



*American History
for a
New Generation of Americans*

Compiled by John Norton



CONTENTS

Prologue

A

Samuel Johnson
Alexis de Tocqueville
Harry S Truman
John Quincy Adams

Historical Americana

1 thru 24

Mayflower Compact 1620 1
Patrick Henry's - Speech on Liberty 1 - 3
George Washington's Farewell Address 1796 4 - 7
Declaration of Independence 7 - 10
The Federalist Papers: No 30 10 - 13
The Federalist Papers: No 47 13 - 18
Paul Revere's Ride 18 - 20
The Gettysburg Address 20 - 21
Star Spangled Banner 21 - 22
The Emancipation Proclamation 22 - 24
Pledge of Allegiance 24

Historical Poetry and Prose

25 thru 28

The New Colossus 25
Ballad of the Boston Tea Party 25 - 26
Barbara Frietchie 27
The Americans Creed 28
America 28

Epilogue

29

Harry Emerson Fosdick
Founding Fathers on the Second Amendment:
Alexander Hamilton
George Washington
John Adams
Thomas Jefferson
James Madison
George Mason
Thomas Jefferson
Richard Henry Lee

Additional Readings

30

PROLOGUE

"A contempt of the monuments and the wisdom of the past, may be justly reckoned one of the reigning follies of these days, to which pride and idleness have equally contributed." (*Samuel Johnson*)

"I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers, and it was not there; in her fertile fields and boundless prairies, and it was not there; in her rich mines and her vast world commerce, and it was not there. Not until I went to the churches of America and heard her pulpits aflame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because she is good and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great." (*Alexis de Tocqueville*)

"The only thing new in the world is the history you don't know." (*Harry S. Truman, US President 1945-1952*)

"Posterity: you will never know how much it has cost my generation to preserve your freedom. I hope you will make good use of it." (*John Quincy Adams*)

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

Mayflower Compact 1620

Drafted and signed on board the Mayflower as that ship approached Cape Cod on November 11, 1620, the compact is regarded as one of the most important documents in American history. It proves the determination of the small group of English separatist Christians to live under a rule of law based on the consent of the people and to set up their own civil government. The parchment has long since disappeared - the current text was first printed in London in 1622 in a pamphlet generally known as: Mourt's Relation," which contained extracts from the fledgling colony's journals and histories. In an oration delivered at Plymouth in 1802 John Quincy Adams declared that it was "perhaps the only instance, in human history, of that positive, original social compact, which speculative philosophers have imagined as the only legitimate source of government." Thus the Pilgrim Fathers had anticipated the covenantal social contract seventy years before John Locke and 140 years before Jean Jacques Rousseau.

In the name of God Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign Lord King James by the grace of God, of great Britain, France, and Ireland king, defender of the faith, etceteras.

Having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancements of the Christian faith and honor of our king & country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the Northern parts of Virginia, doe by these presents solemnly & mutually in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant & combine our selves together into a civil body politick; for our better ordering, & preservation & furtherance

of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame such just & equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.

In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cape Cod the eleventh of November, in the year the reign of our sovereign Lord King James of England, France and Ireland the eighteenth and of Scotland and fifty fourth, Anno Domini, 1620.

John Carver, William Bradford, Edward Winslow, William Brewster, Isaac Allerton, Myles Standish, John Alden, Samuel Fuller, Christopher Martin, William Mullins, William White, Richard Warren, John Howland, Stephen Hopkins, Edward Tilley, John Tilley, Francis Cooke, Thomas Rogers, John Turner, Francis Eaton, James Chilton, John Crakston, John Billington, Moses Fletcher, John Goodman, Degory Priest, Thomas Tinker, John Rigdale, Edward Fuller, Thomas Williams, Gilbert Winslow, Edmund Margeson, Peter Brown, Richard Britteridge, George Soule, Richard Clarke, Richard Gardiner, John Allerton, Thomas English, Edward Doty, Edward Leister.

Patrick Henry's Speech on Liberty - 1775

This famous speech by the first governor of the state of Virginia, a member of the First Continental Congress, was delivered at Richmond's historic St John's Episcopal Church in the year before the signing of the Declaration of Independence. It was a fiery call to arms

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

against British oppression and a cry for a "well-regulated militia" for the colony of Virginia. It caused an immediate and rousing reaction and subsequently became one of the great clarion cries for freedom that circulated throughout the colonies. The convention subsequently passed his resolution.....

"Mr. President: No man thinks more highly than I do of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who have just addressed the House. But different men often see the same subjects in different lights; and, therefore, I hope that it will not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen, if entertaining as I do, opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, I shall speak forth my sentiments freely and without reserve. This is no time for ceremony. The question before the House is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery, and in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ought to be the freedom of the debate. It is only in this way that we can hope to arrive at truth and fulfill the great responsibility which we hold to God and our country. Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offense, I should consider myself as guilty of treason toward my country and of an act of disloyalty toward the majesty of heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings.

Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever

anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth, to know the worst and to provide for it.

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves and the House? Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition comports with these warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled that force must be called in to win back our love?

Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation, the last arguments to which kings resort. I ask gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motives for it? Has Great Britain any enemy, in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us; they can be meant for no other, they are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we oppose to them? Shall we try

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer on the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable, but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer. Sir, we have done everything that could be done to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned; we have remonstrated; we have supplicated; we have prostrated ourselves before the tyrannical hands of the ministry and parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned, with contempt, from the foot of the throne.

In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free - if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending - if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained, 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 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 power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battle alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base, enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. 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!

It is vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. 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!"

