MY AMERICA STORY BOOK

Moving Towards Independence

A Compilation of Historical
Biographies for the Young Reader

Compiled by Marlene Peterson

Libraries of Hope

My America Story Book
Book Three: Moving Towards Independence

Cover Image: Writing the Declaration of Independence, 1776, by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris (1932). In public domain, source Wikimedia Commons.

Libraries of Hope, Inc.
Appomattox, Virginia 24522

Website: www.librariesofhope.com
Email**:** librariesofhope@gmail.com

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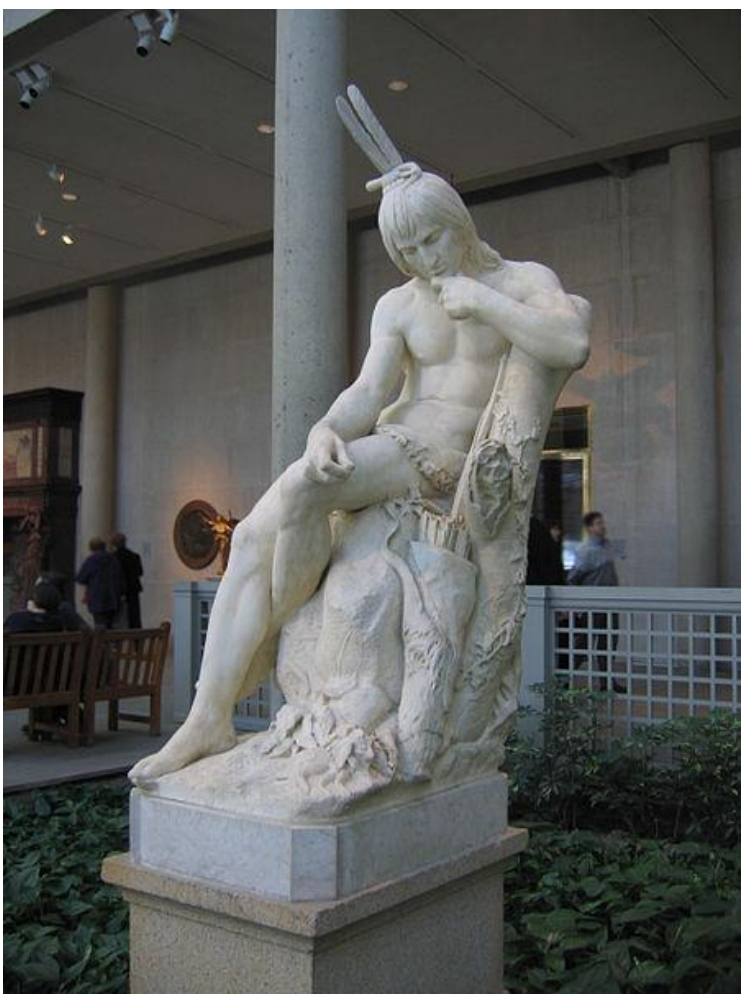
Chapter 1

Hiawatha

Died 1595

Hiawatha was the son of the West Wind, so the poet tells us, and his young mother died when he was so small he could not remember her face. No one really knows when Hiawatha was born. But if he ever was born his ancestors were certainly living when Henry the Navigator's pilots first saw the black men of Africa; yes, and more than a hundred years before that, when Marco Polo first saw the yellow men of Asia. And ages before that his race, whose skin was reddish-brown, had been wandering over the vast continents of North and South America, which the white people of Europe knew nothing about.



Hiawatha, Augustus Saint-Gaudens,
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

Hiawatha belonged to the Iroquois tribe, who dwelt in what is now central New York, and along the St. Lawrence and the lower lakes.

His grandmother, old Nokomis, taught him to know the forest as the white boy knows his book. Even while he was a papoose, bound to the branch of a tree in a linden cradle, old Nokomis crooned up to him tales of the woodlands, and the marshes, and the river that ran so swiftly past the wigwam.

At evening when the fire-flies fluttered, she called up to him that they were setting candles in the pine trees to light him to bed; when the slow moon rose above the hill-top, she said the watchman was coming to guard him from harm all the night. If a hooting

broke the silence and he lisped out shrilly: "What is that, Nokomis?" she soothed him, gently saying it was the owl and the owlets talking in their native language.

Day after day he lay there in the branches. He learned all the noises of the forest. As soon as he could toddle off among the tree trunks he found where the squirrels hid their acorns, and how the beavers built their lodges, and what made the rabbits seem so timid.

Hiawatha lived alone with old Nokomis, but the woods were full of friends. He could answer the calls of the birds, and the growls of the bear, and the howls of the wolf, and the croaks of the frog, and the high, sharp neighs of the red deer. He glided like the weasel, he ran like the bison, he raised himself high like the bear when it strikes with its paw. And these creatures soon began to know him and to love him.

When Hiawatha learned to make his bow of ash wood and his oaken arrows, he shot so fast and so far that if he sent ten arrows upward, the last one left the bowstring before the first had fallen. Yet, swiftly as he sent his arrows, he could shoot straight out before him and spring forward with such fleetness that the arrow would fall behind him.

When he learned to build a boat of birch bark—with the larch-tree roots to bind it, and the fir-tree sap to glue it, and the quills of the porcupine stained with the juice of berries for a border—he glided up and down the river, sometimes seated, sometimes standing, trailing strings of fish behind him. A crumpled rose leaf in the current, or a twisted twig that hung above the water, often told him a long, long story.

So Hiawatha really read the forest as the white boy reads his book.

After a time he wandered from Nokomis to mingle with the chiefs of his clan. Through the Moon of Leaves and the Moon of Strawberries[1] he dwelt in the Iroquois tents. The Iroquois tribe was divided into five great nations. Sometimes these nations quarreled with one another, but they spoke the same language and usually went together on the warpath against hostile tribes.

Iroquois who were related formed clans—sisters and brothers, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, grandmothers, grandfathers, great grandmothers, great grandfathers; and second and third cousins counted too. Families in the clan, or as many as could do so, lived together in one "long house," built of Wood and covered over with elm bark. The house was divided into rooms. Each family occupied one room. Four rooms had one fire-pit, where four families cooked their food. If I told you Hiawatha visited in a house with "five fires," you would surely know that he was an Iroquois, and that the "long house" had twenty families in it. Over each house stood the totem pole of the clan. The totem pole was a kind of coat of arms with an animal for its symbol—a wolf, a bear, a tortoise, a beaver, or a red deer.

In pleasant weather the warriors did not stay long in the houses. They sped down the rivers fishing or plunged deep into the forest after game, and Hiawatha was always with them. When the stars came out they lighted a fire of leaves and twigs, with flint stones, and sat around it in a circle. Then Hiawatha asked them many questions. The warriors told him that between the Rocky Mountains and the Mississippi River lived the Dakotahs, who dwelt in skin tents and moved from place to place to hunt and fish. East of the great Father of Waters[2] and south of the Tennessee lived

[1] The months of May and June.

[2] The meaning of Mississippi

the Mobilians, a confederacy of many nations—the Chickasaws, who were cunning thieves; the Choctaws, who pressed their papooses' heads quite flat; the Creeks and Seminoles, far down on a gulf of the salt sea, who wove cloth from buffalo wool and wild hemp, and made pots from clay, and had nets called "hammocks" for beds, which they hung between two posts. Hiawatha asked the warriors how the Creeks and Seminoles had learned to make the pots of clay and cloth of wool and wild hemp; but they merely shook their heads for answer. What need had men of such things? There were skins in plenty for the winter, and gourds and deer horns for the water!

"Umph! Umph!" then went around the circle.

They told him about his neighbors, the Algonquins, who did not bother about pot-making. The hunting grounds of the Algonquins stretched from the Atlantic salt sea to the Mississippi. The Algonquins went on the warpath whenever they could. Sometimes they put on paint and feathers to go to Kentucky, "The Dark and Bloody Ground." All nations hunted in Kentucky, but no nation dared to dwell there; for the warriors always brought back many scalp-locks.

Some of Hiawatha's kinsmen showed long scalp-locks they had taken in Kentucky. This was Creek, and that was Choctaw, these were Seminoles, and one, with feathers still stuck in it, was from a big Algonquin chieftain.

The Algonquins lived in wigwams made of bark. They painted their naked bodies, and they shaved their hair except the scalp-lock, which they trimmed and decked with feathers like a banner, and which they dared their foes to come and capture.

These things and many others Hiawatha heard about his neighbors as he sat around the camp-fires. Then he went back to his wigwam; but he kept thinking over what the chiefs had told him.

Among the kinsmen that came to see Nokomis was Iagoo, famous as a story-teller. Often when the air was white with moonlight, Iagoo sat alone with Hiawatha. Once he told of tribes far to the south and bordering on a great salt water. These people, said Iagoo, built stone houses, with straight stone pillars like the tree trunks, carved all over with strange totems. Some of the houses were temples, where priests in long robes made sacrifices upon an altar to their god, the Sun. These houses set together made great cities. There were many cities in the southlands, said Iagoo; but Mexico, on the shores of a lake, was the greatest, Mexico with straight broad stone paths that led to other cities.

Between the cities were fields of maize, and cane with sweet sap like the maple. There were shrubs that bore berries which were brewed for drink. There were plants that had tufts of white down like the thistles, from which the squaws made cloth, which they dyed in colors made from roots and barks.

Thousands and thousands of slaves, taken in battle, worked deep in the sides of the mountains to get metals—one yellow as the buttercups and another pale as moonbeams—which cunning artisans fashioned into necklaces and rings and wristlets.

The men of the southlands lined the walls of their temples with these metals and built their altars of them and stored the rest away in heaps in public buildings.

The people who lived in Mexico were called the Aztecs. Their king, the montezuma, was a mighty warrior. He had bows and arrows that numbered like the stars to be ready if enemies came to his kingdom. When one montezuma died his oldest son or oldest brother mounted the throne, which shone like the sun.

It was a wonderful story Iagoo was telling! Hiawatha did not hear the owl that hooted from a nearby fir tree.

When a silence fell upon the night air he asked in a half whisper where these people learned to build stone houses, lay stone paths, dig metals, weave cloth, and plant fine gardens of fruits and flowers.

Iagoo, the great traveler and boaster, looked very wise as he sat there in the moonlight. He kept silent for a moment. Then he said it was tradition that ages and ages ago a child of the Sun, with skin like the snow and hair like the buttercups and eyes blue as the lake, had come to earth to teach these people in the southlands.

Pleasant Was the Journey Homeward, Illustration by M. L. Kirk, from The Story of Hiawatha, 1910

"And what became of the white man?" whispered Hiawatha.

"He lived with them many, many summers," said Iagoo. "When they needed him no longer he called them all together. He told them he was going to the great Hereafter, but some day another prophet would come down among them with a white face like his own."

"Esa, esa, old Iagoo! Shame upon you!" cried Nokomis, when Hiawatha told her the story.

But Hiawatha could not cease his thinking, though he was always very busy. In the Moon of Falling Leaves[1] he joined a fishing expedition. When the snowflakes sifted through the forest he put on snowshoes for a great hunt, and he brought back loads of skins and dried meat.

But he could not cease his thinking, though he made things ready for the warpath with his people. He helped to build a great fire in the open. He painted his face in stripes of red and yellow, put turkey feathers in his hair, borrowed from Nokomis all her

[1] September.

beads and feathers, and tossed the finest bear skin on his shoulders.

He helped to set up a red post. With the other warriors, all in paint and feathers, he marched slowly round the post. Faster and faster went the footsteps. Someone thumped upon a drum of deer skin. Loud and louder rose the chanting, until it changed to war whoops. Hiawatha struck the red post with the others. He kicked it and stabbed it, just as he intended to do to his foes. The great warriors shouted the number of scalps they had taken and the number they intended to take before they came back to their wigwams.

Hiawatha had never cut a scalp-lock. He could only boast how many he too would take when the battle was on.

When dawn broke above the tree-tops he laid aside his war gear and, half naked like the others, hurried to his first real battle.

The way was long. Then came blood-curdling war whoops. The ground shook with the fury of the combat. The trees swam round. The air was black with arrows. The hills hissed back the twang of bowstrings. Hiawatha shot from his quiver all his jasper-headed arrows. He kept rushing onward. He stumbled over bodies streaked with crimson. He beat and bruised about him with his war club. He did not know just what was happening till he saw himself surrounded by his clansmen, who were shouting "Hiawatha! Hiawatha!"

Then he looked and saw a string of bloody scalp-locks dangling from his belt—one, two, three, and up to twenty. No great brave who boasted at the war dance carried half so many scalp-locks. The warriors started home in triumph.

One night they halted in a gully of a mountain. Fire was struck from flint stones, game was cooked, and the warriors slept in rows before the blazing logs—all but Hiawatha who kept thinking. He remembered the hate in his heart when he whirled around the war post; he heard again the hiss of arrows and the tumult of the battle; he felt with his fingers the long damp scalp-locks that hung at his belt; he gazed upon his kinsmen as they lay there in the firelight with their weapons and their war gear. The feuds of ages had set upon their faces deep lines which showed beneath the war paint.

The fire smouldered away to soft pink coals, like seashells; the noises of the forest hushed in sleep, but Hiawatha lay there, with his eyes half open, thinking.

Presently he arose. He trod softly through the rim of sleepers. He stepped beyond the open to a wood. He stooped and dug a hollow in the leaf mould with his scalp-knife. He rose again, and one by one he smoothed the scalp-locks of his foes and laid them gently in the hollow, which he then filled with leaves and bushes. Then he trod his way into the forest to the shadow of a rock where no warrior's foot had ventured. Here he built a tent and fasted seven days and seven nights. He prayed to the Great Spirit:

> Not for greater skill in hunting,
> Not for greater craft in fishing,
> Not for triumph in the battle;
>
> * * * * * *
>
> But for profit of the people—
> How to help them live like brothers.

And Each Figure Had a Meaning, Illustration by M. L. Kirk, from The Story of Hiawatha, 1910

When the days of prayer and fast were over, Hiawatha went back to old Nokomis. The braves who had come home from the battle had already told Nokomis of his prowess. She ran to meet him, shouting out her welcome. He was wan and thin and haggard, but his eyes were very bright.

"Where are the scalp-locks?" called Nokomis, in haste to feel them with her fingers.

Hiawatha told her of his days of prayer and fasting. He said the Great Spirit had taught him how to live and toil and suffer, that the Iroquois might prosper.

He cleared the streams of logs and sand bars; he dried the swamps that bred diseases; he taught the use of barks and roots and herbs for sickness and the antidotes for poisons; he tilled the soil for maize which brought forth yellow harvests so that no one need go hungry. He summoned all the nations of his language to sit with him in a council—Mohawks, Oneidas, Cayugas, Senecas, and Onondagas.

He persuaded them to stop their wrangling and to smoke the pipe of peace around a camp-fire—five great nations, quite united under the name of Iroquois.

He painted, on smooth birch bark, shapes and figures which had meaning, so that they might speak to one another from a distance: life was a white circle, death was a black circle. The earth was a straight line. The sky was a bow above the straight line. When the space between was white it meant daytime. When there were stars it was night. A point on the right of the bow meant sunrise; a point at the top curve, midday; a point on the left meant sunset. Waving lines between the bow and straight line meant rainy weather.

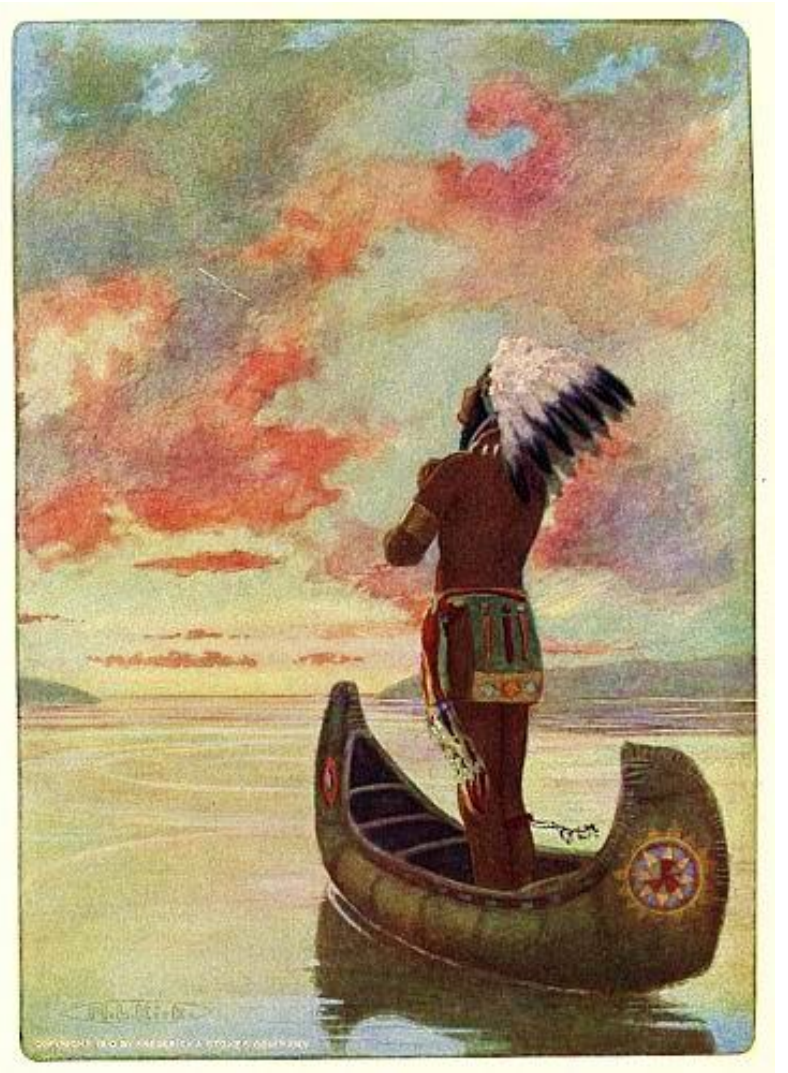
And so Hiawatha painted on the smooth white birch bark to preserve among the Iroquois the victories of their warriors, and the adventures of their hunters, and the visions of their prophets.

It is tradition that Hiawatha lived for many years doing good among his people. When he saw

his death approaching he called the Five Nations to a council. He told them he must leave them; but the Great Spirit would send a race of white men in canoes of thunder from across the morning water, who could teach them how to weave, and build warm houses, and till the earth for grain and fruit. If they listened to these teachings, they would flourish like the leaves in springtime; but if they heeded not the white men's wisdom, they would scatter like the leaves in autumn. It will be interesting to read whether the red men in America listened to the counsel of their prophet.

Of Hiawatha's farewell to his people Longfellow says:

> On the shore stood Hiawatha,
> Turned and waved his hand at parting;
>
> * * * *
>
> Launched his birch canoe for sailing,
>
> * * * *
>
> Whispered to it, "Westward! westward!"
>
> * * * *
>
> And the evening sun descending
>
> * * * *
>
> Left upon the level water
> One long track and trail of splendor,
> Down whose stream, as down a river,
> Westward, westward Hiawatha
>
> * * * *
>
> Sailed into the dusk of evening.



Westward, Westward, Hiawatha, Illustration by M. L. Kirk, from The Story of Hiawatha, 1910

Chapter 2

Blackbeard, the Last of the Pirates

Circa 1680–1718

Some sixty years after the settlement of Virginia, strange, wild men swarmed along her coast. They were pirates. They found refuge in the many inlets, creeks, and harbors along the shore of Virginia and the Carolinas.

A pirate captain had a very swift ship so that he could overtake other vessels at sea. At his masthead hung a black flag decorated with a white skull and crossbones. This meant death to all whom the pirate captured. Strangely enough the flag was called the "Jolly Roger."

The crew of the pirate ship was made up of convicts, cutthroats, and vagabonds from all nations. The leader was a man fiercer and stronger than the rest. It was only by his ferocity that he could hold his followers in check.

The business of the pirate was to pursue and capture merchant or treasure ships to secure their cargoes. Often a sharp fight took place. But the pirate usually boarded his foe, killed many of the fighting men, and made those who were taken alive "walk the plank." That meant that they were thrown into the sea. In this way, week after week, the pirate gathered much wealth together.

Often his men mutinied. Then a terrible fight took place in the ship. The victors made their conquered shipmates "walk the plank," or they marooned them. To maroon a man was to leave him on some desert island. Sometimes a loaf of bread and a bottle of water were given to him, but they were soon gone. Death followed by slow starvation.

Sometimes a pirate went ashore to bury his treasure. He selected the spot carefully, and made written notes as to the number of paces between it and prominent landmarks. These notes were not made very plain, for the pirate did not wish them to be understood by any one into whose hands the paper might fall. They were purposely made "blind"—so that the pirate alone could understand them.

Next, he brought a few men on shore with the money. Under their captain's eye they dug a deep hole and buried the treasure. Afterwards, the captain often killed them in return for their pains. This was because they knew the hiding place of his wealth.

Often tales would be told by the people of the countryside of having seen ragged cutthroats digging pits for treasure. Sometimes slips of paper were found with mysterious figures and letters. Young men and old men who had more imagination than sound sense, would spend years of their lives hunting for buried treasures. This folly has gone on throughout the length of the Atlantic seacoast.

In 1717 it was stated on good authority that there were fifteen hundred pirates on our coast. Their headquarters were at New Providence, a town on one of the Bahama Islands, and at Cape

Fear in North Carolina. To pillage the passing vessels, they ranged the coast from Newfoundland to Brazil.

How did they ever come to be so numerous? When England was fighting Spain, of course English ships attacked Spanish ships wherever they found them. The Spanish ships were usually carrying treasure to Spain to pay the expenses of the war, and the English were glad enough to cripple the enemy in this way. Even before war was declared, Spain and England fought each other in America. You remember how Francis Drake captured Spanish ships in the South Sea when he sailed around the world.

In the latter part of the seventeenth century, Spain was the great bully of Europe. She was cordially hated by Holland and France, as well as by England. She would allow no other nation to trade with her colonies in America. When she caught foreign ships in her ports, she hanged the men, and sank or stole the ships.

Thus it came to pass that the English, French, and Dutch would combine against the Spaniard. They called themselves the Brethren of the Coast. They would together surprise a Spanish colony, sack the town, and kill the people. So it happened that there was constant fighting both on land and sea in the West Indies. Fierce and lawless men would naturally be drawn to this region, the Spanish Main, as it was called. So there came to be, not only Brethren of the Coast and buccaneers, but also pirates.

Captain Kidd in New York Harbor, Jean Leon Gerome Ferris

Some of the famous pirates were Henry Morgan, Captain Kidd, Quelch, Bellamy, and Blackbeard.

Blackbeard was the last of the pirates. You may be interested to know something of his career. He was a native of Bristol, England, and his name was said to be Drummond. He had changed his name to Robert Thatch, but he was more often called Blackbeard, on account of the thick, shaggy beard that hung far down his chest. He had a low forehead, shrewd little eyes, and a fierce temper.

He wore three braces of pistols slung over his shoulders, and these he used freely. He put out his candle at night by shooting a bullet through the flame. He often startled his friends at table by sending a bullet spinning through their hair or close by their ears. He was not angry; it was just a pleasant little way he had.

When George I became king in 1714, he determined to expel the pirates from New Providence. A few years later he sent a fleet to the Bahamas, and the pirates were driven from the stronghold they had held so long. Many of them took up their abode in the mazes of the Carolina coast. Among these was Robert Thatch.

In June 1718, he appeared off Charleston harbor with a forty-gun frigate and three smaller boats. He lay in wait for ships entering or leaving the harbor, and it was not long before he had captured eight or ten. One ship was bound for London, and upon it were men of importance in the colony.

Capture of the Pirate, Blackbeard, Jean Leon Gerome Ferris

One passenger was a member of Governor Johnson's council.

Blackbeard needed supplies and medicines. He made a list of what he desired to have sent him, which was carried to Governor Johnson by a party of Blackbeard's sailors, headed by his mate, Richards. The message was that, if the articles were not sent, Blackbeard would send Governor Johnson the heads of all the good citizens of Charleston that were his prisoners.

The governor saw that the lives of the citizens must be saved. He hastened to collect what Blackbeard had demanded. The prisoners were landed in a pitiable condition. They came ashore almost naked, for Blackbeard had robbed them of their clothing as well as of their money. From one man he stole six thousand dollars.

Blackbeard went to North Carolina, where the governor actually permitted him to swagger around town and to spend his money freely. It was said that Blackbeard had bribed the governor to protect him.

At last the pirate's ill-gotten wealth was spent. To get more he had to take to the high seas again. He secured a ship, collected a crew, and told every one that he was a merchantman.

He set sail, but soon returned, bringing into port a fine French ship with a rich cargo. He declared that he had found her adrift, but no one believed him. The people of North Carolina felt that a stop must be put to piracy. At least they would have no more Blackbeards among them.

They sent word to the vigorous Governor Spotswood of Virginia, and he came with two cruisers against this rover of the sea. They tracked him to his lair, and thereupon a running battle took place through the coast channels.

Blackbeard was a terrible figure in a fight. Lighted matches were thrust over his ears and stuck out from beneath his hat brim. He stood by a cannon which he was about to fire, when the Virginians boarded his vessel. All around, his pirate crew lay dying, and he himself fell dead beside the cannon he was aiming at the enemy. So passed Blackbeard, the last of the pirates.

Chapter 3

Heroic Madelon

1678-1747

On the St. Lawrence River, about twenty miles from Montreal, there is a pleasant French village called Vercheres. You will see it as you sail down the river. You will think it very pretty with its small, old-fashioned houses nestling among the trees, its old French windmill, and the white spire of its little church towering above its quiet street and blooming gardens.

Two hundred and twenty years ago there was no village there. A short distance from the river's bank, however, there was a log fort with palisades around it. The palisades were made of the trunks of trees set upright in the ground and so close together that nothing could pass between. They formed, in fact, a wooden wall a foot in thickness and ten or twelve feet high. It was the kind of wall which the early settlers built to protect themselves from the Indians.

Marie Madeleine de Verchères,
Gerald Sinclair Hayward

In front of the fort, and joined to it by a covered way, was a strong blockhouse built also of logs. There the guns were kept, and the powder and balls.

The commander of this fort, and indeed the owner of it and of all the lands around it, was a French gentleman whose name was M. de Vercheres. He had come to this place, in the heart of the wild Canadian woods, to found a new home for himself and his family. Here he lived during the greater part of each year with his wife and his daughter Madelon, aged fourteen years, and his two little sons, Louis and Alexander. There were also in the household several servants; and two soldiers had been brought from Quebec to man the fort.

One day, in early autumn, M. de Vercheres was called to Quebec on business. His wife was visiting friends in Montreal. The young girl Madelon was left at home with her little brothers and the servants.

"Madelon," said her father, "I leave everything in your care. Keep the fort well while I am gone."

"You may trust me, father," said the child. "But what if the Iroquois should come?"

"Nonsense, Madelon. The Iroquois will not dare to show themselves this side of Montreal. Still it will be well for you to be watchful."

"And watchful I will be, father. Good-by till your return."

The boat pushed out into the stream, and Madelon was left sole mistress of the lonely fort in the midst of the savage wilderness.

A week, two weeks, three weeks, passed by, and all went as happily as when the master was at home. The days were growing shorter, the nights were chilly with now and then a white frost, the leaves were falling from the trees. The men were all busy getting ready for winter—hauling in the hay, cutting wood, and putting things in order against the coming of the deep snows. Scarcely a thought was given to the Iroquois, although it was known that they were on the warpath.

One day Madelon, as was her habit, went down to the landing place by the river. It was not more than a hundred yards from the gate of the fort. A hired man whose name was Laviolette had just come to shore with a string of fish. All the rest of the men, except the soldiers and a grandfather of eighty, were at work in a field behind the fort.

As Madelon was admiring the fish the sharp crack of guns was heard in the field.

"The Iroquois!" she cried.

"Yes, yes! Run, Mademoiselle," shouted Laviolette.

She was not a moment too quick. As she ran she saw a number of painted warriors hurrying to get between her and the fort. But she was as fleet-

She was as fleet-footed as a deer,
from An American Book of Golden Deeds
by James Baldwin. 1907

footed as a deer and had the start of them all. The Indians shot at her. The bullets whizzed close by her ears. How long that hundred yards seemed!

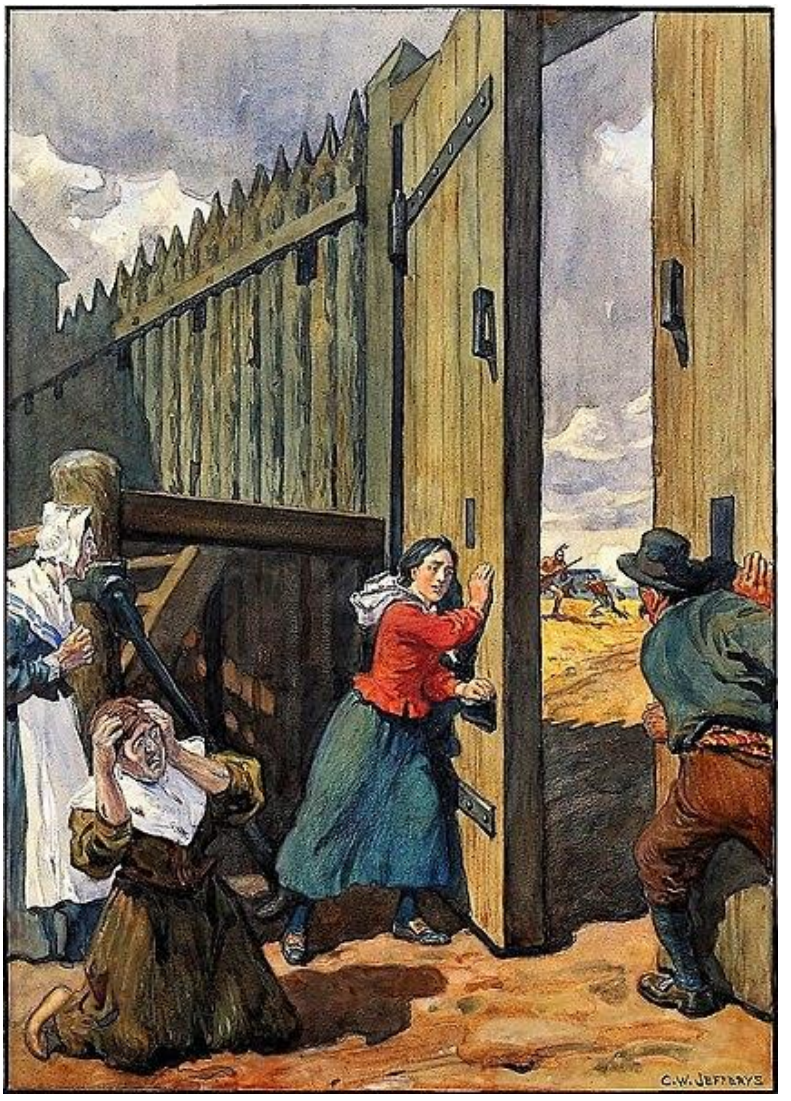
"To arms! to arms!" she screamed to those in the fort, hoping that the soldiers would come out and help.

But it was of no use. The two fellows were so badly frightened that they had run and hidden themselves in the blockhouse.

Two women met Madelon at the gate, crying, "Oh, what shall we do? What shall we do? They've killed all the men, and we are lost!"

"Go back into the fort, you sillies," said Madelon, angrily and out of breath. She pushed them back with her hands. Then she shut the heavy gate and bolted it.

All was confusion inside. The women and children were running hither and thither and screaming with all their might. The old grandfather crouched trembling in a corner. All seemed to have lost their senses.



The Iroquois attack of Fort Vercheres,
C. W. Jefferys

"Here, Alexander! Here, Louis! Follow me," cried Madelon. On one side of the fort several of the palisades had been blown down by a wind. There were gaps in the wall through which an enemy could shoot, even if he could not enter.

"Come, every one of you, and help close up these gaps," said Madelon.

With her own hands she helped to raise the heavy logs to their places. She told the old man and the boys how to make them firm. "Be quick and do your work well," she said. Laviolette soon joined her, and the weak places were quickly mended.

The women were still screaming and weeping and running wildly about. Madelon stopped to quiet them.

"Hush your noise this moment, or we shall all be lost," she said. "Will your crying and moaning do any good? Hush, I command you."

She spoke so firmly that every one obeyed. She ordered each of the women to some place of duty. One was to care for the children in the kitchen, one was to watch from this corner of the fort, one was to stand guard at that.

Having thus put matters to rights in the main building she ran to the blockhouse. There she found Pierre and Jean, the two soldiers. Pierre was hiding behind some barrels in a corner. Jean was holding a lighted match in his hand.

"What are you going to do with that match?" asked Madelon.

"Light the powder and blow us all up," answered Jean, trembling from head to foot.

"You miserable coward! Get out of here this instant." She spoke so firmly that the wretched fellow obeyed at once.

