

**AN AMERICAN DEVOTIONAL:
FROM THE VOICES OF OUR FOUNDING MOTHERS AND FATHERS**

Scott Campbell Brown

This book is dedicated to the women and men in uniforms who serve us and risk their lives for us every day.

INTRODUCTION

“Four score 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.” Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address, November 19, 1863

Consider these first words of the Gettysburg Address. For many, they comprise a mere introduction to the famous speech by Abraham Lincoln. Yet, taken on their own, they have a profound meaning. They speak to the actions and sacrifices of the Founding Mothers and Fathers, based on the concepts of Liberty and Equality. In this one sentence, Lincoln demonstrates the inspiring wisdom and humanity of our Founders.

Such wisdom and humanity appear to be lacking today. Have you ever wished that you could grow from an interaction with our nation’s early leaders? Do you believe that, if only those women and men could speak to you in a meaningful way, you might gain insight from their wisdom? As you turn these pages, our Founders will indeed speak to you about the three concepts addressed by Lincoln – Liberty, our Country’s Founding and Equality. For you, their voices will comprise an American Devotional.

Devotionals are a wonderful gift to deepen people’s Faith, as they take their walk through a difficult life path. They often consist of daily or weekly inspirational words on which people should dwell. Through such an intense focus on a periodic basis, persons can obtain comfort, joy or a positive direction for their lives. Often based on the Bible, the words contained in Devotionals enhance both spiritual growth and religious depth.

This Devotional is a little different. While most Devotionals aspire to deepen your relationship with God, this one seeks to inspire and reassure you of the love our Founders had for you. Instead of a Biblical base, this weekly Devotional employs the words of the wonderful people of which Lincoln spoke to deepen your relationship with this wonderful country they

established. In so doing, the aim is not to produce a blind patriotism, but, rather, a thoughtful love and devotion to the United States of America, based on Liberty and Equality.

Considering that you lead a busy life, this Devotional contains 52 passages, one for each week of the year. You need only to read one page and dwell on it for a week. These passages have been selected from the writings of both the Founding Fathers and Mothers. They have been chosen for both their inspirational quality and their clarity for today's readers. The weekly words are presented in a rough, but, not strict chronological order, so that the growth in the thoughts of the Forebearers is reflected. Sometimes, a later source may appear placed in the order of events, as opposed to the date of publication.

Each week will begin with one sentence that forms a kind of a headline. Then, the passage will follow, with its key phrase provided in bold letters. However, some surrounding text may also be provided to strengthen your understanding of the context of the writings. The name of the writer will be provided, as well as the title and date of the composition. When the source of the passage is a letter, the name of the recipient will also be given. Finally, some information about the passage called the Story will provide you with further information about the passage on which to reflect.

This Devotional will be organized by the suggested chronological order of the opening sentence of the Gettysburg Address. The book is divided into roughly equal three parts – Liberty, A New Nation and Equality. At the beginning of each part, a brief orientation will be given to you. Note that the orientation of each part will be a little different from the other two as our Founders translate their ideals into concrete actions.

Of course, you can read these passages at a faster pace. You may wish to absorb each part closer together to gain a holistic understanding of each of the three concepts and how they fit together as a whole. You will observe how a love of Liberty throughout the colonies led to the actions and sacrifices that gave birth to our country, and then, how the dedication to equality led to specific actions to achieve it throughout the land.

By the time you complete the Devotional, some of the best writers that the country has ever produced will have spoken to you. You should have a clear picture as to why their thoughts and actions inspired President Lincoln so much. From this picture, my hope is that your

understanding of our country will grow and your love for America will be deepened. In some sense, you will be the writer of this story.

PART ONE: LIBERTY

Our story begins in the Colonial Era; for it was in this period that the Founding Mothers and Fathers formulated their view of Liberty. This part will run into the first days of the Revolutionary War (1775-1776), right up to the July 1776 formulation of the Declaration of Independence. By stopping at this point, the goal is to stay in keeping with Lincoln's phrase, "conceived in Liberty." You will then see, in Part Two, how this conception is translated by the women and men into action and sacrifice – the American Revolution.

Liberty is a complex concept. Each of the Founders had a unique view of Liberty. Sometimes, they overlap, sometimes not. Yet, you clearly will observe that they each valued Liberty dearly.

Week 1

A sense of Liberty is good.

“It is a silly affectation for modern statesmen to act or descant upon Ancient Principles of Morals and Civility. **The Beauty of Virtue, the Love of one’s Country, a sense of Liberty, a Feeling for our Fellow Men, are ideas that the brains of men nowadays cannot contemplate.** It is a better way to substitute in the place of them, the beauty of a lady, the love of cards and horse races, a taste in dress, music and dancing, the feeling of a pretty girl or fellow and a genteel delicacy and complaisance to all who have Power to abuse us.’

John Adams letter to Abigail Smith, 20 April 1763

The Story: John Adams (1735-1826) of Massachusetts was our first Vice-President and second President of the United States, as well as a diplomat. At the time of this writing, he was a 27-year old man wooing an 18-year old Abigail Smith (1744-1818), whom he would marry the next year. Here Adams laments that men dwell on idle pleasures, rather than higher concepts such as Liberty. This letter reveals that John and Abigail had a love of Liberty in common, which would form one of the foundations of their long and loving marriage.

Week 2

Liberty is lost through nonconsensual taxation.

“But though it be allowed, that liberty may be enjoyed in a comfortable measure, where prohibitions are laid on the trade of a kingdom or province; yet if taxes are laid on either, without consent, they cannot be said to be free. **This barrier of liberty being once broken down, all is lost. If a shilling in the pound may be taken from me against my will, why may not twenty shillings; and if so, why not my liberty or my life?**”

James Otis. (1766). *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved*, page 82.
Boston: for J. Almon, Third Edition.

The Story: James Otis (1725-1783) was one of the earliest advocates for American freedoms, often deploring taxation without representation. He was a leading figure in the Massachusetts patriot movement, but, faded from view due to mental health issues. He tragically died by being hit by lightning.

Week 3

Competition with our Liberty should be rejected.

“Our All is at Stake, and **the little conveniences and comforts of life, when set in competition with our Liberty, ought to be rejected not with reluctance but with pleasure.”**

George Mason IV letter to George Washington, 5 April 1769

The Story: George Mason IV (1725-1792) of Virginia was another early advocate for American freedoms. He would later oppose the United States Constitution, because it did not explicitly include a Bill of Rights. Here he goes further than the young John Adams in rejoicing in a preference for liberty over pleasures. His thinking may have helped to shape that of the younger George Washington (1732-1799) of Virginia.

Week 4

States have equal rights and Liberties.

“In the meantime, I could wish that such expressions as, ‘The supreme Authority of Parliament,’ ‘The Subordinacy of our Assemblies to the Parliament’ and the like...; I say I could wish that such Expressions were no more seen in our public pieces. They are too strong for compliment, and tend to confirm a Claim [of] Subjects in one Part of the King’s Dominions to be Sovereigns over their Fellow-Subjects in another Part of his Dominions; when [in] truth **they have no such Right, and their Claim is founded only on usurpation, the several States having equal Rights and Liberties**, and being only connected, as England and Scotland were before the Union, by having one common Sovereign, the King.”

Benjamin Franklin letter to Samuel Cooper, 8 June 1770

The Story: Ben Franklin (1706-1790) of Pennsylvania was everything – scientist, inventor, diplomat and humorist. He would play a major role in the drafting of both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Here he notes that States, meaning the colonies have equal rights and Liberties to the mother country. Today, we might see this passage to support the equality of all States in our country.

Week 5

Defending Liberties is our duty.

“The liberties of our Country, the freedom of our civil constitution are worth defending at all hazards; And it is our duty to defend them against all attacks. We have received them as a fair inheritance from our worthy Ancestors. They purchased them for us with toil and danger and expense of treasure and blood; and transmitted them to us with care and diligence. It will bring an everlasting mark of infamy on the present generation, enlightened as it is, if we should suffer them to be wrested from us by violence without a struggle; or be cheated out of them by the artifices of false and designing men.”

Samuel Adams, Essay in the Boston Gazette, 14 October 1771

The Story: Samuel Adams (1722-1803) of Massachusetts was one of the major figures advocating for American freedoms. A second cousin of John Adams, he would later serve as Governor of the Commonwealth. Known as somewhat of an agitator, here he is clearly strong in his view that Liberty must be defended.

Week 6

All Americans think of Liberty or Death.

“...the cause of America, a cause, madam, which is now become so serious to every American, that we consider it as a struggle from which we shall obtain a release from our present bondage by an ample redress of our grievances or a redress by the sword. **The only alternative which every American thinks of is Liberty or Death.**”

Abigail Smith Adams letter to Catharine Sawbridge Macaulay, 1774

The Story: Note that Patrick Henry was not necessarily the first to present the liberty or death choice. Abigail Adams, now married to John, writes here that the dichotomy is on the minds of all Americans.

Week 7

The deprivation of Liberty, after its enjoyment, is horrible.

“No person, that has enjoyed the sweets of liberty, can be insensible of its infinite value, or can reflect on its reverse, without horror and detestation. No person, that is not lost to every generous feeling of humanity, or that is not stupidly blind to his own interest, could bear to offer himself and posterity as victims at the shrine of despotism, in preference to enduring the short-lived inconveniencies that may result from an abridgment, or even entire suspension of commerce.”

Alexander Hamilton. (1774). A Full Vindication of the Measures of the Congress, from the Calumnies of their Enemies;...¹ New York: Printed by James Rivington, 15 December.

The Story: Alexander Hamilton (1755?-1804) of New York was the prime author of the Federalist papers, our first Secretary of the Treasury and a major advocate for our Constitution. Despite his great accomplishments, he would tragically lose his life in a duel with Aaron Burr (1756-1836). He was less than 20 years of age when he wrote this pamphlet, arguing that the pain of losing Liberty is enormous. Note also that calumnies mean false and/or slanderous statements.

¹ Full Title - A Full Vindication of the Measures of the Congress, from the Calumnies of their Enemies; In Answer to A Letter, Under the Signature of A. W. Farmer. Whereby His Sophistry is exposed, his Cavils confuted, his Artifices detected, and his Wit ridiculed; in a General Address to the Inhabitants of America, And a Particular Address to the Farmers of the Province of New York.

Week 8

Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death!

“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!**”

Patrick Henry speech, St. John's Episcopal Church, Richmond, Virginia, 20 March 1775

The Story: Patrick Henry (1736-1799) of Virginia was a master orator. He would go on to serve as Governor of Virginia and to join George Mason in opposing the Constitution. While there are some historical questions as to his exact words, his speech at St. John's Episcopal Church in Richmond, Virginia so inspired Colonel Edward Carrington (1748-1810) also of Virginia that Carrington requested that he be buried on the Church grounds.

Week 9

Liberty is a human birthright.

“...may you and your associates be directed to those steps which will redound to the glory of America, the welfare of Britain and the promotion of that **Equal Liberty which is the birthright of man and the only basis on which civil society can enjoy any durable tranquility.**”

Mercy Otis Warren letter to John Adams, 4 April 1775

The Story: Mercy Otis Warren (1728-1814) of Massachusetts was a great political thinker and writer. She was the younger sister of James Otis and started out as a close friend to Abigail and John Adams. She would later oppose the Constitution and became a supporter of Thomas Jefferson over John Adams. Eventually, she reconciled with the couple. Here she posits that Liberty is a birthright, a year prior to the concept being elaborated in our Declaration of Independence.

Week 10

Peace cannot be purchased at the expense of Liberty.

“A great number of very good companies were raised in many Counties in this Colony, before it was recommended to them by the Convention, and are now in excellent training; the people being resolved, although they wish for nothing, more ardently, than a **happy and lasting reconciliation with the parent State, not to purchase it at the expense of their liberty and the sacred compacts of Government.**”

George Washington letter to George Mercer, 5 April 1775

The Story: As the leader of our Revolution and our first President, George Washington is a giant in our history. While he sat silently presiding over our Constitutional convention, he played a major behind-the-scenes role in its adoption. His writings demonstrate a clear insight into the major issues of his day. Here he admits that, while peace with Great Britain is desirable, it cannot be purchased at the expense of Liberty.

Week 11

Liberty, once lost, is lost forever.

