



American History

SETON HOME STUDY SCHOOL

Lesson Plan ♦ Answer Keys ♦ Tests ♦ Quarter Report Forms



Course Manual

HIS301_21B

AMERICAN HISTORY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
FIRST QUARTER.....	8
SECOND QUARTER.....	16
BATTLE OF SARATOGA.....	19
STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES OF CONSTITUTION	22
MARBURY VS MADISON	26
TEXAS	29
ABRAHAM LINCOLN	46
THIRD QUARTER.....	56
SHERMAN’S MARCH TO THE SEA	57
FOURTH QUARTER	71
PEARL HARBOR.....	73
THE BATTLE OF MIDWAY	79
THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF.....	83
HIROSHIMA & NAGASAKI	93
CASABLANCA.....	98
Answer Key.....	111

Tests and Quarter Report Forms (near end of course manual)

Revised July 2018

Outer Cover: *Surrender of Lord Cornwallis* by John Trumbull (1756–1843)

Inner Cover: *St. Elizabeth Ann Seton*



Second Quarter

WEEK TEN

Day 1

Survey Chapter 8: The United States' War for Independence, pp. 109 to 120. Read the headings, the subheadings, the first sentence of each paragraph, the summary and Review Questions.

Brigadier-General Daniel Morgan was the hero of the Battle of Cowpens (S.C.) Jan. 17, 1781.

General Francis Marion, whose bold forays against the British lines of communication earned him the soubriquet of the "Swamp Fox". He participated in the Battle of Eutaw Springs.



Daniel Morgan portrait
by Charles Willson Peale
1794

Day 2

Read, study, and highlight or outline or number important points, pp. 109 to 114.

For your enjoyment, Seton's Who's Who historian, Bruce Clark, the author of several history books, has written an article about the Battle of Saratoga, noted on p. 113 in the text.

The Battle of Saratoga

The Shot that Changed American History

by Bruce T. Clark, Seton History Department



Francis Marion
(the Swamp Fox)
Artist Unknown

In the history of warfare there have been surprisingly few fighting forces that could bolster the courage of their allies and strike fear into the hearts of their enemies by their mere presence. The ones that readily come to mind for inclusion on this honor roll of power are: The Immortals of Ancient Persia, the Elites of Sparta, the Roman Legions, Roger's Rangers of the American Revolution, Darby's Rangers of World War II, the U.S. Marines, Patton's Tank Corps, the Green Berets, the Commandos of Great Britain and Israel, and currently, the U.S. Seals. Of course, it is always more difficult to lead than it is

to follow, particularly into a combat situation. But these forces by their very nature and composition were the designated leaders, and were always found in the vanguard of their respective military organizations. Armies often have been described as politician's javelins. If that statement is correct, the aforementioned fighting forces truly have been the very tips of those javelins.

In the early days of the American Revolution, a giant of a man from Virginia named Daniel Morgan assembled a legendary unit of frontiersmen. These men were rough and ready tavern-brawlers from the hills of a struggling new nation—a nation impertinent enough to call itself the United States of America.

Morgan's men weren't very genteel—they were often smelled long before they were seen—but they were fighters. (Indeed, if they couldn't find an enemy, they were perfectly willing to fight with each other!) Morgan's Riflemen—as they came to be called—were destined to become the tip of George Washington's javelin.

The Temper of the Times

To understand the significance of units such as Roger's Rangers and Morgan's Riflemen, one must recall the way war was practiced in Europe during the second half of the 18th Century. Typically, ranks and rows of soldiers advanced across open fields in formations called "boxes."

The French and Indian War, which had ended in 1763, should have taught the English more about forest fighting in North America than it did. Indians and frontiersmen alike hid behind trees, fired from cover, moved about constantly, and almost never offered their enemies a target. The English, however, found this type of warfare "barbaric." It was like fighting another chap without observing the Marquis of Queensberry Rules—absolutely unthinkable!

Morgan's Riflemen

Every member of Morgan's elite force was completely at home in the forest and capable of living off the land for prolonged periods. Each rifleman possessed a woods lore that rivaled that of many Indians. Morgan's men had been the black sheep of the Colonies prior to April of 1775—the hunters and trappers, "woods-running louts, that no decent person wanted to know"; but suddenly they had become the protectors of "decent folks."

