

SECTION 9
ROAD TO REVOLUTION
1754-1776

“I think the Parliament of Great Britain hath no more right to put their hands into my pocket, without my consent, than I have to put my hands into yours for money...”
 —George Washington

“Under the law of nature, all men are born free...”
 —Thomas Jefferson

How one thing led to another . . .

VOUS BRITISH ROGUE!

YOU FRENCH SCOUNDREL!

HEY! I'M NOT EVEN REPRESENTED IN PARLIAMENT!

OUCH!

BRITISH TAXATION

FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR = 1754 - 1763

IF OUR TRADE MAY BE TAXED, WHY NOT OUR LANDS? WHY NOT THE PRODUCE OF OUR LANDS AND EVERYTHING WE MAKE USE OF? IF TAXES ARE LAID ON US IN ANY SHAPE WITHOUT OUR HAVING A LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE WHERE THEY ARE LAID, ARE NOT WE REDUCED FROM THE CHARACTER OF FREE SUBJECTS TO THE MISERABLE STATE OF TRIBUTARY SLAVES?

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE 1776

SAMUEL ADAMS

THOMAS JEFFERSON

SAMUEL ADAMS

- ◆ Boston patriot who used propaganda, press, and public relations to stir revolutionary fervor
- ◆ Organized Sons of Liberty, a radical anti-British protest group, and Boston Committee of Correspondence, which circulated letters documenting British violations of colonial rights



- ◆ Led Boston Tea Party
- ◆ Delegate to First Continental Congress
- ◆ Signed Declaration of Independence

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

- ◆ Printer, journalist, inventor, scientist, colonial agent in England, minister to France
- ◆ Negotiated French-American Alliance crucial to America's victory in 1783
- ◆ Helped negotiate favorable terms of the Treaty of Paris, ending the American Revolution
- ◆ Delegate to the 1787 Constitutional Convention



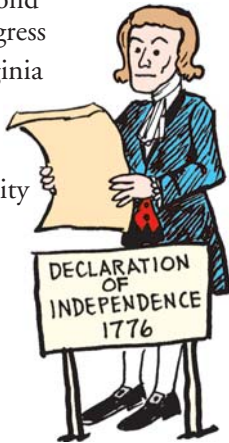
KING GEORGE III

- ◆ British King who lost the American colonies by refusing to yield to the colonists' grievances and their Olive Branch Petition



THOMAS JEFFERSON

- ◆ Virginia plantation owner
- ◆ Wrote Declaration of Independence, as delegate to Second Continental Congress
- ◆ Governor of Virginia
- ◆ 3rd president of the United States
- ◆ Founded University of Virginia



ABIGAIL ADAMS

- ◆ Wife of the 2nd U.S. president (John Adams); mother of the 6th U.S. president (John Quincy Adams)
- ◆ Urged John Adams to include women's rights in the "new code of laws" being written



JOHN ADAMS

- ◆ Leading patriot in First and Second Continental Congresses
- ◆ Championed adoption of Declaration of Independence
- ◆ Wrote Massachusetts state constitution
- ◆ 2nd president of the United States



MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

- ◆ French nobleman and army officer who became a general in America's Continental Army and a hero in the Battle of Yorktown
- ◆ A favorite of General George Washington, with whom he served.
- ◆ Leader of French Revolution in 1790s



THOMAS PAINE

- ◆ Wrote "Common Sense" (1776), advocating independence—a pamphlet that persuaded many colonists to rebel

INDEPENDENCE—IT'S JUST COMMON SENSE!



GEORGE WASHINGTON

- ◆ Virginia plantation owner
- ◆ French and Indian War army officer
- ◆ Commander in chief of Continental Army
- ◆ 1st president of United States
- ◆ Known as the "Father of our country"



9-2 ★ CAUSES OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: AN OVERVIEW

“When a certain great king, whose initial is G,
 Shall force stamps upon paper, and folks to drink tea;
 When these folks burn his tea and stamp paper, like stubble,
 You may guess that this king is then coming to trouble.”—Philip Freneau

POLITICAL CAUSES FOR BREAKING WITH BRITAIN

1. ENGLAND'S NEGLECT OF THE COLONIES



2. TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION



3. LIMITATION OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS



ECONOMIC CAUSES FOR BREAKING WITH BRITAIN

4. TAXATION



5. MERCANTILISM



ENGLAND'S ECONOMIC POLICY

- ◆ Gold in the treasury makes a nation strong.
- ◆ So, a nation must have more gold coming in than going out—meaning, a favorable balance of trade
- ◆ Therefore, a nation must regulate its trade to sell more than it buys.
- ◆ Colonies exist for the trade benefits of the mother country.

6. TRADE RESTRICTIONS

Britain regulated trade with the colonies for her own benefit through navigation, or shipping, laws that forced the colonists to trade mainly with Britain.



7. ECONOMIC POWER

But England failed to enforce the navigation laws, and the colonists traded with whomever they pleased—and made money doing so.



8. FREE ENTERPRISE

The colonists grew accustomed to free enterprise (free, unrestricted trade). When Britain finally began enforcing too late!



9-3 ★ THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR: STRUGGLE FOR NORTH AMERICA

1492

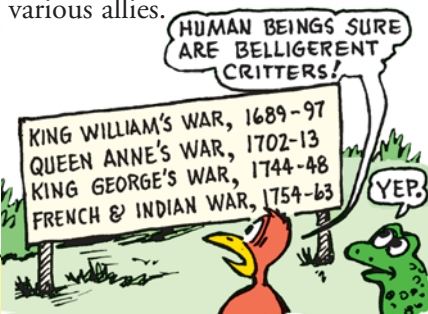
1754-63

Present

Remember the 3-way race for North America among Spain, France, and England? One contestant, France, now loses.



Between 1689 and 1763 England (after 1707, Great Britain) and France fought four wars to win control of the eastern half of North America and extend their global empires. They battled in Europe and India and America, engaging various allies.



The French and Indian War erupted in 1754 over disputed claims by Britain and France to the Ohio River Valley. France built forts there to protect her fur trade—and her claims. Most Indian tribes, except the Iroquois, sided with the French.



In 1754 the Virginia governor sent George Washington, a 22-year-old lieutenant colonel in the Virginia militia, to western Pennsylvania with 150 militiamen to force French withdrawal from land Virginia claimed from her 1609 charter.



The French attacked and defeated them near Fort Duquesne (present-day Pittsburgh) in the first battle of the French and Indian War.

ALBANY CONFERENCE
 Meanwhile, in Albany, New York, delegates from seven colonies met to discuss colonial defense—and Benjamin Franklin's Albany Plan for uniting the colonies under a royally appointed president general and an elected council. Despite his cartoon advice, the colonies said, "No."
 (And so did the British.)



1755—British General Edward Braddock, with his new aide George Washington, led British troops against the French at Fort Duquesne. Defeated, he lost half his troops and his life by fighting in column formation (against Washington's advice), instead of behind trees as the French and Indians did. Washington rallied the troops and emerged a hero.



In 1759 Britain reversed a losing streak with a series of triumphs, culminating with the capture of Quebec. France lost not only the war but also her race for North America.

THE 1763 PEACE TREATY
 changed the map of North America.

- ◆ **France** gave to **Great Britain**
 - Canada
 - All land east of the Mississippi River, except New Orleans
- ◆ **France** gave to **Spain** (her ally)
 - New Orleans
 - French land west of the Mississippi River



“What do we mean by the Revolution? The war? That was no part of the Revolution: it was only an effect and consequence of it. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people, and this was effected from 1760 to 1775, in the course of fifteen years, before a drop of blood was shed...”—John Adams

1492

1763-74

Present

THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR CHANGED EVERYTHING.

