



Contemporary broadside editions of the Declaration of Independence

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Contemporary Broadside Editions of the Declaration of Independence

RECENTLY, through the generosity of Carleton R. Richmond, '09, the Harvard College Library was enabled to acquire a copy of the first edition of the Declaration of Independence, printed as a broadside by John Dunlap in Philadelphia the night of 4 July or early on 5 July 1776. There would presumably be general agreement that this broadside constitutes the most important single printed document in our national annals. It was inserted in the 'rough' Journal of the Congress on 5 July 1776, in a space left blank by the Secretary, Charles Thomson. As a result, it supplied the text for the longhand copy of the Declaration in the 'smooth' Journal of the Congress, and that for the famous engrossed vellum copy signed by the delegates. It was the form of the Declaration disseminated to the new-born 'states' by order of the Congress, thereby becoming the basis for later printings in newspapers, broadsides, and books. It stands as the first official version of the Declaration, as well as its first appearance in print.

The present article is concerned with the bibliography of the contemporary broadside editions of the Declaration, all deriving ultimately from this first edition of Dunlap's, and hastily printed on single sheets of paper to convey the great news to the people as quickly as possible. Previous bibliographical listings of the Declaration broadsides have been made by Paul Leicester Ford in *Some Materials for a Bibliography of the Official Publications of the Continental Congress* (Brooklyn, 1888); I. Minis Hays, *A Contribution to the Bibliography of the Declaration of Independence* (Philadelphia, 1900); *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789*, edited by Worthington Chauncey Ford (Washington, 1906), Vol. VI; and Charles Evans, *American Bibliography* (Chicago, 1909), Vol. V. It is interesting to note that each in his turn was able to increase the number of known editions or variants of editions. P. L. Ford listed five, Hays listed eight, W. C. Ford listed ten, and Evans listed eleven. Enough additional information has been found to warrant the present bibliographical effort, in which nineteen different editions or variants of editions are recorded,

beginning with the first Dunlap edition and including the 'authenticated' copy printed at Baltimore early in 1777.

Much has been written on the evolution and history of the Declaration, including standard works by John H. Hazelton,¹ Carl Becker,² and Julian P. Boyd.³ In brief, the following were the important steps leading up to the first printing of the Declaration.⁴

In the Continental Congress on 7 June 1776, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia offered the following: 'Resolved, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be totally dissolved.'

Consideration of the resolution was postponed until the 8th of June. It was referred to the committee of the whole for discussion on the 10th, on which date there was adopted the following resolution: 'Resolved, that the consideration of the first resolution be postponed to this day three weeks [July 1], and in the mean while that no time be lost in case the Congress agree thereto, that a committee be appointed to prepare a declaration to the effect of the said first resolution.'

The next day, June 11th, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston were chosen 'to prepare the Declaration.'

On June 28th, the Committee brought in a draft of 'A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America in Congress Assembled.' Jefferson had been given the task of composing the Declaration and the draft presented by the Committee was his, with the exception of a few changes suggested by Adams and Franklin.

During the debate that followed further changes were made, the most important being the deletion of the paragraph on the restriction of the slave trade.

Finally, on July 4th, the Congress acting as a committee of the whole approved the Declaration as amended. The document then being read again, it was agreed to unanimously by all of the delegates,

¹ *The Declaration of Independence: Its History* (New York, 1906).

² *The Declaration of Independence. A Study in the History of Political Ideas* (New York, 1912).

³ *The Declaration of Independence, the Evolution of the Text* (Washington, 1943).

⁴ Based on the Journal of the Congress, as printed in Hazelton, *The Declaration of Independence*, pp. 109, 118, 120, 170-171.

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.
A DECLARATION
BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

WHEN in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the Separation.

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness—That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and accordingly all Experiences hath shown, that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while Evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security. Such has been the patient Sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the Necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The History of the present King of Great-Britain 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 forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing Importance, unless suspended in their Operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the Accommodation of large Districts of People, unless those People would relinquish the Right of Representation in the Legislature, a Right inalienable to them, and formidable to Tyrants only.

He has called together Legislative Bodies at Places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the Depository of their public Records, for the sole Purpose of suspending them into Compliance with his Measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses 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 cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the Dangers of Invasion from without, and Convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the Population of these States; for that Purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their Migrations hither, and raising the Conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the Tenure of their Offices, and the Amount and Payment of their Salaries.

