Declaration of Independence: A Chronology including Highlights from the Fourth of July.
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This is not an exhaustive chronology of the Declaration of Independence but rather selected significant information that adds to our knowledge of this historic and treasured document. Many toasts and public readings were offered in honor of the Declaration of Independence during the nineteenth century but only a selection of examples is included in this paper. Included also are selections of parodies of the Declaration, noteworthy editorials, printings, and significant highlights that cast information on the Declaration as a historic icon.

The first copies of the Declaration printed on the evening of July 4, 1776, served primarily as a means to communicate the news of independence and to help unify the new states in the mission that lay ahead. At first, the document was treated as any other broadside. It was posted in prominent places in towns and cities and read publicly to townspeople and the militia in city squares, churches, and state houses. The inherent value of the document as a historic icon and relic was not fully appreciated until the early nineteenth century when the Revolutionary war generation had decreased in number, and the populace had come to realize the importance of their collective experience. The Declaration served as a link to the past. Public readings of the Declaration increased in momentum. Individuals began carrying copies of the declaration in processions. The craft of printing demonstrated in Fourth of July parades provided opportunities for artisans to distribute copies of the Declaration to crowds along parade routes.1 Newspapers across the Eastern seaboard included printings of the Declaration as a matter of pride and admiration for Thomas Jefferson and other founders. Some of these issues included enhancements such as the addition of the Great Seal as a header to the text and the listing of the names of states representing the 56 signers. Commemorative and elaborate copies of the Declaration were offered for sale to the public that included proposals by John Binns (Philadelphia, 1816 and 1819), Benjamin Owen Tyler (New York, 1818), and William Stone (1823). Unusual replicas and renditions of the Declaration were created: a presentation copy was reproduced on a swath of white silk in Westminster, Vermont, July 4, 1799, and a poetical version of the Declaration's text was presented at City Hall in Richmond, Virginia, on July 4, 1821.

After the Revolutionary War, because of the continued aggressions by the French in the 1790s and the British as well, new declarations of independence based on the 1776 model were compiled to stir the emotions of Americans as they took a stand to protect their freedoms. In 1798 the urging of severing relations with France in a "A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress Assembled," but written by one unnamed individual Whig, was printed in a number of New England newspapers. The author carefully crafted his wording to mimic the original Declaration and listed specific complaints against the French, that included unlawful embargoes, usurpation of

1 See 1809 (Baltimore) and 1824 (Washington City).
American commerce and the capturing and torture of American seamen. Similarly in 1808, two parodies of the Declaration were issued, each directed against the British for similar reasons. One was a “sketch of a declaration of dependence on Great Britain” written as a sarcastic outrage and the other titled “A Manual of Independence” that listed British aggressions since the treaty of 1783. With the advent of nineteenth century political and such social movements as temperance, abolition, and education, other parodies of the Declaration were written to reflect the goals and missions of those causes.

The general antagonisms that had been exchanged between the Federalists and Anti-Federalist since the adoption of the Constitution, seemed to gain momentum with the election of Jefferson as president in 1801. Federalists “questioned whether the recent general reading of the Declaration of independence by the Democrats, is from respect to the sentiments it contains, or to promote the popularity of its author.” Some believed that the Federalists’ “hatred” of the Declaration was not only that Jefferson wrote it but that it exhibited “a striking resemblance to his inaugural speeches and messages,” and therefore served as a political device meant to gain favor among the republicans. Others deemed it simply improper, if not a “wicked practice” meant to mock the Federalists. Accordingly many Federalist celebrations, especially those in New England, omitted the public reading of the Declaration. According to Republicans, “Federalists have ceased to read the Declaration of Independence, because it contains plain republican truths respecting the enemy of all nations; truths, which have been lately exemplified in the plunder of our property [and] the impressions of our seamen.”

As the nineteenth century progressed some individuals believed that it was no longer relevant to read aloud the accusations specified in the Declaration since the United States and Britain were now on good terms. Conservatives and others became increasingly concerned about the condition of the original signed copy of the Declaration. Various plans were introduced to help safeguard the parchment.

1776

Highlights: July 9-- At a convention of the Representatives of the State of New York, it was unanimously resolved that independence should be declared—July 9.

Printings of the Declaration: Pennsylvania Evening Post, 6 July 1776, 335-336; Dunlap’s Pennsylvania Packet or, General Advertiser, 8 July 1776, 1; Constitutional Gazette (New York), 10 July 1776, 1-2; New-York Journal, or, The General Advertiser, 11 July 1776, Supplement, 1; Pennsylvania Ledger, 13 July 1776, 2; American Gazette, or the Constitutional Journal, 16 July 1776, 19, 22; New Hampshire Gazette, or Exeter Morning Chronicle, 16 July 1776; Connecticut Journal, 17 July 1776, 2; Continental Journal, 18 July 1776, 1; New England Chronicle, 18 July 1776, 1; Newport Mercury, 18 July 1776,

3 Pittsfield Sun, 3 August 1805, 3.
4 True Republican (Norwich, CN) and Albany Centinel as reprinted in Norfolk Repository, 22 July 1806, 295; Pittsfield Sun, 3 August 1805, 3.
5 American Mercury, 10 July 1806, 2.
6 See OCLC 191270750
7 Has incorrect spelling of “Charles Thompson [!].”
2-3; *Freeman's Journal* (Portsmouth, NH), 20 July 1776, 4;* The London Chronicle* (no. 307), 104; *Scots Magazine* 38 (1776): 433-34.

**1784**

**1785**

**1786**
Printings of the Declaration: *Pennsylvania Packet, and Daily Advertiser*, 4 July 1786, 1.9

**1787**

**1791**

**1792**

Readings: “The Declaration of Independence is not to be celebrated, merely as affecting the separation of one country from the jurisdiction of another; but as being the result of a rational discussion and definition of the rights of man, and the end of civil government; and as opening the fairest prospect of political happiness, that ever smiled upon our world.” *Independence Chronicle and the Universal Advertiser*, 19 July 1792, 2.

Toasts: At Wilmington, Delaware: “The glorious declaration of independency; may every succeeding anniversary impart a new luster on the magnanimity which then directed the councils of America.” *Diary or London's Register*, 19 July 1792, 3.

**1793**
Highlights: A transparency by C.P. Polk painted depicting the “Declaration of Congress on the 4th of July, 1776” was displayed at Gray’s Gardens in Baltimore on July 4, 1793. Included were these words:

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8 Secretary Charles Thomson’s name misspelled as “Thompson.”
9 Includes list of signers bracketed under state headings.
We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal—that they are
distributed 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.
*Daily Advertiser*, 12 July 1793, 2.

Poems: “The Declaration of Independence; a poem: accompanied by odes, songs, &c.
adapted to the day. By a citizen of Boston [George Richards (1755?-1814)].” Boston:
Cited for sale at “Faust’s Statue” in *Massachusetts Mercury*, 16 July 1793, 4.

**Printings of the Declaration:** *Federal Gazette, and Philadelphia Evening Post*, 3 July 1793,
2.12

**1794**

**Orations:** Major Robert Wright13 presented an address in which he both paraphrased and
quoted from the Declaration of Independence at Chestertown, Maryland, before “a
crowded audience” on July 4, 1794.

My fair hearers and fellow citizens, this is the triumphant period in the annals of
America—this is the great American festival. On this day was executed the great
charter of American liberties—a charter sealed with the blood of our patriots, and
recorded in the blood of our heroes—a charter which delivered us from the domination
of kings, priests, and nobles, and unalienably secured the rights of man, and the
sovereignty of the people, to the gallant sons of America—this then is the period we are
called to the view of our former political wretchedness, to the confession of our present
political happiness and to the anticipation of our future political greatness—This is the
period we with gratitude unlimited, and exultation unspeakable, contemplate the might
contest we have sustained, and glory in that peace, which crowned our heroic labors,
and delivered us from the painful scenes of blood and carnage into the pleasing
possession of independence, liberty and prosperity—that we may perfectly embrace
the principles of our glorious revolution, and precisely understand the state of our
political wretchedness on that tremendous day on which hung the fate of America,
permit me to give you a view thereof, drawn from the original in the language of
Congress, who declare, that “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 posers 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

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12 The following preceded the text of the Declaration: “Agreeable to the order of the day, the Congress
resolved itself into a committee of the whole, to take into their farther consideration the declaration, and after
some time the president resumed the chair, and Mr. Harrison reported, that the committee[e] have agreed to a
declaration which they desired him to report.”

13 Robert Wright (1752-1826) served in the Revolutionary War, and later was a member of the House of
Delegates (1784-86) and Maryland State Senate (1801). He was Governor Maryland (1806-09).
to the separation."14

1795

Readings:
Americans! the declaration of Independence was the salvation of our country. It was this, which blew into a flame the almost smothered embers of freedom, and roused, from the vale of despondence, the genius of Columbia. It was this, which wrested us from the grasp of tyranny, from the iron hand of oppression, and promoted us, to an eminent rank, among the nations of the earth. This is the first link in a grand chain of events, which issued in the establishment of a constitution, which combines the wisdom of ages, which secures to us the rights, the privileges, & the blessings, of a free people, and, under which, this federal republic is rapidly ascending the heights of political importance and national glory.15

1798
Highlights: The Declaration was carried in a procession and read under a “Tree of Liberty” in Patterson, New Jersey, on July 4, 1798. Centinel of Freedom, 10 July 1798, 3.

Parodies of the Declaration:

The Declaration. “A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled.”16

When, in the course of human events, it becomes most necessary for one nation to dissolve the treaties “and political bands which have connected them with another, and to” maintain “among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and Nature’s God entitles them.”

In such a melancholy event, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind, requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the dissolution of all their bonds of alliance and of all political connexion. “We hold these truths to be self evident, that all the nations as well as men are created equal; that God hath endowed them with certain unalienable rights, and that among these are independence, and the right of self government; that to secure these rights, societies were originally instituted; and to preserve them, it is necessary that they should exercise the poser to regulate their

14 General Advertiser (Philadelphia), 23 July 1794, 2. Narrative continued in another edition. Also printed in Baltimore Daily Intelligencer, 16 and 18 August 1794, 2 and 1, respectively. Robert Wright had delivered an “animated oration” on July 4, 1793, at the church in Chestertown. Chestertown Gazette, 9 July 1793, 3; General Advertiser, 13 July 1793, 3.
15 Samuel Worcester, An Oration Delivered, at the College Chapel, Hanover, on the Anniversary of American Independence, July Fourth, 1795 (Hanover: Dunham and True, 1795), 7. Worcester was a member of the senior class at Dartmouth University.
16 The printing in the Oracle of the Day (14 July) is titled “New Declaration of Independence by a Whig of 1798.” Daily Advertiser (2 May) and Spooners Vermont Journal (16 May) has the Declaration signed by “A Whig of 1798.”
internal and external concerns, without the officious control, direction or interference of any foreign nation whatsoever. For these principles our ancestors have nobly contended, and for them we threw off the galling yoke of Great Britain, and expended our blood and our treasure through a long and arduous conflict.” The King of France, it is true, with a view of humbling his old and inveterate rival, did form an alliance with us, after we had fought at Bunker’s Hill, and conquered at Saratoga, and cooperated with us in beating his enemy, though not in establishing our independence.† Prudence & policy, however, for a long time dictate that we flatter the vanity of the Grand Monarque, and of his subjects, by trumpeting our gratitude for them, and by ascribing our final success to their achievements. But when the monarchy of France has been long since subverted; when their successors, the Republicans, in order to render those to whom we professed gratitude detestable in our eyes have declared, that “the aid afforded us by France was the fruit of a base speculation,” and that “our glory offended their ambitious views;” and more especially when a long train of insults, abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evince a settled design to divide, humble, and Hollandise: this country, it is our right, it is our duty to dissolve an alliance with such a government, to separate from so pernicious a nation, and to place new guards for our future security.—Such has been the patient suffering of these United States, and such is now the necessity which constrains us to dissolve our political connexions with France.

The history of the present government of France, is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute influence and tyranny over those States. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world. France has refused to comply with the most important stipulations in the Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the United States. She has interrupted, by illegal and unjust decrees, the ordinary administrations of her Admiralty Tribunals in the cases of American captures. She has sent insolent and incendiary Ministers and Consuls, to divide, insult and overturn the Government of these independent states. She has authorised the fitting out of privateers, in our sea ports, in defiance of the Executive’s proclamation of neutrality. She has accepted commissions, raised troops, and began military enterprises within our jurisdiction, thereby endangering the peace and insulting the authority of our Government. She has authorized her Ministers to make insidious appeals from the Constituted Authorities to the People, and has endeavored to create a division and odious distinction between the Administration and the citizens of the United States. She has laid unnecessary and wanton embargoes and restrictions on our vessels lawfully trading in her ports, and has refused to compensate our citizens, who have suffered by these vexations. She has forcibly seized and taken valuable cargoes, belonging to citizens of these United States, who lawfully entered her ports, or the ports of her enemies, relying on that faith and protection which all civilized nations have heretofore found; and has compelled said citizens to accept her own terms, prices and conditions. She has in innumerable instances, through her wicked Agents, Commissaries, and Governors, not only seized the said cargoes, affixed her own prices, but has sent their vessels away with a naked receipt and promise, under the mockery of a payment; and she has justified such proceedings by continuing the said wicked Agents in her employ, notwithstanding our repeated remonstrances and complaints. She has issued repeated decrees and orders for the capture, arrest, molestation and
condemnation of our vessels, lawfully sailing on the highway of nations, the broad ocean, upon the most frivolous and unjustifiable pretexts. She has interfered in our elections and has attempted to gain a dangerous ascendancy in our Councils. She has corrupted one of our highest officers, and but for a timely discovery of the plot she might have poisoned and tainted one of the highest springs of public confidence; the notoriety of the fact renders it unnecessary to detail the deflections of Randolph, and the intrigues of Fauchet. She has countenance & authorized her citizens to commit the most outrageous and barbarous attacks on the property and persons of the people of the United States, by permitting them, with impunity, and without censure, to capture our vessels and cargoes, against our treaty, and against the law of nations. To plunder our mariners, who have been captured, of their clothes and other necessaries for the sustenance of life. To imprison and otherwise maltreat, abuse, and insult, those honest seamen whom their aggressions have thrown into their power. To treat with every indignity and contempt the American flag, not only in derogation of our alliance, but in defiance of the laws and rights of nations. In fine, even to whip, lacerate and scourge the persons of those brave and independent freemen, whom they had captured and already plundered of their property.

To complete the black catalogue of her injuries, she has lately passed an arrêtee, calculated, and intended to cut off our commerce with all the world, to destroy our navigation, and ruin our advantageous carrying trade, to render useless and idle the capitals of our merchants, which have been hitherto saved from the devastation and plunder of her corsairs; to deprive our industrious and honest mechanics of their means of subsistence; to turn our unhappy mariners out of employ, and to beggar all descriptions of our citizens, who depend on this branch of industry for their support. In fine, to leave the fruits of our husbandmen to perish on their hands without demand, and to aim a fatal blow at our prosperity, industry and happiness.