“Our consolation must be this, my dear, that Cities may be rebuilt, and a people reduced to poverty, may acquire fresh property: But a Constitution of Government once changed from Freedom, can never be restored. **Liberty once lost is lost forever.**”

John Adams letter to Abigail Smith Adams, 7 July 1775

The Story: Here John Adams is attempting to comfort his wife. As Alexander Hamilton bemoaned the pain of losing liberty, Adams warns that its loss will be permanent. In less than a year, Adams would go on to become a major figure in the drafting of our Declaration of Independence.

Week 12

The defense of American Liberty is a righteous cause.

“It is with singular pleasure that we can congratulate you on the success with which providence has been pleased to favor our righteous cause by giving success to the operations in defense of American liberty.”

Thomas Jefferson letter to the President of the Virginia Convention, 11 July 1775

The Story: Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) was a statesman and scientist, one of the greatest writers of our country. While he would become our first Secretary of State, our second Vice-President and our third President, ousting John Adams from the office, he was not particularly proud of holding those offices. His tomb would list his authorship of the Declaration of Independence first among his accomplishments. Here he proclaims the righteousness of defending Liberty.

Week 13

Love of Liberty prevails throughout America.

“However, should it come to the worst, **I am persuaded that the Union virtue and love of Liberty at present prevailing throughout the Colonies is such that it would be as little in the power of our treacherous friends as of our avowed enemies, to put the yoke upon us.** An attempt to sell us would infallibly purchase to the authors present vengeance and eternal infamy.”

James Madison letter to William Bradford, 19 June 1775

The Story: James Madison (1751-1836) of Virginia would go on to become the primary author of our Constitution, the second author of the Federalist papers, Congressman, Secretary of State and the fourth President. As a close friend and follower of Thomas Jefferson, he would often echo Jefferson’s views, sometimes to the disappointment of George Washington and Alexander Hamilton, with whom he worked closely on the Constitution. Here, Madison comments on the universal popularity of Liberty throughout the colonies.

Week 14

We shall suffer for Liberty.

“We shall, doubtless, in this great struggle suffer much, but I trust no losses or sufferings will induce us to give over the defense of our liberty, and that cost what it may, we will persevere with unremitting vigor to maintain that inestimable jewel which we have received from our ancestors and transmit the same with unsullied lustre to our posterity.”

John Hancock letter to George Washington, 6 January 1776

The Story: John Hancock (1736-1793) of Massachusetts presided over the Continental Congress that declared our independence and produced the Declaration of Independence. His signature was so large that “John Hancock” has come to mean signature. A story that he stated that he wrote large so that the King could read it without his spectacles has not been confirmed. Earlier in his life, Hancock owned a ship, named *Liberty*, that was seized by British officials. He would later go on to become Governor. Here he assures General Washington of the commitment to defend liberties as part of our ancestral heritage.

Week 15

America is the asylum for Liberty.

“Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America. This new world hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from every part of Europe. Hither have they fled, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still.”

Thomas Paine (1776). *Common Sense; Address to the Inhabitants of America*, page 35. Philadelphia: Robert Bell, 10 January.

The Story: Thomas Paine (1736-1809), originally born in Great Britain, may have considered himself a bit as a citizen of the world. He was a great writer and theorist, who would be involved in our Revolution and the French Revolution and oppose our Constitution. His work, Common Sense greatly inspired the Revolutionary movement; here he espouses a theory that the physical separation from Europe has provided the asylum for Liberty in America.

Week 16

Teach Reverence for Liberty.

“Teach them to scorn injustice, ingratitude, cowardice, and falsehood. **Let them revere nothing but Religion, Morality and Liberty.**”

John Adams letter to Abigail Smith Adams, 15 April 1776

The Story: Here is another demonstration of how Liberty was so personal to John Adams. We first saw it as a common value for him and the woman he was wooing. Now, he implores his wife to teach a reverence for Liberty to their children. The record shows that his wishes were granted in the form of his son, John Quincy Adams (1767-1848), who would go on to become a diplomat, Senator, Secretary of State, President and Congressman.

Week 17

The right to Liberty is derived from equal creation.

“We hold these truths to be sacred and undeniable; that all men are created equal and independent, **that from that equal creation they derive rights inherent and inalienable, among which are the preservation of life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness...**”

Jefferson’s “Original Rough draught” of the Declaration of Independence, 11 June–4 July 1776

The Story: What better way to end our reading on the conception of Liberty than with Thomas Jefferson? Here we see a conception of the Declaration of Independence. The self-evident truths were originally sacred and undeniable and that from equal creation derives the right of the preservation of Liberty. Liberty conceives the New Nation.

PART TWO: A NEW NATION

We must now back up a bit to the beginning of the Revolutionary War. This part will run through the period from 1775 to 1783. Of course, volumes have been written on this topic and it is impossible to cover the entirety of bringing forth a new nation. Here the emphasis is on two concepts – action and sacrifice. These concepts will be identified in each passage, with a brief discussion of what each man or woman did.

The previous part on Liberty provided you with the thoughts and opinions of the Founding Mothers and Fathers. In this part, you will observe their actions and sacrifices to bring forth the difficult birth of the United States of America.

Week 18, Action

Paul Revere rides to warn Massachusetts towns.

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

Paul Revere letter to Jeremy Belknap, 1798

The Story: Paul Revere (1734-1818) of Massachusetts was a silversmith and engraver. On the night of April 18-19, 1775, he rode through several Massachusetts towns, warning of the arrival of British troops. The next day, the American Revolution broke out. His actions were recounted in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s dramatic poem, “Paul Revere’s Ride” (1861). While other patriots also engaged in midnight rides and his own narrative is less dramatic than the poem, Paul Revere’s account of his actions attests to his bravery and teamwork.

Week 19. Action and Sacrifice

A reluctant George Washington takes command.

“It has been determined in Congress, that **the whole Army raised for the defense of the American Cause shall be put under my care**, and that it is necessary for me to proceed immediately to Boston to take upon me the Command of it. You may believe me, my dear Patsy, when I assure you, in the most solemn manner, that, so far from seeking this appointment I have used every endeavor in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the Family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my Capacity and that I should enjoy more real happiness and felicity in one month with you, at home, than I have the most distant prospect of reaping abroad, if my stay was to be Seven times Seven years.”

George Washington letter to Martha Dandridge Custis Washington, 18 June 1775

The Story: On 14 June 1775, the Continental Congress created the Continental Army. Then, John Adams nominated George Washington to be General and Commander-in-Chief. Four days later, General Washington laments to his wife Martha (nicknamed Patsy) his sorrow at his appointment.

Week 20, Action and Sacrifice

Dr. Joseph Warren sacrifices his life at the Battle of Bunker Hill.

The day, perhaps the decisive Day is come on which the fate of America depends. **My bursting Heart must find vent at my pen. I have just heard that our dear friend Dr. Warren is no more, but fell gloriously fighting for his country, saying better to die honorably in the field than ignominiously hang upon the Gallows. Great is our loss.** He has distinguished himself in every engagement, by his courage and fortitude, by animating the Soldiers and leading them on by his own example.”

Abigail Smith Adams letter to John Adams, 18 June 1775

The Story: Dr. Joseph Warren (1741-1775) of Massachusetts was a great physician and brave patriot. He was the one who directed Paul Revere to undertake his midnight ride. He sacrificed his life for the American cause at the June 17, 1775 Battle of Bunker Hill. He was a close friend of Abigail and John Adams and so, too, they sacrificed at the loss of their good friend.

Week 21, Action

Richard Henry Lee introduces a resolution for independence.

“Resolved, 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.

“That it is expedient forthwith to take the most effectual measures for forming foreign Alliances.

“That a plan of confederation be prepared and transmitted to the respective Colonies for their consideration and approbation.”

Richard Henry Lee, The Resolution for Independence, 7 June 1776

The Story: Richard Henry Lee (1732-1794) of Virginia was an American statesman who was elected to the Continental Congress. Here we see him taking the major action of introducing the resolution that would eventually pass, declaring our American independence. He would later become one of the first two United States Senators from Virginia.

Week 22, Action

America declares Independence, with the words of Thomas Jefferson.

“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.”

Thomas Jefferson, Declaration of Independence, 2 July 1776

Of course, had Jefferson done nothing else, this document would have cemented his place in history. In this passage, the focus is on the actual declaring of our American independence.

Week 23, Sacrifice

While Independence is a joy, John Adams knows that the fight for it is costly.

“The Second Day of July 1776 will be the most memorable Epocha, in the History of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated, by succeeding generations, as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the Day of Deliverance by solemn Acts of Devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations from one end of this Continent to the other from this time forward forever more.”

“You will think me transported with enthusiasm, but I am not. **I am well aware of the toil and blood and treasure, that it will cost us to maintain this Declaration, and support and defend these States. Yet through all the gloom I can see the rays of ravishing light and glory.** I can see that the end is more than worth all the means. And that posterity will triumph in that day’s transaction, even although we should rue it, which I trust in God we shall not.”

John Adams letter to Abigail Smith Adams, 3 July 1776

The Story: John Adams may have predicted the incorrect date for celebration (July 2, instead of July 4), but the rest of his forecasts were correct.

Week 24, Action and Sacrifice

Nathan Hale sacrifices his one life for his country.

“A person named Nathaniel Hale, a Lieutenant in the Rebel Army, and a native of Connecticut, was apprehended as a Spy last night upon Long Island...He was about 24 years of age and had been educated at the College of New Haven in Connecticut. He behaved with great composure and resolution, saying he thought **it the duty of every good officer, to obey any orders given him by his commander-in-chief; and desired the spectators to be at all times prepared to meet death in whatever shape it might appear.**”

British Officer Frederick MacKensie's Diary, 22 September 1776

The Story: Nathan Hale (1755-1776) of Connecticut was a soldier and a spy. He was the only volunteer for his mission, on which he was captured and hung by the British for spying. It is not known for certain whether he said, “I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country,” but this British officer's account of his death demonstrates Hale's brave sacrifice.

Week 25, Action

Thomas Paine inspires America through its crisis.

“These are the times that try men’s souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country, but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like Hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly. It is dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as freedom should not be highly rated.”

Thomas Paine. (1776). The American Crisis, Pamphlet Number 1, page 1. Philadelphia: The Pennsylvania Journal, 19 December

The Story: By December of 1776, George Washington was a desperate man. After repelling the British Siege of Boston, he had lost New York City and led across New Jersey to Pennsylvania on the west side of the Delaware River. He resolved to take two New Jersey towns on the east side, Trenton and Princeton. However, his men were discouraged and ready to quit. Washington was a decent speaker, but not a great one. Fortunately, the author of “Common Sense,” produced another pamphlet with the above eloquent words. Washington had the pamphlet read aloud to inspire his men. They continued to inspire throughout the Revolution.

Week 26, Action and Sacrifice

George Washington's troops suffer the Delaware River Crossing.

“In justice to the officers and men, I must add, that their behavior upon this occasion, reflects the highest honor upon them. The difficulty of passing the River in a very severe night, and their march through a violent storm of snow and hail, did not in the least abate their ardor. But when they came to the charge, each seemed to vie with the other in pressing forward, and were I to give a preference to any particular Corps, I should do great injustice to the others.”

George Washington letter to John Hancock, 27 December 1776

The Story: Here General Washington recounts the suffering of his men in the Delaware River Crossing on Christmas Night and the subsequent 26 December 1776 victory at Trenton. He would also emerge victorious at the 3 January 1777 battle of Princeton, but that victory would be marred by the sacrifice of his life by Washington's brave friend, Doctor Hugh Mercer (1726-1777) of Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Week 27, Sacrifice

John Adams admonishes future generations to make the most of our freedom.

“Posterity! **You will never know, how much it cost the present Generation, to preserve your Freedom! I hope you will make a good use of it.** If you do not, I shall repent in Heaven, that I ever took half the Pains to preserve it.”

John Adams letter to Abigail Smith Adams, 26 April 1777

The Story: Perhaps with the deaths of Doctors Joseph Warren and Hugh Mercer in mind, John Adams laments the sacrifices. He would soon be making greater sacrifices, parting from Abigail to represent the United States in Europe.

Week 28, Action and Sacrifice

Boyrereau Brinch, a slave fights for the cause and is wounded.

