

== SECTION NINE ==
ROAD TO REVOLUTION
1754-1776

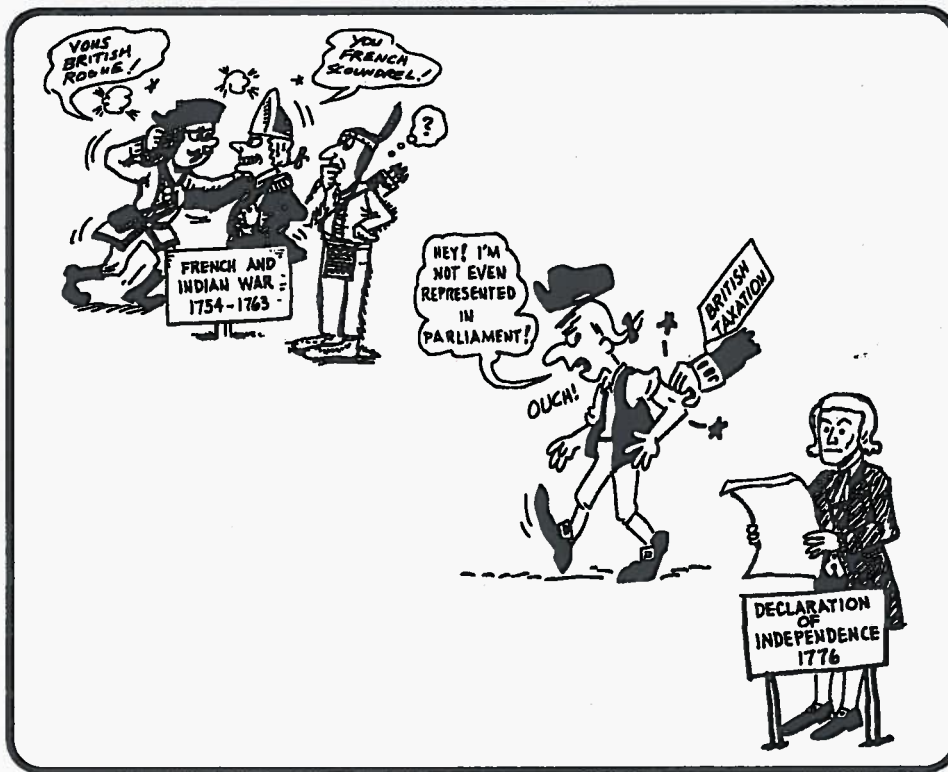
1492

1754-76

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

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



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

POLITICAL CAUSES FOR BREAKING WITH BRITAIN.