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS - 1796

By September 17, 1796, when this

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

address was delivered to his cabinet in Philadelphia, the president had already served two terms and did not wish to serve a third. His immense popularity had dwindled dramatically due to his fierce federalism and his opposition to the formation of political parties that were emerging. In addition, he was tired of being lampooned in the political press. He considered this message so important that he had the full text published in newspapers around the country two days later so it would reach a much wider audience. The address warned against foreign involvements, political factions, and sectionalism and promoted religion, morality, and education.

"Friends and fellow citizens: The period for a new election of a citizen to administer the executive government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

In looking forward to the moment which is intended to terminate the career of my political life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me, and for the opportunities, I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable

attachment by services faithful and persevering, through in usefulness unequal to my zeal.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger natural to that solicitude urge me on an occasion like the present to offer to your solemn contemplation and to recommend to your frequent review some sentiments which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all important to the permanency of your felicity as a people.

The unity of government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity, of that very liberty which you so highly prize.

But as it is easy to foresee that from different quarters much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth, as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness.

The name of American, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations - Northern and Southern, Atlantic and Western - whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts is to misrepresent the opinion and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heartburnings which spring from these misrepresentations. They tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection.

To the efficacy and permanency of your Union a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an

intimate union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns.

Toward the preservation of your government and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts. One method of assault may be to effect in the forms of the Constitution alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual, and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation on the ruins of public liberty.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politicians, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked: Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

'Tis substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric? Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

Observe good faith and justice toward all nations. Cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and

things the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtues? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! Is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments for others should be excluded, and that in place of them just and amicable feelings toward all should be cultivated.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand, neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. 'Tis an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish, that they will control the usual current of the passions or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good - that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism - this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

by which they have been dictated.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence, and that after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love toward it which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing exception that retreat in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government - the ever favorite object of my heart and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors, and dangers.....

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE *(including grievances against King George of Great Britain)*

On June 9, 1776, the Continental Congress accepted a resolution of Virginia delegate Richard Henry Lee, appointing a committee to draft a declaration of secession from the dominions of the English king and

parliament. On June 29 the committee - composed of Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert Livingston - presented their draft for debate and a vote. On July 4 an amended version of that draft was accepted. The war that had been raging for more than a year had finally driven the reluctant revolutionaries to sever all ties with their motherland.

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

We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that wherever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government.

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

He has refused his assent to laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has for bidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

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

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

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the right of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after

such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the state remaining in the meantime exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for the purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

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

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies without the consent of our legislature.

He has affected to render the military independent of and superior to the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation.

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us.

For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states;

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

For imposing taxes on us without our

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

consent;

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury;

For transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offenses;

For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies;

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments; For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us.

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

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy of the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow citizens taken captive on the high seas to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless

Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

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

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in general congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that as free and independent states they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.....

THE FEDERALIST PAPERS: No. 30 (BY Alexander Hamilton)

The Federalist Papers are among the most important documents in American political history. They were originally composed as newspaper articles by three men; Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay. Strong Federalists, they desired to see the states ratify the new constitution that had been drafted at a secret - and unauthorized - meeting of influential leaders in Philadelphia. This essay was written by the future secretary of the treasury to discuss the taxing authority of the envisioned federal state.

It has been already observed that the federal government ought to possess the power of providing for the support of the national forces; in which proposition was intended to be included the expense of raising troops, of building and equipping fleets, and all other expenses in any wise connected with military arrangements and operations. But these are not the only objects to which the jurisdiction of the Union in respect to revenue must necessarily be empowered to extend. It must embrace a provision for the support of

the national civil list; for the payment of the national debts contracted, or that may be contracted; and, in general, for all those matters which will call for disbursements out of the national treasury. The conclusion is that there must be interwoven in the frame of the government a general power of taxation, in one shape or another.

Money is, with propriety, considered as the vital principle of the body politic; as that which sustains its life and motion and enables it to perform its most essential functions. A complete power, therefore, to procure a regular and adequate supply of revenue, as far as the resources of the community will permit, may be regarded as an indispensable ingredient in every constitution. From a deficiency in this particular, one of two evils must ensue; either the people must be subjected to continual plunder, as a substitute for a more eligible mode of supplying the public wants, or the government must sink into a fatal atrophy, and, in a short course of time, perish.

In the Ottoman or Turkish empire the sovereign, through in other respects absolute master of the lives and fortunes of his subjects, has no right to impose a new tax. The consequence is that he permits the bashaw of governors of provinces to pillage the people at discretion, and, in turn, squeezes out of them the sums of which he stands in need to satisfy his own exigencies and those of the state. In America, from a like cause, the government of the Union has gradually dwindled into a state of decay, approaching nearly to annihilation. Who can doubt that the happiness of the people in both countries would be promoted by competent authorities in the proper hands to provide the revenues which the necessities of the public might require?

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

The present Confederation, feeble as it is, intended to repose in the United States an unlimited power of providing for the pecuniary wants of the Union. But proceeding upon an erroneous principle, it has been done in such a manner as entirely to have frustrated the intention. Congress, by the articles which compose that compact (as has already been stated), are authorized to ascertain and call for any sums of money necessary in their judgment to the service of the United State; and their requisitions, if conformable to the rule of apportionment, are in every constitutional sense obligatory upon the States. These have no right to question the propriety of the demand; no discretion beyond that of devising the ways and means of furnishing the sums demanded. But through this be strictly and truly the case; through the assumption of such a right would be an infringement of the articles of Union; through it may seldom or never have been avowedly claimed, yet in practice it has been constantly exercised and would continue to be so, as long as the revenues of the Confederacy should remain dependent on the intermediate agency of its members. What the consequences of this system have been is within the knowledge of every man the least conversant in our public affairs, and has been abundantly unfolded in different parts of these inquiries. It is this which affords ample cause of mortification to ourselves, and of triumph to our enemies.