In every state of these oppressions we have supplicated and humbly petitioned for redress in the most soothing and humiliating terms. Our repeated petitions and embassies have been answered only by repeated injuries. A people whose character is thus marked by every act, towards us, which can define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ally of a free and independent nation.—Nor have we been unmindful or wanting in attention to our Gallic friends; we have warned them of their attempts to extend an unwarrantable and insolent jurisdiction over us; we have often reminded them of our original connexion, and of the interest which we felt in their success. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them, by the principles of liberty, which they professed, but did not practice, to disavow these usurpations and insults, which would inevitably interrupt our connexion and correspondence. But they have deaf to the voice of justice and friendship, and have treated our proffered adjustment with scorn and contumely.

We must therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we do the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace, friends.

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world, to that being whose altars France has demolished, for the rectitude of our intentions, do solemnly declare, that these U. States are, and of right ought to be, free, sovereign and independent States, as such they are absolved from all alliance or other political connexion with the Republic of France, and that, as free and independent
States, they have full power to levy war, to conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and do all other acts and things which independent States have a right to do—and for the support of this declaration, with a firm and well grounded reliance on Divine Providence, we, the said Representatives, in Congress assembled, mutually pledge to each other, our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.

Such was the noble language of the patriots of 1775. Such was their firmness, such was their heroism, such was their disinterested virtue.

The list of injuries committed by France is as lengthy, and is as well founded, as our old grievances with Great Britain. Will any honest American pretend that they are not has humiliating and oppressive? Are we so childish as to be amused with a feather, to be captivated with sounds? Is it any alleviation to our burthens [?] and injuries, that they are inflicted by pretended Republicans? Is there less smart in the lath of a Sans Culotte than there is in the stripe of a Royalist? Is it any consolation to a beggared American, whose wife and children are famished for that bread which the French had plundered from him, that it has gone to enrich a bon Republican, to relish his soup, and to support the cause of French liberty?

No, this delusion has long since vanished in the hauteur, the luxury, and the tyranny of the five Directors. In the ambition, the vanity, the desire of conquest, and the rapacity of the two Councils of the Republic of France, we can see nothing to admire, but much to despise. The open, avowed and lawless expulsion and banishment of two Directors and sixty members of the Legislature, without trial, without mockery of forms, and, in defiance of a Constitution just solemnly established, has at last opened the eyes of all honest and enlightened Americans. To preserve any good understanding with such a nation, is no longer possible. Every lenient and assuasive measure has been attempted, but in vain.

War is indeed to be deprecated; by it we can gain nothing, though it may involve us in incalculable expense. But much is due to our Dignity, our Honor and our Independence, for which we have fought so long and expended so much treasure. Let us then rally round our Government; let us erect a rampart to defend our rights, our religion, our wives and children, from the polluting embraces, or attacks of these terrifying Republicans.

Let us adopt a system of defence, but let it be effectual, let it be energetic, let it be worthy the contest, for every thing we hold dear is embarked on it. Let us announce our motives to the world in the bold and dignified language of the patriots of 1775. Let us dissolve our alliance and all political connexion with a nation, whose first law is perfidy and whose ultimate principle is plunder. We shall then have attained a benefit of no inconsiderable value. We shall then in truth be freed from that wretched connexion which has gradually been undermining our Government, and we shall be relieved from the oppressive gratitude which seemed to increase with our payments, and which a liberal requital served rather to inflame and magnify, than diminish.

*The French do not admit the existence of a God, therefore this argument will be lost on them.

+See the private correspondence of our Ministers at Paris, by which it will appear that the Court of France opposed our final Independence.

[Massachusetts Mercury, 13 April 1798, 1; Daily Advertiser, 2 May 1798, 2; Spooners Vermont Journal, 16 May 1798, 2; Federal Galaxy (Brattleboro, VT), 22 May 1798, 4;
Printings of the Declaration: The Declaration is published together with the Constitution, Constitution of the State of New Jersey, “Compendium of the Declaration of Rights, selected from several of the State Constitutions” in a “small pamphlet” by the office of the newspaper *Centinel of Freedom;* Carey’s *United States’ Recorder*, 3 July 1798, 2; a shortened version of the Declaration with changes in wording in *Alexandria Advertiser*, 24 May 1798, 3. Other printings: *Daily Advertiser*, 2 May 1798, 2.

1799

Highlights: A copy of the Declaration “borne on a white silk sofadan, fringed with gold,” was carried in a parade from the Coffee House to the meeting house in Westminster, Vermont, on July 4, 1799. *Farmer’s Weekly Museum*, 15 July 1799, 3.


1801

Printings of the Declaration: *Kline’s Carlisle Weekly Gazette*, 18 March 1801, 4; American Citizen and General Advertiser, 7–8 July 1801, 2 and 2, respectively; *American Mercury*, 9 July 1801, 1.

Readings: “Extract from an Oration delivered at the city of Hudson, N.Y. before the Republicans of the county of Columbia, on the 4th of July last, by John P. Vanness, Esq.”

Behold the streams of liberty which upon the occasion, flowed from the pen of the immortal sage who is now at the head of your affairs, and in the most gloomy times pored consolatiol into the bosom of your almost desponding country.

“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, among which are, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” [*Edes’ Kennebec Gazette*, 20 November 1801, 1.]

1802

Printings of the Declaration: advertised for sale: “Constitutions of the United States with the latest amendments, to which are prefixed, the Declaration of Independence and the Federal Constitution and the amendments” in *The Times; and District of Columbia Daily Advertiser* (Alexandria, VA), 25 June 1802, 4; see a printing also on 3 July 1802, 2.

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18 Note preceding the Declaration: “The following Declaration of Independence, the Author of which was installed into the Office of President of the United States, 4th March, 1801, is worthy of a republication.”
19 Includes list of signers under state headings.
20 Includes list of signers under state headings.
1803

Highlights: Independence Day readings of the Declaration generally by Democrats are suspect as to whether such readings are “from respect to the sentiments it contains, or to promote the popularity of its author.” *New-England Palladium*, 15 July 1803, 2. See also *Salem Register*, 21 July 1803, 2; *New York-Herald*, 7 July 1804, 2; *Alexandria Expositor*, 14 October 1805, 2; *Witness* (Litchfield, CT), 16 July 1806, 2; *Columbian Centinel*, 19 July 1806, 2.


See *Morning Chronicle* (New York), 4 March 1803, 4 and 11 May 1803, 4, for an advertisement for a print to be engraved by E. Savage, taken from a painting of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. The proposed size of the picture was “eleven feet wide, by eight feet high.”

Readings:

It has been too often matter of just complaint, that the Declaration of Independence has been read in a clumsy and unintelligible manner; no regard paid to loudness, to distinctness, to emphasis, to pauses, to intonation of voice, or to due animation. Though few persons are qualified to read well, yet with a little attention, the advice of friends, and constant practice, they might, at least, avoid offending their hearers.

Sometimes the reader is so low that he cannot be heard; and those present are employed in gazing around them, or in examining the devices and mottoes on the standards of the different tribes which composes the Tammany society, sometimes he is so loud that one would imagine the British were landing upon Long Island; and

21 Perhaps the earliest reading of the Declaration in Washington City.
23 *Daily Advertiser*, 9 July 1803, 2.
24 At head of Declaration: “under an impression that every Citizen admits the propriety of celebrating the birth day of American Independence, we are induced to lay before our readers the declaration of Independence pronounced on the fourth of July 1776. A perusal of it will no doubt, bring back a pleasing and grateful recollection of the circumstances under which it was pronounced, and we presume to hope there is not one of our readers but will, on this auspicious day, receive it with pleasure as a substitute for any article of intelligence which could be inserted in the Register.”
sometimes the emphasis is laid upon the most insignificant words, and pauses made, if any at all, always in the wrong places. As to the modulation of the voice, it may be very difficult; but those who cannot do otherwise than drone like a bagpipe, or squeak like an oaten straw, ought to shun, as much as possible an appearance before the public.

The preamble to the Declaration ought to be read with a slow, solemn, and rather low, but at the same time a sufficiently audible tone. At the rehearsal of inquiries, the voice ought to be raised, and the pronunciation to be more rapid; the reader making a considerable pause after every article, that so the hearer may have time to weigh the import of the charge, and be fired with a proper indignation. In the conclusion the voice ought to fall, but not so low as in the preamble, and to discover great spirit and firmness mingled with cool deliberation. By such reading, the auditors would be put into a perfect glow, and feel themselves in a right frame for battle.

There are some tories and lukewarm whigs who condemn the reading of the Declaration of Independence at this day; and who say, that as the two nations are now at peace, there is an impolicy [sic], and indeed, an impropriety in a rehearsal of injuries which have been sustained, that the British nation no longer charge the Americans with rebellion, nor constantly cast in their teeth what they have done and that it is wisdom and duty to exercise mutual forgiveness, and encourage a habit of friendship and social intercourse. This reasoning would be irresistible, if it could be admitted that "religion has any thing to do with politics," or were nations bound to "bless and curse not." One remark more shall indulged at present, and that is, the want of feeling and energy in the reader may frequently arise from his having had no part in the revolution. Men have started up like mushrooms, affecting great concern for liberty, who could not have been active in its establishment, or whose connections were decided in the opposition.

If the above remarks should be of any service to those societies who have undertaken to celebrate for the city the approaching anniversary, and lead them to circumpection in the choice of their reader, and of their orator, the writer will have his reward. Preceptor.

"Communication: Anniversary."

From the New York Herald as printed in Connecticut Centinel, 28 June 1803, 3.

1804
Printings of the Declaration: The American Citizen's Sure Guide;25 American Citizen, 4 July 1804, 2-3; Alexandria Expositor, 4 July 1804, 1;26 Maryland Herald and Hager's-Town Weekly Advertiser, 4 July 1804, 1; American Mercury, 5 July 1804, 1-2; Republican Watch Tower, 7 July 1804, 1; New Hampshire Gazette, 10 July 1804, 1-2; Republican Spy, 17 July 1804, 4.

"Mr. Charles Pierce of Portsmouth, Newhampshire [sic], has issued proposals for printing by subscription, 2 volumes of public documents and papers, interesting to every citizen of the United States, desirous of acquainting himself with the political relations of his country. It will contain, the Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, Constitution of the U. States, fifteen Treaties, Conventions, &c. with foreign nations,

25 Advertised in Morning Chronicle, 12 September 1804, 3.
26 Includes list of signers under state headings.

11
Nineteen Treaties with the Indian Nations, and several domestic papers, interesting to the merchant.” *Philadelphia Repository, and Weekly Register*, 14 January 1804, 15.

1805

Highlights: An editorial in the *Pittsfield Sun* (Massachusetts) states that the annual reading of the Declaration on the Fourth of July “seems to be considered by certain Federalists as an electioneering address to the people in favour of the Republican party and against themselves. Their hatred of the Declaration of Independence is not merely because it was drawn by Thomas Jefferson, and exhibits a striking resemblance to his inaugural speeches and messages, but also because of its history and principles.”

This [the Declaration of Independence] is neither read nor sung by federalists on the 4th of July--nor will they sing Jefferson and Liberty. Adams and Liberty runs all into discord--Moll Carey is hardly decent Calender left no song--Toni Turner’s letter will not suit any metre; and black Sal is no composuist [sic]. What shall federalists do for a song on the 4th July? Nothing will answer them by the lamentations of Job, “Let that day be darkness, neither let the light shine upon it. Let the light be solitary, let them curse it that curse the day.”

This language is appropriate, because there is a strong resemblance between federalism and Job. Job had been in great prosperity, so had federalism. Job lost nearly all his friends, so has federalism--Job was very sore; so are federalists. Job fretted very vehemently, even so do they.

But they used to convene on the 4th of July, and to read the Declaration of Independence gravely charging the British government with all its enormities, and defining George III to be “a Prince, whose character is marked by every act, which may define a tyrant.”

Even men, who were tories through the war, and who to be consistent, have been tories ever since were appointed to read this Declaration, and did read it publicly, not because they approved it, but because the reading of it might blind the people in a belief, that the principles of the revolution were the guides of federalism.

After power got into republican hands the federal papers remonstrated against reading such a piece of abuse against our ally George III with whom we were iron bound by a federal treaty of Amity and Commerce: but republicans do not love the treaty, and they will read the Declaration, reminding the people once a year, that our lives, fortunes, and sacred honor were pledged for the support of this Declaration.

But Mr. Jefferson penned the Declaration.--This is a sore thing for federalists. They sometimes pretend that five or six men penned it. Five or six or two men could never have penned such an instrument. The high finish of it shews it to have been the work of that distinguished citizen, who now believes it true and is supporting it. If George III has repented of his evil deeds and has reformed, we ought to hear of it thro’ the federal prints; but without such notice we shall proclaim every year “that he plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people--that he constrained our fellow citizens to bear arms against their country, and to become the executioners of their friends and brethren--and that he is a tyrant, unfit to

be the ruler of a free people.” [Hartford (Conn.) Mercury as printed in Suffolk Gazette, 9 September 1805, 1.]

Printings of the Declaration: Eastern Argus (Portland, ME), 28 June 1805, 4; Democrat (Boston), 3 July 1805, 4; National Intelligencer (Washington, D.C.), 3 July 1805, 2; Independent Chronicle, 4 July 1805, 1; Salem Register, 4 July 1805, 2; Republican Spy (Northampton, MA), 9 July 1805, 3; Providence Phoenix (RI), 13 July 1805, 1-2.29

Phinehas Allen proposed publishing a “New School Book” to include the Declaration of Independence, Washington’s Farewell Address, and the Constitution of the State of Massachusetts. Pittsfield Sun, 20 July 1805, 3.


The Declaration was drawn by Thomas Jefferson; who, in the figurative language of the late Dr. Stiles, President of Yale College, “poured the soul of the continent into the monumental act of Independence.” It is familiarly known to you all that it was signed on the memorable fourth of July. . . . With halters about their necks, the signers of the Declaration of Independence set their names to an instrument, which, in case of failure, they knew must be their death warrant. Yes, my friends, had the Revolution been crushed, they would have been distinguished from common rebels, and signally executed or exiled.

1806

Highlights: It is reported in the Richmond Enquirer and reprinted in Vermont Gazette, 14 July 1806, 2, that a copy of the Declaration “in the hand writing of Mr. Jefferson” was discovered in the papers of the estate of George Wythe. The Declaration is reprinted with erasures of some of the original document and deletions are printed in italics.

Readings:

The thirtieth anniversary of that auspicious era approaches. Federalists have ceased to read the Declaration of Independence, because it contains plain republican truths respecting the enemy of all nations; truths, which have been lately exemplified in the plunder of our property, the impressments of our seamen and the murder of John Pierce.

