

4 DOCUMENTS OF FREEDOM

Authentic Reproductions on Antiqued Parchment

Constitution of the United States

Declaration of Independence

Gettysburg Address

Bill of Rights



TO _____

Smithsonian Institution • Washington, D.C.

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SKU #3707

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.

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

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good. — He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them. — He has refused to pass Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, whoch those people would otherwise obtain; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them. — He has refused to pay the Law for the accommodation of large districts of people, whoch those people would otherwise obtain; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them. — He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfitable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of disabling them to comply with his measures. — He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people. — He has refused for along time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected, whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise, the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within. — He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws of Naturalization, refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands. — He has obstructed the administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers. — He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries. — He has created a multitude of new Offices, and sent hither persons to harass our people, and eat out their substance. — He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the consent of our legislatures. — He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power. — He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws, giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation. — For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us. — For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States. — For calling off our Trade with all parts of the world. — For enjoining Taxes on us without our Consent. — For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury. — For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences. — For abolishing the free system of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies. — For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Government. — For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever. — He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us. — He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people. — He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun, with circumstances of cruelty & perfidy, hardly paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation. — He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken captive on the high seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands. — He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all age, sex and condition. — In every stage of these Oppressions we have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms. Our repeated Petitions have been answered by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may serve 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 an unmerciful 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 conseruancy. — We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

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

Benton, Garrison,
Lyman Hall,
Geo Walton.

John Hancock
John Jay
Samuel Chase
Wm Paca
Tho Stone
Gadsden of South Carolina
Edward Rutledge
The Mayes & Jen.
Thomas Lynch Jr.
Arthur Middleton
George Wythe
Richard Henry Lee
Th Jefferson
Benjamin Franklin
Benjamin Harrison
Th Nelson Jr.
Francis Lightfoot Lee
Carter Braxton

Nob Morris
Benjamin Rush
Ben Franklin
John Morton
Gouverneur Morris
S. Smith
Geo Taylor
James Wilson
Rich. Stockton
Genl. Mifflin
Genl. Greene
Genl. Wayne
Genl. Lee
Genl. Scott
Genl. Clark
Abra Galt

Philep Schuyler
Genl. Livingston
Genl. Wayne
Genl. Scott
Genl. Clark
Abra Galt
Josiah Bartlett
W. Whipple
Sam Adams
John Adams
Rt. Hon. Prince
Henry Gray
Step. Hopkins
William Ellery
Roger Sherman
Genl. Huntington
Abd. Tracy
Oliver Wolcott
Matthew Thornton

Congress of the United States

begun and held at the City of New York, on
Wednesday the fourth of March, one thousand seven hundred and eighty nine

THE Convention of number of the states, having at the time of their adopting the Constitution, expressed desire, in order to prevent misconstruction or abuse of its powers, that further declaratory and restrictive clauses should be added: And as extending the ground of public confidence in the Government, will best ensure the beneficent ends of its institution.

RESOLVED by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, two thirds of both Houses concurring, that the following Articles be proposed to the Legislatures of the several States, as amendments to the Constitution of the United States, all or any of which Articles, when ratified by three fourths of the said Legislatures, to be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of the said Constitution: Viz:

ARTICLES in addition to, and Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America; proposed by Congress, and ratified by the Legislatures of the several States, pursuant to the fifth Article of the original Constitution.

Article the first. After the first enumeration required by the first Article of the Constitution, there shall be one Representative for every thirty thousand, until the number shall amount to one hundred, after which the proportion shall be regulated by Congress, so that there shall not be less than one hundred Representatives, nor less than one Representative for every forty thousand persons, until the number of Representatives shall amount to two hundred, after which the proportion shall be so regulated by Congress, that there shall not be less than two hundred Representatives, nor more than one Representative for every fifty thousand persons.

Article the second. No law, varying the compensation for the services of Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election of Representatives shall have intervened.

Article the third. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Article the fourth. A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

Article the fifth. No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Article the sixth. The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Article the seventh. No person shall be held to answer for capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall he be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation.

Article the eighth. In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

Article the ninth. In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise re-examined in any court of the United States than according to the rules of the common law.

Article the tenth. Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Article the eleventh. The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Article the twelfth. The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

ATTEST,

Fredrick Augustus Muhlenberg Speaker of the House of Representatives.

John Adams, Vice President of the United States, and President of the Senate

John Beckley, Clerk of the House of Representatives.
Sam. A. Otis Secretary of the Senate.

Address delivered at the dedication of the
cemetery at Gettysburg.

Four score and seven years ago our fathers
brought forth on this continent, a new na-
tion, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated
to the proposition that all men are cre-
ated 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 that nation might live. It is alto-
gether fitting and proper that we should
do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedi-
cate—we can not consecrate—we can not
hallow this ground. The brave men, liv-
ing and dead, who struggled here, have con-
secrated 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 be dedicated here to
the unfinished work which they who fol-
lowed them here 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 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 free-
dom—and that government of the people,
by the people, for the people, shall not per-
ish from the earth.

Abraham Lincoln.

November 19, 1863.

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TO

July 4, 1776.

CONGRESS. JULY 4, 1776.

Declaration of the States of -

Congress of the United States
and the City of Philadelphia,
in the Year of our Lord one
Thousand Seven hundred and Eighteen.

to distance. She writes with books, not pen
long remembered when we say four books in
our power when they come from her. It is from
the library collected for education hence
the language familiar to which they are left
after her. Some that far as reading among
them rather for us to be here momentous
the great distinction beginning the
four thousand years in literature
devotion to that cause for which they gave
the first full measure of devotion like
we have highly under their hands
not have them in vain. When the nation
under God shall have a new birth of free
men - our other government of the people
by the people, for the people shall not per-
ish from the earth.

November 19, 1863. — New Haven.

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CONGRESS,
States of America,
Declaration of Independence

United States

**Congress of THE
LAW AND HILL at the City of Washington,
and with Land and Capital.**

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Address unknown at the moment you
leaving, & get it by

Our new men have sprung up & I find
longer fit in the Committee, & am now
in consequence taking my seat
on the opposition side, & do not
mean again.

Now we are engaged in a great audience
utilizing whatever place can be obtained
so considerate and so discriminating in their
audience. We are most interested here for
of those who have done some work in
portion of that field, not in giving a
place for those who have given the
like labor nothing might have been done
without finding some proper place and
no other

But in a higher sense we consider
other considerations, which are
between the present. The best way to
say and show who ought to be the
successor, is for others our first position.

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TO

Abraham Lincoln
April 19, 1865

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