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THE  
AMERICAN  
EXPERIENCE  
STORYBOOK

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND EDITED BY

Stephanie Bailey Meter

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## IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE HEROES AGAIN

In the era of the tabloid, cynicism reigns. We don't want to hear what so-and-so accomplished fairly or what a good father famous Mr. Jones is or the way well-known Mrs. Smith volunteered her time. Cynicism sells. Dirty laundry sells. Skeletons in the closet sell.

Not only that, we often praise skepticism in general as a sign of good thinking skills (and sometimes it is). We watch *MythBusters*, we scour arguments for fallacies, we dissect everything a presidential candidate says.

Lately, cynicism about America seems especially trendy. The phrase "American dream" has picked up a sadly sarcastic connotation, and one can barely mention Christopher Columbus without being bludgeoned with how unfairly he treated the Native Americans. Is there truth in the sarcasm of "the dream"? Is there truth in the accusations against Christopher Columbus? Yes. Flawed humans developed the American dream, and Christopher Columbus was a flawed human.

But is that the *most* important takeaway? As passionate seekers and celebrators of truth, have we discounted goodness and beauty? Is there an important balance to rediscover? I think so. I think it is important to acknowledge the whole truth and to recognize the earthly flaws we live with—but I think it is important to have heroes, too.

What is a hero? Someone good and strong? Someone brave? Someone “right”? Merriam-Webster’s dictionary relegates heroes to mythology in its first definition: “a mythological or legendary figure often of divine descent endowed with great strength or ability.” For this discussion, let’s err on the more practical side with our definition:

**hero** (*n*): someone—often famous—characterized by exceptional virtue, courage, or discernment, whose actions positively shaped his or her world.

With the exception of Jesus, no one has ever been perfect—no fondly-remembered leader, no beloved saint. We know and accept this. Does that mean that nothing anyone has ever done is worthy of note or imitation? I should think not! And, if I may say so, I think Jesus would agree.

Consider the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37). We have no idea what the Samaritan’s everyday life was like. We have no idea if he stole something once when he was a child, if he was ever rude to his wife in an argument, or if he sometimes cheated while playing board games. As far as we know, the Good Samaritan did not really exist at all; he was a character Jesus invented to make a point. However, the Good Samaritan was human, so we know he was flawed, and yet Jesus thought one action of the Samaritan’s was worthy of emulation. Regardless of the rest of his life, the Samaritan’s decision to go out of his way to help someone made him a kind of hero, someone—in at least one situation—whom Jesus wanted his disciples to imitate. Jesus believed in heroes.

In fact, the Bible is full of heroes: brave and virtuous men and women—all human, all flawed—who went against the status quo or gave a hundred and ten percent because they knew it was right.

Of course, healthy cynicism has its place. We need to remember that all people are just people and check our facts and report accurately when appropriate. But today, particularly in and regarding America, we get a substantial dose of cynical realism. America is a country founded by flawed humans, but, for the most part, with genuinely good intent. If Christopher Columbus’s method of evangelism was implemented poorly, does that mean we discount his perseverance in finding the New World? If he collected wealth too greedily, does that mean his desire to spread the gospel was all a sham? Not necessarily, and it certainly does not mean that the “right thing to do” is to focus exclusively on his shortcomings.

In this collection of stories, we want to celebrate the brave and virtuous men and women who shaped America. Are they all perfect? Absolutely not. Are they all remembered for some actions worthy of emulation? Absolutely!

We need heroes. We need people to admire, who remind us that dreams can be achieved with hard work, that persevering pays off, that love and truth can take the day. In this era of cynicism, we need true, good, beautiful encouragement!

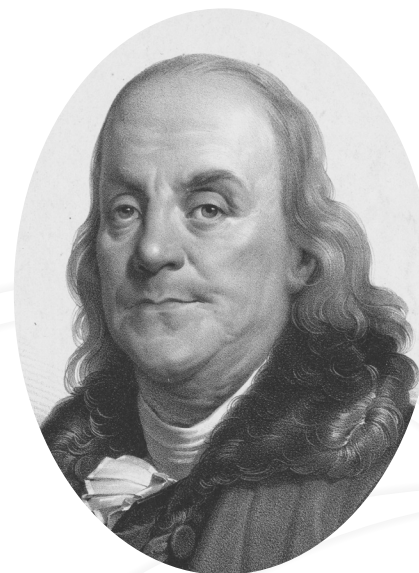
As you will read later in our story about Theodore Roosevelt, author Hermann Hagedorn agrees. He credits Theodore Roosevelt’s good character to the admiration of his father as Theodore grew up: “It was...of the greatest moment to the growth of [Theodore’s] character that he should have lived those early years so intimately close to a man of such unquestionably heroic stature.” Theodore Roosevelt grew up to be a man of strong

character, powerful convictions, and good heart because he had a hero to imitate.

We live in a flawed and sinful world. But part of godly living is learning how to practice discernment and learn from our broken world. It is important to see good in people, even though there is bad too. God created all people uniquely and wonderfully; it would be irresponsible and tragic—even rude to the Creator!—to allow the Enemy to rob us of the good.

In these stories of America’s past, readers will not only learn history but also aspects and attributes of great character. Be inspired by the enduring ingenuity of Thomas Edison, the joyful resourcefulness of Clara Barton, the winsome leadership of Ronald Reagan. Celebrate the characters who made America, and celebrate the making of great character in yourself and those around you.

—Stephanie B. Meter



## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (1706–1790)

**“He that lies down with Dogs, shall get up  
with fleas.”**

—*Poor Richard’s Almanack*

*Though born into a poor family of soap and candle makers, Benjamin Franklin became one of America’s wisest and most inventive Founding Fathers. Born in 1706, Benjamin lived to see the rise of the American Revolutionary War and the Declaration of Independence and its culmination in the Constitution, which was ratified just two years before Benjamin’s death.*

*In some ways, Benjamin was not set up for success; for financial reasons, his father took him out of school at age ten. To keep him from running off to sea, Benjamin was apprenticed to his tyrannical older brother in a printing shop. However, there were stronger forces at work within Benjamin: he possessed natural curiosity, determination, and a deep desire to understand life. He read voraciously, took opportunities as they came, and practiced a lot of common sense, some of which he published in witty annual editions of Poor Richard's Almanack.*

*Benjamin lived in Boston, Philadelphia, and London. He invented—among many other things—bifocals, the rocking chair, the lightning rod, and the lending library. He helped negotiate the Treaty of Paris and draft the Constitution of the United States. It is no wonder he was chosen as one of only two non-presidents to be featured on a dollar bill!*



The following excerpt is from *True Stories of History and Biography* by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

**I**n the year 1716, or about that period, a boy used to be seen in the streets of Boston who was known among his school-fellows and playmates by the name of Ben Franklin. Ben was born in 1706; so that he was now about ten years old. His father, who had come over from England, was a soap-boiler and tallow-chandler, and resided in Milk Street, not far from the Old South Church.

Ben was a bright boy at his book, and even a brighter one when at play with his comrades. He had some remarkable qualities which always seemed to give him the lead, whether at sport or in more serious matters. I might tell you a number of amusing anecdotes about him. You are acquainted, I suppose, with his famous story of the whistle,<sup>1</sup> and how he bought it, with a whole pocketful of coppers and afterwards repented of his bargain. But Ben had grown a great boy since those days, and had gained wisdom by experience; for it was one of his peculiarities, that no incident ever happened to him without teaching him some valuable lesson. Thus he generally profited more by his misfortunes than many people do by the most favorable events that could befall them.

Ben's face was already pretty well known to the inhabitants of Boston. The selectmen and other people of note often used to visit his father, for the sake of talking about the affairs of the town or province. Mr. Franklin was considered a person of great wisdom and integrity, and was respected by all who knew him, although

1. When he was young, Ben Franklin encountered a boy with a whistle and was so eager to have the whistle for himself that he gave the whistling boy all the coppers in his pocket in exchange for the instrument. For a little while, Ben was happy with his purchase, but then it began to sink in that he had traded so much money for something he only wanted in the moment. He could have bought many different, better, lasting things with his money. As a grown-up, Ben later wrote to his friend Madame Brillon and told her this story, saying that ever since, he has learned to remind himself not to "give too much for the whistle" whenever he feels compelled to spend a lot on anything.

he supported his family by the humble trade of boiling soap and making tallow candles.

While his father and the visitors were holding deep consultations about public affairs, little Ben would sit on his stool in a corner, listening with the greatest interest, as if he understood every word. Indeed, his features were so full of intelligence that there could be but little doubt, not only that he understood what was said, but that he could have expressed some very sagacious<sup>2</sup> opinions out of his own mind. But in those days boys were expected to be silent in the presence of their elders. However, Ben Franklin was looked upon as a very promising lad, who would talk and act wisely by and by.

“Neighbor Franklin,” his father’s friends would sometimes say, “you ought to send this boy to college and make a minister of him.”

“I have often thought of it,” his father would reply; “and my brother Benjamin promises to give him a great many volumes of manuscript sermons, in case he should be educated for the church. But I have a large family to support, and cannot afford the expense.”

In fact, Mr. Franklin found it so difficult to provide bread for his family, that, when the boy was ten years old, it became necessary to take him from school. Ben was then employed in cutting candlewicks into equal lengths and filling the molds with tallow; and many families in Boston spent their evenings by the light of the candles which he had helped to make. Thus, you see, in his early days, as well as in his manhood, his labors contributed to throw light upon dark matters.

Busy as his life now was, Ben still found time to keep company with his former schoolfellows. He and the other boys were very

2. Pronounced seh-GAY-shuss. Wise and discerning.

fond of fishing, and spent many of their leisure hours on the margin<sup>3</sup> of the mill-pond, catching flounders, perch, eels, and tom-cod, which came up thither with the tide. The place where they fished is now, probably, covered with stone pavements and brick buildings, and thronged<sup>4</sup> with people and with vehicles of all kinds. But at that period it was a marshy spot on the outskirts of the town, where gulls flitted and screamed overhead and salt-meadow grass grew under foot.

On the edge of the water there was a deep bed of clay, in which the boys were forced to stand while they caught their fish. Here they dabbled in mud and mire like a flock of ducks.

“This is very uncomfortable,” said Ben Franklin one day to his comrades, while they were standing mid-leg deep in the quagmire<sup>5</sup>.

“So it is,” said the other boys. “What a pity we have no better place to stand!”

If it had not been for Ben, nothing more would have been done or said about the matter. But it was not in his nature to be sensible of an inconvenience without using his best efforts to find a remedy. So, as he and his comrades were returning from the water-side, Ben suddenly threw down his string of fish with a very determined air.

“Boys,” cried he, “I have thought of a scheme which will be greatly for our benefit and for the public benefit.”

It was queer enough, to be sure, to hear this little chap—this rosy-cheeked, ten-year-old boy—talking about schemes for the public benefit! Nevertheless, his companions were ready to listen, being assured that Ben’s scheme, whatever it was, would be well worth their attention. They remembered how sagaciously he had

3. Edge or bank.

4. Pronounced THRONG’d. Crowded.

5. Pronounced KWAG-mire. A muddy and spongy area.

conducted all their enterprises ever since he had been old enough to wear small-clothes.<sup>6</sup>

They remembered, too, his wonderful contrivance of sailing across the mill-pond by lying flat on his back in the water and allowing himself to be drawn along by a paper kite. If Ben could do that, he might certainly do anything.

“What is your scheme, Ben?—what is it?” cried they all.

It so happened that they had now come to a spot of ground where a new house was to be built. Scattered round about lay a great many large stones which were to be used for the cellar and foundation. Ben mounted upon the highest of these stones, so that he might speak with the more authority.

“You know, lads,” said he, “what a plague it is to be forced to stand in the quagmire yonder,—over shoes and stockings (if we wear any) in mud and water. See! I am bedaubed<sup>7</sup> to the knees of my small-clothes; and you are all in the same pickle. Unless we can find some remedy for this evil, our fishing business must be entirely given up. And, surely, this would be a terrible misfortune!”

“That it would! that it would!” said his comrades, sorrowfully.

“Now, I propose,” continued Master Benjamin, “that we build a wharf,<sup>8</sup> for the purpose of carrying on our fisheries. You see these stones. The workmen mean to use them for the underpinning of a house; but that would be for only one man’s advantage. My plan is to take these same stones and carry them to the edge of the water and build a wharf with them. This will not only enable us to carry on the fishing business with comfort and to better advantage, but it will likewise be a great convenience to boats passing up and down the stream. Thus, instead of one man, fifty,

6. A kind of close-fitting pants worn in Ben’s time.

7. Pronounced bih-DAWBd. Smeared.

8. A pier.

or a hundred, or a thousand, besides ourselves, may be benefited by these stones. What say you, lads? shall we build the wharf?”

Ben’s proposal was received with one of those uproarious shouts wherewith boys usually express their delight at whatever completely suits their views. Nobody thought of questioning the right and justice of building a wharf with stones that belonged to another person.

“Hurrah! hurrah!” shouted they. “Let’s set about it.”

It was agreed that they should all be on the spot that evening and commence their grand public enterprise by moonlight. Accordingly, at the appointed time, the whole gang of youthful laborers assembled, and eagerly began to remove the stones. They had not calculated how much toil would be requisite in this important part of their undertaking. The very first stone which they laid hold of proved so heavy that it almost seemed to be fastened to the ground. Nothing but Ben Franklin’s cheerful and resolute spirit could have induced them to persevere.

Ben, as might be expected, was the soul of the enterprise. By his mechanical genius, he contrived methods to lighten the labor of transporting the stones, so that one boy, under his directions, would perform as much as half a dozen if left to themselves. Whenever their spirits flagged he had some joke ready, which seemed to renew their strength, by setting them all into a roar of laughter. And when, after an hour or two of hard work, the stones were transported to the water-side, Ben Franklin was the engineer to superintend the construction of the wharf.

The boys, like a colony of ants, performed a great deal of labor by their multitude, though the individual strength of each could have accomplished but little. Finally, just as the moon sank below the horizon, the great work was finished.

“Now, boys,” cried Ben, “let’s give three cheers and go home to bed. To-morrow we may catch fish at our ease.”

“Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!” shouted his comrades.

Then they all went home in such an ecstasy of delight that they could hardly get a wink of sleep.

In the morning, when the early sunbeams were gleaming on the steeples and roofs of the town and gilding the water that surrounded it, the masons<sup>9</sup> came, rubbing their eyes, to begin their work at the foundation of the new house. But, on reaching the spot, they rubbed their eyes so much the harder. What had become of their heap of stones?

“Why, Sam,” said one to another, in great perplexity, “here’s been some witchcraft at work while we were asleep. The stones must have flown away through the air!”

“More likely they have been stolen!” answered Sam.

“But who on earth would think of stealing a heap of stones?” cried a third. “Could a man carry them away in his pocket?”

The master-mason, who was a gruff kind of man, stood scratching his head, and said nothing at first. But, looking carefully on the ground, he discerned innumerable<sup>10</sup> tracks of little feet, some with shoes and some barefoot. Following these tracks with his eye, he saw that they formed a beaten path towards the water-side.

“Ah, I see what the mischief is,” said he, nodding his head. “Those little rascals, the boys! They have stolen our stones to build a wharf with!”

The masons immediately went to examine the new structure. And to say the truth, it was well worth looking at, so neatly, and with such admirable skill, had it been planned and finished. The

stones were put together so securely that there was no danger of their being loosened by the tide, however swiftly it might sweep along. There was a broad and safe platform to stand upon, whence the little fishermen might cast their lines into deep water and draw up fish in abundance. Indeed, it almost seemed as if Ben and his comrades might be forgiven for taking the stones, because they had done their job in such a workmanlike manner.

“The chaps that built this wharf, understood their business pretty well,” said one of the masons. “I should not be ashamed of such a piece of work myself.”

But the master-mason did not seem to enjoy the joke. He was one of those unreasonable people who care a great deal more for their own rights and privileges than for the convenience of all the rest of the world.

“Sam,” said he, more gruffly than usual, “go call a constable.”

So Sam called a constable, and inquiries were set on foot to discover the perpetrators of the theft. In the course of the day warrants were issued, with the signature of a Justice of the Peace, to take the bodies of Benjamin Franklin and other evil-disposed persons who had stolen a heap of stones. If the owner of the stolen property had not been more merciful than the master-mason, it might have gone hard with our friend Benjamin and his fellow-laborers. But, luckily for them, the gentleman had a respect for Ben’s father, and, moreover, was amused with the spirit of the whole affair. He therefore let the culprits off pretty easily.

But, when the constables were dismissed, the poor boys had to go through another trial, and receive sentence, and suffer execution, too, from their own fathers. Many a rod, I grieve to say, was worn to the stump on that unlucky night.

9. People who build with stone or brick.

10. Pronounced ih-NOOM-er-uh-bull. Impossible to count.

As for Ben, he was less afraid of a whipping than of his father's disapprobation.<sup>11</sup> Mr. Franklin, as I have mentioned before, was a sagacious man, and also an inflexibly upright one. He had read much for a person in his rank of life, and had pondered upon the ways of the world, until he had gained more wisdom than a whole library of books could have taught him. Ben had a greater reverence for his father than for any other person in the world, as well on account of his spotless integrity as of his practical sense and deep views of things.

Consequently, after being released from the clutches of the law, Ben came into his father's presence with no small perturbation<sup>12</sup> of mind.

"Benjamin, come hither," began Mr. Franklin, in his customary solemn and weighty tone.

The boy approached and stood before his father's chair, waiting reverently to hear what judgment this good man would pass upon his late offence. He felt that now the right and wrong of the whole matter would be made to appear.

"Benjamin!" said his father, "what could induce you to take property which did not belong to you?"

"Why, father," replied Ben, hanging his head at first, but then lifting eyes to Mr. Franklin's face, "if it had been merely for my own benefit, I never should have dreamed of it. But I knew that the wharf would be a public convenience. If the owner of the stones should build a house with them, nobody will enjoy any advantage except himself. Now, I made use of them in a way that was for the advantage of many persons. I thought it right to aim at doing good to the greatest number."

11. Pronounced diss-app-roe-BAY-shun. Stern disapproval.

12. Pronounced per-tur-BAY-shun. Often has the connotation of confused irritation, but here it is more just "disturbance."

"My son," said Mr. Franklin, solemnly, "so far as it was in your power, you have done a greater harm to the public than to the owner of the stones."

"How can that be, father?" asked Ben.

"Because," answered his father, "in building your wharf with stolen materials, you have committed a moral wrong. There is no more terrible mistake than to violate what is eternally right for the sake of a seeming expediency. Those who act upon such a principle do the utmost in their power to destroy all that is good in the world."

"Heaven forbid!" said Benjamin.

"No act," continued Mr. Franklin, "can possibly be for the benefit of the public generally which involves injustice to any individual. It would be easy to prove this by examples. But, indeed, can we suppose that our all-wise and just Creator would have so ordered the affairs of the world that a wrong act should be the true method of attaining a right end? It is impious<sup>13</sup> to think so. And I do verily believe, Benjamin, that almost all the public and private misery of mankind arises from a neglect of this great truth—that evil can produce only evil—that good ends must be wrought out by good means."

"I will never forget it again," said Benjamin, bowing his head.

"Remember," concluded his father, "that, whenever we vary from the highest rule of right, just so far we do an injury to the world. It may seem otherwise for the moment; but, both in time and in eternity, it will be found so."

To the close of his life Ben Franklin never forgot this conversation with his father; and we have reason to suppose that, in most of his public and private career, he endeavored to act upon

13. Pronounced im-PIE-us or im-PEE-us. Immoral, with a connotation of unholiness.

the principles which that good and wise man had then taught him.

After the great event of building the wharf, Ben continued to cut wick-yarn and fill candle-molds for about two years. But, as he had no love for that occupation, his father often took him to see various artisans at their work, in order to discover what trade he would prefer. Thus Ben learned the use of a great many tools, the knowledge of which afterwards proved very useful to him. But he seemed much inclined to go to sea. In order to keep him at home, and likewise to gratify his taste for letters, the lad was bound apprentice to his elder brother, who had lately set up a printing-office in Boston.

Here he had many opportunities of reading new books and of hearing instructive conversation. He exercised himself so successfully in writing compositions, that, when no more than thirteen or fourteen years old, he became a contributor to his brother's newspaper. Ben was also a versifier, if not a poet. He made two doleful ballads; one about the shipwreck of Captain Worthilake,<sup>14</sup> and the other about the pirate Black Beard,<sup>15</sup> who, not long before, infested the American seas.

When Ben's verses were printed, his brother sent him to sell them to the townspeople wet from the press. "Buy my ballads!" shouted Benjamin, as he trudged through the streets with a basketful on his arm. "Who'll buy a ballad about Black Beard? A penny apiece! a penny apiece! Who'll buy my ballads?"

14. Captain Worthilake (also spelled Worthyake) was the lightkeeper of Boston Light light-house. One day after church, he and his family drowned when their small boat was overturned.

15. Edward Teach, nicknamed Blackbeard, was a brutal pirate and captain of the infamous *Queen Anne's Revenge*. He was killed in 1718 by the British navy off the coast of North Carolina.

If one of those roughly composed and rudely printed ballads could be discovered now, it would be worth more than its weight in gold.

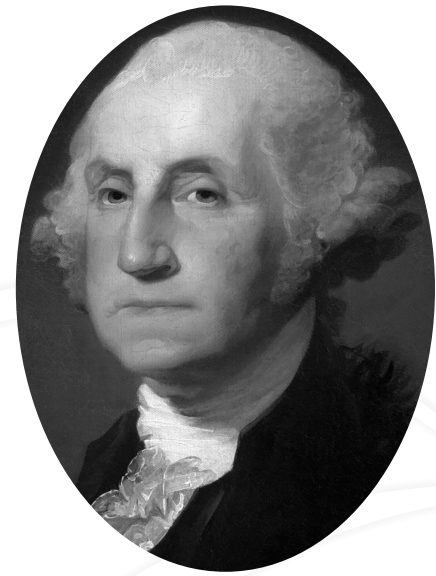
In this way our friend Benjamin spent his boyhood and youth, until, on account of some disagreement with his brother, he left his native town and went to Philadelphia. He landed in the latter city, a homeless and hungry young man, and bought three-pence worth of bread to satisfy his appetite. Not knowing where else to go, he entered a Quaker meeting-house, sat down, and fell fast asleep. He has not told us whether his slumbers were visited by any dreams. But it would have been a strange dream, indeed, and an incredible one, that should have foretold how great a man he was destined to become, and how much he would be honored in that very city where he was now friendless and unknown.

So here we finish our story of the childhood of Benjamin Franklin. One of these days, if you would know what he was in his manhood, you must read his own works and the history of American independence.



ABOVE: When learning of his appointment by Congress as commander-in-chief of the American Army in 1798, Washington is said to have replied, “I am ready for any service that I can give my country.”

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## GEORGE WASHINGTON (1732–1799)

**“Still I hope I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain (what I consider the most enviable of all titles) the character of an honest man.”**

—George Washington to Alexander Hamilton (August 28, 1788)

*Believe it or not, George Washington never wanted a career in politics. He was tall and brave, educated, an officer in two wars (French and Indian, American Revolutionary), a delegate to the First (and Second) Continental Congress, and—of course—America’s first president. But at heart, George was a farmer. As a homeschooler, he learned some of the usual subjects, such as math, geography, and Latin, but what he found most useful in his life*

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were the skills of farming and surveying. Even after he became a wealthy landowner, George would often work alongside his field hands because he enjoyed it.

At the start of the French and Indian War, George was only a messenger, but he quickly became a major in the army, later a colonel, and in the Revolutionary War, a major general. For a long time, George did not want the American colonies to declare independence, but when the Townshend Acts<sup>1</sup> came, he admitted that it was only right for the colonists to resist such unfair treatment.

Both times George was elected president, the votes were unanimous.<sup>2</sup> At the end of his second term, George firmly but gracefully declined a third and went home to work his farm until he died at his Mount Vernon home two years later.



The following excerpt is from *Stories of Great Americans for Little Americans* by Edward Eggleston, chapter “Washington and His Hatchet.”

