

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

III B A HISTORY V SEMESTER

CORE – X : HISTORY OF USA 1776 TO 1974 A. D(18BHI52C)

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UNIT I

THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

The Discovery of America is a trilogy written by the German author and educator Joachim Heinrich Campe (1746-1818). It was originally published in 1781/82 as *Die Entdeckung von Amerika - ein angenehmes und nützliches Lesebuch für Kinder und junge Leute* and deals with the discovery, early exploration and conquest of America by focusing on one explorer in each volume: Christopher Columbus is treated first, followed by Hernán Cortés and finally Francisco Pizarro. The work is counted among the first books of specific children's literature, directly targeting children and adolescents as its main audience, and Campe said to have "set the standard for German children's literature. The trilogy is defined by its author's involvement in the German educational movement of philanthropinism and has been a great success, also being translated into several languages.

The explorer Christopher Columbus made four trips across the Atlantic Ocean from Spain: in 1492, 1493, 1498 and 1502. He was determined to find a direct water route

west from Europe to Asia, but he never did. Instead, he stumbled upon the Americas. Though he did not really “discover” the New World—millions of people already lived there—his journeys marked the beginning of centuries of exploration and colonization of North and South America.

AMERIGO VESPUCCI

Amerigo Vespucci (9 March 1454 – 22 February 1512) was an [Italian](#) merchant, explorer, and navigator from the [Republic of Florence](#), from whose name the term "America" is derived.

Between 1497 and 1504, Vespucci participated in at least two voyages of the [Age of Discovery](#), first on behalf of Spain (1499–1500) and then for Portugal (1501–1502). In 1503 and 1505, two booklets were published under his name, containing colourful descriptions of these explorations and other alleged voyages. Both publications were extremely popular and widely read across much of Europe. Although historians still dispute the authorship and veracity of these accounts, at the time they were instrumental in raising awareness of the new discoveries and enhancing the reputation of Vespucci as an explorer and navigator.

Vespucci claimed to have understood, back in 1501 during his Portuguese expedition, that Brazil was part of a different continent, which he called the *New World*. The claim inspired cartographer [Martin Waldseemüller](#) to recognize Vespucci's accomplishments in 1507 by applying the Latinized form America for the first time to a map showing the New World. Other cartographers followed suit, and by 1532 the name America was permanently affixed to the newly discovered continents.

BRITISH COLONIES

New England Colonies

Following the success of the Jamestown and Plymouth Colonies, several more English groups established colonies in the region that became known as [New England](#). In 1629, another group of Puritans led by [John Winthrop](#) established the [Massachusetts Bay Colony](#), and by 1635 roughly ten thousand English settlers lived in the region between the [Connecticut River](#) and the [Kennebec River](#). After defeating the [Pequot](#) in the [Pequot War](#), Puritan settlers established the [Connecticut Colony](#) in the region the Pequots had formerly controlled. The [Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations](#) was founded by [Roger Williams](#), a Puritan leader who was expelled from the Massachusetts Bay Colony after he advocated for a formal split with the [Church of England](#). As New England was a relatively cold and infertile region, the [New England Colonies](#) relied on fishing and long-distance trade to sustain the economy.

A "History of New England" would not be complete without discussing [John Hull](#), [the pine tree shilling](#), his central role in the establishment of the [Massachusetts Bay Colony](#) and the [Old South Church](#). In 1652 the [Massachusetts legislature](#) authorized [John Hull](#) to produce coinage ([mintmaster](#)). "The Hull Mint produced several denominations of silver coinage, including the pine tree shilling, for over 30 years until the political and economic situation made operating the mint no longer practical." Mostly political for [Charles II](#) deemed the "Hull Mint" [high treason in the United Kingdom](#) which had a punishment of [Hanging, drawing and quartering](#). "On April 6, 1681, [Edward Randolph \(colonial administrator\)](#) petitioned the king, informing him the colony was still pressing their own coins which he saw as high treason and believed it was enough to void the charter. He asked that a writ of Quo warranto (a legal action requiring the defendant to show what authority they have for exercising some right, power, or franchise they claim to hold) be issued against [Massachusetts](#) for the violations."