He has erected a Multitude of new Offices, and sent hither Swarms of Officers to harass our People, and eat out their Substance.

He has kept among us, in Times of Peace, Standing Armies, without the Consent of our Legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a Jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution, and unacknowledged by our Laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For quartering large Bodies of Armed Troops among us;

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from Punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States;

For cutting off our Trade with all Parts of the World;

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent;

For depriving us, in many Cases, of the Benefit of Trial by Jury;

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended Offences;

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an arbitrary Government, and enlarging its Boundaries, so as to render it at once an Example and fit Instrument for introducing the same absolute Rule into these Colonies;

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments;

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with Power to legislate for us in all Cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our Seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our Towns, and destroyed the Lives of our People.

He is, at this Time, transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to complete the Works of Death, Destruction, 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 our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the Executioners of their Friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic Insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the Inhabitants of our Frontiers, the merciless Indian Savager, whose known Rule of Warfare, is an undistinguished Destruction, of all Ages, Sexes and Conditions.

In every Stage of these Oppressions we have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble Terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated Injury. A Prince, whose Character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the Ruler of a free People.

Not have we been wanting in Attention to our British Brethren. We have warned them from Time to Time of Attempts by their Legislature to extend an unwarrantable Jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the Circumstances of our Emigration and Settlement here. We have appealed to their native Justice and Magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the Ties of our common Kindred to disavow these Usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our Connections and Correspondence. They too have been deaf to the Voice of Justice and of Consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the Necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of Mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace, Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the Rectitude of our Intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly Publish and Declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political Connection between them and the State of Great-Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

Signed by ORDER and in BEHALF of the CONGRESS,

JOHN HANCOCK, PRESIDENT.

ATTEST.
CHARLES THOMSON, SECRETARY.

PHILADELPHIA: PRINTED BY JOHN BELLAM.

PLATE I

THE FIRST EDITION OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

(No. 1; Harvard copy)

Boston July 6. 1776

Sir,

The enclosed Declaration of Independence, I am directed to transmit to you with a Request, that you will have it proclaimed at the Head of the Troops under your Command, in the way you shall think most proper.

I have only Time to add, that the Importance of it, will naturally suggest the Propriety of proclaiming it, in such a Manner, as that the whole Army may be fully apprized of it.

I have the Honour to be

Sir, your most Obedt.

Very humble Servant

John Hancock

Genl. Ward, on Staff
Commanding the Continental Troops at Boston

PLATE II

LETTER OF JOHN HANCOCK TO GENERAL ARTEMAS WARD, 6 JULY 1776

IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

A DECLARATION BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

WHEN in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station, to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the Separation.

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness—That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and accordingly all Experiences have shown that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security. Such has been the patient Sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the Necessity, which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The History of the present King of Great-Britain 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 forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing Importance, unless suspended in their Operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.
He has refused to pass other Laws for the Advancement of the great and growing Settlements of these Colonies, unless by the Assent of the King of Great-Britain, a Right inestimable to them, and formidable to Tyrants only.
He has called together Legislative Bodies at Places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the Depository of their public Records, for the sole Purpose of fatiguing them into Compliance with his Measures.
He has dissolved Representative Houses 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 cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean Time exposed to all the Dangers of Invasion from without, and Confusions within.
He has endeavoured to prevent the Population of these States; for that Purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their Migrations hither, and raising the Conditions of new Appropriations of Land.
He has obstructed the Administration of Justice by refusing his Assent to Laws that establish Judiciary Powers.
He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the Tenure of their Offices, and the Amount and Payment of their Salaries.
He has erected a Multitude of new Offices, and sent hither Swarms of Officers to harass our People, and eat out their Substance.
He has kept among us, in Times of Peace, Standing Armies, without the Consent of our Legislatures.
He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.
He has combined with others to subject us to a Jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution, and unacknowledged by our Laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For quartering large Bodies of Armed Troops among us,
For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from Punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States;
For cutting off our Trade with all Parts of the World;
For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent;
For depriving us, in many Cases, of the Benefit of Trial by Jury;
For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended Offences;
For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighboring Province, establishing therein an arbitrary Government, and extending its Boundaries, so as to render it at once an Example and fit Instrument for introducing the same absolute Rule into these Colonies;
For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments;
For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with Power to legislate for us in all Cases whatsoever.
He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.
He has plundered our Seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our Towns, and defaced the Lives of our People.
He is, at this Time, transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to commit the Works of Death, 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 our fellow Citizens, taken Captive on the high Seas, to bear Arms against their Country, to become the Executioners of their Friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.
He has excited domestic Insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the Inhabitants of our Frontiers the merciless Indian Savages, whose known Rule of Warfare is an unrelenting Destruction, of all Ages, Sexes and Conditions.
In every Stage of these Oppressions we have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble Terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated Injury: A Prince, whose Character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the Ruler of a free People.
Not have we been wanting in Attention to our British Brethren: We have warned them from Time to Time of Attempts by their Legislature to extend an unwarrantable Jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the Circumstances of our Emigration and Settlement here. We have appealed to their native Justice and Magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the Ties of our common Kindred to disavow these Usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our Commerce and Correspondence. They too have been deaf to the Voice of Justice and Consistency. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the Necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of Mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace, Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the Rectitude of our Intentions, do, in the Name and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly Publish and Declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political Connection between them and the State of Great-Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