1. Named for their sponsor, Charles Townshend, the Townshend Acts placed intense taxes on the American imported goods and controlled what the New York Assembly was allowed to do.
2. The votes were unanimous by the electoral college. With the electoral college, each state gets a certain number of “electoral votes” based on the number of people in the state. Everyone votes, and whichever candidate wins the most votes in a state gets all of that state’s electoral votes.

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It was Arbor Day in the Mossy Hill School, and Johnny Littlejohn had to speak a piece that had something to do with trees. He thought it would be a good plan to say something about the little cherry tree that Washington spoiled with his hatchet when he was a little boy. This is what he said:

“He had a hatchet—little George—  
A hatchet bright and new,  
And sharp enough to cut a stick—  
A little stick—in two.

He hacked and whacked and whacked and hacked,  
This sturdy little man;  
He hacked a log and hacked a fence,  
As round about he ran.

He hacked his father’s cherry tree  
And made an ugly spot;  
The bark was soft, the hatchet sharp,  
And little George forgot.

You know the rest. The father frowned  
And asked the reason why;  
You know the good old story runs,  
He could not tell a lie.

The boy that chopped that cherry tree  
Soon grew to be a youth;  
At work and books he hacked away,  
And still he told the truth.

The youth became a famous man,

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above six feet in height,  
And when he had good work to do  
He hacked with all his might.

He fought the armies that the king  
Had sent across the sea;  
He battled up and down the land  
To set his country free.

For seven long years he hacked and whacked  
With all his might and main,  
Until the British sailed away  
And did not come again.”



The following excerpt is from the chapter “Washington’s Christmas Gift.”

**W**ashington was fighting to set this country free. But the army that the King of England sent to fight him was stronger than Washington’s army. Washington was beaten and driven out of Brooklyn. Then he had to leave New York. After that, he marched away into New Jersey to save his army from being taken. At last he crossed the Delaware River. Here he was safe for a while.

Some of the Hessian<sup>3</sup> soldiers that the king had hired to fight against the Americans came to Trenton. Trenton is on the Delaware River.<sup>4</sup>

3. Pronounced HEH-shun. German soldiers hired by the British to fight, most notably in the American Revolutionary War. The soldiers were named after one of the German states, Hesse-Kassel.

4. The Delaware River starts in New York and empties into the Atlantic Ocean. It runs through New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland.

Washington and his men were on the other side of the Delaware River from the Hessians. Washington’s men were discouraged. They had been driven back all the way from Brooklyn. It was winter, and they had no warm houses to stay in. They had not even warm clothes. They were dressed in old clothes that people had given them. Some of them were bare-footed in this cold weather.

The Hessians and other soldiers of the king were waiting for the river to freeze over. Then they would march across on the ice. They meant to fight Washington once more and break up his army.

But Washington was thinking about something too.

He was waiting for Christmas. He knew that the Hessian soldiers on the other side of the river would eat and drink a great deal on Christmas Day.

The afternoon of Christmas came. The Hessians were singing and drinking in Trenton. But Washington was marching up the river bank. Some of his bare-foot men left blood marks on the snow as they marched.

The men and cannons were put into flat boats. These boats were pushed across the river with poles. There were many great pieces of ice in the river. But all night long the flat boats were pushed across and then back again for more men.

It was three o’clock on the morning after Christmas when the last Americans crossed the river. It was hailing and snowing, and it was very cold. Two or three of the soldiers were frozen to death.

It was eight o’clock in the morning when Washington got to Trenton. The Hessians were sleeping soundly. The sound of the American drums waked them. They jumped out of their beds. They ran into the streets. They tried to fight the Americans.

But it was too late. Washington had already taken their cannons. His men were firing these at the Hessians. The Hessians ran into the fields to get away. But the Americans caught them.

The battle was soon over. Washington had taken nine hundred prisoners.

This was called the battle of Trenton. It gave great joy to all the Americans. It was Washington's Christmas gift to the country.



The following excerpt is from the chapter "How Washington Got Out of a Trap."

**A**fter the battle of Trenton, Washington went back across the Delaware River. He had not men enough to fight the whole British army.



ABOVE: *Washington Crossing the Delaware*, painted by Emanuel Leutze in 1851 to commemorate the Battle of Trenton. (Image provided courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of John Stewart Kennedy, 1897.)

But the Americans were glad when they heard that he had beaten the Hessians. They sent him more soldiers. Then he went back across the river to Trenton again.

There was a British general named Cornwallis. He marched to Trenton. He fought against Washington. Cornwallis had more men than Washington. Night came, and they could not see to fight. There was a little creek between the two armies.

Washington had not boats enough to carry his men across the river. Cornwallis was sure to beat him if they should fight a battle the next morning.

Cornwallis said, "I will catch the fox in the morning."

He called Washington a fox. He thought he had him in a trap. Cornwallis sent for some more soldiers to come from Princeton in the morning. He wanted them to help him catch the fox.

But foxes sometimes get out of traps.

When it was dark, Washington had all his camp fires lighted. He put men to digging where the British could hear them. He made Cornwallis think that he was throwing up banks of earth and getting ready to fight in the morning.

But Washington did not stay in Trenton. He did not wish to be caught like a fox in a trap. He could not get across the river. But he knew a road that went round the place where Cornwallis and his army were. He took that road and got behind the British army.

It was like John waiting to catch James.<sup>5</sup> James is in the house. John is waiting at the front door to catch James when he comes out. But James slips out by the backway. John hears him call "Hello!" James has gone round behind him and got<sup>6</sup> away.

5. This is not a reference to a real story, just a couple of named characters to help you get the idea of what the writer means.

6. British (and therefore early American!) English and modern American English have different past participle forms. British English speakers usually say "has got" or "had got"; in American English, we are taught to say "has gotten" or "had gotten."

Washington went out of Trenton in the darkness. You might say that he marched out by the back door. He left Cornwallis watching the front door. The Americans went away quietly. They left a few men to keep up the fires, and make a noise like digging. Before morning these slipped away too.

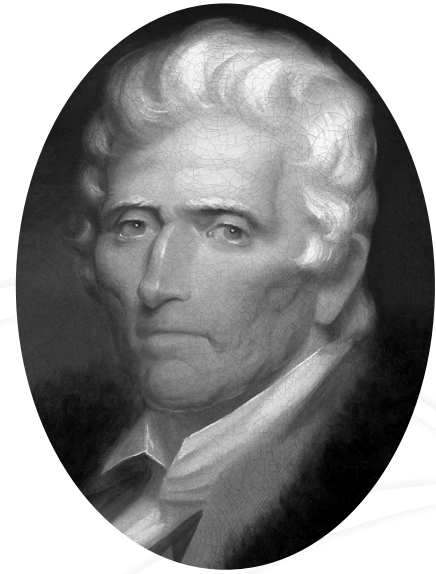
When morning came, Cornwallis went to catch his fox. But the fox was not there.

He looked for the Americans. There was the place where they had been digging. Their camp fires were still burning. But where had they gone?

Cornwallis thought that Washington had crossed the river by some means. But soon he heard guns firing away back toward Princeton. He thought that it must be thunder. But he found that it was a battle. Then he knew that Washington had gone to Princeton.

Washington had marched all night. When he got to Princeton, he met the British coming out to go to Trenton. They were going to help Cornwallis to catch Washington. But Washington had come to Princeton to catch them. He had a hard fight with the British at Princeton. But at last he had beat them.

When Cornwallis knew that the Americans had gone to Princeton, he hurried there to help his men. But it was too late. Washington had beaten the British at Princeton, and had gone on into the hills, where he was safe. The fox had got out of the trap.



## DANIEL BOONE

(1734–1820)

**“...I firmly believe it requires but a little philosophy to make a man happy in whatsoever state he is. This consists in a full resignation to the will of Providence; and a resigned soul finds pleasure in a path strewed with briars and thorns.”**

—Quoted in *The Discovery, Settlement And present State of Kentucke*,  
John Filson (1784)

*Famous frontiersman Daniel Boone shaped America through exploration and settlement. Born in Pennsylvania in 1734, Daniel learned to read and write from his mother and learned survival and hunting skills from his father. Like George Washington, Daniel*

*played a part in the French and Indian War, but he went on to establish and defend settlements rather than pursue a political career.*

*Still, Daniel's life was far from uneventful. Along with five friends, he discovered the Cumberland Gap in the Appalachian<sup>1</sup> Mountains, the trail that pioneers traveled for years on their way out west. While he was developing a settlement in Kentucky, Indians kidnapped his daughter, and Daniel had to save her. Later, Daniel was kidnapped himself and escaped!*

*Eventually Daniel left Kentucky and took his family to West Virginia, where he served very briefly in the county legislature. Political leadership didn't suit Daniel best, though, and he and his family moved again, this time to Missouri, where he hunted and tracked for the rest of his long life.*



The following excerpt is from *The Adventures of Daniel Boone, the Kentucky Rifleman* by F. L. Hawks (1844), chapter 1.

**S**ome men choose to live in crowded cities; —others are pleased with the peaceful quiet of a country farm; while some love to roam through wild forests, and make their homes in the wilderness. The man of whom I shall now speak was one of this last class. Perhaps you never heard of Daniel Boone, the Kentucky rifleman. If not, then I have a strange and interesting story to tell you.

If, when a child was born, we knew that he was to become a remarkable man, the time and place of his birth would, perhaps, be remembered. But as this cannot be known, great mistakes are often made on these points. As to the time when Daniel Boone

1. Pronounced app-uh-LATCH-un. There are no other correct pronunciations.  
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was born, there is no difficulty; but people have fallen into many blunders about the place. Some have said that he was born in England, before his parents left that country; others that he came into this world during the passage of his parents across the Atlantic. One has told us that he was born in Virginia; another in Maryland; while many have stated that he was a native of North Carolina. These are all mistakes. Daniel Boone was born in the year [1734], in Bucks county, in the state of Pennsylvania.

From some cause or other, when the boy was but three years old, his parents moved from this home, and settled upon the Schuylkill river,<sup>2</sup> not far from the town of Reading. Here they lived for ten years; and it was during this time that their son Daniel began to show his passion for hunting. He was scarcely able to carry a gun when he was shooting all the squirrels, racoons, and even wild-cats (it is said) that he could find in that region. As he grew older, his courage increased, and then we find him amusing himself with higher game. Other lads in the neighborhood were soon taught by him the use of the rifle, and were then able to join him in his adventures. On one occasion, they all started out for a hunt, and after amusing themselves till it was almost dark, were returning homeward, when suddenly a wild cry was heard in the woods. The boys screamed out, "A panther! a panther!" and ran off as fast as they could. Boone stood firmly, looking around for the animal. It was a panther indeed. His eye lighted upon him just in the act of springing toward him: in an instant he levelled his rifle, and shot him through the heart.

But this sort of sport was not enough for him. He seemed resolved to go away from men, and live in the forests with these animals. One morning he started off as usual, with his rifle and

2. Pronounced SKOOL-kill, and means "hidden river" or "hideout river" in Dutch: *kill*, "river"; *schuilen*, "take shelter." The Schuylkill River is located in southern Pennsylvania.  
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dog. Night came on, but Daniel did not return to his home. Another day and night passed away, and still the boy did not make his appearance. His parents were now greatly alarmed. The neighbors joined them in making a search for the lad. After wandering about a great while, they at length saw smoke rising from a cabin in the distance. Upon reaching it, they found the boy. The floor of the cabin was covered with the skins of such animals as he had slain, and pieces of meat were roasting before the fire for his supper. Here, at a distance of three miles from any settlement, he had built his cabin of sods and branches, and sheltered himself in the wilderness.

It was while his father was living on the headwaters of the Schuylkill that young Boone received, so far as we know, all his education.

.....

HIS DOG AND RIFLE WERE HIS CONSTANT COMPANIONS, and day after day he started from home, only to roam through the forests. Hunting seemed to be the only business of his life; and he was never so happy as when at night he came home laden with game. He was an untiring wanderer.

I do not know but that this passion for roaming was in some degree inherited by Daniel Boone. His father had already had three homes: one in England, one in Bucks county, and another on the Schuylkill; and he now thought of removing further. It is said that the passion of Daniel for hunting was one cause which prompted his father to think of this. Land was becoming scarce, the neighborhood a little crowded, and game less abundant; and, to mend matters, he began to cast his eyes around for a new home. He was not long in choosing one. He had heard of a rich and beautiful country on the banks of the Yadkin river in North

Carolina, and he determined that this should be the next resting-place for him and his household.

All things were made ready as soon as possible, and the journey commenced. It was a fine spring morning when the father started for his new home with his wife and children, his flocks and herds. Their journey lay hundreds of miles through a trackless wilderness; yet with cheerful and fearless hearts they pressed onward. When hungry, they feasted upon venison<sup>3</sup> and wild turkeys (for Daniel, with his rifle, was in company); when thirsty, they found cool springs of water to refresh them by the way; when wearied at night, they laid themselves down and slept under the wide-spreading branches of the forest. At length they reached the land they looked for, and the father found it to be all that he expected. The woods in that region were unbroken; no man seemed yet to have found them. Land was soon cleared, a cabin built, and the father in a little time found himself once more happily settled with his family.

The old man with his other sons went busily to the work of making a farm. As for Daniel, they knew it was idle to expect him to help in such employment, and therefore left him to roam about with his rifle. This was a glorious country for the youth; wild woods were all around him, and game, having not yet learned to fear the crack of the rifle, wandered fearlessly through them. This, he thought, was, of all places, the home for him. I hope you will not think that he was the idle and useless boy of the family, for it was not so. While the farm was improving, Daniel was supplying the family with provisions. The table at home was always filled with game, and they had enough and to spare. Their house became known as a warm-hearted and hospitable abode; for the wayfaring wanderer, when lost in the woods, was sure to find here a welcome, a shelter, and an abundance. Then, too,

<sup>3</sup> Pronounced VEHN-ih-sun. Deer meat.

if money was wanted in the family, the peltries of the animals shot by Daniel supplied it: so that he was, in a large degree, the supporter of the household. In this way years rolled onward—the farm still enlarging and improving, Daniel still hunting, and the home one of constant peace, happiness, and plenty.

At length the story of the success and comfort of the family brought neighbors around them. Different parts of the forests began to be cleared; smoke was soon seen rising from new cabins; and the sharp crack of other rifles than Daniel's was sometimes heard in the morning. This grieved him sadly. Most people would have been pleased to find neighbors in the loneliness of the woods; but what pleased others did not please him. They were crowding upon him; they were driving away his game: this was his trouble. But, after all, there was one good farmer who came into the region and made his settlement; which settlement, as it turned out, proved a happy thing for Daniel. This was a very worthy man named Bryan. He cleared his land, built his cabin upon a sloping hill, not very far from Mr. Boone's, and before a great while, by dint<sup>4</sup> of industry, had a good farm of more than a hundred acres. This farm was beautifully situated. A pretty stream of water almost encircled it. On the banks of the Schuylkill, Daniel Boone found all his education, such as it was; on the banks of the Yadkin he found something far better. I must tell you now of a very strange adventure.

One evening, with another young friend, he started out upon what is called a "*fire-hunt*." Perhaps you do not know what this means. I will explain it to you. Two people are always necessary for a fire-hunt. One goes before, carrying a blazing torch of pitch-pine wood (or lightwood, as it is called in the southern country), while the other follows behind with his rifle. In this way the two

hunters move through the forests. When an animal is startled, he will stand gazing at the light, and his eyes may be seen shining distinctly: this is called "shining the eyes." The hunter with the rifle, thus seeing him, while the other *shines* him, levels his gun with steady aim, and has a fair shot.

This method of hunting is still practiced in many parts of our country, and is everywhere known as a *fire-hunt*.

Boone, with his companion, started out upon such a hunt, and very soon reached the woods skirting the lower end of Mr. Bryan's farm. It seems they were on horseback, Boone being behind with the rifle. They had not gone far, when his companion reined up his horse, and two eyes were seen distinctly shining. Boone levelled his rifle, but something preventing his firing. The animal darted off. Boone leaped from his horse, left his companion, and instantly dashed after it. It was too dark to see plainly, still he pursued it; he was close upon its track, when a fence coming in the way, the animal leaped it with a clear bound. Boone climbed over as fast as he could with his rifle, but the game had got ahead. Nothing daunted by this, he pushed on, until he found himself at last not very far from Mr. Bryan's home. But he animal was gone. It was a strange chase. He determined to go into Mr. Bryan's house, and tell his adventure. As he drew near, the dogs raised a loud barking, the master came out, bade him welcome, and carried him into the house. Mr. Bryan had scarcely introduced him to his family as "the son of his neighbor Boone," when suddenly the door of the room was burst open, and in rushed a little lad of seven, followed by a girl of sixteen years, crying out "O father! father! sister is frightened to death! She went down to the river, and was chased by a panther!" The hunter and his game had met. There stood Boone, leaning upon his rifle, and Rebecca Bryan before him, gasping for breath. From that moment

4. Effort or force.

he continued to pursue it; Farmer Bryan's house became a favorite resort for him; he loved it as well as the woods. The business was now changed: Rebecca Bryan, completely *shined his eyes*; and after a time, to the great joy of themselves and both families, Daniel Boone and Rebecca Bryan were married. It proved, as you will see, a very happy marriage to both parties.

Being now a married man, it became Daniel Boone's duty to seek a new home for himself. In a little time, therefore, he left his wife, and wandered into the unsettled parts of North Carolina in search of one. After moving about for some time, he found, upon the head-waters of the Yadkin, a rich soil, covered with a heavy and once more unbroken forest. "Here," thought Daniel Boone, "is the resting-place for me; here Rebecca Bryan and myself may be happy: this shall be our home." He returned to his wife, and she, with a cheerful heart, joined in all his plans. With tears in her eyes, she bade farewell to her friends; yet, with a light spirit, she started off with her husband. A clearing in the woods was soon made, a log cabin of his own soon built, and a portion of ground planted. Boone seems now to have thought he must do something more than use his rifle. He was to make a home for his wife; and busied himself, accordingly, in enlarging his farm as fast as he could, and in industriously cultivating it. Still, on his busiest day, he would find a leisure hour to saunter with his gun to the woods, and was sure never to return without game. His own table was loaded with it, as when at his father's, and his house, like his father's, soon became known as a warm and kind shelter for the wandering traveler. In this industrious and quiet way of farming and hunting, years were spent, and Daniel Boone was contented and happy. Several little children were now added to his group; and, with his wife, his children, and his rifle, for companions, he felt that all was well.



PAUL REVERE  
(1735–1818)

*Most people know Paul Revere for his midnight ride. However, that fateful night was just a slice of this patriot's life.*

*Professionally, Paul followed in his French father's footsteps as a master goldsmith, but the heavy British taxes required that Paul learn several other trades to help make ends meet, including dentistry and engraving. Paul noticed that others struggled similarly, and he quickly grew revolutionary-minded. In December of 1773, he helped to throw cases of tea at the Boston Tea Party. He spied*

*on the British, rode for the Boston Committee of Correspondence, worked on the Massachusetts Committee of Safety, and engraved political cartoons.*

*It was Paul who developed a lantern system to warn the people of British arrival: In the tower of the Old North Church in Boston, one lantern would be hung if the British approached by land, two if by sea. Upon seeing the signal in April of 1775, Paul and several other riders took off to warn people that the British were coming—by sea. The Battle of Lexington-Concord ensued, and—maybe thanks to Paul—the revolutionaries secured victory.*

*Paul kept busy during the American Revolution and beyond, manufacturing gunpowder, printing the first American money, commanding Castle Williams at Boston Harbor, running a hardware store and foundry, and opening the first American copper-rolling mill, a version of which is still in business today!*



The following excerpt is from *Stories of Later American History* by Wilbur Fisk Gordy, chapter 3, “The War Begins Near Boston.”

**W**hen Parliament passed the Boston Port Bill, the King believed that such severe punishment would not only put a stop to further rebellious acts, but would cause the colonists to feel sorry for what they had done and incline them once more to obey him. Imagine his surprise and indignation at what followed!

As soon as General Gage ordered that the Massachusetts Assembly should hold no more meetings, the colonists made up their minds they would not be put down in this manner. They said: “The King has broken up the assembly. Very well. We will

form a new governing body and give it a new name, the Provincial Congress.”

And what do you suppose the chief business of this Congress was? To make ready for war! An army was called for, and provision made that a certain number of the men enlisted should be prepared to leave their homes at a minute’s notice. These men were called “minute-men.”

Even while the patriots, for so the rebellious subjects of King George called themselves, were making these preparations, General Gage, who was in command of the British troops in Boston, had received orders from England to seize as traitors Samuel Adams and John Hancock, who were the most active leaders.

Of Samuel Adams you already know. John Hancock was president of the newly made Provincial Congress.

General Gage knew that Adams and Hancock were staying for a while with a friend in Lexington. He had learned also through spies that minutemen had collected some cannon and military stores in Concord, twenty miles from Boston, and only eight miles beyond Lexington.

The British general planned, therefore, to send a body of troops to arrest the two leaders at Lexington, and then to push on and capture or destroy the stores at Concord.

Although he acted with the greatest secrecy, he was unable to keep his plans from the watchful minutemen. We shall see how one of these, Paul Revere, outwitted him. Perhaps you have read Longfellow’s poem which tells the story of the famous “midnight ride” taken by this fearless young man.

Paul Revere had taken an active part in the “Boston Tea Party,” and the following year, with about thirty other young patriots, he had formed a society to spy out the British plans. I fancy that the

daring and courage called for in this business appealed to the high spirits and love of adventure of these young men. Always on the watch, they were quick to notice any strange movement and report to such leaders as Samuel Adams, John Hancock, and Doctor Joseph Warren.

On the evening of April 18, 1775, Paul Revere and his friends brought word to Doctor Warren that they believed General Gage was about to carry out his plan, already reported to the patriots, of capturing Adams and Hancock, and of taking or destroying the military stores at Concord.

Doctor Warren quickly decided that Paul Revere and William Dawes should go on horseback to Lexington and Concord and give the alarm. He sent them by different routes, hoping that one at least might escape the British patrols with whom Gage had carefully guarded all the roads leading from Boston.

Soon Dawes was galloping across Boston Neck, and Paul Revere was getting ready for a long night ride.

After arranging with a friend for a lantern signal to be hung in the belfry of the Old North Church to show by which route the British forces were advancing, “one if by land and two if by sea,” he stepped into a light skiff with two friends who rowed him from Boston across the Charles River to Charlestown.

Upon reaching the other side of the river, he obtained a fleet horse and stood ready, bridle in hand, straining his eyes in the darkness to catch sight of the signal-lights. The horse waits obedient to his master’s touch, and the master stands eagerly watching the spot where the signal is to appear.

At eleven o’clock a light flashes forth. Exciting moment! Then another light! “Two if by sea!” The British troops are crossing the Charles River to march through Cambridge!

No time to lose! Springing into his saddle and spurring his horse, he speeds like the wind toward Lexington.

Suddenly two British officers are about to capture him. He turns quickly and, dashing into a side-path, with spurs in horse he is soon far from his pursuers.

Then, in his swift flight along the road he pauses at every house to shout: “Up and arm! Up and arm! The regulars are out! The regulars are out!”

Families are roused. Lights gleam from the windows. Doors open and close. Minutemen are mustering.

When Lexington is reached, it is just midnight. Eight minutemen are guarding the house where Adams and Hancock are sleeping. “Make less noise! Don’t disturb the people inside,” they warn the lusty rider. “Noise!” cries Paul Revere. “You’ll have noise enough before long. The regulars are out!”

Soon William Dawes arrived and joined Revere. Hastily refreshing themselves with a light meal, they rode off together toward Concord, in company with Samuel Prescott, a prominent Son of Liberty whose home was in that town. About half-way there, they were surprised by mounted British officers, who called: “Halt.”

Prescott managed to escape by making his horse leap a stone wall, and rode in hot haste to Concord, which he reached in safety; but Paul Revere and William Dawes both fell into the hands of the British.

Meantime, the British troops numbering eight hundred men, under Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, were on their way to Lexington. But before they had gone far they were made aware, by the ringing of church-bells, the firing of signal-guns, the beating of drums, and the gleaming of beacon-fires from the surrounding hilltops,

that their secret was out, and that the minutemen knew what was going on.