Madelon threw off her bonnet. She put a man's hat on her head. She took a gun in her hands. She called her brothers to the blockhouse.

"Here, Louis! Here, Alexander!" she said.

"You are but children ten and twelve years of age, but you can be brave. Let us fight to the death. Remember what our father has taught you, that a gentleman is born to shed his blood in the service of God and the king."

With that the two lads seized some guns and began to fire from the loopholes.

The Indians had gathered at some distance from the gate, and were afraid to come within closer range of the rifles. The firing was so sharp that they withdrew still farther away.

The two soldiers, grown ashamed of their cowardice, came back and began also to shoot from the loopholes.

There was a single small cannon in the blockhouse. Madelon ordered it to be fired.

"But we cannot bring it in range of the Indians," said Pierre.

"Fire it in any case," she said. "It will make them more afraid of us. It will also be a warning to any of our friends who may be within hearing distance."

About the middle of the afternoon a canoe was seen coming toward the landing place.

"It is Fontaine, the settler whose hut is a mile below us," said little Louis.

"Yes," said Madelon, "and I see his wife and children with him. They are coming to the fort to find safety from the Iroquois."

"But they will never get here," said Laviolette. "The moment they touch the landing, the savages will be upon them."

"We must save them," said Madelon. "I myself will go out and meet them."

It was no use to dissuade the girl. She was the commander in that fort, and everybody knew it. She thought not of her own safety but of the welfare of others.

She ordered Laviolette to open the gate and stand by it until she returned. Then she walked boldly out in full view of the savages. They supposed that it was a trick to draw them nearer to the fort, where they would be within range of the guns. They were afraid, therefore, to make any movement toward her.

She went fearlessly down to the landing just as Fontaine's canoe was coming in. The family were safely brought to shore. In a few words, Madelon told them of their danger. She made them march in good order before her, showing no signs of fear. The Indians looked on and kept their distance. They might easily have captured or killed the whole party, but they were afraid of falling into some

kind of trap.

Night came on and with it a storm of hail and snow. The wind blew fiercely. It was just such a night as the savages would wish for their work of destruction and slaughter.

But Madelon was undismayed. She called her garrison before her. There were six of them.

"God has saved us from our enemies to-day," she said; "but we must take care not to fall into their hands to-night. As for me, I am not afraid."

Then she sent each one to his post. She ordered Fontaine and the two soldiers to keep the blockhouse. "Take the women and children there, for that is the safest place. No matter what may happen to me, don't surrender. The savages cannot get to you in the blockhouse."

Then with Laviolette, the old grandfather, and her little brothers, she undertook the defense of the rest of the fort. Laviolette guarded the gate, while each of the others stood sentinel at some other allotted post.

All night long, through the snow and the hail and the wind, the cry of "All's well!" rang out from each corner of the fort and was answered by "All's well!" from the blockhouse. The Indians heard and thought that the place was full of soldiers. They held a council, and decided that it would be unwise to try to surprise a place that was so well guarded.

It was some time after midnight when the watcher at the gate called softly to Madelon, "Mademoiselle, I hear something outside."

She went and peered through a hole in the wall. In the darkness she saw what she felt sure were cattle huddling close up to the gate while the snow was beating down upon them.

"I think they are our cows," she said, "or at least such of them as the Iroquois have not stolen. Poor things, they are needing shelter this fearful night."

"Let us open the gate and call them in," said Laviolette.

"God forbid," said Madelon. "The savages are good at tricks. Who knows that they are not among these cattle, wrapped up in skins and ready to rush into the fort as soon as the gate is opened?"

For some time everything was quiet. Then it was decided to open the gate a little and let the cattle slip in, one at a time. They entered very quietly, while Louis and Alexander stood on each side with their guns cocked and ready for any event.

At last the long night was ended. Morning came, and everybody felt braver and stronger. But all day long the watch was kept up in fort and blockhouse; and all day long brave Madelon went hither and thither, commanding, encouraging, directing. Who could be afraid in the presence of her cheerful and smiling face? There was not one of her little company who would not have died for her.

For forty-eight hours she neither ate nor slept. For a whole week the savages lurked within sight of the fort. Courage and watchfulness were necessary every hour.

At last help came at night. A young lieutenant with forty soldiers landed silently and went cautiously toward the fort, fearing that it was in the hands of the Indians. One of the sentinels heard them.

"Who goes there?" he cried.

Madelon was sitting at a table, asleep with her gun across her arms. The words aroused her.

"Mademoiselle," said the sentinel, "I heard a voice at the landing."

Then Madelon herself, in louder tones, demanded, "Who goes there?"

"We are Frenchmen," was the answer, "and we bring you help."

Madelon hastened to the gate. When she saw the lieutenant at the head of his company, she said, "Monsieur, I surrender my arms to you."

The lieutenant answered, "Mademoiselle, they are already in good hands."

"Better than you think," said the brave child.

The men entered the fort and looked around. Everything was in its place. The sentinels were at their posts.

"Monsieur," said Madelon, "these watchers have been on guard every hour for a week. Is it not time to relieve them?"

Monument to Madeleine de Verchères, Verchères, Quebec

Chapter 4

The Lost Children

The valleys of Pennsylvania were dotted with log cabins in the days of the French and Indian wars. Sometimes a number of the little houses stood close together for protection, but often they were built far apart. Wherever the pioneer saw good farm land he settled. It was a new sensation for men to be able to go into the country and take whatever land attracted them. Gentle rolling fields, with wide views of distant country through the notches of the hills, shining rivers, splendid uncut forests, and rich pasturage were to be found not far from the growing village of Philadelphia, and were free to any who wished to take them. Such a land would have been a paradise, but for one shadow that hung over it. In the background always lurked the Indians, who might at any time, without rhyme or reason, steal down upon the lonely hamlet or cabin, and lay it waste. The pioneer looked across the broad acres of central Pennsylvania and found them beautiful. Only when he had built his home and planted his fields did he fully realize the constant peril that lurked in the wooded mountains.

English, French, and Spanish came to the new world, and the English proved themselves the best colonists. They settled the central part of the Atlantic Coast, but among them and mixed with them were people of other lands. The Dutch took a liking for the Island of Manhattan and the Hudson River, the Swedes for Delaware, and into the colony of William Penn came pilgrims from what was called the Palatinate, Germans, a strong race drawn partly by desire for religious freedom, partly by the reports of the great free lands across the ocean. They brought with them the tongue, the customs, and the names of the German Fatherland, and many a valley of eastern Pennsylvania heard only the German language spoken.

The Indian tribes known as the Six Nations roamed through the country watered by the Susquehanna. They hunted through all the land south of the Great Lakes. Sometimes they fought with the Delawares, sometimes with the Catawbas, and again they would smoke the calumet or pipe of peace with their neighbors, and give up the war-path for months at a time. But the settlers could never be sure of their intentions. Wily French agents might sow seeds of discord in the Indians minds, and then the chiefs who had lately exchanged gifts with the settlers might suddenly steal upon some quiet village and leave the place in ruins. This constant peril was the price men had to pay in return for the right to take whatever land they liked.

In a little valley of eastern Pennsylvania a German settler named John Hartman had built a cabin in 1754. He had come to this place with his wife and four children because here he might earn a good living from the land. He was a hard worker, and his farm was prospering. He had horses and cattle, and his wife spun and wove the clothing for the family. The four children, George, Barbara, Regina, and Christian, looked upon the valley as their home, forgetting the German village

over the sea. Not far away lived neighbors, and sometimes the children went to play with other boys and girls, and some times their friends spent a holiday on John Hartman s farm.

The family, like all farmers families, rose early. Before they began the day's work the father would read to them from his big Bible, which he had brought from his native land as his most valuable possession. On a bright morning in the autumn of 1754 he gathered his family in the living-room of his cabin and read them a Bible lesson. The doors and windows stood open, and the sun flooded the little house, built of rough boards, and scrupulously clean. The farmer's dog, Wasser, lay curled up asleep just outside the front door, and a pair of horses, already harnessed, stood waiting to be driven to the field. Birds singing in the trees called to the children to hurry out-of-doors. They tried to listen to their father's voice as he read, and to pay attention. As they all knelt he prayed for their safety. Then they had breakfast, and the father and mother made plans for the day. Mrs. Hartman was to take the younger boy, Christian, to the flour-mill several miles away, and if they had time was to call at the cabin of a sick friend. The father and George went to the field to finish their sowing before the autumn rains should come, and the two little girls were told to look after the house till their mother should return. Little Christian sat upon an old horse, held on by his mother, and waved his hand to his father and George as he rode by the field on his way to the mill.

The girls, like their mother, were good house keepers. They set the table for dinner, and at noon Barbara blew the big tin horn to call her father and brother. As they were eating dinner the dog Wasser came running into the house growling, and acting as if he were very much frightened. Mr. Hartman spoke to him, and called him to his side. But the dog stood in the doorway, and then suddenly leaped forward and sprang upon an Indian who came around the wall.

The peril that lurked in the woods had come. John Hartman jumped to the door, but two rifle bullets struck him down. George sprang up, only to fall beside his father. An Indian killed the dog with his tomahawk. Into the peaceful cabin swarmed fifteen yelling savages. Barbara ran up a ladder into the loft, and Regina fell on her knees, murmuring "Herr Jesus! Herr Jesus!" The Indians hesitated, then one of them seized her, and made a motion with his knife across her lips to bid her be silent. Another went after Barbara and brought her down from the loft, and then the Indians ordered the two girls to put on the table all the food there was in the cabin.

When the food was gone the savages plundered the house, making bundles of what they wanted and slinging them over their shoulders. They took the two little girls into the field. There another girl stood tied to the fence. When she saw Barbara and Regina she began to cry, and called in German for her mother. While the three frightened girls stood close together the Indians set fire to the cabin. Very soon the log house that had cost John Hartman so much labor was burned to the ground. When their work of destruction was completed the Indians took the three children into the woods.

At sunset Mrs. Hartman returned from the flourmill with little Christian riding his horse, but when she came up the road it seemed as if her house had disappeared. Yet the pine trees, the fences, the plowed fields, and the orchard were still there. The little boy cried, "Where is our house, mother?" and the poor woman could not understand.

The story of what had occurred was only too plain to her a few minutes later. What had happened to many other pioneers had happened to her family. Clutching Christian in her arms she ran to the house of her nearest neighbor. There she heard that the Indians had left the same track

of blood through other parts of the valley; that farmers had been slain; their crops burned; and their children carried off into the wilderness. The terrified settlers banded together for protection. For weeks new stories came of the Indians' massacres. If ever there were heartless savages these were! They did not carry all the children to their wigwams; some were killed on the way; and among them was little Barbara Hartman. Word came from time to time of some of the stolen children, but there was no word of Regina or Susan Smith, the daughter of the neighboring farmer.

Far in the forests of western New York was the camp of a great Indian tribe. The wigwams stood on the banks of a beautiful mountain stream, broken by great rocks that sent the water leaping in cascades and falls. In one of the wigwams lived the mother of a famous warrior of the tribe, and with her were two girls whom she treated as her daughters. The name of the old squaw was She-lack-la, which meant "the Dark and Rainy Cloud," a name given her because at times she grew very angry and ill-treated every one around her. Fortunately there were two girls in her wigwam, and when the old squaw was in a bad temper they had each other for protection. The older girl had been given the name of Saw-que-han-na, or "the White Lily," and the other was known as Kno-los-ka, "the Short-legged Bear." Like all the Indian girls they had to work hard, grinding corn, cooking and keeping house for the boys and men who were brought up to hunt and fight. Sawquehanna was tall and strong, spoke the language of the tribe, and looked very much like her Indian girl friends.

In the meantime many battles had been fought through the country of the pioneers, and the English colonists were beating the French and Indians, and driving the Frenchmen farther and farther north. In 1765 the long war between the two nations ended. Under a treaty of peace the English Colonel Boquet demanded that all the white children who had been captured by the Indian tribes should be surrendered to the English officers. So one day white soldiers came into the woods of western New York and found the wigwams there. The children were called out, and the soldiers took the two girls from the old squaw Shelackla. Then they went on to the other tribes, and from each they took all the white children. They carried them to Fort Duquesne. The Fort was in western Pennsylvania, and as soon as it was known that the lost white children were there, fathers and mothers all over the country hurried to find their boys and girls. Many of the children had been away so long that they hardly remembered their parents, but most of the parents knew their children, and found them again within the walls of the fortress.

Some of the children, however, were not claimed. Sawquehanna and her friend Knoloska and nearly fifty more found no one looking for them and wondered what would happen to them. After they had waited at Fort Duquesne eight days, Colonel Boquet started to march with his band of children to the town of Carlisle, in hopes that they might find friends farther east, or at least kind-hearted people who would give the children homes. He sent news of their march all through the country, and from day to day as they traveled through the mountains by way of Fort Ligonier, Raystown, and Louden, eager people arrived to search among the band of children for lost sons and daughters. When the children came to Carlisle the town was filled with settlers from the East.

The children stood in the market-place, and the men and women pressed about them, trying to recognize little ones who had been carried away by Indians years before. Some people who lived in the Blue Mountains were in the throng, and they recognized the dark-haired Indian girl Knoloska as Susan, the daughter of Mr. Smith, the farmer who had lived near the Hartmans. Knoloska and Sawquehanna had not been separated for a long time. They had kept together ever since the white

soldiers had freed them from the old squaw's wigwam. Sawquehanna could not bear to think of having her comrade leave her, and Susan clung to her adopted sister's arm and kissed her again and again. The white people were much kinder than the old squaw had been, and instead of beating the girls when they cried, and frightening them with threats, the officers told Sawquehanna that she would probably find some friends soon, and if she did not, that perhaps Susan's family would let her live in their home. But as nobody seemed to recognize her Sawquehanna felt more lonely than she had ever felt before.

Meanwhile Mrs. Hartman was living in the valley with her son Christian, who had grown to be a strong boy of fourteen. Neighbors told her that the lost children were being brought across the mountains to Carlisle, but there seemed little chance that her own Regina might be one of them. She decided, however, that she must go to the town and see. Travel was difficult in those days, but the brave woman set out over the mountains and across the rivers to Carlisle, and at last reached the town market-place. She looked anxiously among the girls, remembering her little daughter as she had been on that autumn day eleven years before; but none of the girls had the blue eyes, light yellow hair and red cheeks of Regina. Mrs. Hartman shook her head, and decided that her daughter was not among these children.

As she turned away, disconsolate, Colonel Boquet said to her, "Can't you find your daughter?"

"No," said the disappointed mother, "my daughter is not among those children."

"Are you sure?" asked the colonel. "Are there no marks by which you might know her?"

"None, sir," she answered, shaking her head.

Colonel Boquet considered the matter for a few minutes. "Did you ever sing to her?" he asked presently. "Was there no old hymn that she was fond of?"

The mother looked up quickly. "Yes, there was!" she answered. "I have often sung her to sleep in my arms with an old German hymn we all loved so well."

"Then," said the colonel, "you and I will walk along the line of girls and you shall sing that hymn. It may be that your daughter has changed so much that you wouldn't know her, but she may remember the tune."

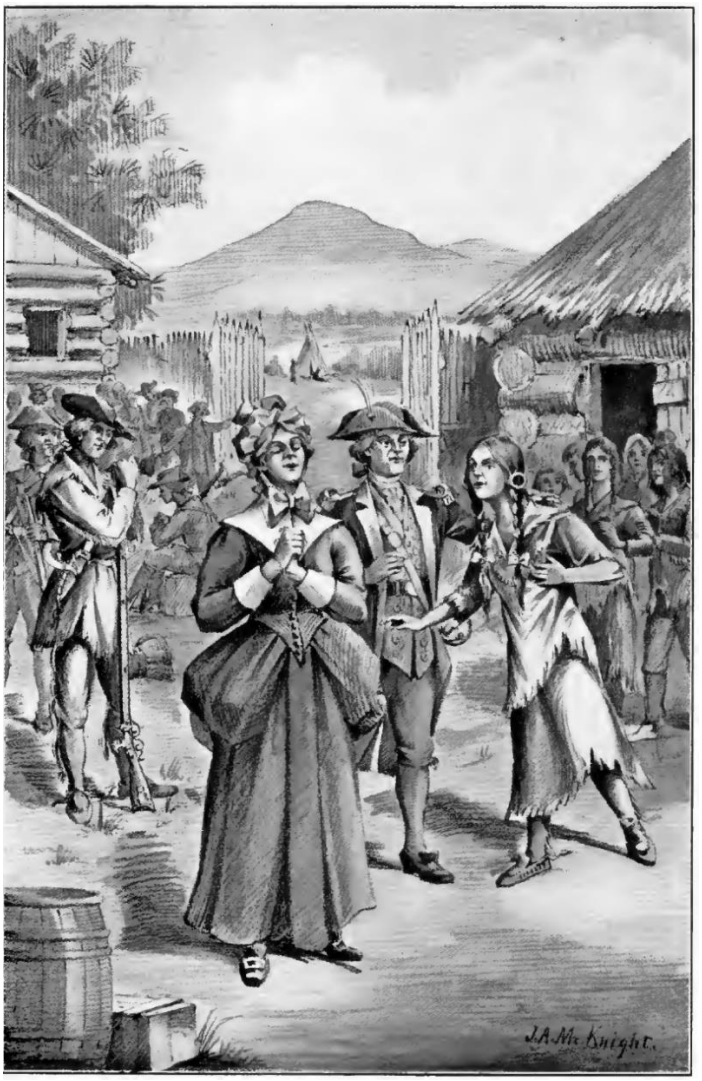
Mrs. Hartman looked very doubtful. "There is little use in it, sir," she said, "for certainly I should have known her if she were here; and if I try your plan all these soldiers will laugh at me for a foolish old German woman."

The colonel, however, begged her at least to try his plan, and she finally consented. They walked back to the place where the children were standing, and Mrs. Hartman began to sing in a trembling voice the first words of the old hymn:

"Alone, and yet not all alone, am I
In this lone wilderness."

As she went on singing every one stopped talking and turned to look at her. The woman's hands were clasped as if in prayer, and her eyes were closed. The sun shone full upon her white hair and upturned face. There was something very beautiful in the picture she made, and there was silence in the market-place as her gentle voice went on through the words of the hymn.

The mother had begun the second verse when one of the children gave a cry. It was Sawquehanna, who seemed suddenly to have remembered the voice and words. She rushed forward,



Sawquehanna seemed to remember the voice.

and flung her arms about the mother's neck, crying, "Mother, mother!" Then, with her arms tight about her, the tall girl joined in singing the words that had lulled her to sleep in their cabin home.

"Alone, and yet not all alone, am I
In this lone wilderness,
I feel my Saviour always nigh;
He comes the weary hours to bless.
I am with Him, and He with me,
E'en here alone I cannot be."

The people in the market-place moved on about their own affairs, and the mother and daughter were left together. Now Mrs. Hartman recognized the blue eyes of Regina, and knew her daughter in spite of her height and dark skin. Regina began to remember the days of her childhood, and the years she had spent among the Indians were forgotten. She was a white girl again, and happier now than she had ever thought to be.

Next day Knoloska, now Susan Smith, and Sawquehanna, or Regina Hartman, went back to their homes in the valley. Many a settler there had found his son or daughter in the crowd of lost children at Carlisle.

Chapter 5

George Washington

1732–1799

A few miles below Mount Vernon, on the Potomac River, was the beautiful estate of Belvoir, belonging to an English gentleman of rank named Lord Fairfax. The broad Potomac wound about the base of the lawn that sloped gently downward from the old colonial mansion which sat upon a height looking out across the exquisite Virginia country.

The Potomac was not a busy river then, and the only trade that came up it was such as was needed to supply the rich planters on the shores with food and clothing. From the porch of Belvoir one might see an occasional sailing vessel dropping up with the tide, lately come from England to make a tour of the seaboard states, and to take home cotton and tobacco in exchange for the silks and satins brought out to the colonies.

A great man in both England and America was Lord Fairfax; he owned many estates in both countries, but his favorite was this of Belvoir, not only because of its great natural beauty, but because he liked the company of the Virginia planters, who joined a certain frankness and simplicity of life with all the charms of European refinement.

Lord Fairfax kept up all the old English customs in his Potomac home. He had a passion for horses and for hunting, and his pack of foxhounds was the best in the colony. Sometimes he had the company of men of his own age to hunt with him, but he was always sure that he could count upon the fellowship of a certain boy, the son of a neighbor, named Washington. Whenever the hunting season arrived, Lord Fairfax sent word to Mrs. Washington that he would be glad of the company of her eldest son George, and a day or two later the boy would appear at Belvoir, keen to mount horse and be off for the chase.

On one such winter day Lord Fairfax and his friend George were hunting alone. They had had a good run and caught their fox, and were returning home in a leisurely fashion across the rolling country south of the hills. They were a curious couple.

The Englishman was nearly sixty years old, more than six feet tall, very gaunt and big-boned, with gray eyes overhung by bushy brows, sharp features, and keen, aquiline nose. He had been a great beau in his youthful days in London, and there was no mistaking the mark of authority that sat upon him.

The boy who rode by his side was not yet sixteen years old, and yet he scarcely seemed a boy, nor would his manner have led one to treat him as such. He was unusually tall and strong for his years, and he had so trained himself in a strict code of conduct that a singular gravity and decision marked his bearing. This might have had much to do with the bond of affection between the man and the youth. Lord Fairfax was not ashamed to listen seriously to the opinions of young George

Washington, and he had learnt that those opinions were not apt to be trivial, but the result of deep observation and thought.

As they rode home the man asked the boy what he was planning to do. He knew that Mrs. Washington was poor and that her son would have to make his own way in the world.

"What should you like to be, George?" he inquired. "I dare say you've had enough schooling by this time."

"The sea was my first choice, sir," was the answer. "My brother Lawrence got me a commission in the navy, but at the last minute mother asked me not to leave her. She has had hard times bringing us all up, and I felt, as the eldest, that I ought to stay at home; so I gave up my commission."

Mrs. Washington urges George not to enter the Navy.

"That was hard," said Lord Fairfax, "and yet I think you did well. There should be openings for a young man in the colonies. It seems to me I heard that you were very fond of the surveyor's work."

The boy looked up quickly, and his bright eyes flashed. "So I am, sir. I have made surveys of all the fields near school, and have got the figures in my books at home. I should like very much to be a real surveyor."

"Well, George," said Lord Fairfax, "perhaps I can help you then. I've bought lands out west, the other side the Appalachians. It's a big tract I own, but I know little about it, and I'm told that men are settling out there and taking it up themselves. I should like to have it surveyed, and I think you're just the one to do it."

"I should like it above all things," said the boy, "if you think you can trust me to do the work properly."

Lord Fairfax smiled slightly as he looked down at his companion. He was apt to be somewhat amused at Washington's serious modesty. "I'll show you the plans after dinner. I almost wish I could go out there with you."

They were now nearing Belvoir, and the man put spurs to his horse and dashed across the intervening fields. The boy followed close behind, sitting his horse to perfection. Just before they reached Belvoir they came to a high hedge. Lord Fairfax put his horse at it and went flying over. A second later George had followed him. There was no feat of horsemanship to which he was not equal.

A little later dinner was served in the big dining-room at Belvoir. Lord Fairfax had his brother's family living with him, and with one or two friends who were apt to be staying at the house they made quite a large party. The long polished mahogany table gleamed with silver and glass. Candles on it and in sconces about the white paneled walls shed a pleasant lustre over the dinner party.

It was a time when men and women paid great attention to dress. The ladies wore light flowered gowns, and the men brilliant coats and knee-breeches, with lace stocks and white powdered hair. Their manners were of the courts of Europe, polished in the extreme, and they had all been trained to make an art of conversation. Negro servants waited on the table, and the noble lord presided at its head with something of the majesty of a medieval baron in his castle. There were young people present, and George sat with them, paying gallant speeches to the girls and telling stories of sport to the boys. He was a popular youth, having a singularly gentle manner which made him a great favorite with those of his own age.

After dinner Lord Fairfax took George to his study, and spread out the plans of his western estate. He told the boy just where to go and what to do, and George made notes in a small pocket-book, asking questions now and then which showed a remarkable knowledge of the surveyor's work.

"When can you start?" Lord Fairfax asked, as he finished with the plans.

"At once," said the boy, "if mother can spare me, and I think she can."

"Good. I'd like another hunt with you before you go, but when there's work afoot a man shouldn't tarry. The sooner you start the better."

A little later George was sleeping soundly in the guest-room above-stairs dreaming of the adventures he hoped soon to have.

On a March day in 1748 Washington set out with young George Fairfax, a nephew of the English lord, to make the surveying expedition. Their road led by Ashley's Gap, a deep pass through the Blue Ridge, that picturesque line of mountains which had so far marked the boundary of civilized Virginia.

When they reached the pass they found at its base a rapidly rising river. The melting snow which still lingered on the hilltops had swollen the stream and in places had made the road almost impassable. The two horsemen, by searching for fords, managed to make their way through the pass, and came out into the wide, smiling valley of Virginia, bounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Alleghanies. Here flowed that picturesque river called by the Indian name of Shenandoah, which means "the Daughter of the Stars."

The first stop the travelers made was at a rough lodge house where one of Lord Fairfax's bailiffs lived, and here the actual work of surveying began. Spring was rapidly coming, and young George Washington was by no means blind to the beauties of the country in that season. He tried, however, to look about him with a practical eye. He studied the valley for building sites. He examined the

soil. He made carefully measured maps and drawings, after using his surveyor's rod and chain. When he had learned all that he wanted of this locality, he followed the valley down toward the Potomac, he and Fairfax camping out at nights under the trees, sleeping beside a watch-fire, and keeping ever on the alert for attack by Indians or wild animals.

George Washington, Surveyor, Henry Hintermeister

When they had reached the river they found it so swollen with spring floods that there seemed no way of crossing it. Finally, however, they met an Indian with a birch-bark canoe and bargained with him to take them across. In this way, swimming their horses, they reached the Maryland side, and set out again westward.

Shortly after they had left the river they came to a planter's house where they stayed over night. The next day they were surprised by the arrival of a war party of thirty Indians carrying scalps won in battle. The planter knew how to treat the Indians, and soon made friends with them by offering them whiskey. George had seen little of the red men and begged them to hold a war-dance.

The white men and the red went out into a meadow and there built a fire, round which the braves took their seats. The chief made a speech telling of the tribe's deeds of valor, and calling on the warriors to win new triumphs. Gradually one by one the reclining members of the band rose and circled about the fire in a slow swinging step. Two Indians at a little distance beat upon a rough drum made of wood covered with deerskin and half filled with water.

As the chief's voice rose higher and higher and the music grew louder and louder, more and

more men joined the dance, until finally all the tribe was dancing about the fire, and their pace grew ever faster. Now, from time to time, one would leap in the air uttering savage cries and yells, then another, and finally all seemed absolutely lost in a sort of demon's frenzy. Suddenly, at a sharp command from the chief, the dance and the music ceased, and the warriors came up to their white friends smiling and asking for more whiskey.

The scene made a deep impression on George Washington. So far he had lived only among white people, and knew little of the Indian in his native haunts, but from the date of this war-dance he began to study the red man's character, and before long he had become an expert in the art of dealing with these people.

For a month George and young Fairfax traveled through the land that belonged to the latter's uncle, and at the end of that time the boy had made practically a complete survey of the region. By the middle of April he was back at Belvoir. His plans were examined and approved, and he was well paid for his services.

So pleased was the Englishman with George's work that he used his efforts to get him the appointment of Public Surveyor. The position pleased the boy, who at once started to make maps of the whole region lying along the Potomac. He divided his time between his mother's simple house, the big house which his older half-brother, Lawrence, had built at Mount Vernon, and Lord Fairfax's seat at Belvoir. The strongest friendship had grown up between the nobleman and the boy, and George unquestionably profited greatly by his talks with this man, who was very fond of literature and art, and who had known the most distinguished men and women of Europe.

Belvoir had a fine library, and George spent much of his spare time there reading with special eagerness the history of England and Addison's essays in the Spectator. His only schooling had been that which he had gained at a very primitive log schoolhouse, where an old man named Hobby, originally a bondsman, taught the children of the plantations reading, writing, and arithmetic. George, however, was not the boy to be content with such a simple education, and he had made up his mind that if he could not go to William and Mary College he would at least learn all he could from Lord Fairfax's well-stocked library.

Young Washington's work as a surveyor was shortly cut in upon by the outbreak of trouble with France. In looking over the youths of the neighborhood who were likely to make good soldiers, attention was almost at once attracted to him. Everybody knew he had a great sense of responsibility, and his feats as an athlete were equally well known.

As a small boy he had been unusually big and strong for his age, and had always delighted in any kind of contest of strength. He could outrun, outride and outbox any boy of either side the Potomac, and had proved it in many contests of skill. When he was at Hobby's school he had liked to form his mates into companies at recess time, with cane stalks for rifles and dried gourds for drums, and drill them in the manual of arms. They had fought mimic battles, and Washington always commanded one side. He had really learned a good deal of the art of war in this way, and so when men were casting about for likely young officers they naturally thought of the boy surveyor.

His brother Lawrence had sufficient influence to procure him an appointment as District Adjutant General, and had him make his headquarters at Mount Vernon, where he immediately began to drill the raw recruits of the countryside. But in the midst of these military operations Lawrence fell ill and had to make a sea voyage to the West Indies, taking his young brother George

with him as company.

In the West Indies George caught smallpox, but he made a quick recovery and after a short convalescence began to enjoy the tropical life which was so entirely new to him.

Unfortunately Lawrence Washington did not grow stronger, and finally came back to Mount Vernon to die under his own roof. He was very young, very high-spirited and accomplished, and immensely popular with all Virginians. George had looked up to him as to a second father, and his loss was a tremendous blow to him. Lawrence for his part must have realized the very unusual qualities of character in his young half-brother. He left his great estate of Mount Vernon together with other property to his wife and daughter, and in case they should die, then to his mother and his brother George. George was asked to take charge of the estates, and although he was still only a boy in years he showed such splendid ability and judgment in business matters that the whole care of the family interests soon fell upon his shoulders.

We have already seen how deeply this boy impressed older men with his rare judgment, and it is scarcely strange to find that he was soon after picked out by the governor of Virginia to command an expedition sent through the wilderness to treat with the Indians and French. This required physical strength and firm purpose, the courage to deal with the Indians and shrewdness to treat with the French. Washington was known to have all these qualities. His youth was the only thing against him, and that the governor was glad to overlook.

It was a rough and perilous expedition, made partly in frail canoes down the great rivers, and partly by fighting a way through the unbroken woods. Washington met the Indians whom the French had tried hard to win over to their side, and by the most skilful diplomacy induced the chiefs to send back the wampums which the French had given them as tokens of alliance. He had studied the Indian character and knew the twists and turns of their peculiar type of mind. He was frank and outspoken with them, and as a result won their confidence, so that for a great part of his journey chiefs of the Delawares, the Shawnees and other tribes traveled with him.

Besides his success with the red men, George Washington, with his surveyor's knowledge, made a careful study of the country through which he passed, the result of which study was of the greatest value in later years when he commanded an army in that region.

He picked out the place where the Alleghany and Monongahela Rivers meet as an admirable site for a fort and made a report of its advantages from a military point of view. Only a year or two later French engineers proved the correctness of his judgment by settling on the spot as the site of Fort DuQuesne, which is now Pittsburg.

Successful as he had been with the Indians, Washington was scarcely less successful with the civilized French commander. This man, like those at Belvoir, recognized at once the self-command, the extreme intelligence, and the modesty of the youth who appeared before him. The old officer and the young pioneer met as equals and fought diplomatically across the table as to which nation should win the alliance of the red men. The negotiations were extremely difficult, enough to try the skill of a man grown old in diplomatic service, but Washington completed his mission successfully, and at last set out to retrace his steps home.

Now they had much more difficulty with the Indians and with the elements. Some of their guides turned traitors, and they had to watch their arms by night and day. Ceaseless vigilance had to be used, and time and again the little band had to make forced marches and change their course on

the spur of the moment to throw off bands of pursuing savages. When they reached the banks of the Alleghany River they found that it was only partly frozen over and that great quantities of broken ice were driving down the channel in the middle.

Washington knew that a band of hostile Indians was at his heels, and he had to plan some way of crossing the Alleghany. He decided to build a raft, but had only one poor hatchet with which to construct it. The men set to work with this, and labored all day, but night came before the raft was finished. As soon as they could they launched it and tried to steer it across with long poles. When they reached the main channel the raft became jammed between great cakes of ice, and it seemed as if they would all be swept down-stream with it. Washington planted his pole against the bottom of the stream and pushed with all his might, in hopes of holding the raft still until the ice should have gone by. Instead the current drove the ice against his pole with such force that he was jerked into the water and only saved himself from being swept down the roaring channel by seizing one of the logs.

They found it impossible to reach shore. The best they could do was to get to an island near which the raft had drifted. Here they passed the night, exposed to extreme cold, in great danger of freezing; but in the morning the drift ice was found so tightly wedged together that they were able to cross over on it to the opposite bank of the Alleghany.

