lower house, the assembly. The assembly, whose members were to serve two-year terms, could be convened with a membership of one for every five hundred free male inhabitants. After the number of members of the legislature reached twenty-five, it would be allowed to determine its own size. The legislative council was to be made up of five men, selected by Congress from ten men nominated by the assembly, serving five-year terms. Legislation would then become law if passed by both houses and signed by the governor, as long as these laws were not in conflict with the Ordinance. The territory had a right to send a delegate to Congress, who could participate in debate but not vote.

The Ordinance determined that not less than three or more than five states were to be laid out within the territory. When the population of any part of the territory reached sixty thousand, that region could apply for admission to the Union as a state on an equal basis with the original states. Congress could reduce the number of citizens required for admission if it saw fit. Ultimately, five states—Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin—were created.

Congress added a series of articles to the Ordinance placing certain limitations on the territory and establishing a bill of rights. The bill of rights included freedom of worship, protection of the writ of habeas corpus, trial by jury, moderate fines, bail, a ban on cruel or unusual punishments, and protection of property rights. The territory was required to encourage education and show good faith toward Indians, whose land was not to be taken without their permission. It was also prohibited from taxing U.S. property or placing higher taxes on nonresident pro-

prietors. The last article of the Ordinance, Article VI, prohibited slavery in the territory. By defining the North as free and the South as slave territory, this prohibition contributed to the growing divide in the young nation over the issue of slavery.

In 1789 the Congress passed an act effectively reasserting the Northwest Ordinance under the new Constitution while making a few minor changes in the reporting requirement for the territorial government by replacing Congress with the president.

### **SOUTHWEST ORDINANCE**

In 1789 North Carolina agreed to cede to the United States its western territory, which would eventually become the state of Tennessee. In response to such land cessions south of the Ohio River, in 1790 Congress organized the Southwest Territory in its Act for the Government of the Territory of the United States South of the River Ohio. This act was designed to extend the provisions of the Northwest Ordinance to the South, with the important exception of allowing slavery. Georgia's cession of lands in 1802 also made reference to the Northwest Ordinance but exempted the region from the provisions forbidding slavery.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

The most important provisions of the acts establishing the Northwest and Southwest Ordinances were those affecting the admission of new states to the Union and the prohibition of slavery. Other than requiring the agreement of nine states, the admissions provision of the Articles of Confederation did not outline how new states were to be admitted to the Union. The Northwest Ordinance and its successor laws outlined a process for admission of the five states of the Old Northwest Territories as well as Mississippi and Alabama in the South.

The ramifications of the slavery provision played a role in the Missouri Compromise (1820–1821), which created a balance in the Union between free and slave states. During the debates over Missouri's admission, slavery opponents used the Northwest Ordinance and its successor as proof of Congress's ability to regulate slavery in the territories and to set conditions for admission to the Union, as it had done in prohibiting the Ohio constitution from conflicting with the provisions of the Northwest Ordinance.

*See also Antislavery; Articles of Confederation; Continental Congresses; Missouri Com-*

**promise; North Carolina; Ohio; Pro-slavery Thought.****BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Documents from the Continental Congress and the Constitutional Convention, 1774–1789. A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation, American Memory Collection, Library of Congress.* <<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw>>
- Finkelman, Paul. *Slavery and the Founders: Race and Liberty in the Age of Jefferson*, 2nd ed. Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 2001.
- Pathways to the Old Northwest: An Observance of the Bicentennial of the Northwest Ordinance: Proceedings of a Conference*

*Held at Franklin College of Indiana, July 10–11, 1987. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1988.*

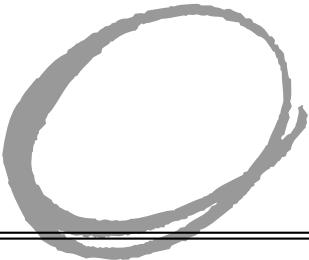
Taylor, Robert M., ed. *The Northwest Ordinance, 1787: A Bicentennial Handbook*. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1987.

*Donald E. Heidenreich, Jr.*

---

---

**NUMERACY** See **Arithmetic and Numeracy**.



---

**OHIO** In 1787 the Northwest Ordinance defined the boundaries of what became the future state of Ohio, and Congress authorized the first legal settlements there by white Americans. The Massachusetts-based Ohio Company established Marietta in April 1788, and settlement in John Cleves Symmes's Miami Purchase began in November. Vigorous and successful resistance by the indigenous tribes inhibited in-migration for several years until the United States Army under Anthony Wayne defeated them at the Battle of Fallen Timbers on 20 August 1794. By the Treaty of Greenville of 3 August 1795, the tribes conceded the title to three-quarters of the future state to the federal government, restricting their tribal lands to the northwestern quarter. The process of settlement now began in earnest and federal land sales accelerated. By 1800 the future state had acquired a population of 42,159 (of whom about 14,400 were adult), mainly clustered close to the Ohio and Scioto Rivers.

In 1798 the population of the Northwest Territory was judged large enough to justify the election of a territorial legislature, which made laws for the territory subject to the veto of the federally appointed territorial governor, Arthur St. Clair. In 1800 Congress divided the Northwest Territory by creating the Indiana Territory, and the remaining eastern division

of the Northwest Territory began to debate the desirability of statehood. When St. Clair persuaded the legislature to support a further division of the territory in order to postpone statehood and perhaps gerrymander a pro-Federalist state east of the Scioto, the Republican opposition, led by Thomas Worthington, prompted a massive petition campaign and persuaded the new Republican majority in Congress to authorize the calling of a constitutional convention, even though the territory had not yet reached the mandated size of population.

Elected in October 1802, the Republican-dominated convention voted for statehood and drafted a constitution that prohibited slavery, weakened gubernatorial power, and gave control of the legislature to what in practice amounted to a white adult male electorate. After becoming a state in March 1803, Ohio proved a consistent Democratic Republican stronghold, supporting Presidents Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and James Monroe, though suffering strong internal divisions over the role of the judiciary. In 1812 the state enthusiastically backed the War of 1812 against Britain, which resulted in two invasions of Ohio, in 1812 and 1813, by British troops and the Shawnee leader Tecumseh's native warriors. Security was not restored until late in 1813, with naval victory at Put-in-Bay on Lake Erie in September and military defeat of the hostile forces

at the Battle of the Thames in Upper Canada (Ontario) in October. National victory made possible the treaties of 1817 and 1818 that finally expunged the title of the Indian tribes in northwestern Ohio and restricted the three thousand natives who remained to a few small reservations until the last were moved westward in 1842.

The extraordinary rate of white settlement that followed statehood gave Ohio a population of 230,760 in 1810. The interior of southern Ohio opened up, especially the Scioto, Muskingum, and Miami Valleys, which were settled mainly by people from Pennsylvania and the Upper South. The land between the Scioto and the Little Miami Rivers had been reserved to pay the wages owed to Virginia's Revolutionary War veterans, with the result that although the warrants had largely passed into the hands of speculators, settlers in this military district came disproportionately from Virginia and Kentucky. The process of rapid settlement slowed after 1809 during the years of Indian hostility and war but resumed with even greater intensity after 1813. New Englanders now flooded into northeastern Ohio, on to the lands known as the Western Reserve (or New Connecticut), which had been reserved in 1800 by Connecticut to pay off its Revolutionary War debts. At the same time German farmers from Pennsylvania settled the upland wheat-growing area south of the Reserve. The interior filled as Ohio's population doubled in a decade to 581,434 in 1820, making it the fifth most populous state in the nation. Although varied in religious character and regional origin, its people consisted primarily of white migrants born in the United States, with only a minute proportion of unnaturalized foreigners. The black population also remained less than 1 percent of the whole, thanks largely to the law discouraging black immigration passed in 1807, though numbers began to increase in the 1820s.

Essentially a land of farmers producing for their families' immediate needs, Ohio from an early date generated an agricultural surplus, mainly of corn and pork, for sale outside the state. After 1818 the state's development slowed considerably during the hardships of the Panic of 1819 and the subsequent depression. Then, in 1825, the state government embarked on an ambitious canal program, notably connecting Lake Erie with the Ohio River, which duly stimulated a considerable economic recovery as commercial agriculture expanded. Many backward and frontier areas still remained as population growth now occurred mainly in the older counties, where small market towns developed rapidly. From the

start, Cincinnati had been the major commercial entrepôt, and after 1815 it began to develop some industry. Between 1824 and 1829 its population doubled in size to 24,143, more than the state's other urban centers put together. By 1830 Ohio, with a population of 937,903, was a highly heterogeneous state that supported an active and contentious public life; its voters divided evenly between the Jacksonian Democrats and their National Republican opponents, and as the state with the fourth-largest number of electoral votes and U.S. representatives, Ohio was already regarded as a critical swing state in national elections.

*See also African Americans: Free Blacks in the North; American Indians: American Indian Resistance to White Expansion; Cincinnati; Northwest; Northwest and Southwest Ordinances; Transportation: Canals and Waterways; War of 1812.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cayton, Andrew R. L., and Stuart D. Hobbs, eds. *"The Center of a Great Empire": The Ohio Country in the Early American Republic*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005.
- Hurt, R. Douglas. *The Ohio Frontier: Crucible of the Old Northwest, 1720–1830*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996.
- Ratcliffe, Donald J. *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic: Democratic Politics in Ohio, 1793–1821*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998.
- . *The Politics of Long Division: The Birth of the Second Party System in Ohio, 1818–1828*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2000.

Donald J. Ratcliffe

---

**OKLAHOMA** Located on the southern prairie-plains and intersected by the Arkansas, Red, Canadian, and Cimarron Rivers, Oklahoma was long an important crossroads. The great Mississippian city of Spiro in eastern Oklahoma dominated the region from A.D. 950 to 1450, and its burial mounds held some of the most remarkable pre-Columbian artwork north of Mexico. By 1700, Caddo and Wichita Indian villages, surrounded by immense cornfields, sprawled along the Red and Canadian Rivers, while Comanches, and later Kiowas, roamed the western regions.

Oklahoma fell within the territorial claims of France's Louisiana colony. In 1719, Bénard de la Harpe became one of the first French explorers to visit Oklahoma Indians. Soon French traders from Louisi-

ana and Arkansas were regulars in the area. Spanish Texas also claimed Oklahoma but could never exert control over it. In 1759, at the Battle of the Wichita Fort on the Red River, a Spanish punitive expedition against the Wichitas, Caddos, and Comanches was driven off with the loss of its artillery.

Oklahoma became part of the United States in the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. Considered to be part of the Great American Desert, politicians saw it as a place to relocate "civilized" eastern Indians. In 1824 the federal government formed what later became Oklahoma, Kansas, and Nebraska into an official Indian Territory. At that time, Oklahoma was home to the Comanches, Kiowas, Wichitas, and Caddos, with perhaps a few Cherokees living in eastern Oklahoma before the 1830s. However, that decade would see the arrival of thousands of southeastern Indians who had been removed to Oklahoma over the Trail of Tears.

*See also American Indians: American Indian Removal.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- John, Elizabeth A. H. *Storms Brewed in Other Men's Worlds: The Confrontation of the Indians, Spanish, and French in the Southwest, 1540–1795*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975.
- La Vere, David. *Contrary Neighbors: Southern Plains and Removed Indians in Indian Territory*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000.
- Smith, F. Todd. *The Wichita Indians: Traders of Texas and the Southern Plains, 1540–1845*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000.

David La Vere

---

**OLD AGE** Three continuities and three changes characterize the history of old age in the United States between 1754 and 1829. The continuities provide a context for interpreting shifts in the meanings and experiences of being old. Having debated the magnitude of changes that occurred during the era, historians agree that it was no golden age. Developments from 1754 and 1829 set the stage for dramatic demographic, socioeconomic, and political transformations in late life during the twentieth century.

The first continuity worth noting is that throughout history, old age has been recognized as a stage of life. Unlike other stages of life like "adolescence" that were invented, almanacs, newspapers, and artifacts from this period document that scien-

tists, ministers, farmers, and popular writers put the same chronological boundaries around elderhood as had seventeenth-century settlers. Americans at the time agreed that old age began at sixty-five, give or take fifteen years.

Second, because of late life's elongated, elastic end points, older Americans collectively were the most diverse segment of the population between 1754 and 1829. Some, like Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) and John Adams (1735–1826), maintained their health and vitality well into their seventh decade. Others became increasingly frail with advancing years. Physicians and philosophers considered senescence a natural process, not a pathological disorder. Nor was mental decline deemed inevitable. Benjamin Rush (1745–1813), arguably the nation's first geriatrician, opined that a proper diet and exercise in moderation preserved the faculties. Extremes in wealth, as in health, existed in old age. A majority of the country's wealthiest men were either aged plantation owners and slaveholders or bankers and manufacturers in urban settings. That said, most elders died intestate, having managed to save little over the course of their lives.

Third, attitudes toward old age ranged from positive to negative, by turns ambivalent and ambiguous. Charles Willson Peale's luminous portraits of contented elderly gentry contrasted with images of widows and the disabled seeking refuge in almshouses or having to accept outdoor relief. Commentators between 1754 and 1829 frequently describe old people with status as "venerable," while others hurled disparaging invectives at those who were vulnerable and marginal with advancing years.

David Hackett Fischer's *Growing Old in America* (1977) sparked considerable interest in historical gerontology by arguing that there was a "deep change" in attitudes toward age and the elderly's behavior between 1790 and 1820. He cited changes in vocabulary and fashion, seating patterns in meetinghouses, and other indicators to substantiate his claim. Subsequent scholarship undermined Fischer's argument, but at least three changes took place during the period that set the stage for subsequent developments.

First, older men and women worked as long as possible between 1754 and 1829 and then relied on the (minimal) savings they had acquired. In a few instances—notably judgeships in thirteen states—sexagenarians were forced to quit the bench. These are the first instances of retirement in U.S. history. A provision of New York's 1777 state constitution set a precedent and forced Chancellor James Kent (1763–1847) off the bench; he then wrote his four-

volume *Commentaries on American Law* (1826–1830). Kent did not die until he was eighty-four years old, a year after the state rescinded the rule.

Second, the longevity of Americans became a measure of the nation's health. That there was a relatively higher percentage of octogenarians on this side of the Atlantic than in Europe was considered proof that the climate, food supply, and rural values in the New World were more conducive to salubrity than was the Old World. Graybeard Uncle Sam was an apt symbol, Americans felt, for the young Republic. Historical demographers nonetheless remind us that children born in 1790 had as great a chance of attaining their first birthdays as babies born in 1970 have of reaching age sixty-five. Hence, transatlantic comparisons were more valuable as an ideological tool than as a measure of increased life expectancy at birth during this period.

Third, the vast network of public measures to protect and empower older Americans that grew after the passage of the Social Security Act of 1935 had its humble origins in the early years of the Republic. Thomas Paine and Alexander Everett in 1797 and 1823 respectively proposed nationally funded pensions to prevent old-age dependency, but they mustered minimal support. Then, building on its 1789 precedent for granting disability pensions, the federal government offered old-age pensions in 1818 to Revolutionary War veterans who had served nine months, needed assistance, and relinquished claim to any other pension. Congress liberalized benefits in the 1820s, a pattern of incrementalism that would characterize public policymaking thereafter.

*See also Domestic Life; Medicine.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Achenbaum, W. Andrew. *Old Age in the New Land*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.
- Cole, Thomas R. *The Journey of Life: A Cultural History of Aging in America*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Fisher, David Hackett. *Growing Old in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.

W. Andrew Achenbaum

of independence. John Dickinson from Pennsylvania was the leader of the moderates, who favored reconciliation. The moderates, however, had been fighting a losing battle ever since the clashes at Lexington and Concord in April, and their support eroded with each passing act of hostility. When news of the Battle of Bunker Hill in June 1775 reached Philadelphia, it had a radicalizing effect on the Congress. The moderates still retained enough strength and influence, however, to keep the concept of a peaceful resolution on the table. The result was the Olive Branch Petition, written largely by Dickinson and addressed to King George III. It stated that the British monarch and his ministers had jeopardized the relationship between the colonies and the mother country by assaulting traditional liberties. It called for a truce in the fighting, repeal of the Coercive Acts, and a restructuring of imperial institutions to allow the colonists more autonomy.

Generally, historians believe that the Olive Branch Petition was less a serious attempt at averting war than a political move to satisfy moderates that the colonials had made one last appeal to the king to preserve the peace. Radicals, such as John Adams, thought it a farcical waste of time and thought more unity could be gained through an immediate declaration of independence. As Congress discussed the Olive Branch Petition, it continued the march toward war, creating the Continental Army, appointing George Washington of Virginia as commander in chief, authorizing an invasion of Canada, and adopting Thomas Jefferson and John Dickinson's *Declaration of the Causes and Necessity for Taking up Arms*.

On 8 July 1775 the Congress adopted the Olive Branch Petition. Richard Penn, a colonial agent, carried it to Britain. The plan was for the agents to present it to the king, but only Penn and Arthur Lee actually attempted to deliver the message. King George III refused to acknowledge the communication of an illegal institution and declared the colonies in rebellion. Parliament was out of session. When it reconvened on 26 October 1775, the king, in his speech opening the session ridiculed the petition in an indirect reference. The errant colonists were not the only ones petitioning the king for peace; towns and cities throughout Britain did likewise, which meant that Parliament could not ignore the issue. In November, Edmund Burke introduced a bill to revoke the Coercive Acts, grant pardons to all those involved in rebellion to that point, and grant the supremacy of colonial assemblies over Parliament regarding the right to tax the colonists. It failed by 210 to 105. This was interpreted as Parliament's agreement with the king

---

**OLIVE BRANCH PETITION** Representatives to the Continental Congress in the spring and early summer of 1775 divided into two rival camps. The radicals were predominantly New Englanders led by John Adams, who favored an immediate declaration

in rejecting the Olive Branch Petition and setting the stage for war.

*See also Continental Congresses.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Flower, Milton E. *John Dickinson, Conservative Revolutionary*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1983.
- Middlekauf, Robert. *The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution, 1763–1789*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Gregory J. Dehler

---

**ORPHANS AND ORPHANAGES** Since the seventeenth century, child welfare policy in America has wavered between two principal policies: providing support to keep families together, and removing orphans from their families to care for them elsewhere. The word *orphans*, in the language of the new American nation, meant children who had lost one or both parents and who, because their families were unable to care for them, had become the public's responsibility. Although public leaders during the colonial period had relied primarily on three types of arrangements to care for orphans—outdoor relief, indenture, and almshouses—it was during the era of the new American nation that orphanages first appeared and entered their formative stage.

In 1739 George Whitefield (1714–1770), the charismatic leader of the transatlantic religious revival known as the Great Awakening (late 1730s and early 1740s), traveled to America to care for orphaned children. Inspired by the asylum of the German Pietist August Hermann Francke in Halle, Germany, Whitefield founded Bethesda Orphanage, known as the House of Mercy, in 1740. Located near Savannah, Georgia, it was the first orphanage in the British American colonies. (The first orphanage in all of the territory that would eventually become the United States was the Ursuline convent founded in New Orleans in 1727 by the French for children orphaned in an Indian raid.) Bethesda Orphanage was unique for its time, a product of Whitefield's emphasis on Christian charity and private philanthropy and of his insistence that benevolent giving was not the unique province of the elite. Of the forty-six children who entered Bethesda in 1740, eleven stayed for less than a year, and only nine remained in 1745. The vast majority of Bethesda's orphans returned to their families or were apprenticed to artisan families.

By 1801 seven orphan asylums dotted the Atlantic Coast. In 1790 the only publicly funded orphanage in the United States during the eighteenth century was founded by the city of Charleston, South Carolina, when it opened the doors of the Charleston Orphan House for 115 destitute children. Thereafter, private associations began to appear in northern urban areas. In 1797 one association founded the Society for the Relief of Poor Widows and Small Children in New York City to care for orphans; the following year a Roman Catholic priest established St. Joseph's Female Orphan Asylum in Philadelphia to care for girls orphaned by yellow fever. In 1799 St. Paul's Orphanage was founded in Baltimore for impoverished girls and, a year later, an association of women incorporated the Boston Female Orphan Asylum. In 1801 the Hebrew Orphan Asylum was established to care for poor children in Charleston.

Orphanages began to proliferate in America after 1801. By 1830 there were more than thirty orphan asylums in the United States, most located in northeastern urban areas, twenty-one under the auspices of Protestant churches, and ten established by Catholic churches. Elite and middle-class white women provided the leadership and organizational skills for these early orphanages. The Second Great Awakening (1790s–1830s) spurred them to social activism in this area and in many other public spheres of moral reform. These included interdenominational campaigns to curb drinking, end slavery, and improve the condition of the poor and insane.

The programs of the thirty-odd private orphanages differed radically in their approaches. Some, like the New York Orphan Asylum, sought the permanent removal of children from their indigent or widowed parents, while others, like the Boston Female Asylum, offered short-term facilities as well as long-term care for impoverished mothers during economic downturns. They often admitted as many as from ninety to one hundred children, boys under the age of six and girls under the age eight. All made efforts to educate their young charges. They were instructed in religion, reading, writing, and arithmetic, yet also earned their own keep by knitting stockings sold to benefit the institution. Most boys and girls left the asylum at approximately age twelve (though some left as early as ages nine or ten), when they were placed under indenture. Most of the girls were bound out as domestic servants; the boys were bound out as agricultural laborers to farmers or apprenticed to trades such as cabinetmaking, shoemaking, and tail-

oring. The managers of the Boston Female Asylum placed approximately 4 percent of their charges for adoption.

For orphanages in America, the period from roughly 1754 to 1829 was a formative one. During the antebellum era, public officials and moral reformers investigated almshouses, a popular method of caring for children. They revealed mismanaged and overcrowded institutions where living conditions were squalid. As a result, they urged that "scientifically" administered orphanages replace almshouses. In the following decades, orphanages would mushroom, numbering nearly two hundred on the eve of the Civil War.

*See also Asylums; Philanthropy and Giving; Revivals and Revivalism; Women: Women's Voluntary Associations.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Porter, Susan L. "A Good Home: Indenture and Adoption in Nineteenth-Century Orphanages." In *Adoption in America: Historical Perspectives*. Edited by E. Wayne Carp. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2002.

Hacsí, Timothy A. *Second Home: Orphan Asylums and Poor Families in America*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997.

McCarthy, Kathleen D. *American Creed: Philanthropy and the Rise of Civil Society, 1700–1865*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

*E. Wayne Carp*



---

**PAIN** As in previous eras, pain was omnipresent in the new American nation. Americans expected to experience pain and even to be debilitated by it for short or long periods of time, although expressions of this pain varied through gender conventions. By the eighteenth century, women were expected to suffer more than men, as they were considered more delicate creatures. Men who complained too loudly or long about pain ran the risk of being seen as effeminate.

People in pain had recourse to only a few pain medications. By the end of the eighteenth century, large doses of opium were common. Some physicians, called vitalists, believed that the infliction of pain would awaken the patient's vital energy and allow him or her to fight the illness causing the pain. By the early nineteenth century, morphine, a more effective pain reliever, had been isolated from opium. However, all of these attempts to relieve pain did little for most sufferers and ran the risk of creating drug-addicted patients.

For centuries, Christians understood that pain was linked with original sin, an indication of divine retribution. However, with the onset of the Enlightenment, understandings of pain were secularized. Physicians and philosophes separated pain from sin and punishment and searched for scientific under-

standings of the causes of pain. Some believed pain could give the physician indication of how to proceed in treating the illness.

This secularization did not lead to the abandonment of the link between spirituality and pain in the new American nation. American Christians sustained the belief that God meted out pain. While secular humanists tried to divorce understanding of pain and illness from religion, ministers continued to preach that pain originated from original sin and congregants continued to believe in the link between sin and pain. God made this world a vale of tears. Only in the next life would a man or woman be released from earthly pain.

*See also Drugs; Medicine.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Crane, Elaine Forman. "'I Have Suffer'd Much Today': The Defining Force of Pain in Early America." In *Through a Glass Darkly: Reflections on Personal Identity in Early America*. Edited by Ronald Hoffman, Mechal Sobel, and Fredrika J. Teute. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Rey, Roselyne. *The History of Pain*. Translated by Louise Elliot Wallace, J. A. Cadden, and S. W. Cadden. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995.

Vertosick, Frank T. *Why We Hurt: The Natural History of Pain*. New York: Harcourt, 2000.

Sarah Swedberg

**PAINE, THOMAS** More than any other writer of the late eighteenth century, Thomas Paine articulated the democratic aspirations of that revolutionary age. His contribution lay less in the originality of his ideas than in his ability to articulate those ideas in a style that resonated with the experiences of ordinary people. Paine's best-selling pamphlets in support of the American and French Revolutions—*Common Sense* and *The Rights of Man*—transformed this former stay maker, sailor, and tax collector into an international symbol of democratic radicalism. To his supporters, he was the heroic leader of a popular movement to eradicate artificial privilege and inequality. His many detractors on the other hand—like John Adams, who once referred to him as a “mongrel between Pigg and Puppy, begotten by a wild Boar on a Bitch Wolf”—worried that Paine’s scathing attacks on all forms of traditional authority threatened to engulf the Atlantic world in anarchic mob rule. But whether they hated him or loved him, by the 1790s there were few people in the Atlantic basin who had not at least heard of Thomas Paine.

Paine was born and raised in Thetford, about seventy-five miles from London. At the age of twelve he followed his father into the trade of stay making (stays were the whalebone pieces that gave corsets their shape and stiffness). After a short stint as a sailor aboard a privateer, Paine moved to Sandwich in 1758 where he set up his own stay making shop and married Mary Lambert. Mary and their newborn child died in 1760, and for the next eight years Paine held various jobs in the south of England until finally finding steady work in 1768 as an excise officer in Lewes. That town, with its tradition of political radicalism extending back to the 1640s, transformed this disgruntled laborer into an articulate and radicalized activist.

Several strands of British oppositional thought underlay Paine’s political vision. First, his Quaker upbringing taught him to distrust orthodox authorities and instead follow his own “inner light.” Second, during a short stay in London in his twenties, Paine associated with a group of artisans who, in the spirit of Benjamin Franklin, regularly attended public lectures on scientific topics. At these lectures Paine was introduced to the fundamental Enlightenment

tenet that the natural and social worlds operated according to a set of universal laws that any person could discover through the use of their rational faculties. The anti-authoritarian implications of this Newtonian worldview—if reason was universally shared then religious and political leaders had no special access to “the truth”—remained an unchanging feature of Paine’s life’s work. Finally, thanks to his participation in political debating societies in Lewes and elsewhere, Paine became steeped in Whig opposition thought, which advocated parliamentary reforms to limit the government’s power and make it more responsive to the citizenry.

Arriving in Philadelphia only a few months before the battles of Lexington and Concord, Paine encountered a large community of politicized citizens who already spoke his transatlantic language of religious dissent, Enlightenment rationality, and Whig republicanism. After honing his journalistic skills for a year as the editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, Paine wove these ideological threads together to produce the most widely read pamphlet of its day, *Common Sense*. As an idealistic transplant with few ties to any particular locality, Paine was perfectly situated to articulate a sweeping vision of a unified American state that had a world-historical mission to establish representative government and create the conditions for widespread economic prosperity. With rude swipes at the king, whom he referred to as “the Royal Brute,” and inspirational assertions that the colonists had the unprecedented opportunity to “begin the world anew,” Paine channeled the inchoate rage and unvoiced aspirations of ordinary Americans into a growing movement for national independence. When *Common Sense* was published in January of 1776 few Americans had publicly broached the issue of independence. By July of that year, however, the popularity of Paine’s pamphlet and the force of its arguments played a major role in pushing a hesitating Continental Congress toward declaring independence. During the war Paine produced, at George Washington’s request, a series of *Crisis* papers that boosted the morale of the Continental Army. At the same time he also worked with a diverse coalition of urban and rural radicals in Pennsylvania to write the Revolution’s most democratic state constitution.

In the early years of the war, Paine succeeded because he served multiple constituencies. The leadership class needed his abilities as a publicist, and the Patriot rank-and-file appreciated his support for democratic measures that furthered their political and economic interests. By the 1780s, however, Paine found himself at odds both with many Patriot



**Tom Paine's Nightly Pest.** Paine's detractors worried that his attacks on traditional authority threatened to engulf the Atlantic world in mob rule. He was particularly despised by conservatives in England, where James Gillray produced this engraving in 1792. Paine is shown dreaming of his final judgment, when he will be punished for his revolutionary ideals. © CORBIS.

leaders and with urban radicals. Paine was unusual in the 1780s in that he endorsed both highly democratic political arrangements and free-market economics. Most supporters of the free market were established leaders who had little interest in democratizing politics, whereas most supporters of democratic politics were skeptical of the free market and advocated price controls and other economic restrictions to protect laborers from the vagaries of the market. Paine's amalgam of democracy and free-market capitalism would eventually become mainstream in the nineteenth century. When he decided to return to England in 1787, however, he left America having alienated a good number of his former allies.

Paine reemerged on the world stage in 1790 when he wrote *The Rights of Man* to defend the French Revolution against the British statesman Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Paine's pamphlet, the second part of which was issued in 1792, sold an estimated 300,000 copies throughout Europe and America. In the context of America's heated partisan battles of the 1790s, Paine's outspoken support for international revolution made him one of the most controversial figures of the decade. Republicans used his writings to show that any true American patriot should support both the French Revolution and continued democratization at home. The Federalists, especially after Paine's attack on organized religion (*The Age of Reason*) was published in

1795, argued that the Republicans' association with Paine showed that they were too radical to be trusted with political power. In the summer of 1798, in the midst of the Quasi-War with France and immediately following passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts, some Federalists went so far as to claim that Paine was part of an international conspiracy to overthrow all religion, abolish private property, and eliminate national governments. By the time Paine returned to America in 1802, very few Americans would publicly associate themselves with him. Indeed, Thomas Jefferson was viciously criticized for granting Paine passage from France on a navy warship and warmly receiving him at the White House. Paine died in 1809, a poor and publicly reviled man.

His American detractors were right in claiming that Paine had become more radical during his time in Europe, but he was hardly the bloodthirsty, atheistic anarchist they claimed. In 1793, as a member of the French National Assembly, Paine allied himself with a moderate faction and argued against the execution of the king; when the Jacobins took power, they had Paine imprisoned for almost a year. The tract he wrote in jail, *The Age of Reason*, affirmed his belief "in one God" and his hopes for "happiness beyond this life." So although he was neither an anarchist nor an atheist, Paine's writings of the 1790s did extend his vision of democracy into increasingly radical and uncharted territory. In the second part of *The Rights of Man* he argued that the government should institute a progressive taxation system (with a top tax rate of 100 percent) to discourage great inequalities of wealth. He also advocated state pensions for poor men and their widows not as a matter "of Charity, but of right." A few years later, in *Agrarian Justice*, Paine argued that because modern commercial society had created an increasingly "hereditary" class of poor people by robbing them of their right to a portion of the earth, the state had a duty to compensate every citizen for this loss. Most of his contemporaries regarded such ideas as perversions rather than logical extensions of the democratic ideal. But future American radicals would look back to this phase of Paine's career as a source of ideas and inspiration for their own struggles to create a more democratic and egalitarian world.

*See also* **Alien and Sedition Acts; Citizenship; Continental Congresses; Declaration of Independence; Democratic Republicans; European Influences: Enlightenment Thought; European Influences: The French**

**Revolution; Federalists; Founding Fathers; Government; Jefferson, Thomas; Politics; Political Thought; Politics: Political Pamphlets; Quasi-War with France; Radicalism in the Revolution.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Foner, Eric. *Tom Paine and Revolutionary America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.  
 Foner, Eric, ed. *Thomas Paine: Collected Writings*. New York: Library of America, 1995.  
 Fruchtman, Jack. *Thomas Paine: Apostle of Freedom*. Four Walls Eight Windows, 1994.  
 Keane, John. *Tom Paine: A Political Life*. New York: Grove Press, 2003.

Seth Cotlar

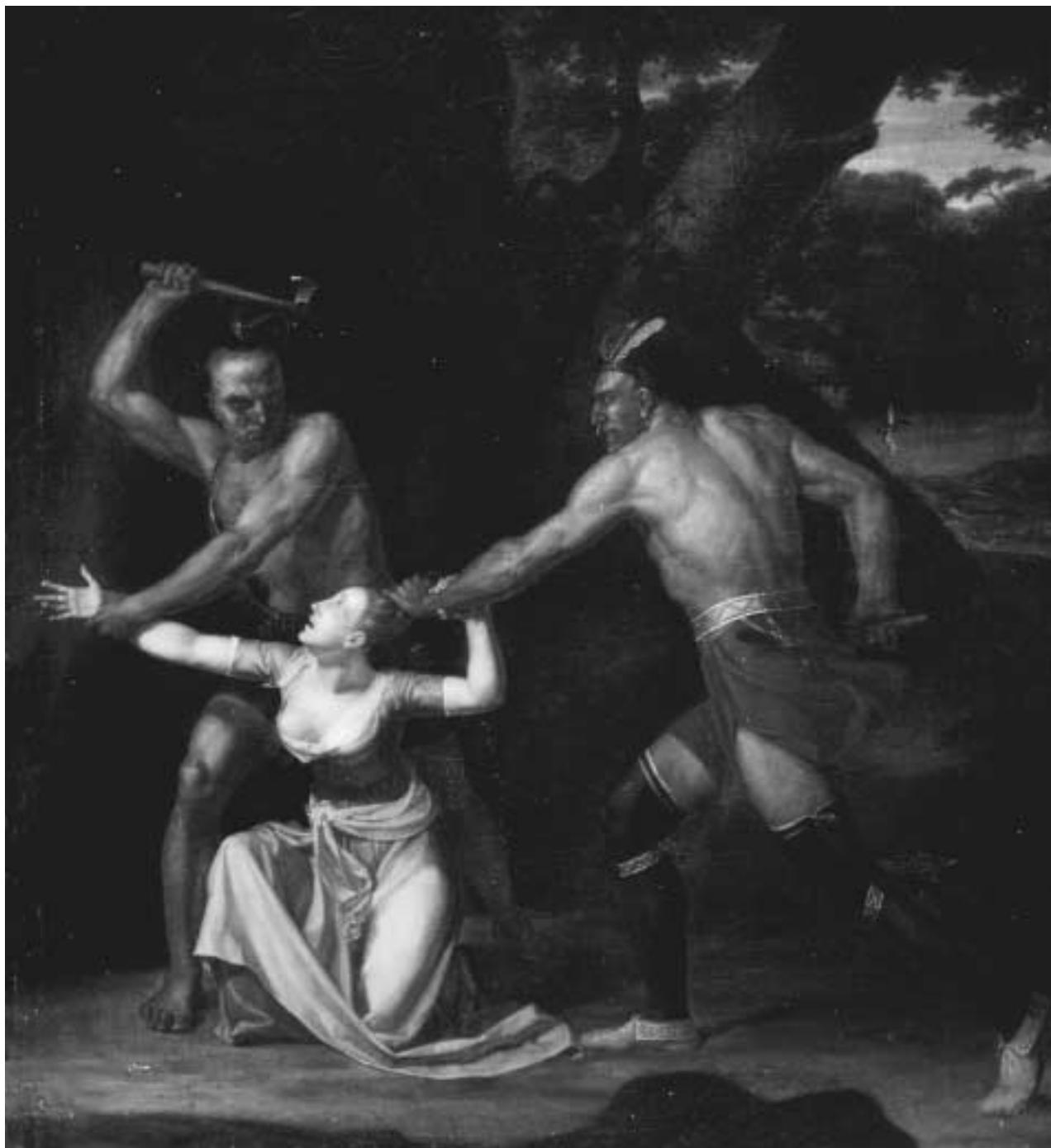
---

**PAINTING** If it can be said that there is a national artistic tradition in American painting, it is true only insofar as it is a tradition that is contentious and conciliatory, direct and convoluted, wildly independent yet eager to demonstrate its urbane and cosmopolitan European associations. How did a relatively young country that derived from thirteen fractious colonies and was physically removed from its European antecedents come to have anything that could be considered a tradition regarding art? It did so by developing a number of artistic practices in which European references were recognizable but were rendered in uniquely American terms. From the functional expressions of sign painters of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, to the grand gestures of nineteenth-century landscapes that worship nature, Americans certainly were not immune to interpreting their world through painting.

#### THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Early depictions of the territory comprising the British North American colonies were employed widely as visual aids to stimulate interest in the colonies across the Atlantic, or to sketch for those back in England something of the thriving port towns. Such images may have detailed the workings of systems of labor, or the interactions between Europeans and the local Indians; Indians fascinated and many were eager for their images.

In a challenging seventeenth-century colonial environment rife with uncertainties, wilderness terrified rather than delighted; its reproduction for plea-



**The Death of Jane McCrea (1804).** The death in 1777 of Jane McCrea at the hands of Indians allied with the British was rendered by several artists during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This version by John Vanderlyn portrays the murder in lurid, highly sexualized detail. The effect is to link the Revolution to a sexual threat by nonwhite males, implicitly justifying their people's fate at the hands of the triumphant Republic. © FRANCIS G. MAYER/CORBIS.

surable contemplation was unthinkable. Thus, in the North American colonies, it was portraiture that first made an appearance in American painting, not landscape. Early portraits—such as those of John

Winthrop or Pocahontas—were largely utilitarian. They were records of the sitter (including the regular practice of noting the age of the sitter in Latin within the body of the portrait) executed in a stiff, frontal

manner in which the subject gazed out at the viewer and the viewer returned the glance. Such portraits carried within them visual clues regarding the status and occupation (not to mention the sensibility) of the sitter. The style owed much to seventeenth-century European painting—notably Dutch and English—demonstrating that American painting did not develop in an artistic vacuum.

#### **EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PORTRAITURE: EXPLORATION OF CURVE AND SPACE**

Early practitioners of eighteenth-century portrait painting such as Robert Feke (c. 1705–c. 1750) and Joseph Blackburn (c. 1730–c. 1774) (and the ever-present Anonymous), ushered in a new age of portraiture, aspiring as they did to the style of the formally trained painters of the wealthier English classes. The placement of the sitter continued to be typically frontal and the gaze continued to engage the viewer. However, rather than the portrait being merely a useful record of the sitter, it became a vehicle for the display of the sitter's newly attained colonial wealth and status, in addition to showcasing the aptitude of the artist. The frontality and adherence to line (resulting in images that were inescapably two-dimensional), so characteristic of the limner tradition, gradually became an artistic exploration of curve, of space and of light in a three-dimensional world. (Untrained artists tended to rely on sharp outlines to delineate form.) By the middle of the eighteenth century, the dimensionlessness of decal-like figures who adhered to the surface of the canvas developed into fully rounded forms who inhabited space.

#### **LINE, SHADOW, AND FORM**

It is in the work of John Singleton Copley (1738–1815) where fullness of form is rendered such that the eye sees it as occupying space and having substantive tactility. Although Copley retained the limner's love of line he infused his forms with three-dimensionality. Copley's ability to transcend the limner-folk tradition to which he was heir (though that tradition endured in its own right) guided American painting into a long-standing love of realism. He presided over a period of classical American painting in which the European courtly portrait tradition found its match on the comparatively rough-and-tumble North American shores some three thousand miles distant.

One of the most quintessential examples of Copley's ability to paint fully rounded form is his formal portrait of *Mrs. Ezekiel Goldthwait* (1770–1771)—a

well-to-do matron whose animate hand reaches for inanimate (but nonetheless lifelike) fruit. Copley delighted in surface (the table is hard and highly polished) and shadow (the deep folds of Mrs. Goldthwait's skirts are depicted darkly), both echoes of the limner tradition. Copley's portrait of Paul Revere (late 1760s–1770) is an example of a less formal endeavor: it portrays Revere in his trade as a silversmith years before he became one of the key figures associated with Revolutionary America. (Revere was initially known as an engraver and it is his representation of the Boston Massacre in March 1770, that is familiar.) In Copley's portrait, Revere pauses to consider what he will engrave on the silver teapot resting in his left hand while his right hand, raised to his face, indents the flesh on the side of his mouth as he holds his chin thoughtfully. There is plenty of adherence to line and surface as is typical of Copley, but the portrait can be described as "realistic" or "life-like" because Copley was a master of life breathed into line. His contemporary, Gilbert Stuart (1755–1828) known, in part, by his various portraits—finished and unfinished—of George Washington, employed a more painterly approach to his realism, eschewing hard linearity in favor of a lighter, comparatively impressionistic hand, though the weight of form and contour did not suffer. Stuart's *The Skater* from the early 1780s is a masterpiece of colonial painterliness. (It was for a time, thought to be a work by the British artist Thomas Gainsborough.) In a similar vein, Thomas Sully (1783–1872) who painted dashing figures set amid romantic landscapes owed much to the English portrait tradition. European art—long considered the chief example of artistic refinement—in short drew numerous late-eighteenth-century and early-nineteenth-century American painters regardless of their artistic style: from Copley and West, John Trumbull and John Vanderlyn to Washington Allston, Samuel F. B. Morse and Thomas Cole.

#### **HISTORY PAINTING AND A BURGEONING LANDSCAPE**

While people never tire of having their picture painted, the work of Benjamin West (1738–1820) changed the thrust of American painting in the late 1770s from the predominance of portraiture toward landscape. Initially, in an unfamiliar land, portraits were preferable; the eye did not seek out disorderly vistas, but with the imposition (at least superficially) of colonial order upon the land, vast spaces were less frightening. Portraits contain. Landscapes expand. West clothed that expansiveness in familiar garb, looking to the classical past for inspiration. His ef-



**The Death of General Wolfe (1776).** Though he remained within the history-painting genre, Benjamin West angled away from ancient classical subjects and toward contemporary events rendered in grand style. *The Death of General Wolfe*, shown here in an engraving by William Woollett after West, depicts the death of James Wolfe at the Battle of Quebec in 1759. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

forts at biblical narrative and scenes from ancient Greece and Rome characterized him as a history painter—one who mined the past for lessons useful in the present. The advent of history painting signaled, in part, a new direction in painting as well as in the ways Americans interacted with their world. Gone was the preference for controlled and controllable interiors where evidence of the out-of-doors was either entirely excluded or relegated to a glimpse of a tame, vaguely Claudian (that is, romanticized landscape with poetic ethereal lighting) cluster of trees. Instead, landscape with all of its unpredictability became an important locus of activity. History paintings and the fact that they encompassed great sweeps of space as well as great ideas demonstrated a growing confidence on the part of Americans in their ability not only to survive but to thrive in a vast territory. However, the somewhat romanticized depictions of toga-clad figures as they reenacted scenes of vary-

ing solemnity had relatively little to do with American life in the 1770s.

Though West remained within the history-painting genre, he soon angled away from ancient classical subjects and toward contemporary events rendered in grand style. West's *Death of General Wolfe* (1770), for example, was painted after the end of the Seven Years' War (1756–1763) in which Britain vanquished the French from North America. Wolfe, relatively young and untried militarily speaking, managed to achieve victory on the Plains of Abraham—a highly defensible French field of battle made inaccessible by unscaleable cliffs. Rallying round Wolfe were contemporary figures—all of whom were recognizable types to anyone viewing the painting. Wolfe's swooning figure was both real and symbolic and his death had distinct redemptive value.

Copley, too, tried his hand at history painting as evidenced by his *Watson and the Shark* of 1778. It de-

picted a horrific event in which a young man was depicted struggling to reach the outstretched hands of his rescuers while a shark displayed ferocious rows of teeth as it bore down on the helpless, terrified form. As Americans developing an artistic idiom, it behooved artists drawn to the grand gestures of iconic, historical figures to make those figures accessible to a contemporary viewing audience.

While the grisly and frightening aspect of certain historical paintings can be said to have spun off into a direction that favored Romantic visions of the ghostly and suggestions of the supernatural—as seen especially in the paintings of Washington Allston (1779–1843) who was active in the beginning of the 1800s—the out-of-doors settings of those history paintings helped pave the way toward a visual exploration of landscape for its own sake. Too, over time, the moody, gothic depictions by a painter like Allston that capitalized on moonlight and shadow in fact showcased the land: if the land could offer such moonlit mysteries, what might it have to offer during the daylight hours?

American painters might have discarded the ghostly aspect of Allston's gothic Romanticism, but they nevertheless retained the Romantic sensibility. It was, after all, the early nineteenth century—a time in which industry-advancing inventions came to the fore. And it was those inventions, along with the advent of steam power, the development of canal systems, and the spread of railroads that contributed greatly to the rosy optimism (at least in some quarters) and the expansionist vision that was a key characteristic of the new American nation.

Although it would be some years before the Indian Removals of Jacksonian America (Jackson was elected in 1828 and Congress passed the Indian Removal Act in 1830), and before John L. O'Sullivan wrote convincingly of America being a "great nation of futurity" (1839) or coined the phrase "Manifest Destiny" (1845), the American sensibility was nevertheless focused on the possibility of the unrestricted extension of the nation's western borders—an expansiveness that was reflected in painting.

#### **REVOLUTIONARY LIBERTY AND AFRICAN AMERICAN PORTRAITURE**

It was during the Revolutionary period in the 1770s and 1780s that images of African Americans began to appear regularly. (However, it must be said that there were numerous images of Africans throughout western art for centuries, largely because those images pre-dated the equation of Africanness with slavery. Once the two became largely synonymous as a

result of New World bound labor practices, depictions of Africans and their descendants became exceptional.) As a group of people for whom liberty was key, and as eager participants in the struggle for freedom, African Americans appeared in any number of places in the visual record. Paul Revere's engraving of the "Bloody Massacre" included the name of Crispus Attucks (c. 1723–1770) among the brief list of "unhappy sufferers," but there is no known portrait of Attucks. Nevertheless, numerous formal portraits of African Americans were painted during that time.

John Trumbull's portrait of George Washington at West Point (1780) included William Lee, one of George Washington's slaves. Lee was depicted in a turban (a popular eighteenth-century artistic conceit for French and British artists portraying Africans and those of African descent), and thus was exoticized. Nevertheless, Trumbull did not lampoon Lee. Instead, he depicted Lee as an active participant in the events of the time. Similarly, other engravings of Washington included Lee whose presence and assistance during the war campaigns Washington found indispensable. (Washington provided for Lee in his will, explicitly referring to Lee's services during the War for Independence.) Trumbull continued to acknowledge and embrace the presence of Revolutionary-period African Americans in his later work: his *Battle of Bunker Hill* (1786) included the well-known Peter Salem (one of several African Americans fighting), who participated in the fray.