Surprised and disturbed by these signs that the colonists were on the alert, Colonel Smith sent Major Pitcairn ahead with a picked body of troops, in the hope that they might reach Lexington before the town could be completely aroused. He also sent back to Boston for more men.

The British commander would have been still more disturbed if he had known all that was happening, for the alarm-signals were calling to arms thousands of patriots ready to die for their rights. Hastily wakened from sleep, men snatched their old muskets from over the door, and bidding a hurried good-by to wife and children, started for the meeting-places long before agreed upon.

Just as the sun was rising, Major Pitcairn marched into Lexington, where he found forty or fifty minutemen ready to dispute his advance.

“Disperse, ye rebels; disperse!” he cried, riding up. But they did not disperse. Pitcairn ordered his men to fire, and eighteen minutemen fell to the ground.

Before the arrival of Pitcairn, the British officers who had captured Revere and Dawes returned with them to Lexington, where, commanding Revere to dismount, they let him go. Running off at full speed to the house where Samuel Adams and John Hancock were staying, he told them what had happened, and then guided them across the fields to a place of safety.

Leaving the shocked and dazed villagers to collect their dead and wounded, Colonel Smith hastened to Concord. He arrived about seven in the morning, six hours after Doctor Prescott had given the alarm.

There had been time to hide the military stores, so the British could not get at those. But they cut down the liberty-pole, set

fire to the court-house, spiked a few cannon, and emptied some barrels of flour.

About two hundred of them stood guard at the North Bridge, while a body of minutemen gathered on a hill on the opposite side. When the minutemen had increased to four hundred, they advanced to the bridge and brought on a fight which resulted in loss of life on both sides. Then, pushing on across the bridge, they forced the British to withdraw into the town.

The affair had become more serious than the British had expected. Even in the town they could not rest, for an ever-increasing body of minutemen kept swarming into Concord from every direction.

By noon Colonel Smith could see that it would be unwise to delay the return to Boston. So, although his men had marched twenty miles, and had had little or no food for fourteen hours, he gave the order for the return march.

But when they started back, the minutemen kept after them and began a deadly attack. It was an unequal fight. The minutemen, trained to woodland warfare, slipped from tree to tree, shot down the worn and helpless British soldiers, and then retreated only to return and repeat the harassing attack.

The wooded country through which they were passing favored this kind of fighting. But even in the open country every stone wall and hill, every house and barn seemed to the exhausted British troops to bristle with the guns of minutemen. The retreating army dragged wearily forward, fighting as bravely as possible, but on the verge of confusion and panic.

They reached Lexington Common at two o'clock, quite overcome with fatigue. There they were met by one thousand two hundred fresh troops, under Lord Percy, whose timely arrival saved the entire force from capture. Lord Percy's men formed a

square for the protection of the retreating soldiers, and into it they staggered, falling upon the ground, “with their tongues hanging out of their mouths like those of dogs after a chase.”

After resting for an hour, the British again took up their march to Boston. The minutemen, increasing in numbers every moment, kept up the same kind of running attack that they had made between Concord and Lexington until, late in the day, the redcoats came under the protection of the guns of the war vessels in Boston Harbor.

The British had failed. There was no denying that. They had been driven back, almost in a panic, to Boston, with a loss of nearly three hundred men. The Americans had not lost one hundred.



“Paul Revere’s Ride” is from *The Landlord’s Tale* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

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

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

Then he said, “Good night!” and with muffled oar  
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,  
Just as the moon rose over the bay,  
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay  
The Somerset, British man-of-war;  
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar  
Across the moon like a prison bar,  
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified  
By its own reflection in the tide.

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

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

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,

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

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

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

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

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

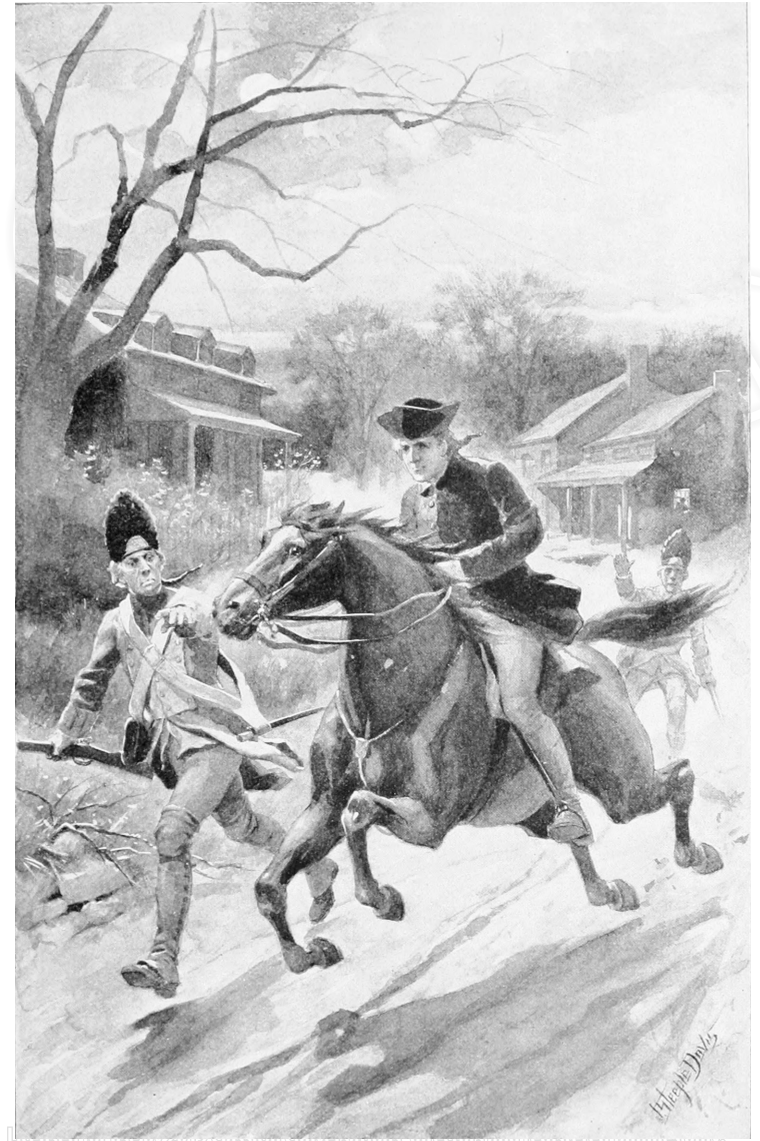
It was one by the village clock,  
 When he galloped into Lexington.  
 He saw the gilded weathercock  
 Swim in the moonlight as he passed,  
 And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,  
 Gaze at him with a spectral glare,  
 As if they already stood aghast  
 At the bloody work they would look upon.

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

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

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

The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,  
 And the midnight message of Paul Revere.





**PATRICK HENRY**  
(1736–1799)

**“The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave.”**

—Speech at the Second Virginia Convention at St. John’s Church in Richmond, Virginia (March 23, 1775)

*“I am not a Virginian, but an American,” Patrick Henry declared at the First Continental Congress. Patrick was among the first people to feel and express this as the American Revolution began. From boyhood, he’d been taught to speak well from his college-educated father and his Anglican pastor uncle. Patrick had several jobs as a young adult including store clerk, tobacco farmer, and tavern manager, but he found his niche when he became a lawyer.*

*Patrick communicated clearly and persuasively, discussing complex political or legal issues in a way that allowed everyone—not just the highly educated—to understand and participate. He encouraged people to unite and to oppose the Stamp Act; only the colonies should be able to tax the colonists.*

*Patrick became Virginia's first governor and helped to write the state constitution. He believed in individual and states' rights more than a powerful central government. In fact, after the war, he argued that Loyalists' property be returned to them. This passion for states' rights led Patrick to oppose the Constitution because he thought it gave the federal government too much power. It is largely because of Patrick's protests that James Madison drafted the Bill of Rights.*

*In his later years, Patrick was offered positions in the Supreme Court, as secretary of state and attorney general, but he declined them. He preferred to spend his later years with his family.*



The following excerpt is from *Stories of Great Americans for Young Americans* by Elbridge Streeter Brooks and Thomas Sheppard Meek, chapter “Patrick Henry: The Poor Boy Who Became a Lawyer and the Famous Orator of the Revolution.”

**E**very boy and girl loves to hear a great speaker, and almost everyone has heard of the wonderful orator<sup>1</sup> who stirred up the people and made them resist the tyrant King of England, who made our forefathers pay unjust taxes and kept us from being a free and independent people.

His name was Patrick Henry. Like almost all other great men, he has an interesting life. He made himself what he was. After

1. Pronounced OR-uh-ter. A great public speaker.

failing in several other undertakings, he finally entered the calling to which he was exactly suited and became famous.

His life will teach my girl and boy readers not to despair if they fail once or twice, but to keep on trying. There is some line of work or some profession in which every boy and girl can succeed, if they will only do as Patrick Henry did, find out just what they can do best; and, once they have undertaken it, stick to it and work with all their might.

Like George Washington and Thomas Jefferson and many of the great men in the early history of our country, Patrick Henry was born and raised in Virginia. His father was named John Henry, and came to this country, when a boy, from Scotland, about the year 1730, to seek his fortune in the New World. He got acquainted with the Governor's family, and the Governor introduced him to a Colonel Syme, who commanded the soldiers in Virginia. John Henry became a great friend of Colonel Syme and his wife. Mr. Henry also had a good education, and he was very useful to the Governor in the Colony. After a while he wrote back to his brother Patrick, in Scotland, who was a minister of the Church of England, and invited him to come to this country. Soon the Rev. Patrick Henry arrived. He was a smart man and quite an orator, and was made the preacher of St. Paul's Parish in Hanover, Virginia. It was for this good man that Patrick Henry, our great orator, was afterwards named.

Colonel Syme, who commanded the Virginia soldiers, died, and his good friend, John Henry, was made colonel in his stead. After a little while he married Mrs. Syme, the widow of his former friend, and they had two sons; the older one they named William, after the brother of Mrs. Henry, and the younger boy was named Patrick, after his father's brother whom we have just told you about.

The two boys, William and Patrick, grew up together, and until Patrick was ten years old, he and his brother William went to school in the neighborhood, where they learned to read and write and studied arithmetic. About this time their father opened a grammar school in his own house and the boys attended this school, where they studied Latin and also a little Greek. Patrick was, however, more fond of arithmetic and algebra and geometry. In fact he disliked to study anything else, and if we must tell you the plain truth—he was very lazy about studying anything and got out of all the lessons he could without telling stories or being dishonorable. Like George Washington, he always told the truth, and is said never to have done a dishonorable thing in his life.

But when it came to play, Patrick was different. He loved to play ball, to go swimming and to go hunting. So fond was he of the woods that sometimes when the school hour arrived Patrick was far away in the forest with his gun and his dog, or along the banks of the brook with his angle-rod, though it is said he seldom brought home any fish. When school was out, as soon as he got his breakfast in the morning, he was away to the woods, where he would spend whole days together, for weeks at a time, seeming to grow more fond of the deep and lonely stillness of the vast forest, which covered almost the entire country at that time. He preferred rather to go alone than with the other boys and join in the jolly fox-chase of a rabbit hunt, as boys do now and as boys did then. It is true that he often started off with them but after a little while they would find out that Patrick was not among them. Sometimes they would follow him, and then they would nearly always find him lying alone by some rippling brook, where he seemed to be delighted with the music of the waters, or he would be flat on his back looking up into the blue sky.

They naturally thought that he was too lazy to run about with them, but often when they slipped up on him, they would hear words in measured tones of oratory coming from his lips. He always seemed much ashamed when they caught him “talking to himself;” as they called it, and he was too modest to tell them what he really was doing. It was found out in later life that he was thinking of the beauties of nature, studying about the strange things in the woods and the streams and the sky, and making to himself pretty speeches about them or about people.

Thus we see, in early life, how his mind was inclined, and how he was naturally training himself. There were at that time a great many deer in Virginia, and it was sport to hunt them with dogs. One part of the men and boys who went out to hunt would go on what they called the “drive”; that is, they would take the dogs and go into a part of the forest and march straight through. If the dogs “jumped” a deer, it would run off in the other direction. The hunters followed, the dogs barking and the men hallooing<sup>2</sup> with all their might, and the poor frightened deer would speed away in the other direction, as fast as its nimble legs would carry it. The other part of the men were called the “standers.” They would go a mile or two ahead of where they expected to start the deer, and stand in the little forest paths along which the animals passed to and fro in the forest. When the frightened deer came bounding along the pathway, the “standers” would shoot it down.

When the deer was killed, the lucky hunter would blow his horn with all his might, and all the hunters would come together, and they would have a great jubilee. They had a fashion, when a young man first killed a deer, to take the blood of the animal and literally smear him all over with it, and it is said that Patrick, although he was a constant hunter, was a good deal larger and

older boy when he got his first smearing than a majority of his companions in the neighborhood.

Patrick Henry was very fond of deer-hunting, but he never went on the “drive.” He always took one of the “stands,” and was not at all choice about which stand they gave him, for it seems he would much rather remain along with his thoughts than to be the heroic hunter who should bring down the deer. In fact, he frequently failed to answer the call of the lucky hunter who bagged the game, and was absent at the jollification<sup>3</sup> around the slain animal. This was a breach of politeness on the part of the hunter which his companions were very slow to forgive.

We must not conclude, however, that Patrick did not like society. On the contrary, he was very fond of it, but his enjoyments were of a peculiar cast. He did not mix in the wild and mirthful<sup>4</sup> scenes, but usually sat quiet, taking little part in the conversation, seldom, it is said, even smiling or telling a joke. He seemed lost most of the time in his thoughts. For this reason, people used to think he did not know what was going on; but they found out their mistake when they asked him about it, for he was able to repeat every word of the conversation better than any of the others could do it.

Patrick was very fond of music and learned to play on the flute and violin, and often, at the country parties, he played the fiddle for many a jolly “old Virginia reel,” which was the most popular dance in those days. He frequently joined in the dance, and, while he appeared to enjoy it immensely, it was said that he was very awkward and danced all over rather than with his feet. It was funny to see his long lanky arms and his big shoulders flying

3. Pronounced joh-lih-fuh-CAY-shun. Merriment.

4. Pronounced MERTH-full. Mirth is a synonym for amusement or laughter.

and shrugging about, while his feet seemed so heavy that he could scarcely lift them off the floor.

Patrick’s school-days ended when he was fifteen years of age. By that time there were so many brothers and sisters in the family that the father was scarcely able to support them; so he had to let the two older boys leave school. Patrick was placed behind the counter of a country store, where he stayed for one year as a clerk. His father then thought Patrick and William ought to be able to run a store for themselves, so he bought them a stock of goods, and in a country store “set them up in trade,” as it was then called.

Patrick was the manager of the store, because he had a year’s experience, and William, though older, must be his clerk, at least until he could learn all the mysteries of storekeeping from the younger brother. But the boys thought that keeping store wasn’t work, but only play, and all they needed to do was merely to wait on the customers and give them what they called for. Furthermore, they thought everybody was perfectly honest, and so they were generally, but often people who do not have the money buy more things than they can pay for. So Patrick and William trusted everybody and about one-half of the time forgot to charge the things they sold on credit, and, at the end of the year when their father came to see how much money they had made, lo! he was surprised to behold that they had sold almost everything in their store, and that they had very little money, and what they had charged up to the neighbors, if all collected, would not leave one-half so much as he had started the boys in business with at the beginning.

Thus Patrick Henry and his brother had proved great failures as merchants, and they had to hunt work with the farmers, or get to be clerks in other stores where they would have nothing to do with the management. But while the money had been wasted,

Patrick's time had not been wasted. His store was one of the most popular places in the neighborhood. People used to go there to talk and gossip with the "Henry boys," as they called them. No other place was so entertaining, or such a jolly good place to go. Every Saturday afternoon and almost every night found quite a throng of men and boys seated before the store-door in the summertime, or on goods boxes around the stove in the winter, animated in conversation.

No matter where else they might go, they never talked like they did in the "Henry boys" store; the reason of it was this: Patrick Henry, while he did little talking himself, every time he could get a crowd together began to ask somebody questions about some matter of history or something of common interest. He would carry his questions from one to another, around the company, until he would get them into a lively debate which often ended in quarrels and sometimes in a fist-fight, for they were great fighters in those days.

But no matter what they were doing, whether engaged in heated discussion or pommeling each other with their fists, Patrick was watching them closely and studying human nature. You remember that he formerly studied the woods, the birds, the brooks and the things he found in the forest. He was now studying men, and how they might be moved to good or bad deeds by speech. Perhaps he had no thought of ever becoming a great orator. He studied human nature because he loved to be doing it, and he thus gained a knowledge of men which afterwards enabled him to control them so powerfully with his wonderful eloquence.

During this period at the store, Patrick also began to read books of history. He particularly loved to study the lives of the grand old Greek and Roman heroes. He read all the orations

of that wonderful orator, Demosthenes, who lived in the city of Athens more than three hundred years before Christ, and who used to make such fiery orations against King Philip of Macedonia, who was oppressing his countrymen, so that the people of Athens would rise up and shout in their frenzy, "Let us march against Philip." He read also the beautiful speeches of Cicero, the silver-tongued orator of the Romans, whose voice was so melodious, words so well chosen and sentences so beautifully put together that it was like listening to sweet enchanted music to hear him speak.

Frequently, when customers came into the store, they heard Patrick in the back room, repeating some of these master orations, and they used to pause in the doorway before asking for the goods they wanted, and listen for a few moments to the beautiful expression he gave them. Thus it will be seen how he prepared himself to speak as forcibly as Demosthenes, yet as musically and beautifully as Cicero. Let not any of my young readers think this time was wasted. Not so; it was very profitably spent. It is not what we learn in school so much as the private training we give ourselves which makes us great in any cause.

We have spoken above of Patrick Henry's playing the violin and flute at the country parties. Like all true-hearted and manly boys, he liked the girls, and was fonder of being with them than in the society of the men, for he was always pure-minded and never given to telling vulgar stories, nor did he enjoy listening to them from others. At one of the parties he attended, when he was about seventeen years of age, he met and fell in love with a farmer's daughter, and when he was only eighteen years old did a very foolish thing which we would not advise any of our young readers to imitate. What did he do, did you ask? Why, at this early age he got married, without any money himself, and his wife's

father was so poor he could not help her. What do you think of an eighteen-year-old boy with a wife?

But before we blame Patrick Henry too much, we must remember that in those days people got married earlier than they do now. In the South many of the young men marry at the age of eighteen or nineteen years, and the girls from fifteen to seventeen. If we go into some of the far south countries, like Mexico, we find them marrying even younger. So, while Patrick Henry was, as we think, a very young groom, he was not in that day entirely out of fashion.

One day soon after the wedding, Mr. John Henry and Mr. Shelton—that was the name of Patrick’s wife’s father—met, and, between them, gave the young people enough land to make them a small farm. They built them a little house, and the young husband went to work with a little digging in the earth to support himself and his new wife. Their little cottage consisted of two rooms; one in which they cooked and ate, and the other was their sleeping-room, their sitting-room, their parlor and their spare room, so that when any of their friends came to see them and stayed all night, as they frequently did, Patrick and his wife gave up the bed to the visitors and made for themselves a pallet in a corner. This, you must remember, was not as poor a home as Abraham Lincoln had when he was a boy; but a poorer one than he had when he started his married life.

Many a day you might have seen Patrick, then a young husband not yet nineteen years of age, plowing among the stumps in his “new ground,” as he called it, cleared up in front of his cabin, with his happy girl-wife busy inside the house, or feeding the chickens about the door. It was too bad that the first year the crop on Patrick’s farm was a failure. He did not make enough to keep them alive and in the poorest kind of clothes. He proved

himself to be as poor a farmer as he had been a merchant, for at the end of the year he came out in debt. He and his wife talked the matter over, and it was decided that they should get out of debt by selling their little farm and all they had, and he should take the remainder of the money and go again into business as a merchant. He no doubt flattered himself that he would be able to profit by his past experience and make a success. The farm was sold, and the store was opened.

His old friends came again. He had no trouble to get customers, but he was too good-hearted to press anybody for money; and he occupied so much time in playing his violin and flute for the pleasure of those who came to his store to buy, and got up so many debates and his customers had such a good time generally, that at the end of two years he was worse off than before and had to give up his store. Thus, before he was more than twenty-three years of age, he had failed twice as a merchant, once as a farmer, and altogether in everything else he had attempted to do except to make people like him and to learn more about human nature and the way to control and influence men. In this he was wiser than anyone else about him.

The little store being given up, he did such various jobs of work as he could get and thus earned a poor support for his family. He had by this time also become a great reader. During his idle hours, he studied geography and history, learned all about the different countries, their rulers, and their manners and customs. He was said by everybody to be the best-read man in the community.

Often he had to go hungry or eat the very poorest and coarsest of food, but he was always cheerful and never despondent. “No use of crossing the bridge before we get to it,” he used to say to his wife. “There’s a good time coming bye and bye” was another

of his favorite expressions, though there was little prospect at this time for any good times for Patrick Henry or his family. But it did come, as we shall see, and one of the best lessons which young people can learn from his life is that of cheerfulness and hopefulness. He was, also, always truthful and rigidly honest, as we have said before. He was, also, a man of very firm character. He could not be led into anything he thought was wrong, and he was a believer in God and a true Christian. Thus he was able to be cheerful and hopeful under troubles which would cause many men to despair.

Up to this time he had never thought of becoming a lawyer, nor had any of his friends suggested it to him. He had not made a public speech, not even in a debating society, but he had read the history of the nations of the world; he had studied oratory for his own pleasure, and it suddenly dawned upon him that he might make a lawyer.

When Patrick Henry was twenty-four years old, he set to work to read law. For six weeks or two months he shut himself up with a few law books and then he went before the board of examiners and asked them to see if he did not know enough to practice law. He told them how much he had read, and they laughed at him; but in talking with him they found that he knew so much about history and other things that a lawyer needed to know, that two of them gave him their consent to practice.

The other one of the examiners, Mr. Randolph, who was not present when the other two gave him their consent, was so shocked at Mr. Henry's personal appearance and poor clothes, when he came to see him, that he told him he was not fit to be a lawyer—that no man who looked like him could be a lawyer, and he would not examine him at all. This made Patrick angry, and he answered the learned man in such a manner and gave him such

a lecture on his duty that Mr. Randolph was greatly surprised, and he tried to punish Mr. Henry for it by getting him into an argument in which he meant to show him how ignorant and unfit he was; but here Patrick Henry was at home, and he talked so smart and so well that the judge exclaimed: “Mr. Henry, I will never trust to appearances again. If your industry be only half equal to your genius, you will become an honor to your profession”; and he signed Patrick Henry's license, though it is said young Henry was at this time so ignorant of the forms of practice that he could not make out a case or present it before the court.

Like most young lawyers, he had to wait a good while before he had anything to do, and when it came it was rather by accident; but it gave him an opportunity, and that opportunity made him famous.

We will now tell you about his first law case and his first speech. There was at that time in Virginia an established church like they had in England. It was called the Episcopal Church, and the ministers were hired by the Governor. Virginia was a great tobacco-raising country, and they had a law that the farmers might pay their debts in tobacco. The sheriff and the judges of the court were paid so much a year in tobacco for their services, and the ministers also received a certain number of pounds of tobacco each year.

That seems very funny to us now; but you know there was once a time, in certain parts of the South, when they even used coon-skins for money. There are many cases where a man even paid for his license, when he wanted to get married, in coon-skins, and when the preacher “tied the knot,” the young man, if he was generous and liberal, would always load the preacher up with coon-skins as payment for his services. This was not generally so, but it was often done in new countries where coons were plentiful

and money was scarce. So in Virginia the farmer could pay his debts in tobacco at sixteen shillings a pound. But one year tobacco went up to fifty shillings a pound, therefore the farmers, who were in control, had a law made that they might pay their debts in money if they wanted to, instead of tobacco.