This was but one of many adventures that befell the little party on its homeward way. Through all kinds of dangers Washington led his men, and finally he had the satisfaction of bringing the expedition safely back to Williamsburg, where he gave the governor a full report of his remarkable mission. It was practically the first expedition of its kind in Virginian history, and the story of it soon spread far and wide through the Old Dominion.

Everywhere men spoke of the remarkable skill the young man had shown in dealing with fickle Indians and crafty French. Report was made of the trained eye with which the young commander had noticed the military qualities of the country and of the courage he had shown in all sorts of perils. More than that, the governor of Virginia and other men in power realized that Washington had prudence, good judgment, and resolution to a remarkable degree, and told each other that here was a man worthy to uphold the interests of the colony. From the date of this trip George Washington became a prominent figure. It was not long before he was to be the mainstay of Virginia.

Every one knows the story of Washington's life. From being the mainstay of Virginia and fighting with General Braddock against the French and Indians, he became the mainstay of the United Colonies and fought through seven long and trying years against the veterans of England. Who can overestimate the great patience and courage and determination that heroic struggle required of him?

We see him taking command of the raw recruits at Cambridge, leading his men in victory at Trenton, sustaining them in defeat at Monmouth, cheering them through the desperate winter at Valley Forge. Later we see him as first President of the United States guiding the new republic through its first troubled years, and later still as the simple gentleman of Mount Vernon, glad to escape to the peace of the river and fields he loved.

There are few figures in history quite so self-reliant as that of this "Father of his Country." The qualities which made him so remarkable a boy were the same as those which made him so great a man.

Chapter 6

The French and Indian War

1688-1748

A revolution broke out in England in 1688, and James, the king, fled to France. The French king, Louis XIV., gave James shelter; and this made war between France and England. In these wars, the colonies had their share, and the Indians also took part, some helping the English colonies, some the French colonies.

The first attacks were made by the French colonists upon the English settlements in New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts, for these colonies were easy to reach.

In the summer of 1689, a party of French and Indians crept down from Canada, and attacked a settlement at Dover in New Hampshire.

A little later a band of French and Indians surprised some English colonists at work in their fields in one of the Maine settlements. Their fort was destroyed, and only a few of the settlers escaped alive.

During the winter down came another band of French and Indians, and these broke in upon the quiet town of Schenectady, New York. The people in this town had not dreamed of danger. The winter was so cold and the snow was so deep that they were sure no foe would risk a march across the country. Reasoning like this, they left the town unguarded. Even the gates were left open, and it is said that snow men were placed at the gate in the place of living sentinels—so secure did the people feel.

But the French and Indians were no mean foe. There was nothing they did not dare, nothing they would not risk.

They reached the outskirts of the town in the morning, but lay hidden in the forests all day long. There they waited till the lights were out in the houses and the people were fast asleep. Then they crept out from the forests, past the snow sentinels, through the gates—in upon the sleeping people.

"Make no sound," their leader said, "till I give the signal."

The soldiers and Indians obeyed, and so softly did they creep into the town that the snow hardly crunched beneath their tread.

Then the leader gave the signal. Wild whoops rang out in the cold, still, midnight air. Torches blazed; rifles cracked. The people sprang from their beds terror-stricken and stunned with noise.

The Indians fell upon them like wild animals. More than sixty settlers were tomahawked. The houses were burned, and the Indians danced and yelled by the light of the fire. Only a few settlers escaped; and these, after a terrible journey, half clad, and with bare feet, dragged themselves into the fort at Albany.

After this more attacks were made upon New England.

Such was the dangerous condition of the colonies; and we may be sure that there was great rejoicing when at last France and England made peace.

For when the two countries stopped fighting, the French and English colonies, too, stopped making trouble for each other.

Peace lasted, however, for only a short time. Another war between France and England soon followed—Queen Anne's War, it was called—and in this the colonies again shared the ill-feeling of the mother countries.

After this came a peace of thirty-one years. Then came a third war—King George's War. This lasted only two years, but it was a time of trouble in the colonies.

One of the greatest events of King George's War was the taking of the French stronghold—Louisburg—by the New England colonists.

Louisburg had long been called the "Gibraltar of America"; and indeed it seemed rightly named. But General Pepperell set out from New England with an army of four thousand untrained farmers and fishermen; and with these he marched up to Louisburg, and, to his own surprise, the garrison surrendered to him.

"Despair of nothing!" the good old Puritan preacher had said to these men, as they went out from Boston; "Despair of nothing so long as God is the leader."

It was indeed wonderful how easily Louisburg fell into the hands of the colonists. Even General Pepperell said, "I wonder myself how we ever did it. Surely God must have been with us."

In time King George's War, too, closed with a peace treaty, but there could never be real peace till the ownership of the new country was settled.

"We discovered and explored the coast. That makes the whole country ours," said the English.

"We have not only explored the inland country, but we have colonized the Mississippi. That makes it ours," said the French.

"There is but one way to settle this," said the English king; "we must fight it out once and for all."

Then the English government laid out its maps. "We own from the northern boundary of the Massachusetts Colony, to the southern boundary of Georgia—and from the Atlantic to the Pacific!" England said.

At the same time the French government laid out its maps.

"We own the country along the St. Lawrence, the Great Lakes, and the Mississippi with its branches," France said.

"We will send forces to keep the French off our territory," said the English.

"We will send forces to keep the English off our territory," said the French.

The French Getting Ready for War.

"Let it cost what it will," said the French governor of Canada, "we must not lose our hold on the Mississippi Valley."

So Celoron De Bienville was sent down into the valley with a company of soldiers.

"We must get possession of the middle part of this valley," said Bienville.

So when he reached the Ohio River region, he drew up his men around him. "In the name of

France, and in the name of our French King Louis XV., do we take possession of this river and the country round about," Bienville said. For this was the French way of taking possession of a country.

Then Bienville buried a lead plate beneath a tree, and on the plate were these words: —

In the year 1749,
during the reign of Louis XV.,
we Celoron — commander-in-chief of New France —
have buried this plate —
near the river Ohio —
as a monument of
our having taken
possession of the said river Ohio
and of all streams
that fall into
the same. And of all
the lands on both sides
as far as the sources
of said rivers.

Then the little band marched on. At one place Bienville came upon an Indian village friendly to the English.

"My children," said Bienville to these Indians, "I have been told that the English have turned you from us. More than this; in my absence they have come into our lands. Now listen to me, my children, and know that I shall not allow these English to stay in French territory. Mark well what I say to you. Follow my advice, then the sky will always be calm over your village. I expect an answer from you worthy of true children. Stop, then, your trade with the English, and help me to drive them back into their own country."

Of course the Indians promised faithfully. Indeed, they were ready to promise anything, so frightened were they.

Then Bienville marched on to French Creek; and not far from here he came upon some English traders.

"Begone!" was the French leader's command. And as there were only six traders to Bienville's two hundred men, there was nothing for them to do but to promise to obey. And as they went away Bienville gave them a letter to take to their governor in Pennsylvania.

"I am surprised," said Bienville in this letter, "to find English traders on French territory. I know the governor of Canada would be aggrieved to use force against you, but English traders must not again be found within the limits of his government."

So Bienville went on, burying other plates, and taking further possession of the country; and when at last he felt that the territory was secured to the French, he went back to Canada.

"We have travelled," said Bienville in his journal, "about twelve hundred leagues, though I think it is much more. All I can say is, that I find the Indians of these countries round about the Ohio most friendly to the English and very unfriendly to the French."

"It is well for us that we know this," said the governor of Canada; "it may be useful to us by and by when war is declared."

The Beginning of the French and Indian War.

But merely to say, "We own the Ohio valley," was not enough. This France knew full well. So forts were built as soon as possible along the route Bienville had taken.

"We will not submit to this," said Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia.

"Our own Virginia territory includes the land on which the French have built their forts."

At this time George Washington was a young man of twenty-one. He was brave and wise and a good woodsman. So to him Dinwiddie said, "Can you go to the commander of these French forts and give this letter to him?"

"I shall be proud to be trusted," said Washington, bravely.

"And while you are there, find out if possible how many forts have been built, and how many soldiers are in each."

The country west of the Alleghanies was as yet wild and unbroken. The forests were dense; the plains were trackless, and, at this time of the year, were covered with deep snow. There were no roads; the rivers were bridgeless; and even the Indian trails were hidden beneath the snow. More than this, the country was filled with hostile Indians. Could any undertaking, then, have been more difficult or dangerous?

Washington was brave of heart, however, and set forth with four companions, one white guide, and an Indian interpreter.

At Fort Le Boeuf, Washington was received very cordially by the French, commander. As a guest, he was honored; but upon the matter of business which Washington brought to his notice, the French commander was firm and decided.

"This is our country," he said to Washington, "and you must tell the Virginia governor that we make no excuse to English colonies for what we do in our own country."

With this discouraging reply Washington set out upon his journey home. There had been heavy storms since the little company first travelled across the country, and the danger had increased. The snow was deeper, rains were falling, the rivers were swollen, and their banks were overflowed. Cold winds with sleet and rain beat upon the travellers. The horses failed, and food grew scarce. Washington, with one companion, struck into the forests. He had his compass, and he was sure he could shorten his journey by pushing ahead on foot.

Soon he came to the Allegheny River. How it rushed and roared! Its banks were overflowed, and blocks of floating ice filled the stream. How could he cross this torrent?

"We have our choice," said Washington, "to build a raft or stay here till spring."

His companion smiled grimly and looked at the haversacks.

"It will be as well, perhaps, to build a raft," he said.

So Washington and his companion set to work. It was a rude raft they built, but with this they tried to push their way across. Midway in the stream a huge block of ice struck the raft, and Washington was thrown into the water.

Struggling against the ice, he swam to an island and climbed upon its rocks. The night was very cold, and Washington's clothes froze. But even now he could find some cheer. "If it is as cold as this, the river will be frozen over," he said.

It grew even colder and colder, and soon the river was frozen over. How grateful Washington

was, for now he could easily get across to the Virginian shore! There he built a fire, warmed himself, and dried his frozen clothes.

The long, cold journey was a bitter experience; but Washington did his work well, and when at last he reached his home, the people received him with cheers and shouts of welcome. This was, as we know, only the beginning of George Washington's noble service to his country.

"There is no time to be lost," said Dinwiddie, when he read the letter that Washington had brought from the French commander. "The French will be coming farther down the river. Let us ourselves build a fort at the junction of the Ohio and the Allegheny. This will force the French to stay where they are."

Forty men, then, were hurried off to build this fort; but while they were in the midst of the building, down came a party of French and Indians upon them.

"What are you doing in our territory?" the French commander demanded.

"We are building a fort, but we are building it in our own territory," was the answer.

"It is a fine location for a fort," said the French commander; "but we will finish the building ourselves and save you the trouble."

There were only forty Virginians, and there were two or three times that number of French and Indians. It was useless to fight, so the workmen dropped their tools, and marched back to Virginia. The French finished the fort, took possession of it, and named it Fort Duquesne.

"We couldn't have chosen a better site," said the French commander, gleefully. "How easy it will be to make raids from here into Pennsylvania and Virginia!"

Governor Dinwiddie was furious when he heard of the fate of his fort.

"Shall we endure this insult? Shall we make no attempt to rout the French from our fort?" Dinwiddie thundered into the ears of the Virginia legislature, till at last ten thousand pounds were raised to protect the Ohio valley.

"But Virginia alone cannot protect the Ohio valley," said the wise men of other colonies.

"We must join forces!" said wise Benjamin Franklin. "We must join or die!"

And when the next issue of Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette* came out it had at its top this strange picture; for there was a belief in these days that if a snake was cut in pieces it could live again if only the pieces were joined together in time.

Now, although the danger was so great, the *join-or-die* feeling grew very slowly. It was a new idea for the colonies. Never until now had they felt any close friendship for one another. Indeed, between some of the colonies there had often been real enmity.

One great result, then, of the French and Indian War was that a feeling of brotherhood sprang up among the colonies; they stood now before a common danger; they were forced to forget old quarrels. That they must join or die began to be understood by the people from Massachusetts to Georgia.

Other newspapers copied the join-or-die picture; and when by and by the different colonies began to hold their public meetings, "Join or die! Join or die!" came to be the watchword of the hour.

How the English planned the French and Indian War.

Now when England heard of all this, the king called his council together, and they spread out

the maps of America.

This time it was to see just where the French forts were.

"War is sure to come," they said. "Let us see, then, which forts are most important; for those are the ones that we must capture."

"Fort Duquesne must surely be attacked," said the council; "for see how close it is to Pennsylvania and Virginia. So long as the French hold that, those two colonies must be in danger."

"Surely, then, Duquesne must be attacked!" said the king and the court and all the English generals.

"Then Fort Niagara must be ours. See where it lies—on the route between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario! That fort protects the whole fur trade of the West. Certainly, we must get possession of that."

"Certainly, certainly!" cried the king and the court and all the English generals.

"Then there are the two forts—Crown Point and Ticonderoga. They must be taken for the same reason that Fort Duquesne must be taken. The French will sail up Lake Champlain to these forts; and from there they will march by land upon the New York and New England settlements."

"Certainly, certainly!" cried the king and the court and all the English generals. "Nothing could be plainer."

"Then there is Quebec, one of the strongest fortresses in all America. The French made it strong to protect the St. Lawrence. It was built in the days of Champlain, and Champlain was a far-seeing man."

"Certainly, certainly!" said the king and the court and all the English generals.

"And the French possessions at the mouth of the St. Lawrence—they must be attacked, and for two reasons: They overlook our own possessions, and are dangerous to them, just as Duquesne is dangerous to New York and Virginia. And the other reason is this: they overlook our Newfoundland fisheries; and of course the French will try to destroy our fishing vessels as they enter the bay."

"Certainly, certainly!" cried the king, the court, and all the English generals.

So it was decided that these six points must be attacked at once.

General Braddock

General Braddock was first sent over with the British troops to fight the French, and he was one of England's good generals. He had fought bravely in English battles and had won a name for himself.

Braddock came at once to Virginia, and there the governors of all the colonies went to meet him, that they might consult together.

It was an unknown land to Braddock; he knew nothing of the routes, nothing of the distances. So he and the colonial governors spread out their maps, and went to work to plan a campaign. This is what they finally decided upon; and you will see how well it falls in line with the plans the king and his council had already made.

Four armies were to be made ready. One of these was to start from Fort Cumberland in Maryland, and go direct to Fort Duquesne.

Another army was to start out by sea from Boston and attack Louisburg; for in the treaty at the close of King Georges War, Louisburg had been given back to France.

Another army was to start out from Albany and go up Lake Ontario to Fort Niagara.

Another army was to start from the town of New York and march north to Crown Point and Ticonderoga. When these two forts were taken the same army was to march on to Quebec.

Braddock himself took command of the army that was to march upon Fort Duquesne. Now we are sometimes told that Braddock was lofty and proud, that he thought he knew everything, and that he would take no advice from anybody.

But I am sure that he was not quite so bad as he is painted; and we must own that the colonies were not always as helpful to him as they might have been. Many of them didn't yet believe that there was any need for war.

"It is one of Governor Dinwiddie's scares," they said. "He owns fur-trading stations in the Ohio valley, and he is afraid that he will lose them."

Then there were others who said, "The whole thing is a scheme to stir us up to throw off English rule by and by."

So, when Braddock landed his great army in Virginia, is it any wonder that he was vexed now and then by these quarrels and misunderstandings? Indeed, the provisions which the colonists were to bring for the army were so slow in coming in, that even Washington himself said, "The laggards! They should be chastised." And so, because of these conditions, there was a long, long delay in setting out upon the march.

"Braddock seems in no hurry to be scalped," said England. But England didn't know all that Braddock had to delay him.

At last Benjamin Franklin—the wise, cool-headed man who seemed to know how to do the right thing at the right time—came to the aid of Braddock. He scoured the colony of Pennsylvania and got horses and wagons from the farmers, so that at last Braddock, with his army of twenty-two hundred men, started out through the forests to Fort Duquesne.

At Fort Cumberland the heavy baggage was left, and the army then moved on much more rapidly. Down the valley of the Monongahela marched British soldiers in their fine new red uniforms. The Virginia companies, too, though in leather and homespun, marched no less proudly. The bayonets glistened, the banners waved, the trumpets sounded, and the drums rolled.

Braddock had long counsels with Washington, whom he had taken with him for his aid, and from Washington he had learned much of the Indian way of carrying on war. It was all very new to him; for he had been trained to march his armies out over broad fields, and no one was braver to face an enemy in this way than Braddock was.

Now it is sometimes said that Braddock scorned the advice that Washington gave him, but that doesn't seem quite true. For when Washington advised Braddock to keep scouts ahead lest the Indians be hidden in the swamps, Braddock did as Washington advised. At the time the Indians surprised the army, there was one little force ahead of the main army, and a smaller force still ahead of that, watching and marking out a road.

But the French and Indians, also, were on the watch. They were used to attacking from behind trees.

So, whether Braddock tried to follow Washington's advice or not, it is little wonder that the general and his soldiers were unprepared for the sudden onslaught of their savage enemies.

"*Vive le roi! Vive le roi!*"

"Whoop! Whoop!"

It was the French and the Indians. They had crept out from Duquesne to surprise the English army.

Out flashed fire from behind the trees, from the swamp—from everywhere. The head of the advance was mowed down. Then the English rallied, and poured so terrible a volley upon the enemy that the French leader and thirteen of his chosen men fell.

But the English were panic-stricken. What could they do?

Braddock tried to form them into platoons, as he had been taught, and as they had been taught. But platoons were of little use in a fight like this. For three hours this terrible fight went on. Braddock himself had five horses shot from under him.

Washington's own horse was killed, and he mounted another. That, too, was killed. A bullet went through Washington's coat and another through his hat.

"Truly, the Great Spirit protects that warrior," said the Indians.

At last General Braddock himself was shot, and he fell from his horse. At the sight of their fallen leader, the British soldiers turned and fled.

"Shame upon you!" shouted one officer, "will you leave your general to be scalped?"

But the British soldiers were in a frenzy of fear. For three hours they had fired into space, seldom seeing one of their enemy. So it was the Virginia soldiers that lifted the dying general and carried

George Washington as Captain in the French and Indian War, Junius Brutus Stearns

him from the field.

"Who would have thought such a battle possible!" gasped Braddock. A few minutes later he said, "How brave the Virginians were! I hope that I may live to reward them. They are noble soldiers."

But Braddock was growing weaker and weaker. The men who stood about him knew that he would never live to reward the Virginians or to conquer the French.

"It was very strange," he whispered; "but we shall know better how to fight next time."

Then Braddock closed his eyes and died; and thus ended the first of the four expeditions against the French.

Chapter 7

James Otis

1725-1783

"From men like Otis, Independence grew;
From such beginnings empire rose to view."
Thomas Dawes.

James Otis, Henry Blackburn

It was a raw February day in Boston town, and Mr. James Otis, advocate-general of the Colony of Massachusetts, buttoned his brown surtout closely about him, as he passed out through the round-topped doorway of his house on Court street and walked briskly on toward the Royal Exchange tavern, or Stone's—as the tavern was called "for short"—on State street. It was at Stone's that the lawyers and politicians of old Boston met to talk things over before court was opened in the State House across the way.

But though the day was raw the sturdy advocate-general did not feel nearly so much the sharp sea-turn that came in from the bay, damp and penetrating, as he did the responsibility that was laid upon him and the pinch of the struggle between duty and inclination. For Mr. Paxton, collector of customs for the king in Boston town, had determined to put a stop to the "tax-dodging" of those merchants of Massachusetts who denied the king's right to collect such duties, and who smuggled or secreted goods in their own houses in order to avoid the dues. Under the laws made for the colony, in England, such places could be searched and, if resistance were made, the officers, under the authority of a paper called a Writ of Assistance, could request or compel any citizen to assist them in their forcible search of a private house.

This law enraged the good people of the Bay Colony, but Mr. Paxton, the collector, was deter-

mined to force his order through, and he had petitioned the Supreme Court, sitting in Boston, to grant these writs of assistance. It was the duty of the advocate-general to argue such a case as this before the court and secure the writ. So Mr. Paxton called upon Mr. James Otis, as advocate-general, to argue the case for the crown.

But Mr. James Otis, the advocate-general, did not wish to do his official duty. He did not believe in the right of king or council to make such a law.

"A man's house is his castle," he declared, "and while he is quiet he is as well guarded as a prince. If these writs of assistance are made legal no man is safe—the privilege of safety at home is annihilated. Officers may enter our houses whenever they please and we cannot resist them. It is wrong; it is totally wrong. No act of Parliament can make such a writ stand. I cannot—I will not be party to it."

James Otis was an impulsive man, of quick temper and of hasty speech, but he was a lover of right and justice and liberty. When he made up his mind, however, he was quick to act, and before the short walk between his house and "Stone's" was over he had determined upon his course. He would refuse to argue the writ.

"But as judge-advocate you must argue it," said his friend Mr. Thacher, great lawyer and true patriot. "Your argument is right. The writ is not legal. Even what is binding in England cannot be used against us in America. But that is not for you to say. As advocate-general for the crown you must argue for the benefit of the crown; there is no other way."

"But there is a way, Thacher!" cried James Otis, turning on his friend. "It is the way of every honest man out of a dishonest situation. Here, Master Stone," he demanded in his impulsive way, and the landlord of the "ordinary" hurried up to answer Mr. Otis's summons; "some paper and a quill, quickly, please!"

Then seated at a table in a quiet corner, while Mr. Thacher stood beside him, James Otis dashed off a few hasty lines and showed the letter to his friend.

"That's the way I can fix it," said he.

It was the resignation of James Otis as advocate-general of the colony. It meant the loss of much practice, for which the crown paid good fees, but in the eyes of James Otis, loss of money was not to be compared with loss of honor.

No sooner was the fact of this resignation known than the merchants of Salem and Boston, the two ports most affected by this odious search law, applied to James Otis to take their case and argue against the writ.

It would be before this very court, in which, as advocate-general, it would have been his duty to argue in behalf of the writ, and the opportunity was one which his impulsive nature could not resist.

"I shall be glad to do it, gentlemen," he said to those who sought his aid; but when they offered liberal fees in payment of his services Otis was as quick tempered as he had been with his friend Thacher.

"Fees?" he cried; "fees, do you say? In such a case, gentlemen, I despise all fees," and he would take none; for, in this case, resistance to what he considered tyranny was duty, and not a matter of business.

This feeling grew within him as the time of the trial approached, and when, on a late day in that same month of February, 1761, he entered the courtroom in the Old State House on State street, where the writ was to be argued, he was so inspired by his theme that he made one of the famous

speeches of the world.

The court-room—they still show it to visitors, in the east end of the famous Old State House, preserved as a memorial of patriotism by Boston town—was filled with lawyers and interested listeners as Otis rose to speak, for the case was one that affected the safety and manhood of every citizen of the Bay State. Down upon this opponent of kingly prerogative looked the full-length portraits of Charles and James, kings of England both, who held to that ridiculous theory that "the king can do no wrong." Five judges in scarlet robes, wide bands, and mighty wigs, sat to hear the case, and central among them as chief-justice was Thomas Hutchinson, who combined in his single person the lucrative offices of lieutenant-governor of Massachusetts, chief-justice of the Superior Court of the colony, governor of the castle, member of the council, and judge of probate. Mr. Thacher, the friend and associate of Otis, had just completed an able, but mild and moderate speech when the "champion of the people" sprang to his feet.

Already he was tingling with his theme; at once he burst into an indignant protest against the drag the king would place on liberty.

"I take this opportunity to declare," Otis burst forth, "that, to my dying day, I will oppose with all the faculties God has given me, all such instruments of slavery on the one hand, and villainy on the other, as this writ of assistance."

This stirred the people. One young man, who later became a great factor in America's independence and progress, John Adams, of Quincy, was so aroused and electrified by the words he heard that, fifty-seven years after, he could repeat almost word for word the speech of Otis, a speech which so aroused and awakened his patriotism that, as his grandson declared, "that speech of Otis was to Adams like the oath of Hamilcar administered to Hannibal." It made of the young man an instant patriot.

"I was solicited," continued Otis, "to argue this cause as advocate-general; and because I would not I have been charged with desertion of my office. To this charge I can give a very sufficient answer: I renounced that office, and I argue this cause from the same principle…. It is in opposition to a kind of power the exercise of which in former periods of English history" (here he glanced significantly to the two royal portraits on the wall) "cost one king of England his head and another his throne. … I cheerfully submit myself to every odious name for conscience' sake; and from my soul I despise all those whose guilt, malice, or folly has made them my foes. Let the consequences be what they will, I am determined to proceed. The only principles of public conduct that are worthy of a gentleman or a man are to sacrifice estate, ease, health, applause, and even life, to the sacred call of his country."

Then he went deeply into the case and for four hours the speech went on. Into it James Otis put all the strength of his mind, all the force of his indignation, all the splendor of his eloquence, all the brilliancy of his magnetic power.

Parliament, he said, could not legalize tyranny. "Though it should be made in the very words of the petition," he declared, "it would be void, for every act against the Constitution is void."

"Every man," he declared, "is individually independent. His right to his life, his liberty, and his property no created being can rightfully contest; these rights are inherent and inalienable."

It was just such language as this that, years after, opened the Declaration of Independence, which James Otis thus inspired.

Individuals, he said, when associated together as a nation for mutual protection and defence did

not surrender their natural rights. "Our ancestors, as British subjects," he said, "and we their descendants, as British subjects, were entitled to all those rights, and we are not to be cheated out of them by any phantom of virtual representation or any other fiction of law and politics."

Then Otis explained what taxes were, when they were just, and laid down the doctrine that brought on the American Revolution. "Taxation without representation is tyranny." Acts imposing unjust or oppressive taxation, he declared, were tyrannical, and never had and never could be executed in America. "If the king of Great Britain, in person," he declared, "were encamped on Boston Common at the head of twenty thousand men, with all his navy on our coast, he would not be able to execute those laws. They would be resisted or eluded."

He grew bolder and more impassioned as he concluded. He denounced the taxation and revenue laws of England, "made by a foreign legislature without our consent, by a legislature which has no feeling for us and whose interest prompts them to tax us to the quick." Then he went on reproaching the British nation, Parliament, and king with injustice, illiberality, ingratitude, and oppression in their conduct toward the people of America, in a style of oratory, so John Adams reported, "that I have never heard equalled in this or any country."

The grounds that James Otis took and the sentiments he uttered in that famous five-hour speech do not sound strange to us. We have been brought up to believe in personal liberty, no taxation without representation, and the security of house and home; we have no need for such impassioned appeals or such attacks on royalty. We have no fear of royalty to-day, and we have a way of speaking our minds if things do not go to suit us in matters of state. But in that day it was treason to criticise; it was crime to talk of liberty; and the words of Otis came like a strong wind blowing down from the heights of freedom.

"I do say in the most solemn manner," John Adams declared fifty years later, "that Mr. Otis's oration against writs of assistance breathed into this nation the breath of life."

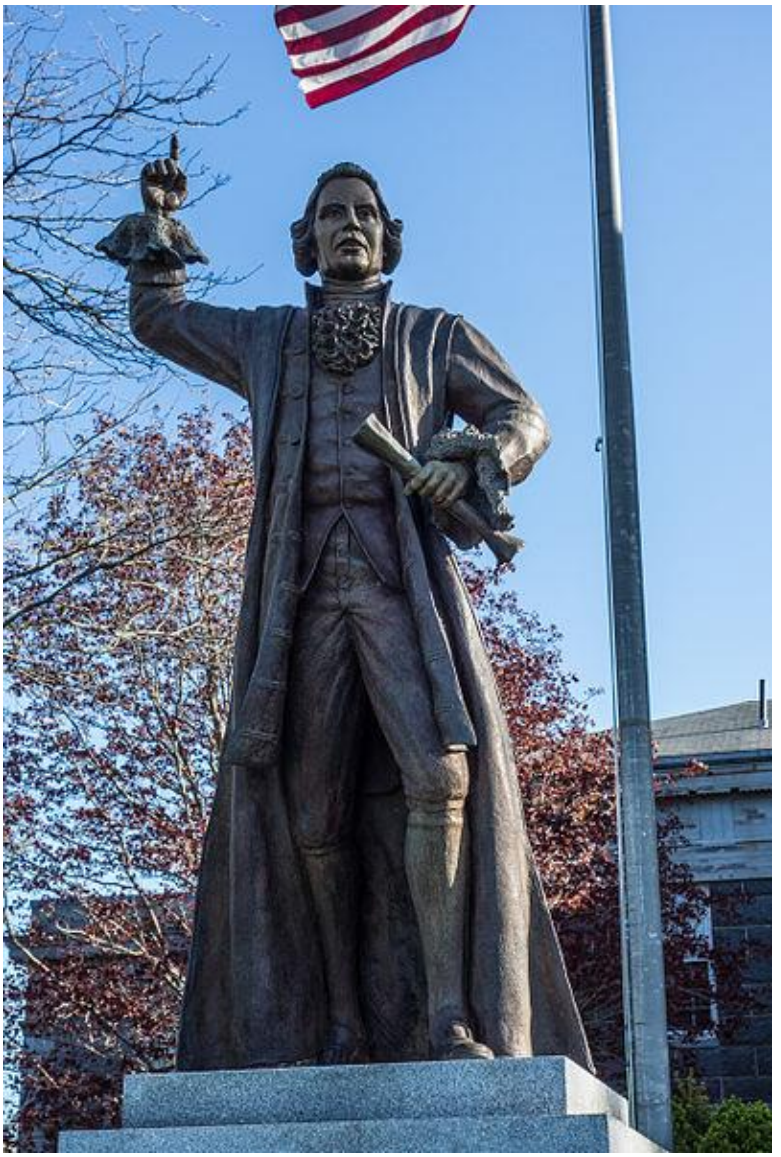
It set people thinking; it gave them courage; it put into expression that feeling that something was wrong in the acts of Great Britain, which, later, took definite shape at Lexington and Concord, and burst into the protest of freemen in the Declaration of Independence.

"This was the opening scene of American resistance," John Adams wrote to a friend. "It began in New England and made its first battle-ground in a court-room. A lawyer of Boston, with a tongue of flame and the inspiration of a seer, stepped forward to demonstrate that all arbitrary authority was unconstitutional and against the law. Then and there, in that court-room, the child Independence was born."

The judges were against him and their decision was adverse; but the writs were not issued publicly. The people were aroused, and the seeds planted by the words of Otis in time burst forth, grew, and blossomed into a righteous and successful resistance to tyranny. His speech made patriots, and those patriots in time made America free.

The story of James Otis is one of the tragedies of the American Revolution. His was a brief but brilliant career, as sad in its ending as it was promising at its opening. Born on Cape Cod, a student of law in Boston, with excellent connections, opportunities, and abilities, he sacrificed, as he declared himself ready to do in that impressive speech, "estate, ease, health, applause, and even life, to the sacred call of his country."

Enlisted on the side of the people he devoted himself to their cause. He neglected his private practice to labor in their behalf. He served them in the Legislature of Massachusetts, and wrote and



Statue of James Otis, Jr., Barnstable County Courthouse, Barnstable, Massachusetts

spoke on the rights of the colonies and the evils of taxation without representation. He proposed and largely brought about the first Colonial Congress, of which he was a member, and when the rising spirit of resistance alarmed the British government and induced it to send troops to America and quarter them upon the people of Boston, Otis protested with all his fiery eloquence….

When the Superior Court met in the State House and found a body of British troops posted outside the building, and even quartered within it, Otis moved at once that the court should adjourn to Faneuil hall, for, he declared, "it is utterly derogatory to this court to attempt to administer justice at the points of bayonets and the mouths of cannon." He advocated the appointment of a committee to remonstrate against the occupation of the town by an armed force, and to demand of the governor that this force be removed "by sea and land, out of the port and the gates of this city."

The boldness of his stand and the vigor of his language raised up many enemies for him in Massachusetts, especially in Boston, where British troops were stationed and Tories abounded. Otis was neither careful of his words nor cautious in his actions, and on the evening of the fifth of September in the year 1764 he was set upon by certain Tories and British sympathizers in a Boston tavern, and so brutally beaten over the head as to make him ever after an irresponsible and often crazy invalid. He was the first eminent martyr to the cause of American independence.

For nearly fourteen years he lived this almost useless life, rousing at intervals and flaming up into the most fervid patriotism, only to break down at the most important moment and drop again into semi-insanity.

At last, on the twenty-third of May, 1783, the very year that saw the triumph of his principles and the dawn of independence for America, he was struck by lightning as he stood in the doorway of his sister's house at Andover, and died at once, a brilliant intellect weakened by his own

carelessness and the assault of a brutal enemy.

