

Cartography, Colonies, and the 1766 Expedition

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In 1766, three men set out from Fort Pitt on a mission several years in the making. The mission seemed simple in theory, but a specific cadre of imperial agents could only accomplish the task. An army engineer, a woodsman, and a trader led a flotilla of company men and Shawnee to the furthest edges of Britain's newly claimed continental empire. A circuitous loop of 4,582 water miles connected their journey from Fort Pitt, Pennsylvania, to Charleston, South Carolina. This mission captured the tensions of enlightened British agents' inherent skillset of improvement and colonization at odds with a centralizing government's plan to manage North America after the Seven Years' War.

This essay places the 1766 expedition in context with the 1755 Mitchell Map of *British Dominions in North America*, Harry Gordon's 1766 *Courses of the Ohio River*, Daniel Paterson's 1767 *Cantonment of His Majesty's Forces in North America*, and Thomas Hutchins' 1778 *A Plan of Several Villages in the Illinois Country*. Evaluating these maps with historiographical concepts such as borderlands, transatlantic experiences, and a scientific improvement demonstrates the significance of General Thomas Gage's administration before the American Revolution and emphasizes the critical role British agents and Native chiefs played in the complex watershed of the Ohio River.¹

John Mitchell's *Map of British Dominions in North America* painted a picture of a large British landscape with legal and physical claims across the continent. Historians David Dixon and Colin Calloway define the British Indian reserve as a land pillaged and broken by a tidal

¹ All maps referenced can be found at the end of this document. Thomas Hutchins, *A Plan of the River Ohio from Fort Pitt to the Mississippi: By order of ye Chief Engineer, Tho. Hutchins Ensign Draughtsman*, (London, 1766.) Thomas Hutchins, *A Plan of the Several Villages in the Illinois Country with Part of the River Mississippi*, (London, Printed for the author by Almon, J. 1778); John Mitchell, Thomas Kitchin, and Andrew Millar, *A map of the British and French dominions in North America, with the roads, distances, limits, and extent of the settlements, humbly inscribed to the Right Honourable the Earl of Halifax, and the other Right Honorable the Lords Commissioners for Trade & Plantations*, (London, Sold by and: Millar, 1755), G3300 1755, M51, Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC; Daniel Paterson, *Cantonment of the Forces in North America, 11th Oct 1765*, G3301.R2 1765.C3, Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

wave of colonial encroachment. Yet, this essay takes an approach akin to Susan Sleeper-Smith and Stephen Warren's view of a close-knit Indian network that thrived on borderland diplomacy until the removal of British troops. In *The Worlds the Shawnees Made*, Stephen Warren argues that the Shawnee acted as "parochial cosmopolitans" or, more plainly, as well-connected borderland diplomats. As depicted by the thinly stationed troops in the *Cantonment Map of his Majesty's Forces* and "Shawnee towns" around Mitchell's map, the Shawnee acted as a borderland power enabling the British to negotiate with tribes and traders around the Indian Reserve. Throughout this story, the Shawnee reside firmly at the side of George Croghan. This connection is not only economical but kinship-based as Croghan married Takarihoga of the Mohawk Turtle Clan and used this connection to bolster personal and imperial alliances and trade networks.²

Before 1763, European powers could barely delineate the far colonial west; various maps depicted waterways and connecting points where British, French, and Spanish lands collided. Expanding British networks endured through the diligence of on-the-ground agents' implementation of trans-Atlantic experiences. By 1766, British colonial actors evolved from experimental woodsmen into trained military and diplomatic agents. The new regime in the *pays d'en haut* relied on experiences from the Caribbean, Ireland, and Scotland to secure the frontier.

² Stephen Warren, *The Worlds the Shawnees Made: Migration and Violence In Early America*. (The University of North Carolina Press, 2014). Volwiler, Albert, *George Croghan and the Westward Movement, 1741-1782*. (Arthur H. Clark, 1926), 25. David Dixon, *Never Come to Peace Again: Pontiac's Uprising and the Fate of the British Empire In North America*, (University of Oklahoma Press, 2005). Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indigenous Prosperity and American Conquest: Indian Women of the Ohio River Valley, 1690-1792*, (Williamsburg, Virginia: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2019).

Cosmopolitan agents who served in several trans-Atlantic theaters oversaw the new regime's activities.³

Captain Harry Gordon, a veteran of the Jacobite campaigns and war in the Caribbean, became the Chief Army Engineer in North America in 1765. His right-hand man, Thomas Hutchins, previously proved himself a master woodsman and map maker during long-distance missions from the forks of the Ohio to the edge of the Great Lakes. Gordon and Hutchins exemplify Britain's newest agents: two men, one English born and one colonial born, eager to advance the British state and make their mark on the frontier. The Scottish-born Gordon received classical and professional education as a surveyor and engineer. Hutchins, a colonial orphan, gained his education through on-the-job training and trudging through vast forests. Together they created the first hydrography of the British interior. Analyzing the maps made by Gordon and Hutchins in 1766 reveals the trans-Atlantic skills brought to bear on the Indian reserve during the 1766 expedition.⁴

The final portion of the essay sees Thomas Hutchins' colonial advocacy reflecting 18th-century scientific enlightened mores. Engineers such as Hutchins and Gordon provided British planners with all the information necessary to forge a colonial path in the American West. Their developed eye for improving the land agriculturally and scientifically clashed with the creation of the Indian Reserve.⁵ While frontier agents advocated for growth, George III and his ministers

³ Harry Gordon, "Harry Gordon to Robert Napier," Pargellis, Stanley (ed), *Military Affairs in North America, 1748-1765: Selected Documents From the Cumberland Papers In Windsor Castle*, (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1936), 177.

⁴ Fraser, William, *The Chiefs of Grant: Correspondence*, Vol 2, (Edinburgh, 1883). 284. Alden, John Richard, *General Gage In America*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1948); Paterson, Daniel, *Cantonment of the Forces in North America, 11th Oct 1765*, G3301.R2 1765.C3. Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

⁵ Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans In an Age of Expansion, 1560-1660*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Alexander Johnson, *The First Mapping of America: The General Survey of British North America*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2017); Seed, Patricia, *Ceremonies of Possession In Europe's Conquest of the New*

followed enlightened principles to improve and catalog their domain. The Ohio River Valley existed as a land pulled between the settler-colonial visions of experienced colonists and the enlightened monarchy's desire to improve "savages" and "wastes." The information collection stemming from enlightened cartography continued the slow drift toward a centralizing state. Large and small-scale maps were sent to General Gage and on to London depicting forts around the west and complete route surveys of inland rivers. Colonial leaders in America continually operated on the assumption that more information would lead the Board of Trade to approve colonies within the Indian reserve.⁶

The 1766 expedition exemplified the dichotomies pulling at the evolving British state as it attempted to gain control of its newly won empire after 1763. This essay contextualizes maps surrounding the 1766 expedition, building upon Allison Games' *Web of Empires* cosmopolitan agents operating worldwide; Stephen Warren's "parochial cosmopolitan" Shawnee diplomats who stitched borderlands together, and Matthew Edney and Richard Drayton's cartographic improvements within British systems. The maps generated by the 1766 expedition down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers exemplify how borderland tactics shifted to a larger scale, trans-Atlantic experiences shaped imperial actions, and cartographic ventures codified colonial opportunities.

Borderlands

A Map of the British and French Dominions in North America, published in 1755 for the Board of Trade, captures the first attempt to see Britain's North American holdings. The Board

World, 1492-1640, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). Stephen Hornsby and Hope Stege, *Surveyors of Empire: Samuel Holland, J.W.F. Des Barres, and the Making of the Atlantic Neptune*, (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011).

⁶ Richard Drayton, *Nature's Government: Science, Imperial Britain, and the 'Improvement' of the World*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 85. James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 2.

of Trade meticulously began surveys of the continent before the outbreak of war in 1754. The cartographer, Virginian-born John Mitchell, understood British claims in America and portrayed the territory as a densely settled coastline reaching towards the continent's interior, hemmed by French lands. The most intriguing claims on the map appear along the Canadian border and the Ohio watershed. Several claims are scattered across the map to justify the map's design. A small paragraph printed above Lake Ontario claims the British-Iroquois alliance as proof of British rights to Montreal and its environs. Two paragraphs appear above the mouth of the Ohio River, declaring, "The six nations have extended their territories to the river Illinois ever since the year 1672, ... The Ohio Indians are a mixt tribe of the several Indians of our colonies settled here under the six nations, who have always been in alliance and subjection to the English." Another claim printed at the mouth of the Illinois River lists the river as the Six Nation's boundary since 1744. These speculative statements gave British planners confidence to imagine a controlled and understood land despite the complex realities.⁷ [See Map 1]

Before the British triumph in the Seven Years' War, the lands of the Ohio River watershed encapsulated a complex yet balanced borderland. For two centuries, the lands and rivers separated the coastal colonies from the inland colonials. The multifaceted borderland lay narrowly between the Appalachian and the Great Lakes. Dutch, French, English, Iroquois, Algonquian, and more crisscrossed the lands with settlements and trading posts, testing one another for advantage and survival. Borderlands are regions where no single faction wields enough force or influence to dominate. Two historians, Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron define the borderlands term as an international struggle that turns into an international