Southern Colonies

In 1632, [Cecil Calvert, 2nd Baron Baltimore](#) founded the [Province of Maryland](#) to the north of Virginia. Maryland and Virginia became known as the [Chesapeake Colonies](#), and experienced similar immigration and economic activities. Though Baltimore and his descendants intended for the colony to be a refuge for Catholics, it attracted mostly Protestant immigrants, many of whom scorned the Calvert family's policy of religious toleration. In the mid-17th century, the Chesapeake Colonies, inspired by the success of slavery in Barbados, began the mass [importation of African slaves](#). Though many early slaves eventually gained their freedom, after 1662 Virginia adopted policies that passed [enslaved status from mother to child](#) and granted slave owners near-total domination of their human property.

640 miles East-South-East of [Cape Hatteras](#), in the Virginia Company's other former settlement, the Somers Isles, alias the Islands of Bermuda, where the spin-off Somers Isles Company still administered, the company and its shareholders in England only earned profits from the export of tobacco, placing them increasingly at odds with Bermudians for whom tobacco had become unprofitable to cultivate. As only those landowners who could attend the company's annual meetings in England were permitted to vote on company policy, the company worked to suppress the developing maritime economy of the colonists and to force the production of tobacco, which required unsustainable farming practices as more was required to be produced to make up for the diminished value.

As many of the class of moneyed businessmen who were adventurers in the company were aligned to the Parliamentary cause during the [English Civil War](#), Bermuda was one of the [colonies that sided with the Crown during the war](#), being the first to recognise [Charles II](#) after the execution of his father. With control of their Assembly and the militia and volunteer [coastal](#)

[artillery](#), the Royalist majority deposed the company-appointed Governor (by the 1630s, the company had ceased sending Governors to Bermuda and had instead appointed a succession of prominent Bermudians to the role, including religious Independent and Parliamentarian [William Sayle](#)) by force of arms and elected John Trimingham to replace him. Many of Bermuda's religious Independents, who had sided with Parliament, were forced into exile. Although some of the newer continental colonies settled largely by anti-episcopalian Protestants sided with Parliament during the war, Virginia and other colonies like Bermuda supported the Crown and were subjected to the measures laid out in [An Act for prohibiting Trade with the Barbadoes, Virginia, Bermuda and Antego](#) until Parliament was able to force them to acknowledge its sovereignty.

Bermudian anger at the policies of the Somers Isles Company ultimately saw them take their complaints to the Crown after [The Restoration](#), leading to the Crown revoking the Royal Charter of the Somers Isles Company and taking over direct administration of Bermuda in 1684. From that date, Bermudians abandoned agriculture, diversifying their maritime industry to occupy many niches of inter-colonial trade between North America and the West Indies. Bermudians limited landmass and high birth rate meant that a steady outflow from the colony contributed about 10,000 settlers to other colonies, notably the southern continental colonies (including [Carolina Province](#), which was settled from Bermuda in 1670), as well as West Indian settlements, including the [Providence Island colony](#) in 1631, the [Bahamas](#) (settled by [Eleutheran Adventurers](#), Parliament-allied Civil War exiles from Bermuda, under William Sayle in the 1640s), and the seasonal occupation of the [Turks Islands](#) from 1681.

Encouraged by the apparent weakness of Spanish rule in [Florida](#), Barbadian planter [John Colleton](#) and seven other supporters of [Charles II of England](#) established the [Province of](#)

[Carolina](#) in 1663.^[36] Settlers in the Carolina Colony established two main population centers, with many Virginians settling in the north of the province and many English Barbadians settling in the southern port city of [Charles Town](#). In 1729, following the [Yamasee War](#), Carolina was divided into the crown colonies of [North Carolina](#) and [South Carolina](#). The colonies of Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina (as well as the [Province of Georgia](#), which was established in 1732) became known as the [Southern Colonies](#).