Until 1763 Britain had paid little attention to her colonies, 3,000 miles distant. Taking advantage of this salutary (beneficial) neglect, the colonists had exercised the liberties of Englishmen and become increasingly autonomous (self-governing), while remaining proud, loyal British subjects.

After 1763 victorious Britain tightened control of her vast North American empire (almost doubled in size) in a series of actions that seemed fair to Britain, unfair to the colonists, and that led directly to the American Revolution.

As you read what happened, analyze the cause and effect relationships in the sequence of events, and then decide what you would have done 1) as a colonial leader and 2) as a member of Parliament.



In 1760 George III (age 22) had become king of Great Britain. Although not a tyrant, he took his mother's advice to rule as well as reign (unlike easy-going George I and George II).



BRITISH POST-WAR PROBLEMS

Insecure, vain, headstrong, and eventually insane, George III and his King's Friends faction in Parliament were ill-equipped to deal with British-American problems following the French and Indian War.



PROBLEM #1: FRONTIER DEFENSE

How could England keep peace along the colonial frontier with Americans eager to cross it and settle Indian lands? Pontiac's Rebellion compounded the problem: In 1763 Ottawa Chief Pontiac led a confederation of Indian tribes in a year-long (albeit unsuccessful) siege of British forts in the Great Lakes region.

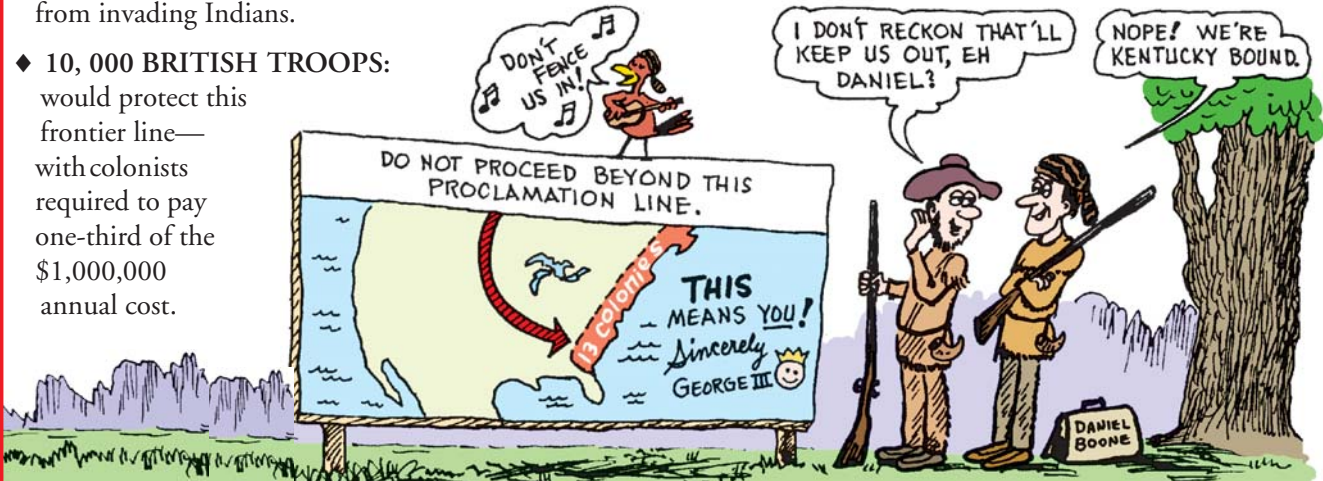
BRITISH ACTION

AMERICAN REACTION

◆ **PROCLAMATION LINE OF 1763:** would bar westward settlement on Indian lands and, in turn, protect the colonists from invading Indians.

◆ **10, 000 BRITISH TROOPS:** would protect this frontier line—with colonists required to pay one-third of the \$1,000,000 annual cost.

“UNFAIR,” the colonists protested, arguing that their original charters included land west of that line. Furthermore, they declared, “We don't want a standing army during peace time!”



★ BRITANNIA RULES! AMERICA REBELS!

patriots—colonists for independence

PROBLEM #2: TAXES...and then one thing led to another!

THE COST OF BEATING THE FRENCH HAS DOUBLED OUR NATIONAL DEBT!! WHO'S GOING TO PAY THIS BILL? ENGLISHMEN ARE ALREADY PAYING HUGE TAXES: 20%.



King George III

LET'S MAKE THOSE UNGRATEFUL COLONISTS PAY THEIR FAIR SHARE. WE FOUGHT THE WAR TO FREE THEM FROM THE FRENCH MENACE, AND THEY SMUGGLED GOODS TO THE FRENCH THE WHOLE TIME! AND THEY STILL SMUGGLE TO AVOID PAYING DUTIES. LET'S TAX THEM! IT'S ONLY FAIR.



British Prime Minister George Grenville

CAN WE DO THIS? PARLIAMENT HAS ALWAYS LIMITED ITS TAXING OF THE COLONIES TO EXTERNAL TAXES—ON IMPORTED GOODS. IT HAS NEVER PASSED INTERNAL TAXES. THESE ARE LEFT TO THE COLONIAL ASSEMBLIES, AS A BASIC LIBERTY OF ENGLISHMEN.



British House of Commons member Edmond Burke

BRITISH ACTION

COLONIAL REACTION

1764—SUGAR ACT

Placed duties on sugar and molasses—not just to regulate trade (as before) but to produce revenue for Britain. Smugglers would be tried in admiralty courts without juries.



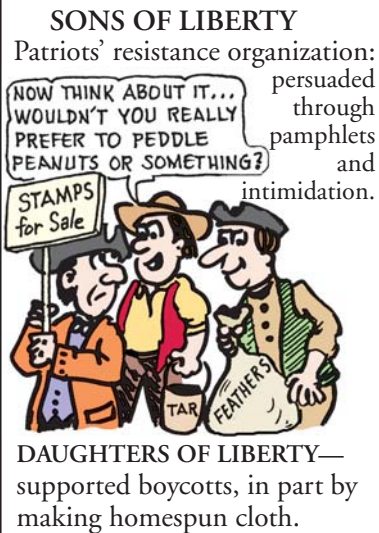
1765—STAMP ACT

Required revenue stamps for all publications and official documents.

Englishman Isaac Barre warned his fellow Parliamentarians:

“Americans are sons of liberty and won't surrender their rights without a fight.”

He was right!



1765—QUARTERING ACT

Required the colonists to quarter (house and feed) British troops in America.



1766—REPEALED STAMP ACT but passed **DECLARATORY ACT**: Parliament could make laws binding colonies “in all cases whatsoever.”



★ **BRITANNIA RULES! AMERICA REBELS!**
writs of assistance—non-specific search warrants
propaganda—information spread to influence opinion

BRITISH ACTION **AMERICAN REACTION**

1767—TOWNSEND ACTS

1. Revenue duties on tea, glass, lead, paper, paints
2. Strict customs enforcement, including Writs of Assistance

Charles Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer (Treasury), boasted he could raise revenue through duties, because Americans accepted these external taxes to regulate trade as legal.

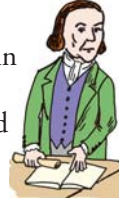
John Dickinson, a Pennsylvania lawyer, argued in his “Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania,” that **external taxes to regulate trade were illegal if used to raise revenue.**



“Those who are taxed without their consent... are slaves.”

This influential pamphlet urged repeal of the Townshend Acts.

Samuel Adams and fellow radicals in the Massachusetts legislature circulated letters to all the colonies, urging them to **boycott** (refuse to buy) British goods.



Colonists revived James Otis’ 1761 claim that Writs of Assistance violated their English right to sanctity of the home: the right not to have their homes searched without a warrant.



