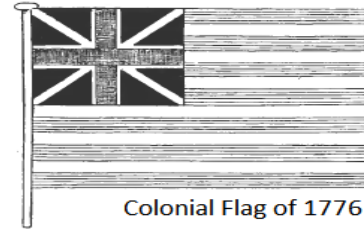


The Boston Boys



Colonial Flag of 1776

All this time, the British colonies in North America were growing larger. Every year, hundreds of people came over from England, and there were many large towns up and down the Atlantic coast.

But into all this peace and success came a war. This war, fought between 1754 and 1763, was called the Seven Years' War. Part of this war was fought in North America, where it was called the French and Indian War. England had a great debt from this expensive war, and thought the colonies should help to pay it, because part of the war was fought to protect the American colonies.

French and Indian War

The colonies were willing to help if England would do certain things for them that they thought England ought to do. But England was not willing to do these things. Then, a new war came, this war between the mother country and the colonies—the Revolutionary War, or American Revolution, as it was

called. Americans fought this war to gain independence from Great Britain.

The American colonies swore to gain their freedom in the Declaration of Independence, which they signed on July 4, 1776, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This was done at a meeting of the Continental Congress.

American Revolution

independence



This is the house of John Hancock, which faced Boston Common. John Hancock was the first person to sign the Declaration of Independence.

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such Principles and organizing its Powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to promote their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and accordingly we have suffered long from the effects of those who have assumed the Power of the People without their Consent. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a design to reduce us to absolute Tyranny, it is our Duty, not mere Privilege, but Right, to throw off such Government, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such Principles and organizing its Powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to promote their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and accordingly we have suffered long from the effects of those who have assumed the Power of the People without their Consent. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a design to reduce us to absolute Tyranny, it is our Duty, not mere Privilege, but Right, to throw off such Government, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such Principles and organizing its Powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to promote their Safety and Happiness.

Handwritten signatures of the signatories to the Declaration of Independence, including John Hancock's large signature.

Here is the Declaration of Independence. Can you find and circle John Hancock's large signature?

"Our soldiers will need warm stockings and blankets and woolen clothing," said the colonial women. So they set to work to spin yarn and weave cloth for the soldiers. The boys and girls did their share. When the British soldiers came, the American people were ready for them.

The English soldiers first made their camp upon the common in the town of Boston, better known as Boston Common.

Boston Common

1. What war was fought in North America between 1754 and 1763?

- a. American Revolution
b. Civil War
c. French and Indian War
d. World War I

2. When was the Declaration of Independence signed?

Blank lines for writing the answer to question 2.

"This is a good place for us," they said. "We will make the Boston people bring us food. And then, too, from this common we can keep good watch on the harbor."

Boston harbor

Blank lines for writing the answer to question 2.

On the common there was a fine pond, and here, the Boston boys liked to skate and slide.

"We mustn't fail in spelling tomorrow, boys," said one boy as he ran off down the street. The boys laughed, for they well knew that if they didn't learn their lesson, there would be no skating for them.

The next morning was cold and clear. "Good weather for the ice," thought every boy as he crept out of

bed. As soon as school was over, away the boys hurried to the pond.

But alas for their plans for a good hour's skating! The ice had been broken everywhere; and it had frozen again with a rough and uneven surface.

"Those British redcoats have done this," cried the boys.

British redcoats

Certainly, the English soldiers would have been terrified if they had heard the threats those Boston boys made. But there were no redcoats in sight, and the disappointed boys went home.

disappointed

A few days later the ice thawed. There came a heavy rain, followed by a week of frost.

"Now we shall have skating," the boys said. And again they watched the ice.

The redcoats, too, watched the ice, and they watched the boys as well. One night, they went again to the pond and broke the ice with their heavy boot heels.

"We have nothing else to do," they said. "And it is fun to see the little Yankees angry."

Yankees

On the next afternoon came the boys with their skates, and again they found the ice broken. Then one of the boys spoke out.

"They have no right to break our ice," he cried. "Let us go to General Gage, and tell him what his men have done."

General Gage

Away the boys ran, straight up to the door of the great British general's house.

"Why do you come here?" asked the general's servant.

"We came to see General Gage."

"General Gage has no time to talk with boys," answered the guard.