1. England's neglect of the colonies



2. Taxation without representation



3. Limitation of Individual rights



ECONOMIC CAUSES FOR BREAKING WITH BRITAIN

4. Taxation



5. Mercantilism



ENGLAND'S ECONOMIC POLICY

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

6. Trade restrictions

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



7. Economic power



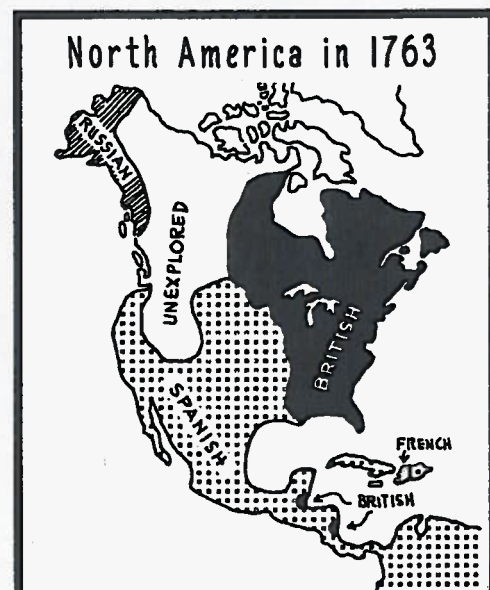
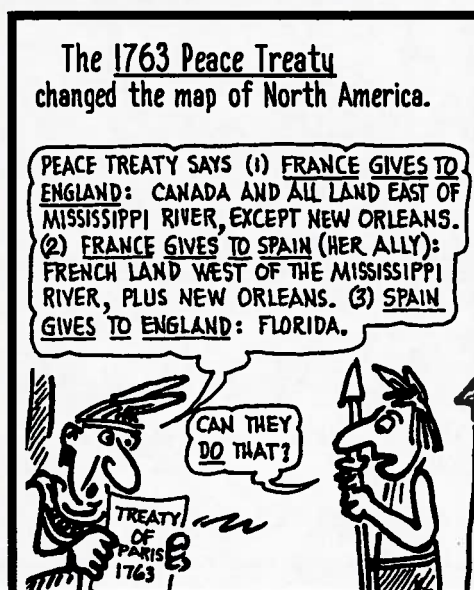
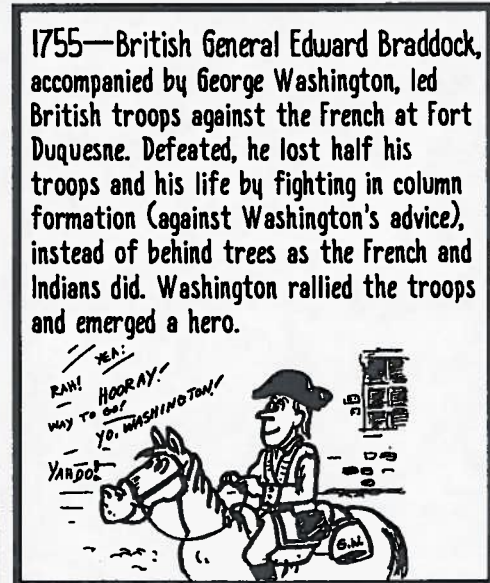
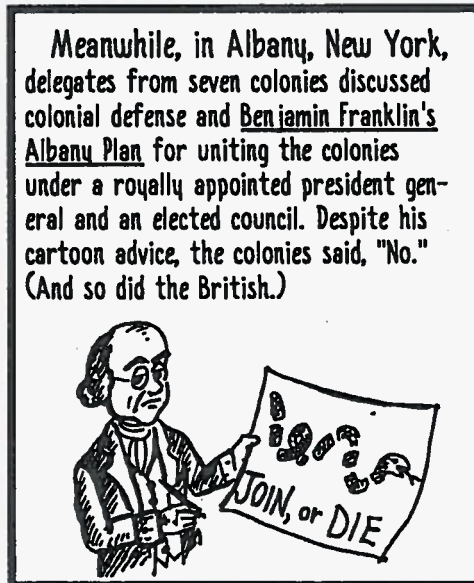
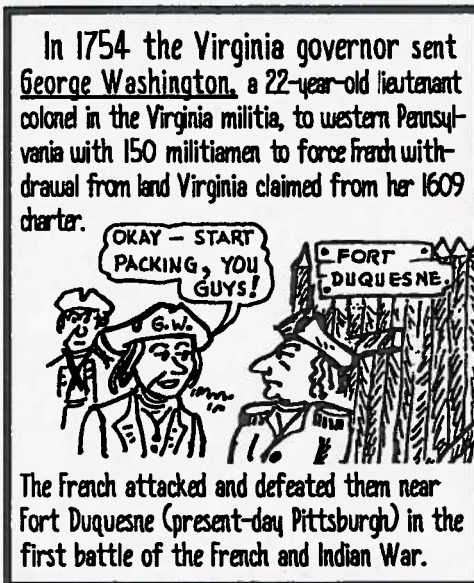
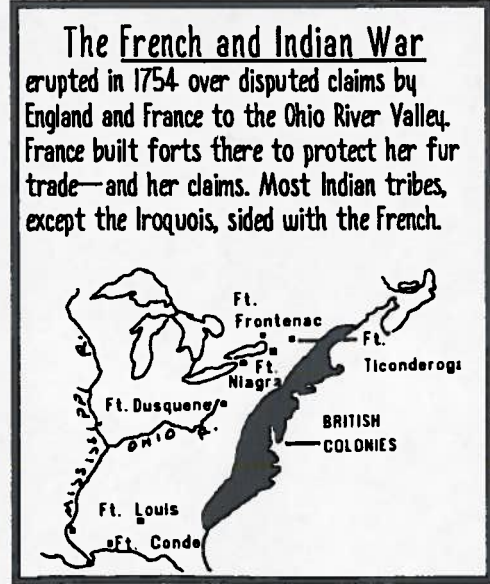
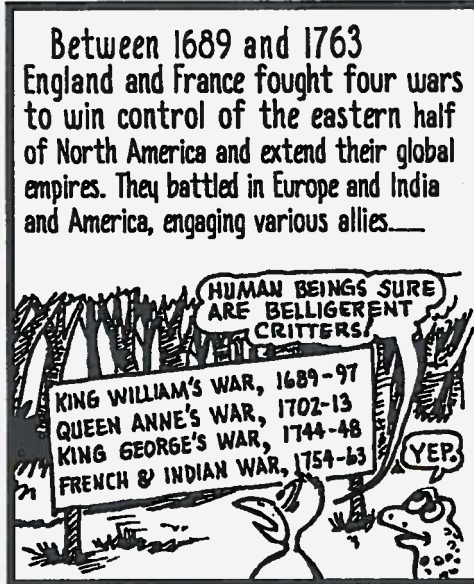
But England failed to enforce the navigation laws, and the colonists traded with whomever they pleased—and made money doing so.

8. Free enterprise

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



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



"What do we mean by the Revolution? The war? That was no part of the Revolution: it was only an effect and consequence of it. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people, and this was effected from 1760 to 1775, in the course of fifteen years, before a drop of blood was shed...."—John Adams 1492 1763-74 2000

THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR CHANGED EVERYTHING.