This law was made to hold good for only ten months, and after that time they again paid in tobacco, the price of which had gone down as low or lower than it had been before. But a few years later there came another short crop in tobacco, and the price went up to fifty shillings again, so the farmers had another law made permitting them to pay in money, but they very cautiously made this law so that it would not run out; but the ministers seemed not to have noticed it was so made and after the first year they wanted their pay in tobacco again, because it would bring them nearly double what they would get, if they were paid in money.

This brought on quite a war between the people and the ministers, and they had a big suit in court. The farmers were very mad with the clergymen, and the clergymen were very mad with the farmers, each accusing the other of wanting to cheat them. The clergymen sent word to the King of England, and the King took their side, and said that the farmer's law should be "null and void," which means that it should not be enforced, that the clergymen should be paid in tobacco. The King was very wise in this, and while it appeared that he only wanted to take the ministers' part, he was, in reality, planning to enrich himself; because, if the clergy could collect their debts from the people in tobacco, which was worth more than twice as much as the money they were entitled to, the King said he would also collect his taxes in tobacco.

So you see how wise and yet how mean the King was in his decision. The people had the law on their side, and the clergymen wanted to collect twice what the people owed them, and the King said that they should do it. The clergymen made a great noise that the people were swindling them out of their just rights. They wanted tobacco, they did not want money. They argued that it was a shame and a disgrace to swindle the ministers in that way, and insisted that they were right, because the King himself said so. The people, on the other hand, said that the ministers and officers were employed for so much a year, and that they had no right to demand their tobacco, which they could sell for two or three times as many pounds of money as they had engaged to work for.

This looks entirely reasonable, and the people were right; but the clergymen and the officers and the King wanted tobacco. You would think that it would have been better if the sheriff and the King and the judges had brought suit against the people to collect their claims in tobacco; but you will see how cunning they were in having the ministers do it instead of doing it themselves. All the people loved the ministers, and they would sympathize with their cause perhaps, when they would not sympathize with the officers. Therefore, it was decided that the ministers should bring suit, and if they could make the people pay them in tobacco, then they would have to pay the officers and the King also in tobacco.

A lawyer by the name of Lewis was to plead the cause of the people, and a Mr. Lyons was to plead the cause of the clergymen; but when the King decided that the clergymen were right and the people were wrong, and that the law should not be obeyed, Mr. Lewis, the people's lawyer, told them they could not gain their cause against the King, and so he gave it up.

There were very few lawyers then in the country, and they were nearly all in the employ of the King, so the people could find

no one to plead their cause, and, as the last resort, they turned to Patrick Henry, a young lawyer of twenty-four years, who had never made a speech in his life. The place where the case was to be tried was at Hanover Courthouse, and the judge who was to sit on the bench was Patrick Henry's own father, and among those who opposed the people was his own uncle for whom he was named, the Rev. Patrick Henry. Was this not an embarrassing situation for the young lawyer who had never made a speech?

The day came. It was one of those beautiful Indian summer days which comes in November in the South. Patrick Henry was early at the courthouse, and great throngs of people gathered in from all directions. Never before in Hanover had there been so many farmers present on any court day. The decision of the case amounted to thousands of dollars of loss or gain to them. The clergymen came from all over the State, which was then, you know, only a Colony—though much larger than it is now. There were twenty or more of the most learned clergymen of the nation present. They had come to frown upon the young lawyer who was to plead against them and to scowl at the people, who, they pretended, were trying to rob them.

Patrick Henry was nervous. It was his first case. He had never spoken in court, and he walked restlessly about among the farmers, speaking a word here and there to this or that one, with many of them pulling at his elbows, offering him advice. He could plainly see that they were afraid they had a very poor lawyer, and he felt, himself, that they had. Presently, he saw his learned and eloquent uncle, Rev. Patrick Henry, drive up in his carriage, and, before any of the clergymen could get to him, the young lawyer dashed up, grasped his uncle by the hand and pleaded with him to go away. The young lawyer said: "Sir, I have never spoken in my life, and your presence here will add to my embarrassment. My

own father must sit on the bench, and that will be bad enough. Besides, there will be twenty clergymen to criticize me. All of this I can stand, but I am sure I could not have my own uncle, whose name I bear, sitting among them frowning upon me. For my sake I beg you to go away."

The uncle replied in kindly but regretful tones: "Patrick, I am surprised to find you arrayed against the ministry, you are doing yourself great injustice and ruining your future prospects for usefulness."

"That may be," said Patrick, "but I see no moral reason why I should not accept the case for the people, besides, in my own heart, I am firmly convinced that they are right, and with all due respect, sir, that you and the clergy are wrong. For my sake and the respect that I bear you, will you not go away? I shall have to say some hard words against the clergy this day, and I would not speak them in your ears."

There was a respectfulness in his tones that his uncle could but appreciate and an earnestness in his manner which he could not resist, so re-entering his carriage, he simply said: "For your sake, Patrick, I will be absent; though your cause is wrong, I have too much respect for your feelings to allow my presence to embarrass you." So saying, he drove away.

The court was opened. The array before Patrick's eyes was almost fearful. The most learned men of the Colony, the severest critics in the New World, were against him, and the courthouse was crowded. On the outside, the windows were thronged with anxious faces looking in.

Mr. Lyons made a short speech, simply explaining to the jury the fact that the King had decreed his side to be right. He pleaded that the clergy were the greatest benefactors of the Colony, that it was a shame to mistreat them, and that this law, if enforced,

simply robbed them of their just allowance. His closing was eloquent and beautiful, and the ministers nodded their assent when he took his seat. He had presented their cause well.

Now came the first trial of Patrick Henry's strength. No one had ever heard him speak, and everyone was curious. Even his opponents seemed sorry for him. He rose and stood for a moment in an awkward manner, and, when he began, faltered much in his speech. The people hung their heads, and the ministers exchanged sly, smiling looks of derision at each other. His father, it is said, almost sunk behind the desk, he was so mortified and confused; but these circumstances only lasted for a few moments.

Patrick Henry's soul rose within him, his whole appearance changed, the fire of his eloquence was kindled, and he seemed to forget himself; his figure stood erect, his bearing was lofty, and his face shone with a grandeur which no one had ever seen upon it before. His awkward actions became graceful to behold; his voice, no longer faltering, was charming and beautiful. Words seemed to crowd for utterance; there was lightning in his eyes as he turned upon the clergymen that seemed to rive<sup>5</sup> them like a thunderbolt. He literally made their blood run cold and their hair rise on ends. All eyes were now fastened upon him. Men looked at each other with surprise, and then, held by the spell of his eyes, the majesty of his attitude and the power of his words, they could look away no more. The old father stood erect behind the desk, with tears of delight streaming down his cheeks. The jury seemed bewildered.

No one can describe that speech, and it has never been printed. It was delivered under the impulse of the moment; but it was declared by the clergymen themselves, against whom it was spoken, that no such speech, as they believed, had ever fallen from the lips of man, and, to this day, in Hanover, Virginia, the

5. Tear apart.

highest compliment that can be paid to a speaker is to say: "He is almost equal to Patrick Henry when he plead against the parsons." The clergymen had sued for heavy damages, but the jury, without scarcely leaving their seats, granted them only one penny. Mr. Lyons made a motion for a new trial; that is, he tried to get his case tried over, but the court refused to give them a new hearing.

Was ever such a victory won by a new lawyer? It was the first speech Patrick Henry ever made, and it was undoubtedly one of the greatest speeches ever delivered in the world before a court. At its close the people, who had hung their heads in shame at the beginning, rushed into the courthouse, seized the young lawyer in spite of the sheriff's cry for order, hoisted him on their shoulders, carried him out of the house and over the town, with a wild multitude following and screaming his praises at the top of their voices.

Patrick Henry had at last found the calling for which he was intended, and to which he was suited. From this time forward he was the greatest lawyer, not only in Hanover Courthouse, but of all Virginia. He had all the cases he could attend to, and made plenty of money to support his family, who had for many years been struggling with poverty.

He lived for nearly forty years after this memorable day at Hanover Courthouse. His life was full of honor and usefulness to his country, and he has made several other speeches, parts of which almost every schoolboy has at one time or another used as a declamation.

And now that we have told you of the hardships and troubles of Patrick Henry's early life, let us tell you of the great things he did in the service of his country.

In January, 1765, the famous "Stamp Act" was passed by the British Parliament. The colonists were to be oppressed, and no one dared to openly rebel against it.

In May, Patrick Henry was elected to the House of Burgesses (that is what the Virginia Legislature was called in those days), and he pledged himself to his people to do all he could to oppose it. There were many learned and eloquent speakers in the House and he was not expected to take the lead.

The fine gentlemen in the assembly, who lived in fine old Virginia mansions, and wore fine clothes, made fun of Patrick's country way of talking, his "homespun" clothes and his awkward manners; but when he spoke they could not help admiring his wonderful command of language and his power over men. His first speech was against rich men who wanted to lend the Colony's money to themselves and their friends. This made them his great enemies, but the other side—the common people—admired him more than ever.

At last it came time to consider the hated "Stamp Act." None of the great men dared to speak against it openly. So Patrick Henry drew up some resolutions declaring that the English Parliament had no right to make this tax upon the people, and, furthermore, they had no right to make any laws against the interest of the Colonies. He said they were responsible to the King alone, and that the House of Burgesses and the Governor alone had the right to make the colonists pay taxes.

After the reading of his resolutions, Patrick Henry was assailed with a storm of words and much ridicule by those who favored or were afraid of England. There were hot speeches from several gentlemen, and a less heroic spirit than Henry's would have said not a word more. No one thought the resolutions would pass.

At length when the storm had subsided, Patrick Henry arose to speak. His face was deathly pale, his thin lips quivered, but his

eyes had a look of awful<sup>6</sup> determination in them. Stretching his long arms at full length toward the President (called the Speaker) he began and delivered the greatest speech perhaps ever heard in America. The walls rang with the mighty force of his words, and everyone was overpowered with his wonderful eloquence, as they had been in the famous "Parson Case." They shouted "treason" at him, but he could not be frightened; but all the time grew bolder and more eloquent. When he closed this great speech, every member but two voted for his resolutions.

Patrick Henry had been the first one who dared oppose England. His wonderful speech was printed and sent all over the Colonies, north and south, and it was even sent to England; and in a few months Parliament repealed (that is, removed) the hated "Stamp Act."

But the spirit of liberty was now awake in the people, and they demanded relief from other unjust laws which England tried to impose, and in this effort Patrick Henry was one of the foremost men in the country. He was greater than all other men in Virginia, and he, with Thomas Jefferson and Richard Henry Lee, kept telling the people they ought to be free.

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6. As in full or worthy of awe.



## MOLLY PITCHER

(1754–1832)

*Molly Pitcher was probably born Mary “Molly” Ludwig; however, historians can’t be completely sure that Molly Ludwig and the legendary Revolutionary War heroine “Molly Pitcher” were the same person. Some people even think that Molly Pitcher is a character created from stories about several different women. Because of all this mystery, dates and particulars about Molly’s life are often inconsistent.*

*Regardless, “Molly Pitcher” was a one-of-a-kind woman. If she was Molly Ludwig, she was born in New Jersey in the mid-1700s and married William Hays. When William went into the army, Molly went with him, traveling with the troops to help cook and take care of wounded soldiers. During battles, Molly would run*

*back and forth bringing drinking water to the soldiers and dousing the overheated cannons with water as well.*

*During the Battle of Monmouth, her husband collapsed at the cannon he manned. Molly dropped her pitcher and became Captain Molly for a bit, operating the cannon herself! Legend has it that at one point an enemy cannon ball passed between Molly's legs, tearing her dress. She wryly glanced at the soldiers on either side of her and said, "Well, that could've been worse."*

*Years later, the Pennsylvania legislature awarded Molly for her bravery, giving her an award and a yearly gift of forty dollars until she passed away.*



The following excerpt is from *American Heroes and Heroines* by Pauline Carrington Bouvé, chapter "Molly Pitcher."

Old Monmouth Court House in New Jersey, where the famous battle of Monmouth was fought in the year 1778, preserves many stirring tales of Revolutionary days among its yellowed records. Tales of the "Pine Robbers,"<sup>1</sup> who spread terror and destruction along the Jersey coasts, and who made the farmers in the neighborhood live very anxious lives—tales of those old days when British Tory and American Patriot were at feud in house and home as well as on the bloody battlefield.

But among these stories of long ago none stirs the blood with a warmer thrill of admiration than that of brave Molly Pitcher, whose heroism on Monmouth field has found a lasting record in the pages of American history.

1. The Pine Robbers were a gang of British loyalists who liked to pillage, steal, and sometimes even murder. They would hide in the dense New Jersey Pine Barrens.

Some time toward the middle of the eighteenth century there came to America from Germany an emigrant by the name of John George Ludwig, who settled in the colony of Pennsylvania. Here—in the town of Carlisle, probably, though the exact locality of her birth is not positively known—was born to John George Ludwig, October 13th, 1744, a little blue-eyed daughter, whom he called Mary.

Little Mary grew up tall and strong and healthy, with the fair complexion and red hair of her German ancestors, and a good deal of their love of home and country. The Ludwigs being poor, Mary became a servant girl in the family of Dr. William Irvine, an Irish gentleman who was living in Carlisle. This Dr. Irvine, who had come to the Colonies as surgeon on board a British man-of-war, afterwards became an officer in the Continental or American Army. He was one of the most zealous of the patriots, and it was due to his influence that many of the colonists of Pennsylvania were aroused to a spirit of independence and a realization of the necessity of asserting and defending their rights. This was no easy task, for a great number of these colonists belonged to the Society of Friends,<sup>2</sup> a religious sect that was opposed to war upon any conditions, and also because most of the proprietary owners were in favor of the Crown.

It is on account of General Irvine's nationality, perhaps, that the earlier historians of the Revolution supposed Mary Ludwig to be Irish—a mistake set right by recent investigation.

It was while in General Irvine's household, no doubt, that "Molly," as she was familiarly known, first learned to love the country of her birth, and there was sown the seed of that patriotism and loyalty that was one day to make the humble servant girl a soldier and a heroine.

2. These Christians are also called the Quakers.

In July of the year 1769 Molly left the roof of her master and became the wife of a barber by the name of John Hays. Whether or not Molly fired her barber with warlike ambition is an open question, but at any rate Hays was commissioned gunner in Proctor's First Pennsylvania Artillery, on the 14th of December, 1775, changing the peaceful occupation of cutting off hair with shears to the more exciting one of cutting off heads with cannon balls. With a loyalty born of devotion and unselfishness, Molly determined to follow her husband; so when Gunner Hays marched off with Proctor's First, Molly marched with him.

Through the din of battle, the heat of summer and the cold of winter, the gunner and his faithful wife followed the fortunes of the American army, but it was not until the retreat of our forces at Fort Clinton<sup>3</sup> that Molly's first deed of daring became a byword<sup>4</sup> in tent and camp.

Finding that it was necessary to leave the enemy in possession, Hays started to fire his gun as a parting salute to the British. In the rush and confusion of the moment he dropped his lighted match. There was no time to lose, and there was danger of being captured, so he did not stop. Molly, who was behind him, seized the match from the ground, ran to the gun, touched it off, and then scampered down the hill as fast as her legs would carry her, to join the soldiers. This happened some months before the famous battle of Monmouth.

Down in Monmouth, meanwhile, the people were busy defending themselves from the attacks of the "Pine Robbers," and never dreamed that there would ever be any fighting in their midst.

3. A fort near the Hudson River in the state of New York.

4. A phrase or motto that captures a principle; sometimes derived from an anecdote—a short, fun story.

The murmur of the sea on the one side and the murmur of the pine forests on the other made a melody of nature that shut out the distant roar of warfare, and so the tramp, tramp, tramp, of the British army that suddenly aroused them must have been a very great surprise.

The arrival of a French fleet, with the gallant young hero, Lafayette, had startled Sir William Howe, who was at that time holding Philadelphia in siege. Sir William and his red-coated officers had been having a gay time in the old Quaker city; there had been balls and dinners and a great carnival during the winter, and when Dr. Franklin,<sup>5</sup> who was with the American Commissioners in France, heard of all this gayety, he remarked shrewdly: "Howe has not taken Philadelphia, but Philadelphia has taken *him*."

When the French fleet landed, and he knew that France had acknowledged America as an independent government, Howe began to think like Dr. Franklin, perhaps.

Preparations were made to raise the siege of Philadelphia at once, and Sir Henry Clinton succeeded to the command of the British army, with orders to go to New York by water. This plan of route was changed, however, and so it came about that the line of march was through the Jerseys, and so it happened that old Monmouth became the scene of conflict. The line of the British baggage wagons was twelve miles long, and the sandy roads made its progress slow.

When Washington heard of Clinton's changed route he determined to march forward and head him off.

Arriving at a little place called Allentown, the English commander found the American force at his front. He pushed on, and on the 27th of June, encamped at Monmouth Court House

5. Benjamin Franklin.

on rising ground that was hemmed in on all sides by woods and marshes. General Washington, after grave deliberation, decided to risk the fight, and, although the battle was hotly contested and indeed almost lost three separate times, the American army was victorious. That memorable Sunday, the 28th of June, 1778, was the hottest day of the year. The heat was so great that the soldiers were ordered to take off their coats, yet through the heat and dust and smoke and blood, Molly, the gunner's wife, carried water to her husband and the soldiers on the field, all day. The little spring from which she fetched the water was at the bottom of the hill, and, instead of a pail, she brought it in a pitcher. This, most probably, was the origin of her name, "Molly Pitcher," among the soldiers, a name that from that day has become historic.

There had been a fierce charge of the enemy's cavalry on Hays' gun, and just as she was returning with the refreshing draught for the almost perishing men, she saw her husband fall mortally wounded.<sup>6</sup> Rushing forward she heard an officer say, "Wheel back the gun; there's no one here to serve it."

Checking the blinding rush of tears, Molly threw down her pitcher and seized the rammer of the gun. "I'll fire it," she said, and taking her place beside the dead gunner's cannon she filled his place during the rest of the day. The story of the brave deed has been told in verse.

"Wheel back the gun,' the gunner said,  
When a flash before him stood  
A figure dashed with smoke and blood,  
With streaming hair, with eyes aflame,  
With lips that falter the gunner's name,  
'Wheel back *his* gun that never yet,

6. Though "mortally wounded" means that the wound he received was the cause of his death, Molly's husband did not die in battle, but years later.

His fighting duty did forget?  
His voice shall speak though he be dead,  
*I'll* serve my husband's gun!' she said.  
Oh, Molly, Molly, with eyes so blue,  
Oh, Molly, Molly, here's to you!  
Sweet Honor's roll will aye be richer,  
To hold the name of Molly Pitcher!"

The next day General Greene sought for Molly, and had her up to General Washington, who praised her for her courage and who presented her then and there with the commission of sergeant in the Continental Army. As the half dazed Molly stood before the great general in her soldier's coat and cap, cheer after



ABOVE: *Molly Pitcher at the Battle of Monmouth* (i.e., Mary "Molly" Hays loading cannon at Battle of Monmouth, 1778) by J. C. Armytage after A. Chappel, c. 1859.

cheer for “Sergeant Molly Pitcher” went up from ten thousand throats. It must have been a stirring scene—stately Washington and the bloodstained, smoke-begrimed figure of the gunner’s wife, who was now an officer and forever a heroine—a scene that must today thrill the heart of every boy and girl who reads the story of American history!

“Next day on that field so hardly won,  
Stately and calm stands Washington  
And looks where our gallant Greene doth lead,  
A figure clad in motley weed<sup>7</sup>—  
A soldier’s cap and a soldier’s coat  
Masking a woman’s petticoat.  
He greets our Molly in kindly wise,  
He bids her raise her fearful eyes,  
And he hails her there before them all,  
Comrade and soldier whate’er befall,  
And since she has played a man’s full part,  
A man’s reward for her loyal heart!  
And Sergeant Molly Pitcher’s name  
Be writ henceforth on the shield of fame.”

The battle on Monmouth was the only battle of the Revolution in which every one of the thirteen colonies was represented, so Sergeant Molly’s is a matter of national as well as local pride.

For eight years she did her humble part in the great struggle, and when the war was over she went back to her old home in Carlisle, where she engaged employment as a nurse and where in later years she kept a little shop.

One can easily imagine how Sergeant Molly’s shop was a favorite place for the boys and girls of the town to gather on winter

7. “Motley” means mismatched; here, “weed” is a word for clothing.  
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nights, when she would sit behind the counter and tell them about that dreadful winter at Valley Forge where Washington’s brave men suffered from cold and hunger; or on summer evenings how the children would cluster about the veteran’s knee and beg to hear again the story of Monmouth.

To the soldiers she was always “Captain” Molly—and the French officers and soldiers admired the woman soldier so much that whenever she passed their lines her sergeant’s cocked hat would always be filled with French coins. As she grew old Molly grew garrulous,<sup>8</sup> and she was very fond of rehearsing these old stories of her soldier life.

She made an unfortunate second marriage, taking for a husband a worthless scamp of a fellow by the name of McCauley or McKnolly, who lived on her sergeant’s half pay and her hard earnings.

By an especial act of the State Legislature she was given a pension of eighty dollars a year. This act was passed on the 27th of February, 1822. She died in 1823.

In 1877 the people of Cumberland erected a monument to Sergeant Molly’s memory. The inscription reads:

“Molly McCauley,  
Renowned in History as Molly Pitcher  
The Heroine of Monmouth.  
Died January, 1823, Aged 79 years.  
Erected by the Citizens of Cumberland County.  
July 4th, 1876.”

There is more than a thrilling story in this woman’s life, there is a lesson of endurance, loyalty and courage, and more—the lesson of a life not spoiled by praise and popularity.

8. Pronounced GAIR-ih-luss. Very chatty.  
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“Oh, Molly, Molly with eyes so blue,  
 Oh, Molly, Molly, here’s to you!  
 Sweet Honor’s roll will aye be richer,  
 To hold the name of Molly Pitcher!”



ELI WHITNEY  
 (1765–1825)

**“It is to be remembered that the pursuit of wealth, by means of new inventions, is a very precarious and uncertain one...”**

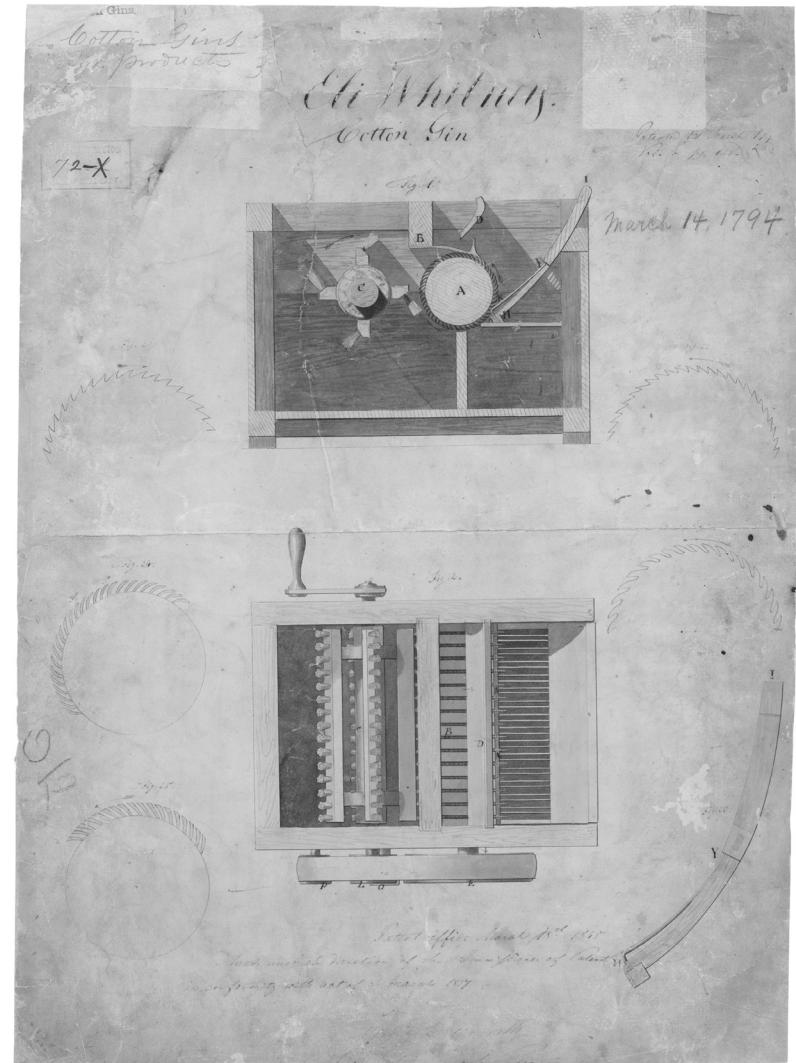
—Patent petition to Congress (April 16, 1812)

*Eli Whitney had a quiet beginning on a farm in Massachusetts. He loved machinery and making things, like nails and hatpins, but when he went to college at Yale, it was with law in mind. However, as happens to many people, Eli ended up working with his passion rather than his degree.*

*After graduating from Yale, Eli met Catherine Greene, who was interested in a problem that plagued plantations: the market for tobacco was declining, and though cotton grew plentifully, it*

took a long time to comb out the seeds. Catherine's fiancé, Phineas Miller, and Eli set themselves to remedy this problem. Soon, Eli had developed the "cotton gin" ("gin" being short for "engine"), which could do in an hour what men could do in a day!

