

Cambridge University Press

0521845661 - The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814

John Grenier

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The First Way of War

This book explores the evolution of early Americans' first ways of making war to show how war waged against enemy noncombatant populations and agricultural resources ultimately defined Americans' military heritage. Grenier explains the significance of Americans' earliest wars with both Indians and Europeans, from the seventeenth-century conflicts with the Indians of the Eastern Seaboard, through the imperial wars among England, France, and Spain in the eighteenth century, to frontier Americans' conquest of the Indians of the Transappalachian West in 1814. This sanguinary story of Americans' inexorable march across the first frontiers helps demonstrate how they embraced warfare shaped by extravagant violence and focused on conquest. Grenier provides a major revision in understanding the place of warfare directed at noncombatants in the American military tradition, and his conclusions are relevant to understanding U.S. "special operations" in the War on Terror.

John Grenier is an Air Force officer and Associate Professor of History at the United States Air Force Academy.

Cambridge University Press

0521845661 - *The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814*

John Grenier

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The First Way of War

American War Making on the Frontier, 1607–1814

John Grenier



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
 0521845661 - The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814
 John Grenier
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
 Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press
 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521845663

© John Grenier 2005

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2005

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Grenier, John, 1967–
 The first way of war : American war making on the frontier, 1607–1814 / John Grenier.
 p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-521-84566-1 (hardback : alk. paper)

1. Indians of North America – Wars – 1600–1750. 2. Indians of North America – Wars – 1750–1815. 3. Indians of North America – History – Colonial period, ca. 1600–1775. 4. Indians of North America – History – Revolution, 1775–1783. 5. United States – Politics and government – To 1775. 6. United States – Politics and government – 1775–1783. 7. United States – Politics and government – 1783–1865. I. Title.

E82.G74 2005

355'.00973'0903–dc22

2004052547

ISBN-13 978-0-521-84566-3 hardback

ISBN-10 0-521-84566-1 hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Web sites referred to in this book and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

0521845661 - The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814

John Grenier

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

For Molly and Sophia

Cambridge University Press

0521845661 - The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814

John Grenier

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

They were no colonists; their administration was merely a squeeze, and nothing more, I suspect. They were conquerors, and for that you want only brute force – nothing to boast of, when you have it, since your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness of others. They grabbed what they could get for the sake of what was to be got. It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a great scale, and men going at it blind – as is very proper for those who tackle a darkness. The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much.

Joseph Conrad, *The Heart of Darkness*

Cambridge University Press

0521845661 - The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814

John Grenier

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

<i>List of Figures and Maps</i>	viii
<i>Preface</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xii
Introduction	1
1 The First Way of War's Origins in Colonial America	16
2 The First Way of War in the North American Wars of King George II, 1739–1755	53
3 Continental and British <i>Petite Guerre</i> , circa 1750	87
4 The First Way of War in the Seven Years' War, 1754–1763	115
5 The First Way of War in the Era of the American Revolution	146
6 The First Way of War in the 1790s	170
7 The First Way of War and the Final Conquest of the Transappalachian West	204
Epilogue	221
<i>Index</i>	227

Cambridge University Press

0521845661 - The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814

John Grenier

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Figures and Maps

Figures

- 1 Hannah Dustan bronze statue in Haverhill, Massachusetts 40
- 2 Title page of Grandmaison's *La Petite Guerre* 99
- 3 John Sevier bronze statue in the National Statuary Hall, U.S. Capitol Building 173

Maps

- 1 Indian nations of North America 20
- 2 The Nova Scotia frontier, 1740–1765 67
- 3 The Northwest frontier, 1750–1815 149
- 4 The Southern frontier, 1740–1815 214

Cambridge University Press

0521845661 - The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814

John Grenier

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface

This book is an attempt to understand better the evolution of an early American way of war that condoned the use of violence against enemy noncombatants. As a serving officer in the United States Air Force, I have tried to focus on a larger audience than colonial historians. As such, I hope this book will encourage military professionals to think about the other sides of our martial culture. Military leaders should look at all the ways, even if they seem brutal and out of character, that we wage war. Similarly, there remains little doubt that a significant part of the future for the American soldier will involve the challenges, in their modern manifestations, that early American soldiers faced. Especially to my colleagues in the profession of arms, therefore, I suggest that relevant lessons abound in a study of early American military history.¹