What remedy can there be for this situation, but in a change of the system which has produced it - in a change of the fallacious and delusive system of quotas and requisitions? What substitute can there be imagined for this ignis fatuus in finance, but

that of permitting the national government to raise its own revenues by the ordinary methods of taxation authorized in every well-ordered constitution of civil government? Ingenious men may declaim with plausibility on any subject; but no human ingenuity can point out any other expedient to rescue us from the inconveniences and embarrassments naturally resulting from defective supplies of the public treasury.

The more intelligent adversaries of the new Constitution admit the force of this reasoning; but they qualify their admission by a distinction between what they call internal and external taxation. The former they would reserve to the State governments; the latter, which they explain into commercial imposts, or rather duties on imported articles, they declare themselves willing to concede to the federal head. This distinction, however, would violate that fundamental maxim of good sense and sound policy, which dictates that every Power ought to be proportionate to its Object; and would still leave the general government in a kind of tutelage to the State governments, inconsistent with every idea of vigor or efficiency. Who can pretend that commercial imposts are, or would be, alone equal to the present and future exigencies of the Union? Taking into the account the existing debt, foreign and domestic, upon any plan of extinguishment which a man moderately impressed with the importance of public justice and public credit could approve, in addition to the establishments which all parties will acknowledge to be necessary, we could not reasonably flatter ourselves that this resource alone, upon the most improved scale, would ever suffice for its present necessities. Its most improved scale, would ever suffice for its

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

present necessities. Its future necessities admit not of calculation or limitation; and upon the principle more than once adverted to the power of making provision for them as they arise ought to be equally unconfined, I believe it may be regarded as a position warranted by the history of mankind that, in the usual progress of things, the necessities of a nation, in every stage of its existence, will be found at least equal to its resources.

To say that deficiencies may be provided for any requisitions upon the States is on the one hand to acknowledge that this system cannot be depended upon, and on the other hand to depend upon it for every thing beyond a certain limit. Those who have carefully attended to its vices and deformities as they have been exhibited by experience or delineated in the course of these papers must feel an invincible repugnancy to trusting the national interests in any degree to its operation. Its inevitable tendency, whenever it is brought into activity, must be enfeeble the Union, and sow the seeds of discord and contention between the federal head and its members, and between the members, and between the members themselves. Can it be expected that the total wants of the Union have heretofore been supplied in the same mode? It ought to be recollected that if less will be required from the States, they will have proportionately less means to answer the demand. If the opinions of those who contend for the distinction which has been mentioned were to be received as evidence of truth, one would be led to conclude that there was some known point in the economy of national affairs at which it would be safe to stop and to say: Thus far the ends of public happiness will be promoted by supplying the wants of

government, and all beyond this is unworthy of our care or anxiety. How is it possible that a government half supplied and always necessitous can fulfil the purposes of its institution, can provide for the security, advance the prosperity, or support the reputation of the commonwealth? How can it ever possess either energy or stability, dignity or credit, confidence at home or respectability abroad? How can its administration be anything else than a succession of expedients temporizing, impotent, disgraceful? How will it be able to avoid a frequent sacrifice of its engagements to immediate necessity? How can it undertake or execute any liberal or enlarged plans of public good?

Let us attend to what would be the effects of this situation in the very first war in which we should happen to be engaged. We will presume, for argument's sake, that the revenue arising from the impost duties answers the purposes of a provision for the public debt and of a peace establishment for the Union. Thus circumstanced, a war breaks out. What would be the probable conduct of the government in such an emergency? Taught by experience that proper dependence could not be placed on the success of requisitions, unable by its own authority to lay hold of fresh resources, and urged by considerations of national danger, would it not be driven to the expedient of diverting the funds already appropriated from their proper objects to the defense of the State? It is not easy to see how a step of this kind could be avoided; and if it should be taken, it is evident that it would prove the destruction of public credit at the very moment that it was becoming essential to the public safety. To imagine that at such a crisis credit might be dispensed with would be the extreme of

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

infatuation. In the modern system of war, nations the most wealthy are obliged to have recourse to large loans. A country so little opulent as ours must feel this necessity in a much stronger degree. But who would lend to a government that prefaced its overtures for borrowing by an act which demonstrated that no reliance could be placed on the steadiness of its measures for paying? The loans it might be able to procure would be as limited in their extent as burdensome in their conditions. They would be made upon the same principles that usurers commonly lend to bankrupt and fraudulent debtors - with a sparing hand and at enormous premiums. It may perhaps be imagined that from the scantiness of the resources of the country the necessity of diverting the established funds in the case supposed would exist, though the national government should possess an unrestrained power of taxation. But two considerations will serve to quiet all apprehension on this head; one is that we are sure the resources of the community, in their full extent, will be brought into activity for the benefit of the Union; the other is that whatever deficiencies there may be can without difficulty be supplied by loans.

The power of creating new funds upon new objects of taxation by its own authority would enable the national government to borrow as far as its necessities might require. Foreigners, as well as the citizens of America, could then reasonably repose confidence in its engagements; but to depend upon a government that must itself depend upon thirteen other governments for the means of fulfilling its contracts, when once its situation is clearly understood, would require a degree of credulity not often to be met with in the

pecuniary transactions of mankind, and little reconcilable with the usual sharp-sightedness of avarice.