1768—BRITISH TROOPS (4,000) were assigned to Boston to ensure orderly customs collections.

1770: THE BOSTON MASSACRE

Bostonians resented the British troops and often taunted them. On March 5 a rowdy gang of men and boys threw snowballs and rocks at a British soldier guarding the Boston custom office across from the State house. British Captain Thomas Preston and a few soldiers came to his aid. An unknown person shouted “Fire!”—and the soldiers did, killing five colonists, including Crispus Attucks, an African-American. Attucks was the first person to die for the nation’s liberty.



1770—TOWNSEND ACTS partially repealed—duties withdrawn on all items except tea.

On March 5, (the same day as the Boston Massacre) Lord Frederick North, the new Prime Minister, recommended this action because of pressure from British merchants who had suffered a 38 percent cut in exports from the colonial boycott.

The **tea duty** was retained to show that Parliament and King George III were still boss.

Two Boston Sons of Liberty used the shooting incident as propaganda* to stir revolutionary fervor:

- 1) **Samuel Adams**, by publicizing it as a massacre of innocent victims, and
- 2) **Paul Revere**, with his engraving of British soldiers firing on unarmed men and women entitled: “The Bloody Massacre.”

Prints were sent to all the colonies

**propaganda*—information spread to influence opinion



Boston lawyer John Adams (Samuel Adams’ cousin) courageously defended Preston and his men in their murder trial, for he believed they fired in self defense. (John Adams later became the second president of the United States.)

All were acquitted except two who were convicted of manslaughter, branded on the thumb, and released.



BRITISH ACTION

1770-73—A calm period as King George III and Lord North avoided further provocation of the colonists



SAMUEL ADAMS

AMERICAN REACTION

COMMITTEES OF CORRESPONDENCE

Meanwhile, patriot Samuel Adams helped Boston and 80 other Massachusetts towns organize Committees of Correspondence to spread word of any new British aggression. Other colonies followed suit, and by 1774 an intercolonial information network existed that would unite the colonies in fighting for their liberties. If trouble arose—and it soon did—they would be ready.



1773—TEA ACT

In a costly blunder, Parliament tried to bail out the (British) East India Company—near bankruptcy because of 17,000,000 pounds of surplus tea—by giving it a monopoly of the American market.

Parliament hoped the colonists would start buying British tea again (instead of smuggling Dutch tea) when they saw the new bargain prices.

1773—THE BOSTON TEA PARTY

The Tea Act united America's conservative merchants (outraged by the monopoly) and radical patriots (angered by the tea tax) in resisting Great Britain. In New York and Philadelphia, tea ships were forced back to England.

Then, on December 16, about 60 Bostonians disguised as Mohawk Indians—believed to be Sons of Liberty,

led by Sam Adams—war-hooped onto three tea ships in Boston Harbor and threw overboard all 342 chests of East India Company tea.



1774—COERCIVE ACTS (called "INTOLERABLE ACTS" by the colonists)

An angry King and Parliament decided to teach all the colonies a lesson by punishing Massachusetts through four acts, which:

1. closed Boston's port until the city paid for the tea
2. deprived Massachusetts of self-government and placed it under the military rule of British General Thomas Gage
3. allowed British officials to be tried in England if charged with crimes while enforcing British laws
4. issued a stronger Quartering Act for all the colonies

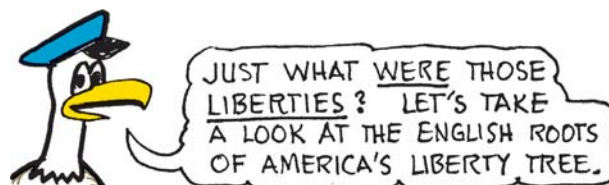
1774—QUEBEC ACT

1. extended Quebec's boundaries to Ohio and Mississippi rivers—land claimed by Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and Virginia
2. gave Quebec's Catholic Church preferred status and sanctioned Quebec's French law of trial without jury (Would America be next? Some colonists feared so.)

FIRST CONTINENTAL CONGRESS, Sept. 5-Oct. 26, 1774

Blasting the Intolerable Acts as tyrannical, Committees of Correspondence rallied support in all the colonies for beleaguered Massachusetts and arranged for an unprecedented gathering: a **Continental Congress**. Fifty-six delegates, from every colony except Georgia, met in Philadelphia to chart a unified response to Britain. The results:

1. an Association, pledged to boycott British trade
2. adoption of Suffolk Resolves, declaring the Coercive Acts unconstitutional and urging Massachusetts to form its own government and collect its own taxes and to form and arm a militia
3. a Declaration of Rights and Grievances, stating that the colonists were defying Britain because their **LIBERTIES AS ENGLISHMEN** had been violated



9-5 ★ THE AMERICAN TREE OF LIBERTY: ENGLISH ROOTS, 1215-1689

*** A FLASHBACK IN TIME: THE LIBERTIES OF ENGLISHMEN ***

MAGNA CARTA

Way back in 1215, merrie old England was not so merrie. Why? Tyrannical **King John** ruled just as he pleased and made the English barons support him—and his wars—with high taxes. Then one day. . .

SIRE, WE'VE DRAWN UP A CHARTER LISTING 63 RIGHTS WE DESERVE AS FREEMEN, INCLUDING NO TAXATION WITHOUT OUR COUNSEL. SIGN RIGHT HERE, OR THERE WILL BE TROUBLE!

WHY NOT ASK FOR MY KINGDOM?



On June 15, 1215, in Runnymede Meadow, King John signed the barons' charter. Later called the **MAGNA CARTA**, it was the first English document to limit absolute power of the king and grant rights to freemen.

THE MAGNA CARTA CREATED "RULE BY LAW" RATHER THAN "RULE BY MEN," MEANING THERE WERE LAWS THAT EVEN THE KING COULD NOT BREAK.



THE TAP ROOT

A tap root is a main root from which smaller, lateral roots grow.

