Revolutionary America

A DOCUMENTARY COMPANION

Edited by
JOHN CASE

A NOTE ON THE TEXTS

The documents quoted in the theatrical documentary Revolutionary America *have been compiled and edited in this volume to provide the context in which they were written. Spelling and punctuation have been updated to make the documents easier to read. Most of the documents are included in full, but some have been excerpted as noted.*

contents


THE
NEW WORLD

JULY 20, 1811

Benjamin Rush to John Adams

In this letter, Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, recounts the 35th Anniversary celebrations of the Declaration that he witnessed in Philadelphia.

The 4th of July has been celebrated in Philadelphia in the manner I expected. The military men, and particularly one of them, ran away with all the glory of the day. Scarcely a word was said of the solicitude and labors, and fears, and sorrows, and sleepless nights of the men who projected, proposed, defended, and subscribed the Declaration of Independence. Do you recollect your memorable speech upon the day on which the vote was taken? Do you recollect the pensive and awful silence which pervaded the house when we were called up, one after another, to the table of the President of Congress, to subscribe what was believed by many at that time to be our own death warrants? The silence and the gloom of the morning were interrupted, I well recollect, only for a moment by Col. Harrison of Virginia who said to Mr. Gerry at the table, "I shall have a great advantage over you Mr. Gerry when we are all hung for what we are now doing. From the size and weight of my body I shall die in a few minutes, but from the lightness of your body you will dance in the air an hour or two before you are dead." This Speech procured a transient smile, but it was soon succeeded by the Solemnity with which the whole business was conducted.

Of the farewell addresses you mention in your letter it is hardly safe to speak, they are so popular in our Country, but I cannot help mentioning a remark I heard made by one of our Democrats a day or two after the last of them was published. "He has treated us as a master would do his Slaves were he about to transfer them to a new master. As a Servant of the public, he should have been more modest."

How is it that the old Tories love him exclusively of all the Whigs of the Revolution? The names of the Adamses, Hancock, the Lees, and Franklin are all more or less disliked, or hated by them. One of them a few years ago in viewing the statue of Dr. Franklin in a niche over our City Library door, said with a malignant sneer, "But for that fellow, we should never have had Independence."

There was a time when these things irritated and distressed me, but I now hear and see them with the same indifference, or pity, that I hear the ravings and witness the antic gestures of my deranged patients in our hospital. We often hear of "prisoners at large."—The majority of mankind are madmen at large. They differ in their degrees of insanity, but I have sometimes thought the most prominent in this general mental disease are those men who, by writing and reasoning, attempt to cure them.

I visited the late Rev. Mr. Marshall of this City in his last illness. A few days before his death, he thanked me affectionately for my services to him and his family, and afterwards, said some kind and flattering things to me upon the pursuits and labors of my life. I replied to the latter by saying that I had aimed to do all the good I could to my fellow-citizens, but that I had been so much thwarted and opposed that I did not know that any of my labors had ever been attended with success. "Well, well," said this dying saint—"remember your Saviour at the Day of judgment will not say, 'well done thou successful,' but 'well done thou faithful Servant.' You have been 'faithful,' Doctor, and that is enough." Let us my dear friend console ourselves for the unsuccessful efforts of our lives to serve our fellow creatures, by recollecting that we have aimed well, that we have faithfully strove to tear from their hands the instruments of death with which they were about to destroy themselves—that we have attempted to take off their fancied crowns and royal robes, and to clothe them with their own proper dresses, and that we have endeavored to Snatch the poisoned bowl from their lips, and to replace it with pleasant and wholesome food. We shall not, I hope, lose our reward for these well-intended labors of love. "She did all that she could" was once both the acquittal and the praise of a pious woman in the New Testament and pronounced too by those lips which must finally decide the merit and demerit of all human actions. They are full of consolation to those who have aimed well.

JULY 18, 1755

George Washington to Mary Ball Washington

In this letter to his mother, Washington recounts the Battle of the Monongahela at the outset of the French and Indian War.

As I doubt not but you have heard of our defeat, and perhaps have had it represented in a worse light (if possible) than it deserves; I have taken this earliest opportunity to give you some account of the engagement, as it happened within seven miles of the French Fort on Wednesday the 9th of this month.

We marched onto that place without any considerable loss, having only now and then a straggler picked up by the French scouting Indians. When we came there, we were attacked by a body of French and Indians whose number I am persuaded did not exceed 300 men; ours consisted of about 1,300 well-armed troops, chiefly regular soldiers, who were struck with such a panic that they behaved with more cowardice than it is possible to conceive. The officers behaved gallantly in order to encourage their men, for which they suffered greatly, there being nearly 60 killed and wounded, a large proportion out of the number we had! The Virginia troops showed a good deal of bravery, and were nearly all killed; for I believe out of three companies that were there, there are scarcely 30 men left alive. Captain Peyrouny and all his officers, down to a corporal, were killed; Capt. Polson shared near as hard a fate, for only one of his was left. In short, the dastardly behavior of those they call regulars exposed all others that were inclined to do their duty to almost certain death; and at last, in spite of all the efforts of the officers to the contrary, they broke and ran as sheep pursued by dogs; and it was impossible to rally them. The General [Braddock] was wounded, of which he died three days later; Sir Peter Halket was killed in the Field, where many other brave officers died; I luckily escaped without a wound, though I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me; Captains Orme and Morris, two of the Aids de Camps, were wounded early in the engagement which rendered the duty harder upon me, as I was the only person then left to distribute the General's Orders, which I was scarcely able to do, as I was not half recovered from a violent illness that had confined me to my bed, and a wagon, for above ten days. I am still in a weak and feeble condition which induces me to halt here two or three days in hopes of recovering a little strength, to enable me to proceed homewards; from whence, I fear I shall not be able to stir till towards September, so that I shall not have the pleasure of seeing you till then, unless it be in Fairfax. Please give my love to Mr. Lewis and my sister, and compliments to Mr. Jackson and all other friends who enquire after me.

P.S. You may acquaint Priscilla Mullican that her son Charles is very well, having only received a slight wound in his foot, which will be cured without detriment to him in a very small time. We had about 300 men killed and as many, or more, wounded; and this was chiefly done by our own Men.

OCTOBER 7, 1763

Royal Proclamation

After the French and Indian War, King George III issued this proclamation to establish governments in the new territories Britain had acquired and to establish a line of demarcation that limited colonists from occupying much of the new territory they had fought to secure.

Whereas We have taken into our royal consideration the extensive and valuable acquisitions in America, secured to our Crown by the late definitive treaty of peace, concluded at Paris the 10th day of February last; and being desirous that all our loving subjects, as well of our kingdom as of our colonies in America, may avail themselves with all convenient speed, of the great benefits and advantages which must accrue therefrom to their commerce, manufactures, and navigation, We have thought fit, with the advice of our Privy Council, to issue this our Royal Proclamation, hereby to publish and declare to all our loving subjects, that We have, with the advice of our said Privy Council, granted our letters patent, under our Great Seal of Great Britain, to erect, within the countries and islands ceded and confirmed to Us by the said treaty, four distinct and separate governments, styled and called by the names of Quebec, East Florida, West Florida and Grenada, and limited and bounded as follows:

First—The government of Quebec bounded on the Labrador Coast by the River St. John, and from thence by a line drawn from the head of that river through the Lake St. John, to the south end of the Lake Nipissing; from whence the said line, crossing the River St. Lawrence, and the Lake Champlain, in 45 degrees of north latitude, passes along the high lands which divide the rivers that empty themselves into the said River St. Lawrence from those which fall into the sea; and also along the north coast of the Baye des Chaleurs, and the Coast of the Gulf of St. Lawrence to Cape Rosieres, and from thence crossing the mouth of the River St. Lawrence by the west end of the Island of Anticosti, terminates at the aforesaid River of St. John.

Secondly—The government of East Florida bounded to the westward by the Gulf of Mexico and the Apalachicola River; to the northward by a line drawn from that part of the said river where the Chatahouchee and Flint Rivers meet, to the source of St. Mary's River. And by the course of the said river to the Atlantic Ocean, and to the eastward and southward by the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Florida, including all islands within six leagues of the seacoast.

Thirdly—The government of West Florida bounded to the southward by the Gulf of Mexico, including all islands within six leagues of the coast, from the River Apalachicola to Lake Pontchartrain; to the westward by the said lake, the Lake Maurepas, and the River Mississippi; to the northward by a line drawn due east from that part of the River Mississippi which lies in 31 degrees north latitude to the River Apalachicola or Chatahouchee; and to the eastward by the said river.

Fourthly—The government of Grenada, comprehending the island of that name, together with the Grenadines, and the Islands of Dominico, St. Vincent's and Tobago. And to the end that the open and free Fishery of our Subjects may be extended to and carried on upon the Coast of Labrador, and the adjacent islands, We have thought fit, with the advice of our said Privy Council to put all that coast, from the River St. John's to Hudson's Straits, together with the Islands of Anticosti and Madelaine, and all other smaller islands lying upon the said coast, under the care and inspection of our governor of Newfoundland.

We have also, with the advice of our Privy Council, thought fit to annex the Islands of St. John's and Cape Breton, or Isle Royale, with the lesser islands adjacent thereto, to our government of Nova Scotia.

We have also, with the advice of our Privy Council aforesaid, annexed to our province of Georgia all the lands lying between the Rivers Alatamaha and St. Mary's.

And whereas it will greatly contribute to the speedy settling of our said new governments, that our loving subjects should be informed of our paternal care, for the security of the liberties and properties of those who are and shall become inhabitants thereof, We have thought fit to publish and declare, by this our Proclamation, that We have, in the letters patent under our Great Seal of Great Britain, by which the said gov-

ernments are constituted, given express power and direction to our governors of our said colonies respectively, that so soon as the state and circumstances of the said colonies will admit thereof, they shall, with the advice and consent of the members of our Council, summon and call General Assemblies within the said governments respectively, in such manner and form as is used and directed in those colonies and provinces in America which are under our immediate government, and We also have given power to the said governors, with the consent of our said councils and the representatives of the people, so to be summoned as aforesaid, to make, constitute, and ordain laws, statutes, and ordinances for the public peace, welfare, and good government of our said colonies, and of the people and inhabitants thereof, as near as may be agreeable to the laws of England, and under such regulations and restrictions as are used in other colonies. And in the meantime, and until such assemblies can be called as aforesaid, all persons inhabiting in, or resorting to our said colonies, may confide in our royal protection for the enjoyment of the benefit of the laws of our realm of England, for which purpose, We have given power under our Great Seal to the governors of our said colonies respectively, to erect and constitute, with the advice of our said Councils respectively, courts of judicature and public justice, within our said colonies, for the hearing and determining all causes, as well criminal as civil, according to law and equity, and as near as may be agreeable to the laws of England, with liberty to all persons who may think themselves aggrieved by the sentences of such courts, in all civil cases, to appeal, under the usual limitations and restriction, to us in our Privy Council.

We have also thought fit, with the advice of our Privy Council as aforesaid, to give unto the governors and councils of our said three new colonies, upon the continent full power and authority to settle and agree with the inhabitants of our said new colonies or with any other persons who shall resort thereto, for such lands, tenements and hereditaments, as are now or hereafter shall be in our power to dispose of; and them to grant to any such person or persons upon such terms, and under such moderate quit-rents, services and acknowledgments, as have been appointed and settled in our other colonies, and under such other conditions as shall appear to us to be necessary and expedient for the advantage of the grantees, and the improvement and settlement of our said colonies.

And whereas, We are desirous, upon all occasions, to testify our royal sense and approbation of the conduct and bravery of the officers and soldiers of our armies, and to reward the same, We do hereby command and impower our governors of our said three new colonies, and all other our governors of our several provinces on the continent of North America, to grant without fee or reward, to such reduced officers as have served in North America during the late war, and to such private soldiers as have been or shall be disbanded in America, and are actually residing there, and shall personally apply for the same, the following quantities of lands, subject, at the expiration of ten years, to the same quit-rents as other lands are subject to in the province within which they are granted, as also subject to the same conditions of cultivation and improvement, namely,

To every person having the rank of a Field Officer—5,000 acres.

To every Captain—3,000 acres.

To every Subaltern or Staff Officer—2,000 acres.

To every Non-Commission Officer—200 acres.

To every Private Man—50 acres.

We do likewise authorize and require the governors and commanders-in-chief of all our said colonies upon the continent of North America to grant the like quantities of land, and upon the same conditions, to such reduced officers of our Navy of like rank as served on board our Ships of War in North America at the times of the reduction of Louisburg and Quebec in the late war, and who shall personally apply to our respective governors for such grants.

And whereas it is just and reasonable, and essential to our interest, and the security of our colonies, that the several nations or tribes of Indians with whom We are connected, and who live under our protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the possession of such parts of our dominions and territories as, not having been ceded to or purchased by us, are reserved to them or any of them, as their hunting grounds.—We do therefore, with the advice of our Privy Council, declare it to be our royal will and pleasure, that no governor or commander-in-chief in any of our colonies of Quebec, East Florida, or West Florida, do presume, upon any pretense whatever, to grant warrants of survey, or pass any patents for lands beyond the bounds of their respective governments as described in their commissions; as also that

no governor or commander-in-chief in any of our other colonies or plantations in America do presume for the present, and until our further pleasure be known, to grant warrants of survey, or pass any patents for any lands beyond the heads or sources of any of the rivers which fall into the Atlantic Ocean from the west and north west, or upon any lands whatever, which, not having been ceded to, or purchased by us as aforesaid, are reserved to the said Indians, or any of them.

And We do further declare it to be our royal will and pleasure, for the present as aforesaid, to reserve under our sovereignty, protection, and dominion, for the use of the said Indians, all the lands and territories not included within the limits of our said three new governments, or within the limits of the territory granted to the Hudson's Bay Company, as also all the lands and territories lying to the westward of the sources of the rivers which fall into the sea from the west and north west as aforesaid.

And We do hereby strictly forbid, on pain of our displeasure, all our loving subjects from making any purchases or settlements whatever or taking possession of any of the lands above reserved, without our especial leave and license for that purpose first obtained.

And We do further strictly enjoin and require all persons whatever who have either willfully or inadvertently seated themselves upon any lands within the countries above described, or upon any other lands which, not having been ceded to or purchased by us, are still reserved to the said Indians as aforesaid, forthwith to remove themselves from such settlements.

And whereas great frauds and abuses have been committed in purchasing lands of the Indians, to the great prejudice of our interests and to the great dissatisfaction of the said Indians. In order, therefore, to prevent such irregularities for the future, and to the end that the Indians may be convinced of our justice and determined resolution to remove all reasonable cause of discontent, We do, with the advice of our Privy Council strictly enjoin and require that no private person do presume to make any purchase from the said Indians of any lands reserved to the said Indians, within those parts of our colonies where We have thought proper to allow settlement; but that if at any time any of the said Indians should be inclined to dispose of the said lands, the same shall be purchased only for us, in our name, at some public meeting or assembly of the said Indians, to be held for that purpose by the governor or commander-in-chief of our colony respectively within which they shall lie; and in case they shall lie within the limits of any proprietary government, they shall be purchased only for the use and in the name of such proprietaries, conformable to such directions and instructions as We or they shall think proper to give for that purpose.

And We do by the advice of our Privy Council, declare and enjoin, that the trade with the said Indians shall be free and open to all our subjects whatever, provided that every person who may incline to trade with the said Indians, do take out a license for carrying on such trade from the governor or commander-in-chief of any of our colonies respectively, where such person shall reside; and also give security to observe such regulations as We shall at any time think fit, by ourselves or by our commissaries to be appointed for this purpose, to direct and appoint for the benefit of the said trade.

And We do hereby authorize, enjoin, and require the governors and commanders-in-chief of all our colonies respectively, as well those under our immediate government as those under the government and direction of proprietaries, to grant such licenses without fee or reward, taking especial care to insert therein a condition, that such license shall be void, and the security forfeited in case the person to whom the same is granted shall refuse or neglect to observe such regulations as We shall think proper to prescribe as aforesaid.

And We do further expressly enjoin and require all officers whatever, as well military as those employed in the management and direction of Indian affairs, within the territories reserved as aforesaid for the use of the said Indians, to seize and apprehend all persons whatever, who, standing charged with treason, misprisions of treason, murders, or other felonies or misdemeanors, shall fly from justice and take refuge in the said territory, and to send them under a proper guard to the colony where the crime was committed of which they, stand accused, in order to take their trial for the same.

Given at Our Court at Saint James, the Seventh Day of October, One thousand seven hundred and sixty-three, in the Third Year of Our Reign.

GOD save the KING.

MARCH 18, 1766

Declaratory Act

The Declaratory Act accompanied the repeal of the Stamp Act but firmly asserted Parliament's claim to possess the right to legislate for the American colonies "in all cases whatsoever."

An act for the better securing the dependency of his majesty's dominions in America upon the crown and parliament of Great Britain.

Whereas several of the houses of representatives in his majesty's colonies and plantations in America, have of late, against law, claimed to themselves, or to the general assemblies of the same, the sole and exclusive right of imposing duties and taxes upon his majesty's subjects in the said colonies and plantations; and have in pursuance of such claim, passed certain votes, resolutions, and orders derogatory to the legislative authority of parliament, and inconsistent with the dependency of the said colonies and plantations upon the crown of Great Britain. May it therefore please your most excellent majesty, that it may be declared, and be it declared by the King's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That the said colonies and plantations in America have been, are, and of right ought to be, subordinate unto, and dependent upon the imperial crown and parliament of Great Britain; and that the King's majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons of Great Britain, in parliament assembled, had, hath, and of right ought to have, full power and authority to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the colonies and people of America, subjects of the crown of Great Britain, in all cases whatsoever.

II. And be it further declared and enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all resolutions, votes, orders, and proceedings, in any of the said colonies or plantations, whereby the power and authority of the parliament of Great Britain, to make laws and statutes as aforesaid, is denied, or drawn into question, are, and are hereby declared to be, utterly null and void to all intents and purposes whatsoever.

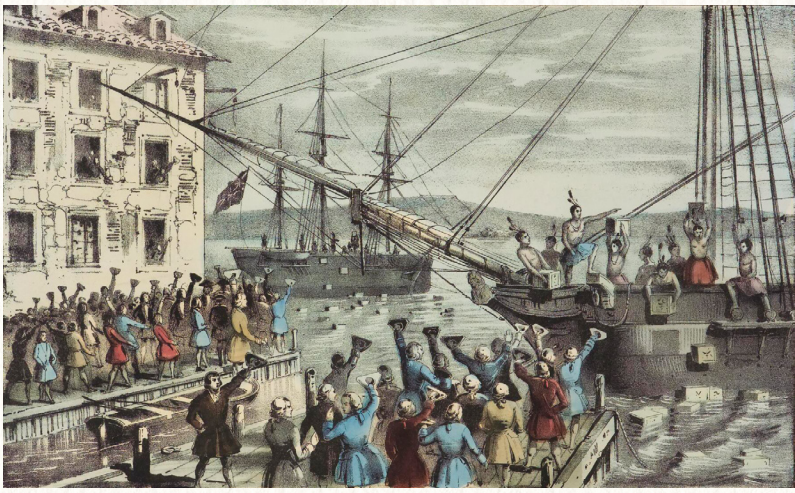
1834

George Hewes, Recollection of the Boston Tea Party

Hewes, a native Bostonian, was present at the Botson Massacre and participated in the Boston Tea Party. In this account from late in his life, he recalls the events of December 17, 1773.

The tea destroyed was contained in three ships, lying near each other at what was called at that time Griffin's wharf, and were surrounded by armed ships of war, the commanders of which had publicly declared that if the rebels, as they were pleased to style the Bostonians, should not withdraw their opposition to the landing of the tea before a certain day, the 17th day of December 1773, they should, on that day, force it on shore under the cover of their cannon's mouth. On the day preceding the 17th, there was a meeting of the citizens of the county of Suffolk convened at one of the churches in Boston for the purpose of consulting on what measures might be considered expedient to prevent the landing of the tea, or secure the people from the collection of the duty. At that meeting, a committee was appointed to wait on Governor Hutchinson and request him to inform them whether he would take any measures to satisfy the people on the object of the meeting. To the first application of this committee, the Governor told them he would give them a definite answer by five o'clock in the afternoon. At the hour appointed, the committee again repaired to the Governor's house and, on inquiry, found he had gone to his country seat at Milton, distance of about six miles. When the committee returned and informed the meeting of the absence of the Governor, there was a confused murmur among the members, and the meeting was immediately dissolved, many of them crying out, "Let every man do his duty and be true to his country;" and there was a general huzza for Griffin's wharf.

It was now evening, and I immediately dressed myself in the costume of an Indian, equipped with a small hatchet, which I and my associates denominated the tomahawk, with which and a club, after having painted my face and hands with coal dust in the shop of a blacksmith, I repaired to Griffin's wharf, where the ships lay that contained the tea. When I first appeared in the street after being thus disguised, I fell in with many who were dressed, equipped, and painted as I



was, and who fell in with me and marched in order to the place of our destination.

When we arrived at the wharf, there were three of our number who assumed an authority to direct our operations, to which we readily submitted. They divided us into three parties for the purpose of boarding the three ships, which contained the tea, at the same time. The name of him who commanded that division to which I was assigned was Leonard Pitt. The names of the other commanders I never knew. We were immediately ordered by the respective commanders to board all the ships at the same time, which we promptly obeyed. The commander of the division to which I belonged, as soon as we were on board the ship, appointed me boatswain, and ordered me to go to the captain and demand of him the keys to the hatches and a dozen candles. I made the demand accordingly, and the captain promptly replied and delivered the articles, but requested me at the same time to do no damage to the ship or rigging. We then were ordered by our commander to open the hatches and take out all the tea and throw them overboard, and we immediately proceeded to execute his orders, first cutting and splitting the chests

with our tomahawks, so as thoroughly to expose them to the effects of the water.