Reflections of this kind may have trifling weight with men who hope to see realized in America the halcyon scenes of the poetic or fabulous age; but to those who believe we are likely to experience a common portion of the vicissitudes and calamities which have fallen to the lot of other nations, they must appear entitled to serious attention. Such men must behold the actual situation of their country with painful solicitude, and deprecate the evils which ambition or revenge might, with too much facility, inflict upon it.

THE FEDERALIST PAPERS: NO. 47 *by James Madison*

In this closely argued essay the constitutional idea of the separation of powers is discussed. By holding one another in check, the Federalists felt that the executive, legislative, and judicial powers could not create the kind of intrusive governmental tyranny the anti-Federalists so greatly feared.

Having reviewed the general form of the proposed government and the general mass of power allotted to it, I proceed to examine the particular structure of this government, and the distribution of this mass of power among its constituent parts.

One of the principal objections inculcated by the more respectable adversaries to the Constitution is its supposed violation of the political maxim that the legislative, executive, and judiciary departments ought to be separate and distinct. In the structure of the federal government no regard, it is said, seems

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

to have been paid to this essential precaution in favor of liberty. The several departments of power are distributed and blended in such a manner as at once to destroy all symmetry and beauty of form, and to expose some of the essential parts of the edifice to the danger of being crushed by the disproportionate weight of other parts.

No political truth is certainly of greater intrinsic value, or is stamped with the authority of more enlightened patrons of liberty than that on which the objection is founded. The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, in the same hands, whether of one, or a few, or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny. Were the federal Constitution, therefore, really chargeable with this accumulation of power, or with a mixture of powers, having a dangerous tendency to such an accumulation, no further arguments would be necessary to inspire a universal reprobation of the system. I persuade myself, however, that it will be made apparent to everyone that the charge cannot be supported, and that the maxim on which it relies has been totally misconceived and misapplied. In order to form correct ideas on this important subject it will be proper to investigate the sense in which the preservation of liberty required that the three great departments of power should be separate and distinct.

The British Constitution was to Montesquieu what Homer has been to the didactic writers on epic poetry. As the latter have considered the work of the immortal bard as the perfect model from which the principles and rules of the epic art were to be drawn, and by which all similar works were to

be judged, so this great political critic appears to have viewed the Constitution of England as the standard, or to use his own expression, as the mirror of political liberty; and to have delivered, in the form of elementary truths, the several characteristic principles of that particular system. That we may be sure, then, not to mistake his meaning in this case, let us recur to the source from which the maxim was drawn.

On the slightest view of the British Constitution, we must perceive that the legislative, executive, and judiciary departments are by no means totally separate and distinct from each other. The executive magistrate forms an integral part of the legislative authority. He alone has the prerogative of making treaties with foreign sovereigns which, when made, have, under certain limitations, the force of legislative acts. All the members of the judiciary department are appointed by him, can be removed by him on the address of the two Houses of Parliament, and form, when he pleases to consult them, one of his constitutional councils. One branch of the legislative department forms also a great constitutional council to the executive chief, as, on another hand, it is the sole depository of judicial power in cases of impeachment, and is invested with the supreme appellate jurisdiction in all other cases. The judges, again, are so far connected with the legislative department as often to attend and participate in its deliberations, though not admitted to a legislative vote.

From these facts, by which Montesquieu was guided, it may clearly be inferred that in saying "There can be no liberty where the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person, or body of

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

magistrates," or, "if the power of judging be not separated from the legislative and executive powers," he did not mean that these departments ought to have no partial agency in, or no control over, the acts of each other. His meaning, as his own words import, and still more conclusively as illustrated by the example in his eye, can amount to no more than this, that where the whole power of one department is exercised by the same hands which possess the whole power of another department, the fundamental principle of a free constitution are subverted. This would have been the case in the constitution examined by him, if the king, who is the sole executive magistrate, had possessed also the complete legislative power, or the supreme administration of justice; or if the entire legislative body had possessed the supreme judiciary, or the supreme executive authority. This, however, is not among the vices of that supreme executive authority. This however is not among the vices of that constitution. The magistrate in whom the whole executive power resides cannot of himself make a law, through he can put a negative on every law; nor administer justice in person, though he has the appointment of those who do administer it. The judges can exercise no executive prerogative, though they are shoots from the executive stock; nor any legislative function, through they may be advised by the legislative councils. The entire legislative can perform no judiciary act, through by the joint act of two of its branches the judges may be removed from their offices, and though one of its branches is possessed of the judicial power in the last resort. The entire legislature, again, can exercise no executive prerogative, though one of its branches constitutes the supreme

executive magistracy, and another, on the impeachment of a third, can try and condemn all the subordinate officers in the executive department.

The reasons on which Montesquieu grounds his maxim are a further demonstration of his meaning. "When the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person or body," says he, "there can be no liberty, because apprehensions may arise lest the same monarch or senate should enact tyrannical laws to execute them in a tyrannical manner." Again: "Where the power of judging joined with the legislative, the life and liberty of the subject would be exposed to arbitrary control, for the judge would then be the legislator. Were it joined to the executive power, the judge might behave with all the violence of an oppressor." Some of these reasons are more fully explained in other passages; but briefly stated as they are here they sufficiently establish the meaning which we have put on this celebrated maxim of this celebrated author.