Other artists depicted African Americans as valued soldiers during the American War for Independence. But the presence of those of African descent was not limited to involvement in war campaigns. While the War for Independence could be considered an incomplete revolution as far as the universal application of liberty and natural rights was concerned, the numbers of free African Americans were nonetheless on the rise post-war. There was a variety of African American clergy—including Absalom Jones, Richard Allen, and Peter Williams—whose portraits were made prior to 1820. (Indeed, a ceramic pitcher of English Liverpoolware with Jones's image on it was produced around 1808, to much the same purpose that Josiah Wedgwood's late-1780s medallion of a generic enslaved man "Am I Not a Man and a Brother?" was devised: to further the antislavery cause.) Several members of the Philadelphia-based family of artists and natural scientists, the Peales (notably Charles Willson Peale (1741–1827), the patriarch, and one of his sons, Raphaelle Peale (1774–1825) painted portraits of African Americans, prom-



**Watson and the Shark (1778).** John Singleton Copley's ability to transcend the limner-folk tradition to which he was heir guided American painting into a long-standing love of realism. In this painting Copley depicts an event that occurred near Havana, Cuba, in 1749 when Brook Watson, a young sailor, was attacked by a shark while swimming in the harbor. Watson was rescued by his shipmates, but he lost his right leg below the knee. © BURSTEIN COLLECTION/CORBIS.

inent and less so, in the 1810s. Raphaelle painted a portrait in 1810, of the cleric Jones, while Charles Willson Peale depicted an African who retained his Muslim faith—Yarrow Mamout—in 1819. His portrayal of Mamout, who was not famous, was a respectful rendering of an aged, free person of color.

Gradual manumission laws, effective beginning in the 1780s, contributed to the growing number of free African Americans in the early nineteenth century. However, political, social and economic changes in the late 1810s into the 1820s sanctioned the curtailment of African American liberties in all aspects of life: from voting, to housing and education, to occupations. Ironically, it is a period in American histo-

ry frequently characterized as one in which a strong egalitarian impulse prevailed (in part due to the Second Great Awakening). Maryland-based painter Joshua Johnson (sometimes "Johnston"), however, is an exception. Without the benefit of formal artistic training, Johnson painted local Maryland worthies in a naïve style that was charming for its directness. Nevertheless, in this period in general, the recorded artistic endeavors of African Americans were largely in the realm of the decorative arts, especially furniture making and cabinetry. Many African Americans were skilled artisans, such as cabinetmaker Thomas Day who flourished in the period between 1820 and 1860, whose creative impulse endured in three-dimensional, everyday items.

### HUDSON RIVER SCHOOL AND THE TRIUMPH OF NATURE

It is the short-lived Thomas Cole (1801–1848) rather than his slightly older and longer-lived contemporary Asher B. Durand (1796–1886), who is considered the father of the Hudson River school—the quintessential American art movement of the first half of the nineteenth century—although Cole's early paintings were tributes to the dreamy vision of the classical ideal, to Arcadia. Cole was beguiled by artistic invocations of the beautiful and the sublime; some of his works are paintings to uplift the soul and to encourage one toward the recognition and contemplation of the awesome power of God's world. His well-known series *The Course of Empire*, which outlined for the viewer the cycle of human endeavor from promising beginnings, through a decadent apex, to a desolation of man-made things left standing like a warning (covered as they were in neglect), attests to that vision.

However, in other works, Cole foregoes the contrived lessons of man's dissolute ways, concentrating instead on the grandeur of nature before him. In America, all nature is new, unsullied—or so it seems when compared with ancient European locales. It is that newness, that hopefulness (recall the "city on a hill" and the beacon of light that America was to be) that finds expression in the landscapes of the Hudson River school. With the help of a higher power (for the descendants of Puritans it is God; for someone like Ralph Waldo Emerson, it is the Universal Being), America's pristine wilderness was a vehicle for a kind of salvation. It is nature that reveals God's essence. On the occasions in which the human figure is present in the landscape, it is dwarfed by the size and sublimeness of the natural world. In contrast to the classical American portrait style of Copley in the eighteenth century (or even of Thomas Sully [1783–1872] in the early nineteenth century) where the emphasis is on the ability of artist-as-draftsman, the landscapes of the Hudson River school deemphasize the hand of the artist. Erasure of the artist is the goal; the scene is meant to be unmediated (in much the same way that photography, when new, was said to capture the "truth" of what the eye saw without editorialization). The viewer is meant to stand before the canvas—rendered with authenticity by an artist who has been vouchsafed the essence of the scene—and to commune, fully, with Nature.

Thomas Cole, despite being the father of the Hudson River school, was a transitional figure, although his sensibility lived on in the work of Robert S. Duncanson (1817–1872) who was considered one of the first recognized African American professional

painters; Duncanson flourished in the mid-nineteenth century and was a true practitioner of the Hudson River mood. After Cole, the canvases of American landscape painting became immense—their sheer size encouraging the viewer to very nearly step into the scene. That monumentality was no accident; it was both a symbol of the endless renewal that a distinctly American Nature afforded its people and a reflection of the reality of the country's generous proportions and providentially endless boundaries. It echoed the confidence with which the new nation expanded and contained within it the first fears of the result of that expansion—a vanishing wilderness. And it was an assertion—at once nostalgic and expectant—that the errand into the wilderness had been in some sense completed, yet continued to draw the nation ahead into futurity.

*See also Art and American Nationhood.*

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Flexner, James T. *American Painting: The Light of Distant Skies, 1760–1835*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1954.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Nineteenth Century American Painting*. New York: Putnam, 1970.
- Huth, Hans. *Nature and the American*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957. Reprint, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972.
- Kaplan, Sidney. *The Black Presence in the Era of the American Revolution: 1770–1800*. New York: New York Graphic Society, Ltd., 1973.
- McShine, Kynaston. *The Natural Paradise: Painting in America 1800–1950*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1976.
- Miller, Perry. *Errand into the Wilderness*. New York: Harper and Row, 1964.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Nature's Nation*. Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967.
- Miller, Perry, ed. *The Transcendentalists*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1950.
- Nash, Roderick. *Wilderness and the American Mind*. Rev. ed. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1973.
- Novak, Barbara. *American Painting of the Nineteenth Century*. New York: Praeger, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Nature and Culture: American Landscape and Painting 1825–1875*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Next to Nature: Landscape Paintings from the National Academy of Design*. New York: Harper and Row, 1980.
- Wilmerding, John. *American Views: Essays on American Art*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991.

T. K. Hunter

---

**PALEONTOLOGY** Several currents of thought converged in the 1790s to give new impetus to study



**Exhumation of the Mastodon (1806–1808).** In this painting Charles Willson Peale commemorated the excavation of a nearly complete mastodon skeleton near Newburgh, New York. The skeleton was installed as the centerpiece of Peale's Philadelphia Museum in 1801. THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND.

of the natural past. Over the course of half a century, American natural historians had shifted from conceiving of the world as governed by an active God to a world governed by a more distant deity operating through immutable natural law. At the same time, the French comparative anatomist Georges Cuvier (1769–1832) capped a long and intense debate by concluding that the recently discovered remains of a gigantic aquatic lizard proved that extinction and faunal change were real phenomena. The static world, created in perfection by God and fixed for all eternity, had given way to a dynamic one in which the past was deeper and eminently more distant.

Although American fossils received little attention prior to the Revolution—and indeed were often not understood as organic remains—one fossil or-

ganism proved an exception, gaining an unusual importance as a symbol of national identity and nationalist aspiration. Fragmentary specimens of mastodons had been known from as early as 1705, when the Puritan divine Cotton Mather (1663–1728) described a tooth as belonging to a human giant. Bones and tusks discovered in Kentucky and New York garnered attention on both sides of the Atlantic as natural historians tried to discern the true identity of this “American *incognitum*,” an animal likened to an elephant, but (to some) with a carnivore’s heavily cusped teeth. So great was the interest that Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) had specimens sent to him in London, and when teeth were uncovered near the Hudson River in 1780, George Washington (1732–1799) took time out from the Revolution to see for himself.

With Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826), however, interest in the mastodon reached its peak. As governor of Virginia, Jefferson received in November 1780 a standard set of diplomatic queries about his state from the French minister François de Barbé-Marbois (1745–1837), and he responded by writing a decidedly nonstandard meditation on his new nation. In a key section of the resulting book, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785), Jefferson set out to defend his country against the calumnies of Georges Louis Leclerc de Buffon (1707–1788), a French scientist who had theorized that the American climate was so cold and damp that life there would inevitably degenerate.

To Jefferson, such a judgment on the American nation could not be left to stand unchallenged. To counter Buffon, he assembled data on the size of American animals, demonstrating that American deer, skunks, and weasels were every bit as large as their European counterparts. But the *pièce de résistance* of his argument was the great American mastodon, “six times the cubic volume of the elephant,” fiercer and more virile than its plant-eating kin. Still doubting that extinction could occur, Jefferson—when organizing the transcontinental expeditions of André Michaux (1746–1802) in 1793 and of Meriwether Lewis (1774–1809) and William Clark (1770–1838) in 1803—pointedly ordered them to watch for any mastodon herds the might still be wandering the trackless west.

This paleontological assault continued in 1797, when Jefferson described a giant claw and phalanges from an animal that he named *Megalonyx* (big claw) as belonging to a great lionlike beast, as much at the head of the clawed animals as the mastodon was at the head of pachyderms. It was up to his friend, the anatomist Caspar Wistar (1761–1818), to recognize *Megalonyx* as a giant ground sloth, and up to others to show that the mastodon was in fact an herbivore.

But still the mastodon remained the American star. A nearly complete skeleton excavated near Newburgh, New York, was installed as the centerpiece of Charles Willson Peale’s (1741–1827) Philadelphia Museum in 1801, becoming the most popular exhibit in the foremost venue in the early Republic for the public display of American natural history.

*See also Deism; Jefferson, Thomas.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the State of Virginia*. Paris: Pierres, 1785.

Roger, Jacques. *Buffon: A Life in Natural History*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997.

Semonin, Paul. *American Monster: How the Nation's First Prehistoric Creature Became a Symbol of National Identity*. New York: New York University Press, 2000.

Robert S. Cox

---

**PANAMA CONGRESS** The Panama Congress, held in 1826, was intended to form a union among the newly independent Spanish American republics. Simon Bolívar issued a circular letter on 7 December 1824 calling for a meeting to frame a confederation. On 23 April 1825 a Washington, D.C., newspaper ran an article containing an agenda that included a discussion of neutral rights, the three essential principles of which are: free ships make free goods (goods belonging to a belligerent are considered neutral if in a neutral vessel); limited contraband (that is, those goods that a neutral cannot trade to a belligerent and still remain a neutral); and strict definition of a legal blockade (there must be a reasonable certainty rather than a reasonable possibility of capture). Secretary of State Henry Clay had long been an advocate of Pan American cooperation. President John Quincy Adams had been a skeptic, but he supported the idea of a neutral rights convention. The Mexican and Colombian ministers to the United States tendered unofficial invitations to the United States, mentioning neutral rights. In May the cabinet approved American attendance. In November the United States was formally invited.

In December 1825 Adams nominated Richard C. Anderson, then minister to Colombia, and John Sergeant as ministers to the Panama Congress. Martin Van Buren led the opposition in the Senate, submitting a resolution calling attendance at the Congress unconstitutional. The Senate, however, rejected the resolution on 14 March 1826. The House of Representatives approved the mission on 22 April. Clay instructed the ministers to defend neutral rights and the Monroe Doctrine and to prevent the transfer of Cuba to another power. Anderson died en route and was replaced by Joel R. Poinsett, but the legation did not reach Panama until after the Congress, in January 1827. The Congress met from 22 June to 15 July 1826. The nations present agreed to form a confederation and a combined army and navy. However, only Colombia ratified the agreements. The next meeting, scheduled for the following year in Tacubaya, Mexico, never took place.

*See also Latin American Revolutions, American Response to; Monroe Doctrine.*

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Hargreaves, Mary W. M. *The Presidency of John Quincy Adams*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1985.
- Lewis, James E., Jr. *The American Union and the Problem of Neighborhood: The United States and the Collapse of the Spanish Empire, 1783–1829*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- Whitaker, Arthur. *The United States and the Independence of Latin America, 1800–1830*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1941.

*Robert W. Smith*

**PANIC OF 1819** Those living at the time of the Panic of 1819 indicated that it was a traumatic experience for the new Republic. In one representative conversation, John C. Calhoun, discussing the situation with John Quincy Adams in 1820, said, "There has been within these two years an immense revolution of fortunes in every part of the Union: enormous numbers of persons utterly ruined; multitudes in deep distress; and a general mass disaffection to the government" (Rezneck, "The Depression of 1819–1822," p. 29).

What historian Charles Sellers has called the young nation's "traumatic awakening to the capitalist reality of boom-and-bust" was a complex combination of financial market volatility, swings in international market demand, and the financial activity of the federal government (*Market Revolution*, p. 137). The panic and the following depression saw output stagnate, exports decline 34.5 percent, imports fall 48.9 percent, and a dramatic deflation as prices fell 30.6 percent.

The panic had its origins in the War of 1812 and the boom following the end of hostilities. With the opening of British and European markets in 1815, demand for American commodities soared. As farmers benefited from increased incomes, so did the cities and towns that served them. The only sector not sharing in the boom was the nation's nascent manufacturing firms, which had blossomed during the embargo and the war. The end of the war meant America was open to British manufacturing goods, which flooded the market and drove prices down sharply. Unable to compete, American manufacturing stumbled as factories closed and unemployment in manufacturing areas rose.

In studies of the panic, the actions of the second Bank of the United States, along with those of a number of state chartered banks, has received much attention. And the monetary collapse of 1818–1819

sounded the alarm for an economy rife with speculation and brought the economic optimism that fueled such speculation to an end. Although dramatic monetary changes were an important component in generating panic across the nation and certainly made conditions difficult for businesses and farmers, ultimately two factors were responsible for the downturn. The most important was the collapse of the strong foreign markets for commodities that had fueled the American economy in the years following the War of 1812. To a lesser extent, the repayment of federal debt, much of it to foreign bondholders, was also a proximate cause of the country's first modern business cycle.

The banking system played a critical role in the events leading up to the Panic of 1819. In exchange for a return to specie convertibility by state banks, the newly formed second Bank of the United States proceeded to expand credit dramatically. This expansion, combined with a marked increase in western land sales, created a situation in which, despite large imports of specie, the bank could not continue to meet the demand for redemption of its notes. Thus, in July 1818 the directors ordered credit reduced by a total of \$5 million at its Philadelphia, Baltimore, Richmond, and Norfolk offices.

Further complicating the financial picture at the time was the retirement of Louisiana bonds of 1803 scheduled to begin in 1818. Such fiscal action, on top of the over \$20 million in federal debt retired during 1817, meant that substantial government revenues did not reenter the economy directly, particularly the more than half of the bond retirement that went to foreigners. This outflow from the domestic economy decreased potential spending at a critical time and placed additional strains on the second bank as Treasury deposits held there dropped significantly.

With a monetary contraction under way, along with the continued retirement of federal debt, much of it to foreigners, the collapse of the markets for American staples meant the U.S. economy was headed for disaster. Led by an economic downturn in Great Britain, reinforced by recession in Europe, and adversely affected by the operations of the British Corn Laws, the demand for American staples dropped significantly beginning in 1819. The combined circumstances of a sharp credit contraction followed by the evaporation of markets for the nation's products created hardships for Americans of all classes as businesses closed, land values plummeted, and farmers were forced to abandon their activities.

The Panic of 1819 affected the nation in a variety of complex ways. Because of its origins in contrac-

tions by both state banks and the new Bank of the United States, hostility towards banking in general, and towards the second bank in particular, intensified. Political controversy regarding the bank and its power grew, and many of the anti-bank leaders of the Jacksonian period came to their positions as a result of the panic and subsequent depression.

Also, demands for tariffs to protect American businesses were intensified by the downturn, and while efforts to increase tariffs in 1820 failed by the narrowest of margins, in 1824 protection was increased. The movement for higher tariffs led ultimately to the record high Tariff of Abominations in 1828.

Public policy regarding debtor relief also took center stage, as did concern for the rising cost of poor relief. At the federal level, Congress postponed forfeiture for debt on public lands in 1818, 1819, and 1820 before providing permanent relief in 1821. Debt relief measures were hotly debated in virtually every state as well, with many passing some form of relief. Following the lead of New York, many states also began to review their poor relief systems, which led to substantial changes in most by the 1830s.

In addition, the upheaval of the panic served to strengthen the positions of states' rights advocates and to increase calls for expanding internal improvements. It also sparked a heightened interest in economic thinking, reflected for example in the publication in 1820 of the first American book on economics.

*See also* **Bank of the United States; Debt and Bankruptcy; Economic Development; Manufacturing; Poverty; Tariff Politics.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- North, Douglass C. *The Economic Growth of the United States, 1790–1860*. New York: Norton, 1966.
- Reznick, Samuel. "The Depression of 1819–1822, A Social History." *American Historical Review* 39 (1933): 28–47.
- Rothbard, Murray. *The Panic of 1819: Reactions and Policies*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1962.
- Sellers, Charles. *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815–1846*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Temin, Peter. *The Jacksonian Economy*. New York: Norton, 1969.

Clyde Haulman

---

**PARADES** While parades and processions were not unknown in the colonial era, they assumed national significance as structured expressions of group identity in the early Republic. Before independence, American festive culture often reinforced royal authority with public celebrations of English military victories and ceremonies to welcome newly appointed royal governors. Massachusetts governor Francis Bernard made his carefully orchestrated entrance into Boston in 1760 and was received, as he described it, "in a very Magnificent Manner." However, he and other crown officials would soon find themselves the targets of parades of protest. Opposition to Britain during the Revolution often took the form of public demonstrations. Some were rather spontaneous, as when a street confrontation prompted a Boston crowd to tar and feather the Loyalist John Malcolm before carting him around town. Others were meticulously planned to maximize their propaganda value for the Patriot cause. The elaborate funeral procession for victims of the Boston Massacre in 1770 represented such a spectacle. Parading was a fundamentally democratic means of political expression during the Revolution, incorporating all social ranks as participants and observers.

With independence won, the politics of parades evolved in new directions as part of the debate over the Constitution in the late 1780s. Federalists supporting a change in government found parades to be an especially effective way of promoting their cause. Organized as celebrations of a national community that transcended the locales in which they took place, these events marginalized their anti-Federalist opponents, who were slow to appreciate their utility. Parades, bonfires, and toasts usually accompanied ratification of the Constitution in each state. Philadelphia's celebration produced one of the largest parades that city had ever seen, complete with floats that featured various mechanics plying their trades. Following up their success, Federalist leaders planned a grand procession that carried the new president, George Washington, across the country in an effort to deepen nationalist sentiment. Even his birthday became a festive occasion, much to the concern of the administration's Democratic Republican critics, who feared the treatment of Washington as royalty.

In response, the Democratic Republicans developed their own celebrations that expressed their commitment to the principles of popular sovereignty against elite interests. Many of their fetes revolved around support for the French Revolution in the 1790s and were located in urban centers along the

Atlantic seaboard. Although the French Revolution initially garnered widespread support within the United States, its excesses increasingly alienated Americans. In an effort to maintain public support for the French, Democratic Republican societies organized parades that linked the French cause to America's Revolutionary heritage, especially on the Fourth of July. As relations with France continued to deteriorate, however, these activities were redirected against the rival Federalist Party and helped Thomas Jefferson defeat incumbent John Adams for the presidency in 1800.

Parades in the new nation celebrated America's triumphant past as well as its hopeful future. Those marking the end of the War of 1812 (1812–1815) reflected the sense of rebirth that would fuel the patriotic pageantry of the 1820s. Oftentimes, these parades featured Revolutionary War veterans for

whom the public had gained renewed appreciation, none more so than the Marquis de Lafayette. His return to the United States at the request of Congress in 1824 sparked lavish celebrations wherever he traveled. For instance, officials in New Orleans ordered construction of a sixty-six-foot-high triumphal arch through which to parade the French hero. Local civic and military leaders participated in the procession, while commoners could only watch from amidst the crowds that lined Lafayette's route through the city. New York's festivities were typically more inclusive, especially those that accompanied the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825. The canal was a source of great pride for the artisan community, which figured prominently in the parades that followed its completion. Yet African Americans could no more participate in New York's canal celebrations than they could in New Orleans's fêtes for Lafayette, except as passive observers.

Parades in the early Republic were often used either to exclude blacks from the national identity or to assert a black national identity. The growth of free black communities in cities such as Boston, New York, and Philadelphia encouraged blacks to stake a claim to the streets. Denied the franchise, they increasingly expressed their political views through pageantry. The end of the American slave trade in 1808, for example, inspired annual celebrations among northern blacks that included public marches. Ridicule from whites only strengthened their resolve and reinforced the value of parades as a means of forging collective identity in American culture.

*See also Fourth of July; Holidays and Public Celebrations.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Newman, Simon P. *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early Republic*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997.
- Travers, Len. *Celebrating the Fourth: Independence Day and the Rites of Nationalism in the Early Republic*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.
- Waldstreicher, David. *In the Midst of Perpetual Fêtes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Jonathan M. Beagle

---

**PARENTHOOD** The birth and early development of the United States were accompanied by fundamental transformations in the way people thought about and practiced parenting. The political, economic, geographic, and cultural forces shaping the new nation profoundly affected conceptions about gender, and thus about motherhood and fatherhood.

#### THE COLONIAL BACKDROP

In the British colonies of North America, fatherhood and motherhood were shaped by the attitudes and economic arrangements of a preindustrial and agrarian society. Especially in the New England colonies, such attitudes were also shaped by Calvinist Protestantism, which assumed the innate depravity of children. The colonial economies rested on the foundation of the independent household, which was typically headed by an adult white male and included servants and apprentices as well as blood kin. Such households, sustained through the labor of all household members, were large, with eight or more children not uncommon. Because males were

thought to possess greater powers of intellect, moral discipline, and emotional self-control than were women, fathers were recognized as the primary parents. Fathers were responsible for ensuring the physical, spiritual, and moral well-being of their dependents and for providing their sons and apprentices with education, moral values, and the skills necessary for work in farming, handicrafts, or business. Because the village workplace was typically not far from home, most fathers exercised an active role in domestic governance. Fathers also influenced their children's marital choices and helped them achieve economic security through their control and disbursement of family property. Mothers, meanwhile, were responsible for rearing young children, training their daughters in home maintenance, and performing such household tasks as cooking, washing, and spinning. Mothers were presumed to have a tendency toward emotional overindulgence of children such that their parenting was often considered dangerous to a child's spiritual and moral development. Therefore custody of children generally went to fathers in colonial America's rare cases of divorce.

#### PARENTING IN TRANSITION

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a series of overlapping and mutually reinforcing political, economic, intellectual, and religious developments transformed motherhood and fatherhood. A new power dynamic emerged between fathers and mothers, resulting in the emergence of ideals and practices of parenting often called "modern." Enlightenment thinking had emphasized that the young mind was basically good, rational, and impressionable. Such ideas reshaped Western thought and challenged arbitrary patriarchal authority, pointing toward more democratic family relationships. Parental affection, the encouragement of independent judgment, and an emphasis on voluntary and reason-based filial obedience were increasingly perceived to be the bases of domestic and social stability. Similarly, republican political ideology and the American Revolution that it inspired disparaged monarchical tyranny, encouraging fathers and mothers alike to foster in their children the independence and love of virtue necessary for good citizenship in the new republic. By the early nineteenth century, Romanticism had generated a "sentimental" approach to family relations, which exalted affectionate and emotionally intense family relationships and idealized the mother-child relationship in particular. Meanwhile, a growing challenge to orthodox Calvinist theology, evident during the burst of religious revival activity that characterized the early



**The Peale Family (ca. 1770–1773) by Charles Willson Peale.** A painting of the artist's own large family. © FRANCIS G. MAYER/CORBIS.

nineteenth century, discouraged the stern and emotionally reserved exercises in will-breaking often employed by traditional Calvinist fathers. The new thinking stressed that humans had an innate capacity for morality, the development of which required nurture—understood as the natural talent of women—and an overall gentler parenting style.

The changing physical and economic realities of the new nation reinforced these shifts. Ongoing population growth, out-migration to newly opening western areas, and the abandonment in American law of customary English inheritance practices reduced (though by no means eliminated) fathers' ability to enforce their authority through their control of property. The expansion of market capitalism and growth of industrial production in the early nineteenth century, especially in northern urban areas, eroded the premodern household economy, creating a new white middle class. Fathers in this emergent middle class were defined as breadwinners whose primary parental responsibility was to provide income. In pursuit of that income they were often separated physically, and therefore psychologically, from their

families for significant amounts of time. Although this development enhanced fathers' economic authority and even lent it something of a mystique, it also enhanced mothers' responsibility for day-to-day household governance. At the same time, the demise of the preindustrial economy magnified the importance of the family's psychological and emotional functions over its traditional economic ones and prompted a gradual decrease in family size (from an average of 7.04 children for white women in 1800 to 5.42 in 1850). Smaller families in turn allowed a more intensive approach to parenting. Commentators and authors of parental advice literature increasingly identified mothers, insulated from the amoral world of economic and political activity, as naturally pious beings solely able to ensure the morality of their children and husbands. Mothers remained legally subordinate to their husbands and retained many of the household tasks of their colonial forebears, but by about 1830 the Victorian apotheosis of the mother had begun and, at least for the white middle class, motherhood, morality, and homemaking had become closely identified. For both fathers

and mothers of the white middle class, parenting became—and to a considerable degree remains increasingly focused on educating children and preparing them for middle-class careers and marriages.

#### **REGIONAL, RACIAL, AND CLASS VARIATIONS**

For Americans outside the northern white middle class, experiences of race, class, and region counteracted and muted to a considerable degree the impact of the various forces described above. Thus different patterns of fatherhood and motherhood emerged. Southern planters, for instance, shared with middle-class northerners the emerging ideals of gentle parenting, romantic sentimentalism, mothers' moral guardianship, and republican citizenship. However, the presence of slaves and accompanying ideologies of racial hierarchy perpetuated older patterns of patriarchal household leadership, gave mothers responsibility for slaves' children as well as their own, allowed white women to use house slaves to mitigate their own child rearing responsibilities (though they were often mistrustful of their black servants' care), and tied the ideal of the moral, self-sacrificing mother to the requirements of the slave economy.

For slaves themselves, parenthood was shaped by the realities of bondage and, to a degree still debated among scholars, by the legacies of their West African cultures. Many slave women, though often described by whites as lacking the nurturing instincts "natural" to white women, considered motherhood sacred and integral to their identities and mothers as central to family structure. Although some scholars have suggested that reduced fertility was common among slave women in the Caribbean islands, slave populations in the United States began experiencing natural increase by about 1750, and slave women began experiencing increased pressure to reproduce after the new nation withdrew from the international slave trade in 1808. Indeed, slaveowners' often manipulative encouragement of slave motherhood probably explains the fact that slave women tended to have their first children at age eighteen, about two years earlier than southern white women. Yet slave women also became mothers to ensure their own security, to reduce the likelihood of their being sold away from their families and friends, or to augment their family's rations of food and clothing—a point underscored by the fact that they typically had to care for their children in addition to their regular workload.

Reliable statistics on birthrates among slave women do not exist, but research does indicate that about one-third of slave families—a significantly

higher proportion than among white families—were female-headed. This does not mean, however, that slave fatherhood was of negligible importance or fit the white-perpetuated stereotypes of alienation, absence, and irresponsibility. In fact, research has revealed that paternal presence, involvement, and leadership in a two-parent setting were the norm in slave families. To be sure, slave fathers lacked property rights, breadwinner status, and legal control over their children, and lived apart from their families more frequently than did white fathers; but they provided love and attention for their children, served as male role models, transmitted family customs and culture, hunted and fished to supplement their families' modest food allotments, passed on survival and craft skills to their children, and sought to insulate their families from the harshest aspects of slavery and racism.

Working-class parents were usually unable to realize the middle-class ideals of the breadwinner father and homemaker mother. Even when they aspired to achieve middle-class status, father, mother, and children alike were forced to work as a buffer against financial uncertainty. The need for income from all family members tended to perpetuate older patterns of family functioning, with large family size (although, as in the case of African Americans, precise birthrate statistics are lacking) and traditional patriarchal dominance remaining long after these characteristics had begun to fade from middle-class family life. Because men were paid more than women, fathers generally provided most of a working-class family's income. However, their economic vulnerability and the increasing obsolescence of traditional artisanal skills undermined their economic leadership and domestic authority, and the employment of mothers and children often sparked tensions and power struggles among family members. With more mothers at work, children spent more time away from direct parental supervision, preventing the working-class home from becoming the haven of sentimental nurture idealized by middle-class writers.

Yet the ideals and practices of white middle-class parenthood provided a powerfully influential model for nonwhite and non-middle-class groups in the new nation. White middle-class men and women themselves, viewing their parenting as normative and as the key to national economic strength and social stability, began by the 1820s to form voluntary organizations—and would later enlist the state—to export their standards of domestic life beyond their own race and class. Meanwhile, African Americans,

working-class Americans, and others outside the northern white middle class, although in some instances strenuously resistant to white middle-class values, gradually followed the pattern of reduced fertility and drew decisively on white middle-class domestic visions of breadwinning fatherhood and homemaking motherhood as they began in their fledgling unions and other activist organizations to define their agendas for social change in the young Republic.

**See also Childbirth and Childbearing; Childhood and Adolescence; Contraception and Abortion; Divorce and Desertion; Domestic Life; Domestic Violence; Home; Manliness and Masculinity; Marriage; Siblings; Widowhood.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Apple, Rima D., and Janet Golden, eds. *Mothers and Motherhood: Readings in American History*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1997.
- Coontz, Stephanie. *The Social Origins of Private Life: A History of American Families, 1600–1900*. London and New York: Verso, 1988.
- Degler, Carl N. *At Odds: Women and the Family in America from the Revolution to the Present*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.
- Fliegelman, Jay. *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution against Patriarchal Authority, 1750–1800*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Frank, Stephen M. *Life with Father: Parenthood and Masculinity in the Nineteenth-Century American North*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.
- Griswold, Robert L. *Fatherhood in America: A History*. New York: Basic Books, 1993.
- Johansen, Shawn. *Family Men: Middle-Class Fatherhood in Early Industrializing America*. New York: Routledge, 2001.
- Mintz, Steven, and Susan Kellogg. *Domestic Revolutions: A Social History of American Family Life*. New York: Free Press, 1988.
- Ryan, Mary. *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790–1835*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Bret E. Carroll

---

#### PARKS AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

**See Architecture: Parks and Landscape.**

**PARLOR** The Anglo-American parlor in the years between 1754 and 1829 was a domestic chamber dedicated to sociability, status consumption, and display. Early a material expression of genteel social status, the parlor after the American Revolution became a symbol of what the historian Richard L. Bushman, in *The Refinement of America* (1992), terms middle-class "respectability." "Parlor" is derived from the French *parler* (to speak, to talk) and referred both to the chamber created in medieval European monasteries for interaction between residents and the public and to the private room for intimate conversation set apart from the great hall in manor houses. By the mid-eighteenth century, the parlor housed both purposes and bespoke the cultural and social aspirations of its temporary inhabitants.

From the earliest British settlement in what would become the United States through the Age of Jackson, the great majority of families were housed in one- or two-cell houses. In these houses the hall was an all-purpose room, accommodating nearly all of a family's activities. The sleeping parlor, or best chamber, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries served as the master bedroom and housed a family's prized furniture in the typical two-cell (hall-parlor plan) house. Spaces located in the full or half-story above these chambers were used for sleeping, storage, and other household activities. This pattern continued nationally for a majority of Americans into the early nineteenth century, but an important trend, charted through probate inventories, was the removal of beds from the parlor. This signaled the re-orientation of this space. No longer accommodating to work or sleep, the domestic parlor was dedicated to leisure pursuits and entertaining.

The popular perception of the parlor is that of the formal room of a colonial gentleman's or merchant's house. Accessed directly from the outside or through an entry hall, the parlor was situated to offer the best views through its windows and to offer visitors the best of what the household possessed. In such a larger house, the parlor—with its walls, ceiling, and floor well finished; its windows curtained; its location at the front of the house—was decorated in the latest fashion and filled with the accoutrements of genteel sociability: furniture (particularly chairs), mirrors, carpets, portraits and other pictures, and books. Throughout the period the furniture was arranged against the walls, facilitating easy cleaning.

Occasion dictated the movement and use of the parlor's furniture as etiquette increasingly dictated

the occasion. Perhaps it was the heterosocial tea party ("taking tea") that best symbolized parlor culture. Taking tea was an exercise in gentility. Bodily deportment was tested by chairs that straightened posture and required that feet be planted squarely on the floor for leverage. The tea ceremony required dedicated tea tables and equipage—china pots, cups and saucers, slop bowls, sugar snips, sugar bowls and creamers, silver spoons, white linen napkins and tablecloths—all of which tested the participant's knowledge of decorum (let alone the poise). Tea parties were events dedicated to polite cosmopolitan conversation, to musical performance, and to card playing. (Card tables were another specialized furniture form arising in this era.) By the 1820s the domestic parlor had become established as a marker of class as early industrialization of textiles, furniture, and ceramics brought the material symbols of genteel culture into the economic reach of middling Americans, who in turn claimed—albeit unevenly—not only its trappings but also the cultural power of gentility.

*See also Furniture; Home; Housing; Manners.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bushman, Richard L. *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities*. New York: Random House, 1992.
- Cooke, Edward S., Jr. "Domestic Space in the Federal-Period Inventories of Salem Merchants." *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 116, no. 4 (1980): 248–264.
- Cummings, Abbott Lowell. *Rural Household Inventories, Establishing the Names, Uses and Furnishings of Rooms in the Colonial New England Home, 1675–1775*. Boston: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 1964.
- Garrett, Elisabeth Donaghy. *At Home: The American Family 1750–1870*. New York: Abrams, 1990.
- Mayhew, Edgar de N., and Minor Myers Jr. *A Documentary History of American Interiors from the Colonial Era to 1915*. New York: Scribners, 1980.
- Nylander, Jane C. *Our Own Snug Fireside: Images of the New England Home, 1760–1860*. New York: Knopf, 1993.
- Rodris, Roth. "Tea Drinking in Eighteenth-Century America: Its Etiquette and Equipage." In *Material Life in America, 1600–1860*. Edited by Robert Blair St. George. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988.
- Smith, Barbara Clark. *After the Revolution: The Smithsonian History of Everyday Life in the Eighteenth Century*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1985.
- Upton, Dell. "Vernacular Domestic Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Virginia." In *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture*. Edited by Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986.
- Ward, Gerald W. R., and William N. Hosley Jr., eds. *The Great River: Art and Society of the Connecticut River Valley*,

1635–1820. Hartford, Conn.: Wadsworth Atheneum, 1985.

Shirley Teresa Wajda

---

**PARSONS' CAUSE** The Parsons' Cause was a Virginia legal and political dispute involving the pay of Church of England ministers. Its significance lay in eroding the religious establishment's stature in Virginia and in propelling a previously unknown young lawyer, Patrick Henry, to political prominence.

In colonial Virginia's tobacco monoculture, the vagaries of the world tobacco market affected virtually everyone. When the price of tobacco rose, times were flush; when it fell, serious disruption and suffering might ensue. The Old Dominion, as Virginia was called, suffered from a chronic shortage of specie (money in coin). As a result, in the period after 1748 the ministers' salaries were regulated by a law requiring that they be paid annually sixteen thousand pounds of tobacco. Thus they experienced good economic times and bad right along with Virginia laymen. However, in 1755 and again in 1758, the General Assembly made exceptions to this system. In each of those years, a diminished harvest due to crop failure had driven the price of tobacco to notable heights. In response, the colonial legislature arbitrarily proclaimed that, insofar as meeting a parish's obligation to its minister was concerned, a pound of tobacco was to be understood to have a two-penny value—instead of its actual value of approximately twice that amount in the latter year.

Predictably, the clergymen were displeased with the Two-Penny Acts. They held a convention, appealed for help from the mother country, and asked that the General Assembly do them justice—all without much effect. The King's Privy Council, the institution responsible for overseeing royal colonies, did declare that the Two-Penny Acts were invalid because they had been adopted without the required clause suspending their effect until the king gave his approval. Yet, because the disallowance was not declared to be retroactive, this seemed a victory in name only.

In response, ministers in several counties filed suits against their local parish vestries asking that they be paid back wages to make up the difference between the market value of the tobacco they would have received absent the invalidated Two-Penny Acts and the amount they actually had received. These

suits, as a group, became known as the Parsons' Cause. In the first two damage suits to reach verdicts, the courts refused to find for the plaintiffs despite the clarity of the law.

In Hanover County, however, the court, whose presiding judge was John Henry (father of Patrick Henry), found for the plaintiff. At that point, the more senior lawyer who had tried the case turned the argument on the issue of damages over to young Patrick. To murmurs of "treason," Patrick Henry argued that a king who refused to ratify a law adopted by Virginia's General Assembly to accommodate people who faced economic difficulty (the taxpayers, in this case) thereby ceased to be a fit sovereign and degenerated into a tyrant whose will need not be respected. To the astonishment of the plaintiff in the case, and again despite the clarity of the law, the jury took just five minutes to award damages in the amount of one cent. Patrick Henry was then hoisted onto the shoulders of onlookers and paraded around the courthouse grounds.

No clergyman ever benefited from the Parsons' Cause. The argument concocted by Virginia partisans in response to it, that ultimately it was for the General Assembly to determine what was best for Virginia and that the king must ratify such determinations, would have explosive repercussions—especially as enunciated by Patrick Henry.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Beeman, Richard R. *Patrick Henry: A Biography*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974.
- Henry, William Wirt. *Patrick Henry: Life, Correspondence, and Speeches*. 3 vols., 1891. Harrisonburg, Va.: Sprinkle Publications, 1993.
- Mayer, Henry. *A Son of Thunder: Patrick Henry and the American Republic*. New York: Grove Press, 2001.

*Kevin R. C. Gutzman*

---

**PATENT MEDICINES** Patent medicines were products that claimed to cure a variety of common illnesses, including many, such as cancer and diabetes, that are still not curable. These products appeared in American homes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries because access to medical practitioners was limited, especially in rural areas, and because physicians typically engaged in such frightening practices as bloodletting.

The first patent medicines to appear in America came from England. In mid-eighteenth-century

Great Britain, some producers of medical preparations obtained royal patents for their products. The patents protected the owners' rights to the products and gave some prestige to the medicines. Later, the term *patent medicine* was applied to any product of this type, whether patented or not.

In the eighteenth century medical theorists believed that disease could be driven from the body only by a substance as appalling as the illness. Therefore, the worse a medicine tasted or smelled, the greater its corrective power. These foul-tasting, foul-smelling products had ingredients that had an effect on the body, thus giving the illusion of a cure in action. Bateman's Drops, Dalby's Carminative, and Godfrey's Cordial contained the sedative opium. Hooper's Pills purged the digestive system and induced menstruation. British Oil and Steer's Opodeldoc were both liniments containing ammonia that irritated the skin.

The popularity of the English remedies owed much to the fact that, though the ingredients might vary, the shape of the bottle did not. Even an illiterate could identify a favorite nostrum. This allowed enterprising American merchants to refill the familiar bottles with cheaper-selling concoctions of their own creation when the American Revolution interrupted shipments of British products. English medicines never regained their prewar sales once the end of fighting in 1782 permitted their return to the American market.

After the Revolution American physicians began a search to discover American herbs that could relieve ailing Americans of "unrepublican dependence" on European medicines. In 1793 Congress enacted a law granting patents to inventors. In 1796 Samuel Lee, Jr., of Windham, Connecticut, became the first American to obtain a patent on a medicine, for Bilious Pills, which purported to fight biliousness as well as yellow fever, jaundice, dysentery, dropsy, worms, and female complaints. Whereas most patent medicine makers kept their ingredients secret and patented the packaging, Lee revealed that he used gamboge, aloes, soap, and nitrate of potassa. More important, as he emphasized in advertising, he used no mercury.

In 1793 the prominent physician Benjamin Rush attributed all physical ailments to hypertension (high blood pressure) and prescribed bloodletting to the point of unconsciousness as a cure. Rush also recommended such tremendous purgative doses of mercury that patients lost teeth and, occasionally, jawbones. Whereas physicians embraced Rush's stringent methods, which were known at the time as

"heroic medicine," patent medicine merchants offered frightened patients a mild and pleasant mode of treatment. Such merchants regularly attacked the brutal therapy of the regular doctor while improving the palatability of their concoctions. Swain's Panacea owed much of its success to a delicious flavor, and sugar-coated pills were first introduced by patent medicine makers. The popularity of patent medicines as a treatment regimen continued to rise throughout the nineteenth century.

*See also Death and Dying; Drugs; Health and Disease; Medicine; Professions: Physicians.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Holbrook, Stewart Hall. *The Golden Age of Quackery*. New York: Macmillan, 1959.

Young, James Harvey. *The Toadstool Millionaires: A Social History of Patent Medicines in America before Federal Regulation*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1961.

Caryn E. Neumann

**PATENTS AND COPYRIGHTS.** Modern concern with the protection of intellectual property of authors originates in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century natural rights and mercantilist discourse. Natural rights philosophers taught that the right of individuals to property was inalienable and that they are entitled to the wealth generated by their mental creations. Mercantilism, which judged the relative strength of nations by their balance of trade, prompted rulers to find ways to encourage creativity and innovation at home as a way of besting international rivals. In theory, English law and practice covered the intellectual property of authors and inventors. In practice, however, no enforcement mechanisms to protect intellectual property existed in the colonies and colonial authorities issued very few patents.

Following the American Revolution (1775–1783), the various states tried to foster independent intellectual property policies in line with these beliefs. Noah Webster (1758–1843), author of the best-selling *Grammatical Institute of the English Language* (1783), campaigned to make the protection of intellectual property the law of the land. Webster feared that pirated versions of the book would deprive him of profits and lobbied with each state legislature to protect his ownership. He associated his campaign with the patriotic cause of establishing the legitima-

cy and distinctiveness of American English and enlisted the support of well-respected revolutionaries like Thomas Paine and Joel Barlow to speak out in support of copyright legislation. The copyright movement of the 1780s was triumphant. All states, with the exception of Delaware, passed acts that in principle established their commitment to protecting the intellectual property of authors.

The copyright campaign of the 1780s, however, demonstrated the need for a coherent national policy. Under the Articles of Confederation (1781), Congress could only recommend that the states protect the rights of authors. Whether a policy was enacted or not remained up to the states. Similarly, the right to issue patents to reward a mechanical innovation resided exclusively with the states.

#### THE CONSTITUTION

Champions of intellectual property thus backed the constitutional movement of the second half of the 1780s. Many Patriots were alarmed by the unquenchable American consumption of imported British goods, feeling that political independence was undermined by the return of economic dependence on the former colonizer. Establishing a unified and effective manner of rewarding authors and inventors promised to foster American innovation and creativity that would wean the citizens of the Republic from their addiction to English manufactures.

The Constitutional Convention (1787) did not disappoint these backers. On 18 August 1787, James Madison (1757–1836) of Virginia and Charles Pinckney (1757–1824) of South Carolina recommended that the Constitution include a clause rewarding creativity in both literary and practical realms by granting exclusive rights over intellectual creation for a specified period of time. On 5 September 1787, the convention unanimously approved Article I, section 8 of the Constitution that instructed the new government "to promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writing and discoveries."

The founding fathers thus provided a mechanism by which individual inventors and authors were rewarded for enriching American society with new devices or writings. Inventors and writers were the only occupational groups given special benefits in the U.S. Constitution. The intellectual property provision in the Constitution was the first legal affirmative recognition of the property right embodied in the process that produced innovation. Even anti-

Federalists rarely criticized this aspect of the proposed Constitution.

The consensus in favor of the clause suggests widespread cultural acceptance of the measure. No one in particular had to push the delegates to include it in the Constitution. The prevalence of intellectual property clauses in the states' constitutions suggests that most American leaders recognized by the 1780s the need to promote literary and industrial creativity in the new nation. In unifying the patent grants on a national scale, the Constitutional Convention created an apparatus that spared authors and patentees the chore of having secure grants in each of the individual states.

#### **FEDERAL INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY POLICY**

In his first annual message, in January 1790, President George Washington asked Congress to enact the necessary legislation encouraging "skill and genius" at home and "the introduction of new and useful inventions from abroad." Congress took up the matter and in 1790 passed bills to protect the rights of authors and inventors. The first U.S. Copyright Act followed the British one, granting literary works an initial fourteen-year term of protection, which could then be renewed for another fourteen years for a total of twenty-eight years of protection. Only citizens of the United States enjoyed copyright protection.

The Patent Act of 1790, however, broke new ground. The initial proposal followed the English system, which sought to attract superior European craftspersons to the kingdom. Those who introduced technological innovations hitherto unknown in England were rewarded with production monopolies. Likewise, the initial version passed by the House of Representatives granted introducers of pirated technology the fourteen-year monopoly privileges accorded to original inventors. The Senate, however, amended the bill to grant patent monopolies only to inventors of machines "not before known or used" and deleted the location qualifier of the House version—"within the United States." The first U.S. Patent Act, then, restricted patents exclusively to original inventors and established the principle that prior use anywhere in the world was grounds for invalidating a patent.

The 1790 Act required the formation of a patent board composed of the secretary of state, the secretary of war, and the attorney general and charged it with evaluating the merit of each application. This requirement became too burdensome, particularly for Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, who was

put in charge of the entire project. The sheer volume of applications made the first patent act an administrative nightmare. In 1793 Congress relieved members of the cabinet from examining individual patents and assigned the duty to a clerk in the State Department. A patent became a registration of a claim any persons could make provided they paid the thirty-dollar fee and that no similar claim was previously registered. Acquiring a patent depended exclusively on prompt completion of the necessary bureaucratic paperwork. The revised system maintained the dual demand for novelty and originality by requiring each patentee to take an oath that he or she was indeed the first and original inventor. The disputes likely to arise from this strictly bureaucratic registration were to be resolved by a board of arbitrators and the courts. A revision in 1800 added the requirement of an oath by all applicants to the effect that their "invention, art or discovery hath not . . . been known or used either in this or any foreign country."

Textual examination of the patent law might give the impression that the young Republic had established a new moral code of intellectual property. The statutory requirement of worldwide originality and novelty, however, did not hinder widespread and officially sanctioned piracy of both technology and literary works. American publishers printed pirated literary works without compensating authors and artisans successfully received patents for devices already in use in Europe. Moreover, the Patent and Copyright Acts explicitly prohibited foreigners from claiming copyright or patent privileges in America for works and innovations they had already patented in Europe. Intellectual property practices in the early Republic favored printers, operators, internal developers, and entrepreneurs at the expense of artists, authors, investors, and inventors.

*See also Book Trade; Inventors and Inventions.*

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Ben-Atar, Doron S. *Trade Secrets: Intellectual Piracy and the Origins of American Industrial Power*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2004.
- Bugbee, Bruce W. *Genesis of American Patent and Copyright Law*. Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1967.
- Hindle, Brooke. *The Pursuit of Science in Revolutionary America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1956.
- MacLeod, Christine. *Inventing the Industrial Revolution: The English Patent System, 1660–1800*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Rose, Mark. *Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993.