In about three hours from the time we went on board, we had thus broken and thrown overboard every tea chest to be found in the ship, while those in the other ships were disposing of the tea in the same way, at the same time. We were surrounded by British armed ships, but no attempt was made to resist us.

We then quietly retired to our several places of residence, without having any conversation with each other, or taking any measures to discover who were our associates; nor do I recollect our having had the knowledge of the name of a single individual concerned in the affair, except that of Leonard Pitt, the commander of my division, whom I have mentioned. There appeared to be an understanding that each individual should volunteer his services, keep his own secret, and risk the consequence for himself. No disorder took place during that transaction, and it was observed at that time that the stillest night ensued that Boston had enjoyed for many months.

During the time we were throwing the tea overboard, there were several attempts made by some of the citizens of Boston and its vicinity to carry off small quantities of it for their family use. To effect that object, they would watch their opportunity to snatch up a handful from the deck, where it became plentifully scattered, and put it into their pockets. One Captain O'Connor, whom I well knew, came on board for that purpose, and when he supposed he was not noticed, filled his pockets and also the lining of his coat. But I had detected him and gave information to the captain of what he was doing. We were ordered to take him into custody, and just as he was stepping from the vessel, I seized him by the skirt of his coat, and in attempting to pull him back, I tore it off, but springing forward by a rapid effort, he made his escape. He had, however, to run a gauntlet through the crowd upon the wharf, each one, as he passed, giving him a kick or a stroke.

Another attempt was made to save a little tea from the ruins of the cargo by a tall, aged man who wore a large cocked hat and white wig, which was fashionable at the time. He had slightly slipped a little into his pocket, but being detected, they seized him and, taking his hat and wig from his head, threw them, together with the tea of which they had emptied his pockets, into the water. In consideration of his advanced age, he was permitted to escape with now and then a slight kick.

The next morning, after we had cleared the ships of the tea, it was discovered that very considerable quantities of it were floating upon the surface of the water, and to prevent the possibility of any of its being saved for use, a number of small boats were manned by sailors and citizens, who rowed them into the parts of the harbor wherever the tea was visible, and by beating it with oars and paddles so thoroughly drenched it as to render its entire destruction inevitable.

1774

Thomas Jefferson, *A Summary View of the Rights of British America* excerpts

Originally drafted as proposed instructions for Virginia's delegates to the First Continental Congress, this pamphlet offers a forceful defense of American rights and critique of British Imperial authority, while introducing several of the principles and grievances Jefferson would later express in the Declaration of Independence.

Resolved, that it be an instruction to the said deputies, when assembled in general congress with the deputies from the other states of British America, to propose to the said congress that an humble and dutiful address be presented to his majesty begging leave to lay before him, as chief magistrate of the British empire, the united complaints of his majesty's subjects in America; complaints which are excited by many unwarrantable encroachments and usurpations attempted to be made by the legislature of one part of the empire upon those rights which God and the laws have given equally and independently to all. To represent to his majesty that these his states have often individually made humble application to his imperial throne to obtain, through its intervention, some redress of their injured rights, to none of which was ever even an answer condescended; humbly to hope that this their joint address, penned in the language of truth and divested of those expressions of servility which would persuade his majesty that we are asking favors and not rights, shall obtain from his majesty a more respectful acceptance. And this his majesty will think we have reason to expect when he reflects that he is no more than the chief officer of the people appointed by the laws and circumscribed with definite powers to assist in working the great machine of government erected for their use and consequently subject to their superintendence. And in order that these our rights, as well as the invasions of them, may be laid more fully before his majesty to take a view of them from the origin and first settlement of these countries.

To remind him that our ancestors, before their emigration to America, were the free inhabitants of the British dominions in Europe and possessed a right, which nature has given to all men, of departing from the country in which chance, not choice, has placed them, of going in quest of new habitations, and of their establishing new societies, under such laws and regulations as to them shall seem most likely to promote public happiness. That their Saxon ancestors had, under this universal law, in like manner left their native wilds and woods in the north of Europe, had possessed themselves of the island of Britain, then less charged with inhabitants, and had established there that system of laws which has so long been the glory and protection of that country. Nor was ever any claim of superiority or dependence asserted over them by that mother country from which they had migrated; and were such a claim made, it is believed that his majesty's subjects in Great Britain have too firm a feeling of the rights derived to them from their ancestors to bow down to the sovereignty of their state before such visionary pretensions. And it is thought that no circumstance has occurred to distinguish materially the British from the Saxon emigration. America was conquered, and her settlements made and firmly established, at the expense of individuals and not of the British public. Their own blood was spilt in acquiring lands for their settlement, their own fortunes expended in making that settlement effectual; for themselves they fought, for themselves they conquered, and for themselves alone they have right to hold. Not a shilling was ever issued from the public treasures of his majesty, or his ancestors, for their assistance, till of very late times, after the colonies had become established on a firm and permanent footing. That then, indeed, having become valuable to Great Britain for her commercial purposes, his parliament was pleased to lend them assistance against an enemy who would fain have drawn to herself the benefits of their commerce, to the great aggrandizement of herself and danger of Great Britain. Such assistance, and in such circumstances, they had often before given to Portugal and other allied states, with whom they carry on a commercial intercourse; yet these states never supposed that by calling in her aid, they thereby submitted themselves to her sovereignty. Had such terms been proposed, they would have rejected them with disdain and trusted for better to the moderation of

their enemies or to a vigorous exertion of their own force. We do not, however, mean to underrate those aids, which to us were doubtless valuable, on whatever principles granted; but we would show that they cannot give a title to that authority which the British parliament would arrogate over us, and that they may amply be repaid by our giving to the inhabitants of Great Britain such exclusive privileges in trade as may be advantageous to them, and at the same time, not too restrictive to ourselves. That settlements having been thus effected in the wilds of America, the emigrants thought proper to adopt that system of laws under which they had hitherto lived in the mother country and to continue their union with her by submitting themselves to the same common sovereign, who was thereby made the central link connecting the several parts of the empire thus newly multiplied. . . .

History has informed us that bodies of men, as well as individuals, are susceptible of the spirit of tyranny. A view of these acts of parliament for regulation, as it has been affectedly called, of the American trade, if all other evidence were removed out of the case, would undeniably evince the truth of this observation. Besides the duties they impose on our articles of export and import, they prohibit our going to any markets northward of Cape Finisterre, in the kingdom of Spain, for the sale of commodities which Great Britain will not take from us, and for the purchase of others with which she cannot supply us, and that for no other than the arbitrary purposes of purchasing for themselves, by a sacrifice of our rights and interests, certain privileges in their commerce with an allied state, who in confidence that their exclusive trade with America will be continued while the principles and power of the British parliament be the same, have indulged themselves in every exorbitance which their avarice could dictate, or our necessities extort; have raised their commodities called for in America to the double and treble of what they sold for before such exclusive privileges were given them, and of what better commodities of the same kind would cost us elsewhere, and at the same time give us much less for what we carry thither than might be had at more convenient ports. That these acts prohibit us from carrying in quest of other purchasers the surplus of our tobaccos remaining after the consumption of Great Britain is supplied so that we must leave them with the British merchant for whatever he will please to allow us, to be by him reshipped to foreign markets where he will reap the benefits of making sale of them for full value. That to heighten still the idea of parliamentary justice, and to show with what moderation they are like to exercise power where themselves are to feel no part of its weight, we take leave to mention to his majesty certain other acts of British parliament by which they would prohibit us from manufacturing for our own use the articles we raise on our own lands with our own labor. By an act passed in the 5th year of the reign of his late majesty, king George II, an American subject is forbidden to make a hat for himself of the fur which he has taken perhaps on his own soil; an instance of despotism to which no parallel can be produced in the most arbitrary ages of British history. By one other act passed in the 23d year of the same reign, the iron which we make we are forbidden to manufacture, and heavy as that article is and necessary in every branch of husbandry, besides commission and insurance, we are to pay freight for it to Great Britain and freight for it back again for the purpose of supporting not men, but machines in the island of Great Britain. In the same spirit of equal and impartial legislation is to be viewed the act of parliament passed in the 5th year of the same reign, by which American lands are made subject to the demands of British creditors while their own lands were still continued unanswerable for their debts; from which one of these conclusions must necessarily follow: either that justice is not the same in America as in Britain, or else that the British parliament pay less regard to it here than there. But that we do not point out to his majesty the injustice of these acts with intent to rest on that principle the cause of their nullity, but to show that experience confirms the propriety of those political principles which exempt us from the jurisdiction of the British parliament. The true ground on which we declare these acts void is that the British parliament has no right to exercise authority over us. . . .

That thus have we hastened through the reigns which preceded his majesty's, during which the violations of our right were less alarming because they were repeated at more distant intervals than that rapid and bold succession of injuries which is likely to distinguish the present from all other periods of the American story. Scarcely have our minds been able to emerge from the astonishment into which one stroke of parliamentary thunder has involved us before another more heavy and more alarming is fallen on us. Single acts of tyranny may be ascribed to the accidental opinion of a day; but a series of oppressions, begun at a distinguished period, and pursued unalterably through every change of ministers, too

plainly prove a deliberate and systematical plan of reducing us to slavery. . . .

No answers having yet been condescended to any of these, we shall not trouble his majesty with a repetition of the matters they contained.

But that one other act, passed in the same 7th year of the reign, having been a peculiar attempt, must ever require peculiar mention; it is intitled "An act for suspending the legislature of New York." One free and independent legislature hereby takes upon itself to suspend the powers of another, free and independent as itself. . . . Not only the principles of common sense, but the common feelings of human nature, must be surrendered up before his majesty's subjects here can be persuaded to believe that they hold their political existence at the will of a British parliament. Shall these governments be dissolved, their property annihilated, and their people reduced to a state of nature at the imperious breath of a body of men, whom they never saw, in whom they never confided, and over whom they have no powers of punishment or removal, let their crimes against the American public be ever so great? Can any one reason be assigned why 160,000 electors in the island of Great Britain should give law to four millions in the states of America, every individual of whom is equal to every individual of them in virtue, in understanding, and in bodily strength? Were this to be admitted, instead of being a free people, as we have hitherto supposed, and mean to continue ourselves, we should suddenly be found the slaves, not of one, but of 160,000 tyrants, distinguished too from all others by this singular circumstance, that they are removed from the reach of fear, the only restraining motive which may hold the hand of a tyrant.

That by "an act to discontinue in such manner and for such time as are therein mentioned the landing and discharging, lading or shipping, of goods, wares, and merchandize, at the town and within the harbour of Boston, in the province of Massachusetts Bay, in North America," which was passed at the last session of British parliament; a large and populous town, whose trade was their sole subsistence, was deprived of that trade and involved in utter ruin. . . . Without calling for a party accused, without asking a proof, without attempting a distinction between the guilty and the innocent, the whole of that ancient and wealthy town is in a moment reduced from opulence to beggary. Men who had spent their lives in extending the British commerce, who had invested in that place the wealth their honest endeavors had merited, found themselves and their families thrown at once on the world for subsistence by its charities. Not the hundredth part of the inhabitants of that town had been concerned in the act complained of; many of them were in Great Britain and in other parts beyond sea; yet all were involved in one indiscriminate ruin, by a new executive power, unheard of till then, that of a British parliament. A property of the value of many millions of money was sacrificed to revenge, not repay, the loss of a few thousands. This is administering justice with a heavy hand indeed! . . .

By the act for the suppression of riots and tumults in the town of Boston, passed also in the last session of parliament, a murder committed there is, if the governor pleases, to be tried in the court of King's Bench, in the island of Great Britain, by a jury of Middlesex. The witnesses, too, on receipt of such a sum as the governor shall think it reasonable for them to expend, are to enter into recognizance to appear at the trial. This is, in other words, taxing them to the amount of their recognizance, and that amount may be whatever a governor pleases; for who does his majesty think can be prevailed on to cross the Atlantic for the sole purpose of bearing evidence to a fact? . . . And the wretched criminal, if he happen to have offended on the American side, stripped of his privilege of trial by peers of his vicinage, removed from the place where alone full evidence could be obtained, without money, without counsel, without friends, without exculpatory proof, is tried before judges predetermined to condemn. The cowards who would suffer a countryman to be torn from the bowels of their society in order to be thus offered a sacrifice to parliamentary tyranny would merit that everlasting infamy now fixed on the authors of the act! . . .

That these are the acts of power, assumed by a body of men, foreign to our constitutions, and unacknowledged by our laws, against which we do, on behalf of the inhabitants of British America, enter this our solemn and determined protest; and we do earnestly entreat his majesty as yet the only mediatory power between the several states of the British empire, to recommend to his parliament of Great Britain the total revocation of these acts, which, however nugatory they be, may yet prove the cause of further discontents and jealousies among us.

That we next proceed to consider the conduct of his majesty as holding the executive powers of the laws of these states,

and mark out his deviations from the line of duty: By the constitution of Great Britain as well as of the several American states, his majesty possesses the power of refusing to pass into a law any bill which has already passed the other two branches of legislature. His majesty, however, and his ancestors, conscious of the impropriety of opposing their single opinion to the united wisdom of two houses of parliament, while their proceedings were unbiassed by interested principles, for several ages past have modestly declined the exercise of this power in that part of his empire called Great Britain. But by change of circumstances, other principles than those of justice simply have obtained an influence on their determinations; the addition of new states to the British empire has produced an addition of new and sometimes opposite interests. It is now, therefore, the great office of his majesty to resume the exercise of his negative power and to prevent the passage of laws by any one legislature of the empire, which might bear injuriously on the rights and interests of another. Yet this will not excuse the wanton exercise of this power which we have seen his majesty practice on the laws of the American legislatures. For the most trifling reasons, and sometimes for no conceivable reason at all, his majesty has rejected laws of the most salutary tendency. The abolition of domestic slavery is the great object of desire in those colonies where it was unhappily introduced in their infant state. But previous to the enfranchisement of the slaves we have, it is necessary to exclude all further importations from Africa; yet our repeated attempts to effect this by prohibitions and by imposing duties which might amount to a prohibition, have been hitherto defeated by his majesty's negative. Thus preferring the immediate advantages of a few African corsairs to the lasting interests of the American states and to the rights of human nature deeply wounded by this infamous practice. Nay, the single interposition of an interested individual against a law was scarcely ever known to fail of success though in the opposite scale were placed the interests of a whole country. That this is so shameful an abuse of a power trusted with his majesty for other purposes as, if not reformed, would call for some legal restrictions.

With equal inattention to the necessities of his people here has his majesty permitted our laws to lie neglected in England for years, neither confirming them by his assent, nor annulling them by his negative; so that such of them as have no suspending clause we hold on the most precarious of all tenures, his majesty's will, and such of them as suspend themselves till his majesty's assent be obtained, we have feared might be called into existence at some future and distant period, when time and change of circumstances shall have rendered them destructive to his people here. And to render this grievance still more oppressive, his majesty by his instructions has laid his governors under such restrictions that they can pass no law of any moment unless it have such suspending clause; so that, however immediate may be the call for legislative interposition, the law cannot be executed till it has twice crossed the Atlantic, by which time the evil may have spent its whole force.

But in what terms, reconcilable to majesty and at the same time to truth, shall we speak of a late instruction to his majesty's governor of the colony of Virginia, by which he is forbidden to assent to any law for the division of a county, unless the new county will consent to have no representative in assembly? That colony has as yet fixed no boundary to the westward. Their western counties, therefore, are of indefinite extent; some of them are actually seated many hundred miles from their eastern limits. Is it possible, then, that his majesty can have bestowed a single thought on the situation of those people, who, in order to obtain justice for injuries, however great or small, must, by the laws of that colony, attend their county court at such a distance with all their witnesses, monthly, till their litigation be determined? Or does his majesty seriously wish and publish it to the world that his subjects should give up the glorious right of representation with all the benefits derived from that, and submit themselves the absolute slaves of his sovereign will? Or is it rather meant to confine the legislative body to their present numbers, that they may be the cheaper bargain whenever they shall become worth a purchase? . . .

When the representative body have lost the confidence of their constituents, when they have notoriously made sale of their most valuable rights, when they have assumed to themselves powers which the people never put into their hands, then indeed their continuing in office becomes dangerous to the state and calls for an exercise of the power of dissolution. Such being the causes for which the representative body should and should not be dissolved, will it not appear strange to an unbiassed observer that that of Great Britain was not dissolved while those of the colonies have repeatedly incurred that sentence?

But your majesty, or your governors, have carried this power beyond every limit known or provided for by the laws: After dissolving one house of representatives, they have refused to call another, so that for a great length of time, the legislature provided by the laws has been out of existence. From the nature of things, every society must at all times possess within itself the sovereign powers of legislation. The feelings of human nature revolt against the supposition of a state so situated as that it may not in any emergency provide against dangers which perhaps threaten immediate ruin. While those bodies are in existence to whom the people have delegated the powers of legislation, they alone possess and may exercise those powers; but when they are dissolved by the lopping off one or more of their branches, the power reverts to the people who may exercise it to unlimited extent, either assembling together in person, sending deputies, or in any other way they may think proper. We forbear to trace consequences further; the dangers are conspicuous with which this practice is replete. . . .

That in order to enforce the arbitrary measures before complained of, his majesty has from time to time sent among us large bodies of armed forces not made up of the people here, nor raised by the authority of our laws: Did his majesty possess such a right as this, it might swallow up all our other rights whenever he should think proper. But his majesty has no right to land a single armed man on our shores, and those whom he sends here are liable to our laws made for the suppression and punishment of riots, routs, and unlawful assemblies; or are hostile bodies, invading us in defiance of law. When in the course of the late war it became expedient that a body of Hanoverian troops should be brought over for the defense of Great Britain, his majesty's grandfather, our late sovereign, did not pretend to introduce them under any authority he possessed. Such a measure would have given just alarm to his subjects in Great Britain, whose liberties would not be safe if armed men of another country, and of another spirit, might be brought into the realm at any time without the consent of their legislature. He therefore applied to parliament, who passed an act for that purpose, limiting the number to be brought in and the time they were to continue. In like manner is his majesty restrained in every part of the empire. He possesses, indeed, the executive power of the laws in every state; but they are the laws of the particular state which he is to administer within that state and not those of any one within the limits of another. Every state must judge for itself the number of armed men which they may safely trust among them, of whom they are to consist, and under what restrictions they shall be laid.

To render these proceedings still more criminal against our laws, instead of subjecting the military to the civil powers, his majesty has expressly made the civil subordinate to the military. But can his majesty thus put down all law under his feet? Can he erect a power superior to that which erected himself? He has done it indeed by force; but let him remember that force cannot give right.

That these are our grievances which we have thus laid before his majesty with that freedom of language and sentiment which becomes a free people claiming their rights as derived from the laws of nature and not as the gift of their chief magistrate: Let those flatter who fear; it is not an American art. To give praise which is not due might be well from the venal, but would ill beseem those who are asserting the rights of human nature. They know, and will therefore say, that kings are the servants, not the proprietors of the people. Open your breast, sire, to liberal and expanded thought. Let not the name of George III be a blot in the page of history. You are surrounded by British counsellors but remember that they are parties. You have no ministers for American affairs because you have none taken from among us nor amenable to the laws on which they are to give you advice. It behooves you, therefore, to think and to act for yourself and your people. The great principles of right and wrong are legible to every reader; to pursue them requires not the aid of many counsellors. The whole art of government consists in the art of being honest. Only aim to do your duty, and mankind will give you credit where you fail. No longer persevere in sacrificing the rights of one part of the empire to the inordinate desires of another; but deal out to all equal and impartial right. Let no act be passed by any one legislature which may infringe on the rights and liberties of another. This is the important post in which fortune has placed you, holding the balance of a great, if a well poised empire. This, sire, is the advice of your great American council, on the observance of which may perhaps depend your felicity and future fame and the preservation of that harmony which alone can continue both to Great Britain and America the reciprocal advantages of their connection. It is neither our wish, nor our interest, to separate from her. We are willing, on our part, to sacrifice everything which reason can ask to the restoration of that

tranquility for which all must wish. On their part, let them be ready to establish union and a generous plan. Let them name their terms but let them be just. Accept of every commercial preference it is in our power to give for such things as we can raise for their use, or they make for ours. But let them not think to exclude us from going to other markets to dispose of those commodities which they cannot use or to supply those wants which they cannot supply. Still less let it be proposed that our properties within our own territories shall be taxed or regulated by any power on earth but our own. The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time; the hand of force may destroy but cannot disjoin them. This, sire, is our last, our determined resolution; and that you will be pleased to interpose with that efficacy which your earnest endeavors may ensure to procure redress of these our great grievances, to quiet the minds of your subjects in British America against any apprehensions of future encroachment, to establish fraternal love and harmony through the whole empire, and that these may continue to the latest ages of time, is the fervent prayer of all British America!

FEBRUARY 23, 1775

Alexander Hamilton, *The Farmer Refuted* excerpts

Hamilton, at the age of 19, engaged in a pamphlet debate with the 45-year-old Loyalist Samuel Seabury. Hamilton's A Full Vindication of the Measures of Congress*, written in 1774, drew Seabury's critique in* A View of the Controversy Between Great Britain and her Colonies *under the pseudonym of A.W. Farmer. Hamilton responded with this thorough defense of American rights.*

I resume my pen, in reply to the curious epistle, you have been pleased to favor me with; and can assure you, that, notwithstanding, I am naturally of a grave and phlegmatic disposition, it has been the source of abundant merriment to me. The spirit that breathes throughout is so rancorous, illiberal, and imperious: The argumentative part of it so puerile and fallacious: The misrepresentations of facts so palpable and flagrant: The criticisms so illiterate, trifling, and absurd: The conceits so low, sterile, and splenetic, that I will venture to pronounce it one of the most ludicrous performances, which has been exhibited to public view, during all the present controversy.