If we look into the constitutions of the several States we find that, notwithstanding the emphatical and, in some instances, the unqualified terms in which this axiom has been laid down, there is not a single instance in which the several departments of power have been kept absolutely separate and distinct. New Hampshire, whose constitution was the last formed, seems to have been fully aware of the impossibility and inexpediency of avoiding any mixture whatever of these departments, and has qualified the doctrine by declaring "that the legislative, executive, and judiciary powers ought to be kept as separate from, and independent of, each other as the nature of a free government will admit; or as is consistent with that chain of connection that binds the

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

whole fabric of the constitution in one indissoluble bond of unity and amity." Her constitution accordingly mixes these departments in several respects. The Senate, which is a branch of the legislative department, is also a judicial tribunal for the trial of impeachments. The President, who is the head of the executive department, is the presiding member also of the Senate; and, besides an equal vote in all cases, has a casting vote in case of a tie. The executive head is himself eventually elective every year by the legislative department, and his council is every year chosen by and from the members of the same department. Several of the officers of state are also appointed by the legislature. And the members of the judiciary department are appointed by the executive department.

The constitution of Massachusetts has observed a sufficient though less pointed caution in expressing this fundamental article of liberty. It declares "that the legislative department shall never exercise the executive and judicial powers, or either of them; the executive shall never exercise the legislative and judicial powers, or either of them; the judicial shall never exercise the legislative and executive powers, or either of them." This declaration corresponds precisely with the doctrine of Montesquieu, as it has been explained, and is not in a single point violated by the plan of the convention. It goes no farther than to prohibit any one of the entire departments from exercising the powers of another department. In the very constitution to which it is prefixed, a partial mixture of powers has been admitted. The executive magistrate has a qualified negative on the legislative body, and the Senate, which is a

part of the legislature, is a court of impeachment for members both of the executive and judiciary departments. The members of the judiciary department, again, are appointable by the executive department, and removable by the same authority on the address of the two legislative branches. Lastly, a number of the officers of government are annually appointed by the legislative department. As the appointment to offices, particularly executive offices, is in its nature an executive function, the compilers of the Constitution have, in this last point at least, violated the rule established by themselves.

I pass over the constitutions of Rhode island and Connecticut, because they were formed prior to the Revolution and even before the principle under examination had become an object of political attention.

The constitution of New York contains no declaration on this subject, but appears very clearly to have been framed with an eye to the danger of improperly blending the different departments. It gives, nevertheless, to the executive magistrate, a partial control over the legislative department; and, what is more, gives a like control to the judiciary department; and even blends the executive and judiciary departments in the exercise of this control. In its council of appointment members of the legislative are associated with executive authority, in the appointment of officers, both executive and judiciary. And its court for the trial of impeachments and correction of errors is to consist of one branch of the legislature and the principal members of the judiciary department.

The constitution of New Jersey has blended the different powers of government more than any of the preceding. The governor,

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

who is the executive magistrate, is appointed by the legislature; is chancellor and ordinary, or surrogate of the State; is a member of the Supreme Court of Appeals, and president, with a casting vote, of one of the legislative branches. The same legislative branch acts again as executive council to the governor, and with him constitutes the Court of Appeal. The members of the judiciary department are appointed by the legislative department, and removable by one branch of it, on the impeachment of the other.

According to the constitution of Pennsylvania, the president, who is the head of the executive department, is annually elected by a vote in which the legislative department predominates. In conjunction with an executive council, he appoints the members of the judiciary department and forces a court of impeachment for trial of all officers, judiciary as well as executive. The judges of the Supreme Court and justices of the peace seem also to be removable by the legislature; and the executive power of pardoning, in certain cases, to be referred to the same department. The members of the executive council are made *Ex Officio* justices of peace throughout the State.

In Delaware, the chief executive magistrate is annually elected by the legislative department. The speakers of the two legislative branches are vice-presidents in the executive department. The executive chief, with six other appointed, three by each of the legislative branches, constitutes the Supreme Court of Appeals; he is joined with the legislative department in the appointment of the other judges. Throughout the States it appears that the members of the legislature may at the same time be justices of the peace;

in this State, the members of one branch of it are *Ex Officio* justices of the peace; as are also the members of the executive council. The principal officers of the executive department are appointed by the legislature; and one branch of the latter forms a court of impeachments. All officers may be removed on address of the legislature.

Maryland has adopted the maxim in the most unqualified terms; declaring that the legislative, executive, and judicial powers of government ought to be forever separate and distinct from each other. Her constitution, notwithstanding, makes the executive magistrate appointable by the legislative department; and the members of the judiciary by the executive department.

The language of Virginia is still more pointed on this subject. Her constitution declares 'that the legislative, executive, and judiciary departments shall be separate and distinct; so that neither exercises the powers properly belonging to the other, nor shall any person exercise the powers of more than one of them at the same time, except that the justices of county courts shall be eligible to either House of Assembly.' Yet we find not only this express exception with respect to the members of the inferior courts, but that the chief magistrate with his executive council, are appointable by the legislature; that two members of the latter are triennially appointable by the legislature; displaced at the pleasure of the legislature; and that all the principal offices, both executive and judiciary, are filled by the same department. The executive prerogative of pardon, also, is in one case vested in the legislative department.

The constitution of North Carolina, which declares "that the legislative, executive, and

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

supreme judicial powers of government ought to be forever separate and distinct from each other," refers, at the same time, to the legislative department, the appointments not only of the executive chief but all the principal officers within both that and the judiciary department.

In South Carolina, the constitution makes the executive magistracy eligible by the legislative department. It gives to the latter also, the appointment of the members of the judiciary department, including even justices of the peace and sheriffs; and the appointment of officers in the executive department, down to captains in the army and navy of the State.

