

HIDDEN STRIKE:

AMERICAN REVOLUTION



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Version 1.0

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Hidden Strike: American Revolution recreates the struggle between the American colonists and the British forces during the War of Independence. Each side tries to win the war by controlling a majority of regions.

Confronted by overwhelming forces, the colonists will need strategy to defeat the larger British army and navy to gain their Independence. This is a card driven game, where players manage their hand of cards, usually playing just one card a turn to allow them to move tokens representing military forces across the board into key spaces at key times.

The game can be played in five different modes. If you're new to the game we strongly recommend you start with the Co-op or Solitaire mode to familiarize yourself with the basic rules.

SOLITAIRE MODE (1 PLAYER):

This mode offers a regular and a hardcore option, and is a good starting point if you're trying to learn the game. Read *"5.0 Setup (Co-op and solitaire mode)"* on page 5 and *"6.0 Playing the Game"* on page 6.

CO-OP MODE (2-5 PLAYERS)

In this cooperative mode all players share the same objective: take on the role of prominent American colonists in their fight to win Independence from the British. The basic rules described under *"6.0 Playing the Game"* on page 6 covers all the rules for this mode. Everyone wins together, or loses together.

TRAITOR MODE (3-5 PLAYERS)

The inclusion of a possible secret traitor who will try to thwart the Americans' efforts adds a devious twist to the Co-op mode. Review the Traitor rules under *"7.1 Traitor Mode"* on page 8 after reading *"6.0 Playing the Game"* on page 6.

VERSUS MODE (2 PLAYERS):

A head-to-head game in which one player pitches the British forces against the other player's American forces. Review the specific versus rules under *"7.2 Versus Mode"* on page 9, after having read *"6.0 Playing the Game"* on page 6.

MASTERMIND MODE (3-4 PLAYERS):

As one player assumes the role of George III, the Sons of Liberty will have to band together to overcome the British King's formidable forces. See *"7.3 Mastermind Mode"* on page 10 for this mode after having read *"6.0 Playing the Game"* on page 6.

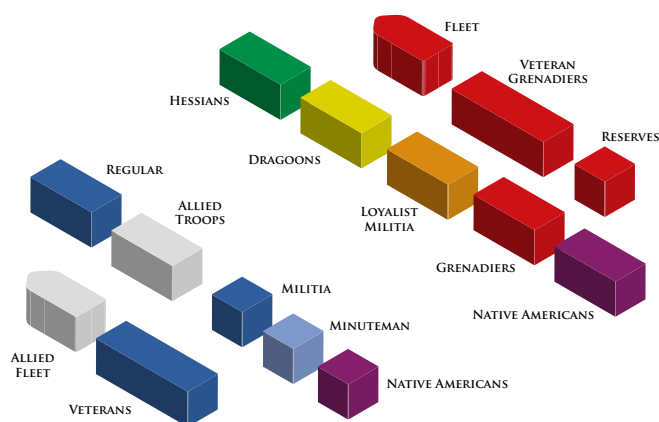
2.0 GAME BOARD

The board represents the six key regions the two sides are fighting over: Canada, New England, Northern Colonies, Mid Atlantic, Tidewater, and Southern Colonies. The goal of the game is to control the majority of these regions by deploying troops into each region's conflict zone.



Each conflict zone is divided into an American half (on the left), and a British half (on the right). American tokens are placed in the left portion of a conflict zone. British tokens are placed on the right. At the bottom left of each conflict zone is a space where the siege token might go. Only one space during a game will have the siege token applied to it.

Each side starts with a pool of local and general forces, represented by colored blocks (hereafter called tokens) of different sizes and colors. These are potential forces that might be deployed into the six conflict zones over the course of the game, if they can be activated.



The tokens used in the game are limited to those placed in the force pools when the game begins, **any extras are spares**. If a deployment is attempted but there is no corresponding piece left, then deployment cannot take effect.

Arrows on the board indicate where forces can potentially be deployed to.

DESIGN NOTE: Having the potential support, and the potential forces is not enough. War is a matter of bringing forces to bear at the right place and the right time. Force pools are the potential troops - troops not yet mobilized, conflict zones are where the war is decided.

THERE ARE SIX DIFFERENT KINDS OF STARTING LOCATIONS FOR TOKENS:

LOCAL FORCE POOLS: Troops stationed in a British (red) or American (blue) *local force pool* are ready to be deployed into their adjacent Conflict Zone.



BRITISH ARMY FORCE POOL: British troops stationed here must first cross the Atlantic and thus may be hindered by blockades enforced by Allied Fleets. (Explained later in "6.5 Allied Fleet Blockade" on page 7)

BRITISH FLEET POOL: British fleets ready to be deployed across the Atlantic are stationed here.

CONTINENTAL ARMY FORCE POOL: American troops stationed here don't have pre-assigned regions but some require an upgrade in order to be deployed (Explained later in "6.6 Promoting Militia and Regulars" on page 7.)

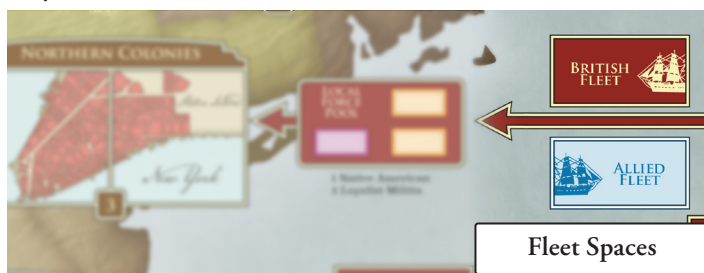
ALLIED ARMY FORCE POOL: These allied troops are ready to fight for the Americans - when activated.

ALLIED FLEET POOL: Allied fleets can be used to create blockades (see "6.5 Allied Fleet Blockade" on page 7). while Allied troops can usually only be deployed in a region with an already deployed Allied Fleet.

THERE ARE ALSO TWO OTHER KINDS OF SPACES ON THE BOARD:

TIEBREAKER SPACE: This is where the red (British) or blue (American) token is placed according to which side currently wins the game if the number of resolved regions are tied. For the British the token is the same as those used for Grenadiers. For the Americans the token is the same as those used for Regulars. By default, the British always win ties, but this can change in some modes.

FLEET SPACES: Aside from its conflict zone, each region also has two fleet spaces, one for the British, and one for the American allies. These spaces are where fleets are placed when they become activated.



3.0 CARDS & ABILITIES

The rhythm of the game is most often: play a card, then move a token from a force pool into one region's conflict zone, then take another card into your hand. Figuring out which cards to play when, so which tokens to move into the right conflict zone at the right time, is the essence of the game.

THERE ARE THREE TYPES OF CARDS IN THE AMERICAN AND BRITISH FORCES DECKS:

- » **TROOP CARDS:** These cards allow you to activate troop tokens in force pools and to deploy them in a conflict zone. Only troops deployed in a region's conflict zone contribute to that region's total.
- » **FLEET CARDS:** These cards allow you to activate Fleets. Fleets do not count towards a region total but have the ability to create or counter blockades.
- » **EVENT CARDS:** These cards do not automatically activate a fleet or troop but instead give you the ability to interact with the tokens on the board in another manner like removing a Grenadier or moving troops around. Most of these cards have a secondary ability to deploy a Minutemen troop instead of activating the Event. Note that the amount of Minutemen available is limited, so using the secondary function too often will exhaust your supply.