You have not even imposed the laborious task of pursuing you through a labyrinth of *subtilty*. You have not had ability sufficient, however violent your efforts, to try the *depths of sophistry*; but have barely skimmed along its *surface*. I should, almost, deem the animadversions I am going to make unnecessary, were it not that, without them, you might exult in a fancied victory, and arrogate to yourself imaginary trophies. . . .

The first thing that presents itself is a wish, that

> I had, explicitly, declared to the public my ideas of the *natural rights* of mankind. Man, in a state of nature (you say) may be considered, as perfectly free from all restraints of law and government, and, then, the weak must submit to the strong.

I shall, henceforth, begin to make some allowance for that enmity, you have discovered to the *natural rights* of mankind. For, though ignorance of them in this enlightened age cannot be admitted, as a sufficient excuse for you; yet, it ought, in some measure, to extenuate your guilt. If you will follow my advice, there still may be hopes of your reformation. Apply yourself, without delay, to the study of the law of nature. I would recommend to your perusal, Grotius, Pufendorf, Locke, Montesquieu, and Burlamaqui. I might mention other excellent writers on this subject, but if you attend, diligently, to these, you will not require any others.

There is so strong a similitude between your political principles and those maintained by Mr. Hobbes that, in judging from them, a person might very easily *mistake* you for a disciple of his. His opinion was exactly coincident with yours relative to man in a state of nature. He held, as you do, that he was, then, perfectly free from all restraint of *law* and *government*. Moral obligation, according to him, is derived from the introduction of civil society; and there is no virtue but what

is purely artificial, the mere contrivance of politicians for the maintenance of social intercourse. But the reason he ran into this absurd and impious doctrine, was, that he disbelieved the existence of an intelligent superintending principle, who is the governor, and will be the final judge of the universe.

As you sometimes swear *by him that made you*, I conclude your sentiment does not correspond with his in that which is the basis of the doctrine you both agree in; and this makes it impossible to imagine whence this congruity between you arises. To grant that there is a supreme intelligence who rules the world and has established laws to regulate the actions of his creatures; and, still, to assert that man, in a state of nature, may be considered as perfectly free from all restraints of *law* and *government*, appear to a common understanding, altogether irreconcilable.

Good and wise men, in all ages, have embraced a very dissimilar theory. They have supposed that the deity, from the relations we stand in to himself and to each other, has constituted an eternal and immutable law, which is indispensably obligatory upon all mankind prior to any human institution whatever.

This is what is called the law of nature,

> which, being coeval with mankind, and dictated by God himself, is, of course, superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe, in all countries, and at all times. No human laws are of any validity, if contrary to this; and such of them as are valid, derive all their authority, mediately or immediately, from this original.
>
> —Blackstone.

Upon this law depend the natural rights of mankind; the supreme being gave existence to man together with the means of preserving and beatifying that existence. He endowed him with rational faculties, by the help of which to discern and pursue such things as were consistent with his duty and interest, and invested him with an inviolable right to personal liberty and personal safety.

Hence, in a state of nature, no man had any moral power to deprive another of his life, limbs, property, or liberty; nor the least authority to command or exact obedience from him; except that which arose from the ties of consanguinity.

Hence also, the origin of all civil government, justly established, must be a voluntary compact between the rulers and the ruled; and must be liable to such limitations, as are necessary for the security of the *absolute rights* of the latter; for what original title can any man or set of men have to govern others except their own consent? To usurp dominion over a people in their own despite, or to grasp at a more extensive power than they are willing to entrust, is to violate that law of nature, which gives every man a right to his personal liberty; and can, therefore, confer no obligation to obedience.

> The principal aim of society is to protect individuals, in the enjoyment of those absolute rights, which were vested in them by the immutable laws of nature; but which could not be preserved, in peace, without that mutual assistance and intercourse, which is gained by the institution of friendly and social communities. Hence it follows, that the first and primary end of human laws is to maintain and regulate these *absolute rights* of individuals.
>
> —Blackstone.

If we examine the pretensions of parliament, by this criterion, which is evidently, a good one, we shall, presently detect their injustice. First, they are subversive of our natural liberty because an authority is assumed over us, which we by no means assent to. And secondly, they divest us of that moral security for our lives and properties, which we are intitled to, and which it is the primary end of society to bestow. For such security can never exist while we have no part in making the laws that are to bind us; and while it may be the interest of our uncontrolled legislators to oppress us as much as possible.

To deny these principles will be not less absurd than to deny the plainest axioms: I shall not, therefore, attempt any further illustration of them. . . .

In what sense, the dependance of the colonies on the mother country, has been acknowledged, will appear from those circumstances of their political history, which I shall, by and by, recite. The term colony signifies nothing more than a body of people drawn from the mother country to inhabit some distant place, or the country itself so inhabited. As to the degrees and modifications of that subordination, which is due to the parent state, these must depend upon other things besides the mere act of emigration to inhabit or settle a distant country. These must be ascertained by the spirit of the constitution of the mother country, by the compacts for the purpose of colonizing, and, more especially, by the law of nature and that supreme law of every society—*its own happiness*.

The idea of colony does not involve the idea of slavery. There is a wide difference between the dependence of a free people and the submission of slaves. The former I allow; the latter I reject with disdain. Nor does the notion of a colony imply any subordination to our fellow subjects in the parent state while there is one common sovereign established. The dependence of the colonies on Great Britain is an ambiguous and equivocal phrase. It may either mean dependence on the people of Great-Britain, or on the King. In the former sense, it is absurd and unaccountable: In the latter it is just and rational. No person will affirm that a French colony is independent of the parent state, though it acknowledges the King of France as rightful sovereign. Nor can it, with any greater propriety, be said, that an English colony is independent while it bears allegiance to the King of Great Britain. The difference between their dependence is only that which distinguishes civil liberty from slavery and results from the different genius of the French and English constitution.

But you deny, that "we can be liege subjects to the King of Great Britain while we disavow the authority of parliament." You endeavor to prove it thus,

> The King of Great Britain was placed on the throne, by virtue of an act of parliament; and he is King of America, by virtue of being King of Great Britain. He is therefore King of America by act of parliament: And, if we disclaim that authority of Parliament, which made him our King, we, in fact, reject him from being our King; for we disclaim that authority by which he is King at all.

Admitting, that the King of Great Britain was enthroned by virtue of an act of parliament, and that he is King of America, because he is King of Great Britain, yet the act of parliament is not the *efficient cause* of his being the King of America: It is only the *occasion* of it. He is King of America, by virtue of a compact between us and the kings of Great Britain. These colonies were planted and settled by the grants, and under the protection of English kings, who entered into covenants with us for themselves, their heirs and successors; and it is from these covenants that the duty of protection on their part and the duty of allegiance on ours arise.

So that to disclaim the authority of a British Parliament over us does by no means imply the dereliction of our allegiance to British Monarchs. Our compact takes no cognizance of the manner of their accession to the throne. It is sufficient for us that they are Kings of England.

The most valid reasons can be assigned for our allegiance to the King of Great Britain; but not one of the least force or plausibility for our subjection to parliamentary decrees.

We hold our lands in America by virtue of charters from British Monarchs; and are under no obligations to the lords or commons for them: Our title is similar and equal to that by which they possess their lands; and the King is the legal fountain of both: this is one grand source of our obligation to allegiance.

Another, and the principal source, is that protection which we have hitherto enjoyed from the Kings of Great Britain. Nothing is more common than to hear the votaries of parliament urge the protection we have received from the mother country, as an argument for submission to its claims. But they entertain erroneous conceptions of the matter; the King himself, being the supreme executive magistrate, is regarded by the constitution as the supreme protector of the empire. For this purpose, he is the generalissimo, or first in military command; in him is vested the power of making war and peace, of raising armies, equipping fleets and directing all their motions. He it is that has defended us from our enemies, and to him alone we are obliged to render allegiance and submission.

The law of nature and the British constitution both confine allegiance to the person of the King and found it upon the principle of protection. We may see the subject discussed at large in the case of Calvin: The definition given of it by the learned Coke, is this,

> Legiance is the mutual bond and obligation between the King and his subjects, whereby subjects are called his liege subjects because they are bound to obey and serve him; and he is called their liege lord because he is bound to maintain and defend them.

Hence it is evident that while we enjoy the protection of the King it is incumbent upon us to obey and serve him without the interposition of parliamentary supremacy.

The right of parliament to legislate for us cannot be accounted for upon any reasonable grounds. The constitution of Great Britain is very properly called a limited monarchy, the people having reserved to themselves a share in the legislature as a check upon the regal authority to prevent its

degenerating into despotism and tyranny. The very aim and intention of the democratical part, or the house of commons, is to secure the rights of the people. Its very being depends upon those rights. Its whole power is derived from them and must be terminated by them.

It is the unalienable birth-right of every Englishman who can be considered as a *free agent* to participate in framing the laws which are to bind him either as to his life or property. But, as many inconveniences would result from the exercise of this right in person, it is appointed by the constitution that he shall delegate it to another. Hence, he is to give his vote in the election of some person he chooses to confide in as his representative. This right no power on earth can divest him of. It was enjoyed by his ancestors time immemorial, recognized and established by Magna Charta, and is essential to the existence of the constitution. Abolish this privilege and the house of commons is annihilated.

But what was the use and design of this privilege? To secure his life and property from the attacks of exorbitant power. And in what manner is this done? By giving him the election of those who are to have the disposal and regulation of them, and whose interest is in every respect connected with his.

The representative in this case is bound by every possible tie to consult the advantage of his constituent. Gratitude for the high and honorable trust reposed in him demands a return of attention and regard to the advancement of his happiness. Self-interest, that most powerful incentive of human actions, points and attracts towards the same object.

The duration of his trust is not perpetual but must expire in a few years, and if he is desirous of the future favor of his constituents, he must not abuse the present instance of it but must pursue the end for which he enjoys it; otherwise he forfeits it and defeats his own purpose. Besides, if he consent to any laws hurtful to his constituent, he is bound by the same and must partake in the disadvantage of them. His friends, relations, children, all whose ease and comfort are dear to him, will be in a like predicament. And should he concur in any flagrant acts of injustice or oppression, he will be within the reach of popular vengeance, and this will restrain him within due bounds.

To crown the whole, at the expiration of a few years, if their representatives have abused their trust, the people have it in their power to change them, and to elect others who may be more faithful and more attached to their interest.

These securities, the most powerful that human affairs will admit of, have the people of Britain for the good deportment of their representatives towards them. They may have proved, at some times and on some occasions, defective; but, upon the whole, they have been found sufficient.

When we ascribe to the British house of commons a jurisdiction over the colonies, the scene is entirely reversed. All these kinds of security immediately disappear; no ties of gratitude or interest remain. Interest, indeed, may operate to our prejudice. To oppress us may serve as a recommendation to their constituents, as well as an alleviation of their own incumbrances. The British patriots may, in time, be heard to court the gale of popular favor, by boasting their exploits in laying some new impositions on their American vassals, and, by that means, lessening the burthens of their friends and fellow subjects.

But what merits still more serious attention is this. There seems to be already a jealousy of our dawning splendor. It is looked upon as portentous of approaching independence. This we have reason to believe is one of the principal incitements to the present rigorous and unconstitutional proceedings against us. And though it may have chiefly originated in the calumnies of designing men, yet it does not entirely depend upon adventitious or partial causes; but is also founded in the circumstances of our country and situation. The boundless extent of territory we possess, the wholesome temperament of our climate, the luxuriance and fertility of our soil, the variety of our products, the rapidity of our population, the industry of our country men, and the commodiousness of our ports naturally lead to a suspicion of independence and would always have an influence pernicious to us. Jealousy is a predominant passion of human nature and is a source of the greatest evils. Whenever it takes place between rulers and their subjects, it proves the bane of civil society.

The experience of past ages may inform us that when the circumstances of a people render them distressed, their rulers generally recur to severe, cruel, and oppressive measures. Instead of endeavoring to establish their authority in the *affection* of their subjects, they think they have no security but in their *fear*. They do not aim at gaining their fidelity and obedience by making them flourishing, prosperous, and happy; but by rendering them abject and dispirited. They think it necessary to intimidate and awe them, to make every

accession to their own power, and to impair the people's as much as possible.

One great engine, to effect this in America, would be a large standing army, maintained out of our own pockets, to be at the devotion of our oppressors. This would be introduced under pretense of defending us; but in fact to make our bondage and misery complete.

We might soon expect the martial law, universally prevalent to the abolition of trials by juries, the *Habeas Corpus* act, and every other bulwark of personal safety, in order to overawe the honest assertors of their country's cause. A numerous train of *court dependents* would be created and supported at our expense. The value of all our possessions, by a complication of extorsive methods, would be gradually depreciated, till it became a mere shadow. . . .

From what has been said, it is plain, that we are without those checks, upon the representatives of Great Britain, which alone can make them answer the end of their appointment, with respect to us; which is the preservation of the rights, and the advancement of the happiness of the governed. The direct and inevitable consequence is, *they have no right to govern us*. . . .

It is said, that

> in every government, there must be a supreme absolute authority lodged somewhere. In arbitrary governments, this power is in the monarch. In aristocratical governments, in the nobles. In democratical, in the people, or the deputies of their electing. Our own government being a mixture of all these kinds, the supreme authority is vested in the king, nobles and people; i.e. the king, house of lords, and house of commons elected by the people. This supreme authority extends as far as the British dominions extend. To suppose a part of the British dominions which is not subject to the power of the British legislature is no better sense than to suppose a country at one and the same time to be and not to be a part of the British dominions. If therefore the colony of New York is a part of the British dominions, the colony of New York is subject, and dependent on the supreme legislative authority of Great Britain.

This argument is the most specious of any, the advocates for parliamentary supremacy are able to produce; but, when we come to anatomize and closely examine every part of it, we shall discover that it is entirely composed of distorted and misapplied principles together with ambiguous and equivocal terms.

The first branch is that "in every government, there must be a supreme absolute authority lodged somewhere." This position, when properly explained, is evidently just. In every civil society there must be a supreme power to which all the members of that society are subject; for, otherwise, there could be no supremacy or subordination, that is, no government at all. But no use can be made of this principle beyond matter of fact. To infer from thence that, unless a supreme absolute authority be vested in one part of an empire over all the other parts, there can be no government in the whole, is false and absurd. Each branch may enjoy a distinct complete legislature, and still good government may be preserved everywhere. It is in vain to assert that two or more distinct legislatures cannot exist in the same state. If, by the same state, be meant the same individual community, it is true. Thus, for instance, there cannot be two supreme legislatures in Great Britain, or two in New York. But, if, by the same state, be understood a number of individual societies or bodies politic united under one common head, then, I maintain, that there may be one distinct complete legislature in each: Thus there may be one in Great Britain, another in Ireland, and another in New York, and still these several parts may form but one state. In order to this, there must indeed be some connecting, pervading principle; but this is found in the person and prerogative of the King. He it is that conjoins all these individual societies into one great body politic. He it is that is to preserve their mutual connection and dependence, and make them all co-operate to one common end, the general good. His power is equal to the purpose, and his interest binds him to the due prosecution of it. . . .

You are mistaken, when you confine arbitrary government to a monarchy. It is not the supreme power being placed in one instead of many that discriminates an arbitrary from a free government. When any people are ruled by laws, in framing which they have no part, that are to bind them, to all intents and purposes, without, in the same manner, binding the legislators themselves, they are in the strictest sense slaves, and the government, with respect to them, is despotic. . . .

The lords and commons both have a private and separate interest to pursue. They must be wonderfully disinterested,

if they would not make us bear a very disproportional part of the public burthens to avoid them as much as possible themselves. The people of Britain must, in reality, be an order of superior beings not cast in the same mold with the common degenerate race of mortals, if the sacrifice of our interest and ease to theirs be not extremely welcome and alluring. But should experience teach us that they are only mere mortals, fonder of themselves than their neighbors, the philanthropy and integrity of their representatives will be of a transcendent and matchless nature, should they not gratify the natural propensities of their constituents in order to ingratiate themselves and enhance their popularity.

When you say, that "our government being a mixture of all these kinds, the supreme authority is vested in the King, Nobles, and People, that is, the King, House of Lords, and House of Commons, elected by the people," you speak unintelligibly. A person who had not read any more of your pamphlet, than this passage, would have concluded, you were speaking of our Governor, Council and Assembly, whom, by a rhetorical figure, you styled King, Nobles and People. For how could it be imagined you would call any government our own with this description, that it is vested in the King, Nobles, and People, in which our own people have not the least share? . . .

Your next argument (if it deserves the name) is this,

> legislation is not an inherent right in the colonies; many colonies have been established and subsisted long without it. The Roman colonies had no legislative authority. It was not 'till the latter period of their republic that the privileges of Roman citizens, among which that of voting in Assemblies of the people at Rome, was a principal one, were extended to the inhabitants of Italy. All the laws of the empire were enacted at Rome. Neither their colonies, nor conquered countries had anything to do with legislation.

The fundamental source of all your errors, sophisms and false reasonings is a total ignorance of the natural rights of mankind. Were you once to become acquainted with these, you could never entertain a thought that all men are not, by nature, entitled to a parity of privileges. You would be convinced that natural liberty is a gift of the beneficent Creator to the whole human race, and that civil liberty is founded in that; and cannot be wrested from any people without the most manifest violation of justice. Civil liberty is only natural liberty, modified and secured by the sanctions of civil society. It is not a thing in its own nature, precarious and dependent on human will and caprice; but is conformable to the constitution of man as well as necessary to the wellbeing of society.

Upon this principle, colonists as well as other men have a right to civil liberty: For if it be conducive to the happiness of society (and reason and experience testify that it is), it is evident that every society, of whatsoever kind, has an absolute and perfect right to it, which can never be withheld without cruelty and injustice. The practice of Rome towards her colonies cannot afford the shadow of an argument against this. That mistress of the world was often unjust. And the treatment of her dependent provinces is one of the greatest blemishes in her history. Through the want of that civil liberty for which we are now so warmly contending, they groaned under every species of wanton oppression. If we are wise, we shall take warning from thence; and consider a like state of dependence, as more to be dreaded, than pestilence and famine.

The right of colonists, therefore, to exercise a legislative power, is an inherent right. It is founded upon the right of all men to freedom and happiness. For civil liberty cannot possibly have any existence where the society, for whom laws are made have no share in making them; and where the interest of their legislators is not inseparably interwoven with theirs. . . .

I shall now proceed to take such a survey of the political history of the colonies, as may be necessary to cast a full light upon their present contest; and at the same time, to give the public a just conception of the profound and comprehensive knowledge you have of the dispute; the fairness and candor with which you have represented facts, and the immaculate purity of your intentions. . . .

It is an invariable maxim, that every acquisition of foreign territory is at the absolute disposal of the King; and, unless he annex it to the realm, it is no part of it. And if it be once alienated, it can never be united to it without the concurrence of the proprietors.

Were there any room to doubt that the sole right of the territories in America was vested in the crown, a convincing argument might be drawn from the principle of English tenure. By means of the feudal system, the King became and still continues to be in a legal sense, the original proprietor or lord paramount of all the lands in England. Agreeable to

this rule, he must have been the original proprietor of all the lands in America and was, therefore, authorized to dispose of them in what manner he thought proper.

The great enquiry, therefore, is concerning the terms on which these lands were really dispensed.

"The first charter granted by the crown for the purpose of colonization is" not "that of King James the first to the two Virginia companies," as you assert. Previous to that, there was one from Queen Elizabeth to Sir Walter Raliegh for all the territory he might discover and plant between the 33d. and 40th. degrees of north latitude; which was not actually possessed by any Christian prince or inhabited by any Christian people, to have, hold, occupy, and enjoy the same, to him, his heirs, and assigns forever, with all prerogatives, jurisdictions, royalties, privileges, franchises, thereunto belonging by sea or land; only reserving to herself, her heirs and successors, the fifth part of all gold and silver ore that might be acquired in those regions.

By this grant, Queen Elizabeth relinquished the whole legislative and executive power to Sir Walter upon no other condition than simple homage, and the above-mentioned fifth part of gold and silver ore; which shews that the crown considered itself as invested with the absolute and entire disposal of the territories in America; and the passive conduct of the nation declares its acquiescence in the same.

After many successless efforts to plant a colony in Virginia, this charter was forfeited and abrogated by the attainder of Sir Walter Raleigh; and then succeeded that of King James the first to the two Virginia companies dated the 10th of April 1606. This was afterwards altered and improved by a second charter issued in 1609. There was also a third, dated March 12, 1611–12. The mention of this last would not have answered your purpose, and therefore, you chose to pass it over in silence.

In neither of these three is there the least reservation made of any authority to parliament. The colonies are considered in them as entirely without the realm, and consequently, without the jurisdiction of its legislature.

In the first charter from King James, there are the following clauses:

> We do ordain, establish and agree, etc. that each of the said colonies shall have a council, which shall govern and order all matters and all causes which shall arise, grow, or happen to, or within the same; according to such laws, ordinances, and instructions, as shall be in that behalf given and signed with our hand, or sign manual, and pass under the privy seal of our realm of England.
>
> And that also, there shall be a council established here in England, which shall consist of thirteen persons, to be for that purpose appointed; which shall have the superior managing and direction only of and for all matters that shall or may concern the government of the said several colonies.
>
> Also, we do for us, our heirs, etc. declare that all and every the persons, being our subjects, which shall dwell and inhabit within every or any the said several colonies, and every of their children which shall happen to be born within any of the said several colonies, shall have and enjoy all liberties, franchises, and immunities within any of our other dominions, to all intents and purposes as if they had been abiding and born within our Realm of England.