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

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

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



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

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



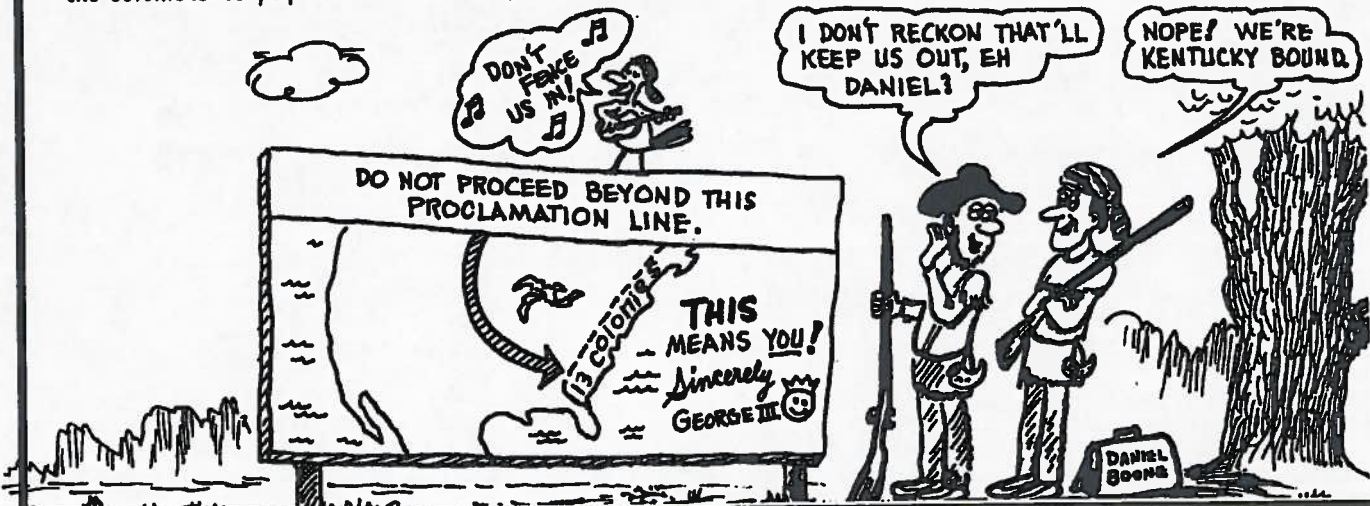
PROBLEM #1: FRONTIER DEFENSE—How could England keep peace along the colonial frontier with Americans raring to cross it and settle Indian lands? In 1763 Chief Pontiac led Indians in the Great Lakes area in a year-long war against such land-hungry colonists.

BRITISH ACTION

AMERICAN REACTION

1. **PROCLAMATION LINE OF 1763:** would bar westward settlement on Indian lands and, in turn, protect the colonists from invading Indians;
2. **10,000 BRITISH TROOPS:** would protect this frontier line, with the colonists to pay one-third of the \$1,000,000 annual cost.

"UNFAIR! Our original charters included land west of that line. And we don't want a standing army during peace time!"



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

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

King George



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

Prime Minister George Grenville



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

House of Commons member Edmund Burke



BRITISH ACTION

COLONIAL REACTION

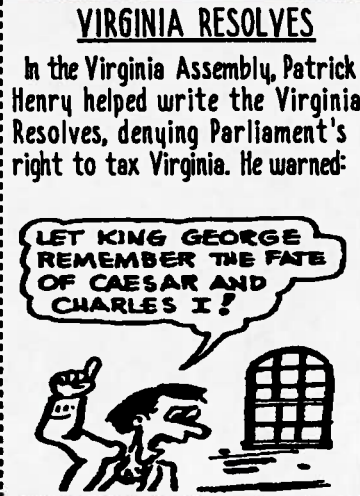
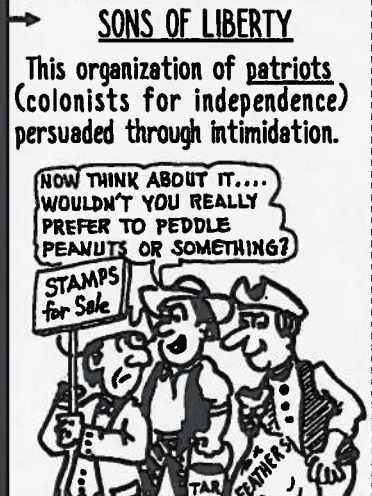
1764—SUGAR ACT

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



1765—STAMP ACT

Required revenue stamps for all publications and official documents. Englishman Isaac Barre warned his fellow Parliamentarians, "Americans are sons of liberty and won't surrender their rights without a fight." He was right!



1765—QUARTERING ACT

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



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



BRITISH ACTION

1767—TOWNSHEND ACTS

1. Revenue duties on tea, glass, lead, paper, paints
2. Strict customs enforcement, including Writs of Assistance (non-specific search warrants)—

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

AMERICAN REACTION

"Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania," by John Dickinson, a lawyer from Pennsylvania, argued that external taxes to regulate trade were illegal if used to raise revenue. This influential pamphlet urged repeal of the Townshend Acts.

