



### Lord North: The Prime Minister Who Lost America

Peter Whiteley

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Lord North was in many ways a most successful politician. Prime Minister for an unbroken twelve years, his management of both parliament and of the business of government was adept. He enjoyed the confidence of King George III, not always an easy political ally, avoided factional strife (having no political following of his own), was notably uncorrupt and made virtually no enemies. In many ways he epitomised the political outlook and aristocratic assumptions of the eighteenth century.

He is, however, principally remembered for presiding over Britain's loss of her American colonies. *Lord North: The Prime Minister Who Lost America* is a scholarly but highly readable account of his life. It includes a full study of the American War of Independence, examining it from the perspective of the British government as well as from the colonial standpoint. No senior politician had visited America and few had a proper knowledge or understanding of Americans. Too often the colonists were regarded as unruly and ungrateful children, with whom compromise was either a sign of weakness or the betrayal of the principle of parliamentary sovereignty. Highmindedness contributed to the final humiliation, as did ignorant overconfidence. Military defeat, to a country that had become preeminent in Europe by the end of the Seven Years War, was not entertained as a possibility.



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