AMERICAN AND BRITISH CARDS CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

TROOP TYPE CARD EXAMPLE

Troop Name → **GRENADIERS**

Card Type → **TROOP**

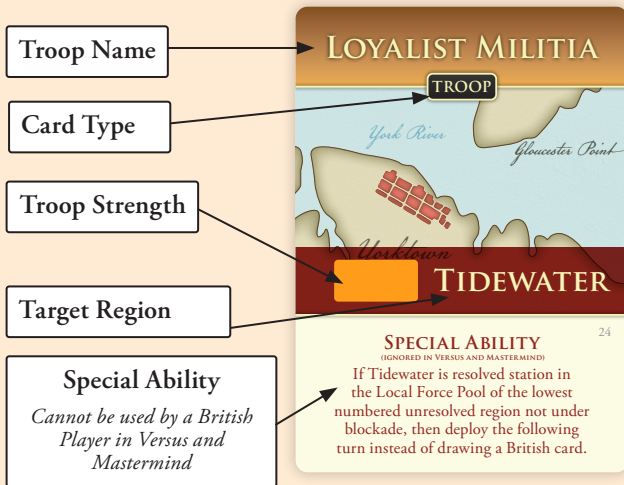
Troop Strength → **26**

Deployment Rules
If applicable → Deploy in the region not under blockade where the British are closest to losing or least ahead by points.

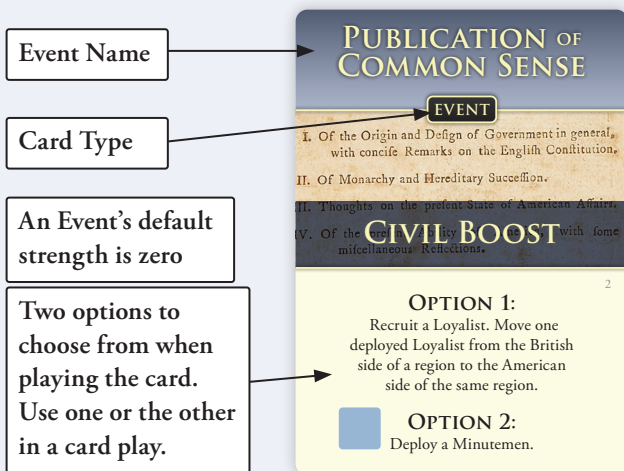
General Abilities
Used in all modes → **GENERAL ABILITY**
If the last unresolved region is under blockade the Grenadiers break through that blockade.

Special Ability
Cannot be used by a British Player in Versus and Mastermind → **SPECIAL ABILITY**
(IGNORED IN VERSUS AND MASTERMIND)
Deploy as Veteran Grenadiers if another Grenadier is already in the target region.

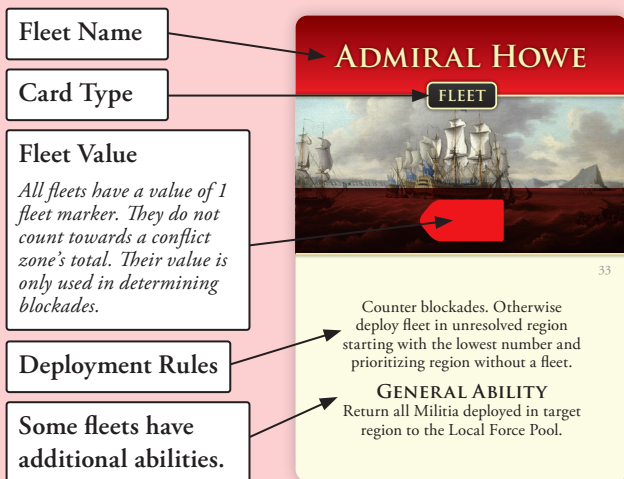
TROOP TYPE CARD EXAMPLE



EVENT TYPE CARD EXAMPLE

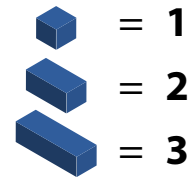


FLEET TYPE CARD EXAMPLE



TROOP STRENGTH (TROOP CARDS ONLY)

The troop's point value i.e. how many points it adds towards a side's total when deployed into a region's conflict zone.



Type		Value	# Needed*
American Tiebreaker		-	1
American Regulars		2	5
American Veteran		3	2
Allied Troops		2	4
Allied Fleet		-	3
Militia		1	10
Minuteman		1	8
Native Americans		1	5
Siege		2	1
British Reserves		1	10
British Tiebreaker		-	1
Grenadiers		2	5
Veteran Grenadiers		3	2
Hessians		2	6
Dragoons		2	5
Loyalist		2	12
Native Americans		2	3
British Fleet		-	6

* Needed for play, extras may be included and should be set aside as spares.

TROOP TYPE (TROOP CARDS ONLY)

The type of troop that can be activated and deployed by playing this card.

3.1 CARD ABILITIES

Some cards have additional 'powers' referred to as abilities. British abilities are divided into General Abilities and Special Abilities. This distinction only applies to the *Versus* and *Mastermind* modes in which Special Abilities are ignored by the British player. In all other modes both function the same way.

- » Abilities always supersede general rules. When in doubt follow the description on the card.
- » Abilities only trigger at the time a card is played.
- » If a card cannot be played (because its target region is resolved or under blockade for example), its ability does not trigger.
- » If an ability cannot be triggered at the time a card is played it is ignored.

Example: The Grenadiers have the ability to be deployed as Veteran Grenadiers if another Grenadier is already present in the same region. If no Veteran Grenadiers token is available at this point their upgrade ability is ignored and they are deployed as regular Grenadiers instead.

- » If several options are listed, you must choose one of them when playing the card.
- » Triggering American card abilities is optional.

Note: In Versus and Mastermind games the British player may similarly ignore a British card ability.

3.2 REGION

If a target region is indicated in the center of the card, the listed troop must be deployed in that region.

For more details on troop and fleet cards, see "8.0 Card Details" on page 12.

3.3 FLEETS

Allied Fleets can create a blockade in a region i.e. prevent troops from the British army force pool from landing in a conflict zone.

Note that British troops stationed in local force pools are not affected by blockades when moving to their associated conflict zone - they are already in the colonies!

British Fleets have the ability to break blockades. See "6.5 Allied Fleet Blockade" on page 7.

Remember that fleets do NOT count towards a region's total.

4.0 WINNING THE GAME

Each side's goal is to win the war by controlling the most regions.

The first side to have **8 POINTS** worth of troops deployed in a region's conflict zone, and to be 2 points clear (i.e. a minimum of **2 POINTS** ahead of the enemy), wins that region. The region is then considered '**RESOLVED**' and remains under control of the winning side for the rest of the game. Indicate this by placing the appropriate control flag card on the region. Troops stationed in a resolved region become inactive and, for the most part, cannot be moved.



THE GAME ENDS WHEN ONE OF THESE CONDITIONS ARE MET:

- » **ALL REGIONS ARE RESOLVED.**
- » **THE BRITISH RUN OUT OF CARDS:** Once the British play their last card the currently active American player gets to finish her turn before the game ends.
- » **THE AMERICANS ALL RUN OUT OF CARDS.**

Note: when an American player is unable to act during her turn (i.e. she's out of cards but other players still have cards to play) in a multiplayer game she must still draw and deploy a British card at the beginning of that turn.

VICTORY AND LOSS CONDITIONS

Once the game ends any unresolved regions count towards the British win total. Whoever controls the most regions at the end of the game wins. By default ties in region total counts go to the British. This means that by default Americans must control 4 regions in order to win.

5.0 SETUP (CO-OP AND SOLITAIRE MODE)

STEP 1: Place all fleets and troops in their corresponding starting positions on the board as indicated in the local, Continental, Allied, and British army force pools.

STEP 2: Put a red (British) token the same size and color of a Grenadier token, on the Tiebreaker space on the board.

STEP 3: Shuffle the British Forces cards and place them facedown next to the board where they can easily be reached by all players. This will be the British draw deck.

STEP 4: Shuffle the American Forces cards and place them facedown next to the board where they can easily be reached by all players. This will be the American draw deck.

STEP 5: In Co-op mode randomly assign one of the following Founding Fathers to each player: George Washington (1), Thomas Jefferson (2), Benjamin Franklin (3), John Hancock (4), Samuel Adams (5). Each player then places their Founding Father card with the traitor side facedown in front of them (The traitor side only comes into play in the Traitor mode). Rotate the card 90 degrees after a 'once per game' ability has been used to indicate that it is exhausted.