In the constitution of Georgia where it is declared "that the legislative, executive, and judiciary departments shall be separate and distinct, so that neither exercise the powers properly belonging to the other," we find that the executive department is to be filled by appointments of the legislature; and the executive prerogative of pardon to be finally exercised by the same authority. Even justices of the peace are to be appointed by the legislature.

In citing these cases, in which the legislative, executive, and judiciary departments have not been kept totally separate and distinct, I wish not to be regarded as an advocate for the particular organizations of the several State governments. I am fully aware that among the many excellent principles which they exemplify they carry strong marks of the haste, and still stronger of the inexperience, under which they were framed. It is but too obvious that in some instances the fundamental principle under consideration has been violated by too great a

mixture, and even an actual consolidation of the different powers; and that in no instance has a competent provision been made for maintaining in practice the separation delineated on paper. What I have wished to evince is that the charge brought against the proposed Constitution of violating the sacred maxim of free government is warranted neither by the real meaning annexed to that maxim by its author, nor by the sense in which it has hitherto been understood in America. This interesting subject will be resumed in the ensuing paper.

PAUL REVERE'S RIDE

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1863

This tale, one of the most legendary in all the Founding Era, was set to verse by one of America's foremost poets. It immediately became a popular anthem celebrating both the great valor of the revolutionaries and the great virtue of the revolutionary cause.

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,

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

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 the tower of the Old North
Church,
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the somber 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 faraway,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,
A line of black that bends and gloats
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 at 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 somber 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 flying 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.

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

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 after 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 farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farm-yard 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.

THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS by Abraham Lincoln, 1863

Though he was not even the main speaker at the dedication of a cemetery on the side of the bloody Gettysburg battlefield, the tantalizingly short speech Abraham Lincoln gave on November 19, 1863, is a masterpiece of both penetrating rhetoric and moral politics. These words, though few, have proven to be immortal. Carl Sandburg in 1946 hailed the address as one of the great American poems. "One may delve deeply into its unfolded meanings", he wrote, "but its poetic

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

significance carries it far beyond the limits of a state paper. It curiously incarnates the claims, assurances, and pretenses of republican institutions, of democratic procedure, of the rule of the people. It is a timeless psalm in the name of those who fight and do in behalf a great human cause rather than talk, in a belief that men can 'highly resolve' themselves, and can mutually 'dedicate' their lives to a cause."

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives, that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate - we can not consecrate - we can not hallow - this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to thus far be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us - that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion - that we here highly

resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain - that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom - and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

STAR SPANGLED BANNER

By Francis Scott Key, 1814

During the night of September 13, 1814, as a Washington attorney was sent to the British command to secure the release of a prisoner, the fleet began to bombard the placement of American fortification in Baltimore at Fort McHenry. Though the battle raged through the night, the defenses stood firm. The sight of the flag still flying over the fort the next morning inspired the young lawyer to pen these words. Set to a popular English song, Anacreon in Heaven, it was officially declared to be the national anthem more than a hundred years later, just before the First World War.

O! Say, can you see, by the dawn's early
light,

What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's
last gleaming:

Whose broad stripes and bright stars
through the perilous fight,

O'er the ramparts we watched
were so gallantly streaming,

And the rocket's red glare,
the bombs bursting in air,

Gave proof through the night
that our flag was still there:

O! Say, does the star-spangled
banner still wave

O'er the land of the free and the home of the
brave?

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

On the shore, dimly seen through the mist of
the deep, Where the foe's haughty host in
dread silence reposes, What is that which the
breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half
discloses? Now it catches the gleam of the
morning's first beam - In full glory reflected,
now shines on the stream.

Tis the star-spangled banner,

O! Long may it wave

O'er the land of the free
and the home of the brave.

And where is the band who so
vauntingly swore That the havoc of war and
the battle's confusion A home and a country
would leave us no more? Their blood has
washed out their foul footsteps' pollution. No
refuge could save the hireling and slave From
the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave.

And the star-spangled banner

in triumph doth wave

O'er the land of the free
and the home of the brave.

O! Thus be it ever when freemen shall
stand Between their loved homes and the foe's
desolation; Bless'd with victory and peace,
may our heaven-rescued land Praise the Power
that hat made and preserved us a nation. Then
conquer we must, for our cause it is just - And
this be our motto - "In God is our trust!"

And the star-spangled banner

in triumph shall wave

O'er the land of the free
and the home of the brave.

THE EMANCIPATION

PROCLAMATION

By Abraham Lincoln 1863

Despite the fact that much of the conflict between North and South revolved around the slavery issue, the North never adopted an abolitionist stance during the lifetime of Abraham Lincoln. In his first inaugural speech he admitted that in his view the freeing of slaves was not only inexpedient and impolitic but perhaps even unconstitutional. To reinforce that position, several of the states that remained in the northern Union were slave states - including Missouri, Maryland, West Virginia, East Tennessee, and northern Kentucky. Thus, when the administration finally did act on the slave issue of chattel slavery on January 1, 1863, it did not actually free any slaves within the jurisdiction of its governmental authority. This document was essentially symbolic, designed to placate certain sectors within the Republicans' abolitionist constituency and provide certain strategic wartime advantages. Nevertheless, the decree did lay the groundwork for freedom for the slaves, which would come with the ratification of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution.

January 1, 1863, by the President of the United States of America: A proclamation: Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following to wit:

That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then,

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof, shall on that day be, in good faith, represented in Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States.

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me invested as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days, from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States the following to wit:

Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana (except the Parishes of St Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. Johns, St Charles, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Terrebone, Lafourche, St Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the city of New Orleans), Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth, and which excepted parts are, for the present, left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued).