Eli also developed the "interchangeable parts" system for making weapons. Instead of having every worker put together a complete musket, with parts that were incidentally unique, Eli deputized each worker to man a machine that would make exact copies of a single musket part; the parts were assembled later. This way, if part of a musket broke, the part could easily be replaced because all such parts were made exactly alike. Though it took a few years to perfect this new process, eventually it fulfilled a government request of 15,000 guns in two years. Eli's tireless spirit of invention is why he is sometimes called the "father of American technology."



ABOVE: Eli Whitney's Cotton Gin, patent drawing (March 14, 1794). Courtesy of the U.S. National Archives.)

The following excerpt is from *Great Inventors and Their Inventions* by Frank P. Bachman, chapter “Eli Whitney and the Invention of the Cotton Gin.”

### Boyish Traits of Whitney

**E**li Whitney was born at Westboro, Massachusetts, in 1765. His parents lived on a farm, and belonged to that sturdy class who provide well for their children, and train them to be industrious, saving, honest, and honorable,—virtues which boys and girls must have, if they are to lead clean lives, be useful, and be truly successful.

As a mere boy, Eli had a passion for pulling things to pieces, to see how they were made and how they worked. His sister tells this story: “His father’s watch was the greatest piece of mechanism Eli had seen as yet. He was very anxious to look inside of it and to examine the works, but was not permitted to do so. One Sunday morning, observing that his father was going to meeting, and was leaving at home the wonderful little machine, he...made believe that he was sick, as an apology for not going to church. As soon as the family were out of sight, he flew to the room where the watch hung, and taking it down, he was so delighted with... the movements of the wheels, that he took it to pieces before he thought what he was doing. His father was a stern parent, and he...would have been punished...for his idle curiosity, had the mischief been found out. He put the works all so neatly together, however, that his father never discovered...what he had done, until Eli told him many years afterwards.”

Eli was equally fond of making things. “Our father,” writes the sister, “had a workshop...and a variety of tools, also a lathe.<sup>1</sup> This gave my brother an opportunity...to learn the use of tools when

1. Pronounced LAYTH, with a “th” sound as in the word “this.” A woodcarving machine that spins the piece to be carved against an interchangeable blade. Table legs that are rounded or have designs cut into them are often made with a lathe.

very young... He was always making something in the shop, and seemed not to like working out on the farm. On a time, after the death of our mother, when our father had been absent from home two or three days, on his return he inquired of the housekeeper what the boys had been doing. She told him what B. and J. had been about. ‘But what has Eli been doing?’ said he. She replied, ‘He has been making fiddles.’ ‘Ah! I fear Eli will have to take his portion in fiddles!’”

Eli was not more than fifteen or sixteen years of age when he began to put his gift for making things to practical use. It was the time of the Revolutionary War. Nails, made then by hand, were scarce and brought a good price. Eli proposed to his father that he give him the needed tools to make nails. The father did, and it was not long before Eli was supplying all the neighbors for miles around. Besides, he put new blades in broken knives, and did different kinds of curious jobs in a way which exceeded the skill of the country smiths. When the war closed, it was no longer profitable to make nails, but fashion came to young Whitney’s rescue. The ladies of the time used long pins to fasten on their bonnets. Whitney made these pins with such skill and finish that he had a monopoly of the trade. He also built up a good business in walking canes.

When about nineteen, Whitney began to wish for a better education than could be obtained in the district school. By working in his shop, and by teaching school for two winters, he saved enough money to make a start. He entered Yale University in the fall of 1789. When a boy like Whitney enters college, now, he is almost certain to take a course in mechanical engineering. But when Whitney went to Yale, there was no such course. There was only one course, the classical, made up for the most part of Greek, Latin, and mathematics, with a little science. Though

Whitney had no opportunity at Yale to prepare himself to become an engineer, he never lost his interest in making things.

One day a teacher found a piece of apparatus out of order, and said in Whitney's presence, "I am sorry, but it must go abroad for repair, to the shop it came from."

Whitney replied, "I think I might mend it."

Within a week the machine was as good as new.

### **Visit to the South**

About the only opening for a college graduate in 1792, when Whitney finished his studies at Yale, was to become a minister, a lawyer, or a teacher. Few college graduates thought then of going into business, and there was little or no engineering work. Whitney decided, at least for a time, to take up teaching, so he secured a place to tutor the children of a wealthy gentleman at Savannah, Georgia. On the same boat for Savannah, was Mrs. Nathanael Greene, widow of the famous General Greene. Mrs. Greene saw that Whitney was a young man of character, and the two became well acquainted before they reached Georgia. When Whitney arrived at Savannah, he found that his employer, instead of being willing to pay one hundred dollars a year and board, for the teaching of his children, as he had promised to do, was now unwilling to pay more than fifty dollars a year. Whitney refused to take the position. This left him in a strange city, without friends and almost without money. Mrs. Greene, on hearing of his troubles, invited him to her plantation, some twelve miles from Savannah.

Whitney was not long in winning the hearts of Mrs. Greene's children. His skillful fingers made for them many wonderful toys, and he repaired others that were broken. Nor did Mrs. Greene's respect for Whitney grow less as she came to know him better.

She soon learned also that she was entertaining an inventor of the first rank. One evening, while making a piece of embroidery on a frame called a tambour, she complained that the frame tore the delicate silk threads of her work. An evening or two later, Whitney presented her with a frame to do the same work, but made in a different way. The new frame was much better than the old one, and Mrs. Greene wanted to know where he had obtained it. To her surprise, he replied, "Oh! I had just got it out of my head."

Early in January, 1793, three former comrades of General Greene's visited Mrs. Greene. Being planters, they talked of farming and about what could and what could not be raised at a profit. They all agreed that much of their upland would raise good cotton, but there was no profit in growing cotton, because it cost so much to separate the seeds from the lint. They deplored greatly the lack of a machine to do away with this tedious and costly work, whereupon Mrs. Greene said, "Gentlemen, why don't you apply to my young friend Mr. Whitney; he can make anything."

Whitney was called in, but when he learned what the planters wanted, he assured them that he did not know how to make such a machine. Still, to have the need pointed out to him, and to be asked to make a machine, aroused all of the inventive genius there was in him.

### **Inventing the Cotton Gin**

The very next day saw him on his way to Savannah to get some cotton in the seed. Returning, he told Mr. Miller, who was at that time manager of Mrs. Greene's plantation, and afterwards her husband, what he intended to do. Mrs. Greene also became a party to the secret. They were scarcely less enthusiastic than Whitney himself. A room in the basement of the house served

for a shop. Here they set up a workbench and assembled a few common tools. This done, Whitney set to work.

In Asia, the West Indies, and along the coast in the South, a crude kind of roller gin was in use, made of two rollers, which revolved very close together. The seed cotton put in on one side was drawn between the revolving rollers, as clothes are drawn through a clothes wringer. The seeds too large to go between the rollers were broken off, and dropped down on the opposite side from the cotton. This roller gin answered fairly well for the black seed cotton of Asia and the West Indies, and what little was raised along the coast in the South, as it has a long fiber, and large seeds loosely attached. With a roller gin one man could clean from fifty to sixty pounds of black seed cotton in a day.

But the roller gin would not clean the green seed cotton raised on the uplands of Georgia, which has a short fiber and small seeds firmly attached. Whitney, however, obtained a valuable suggestion from the roller gin. He thought it would be a good idea to make a machine which would shove or thrust the cotton through slits so narrow that when the cotton was thrust through, the seeds would be torn off, just as they were broken off when the cotton was drawn between the rollers of the roller gin. How could such a machine be made?

Whitney's first successful gin had a hopper to hold the cotton. Iron bars placed close together in pairs formed one side of the hopper, and heavy boards the other. Reaching well up into the hopper was a wooden cylinder, armed with rows of wire teeth curved slightly back from the direction in which the cylinder moved. When the cylinder turned, the short wire teeth grabbed small bunches of cotton, and thrust these through the slits between the iron bars. The pressure of the cotton on the sides of the slits pulled off the seeds, which dropped into a trough, while

the cotton fiber was drawn on through the slits. Most of the fiber fell from the wire teeth. What still held on was pushed off by big brushes on the left of the machine, which revolved in an opposite direction and four times as fast as the cylinder.

Whitney did not make a machine like this at first. The hopper of iron gratings and boards was clear in his mind from the start. The part giving the most trouble was the teeth of the cylinder. His first idea was to use teeth like the teeth of a circular saw. But he had at hand no iron plates thin and strong enough to make such teeth. Fortunately, there arrived at this time, at Mrs. Greene's, a coil of heavy iron wire, brought to make a bird cage for the daughter. The sight of this wire suggested to Whitney making wire teeth. The wire was too large and had to be drawn smaller. This was slow work with Whitney's crude tools. But he was an expert. Had he not drawn thousands of bonnet pins? Trial after trial was made with wire teeth of different lengths and shapes. He finally learned that teeth about an inch long, and curved slightly back from the direction in which the cylinder turned, were the best, and would take out all the seeds and not greatly injure the fiber. But every little while the teeth would become clogged, and it was hard work to get the cotton off. Mrs. Greene one day saw Whitney working away, cleaning the clogged teeth.

"Why don't you clean the cotton off this way?" and she began to brush away with a hearth brush.

"Just the thing!" exclaimed Whitney. Forthwith, a revolving brush was set up just back of the toothed cylinder.

Towards the end of the winter of 1793, Whitney completed his first machine. It was hardly finished before Mrs. Greene invited a number of friends in to see it work. With Whitney's little gin, scarcely harder to turn by hand than a grindstone, one man could clean as much cotton as fifty men cleaned in the old way.

The planters looked on in amazement, and were quick to see that, with this machine to take out the seeds, they could raise cotton at a good profit. They congratulated Whitney on his ingenuity. They urged him to get a patent at once, telling him that his invention was sure to bring him wealth and honor. Whitney was too much of a Yankee<sup>2</sup> to be averse either to wealth or to honor. He and Mr. Miller entered into a partnership to take out a patent, and to make and sell gins. Mr. Miller was to supply the money.

So enthusiastic were the planters over the outlook for raising cotton, that it was hard for them to keep such a secret to themselves. Before long the news was all over Georgia. Crowds gathered from all parts of the state. The machine had not yet been patented, and Mr. Miller would not let them see it. One night, the shed in which it was kept was broken open and the machine carried away. It thus came about that gins were made after Whitney's idea before he secured his patent.

### **Seeking the Reward**

Miller and Whitney, as the firm was called, made a mistake often made by young men. They wanted to make a lot of money, and they wanted to make it quickly. Instead of asking a modest sum for the use of a gin and letting anyone make one who wanted to, they proposed to build and own all the gins that were to be used. For ginning the cotton, they proposed to take from the planters each third pound of clean cotton. This was an exorbitant charge. The very best cotton planters resented such a price and were angry at what they called a monopoly.

The gins built for use at this time had as a rule eighty rows of teeth, and were worked by two horses or oxen, or by water power.

With such a gin one man could clean five thousand pounds of seed cotton, or prepare from a thousand to twelve hundred pounds of clean cotton for the market in a day, which is as much as a thousand men could clean by hand. Is it any wonder that these two young men had visions of great and immediate wealth?

From the first, Miller and Whitney found it difficult to obtain the money they needed to build a factory and to procure tools and materials. To build gins in large numbers also proved a bigger undertaking than either of the partners had supposed, for in the days when the cotton gin was young, there were few skilled mechanics, and there were no self-acting lathes, or planes, or drills. Everything was done by hand.

Then, too, the young men had bad luck. The factory which they built at New Haven, Connecticut, was hardly in good working order before it caught fire, and building, machinery, and finished gins were destroyed. Though steps were taken at once to build a new factory, this accident lessened the number of gins they were able to make. As late as 1796, they had only thirty gins of their own at work in the whole state of Georgia.

In the meantime, the production of cotton in the South increased by leaps and bounds. In 1792, the year before the invention of the cotton gin, there were raised and sent out of the United States 138,000 pounds of cotton. In 1793, about 487,000 pounds were exported; in 1794, about 1,000,000; and in 1800, about 17,000,000 pounds.

The planters put in cotton, expecting to take the seeds out of it with one of Whitney's gins. Even if the planters had been willing to pay one pound out of each three for ginning—and there were many who were not—Miller and Whitney had not and could not possibly have built gins enough to clean the entire cotton crop. What were the planters to do? Were they to let their cotton stand

2. An American.

in the field and spoil, because there was no gin owned and made by Miller and Whitney at hand to clean it? Were they to stop raising cotton, because two young men had a patent on a great invention, and had a foolish idea about how to make a fortune out of it? The planters did what it was natural to expect them to do. They had some near-by carpenter and blacksmith make them a gin, and with it they cleaned their cotton.

Seeing what the planters were doing, Miller and Whitney gave up the idea of making and owning all the gins used. They now tried to collect royalty of two hundred dollars a year on each gin in operation. A tax of two hundred dollars a year on a machine which a local carpenter and blacksmith can make at a cost of from fifty to one hundred dollars, and which had cost the inventor but three months of effort, was excessive. A few planters paid the fee, but most of them refused. An agent sent out through Georgia to collect these royalties was not able to get money enough even to pay his expenses.

Miller and Whitney had other troubles quite as serious as trying to collect royalties from planters. Hodgen Homes, of Georgia, patented a gin, called the “saw gin.” It was made like Whitney’s, except that dull teeth like the teeth of a circular saw were used instead of wire teeth. Homes’s “saw gin” took out the seeds better than Whitney’s, and did less injury to the cotton. Naturally, people preferred it to Whitney’s, and it was on the point of driving his machine from the field.

Whitney’s first idea, you will remember, was to use saw teeth. But iron plates thin and strong enough to make saw teeth were not to be had, so he fell back on wire teeth. Whitney therefore felt that Homes was using his idea, and he brought suit in court to prevent the making of “saw gins.” Unfortunately for Whitney, in his application for a patent nothing was said either in words

or in drawings about saw teeth. For this reason, it was hard for Whitney to prove that the idea of using saw teeth belonged to him and not to Homes. He finally succeeded and Homes’s patent was taken away.

Finding it difficult to keep others from making and selling gins after their model, and being unable to collect a royalty from the planters, Miller and Whitney now thought it would be best to sell the right to use their gin to the states themselves. In this way they received altogether ninety thousand dollars. Much of this sum was spent for lawyers’ fees and other expenses. What little remained made up in large part Whitney’s reward for his invention, and for years of worry and disappointment.

If the cotton gin failed to bring to Whitney the wealth of which he dreamed, it did bring great wealth to the South. The invention came at a time when the old products of the South, such as tobacco and rice, were cheap, and when it was hard to find profitable use for her lands and for her slaves. The cotton gin created for her a new crop, “King Cotton,” in which there were enormous profits. These profits made the South rich, adding millions of dollars to the value of her plantations.

### **Making Muskets**

However, Whitney was destined to become rich. He was too gifted a man to be crushed by disappointment over his first invention. As soon as he saw that there was a small chance of getting much of anything out of the cotton gin, he looked about for a field where he could use the genius he had for mechanics and invention, and where by industry and economy he might perhaps make the fortune which he once thought was all but in his hands. He began to make muskets for the government, and in 1798 he built a factory at New Haven, Connecticut.

Whitney's genius for invention showed itself no less in manufacturing muskets than in making the first cotton gin. Before his day, one man made the lock of a gun, another carved the stock, another drilled out the barrel, and so on. Each workman had considerable skill, did everything by hand, and made one entire piece. But no two locks, or stocks, or barrels were exactly alike.

If the lock of a musket broke, no other lock would fit; a new lock had to be made for that particular gun.

Whitney changed all this. He invented power machines to cut, to file, to drill, and to bore, which did away with hand machines. He divided the making of a musket into about a hundred different parts, and divided the making of each part into a number of single steps, so that little skill was needed by a workman to do any one of them. Each part was made after a pattern, so that all locks, all stocks, and all barrels were exactly alike. If part of a musket broke, it could be replaced at slight cost, by a new piece from the factory, which was sure to fit.

Whitney was the first to manufacture anything in this new way. His ideas were followed by others, and similar methods are now used in making all kinds of things. For this reason, Whitney is often called the "father of modern factory methods." He will always be honored, of course, as the inventor of the cotton gin, but his right to fame rests no less on what he taught the world about the use of machines in the making of common things.



## DOLLY MADISON (1768–1849)

**“I am accordingly ready; I have pressed as many cabinet papers into trunks as to fill one carriage; our private property must be sacrificed, as it is impossible to procure wagons for its transportation.”**

—Extract from a letter written to Dolly Madison's sister (August 23, 1814)

*Dolly (sometimes spelled “Dolley”) Madison might have been remembered as simply the First Lady of President James Madison. However, Dolly made a name for herself! Anyone who knew her would say that this Quaker-born lady was sociable, energetic, and tough in a pinch.*

*At age twenty-five, Dolly became a widow when yellow fever took her first husband and one of her two sons. Soon after, Aaron Burr introduced her to James Madison (allegedly at Madison's request) and the two opposites attracted. Though brilliant, James was extremely shy; Dolly's engaging personality played a key role in his popularity as president. She coordinated weekly parties that doubled as opportunities to make political connections. However, as you will read in the story below, Dolly's bravery and determination extended far beyond hostessing.*

*After James Madison died, Dolly spent a year sorting and copying all his papers, which Congress published in seven volumes. Thirteen years later, at age eighty-one, Dolly died peacefully at home in Washington.*



The following excerpt is from *American Hero Stories* by Eva March Tappan, chapter "Dolly Madison, Who Guarded the Nation's Treasures."

“Dolly,” asked President Madison of his wife, “have you the courage to stay here till I come back tomorrow or next day?”

“I am not afraid of anything if only you are not harmed and our army succeeds,” was her reply.

“Good-by, then, take care of yourself, and if anything happens, look out for the Cabinet papers,” said the President, and rode away to where the militia was gathering.

There was good reason for Mrs. Madison to be anxious about her husband and about the success of the Americans. It was now 1814;<sup>1</sup> America and England had been fighting for two years. Many people thought that the President had been wrong in resorting to war. Letters had been sent to him which said, “If this war does not come to an end soon, you will be poisoned.” The city of Washington, too, was in great danger. Four days earlier a messenger had ridden up at full speed to say, “Fifty British ships are anchoring off the Potomac.”<sup>2</sup> Nearly all the men hurried to the front to try to oppose the enemy. People in Washington were carrying their property away to the country. Still the little lady at the White House did not run away. She had the public papers to guard, and she would not go.

Besides the papers, there was another of the nation's treasures in the house, a fine portrait of George Washington by the famous artist, Gilbert Stuart. The son of Washington's stepson came to Mrs. Madison to plan for its safety. “Whatever happens, that shall be cared for,” she had promised him.

1. Making this war the War of 1812.

2. A river that runs through Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, and Washington, DC.

At last a note came to her from the President. “The enemy are stronger than we heard at first,” it said. “They may reach the city and destroy it. Be ready to leave at a moment’s warning.”

Most of her friends had already gone, but her faithful servants were with her. “Bring me as many trunks as my carriage will hold,” she ordered; and then she set to work to fill them with the Declaration of Independence and the other papers that were of value to the whole nation.

Night came, but there was no rest for the lady of the White House. As soon as the sun rose, she was at the windows with a spy-glass, gazing in every direction and hoping to catch a glimpse of her husband. All she could see was clouds of dust, here and there a group of soldiers wandering about, and little companies of frightened women and children, hurrying to the bridge across the Potomac. She began to hear the roar of cannon, and she knew that a battle was going on; still the President did not come. There was nothing to do but wait. It was of no use to pack the silver and other valuables, for every wagon had been seized long before, and not one was left even for the wife of the President.

At three o’clock two men, covered with dust, galloped up and cried, “You must fly, or the house will be burned over your head.”

“I shall wait here for the President,” was her reply.

A wagon came rumbling along. Some good friends had at last succeeded in getting it for her. She had it filled with silver and other valuables. “Take them to the Bank of Maryland,” she ordered; but she said to herself, “The Bank of Maryland or the hands of the British—who knows which it will be?”

Two or three friends came to hurry her away. “The British will burn the house,” they said. “They will take you prisoner; they boast that they will carry the President and his wife to England and make a show of them.”

They were almost lifting her to her carriage, when she said, “Not yet. The picture of Washington shall never fall into the hands of the enemy. That must be taken away before I leave the house.” This picture was in a heavy frame that was firmly screwed to the wall, and with what tools were at hand it could not be easily loosened. “Get an axe and break the frame,” Mrs. Madison bade her servants. Once this was done, the canvas was taken from the stretcher, carefully rolled up, and sent to a safe place. Then the carriage with Mrs. Madison was driven rapidly away.

She left the house none too soon, for the British were upon the city. They broke into the White House. They stole what they could carry off with them, and set fire to the rest. They fired the navy yard, the Treasury building, the public libraries, and the new Capitol. The British Admiral Cockburn had a special spite against one of the Washington newspapers because it had printed some bitter articles about his savage burning of the defenseless villages along the coast. “Burn that office,” he commanded, “and be sure that all the C’s are destroyed,<sup>3</sup> so that the rascals cannot abuse my name any longer.” It is said that he jumped down from his horse and kindled the fire with his own hand.

At night a fearful tempest swept over the city. Trees were blown down and houses were unroofed. When the storm burst, Mrs. Madison was pleading for shelter at a little tavern sixteen miles from Washington. She had seen the President, and he had told her to meet him at this place. The house was full of people who had fled from the city. “Stay out,” they cried. “Your husband brought on this war, and his wife shall have no shelter in the same house with us.” At last, however, they let her in. The President found his way to her later, almost exhausted; but before he had

3. For printing, blocks with raised individual letters were arranged in a printing press and inked. The printer would then press a sheet of paper down on the inked blocks, using them like a stamp. Admiral Cockburn wanted all the “C” blocks destroyed!