In Solitaire Mode, Select Alexander Hamilton.

Note: if you're brave enough you may attempt the hardcore Solitaire version by confronting the British forces without the help of Hamilton (i.e. without his ability).

STEP 6: Each player receives three cards from the top of the American draw deck. These cards constitute players' initial hand and are kept hidden from other players.

6.0 PLAYING THE GAME

This section describes all the rules for playing in Co-op or Solitaire mode. All other modes are an expansion of these modes. The expanded rules for these other modes are listed under "7.0 Other modes of play" on page 8.

6.1 SEQUENCE OF PLAY

The player with the lowest starting number on her Founding Father acts first. The game then proceeds clockwise.

A note on tabletalk: Players may discuss strategies but they may not share which cards they have in their hand or, if applicable, which cards they saw in the American or British draw deck. Example: A player may say "I can help in New England next round", or "Maybe we should focus on the Northern Colonies", but may not say "I can play an Allied Troop in the Northern Colonies on my turn", or "The British are about to deploy a Grenadier."

6.2 DEPLOYING TROOPS AND FLEETS

Troops and Fleets (represented by tokens on the board) are activated and deployed by playing cards. Only once deployed into a region's conflict zone do troops count towards the region's total.

Once activated and deployed, tokens - for the most part - do not move, and they remain in place for the remainder of the game.

You play a card from your hand by placing it *faceup* on the discard deck, then move the associated token. A Militia card, for example, will allow you to move any Militia token in a local force pool into its adjacent conflict zone.

6.3 FLEET DEPLOYMENT

Allied Fleets can be deployed in any unresolved region's fleet space.

British Fleets are deployed into a region's fleet space with the following priorities:

- » If an unresolved region is under blockade they will attempt to unblock it.
- » If no regions are under blockade the British fleet will follow the priority sequence top to bottom on the board (highest priority down, lowest number upwards) skipping a region if a British fleet is already present or if the region is resolved.
- » If British fleets are already present in all unresolved regions, they start doubling up using the same priority sequence.

Example 1: New England is currently under blockade. In this case the Fleet is deployed in New England to counter the blockade.

Example 2: No blockades are present but a British Fleet is already deployed in Canada, and New England is resolved, so a fleet token is played in the next available region, Northern Colonies.

Example 3: Only New England and Southern Colonies are still unresolved. Both already have British Fleets. In this case the next Fleet is played by priority from top to bottom so ends up in New England.

6.4 BRITISH AND AMERICAN PHASES

Each turn is broken down into two phases:

- » **BRITISH PHASE:** British cards are played.
- » **AMERICAN PHASE:** American cards are played, then replenished.

BRITISH PHASE

Each American player starts their turn by acting for the British.

- » Reveal the top card from the British draw deck and deploy the listed troop or fleet following the British deployment rules described below.
- » Place the card faceup on the British discard deck.

BRITISH DEPLOYMENT RULES

When a card mentions deploying a card into a region it always means into a region's conflict zone.

- » Deployment rules listed on a card supersede any of the rules below.
- » If a troop card includes a target region that troop must be deployed in the listed region's conflict zone.
- » No troop or fleet may be deployed into a resolved region (its conflict zone or fleet space).
- » No troops stationed in the British army force pool may be deployed into a region under blockade. Note that troops stationed in a local force pool are not affected by blockades as they are already 'behind' them.
- » If more than one option is available, British cards prioritize from top to bottom on the board (i.e. from the region with the lowest number up).

Example: Grenadiers deploy in the region the British are closest to losing or the least ahead by points. If two or more regions meet this criteria, the region with the lowest number takes precedence.

- » If a British troop cannot be deployed its ability does not trigger.

Example: If a Hessian cannot be deployed because its target region is under blockade or resolved, the card is simply discarded and the Hessian's ability to draw another card is ignored. A second card is not drawn, and the British phase of the turn is over.

- » If a card's ability cannot be fulfilled the ability is ignored.

AMERICAN PHASE

During this phase the American player must take ONE of the following actions unless unable to do so:

- » Play a card from your hand, placing it faceup on the discard pile.
- » Promote a *Militia* or *Regulars* token.
- » Discard 1-2 cards for no effect. *Note that this is a last resort in case you are unable to play any cards from your hand.*

AMERICAN DEPLOYMENT RULES

- » Deployment rules listed on a card supersede any of the rules below.
- » If a troop card includes a target region that troop may only be deployed in the listed region's conflict zone.
- » Troops stationed in a local force pool may only be deployed into that region's conflict zone.

Example: A Militia stationed in the Northern Colonies' local force pool can only be deployed in the Northern Colonies.

- » No troop or fleet may be deployed in a resolved region.
- » No troop or fleet may ever be moved out of a resolved region. The Declaration of Independence is the only exception.

6.5 ALLIED FLEET BLOCKADE

When Allied Fleets (French, Spanish or Dutch) outnumber British Fleets in a region's opposing fleet spaces the whole region is under blockade. The British are then prevented from deploying troops from the British army force pool into that region's conflict zone until they break the blockade by equaling or surpassing the number of Allied Fleets.

Note: British Local Force Pools are not affected by blockades.

6.6 PROMOTING MILITIA AND REGULARS

Instead of playing a card the player may discard 1-2 cards to promote a *Militia* or *Regulars* token.



- » Only *Militia* and *Regulars* deployed in an unresolved region can be promoted (i.e. you cannot promote troops still stationed in a local force pool).
- » Only one troop can be promoted per player turn.
- » Discard 1 card facedown (any effects are not triggered) on the discard pile to promote one *Militia* to a *Regulars*. Swap out the *Militia* token for a *Regulars* token. Return the promoted *Militia* token to the corresponding local force pool.
- » Discard 2 cards facedown (any effects are not triggered) on the discard pile to promote one *Regulars* to a *Veteran*. Swap out the *Regulars* token for a *Veterans* token. Return the promoted *Regulars* token to the Continental army force pool. (*Note: this also includes the Regulars-Canadian Department initially stationed in Canada, and is a great way to make that token available for future Militia promotions.*)
- » Immediately after promoting a *Regulars* to a *Veteran* you may go through the American draw deck and select any one card you want from it. Place this selected card in your hand. Reshuffle the American draw deck and return it to the table facedown.

Note: it is not possible to promote Militia to Veterans in one go. The Militia must first be promoted to Regulars, and in a subsequent turn may be promoted to Veterans.

6.7 DISCARDING CARDS

There may be times when players are short of options and they do not play a card from their hand, and do not discard to promote a token. Players must still do something. In this case they will have to discard at least one card by placing it *facedown* on the discard deck, but could discard 2 if they wish.

As will become apparent, though, the American resources are sparse and will be spread thin over the course of the war, so it quickly becomes dangerous to discard cards too readily. Accordingly, in the Traitor mode discarding cards will be a suspicious move.

6.8 REPLENISHING YOUR HAND

At the end of the American phase the American player must draw back up to 3 cards unless there aren't enough cards left to do so.

7.0 OTHER MODES OF PLAY

This section covers additions and/or variations to Solitaire and Co-op modes to explain the Traitor, Versus, and Mastermind modes. Read "6.0 Playing the Game" on page 6 before reading this section.

7.1 TRAITOR MODE

Like Co-op, but with a possible traitor.

VICTORY AND LOSS CONDITIONS

- » The traitor wins if the British win.
- » Ties are won by Americans if they make a successful accusation and expose the traitor. (see Exposing a Traitor)

SETUP

In addition to the basic setup take the following steps:

STEP 1: Add Benedict Arnold to the pool of available Founding Fathers.

Note on Benedict Arnold's ability: any loyalty card's effect comes into play before the last region is officially resolved, i.e. if you deploy the last card using your special ability and draw the traitor card you immediately become the traitor and lose if the British lose.

STEP 2: Place the extra red British Grenadier token not used on the board in the Tiebreaker spot on the board. This indicates that the British currently win ties.