Each rifleman owned and carried his own equipment and was proficient in its use. He carried an Indian tomahawk, a large knife, a bullet pouch, molds for melting lead to make bullets, two powder horns (the larger one held the coarse powder that he poured into the barrel; the smaller one was used to prime the flash pan) and, of course, a rifle.



Most of the rifles were Kentucky Long Rifles, almost none of which had been made in Kentucky. The legendary gunsmiths of Pennsylvania actually made most of the long rifles of that day. These were truly amazing weapons, capable of hitting a target as far as 250 yards away. The bullets for these weapons were round balls, held in place by a patch which was wrapped round the ball before it was rammed down the barrel. The weight of the balls varied greatly depending on the diameter of the rifle's bore; but they were usually in the range of 25 to 45 per pound. A skilled rifleman could load and fire three shots in two minutes. When matched against the "Brown Bess" of the English, there was simply no contest.

The American Strategy

The stage began to be set for Morgan's Riflemen and "the shot that changed American history" at the beginning of the war. In those early days, George Washington's army could only be described as a "ragtag" bunch of amateurs. Many of his troops had volunteered for short-term enlistments, as brief as three to six months. Many of these men felt that if they couldn't beat the British in short order, then they probably couldn't beat them at all. Even those troops that were willing to fight had to be trained. Consequently, Washington could not harbor any thoughts of an offensive campaign. While trying to hold his army together, he had to be content with a defensive war.

Washington's plan was to fight the British on even terms whenever possible, wear down the enemy's will to win, and gain enough time to train his troops. This plan did not always succeed, as witnessed by such defeats as the Battle of Long Island, on August 27-28, 1776, when the American army was sent scurrying away in retreat. However, the General did score some resounding victories, most notably his brilliant triumph at Trenton, New Jersey.

On Dec. 26, 1776, Washington crossed the Delaware River with 2400 troops and surprised Trenton's Hessian garrison, 900 of whom were captured. This battle, which produced only four American casualties, was a tactical master stroke and did a great deal to raise American morale. (One of the wounded was Lt. James Monroe, who lived to become our fifth president.)

The French foreign minister, the Comte de Vergennes, had been offering encouragement and help to the Colonies since his election in 1774. In 1776, Congress sent three diplomats to France to meet with Vergennes and his advisors. The American envoys were Silas Deane, Arthur Lee, and Benjamin Franklin. The purpose of their mission was to secure a commercial and military alliance that would provide the Colonists with much-needed munitions, credit, and the use of French seaports. Although Vergennes had helped in the past, he needed some additional justification before making such an open alliance. Naturally, the best justification would be a major American victory.

While Howe and Clinton were delayed by Washington, the main British strike force under General “Gentleman Johnny” Burgoyne was left to face an American force of 7000 men—alone. On September 19, 1777, at a place called Freeman’s Farm, a short distance from Saratoga Springs, New York, Burgoyne attempted to force the Americans’ right flank but was repulsed. An ancient adage holds that he who fights and runs away lives to fight another day; and that is precisely what Burgoyne did. On October 7, at the same place, he tried the same maneuver. The result was the Second Battle of Freeman’s Farm, or, as it has always been called, the Battle of Saratoga.

The Battle of Saratoga

On that fateful day, since Burgoyne had not been reinforced by either Clinton or St. Leger, his troops numbered approximately 5000. The Americans, for once, actually outnumbered the British, with a strength of 7000. The Americans’ strategic commander was General Horatio Gates, called “Granny” Gates by those who knew him best. Fortunately for the Colonists’ cause, their tactical commander that day was the most successful general they had—Benedict Arnold.

Arnold’s field generals were Enoch Poor, Ebenezer Learned, and Daniel Morgan. Of course, Morgan had brought along his beloved Riflemen, one of whom was to gain a curious fame on that day. The soon-to-be famous rifleman’s name was Timothy Murphy. He could neither read nor write, and he had never been successful at anything in his life—with one exception: he had never lost a shooting match.

Murphy carried a double-barreled rifle made by one of the finest riflemiths in the world—John Golcher of Easton, Pennsylvania. In a unit where every man had to be a superb marksman, Murphy was acknowledged to be the best. He seems to have had an interesting sense of humor, too. When asked why he needed two barrels if he never missed, he observed that his enemies usually didn’t come after him one at a time. That was certainly true at the Battle of Saratoga.