Middle Colonies

[James II](#) established the [Colony of New York](#) and the [Dominion of New England](#). He succeeded his brother as King of England in 1685 but was overthrown in the [Glorious Revolution](#) of 1688

Beginning in 1609, Dutch traders had established fur trading posts on the [Hudson River](#), [Delaware River](#), and [Connecticut River](#), ultimately creating the Dutch colony of [New Netherland](#), with a capital at [New Amsterdam](#).^[41] In 1657, New Netherland expanded through conquest of [New Sweden](#), a [Swedish](#) colony centered in the [Delaware Valley](#). Despite commercial success, New Netherland failed to attract the same level of settlement as the English colonies. In 1664, during a [series of wars](#) between the English and Dutch, English soldier [Richard Nicolls](#) captured New Netherland.^[44] The Dutch briefly regained control of parts of New Netherland in the [Third Anglo-Dutch War](#), but surrendered its claim to the territory in the 1674 [Treaty of Westminster](#), ending the Dutch colonial presence in North America.^[45] In 1664, the [Duke of York](#), later known as [James II of England](#), was granted control of the English colonies north of the Delaware River. He created the [Province of New York](#) out of the former Dutch territory and renamed New Amsterdam as [New York City](#).^[46] He also created the provinces of [West Jersey](#) and [East Jersey](#) out of former Dutch land situated to the west of New

York City, giving the territories to [John Berkeley](#) and [George Carteret](#).^[47] East Jersey and West Jersey would later be unified as the [Province of New Jersey](#) in 1702.^[48]

Charles II rewarded [William Penn](#), the son of distinguished [Admiral William Penn](#), with the land situated between Maryland and the Jerseys. Penn named this land the [Province of Pennsylvania](#).^[49] Penn was also granted a lease to the [Delaware Colony](#), which gained its own legislature in 1701.^[50] A devout [Quaker](#), Penn sought to create a haven of [religious toleration](#) in the New World.^[50] Pennsylvania attracted Quakers and other settlers from across Europe, and the city of [Philadelphia](#) quickly emerged as a thriving port city.^[51] With its fertile and cheap land, Pennsylvania became one of the most attractive destinations for immigrants in the late 17th century. New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware became known as the [Middle Colonies](#).

Hudson's Bay Company

In 1670, [Charles II](#) incorporated by [royal charter](#) the [Hudson's Bay Company](#) (HBC), granting it a monopoly on the [fur trade](#) in the area known as [Rupert's Land](#). Forts and trading posts established by the HBC were frequently the subject of attacks by the French.^[54]

Darien scheme

In 1695, the [Parliament of Scotland](#) granted a charter to the [Company of Scotland](#), which established a settlement in 1698 on the [Isthmus of Panama](#). Besieged by neighbouring Spanish colonists of [New Granada](#), and afflicted by [malaria](#), the colony was abandoned two years later. The [Darien scheme](#) was a financial disaster for Scotland—a quarter of Scottish capital^[55] was lost in the enterprise—and ended Scottish hopes of establishing its own overseas empire. The episode also had major political consequences, persuading the governments of both England and

Scotland of the merits of a union of countries, rather than just crowns.^[56] This occurred in 1707 with the [Treaty of Union](#), establishing the [Kingdom of Great Britain](#).

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1. Defective Administration:

The Administrative System of England in the American Colonies was defective. Each Colony had its Assembly and the elected members.

But, the nominated governor to each colony by the British Parliament became intolerable on the part of the Colonists. Many times conflict between the Governors and the elected representatives of different colonies became inevitable. The Governors did not do anything without the permission of British Parliament.

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Thus, the administrative system of each colony was controlled by the British Parliament. The British Parliament did not recognise the colonial problems. Thus, the colonists became intolerable and raised their voice against the defective administrative system of England.

2. Restrictions on Colonial Trade:

The British Government regulated the colonial trade for her own advantage. The trade policy of England was the colonies were.

The Navigation Act which was passed in 1660 was again practised by George Grenville, the Prime Minister of England. Before this Act, the Colonist's accepted the manufactured goods of

England only by exporting the raw materials to England. But when the Navigation Act was re-introduced, the Americans were forbidden to export their native products directly to other European countries. They could import their necessary goods only through England from other countries. The British Government imposed taxes on the American Colonies.