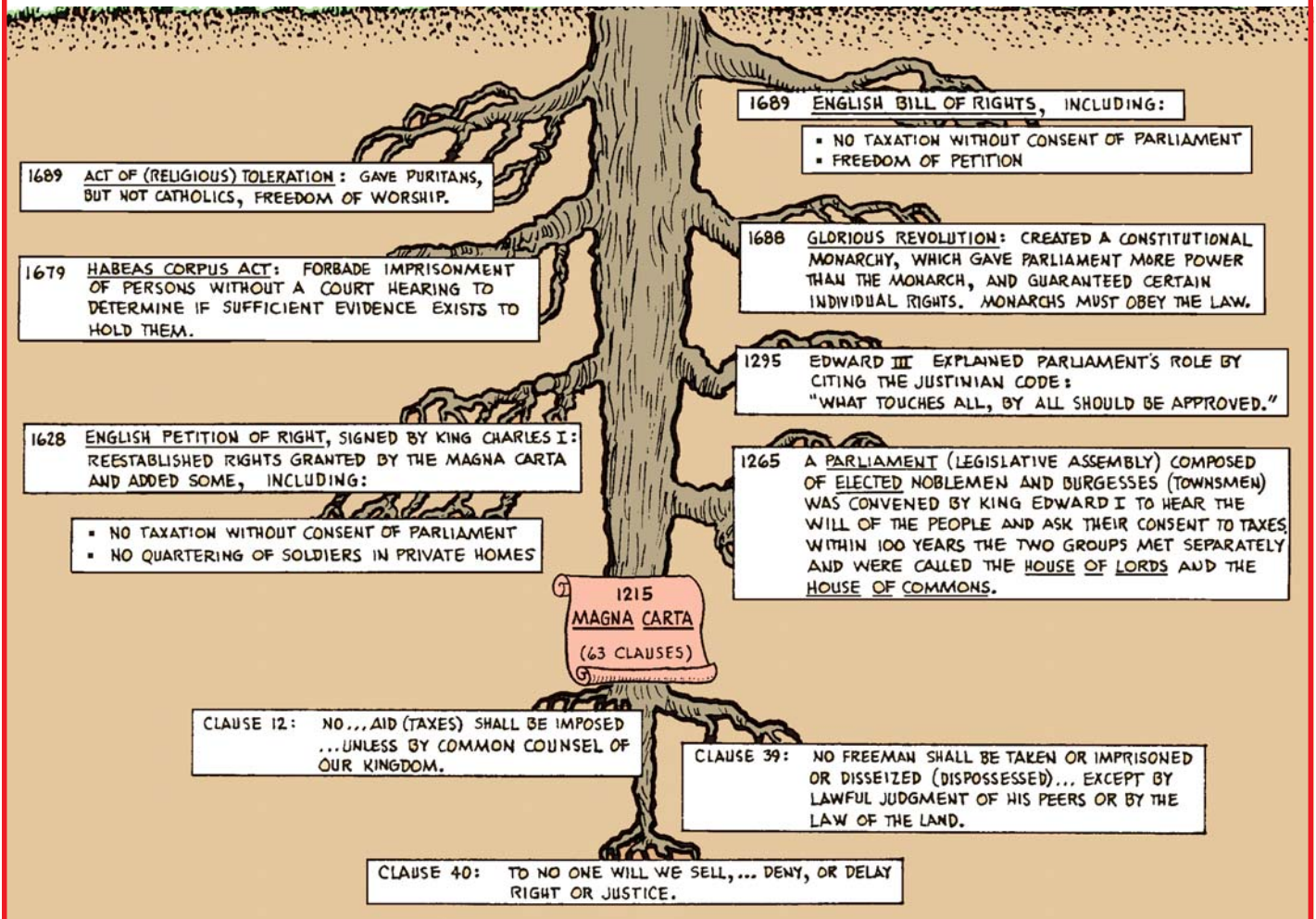
THE TAP ROOT OF ENGLISH LIBERTY, THE MAGNA CARTA GROUNDED ENGLISH COMMON LAW IN SUCH RIGHTS AS NO TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION AND NO ILLEGAL IMPRISONMENT, AND IT SET A PRECEDENT FOR RIGHTS GUARANTEED BY THE U.S. CONSTITUTION.

FROM THE TAP ROOT OF THE MAGNA CARTA THERE GREW OTHER ROOTS STRENGTHENING THE TREE OF LIBERTY.



"In this character of the Americans a love of freedom is the predominating feature... They are...not only devoted to liberty, but to liberty according to English principles."

—Edmund Burke, member of British House of Commons, 1775



9-6 ★ "ON THE BRINK OF A PRECIPICE," 1774-1775

precipice—a steep cliff; a situation of grave danger
 "From all these causes a fierce spirit of liberty has grown up."—Edmund Burke

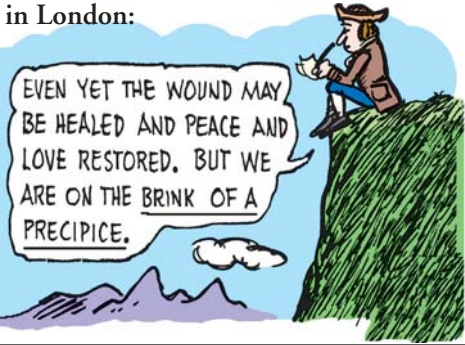
1492

1774-75

Present

Now, back to Congress in Philadelphia.

On October 26, 1774, the Continental Congress adjourned, agreeing to reconvene May 10, 1775, if King George did not respond to their grievances. Congressman Charles Thomson wrote to Benjamin Franklin in London:



The Continental Congressman did not seek war or independence, only their rights as Englishmen, which they felt Parliament had violated.

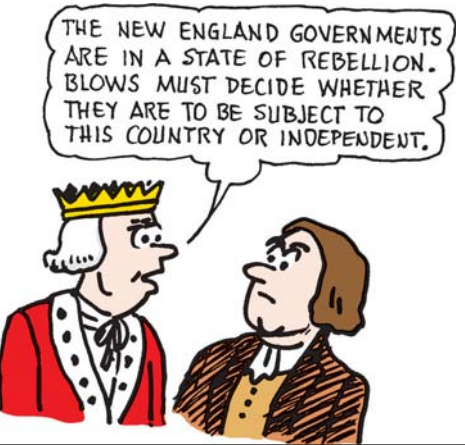


In Parliament, William Pitt and Edmund Burke agreed with the colonists' view of their liberties as Englishmen. They argued for repealing the Coercive Acts.

English merchants suffering from the boycott also urged repeal.



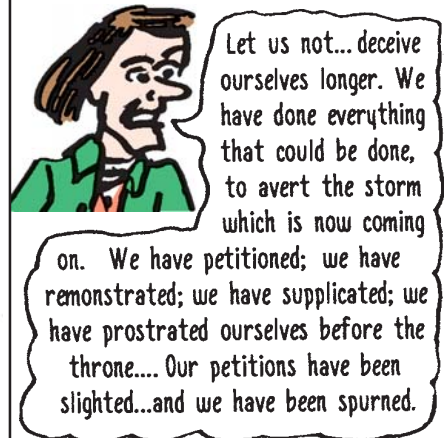
But King George III, Lord North, and the "kings' friends" faction refused to yield. In November 1774 the king declared:



Blows seemed not too distant. General Gage and his British troops were fortifying Boston, while Massachusetts colonists formed a provisional government under John Hancock, and signed up men for the militia.



Meanwhile, fiery orator Patrick Henry urged the Virginia House of Burgesses to act.



GENTLEMEN, WE MAY CRY PEACE, PEACE—BUT THERE IS NO PEACE. THE WAR IS ACTUALLY BEGUN! THE NEXT GALE THAT SWEEPS FROM THE NORTH WILL BRING TO OUR EARS THE CLASH OF RESOUNDING ARMS! OUR BRETHREN ARE ALREADY IN THE FIELD! WHY STAND WE HERE IDLE?... IS LIFE SO DEAR, OR PEACE SO SWEET, AS TO BE PURCHASED AT THE PRICE OF CHAINS AND SLAVERY? FORBID IT, ALMIGHTY GOD! I KNOW NOT WHAT COURSE OTHERS MAY TAKE, BUT AS FOR ME, GIVE ME LIBERTY, OR GIVE ME DEATH!



A WAR FOR LIBERTY? PERHAPS—IF THEIR RIGHTS WERE NOT RESTORED. A WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE? FEW HAD ANY DESIRE TO SEPARATE FROM THE MOTHER COUNTRY, ANY MORE THAN YOU OR I WOULD WANT TO SEPARATE FROM OUR COUNTRY. MOST WERE STILL PROUD TO BE SUBJECTS OF THE MIGHTY BRITISH EMPIRE. IT WAS A FAMILY QUARREL—OR WAS IT?



9-7 ★ THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION: LEXINGTON AND CONCORD

“By the rude bridge that arched the flood, Their flag to April’s breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood, And fired the shot heard round the world.”—Ralph Waldo Emerson

1492

1775

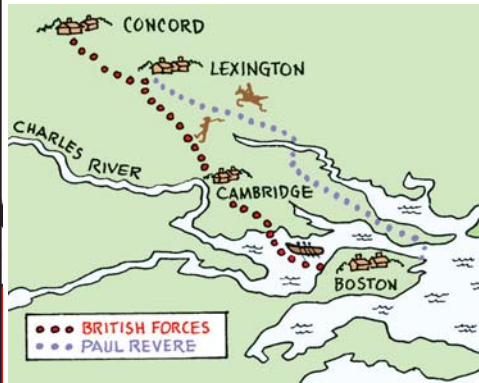
Present

April 18, 1775: BOSTON—British General Gage never intended a war—only a raid to seize the gunpowder patriots were stashing away in Concord, Massachusetts.