Doron S. Ben-Atar

**PATRIOTIC SOCIETIES** Coming together, mostly as young men, to fight the Revolutionary War, the officers of the Continental Army considered themselves the essence of the nation. While enlisted men came and went, the officers had served for up to eight years, frequently without pay and at their own expense. The war had been the peak—and for the younger ones, the only—experience of their adult lives. The officers had been promised pensions of half-pay for life, later commuted to five years' full pay, but the new nation was bankrupt. To lobby for benefits and to preserve the memory of their service through meetings and correspondence, on 13 May 1783 the soon-to-be-demobilized officers formed the Society of the Cincinnati, named after a Roman general who returned to his plow rather than be rewarded for his outstanding service. Modeled on the French army's Order of St. Louis, it offered participants badges, ribbons, reunions, and hereditary membership for their descendants.

Aspiring to be a well-respected group whose members would acquire honor and office, the Cincinnati instead provoked a huge public outcry. As a hereditary society the Cincinnati smacked of aristocracy; as an organized lobby it fell under the rubric of "faction," a special interest that set itself against the general good. The public also identified it with other signs of what seemed to be impending military rule: unruly enlisted men had forced Congress out of Philadelphia when they failed to receive their wages, and many officers themselves took part in what is known as the Newburgh Conspiracy of 1783, threatening a coup d'état (scholars argue whether they intended to carry it out) that was forestalled only by General Washington's intervention.

In response, the Cincinnati adopted a low profile. It never attained more than 2,300 members, and although President Washington and five members of his cabinet belonged, its partisanship was limited to electioneering on behalf of some Federalist candidates. Identified with the Federalists, the Cincinnati declined after the War of 1812 and by 1832 were active in only six states. They would remain moribund until the 1880s.

The Masons were another prominent society to which George Washington lent his prestige. Imported into the American colonies from Britain in 1733, the order of Freemasons still exists, uncontroversially, in the early twenty-first century. However, during the eighteenth century it was identified with Enlightenment ideas: belief in a Supreme Being rather than the Christian God (many Jews belonged) and

the brotherhood and equality of mankind—all members called each other brother and were treated as equals with respect to the order. In the 1830s the prominence of many Masons in economic and civic life led to the creation of the anti-Masonic political party. Although it failed to rival the Democrats and Whigs, the anti-Masons were successful in persuading the Masons to protest that they were merely a fraternal, apolitical order, devoted to social betterment and general civic virtue.

Enlisted men, lacking a society of their own, joined the Sons of St. Tammany and, during the 1790s, Republican societies. For a time, George Washington provided an element of unity by serving as the Tammany's president as well. During these early years, the Tammany were a general patriotic rather than a partisan group. Unlike the exclusive Cincinnati, these forerunners of modern political clubs were open to most adult white men and produced the first modern political machine in New York under the leadership of Aaron Burr and later Martin Van Buren. In response, young Federalists formed the Washington Benevolent Societies during the early 1800s. Celebrating Washington's birthday (which only became a national holiday much later) by holding festivals and parades, they copied Tammany in many respects, although the latter favored the Fourth of July as its principal holiday. Like the Cincinnati, they too declined after 1815 and were all but extinct by 1830. Reformer societies continued, however, to seek the prestige of the first president, as in the Washingtonian Temperance Societies (Washington himself did not shun alcohol), or the use of mediums by the American Peace Society to evoke Washington's ghost to prove he had converted to pacifism.

In the early Republic voluntary associations, to which Alexis de Tocqueville called attention in *Democracy in America* (1835, 1840), proliferated. Most were fiercely patriotic: volunteer fire companies, for instance, painted beautiful emblems of American heroes and symbols on their engines. In a nation that feared a standing army, private military organizations flourished. They regularly drilled in public, held competitions, and hosted holiday festivals. Entire cities would plan elaborate parades for the Fourth of July in which social groups participated, arranged by occupation—including the clergy, professionals, and artisans. Although frequently excluding blacks, Roman Catholics, or immigrants, their activities otherwise linked people of different classes and religions in a common civic culture.

In the late nineteenth century, Americans descended from the British, German, and Dutch inhabitants who fought in the Revolution feared that their nation's survival and culture were in jeopardy from the foreign influences of new immigrant groups from southern and eastern Europe. John Adams's descendants, for example, included three major historians who feared that European Jewish money and the pope's Catholic minions would soon swamp the declining percentage of "real" or "hundred percent" Americans.

Beginning in the 1880s, new organizations that required members to prove descent from Revolutionary soldiers or other groups emerged as part of a general movement of the traditional elite to insulate and secure itself from the newcomers. These included the Sons of the American Revolution (1883), the Daughters of the American Revolution (1890), the Daughters of the Cincinnati (1894), attaching themselves to that reactivated order, the Society of Colonial Wars (1892), and the Society of Mayflower Descendants (1894). Looking even farther back to European roots were the Aryan Order of St. George or the Holy Roman Empire in the Colonies of America (1892), and the Baronial Order of Runnymede (1897). Other long-established immigrant groups climbed on the bandwagon to distinguish themselves from recent arrivals and to commemorate their ancestors' role in the Republic's formation: the Holland Society, for descendants of Dutch New Yorkers (1885), the Scotch-Irish Society (1889), the Pennsylvania German Society (1891), the American Jewish Historical Society (1894), and the American Irish Historical Society (1898).

Among the initiatives sponsored by these societies was the promotion of laws to prohibit activities the new immigrants imported from Europe. Games of chance (held to benefit Roman Catholic churches), entertainments and saloons open on Sunday, and aid to parochial schools all came under attack from the largely Protestant "old American" groups.

Genealogy was a major preoccupation of these societies. Organizations such as the New England Historic Genealogical Society and other research libraries expanded their publications and space. Numerous histories of towns, counties, and states appeared, most with lengthy sections devoted to biographies of ancestors whose uniform probity boggles statistical probability. The newly formed American Historical Association, after selecting five outstanding scholars as president, turned to John Jay II and William Wirt Henry, descendants of the founders whose sole notable works honored their

ancestors, in 1890 and 1891, to demonstrate its approval of filiopietistic scholarship.

The traditional elite's effort to unite with its ancestors was matched by an equal determination to isolate itself from its contemporaries: exclusive boarding schools, colleges, clubs, communities, and even cemeteries ensured that long-established families did not have to associate with those whose labor made their comfortable lives possible—except, of course, to service their personal needs as clearly delineated inferiors. Although schools no longer exclude Jews or Catholics, exclusivity lives on in country clubs, secret college associations, and the still-flourishing hereditary societies. Far from being quaint or irrelevant, these are important places where the elites meet and continue to influence American history.

*See also Fourth of July; Freemasons; Society of the Cincinnati; Society of St. Tammany.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baltzell, E. Digby. *The Protestant Establishment: Aristocracy and Caste in America*. New York: Random House, 1964; New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1987.
- Cunliffe, Marcus. *Soldiers and Civilians: The Martial Spirit in America, 1775–1865*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1968; New York: Free Press, 1973.
- Davies, Wallace E. *Patriotism on Parade: The Story of Veterans and Hereditary Organizations in America, 1783–1900*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1955.
- Fischer, David Hackett. *The Revolution of American Conservatism: The Federalist Party in the Era of Jeffersonian Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row, 1965, 1969.

William Pencak

---

**PENITENTIARIES** Standing at the epicenter of a transatlantic transformation in the practice of punishment, the emergence of penitentiaries altered the penal landscape of the early American Republic. Spreading in two separate waves, first at the turn of the nineteenth century and then during the Jacksonian period, early national penitentiaries helped reshape the theory and practice of punishment. Particularly in the northern states of Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania, new theories and practices of punishment took center stage. Indeed, the efforts of penal officials and theorists in the northern United States made them the objects of intense scrutiny and imitation by their European counterparts. But despite the revolutionary claims of its early proponents and the long-term effects of their penal strategies, the

practical effects of the penitentiary remained limited during the early Republic. In the north, experimental reformatory practices were only implemented in larger prisons, while in the southern states the power of slavery meant that penitentiaries were of limited significance.

In the colonial period, prisons and jails had restricted importance in the criminal justice system. Small, often ramshackle affairs, prisons were largely holding areas. Courts and magistrates deployed prisoners to hold prisoners awaiting trial or sentencing, to detain prisoners awaiting their actual punishments, or to confine debtors or vagrants. Imprisonment for debt was perhaps the most significant form of long-term confinement in colonial jails; rarely did the authorities employ prisons as part of criminal punishment itself. Instead, the vast majority of criminal sanctions in colonial America were corporal, capital, or financial. Nor did officials or the public expect prisons and jails to operate as reformative influences. In fact, critics consistently insisted that jails were sources of infection—both moral and physical. Although not on the scale of London's notorious Newgate or Fleet prisons, colonial jails were the sites of jail fevers and the launching pads for escapes. Jailers survived on fees for services, a system that hardly discouraged efforts to exploit prisoners and the public for personal gain.

Prisons assumed new importance during the late eighteenth century. A combination of factors provided political contexts for a reconsideration of traditional systems of public, capital, and corporal punishments: a perceived rise in crime during the late colonial and Revolutionary eras; the growing conviction among Revolutionary elites that capital and corporal penalties were unsuitable for a Republic; and a heightened sensitivity to the possible abuse of courts and penalties for political purposes. Intellectually, diverse attachments to notions of enlightened reforms and a transatlantic network of reformers (both religious and secular) helped provide the arguments to justify an increased emphasis on imprisonment and reformation. But despite the obvious importance of the search for a republican form of penalty, it is important to recognize that penal reform occurred in both America and Europe. National pride and republican ideology may have encouraged Americans to experiment with prisons—but Americans were only a part of a wider transatlantic reformation. Complicating matters further, southern states joined in the late-eighteenth-century fascination with penitentiaries, but significant experiments were focused largely

in the North. Penal practice followed regional distinctiveness.

#### FIRST GENERATION OF REFORM

Although Massachusetts and other northern states transformed their penal systems (and in the case of Massachusetts engaged in pathbreaking prison reform), it was New York and Pennsylvania that quickly assumed center stage in articulating the ideology and establishing the practice of reformed imprisonment. During the 1790s and the first decade of the nineteenth century, these two states engaged in sustained efforts to transform punishment in the direction of reformatory incarceration. First at Philadelphia's Walnut Street Prison and then in New York City's Newgate Prison, prison officials and private reformers aimed to establish a new penal system that placed penitence and reform at its heart.

The new developments could be seen most clearly in Philadelphia's Walnut Street Prison. Built in 1773 under the unreformed system, the jail was used to hold prisoners during the Revolutionary War. But beginning in 1790, Pennsylvania transformed Walnut Street into a state prison dedicated simultaneously to punishing and reforming inmates through a complicated regimen of hard labor, solitude, enforced cleanliness and discipline. Then, in 1794 officials opened a house of solitary cells (known as the "penitentiary house") in the prison yard.

Although in reality Pennsylvanians were following upon a series of English experiments in solitary confinement, Walnut Street became internationally famous as a laboratory of humane penal practice—linked in the transatlantic mind with Quaker opposition to the death penalty and cruelty in punishment. Visitors from across the new nation and across the Atlantic came to sing its praises. Its efforts were copied around the Atlantic world, most directly, perhaps, in New York's Newgate Prison under the direction of Thomas Eddy. In both prisons the early years appeared promising—order was sustained, labor was imposed, officials insisted that prisoners were reformed, and humanity's claims seemed fulfilled.

**A new social regime.** In these first efforts at reformatory incarceration, the emphasis lay on a social transformation of prisons and prisoners. Although new prison buildings were built (the "penitentiary house" at Walnut Street and new state prisons in Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Virginia), the overwhelming focus was on creating a new social regimen that would transform the habits and characters of inmates. Reformers such as Eddy in New York and Caleb Lownes in Philadelphia were convinced that

criminality was an effect of bad habits—particularly as regarded labor. They were certain that if they imposed disciplined labor combined with regular oversight and some moral or religious instruction that they could remake inmates and produce productive and disciplined citizens. In their minds the physical plant or architecture of the prison was clearly a secondary consideration to the structure of authority and the social milieu.

**Failure.** If Newgate and Walnut Street represented the first wave of enlightened penal reform, by the second decade of the nineteenth century both projects were in shambles. Nearly all of the elements of the reformed prison had either collapsed or been undermined through prisoner resistance. The labor system was erratic, discipline was in disarray, silence and solitude were rarely enforced, and disease and death haunted the inmates. A rise in recidivism and a decline in reformation increased the strains on the prison establishments as inmate populations grew without equivalent increases in staffing or resources. Escapes and prison violence increased over time. Inmate riots and arson marked the failure of the first generation of prison reformers.

#### A SECOND REFORM EFFORT

The crisis of reformatory incarceration led to a dramatic reconstruction of the theory and practice of penitentiaries. In this reconstruction, Pennsylvania and New York again took the lead. In prisons (most famously at Auburn, New York, and Philadelphia) designed and constructed across the 1820s, each state laid out a new vision (and a good deal of state funds) for the proper organization of penitentiaries. These new prisons were bold efforts. Significantly larger than their predecessors, their designs were carefully calibrated for maximum discipline and control of inmates, each built around a philosophy of punitive silence. At the heart of these prisons was the effort to control communication. Prison reformers throughout the early Republic concluded that the first generation of prisons had failed because inmates were able to communicate freely with each other, undermining the authority of prison officials and transforming prisons from “schools of virtue to schools of vice.” The reformers of the 1820s, however, placed less faith in the social relations of the prison and more in their architectural styles. The use of architecture to control space lay at the heart of these new prisons.

**Congregate versus solitary regimes.** Consequently, solitary confinement played a central role at both New York’s Auburn Prison and Pennsylvania’s East-

ern State Penitentiary. But from this shared premise the two prison systems diverged dramatically. Eastern State Penitentiary aimed to impose solitary confinement on inmates for the entirety of their confinement: each inmate had a separate, individual cell and exercise yard, labor took place within cells, food was delivered in special drawers, and contact was limited to approved prison officials. At Auburn, by contrast, solitary confinement was imposed only at night. During the day, prisoners labored in a congregate setting more akin to a factory. Silence was enforced not by separation but through the whip, while the invention of the lockstep aimed to ensure that prisoners could not communicate while they traveled from cell to workshop. If Eastern State sought to individualize in the aim of repentance, Auburn sought to discipline in the interests of production.

The debate over congregate versus solitary regimes would shape the course of prisons throughout the nineteenth century. In the United States, the congregate system quickly became the dominant prison form—it would prove more economical and productive. Interestingly, Europeans were more drawn to the solitary system developed in Philadelphia. Indeed, from the 1820s onward, leading European reformers such as William Crawford and Alexis de Tocqueville came to America to examine these new penitential systems. In the end, despite dissenters like Charles Dickens, they argued that the solitary system was more humane. The penitential imagination trumped the fiscal imagination in Britain and the Continent.

Penitentiaries transformed systems of punishment on both sides of the Atlantic. Still, their impact remained uneven. Efforts to turn prisons into penitentiaries could only occur in the largest institutions; in most local jails or secondary prisons the new penitential structures were absent. And in the United States, their importance was largely limited to the North. It is true that southern states—with the notable exceptions of the Carolinas—also constructed new penitentiaries in this period. But their importance and their populations remained constrained by the existence of slavery. Slaves continued to be punished largely on plantations, and public punishments remained ever present in the southern states. Penitentiaries were the companions of new liberal, capitalist orders. They would have to wait till after the Civil War for their day in the South.

*See also Capital Punishment; Corporal Punishment; Crime and Punishment; Reform, Social.*

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Ayers, Edward L. *Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19th Century American South*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Pantheon Books, 1977.
- Hirsch, Adam Jay. *The Rise of the Penitentiary: Prisons and Punishment in Early America*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992.
- McGowen, Randall. "The Well-Ordered Prison: England, 1780–1865." In *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society*. Edited by Norval Morris and David J. Rothman. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Meranze, Michael. *Laboratories of Virtue: Punishment, Revolution, and Authority in Philadelphia, 1760–1835*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
- Rothman, David J. *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic*. Rev. ed. Boston: Little, Brown, 1990.

*Michael Meranze*

---

**PENNSYLVANIA** As the second most populous state in the Union from 1810 to 1860 after New York, Pennsylvania was at the center of its political and industrial development. The Declaration of Independence and Constitution of the United States were ratified in the "Keystone State's" capital of Philadelphia and the Continental Congress met there. As the nation's capital from 1790 to 1800, Philadelphia was the site of its most bitter political struggles between the Federalists and their Republican rivals. Because of its diverse population and active partisan press, Pennsylvania was among the first states to pioneer a modern two-party system, where each party ran a slate of candidates, had regular campaign workers, and tried to balance tickets ethnically and geographically.

With its large number of electoral votes—fifteen in 1800 (third to New York and Massachusetts) and 28 by 1828 (second only to New York), Pennsylvania was a critical political battleground during the early Republic. In the election of 1800, when Pennsylvania almost did not cast its electoral votes as a lame-duck Federalist state senate and House of Representatives could not agree. Although the Republicans had overwhelmingly won the election, Federalists still controlled the Senate. Only when Jefferson's election was clear did the state cast eight votes for him against seven for Adams. Pennsylvania also made political history in 1824 by holding the first

convention to nominate presidential and vice-presidential candidates: Andrew Jackson and John C. Calhoun were chosen to repudiate William Crawford, the last candidate officially selected by a national caucus. Pennsylvania had twenty-eight electoral votes.

Begun in 1682 as a "holy experiment" and founded by Quaker William Penn, Pennsylvania was the world's only society to date to combine pacifism with almost complete toleration of all religious groups. Penn aggressively recruited German as well as English settlers. As a result, the colony received an influx of mainstream Lutherans and Reformed Calvinists, who comprised over 90 percent of the Germans, along with pacifist groups such as the Amish, Schwenkfelders, Dunkards. Many Germans remained socially insular, continuing to speak their language even into the twentieth century. The presence of the smaller groups can still be noticed in the Ephrata Cloisters, Moravian Bethlehem, and the farm communities of Amish, who dress traditionally and do not use automobiles or electricity.

Pennsylvania prospered as the breadbasket of North America. By 1776 Philadelphia, closer to the West Indies than New York or Boston, which both had a half-century head start, was British North America's largest city, with about thirty thousand inhabitants. Dotting a prosperous countryside were iron forges, supported by the rich deposits of iron ore of the colony. Under the leadership of printer Benjamin Franklin, Philadelphia developed such institutions and public improvements as the American Philosophical Society, the Library Company, paved streets, and the College of Pennsylvania.

Although Quakers numbered but a small minority, they continued to rule Pennsylvania with German support until the French and Indian War. Following the defeat of General Braddock near present-day Pittsburgh in 1755, native Americans attacked all along the frontier. These Lenape (Delaware), Shawnee, Minisink, and other groups had been dispossessed by a series of treaties made with Pennsylvania but enforced by the Iroquois, who were glad to have a pacifist society on their southern border. The Pennsylvania hinterland was devastated, and towns as far east as Bethlehem and Reading became centers of refugees. After the war ended in 1763, a confederation of native Americans led by Pontiac once again pushed back the settlers searching for fertile lands.

Aware that the province needed to defend itself, several Quakers resigned from the Pennsylvania Assembly in 1756. Until the American Revolution, two

major factions blamed each other for the province's lamentable defense. Quakers and their supporters, led by Benjamin Franklin, tried to have Pennsylvania made a royal province; they were opposed by the Proprietary Faction, who blamed the pacifist Quakers for Pennsylvania's defense problems. Meanwhile, the Paxton Boys in 1763 took out their anger by massacring some of the many Christian Indians converted mostly by the Moravians. The frontier people had no use for either faction. When Britain imposed taxes and increased trade regulation in the 1760s, while the other colonies protested, the major political groups in Pennsylvania courted royal favor.

Because the governing elite of Pennsylvania was heavily Loyalist or neutral, Pennsylvanians opposed to British policy and supporting independence had to effect the most radical internal revolution of any British colony. In 1776 a coalition of representatives composed primarily of farmers, Philadelphia working people, at the prompting of a Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia, ousted the government and established a new constitution. It allowed all male taxpayers over the age of twenty-one to vote, the most liberal franchise in the country. On the other hand, a test oath, requiring voters to swear allegiance to the constitution, disfranchised perhaps half the state's population, including Quakers, who would not swear oaths. Representation favored the more radical western counties. Voters annually elected an assembly (enlarged from 30 to 74), which had to take its laws back to the people for final approval the next year. In the nation's first experiment with rotation in office, representatives could serve for only four years out of seven, to keep them from aggrandizing power. The only check on the assembly was the council of censors, which could call attention to the assembly's abuses and recommend changes in the constitution. The president merely presided over the assembly.

Pennsylvania saw considerable action during the Revolution. In September 1777, British forces from New York under General William Howe defeated Washington's army at Brandywine and then Germantown, occupying the city as the continentals suffered from cold and food shortages at Valley Forge, twenty miles up the Schuylkill River. Although the redcoats left the following year, fighting remained endemic along the western and northeastern Pennsylvania frontiers, where the British supported Indians against settlers who sought their lands. In the Wyoming Valley in the northeast, around present-day Wilkes-Barre, Connecticut settlers claiming the land for their state, with support

from the Revolutionary government, battled Pennsylvania settlers, who received aid from the British and Iroquois. Congress ultimately granted the land to Pennsylvania, but intermittent fighting and conflicting land claims continued in the region until the early nineteenth century.

Support for the radicals declined during the Revolution, as they levied high taxes and seized production to help the war effort. Riots broke out in Philadelphia to protest profiteering and toleration of Loyalists. Pennsylvania soldiers mutinied twice: in 1781 to be released from their enlistments, and in 1783 to be paid, an action that chased Congress out of Philadelphia for two years. By 1786 conservative Philadelphia businessmen were firmly in control, and in 1790 the state promulgated a new constitution: a governor, senate, and assembly checked each other, the governor appointed the judiciary, and Philadelphia returned to its colonial government—a self-perpetuating board of aldermen.

Pennsylvania ratified the U.S. Constitution in 1787, the second state to do so. Its population grew from 433,611 in 1790 to 602,365 in 1800, to 810,019 in 1810, to 1,049,458 in 1820, and to 1,348,233 in 1830. In 1780 Pennsylvania was the first state to legislate the gradual abolition of slavery: children of slave mothers were born free, subject to an indenture until age 28. As a result, Pennsylvania's slave population declined from 3,707 in 1790 to 1,706 in 1800, to 795 in 1810, to 611 in 1820, to 403 in 1830, to 64 as late as 1840, and finally to none by 1850. Meanwhile, the state's free black population rose from 6,531 in 1790 to 14,564 in 1800, to 23,215 in 1810, to 30,202 in 1820, and to 37,930 in 1830. Much of this growth occurred in the southeastern part of the state because of the ease with which both free blacks and escaping slaves could cross over from Maryland and Delaware. Philadelphia had the nation's wealthiest and best established black community. When white churches there refused to admit blacks or seated them in segregated sections, the Reverend Absalom Jones began St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, and the Reverend Richard Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church, both in 1794. Within a year, almost half of Philadelphia's black churchgoers belonged to these congregations. Though the 1790 constitution granted blacks the right to vote, even such worthies as businessman James Forten were intimidated from exercising their franchise before the constitution of 1838 limited voting to white males.

At the first federal census of 1790, Pennsylvania's three main ethnic groups were English and

Welsh (30 percent), Scots (7 percent), Irish (7 percent), Scots-Irish (15 percent), and German (38 percent). Some 26,000 Irish immigrants came to the state in the late eighteenth century, and more after a hiatus during the Napoleonic Wars. Still, there were only 10,000 Catholics in the entire state as late as 1830, mostly in Philadelphia, as many of the Irish were either Presbyterians or anticlerical. The population rose largely through natural reproduction, though there were a handful of German, English, French, and Italian immigrants. Most of Pennsylvania's Native Americans left the state following the American Revolution; under a thousand Iroquois led by Cornplanter lived on the state's one remaining reservation in the northwest.

By 1800 Pennsylvania was the second most populous state after New York, and it led the nation in industry, whereas New York led in commerce. Production tended to be scattered throughout the state rather than concentrated at a handful of sites, like the Lowell Mills of Massachusetts. Philadelphia, the state's largest city with 41,000 inhabitants in 1800, grew to 80,462 by 1830. Lancaster was the second largest with 4,292 inhabitants in 1800, growing to 7,704 in 1830. Pittsburgh, which had only 1,565 people in 1800, was the second largest city by 1830 with 12,568 people. Prominent sites of industry were the textile mills at Manayunk (several miles north of Philadelphia), where rapid running water provided power; Coatesville in the southeast, where Rebecca Lukens (the foremost female entrepreneur in the nation) ran Lukens Steel; Milford in the northeast, where Cyrille Pinchot made a fortune in the lumber business; and numerous rural forges that exploited the state's rich iron deposits.

Collective leadership and state funding were essential to Pennsylvania's economic rise, for the mountainous terrain in the state could be overcome only by roads, bridges, canals, and railroads. Beginning in the 1780s, when sales of Pennsylvania grain to the West Indies brought the post-Revolutionary depression to a quick close, Pennsylvania pioneered new economic institutions that were later adopted by the entire nation. In 1780 Philadelphia merchants established the Bank of Pennsylvania, followed by the Bank of North America, the first banks in the United States. While the Constitutional Convention was sitting in 1787, they founded the Society for the Encouragement of Manufacturers, which offered bounties to develop useful technology. America's first steamboat, designed by John Fitch, plied the Delaware River from 1787 to 1789. Other Pennsylvania firsts included the first turnpike, which connected

Philadelphia and Lancaster with a sixty-five-mile road of macadam (crushed stone) to the first stock exchange (1791), and the first insurance company (1792). The first approximation of a labor union, the Franklin Typographical Society of Philadelphia, a printers' collective, organized the new nation's first strike in 1786. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court declared strikes unconstitutional in 1805.

For most of the 1790s, nonpartisan Governor Thomas Mifflin kept the peace between the Federalists and Republicans on the state level, greatly helped by sales of public lands, which reduced state taxes to the vanishing point. The national Federalist party, however, had not learned the art of coalition building and compromise and provoked the Whiskey Rebellion (1794) and Fries's Rebellion (1798) by imposing a tax on whiskey. In response to the Whiskey Rebellion, protestors closed courts that tried delinquents, tarred and feathered excise officers, and burned distilleries whose owners paid the tax. About five hundred men attacked the house of excise collector John Neville, a native Virginian and thus doubly hated by the western Pennsylvanians; two were killed and six wounded although Neville escaped with his life. Over six thousand "rebels" then marched on Pittsburgh, but they dispersed when President Washington led thirteen thousand federal troops to the region.

Four years later, John Fries led a mob of mostly Pennsylvania German protestors and rescued people who refused to pay their taxes from a jail in Bethlehem. Although called rebels and charged by the government with treason, the perpetrators were continuing the tradition of tax resistance that brought forth the American Revolution itself.

The 1790s were eventful in Philadelphia as well. The new Walnut Street prison sought to rehabilitate, rather than simply incarcerate, the disorderly. It introduced forced labor in a carefully regulated environment, setting a precedent for the Eastern State Penitentiary, founded in 1821, which placed culprits in solitary confinement to give them time to reflect on their crimes. Eight yellow fever epidemics, brought by refugees from the Haitian Revolution, struck the city between 1793 and 1805, killed thousands, and caused thousands more to flee. African Americans distinguished themselves by caring for the sick.

In the early nineteenth century, Pennsylvania was firmly dominated by a Republican party whose main support came from farmers. By the War of 1812, however, they too had adopted the Federalist position that the state should support vigorous economic growth. Bridges spanned the Schuylkill River

at Philadelphia and the Susquehanna at Harrisburg, which replaced Philadelphia as the state capital in 1811. At the end of the war, Pennsylvania had forty-one banks. By 1830 the legislature had chartered over two hundred turnpike companies, which crisscrossed the state with over three thousand miles of paved roads. Canals enabled the burgeoning anthracite coal industry to supply other states and Europe, especially the one connecting northeastern Pennsylvania with the Atlantic. In the late 1820s the first Pennsylvania railroads began shipping coal; in 1832 the first passenger line connected Philadelphia and Germantown. Responding to the state-built Erie Canal in New York, the legislature appropriated funds for a seven-hundred-mile transportation network of roads, railroads, and canals to assure that Pennsylvania's booming industrial and agricultural production would reach lucrative markets.

Not surprisingly, the most distinguished Pennsylvanians of the early Republic were business rather than political leaders. Robert Morris, superintendent of finance during the Revolution, founded the Bank of the United States with his partner, Thomas Willing, who directed it. Albert Gallatin, secretary of the Treasury under Jefferson and Madison, founded the Second Bank of the United States in Philadelphia. This bank, under the capable control of Nicholas Biddle in the 1820s, successfully regulated the nation's money supply between the panics of 1819 and 1837. Writers Charles Brockden Brown and Hugh Henry Brackenridge wrote some of America's earliest novels, reflecting the merits and shortcomings of democracy in Philadelphia and western Pennsylvania, respectively. From the early nineteenth century Pennsylvania became more noted for the collective effort and economic energy of its people, and beginning in the 1830s the state would be deeply wracked by conflicts between business and labor, white and black, and immigrants and the native born.

*See also Franklin, Benjamin; Fries's Rebellion; Immigration and Immigrants: Germans; Pietists; Quakers; Valley Forge; Whiskey Rebellion.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brunhouse, Robert. *The Counter-Revolution in Pennsylvania, 1776–1790*. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1951.
- Frantz, John B., and William Pencak, eds. *Beyond Philadelphia: The American Revolution in the Pennsylvania Hinterland*. University Park: Penn State Press, 1998.
- Higginbotham, Sanford W. *The Keystone in the Democratic Arch: Pennsylvania Politics, 1800–1816*. Harrisburg:

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1952.

Klein, Philip S. *Pennsylvania Politics: A Game without Rules, 1817–1832*. Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1940.

Miller, Randall, and William Pencak, eds. *Pennsylvania: History of a Commonwealth*. University Park: Penn State Press, 2002. Especially chaps. 2–4.

Tinkcom, Harry M. *The Republicans and Federalists in Pennsylvania, 1790–1801*. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1950.

William Pencak

---

**PEOPLE OF AMERICA** Begun in 1790, the decennial censuses of the United States provide basic information about the population. Immigration statistics were recorded by the federal government only after 1820, and data on class have been derived from tax lists. Before 1790, most "statistics" are, in fact, estimates, based on scattered censuses and estimates of population taken at the request of the British government.

#### POPULATION SIZE AND GROWTH

Between 1750 and 1830, the population of what became the United States grew from 1.1 million to 12.9 million people, as Table 1 shows. When the War for Independence began, about 2.5 million people lived in the thirteen colonies; the population had increased to about 4 million shortly after the new Constitution went into effect in 1789. Overall, the rate of growth during this period was just over 30 percent each decade, a pattern that emerged about 1700 and would continue until 1860. Two centuries after the first census, the American population totaled almost 250 million. Most of the growth occurred because of the high rate of natural increase. Life expectancy at the time, as favorable as anywhere in the world, was far below modern standards. But American husbands and wives married early and had children rapidly—in the neighborhood of 50 births per 1,000 population each year. This, coupled with a moderate death rate and some immigration, produced an annual rate of increase of about 3 percent, sufficient to double the population in just under twenty-five years. Table 1 also shows the American people were spread thinly across the land, averaging only 7.4 people per square mile in 1830, partly because of the additions of the Louisiana Territory and East Florida in 1803 and 1819, respectively.

TABLE 1

**Population Size and Composition: 1750–1830**

Year	Total Population	% Black	% Urban	Median Age-Whites	Sex Ratio	Square Miles	Population per Square Mile
1750	1,107,000	20.2	—	—	—	—	—
1760	1,593,000	20.4	—	—	—	—	—
1770	2,148,000	21.4	—	—	—	—	—
1780	2,780,000	20.7	—	—	—	—	—
1790	3,929,000	19.3	5.1	15.9 (m)	103.8	888,811	4.5
1800	5,308,000	18.9	6.1	16.0	104.0	888,811	6.1
1810	7,224,000	19.0	7.3	16.0	104.0	1,716,003	4.3
1820	9,683,000	18.4	7.2	16.6	103.2	1,788,006	5.6
1830	12,866,000	18.1	8.8	17.3	103.8	1,788,006	7.4
1900	75,994,000	12.1	39.7	23.4	104.9	3,022,387	25.6
1990	248,710,000	16.1*	75.2	36.9	95.4	3,563,388	70.3

\* % non-white

**POPULATION COMPOSITION**

In considering the composition of the population between 1750 and 1830, first attention will go to age and sex. One of the striking characteristics of the population was its youthfulness, as is evident in Table 1. Starting in 1790, and in accord with many colonial censuses, the median age of the white population was about 16, rising slightly by 1830. In 1990 the median age was 36.9, over twice that of the period under consideration. This is not surprising, as high birth rates produce low median ages. At the top of the age pyramid, only about 4 percent of all Americans reached the age of 60.

One reason for the high birth rate was a relatively even balance between the sexes among whites, making marriage possible for all who wanted to marry. In the seventeenth century, the colonial population was often heavily male (about six men for every one woman in early Virginia), but by 1750 there were only 104 men for every 100 women, despite continued immigration favoring males in the eighteenth century. Among African Americans, the proportion of men would have been slightly higher, because there were more men captured and sold as slaves than women, but the decline in slave imports from 1775 to 1803 stabilized sex ratios for blacks.

Both men and children were slightly more common on the frontier than in more settled regions. In 1800, for example, the ratio of men to women in Massachusetts was 99 to 100, compared to 106 to 100 in Vermont. Similarly, while Pennsylvania's sex ratio was about 106, that in the neighboring Ohio Territory was 119. Even though women were rela-

tively scarce in frontier regions, those who lived there had large families, as is evident in the proportion of the population under sixteen. The percent under sixteen in Massachusetts and Vermont stood at 46.9 and 52.7 respectively. In Pennsylvania and Ohio, the relevant figures were 49.9 and 55.5 percent.

The cultural pluralism familiar to twentieth-century American society was evident in the early national period, before the great nineteenth-century influx of immigration. As Table 1 shows, African Americans accounted for about one of every five Americans from 1750 to 1830. Although slavery as a legal status was defined in the middle of the seventeenth century, the majority of Africans sold as slaves in the future United States arrived between 1700 and 1770. With the Revolution, the importation of slaves slowed, and in many localities stopped. Although slaves were imported into places like South Carolina and Georgia after the war, the slave trade was outlawed by Congress in 1808, as soon as permitted under the Constitution. After a surge of immigration from Europe just before independence, the white population grew mostly by natural increase until about 1820. The slight decline in the proportion of blacks from 21.4 percent in 1770 to 18.1 percent in 1830 can be explained by better life chances and higher fertility among whites, and perhaps a slight advantage in immigrants.

One might assume that because the colonies were part of the British Empire, the colonists would have been overwhelmingly English. Table 2 demonstrates that was emphatically not the case. Table 2

**TABLE 2**

<b>Race and Ethnicity in 1790</b> (for states with surviving records)			
<b>State</b>	<b>% English</b>	<b>% Other White</b>	<b>% Black</b>
Maine	71.8	27.6	0.6
New Hampshire	72.7	26.7	0.6
Vermont	75.0	24.7	0.3
Massachusetts	78.6	20.0	1.4
Rhode Island	70.3	23.3	6.4
Connecticut	79.1	18.6	2.3
New York	40.8	51.6	7.6
Pennsylvania	19.0	78.6	2.4
Maryland	31.0	34.3	34.7
Virginia	29.3	29.8	40.9
North Carolina	29.7	43.5	26.8
South Carolina	20.7	35.6	43.7

also shows that both Africans and non-English whites were not evenly distributed across the colonies and states. The data in Table 2, from the 1790 census, combine recent estimates of the ethnic origins of the white population, for those states where records with names survive, with information on the proportion that was black. Of the non-English whites, the majority were Scots or Scots-Irish, with notable presences in some localities of people with Dutch or German backgrounds. New England was, in fact, aptly named, as three of every four inhabitants traced their origins back to England. Only a few blacks (both slave and free) lived there. From Maryland to South Carolina, settlers with English roots no longer accounted for the majority of the white population, and in most southern states Americans with African origins outnumbered each of the white groups. The middle states of New York and Pennsylvania were dominated by non-English whites, with a small but significant black population, most of whom lived in or around the cities.

Although the federal government never included Native Americans in the census during this period, we must remember that they were a significant presence in 1750 from the Appalachian Mountains westward. In the South alone, there were over 55,000 Native Americans in 1750, including over 12,000 Creeks, 8,000 Cherokee, and 14,500 Choctaws. In the North, the Iroquois and their allies remained a powerful force until after the War for Independence. By 1830, however, most of the native peoples north of the Ohio River had been forced west of the Mississippi, and the Indian Removal Act of that year would

lead to expulsion of most of the remaining native peoples in the South by 1838. The acquisition of the Louisiana Territory in 1803 added significant numbers of Native Americans to the United States.

The emergence of cities will be addressed more fully as part of migrations, but it is worth noting here that the proportion of the population living in urban areas (defined by the census as a place with at least 2,500 people) was only 5.1 percent in 1790. By 1830, the United States was still overwhelmingly rural, as only 8.8 percent lived in what might be called cities. An urban majority was first documented in the 1920 census, with the proportion rising to 75.2 percent two centuries after the first census.

Assessing class distinctions among the American people in this period depends on studies based on tax lists to provide some evidence into the relative wealth of Americans. In Boston, for example, the distribution of wealth, as measured in the tax lists, remained remarkably stable over the period, with the bottom third of all taxpayers holding no property and the top 10 percent owning about two-thirds of the wealth in the city. Elsewhere, increasing concentrations of wealth were common, especially in cities or settled regions. In Hingham, Massachusetts, the share of wealth held by the poorest 20 percent declined from 1.8 percent to 0.05 percent between 1754 and 1830. The share of the wealthiest 10 percent increased from 37.4 to 47.0 percent. Chester County, Pennsylvania, saw the share of wealth held by the richest ten percent rise from 29.9 to 38.3 percent between 1760 and 1802; the poorest 30 percent saw their share decrease from 6.3 to 3.9 percent. Frontier farming regions may have had more equal opportunities, as the wealthiest 10 percent of farmers in Sugar Creek, Illinois, in 1838 held only 25.0 percent of the wealth, compared to 9.7 percent among the bottom 20 percent. Cities and large towns, on the other hand, were places where wealth was often concentrated. In 1810, the richest one percent of the population in Brooklyn held property worth at least \$15,000 and owned at least 22.0 percent of the wealth. By 1841 it took \$50,000 to make it into the top one percent in Brooklyn, by which time that elite held at least 42.0 percent of the city's wealth.

A rare federal property tax in 1798 produced a national assessment of real property. This list shows that the average property holder held land and buildings worth \$1,433, though only 49.4 percent of households held such property. The richest 10 percent held 45.0 percent, while 88.0 percent of the value of all real property was held by only half of all property owners. The average value of houses

ranged from a high of \$426 in Massachusetts to a low of \$41 in Tennessee in 1798. In Vermont, the average house was assessed at \$84, while in Virginia the comparable figure was \$190.

Any discussion of class and wealth must recognize that the system of slavery meant that about one-fifth of Americans in 1750 were considered as property themselves, not legally entitled to own anything. By 1830 there were over 300,000 free blacks in the country; but while no longer property, many were among the poorest of Americans. In fact, slavery might best be viewed as a system of caste laid over a system of class.

Of religion, there is little to say with confidence other than the country was overwhelmingly Protestant, with a few Catholics, Jews, and Muslims (mostly African-born slaves) present. Numerous Protestant denominations contended for communicants in various parts of the country, with Congregationalists remaining strong in New England, Episcopalian in the Tidewater and low-country South, and Baptists and Methodists dominating the rest of the South and the West. The middle states were, from start to finish, a mosaic of multiplying and contending Protestant faiths.

#### MIGRATION

During the years from 1775 to 1830, immigration may have been slower than at any other time in American history, with the exception of the 1930s. A surge of immigrants from England and Europe after 1760 came to an end with the War for Independence. Scant records suggest only modest numbers of arrivals until after 1820s; the great surge that brought over thirty million new people to the country by 1920 did not begin in a serious way until after 1845. During the first decade after the government thought it worth recording such data, the number of recorded immigrants was about 10,000 per year from 1820 to 1826, with the total more than doubling as the decade came to a close. In 1832, the number of immigrants jumped to just over 60,000 and topped 100,000 for the first time in 1842, about one-tenth of the yearly totals in the decades before World War I. Males accounted for from 65 to 80 percent of the total, most in the prime ages for work between fifteen and forty. This pattern of immigrants being predominantly males of working age would continue until after 1930.

The low level of immigration may have allowed Americans to become a more homogeneous people during the years they were establishing their new republican experiment. The emergence of African

Americans out of a multiplicity of African origins has been well documented, and presumably the same may have happened among Americans of European background, aided by public ceremonies designed to foster national identity.

The transformation of the United States from a rural to an urban society clearly began during this period. In 1750, three cities in the colonies had at least 8,000 inhabitants: Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. Together, they accounted for 3.5 percent of the colonial population. By 1770, the largest city was Philadelphia, with approximately 28,000 residents. By the first census in 1790, another three cities had reached that size, though the proportion of the total population living in those places had declined slightly. The move to cities picked up noticeably after 1800, so that the census of 1830 recorded twenty-six places with at least 8,000 inhabitants, accounting for 6.7 percent of the people. New York had replaced Philadelphia as the largest city, with 202,589 inhabitants. The urbanizing trend was just getting started by 1830, as the 1890 census recorded 447 cities with at least 8,000 people. The 18 million Americans living in such places were 29.0 percent of the total.

The third great flow of migrants during and after this period was the movement from east to west. In 1750 the population of England's colonies was scattered, rarely more than 150 miles from the Atlantic Ocean. Over the next eighty years, a combination of a rapidly growing population, freedom from imperial restrictions, the acquisition of additional territory from France and Spain, and major innovations in transportation sent the American population westward. This migration is shown in Table 3. Although westward expansion is often celebrated in American history, it is important to remember that thousands of slaves were unwilling participants, and the native American population experienced contraction in the face of white expansion. The figures in Table 3 demonstrate not only the remarkable growth in the regions of the country comprised by the original thirteen states, but also the dramatic movement to new areas. Although only 109,368 lived in what became Kentucky and Tennessee in 1790, over 3.6 million people lived in the West by 1830, almost as many as in the United States in 1790. One result was the addition of eleven new states by 1821.

It is evident that, from the early years of the Revolution through the Constitutional Convention in 1787, Americans were unsure of whether they were one people or a collection of sections. No issue so clearly defined sectional differences as the presence or absence of slaves and free blacks. The end of slavery

TABLE 3

<b>Regional Population Growth: 1750–1830</b>					
<b>Region</b>	<b>1750</b>	<b>1770</b>	<b>1790</b>	<b>1810</b>	<b>1830</b>
New England	360,011	581,038	1,009,206	1,471,973	1,954,717
Middle Atlantic	296,459	555,904	958,632	2,014,702	3,587,664
South Atlantic	514,290	991,734	1,851,806	2,674,891	3,645,752
East North Central*				272,324	1,470,018
West North Central†				19,783	140,455
East South Central‡		19,400	109,368	708,590	1,815,969
West South Central§				77,618	246,127

\* Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan  
+ Only Missouri by 1830  
^ Kentucky (1790), Tennessee (1790), Mississippi (1810), Alabama (1830)  
# Louisiana (1810) and Arkansas (1830)

in the North led to an increase in the free black population, not only from slaves freed locally, but also from freed blacks moving from the South. Although the vast majority of African Americans living in the North were free by 1830, more free blacks lived in the South Atlantic region than in any other part of the country. Because of the internal slave trade, 490,024 slaves were living in the region comprised of Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama in 1830, more than the total number of black colonists in 1770.

The addition of the Louisiana Territory in 1803 and East Florida in 1819 brought a few French and Spanish colonists into the American population, but they were quickly overwhelmed by arrivals from the states. In these and later conquests, Native American populations nominally under the control of European empires or independent Mexico after 1821, were exposed to the expanding people of the United States, who considered it their divine destiny to populate and transform the entire North American continent.

*See also African Americans: Free Blacks in the North; African Americans: Free Blacks in the South; American Indians: American Indian Ethnography; American Indians: American Indian Removal; American Indians: Overview; City Growth and Development; Class: Overview; Demography; Frontier; Immigration and Immigrants; Migration and Population Movement; Slavery: Overview; West.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Haines, Michael R., and Richard H. Steckel, eds. *A Population History of North America*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

McClelland, Peter D., and Richard J. Zeckhauser, eds. *Demographic Dimensions of the New Republic: American Interregional Migration, Vital Statistics, and Manumissions, 1800–1860*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

McDonald, Forrest, and Ellen Shapiro McDonald. "The Ethnic Origins of the American People, 1790." *William and Mary Quarterly*, third series, 37 (1980): 179–199.

Nugent, Walter. *Structures of American Social History*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981.

Pessen, Edward. *Riches, Class, and Power before the Civil War*. Lexington, Mass.: Heath, 1973.

Potter, James. "The Growth of Population in America, 1700–1860." In *Population in History: Essays in Historical Demography*. Edited by D. V. Glass and D. E. C. Eversley. London: Edward Arnold, 1965.

Soltow, Lee. *Distribution of Wealth and Income in the United States in 1798*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1989.

Thernstrom, Stephen, ed. *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980.

United States Bureau of the Census. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975.

Wells, Robert V. *Revolutions in Americans' Lives: A Demographic Perspective on the History of Americans, Their Families, and Their Society*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982.

Robert V. Wells

---

**PERSONAL APPEARANCE** The works of itinerant portrait artists from the early nineteenth century provide some idea of what Americans in the northern states looked like. These vernacular portraits show



**William Paca.** Charles Willson Peale painted this full-length portrait of the Maryland Patriot and politician William Paca in 1772. Paca poses in an eighteenth-century gentleman's suit, with knee-length coat, waistcoat, breeches, and stockings. THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND.

respectable men and women—merchants, professional men, successful artisans, manufacturers and their wives—in their best clothes, the men in sober black, the women in ornamented caps and collars. They hold books, often Bibles, and sometimes other implements that signify female arts or men's trades. With rare exceptions they are gazing seriously at the beholder. This is the world of the prosperous American parlor. Occasionally there is a revealing lapse from propriety, as in the portrait of Stephen Fitch, circa 1820, that shows him holding not a book but a snuffbox and a handkerchief that he will use to clean up after he has inhaled the tobacco.

Such portraits also reveal changes in personal appearance. Men's hairstyles began to change radically at the turn of the century, along with much else. Wigs, long flowing locks, and hair tied in queues or clubs gave way to short hair—"brush heads" as they were first called. Men sat for their portraits with

hair close-cropped in the Roman style, or brushed back to reveal the forehead. Beards and mustaches, which had disappeared from the American colonies in the late seventeenth century, would not begin their return until after 1830.

