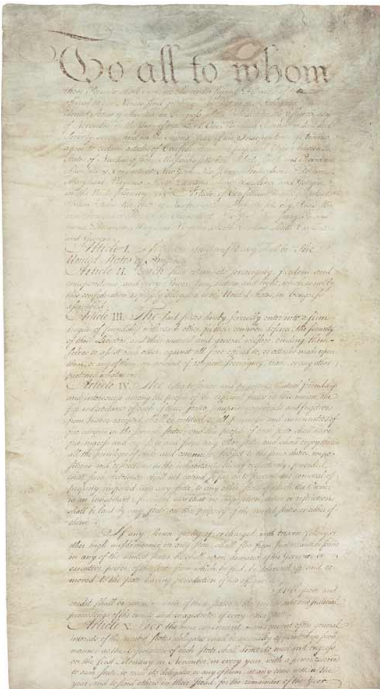
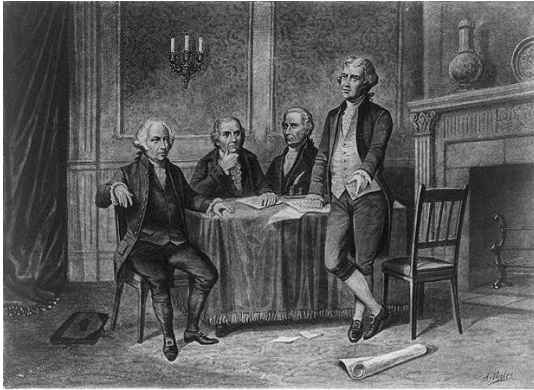


The Articles of Confederation

Our New Nation's First Constitution



The Articles of Confederation

When the Second Continental Congress appointed a committee to write a Declaration of Independence in 1776, they they also created a committee to write a constitution that would create a union of all the states.

constitution:

The United States' first attempt at a constitution was

*We have it in our power to begin the world over again.
A situation, similar to the present, hath not happened since the days of Noah until now.
The birthday of a new world is at hand.
~ Thomas Paine, February, 1776*

The Articles of Confederation: What it Said



Included:

a _____ branch
(to make laws)

_____ (one house)
legislature

each state had one vote

Had the power to:

borrow money

establish postal system

manage Native American affairs



Did NOT include:

an _____ branch
(to enforce the laws)

a _____ branch
(to interpret the laws)

Did NOT have the power to:

regulate trade

(some states taxed goods from other states!)

create a national currency

(each state had a different currency!)

_____ the states or people directly
(no \$\$ to run the gov't!)

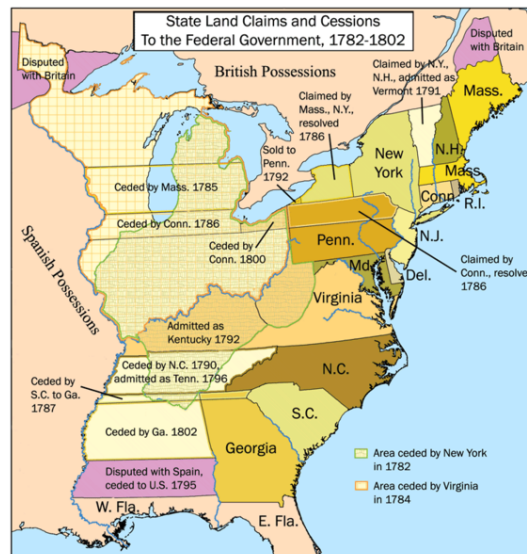
Ratification of the Articles of Confederation

The Articles required unanimous ratification by the states.

Virginia was the first state to ratify the Articles on December 16, 1777,
followed by nine others.

Maryland, Delaware,
and New Jersey
refused to ratify the
Articles until all the
states gave up their
western land claims.

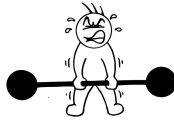
New Jersey and
Delaware eventually
agreed to ratify the
Articles, leaving
Maryland as the last
remaining holdout.