⁷ Matthew H. Edney, "A Publishing History of John Mitchell's Map of North America, 1755-1775," *Cartographic Perspectives*, no. 58, (1 Sep. 2007), 4-27, 8 and 36. S. Max Edelson, *The New Map of Empire: How Britain Imagined America Before Independence*. Cambridge, (MA: Harvard University Press, 2017), 37. Mitchell, *A map of the British and French dominions in North America*. Warren, *The Worlds the Shawnees Made*, 225.

coexistence. Within a borderland, factions gain a balance of power through steady intercultural exchange instead of groups infrequently penetrating zones for short-term gain.⁸

In their borderlands essay, Aron and Adelman utilize the Ohio River Valley as a critical turning point from borderland to bordered land. Aron writes, “the British began changing borderland rules. Intercultural diplomacy gave way to a spirit of outright conquest. Territorial colonization replaced exchange. ... Thus, in North America, the British sphere became the first to host the transition from borderland to frontier colonies.” This statement is true in the long term, but the proclamation line of 1763 restored the borderland status quo until the American Revolution.⁹

The imperial rivalries of the early 18th century pushed and pulled their peoples along the Great Lakes and Ohio River Valley. From 1763 to 1775, the changed borderland brought trade and resource from the West to coastal city centers. A nation proud of its scientific prowess, Britain lacked geographic knowledge of the interior’s waterways. Imperial visions sought fully developed waterway routes to extend growing mercantile networks. After 1763, new British lands recentered trade networks on the Ohio and St. Lawrence Rivers, hoping to cut out rivals on the Mississippi. Lord Barrington wrote in May 1766, “In short, we may safely give up the trade of the Mississippi such as it is, to the French, and let them make the most of it. We have much better means of trading by other rivers and should never trade by the Mississippi because the French at New Orleans will always command its progress to the sea.” London ministers believed French trade could be discounted, but General Gage replied to Barrington, saying, “skins and

⁸ Adelman, Jeremy and Stephen Aron. "From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and the Peoples In Between In North American History." *The American Historical Review*, vol. 104, no. 3, (1 Jun. 1999), pp. 814 – 841, 818; Colin G. Calloway, *The Scratch of a Pen: 1763 and the Transformation of North America*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006); Edelson, *New Map of Empire*, 252.

⁹ Adelman and Aron, “From Borderlands to Borders,” 818.

furs are brought from the lakes and other parts to the French, now settled opposite Illinois, and our traders, get French goods from thence...The only visible means to prevent this smuggling would be to stop up the Ohio and Illinois rivers by having a post on each to confiscate all French goods found on the east side of the Mississippi.” The new borderland bore similar imperial tensions but on a larger scale. Now stretching from Pennsylvania to the Mississippi River, Britain’s borderland district required an army to control the massive watershed; however, £122 million of war debts weighed heavy on London ministers.¹⁰

Despite dozens of letters and pleas from colonial officials, the western budget was continually reduced. In 1763, General Amherst requested nine regiments of ten companies. Surprisingly, by 1767, fifteen regiments garrisoned American lands. The British army positioned 15,000 men in England, 12,000 in Ireland, and 8,000 troops in North America, making the largest zone defended by the fewest men. In October 1765, Gage’s staff drew up a *Cantonment of Forces in North America*. Drawn by Ensign Daniel Paterson, the 1765 edition of the map depicts units garrisoned sparsely across the continent. Gage forwarded the 1765 edition of the map to Secretary of State Conway in a letter on March 28, 1766. The *Cantonment* map began to help British planners know and occupy the vast interior.¹¹ [See Maps 2 and 3]

General William Roy, the prime surveyor of Scotland, said, “accurate surveys of a country are universally admitted to be... the best means of forming judicious plans of defense...Hence it happens, that if a country has not actually been surveyed, or is but little known, a state of warfare generally produces the first improvements in its geography.” Before

¹⁰ William Barrington, “Plan for the West,” *The New Régime, 1765-1767*, Edited by Clarence Alvord, Volume 11, Illinois State Historical Library, 1916, 238. Gage, “Remarks,” *IHC*, Vol 11, 244.

¹¹ Thomas Gage, “Distribution of Troops, February 22nd 1767,” *New Regime*, *IHC* Vol 11, 512. Edward Ely Curtis, *The Organization of the British Army in the American Revolution*, (United Kingdom: Yale University Press, 1926), 2. Paterson, “Cantonment of the Forces in North America, 11th Oct 1765.” Edelson, *New Map of Empire*, 86. Thomas Gage, “To Conway, March 28, 1766,” *IHC* Vol 11, 200.

Gage could apply General Roy's adage, a formal survey needed to answer the navigability of the Ohio River. The 1765 *Cantonment* map did not display the Ohio River as a useable route. The Ohio River could become the critical logistical corridor between the East and West if fully navigable. Gage's *Cantonment* map captures the thin dispersal of troops around the continent. Britain needed a more significant inland force if the proposed Indian Reserve was to be protected from outlaw settlers and rebellious natives. Amherst had not feared or respected the Indians, but Gage realized the need for Indian allies to create a profitable inland market. General Gage, William Johnson, and George Croghan developed a plan for the West; the recently subdued Pontiac would be wooed to represent all Native people in the West, and Shawnee chiefs would escort Pontiac around the region to build alliances. The Shawnee people became the imperial glue for Thomas Gage's borderland problems.¹²

The Shawnee, frequent migrants, re-established the Ohio Valley as their central homeland before the mid-18th-century. This region served as the hotbed of conflict between the British and French, placing the Shawnee in the middle of it all. The Shawnee thrived in the colonial borderlands for two centuries, enjoying strong trade relations with the British, especially in the southern colonies. After a spate of colonial abuses in South Carolina, the Shawnee, through Illinois connections, realigned themselves, taking French offers to fight the British during the Seven Years' War. The Shawnee acted as stalwart soldiers and diplomats amongst the Middle West's many nations throughout the war. The tides of war pushed the Shawnee up and down the continent, but their strong kinship networks enabled them to be less tied to the land and more connected as diplomats and traders. Shawnee borderland connections helped them quickly integrate into the French network, allying with the Illinois, Kickapoo, and others to hinder

¹² Carolyn J. Anderson, "Constructing the Military Landscape the Board of Ordnance Maps and Plans of Scotland, 1689-1815," (University of Edinburgh, 2010), 10; Dixon, *Never Come to Peace*. 268.

British activity in the West. This successful flip played into the post-war dilemma when many Shawnee chiefs expressed their victorious military record against the British to refute why Britain could not claim their lands. Claims drawn on Mitchell's map seemed to place Britons in control of the Ohio River Valley, but Shawnee alliances kept the peace while Britain expanded their networks.¹³

The 1758 Treaty of Easton, followed by a 1760 conference at the freshly constructed Fort Pitt, restored the Shawnee-British Alliance. The Shawnee sought British realignment to maintain factional superiority in the Ohio watershed with the French in decline. The Shawnee migrated and traded across the entire eastern portion of the continent, forming connections from Georgia to Michigan. In 1763, the retreating French regime seeded the region with rumors of a glorious French return. The Ottawa, led by Pontiac, coordinated a broader Indian alliance to prevent British dominance of the borderland. Britain found itself unsure how to proceed; military units had not conquered the West, and many tribal leaders reminded the British of that fact. Diplomacy conducted in Paris did not paint a clear justification for tribes to subordinate themselves to a new British "father." Despite enlarging visions and growing alliances, the interior of North America remained shadowed in mystery for British military commanders. General William Roy's adage of surveying for a judicious defense correctly captured the panicked rush General Jeffrey Amherst experienced as Pontiac's War engulfed the former *pays d'en haut* in 1763.¹⁴

One year into Pontiac's War, the Lords of Trade sent a message to King George III saying, "We find ourselves under the greatest difficulties arising from the want of exact surveys

¹³ Steele, Ian, "Shawnee Origins of Their Seven Years' War," *Ethnohistory*, vol 53, no 4, (1 Sep. 2006), pp. 657 – 687, 658; Warren, *World the Shawnees Made*, 28 and 109. Calloway, *Shawnees and the War*, 86.