Caricatures provide a different view. The drawings and lithographs of David Claypoole Johnston depict men in shirtsleeves, with ill-fitting hats and soiled or missing cravats. Drunkards' bare toes stick out of their broken shoes. In Johnston's "Militia Muster" (1828), the New England citizen-soldiers are an unattractive lot. Some men wear patched and soiled trousers while others puff on "segars." Because the militia spanned class divisions in the community, at least some pictured in this all-male world of the muster are those who might have sat for portraits in their own parlors. Four of the working-class militiamen have open mouths, displaying missing and rotted teeth. This is a striking reminder of the dental difficulties that plagued many, perhaps most Americans.

#### BODY LANGUAGE

One keen observer thought that the farm people of his native New England in the 1820s were facially expressive, "wearing all unconsciously the masks that custom had prescribed." The great physical demands of unmechanized agriculture, he maintained, made men "heavy, awkward and slouching in movement." Other observers likewise found Dutch farmers in New York and Germans in Pennsylvania "clumsy and chill," or "dull and stolid." Poorer rural folk in the South looked "disagreeable and boorish" to English travelers, their faces giving nothing away.

The newly arrived "wild Irish," on the other hand, stood out as too expressive—loud, boisterous, and gesticulating. African Americans were in a different category entirely. Their freer expressions and gestures confused and distracted observers who saw only "antics and frolics," or "savagery." Whether seen as sullenly uncommunicative or childishly merry, they also wore the masks of custom—in this case self-protective strategies for controlling what could be known about their feelings and motivations. Low status and greater physical expressiveness made both groups vulnerable to caricature; their faces were customarily portrayed as coarse and brutal.

American city dwellers, driven by the quicker pace of commerce, were reputed to be easy to distinguish from rural folk. It was already said of New York City that the men hurrying on Broadway shared a universal "contraction of the brow, knitting



**A Militia Muster.** This satirical 1828 watercolor by David Claypoole Johnston paints an unflattering portrait of the cleanliness of militia soldiers. There is a sharp contrast between the high level of personal appearance found in portraits of this period and the grittier portrayal of citizens often found in caricatures. COURTESY, AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY.

of the eyebrows, and compression of the lips." It was a popular American saying that "a New York merchant always walks as if he had a good dinner before him, and a bailiff behind him."

The most physically graceful of Americans were thought to be members of the planter aristocracy, who expressed the power of their class in the way they stood and moved. Accustomed to command, at ease on the dance floor or in the saddle, they could be distinguished from men hardened by toil or preoccupied with commerce. An Englishwoman visiting Washington contrasted not the politics but the posture of congressmen from the North and South. She noted the "ease and frank courtesy . . . with an occasional touch of arrogance" of the slaveholders alongside the "cautious . . . and too deferential air of the members from the North." A New Englander could be identified, she wrote, "by his deprecatory walk."

#### CLEANLINESS

Until well after the Revolution, very few Americans bathed—that is, washed their entire bodies. Custom-

arily, they went no farther than washing the face and hands once a day in cold water in full view of others. Most men and women also washed without soap, reserving it for laundering clothes; instead they rubbed briskly with a coarse towel to scrub off dirt. Only those whose hands and faces were clearly dirty were considered unclean.

Elite American families with transatlantic connections to the British aristocracy first took up bathing in the 1790s in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. Men and women undressed in their rooms and washed themselves using basin, pitcher, and towel—an ensemble called a "chamber set" that would become increasingly frequent in American bedchambers.

These new practices were influenced in part by considerations of health, in particular the eighteenth-century medical discovery that the skin with its pores was an organ of secretion, with its corollary that the pores needed to be kept clean and open. But the new attitude owed even more to aesthetics—a revulsion from bodily smells, a desire for smooth, un-

blemished surfaces, and a willingness to connect bodily cleanliness with virtue and refinement.

During the first three decades of the nineteenth century, other Americans in city and countryside followed the example of urban elite families. However, the democratization of bathing was gradual. In 1815 the family of a prominent minister in Litchfield, Connecticut, still washed in their kitchen using a stone sink and "a couple of basins." Historians know this because a young woman from New York City who boarded with them complained in a letter home that she was unable to bathe.

Advice books on health and manners began to recommend bathing, and it is likely that young people were most responsive. Most members of the older generation at the time of transition—those born before 1780, say—may never have been comfortable with it. By 1830 bathing was probably widespread among prosperous families in cities (and to some extent among plantation families as well) and coming into acceptance in rural villages. It remained relatively rare in the countryside; the northern agricultural press would not begin a campaign to encourage bathing until around 1840. Bathing did not touch the lives of the urban poor or the world of the slaves.

*See also Character; Clothing; Health and Disease; Manners; Refinement and Gentility; Wigs.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bushman, Richard L. *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities*. New York: Knopf, 1992; New York: Vintage, 1993.
- Bushman, Richard L., and Claudia L. Bushman. "The Early History of Cleanliness in America." *Journal of American History* 74, no. 4 (March 1988): 1213–1238.
- Kasson, John F. *Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1991.
- Larkin, Jack. *The Reshaping of Everyday Life, 1790–1840*. New York: Harper and Row, 1988.
- Sloat, Caroline F., and Jessica Nicoll, eds. *Meet Your Neighbors: New England Portraits, Painters, and Society, 1790–1850*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992.

Jack Larkin

---

**PHILADELPHIA** Philadelphia was founded by William Penn in 1681 as the seat of government for Pennsylvania, the colony that had been granted to him by King Charles II. Penn hoped to provide a haven for fellow members of the Society of Friends,

otherwise known as the Quakers. The Friends left their mark on America in many ways, but none perhaps was so great as the heritage of tolerance signified by the name Philadelphia, which means "City of Brotherly Love." The city's reputation for tolerance made it the perfect location for the cultural, as well as geographic, center of what would one day become the United States.

#### TRADE

The key to Philadelphia's phenomenal growth lay in trade. Dozens of charters for new cities were written in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, but Philadelphia was uniquely situated to take advantage of a growing economic boom in export flour. Delaware Valley farms produced two wheat harvests a year. Unlike tobacco, another major export of the colonies that was shipped in its raw form and finished abroad, wheat was milled into the final product, flour, at hundreds of watermills scattered around the countryside. Barrels of flour arrived in Philadelphia by cart from as far south as Virginia and on small, flat-bottomed boats called shallops from Chesapeake and Delaware Bays.

Flour barrels reexported from Philadelphia had the added advantage of being literally branded as proof that Pennsylvania stood behind the quality of the flour inside. By the end of the colonial period, the government of Pennsylvania recognized seven different grades, the highest called "super fine" and marketed to Europe. Pennsylvania flour was sold in the West Indies, South Carolina, the sugar islands of Madeira and the Azores, southwestern Europe, and even New England.

The city's most useful product was information at a time when information from overseas markets traveled no faster than a sailing ship. News of the best prices for export flour spread even before an incoming ship had completely docked. Merchants gathered at coffeehouses in the center of the city quickly put together "ventures" to send new shipments out to the most promising market. It did not take long for Philadelphia also to become a center for the reexport of manufactured products such as cloth that was sold first in the city's hinterland and eventually to coastal cities throughout America.

#### GROWTH OF THE CITIES

From roughly 1720—around the time when Pennsylvania passed laws to certify the quality of export flour and print a local paper money supply—to the end of the century, Philadelphia grew rapidly. Influenced by the planned rebuilding of London after the



**The House Intended for the President of the United States.** The state of Pennsylvania began construction on this house in Philadelphia in 1792 in hopes that the city would be named the permanent national capital. The house was eventually purchased by the University of Pennsylvania, which demolished it in 1829. © CORBIS.

great fire in 1666, Penn had imagined a beautiful city with wide boulevards, attractive city parks, and rows of brick townhouses backing up to gardens and trees. The rapidly growing population, however, apparently wished to settle as near to the city's center at Second and Market Streets as was physically possible. Residents defied Penn's plans by crisscrossing the wide city blocks with alleys and spilling over the city's northern and southern boundaries into the suburbs of Southwark and Northern Liberties.

By 1790, forty-five thousand people lived in Philadelphia and the urbanized area around it, an area defined not by the rectangular plan of Penn's design, but rather by a semicircle two miles along the Delaware River and, at its widest point along Market Street, one mile west of the river. Warehouses crowded along the waterfront, along with tightly packed housing for tailors. Mariners stayed along

the south border of the river, while the shipbuilding industry dominated the riverside to the north.

The city boasted over three hundred inns, taverns, and boardinghouses and five hundred shopkeepers and grocers. Scattered throughout the city and living in shacks along the alleys or on the top floors of sturdier buildings, common laborers (black as well as white) accounted for one in twelve city residents. The city's formal market ran the length of Market Street, which along with Second Street divided the city into identifiable sectors.

#### PROMINENT PHILADELPHIANS

The city had three hundred self-identified merchants, including seven who specialized in the Chinese trade alone. Twenty-five identified themselves as brokers or dealers, thirty-one specialized in the flour trade, twenty-four in lumber, eight in iron, and eight in tea. Young merchants tended to live in or near the

warehouses on the docks. The measure of success, however, was being able to move to the category of "gentleman" and live in Society Hill.

The enclosure of Dock Street, previously a foul-smelling open sewer, created a boom in building for the upper class in an area still called Society Hill in the early twenty-first century. It was centered on its own smaller market on Second Street south of Market. Thomas Willing, Benjamin Chew, Samuel Powell, William Shippen, and Robert Wharton—all famous merchants in their day—lived on Third and Fourth Streets. Alexander Hamilton and Benjamin Rush also lived nearby. Wealthy widows from the Mifflin, Wharton, Gilpin, Bartram, and Hamilton families were neighbors in this new wealthy enclave.

The role of Independence Hall on Fifth and Chestnut led other wealthy residents to begin to build finer

houses along Market on the western outskirts of the city. The most notable of these new residences was that of financier Robert Morris at Fifth and Market Streets. Morris loaned his home to George Washington during the latter's two terms as president of the United States. Thomas Jefferson stayed in this neighborhood while writing the Declaration of Independence and later when he was in the new national government. New houses there and in Society Hill were built further apart than elsewhere, and so the wealthy could avoid the chaos that characterized other sections of town. When a household member was ill, for example, sawdust was spread over the cobblestones in front of the house to keep the area quiet. Even sawdust could not have shut out the din of overcrowded blocks through most areas of the city.

### OCCUPATIONS

The majority of shopkeepers and artisans operated to the northwest of Society Hill, clustering along Market Street, on Second Street, and also on Sixth Street north of Market. Approximately sixty different types of shopkeepers operated in the block surrounding the permanent market, along with numerous artisans and some professionals.

The variety of occupations offers a glimpse of the complexity of the city in 1790. There were twenty-three ministers, five sextons, twenty-eight clerks, ninety-eight schoolmasters or mistresses, fourteen university professors, fifty-five physicians, twenty-four pharmacists, five midwives, nine bleeders, three dentists, one dispensary, and a "doctress." Thirty-one manufacturers specialized in carriages, thirty-seven as printers, twenty-four as chandlers, twenty-three as potters, fifteen as watchmakers, ten as clockmakers, thirteen as bookbinders, and ten as brushmakers. There were also comb makers, plane makers, sieve makers, soap boilers, card makers, three umbrella makers, two whip makers, seven pump makers, seven millstone makers, two engine makers, four fan makers, three parchment makers, five engravers, and glassblowers, along with a chaise maker, wire cage maker, cane maker, whalebone cutter, and pottery wheel maker. Other manufacturers made musical, mathematical, and obstetrical instruments; cigars; organs; trunks; hair powder; and hanging paper.

The city had 54 barbers, 192 innkeepers, 110 boardinghouses, 249 shopkeepers, 44 tobacconists, and 61 hucksters. In addition to 153 blacksmiths and 30 ironmongers, the city was home to 18 nail-makers, 25 silversmiths, 16 tinsmiths, 10 copper-smiths, brass founders, typefounders, block makers, gunsmiths, goldsmiths, cutlers, pewterers, and a steelmaker, wire maker, file cutter, and button mold maker. There were 131 butchers, 117 bakers, 34 brewers, and 18 sugar bakers or refiners, along with cake bakers, pastry cooks, chocolate makers, hard-tack bakers, a mustard maker, and a confectioner.

To the southwest of the homes of the wealthy arose a city-within-a-city, home to a growing number of free blacks and slaves who had escaped from southern states across the Pennsylvania border to safety. Dr. Israel Butterfield, the first known African American physician and a leader in the fight against yellow fever, lived here.

City restrictions against "noxious" occupations had forced the wholesale butcher trade into a region of its own, Spring Garden, between the Northern Liberties and Germantown. Tanners and ropemakers

also lived and worked outside the city proper. Carpenters lived on the outskirts of the city next to the new homes being built.

Whereas it was rare in the countryside for a woman to continue maintaining her own household after widowhood, female-headed households accounted for 10 percent of the total in Philadelphia. Wealthy widows, or gentlewomen, lived in Society Hill or the older sections once occupied by the wealthy closer to the river. Widows and women identified by a specific trade lived along with other shopkeepers and artisans in the northwest. It was standard practice in both shopkeeping and artisanal households for women to keep the books (including Debbie Franklin, Benjamin's common-law wife). After the death of a husband, it was easier for a woman to continue shopkeeping, or even directing the labor of artisans, than continuing to operate a farm on her own. There were also trades such as midwifery, cake baker, and mantua maker that were run by women.

### ENVIRONMENT AND INSTITUTIONS

The bulk of the city was crowded and noisy. At its most densely populated point, twenty-four-hundred people lived in a single city block in an era when houses could be constructed only to four stories in height. The poorest of residents squeezed into shanties along alleys in the rain, living outdoors when the weather permitted. The children of the middling and upper classes spent a lot of their time outdoors by choice; those of the lower classes ran in little packs through the streets. By the first decade of the new nation, the city had exceeded a safe rate of population density, leaving it vulnerable to the nation's first major outbreak of disease, a yellow fever epidemic.

By the 1790s Philadelphia had a university and a medical school; two banks; the nation's first fire departments, insurance companies, and free library; and Benjamin Franklin's American Philosophical Society—so named to signify the role of the city as the center of America, not just the Delaware Valley.

### THE DECLARATION AND THE CONSTITUTION

The city would become best known for the legislative hall, known as the State House, that was built in the 1730s and 1740s to house the colonial legislature. A bell on top, ordered by the governor, had the inscription "Proclaim Liberty throughout the Land." Because of Philadelphia's central location along the coast—and its noted inclusiveness with regard to religion and creed—the city became home to both Continental Congresses through most of their operation.

The Declaration of Independence was written in Philadelphia, signed in the State House—which became Independence Hall—and read to the public for the first time on its steps.

When the loose confederation of nation-states that had successfully won independence from Great Britain began to fall apart after the war, a convention was called in 1787, again in Philadelphia, to write a stronger constitution that would create by peaceful means an effective centralized government. Pennsylvania was the second state to ratify the new Constitution. Ironically, Pennsylvania was also the center of a revolt against the document, ending in a compromise by which a Bill of Rights was appended as the first amendments to the Constitution.

#### **IN THE NEW NATION**

Had Philadelphia remained the capital of the new United States, it might have become a city with the size and prominence of Paris, as many educated residents dreamed. However, during the Revolution a group of Pennsylvania militiamen had marched on the Continental Congress, then meeting in Philadelphia, requesting (rather forcefully) that they be paid. From a distance, the request seems perfectly reasonable—but the manner, which Congress found frightening, led instead to its move across the river into New Jersey for a time. When the convention convened in the same building to write the Constitution, members remembered that particular outburst and insisted that there be a separate district for the nation's government so that the real or imagined failings of the state government would not directly impact the workings of the new federal government.

When the Constitution was approved in 1788, the mechanics of Philadelphia mounted a grand parade, by their own accounts, down a street that would forever be known as Arch Street because of the construction of a triumphant arch just for the occasion. Each artisan specialty marched, often with an accompanying float, in honor of the new nation. The first national capital under the new Constitution was New York City, where George Washington was inaugurated as president in April 1789. The following year, however, the federal government moved to Philadelphia. Briefly, the economic, political, and social centers of the new nation were all in Philadelphia. However, the federal government moved south to the new District of Columbia in 1800 and New York City gained primacy in international finance and domestic trade in the nineteenth century, particularly after the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825.

The first decades of the nineteenth century were not easy for Philadelphia, but the city continued to grow nevertheless. Philadelphia merchants continued to prosper in the China and West Indies trade. The city also remained a reexporter to southern ports and, through New Orleans, parts of the Ohio River Valley. The old artisan system of master-journeyman-apprentice died out, but Philadelphia remained a center of specialized manufacture, particularly with regard to machinery and fabrics. The city was no longer the financial capital of the nation, but in a period where the major money supply came from private banks, the city did not lack for either banks or money. Finally, the city grew as a center of abolitionist thought, and as the northern terminus of the Underground Railroad, it drew slaves to the city-within-a-city of free blacks and to numerous surrounding rural African American settlements.

After an ill-fated effort to create its own Main Line Canal westward through the mountains, the city ceded the route to the newly created, private Pennsylvania Railroad, which by the 1850s would dominate inland railroad trade. In the 1840s German and Irish immigration through the port of Philadelphia led to renewed growth in the backcountry and provided a labor force of young adults willing to take on whatever work was necessary. The city's rebirth was not easy. Journeymen struggled to find a niche in the new world of wage labor, and nativist riots led to the establishment of the nation's first Catholic parochial school system. By 1850, however, the city was once again on the rise, a center of international and national trade as well as custom manufacturing in textiles and machinery. Philadelphia's particular gift then and in the future would be the ability to reshape itself as the nation changed around it.

*See also American Philosophical Society; China Trade; City Growth and Development; City Planning; Foreign Investment and Trade; Immigration and Immigrants; Pennsylvania; Social Life: Urban Life; Work: Artisans and Crafts Workers, and the Workshop.*

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Bridenbaugh, Carl, and Jessica Bridenbaugh. *Rebels and Gentlemen: Philadelphia in the Age of Franklin*. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1942.

Doerflinger, Thomas M. *A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise: Merchants and Economic Development in Revolutionary Philadelphia*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986.

Foner, Eric. *Tom Paine and Revolutionary America*. Updated ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

- Jensen, Arthur L. *The Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963.
- Klepp, Susan E. *Philadelphia in Transition: A Demographic History of the City and Its Occupational Groups, 1720–1830*. New York: Garland, 1989.
- Lapsansky, Emma Jones. *Neighborhoods in Transition: William Penn's Dream and Urban Reality*. New York: Garland, 1994.
- Nash, Gary B. *Quakers and Politics: Pennsylvania, 1681–1726*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968.
- Newman, Simon P. *Embodying History: The Lives of the Poor in Early Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003.
- Ryerson, Richard Alan. *The Revolution Is Now Begun: The Radical Committees of Philadelphia, 1765–1776*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978.
- Schweitzer, Mary M. *Custom and Contract: Household, Government, and the Economy in Colonial Pennsylvania*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987.
- . "The Spatial Organization of Federalist Philadelphia." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 24 (1993): 31–57.
- Smith, Billy G. *The "Lower Sort": Philadelphia's Laboring People, 1750–1800*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990.
- Thompson, Peter. *Rum Punch and Revolution: Taverngoing and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999.
- Tolles, Frederick Barnes. *Meeting House and Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia, 1682–1763*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1948.
- Tully, Alan. *William Penn's Legacy: Politics and Social Structure in Provincial Pennsylvania, 1726–1755*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977.
- Warner, Sam Bass, Jr. *The Private City: Philadelphia in Three Periods of Its Growth*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968.
- Wulf, Karen A. *Not All Wives: Women of Colonial Philadelphia*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2000.

Mary Schweitzer

ample, established aid societies for fellow migrants who had just arrived in New York City or New Orleans and needed assistance in finding a place to live and work. One such association was the German Society of the City of New York, founded in 1784 to relieve the local German churches of their charitable burdens and to take effective steps to deal with problems emerging from the influx of German immigrants.

In the South, philanthropy followed the color line and played its part in preserving a racist society. Visiting the poor and caring for orphans was, according to Gross, at the heart of Southern philanthropy and reaffirmed a patron-client relationship. Philanthropy by free and wealthy blacks for slaves and blacks in need, however, challenged this society. Henriette Delille, a wealthy offspring of one of the oldest families of free blacks, supported by several other women, established the Sisters of the Presentation (later renamed Sisters of the Holy Family). The members of this Catholic order worked among the poor, the sick, the elderly and also among slaves. Delille also founded a school for girls and opened a hospital for needy blacks in New Orleans. When Alexis de Tocqueville toured the United States in 1831, he was impressed by the wide array of these associations, which had been founded to support the poor, build schools and colleges, organize hospitals, and create libraries.

Dartmouth College was such a privately founded college in New England. Chartered in 1769 by Dr. Eleazar Wheelock, it became the center of a legal fight between the state legislature of New Hampshire and the trustees of Dartmouth College—a struggle that defined American philanthropic culture. Since the college received state aid and fulfilled a public task (education), William Plumer, the state's governor (1812–1813, 1816–1819), asserted that the state government had a right to interfere in the administration of the college and its curriculum. The ensuing legal conflict, culminating in the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Dartmouth College v. Woodward* (1819), resulted in the reassertion of the trustees' rights and the clear separation of state and private spheres in the provision of public services. After the *Dartmouth* decision, philanthropy's place in American society was defined. State legislatures could no longer expect to interfere into the operations of private associations. Subsequently, state governments evaluated the importance of certain fields such as education and social welfare and decided to leave aspects of these fields to private and religious associations. The *Dartmouth* decision also ac-

**PHILANTHROPY AND GIVING** Since the arrival of the *Mayflower* on North America's shores in 1620, millions of Europeans have set sail for the new continent to find a better life. The settlers created communities, organized a social and cultural infrastructure, and—after some time—even established philanthropic networks. None of these structures was entirely new; the settlers often recreated institutions they had already known from their European home. According to historian Robert A. Gross, there were some two thousand benevolent institutions in New England by 1820. German immigrants, for ex-

counts for the nation's reliance on philanthropy rather than a comprehensive, state-organized system of social welfare. Private associations, as the legal scholar Mark D. McGarvie has pointed out, did not assume responsibility in matters that would otherwise have been government functions; they occupied spaces left vacant by the local, state, and federal governments. The clergy seized this opportunity and filled the emerging void by creating a dense network of church-affiliated philanthropic institutions. In the early years of the American Republic, clergymen lost the status and political authority that went with representing a state church. But in philanthropy they recognized the potential for the realization of a religiously inspired vision of social organization.

Thus, philanthropy became a force for social change. Some historians go even further in their assessment of philanthropy by suggesting that it constituted some form of "counter-government" to political authority. This aspect of philanthropy was not lost on persons excluded from civil society because of their religion or gender. Long before women received the right to vote, they organized, financed, and ran voluntary associations. For example, they established the Female Society for the Relief of the Distressed in Philadelphia (1795) and the New York Society for the Relief of Poor Widows with Small Children (1797). Within society, philanthropy assumed an exclusionary as well as an inclusionary function. It gave women an opportunity to step out of the domestic sphere and gain a voice in dealing with society's most pressing issues. It even allowed women to shape society. On the other hand, however, it also allowed for excluding Catholics and Jews from Protestant establishments and promoted the creation of ethnically and religiously defined philanthropic spheres in American cities.

*See also Dartmouth College v. Woodward; Education: Education of African Americans; Welfare and Charity; Women: Female Reform Societies and Reformers.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- McCarthy, Kathleen D. *Noblesse Oblige: Charity and Cultural Philanthropy in Chicago, 1849–1929*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.
- . *Women's Culture: American Philanthropy and Art, 1830–1930*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.
- Hall, Peter Dobkin. *Inventing the Nonprofit Sector and Other Essays on Philanthropy, Voluntarism, and Nonprofit Organizations*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.

Jaher, Frederic Cople. *The Urban Establishment: Upper Strata in Boston, New York, Charleston, Chicago, and Los Angeles*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982.

Friedman, Lawrence J., and Mark D. McGarvie, eds. *Charity, Philanthropy, and Civility in American History*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Thomas Adam

---

**PHILOSOPHY** Philosophy engages people in dialogue and dispute, seeking insights to questions both compelling and unsettled about human nature and divinity, about what the world is, how we know it, and how to live within it. Philosophical pursuits are common across the generations, but the context of early America shaped these questions and their answers in distinctive ways. The emergence of modern science, the American Revolution (1775–1783), and the creation of representative government blossomed within a nation built on religious foundations. This mix between science, politics, and religion has a rich and distinctive American cast and forged the new American nation.

#### RELIGIOUS FOUNDATIONS

From the 1750s to the 1830s, American philosophical dialogue was framed primarily by divinity school theologians. They sought to understand the human being's personal relationship to God within a Christian worldview, drawing on the Bible and theological reflection. They also sought to make sense of the new science of Englishmen John Locke (1632–1704) and Isaac Newton (1642–1727). They affirmed the supremacy of the Bible but were committed to reconciling modern science with traditional theological beliefs. Later philosophers would integrate science and speculative thought without Christian theology, but a religious orientation dominated early America.

Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) is often described as America's first philosopher and most influential theologian prior to the Civil War. Edwards inherited a Calvinist background and breathed new life into its doctrines. He defended basic Puritan beliefs in his writings and sermons, beliefs such as original sin (all humans are born depraved), grace (only God can save people from this condition), and predestination (God determines every aspect of our fate). Edwards confronted the most puzzling theological challenges, including an account of free will and responsibility in a predetermined world.

His writings sustained intellectual speculative conversation from the mid-eighteenth through the

early nineteenth century, creating a distinctive tradition of American thought, often called the New England Theology. Competing theologies emerged at the leading seminaries, such as the New Divinity at Yale, the closest heir to Edwards's ideas. The New England disputes were intense, but they largely shared a religious orientation that all learning is based on theology. History, ethics, philosophy, science: everything is God's work, and so the attainment of knowledge is only possible when it is joined with religious reflection, based on the Bible.

The intellectual debates were fueled significantly by the writings of Isaac Newton, who offered an interpretation of all physical happenings as motions of material points, synthesizing scientific learning into a framework that guided intellectual progress in America for over two hundred years. Newton's science made belief in God seem increasingly unnecessary to explain what happens around us. Further, it raised a puzzle about how to reconcile the seeming impersonalism of a Newtonian universe with belief in the immanence of God.

Edwards's solution was idealism, a philosophical perspective attracting American philosophers ever since, many of whom also drew from a European idealist tradition that included Irishman George Berkeley (1685–1753) and Germans Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) and G. W. F. Hegel (1770–1831). If the world is the motion of material points, then one might infer that reality is material. (Thomas Jefferson embraced this view.) But Edwards's idealism says that atoms, or whatever else science reveals as part of nature, are expressions of God. Ultimately, the world is in fact God, and the motions and movements contained within it are God's Ideas. The implication is that our personal daily experiences of the world are experiences of God. Another implication for Edwards is that the world we observe should be studied with intensity for all of its (divine) insights. Like Puritans before him (especially Cotton Mather [1663–1728]), New England theologians actively embraced science and were scientists themselves.

Leading intellectuals also debated the first Great Awakening (1739–1740) and other religious revivals of the time. How does one distinguish authentic religious experience from emotionalism? How does one come to know God (or anything else for that matter)? What is the best method for interpreting the Bible? Divisions over these and other questions led to the American Unitarian movement, committed to the rational appraisal of Christian beliefs.

One distinctive characteristic of early American philosophy is that intellectual thought from the be-

ginning was deeply religious and communal and yet friendly to science and its investigations. Science tells us how God operates; reason and biblical revelation tell us why and provide further clues about God's purposes. This compatibility was important for supporting the industrial and technological development of the new nation.

#### POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

It is astounding that this religious orientation existed alongside America's founding documents, which so carefully draw a separation between church and state. Explaining this incongruity is a deep task, but there are two initial remarks often made: first, that those who created the founding documents saw the terrible violence from a European history that did not separate church and state, and they learned from that experience; and second, that they were influenced by Enlightenment values apart from the orientations of theologians.

Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) is often contrasted with Jonathan Edwards to symbolize these divergent American sensibilities. A statesman and scientist throughout the Revolutionary period, Franklin abandoned his Calvinist upbringing while a teenager and, after an initial foray in metaphysics, steadfastly refused to be a speculative philosopher. Instead, Franklin emphasized practical achievements and used the tribunal of experience to guide his scientific, moral, and religious beliefs. Thinking was a means to action rather than reflective meditation.

The American statesman Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) was more interested in speculative thinking, but these speculations led him away from Calvinist beliefs and toward an impersonal Deism. Jefferson was influenced by the eighteenth-century Scottish Enlightenment, with its ideas of humanism, scientific discovery, and morality as a natural science rather than applied theology. He and his political contemporaries absorbed the natural rights and utilitarian traditions of England's John Locke and Scotland's Adam Smith (1723–1790) and David Hume (1711–1776). For these statesmen, the design of political institutions became a matter of debate and rational argument disassociated from biblical interpretation.

The constitutional designers are often called classical liberals. They believed in limited government, its authority resting with the people it serves rather than divine right. Government should secure a basic rule of law that allows people to lead their own lives in accord with their own religious conceptions. Reason showed that people were born free and equal and

that they were endowed with natural rights. Freedom was thought the best means for securing individual happiness. As recounted most famously in Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (1835, 1840), Americans both believed and lived these ideas, in contrast to European aristocracies. The great American exception was slavery.

American views about representative government spring from a particular conception of human nature at once optimistic and pessimistic. On the one hand, people left to themselves will create reciprocal and cooperative relations with others that improve the world and themselves. Individuals through their own efforts will foster community, cooperation, and good will. On the other hand, those who wield political power over others are likely to abuse this power. The solution was to devise a system of checks and balances and limited government that they hoped would allow individual efforts to flourish for the good while minimizing despotic tendencies.

Debates in political philosophy in early America were held in newspapers and pamphlets by famous public leaders and local citizens. The essays constituting *The Federalist* (1787–1788) were published in a New York state newspaper. Written variously by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, they are the most extended defense of the federal Constitution and one of America's great documents of political philosophy. The anti-Federalists (those who opposed the ratification of the Constitution) shot back, and the battle of intellectual ideas took place as pamphlet wars in the public square. Only after the 1830s did the movement of these debates turn to an increasingly smaller circle of university scholars. In early America the location of most philosophical debate was the public.

Remarkably, the greatest political leaders were also the greatest political philosophers. The ideals of liberty and equality were not distinctive to America, but the close relations between philosophical thought and the creation of America's system of government is one of the remarkable developments in human history.

#### **EMERGING AMERICAN TRADITIONS**

Early American intellectuals looked to Europe for their sources and then made them their own. The European Romantics emphasized freedom of expression and the greatness of nature, important currents in American politics and religion during the early to mid-nineteenth century. Transcendentalism and pragmatism emerged as America's most distinctive philosophical schools of thought in the nineteenth

century, supplanting the earlier New England Theology. The transcendentalists emerged in the 1830s from the Unitarians, who had reacted against the Calvinists. The pragmatists came after the Civil War (1861–1865) and Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859). They reshaped the exchange between religion and science and combined elements of Benjamin Franklin's (distinctively American) no-nonsense approach and Jonathan Edwards's idealism. These traditions are the beginning of a long arc from a religious to a secular orientation in American philosophy. The exception was the growth of Catholic institutions of higher education from the mid-nineteenth century onward, with intellectual roots in Aristotle (384–322 b.c.) and St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274).

Philosophy in early America had another lasting influence by creating two distinctive paths of philosophical thought. One path has a spiritual orientation that focuses above all on one's inner life and personal relationship to the world, a connection to America's religious foundations. The Second Great Awakening in the early nineteenth century was an important religious revival, leading to the establishment of many colleges and seminaries and a distinctive history of camp meetings—associations of thousands of people who camped out in search of spiritual renewal. These camp experiences developed into the American Chautauqua movement in the late nineteenth century. Another lasting historical legacy of religious revivals and their spiritual orientation was their association with and support of the abolitionist, suffragette, and temperance movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Another path of philosophy has an empirical and secular orientation that addresses problems of philosophy significantly through the lens of science in disassociation from any religious tradition. This path traces a connection to Enlightenment values of the eighteenth century and is found throughout academic philosophy. But whichever path one traces, the philosophical pursuit is the same, exploring compelling questions about ethics, religion, knowledge, and existence, from one generation to the next.

*See also European Influences: Enlightenment Thought; Federalist Papers; Hamilton, Alexander; Jefferson, Thomas; Madison, James; Politics: Political Thought; Revivals and Revivalism; Science; Theology.*

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Flower, Elizabeth, and Murray G. Murphey. *A History of Philosophy in America*. 2 vols. New York: Capricorn, 1977.

- Hamilton, Alexander, James Madison, and John Jay. *The Federalist*. Edited by Benjamin Fletcher Wright. New York: Metrobooks, 2002.
- Kuklick, Bruce. *A History of Philosophy in America: 1720–2000*. Oxford: Clarendon, 2001.
- Menand, Louis. *The Metaphysical Club*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001.
- Needleman, Jacob. *The American Soul: Rediscovering the Wisdom of the Founders*. New York: Tarcher/Putnam, 2002.
- Scalet, Steven, and David Schmidtz. "State, Civil Society, and Classical Liberalism." In *Civil Society and Government*. Edited by Nancy L. Rosenblum and Robert C. Post. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2002.
- Tocqueville, Alexis de. *Democracy in America*. Edited by Harvey C. Mansfield and Delba Winthrop. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Steven Scalet

---

**PHRENOLOGY** Phrenology, the practice of reading character from bumps on the skull, has enjoyed a long career as a sideshow amusement, but its origins are rooted in the most advanced currents of late-eighteenth-century neuroanatomy and psychology. Though seldom seen as a product of Enlightenment rationality, it represented a serious attempt to systematize human behavior and provide a material basis for theories of mind.

The founder of phrenology, the Austrian neuroanatomist Franz Joseph Gall (1758–1828), argued that the brain was divided into a number of discrete organs, each correlated with a single mental, behavioral, or physiological function. He assumed that the larger the region, the more strongly expressed that behavior would be. Gall made one additional assumption that was critically important for the popular success of phrenology: he conjectured that the skull conformed precisely to the shape of the brain beneath. In this way, Gall developed a system for using the external signs of the body to read the internal state of the mind, the bumps on the skull precisely reflecting the size and shape of the mental organs.

Gall was not the first to interpret the mind through the body. Before Gall, the physiognomist Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741–1801) claimed that all truths were "truths of the surface" and that all parts of the body reflected all others. Unlike his precursors, however, Gall adopted a rigorously empirical approach to mapping and identifying mental organs. Gall and his followers systematically recorded instances of individuals with pronounced talents to de-

termine whether they displayed any distinctive features of the skull and delved into pathology to record instances of persons who had suffered traumatic head injuries associated with alterations in character. Eventually they mapped as many as forty-two discrete organs with coordinating behavioral traits, including alimentiveness (appetite, relish, greediness), amativeness (sexual love), veneration (worship, adoration, obedience), and vitativeness (clinging to life, resisting disease).

From the time of its introduction to the United States in the 1790s, phrenology found both a ready audience and a steady opposition. Objections to phrenology centered, in part, on its materialism and its implicit reduction of mind to little more than a product of physical conditions. But physicians such as Charles Caldwell (1772–1853) (a student of the pre-eminent early national physician and theorist of the mind, Benjamin Rush [1745–1813]) adopted phrenology as a centerpiece of an overarching medical view of society.

Indeed, the entertainment value of phrenology should not mask the fact that many Americans believed it held profound implications for American society. A raft of social reformers saw in phrenology a means of self-interpretation (resonant, many wrote, with the Protestant right of self-interpretation) and an opportunity to identify and overcome personal limitations. On the other hand, however, a starkly determinist strain emerged in which the phrenological organs were seen as inborn reflections of an unchanging character, and in characteristically American fashion, such deterministic readings became deeply inflected by considerations of race. Caldwell, for example, used phrenological analysis to support his contention that Africans were intellectually and morally inferior to Europeans. Phrenological thinking also underlay the work of craniologists such as Samuel George Morton, who quantified and compared the size of brains among the races while arguing for separate origins for the races. Gall's theory of the localization of cerebral function was a foundational concept in early psychology, but its cross-fertilization with conceptions of race and social hierarchy made it a remarkably resilient discipline for almost a century more.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cooter, Roger. *The Cultural Meaning of Popular Science: Phrenology and the Organization of Consent in Nineteenth-Century Britain*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Richards, Graham. *Mental Machinery: The Origins and Consequences of Psychological Ideas, Part I: 1600–1850*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.

Young, Robert M. *Mind, Brain, and Adaptation in the Nineteenth Century: Cerebral Localization and Its Biological Context from Gall to Ferrier*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Robert S. Cox

**PIETISTS** Pietism refers to a Protestant reform movement that originated in Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; the term itself actually was coined by opponents of the movement. Viewing the Protestant churches as legalistic, dead, and unconcerned with personal piety, individuals such as Philip Jakob Spener (1635–1705) and August Hermann Francke (1663–1727) laid out what became the foundational ideas of Pietism. Spener's *Pia Desideria*, published in 1675, advocated the formation of groups or conventicles that stressed personal and group Bible study, the priesthood of the believer by which individuals offered themselves to God as personal sacrifices, an increased effort at harmony among Christians, and the expression of faith through social actions. Spener, who often is referred to as the father of Pietism, elevated personal religious experience over dogma.

As a movement, Pietism influenced individuals who chose to remain within their denominational settings (usually referred to as Church Pietists), as well as those who decided to break with their established churches and form other groups. The latter were known as Radical Pietists, and Francke was particularly influential among many of them. Radical Pietists distinguished between true and false Christianity (usually represented by established churches), which led to their separation from these entities.

In the United States, Pietism affected many religious expressions. The Moravians came under pietistic influence through the leadership of Spener's godson, Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf. By 1722 Zinzendorf had given refuge to the Moravians (also known as the Bohemian Brethren or the Renewed Unity of Brethren) from persecution in Europe. Under his leadership, the Moravians became an aggressive international missionary force and eventually the most significant Pietist group. By the 1730s the Brethren were colonizing places in Europe and North America, and by the next decade they had established colonies in Pennsylvania and Georgia. In the early 1750s a group of Moravians under the

leadership of Bishop August Gottlieb Spangenberg began new settlements in North Carolina on a tract of land called Wachovia. In their new society, which sought freedom from persecution, the Brethren also held slaves. In Salem, Wachovia's main settlement, all slaves were considered church property, while in outlying areas individuals could own slaves. Yet the emphasis on universal salvation that included their African and African American slaves, while not leading immediately to their embracing of abolition, did mark a small move toward white recognition of the humanity of blacks.

The Moravians of Wachovia, however, struggled with the implications for freedom raised by the American Revolution. Following Zinzendorf's views that freedom meant, among other things, submitting to church authority, the church owned all property and administered a strict discipline. African Americans participated fully as members in the life of the church, but remained unequal in social relations with whites. In the early nineteenth century, Pennsylvania Moravians ceased holding slaves, while North Carolina Moravians increased their slaveholdings. By 1822 blacks and whites in Wachovia worshiped separately amid rising racial tensions. Pietism, therefore, in Moravian communities took on varying expressions as it developed in different chronological, social, and geographical environments.

The pietistic influence also manifested itself in other religious traditions. Conrad Beissel (1691–1768), the founder of America's first major communitarian group, the Ephrata Cloister, was particularly affected by Radical Pietism's emphasis on personal experience and separation from false Christianity. The emphasis on an individual spiritual rebirth and piety touched Methodism through the Moravians. While traveling to and working in Georgia in the 1730s, John Wesley (1703–1791) was exposed to Moravian religious understandings. He subsequently adopted and modified many of their ideas related to personal devotion, which then shaped Methodism during the early national period.

Other German pietistic groups such as the Mennonites, Dunkers (Church of the Brethren; Dunkards), and Schwenkfelders had come to America in search of religious freedom. The Mennonites first settled as a group in Pennsylvania in the late seventeenth century and established the settlement of Germantown. Dunkers and Schwenkfelders followed within the next few decades. Acting in part from beliefs that stemmed from pietistic thinking, these groups embraced pacifism and denounced the signing of oaths. During the American Revolution the

Mennonites refused to take an oath of allegiance to the state of Pennsylvania and to pay war taxes. They, however, consented to sell grain and other supplies to the American government and to pay fees in place of military service. Dunkers and Schwenkfelders also took similar actions. Not long after the Revolution groups of Dunkers began moving west and established several settlements in Ohio and Indiana.

Moravians in Pennsylvania transmitted pietistic ideas to Native Americans while America was emerging and developing as a nation. Pietism's emphasis on personal experience over doctrinal understanding allowed Native American Christians to develop a distinctive religion. Furthermore, the pietistic stress on ecumenism facilitated relationships between Jews and German Pietists in colonial and national America, although Pietism itself was unable to obliterate prejudice against Jews. These examples illustrate that Pietism transcended denominational boundaries and shaped how many Americans conceived of God, their relationship to God, and their attendant social responsibilities. At the same time, Pietism was shaped by the many contexts in which it arose, and therefore its adherents might develop contradictory expressions of it. Its emphasis on personal experience and ecumenism, along with its experience of persecution and resistance to established religious authority, produced dynamic interactions with the various environments existing in Revolutionary and early national America.

*See also Methodists; Moravians; Religion: Overview.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Erb, Peter C., ed. *Pietists: Selected Writings*. New York: Paulist Press, 1983.
- "Forum: Jews and Pietists in Early America." *William and Mary Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (October 2001): 849–912.
- Merritt, Jane T. "Dreaming of the Savior's Blood: Moravians and the Indian Great Awakening in Pennsylvania." *William and Mary Quarterly* 54, no. 4 (October 1997): 723–746.
- Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*. 12 vols. Raleigh, N.C.: Edwards and Broughton, 1922–2000.
- Sensbach, Jon F. *A Separate Canaan: The Making of an Afro-Moravian World in North Carolina, 1763–1840*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.

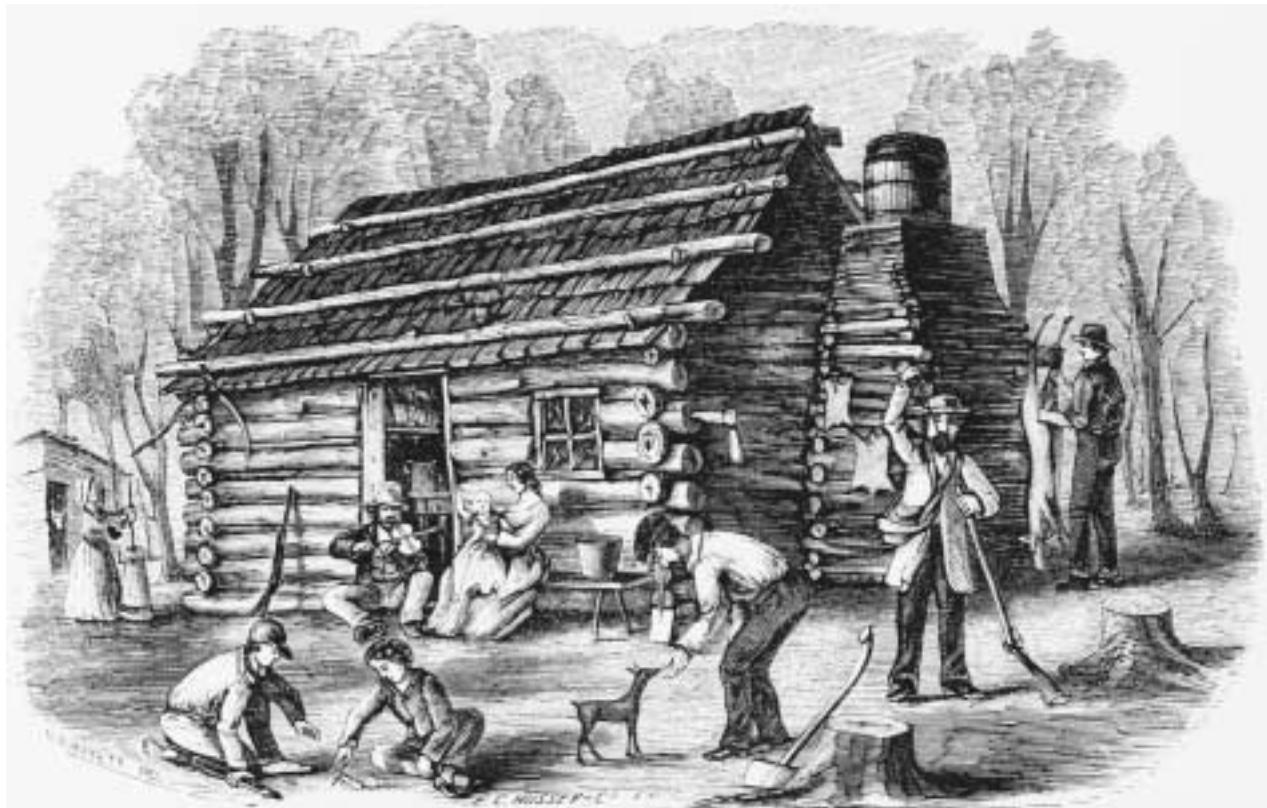
Scott M. Langston

**PIONEERING** In the first half of the eighteenth century, large Indian populations and the Appalachian Mountains limited the Euro-American population outside the eastern colonies to a mélange of French, British, and American fur traders and small military outposts. Then in 1750 the famed Cumberland Gap in northeastern Tennessee was discovered and by the 1770s it became a route for pioneers through the mountains. In 1775 Daniel Boone marked off the Wilderness Road through the Gap into the Bluegrass region of Kentucky. Concerted American expansion into the region followed, with migrations from east to west along lines of latitude. In addition to Chesapeake natives who followed Boone into Kentucky and Tennessee, New Englanders moved through Pennsylvania into the Ohio River Valley into Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and later, Michigan and Wisconsin. White and black Southerners formed a third migration stream from the Carolinas and Georgia west into the Black Belt of northern Alabama and Mississippi, so named for the dark, rich soils of the region.

Because western routes crossed tremendously rugged terrain, wagons were an impractical method of travel. Instead, pioneers took to the river courses that traversed the frontier. The intricate network of rivers meant that goods and settlers could eventually travel from Pittsburgh to New Orleans and all points in between by water. In the early decades of westward expansion, numerous flatboats and canoes plied trans-Appalachian rivers, and after 1815 the introduction of the steamboat on inland waterways facilitated and spurred migration. Rivers afforded not only routes of travel but the only supply and communication link with the East.