To-day, historians in their study of American history agree in proclaiming James Otis as the prophet and forerunner of American independence. He vindicated the rights of Americans to representation, justice, and liberty; he was their open and acknowledged leader in the dawning days of resistance to British tyranny; he led the way to organization and action and became at once the oracle and guide of the patriots of struggling America. He was full of faults and contrasts of character, but to-day these all are forgotten. Impetuous and commanding, sound and just in his advice as a statesman, self-sacrificing and devoted in his stand as a patriot, he won a foremost place among those historic Americans who bore the colonies upward to protest, to revolution, and to victory, and by his burning words, which made him, as John Adams declared, "a flame of fire," he set alight the spark that burst at length into the glorious beacon-fire that lighted the world forward on its path of liberty, progress, and achievement.

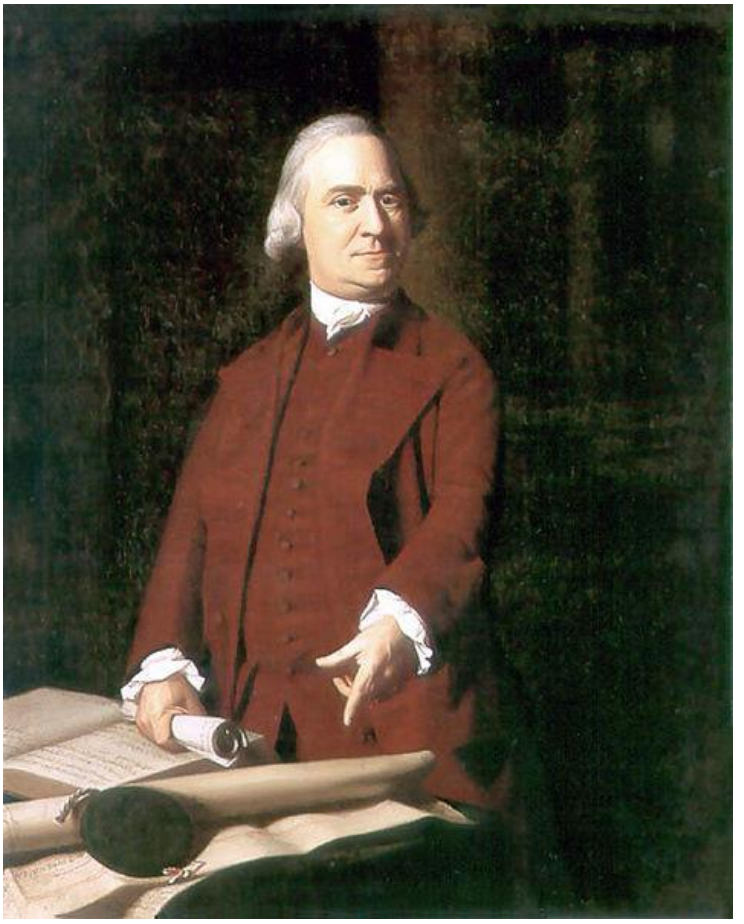
Chapter 8

Samuel Adams

1722-1805

"A man whom Plutarch, if he had only lived late enough, would have delighted to include in his gallery of worthies—a man who, in the history of the American Revolution, is second only to Washington—Samuel Adams." — *John Fiske.*

The fugitives paused on the crest of a ridge just beyond Granny's hill, and looked back toward the town. In the east the day was just breaking, for the dawn comes early about Lexington in April; through the scant spring foliage they could catch glimpses of the vanishing forms of Sergeant Munroe and his guard of eight minute-men, from Captain Parker's Lexington company, for this escort had left the fugitives on the Woburn road, and had at once hurried back to join their comrades on the Common.



Samuel Adams, John Singleton Copley

Only a little while the watchers waited; then there came to their ears from the village green the indistinguishable command which all the world has heard now, better than did those listening fugitives on the distant hill: "Disperse, ye rebels! ye cowards, lay down your arms and disperse!" Then followed other indistinguishable shouts, the fatal pistol shot, never yet explained, the rattle of arms, and the historic, unanswered volley that made up the battle of Lexington. And as these sounds climaxed in the volley of British guns one of the fugitives on the hill turned on the other and made what is set down as "one of the few exultant

outbursts of his life."

"What a glorious morning is this for America!" he exclaimed; for he knew that the result he had long foreseen had come at last, and in what he considered the right way. The British soldiers had fired first; the blame and the responsibility were theirs; conciliation was impossible; the conflict had begun. England was in the wrong.

For a brief space they stood, listening intently; then, not knowing what orders concerning them the vindictive Gage had given his redcoats, the two fugitives hurried on to Burlington, and thence to Billerica, where they made a substantial dinner off cold salt pork and boiled potatoes, served in a wooden tray. Then they were up and off again. And so at last they made their risky way to Philadelphia and the Continental Congress.

For those two fugitives on the Lexington hill on that nineteenth day of April, in the year 1775, were two historic Americans Samuel Adams, the patriot, and John Hancock, whose bold signature we know so well as it heads the signers of the Declaration of Independence. And it was Samuel Adams who made the enthusiastic remark, as upon his ears fell the crack of the British guns at Lexington.

He had long been preparing for that important event. Away back in his college days he had felt it coming. For at Harvard he had made resistance to tyrants the theme of his Commencement oration: "Is it lawful to resist the supreme magistrate if the Commonwealth cannot otherwise be protected?" And the young A.M. distinctly announced that it was not only lawful but imperative. From that day forward the right of Americans to resistance and to liberty had been his chief thought, even when others repudiated the idea of independence, and reiterated their loyalty to the king.

But Samuel Adams educated the people to resistance. To the neglect of his business and his personal comfort and desires he took up the grand idea of personal liberty and direct representation, and drew his fellow-countrymen away from old to new truths.

Samuel Adams was Boston born and bred. Reared in his father's fine old house on Purchase street in that sturdy, democratic old town, he was instructed in its schools, developed amid its influences, and early called to share in its affairs, as a sober-minded, well-balanced, public-spirited young man.

He was an associate of James Otis in all plans that touched the public welfare, distancing even that ardent and impulsive patriot in his opposition to British measures and methods. He made the life of the royal governor Bernard a burden and finally forced him from his post; he waged a never-ending feud with Hutchinson, chief-justice and later governor; he fought with vigor the kingly attempts to fasten a state church upon Puritan New England; he succeeded to the leadership of the patriot party when Otis had been beaten into insanity; he denounced unsparingly and unceasingly the quartering of British troops in Boston, and, after the Boston massacre, actually succeeded in having the obnoxious regiments removed from the rebellious town; he led and strengthened public opinion through the colony by his advice to the towns and his practical use of the great power of the town-meetings those assemblies in which New England people freely spoke their minds; he organized the opposition of the people against the hated Stamp Act and advised the action that led to the famous "Boston tea party;" by letters and speeches, by conferences and counsel, he drew his countrymen into a union for mutual protection against the encroachments of the British crown; he helped form the Committees of Correspondence by which the different colonies came into touch

and accord with each other on the subject of concerted action; he advocated the Congress of the Colonies which James Otis had first proposed, and he labored to bring it about; he went as a delegate to the first Continental Congress at Philadelphia, and there took a stand as the uncompromising opponent of all concessions to the British crown and as the open advocate of independence; he recommended and took part in the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts at Concord, and when, in the Continental Congress, 'fears were expressed lest the bold stand of the colonies should lead to an open rupture with England, it was Samuel Adams who bravely declared, "I should advise persisting in our struggle for liberty though it were revealed from heaven that nine hundred and ninety-nine were to perish and only one of a thousand to survive and retain his liberty. One such freeman," he said, "must possess more virtue and enjoy more happiness than a thousand slaves; let him propagate his like and transmit to them what he has so nobly preserved."

So bold and outspoken an enemy to kingly authority could not but be a marked man, and it is no wonder that the British government wished to silence him, or that Gage, the British commander in Boston, sought to arrest and imprison Samuel Adams as a rebel to the king. That watchful patriot was wary, however, and the general was slow to act. But when Adams saw that more soldiers were coming from England he warned the people to be ready for them and to oppose, if need be, an expedition of troops out of Boston to search for concealed arms or warlike supplies.

It was this warning that led to the active preparations of the New England militia, and especially of the minutemen of Massachusetts; it was this, therefore, that induced the rallying of the minutemen when Paul Revere and his compatriot, William Dawes, galloped out from Boston to warn the country towns of the coming of the regulars; and it was because of this that we may claim for Samuel Adams the credit and responsibility for the now immortal battle of Lexington.

When that clash came Samuel Adams saw that his determined and persistent efforts had at last borne fruit; he felt that resistance to tyranny had indeed taken form, and that the spirit of the people was aroused for a stand for right, for justice, and for liberty. Do you wonder, then, that, as he and John Hancock, arch-rebels both, and fugitives from British oppression and persecution, stood on Granny hill in Lexington, on the nineteenth of April, 1775, and heard from the Common the sounds of resistance and conflict, he should have exclaimed thankfully and with an enthusiasm not often displayed by one so sober and self-contained, "What a glorious morning is this for America"? In that open act of popular resistance Samuel Adams, patriot and lover of liberty, recognized the dawning of a new day for America the sunrise of independence.

When the tidings of that bloody day at Lexington and Concord and the tidings of the twenty-mile harrying of the redcoats by the aroused farmers of Middlesex were speeding through the colonies, arousing them to action, Samuel Adams was posting south to Philadelphia to join his associates in the second Continental Congress. That Congress was still slow to act, and while they hesitated and temporized, considering new and useless appeals to king and Parliament, Samuel Adams stood almost alone as the champion of absolute independence. Gradually, however, men came to his opinion; one after another they joined him in his firm and uncompromising stand, and at last on the fourth of July, 1776, Samuel Adams saw the fulfilment of his hopes and the fruitage of his high desires in the passage and signing of the Declaration of Independence. "For Samuel Adams," so one writer declares, "that was the most triumphant moment of his life."

Even his enemies admitted his great power in this leadership of the forces of revolt. One of them

said of him at that time: "Samuel Adams is the Cromwell of New England; to his intriguing arts the Declaration of Independence is in great measure to be attributed;" and Governor Hutchinson, then a fugitive in London, assured King George that Samuel Adams was the arch-rebel of the colonies, for the reason that "he was the first that publicly asserted the independency of the colonies upon the kingdom."

As for Samuel Adams's fellow-countrymen, we are told how they regarded him in those years of his crowning triumph. John Adams, of Massachusetts, his kinsman and associate in Congress, declared that "Sam Adams was born and tempered a wedge of steel to split the knot of *lignum vitæ* that tied America to England." Josiah Quincy, an ardent patriot, seeking health in England, wrote: "I find many here who consider Samuel Adams the first politician in the world. I have found more reason every day to convince me that he has been right when others supposed him wrong;" and Thomas Jefferson said, "If there was any Palinurus"—that is, pilot—"to the Revolution, Samuel Adams was the man. Indeed, in the Eastern States, for a year or two after it began, he was, truly, the 'Man of the Revolution;' and of his influence in the Continental Congress Jefferson said, 'Samuel Adams was so rigorously logical, so clear in his views, abundant in good sense and master always of his subject, that he commanded the most profound attention whenever he rose in an assembly by which the froth of declamation was heard with the most sovereign contempt.'"

How far he was the "Man of the Revolution" in New England, as Jefferson declared, you have seen in the brief summary of his fearless actions in behalf of independence, and his education of the people of the Massachusetts towns in lessons of liberty. But with the signing of the Declaration of Independence his great life-work practically came to an end. "Had he died then," one of his biographers admits, "his fame would have been as great as it is now. What further he accomplished, though often of value, an ordinary man might have performed." He seems to have been raised up to show the people the only clear path to independence; after that the leadership was taken by others.

Historians tell us that Samuel Adams was what they term "the architect of ruin" that is, he carefully and persistently planned the overthrow of kingly authority in America; that was his mission; he was fitted neither to plan nor organize the successful Republic. You can see from the glimpses I have given you of the man and his career that his work was destructive rather than preservative. He was, as you have seen, a rebel against the British throne from boyhood, and this in spite of the fact that both he and his father were, at one time in their lives, tax-collectors for the crown. You have seen that almost his first notable oration at college was a plea for resistance to tyranny, and that his entrance into public life was as the declared opponent of the kingly prerogative. He was the leader and chosen representative of the restless and aggressive people the "tribune of the yeomanry," as some one called him. He advocated and organized rebellion; he urged on the farmers of Middlesex to stand their ground at Lexington and Concord; and when they had "fired the shot heard round the world," as Emerson puts it, none was more jubilant, none more enthusiastic, than Samuel Adams.

This was all destructive work, you see, the overthrow of constituted authority in America. When it came to upbuilding, the new nation looked to other hands than those of Samuel Adams. Throughout the Revolution he served in the Congress, but his position was rather that of a critic than a leader. And when the government began to take definite shape, and the plan of departments that

was finally adopted as most practical was proposed, Samuel Adams strongly opposed it. He objected to the establishment of a State Department, of a War Department, and of a Treasury Department, the leading executive branches of our government and the chief presidential helpers. Instead, he advocated the outgrown and cumbersome conduct of those important departments by committees of Congress, as had been the method during the Revolution. It would have been a great mistake had his plan been carried out; but even in this opposition he was the same Samuel Adams fearful of the concentration of authority in the president, fearful lest that office become a "one man power" or tyranny, and desirous of having all government and all direction come from the people, through committees selected from them the people whose servant and leader, whose advocate and mouthpiece, he had been so long.

He disliked to exchange the old Articles of Confederation of 1781 which he had helped draw up for the Constitution of 1789, under which we live to-day. The Constitution would centralize things, he feared; the independence of the separate and sovereign States would be given up; and so, not liking the new order of things, he went home to Massachusetts.

There he worked in his beloved town-meetings the people's tribunals to help the Commonwealth of Massachusetts prepare and adopt a State Constitution; there he served the Commonwealth as lieutenant-governor and governor; and there he outlived the century which he had helped to make both notable and historic, dying at last on the second of October in the year 1803, in his house on Winter street in his beloved home-town of Boston, so beloved by him and so much a part of his very existence that one of his associates and fellow-workers declared, in just a bit of good-natured complaining, "Samuel Adams would have the State of Massachusetts govern the Union, the town of Boston govern Massachusetts, and Samuel Adams govern the town of Boston. Then, he believes, the whole would not be ill-governed." Samuel Adams, you see, was a patriot for his own times and generation. The Samuel Adams of the America of 1775 would be out of place, lost, and confounded in the America of 1900.

How much his State and town revered the stout old patriot let me show you.

There had been an election in Massachusetts—the hotly contested State election of 1800. The political opponent of the old ex-governor had been elected, and he himself was rather despairing of the Republic. Inauguration day came, and, up Winter street in Boston town, marched the great procession escorting the governor to the State House on the hill. There were bands of music, flags and banners, parading troops and political clubs, all jubilant over their victory and filling the narrow Boston street with noise and show and color.

As they passed the modest house on the corner of what is today Winter street and Winter place and where, in recent years, a tablet has been erected in honor of "the Father of the Revolution" who once lived on that corner, the old patriot, then nearly eighty years old, was observed by the new governor watching the parade from his window.

"Halt!" commanded the governor-elect, and procession and music alike came to a stop. Then stepping from his carriage, while the troops presented arms and the people waited uncovered, the new governor, political rival and opponent, though he was stood with bared head and extended hands before the door of Samuel Adams, and, in a few brief but tender words, did graceful honor to his political opponent, the patriot and leader of the people, whose efforts had freed the colonies and given liberty and independence to the land.

Statue of Samuel Adams, Faneuil Hall Plaza, Boston, Massachusetts

For the times comes the man. Revolution was inevitable, and God raised up Samuel Adams to be its organizer and earliest leader. Beneath the bronze statue of this historic American where it stands amid the rush and bustle of what is now called Adams square in the city of Boston you may read this estimate of the man: "A statesman incorruptible and fearless." And that is strictly true. As rugged and immovable as the great boulder that, as the century closes, has been placed above his resting-place in the Old Granary burying-ground, in Boston town, Samuel Adams was at once grand and noble, a fearless, sincere, unyielding, and incorruptible patriot, a true American.

And free America owes much to Samuel Adams. He proposed the Revolution; he advocated the Continental Congress; he signed the Declaration of Independence; and was so sharp a thorn in the side of the British Government and of the British generals that they tried first to bribe and then to kill him. But they could neither bribe nor kill him. He lived to see the redcoats of King George driven from Boston and, in time, from America; he lived to hail the final triumph of the principles for which he labored and suffered, and to see the people whose welfare he held above all selfish considerations of gain or position free and independent Americans, beginners and designers of a nation whose greatness even he could not comprehend or prophesy.

While Patrick Henry was leading the people of Virginia in their defiance of the Stamp Act, exciting events were taking place in Massachusetts under another colonial leader. This was Samuel Adams. Even before Virginia took any action, he had introduced in the Massachusetts Assembly resolutions opposing the Stamp Act, and they were passed.

This man, who did more than any one else to arouse the love of liberty in his colony, was born in Boston in 1722. His boyhood was quite different from that of Patrick Henry. He liked to go to school and to learn from books, and he cared little for outdoor life or sport of any kind.

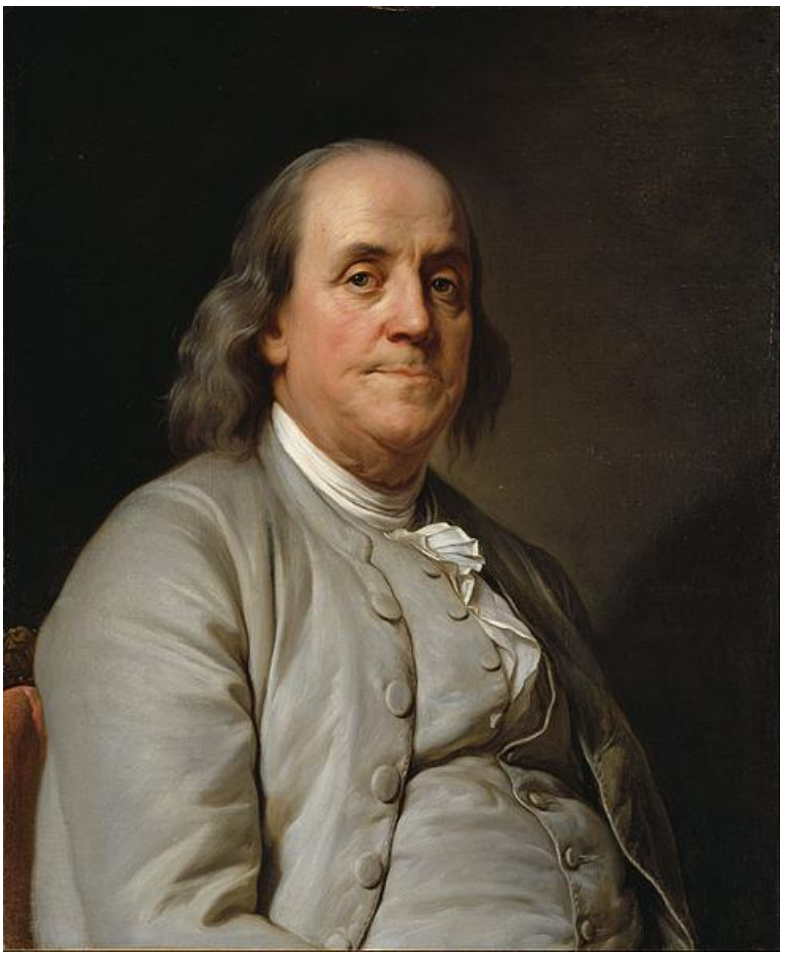
As he grew up, his father wished him to become a clergyman, but Samuel preferred to study law. His mother opposing this, however, he entered upon business life. This perhaps was a mistake, for he did not take to business, and, like Patrick Henry, he soon failed, even losing most of the property his father had left him.

Chapter 9

Benjamin Franklin

1706–1790

If you should go to Boston today you should be sure to visit Old South Church. Just across the street from this church Benjamin Franklin was born. His father, Josiah Franklin, was an English silk-dyer, who came to America in 1682 because here he could worship according to his own beliefs. At that time the people of England did not have religious freedom. Every one was supposed to attend the Church of England. Upon his arrival at Boston the older Franklin found that there was little demand for his skill as dyer. The women in the colony spun and wove the cloth out of which they later made the clothes for their entire families. Often the suits and dresses were not dyed, but when that was necessary, the women themselves did the work. Josiah Franklin had a wife and three children to support, so he became a candle and soap maker. At that time candles were used instead of lamps. Gas and electricity were not even known.



Benjamin Franklin, Joseph Siffrein Duplessis

Benjamin was the fifteenth child of Josiah Franklin. The family was poor and the examples of thrift and saving that Benjamin saw practised daily made a lasting impression on him. He began to read so early that he never remembered having been taught his letters. His father placed him in school when he was eight years old and he remained there for two years. Then several of his older brothers left home to enter business for themselves, so Benjamin was taken into his father's shop. There he helped his father for the next two

years by cutting wicks and filling candle molds with melted tallow.

Not all of young Franklin's time was spent in study or in his father's shop. He was fond of swimming, fishing and boating. A nearby pond was his favorite resort on a sunny day. There he was very popular with the other boys. One day he brought a large kite down to the pond with him. Without telling his playmates what he was about to do, he undressed and then flew the kite. It sailed up and out over the water. Then he tied the string about his waist and waded out several yards. The kite was pulling and tugging; the breeze was strong. Stretching out flat upon his stomach and grasping the string firmly, Franklin let the kite pull him across the pond. The new sport soon became very popular with the other lads in the neighborhood.

Until he was twelve years old Benjamin helped his father make soap and candles. At this time he became so dissatisfied with the work that he talked of running away to sea. His father discouraged that idea, but began to look for a trade for the boy to follow. The father and son visited bricklayers, glaziers, weavers, carpenters and cutlers, but the boy did not like any of the work he saw. About this time James Franklin, an elder brother of Benjamin, returned from England with a press and enough type to open a printing shop. Franklin's father grasped the opportunity to place the restless boy in a trade where he might read and study. He was apprenticed to his brother James, who was to feed and clothe him until he was twenty-one in return for his services. During that time Benjamin was to be taught the trade of printer. Only during the last year of his apprenticeship was he to receive a small wage.

James Franklin started a newspaper in Boston, and Benjamin became the boy-of-all-work in the shop. His brother sometimes treated him cruelly, but he enjoyed his work and liked to read everything that he saw in print. The printing shop was the meeting-place of writers and thinkers of the day, and young Benjamin listened eagerly to their conversation. While working at some task, he thought over all he had heard. Once in a while he wrote out different ideas that occurred to him, but he was afraid to show them to his brother. He believed one little article that he wrote was so good it ought to be printed. He hid it away a long time between the pages of a book.

At last he thought of a way to bring it to his brother's attention without letting him know who had written it. That night he slipped the folded bit of paper under the door of the printing office. The next morning James Franklin found it. As Benjamin watched him reading it his heart nearly stood still. Suddenly James exclaimed, "I like this. I wonder who wrote it?" And he placed it with the papers that were to be printed that day. The unknown author continued to slip articles under the door of the printing shop and James Franklin continued to print them. At last Benjamin confessed that he was the writer and he became a person of some value in the eyes of his brother and his friends.

Several articles that James Franklin printed in his paper displeased the authorities in the colony and he was arrested and thrown into jail. Benjamin was about sixteen years old at that time and for several months, until the release of his brother, he ran the paper. There had been a shipwreck off the New England coast and Benjamin wrote a poem about the event which he printed and sold on the streets of Boston. Another sailor song he wrote was also very popular. His father said that the poems were poor and that he was wasting his time thinking about them.

When James returned from jail the two brothers quarreled more and more. Finally Benjamin decided to leave his brother. James went to all of the printers in Boston and got their promise not

to hire the boy. Since he could find no work at his trade in that city, he determined to go elsewhere. He sold his books and few trinkets and boarded a sailing vessel bound for New York. Later in life he said it was a great mistake to leave home without bidding friends and family good-by.

After a few days at sea Franklin landed at New York. There he went to see William Bradford, the only printer in the town. Bradford had little work and plenty of hands, so he was not in a position to hire the young printer. However, he told him of an opportunity in the shop of a relative in Philadelphia, and urged the boy to go there. In those times it took several days to make the trip from New York to Philadelphia. Now it can be done in two hours.

Franklin boarded another sailing boat whose captain planned to sail around New Jersey, then up the Delaware Bay and River to Philadelphia. While in Long Island Sound the boat was overtaken by a violent storm and very nearly wrecked. After thirty hours the hungry, dripping, sea-sick passengers were landed at Amboy, on the New Jersey coast, from there the young traveler made his way afoot across the state to Burlington. At that town, after a short wait, he boarded a rowboat that was going to Philidelphia. The men of the party rowed until late at night. In the darkness they were certain they had passed their destination, so they landed on the New Jersey shore where they camped until morning. When day broke they could see Philadelphia in the distance. The party rowed across the river and landed at Market Street wharf about nine o'clock.

Franklin's Return to Philadelphia, Jean Leon Gerome Ferris

From the wharf Franklin walked up Market Street. Soon he spied a baker's boy with a basket of bread on his arm. He thought of how hungry he was, so he asked the boy to direct him to a baker's shop. The boy told him where to go, and when he reached the place he went in and asked for three biscuits such as he had known in Boston. The baker did not have any, so Franklin asked for three pennies' worth of bread of any sort. He was surprised when he was given three large rolls. Not knowing what to do with so much bread, he placed a roll under each arm and stepped out into the street gnawing the third one. He walked out Market Street past the home of Miss Deborah Reid who was standing in the doorway. She could not help smiling at the queer figure he made. His clothing was creased and his shoes were dusty. His pockets were stuffed with extra socks and shirts. He might easily have been mistaken for a runaway servant. Deborah Reid would have smiled still more if some fairy had allowed her to peep into the future, and to see the young man passing before her munching a roll, as the world-famous Franklin, and herself at his side as Mrs. Franklin.

It was Sunday morning and the Quakers were walking slowly out Market Street toward their meeting-house. Franklin followed and entered the building. Soon he became drowsy and fell asleep. After the service was ended a kind old Quaker aroused him. This man welcomed him to the Quaker City and found a boarding-place for him. The next day Franklin went to see the printer, Bradford. He did not have work for the boy, but sent him to another man named Keimer who hired him, and who was well pleased with his new employee.

At that time Philadelphia was the capital of the Province of Pennsylvania. Benjamin Franklin soon came to the notice of Governor Keith who suggested that an up-to-date printing shop be set up in the town with the young man at its head. Franklin was pleased and flattered at the governor's attention, and made a journey to Boston to secure his father's aid in buying a press and type. His father welcomed his returned son, but was unable and unwilling to set him up in business. When he returned to Philadelphia the governor still urged his plan and suggested that Franklin go to England to purchase his supplies. The governor promised letters of credit to friends there. After many delays Franklin sailed on the annual ship from Philadelphia to London, being assured that letters of introduction were in the hands of the captain. Imagine his disappointment upon his arrival in London when he found that the easy-going Governor Keith had failed in his promise.

Friendless and almost penniless in the largest city in the world, Franklin soon found work at his trade. He remained in London for eighteen months, and while there met many famous people and visited many noted places. The printers in the shop in which he worked drank beer to make them strong. Franklin argued that beer had little food value because it was nearly all water. The part that was not water was harmful, he said. He drank pure water and was able to do more work with less effort than his fellow-workers. They called him the "Water-American."

After Franklin had been in London a year and a half he met a Philadelphia merchant who was returning with a stock of goods. This man persuaded Franklin to return to America and act as his clerk. Franklin accepted the offer and worked in a store for a time, but upon the death of his employer he returned to printing. About this time a newspaper, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, was offered for sale. As he had saved a little money Franklin bought the paper. Soon he secured the contract for printing the paper money for the colony and he was on the road to become a successful man.

In 1732 Franklin began to print an almanac under the name of Richard Saunders. This became the famous *Poor Richard's Almanac*. It was published yearly and was filled with quaint sayings, and

homely advice, such as:

Early to bed and early to rise
Makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.

God helps those who help themselves.

A word to the wise is enough.

Well done is better than well said.

Have something to do to-morrow? Do it to-day.

Drive thy work. Let not thy work drive thee.

Make haste slowly.

A penny saved is a penny made.

One to-day is worth two to-morrows.

Speak little: do much.

A slip of the foot you may soon recover,
But a slip of the tongue you may never get over.

The almanac contained information about crop planting and the weather. Children often carried it to school and used it for a reading book. During the period from 1740 until the Revolution no other book, except the Bible, was so widely read in the colonies. The almanac was translated into many foreign languages and helped to spread the fame of Franklin abroad. Benjamin Franklin was a man of method and order. He set aside a certain part of the day for work and another part for reading and study. He lived according to rule. During his spare moments he learned Latin, French, Spanish and Italian. The people of Philadelphia elected him to the assembly where he helped to make the laws for the commonwealth. He also became postmaster of the city, and later was postmaster-general of all the colonies.

He was interested in making Philadelphia a model city. He constantly urged upon the citizens the need of street paving. He improved the smoky street-lamps so that they would burn brightly until morning. He invented the Franklin stove which gradually took the place of the wasteful fireplace mode of heating. Systems of paid police protection and street cleaning that he suggested were adopted. Together with a number of friends, Franklin started a free library which was the first one of its kind in the world. A college that he founded has grown into the University of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Hospital which he started is still in existence. If you look on the front of *The Saturday Evening Post* you will find something interesting about Benjamin Franklin. It says that he began to publish that weekly journal in 1728.

When Franklin was about forty-five years old he became very much interested in electricity. One day while watching the lightning flash during a heavy storm, it occurred to him that possibly lightning and electricity were the same thing. After the idea came to him he could not rest until he had either proved or disproved it. For a long time he thought about the matter. At last he thought he had solved the problem. He made a large kite out of two strong sticks and a big silk handkerchief. To this he fastened a long hemp cord. Then he waited until the next heavy storm. At last the dark

clouds rolled up and he knew that soon he would be able to prove whether or not lightning and electricity were the same thing.

Just before it began to rain he called his son William, and gave him the kite and ball of string to carry. As Franklin stepped out of his doorway he took the big brass key out of the lock and slipped it into his pocket. William did not know what to think, because he had never heard of any one flying kites in a thunder-storm. The two went out Market Street to an old cow-shed that stood on the site of the present City Hall, in Philadelphia. Standing in the shelter of the shed Franklin and his son William put up the kite. After it had sailed high up over the city the brass door key was tied to the end of the string. Then the two waited. After a flash of lightning Franklin touched his knuckles to the key. What do you suppose happened? An electric spark jumped from the key to his hand and he felt a shock. "There is electricity there, William! There is electricity there!" he cried. He had brought electricity down from the clouds and proved that it and lightning were the same thing. This discovery won for him the respect and admiration of all thinking men, both in this country and in Europe.

A short time after this he invented the lightning rod to protect houses during the time of storm. That invention has never been improved upon. It is used to-day just as when he placed the first rod on his own home.

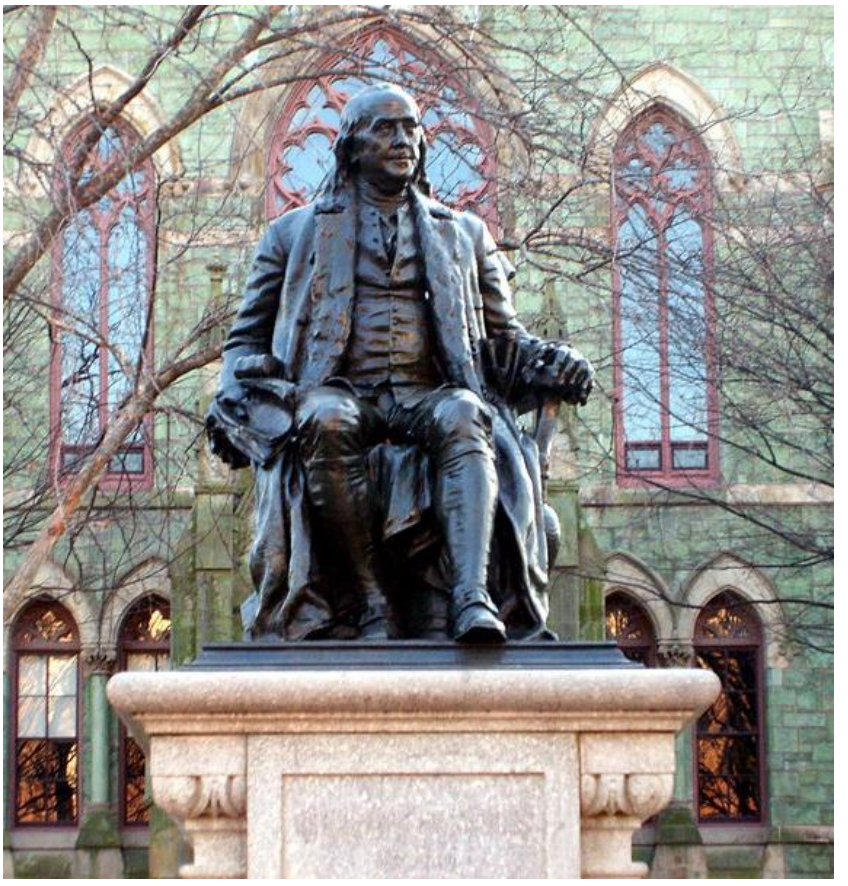
Franklin established a fire company in Philadelphia, the first of its kind in any city in America. His system was very simple. All householders were required to keep several leather buckets, filled with water, near the door. "When the fire bell was rung all of the citizens rushed out with their buckets. A line was formed quickly between the burning house and a pump, and while one or two strong men pumped, the filled buckets were passed and emptied on the fire. The empty buckets were returned by another line and quickly refilled.