“I made no halt until I arrived within our camp. When I dismounted, tied my horse and went to set up my gun, I found I could not open my hand which was the first time that I discovered that **I was wounded.**”

The account of Boyrereau Brinch, an enslaved African American in the Revolutionary Army, 1777-1783 in Benjamin Franklin Prentiss. (1810). *The Blind African Slave* in 1810, Chapter 9, page 166. St. Albans: printed by Harry Whitney.

The Story: Boyrereau Brinch (1742-1827), nicknamed Jeffrey Brace, fought as a slave soldier in both the French and Indian Wars and the American Revolution. Most slaves who fought in the war fought for the British side, because Great Britain promised them their freedom. Others, who were promised their freedom by Americans, fought for the United States. Brinch, who was kidnapped from West Africa, received his freedom. His account was published by Prentiss, an anti-slavery activist.²

² Brinch was nobly wounded in an August 1777 battle after the following altercation: “While I stood there anxiously waiting for their return, I suddenly discovered a man riding up to me not more than eight rods distant on full speed with a pistol in his hand and ordered me to lay down my arms. But not being so instructed by my officers you may well suppose that I did not...He said I must surrender to him who demanded me in the name of the King his majesty of Great Britain. I then plainly told him that neither him or his King’s majesty would get my arms unless he took them by force. He immediately cocked his pistol and fired. I fell flat upon the ground in order to dodge his ball and did so effectually do it that he missed me. I rose; he drew his sword and rode up to me so quick that I had no time to take aim before he struck my gun barrel with his cutlass and cut it almost one third off; also cut off the bone of my middle finger on my hand. As he struck the horse jumped before he could wheel upon me again. Although my gun barrel was cut, I fired and killed him...” (pp 162-166)

Week 29, Action and Sacrifice

The Oneidas fight for the cause and help us turn the tide.

“The Oneydas were the only Nation of Indians, who held fast the Covenant chain which was made between the five Nations and the people of the United States, all the others deserted or fought against You, in the late War...We have suffered hardship, undergone fatigues, and have fought with and for You. Because we held fast the covenant Chain with our Brethren of the United States, our aged Fathers, our Wives and little ones, were obliged for a time to remove from our lands, and frequently to suffer for want of necessaries...”

The Oneida Indians letter to George Washington, 7 April 1793, signed by Captains Hanjyrrie Thowaweh Thasogweh, John Otaawiton, Nicholas Kanatjogh and Cornelius Kakeghdotxa.

The Story: As with the slaves, most Native Americans who did fight fought for the British, perhaps sensing the coming American expansion. However, some did fight for the American side, particularly the Oneidas or the People of the Upright Stone or Standing Stone. The Oneidas were of the five founding nations of the Iroquois Confederacy in upstate New York. It could be argued that the Oneida made the difference in the American victory in the Revolution by aiding our forces in the Battle of Oriskany on 6 August 1777. The American victory prevented British General Barry St. Leger from marching east to Saratoga. This, in turn, helped the Americans to win the fall 1777 battles at Saratoga, which led to the French decision to enter the war on our side.³

³ The 3 September 1777 Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser described the actions of Tyonajanegen, an Oneida woman who fought with us: “...a friendly Indian, with his wife and son, who distinguished themselves remarkably on the occasion. The Indian killed nine of the enemy, when having received a ball through his wrist that disabled him from using his gun, he then fought with his tomahawk. His son killed two, and his wife on horseback, fought by his side, with pistols during the whole action, which lasted six hours.”

Week 30, Sacrifice

George Washington's men suffer terribly at Valley Forge.

“...for without arrogance, or the smallest deviation from truth it may be said, that **no history, now extant, can furnish an instance of an army's suffering such uncommon hardships as ours have done, and bearing them with the same patience and fortitude.** To see men without clothes to cover their nakedness, without Blankets to lay on, without Shoes, by which their marches might be traced by the blood from their feet and almost as often without provisions as with; marching through frost and snow, and at Christmas taking up their Winter Quarters within a day's march of the enemy, without a house or hut to cover them till they could be built and submitting to it without a murmur, is a mark of patience and obedience, which, in my opinion, can scarce be paralleled.”

George Washington letter to John Banister, 21 April 1778

The Story: In the fall of 1777, the British took Philadelphia and America did not know that the French would join our cause. With New York and Philadelphia occupied, George Washington moved his troops to Valley Forge, where they suffered terribly through the cold winter. By the time of this letter, the situation at Valley Forge had improved and his troops were ready to fight. Here he pays them honor for their sufferings.

Week 31, Action and Sacrifice

American troops fight well in the heat at Monmouth Courthouse.

“In short one can hardly name particulars without doing injustice to the rest. The behavior of the officers and men in general was such as could not easily be surpassed. Our troops, after the first impulse from mismanagement, behaved with more spirit and moved with greater order than the British troops. You know my way of thinking about our army, and that I am not apt to flatter it. I assure you I never was pleased with them before this day.”

Alexander Hamilton letter to Elias Boudinot, 5 July 1778

The Story: If Washington’s troops had to suffer through the freezing winter in Valley Forge, the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse was fought on 28 June 1778, a day of stifling heat. It was the longest battle of the war and, technically, a British victory, as the Americans did not achieve their objective of preventing the movement of British troops back to New York City. However, as noted here, the battle demonstrated that the American troops could hold their own in a head-to-head battle. The battle is famous for establishing the legend of Molly Pitcher, a woman who may have fought alongside of American troops. But, as we saw previously, an actual Oneida woman, Tyonajanegen did fight in the war. We shall continue to see American women supporting the great cause.

Week 32, Action

Martha Washington and Martha Jefferson rally women to support the cause.

“Mrs. Washington has done me the honor of communicating the enclosed proposition of our sisters of Pennsylvania and of informing me that the same grateful sentiments are displaying themselves in Maryland. **Justified by the sanction of her letter in handing forward the scheme, I undertake with cheerfulness the duty of furnishing to my country women an opportunity of proving that they also participate of those virtuous feelings** which gave birth to it.”

Martha Wayles Skelton Jefferson letter to Eleanor Conway Madison, 8 August 1780

The Story: Here we see the two Virginia Marthas, Washington (1731-1802) and Jefferson (1748-1782) organizing women to provide aid and comfort to American troops. Martha Washington had previously brought clothing and other supplies to Valley Forge. Martha Jefferson would die young, and this is her one surviving letter.

Week 33, Sacrifice

A young teenaged lady, Eliza Jacquelin Ambler must flee her home.

“What an alarming crisis is this!

“War in itself, however distant, is indeed terrible. But, when brought to our very doors, when those we most love are personally engaged in it, when our friends and neighbors are exposed to its ravages, when we know assuredly that without sacrificing many dear to us our own lives, our country must remain subject to British tyranny, the reflection is indeed overwhelming!”

Eliza Jacquelin Ambler to Mildred Smith Dudley, Richmond 1781

The Story: Benedict Arnold (1741-1801) had fought bravely for the American cause in Quebec, Fort Ticonderoga and Saratoga. But, in the fall of 1780, he turned traitor. He was given a British command and sailed up the James River in Virginia. He burned the city of Richmond to the ground and destroyed much of what was in his path. Here a young lady, Eliza Jacquelin Ambler (1765-1842) of Virginia describes her traumatic experiences fleeing her home, which was destroyed.

Week 34, Action and Sacrifice

Deborah Sampson fights for the cause and is wounded.

“Mrs. Deborah Gannett...told me, she had no doubt that her ill health is in consequence of her being exposed when she did a Soldiers duty; and that **while in the Army, she was wounded**...I have no doubt your humanity will prompt you to do all in your power to git her some relief; I think her case much more deserving.”

Paul Revere letter to William Eustis, 20 February 1804

Molly Pitcher may have had the legend, but, Deborah Sampson Gannett (1760-1827) really did fight for the cause; and note that one of her biggest supporters is none other than Paul Revere! Here he writes her a letter of support for a military pension, which Congress approved on 11 March 1805.⁴

⁴ A further description is provided in Mann, Herman. (1797). *The Female Review or Memoirs of an American Young Lady*, page 95. Dedham: Nathaniel and Benjamin Heaton for the Author, July: “Instead of going to Boston, she went back and was immediately conducted to Worcester, where she was mustered. She was enrolled by the name of Robert Schurtliffe. The general muster-master was doubtless glad to enroll the name of a youth whose looks and mein promised to do honor to the cause in which she was then engaged. Ah, females, we have too long estimated your abilities and worth at too mean a price!”

Week 35, Sacrifice

George Washington acknowledges the service of his soldiers.

“And being now to conclude these his last public Orders, to take his ultimate leave, in a short time of the military character, and to bid a final adieu to the Armies he has so long had the honor to command, he can only again offer in their behalf his recommendations to their grateful Country, and his prayers to the God of Armies. **May ample justice be done them here; and may the choicest of Heaven’s favors both here and hereafter attend those, who under the divine auspices have secured innumerable blessings for others.** With these wishes and this benediction, the Commander in Chief is about to retire from service, the curtain of separation will soon be drawn and the military scene to him will be closed forever.”

George Washington’s Farewell Address to the Army, 2 November 1783

The Story: American independence was achieved under the Treaty of Paris, signed 3 September 1783. Among the American negotiators were Ben Franklin, John Adams and John Jay (1745-1829). Indeed, while we tend to think the final American victory occurred at Yorktown in October of 1781, sporadic fighting continued. Deborah Sampson did much of her service in 1782 and a close friend of Alexander Hamilton’s, John Laurens (1754-1782) of South Carolina sacrificed his life that year for the American cause. Thus, peace was only obtained after the Treaty. The British finally evacuated New York City on 25 November 1783 and the war came to an end. In anticipation of this end, General Washington wrote his farewell to his troops, in which he acknowledges their long and many sacrifices. Conceived in Liberty, the New Nation was now brought forth.

PART THREE: EQUALITY

We must, once again, back our story up to the Colonial Era; for, once again, it was in this period that the Founding Mothers and Fathers formulated their view of Equality. However, this part will continue past the Revolutionary War (1775-1783), right into the early days of this nation. In this section, you will observe not only their conceptualizations of Equality, but many of the Founders putting their ideas of Equality into action.

As with Liberty, Equality is a complex concept. Again, each of the Founders had a unique view of Equality, sometimes overlapping, sometimes not. You can compare their goals and actions to achieve Equality, which may address different concerns and/or populations. You also clearly will see that they each were extremely dedicated to the proposition that all are created equal.

Week 36

American colonists have equal rights to the natives of Great Britain.

“For if our Trade may be taxed why not our lands? Why not the produce of our lands and everything we possess or make use of? This we apprehend annihilates our Charter Right to govern and tax ourselves. **It strikes at our British Privileges, which as we have never forfeited them, we hold in common with our Fellow Subjects who are Natives of Britain. If taxes are laid upon us in any shape without our having a legal Representation where they are laid, are we not reduced from the character of free Subjects to the miserable State of tributary Slaves?**”

Samuel Adams, Instructions to Boston’s Representatives in response to the 1764 Sugar Act,
15 May 1764

The Story: You may remember Ben Franklin’s assertion from Week 4 that States have equal rights and Liberties. Here Sam Adams personalizes the concept of equality between the people in the colonies and those living in Britain.

Week 37

All persons are born free by natural law, regardless of race.

“The colonists are by the law of nature freeborn, as indeed all men are, white or black. No better reasons can be given for enslaving those of any color than such as Baron Montesquieu has humorously given as the foundation of that cruel slavery exercised over the poor Ethiopians, which threatens one day to reduce both Europe and America to the ignorance and barbarity of the darkest ages. Does it follow that tis right to enslave a man because he is black?”

James Otis. (1766). *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved*, page 43.
Boston: for J. Almon, Third Edition.

The Story: Prior to the Revolution, James Otis deplors slavery and eerily predicts the Civil War.

Week 38

Many patriot slaveholders felt guilt over their ownership of other humans.

“Would anyone believe that **I am the Master of Slaves of my own purchase! I am drawn along by the general inconvenience of living here without them. I will not, I cannot justify it.** However culpable my conduct, I will so far pay my devoir to Virtue, as to own the excellence and rectitude of her Precepts, and to lament my want of conforming to them. I believe a time will come when an opportunity will be afforded to abolish this lamentable evil.”

Patrick Henry letter to Robert Pleasants, 18 January 1773

The Story: Patrick Henry could not live without liberty, but he bemoans that he cannot bring himself to grant liberty to his slaves. Note that the term “devoir” means a person’s duty.