STEP 3: Assemble a Loyalty Deck.

The loyalty deck is used to determine a traitor. A player who draws the traitor card acts as the traitor by attempting to subvert the plans of the other players – as overtly or covertly as she wishes. Her goal is to end the game with a British victory.

Note: have everyone hold their card for several seconds and not look around the room so the traitor has enough time to read their card without exposing themselves.

IF BENEDICT ARNOLD IS NOT IN PLAY: Select one Loyal card from the Loyalty deck for each player and add a random Traitor card (no players should know which Traitor card from the four possible is in the game). Shuffle the cards, then hand out one card to each player who secretly looks at it, then places it facedown in front of her. Each Traitor card has a different ability. Which ability may come into play if the traitor is exposed will only be known to the player who drew the Traitor card. Return the remaining card to the rest of the loyalty cards without looking at it.

Note: Since one card will be left over it is possible no traitor is in play.

IF BENEDICT ARNOLD IS IN PLAY: Select a number of Loyal cards equal to the number of players +2 (so 7 for a 5 player game for example), then add a random Traitor card. Shuffle the cards and hand one card to each player who secretly looks at it, then places it facedown in front of her. Place the remaining three cards facedown next to the Benedict Arnold player.

DESIGN NOTE: Benedict Arnold was heavily tasked during the war - the raid at Fort Ticonderoga, defending Lake Champlain in 1776 after the withdrawal from Quebec the previous winter, and his exploits at Freeman's Farm as the most high profile instances - which also led to injuries from which he never really recovered. He was also something of a glory hunter - not always so much tasked as self-directed - with a possible death wish. The more Benedict Arnold is tasked the more likely he is to feel unrecognized (and unpaid) and the more likely he is to think he is better off fighting for the British. So don't push him too far or you might not like where things end up.

MAKING AN ACCUSATION

After completing the British phase, a player may make an accusation *instead* of playing an American card.

Place any card from your hand facedown in front of you and point out the player you suspect of being the traitor. If all other players except the accused agree by similarly placing a card from their hand facedown in front of them the accusation becomes formal. The accused player is then forced to reveal her loyalty card by turning it faceup.

If there is no consensus, the accusation is retracted, and players who placed a card facedown return it to their hand and the active player ends her turn by drawing back up.

IF THE ACCUSATION IS NOT RETRACTED, BUT IT IS FALSE (I.E. THE ACCUSED REVEALS A LOYAL CARD) THE FOLLOWING HAPPENS:

All cards placed facedown as part of the accusation are discarded facedown and the player who started the accusation ends her turn by drawing back up. The other players may not draw back up until the end of their turn. After heavily cussing out the other players, the falsely accused player continues to fight on the American side. Players may make another accusation during the following round following the same accusation procedures.

IF THE ACCUSATION IS CORRECT (BE IT ON THE FIRST OR LATER TRIES) THE FOLLOWING HAPPENS:

STEP 1: Players return the cards they placed in front of them to their hands.

STEP 2: The cards of the revealed traitor are shuffled into the American draw deck.

STEP 3: The British Tiebreaker token is changed to the American token indicating that ties now go to the Americans.

STEP 4: The player who started the accusation ends her turn.

STEP 5: The traitor flips her Founding Father card to the traitor side, relishing in her deviousness, and proceeds to fight on the British side. (See "Switching Sides" below.)

Note: If not all the American players (except the player to be accused) have at least 1 card in their hand they cannot make a traitor accusation.

Note: At the start of her turn a traitor may choose to reveal her deviousness by revealing her loyalty card. She then shuffles her cards back into the American draw deck and ends her turn as an American player, ready to start fighting on the British side. When a traitor reveals herself, ties go to the Americans as if they had made a successful accusation (Switch the British Tiebreaker token to the American one).

SWITCHING SIDES

If at the end of the game players are tied in the number of resolved regions, the game is won by the player who controls the Tiebreaker region.

From now on American players skip the British phase during their turn and the traitor draws and deploys the British cards for them instead, following the standard British deployment rules, and the same play, sequence of play, a British card, then an American card, etc.

The revealed traitor may now use the traitor ability listed on her Traitor card.

7.2 VERSUS MODE

Versus mode pitches a British player against an American. We strongly recommend you familiarize yourself with the Co-op or Solitaire mode first before trying this more challenging variation.

The additional rules address the fact that a player is now actively controlling the British forces. They give him more control over how some cards are played and give him access to the Reserve deck. They also give the American player access to a new Founding Father with a new special ability.

VICTORY AND LOSS CONDITIONS

- » Once the game ends, any unresolved regions count towards the player's total who still has at least one card left. *Note that if the British player runs out of cards first the American player acts one last time before the game ends.*
- » Games where there is a tie in the number of resolved regions are won by the player who controls the Tiebreaker region.

SETUP

- STEP 1:** Remove the Siege card from the American deck before shuffling it.
- STEP 2:** Randomly select the Tiebreaker region. Do this by shuffling the British Forces cards, then drawing British cards until drawing one with a listed target region. This becomes the Tiebreaker region. In the event of a draw in the total of won regions overall, the winner of this region will win the game. Place the Siege token in the dedicated siege space of the Tiebreaker region's conflict zone, thus increasing its win requirement to 12 points with 2 points clear and reshuffle the British cards to form the draw deck as usual.
- STEP 3:** The American player selects the John Adams player card, and the British player selects the Lord George Germain player card.
- STEP 4:** Prepare the British Reserve Tokens (British Player). Add the Reserve Force Pool Expansion card by the indicated tab on the right side of the main board. Then place the red Reserve tokens as indicated on the card.
- STEP 5:** Build a British Reserve Deck (British Player). Shuffle the Reserves cards and place them facedown by the Reserve Force Pool Expansion card. The British player may use this deck to convert any card from their hand into a Reserve. See 'Converting British cards into Reserves' below.
- STEP 6:** Each player draws the top three cards from their draw deck and is now ready to fight for control over the colonies.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

The British player acts first.

BRITISH PHASE

The British player acts during this phase.

STEP 1: You must take ONE of these actions:

- » Play a card from your hand.
- » Convert one card into a Reserve. (See below)
- » Discard 1-2 cards for no effect. *Note: this should be a last resort in case you run out of Reserves.*

STEP 2: Draw back up to 3 cards.

CONVERTING BRITISH CARDS INTO RESERVES

Only one card per turn can be converted into a Reserve. Discard one card from your hand to draw the top card from the Reserve deck. Immediately play this card or discard it, then draw back up as usual.

PLAYING A RESERVE CARD

EVENT RESERVE CARDS: These do not move troops but have special abilities that can be used by the British player.

RESERVE CARDS: These are used to deploy Reserve tokens and function like any troop card with the two following restrictions noted on the cards:

DELAYED: If attempting to enter a region under blockade, move the Reserve to the local force pool of that region, then place this card in your hand and end your turn. Play this card at a later turn to move one Reserve from a local force pool into the adjacent conflict zone.

LIMITED RANGE: Move a Reserve from the Reserve Pool into an unresolved region's local force pool OR from a local force pool into a region's conflict zone. Cannot bypass blockades.

These types of troops need two of the same cards to complete their deployment, one to move them to the region's local force pool and another one to deploy them into that region's conflict zone. They DO NOT move automatically from a local force pool into the conflict zone the following turn.

AMERICAN PHASE

The American player acts during this phase.

STEP 1: You must take ONE of these actions:

- » Play a card from your hand.
- » Promote a Militia or Regulars.
- » Discard 1-2 cards for no effect. Note that this is a last resort in case you are unable to play any cards from your hand.

STEP 2: Draw back up to 3 cards.

7.3 MASTERMIND MODE

In this mode 2-3 American players band together as the Sons of Liberty to defeat the British Mastermind. As with the Versus mode we strongly recommend you familiarize yourself with the basic rules of the co-op or solitaire mode first before attempting this variation.