This latter declaration (to which there is one correspondent or similar, in every American Grant) plainly indicates, that it was not the royal intention to comprise the colonies within the realm of England. The powers committed to the two councils demonstrate the same; for they would be incompatible with the idea of any other than distinct states.

The King could neither exercise himself, nor empower others to exercise such an authority, as was really vested in the council, without a breach of the constitution, if the colonies had been a part of the realm, or within the jurisdiction of parliament. Such an exertion of power would have been unconstitutional and illegal, and, of course, inadmissible; but we find it was never called in question, by the legislature, and we may conclude from thence that America was universally considered as being without the jurisdiction of parliament. . . .

In April 1621, about nine years after the third Virginia charter was issued, a bill was introduced into the house of commons for indulging the subjects of England with the privilege of fishing upon the coast of America; but the house was informed by the secretary of state, by order of his majesty King James, that "America was not annexed to the realm, and that it was not fitting that parliament should make laws for those countries." . . .

The settlement of New England was the next in succession and was instigated by a detestation of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny. The principal design of the enterprise was to be emancipated from their sufferings under the authority of parliament and the laws of England. For this purpose, the Puritans had before retired to foreign countries, particularly to Holland. But Sir Robert Naughton, secretary of state, having remonstrated to his Majesty, concerning the impolicy and absurdity of dis-peopling his own dominions by means of religious oppression; obtained permission for the Puritans to take up their abode in America, where they found an asylum from their former misfortunes.

Previous to their embarkation at Holland, they had stipulated, with the Virginia company for a tract of land in contiguity with Hudson's River; but when they arrived in America (by some misconduct of the pilot) they found themselves at Cape Cod, which was without the boundaries of the Virginia Patent. There the season compelled them to remain, and there they have prosecuted their settlements.

They looked upon themselves as having reverted to a state of nature; but being willing still to enjoy the protection of their former sovereign, they executed the following instrument.

> In the name of God, Amen! We, whose names are under-written, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign Lord King James, of Great Britain, etc. King, defender of the faith, etc, having undertaken, for the glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith, and the honor of our King and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern part of Virginia, do by these presents, mutually in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid, and by virtue hereof, to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions and officers from time to time as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony; unto which, we promise all due submission and obedience.
>
> In witness whereof, we have hereunto subscribed our names, at Cape Cod, November 11th, 1620.

This was the original constitution of New Plymouth. It deserves to be remarked here that these first settlers possessed their lands by the most equitable and independent title, that of a fair and honest purchase from their natural owners, the Indian tribes. King James soon after erected a Council at Plymouth in the county of Devon, "for the planting, ruling, ordering and governing of New England, in America;" and granted to

> them, their successors and assigns, all that part of America, lying and being in breadth from 40 deg. of north latitude from the equinoctial line to the 48th degree of the said northerly latitude, inclusively, and in length of, and within all the breadth aforesaid, throughout all the main land, from sea to sea; together with all the firm lands, soils, grounds, havens, ports, rivers, waters, fishings, mines, minerals, precious stones, quarries, and all and singular other commodities, jurisdictions, royalties, privileges, franchises, and preeminences, both within the said tract of land, upon the main, and also within the islands and seas adjacent. To be held of his Majesty, his heirs, and successors in free and common socage, and the only consideration to be, the fifth part of all gold and silver ore, for, and in respect of all and all manner of duties, demands, and services.

This council was vested with the sole power of legislation, the election and appointment of all officers civil and military, authority to coin money, make war and peace, and a variety of other signal privileges. The colony of New Plymouth was comprehended within the grant. In consequence of which, its inhabitants, a few years after, purchased the claim of the patentees with all their rights and immunities, and became an independent state by charter.

The same motives that induced the settlement of New Plymouth did also produce that of Massachusetts. . . .

It happened some time before this, that there was a dissolution of the Virginia Company by a royal proclamation dated 15th of July 1624, by which the colony became more immediately dependent on the King. The Virginians were greatly alarmed at this and forthwith presented a remonstrance to the throne: In which they signified an apprehension of "designs formed against their rights and privileges." In order to banish their fears, the Lords of the Council (in a letter dated the 22d of July 1634) gave them an assurance by his Majesty's direction, "That all their estates, trade, freedom and privileges, should be enjoyed by them in as extensive a manner as they enjoyed them before the recall of the company's patent."

Agreeable to this, their former constitution was confirmed and continued.

The Maryland charter is the next in order, of which you, Sir, have made no mention. It was granted by King Charles I to Lord Baltimore and contains such ample and exalted privileges that no man in his senses can read it without being convinced it is repugnant to every idea of dependence on Parliament. . . .

In the 14th year of Charles II, the two colonies, Connecticut and New Haven, petitioned the King to unite them into one colony, which was complied with. Privileges, as valuable and extensive as any that had been before granted, were comprised in their charter. There was only a reservation of allegiance to the King without the smallest share of the legislative or executive power. The next year, Providence and Rhode Island procured a charter with privileges exactly correspondent to those of Connecticut. . . .

In the 15th year of Charles II, Carolina was erected into a principality. A Patent dated March 24, 1663 was granted to eight lord proprietors, vesting them with all its rights, privileges, prerogatives, royalties, etc. and the whole legislative and executive authority, together with the power of creating a nobility. The form of government was determined by a compact between the people and the proprietors, which contained one hundred and twenty articles; and, "these were to be and remain the sacred and unalterable rule and form of government in Carolina, for ever." . . .

The Philadelphia Charter was next granted; and contained almost an equality of privileges with that of Maryland. There was indeed a reserve in favor of parliament, perfectly singular and unprecedented in any foregoing charter; and which must either be rejected, or the general tenor of the grant becomes unintelligible. . . .

Were it necessary to elucidate still more a point which is so conspicuous from the several charters of the colonies as well as the express declarations of those princes by whom they were granted, to wit, "that the colonies are without the realm and jurisdiction of parliament," I might enumerate many striking circumstances, besides those I have already mentioned. But as the case is by this time sufficiently clear, I shall confine myself to the recital of only one or two more transactions.

An act of the 25th of Charles II was the first that ever imposed duties on the colonies for any purpose; and these, as the preamble itself recites, were simply as a regulation of trade and were of a prohibitory nature. Notwithstanding this, it was the source of great dissatisfaction and was one of the principal causes of the insurrection in Virginia under Colonel Bacon; which after his death subsided; and then the province sent agents to England to remonstrate "against taxes and imposition being laid on the colony, by any authority, but that of the General Assembly." In consequence of this, a declaration was obtained, under the privy seal of King Charles, dated 19th of April 1676 to this effect, that "taxes ought not to be laid upon the proprietors and inhabitants of the colony, but by the common consent of the General Assembly."

About three years after, when King Charles had occasion to raise a permanent revenue for the support of Virginia, he did not attempt to do it by means of a parliamentary donation; but framed a Bill and sent it there by Lord Colepepper, who was at that time governor, to receive the concurrence of their legislature. It was *there* passed into a law and "*enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the consent of the General Assembly of the colony of Virginia.*" If the Virginians had been subjects of the realm, this could not have been done, without a direct violation of *magna charta*; which provides that no English subject shall be taxed without the consent of Parliament.

Thus Sir, I have taken a pretty general survey of the American Charters and proved to the satisfaction of every unbiassed person that they are entirely discordant with that sovereignty of parliament for which you are an advocate. The disingenuity of your extracts (to give it no harsher name) merits the severest censure; and will no doubt serve to discredit all your former, as well as future labors, in your favorite cause of despotism.

It is true, that New York has no Charter. But, if it could support its claim to liberty in no other way, it might with justice plead the common principles of colonization: for it would be unreasonable to seclude one colony from the enjoyment of the most important privileges of the rest. There is no need, however, of this plea: The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records. They are written, as with a sun beam, in the whole volume of human nature by the hand of the divinity itself; and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power.

The nations of Turkey, Russia, France, Spain, and all other despotic kingdoms in the world have an inherent right, whenever they please, to shake off the yoke of servitude, (though sanctified by the immemorial usage of their ancestors;) and to model their government upon the principles of civil liberty.

I will now venture to assert that I have demonstrated, from the voice of nature, the *spirit* of the British constitution and the charters of the colonies in general, the absolute non-existence of that parliamentary supremacy for which you contend. I am not apt to be dogmatical or too confident of my own opinions; but, if I thought it possible for me to be mistaken when I maintain that the parliament of Great Britain has no sovereign authority over America, I should distrust every principle of my understanding, reject every distinction between truth and falsehood, and fall into an universal skepticism. . . .

Whatever opinion may be entertained of my sentiments and intentions, I attest that being, whose all-seeing eye penetrates the inmost recesses of the heart, that I am not influenced (in the part I take) by any unworthy motive—that, if I am in an error, it is my judgment, not my heart, that errs. That I earnestly lament the unnatural quarrel, between the parent state and the colonies; and most ardently wish for a speedy reconciliation, a perpetual and mutually beneficial union, that I am a warm advocate for limited monarchy and an unfeigned well-wisher to the present Royal Family.

But on the other hand, I am inviolably attached to the essential rights of mankind and the true interests of society. I consider civil liberty, in a genuine unadulterated sense, as the greatest of terrestrial blessings. I am convinced that the whole human race is intitled to it; and, that it can be wrested from no part of them without the blackest and most aggravated guilt.

I verily believe also that the best way to secure a permanent and happy union between Great Britain and the colonies is to permit the latter to be as free as they desire. To abridge their liberties or to exercise any power over them, which they are unwilling to submit to, would be a perpetual source of discontent and animosity. A continual jealousy would exist on both sides. This would lead to tyranny, on the one hand, and to sedition and rebellion, on the other. Impositions, not really grievous in themselves, would be thought so; and the murmurs arising from thence would be considered as the effect of a turbulent, ungovernable spirit. These jarring principles would, at length, throw all things into disorder and be productive of an irreparable breach and a total disunion.

That harmony and mutual confidence may speedily be restored between all the parts of the British empire is the favorite wish of one who feels the warmest sentiments of good will to mankind, who bears no enmity to you, and who is, a sincere Friend to America.

c. 1798

Paul Revere to Jeremy Belknap

Belknap, a historian who had served as a chaplain for the New Hampshire militia, helped found the Massachusetts Historical Society after the war and collected first-hand accounts—like this one from Revere—to preserve the documentary record of the Revolution.

Having a little leisure, I wish to fulfill my promise of giving you some facts and anecdotes prior to the Battle of Lexington, which I do not remember to have seen in any history of the American Revolution.

In the year 1773, I was employed by the select men of the Town of Boston to carry the account of the destruction of the tea to New York; and afterwards, 1774, to carry their dispatches to New York and Philadelphia for calling a congress; and afterwards to Congress, several times. In the Fall of 1774 and Winter of 1775, I was one of upwards of thirty, chiefly mechanics, who formed ourselves into a Committee for the purpose of watching the movements of the British soldiers and gaining every intelligence of the movements of the Tories. We held our meetings at the Green Dragon Tavern. We were so careful that our meetings should be kept secret that, every time we met, every person swore upon the Bible that they would not discover any of our transactions but to Messrs. Hancock, Adams, Doctors Warren, Church, and one or two more.

About November, when things began to grow serious, a gentleman who had connections with the Tory party, but was a Whig at heart, acquainted me that our meetings were discovered and mentioned the identical words that were spoken among us the night before. We did not then distrust Dr. Church but supposed it must be someone among us. We removed to another place, which we thought was more secure: but here we found that all our transactions were communicated to Governor Gage. (This came to me through the then Secretary Flucker; he told it to the gentleman mentioned above). It was then a common opinion that there was a traitor in the provincial Congress, and that Gage was possessed of all their secrets. (Church was a member of that Congress for Boston.) In the Winter, towards the Spring, we frequently took turns, two and two, to watch the soldiers by patrolling the streets all night.

The Saturday night preceding the 19th of April, about 12 o'clock at night, the boats belonging to the transports were all launched and carried under the sterns of the Men of War. (They had been previously hauled up and repaired). We likewise found that the grenadiers and light infantry were all taken off duty. From these movements, we expected something serious was to be transacted. On Tuesday evening, the 18th, it was observed that a number of soldiers were marching towards the bottom of the Common. About 10 o'clock, Dr. Warren sent in great haste for me and begged that I would immediately set off for Lexington, where Messrs. Hancock and Adams were, and acquaint them of the movement, and that it was thought they were the objects. When I got to Dr. Warren's house, I found he had sent an express by land to Lexington—a Mr. William Dawes. The Sunday before, by desire of Dr. Warren, I had been to Lexington to Mess. Hancock and Adams, who were at the Rev. Mr. Clark's. I returned at night through Charlestown; there I agreed with a Col. Conant and some other gentlemen in Charleston, that if the British went out by water, we would show two lanterns in the North Church steeple; and if by land, one, as a signal; for we were apprehensive it would be difficult to cross the Charles River or get over Boston neck. I left Dr. Warren's, called upon a friend, and desired him to make the signals.

I then went home, took my boots and surtout, and went to the north part of the town, where I had kept a boat; two friends rowed me across Charles River a little to the eastward where the *Somerset* Man of War lay. It was then young flood, the ship was winding, and the moon was rising. They landed me on Charlestown side. When I got into town, I met Col. Conant and several others; they said they had seen our signals. I told them what was acting and went to get me a horse; I got a horse of Deacon Larkin. While the horse was preparing, Richard Devens, Esq. who was one of the Committee of Safety, came to me and told me that he came down the road from Lexington after sundown that evening; that he met ten British Officers, all well mounted and armed, going up the road.

I set off upon a very good horse; it was then about 11 o'clock and very pleasant. After I had passed Charlestown Neck and got nearly opposite where Mark was hung in chains, I saw two men on horseback under a Tree. When I got near them, I discovered they were British officers. One tried to get ahead of me, and the other to take me. I turned my horse very quick and galloped towards Charlestown neck, and then pushed for the Medford Road. The one who chased me, endeavoring to cut me off, got into a clay pond near where the new tavern is now built. I got clear of him and went through Medford, over the bridge, and up to Menotomy. In Medford, I awaked the Captain of the Minutemen; and after that, I alarmed almost every house till I got to Lexington.

I found Messrs. Hancock and Adams at the Rev. Mr. Clark's; I told them my errand and inquired for Mr. Dawes; they said he had not been there; I related the story of the two officers and supposed that he must have been stopped as he ought to have been there before me. After I had been there about half an Hour, Mr. Dawes came; after we refreshed ourselves, we set off for Concord to secure the stores, etc. there. We were overtaken by a young Doctor Prescot, whom we found to be a high Son of Liberty. I told them of the ten officers that Mr. Devens met, and that it was probable we might be stopped before we got to Concord; for I supposed that after night they divided themselves, and that two of them had fixed themselves in such passages as were most likely to stop any intelligence going to Concord. I likewise mentioned that we had better alarm all the inhabitants till we got to Concord; the young Doctor much approved of it and said he would stop with either of us for the people between that and Concord knew him and would give the more credit to what we said.

We had got nearly halfway. Mr. Dawes and the Doctor stopped to alarm the people of a house: I was about one hundred rod ahead when I saw two men in nearly the same situation as those officer were near Charlestown. I called for the Doctor and Dawes to come up; in an instant I was surrounded by four; they had placed themselves in a straight road that inclined each way; they had taken down a pair of bars on the north side of the road and two of them were under a tree in the pasture. The Doctor being foremost, he came up and we tried to get past them; but they being armed with

pistols and swords, they forced us into the pasture; the Doctor jumped his horse over a low stone wall and got to Concord.

I observed a wood at a small distance and made for that. When I got there, out started six officers on horseback and ordered me to dismount; one of them, who appeared to have the command, examined me, where I came from and what my name was? I told him it was Revere, he asked if it was Paul? I told him yes. He asked me if I was an express? I answered in the affirmative. He demanded what time I left Boston? I told him, and added that their troops had catched aground in passing the River, and that there would be five hundred Americans there in a short time for I had alarmed the country all the way up. He immediately rode towards those who stopped us when all five of them came down upon a full gallop; one of them, whom I afterwards found to be Major Mitchel of the 5th Regiment, clapped his pistol to my head, called me by name, and told me he was going to ask me some questions and if I did not give him true answers, he would blow my brains out. He then asked me similar questions to those above. He then ordered me to mount my horse after searching me for arms. He then ordered them to advance and to lead me in front. When we got to the road, they turned down towards Lexington. When we had got about one mile, the Major rode up to the officer that was leading me and told him to give me to the Sergeant. As soon as he took me, the Major ordered him, if I attempted to run or anybody insulted them, to blow my brains out. We rode till we got near Lexington Meetinghouse, when the Militia fired a volley of guns, which appeared to alarm them very much. The Major inquired of me how far it was to Cambridge and if there were any other road? After some consultation, the Major rode up to the Seargent and asked if his horse was tired? He answered him he was (He was a Seargent of grenadiers and had a small horse). Then, said he, take that man's horse. I dismounted and the Seargent mounted my horse, when they all rode towards Lexington Meetinghouse. I went across the burying ground and some pastures, and came to the Rev. Mr. Clark's house, where I found Messrs. Hancock and Adams. I told them of my treatment, and they concluded to go from that house towards Woburn.

I went with them and a Mr. Lowell who was a clerk to Mr. Hancock. When we got to the house where they intended to stop, Mr. Lowell and myself returned to Mr. Clark's to find what was going on. When we got there, an elderly man came in; he said he had just come from the tavern, that a man had come from Boston who said there were no British troops coming. Mr. Lowell and myself went towards the tavern when we met a man on a full gallop who told us the troops were coming up the rocks. We afterwards met another, who said they were close by. Mr. Lowell asked me to go to the tavern with him, to get a trunk of papers belonging to Mr. Hancock. We went up chamber; and while we were getting the trunk, we saw the British very near upon a full March. We hurried towards Mr. Clark's house. In our way, we passed through the militia. There were about 50. When we had got about 100 yards from the Meetinghouse the British troops appeared on both sides of the Meetinghouse. In their front was an officer on horseback. They made a short halt; when I saw and heard a gun fired, which appeared to be a pistol. Then I could distinguish two guns, and then a continual roar of musketry, when we made off with the trunk.

As I have mentioned Dr. Church, perhaps it might not be disagreeable to mention some matters of my own knowledge respecting him. He appeared to be a high Son of Liberty. He frequented all the places where they met, was encouraged by all the leaders of the Sons of Liberty, and it appeared he was respected by them, though I knew that Dr. Warren had not the greatest affection for him. He was esteemed a very capable writer, especially in verse; and as the Whig party needed every strength, they feared as well as courted him. Though it was known that some of the Liberty Songs, which we composed, were parodied by him in favor of the British, yet none dare charge him with it. I was a constant and critical observer of him, and I must say that I never thought him a man of principle; and I doubted much in my own mind whether he was a real Whig. I knew that he kept company with a Capt. Price, a half-pay British officer, and that he frequently dined with him and Robinson, one of the commissioners. I know that one of his intimate acquaintances asked him why he was so often with Robinson and Price? His answer was that he kept company with them on purpose to find out their plans. The day after the Battle of Lexington, I met him in Cambridge, when He showed me some blood on his stocking, which he said spurted on him from a man who was killed near him as he was urging the militia on. I well remember that I argued with myself if a man will risk his life in a cause, he must be a friend to that cause; and I never suspected him after till he was charged with being a traitor.

The same day I met Dr. Warren. He was President of the Committee of Safety. He engaged me as a messenger to do the out of doors business for that committee; which gave me an opportunity of being frequently with them. The Friday evening after, about sunset, I was sitting with some, or near all that Committee in their room, which was at Mr. Hastings's house at Cambridge. Dr. Church, all at once, started up "Dr. Warren," said he, "I am determined to go into Boston tomorrow" (it set them all a staring). Dr. Warren replied, "Are you serious, Dr. Church? they will hang you if they catch you in Boston." He replied, "I am serious and am determined to go at all adventures." After a considerable conversation, Dr. Warren said, "If you are determined, let us make some business for you." They agreed that he should go to get medicine for their and our wounded officers. He went the next morning, and I think he came back on Sunday evening. After he had told the Committee how things were, I took him aside and inquired particularly how they treated him? he said, that as soon as he got to their lines on the Boston Neck, they made him a prisoner and carried him to General Gage, where he was examined, and then he was sent to Gould's barracks and was not suffered to go home but once. After He was taken up, for holding a correspondence with the British, I came across Deacon Caleb Davis; we entered into conversation about him; he told me, that the morning Church went into Boston, he (Davis) received a billet for General Gage (he then did not know that Church was in Town). When he got to the General's house, he was told the General could not be spoke with, that he was in private with a gentleman; that he waited near half an hour, when General Gage and Dr. Church came out of a room discoursing together like persons who had been long acquainted. He appeared to be quite surprised at seeing Deacon Davis there; that he (Church) went where he pleased while in Boston, only a Major Caine, one of Gage's aids, went with him. I was told by another person whom I could depend upon that he saw Church go into General Gage's house at the above time; that he got out of the chaise and went up the steps more like a man that was acquainted than a prisoner. Sometime after, perhaps a year or two, I fell in company with a gentleman who studied with Church in discoursing about him, I related what I have mentioned above; he said he did not doubt that he was in the interest of the British; and that it was he who informed Gen. Gage, that he knew for certain that a short time before the Battle of Lexington (for he then lived with him and took care of his business and books) he had no money by him and was much drove for money; that all at once, he had several hundred new British Guineas; and that he thought at the time where they came from.