¹⁴ Steele, "Shawnee Origins of Their Seven Years' War," 680. Anderson, "Constructing the Military Landscape," 10.

of these countries in America, many parts of which have never been surveyed at all and others so imperfectly that the charts and maps thereof are not to be depended upon and in this situation, we are reduced to the necessity of making representation to your majesty, founded upon little or no information.” British leadership acknowledged they moved through the fog of war with inadequate geographic data. Mitchell’s map of North America compiled decades of cartographic knowledge into one map, but Mitchell’s British domain lacked the scientific and political power to suppress Pontiac’s influence.¹⁵

Without a French menace, the new bordered land had not frightened Amherst. He displayed a lack of concern and a lack of knowledge of the fatherly alliance system. When the secretary of state ordered Amherst to limit expenditures and gifts, Amherst took the cessation of gifts to Indians as an easy way to save money. Policies of harsh diplomacy and no gifts presented to the Indian nations the “vengeful father” they feared. Pontiac emerged as the face of a widespread Indian revolt against their new British father. Pontiac’s uprising triggered a significant blow to British power, capturing nine of the eleven western forts. On the heels of the recent Cherokee rebellion, the British far west looked like a tattered warzone to planners in London. Ministers searching for a way to maintain the west developed the Proclamation of 1763, which planned to limit settlement and create an Indian Reserve. This secured zone was not a favor to the colonists but to the Indians.¹⁶

In 1763, General Thomas Gage replaced Amherst as commander of North America, rapidly deploying Colonel Bouquet and Colonel Bradstreet to end Pontiac’s movement.

¹⁵ Board of Trade quoted in Keith R Widder, "The Cartography of Dietrich Brehm and Thomas Hutchins and the Establishment of British Authority in the Western Great Lakes Region, 1760-1763," *Cartographica*, vol. 36, no. 1, (1 Mar. 1999), 2.

¹⁶ Dixon, *Never Come to Peace Again*, 112. Calloway, *The Scratch of a Pen*, 91.

Bradstreet failed, but Colonel Henry Bouquet managed first to win defensive battles near Fort Pitt in 1763 and then march a 1,500-man army deep into the Ohio country in 1764. Bouquet calmed the war zone with a show of force instead of a bloody battle in the lower Ohio River Valley. A peace conference deep in hostile territory restored the status quo.¹⁷

Despite its imperial visions, Mitchell's map captured the borderland skills of the Shawnee, listing four separate locations across Pennsylvania and western Virginia as Shawnee lands or towns. Recent scholarship by Colin Callaway and Steven Warren place Shawnee migratory towns as far-flung as the Savannah River, Kaskaskia town, and along Lake Erie. The Shawnee maintained a powerful tribal identity no matter their situation and were the only faction capable of monitoring the expansive "Indian Reserve." Three copies from three different years exist of General Gage's *Cantonment of His Majesties Forces* map. The three maps provide a pictorial change for 1765, 1766, and 1767. Over the three years, the map depicts regiments and detachments stationed throughout North America. The 1767 edition of Gage's *Cantonment Map* only depicts fourteen companies west of the Proclamation Line, meaning 1,050 British men monitored the 204,000 square miles of the Ohio watershed. In reality, Indian alliances formed across the borderland "kept the peace." Comparatively, at the May 1765 Fort Pitt conference, 461 Indian warriors attended. At the August 1765 Detroit conference, 530 warriors attended, meaning that the Indian warriors capable of traveling to two conferences equaled the entire British garrison in the Indian Reserve. In 1765, when George Croghan's diplomatic party was ambushed, and allied Shawnee chiefs were killed, the Kickapoo did not ask for British

¹⁷ Dixon, *Never Come to Peace Again*, 243.

forgiveness but Shawnee. Pontiac personally delivered Kickapoo Wampum belts asking the Shawnee for forgiveness in the fall of 1765.¹⁸

The Shawnee offered themselves as spokesmen for the volatile region. Shawnee Chiefs accompanied George Croghan on every diplomatic mission from 1764 to 1767, including a large contingent that traveled to Fort Chartres with Croghan in the 1766 expedition. Shawnee borderland connections were essential for Britain to establish peace in their new sector. Mitchell's beautiful map was a better imagining tool than a planning device. In the 18th century, Britain struggled to understand space, even on their home island. Carolyn Anderson discusses the military survey of Scotland, saying, "Reliable information about the geography of Scotland was essential for the British state to exercise territorial control and counter-insurgency incited by Jacobite rebellions."¹⁹ Scottish rebellions forced the British military to rethink how to control their island through military surveys and outposts. The square mileage of the entire British Island is less than 93,000 square miles, but the Ohio watershed contains 204,000 square miles. North American maps presented this enormous landscape on a well-ordered scale, often drawn at 1:2,000,000, depicting a top-down view of the entire continent. Mitchell's map seemed to show a land already tamed by imperial might. The map imagined that once rid of the French, a smattering of outposts along the Mississippi and Great Lakes could control a region ten times the landmass of the British Isles. For Britain to claim the vast space, token Army posts must occupy and develop the land to meet the rules of international law. In 1766, General Gage, commander of North American forces, needed to demonstrate his progress in taming and claiming North America. The best way to show proof to ministers in London lay in a cadre of scientifically

¹⁸ Colin Calloway, *The Shawnees and the War for America*, (New York: Viking, 2007), 20; George Croghan, "Croghan's Journal, Feb 28 – May 11 1765," "Croghan's Journal, May 15 – Oct 8 1765," "List of Indians Met at the Detroit Conference, August 1765," *New Regime. IHC Vol 11*, 10, 31, and 57.

¹⁹ Anderson, "Constructing the Military Landscape," 10.

trained military engineers who began charting North America. Gage and London ministers believed the land could be controlled if it was known.

By 1766, the British-Indian alliances gained traction and support, but peace in the borderland was only the first step. The next task for British imperial expansion involved trading posts and colonies. Early in 1766, General Gage wrote orders to send two specialists into the frontier — Captain Harry Gordon and George Croghan. For Britannia to rule the inland rivers, English Gage, Scottish Gordon, and Irish Croghan relied on their diverse experiences to shape the growing power of the British Empire.

Empire and Experience

The tiny island off the northwest coast of the European continent rose to power through two centuries of overseas experimentation. Allison Games advocates for a “web of empire” created by repeated movements and the implementation of overseas experience to build an adaptive cohort of leaders who could develop an empire. General Thomas Gage, Captain Harry Gordon, Ensign Thomas Hutchins, and George Croghan represent a 1760s incarnation of the empire-building agents Games saw in the 16th and 17th centuries. Gage, Gordon, Hutchins, and Croghan did not travel to Asia, but they moved through multiple imperial spaces bringing ideas, experiences, and the trans-Atlantic world together. Through these four figures, I will examine how trans-Atlantic experiences were deployed in the new British Far West. The beating heart of the empire sent agents to the periphery, recalled them home, then redeployed them to new zones continuing the gradual trend of centralization and standardization of colonial practices.²⁰

Thomas Gage came from a long family line of elite aristocrats who continually chose the wrong side of history. Such familial failures led Thomas to seek a safe route through British

²⁰ Games, *Web of Empire*, 291.

politics. He went to school and bought a commission into the Army. He served in Ireland, France, and Scotland. In Ireland, he learned colonial management; in France, he learned the brutal costs of full-scale war at the battle of Fontenoy; and in Scotland, he experienced the difficulties of chasing rebels in their homeland. Thomas Hutchins joined the transnational émigré regiment of the 60th Royal Americans. The 60th regiment consisted of Swiss, Dutch, and German officers, with the enlisted ranks filled by colonials. George Croghan, an immigrant from Ireland, followed the customs of the land to marry and trade along the English routes of the lower Great Lakes. A proud member of the Gordon aristocratic family, Harry Gordon attended the Woolwich school of Engineers, entering a limited group of trained military surveyors and engineers. Gordon honed his cartographic skills surveying in Scotland during the tenure of the talented William Roy.²¹

At Woolwich school, Gordon trained in the newly developed systems of military cartography. He charted Scottish roads and forts following exact templates. By 1760, the army corps of engineers had spent a decade surveying and building across the Scottish Highlands. The contested landscape required new maps secured under lock and key, preventing untrustworthy eyes from seeing the elaborate military network around Fort George on the Moray Firth. Gordon's skills contributed to the development of fortifications in Quebec, Augusta, and most notably, the eyewitness account of the siege of Martinique.²²

²¹ The Gage family supported the leadership of King John, Queen Mary, Charles I, James II, and Fredrick of Wales. Gage served in the "Battereau's foot" and then Duke of Cumberland's 55th/44th Regiment. John Richard Alden, *General Gage in America*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1948), 12-15; Alexander Campbell, *The Royal American Regiment: An Atlantic Microcosm, 1755-1772*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), 69.

²² Patrice Bret, "Engineers and Topographical Surveys" in Edney, Matthew and Pedley, Mary Sponberg, eds. *The History of Cartography, Volume 4: Cartography In the European Enlightenment*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 383-393; Carolyn Anderson, "State Imperatives: Military Mapping In Scotland, 1689-1770." *Scottish Geographical Journal*, vol. 125, no. 1, (1 Mar. 2009), pp. 4 - 24. 21. Pargellis, Stanley (ed). *Military Affairs In North America, 1748-1765: Selected Documents From the Cumberland Papers In Windsor Castle*, (Hamden, Conn: Archon Books, 1936), 104n.