Signed by ORDER, and in BEHALF of the CONGRESS,

JOHN HANCOCK, PRESIDENT.

ATTEST.
CHARLES THOMSON, Secretary.

NEW YORK: Printed by S. JOHNSON, 1776.

PLATE III

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE: FIRST NEWPORT EDITION

(No. 7; Harvard copy)

C O N G R E S S,
JULY 4 1776.
D E C L A R A T I O N
BY THE
R E P R E S E N T A T I V E S
O F
U N I T E D S T A T E S O F A M E R I C A,
I N G E N E R A L C O N G R E S S A S S E M B L E D.

WHEN in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever a form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great-Britain 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 forbidden his Governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in

their operation until his assent should be obtained; and when he suspends them, he has utterly neglected to attend them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the Legislature, a right inalienable to them, and inseparable to Tyranny only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

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

He has refused for a long time, when called together, to attend, unless he should be elected, whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have remained in the hands of a few, and the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the laws for encouragement of emigration, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and has swarmed officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies, without the consent of our Legislature.

He has affected to render the military independent of and superior to the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation:

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

For making them, by a mock trial, from questioning for any reason, which they should commit on the inhabitants of these States;

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

For imposing taxes on us without our consent;

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefit of trial by jury;

For transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offenses;

For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its borders, so as to render it at once an example and instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies;

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments;

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves superior to the laws for us in all cases;

For imposing a government, have, by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time, transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, 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 our fellow Citizens taken captive on the high seas to bear arms against their own country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known mode of warfare is a merciless and indiscriminate destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress, in the most humble terms: Our re-

peated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the Ruler of free People.

Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of the dangerous consequences of their attempts to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to share with us their own indignation, which would surely have interposed their intercession and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of equity, and have shown a9 partiality in the exercise which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace, and friendship.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do in the name and by the authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great-Britain, is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that as FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress,
JOHN HANCOCK, President.
Attest,
CHARLES THOMPSON, Secretary.

PLATE IV
DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE: [SALEM, E. RUSSELL?]
(No. 12; Harvard copy)

save those from New York, who had no power to act. It was thereupon 'Ordered That the declaration be authenticated & printed. That the committee appointed to prepare the declaration superintend & correct the press. That copies of the declaration be sent to the several assemblies, conventions & committees or councils of safety and to the several commanding officers of the continental troops that it be proclaimed in each of the united states and at the head of the army.'

In obedience to this order the manuscript was given to John Dunlap and the broadside was printed and ready for distribution the next day, July 5th. It is known that on that day Hancock sent a copy to the Committee of Safety of Pennsylvania, a copy to the Convention of New Jersey, and a copy to Colonel Haslet. John Adams sent a copy, and Gerry two copies, to friends.⁵

The dissemination of this first printing of the Declaration stirred into action printers from Williamsburg, Virginia, to Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Besides the nineteen editions or variants of editions in broadside form now known, the Declaration was printed in at least twenty-nine newspapers during July. Its first newspaper appearance was in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* of July 6th,⁶ a copy of which has recently been added to the Harvard Library.

⁵ Hazlton, *Declaration of Independence*, p. 476.