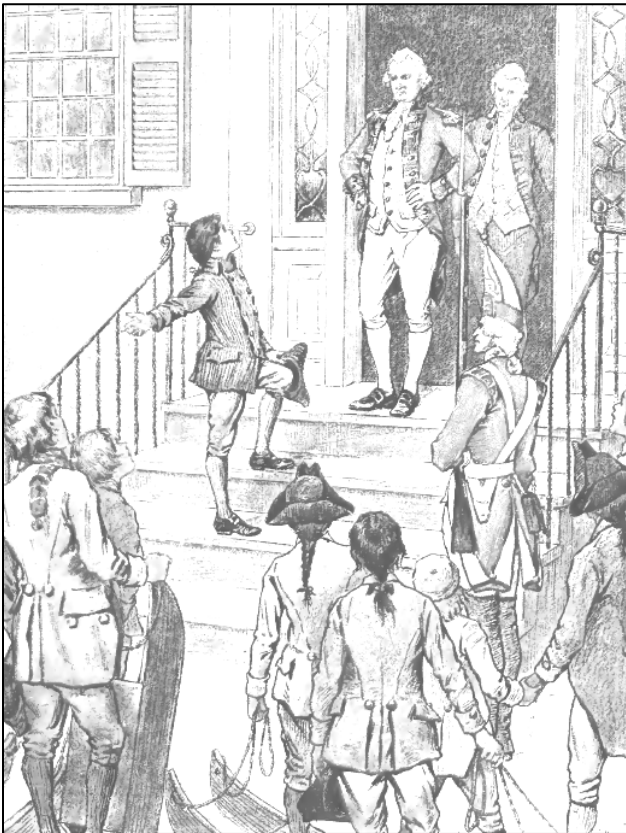
"But we must see him," the boys insisted.

"What is it, my lads?" said the general, who just then came to the door.

"We have come," said the leader of the Boston boys. "To complain of your soldiers."

"What have my soldiers done to you?" asked General Gage.

"They do everything they can to plague us," said the boy. "They knock down our snow forts, and now they are breaking up the ice on our pond. We think it is mean—it is mean—for soldiers to do things like this."



soldiers

The boy's cheeks were red and his eyes snapped. His small fists were

clenched, and very likely his voice was rather shrill and high.

The guard laughed. General Gage himself smiled a little.

"You are plucky boys," he said. "You would make good soldiers. If my soldiers trouble you again, let me know at once."

Then the boys thanked the general, and went back to their playground.

"Even the children breathe in liberty in this land," said General Gage, after the boys were gone.

liberty

After a time, this war came to an end. The English soldiers went back to England, and the colonies were free.

"Now," said the thirteen colonies. "We do not belong to England any more. We are the American people. We will call our country the United States. And we must have a president. Who shall it be?"

"George Washington," the people cried. "For he led our troops on to victory."

George Washington

And indeed, it was George Washington who led the troops on to victory. He deserved the honor of being president.

The capital city of America at this time was New York. So to this city George Washington went to be made the first president of the United States. The ceremony of officially making someone the president is called an *inauguration*.

inauguration

3. To whom did the Boston boys complain about the British soldiers breaking the ice?

4. Who became the first president of the United States?

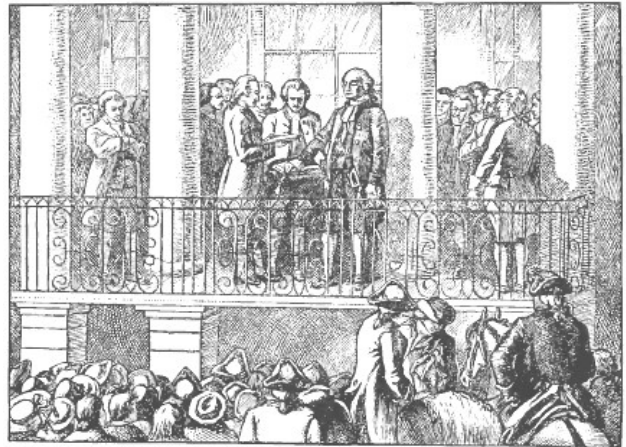
- a. Benjamin Franklin
- b. General Gage
- c. George Washington
- d. John Adams

There were no railroads yet at this time, so he traveled in his own coach, drawn by six beautiful white horses. There was a coachman in a uniform. The coach was lined with

velvet, and there were flowers of gold on the outside.

The people were very proud of their new president. As he drove across the country, they came out from the towns to meet him. "Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!" they shouted as the coach drew near. In some towns, the people scattered flowers along the road.

Often, Washington stood up in his coach and thanked the people for the honor they had given him. Then the people cheered louder than ever, "Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah for the president!"



The inauguration of George Washington as the first president.

In New York City, a great ball was given in George Washington's honor. How fine Washington must have looked! He was dressed in velvet and satin, for that was the fashion of those early times. His knee breeches were of black velvet, and fastened at the knee with very handsome buckles.

His stockings were of white silk; and he had silver buckles upon the shoes. His waistcoat was of embroidered satin, and over this he wore a rich coat of velvet. He wore also a white wig,

with a long tail hanging down behind; for this was the way gentlemen wore their hair in Washington's time.

It was a great day for New York.
It was a great day for the United States.

Working with a Map



5. Circle Boston, Massachusetts, on the map above.

6. Circle New York, New York, on the map above.

7. Boston is ____ of New York City.
- northeast
 - northwest
 - southeast
 - southwest

8. New York City is ____ of Boston.
- northeast
 - northwest
 - southeast
 - southwest

Word Search Puzzle

Directions: Find each term in the word search puzzle below.



American Revolution
Boston Common
British redcoats
Continental Congress
French and Indian War
General Gage
George Washington
inauguration

independence
John Hancock
liberty
New York City
soldiers
Thirteen Colonies
United States
Yankees

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