

**The American times—chronicle. Containing the freshest advices — both foreign and domestic. December 1776. [n. p.] Copyright 1935 by Herbert A. Woodruff.**

THE AMERICAN TIMES—CHRONICLE

**CONTAINING the FRESHEST ADVICES — BOTH FOREIGN and DOMESTIC.**

**DECEMBER, 1776.**

THE subscriber begs leave to inform the public, that he can infallibly CURE the BITE of a MAD DOG, as numbers of the people in this and the neighboring provinces can testify; my ancestors, for upwards of 150 years, did successfully practise the same cures in Old-England.

Daniel Goodman, Baker, living in Arch-street, between Second and Third-streets, Philadelphia.

The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United American States.

The Congress, State-House, Philadelphia—

THE 4th of July, 1776, should be forever commemorated on this Continent as the day on which the American Colonies ceased to be Oppressed Provinces of Great Britain and became Free and Independent States.

The step was not unexpected, having been the chief subject of conversation among all classes for several months. But, unfortunately, to some Members of the Continental Congress the word **Independency** appeared to be a Hobgoblin of so frightful mien, that they had been exercising all their art to consume the time of that body with trivial matters, even to motions for Adjournment, in order to delay the vote on this momentous question.

The Delegates to Congress being bound by an Oath of Secrecy, the Weekly Prints have published only the text of the Declaration. We are pleased to be able to acquaint our Readers with the following Particulars, which we have been at great pains to collect.

Being unwilling to increase the personal danger in which the Members by necessity stand, we have mentioned no names, except in the case of Gentlemen whose known rebel exertions had previously placed them on his Tyrannick Majesty's Black List.

*ELDEST COLONY IN LEAD.*

Virginia deserves the credit for having brought the Subject of Independency into the open by a motion on 7th June.

After debating the matter for two days, the Congress voted to delay a decision to that day, three weeks, to allow Members who had not been given authority to vote on the measure, an opportunity to consult their respective Assemblies.

Meanwhile, a Committee was appointed to draw a declaration of independency, the same including that young Virginia lawyer, Mr. Th. Jefferson as head, Mr. John Adams, Esqr., of the Massachusetts-Bay, Dr. Benj. Franklin, Esqr., of Pennsylvania, a Member from Connecticut, and one from New-York. We have authentick intelligence that Mr. Jefferson wrote the declaration, with the counsel of Mr. Adams, and Dr. Franklin, the latter suffering from gout at the time. Besides being possessed of Patriotick Zeal (almost as fiery as his hair), Mr. Jefferson is acknowledged to be one of the most masterly political writers in the Congress, his **Summary View of the Rights of British America** containing many of the principles desired to be set forth in the declaration.

On 1 July the Congress resumed debate on the Subject. It is accounted that in answer to warm opposition to the measure, Mr. John Adams, though speaking without preparation, and wanting somewhat in grace and elegance, astonished all present with his grasp of facts and reasons.

#### *UNANIMITY AT FIRST LACKING.*

When the question was put, nine states favoured a declaration; South Carolina and Pennsylvania opposed it, the Delaware Members were tied, and those from New-York were permitted to withdraw from the question, because their year-old instructions had been to do nothing which would impede reconciliation. It was agreed to take a final vote the following day.

Meantime, an Express was sent post to Dover, in Delaware, for the remaining delegate of that Colony. Coming on horseback by night, notwithstanding Thunder and Rain, he turned the vote of Delaware for Independence. Two unfavourable Gentlemen from Pennsylvania staid away, and the South Carolinans, reputedly influenced by news of the arrival of a large British Fleet off Sandy-Hook, swung over to the affirmative, thus passing the resolution without a dicenting vote.

Having decided on Independency, the Congress at once proceeded to consider the declaration drafted by the Committee. Among several changes reputedly made, a clause condemning the slave trade was omitted, in complaisance, we understand, to two Southern Colonies and to Certain Northern Gentlemen who, though holding few slaves, sometimes engage in carrying them to others.

*THE VOTE HASTENED BY FLIES.*

The Coffee-House Wits relate that the solemn discussion was at length terminated most farcially. The afternoon of Thursday, 4th of July, being very hot, horse-flies from the livery-stable near the State-House swarmed in at the open windows and so tormented the August Members through their silk stockings, that some of them, goaded beyond endurance, called for an immediate vote.

The twelve Colonies authorized to vote, agreed to the Resolution. Five days later, the New-York Convention approved the Measure, thereby making it the **Unanimous Declaration** of the **Thirteen United American States**.

Great praise is due the Members of the Continental Congress who so courageously staked their lives and their fortunes by this momentous Act.

I WILL give a good price for any quantity of large and strong Goose Quills brought to my office.

Alex. Purdie, Printer, Williamsburg, Virginia.