Numerous Indian peoples lived across the entire Trans-Appalachian frontier. The fear of Indian hostilities did much to shape the character of migrations, as whites faced the threat of reprisal from the formidable Shawnees in the Ohio Valley and the Creek Confederacy in the Lower South. One form of defense was for families to travel in groups, and it was not uncommon for armed guards to join them for extra security. Once they arrived at their destination, frontier militias were organized to protect early settlements, giving rise to an innovative community structure known as a station—a fortified village designed for defense against Indian attacks.

Regardless of their destination, pioneers were interested in one thing: good agricultural land. The earliest settlers established subsistence-level farms, but commercial agriculture eventually blossomed



**A Pioneer Family.** Members of a Missouri pioneer family perform chores, including cleaning game and churning butter, outside their log cabin in 1820. © CORBIS.

throughout the Trans-Appalachian frontier. This was particularly the case in the South, where Eli Whitney's cotton gin gave rise to an empire of commercial cotton growers following its introduction in the 1790s. Once a location was chosen, settlers set about the arduous task of turning a forest into a field. The first step was the removal of trees, stumps, and other impediments. Burning the new opening often followed, which both cleared away brush and provided a nutrient-rich base of ash and soil. The first crop planted was typically corn, as it grew well with minimal care. Wheat and other vegetable crops rounded out early pioneer farms. In addition to feeding and clothing themselves, pioneers drew on the cultural hearths of their Eastern origins to establish laws, schools, churches, and a structured social order in the West.

*See also American Indians: American Indian Resistance to White Expansion; Appalachia; Cotton Gin; Expansion; Exploration and Explorers.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aron, Stephen A. *How the West Was Lost: The Transformation of Kentucky from Daniel Boone to Henry Clay*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Faragher, John Mack. *Daniel Boone: The Life and Legend of an American Pioneer*. New York: Holt, 1992.
- Hinderaker, Eric. *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673–1800*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Rohrbough, Malcolm J. *The Trans-Appalachian Frontier: People, Societies, and Institutions, 1775–1850*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.

Bradley J. Gills

---

**PIRACY** Piracy, defined here as larceny at or by descent from the sea, figured prominently in the formative years of the United States. Piracy was associated first with English colonization in an Atlantic world dominated by Iberian powers, then with indiscriminate poaching by colonial outcasts and rebels on the growing plantation economy at large. By the

1660s, Atlantic piracy constituted a seaborne variety of organized crime. Alongside these developments, piracy came to be closely associated with the transatlantic slave trade and with imperial warfare "beyond the line." Some pirates were former slavers, some were former slaves. Nearly all made frequent stops in West Africa in the course of their plundering voyages. With regard to war and legality, the line between piracy and privateering, or state-sponsored paranovaal plundering, could be quite thin. A spate of diplomatic incidents related to privateering abuses in peacetime and against allies led not only to disastrous conflicts such as the War of Jenkins's Ear (1739–1743), but ultimately to the formation of professional navies and coast guards throughout the Atlantic.

As the United States came into being in the late eighteenth century, piracy was almost universally regarded as a crime not unlike terrorism in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries. No one wished to be called a pirate. As with terrorism, the use of the term piracy in legal and journalistic circles was broadened substantially to help promote a range of causes. These included the early-nineteenth-century suppression of the transatlantic slave trade and the more effective anticorsairing campaigns of 1801–1805 along the Barbary Coast of North Africa.

Reaching back to early colonial times, Elizabethan corsairs were among the first Englishmen to reconnoiter and settle North America's eastern seaboard. Their successors, the seventeenth-century buccaneers, found hideouts, markets for stolen goods, and occasional plunder from Cape Cod to Cape Canaveral. By 1700, ports such as Providence, New York, Norfolk, and Charleston served as prime recruiting grounds for Anglo-American raiders, some of them disgruntled and overworked merchant seamen. The so-called Great Age of Piracy (c. 1660–c. 1720) only ended following a concerted and bloody campaign of extermination prosecuted by English admiralty courts both at home and in the American colonies. Governors of Virginia and Massachusetts figured prominently in this process. Captain William Kidd (c. 1645–1701) of New York was an early casualty, dying by execution, and North Carolina-based "Blackbeard," or Edward Teach (d. 1718), a late one, dying in battle.

#### PRIVATEERING

Though much reduced as a result of this campaign—and with it the general rise of the British navy—Anglo-American piracy and privateering continued throughout the eighteenth century. Privateering, in

some ways comparable to the extensive military subcontracting of later times, was an accepted if unconventional means of complementing formal naval power. Admiral Edward "Old Grog" Vernon's failed 1741 siege of Cartagena de Indias, in what would become Colombia, was typical in its blend of formally trained European and colonial paranovaal combatants. The policy of commissioning privateers continued through the Seven Years' War (1756–1763) and well beyond, playing a significant role in the American War of Independence (1775–1783) and the War of 1812 (1812–1815). From the merchant-victim's perspective, being robbed by privateers was much like being robbed by pirates.

Hundreds of privateers were commissioned by U.S. authorities during the American War of Independence, and they met with some success. New England-based raiders were particularly active off the coast of Nova Scotia, but others ranged as far as the English Channel. American privateers had an early advantage against their British adversaries, as Parliament was reluctant to issue letters of marque and reprisal against a state that it preferred not to recognize. After 1777, when such letters were issued, British privateers found few vulnerable colonial vessels; most were themselves armed and dangerous. Instead, British predators focused on the tacit—and later open—allies of the fledgling U.S.: France, Spain, and the Netherlands. French shipping suffered most: whereas 183 American vessels taken by British privateers were condemned by London's Prize Court between 1777 and 1783, French vessels numbered 872.

Privateering remained a conveniently cheap buttress to overextended naval forces on both sides during the War of 1812. Outstanding U.S. privateers such as Johnston Blakely and Otway Burns ranged throughout the Atlantic, pillaging and destroying whatever British shipping they could find. British privateers responded in kind. French-born Jean Lafitte, a privateer and smuggler based in the labyrinthine Barataria bayou of Louisiana's Gulf Coast, eventually sided with U.S. forces under Andrew Jackson in the decisive 1815 Battle of New Orleans. Multinational privateers such as Lafitte switched sides often, taking advantage of the chaos generated by Latin American independence movements (1810–1824) and shifting post-Napoleonic alliances. After the War of 1812, Lafitte smuggled slaves, some stolen from Spanish vessels, into the southern U.S.

#### SLAVE TRADE

Piracy was also intimately linked to slavery. The same Elizabethan corsairs who had founded Virginia

and other colonies first entered the transatlantic economy as contraband slavers, illegally supplying Spanish Caribbean planters with Africans kidnapped and purchased in Upper Guinea. The trend continued; the first Africans brought to Virginia in 1619 were carried by Dutch corsairs who had stolen them from the Portuguese (who had in turn bartered for them in Angola). The later buccaneers were also familiar with the growing transatlantic slave trade, some as victims, others as professional slavers. Though not known for their scruples, pirates of the Great Age, such as Blackbeard, occasionally freed slaves or incorporated them into their crews. More often they sold them to planters and merchants. An often-forgotten fact is that England's early-eighteenth-century suppression of Atlantic piracy enabled the rapid expansion of the slave trade that marked the post-1760 period.

Yet the same empire that benefited most from the slave trade eventually turned against it. Although economic reasons such as the industrial revolution have been cited, this British turnabout was in large part due to the efforts of prominent religious figures, many of them Quakers. British and U.S. abolitionists of several religious persuasions agreed that the slave trade was an outrage and must be universally suppressed. Interestingly, both U.S. and British legislators chose to elide slave trading and piracy in the first decades of the nineteenth century, making the former a capital crime for the first time. By 1814 the British were able to commit substantial, war-hardened naval forces—some fresh from epic battles with Napoleon and his allies—to the cause of slave trade suppression. They requested and received help in patrolling West African waters, albeit intermittently, from the infant U.S. Navy.

The United States formally declared slave trading a variety of piracy in 1820. It is often forgotten that this declaration came amidst a wave of widely reported and vicious Caribbean piracy, mostly executed by Spanish Americans rebelling against their colonial overlords. Although Cuba itself remained "faithful," as the Spanish put it, Cuban renegades-turned-pirates in this era were said to have invented the legendary practice of walking the plank, among other tortures much publicized in the U.S. press. Some such miscreants were also said to be slavers. Still, application of the law proved difficult. Many American jurists regarded the Atlantic slave trade as a legitimate, if unsavory, business, and viewed the 1819 law as part of an emotionally driven, moral crusade to undermine slavery. Defenders of the slave trade were not rare, since slavery itself still figured

prominently in the U.S. economy. Throughout the era of suppression, contraband slaves reached southern plantations through ports in Texas and Louisiana.

The crux cases linking piracy and the slave trade, however, involved mostly British interdiction of U.S. and foreign vessels engaged in trading slaves to Brazil, Venezuela, and Cuba. Since Cuba was nearest at hand and because it remained a colony of Spain, the U.S. embargo of slaving vessels inevitably produced significant international incidents. Under Pinckney's Treaty (1795) and other agreements, the United States had promised to respect Spanish laws, vessels, and cargoes—and also to help Spain fight piracy. Thus, seizures and mutinies, including those of the *Amistad* (1839) and the *Creole* (1841), tested the will of U.S. courts to enforce the letter of the 1819 law. On-board rebellions were particularly troublesome for judges and diplomats. Was slave mutiny aboard a foreign vessel piracy or self-liberation? Ultimately, the latter definition prevailed, but suppression of the slave trade as a form of piracy was never seriously pursued by the U.S. Navy or courts and remained a point of considerable friction between North and South.

#### BARBARY WARS

Perhaps better known than the West African slave trade's links to piracy during America's formative years was U.S. suppression of the so-called Barbary pirates of North Africa between 1801 and 1805. This campaign, also pursued by the U.S. Navy—and the fledgling marines—aimed to secure U.S. commercial access to the Mediterranean Sea. Pursued at first reluctantly by President Thomas Jefferson, the campaign sought to end the long-established Algerian and Tripolitan practices of hostage taking and tribute extortion in exchange for free passage beyond the Straits of Gibraltar. Despite setbacks, the effort proved mostly successful, and it gained popular support in part from a growing literature alleging enslavement of white Americans, some of them women, in Muslim "pirate" compounds. Once again, matters of captivity and redemption crossed over with changing interpretations of piracy and its suppression.

After 1840, sporadic acts of piracy occurred in U.S.-claimed waters and against U.S. vessels abroad, but no significant cycle of piracy would emerge to match those of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Instead, piracy would become firmly ensconced in U.S. literature and other forms of popular culture. Edgar Allan Poe's short story, "The Gold-

Bug" (1843), is an early example. Since then, the fascination has persisted.

*See also Barbary Wars; Slavery: Slave Trade, African.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Butler, Lindley S. *Pirates, Privateers, and Rebel Raiders of the Carolina Coast*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.
- DuBois, W. E. B. *The Suppression of the Slave-Trade to the United States of America, 1638–1870*. New York: Longmans, Green, 1896.
- Earle, Peter. *The Pirate Wars*. London: Methuen, 2003.
- Eltis, David, and James Walvin, eds. *The Abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade: Origins and Effects in Europe, Africa, and the Americas*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981.
- Kitzen, Michael L. *Tripoli and the United States at War: A History of American Relations with the Barbary States, 1785–1805*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1993.
- Parker, Richard B. *Uncle Sam in Barbary: A Diplomatic History*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004.
- Pennell, C. R., ed. *Bandits at Sea: A Pirates Reader*. New York: New York University Press, 2000.
- Rediker, Marcus. *Villains of All Nations: Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age*. Boston: Beacon, 2004.
- Ritchie, Robert C. *Captain Kidd and the War against the Pirates*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986.
- Starkey, David J. *British Privateering Enterprise in the Eighteenth Century*. Exeter, UK: University of Exeter Press, 1990.

Kris Lane

---

**PLANTATION, THE** "The plantation" figures among American icons. Like "the cowboy" or "the New England village," both the word itself and the imagery associated with it seem to tell something fundamental about being American. One element is stability, projected in the balanced architecture of the great plantation houses that line the James River in Virginia, the Ashley and Cooper Rivers in South Carolina, or the Mississippi and its lower tributaries. A second element is patriarchal hierarchy. Plantations require planters, and all plantations were organized around the principle that their planters presided over communities with no pretense at equality. White and black alike, a plantation's denizens occupied different rungs on a social ladder, with the planter at the top. A third element is remoteness from the driven, ceaseless transformations of the capitalist world.

Planters carefully cultivated such imagery. The emergence of a permanent, resident planter class had a great deal to do with early Virginia's transformation from a violent, volatile society to a place where white people's lives could be comfortable and stable. Virginia planters developed ways of imposing themselves on the land and on the land's other inhabitants that provided a social template from Chesapeake Bay to east Texas. The notion that the southern ruling class was descended from the cavaliers of Stuart England and that it carried their gracious ways to America acquired great cultural strength and is not completely dead.

Unlike their West Indian counterparts, who often lived in England rather than on their plantations, North American planters tended to be resident. That meant committing themselves to their own communities—a commitment that bore fruit when they persuaded large numbers of nonplanters to go to war in 1861 in order to protect the planters' way of life. To that extent, the received imagery of plantations as organic communities has an element of truth. But for the most part the reality was otherwise. From their beginning, plantations were in fact part of the emerging capitalist world, partaking of all that world's capacity for disruption, profit seeking, and change. Never was that more true than in the early nineteenth century.

The historian Peter Wood has suggested that, whatever their degree of refinement, plantations are best described as "slave labor camps." Robin Blackburn has pointed out that, in its combination of race as a sign of permanent degradation, slavery as a condition of life and work, and large-scale production for distant markets, "the slave plantation complex" of the Western Hemisphere was unique in the history of the Western economy. Any resemblance to the manors of England or mainland Europe was superficial.

#### PLANTATIONS IN A BOOMING REPUBLIC

The conventional criterion for planter status was the ownership of at least twenty slaves. This was the minimum number necessary to relieve the owner and the owner's family of manual field work. A planter with a slave force of that size was not able to maintain anything like the grand style of conventional plantation imagery. Rather than a "big house," such a person probably occupied a dwelling of only moderate refinement. Rather than a small army of "house slaves," there might be one slave adult and a few slave children to aid in domestic work, and even they would be dispatched to the fields



**Destrehan Plantation.** Established in 1787 near New Orleans, Louisiana, Destrehan is the oldest documented plantation home in the lower Mississippi Valley. © MARK E. GIBSON/CORBIS.

at sowing or harvest time. Even a very large operation, such as Pierce Butler's rice plantation in 1830s Georgia, might lack most of the symbols of refinement, as Butler's English wife Frances Kemble found when she insisted on visiting it in 1837.

Prior to American independence plantations were characteristic of two separate zones, the tobacco-growing Chesapeake and the rice and indigo-growing Carolina and Georgia lowlands. These were very different places. Tobacco planting meant dividing slaves into separate "quarters" of about twenty-five slaves, the number depending on the size of the holding. The characteristics of the crop required gang labor. By the middle of the eighteenth century the Chesapeake no longer needed the African slave trade to sustain and grow its servile population. Carolina, however, required the trade because of the more demanding conditions of the rice crop and lowland life. Holdings in the rice zone tended to be much larger, in terms of slave numbers, than in the tobacco zone. Because periodic flooding renewed the soil, rice planters, their families, and their slave forces stayed in one place. Slaves generally worked under the task sys-

tem, which limited a day's work and allowed the possibility of free time.

After independence, however, "the South" emerged. The major reason was three new slave crops: hemp, in Kentucky; sugar, in southernmost Louisiana; and, foremost, cotton, because of Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin in 1793. Prior cotton production was limited to the sea islands of the Georgia and Carolina coast, where the long-staple variety could thrive. Long-staple seeds are easily separable from the lint, but the short-staple variety that could grow inland was another matter. Production shot up, from 10,000 bales the year Whitney invented the gin to 209,000 in 1815, when the European wars of the French Revolution finally ended. Now England's mills and the emergent mills of the American Northeast could take all the cotton that the South's plantations could produce. In 1830 the total reached 732,000 bales, with far larger totals to come.

Some of this ever-burgeoning crop came from small farms that produced a few bales for cash in-

come. Most came from plantations, as the Cotton Kingdom spread across South Carolina and Georgia, Alabama, into Mississippi, and beyond the Mississippi River. Most of these took shape on formerly public land, which their owners bought as Indians lost it, cleared with slave labor, and put into production with a view to catching a rising market.

#### THE SPREAD OF PLANTATIONS AND THE TRADE IN SLAVES

Opening a plantation required capital, for purchasing land, for buying equipment and machinery, and often for purchasing slaves. Some cotton plantations amounted to far-flung branches of existing enterprises, as the younger generation of a tobacco or rice family took part of an older slave force westward onto new land. But expanding the plantation South required a lively slave trade. Most of the founding states banned the African slave trade after the American Revolution, but at the insistence of South Carolina and Georgia the Constitution forbade Congress to do so until 1808. South Carolina reopened the legal African trade in 1804.

What followed was not peripheral to the story of forced African migration to North America but rather a major part of it. The historian James McMillin estimates that about 170,000 enslaved Africans entered the United States after the Revolution, nearly double the previously accepted figure. The demand for these people came directly from the rapid growth of plantation agriculture. An illegal trade from Africa went on after Congress's ban, both to serve small farmers who wanted to become planters and to meet the needs of cotton and sugar production.

Congress did act to close the trade as soon as the Constitution permitted. But unlike the British West Indies, where the plantation economy began to die when Parliament closed the trade about the same time, the plantation system in the American South grew and prospered. As soon as the trade in enslaved Africans dropped off, a trade in American-born slaves began to flourish. Between 1790 and 1799 most came from Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware, where the pre-Revolutionary tobacco economy was yielding to the production of wheat, a crop that required less labor. By 1820 the two Carolinas and Kentucky also were exporting slaves. Some traveled by coastal vessel to Mobile or New Orleans, others overland to the Southwest in coffles. Between 1810 and 1829, when Alabama was opening up to cotton production, it imported roughly 90,000 slaves. During the same two decades Virginia exported more than 150,000. The expansion of the plantation sys-

tem required the forced disruption of slaves' lives on a massive scale.

Either way, the experience emulated what the slaves' ancestors had undergone leaving Africa. The original trade underpinned the founding of the Western Hemisphere slave plantation complex. The domestic trade underpinned the expansion of that complex across the southern United States. In the Louisiana sugar zone, the demography of the trade was much the same as it had been to the sugar regions of the West Indies and Brazil. Sugar planters wanted young males whom they could work at a very hard pace. In the colonial-era West Indies the combination of cheap African slaves, a tropical disease environment, and high profits on sugar had created a demographic catastrophe. Planters brought in slaves and worked them to death. Jamaica imported about one million Africans over that period. But it had a population of only about 300,000 in 1800. Louisiana sugar production was demanding, but the high price of slaves gave planters an incentive to treat them better.

But both in the sugar region and on the cotton frontier, the early stages of plantation expansion were likely to lead to a skewed population structure, with adolescents and young adults heavily overrepresented. Census records of the mid-nineteenth century, which make comparative analysis possible, show that this was particularly so in highly fertile areas close to water transport, where land values were high and where high productivity could be expected. Planters moved into such areas in the 1850s in order to grow as much cotton as possible as fast as possible, not to create patriarchal communities. There is no reason to think that the cotton frontier thirty years earlier was different. Slaves being moved by the domestic slave trade into the cotton zone did have one advantage over Africans: they moved in roughly equal numbers of males and females, which permitted the founding of families, assuming that a couple was not separated by a subsequent move. In 1830 white men outnumbered white women in Alabama, 100,846 to 89,560, but the number of male slaves (59,170) and the number of female slaves (58,379) were virtually even.

#### PLANTERS AND PLAIN FOLKS

Throughout the history of American slavery, the planter class formed a small proportion of slaveholders and an even smaller proportion of white society. The 1790 census is the only count that gives slaveholdings. It was taken prior to the cotton gin and it excludes Virginia, but it provides some sense of the

planter class's dimensions. In South Carolina 5,657 slaveholding families had fewer than 20 slaves. Only 1,267 families had more than 20. Of these, 859 had 20 to 49 slaves; 285 had 50 to 99; 96 had 100 to 200; 21 had 200 to 300; and only 6 had more than 300. In North Carolina there were 10,122 nonplanter slaveholding families and only 804 in the planter category. Of those planters, 701 had 20 to 49 slaves; 90 had 50 to 99; 11 had 100 to 199 slaves, and 2 had more than 200.

The actual difference between a "farmer" or (as Mississippians would come to say) a "second planter" who held seventeen or eighteen slaves and a supposedly "real" planter with twenty-five slaves cannot have been great. Even a large-scale planter who intended to lead his county had to win his fellows' consent, not impose himself on them. When James Henry Hammond, who married into the South Carolina elite, returned *nouveau riche* from Europe in 1837, his neighbors refused to be impressed by the works of art he had acquired and by the gaudy houses he built in Columbia and on his plantation at Silver Bluff.

Whether a plantation had twenty slaves or two hundred, it is best described as a "factory in the fields." Large or small, a plantation produced much of its own food and on a large operation many other day-to-day goods as well. Fields were planted in corn, for human and animal feed, as well as in cotton or rice. This was not "mixed farming" of the sort nonslaveholders and northern free-labor farmers practiced. A plantation's purpose was to produce commercial commodities at the lowest possible cost for a highly competitive market. It required heavy investment and reinvestment in a capital market that did offer other possibilities. Really sizable planters could invest in other activities, or even out of the South. South Carolinians sponsored the Charleston and Hamburg Railroad, completed in 1833, which was the first long-distance line in the United States. Nonetheless, in the early nineteenth century, while the "Old South" was developing, plantations, their owners, and their mode of production dominated southern life, just as in the decades before the Civil War.

*See also Agriculture: Agricultural Improvement; Agriculture: Agricultural Technology; Alabama; Cotton; Cotton Gin; Emancipation and Manumission; Georgia; Louisiana; Mississippi; North Carolina; Slavery: Slave Life; Slavery: Slave Trade, African; Slavery: Slave Trade, Domestic; South; South Carolina; Virginia.*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Blackburn, Robin. *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492–1800*. London and New York: Verso, 1997.
- Kemble, Frances Anne. *Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation in 1838–1839*. Edited by John A. Scott. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984.
- McMillin, James A. *The Final Victims: Foreign Slave Trade to North America, 1783–1810*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2004.
- Moore, John Hebron. *The Emergence of the Cotton Kingdom in the Old Southwest: Mississippi, 1770–1860*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988.
- Morris, Christopher. *Becoming Southern: The Evolution of a Way of Life, Warren County and Vicksburg, Mississippi, 1770–1860*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Oakes, James. *The Ruling Race: A History of American Slaveholders*. New York: Knopf, 1982; London and New York: Norton, 1998.
- Tadman, Michael. *Speculators and Slaves: Masters, Traders, and Slaves in the Old South*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989, 1996.
- Wood, Peter H. "Slave Labor Camps in Early America: Overcoming Denial and Discovering the Gulag." In *Inequality in Early America*. Edited by Carla Gardina Pestana and Sharon V. Salinger. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1999.

Edward Countryman

---

**POETRY** Like politics, poetry was everywhere in the years from 1754 to 1829. And like politics, poetry had both public and private meanings. Americans turned to poetry to amuse themselves and their friends, to pursue and publicize arguments, and to claim membership in real and imagined collectivities. The resultant verses offer a window onto a world of poetic purposes and pleasures that has often been overlooked.

## THE COLONIAL ERA

During the late colonial period, educated Americans gathered in formal and informal circles to read and exchange original manuscripts, including poetry. They modeled their works on those of neoclassical English poets, particularly Alexander Pope, and they often signed compositions with pseudonyms such as Leander and Amynta. Women as well as men were prominent in these circles, and for all involved the writing and enjoying of such poetry was a way of proclaiming membership in two communities: the intimate circle of friends who were one's immediate readership, and the larger, Anglo-American commu-



**Phillis Wheatley.** This engraving by Scipio Moorhead served as the frontispiece for Wheatley's *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* (1773). Wheatley, an African-born woman living in slavery in the colonies, penned neoclassical verse that followed English models.

nity of sensibility to which one's mastery of the forms granted membership.

Participants in literary circles wrote poetry to nurture and commemorate their own relationships, as well as to memorialize the occasions of their gatherings. Poets of the day also took on explicitly public themes. Elizabeth Graeme Fergusson, who was an admired poet and conversationalist in both her own mid-Atlantic region and in England, penned poetic responses to both John Dickinson's *Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer* (1782) and to Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759). John Mayle's "Conquest of Louisburg" described the siege and battle of that fortress during the French and Indian War. And Philip Freneau and Hugh Henry Brackenridge's "The Rising Glory of America," delivered on commencement day at the College of New Jersey in 1771, offered a vision of a prosperous and expansive future for America:

The Ohio soon shall glide by many a town  
Of note; and where the Mississippi stream,  
By forests shaded, now runs weeping on,  
Nations shall grow, and STATES not less in fame

Than Greece and Rome of old!

Poems such as "The Rising Glory of America" claimed a place for the colonies on the world stage. They also asserted, implicitly or explicitly, that their authors deserved a place on that stage, too, and were not simply rude provincials. These entwined public and personal, emulative and assertive meanings of poetry took on added significance in the verse of the era's best-known African American poet, Phillis Wheatley. Wheatley, an African-born woman living in slavery in the colonies, penned neoclassical verse that followed English models. Yet Wheatley's identity, which was revealed in the published volumes of her work, made her successful adoption of English conventions a challenge to contemporaries who assumed blacks were intellectually inferior. The content of Wheatley's poetry, meanwhile, continues to inspire debate among scholars, who disagree over the extent to which Wheatley challenged Christianity and the social and political mores of her day.

#### IMPERIAL CRISIS AND REVOLUTION

In the years leading up to the Revolution, political arguments and emotions were often cast in verse. Benjamin Franklin counseled colonists to have patience with England and confidence in the colonies' eventual dominance: "We have an old mother, who peevish has grown," he wrote in the mid 1760s: "She snubs us like Children that scarce walk alone; She forgets we're grown up and have Sense of our own." Such verses made political argumentation more accessible and quotable, and those on both sides of the impending conflict also went further, setting their rhymed disagreements to music. John Dickinson's "Liberty Song"—which began, "Come join hand in hand brave Americans all / And rouse your bold hearts at fair liberty's call"—was published in the *Boston Gazette* in 1768, and it spawned a quick parody, published in the same newspaper and sung to the same tune: "Come shake your dull noodles ye pumpkins and bawl," the parody began, "And own that you're mad at Fair Liberty's call." Not all the poetry of the war years, however, was doggerel. Philip Freneau, ship captain and man of letters, sought to commemorate the events and people of the Revolution in often-ambitious verse, and he movingly evoked the horrors of his own wartime captivity in "The British Prison Ship."

#### POETRY IN THE NEW NATION

After the Revolution, Americans of all political stripes and social stations wrote poetry celebrating and critiquing the new nation's culture and politics. Philip

Freneau published a revised version of "The Rising Glory of America" in 1786 and continued to pen new works. Also among the era's best-known practitioners of the arts were the Connecticut or Hartford Wits, who included Joel Barlow, John Trumbull, David Humphries, Lemuel Hopkins, Richard Alsop, and Timothy Dwight. Amateur men of letters who had begun their literary involvement before America's independence, the Wits combined a serious devotion to literature with careers that included diplomacy and the ministry. Barlow's work ranged from "Hasty Pudding," a humorous celebration of that dish and of Barlow's New England region, to the more ambitious "Vision of Columbus." Greeted with admiration in its original version, Barlow's expanded and revised epic, *The Columbiad*, fell with a thud when published in 1807. Timothy Dwight's 1794 "Greenfield Hill," meanwhile, offered a vision of New England's past, present, and future, and copious poetic commentary on its landscape, people, and customs. Such poetry combined nationalist ambitions with a wholehearted embrace of English poetic conventions, and the Wits saw no shame in that. In their view, achieving excellence in established poetic forms brought more honor to America than would have the attempted creation of a self-consciously new "American" style.

Freneau and the Wits were perhaps the best-known poets of the early national period, but many other Americans also tried their hand at the form. Women as well as men offered their verses to the public; in 1790, Mercy Otis Warren published cerebral verse on political and religious themes, and the same year saw publication of Sara Wentworth Morton's "Ouabi, or the Virtues of Nature, an Indian Tale in Four Cantos." Newspapers of the day often kept a spot on their back page for original and extracted verse, and readers eagerly sent in their offerings. One of the more widely circulated newspapers of the era, Joseph Dennie's *Farmer's Weekly Museum*, published a variety of poetry, including satiric treatments of American rustics, odes to beautiful maidens, and gently needling lines on the subject of the editor himself: "His flowery road you may rely on," wrote one correspondent, "is but a crooked path to Zion." And although poetry was a particular passion among young Federalist-leaning literati such as Dennie, Jeffersonians, too, expressed themselves in verse. The *Kentucky Gazette*, for example, published poetry that celebrated France and Jefferson, and the Fourth of July regularly inspired poetical commemorations in partisan newspapers of all kinds.

Among poets both well-known and obscure, satire was a favored mode of poetical communication in the early national period; its popularity reflected both the continued influence of the English Augustan poets and the mixture of intimacy and publicity that characterized American uses of verse. Satirical treatments of everything from religious orthodoxy to New Englanders' gift to Thomas Jefferson of a "mammoth cheese" found their way into print, and poetic styles themselves—particularly the rather florid Della Cruscan mode—also became the subject of archly mocking lines.

Even as satires, "occasional" poetry, and nationalist verse thrived in the early Republic, however, other forms were gaining popularity. Like their predecessors, these were influenced by English models, although they were put to what were intended as distinctively American uses. Moving beyond their love of Pope, Americans came in the early national period to admire the poetry of authors such as Thomas Gray, William Wordsworth, and Samuel Coleridge, and they began to write poetry that explored inner states and evoked intense connections to nature. This was not a rejection of all that had come before; Americans had written poetry about nature throughout the colonial and Revolutionary periods, and Freneau's melancholic "The Wild Honeysuckle" had in fact foreshadowed the way in which, in later years, a contemplation of nature would become a contemplation of the observing self. It is the case, though, that what had once been a minor strain was becoming a dominant idiom, and the early verse of perhaps the era's best-known practitioner of the new style, William Cullen Bryant, suggests the changing style and tone of American poetry. Bryant's 1808 "The Embargo" was a poetic attack on Thomas Jefferson's policies. Despite its familiar subject, the poem had an unexpected emotional intensity that, in Bryant's own words, "darken'd satire's page." By the time of Bryant's first significant work, "Thanatopsis," which he began in 1814 and completed in 1821, the poet had more completely left behind Augustan forms and themes for strains both older and newer: "Thanatopsis," written in a meditative blank verse, merged a Calvinist sense of death's dominion with a reverence for nature that feels distinctively nineteenth century:

When thoughts  
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight  
Over thy spirit and sad images  
Of the stern agony, and shroud and pall,  
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,  
Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart;—  
Go forth under the open sky, and list

To Nature's teachings, while from all around—  
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air,—  
Comes a still voice.

"No one, on this side of the Atlantic," insisted the author Richard Henry Dana on reading the original published version, "is capable of writing such verses." But someone had, and he would be far from the last American poet to venture forth "under the open sky."

**See also Authorship; Autobiography and Memoir; Fiction; Fourth of July; Nonfiction Prose; Print Culture; Romanticism; Satire; Theater and Drama; Women: Writers.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Dowling, William C. *Poetry and Ideology in Revolutionary Connecticut*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990.
- Ellison, Julie. "Race and Sensibility in the Early Republic: Ann Eliza Bleecker and Sarah Wentworth Morton." *American Literature* 65, no. 3 (1993): 445–474.
- Gilmore, Michael T. "The Literature of the Revolutionary and Early National Periods." In *The Cambridge History of American Literature*. Edited by Sacvan Bercovitch. Vol. 1: 1590–1820. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Grasso, Christopher. *A Speaking Aristocracy: Transforming Public Discourse in Eighteenth-Century Connecticut*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Hayes, Edmund M. "The Private Poems of Mercy Otis Warren." *New England Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (1981): 199–224.
- Mulford, Carla J. "Political Poetics: Annis Boudinot Stockton and Middle Atlantic Women's Culture." *New Jersey History* 111, no. 1–2 (1993): 67–110.
- Nickels, Cameron C. "Federalist Mock Pastorals: The Ideology of Early New England Humor." *Early American Literature* 17, no. 2 (1982): 139–151.
- Richards, Phillip M. "Phillis Wheatley and Literary Americanization." *American Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (1992): 163–191.
- Shields, David S. *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
- Shields, John C. "Phillis Wheatley's Subversive Pastoral." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 27, no. 4 (1994): 631–647.
- Wertheimer, Eric. "Commencement Ceremonies: History and Identity in 'The Rising Glory of America,' 1771 and 1786." *Early American Literature* 29, no. 1 (1994): 35–58.

Catherine O. Kaplan

can policing changed little. As in England, justices of the peace (JPs) bore the chief responsibility for keeping order, hearing complaints, and jailing malefactors. But for the most part American communities policed themselves.

Night watchmen guarded city spaces, but JPs expected citizens to identify criminals. Grand jurors sometimes informed themselves, identifying the persons they wanted indicted and thereby acting as a kind of citizen police force. State statutes authorized sheriffs and constables to keep the peace, especially in cases of riot or a major crime committed before their eyes. An 1812 New York digest of laws for sheriffs, coroners, and constables compiled by Joseph Backus explained that "when any felony shall be committed," and notice given, "fresh pursuit shall be forthwith made after every such felon, by sheriffs, coroners, constables, marshals, and all other persons who shall be by them commanded and summoned." New York also expected sheriffs and constables to suppress gaming, implying that they might actively seek out gamblers. More often, legislators expected ordinary citizens, acting as a *posse comitatus* or individually, to run down felons. Backus wrote that in cases of forcible entry, justices of the peace should go to the scene of the crime and offer a reward. "And all the people of the county" shall assist the JP in making arrests. Sheriffs and constables most often acted as process servers.

In the early national period, a more secular understanding of crime and misconduct changed how Americans viewed the detection of criminality. Colonials saw crime as sin, and all persons as sinners. Printed crime narratives came in the form of sermons, looking not at the crime or the judicial process but on the criminal's spiritual condition. Ministers asked what small sins, the sort committed by everyone, had led to the bigger sin? The clergy searched for clues not to identify the sinner/criminal, but to reveal the condition of his eternal soul. Americans after the Revolution set apart criminals from the larger population. Ministers' moral policing declined in importance. Published crime stories, especially murder narratives, now invited readers into secret worlds and treated the crime as a mystery with clues and motives to be unraveled. This new view of crime as mystery practically cried out for policing and detectives; but outside the South cities did not organize professional police forces until the antebellum era.

Nonetheless, the roots of modern policing can be discerned in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Institutionalized policing has its roots in American slavery. In seventeenth-century South

---

**POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT** Between 1754 and 1829 the institutional structure of Ameri-

Carolina, white colonists had passed laws against bartering with slaves and established a curfew for their slaves. Needing a police force to enforce these statutes, white South Carolinians created a night watch of constables and citizens to watch for fires, attacking Indians, and slave gatherings. Virginia organized slave patrols in the eighteenth century. Other states followed.

After the Revolution, the states regularized their patrol procedures. In most, county courts appointed patrollers. Town officials worried that patrols appointed by county government would not adequately patrol urban areas. Columbia, South Carolina, petitioned its legislature for an appropriation for a city "guard." Some towns incorporated so as to organize a "proper police," as Pearisburg, Virginia, officials put it. Historians have traditionally described patrollers as "poor white," but freeholders (estate owners) and slaveholders filled the ranks of these early police forces; from 1805 to 1830, New Orleans used free blacks in its city guard and patrol forces.

Slave patrols policed their jurisdictions. They stopped and interrogated suspects. They entered private homes, searching for evidence. They broke up gatherings they deemed unruly. They administered what a later generation might call "street justice": an unrecorded beating on the spot. They particularly looked for contraband and stolen objects. In rural areas patrollers made their rounds on horseback, in urban areas on foot.

Creation of a federal court system in 1787 changed American policing but little. Federal judges did not believe their jurisdiction included common law crimes. U.S. attorneys and federal marshals identified violators of the revenue laws. In 1802, when three white men murdered three Indians in the Northwest Territory, ordinary citizens identified the killers when the culprits boasted of their acts and displayed the dead Indians' property. As in state cases, detection of malefactors depended largely on the willingness of ordinary citizens to step forward. The appearance of an unaccountably dead body, or any crime committed with the assent of the neighborhood, rarely led to a warrant or an arrest.

In 1829, London established its police department, heralding a new age in crime control. Thereafter Boston, New York, and other cities put their own officers on patrol. Constables had collected fees by serving writs and warrants, acting only in response to citizen complaints. The new officers received a salary and sought out crime and criminals for arrest.

*See also Crime and Punishment; Law: Federal Law; Law: Law of Slavery; Law: State Law and Common Law; Legal Culture.*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Hadden, Sally E. *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001.
- Halttunen, Karen. *Murder Most Foul: The Killer and the American Gothic Imagination*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998.
- Hoffer, Peter Charles. *Law and People in Colonial America*, rev. ed. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.
- Lane, Roger. *Policing the City: Boston, 1822–1885*, New York. Boston: Atheneum, 1975.
- Rousey, Dennis C. *Policing the Southern City: New Orleans, 1805–1889*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997.

Christopher Waldrep

---

**POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS** *See Politics: Political Culture.*

---

**POLITICAL REFUGEES** *See Immigration and Immigrants: Political Refugees.*

---

## POLITICS

The entry consists of ten separate articles: *Overview, Party Organization and Operations, Political Corruption and Scandals, Political Culture, Political Economy, Political Pamphlets, Political Parties, Political Parties and the Press, Political Patronage, and Political Thought*.

### **Overview**

By the end of the Seven Years' War in 1763, the colonies of British North America had relatively mature political systems. Most were royal colonies whose governors and (often) governor's councils were appointed by the imperial government. Proprietors—the Penn family, for example—appointed the governors of Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland. Only in the corporate colonies, Connecticut and Rhode Island, were they elected. The colonial assem-

were often the only elected officials in the colonies, and those chosen by the voters were invariably men of wealth and power within their colony. The rituals of politics, such as treating—the practice of providing liquor and food for the voters—and the fact that the legislators were not paid meant that candidates had to be wealthy. *Viva voce* and other open voting procedures heightened the pressure of the “better sort” on the voters of lesser means. Thus, colonial elections revolved around reputation on the one hand and deference on the other.

Intracolonial politics involved questions of money and credit, internal improvements, taxes, land, Indians, and ethnic and religious conflict. Sectionalism, rooted in differences between coastal areas and the backcountry or simply East Jersey and West Jersey, and the various—often associated—ties of family and kin generally determined the ways men in the assemblies responded to these local issues. There were no real parties in the assemblies. In fact, the political culture of these years, as can be seen clearly in the debates leading up to the Revolution, reflected a commitment to the form of republicanism which had emerged in mid-eighteenth-century England that condemned parties. Most states, however, had fairly stable factions, such as those associated with the Livingston and the De Lancey families in New York or the followers of Samuel Ward (1725–1776) of Newport and Stephen Hopkins (1707–1785) of Providence in Rhode Island. The elites of Virginia and South Carolina, because of the nature of their economic and social structure, had an exceptional degree of unity on the eve of the Revolution.

The American Revolution was a revolt of the already empowered. As Parliament attempted to reassert its imperial power following the Seven Years’ War through a series of taxes and other actions such as the Intolerable Acts (1774), the colonists resisted. While resistance was sometimes violent or marked by the fake-violence theater of the Boston Tea Party (1773), most often the colonists made use of the normal tools of redress in the imperial system of politics. The members of the colonial assemblies led this resistance and then a rebellion, designed at first to preserve their rights as Englishmen. In a lawyerlike fashion Thomas Jefferson, trained in colonial politics and representing the extralegal Continental Congress, put forth the case against the illegal actions of King George III in the Declaration of Independence. Most of the colonies, over a period from 1776 to 1792, wrote and rewrote republican constitutions for the new states. In 1781 the states were joined in a very loose national government under the Articles

blies often found themselves in direct conflict with the governors. In the course of the eighteenth century, these assemblies—whose members were popularly elected—expanded their legislative role at the expense of both the governors and the imperial government.

#### **PROVINCIAL POLITICS**

All of the British North American colonies had relatively large electorates made up of white male freeholders, men who owned their own land. Because of the wide distribution of landholding, common men voted in greater numbers than anywhere else in the world. Outside of New England, the assemblymen

of Confederation. During the 1780s, congressional politics under the Articles of Confederation witnessed divisions between the original federalists, who supported a weak central government, and the nationalists, who wanted to give the federal government greater power.

The unstable factions in the Continental and Confederation Congresses were, except perhaps in the case of Pennsylvania, unconnected with the factions in the state legislatures, which focused on local issues. The new constitutions notoriously limited executive power and emphasized the role of the state legislatures. They also expanded the electorate by allowing taxpayers to vote and lowered the requirements for officeholding. Yet the old colonial politics, a "politics without party," based on family connections and intrastate geographical divisions, continued. The Revolution stripped off royal appointees, and many of the most conservative Loyalist elements fled. A revolution of expectations among those who had stood and fought, or watched cautiously from the sidelines, led to an increase in voter turnout and a change in the nature of the political elite. More common men became involved and more people at the middle levels of the economic structure gained office. The Revolution had brought neither a democratic political system nor a democratic order, but clearly the new American nation was, in its politics, moving toward a more democratic interpretation of republicanism.

#### THE EARLY REPUBLIC

The writing of the Constitution in 1787 and the fight over its ratification the following year brought a crucial change in the politics of the early Republic by creating for the first time a national stage for political action. The politicians in the states, who had carried out the Revolution and who were arguing among themselves about various economic questions, had to decide what approach to the Constitution was in their interest. Historians disagree in their interpretations of the conflict between the Federalists, who favored the Constitution, and the anti-Federalists, who opposed its adoption. Was it a matter of ideological conflict or economic self-interest? The obvious answer is that it was a bit of both. Ideologically, Federalists and anti-Federalists mixed together liberal and republican ideas along with long-standing Protestant religious convictions. Clearly, the more commercial and cosmopolitan elements of the society disagreed with those whose local perspective grew out of their reliance on subsistence agriculture and only a modest connection to the marketplace. Yet it is nearly impos-

sible to put even a majority of the men at the time into these categories, and some of the anti-Federalists were very wealthy "men of little faith." The ideological arguments did have a similarity from state to state, but the economic conflicts did not. As a consequence, neither the Federalists nor the anti-Federalists had the degree of organization associated with modern political parties. The Federalists were led by two very young men, Alexander Hamilton and James Madison, who—along with the slightly older John Jay—wrote *The Federalist* in 1787–1788 and managed the ratification of the Constitution in two of the three most populous states, New York and Virginia. In the end the Constitution was ratified through a system of state conventions and never voted upon nationally. The elections for the state conventions drew only one-quarter of the white adult men.

Through a very complicated process that extended over six months from 1788 into 1789, George Washington was chosen as the first president and John Adams as vice president. While Washington was popular the election was not a democratic affair, the modes of selecting electors varied widely from state to state and turnouts, where white men of property were allowed to vote were low. It is nearly impossible to imagine what the two hundred and twenty men who ran for elector in Massachusetts had in mind or explain why thirty-five electors cast votes for candidates other than Adams for the second (and possibly the first) office or why twelve electors chose not to vote at all.

The critical problem faced by Washington's new administration was not only to create a government, but also to build a nation. The administration included men who had emerged during the Revolution. When Robert Morris, the financier of the Revolution, refused the post of secretary of the Treasury, Washington chose Hamilton for the post, and then the president called back Thomas Jefferson from France to be secretary of state. The anti-Federalists and their demands for a new constitutional convention passed from the scene, although some were in the First Congress and one of them, James Monroe, would eventually become president.

In the 1790s two issues separated the American people, or at least the political elite. One was related to the old fight over how strong the national government needed to be, and the other involved how the country should align itself internationally, particularly after the outbreak and radical turn of the French Revolution. How would the new government respond to the French Revolution? In Washington's

cabinet, Hamilton was pro-British and Jefferson pro-French, although they agreed with the president that the best position for the new nation was neutrality. Hamilton created a set of economic policies designed to handle the Revolutionary debt and put the country on an even keel while strengthening the federal government. The Virginians, Jefferson and Madison, who were not happy with the growing power of the federal government, led the opposition in the cabinet and Congress.

Although there were numerous battles on individual issues, it took almost six years before clear and consistent pro- and anti-administration blocs appeared in Congress. In the election of 1796, Jefferson came out of retirement to challenge Adams. In a closely contested election, Adams won the presidency and Jefferson became vice president. Clearly, modern parties did not exist. Over the next four years, however, fairly stable coalitions emerged in Congress. The Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 showed how clearly the lines were being drawn. In the states, newspapers reflected the contrasting positions of the Federalists and the Republicans.

In 1800 Jefferson won the presidency in what he called "The Revolution of 1800," which began the rule of the Virginia Dynasty of presidents—Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe. Jefferson, who is every modern American democrat, did not win his office because of his great popularity with the American people, but because of the nature of the presidential electoral system. Ten of the sixteen states let their legislatures pick the electors. He won in the electoral college, helped crucially by the fact that the three-fifths clause in the Constitution enlarged the electoral vote in the slave states and the fact that the vote was both close and clearly sectional. The result was a product of elite manipulation and back-room negotiations in the state legislatures, particularly that of South Carolina. If there was a Revolution of 1800, it came in the congressional elections of 1800–1801, during which the Republicans gained twenty-seven seats in Congress and six in the Senate to go from being a minority in both bodies to a clear majority in both. When Jefferson became president, he had a friendly Congress to work with. He took advantage of this fact during his first administration (1801–1805) to replace as many Federalists as he could in the bureaucracy and to realign the federal courts.

Jefferson began his first term decrying partisanship. He declared in his Inaugural Address, "We are all Federalists, we are all Republicans," and he truly believed that he was a president above party. His war

against the North African pirates, his purchase of Louisiana (1803), and his often-ignored Indian policy made Jefferson extremely popular. By the election of 1804, his supporters controlled most of the state governments (even in New England) and held overwhelming majorities in both houses of Congress. Jefferson won a second term against what was only a shadow opposition. Politicians continued to come predominately from the "better sort," or what might be called upper middle class, but the "middling sort" of mechanics, manufacturers, and editors entered the fray and often won.

Jefferson's second term caused grave problems for the Republicans. In response to the return of war in Europe, Jefferson in 1807 pushed Congress to institute an embargo on American foreign trade. This created economic problems in much of the country and, along with its enforcement legislation, produced a Federalist revival. The opposition, led by a younger generation, developed new organizations that addressed voters more directly than before and encouraged them to come out in larger numbers. To add to their appeal, in several areas they took on the name "American" and accused the administration supporters of being the "French" party.