Gordon exemplified the enlightened mid-eighteenth-century operator Britain's empire desired. Well educated, driven, and talented, Gordon surveyed and reported on events around the Empire. His two surviving Scottish maps are remarkable examples of enlightened cartography. The beautifully crafted maps of his Scottish endeavors exemplify the professionalization of British engineers in the 1750s. Army surveyors centralized and standardized cartography paying dividends after the young James Cook took skills he learned from army engineers in the American Northeast to the Pacific.²³ [See Maps 4 and 5]

Captain Harry Gordon became chief army engineer in North America in 1764. Upon assumption as chief engineer in America, Gordon wrote a memorial to the Board of Trade. Gordon viewed the utility of frontier forts as essential for maintaining peace in the West. He explained that if the military armed outposts better, "We should probably have saved a number of soldiers and an expense of £150,000 which the last Indian War cost us." Gordon believed more military spending to survey and fortify a waterway corridor could project power into the vast interior of British North America. This opinion matched Gordon's experience in Scotland, where he helped chart the landscape hedging in Jacobites moving from valley to valley in 1755.²⁴

While it may seem that an engineer would always argue for more forts, a vital counterpoint was the previous chief engineer in North America. Colonel William Eyre, also a veteran of the campaigns to suppress the Jacobite Rebellion, wrote to William Johnson of the expense and danger of maintaining forts across the vast North American space: "I am persuaded we must alter our way of thinking and act differently from our present plan...our taking posts

²³ Hornsby tells a riveting tale of professional knowledge sharing between Samuel Holland and James Cook in chapter 1 of his book. Hornsby, *Surveyors of Empire*, 18-19.

²⁴ "The grand avenue by which trade must be carried on is the communication of the western lakes...if this grand avenue is properly attended to and secured, trade may safely branch out from it in all...channels." Harry Gordon, "Memorial of Western Forts,," Pargellis. *Military Affairs*. 464. Fraser, *The Chiefs of Grant*, 284.

and so many of them far advanced amongst the Indians, must for centuries put ourselves in their power...our withdrawing our posts is the only safety left us...the enemy will have the further to come to attack them, consequently be less formidable than if they were in their own country.”

Eyre wrote this assessment two months after Pontiac lifted the siege of Detroit. The ferocity and power of the Native nations freshly festered in the minds of men living on the frontier. Johnson replied to the letter mainly in agreement: “the difficulty and even impossibility of securing our communications or maintaining our Outposts contrary to the Indians inclinations are very clear to me, but...whenever we can have a good communication by the water, we might tolerably well maintain posts.” Despite Johnson’s intimate knowledge of Indian affairs, he believed in the British capability to control the frontier through connected waterways. The lines connecting regiments across the Indian Reserve on Paterson’s *Cantonment Map* would give Johnson hope the army supported his plans.²⁵

As early as 1763, General Amherst announced to London ministers that new regiments would be stationed in newly built “grand stations” across the West. After the failures of Jeffery Amherst, Gage strove to prove himself a capable administrator of North America; he must balance peace, trade, and growth in North America. Britain’s mercantilist policies generated trade and wealth by taking raw resources from the colonies and redistributing manufactured goods through the seaport cities. The Board of Trade feared the new lands would burden the mercantile system unless they had improved waterways and trade centers into the continental interior. Once imperial planners saw the interior as a zone for raw resources, water routes

²⁵ William Johnson, “Johnson to Eyre, January 19th, 1764,” *Military Affairs in North America*, 460; Patterson, *Cantonment Map*, 1766.

became essential for a successful trade. General Gage followed the previous example of General James Murray and ordered extensive army surveys of inland rivers to connect trade networks.²⁶

The Ohio River represented the prime corridor within the Indian Reserve, but as of 1764, the extent of navigability was unconfirmed. General Gage “was deeply concerned that the influence of recalcitrant...might spark hostilities in Illinois country. This was more likely since Great Britain had not yet extended its authority in the region ...French traders still roamed throughout the territory and were more than willing to sell arms and ammunition to the Indians.” Gage needed to finalize the peace treaties with the tribes of Pontiac’s rebellion, and he needed to know how to protect the region from further instability.²⁷

In a letter on May 9, 1766, Gage gave Gordon the following instructions: sketch the depth and breadth of the Ohio River; select sites for new outposts and nightly campsites along the rivers; prevent the collapse of Fort Chartres; travel the length of the Mississippi and record its courses and strengths of foreign outposts; examine British forts at Natchez, Mobile, and Pensacola; and lastly, report in person after the mission. On June 18, 1766, seventeen boats departed Fort Pitt, thirteen owned by Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan Company, one for Croghan, and three for the military cadre. A party of seventy Seneca and fifty Shawnee accompanied the flotilla. Between the bateaus and canoes, the flotilla stretched over twenty miles

²⁶ Jeffery Amherst, “*Distribution of Troops 1763*,” *The Critical Period, 1763-1765, Illinois Historical Collections, Volume 10*, (Springfield, Illinois. 1915), 5; “This country by a communication of waters that is extended thro’out & by an Alliance of all these into a one whole is capable of being & is naturally, a Foundation of a one system of command,” Thomas Pownall, “Considerations upon the Scite, Interests, and Service of North America,” *Military Affairs in North America*, 159.

²⁷ “I shall be obliged to you for any intelligence you have been able to collect, which you can in any shape depend upon, about the navigation of the Ohio, particularly what you have learnt about the depth of water at the rapids whether they can be passed up and down without the necessity of making a portage.” Thomas Gage, “Gage to Bouquet, May 21st, 1764,” *New Regime, Vol 11*, 248. The Naval plan to map the new world followed by General Murray’s survey of Canada is best recorded in Hornby’s *Surveyors of Empire*. Dixon, *Never Come to Peace Again*. 252.

along the river. This formidable fleet brought the authority and wealth of the British Empire into the West.²⁸ [See Map 10]

Gordon dutifully recorded the latitude and longitude of tributary river mouths opening into the Ohio River throughout the expedition. Thomas Hutchins recorded every bearing taken along each nautical course. Hutchins's detailed journal of 1766 contains the course, hour and minute traveled, miles and yards traveled, water speed, and remarks for each course recorded. Hutchins recorded the details of over 450 individual courses. At the journey's end, Gordon compiled all of Hutchins's courses into a map of the river, which Gordon attached to the report he sent to Gage. Gordon's survey confirmed the navigability of the Ohio River, writing; "The Falls ought not to be called so as the stream on the north side has no sudden pitch, but only runs rapidly over the ledge of a flat limestone rock...the company's boats that passed in April were not sensible of any Falls neither knew the place where they are. In the course of communication, a Sergeant's post will be necessary & useful here. The situation of it will be marked on the Plan." Before the survey, details of the Ohio River remained unconfirmed; the conditions of the rapids or falls and the time required to traverse from Fort Pitt to the mouth of the Mississippi needed answering. Gordon and Hutchins created a detailed hydrographic chart answering those questions and proved the Ohio River could logistically resupply outposts from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi.²⁹

While the army officers bent over survey equipment and strained their eyes on dark nights to create charts, Croghan enjoyed the expedition. George Morgan criticized Croghan's "laziness": "We have not yet embark'd till half-past six in the morning or rowed till after five

²⁸ Harry Gordon, "Gordon's Journal, May 8th – December 6th, 1766," *New Regime*, IHC, Vol 11, 291; George Morgan, "Morgan to his Wife, June 28th, 1766," *New Regime*, IHC, Vol 11, 314.

²⁹ Harry Gordon, "Gordon's Journal," *New Regime*, IHC Vol 11, 293-294.

since Mr. Croghan has joined us which will render our voyage not a little tedious.” Croghan went slower to maintain a cordial relationship with the Seneca war party and Shawnee chiefs traveling with the group. Croghan’s patience paid off in successful conferences at the Mingo Town and the villages at the Mouth of the Muskingum and Scioto. Patience and communication with the Indian allies saw the most significant returns when Croghan sent Indian scout parties to spread the word of their peaceful mission.³⁰

Croghan treated with several tribes at the mouth of the Scioto River. “The greatest part of the Shawnee nation was assembled here at the desire of Mr. Croghan; matters being settled with them, although with difficulty.” Croghan successfully negotiated peace with the Shawnee and Mingos. To complete the treaty, Croghan promised to send traders to their villages near the Scioto, despite this being in violation of Gage, Johnson, and Governor Fauquier’s trade policies requiring Indian traders to report to Army occupied outposts for exchanges. Croghan ignored the limitations of official policy, relying on his experience with the on-the-ground realities to stretch policy and further imperial missions. Agents’ expertise and local initiative forged an imperial transatlantic web to forge a vast empire.³¹

On August 6, 1766, Gordon examined Fort Massac near the mouth of the Tennessee River: Gordon wrote, “The situation of this fort is a good one; jetting with a point a little into the river, the reach of which up and down it discovers to a considerable distance; a garrison here will protect the traders that come down the Ohio.” Answering Gage’s orders, he explained the strategic value of Fort Massac laid in its ability to check Cherokee war parties. For decades, the French retained the fort to deter southern war parties from ascending the river. Each detail

³⁰ George Morgan, “Morgan to his Wife, June 28th, 1766,” *New Regime*, IHC, Vol 11, 314.