⁶ Dr Clarence S. Brigham has generously allowed the writer to use the following list of newspaper printings of the Declaration, the result of a complete check by him of all existing American newspapers of the period:

- July 6 Philadelphia, *Pennsylvania Evening Post*
- July 8 Philadelphia, *Dunlap's Pennsylvania Packet*
- July 9 Philadelphia, *Pennsylvanischer Staatsbote*
- July 9 Baltimore, *Dunlap's Maryland Gazette*
- July 10 Philadelphia, *Pennsylvania Gazette*
- July 10 Philadelphia, *Pennsylvania Journal*
- July 10 Baltimore, *Maryland Journal*
- July 10 New York, *Constitutional Gazette*
- July 11 *New York Packet*
- July 11 *New York Journal*
- July 11 Annapolis, *Maryland Gazette*
- July 12 New London, *Connecticut Gazette*
- July 13 Philadelphia, *Pennsylvania Ledger*
- July 13 *Providence Gazette*
- July 15 *New York Gazette*
- July 15 Hartford, *Connecticut Courant*
- July 15 *Norwich Packet*
- July 16 Exeter, *New Hampshire Gazette, Extraordinary*
- July 16 Salem, *American Gazette*

The first publication of the Declaration in a book was apparently in *The Genuine Principles of the Ancient Saxon, or English Constitution, Carefully Collected from the Best Authorities; with Some Observations, on Their Peculiar Fitness for the United Colonies in General, and Pennsylvania in Particular, By Demophilus* (Philadelphia, Printed and Sold by Robert Bell, in Third-Street. MDCCLXXVI), a copy of which is at Harvard.

Harvard also possesses the original letter (Plate II) written by John Hancock to Major General Artemas Ward, dated Philadelphia, 6 July 1776, transmitting a copy of the Declaration broadside, with the request 'that you will have it proclaimed at the Head of the Troops under your Command in the Way you shall think most proper.' General Ward was the first American Major General and was then in command of the Massachusetts troops.

Hazelton's exhaustive research has shown that besides the copies already mentioned as having been sent (with covering letters) on July 5th, Hancock sent letters and copies on July 6th to General Washington, the Convention of New York, the Assembly of Massachusetts, the Assembly of New Hampshire, Governor Trumbull of Connecticut, and Governor Cooke of Rhode Island, and on July 8th to Maryland and Virginia.⁷

The following bibliographical list of the separate contemporary broadsides is as nearly in the order of their probable appearance as can be estimated, the order correlating roughly with geographical distances from Philadelphia. Unless otherwise stated, the broadsides are printed in single columns. The transcriptions have been designed to provide adequate data, in conjunction with the accompanying comments, for distinguishing the various editions or variants of editions. Line endings

-
- July 17 Worcester, *Massachusetts Spy*
 - July 17 New Haven, *Connecticut Journal*
 - July 18 Boston, *Continental Journal*
 - July 18 Boston, *New England Chronicle*
 - July 18 Newport *Mercury, Extraordinary*
 - July 19 Newburyport, *Essex Journal*
 - July 19 Williamsburg, *Virginia Gazette* [Purdie] (extracts only of the Declaration)
 - July 20 Williamsburg, *Virginia Gazette* [Dixon and Hunter]
 - July 20 Portsmouth, *Freeman's Journal*
 - July 22 Watertown, *Boston Gazette*
 - July 26 Williamsburg, *Virginia Gazette* [Purdie].

⁷ Hazelton, *Declaration of Independence*, pp. 240, 559 (note 39).

have been indicated and the punctuation carefully followed. On the other hand, an elaborate reproduction of type sizes, fonts, and capitalization has not been attempted, as serving no useful purpose and as affording opportunity for the introduction of potentially confusing typographical errors. In consequence, some standardization in the capitalizing of initial letters has been necessary.

I.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / A Declaration / By the Representatives of the / United States of America, / In General Congress assembled. / / Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock, President. / Attest. / Charles Thomson, Secretary. / [rule] / Philadelphia: Printed by John Dunlap.

Evans 15155. The first printing of the Declaration of Independence. Reproduced in Plate I; and in *The Declaration of Independence; Its History*, by John H. Hazelton (New York, 1906), opposite p. 170; in *A History of the United States and Its People*, by Elroy McKendree Avery (Cleveland, Ohio, 1904-10), V, 395; in *The Declaration of Independence, the Evolution of the Text*, by Julian P. Boyd (Washington, 1943); and in *One Hundred Influential American Books* (New York, The Grolier Club, 1947).