In order to impose, more tax on the colonial imports, the British Parliament strengthened the 'Molasses Act' which was originally passed in 1773 by the British Parliament. By this Act the American Colonies were permitted to import Molasses only from the British West Indies. It annoyed the colonists and they became revolutionary.

3. Influence of Seven Years War:

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The Seven Years War which was started in 1756 and ended in 1763 had an impact on the American Colonies. By defeating France, England occupied Canada. The Americans were freed from the French menace. This enabled the people to stand by themselves. They did not feel the necessity of maintaining the British army at their own expense. After this seven years war the American Colonies began to be revolutionary.

4. Role of the Writers and Philosophers:

The Writers and Philosophers played an important role in the American War of Independence. Thomas Paine through this writing 'Commonsense' inspired the Americans to raise their voice against the British Government. Samuel Adams, another writer sowed the seed of independence among the Americans through his writings. Besides this, the Americans were influenced by the writings of Locke, Rousseau, Adam Smith and Milton.

5. The Stamp Act (1765):

To meet the additional expenditure of the standing army in the American Colonies, England decided that American Colonists should bear that expense. So, George Grenville, the Prime Minister during the reign of George III passed the Stamp Act in 1765. The Act directed that in the American Colonies, the government papers, legal documents, receipts should be written or printed on Stamp Paper. The tax which was collected from this stamp was to be used for the expenditure of the Standing Army in America. It created storm in America. They destroyed the stamp papers. “No Taxation without Representation” or “Taxation without representation is tyranny”, became their cry. This gave impetus to the revolution.

6. The Declaratory Act (1766):

The Stamp Act made Grenville unpopular and he was dismissed. Rockingham succeeded him. He passed the Declaratory Act in 1766. It repealed the Stamp Act. It declared that the Mother country had the right to impose taxes on the Colonies. This created a storm among the Americans and they became revolutionary.

7. Townshend's Policy:

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Townshend, the Chancellor of Exchequer in Pitt, the Elder's Ministry, revived the policy of Grenville. He imposed duties on tea, glass, lead, paper and colour imported into the American colonies. This gave a serious setback to the colonists and they became rebellious. They boycotted the trade relationship with England.

8. Lord North's Measures:

Then Lord North, the Prime Minister of England abolished duties on glass, lead and paper etc. but retained on tea. This annoyed the colonist. In 1770, when a company of British soldiers were marching through the streets of Boston, the Americans showered on them snow balls. Being insulted, the soldiers fired on them and killed five Americans which was known as "Boston Massacre".

9. The Boston Tea Party:

In 1773 Lord North introduced a new Tea Act and allowed the East India Company to sell tea directly in America. It created severe reaction among the Americans. The agitators in Boston formed the 'Boston Tea Party'. The chief motive of this party was to resist the East India Company to sell tea in America. The first cargoes of Tea sent by East India Company arrived at Boston.

On 16 December 1773, under the leadership of Samuel Adams, some agitators of Boston Tea Party entered into the ship in the disguise of Red Indians and threw 343 chests of the tea into the Sea. This event was famous as 'The Boston Tea Riot'. Out of anger, Lord North passed the Boston Port Act in 1774 and the Port was closed. This incident gave an impetus to the American War of Independence.

The activities of Lord North prompted the Americans to unite. All the thirteen Colonies except Georgia met at Philadelphia in 1775. They sent a petition in association with an Olive Branch to the British Parliament demanding the repeal of the thirteen Acts passed by the British Parliament since 1765. This was famous as the 'Olive Branch Petition'.

Edmund Burke and Pitt, the Elder tried to find out the method of consiliation. They ‘ advised George III to negotiate with the Americans but George III did not pay stress on their advice. So, on 19 April, 1775, the Americans killed eight British soldiers at Lexington.

10. The Declaration of Independence:

On 4 July 1776, the thirteen American Colonies met at Philadelphia for the second time. A paper was drafted by Thomas Jefferson and this Declaration of Independence was unanimously accepted in the Congress by the thirteen American Colonies. This historic document proclaimed the cause of the revolt.

The declaration was—”That 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.” This declaration glavinised the course of the American war of Independence.