Week 39

On the eve of independence, Abigail Adams urges the advancement of women.

“I long to hear that you have declared an independancy—and by the way in the new Code of Laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make **I desire you would Remember the Ladies** and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors.”

Abigail Adams letter to John Adams, 31 March 1776

The Story: At an early date in our history, Abigail Adams not only urges her husband to remember women, but to remember them in the Code of Laws.

Week 40

The slave trade is against natural law.

“He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither...Determined to keep open a market where Men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or restrain this execrable commerce.”

Thomas Jefferson, “Original Rough draught” of the Declaration of Independence, 11 June–4 July 1776

The Story: This passage attacking the British King for the kidnapping of Africans for the trans-Atlantic slave trade was deleted from the final Declaration of Independence. Thomas Jefferson’s words were attacked by southern delegates and some northern delegates who represented merchants involved in importing slaves.

Week 41

Equality is self-evident.

“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.”

Thomas Jefferson, Declaration of Independence, 2 July 1776

The Story: Note again how Thomas Jefferson’s original assertion of “sacred and undeniable” was changed to “self-evident.” Jefferson was a Deist who believed in an intelligent design of the universe, but not in an interactive God to be worshipped. Hence, he was probably very comfortable with this change.

Week 42

All religions should be held Equal under the law.

“Whereas, Almighty God hath created the mind free;...Be it enacted by General Assembly that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief, but that **all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of Religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge or affect their civil capacities.**”

Thomas Jefferson, Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom Draft, 1777, enacted 16 January 1786

The Story: If his authorship of the Declaration of Independence was the first accomplishment that he wanted listed on his tombstone, Thomas Jefferson’s authorship of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom was the second. In his 1 January 1802 letter to the Danbury Baptists of Connecticut, he coined the phrase “wall of separation between church and state.” Jefferson always stood for equality for all creeds.

Week 43, Action

Alexander Hamilton derives a plan to free black soldiers.

“I have not the least doubt, that the negroes will make very excellent soldiers, with proper management...I foresee that this project will have to combat much opposition from prejudice and self-interest. The contempt we have been taught to entertain for the blacks, makes us fancy many things that are founded neither in reason nor experience...**give them their freedom with their muskets.** This will secure their fidelity, animate their courage and, I believe, will have a good influence upon those who remain, by opening a door to their emancipation.”

Alexander Hamilton letter to John Jay, 14 March 1779

The Story: In the middle of the Revolutionary War, Alexander Hamilton deplored prejudice and sought to offer freedom to African Americans who fought for our country. He would later become a founding member of the New York Manumission Society and the man to whom he wrote this letter, John Jay would become its first President.

Week 44

The abolition of slavery is a prerequisite for Liberty.

“An excellent law might be made out of the Pennsylvania one **for the gradual abolition of slavery. Till America comes into this measure, her prayers to Heaven for Liberty will be impious. This is a strong expression, but it is just.** Were I in your legislature, I would prepare a bill for the purpose with great care, and I would never leave moving it till it became a law or I ceased to be a member.”

John Jay letter to Egbert Benson, 17 September 1780

The Story: John Jay of New York was an American diplomat, the third author of the Federalist papers and the first Chief Justice of the United States. Throughout his life, he advocated for the abolition of slavery in New York State. Note here, also in the midst of the war for independence, Jay turns Lincoln’s phrasing on his head, basically asserting that the dedication to the proposition of Liberty must be conceived in ending slavery.

Week 45, Action

Patrick Henry seeks to encourage Native American/mixing with whites.

“We have rejected some which in my conception would have been advantageous to this country. **Among these I rank the bill for encouraging intermarriages with the Indians. Our prejudices, however, oppose themselves to our interests, and operate too powerfully for them.**”

John Marshall to James Monroe, 2 December 1784

The Story: American independence had been won and the States set about the business of Government. Patrick Henry may have had a poor record on slavery, but, as Governor of Virginia, he sought to encourage whites and Native Americans to marry. Among his supporters was the youthful John Marshall (1755-1835) of Virginia, who would later become a Congressman, Secretary of State and the greatest Chief Justice of the United States.

Week 46, Action

John Jay promotes racial and religious Equality for participation in Liberty.

“I consider knowledge to be the soul of a republic, and as the weak and the wicked are generally in alliance, as much care should be taken to diminish the number of the former as well of the latter. Education is the way to do this, and nothing should be left undone to afford all ranks of people the means of obtaining a proper degree of it at a cheap and easy rate...**I wish to see all unjust and unnecessary discriminations everywhere abolished, and that the time may come when all our inhabitants of every color and denomination shall be free and Equal partakers of our political Liberty.**”

John Jay letter to Benjamin Rush, 24 March 1785

The Story: John Jay had helped to negotiate our independence and was then serving as the United States Secretary of Foreign Affairs. But, on January 25, 1785, he became the first President of the New York Manumission Society. Here he promotes not only racial, but also religious equality for participation in political Liberty.

Week 47

Equality is hampered in kingdoms, because monarchs are not wise.

“**Kings are not usually very wise**; ours is afflicted by the greatest scourge of heaven. He is quite mad, and often fancies himself General Washington.”

Angelica Schuyler Church letter to Thomas Jefferson, 19 November 1788

The Story: Angelica Schuyler Church (1756-1814) of New York was the sister-in-law to Alexander Hamilton. She was one of the few people to have friendly correspondence with both Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson. She had married an Englishman and had moved to Great Britain for a time. Here she bemoans the madness of the King and implies her preference for America.

Week 48

The Empress of Russia is to be admired for advancing the cause of women.

“The Empress of Russia is as successful as I wish her. What a glorious figure will she make on the historical page...The ladies should deify her and consecrate a temple to her praise! It is a diverting thought, that the mighty Emperor of the Turks should be subdued by a woman. **How enviable that she alone should be the avenger of her sex’s wrongs for so many ages past. She seems to have awakened Justice**, who appears to be a sleepy dame in the cause of injured innocence.”

Theodosia Bartow Prevost Burr letter to Aaron Burr, 27 July 1791

The Story: Theodosia Bartow Prevost Burr (1746-1794) of New Jersey, though married to a British officer, was an American patriot who offered her home as the headquarters for George Washington. After her husband died, she married Colonel Aaron Burr; both became advocates for the rights of women. Here she admires the Empress of Russia for doing the same.

Week 49, Action

George Washington frees his slaves.

“In the name of God, amen, I George Washington of Mount Vernon, a citizen of the United States, and lately President of the same, do make, ordain and declare this Instrument; which is written with my own hand and every page thereof subscribed with my name, to be my last Will and Testament, revoking all others...**Upon the decease of my wife, it is my Will and desire that all the Slaves which I hold in my own right, shall receive their freedom.** To emancipate them during her life, would, though earnestly wished by me, be attended with such insuperable difficulties...”

George Washington’s Last Will and Testament, 9 July 1799

The Story: George Washington’s views on slavery evolved over his life. Finally, in his will, he acted, calling for the freedom of 124 slaves after the death of his wife. In December 1800, Martha Washington authorized the manumission of her husband’s slaves, who were freed on 1 January 1801. Where others, like Jefferson, sometimes wrote of equality of the slaves, Washington acted.

Week 50

Equality leads to democracy.

“Perhaps it may be true, that wherever slavery is encouraged, there are among the free inhabitants very high ideas of Liberty; though not so much from a sense of the common rights of man, as from their own feelings of superiority.

“Democratic principles are the result of Equality of condition.”

Mercy Otis Warren. (1805). The Rise, Progress and Termination of the American Revolution, Interspersed with Biographical, Political and Moral Observations, Volume I, Chapter I, page 22. Boston: Manning and Loring.

The Story: While Mercy Otis Warren may have supported Thomas Jefferson over John Adams, her views on slavery were closer to those of Adams. Here she implicitly criticizes southern slaveholders who were patriots and indicates her strong opposition to slavery.

Week 51, Action

Eliza Jacquelin Ambler Brent Carrington advocates for female orphans.

“The petition of the Female Humane Association of the City of Richmond humbly represents that **your petitioners with a view to afford relief to indigent females, and to educate and to provide for destitute female children, formed themselves into a society.**”

Eliza Jacquelin Ambler Brent Carrington, Legislative Petition to the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia, 13 December 1810

The Story: Remember young Eliza Ambler, the girl who fled Benedict Arnold’s invasion in Week 33? She grew up to be quite well connected, becoming John Marshall’s sister-in-law and marrying Edward Carrington, who would become Mayor of Richmond. Colonel Carrington was the gentleman who so admired Patrick Henry’s speech. Eliza would know sadness. She would be married and widowed twice and would be childless. Nevertheless, this did not prevent her from becoming an advocate for the education of female orphans, as was Alexander Hamilton’s widow, Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton (1757-1854) of New York. In 1805, Mrs. Carrington helped found the Female Humane Association of the City of Richmond and was its secretary for many years.⁵

⁵ When she passed away, the Richmond Enquirer noted, in her obituary, “...her intelligent and cultivated mind; her generous heart; her active and diffusive charity, of which the Female Humane Association of Richmond furnishes one enduring memorial...”

Week 52

Equal laws protecting equal rights promote patriotism.

“Among the features peculiar to the political system of the United States is the perfect equality of rights which it secures to every religious sect. And it is particularly pleasing to observe in the good citizenship of such as have been most distrusted and oppressed elsewhere, a happy illustration of the safety and success of this experiment of a just and benignant policy. **Equal laws protecting equal rights are found as they ought to be presumed, the best guarantee of loyalty and love of country;** as well as best calculated to cherish that mutual respect and good will among citizens of every religious denomination, which are necessary to social harmony and most favorable to the advancement of truth.”

James Madison letter to Jacob De La Motta, post-7 August 1820

The Story: Who better to end this Devotional than with James Madison, the father of our Constitution? In this letter written to a Jewish leader, the aging former President was referencing religious equality. Yet, the notion that equal laws protecting equal rights promote patriotism has a broad power in our dedication to the proposition that all are created equal.

EPILOGUE

Our Devotional journey has come to an end. In time, we traveled from the Colonial era, through the American War for Independence and into the early Nineteenth Century. We traversed the concepts of the conception of Liberty, to forging of a new nation through the sacrifices and actions in the Revolutionary War and the pursuit of equality for all. Along the way, we met some famous people and, perhaps, some new people, such as the slaves, native Americans and women who fought for our country.

In his article, “John Marshall: The “Man Who Made the Court Supreme (Washington: The Saylor Foundation, 2008), on page 2, Henry Jud Sage states that John Marshall once said, “I went into the war a Virginian. I came out an American.” We know for certain that Chief Justice Marshall wrote to Justice Joseph Story in 1827, “...I found myself associated with brave men from different States who were risking life and everything valuable in a common cause believed by all to be most precious; and where I was confirmed in the habit of considering America as my country...”

No matter what your disposition was when you began this Devotional and no matter how you read it, perhaps you come out of it with a stronger conviction of being American. Perhaps completing this Devotional has confirmed your consideration for the actions and sacrifices of our Founding Mothers and Fathers, for our Liberties and our dedication to Equality for all. The American Journeys of our Founders are finished. The American Journey of Abraham Lincoln is complete.

Your American Journey continues.

About the Author

Scott Campbell Brown holds a PhD in demography from the University of Pennsylvania. He was a researcher at Gallaudet University and the US Department of Education and has served as a consultant to the United Nations and the International Labour Organization. His research has led to awards from the National Institutes of Health and the AARP Andrus Foundation. He is the author of *The Saga of the Four King* and *Migrants and Workers in Philadelphia*. Scott is married and currently lives in San Antonio, Texas.

A free sample of the first four chapters of *The Saga of the Four Kings: Book One, The Age of Washington* follows.

Sample of The Saga of the Four Kings: Book One, The Age of Washington

Chapter 1: Silverheels

“Useful, not ornamental. Good, not great.”