The Federalists became a significant minority during James Madison's administration, which was embroiled in an ongoing foreign policy crisis that led to the War of 1812 (1812–1815). The election of 1812 and the war brought on a high point in American partisanship, affecting both Congress and the electorate. When the war went poorly, the Federalists gained further support. Yet the presidential election of 1812 was one of the most sectional in American history and the "Federalist" candidate was a New York Republican, DeWitt Clinton.

#### THE ERA OF GOOD FEELINGS

Hostility to the war led a group of New England Federalists to meet in Hartford in 1814–1815 to suggest amendments to the Constitution designed to limit Congress's power to make war and to eliminate the three-fifths clause. Andrew Jackson's victory at New Orleans in January 1815 and the Peace of Ghent (December 1814), which ended the war, doomed the Federalists. In 1816 the Republicans pressed an aggressive set of economic policies. After these were approved by Madison, his secretary of state, James Monroe, was elected president. Early in his presidency, a Boston newspaper referred to the postwar period as an Era of Good Feelings. Later, historian Charles Sydnor called the decade between 1815 and 1825, "The One Party Period of American History." The

presidential election of 1820 was the dullest and least interesting in American history and signaled the end of the First American Party System, which off and on involved the contention of Republicans and Federalists. By this time, nearly everyone claimed to be a Republican. Monroe ran virtually unopposed and received all of the electoral votes save one, cast for his secretary of state, John Quincy Adams. The decade of the 1820s was, however, an era of "ill feelings" in which fierce intrastate sectional and factional politics prevailed. "Connections" such as the Albany Regency in New York, the Richmond Junto in Virginia, the Nashville Junto in Tennessee, and Ambrose "Sevier's Hungry Kinfolk" in what became Arkansas, along with barbecues and stump speeches, began to dominate state politics, while sectionalism dominated national affairs.

The postwar era was characterized by conflicts among the Republicans over the economic policies that Henry Clay termed the American System. The sectional nature of these issues was exaggerated by the Panic of 1819, the debate over Missouri's entrance into the Union as a slave state in 1819–1820, the emergence of the industrial revolution in the North, and the spread of the cotton culture across the Lower South. The effects of these events were clearly seen in the fragmentation of the Republican establishment in the election of 1824. All of the contenders were Republicans. John Quincy Adams was the secretary of state, William Harris Crawford the secretary of the Treasury, and John C. Calhoun the secretary of war in Monroe's cabinet. Henry Clay had been Speaker of the House for a decade and General Andrew Jackson, the hero of New Orleans, was a U.S. senator from Tennessee. Ironically, this is the most impressive array of candidates ever assembled for an American presidential election. Calhoun withdrew and became the overwhelming choice for vice president.

Jackson won the most popular and electoral votes, but not a majority of either. Thus, the election went into the House of Representatives, which chose Adams in what Jacksonians called, "the corrupt bargain" because Clay influenced his supporters to vote for Adams and Adams then appointed Clay secretary of state. While this laid the basis for the development of the Second American Party System, the most important aspect of the election was its sectional nature. Two-fifths of Jackson's popular votes came from three states. In this election, each of the candidates represented a separate part of the American electorate and, with a few ethnic overtones, such as the fact Jackson was Scotch-Irish, there was also a

generalized sense of regional economic self-interest. During Adams's administration, the congressional factions that had supported the various candidates in 1824 came together into pro- and anti-administration coalitions to prepare for the next presidential election.

The states tended to be dominated by one faction or the other. There was much talk about organized "political machines." More important probably was the expansion of the newspaper network dedicated to the future candidacy of Jackson. The Virginia editor, Thomas Ritchie, and the New York lawyer-politician, Martin Van Buren, wanted to revive the old Republican Party and use General Jackson's "great popularity" to reunite "the Planters of the South and the plain Republicans of the North." And to a great degree they did. The Old Hero, as Jackson was called, won handily in both 1828 against Adams and in 1832 against Clay and the third party anti-Mason candidate, William Wirt. All of the these men with good reason described themselves as Republicans. The election of 1832 led to the development of the nominating convention, initiated in 1831 by the anti-Masons, who had begun as an organization opposed to secret societies.

Jackson's election victories in 1828 and 1832, which have been described as being about democracy and class conflict, were most clearly sectional. The popular vote from 1824 to 1832 shows a clearly correlated and consistent pattern. Certainly New York, and still more so Pennsylvania, yielded Jacksonian majorities, as did New Hampshire, which voted for Jackson in two out of the three elections. But Jackson was overwhelmingly popular in the slave states. What is more important is that while the strands of party were being woven together, the whole cloth did not yet exist.

The same patterns can be seen in Congress during the 1820s and even the early 1830s. The major votes on the important issues of Indian policy, land policy, the Bank of the United States, and of course, the tariff, revealed that section trumped party. There were as yet no clear partisan labels, nor truly national organizational structures. However, the average American voter seemed more interested in politics, a newspaper network that was intensely partisan was growing, more common men were running for office, and the rhetoric of American politics had become much more distinctly democratic.

*See also Democratic Republicans;*

**Democratization; Election of 1796;**

**Election of 1800; Election of 1824;**

**Election of 1828; Federalist Party;**

## **Hamilton, Alexander; Hartford Convention; Political Parties: Overview; Presidency, The.**

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Bailyn, Bernard. *The Origins of American Politics*. New York: Knopf, 1969.
- Beeman, Richard R. *The Varieties of Political Experience in Eighteenth-Century America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
- Cornell, Saul. *The Other Founders: Anti-Federalism and the Dissenting Tradition in America, 1788–1828*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Fischer, David Hackett. *The Revolution of American Conservatism: The Federalist Party in the Era of Jeffersonian Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row, 1965.
- Formisano, Ronald P. "Deferential-Participant Politics: the Early Republic's Political Culture, 1789–1840." *American Political Science Review* 68 (1974): 473–487.
- Freeman, Joanne B. *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001.
- Greene, Jack P. "Changing Interpretations of Early American Politics." In *The Reinterpretation of Early American History: Essays in Honor of John Edwin Pomfert*. Edited by Ray Billington. New York: Norton, 1968.
- Henderson, H. James. *Party Politics in the Continental Congress*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974.
- Hofstadter, Richard. *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780–1840*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.
- McCormick, Richard P. "New Perspectives on Jacksonian Politics." *American Historical Review* 65 (1960): 288–301.
- Pasley, Jeffery L. *"The Tyranny of Printers": Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001.
- Rakove, Jack N. "The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George Washington." In *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity*. Edited by Richard Beeman, Stephen Botein, and Edward C. Carter II. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987.
- Ratcliffe, Donald J. *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic: Democratic Politics in Ohio, 1793–1821*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998.
- Remini, Robert V. *The Election of Andrew Jackson*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1963.
- Risjord, Norman K. *Chesapeake Politics, 1781–1800*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1978.
- Shankman, Andrew. *Crucible of American Democracy: The Struggle to Fuse Egalitarianism and Capitalism in Jeffersonian Pennsylvania*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004.

William G. Shade

## **Party Organization and Operations**

The founding fathers accepted the conventional wisdom that political parties or factions are inherently undesirable. Parties, they thought, set one part of the community against the rest and prevented attention to the general good. James Madison and the other framers believed that the U.S. Constitution would prevent any party or faction from taking control of all parts of the new government and would thus encourage interest groups to compromise. The founders were, however, thinking of the political groupings they had experienced, which modern historians see as either unstable leadership factions or broader movements held together only by an immediate crisis or a single pressing issue. What developed in the 1790s were parties of a quite new kind: more organized and coherent; based on the secure loyalty of ordinary voters; and capable of surviving changes of leadership or the passing of the issues that had led to their formation. Ironically, these new formations were a consequence of the Constitution: it had created a center of national power capable of capture through the electoral process at a time when most states had already granted the right to vote to most adult white males, while the complexity of the new constitutional structure ensured that only the broadest coalitions could hope to succeed.

### **PROTO-PARTIES**

Parties did not seriously develop, however, until George Washington's impending retirement produced the first contested presidential election in 1796, after six years of growing disagreement over domestic policy, the French Revolution, and the Anglo-French war had aroused deep passions. The long-drawn-out debates over Jay's Treaty (1794) produced a deep cleavage within Congress and polarized the political classes. Supporters of the Washington administration kept the old name "Federalist" and backed John Adams, while their opponents, calling themselves "Republicans," supported Thomas Jefferson. The Federalists exploited their command of the federal government and its patronage, whereas the Republicans had to develop extraconstitutional means of organization, though in some states they did command the state government. For the Republicans, John Beckley, the clerk of the House of Representatives, corresponded with opposition elements in the various states and ensured the nomination of party tickets. After Adams's narrow victory in 1796, partisanship intensified as the growing international crisis made each side believe that the future of the Re-

public was at stake in the coming presidential election of 1800.

Though at this stage the groupings are best described as proto-parties, the electoral battle of 1800 took on characteristics that were qualitatively different from earlier factional struggles. All participants accepted that the contest was between two distinct groupings. Despite bitter rivalries within each party, the internal factions recognized the need to back the party's candidate, however much they disapproved of him. Both sides saw that it was necessary to organize support in the wider public and stimulate voter turnout, especially in the six states where the electorate chose the members of the electoral college. The Republicans were the more energetic, even intervening in New York in the state election that would affect the makeup of the legislature which would choose the presidential electors, but the Federalists began to develop comparable techniques. In their creation of a committed party press, their use of nominating procedures to unify the party's vote, and their belief that they possessed committed popular support, these political formations were taking on some characteristics of mass parties.

#### FIRST PARTY SYSTEM, 1800–1824

Taking power in 1801, President Jefferson buttressed Republican predominance by distributing office on a partisan basis, and his supporters in Congress regularized the use of a congressional caucus to maintain party unity there. The effectiveness of the Federalist opposition gradually diminished as Jefferson won overwhelming reelection in 1804 and the Republican majority in the House grew from 69 to 36 between 1801 and 1803 to 118 to 24 between 1807 and 1809. Factionalism among Republicans seemed at times more important than the party contest, and many historians have deduced that the Jeffersonian parties were not well-established, deep-rooted institutions. However, the economic dislocations and social discontent created by Jefferson's Embargo of 1807 revived the opposition party and reinvigorated the party contest. In all the seaboard states north of Virginia, Federalist voters who had been disheartened since 1800 reappeared at the polls and challenged Republican control at the state and local levels. In 1808 the Federalists contested every congressional seat north of the Potomac as well as some in the South and then built up their electoral position impressively, especially after the outbreak of war in 1812. In that year's presidential election, they backed the dissident New York Republican DeWitt Clinton and would have defeated Madison's reelection bid had

they carried Pennsylvania. Similarly, their position in Congress improved, and through the 1813–1815 Congress their 68 members showed far greater cohesion than the 112 Republicans.

**Party competition.** Even during their revival, the Federalists never seriously challenged the Republican predominance because they could not break into the South and West. In these areas the overwhelming support for the Republicans inhibited party development and politics remained elitist, personal, and informal. By contrast, the intense rivalry in two-thirds of the states, from New Hampshire through Maryland and even reaching Ohio, made this period one of intense partisan experience for many Americans. As Philip Lampi's collection of election data at the American Antiquarian Society reveals, voter turnout increased between 1808 and 1814. Over 70 percent of adult males were voting in states as various as New Hampshire and Pennsylvania.

In New England the Republicans mounted an effective challenge after 1800, using legislative caucuses and local meetings to nominate their candidates and backing them with a committed local press. The Federalist revival sharpened party competition and saw the Federalists adopting Republican techniques. The conflict became so sharp in some states, notably Massachusetts, that each year it seemed control of the state government might change hands.

The middle states were throughout the period the most competitive and politically innovative. In the 1790s the Republicans in Pennsylvania and New Jersey developed a party organization that enabled them to nominate tickets, coordinate action, arouse the electorate, and dictate a strict party line. After 1807, in the area from New York through Maryland, the Republicans—who increasingly called themselves Democratic Republicans or even Democrats—began to encourage the popular election of delegates to meet in local and county conventions to nominate candidates for local office, the state legislature, and Congress, and in some states by 1812 in state conventions to nominate gubernatorial candidates. Similarly, the Federalists, eager to harmonize the party, occasionally resorted to delegate conventions, though they usually met in secret because of their public disapproval of Republican "dictation" to the voters. In presidential elections the Republicans either backed the incumbent or, as in 1808 and 1816, used their wide representation in Congress to name a successor through a congressional caucus. The Federalists, for their part, had to look beyond Congress and, in both 1808 and 1812, called secret meetings

in New York that some have seen as, in effect, the first national nominating conventions.

**The acceptance of parties.** One consequence of this experience of party contest was that publicists began to develop theoretical justifications for party organization. In the 1790s most Republicans regarded themselves not as a party but as a band of patriots coming together to overthrow the selfish interests that had captured the federal government. After 1800 Republicans continued to regard their party as embodying the general interest, though some argued that voters owed loyalty to party nominations only if the people could influence nominations to office through delegate conventions. The Federalists ostensibly maintained a traditional scorn for parties, but during the War of 1812 they defended the right of constitutional opposition, arguing that an opposition was essential to protect civil liberties against an overbearing government. Only as the Republican Party began to lose its unity and cohesion after the war did its publicists start to argue that a two-party conflict was good in itself.

**Federalist demise.** The party battle lost its heat and purpose when news of the Treaty of Ghent (December 1814) and the Battle of New Orleans (January 1815) transformed the Federalists from the prudent critics of a foolish war into traitorous obstructionists. As the presidential election of 1816 demonstrated, the Federalist Party now found it impossible to attract new support, and it ceased formal opposition to the new Republican president, James Monroe. In many localities, however, party activists ignored calls for partisan differences to be dropped and tried to organize elections along party lines, though it became harder to maintain unity behind a single candidate. Close state elections returned some Federalist state governments into the early 1820s, and members of the U.S. House of Representatives continued to be categorized as Republicans or Federalists down to 1824.

#### PARTY REALIGNMENT, 1824–1832

The old party system was finally destroyed by the sectional feelings generated by the Missouri crisis of 1819–1820 and the depression of the early 1820s. In 1824 the Democratic Republican Party could not agree on a single candidate, and four Republicans found strong bases of voter support. The need to find a president obliged John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay—and their supporters—to come together in 1825 to elect the former in the House election and form an administration, prompting their disappointed rivals to raise the banner of opposition. By 1827

these opposition groups had accepted Andrew Jackson as their presidential candidate, and they began to appeal to voters in a manner entirely reminiscent of the late 1790s. Some of their leaders, notably Martin Van Buren, specifically saw this campaign as the re-creation of the old Democratic Republican Party, which they argued was the best means of restoring the rule of sound political principle. In this process the Federalists also divided, though most supported Adams. Old political friends now separated, old enemies joined together, and new newspapers were founded in what was in effect the greatest political realignment in American history.

The election of 1828 produced a turnout unprecedented in presidential elections, though not in earlier state or congressional contests. Jackson and his supporters responded to victory as had Jefferson's Republicans thirty years before, moving their own men into office and using the federal government to consolidate their position. The former Adams men maintained their opposition and adopted the new name of National Republicans. The electoral basis of this new party contest was confirmed when the election of 1832 saw most voters voting the same way as they had in 1828.

In this new party competition, the election devices that had been created over the previous thirty years were adopted again, only more systematically, by both sides. If anything, the Adams men of 1828 proved the more innovative in their use of state conventions and the creation of a national campaign newspaper. Once again, overwhelming sectional preferences—for Jackson in the South and the frontier West, for the National Republicans in most of New England—made the adoption of thoroughgoing party techniques unnecessary. Partisan organization advanced at the state level only in states and districts that were competitive. But in battleground states like New York, New Jersey, and Ohio, the parties used all possible devices, swaying public opinion with scurrilous pamphlets and broadsides, introducing national party divisions into state elections, and using delegate conventions to name tickets at all levels, including congressional elections. Finally, in 1831 and 1832, the Democrats, National Republicans, and a third party, the anti-Masons, all used a national delegate convention to nominate their candidates, the beginning of a practice that became the particular hallmark of American electoral politics.

*See also Anti-Masons; Democratic Republicans; Election of 1796; Election of 1800; Election of 1824; Election of 1828;*

## Federalist Party; Jay's Treaty; National Republican Party.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Chambers, William Nisbit. *Political Parties in a New Nation: The American Experience, 1776–1809*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1963.
- Chase, James S. *Emergence of the Presidential Nominating Convention, 1789–1832*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973.
- Cunningham, Noble E. *The Jeffersonians in Power, 1801–1809*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1963.
- Fischer, David Hackett. *The Revolution of American Conservatism: The Federalist Party in the Age of Jeffersonian Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row, 1965.
- Formisano, Ronald P. "Deferential-Participant Politics: The Early Republic's Political Culture, 1789–1840." *American Political Science Review* 68 (1974): 473–487.
- Hoadley, John F. *Origins of American Political Parties, 1789–1803*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986.
- Hofstadter, Richard. *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1790–1840*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.
- Ratcliffe, Donald J. *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic: Democratic Politics in Ohio, 1793–1821*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998.
- Sharp, James Roger. *American Politics in the Early Republic: The New Nation in Crisis*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993.

Donald J. Ratcliffe

### Political Corruption and Scandals

Political corruption and scandals have been recurring themes throughout American history. From Samuel Argall's plundering of the Virginia Company in the early seventeenth century to the Credit Mobilier, Watergate, and countless lesser scandals, each generation of Americans has had its share of public officials who were charged with abusing their positions in the pursuit of money, power, or both. Far from being timeless, however, definitions of corruption and scandal have evolved alongside broader changes in American society and politics.

#### POLITICAL CORRUPTION AND THE REVOLUTION

For Americans of the Revolutionary generation, corruption connoted much more than private or individual crimes and misdeeds. Influenced by English political debates and by republican ideology, colonial Americans associated corruption with executive dominance over legislatures through the improper use of patronage and other favors for the benefit of private interests at the expense of the public good.

Following the Glorious Revolution, English politics and government were transformed by the growth of state power and public debt, the emergence of new financial interests and institutions, a proliferation of public offices, and newfound political stability. Most Englishmen attributed that power and stability, and the liberty that accompanied it, to the balance of king, lords, and commons in the English constitution. Simultaneously with these developments, however, there emerged an informal system of "influence" through which the king's ministers dominated parliamentary deliberations through the adroit distribution of appointments, contracts, honors, and the like. Opposition spokesmen viewed this crown influence, especially during Robert Walpole's ministry, not as the source of English political stability but as another chapter in the age-old struggle between power and liberty. As the court party solidified its control over the House of Commons through "influence," radical Whigs such as John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon and old Tories like Bolingbroke and other leaders of the country party charged the king's ministers with attempting to corrupt and subvert the mixed and balanced constitution.

This view of politics—with its emphasis on the dangers of corruption and the need for constitutional balance—shaped the colonial response to British imperial policies prior to the Revolution. By 1750 provincial politics had assumed many of the characteristics of British practice. Royal governors used patronage and influence to impose crown authority over newly assertive colonial assemblies, while crown-appointed officials and placemen proliferated, depriving colonial elites of political opportunity and reinforcing oppositional political beliefs. In this context, apprehensive colonials came to view the new British imperial policies of the 1760s and 1770s not as a legitimate attempt to reform the empire but as an extension to the colonies of a corrupt ministerial plot to subvert liberty.

#### CORRUPTION IN THE NEW REPUBLIC

Such concerns provided a justification for independence and the basis for a vision of a republican society founded on a virtuous citizenry free of corruption. During and after the Revolution, new state constitutions sought to limit undue executive influence over the people's representatives, and some states passed laws to promote virtue and prevent vice. But the fear of corruption was not abated by independence. Believing that successful republics depended on the citizens' selfless subordination of private interest to the public good, many Americans

worried that greed, speculation, profiteering, and the unrestrained pursuit of private gain threatened the moral reformation promised by the Revolution. When some members of the Confederation Congress charged that Silas Deane, Robert Morris, Samuel Chase, and other public officials misused their positions for personal enrichment, such doubts were reinforced. The burgeoning public debt, a source of corruption in the English system, added to the fear that America might yet suffer the fate of past republics brought low by the loss of virtue and by corruption.

The new federal Constitution adopted in 1788 did not immediately allay concerns about the corrosive influence of corruption. Proponents argued that a stronger national government founded on the principle of separation of powers would remedy the "vices of the system" so prevalent in the 1780s. Opponents predicted that such a system would only create new opportunities for corruption. Alexander Hamilton's fiscal program—with its permanent debt, national bank, and federal subsidies of manufacturing—seemed to confirm the anti-Federalists' worst fears. Hamilton's intent was to strengthen the central government and stabilize the nation's finances by forging an alliance between government and business, exploiting the latter's self-interest to that end. But to Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and others of the emerging opposition, Hamilton's hidden purpose was to impose a system of government in America à la Walpole, with executive dominance over the legislature solidified through patronage, influence, and favoritism to business interests. In the increasingly divisive politics of the 1790s, rampant speculation in government securities and unseemly ties between government officials and public creditors reawakened old concerns about the threat posed by corruption in a republic. The involvement of some of Hamilton's closest associates—William Duer (sent to jail for his role in the highest-level financial scandal in the history of the Treasury Department), James Duane, Rufus King, and his own father-in-law, Philip Schuyler—fueled such fears. Although Democratic Republicans tried to link Hamilton to such activities and even pushed for congressional censure in 1793 for his alleged misuse of foreign loans, there is no evidence that he ever benefited personally from his policies.

The traditional rhetoric of "ministerial corruption" persisted through the late 1790s and beyond, but its resonance waned. Despite its initial excesses, the Hamiltonian program remained in place. Unsubstantiated charges of soliciting a bribe from the French government forced Secretary of State Ed-

mund Randolph's resignation in 1795, and questions were raised about House Speaker Jonathan Dayton's handling of his accounts; but there were no serious instances of corruption in the Washington and Adams administrations. By the late 1790s, moreover, laws had been passed prohibiting many kinds of corrupt practices. Although politically charged in their own way, the two most sensational scandals of the period were of an entirely different nature. In 1797 Hamilton's opponents revealed that he had earlier had an affair with a married woman, Maria Reynolds, and had submitted to blackmail to conceal it. Five years later, Jefferson's intimate relationship with Sally Hemings, one of his slaves, was exposed, setting off a firestorm of opposition criticism.

Land speculation was at the heart of two major scandals involving misconduct by state and national officials. In 1797 the U.S. Senate voted overwhelmingly to expel Tennessee senator William Blount for conspiring with western settlers and the British to forcibly oust the Spanish from Florida and Louisiana. Blount, a prominent North Carolinian who became the first territorial governor and first senator from Tennessee, had become deeply involved in land speculation and saw the removal of the Spanish as a way to enhance his investments. His illegal interference in U.S. foreign policy for private gain prompted his expulsion from the Senate and the initiation of formal impeachment proceedings in the House of Representatives. A second scandal involved the Georgia legislature's sale of 35 million acres of land in the Yazoo River district of present-day Mississippi and Alabama to the Yazoo Land Company for below-market prices. When it was revealed that the 1795 law was the result of rampant bribery and corruption, a new legislature rescinded the sale, whereupon private investors who had purchased Yazoo lands demanded relief and protection of their property rights. After years of controversy, the Jefferson administration settled speculators' claims with federal funds in 1802, and, in 1810 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the original land sales in *Fletcher v. Peck*.

#### CORRUPTION IN THE AGE OF JEFFERSON AND JACKSON

With the Jeffersonian-Republican ascendancy in 1801, the eighteenth-century view of corruption became increasingly anachronistic. Jefferson did replace most (but not all) Federalist officeholders with loyal partisans; but in the new world of party politics, patronage appointments were viewed not as traditional corruption but as an essential ingredient of party government. Apart from the activities of General James Wilkinson and some graft and profiteer-

ing during the War of 1812, the era was mostly free of major scandal. The charge of corruption, however, continued to be an effective political tool in the factional politics of the 1820s. Most notably, Andrew Jackson and his supporters echoed older notions of corruption when they charged John Quincy Adams with having won the presidency in 1825 by means of a "corrupt bargain." Because no candidate had received a majority of the electoral votes, the election of 1824 was thrown into the House of Representatives. Henry Clay, himself eliminated from consideration by the Twelfth Amendment, threw his support to Adams, ensuring the latter's election. When Adams subsequently appointed Clay as his secretary of state, outraged Jacksonians charged that Adams had subverted the will of the people through political intrigue and corruption. The Jacksonians' appropriation of the Revolutionary-era rhetoric of corruption served them well and laid the foundations for Jackson's electoral victory over Adams in 1828. By that time, however, the nation was already undergoing fundamental social, economic, and political changes that would, among other things, transform the meaning, extent, and character of corruption in American society.

*See also Anti-Federalists; Blount Conspiracy; Burr Conspiracy; Cabinet and Executive Department; Concept of Empire; Constitution, Ratification of; Constitutional Law; Crime and Punishment; Election of 1800; Election of 1824; Election of 1828; Federalists; Government: Overview; Hamilton, Alexander; Hamilton's Economic Plan; Jefferson, Thomas; Land Speculation; Presidency, The: Thomas Jefferson.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Benson, George C. S., Steven A. Maaranen, and Alan Heslop. *Political Corruption in America*. Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1978.
- Eisenstadt, Abraham S., Ari Hoogenboom, and Hans L. Trefousse, eds. *Before Watergate: Problems of Corruption in American Society*. Brooklyn, N.Y.: Brooklyn College Press, distributed by Columbia University Press, 1979.
- Loth, David Goldsmith. *Public Plunder: A History of Graft in America*. 1938. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1970.
- Miller, Nathan. *Stealing from America: A History of Corruption from Jamestown to Reagan*. New York: Paragon House, 1992.

Wood, Gordon S. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787*. New York: Norton, 1972; Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.

L. Ray Gunn

#### Political Culture

Political culture, a concept popular among scholars, takes an anthropological approach to political life. In other words, rather than concentrate on systematic political theories, the study of political culture is attuned to cultural symbols and "unstated premises." Studies of political culture often boil down to identifying the implicit rules of political behavior in a given context—the boundaries of legitimate, effective political action. Political culture has been particularly useful for studying the early Republic because only at the end of this period did anything much resembling the familiar U.S. party system take shape.

#### CONSPIRACY THEORIES

The books often said to have inaugurated the study of political culture among historians of early America were Bernard Bailyn's *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (1967) and its companion volume, *The Origins of American Politics*. Locating the sources of American political thought in a then little-read collection of tracts from the fringes of British politics, Bailyn exposed the founding fathers as conspiracy theorists whose campaign against the British imperial regime was full of hysterical rhetoric and outlandish beliefs, most of them revolving around a secret British design to impose an unconstitutional tyranny on the American colonies—or, as worried American slaveholders tended to put it, to reduce America to slavery. Living far from the centers of a British authority that was rarely exercised before the 1750s, Americans came to regard power itself as a fearsome, evil, hungry thing with an "endlessly propulsive tendency to expand itself beyond legitimate boundaries."

Colonial Americans still considered themselves Britons, but their reading and often limited experience of the mother country led many of them to believe that the free British constitution had been corrupted by what historians now know were the beginnings of the modern parliamentary system: the consolidation of power in the hands of a "prime" minister who controlled a majority in the House of Commons. Many came to see America as the last bastion of British constitutional liberty and their own local governments as reflecting the "true" British constitution. When the British tried to tighten up



**The Gerry-mander.** In 1812 Elkanah Tisdale created this famous woodcut showing the new voting districts in Essex County, Massachusetts, as a winged lizard. The term *gerrymander* is derived from the last name of Massachusetts governor Elbridge Gerry, a Democratic Republican who forced a partisan redistricting bill through the state legislature. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

the governance of the empire a bit, seriously enforcing their languishing customs laws and asking their now-wealthy colonies to contribute some tax revenue for the first time, Americans saw something far

more sinister at work. Building on what by 1776 was a long tradition of over-the-top charges against the British, Thomas Jefferson made the Declaration of Independence into a long conspiracy theory about

the king himself, charging him with introducing slavery and causing America's racial problems with both blacks and Indians.

The success of conspiracy theories in recruiting popular support for the Revolution, and the lurid fears of political power that underlay the theories, made such scare-mongering a permanent part of American political culture. Nearly every major social and political development of the period would generate such theories, which were often central to the political messages and methodologies of major movements in this period and all the early national political parties from the Federalists and Democratic Republicans to the anti-Masons, Whigs, and Know-Nothings. The major conspiracy theory "villains" in the early Republic included the French revolutionaries, the Masons, both the Jeffersonian Republicans and the opposing Federalists, the Irish, the Catholic Church, Andrew Jackson, John Quincy Adams, the Bank of the United States, the abolitionists, southern slaveholders, and more. It often seemed that an all-out plot to subvert liberty was the only thing that could motivate large numbers of Americans to political action.

Historians have differed over whether conspiratorial thinking should be considered a psychological problem, a genuine political philosophy, or something else. What can be said with certainty is that, from the very beginning of American political history, Americans have been notably moralistic and Manichean in their approach to political debate, tending to see politics as a war between the forces of light and darkness, order and chaos, good and evil.

#### **REPUBLICAN VIRTUE, POLITICAL CHARACTER, AND ANTI-PARTYISM**

Directly related to the outsized fears of conspiracy and corruption was a somewhat paradoxical set of political ideals that many historians have come to label "classical republicanism." These notions had their origins in a certain idealized view of classical antiquity that was encouraged by many of the favorite political texts. Classical republican thought was communitarian in orientation, holding that representative government and republican liberty were safe only when both leaders and citizens virtuously abstained from self-interested behavior and acted for the common good. In terms of political culture, however, republican virtue demanded individualism, more commonly rendered in this period as "independence": a virtuous statesman could never submit his own political conscience to interest, ambition, or external pressure if his actions were to have legitimacy or influence.

Virtuous citizens were also necessary in a republic, and citizens showed their virtue by always putting self-interest and passion aside and choosing virtuous "characters" to lead them. During and after the Revolution, there was much concern among the Patriot leaders about the possible corruption of the citizenry. The anti-British protestors of the 1760s organized boycotts of British luxury goods out of a desire to pressure British merchants, but from that time on there were recurrent campaigns against luxurious living in general, as Patriot agitators like Samuel Adams sought a moral and political regeneration they believed went hand in hand. The first Continental Congress proclaimed a moral code for the new nation that banned theaters, horse racing, and cock-fighting, and local controversies over luxury items and frivolous entertainment broke out periodically thereafter. Dr. Benjamin Rush proposed a system of public education that would "render the mass of the people more homogeneous, and thereby fit them more easily for uniform and peaceable government."

Obviously these conformist political values were not especially friendly to the later American ideal of participatory democracy. The ideal of republican virtue affected political behavior, especially among the members of the Virginia dynasty. A virtuous republican could never actively seek power: candidates did not "run" for office, they were asked by others to "stand." Though lifelong politicians almost to a man, the founders went to great lengths to convey their utter disinterest in political power or financial gain to any who would listen.

The quest for republican virtue made early American political culture rather schizophrenic concerning such basic elements of democratic politics as parties and campaigning. Though many parts of America had experienced vigorous political competition along clear partisan lines since colonial times, most early American leaders did not regard this as a normal or acceptable state of affairs. Thomas Jefferson expressed the feelings of many early American leaders about the idea of joining a political party: "Such an addiction is the last degradation of a free and moral agent. If I could not go to heaven but with a party, I would not go there at all." Nevertheless, Jefferson soon became the figurehead of the country's first political party. And antipartyism remained a common sentiment even as parties became the norm. Americans congratulated themselves on the seeming collapse of national party divisions during the "Era of Good Feeling" in the 1810s, then promptly rejoined them with renewed fervor in the decades that followed while always remaining open to re-

formers' attacks on the corruption and divisiveness of parties. The contradictions are symbolized by the fact that one of the most organizationally aggressive and innovative national parties, the anti-Masons, had antipartyism as a major part of its message.

Antipartisanship shaped actual political behavior as well as attitudes. Candidates for high office could not be seen as active public participants in their own campaigns during this period. (Even the nakedly ambitious Aaron Burr, who campaigned aggressively for the Democratic Republicans in 1800, had to stand for office in a district far away from the scene of his campaign activities in New York City.) Presidential candidates made no national speaking tours until the middle of the nineteenth century, and even then the practice was widely criticized. High officeholders had to rely on friends and surrogates, including newspaper editors, if they wanted to seek broad public support for their actions or win a higher office.

While newspapers, congressional debaters, and other partisans carried out public battles over ideology and policy, American statesmen themselves operated in a highly pressurized environment in which political battles seemed to be more about personal character and "honor." In the absence of any agreed-upon standards or mechanisms for dealing with questions of personal integrity, like ethics laws, aspersions on a statesman's character, and many other political quarrels, were settled according to prevailing social mores. Aaron Burr's killing of Alexander Hamilton in a duel was only one of many political duels and near-duels in the early Republic, though it was somewhat unusual in ending with an actual death. The political duel was largely limited to a subculture of gentlemen politicians who had once been military officers. If someone beneath that station insulted a gentleman or tried to issue a challenge, he was more likely to get "cowhided" in the street than to be dueled.

Violence, however, remained an important part of American political culture throughout this period. Teams of thugs at polling places were an integral part of the "get out the vote" (or keep down the vote) efforts in many cities. Rioting mobs were also an occasionally critical political factor, and at several key points, a tool. The Sons of Liberty encouraged mobs to intimidate local British officials during the Stamp Act crisis, a campaign of terror that included the dismantling of Massachusetts Chief Justice Thomas Hutchinson's mansion. During the 1830s prominent politicians in the North and South helped organize mobs that shut down abolitionist meetings and destroyed abolitionist newspapers and pamphlets. Ab-

olitionist editor Elijah P. Lovejoy was murdered during one of these riots in 1837.

#### CELEBRATORY POLITICS

Although classical republican virtue was a deep strain in American political culture, it was hardly universal. The "disinterestedness" it required could be practiced only by the wealthiest, best-placed politicians in any case, and it had little to say about the more active and democratic forms that early on became a basic part of American political life. Governments that were in the end based on public opinion and popular voting inevitably spawned practices that sought to marshal those forces one way or another. It was only at the end of this period that the familiar institutions of the American party system really took shape.

In the early Republic, therefore, popular political culture was necessarily creative, adaptive, and variable. Because the early political parties were organizationally almost nonexistent, the work of building support for them was conducted by scattered groups of local activists, with little centralized direction or funding. Necessarily reliant on local resources and personnel, these typically self-appointed activists simply made partisan use of whatever existing traditions, institutions, and practices they could, including many that were long-standing features of Anglo-American culture. Among these were holiday celebrations, parades, taverns, toasts, songs, town meetings, petitions, militia company training days, and various products of local printing presses, including broadsides, handbills, almanacs, poems, pamphlets, and, especially, the small-circulation local and regional newspapers that sprang up everywhere after the Revolution.

Some of the most interesting political artifacts of this type are the plethora of songs published on the back pages of partisan newspapers and sometimes as sheet music or in songbooks, many of which were presumably sung in taverns or at partisan gatherings. The musical output included not only "Jefferson and Liberty" and "The People's Friend," but also such unlikely numbers as "Adams and Liberty," "Huzzah Madison Huzzah," and even "Monroe Is the Man." Especially popular among local partisans were innumerable sets of new lyrics to popular tunes such as "Yankee Doodle," "Hail Columbia," and the "Anacreonic Song," better known today as the United States national anthem.

Each region of the country had its own particular local practices that were drawn into partisan politics and became part of a distinctive regional political

culture. In the South, the famous court-day barbecues were transformed from rituals of noblesse oblige into competitive partisan debates, initiating the Southern stump-speaking tradition. In the cities and larger towns, fraternal orders, voluntary associations, and militia companies were politicized, with the so-called Democratic Republican societies and the Tammany Society being two of the best-known examples on the Republican side. These groups formed the beginnings of the highly disciplined neighborhood-based political organizations that would in time become known as urban political "machines."

In New England, where churches and the clergy had always played an unusually prominent role in public life, many aspects of religious culture were adapted to partisan use. The Congregational establishment was heavily and intemperately Federalist, and its members did not hesitate to put partisan political instructions into their sermons. At the same time, the traditions of the jeremiad and the publication of sermons gave rise not only to a large number of published political sermons and books by the clergy, but also the practice of secular politicians giving and publishing formal orations that often took on a distinctly homiletic tone.

Although always locally controlled and thus highly varied in tone and content, certain practices were nearly universal in this political culture. Among the most important were the holiday celebrations that dotted the civic calendar, each of which brought many of the elements mentioned above together into a single political event. For Republicans, the most important day was the Jefferson-centric Fourth of July, which they had championed as a more republican and democratic alternative to Washington's birthday or government-mandated thanksgiving and fast days. The highlights of such banquets were the toasts, drunk at the end and accompanied by cheers or cannon blasts if possible. Afterward, an account of the celebration would be published in a sympathetic local newspaper, including a verbatim transcript of the toasts. No mere drinking game, political banquet toasts served, and were intended to serve, as informal platforms for the community, party, or faction that held the gathering.

One form of political statement that was unique to Jefferson's Democratic Republicans and befit a party claiming to champion ordinary farmers and mechanics was the creation and presentation of an outsized foodstuff. As the city's Democratic Republicans prepared for their first March 4th celebration (the anniversary of Jefferson's election to the presidency) in 1801, "a monstrous large ox" was fes-

tooned with flowers and ribbons and the logo "Jefferson and Burr" between its horns and then processed through the streets, "followed," as one outraged Federalist lady remembered it, "by such a despicable rabble as you never saw." The Baptists of Cheshire, Massachusetts, established the mature version of the fad with the half-ton mammoth cheese that Elder John Leland had delivered to Thomas Jefferson on New Year's 1802, bearing the inscription: "THE GREATEST CHEESE IN AMERICA, FOR THE GREATEST MAN IN AMERICA." Be they edible or tuneful, all of these homely, locally produced tributes were part of a significant, democratizing shift in the culture of American political leadership that occurred after 1800. The imagery and iconography surrounding Washington depicted a stern patriarch bestride a warhorse, lifted to heaven by choirs of angels, or enrobed and enthroned in the clouds like Zeus. The images of Jefferson that circulated, however, were simple portraits, and the language used to praise him often strikingly intimate. As one song put it in 1801: "Invited, by the friendly voice, / Of free-men, in a prudent choice; / Kind JEFFERSON, with love replete, / Accepts, th' *important helm of state.*"

This was not "merely" a verbal or linguistic change; it reflected and authorized concrete changes in the way that politics was conducted at the local, retail level. Even some Federalists learned to approach voters in a different way after Jefferson's accession. Following the Republicans' lead, it was now imperative for all political activists—whether in how they wrote, spoke, or personally behaved when they encountered citizens in taverns, public meetings, polling places, or homes—to approach the people as friends and equals, not as children or subjects to be guided.

*See also Almanacs; Congregationalists; Declaration of Independence; Democratic Republicans; Era of Good Feeling; Federalist Party; Fourth of July; Holidays and Public Celebrations; Jefferson, Thomas; Liberty; Music: Patriotic and Political; Newspapers; Poetry; Presidency, The: Thomas Jefferson; Press, The; Print Culture; Revolution: Social History; Rhetoric; Sons of Liberty; Stamp Act and Stamp Act Congress; Taverns.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bailyn, Bernard. *The Origins of American Politics*. New York: Vintage, 1970.  
 —. *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*. Enlarged ed. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992.

- Baker, Jean H. *Affairs of Party: The Political Culture of Northern Democrats in the Mid-Nineteenth Century*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983; New York: Fordham University Press, 1998.
- Beeman, Richard, Stephen Botein, and Edward C. Carter II, eds. *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987.
- Formisano, Ronald P. "The Concept of Political Culture." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 31 (winter 2001): 493–526.
- . *The Transformation of Political Culture: Massachusetts Parties, 1790s–1840s*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.
- Freeman, Joanne B. *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001.
- Gendzel, Glen. "Political Culture: Genealogy of a Concept." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 28 (1997): 225–250.
- Goldberg, Robert Alan. *Enemies Within: The Culture of Conspiracy in Modern America*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001.
- Hofstadter, Richard. *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780–1840*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.
- Horn, James, Jan Ellen Lewis, and Peter S. Onuf, eds. *The Revolution of 1800: Democracy, Race, and the New Republic*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002.
- Ketcham, Ralph. *Presidents Above Party: The First American Presidency, 1789–1829*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984.
- Pasley, Jeffrey L. "Conspiracy Theory and American Exceptionalism from the Revolution to Roswell." Paper read at Bernard Bailyn festschrift, Harvard University, May 21, 2000. Available at [http://conspiracy.pasleybrothers.com/CT\\_and\\_American\\_Exceptionalism\\_web\\_version.htm](http://conspiracy.pasleybrothers.com/CT_and_American_Exceptionalism_web_version.htm)
- . *The Tyranny of Printers: Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001.
- Pasley, Jeffrey L., Andrew W. Robertson, and David Waldstreicher, eds. *Beyond the Founders: New Approaches to the Political History of the Early American Republic*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.
- Rosenbaum, Walter A. *Political Culture*. New York: Praeger, 1975.
- Waldstreicher, David. *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
- Withington, Ann Fairfax. *Toward a More Perfect Union: Virtue and the Formation of American Republics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Jeffrey L. Pasley

### **Political Economy**

The concept of "political economy" has a long and varied history. Aristotle wrote about the allocation

of household resources and the relationships of individual producers to each other in the city-states of ancient Greece. Modern scholars often employ the term when investigating how larger systems of authority create the means to satisfy the wants and needs of particular groups of people. In the British Atlantic system that developed from the early 1600s to the early 1800s, "political economy" became an important conceptual tool for policymakers, economic agents, and intellectuals concerned with shaping the imperial expansion of competing nations, their control over the people and resources of far-flung colonies, and the production and distribution of wealth within European nations. Among British writers of that era, ideas about political economy coincided with the broad transatlantic appeal of republicanism in political thought, and with the general tenets of the era's moral philosophy.

### **A TRANSFORMATIVE ERA**

The acceleration of Britain's economic transformation toward an industrial revolution was aided by imperial commercial expansion and North American colonists' agricultural prosperity. As a result, the state and social classes underwent dramatic alteration throughout the empire. Rising, ambitious groups of commercial farmers, entrepreneurs, merchants, and manufacturers in England clamored for promotion and protection of their modern interests against traditional interests, often including landed aristocrats and families protected by the patronage of the monarchy. Writers stood back and observed the long view of this transformative era, and what they saw was a paradox: although the British people at home and in the colonies enjoyed relief from the deep structural economic insecurity brought by plagues, scarcities, and protracted wars during previous centuries, the fruits of their expansion and development were uneven and unpredictable in the 1600s and 1700s. The violent disorder that erupted locally, as well as the revolutions and civil wars of the era, often had underlying economic causes, which in turn pointed toward the need for more active government intervention into the nation's—and empire's—economic affairs. "Political economists" in the British Atlantic saw this state of affairs as their particular challenge, just as republicans, or "commonwealthmen," grappled with questions of freedom and obligation. While republicans rediscovered (and reshaped) much older theories explaining that rulers walked a precarious path of wisdom, reason, and virtue, on either side of which lay tyranny and licentiousness, political economists tried to secure social order and material prosperity with a network of pol-

icies addressing economic activities, goods, and services.

#### THE ART OF MANAGING A STATE

Early modern political economy was at once political and ethical. Before the early nineteenth century, economics was not a pure science, though writers claimed to be investigating or formulating "laws" of economic behavior or development. It was, rather, a branch of moral philosophy and contained numerous assumptions about human nature and the appropriate ethical relationships advancing peoples should exhibit. Just as a republican citizen needed to live virtuously, the political economy of a nation needed to embody economic justice. Of course, abstract principles translated only haphazardly into practice, and more often than not the unfolding litany of mercantile legislation passed by British imperial authorities served one or another special economic interest. By the late eighteenth century, British Americans understood political economy as the art of managing a state, or the means by which a government allocated resources and protected various interests of its citizenry. The Scottish writer Adam Smith defined political economy as "a branch of the science of a statesman or legislator" the primary goal of which was to "enrich both the people and the sovereign." Smith and other writers believed political economy was directly derived from policies and directly influenced the economic lives of all groups within a state. And although Smith is probably most closely associated with a targeted assault on the mercantilist state (the term first used in Smith's *Wealth of Nations* in 1776), even Smith believed that there was an important role for government in furthering the economic development of a nation. Government and citizens of a republic were interdependent; as in republican belief, the state could not survive without striving to preserve the well-being of society.

As American Revolutionaries discovered, once they had secured their political independence, their need to secure an economic foundation that would preserve Americans' republican character evinced a similar patchwork quilt of legislation. How newly independent Americans would create a viable political economy was by no means clear. Optimists and skeptics debated the qualities of the republican character. From the 1780s to 1810s, they also engaged in a vibrant public and legislative discussion about whether there were sufficient resources—people, skills, capital—to launch a republic that could enter the "world of nations" as an independently productive people, and on what basis productivity should

unfold at all. A bewildering array of voices joined this discussion about how to shape the new nation's political economy.

#### HAMILTONIAN AND JEFFERSONIAN VIEWS

Scholars tend to cluster the many different ideas and policies of the era, and the numerous shifting alliances of Americans who promoted them, around two poles. One, the nationalist or Federalist or Hamiltonian political economy, was more intimately associated with British development, urban cosmopolitanism exhibited in the American North, and rising entrepreneurship and manufactures. Its adherents identified with many of the economic ideas that gave rise to the mercantilist policymaking of the British Empire; mercantilism was, if nothing else, defined by its reliance on government legislation to secure the most desirable economic activities and to thwart those that were undesirable. Following other British precedents, Hamiltonian political economists also supported such federal institutions as the Bank of the United States and policies designed to raise revenue to fund the central debt.

The other pole, a localist or Jeffersonian political economy, contrasted American simplicity with the degeneration and corruption—concepts inherited from republicanism—of the developing British state, banking system, and industrial revolution. They emphasized the abundance of natural resources in North America, the potential for westward expansion, and the virtues of continuing to exist as primarily an agricultural people. Jeffersonian political economy was associated with "free trade" among southern planters and took a view of international affairs premised on America's role in nurturing the "natural virtue" of agricultural expansion and the exporting of staples. In this view, Americans would not only provide sufficiency and modest comfort for themselves, but would also enter commerce as the provisioners of war-torn and hungry peoples elsewhere in the world.

Scholars of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century argue that, though such a polarization of views may have appeared in Americans' spirited discussions during the post-Revolutionary generation, it did not reflect reality. Neither Hamiltonian nor Jeffersonian political economy was a static body of ideas and policies. Both persuasions were more pragmatic than dogmatic in their approaches to shaping the economy; both embodied a range of contentious views; both accepted various degrees of governmental involvement in facilitating economic development; and both anticipated an American future

of economic growth and widespread individual material comfort. Indeed, post-Revolutionary Americans readily adopted many mercantilist measures to stabilize and develop the economies of states and nation, and few of them believed in the efficacy of "economic naturalism" or free-market agrarianism, ideas that had been touted by eighteenth-century French political economists. In reality, individuals and groups throughout America clamored for economic policies at the local and state level that would channel resources, regulate particular privileges, and set the parameters of an economic interest's activities; the policies were passed in legislatures that combined representatives of Hamiltonian and Jeffersonian views in myriad ways during the early Republic. In reality, too, most Americans lived on the land or very close to farming activities, and most technologies and economic infrastructures reflected preindustrial arrangements for at least two generations after independence.