In 1754 a convention was called to meet at Albany, New York. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the French and Indian question, and to make a treaty with the chiefs of the Six Nations, a powerful Indian tribe that lived in the Mohawk Valley. Franklin was one of the delegates from Pennsylvania and he offered a plan of union for the colonies. In his paper, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* he printed a picture of a snake cut into thirteen pieces which represented the thirteen colonies. Above and below the picture he had these words, "Unite or Die." Although the colonists were in favor of a union, the plan was rejected by the King of England when it was placed before him.

The trouble between the colonists and the French and Indians was not settled until a war was fought between them. That war was very expensive and the English government decided that since the war had been fought for the protection of the colonists they should pay the cost. Money was to be raised by means of a stamp tax. The Stamp Act which was passed by England in 1765 was a direct tax. All newspapers had to be printed on stamped paper. Marriage licenses, mortgages, deeds and other business papers were to bear a stamp which had to be bought from a government officer. The people in the colonies resented the direct tax, saying that their own assemblies and legislatures, whose members they had elected, were the only bodies that had a right to tax them. Franklin made a trip to England to protest against the tax. On his return he warned the people that they must prepare for war.

The discontent grew and ten years later war became necessary. Franklin was a member of the First Continental Congress which met in Carpenter's Hall in Philadelphia. This Congress protested

against England's treatment and decided to prepare for war. Franklin was also a member of the Second Continental Congress which met in Independence Hall, and he helped Thomas Jefferson to draw up the Declaration of Independence. As the members of Congress were signing the document, John Hancock said, "Gentlemen, we must all hang together in this matter." Immediately Benjamin Franklin replied, "Yes, because if we don't hang together we will be sure to hang separately!"



Statue of Benjamin Franklin, College Hall, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

At this time Franklin was an old man, loved and respected in America and Europe. America needed a friend abroad, and it needed money and troops. Some one had to go to Europe and plead our cause. No one was so well fitted to undertake such an important mission as Benjamin Franklin. In his old age, while a revolution raged in his own country, he went to the court of the King of France. He persuaded that monarch to recognize the struggling colonies and to assist them in their fight for independence. Franklin was very popular in Paris. Crowds cheered him when he appeared and followed him on the streets. His pictures were sold everywhere. He won the sympathy, regard and support of the French people and helped to win the Revolution by his untiring efforts.

After the war was won Franklin represented his country when the treaty of peace was signed between the United States of America and England. Soon after his return to this country he aided in drawing up the Constitution of the United States. Pennsylvania honored him by electing him governor of the state.

Throughout the long life of Benjamin Franklin he had but one motive, and that was to serve. He spent years in the service of his country, and at times neglected his business in order to serve her. He was just as ready to give his time, as well as his advice, when that was needed. He was not content to have things done in a careless way. He always tried to improve conditions under which he lived. Many of the enterprises and institutions founded by him are still in existence and they form great memorials to his genius.

Chapter 10

Crispus Attucks – Boston Massacre

1723-1770

Portrait of Crispus Attucks, unknown artist

Crispus Attucks was born many years ago, at some place, but nobody in the world seems to know just where. And no one seems to know anything at all about him, or about his people, except that he was a sailor. He received public notice just twice in his lifetime. The first time it was through an advertisement in a Boston newspaper, which came out on the second of October, 1750. The advertisement read:

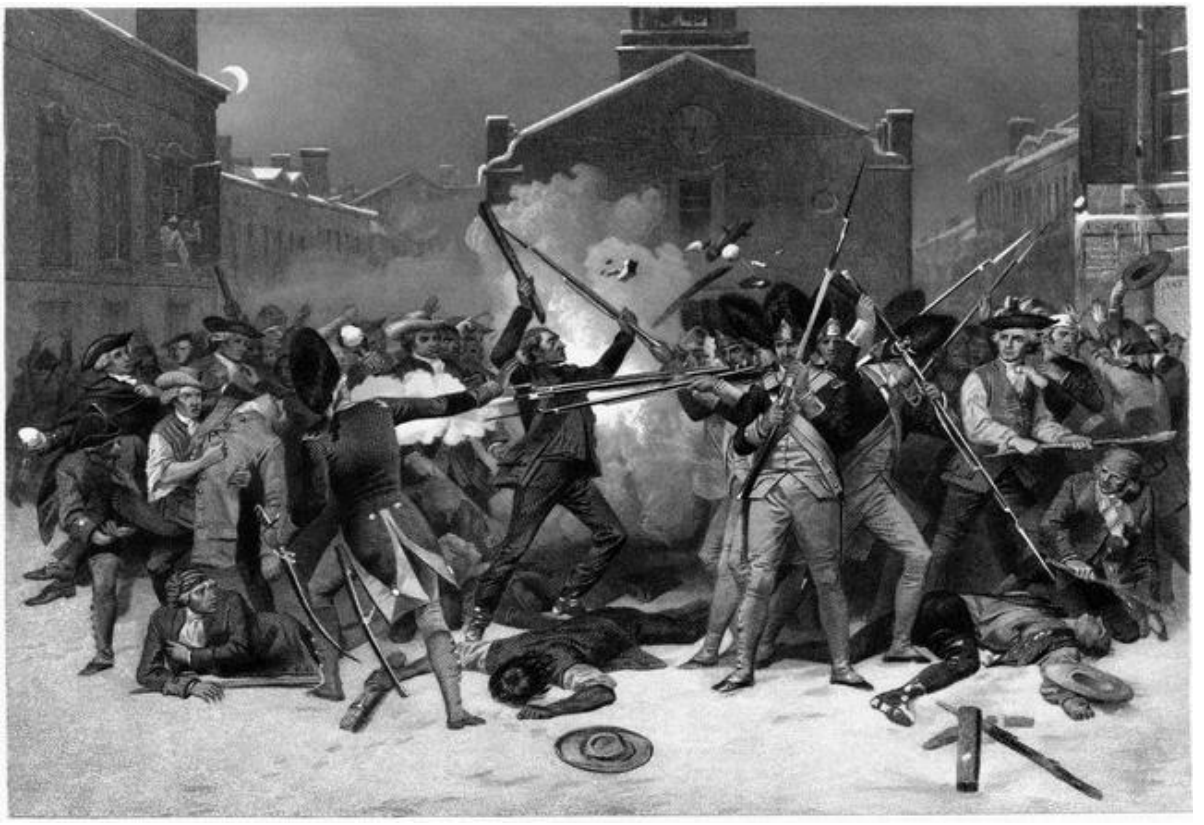
Ran away from his master, William Brown of Framingham, on the 30th of September, last, a Molatto-Fellow, about twenty-seven years of age, named Crispus, 6 feet 2 inches high, short curl'd hair, his knees nearer together than common; had on a light color'd Bearskin Coat, plain brown Fustain Jacket, or brown all-wool one, new Buck skin Breeches, blue yarn stockings, and a checked woolen shirt.

Whoever shall take up said Runaway, and convey him to his above said Master, shall have ten pounds, Old Tenor Reward, and all necessary charges paid. Boston, Oct. 2, 1750.

The name of Crispus Attucks appeared in the Boston papers just once more, and that was twenty years later, at the time of the Boston Massacre. In those days Crispus Attucks knew nothing about the United States, and nobody else did, for there were no United States. There were only the American colonies of Great Britain.

Because Great Britain knew that these colonies were angry with her, she sent several regiments of soldiers over to Boston, Massachusetts. These soldiers were to make the colonies obey England. Every one in Boston seemed to be speaking against these British soldiers.

Finally a group of men led by Crispus Attucks began to pelt them with missiles and chunks of



Boston Massacre, Johnson, Fry & Co.

ice, and to dare them to fire their guns, but the British soldiers fired. Shells from their guns struck Crispus Attucks and three other men. Crispus Attucks and one of the men, by the name of Caldwell, fell dead. The other two were mortally wounded.

The whole city of Boston was in an uproar. Bells were ringing everywhere, and people were running here and there as if they were crazy. In the midst of all of this excitement, the bodies of Crispus Attucks and Caldwell were taken into Faneuil Hall. It is said that their faces were looked upon by the largest gathering of people ever assembled there. One of the men who fell was buried from his mother's home. Another was buried from his brother's home, but Attucks and Caldwell, being strangers in the city, were buried from Faneuil Hall.

The four hearses bearing the bodies of the dead men met in King Street. From there the funeral procession moved in columns six deep. There was an extended line of carriages containing the first citizens of Boston. The four bodies were buried in one grave, and over the grave was placed a stone with this inscription:

> Long as in Freedom's cause the wise contend,
> Dear to your Country shall your fame extend;
> While to the world the lettered stone shall tell
> Where Caldwell, Attucks, Gray and Maverick fell.

Crispus Attucks is sometimes called a madcap, because he led the Boston Massacre charge,

which was the beginning of the Revolutionary War. He had apparently been around Boston for some years and had listened to the fiery speeches of some of the orators of that day.

A memorial shaft was later erected on Boston Common to the memory of these men, and a memorial tablet was placed on State Street in Boston.

Crispus Attucks

Read at the Dedication of the Crispus Attucks Monument of Boston, November 14, 1888

Where shall we seek for a hero, and where shall we find a story?
Our laurels are wreathed for conquest, our songs for completed glory.
But we honor a shrine unfinished, a column uncapped with pride.
If we sing the deed that was sown like seed when Crispus Attucks died.

Shall we take for a sign this Negro-slave with unfamiliar name —
With his poor companions, nameless too, till their lives leaped forth in flame?
Yea, sorely, the verdict is not for us to render or deny;
We can only interpret the symbol; God chose these men to die —
As teachers and types, that to humble lives may chief award be made;
That from lowly ones, and rejected stones, the temple's base is laid!

When the bullets leaped from the British guns, no chance decreed their aim:
Men see what the royal hirelings saw — a multitude and a flame;
But beyond the flame, a mystery; five dying men in the street,
While the streams of several races in the well of a nation meet!

O, blood of the people! changeless tide, through century, creed and race!
Still one as the sweet salt sea is one, though tempered by sun and place;
The same in the ocean currents, and the same in the sheltered seas;
Forever the fountain of common hopes and kindly sympathies;

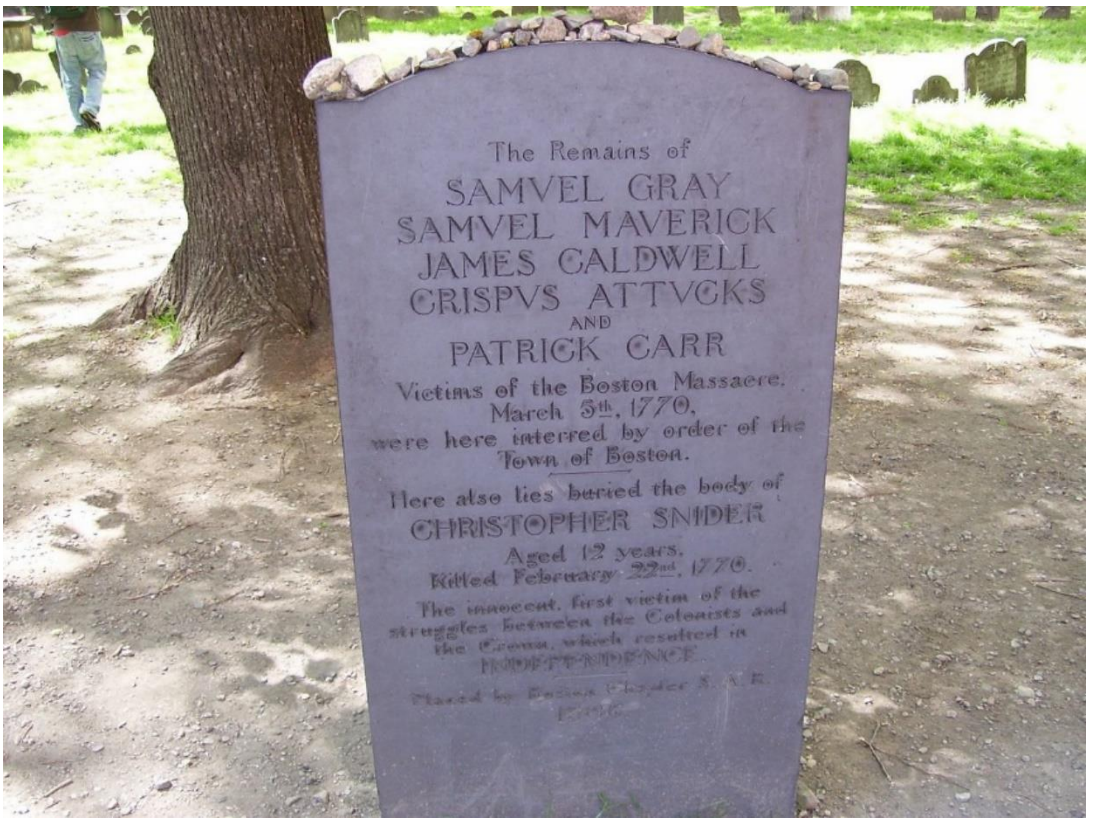
Indian and Negro, Saxon and Celt, Teuton and Latin and Gaul
Mere surface shadow and sunshine; while the sounding unifies all!
One love, one hope, one duty theirs! No matter the time or ken,
There never was separate heart-beat in all the races of men!

But alien is one — of class, not race — he has drawn the line for himself;
His roots drink life from inhuman soil, from garbage of pomp and pelf;
His heart beats not with the common beat, he has changed his life-stream's hue;
He deems his flesh to be finer flesh, he boasts that his blood is blue:
Patrician, aristocrat, tory whatever his age or name,
To the people's rights and liberties, a traitor ever the same.
The natural crowd is a mob to him, their prayer a vulgar rhyme;
The freeman's speech is sedition, and the patriot's deed a crime.

Wherever the race, the law, the land whatever the time, or throne,
The tory is always a traitor to every class but his own.

Thank God for a land where pride is clipped, where arrogance stalks apart;
Where law and song and loathing of wrong are words of the common heart;
Where the masses honor straightforward strength, and know, when veins are bled,
That the bluest blood is putrid blood that the people's blood is red!

And honor to Crispus Attucks, who was leader and voice that day;
The first to defy, and the first to die, with Maverick, Carr, and Gray.
Call it riot or revolution, his hand first clenched at the crown;
His feet were the first in perilous place to pull the king's flag down;
His breast was the first one rent apart that liberty's stream might flow;
For our freedom now and forever, his head was the first laid low.
—*John Boyle O'Reilly.*



Boston Massacre victims' grave, Boston Massachusetts' Granary Burying Ground.

Chapter 11

Boston Tea Party

December 16, 1773

The quarrel did not stop. It never does when men have courage to be free. The Americans had that courage. They would not be taxed without their consent. When the King, George III, determined to let them have no tea, except that which was sent in his own ships, they said, "We will have no tea at all." Their own ships were stopped from going for cargoes of tea. The king's ships, only, were to bring it. They could have no tea unless they bought that which the king's ships brought over from England, and that tea was taxed.

Now it was not the tax only. That was only a few cents on each pound of tea. It was the right of the king to tax, that the Americans disputed. They did not care for the money. They cared for the right to import their own teas. It was as if a big, bully boy should say to the small boys, "Pay me a marble, or you shall not play on the green." It was not the marble each little boy would mind. Nobody cares much for a marble. "But what right have you to make us pay a marble for coming in here to play?" the little boys would ask. "The ground is as much ours as yours. It is a tax; we won't pay it."

It was just this with the Americans. And so, when the king sent three ships laden with tea to Charleston, and four to Philadelphia, and three to New York, and three to Boston, the people in Charleston, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, determined the tea should not be landed. In Charleston, indeed, they did land it; but no one dared to sell it, and it perished in the cellars, where it was stored. In Philadelphia, five thousand people collected, and frightened the captains of the tea ships so that they set sail back for England. New York did the same. The tea did not come into port there. All but eighteen chests went back to England, the owners of the tea being afraid of the people. In Boston, it was different. The three ships came into port. They were loaded with tea. Governor Hutchinson was determined it should be landed. The people were determined it should not. And it is this quarrel between the governor and the people which is now to be told.

It was a bright Sunday morning, that 29th of November, 1773. The bells in Boston were ringing for church. Parents and children were dressed in their best. To the Old South, to King's Chapel, and to other places of worship, everybody was hastening. No shops were open, no wagons crowded the streets, no sellers cried their wares, no boys were at play. It was the Lord's day, and all the people kept it holy. At eleven o'clock, while the ministers were preaching, there came the news that the "Dartmouth" was in sight. She was coming up the bay. No sooner had the services ended than the people, coming out of meeting, got the news. It spread from one to the other. "The 'Dartmouth' is in," was in everybody's mouth. Groups stopped in the streets. It was not the sermons now, but the news, everybody was talking about. What was to be done, no one knew. It was Sunday, but the

hours were precious. If they waited till Monday, the tea might be landed. And so, God's day though it was, the selectmen had a meeting at noon, and a meeting in the evening.

And now was coming on the bravest day Boston had ever seen. Mr. Rotch owned the "Dartmouth." The selectmen got his promise not to land the tea till Tuesday. They then sent men to Dorchester, Foxbury, Brookline, Cambridge, and Charlestown, to tell the people there would be a meeting at Faneuil Hall Monday morning. The people came in so great crowds that the meeting had to adjourn to the Old South meeting-house. There were five thousand persons present; John Hancock, and Samuel Adams, and Dr. Warren, and all the patriots were there. They resolved that the tea should not be landed. Governor Hutchinson sent the sheriff to disperse the meeting, but he was hissed out of the house. Six persons were appointed post-riders, to arouse the country people; five persons were chosen to talk with the governor; and twenty-four sturdy young men were named to stand on the wharves—twelve by day and twelve by night—to ring the bells and hoist the lanterns to call the people together, if the ship should begin to land her cargo.

Meanwhile, the other two tea ships arrived. There were now three, all laden with tea. The six post-riders kept the country people informed of this. These brave farmers were ready to start for Boston in an instant; it looked like a fight. "It is better to wait," the selectmen said; "perhaps we can induce the governor to send the ships back to England." And so, from day to day they talked and pleaded with him to order the ships away.

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday came; meetings were held every day; hardly any ordinary business was done in Boston. A committee waited on the governor every morning; he would not yield. "The tea shall be landed," he said. There were ships of war in the harbor, and British troops in the town, and he thought he could compel the citizens. But he did not know them. They were full of the spirit of liberty; and, night and day, neglecting everything not necessary to be done, shutting up their shops, closing the schools, stopping drays and wagons, carts and barrows, from work in the streets, and even closing the markets, these Boston citizens did little during four days but stand talking in groups at the corners, or hold meetings on the Common. What they wanted was, that Governor Hutchinson should send the tea ships back to England.

It was now Thursday morning, December 16, 1773. Mr. Rotch had kept his promise not to land the tea from the ships; but the people wanted more. Until the sails were spread and the three vessels were underway down the harbor, they would not be content; he must see the governor and get a pass for the clearance of his ships instantly. The poor man was frightened; he went to the Government House, but the governor had gone to Milton. Mounting his horse, he then galloped out of town towards Milton, to find the governor and obtain the pass.

At three in the afternoon a meeting was held at the Old South. A great many people had come in from the country, and what with them and the citizens, the house was full. While they were waiting the return of Mr. Rotch, speeches were made by Adams, and Hancock, and Young. The meeting cheered the speakers, and appointed the resolutions, and when the vote was taken "Shall the tea be landed?" and every man cried out "No!" there went up a hurrah that shook the roof; the people outside caught up the cheer, and all along Washington Street, and up School Street, and down Water Street and Milk Street, the huzzahs filled the air.

But it was in December, and the days were short. It was past five o'clock. Out of doors the twilight was fading into night, and in the meeting-house it was becoming dark. While the people were

The Destruction of Tea at Boston Harbor, Nathaniel Currier

growing impatient, and calls were made for lights, and some cried one thing and some another, Mr. Rotch arrived. Samuel Adams stood up and said: "Order! Mr. Rotch has come back from the governor! Hear what he has to say!" All became quiet and listened. The poor, tired man, stood up and answered: "I cannot send back the tea; the governor will not give the vessels a pass." "This meeting, then," said Adams, "can do no more to save the country"; and the great crowd of people in the meeting-house poured out into the street.

On the instant a shout was heard from a body of men, disguised as Indians, coming along. Clad in blankets, with painted faces and brandished tomahawks, crying the war-whoop as they passed the door, they proceeded to the wharf. The people shouted as they passed. Numbers followed them. Posting guards at the docks, obeying the orders of their leader, committing no outrage upon persons or property, these young patriots took possession of the three tea-ships. At once pulleys and tackles were at work hoisting the tea-chests out of the holds. Men stood ready to handle them. As the windlass hove up each chest, an axe broke in its head, and its contents were poured into the sea. No one disturbed the workers; the stars were shining brightly overhead; the work was plied far into the night; and when it was done, all separated without noise, and went home to bed. Next morning there was not a chest of taxed tea in Boston, on shipboard or on shore. Mr. Rotch was sorry, and the governor angry; but the tea was safe in salt water, and the people returned to their work.

Chapter 12

Patrick Henry

1738–1799 (March 20, 1775)

Patrick Henry, George Bagby Mathews

The Last French War had cost England so much that at its close she was heavily in debt.

"As England must now send to America a standing army of at least ten thousand men to protect the colonies against the Indians and other enemies," the King, George III, reasoned, "it is only fair that the colonists should pay a part of the cost of supporting it."

The English Parliament, being largely made up of the King's friends, was quite ready to carry out his wishes, and passed a law taxing the colonists. This law was called the Stamp Act. It provided that stamps—very much like our postage-stamps, but costing all the way from one cent to fifty dollars each—should be put upon all the newspapers and almanacs used by the colonies, and upon all such legal papers as wills, deeds, and the notes which men give promising to pay back borrowed money.

When news of this act reached the colonists they were angry. "It is unjust," they said. "Parliament is trying to make slaves of us by forcing us to pay money without our consent. The charters which the English King granted to our forefathers when they came to America make us free men just as much as if we were living in England.

"In England it is the law that no free man shall pay taxes unless they are levied by his representatives in Parliament. We have no one to speak for us in Parliament, and so we will not pay any taxes which Parliament votes. The only taxes we will pay are those voted by our representatives in

our own colonial assemblies."

They were all the more ready to take this stand because for many years they had bitterly disliked other English laws which were unfair to them. One of these forbade selling their products to any country but England. And, of course, if they could sell to no one else, they would have to sell for what the English merchants chose to pay.

Another law said that the colonists should buy the goods they needed from no other country than England, and that these goods should be brought over in English vessels. So in buying as well as in selling they were at the mercy of the English merchants and the English ship owners, who could set their own prices.

But even more unjust seemed the law forbidding the manufacture in America of anything which was manufactured in England. For instance, iron from American mines had to be sent to England to be made into useful articles, and then brought back over the sea in English vessels and sold to the colonists by English merchants at their own price.

Do you wonder that the colonists felt that England was taking an unfair advantage? You need not be told that these laws were strongly opposed. In fact, the colonists, thinking them unjust, did not hesitate to break them. Some, in spite of the laws, shipped their products to other countries and smuggled the goods they received in exchange; and some dared make articles of iron, wool, or other raw material, both for their own use and to sell to others.

"We will not be used as tools for England to make out of us all the profit she possibly can," they declared. "We are not slaves but free-born Englishmen, and we refuse to obey laws which shackle us and rob us of our rights."

So when to these harsh trade laws the Stamp Act was added, great indignation was aroused. Among those most earnest in opposing the act was Patrick Henry.

Let us take a look at the early life of this powerful man. He was born in 1736, in Hanover County, Virginia. His father was an able lawyer, and his mother belonged to a fine old Welsh family.

But Patrick, as a boy, took little interest in anything that seemed to his older friends worth while. He did not like to study nor to work on his father's farm. His delight was to wander through the woods, gun in hand, hunting for game, or to sit on the bank of some stream fishing by the hour. When not enjoying himself out-of-doors he might be heard playing his violin.

Of course the neighbors said, "A boy so idle and shiftless will never amount to anything," and his parents did not know what to do with him. They put him, when fifteen years old, as clerk into a little country store. Here he remained for a year, and then opened a store of his own. But he was still too lazy to attend to business, and soon failed.

When he was only eighteen years old, he married. The parents of the young couple, anxious that they should do well, gave them a small farm and a few slaves. But it was the same old story. The young farmer would not take the trouble to look after his affairs, and let things drift. So before long the farm had to be sold to pay debts. Once more Patrick turned to storekeeping, but after a few years he failed again.

He was now twenty-three years old, with no settled occupation, and with a wife and family to support. No doubt he seemed to his friends a ne'er-do-well.

About this time he decided to become a lawyer. He borrowed some law-books, and after studying for six months, he applied for permission to practise law. Although he passed but a poor

Patrick Henry arguing the "Parson's Cause," George Cooke

examination, he at last was started on the right road.

He succeeded well in his law practice, and in a few years had so much business that people in his part of Virginia began to take notice of him. In 1765, soon after the Stamp Act was passed by the British Parliament, he was elected a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, a body not unlike our State Legislature.

History gives us a vivid picture of the young lawyer at this time as he rides on horseback along the country road toward Williamsburg, then the capital of Virginia. He is wearing a faded coat, leather knee-breeches, and yarn stockings, and carries his law papers in his saddle-bag. Although but twenty-nine, his tall, thin figure stoops as if bent with age. He does not look the important man he is soon to become.

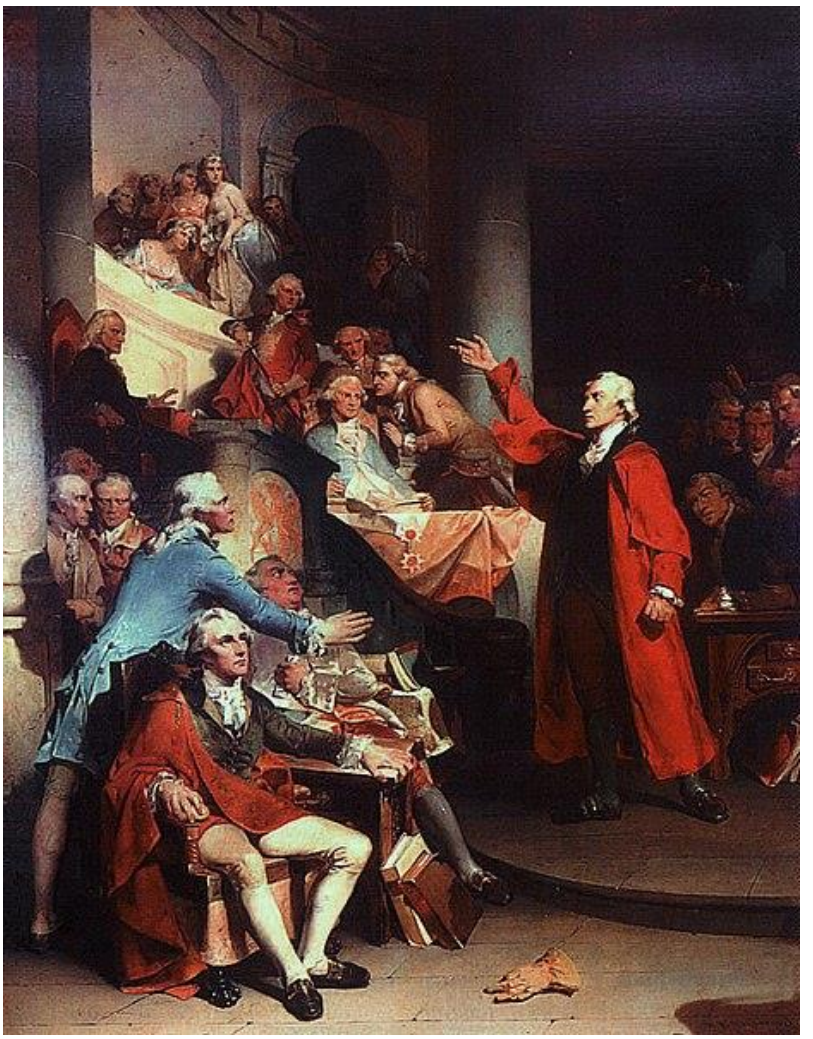
When he reaches the little town of Williamsburg, he finds great excitement. Men gather in small groups on the street, talking in anxious tones. Serious questions are being discussed: "What shall we do about the Stamp Act?" they say. "Shall we submit and say nothing? Shall we send a petition to King George asking him for justice? Shall we beg Parliament to repeal the act, or shall we take a bold stand and declare that we will not obey it?"

Not only on the street, but also in the House of Burgesses was great excitement. Most of the members were wealthy planters who lived on great estates. So much weight and dignity had they that the affairs of the colony were largely under their control. Most of them were loyal to the "mother country," as they liked to call England, and they wished to obey the English laws as long as

these were just.

So they counselled: "Let us move slowly. Let nothing be done in a passion. Let us petition the King to modify the laws which appear to us unjust, and then, if he will not listen, it will be time to refuse to obey. We must not be rash."

Patrick Henry, the new member, listened earnestly. But he could not see things as these older men of affairs saw them. To him delay seemed dangerous. He was eager for prompt, decisive action. Tearing a blank leaf from a lawbook, he hastily wrote some resolutions, and, rising to his feet, he read them to the assembly.



Patrick Henry Before the Virginia House of Burgesses,
Peter F. Rothermel

We can easily picture the scene. This plainly dressed rustic with his bent shoulders is in striking contrast to the prosperous plantation owners, with their powdered hair, ruffled shirts, knee-breeches, and silver shoe-buckles. They give but a listless attention as Henry begins in quiet tones to read his resolutions. "Who cares what this country fellow thinks?" is their attitude. "Who is he anyway? We never heard his voice before."

It is but natural that these men, whose judgment has been looked up to for years, should regard as an upstart this young, unknown member, who presumes to think his opinion worth listening to in a time of great crisis like this.

But while they sit in scornful wrath, the young orator's eyes begin to glow, his stooping figure becomes erect, and his voice rings out with fiery eloquence. "The General Assembly of Virginia, and only the General Assembly of Virginia," he exclaims, "has the right and the power of laying taxes upon the people of this colony."

These are stirring words, and they fall amid a hushed silence. Then the debate grows hot, as members rise to speak in opposition to his burning eloquence.

But our hero is more than a match for all the distinguished men who disagree with him. Like a torrent, his arguments pour forth and sweep all before them. The bold resolutions he presents are

passed by the assembly.

It was a great triumph for the young orator. On that day Patrick Henry made his name. "Stick to us, old fellow, or we're gone," said one of the plain people, giving him a slap on the shoulder as he passed out at the close of the stormy session. The unpromising youth had suddenly become a leader in the affairs of the colony.

Not only in Virginia, but also in other colonies, his fiery words acted like magic in stirring up the people against the Stamp Act. He had proved himself a bold leader, willing to risk any danger for the cause of justice and freedom.

You would expect that in the colonies there would be strong and deep feeling against the Stamp Act. But perhaps you will be surprised to learn that even in England many leading men opposed it. They thought that George III was making a great mistake in trying to tax the colonies without their consent. William Pitt, a leader in the House of Commons, made a great speech, in which he said: "I rejoice that America has resisted." He went on to say that if the Americans had meekly submitted, they would have acted like slaves.

Burke and Fox, other great statesmen, also befriended us. And the English merchants and ship owners, who were losing heavily because the Americans refused to buy any English goods as long as the Stamp Act was in force, joined in begging Parliament that the act be repealed. This was done the next year.

Other unjust measures followed, but before we take them up, let us catch another glimpse of Patrick Henry, ten years after his great speech at Williamsburg.

The people of Virginia are again greatly aroused. King George has caused Parliament to send English soldiers to Boston to force the unruly people of Massachusetts to obey some of his commands, against which they had rebelled. Virginia has stood by her sister colony, and now the royal governor of Virginia, to punish her, has prevented the House of Burgesses from meeting at Williamsburg.

But the Virginians are not so easily kept from doing their duty. With a grim determination to defend their rights as free men, they elect some of their leaders to act for them at this trying time.

These meet in Richmond at old St. John's Church, which is still standing. Great is the excitement, and thoughtful people are very serious, for the shadows of the war-cloud grow blacker hour by hour.