Silverheels had always drawn strength from his family, and those words from his mother would serve him well on that warm spring day. He had heard the church bell ringing, calling young men to muster for what would later become the American War for Independence. When the lad happened upon the muster field, he appeared to be a young giant running out of the forest. Some noticed his blue socks with the white heels that his mother had knitted for him. From this footwear he would gain the moniker Silverheels.ⁱ

A witness later described the scene: “It was in May 1775. He was then a youth of nineteen. The muster field was some twenty miles distant from the Court House, and in a section of country peopled by tillers of the earth. Rumors of the occurrences near Boston had circulated with the effect of alarm and agitation, but without the means of ascertaining the truth...The Captain had called the company together, and was expected to attend, but did not.”ⁱⁱ

The witness described Silverheels as he appeared on that day: “He was about six feet high, straight and rather slender, of dark complexion—showing little, if any, rosy red, yet good health, the outline of the face nearly a circle, and within that, eyes dark to blackness, strong and penetrating, beaming with intelligence and good nature; an upright forehead, rather low, was terminated in a horizontal line by a mass of raven-black hair of unusual thickness and strength. The features of the face were in harmony with this outline, and the temples fully developed. The result of this combination was interesting and very agreeable. The body and limbs indicated agility, rather than strength, in which, however, he was, by no means, deficient. He wore a purple or pale blue hunting-shirt, and trousers of the same material fringed with white. A round black hat, mounted with the bucks-tail for a cockade, crowned the figure and the man.”

As he came to a halt and caught his breath, the lad thought of how he had prepared for this assembly, as he later recalled: “About the time I entered my eighteenth year, the controversy between Great Britain and her colonies had assumed so serious an aspect as almost to monopolize the attention of the old and the young. I engaged in it with all the zeal and enthusiasm which belonged to my age; and devoted more time to learning the first rudiments of

military exercise in an independent company of the gentlemen of the county, to training a militia company in the neighborhood, and to the political essays of the day.”ⁱⁱⁱ

He had trained to be a lieutenant in the Fauquier Rifles of the Culpeper Minutemen battalion. Yet here, at the muster field, no captain was present. As he surveyed the men gathered, he wanted to scream out that it was not supposed to be this way! For a moment, he wished that his parents were present—to tell him what to do. He then remembered the constant admonition from his own beloved mother—be useful, not ornamental, and be good, not great.^{iv} Silverheels stepped forward.

The witness remembered his words: “My fellow soldiers, no Captain will be here today. I have been appointed Lieutenant, instead of a better man. I have come to meet you as fellow soldiers, who are likely to be called on to defend your country and your own rights and liberties. The Americans have been victorious in New England, but more fighting is expected. Soldiers are called and it is time to brighten up our firearms and learn to use them in the field. If you would fall into a single line, I will show you the new exercise.”

The lieutenant then brought his own gun to his shoulder, and the sergeants put the men into a line. The witness recalled, “He went through the manual exercise by word and motion deliberately pronounced and performed, in the presence of the company, before he required the men to imitate him; and then proceeded to exercise them, with the most perfect temper. Never did man possess a temper more happy, or if otherwise, more subdued or better disciplined.” After the men had drilled, people at the scene marveled not only at the youth’s leadership but also at the fact that, after the drill, he and the men were playing games—running and jumping. They were throwing small rings!^v

Many of life’s lessons are learned by failure, but on that day, Silverheels learned a lesson from a success. He had not tried to take charge by his status (ornamental) or by making a great speech. Rather, he had been useful and good, and as a result, men had followed his lead. The lad went off to war, happy that the admonition of his mother had served him well. Moreover, the stockings his mother had made for him had gained him a fun nickname.

The first contribution of the young lieutenant to the war was at the decisive American victory at the Battle of Great Bridge near Norfolk, Virginia.^{vi} He later recalled in his autobiography, “We were ordered to march into the lower country for the purpose of defending it

against a small regular and predatory force commanded by Lord Dunmore. I was engaged in the action at the Great Bridge; and was in Norfolk when it was set on fire by a detachment from the British ships lying in the river, and afterwards when the remaining houses were burnt by orders from the Committee of safety.”

In 1776 the status of the young man changed from militiaman to an officer in the army of George Washington. Silverheels remembered the days of his youth when the great general and his own father were friends, working together as surveyors. Sometimes the boy would be allowed to join them. Silverheels liked the fact that Washington always seemed to take an interest in him. He, in turn, was in awe of the general.

The lieutenant was happy to go wherever Washington sent him. The British had occupied the city of New York in the fall of 1776. In April of 1777, Silverheels’s regiment of sharpshooters was dispatched through New York into the Hudson Valley to establish a presence against the British north of the city.^{vii} But by the fall of that year, he was back serving under Washington.

September proved to be a terrible month. Because the British were not able to successfully occupy New Jersey, they determined to sail troops south of New York City and up into the Chesapeake Bay to march through Delaware to seize Philadelphia. The lieutenant and his light infantry unit of six hundred marksmen were assigned to slow the British advance and so fought the Battle of Iron Hill.^{viii} Having been designated the American flag on the previous June 14 by the Continental Congress, for the first time, the Stars and Stripes flew proudly in battle. Alas, the flag could not prevent defeat when half of the unit ran out of ammunition! They fought on valiantly with their swords and bayonets, but in the end, Silverheels and his unit had to retreat.

Then came the Battle of Brandywine Creek.^{ix} The British had seventeen thousand troops to General Washington’s ten thousand. Despite fierce fighting the British troops overwhelmed the Americans. The lieutenant’s light infantry comprised an ambush rear guard and held the British grenadiers for a while. Later that night, under cover, they were the last unit to retreat. Silverheels knew he was developing a strange area of expertise—evacuation, rear-guard ambush, and retreat.

With these losses the British took Philadelphia.^x The Continental Congress moved its operation to York, Pennsylvania. General Washington decided to strike back in a surprise attack

on British forces at Germantown, which constituted the main British camp on the outskirts of Philadelphia.^{xi} Alas, Silverheels suffered minor wounds in his hand as the attack failed.

The emotional wounds were greater than the physical wounds. Promotions were obtained by winning battles, not by evacuation and retreat when the day is lost. As he nursed his wounds, Silverheels once again remembered his mother's refrain. All right then! Let the others have their promotions. He would enjoy the company of his fellows. Their sacrifices would be his. He had developed a fondness for Madeira. Yet, he resolved that if they would have no Madeira, he would have no Madeira. He would be useful, not ornamental, and be good, not great.

Then, George Washington ordered, "Lieutenant John Marshall is, by the Judge Advocate General, appointed Deputy Judge Advocate in the Army of the United States, and is to be respected as such."^{xii}

As he thought of this appointment, Lieutenant John Marshall, a.k.a. Silverheels, contemplated the possibility that perhaps the general he respected so much was sending him a message—go into the law! Indeed, Washington was. Although the general had respect for the bravery and soldiering ability of Lieutenant Marshall, he knew that the value of the young man was in the law.

He knew that John had enjoyed the teachings of a great man—his own father, Colonel Thomas Marshall. Indeed, Colonel Marshall had invented a surveying device for converting magnetic north to true north. It was called Marshall's meridian instrument, and the Virginia Assembly required its use for all surveys. The older Marshall had received his education at the Campbelltown Academy, named for the man who had operated it, the Reverend Archibald Campbell.^{xiii}

John would later write, "My Father possessed scarcely any fortune, and had received a very limited education—but was a man to whom nature had been bountiful, and who had assiduously improved her gifts. He superintended my education, and gave me an early taste for history and for poetry...to his care I am indebted for anything valuable which I may have acquired in my youth. He was my only intelligent companion; and was both a watchful parent and an affectionate instructive friend."

Thomas also hired tutors for his young son. Indeed, John had transcribed the works of Alexander Pope when he was only twelve years of age. Silverheels always quoted from Pope's poem "An Essay on Man," "Know then thyself; presume not God to scan. The proper study of Mankind is Man."^{xiv} When John was fourteen years of age, Colonel Marshall sent him to the Campbelltown Academy for one year.^{xv}

Yes, Washington would send the young lieutenant into the law, and the life of John Marshall would never be the same.

Soon after his appointment, however, John found himself with Washington at Valley Forge. Lieutenant Marshall turned his attention to working with his men to build huts to provide greater protection from the elements than tents. Huts were desperately needed, as it had rained thirteen days from their arrival at Valley Forge to the end of January. The low temperatures for the winter months were as follows: December -6°F , January -12°F , February -16°F , and March -8°F . When the weather thawed, the camp would become a sea of mud, which would then freeze again. The cold would increase the risk of exposure, and the thaws would increase the risk of disease, which was rampant.

Over the years, some have imagined Washington's army shivering quietly in the cold. Au contraire, Valley Forge at that time was in a noisy state of chaos. There were no drills or roll calls. The men fought, gambled, sold supplies, and were absent without leave. While no one outright starved, many men just lost pound after pound. At night one could hear the groans of hunger from the men.

Rooming with John was a youth who had recently turned nineteen years of age—Lieutenant Philip Slaughter.^{xvi} John could tell that the younger man was very cold and frightened. Silverheels would comfort him as he would a younger brother. He turned to Philip and told him that he would teach him and others how to play quoits.^{xvii} Like horseshoes, the object of quoits was to throw a ring across a set distance to envelop a spike. If this did not happen, the secondary goal would be to get as close to the spike, hob, motte, or pin as possible. Philip marveled as Silverheels organized both races and games of quoits to break up the monotony.

Philip loved the way John made fun of himself. Philip later remembered, "At ten in the night, we were aroused from sleep. Lieutenant Marshall had raked up some leaves to sleep on. He had pulled off one of his stockings in the night (the only pair of silk stockings in the

regiment); and not being able to find it in the dark, he set fire to the leaves, and before we saw it, a large hole had been burnt in it. He pulled it on so, and away we went.”^{xviii} Philip laughed at John’s willingness to wear one of his mother’s stockings with a hole in it. Silverheels was now Noheels.

John Marshall certainly did not report this mistake to his mother, Mary Keith Marshall, for it was she who provided him material help that winter. His mother would send him clothes and blankets as fast as she and her friends could make them and have them delivered from Oak Hill, Virginia, to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Often John would not use them himself but gave them to the man in his unit most in need. His reputation as a good, generous man grew.

As his men felt he cared about them, they also sensed he was a fair man, a kind of an honest broker. Philip witnessed whenever a dispute occurred between two men, they would take the matter to John Marshall to resolve even outside of his official duties as deputy judge advocate. He did so in such a manner that both men felt his decision was just. This enhanced his reputation for judicial capacity, and he found himself more and more in the position of arbitrating disputes. As his reputation grew, many fellow officers would ask John Marshall to provide them with written opinions for them to reference.

Though the winter at Valley Forge was a harsh experience, John Marshall felt surrounded by family as he made men like Philip Slaughter his brothers. In turn, Philip would remember Silverheels fondly: “He was the best-tempered man I ever knew. During his sufferings at Valley Forge, nothing discouraged, nothing disturbed him. If he had only bread to eat, it was just as well; if only meat, it made no difference. If any of the others murmured at their deprivations, he would shame them by good-natured raillery, or encourage them by his own exuberance of spirits. He was an excellent companion and idolized by the soldiers and his brother officers, whose gloomy hours were enlivened by his inexhaustible fund of anecdote.”^{xix}

To repeat the conclusion on John Marshall, “He was the best-tempered man I ever knew.”

Chapter 2: The Little Bastard

“He will snatch me from ruin.”

The little bastard indeed felt he had been snatched from ruin as his ship set sail and the Caribbean island of Saint Croix grew smaller in the distance. Born on the West Indian island of Nevis, he was of illegitimate birth. His father, of Scottish lineage, had deserted the family, and his mother was deceased. Her estate was seized. When he and his brother were penniless, a cousin adopted them. Now he could recall the suicide of that cousin five years previously and the subsequent separation from his brother.

Oh, eventually things turned. A disaster started the turning when a hurricane ripped through the town where he lived, Christiansted.^{xx} In response the young man wrote to the *Royal Danish American Gazette* about the hurricane and his awesome God: “He who gave the winds to blow, and the lightnings to rage—even Him I have always loved and served. His precepts have I observed. His commandments I have obeyed—and his perfections have I adored. He will snatch me from ruin. He will exalt me to the fellowship of Angels and Seraphs, and to the fullness of never ending joys.”^{xxi}

The lad had enjoyed the opportunity to study under Hugh Knox. The Reverend Mr. Knox himself had studied theology at the College of New Jersey. We know it today as Princeton University. The reverend’s teacher had been another man of the cloth, as well as the president of the college, Aaron Burr. The Reverend Mr. Knox and others believed that the young man’s essay on the hurricane, which was indeed published, was of such high caliber they should raise the money to send this young God-fearing orphan to the colonies for an education.