Thus, Sir, I have endeavored to give you a short detail of some matters of which perhaps no person but myself have documents or knowledge. I have mentioned some names which you are acquainted with: I wish you would ask them if they can remember the circumstances I allude to.

1855

Theodore Parker, Trial before the Circuit Court of the United States at Boston EXCERPT

Theodore Parker, the grandson of Captain John Parker, invoked the following story in court while testifying against the Fugitive Slave Act. The Lexington Minutemen Monument is etched with this quote attributed to John Parker.

I drew my first breath in a little town not far off, a poor little town where the farmers and mechanics first unsheathed that revolutionary sword which, after eight years of hewing, clove asunder the Gordian Knot that bound America to the British yoke. One raw morning in spring—it will be eighty years the 19th of this month—Hancock and Adams, the Moses and Aaron of that Great Deliverance, were both at Lexington; they also had "obstructed an officer" with brave words. British soldiers, a thousand strong, came to seize them and carry them over sea for trial, and so nip the bud of freedom auspiciously opening in that early spring. The town militia came together before daylight "for training." A great, tall man, with a large head and a high, wide brow, their Captain,—one who "had seen service,"—marshalled them into line, numbering but seventy, and bade "every man load his piece with powder and ball." "I will order the first man shot that runs away," said he, when some faltered; "Don't fire unless fired upon, but if they want to have a war,—let it begin here." Gentlemen, you know what followed: those farmers and mechanics "fired the shot heard round the world." A little monument covers the bones of such as before had pledged their fortune and their sacred honor to the freedom of America, and that day gave it also their lives. I was born in that little town and bred up amid the memories of that day. When a boy, my mother lifted me up one Sunday in her religious, patriotic arms, and held me while I read the first monumental line I ever saw:

Sacred to Liberty and the Rights of Mankind. . . .

1776

Jonas Clark, A Narrative of the Day

John Hancock and Samuel Adams were staying at Clark's home while the British troops were searching the countryside for military stores and patriot leaders. Clark appended this narrative of the events of April 19, 1775 to a sermon he preached on the first anniversary of the battles of Lexington and Concord.

On the evening of the eighteenth of April 1775, we received two messages; the first verbal, the other *by express in writing* from the *committee of safety*, who were then sitting in the westerly part of *Cambridge*, directed to the Honorable John Hancock, Esq; (who, with the Honorable Samuel Adams, Esq; was then providentially with us) informing, "that *eight* or *nine* officers of the *king's troops* were seen just before night passing the road towards *Lexington* in a *musing, contemplative* posture; and it was suspected they were out upon some evil design."

As both these gentlemen had been frequently and even *publicly* threatened by the enemies of *this people*, both in England and America, with the *vengeance* of the *British administration:*—And as Mr. *Hancock* in particular had been more than once *personally insulted* by some officers of the troops in Boston; it was not without some just grounds supposed that, under cover of the darkness, *sudden arrest* if not assassination might be attempted by these *instruments of tyranny*!

To prevent any thing of this kind, *ten* or *twelve* men were immediately collected in arms to guard my house through the night.

In the meantime, said *officers* passed through this town on the road towards *Concord:* It was therefore thought expedient to watch their motions, and if possible, make some discovery of their intentions. Accordingly, about 10 o'clock in the evening, three men on horses were dispatched for this purpose. As they were *peaceably* passing the road towards *Concord,* in the borders of *Lincoln,* they were suddenly stopped by *said officers*, who rode up to them and, putting pistols to their breasts and seizing their horses bridles, *swore if they stirred another step, they should be all dead men!*—The officers detained them several hours as prisoners, examined, searched, abused and insulted them; and in their hasty return (supposing themselves discovered) they left them in Lexington.—Said officers also took into custody, abused, and *threatened with their lives*, several other persons; some of whom they met peaceably passing on the road, others even at the doors of their dwellings, without the least provocation on the part of the inhabitants or so much as a question asked by them.

Between the hours of twelve and one on the morning of the nineteenth of April, we received intelligence by express from the Honorable Joseph Warren Esq; at Boston, "that a large body of the king's troops (supposed to be a brigade of about 12 or 1500) were embarked in boats from Boston and gone over to land on Lechmere's Point (so called) in Cambridge: And that it was shrewdly suspected, that they were ordered to seize and destroy the stores, belonging to the colony, then deposited at Concord," in consequence of General Gage's unjustifiable seizure of the provincial magazine of powder at Medford and other colony stores in several other places.

Upon this intelligence, as also upon information of the conduct of the officers as above mentioned, the militia of this town were alarmed and ordered to meet on the usual place of parade; not with any design of commencing hostilities upon the king's troops, but to consult what might be done for our own and the people's safety: And also to be ready for whatever service providence might call us out to upon this alarming occasion in case overt acts of violence or open hostilities should be committed by this mercenary band of armed and blood-thirsty oppressors.

About the same time, two persons were sent express to Cambridge, if possible to gain intelligence of the motions of the troops and what route they took.

The militia met according to order and waited the return of the messengers that they might order their measures as occasion should require. Between 3 and 4 o'clock, one of the expresses returned, informing that there was no appearance of the troops on the roads either from Cambridge or Charlestown; and that it was supposed that the movements in the army the evening before were only a feint to alarm the people. Upon this, therefore, the militia company were dismissed for the present but with orders to be within call of the drum,—waiting the return of the other messenger who was expected in about an hour or sooner, if any discovery should be made of the motions of the troops.—But he was prevented by their silent and sudden arrival at the place where he was waiting for intelligence. So that, after all this precaution, we had no notice of their approach till the brigade was actually in the town and upon a quick march within about a mile and a quarter of the meeting house and place of parade.

However, the commanding officer thought best to call the company together,—not with any design of opposing so superior a force, much less of commencing hostilities; but only with a view to determine what to do, when and where to meet, and to dismiss and disperse.

Accordingly, about half an hour after four o'clock, alarm guns were fired and the drums beat to arms; and the militia were collecting together. Some, to the number of about 50 or 60 or possibly more, were on the parade, others were coming towards it. In the meantime, the troops, having thus stolen a march upon us, and to prevent any intelligence of their approach, having seized and held prisoners several persons whom they met unarmed upon the road, seemed to come determined for murder and bloodshed; and that whether provoked to it, or not! When within about half a quarter of a mile of the meeting-house, they halted and the command was given to prime and load; which being done, they marched on till they came up to the east end of said meeting house, in sight of our militia (collecting as aforesaid) who were about 12 or 13 rods distant. Immediately upon their appearing so suddenly and so nigh, Capt. Parker, who commanded the militia company, ordered the men to disperse and take care of themselves; and not to fire. Upon this, our men dispersed; but many of them not so speedily as they might have done,

not having the most distant idea of such brutal barbarity and more than savage cruelty from the troops of a British king as they immediately experienced! For no sooner did they come in sight of our company but one of them, supposed to be an officer of rank, was heard to say to the troops, "Damn them; we will have them!" Upon which the troops shouted aloud, huzza'd, and rushed furiously towards our men. About the same time, three officers (supposed to be Col. Smith, Major Pitcairn, and another officer) advanced on horseback to the front of the body and, coming within 5 or 6 rods of the militia, one of them cried out, "ye villains, ye Rebels, disperse; Damn you, disperse!" or words to this effect. One of them (whether the same or not is not easily determined) said, "Lay down your arms; Damn you, why don't you lay down your arms!" The second of these officers, about this time, fired a pistol towards the militia as they were dispersing. The foremost, who was within a few yards of our men, brandishing his sword and then pointing towards them, with a loud voice said to the troops, "Fire!—By God, fire!" which was instantly followed by a discharge of arms from the said troops, succeeded by a very heavy and close fire upon our party dispersing so long as any of them were within reach. Eight were left dead upon the ground! Ten were wounded. The rest of the company, through divine goodness, were (to a miracle) preserved unhurt in this murderous action!

As to the question, "Who fired first?" if it can be a question with any; we may observe that though General Gage hath been pleased to tell the world, in his account of this savage transaction, "that the troops were fired upon by the rebels out of the meeting house and the neighbouring houses, as well as by those that were in the field; and that the troops only returned the fire and passed on their way to Concord;" yet nothing can be more certain than the contrary, and nothing more false, weak, or wicked, than such a representation.

To say nothing of the absurdity of the supposition, that 50, 60, or even 70 men should, in the open field, commence hostilities with 12 or 1500 of the best troops of Britain, nor of the known determination of this small party of Americans, upon no consideration whatever, to begin the scene of blood. A cloud of witnesses, whose veracity cannot be justly disputed, upon oath have declared in the most express and positive terms, "that the British troops fired first:" And I think we may safely add, without the least reason or provocation. Nor was there opportunity given for our men to have saved themselves either by laying down their arms or dispersing as directed, had they been disposed to; as the command to fire upon them was given almost at the same instant that they were ordered by the British officers, to disperse, to lay down their arms, etc.

In short, so far from firing first upon the king's troops, upon the most careful enquiry, it appears that but very few of our people fired at all; and even they did not fire till, after being fired upon by the troops, they were wounded themselves or saw others killed or wounded by them and looked upon it next to impossible for them to escape.

As to any firing from the meeting house as Gage represents; it is certain that there were but four men in the meeting house when the troops came up: and they were then getting some ammunition from the town stock and had not so much as loaded their guns (except one, who never discharged it) when the troops fired upon the militia. And as to the neighboring houses, it is equally certain that there was no firing from them, unless after the dispersion of our men, some, who had fled to them for shelter, might fire from them upon the troops.

One circumstance more before the brigade quitted Lexington, I beg leave to mention as what may give a further specimen of the spirit and character of the officers and men of this body of troops. After the militia company were dispersed and the firing ceased, the troops drew up and formed in a body on the common, fired a volley and gave three huzzas by way of triumph and as expressive of the joy of victory and glory of conquest! Of this transaction, I was a witness, having, at that time, a fair view of their motions and being at the distance of not more than 70 or 80 rods from them.

Whether this step was honorary to the detachment or agreeable to the rules of war—or how far it was expressive of bravery, heroism, and true military glory for 800 disciplined troops of Great Britain, without notice or provocation, to fall upon 60 or 70 undisciplined Americans, who neither opposed nor molested them, and murder some and disperse the rest, and then to give the shout and make the triumph of victory, is not for me to determine; but must be submitted to the impartial world to judge. That "there is a God with whom is the power, and the glory, and the victory," is certain: but whether he will set his seal to the triumph made upon this most peculiar occasion by following it with further successes and finally giving up this people into the hands of those that

have thus cruelly commenced hostilities against them must be left to time to discover. But to return from this digression, if it may be called a digression. Having thus vanquished the party in Lexington, the troops marched on for Concord to execute their orders in destroying the stores belonging to the colony deposited there. They met with no interruption in their march to Concord. But by some means or other, the people of Concord had notice of their approach and designs and were alarmed about break of day; and collecting as soon and as many as possible, improved the time they had before the troops came upon them to the best advantage both for concealing and securing as many of the public stores as they could and in preparing for defense. By the stop of the troops at Lexington, many thousands were saved to the colony, and they were, in a great measure, frustrated in their design.

When the troops made their approach to the easterly part of the town, the provincials of Concord and some neighboring towns were collected and collecting in an advantageous post on a hill a little distance from the meeting house north of the road, to the number of about 150 or 200: but finding the troops to be more than three times as many, they wisely retreated, first to a hill about 80 rods further north, and then over the north bridge (so called) about a mile from the town: and there they waited the coming of the militia of the towns adjacent to their assistance.

In the meantime, the British detachment marched into the center of the town. A party of about 200 was ordered to take possession of said bridge, other parties were dispatched to various parts of the town in search of public stores, while the remainder were employed in seizing and destroying whatever they could find in the town house and other places where stores had been lodged. But before they had accomplished their design, they were interrupted by a discharge of arms at said bridge.

It seems that, of the party above mentioned as ordered to take possession of the bridge, one half were marched on about two miles in search of stores at Col. Barret's and that part of the town, while the other half, consisting of towards 100 men under Capt. Lawrie, were left to guard the bridge. The provincials, who were in sight of the bridge, observing the troops attempting to take up the planks of said bridge, thought it necessary to dislodge them and gain possession of the bridge. They accordingly marched, but with express orders not to fire unless first fired upon by the king's troops. Upon their approach towards the bridge, Capt. Lawrie's party fired upon them, killed Capt. Davis and another man dead upon the spot, and wounded several others. Upon this, our militia rushed on with a spirit becoming free-born Americans, returned fire upon the enemy, killed two, wounded several, and drove them from the bridge and pursued them towards the town until they were covered by a reinforcement from the main body. The provincials then took post on a hill at some distance north of the town, and as their numbers were continually increasing, they were preparing to give the troops a proper discharge on their departure from the town.

In the meantime, the king's troops collected; and having dressed their wounded, destroyed what stores they could find, and insulted and plundered a number of the inhabitants; prepared for a retreat.

While at Concord, the troops disabled two 24 pounders; destroyed their 2 carriages and seven wheels for the same, with their limbers. Sixteen wheels for brass 3 pounders and 2 carriages with limber and wheels for two 4 pounders. They threw into the river, wells, etc. about 500 weight of ball: and stove about 60 barrels of flour; but not having time to perfect their work, one half of the flour was afterwards saved.

The troops began a hasty retreat about the middle of the day and were no sooner out of the town but they began to meet the effects of the just resentments of this injured people. The provincials fired upon them from various quarters and pursued them (though without any military order) with a firmness and intrepidity beyond what could have been expected on the first onset and in such a day of confusion and distress! The fire was returned, for a time, with great fury by the troops as they retreated, though (through divine goodness) with but little execution. This scene continued with but little intermission till they returned to Lexington; when it was evident that, having lost numbers in killed, wounded, and prisoners that fell into our hands, they began to be not only fatigued but greatly disheartened. And it is supposed they must have soon surrendered at discretion had they not been reinforced. But Lord Percy's arrival with another brigade of about 1000 men and 2 field pieces about half a mile from Lexington meeting house towards Cambridge, gave them a seasonable respite.

The coming of the reinforcement with the cannon (which our people were not so well acquainted with then as they have been since) put the provincials also to a pause for a time.

But no sooner were the king's troops in motion, but our men renewed the pursuit with equal and even greater ardor and intrepidity than before, and the firing on both sides continued with but little intermission to the close of the day, when the troops entered Charlestown where the provincials could not follow them without exposing the worthy inhabitants of that truly patriotic town to their rage and revenge. That night and the next day they were conveyed in boats over Charles River to Boston, glad to secure themselves, under the cover of the shipping and by strengthening and perfecting the fortifications at every part, against the further attacks of a justly incensed people, who, upon intelligence of the murderous transactions of this fatal day, were collecting in arms round the town in great numbers and from every quarter.

In the retreat of the king's troops from Concord to Lexington, they ravaged and plundered as they had opportunity, more or less, in most of the houses that were upon the road. But after they were joined by Piercy's brigade in Lexington, it seemed as if all the little remains of humanity had left them; and rage and revenge had taken the reins and knew no bounds! Clothing, furniture, provisions, goods plundered, broken, carried off, or destroyed! Buildings (especially dwelling houses) abused, defaced, battered, shattered, and almost ruined! And, as if this had not been enough, numbers of them doomed to the flames! Three dwelling houses, two shops, and a barn were laid in ashes in Lexington! Many others were set on fire in this town, in Cambridge, etc. and must have shared the same fate had not the close pursuit of the provincials prevented and the flames been seasonably quenched! Add to all this; the unarmed, the aged and infirm who were unable to flee, are inhumanly stabbed and murdered in their habitations! Yea, even women in childbed, with their helpless babes in their arms, do not escape the horrid alternative of being either cruelly murdered in their beds, burnt in their habitations, or turned into the streets to perish with cold, nakedness, and distress! But I forbear—words are too insignificant to express the horrid barbarities of that distressing day!

Our loss in the several actions of that day was 49 killed, 34 wounded, and 5 missing, who were taken prisoners and have since been exchanged. The enemy's loss, according to the best accounts, in killed, wounded, and missing, about 300.

As the war was thus began with savage cruelty in the aggressors; so it has been carried on with the same temper and spirit by the enemy in but too many instances. Witness the wanton cruelty discovered in burning Charlestown, Norfolk, Falmouth, etc. But as events which have taken place since the ever memorable nineteenth of April 1775, do not properly come within the compass of this narrative, they must be left for some abler pen to relate.

APRIL 19, 1775

William Emerson, Account of the Battle of Concord

Emerson was a minister in Concord, Massachusetts and served in the militia that fought at the North Bridge. He later served as chaplain for the Massachusetts Provincial Congress and for the Continental Army.

This morning, between one and two o'clock, we were alarmed by the ringing of the bell, and upon examination found that the troops, to the number of 800, had stole their march from Boston in boats and barges from the bottom of the Common over to a point in Cambridge near to Inman's Farm, and were at Lexington meeting house half an hour before sunrise, where they had fired upon a body of our men, and (as we afterward heard) had killed several. This intelligence was brought us at first by Dr. Samuel Prescott, who narrowly escaped the guard that were sent before on horses purposely to prevent all posts and messengers from giving us timely information. He, by the help of a very fleet horse, crossing several walls and fences, arrived at Concord at the time above mentioned; when several posts were immediately dispatched that returning confirmed the account of the regulars' arrival at Lexington and that they were on their way to Concord.

Upon this, a number of our minutemen belonging to this town, and Acton and Lincoln, with several others that were in readiness, marched out to meet them, while the alarm

company were preparing to receive them in the town. Captain Minot, who commanded them, thought it proper to take possession of the hill above the meeting house as the most advantageous situation. No sooner had our men gained it than we were met by the companies that were sent out to meet the troops, who informed us that they were just upon us, and that we must retreat as their number was more than treble ours. We then retreated from the hill near the Liberty Pole and took a new post back of the town upon an eminence where we formed into two battalions and waited the arrival of the enemy.

Scarcely had we formed, before we saw the British troops at the distance of a quarter of a mile, glittering in arms, advancing towards us with the greatest celerity. Some were for making a stand notwithstanding the superiority of their number; but others more prudent thought best to retreat till our strength should be equal to the enemy's by recruits from neighboring towns that were continually coming in to our assistance. Accordingly, we retreated over the bridge when the troops came into the town, set fire to several carriages for the artillery, destroyed 60 barrels flour, rifled several houses, took possession of the town house, destroyed 500 lb. of balls, set a guard of 100 men at the North Bridge, and sent up a party to the house of Colonel Barrett where they were in expectation of finding a quantity of warlike stores. But these were happily secured just before their arrival by transportation into the woods and other by-places.

In the meantime, the guard set by the enemy to secure the pass at the North Bridge were alarmed by the approach of our people, who had retreated, as mentioned before, and were now advancing with special orders not to fire upon the troops unless fired upon. These orders were so punctually observed that we received the fire of the enemy in three several and separate discharges of their pieces before it was returned by our commanding officer; the firing then soon become general for several minutes, in which skirmish two were killed on each side and several of the enemy wounded. It may here be observed, by the way, that we were the more cautious to prevent beginning a rupture with the King's troops as we were then uncertain what had happened at Lexington, and knew not that they had begun the quarrel there by first firing upon our people, and killing eight men upon the spot.

The three companies of troops soon quitted their post at the bridge and retreated in the greatest disorder and confusion to the main body, who were soon upon the march to meet them. For half an hour, the enemy, by their marches and countermarches, discovered great fickleness and inconstancy of mind, sometimes advancing, sometimes returning to their former posts; till, at length they quitted the town and retreated by the way they came. In the meantime, a party of our men took the back way through the Great Fields into the east quarter and had placed themselves to advantage, lying in ambush behind walls, fences, and buildings, ready to fire upon the enemy on their retreat.

APRIL 20, 1775

Hugh Percy to Thomas Gage

Percy was the Colonel of the 5th Regiment of Foot and led the relief column that covered the British regulars during their retreat back to Boston after the Battles of Lexington and Concord. Gage was the Commander-in-Chief of British forces in North America and military governor of Massachusetts.

In obedience to your Excellency's orders, I marched yesterday morning at nine o'clock with the first brigade and two field pieces in order to cover the retreat of the Grenadiers and Light Infantry in their return from their expedition to Concord. As all the houses were shut up and there was not the appearance of a single inhabitant, I could get no intelligence concerning them till I had passed Menotomy, when I was informed that the rebels had attacked His Majesty's troops who were returning overpowered by numbers, greatly exhausted, and fatigued, and having expended almost all their ammunition; And about two o'clock, I met them retiring through the Town of Lexington. I immediately ordered the two field pieces to fire at the rebels and drew up the brigade on a height. The shot from the cannon had the desired effect and stopped the rebels for a little time, who immediately dispersed and endeavored to surround us, being very numerous. As it began now to grow pretty late, and we had miles to retire and only our 36 pounds, ordered the Grenadiers and Light Infantry to move off first and covered them with my brigade, sending out very strong flanking parties, which were absolutely necessary as there was not a stone wall or house, though before in appearance evacuated, from whence the rebels did not fire upon us. As soon as they saw us begin to retire, they pressed very much upon our Rear Guard, which, for that reason, I relieved every now and then. In this manner we retired for 15 miles under an incessant fire all round us till we arrived at Charles Town between 7. and 8. in the evening, very much fatigued with a march of above 30 miles and having expended almost all our ammunition. We had the misfortune of losing a good many men in the retreat, though nothing like the number, which, from many circumstances I have reason to believe, were killed of the rebels. His Majesty's troops, during the whole of the affair, behaved with their usual intrepidity and spirit. Nor were they a little exasperated at the cruelty and barbarity of the rebels, who scalped and cut off the ears of some of the wounded men that fell into their hands.