But republicans will read that Declaration and they will rejoice that the power of Great Britain is humbled, that Mr. Adams’s practice on the British constitution is finished, and that the well-born nobles of our country have retired to their hole, that republicanism prevails over three-fourths of the state of New-Hampshire, that

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28 Preceding the Declaration: “The following is the language of Jefferson, at the perilous times which ‘tried men’s souls.’ Let his calumniators read and blush.”
29 Note preceding the text of the Declaration: “The following is the language of Jefferson, at the perilous times which ‘tried men’s souls.’ Let his calumniators read and blush.”
13
republicans are in possession of the government of Massachusetts, that governor String lifts up his head, only like the mast of a wreck (in the midst of a fleet of merchantmen) ready to be plunged to the bottom by the next wave, that we have gained 1500 votes in Connecticut, sinking the federal majority from 5400 to 3900, and that all the wiles of federalism have been defeated.

On that day federalists will mourn, because we have no sedition or alien act, no stamp or land tax, no standing army, or navy of 74's, no 8 per cent loan or new judiciary, no Hamilton or Pitt, no Adams or reign of terror, no Cincinnati or sacred honor; in fact, that all is gone, that their mighty talents are likely to perish within them, that their religion will bring them nothing in market, that their electioneering stories are discredited, that Callander is dead, and John Allen resigned. It will be truly a mournful day for federalists; as they will have few orations, it will be well for one of their political priests to preach to them from the parable of Dives and Lazarus. “From the Witness (of July 2),” as printed in American Mercury, 10 July 1806, 2.

Printings of the Declaration: American Mercury, 3 July 1806, 1-2; Independent Chronicle, 3 July 1806, 1;20 Kline’s Carlisle Weekly Gazette, 4 July 1806, 3;21 Morning Chronicle (New York), 4 July 1806, 2; Witness (Litchfield, CT), 9 July 1806, 1-2; Suffolk Gazette (Sag Harbor, NY), 14 July 1806, 1-2; Vermont Gazette (Bennington), 14 July 1806, 2.33

1807
Printings of the Declaration: True Republican (New London, CT), 1 July 1807, 1; “Spirit of Seventy-Six,” Albany Register (NY), 3 July 1807, 2; National Intelligencer, 3 July 1807, 2; Public Advertiser, 3 July 1807, 2.

20 A paraphrased version of the Declaration. For example, the last paragraph of the Declaration now reads: We therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, do, in the name and by authority of the good people of these states reject and renounce all allegiance and subjection to the kings of Great Britain, and all others who may hereafter claim, by, through, or under them; we utterly dissolve all political connection which may heretofore have subsisted between us and the Parliament or people of Great Britain; and finally, we do assert these colonies to be free and independent states, and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

21 Declaration preceded with the following note: “This day being the Anniversary of our nation Freedom—although Federal Editors ‘remember to forget it’—we conceive nothing could be more acceptable to our Republican Readers than the following.”

22 “From the Richmond Enquirer.” The following note precedes the Declaration: Mr. Jefferson. Among the literary relics of the venerable George Wythe, was found the following rare and curious paper in the hand writing of Mr. Jefferson. It is a copy of the original Declaration of our Independence, as it came from the hands of its author. For the permission to peruse and publish this paper, we are indebted to the politeness of Major Duval, the sole executor of the estate. The federal assertion that Mr. Jefferson was not the author of this celebrated declaration, has long since been refuted, or else this paper would have furnished the most abundant refutation.—What now will become of the no less unfounded assertion, that his paper as it was adopted by congress, owes much of its beauty and its force to the committee appointed to draft it? The world will see that not only were very few additions made by the committee, but that they even struck out two of the most forcible and striking passages in the whole composition, for what reasons, yet remains to be discovered. The passages omitted in the original composition are printed in Italic.

23 Ibid.
Parodies of the Declaration:

Three or four years ago, a federal paper in the state of New-York, condemned the reading of the declaration of independence on the 4th of July, and declared it to be "a pernicious practice!"—About the same time, Coleman, the federal editor of New-York, expressed his disapprobation of the same practice; because, as he said, it was an unnecessary insult towards a friendly nation!

The federalists of Boston, it is presumed, cannot be more friendly to this practice; which we have a right to infer from their former conduct, as well as from the reflection that it would belie the assurances they have so often of late, publicly given to England—as well as from a reason similar to that of Mr. Coleman,

Considering these things, we are induced humbly to submit to those patriotic men the sketch of a declaration of dependence on Great Britain—which might be something like the following.—Their words and actions induce in us an honest belief, that such would be much the most agreeable to them.

Declaration of Dependence

When, in the course of human events, it becomes "expedient" for one people to remove the obstacles which have prevented the connection with another, a becoming respect for their own reputation and interest requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the reunion.

We hold these truths to be self-evident—that the people of America and those of Great Britain are equal—possessing in common certain alienable rights, among which are life (that is, bare existence) and as much property and commerce as the British ministry shall find it expedient to afford us—that to secure these, a monarchy is instituted on the other side of the Atlantic; deriving jus powers from the conquest. The history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of repeated instances of heroic generosity and universal benevolence, all having in direct object the establishment of "the liberty of these states and of the world." To prove this let facts be submitted.

He has left to our free enjoyment, all the privileges of commerce, which he, (as rightful sovereign of the seas) did not find worth monopolizing to himself.

He has, with unparalleled generosity, exempted a great portion of seamen from starving on board of his ships of war—at a time, too, when he wanted all the sailors he

34 Printed under the heading, "The Patriotism of Our Fathers."
35 Note preceding the Declaration: "Monday next being the Anniversary of American Independence, there can be no impropriety in offering to our readers the Declaration of that Event. The following is the draught of that instrument as penned by Mr. Jefferson. The manner in which is found its way to the public is thus described by the Editor of the Richmond Enquirer." Following are the same editorial comments as found in the Suffolk Gazette, 14 July 1806, 1-2.
could find, to man that navy which was necessary to preserve his own existence, and the liberty of the world.

He has suffered several of our ships to cross the seas without firing upon them. He has left alive a number of our seamen, whom he had as good a right to kill as Pierce, those of the Chesapeake, &c. and we ought to be proud to die in the service of the protector of the world.

He has, with amazing condescension, sent an envoy all the way to America, to reconcile us to the chastisement inflicted on us by Berkeley and Humphreys—with as much graciousness as if he had really done us injustice—and even offered us what in his wise estimation should be considered “honorable reparation” requiring only the trifling preliminary of an abandonment of our sovereignty, and the repeal of such restrictions and laws as he did not approve!!! (For more copious details of benefits see federal papers for months past.)

We, therefore, the representatives of all the religion, talents, wealth and honesty of the country, do solemnly publish and declare, that these United States are, or of right ought to be, dependent colonies—that all allegiance to, and political connection with the crown of Great Britain, is, or ought to be, resumed—and that, as dependent colonies, they have no power to do any acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of the British navy, we mutually pledge to each other our selves, and (as far as it will go) our sacred honor! [“From the Boston Democrat,” published in City Gazette and Daily Advertiser (Charleston, SC), 6 August 1808, 2.]

“The following is a hasty effort to reduce the multiplied aggressions of Great Britain, committed since the peace of ’83, to a small compass. We shall presume to call it a Manual of American Independence, emanating from the encroachments of the same nation, and adapted to the present times. The reader will perceive, that its basis is the Declaration of Independence, and the incomparable letter of Mr. Madison to Mr. Rose. It was sincerely to be wished, that Great Britain was alone in these aggressions. But such has been the contest of herself and her enemy, that much of what relates to maritime aggressions, applies also to France.”

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all governments are equal in their rights of sovereignty; that they are endowed with certain privileges, which none can abandon without a relinquishment of their independence: that, amongst these, is the right of navigating the seas, of regulating its own commerce on this wide domain, subject only to the exceptions of contraband of war and of actual blockade, and of preserving entire the rights of its maritime jurisdiction; that, when any of these great rights are invaded, it is the right of the sovereign power to adopt such expedients, as are calculable to obtain redress and scarcity.

Prudence, indeed the love of peace and the interests of this country, dictate, that war, or cogent sacrifices are not to be incurred for light and transient causes. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce us under absolute despotism; it is our right, it is our duty, to provide new guards for our security. Such has been the prudent sufferance of the U. States; and such now is the necessity which co [sic] ins [sic] them to adopt some cogent
measures of redress.

The history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpation, all having in direct object the prostration of the dearest rights of these states. As, before the war of our revolution, he attempted to reduce us, from the rank of colonies, to the humiliating condition of slaves: so he has subsequently attempted to deprive us of those rights of sovereignty, which were sealed by the blood, and purchased by the treasure of our gallant forefathers. To prove this let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has permitted his cruisers to lie in wait before our harbors, and interrupt foreign vessels, who have come within those harbors to enjoy the rights of hospitality, and reciprocate the benefits of commerce.

He has permitted his ships of war in violation of our port laws, relating both to health and revenue, to board a merchant vessel within the limits of those United States and actually to impress and carry off a number of seamen and passengers, into the service of the ships of war. On an appeal to the commanders of these ships, he first failed to give up the actual offenders to justice, and finally repelled the officer charged with the regular process for the purpose.

The commanders of his frigates have hovered about the entrance of our harbors, for the purpose of annoying our outward and inward trade; and finally closed a series of irregularities, by attempting to arrest a coasting vessel, and murdering an American vessel, and murdering an American citizen on board, within a mile from the shores of our country.

With the same disrespect for the rights of our sovereignty, his ships of war have fired upon, boarded, and burnt one of the armed ships of a foreign power, then in amity with us, within the territorial jurisdiction and hospitable protection of the U. States.

In every stage of these oppressions, we have demanded redress, as become the sovereignty of an independent nation. Our repeated remonstrances have been answered only by repeated injuries. The authors of these outrageous attacks have either escaped, without any animadversion, or after the ridiculous solemnities of a mock trial have been honorably acquitted, or, in most cases, been honorably recompensed, for these outrageous violation of our rights, by their promotion to command.

To crown the climax of these insolent attacks, instituted by his ships of war, an American frigate has been attacked and captured, off our very coast, by a British ship of war who had just been enjoying the hospitality of our ports, and had actually sailed out of the same harbor, in company with the frigate, for the purpose of making this outrageous attack. This violation of the sovereignty of our flag was in consequence of a demand, disclaimed by all the laws of nations, and expressly contrary to the independence of our country. Not satisfied with this insulting outrage, his commanding officer still continued to molest the rights of our jurisdiction, bring to, by firing at vessels pursuing their regular course of trade, and to institute a real blockade of our harbor.

For an outrage thus gross and unprecedented in its nature, a solemn remonstrance has been made; but no reparation has been given. Our just demand has been rejected on the most frivolous pretext. The commanding officer still remains in the confidence of his sovereign. Three of the seamen, torn from the flag of the American frigate, still
continue in the fleet-prisons of the triumphant assailants; while the 4th has been placed by the sentence of the court martial, beyond the reach of demand of restoration.

He has virtually declared himself the ruler of the waves, and the arbiter of the winds; at whose sovereign nod every thing that is on the bosom of the ocean, is to sink or swim.

To carry this usurping system into execution, to soothe the unworthy animosity of his commercial subjects, jealous of the rising prosperity of these states: to extend their commerce by the sacrifice of our own; he has employed the mighty resources of his maritime power.

He has used every expedient for cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

By instituting blockades of whole countries on paper, when they had no real existence in fact;

By interrupting the circuitous trade, between the colonies and the mother country of his enemy, although conducted according to principles which he himself had previously recognized by the most solemn forms:

He has attempted to weaken the honorable allegiance of our countrymen, by holding out to our merchants and seamen the alternative of losing their property by British capture, or disgracing the flag of their country by sailing under British licence.

He has authorized the commanders of his armed ships to search American vessels, on a pretext utterly disclaimed by the laws of nations; to impress our seamen from those vessels, in their own ports, on the high seas, and even in our own harbors; thus compelling our gallant countrymen to bleed in a cause for which they have no sympathy, and in which their country has no interest.

He has endeavored to bring on our innocent countrymen, the piratical rapacity of the states of Barbary.

He has sent the ministers of his ambition among us, to provide the means of military expeditions against the territories of a nation with whom we are at amity; the enlisting our own resources to extend their conquests over those territories, or sowing the seeds of jealousy and war in the bosom of a friendly power.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us; and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages; whose known rule of warfare is, an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions, we have remonstrated against his injustice; but remonstrances have been in vain. It is time, therefore, for us to rise up against these aggressions; to show to the wondering world, that we are worthy of the rich inheritance bequeathed to us by our ancestors; and that as like them, we are subjected to the injustice of Great Britain, like them the holy spark of liberty is not extinguished in our veins.

We, therefore, the people of the United States, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the Universe, for the rectitude of our intentions, do solemnly publish and declare, that we will cheerfully acquiesce in the sacrifices which the embargo may impose upon us; and that, if the injustice of Great Britain shall still continue, we will whenever the constituted authorities of this country shall require it, encounter every privation, and shed our blood in defence of the rights and honor of our country. And in support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.

Readings:
Independence and Declaration.—The recent anniversary of our independence has been celebrated with much éclat by the federalists in different parts of the Union. We are happy to observe, in several places, the practice of reading the Declaration of Independence, was omitted, and in others such parts only read as do not tend to excite the angry passions, and perpetuate animosity against a nation with whom we are, and since the revolution have been, at peace.—This practice has no good tendency, but, on the contrary, is calculated to sour or inflame every mind, and therefore, none by those bent on eternal hatred, can derive any satisfaction from it.—Whatever reasons did exist for the recital of those injuries ceased when we became an independent nation; for it is inconsistent with that justice and good will, which independent states at peace owe each other, that either should excite its citizens to enmity with the other. Every ingenious persons condemns the practice, and would rejoice at its expulsion [?].

At Utica the Federalists substituted for the Declaration the Farewell Address of our political father, the illustrious Washington. At this critical period it is to be regretted that the maxims of this sage statesman are no more regarded by shoe who guide the helm of our political barque; we venture to affirm that his counsels only are capable of conducting us safe through our present difficulties, and to ensure our future prosperity. The parting counsels of Washington ought to occupy a place in every family; and we deem the adoption of it, in preference of the Declaration, by the citizens of Utica, a high testimony of their good sense and patriotism. [*Poulson’s American Daily Advertiser*, 22 July 1808, 3.]

1809

**Highlights:** Governor of Massachusetts Christopher Gore holds a dinner that included the last three “surviving delegates of Massachusetts who signed the Declaration of Independence”: John Adams, Robert Treat Paine, and Elbridge Gerry, in Boston, on July 4, 1809. In Baltimore on July 4, in a city parade of journeymen and others depicting their crafts, products, and expertise, a group of printers issued copies of the Declaration of Independence to the spectators along the parade route, and was described in a newspaper report as

The printers, at the sign of Franklin’s Head, striking off the Declaration of Independence and occasional Odes, which were distributed among the crowd, or flipt (by the help of long wands) into the hands of the ladies, as they looked from their windows.  

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36 *New-England Palladium*, 7 July 1809, 2.
37 *New Hampshire Patriot*, 18 July 1809, 3; *American Mercury*, 20 July 1809, 2.
Parodies of the Declaration:
New Declaration of Independence, by the good people of America, on the fourth day of March, 1809

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for a free people to dissolve the political bands, which have connected them with an Idolised Ruler, and to degrade him to that low and despicable station to which his incapacity, his vices and the laws of justice condemn him, a decent respect for the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the measure.