³¹ Harry Gordon, “Gordon’s Journal,” *New Regime*, IHC Vol 11, 292; Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan, “Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan to Gage, August 10th, 1766,” *New Regime*, IHC Vol 11, 363.

recorded by Gordon and Hutchins enhanced the army's ability to interdict and shape Indian movements along the Ohio. Gordon watched as Jacobites repeatedly outran British units through ill-defined valleys in Scotland. Gordon believed forts at geographic chokepoints would restrict Indian maneuvers to manageable patterns.³² [See Map 3, 9, and 10]

While most geographic features on maps appear to represent more than they do, Fort Massac exemplifies the inverse dilemma of an on-the-ground reality being more advantageous than the map displays. Fort Massac rarely appears on maps of the west. The fort is absent from pre-Seven Years' War maps, Peterson's "Cantonment maps," and Bowen and Gibson's 1771 *An Accurate Map of North America*. Yet, Gordon, Hutchins, and other military officers recognized the usefulness of the strategic location. The fort's strong potential to prevent Cherokee freedom of movement kept it in frequent use until 1814. In 1796, President George Washington ordered the fort reinforced and strengthened; Captain William Clark resupplied at the fort in 1803, and Vice President Burr stopped at the fort for a secret meeting in 1805. Copying the string of forts stretched between Loch Ness and Moray Firth, Gordon hoped to plant American defenses in the most strategic locations. As the 34th regiment occupied Fort Chartres and the 21st regiment managed West Florida, Gordon recommended to Gage that a new fort must be established at the forks of the Mississippi. This advice never came to fruition, but it matched the zeal which installed Fort Augustus and Fort George in the Scottish Highlands.³³

Gordon, Hutchins, and Croghan complete the 1766 expedition by sailing down the Mississippi, analyzing the forts across the Gulf Coast, and reporting on the appearance of Cuban

³² Fraser, *The Chiefs of Grant*. 285.

³³ Thomas Gage, "Distribution of Troops February 22, 1767," *New Regime, IHC Vol 11*, 512-13; Emanuel Bowen, "An accurate map of North America," Map, (London: Printed for Robert Sayer, 1775), Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center; Paterson, *Cantonement Map*, 1767.

defenses. Finally, they returned to Charleston, South Carolina. By December 1766, a few weeks before his forty-second birthday, Harry Gordon had served the crown in Scotland, France, Canada, the Caribbean, Mississippi, and Florida. Later in life, he commanded the garrison in Grenada, Dominica, and the Leeward Islands. Harry Gordon reached the rank of colonel, and on his death in 1787, his estate controlled a plantation in Grenada and thousands of acres of land in Pennsylvania and Vermont. Gordon's trans-Atlantic experience developed imperial projects.

Colonies and Improvement

Immediately after news of the Treaty of Paris in 1763, western traders and settlers prepared to advance into the west. George Croghan wrote on April 24th, 1763, from Fort Pitt, "There are 30 large batteaus building here to carry 400 men down this river to take possession of that part of America ceded to Great Britain...great numbers of people are preparing to go down the river with the troops from this post in order to settle." George III's ministers hoped to prevent this settler expansion to avoid Indian war and increase trade revenue. In October, the Proclamation of 1763 outlined an Indian Reserve prohibiting British settlement in the West.³⁴

A large swath of land appeared on British maps stretching from the colony of West Florida to Quebec. A side effect of the Indian Reserve made the prime lands of mercantilist raw resources distant from the seaboard. Access to the rich interior now sought avenues down the long waterways of the Great Lakes, Ohio, and Mississippi. Gordon and Hutchins's survey delineated the prime corridor of the Ohio River to control and settle the new lands. Thomas Hutchins and others advocated for a colony at the forks of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to serve as the hub for all western trade, despite the prohibition on settlements across the

³⁴ George Croghan, "From George Croghan," *Papers of William Johnson*, VOL X, 660.

proclamation line. This section incorporates Max Edelson's visions for empire, Richard Drayton, and Matthew Edney's surveying for improvement balanced against the tension of defending an Indian reserve from the in-vogue attitudes of new colonization in the American Middle West. George III and his ministers followed enlightened principles to develop and manage their domain. The Ohio River Valley existed as a land pulled between the settler-colonial visions of experienced colonists and the enlightened monarchy's desire to improve "savages" and "wastes."³⁵

The cessation of war with France in 1763 opened the door for trade and settlement of the Ohio River Valley. Thomas Hutchins and George Croghan advocated for the improvement of the Indian reserve; the lush lands tempted the enlightened agents with many "futures," futures in the sense of stock contracts and possibilities. Western agents provided British planners with all the information necessary to forge a colonial path in the Illinois. These men brought detailed viewpoints for the future of the British empire in the West and favored colonization along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. The following examines Thomas Hutchins' map, *A Plan of Several Villages in the Illinois Country*, against these imperial visions after his journey down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers in 1766.³⁶

The Board of Trade wanted a stable continent; Cherokee uprisings, unruly traders, and growing Indian discontent in the Great Lakes led to the Proclamation Line of 1763, limiting British settlement east of the Appalachian Mountains. Yet a generation of Britons developed scientific skills and enlightened mores, helping them advocate and plant new British spaces.

³⁵ Drayton, *Nature's Government*, 86. Edelson, *New Map of Empire*, 65; Matthew H. Edney, *Mapping an Empire: The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765-1843*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 32. Calloway, *The Scratch of a Pen*. 62.

³⁶ Bernard Bailyn and Barbara DeWolfe, *Voyagers to the West: A Passage In the Peopling of America On the Eve of the Revolution*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1988), 7.

Bernard Bailyn writes, “That this strange world should have attracted thousands of ordinary Britons year after year – people not driven out by plague or famine or war or persecution, people engaged in all the pursuits of a long-familiar way of life.” Briton’s dedication to colonization and improvement maintained a flood of settlers pushing against government regulations. Agents of the West continually envisioned new colonies. Fort Chartres along the eastern bank of the Mississippi became a popular location which proponents of settlement touted as the premier location to begin a colony in the continent’s interior. Formally, the government pursued no settlement plans in the West. Yet, Johnson, Gage, Gordon, Croghan, Morgan, and many other colonial leaders wrote memorials or petitions to the Board of Trade begging for a colony near Fort Chartres. British desire for improvement resisted royal proclamations.³⁷

British military officers experienced in America often included their professional and personal opinions within formal reports on the continent’s conditions. Major Robert Farmar, commander of the recently occupied Fort Chartres, writes in March 1766 to Lord Barrington:

The soil of this country is in general very good and fertile, and with proper industry and cultivation it would I make no doubt in a few years produce sufficient grain for the maintenance of the troops and inhabitants; But the present inhabitants are and always have been too indolent and lazy to bestow any pains upon cultivating their lands, especially since the country has been ceded to the crown.³⁸

Farmer not only sees the richness of the land but hopes to supplant Indian agriculture with “proper” development. English attitudes used agricultural improvement to gain others land throughout the empire, capitalizing on Lockean wastelands and the need to cultivate; the Indian Reserve did not deter the British eye for improvement. Thomas Hutchins, during his survey of

³⁷ Thomas Gage, “Gage to Johnson, April 7, 1766,” *New Regime, IHC Vol 11*, 212; Thomas Gage, “Gage to Johnson, April 13, 1766,” *New Regime, IHC Vol 11*, 213. See *New Regime*, chapter 4, “Plans for a Colony” IHC Vol 11, 178, for primary documents advocating for an Illinois colony. Bailyn, *Voyages to the West*, 5.

³⁸ Robert Farmar, “Farmer to Barrington, March 19th, 1766,” *New Regime, IHC Vol 11*, 191.

the Ohio River, recorded campsites and sergeants posts he recommended for military control, but the fertility of the Illinois country stood out to him as the “superior soil in all of North America.” Hutchins’s eye naturally saw improvement potential amidst contentious and reserved lands.³⁹

Thomas Hutchins grew up in the colonial world. He saw the results of generations of colonial building and western exploration. Hutchins received his commission in the Pennsylvania militia in 1756, becoming a favored young officer in North America. He repeatedly impressed his superiors as quartermaster, engineer, guide, and surveyor. Second, only to George Croghan among British officials knowledgeable of the upper Ohio River Valley, Hutchins gained fame after conducting a 3,000-mile expedition charting the waterways between Fort Pitt and Presque Isle in 1762. Colonel Bouquet specifically requested Hutchins as his guide during the Ohio expedition of 1764. Hutchins’s colonial experiences gave him a good sense of the frontier, being one of the first Indian agents to put into writing a warning of an Indian movement in September 1762.⁴⁰

In 1766, Hutchins dutifully charted the Ohio River for his superior officer, Harry Gordon. The several maps published after the 1766 expedition seem to come from Hutchins’s hand. Compared to Gordon’s 1755 Scottish maps, the Ohio maps look nothing like Gordon’s style. The plainly drawn lines do not invoke the studied skills of a Woolwich-trained engineer. The lines match an on-the-job colonial-trained Hutchins. With an outlook that favored colonialism, Hutchins discussed with Gordon the many advantages of what a colony in the West could

³⁹ Herman Lebovics, “The Uses of America in Locke’s Second Treatise of Government,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 47, no. 4 (1986): 567–581, 577; Drayton, *Natures Government*. 55 and 58; Edelson, *New Map of Empire*, 106; Thomas Hutchins, *Topographical Description of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and North-Carolina*, (Piccadilly London. 1778), 43.