VICTORY AND LOSS CONDITIONS

- » Once the game ends, any unresolved regions count towards the side's total that still has at least one card left. *Note that if the British player runs out of cards first, the American player whose turn is next acts one last time before the game ends.*
- » Games where there is a tie in the number of resolved regions are won by the side who controls the Tiebreaker region.

SETUP

In addition to the basic setup take the following steps:

- STEP 1:** Remove the Siege card from the American deck before shuffling it.
- STEP 2:** Select the Tiebreaker region. Do this by shuffling the British Forces cards, then drawing British cards until one is drawn with a target region. This becomes the Tiebreaker region. Place the Siege token in the dedicated Siege space of the Tiebreaker region's conflict zone thus increasing its win requirement to 12 points with 2 points clear and reshuffle the British cards to form the draw deck as usual.
- STEP 3:** One player selects the George III player card thus assuming the British Mastermind role. The remaining players each take a Sons of Liberty player card. The American player sequence is determined by the lowest number of this card. Then play moves clockwise.
- STEP 4:** Prepare the British Reserve Tokens (British Player). Add the Reserve Force Pool Expansion card by the indicated tab on the right side of the main board. Then place the red Reserve tokens as indicated on the card.
- STEP 5:** Build a British Reserves Deck (British Player). Shuffle the Reserves cards and place them facedown by the Reserve Force Pool Expansion card. The British player may use this deck to convert any card from their hand into a Reserve. See "Converting British cards into Reserves" on page 10.
- STEP 6:** Build a Loyalty deck. Select a random Traitor card and a Loyal card. Have an American player shuffle them and place them near the British draw deck. This loyalty deck will be used to determine if any American troops defect to the British side after the British take a region. (See Abilities listed on George III player card.)
- STEP 7:** The British player draws the top 3 cards from the British draw deck. Each American player receives 3 cards from the top of the American draw deck.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

The British player acts before each American player, thus alternating British and American phases as usual. The sequence is as follows: British player, American player 1, British player, American player 2 etc. until all American players have taken their turn and the round is concluded. This means that the British player will take as many turns during a round as there are American players. At the end of their turn each American player turns their Sons of Liberty card 90 degrees as a visual reminder that they already acted. After a full round is completed all American players reset their Sons of Liberty card and the next round begins.

BRITISH PHASE

The British player acts during this phase.

STEP 1: You must take ONE of these actions:

- » Play a card
- » Convert a card into a Reserve. (see below)
- » Discard 1-2 cards for no effect. *Note: this should be a last resort in case you run out of Reserves.*

STEP 2: Draw back up to 3 cards.

CONVERTING BRITISH CARDS INTO RESERVES

Only one card per turn can be converted into a Reserve. Discard one card from your hand to draw the top card from the Reserve deck. Immediately play this card or discard it, then draw back up as usual.

AMERICAN PHASE

The active American player acts during this phase.

STEP 1: You must take ONE of these actions:

- » Play a card from your hand.
- » Promote a *Militia* or *Regulars*.
- » Discard 1-2 cards for no effect. *Note that this is a last resort in case you are unable to play any cards from your hand.*

STEP 2: Draw back up to 3 cards.

STEP 3: Turn your *Sons of Liberty* card 90 degrees to indicate the end of your turn.

If you're unable to take any of the actions in STEP 1 you lose your turn and it's back to the British player.

8.0 CARD DETAILS

8.1 BRITISH TROOP CARDS

Arrows on the board indicate where forces can potentially be deployed to.

GRENADIERS

STRENGTH: 2

DEPLOYMENT: Deploy in the region not currently under blockade where the British are closest to losing (i.e. where the Americans have the biggest lead by points); if the British aren't losing in any of the regions, deploy in the region where the British are the least ahead by points.

GENERAL ABILITY: If the last unresolved region is under blockade the Grenadiers break through that blockade.

SPECIAL ABILITY: If a Grenadier is already present in the target region any subsequent Grenadiers are deployed as Veteran Grenadiers.

DESIGN NOTE: Grenadiers represent the elite troops of the British. If a large force of Grenadiers accumulates in the same region they become even more formidable.

HESSIANS

STRENGTH: 2

SPECIAL ABILITY: Draw and deploy another British card.

DESIGN NOTE: The 'Hessians' were German mercenary troops (technically auxiliaries serving their prince who was hired by another prince) hired by the British. These troops came from the German states of Hesse-Kassel and Hesse-Hanau, as well as Brunswick, Ansbach-Bayreuth, Anhalt-Zerbst, and Waldeck. They were feared for their ruthlessness.

LOYALIST MILITIA

STRENGTH: 2

SPECIAL ABILITY: If the target region is resolved, station in the local force pool of the region determined by the usual British priority list (starting by the lowest number, bypassing any regions that are resolved or under blockade). Place the card faceup on top of the British draw deck. On the following turn deploy the Loyalist token in the secondary region's conflict zone and discard the card faceup.

Example: The British draw the Loyalist Militia - Northern Colonies card but the Northern Colonies are already resolved. Both Canada and the North Atlantic are still unresolved. Following the default prioritization rules (the lower region number) the Loyalists move to Canada's Local Force Pool this turn, and are then deployed into Canada on the following turn.

Note: If the secondary region is resolved before the British act again, the Loyalist Militia remain in the Local Force Pool, the card is discarded and the British end that turn. This is actually a good strategy to aim for if you can since the British end up losing two turns!

DESIGN NOTE: It's to mischaracterize the American War of Independence, or the Revolution as a whole as a simple matter of the British (tyrannical or not) against the Americans (noble and plucky, or not). Possibly as many as 20% of the colonialists of European descent could be termed 'loyal' to Britain during the war. In many regards we could consider the conflict to be a civil war. (Indeed, from the Iroquois perspective this is certainly so.) Some of the loyalists who were combatants were escaped slaves, who fought in return for their emancipation, not out of a sense of support to the British crown or parliament. In truth, even thinking in terms of clearly distinct 'American' and 'British' sides is to also simplify and mischaracterize the conflict.

DRAGOONS

STRENGTH: 2

SPECIAL ABILITY: If the target region is under blockade or resolved, station in the local force pool of the region determined by the usual British priority list (starting by the lowest number and bypassing any regions that are resolved or under blockade). Place the card faceup on top of the British draw deck. On the following turn deploy the Loyalist in the secondary region and discard the card.

Example: The British draw the Dragoons - Tidewater card but Tidewater is under blockade. The only two unresolved regions not under blockade are Northern Colonies and Southern Colonies. Following the default prioritization rules the Loyalists move to the Northern Colonies' local force pool (the lower region number), and are then deployed in the Northern Colonies' conflict zone on the following turn.

Note: If the secondary region is resolved before the British act again the Dragoons remain in the Local Force Pool, the card is discarded and the British end that turn.

DESIGN NOTE: Dragoons were mounted troops also capable of fighting on foot. They moved faster than infantry, but they still required the Royal Navy to move large distances.

NATIVE AMERICAN CARDS

(Seneca, Mohawk, Shawnee)

STRENGTH: 2

SPECIAL ABILITY: Select one card from your hand and place it at the bottom of the American draw deck. You may not draw back up until the end of your turn.

DESIGN NOTE: Native American warriors specialized in a type of warfare quite unlike conventional European war at the time. They tended to move fast and stealthily, to strike and then melt away in the face of superior and organized forces: ideal for surprising enemies in an ambush.

8.2 AMERICAN TROOP CARDS

Arrows on the board indicate where forces can potentially be deployed to (although there are no arrows for Allied troops and fleets).

ALLIES: FRENCH/SPANISH

STRENGTH: 2

DEPLOYMENT: Can only be deployed in a region with a previously deployed Allied Fleet.

Note: Lafayette has no restriction tied to Allied Fleets, but may only be played in a region where there is a previously deployed Native American token on the American side.