11. The Course of War:

Then started the war between the American Colonies and England. In June 1776 Howe moved towards New York. George Washington was also ready. He fled to South through New Jersey. Before Howe could reach the bank of river Dilaware Washington destroyed all the bridges thereby preventing Howe to proceed further.

On October 17, 1777, Burgoyne, the British Commander surrendered to the American Commander at Saratoga. The British soldiers did not know about geographical location of America for which they were defeated. In 1782, the combined army of France and Spain

occupied Minorca. Lord North was compelled to resign. The American War of Independence came to an end.

12. The Treaty of Versailles:

Lord Shelburne became the Prime Minister of England. He concluded the peace treaty with the enemies. After vigorous negotiation with France, Spain and Holland, England signed the Treaty of Versailles on 3 September, 1783 at Paris. Great Britain acknowledged the independence of the United States of America.

The year 1783 was glorious for both England and America. When John Adams appeared before George III at St. James palace as the first accepted representative of the U.S.A., the latter accepted the former with a cordial gesture which marked an end of the distinction between the 'Ruler' and the 'Ruled'.

Results:

The consequences of the American War of Independence were far reaching:

Firstly, the thirteen colonies of America were freed from the clutches of their Mother Country. They combinedly formed the United States of America. In 1787, the thirteen Colonies met at Philadelphia and passed constitution of the United States of America and George Washington became the First President of United States of America.

Secondly, the influence of American War of Independence was felt in the whole of Europe. According to the Paris Peace Conference France received Chandan Nagar and other trade centres in India. She also received back her West African Settlement of Senegal and acquired the islands of Tobago and St. Lucia in the West Indies. Spain received Florida and Minorca from England.

Thirdly, the victory of the Americans influenced the people of France. The French people derived lesson from it. They wanted to experience the same in their own country. It also inspired the people of Ireland. In 1782, Ireland declared its independence and freed herself from the clutches of England.

Fourthly, the American War of Independence gave a serious setback to the British Colonialism and destroyed it.

Fifthly, the American War of Independence laid stress on the Rights of Human beings. The 'Declaration of Rights' of Thomas Jefferson aroused people about their rights.

Sixthly, by this War of Independence America became free from England. Under the able leadership of George Washington, there were several changes in the administrative system of America. After this war, America became a Democratic Nation.

Seventhly, this war opened a new avenue of trade for America. America established her trade relationship with other countries and became prosperous. The United States of America grew from strength to strength and became super power in the world.

Lastly, the American war of the independence helped England in the growth of new colonies in Australia. Australia came under the sway of England.

END AND RESULT

The British army under Cornwallis marched to [Yorktown, Virginia](#), where they expected to be rescued by a British fleet.^[74] The fleet did arrive, but so did a larger French fleet. The French were victorious in the [Battle of the Chesapeake](#), and the British fleet returned to New

York for reinforcements, leaving Cornwallis trapped. In October 1781, the British surrendered their second invading army of the war under a siege by the combined French and Continental armies commanded by Washington. Historians continue to debate whether the odds were long or short for American victory. [John E. Ferling](#) says that the odds were so long that the American victory was "almost a miracle".^[76] On the other hand, [Joseph Ellis](#) says that the odds favored the Americans, and asks whether there ever was any realistic chance for the British to win. He argues that this opportunity came only once, in the summer of 1776, and the British failed that test. Admiral Howe and his brother General Howe "missed several opportunities to destroy the Continental Army Chance, luck, and even the vagaries of the weather played crucial roles." Ellis's point is that the strategic and tactical decisions of the Howes were fatally flawed because they underestimated the challenges posed by the Patriots. Ellis concludes that, once the Howe brothers failed, the opportunity "would never come again" for a British victory.^[77]

Support for the conflict had never been strong in Britain, where many sympathized with the Americans, but now it reached a new low.^[78] King George wanted to fight on, but his supporters lost control of Parliament and they launched no further offensives in America.^{[71][79]} War erupted between America and Britain three decades later with the [War of 1812](#), which firmly established the permanence of the United States and its complete autonomy.^[80]

