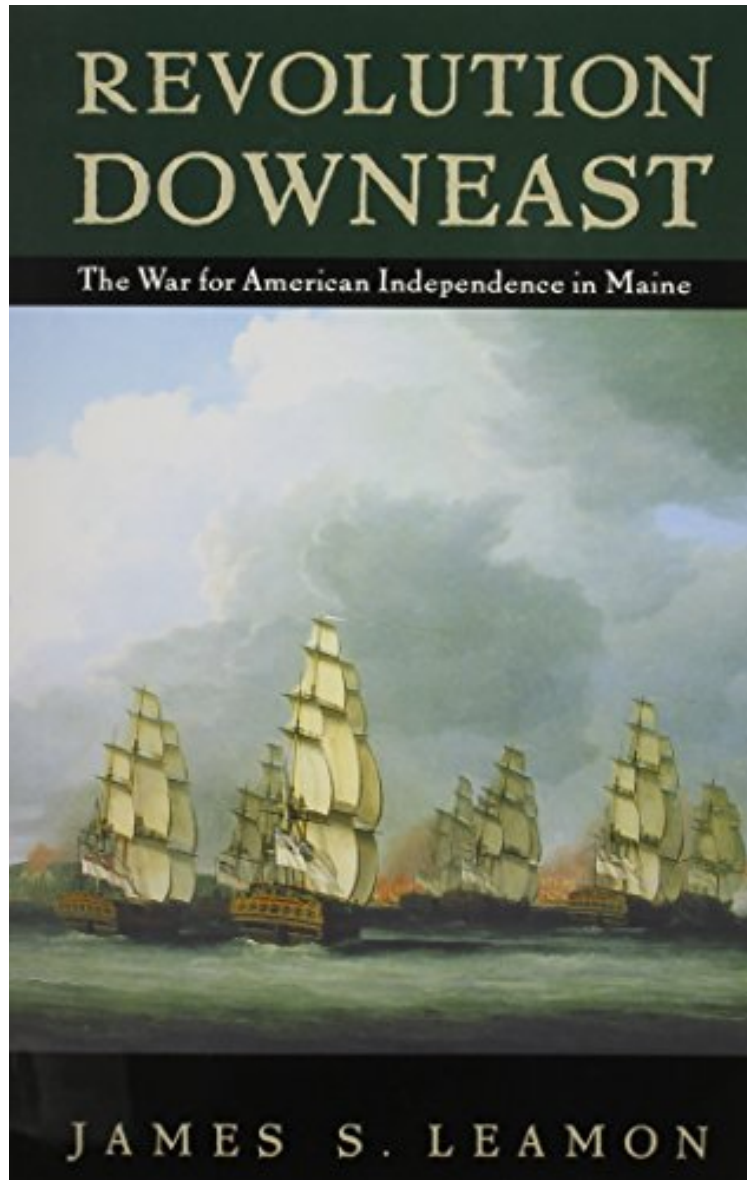


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Revolution Downeast: The War for American Independence in Maine

James S. Leamon

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James S. Leamon : Revolution Downeast: The War for American Independence in Maine before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Revolution Downeast: The War for American

Independence in Maine:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent, readable, well-sourced! By uklover I am an avid reader of American History and a Maine resident. I have had the pleasure of hearing this author speak. He is an excellent writer of Maine history. This is a very readable book but still loses nothing in its accuracy. Mr. Leamon uses ample primary source documents. His quotes allow those that lived through this troubled time to be heard. His contribution to the history of the American Revolution in Maine is immense as he opens up a very underwritten topic. Most books approach this from the Massachusetts shared history point of view. Leamon does not! Loved the book! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Revolution Downeast By Thomas Allan This book was factual and well researched. It helped me to do a good job on a presentation to a local historical society. This book has an a lot of information and will be used for research again and again. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Revolution comes to Maine... By HMS Warspite In the Revolutionary War era, the District of Maine was part of Massachusetts, three thinly populated counties with a marginal economy tied to trade with Boston and points overseas. Although Maine was a backwater, the Revolution had a great impact. The struggle for independence was played out through acts of resistance against British taxes to acts of rebellion against British authority, and finally in acts of violence against British military forces. Maine's thin and scattered population was often at the mercy of events, in Maine and elsewhere. James Leamon's "Revolution Downeast", first published in 1993, remains a highly readable account. The narrative draws capably from a variety of sources to tell an exciting story, often on a town by town basis. The names of some of the towns have changed since Revolutionary War days, but it is easy to follow events (although this reader pulled out his Maine atlas). The war accentuated the pre-war divisions in Maine, between Tories and Whigs, rich and poor, inland farmers and wealthier coastal towns, English settlers and Indian tribes. The counties and towns struggled to provide for the common defense, even as the British Navy and British privateers smothered pre-war trade. The author does an excellent job of capturing the struggle for power within the state, and of explaining why the Revolution was ultimately a conservative one. The narrative highlights the role of the town of Machias as a patriot redoubt in the eastern part of the district. It also highlights the consequences of the disastrous Massachusetts expedition to Penobscot Bay in 1779, ostensibly to displace the British garrison at Fort George in what is now the town of Castine. There are a small number of maps and illustrations to support the text. Highly recommended as a good read on a topic still not fully explored all these years later.

The history of the Revolution in Maine is the story of a people who did not really want a revolution at least at first. Since the middle of the seventeenth century, the powerful Massachusetts Bay Colony had exercised an increasing hegemony over the settlements downeast a hegemony legalized in the Massachusetts royal charter of 1691. From then until 1820, when it became a state, Maine remained an integral part of Massachusetts. Geographically isolated from the Bay Colony by the province of New Hampshire, and dependent on Massachusetts for its very existence, Maine was indeed a colony, in every sense of the word. The larger Massachusetts context has tended to obscure Maine as a legitimate object of study, nowhere more than in the period of the American Revolution. Even historians in Maine have slighted the period of the American Revolution. Where appropriate, town historians devote a chapter or so to the event, but only in the context of a particular community. In his book, Leamon aims to meet that deficiency by drawing together town and general histories, specialized studies, and primary sources, both published and unpublished. He examines why and how Maine fought the Revolution and the changes that occurred in Maine during and after the war.

"A valuable addition to the state's historic record, *Revolution Downeast* sheds welcome light on Maine's role in the birth of a nation." *Down East Magazine* Although Leamon has a sobering tale to tell, he narrates it so lucidly, concisely, and vividly that *Revolution Downeast* is a compelling read. Leamon brings an impressive clarity to his narration of the war's diverse and often chaotic events, interweaving the social, political, cultural and the military into a compelling picture. *New England Quarterly* "A useful, well-cited exploration of Maine as an entity tied to Massachusetts. . . . This well-written work flows through the Stamp Act crises, the onset of revolution, military activity, British occupation, and the efforts toward statehood without being cumbersome. Of particular interest is the constant reference to trading with the enemy permitted by both sides and the importance of the naval-oriented timber trade." *Choice* About the Author James S. Leamon is professor of history emeritus at Bates College and author of *Revolution Downeast: The War for American Independence in Maine* (University of Massachusetts Press).