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

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



1770: THE BOSTON MASSACRE

Bostonians resented the British troops and often taunted them.

On March 5 a rowdy gang of men and boys threw snowballs and rocks at a British soldier guarding the Boston customhouse across from the Statehouse. Captain Thomas Preston and a few soldiers came to his aid. An unknown person shouted "Fire!"—and the soldiers did, killing 5 colonists including Crispus Attucks, an African-American. Attucks, a former slave, was the first person to die for the nation's liberty.



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

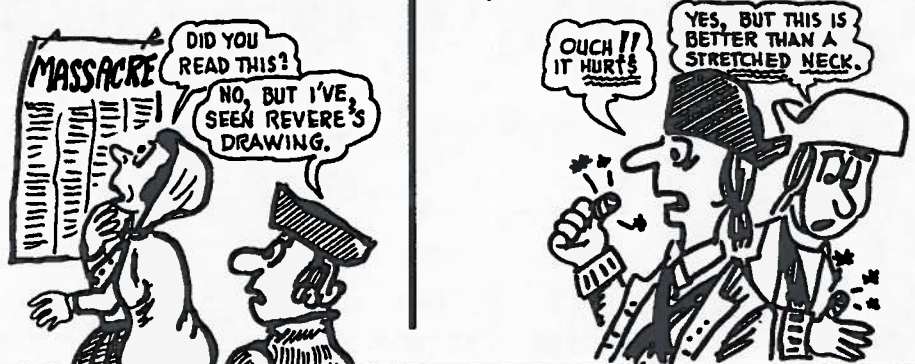
1770—TOWNSHEND DUTIES repealed—on all items except tea

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

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

Two Boston Sons of Liberty used the shooting incident as propaganda to stir revolutionary fervor: 1) Sam Adams, by publicizing it as a massacre of innocent victims, and 2) Paul Revere, with his engraving of British soldiers firing on unarmed men and women, entitled "The Bloody Massacre." Prints were sent to all the colonies.

Boston lawyer John Adams (Sam Adams' cousin) courageously defended Preston and his men in their murder trial, for he believed they fired in self defense. (John Adams later became the second president of the U.S.) All were acquitted except two who were convicted of manslaughter, branded on the thumb, and released.



BRITISH ACTION

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

AMERICAN REACTION

1772 — COMMITTEES OF CORRESPONDENCE

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



1773—TEA ACT

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

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

1773 — THE BOSTON TEA PARTY

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

Then, on December 16, about 60 Bostonians disguised as Mohawk Indians (believed to be Sons of Liberty, led by Sam Adams) war-hooped onto three tea ships in Boston Harbor and threw overboard all 342 chests of East India Company tea.



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

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

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

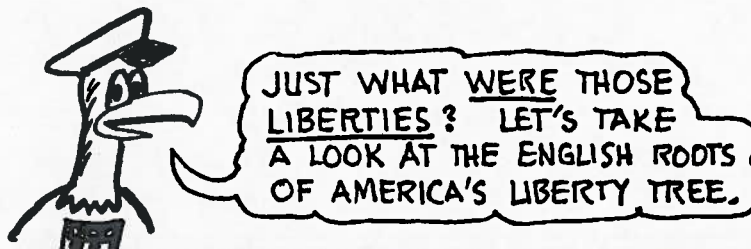
1774—QUEBEC ACT

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

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

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

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



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

MAGNA CARTA

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

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

WHY NOT ASK FOR MY KINGDOM?

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

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

KEEP OFF GRASS. KING, THIS INCLUDES YOU!