TO BE SOLD

*On very reasonable Terms, by Dr. Eliot Rawson, to a good Master , A Likely Negro Woman About 25 Years Old, With 3 Likely Children.*

Middletown, Connecticut, Dec. 4, 1776.

General Made Dictator.

Present Seat of the Congress, at Baltimore, 27 December, 1776—

THE Congress this day resolved to invest genl. Washington with Powers for six months to Regulate the Armies in such manner as he, with the advice of his general officers, shall think most Conducive to promote the Public Good.

This drastic measure is judged absolutely Necessary for the Salvation of America. The present Critical Scituation demands a Promptness of Decision and a Viggour, which Distance from the Seat of War, and a Multiplicity of Minds deny to the Congress. Happy it is for this Country that the Commander of our Forces can safely be entrusted with such Unlimited Power.

N. B. It is regarded in some quarters that one of the greatest of the many handicaps under which our Commander has laboured, has been his Want of Power to Evacuate a Town or Cross a River until he had carried on sufficient correspondence to Convince Sixty Gentlemen that the action was neither Premature nor Unwarrantable.

CASH given for woolen shirting, shoes, mittens, etc. for the use of the army, by Oliver Phelps.

Granville, Connecticut.

*We have authentick private intelligence that the Name of the Confederacy which the Congress now has in the making, is likely to be, THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.*

*His Excellency Genl. Washington, Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army —*

“To trust altogether in the justice of our cause, without our own utmost exertions, would be tempting Providence.”

*John Hancock, President of the Continental Congress —*

“The Situation of our Country at this Season, calls for all the Vigour and Wisdom among us; and if we do not mean to desert her at this alarming Crisis, it is high Time to rouse every Spark of Virtue; and forgetting all inferior Considerations, to exert ourselves in a Manner becoming Freemen.”

Nov. 27, 1776.

THE subscriber takes this method to acquaint the public, that he hath removed from the Trap Tavern, to the town of Wilmington, at the *Sign of the Pennsylvania Farmer*, opposite the lower Market-house, where he has furnished himself with genteel accommodations for the reception of gentlemen travellers, etc., also the best of stabling.

The public's already much obliged and very humble servant, James Thompson.

N. B. The *Pennsylvania Farmer* stands in full view of the great road coming in from Christiana Bridge, and to the left on the same square with Mr. James Adams' house coming in from the Ferry.

THE CRISIS.

A FRIEND has just loaned us a copy of a stirring new pamphlet entitled *The Crisis*, by the author of that celebrated paper, *Common Sense*, lately discovered to be Thomas Paine (now an Aide-de-Camp of Genl. Greene).

This new pamphlet was reputedly written early in December on a drum-head by the light of the camp-fire at the close of each day's gloomy retreat. While pathetically accounting the sufferings and discouragements which the soldiers (including Paine himself) had for weeks endured, it also fervently exhorts them to fortitude and courage. It is accounted that this paper, being read aloud to the various detachments of our army on the eve of the attack upon Trenton, so inspired the men as to render the victory possible.

Space permits only the beginning and a part of the ending:

"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 his country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.

"Up and help us; lay your shoulders to the wheel; better have too much force than too little, when so great an object is at stake. . . The heart that feels not now, is dead. The blood of his children will curse his cowardice, who shrinks back at a time when a little might have saved the whole, and made them happy."

*To be Sold by Auction on Friday, On colonel Hancock's Wharf, in Boston , 400 Barrels of Beef.*

*The Sale will begin at XI o'clock.*

*W. Greenleaf, Sheriff.*

New-Castle County, on Delaware—

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to such Person or Persons as would undertake to deliver, in some short and convenient Time,

ONE HUNDRED GOOD FIRELOCKS, made in this or any neighboring Colony, that they do make known their Proposals as speedily as possible to the Subscribers. who are duly authorized to contract for the same, for the use of this County.

JAMES LATIMER,

JOHN EVANS.

DR. FRANKLIN ABROAD.

THE Entire Continent will be relieved when the news comes that the Congress Ship, **Reprisal** , which sailed from the Capes of Delaware, on 26th October, with our beloved Dr. Benjamin Franklin on board, has completed its perilous journey across the Treacherous Ocean Wastes and safely come to port in France. Capt. Lambert Wickes had orders to avoid as far as possible engagements with the Enemy.

Though the matter has been surrounded with the utmost secrecy, it is generally known that Dr. Franklin was sent to transact the business of the united States at the Court of France. His being, no doubt, Better Known abroad than any other American, his Knowledge of the French language, his Wisdom, Prudence, Caution, his Engaging Address, united to his unshaken Firmness in our present System of Politicks and War render him, in spite of his seventy odd years, the Fittest Character for this Momentous Undertaking.