Washington did not know whether the British might reopen hostilities after Yorktown. They still had 26,000 troops occupying New York City, Charleston, and Savannah, together with a powerful fleet. The French army and navy departed, so the Americans were on their own in 1782–83.^[81] The treasury was empty, and the unpaid soldiers were growing restive, almost to the point of mutiny or possible *coup d'état*. Washington dispelled the unrest among officers of

the [Newburgh Conspiracy](#) in 1783, and Congress subsequently created the promise of a five years bonus for all officers.^[82]

Paris peace treaty

The United States delegation at the 1783 [Treaty of Paris](#) ([John Jay](#), [John Adams](#), [Benjamin Franklin](#), [Henry Laurens](#), and [William Temple Franklin](#)) are depicted in [Benjamin West's](#) 1783 painting *[American Commissioners of the Preliminary Peace Agreement with Great Britain](#)*. The British delegation refused to pose and the painting was never comp

During negotiations in Paris, the American delegation discovered that France supported American independence but no territorial gains, hoping to confine the new nation to the area east of the Appalachian Mountains. The Americans opened direct secret negotiations with London, cutting out the French. British Prime Minister [Lord Shelburne](#) was in charge of the British negotiations, and he saw a chance to make the United States a valuable economic partner.^[83] The US obtained all the land east of the Mississippi River, including [southern Canada](#), but Spain took control of Florida from the British. It gained fishing rights off Canadian coasts, and agreed to allow British merchants and Loyalists to recover their property. Prime Minister Shelburne foresaw highly profitable two-way trade between Britain and the rapidly growing United States, which did come to pass. The blockade was lifted and all British interference had been driven out, and American merchants were free to trade with any nation anywhere in the world.^[84]

The British largely abandoned their indigenous allies, who were not a party to this treaty and did not recognize it until they were defeated militarily by the United States. However, the British did sell them munitions and maintain forts in American territory until the [Jay Treaty](#) of 1795.^[85]

Losing the war and the Thirteen Colonies was a shock to Britain. The war revealed the limitations of Britain's [fiscal-military state](#) when they discovered that they suddenly faced powerful enemies with no allies, and they were dependent on extended and vulnerable transatlantic lines of communication. The defeat heightened dissension and escalated political antagonism to the King's ministers. Inside Parliament, the primary concern changed from fears of an over-mighty monarch to the issues of representation, parliamentary reform, and government retrenchment. Reformers sought to destroy what they saw as widespread institutional corruption,^{[86][87]} and the result was a crisis from 1776 to 1783. The peace in 1783 left France financially prostrate, while the British economy boomed thanks to the return of American business. The crisis ended after 1784 thanks to the King's shrewdness in outwitting [Charles James Fox](#) (the leader of the [Fox-North Coalition](#)), and renewed confidence in the system engendered by the leadership of Prime Minister [William Pitt](#). Some historians suggest that loss of the American colonies enabled Britain to deal with the [French Revolution](#) with more unity and better organization than would otherwise have been the case.^{[86][87]} Britain turned towards Asia, the Pacific, and later Africa with subsequent exploration leading to the rise of the [Second British Empire](#).

Presidency of George Washington

The **presidency of George Washington** began on April 30, 1789, when [Washington](#) was [inaugurated](#) as the [first president of the United States](#), and ended on March 4, 1797. Washington took office after the [1788–89 presidential election](#), the nation's first quadrennial presidential election, in which he was [elected unanimously](#). Washington was re-

elected unanimously in the [1792 presidential election](#), and chose to retire after two terms. He was succeeded by his vice president, [John Adams](#) of the [Federalist Party](#).

Washington had established his preeminence among the new nation's [Founding Fathers](#) through his service as [Commander-in-Chief](#) of the [Continental Army](#) during the [American Revolutionary War](#) and as President of the [1787 Constitutional Convention](#). Once the [Constitution](#) was approved, it was widely expected that Washington would become the first president of the United States, despite his own desire to retire from public life. In his first [inaugural address](#), Washington expressed both his reluctance to accept the presidency and his inexperience with the duties of civil administration, but he proved an able [leader](#).