AND MAJOR PITCAIRN, WHEN YOU PASS THROUGH LEXINGTON, ARREST THOSE REBELS, SAM ADAMS AND JOHN HANCOCK. SAY, YOU GUYS ARE KEEPING THIS MISSION A SECRET, AREN'T YOU?



10 p.m. April 18—Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith and Major John Pitcairn signaled 700 British soldiers to begin their secret mission. Marching confidently to Concord (about 20 miles from Boston) in the bright red uniforms of the British army—mightiest army in the world, the redcoats sang a song ridiculing their backward frontier cousins, the American Yankees.

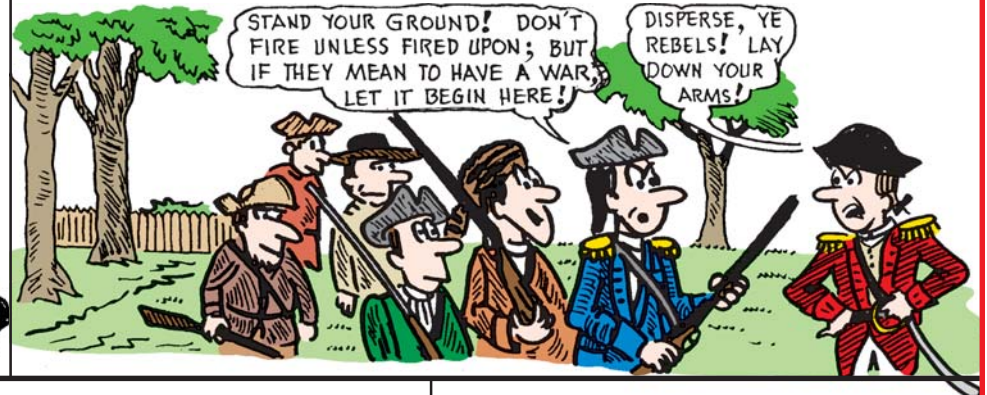


“Listen my children, and you shall hear of the midnight ride of Paul Revere.”—Henry W. Longfellow

Silversmith Paul Revere, a member of the Sons of Liberty, and William Dawes galloped by separate routes from Boston to Lexington to warn the patriots.



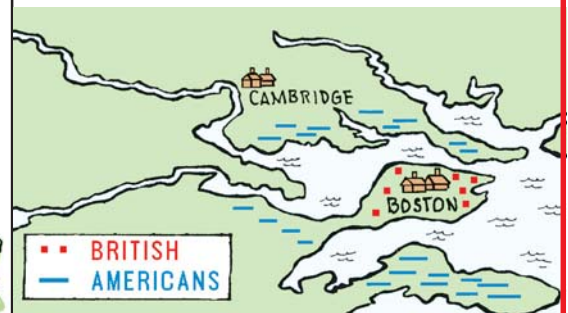
Dawn, April 19, 1775: LEXINGTON—Warned by Paul Revere, 70 brave Minutemen, under Captain John Parker, met the British redcoats on Lexington green at sunrise. A shot rang out, then a volley. No one knows who fired first, but the redcoats counted eight Americans dead and ten wounded before marching on to Concord. Samuel Adams and John Hancock, both at Lexington, escaped capture—thanks to Paul Revere.



Afternoon, April 19: TO CONCORD AND BACK—Dazed by a skirmish with Minutemen at Concord’s North Bridge, the British fled back to Boston—via Lexington—through a gantlet of 4,000 angry militiamen (farmers, artisans, teachers, ministers) shooting Indian-style from behind trees and rocks. The Yankees taunted the redcoats with a familiar tune, having adopted “Yankee Doodle” as their own. This song became the American theme song of the Revolution.



News of the British rout spread throughout the colonies. Soon 16,000 New England militiamen surrounded Boston, trapping General Gage’s redcoats in an eleven-month siege, from April 1775 to March 1776.



★ ROAD TO REVOLUTION: GOING THE LAST MILE

May 1775—Realizing the patriots meant business, England sent three new generals to help General Gage and the besieged redcoats in Boston. They soon took action.



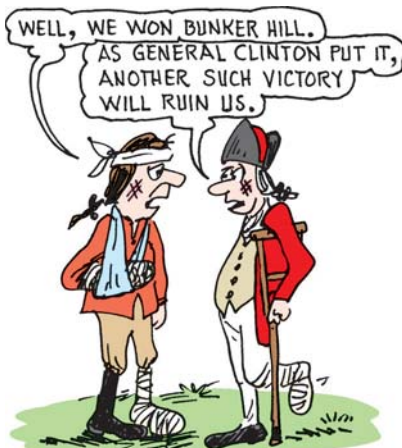
June 17, 1775: **Battle of Bunker Hill**—General Howe led 2,400 British troops (each with 100 pounds of equipment) in a frontal attack on 1,600 Americans defending Breed's Hill (near Bunker Hill), overlooking Boston.



Israel Putnam, a farmer/officer, had the patriots hold their fire until the redcoats were 20 yards away. Then they fired, reloaded and fired again—killing or wounding 1,000 men (40 percent of Howe's troops and 12 percent of all British officers who would fight in the war). Out of ammunition, the patriots retreated.



The Americans lost the battle (with fewer than 500 casualties), but won a strategic victory of confidence and pride. The British never again underestimated the patriots' bravery and marksmanship.



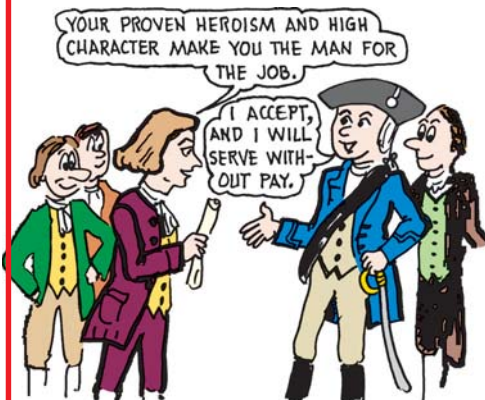
And General Howe never seemed to recover his confidence. Throughout the war he avoided frontal attacks, as well as final pursuit of the enemy.



May 10, 1775—Meanwhile, the 2nd Continental Congress met as scheduled at the Philadelphia Statehouse and began to deal with the **unscheduled war**— while continuing to seek peace. (All states except Georgia sent delegates.)



June 15, 1775—Congress adopted the New England militia as the new Continental Army. John Adams, seeking colonial unity with a Virginia leader, nominated George Washington commander in chief of the armed forces of the United Colonies.



ON JULY 8, 1775, CONGRESS DREW UP THE "OLIVE BRANCH PETITION," ONE LAST ATTEMPT TO GET GEORGE III TO RESTORE ENGLISH LIBERTIES IN AMERICA....



August 1775—King George III responded by declaring the colonies to be in a state of rebellion. He said:



9-8 ★ GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON: COMMANDER IN CHIEF

“I hope I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain (what I consider the most enviable of all titles) the character of an honest man.”—George Washington

1492

1775-76

Present



General George Washington (1732-99), a giant of a man in physique and character, held the Continental Army together for eight years through sheer force of character. He became the symbol of the American cause. Patriots trusted and followed him because of his honesty, courage, dignity, and spirited sense of duty.