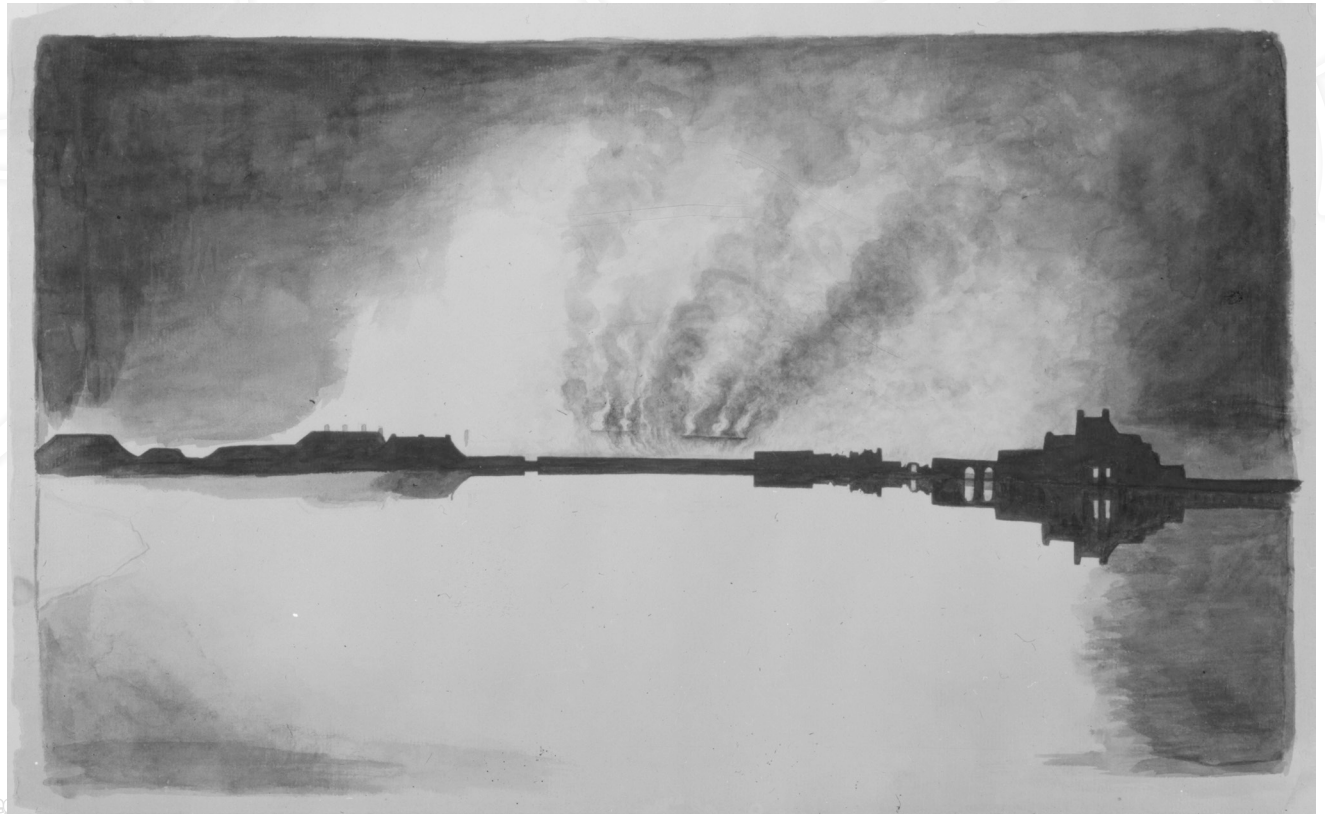
had an hour of rest, a man threw open the door, so out of breath that he could only gasp, “The British—they know you are here—fly!” Mrs. Madison begged him to go, and finally he yielded and escaped to a little hut in the woods where he could be safe. “I will disguise myself and go to some safe place,” she promised; and in the first gray of the morning she left the tavern. On the way she heard the best of news: “The British heard that reinforcements were coming and they have gone to their ships.” Then she turned around and drove toward the city; but when she came to the bridge over the Potomac, it was afire. An American officer stood by. “Will you row me across the river?” she begged, for a little boat was moored to the bank. “No,” he replied, “We don’t let strange women into the city.” In vain she pleaded, but he was firm. “Who knows what you are?” he demanded roughly. “We have had spies through here. How do I know but the British have sent you to burn what they left? You will not cross the river—that is sure.”

“But I am Mrs. Madison, the wife of your President,” she said, and threw off her disguise.

Even then he could hardly be persuaded to row her across, but finally he yielded. Through clouds of smoke she made her way

past heaps of smoldering ruins to the home of her sister, where she awaited the coming of the President.

Such were five days in the life of a “first lady of the land.”



AT RIGHT: *Waterfront fire, probably burning of the Washington Navy Yard, 1814, Anacostia River, Washington, D.C.* by William Thornton, c. 1815.



SACAJAWEA  
(1788–1812?)

**“[Sacajawea] who accompanied you [Sacajawea’s husband] that long dangerous and fatiguing rout to the Pacific Ocean and back deserved a greater reward for her attention and services on that rout than we had in our power to give her at the Mandans.”**

—William Clark to Charbonneau in *Letters*, 1:315 (August 20, 1806)

*Very little is known about the American heroine Sacajawea. She belonged to the Shoshone (meaning “Snake”) tribe, although her name etymology is from the Hidatsa or Minataree tribe that*

*kidnapped her when she was young: sacaja, meaning “bird,” and wea, meaning “woman.”*

*Sacajawea accompanied Meriwether Lewis and William Clark on their expedition west, acting as their translator and guide. She spoke both Shoshone and Hidatsa, and her husband Toussaint Charbonneau (TOO-sohn SHAHR-boh-noe) also spoke French. From the journals of Lewis and Clark, we know that Sacajawea had an incredible memory, deeply loved her family, and possessed a strong constitution: she and her husband joined the famous expedition just a few months after she had given birth!*

*When and where Sacajawea died is shrouded in mystery due to poor record-keeping and the fact that she was often not called by name in accounts that (may or may not) feature her. Without a doubt, she played a vital part in the success and scope of Lewis and Clark’s influential journey.*



ABOVE: *Lewis and Clark on the Lower Columbia* by Charles Marion Russell, 1905.  
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The following excerpt is from the article “Bird Woman” in the *Dickinson Press* newspaper, November 9, 1907.

### “BIRD WOMAN”

#### State of Wyoming Places Monument over Remains of Sacajawea<sup>1</sup>

**I**n view of the fact that the club women of North Dakota are raising a fund for the purpose of erecting a monument to Sacajawea, the “bird woman” who was the guide from this vicinity to the Pacific coast of the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1803–4, the proposal of the state of Wyoming to build a monument on her grave is a matter of interest here.

At the last session of the Wyoming legislature a bill was favorably considered providing for the erection of a monument to cost no less than \$500, on the site of the burial place of Sacajawea, the Shoshone squaw, who accompanied the Lewis and Clark expedition and who rendered invaluable service to the intrepid explorers.

All that remains is to make certain of the exact burial place of Sacajawea. It seems to have been proven, however, that the bird woman is buried not far from Washakie,<sup>2</sup> the present agency of the Shoshone tribe, and there are several old Indians who remember of Sacajawea and who have pointed out the pile of rocks that marks her last resting place. Sacajawea was not buried

1. As this newspaper story suggests, the exact resting place of Sacajawea is a mystery. There is a grave for her in Wyoming, claiming that she died in 1884, and another grave in South Dakota, claiming that she died in 1812. Many reasons contribute to this confusion, but mainly the problem is that she is not always called by name in accounts that may (or may not) be talking about her.

2. Fort Washakie, located in the middle of Wyoming.

on a scaffold but according to all the reliable testimony that has been gathered the faithful squaw was given a Christian burial by her husband, a French scout, and the pile of rocks over her grave kept off the coyotes and wolves that infested the plains burying ground.

### Monument To Her Memory

When the state of North Dakota honors Sacajawea, the bird woman will have more monuments than have ever fallen to the lot of any squaw, not excepting Pocahontas. When the Lewis and Clark exposition was suggested, the part played by Sacajawea in the overland expedition of the white men aroused keen interest among the women of the United States. It was proposed by the women of Oregon to erect some memorial to the only woman of that history-making expedition, so Miss Alice Cooper, a Denver sculptor, was commissioned to evolve a suitable monument. The young sculptor evolved a work that has been pronounced a masterpiece and that awakens the admiration of the thousands of tourists who visit Portland. The squaw, with a papoose clinging at her back, is seen pointing at some distant object—just as the Lewis and Clark journal describes the way in which she pointed out many a mountain pass that made travel easy for the explorers. While the memorial at the squaw's grave will not be so costly or imposing as the Portland monument, it will at least afford an appropriate marking place for the grave of this remarkable woman.

### Her Romantic Career

Sacajawea had a most romantic experience, which appears in fragmentary chapters of the journals of Lewis and Clark. She was the wife of Chaboneau [*sic*], who was picked up as a Minataree

interpreter when the expedition reached that tribe. Sacajawea was a Snake, or Shoshone Indian. She had been captured by raiding Minatarees and had been sold as a slave to Chaboneau, who brought her up and later married her. When the expedition left the Minnatarees [*sic*] Chaboneau and Sacajawea were taken along. The captains were fearful at their reception at the hands of the powerful Shoshones and desired someone to act as an interpreter when the tribe was reached. Sacajawea was taken along for this purpose. She had given birth to a child while the expedition was in the Minnataree stronghold, but with customary Indian hardihood the young mother faced all the perils and hardships of the journey.

Sacajawea's meeting with her own people is thus described in the journal: "On setting out at 7 o'clock Captain Clark with Chaboneau and his wife walked on shore but they had not gone more than a mile before the captain saw Sacajawea, who was with her husband, 100 yards ahead, begin to dance and show every mark of the most extravagant joy, turning around and pointing to several Indians whom he now saw advancing on horseback, sucking her fingers at the same time to show that they were of her native tribe. We soon drew near the camp and just as we approached a woman made her way past the crowd to Sacajawea and, recognizing each other, they embraced one another with the most tender affection. The meeting of these two young women had in it something peculiarly touching, not only in the ardent manner in which their feelings were expressed, but from the real interest of the situation. They had been companions in childhood in the same battle with the Minnatarees and they had been taken prisoners; they had shared the same rigors of captivity until one had escaped from the Minnatarees with scarce a hope of ever seeing her friend released from the hand of her enemies."

After a conference with the chief, Sacajawea was sent for as an interpreter and the journal continues: “She came into the tent and sat down and was beginning to interpret, when in the person of Chinnewait she recognized her brother; she instantly jumped up and ran and embraced him, throwing her blanket over him and weeping profusely; the chief was himself moved though not to the same degree. After some conversation between them she resumed her seat and attempted to interpret for us, but her new situation seemed to overpower her, and she was frequently interrupted by her tears. After the council had finished, the unfortunate woman learned that all her family was dead except two brothers, one of whom was absent, and a son of her elder sister, a small boy, who was immediately adopted by her.”

The journal pays the highest tribute to the Shoshones as a nation. This powerful tribe, whose friendliness Lewis and Clark especially desired, might not have been so favorably disposed toward the adventurers had it not been for the young Snake woman, who accompanied the expedition. But her work as an interpreter was only a small part of the service this remarkable woman rendered Lewis and Clark. Time and time again the journals pay tribute to her wonderful memory. As a child she had wandered over much of the wilderness which was then unknown to white men, and she seemed to remember every trail, every pass and every landmark in the wild country through which the expedition traveled. More than once the party would have been halted by apparently impassible barriers, but always Sacajawea came to the rescue and pointed out some pass through which she had traveled in childhood.

After the separation of the party Sacajawea proceeded with Captain Lewis along Clark river, near the Yellowstone. Here is one instance of her wonderful memory quoted from the journals:

“Along the roads there were also some appearances of old buffalo paths and some old heads of buffaloes, and as these animals have wonderful sagacity in the choice of their routes, the coincidence of the buffalo with an Indian road was the strongest assurance that it was best. In the afternoon we passed along the hillside north of the creek until in the course of six miles we entered an extensive level plain. Here the tracks of the Indians scattered so we could no longer recognize them, but Sacajawea recognized the plain immediately. She had traveled it often in her childhood and informed us it was the great resort of the Shoshones, who came for the purpose of gathering quamish and cows and taking beaver; and that glade track was a branch of the Wisdom river, and that on reaching the higher part of the plain one should see a gap in the mountains, on the course to our canoes, and from that gap a high point of mountain covered with snow.”

Struggling over dangerous mountain passes and shooting rapids in frail canoes, the party was always accompanied by Sacajawea. On the return of the expedition Chaboneau and his wife decided to remain with the Shoshones. The interpreter was paid something like \$500 for his services but no record is made of paying Sacajawea. The squaw remained among her people to the last on the plains watered by the Wind river in Wyoming. Here the faithful “bird woman” died and it is only fitting that her grave should be marked as the state of Wyoming proposes.



**SAM HOUSTON**  
(1793–1863)

**“Whatever is calculated to weaken or impair the strength of Union, whether originating at the North or the South, whether arising from the incendiary violence of abolitionists, or from the coalition of nullifiers, will never meet with my unqualified approval.”**

—As quoted by James Haley in *Sam Houston* (2004)

*In Virginia, 1793, was born Samuel Houston: honorary Cherokee, lawyer, Congressman, governor of Texas and Tennessee, military leader, liberator of Texas, and namesake of the city of Houston.*

*Sam's political career began when he joined the military and fought in the War of 1812 with future president Andrew Jackson. The experience inspired him to pursue political positions, which he used to advocate for fair treatment of and treaties with American Indians. As a young man, he befriended many Cherokees, learning so much of their culture and language that they made him an honorary tribe member.*

*But why was the city of Houston, Texas named for Sam? For years, the territory of Texas had belonged to Mexico. When the laws of Texas's dictator-president Santa Anna became oppressive, the Texans decided to fight for their freedom. The turning point in the revolution was the Battle of San Jacinto,<sup>1</sup> when Sam led 900 soldiers to defeat the Mexicans' 1,200 soldiers—in only eighteen minutes! Sam became the president of Texas, and later governor when Texas became part of the United States. However, he was eventually forced to resign because he did not want Texas to secede in the Civil War.*



1. Pronounced juh-SIN-toe, despite the fact that Spanish Js are usually pronounced as Hs.  
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The following excerpt is adapted from *Texas History Stories: Houston, Austin, Crockett, LaSalle* by E. G. Littlejohn, chapter "Sam Houston."

**S**am Houston was born in Virginia. His parents were poor people. He had five brothers and three sisters.

When Sam was eight years old he started to school. There were few good schools in Virginia in those days. There were no free schools, such as we have today. Sam could go to school only late in the winter. The rest of the year he was kept hard at work. Sometimes, if he worked well, he was allowed to run home from the fields, to be in time to take his place in spelling.

He learned to read and write and cypher.

When he was thirteen years old, he had gone to school but six months in all. It was then that his father died. After the death of his father, his mother sold the old home in Virginia and took her family across the mountains into Tennessee.

At that time Tennessee was only a great wilderness. Indians were everywhere. There were dense forests full of wolves, bears and other wild animals.

The little party halted eight miles from the Tennessee River, which was the boundary between the white men and Cherokee Indians. Here a new log cabin was built and a farm cleared.

Sam set to work on the farm with his brothers. But they liked hunting and fishing better than work. He soon became acquainted with the Indians living near his home and spent much of his time with them in the woods.

His family did not like this, so he was put to working a country store. Sam had no greater liking for this kind of life than for farming, so one day he suddenly disappeared. A great search was made for him, but he could not be found for several weeks. At last it was learned that he had gone back to his friends,

the Indians. When asked why he had acted in this way, he said because he liked to measure deer tracks better than tape.

When his clothes were worn out, he returned home for more. He was kindly received by his mother, who gave him all the clothes he needed.

But he could not forget his free life in the woods.

He longed to sport with the happy Indian boys. He longed to chase the deer. He longed for the fresh air of the forests. And he was soon back among the Indians again. He stayed with them most of the time, till he was eighteen years of age.

Sam did not like hard study, but he was very fond of reading. His favorite book was Homer's *Iliad*,<sup>2</sup> which he carried with him to the woods. This he read by the light of the Indians' campfire at night, and in the daytime, when the chase was ended, he would lay himself down under the shade of a great tree and read for hours at a time.

When he was eighteen years old, he left the Indians and began to teach school for the pale-faces, as the whites were called.

He wanted money to pay some debts. He had few pupils at first, but he was not one of the kind that gives up easily. He kept right on and soon had more pupils than he could teach. For pay he received corn, cotton cloth, and a little money. When he had made enough money to pay his debts, he shut up his school.

He soon after became a soldier in the United States army. When he marched away, his mother, standing in the door of her cottage, handed him his musket, saying: "Here, my son, take this musket and never disgrace it; for remember, I had rather all my sons should fill one honorable grave than that one of them should turn his back to save his life. The door of my cottage is ever open to brave men, but always shut against cowards."

2. The *Iliad* is an ancient Greek epic poem about the Trojan War.

He never forgot his mother's words. Where the battle was thickest, there he was always to be found.

In a battle with the Indians he was shot by an arrow that struck deep into his thigh. He tried to pull it out, but failed. A comrade was then called upon to pull it out, but failed also. "Try again," said Houston, raising his sword, "and pull it out or I strike you down." This time it came, tearing away the flesh and leaving an ugly wound, which never got entirely well.

When the war was over he was sent to New Orleans. This was a long way from his home. There were no railroads in those days, so he, with two other young men, floated down the Mississippi River in a canoe.

One day, as their skiff<sup>3</sup> was turning a bend in the river, they saw a strange sight. It was a vessel coming up stream without any sails and sending up a heavy column of smoke. They thought it must be on fire. On coming closer, they saw it was a steamboat, the first that ever went up the Mississippi River.

He soon returned to Tennessee and made his home in the city of Nashville. He studied law and became a great lawyer. Before long people began to hear about him all over the State. The people wanted a wise man to go to Congress to help make laws for the whole land. When election day came they chose Sam Houston to go. When his time was out, they chose him to go back again. He did his work so well in Congress that people began to say that he would make a good Governor of the State.

Sam Houston never neglected his work. Whatever he had to do, he did well. And so he was chosen Governor.

For some cause he soon gave up the governorship and went to live again with his friends, the Cherokee Indians. The Indians were delighted to have him with them once more. Years before he

3. A canoe with a pointed bow and squared-off stern.

had been adopted as a son by the Cherokee chief. He was given the name Coloneh, which means “the Rover.”<sup>4</sup>

When the old chief heard that his son was coming to see him once more, he went down to the river to meet him, taking his whole family with him. When he landed, the old chief threw his arms around him and embraced him with great affection.

The chief said to him: “My son, eleven winters have passed since we met.

“My heart has wondered often where you were.

“I heard you were a great chief among your people.

“We are in trouble, and the Great Spirit has sent you to tell us what to do and take the trouble away from us.

“I know you will be our friend, for our hearts are near to you.

“My wigwam is yours, my home is yours, my people are yours—rest with us.”

Houston was glad to be back again with his old friend. He said that when he laid himself down to sleep that night he felt like a lost child returned at last to his father’s house.

Houston was always the friend of the red man. He said that in all the years he had known them he was never deceived by one of them.

Houston said the Indians were treated badly by the white man. He had taken their lands away from them. He had robbed them of their forests and game. He had given them “fire water”<sup>5</sup> to drink.

Houston loved them and felt very sorry for them. He said he would do all he could to help them. He and they were children of the same Great Father. He got them money for their lands. He

4. Also spelled Colonneh. Some sources do translate this word as “the Rover,” but most agree that it really means “the Raven.”

5. Alcohol.

would not let anyone sell them “fire water.” He had the bad men, who ill-treated them, punished.

After three years of forest life among the Indians, Houston determined to become a herdsman. A herdsman is one who raises cattle.

The broad prairies of Texas are covered with grass which cattle like to eat. Houston thought Texas would be a good place to start his ranch. So, in 1832, with a few friends, he came to Texas. He stopped for a while at Nacogdoches,<sup>6</sup> and then went on to San Antonio.

At this time Texas belong to Mexico. The people of Texas were badly treated by the Mexicans. Many of them were thrown into prison without cause. They were not allowed to worship God in the way they wanted to. They were not allowed to keep guns to protect themselves from the Indians. They were given no public schools. They were not allowed to make their own laws. They were in great trouble and knew not what to do.

They thought Houston might be able to help them. He was invited to become their leader. Houston was always careful about what he said and did, and the people felt safe while he was their leader.

War soon broke out between Texas and Mexico, and Houston was made general of the Texan army. He was a wise commander. He watched the enemy carefully.

When General Santa Anna, the Mexican commander, marched his army into Texas, Houston was on the lookout for him.

The two armies met on the banks of the San Jacinto River, not far from the present city of Houston. Santa Anna’s army was nearly three times as large as Houston’s.

6. Pronounced nack-uh-DOE-chuss. A city in eastern Texas.

Before going into battle, Houston made a speech to his men. He told them that when they went into the fight to remember the Alamo. The Alamo is an old church in San Antonio. In this old church there had been a battle, in which one hundred and fifty brave Texans had been killed by the Mexicans. Houston wanted his men to remember this, so they would pay the Mexicans back.

The battle was fought April 21, 1836. It is called the Battle of San Jacinto. The Texans rushed into the battle shouting “Remember the Alamo! Remember the Alamo!”

The Mexicans were very much frightened and soon began to run. The Texans followed them, killing many of them. General Santa Anna was taken prisoner. He was found the day after the battle crawling on all-fours through the tall grass of the prairie. He had found some old clothes, which he put on so that no one would know him. He was placed on a horse behind a soldier, who carried him to General Houston.

Houston’s horse had been shot under him and he himself was badly wounded in the ankle. The wound was very painful and kept him awake all night. When Santa Anna was brought to him he was lying on a pallet under an old oak tree and had fallen into a doze.

Santa Anna told him who he was and begged that his life might be spared.

Houston was a brave man and he felt sorry for the prisoner. He asked Santa Anna not to fight against the Texans any more, and then sent him back to his home in Mexico.

Texas was now free from Mexico. The people were very glad. They could go back to their homes and live in peace. They could make their own laws.

The people now wanted someone for President,<sup>7</sup> and everybody thought Houston just the man for the place. He was elected and served for two years. Some years afterward he was made President again, and then Governor of the State of Texas.

When his time as Governor was out, he went back to his home in Huntsville, Texas. Here he lived a quiet and happy life with his wife and children.

He died July 26, 1863, aged seventy years. The whole people of Texas mourned for him as if he had been their father.

He is buried at Huntsville, Texas.

7. President of the Republic of Texas.



ABOVE: In *Surrender of Santa Anna* (1890), William Huddle depicts Mexican General Santa Anna surrendering to the wounded Sam Houston after the Battle of San Jacinto in 1836.



**ROBERT E. LEE**  
(1807–1870)

**“I have fought against the people of the North because I believed they were seeking to wrest from the South its dearest rights. But I have never cherished toward them bitter or vindictive feelings, and have never seen the day when I did not pray for them.”**

—As quoted by Charles Sherwood Farris in *The American Soul: An Appreciation of the Four Greatest Americans and their Lessons for Present Americans* (63)

*Robert E. Lee’s father, “Light-Horse Harry” Lee, had been a cavalry leader in the Revolutionary War, so it was no surprise when Robert enrolled in West Point Military Academy. He graduated*

*with no demerits;<sup>1</sup> perfect scores in artillery, infantry, and cavalry; and a reputation as a strong and honorable man.*

*Robert's military success continued, particularly in the Mexican-American War and the slave revolt at Harpers Ferry. As the Civil War brewed, President Abraham Lincoln heard of Robert's military brilliance and good character and offered him command of the Union Army. While Robert believed in the Union and did not want to fight for slavery, he felt a duty to his home state. He resigned from the United States military and agreed to lead the Confederate Army.*

*Robert's leadership style and decisions were daring and unconventional to the point of shocking his opponents, which often gave him the upper hand. In the battle at Chancellorsville, Robert faced an army much bigger than his own, yet he instructed his forces to divide into three even smaller groups before attacking! Union commander Joseph Hooker had no idea how to react, and Robert led his men to victory.*

*Still, eventually the Union army began to win the war, and in 1865, Robert surrendered to General Ulysses Grant in Appomattox Court House, Virginia.*

*Though Robert could have been hanged as a traitor, President Lincoln and General Grant honored his character by allowing him to return to his private life. Robert later became president of Washington College, which was renamed Washington and Lee after Robert passed away.*



The following excerpt is from *True Stories of Great Americans for Young Americans* by Elbridge Streeter Brooks and Thomas Sheppard Meek, chapter "The Stirring Story of Robert E. Lee, General of the Confederate Armies."

1. Pronounced dih-MEHR-itz. Penalties or marks on one's record, usually at school.  
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**T**his is to tell you the story of Robert E. Lee. Every boy and girl in America knows who he was—a great American soldier.

But he was more than a great soldier, he was a hero, and this is a hero story. Is there any boy or girl who does not like to hear about a hero? You know what a hero is, don't you? It is one who does great deeds in a grand way.

