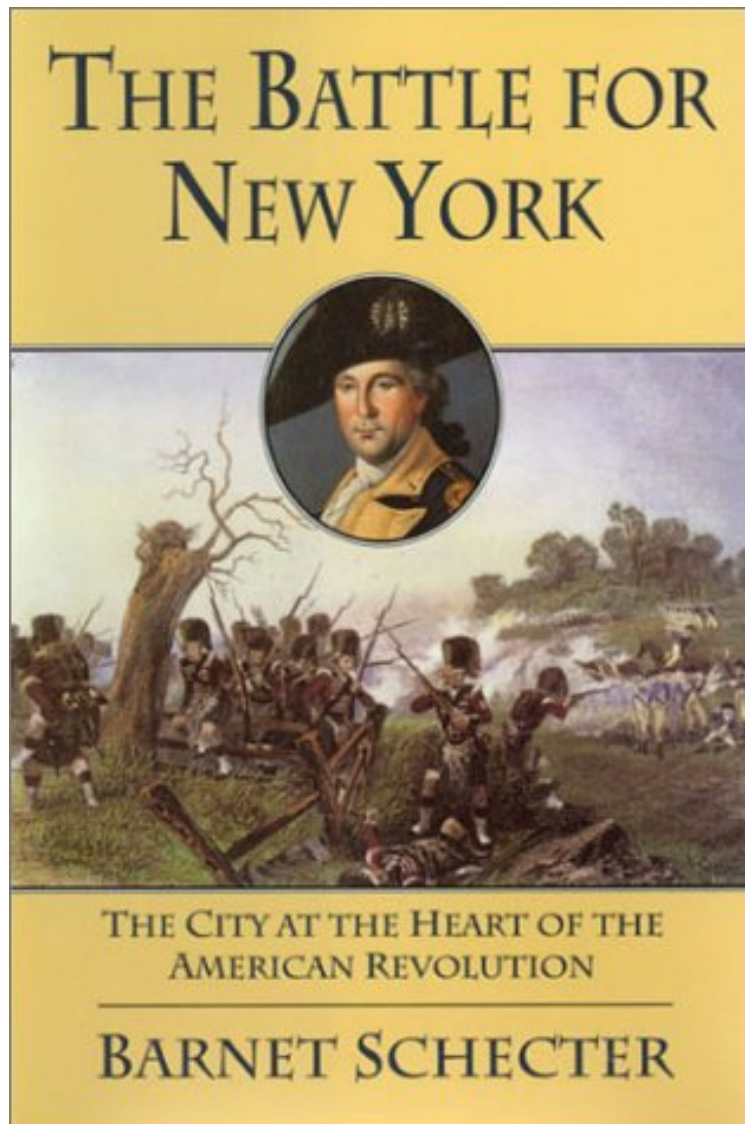


[Pdf free] The Battle for New York

## The Battle for New York

*Barnet Schecter*

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**Barnet Schecter : The Battle for New York** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Battle for New York:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Long overdue, Schecter's book fills an important gap in ...By Billy McJohnsonLong overdue, Schecter's book fills an important gap in the history of the revolution. The New York campaign's battlefields are largely lost to us, as were the battles themselves, and the city, more loyal than the Boston of the times, takes no especial pride in its role in expelling the British, but that silence hides the fact that New York City was in large the crux of the war, the place where the British lion dug its claws in for the long haul, and the last place to

be liberated. Schechter's book has gone a long way to bring much needed perspective. The walking tour accompanying the text is also a welcome addition, as the modern walker might have trouble finding any trace of the battlefields lost under the concrete. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Battle for New York By Kim Burdick Yes to this book! Although I grew up in New York State and have studied both the Philadelphia and Yorktown Campaigns for many years, I found much that was fresh and new to me in Barney Schechter's book. I found the parallels between the occupied cities of New York and Philadelphia very striking and I thoroughly enjoyed the quotations Schechter selected to illustrate his points. Whose nose would not wrinkle at "stagnant water, damaged sour Crout, and filth of every kind," (p. 273) or chuckle at the contemporary description of Lord Howe as the "Duke of Dally, Lord Lingerloring?" (325). I also enjoyed the eye-witness accounts of both the British occupation of New York and the eventual homecoming of the American Patriots. "Battle for New York" was very carefully researched and well-written. Excellent! Kim Burdick Stanton, Delaware 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. History Under Foot By Steven P. Mark I loved this book. As an avid reader of history I found Barney Schechter's volume highly readable, comprehensive and a must read for any New Yorker, history buff or not. In addition to the great story that is this book, the author continuously compares the places that great events took place in relation to current day NY. He also depicts how close America came to losing. Additionally, he offers walking tours (all accessible by public transport) and a website to enhance the reading experience. Photos of the portraits of the main characters are interspersed throughout the book. All told, this is an excellent and scholarly volume that can also be a wonderful gift for a young student interested in US history in general and NY history in particular.