We hold these truths to be self evident, that rulers are responsible to their constituents; and endowed, by them, with certain unalienable powers to be faithfully exercised in preserving the lives, liberty, and happiness of the people: that to secure these objects governors were created among men, and whenever their conduct becomes destructive of those ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish their functions; and to elect new rulers, professing such principles, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that men long in office should not be removed for light and transient causes; and accordingly experience hath shewn that we were disposed to suffer, while evils were sufferable. But when a long train of measures and abuses, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce us to absolute ruin and confusion, it is our right, it is our duty, to throw off such a leader, and to provide a new and better adviser. Such has been our patient sufferance, and such is the necessity which now constrains us to denounce our former chief. The history of the administration of the late president of the United States is a history of obstinate and destructive folly, of repeated usurpations and injuries—all having a direct tendency to establish an absolute anarchy in these states. To prove this let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has opposed laws most wholesome and necessary for the public good.
He has destroyed our domestic peace, and interrupted our political and social harmony by introducing an inexorable spirit of party hatred and intolerance.
He has produced turbulence and dissention by having erected and cherished a jacobinical faction among us, whereby virtue and wisdom have been exalted to distinction and power.
He has removed from office the warworn veterans of the revolution, and conferred appointments of honor, confidence and profit on weak, unprincipled and presuming foreigners.
He has demoralized public sentiment, misled and bewildered public judgement, by encouraging a laxity of manners, irreligion, and by disseminating wild and visionary politics.
He has wantonly destroyed a navy, which had been created to protect us from foreign mercenaries, thereby exposing the state to all the dangers of invasion.
He has prevented the population of these states by adopting a destructive policy, calculated to deter foreigners from migrating hither.
He has obstructed the administration of Justice by unlawfully remitting the penalty incurred by one profligate criminal, by arresting the prosecution of others, and endeavoring to intimidate our Judges.
He has attempted to make the Judges dependent on his will alone for the tenure of
their offices, by subjecting them to the despotic control of his obsequious instruments.

He has created a multitude of new Gunboats and sent swarms of sailors, soldiers and officers to harass our own people and eat out their substance.

He has raised and kept among us in times of peace a standing army to compel submission, to plunder our waters, ravage our coasts and destroy the lives of our people.

He has affected to render the military independent of, or superior to the civil power, by protecting from punishment, with a mock trial, the military usurper, who had lawlessly imprisoned our citizens with unheard of cruelty—who

Had transported them over the sea to be tried for pretended offences.

Had deprived them of the benefit of trial by jury and

Had abolished the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government.

He has given his assent to laws,
For destroying our judiciary;
For quartering large bodies of troops among us;
For imposing taxes on us to be lavished on a traitorous favorite, without our consent:
For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:
For taking from us many of our most valuable rights, contrary to the fundamental principles of our government.

He has combined with others to subject us to the jurisdiction of a foreign despot, unacknowledged by our laws, tacitly assenting and conniving at his decrees and usurpations. He has constrained our fellow citizens to bear arms against their country, and become the executioners of their friends and brethren in forcing obedience to unconstitutional edicts. He has excited domestic insurrection and discontent among us by ruinous and intolerable laws.

In every stage of these oppressions we have solicited redress in the most respectful terms. Our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injuries. A man, whose political character is marked by such conduct, is unfit to be the Director of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our democratic brethren. We have warned them from time to time, of the attempts by their chief to introduce a ruinous and unwarrantable, policy. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our peace, union and happiness under the administration of Washington. We have appealed to their self-love, to their justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common interest to disavow those measures and their author, which otherwise would destroy our country and might interrupt our connection and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of reason and justice. We must therefore acquiesce in the necessity which compels us to denounce them and their Idol; and we hold them, as we do the rest of mankind, mad-men when they impair their own happiness, enemies when the[y] disturb ours.

We therefore, the good people of the United States of America, do, in our own name and by our own authority, solemnly publish and declare, that these United States are and of right ought to be free and independent of the pernicious influence, counsel & control of the late president thereof, and are forever absolved from all attachment to him—and that being so, we will contract an alliance with England, declare war with
France, if necessary, & do such other acts and things as a wise and free people ought to
do for their happiness and safety. And in support of this declaration we mutually
pledge to each other our sacred honour. [Evening Post (New York), 18 July 1809, 2;38
New York Herald, 19 July 1809, 2; Hampshire Federalist (Springfield MA), 27 July
1809, 1.]

Printings of the Declaration: Kline's Carlisle Weekly Gazette, 30 June 1809, 3;
Independent Chronicle, 3 July 1809, 1; American Citizen, 4 July 1809, 2; Hagers-Town
Gazette, 4 July 1809, 2;39 Public Advertiser, 4 July 1809, 2; Sentinel of Freedom, 4 July
1809, 3; Republican Star or Eastern Shore General Advertiser (Easton, MD), 4 July 1809,
1;40 Pennsylvania Herald, and Easton Intelligencer (Easton, PA), 5 July 1809, 1;
Republican Watch-Tower, 7 July 1809, 1; Evening Post, 18 July 1809, 2.

Toasts: Offered at a dinner celebration by the Washington Hussars and citizens in
Williamsport, Maryland: “The Declaration of Independence--Its cause and effects can
never be forgotten. May its principles be the practice of United Americans.”
Hagers-Town Gazette, 11 July 1809, 3.

1810

Printings of the Declaration: Advertised in a Rutland, Vermont, newspaper as printed in the
Laws of the State of Vermont, Digested & Compiled.41 Declaration published in Public
Advertiser (New York), 24 April 1810, 2; Old Colony Gazette (New Bedford, MA), 29
June 1810, 2; Independent Chronicle, 2 July 1810, 1; Richmond Enquirer, 3 July 1810, 3;
American Citizen, 4 July 1810, 2-3; American Watchman (Wilmington, DE), 4 July 1810,
2,42 Essex Register (Salem, MA), 4 July 1810, 1;43 Pennsylvania Herald, and Easton

38 With this accompanying note: “From the Republican Farmer, an excellent Federal paper published at
Staunton, Virginia.”
39 Includes list of signers under state headings.
40 Note preceding the text of the Declaration: “Deeming the following highly important document, will be
cheerfully received and read by our patrons, on the return of the memorable day of its birth. It is with no
small degree of gratification introduced in the Star this morning.” Includes image of the Great Seal of the
United States.
41 Rutland Herald, 28 February 1810, 1.
42 Preceding the Declaration: “We lay before them the Declaration of Independence, that sacred charter by
which our rights were originally proclaimed! Heaven forbid that the Martyrs of the Revolution, should
blush in their graves for the degeneracy of their Sons!”
43 Published under the heading, “Original Declaration of Independence” with the following note: Among
the literary reliques of the venerable George Wythe, was found the following paper in the hand writing of Mr.
Jefferson. It is the copy of the original Declaration of our Independence, as it came from the hands of its
author. For the permission to peruse and publish this paper we are indebted to the politeness of Major
Duval, the sole executor of the estate. The federal assertion that Mr. Jefferson was not the author of this
celebrated declaration has long since been refuted, or else this paper would furnish abundant refutation.
What now will become of the no less unfound assertion, that this paper as it was adopted by Congress, owes
much of its beauty and its force to the committee appointed to draught it? The world will see that not only
were very few additions made by the committee, but that they even struck out two of the most forcible and
striking passages in the whole composition, for what reasons yet remains to be discovered. The passages
omitted in the original composition, are printed in Italics. (Enquirer.)
Readings:

“Fourth of July Reading!”
The same forcible reasons which led to the establishment of the ordinance in most of
the Christian Churches of reading the letter of the Holy Scriptures upon the Sabbath,
operated also in a degree with those who are judiciously establishing the practice in the
United States, of reading to assemblies of the people the Declaration of Independence
upon the anniversary of its date. It serves to remind its admirers of its genuine original
text, and the true purpose of its publication; it never fails to recall the most interesting
sen[s]ations, because it is a record of the cause and period of our political birth and civil
regeneration; the tenets it contains and the principles it asserts, should be taught to the
children of those who atcheived [sic] it as long as their posterity dwell upon the land
that it has blessed. For these reasons it has become a practice with some of our
political journalists to present their subscribers with it annually as suitable reading for
the fourth of July. It is not, perhaps, the least distressing instance of party extremes, to
observe that it has established a distinction in this respect—that this wholesome
practice, which should be general, and seems a suitable thing for all who profess to
admire the instrument itself, should become partial and circumscribed by the plainest
limits! I have seen no Republican paper which did not contain that excellent
instrument; but of all the Federal papers which I have seen, only one solitary instance
of its insertion was to be found! It would be uncharitable to suppose the neglect of the
latter arose universally from the same cause. But whilst we lament the humiliating
fact, too plainly established, that there are numbers of high toned politicians absolutely
hostile to the Declaration of Independence itself—who have not scrupled to pronounce
it a “wicked thing,” who “believed it to be wrong at first, and think so still”—and who
publicly pronounce that “the reading of it is a foolish practice” because it keeps the
feelings alive which prompted it originally, who, in short, descend to ridicule with all
the levity of Licentious criticism, the instrument itself, that they may make it
contemptible if possible to the descendants of those worthies who conceived and dared
to “pledge their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor,” to establish and support it!
Whilst we observe and know these things to be openly said and done by the leaders of
the party, we cannot but be alarmed to find their examples, if not openly admired, at
least tacitly copied by a whole party of humble followers! If they can prevent its
universal promulgation, and plant the seeds of contempt for the instrument which
asserted our freedom, they rob the glorious circumstance itself of half the veneration
due to it, they break the ties that should have bound us to the act, with the strongest
endeavors, & indulge the propensity to neglect & forget the obligations of
patriotism. There is, it is most certain, a wide difference between the benefit of
religious and of political institutions, and in proportion to the importance of that
distinction is the crime of disrespect to the letter of Revelation itself, and contempt for
the instrument by which we hold our political freedom. Pity it is that either should be

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44 Includes image of the Great Seal of the United States.
countenanced by Americans; for veneration and respect for each, is the first stage of our religious & political safety. [Independent Chronicle, 2 July 1810, 1; American Mercury (Hartford, CT), 12 July 1810, 2; reprinted also in The Bee (Hudson, NY), 28 June 1811, 2; Rhode-Island Republican, 10 July 1811, 2.\(^4^5\)]

That this instrument, the ever-memorable annunciation of all the political blessings we enjoy as a nation, is hateful to tories and British advocates for the many solemn and weighty truths it contains, no one can doubt; and that they are determined to discard it, as well as every other document or memorial of the kind, is almost equally evident. Prudence, however, obliges them to display their intentions with caution; and although the federalists in general, unquestionably coincide with the following sentiments, it is left for such honest or impudent writers as the editor of the Independent American, from which we copy them, to probe the public mind by uttering them.--Columbian.

“We had forgot to mention that the Declaration of Independence, was read at the Baptist meeting-house. This foolish practice is still preserved in many places by those who have more malice than patriotism. What individual, having quarrelled with another, having triumphed over him, vindicated his character and his rights, and having buried the hatchet, and in his own hand writing sworn to an oblivion of past animosities, and to the cultivation of future good will, would annually call to remembrance, and rouse his revengeful feelings, by treading over the correspondence that past in a quarrel near thirty years since? It is not patriotism but party views that dictate this measure. Let the anniversary be kept as a great national jubilee, in which the heroes, the sages and the principles of the revolution shall be eulogized, and our present situation and prospects discussed; but let not ignorance and party spirit seize the occasion to waken dormant feelings, worse than useless when roused, and under the mask of patriotism to promote only selfish views.”--Ind. Am. [“Declaration of Independence,” Otsego Herald, 21 July 1810, 3.]

1811

Printings of the Declaration: The Bee (Hudson, NY), 28 June 1811, 2; Richmond Enquirer, 2 July 1811, 3; Rhode-Island Republican (Newport), 3 July 1811, 1; National Intelligencer, 4 July 1811, 1; Public Advertiser, 4 July 1811, 2.


1812

Printings of the Declaration: Rhode-Island Republican, 1 July 1812, 1; Columbian, 3 July

\(^4^5\) Note preceding the reading: “We copy the following remarks from the ‘Hartford Mercury,’ tending to shew the unpardonable remissness of the federalists, in neglecting the annual re-publication and the publick reading of the Declaration of Independence. We think it may with justice be attributed more to witful neglect, than to any other cause; people believing in, and inculcating the doctrine of a servile dependence on Great Britain, are ashamed to view their conduct in its proper light, as it appears when contrasted with the spirit of patriotism which animated the patriots of ’76. Ed. Repub.”
Readings:
The Declaration of American Independence, penned by the illustrious Jefferson, should be engraved on every American heart—it should be imprinted in indelible letters on the tablet of our memories. While the enemies of the political opinions of that great and good man (for he never had other than political enemies) have denounced this declaration—have declared that it ought not to be read on the day of our annual celebrations; the true whigs have ever looked at it as the polar star of their opinions—as the directory of patriotism and genuine love of country. For what do we hold dear the name of Washington? Because he resisted British oppression, and guided our destinies safe through the long doubtful contest. For what do we venerate the Declaration of American Independence? Because it recounts that odious, that barbarous British tyranny, to forget which would argue in the American people, the highest ingratitude to our fathers who bled for the benefits of that Independence, and the most criminal indifference to our posterity, whose rights and privileges we ought to hold equally dear with our own. Let the fourth day of July never pass without the reading of that Declaration—that we may never forget the causes which aroused the genius of freedom, and procured our happy emancipation from the thraldom of British tyranny.
[“Declaration of Independence,” New-Hampshire Patriot, 7 July 1812, 3.]

Toasts: At a Celebration of the Columbian Society held in a church in New York city, on July 4, 1812: “The Declaration of Independence—Like the recent brilliant manifesto in Congress, it found opponents in those who preferred their own immediate interest, to the independence of their country, the rights of humanity, and the peace and happiness of subsequent ages. 3 cheers—song, Ye Sons of Columbia, Determined to Keep, &c.”
Public Advertiser, 10 July 1812, 2.

1813
Printings of the Declaration: Baltimore Patriot & Evening Advertiser, 3 July 1813, 2; The Columbian (New York), 3 July 1813, 2; Independent Chronicle, 5 July 1813, 1; Military Monitor, and American Register (New York), 5 July 1813, 356-358; National Advocate, 5 July 1813, 2; Albany Register, 6 July 1813, 2; American Watchman, 9 July 1813, 2.