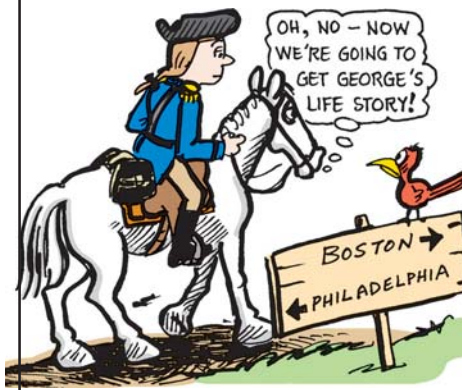
Thomas Jefferson said of him in 1814: “His integrity was most pure, his justice was the most inflexible I have ever known, no motives of interest, of friendships, or hate, being able to bias his decision. He was, indeed...a wise, a good, and a great man.”

Like Columbus in 1492, George Washington, in June 1775, prepared to venture into the unknown—as commander in chief of the Continental Army. Did he think of Columbus as he wrote his brother John?

I AM EMBARKED ON A WIDE OCEAN, BOUNDLESS IN ITS PROSPECT, AND FROM WHENCE PERHAPS, NO SAFE HARBOR IS TO BE FOUND.



June 1775—As Washington journeyed to Massachusetts to take command of the Continental Army (which still held the British redcoats trapped in Boston), we can imagine that he reflected on his life.



Washington’s great-grandfather John Washington, an English sailor, came to Virginia in 1657—with no money. Within twenty years, he owned 5,000 acres, including the land that became Mount Vernon, George’s home as an adult.



George was born in 1732 at Popes Creek Plantation in Westmoreland County, Virginia, into a family of eight children (two were his half-brothers). In 1738 his father Augustine moved the family to Ferry Farm near Fredericksburg to be near Augustine’s ironworks.

To develop character, George copied 110 “Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation” on pages his mother Mary sewed into a notebook. He practiced them all of his life.

“Associate...with Men of good Quality if you Esteem your own Reputation; for tis better to be alone than in bad Company.”



George went to school in Fredericksburg but did not go to college, to his regret. Excelling in geometry (though a poor speller), he became a land surveyor at age 16. He spent the next year as Culpeper County surveyor. Then, from age 18 to 20 he developed wilderness skills surveying Virginia’s frontier for the Fairfax family. A rugged outdoorsman, he used these skills in the French and Indian war and in the American Revolution.

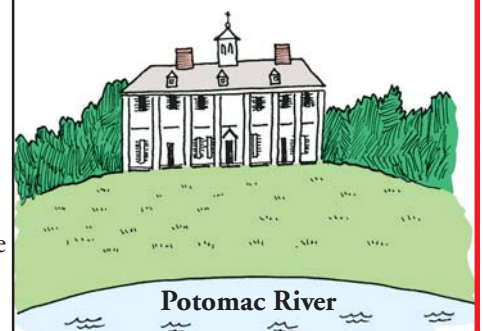


George loved to fish and fox hunt, ride horses, and go to plantation parties (where he became an expert dancer).

George’s father died when he was eleven. At age 21, George inherited Ferry Farm and twenty slaves from him.

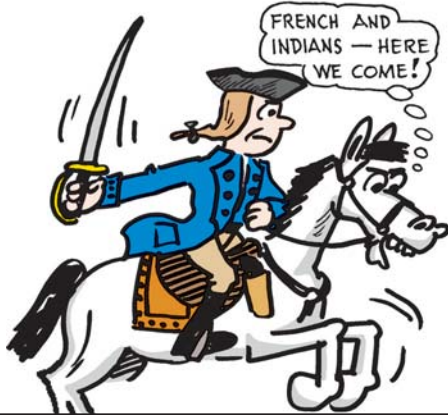
At age 28 (1760), he inherited Mount Vernon plantation from his brother Lawrence. By 1773, he had acquired 40,000 acres of land. He enjoyed his life as a planter and constantly sought improved techniques of farming and land use.

MOUNT VERNON



★ GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON TAKES COMMAND

At age 21, George joined the Virginia militia for five years (1753-58). Fighting with the British during the French and Indian War gave him a knowledge of British war tactics that would come in handy with his new job as commander in chief of the Continental Army.



In 1759 he married Martha Custis, a wealthy Virginia widow, and Mount Vernon became their plantation home. He adopted and loved her two children, Jack and Patsy. They had none of their own.

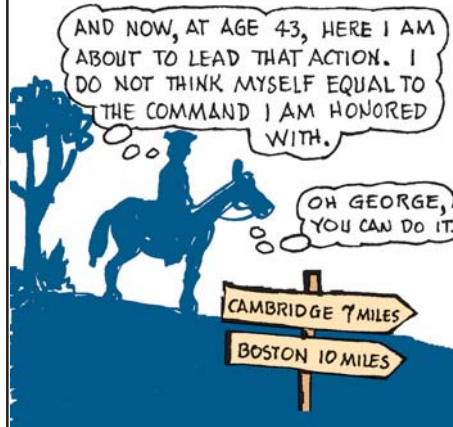


In 1760 George's friend George Mercer described him at age 28 as: "straight as an Indian...6 feet 2 inches...175 pounds...[with] a large and straight...nose; blue-gray penetrating eyes...a clear though rather colorless pale skin which burns with the sun....His mouth is large and generally firmly closed, but which from time to time discloses some defective teeth....His movements and gestures are graceful, his walk majestic, and he is a splendid horseman."

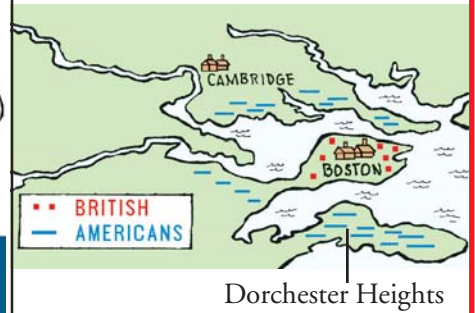
George served in the Virginia legislature 15 years (1758-73). He learned the process of representative government and became friends with Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, James Madison, and other outstanding Virginia leaders.



As a Virginia delegate to the First and Second Continental Congresses, George called for action to maintain "the liberty that we have derived from our ancestors."



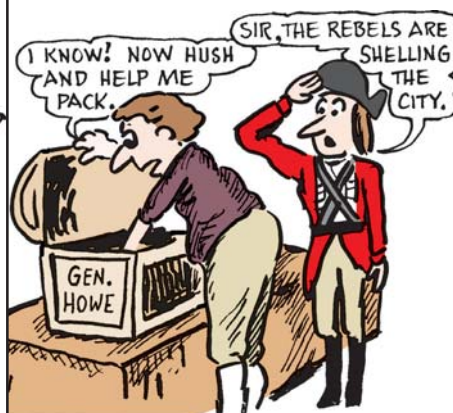
On July 3, 1775, George Washington arrived in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and took command of the Continental Army (about 15,000 men, encamped at Harvard College) still laying siege to the British army trapped in Boston.



Dismayed at the "imperfect obedience" of troops who couldn't even march in step, Washington set stern measures, including 20 lashes for swearing, to make soldiers of them and develop their character.



Success came eight months later on March 17, 1776, when Washington's soldiers positioned cannon on Dorchester Heights and forced General Howe, who had replaced General Gage, to evacuate Boston.



The British sailed to Nova Scotia to plan their next move. They took 1,000 loyalists with them. (Eventually 100,000 loyalists left America.)

In April 1776, Washington marched his army to New York City, guessing (correctly) that Howe would soon attack New York.