MILITIA

STRENGTH: 1

MILITIA - PAUL REVERE

STRENGTH: 1

ABILITY: If the Militia is deployed in New England force march (move) one deployed American troop up to 2 points from any unresolved region's conflict zone to New England's conflict zone.

MILITIA - CROSSING THE DELAWARE

STRENGTH: 1

ABILITY: If the Militia is deployed in the Northern Colonies force march (move) one deployed American troop up to 2 points from any unresolved region's conflict zone to the Northern Colonies's conflict zone.

MILITIA - RECONCENTRATION

STRENGTH: 1

ABILITY: You may move 1 additional Militia from any local force pool to any adjacent local force pool.

NATIVE AMERICANS CARDS

(Oneida, Pee Dee, Mi'kmaq, Catawba, Stockbridge Mahicans)

STRENGTH: 1

REGULARS - CANADIAN DEPARTMENT

STRENGTH: 2

TARGET REGION: Canada

CULPER RING

STRENGTH: 1 (0)

ABILITY: Choose one of the options below.

OPTION 1: Deploy a Minutemen, then look at, and if desired, reorder the top three cards from the American draw deck.

OPTION 2: Force one American player to reveal their Loyalty card to you. (Only you get to see the card).

Note: The second ability is useful when a traitor is in play and you're trying to gather information. Also note, when it comes to Loyalty Cards table talk is encouraged - but you are under no obligation to tell the truth about what you have seen, and getting other players to believe you might be no small task.

DESIGN NOTE: During the British occupation of New York in 1778 Major Benjamin Tallmadge established a spy ring called the Culper Ring.

SCOUT

STRENGTH: 1 (0)

ABILITY: Look at the top three cards of the British draw deck, then choose one of the options below.

OPTION 1: Rearrange the cards if desired, then deploy a Minutemen.

OPTION 2: Place one of the three cards at the bottom of the British draw deck, then place the remaining two back on top in any order

Note: If the top card of the draw deck is a delayed Loyalist Militia or Dragoons (i.e. the card is faceup to indicate the delayed troop will be deployed in a secondary region on the following turn) treat it as one of the three top cards. Leave it faceup when placing it back on either the top or bottom of the deck.

LIGHT CAVALRY

STRENGTH: 1

ABILITY: Deploy a Minutemen and move (if so desired) one American troop worth up to 2 points from any unresolved region to any other unresolved region.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

STRENGTH: 0 (1)

ABILITY: Choose one of the options below.

OPTION 1 (REENLISTMENT): Force march (move) one deployed American troop worth up to 2 points (or two troops for a maximum of 3 points if *Publication of Common Sense* has already been played) from a resolved region's conflict zone to any unresolved region's conflict zone.

OPTION 2: Deploy a Minutemen.

DESIGN NOTE: One of the effects of the Declaration of Independence was to encourage significant reenlistment in the Continental Army.

PUBLICATION OF COMMON SENSE

STRENGTH: 0 (1)

ABILITY: Choose one of the options below.

OPTION 1 (CIVIL BOOST): Recruit one deployed Loyalist Militia from the British (move the Loyalist token over to the American side in the same region's conflict zone).

OPTION 2: Deploy a Minutemen.

DESIGN NOTE: The publication of Common Sense (written by the English-born Thomas Paine) was an extremely important document that helped provide philosophical underpinnings to the Revolution.

SIEGE

STRENGTH: 2

ABILITY: Increases the number of points needed to win the region where this card is played to **12 points** with 2 points clear. Place the gray siege marker in the siege space in the region under siege.

WOMEN AT WAR

STRENGTH: 0 (1)

ABILITY: Choose one of the options below.

OPTION 1: Promote 2 Militia deployed in the same region.

OPTION 2: Deploy a Minutemen.

DESIGN NOTE: Though officially barred from serving in the army or joining the militia, women contributed to the war effort in crucial ways. "Camp followers" would not only help cook, carry equipment, and tend to the wounded, but there are reports of some of them taking over positions from fallen or wounded soldiers. Others risked their lives by delivering messages over great distances and acting as spies.

SHARPSHOOTER - DANIEL MORGAN REGIMENT

STRENGTH: 0 (1)

ABILITY: Choose one of the options below.

OPTION 1: Discard 1 deployed Grenadier (Remove the token from play i.e. place it somewhere to the side, and not back into its force pool on the board).

OPTION 2: Deploy a minutemen.

DESIGN NOTE: Daniel Morgan's regiment devastated the British ranks - and officers - at the Battle of Freeman's Farm in 1777. The regiment's skill with longer range rifles and capacity for independent command made it lethal against closely packed troops in open ground.

RAID ON FORT TICONDEROGA

STRENGTH: 0

ABILITY: Choose one of the options below.

OPTION 1: Remove one deployed 2 pt. British troop from either Canada, New England, or the Northern Colonies except Native Americans. Place the removed token off the board.

OPTION 2: Deploy a minutemen.

DESIGN NOTE: Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold raided Fort Ticonderoga (in Upstate New York) in May 1775, secured supplies and ammunition and - most significantly - siege artillery. This artillery was dragged to Boston where it helped push the British out of the city. The artillery might also have been useful in Canada or New York.

8.3 BRITISH FLEET CARDS

All British Fleet cards have the ability to counter Allied blockades. Three of them have additional abilities.

BRITISH FLEET - ADMIRAL HOWE

GENERAL ABILITY: When this card is played its presence is intimidating and returns all American controlled Militia in the target region's conflict zone to their local force pool. Move any Militia tokens on the American side including the recruited Loyalist Militia token if applicable to the American local force pool.

DESIGN NOTE: Howe entered the conflict with an impressive resume, having already gained notoriety through his successful naval operations during the War of the Austrian Succession and the Seven Years' War. His ability to intimidate reflects his reputation as a brilliant naval officer, though some suspected him of sympathizing with the colonists.

BRITISH FLEET - ADMIRAL RODNEY

GENERAL ABILITY: When this card is played any Militia deployed in the target region turns into a Minutemen. Replace all deployed Militia in the target region's conflict zone with Minutemen. Place the removed Militia tokens back in the region's local force pool.

DESIGN NOTE: Admiral Rodney became known for breaking the French lines at the Battle of the Saintes (1782), thus taking full advantage of the newly equipped carronades to attack enemy vessels from both sides. The three tiers of powerful short range guns that were quicker to reload forced many French gunners to abandon their posts. So beware Rodney's ability to unnerve your Militia and turn them into simple Minutemen.

BRITISH FLEET - LANDING PARTY

GENERAL ABILITY: Deploy a Grenadier in the target region's conflict zone if British are tied or losing in that region - even if it is under blockade.

8.4 ALLIED FLEETS CARDS

All Allied Fleet cards have the ability to create blockades and allow Allied troops to be deployed in the same region. Comte de Grasse has an additional ability.

ALLIED FLEET - COMTE DE GRASSE

ABILITY: Deploy one Allied Fleet and remove one British fleet in target region.

DESIGN NOTE: DeGrasse, commander of the French fleet, played a decisive part in the Siege of Yorktown, a pivotal point in the Revolutionary War. If timed right, his ability may help you too to turn things around when they look the bleakest.

9.0 GAME COMPONENTS

- 37x British Forces cards
- 37x American Forces cards
- 11x Founding Father cards
- 1x Lord George Germain card
- 1x George III card
- 11x Loyalty cards
- 15x Reserve cards
- 89x Tokens (Needed for play, extras may be included)
- 6x Control Flag cards (double sided)
- 1x Game Board
- 1x Reserve Force Pool Expansion card
- 2x Rulebooks

10.0 CREDITS

GAME SYSTEM: Maurice Suckling & Dorian Richard

GAME DESIGN: Maurice Suckling & Dorian Richard

ART AND LAYOUT: Sean Cooke

PLAYTESTERS

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| » Daniel Manley | » Kyle Ring |
| » Andrew Walsh | » Andy Son |
| » Drew Smith | » Richard Simmons |
| » Michael Csurics | » Duygu |
| » Rachel Strum | » Brian Powers |
| » Duncan Molloy | » Joanne Powers |
| » Daniel Burt | » Noah Massaio |
| » Noah Akinloba | » Michael L. Stultz |
| » Owen Elliff | » Chuck Hughes |
| » Gabriel Gray | » Christopher Alexander |

11.0 EXAMPLE OF PLAY

SOLITAIRE MODE:

I set up the game, finding the Alexander Hamilton Founding Father card with the useful ability of an additional card play in the same turn immediately after resolving a region.