1814
Exhibits: In New York at the Theatre “in commemoration of the Declaration of the Independence of the United States of America,” a transparency of Lady Liberty including an image of the Declaration of Independence is displayed on July 4:

On the right hand is Liberty, represented by an allegorical female figure, clad in robes

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46 Includes an image of the Great Seal of the United States.
25
of yellow, beneath her feet a Globe; in one hand she holds the Standard of the United States, and is supposed to be in the act of planting it upon that part designated America; in the other hand an Olive Branch; the standard forms the outer drapery. Beneath is likewise seen a white Lily, the most approved symbol of purity and sincerity. On the left are three Boys, one of whom is holding and pointing to a Book, in the open leaf of which is seen written—Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776. In the centre, the American Eagle hovering over and covering a Globe.47

Printings of the Declaration: The Columbian (New York), 2 July 1814, 2; Baltimore Patriot & Evening Advertiser, 4 July 1814, 2; Independent Chronicle, 4 July 1814, 1-2;48 National Intelligencer, 4 July 1814, 2.

1815
Printings of the Declaration: Baltimore Patriot, 3 July 1815, 2; The Columbian, 3 July 1815, 2; Independent Chronicle, 3 July 1815, 1;50 Mechanics’ Gazette, and Merchants’ Daily Advertiser (Baltimore), 3 July 1815, 2; National Advocate (NY), 4 July 1815, 2; National Intelligencer, 4 July 1815, 2-3.

1816
Highlights: John Binns of Philadelphia proposed publishing an edition of the Declaration at $13 a copy.51

Printings of the Declaration: Farmer’s Repository, 3 July 1816, 2; Camden Gazette (Camden, SC), 4 July 1816, 2-3; Independent Chronicle, 4 July 1816, 1; National Intelligencer, 4 July 1816, 2-3;52 Shamrock (New York), 6 July 1816, 322-23; Northern Whig, 10 September 1816, 2;53 New-York Courier, 14 September 1816, 2.

47 Mercantile Advertiser, 2 July 1816, 3. The transparency was also displayed on July 4, 1816 at the same theater. Commercial Advertiser, 3 July 1818, 3.
48 Includes names of signers under state headings.
49 Includes the following note preceding the Declaration: “The Anniversary of our National Independence being this day celebrated, we have thought that we could lay before our readers nothing more appropriate than the Declaration of Independence as it was originally drafted by Mr. Jefferson. It was found among the papers of the late George Wythe, Chancellor of Virginia. It will be perceived how much of effect this immortal state paper has lost, by striking out several of the most eloquent passages.”
50 Note preceding the Declaration: “As to-morrow will be the Anniversary of American Independence, a day dear to the heart of every American patriot, and having no interesting news, we think that nothing could be more acceptable to our readers than the following.”
51 Alexandria Gazette, 9 July 1816, 4. See also, “Plan and Terms of Subscription,” City Gazette and Daily Advertiser (Charleston, SC), 21 September 1816, 4. See also, The Columbian, 8 July 1816, 3.
52 Note accompanying the Declaration: “We have, according to a custom among those prints friendly to Republican principles, republished to-day the Declaration of Independence, for a correct and authentic copy of which we are indebted to the revised edition of the Laws of the United States. Whilst its principles are impressed on our minds, let us revere the memory of those sages and heroes who united in rescuing from the grasp of tyranny those rights which belong equally to all men.”
53 Accompanying note (“from the Massachusetts Spy”): Our readers have often heard that Mr. Jefferson is the author of the Declaration of Independence. The facts connected with the subject are these. A large committee were appointed for the purpose of
Independence Day Readings of the Declaration: Lieut. John O. Cole at the Episcopal Church, Albany, New York, preceded with the following “brief address”:

That glorious and immortal instrument which contains a recital of the numerous and unparalleled wrongs, the manifold and insupportable oppressions which were heaped upon the American colonies by the mother country; which contains the fundamental principles of our government, the essence of our political faith; which inculcates the doctrine that “all men are created equal,” and are “endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights”; cannot be too deeply engraven upon the mind of every American citizen.

A frequent recurrence to first principles is the surest safeguard of a free people against the encroachments and usurpations of their government. Whenever a people give themselves up to a drowsy apathy, a carelessness of their privileges; whenever they rivest [?] themselves of that stern republican virtue—a watchful jealousy of their rights—they are already worthy of those chains which inevitably await them. To avoid this greatest of calamities to a free people it is necessary that every citizen should have a perfect acquaintance with those rights and those privileges; for the careless heir to a rich inheritance, who is unmindful of his wealth, or is ignorant of its extent, will be strip of his possessions, by those wary and unfaithful servants he had set to guard them.

The Declaration of Independence, in this point of view, is invaluable. Let us, then, regard it as such. While we on this glorious day, the birthday of our liberties, cherish the memory of those immortal heroes, who under the blessing of Divine Providence, secured our independence, and bequeathed to us, the richest of blessings, let us, by imbidding their principles and emulating their virtues, preserve them inviolate.

[“Celebration at Albany,” Columbian, 12 July 1816, 2.]
1817

Highlights: Thomas McKean, Pennsylvania delegate to the Continental Congress and signer of the Declaration, publishes a letter that explains that the omission of his name as one who voted affirmatively to adopt the Declaration in the journals of Congress is an error. McKean also describes additional errors and provides details regarding the proceedings in Congress, July 2-4, 1776. Opening excerpt from the article:

Gentlemen--Several applications have been recently made to me, to state the errors which I had observed, and often mentioned, in the publications of the names of the members of the Continental Congress, who declared in favour of the Independence of the United States, on the 4th of July, 1776. I have not, at present, sufficient health and leisure to reply severally to each application. There can be but one correct statement of facts; one public statement, therefore, through the press, will serve the purpose of the gentlemen who have made the request, and may also give satisfaction to the minds of others, who have turned their thought on the subject. If I am correct in my statement, it may be of use to future historians; if not, my errors can be readily corrected. I with, therefore, by means of your paper, to make the following statement of the facts within my knowledge, relative to the subject of inquiry. “From the Philadelphia Freeman’s Journal” as reprinted as “Declaration of Independence,” Salem Gazette, 22 July 1817, 1.

Printings of the Declaration: Kline’s Weekly Carlisle Gazette, 26 June 1817, 2;4 American Watchman (Wilmington, Delaware), 2 July 1817, 2; New-York Columbian, 3 July 1817, 3; National Intelligencer, 4 July 1817, 2; “Declaration: or Independence,” Spirit of the Times (Shippensburg, PA), 4 July 1817, 1;5 Shamrock, 5 July 1817, 214.

1818

Highlights:

Mr. [Benjamin Owen] Tyler, from Washington, is now in town [Boston], soliciting subscriptions for an elegant copperplate engraving of this celebrated document. The beauty and neatness of the writing are unparalleled. The signatures are certified by the Secretary of State to be facsimiles of the original paper now in the department of State. Every man, whose circumstances are comfortable, ought to possess a copy of this instrument; for what more valuable legacy can he bequeath to his children, than a memorial of the integrity, the virtue, and the patriotism of the fathers of our Independence? [“Declaration of Independence,” New-England Galaxy & Masonic Magazine, 11 December 1818, 35.]

Exhibits: Trumbull’s painting of the Declaration of Independence is exhibited at Faneuil Hall in Boston and following that is “removed to the Southward.”56 The exhibit ran until

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4 Includes image of the Great Seal of the United States and a list of signers arranged under state headings.
5 “Thursday, July 4, 1776” follows the text of the Declaration.
6 Essex Patriot, 26 December 1818, 2.
December 19, with an admittance fee of 25 cents.\textsuperscript{57}

Printings of the Declaration: \textit{Westchester Herald} (Mount Pleasant, NY), 30 June 1818, 2; \textit{Baltimore Patriot \& Mercantile Advertiser}, 3 July 1818, 2;\textsuperscript{58} \textit{National Advocate}, 4 July 1818, 2;\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Plattsburgh Republican}, 4 July 1818, 2;\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Spirit of the Times \& Carlisle Gazette}, 6 July 1818, 2. “Proposals, by Benjamin Owen Tyler,\textsuperscript{61} for publishing by subscription, a splendid edition of the Declaration of American Independence, copied from the original in the Secretary of State’s Office.” See more in \textit{New-York Columbian}, 8 April 1818, 3; \textit{Baltimore Patriot \& Mercantile Advertiser}, 16 April 1818, 2; \textit{City of Washington Gazette}, 23 April 1818, 3.

Toasts: Dr. I. Fanning proposed this toast at a dinner celebration “at Riverhead, Long-Island, N.Y.,” on July 4: “The Declaration of the Independence of the United States—it was purchased with the blood of a host of heroes.” \textit{National Advocate}, 17 July 1818, 2.

1819

Highlights: “Col. Trumbull’s painting of the Declaration of Independence was deposited in the north wing of the Capitol, at Washington, on Wednesday, last” (\textit{New-York Spectator}, 23 February 1819, 2) and Trumbull received $8000 for the contract (\textit{New Hampshire Sentinel}, 13 March 1819, 3; “proposal by Joseph M. Sanderson, for publishing by subscription, a biography of the signers to the Declaration of Independence, accompanied with plates; to which will be annexed a history of the proceedings of congress during the passage of the law, and the Declaration itself with fac-simile [sic] engravings of the signatures.” \textit{Alexandria Gazette \& Daily Advertiser}, 4 February 1819, 4. See more details in \textit{Alexandria Gazette}, 12 August 1820, 4. In April 1820, Sanderson decides to

\textsuperscript{57} \textit{Boston Gazette}, 3 December 1818, 3.

\textsuperscript{58} Includes names of signers arranged under state headings.

\textsuperscript{59} The following note under the title “The Day!” precedes the Declaration: In offering to our fellow citizens our sincere congratulations on the return of our national anniversary, we present them, as customary, with the Declaration of Independence, the Magna Charta of our liberties, and the proud document of American courage and patriotism. They cannot be too familiar with the great and solemn truths which it develops [sic], nor insensible to the great national blessings to which it was the herald:—they should teach it to their children, and impress upon their tender minds the obligations which they owe to Liberty and their Country. This day has ever been celebrated as a jubilee: but never have we had cause to rejoice in our national strength and prosperity as we have at present. Our country has taken a proud rank among the governments of the earth; our arms have been successful and feared; our republican institutions correctly supported; our national faith maintains with integrity; our people prosperous and happy, and the republican rulers of our choice viewed with confidence and respect. These are considerations calling for our gratitude to Providence for such blessings; and, with the hope that be may continue us a free and favoured nation, we subjoin the great instrument of our liberties.

\textsuperscript{60} Signed “Charles Thompson [I].”

\textsuperscript{61} In 1816 Tyler operated a writing academy at 126 Broadway in New York. “For the amusement of the curious, and ingenious scholar, he will give lessons in ornamental writing of every description.” “Practical Penmanship,” \textit{Columbian}, 4 January 1816, 1. See letter by Thomas Jefferson who requests “a copy when published, which, if rolled on a wooden roller, and sent by mail, will come safely,” in \textit{City of Washington Gazette}, 3 July 1818, 3; \textit{Baltimore Patriot}, 15 July 1818, 2.
move to Philadelphia “for the better execution of his plan.” *Alexandria Gazette & Daily Advertiser*, 20 April 1820, 4. Sanderson’s information available on the internet in Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society.


Printings of the Declaration: *Carlisle Republican* (Carlisle, PA), 29 June 1819, 2; *Baltimore Patriot*, 3 July 1819, 2; *Independent Chronicle and Boston Patriot*, 3 July 1819, 2; *National Advocate* (New York), 5 July 1819, 2. William Woodruff broadside printing of the Declaration of Independence is issued ca. 1819.

Binns edition of the Declaration is announced as completed. The edition was described as “splendid” and “the cost of this plate is considerable, and a great length of time has been consumed in its completion” (“Declaration of Independence,” *New-Hampshire Gazette*, 5 January 1819, 3). “Mr. Roberts” gave notice that he should on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill to authorize the purchase of a certain number of copies of the Declaration of Independence, published by J. Binns.” (“Congressional Proceedings,” *National Intelligencer*, 15 December 1819, 3).

1820

Highlights: Charles Carroll, signer of the Declaration, attends the celebration in Baltimore at Howard’s Park, with his copy of the parchment in hand. *National Intelligencer*, 8 July 1820, 3; *Essex Register*, 12 July 1820, 2; in Patterson Landing, New Jersey, a “citizen” carries a copy of the Declaration in a parade through city streets arriving at the Reformed Dutch Church, where the document was read by S. Van Zau. “Fourth of July Celebrations,” *Centinel of Freedom*, 18 July 1820, 1.

Parodies of the Declaration: Print off “From the Cincinnati Spy,” *Kentucky Reporter*, 16 August 1820, 2.


62 Includes a variant image of the Great Seal of the United States, as well as a list of signers arranged under state headings.
63 Includes an image of the Great Seal of the United States, as well a list of signers arranged by state.
July 1820, 2.\textsuperscript{65} National Aegis (Worcester, MA), 4 July 1820, 2;\textsuperscript{66} New-York Statesman (Albany), 4 July 1820, 2;\textsuperscript{67} Richmond Enquirer, 4 July 1820, 3; Westchester Herald (Mount Pleasant, NY), 4 July 1820, 4.


1821

Highlights:

In the celebration of the late anniversary of independence at Richmond, Va. a Poetical Version of the Declaration of Independence was delivered at the City Hall--& some songs in honor of the day were written and sung by Mr. Leroy Anderson [Hampden Patriot and Liberal Recorder, 25 July 1821, 3.]

Handkerchiefs--We have received from Colin Gillespie, Esq of Glasgow: formerly of this city, two handkerchiefs, the finest specimens of printing on cambric ever produced. The design is a complete facsimile of Binns' superb print of the declaration of Independence and contains the signatures of the illustrious signers with great exactness. In one corner is a representation of the “patriotic Bostonians discharging the British ships, in Boston harbour;” of their cargoes of tea; and in the other, the surrender of Burgoyne to Gates at Saratoga. In a branch of laurel, on each side, is inscribed the names of Hamilton and Putnam, and the likenesses of Washington, Adams, and Jefferson. The only deviation from the print, is the omission of the portrait of John Hancock.\textsuperscript{68}

Independence Day Readings of the Declaration: John Quincy Adams in the U.S. House of Representatives;\textsuperscript{69} “At a public celebration of the 4\textsuperscript{th} of July in Philadelphia, the Declaration of Independence was read by the venerable Timothy Matlack, nearly 90 years of age” (Essex Register, 18 July 1821, 3). E.L. Finley read the Declaration in Baltimore, preceded by an address (Baltimore Patriot, 5 July 1821, 2).

Printings of the Declaration: Washington Gazette, 3 July 1821, 2-3; Columbian Centinel, 4

\textsuperscript{65} Includes a list of signers arranged by state.
\textsuperscript{66} Note preceding the Declaration: “The Declaration of American Independence is in some Papers annually, and in others occasionally, published—We have thought that we could not fill a column in our paper this day more profitably than with this august instrument. It is as follows.”
\textsuperscript{67} Excerpt of essay preceding the Declaration: “We cannot pay a higher tribute of honor and respect to the surviving statesmen and patriots of the revolution and to the memories of their departed associates, than by republishing the Declaration of Independence, which contains a concise epitome of the stern republican principles, the high toned sentiments, and devoted patriotism, that characterized the age when this document was written. We here present it entire, with the names of those who pledged their lives, their fortunes, and sacred honor to maintain the rights which they boldly asserted.”
\textsuperscript{68} From the National Advocate as printed in Essex Register, 19 May 1821, 3.
\textsuperscript{69} Alexandria Gazette, 9 July 1821, 2; National Intelligencer, 3 July 1821, 3.
July 1821, 1.⁷⁰

Toasts: At a celebration at Rockhall Roads, Maryland, on July 4: “The Declaration of Independence—the Instrument, which severed the shackles of tyranny from the American people—We unite in commemorating this glorious event, with feelings of joy, harmony and neighborly good will.”  
_Baltimore Patriot_, 10 July 1821, 2.