⁴⁰ Anna M. Quattrocchi, “Thomas Hutchins in Western Pennsylvania,” *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies*, vol. 16, no. 1, (1 Jan. 1949), pp. 31 – 30; William Smith and Martin West, *Bouquet's Expedition Against the Ohio Indians in 1764*, (The Kent State University Press, 2017), 57; Thomas Hutchins, “Journal and Report of Thomas Hutchins,” *Papers of William Johnson, Vol X*, 529; Dixon, *Never Come to Peace*, 72 and 78.

accomplish: “There is hardly any place from Fort Pitt to the falls, where a good road may not be made along the banks, and horses are employed in drawing up bilanders against the stream, which is gentle if no rain flood is in the river. The height of the banks permits their being everywhere inhabited.” Bilanders were trading boats that sailed downriver and were pulled upriver by horses. In the 1700s, many ships plied English and Dutch canals in this manner. Gordon and Hutchins’s collective experience saw the usefulness of the countryside for settlement. Gordon’s optimism for outposts and Hutchins’ hope for the future contributed to the many schemes in Philadelphia for future colonies.⁴¹

In the first decade of George III’s reign, his ministers had yet to work out better systems for cartography and planned improvements. By the 1790s, intentional strategies shaped the imperial actions in British India, but the lessons began in Ireland and America. Surveyors deployed up and down the American seaboard, and a few traversed the inland waterways. Hutchins’ 1762 survey of Michigan, 1764 survey of Ohio, and 1766 survey of Illinois contributed to the growing repositories of geographic knowledge clutched by British planners.⁴²

British and colonial leaders imagined Vandalia, Kentucky, Charlottiana, Transylvania, Westsylvania, and other projects, hoping to be new proprietors of a colony. Hutchins’ 1766 sketches of the West reached a wider audience with the 1778 publication of his book, *A Topographical Description of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and North Carolina, comprehending the rivers Ohio, Kanawa, Scioto, Cherokee, Wabash, Illinois, Mississippi, etc.* Hutchins’ book not only described the map but detailed Indian life, flora, fauna, and the best places for settlement filling the one hundred page monograph. Scientific-minded British elites

⁴¹ Gordon, “Gordon’s Journal”, *New Regime*, IHC Vol 11, 294.

⁴² Edelson, *New Map of Empire*. 66. Edney, *Mapping an Empire*, 35.

consumed the well-worn genre of cosmological, environmental, and colonial works; Hutchins's personal explorations and surveys made him a small fortune, adding to enlightened codifications. Meticulous descriptions of flora and fauna native to the American West culminate with a map titled, "*A Plan of the Several Villages in the Illinois Country, with Part of the River Mississippi &c.*" This map depicted an agrarian world ripe for development and, at its heart, the formidable Fort Chartres. Hutchins revealed Chartres as a world surrounded by possibilities; old roadways already divided the landscape, and foundations of forts and windmills survived, ready for new structures to be placed on top of the old. Tempting British futures abounded; colonial opportunities awaited those willing to build.⁴³ [See Map 8]

Hutchins's skillset set him apart as a military officer who knew the land and recorded its corridors for London planners. General Gage sent his maps to the Lords of Trade in 1766, and Gage personally ordered Hutchins to quietly chart New Orleans in 1773. Hutchins's western portfolio of charted networks across Michigan, Western Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Florida, and Illinois led him to develop a new map of the continent's interior. *A Map of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and North Carolina, comprehending the rivers Ohio, Kanawa, Scioto, Cherokee, Wabash, Illinois, Mississippi, etc.* published with an accompanying book. The map joined a shortlist of cumulative works drawn from personally conducted surveys. Systematic and cumulative cartography helped the increasingly centralizing states. Thomas Jefferson corresponded with Hutchins discussing the imperfections in his map but complimented him for

⁴³ George Henry Alden, *New Governments West of the Alleghanies Before 1780: Introductory to a Study of the Organization and Admission of New States*, (Madison, Wis: University of Wisconsin, 1897), 1-15; Hutchins, *Topography, [Fold out Map]* 40; Drayton, *Natures Government*, 89.

his addition to the national geography. This conversation led to Hutchins' appointment as the first geographer of the United States in 1781.⁴⁴

The *Plan of the Villages and Country of the Illinois and Part of the Mississippi River* aided both the traders and military men in their quest to settle the area around Fort Chartres. The map depicts the waterway avenues around Kaskaskia Village to the south, Fort Chartres in the center, and Cahokia and St. Louis (Pain Court) at the top of the map. Small hachures delineate the region as a river valley with many tributaries and small settlements near the fort and villages. A drawn road connects Kaskaskia, Prairie de Roche, Fort Chartres, and Cahokia. This idyllic setting beckoned for the expansion of trade and settlement. However, the map fails to reveal the reality of a flood plain, thin on people and with an eroding central fortress. [See Map 8]

In 1765 and 1766, General Gage, William Johnson, and many others hoped to occupy Fort Chartres to deter war in the West and establish a colony on the Mississippi River. The collection of information stemmed from enlightened cartography and the centralizing state. Large and small-scale maps were sent to General Gage and on to London depicting forts around the west and complete route surveys of inland rivers. Colonial leaders in America continually operated on the assumption that more information would lead the Board of Trade to approve colonies within the Indian reserve. Until that approval came, Gage and Johnson would support as many military outposts as the budget allowed.

⁴⁴ William C Wooldridge, and Mariners' Museum, *Mapping Virginia: From the Age of Exploration to the Civil War*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012), 139; Joseph G. Tregle, "British Spy along the Mississippi: Thomas Hutchins and the Defenses of New Orleans, 1773," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 8, no. 4 (1967): 313–327, 312; Thomas Jefferson, "From Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Hutchins, 24 January 1784," Founders Online, National Archives. [Original source: The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, vol. 27, 1 September–31 December 1793, ed. John Catanzariti, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 737.] Quattrocchi, "Thomas Hutchins in Western Pennsylvania," 38.

In the fall of 1765, Captain Stirling and Major Farmar succeeded in getting the 42nd and 34th Regiment up the Mississippi to occupy Fort Chartres. Lieutenant Pittman, an engineer of the 34th regiment, praised the fifteen-foot stone walls but foresaw their demise at the hands of nature. Gordon and Hutchins agreed on the imminent collapse of Fort Chartres due to seasonal flooding.⁴⁵ On Hutchins's map, *A Plan of the Several Villages*, he sketched a road network connecting eight European and seven Indian-styled settlements. Of the fifteen named settlements, only one of them is depicted by a European and Native home side by side, St. Philips. [See Map #7, the village of St. Philips] The village of St. Philips reportedly had sixteen homes and a small church, but mostly abandoned by 1766. Despite the sizeable French migration, these fifteen settlements still sheltered hundreds of occupants as of 1766; divided into three groups, Hutchins claimed over 1000 Frenchmen, 800 Negroes, and 300 Indians lived in the "Illinois Country." For Hutchins, this sizeable number could easily be the foundation of a new colony.

Three full pages of Hutchins' *Topography of Virginia* book describe the verdant state of the Illinois. Textual descriptions of flora and fauna are rivaled only by the claims of high production output of local crops. In a letter to Shelburne, Gordon included a small sketch, drawn by Hutchins, of the Cahokia settlement. Despite its distant location, Cahokia appears as a functional town nestled on the south side of a small river. Hutchins' convincing compliments of the Illinois country boast of the futures of the newest British colonies. [See Maps 7 and 9]

Gordon, Hutchins, and Pittman acknowledged the shortcomings of Fort Chartres' empty villages and an eroding riverbank. Still, the potential remained too great to discourage anything

⁴⁵ Philip Pittman, *The Present State of the European Settlements on the Mississippi: With a Geographical Description of That River*, (Printed for J. Nourse, 1770), 46; Harry Gordon, "Gordon Journal May 8th – December 6th 1766, *New Regime*, Vol 11, 298.

but a full recommendation for a colony on the Mississippi River. American-born traders and elites dreamed over maps such as Hutchins' *Villages of the Illinois*. Yet a discrepancy existed between the desire to improve the "wastes" and the Board of Trade's plans for order in America. In 1774, the newest iteration of the Quebec Act again rejected Thomas Gage's formal requests for a colony in the Illinois and reasserted the Indian boundary as a barrier to settlement. Despite royal disapprovals, surging migrations, and scientific attempts to know the land, dreams of futures persisted in the colonial collective ready for more "improvement" of North American lands.⁴⁶

Conclusion

The 1766 expedition represented a significant undertaking for the British Army in North America. Gage deployed his best agents into the interior. The Chief Engineer in America, Harry Gordon, spent seven months traveling down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. Thomas Hutchins recorded the navigability of the Ohio and the potential for western settlement. George Croghan met with Ohio and Illinois tribes to establish a new British peace in the Indian reserve. Borderland agents and transatlantic experiences shaped the British occupation of the continent.