I deal the top 3 cards from the American Forces deck into my hand:

- » A Militia card (without any other abilities).
- » A Culper Ring card.
- » The Canadian Department card.

This makes me think an invasion of Canada could be a possibility, but I'll wait and see.

BRITISH PHASE

I reveal the top of the British forces deck:

Hessians in New England.

I take a green Hessian token from the British army force pool and place it on the right hand side of the New England Conflict Zone. The British are now 2 points up there. Since it's a Hessian that means I draw another card:

- » British Fleet/Admiral Howe.

Since there are no blockades to counter, the fleet goes to the highest priority region (lowest number), which is 1. Canada. Since there are no Militia in Canada, Howe's ability doesn't trigger and no Militia are returned to the local force pool.

AMERICAN PHASE

I decide to play the Culper Ring card - looking for an Allied fleet in the American deck to help me set up an early blockade elsewhere in the colonies. (The Option 2, to look at another player's Loyalty card isn't relevant in the solitaire mode.) I take a Minuteman from the Continental army force pool and deploy it on the left hand side of the New York conflict zone, then look at the top 3 cards of the American forces deck. I see:

- » Native Americans (Mi'kmaq) that can be played in Quebec.
- » Allied troops.
- » A Militia card.

The Allied troops are the least use to me right now. They're 2 points, but I can't play them unless a fleet exists. I put this card to the bottom of the stack of 3 cards, and move the Mi'kmaq to the top. I'm thinking I might launch that invasion of Canada after all.

I draw my hand back up to 3 cards - that Mi'kmaq comes off the top of the deck into my hand.

BRITISH PHASE

The next card from the top of the British deck is revealed: Loyalists in the Southern Colonies.

I take an orange token from the Local Force Pool in the Southern Colonies and move it into the conflict zone.

AMERICAN PHASE

It's on! I play the Mi'kmaq card, and take the purple token from the local force pool next to Canada and deploy that one 1 point in Canada's conflict zone.

I draw a Militia card and end my turn.

BRITISH PHASE

Ah. The next card from the top of the British deck is:

- » Hessians in Canada.

Followed by:

- » British fleet.

With no blockades to counter, and an unopposed British fleet already in the Canada fleet box, it moves to the fleet box in New England.

The Revolution has not got off to a great start.

AMERICAN PHASE

I follow through with my invasion plans and play the Canadian Department card to activate the regular in the Canada local force pool and deploy it in Canada's conflict zone. I'm now winning there 3 to 2. If the next British card is a Grenadier this is where they'll come to try and wipe out my lead.

I draw Allied troops into my hand.

BRITISH PHASE

The next card from the top of the British deck is:

- » Dragoons in New York.

I'm now losing there 1 to 2.

AMERICAN PHASE

I make a big play. I discard the 2 Militia cards in my hand to promote the Regulars in Canada to Veterans. I put the Regulars token in the Continental Army Force Pool (Militia would be returned to the Local Force Pool, but Regulars tokens are always put in the Continental Army Force Pool if they are promoted), and take a Veteran token from the Continental Army Force Pool and place that in Canada. I'm now up 4 to 2.

Because I've promoted Veterans I can now go into the American Forces deck and choose any card. I know exactly what I'm after: the Comte de Grasse fleet.

I take that card, then reshuffle the deck and draw the top card into my hand:

- » Scouts.

I plan to use the Comte de Grasse fleet to remove the British fleet in Canada, and that will also let me use the Allied troops there on my following turn and I'll be at 6 to 2 there. Maybe this Revolution will work after all! Mind you, even if I take Canada I still most likely need three other regions and the British won't let them go without a fight...

12.0 DESIGN NOTES

■ Is this a wargame?

Who cares? Play it. Enjoy it. Then do something else.

■ Slightly longer version: Is this a wargame?

I think it's a 'light' card-driven puzzle/strategy game that's really about social interaction (unless played in solitaire or versus mode) with a well known war as a theme around which that interaction occurs. In solitaire or versus mode, yes, I think it is a wargame, albeit rather abstract and unconventional.

■ Longer version: Is this a wargame?

Isn't it a game that tells a story, because all games tell stories? Such a view appears to come from scholars such as Janet Murray and Celia Pearce.¹ In a similar vein some scholars, like Richard Bartle suggest even abstract games have stories - the stories of how you played the game.²

The problem is that with such a broad critical lens it is hard to bring much detail into focus. I suggest that these perspectives do not sufficiently equip us to see wargames as a game type broadly distinct from either games that tell stories that are heavily themed by history, or from 'storytelling games' that are heavily themed by history.³ It gives us no way to distinguish, for example, between *Washington's War* (2010), *Pandemic: Fall of Rome* (2018), *Legion of Honor* (2014), *Fog of War* (2016), *Undaunted Normandy* (2019), or *The Grizzled* (2015), by genus. We must go laboriously to each individually to examine in detail before we can say anything distinguishing. Does this matter? For many, perhaps not. But for scholars of wargaming it is surely preferable to attempt to acquire the critical tools for analysis than to employ those that are too unwieldy to be useful, or to use none at all. If scholarly analysis is to be relevant it surely cannot lag way behind the consensus of hobbyists that it is erroneous to describe all of the above equally as 'wargames'. I posted a poll through the Wargamers group on Facebook (12,422 members at the time), on April 12, 2020. Below is the original text and the votes registered by April 17, 2020:

The following poll is part of a paper I'm researching on storytelling and wargame design:

Please vote for each game below you consider to be a wargame:

The Grizzled: 6

Legion of Honor: 12

Undaunted Normandy: 43

Fog of War: 13

Pandemic: Fall of Rome: 7

Washington's War: 65

We can only speculate on why this apparent disparity in views exists - if indeed it really is a disparity.⁴ *The Grizzled*, and *Legion of Honor* seem more like storytelling games heavily themed around history. *Fog of War* might be thought of more as a game of bluff, rather than a wargame.⁵ *Undaunted Normandy* is perhaps considered by some to be a war-themed deck building game.

Further, my concern is, even more, for design practitioners, who may benefit from more nuanced considerations of the storytelling/wargame design intersection. Marco Arnaudo in his *Storytelling in the Modern Board Game* suggests working with Onega and Landa's definition of story as '...the semiotic representations of a series of events meaningfully connected in a temporal and causal way'.⁶ Through this lens we arrive at Arnaudo's notion that wargames demonstrate prominent representational components and significant 'narrative content', but not sufficient for us to consider them games that tell stories. Arnaudo's thinking is nuanced, and supported by the likes of narratologists such as Seymour Chatman, but principally the distinction is through the absence of individual characters in wargames as the ludic lens through which players engage and exploit the game system.⁷ He acknowledges wargames have dramatic causally connected arcs but says he doesn't think of them - or feel about them - in the same way he does about games that tell stories.⁸ This seems a reasonable position for those of us who regularly play many different types of games, including wargames and games that tell stories.⁹ Perhaps the reason for this - as Arnaudo already identified - is in the ludic/narratological lens through which the player agency is effected. In *Hidden Strike: The American Revolution* we have the rather curious situation of players ostensibly acting through characters, who have their own distinct abilities, but much of the conventional design architecture which usually supports the notion of these avatars - like a physical pawn for the board, or health metrics, or weaponry, is missing from them. In this game I'm also far from sure that most players really think of themselves as playing the character they have drawn, so much as leveraging their abilities. So we could end up feeling it's not a wargame, nor a game that tells a story, but some other kind of game.