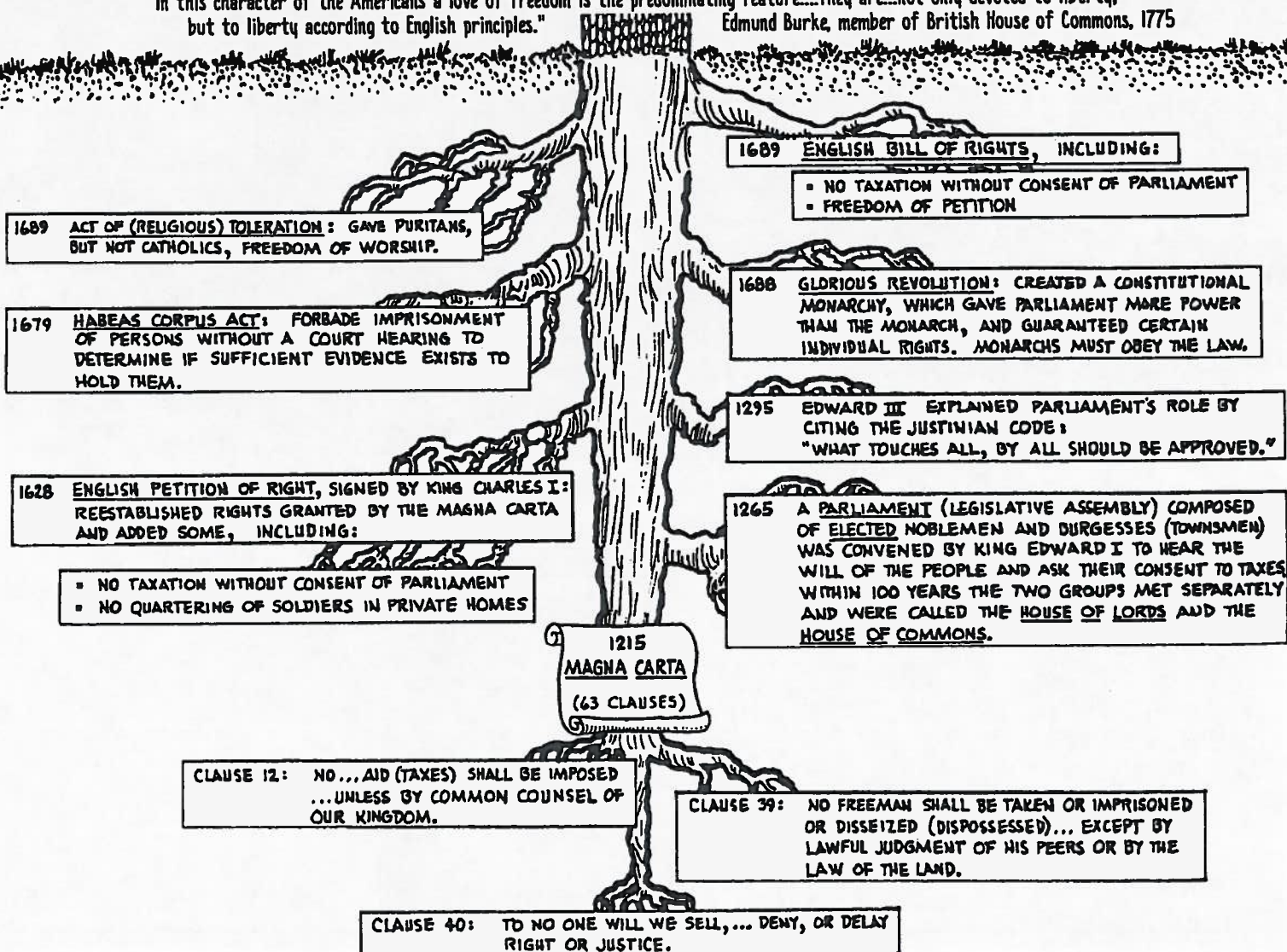
THE TAP ROOT

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

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

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

"In this character of the Americans a love of freedom is the predominating feature...They are...not only devoted to liberty, but to liberty according to English principles." Edmund Burke, member of British House of Commons, 1775



"From all these causes a fierce spirit of liberty has grown up." — Edmund Burke

Now, back to Congress in Philadelphia.

On October 26, 1774, the Continental Congress adjourned, agreeing to reconvene May 10, 1775, if King George did not respond to their grievances.

Congressman Charles Thomson wrote to Benjamin Franklin in London:

EVEN YET THE WOUND MAY BE HEALED AND PEACE AND LOVE RESTORED, BUT WE ARE ON THE BRINK OF A PRECIPICE.



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

PARLIAMENT HAS NO RIGHT TO LEGISLATE FOR US AT ALL, BECAUSE WE HAVE NO ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES IN PARLIAMENT.



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

English merchants suffering from the boycott also urged repeal.

I'M GOING TO LOBBY FOR REPEAL OF THE COERCIVE ACTS — BECAUSE I BELIEVE IN LIBERTY.

PLUS, YOUR SALES ARE WAY DOWN... RIGHT?



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

THE NEW ENGLAND GOVERNMENTS ARE IN A STATE OF REBELLION. BLOWS MUST DECIDE WHETHER THEY ARE TO BE SUBJECT TO THIS COUNTRY OR INDEPENDENT.



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

BY GOLLY, I'M READY!



Minutemen were militiamen trained for action at a minute's notice.

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



Let us not... deceive ourselves longer. We have done everything that could be done, to avert the storm which is now coming

on. We have petitioned; we have remonstrated; we have supplicated; we have prostrated ourselves before the throne.... Our petitions have been slighted...and we have been spurned.

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



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



51 → THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION: LEXINGTON AND CONCORD, April 19, 1775

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

1492

1775

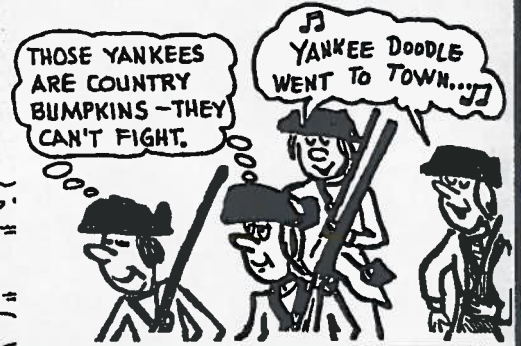
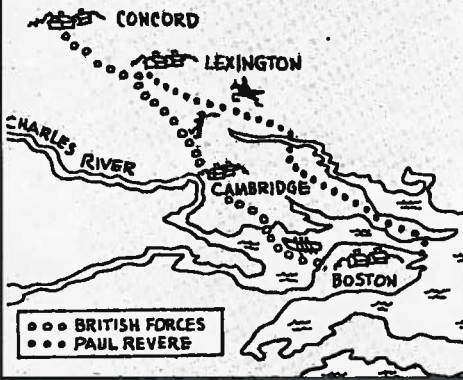
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April 18, 1775: BOSTON—British General Gage never intended a war—only a raid to seize the gunpowder patriots were stashing away in Concord, Massachusetts.