JULY 6, 1775

Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms

After the British had opened hostilities against America, the Second Continental Congress adopted this declaration, drafted primarily by Thomas Jefferson and John Dickinson, to justify armed resistance to military oppression and reiterate their desire for reconciliation, not independence.

If it was possible for men, who exercise their reason to believe, that the divine Author of our existence intended a part of the human race to hold an absolute property in, and an unbounded power over others, marked out by his infinite goodness and wisdom, as the objects of a legal domination never rightfully resistible, however severe and oppressive, the inhabitants of these colonies might at least require from the parliament of Great Britain some evidence that this dreadful authority over them has been granted to that body. But a reverence for our Creator, principles of humanity, and the dictates of common sense must convince all those who reflect upon the subject that government was instituted to promote the welfare of mankind and ought to be administered for the attainment of that end. The legislature of Great Britain, however, stimulated by an inordinate passion for a power not only unjustifiable, but which they know to be peculiarly reprobated by the very constitution of that kingdom, and desperate of success in any mode of contest, where regard should be had to truth, law, or right, have at length, deserting those, attempted to effect their cruel and impolitic purpose of enslaving these colonies by violence, and have thereby rendered it necessary for us to close with their last appeal from reason to arms. Yet, however blinded that assembly may be by their intemperate rage for unlimited domination, so to slight justice and the opinion of mankind, we esteem ourselves bound by obligations of respect to the rest of the world to make known the justice of our cause.

Our forefathers, inhabitants of the island of Great Britain, left their native land, to seek on these shores a residence for civil and religious freedom. At the expense of their blood, at the hazard of their fortunes, without the least charge to the country from which they removed, by unceasing labor and an unconquerable spirit they effected settlements in the distant and unhospitable wilds of America, then filled with numerous and warlike barbarians. Societies or governments vested with perfect legislatures were formed under charters from the crown, and an harmonious intercourse was established between the colonies and the kingdom from which they derived their origin. The mutual benefits of this union became in a short time so extraordinary as to excite astonishment. It is universally confessed that the amazing increase of the wealth, strength, and navigation of the realm arose from this source; and the minister, who so wisely and successfully directed the measures of Great Britain in the late war, publicly declared that these colonies enabled her to triumph over her enemies. Towards the conclusion of that war, it pleased our sovereign to make a change in his counsels. From that fatal movement, the affairs of the British empire began to fall into confusion and, gradually sliding from the summit of glorious prosperity to which they had been advanced by the virtues and abilities of one man, are at length distracted by the convulsions that now shake it to its deepest foundations. The new ministry finding the brave foes of Britain, though frequently defeated, yet still contending, took up the unfortunate idea of granting them a hasty peace, and of then subduing her faithful friends.

These devoted colonies were judged to be in such a state as to present victories without bloodshed and all the easy emoluments of statutable plunder. The uninterrupted tenor of their peaceable and respectful behavior from the beginning of colonization, their dutiful, zealous, and useful services during the war, though so recently and amply acknowledged in the most honorable manner by his majesty, by the late king, and by parliament, could not save them from the meditated innovations. Parliament was influenced to adopt the pernicious project, and assuming a new power over them, have in the course of eleven years, given such decisive specimens of the spirit and consequences attending this power as to leave no doubt concerning the effects of acquiescence under it. They have undertaken to give and grant our money without our consent, though we have ever exercised an exclusive right to

dispose of our own property; statutes have been passed for extending the jurisdiction of courts of admiralty and vice-admiralty beyond their ancient limits; for depriving us of the accustomed and inestimable privilege of trial by jury in cases affecting both life and property; for suspending the legislature of one of the colonies; for interdicting all commerce to the capital of another; and for altering fundamentally the form of government established by charter, and secured by acts of its own legislature solemnly confirmed by the crown; for exempting the "murderers" of colonists from legal trial, and in effect, from punishment; for erecting in a neighboring province, acquired by the joint arms of Great Britain and America, a despotism dangerous to our very existence; and for quartering soldiers upon the colonists in time of profound peace. It has also been resolved in parliament that colonists charged with committing certain offences shall be transported to England to be tried.

But why should we enumerate our injuries in detail? By one statute it is declared that parliament can "of right make laws to bind us in all cases whatsoever." What is to defend us against so enormous, so unlimited a power? Not a single man of those who assume it is chosen by us or is subject to our control or influence; but, on the contrary, they are all of them exempt from the operation of such laws, and an American revenue, if not diverted from the ostensible purposes for which it is raised, would actually lighten their own burdens in proportion as they increase ours. We saw the misery to which such despotism would reduce us. We for ten years incessantly and ineffectually besieged the throne as supplicants; we reasoned, we remonstrated with parliament, in the most mild and decent language.

Administration sensible that we should regard these oppressive measures as freemen ought to do, sent over fleets and armies to enforce them. The indignation of the Americans was roused, it is true; but it was the indignation of a virtuous, loyal, and affectionate people. A Congress of delegates from the United Colonies was assembled at Philadelphia on the fifth day of last September. We resolved again to offer an humble and dutiful petition to the King and also addressed our fellow-subjects of Great Britain. We have pursued every temperate, every respectful measure; we have even proceeded to break off our commercial intercourse with our fellow-subjects as the last peaceable admonition that our attachment to no nation upon earth should supplant our attachment to liberty. This, we flattered ourselves, was the ultimate step of the controversy: but subsequent events have shown how vain was this hope of finding moderation in our enemies.

Several threatening expressions against the colonies were inserted in his majesty's speech; our petition, though we were told it was a decent one, and that his majesty had been pleased to receive it graciously, and to promise laying it before his parliament, was huddled into both houses among a bundle of American papers, and there neglected. The lords and commons in their address, in the month of February, said, that

> a rebellion at that time actually existed within the province of Massachusetts-Bay; and that those concerned with it, had been countenanced and encouraged by unlawful combinations and engagements, entered into by his majesty's subjects in several of the other colonies; and therefore they besought his majesty, that he would take the most effectual measures to enforce due obedience to the laws and authority of the supreme legislature.

Soon after, the commercial intercourse of whole colonies, with foreign countries and with each other, was cut off by an act of parliament; by another several of them were entirely prohibited from the fisheries in the seas near their coasts on which they always depended for their sustenance; and large reinforcements of ships and troops were immediately sent over to General Gage.

Fruitless were all the entreaties, arguments, and eloquence of an illustrious band of the most distinguished peers and commoners, who nobly and strenuously asserted the justice of our cause to stay, or even to mitigate the heedless fury with which these accumulated and unexampled outrages were hurried on. Equally fruitless was the interference of the city of London, of Bristol, and many other respectable towns in our favor. Parliament adopted an insidious maneuver calculated to divide us, to establish a perpetual auction of taxations where colony should bid against colony, all of them uninformed what ransom would redeem their lives; and thus to extort from us, at the point of the bayonet, the unknown sums that should be sufficient to gratify, if possible to gratify, ministerial rapacity with the miserable indulgence left to us of raising, in our own mode, the prescribed tribute. What terms more rigid and humiliating could have been dictated by remorseless

victors to conquered enemies? in our circumstances, to accept them would be to deserve them.

Soon after the intelligence of these proceedings arrived on this continent, General Gage, who in the course of the last year had taken possession of the town of Boston in the province of Massachusetts-Bay and still occupied it a garrison, on the 19th day of April, sent out from that place a large detachment of his army, who made an unprovoked assault on the inhabitants of the said province at the town of Lexington as appears by the affidavits of a great number of persons, some of whom were officers and soldiers of that detachment, murdered eight of the inhabitants and wounded many others. From thence the troops proceeded in warlike array to the town of Concord, where they set upon another party of the inhabitants of the same province, killing several and wounding more, until compelled to retreat by the country people suddenly assembled to repel this cruel aggression. Hostilities, thus commenced by the British troops, have been since prosecuted by them without regard to faith or reputation. The inhabitants of Boston being confined within that town by the General their governor, and having, in order to procure their dismission, entered into a treaty with him, it was stipulated that the said inhabitants having deposited their arms with their own magistrate should have liberty to depart, taking with them their other effects. They accordingly delivered up their arms, but in open violation of honor, in defiance of the obligation of treaties, which even savage nations esteemed sacred, the governor ordered the arms deposited as aforesaid that they might be preserved for their owners, to be seized by a body of soldiers, detained the greatest part of the inhabitants in the town, and compelled the few who were permitted to retire to leave their most valuable effects behind.

By this perfidy wives are separated from their husbands, children from their parents, the aged and the sick from their relations and friends who wish to attend and comfort them, and those who have been used to live in plenty and even elegance are reduced to deplorable distress.

The General, further emulating his ministerial masters, by a proclamation bearing date on the 12th day of June, after venting the grossest falsehoods and calumnies against the good people of these colonies, proceeds to "declare them all, either by name or description, to be rebels and traitors, to supersede the course of the common law, and instead thereof to publish and order the use and exercise of the law martial." His troops have butchered our countrymen, have wantonly burnt Charlestown besides a considerable number of houses in other places; our ships and vessels are seized; the necessary supplies of provisions are intercepted, and he is exerting his utmost power to spread destruction and devastation around him.

We have received certain intelligence, that General Carleton, the governor of Canada, is instigating the people of that province and the Indians to fall upon us; and we have but too much reason to apprehend that schemes have been formed to excite domestic enemies against us. In brief, a part of these colonies now feel, and all of them are sure of feeling, as far as the vengeance of administration can inflict them, the complicated calamities of fire, sword and famine. We are reduced to the alternative of choosing an unconditional submission to the tyranny of irritated ministers, or resistance by force. The latter is our choice. We have counted the cost of this contest and find nothing so dreadful as voluntary slavery. Honour, justice, and humanity forbid us tamely to surrender that freedom which we received from our gallant ancestors, and which our innocent posterity have a right to receive from us. We cannot endure the infamy and guilt of resigning succeeding generations to that wretchedness which inevitably awaits them if we basely entail hereditary bondage upon them.

Our cause is just. Our union is perfect. Our internal resources are great, and, if necessary, foreign assistance is undoubtedly attainable. We gratefully acknowledge, as signal instances of the Divine favor towards us, that his Providence would not permit us to be called into this severe controversy until we were grown up to our present strength, had been previously exercised in warlike operation, and possessed of the means of defending ourselves. With hearts fortified with these animating reflections, we most solemnly, before God and the world, declare that, exerting the utmost energy of those powers, which our beneficent Creator hath graciously bestowed upon us, the arms we have been compelled by our enemies to assume, we will, in defiance of every hazard, with unabating firmness and perseverance, employ for the preservation of our liberties; being with one mind resolved to die freemen rather than to live slaves.

Lest this declaration should disquiet the minds of our friends and fellow-subjects in any part of the empire, we assure them that we mean not to dissolve that union which has so long

and so happily subsisted between us, and which we sincerely wish to see restored. Necessity has not yet driven us into that desperate measure or induced us to excite any other nation to war against them. We have not raised armies with ambitious designs of separating from Great-Britain and establishing independent states. We fight not for glory or for conquest. We exhibit to mankind the remarkable spectacle of a people attacked by unprovoked enemies without any imputation or even suspicion of offence. They boast of their privileges and civilization and yet proffer no milder conditions than servitude or death.

In our own native land, in defense of the freedom that is our birthright and which we ever enjoyed till the late violation of it—for the protection of our property, acquired solely by the honest industry of our forefathers and ourselves, against violence actually offered, we have taken up arms. We shall lay them down when hostilities shall cease on the part of the aggressors and all danger of their being renewed shall be removed, and not before.

With an humble confidence in the mercies of the supreme and impartial Judge and Ruler of the Universe, we most devoutly implore his Divine Goodness to protect us happily through this great conflict, to dispose our adversaries to reconciliation on reasonable terms, and thereby to relieve the empire from the calamities of civil war.

JUNE 17, 1775

Amos Farnsworth, Diary

Farnsworth was a corporal in the Massachusetts militia who was present at the Battle of Bunker Hill.

The Enemy appeared to be much alarmed on Saturday morning when they discovered our operations and immediately began a heavy cannonading from a battery on Corps-Hill, Boston and from the ships in the harbor; we with little loss, continued to carry on our works till one o'clock when we discovered a large body of the enemy crossing Charles River from Boston. They landed on a point of land about a mile eastward of our intrenchment and immediately disposed their army for an attack, previous to which they set fire to the town of Charlestown. It is supposed that the Enemy intended to attack us under the cover of the smoke from the burning houses, the wind favoring them in such a design; while on the other side, their army was extending northward towards Mystic River with an apparent design of surrounding our den in the works, and of cutting off any assistance intended for our relief. They were, however, in some measure counteracted in this design, and drew their army into closer order. As the enemy approached, our men were not only exposed to the attack of a very numerous musketry, but to the heavy fire of the battery on Corps-Hill, four or five Men of War, several armed boats or floating batteries in Mystic River, and a number of field pieces. Notwithstanding we within the intrenchment and at a breastwork without, sustained the enemy's attacks with great bravery and resolution, killed and wounded great numbers, and repulsed them several times; and after bearing, for about two hours, as severe and heavy a fire as perhaps ever was known, and many having fired away all their ammunition, and having no reinforcement: although there was a great body of men nigh by: we were overpowered by numbers and obliged to leave the entrenchment, retreating about sunset to a small distance over Charlestown Neck. N.B.—I did not leave the intrenchment until the enemy got in. I then retreated ten or fifteen rods, then I received a wound in my right arm, the ball going through a little below my elbow, breaking the little shell bone. Another ball struck my back, taking of a piece of skin about as big as a penny. But I got to Cambridge that night. The town of Charlestown supposed to contain about 300 dwelling houses, a great number of which were large and elegant, besides 150 or 200 other buildings are almost all laid in ashes by the barbarity and wanton cruelty of that infernal villain, Thomas Gage. Oh the goodness of God in preserving my life although they fell on my right hand and on my left: O may this act of deliverance of thine, oh God, lead me never to distrust thee, but may I ever trust in thee and put confidence in no arm of flesh. I was in great pain the first night with my wound.

JUNE 26, 1775

Thomas Gage to William Barrington

As governor and commander-in-chief, Gage wrote this evaluation of Bunker Hill to Lord Barrington, Secretary at War.

My Lord, you will receive an account of some success against the rebels but attended with a long list of killed and wounded on our side, so many of the latter that the hospital has hardly hands sufficient to take care of them. Their people show a spirit and conduct against us they never showed against the French, and everybody has judged of them from their former appearance, and behavior when joined with the King's forces in the last war; which has led many into great mistakes. They are stirred up by a rage and enthusiasm as great as ever people were possessed of, and you must proceed in earnest or give the business up. A small body acting in one spot will not avail, you must have large armies making diversions on different sides to divide their force.

The loss we have sustained is greater than we can bear. Small armies cannot afford such losses, especially when the advantage gained tends to little more than the gaining of a post—a material one indeed, as our own security depended on it. The troops are sent out too late; the rebels were at least two months before hand with us, and your Lordship would be astonished to see the tract of country they have entrenched and fortified; their number is great, so many hands have been employed.

We are here, to use a common expression, taking the bull by the horn, attacking the enemy in their strong parts. I wish this cursed place was burned, the only use is its harbor, which may be said to be material; but in all other respects it is the worst place either to act offensively from, or defensively. I have before wrote to your Lordship my opinion that a large army must at length be employed to reduce these people, and mentioned the hiring of foreign troops. I fear it must come to that or else to avoid a land war and make use only of your fleet. I do not find one province in appearance better disposed than another, though I think if this army was in New York that we should find many friends and be able to raise forces in that province in the side of government.

The troops of the first embarkation are all arrived and two companies of the 4th Regiment, which was off the second they were onboard a prime sailor and left the rest, which can not be expected for some time.

Having unfortunately lost the Adjutant General, I am to recommend the Deputy Adjutant General to succeed him. I do not mean or expect the same rank for him as Lieutenant Colonel Abercrombie was to have had but hope there will be no difficulty in his having the rank of a Lieutenant Colonel.

JULY 2, 1776

George Washington, General Orders

With Congress debating independence, Washington exhorted his troops to fight with renewed vigor. When Washington received Hancock's letter enclosing the Declaration on July 6, he ordered it read aloud to the army on July 9.

General Mifflin is to repair to the post near Kingsbridge and use his utmost endeavors to forward the works there—General Scott in the meantime to perform the duty required of General Mifflin in the orders of the 29th of June.

No sentries are to stop or molest the country people coming to market or going from it but to be very vigilant in preventing soldiers leaving the army.

Col. Cortlandt of the New Jersey Brigade is to send over five hundred of the militia under his command to reinforce General Greene's Brigade; these troops are to be distinguished from the old militia in future by being called New Levies; the Quarter Master General to furnish them with tents. The detachment from General Spencer's Brigade to return when these get over. The militia not under the immediate command of General Heard are to be under that of General Mercer until the arrival of their own general officer.

The time is now near at hand which must probably determine, whether Americans are to be Freemen or Slaves; whether they are to have any property they can call their own; whether their houses and farms are to be pillaged and destroyed, and

they consigned to a state of wretchedness from which no human efforts will probably deliver them. The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on the courage and conduct of this army. Our cruel and unrelenting enemy leaves us no choice but a brave resistance or the most abject submission; this is all we can expect. We have, therefore, to resolve to conquer or die. Our own country's honor, all call upon us for a vigorous and manly exertion, and if we now shamefully fail, we shall become infamous to the whole world. Let us, therefore, rely upon the goodness of the cause and the aid of the supreme Being, in whose hands victory is, to animate and encourage us to great and noble actions. The eyes of all our countrymen are now upon us, and we shall have their blessings and praises if happily we are the instruments of saving them from the tyranny meditated against them. Let us therefore animate and encourage each other and show the whole world that a freeman contending for liberty on his own ground is superior to any slavish mercenary on earth.

The General recommends to the officers great coolness in time of action, and to the soldiers a strict attention and obedience with a becoming firmness and spirit.

Any officer, or soldier, or any particular corps distinguishing themselves by any acts of bravery and courage will assuredly meet with notice and rewards; and on the other hand, those who behave ill will as certainly be exposed and punished. The General being resolved, as well for the honor and safety of the country as army, to show no favor to such as refuse or neglect their duty at so important a crisis.

The General expressly orders that no officer or soldier, on any pretense whatever, without leave in writing from the commanding officer of the regiment, do leave the parade so as to be out of drum-call in case of an alarm, which may be hourly expected. The regiments are immediately to be under arms on their respective parades, and should any be absent, they will be severely punished. The whole army to be at their alarm posts completely equipped tomorrow a little before day.

Ensign Charles Miller, Capt. Wright's Company and Colonel Wyllys's Regiment, charged with "absenting himself from his Guard," tried by a General Court Martial and acquitted. The General approves the sentence and orders him to be dismissed from his arrest.

As there is a probability of rain, the General strongly recommends to the officers to pay particular attention to their men's arms and ammunition that neither may be damaged.

Lieut. Col. Clark who was ordered to sit on General Court Martial in the orders of yesterday being absent on command, Lieut. Col. Tyler is to sit in Court.

Evening Orders. 'Tis the General's desire that the men lay upon their arms in their tents and quarters, ready to turn out at a moment's warning as there is the greatest likelihood of it.

JULY 4, 1776

Declaration of Independence

After more than a year of war and repeated failed appeals to King and Parliament, Richard Henry Lee introduced a resolution for independence on June 7, 1776. Congress appointed a committee to draft a declaration while they considered Lee's resolution. Lee's Resolution passed on July 2, and Congress adopted the Declaration's final text on July 4.

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 shewn, 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 meantime exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without and convulsions within.

He has endeavored 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.

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 neighboring 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 governments;
>
> 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 complete 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 endeavored 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 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 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.

1830

Joseph Plumb Martin, *The Adventures of a Revolutionary Soldier* excerpt

Martin enlisted as a soldier in the Connecticut Militia in 1776 at the age of 15. He re-enlisted in the Continental Army in 1777 and served for the duration of the war. His memoir is one of the most complete accounts of the experiences of enlisted soldiers during the war, including the march into Valley Forge in 1777 and the even harsher winter of 1779–1780.

Soon after the British had quit their position on Chestnut-hill, we left this place, and after marching and countermarching back and forward some days, we crossed the Schuylkill in a cold rainy and snowy night upon a bridge of wagons set end to end and joined together by boards and planks; and after a few days more maneuvering, we at last settled down at a place called "the Gulf," (so named on account of a remarkable chasm in the hills;) and here we encamped some time, and here we had liked to have encamped forever—for starvation here rioted in its glory. But, lest the reader should be disgusted at hearing so much said about "starvation," I will give him something that, perhaps, may in some measure alleviate his ill humor.

While we lay here, there was a Continental thanksgiving ordered by Congress; and as the army had all the cause in the world to be particularly thankful, if not for being well off, at least that it was no worse, we were ordered to participate in it. We had nothing to eat for two or three days previous, except what the trees of the fields and forests afforded us. But we must now have what Congress said—a sumptuous thanksgiving to close the year of high living we had now nearly seen brought to a close. Well—to add something extraordinary to our present stock of provisions, our country, ever mindful of its suffering army, opened her sympathizing heart so wide, upon this occasion, as to give us something to make the world stare. And what do you think it was, reader?—Guess.—You cannot guess, be you as much of a Yankee as you will. I will tell you: it gave each and every man half a gill of rice and a table spoon full of vinegar!! After we had made sure of this extraordinary superabundant donation, we were ordered out to attend a meeting, and hear a sermon delivered upon the happy occasion. We accordingly went, for we could not help it. I heard a sermon, a "thanksgiving sermon," what sort of one I do not know now, nor did I at the time I heard it, I had something else to think upon: my belly put me in remembrance of the fine thanksgiving dinner I was to partake of when I could get it. I remember the text like an attentive lad at church, I can still remember that it was this, "And the soldiers said unto him, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, nor accuse any one falsely." The Preacher ought to have added the remainder of the sentence to have made it complete; "And be content with your wages." But that would not do, it would be too apropos; however, he heard it as soon as the service was over, it was shouted from a hundred tongues. Well—we had got through the services of the day and had nothing to do but to return in good order to our tents and fare as we could. As we returned to our camp, we passed by our Commissary's quarters, all his stores, consisting of a barrel about two thirds full of hocks of fresh beef, stood directly in our way, but there was a sentinel guarding even that; however, one of my messmates purloined a piece of it, four or five pounds perhaps. I was exceeding glad to see him take it, I thought it might help to eke out our thanksgiving supper; but, alas! how soon my expectations were blasted!—The sentinel saw him have it as soon as I did and obliged him to return it to the barrel again. So I had nothing else to do but to go home and make out my supper as usual, upon a leg of nothing and no turnips.