14 copies: Am. Phil. Soc.; Lib. of Cong. (three copies, one imperfect); Henry N. Flynt; Roberts Harrison; Harv.; Mass. Hist. Soc.; N. Y. Hist. Soc.; N. Y. Pub. Lib.; Hist. Soc. of Penn.; Public Record Office, London; Lib. of the late John H. Scheide; Yale.

2.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / A Declaration / By the Representatives of the / United States of America, / In General Congress assembled. / / Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock, President. / Attest. / Charles Thomson, Secretary. / [rule] / Printed by John Dunlap.

Evans 15156. Reproduced in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, XXXIX (1900), opposite p. 72, and in the reprint therefrom, *A Contribution to the Bibliography of the Declaration of Independence*, by I. Minis Hays (Philadelphia, 1900).

1 copy: Am. Phil. Soc. (printed on vellum).

3.

White-Plains, July, 9 1776. / In Convention of the Representatives of the State of New-York. / Resolved Unanimously, That the Reasons assigned by the Continental Congress, for declaring / the United Colonies Free and Independent States, are cogent and conclusive, and that / while we lament the cruel Necessity which has rendered that Measure unavoidable, we approve the same, and / will at the Risque of our Lives and Fortunes, join with the other

Colonies in supporting it. / Resolved, That a Copy of the said Declaration and the foregoing Resolution be sent to the Chairman / of the Committee of the County of Westchester, with Orders to publish the same with Beat of Drum, at this / Place, on Thursday next, and to give Directions that it be published with all convenient Speed in the several / Districts within the said County. — And that Copies thereof be forthwith transmitted to the other County / Committees within the State of New-York, with Orders to cause the same to be published in the several / Districts of their respective Counties. Extract from the Minutes, / Robert Benson, Secretary. / [line of type ornaments] / In Congress, July 4, 1776. / A Declaration / by the / Representatives / of the / United States / of / America, / In General Congress Assembled. / / Signed by order and in behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock, President. / Attest. / Charles Thomson, Secretary. / [line of type ornaments] / New-York: Printed by John Holt, in Water-Street.

Evans 15158. Two columns, within border of type ornaments, and with line of type ornaments between the columns. Printed surface, including border, measures 19⁵/₈ x 10³/₄ in. It is probable that Evans had not seen a copy. Although his wording is correct, the punctuation and capitalization differ in some places.

The Huntington copy was bought at an American Art Association sale 17 February 1920 for \$810.00. The cataloguer stated that it was at that time the only known copy. It is reproduced in I. N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island* (New York, 1915-28), IV, pl. 46, opposite p. 928.

Hazelton's *Declaration of Independence*, p. 491, describes a Declaration broadside printed by John Holt which in 1904 was to be found in the New York State Library. While the Resolution of July 9th is not mentioned in the description, it is possible that the person who sent the information to Hazelton did not think the Resolution was of sufficient bibliographical importance to copy it. Without the Resolution, the line endings, capitalization, and punctuation agree with the above. It is now known that the copy in question was destroyed in the fire at the State Capitol in 1911.

2 copies: Henry E. Huntington Lib.; N. Y. Pub. Lib.

4.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / A Declaration / By the Representatives of the / United States of America, / In General Congress assembled. / / Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock, President. / Attest. / Charles Thomson, Secretary. / [rule] / New-York: Printed by Hugh Gaine, in Hanover-Square.

Not in Evans. According to Hazelton (p. 566) there was a copy in the Public Record Office, London, in 1905. The Record Office now says, however, that they do not have this edition, but do have No. 1 on this list. On 22 March 1938 the copy described was sold at auction at the American Art Association Anderson Galleries, and was purchased by the late Gabriel Wells, New York bookseller, for Mr Lucius Wilmerding. Mr Wilmerding recently presented it to the New York Historical Society. It has been reproduced in the *New-York Historical Society Quarterly*, XXXII (1948), 220.

1 copy: N. Y. Hist. Soc.

5.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America, in / General Congress Assembled. / / Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock, President. / Attest. Charles Thomson, Sec'ry.

Previously unrecorded. No imprint. Two columns, with 70 lines in the first.

1 copy: N. Y. Hist. Soc.

6.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / A Declaration / By the Representatives of the / United States of America, / In General Congress Assembled. / / Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock, President. / attest. / Charles Thomson, Secretary.