John Mitchell's 1755 map hoped to create a bordered British land in North America, but the land remained a complex borderland where Native influences found a balance between British and French markets. The Indian reserve included the large Ohio River watershed; Britain claimed this expansive region, but the peace held together not through British military might but through Native alliances such as the Shawnee, who acted as borderland diplomats. Shawnee kinship and military alliances connected tribes from Pennsylvania to Illinois. British traders

⁴⁶ Edelson, *New Map of Empire*, 312; Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West*, 25.

relied on experience and Native partnerships to found trade posts in the West. French and Spanish threats across the Mississippi reoriented the borderland from an upper Ohio center to an Illinois center.

Eight published maps from the 1766 expedition set the stage for a decade of trade and colonial dreams in the British far West. Hutchins and Gordon published *The Courses of the Ohio, A Plan of the Several Villages in the Illinois Country, Plan of the Rapids of the Ohio*, and *A Sketch of Cahokia* in 1766. By 1778, Hutchins created *A New Map of the Western parts of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and North Carolina* from his remaining notes. These maps advanced techniques Harry Gordon learned in Scotland and Woolwich. Thomas Gage needed small- and large-scale maps to devise a plan to manage North America; the hydrography and the detailed map of the Falls of the Ohio River answered the navigability questions. The large-scale *Cantonment* map addressed the difficulties of coordinating troop movements around the continent. Gordon's experience in Scotland and the Seven Years' War exemplify the trans-Atlantic skills that advanced North America's British control. [See Maps 3 and 6]

British leaders and adventurers capitalized on the expansive zone in North America, which suddenly became available to them with the French defeat in 1763. New lands, new settlements, and new trade partners spurred the imaginings of new colonies and new trade empires. From 1763 to 1775, the borderland of the Indian reserve incited a longing for scientific and agricultural improvement, which strained against the settlement prohibition.

British and Indian alliances in the West found a balance of power in the borderlands, which survived until colonial settlers broke British control. Colonial American settlers ruptured the 150 years of the borderland ballet as colonists drove Britain from the Ohio in 1778. The 1766 expedition preserved a moment when the British Empire reached a peak employing several early

modern tactics to develop its empire. The Indian Reserve borderlands would disappear with the arrival of the United States, but colonial ambitions and scientific drive migrated to other British borderlands in India and the Pacific. The 1766 expedition of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers exemplifies the evolution of traders, Indians, and cartographers into imperial actors, seeking personal and imperial benefits amidst the borderlands of the early modern state.

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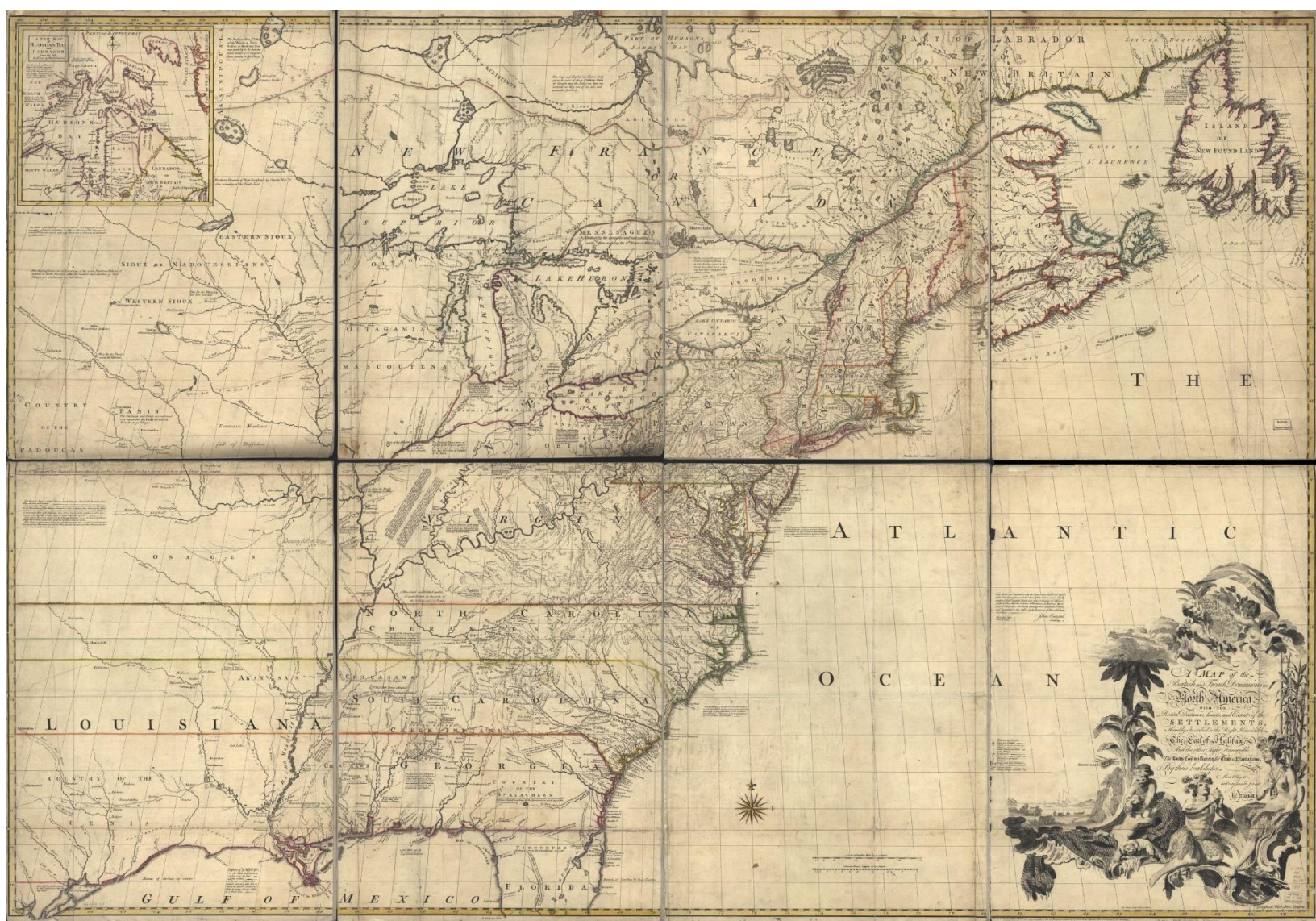
King's Topographical Collection. 1754.