The Virginians have already begun to make ready to fight if they must. But many still hope that all disagreements may yet be settled peaceably, and therefore advise acting with caution.

Patrick Henry is not one of these. He believes that the time has come when talking should give place to prompt, decisive action. The war is at hand. It cannot be avoided. The colonists must fight or slavishly submit.

So intense is his belief that he offers in this meeting a resolution that Virginia should at once prepare to defend herself. Many of the leading men stoutly oppose this resolution as rash and unwise.

At length Patrick Henry rises to his feet, his face pale, and his voice trembling with deep emotion. Again we see the bent shoulders straighten and the eyes flash. His voice rings out like a trumpet. As he goes on with increasing power, men lean forward in breathless interest. Listen to his ringing words:

"We must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all

that is left us! They tell us, sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak if we make a proper use of the means which the God of nature hath placed in our hands…. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable—and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come!

"…Gentlemen may cry peace, peace—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? 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!"

But as for me, give me liberty or give me death.

What wonder that the audience sways to his belief!

He was a true prophet, for in less than four weeks the first gun of the Revolution was fired in the quiet town of Lexington, Massachusetts. Undoubtedly Patrick Henry's fiery spirit had done much to kindle the flame which then burst forth.

Not long after this, he was made commander-in-chief of the Virginia forces (1775), and the next year was elected governor of Virginia.

When the war—in the declaring of which he had taken so active a part—was over, Patrick Henry retired at the age of fifty-eight (1794), to an estate in Charlotte County called "Red Hill," where he lived a simple and beautiful life. He died in 1799.

Without doubt he was one of the most eloquent orators our country has ever produced, and we should be grateful to him because he used his great gift in helping to secure the freedom we now enjoy.

Chapter 13

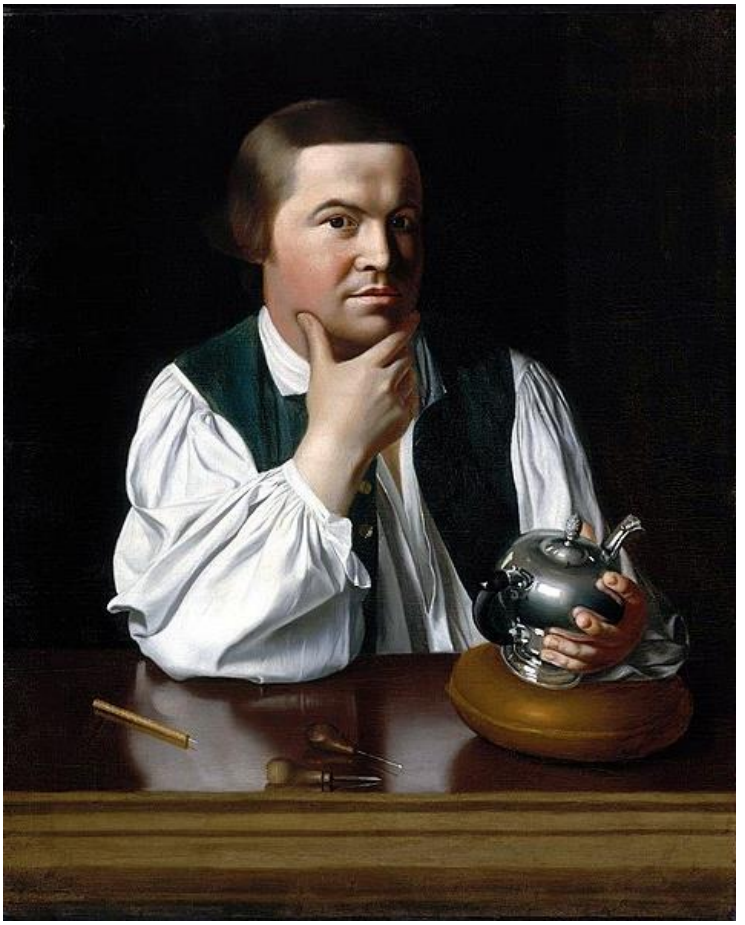
Paul Revere

1735–1818 (April 1775)

All the colonies now felt that they must unite in truth, and that they must have some centre to which all could appeal. So a Congress of all the colonies was called at Philadelphia. This is called the first Continental Congress, and to it all the colonies except Georgia sent delegates.

This Congress drew up a Declaration of Rights. They also sent an address to the King in which they declared that they had no wish to separate from Britain.

But the King called the Congress an unlawful and seditious gathering, and would not listen to anything it had to say. Still, far-seeing statesmen with Pitt at their head struggled to bring about a reconciliation.



Portrait of Paul Revere, John Singleton Copley

"I contend, not for indulgence, but for justice to America," he said. "The Americans are a brave, generous and united people, with arms in their hands, and courage in their hearts. It is not repealing this act of Parliament, it is not repealing a piece of parchment, that can restore America to our bosom. You must repeal her fears and her resentments. And you may then hope for her love and gratitude."

But few people listened to Pitt, the bill which he brought into Parliament was rejected with scorn, and the great struggle which was to last for eight years began.

Already in America men's minds had begun to turn to war, and on every village green the farmers might be seen drilling every evening. Bands of minute men, that is, men who would be ready at a minute's notice, were organised. All sorts of war stores were gathered.

Two of the leaders of the people in all these matters were Samuel Adams and John Hancock. These men Governor Gage, who was also commander of the troops, was ordered to arrest and send to England to be tried as traitors. Gage having heard that both men were staying at the village of Lexington decided to arrest them together.

For this he carefully laid his plans. Eight hundred men were to leave Boston in secret at dead of night. First they were to go to Lexington, and having arrested the "traitors" they were next to march on to Concord to seize the large war stores which were known to be gathered there.

All the preparations were made as silently and as secretly as possible. But the colonists were on the alert. They knew that something was afoot, and guessed what it was.

On the 18th of April, Gage gave strict orders that no one was to be allowed to leave Boston that night. But no orders could stop determined men.

And as the moon was rising a little boat was rowed across the Charles River almost under the shadow of the British man-of-war. The boat reached the farther shore and a man booted and spurred, as if ready for a long ride, leaped out upon the bank. This man was Paul Revere.

At ten o'clock the troops also were silently rowed across the Charles River, and in the darkness set out for Lexington. But not far off on the bank of the same river, a man stood waiting beside a saddled horse. Quietly he waited, looking always towards the tower of the Old North Church. It was Paul Revere, and he waited for a signal to tell him which way the red coats were going.

Suddenly about eleven o'clock two twinkling lights appeared upon the tower, and without a moment's loss Paul Revere leaped into the saddle and dashed away. Swiftly he rode, urging his good horse onward with voice and hand.

Near the lonely spot where stood the gallows he passed. Here under a tree, two horsemen waited,

Paul Revere's Ride, Charles Green Bush

and as Revere came nearer he saw that they were British soldiers. Swiftly they darted at him. One tried to seize his bridle, the other to head him off. But Revere was a fearless rider, and knew the countryside by heart. He swerved suddenly, doubled, and was soon clear of his pursuers.

Then on through the darkness he galloped unhindered till he reached Medford. Here he stayed but to rouse the captain of the minute men, and onward he sped once more. Now at the door of every cottage or farmhouse which he passed he loudly knocked, shouting his news "the soldiers are coming," and thundered off again in the darkness.

A little after midnight he reached Lexington and stopped before the house where Adams and Hancock were sleeping. He found it guarded by minute men, and as he excitedly shouted his news, they bade him be quiet.

"Don't make such a noise," said the sergeant, "you will waken the people in the house."

"Noise," cried Revere, "you will soon have noise enough—the regulars are coming."

Hancock was awake, and hearing Revere's voice he threw up his window, shouting to the guard to let him in. So Revere went into the house and told all he knew. When they heard the news, Hancock wanted to stay and fight, if fighting there was to be. But the others would not hear of it, so as day dawned the two men quietly walked away, and were soon on the road to Philadelphia.

Minute-Men Hurrying to Concord Bridge,
from *American Hero Stories*, Eva March Tappan, 1906

Meanwhile the British troops were steadily marching nearer and nearer. At first all was silent: save the clatter and jingle of their arms and the tramp of their feet, there was no sound. No light was to be seen far or near. Then suddenly a bell rang, a shout was heard, lights twinkled here and there. The night was no longer silent and dark. The country was no longer asleep.

The colonel in command of the troops grew anxious. He had expected to take the people completely by surprise, and he had not done so. Somehow the secret had leaked out. The whole countryside was up and awake, and fearing lest with his small company of soldiers, he would not be able to do what he had set out to do, he sent back to Boston for more men.

And sure enough, his fears were well founded, for when in the cold grey of early dawn the advance party reached Lexington, they found a little guard of sixty

or seventy armed men drawn up to receive them.

"Disperse, ye rebels, disperse," shouted the commander as he rode towards them. But the men stood motionless and silent.

"Why don't you disperse, you villains?" he cried again.

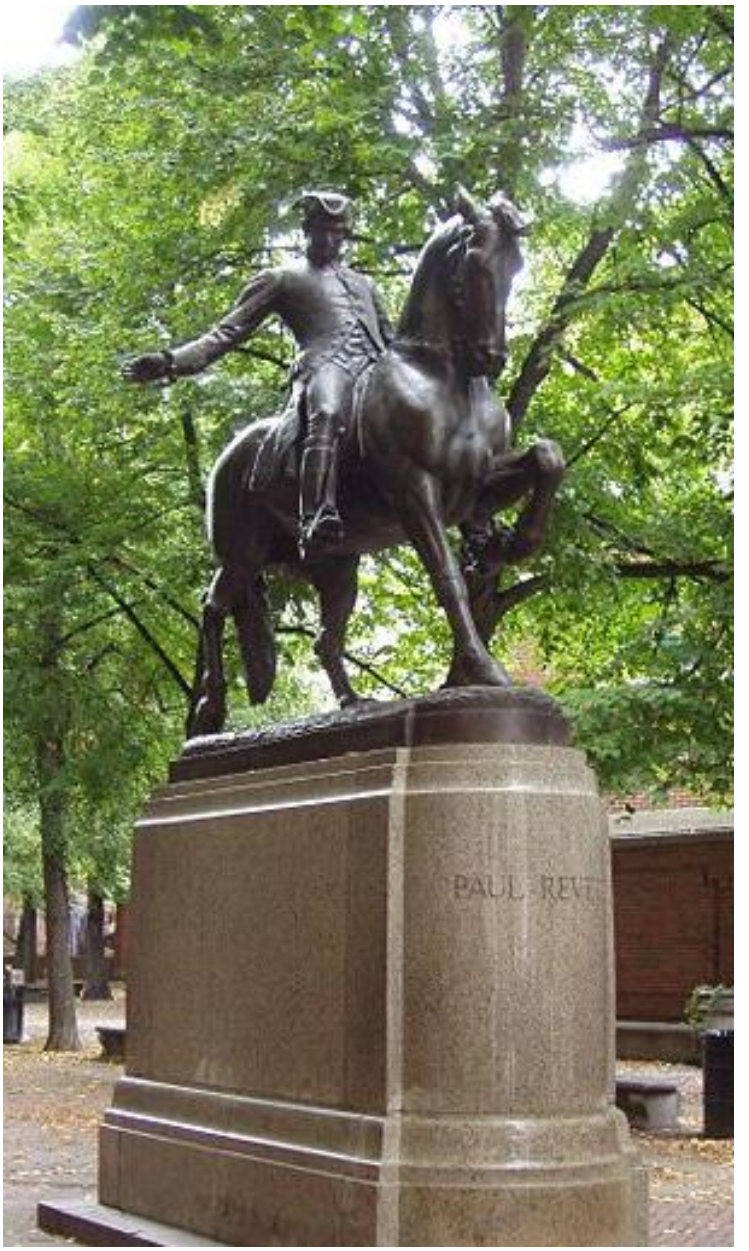
Then seeing words had no effect, he gave the order to fire. The soldiers obeyed, and eight minute men fell dead, and several more were wounded. The minute men returned the fire, but just then more British soldiers appeared in sight. And seeing that it was useless to try to resist so great a force the Americans dispersed.

Thus the terrible war, which was almost a civil war, began. The British now marched on to Concord. They had failed to arrest the men they had been sent to arrest at Lexington. So there was all the more reason to hurry on to Concord, and seize the war stores before there was time to spirit them away. But when about seven o'clock in the morning the troops arrived at Concord the stores for the most part had been already safely hidden. A gun or two they found, and a few barrels of flour. The guns were spiked, the barrels staved in, the court house set on fire.

But meanwhile the minute men had been gathering, and now a force four hundred strong appeared on the further side of a bridge known as the North Bridge. The bridge was held by two hundred British, and when they saw the minute men approach they began to destroy it.

There was a sharp exchange of fire. Then the minute men charged across the narrow bridge, sweeping all before them. The British fled back to the village, and the minute men, hardly knowing what they had done, retired again across the bridge and waited.

The British leader now decided to return to Boston. He had done nothing which he had set out to do. But he saw this his position was one of great danger.



Statue of Paul Revere by Cyrus E. Dallin,
Paul Revere Mall, Boston, Massachusetts

Everywhere he was surrounded with enemies. His men were hungry and worn out, so about twelve o'clock the march back to Boston began.

But the return was not easy, for all the way the troops were harassed by the Americans. Every bush, every wall concealed an armed farmer, whose aim was deadly and sure. Man after man fell, and beneath the constant and galling fire coming, it seemed from everywhere and nowhere, the nerves of the wearied, hungry men gave way. Faster and faster the long red line swept along in ever growing confusion. There was no thought now of anything but safety, and the march was almost a rout when at length the reinforcements from Boston appeared. These were a thousand strong, and their leader, Lord Percy, seeing the confusion and distress of the British formed his men into a hollow square. Into this refuge the fugitives fled, throwing themselves upon the ground in utter exhaustion, with their tongues hanging out of their mouths "like those of dogs after a chase."

Lord Percy had brought cannons with him, so with these he swept the field, and for a time forced the colonists to retire. But they did not disperse; they still hovered near, and as soon as the retreat again began, there began with it the constant galling fire from every tree or bush, before, behind, on either side. To return the fire was useless, as the enemy were hidden. It was a sort of warfare not unlike that which Braddock had had to meet, a sort of warfare in which the American farmer was skilled, but of which the British soldier know nothing. So when, at length, as day darkened the British troops reached Boston they were utterly spent and weary. And in a huddled, disorganised crowd, they hurried into shelter.

Paul Revere's Ride

Listen, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-Five:
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry-arch
Of the North-Church-tower, as a signal-light,—
One if by land, and two if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country-folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said "Good night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war:

A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon, like a prison-bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed to the tower of the church,
Up the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade,—
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night-encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,—
A line of black, that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride,

On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed on the landscape far and near,
Then impetuous stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height,
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in a village-street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed that flies fearless and fleet:
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders, that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river-fog,
That rises when the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,

Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read,
How the British Regulars fired and fled,—
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farmyard-wall,
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,—
A cry of defiance, and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo forevermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

— *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

Chapter 14

Battle of Concord/Lexington

April 19, 1775

Boston had become a city. Since the Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth, one hundred and fifty-five years had gone. All over Massachusetts, there were farms, with houses and barns, orchards and gardens, horses and wagons. The great forests had been cut down. There were roads and bridges. Pretty villages, with school-houses and churches and shops, had grown up. The Indians had disappeared. Bears and wolves had been killed, or driven away. You might go a hundred miles, north, south, or west, and see everywhere, green fields, saw mills, grist mills, sloops sailing on the rivers, great herds of cattle, farmers at work ploughing or harvesting, children playing in the yards, carriages passing along the streets, and great carts carrying crops to market. It was a pleasant country, and a happy people.

But there was one trouble. England was the Mother Country, and the people had a quarrel with England. George the Third was king, both of England and America, and he wanted us to be governed by laws which he made, and not laws which we ourselves made. We refused. He was angry. And so his parliament passed a law, which was called the Boston Port Bill. By this law we might not sail our ships, nor sell our corn, nor hold our town-meetings, nor choose our rulers, and he sent General Gage, and a large army, and several ships of war, to Boston, to make us obedient. All this was in 1774-5.

The Americans saw that there was to be war, and they took care of their powder, storing it in powder-houses, in many places. General Gage heard that powder was stored in Lexington and Concord, and he determined to get possession of it before the Americans knew what he meant to do. And this was the reason of the battle of Lexington.

It was a chilly night, on the 18th of April, 1775, when a great many soldiers, commanded by Lieut. Col. Smith, marched out of Boston, on their way to Lexington and Concord. They made no noise. Drums did not beat, nor did fifes play. The soldiers were not allowed to speak aloud. When the officers gave their commands, they did it quietly. Not a sound was to be heard as the companies marched along the road, except the noise of horses' hoofs, and the tramp of footsteps on the hard ground. Guns were already loaded, cartridge boxes were full of powder and ball, haversacks of bread and meat hung from the men's shoulders, and canteens to drink from were tied at their sides. The army moved as quietly as the tide of the ocean ebbs and flows, or as a river runs where there are no rocks. Colonel Smith did not mean that the Americans should know that the British troops had come out of Boston.

But they discovered it, nevertheless. Dr. Warren sent Paul Revere across Charles river, and there a man lent him a horse. He stopped at every house on the road, saying, "The regulars are

coming." Other men started off to tell their neighbors. At midnight, Revere rode up to a farm-house, where were Samuel Adams and John Hancock, two patriot leaders, and asked leave to go in. A sergeant, who guarded the door, said, "Do not make a noise, for everybody is asleep!"

"Noise!" answered Paul Revere; "you will have noise enough before long; the British are coming."

The news now flew like the wind. Every one was aroused. Guns were fired, drums beat, and bells rang. Old men, middled-aged men, and even boys, loaded their guns and put on their powder-horns and filled their pockets with bullets. Some on horseback and some on foot, they set out for Lexington. The road was crowded. And while it was yet night, long before the British troops reached the town, Captain Parker formed his company on the common before the Lexington meeting-house. There were seventy of these farmer soldiers in their farm clothes who had already got together, and there were almost as many looking on who had no guns.

It was about four o'clock in the morning, and still dark, when Thad Bowman came furiously riding his horse up to the meeting-house and crying out, "Here they come! Here are the British!" Captain Parker now ordered the drum-beat. Presently there came in sight more than eight hundred soldiers, marching along the road to meet our little company of less than one hundred. The British halted as soon as they came in sight. The officers heard our drums, and thought it a challenge. Captain Parker had ordered his men not to fire first, but wait and see what the regulars would do. While he was still forming his company, the whole body of British troops began to march again. As they came on at double-quick, shouting and firing, one of their officers rode forward and cried out to our soldiers, "Ye villains! Ye rebels! Disperse! Lay down your arms! Why don't you lay down your arms?" and then ordered his men to fire. There was a general discharge. Several were killed, and

The First Shots for American Independence, Fired at Lexington, Mass, April 19, 1775,
from *Hero Tales of the American Soldier and Sailor as Told by the Heroes Themselves and their Comrades* by James W. Buel, 1899

more were wounded.

Our men now dispersed. Before they were out of reach, some of them fired their muskets at the British. One man, whose name was Jonas Parker, had often said *he would never run from the blasted regulars*. And he kept his word. Every one of his company had left the common; but he staid, firing away. At length he was wounded, but even then would not quit; until a soldier ran him through with a bayonet. The cowardly regulars continued firing, killing some in the roads, one running for more powder, and another at the door of his house, until eight were dead and ten wounded, when, discharging a volley and giving three cheers, they continued their march towards Concord.

The Battle of Lexington, William Barnes Wollen

The British troops were in pursuit of the powder and cannon at Concord. This the Americans knew. As soon, therefore, as Dr. Prescott, who had ridden hard from Boston, rushed into the little village, calling out, "The British are coming! The British are coming!" every man knew just what to do. Oxen were yoked to carts, horses were harnessed to wagons, and men trundled wheel-barrows, all trying to hide the powder-kegs and the cannon in the woods. Bells rang in the steeples. Alarm-guns were fired. Lanterns were hung in the belfries and on trees. Couriers were sent in every direction. Before daylight several hundred minute-men had come together in Concord, ready to fight.

When the regulars marched into town, therefore, the powder and cannon were nearly all hidden away. They could do but little harm. The long way from Boston had tired them, and they stopped

The Shot Heard 'Round the World, Domenick D'Andrea

in two places to rest; at the North Bridge, and at the South Bridge. Major John Buttrick took three hundred minute-men, and marched them, in double file, with trailed arms, to the North Bridge. These men had never been in battle. They were farmers and farmers' boys, without uniforms, or martial music, or bayonets to their guns, or mounted officers; but they had courage, and were ready, every man and boy, to fight for freedom. When Captain Laurie, who commanded the British troops at the North Bridge, saw these Provincials coming, he marched his men to the other side of the river, and drew them up in line of battle. Our men hastened forward, and then the British began to fire, killing and wounding several Provincials. This made Major Buttrick angry, and he cried out, "Fire, men! for God's sake, fire!" when a volley was poured upon the British which made them run. But we did not pursue them, because they retreated to their main body at the South Bridge.

And now blood was up. British troops had run from American ploughboys. The bells kept ringing; the news was spreading far and near; everywhere, men were galloping to tell the story; afoot and on horseback, sturdy sharp-shooters were pouring into Concord; women were melting lead into bullets; the roads were filled with angry crowds, and even the ministers were telling their people to go and fight. There never had been such a morning in Massachusetts. From Acton and Lincoln and Carlisle and Chelmsford and Westford and Littleton, the farmers, each with his gun, kept hurrying

Stand Your Ground, Don Troiani

in. It was a glorious day for old Massachusetts, though nobody knew what was going to come.

It was now noon. Colonel Smith saw what was happening, and began to be afraid. His soldiers wanted rest, for they had been marching fourteen hours, and were tired and hungry; but he wished to get back to Boston before the Americans hemmed them in, and he therefore caused the music to play, and gave orders to march. The companies formed, arms were shouldered, captains marshalled the ranks, and while the Provincials were watching them from the top of the hill, with drums beating, and fifes playing, and bugles sounding, and banners flying, the British soldiers filed out of Concord on their way back to Boston.

It was a terrible march. Fifteen miles in a day is good work for an army when the men are fresh. Twenty miles is hard work when no enemy is near; but here, these British soldiers, having had no sleep the night before, tired with a march of eighteen miles out of Boston, sleepy, thirsty, hungry, cross, and lame, were now starting to go eighteen miles back again, with thousands of minute-men firing at them on every side. They would never have got back to Boston, had not another body of troops under the command of Lord Percy, sent out from Boston by General Gage, joined them when they got back as far as Lexington.

This re-enforcement took with them several wagon-loads of provisions when leaving Boston. These the Americans had captured on the road. When the two bodies of soldiers joined, therefore, they were no better off. They had, indeed, more men and more cannon; but for the tired and hungry soldiers, who every now and then would fall to the ground, there was nothing to eat or drink.

It was now two o'clock in the afternoon. Twelve miles more they must march. As they staggered along the winding road, the minute-men kept picking them off. Behind every tree and rock and

Retreat from Concord. unknown artist

stone-wall, an American was concealed, and as the troops marched along, rifles shot them down. Running through the woods and along the fields, these sharp-shooters kept up with the tired army. Now, an officer tumbled from his horse, shot by a bullet. Now, two or three soldiers would fall in the road, wounded by buckshot. Now, a volley would come from behind a barn, and wherever there was a short turn in the road a dozen guns were sure to bring many poor fellows to the ground. It did no good to wheel about and return the fire, for nobody was to be seen. The minute-men were hidden, and as soon as they had fired they ran forward to another place of shelter, loaded their guns, and when the British troops came along fired again.

There was an old fellow, on a shambling white horse, without saddle, and with a halter for a bridle, who followed them a long way. Wherever there was a turn in the road, or a steep hill, or a bridge, galloping along he would come, raise his musket and fire. An officer was sure to fall. Then the old white horse would wheel round, and be off at full speed. It did no good to fire at him. He was out of reach in a minute. Once the troops were scrambling over some trees felled across the road. Up came old grey, bang went the gun, down fell an officer, and back again was the man, quite out of reach. Again, the troops were fording a stream and had got wet. Before the hindmost were quite through, down the hill galloped the old mare, and another officer was killed. The British soldiers named the man "Old Daredevil," but though they aimed their pieces many times at both man and horse, neither were ever hit.

Brave Dr. Warren was about everywhere. He encouraged the minute-men, told them what to do, bade them run ahead through the woods, charged them to take good aim, pointed out where they could get more powder, said cheerful words to our wounded men, and made even boys ashamed to be afraid. His soul beat to arms. "They began it," he said; "that either could do: but we'll end it, that only one can do."

It was night when the British got back to Charlestown, and found boats ready to take them across to Boston. They had lost seventy-three killed, one hundred and seventy-four wounded, and twenty-six missing. We lost forty-nine killed, thirty-nine wounded, and five missing. Two hundred and seventy-three to ninety-three. Not bad for a beginning. It is called the battle of Lexington. It was really the victory of the minute-men.

Chapter 15

Ethan Allen and the Capture of Fort Ticonderoga

1737-1789 (May 10, 1775)

After this battle of Lexington, a Continental Congress met in Philadelphia to talk over this battle and to decide what was to be done. War must follow—of this they all felt sure. And so troops must be raised, a leader appointed, and some plan of action be agreed upon. It was at this time that George Washington was appointed "Commander-in-chief of all the forces raised or to be raised in defence of American liberties."

The news of the battle had been carried throughout the colonies, and in every town the women were knitting and spinning clothes for their husbands and brothers and sons, and making all preparation for war; the men were drilling and forming themselves into companies, ready to march to Boston at the first word of command.

Engraving depicting the capture of Fort Ticonderoga by Ethan Allen, Heppenheimer & Maurer

In Vermont, called in your geographies, you remember, the "Green Mountain State," the men had formed themselves into a company under their colonel, Ethan Allen, and called themselves the "Green Mountain Boys." On the morning of the very day of the meeting of this Congress which had made Washington Commander-in-chief, Ethan Allen, with a detachment of these volunteers, set out to surprise Fort Ticonderoga. Arriving there in the early gray of the morning, he found all but the sentries sound asleep. Suddenly, that no time might be given for an alarm, Allen's band rushed into the fort, and, making their way directly to the sleeping apartments of the commander, Allen, in a voice like thunder—so his followers say—demanded the instant surrender of the fort.

The commander, frightened, and only half dressed, threw open his door, saying, "By whose authority do you—" But Allen broke in upon him with, "In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress do I command you to surrender." No resistance was attempted; and so a large quantity of cannon and ammunition which the English had stored there, and which just then was so much needed by the troops at Boston, fell into the hands of the Americans, without the loss of a single man.

Chapter 16

The Battle of Bunker Hill

1545–1596, England

It was on the nineteenth day of April that the battle of Lexington occurred. Over heavy roads and under leafless trees, the minute-men had chased the British troops back to Boston. Since then the pleasant month of May, with its green pastures and fresh flowers, had come and gone, and June sunlight and showers were making the plants flourish in the garden, and corn-blades spring up in the fields. Everything looked pleasant. Children, coming home from school, played in the streets; farmers' boys drove the cows to pasture, and took the grists to mill; old men were weeding the gardens, and girls and women minding housework; bells rang for meeting on Sundays, and good people went to church to worship God; and to a stranger, all around Boston seemed as it used to seem.

But the Americans were angry. The British troops had shot down their brethren at Lexington. Ships with more soldiers had arrived in Boston. General Gage had an army of ten thousand men. He was proud and strong and boasting. Soldiers insulted citizens. They called hard names, took away arms, shut good men up in prison, stopped people from going to business, forbade being out of doors at night, and made the condition of the inhabitants of Boston little better than that of slaves.

The people in the country knew all this. They saw that war must come. This beautiful land, which was their home, belonged to them. Boston was their capital, and British troops had no business there. Patriots, like John Hancock and Samuel Adams and Dr. Warren and Josiah Quincy, formed themselves into a committee of vigilance, and sent news to every town. In every place meetings were held; military companies were formed; all the young men and strong men left their work in the fields, and became soldiers; and shortly the roads were filled with military companies marching to Cambridge, until there was an army there of eleven thousand Americans, commanded by General Ward.

This American army had hemmed the British inside of Boston. No food could be carried into the city. The regulars did not dare come out. What they got to eat had to come from England; and then, to worry and trouble them, the American army kept drawing closer around the place, so as by and by to fire their cannon into the streets and houses. This was the reason why the Americans went to Bunker Hill. It was nearer Boston.

On a starlight night, the sixteenth of June, 1775, a large body of these farmer soldiers marched from Cambridge towards Charlestown. Colonel Prescott led them. Two men with lanterns went before. Besides guns, the men carried shovels, crowbars, axes and picks. There was no music. They made no noise. Tramp, tramp, they moved onwards, without a word or whisper, lest they should be heard by the sentinels on the British ships, which were close by on the Charles river. By and by they

came to Bunker Hill. Here they threw off their packs, stacked their guns, took shovels and picks, and went to work to make intrenchments.

All the long night they labored, digging the ground and throwing up the dirt. Bunker Hill was only just across Charles river, close by Boston. If the Americans could hold it, they could fire cannon balls into Boston and drive the British to their ships. But the British cannon could also fire back, and these intrenchments were to protect the Americans. Before morning a deep ditch had been dug, a long pile of earth had been thrown up, and behind it stood more than a thousand American soldiers. They were all strong working men, and had made a fort in a single night.

There were live British ships of war lying in Charles river. The sentinels on board never suspected what was going on. "All's well," they drowsily cried out at every quarter hour through the night. But when morning began to come, and gray light was streaking the eastern sky, a sailor, looking on shore, spied the new fort on Bunker Hill. "What's that?" he cried. Other sailors looked and they also cried out, "What's that?" It was on board the Lively that the sailors first descried Bunker Hill fortified. Then the Falcon saw it. Then the Glasgow, and the Cerberus, and the Somerset. And shortly they began to fire their great guns.

General Gage heard in Boston the reports from the ships, and seeing through his spyglass the intrenchments on Bunker Hill, ordered the great guns on Copp's Hill to open fire also. The people in Boston were awakened by the noise, and ran to the top of Beacon Hill to see what was the matter. On the roofs of the houses, in the belfries of the churches, far up along the branches of the tall trees, men and boys were looking over to Charlestown. The news ran through the streets. Everybody was hurrying to and fro. No one went to his work. Shops were not opened. Breakfasts were eaten hurriedly. Half-dressed people rushed into the streets. No children went to school; no women came to market; no girls walked arm and arm on the sidewalks; no boys played on the Common. It was a frightful day in Boston, this Saturday, the seventeenth of June, 1775, though the skies were blue above, and the grass was green in the distant meadows.

Meanwhile the brave men on Bunker Hill kept at work. They shovelled up the earth, making the fort higher and longer. They built platforms to stand upon; they took rails and made fences, stuffing grass into them; and though the cannon-balls were flying around them they did not stop work for a minute.

This alarmed General Gage. He had thought the Americans would run. For three hours he stood looking through his spy-glass. The huge cannon-balls flew through the air; they went right into the fort; the dirt and dust were scattered when they fell; but the Americans stuck to their place. There was nothing to be done then but send British troops across the river.

And now began the great day for America. The British regiments were marshalled on the Common. It was just noon. General Howe had the command. They were three thousand strong. In scarlet uniforms, with glistening guns and waving banners and beating drums, they embarked on a hundred boats and were ferried over to Charlestown. The ships of war were still firing on the fort. From Copp's Hill the great guns were going off. Smoke clouded the sky, booms of cannon filled the air, tramp of armed men was heard on every side, orders of officers rang shrill over the waters, and the bugles of the grenadiers aroused the courage of the soldiers. And when the boats landed at Charlestown and the British troops were drawn up in line of battle, there stood twelve hundred tired laborers on the hill to resist three thousand fresh soldiers on the wharf when the two should

come together.

It was now two o'clock in the afternoon, and very warm. General Howe had sent over to Boston for more soldiers. When he saw them coming in the boats it was three o'clock. Two columns were formed at once to march up the hill—General Howe commanding one, and General Pigot commanding the other. The bugles sounded, the drums beat, the ships in Charles River kept firing on the Americans, and both columns began their march.

Battle of Bunker Hill, Howard Pyle

The Americans were tired, for they had been digging at their intrenchments many hours, and were thirsty and hungry. But when they saw the British troops marching towards them in scarlet uniforms and with burnished guns, they laid aside shovels and picks, and took up their muskets to make ready. On came the redcoats, firing as they mounted the hill. The Americans did not return the fire. "Wait till they get near!" said Colonel Prescott. "Don't fire till I give the order! Then fire low! Aim at the waist-bands! Pick off the officers!"

General Putnam also went along through the American ranks. "Powder is scarce, boys," he said, "and you must not waste it. Don't fire till you can see the whites of their eyes! Wait for orders!"

General Pomeroy, too, came to help them. He was an old man, but he had his gun in his hand and was all ready for the fight. "Don't be in a hurry, my good fellows," he said. "Fire low! Aim at the handsome coats! Wait for orders!"