Administration

The new Constitution empowered the president to appoint [executive department heads](#) with the consent of the Senate.^[42] Three departments had existed under the Articles of Confederation: the [Department of War](#), the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#), and the [Finance Office](#). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was reestablished on July 27, 1789, and would be renamed to the [Department of State](#) in September. The Department of War was retained on August 7, while the Finance office was renamed as the [Department of the Treasury](#) on September 2.^[43] Congress also considered establishing a Home Department to oversee [Native American](#) affairs, the preservation of government documents, and other matters, but the proposed department's duties were instead folded into the State Department.^[44] In September 1789, Congress established the positions of [Attorney General](#), to serve as the chief legal adviser to the president; and [Postmaster General](#), to serve as the head of the postal service.^[b] Initially, Washington met individually with the leaders of the executive departments and the Attorney General, but he began to hold joint meetings in 1791, with the first meeting occurring on November 26.^[45] The four positions of

Secretary of War, Secretary of State, Secretary of Treasury, and Attorney General became collectively known as the [cabinet](#), and Washington held regular cabinet meetings throughout his second term.^[46]

[Edmund Randolph](#) became the first Attorney General, while Henry Knox retained his position as head of the Department of War. Washington initially offered the position of [Secretary of State](#) to John Jay, who had served as the Secretary of Foreign Affairs since 1784 and acted as the interim Secretary of State. After Jay expressed his preference for a judicial appointment, Washington selected Thomas Jefferson as the first permanent Secretary of State.^[47] For the key post of [Secretary of the Treasury](#), which would oversee economic policy, Washington chose Alexander Hamilton, after his first choice, [Robert Morris](#), declined. Morris had recommended Hamilton instead, writing "But, my dear general, you will be no loser by my declining the secretaryship of the Treasury, for I can recommend a far cleverer fellow than I am for your minister of finance in the person of your aide-de-camp, Colonel Hamilton."^[48] Washington's initial cabinet consisted of one individual from [New England](#) (Knox), one individual from the [mid-Atlantic](#) (Hamilton), and two [Southerners](#) (Jefferson and Randolph).^[49]

Washington considered himself to be an expert in both foreign affairs and the Department of War, and as such, according to [Forrest McDonald](#), "he was in practice his own Foreign Secretary and War Secretary."^[50] Jefferson left the cabinet at the end of 1793,^[51] and was replaced by Randolph, while [William Bradford](#) took over as Attorney General.^[52] Like Jefferson, Randolph tended to favor the French in foreign affairs, but he held very little influence in the cabinet.^[53] Knox, Hamilton, and Randolph all left the cabinet during Washington's second term; Randolph was forced to resign during the debate over the Jay Treaty. [Timothy Pickering](#) succeeded Knox as Secretary of War, while [Oliver Wolcott](#) became Secretary of the

Treasury and [Charles Lee](#) took the position of Attorney General.^[54] In 1795, Pickering became the Secretary of State, and [James McHenry](#) replaced Pickering as Secretary of War.^[55]

Hamilton and Jefferson had the greatest impact on cabinet deliberations during Washington's first term. Their deep philosophical differences set them against each other from the outset, and they frequently sparred over economic and foreign policy issues.^[56] With Jefferson's departure, Hamilton came to dominate the cabinet,^[57] and he remained very influential within the administration even after he left the cabinet during Washington's second term to practice law in [New York City](#).^[58]

JOHN ADAMS

John Adams (October 30, 1735^[a] – July 4, 1826) was an American statesman, attorney, diplomat, writer, and [Founding Father](#) who served as the second [president of the United States](#), from 1797 to 1801. Before his [presidency](#), he was a leader of the [American Revolution](#) that achieved independence from [Great Britain](#), and he served as the first [vice president of the United States](#). Adams was a dedicated diarist and regularly corresponded with many important figures in [early American history](#), including his wife and adviser [Abigail Adams](#) and [Thomas Jefferson](#).