1822

Printings of the Declaration: _Republican Star and General Advertiser_, 2 July 1822, 3; _Baltimore Patriot_, 3 July 1822, 2; _Republican Chronicle_ (Ithaca, NY), 3 July 1822, 2; _Lincoln Intelligencer_ (Cadiz, ME), 4 July 1822, 3;⁷¹ _North Star_ (Danville, VT), 4 July 1822, 2-3;⁷² _Independent Chronicle & Boston Patriot_, 6 July 1822, 1.

1823

Printings of the Declaration: John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State, orders 200 copies of the Declaration to be printed by William Stone. Declaration published in the _Republican Star and General Advertiser_ (Easton, MD), 1 July 1823, 2. A Connecticut newspaper printed the following:

New Declaration of Independence—A wit of North Carolina has proposed for her adoption, a new declaration of Independence—her independence of Virginia. It is copied after the celebrated Declaration of American Independence.⁷³

Printings of the Declaration in Newspapers: _Republican Star and General Advertiser_, 1 July 1823, 2; _Baltimore Patriot_, 3 July 1823, 2; _Independent Chronicle & Boston Patriot_, 4

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⁷⁰ Published under the title “A Holiday throughout the Whole United States.” The following note precedes the Declaration: “Our paper being published on the Anniversary of Independence, we cannot offer to our readers a more acceptable article, than the immortal Declaration of our Fathers, which laid the great foundation of it.” Signed incorrectly as “Charles Thompson.”

⁷¹ The following note precedes the Declaration: To awaken the remembrance of the aged, and to instruct the young in events, that gave a decided tone to the fortunes of their country, we publish to-day the Declaration of Independence. This state paper, from the pen of Jefferson, and inferior in point of ability to no production of the kind in any age or country, while it reminds us of the unhappy state of America before the revolution, naturally turns our thoughts to the innumerable blessings that have flowed from it. This anniversary of our Independence is an era in the grand history of the world inferior to none since the establishment of the Christian religion. For wherever we direct our view, whether across the little isthmus that divides us from the South American nations, or the Atlantic and Pacific seas that separate us from the rest of the habitable globe, we “fondly turn” to our own beloved country; tranquil under the shade of our former laurels, and happy in the comparison of our present peaceful state, with the tyrannical and sanguinary conflicts of other nations. When the mountains of America shall crumble into dust, and her rivers cease to flow, then and not until then, will her sons cease to honor the day we are about to celebrate.

⁷² Note preceding the Declaration: “Reader—let a perusal of the following Declaration of American Independence, call to remembrance those trying scenes of the revolution, in which the heroes and patriots of Columbia redeemed their pledge; let us ever cherish the noble spirit of ’76, and emulate the virtue of those who undauntedly braved the storm, and secured under God a ‘goodly heritage’ to so numerous a progeny.” Declaration signed “Charles Tomson [?].”

⁷³ _Norwich Courier_, 7 May 1823, 3.
Independence Day Readings of the Declaration: “In July 1776, the Declaration of Independence was first read in Worcester, by Isaiah Thomas, Esq. now, we believe the oldest Printer living in the United States. It was read from the roof of the porch of the Meeting-House, and received with loud cheers and congratulations” (New-Bedford Mercury, 18 July 1823, 1).

Toasts: By John Devereaux in Salem, Massachusetts, on July 4, 1823: The Declaration of Independence! Like Pallas, it came into the world perfect, and arm’d at all points; but it cost the King of England, as the birth of Pallas did Jupiter, a broken Crown. Essex Register, 7 July 1823, 2.

1824
Highlights: A parade in Washington City on Monday, July 5, included a wagon by the Typographical Society that had “a free press, arched over with evergreen, and surmounted by the blue flag of the society, with suitable emblems, and the motto: ‘Let fire and water, and the arts, combine/And Printing spread o’er earth the gifts divine.’ As it proceeded, the press was worked by pressmen in uniform, and continued to throw off impressions of the Declaration of Independence, which were distributed among the spectators. The white flag of the Society, representing the Columbian Press, a facsimile of the seal of the society, was borne by a member of the Association. A crowd surrounded the Press, and snatched the sheets as they were thrown to the wind.” Another wagon “drawn by two grey horses were two young girls, representing, we believe, Liberty and Independence, with a copy of the Declaration displayed.”

Printings of the Declaration: Baltimore Patriot, 3 July 1824, 2; Independent Chronicle and Boston Patriot, 7 July 1824, 1.

1825

Toasts: Presented at a celebration at a spring near Woodstock, Virginia, on July 4, 1825: “The Declaration of Independence, the political creed of our country, may we shew forth our faith by our works.” Richmond Enquirer, 19 July 1825, 4.

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74 Note preceding the Declaration: “Original Draft of the Declaration of Independence. We consider the present a suitable time to present our readers with the original draft of the Declaration of Independence, found among the relics of the late venerable George Wythe, of Virginia, in the handwriting of Mr. Jefferson. The passages stricken out by the Committee, are inserted in italics.”

75 Richmond Enquirer, 9 July 1824, 2; Salem Gazette, 13 July 1824, 2; New Bedford Mercury, 16 July 1824, 2.

76 Includes a variant image of the Great Seal of the United States, as well as a list of signers arranged by state.

77 Includes a variant version of the Great Seal of the United States, and a list of signers arranged by state.
1826

Highlights: Regarding July 4, 1826:

Among the other interesting occurrences of the day, was the reception by His Honor the Mayor, of a letter from the Rev. Dr. Rowan, accompanied by a most splendid copy of the Declaration of Independence, engraved on Vellum, by J.F. Bragg, of the Shippan Institute, Con. and bound by Mr. Foster, of this city, together with a certificate of the venerable Carroll, the only living signer of the original instrument, on the 2d of August, 1776. The letter is as follows, &c.

Hon. Wm. Paulding, Mayor of the city of N. York. Sir: In the name of the contributors to the Work, I herewith present to the Common Council for their use at the successive anniversaries of our Great National Festival, a copy of the Declaration of independence; accompanied by a certificate of the venerable Charles Carroll, the last surviving signer of the original instrument.

This Copy was engrossed on Vellum, as the result of a suggestion made by me in an address delivered at the request of the Common Council, on occasion of the almost simultaneous death of John Adams & Thomas Jefferson, Presidents of the United States.

It is the most splendid copy of the Declaration extant. And the certificate accompanying it was written, without any recollection of the fact, exactly Fifty years after the original signature.

I trust, that the same Common Council, who were the First to render Elegiac Honours to the memory of the man who wrote the Declaration, and of him who eloquently pleaded for its adoption, will cheerfully take measures to give perpetuity and publicity to the Patriotic sentiments contained in a document written with his own hand, and in the Ninetieth year, by its last surviving Signer. With sentiments of respect, I am Stephen N. Rowan.

The Certificate of Mr. Carroll, annexed to this copy of the Declaration, contains sentiments worthy of the undoubted Patriot, and the sincere Christian. It is as follows:

Grateful to Almighty God for the blessings which through Jesus Christ our Lord he has conferred on my beloved country in her emancipation, and upon myself in permitting me, under circumstances of mercy, to live to the age of eighty-nine years, and to survive the fiftieth year of American Independence, and certifying by my present signature my approbation of the Declaration of Independence, adopted by Congress on the fourth of July in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy six, which I originally subscribed on the second day of August of the same year, and of which I am now the last surviving signer, I do hereby recommend to the present and future generations the principles of that important document, as the best earthly inheritance their ancestors could bequeath to them; and pray that the civil and religious liberties they have secured to my country may be perpetuated to remotest posterity, and extended to the whole family of Man. Charles Carroll, of Carrollton. August, 1826. Stephen N. Rowan, Pastor of the Eighth Presbyterian Church, New York. John Gibson, Pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Baltimore. [“From the New York Commercial Advertiser” as
At Salem, Massachusetts, at the meeting house, on July 4, after reading the Declaration of Independence, John Pickering, presented an address about the Declaration, with the following report printed in a local newspaper:

[Pickering] pointed out such parts of it as were of a permanent, & such as were only of a temporary nature. He made this necessary distinction, in order that impressions which were only designed to produce effect at the time of its first appearance, might not be blended illustrations were most happy. Every one felt how infinitely the moral exceeded in interest and sublimity all that with the happier feeling of the present day. Mr. Pickering, in commenting on the declaration that “all men are created equal, and are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights,” took occasion to speak of the evils which already have resulted from the existence of slavery, and of the consequences to be apprehended from spreading this evil from the Atlantic to the Western Ocean.  

A chronology listing “step by step, the measures which led to the Declaration of Independence.” spanning May 6-August 2, 1776, printed in “Declaration of Independence,” Essex Register, 24 July 1826, 1-2.

“A writer in the Freeman’s Journal has discovered that the Declaration of Independence was written at the Indian Queen Tavern, in Fourth, near Chesnut street, Philadelphia. The tavern mentioned was the boarding-house of Mr. Jefferson, during those days of gloom.” American Mercury, 15 August 1826, 3.

In Newport, Rhode Island, Major John Handy read the Declaration of Independence “on the identical spot which he did 50 years ago,” and was accompanied by Isaac Barker of Middletown, “who was at his side in the same place fifty years before.” Richmond Enquirer, 21 July 1826, 2; signers of the Declaration with their place of birth, and age in 1776, “time of death” published in Essex Register, 31 July 1826, 1; Declaration published in the National Intelligencer, 4 July 1826.

Printings of the Declaration: North Star, 27 June 1826, 1-2; Baltimore Patriot, 3 July 1826, 2; Richmond Enquirer, 4 July 1826, 3; Norwich Courier (Norwich, CT), 5 July 1826, 2-3.

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78 Salem Gazette, 7 July 1826, 2.
79 According to a newspaper report, Barker, “aged 82 years,” died on September 7, 1834. “He was a patriot of the Revolution, and was for many years a member of the Legislature of this State [Rhode Island], as a representative from the town of Middletown.” Newport Mercury, 13 September 1834, 3. Barker’s role in the Revolution is explained in “Memoir of Rhode-Island,” Rhode-Island Republican, 19 September 1838, 1.
80 “Mr. Jefferson’s Draft, as reported by the Committee to Congress.”
81 Includes the eagle seal before the narrative and the sentence “the declaration as adopted was also signed” before the list of signers.
82 Includes an image of the Great Seal of the United States, as well as a list of signers arranged by state.
Independence Day Readings of the Declaration: Dr. E.B. Gale (South Hampton, NH), New-Hampshire Patriot & State Gazette, 31 July 1826, 2; Leander P. Lovell (Fall River, MA), Rhode-Island Republican, 27 July 1826, 2.

Toast: “By Rev. Mr. Burroughs. The Patriotic spirit, that glowed in the character of She (?) Parker, who fifty years ago boldly read the Declaration of Independence from the balcony of our court-house,” at Jefferson Hall in Portsmouth, NH on July 4, 1826 (Portsmouth Journal of Literature & Politics, 8 July 1826, 2); toast presented at Jefferson Hall, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on July 4, 1826: “The Declaration of Independence—And the men who this day fifty years ago ‘pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor’ in its support” (New-Hampshire Gazette, 11 July 1826, 2).

1827


Parodies of the Declaration: “New Declaration of Independence” based on temperance in Christian Intelligencer and Easter Chronicle, 2 November 1827, 176:

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the intermperate bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume the sober station to which the laws of nature and nature’s God entitle them, a decent respect for 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 sober—that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights—that among these are life, liberty, and the purity of health; that whenever any habits become destructive to these ends it is the right for people to alter them.


1828
Printings of the Declaration: *Baltimore Patriot*, 3 July 1828, 2;\textsuperscript{83} *Watch-Tower* (Cooperstown, NY), 7 July 1828, 4.

1829
Printings of the Declaration: *Baltimore Patriot*, 3 July 1829, 2,\textsuperscript{84} *New-Hampshire Patriot and State Gazette*, 20 July 1829, 1.\textsuperscript{85}


1830


1831
Exhibits: Reported in a newspaper that “in the different rooms at the State Department in Washington, may be seen, the original Declaration of Independence, and the commission of George Washington, in glass frames.”\textsuperscript{86}

Printings of the Declaration: *Baltimore Patriot*, 2 July 1831, 2.\textsuperscript{87}

1832
Printings of the Declaration: *Independence* (Poughkeepsie, NY), 4 July 1832, 2.\textsuperscript{88}

1833

\textsuperscript{83} Includes an image of the Great Seal of the United States, as well as a list of signers arranged by states.

\textsuperscript{84} Signed “Charles Thompson [!].” Includes image of the Great Seal of the United States.

\textsuperscript{85} The following precedes the text of the Declaration: That the rising generation may not forget the sufferings and oppressions that led to the Declaration of our National Independence, nor the names of the great and good men who, as representatives of the people, had the moral courage to prefix their names to it, we deem the present a fit time to publish that Declaration and those names, and we hope that annually on the return of our national birthday, this practice may be pursued as long as the Republic endures.

\textsuperscript{86} From the *Boston Gazette*, as published in *Rhode Island American and Gazette*, 4 October 1831, 4.

\textsuperscript{87} Includes image of the Great Seal of the United States.

people, &c”; “absolute tyranny the object of the king of Great Britain”; “recitations of injuries and usurpations on the part of the British crown”; “Declaration of Independence”; “the colonies absolve themselves from their allegiance, &c”; “mutual pledge of fidelity.”

1834
Parodies of the Declaration:

Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Party.
July 4th, 1834

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for a people to dissolve the political bonds which have united them with a corrupt and tyrannical administration, and to assert and maintain the rights 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 the President is but the agent of the laws; endowed by the constitution with certain limited powers; and that to transcend these powers is to violate the rights and destroy the freedom of the people. That to secure a safe administration of the laws, the executive branch of our government was instituted, deriving its just powers from the letter of the constitution and the authority of the two Houses of Congress, that when any administration transcends these powers it is the right of the people to abolish it, and to constitute a new administration, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its departments in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Party indeed will dictate that an administration long established, should not be changed for any causes; and accordingly our experience has shown that the collar men are willing to see the people suffer when evils are insufferable, rather than right them by opposing the administration. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evince a design to reduce the people under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty to throw off such administration, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the sufferance of these States; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to withdraw their support from the administration. The history of the present President of the United States is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has, by his corrupt influence, prevented Congress from passing laws of immediate and pressing importance, when the object of such laws was to relieve the land from a distress unparalleled in extent and severity, and which his usurpations had created.