Nearer and nearer came the great columns of British troops, marching to their music, and firing

as they approached. The Americans stood firm. Two or three fired, but Prescott ran along on the embankment, and kicked up their guns. General Warren, too, who had just arrived, went along the American lines and said, "Wait, my good fellows, wait; don't fire yet!" The most of them did wait. With guns loaded and cocked, standing shoulder to shoulder behind the intrenchment and rail fences, ready to take aim in an instant, with cool heads and brave hearts, these farmers and their boys who had never seen a battle in their lives, stood still and watched the proud coming of the foe. Nearer and nearer the enemy came. Their voices could be heard, their glittering uniforms flashed back the sunlight, and their tramp was almost on the top of the hill, when Prescott gave the order to fire. A thousand bullets were poured into the British columns in an instant. Hundreds of officers and soldiers fell to the ground. The execution was terrible. Everywhere lay the dead and wounded. For a moment the British troops stopped. But the Americans kept loading and firing, picking off officers here and soldiers there, until, disconcerted and broken, the redcoats, who a few moments before were certain of victory, fled in dismay to the bottom of the hill.

The Americans were elated. They had beaten British soldiers. Hundreds of English officers and men lay wounded and dead in the tall grass on the hill-side. The columns of the regulars had broken, and fled down to the river. The Americans counted it a victory. Shouts went up from the intrenchments, men clapped each others' shoulders, and but for Prescott, Pomeroy, Putnam, and Warren, the American soldiers would have leaped over the intrenchments and pursued the British down the hill.

The Battle of Bunker's Hill, John Trumbull

Before the second attack. General Putnam rode back towards Cambridge, and urged fresh American troops to hasten to the hill. Some obeyed; others were afraid, and staid behind. It was curious that those who were in the fight, though tired and hungry and thirsty, were not as much frightened as those who had been in no danger. Their blood was up—the blood of these brave fellows who had shot down the boasting regulars—and when men's blood is up, as every boy knows, there is no more fear.

Meantime the Americans waited. They had loaded their guns again. The British had set Charlestown on fire. The houses were burning, and while smoke filled the air, and cannon were firing from the ships, and the Copp's Hill artillery was playing, and thousands of people were watching from Boston houses and trees and steeples, the drums began again to beat, and, at the music of bugles and fifes, British troops started a second time on their march to drive the Americans off the hill. Onwards they came, stepping over the dead and wounded, pushing through the high grass, scrambling over the fences, and firing and shouting as they climbed the hill. Their bullets wounded a few Americans only; and their noise made no one afraid. Encouraged by their officers, and expecting this time surely to drive the farmer-soldiers out of the intrenchments, the redcoats marched steadily forward; but it was into the jaws of death. This time not an American threw away a ball. Every man had his gun resting on the fort, and was taking aim. They were perfectly still, waiting for the word. It was but a minute. The British seemed almost upon them, when the loud voice of Colonel Prescott was heard all along the line, giving the word. Fire! At once every musket was discharged. Scores of officers, and hundreds of soldiers, fell dead and wounded on the field. It was terrible. The British columns were staggered; and then, as volleys of musketry continued to thin their ranks, the men again broke and ran down the hill. A great shout now arose from the fort. *"Hurrah, hurrah!"* the Americans cried. *"See the redcoats run!" "See the rogues run!"*

It was now five in the afternoon. Only a few re-enforcements had come. The men were tired after working all night and fighting many hours. Their powder was almost gone; but still they stood to their posts, and though they saw more soldiers coming over in boats from Boston, and the British preparing to attack them again, they did not flinch. Never were braver men. General Warren encouraged them. The little powder that was left was given in small parcels to each man. All the guns were loaded again, and as they saw the British columns, urged on by officers, again coming up the hill, they waited as before for the word. This third time many British were killed and wounded. If they had had powder enough, the Americans would have won the day; but it was gone. Colonel Prescott, therefore, gave the order to retreat.

So full of courage were our boys that some were not willing to go. They hurled stones, they clubbed their muskets, they wrestled hand to hand with the British soldiers who had climbed over the redoubt. One redcoat, as he mounted to the top, cried out, "The day is ours," when an American soldier shot him dead.

But a thousand soldiers without powder and ball cannot resist two thousand who have enough of both. The Americans retreated; they did not run; to the last they fought. Colonel Prescott warded off the British bayonets with his sword, as he marched off behind his men. General Warren lingered behind, unwilling to be driven, and was killed. He was a great and good man. General Pomeroy backed off the field, fighting: with breech of his musket, and crying out, "Don't run, boys! Go slow! It shan't be said that Seth Pomeroy was ever shot in the back." General Putnam, regardless of the

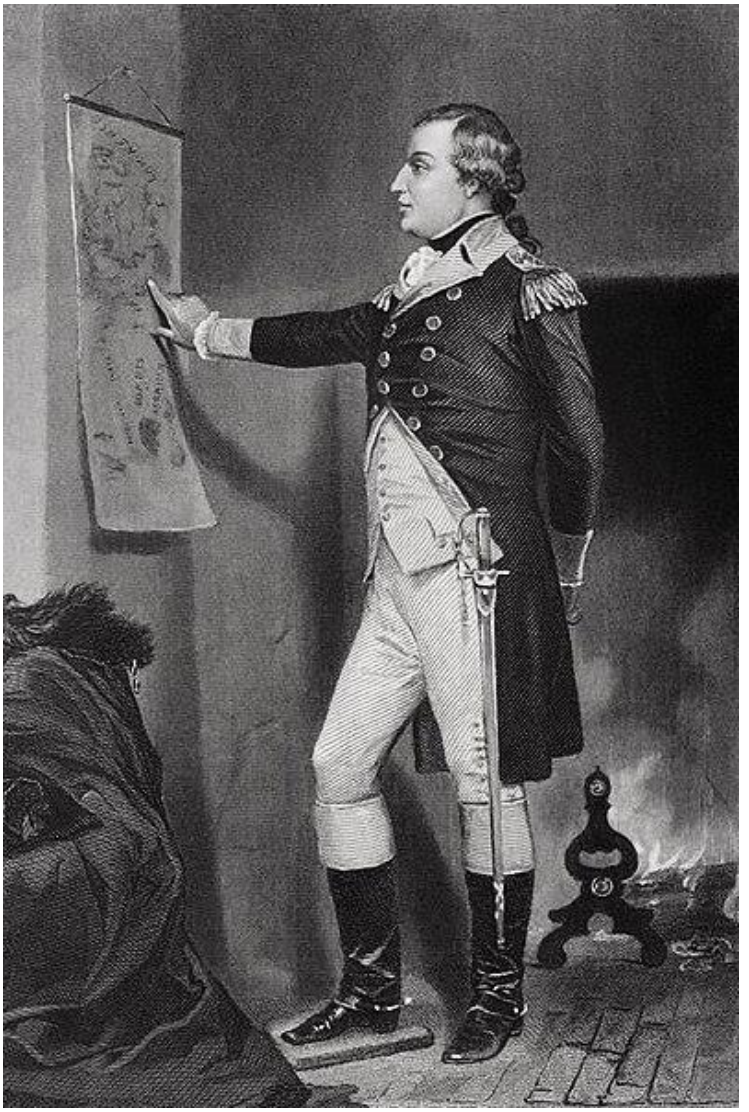
balls flying around him, was not willing to retreat. "Make a stand here," he exclaimed; "we can stop them yet."

But the battle was over. The king's troops had conquered. It was, however, a costly victory. More than fifteen hundred soldiers and officers had been killed and wounded. The Americans lost only three hundred and fifty. But the great thing was this. The British had never believed that Americans would fight. They had laughed at them. It was absurd to believe that farmers' boys would stand fire. "As soon as they see the redcoats, they will run," the English officers said. Bunker Hill changed all that. The farmers did not run. They stood to their posts. There were no better marksmen. Twice the British troops fled from their fire. To be sure, the Americans lost the battle; but they gained courage, and in the end they won independence.

Chapter 17

Richard Montgomery

1738–1775 (December 31, 1775)



Full length engraving of American Revolutionary War General Richard Montgomery, Alonzo Chappel

Generals Schuyler and Montgomery were ordered to assemble their forces at a point on Lake Champlain. Here General Schuyler fell ill and was obliged to return home, leaving the expedition, its dangers and glories, to the youthful Montgomery. He was a man of great military experience for his years; full of gifts, graces, and accomplishments; one of the most admired and beloved of the Revolutionary heroes. The order to take charge of the Canadian expedition reached him in his beautiful home on the banks of the Hudson, where with his young wife, whom he tenderly loved, he had settled, hoping for quiet years of domestic happiness in a home adorned with every refinement. But Montgomery loved honor more than life, and liberty more than happiness. He obeyed the call of his country. …

Since the Americans had taken Forts Ticonderoga and Crown Point the English had much strengthened [Fort St. John and Fort Chambly], especially St. John, as they were the only remaining defenses of Canada on that line. It was necessary to take it by siege. As soon as Montgomery's little band, not more than one thousand in number, were armed and equipped,

their gallant commander led them on until they came near Fort St. John, when they proceeded to invest it. [This is done] some-times by taking positions on hills or eminences outside the fort and mounting cannon to bear on it, sometimes by digging trenches until approaches are made near enough to make a final assault." …

This fort was well armed and garrisoned, and its capture was a work of time. Hearing that Fort St. John was thus closely besieged, the British General Carleton came with a large force, intending to engage Montgomery in battle outside and thus relieve the fort, or, as military men call it, raise the siege. But Montgomery was ready to receive him. Carleton suffered a defeat and retreated with great loss. Montgomery proceeded with the siege. Fort Chambly being feebly garrisoned, he had dispatched a small number who surprised and captured it; this afforded him a further supply of cannon and ammunition. The provisions of the garrison of St. John were now nearly exhausted. Montgomery's trenches were near enough for the assault; he therefore sent a summons to the commander to surrender and thus save further bloodshed, informing him also of Carleton's defeat. Seeing no hope of succor from any quarter, he accepted Montgomery's terms and surrendered the post. The colors taken from the English were presented to Congress. Leaving a garrison to hold the fort, Montgomery hastened on toward Montreal. So rapid were his movements and so well-planned his attack, that General Carleton, after a slight resistance, fled in disguise to Quebec. The city capitulated, and many vessels and naval stores fell to the victors. Montgomery's object was to make friends of the Canadians and induce them to join the cause of the Colonies. Though they did not do this, yet they received the Americans kindly, and supplied them and their army with all that they needed. The news of this brilliant train of victories spread over the land. Montgomery's praises were on every tongue, and Congress voted him the thanks of the nation. But the young soldier's heart was sad. After leaving garrisons at Chambly, St. John, and Montreal, he found himself with only three hundred effective men left him to attempt the capture of Quebec, which was, by natural position and military art, the most strongly fortified city in America. A Canadian winter was upon them, and their perils and hardships had but just commenced. Sad presentiments chilled Montgomery's heart. He often thought of his peaceful home in the bosom of the hills, the loving wife sitting in her loneliness there. He would have bartered all the glory he had won for one hour at that hearthstone. Should he ever see it again?

Washington had forseen the situation in which Montgomery would find himself, and, knowing that without the capture of Quebec the expedition (the object of which was the conquest of Canada) would be a failure, had dispatched a column from his own camp near Boston to penetrate the State of Maine and come out into Canada at Quebec. He even hoped that they would reach it in time to surprise and take it while Montgomery was operating against Montreal. If not, they were to await his coming and operate with him. This force consisted of ten companies of New England infantry, one of Virginia riflemen under the brave Morgan, and two companies of Pennsylvanians. In all the records of ancient or modern valor I have read nothing equal to this wrestle of heroism and endurance with toil and suffering. Let us follow these noble soldiers on the map. They were to sail up the Kennebec River as far as navigable, then they were to take flat-boats, which Washington had ordered to be constructed for their use; thence up the Dead River, a branch of the Kennebec. After that their path lay through an uninhabited wilderness until they came to the sources of the Canadian River, called the Chaudiere, which empties itself into the St. Lawrence River quite near

Quebec….

[A]s they advanced up the Kennebec the stream became rapid and violent over its rocky bed; often they could not row, but had to drag their heavily-laden boats up the swift current, waist deep. It was winter, remember; the mountains were covered with snow and the waters at a deadly chill. Beds of rock, falls and rapids, often forbade the passage of their boats at all. They had to be unloaded, arms, ammunition, baggage and provisions, and the boats themselves carried by the men through tiresome pathless forests until the stream would bear their boats again. Leaving the Kennebec, they dragged every thing over a rough mountain-ridge and through swamps and bogs, sinking knee-deep, to the Dead River. Their course now lay up this river for eighty-three miles, and no less than seventeen times, because of falls and rapids, they were forced to unload their boats and carry them, as I have before described. Winter winds howled around them; their shoes were gone; briers and rocks had torn their clothes from their backs; storms drenched them; they had no shelter at night, except what they made with the boughs of trees; their provisions were nearly gone; famine and death marched with them, until they were forced to kill their faithful dogs that had followed their masters' steps into the wilderness. But the love of liberty and their country kept its flame alive on the altar of their hearts and they toiled on. They had dragged their boats one hundred and eighty miles of the journey; they had carried them on their shoulders with all their contents, forty miles, through frightful thickets, ragged mountains, and knee-deep bogs, till at last they reached the Chaudiere, which goes foaming down its rocky bed at too rapid a speed; for it whirled over three of their boats, and they lost much of the stores and ammunition which they had brought so far with so much labor. They were nearing their journey's end, and the first French Canadians who saw them wondered if they had fallen from the clouds. Arnold had sent forward several letters to Montgomery by the hands of friendly Indians to apprise him of his coming. Unfortunately, these letters were intercepted.

But for this it was very possible that Arnold's brave heroes, worn and tattered as they were, coming suddenly upon the garrison, might have surprised and carried the defenses of the city; but the British strengthened their works and stood well upon their guard. Arnold bravely offered them battle outside the fort, but they did not accept it, and he was forced to march away some miles and wait for Montgomery's arrival. It was a glad day when their eyes caught the first sight of the American colors borne by Montgomery's men. There was a joyful meeting of friends in that far-off winter-land. Montgomery had brought them woolen clothing and boots; he also gave them words of cheer and encouragement for their almost superhuman achievements. Counting their little band, those who remained to Montgomery after battle, siege, and assault, and those who remained to Arnold from the perils of the wilderness, they amounted to a few less than one thousand, including two companies of Canadians. This handful of men appeared in mid-winter before Quebec, defended by two hundred pieces of cannon and a garrison of twice their number, well provisioned. Montgomery spoke hopefully to his men, but in his heart he carried a weight of despair. To return without taking Quebec was to throw away all the brave work he had done. Congress expected it; the nation waited for it. A soldier's fame is dear to him as life; to a patriot the cause of his country is above all else. No time was to be lost; the rigors of winter were becoming intolerable, and the sufferings of the men were beyond endurance. Two diseases attacked the camp, small-pox and home-sickness….

They did not choose the winter, but they accepted it as a necessity. England had no army in

Canada at this time, in the spring she would have. It was now or never for the capture of Canada; moreover. Congress ordered the Canadian expedition; being ordered, Washington contributed to the best of his ability to its success. Montgomery and Arnold used every honorable provocation to induce General Carleton to come out of his defenses and fight; they would then have had a fair chance of success. But the British general thought "prudence the better part of valor." Finding all his efforts unavailing, Montgomery said, "To the storming we must come at last."

The year was growing old, but a few days remaining of 1775. The term of enlistment of most of the men expired with it. The generals planned for a night assault. "The night of the 26th of December was clear, and so cold that no man could handle his arms or scale a wall. The 27th was hazy, and the troops were put in motion; but the sky cleared, and Montgomery, tender of their lives, called them back and waited for a night of clouds and darkness, with a storm of wind and snow."

On the thirtieth, the New Year's eve, a northeast snow-storm set in. The troops were divided for attack at different points, Montgomery reserving the post of danger for himself. Two of the attacks were to be mere pretenses, to draw attention from the real points, which were to be assaulted by Arnold on one side and Montgomery on the other. The snow had changed to driving hail that cut the men's eyes and faces; they advanced with heads down and their guns under their coats to keep them dry. A braver man than Arnold never led men to battle. They assailed their point of attack with the greatest fury. A musket-ball in his leg disabled Arnold early in the action, and he was borne to the rear. Morgan took command, and cheering on his men with words of victory, they carried the battery and took its defenders prisoners, though with great loss of life. He held for a time the lower part of the town, and there they waited and watched for the promised signals from Montgomery's side.

He with three hundred men and his two aids, MacPherson and Cheeseman, two gallant young soldiers, took their course along a steep and rocky path, made so slippery and dangerous by the frozen snow and hail that it was a constant effort to keep their feet. On they went, Montgomery opening the path through the snow with his own hands. A battery intercepted their path — it must be taken. Montgomery ordered them to "double-quick," himself leading, with the words, "Come on, brave boys, you will not fear to follow where your general leads." A flash, a "well-served cannon discharge," Montgomery, MacPherson, and Cheeseman fall dead. The drifted snow was the winding-sheet of the beautiful and brave on the morning of the New Year 1776, before the gates of Quebec. Seeing their leaders fall, the men had no courage to advance over their dead bodies. They retreated. Morgan and his men waited on the other side of the town for the signals, which, alas! they should never see. They waited too long. The enemy, released from defending other points, surrounded and took them prisoners. To General Carleton's praise be it spoken, the bodies of the noble fallen received burial with all the honors of war. Montgomery had fought under England's banner in his youth, and had even then won a name for honor and valor. When the news of his death reached England, the "great defenders of liberty in the British Parliament vied with each other in his praise," and wept as they pronounced his eulogy. Washington bewailed his loss, for he loved him as a brother. All over the land men wept as for a "heart friend." Congress, "desiring to transmit to future ages an example of patriotism, boldness of enterprise, and contempt of danger and death, reared a monument of marble to the glory of Richard Montgomery."

But the bitterest tears were shed in that pleasant home amid the hills of Hudson; a grief was

The Death of General Montgomery in the Attack on Quebec, December 31, 1775, John Trumbull

there for which earth had no balm, for Montgomery's wife took no other love in his stead. Years after the toils of war had passed, Washington kept state in the city of New York as first President of the Republic for which Montgomery had died, and for which Washington had lived. It is related that on reception-days "it was the custom for the secretaries and gentlemen of the household to hand ladies to and from their carriages; but when the honored widow of Montgomery came, the President himself performed these complimentary duties." …

If we consider it as a piece of offensive warfare, perhaps [the expedition] was [a mistake], though the cause of failure seemed to be the accident of Montgomery's death at the critical moment; for it was afterward found that the battery was served only by a handful of men, and if Montgomery had not fallen its capture would have been an easy matter. He without whom the sparrow does not fall gave the final orders. We "rough hew" our destinies, but He "shapes" them as he wills. It would doubtless have been better if they had stood upon their defense, instead of entering a neutral province, and had contented themselves with putting strong garrisons into the forts on the Lakes, on our own territory, thus keeping the doors into Canada well locked on this side. No success attended them afterward, though Congress, against Washington's advice, continued their efforts to accomplish their designs there. War is a horrible wickedness, and includes every form of suffering and wrong. It is unmitigated barbarism from beginning to end, except in defense of a just cause. In that case we are commanded to "resist unto blood," and every man who lays down his life fairly

earns the name of martyr.

Montgomery gave his life to win for us those civil and religious liberties which have made our country "the glory of all lands." The hero keeps his quiet, unbroken slumber in the grave-yard of St. Paul's Church, New York, just a step aside from Broadway. Of all the busy, toiling, hurrying millions that yearly pass and repass above the sacred dust, how many pause to lay upon his grave the chaplet of a grateful memory?

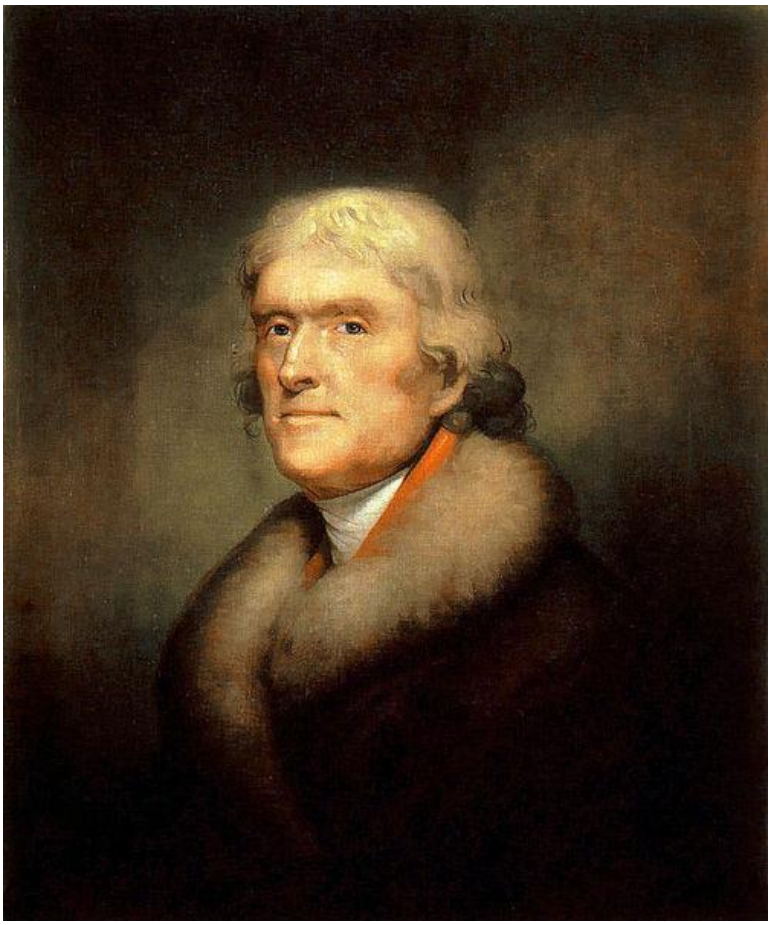
Monument to Richard Montgomery,
located above his tomb at St. Paul's Chapel, Manhattan, NY

Chapter 18

Thomas Jefferson

1743–1826

On the 13th of April, 1743, in a farmhouse among the mountains of Central Virginia, a male child was born who was destined to stamp his genius and personality upon the future nation. The father was a backwoods surveyor, of Welsh origin, and a giant in stature and strength. His name was Peter Jefferson, and he called his boy Thomas.



Thomas Jefferson, Rembrandt Peale

Peter Jefferson was the owner of thirty slaves and of a wheat and tobacco farm of nearly two thousand acres. He was a stern man, though kind and just. One of his favorite maxims was, "Never ask another to do for you what you can do yourself." He died when Thomas was but fourteen years of age, and was ever remembered by his son with pride and veneration.

From the very first, young Thomas was an especially bright child. He inherited his mother's gentle, thoughtful disposition and her love for music and nature. He also took naturally to books and studious pursuits. He might have been overstudious, but his love of nature made him a keen hunter, a fine horseman, and as fond as Washington of out-door sports.

There were ten children in the Jefferson home. Young Thomas was the third. He had a great affection for his elder sister, Jane. The two were always together in the home nest, and she did much toward elevating and ennobling his character. Her early death, at the age of twenty-five, was regretted by Jefferson to the end of his long life.

Young Jefferson entered William and Mary College when he was seventeen. He was described as one of the "gawkiest" students of the session, but professors and students alike soon found out his worth. Dr. Small, the Scotch professor of mathematics, was particularly attracted to him, and exercised a great and beneficial influence over his character.

Among Jefferson's early companions was a jovial young fellow noted for "mimicry, practical jokes, fiddling, and dancing." His name, like Jefferson's, has since been written indelibly upon the country's history. Every school boy and girl knows it. It was Patrick Henry. The two were boon companions in their youthful sports.

Shortly after Jefferson entered college, Henry strolled into his room one clay, and delighted him with the news that he had been studying law since they parted and that he had come to Williamsburg to get a license to practice. Jefferson questioned him eagerly. When he found that the young man had in reality studied law only about six weeks, he was doubtful of the outcome; but, needless to say, young Henry secured his license.

Some time afterward, when Jefferson was himself a law student and young Henry was a member of the House of Burgesses, which met at Williamsburg, matters between the King and the colonies were brought to a straitened pass by the issue of the Stamp Act. Henry felt at once that it was time to rebel, and prepared his famous set of Five Resolutions, and went to the assembly chamber primed for the occasion. It is possible that he gave his young friend, whose guest he was, a hint of what he intended to do. At any rate, young Jefferson watched him intently. Suddenly he saw his friend draw himself to his full height and "sweep with a conqueror's gaze the entire audience before and about him." "Then, in a voice rich and full and musical, he poured out his impassioned plea for the liberties of the people. In the midst of it, his voice suddenly rang out in electric tones:

"Caesar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third—" He paused. The house was in an uproar. The Speaker and many of the members were upon their feet shouting, "Treason! Treason!" They thought that he was going to threaten the overthrow of George III, who was King of England and of the colonies. But young Henry did not flinch. He looked the Speaker squarely in the eye, and, with a superb gesture, added in a tone which thrilled all hearers, "May profit by their example. If that be treason, make the most of it."

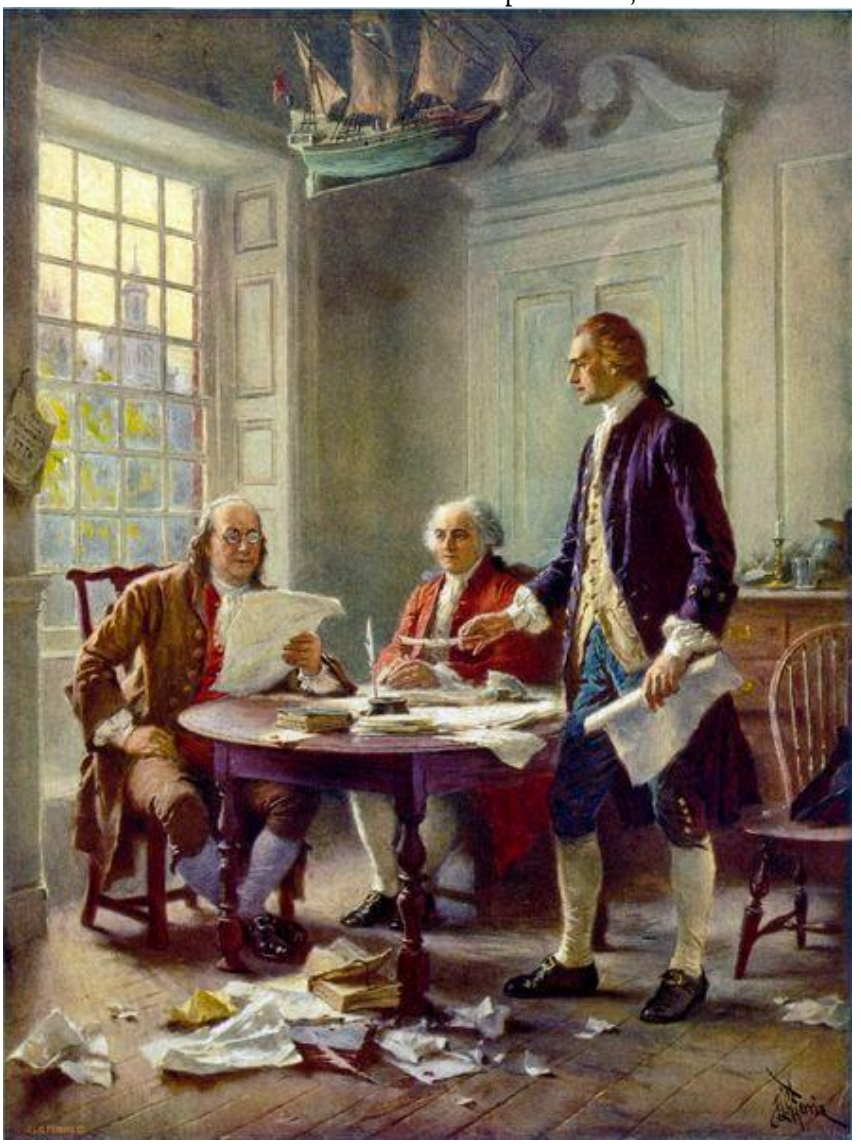
Young Jefferson never forgot the scene. He listened enthusiastically to the heated debate which followed. The "torrents of sublime eloquence" which fell from the lips of Patrick Henry almost took his breath away, and a well-spring of patriotism bubbled into being in his strong young heart. He resolved that he, too, would strive to serve his country, and to this end redoubled his studious efforts, sometimes spending fifteen hours a day over his books. The result was that he soon became the most accomplished scholar in America. He excelled in mathematics and was acquainted with five languages beside his own.

But first and foremost Jefferson was a farmer. He once said: "No occupation is so delightful to me as the culture of the earth, and no culture comparable to that of the garden."

He celebrated the occasion of his coming of age by planting a beautiful avenue of trees near his house, which he had built upon a high hill and given the name of "Monticello," meaning "little mountain." He delighted in trying new things and imported a large number of trees and shrubs to beautify his grounds, which were marvelous indeed.

We are told that "his interests were wide and intense," but in nothing, perhaps, did he display a

more unfaltering zeal than in the cause of education. In his epitaph, which he wrote himself, Jefferson makes no mention of his having been Governor of Virginia, Minister to France, Secretary of State, Vice-President, and President of the United States. Instead, there is a modest mention of the three things which he considered had won him his most enduring title to fame, viz.: that he was the "Author of the Declaration of Independence; of the statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and Father of the University of Virginia." All of these had *freedom* for their core. "Free government; free faith; free thought," says Ellis, in his biography—"these were the treasures which Thomas Jefferson bequeathed to his country and his State; and who, it may well be asked, has ever left a nobler legacy to mankind?"



Writing the Declaration of Independence,
Jean Leon Gerome Ferris

Jefferson was a member of the convention which met in Richmond in March, 1775, to decide what part Virginia should take in the coming war. He fully indorsed the words of his friend, Henry, when that "Demosthenes of the woods" electrified his hearers with the thrilling cry: "Gentlemen may cry, 'Peace, peace!' but there is no peace! The war has actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the North will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field. Why stand we here idle? What is it the gentlemen wish? What would they have? 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!"

When Washington was elected commander-in-chief, Jefferson took the place which he vacated in Congress. He was at once recognized as an influential member. No one was better than he on committees. He was so prompt, frank, and decisive. Again, no one had a clearer insight of a situation

or understood his countrymen better. He was sagacious, wise, and prudent; by birth an aristocrat, but by nature a democrat. He cared very little for pomp and ceremony, and despised titles and the insignia of rank. He could not make a brilliant speech, but in his hand the pen waxed mighty indeed. Indeed, Jefferson is known to fame chiefly because of his authorship of that immortal document, the Declaration of Independence. In June, 1776, he was appointed one of a committee of five to draw up such a document. The other members were Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston. Providence must have decreed that the lot of writing it should fall to Jefferson, for no one else could have written it so eloquently, so inspiringly. The achievement was dear to his heart, for he directed that these lines be carved upon the granite obelisk at his grave: "Here lies buried Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence." Glory enough for one man!

On New Year's Day, 1772, Jefferson was married to Mrs. Martha Wayles Skelton, a beautiful, childless young widow. Their life together was a most happy one; Jefferson was an ideal husband and father, and his wife was "one of the truest wives with which any man was ever blessed of heaven." She died just after the close of the Revolution. Six children were born to them, but only two—Martha and Mary—lived to grow up.

Jefferson looked at life through the lens of a philosopher. Here are ten rules which he considered necessary for a practical life:

"1 — Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today. 2 — Never trouble another for what you can do yourself. 3 — Never spend your money before you have it. 4 — Never buy what you do not want, because it is cheap: it will be dear to you. 5 — Pride costs us more than hunger, thirst, or

View of the West Front of Monticello and Garden, Jane Braddick Peticolas

cold. 6 — We never repent of having eaten too little. 7 — Nothing is troublesome that we do willingly. 8 — How much pain have cost us the evils which have never happened! 9 — Take things always by their smooth handle. 10 — When angry count ten before you speak; if very angry, a hundred."