Only after Virginia
agreed to give up its
western land claims
did Maryland agree
to ratify the Articles.

The Articles of
Confederation
became the official
constitution of the
United States on
March 1, 1781.

Why were the Articles of Confederation so weak?



What we didn't like about British rule...

So the Articles of Confederation said...

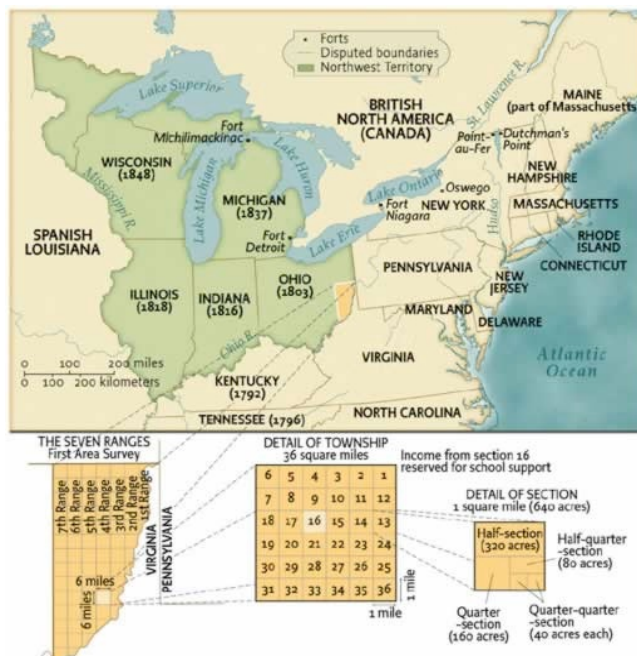
The Land Ordinance of 1785

*created by the government operating under
the Articles of Confederation*

land would be surveyed and
divided into townships

each parcel was 36 one mi square
sections (640 acres)

land sold for \$1/acre



The Northwest Ordinance of 1787

also created by the government operating under the Articles of Confederation

land in the Northwest Territory
would be divided into 3-5
territories

could set up a territorial gov't
(elected legislature) once 5,000
adult males settled there

once pop reached 60,000, could
apply for statehood



Shays' Rebellion

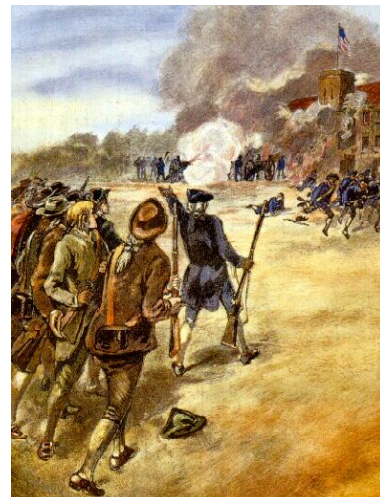


farmers in western MA, unable to pay their
debts, lost their property or were jailed

in late 1786 - early 1787, local militias
closed courts, stopped land confiscations

highlighted a weakness of the AOC:
there was no national government had to ask
states to provide militias to put down
rebellions!

only stopped by militia hired through
donations from wealthy merchants



The Philadelphia/Constitutional Convention

George Washington held a meeting at Mt. Vernon (his home) to discuss fishing rights while they were chatting, many of the attendees of this meeting criticized the AOC and suggested changing it

a meeting to discuss changing the AOC was held in Annapolis, Maryland in 1786, but only 5 states sent delegates

55 delegates from 12 of the 13 states met in Philadelphia in May of 1787.
(Rhode Island didn't show up)



Their goal was only to revise (change) the AOC, not to start over
(which is what they wound up doing!)

The results were our **Constitution!**

The Preamble to the US Constitution



We the people of the United States,
in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice,
insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense,
promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty
to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this
Constitution for the United States of America.