He has usurped the legislative power of our Senate, by sending to that body a decree condemning their conduct, and establishing his will as the measure of their power.

He has dissolved his cabinets repeatedly for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused, for a long time after such dissolutions, to nominate other
officers; whereby the constitutional check of the Senate was annihilated, the executive rendered absolute and the laws administered by irresponsible creatures of the President.

He has endeavored to prevent the advancement and prosperity of these States; for that purpose destroying the currency and waging a barbarous war against all the pursuits connected with the commerce of the nation.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing submission to the judgement of the Supreme Court, and declaring that the laws should be administered “as he understands them.”

He has made all officers, from the highest to the lowest dependent on his will—thus establishing a band of 40,000 hirelings to ascend him in his war against the freedom of the people.

He has erected a multitude of new offices; and scattered over the land, swarms of officers to control our elections, to harass our people, and to eat out their substance.

He has issued in time of peace a warlike proclamation against one of these States; and has urged and by his influence passed, a law enabling him to keep a standing army and to crimson the bayonets of his army in the blood of our brethren.

He has combined with others to destroy our Constitution, to consolidate the States, and to render himself absolute—giving his assent to the measures of an obscure cabal.

For quartering large bodies of pensioned office holders upon us. For protecting them, by his name, from punishment for their profligacy, extravagance, and the offences they have committed on the rights of the people. For diminishing our trade with all parts of the world. For seizing on our treasure without our consent, against both Constitution and laws, and for purposes hostile to the rights of the people. For depriving us, in many cases, by his corrupt influence, of the effectual exercise of the elective franchise.

For abolishing the pure and safe system of republican government, establishing an arbitrary monarchy, and making a pretended love for the people an excuse for introducing an absolute despotism in these States.

For trampling upon our charter, abolishing our most valuable institutions, and altering fundamentally the form of our government.

For suspending the power of our Legislature and declaring himself invested with power to defy the checks of one branch, and veto the acts of both.

He has disgraced his administration, by declaring the business community out of his protection, and waging war against it.

He has driven our commerce from the seas, made our coasts desolate, hushed the hum of industry in our towns, and destroyed the prosperity, while he violated the rights of our people.

He is at this time organizing large armies of office holders and hunters, paid with our money. To sustain him in completing the work of desolation and tyranny already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained his officers to bear arms against the cause of freedom and their country, and to become the voluntary destroyers of their own and their
children's liberty.

He has, in short, defied both law and constitution; he has trampled upon the rights, and disregarded the will and the welfare of the people. He has introduced a system of corruption unparalleled in any country, tainting the purity, and controlling the elections of our citizens; he has committed within a short period more acts of usurpation and tyranny than any monarch of the age; he has deranged our currency, destroyed public confidence, given a fatal blow to commerce and manufactures, and penury and want throughout the whole land.

In every state of these oppressions, we have petitioned for redress in the most earnest terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injuries. A President, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attention to our President. We have warned him, from time to time, of his attempts to extend so unwarrantable a sway over us. We have reminded him of the circumstances of his election, and the pledges given before and after his elevation to the Presidency.—We have appealed to his native justice and patriotism, and we have conjured him by all the ties which bind a patriot to his country, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connexion [sic]. He has been deaf to the voice of reason and duty. We must therefore acquiesce in the necessity which denounced our separation, and hold him, as we held the rest of his faction; our enemy, when wrong, when right, our friend.

We, therefore, members of the Democratic Party, of the United States, appealing to the country for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the Democratic Party, solemnly publish and declare that the said party is, and ought to be, free and independent, that it is absolved from all allegiance to Andrew Jackson, and that all political connexion between him and the said party is, and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as a free and independent party, it has full power to cherish its own principles, select its own candidates, hold its own meetings and festivals, and to do all other acts and things which an independent party may of right to do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the virtue of the people, we mutually pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.⁸⁹ [Baltimore Patriot, 11 July 1834, 2.]

Printings of the Declaration: Baltimore Patriot, 3 July 1834, 2.⁹⁰

1835

Readings:

The Whig makes an awkward, blundering effort to justify the blundering toast about Mr. Jefferson. The toast speaks of the “first draft of American Independence.” This is a most awkward expression! What does it mean? Does it mean the first draft of the

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⁸⁹ Note preceding the narrative: “We publish from the Philadelphia Intelligencer, one of the most ably conducted journals of the country, the following Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Party. Fourth of July. Let the freemen compare the following, sentence by sentence, with the original Declaration of Independence, and answer—who is the greater tyrant, George the third, or Andrew the First?”

⁹⁰ Includes image of the Great Seal of the United States. Signed “Charles Thompson.”
Fourth of July Declaration of Independence?—Then it is denied, that “impartial History will ever subtract the honor from the stock of Thomas Jefferson’s fame.” The honor of that immortal document is his.—Neither impartial history nor prejudiced foes can ever deprive him of the originality of that production. If the toast means, that the Mecklenburg Declaration was the first paper that put forth the idea of independence—and that Mr. Jefferson does not deserve the merit of having first originated the idea of declaring independence, then we ask, why deny him the credit which no one ever claimed for him? The toast is, however, equivocal—and creates a doubt about Mr. Jefferson’s Declaration and his fame, which ought never to have existed. [Richmond Enquirer, 21 July 1835, 3.]

1836
Toasts: At a military celebration at Taylorsville, Virginia, on July 4, 1836: “The Declaration of Independence—Like our Fathers of ’76, we pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor, to preserve its principles.”

1837
Printings of the Declaration: From a New Orleans newspaper: “The Declaration of Independence, as printed in a beautiful style by the printers on the 4th of July, may be obtained at this office. We invite our friends to call and get copies. They will make a beautiful ornament in a frame.” Times Picayune, 7 July 1837, 2

1838
Highlights: In Charlottesville, the Declaration of Independence was read from an “original draft, in the handwriting of Mr. Jefferson.”

Printed in a local newspaper:
The Franklin Print Company have published a copy of Trumbull’s Picture of “The Signers of the Declaration of Independence,” reduced to a small size. Below it is the Declaration, followed by the facsimiles of the signatures, also much reduced; and a key to the Picture. The whole is enclosed in a fanciful frame work, about ten inches by twelve. Parts of this engraving have much merit; and as a whole it is very pleasing. It is a pretty good copy, in a very convenient form, of a celebrated picture which represents one of the most important events that ever occurred; and the publishers merit success.

Acknowledgment of the Declaration in a British journal:
“The first in talent and weight of British publications, (The Edingburg [sic] Quarterly Review) now holds this language. Speaking of the great work of the Fourth of July, 1776, it says:”
This is that famous Declaration of Independence by which the freemen of the new

91 Richmond Enquirer, 12 July 1836, 3.
92 Alexandria Gazette, 12 July 1838, 2.
93 Farmers’ Cabinet, 31 August 1838, 2.
41
world approved themselves worthy of their ancestors in the old—who had spoken, and written, and fought and perished, for conscience & freedom’s sake—but whose descendants in the old had not always borne their high lineage in mind. We verily think that this ‘Declaration’ is the most important event in the history of mankind, whether its consequences be regarded on one side of the Atlantic or the other; and if tyrants are sometimes said to feel uneasy on the 30th of January, how much more fitted to inspire alarm are the recollections associated with the fourth of July, in which nothing like remorse can mingle on the people’s part, and not consolation is afforded to their oppressors by the tendency of cruelty and injustice to mar the work they stain!94

Toasts: At a dinner celebration at Circus Hill, in Sing Sing, New York, on July 4, 1838: “The Declaration of Independence: A rescript of the Divine Will concerning Man and the perfection of reason.” May its principles rapidly extend to all human governments. 6 cheers."95

1839
Highlights: “At a juvenile celebration of the 4th at Norwich, Conn., the lad who read the Declaration of Independence wore the identical hat which was owned and worn by Hon. William Williams of Lebanon, one of the signers of the Declaration.”96

Toasts: Presented at a dinner celebration of 200 ladies and gentlemen at a “beautiful elevation near Wenham Pond” in Beverly, Massachusetts, on July 4, 1839: “The Declaration of Independence. Emphatically the offspring of true democracy, the first occasion when it was loudly proclaimed to royalty and aristocracy, that all men are born free and equal. Let Republicans remember it with gratitude, hail it with rejoicing, and celebrate its anniversary forever.” Essex Gazette, 12 July 1839, 2.

1840
Parodies of the Declaration:
When in the course of plundering the people, it becomes necessary for the public defaulters to dissolve the knavish bands, which connected them together, and to assume in Foreign lands, that offcast and degraded station, to which the laws of their country and their country’s God have driven them, a decent respect for those who may “follow in their footsteps” require that they declare the several sums they have filched from the People, as the causes which have impelled them to the separation. We therefore, the Public Defaulters of the United States of America, to the amount annexed to our names, in unholy conclave assembled, appealing to the blackness of Loco-Focoism for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name of all good Defaulters, solemnly publish and declare that we are, and of right ought to be, free and independent of the People: that we are absolved from all accountability to them, and

94 Rhode-Island Republican, 25 July 1838, 2. The Edinburgh Review began publishing in 1802 and continued until 1929.
95 Hudson River Chronicle, 10 July 1838, 2.
96 Barre Gazette, 19 July 1839, 2; Portsmouth Journal of Literature & Politics, 20 July 1839, 3; Maine Farmer and Journal of the Useful Arts 7/29 (3 August 1839): 230.
that all connection between us and them is, and ought to be, totally dissolved—and that as bold and impudent defaulters, we have full power to seize and appropriate to our own use the People’s money, to contract debts, establish Sub-Treasuries, absquatulate, and to do all other acts, which independent, unaccountable defaulters may of right do; and for the support of this declaration, we pledge mutually to each other the cash we have appropriated, our public honesty, and sacred subservience to party. 97

**1842**

*Published:* A “history of the Declaration of Independence,” by William Bacon Stevens, is published in the *National Intelligencer*, 4 July 1842, 1-4; *Magnolia, or Southern Monthly* (May 1842): 277:

As every thing connected with this “charter of our liberties,” is worthy of preservation, and as we cannot too often recur to, and ponder over, that important event, I propose to draw up a succinct account of the rise and progress of independent principles; and of the preparation and ultimate passage of the memorable “Declaration” of them.”

*Poetry:* “The following Original Poem, composed by a young lady, was rehearsed, at the late celebration of American Independence, at Whitlockville. *The Declaration of Independence, at Philadelphia—July 4th, 1776*”:

Whiten the ancient nation’s hall, were met a mighty crowd,
The country’s fairest chivalry, the noble and the proud:
Men of old names, of well-tried swords, or wealth and talents high,
Who met to save their country, or with her fall to die.

There rose up one with lofty brow, and clear, dark flashing eye:
Hush’d were the murmurs of the throng, by the strange melody
Of his deep voice, that clear and high, rang through the lofty hall,
And with its words of burning truth, held every heart in thrall,

“Ye all have heard—in olden time,
Our fathers left their land,
And sought a home in this new clime,
Far from the tyrant’s hand.

Fair England’s sunny vales and hills,
Her forests green and high,
Her low cots, and her clear bright rills,
Were left with but a sigh.

For they might worship God no more,

97 Following the statement is a list of personal names, their places of residence, and the “amounts of defalcation.” “Second Declaration of independence,” *Portsmouth Journal of Literature and Politics*, 24 October 1840, 1.

43
Nor sing his praise aloud;
Or daily, as in times of yore,
Before his throne be bow’d.

The dungeon, and the fiery stake,
Bow’d many a noble heart;
While others for the Saviour’s sake,
From homes well-loved did part.

Unto this wild, uncultur’d land,
Did they with calm hearts come;
And trusting to their Father’s hand,
Raise here another home.

And for long years they struggled on,
Besoit by trials sore,
Till pleasant homes and wealth were won,
Far from their native shore.

New England with her proud commands,
Mistress of land and sea,
Hath sent us laws and armed bands,
And bound with chains the free.

Our pleasant homes, where shone the hearth,
Where childish voices rose,
No more re-echo to that mirth,
They’re haunted by our foes.

The churches where on Sabbath morn,
We met for praise and prayer,
Their aisles by other feet are worn,
The soldier bands are there.

Our ships that once upon the wave,
Rode gallantly and well,
Have in its waters found a grave;
The war shot was their knell.

No longer must our country bend,
To English lords the knee;
The Lord of Heaven, the sufferer’s friend,
Hath said, “All men are free.”

Like craven slaves we have beat low,
Like freemen must we rise,
Hurling defiance to the foe,
With blood must gain the prize."

Deep silence rested on that hall, but eyes were flashing bright,
And men of bronzed and manly brows, were cheeks as ashes white:
To dare proud England's angry power, it was a fearful thing
And might upon their well lov'd land, most fearful ruin bring;

They cast behind them wealth and friends; they took the traitor's name:
They gave, perchance, themselves to death, their dwellings to the flame.
Yet little reck'd they of their lot, 'twas for their household band
And country, that each cheek was pale, and nerveless each strong hand.
Yet better that their children slept with freedom in their graves
Beneath their ruin'd homes, than dwell in peace and yet be slaves.

They paused no more, but with calm hearts, each pledg'd his honor bright,
His life-blood, and his wealth, to aid his country for her right.
And well was each proud vow redeem'd, those brave ones liv'd to see
The land for which they toll'd--the home and birth place of the free."  

1843
Toasts: Proposed by E. Howe at a dinner celebration held in front of the hotel in North Salem, New York: "The Declaration of Independence. May the names of its authors ever be venerated and its sentiments cherished." Hudson River Chronicle, 18 July 1843, 2.

1844
Independence Day Readings of the Declaration: William H. Dickinson, at a meeting of the Franklin Association held at the Methodist Church, Whitlockville, NY (Hudson River Chronicle, 2 July 1844, 2).

1845

1847

1848
Printings of the Declaration: The True Republican: Containing the Inaugural Addresses, Together with the First Annual Addresses and Messages of All the Presidents of the United States, from 1789 to 1845; Together with Their Farewell Addresses, and Illustrated with the Portrait of Each Presidents. To Which is Annexed the Declaration of Independence and

Constitution of the United States, with the Amendments and Signers' Names. Also, the Constitutions of Many of the Important States in the Union. By Jonathan French. Philadelphia: Published by W.A. Leary. 1848. First Edition.

1849

1853
Highlights: According to Childe Harold, correspondent for the Brooklyn Daily Eagle in April 1853, the “original copy of the Declaration” resides in the Patent Office, in Washington, D.C.99 “The pen with which the signers of the Declaration of Independence signed their several names to that instrument, is now at the office of the Secretary of State, in Washington.”100

1855
Published: The Writings of Thomas Jefferson. 9 vols. (N.Y.: John C. Riker, 1855, containing a “facsimile of the Declaration of Independence.”101

1857

1858

Published: “The Immortal Fifty-Six,” Pittsfield Sun, 19 August 1858, 1. List of the signers, providing “places of birth and their professions.”