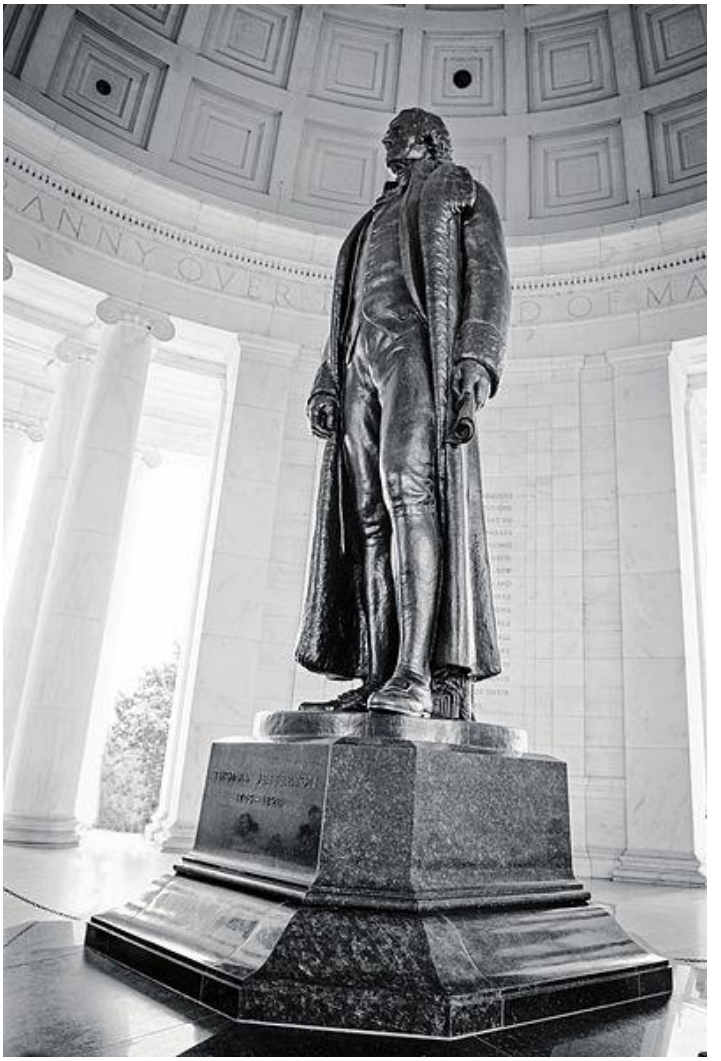
Needless to say that he followed these rules to the letter.

Jefferson was known far and wide for his fairness and justice. He had hosts of friends everywhere, and he entertained them with such lavish hospitality that, in his old age, he was brought to the verge of want, and had to mortgage his estate.

Jefferson deplored slavery as a great moral and political evil. He once said: "I tremble for my country when I remember that God is just." He treated the slaves on his large estate so kindly that they almost worshiped him. It is said that when he returned from his five years' absence as Minister to France, his negroes were so overjoyed that they took him from the carriage and carried him into the house, laughing and crying, and otherwise expressing their joy because "massa done got home again."

When Washington became President, he made Jefferson a member of his cabinet as Secretary of State. Here he collided with Alexander Hamilton, the Secretary of the Treasury. The two were exact opposites in many ways, and could no more mix than oil and water. It required all of Washington's tact to keep peace between them. "Each found the other so intolerable that he wished to resign that he might be freed from meeting him." At last Jefferson could stand it no longer. He resigned in January, 1794, and returned to his beloved farming at Monticello.

Two years later he and John Adams were the candidates for the Presidency. Adams received seventy-one votes and Jefferson sixty-eight. As the law then stood, this made him Vice-President. Adams was a Federalist, Jefferson a Republican. Therefore, it was not perhaps to be expected that they should agree. Mr. Adams, however, did not try. He simply ignored Jefferson in all political matters. At the next election, Jefferson and Adams were again the candidates for the Presidency. Jefferson was elected. The



Statue of Thomas Jefferson, Jefferson Memorial, Washington D.C.

quick-tempered Adams was so nettled over the affair that he arose at daybreak, on the day of the inaugural, and set out in his coach for Massachusetts, refusing to wait and see his successor installed in office. In later years, however, he repented of his foolishness. Jefferson and he became reconciled and kept up a friendly correspondence to the end of their lives.

As President, Jefferson was much beloved. His inauguration was observed as a national holiday throughout the country. Of course, this was distasteful to Jefferson, who hated pomp and ceremony. A story is on record to the effect that he rode to the Capitol on horseback and hitched his horse to the fence, while he went in, unattended, to take the oath of office.

Whether it be true or not, we know that during his term of office Jefferson frowned upon all display, and would have no honors shown to him that might not have been offered to him as a citizen.

Jefferson chose James Madison, his most intimate friend at that time, for his Secretary of State. Congenial men made up the remainder of the cabinet. This "happy family" worked together in peace and harmony throughout the two terms of Jefferson's presidency. Many important national events marked his administration. Chief of them all was the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France, in 1803, for fifteen millions of dollars. Eleven entire States and parts of four others have since been carved from this vast domain.

Jefferson retired forever from public life at the close of his second term. "From that time," says Daniel Webster, "Mr. Jefferson lived as becomes a wise man. Surrounded by affectionate friends, his ardor in the pursuit of knowledge undiminished; with uncommon health and unbroken spirits, he was able to enjoy largely the rational pleasures of life; and to partake of that public prosperity to which he had contributed so much. His kindness and hospitality; the charm of his conversation; the ease of his manners; and especially the full store of revolutionary incidents which he possessed, and which he knew when and how to dispense, rendered his abode attractive in a high degree to his admiring countrymen. His high public and scientific character drew toward him every intelligent and educated traveler from abroad."

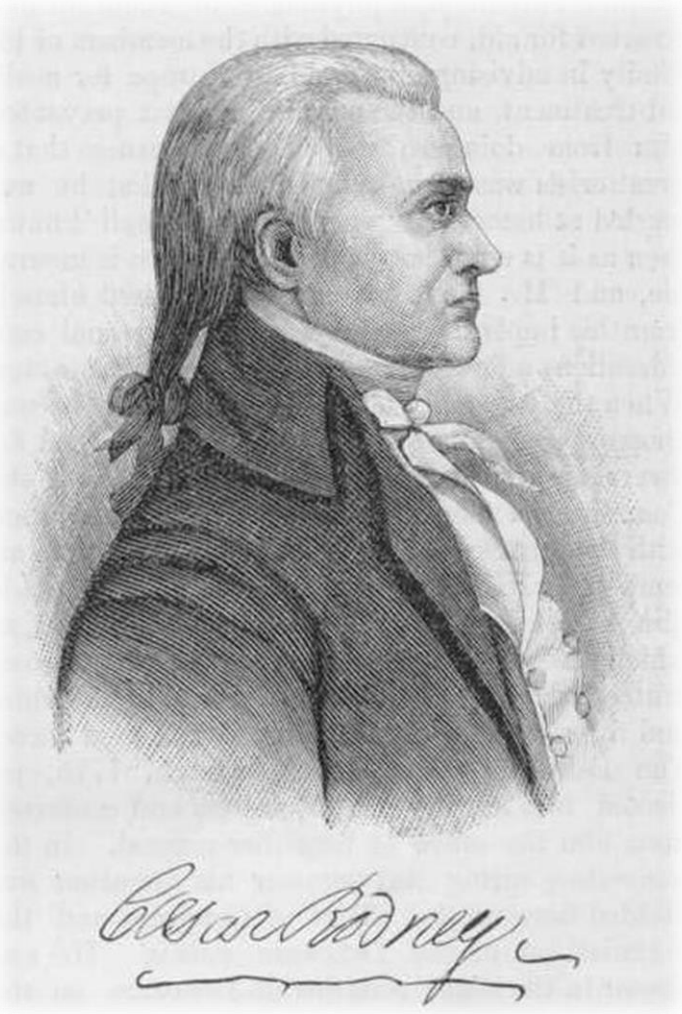
"The Sage of Monticello" died on the afternoon of July 4, 1826. A few hours afterward John Adams, too, breathed his last. Thus passed away, on the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the two men who had been the most instrumental in bringing it about. "Their country is their monument; its independence their epitaph."

Chapter 19

Caesar Rodney

1728-1784

Years passed, and the Counties on the Delaware, under the wise laws of William Penn, grew and prospered. Dover was laid out and settled; New Castle flourished; Lewes became a town. Instead of the rough buildings of the early settlers, handsome country houses and comfortable farms were to be seen.



Caesar Rodney of Delaware,
from J. Thomas Scharf's History of Delaware, 1888

The manners and customs of the people were still very plain and simple. Very few foreign articles were used in this part of the country. Clothes were woven, cut and sewed at home. Beef, pork, poultry, milk, butter, cheese, wheat and Indian corn were raised on the farms; the fruit trees yielded freely, and there was a great deal of wild game; the people lived not only comfortably but luxuriously.

The Counties on the Delaware were very fertile, and very little labor was needed to make the land yield all that was required. The people had a great deal of leisure time for visiting and pleasure. They were always gathering together at one house or another, the younger people to dance or frolic, and the older men to amuse themselves with wrestling, running races, jumping, throwing the disc and other rustic and manly exercises.

On Christmas Eve there was a universal firing of guns, and all through the holidays the people traveled from house to house, feasting and eating Twelfth cake, and playing games.

So for years, life slipped pleasantly by in these southern Counties, and then suddenly there came a change. There began to be talk of war with England. News was eagerly watched for. There was no mail at that time. Letters were carried by stage-coach, or by messengers riding on horseback from town to town. In the old days, the people had been content to send their servants for letters. Now, when a messenger, hot and dusty, came galloping into the town, a crowd would be waiting, and would gather round him.

And it was thrilling news that the dusty messengers carried in those days, the days of 1775. England was determined to tax her colonies, and the colonies were rising in rebellion. Boston had thrown whole cargoes of tea into her harbor rather than pay the tax on it.

Then the first shots of the Revolution were fired at Concord and Lexington. At the sound of those shots the Counties on Delaware awoke. Drums were beat, muskets were cleaned, ladies sewed flags for the troops to carry; men enlisted, and the militia drilled. But still it was hoped by many that things would settle back peaceably.

But worse and worse news came from the north. Boston harbor had been shut up by the English. The people were starving. Warships from England had brought over more troops (many of them hired Germans), and had quartered them on the town. All the country was hot with anger over these things. Food and clothing were sent to Boston. General Washington raised troops of a thousand men, at his own expense, and marched north to her relief.

General Caesar Rodney was one of the important men of Dover at that time. He was a tall, pale, strange looking man, with flashing eyes, and a face, as we are told, "no larger than a good-sized apple." He was a general in the militia, and was heart and soul for independence. He rode about the country, calling meetings, speaking to the people, and urging them to enlist, and urging them, too, to raise money to give to the government. He was at this time suffering from a painful disease, but he spared neither strength nor comfort in the cause of freedom.

Mr. George Read of New Castle was a very important man in the colonies, too. He was a patriot, and belonged to the militia, but he was very anxious not to begin a war. He agreed that the time might come when the colonies would have to be free, but he thought that time had not yet come. He hoped that when it did, the colonies might win their freedom peaceably, and not by battle and bloodshed. He was a calm, quiet, learned man, rather slow of speech, and different in many ways from his quick and fiery friend, Rodney.

A third man who was important in Colonial times was Mr. Thomas McKean. He was a lawyer in New Castle, and was a friend of both these men. Like Rodney, he was for freedom at any cost.

In 1776, when the Colonial Congress was called to meet in Philadelphia, these three men, Rodney, Read and McKean, were sent to it as delegates by the Counties on the Delaware.

This meeting of Congress in the summer of 1776 was the most important meeting that had ever been held. From north and south the delegates came riding to it, from all the thirteen colonies; and they met in the Committee Room of the State House in Philadelphia,

Many serious questions were to be decided by these delegates this year. But the most serious of all the questions was whether the Colonies should declare themselves free and independent states. If they did this, it would mean war with England.

While the question was still argued about in the committee room, Caesar Rodney was sent for to come back to the Counties on the Delaware. Riots and quarrels and disturbances had broken out

there, and no one could quiet them as well as Caesar Rodney. He was very glad to go, for it seemed as though it might be a long time before the delegates would decide on anything, and he hoped to be able to raise some money for the government.

He started out early one morning on horseback, cantering easily along through the cool of the day. It was eighty miles from Philadelphia to Dover, and he broke it by stopping overnight at New Castle, which was rather more than half way home. The road he took was the old King's Highroad, which ran on down through the Counties on Delaware, through Wilmington and New Castle and Dover, as far as Lewes.

General Rodney found a great deal to do down in the Counties. The Whigs and Tories had come to blows. One Tory gentleman only just escaped being tarred and feathered, and carried on a rail. Caesar Rodney was the one who had to quiet all the troubles. Beside this he made speeches, raised moneys and helped get together fresh troops of militia.

But busy though he was, he managed to find some time for visiting about among his friends. Especially he found time to visit at the house of a young Quaker widow named Sarah Rowland. Mistress Rowland lived in Lewes. She was a Tory, but she was very beautiful and witty, and Caesar Rodney was said to be in love with her. He might often have been seen, between his busy times, cantering along the road that led to Lewes and to her house. Mistress Rowland, as a Quaker, believed all fighting to be wrong, but she was always friendly with the General. Perhaps she hoped in some way to be able to help the Tories by things the General told her, or by having him at her house. At any rate she always made him welcome.

Now, while General Rodney was still busy down in the Counties on the Delaware, with his work and pleasure, great things were happening in Philadelphia. The Declaration of Independence was finally drawn up and written out.

It was laid on the table before the Colonial Congress, and the delegates were given five days to make up their minds to agree, whether they would sign it or not. They considered and discussed it in secret behind closed doors.

One after another, the delegates from various colonies agreed to sign. At last, only the Counties on the Delaware were needed to carry the agreement. They could not sign the Declaration, for they had now only two delegates present at Congress. Of these, one (McKean) was for it, and one (Mr. Read) was against it, so it was a tie between them, and Rodney, whose vote could have decided the matter, was down in the Counties on Delaware, eighty miles away.

McKean was in despair. He sent message after message down to Delaware, begging the General to return to Philadelphia and give his deciding vote, but no answer came. The fact was that General Rodney did not receive any of these messages McKean sent. He was visiting Mistress Rowland in Lewes at the time, and she managed to keep the letters back from him. She hoped that he might know nothing about the Declaration until it had been voted on and the whole matter decided. Even if all the other Colonies decided to sign, it would weaken the union very much if the Colonies on the Delaware did not sign.

On the third of July, McKean sent a last message down to Rodney, passionately begging him to come to Philadelphia. The vote of the delegates was to be taken July the fourth, and if the General was not there the vote of the Counties on Delaware could not be cast for the Declaration of Independence, and it might be lost.

On this same day, July the third, 1776, Caesar Rodney was chatting with Mistress Rowland in the parlor of her house at Lewes, so one tradition goes. It had seemed strange to him that he had not heard from McKean lately, but he felt sure that if anything important were happening at Philadelphia he would receive word at once. So he put his anxieties aside and laughed and talked with the widow.

Suddenly, the parlor door was thrown open and a maid-servant came into the room. She crossed over to where General Rodney was sitting. "There!" she cried. "I'm an honest girl and I won't keep those back any long-er!" and she threw a packet of letters into the General's lap.

Rodney picked them up and looked at them. They were in Mr. McKean's handwriting. Has-tily he ran through them. They were the letters Sarah Rowland had been keeping back, the let-ters begging and imploring him to hasten north to Philadelphia.

Without a word, General Rodney started to his feet, and ran out to where his horse was standing before the house. Sarah Rowland called to him, but he did not heed her. He sprang to the saddle and gathered up the reins, and a moment later he was galloping madly north toward Dover. It was a long ride, but a longer still was before him. The heat was stifling, and the dust rose in clouds as he thundered along the King's Highroad.

At Dover, he stopped to change his horse, and here he was met by McKean's last messenger, with a letter, urging him to haste, haste. Indeed, there was not an hour to waste. Philadelphia was eighty miles away, and the vote was to be taken the next morning.

On went Rodney on his fresh horse. Daylight was gone. The moon sailed slowly up the sky, and the trees were clumps of blackness on either hand as he rode.

At Chester, he again changed horses, but he did not stop for either rest or food. Soon, he was riding on again.

It was in the morning of July fourth, that the rider, exhausted and white with dust, drew rein

before the State House door in Philadelphia. McKean was there watching for him.

"Am I in time?" called Rodney as he swung himself from his horse.

"In time, but no more," answered McKean.

Side by side he and Rodney entered Independence Hall. There sat the delegates in a semi-circle. Rodney and McKean took their places. The Declaration of Independence lay on the table before them. It was being voted on. One after the other the colonies were called on and one after another they gave their votes for it. The Counties on Delaware were called on. Mr. McKean rose and voted for it. Mr. Read was, as usual against it.

Then Caesar Rodney rose in his place. His face looked white and worn under its dust, but he spoke in a clear, firm voice. "I vote for Independence."

And so the day was won. From the belfry of Independence Hall, the bells pealed out over the Quaker City, bonfires blazed out, people shouted for joy, and the thirteen American Colonies, strong in union, stood pledged together for liberty.

Statue of Caesar Rodney, Wilmington, Delaware

Chapter 20

The Signing of the Declaration of Independence

July 4, 1776

There had been war between the colonies and England for more than a year. The battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill had occurred more than twelve months before. Washington had long been commander-in-chief. The British army had been driven out of Boston, an American army occupied New York, the governors of the colonies nobody thought of obeying, and yet we had never declared ourselves an independent nation.

But the time for this had come. The king of England had failed to conquer us this first year, but he meant to do it during the second. He therefore raised a larger army and equipped a greater fleet. Our patriots, he said, he would hang. If we did not submit, he threatened to burn our towns, and destroy our ships, and break down our bridges, and lay waste our fields. He sent to Germany and

Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Ferdinand Richardt

Declaration of Independence, John Trumbull

hired Hessian soldiers to fight against us. The Indians he tried to stir up to make war upon our people, and he issued a proclamation that he would never forgive the colonists, unless they laid down their arms.

While Washington was preparing his little army for this great contest, a Congress assembled in Philadelphia. It was composed of wise men from each of the thirteen colonies. New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, all sent delegates. Old men and young men, lawyers and planters and ministers, all good patriots, were in this Congress. They came together to see what was best to be done. Should the colonies submit to England? They answered, No! Should they try to make peace, and let England send us governors again to oppress us? With one voice they all answered, No! Should the colonies declare themselves independent of England? This was the great question.

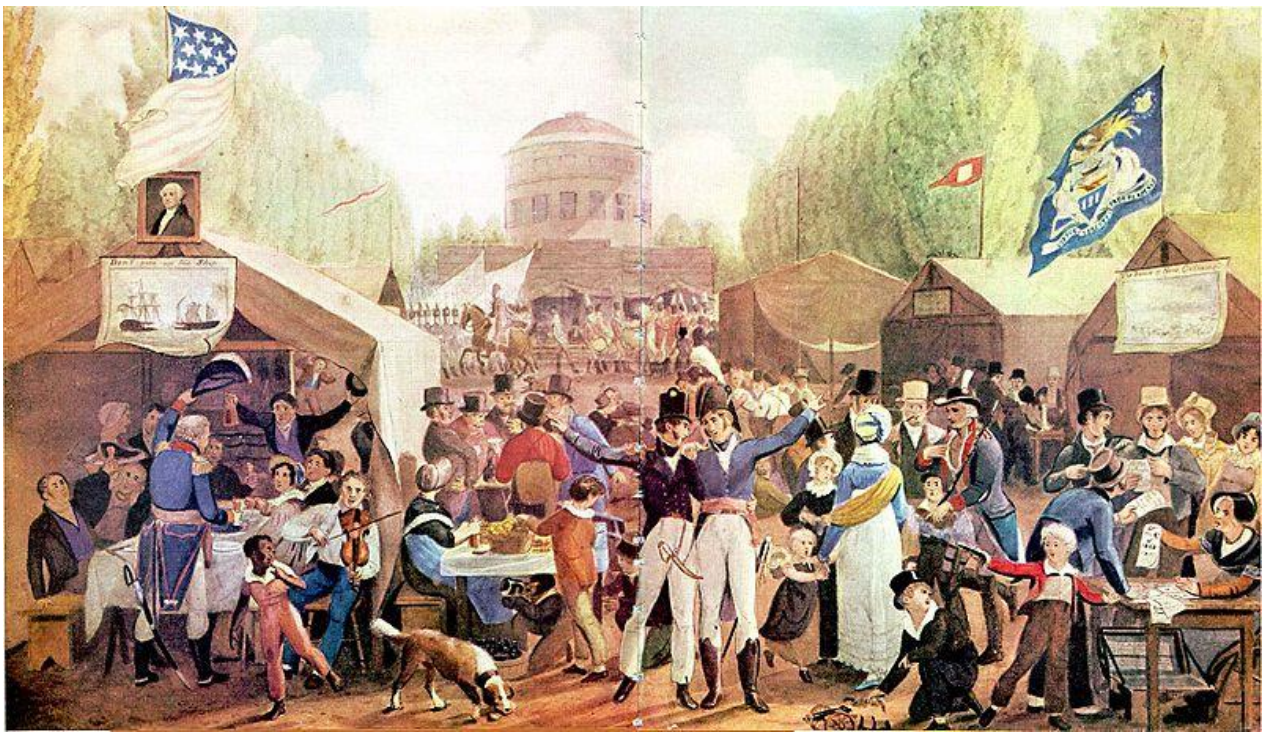
The members of Congress debated this many days. Some thought we had better wait, and see whether the king would not be of better mind. Others said it was of no use, for George the Third was a tyrant. There were many opinions. Shortly, Richard Henry Lee, a delegate from Virginia, rose up and made a famous speech. He was a good and great man. Every one listened to what he said. And when he moved that we declare ourselves a free and independent people, all the delegates in Congress arose and said, Yes.

John Hancock, a Boston merchant, was president of the Congress. Benjamin Franklin, Thomas

Jefferson, John Adams, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston, were chosen a committee to prepare a Declaration of Independence. And on the second of July, 1776, they stood up before the Congress, and what they had prepared was read aloud. There was dead silence. Every one listened. Not a word was spoken. As the solemn words came from the reader, recounting the king's tyranny and our people's sufferings, faces flushed, and hearts throbbed, and sighs were drawn, and eyes dropped tears. The battle of Lexington, when plough-boys drove the British troops back to Boston, was a great event; and the battle of Bunker Hill, when the flower of the English army fell before the deadly fire of raw Yankee volunteers, was a great event; and the abandonment of Boston by General Gage, when General Washington marched his army, with banners flying, and drums beating, and bugles playing, across Charles river, was a great event; but not Lexington, nor Bunker Hill, nor Boston's evacuation, was an event as great as this. The Declaration of Independence, on the fourth of July, 1776, was the greatest event that ever occurred in American history. We celebrate it with ringing of bells, and firing guns, and grand processions, and public speeches, every year. And well we may, for the Declaration of Independence made America.

When the Declaration of Independence had been agreed upon by Congress, it was sent to the people of all the thirteen colonies. Everywhere it was received with rejoicings. The citizens of Philadelphia heard it read first. It was on the fourth of July, 1776. There was an immense crowd of people. The bells of the churches rang, cannon were fired, and as the brave words fell upon the ears of the assembled people, shouts of gladness went up to the skies.

It was the same in New York. Everybody was glad. We were British subjects no longer. Now, for the first time, we were Americans. And so, from the Battery, all up the Hudson river, martial music,



Independence Day Celebration in Centre Square, Philadelphia, John Lewis Krimmel

and bugle salutes, and discharges of artillery filled the air. The joy of the people could not be restrained. They raised flagstaffs, and burned fireworks, and tore down the statue of King George and hauled it through the streets.

The news spread. Couriers carried it to Richmond. Horsemen sped it to Charleston. In every town and village it caused the greatest joy. Men shouted Independence through the streets. Flags inscribed "Independence" floated from the liberty-poles. Boys wore badges with "Independence" on their hats. Everywhere there was music and bell-ringing and the noise of cannon.

In Boston, the citizens held a great meeting in front of the old State House. The military in their uniforms were there, and the judges, and the city officers, and the country gentlemen on horseback, and boys and girls from the schools, and stevedores from the docks, and car men with their teams, and merchants, and lawyers, and ministers—all listening to the Declaration of Independence. They were quiet till the reading was nearly ended. But when the words, "Free and Independent States" fell upon the ears of the crowd, their enthusiasm could be restrained no longer. Cheer after cheer was given. The reader's voice could be no longer heard. The cannon began to roar, the bells pealed out their joyful notes, the bands struck up martial music, and all the town was in a blaze of excitement. Boston boys remembered the redcoats, and shouted Independence with a will.

Chapter 21

The Liberty Bell

July 4, 1776

The bell-ringer of the statehouse in Philadelphia was growing old, and once in awhile his little grandson climbed the stairs to the belfry and pulled the bell rope to help him. It was a long dark way up the dusty staircase and the lad always went as quietly as his copper-toed shoes would let him, partly so as not to surprise the mice and bats into coming down to meet him, and partly to avoid disturbing the great men of the country who met in the assembly room of the statehouse.

They were the important statesmen of the American Colonies, old Dr. Benjamin Franklin, who could accomplish almost anything from printing an almanac to catching lightning, Mr. Thomas Jefferson who was looked up to as the wise scribe of the Colonies. His desk in the statehouse was so covered with quill pens and papers and red seals that the lad scarcely dared to dust it. There was

The Bell's First Note, Jean Leon Gerome Ferris (reproduction)

Mr. John Adams of Massachusetts, also, who had seen a shipload of bales of tea turned overboard in Boston Harbor three years before because the Colonists refused to pay a tax on it to King George III of England. John Adams loved a cup of fragrant tea served in Boston's blue and white china, but he loved his country more.

On his way up toward the belfry stairs, the bell-ringer's grandson peeped in the door at these men and those others with them in knee breeches, silver buckled shoes, and powdered hair that was worn by some in braided queues. They were the members of the first American Congress, and their talk was of the Colonies they represented, stretching now from Maine to Georgia; what was best for them in the way of government that the people might be free, and yet united. The idea had already come to this first body of law makers that laws should not be made to limit a man's freedom, but to give men new liberty to live and work and think by freeing them from wrong doing, lawless-ness, and crime.

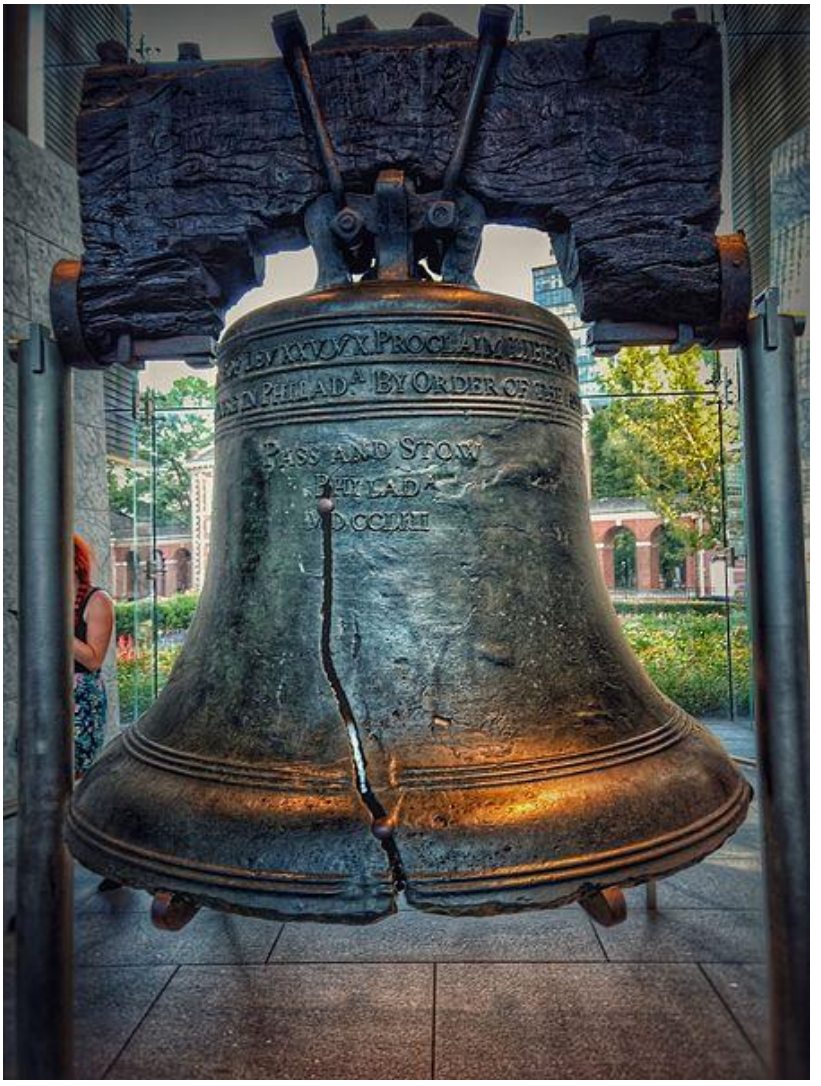
This matter of governing a new nation was becoming increasingly important. The Congress realized that, and so it was sitting in the statehouse of old Philadelphia on a very warm summer afternoon, the fourth of July in the year 1776.

The lad turned away from the door. Perhaps it would be better not to ring the bell for sunset because the Congress was sitting so late, he decided. His grandfather was up in the belfry polishing the bell, and he would wait and go up when the gentlemen of the Congress started home. The boy stood a little while in the doorway of the brick building and looked down Chestnut Street on which it stood.

There came the post rider, his mail pouches gray with dust, and his horse's hoofs striking sparks on the paving stones in the warm, gathering twilight. What an adventuresome life a post rider's was, the lad thought enviously. They rode between all the cities of the new nation, meeting at the borders of the Colonies to exchange and carry on letters and packets.

The post riders were making and living the geography of the American Colonies which were too young and were growing up too fast to be between book covers or on maps yet in the schools. They rode to the green pasture land of New Hampshire, heard the whir of spinning wheels in Connecticut and passed the gate of Harvard College in Boston. They talked to the fishermen of Rhode Island and the trappers of New York; stopped for foaming mugs of milk in some dairy of New Jersey or Pennsylvania, passed fertile farms of Delaware and Maryland, had supper of hot corn bread and ham on a rich Virginia tobacco plantation, and rode past white cotton fields in the Carolinas or Georgia. Thirteen thriving, growing, alert American Colonies, alike in their desire for liberty, and different in their settlement, people, work, products and mode of thinking. But they were keeping together after a fashion, for they all sent delegates to the Continental Congress here in Philadelphia, and they were united at heart in a league of neighborly friendship and for common defense.

The post rider was gone now. The lad in the door of the statehouse could see nothing but a cloud of gray dust up Chestnut Street where he had been. It was the quiet, dim end of a sultry day and the street was empty, for the early supper tables would soon be laid. At least Chestnut Street had been empty. Now the boy saw that it was suddenly beginning to fill. Housewives who had neglected to take off their cooking aprons, shop keepers with their tape measures still dangling over their shoulders, a raw recruit of a soldier who held his musket awkwardly because his hands were more used to a spade, a barrister in a long black robe and huge wig, even the post rider returned, all



Liberty Bell, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

these and more moved toward the stately old building that housed the Congress. What could it mean, the bell ringer's grandson wondered, shrinking back into the shadow of the doorway?

As he waited, the door of the assembly room opened, and he saw that Mr. Thomas Jefferson held a very long and important looking document in his hand from which he was reading in his strong, clear voice. The boy could catch some of the words, and so could that part of the crowd outside nearest the open windows:

"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 —" Mr. Jefiferson read. He went on: —

"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 was the word that held the crowd breathless, "independent."

Then Mr. Jefferson finished: —

"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 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."

There was a silence of only a second. Then the ayes of the Congress, pledging the new nation's support to this declaration of independence filled the room, and resounded in the street and re-echoed from the crowd, mingling with their cheers.

"Ring the bell for freedom!" some one shouted.

Now his chance had come to celebrate the fourth of July, 1776, the bell ringer's grandson knew, and he ran up the stairs to the belfry, kicking up almost as much dust as the post rider and not one whit afraid of the scurrying mice and the flapping winged bats.

"Ring the bell, grandfather," he cried, "Ring it, the Congress and the people say, for freedom!"

Taking hold of the rope, the lad pulled too. helping his grandfather with all his might as peal after peal rang out through the summer evening and was the signal for more shouts of joy in the street and the pealing of every other bell in old Philadelphia.

There are Christmas bells that chime for peace, and church bells that call us to think of holy things, the jester jingles his bells for mirth, and the sheep bells tinkling along country lanes at sunset tell us of the plenty and comfort of the farm. But the ringing of the Liberty Bell on that first fourth of July held the message of all these others. It sounded the desire for a day when wars would not be needed. It rang for religious and civil liberty, for the right to enjoy play and work without autocratic interference, and for freedom to develop and enjoy all the prosperity that the fertile earth offered. So it rings today, and will always ring in the hearts of free peoples.

It was a very fine way of celebrating a great day, and particularly for the lad who was able to have a part in it. No one thought about wasting money on fire crackers or popguns, or rockets, for the people of the Colonies saw a long road ahead of them before they should be able to work out their independence. The call of the Liberty Bell was all the celebration they wanted or needed to start them along that road. The next year, though, saw them holding our flag. The Congress had adopted one, thirteen broad red and white stripes, and thirteen white stars, circled in a blue field, for the thirteen original American colonies, and waving for freedom.

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