The little bastard was glad to leave his home for this opportunity, but he resolved that no one in his new world would ever know anything about his birth. No one would know the year he was born. He would become older or younger at will. He would remake himself anew. And no one would ever know he had been conceived not only out of wedlock but by a woman who had been married to another man who was not his father.

He would no longer be a little bastard.^{xxii}

Many good things rushed by him. A brief year at grammar school to prepare him for college resulted in his admission to King's College in the city of New York. We know it today as Columbia University. He began with the study of medicine but then changed over to the law. While he did work hard, his natural curiosity made learning easier for him. At times it seemed any subject could be of interest to him. He quickly became a soldier-scholar, drilling and drilling before classes, publishing for the revolutionary cause, and engaging in both his formal classwork and informal study of military history.

The little bastard made his mark when he led a successful raid on the British.^{xxiii} His raid for British cannons occurred under the fire of "His Majesty's Ship," *Asia*, the first sixty-four-gun ship! From this raid his group employed the cannons to form the New York Provincial Company of Artillery, and he was elected captain. He was now an officer in the army of George Washington.

After losing the Battle of Boston in early 1776, the British determined to take New York City. By September of 1776, Washington's forces had retreated from Brooklyn and would now fight the Battle of Harlem Heights.^{xxiv} When the New York Company met up with the general's troops, he expected a band of brave but undisciplined men ready to fight for him. But after this victory, he saw the young captain and his troops drill and drill and drill again. Washington determined that he could employ this unit in the battle. The company of roughly sixty men would serve as decoys and lure the British into a trap where Washington's men would descend upon them from the Heights.

The plan seemed good. But soon after the battle commenced, his men were surrounded by the British, and the captain felt even shorter than his five-foot-six-inch frame. As he led his company men through the fight, he imagined them all being slaughtered. The captain now believed with all his heart that he was nothing more than a short, small bastard. The British blew their bugles and came right out into the open, as if they were on a fox hunt. Their contempt seemed justified.

Suddenly the captain heard gunfire. As he looked to ascertain its origins, he knew instinctively that it was friendly. But as he began to glimpse those who were providing cover for him and his men, he did not recognize the men. Now the British advance to the north was met by

the descent of General Washington's troops from Harlem Heights. Though the British might have been stronger, they had to retreat.

The little bastard gazed up at Harlem Heights. On that beautiful September day, the Heights appeared as a piece of heaven on earth from which God's angels and seraphs had come down to earth to snatch him from ruin. He marveled at the beautiful piece of heaven and pondered that perhaps someday he would build a home up there. He might name such a place after his ancestral home in Scotland, the Grange.

The joy of victory would be short lived. Despite their loss at Harlem Heights, the British took New York City and chased Washington's ragtag forces out of the state of New Jersey. The army moved across Northern New Jersey and crossed the Delaware River into the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. New Jersey was now lost.

Along the way Washington's second-in-command, Charles Lee, was captured by the British.^{xxv} Lee, whom the Indians once nicknamed Boiling Water, had lallygagged during the retreat.^{xxvi} Lee was captured by the British, who mounted him, in his nightgown, on the horse of one of his officers, James Wilkinson. Wilkinson, somehow, had managed to escape. In despair Washington opined, "I think the game is pretty near up."^{xxvii}

The general knew he must act. On Christmas Day, 1776, General Washington wrote, "I am determined, as the night is favorable, to cross the river and make the attack upon Trenton in the Morning."^{xxviii}

The little bastard had retreated across the river with the general. Although he now felt ill, the captain determined he would recross the river with the general.^{xxix} That morning the wind came lightly out of the north, and it was cold, not even twenty degrees. Even with the wind, there was a cold silence and stillness.

The silence was broken by the sound of the captain's men, up for their early-morning drill. Later that morning the general ordered that every man be provided with food for three days and fresh flint. When the captain heard that order, he and his men drilled and drilled again.

In the afternoon the sky grew dark. A storm was brewing in the Atlantic Ocean off the Jersey coast. First a freezing rain came, and then a mixture of snow and sleet. Then, at four o'clock, the army assembled, as it did every evening. But instead of being dismissed, the troops

were issued more ammunition to go with their muskets and flint. The general then gave the order for all to march to and assemble on the west side of the Delaware River.

The troops reached the west bank at five o'clock where the Durham boats were prepared and waiting. They were roughly sixty feet in length and three and a half feet deep. They were flat on the bottom and the sides, which made maneuvering the horses and other cargo onto the boats as simple as possible. The boats had no clearly defined fronts or backs, so those determinations were made prior to their loading.

The river was less than a mile wide and not all that deep. The snow and sleet brought ice flowing down the river. General Washington wanted his troops to land to the northwest of Trenton. While it was not his intent to travel north, he did not want the winds to carry them downriver to the south; hence, his troops had to fight the southward bias both of the current and of the wind by leaning to the left. Moreover, the general did not want ice cracking his ships and killing his horses, let alone the men. The boats were carrying not pounds but tons of weight.

The men would stick poles in the water to steady the boats and pull them northward, to the left, with the ice making this task more difficult. General Washington was among the first to cross, completing the task by six o'clock in the evening. He then watched from the east bank and directed the operation calmly. Yes, men rowed and poled valiantly, but others tended to the horses and cannons. The men who had reached the shore first stood on the east bank, throwing ropes. Many of the men on the boats grabbed the ropes and then teamed with the men on the bank to pull the boats safely to the shore.

The captain was now in charge of two cannons and thirty-six men. On that wintery Christmas night, he had but one concern—to ferry the cannons across the Delaware River. These two cannons were his lifeblood, and for the past several days he had focused both on them and on drilling and drilling the men responsible for them. The two cannons were ready to do their job; however, these two new friends were heavy. The prime responsibility for now was to steady the cannons and ferry them across the river. With threats from the river and the sky, he also had to keep his powder dry.

The operation concluded at three o'clock in the morning, three hours behind schedule. There would be no attack under the cover of darkness, as planned by General Washington. Exhausted from the crossing, the young captain now had to transport his men and cannons to

Trenton and fight. Upon their arrival in the city, Washington's troops occupied the high ground on King and Queen Streets. The little bastard and his two cannons settled on the high ground on Queen Street. Now, on this Boxing Day, the captain felt like a tall giant or, at the very least, a strong little bastard.

He was not occupying the low ground, acting as a decoy, as in the Battle of Harlem Heights. The captain could observe the Hessian forces preparing to advance up Queen Street. He gave the order. Fire! His two cannon friends roared. Soon, his cannons were joined by other cannon friends in other regiments. Fire! The advance of the enemy was halted. The Hessian guns on Queen Street were silenced.

George Washington took notice. The heroism of the New York captain at the Battles of Harlem Heights and Princeton was impressive. If these military accomplishments were not enough, the young man had written two pieces that greatly impressed General Washington.^{xxx} The general was not one to pursue intellectual minutiae, but he did keep up with the political writings of his day. And the opinions of the young man, expressed in his writings, echoed many of the general's: "There is something noble and magnificent in the perspective of a great Federal Republic, closely linked in the pursuit of a common interest, tranquil and prosperous at home, respectable abroad; but there is something proportionably diminutive and contemptible in the prospect of a number of petty States, with the appearance only of union, jarring, jealous, and perverse, without any determined direction, fluctuating and unhappy at home, weak and insignificant by their dissensions in the eyes of other nations."^{xxxi}

General Washington had high expectations for the men on his staff. He wanted them to be men of education and sense. He did not require men of military knowledge but men who could quickly write good letters.^{xxxii} In fact he had appointed another New York captain with solid military experience as aide-de-camp, and the man lasted less than a month. But this man was different.

Thus, George Washington ordered, "Alexander Hamilton Esquire is appointed Aide-De-Camp to the Commander in Chief; and is to be respected and obeyed as such."^{xxxiii}

For the first time in his life, Alexander Hamilton felt he had a family, for at that time "family" was the term for the officers directly serving under the general. George Washington was childless. John Marshall had a living father, so Washington could not view him as a son. The

other New York captain was indeed an orphan, but the two could never have anything resembling a father-son relationship. The general knew that Captain Hamilton was effectively an orphan.

Yes, Washington would bring this young man into his family, and the life of Alexander Hamilton would never be the same.

Throughout most of 1777, the youth was either a secretary or messenger for Washington, albeit with rank, for he had also been promoted to lieutenant colonel. The colonel read correspondence and listened closely to learn from General Washington. He grew frustrated, as the year was comprised of several defeats.^{xxxiv} The only bright spot were the American victories at the Battles of Saratoga.^{xxxv}

He watched the commander in chief navigate his way through a strange plot to replace him, known as the Conway Cabal.^{xxxvi} The plot had been revealed by James Wilkinson, the same man who had somehow managed to escape when Charles Lee was captured. Perhaps James Wilkinson had known and had even planned for what would happen, and perhaps he had not. The plot unraveled, however.

Now, winter at Valley Forge presented the new aide-de-camp with a whole host of problems for his inquisitive mind to solve. Colonel Hamilton lamented to New York governor George Clinton, “It is indeed to be wondered at, that the soldiery have manifested so unparalleled a degree of patience, as they have. If effectual measures are not speedily adopted, I know not how we shall keep the army together or make another campaign.”^{xxxvii}

He learned quickly that funding was always less than needed to procure the desired resources—always! The young man committed himself to the proposition that the United States of America would always have a solid financial base. From that base of funding, supplies would be procured for its armed forces that would be the best they could be for the men in service of the country. And right now, that country was in Valley Forge.

As time passed, quiet victories were obtained at Valley Forge. Men were inoculated against smallpox. Martha Washington organized sewing circles to provide clothes. The men were drilled systematically by a Prussian baron.^{xxxviii} Since the baron knew no English but did speak French, Colonel Hamilton’s French skills facilitated communication. Those skills also ingratiated him

with a newly arrived volunteer from France, Marie-Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, the Marquis de Lafayette.

Despite the successes and the new friends, Colonel Hamilton longed to return to battle. While he knew he was learning much, he felt his position was preventing his advancement. Indeed, James Wilkinson had somehow managed to procure a promotion to brigadier general by exaggerating his role at the Battles of Saratoga.^{xxxix} Alexander Hamilton was ready to lead men into battle.

Twenty years later Alexander Hamilton would complain to George Washington, “[I]n the year 1777, the Regiment of Artillery were multiplied, I had good reason to expect that the command of one of them would have fallen to me had I not changed my situation; and this, in all probability, would have led further.”^{xl}

Chapter 3: Junior

“To the doctrine of unconditional submission, he never gave his assent.”

That statement about Junior came from Matthew Livingston Davis, a man who knew him well. Davis was that man’s follower and biographer. Indeed, Davis knew that the man was naturally a fighter, for the statement describes not a grown man but a child. When Junior was roughly four years of age, “he ran away, and was not found until the third or fourth day after his departure from home; thus indicating, at a tender age, that fearlessness of mind, and determination to rely upon himself, which were characteristics stamped upon every subsequent act of his life.”^{xli}

Six years later, at ten years of age, the boy had “a desire to make a voyage to sea; and, with this object in view, ran away...and came to the city of New York. He entered on board an outward-bound vessel as cabin-boy. He was, however, pursued by his guardian, and his place of retreat discovered.” One time, Junior “ran up the shrouds and clambered to the topgallant-mast head. Here he remained, and peremptorily refused to come down, or be taken down, until all the preliminaries of a treaty of peace were agreed upon. To the doctrine of unconditional submission, he never gave his assent.”^{xlii}

The boy never really knew his father or grandfather, who were both men of the cloth. He was a toddler of two years of age when his grandfather died. His father died when he was only one year old, and his mother passed soon thereafter. Junior was an orphan for virtually his entire life. Yet despite this tragedy, he graduated from the College of New Jersey and studied law. His background was far more aristocratic than that of either Alexander Hamilton or John Marshall, and his education much finer.

As soon as the American Revolution began, he joined the fight. He marched with Benedict Arnold for three hundred miles through the land we now call the state of Maine to attack the city of Quebec. Junior traversed the Saint Lawrence River from Quebec City to Montreal and back to bring forces back to Quebec City for the battle. During the Battle of Quebec, at one point, he disguised himself as a priest.