The army was now not only starved but naked; the greatest part were not only shirtless and barefoot, but destitute of all other clothing, especially blankets. I procured a small piece of raw cowhide and made myself a pair of moccasins, which kept my feet (while they lasted) from the frozen ground, although, as I well remember, the hard edges so galled my ankles while on a march that it was with much difficulty and pain that I could wear them afterwards; but the only alternative I had was to endure this inconvenience or to go barefoot, as hundreds of my companions had to till they might be tracked by their blood upon the rough frozen ground. But hunger, nakedness, and sore shins were not the only difficul-

ties we had at that time to encounter;—we had hard duty to perform and little or no strength to perform it with.

The army continued at and near the Gulf for some days, after which we marched for the Valley Forge in order to take up our winter-quarters. We were now in a truly forlorn condition,—no clothing, no provisions and as disheartened as need be. We arrived, however, at our destination a few days before Christmas. Our prospect was indeed dreary. In our miserable condition, to go into the wild woods and build us habitations to stay (not to live) in, in such a weak, starved, and naked condition, was appalling in the highest degree, especially to New Englanders unaccustomed to such kind of hardships at home. However, there was no remedy, no alternative but this or dispersion; but dispersion, I believe, was not thought of, at least, I did not think of it—we had engaged in the defense of our injured country and were willing, nay, we were determined to persevere as long as such hardships were not altogether intolerable. I had experienced what I thought sufficient of the hardships of a military life the year before (although nothing in comparison to what I had suffered the present campaign) and therefore expected to meet with rubbers. But we were now absolutely in danger of perishing, and that too, in the midst of a plentiful country. We then had but little and often nothing to eat for days together; but now we had nothing and saw no likelihood of any betterment of our condition. Had there fallen deep snows (and it was the time of year to expect them) or even heavy and long rainstorms, the whole army must inevitably have perished. Or had the enemy, strong and well provided as he then was, thought fit to pursue us, our poor emaciated carcasses must have "strewed the plain." But a kind and holy Providence took more notice and better care of us than did the country in whose service we were wearing away our lives by piecemeal.

We arrived at the Valley Forge in the evening; it was dark; there was no water to be found, and I was perishing with thirst. I searched for water till I was weary and came to my tent without finding any; fatigue and thirst, joined with hunger, almost made me desperate. I felt at that instant as if I would have taken victuals or drink from the best friend I had on earth by force. I am not writing fiction; all are sober realities. Just after I arrived at my tent, two soldiers, whom I did not know, passed by; they had some water in their canteens which they told me they had found a good distance off but could not direct me to the place as it was very dark. I tried

to beg a draught of water from them, but they were as rigid as Arabs. At length I persuaded them to sell me a drink for three pence, Pennsylvania currency, which was every cent of property I could then call my own; so great was the necessity I was then reduced to.

I lay here two nights and one day, and had not a morsel of anything to eat all the time, save half of a small pumpkin, which I cooked by placing it upon a rock, the skin side uppermost, and making a fire upon it; by the time it was heat through I devoured it with as keen an appetite as I should a pie made of it at some other time. The second evening after our arrival here I was warned to be ready for a two-days command. I never heard a summons to duty with so much disgust before or since as I did that; how I could endure two days more fatigue without nourishment of some sort I could not tell, for I heard nothing said about "provisions." However, in the morning at rollcall, I was obliged to comply. I went to the parade where I found a considerable number, ordered upon the same business, whatever it was. We were ordered to go to the Quartermaster-General and receive from him our final orders. We accordingly repaired to his quarters, which was about three miles from camp; here we understood that our destiny was to go into the country on a foraging expedition, which was nothing more nor less than to procure provisions from the inhabitants for the men in the army and forage for the poor perishing cattle belonging to it, at the point of the bayonet. We stayed at the Quartermaster-General's quarters till sometime in the afternoon, during which time a beef creature was butchered for us; I well remember what fine stuff it was, it was quite transparent; I thought at the time what an excellent lantern it would make. I was, notwithstanding, very glad to get some of it, bad as it looked. We got, I think, two days allowance of it, and some sort of bread kind, I suppose, for I do not remember particularly about that, but it is probable we did. We were then divided into several parties and sent off upon our expedition. Our party consisted of a Lieutenant, a Sergeant, a Corporal, and eighteen privates. We marched till night when we halted and took up our quarters at a large farmhouse. The Lieutenant, attended by his waiter, took up his quarters for the night in the hall with the people of the house, we were put into the kitchen; we had a snug room and a comfortable fire, and we began to think about cooking some of our fat beef; one of the men proposed to the landlady to sell her a shirt for some sauce; she very readily took the shirt, which was worth a dollar at least—she might have given us a mess of sauce, for I think she would not have suffered poverty by so doing as she seemed to have a plenty of all things. After we had received the sauce, we went to work to cook our suppers. By the time it was eatable, the family had gone to rest; we saw where the woman went into the cellar, and, she having left us a candle, we took it into our heads that a little good cider would not make our supper relish any the worse; so some of the men took the water pail and drew it full of excellent cider, which did not fail to raise our spirits considerably. Before we lay down, the man who sold the shirt, having observed that the landlady had flung it into a closet, took a notion to repossess it again. We marched off early in the morning before the people of the house were stirring, consequently did not know or see the woman's chagrin at having been overreached by the soldiers.

This day we arrived at Milltown, or Downingstown, a small village half way between Philadelphia and Lancaster, which was to be our quarters for the winter. It was dark when we had finished our day's march. There was a commissary and a wagon-master-general stationed here, the commissary to take into custody the provisions and forage that we collected, and the wagon-master-general to regulate the conduct of the waggoners and direct their motions. The next day after our arrival at this place, we were put into a small house in which was only one room, in the center of the village. We were immediately furnished with rations of good and wholesome beef and flour, built us up some berths to sleep in, and filled them with straw, and felt as happy as any other pigs that were no better off than ourselves. And now having got into winter-quarters, and ready to commence our foraging business, I shall here end my account of my second campaign. . . .

The winter of 1779 and '80 was very severe; it has been denominated "the hard winter," and hard it was to the army in particular, in more respects than one. The period of the revolution has repeatedly been styled "the times that tried men's souls." I often found that those times not only tried men's souls, but their bodies too; I know they did mine, and that effectually.

Sometime in the month of January there happened a spell of remarkably cold weather; in the height of the cold, a large detachment from the army was sent off on an expedition against some fortifications held by the British on Staten Island. . . .

Soon after this there came on several severe snowstorms. At one time it snowed the greater part of four days successively,

and there fell nearly as many feet deep of snow, and here was the keystone of the arch of starvation. We were absolutely, literally starved;—I do solemnly declare that I did not put a single morsel of victuals into my mouth for four days and as many nights, except a little black birch bark which I gnawed off a stick of wood, if that can be called victuals. I saw several of the men roast their old shoes and eat them, and I was afterwards informed by one of the officer's waiters, that some of the officers killed and ate a favorite little dog that belonged to one of them.—If this was not "suffering" I request to be informed what can pass under that name; if "suffering" like this did not "try men's souls," I confess that I do not know what could. The fourth day, just at dark, we obtained a half pound of lean fresh beef and a gill of wheat for each man, whether we had any salt to season so delicious a morsel, I have forgotten, but I am sure we had no bread, (except the wheat,) but I will assure the reader that we had the best of sauce; that is, we had keen appetites. When the wheat was so swelled by boiling as to be beyond the danger of swelling in the stomach, it was deposited there without ceremony.

After this, we sometimes got a little beef, but no bread; we, however, once in a while got a little rice, but as to flour or bread, I do not recollect that I saw a morsel of either (I mean wheaten) during the winter, all the bread kind we had was Indian meal.

We continued here, starving and freezing, until, I think, some time in the month of February, when the two Connecticut Brigades were ordered to the lines near Staten Island. The small parties from the army which had been sent to the lines, were often surprised and taken by the enemy or cut to pieces by them. These circumstances, it seems, determined the Commander-in-Chief to have a sufficient number of troops there to withstand the enemy even should they come in considerable force. And now a long continuance of our hardships appeared unavoidable. The first brigade took up its quarters in a village called Westfield, and the second in another called Springfield; we were put into the houses with the inhabitants. A fine addition we were, doubtless, to their families, but as we were so plentifully furnished with necessaries, especially in the article of food, we could not be burdensome to them, as will soon appear.

DECEMBER 22, 1777

James Mitchell Varnum to George Washington

Varnum, a Brigadier General in the Continental Army, wrote to Washington about the destitute condition of the troops during their encampment at Valley Forge.

According to the saying of Solomon, hunger will break through a stone wall. It is therefore a very pleasing circumstance to the Division under my command that there is a probability of their marching. Three days successively we have been destitute of bread. Two days we have been entirely without meat. It is not to be had from the commissaries. Whenever we procure beef, it is of such a vile quality as to render it a poor succedaneum for food. The men must be supplied or they cannot be commanded. If this country will not, cannot afford the means, there are other states in a different situation. The complaints are too urging to pass unnoticed. It is with pain that I mention this distress. I know it will make your Excellency unhappy: but, if you expect the exertions of virtuous principles while your troops are deprived of the essential necessaries of life, your final disappointment will be great in proportion to that patience, which now astonishes every man of human feeling. I mention these things on paper that the evil may be inquired into.

DECEMBER 23, 1777

George Washington to Henry Laurens

Laurens served as President of the Continental Congress from November 1, 1777 to December 9, 1778. In this letter, Washington urges the Congress to take action to better equip the Army.

Full as I was in my representation of matters in the Commissary's department yesterday, fresh and more powerful reasons oblige me to add that I am now convinced beyond a doubt that unless some great and capital change suddenly takes place in that line, this Army must inevitably be reduced to one or other of these three things: starve—dissolve—or disperse, in order to obtain subsistence in the best manner they can. Rest assured, Sir, this is not an exaggerated picture, and that I have abundant reason to support what I say.

Yesterday afternoon receiving information that the enemy, in force, had left the city and were advancing towards Derby with apparent design to forage and draw subsistence from that part of the country, I ordered the troops to be in readiness that I might give every opposition in my power; when behold! to my great mortification, I was not only informed, but convinced, that the men were unable to stir on account of provision, and that a dangerous mutiny begun the night before and which with difficulty was suppressed by the spirited exertions of some officers, was still much to be apprehended for want of this article.

This brought forth the only Commissary in the purchasing line in this camp, and with him this melancholy and alarming truth, That he had not a single hoof of any kind to slaughter and not more than 25 barrels of flour! From hence form an opinion of our situation when I add that he could not tell when to expect any.

All I could do under these circumstances was to send out a few light parties to watch and harass the enemy, whilst other parties were instantly detached different ways to collect, if possible, as much provision as would satisfy the present pressing wants of the soldiery. But will this answer? No Sir: three or four days bad weather would prove our destruction. What then is to become of the Army this winter? and if we are as often without provisions now as with them, what is to become of us in the spring when our force will be collected with the aid perhaps of militia to take advantage of an early campaign before the enemy can be reinforced? These are considerations of great magnitude—meriting the closest attention, and will, when my own reputation is so intimately connected and to be affected by the event, justify my saying that the present Commissaries are by no means equal to the execution of the office, or that the disaffection of the people is past belief. The misfortune however does in my opinion proceed from both causes, and though I have been tender heretofore of giving any opinion or lodging complaints as the change in that department took place contrary to my judgement and the consequences thereof were predicted; yet finding that the inactivity of the Army, whether for want of provisions, clothes, or other essentials is charged to my account, not only by the common vulgar but those in power, it is time to speak plain in exculpation of myself. With truth then I can declare that no man in my opinion ever had his measures more impeded than I have by every department. Since the month of July we have had no assistance from the Quarter Master General, and to want of assistance from this department, the Commissary General charges great part of his deficiency—to this I am to add, that notwithstanding it is a standing order and often repeated that the troops shall always have two days provisions by them that they might be ready at any sudden call, yet no opportunity has scarcely ever offered of taking advantage of the enemy that has not been either totally obstructed or greatly impeded on this account: and this the great and crying evil is not all. Soap, vinegar, and other articles allowed by Congress we see none of, nor have we seen them, I believe, since the battle of Brandywine. The first indeed we have now little occasion for, few men having more than one shirt—many only the moiety of one, and some none at all. In addition to which, as a proof of the little benefit received from a Cloathier General, and at the same time, as a farther proof of the inability of an army under the circumstances of this, to perform the common duties of soldiers, besides a number of men confined to hospitals for want of shoes, and others in farmers houses on the same account, we have, by a field return this day made, no less

than 2,898 men now in camp unfit for duty because they are barefoot and otherwise naked; and by the same return it appears that our strength in continental troops, including the Eastern Brigades which have joined since the surrender of General Burgoyne, exclusive of the Maryland troops sent to Wilmington, amount to no more than 8,200 in Camp fit for duty.

Notwithstanding which, and that since the 4th Instant, our numbers fit for duty from the hardships and exposures they have undergone, particularly on account of blankets (numbers having been obliged and still are to set up all night by fires instead of taking comfortable rest in a natural and common way) have decreased near 2,000 men, we find gentlemen without knowing whether the Army was really going into winter quarters or not (for I am sure no resolution of mine would warrant the remonstrance) reprobating the measure as much as if they thought the soldiery were made of stocks or stones and equally insensible of frost and snow; and moreover, as if they conceived it easily practicable for an inferior army, under the disadvantages I have described ours to be, which is by no means exaggerated, to confine a superior one, in all respects well-appointed and provided for a winters campaign, within the city of Philadelphia, and to cover from depredation and waste the states of Pennsylvania, Jersey, etc. But what makes this matter still more extraordinary in my eye is that these very gentlemen who were well apprised of the nakedness of the troops from ocular demonstration, who thought their own soldiers worse clad than others and advised me near a month ago to postpone the execution of a plan I was about to adopt in consequence of a Resolve of Congress for seizing clothes, under strong assurances that an ample supply would be collected in ten days agreeable to a decree of the state (not one article of which, by the bye, is yet come to hand) should think a winters campaign and the covering these states from the invasion of an enemy so easy and practicable a business. I can assure those gentlemen that it is a much easier and less distressing thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fire side than to occupy a cold, bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow without clothes or blankets: However, although they seem to have little feeling for the naked and distressed soldier, I feel superabundantly for them, and from my soul pity those miseries, which it is neither in my power to relieve or prevent. It is for these reasons therefore, I have dwelt upon the subject and it adds not a little to my other difficulties and distress to find that much more is expected of me than is possible to be performed; and, that upon the ground of safety and policy, I am obliged to conceal the true state of the Army from public view and thereby expose myself to detraction and calumny.

The Honorable Committee of Congress went from camp fully possessed of my sentiments respecting the establishment of this Army—the necessity of auditors of accounts—appointment of officers—new arrangements, etc. I have no need therefore to be prolix on these subjects, but shall refer to them after adding a word or two to show, first, the necessity of some better provision for binding the officers by the tie of interest to the service (as no day, nor scarcely an hour passes without an offer of a resigned commission). Otherwise, I much doubt the practicability of holding the Army together much longer. In this, I shall probably be thought more sincere when I freely declare that I do not myself expect to derive the smallest benefit from any establishment that Congress may adopt, otherwise than as a member of the community at large in the good which I am persuaded will result from the measure by making better officers and better troops; and secondly, to point out the necessity of making the appointments, arrangements, etc. without loss of time. We have not more than three months to prepare a great deal of business in—if we let these slip or waste, we shall be laboring under the same difficulties all next campaign as we have done this, to rectify mistakes and bring things to order for military arrangements and movements, in consequence like the mechanism of a clock, will be imperfect and disordered by the want of a part. In a very sensible degree have I experienced this in the course of the last summer—Several Brigades having no Brigadiers appointed to them till late and some not at all, by which means it follows that an additional weight is thrown upon the shoulders of the Commander-in-Chief to withdraw his attention from the great line of his duty. The gentlemen of the Committee, when they were at camp, talked of an expedient for adjusting these matters, which I highly approved and wish to see adopted; namely that two or three members of the Board of War—or a Committee of Congress—should repair immediately to camp where the best aid can be had, and with the Commanding Officer, or a Committee of his appointment, prepare and digest the most perfect plan that can be devised for correcting all abuses, making new arrangements, considering what is to be done with the weak and debilitated Regiments (If the states to which they belong will not draft men to fill them, for as to

enlisting Soldiers it seems to me to be totally out of the question) together with many other things that would occur in the course of such a conference: and after digesting matters in the best manner they can, to submit the whole to the ultimate determination of Congress. If this measure is approved of, I would earnestly advise the immediate execution of it. And that the Commissary General of purchases, whom I rarely see, may be directed to form magazines without a moments delay in the neighborhood of this camp in order to secure provision for us in case of bad weather. The Quarter Master General ought also to be busy in his department. In short, there is as much to be done in preparing for a campaign as in the active part of it. In fine, everything depends upon the preparation that is made in the several departments in the course of this winter and the success or misfortunes of next campaign will more than probably originate with our activity or supineness this winter.

JANUARY 5, 1778

Timothy Pickering to Rebecca Pickering excerpts

Pickering, who would later serve as Postmaster General, Secretary of War, and Secretary of State, wrote this letter to his wife about conditions in Valley Forge.

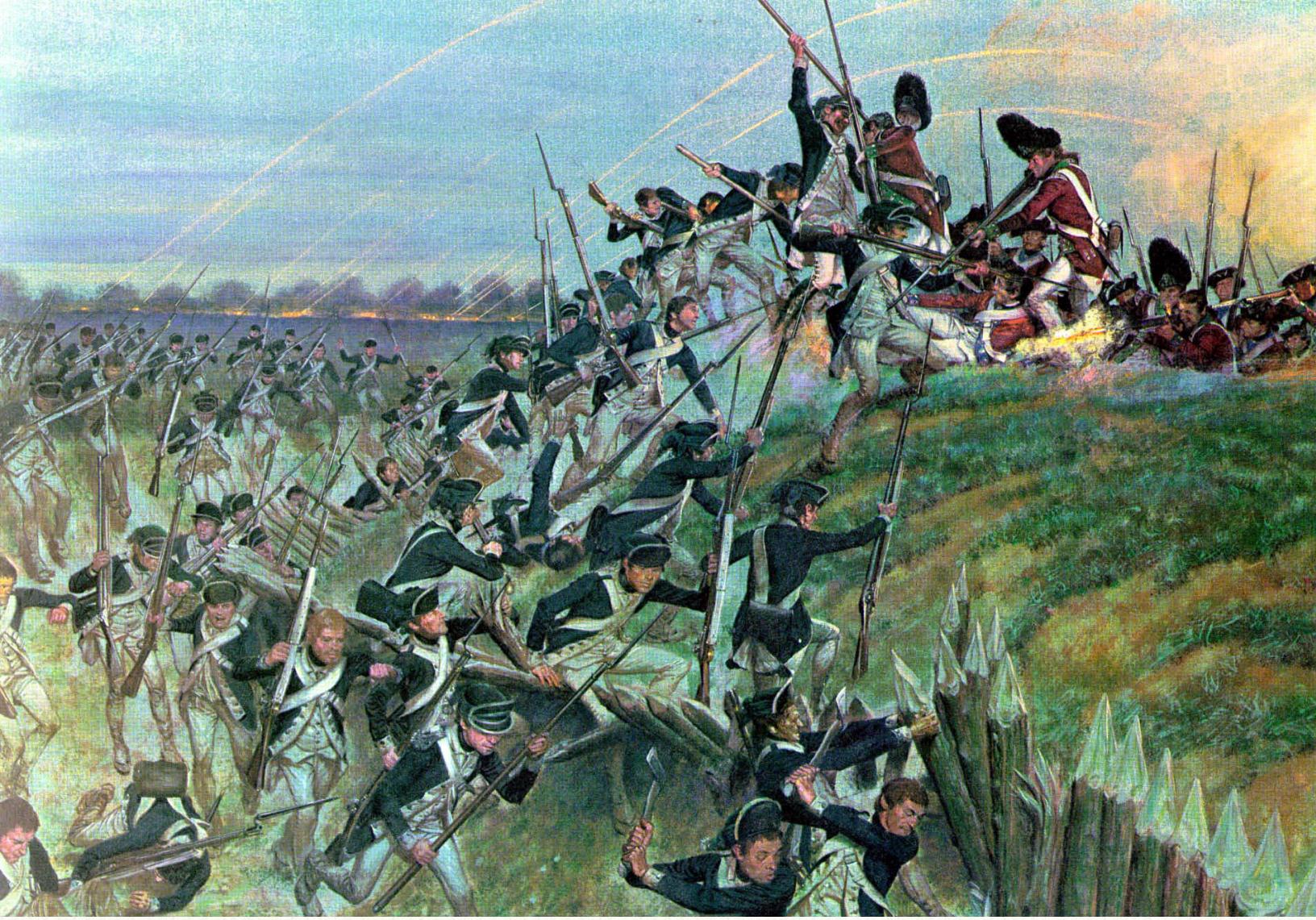
The huts are very warm and comfortable, being very good log-houses, pointed with clay, and the roof made tight with the same. The weather is now very mild, which is . . . favorable to our hutting; but 'tis a melancholy consideration that hundreds of our men are unfit for duty, merely from the want of clothes and shoes.