1861
Printings of the Declaration: Farmers' Cabinet, 5 July 1861, 1.102

1862
Note: The Charleston Daily Courier published a front-page editorial stating “the essential principles and merits of the Declaration of Independence and of the revolution which it originated are on the side of the South.”103

100 Pittsfield Sun, 5 May 1853, 2.
101 Advertised in Brooklyn Eagle, 23 February 1855, 3.
102 Includes names of signers arranged by state.
103 Charleston Daily Courier, 4 July 1862, 1.
1867
Readings:
The *World* thinks the reading on the Fourth of July of the Declaration of independence ought to be dispensed with, because the greater part of it consists in “invectives against a pig-headed old monarch whose bones long since mouldered to dust.” It would also have “stilled, empty, rapid and wearisome” orations done away with. The latter suggestion is sensible, whatever may be thought of the former (*Brooklyn Eagle*, 5 July 1867, 2).

1868
Highlights: At the National Republican Convention the platform included this resolution by Carl Schurz: “Resolved, that we recognize the principles laid down in the immortal Declaration of Independence as the true foundations of Democratic government, and we hail with gladness every effort towards making these principles a living reality on every inch of American soil.” The resolution was adopted after a brief discussion (“National Republican Convention,” *Farmers’ Cabinet*, 28 May 1868, 2).

1869
Highlights: News regarding a proposed new U.S. 10-cent stamp having a picture of the Declaration of Independence is released.\(^\text{104}\) Actually the stamp is a 24-cent stamp.

1876
Independence Day Readings of the Declaration: In Chicago and Freeport, Illinois, the Declaration is read in both English and German. *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 5 July 1876, 3 and 7; at Jamaica, New York, the Declaration read by Miss Mary R. Holland (*New York Times*, 5 July 1876, 10); in Wilmette, Illinois, Annie Gedney read the Declaration (*Chicago Daily Tribune*, 5 July 1876, 3); Miss Lou C. Allen recited the Declaration from memory in Decatur, Illinois (“The Fourth Elsewhere,” *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 5 July 1876, 8); in Philadelphia, at Independence Hall, Richard Henry Lee, grandson of Richard Henry Lee (1732-1794) read the Declaration of Independence (*Farmers’ Cabinet*, 4 July 1876, 2).


INDEPENDENCE, c. 1876, Advertising Broadside: “1776-1876 Centennial Memorial” Declaration of Independence, Copyrighted by James D. McBride, Printed by the Colombian Publishing Company, New York, Choice Extremely Fine. This detailed document celebrates the United States’ centennial by reproducing the

\(^{104}\) *Plattsburgh Sentinel*, 15 January 1869, 3.

\(^{105}\) See also, “A Centennial Poem,” *Atlanta Constitution*, 11 August 1876, 4.
Declaration of Independence and its facsimile signatures. 19.5 x 14.5, printed in black on thin, cream-colored paper. Atop is the image of an eagle flanked by American flags. In the lower left-hand corner is the Department of the Interior's seal and a facsimile signature by the Secretary of the Interior, certifying that this is a “perfect Fac.Simile of the original document now on deposit in the Patent Office at Washington, D.C.” Very light age toning and numerous storage folds, but in otherwise very nice condition. This impressive piece was printed by the Colombian Publishing Company of New York as a Centennial Memorial to the signing of the Declaration of Independence and an advertising piece for Crosby, Edwards & Co. of Providence, Rhode Island. Interestingly, a tiny notice at the bottom of the broadside offers a plate paper version with a red seal and no advertising panel for a mere 50 Cents - we'd sure love to see one of those!

Location of the Declaration: “By direction, M.C. Bell, chief clerk of the interior department, leaves to-morrow [May 6, 1876] with the original declaration of independence, and will deliver it to Col. Frank Etting, at Philadelphia for exhibition in Independence Hall during the entire centennial. Gen. James McBride has left for Philadelphia to make military preparations for the reception of the declaration. Note—This is a violation of the cabinet order regarding original documents.”106 “The Original Document,” Atlanta Constitution, 6 May 1876, 2.

1882
Location of the Declaration: The original signed Declaration of Independence is located by testimony in June of this year in the “diplomatic library in the state department” in the "state, war and navy building" in Washington, D.C., and was described as “bleached” by “the light of a century... its bold lines into dim and uncertain tracery, and even the sweeping signature of John Hancock is now hardly legible.”107

1883
Printings of the Declaration: Facsimile of the Declaration without Matlack’s corrections was printed in the Daily Globe (St. Paul, Minnesota), on July 4, 1883.108

1884
Independence Day Readings of the Declaration: Anson G. McCook, Secretary of the Senate, reads the Declaration after the U.S. Senate convened in Congress.109

1885

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106 According to Minnie Hauck, special correspondent for the Atlanta Constitution who looked at the Declaration at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, the document had been seen by her before in the Patent Office in Washington, D.C. Atlanta Constitution, 18 May 1876, 2.
107 “Republicon Pomp,” Atlanta Constitution, 2 July 1882, 3.
109 “In the Senate,” Atlanta Constitution, 5 July 1884, 1.
Presented an oration at the Tammany Society celebration in NYC, on July 4, 1885. The title being “The Declaration of Independence.” “By those that know no better the Declaration of Independence has been called a mass of glittering generalities. And yet it [‘s] passage was the most heroic act recorded in the history of the republic. It put forth the great truths of freedom and established the proposition that no government can be successful unless it has the consent and co-operation of those governed. Our forefathers built better than they knew.”

1887

Oration: Calvin Edgerton, at the Pavilion in Los Angeles, on July 4, 1887:

Our education should take in the primary principles of the Declaration of Independence. . . . We want our educators to take the plain doctrines of the Declaration of Independence and fill the young men with those principles before they are to go out and assume their place and positions in the world. Those doctrines are such that they are at war with all opposing theories which seek the disruption and overturning of institutions like ours/ . . . Out of that Declaration of Independence comes the Constitution of the country. It would have been utterly impossible to have made the Constitution intelligent; there would have been no grand preamble setting forth its ideas and the great principles of our Government in another form of the Declaration of Independence, if it had not been for the adoption by the common people of the Declaration of Independence (Los Angeles Times, 5 July 1887, 2).

1888

Location of the Declaration: A copy of the Declaration “made in 1826 is found in New York,” in the city library, on December 17. The copy is bound in vellum and has several signatures, including President John Quincy Adams and cabinet members, “the New York State and other officials.” Charles Carroll of Carrollton, the last surviving signer of the Declaration at that time, wrote these words on the document:

Grateful to the Almighty God for the blessings which, through Jesus Christ our Lord, he has conferred on my beloved country in her emancipation and upon myself in permitting me under circumstances of mercy to live to the age of 80 years and to survive the fiftieth year of American independence and certifying by my present signature my approbation of the Declaration of Independence adopted by Congress on the 4th day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-six, which I originally subscribed the 2d day of August of the same year, and of which I am now the last surviving signer, I do hereby recommend to the present and future generations the principles of that important document as the best earthly inheritance their ancestors could bequeath them, and pray that the civil and religious liberties they have secured to my country may be perpetuated to the remotest posterity and extended to the whole family of man. Charles Carroll of Carrollton.

110 Brooklyn Eagle, 5 July 1885, 3.
Witnesses: Stephen N. Bowan, [sic] pastor of the Eighth Presbyterian Church, New York; John Gibson, pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Baltimore. 2d August, 1826.

1892

Highlights:

The firm of Yawman & Erb of this city [Rochester, New York] is constructing a chest as a receptacle for the original Declaration of Independence, the draft of the same made by Thomas Jefferson, the Constitution of the United States, and other valuable historical and legal documents, which are to be exhibited at the World’s Fair. The Constitution has never before been out of the State Department since it was first deposited there.

The chest in appearance is like a safe built in the form of a sideboard. The height is 10 feet. It is 3 feet 6 inches broad and about as deep, and is made of highly-wrought gray steel. The trimmings, which are put on in abundance, are of gold leaf. A shelf lined with velvet is placed below the upper drawers. The latter are of oak.

When the gold combination lock is turned to the right number and the steel doors fly open, a set of drawers working on rollers and provided with birkhead brackets appears. The chest is lined with tin. It will be sent to Washington and there supplied with plate glass so that the curious may catch a glimpse of the documents. A special car will be provided and under a guard, composed of several army officers, it will be taken to the fair. [“A Chest for Precious Papers,” New York Times, 7 October 1892, 5.]

1894

Location of the Declaration: The Declaration “is kept locked up in a steel safe in the library of the Department of State. It is spread out flat in a mahogany portfolio, made to slide in and out of the safe, and over it is a sheet of thick paper and a plate of glass. It is now never exposed to the light, and is as little exposed to the air as is possible without placing it in a vessel from which the atmosphere has been exhausted.” The document was encased in February 1894.

1896

Highlights: A copper box “eighteen inches square” was removed out of the cornerstone of a Chicago post office that was to be demolished and was found to contain a copy of the Declaration of Independence. The box was originally set in the cornerstone on June 24, 1874. Among six floats that were in the parade in Los Angeles on July 4, 1896, was one.

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111 In 1807, Rev. Stephen N. Rowan [spelling?] was installed as pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church in New York at “Greenwich.” On November 9, 1819, he was installed as pastor of the Eighth Presbyterian Church. New-York Gazette & General Advertiser, 3 December 1807, 2; New-York Commercial Advertiser, 8 November 1819, 2.
113 From the Washington Star, as printed in “Badly Worn,” Los Angeles Times, 5 August 1894, 12.
whose theme was “The Declaration of Independence” (“For the Fourth,” Los Angeles Times, 2 June 1896, 11).


1897

1898

1905
Highlights: A framed copy of the Declaration presented to the Daughters of the American Revolution, Washington, D.C., by Mrs. Donald McLean for Memorial Continental Hall.116

1911
Highlights: Secretary of State Philander Chase Knox (1853-1921) examines the Declaration of Independence and constitution on May 6 and issued “instructions that an estimate be made of the cost of a receptacle which would make the historic instruments absolutely secure against destruction. Both documents have been obscured from public gaze since 1902 in order to save them. When uncovered today the declaration displayed the ravages of time and the disastrous effects of press copying to which it was submitted in 1852 and from which all facsimiles have been made.”117


1913

118 Sarah Paxton Ball Dodson (1847-1906) completed her painting of “The Signing of the Declaration” in 1883.
“More than two hundred names of former members have been stricken from the rolls, and have been notified that they have been members of the organization ‘under false pretenses.’”¹¹⁹

1916

1921
Location of the Declaration: Photograph of the “thin steel” safe where “the originals” of the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution are held in the library of the State Department in Washington, D.C., is published. It was noted that the safe was inadequate, “proof against neither fire nor water” and “surrounded by combustible materials.” “Every year congress is asked for $20,000 for a fireproof vault, and every year the request is ignored.”¹²⁰

1924
Location of the Declaration: Photograph published showing Mrs. Coolidge and Speaker of the House, Gillett in the Library of Congress in the vicinity of a new vault where the Declaration is now held.¹²¹

1923
Independence Day Readings of the Declaration: “Charles O. Dogan, a student of English High School, Boston, Mass., has been selected by Mayor Curley (Dem.) to read the Declaration of Independence from the balcony of the old State House, July 4th, at the municipal Independence Day celebration. This is the first time that an Afro-American has been so honored.” *Cleveland Gazette*, 23 June 1923, 1.

1927

1930

¹¹⁹ *New York Times*, 4 July 1913, 3.
1931

1940

1941
Location of the Declaration: “The Declaration of Independence, the Magna Carta, the Gutenberg Bible and certain other documents of ‘extraordinary value’ have been removed from exhibition cases in the gallery of the library of congress to ‘places of greater security.’ Librarian Archibald MacLeish said today. He said the value of the documents ‘requires that they be given the greatest possible protection.’”

1950

1951
Preservation of the Declaration: A plan for sealing the original Declaration and Constitution in “helium filled bronze enclosures” is presented by scientists at the Bureau of Standards. “The bureau of standards and the Libby-Owens-Ford Glass company, began research work 10 years ago to determine the best means of preserving them for future generations.” The parchment, according to Dr. Verner Clapp, acting library of congress, “will be hermetically sealed in atmospheres of 99.99 percent pure helium, an inert gas.” Light filters were also to be installed to protect “against harmful light rays.”


1952
Location of the Declaration: The National Archives takes possession of the Declaration and Constitution from the Library of Congress. “The change in location for the two papers was unanimously approved on April 30 by the Joint Congressional Committee on the Library, headed by Sen. Theodore Francis Green (Dem-R.I.).” Martha J. Hall, “Precious

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123 Includes photograph in “Plan to Guard Constitution with Helium,” Chicago Daily Tribune, 3 July 1951, 1.
53

**1961**

**Readings:** Barry Goldwater, U.S. senator from Arizona:

> The gentlemen of 1776 did not suggest that all governments should be destroyed or that man could prosper without government. Their complaint was against the exercise of unlimited power over their lives by a remote king.\(^{125}\)

**1962**

**Highlights:** President John F. Kennedy presents an address at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, July 4, 1962, and comments on his visit to the National Archives to see the Declaration:

> Today, 186 years later, that Declaration—whose yellowing parchment and fading, almost illegible lines I saw in the past week in the National Archives in Washington, is still a revolutionary document. To read it today is to hear a trumpet call. For that Declaration unleashed not merely a revolution against the British, but a revolution in human affairs. Its authors were highly conscious of its world-wide implications, and George Washington declared that liberty and self-government were, in his words, “finally staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people.”

*[Washington Post, 5 July 1962, A8.]*

**1966**


**1969**

**Exhibits:** “Boston’s first broadside of the Declaration of Independence” is part of an exhibit titled “American Printmaking: The First 150 Years” held at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in June 1969.\(^{126}\)

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1970
Printings of the Declaration: Facsimile edition of the John Dunlap printing is issued by R. R. Donnelley & Sons, the Lakeside Press, as an exact image of the copy owned by Ira G. Corn and Joseph P. Driscoll. From E-Bay.

1976
Highlights: 13-cent U.S. commemorative stamp of the founders at Independence Hall in 1776 is issued.


1982
Highlights: Nicolas D. Kristof published an article describing eleven errors in the text of portions of the Declaration of Independence engraved on the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C. “Approval to omit some words and punctuation apparently was given to two of the architects, Otto R. Eggers and Daniel P. Higgins, who said the changes were necessary to save space. The excerpt in the memorial is carefully laid out so that the right-hand side is square, and faithful reproduction might have thrown this scheme off.” Washington Post, 4 July 1982, A2.

1987

1991

1995
Preservation of the Declaration: The bronze glass case holding the Declaration of Independence is discovered as deteriorating and coming apart and the glass showing signs of decomposing.127

2000
Coins: Republic of Liberia issues a five dollar signing of the Declaration of Independence

55
silver coin (33 mm in diameter) is minted. Info. From e-bay


2002

2008

Coins: U.S. gold commemorative coin (11 mm in diameter; .585 gold and .5 grams) in honor of the Declaration of Independence is minted.

2009

2010

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56

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