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



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



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

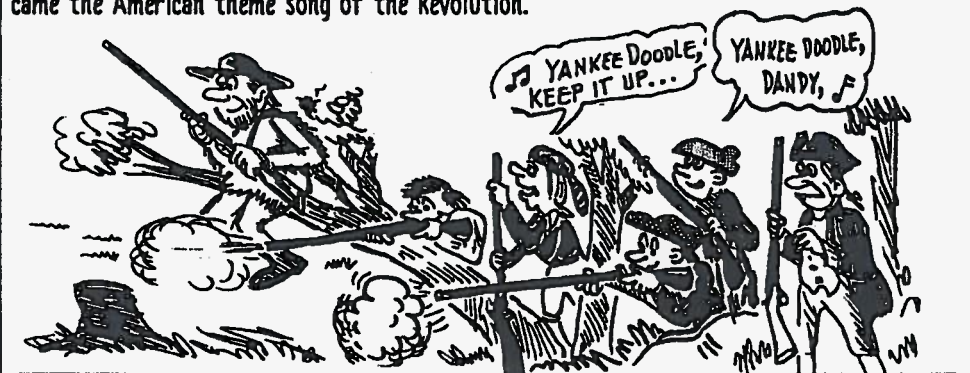
Silversmith Paul Revere, a member of the Sons of Liberty, and William Dawes galloped by separate routes from Boston to Lexington to warn the patriots.



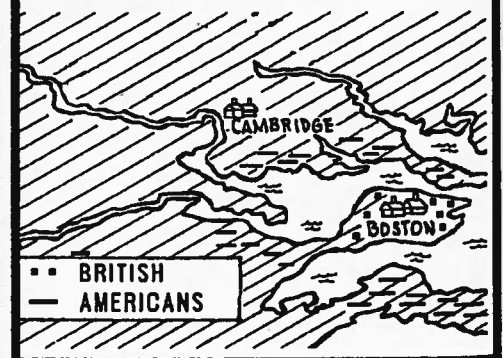
Dawn, April 19, 1775: LEXINGTON—Warned by Paul Revere, 70 brave Minutemen, under Captain John Parker, met the British redcoats on Lexington green at sunrise. A shot rang out, then a volley. No one knows who fired first, but the redcoats counted eight Americans dead and ten wounded before marching on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



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



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



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



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



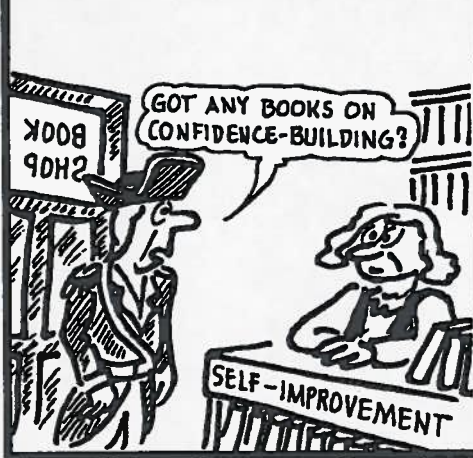
Israel Putnam, a farmer/officer, had the patriots hold their fire until the redcoats were 20 yards away. Then they fired, reloaded and fired again—killing or wounding 1,000 men (40% of Howe's troops and 12% of all British officers who would fight in the war). Out of ammunition, they retreated.



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



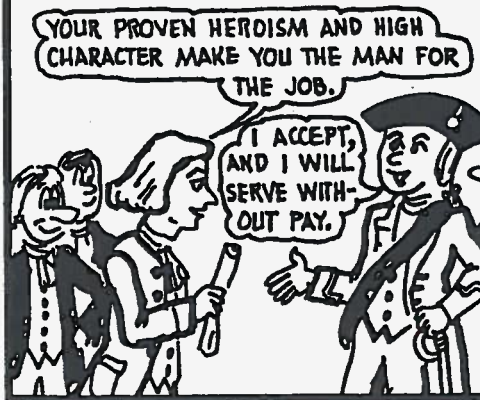
And General Howe never seemed to recover his confidence. Throughout the war he avoided frontal attacks, as well as final pursuit of the enemy.