FEBRUARY 3, 1778

Thomas Bowen and James Chrystie to the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania excerpts

Bowen and Chrystie, both captains in Pennsylvania regiments of the Continental Army, wrote this report of the conditions in Valley Forge back to the Pennsylvania government.

Barefooted, naked, and miserable beyond expression—several brave soldiers, having nothing more than a piece of old tent to shield them from the inclemency of the season and not more than one blanket to six or perhaps eight men. Very few indeed are in any wise fit for duty; the clothing of both officers and soldiers having been lost in the course of the campaign . . . and their blankets lost in the several actions we have had with the Enemy.



FEBRUARY 23, 1778

Friederich von Steuben, Account of Valley Forge

EXCERPTS

Baron von Steuben, a Prussian officer, joined the American cause and helped improve discipline and conditions within the American army after Washington recommended him for the position of Inspector General. The following account was his first impression of the Army after arriving at Valley Forge.

I am sure that at that time a general would have thought himself lucky to find a third of the men ready for action whom they found on paper. . . . The loss of bayonets was still greater. The American soldier, never having used this arm, had no faith in it and never used it but to roast his beefsteak. . . . The arms at Valley Forge were in horrible condition, covered with rust, half of them without bayonets, many from which a single shot could not be fired. The pouches were quite as bad as the arms. A great many of the men had tin boxes instead of pouches, others had cow-horns; and muskets, carbines, fowling pieces, and rifles were to be seen in the same company. The description of dress is most easily given. The men were literally naked, some of them in the fullest extent of the word. The officers who had coats had them of every color and make. I saw officers, at a grand parade at Valley Forge, mounting guard in a sort of dressing gown made of an old blanket or woolen bedcover. With regard to their military discipline, I can safely say no such thing existed.

OCT 17, 1781

Charles Cornwallis to George Washington

Cornwallis, the commander of the British southern campaign, was trapped on the Virginia Peninsula near Yorktown by the French fleet and the Continental Army and forced to surrender in the last major battle of the Revolutionary War.

I propose a cessation of hostilities for twenty-four hours, and that two officers may be appointed by each side to meet at Mr. Moore's house to settle terms for the surrender of the posts of York and Gloucester.

OCT 17, 1781

George Washington to Charles Cornwallis

Washington accepted Cornwallis's surrender. They agreed to conduct the official surrender two days after this letter. On that day, Cornwallis claimed to be ill and sent his second-in-command to surrender his sword to the French General, Rochambeau, who refused and directed him to Washington. Washington instead had his own second-in-command accept the sword.

I have had the honor of receiving Your Lordship's letter of this date.

An ardent desire to spare the further effusion of blood will readily incline me to listen to such terms for the surrender of your post and garrisons at York and Gloucester as are admissible.

I wish, previous to the meeting of commissioners, that Your Lordship's proposals in writing may be sent to the American Lines: for which purpose, a suspension of hostilities during two hours from the delivery of this Letter will be granted.

APRIL 1783

Samuel Shaw, Account of the Newburgh Address

Major Shaw, aide-de-camp to Henry Knox, served as the secretary for the March 15 meeting of the officers in Newburgh and recounted the events leading up to the day and how General Washington dispelled the growing discontent.

These will give you a pretty good idea of our proceedings; and that you may not want any information on the subject, I shall take the liberty of adding a few particulars by way of narrative.

The accumulated hardships under which the army had so long labored made their situation intolerable and called aloud for immediate redress. An application to the supreme authority of America was thought a salutary measure, and the improbability of obtaining relief from the States individually, after the treatment the Massachusetts line had experienced from their State, rendered it absolutely indispensable.

With this view, a delegation from the several regiments composing the Massachusetts line having conferred together, came to a determination of taking the sense of the army at large; and on the 16th of November appointed a committee of seven, who should assemble on the 24th of the same month, and, in conjunction with the delegates from those lines who might see fit to send any, agree and determine upon such measures as should be found best calculated to promote the desirable purposes for which the convention was called.

Agreeably to this proposal there was a full representation of the whole army, when

> it was unanimously agreed that Major General Knox, Brigadier General Huntington, Colonel Crane, Colonel Courtlandt, and Doctor Eustis be a committee to draft an address and petition to Congress in behalf of the army and lay the same before this assembly for consideration at their meeting on the 1st of December.

At the meeting on the 1st of December, "the draft of the address and petition to Congress was read, and voted to be laid before the several lines of the army for consideration," and it was determined,

> that the army at large choose a general officer, and each line send a field-officer, any two of whom, as a majority of them should agree, should, in conjunction with the said general officer, form a committee to wait on Congress and execute the business of said address.

Instructions were also directed to be prepared for the conduct of said committee, and the necessary sum of money raised for their expenses.

On opening the ballots the 5th of December, Major General McDougall, Colonel Ogden, and Colonel Brooks were chosen to proceed to Congress with the address and petition, which was signed on the 7th and delivered to the committee, after which the meeting adjourned without delay.

The delegation from the army to Congress set out on their mission the 21st of December. On the address and petition being read in Congress, a grand committee, consisting of a member from each State, was chosen to confer with our commissioners. The result of this conference was certain resolves of Congress, passed on the 25th of January, the purport whereof was that the army should receive one month's pay and that their accounts should be settled as soon as possible for discharging the balances of which Congress would endeavor to provide adequate funds. The matter respecting a commutation of the half-pay was recommitted. These resolutions at large were transmitted by our commissioners in a letter of the 8th of February to General Knox, which was immediately communicated to the respective lines of the army.

This report, though far from being satisfactory, joined to the certainty that we were on the eve of a general peace, kept the army quiet. In this state of patient expectation, the anonymous address to the officers made its appearance. Immediately on this, the Commander-in-Chief, by an order of the 11th of March, directed the officers to assemble on the 15th, which produced the second anonymous address.

The meeting of the officers was in itself exceedingly respectable, the matters they were called to deliberate upon were of the most serious nature, and the unexpected attendance of the Commander-in-Chief heightened the solemnity of the scene. Every eye was fixed upon the illustrious man, and attention to their beloved General held the assembly mute. He opened the meeting by apologizing for his appearance there, which was by no means his intention when he published the order which directed them to assemble. But the diligence used in circulating the anonymous pieces rendered it necessary that he should give his sentiments to the army on the nature and tendency of them, and determined him to avail himself of the present opportunity; and, in order to do it with greater perspicuity, he had committed his thoughts to writing, which, with the indulgence of his brother officers, he would take the liberty of reading to them. It is needless for me to say anything of this production; it speaks for itself. After he had concluded his address, he said that, as a corroborating testimony of the good disposition in Congress towards the army, he would communicate to them a letter received from a worthy member of that body, and one who on all occasions had ever approved himself their fast friend. This was an exceedingly sensible letter; and, while it pointed out the difficulties and embarrassments of Congress, it held up very forcibly, the idea that the army should, at all events, be generously dealt with. One circumstance in reading this letter must not be omitted. His Excellency, after reading the first paragraph, made a short pause, took out his spectacles, and begged the indulgence of his audience while he put them on, observing at the same time, that he had grown gray in their service, and now found himself growing blind. There was something so natural, so unaffected in this appeal as rendered it superior to the most studied oratory; it forced its way to the heart, and you might see sensibility moisten every eye. The General, having finished, took leave of the assembly and the business of the day was conducted in the manner which is related in the account of the proceedings.

I cannot dismiss this subject without observing that it is happy for America that she has a patriot army and equally so that a Washington is its leader. I rejoice in the opportunities I have had of seeing this great man in a variety of situations; calm and intrepid where the battle raged, patient and persevering under the pressure of misfortune, moderate and possessing himself in the full career of victory. Great as these qualifications deservedly render him, he never appeared to me more truly so than at the assembly we have been speaking of. On other occasions he has been supported by the exertions of an army and the countenance of his friends; but in this he stood single and alone. There was no saying where the passions of an army, which were not a little inflamed, might lead; but it was generally allowed that longer forbearance was dangerous and moderation had ceased to be a virtue. Under these circumstances he appeared, not at the head of his troops, but as it were in opposition to them; and for a dreadful moment, the interests of the army and its General seemed to be in competition! He spoke—every doubt was dispelled and the tide of patriotism rolled again in its wonted course. Illustrious man! what he says of the army may with equal justice be applied to his own character. "Had this day been wanting, the world had never seen the last stage of perfection to which human nature is capable of attaining."

DECEMBER 1, 1787

Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist 15*

Under the name Publius, Hamilton, along with James Madison and John Jay, wrote the Federalist essays to urge New York to ratify the new Constitution. In this number, Hamilton describes the absolute necessity of forming a stronger union in light of the embarrassing defects of the Articles of Confederation.

In the course of the preceding papers, I have endeavored, my fellow-citizens, to place before you, in a clear and convincing light, the importance of Union to your political safety and happiness. I have unfolded to you a complication of dangers to which you would be exposed, should you permit that sacred knot which binds the people of America together be severed or dissolved by ambition or by avarice, by jealousy or by misrepresentation. In the sequel of the inquiry through which I propose to accompany you, the truths intended to be inculcated will receive further confirmation from facts and arguments hitherto unnoticed. If the road over which you will still have to pass should in some places appear to you tedious or irksome, you will recollect that you are in quest of information on a subject the most momentous which can engage the attention of a free people, that the field through which you have to travel is in itself spacious, and that the difficulties of the journey have been unnecessarily increased by the mazes with which sophistry has beset the way. It will be my aim to remove the obstacles from your progress in as compendious a manner as it can be done, without sacrificing utility to dispatch.

In pursuance of the plan which I have laid down for the discussion of the subject, the point next in order to be examined is the "insufficiency of the present Confederation to the preservation of the Union." It may perhaps be asked what need there is of reasoning or proof to illustrate a position which is not either controverted or doubted, to which the understandings and feelings of all classes of men assent, and which in substance is admitted by the opponents as well as by the friends of the new Constitution. It must in truth be acknowledged that, however these may differ in other respects, they in general appear to harmonize in this sentiment, at least, that there are material imperfections in our national system, and that something is necessary to be done to rescue us from impending anarchy. The facts that support this opinion are no longer objects of speculation. They have forced themselves upon the sensibility of the people at large, and have at length extorted from those, whose mistaken policy has had the principal share in precipitating the extremity at which we are arrived, a reluctant confession of the reality of those defects in the scheme of our federal government, which have been long pointed out and regretted by the intelligent friends of the Union.

We may indeed with propriety be said to have reached almost the last stage of national humiliation. There is scarcely anything that can wound the pride or degrade the character of an independent nation which we do not experience. Are there engagements to the performance of which we are held by every tie respectable among men? These are the subjects of constant and unblushing violation. Do we owe debts to foreigners and to our own citizens contracted in a time of imminent peril for the preservation of our political existence? These remain without any proper or satisfactory provision for their discharge. Have we valuable territories and important posts in the possession of a foreign power which, by express stipulations, ought long since to have been surrendered? These are still retained, to the prejudice of our interests, not less than of our rights. Are we in a condition to resent or to repel the aggression? We have neither troops, nor treasury, nor government. Are we even in a condition to remonstrate with dignity? The just imputations on our own faith, in respect to the same treaty, ought first to be removed. Are we entitled by nature and compact to a free participation in the navigation of the Mississippi? Spain excludes us from it. Is public credit an indispensable resource in time of public danger? We seem to have abandoned its cause as desperate and irretrievable. Is commerce of importance to national wealth? Ours is at the lowest point of declension. Is respectability in the eyes of foreign powers a safeguard against foreign encroachments? The imbecility of our government even forbids them to treat with us. Our ambassadors abroad are the mere pageants of mimic sovereignty. Is a violent and unnatural decrease in

the value of land a symptom of national distress? The price of improved land in most parts of the country is much lower than can be accounted for by the quantity of waste land at market, and can only be fully explained by that want of private and public confidence, which are so alarmingly prevalent among all ranks, and which have a direct tendency to depreciate property of every kind. Is private credit the friend and patron of industry? That most useful kind which relates to borrowing and lending is reduced within the narrowest limits, and this still more from an opinion of insecurity than from the scarcity of money. To shorten an enumeration of particulars which can afford neither pleasure nor instruction, it may in general be demanded, what indication is there of national disorder, poverty, and insignificance that could befall a community so peculiarly blessed with natural advantages as we are, which does not form a part of the dark catalogue of our public misfortunes?

This is the melancholy situation to which we have been brought by those very maxims and councils which would now deter us from adopting the proposed Constitution; and which, not content with having conducted us to the brink of a precipice, seem resolved to plunge us into the abyss that awaits us below. Here, my countrymen, impelled by every motive that ought to influence an enlightened people, let us make a firm stand for our safety, our tranquility, our dignity, our reputation. Let us at last break the fatal charm which has too long seduced us from the paths of felicity and prosperity.

It is true, as has been before observed that facts, too stubborn to be resisted, have produced a species of general assent to the abstract proposition that there exist material defects in our national system; but the usefulness of the concession, on the part of the old adversaries of federal measures, is destroyed by a strenuous opposition to a remedy, upon the only principles that can give it a chance of success. While they admit that the government of the United States is destitute of energy, they contend against conferring upon it those powers which are requisite to supply that energy. They seem still to aim at things repugnant and irreconcilable; at an augmentation of federal authority, without a diminution of State authority; at sovereignty in the Union, and complete independence in the members. They still, in fine, seem to cherish with blind devotion the political monster of an imperium in imperio. This renders a full display of the principal defects of the Confederation necessary, in order to show that the evils we experience do not proceed from minute or partial imperfections, but from fundamental errors in the structure of the building, which cannot be amended otherwise than by an alteration in the first principles and main pillars of the fabric.

The great and radical vice in the construction of the existing Confederation is in the principle of legislation for states or governments, in their corporate or collective capacities, and as contradistinguished from the individuals of which they consist. Though this principle does not run through all the powers delegated to the Union, yet it pervades and governs those on which the efficacy of the rest depends. Except as to the rule of appointment, the United States has an indefinite discretion to make requisitions for men and money; but they have no authority to raise either by regulations extending to the individual citizens of America. The consequence of this is, that though in theory their resolutions concerning those objects are laws constitutionally binding on the members of the Union, yet in practice they are mere recommendations which the States observe or disregard at their option.

It is a singular instance of the capriciousness of the human mind, that after all the admonitions we have had from experience on this head, there should still be found men who object to the new Constitution for deviating from a principle which has been found the bane of the old, and which is in itself evidently incompatible with the idea of government; a principle, in short, which, if it is to be executed at all, must substitute the violent and sanguinary agency of the sword to the mild influence of the magistracy.

There is nothing absurd or impracticable in the idea of a league or alliance between independent nations for certain defined purposes precisely stated in a treaty regulating all the details of time, place, circumstance, and quantity; leaving nothing to future discretion; and depending for its execution on the good faith of the parties. Compacts of this kind exist among all civilized nations, subject to the usual vicissitudes of peace and war, of observance and non-observance, as the interests or passions of the contracting powers dictate. In the early part of the present century there was an epidemical rage in Europe for this species of compacts, from which the politicians of the times fondly hoped for benefits which were never realized. With a view to establishing the equilibrium of power and the peace of that part of the world, all the resources of negotiation were exhausted, and triple and quadruple alliances were formed; but they were scarcely formed before

they were broken, giving an instructive but afflicting lesson to mankind, how little dependence is to be placed on treaties which have no other sanction than the obligations of good faith, and which oppose general considerations of peace and justice to the impulse of any immediate interest or passion.

If the particular States in this country are disposed to stand in a similar relation to each other, and to drop the project of a general discretionary superintendence, the scheme would indeed be pernicious, and would entail upon us all the mischiefs which have been enumerated under the first head; but it would have the merit of being, at least, consistent and practicable. Abandoning all views towards a confederate government, this would bring us to a simple alliance offensive and defensive; and would place us in a situation to be alternate friends and enemies of each other, as our mutual jealousies and rivalships, nourished by the intrigues of foreign nations, should prescribe to us.

But if we are unwilling to be placed in this perilous situation; if we still will adhere to the design of a national government, or, which is the same thing, of a superintending power, under the direction of a common council, we must resolve to incorporate into our plan those ingredients which may be considered as forming the characteristic difference between a league and a government; we must extend the authority of the Union to the persons of the citizens, the only proper objects of government.

Government implies the power of making laws. It is essential to the idea of a law that it be attended with a sanction; or, in other words, a penalty or punishment for disobedience. If there be no penalty annexed to disobedience, the resolutions or commands which pretend to be laws will, in fact, amount to nothing more than advice or recommendation. This penalty, whatever it may be, can only be inflicted in two ways: by the agency of the courts and ministers of justice, or by military force; by the coercion of the magistracy, or by the coercion of arms. The first kind can evidently apply only to men; the last kind must of necessity, be employed against bodies politic, or communities, or States. It is evident that there is no process of a court by which the observance of the laws can, in the last resort, be enforced. Sentences may be denounced against them for violations of their duty; but these sentences can only be carried into execution by the sword. In an association where the general authority is confined to the collective bodies of the communities that compose it, every breach of the laws must involve a state of war; and military execution must become the only instrument of civil obedience. Such a state of things can certainly not deserve the name of government, nor would any prudent man choose to commit his happiness to it.

There was a time when we were told that breaches, by the States, of the regulations of the federal authority were not to be expected; that a sense of common interest would preside over the conduct of the respective members and would beget a full compliance with all the constitutional requisitions of the Union. This language, at the present day, would appear as wild as a great part of what we now hear from the same quarter will be thought, when we shall have received further lessons from that best oracle of wisdom, experience. It at all times betrayed an ignorance of the true springs by which human conduct is actuated and belied the original inducements to the establishment of civil power. Why has government been instituted at all? Because the passions of men will not conform to the dictates of reason and justice without constraint. Has it been found that bodies of men act with more rectitude or greater disinterestedness than individuals? The contrary of this has been inferred by all accurate observers of the conduct of mankind; and the inference is founded upon obvious reasons. Regard to reputation has a less active influence when the infamy of a bad action is to be divided among a number than when it is to fall singly upon one. A spirit of faction, which is apt to mingle its poison in the deliberations of all bodies of men, will often hurry the persons of whom they are composed into improprieties and excesses for which they would blush in a private capacity.

In addition to all this, there is, in the nature of sovereign power, an impatience of control that disposes those who are invested with the exercise of it, to look with an evil eye upon all external attempts to restrain or direct its operations. From this spirit it happens that in every political association which is formed upon the principle of uniting in a common interest a number of lesser sovereignties, there will be found a kind of eccentric tendency in the subordinate or inferior orbs, by the operation of which there will be a perpetual effort in each to fly off from the common center. This tendency is not difficult to be accounted for. It has its origin in the love of power. Power controlled or abridged is almost always the rival and enemy of that power by which it is controlled or abridged. This simple proposition will teach us how little reason there

is to expect that the persons entrusted with the administration of the affairs of the particular members of a confederacy will at all times be ready, with perfect good-humor and an unbiased regard to the public weal, to execute the resolutions or decrees of the general authority. The reverse of this results from the constitution of human nature.

If, therefore, the measures of the Confederacy cannot be executed without the intervention of the particular administrations, there will be little prospect of their being executed at all. The rulers of the respective members, whether they have a constitutional right to do it or not, will undertake to judge of the propriety of the measures themselves. They will consider the conformity of the thing proposed or required to their immediate interests or aims; the momentary conveniences or inconveniences that would attend its adoption. All this will be done, and in a spirit of interested and suspicious scrutiny, without that knowledge of national circumstances and reasons of state, which is essential to a right judgment, and with that strong predilection in favor of local objects, which can hardly fail to mislead the decision. The same process must be repeated in every member of which the body is constituted; and the execution of the plans, framed by the councils of the whole, will always fluctuate on the discretion of the ill-informed and prejudiced opinion of every part. Those who have been conversant in the proceedings of popular assemblies, who have seen how difficult it often is where there is no exterior pressure of circumstances to bring them to harmonious resolutions on important points, will readily conceive how impossible it must be to induce a number of such assemblies, deliberating at a distance from each other at different times and under different impressions, long to co-operate in the same views and pursuits.

In our case, the concurrence of thirteen distinct sovereign wills is requisite, under the Confederation, to the complete execution of every important measure that proceeds from the Union. It has happened as was to have been foreseen. The measures of the Union have not been executed; the delinquencies of the States have, step by step, matured themselves to an extreme, which has, at length, arrested all the wheels of the national government and brought them to an awful stand. Congress at this time scarcely possess the means of keeping up the forms of administration till the States can have time to agree upon a more substantial substitute for the present shadow of a federal government. Things did not come to this desperate extremity at once. The causes which have been specified produced at first only unequal and disproportionate degrees of compliance with the requisitions of the Union. The greater deficiencies of some States furnished the pretext of example and the temptation of interest to the complying, or to the least delinquent States. Why should we do more in proportion than those who are embarked with us in the same political voyage? Why should we consent to bear more than our proper share of the common burden? These were suggestions which human selfishness could not withstand, and which even speculative men, who looked forward to remote consequences, could not, without hesitation, combat. Each State, yielding to the persuasive voice of immediate interest or convenience, has successively withdrawn its support, till the frail and tottering edifice seems ready to fall upon our heads, and to crush us beneath its ruins.

PUBLIUS.