He was accompanied by two grandsons, Benja. Franklin Bache, aged seven (son of Dr. Franklin's only daughter, Sarah), and William Temple Franklin, aged seventeen, (who, though a son of the Tory Govr. Franklin of New-Jersey, is a true Patriot.) Benny is to be put to school and Temple will probably assist his grandfather.

N. B. It is being reported that Dr. Franklin fled to France for safety!

Distressing Need.

THE Council of Safety of Penna. lately collected from the inhabitants of Phila. old cloathes and blankets, and sent the same to Genl. Washington for the relief of his suffering army. A soldier home on sick leave accounts that the distress is beyond relation, many of the men (including the Commander's own servant) being entirely naked.

### **Other Towns are Entreated to follow Philadelphia's Example.**

Boston, November 7—

Wanted, two PERSONS to FIFE for the Independent Company of this town.

Apply to HENRY JACKSON.

Panick in Virginia.

A Gentleman just arrived from Williamsburg, in Virginia, relates that so great panick had been occasioned there by the news of our Army's retreat across the Jerseys, that there was talk of making Govr. Patrick Henry **Dictator** over the State. Word of our Victory at Trenton will no doubt dispel the alarm.

*" I consider this war against us as both unjust and unwise; and I am persuaded that cool, dispassionate posterity will condemn to infamy those who advised it. "*

Dr. Benja. Franklin.

Freshest Advices from Headquarters.

THE latest Couriers from Genl. Washington's Headquarters report that notwithstanding his troops are still much fatigued from their forty hours of marching and fighting in sleet and snow in their assault on Trenton, they appear in high spirits over their success. It is hoped that at least half of the men will consent to stay six weeks longer.

No certain intelligence as to the Enemy is obtainable, but from the accounts most to be relied on, they are collecting their forces at Princeton, and are throwing up some works there.

ANY Person who understands CASTING and FINISHING CANNON, by applying to Henry Howard, at Northampton Furnace, about ten miles from Baltimore-Town, in the Province of Maryland, will meet with great Encouragement.

August 5, 1776.

Heartening Victory at Trenton.

NOTHING has so spirited the soldiery and the inhabitants of the thirteen American States as has the News, **just arrived** , of the Extraordinary victory which the Continental Army wrested from the King's hireling forces at Trenton, in New-Jersey, on the morning after Christmas day, Genl. Washington, who was lately branded by his detractors as the **Man of Retreats** , is now, as fast as the News penetrates, acclaimed another **Alexander or Hannibal**.

Realizing that because of our several reverses around New-York and in the Jersies, despair and disaffection were spreading throughout the country, and knowing that the last day of the year would mark the expiration of the terms of most of the Continental army, with few of the men intending to

enlist again, our Wise Commander conceived the daring plan which resulted in so decisive a defeat of the enemy, as to bring new hope and courage to the Patriot Cause.

Only a few particulars of the engagement are as yet procurable:

About a fortnight previously, our army had retreated to the South side of the Delaware, taking over or destroying all the boats for seventy miles upwards from Philadelphia. Apprehending that this removal had no doubt thrown the Enemy off their guard, Genl. Washington determined to recross the river and returning on his course, take some of Genl. Howe's scattered forces by surprise. Rightly surmising that the Hessian hirelings stationed at Trenton would indulge in boisterous Yuletide cheer, he chose that post for attack following Christmas night.

#### *STORM AN OBSTACLE.*

The plan was for our army to advance in three columns, crossing the Delaware at different points and converging at Trenton before daybreak on the morning of Decr. 26th. It appears, however, that the great quantity of ice in the river prevented two of the divisions from crossing. Only Genl. Washington's own force of 2400 men, under Generals Greene and Sullivan (the latter having been exchanged after his capture by the Enemy at Long Island), accomplished the perilous crossing in a driving storm of sleet and snow.

Knowing how thinly most of our men are cloathed, and what wretched shoes they have, we shudder to contemplate what suffering they must have endured on the march (reputed to be some eighteen miles from the Camp to Trenton).

#### *A COMPLETE SURPRISE.*

But whatever their distresses, the Patriots threw themselves into the onslaught with spirit, compleatly surprising the enemy's out-guards, and causing such confusion among the main body, that after less than an hour's fierce fighting, the Hessians lowered their standards and surrendered.

It is accounted that upwards of forty of the enemy were killed or wounded, the commanding officer (Col. Rall or Rahl) being mortally hurt. About a thousand were taken captive, some five hundred escaping.

Our loss is reported trifling, Lieut. James Monroe, a young Virginian, was injured, but is expected to recover. Several men were badly frozen.





Before leaving Trenton, Genl. Washington sent word to the inhabitants of the Town and the adjacent country to claim their furniture and other articles from some twenty wagon-loads of plunder found among the Enemy's goods.

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