All day long at Freeman’s Farm, the Americans and the British exchanged fire and made occasional charges across the fields. Late in the afternoon, it became apparent that the heavier and more accurate fire of the Americans—particularly the Riflemen—was beginning to take its toll on the British and the Hessians. With their will to win starting to erode, it seemed that the next time the Americans charged they would break and run—or would they? Who or what was holding them?



Benedict Arnold
Engraving by H.B.
Hall after John
Trumbull



The man who was holding them—and stopping a complete rout—was the gallant Scottish general, Simon Fraser. He was loved, admired and greatly respected, not only by the men of his own regiment, but also by the other British units and by the Hessians as well. Now he rode in full view of the dreaded long rifles, rifles held by the deadliest marksmen in the world.

Fraser looked disdainfully toward those small black muzzles less than 300 yards away. His horse pranced nervously beneath him, struggling to be gone from the chaos. Fraser guided the frightened animal with one hand and waved his sword with the other, all the time exhorting his troops. You can almost hear his call as it rings across the years—“Hold ’em now, me buckos! Then we’ll drive ’em like hogs to the slaughter.”

General Arnold sensed that a battle he had been poised to win just a minute before was being turned around before his eyes. He rushed up to Dan Morgan in a state of fury, shouting, “That’s Fraser! He has to go down if we’re going to win! Put your boys on him!”

As Morgan called the nearest dozen riflemen to him, he must have known he was about to pronounce Fraser’s death sentence. Moments later, Murphy aimed and fired. Fraser pointed to his saddle where the bullet had struck. Murphy fired again. It was a few seconds before the effects of the shot could be seen. Then Fraser clutched his chest and toppled from the saddle, dead before his body reached the ground.

Immediately, the Americans charged forward. The British broke and fled—perhaps moved as much by sorrow as by fear. Burgoyne retreated to Saratoga, where on October 17th he surrendered his army to General Gates. His defeat ended the British attempt to split the colonies. Most importantly, it provided the much-needed justification for France to enter the war on the American side.

Nearly fifty years after that shot was fired—with his own death fast approaching—Murphy spoke to a journalist about it for the first and only time.

“I heard General Arnold tell Dan Morgan,” he recalled, “that the general on the gray horse had to go down. There were some good-sized trees handy, so I climbed one of them to see him better. He was almost 300 yards away, moving about the speed of a buck looking out for danger. I fired the first barrel, and saw him point to the front of his saddle. Now I knew how much to allow for the distance and the wind, I knew my next shot would hit him.”

Suddenly, I knew that I couldn’t kill him—he was too brave a man to die. I lowered my Golcher.”

Dan Morgan was standing directly below me; he looked up and said, ‘You’ve got to do it, Murph!’”

I raised the Golcher, and a moment later a brave man died. I got sick, and I’ve stayed sick every day of my life; just as I’ve prayed for General Fraser’s immortal soul every night of my life. I hope the Lord in his endless charity will allow me to tell him



I'm sorry. I hope to go to Heaven soon, because I've spent my last forty years in Hell. I know his death was the price I was asked to pay for the right to live free, but it's been hard to bear all the same.

Day 3

Read, study, and highlight or outline or number important points, pp. 114 to 120.

Day 4

Answer Review Questions, 1 to 6 on p. 120. In question 6, omit the second question and substitute: Why was Saratoga such an important victory? Although the victory at Trenton gave renewed hope to the Patriots, the American victory at Saratoga was a turning point of the war.

Day 5

Answer Review Questions 7 to 12 on p. 121. The projects are optional. For Project #3, we recommend a report on Baron von Steuben, Marquis de Lafayette, or Thaddeus Kosciusko. Listen to the Seton online lecture for Chapter 8.

WEEK ELEVEN

Day 1

Survey Chapter 9: The Birth of the American Government, pp. 122 to 131.

Read the headings, the subheadings, and the first sentence of each paragraph. Read the Summary and Conclusion, and the Review Questions.

If you study the existing documents from the thirteen state conventions organized to consider ratification of the Constitution, the main concerns seemed to be these:

1. If we do not become one single Union, we will of necessity become several weak Unions.
2. No foreign trading nation wishes to adhere to 13 separate sets of trading rules.
3. We the states must always be stronger than the federal government.
[The states authorized a standing army of 30,000 federal troops, while their combined state militias totaled 500,000.]
4. We must reserve the right to withdraw from this Union, should our state's sovereignty be challenged.
5. We can no longer survive with the Articles of Confederation.

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