Ever since the world began there have been heroes. Some have been soldiers, some have been kings, some have been just plain, poor men or boys. But the world has liked to hear their stories—from David, the boy who killed Goliath the giant, to George Washington, who delivered his land from tyranny.

In this dear America, which is our native land, we have had many heroes. They have defended us in danger, fought for us in war, cared for us in peace, and every boy and girl in America is told the story of their lives and taught to love and respect and honor them.

It is the story of one of these brave and heroic men that I wish now to tell you—the story of Robert E. Lee, who fought long and bravely for what he believed to be the rights and the liberty of his fellow-men in the southern half of the United States of America. Listen to his story.

Many years ago, when your grandfather's grandfather was helping to make the Fourth of July, a certain brave and gallant soldier fought in almost all the battles of the American Revolution. People called him "Light-horse" Harry Lee. This was because he was the leader of a number of dashing, fast-riding soldiers or cavalry called "light-horse," because the riders were dressed and armed as lightly as possible. In this dress they could ride swiftly and act quickly.

“Light-horse” Harry Lee was a splendid horseback rider, and his swift and daring dashes with his light-horse legion did a great deal toward whipping the British and making the American Revolution a success. General Washington thought very much of this brave Virginian horseman, and, when the war was over, wrote him a letter in which he sent him his “love and thanks” for what he had done in the American Revolution. And, when the great and good Washington died, at his beautiful home in Mount Vernon, it was his friend the dashing cavalry soldier who spoke those splendid words about the greatest American—words which, I hope, you all know by heart: “Washington! first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen.”

Nearly twenty-five years after the American Revolution ended in success, when “Light-horse” Harry Lee had been Governor Lee of Virginia, and was writing a book about the American Revolution, a little baby boy was born into his pleasant Virginia home. This baby was named Robert Edward Lee, and he was to grow up to become an even greater and nobler man than his famous father.

Robert E. Lee was born on the nineteenth of January, 1807—the very year in which our great American poets, Longfellow and Whittier,<sup>2</sup> were born. His father’s house was at a beautiful country place in Virginia, called Stafford. It was in Westmoreland County, on the Potomac River, the very county in Virginia in which George Washington was born, and on the banks of the same Potomac River.

He was a good boy in everything, good in his home, good in his school, good in his looks, and good in his ways. His father was not very well when Robert was a little boy and had to be

2. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and John Greenleaf Whittier.  
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away from home a great deal hunting for good health; so Robert’s mother brought her boy up.

She brought him up well and made a man of him, because she made him true and manly from the start. He was never what little boys called a “sissy” just because he was mild and good, but he was a manly, brave, true-hearted little fellow, kind to all about him, always in love with his mother, always obeying her, attentive to his studies, doing his duty in every way as a real boy should.

When Robert was four years old his father moved from his country home at Stafford to the little city of Alexandria, quite near to Washington, the capital of the nation.

There Robert went to school in a queer, old-fashioned, yellow house that is still standing in Alexandria, and is still used for a boy’s school. Its right name was Hallowell’s School, from the master who kept it; but the boys who went there called it, because of its yellow walls, “Brimstone<sup>3</sup> Castle.”

When Robert was eleven years old his father, the famous “Light-horse” Harry Lee of the American Revolution, died in Georgia, where he had gone for his health. The fatherless boy clung closer to his mother than ever, and determined to do everything he could to help her; but he had such a great respect for his father’s memory, and felt so much pride in the deeds his famous father had done in the cause of liberty and his native land, that when the time came for him to decide what he would do when he became a man, he declared he would be a soldier just as his father had been.

So he went to West Point, the famous Military Academy on the banks of the Hudson River, where the United States trains boys to lead its armies and fight its battles.

3. “Brimstone” is another name for sulfur, a yellow element that smells like rotten eggs.  
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Robert E. Lee stayed four years at West Point. He entered there as a “pleb,”<sup>4</sup> or new boy, in 1825, when he was eighteen years old, and leaving it, or “graduating” as it is called, as Lieutenant Lee in 1829.

He did finely at that famous school. He was what they called a model cadet—always spick and span in his gray and white soldier suit, always at the head in his studies, always ready in his duties, in his drill, and in all he had to do. He never received a demerit, or bad mark, in all the four years that he was a cadet at West Point. Think of that!

They said, there, that cadet Lee kept his gun so bright and clean that the inspecting officer could fairly see his face in its gleaming barrel and its polished stock.<sup>5</sup>

He was such a fine scholar at West Point that when he got through and graduated he stood second in his class—that is, next to head, you know.

This gave him a chance to choose just where he would like to be in the army when he came out of West Point.

He joined what is called the Engineer Corps,<sup>6</sup> the pick of the whole army.

The Engineer Corps is made up of men who look after building the forts and defences of our harbors, set our river channels straight, and protect the land from the sea as well as from the enemy.

It is a fine position for a young officer, and generally gives him pleasant places to live in and agreeable things to do. Soldiers like

4. Pronounced PLEHB, and is short for “plebian” (pleh-BEE-an). Usually means someone of low class. It was used as a term for commoners in ancient Rome. Also called a “plebe.”

5. The wooden, almost triangle-shaped part of a rifle that you put to your shoulder when firing.

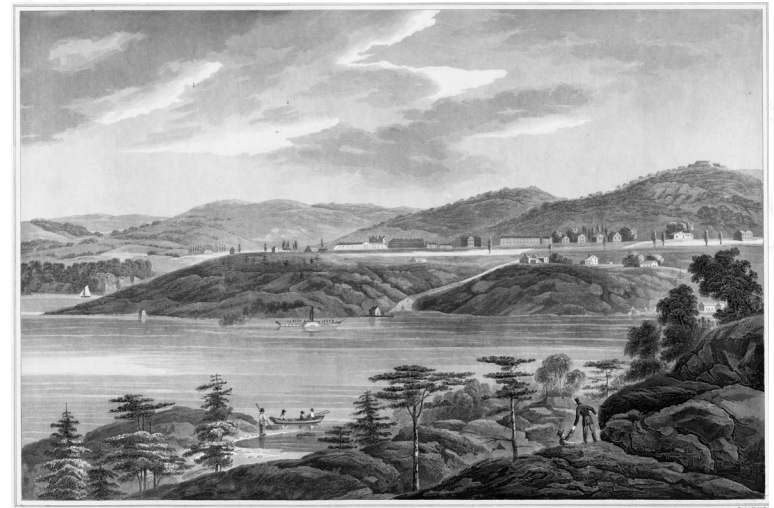
6. Pronounced CORE, and is French for “body” (short for *corps d’armée*, or “army body”).

From the Latin *corpus*, meaning “body.”

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it better than being sent off to lonely posts or to watching Indians, and it gives them a fine training in how to do things about forts and fighting.

Lieutenant Lee was stationed at different places along the Atlantic coast. He helped plan and build Fortress Monroe, on beautiful Hampton Roads, in Virginia; he was stationed in Washington in one of the offices of the big War Department; he



ABOVE: Print shows a view of the Hudson River from above the banks opposite the military academy at West Point, NY, c. 1820.

helped lay out the boundary line between the States of Ohio and Michigan; he looked after the improvement of the harbor of St. Louis, and the changes that were made in the shifting channel of the mighty Mississippi River; he superintended the building of the forts in New York harbor, and, when he got back from a war, which I will soon tell you about, he was made Superintendent of the very place he had gone to school—the Military Academy at West Point; after that he had command of all the United States troops in Texas. He was Second Lieutenant in 1829, then First

Lieutenant, then, in 1838, Captain in the regular army—so you see, he kept going right on in the world, and was a great deal thought of in the army.

The United States did not have a very big army in those days, but whenever there was a war it grew quickly. In the year 1846 there came about a war between the United States and its next-door neighbor, the republic of Mexico.

Never mind what it was all about, you will learn that when you study the history of the United States. It was a cruel war, as all war is cruel; but it was a great chance for Americans who wished to be real soldiers to show what they were good for and what they could do.

They did well. They marched into Mexico, which is just the other side of Texas, you know, and they fought so bravely that in less than two years they had conquered Mexico and added to the United States all the land from Texas to California and the Pacific Ocean.

In this war Robert E. Lee made a splendid soldier. He was so brave and gallant, so ready and reliable, that he was always to be found where the fighting was fiercest. And yet he was so gentle and kind that he always stuck at the point in the enemy's line where they could be beaten the quickest, so as to finish the fight with the smallest loss of men in killed and wounded.

There was one battle in Mexico in which the young engineer was almost the leader and conqueror. This was the time when he got the best of the Mexicans at a place called Cerro Gordo,<sup>7</sup> high up in the mountains. The Mexican soldiers held the zig-zag road up the mountains. It ran between great cliffs and chasms, and had cannons all along so as to keep the Americans from coming up. But Captain Lee, the engineer, said:

7. On the southeast coast of Mexico.

“If we can't march against them, we must get behind them. I'll try.” He hunted all about for a good place, and at last saw a way by which a sort of a path could be cut through the mountains and come out behind the Mexicans. He did this so carefully, so swiftly and so silently that before the Mexicans knew what they were about he was right upon them.

Captain Lee led the way, and showed the men just what to do. They lowered the cannons by ropes down the steep cliff and hauled them up on the opposite hill-side; they cut, and climbed, and jumped, and dug until they got all the men, all the horses and all the cannons up behind the Mexican line. Then they turned their guns upon the enemy, and so surprised and terrified them that almost without a blow all that part of the Mexican Army surrendered to the American commander, General Scott.

This was one of Captain Lee's victories in Mexico. It was one of the kind he liked, because he had to think it out. It was the best kind of victory, too, for he won it without having to shoot down and kill very many men.

For his courage and his soldiership he was again and again promoted—Captain, Major, Lieutenant-Colonel, Colonel. He was on the staff of the commander, Winfield Scott, the General of the American Army; and, after the Mexican war was over, General Scott declared that his success in Mexico was largely due “to the skill, valor and undaunted courage of Robert E. Lee.” That is a good deal to say about one man, is it not, and fine, too?

After the Mexican War was over and all the soldiers had come home again, Colonel Lee was made Superintendent of the Military Academy at West Point, as I have already told you.

For three years he was in charge there, directing the soldier boys in their studies and their drilling at that splendid military school on the banks of the Hudson. Then he was sent to join the

army stationed in Texas. He was Colonel of a cavalry regiment, the same position that his famous father, “Light-horse Harry,” had held in the Army of the Republic. Later on he was placed in command of all the soldiers in what was called the Department of Texas.

While he was home on a long vacation at his beautiful home in Virginia called Arlington, just opposite Washington, the Civil War broke out.

You know what that was, of course—the dreadful and terrible trouble between two parts of our dear native land—the North and the South.

It could not be settled peaceably. Men thought so differently about things that one side would not give in to the other, and so they just had to fight it out.

It was a long and bitter war. Many good and brave men were killed on both sides, and there was sorrow and distress all over the land.

But when the war was over, the people of the United States became better friends than they had ever been before, and there will never be such a war again.

When the war broke out Colonel Robert E. Lee did not know just what to do. But he thought the matter over long and deeply, and then he said: “I cannot fight against my relatives, my children, my home. I have been a soldier of the United States, but I am a son of Virginia, and I must do as my State does.”

He resigned from the United States Army, giving up his position of Colonel, and was made Major-General of the forces of the State of Virginia.

When Virginia went out of the Union—that is, when her people said, “We will not belong to the United States any longer,

we will join the Confederate States,” Colonel Lee said, “Then I must go with you.”

He was appointed military adviser to Jefferson Davis, the President of the newly-formed Confederate States—for so the States that went out of the Union called themselves.

A year later he was made Commanding General of the Army of Northern Virginia, and for three years he led the brave Southern soldiers who fought for the Confederacy against the brave Northern soldiers who fought for the Union.

What a splendid leader of those gallant Southern soldiers General Lee was! He knew just where to have them march, just when to have them fight, just what to have them do.

Richmond, in Virginia, was the capital of the Confederate States, just as Washington is the capital of the United States. General Lee surrounded it with forts and defended it so skillfully that the Northern soldiers could not get into it, though they tried again and again, and whenever they tried to get through any of the approaches to the city, General Lee would march his soldiers against them and fight long and desperately.

Boys, when they play at any good game, like a boy to be their leader. You can do so much better if you have someone to follow, someone who shows you what to do.

It is just so with men—especially with soldiers—and General Lee was just such a leader.

His soldiers learned to love him and look up to him almost as you do to your own father. They called him “Marse Bob”<sup>8</sup> and “Uncle Bobby”—not to his face, of course, but when they talked together about him. He was so kind, and patient, and gentle; he was always trying to help them, and cared for them so much that

8. “Marse” is a shortened way of saying “master.”

they knew he was their friend, even when he made them march the longest, and even when he made them fight the hardest.

But a soldier has to fight, you know. That is why he is a soldier, and, although General Lee was always calm, and quiet, and gentle in speech and manner, he was a great soldier and sometimes a fierce fighter.

One day, when there was a terrible battle raging, he saw his soldiers beaten back by the Union troops from a place he wished them to keep. "They must not lose it," he said, and he waved his sword above his head and dashed to the front to lead his soldiers into the battle again. But his men knew that General Lee's life was precious; that if he were killed there would be no one to lead them to victory.

"No, no, General!" they cried; "Go back! Go back, Lee, to the rear! We'll take it!"

And when he dropped back, he saluted his soldiers for their love and care for him, and pointed at the Union line with his sword.

"Forward," he said, and his men charging forward, thinking of their brave and gallant leader, won back the place from which they had been driven.

Once when his own son, who was also the commander of a large Confederate force of cavalry (as his father and grandfather had been, you know), was in danger of being surrounded by a great force of the enemy, his father, the General, cried out cheerfully, "Keep your men together, General, I'll get you out of this," and he did.

"General," a young officer shouted, dashing up to him, just as a great battle was to begin, "The Federals are advancing." General Lee looked at him with a funny smile, enjoying the young officer's excitement. "Well," he said, just as cool and calm as you please,

"I did hear firing, and I was just beginning to think it was time some of you lazy young fellows were coming to tell me what it was all about."

And I suppose that made the young officer laugh right on the edge of that battle, and to get from his calm and cool General all the more courage to do his best.

So, you see, while he was brave and serious, he could see the funny side of things, too, and did all he could to make his soldiers bright as well as brave, hopeful when things went wrong, calm in the midst of danger. This is what makes a real soldier, you know.

The North had more men and more money than the South; they kept on fighting, too, for neither side was willing to give in. But the North for a long time could get no soldier who was as great a general as Lee.

On the third day of June, 1862, he was made General of the Army of Northern Virginia. That post he held through the war, under that name he led the Southern soldiers to battle and often to victory, while, by his wise way of directing his men, he kept the Northern troops away from Richmond for nearly three years.

He won the Battle of Malvern Hill, he won the Second Battle of Bull Run, he won the Battles of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. Twice he marched his soldiers into the Northern lines, and at Gettysburg, in Pennsylvania, in 1863, he fought a terrible two-days' battle which called for all the strength and all the skill of General Meade, the Northern leader, to turn it into a victory for the Union.

Four generals of the Union led the armies against him in four great attempts to defeat and conquer him. But each time Lee was more than a match, and they fell back from Richmond, defeated.

At last, in the beginning of the year 1864, General U. S. Grant,<sup>9</sup> who had been a successful leader of the Union soldiers in the West, was called to the East to take command of the armies of the United States. Then there came a change.

General Grant knew all about General Lee. They had both been in the Mexican War. He knew that to win he must do his very best. When someone asked him how long it would take him to get to Richmond, General Grant said, “Well, about four days, if General Lee is willing; if he isn’t, well, it’s going to take a good deal longer.”

And it did. General Lee did object; he objected with guns and swords and men, and the soldiers of the North and the soldiers of the South fought many terrible battles. The fighting grew fiercer and hotter. Grant would never give up, but kept pressing on. Bit by bit the Union soldiers drew about Richmond; bit by bit the Confederate soldiers gave way, as their money, their strength and their numbers began to fail. But they fought gallantly still. General Lee was watchful and determined. His eyes saw every weak spot in the Union line; he could spread out his brave but tired and hungry soldiers so as to make the best show, and his men loved him so well and followed him so willingly that he was able to keep up the fight longer than any other general could have done. Never before in all the world had so many men been brought face to face in battle, and dreadful battles they were, there in the swamps and woods and fields of Virginia, in the year 1864. It was because both sides were brave men, and because brave and great generals led them, that these battles were so fierce, for Grant was bound to win and Lee was bound not to let him.

But, when, at last, all hope of successfully defending Richmond was gone, when the brave chieftain had tried to break

his way through the lines of Union soldiers, who now surrounded his army, and had failed, when he saw that to keep up the fight any longer was only a useless killing of men, a thing he always hated and tried to stop, then General Lee laid down his sword and surrendered himself and his army to his great foe, General Grant, a man as gentle, as honorable and as kindly hearted as was he.

It was a sad day for General Lee, when he at last determined to give up the battle.

At first, when one of his soldiers saw how useless it would be to fight any longer, and told the General that he ought to surrender, the grand old soldier straightened himself up and said:

“Surrender? No, sir. I have too many good fighting men for that.”

But General Grant had more, and so, as I told you, General Lee saw this at last, and to stop the killing of any more brave men, he gave it up—that is, he surrendered.

It all came to an end at last at a place called Appomattox Court House, in Virginia. It was on the ninth day of April, 1865. The two Generals met between the lines at a farm-house near an apple orchard, and talked it all over. Both were glad to stop fighting; both were proud of the heroism of their own men, and proud, also, of the courage of the other side, for all were Americans.

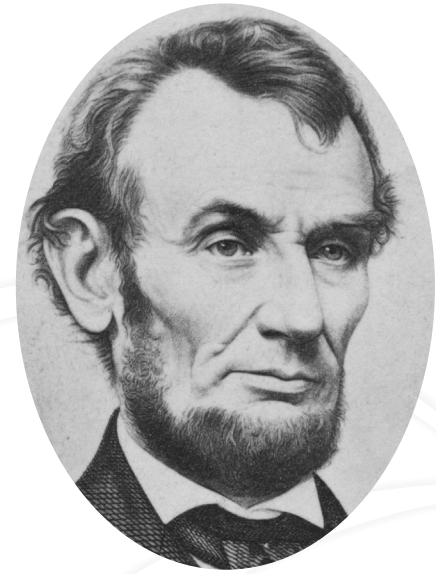
General Grant said to General Lee, “If you will only promise for yourself and your soldiers not to fight any more against the United States, that is all I ask.”

General Lee promised, and so the greatest civil war that ever was fought was ended in the kindest way just because both the leaders were great as well as good, and when they made a promise would keep it.

9. Ulysses S. Grant.



ABOVE: Lincoln said of this picture, “Please explain to folks that Tad and I are looking at a photograph album. They might think we were reading a book. We weren’t; and I don’t like giving out false impressions.”



## ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1809–1865)

**“In times like the present, men should utter nothing for which they would not willingly be responsible through time and in eternity.”**

—From the Second State of the Union Address to Congress (December 1, 1862)

*Like many of young America’s heroes, Abraham Lincoln was born into an ordinary family and grew up hardworking, self-educated, and honest. Despite Abraham’s struggle against feelings of hopelessness and insecurity,<sup>1</sup> he never ceased his good fight for truth and unity during America’s deadliest war—the Civil War.*

*Abraham tried his hand at several professions, including shop keeping (for which he was too distracted) and practicing law (for*

1. Many historians believe that Abraham suffered from clinical depression.  
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which he was very well-suited), but most remember him as the president who cautioned that “a house divided cannot stand” and gave the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, which declared the freedom of all slaves. Just as he had in everyday life, President Abraham Lincoln tried to do what was kind, fair, and best for his country. He even chose several political rivals to serve in his cabinet.

In the beginning of the Civil War, Abraham’s main concern was preserving the United States, but as time wore on, he realized that man’s unalienable rights were an even more just reason to fight. Some believe that Abraham went too far to preserve the Union and eradicate slavery. He arrested Confederate sympathizers without a warrant and called for an army before there was a declaration of war. Not even a great president will make perfect choices, but Abraham’s heart remained earnest and true until the tragic day of his assassination.



The following is from *American Hero Stories* by Eva March Tappan, chapter “Abraham Lincoln: Pioneer and President.”

Once upon a time a family of settlers named Lincoln lived in a log house in Indiana. It was hardly more than a shed, for it had neither floor nor windows. It had a doorway, but the only door was a curtain of bear-skins. There was one boy in the family, a little fellow of seven years named Abraham. “My son is going to have an education,” the father used to say. “He is going to cipher clear through the arithmetic.” The boy went to school for a little while, and learned to read and write. His mother taught him what she could. Among other things she told him about the War of 1812, that had just come to an end, and about the hardships of the soldiers. “Everybody ought to be good to the soldiers,” she used to say. The child listened gravely, and one day, when he had been fishing, he came home empty handed because he had given his string of fish to a soldier whom he met on the road.

When he was only eight years<sup>2</sup> old his mother died, and then the house was lonely indeed. After a time his father married again. The stepmother loved the little boy, and did all she could to help him. He went to school only six months in his life, but he borrowed every book that he heard of in the country for fifty miles around. He used to read them aloud to his stepmother, and talk over with her what he did not understand. He was not quick to learn, but he never gave up a sentence until he had found out what it meant. Some of these books were *Robinson Crusoe*, *Pilgrim’s Progress*, *Aesop’s Fables*, the Bible, a life of Washington, and a history of the United States. One other book was a copy of the Statutes of Indiana. He read these laws over and over again

2. Actually, Abraham had already turned nine.



ABOVE: Abraham Lincoln as a youth, reading in front of the fire; illustrated by Eastman Johnson in 1868.  
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until he knew almost the whole volume by heart. In this book were also the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. He made himself some ink of roots, and cut a turkey quill into a pen. For paper he used a shingle. Then, when he was going to work in the field, he wrote a paragraph from the book on the wood, and whenever he stopped a minute to rest, he pulled out his shingle and read a little to think over when he was working.

“I should like to be a lawyer,” he said to himself; but even when he was twenty-one it did not seem as if he would ever be able to carry out his wish. Indeed, he himself thought that it might be a good thing for him to become a blacksmith, because he was so tall—six feet and four inches—and so strong. His father needed help, however, for he was just moving to a new farm in Illinois, and there was much for them both to do. After building a new log house, the next thing was to cut down some of the tall walnut-trees and split them into rails for a fence. How Abraham Lincoln would have opened his eyes if someone had whispered what those rails would be used for thirty years later!<sup>3</sup>

The next thing that the young man did was to help a man build a flatboat and float the load of goods down the Mississippi to New Orleans. On their return, he “hired out” to work in this man’s store, but in a year the store was closed. Just at that time the Black Hawk Indian War<sup>4</sup> broke out, and Lincoln volunteered. The men of his company chose him captain, and he was much pleased, though he had little notion how to drill them. He always had his wits about him, however, and could generally find a way out of his difficulties. One day his company were marching across

3. Wait for it...

4. This war lasted less than four months and is named after a Sauk Indian warrior named Black Hawk. He believed that earlier treaties signed between Indians and settlers were illegitimate, and waged war on the “encroaching” settlers.

a field four abreast when they came to a gate. The new captain had not the slightest idea what command to give to get them into single file so they could go through, or, as he put it, to get them “through the gate endwise;” so he shouted, “The company is dismissed for two minutes, when it will fall in again on the other side of the gate.”

The war lasted only a few months. Then Lincoln and another young man bought out the village store. Many stories are told of Lincoln as a storekeeper. One is that by mistake he charged a man sixpence too much and that very night walked three miles to the man’s house to return the money. He did other things than tie up sugar and tea, for the village schoolmaster had become his friend and was lending him books, hearing him recite, and correcting his compositions. Lincoln’s partner was careless, and Lincoln himself was perhaps too much interested in study to watch him closely. The result was that the business failed. Then Lincoln said to his creditors, “I mean to pay that money, and if you will trust me, I will give you every cent that I earn above what is enough to live on.” He owed eleven hundred dollars. He used to speak of it as the “National Debt.” Finally he paid every penny of it, and that was why his neighbors called him “Honest Abe.”