Causal progression must, I think, always look like plot progression to narratologists. Perhaps games in stories, and stories in games are not really matter for narratologists or ludologists - but for those who can fuse both disciplines, to see not in terms of a primacy, but, rather in terms of the quality of the experiential delivery to the audience. Narratologists perhaps?¹⁰

Boardgamegeek.com, offers the following definition of 'wargame':

Wargames are games that depict military actions. Wargames are set in a variety of timelines, from the Ancient period to present conflicts and even in the future. Thematically, Wargames cover everything from actions between small units on a very small board to larger, extremely detailed conflicts and even global-scale wars. Although most Wargames are based on historical situations, there are Wargames based on fantasy or science fiction, as well as Wargames based on hypothetical but historically-based situations (e.g., nuclear war between the Soviet Union and the USA).¹¹

Perhaps we might consider the usefulness of 'historical simulation' as a broad term, covering all manner of history themed games with some intention to represent history, without being solely reserved for games with exceptional levels of 'accuracy'. Perhaps, within that, we could refine the definition of a wargame to a game in which the gameplay focus is on combat resolution (of whatever stripe or blend: tactical, operational, strategic) between two or more competing sides, which would leave *Washington's War*, *Fog of War*, *Undaunted Normandy*, and *Pandemic: Fall of Rome*, as wargames, but *The Grizzled*, and *Legion of Honor*, outside that definition.¹² In the latter cases combat is just one of the issues within the gameplay. *Pandemic: Fall of Rome* as a wargame might raise some eyebrows (including my own). It feels more like a resource management game with a (consciously) light historical skin. But its gameplay focus is about managing a strategic situation clearly involving representations of military forces, so I think it's ultimately a wargame, albeit an unconventional one. And, if by that definition *Pandemic: Fall of Rome* is a wargame I think *Hidden Strike: American Revolution* is surely no less of one - perhaps even more of one with more historical detail.

By this definition of wargame, we can also, of course, still have non-kinetic wargames- where combat resolution is not the key focus, but there are wargame-derived, or wargame-like mechanics in play.

TLDR: I think it's an historical simulation game (with a clear emphasis on abstraction over any analytical accuracy), but I think you could also call it a wargame, since combat resolution, at the strategic level, is still the gameplay's key focus (albeit clearly abstracted), and with a clear overall emphasis on social interaction in the co-op and semi-co-op modes.

But mostly, please play it, and - hopefully - enjoy it.

Special Thanks to: Dorian - I think I lucked out when Victory Point Games (who originally signed this game) assigned you to help develop this with me. It's been quite a journey for this game, and you've been there for much of

it. Thank you for being so conscientious and such a joy to work with. This game is unquestionably better for your deep involvement in it. Let's do it again sometime!

Thanks to: Mike, Grant, Sean, and Mark at Worthington - making games with you is such a joy! Thanks to Nathan Hansen and Alan Emrich for seeing the potential in this game. Thanks to everyone who has playtested this in one of its many forms over many years. (This was first designed in a hotel room in Canberra in 2011.)

Maurice

Upstate New York, June 2020.

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ENDNOTES

- 1 Arnaudo, M. *Storytelling in the Modern Board Game: Narrative Trends from the Late 1960s to Today*. (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, 2018). 8.
- 2 Ibid. 8.
- 3 *Storytelling games - such as Fiasco (2003) and Microscope (2011) - might be defined as games where the players carry the majority of the storytelling load, leveraging the game for structure and inspiration but manifestly creating the story detail themselves.*
- 4 *There are evident issues with this poll. There's no way from this data to be certain that the majority of responders didn't only vote for games that they know. Perhaps we're seeing popularity more than any other distinction. However, given that this is a wargames group that could also be telling - accounting for the popularity of Washington's War insofar as wargamers know it precisely because it sits within their understanding of what a wargame is. Regardless, this is not intended as a definitive study in this regard, merely an indication of an issue warranting enquiry.*
- 5 <https://www.creakingshelves.com/first-impressions-of-the-fog-of-war/>.
<https://dailyworkerplacement.com/2017/01/30/the-fog-of-war-done-right/>
- 6 Onega, S., and Landa, J.A.G., *Narratology: An Introduction*. (London: Longman, 1996), 3. Quoted in Arnaudo 19.
- 7 Arnaudo 13-35. See also Chatman, S.B. *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*. (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1978), 111. "...since narrative appeals through the emotions and moral sense, it requires the audience to share interests and antagonisms with the characters."
- 8 Quoted from private correspondence.
- 9 *Even here, there can, of course, be hybrids, and edge-cases. In particular there are character-driven tactical wargames/skirmish games which potentially blur distinctions.*
- 10 *Or ludonarratologists? In 2020 a new online conference was initiated with the name LudoNaraCon.*
- 11 <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgamecategory/1019/wargame>
- 12 *In my own view they might all be termed games they tell stories, with Pandemic: Fall of Rome inclining more to a broadly history themed abstract game.*

RULES SUMMARY

TURN SEQUENCE

AMERICAN PLAYERS

1. Reveal and play the top card from British draw deck. (Ignore this step in Versus and Mastermind mode.)
2. Take ONE of the following actions:
 - » Play a card from your hand.
 - » Promote a Militia or Veteran.
 - » Discard 1–2 cards for no effect.
3. Draw back up to three cards.

IN VERSUS AND MASTERMIND MODES

Before EACH American player's turn, the BRITISH PLAYER will:

1. Play a card from your hand OR discard 1 card to convert it into a Reserve and then play the Reserve card.
2. Draw back up to three cards.

RULES TO REMEMBER

- » Only troops deployed in a region's conflict zone contribute to that region's total.
- » Local force pools are not affected by blockades.
- » Remember that fleets do NOT count towards a region's total.
- » Abilities only trigger at the time a card is played.
- » If a card cannot be played (because its target region is resolved or under blockade for example), its ability does not trigger.
- » Only once deployed into a region's conflict zone do troops count towards the region's total.
- » Only once deployed into a region's conflict zone do troops count towards the region's total.
- » If a troop card includes a target region that troop must be deployed in the listed region's conflict zone.
- » No troop or fleet may be deployed into a resolved region (its conflict zone or fleet space).
- » Allied Fleet Blockade: when Allied Fleets (French, Spanish or Dutch) outnumber British Fleets in a region's opposing fleet spaces the whole region is under blockade.
- » At the end of the American phase the American player must draw back up to 3 cards unless there aren't enough cards left to do so.

WINNING THE GAME

CO-OP AND SOLITAIRE

VICTORY AND LOSS CONDITIONS

Once the game ends any unresolved regions count towards the British win total. Whoever controls the most regions at the end of the game wins. By default ties in region total counts go to the British. This means that by default Americans must control 4 regions in order to win.

TRAITOR MODE

VICTORY AND LOSS CONDITIONS

- » The traitor wins if the British win.
- » Ties are won by Americans if they make a successful accusation and expose the traitor. (see Exposing a Traitor)

VERSUS MODE

VICTORY AND LOSS CONDITIONS

- » Once the game ends, any unresolved regions count towards the player's total who still has at least one card left. *Note that if the British player runs out of cards first the American player acts one last time before the game ends.*
- » Games where there is a tie in the number of resolved regions are won by the player who controls the Tiebreaker region.

MASTERMIND MODE

VICTORY AND LOSS CONDITIONS

- » Once the game ends, any unresolved regions count towards the side's total that still has at least one card left. *Note that if the British player runs out of cards first, the American player whose turn is next acts one last time before the game ends.*
- » Games where there is a tie in the number of resolved regions are won by the side who controls the Tiebreaker region.

GAME END CONDITIONS

- » **ALL REGIONS ARE RESOLVED.**
- » **THE BRITISH RUN OUT OF CARDS:** Once the British play their last card the currently active American player gets to finish her turn before the game ends.
- » **THE AMERICANS ALL RUN OUT OF CARDS.**

TROOP STRENGTH