When differences did emerge among Americans about their economy, they tended to be about how much government intervention in the economy was good to foster; how big the new economic institutions should be; to whom certain economic policies should be addressed; and whether the basis of political authority for economic development should rest at the local, state, or national level. Indeed, the transition from the Federalist presidency of John Adams to the Democratic Republican presidency of Jefferson in 1800, preceded by the political transformation of many local and state legislatures, was more political in nature than economic; Jeffersonians adhered to most of the economic principles and policies laid down by Federalist officeholders in the preceding generation.

#### **THE TRANSFORMATION OF ECONOMIC IDEAS**

In important respects the contentious discussion among shifting groups of Americans who struggled to stabilize and develop their economy was not the result of political independence or the initiation of concerns for a new nation's economic future. It was, rather, the continuation of the more fundamental transformation of economic ideas throughout the Atlantic world during the eighteenth century. Slowly, large numbers of people across imperial boundaries and oceans had begun to understand that the source of value lay not only in accumulating gold and silver, but in the people—who represented the labor and reproductive potential—of a nation; that money could as effectively be made of paper as of specie (gold and silver coin), and that so long as peo-

ple accepted it, paper money could provide a valuable (though temporary) substitute for specie in exchanges.

All along the Atlantic, people began to shed their fear of debt and embraced a tangled web of debt and credit expanding without artificial (government) restraints. Although they distrusted "luxury," they grew generally less fearful of consuming new, unessential, and foreign goods. Having put the long eras of dire scarcities and unemployment far behind them, great numbers of free white Atlantic peoples began to abandon their long-held notion that the world's wealth was relatively fixed in quantity (and its corollary that a nation's wealth increased only by decreasing the wealth of another). In its place they developed an exuberant faith in their ability to transform limitless natural abundance into usable and desirable commodities and to tame the wilderness holding that abundance into valuable real estate and productive farms; moreover, they accepted that government could play some role in bringing all this about. Although they continued to deplore the "bubbles," or excesses of speculation in the public debt, that developed in eighteenth-century England and during the American Revolutionary War, by the 1780s few citizens doubted the benefits of locally controlled banks and a larger, more widely circulating currency.

The delineation of rights and obligations between rulers and ruled that had provided the basis for many economic concepts before the 1700s was breaking down rapidly during the Revolutionary generation. Increasingly, the growing number of brokers, bankers, insurers, retailers, specialists in commercial services, and representatives of many new trades who functioned in the interstices of the economy, linking small investors to emerging institutions or providing services where economic connections were still tenuous, had to be incorporated into the "system of political economy" that Americans embraced. By the 1820s the Republic had entered another era of its political economy.

*See also Bank of the United States; Banking System; Economic Development; Economic Theory; Government and the Economy; Hamilton's Economic Plan; Industrial Revolution; Jefferson, Thomas; Material Culture; Merchants; Revolution: Finance; Taxation, Public Finance, and Public Debt.*

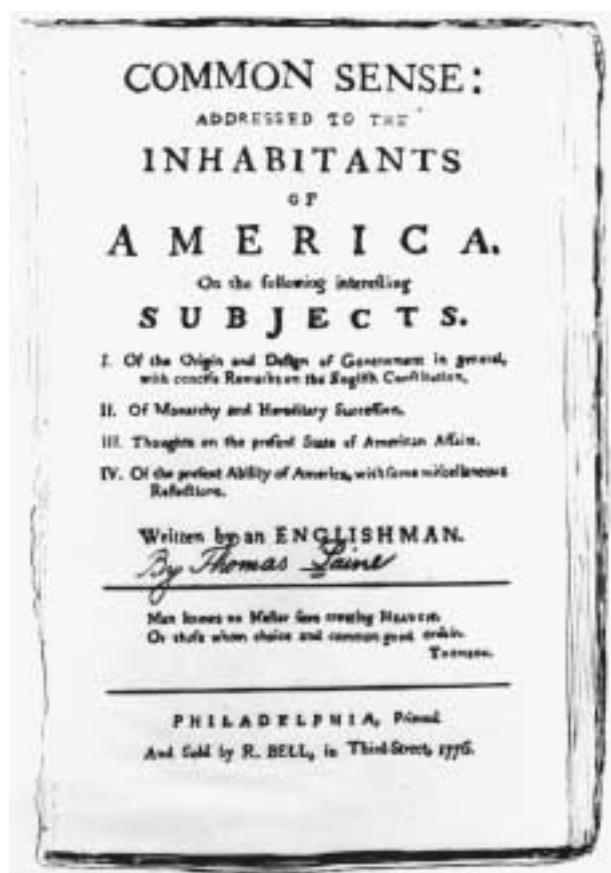
**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Appleby, Joyce. *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s*. New York: New York University Press, 1984.
- Matson, Cathy, and Peter S. Onuf. *A Union of Interests: Economy and Politics in the Revolutionary Era*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1990.
- McCoy, Drew. *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America*. New York: Norton, 1980.
- Reznick, Samuel. "The Rise and Early Development of Industrial Consciousness in the United States, 1760–1830." *Journal of Economic and Business History* 4 (1932): 784–811.
- Riesman, Janet. "Money, Credit, and Federalist Political Economy." In *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity*. Edited by Richard Beeman, Stephen Botein, and Edward C. Carter II. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987.

Cathy Matson

**Political Pamphlets**

In the American colonies of Great Britain and the early United States, printing was of course the only form of mass communication available. With at least one press in every sizeable colony by 1750, the mechanism for an extensive exchange of opinions and information was ready to be tapped when the Crown began in the 1760s to bring the American colonies into "due subordination" to the mother country. The colonists responded to changes in trade regulations and revenue laws by noting the presumed harm to colonial prosperity and imperial trade; but they also argued that the changes violated the British constitution, especially the prohibition against taxing persons not represented in Parliament. In a pamphlet titled *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved* (Boston, 1764), the American Revolutionary statesman James Otis gave his opinion on the proper definition of the constitution and its applicability to the colonists. Later John Dickinson wrote a more extensive treatment of this topic, *Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer . . .* (Philadelphia, 1768) in which he dismissed the difference asserted by some in Britain between "internal" (the Stamp Tax, e.g.) and "external" taxes (import tariffs, e.g.), the former forbidden to the British, the latter permitted. Dickinson argued that both were equally onerous and equally forbidden; taxation without consent was "slavery." In 1774, Thomas Jefferson's *A Summary View of the Rights of British America. . .* (Williamsburg, 1774) denied the existence of little more than a ceremonial tie with Great Britain. Its near assertion of independence was too advanced for the time, but



**Common Sense.** The title page to the pamphlet *Common Sense*, Thomas Paine's violent diatribe against British control. © BETTMANN/CORBIS.

it served to put Jefferson's name before the general public both in the colonies and Britain. Pamphleteers, often using pen names from ancient Greek or Roman history, presented their arguments as gentlemanly dialogues, buttressing their arguments with references to classical or Enlightenment authors.

**THE QUESTION OF INDEPENDENCE**

With the outbreak of fighting between royal forces and colonists at Lexington and Concord in April 1775, the controversy moved to a more consequential question: Did Great Britain have any power over the colonies? While a fledgling Continental Army besieged British forces in Boston and royal governors everywhere lost effective power, the Continental Congress moved toward independence. In January 1776 a recent emigrant, Thomas Paine, signing himself "Common Sense," published a violent diatribe against British control, arguing that there was no alternative to independence. Echoing popular arguments, he asked what logic there was in an island

governing a continent; he derided George III as a "royal brute" and urged a simple republican government for the colonies. This pamphlet was immediately popular, selling more than 150,000 copies through 1778 when the sale of a few hundred copies was remarkable. In addition to a readership, many pamphlets reached even wider audiences when read aloud in gathering places; Paine's crude and harshly expressed language was well suited to oral proclamation. After Paine, other writers dropped their manly tone.

#### STRENGTHENING THE UNION

After independence was declared and until it was won, the principal subjects of pamphlets and newspapers were the conduct of the war, congressional politics, and controversies over state constitutions. After the end of the war, a steady stream of pamphlets and newspaper essays argued for and against the strengthening of the Articles of Confederation. The publication of the draft constitution in the fall of 1787 opened the floodgates of conflicting opinions about ratification. Some of the most widely known essays of the controversy, especially those by the anti-Federalists, who opposed ratification, received only limited circulation. One exception was Melancton Smith's *Observations . . . the Federal Farmer*. Printed in their entirety only in the Poughkeepsie, New York, *Country Journal* (1788), the observations were later collected into a pamphlet printed four times, for a total of about four thousand copies. Deliberations of the state ratifying conventions were sometimes printed in pamphlet form. The best known of these essays, *The Federalist*, went directly from individual newspaper publication to collection in book form in 1788. Another set of Federalist arguments was in the satirical essays and verses of some of the "Connecticut Wits," a group of Yale graduates who poked fun at those opposing the new constitution in *American Antiquities* and *The Anarchiad*, appearing intermittently in 1786–88. One particular object of their scorn was the governor of New York, George Clinton, probably the most notable anti-Federalist in the North.

#### THE NEW REPUBLIC, 1789–1800

Following ratification of the Constitution, the new federal government began operating in March 1789. By the end of Washington's first term as president in March 1793, conflict between the Federalists and an opposition group, the Republicans, had become public. New, fiercely partisan newspapers and numerous pamphlets argued points of public policy, printed

orations and sermons, and marked events such as political anniversaries. The events of the first three presidential administrations, especially those dealing with foreign policy, polarized public opinion, bringing partisan feeling to extraordinary heights. During a foreign policy crisis with France, from 1798 to 1800, at least twenty-nine pamphlets were printed on the Alien and Sedition Acts. At the height of the crisis in 1798, statements in support of President John Adams were frequently printed and widely distributed. Controversialists did not always confine themselves to political questions. In 1797, Alexander Hamilton revealed his adulterous relationship with the wife of a speculator in *Observations on Certain Documents . . .* (Philadelphia, 1797). The speculator was blackmailing Hamilton, resulting in suspicious payments of money. The payments had led to accusations by a scandalmongering journalist, James Thomson Callender (*The American Annual Register . . . [Philadelphia, 1797]*) that Hamilton had dealt illegally in government securities while secretary of the Treasury. Rather than have his public character smeared, Hamilton chose to smear his private reputation and embarrass his wife. Callender later was the first to publish assertions that Thomas Jefferson had fathered children by one of his slaves.

#### ELECTION OF 1800

The first strongly contested presidential election was that of 1800. A flood of campaign literature issued from both sides—the Federalists, in support of John Adams, and the Republicans, in support of Thomas Jefferson. The Republicans were particularly vocal, criticizing the administration's measures restricting freedom of press, speech, and assembly. The Federalists decried Jefferson's presumed atheism and his intellectual predilections, particularly his "unhealthy" interest in foreign philosophies. This was illustrated by a satirical pamphlet by David Daggett, *Sun Beams May Be Extracted from Cucumbers . . .* (New Haven, 1799). Alexander Hamilton made a curious contribution by writing a pamphlet highly critical of Adams, *Letter from Alexander Hamilton Concerning the Public Conduct and Character of John Adams . . .* (New York, 1800). Somewhat illogically, he concluded by strongly advising that readers vote for Adams. After Jefferson and the Republicans won the White House and control of Congress, Republicans focused on organizing the party to ensure future power, printing the proceedings of county and state committees as much to inform voters about Republican leaders as to put forward party policies and achievements, such as the Louisiana Purchase (1803).

During the War of 1812, the Federalists became identified with antiwar, pro-British policies. When the war ended in 1815 with apparent American success, the Federalist Party began to collapse as a national party. Republican propaganda efforts slackened and so did political publishing of all kinds. However, other topics surfaced, and pamphlets presented discussions on slavery and religious questions.

#### THE NO-PARTY PERIOD, 1816–1828

After Monroe's election in 1816, with only nominal Federalist opposition, the Republicans were able to put forward the notion of a no-party state. Monroe toured New England in the summer of 1817 and later saw to the publication of *A Narrative of a Tour . . . by James Monroe . . .* (Philadelphia, 1818). Implicitly, the Yankees' acclaim showed the death of Federalism. Monroe's reelection in 1820 with no formal opposition and only one negative electoral vote seemed to confirm it. However the disputed election of 1824 started new political divisions.

Although Andrew Jackson of Tennessee received the highest number of electoral and popular votes, he did not have the necessary majority. The House of Representatives elected the runner-up, John Quincy Adams. Immediately Jackson's supporters protested what they saw as a stolen election. During the four years of his presidency, Adams was subjected to negative propaganda, stressing the supposed corruption and undemocratic character of his election. His presumed aristocratic background was emphasized in pamphlets such as *Who Shall Be President? The Hero of New Orleans [Jackson], or John the Second, of the House of Braintree. . . ?* (Boston, 1828). Jackson supporters also penned many pamphlets in common language and illustrated with crude woodcuts calling for direct election by the popular vote. In the months leading up to the election of 1828, when Jackson challenged Adams, pamphlets (and broadsides) accused both candidates of the grossest personal acts in addition to their supposed public crimes. Pamphlets helped bring forth a voter turnout estimated at near 80 percent, electing Jackson. In the succeeding years, the role of pamphlets would wax and wane depending on the needs of the parties.

*See also Adams, John Quincy; Anti-Federalists; Constitutional Convention; Democratic Republicans; Election of 1800; Election of 1824; Election of 1828; Federalist Papers; Federalist Party; Federalists; Jackson, Andrew; Paine, Thomas; Press, The.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bailyn, Bernard, ed. *Pamphlets of the American Revolution, 1750–1776*. 2 vols. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965.
- Cornell, Saul. *The Other Founders: Anti-Federalism and the Dissenting Tradition in America, 1788–1828*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Davidson, Philip. *Propaganda and the American Revolution, 1763–1783*. New York: Norton, 1973.
- Ferling, John E. *Adams vs. Jefferson: The Tumultuous Election of 1800*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Jensen, Merrill, ed. *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution*. Vols. 1–10, 13–20. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1976–2004.
- Kerber, Linda K. *Federalist in Dissent: Imagery and Ideology in Jeffersonian America*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1970.
- Remini, Robert F. *The Election of Andrew Jackson*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1963; Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1980.
- Storing, Herbert J., ed. *The Complete Anti-Federalist*. 7 vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.
- Waldstreicher, David. *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Robert F. Jones

#### Political Parties

The emergence of political parties in the United States in the 1790s was anything but preordained. The nation had risen from a colonial structure fearful and mistrustful of formal institutions of political power. James Madison's famous *Federalist No. 10* (1787) was an indictment of political parties, or "factions," and his sentiment was shared by all major political figures of the day, regardless of ideological predisposition, from Thomas Jefferson to George Washington and John Adams, and even to Alexander Hamilton. The common belief was that parties produced political divisiveness and a general distrust in government, elements that had no place in a free society, especially a nascent one struggling to survive in a world of Great Powers.

At the time of the Constitutional Convention of 1787, these early American leaders believed that the source of good government lay in the creation of sound formal institutions. Specifically, a national Constitution, with explicit powers being granted to legislative, executive, and judicial authorities, along with clear checks and balances, was key. Hard lessons had been learned under the Articles of Confederation, with the national government given little meaningful authority over state governments, a sce-

nario that hindered the collection of taxes, the payment of the postwar debt, and the stability of the nation's defenses, all of which threatened the viability of the great experiment in American democracy. The founders believed that the new federal system, with its allocation of greater authority to the national government, would be sufficient to generate sound and stable policy and produce the sort of good government that was preferred by all.

#### **INSTABILITY IN THE FIRST CONGRESS**

Unfortunately, this optimistic view was not to be realized. Upon the convening of the First Congress under the new Constitution in 1789, it became clear that legislative policymaking was anything but stable. Decision making was extremely difficult, as legislative initiatives waxed and waned because of significant instability in voting. Put simply, the nature of policy proposals could be altered easily by the inclusion of amendments, which would change either narrowly or broadly the general thrust of the legislation. This substantive alteration of proposals would then reshape the respective coalitions in support or opposition. Thus, a bill might appear close to passage at one moment; however, after its provisions were altered with an amendment, it would then be defeated. Moreover, decisions themselves were reversible; that is, some bills were in fact passed but were subsequently revisited, altered, and then defeated. Thus, instability reigned in the legislative process. The only way that stable policies were produced was via "vote trades," whereby coalitions would trade support (and votes) across policy areas and agree that eventual decisions were in fact final (and thus not to be revisited). One such case was the famous Jefferson dinner party of 1790, to which Jefferson invited Madison and Hamilton to discuss and finalize a vote trade on the location of the nation's capital and a federal assumption of state debts incurred during and after the Revolution. Yet vote trades were a highly inefficient way of conducting legislative business, since a significant amount of time and effort was needed to negotiate deals on a case-by-case basis.

Underlying the instability in the First Congress was a growing ideological rift on the primary issue dimension that had structured legislative debate and voting, namely the preferred size and scope of the new federal government. While most major political leaders in the early 1790s had been Federalists in the prior decade, supporting stronger national institutions than those under the Articles, differences in perspective existed, and these differences grew over time. Two coalitions subsequently formed, one

around the views of Madison and Jefferson and the other around the views of Hamilton and Adams. The Madison-Jefferson coalition held that the apportionment of authority between the federal and state governments under the Constitution struck the right balance, believing that the increase in centralization was necessary but also that the rights and authority of individual states should remain predominant. The Hamilton-Adams coalition felt the Constitution did not go far enough in centralizing power at the national level, believing that an activist federal government was necessary to build and protect a burgeoning nation. The Hamilton-Adams coalition possessed a majority in the First Congress, but it was unable to realize its policy goals. Whenever a pro-federal majority was close to passing a legislative proposal, members of the Madison-Jefferson coalition tacked on an amendment, adding a local or regional dimension, that upset the fragile majority coalition. Assumption of state debt, which eventually became part of the "dinner party" vote trade, was one such case where the Hamilton-Adams coalition was thwarted. This pattern played itself out across the first session of the First Congress, generating constant instability and frustrating the will of the profederal majority.

#### **THE FIRST PARTY SYSTEM**

Eventually, Hamilton devised a plan to overcome the antifederal resistance. His strategy was to adopt a set of informal mechanisms that together would eventually form the structural basis of a political party. At the time, however, Hamilton had no grand scheme of party development in mind; rather, he acted pragmatically in hopes of achieving the more modest goal of organizing the profederal majority into a consistent voting bloc. If this could be accomplished, Hamilton believed, a consistent stream of legislative victories would follow. His strategy took two forms. First, he set up an informal caucus system so that members of the profederal group could come together, discuss strategies, and learn the benefits of coordinating their behavior. The caucus message was that if they organized and acted collectively, they would win more often. Second, Hamilton established floor leaders in both chambers of Congress to further institutionalize the organization. Their role was to prevent the opposition from introducing sectionally based amendments to split his profederal majority, as well as to serve as proto-whips, keeping members of the coalition informed as to goals and strategies and assuring that they would act in concert. By the second session of the First Congress, his plan was in full swing, and by the third

session, the benefits were clear. Specifically, Hamilton pushed through a set of financial measures—a system of taxation, a mint, and a national bank—that expanded the federal system. The first two measures were adopted rather easily, but the bank bill encountered significant opposition. Nevertheless, Hamilton's pro-federal majority hung together, staved off amendments, and passed the bill. Organization had led to stability, and stability had yielded legislative victories.

The success of Hamilton's coalition became abundantly clear to Madison and Jefferson, and by the Second Congress (1791–1793) they had begun to organize an opposition. Moreover, clear labels began to be used to define the individual coalitions, with Hamilton's group adopting the "Federalist" label and Madison and Jefferson's group taking on the "Republican" (or "Democratic Republican") label. Madison, who had once eschewed political parties, now framed them as democratic devices, egalitarian in nature, that could be used for achieving a greater good. More clearly, he framed his Republicans as the "people's alternative" to the more aristocratic Federalists. Parties, to Madison, were now an essential part of the American experience, crucial to giving diverse groups an equal voice in the political process.

Thus, by the Third Congress (1793–1795), a political party system was in full bloom, specifically an *institutional* party system. That is, a party-in-Congress had developed, with other national features such as a mechanism for presidential nominations (through congressional party caucuses). The other aspects of a modern party system—a party-in-elections, with clear partisan campaigns and mass party identification and linkages, and a party-in-government, with organized and integrated party-based units at the local, state, and national levels—were still decades from developing fully. Still, by the mid-1790s, the beginnings of such aspects were present, such as the emergence of party press organs, the use of party labels in electoral politics, and the rise of party organizations at the national level (like the New York–Virginia alliance).

For the remainder of the 1790s, the partisan schism between the Federalists and Republicans increased steadily. Events such as Jay's Treaty (1794), the Alien and Sedition Acts (1798), and the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions (1798) continued to firm up partisan voting blocs in the Fourth (1795–1797), Fifth (1797–1799), and Sixth (1799–1801) Congresses. In terms of majority control, the Federalists reigned supreme for the first dozen years of the federal system, except for losing the House of Representa-

tives briefly to the Republicans in the Fourth Congress. This Federalist domination changed in 1800 and 1801 as Jefferson was elected president (after an electoral stalemate and a thirty-six-ballot election in the lame-duck Sixth House) and the Republicans swept the elections to the Seventh Congress. The Federalists would continue to vie with the Republicans throughout the first decade of the nineteenth century, but their influence would wane substantially. The Federalists' electoral strength was in the Northeast, a section that became less influential politically as the nation's population grew and shifted toward the West and South, which were heavily Republican areas. The reapportionment after the 1800 census captured these population trends as the size of the House increased by nearly one-third, with the seat additions occurring almost entirely outside of the Northeast. Nevertheless, the Federalists maintained their organization and continued to serve as the major opposition party to the Republicans through the mid-1810s.

The ending of the Federalist–Republican system, or the First Party System, can be traced to events surrounding the War of 1812 (1812–1815). This second war with Britain was initiated by the War Hawks, a new group of nationalistic Republicans from the West led by House Speaker Henry Clay. The Federalists, on the other hand, with their historic ties to the British, operated as the antiwar party during this period. As such, they actually saw their numbers in Congress and state legislatures increase substantially, thanks to the growing antiwar sentiment in the nation and an uncertain political-economic environment. In December 1814 and January 1815, the Federalists met in Hartford, Connecticut, and denounced the Madison administration and the war with Great Britain. Unfortunately, the Hartford Convention was ill timed, as General Andrew Jackson won the Battle of New Orleans in January 1815, turning the tide of public sentiment toward the war. Very quickly, the Federalist Party was framed as the anti-American Party, as stories of near-treasonous events at Hartford, such as (unfounded) claims of secession proceedings, were reported in the Republican press. The Federalist organization, which had been relatively weak for more than a decade, could not overcome these accusations and slowly disappeared as a viable national party.

#### **AN UNSTABLE ONE-PARTY ERA**

Shortly after his election to the presidency in 1816, James Monroe predicted that the country was entering a new period, an Era of Good Feeling. His belief

was that political battles would cease and that cooperation and concession would be the rule, since the Republicans would be operating as the sole national party. Monroe's prediction proved to be inaccurate, however, as this period of one-party rule was anything but amicable. With the Federalists no longer operating as a serious national party, the Republicans lacked a clear foil against which to organize and coordinate. As a result, regional and sectional issues were placed above national issues, leading to rifts within the Republican coalition. In particular, younger Republicans from the West, many of the War Hawk mentality, championed expansionism and a more activist national government (ironically echoing sentiments expressed by the Federalists), putting them at odds with older Republicans from the South, who supported the traditional party positions of states' rights and limited federal power. Congressional voting during this period was highly unstable, stemming from the lack of party discipline, the constant influx of sectional issues, and the general fluidity of members' policy positions. Indeed, the years between 1816 and 1824 have been called the most unstable period in congressional history, with voting patterns often bordering on chaotic.

In time, groups of these Republicans began coalescing around individuals who would become candidates for the presidency in 1824: John Quincy Adams, the secretary of state; William Crawford, the secretary of the Treasury; Henry Clay, the Speaker of the House; and Andrew Jackson, the war hero and U.S. senator from Tennessee. While Crawford would eventually receive the presidential nomination of the congressional caucus in 1823, this mattered little by that time. That is, the caucus nomination had been criticized as undemocratic for more than a decade, leading the other three potential candidates to reject it as politically definitive. Rather, they turned to "the people" for their nominations, as the Tennessee legislature nominated Jackson, the Kentucky legislature nominated Clay, and various groups in New England nominated Adams. As a result, the lead-up to the presidential election of 1824 was significant in opening up the political process, establishing fresh connections between citizens and candidates, and encouraging new and greater participation throughout the nation.

In the end, the presidential election of 1824 was thrown into the House of Representatives, as no candidate received a majority of electoral college votes. The House ballot was held in February 1825, and John Quincy Adams won a bare majority on the first ballot. Adams's winning coalition combined states

loyal to him with states loyal to Henry Clay (who had finished fourth in the popular canvas and thus was excluded from the House ballot). In short order, charges of a "corrupt bargain" between Adams and Clay were reported in the press, made all the more compelling when Adams tapped Clay as his secretary of state. In reality, Adams and Clay were quite close ideologically, leading to a natural (and rational) joining of forces. Moreover, most of the conspiracy charges were manufactured and distributed by Jackson's cronies, with an eye toward the presidential election of 1828. Between 1824 and 1828, the Republican Party would split into Adams and Jackson wings, as Jackson's coalition began building the nation's first mass party organization. Jackson would go on to win the presidential election of 1828, and the Adams-Clay wing of the party would lead the anti-Jackson opposition for the next decade. By the late 1830s, the large group of nominal Republicans would finally split into two mass parties, the Democrats (the former Jackson wing) and the Whigs (the former Adams-Clay wing), and form the Second Party System.

*See also Articles of Confederation; Congress; Constitutional Convention; Democratic Republicans; Election of 1800; Election of 1824; Election of 1828; Era of Good Feeling; Federalist Party; Hartford Convention; Madison, James; Monroe, James.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aldrich, John H. *Why Parties?: The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Dangerfield, George. *The Era of Good Feelings*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1952.
- Dunn, Susan. *Jefferson's Second Revolution: The Election of 1800 and the Triumph of Republicanism*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.
- Elkins, Stanley, and Eric McKittrick. *The Age of Federalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Hoadley, John F. *Origins of American Political Parties, 1789–1803*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986.
- Jenkins, Jeffery A., and Brian R. Sala. "The Spatial Theory of Voting and the Presidential Election of 1824." *American Journal of Political Science* 42 (1998): 1157–1179.
- Livermore, Shaw. *The Twilight of Federalism: The Disintegration of the Federalist Party, 1815–1830*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1962.
- Martis, Kenneth C. *The Historical Atlas of Political Parties in the United States Congress, 1789–1989*. New York: Macmillan, 1989.

Poole, Keith T., and Howard Rosenthal. *Congress: A Political-Economic History of Roll Call Voting*. N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1997.

*Jeffery A. Jenkins*

### **Political Parties and the Press**

While it became common in the late century to complain about the news media inserting itself into the political process rather than just observing it, this complaint would have been nonsensical in the early American Republic. From the 1790s through the Civil War and after, the press was in the thick of politics, not just influencing the party system through its coverage habits, but acting as a basic working component of that system, directly accountable for its outcomes. To a very large degree, party politics in this period was newspaper based.

#### **THE PRESS'S INSTITUTIONAL ROLE: FILLING THE PARTY SYSTEM'S GAPS**

One reason for this is obvious: party politics requires communication with the electorate, and newspapers and other products of the printing press were the most significant means available technologically in this period. Another reason may be less obvious: the uneven development of the antebellum party system. In one sense, nineteenth-century political parties were far more popular than today's models—voter turnouts were huge, campaign events were a major form of popular entertainment, and people identified with their parties to the point of regularly naming children after presidents, Speakers of the House, and even failed candidates. On a more concrete level, the antebellum parties were almost nonexistent, despite the fact that they competed fiercely in every town, county, and state. Parties were not legally recognized by government, meaning there were no voter registrations, official ballots, national party offices, or formal party leaders in Congress. The parties possessed no permanent institutional structures, to say nothing of the large office buildings, permanent staffs, and wads of money that they acquired later. Formal party institutions like national conventions and committees were late innovations. National, state, and local campaign committees might be formed for a particular campaign, but these tended to go dormant or disappear once the campaign was over and so were unable to shape the party's response to events as they unfolded between elections. Partly because of their institutional insubstantiality, antebellum parties came, went, and radically transformed themselves with alarming frequency.

Newspapers filled the party system's many gaps, providing a fabric that held the parties together between elections and conventions, connected voters and activists to the larger party, and linked the different political levels and geographic regions of the country. Outside of election time, the party organizations themselves consisted of little more than the citizens, politicians, and newspapers that supported them. In this situation, the local party newspapers were the only corporeal or institutional form that the parties had in many communities. A subscription to a partisan newspaper, or regular readership of one in a tavern or reading room, was the only real form of party membership that existed in this age long before voter registration. Newspaper offices often served as the unofficial clubhouses and reading rooms of local parties, and newspaper columns were the major source of party doctrine and strategy for activists and voters alike. No politician, party, or faction believed that they could accomplish anything without a newspaper, and the first sign of a factional split in a party was usually the founding of a new newspaper. Similar observations could be made not just about parties, but about political associations of all kinds, including religious groups, moral reform movements, ethnic communities, and even the Cherokee Nation. Thus, one should think of the early political parties and the political press as not just intimately associated, but fused together as constituent elements of the same system.

The use of newspapers to accomplish political ends had roots in America going as far back as the 1730s, but the press gained its reputation for tremendous political efficacy during the American Revolution. The leading Revolutionaries firmly believed that newspapers were a crucial tool in their efforts to build opposition to the British in the 1760s and 1770s. After the war, the press was crucial in the selling of the new Constitution to the nation in 1787 and 1788. The pro-Constitution newspaper articles by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay became famous as the Federalist Papers. The early Congresses wrote the founders' reliance on newspapers into national policy when they created favorable postage rates for newspapers, arranged to pay certain newspapers to reprint the laws of the United States, and codified the long-standing custom of allowing newspaper printers to exchange newspapers with each other through the mail without charge. This latter practice allowed a host of small weekly newspapers, each with a circulation from a few hundred to a few thousand, to form together a kind of national network. Each printer needed to supply relatively little original material himself, but

anything he did originate had a potentially large audience extending far beyond his local area. When newspapers began to identify with the Democratic Republicans or Federalists, what was in essence a subsidized national system of political communication sprang into being, with each party, and often each faction within each party, eventually gaining outlets in almost all significant places.

#### THE ORIGINS OF THE PARTY PRESS: THE 1790s

Though the founders set in place many of the policies that made it possible, they certainly did not intend to create a system of partisan journalism. (In fact, they were opposed to political parties in general.) They knew, as George Mason's Virginia Declaration of Rights put it, that "the freedom of the press is one of the greatest bulwarks of liberty," but the particulars of how such a bulwark should function were hazy or nonexistent. John Adams, Samuel Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, and others had made heavy and often sensationalistic use of the press in the movement for independence from Great Britain. Yet despite their experience rousing the rabble with newspapers and pamphlets, the founders do not seem to have envisioned agitprop as the future of the American press.

Instead, Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton and his "aegis," President George Washington, began their government under the new Constitution in 1789 with the assumption that all they needed to do regarding newspapers was provide the people with basic information about the government's activities such as laws that had been passed and a presidential speech or two. Thus, it seemed more than enough when Boston businessman John Feno showed up in the national capital and started the *Gazette of the United States*, a would-be national newspaper intended to "endear the general government to the people" by printing documents and congressional proceedings, along with letters, essays, and even poetry hailing President Washington and Vice President John Adams as gods among men.

Anyone who remembered the vicious newspaper wars of the Revolution, the kind that still occasionally broke out in local politics, might have predicted that the U.S. political press would not remain so gauzy and one-sided. When fundamental disagreements broke out among the leading members of the cabinet, it was only natural that the combatants reached for journalistic weapons. Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson became convinced that Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton was leading the administration in a dangerously pro-British and an-

tidemocratic direction. Jefferson, however, could not lead the opposition himself and still remain within the administration or retain his status as a respectable statesman. He needed a surrogate, so he and James Madison helped create a newspaper, Philip Freneau's *National Gazette*, to lead the public charge against Hamilton's policies. It was in the *National Gazette*'s pages that the idea of an opposition political party was first floated; when exposed as the *National Gazette*'s sponsor and confronted by President Washington, Jefferson claimed that Freneau's paper had "saved our constitution" from Hamilton.

The *National Gazette*, which folded in 1793, set a precedent that would be followed again and again in the following century as politicians and parties looked to newspapers as their primary public champions in the bruising battles that followed the Jefferson-Hamilton split. The Philadelphia *Aurora*, founded by Benjamin Franklin Bache, grandson of Benjamin Franklin, took over as the leading Jeffersonian paper and around it developed a loose national network of local newspapers that spread the opposition movement's ideas around the country by copying from each other. The Adams administration tried to crush this network with the Alien and Sedition Acts in 1798, but the attempt backfired. So many printers, politicians, and citizens were outraged by this blatant attempt to destroy press freedom for political gain that the Jeffersonian newspaper network got even bigger, despite the fact that all the most prominent opposition papers were hit and numerous editors jailed or ruined.

Unlike the media of the late-twentieth- and early-twenty-first centuries, early American newspapers usually did not claim to be "fair and balanced," especially after the Alien and Sedition Acts. Firmly believing that their political beliefs were right and the other party's was wrong, editors refused to run their newspapers as though those differences did not matter: the press was too powerful a medium to allow evil ideas to pass through it unchallenged. The New York *American Citizen*, one of the new papers that appeared in the wake of the Sedition Act, editorialized that it could not be impartial in the battle between Adams's Federalists and Jefferson's Republicans: "If by impartiality, it is intended to convey an idea of equal attachment to aristocracy as to republicanism, then this paper rejects an impartiality so ruinous to the best interests of mankind."

#### NEWSPAPERS AND POLITICS AFTER 1800

Jefferson's victory in the election of 1800, by some measures the first peaceful transfer of power be-

tween ideologically opposed parties in world history, was a watershed in the growth of press-based politics. People at the time were deeply impressed with what the Republican press network was able to accomplish, often flatly attributing to the newspapers not only Jefferson's victory, but also some kind of deeper democratic awakening of the people to the defense and exercise of their rights. "Had it not been for the patriotic exertions . . . of Republican Papers," declared the Trenton *True American*, "the People would have indulged their love of peace and quiet, until the yoke of tyranny would have been insidiously fixed on their necks." From 1800 on, it was more or less accepted that no serious political movement or candidacy could afford to be without a newspaper network like Jefferson's. Without newspapers, a group of politicians or activists were nothing but "uninfluential atoms," one of Aaron Burr's supporters wrote, with "no rallying point" or visible public presence.

As valuable as newspaper networks were, financing them was always a problem, since the basic purpose of seriously partisan newspapers was building political support rather than making money. Party supporters were urged to buy subscriptions (the main way that most newspapers were sold), but this was rarely enough to keep outlets going in every small town. The difference was made up by politicizing the process of printing government documents. There were no public printing agencies, so the work was contracted out—often at generous rates—by party officeholders to allied newspaper publishers.

After the election of 1800, the first business of any party, faction, candidate, or movement was to establish newspapers or recruit existing ones. For instance, when the New York City mayor DeWitt Clinton sought control of New York state politics (with designs on the presidency), he raised \$27,000 to start Clintonian newspapers all over the state. Martin Van Buren's Bucktail faction eventually won the state back, partly through assiduous efforts to develop a Bucktail newspaper network. Within a few years, the Bucktails had forty-nine journals in their camp.

In the chaotic race to succeed President James Monroe in 1824, all five major hopefuls banked on newspaper support. Secretary of War John C. Calhoun had an "understanding" with the *Washington Republican*, while Secretary of State John Quincy Adams looked to the *National Journal*. Secretary of the Treasury William Crawford had the *Washington Gazette* in his camp, in addition to several of the most widely read papers in other regions, including the New York *National Advocate* and Thomas Ritchie's

*Richmond Enquirer*, the "national" newspaper of the South. Speaker of the House Henry Clay tried to start his own Washington paper but failed, relying instead on a network of papers back home in the Ohio Valley and the partial support of the *National Intelligencer*, the major organ of the Jefferson and Madison administrations.

#### A MEDIA-MADE PRESIDENT

If there was ever a media-made president, it had to be Andrew Jackson. A popular biography and song ("The Hunters of Kentucky") about his war exploits first brought Jackson to prominence, and Pennsylvania newspaper editors John McFarland and Stephen Simpson invented Jackson as a serious presidential candidate in 1823. When Adams won the election of 1824 over Jackson through an alleged corrupt bargain in Congress, Jackson supporters mounted a newspaper campaign that surpassed even what had been done for Jefferson. Thomas Ritchie's *Enquirer* threw in its support, and a new Jackson journal, the *United States Telegraph*, appeared in Washington. By 1828 every major city and town had a Jacksonian paper, and many new journals appeared, even in obscure places like Easton, Pennsylvania, and Vevay, Indiana, especially for the campaign.

Jackson's presidency marked a major turning point in the history of media politics. Understanding exactly the role that newspaper editors played in his campaigns, Jackson publicly expressed his gratitude to the newspapers that supported him by appointing at least seventy journalists to federal offices and allowing several key editors to play crucial roles in his administration. Among the leading members of Jackson's Kitchen Cabinet, the group of unofficial advisers that some historians have called the first White House staff, were three newspaper editors, including Kentucky editor Amos Kendall, who wrote many of Jackson's speeches and later became postmaster general, and Francis Preston Blair, a Kentuckian brought in to edit a new administration paper, the *Washington Globe*, when the *Telegraph*'s loyalty came into question. Blair became one of nineteenth-century Washington's preeminent political figures, spanning decades and administrations much like the lawyer-lobbyist-fixers of the twentieth century.

After Jackson, more and more newspapers became involved in each succeeding campaign, and more and more editors in each succeeding administration, with similar trends occurring in most states. By the 1830s, journalists were starting to run for office in their own right. Hundreds would serve in Con-

gress, and thousands more in positions from postmaster and state legislator to the highest posts in the land. This convergence of parties and the press was most evident between the turn of the nineteenth century and the Civil War, but it remained strong in many rural locations until the twentieth century.

Though always remaining close, the media-politics relationship nevertheless changed a great deal over that period. Like everything else in American life, newspaper politics was severely affected by the industrial and corporate revolution that began during the 1830s and 1840s and reached its peak at the turn of the twentieth century. Vast amounts of money flowed into the political system as campaigning expanded and businessmen sought the myriad benefits that government had to offer. Banks, real estate speculators, and transportation companies (especially railroads) led the way, seeking land grants, financial aid, lenient laws, and favorable decisions on their interests.

The new campaign money flowed especially into the newspaper business. It became increasingly common for local party leaders to publish special newspapers that were wholly devoted to politics and existed only for the duration of the campaign, typically from the early summer to November of a presidential election year. The practice began in 1828 with a few pro- and anti-Jackson papers, including *Truth's Advocate and Monthly Anti-Jackson Expositor*, which spread the tale of Jackson's allegedly bigamous marriage that the president believed killed his wife. The trend exploded during the infamous "Log Cabin Campaign" of 1840, when the new Whig Party, armed with generous funds from the business interests that tended to favor it over the Democrats, created nearly one hundred campaign newspapers across the country as part of their effort to give their candidate, Virginia-born aristocrat William Henry Harrison, the image of a hard-drinking, hard-fighting frontier Indian fighter like Andrew Jackson.

#### THE MYTH OF THE PENNY PRESS

Despite their focus on news reporting, the new mass-circulation papers that emerged in the 1830s—the so-called penny press—were just as partisan as the party journals, and often much more so because their financial independence from party politics relieved their publishers of any real accountability for their editorial policies. These new journals were sold on the street rather than only by subscription, at a much lower price point that allowed sales of hundreds of thousands copies. Print runs of this magnitude were made possible only by new steam-driven

presses. Outrageous political rhetoric became one more way to entertain readers and boost circulation, and the political independence that penny press lords like James Gordon Bennett of the *New York Herald* preened themselves over often amounted only to the ability to support violently a president or policy one week and then turn around and bash it just as hard the next. The New York penny press also spawned a crop of millionaire celebrity editors who were considerably better known than most of the high-ranking political officeholders of the day. Horace Greeley of the *New York Tribune*, a printer, U.S. representative, and presidential candidate as well as the country's most influential publisher, is the best remembered of these celebrity editors.

The new mass-circulation papers bragged that they had opened up newspaper reading to the masses for the first time and made the press a greater force for political and cultural democracy than ever before. But there was one important way in which this was not true at all: the role of money. Local weekly newspapers were relatively cheap and easy to start; with a one-room shop and some basic equipment, a lone printer and one or two boy apprentices could manage it, and start-up costs could stay in three figures, within reach of an ordinary workman who saved a little money or borrowed from local politicians. The local partisan press thus could be an avenue for relatively ordinary young men to pursue their political beliefs and ambitions. Mass-circulation newspapers, on the other hand, required millions of dollars to start, and that meant banks, investors, and a fundamentally profit-oriented mentality. Though the press was still the only means that the government and politicians had to communicate with the mass of voters, at the highest levels this political role was no longer its reason for being. Grassroots democracy probably suffered as a result.

*See also Alien and Sedition Acts; Democratic Republicans; Federalist Papers; Federalists; Newspapers; Printers.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alexander, John K. *The Selling of the Constitutional Convention: A History of News Coverage*. Madison, Wis.: Madison House, 1990.
- Bailyn, Bernard, and John B. Hench, eds. *The Press and the American Revolution*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1981.
- Baldasty, Gerald J. *The Commercialization of News in the Nineteenth Century*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992.

- Cole, Donald B. *A Jackson Man: Amos Kendall and the Rise of American Democracy*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004.
- Davidson, Philip. *Propaganda and the American Revolution, 1763–1783*. New York: Norton, 1973.
- Humphrey, Carol Sue. *The Press of the Young Republic, 1783–1833*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1996.
- John, Richard R. *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995.
- Knudson, Jerry W. "Political Journalism in the Age of Jefferson." *Journalism History* 1(1974): 20–23.
- Leary, Lewis. *That Rascal Freneau: A Study in Literary Failure*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1941.
- Leonard, Thomas C. *The Power of the Press: The Birth of American Political Reporting*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- . *News for All: America's Coming-of-Age with the Press*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Miles, William, comp. *The People's Voice: An Annotated Bibliography of American Presidential Campaign Newspapers, 1828–1984*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1987.
- Nerone, John. "The Mythology of the Penny Press." *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 4 (1987): 376–422.
- Pasley, Jeffrey L. *"The Tyranny of Printers": Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001.
- . "1800 as a Revolution in Political Culture: Newspapers, Celebrations, Democratization, and Voting in the Early Republic." In *The Revolution of 1800: Democracy, Race, and the New Republic*. Edited by James Horn, Jan Ellen Lewis, and Peter S. Onuf. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002.
- Phillips, Kim Tousley. *William Duane, Radical Journalist in the Age of Jefferson*. New York: Garland, 1989.
- Schlesinger, Arthur M. *Prelude to Independence: The Newspaper War on Britain, 1764–1776*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1980.
- Schudson, Michael. *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers*. New York: Basic Books, 1978.
- Sloan, William David. "'Purse and Pen': Party-Press Relationships, 1789–1816." *American Journalism* 6 (1989): 103–127.
- Smith, Culver H. *The Press, Politics, and Patronage: The American Government's Use of Newspapers, 1789–1875*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1977.
- Smith, Elbert B. *Francis Preston Blair*. New York: Free Press, 1980.
- Smith, James Morton. *Freedom's Fetters: The Alien and Sedition Laws and American Civil Liberties*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1956.
- Stewart, Donald H. *The Opposition Press of the Federalist Period*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1969.
- Tagg, James D. *Benjamin Franklin Bache and the Philadelphia "Aurora"*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991.

Jeffrey L. Pasley

## Political Patronage

Political patronage was an ageless institution, well developed even in the American colonies' earliest years. The British crown routinely appointed court favorites and family to positions of place, power, and emolument. Lord Cornbury, the cross-dressing cousin of Queen Anne in the early eighteenth century, was appointed royal governor of New York, a way for the politically embarrassed monarch to put an ocean between herself and a source of scandalous behavior.

## PLACEMEN IN THE COLONIAL ERA

It was a commonplace occurrence by the time of the American Revolution for "placemen" to be appointed to lucrative positions to further political ends. A notorious example, but not an isolated one, was the designation in 1765 of Andrew Oliver as Massachusetts Bay's collector of the new and despised stamp tax. He was named to this post of vast potential profit by Governor Thomas Hutchinson; Oliver was his brother-in-law and a key figure in the Bay Colony's "Court" interest, a designation for Massachusetts's political elite.

When one of the earliest Revolutionary-era crowds reacted to the stamp tax by burning Oliver's house to the ground and then torched Governor Hutchinson's when he reacted by calling out the militia, the events stood as a symbol of many things, one of them being the mob's reaction to entrenched political power rewarding those close to it with lucrative patronage. The Revolution, and then the ensuing U.S. Constitution, which completed the establishment of the new nation, did not end this species of maintaining political privilege through high appointive office. By 1789, in fact, patronage was already a way of life in establishing a new governing network under the just-implemented Constitution. Alexander Hamilton, as secretary of the Treasury and the leader of the Federalist Party, brilliantly adapted the old patronage system to the workings of a self-governing Republic dependent on popular support. The new two-party system inaugurated in the 1790s would include party patronage as an important foundation of political control, regardless of which party was in power. This system operated in the states individually as well as in the federal government. The 1790s, then, saw the new incarnation of an old system, one that would endure for a century.

### AFTER THE REVOLUTION

President George Washington was implicitly a supporter of Hamilton's Federalist Party patronage initiatives, and the second president, John Adams, was overtly complicit. Over five hundred party men found their way into federal offices in the respective states in the 1790s, and dozens more held official positions in Philadelphia, the nation's first capital. Both the U.S. Customs Service (1789) and the first Internal Revenue Service (1791) were homes to hundreds of party operatives. As the newly inaugurated President John Adams said in 1797, "if the officers of government will not support it, who will?" The appointees were politically active Federalists, members of the elite, and often veterans of the Continental Army. They worked in their home port cities for Customs and in smaller towns and villages in the backcountry for Internal Revenue in all states.