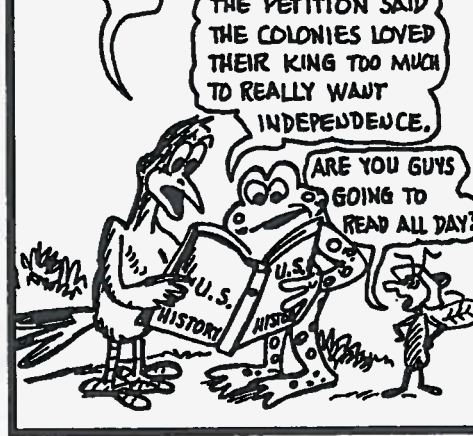
May 10, 1775—Meanwhile, the Second Continental Congress met as scheduled at the Philadelphia Statehouse and began to deal with the unscheduled war—while continuing to seek peace. (All states except Georgia sent delegates.)



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



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



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



52-- GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON TAKES COMMAND, 1775--

"I hope I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain (what I consider the most enviable of all titles) the character of an honest man."—George Washington
1775-76

1492

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

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

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

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



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



"My great grandfather John Washington, an English sailor, came to Virginia in 1657—with no money. Within twenty years, he owned 5,000 acres, including the land that became my plantation, Mount Vernon.



"I was born in 1732 in Westmoreland County, Virginia, into a family of 12 children. Four were my half-siblings. In 1738 we moved to the 260-acre Ferry Farm near Fredericksburg to be near my father's ironworks.

"To develop my character, I copied rules of behavior on pages my mother sewed into a notebook. I still live by them.



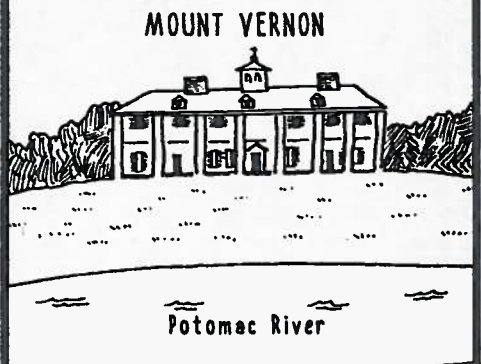
"I went to school seven years in Fredericksburg but did not go to college, to my regret. Excelling in geometry (though a poor speller), I became a land surveyor at age 16. I learned about the frontier wilderness by surveying it for settlers.



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

"My father died when I was 11. At age 21, I inherited Ferry Farm and twenty slaves from him.

"At age 28 (1760), I inherited Mount Vernon from my brother Lawrence. By 1773 I had acquired 40,000 acres of land. I enjoy the land and my life as a planter."



"At age 21, I joined the Virginia militia for five years (1753-58). Fighting with the British during the French and Indian War gave me a knowledge of British war tactics that should come in handy with my new job.



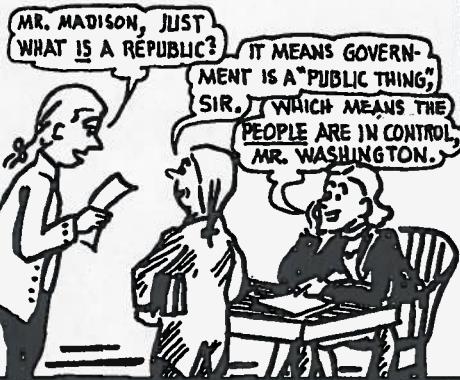
"In 1759 I married Martha Custis, a wealthy Virginia widow, and Mount Vernon became our plantation home. I adopted and loved her two children, Jack and Patsy. We had none of our own.



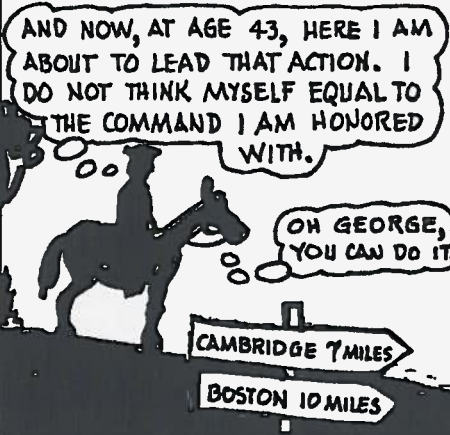
"In 1760 my friend George Mercer described me at age 28 as:

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

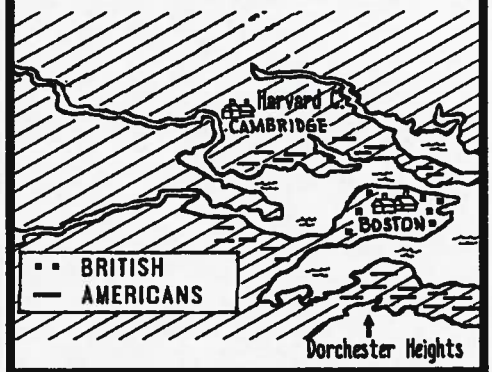
"I served in the Virginia legislature 15 years (1758-73). There I learned the process of representative government and became friends with Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, James Madison, and other outstanding Virginia leaders.