“The cause of America is in a great measure the cause of mankind.”—Thomas Paine

1492

1776

Present

“Tis time to part.”—Thomas Paine

Meanwhile, in January 1776, **COMMON SENSE**, Thomas Paine’s radical pamphlet questioning monarchy, tipped the scales of public opinion toward independence.

Thomas Paine



COMMON SENSE;
 ADDRESSED TO THE
INHABITANTS
 OF
AMERICA
 ON THE FOLLOWING INTERESTING
SUBJECTS

- I. OF THE ORIGIN AND DESIGN OF GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL, WITH CONCISE REMARKS ON THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION.
- II. OF MONARCHY AND HEREDITARY SUCCESSION.
- III. THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF AMERICAN AFFAIRS.
- IV. OF THE PRESENT ABILITY OF AMERICA, WITH SOME MISCELLANEOUS REFLECTIONS.

MAN KNOWS NO MASTER SAVE CREATING HEAVEN,
 OR THOSE WHOM CHOICE AND COMMON GOOD ORDAIN.
 THOMSON.

PHILADELPHIA;
 PRINTED, AND SOLD, BY R. BELL, IN THIRD-STREET.

MDCCLXXVI.

TOM PAINE SAYS: IT'S KING GEORGE, NOT PARLIAMENT, THAT ABUSES OUR FREEDOM; HE IS A TYRANT, A ROYAL BRUTE! WHY SHOULD A KING RULE OTHER MEN? BESIDES, DOES IT MAKE SENSE FOR AN ISLAND TO RULE A CONTINENT?

TOM'S RIGHT...
INDEPENDENCE NOW!



“O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose not only the tyranny but the tyrant, stand forth! Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia and Africa have long expelled her. Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O receive the fugitive [freedom], and prepare in time an asylum for mankind!”



Back at the Second Continental Congress, meeting at the Philadelphia Statehouse, was swamped with colonists' demands for independence.

Delegate John Adams wrote his wife:

Dear Abigail, Every Post and every Day rolls in upon us Independence like a Torrent. On May 15 Congress advised the colonies to establish independent state governments.

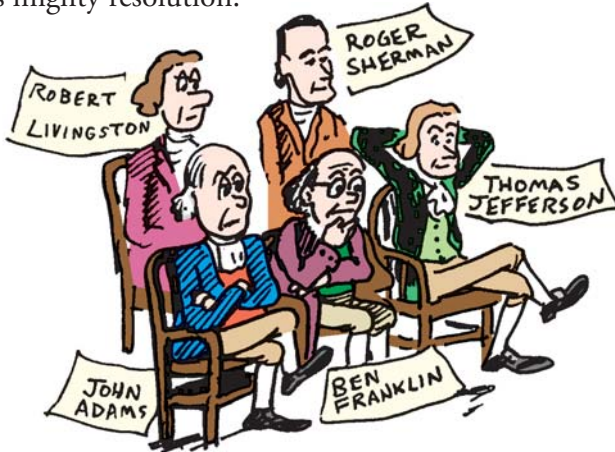


On June 7, 1776, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia introduced a daring resolution to Congress:

I MOVE THAT THESE UNITED COLONIES ARE, AND OF RIGHT OUGHT TO BE, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES.



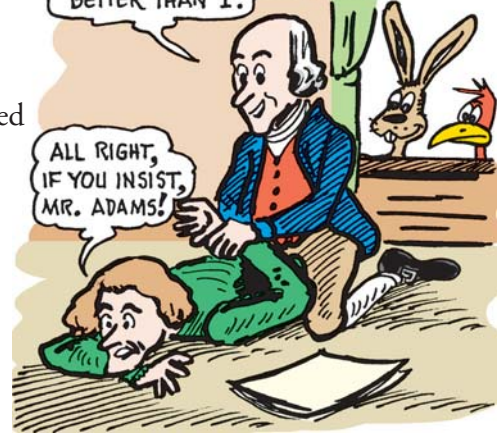
Deferring a vote for three weeks, Congress appointed a committee of five to write a declaration, "setting forth the causes which impelled us to take this mighty resolution."



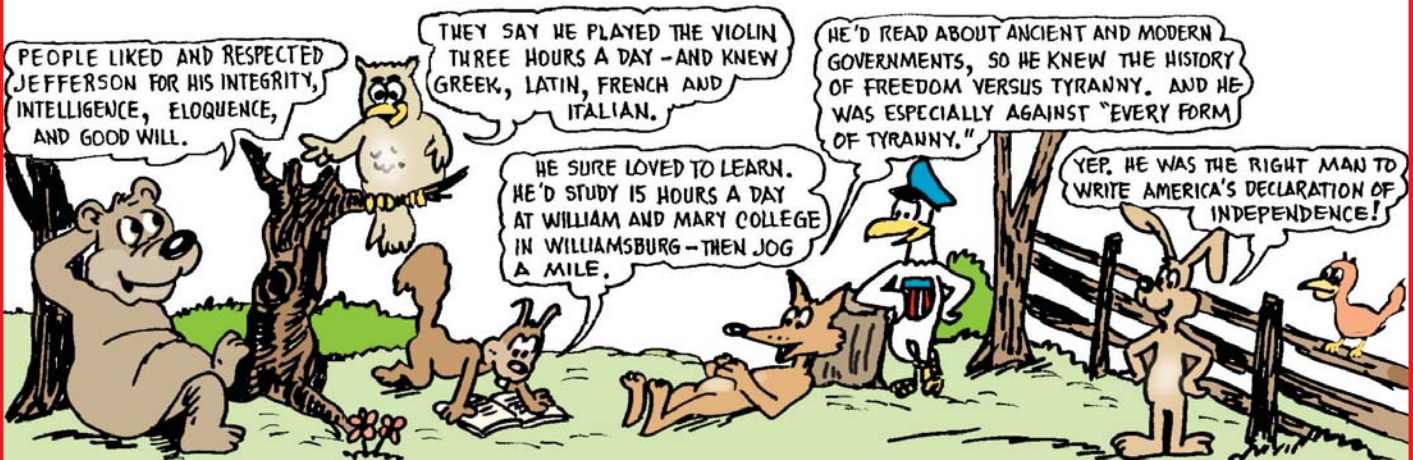
When asked to write the Declaration, Jefferson said Adams should do it—but Adams explained why Jefferson should.

MR. JEFFERSON, YOU MUST WRITE THE DECLARATION.... YOU'RE A VIRGINIAN, YOU ARE POPULAR, AND YOU WRITE TEN TIMES BETTER THAN I.

ALL RIGHT, IF YOU INSIST, MR. ADAMS!



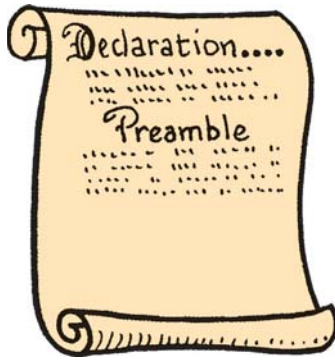
A great choice! Tall, red-haired Thomas Jefferson (age 33 in 1776), gentleman farmer of Monticello near Charlottesville, Virginia, was a genius of the first order: lawyer, legislator, scholar, scientist, architect, musician, linguist. Later he served as Virginia governor and U.S. president. Like John Locke, he believed mankind had the ability to reason and the natural rights to freedom, property, and self-government.



9-10 ★ THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, JULY 4, 1776

“Neither aiming at originality of principle or sentiment, nor yet copied from any particular and previous writing, it was intended to be an expression of the American mind...”

—THOMAS JEFFERSON, AUTHOR OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE



“When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature’s God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

“We hold these truths to be self evident: That all men are created equal;



THOMAS JEFFERSON

“that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;



“that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed;



“that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it and to institute new government....