**Postmasters.** The most overtly political placeholders were postmasters. The number of weekly newspapers multiplied from less than one hundred in 1789 to more than eight hundred by 1800, a response to the needs of both emerging parties. The Federalists and the Jeffersonian Republicans both lined up printers in the states to establish gazettes overtly aligned with party. The Federalists had the upper hand initially, so perhaps fifty Hamiltonian printers were made postmasters. Party support of partisan newspapers was tangible. Under federal laws, for example, printer-postmasters could frank (send free of postal charge) their papers to subscribers each week, and post offices in print shops created built-in custom—in the form of those who picked up their newspapers weekly—by acting as booksellers and stationers as well as printers.

The nationally renowned printer and publisher, Isaiah Thomas, editor of the Worcester, Massachusetts, *Spy*, was a case in point. His printing establishment was made a federal post office in 1789. Already a local Federalist Party figure, he was able to expand his publishing business, and from his shop he issued a stream of Federalist-oriented publications. The business also trained journeymen printers who apprenticed with Thomas and went on to found party newspapers of their own in various towns in the Northeast; four of them were rewarded in turn with postmasterships to help them as they began their careers.

**The Jeffersonian sweep.** In 1801 the newly elected president, Thomas Jefferson, having turned the Federalists out of office, needed no prodding to both remove entrenched Federalists from the civil service and replace them with Republican Party men in their

stead. Despite Jefferson's inaugural moderation ("We are all Republicans; we are all Federalists") he displaced scores of opponents in the federal establishment and filled the posts with his own party supporters. President Jefferson even took political patronage a giant step further, unhinging the judiciary and transforming the federal bench at all levels from entirely Federalist-oriented to a slightly more Jeffersonian character. He started with John Adams's last-minute ("midnight") appointees to the new U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals sitting in the several states. The new president was able to get away with the removals of judges appointed for life because the Federalist-dominated U.S. Supreme Court under Chief Justice John Marshall felt it lacked the political clout to oppose Jefferson.

Jefferson also swept the Customs Service clean of Federalists, and did the same with the Internal Revenue Service and the Post Office. He even removed one of the nation's most skilled and experienced diplomats, John Quincy Adams, from federal service. Jefferson brought political patronage to a new level of both sophistication and scope. The Jeffersonian Republicans' "Virginia Dynasty," which ruled for the next quarter century into the Age of Jackson, firmly maintained its principle of using federal office for party purposes. Needless to say, the states, cities, and even small communities across America did the same. Jacksonian Democratic Party men at the end of the 1820s may have coined the term "spoils system," conferring on institutionalized political patronage a new national visibility, but they did not invent the party-oriented use of jobs as political rewards.

*See also Democratic Republicans; Federalist Party; Post Office; Presidency, The: John Adams; Presidency, The: Thomas Jefferson.*

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Prince, Carl. *The Federalists and the Origins of the U.S. Civil Service*. New York: New York University Press, 1978.
- Prince, Carl E., and Mollie Keller. *The U.S. Customs Service: A Bicentennial History*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Customs Service, 1989.
- White, Leonard Dupee. *The Federalists: A Study in Administrative History*. New York: Macmillan, 1948. Reprint, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978.

Carl E. Prince

### **Political Thought**

American political thought during the era of the Revolution and early Republic was provincial and derivative. No major theoretical works were produced in this period, with the possible and problematic exception of *The Federalist Papers*, newspaper essays by "Publius" (Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay) designed to influence the outcome of the debate over New York's ratification of the federal Constitution. An enormous amount of political writing flowed from American presses, largely in the short, polemical, ad hoc form of newspaper essays and broadsides, and much less frequently as more sustained arguments in pamphlets or books (and these often appeared originally in newspapers). Because this writing was intended to shape public opinion and promote political and military mobilization, it rarely challenged the conventional wisdom or "common sense" of the people. Even when American writers such as Thomas Paine or Thomas Jefferson pushed for radical action, they invoked "self-evident" truths. The Revolutionaries' conceit was that they were bridging the yawning gap between progressive public opinion—codified in the great treatises of Enlightenment political science—and the benighted institutions and practices of a corrupt old regime. Their success depended on exaggerating the people's wisdom—and on suppressing and disguising their own originality.

Yet the prevailing view that the Revolutionaries were conservative, practical-minded statesmen is misleading. As Americans justified the break with Britain, constituted new polities on the basis of popular consent, and sought to perfect a federal system that would serve as a peace plan for their state-republics, they developed a new political science that would have a profound impact on thought and practice throughout the West. That provincial Anglo-Americans should derive so many of their ideas from European sources generally and British sources particularly is hardly surprising. The novelty and significance of their contributions to political thought and practice pivoted on that provincialism: in re-conceptualizing relations between center and periphery, metropolis and province, the European world and the world beyond Europe, Revolutionary Americans precociously addressed the fundamental problems of modern politics. Rejecting traditional monarchical, hierarchical, and corporatist conceptions of authority, they developed a new conception of popular sovereignty and national self-determination. Revolting against metropolitan despotism, they linked the defense of provincial liberties—the traditional

bastion of entrenched aristocratic privilege—with the radical expansion of popular political participation. Freed from the shackles of imperial rule and the constraints of mercantilism, they devoted their best and most original thinking to interstate relations, within and beyond their new republican empire.

### **METROPOLITAN INFLUENCES**

The major source of political thought for pre-Revolutionary Americans was the British constitutional tradition. Anglo-Americans basked in the reflected glory of a constitution that secured the rule of law by separation of powers and limitations on executive prerogative. But their favorite British writers, oppositionist critics of ministerial corruption, taught that a free people must always be vigilant in defense of their liberties. The tension between the oppositionists' self-consciously "classical republican" conception of citizenship and modern political realities was particularly acute on the provincial periphery of the British Empire. As the imperial crisis deepened, Americans discovered that they had no effective voice or influence in the British government: because the empire had no true "constitution," American subjects of George III were powerless to secure their rights. Patriots thus seized on the radical writings of John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon (who published a series of letters, signed only "Cato," in a London newspaper), Lord Bolingbroke (Henry St. John), and other "real Whigs" who suggested that the ultimate source of legitimate authority was in the "people" themselves. Real Whigs warned that the "sovereignty" of king-in-parliament jeopardized traditional British liberties. American patriots took real Whig logic to another level, arguing that royal and parliamentary efforts to reform imperial administration would subvert colonial "constitutions" that secured the rights of their respective "peoples" to liberty, property, and self-government. A great debate over the constitution of the empire as a whole thus gave rise to corporate constitutional claims in the separate colonies, and this is where the Americans diverged from even their most sympathetic metropolitan friends. British radicals (unsuccessfully) pushed for parliamentary reform, seeking to make the national legislature more representative and responsive—and never questioning the unity of the British nation. American radicals moved in the opposite direction, distinguishing the sovereign people—or peoples—from their governments and securing the corporate integrity of distinct state-republics.

Americans remained indebted to the English common law tradition after independence, but could

draw little practical inspiration from British constitutionalism. The very idea that a constitution could be written (and revised) was itself a bold departure from the British constitutional tradition. At best, the idealized misrepresentation of the British constitution in the works of opposition writers and Enlightenment savants such as Montesquieu (Charles de Secondat)—whose *Spirit of the Laws* (1748) exaggerated the separation of powers—offered a set of general principles that could guide the work of American constitution writers. The most influential body of political and constitutional theory for the Revolutionaries came out of the Scottish Enlightenment. In addition to the seminal work of the great English theorist John Locke, whose *Second Treatise on Government* (1689–1690) was the classic statement of “liberal” social contract theory, the Revolutionaries built on the continental natural jurisprudence of Hugo Grotius and Samuel Pufendorf, Frances Hutcheson, Lord Kames (Henry Home), David Hume, Adam Smith, and other Scottish moral philosophers. These theorists provided a broad theoretical and historical framework for the formation of new political societies on the western side of the Atlantic.

The Scots shared the Americans’ provincial perspective, and their experience since incorporation in the United Kingdom (1707) showed how enterprising people on the periphery could prosper in an expanding Atlantic economy. Unlike the Scots, the Americans would not be incorporated in a greater Britain (though Adam Smith urged such a union in his *Wealth of Nations* [1776]). But they would find Scottish Enlightenment ideas about human nature, political economy, and historical progress congenial. Dependent on a vigorous foreign trade for their very existence, Americans eagerly embraced the idea that commercial exchange and the resulting progress of politeness offered a new template for social and political relations grounded in reciprocity and consent. The Americans’ political and constitutional experiments depended on the demystification—and destruction—of traditional, organic, and hierarchical conceptions of legitimate authority. The Enlightenment generally, and Scots theorists particularly, helped eager American readers clear away the conceptual rubbish and locate the American Revolution in the broader context of the history of civilization. The Scots’ conception of progress through time was critical for provincial Americans who sought to overcome the traditional liabilities of their remote peripheral position, far from metropolitan centers of civility and authority.

Smith and other Scottish writers argued that history was marked by progress through four successive stages of development, from primitive societies of hunters and gatherers, to pastoral, agricultural, and advanced commercial societies. Movement across the Atlantic brought civilized Europeans into contact with savage Native Americans, still living under primitive conditions. Enlightened students of natural history such as the Frenchman Charles LeClerc, Comte du Buffon, concluded that the persistence of New World savagery—and the alleged “degeneracy” of Creole (people of European descent born in the West Indies or Spanish America) populations—indicated that the American environment could not sustain advanced civilization. Mobilizing empirical data on the size of animals to refute the degeneracy thesis, Jefferson’s *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1787) offered a much more optimistic reading. If provincial American civilization had not yet reached the metropolitan standard, the future prospects for a fertile and bountiful New World were boundless. Revolutionaries contrasted this potential with the obstacles to further progress in Europe, where corrupt and avaricious regimes and vast disparities in wealth and privilege stifled enterprise. If America’s native peoples represented the human race’s primitive, yet still uncorrupted past, the continent’s infinite bounty augured a brilliant future: there was land enough, Jefferson claimed in his First Inaugural Address, for the “thousandth to the thousandth generation.”

Enlightenment writers enabled provincial Americans to locate their new societies at the cutting edge of history and so overcome their distance from the centers of political and cultural authority. Commentators on the law of nations provided a more concrete set of guidelines for claiming an independent place in the world. In 1776 Europe constituted the civilized world, and distant and dependent colonies could participate in that world only through membership in European empires. But law of nations writers such as the Swiss Emerich de Vattel, whose *Law of Nations or the Principles of Natural Law Applied . . . to the Affairs of Nations* (1758) was the most influential treatise, showed how legitimate governments, acting on behalf of their respective nations or peoples, could gain recognition from other governments, negotiate alliances, and promote the rule of law for an expanding society of nations. The Revolutionaries’ first great challenge was to destroy monarchical authority and constitute new republican regimes. But leaving the British Empire did not mean turning away from the European world; to the contrary, in claiming a “separate and equal station” among “the powers of the earth” (to quote the Declaration of Indepen-

dence) the new nation would move closer to civilized Europe.

#### AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONS

The most enduring American contribution to the history of political thought grew out of constitution writing in the Revolutionary years. Controversy over the provisions of state constitutions and over procedures for implementing them raised and resolved fundamental questions of political legitimacy in the new American republics. The Massachusetts Constitution of 1780, drafted by John Adams, provided the template for subsequent charters: specially chosen delegates, meeting in convention, drafted a document that was submitted to the people (organized within their respective towns) for their approval. The genius of this approach—dictated by the failure of a previous effort to ratify a state constitution in 1778—was to implicate the people in each stage of the process while clearly distinguishing constitution writing from ordinary legislation. In the great treatises in the social contract tradition, the “state of nature” was merely notional, a time out of mind when society was first formed: for all practical purposes, the existence of the “people” thus constituted could be taken for granted. But the dissolution of monarchical rule in America threatened anarchy and disorder, compelling Americans to form new polities on the basis of explicit consent. Paine and other Enlightened republicans claimed that “society” was natural and spontaneous and that the elimination of a corrupt imperial government would clear the way for self-government. Such bold pronouncements could not allay fundamental anxieties about the Revolutionary assault on legitimate authority, nor did they explain precisely how the “people” would govern themselves or define exactly who the people were (as separatist new state movements in Vermont and elsewhere made painfully clear). The state constitutions resolved these dilemmas by a combination of transparency and mystification: on one hand, constitution writing became a kind of spectacle as the people observed themselves enacting their new republican regimes; on the other, in a mystifying circularity, constitutions constituted the very peoples who enacted the constitutional spectacle by specifying state boundaries and defining civic communities.

State constitution writers followed more familiar scripts in organizing new governments. John Adams provided an influential primer for constitutionalists in his *Thoughts on Government* (1776), recommending bicameral legislatures and the functional separation and balance of governmental powers.

Authors of new state constitutions invoked the precepts of Enlightenment political science as they elaborated the relationship between citizens, their legislative representatives, and executive authority. The first great American treatise on politics, Adams's massive *Defense of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America* (1786–1787), located the state constitutions within the long European constitutional tradition, implicitly downplaying the radicalism of the Revolutionary assumption of authority. Adams's compendium of historical sources, leavened by his astute, often mordant commentary on human nature, won him few readers, but it did capture the practical, even antitheoretical spirit of American constitutional statecraft.

The state constitutions' chief novelty was their very existence as written documents, subject to the people's ratification and amendment. By making this consent foundational, the new republican regimes replaced the traditional subject, who owed lifelong allegiance to his sovereign in exchange for protection, by a new kind of active, consenting citizen who, with his fellow citizens, was himself the source of legitimate authority and who retained the right to move from one country to another. In a famous letter to James Madison (6 September 1789), Jefferson drew the logical conclusion, that “the earth belongs to the living” and that each generation was like “an independent nation” with respect to others, preceding and succeeding. In other words, every generation—that is, every people, bounded in time as well as space—should draft its own constitution. The tension between Adams's conception of constitutional continuity and Jefferson's bold articulation of popular sovereignty—and constitutional discontinuity—provided the framework for the subsequent development of American political thought.

State constitution writers drew on colonial experience as well as Enlightenment political science. The state charters in turn provided the delegates who convened in Philadelphia in the summer of 1787 with models for a new federal Constitution. But establishing “a more perfect union” required the framers to meet new challenges. If the demands of collective security required a more “energetic” central government, the separate state-republics sought guarantees of their respective rights and interests. The sorry history of Congress under the Articles of Confederation suggested that a weak alliance would ultimately collapse into an anarchic system of sovereign states, thus Europeanizing American politics. But most Americans were equally wary of the opposite extreme, the consolidation of authority—and the

destruction of the states—in a new American version of British imperial despotism or “universal monarchy.” During the ratification debates, Federalist supporters of the new regime celebrated the framers’ “miraculous” achievement in avoiding these disastrous extremes. American federalism represented a breakthrough in the history of political civilization, a radical improvement on the European balance of power that guaranteed peace among the states by substituting appeals to law for appeals to arms and by promoting the development of harmonious, interdependent interests. The authors of *The Federalist Papers* offered the most comprehensive analysis of the new regime, asserting that this “compound republic” (*Federalist* 51) system met the highest standards of constitutionalism, as developed in the state charters, while best securing the fundamental interests of the states. But anti-Federalists, fearful of encroachments on states’ rights and individual liberties, were skeptical. When the new government was initiated in 1789, their skepticism took the form of a vigilant strict constructionism: the Constitution might be as “perfect” as its advocates had claimed, but it would remain so only if the administration scrupulously observed the letter and spirit of limited constitutional government.

## UNION

Federalism constituted the boldest departure in Revolutionary American political thought and practice. The new federal Union enabled Americans to combine the advantages of responsive, local, decentralized government with the concentration of power in a central government that could keep the counterrevolutionary great powers of the Old World at bay. Montesquieu had argued that a virtuous republican government could only survive in a small polity. American Federalists countered that the republican principle was equally applicable to a *community* of republics, and that, as Jefferson claimed in his Second Inaugural Address, there was no limit to “the extent to which the federative principle may operate effectively.” According to the most enthusiastic Revolutionaries, the Americans’ new federal regime, with republican governments at every level, offered a model world order. Thus in 1799 Joel Barlow, a political ally and confidant of Jefferson, urged the European states to follow the American (and French) example by establishing republican regimes and creating a federal union that might appropriately “assume the name of the United States of Europe.” Such hopes for the political regeneration of the Old World were hard to sustain in a period of chronic warfare that constantly jeopardized the New

World’s peace and security. But Americans of all political persuasions learned to cherish the Union as a bulwark against foreign threats—and as the only effectual curb on centrifugal tendencies that otherwise threatened to unleash “the dogs of war” at home.

Yet it was by no means clear in practice what the survival of the Union required. On one hand, Alexander Hamilton and fellow Federalist state-builders sought to construct a powerful fiscal-military federal state capable of defending and projecting American interests in an increasingly dangerous, war-torn world. In response, oppositionist Republicans warned that the preponderance of federal power and the threat of coercion against recalcitrant states would weaken the Union. Montesquieu taught that the genius of a large unitary state was necessarily despotic, and his teachings took on the aura of prophecy during the Adams administration’s military mobilization against France in the Quasi-War (1798–1800). Only by fully embracing the republican logic of consent and eschewing conventional conceptions of state power could the American experiment survive and prosper. Only then, as Jefferson asserted in his First Inaugural Address, would the United States fulfill its promise as “the strongest Government on earth.”

Jefferson had a point. His emphasis on the consensual foundations of the Union pointed to the future of modern nation-states with homogenous populations of (legally) equal citizens willing to make the ultimate sacrifice. But his anti-statist, libertarian tendencies also gave a powerful impetus to fearful defenders of provincial rights who, with the anti-Federalist Patrick Henry, “smelled a rat” in all efforts to strengthen the central government. After the embarrassments of the War of 1812, Henry Clay and other reform-minded National Republicans sought to square neo-Hamiltonian prescriptions for energetic federal government with Jeffersonian scruples about concentrated power. In doing so, however, they provoked an orthodox Jeffersonian, or Old Republican, reaction. The irascible agrarian theorist and Virginia politician John Taylor, known as John Taylor of Caroline, produced the most sustained and influential works in the history of American political thought since *The Federalist*, including *An Inquiry into the Principles and Policy and Government of the United States* (1814), *Constitutions Construed* (1820), *Tyranny Unmasked* (1822), and *New Views of the Constitution* (1823).

Over the remaining decades of the antebellum period, American political thinkers focused their energies on narrowly construed and polarizing ques-

tions of constitutional interpretation. The framers' optimistic hopes for the union as a new order for the ages—and as a model world order—gave way to an increasingly bitter debate about the distribution of costs and benefits along sectional and sectoral lines that ultimately led to the Union's destruction.

**See also Adams, John; Anti-Federalists; Articles of Confederation; Constitution, Ratification of; Constitutionalism: Overview; Constitutionalism: American Colonies; Constitutionalism: State Constitution Making; European Influences: Enlightenment Thought; Federalism; Federalist Papers; Federalist Party; Federalists; Founding Fathers; Hamilton, Alexander; Jefferson, Thomas; Madison, James; Natural Rights; Newspapers; Paine, Thomas; Popular Sovereignty; Quasi-War with France.**

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bailyn, Bernard. *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967.
- Banning, Lance. *The Jeffersonian Persuasion: Evolution of a Party Ideology*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978.
- . *The Sacred Fire of Liberty: James Madison and the Founding of the Federal Republic*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995.
- Cooke, Jacob E., ed. *The Federalist*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1961, 1982.
- Edling, Max M. *A Revolution in Favor of Government: Origins of the U.S. Constitution and the Making of the American State*. Oxford, U.K., and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Gilbert, Felix. *To the Farewell Address: Ideas of Early American Foreign Policy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1961.
- Greene, Jack P. *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development in the Extended Polities of the British Empire and the United States, 1607–1788*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986.
- Hendrickson, David C. *Peace Pact: The Lost World of the American Founding*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003.
- Hyneman, Charles S., and Donald S. Lutz, eds. *American Political Writing during the Founding Era, 1760–1805*. 2 vols. Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Press, 1983.
- Jefferson, Thomas. *Writings*. Edited by Merrill D. Peterson. New York: Library of America, 1984.
- Kruman, Marc W. *Between Authority and Liberty: State Constitution Making in Revolutionary America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
- Onuf, Peter. *Jefferson's Empire: The Language of American Nationhood*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000.

Onuf, Peter, and Nicholas Onuf. *Federal Union, Modern World: The Law of Nations in an Age of Revolutions, 1776–1814*. Madison, Wis.: Madison House, 1993.

Stourzh, Gerald. *Benjamin Franklin and American Foreign Policy*, 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969.

———. *Alexander Hamilton and the Idea of Republican Government*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1970.

Wood, Gordon S. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969, 1998.

Peter S. Onuf

---

**PONTIAC'S WAR** While the official dates of Pontiac's War are listed as from 1763 to 1776, the conflict emerged out of a tangled web of economic, cultural, and diplomatic issues that extended as far back as the arrival of the first European settlers and lasted, effectively, until 1813 with the death of Tecumseh. The web was spun from the struggles enfolding English, French, and various Indian groups in North America during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. With the expulsion of the French in the wake of the French and Indian War (1754–1763), the British were faced with a pan-Indian uprising that stretched all the way from the Great Lakes region to South Carolina and that challenged British control of the land between the Mississippi River and the Appalachian Mountains.

While there are numerous long-term causes, the immediate reasons for Pontiac's rebellion lay in English diplomatic blunders as well as in deep-seated Indian religious beliefs. In the aftermath of the French and Indian War, initial efforts by the English to establish a relationship with the former Indian allies of the French failed horribly. Sir Jeffrey Amherst, director of British efforts in North America, allowed British colonists to flood westward, thus violating the policies of the Proclamation of 1763 designed to protect Indian lands. Additionally, Amherst simultaneously scaled back British aid to Native Americans in an effort to cut costs and to make these native groups more self-sufficient.

In the face of ongoing English failings and increasing land pressures, Pontiac—an Ottawa "great chief"—began to agitate against the European presence. Drawing on the anxiety of the people and on the religious teachings of Neolin, a Delaware prophet, Pontiac called for a rejection of all things European in an effort to purify the peoples of North America, claiming that continued reliance on European goods would lead to the destruction of Indian peoples. Pon-

Pontiac's message called not only for the rejection of European goods, but also for the expulsion of the British Americans themselves from North America.

Pontiac's forces met with a great deal of success in the early stages of the conflict, destroying almost every British outpost in the Great Lakes region and forcing British American settlers back across the Appalachian Mountains. The planned opening of Pontiac's War was a surprise attack on Fort Detroit in April of 1763. News of this plan was leaked, however, and the British forces were prepared for Pontiac's arrival. When his initial plan failed, Pontiac laid siege to the fort, destroying outlying farms hoping to starve out Fort Detroit's occupants. Despite an eight-month siege, the British held onto the fort for the duration of the conflict. Although successful in defending Detroit, the English forces did not fare as well throughout the rest of the Great Lakes region. Pontiac's forces managed to capture British forts Sandusky and Presque Isle on Lake Erie, Fort Michilimackinac at the junction of Lake Huron and Lake Michigan and Fort Miamis (present-day Fort Wayne, Indiana). The conflict was extremely brutal on both sides, and it was only through exploiting tribal divisions that the British were able to bring an official end to the conflict in 1766. The terms of the peace settlement, provided Pontiac with amnesty in return for acknowledging the authority of the British government. Following the agreement, Pontiac settled near the Mississippi River, only to be murdered a short time later. Despite the settlement with the various tribes, the British government found itself deep in debt and unable to control its colonists as they continued to clamor for western lands. These pressures, as the British attempted to stand between the Indians and the colonists, contributed significantly to the coming of the American Revolution. Ultimately, the American victory over the British in that war left the Indians with a new adversary—the United States government. In the decades following the Revolution, the experience of the American government echoed that of the British during Pontiac's War as a new pan-Indian uprising led by Tecumseh challenged the authority of the new nation.

*See also American Indians: American Indian Relations, 1763–1815; American Indians: British Policies.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, Fred. *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of the British Empire in North America, 1754–1766*. New York: Knopf, 2000.

Dowd, Gregory Evans. *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745–1815*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.

—. *War under Heaven: Pontiac, the Indian Nations, and the British Empire*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.

Nester, William. "Haughty Conquerors": Amherst and the Great Indian Uprising of 1763. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2000.

White, Richard. *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

David Dzurec

---

**POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY** Few Revolutionary concepts are expressed as succinctly as the principle contained in the first three words of the United States Constitution: "We, the people." By this simple phrasing the federal Constitution institutionalized the "revolution principle" that had rejected the sovereignty of king-in-parliament and replaced it with a structure embodying the sovereignty of the people assembled in conventions and implemented in republican political institutions. Trying to condense his lectures on American law into basic principles, the lawyer and politician James Wilson (1742–1798) found it in popular sovereignty. "Permit me to mention one great principle, the *vital* principle I may well call it, which diffuses animation and vigor through all the others," he explained. "The principle I mean is this, that the supreme or sovereign power resides in the citizens at large." From—or upon—that principle rested the justification for the major achievements of the Revolution: a government that was limited, whose representatives were directly responsible and accountable to their constituents, and in which powers were checked and balanced by function as well as between the states and a central authority.

In its initial practical application in the newly independent states, however, the theory of popular sovereignty had created unanticipated political crises that endangered the survival of republican government. With suffrage expanded, residency required of representatives, and frequent elections, the reformed state legislatures claimed to be a faithful reflection of the popular will. Thus legitimated in their assumption of unmediated political authority based on popular sovereignty, they exercised their powers often erratically and without restraint, threatening property and civil liberties and generating fear for the future of republican government. The cure for the ex-

cesses of popular sovereignty was actually more popular sovereignty, though reconstituted in a federal framework that used the concept as a foundation for changes in the structure of government as revolutionary as anything attempted in 1776. Federalists urging ratification of the Constitution thus rallied behind the maxim, "All power is in the people, and not in the state governments."

In so doing, however, they were not simply redistributing political authority between national and local units, but rather simultaneously enhancing and limiting it at both levels. Vesting all power in the undifferentiated "people" and then shaping political institutions to embody their will constituted the American revolution principle. British government was vested in the king-in-parliament, a structure that embodied the body politic as three distinct "orders," the king, the aristocracy, and the democracy. In a system of "mixed government," each order protected its interest, or estate, against the others. This arrangement did not check power, however, because the actual institutions of government operated without effectual restraint. It was against such a concentration of effectively indivisible sovereign authority as achieved by king-in-parliament that Americans had rebelled, and in place of which they had vainly sought to implement popular sovereignty since 1776.

It was the achievement of the Philadelphia Convention to put this concept into practical form in 1787 and to embody the previously amorphous principle of popular sovereignty in a written structure. Wilson tried to assure doubters that all political authority was limited by what he called the "great truth . . . that in the United States the people retain the supreme power" and reserve the right to restrain or empower government as they see fit. To skeptics who demanded a Bill of Rights, James Madison responded with a proposed declaration that included language "that all power is vested in, and consequently derived from the people." Madison's suggestion was not used, but it had correctly identified the means of putting Revolutionary ideas into practice. Reiterating the American revolution principle that founded all power in all the people, the framers produced a government in which each functional branch of government possessed clearly delimited authority but drew it directly from the sovereignty of the people. The result was government of balanced and limited powers derived from all the people rather than government of mixed social and legal orders possessing ill-defined powers. As "Publius," the pseudonymous author of *The Federalist* explained, the new

American nation was a "compound republic" in which "the power surrendered by the people is first divided between two distinct [state and federal] governments, and then the portion allotted to each subdivided among distinct and separate departments." To each only a portion of the people's sovereignty was allotted, and each was subject to the people. In justifying judicial review, for example, Alexander Hamilton rejected the criticism that it assumed "a superiority of the judicial to the legislative power. It only supposes that the power of the people is superior to both." Popular sovereignty had established fundamental law, which the courts were to interpose to restrain other branches from exceeding the will of the people.

The legitimizing of government as the genuine expression of popular sovereignty, however, subtly but significantly changed American constitutionalism. In his Farewell Address, George Washington lauded a government as resting on popular sovereignty. But he spoke in a political atmosphere of conflict and challenge to many of the actions of his Federalist Party. Washington's words (written for him by Hamilton) testified to the new mantle of popular sovereignty claimed by government in the new Republic—a claim not accepted by all, and even opposed with violence by some. The sovereignty of "the people out of doors," the collective acts of groups deemed mobs by the British but championed as constitutional expressions of the popular will in the 1770s, now lacked the legitimacy of the people as embodied in formal constitutional institutions created under the mantle of popular sovereignty. Washington thus went on to explain that "the constitution which at any time exists till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government." With popular sovereignty ratified and given form in written constitutions, the conflict of power and liberty was transformed into contests over politics, government, and law in the new nation.

*See also Constitutional Law; Constitutionalism: Overview; Federalist Party; Government; Politics: Political Culture; Politics: Political Thought.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Morgan, Edmund S. *Inventing the People: The Rise of Popular Sovereignty in England and America*. New York: Norton, 1988.

Novak, William. *The People's Welfare: Law and Regulation in Nineteenth-Century America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

Wills, Garry. "James Wilson's New Meaning for Sovereignty." In *Conceptual Change and the Constitution*. Edited by Terence Ball and J. G. A. Pocock. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1988.

Wood, Gordon S. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969, 1998.

David Konig

---

**POPULATION** See **Migration and Population Movement.**

---

**PORNOGRAPHY** See **Erotica.**

---

**POST OFFICE** "Among the improvements in the United States, there is, perhaps, no one that has advanced more rapidly, or proved more extensively useful, than that of the transportation of the mail." So wrote a contributor in 1810 to the *Port Folio*, a Philadelphia-based literary magazine. Elaborating on his claim, the essayist credited the Post Office Department with an indispensable role in the creation of a geographically extensive public sphere. "In point of public utility, it holds a rank but little inferior to printing. Copies may be multiplied at the press, but, without this establishment, how limited must be their distribution!"

The essayist's observations highlighted a dimension of public life in the United States during the early Republic that is sometimes overlooked. In the decades following the adoption of the federal Constitution, the United States underwent a communications revolution that had enduring consequences for American public and private life. This revolution was predicated on the elaboration of the long-distance information infrastructure: the postal system, the stagecoach industry, and the periodical press. It was fostered by innovative legislation that included the Copyright Act of 1790, the free press guarantees in the federal and state constitutions, and the federal Land Ordinance of 1785. And it was set in motion by the Post Office Act of 1792, a landmark in American communications policy and one of the most far-

reaching pieces of federal legislation to have been enacted in the half-century following the adoption of the federal Constitution.

#### GROWTH OF THE POST OFFICE

In 1788 the Post Office Department boasted a mere sixty-nine offices, only two more than the sixty-seven offices maintained by the royal postal system in 1765. Most were located in a single seaboard chain on what is today the "Old Post Road," just as they had been prior to the break with the crown. No periodical received a government subsidy and few circulated in the mail. Although postal administrators sometimes permitted printers to trade copies of their newspapers, this practice was merely customary and lacked the force of law. The Post Office Department, as one postal administrator explained in 1788, had been established by Congress "for the purpose of facilitating commercial correspondence," and, as such, had, "properly speaking, no connection with the press."

In the great constitutional debates (1787–1788), few contemporaries regarded the limited character of long-distance communications as a major problem. James Madison articulated the conventional wisdom when, in his *Federalist* essays, he presumed that ordinary Americans would receive the bulk of their information about public affairs when their representatives returned to their home districts to meet constituents face-to-face. In *Federalist 10*, Madison went so far as to hail poor long-distance communications as a safeguard for minority rights. The enormous geographical extent of the country, he conjectured, prevented majoritarian factions from organizing across state boundaries to tyrannize the few.

Madison took for granted the limited facilities for long-distance communications then in existence. At that time, ordinary Americans living far from Philadelphia learned only sporadically about the activities of their congressional delegates. When information did arrive, it often came courtesy of individual delegates, who had the right to transmit or "frank" through the mail an unlimited number of items, making them de facto news brokers for the public.

The only public figure in the 1780s to propose a significant augmentation in the facilities for long-distance communications was the physician Benjamin Rush. To adapt the "principles, morals, and manners of our citizens to our republican form of government," Rush proclaimed in a widely circulated essay published shortly before the Constitutional Convention, it was "absolutely necessary" that the

government circulate "knowledge of every kind . . . through every part of the United States." Rush hailed the Post Office Department as the "true non-electric wire of government" and the "only means" of "conveying light and heat to every individual in the federal commonwealth."

With the passage of the Post Office Act of 1792, Rush's vision acquired a legal imprimatur. To expand access to information on public affairs, Congress admitted every newspaper into the mail at extremely low rates. To ensure that the news was broadcast far and wide, it established an administrative mechanism that guaranteed the rapid extension of the postal network into the hinterland. And to safeguard the sanctity of personal correspondence, it proscribed its surveillance by postal administrators, ending a practice that remained common in Great Britain and France.

No issue proved more contentious than the designation of new post routes. Some wanted to retain this power in the executive, others to shift it to Congress. In the end, proponents of congressional control prevailed. By retaining control, Congress established a legislatively mandated entitlement that was broadly egalitarian and easily adjusted to keep pace with the expansion in the area of settlement. From 1792 onward, popular pressure ensured the expansion of the postal network well in advance of commercial demand. No single piece of legislation did more to create a geographically extensive public sphere.

#### THE PROLIFERATION OF PRINTED MATTER

Government newspaper subsidies gave printers ample reason to increase their supply. By 1794 newspapers made up fully 70 percent of the weight of the mail, while generating a mere 3 percent of postal revenue. By 1832 newspapers accounted for an astonishing 95 percent of the weight of the mail, but only 15 percent of postal revenue. Without this substantial federal subsidy for the press, the United States could not have emerged in the early Republic as the leading publisher of newspapers in the world. Federal postal policy was particularly instrumental in spurring the rise of the rural or "country" press, which had been virtually nonexistent before 1792.

After 1794 magazines enjoyed an analogous subsidy and received a parallel boost. By the 1830s postal patrons enjoyed a wide range of reading matter that ranged from learned essays in the *North American Review* to fashion tips in the *Lady's Book*. Writers of imaginative fiction like Edgar Allan Poe, Catherine Sedgwick, and Nathaniel Hawthorne took

advantage of this new literary venue to invent the modern short story. Though fiction-writers preferred to publish books, the steady influx of British imports reduced their marketability in urban centers, as did the proscription of books from the mail in the hinterland. Not until 1851, after the coming of the railroad, was this ban relaxed.

Federal postal policy also encouraged the proliferation of pamphlets, congressional speeches, and government reports. In any given year, public documents constituted approximately one quarter of all the imprints published in the United States. During presidential campaigns, electioneering tracts made up a substantial fraction of the total weight of the mail.

The only form of literary production that postal policy discouraged was letter-writing. The cost of postage on a single letter, which was customarily paid by the recipient, could easily total 50 cents, a substantial sum at a time when a laborer might make one dollar a day. Prior to the 1830s, the high cost of letter postage troubled few Americans, since correspondents (the vast majority of whom were merchants) were presumed to be able to cover the cost. Personal correspondence, of course, was by no means unknown. As one country curate noted in 1820, "a few days carries a communication with mathematical certainty from one point of the Union to the other. Distance is thus reduced to contiguity; and the ink is scarcely dry, or the wax cold on the paper, before we find in our hands, even at a distance of hundreds of miles, a transcript of our dearest friend's mind." Judging by lists of unclaimed mail that newspapers routinely ran, women posted as many as 20 percent of all the letters in the mail. Yet if an ordinary American received anything in the mail in the period between 1792 and 1840, it was more likely to have been a newspaper than a letter.

Just as postal policy favored certain literary forms, and not others, so too it hastened the creation of a particular kind of informational environment. In 1800 the postal network included 903 offices; in 1810, 2,300; in 1820, 4,500; in 1828, 7,641. The resulting informational environment was more decentralized—and less biased toward major commercial centers—than its counterpart in Great Britain or France. After 1800 the national capital ceased to be a major newspaper-publishing center, a situation inconceivable in Europe. By 1828 the United States had seventy-four post offices for every 100,000 inhabitants, as compared to seventeen in Great Britain and four in France. Even some hinterland congressmen concluded that the postal network was complete. Yet

Congress opted not to improve mail delivery in urban centers, which remained rudimentary, but instead to press for even better stagecoach service in the South and West. To boost the stagecoach industry, Congress encouraged the postmaster general to lavish generous contracts on stagecoach proprietors.

Throughout the early Republic, it remained illegal for any public officer to open personal correspondence. (The only exception was undelivered mail, which could be opened by a special class of postal administrators known as dead-letter clerks.) The prohibition on government surveillance extended, at least initially, to newspapers, pamphlets, and magazines. Had Congress found it possible in 1798 to enlist government functionaries to police the mailbags—a practice common in Europe—it would have had less need to pass a sedition act to check the spread of malicious ideas. Critics of the Alien and Sedition Acts, such as Thomas Jefferson, preferred to leave the regulation of printed matter to the states.

#### THE IMPACT ON TRADE AND PUBLIC LIFE

Nowhere were the implications of the communications revolution more fundamental than in the conduct of American trade. Long before the railroad created a national market for goods, the federal government established a national market for information. To move crops to market, merchants relied on the Post Office Department to transmit orders and even banknotes, all of which went uninsured. The high-speed transmission of market information was such a priority that Congress refused to suspend the transportation of the mail on the Sabbath, or even to permit localities to suspend the opening of the post office on this day, an incursion into local autonomy that troubled many, and that prompted the first large-scale petition effort in American history.

Equally far-reaching were the consequences of the communications revolution for public life. After 1792 the public sphere was no longer limited to the relatively small number of people located close to the seats of power, such as Philadelphia or a New England town; rather, it came to be located in the minds and hearts of millions of people. Party strategists relied on the improved facilities for long-distance communications to build the mass party; Evangelicals established voluntary associations on a nationwide scale. When Madison published his *Federalist* essays in 1788, public opinion had yet to emerge as a major category in political theory. By the time the French political theorist Alexis de Tocqueville visited the United States in 1831, it had become a keystone of the new "science of politics" for a democratic age. As

Tocqueville observed in *Democracy in America* (1835; 1840), "there is no French province in which the inhabitants knew each other as well as do the thirteen million men spread over the extent of the United States." This new, disembodied public sphere was dramatized by painters like John Lewis Krimmel, whose *Village Tavern* (1814) portrayed a crowd awaiting the arrival of the mail at a village post office during the War of 1812.

The principal beneficiaries of this new informational environment were the white men who dominated the electorate. Losers included women, slaves, and free blacks. Discouraged from participating in public affairs, they risked harassment every time they ventured into the post office to pick up their mail. Still, by empowering ordinary white men to join together in countless post offices to discuss public affairs, the federal government had helped establish a national community that a generation of men would fight and die for in the Civil War. Long before the advent of the steam railroad and the electric telegraph, the postal system, the stagecoach industry, and the periodical press had prepared the way for the emergence of the United States, in the twentieth century, as the most powerful media empire in the modern world.

*See also Alien and Sedition Acts; American Character and Identity; Book Trade; Democratization; Federalist Papers; Fiction; Madison, James; Magazines; Newspapers; Nonfiction Prose; Politics; Political Pamphlets; Press, The; Print Culture; Public Opinion; Religious Publishing; Transportation: Roads and Turnpikes; Women; Writers.*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brown, Richard D. *Knowledge Is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700–1865*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Headrick, Daniel R. *When Information Came of Age: Technologies of Knowledge in the Age of Reason and Revolution, 1700–1850*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- John, Richard R. "American Historians and the Concept of the Communications Revolution." In *Information Acumen: The Understanding and Use of Knowledge in Modern Business*. Edited by Lisa Bud-Frierman. London and New York: Routledge, 1994.
- . *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995.
- Kielbowicz, Richard B. *News in the Mail: The Press, Post Office, and Public Information, 1700–1860s*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1989.

Pred, Allan R. *Urban Growth and the Circulation of Information: The United States System of Cities, 1790–1840*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973.

Starr, Paul. *The Creation of the Media: Political Origins of Modern Communications*. New York: Basic Books, 2004.

Tocqueville, Alexis de. *Democracy in America*. 1835, 1840. Edited by J. P. Mayer. Translated by George Lawrence. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1969.

Richard R. John

**POVERTY** Historians have disagreed since the 1960s about the extent of poverty in early America. Social historians have eroded the traditional vision of colonial America as a land of opportunity with grim demographic studies of the widening gap between rich and poor in the eighteenth century and detailed examinations of the lives of ordinary people, indentured servants, and slaves. Late-twentieth-century scholarship has offered a vision of early America in which increasing population decreased the size and viability of landholdings, and promoted impoverished tenancy, especially in the South, as a lifelong state rather than a temporary condition to be corrected by hard work and frugality or moving to the frontier. Ideological conflict among historians is not dissimilar to colonial and early republican ambivalence about economic and political independence, civic responsibility, and the possibility of economic mobility and social advancement for the new country's citizens. The concern of early Americans about the proper shape and character of colonial and early republican society was reflected in debates about the moral character of applicants for poor relief and increasing interest in making distinctions between the poor worthy of support ("worthy" or "deserving" poor) and those who required moral reform as well as public assistance ("vicious" or "unworthy" poor).

When English people first moved to the colonies, the problems of helpless poor citizens, unemployment, and the transient poor moved with them, as did ideas about addressing these difficulties. The colonies modeled their earliest relief practice on the English Poor Laws. Township boards of overseers administered relief, and while relief legislation and administration policies were fairly uniform across counties and within regions, individual communities tended to administer relief on a case-by-case basis, with considerable range in the extent to which they enforced residence and conduct requirements, allowed visitors, and allowed inmates to leave the grounds. In addition to variation between communi-

ties, individual towns and townships sometimes switched from "putting out" paupers individually to boarding them collectively and then back again, depending on how many paupers required support.

#### COLLECTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL APPROACHES

In the collective system all paupers not receiving "outdoor" relief (assistance in cash or goods given to paupers or the relatives caring for them) were boarded in a house rented or purchased by the township. A member of the township board or someone hired for that purpose, usually the individual providing the lowest bid for cost of the paupers' support for the year, administered the almshouse. In exchange for a set sum, the steward or overseer provided all food, clothing, and shelter for the town's paupers for the year. In some cases medical care was contracted for separately. The able-bodied generally worked on the almshouse premises or on the overseer's farm. Amounts to be refunded to the local government should any of the paupers die during the course of the year were agreed upon in advance.

Under the "putting out" system the paupers were assigned individually to private households, preferably to those of relatives or friends; some households boarded two paupers at once. These "putting out" agreements were renegotiated every year, which could result in individual paupers being shifted from household to household. These arrangements existed side-by-side with cash payments to individuals or to their families on a quarterly basis as outdoor relief.

#### GROWING NUMBERS OF POOR

By the mid-eighteenth century, poverty was becoming a matter of increasing public concern: increasing numbers of poor people receiving public assistance in cities were joined by growing numbers of dependent poor in nonurban areas. While private charity offered by individuals and by benevolent and religious organizations continued to grow in the eighteenth century, such aid could not keep pace with the growing number of poor people in need. Worse still from an administrator's perspective, many of the people swelling the relief rolls (and prompting increased poor taxes) were not the traditional "worthy" poor (widows, orphans, the sick, the elderly, the disabled, the insane); instead, they were able-bodied but unemployed. Many of these able-bodied unemployed were members of a growing class of landless men who had failed to inherit or acquire land and were forced to hire themselves out as tenants or unskilled laborers. Because women's ability to own property

and act as independent economic entities was restricted by both custom and law, and because women were primarily responsible for child rearing, women were more vulnerable to destitution than men. Thus, another growing category of applicants for relief was women whose husbands had died or abandoned them and who were unable to secure work or subsist on assistance from friends and relatives. Transients in need presented a growing problem for overseers of the poor in both cities and non-urban communities throughout the second half of the eighteenth century. The care of transients strained existing relief resources, especially in periods of epidemic disease such as the yellow fever that devastated Philadelphia in 1741 and 1793, and ravaged Philadelphia, Boston and New York periodically through the 1790s. The inadequacy of existing social welfare resources, especially in urban areas, prompted the creation of poor relief policies that stressed legal residence as a requirement for receiving relief. Paupers who did not qualify as residents could be warned out of town in rural areas, or transported to their counties of residence in order to make room for qualifying members of the community or destitute immigrants. Conflicts like King William's War (1689–1697), the Seven Years' War (1755–1763), and the American Revolution temporarily slowed high rates of immigration, but produced widows, orphans, and veterans that needed care and contributed to the instability of local economies.

#### **AN INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE**

By the late seventeenth century, cities such as Boston (by 1685) and New York (1730s) began to turn to institutions as a more effective way to care for the growing numbers of urban poor. Communities adopted institution-based relief for two reasons: first, because institutional care could be more easily monitored for efficient administration, and second, because institutions offered a setting within which (ideally) the lives and characters of relief recipients could be shaped according to prevailing ideas of appropriate behavior. The first almshouses were usually houses rented or purchased with money from the poor taxes, and poor people were housed there under the care of an overseer and matron. In many communities (New York City's surrounding counties, for example) these poorhouses coexisted with the older "outdoor" relief system.

Poorhouses were important parts of the political, economic, and social lives of their communities. In addition to aiding the poor, poorhouses served as

employers for many of the working poor who would otherwise have become inmates, conducted business with their neighbors, and were lightning rods for controversies over the expenditure of public funds, the outcome of local elections, responses to epidemics, and other issues of public concern.

By the mid-1830s, larger cities such as Boston, New York, and Philadelphia and the towns and cities in their environs had moved to almshouses as their primary response to the problems of poverty in an economically and socially unstable environment. Almshouses occupied an important place in the imaginations of communities throughout the nineteenth century, and they played an important role in the definition of community identity. As places of refuge and employment, sources of object lessons and the temporary homes of objects of pity, almshouses appeared in paintings amid bucolic rural scenery, were embroidered on children's samplers, and were both praised and vilified in the local press. Visitors conducted personal business with the institutions' overseers, evaluated the standards of care for inmates, observed the expenditure of public funds, and contemplated the fragility of material prosperity.

The shift to institutional care for the poor coincided in much of the country with a shift to institutional care for the insane and the construction of the first state penitentiaries. An institution-based system would remain the standard for poor relief for the rest of the nineteenth century and beyond.

*See also Orphans and Orphanages; Wealth; Widowhood; Work: Indentured Servants; Work: Slave Labor; Work: Unskilled Labor.*

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Alexander, John K. *Render Them Submissive: Responses to Poverty in Philadelphia, 1760–1800*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980.
- Cray, Robert E., Jr. *Paupers and Poor Relief in New York City and Its Rural Environs, 1700–1830*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988.
- Katz, Michael B. *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America*. Rev. ed. New York: Basic Books, 1996.
- Smith, Billy G. *The "Lower Sort": Philadelphia's Laboring People, 1750–1800*. Ithaca, N.Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 1990.
- Smith, Billy G., ed. *Down and Out in Early America*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004.

*Monique Bourque*