Attributing names to the various groups involved in the conflicts that shaped early American history is a difficult task. I have made an effort to distinguish systematically among the different participants in seventeenth-through early-nineteenth-century American wars. First, important differences existed among “Englishmen,” “Britons,” “Anglo-Americans,” and “Americans.” “Englishmen” refers to natives of England and Wales; I use “Britons” to describe the same peoples, together with the Scots, after 1707. “Anglo-American” describes Europeans born in England’s or Great Britain’s North American colonial possessions or those individuals who immigrated to North America. North American-born colonists or immigrants were not called “Americans” until the 1740s and generally did not think of themselves as such until after the War of Independence. However,

1 John M. Dederer has observed that the colonial era remains the least studied area of American military history: “the optimum word is *relevance*, or, to be more precise, a lack thereof. Many specialists of nineteenth- and twentieth-century American history seem to feel that there is little significance gained in studying seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century military affairs.” See Dederer, “Colonial Forces, 1607–1776,” *A Guide to the Sources of United States Military History: Supplement IV*, ed. Robin Higham and Donald J. Mrozek (New Haven, CT: Archon Books, 1998), 28.

Cambridge University Press

0521845661 - The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814

John Grenier

Frontmatter

[More information](#)x *Preface*

rather than switch from “Anglo-American” to “American” when the narrative reaches the Revolutionary period, I use “American” to describe both creoles and immigrants before the War of Independence and the same groups after 1775. I use “English,” “French,” and “Spanish” to describe language groups, as well as the Old and New World subjects of their respective European monarchs. When referring to the native European inhabitants of New France, I employ “Canadian.” Naming the indigenous peoples of North America is even more difficult. “Native American” could apply to either indigenous peoples or any creole of the Americas. I prefer “Indian.” I have distinguished among Indian peoples by tribal designations, although those designations describe more linguistic than political differentiation.² The specific names for Indian individuals present another bevy of choices. I have chosen to refer to them by the names by which Americans knew them. But in an attempt to honor their cultural identity, I have placed their Indian name, where possible, after the first citation of their English name. I have assigned places (forts, rivers, regions, etc.) the names their possessors gave them.

No less a problem than naming people and places is deciding to what degree to modernize or translate the prose and speech of seventeenth-through early-nineteenth-century English and French speakers. Authors, especially in their diaries and personal or public correspondence, rarely followed standardized rules of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Though their words carry a sense of the age in which they lived, I have opted to adopt the “Modernized Method” outlined in the *Harvard Guide to American History* to clarify obsolete spelling and erratic punctuation.³ I have translated most quotations taken from French primary sources, with only the occasional exception of short phrases or individual words that seem clear, into English.

2 For the use of tribal designations, see Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), xiv.

3 Frank Freidel, ed., *The Harvard Guide to American History*, rev. ed., 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 1: 31–36.

Cambridge University Press

0521845661 - The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814

John Grenier

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

In writing this book I have become indebted to many teachers, friends, and academic and military colleagues. A list of all of them would be too lengthy to include here, but I hope all will accept my heartfelt gratitude for the support, assistance, and encouragement they selflessly gave me. I would be grossly remiss, however, if I did not single out Fred Anderson for special thanks. Fred, above all others, shaped this book as both a mentor and a friend. I also would like to offer special thanks to Virginia DeJohn Anderson, Richard Beringer, Don Higginbotham, Todd Laughman, Gloria Main, Mark Pittenger, and Arthur Worrall. Of course, my appreciation goes to Frank Smith, the editorial staff, and the readers at Cambridge University Press for agreeing to take on this project.

Several organizations provided financial support and access to their collections. I thank the William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan; the Henry E. Huntington Library in San Marino, California; the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston; the Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (formerly known as the Public Archives of Nova Scotia) in Halifax; the Norlin Library at the University of Colorado at Boulder; and the Colorado College Tutt Library in Colorado Springs.