Previously unrecorded. No imprint. Two columns, with 65 lines in the first. The copy described was recently found in an old house near Kingston, N. Y. As there are no records for printing in Fishkill until late in 1776, or in Poughkeepsie and Kingston until 1777, it is highly improbable that the broadside was printed in one of these places.

1 copy: Mrs Joseph Carson.

7.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / A Declaration / By the Representatives of the / United States of America, / In General Congress assembled. / / Signed by Order, and in Behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock, President. / attest. / Charles Thomson, Secretary. / [rule] / Newport, June 13, 1776: Printed by S. Southwick.

Evans 15159. The first of two Newport editions, containing an error in the publication line, where 'June' is printed instead of 'July.' Reproduced in Plate III.

6 copies: Am. Ant. Soc. (imperfect); John Carter Brown Lib.; Harv.; Hist. Soc. of Penn.; R. I. Hist. Soc.; Rosenbach Co.

8.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / A Declaration / By the Representatives of the / United States of America, / In General Congress assembled. / / Signed by Order, and in Behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock, President. / attest. / Charles Thomson, Secretary. / [followed by the State resolution approving the Declaration and authorizing the publishing and reading of it, printed in two columns] A true copy: / Witness Henry Ward, Sec'ry. / [rule] / Newport, Printed by S. Southwick. A true copy. witness / [signature of] Henry Ward Sec'ry

Evans 15160. The second Newport and the 'official' Rhode Island edition. Reproduced in the *Library of Congress Quarterly Journal of Current Acquisitions*, V, 3 (May, 1948), opposite p. 64.

7 copies: John Carter Brown Lib.; Lib. of Cong.; Harv.; Eric P. Newman, Attorney; R. I. Hist. Soc.; Rosenbach Co.; Wis. Hist. Soc.

9.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / A Declaration / By the Representatives of the / United States of America, / In General Congress assembled. /
/ Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock, President. / Attest. / Charles Thompson, Secretary. [Boston, Printed by John Gill, and Powars and Willis, in Queen-Street. 1776.]

Evans 15162. Not in Worthington C. Ford, *Broadsides, Ballads &c. Published in Massachusetts 1639-1800* (Boston, 1922). No imprint. Two columns, with 68 lines in the first. Reproduced in W. C. Bryant and S. H. Gay, *A Popular History of the United States* (New York, 1876-81), III, 482.

5 copies: Lib. of Cong.; Essex Inst.; Harv.; Mass. Hist. Soc.; Yale.

10.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / A Declaration / By the Representatives of the / United States of America, / In General Congress assembled. /
/ Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock, President. / Attest. / Charles Thompson, Secretary. / [rule] / America: Boston, Printed by John Gill, and Powars and Willis, in Queen-Street.

Evans 15161. Ford, *Mass. Broadsides*, 1954. Two columns. Reproduced in Justin Winsor, *Narrative and Critical History of America* (Boston, 1884-89), VI, 267. This is a second issue of No. 9, with the 'rule' and imprint added. Additional spacing has been allowed between the lines of the heading, and an error in the word 'Declare' in the last paragraph has been corrected, but otherwise there were no substantial changes.

3 copies: Bost. Pub. Lib.; Bostonian Soc.; Mass. Hist. Soc.

11.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / A Declaration / By the Representatives of the / United States of America, / In General Congress assembled. /
/ Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock, President. / Attest. / Charles Thomson, Secretary.

Previously unrecorded. No imprint. Two columns, with a line of 65 type ornaments between.

1 copy: Bos. Pub. Lib.

12.

In / Congress, / July 4, 1776. / A / Declaration / by the / Representatives / of the / United States of America, / In General Congress assembled. /
/ Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock, President. / Attest, / Charles Thompson, Secretary. [Salem, Printed by E. Russell (?)]

Evans 15164. Ford, *Mass. Broadsides*, 1953. No imprint. Four columns. The arrangement of the heading and the similarity of type would suggest that this was

printed at Salem by E. Russell previous to the 'official' Massachusetts edition which follows. Reproduced in Plate IV.

2 copies: Essex Inst.; Harv.⁸

13.

In / Congress, / July 4, 1776. / A Declaration / by the / Representatives / of
the / United States of America, / In General Congress assembled. /
/ Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock, President. /
Attest, Charles Thompson, Secretary. / In Council, July 17th, 1776. / Ordered,
That the Declaration of Independence be printed; [etc., 5 lines] / In the Name,
and by Order of the Council, R. Derby, Jun. President. / A true Copy Attest,
John Avery, Dep. Sec'y. / [rule] / Salem, Massachusetts-Bay: Printed by E.
Russell, by Order of Authority.