A lawyer and political activist prior to the revolution, Adams was devoted to the [right to counsel](#) and [presumption of innocence](#). He defied anti-British sentiment and successfully defended British soldiers against murder charges arising from the [Boston Massacre](#). Adams was a [Massachusetts](#) delegate to the [Continental Congress](#) and became a principal leader of the Revolution. He assisted in drafting the [Declaration of Independence](#) in 1776 and was its foremost advocate in Congress. As a diplomat in Europe, he helped negotiate the [peace treaty with Great Britain](#) and secured vital governmental loans. Adams was the primary author of

the [Massachusetts Constitution](#) in 1780, which influenced the United States' own [constitution](#), as did his earlier *Thoughts on Government*.

Adams was elected to two terms as vice president under President [George Washington](#) and was elected as the United States' second president in 1796. He was the only president elected under the banner of the [Federalist Party](#). During his single term, Adams encountered fierce criticism from the [Jeffersonian Republicans](#) and from some in his own Federalist Party, led by his rival [Alexander Hamilton](#). Adams signed the controversial [Alien and Sedition Acts](#) and built up the [Army](#) and [Navy](#) in the undeclared "Quasi-War" with [France](#). The main accomplishment of his presidency was a [peaceful resolution](#) of this conflict in the face of public anger and Hamilton's opposition. During his term, he became the first president to reside in the executive mansion now known as the [White House](#).¹

JEFFERSON'S PATH TO THE PRESIDENCY

After returning to America in the fall of 1789, Jefferson accepted an appointment from President [George Washington](#) (1732-99) to become the new nation's first secretary of state. In this post, Jefferson clashed with U.S. Secretary of the Treasury [Alexander Hamilton](#) (1755/57-1804) over foreign policy and their differing interpretations of the U.S. Constitution. In the early 1790s, Jefferson, who favored strong state and local government, co-founded the [Democratic-Republican Party](#) to oppose Hamilton's [Federalist Party](#), which advocated for a strong national government with broad powers over the economy.

In the presidential election of 1796, Jefferson ran against John Adams and received the second highest amount of votes, which, according to the law at the time, made him vice president.

Jefferson ran against Adams again in the presidential election of 1800, which turned into a bitter battle between the Federalists and Democratic-Republicans. Jefferson defeated Adams; however, due to a flaw in the electoral system, Jefferson tied with fellow Democratic-Republican Aaron Burr (1756-1836). The House of Representatives broke the tie and voted Jefferson into office. In order to avoid a repeat of this situation, Congress proposed the Twelfth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which required separate voting for president and vice president. The amendment was ratified in 1804.

Jefferson Becomes Third U.S. President **Jefferson was sworn into office on March 4, 1801; his was the first presidential inauguration held in Washington, D.C. (George Washington was inaugurated in New York in 1789; in 1793, he was sworn into office in Philadelphia, as was his successor, John Adams, in 1797.) Instead of riding in a horse-drawn carriage, Jefferson broke with tradition and walked to and from the ceremony.**

One of the most significant achievements of Jefferson's first administration was the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France for \$15 million in 1803. At more than 820,000 square miles, the Louisiana Purchase (which included lands extending

between the Mississippi River and Rocky Mountains and the Gulf of Mexico to present-day Canada) effectively doubled the size of the United States. Jefferson then commissioned explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to explore the uncharted land, plus the area beyond, out to the Pacific Ocean. (At the time, most Americans lived within 50 miles of the Atlantic Ocean.) [Lewis and Clark's expedition](#), known today as the Corps of Discovery, lasted from 1804 to 1806 and provided valuable information about the geography, American Indian tribes and animal and plant life of the western part of the continent. In 1804, Jefferson ran for re-election and defeated Federalist candidate Charles Pinckney (1746-1825) of [South Carolina](#) with more than 70 percent of the popular vote and an electoral count of 162-14. During his second term, Jefferson focused on trying to keep America out of Europe's Napoleonic Wars (1803-15). However, after Great Britain and France, who were at war, both began harassing American merchant ships, Jefferson implemented the Embargo Act of 1807. The act, which closed U.S. ports to foreign trade, proved unpopular with Americans and hurt the U.S. economy. It was repealed in 1809 and, despite the president's attempts to maintain neutrality, the U.S. ended up going to war against Britain in the [War of 1812](#). Jefferson chose not to run for a third term in 1808 and was succeeded in office by [James Madison](#) (1751-1836), a fellow Virginian and former U.S. secretary of state