“when a long train of abuses and usurpations...evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right...their duty, to throw off such government and to provide new guards for their future security.



“Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their form of government.”



In Congress, July 4, 1776 The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America



When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their Public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

★ THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from Punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the World:

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences:

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Government:

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with Power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

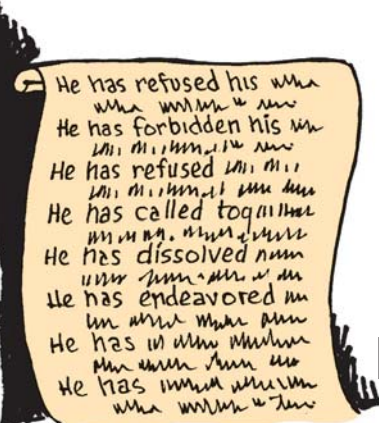
Nor have We been wanting in our attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, Therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by the Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

★ THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

“I hope and firmly believe that the whole world will, sooner or later, feel benefit from...our assertion of the rights of man.”
— Thomas Jefferson

“The history of the King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world:”



JEFFERSON INCLUDED ONE IMPORTANT GRIEVANCE WHICH FEW RECALL, BECAUSE — UNFORTUNATELY — CONGRESS REJECTED IT: A PROTEST OF KING GEORGE'S SUPPORT OF THE SLAVE TRADE AND A CALL FOR ITS END.

Jefferson listed 27 grievances.



Citing repeated petitions for redress, met by repeated injury—Jefferson concluded:

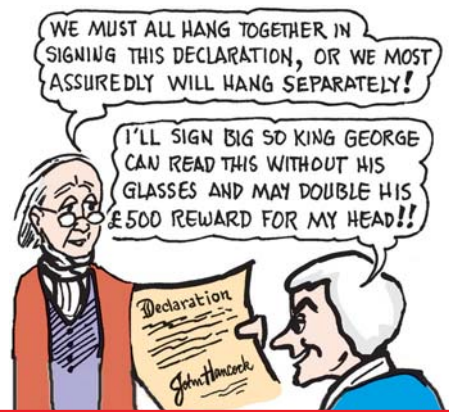
“We, Therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America... solemnly publish and declare that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be free and Independent States....”

“And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.”

July 4, 1776
The Declaration of Independence was unanimously adopted by the Second Continental Congress—two days after it approved Richard Henry Lee's resolution for Independence.



By August 2, 1776, 56 courageous men, led by John Hancock, president of Congress, had signed “The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America.”



William Ellery of Rhode Island: “I was determined to see how my fellow delegates looked as they signed what might be their death warrants.... Undaunted resolution was displayed on every countenance.” Only old Stephen Hopkins' hand shook—with palsy.



Who were these 56 brave men, many of whom lost lives and fortunes in the War of Independence?

- NATIONALLY: 48 American born, 8 Great Britain born
- AGE: 26 to 70, most in 30s and 40s
- OCCUPATION: 23 lawyers, 12 merchants, 6 planters, 4 landowners, 4 doctors, 2 farmers, 2 manufacturers, 1 minister, 1 printer, 1 politician
- EDUCATION: 32, college; 9, tutors at home; 8, self-taught; 6, common schools; 1, no information
- RELIGION: 55 Protestants, 1 Catholic

The Declaration of Independence launched America—and the world—on the greatest adventure ever:

THE ADVENTURE OF FREEDOM FOR MANKIND!

But Jefferson warned, “eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.”

Will you pledge your life, fortune, and sacred honor toward this great adventure?



“I cannot say that I think you have been very generous to the Ladies, for whilst you are proclaiming peace and good will to Men, Emancipating all Nations, you insist upon retaining an absolute power over Wives.”—Abigail Adams to John Adams, May 7, 1776

“A woman as soon as she is married, is called covert, that is veiled...clouded and overshadowed...her new self is her superior, her companion, her master....By marriage, the husband and wife are one person under the law...the very being or legal existence of the wife is suspended...incorporated into that of her husband...under whose cover she performs everything.”

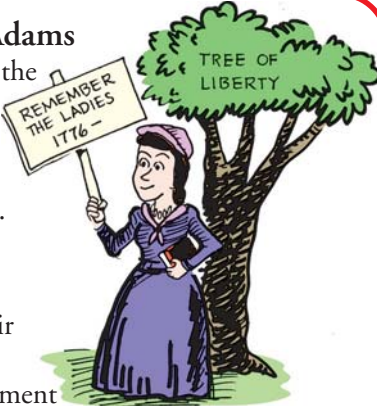
—William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, a common legal reference in America

Meanwhile, Abigail Adams

of Massachusetts thought the Founding Fathers should emancipate women from their centuries-old subordinate status to men.

Considered intellectually inferior to men, women were expected to obey their husbands and legally were subject to physical punishment as if they were children. They were denied access to higher education and, with some exceptions, they could not vote, hold office, serve on juries, bear witness, sue or be sued. Married women, generally, could not own property.

On March 31, 1776, Abigail wrote her husband John Adams, serving in the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia with the other Founding Fathers.



YEAH, SHE SAYS, "IN THIS NEW CODE OF LAWS YOU ARE WRITING, I PRAY YOU WILL REMEMBER THE LADIES. DO NOT PUT UNLIMITED POWER IN THE HANDS OF MEN FOR YOU KNOW ALL MEN WOULD BE TYRANTS IF THEY COULD. LOVE, ABIGAIL"

SOUNDS REVOLUTIONARY TO ME.



DEAR JOHN,

I LONG TO HEAR THAT YOU HAVE DECLARED AN INDEPENDANCY AND BY THE WAY IN THE NEW CODE OF LAWS WHICH I SUPPOSE IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR YOU TO MAKE I DESIRE YOU WOULD REMEMBER THE LADIES, AND BE MORE GENEROUS AND FAVOURABLE TO THEM THAN YOUR ANCESTORS. DO NOT PUT SUCH UNLIMITED POWER INTO THE HANDS OF THE HUSBANDS. REMEMBER ALL MEN WOULD BE TYRANTS IF THEY COULD. IF PARTICULAR CARE AND ATTENTION IS NOT PAID TO THE LADIES WE ARE DETERMINED TO FOMENT A REBELLION, AND WILL NOT HOLD OURSELVES BOUND BY LAWS IN WHICH WE HAVE NO VOICE, OR REPRESENTATION.



DEAR ABIGAIL,

AS TO YOUR EXTRAORDINARY CODE OF LAWS, I CANNOT BUT LAUGH. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT OUR STRUGGLE HAS LOOSENED THE BANDS OF GOVERNMENT EVERY WHERE. THAT CHILDREN AND APPRENTICES WERE DISOBEDIENT— THAT SCHOOLS AND COLLEDGES WERE GROWN TURBULENT— THAT INDIANS SLIGHTED THEIR GUARDIANS AND NEGROES GREW INSOLENT TO THEIR MASTERS. BUT YOUR LETTER WAS THE FIRST INTIMATION THAT ANOTHER TRIBE MORE NUMEROUS AND POWERFULL THAN ALL THE REST WERE GROWN DISCONTENTED.— THIS IS RATHER TOO COARSE A COMPLIMENT BUT YOU ARE SAUCY, I WON'T BLOT IT OUT. DEPEND UPON IT, WE KNOW BETTER THAN TO REPEAL OUR MASCULINE SYSTEMS.



Abigail's prophecy came true.

In 1848 the Woman's Rights Movement began in Seneca Falls, New York. It lasted 72 years, ending in 1920 with passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution giving women the right to vote. You'll read of it in a later chapter.

WOMAN'S RIGHTS MOVEMENT