Evans 15163. Ford, *Mass. Broad sides*, 1955. The 'official' Massachusetts edition. Reproduced in the *Month at Goodspeed's*, VIII, 4 (December, 1936), 109, and XIII, 9 (June, 1942), 274.

11 copies: Am. Ant. Soc.; W. L. Clements Lib.; Lib. of Cong.; Essex Inst.; Harv.; Henry E. Huntington Lib.; Mass. Hist. Soc.; William G. Mather; N. Y. Pub. Lib.; Rosenbach Co.; Yale.

14.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / Declaration, / By the Representatives of the /
United States of America, / In General Congress Assembled. /
/ Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock, President. /
Attest. / Charles Thompson, Secretary.

Ford, *Mass. Broad sides*, 1952. Not in Evans. No imprint. Two columns, with 58 lines in the first.

With the American Antiquarian Society copy is a letter from the donor, Simon Greenleaf, dated 1822, who states that, 'It was posted up in Newburyport, and afterwards preserved by my grandfather, the late Hon. Jonathan Greenleaf, who gave it to me.' From this it has been suggested that the broadside may have been printed in Newburyport. However, Frederick R. Goff in a detailed study of the Library of Congress variant described below (No. 15) and published in the *Library of Congress Quarterly Journal of Current Acquisitions*, V, 1 (November, 1947), 12-16, gives it as his opinion that evidence regarding the place of printing would seem to point to Exeter.

2 copies: Am. Ant. Soc. (imperfect at the top); Yale.

15.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / Declaration, / By the Representatives of the /
United States of America, / In General Congress Assembled. /
/ Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress, / John Hancock President. /
Attest. / Charles Thompson, Secretary.

⁸The Harvard copy was recently purchased through a generous gift for the purpose made by Stephen W. Phillips, '95, of Salem.

Not in Evans or Ford, *Mass. Broadsides*. No imprint. Two columns, with 58 lines in the first.

This is a later printing of No. 14 with the missing letter 'n' inserted in 'Hancock' and with the last three lines reset. Reproduced in the *Library of Congress Quarterly Journal of Current Acquisitions*, V, 1 (November, 1947), opposite p. 1.

3 copies: Am. Ant. Soc.; Lib. of Cong.; N. H. Hist. Soc. Another copy is reported as having been sold in 1925 by L. N. Phelps Stokes to Lathrop C. Harper. It was afterwards in the possession of A. S. W. Rosenbach. Its present location is unknown. A photostat of this copy in the library of the American Antiquarian Society shows that in its printing the word 'which' at the end of the first line in the second column dropped out.

16.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. Declaration, by the Representatives of the United States of America, In General Congress Assembled Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress John Hancock, President.

Not in Evans or Ford, *Mass. Broadsides*. Title from the Libbie Auction Catalogue of 19-21 May 1903, lot 72. Described as '2 pages, double folio. Wide margins untrimmed, slightly injured, but repaired and backed; and very suitable to head a collection of Signers. An excessively rare Broadside, being a printed copy of the Declaration, issued by the Congress, and sent to the several Colonies to be Communicated to the General Public.'

If actually in two pages, this would be a broadsheet rather than a broadside, but the writer feels it still would belong in this list.

No copy located.

17.

[Copper-plate engraved, oval portrait of John Hancock, framed by crossed palms and surmounted by a liberty cap, from which sun rays extend.]

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States / of America, in General Congress assembled. / / Signed by order, and in behalf of the Congress, / Attest, C. Thomson, Secretary. John Hancock, President.

Previously unrecorded. No imprint. Two columns, with 58 lines in the first, and a double rule between.

Sabin, No. 17516, mentions this broadside in his listing of the John Carter Brown file of the *Crisis*, an English weekly published in London during 1775 and 1776. The paper was severe in its attacks on the government and sided strongly with the American colonies. For a description and collation see Paul Leicester Ford, 'The Crisis,' *The Bibliographer*, I (1902), 139-152.

The text of the Declaration was printed in No. 84 of the *Crisis*, 24 August 1776, and it is probable that the separately printed broadside bound with the John Carter Brown file was issued at about the same time. Inquiries to libraries in this country and England owning files of the *Crisis* have not resulted in the location of other copies of the broadside.