And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free; and the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defense; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known that such persons of suitable condition will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgement of mankind, and the

HISTORICAL AMERICANA

gracious favor of Almighty God.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, the first day of January, in the year our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Francis Bellamy, 1892

This patriotic vow was written by a journalist to commemorate the four-hundredth anniversary of the discovery voyage of Christopher Columbus in 1892. Though it was first publicly recited at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago that year, it was not officially recognized until 1954. At that time the original was revised to include the words "under God." Usually recited at the opening of public ceremonies or events, it is a kind of national covenantal commitment.

I pledge allegiance To the flag
of the united States of America
And to the republic for which it stands,
One nation under God,
Indivisible, with liberty, and justice for all.

HISTORICAL POETRY AND PROSE

THE NEW COLOSSUS

by Emma Lazarus

Written in 1883, this poem gained fame after it was inscribed on the Statue of Liberty in 1903. Thereafter it became a beacon light of hope to the oppressed peoples of the world. To this day it conveys the exceptionalism of the American experiment in national life - one that is rooted first and foremost in a set of ideas about freedom.

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glowes worldwide welcome; her mild eyes
command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.

"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips, "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

BALLAD OF THE BOSTON TEA PARTY

by Oliver Wendell Holmes 1909-94

On December 16, 1773, colonial leaders grown weary with England's increasingly intrusive government carried out a remarkable protest in Boston harbor. Disguised as Indians, they boarded a British ship and threw its cargo of imported tea overboard. This action, more than almost any other, demonstrated the resolve of the colonists to maintain the standard of liberty - guaranteed by English common law - in their American homeland. Here this well-known tale is set to popular verse by one of the masters of the nineteenth-century American literary scene.

No! Never such a draught was poured
Since Hebe served with nectar
The bright Olympians and their Lord,
Her over-kind protector,
Since Father Noah squeezed the grape
And took to such behaving As would have
shamed our grand-sire ape
Before the days of shaving,
No! Ne're was mingled such a draught
In palace, hall or arbor,
As freemen brewed and tyrants quaffed
That night in Boston Harbor!
It kept King George so long awake
His brain at last got addled,
It made the nerves of Britain shake,
With seven score millions saddled;
Before that bitter cup was drained,
Amid the roar of cannon,
The Western war-cloud's crimson stained
The Thames, the Clyde, the Shannon;
Full many a six-foot grenadier
The flattened grass had measured,
And, many a mother many a year
Her tearful memories treasured;
Fast spread the tempest's darkening pall,

HISTORICAL POETRY AND PROSE

The mighty realms were troubled,
The storm broke loose, but first of all
The Boston teapot bubbled!

An evening party - only that,
No formal invitation,
no gold-laced coat, no stiff cravat,
no feast in contemplation,
no silk-robed dames, no fiddling band,
No flowers, no songs, no dancing,
A tribe of red men, axe in hand,
Behold the guests advancing!
How fast the stragglers join the throng,
From stall and workshop gathered!
That lively barber skips along
And leaves a chin half-lathered;
The smith has flung his hammer down,
The horseshoe still is glowing;
The truant tapster at the Crown
Has left a beer-cask flowing;
The cooper's boys have dropped the adze
And trot behind their master;
up run the tarry shipyard lads,
The crowd is hurrying faster,
Out from the millpond's purlieus gush
The streams of white-faced millers,
And down their slippery alleys rush
The lusty young Fort-Hillers;
The ropewalk lends its 'prentice crew,
The Tories seize the omen:
'Ay, boys, you'll soon have work to do
For England's rebel foemen,
'King Hancock,' Adams, and their gang,
That fire the mob with treason,
When these we shoot and those we hang
The town will come to reason.'
On - on to where the ten-ships ride!
And now their ranks are forming,
A rush, and up the Dartmouth's side
The Mohawk band is swarming!
See the fierce natives! What a glimpse
Of paint and fur and feather,
As all at once the full-grown imps

Light on the deck together!
A scarf the pigtail's secret keeps,
A blanket hides the breeches,
And our the cursed cargo leaps,
And overhead it pitches!
O woman at the evening board
So gracious, sweet, and purring,
So happy while the tea is poured,
So blest while spoons are stirring,
What martyr can compare with thee,
The mother, wife, or daughter,
That night, instead of best Bohea,
Condemned to milk and water!
Ah, little dreams that quiet dame
Who plies with rock and spindle
The patient flax, how great a flame
you little spark shall kindle!
The lurid mourning shall reveal
A fire no king can smother
Where British flint and Boston steel
Have clashed against each other!
Old charters shrivel in its track,
his Worship's bench has crumbled,
It climbs and clasps the Union Jack,
Its blazoned pomp is humbled,
The flags go down on land and sea
Like corn before the reapers;
So burned the fire that brewed the tea
That Boston served her keepers!

The waves that wrought a century's wreck
Have rolled o'er Whig and Tory;
The Mohawks on the Dartmouth's deck
Still live in song and story;
The waters in the rebel bay
Have kept the tea-leaf savor;
Our old North-Enders in their spray
Still taste a Hyson flavor;
And Freedom's teacup still o'erflows
With ever fresh libations,
To cheat of slumber all her foes
And cheer the wakening nations!

HISTORICAL POETRY AND PROSE

BARBARA FRIETCHIE - 1863

by John Greenleaf Whittier

Sometimes our sense of loyalty demands that we show the flag even in the enemy's midst. John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892) wrote this poem in 1863, during the Civil War, and claimed its story is true.