Keeping store was bad for his pocketbook, but something happened one day when he was behind the counter that was very good for him. A man who was moving west with his family drove up and said, “Look here, this barrel’s in the way. I’ve no room in the wagon for it, and there’s nothing of much value in it. I’ll sell it for half a dollar. Will you buy it?”

To oblige the man, Lincoln bought the barrel, rolled it out of the way, and forgot all about it. Some time afterwards, he came upon it, knocked the head off, and turned it over to see what was in it. At the very bottom were Blackstone’s *Commentaries*, famous

law books. Lincoln opened the volumes and began to read. “The more I read, the more interested I became,” he said. He determined not to be a blacksmith or a storekeeper or anything else but a lawyer; and after much hard work a lawyer he became. His studying did not stop then by any means, for he gave a certain number of hours every day to the studies that he would have taken up had he been in college. He worked hard on his cases, too. He went over the case in his own mind, thinking over all the reasons for believing that his client was in the right. Then he tried to think of everything that the opposing lawyer could say to show the man in the wrong and of what he himself could say in reply. In one famous case of which he had charge, he defended an old neighbor who was accused of murder. One witness after another said, “I saw him commit the murder.”

“What time was it?” Lincoln asked quietly.

“About eleven,” they answered.

“How could you see so clearly at eleven o’clock at night?” he demanded.

“The moon was shining,” they said.

“Just where was the moon and how large was it?” he asked. They told him its size and in what part of the sky it was.

Then Lincoln pulled an almanac out of his pocket and said to the court, “This is all the defense I have. This almanac declares that there was no moon on the night of the murder.” The witnesses had made up their story together, but had forgotten to see whether it agreed with the moon. The man was declared to be innocent.

Lincoln had been made a member of the state legislature and had been a congressman. In 1860 a meeting was held to nominate a Republican candidate for the presidency of the United States, and Lincoln was chosen. Of course there were all sorts of emblems and decorations used in the campaign, but the one that people

looked at most was two weather-beaten fence rails trimmed with flowers and streamers and lighted tapers. Over them was a banner which said they were two of the rails cut by Abraham Lincoln thirty years before. When he was asked about them, he replied, "I don't know whether we made those rails or not; fact is, I don't think they are a credit to the maker; but I know this—I made rails then, and I think I could make better ones than these now."

Lincoln became President, but there must have been many days during the five years following when he wished he had no harder work than splitting rails, for the Civil War broke out. The President is commander-in-chief of the army; and Lincoln set to work to study how to carry on war. He used every spare minute to read on the subject. Then he called the military committees of Congress together and laid before them the plan that he had made. They did not follow it, but to-day people who are wise in warfare say that if it had been followed the war would have ended much sooner. One of his generals was so insolent that the members of the Cabinet were angry and indignant; but even then Lincoln did not lose his patience. "Never mind," he said, "I will hold his horse for him if he will only bring us success."

Every day crowds of people came to see the President, and almost everyone wanted some favor. One wanted to be postmaster somewhere else, another wanted promotion in the army, and many came to plead that he would pardon some soldier who was condemned to die for deserting or sleeping at his post. It is no wonder that the weary President said to his secretary, "I wish George Washington or some other old patriot were here to take my place for a while, so that I could have a little rest." Tired as he was, he would not send people away. Even when a man persisted in reading him a long, wearisome paper, he did not refuse to listen. "What do you think of it?" the author demanded.

"Well, for those who like that sort of thing," replied the tired man, "I should think it is just about the sort of thing they would like."

It was almost impossible for him to refuse to pardon a soldier. Perhaps he remembered that his mother had said to him when he was a little boy, "Everybody ought to be good to the soldiers." The generals objected. They begged him not to interfere, but still the President could not help writing pardons. "It rests me after a hard day's work," he said, "if I can find some good cause for saving a man's life; and I go to bed happy as I think how joyous the signing of my name will make him and his family and his friends."

One day an old man came to plead for the life of his son, a soldier who had been sentenced to death. "I am sorry I can do nothing for you," said the President, "but the crime is unpardonable. Hear what General Butler telegraphed me yesterday." And he read, "President Lincoln, I pray you not to interfere with the courts-martial of the army. You will destroy all discipline among our soldiers." Then the old man was hopeless, and he broke down completely. Lincoln could not bear to see his sorrow. Suddenly he burst out, "Butler or no Butler, here goes!" and he wrote that the boy was not to be shot without further orders from the President. "There," he said, "if your son never dies till orders come from me to shoot him, he will live to be a great deal older than Methuselah."

At last the war came to an end, but only a few days after its close the President was assassinated. The poet, Walt Whitman, expressed his own grief and that of millions of others in his poem, "My Captain." In this the "Captain" is President Lincoln, the "ship" is the Union, and the "voyage" is the cruel war that had just come to an end.

## “O Captain! My Captain!”

Walt Whitman

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,  
 The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,  
 The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,  
 While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;  
     But O heart! heart! heart!  
     O the bleeding drops of red,  
     Where on the deck my Captain lies,  
     Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;  
 Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,  
 For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores  
 a-crowding,  
 For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;  
     Here Captain! dear father!  
     This arm beneath your head!  
     It is some dream that on the deck,  
     You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,  
 My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,  
 The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,  
 From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;  
     Exult O shores, and ring O bells!  
     But I with mournful tread,  
     Walk the deck my Captain lies,  
     Fallen cold and dead.



SUSAN B. ANTHONY  
 (1820–1906)

**“Here, in the first paragraph of the Declaration [of Independence], is the assertion of the natural right of all to the ballot; for how can ‘the consent of the governed’ be given, if the right to vote be denied?”**

—From “Is It a Crime for a Citizen of the United States to Vote?” speech (1873)

*Susan B. Anthony was born to fight for what she believed was right. Her Quaker family modeled for her what it looked like to take a stand and influence the world by hosting abolitionist meetings (sometimes attended by Frederick Douglass) and advocating for limitations on alcohol sale.*

*When Susan grew up and began supporting these causes on her own, she discovered another injustice that she could not let stand: women had woefully unequal rights. At a temperance convention, Susan tried to give a speech but was denied because she was a woman. She realized that until women could own property and vote, politicians had no reason to take them seriously—and women should be taken seriously.*

*Being marginalized for femininity made Susan even more sensitive to people marginalized because of their race. At an anti-slavery march, Susan met fellow women's rights activist Elizabeth Cady Stanton and they began campaigning together. They formed a Women's National Loyal League to petition against slavery, published a women's rights-focused newspaper called The Revolution, and founded the American Equal Rights Association and the National Woman Suffrage Association.*

*Susan passed away before the Nineteenth Amendment granted women the right to vote—but not before she voted herself. In 1872, Susan demanded to be registered and voted, illegally. She was later fined a hundred dollars but never paid the fine.*



The following excerpts are from *The Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony* (Volume I of II) by Ida Husted Harper, chapter 2, “Girlhood and School-Life.”

**I**n the spring of 1832 a brick-kiln was burned in preparation for the new house. Mrs. Anthony boarded ten or twelve brick-makers and some of the factory hands, with no help but that of her daughters Guelma, Susan and Hannah, aged fourteen, twelve and ten. When the new baby came, these three little girls did all the work, cooking the food and carrying it four or five steps up from the kitchen to the mother's room to let her see if it were nicely prepared and if the dinner-pails for the men were properly packed.

Soon after this, Mr. Anthony remarked that one of the “spoolers” was ill and there was no one to do her work. Susan and Hannah had spent many hours watching the factory girls, and at once raised a clamor to take the place of the sick “spooler.” The mother objected, but the father, who always encouraged his children in their independent ideas, interceded and finally they were allowed to draw straws to decide which should go, the winner to divide her wages with the loser. The lot fell to Susan, who worked faithfully every day for two weeks and received full wages, \$3. Hannah, with her \$1.50, bought a green bead bag, then considered the crowning glory of a girl's wardrobe. Susan purchased half a dozen pale-blue coffee cups and saucers, which she had heard her mother wish for, and presented them to her with a happy heart.

The next summer the house was built, the finest in that part of the country, a two-and-a-half-story brick with fifteen rooms and all the conveniences then known. Quakers never celebrate Christmas, but the Anthonys, having lived now for seven years in a Presbyterian neighborhood, decided to give the children a

Christmas party in the new home. The walls had a beautiful hard finish, the woodwork was tinted light green and the new flag-bottomed chairs<sup>1</sup> were painted black. Between the rough boots of the country youths and the chairs pushed or tipped against the wall, both woodwork and plastering were almost ruined, and the new house carried a lasting reminder of the festivities.

About this time Daniel Anthony was again brought under Quaker criticism. On one of his journeys to New York he had bought a camel<sup>2</sup> cloak with a big cape, as affording the best protection for the long, cold rides he had to take. The Friends declared this to be “out of plainness” and insisted that he leave off the cape and cease wearing a brightly colored handkerchief about his neck and ears. Daniel, who was beginning to be rather restive<sup>3</sup> under these restraints, refused to comply, but, as he was a valuable member, it was finally decided here also to condone his offense.

Through all those years Lucy Anthony went to Quaker meeting with her husband. After public services were over, however, and the shutters pulled up between the men’s and the women’s sides of the house for business meeting, she was rigidly barred out. She would take her children and walk about in the grave-yard outside while she waited for Daniel, but, as the graves were all in a row without even a headstone to distinguish them, this was not a very interesting pastime and the wait was long and tedious. When the little girls went with the father they also were shut out of the executive session where such momentous questions were discussed as, “Are Friends careful to keep themselves and their children from attending places of diversion?” “Are Friends careful to refrain from tale-bearing and detraction?” “Are Friends

1. A style of simple wooden chair.

2. A fabric made of wool and silk, though originally camel hair was used.

3. Pronounced REST-ihv. Difficult to control, acting out in boredom.

careful to send their children to school, and all children in their employ?”

One cold day, the mother being detained at home, ten-year-old Susan received permission to go with her father. When the business meeting began, she curled up quietly in a corner by the stove, thinking to escape detection, but was spied out by one of the elders, a woman with green spectacles, who tip-toed down from the “high seat” and said, “Is thee a member?” “No, but my father is,” replied Susan. “That will not do, thee will have to go out.” “My mother told me to stay in.” “Thy mother doesn’t manage things here.” “But my father told me to stay in.” “Neither thy father nor thy mother can say what thee shall do here; thee will have to go out;” and taking the child by the arm she led her into the cold vestibule. After remaining there until almost frozen, Susan decided to go to the nearest neighbor’s. When she opened the gate a big dog sprung fiercely upon her. Her screams brought out the family and she was taken into the house, where it was found the only injury was a large piece bitten out of the new Scotch plaid cloak which she had gone to meeting on purpose to exhibit. The affair created considerable excitement, Mr. and Mrs. Anthony were very indignant, and it ended in the father’s making a “request” that his children be made members of the Society, which was done.

Daniel Anthony was by nature a broad, progressive man, and his family were not brought up according to the strictest and narrowest requirements of Quaker doctrine; while his wife, remembering the liberal teachings of her Universalist<sup>4</sup> father and her own girlish love of youthful pastimes, went still further in making life pleasant for the children. Through her influence the daughters secured many a pretty article of wearing apparel, and,

4. Universalists believe that everyone will go to heaven.

when there was a party whose hours were later than the father approved, the mother managed to have them spend the night with girls in the neighborhood.

When the family first moved to Battenville<sup>5</sup> the children went to the little old-fashioned district school taught by a man in winter and a woman in summer. None of the men could teach Susan “long division” or understand why a girl should insist upon learning it. One of the women maintained discipline by means of her corset-board used as a ferule.<sup>6</sup> As soon as Mr. Anthony finished the brick store he set apart one room upstairs for a private school, employed the best teachers to be had and admitted only such children as he wished to associate with his own. When the new house was built a large room was devoted to school purposes. This was the first in that neighborhood to have a separate seat for each pupil, and, although only a stool without a back, it was a vast improvement on the long bench running around the wall, the same height for big and little. The girls were taught sewing as carefully as reading and spelling, and Susan was noted for her skill with the needle. A sampler is still in existence which she made at the age of eleven, a fine specimen of needlework with the family record surrounded by a wreath of strawberries all carefully wrought in crewels.<sup>7</sup> There is also a bedquilt, the pieces sewed together with the fine “over-and-over” stitch, and there are ruffles hemmed with stitches so tiny they scarcely can be distinguished. An early teacher was a cousin, Nancy Howe, who was followed by another cousin, Sarah Anthony, a graduate of Rensselaer Quaker boarding-school. Among the teachers was Mary Perkins, just graduated from Miss Grant’s seminary at Ipswich, Massachusetts, and a pupil of Mary Lyon, founder of

5. A city in eastern New York state.

6. Pronounced FEH-ruhl or feh-ROOL. A ruler-shaped instrument used to punish children.

7. Pronounced CREW-uhlz. Loosely twisted yard used for embroidery.

Mt. Holyoke. She was their first fashionably educated teacher and taught them to recite poems in concert,<sup>8</sup> introduced school books with pictures, little black illustrations of Old Dog Tray, Mary and Her Lamb, etc., and gave them their first idea of calisthenics.<sup>9</sup> She loved music, and wished to attend the village singing-school. Lucy Anthony sympathized with this desire and interceded for her, but Daniel decided it would be setting a bad example to the children and they would be wanting to sing.

Into this commodious<sup>10</sup> home Lucy Anthony brought her aged father and mother, and carefully tended them until the death of both within the same year, aged eighty-four. In May, 1834, came the first great sorrow, the death of little Eliza, aged two years, and the mother was heart-broken. Her life was centered in her children, and she could not be reconciled to giving up even one. After her own death, nearly fifty years later, in her box of most sacredly guarded keepsakes, was found a little faded pink dress of the dear child’s which many times had been moistened with the mother’s tears.

The children continued to attend this private school, and as Guelma and Susan reached the age of fifteen, each in turn was installed as teacher in summer when there were only young pupils. The factory now was at the height of prosperity; there was only one larger in all that part of the country, and Daniel Anthony was looked upon as a wealthy man. He was much criticised for allowing his daughters to teach, as in those days no woman worked for wages except from pressing necessity; but he was far enough in advance of his time to believe that every girl should be trained to self-support. In 1837, writing to Guelma at

8. Here, “in concert” means together, or maybe as a performance.

9. Pronounced cal-tuh-s-THEN-icks. Aerobic and strength exercises, like gymnastics.

10. Pronounced cuh-MOE-dee-us. Spacious.

boarding-school, he urges her to accept the offer of the principal to remain through the winter as an assistant:

I am fully of the belief that shouldst thou never teach school a single day afterwards, thou wouldst ever feel to justify thy course.... Thou wouldst seem to me to be laying the foundation for thy far greater usefulness. Thy remaining through the winter, must, however, be left solely to thyself, as it would be of little avail for thee to stay and not be contented. Thy home, Guelma, is just the same as when thou left it, and shouldst thou decide to spend the winter months away, we will try to keep it the same until thy return in the spring. Let me know if thou canst be content to remain away a few months longer from thy mother's kitchen.

In the winter of 1837, at the age of seventeen, Susan taught in the family of Doris and Huldah Deliverge, at Easton, a few miles from Battenville, for \$1 a week and board. The next summer she taught a district school at the neighboring village, Reid's Corners, for \$1.50 a week and "boarded round," and proud was she to earn what was then considered excellent wages for a woman. In the fall she joined Guelma at boarding-school. The little circular, yellow with age, reads:

DEBORAH MOULSON, having obtained an agreeable location in the pleasant village of Hamilton, in the vicinity of Philadelphia, intends, with the assistance of competent Teachers, to open immediately a Seminary for Females....

Terms, \$125 per annum, for boarding and tuition....

The inculcation of the principles of Humility, Morality and a love of Virtue, will receive particular attention.

This was Susan's first long absence from home, and her letters and journals give a good idea of the thoughts and feelings of a girl at boarding-school in those days. She developed then the "letter-writing habit," which has clung to her through life. The letters of that time were laborious affairs, often consuming days in the writing, commencing even to children, "Respected Daughter," or "Son," and rarely exceeding one or two pages. They were written with a quill pen on foolscap<sup>11</sup> paper, and almost wholly devoted to the weather and the sickness in the family. The amount of the latter would be appalling to modern households. The women's letters were written in infinitesimal characters, it being considered unladylike to write a large hand. The Anthonys were exceptional letter-writers. It cost eighteen cents to send a letter, but Daniel Anthony was postmaster at Battenville, and his family had free use of the mails. If he had had postage to pay on all of homesick Susan's epistles it would have cost him a good round sum. The rules of the school required these to be written on the slate, submitted to the teacher and then carefully copied by the pupil, so it is not unusual to find that a letter was five or six days in preparation. For the same reason it is impossible to tell how much sincerity there is in the frequent references to the "dear teacher" and the "most excellent school." The "stilted" style of Susan's letters is most amusing. A few extracts will illustrate:

I regret that Brothers and Sisters have not the privilege of attending a school better adapted to their improvement,

11. This refers to the size of the paper: 8½ by 13½ inches.

both in Science and Morality; surely a District School (unless they have recently reformed) is not an appropriate place for the cultivation of the latter, although in the former they may make some partial progress. Deborah has not determined to relinquish this school, although she has not yet ascertained whether the income from it will be equal to the expenditures; but if it should continue I shall have a wish for Hannah and Mary to attend; as I think another one can not be named so agreeable on all accounts as is Deborah Moulson's at Hamilton.

One may imagine that Susan got several credit marks when her teacher corrected this on the slate. The lecturer on philosophy and science came up from Philadelphia, and Susan tells her parents that "he is quite an interesting man," and that "his lecture on Philosophy was far more entertaining than I had dared to anticipate." Of the science lecture she says:

He had a microscope through which we had the pleasure of viewing the dust from the wings of a butterfly, each minute particle of which appeared as large as a common fly. He mentioned several very interesting circumstances; but I must defer particularizing them until I can have the privilege of verbally communicating them to my dear friends at Battenville. Guelma joins with me in wishing love distributed to all.

Again she writes:

Beloved Parents: The second Seventh day of my short stay in Hamilton arrives and finds me scarcely capable of

informing you how the intervening moments have been employed; but I hope they have not passed without some improvement. Indeed, we should all improve, perceptibly too, were we to attend to the instructions which are here given, for the advancement both of moral and literary pursuits. May I improve in both; but it is far easier for us to perceive where others should reform, than to observe and correct our own imperfections, while perhaps our failings are completely disgusting in the sight of others. I find it very difficult leaving off old habits so as to have a vacuum for the formation of those which are new and more advantageous.

My letter will be short this week and I can assign no other cause than that my ideas do not freely flow. The difference in weather is quite material between this and our northern clime. Snow commenced falling about 12 o'clock to-day and continued till evening; but, Father, it was not such a storm as the one in which we travelled during the second day of our journey to the beautiful and sequestered<sup>12</sup> shades of Hamilton. The cause of my neglecting to write last week was not the absence of this mind from home, but that it is obliged to occupy every moment in studies.

A fire in Philadelphia gives her an opportunity for this bit of description:

I was requested, 5th day evening last, about 7 o'clock, by one of the scholars, to step out and view the Aurora

Borealis,<sup>13</sup> which she said was extremely brilliant and beautiful. When there I looked towards the north, but discovered no light, and then to the zenith, which was indeed very magnificent; “but,” said I, “that does not look like the Aurora, it is more like the light from a fire,” and upon investigation we found it so to be. The light appeared in the east, we walked in that direction, when we beheld the flames bursting forth in stupendous grandeur. Not a bell was heard, all was calm, with the exception of the minds of some of the scholars whose parents resided in the city. The scene indeed would have been to the eye extremely pleasing, were it not for the reflection that some of our fellow-beings were about being deprived of a home, and perhaps lives also. We learned a few minutes after witnessing this phenomena that the fire was occasioned by the conflagration of a large board yard near Market Street Bridge.

After many affectionate messages, she says:

I have not had but one real homesick fit and that was one week from the night Father left us. I felt then as if I were taking leave of him again; in fact the tears have come into my eyes as I write that last sentence; but do not suppose I carry a gloomy countenance all the time, far be it from that, yet oft I think seriously of home and the endearing ties which bind us together. Father, we will look at the sentiments, and not the Orthography and Grammar of thy letters, in which I did discover some errors.

13. Pronounced uh-RORE-uh bore-ee-AL-iss. The Northern Lights.  
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She frequently admits that her sister admonishes her, “Susan, thee writes too much; thee should learn to be concise,” but she delights in letter-writing and says:

Most of the girls are taking a walk this First day afternoon, but I did not feel like enjoying myself by accompanying them as well as in holding sweet communion in writing with those inestimable friends I so dearly love, and arranging those thoughts in a manner congenial<sup>14</sup> to our feelings.... The query naturally arises, at least to the thoughtful mind, How has our time since the last Annual revolution of the Earth been employed? Have our minds become improved from passing occurrences, or do they remain in that dormant-like state which so often degrades the human soul?

She comes down from her lofty heights far enough to add, “It would have afforded us the greatest pleasure imaginable to have dined on that Goose in company with you on New Year’s day.” It is Susan’s diary, however, which affords the most satisfactory glimpses of her true character, serious, devotional, deeply conscientious and strong in affection:

Five weeks have been spent in Hamilton and to what purpose? Has my mind advanced either in Virtue or Literature? I fear that every moment has not been profitably spent. O, may this careless mind be more watchful in the future! O, may the many warnings which we every day receive, tend to make me more attentive to what is right!

14. Pronounced cun-JEEN-ee-uhl. Friendly and pleasant.  
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We were cautioned by our dear Teacher to-day to beware of self-esteem and of all signs that would indicate an untruth. We were referred to the condition of Ananias and Sapphira,<sup>15</sup> who intended to deceive the Apostle. Would that I were wholly free from that same Evil Spirit which tempted those persons in ancient times. The Spirit of Truth must have dominion in the mind in order to attain a state of happiness.

.....

Resolves and resolves fill up my time. I resolve at night to do better on the morrow, and when the morrow comes and I mingle with my companions all the resolutions are obliterated.... In the afternoon of Seventh day Deborah accompanied the scholars to Town and visited the Academy of Arts and Sciences; beautiful indeed was the sight. Nature, how bounteous and varied are thy works! On beholding the splendid scene I was ready to exclaim, "O, Miracle of Miracles," with the celebrated Naturalist when speaking of the metamorphoses<sup>16</sup> of insects.

.....

2nd mo. 15th day.—This day I call myself eighteen. It seems impossible that I can be so old, and even at this age I find myself possessed of no more knowledge than I ought to have had at twelve. Dr. Allen, a Phrenologist,<sup>17</sup> gave us a short lecture this morning and examined a few

15. Acts 5:1–11.

16. Pronounced meht-uh-MORE-fuh-seez. Plural of metamorphosis, meaning a complete transformation, like when a caterpillar becomes a butterfly.

17. Pronounced fren-AH-luh-jist. Phrenology is the study of the shape of people's heads, believing that skull shape affects personality and psychology.

heads, mine among them. He described only the good organs and said nothing of the bad. I should like to know the whole truth.

Susan relates with a good deal of satisfaction that she has written a letter to a schoolmate at home, without putting it on the slate for the teacher to see. A few days later Deborah sends for her. She "went down with cheerfulness," but what was her



AT LEFT: Photo shows suffragist Florence Jaffray "Daisy" Harriman (1870–1967) holding a banner with the words "Failure Is Impossible. Susan B. Anthony. Votes for Women." Bain News Service, c. 1910–1915.

astonishment to see Deborah with the intercepted letter open in her hand! Susan closes her account of the interview by saying, “Little did I think, when I was writing that letter, that I was committing such an enormous crime.”



**FANNY CROSBY**  
(1820–1915)

**“One of the easiest resolves that I formed in my young and joyous heart was to leave all care to yesterday, and to believe that the morning would bring forth its own peculiar joy.”**

—From *Heroines of Modern Religion*, edited by Warren Dunham Foster (1913)

*Fanny Crosby wrote about eight thousand hymns, published a volume of poetry when she was twenty-four years old, wrote a eulogy for President Harrison, and inspired everyone she met with her spirit of joy and fun. Fanny was also blind.*



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July 30, 2019

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In Him,  
Heather Shirley  
Chief Academic Officer