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



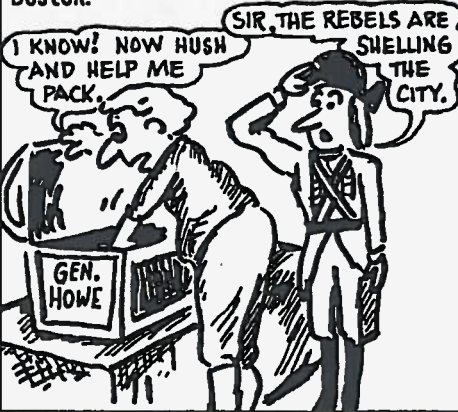
On July 3, 1775, Washington arrived in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and took command of the Continental Army (about 15,000 men, encamped at Harvard College) still laying siege to the British army trapped in Boston.



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



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



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

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



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

1492

1776

2000

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

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



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



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

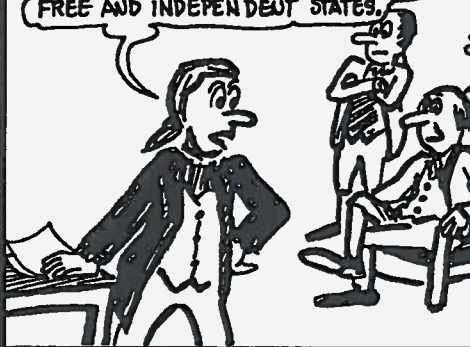
Delegate John Adams wrote his wife:

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



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

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



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



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

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

ALL RIGHT, IF YOU INSIST, MR. ADAMS!



A great choice! Tall, red-haired **Thomas Jefferson** (age 33 in 1776), gentleman farmer of Monticello near Charlottesville, Virginia, was a genius of the 1st order: lawyer, legislator, scholar, scientist, architect, musician, linguist. Later he served as Virginia governor and U.S. president. Like John Locke, he believed mankind had the ability to reason and the natural rights to freedom, property, and self-government.

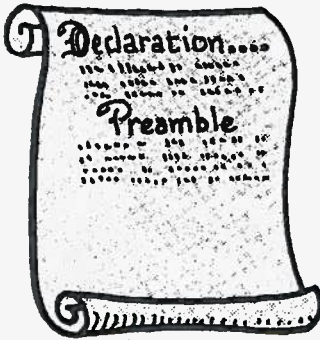


"Neither aiming at originality of principle or sentiment, nor yet copied from any particular and previous writing, it was intended to be an expression of the American mind...."—Thomas Jefferson

1492

1776

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

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



THOMAS JEFFERSON

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



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



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



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



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



== DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE ==

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

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

He has refused his assent to laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.
 He has forbidden his governors to receive their oaths of office, unless they pledge themselves to support the royal charter.
 He has refused to assent to laws for the relief of the poor, prisoners, or distressed situations, unless they be laden with the vilest abuses.
 He has called together legislatures, to separate chambers, or to single assemblies, at will, and dissolved them against their wishes, after long and tedious sessions.
 He has refused to assent to laws for the amendment of his government.
 He has endeavored to keep us long in a state of unwarlike armaments, so that we should never be able to do otherwise than yield to his will.
 He has attempted to deprive us of the benefits of trial by jury.
 He has made us subject to taxes without our consent.

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



* Jefferson listed 27 grievances.

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

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

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

July 4, 1776

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

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

William Ellery of Rhode Island positioned himself "to see how my fellow delegates looked as they signed what might be their death warrants.... Un-daunted resolution was displayed on every countenance." Only old Stephen Hopkins' hand shook—with palsy. He explained:

MY HAND TREMBLES, BUT MY HEART DOES NOT.

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

NATIONALITY: 48 American born;
 8 Great Britain born

AGE: 26 to 70; most in 30s and 40s

OCCUPATION: 23 lawyers; 12 merchants;
 6 planters; 4 landowners; 4 doctors;
 2 farmers; 2 manufacturers;
 1 minister; 1 printer; 1 politician

EDUCATION: 32, college; 9, tutors at home;
 8, self-taught; 6, common schools;
 1, no information

RELIGION: 55 Protestants; 1 Catholic

The Declaration of Independence launched America—and the world—on the greatest adventure since Columbus:
THE ADVENTURE OF FREEDOM FOR MANKIND!

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

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

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

"A woman as soon as she is married, is called covert, that is veiled...clouded and overshadowed...her new self is her superior, her companion, her master... By marriage, the husband and wife are one person under the law...the very being or legal existence of the wife is suspended...incorporated into that of her husband...under whose cover she performs everything."—William Blackstone, Commentaries on the Laws of England, common legal reference in America.

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

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

Married women, generally, could not own property.

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



DEAR JOHN,

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



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

SOUNDS REVOLUTIONARY TO ME.



DEAR ABIGAIL,

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



Abigail's prophecy came true. In 1848 the Woman's Rights Movement began in Seneca Falls, New York.

It lasted 72 years, ending in 1920 with passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution giving women the right to vote. You'll read of it in a later chapter.

WOMAN'S RIGHTS MOVEMENT