He became a captain in the American army. In June of 1776, a friend wrote to him, “General Washington desired me to inform you that he will provide for you, and that he expects you will come to him immediately, and stay in his family.”^{xliii} Yes, Washington would bring this young man into his family, and the life of the orphan would never be the same. Perhaps they could be the father and son neither ever had.

But by the end of June, Junior and Washington parted ways.^{xliv} The captain wanted to fight. Indeed, he led the men whose fire rescued Alexander Hamilton at the Battle of Harlem Heights. After the battle the orphan gazed up at Harlem Heights. On that beautiful September day, he determined he wanted to make a home in the mansion Washington used as his temporary headquarters.

For most of his military career so far, the captain had professed no interest in advancement, writing, “We are not to judge of our own merit, and I am content to contribute my mite in any station.”^{xlv}

Yet Washington decided to give the young man another chance, writing him, “You are hereby appointed Lieutenant Colonel to a Regiment in the Continental Service to be commanded by Colonel Malcolm.”^{xlvi} The regiment, which had been authorized by the Continental Congress, was ordered to defend New Jersey on the west side of the Hudson River.

Although its nominal commander was a wealthy New York merchant, the orphan would be the regiment’s real commander of three hundred some-odd men.^{xlvii} In fact the merchant once said to Junior, “You shall have all the honor of disciplining and fighting the regiment, while I will be its father.”^{xlviii} British troops would cross the Hudson River from east to west, from Manhattan to New Jersey, to conduct nighttime raids; the captain and his men would beat them back.

In July of 1777, Junior followed Alexander Hamilton in a promotion to lieutenant colonel. General Washington believed that a promotion to colonel and a new assignment should content the ambitious young man. He had been quite aware of the complaints over a lack of recognition since the Canadian Campaign. Washington would be proven incorrect.

Junior wrote to the general, “I was this morning favored with...my appointment...I am truly sensible of the honor done me, and shall be studious that my deportment in that station be such

as will ensure your future esteem. I am nevertheless, sir, constrained to observe that the late date of my appointment subjects me to the command of many who are younger in the service and junior officers the last campaign...I would beg to know, whether it was any misconduct in me or extraordinary merit or services in them, which entitled the gentlemen lately put over me...or...whether I may not expect to be restored to that rank of which I have been deprived...as a decent attention to rank is both proper and necessary, I hope it will be excused in one who regards his honor next to the welfare of his country...I have the honor to be, with the greatest Respect, Your Excellency's very humble Servant, A. Burr.”^{xlix}

With this letter, this young man cut his ties with Washington's family, and the life of Aaron Burr Junior would never be the same.

At first sight of it, General Washington wanted to tear up this letter. Why was young Burr complaining? His rise was similar to that of Colonel Hamilton's and faster than that of his contemporary John Marshall. But the general knew better; this letter needed to be kept and studied. The young man's reputation was such that he could not be ignored, and at times he had proven useful.

Colonel Burr was the grandson of a very famous preacher, Jonathan Edwards, who had shaped the First Great Awakening. Burr was named after his father, who had served as president of the College of New Jersey. Washington was now thankful that Colonel Burr had left his work in his headquarters. He wanted this young man as far away from him as possible.

Several years later Davis reported that Washington had good reasons to feel this way: “[H]is prejudices against General Washington became fixed and unchangeable; and to the latest hour of his life, he recurred to the retreat from Long Island, and from the city of New-York, with acrimonious feelings towards the commander-in-chief. Whatever may be said to the contrary, as early as this period those prejudices were formed and confirmed. That General Washington placed no confidence in Burr, and that, for some reason, he was exceedingly hostile towards him, is equally certain.”¹

Hence, when Washington retreated to Valley Forge, the general decided on the ideal assignment for Aaron Burr. Davis noted, “Within eight or ten miles of Valley Forge, there was a narrow and important pass, known as the Gulf.” It was an isolated pass controlling an important entry into the winter camp. Gulf Mills had been the spot where Washington's army camped prior

to moving to Valley Forge. Despite his reservations about Colonel Burr, the general knew that under this young man's command, nothing would get in or out of the gulf.

Davis reported, "Colonel Burr immediately commenced a rigid system of police, visiting every night, and at all hours of the night, the sentinels; changing their position, etc. During the day, he kept the troops under a constant drill. The rigor of this service was not adapted to the habits of militia, who had been accustomed to pass, in camp, a life of idleness, and to act as suited their individual whims and caprices. A portion of the most worthless became restless, and were determined to rid themselves of such a commander.

"Colonel Burr was notified of the contemplated mutiny, in which he would probably fall a victim. He ordered the detachment to be formed that night (it being a cold, bright moonlight), and secretly directed that all their cartridges should be drawn, so that there should not be a loaded musket on the ground. He provided himself with a good and well-sharpened sabre. He knew all the principal mutineers. He marched along the line, eying the men closely. When he came opposite to one of the most daring of the ringleaders, the soldier advanced a step, and levelled his musket at Colonel Burr."

The man yelled, "Now is your time, my boys!"

Davis continued, "Burr, being well prepared and in readiness, anticipating an assault, with a celerity for which he was remarkable, smote the arm of the mutineer above the elbow, and nearly severed it from his body, ordering him, at the same time, to take and keep his place in the line. In a few minutes, the men were dismissed, and the arm of the mutineer was next day amputated. No more was heard of the mutiny; nor were there afterwards, during Colonel Burr's command, any false alarms...some of the officers talked of having Colonel Burr arrested, and tried by a court-martial, for the act; but the threat was never carried into execution."^{li}

Such was the desperate situation at Valley Forge that Washington chose to look the other way. But the general knew that Aaron Burr was a dangerous man. For the rest of his life, he would keep this man away from him. For the rest of his life, he would also do his best to keep this man out of any position of responsibility. He would make it a point to warn others as well.

In short Colonel Burr's "prejudices against General Washington became fixed and unchangeable," and the feeling was mutual.

Chapter 4: The Cocked-Hat Boy

“These are the times that try men’s souls.”

The youth in the cocked hat read those words that Christmas morning of 1776. The text continued, “[T]he summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph.”^{lii}

George Washington had distributed a pamphlet titled *The American Crisis* by Thomas Paine to inspire his men. The eighteen-year-old lad was moved and hoped to meet the author someday, but such a meeting would have to wait for the time being. There was another man he wished he could meet—King George the Third of Great Britain. He desired to end the life of that British despot. But that assignation too would have to wait. Perhaps he might soon slay some of the king’s minions.

The young lieutenant knew that something was afoot. Blankets had arrived, proving to be a much-needed Christmas Eve gift. That might have brought no notice, but when he heard that Durham boats had arrived and were hidden on the west side of the Delaware River, he suspected that Paine’s inspiration was not for naught. For now, the lieutenant ascertained his hat was properly fitted; its brim turned up to give three-cornered appearance.

He felt so alone. He was now an orphan, having lost both of his parents in his teenage years. He felt that he had been robbed of his time with them, because, even when they were alive, he was sent away from them to attend the Campbelltown Academy. He had been baptized by Reverend Campbell and attended his school for five years. He envied John Marshall, who had attended Campbelltown for only one year and enjoyed many years at home with his parents. To add to his jealousy, both of Silverheels’s parents were still alive, while both of his own were dead. Indeed, even in war, John was enjoying close contact with his father, with whom he served in the Virginia Third Regiment.

John Marshall had a precious possession that he lacked—a family.

The youth—a quiet, somber young man—had other reasons to envy John Marshall, who was almost three years older. Silverheels made close friends easily and learned quickly. By contrast, the youth was retiring and had to work hard to absorb his own formal education. He had to study subjects mostly by rote memory, such as Latin and mathematics. John demonstrated the ability to always enjoy himself, whereas the youth could not. He looked up to his older schoolmate but always was a tad jealous of him.

At the same time, he sometimes felt contempt for Silverheels. Even at Campbelltown, John paid no attention to his clothes, while the youth always dressed sharply. Now, the uniform of John Marshall seemed ill fitted, whereas the youth paid meticulous attention to his dress, particularly his hat. He owned some land, whereas John had come out of the woods. Yet, he also knew that he had financial woes that did not plague Silverheels.

Where John had distinctive black eyes with a speck of joy, the youth had sad, piercing blue eyes. Although he was a quiet and somber boy, the younger man would occasionally demonstrate flashes of anger, and when he did, he was a physical force with which to be reckoned. In fact on a spring day in his eighteenth year, instead of attending his class at the College of William and Mary, the boy in the cocked hat led a raid on the palace of the governor of Virginia.

He and his mates returned to the college campus with three hundred swords and two hundred muskets. The young men proceeded to drill and were soon members of the Virginia infantry. He was appointed lieutenant, with the honor of serving as second-in-command to the cousin of the commander in chief of the American forces, George Washington.^{liii}

Like John Marshall, he too was a member in the Virginia Third Regiment, and his status had changed from militiaman to an officer in Washington's army. He would share in the retreat across New Jersey and would find himself on the west side of the Delaware River on Christmas Day of 1776. Although the weather rose to the upper twenties, no one felt warm. For the youth, however, all the activity raised his adrenaline, and he did not mind the cold.

Upon completion of the crossing of the river, one group marched ahead. Among them was the lieutenant, as he would later remember, "at dusk they passed the Delaware in advance of the army, in the dusk of the evening, at Corrells ferry, ten miles above Trenton, and hastened to a point, about one and half mile from it, at which the road by which they descended, intersected, that, which led from Trenton to Princeton, for the purpose, in obedience to orders of cutting off

all communication between them and from the country to Trenton. The night was tempestuous, as was the succeeding day, and made more severe, by a heavy fall of snow.”^{liv}

It was now December 26, 1776, Boxing Day. Ahead of General Washington, the lieutenant was trying to march his troops silently to Trenton. They passed by a house where the owner’s dogs had other ideas. They barked and barked and barked. The lieutenant muttered to himself, cursing these hounds from hell. The man inside cried out to quiet his mutts, but the dogs would not cease.

He then put on his robe, went to the window, and spotted the young man in the cocked hat. He cursed the goddamn soldiers. Although he knew that the soldiers were powerful, that fact never would stop him from giving them grief. As he had many times before, the owner of the home went out his front door and yelled out into the dark for them to get off his land.

To the lieutenant this man appeared determined, profane, and violent. The young officer wanted no trouble. The young lieutenant spoke in his quiet voice, ordering the man to please go back into his home, or he would be taken prisoner. In response the man demanded who had given the young man the authority to take him prisoner. When the lieutenant responded it was General Washington, the man’s tone suddenly and completely changed. The man apologized, revealing that he’d thought these men were British, not American troops.

The two introduced themselves, and the man invited the troops into his house. The lieutenant thanked him but demurred, informing the man that they had to be in Trenton as soon as possible after daybreak. They had marched since four o’clock in the morning. The owner of the house warned him that both the British and the Hessians were there, and he gave all the soldiers food.

As he and the lieutenant distributed the food to the men, he turned to them and asked to accompany the troop. He explained he was a doctor and might be of help to some poor fellow.^{lv} The lieutenant immediately accepted the offer and proclaimed the doctor to be a surgeon volunteer. As the march resumed, the lieutenant could not help but wonder who might be the poor fellow this doctor helped.

At seven thirty in the morning, the troops were two miles away from Trenton. George Washington could spot to his front the Virginia Third Infantry. Legend has it the troops surprised

the foolish Hessians who were either drunk or hungover. However, the Hessians were well-trained mercenaries, and there were also a few good British troops at Trenton.

The battle hinged on George Washington's tactics, which did indeed rely not only upon surprise but also upon occupation of the high ground. By eight o'clock in the morning, it was twenty degrees, and the winds were calm. In numbers Washington had twenty-four hundred troops, and the enemy fifteen hundred. He knew he had to move quickly. The general and his troops came down from the high ground. The lieutenant could hear Alexander Hamilton's cannons roaring from Queen Street.

On King Street the Hessians knew they had only a short window of opportunity to respond and obtain artillery from their enemy. The lieutenant became excited when he saw the enemy roll out a field gun onto King Street. Quickly his captain and he rushed toward the cannon, followed by six other men. As they fought for the cannon, his captain was shot in both hands and fell.

Once again, the lieutenant now felt the adrenaline. He quickly took command and ordered his men to turn the field gun toward the Hessians. He sensed victory over the Hessians was near. He would lead his men and would give the order to follow. He would run and capture the Hessians and—suddenly he felt a slight sting on his chest and then a sharp burn on his left shoulder.