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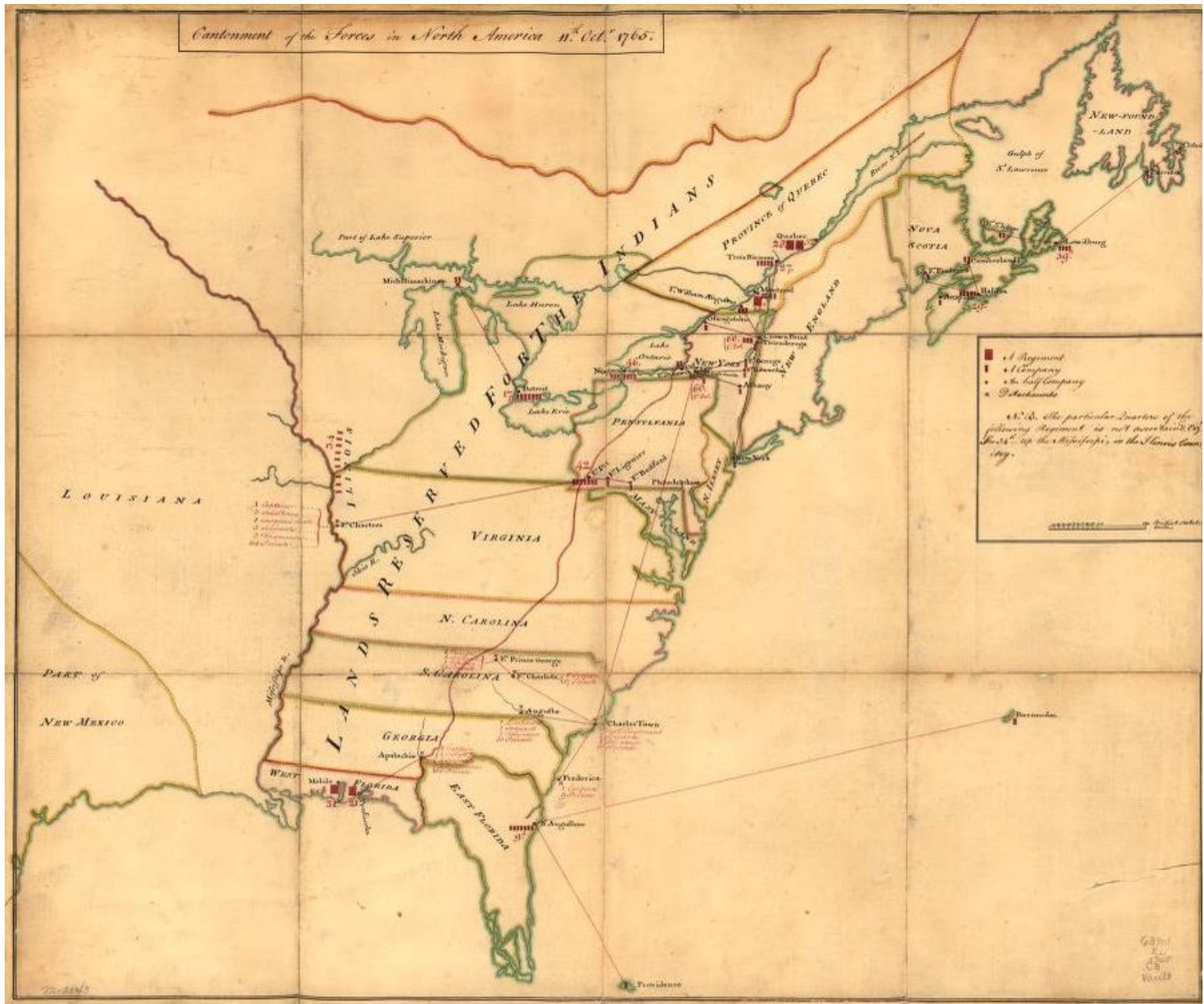
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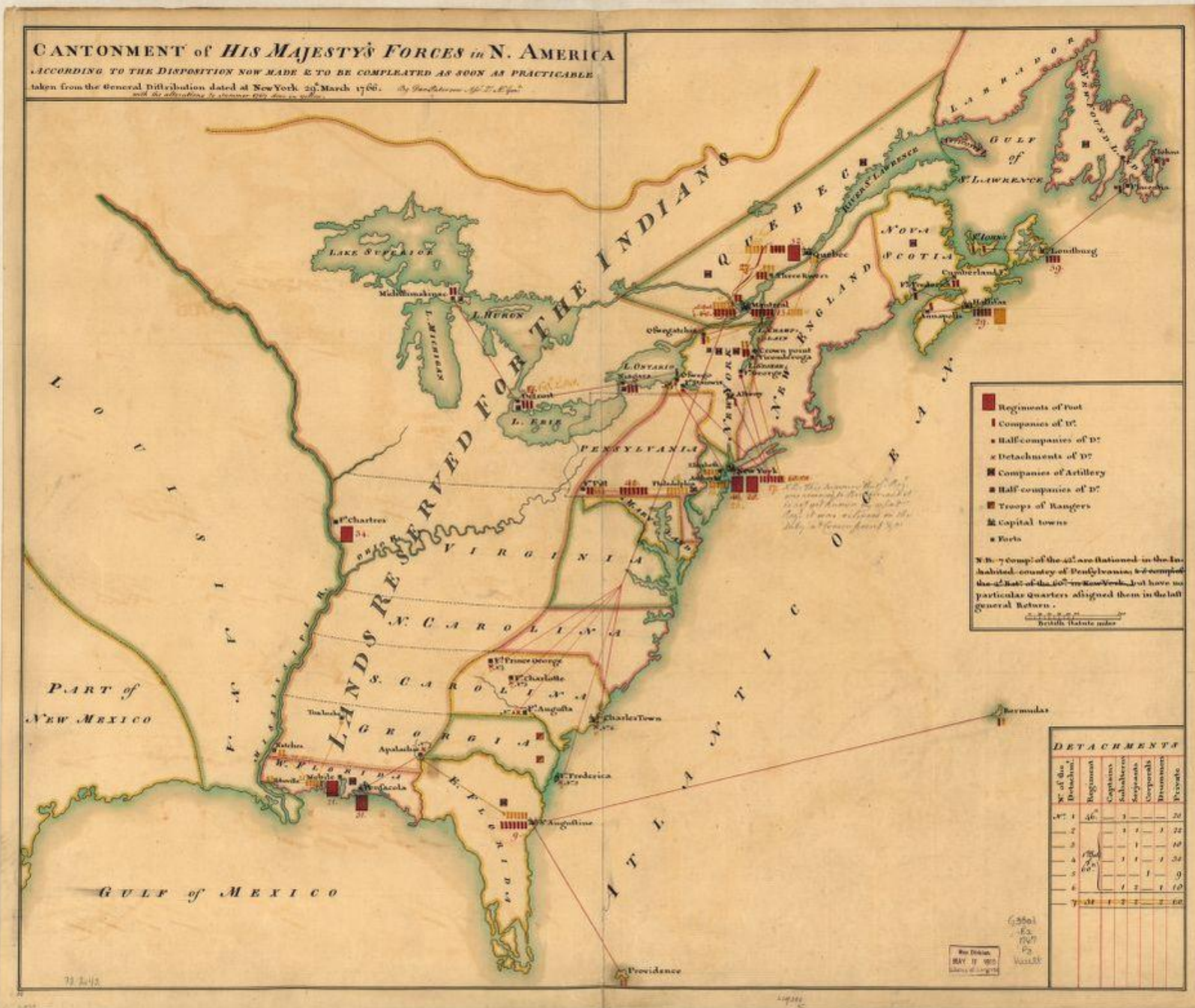
Map 1. John Mitchell, *A map of the British and French dominions in North America, with the roads, distances, limits, and extent of the settlements, humbly inscribed to the Right Honourable the Earl of Halifax and the other Right Honorable the Lords Commissioners for Trade & Plantations.* 1755.



Map 2: Daniel Paterson, *Cantonment of the Forces in North America, 11th Oct 1765.*



Map 3: Daniel Paterson, *Cantonment of the Forces in North America According to the Disposition Now Made and to be Completed as soon as Practicable*, taken from the general distribution dated at New York 29 March 1766, with Alteration to summer 1767 done in yellow. 1767.



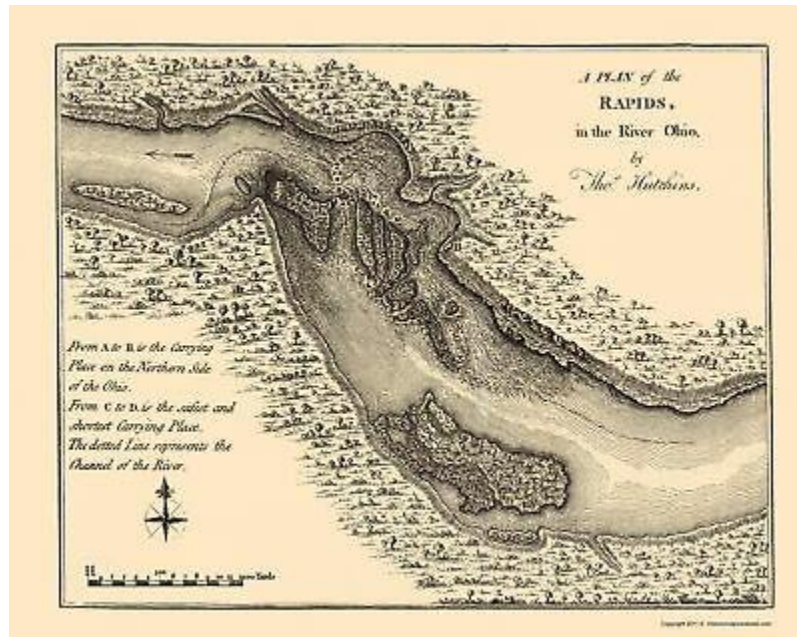
Map 4: Harry Gordon, *A Plan of a Part, of the NEW ROAD from PERTH to FORT GEORGE, done by five Companies of Lord Charles Hay's Regiment, in Summer 1754.*



Map 5: Harry Gordon, *Plan of Part of the Road from Perth to Fort Geroge. 1754.*



Map 6: Thomas Hutchins, *A Plan of the Rapids in the River Ohio*. 1766.



Map 7: Thomas Hutchins, *Cahokia Settlement Map and Key*. 1766. Note that the arrow is the Mississippi River flow, not a north arrow. The map is oriented to the south.



Map 8: Thomas Hutchins, *A Plan of the Several Villages in the Illinois Country with Part of the River Mississippi*. 1778.



Map 9: Thomas Hutchins, “A new map of the western parts of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and North Carolina; comprehending the River Ohio, and all the rivers, which fall into it; part of the River Mississippi, the whole of the Illinois River, Lake Erie; part of the Lakes Huron, Michigan &c. and all the country bordering on these lakes and rivers.” 1778.



Map 10: Thomas Hutchins, *A Plan of the River Ohio from Fort Pitt to the Mississippi: By order of ye Chief Engineer, Tho. Hutchins Ensign Draughtsman.* 1766