On September 15, 1776, the British army under General William Howe invaded Manhattan Island, landing at an open field on the banks of the East River, roughly where the United Nations sits today. George Washington's Continental Army, still in disarray after its miraculous escape following the disastrous Battle of Brooklyn some two weeks earlier, retreated north to Harlem Heights, leaving New York in British hands. Control of the city was Howe's primary objective; located at the mouth of the strategically vital Hudson River, it had become the centerpiece of England's strategy for putting down the American rebellion. However, as Barney Schechter reveals in his stirring narrative, far from furnishing a key to the colonies, New York proved to be the fatal albatross that strangled the British war effort. The Battle for New York tells the story of how the city became the pivot on which the American Revolution turned from the political and religious struggles of the 1760s and early 1770s that polarized its citizens and increasingly made New York a hotbed of radical thought and action; to the campaign of 1776, which turned today's five boroughs and Westchester County into a series of battlefields; to the seven years of British occupation and martial law, during which time Washington and Congress were as focused on getting the city back as the British were on holding it. The extraordinary campaign in the fall of 1776, which forms the dramatic heart of Schechter's chronicle, has been overshadowed by more famous engagements at Bunker Hill, Saratoga, and Yorktown, and by the winter at Valley Forge. Yet the contest for New York was by far the largest military venture of the Revolutionary War; it involved almost every significant participant in the war on both sides; and there can be little doubt that during this campaign, the fate of America hung in the balance on several occasions. Moreover, the outcome had a direct impact on the major turning points of the rest of the war. Schechter delights in linking eighteenth-century events with the city's modern landscape, illuminating the forgotten battlefield that remains in our midst. He skillfully weaves into his narrative the memorable and passionate voices of those who were there: American private Joseph Martin, British second-in-command Henry Clinton, patriot-turned-Tory William Smith, minister Ewald Shewkirk, Nathan Hale, Benedict Arnold, and many others, thereby tracing the impact and meaning of the revolution in personal terms and giving his story a powerful human dimension. A profound and memorable saga in its own right, The Battle for New York offers valuable new insight into the American Revolution.

From Publishers Weekly Schechter here presents in sometimes overwhelming detail the story of New York from the beginning of the American Revolution in the spring of 1775 to the city's evacuation by the British late in 1783. The military operations of 1776 are the central focus, as the British occupied the city in order to advance up the Hudson River and unite with another force coming down from Canada. British Gen. William Howe landed troops on Long Island and routed the colonial army on August 27. In despair but persevering, Gen. George Washington listened to subordinates and managed to evacuate his troops from Long Island that night, even as the British navy awaited nearby. And Washington kept running, evacuating New York City in mid-September (with some minor fighting at Harlem Heights, Throg's Neck and White Plains) and withdrawing into New Jersey after losing more than 2,600 captured at Fort Mifflin. The British navy held New York City under martial law for the rest of the war, forced to maintain its presence there after the army moved to the South. Schechter details the lives of area loyalists, more than 29,000 of whom went to Canada after the war. Although many readers will find some of the abundant operational material hard going, Schechter's research is impeccable, and his battlefield tour of today's New York brings immediacy to the story. 8 maps and 65 illus. not seen by PW. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal When we think of America and the Civil War, we usually think of the blue and the gray. But as historian Ketchum (The Winter

Soldiers) points out in his newest book, America's first Civil War occurred nearly a century earlier. Ketchum uses New York City as the backdrop to describe the events that ultimately led to war, beginning with British Prime Minister Walpole's policy of "salutary neglect" (i.e., the Colonies were best served by avoiding war, encouraging trade, and keeping taxes low) to George III's efforts to tax the Colonies to pay war debts and his rejection of a final peace proposal in 1775. Ketchum uses two prominent New York families, the DeLanceys and the Livingstons, one with loyalist tendencies and the other patriotic, to illustrate the complex issues that not only divided the country but split families and set neighbor against neighbor. Ketchum's narrative style and frequent use of firsthand accounts makes for easy reading and brings the participants to life. What results is a good companion to Schecter's *The Battle for New York*, since Schecter essentially picks up where Ketchum leaves off, on the eve of war, and describes the struggles of the British to hold on to New York City. Ketchum's book also includes an appendix of the principal characters. Recommended for medium to large public libraries. (Index not seen.)

Schecter, a professional writer and historian, makes the case for New York City's being the strategic axis around which the Revolutionary War revolved. Schecter shows again and again how Great Britain's desire to hold New York City cost it the war effort, beginning with Gen. William Howe's slow invasion, in which he missed several opportunities to trap Washington in favor of securing the city, and ending with Gen. Henry Clinton's failure to reinforce Cornwallis because of his apprehensions about a possible attack on the city. The easy narrative style is enhanced by numerous quotes, allowing the actual players to tell their part of the story. This book is of special interest to those who live in and around New York, as it includes details about the fortifications of the two armies complete with references to current locations in the city and a walking tour. Well researched and written, this book is recommended for libraries in the New York area and those with comprehensive American Revolution collections.

Robert K. Flatley, Frostburg State Univ. Libs., MD Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist

In the pantheon of sacred cities of the American Revolution, New York City has always taken a back seat to Boston and Philadelphia. Yet the military significance of New York was immense, and the struggle for control of that city and its environs ultimately decided the fate of the war. New York, of course, sits astride the Hudson River; as both the British and the Americans understood, control of the city could lead to control of the entire Hudson River Valley, cutting New England off from the southern states. This gripping account of the battles, personalities, and politics that inflamed the city from 1760 to the beginning of the nineteenth century is superbly written and often exciting. Although the military campaigns are central to his story, the descriptions of daily life and the effects of war upon ordinary civilians are especially absorbing.

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