There is more than slight evidence to favor London as the place of printing. The

Hancock portrait is after a mezzotint published in London in October 1775.⁹ The use of the liberty cap and the crossed palms suggest English printing rather than American, and the type used is a standard English font of the period, which resembles that used in the *Crisis*.

1 copy: John Carter Brown Lib.

18.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States / of America, in General Congress assembled. / / Signed by order, and in behalf of the Congress, / Attest, C. Thomson, Secretary. John Hancock, President.

Evans 15157. No imprint. Two columns, with 58 lines in the first, and a double rule between.

Printed without the Hancock portrait, but from the same type as No. 17, and therefore possibly printed in England. The thought naturally occurs that the portrait could have been trimmed off. There is, however, sufficient blank space at the top to show that the portrait was not printed with this edition. In No. 17 the portrait is printed very close to the text and the lower edge of the plate mark runs through the first line. In the present broadside there is no plate mark.

1 copy: Free Lib. of Phil.

19.

In Congress, July 4, 1776. / The Unanimous / Declaration / of the / Thirteen United States of America. / / John Hancock. / [follows the list of signers from the various states, in four columns] / In Congress, January 18, 1777. / ordered, / That an authenticated Copy of the Declaration of Independence, with the Names of the Members of Congress, subscribing the same, be sent to each / of the United States, and that they be desired to have the same put on Record. / By Order of Congress, / John Hancock, President. / [rule] / Baltimore, in Maryland: Printed by Mary Katharine Goddard.

Evans 15650. The Declaration is printed in two columns. The title was changed to 'The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America.' This is the first edition to contain the names of the signers. The copy in the Massachusetts Archives, the only one examined, is signed by Hancock. A reproduction of the Library of Congress copy appears facing page 284 of Hazelton's *Declaration of Independence*, and shows that Hancock also signed that copy.

9 copies: Lib. of Cong.; Conn. State Lib.; Library of the late John W. Garrett; Md. Hall of Records; Md. Hist. Soc.; Mass. Archives; N. Y. Pub. Lib.; Lib. Co. of Phila.; R. I. Archives.

The foregoing list includes four broadsides previously unrecorded: Nos. 5, 6, 11, 17. The eight broadsides not recorded in Evans (whose

⁹ *The Hampton L. Carson Collection of Engraved Portraits of Signers of the Declaration of Independence . . . Catalogue Compiled . . . by Stan V. Henkels* (Catalogue No. 906, Pt. III; Philadelphia, 1904), lot 3189.

total of eleven had been the previous highest assemblage) are Nos. 4, 5, 6, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17.

Copies of the various editions or variants are on the whole scarce. Out of a total of 71 located copies (73 recorded), three entries account for almost half: No. 1 with 14 copies, No. 13 with 11 copies, and No. 19 with 9. Of the remaining entries, 1 shows no located copy, 7 show 1 only, 3 show 2, and 2 show 3. The following table gives the order of the entries based on the number of located copies:

<i>Entry</i>	<i>Copies</i>
1.....	14
13.....	11
19.....	9
8.....	7
7.....	6
9.....	5
10.....	3
15.....	3
3.....	2
12.....	2
14.....	2
2.....	1
4.....	1
5.....	1
6.....	1
11.....	1
17.....	1
18.....	1
16.....	0

The largest number of editions or variants are held by Harvard and the Library of Congress, with 6 each (Harvard: Nos. 1, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13; Library of Congress: Nos. 1, 8, 9, 13, 15, 19). Four each are held by the American Antiquarian Society (Nos. 7, 13, 14, 15); Massachusetts Historical Society (Nos. 1, 9, 10, 13); New York Public Library (Nos. 1, 3, 13, 19); and Yale (Nos. 1, 9, 13, 14). Thereafter follow 4 holdings of 3 each, 5 of 2 each, and 19 of 1 each, making a total of 34 holdings covering 71 copies (the Library of Congress owning three copies of No. 1).

Of the 19 entries, there are 9 for which no published reproductions

have been noted. Of these, No. 7 and No. 12 are here reproduced, in Plates III and IV, leaving Nos. 5, 6, 11, 14, 16, 17, and 18 apparently not reproduced. Photostats or facsimiles of all entries except No. 16 (for which no copy is now known) are available for consultation in the Harvard Library.

MICHAEL J. WALSH

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