He never sensed that he fell. His back felt suddenly very cold, and he became aware that the cold was coming from the ground on King Street. His hat was gone. Oh, now there was the great pain in his shoulder. The noise of the battle faded into the background, and his eyesight grew dim. Aside from the pain, he could feel a warm liquid on the front of his torso. He could...

The lad heard a voice yelling that he was dying, and he knew that it was true. It had been roughly two years since he'd lost his parents, and he would now join them. He could hear something like ripping and tearing. He could feel cold air, as if he had no shirt on him. As he tried to prepare himself for death, the pain in his shoulder grew even sharper, as he felt a finger pushing into the hole. The hurt...

The doctor rushed over to the young lieutenant he had met only about four hours earlier. A musket ball had severed an artery in the young man's left shoulder. He was hemorrhaging.^{lvi} The physician repeated to himself that this poor fellow was dying. He ripped off the top of the

youth's shirt and stuck his index finger in the wound. The doctor applied pressure and ordered that men come to carry the young soldier from the field.

The lieutenant alternated in and out of consciousness. He could feel soldiers lifting him off the ground. As they moved to safety, the physician kept his index finger in the hole. When they set the young man down, the doctor observed how much blood was leaving the man. When the bleeding lessened, he clamped the artery and attempted to find the bullet to take it out. But the bullet had moved toward the neck and could not be found. It would remain within his body for the rest of his life.

The battle ended quickly. A list of casualties was presented to the victor, George Washington. Hessian losses were over twenty men killed, over eighty seriously wounded, and the rest, roughly nine hundred, taken prisoner. He inquired about his losses. There were less than ten casualties. James Wilkinson, the young officer who had escaped when General Lee was captured, rode up with a message. General Washington took him by the hand, exclaiming, "Major Wilkinson, this is a glorious day for our country!"

General Washington asked about the wounded. When he was told his cousin was wounded in both hands, the general's face grew grave. But he was told his cousin was doing well and would survive. He was then told of the fate of his cousin's lieutenant. After visiting his cousin, George Washington went to visit the wounded man and the physician who had saved his life.

The doctor revealed that the lieutenant would recover but recommended he be sent away to mend. He told the general of how he and this polite young man had met and the full tale of the youth's bravery. The older Virginia soldier, born in Westmoreland County, examined the younger Virginia soldier, also born in Westmoreland County, commended him, and sent him home to recuperate. The wounded man would later remember that he "was confined to his bed about 10 days, treated with great kindness and thence removed."^{lvii}

The next fall he returned to Washington's army mostly restored to health. For his pains he was promoted to captain but had no company to command. Perhaps the major joy in returning was making friends with the Marquis de La Fayette. He was happy the French might be joining the American effort. He felt an affinity for the French, as his ancestors were French Huguenot immigrants who had arrived in Virginia around 1700.

In the Battle of Brandywine Creek, the Marquis de La Fayette was wounded in the leg as he was directing the retreat. Although injured the marquis would not leave the field and persisted in commanding. The troops rallied under his leadership, but his wound became too much. When the new captain saw this, he empathized, reliving the battle in which he himself had been shot. Just as on Boxing Day, his adrenaline started to flow, and he immediately rushed to the marquis to tend to his wound. The two spent the night at Birmingham Church, where the captain tended the wounds of the marquis.^{lviii}

The rise in rank for the cocked-hat boy continued. On the same day that John Marshall was appointed deputy judge advocate, George Washington ordered, “James Monroe Esquire, formerly appointed an additional Aide-de-Camp to Major General Lord Stirling, is now appointed Aide-de-Camp to his Lordship...and is to be respected as such.”^{lix} Along with the order, he was now Major James Monroe. James was proud that he now outranked the older John Marshall by two levels.

Yet James Monroe sensed John Marshall was the happier man. He would feel the bullet from Trenton burning inside him. As he felt the heat of that pain, a heat of hatred also burned inside him. He longed to encounter the hated King George the Third and avenge his wound. Yet instead of serving as a great warrior, he found himself playing the sniveling sycophant.

Wherever they were stationed, Lord Stirling’s quarters were always decorated like a Scottish castle, its walls covered with tapestries. At night the Lord would bring out the scotch and relive the entire history of Scotland.^{lx} James would have preferred a fine wine, and sometimes his lordship would accommodate the young man. But more often he would insist the young man pour him his scotch and join him in drinking this beverage that burned as it went down. Major James Monroe, hero of the Battle of Trenton and healer of La Fayette, was nothing but Lord Stirling’s steward! This war was to throw off such symbols of the older order.

To comfort himself the lad would remove his cocked hat and would read and reread these inspiring words: “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.”

Chapter 5: The Four Kings

“Colonel Burr must wait till more field officers return to camp before he leaves it!”

George Washington’s complaint to Lord Stirling against Aaron Burr continued, “The daily application for discharges and furloughs distresses me beyond measure!”^{lxix} His request refused, Colonel Burr’s resentments against Washington expanded to those of his generation whom Washington seemed to favor, particularly Alexander Hamilton and John Marshall.

Through his general orders, the general changed Alexander Hamilton from a bastard to a member of his family and changed John Marshall from Silverheels to a judge. James Monroe was no longer just the cocked-hat boy as he was given promotions. By contrast, Aaron Burr grew distant from the commander. Washington did not know he had set into motion events for his four young officers to interact with him and each other over a sixty-year period that would shape the federal republic through its infancy and childhood. The four would be shaped by their common experiences serving under General Washington but would respond in very different ways.

The four men were born in a three-year period between 1755 and 1758.^{lxxii} The actual pecking order of the oldest to the youngest was unimportant. To be certain, while at Campbelltown Academy and in the early days of the revolution, the age difference between James and John came into play a little. But for the most part, they were generational equals.

These four officers could not be called the sons of the revolution. Perhaps the four could be considered Founding Fathers, but they did not guide the War of Independence, as did Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin. They were the four young officers of the revolution.

ⁱ. Frances Norton Mason, *My Dearest Polly: Letters of Chief Justice John Marshall to His Wife, with Their Background, Political and Domestic 1779–1831* (Richmond: Garrett and Massie, 1961), p. 5, Library of Congress Catalogue Number 61-15099.

ⁱⁱ. Horace Binney, *Eulogy on the Life and Character of John Marshall, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States* (Philadelphia: J. Crissy and C. Goodman, 1835), pp. 22–24.

ⁱⁱⁱ. All quotations from John Marshall’s autobiography in this novel are obtained from *John Marshall Letter to Joseph Story*, 1827, <http://www.friendsofthehollow.org/letter.htm>.

^{iv}. Mason (1961, p. 201) notes that these words constituted the epitaph on Mary Keith Marshall’s gravestone.

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- v. Albert Jerimiah Beveridge, *The Life of John Marshall*, vol. I (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1919), pp. 73–74.
- vi. The Battle of Great Bridge occurred on December 9, 1775.
- vii. The summary of John Marshall’s 1777 military adventures is taken from Stephen J. McEwen Jr., *Chief Justice John Marshall: Soldier of the Revolution. Court Review* (American Judges Association, 2001), pp. 4–5.
- viii. The Battle of Iron Hill at Cooch’s Bridge, Delaware, September 3, 1777.
- ix. September 11, 1777.
- x. September 26, 1777.
- xi. October 4, 1777.
- xii. George Washington, General Orders, November 20, 1777.
- xiii. The Reverend Archibald Maciver Campbell (1708–1774). George Washington himself might have studied under Rev. Campbell.
- xiv. Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Man, Epistle II, Verses 1 and 2* (London: printed by John Wright, for Lawton Gilliver, 1733), <http://www.eighteenthcenturypoetry.org/works/o3676-w0010.shtml>.
- xv. Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Virginia* (Charleston: W. R. Babcock, 1847), p. 262.
- xvi. Philip Slaughter (December 4, 1758, to December 4, 1849).
- xvii. The athleticism of John Marshall and the origin of the Silverheels nickname are documented in James Bradley Thayer, *John Marshall* (Boston: Houghlin Mifflin, 1901), pp. 12–13.
- xviii. Philip Slaughter, *A History of St. Mark’s Parish, Culpeper County, Virginia* (Baltimore: Innes, 1877), p. 108.
- xix. Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Virginia* (Charleston: W. R. Babcock, 1847), p. 266.
- xx. August 30, 1772.
- xxi. Alexander Hamilton letter to the Royal Danish Gazette, September 6, 1772.
- xxii. The phrase for Alexander Hamilton is derived from a John Adams letter to Benjamin Rush, January 25, 1806, in which he references “a bastard brat of a Scotch Pedler.”
- xxiii. August 23, 1775. See Ron Chernow, *Alexander Hamilton* (New York: Penguin, 2004), p. 67, ISBN 1-59420-009-2.
- xxiv. September 16, 1776.
- xxv. Charles Lee was captured on December 13, 1776.
- xxvi. This portrait of Charles Lee is drawn from Joseph J. Ellis, *His Excellency: George Washington* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), pp. 80–81.
- xxvii. George Washington letter to his brother Samuel, December 18, 1776.
- xxviii. George Washington letter to Colonel John Cadwalader, December 25, 1776.
- xxix. See Ron Chernow, *Alexander Hamilton* (New York: Penguin, 2004), p. 84, ISBN 1-59420-009-2.
- xxx. Alexander Hamilton, *A Full Vindication of the Measures of Congress* (December 15, 1774) and *The Farmer Refuted* (February 23, 1775).
- xxxi. Alexander Hamilton, *The Farmer Refuted* (February 23, 1775).
- xxxii. George Washington letter to Robert Hanson Harrison, January 9, 1777, stating, “If they can write a good letter, write quick, are methodical and diligent, it is all I expect to find in my aids.”
- xxxiii. George Washington, General Orders, March 1, 1777.
- xxxiv. The defeats included the battles of Brandywine Creek, Iron Hill, and Germantown.
- xxxv. September 19 and October 7, 1777.
- xxxvi. Named after General Thomas Conway (1735–1800).
- xxxvii. Alexander Hamilton letter to George Clinton, February 13, 1778.
- xxxviii. Friedrich Wilhelm Ludolf Gerhard Augustin von Steuben; also referred to as the Baron von Steuben (1730–1794).
- xxxix. November 6, 1777.
- xl. Alexander Hamilton letter to George Washington, July 29 and August 1, 1798.
- xli. Matthew L. Davis, *Memoirs of Aaron Burr*, vol. I (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1837), p. 25.
- xlii. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- xliii. Matthias Ogden letter to Aaron Burr, June 5, 1776.
- xliv. George Washington General Orders, June 22, 1776.
- xliv. Aaron Burr letter to Matthew Ogden, March 1777.
- xlvi. George Washington letter to Aaron Burr, June 27, 1777.
- xlvi. William Malcolm (1745–1791).
- xlvi. Davis, *Memoirs of Aaron Burr*, p. 112.
- xlvi. Aaron Burr letter to George Washington, July 20, 1777.
- l. Davis, *Memoirs of Aaron Burr*, pp. 122–23.

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- li. *Ibid.*, pp. 119–21.
- lii. Thomas Paine, *The American Crisis* (December 19, 1776).
- liii. William Washington (1752–1810).
- liv. “Draft Note: The Continental Army, January 1776 – July 1777” from *The Autobiography of James Monroe, James Monroe Papers*.
- lv. Doctor John Berrien Riker (1738–1794).
- lvi. Harlow Giles Unger, *The Last Founding Father: James Monroe and a Nation’s Call to Greatness* (Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2009), p. 26.
- lvii. “Draft Note: The Continental Army, January 1776 – July 1777.”
- lviii. Unger, *The Last Founding Father*, p. 29.
- lix. George Washington, General Orders, November 20, 1777.
- lx. William Alexander, Lord Stirling (1726–1783).
- lxi. George Washington letter to Lord Stirling, March 21, 1778.
- lxii. John Marshall may have been the eldest, born on September 24, 1755. The word “may” is used because no one knows precisely when Alexander Hamilton was born. The month and the day appear firm as January 11. However, at various points, he gave out the year as 1755 and 1757. If it were 1755, he would have been the eldest. Note that he never claimed 1756, just 1755 or 1757. Aaron Burr was born on February 6, 1756. The youngest was clearly James Monroe, born on April 28, 1758.