Up from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,
The clustered spires of Frederick stand
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.
Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,
Fair as the garden of the Lord
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,
On that pleasant morn of the early fall
When Lee marched over the mountain wall;
Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,
Forty flags with their crimson bars,
Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.
Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;
Bravest of all in Frederick town,
She took up the flag the men hauled down;
In her attic window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.
Under his slouched hat left and right
He glanced; the old flag met his sight.
"Halt" - the dust-brown ranks stood fast.
"Fire" - out blazed the rifle blast.
It shivered the window, pane and sash;
It rent the banner with seam and gash.
Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the windowsill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.
"Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country's flag" she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;
The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman's deed and word;
"Who touches a hair on yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!" he said.
All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet:
All day long that free flag tost
Over the heads of the rebel host.
Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it well;
And through the hill gaps sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.
Honor to her! And let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.
Over Barbara Frietchie's grave
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave!
Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;
And ever the stars above look down
On they stars below in Frederick town!

HISTORICAL POETRY AND PROSE

THE AMERICAN'S CREED

by William Tyler Page

I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a Republic; a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States; a perfect Union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I therefore believe it is my duty to my Country to love it; to support its Constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies.

AMERICA

by: Arthur Cleveland Coxe

From the time of the earliest explorations of the Norse along Ultima Thule and the Spanish in the Caribbean to the settlements of the pioneers in Virginia and Pilgrims in Massachusetts, Americans have always been proud of their courageous heritage and lineage. In this popular nineteenth-century verse, that unique legacy is celebrated.

Oh, who has not heard of the Northmen of yore,
How flew, like the sea-bird, their sails from the shore;
How, westward, they stayed not till, breasting the brine,
They hailed Narragansett, the land of the vine!

Then the war-songs of Rollo, his pennon and glaive,
Were heard as they danced by the moon-lighted wave,
And their golden-haired wives bore them sons of the soil,
While raged with the redskins their feud and turmoil.

And who has not seen, 'mid the summer's gay crowd,
That old pillared tower of their fortalice proud,
How it stands solid proof of the sea chieftains' reign
Ere came with Columbus those galleys of Spain!

*Tw'as a claim for their kindred: an earnest of sway,
By the stout-hearted Cabot made good in its day;
Of the Cross of St. George, on the Chesapeake's tide,
Where lovely Virginia arose like a bride.*

*Came the Pilgrims with Wintrop; and, saint of the West,
Came Robert of Jamestown, the brave and the blest;
Came Smith, the bold rover, and Rolfe - with his ring,
To wed sweet Matoaka, child of a king.*

*Undaunted they came, every peril to dare,
Of tribes fiercer far than the wolf in his lair;
Of the wild irksome woods, where in ambush they lay;
Of their terror by night and their arrow by day.*

*And so where our capes cleave the ice of the poles,
Where groves of the orange scent sea-coast and shoals,
Where the froward Atlantic uplifts its last crest,
Where the sun, when he sets, seeks the East from the West;*

*The clime that from ocean to ocean expands,
The fields to the snowdrifts that stretch from the sands,
The wilds they have conquered of mountain and plain;
Those Pilgrims have made them fair Freedom's domain.*

*And the bread of dependence if proudly they spurned,
Tw'as the soul of their fathers that kindled and burned,
Tw'as the blood of old Saxon within them that ran;
They held - to be free is the birthright of man.*

*So oft the old lion majestic of mane,
sees cubs of his cave breaking loose from his reign;
Unmeet to be his if they braved not his eye,
He gave them the spirit his own to defy.*

EPILOGUE

"Liberty is always dangerous but it is the safest thing we have." (*Harry Emerson Fosdick, American Preacher 1878-1969*)

Founding Fathers on the Second Amendment:

"The Constitution shall never be construed...to prevent the people of the United States who are peaceable citizens from keeping their own arms." (*Alexander Hamilton*)

"Firearms stand next in importance to the Constitution itself. They are the American peoples liberty teeth and keystone under independence...From the hour the Pilgrims landed, to the present day. Events, occurrences, and tendencies prove that to ensure peace, security, and happiness, the rifle and pistol are equally indispensable... The very atmosphere of firearms everywhere restrains evil interference - they deserve a place of honor with all that's good. (*George Washington, first President of the United States, and "The Father of Our Country"*)

"Arms in the hands of citizens (may) be used at individual discretion..in private self-defense." (*John Adams*)

"The strongest reason for the people to retain the right to keep and bear arms is, as a last resort, to protect themselves against tyranny in government." (*Thomas Jefferson*)

"The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. A well-regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to arms, is the best and most natural defense of a free country." (*James Madison*)

"I ask, sir, what is the militia? It is the whole people, except for a few public officials." (*George Mason*)

"No freeman shall ever be debarred the use of arms." (*Thomas Jefferson*)

"To preserve liberty it is essential that the whole body of the people always possess arms and be taught alike, especially when young, how to use them. (*Richard Henry Lee writing in Letters from the Federal Farmer to the Republic*)

"The best we can hope for concerning the people at large is that they be properly armed." (*Alexander Hamilton*)

ADDITIONAL READINGS

1. **Democracy in America** - Alexis de Tocqueville - 1835
2. **A History of the American People** - Paul Johnson
3. **History of the United States** - Alexander H. Stephens
4. **Federalist Papers** - Alexander Hamilton, John Jay. James Madison
5. **Road to Serfdom** - Freidrich A Hayek
6. **Mainspring of Human Progress** - Henry Grady Weaver
7. **A Basic History of the United States** - Clarence B Carson
8. **Founding Fathers** - M E Bradford
9. **The American Crisis** - Thomas Paine, 1776
10. **The Holy Bible - King James Edition**