Last, but certainly not least, my love and thanks go to my wife, Molly, and my daughter, Sophia. I will never be able to express how much they have meant to me, and I thank them for the innumerable sacrifices they have made in supporting both my career in the Air Force and this book. It is to them that I dedicate all my efforts.

Cambridge University Press

0521845661 - The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814

John Grenier

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Abbreviations

- ASPIA U.S. Congress. *American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs*. 2 vols. Washington, DC: Gales and Seaton, 1832–1834.
- ASPMA U.S. Congress. *American State Papers, Class V, Military Affairs*. 7 vols. Washington, DC: Gales and Seaton, 1832–1861.
- Baxter MSS James Phinney Baxter, ed. *Collections of the Maine Historical Society, Second Series, Documentary History of the State of Maine, Vols. 4, 9–12, Containing the Baxter Manuscripts*. Portland: Brown, Thurston & Company, 1889 (Vol. 4) and LeFavor-Tower Company, 1907–1908 (Vols. 9–12).
- CO 5 Great Britain. Public Records Office. Colonial Office, Class 5 Papers.
- CSPC Great Britain. Public Records Office. *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies*. Edited by J. W. Fortescue et al. 45 vols. to date. London: HMSO, 1860–.
- CSPI Great Britain, Public Records Office. *Calendar of State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reign of Charles I, 1633–1647*. Edited by Robert Pentland Mahaffy. 4 vols. 1900–1903. Reprint, Nendeln, Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprint Corporation, 1979.
- CTBP Great Britain. Public Records Office. *Calendar of Treasury Books and Papers, 1729–1745*. Compiled by William A. Shaw et al. 5 vols. 1897. Reprint, Nendeln, Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprint, 1974.
- CVSP William Palmer et al., eds. *Calendar of Virginia State Papers and Other Manuscripts*. 11 vols. 1875–1893. Reprint, New York: Kraus Reprint Corporation, 1968.
- DCB *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*.
- GHQ *Georgia Historical Quarterly*.

Cambridge University Press

0521845661 - The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814

John Grenier

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Abbreviations*

xiii

- HBP* Henry Bouquet. *The Papers of Colonel Henry Bouquet*. Edited by Sylvester K. Stevens. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1941–1943.
- Hist. Stats.* U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*. Washington, DC: GPO, 1960.
- HNAI* William C. Sturtevant et al., eds. *Handbook of North American Indians*. 20 vols. planned. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1978–.
- (O)IEAHC (Omohundro) Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA.
- JAH* *Journal of American History*.
- JSAHR* *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*.
- <Kappler/> <<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/vol2/treaties>> for Charles J. Kappler, Jr., ed. *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*. 5 vols. Washington, DC: GPO, 1904–1941.
- LO* Earl of Loudoun MSS, Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.
- LOMBC* Massachusetts. *Laws and Orders of Massachusetts Bay Colony*. Buffalo, NY: W. S. Hein, 1987. 736 microfiches.
- MHSC* *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*.
- NC Records* William L. Saunders and Walter Clark, comps. and eds. *The State Records of North Carolina*. 30 vols. 1886–1914. Reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1968–1978.
- NEHGR* *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*.
- NSARM* Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (formerly the Public Archives of Nova Scotia), Halifax.
- NYCD* Edmund B. O’Callaghan and Berthold Fernow, eds. and trans. *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*. 15 vols. Albany, NY: Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, 1856–1887.
- SAL* William Walter Hening, ed. and comp. *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, from the First Session of the Legislature in the Year 1619*. 13 vols. 1819–1832. Reprint, Charlottesville: Published for the Jamestown Foundation of the Commonwealth of Virginia by the University Press of Virginia, 1969.
- Terr. Papers* Clarence Edwin Carter, comp. and ed. *The Territorial Papers of the United States*. 12 vols. Washington, DC: GPO, 1934–1945.
- TJP* Thomas Jefferson. *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*. Edited by Julian P. Boyd et al. 29 vols. to date. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1950–.

Cambridge University Press

0521845661 - The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814

John Grenier

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv *Abbreviations*

- WJP William Johnson. *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*.
 Edited by James Sullivan et al. 14 vols. Albany:
 University of the State of New York, 1921–1965.
- WMQ *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser.
- WO 34 Great Britain. War Office. Class 34 Papers.