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Richard Henry Lee, a delegate from Virginia, put this resolution to a vote before the Continental Congress: "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." This image depicts the Resolution and the 13 Colonies whose representatives would vote on freedom from Great Britain. Image online, courtesy National Archives.

On July 2, 1776, <u>Charles Thompson</u>, Secretary of the Second Continental Congress, penned <u>Lee's resolution</u>, severing the ties with England, and put it to a vote:

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 connexion between them, and the state of Great Britain, is, and ought to be, totally dissolved

All the colonies except New York (which abstained) <u>voted in favor</u> of the resolution. (Follow this link to see the actual results of the vote - look at the lower right side.)

On July 2, 1776, (at "<u>Independence Hall</u>" in Philadelphia), Congress <u>approved the concept</u>: The British colonies would sever all political ties with Great Britain. <u>John Adams</u> (who had strongly argued in favor of the resolution) told his wife Abigail it was the greatest day in the history of the country.

<u>More work</u> had to be done on the Declaration itself to make it acceptable to all the colonies. The committee needed two more days to complete the final draft. (Follow these links to see Jefferson's <u>work-in-progress</u>.) Soon the <u>final version</u> of the Declaration was ready for the <u>delegates' vote</u>. This time, even New York approved.

When it came time for the representatives to <u>sign</u> the document (which actually put them <u>in peril</u> with the Crown), <u>John Hancock</u> (president of the Congress) signed in huge letters. He wanted to be sure the King saw his name. Today, his is the only signature still legible on the <u>original Declaration</u>.

On the 2nd of July, 2010 - 234 years to the day after Congress <u>first voted on the document</u> - Americans learned what Jefferson had tried to obliterate from his Declaration draft. Listing grievances which the people had

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against George III, Jefferson described Americans as "citizens." But that's not what he originally called them.

Using hyperspectral imaging, preservation scientists at the Library of Congress discovered Jefferson had initially referred to himself, and other Americans, as the King's subjects:

... he has incited treasonable insurrections of our fellow subjects ...

It must have been an interesting moment when Jefferson reflected on what he'd first written, then <u>carefully</u> <u>transformed</u> into a completely different word. Perhaps he realized his Declaration, as a whole, would have the same impact as his simple, but highly significant, edit.

People who were once "subjects" of the King were now "citizens" of their own independent country - and Jefferson's document declared it so.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-VOTE-13-0-American-Revolution-Highlights

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-VOTE-13-0-American-Revolution-Highlights

Media Stream



CHARLES THOMPSON ESQ.^R Secretary to Congrept. Pak ^dest star cross by R. stationfor, N'1881 (conduct) to





Charles Thompson Image, Library of Congress. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Charles-Thompson</u>

Continental Congress - Considers Declaration

Congress Voting the Declaration of Independence, c. 1776, by Edward Savage and/or Robert Edge Pine.

Copyprint of oil on canvas, Courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Image, Library of Congress web site, *Thomas Jefferson Exhibition*. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Continental-Congress-Considers-Declaration

Original Declaration of Independence

U.S. National Archives. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Original-Declaration-of-Independence







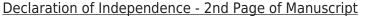


Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress, Treasures, Original Rough Draft, image decp2.

View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Declaration-of-Independence-2nd-Page-of-Manuscript

Declaration of Independence, 3rd Page of Manuscript Library of Congress, Treasures, Original Rough Draft, image decp3. View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Declaration-of-Independence-3rd-Page-of-Manuscript

<u>Declaration of Independence, 4th Page of Manuscript</u> Library of Congress, Treasures, Original Rough Draft, image decp4. View this asset at:

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Independence Hall, Philadelphia

Exterior view of Independence Hall, Philadelphia. Engraving, U.S. National Archives image 66-G-1E-6.

Assembly Room, Independence Hall, photo courtesy Dan Smith (under a Creative Commons, Attribution ShareAlike 2.5 License). Online, Wikimedia Commons. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Independence-Hall-Philadelphia





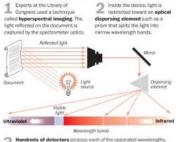


Enhanced portion of the document



Using hyperspectral imaging on an early draft of the Declaration of Integendence, preservation soleritists at the Library of Congress discovered thut Thomas Jefferson initially used the word "subjects" before replacing it with "citizens."

How the hidden word 'subjects' was discover



3 Hundreds of detectors process each of the separated wavelengths, ransforming them into electronic signals that are interpreted by imaging equipment, Researchers also utilized other analysis software to enhance the underwing text.

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Resolution to Declare America Independent

Image depicting the Resolution of Richard Henry Lee for Independence, June 7, 1776, online via the U.S. National Archives, Records of the Continental and Confederation Congress and the Constitutional Convention, ARC 301684.

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View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Resolution-to-Declare-America-Independent

Signing the Declaration of Independence

Images, Library of Congress. Information and quote, U.S. National Archives: *Did You Know...Independence Day Should Actually Be July 2?* (Press Release June 1, 2005) View this asset at: http://www.awosomectories.com/accot/view/Signing the Declaration of Independence

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Signing-the-Declaration-of-Independence

Vote - Declare Independence from Britain

Image, U.S. National Archives.

View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Vote-Declare-Independence-from-Britain

<u>Declaration of Independence - Citizens not Subjects</u> <u>Image online</u>, courtesy the Library of Congress and Alberto Cuadra, Karen Yourish/*The Washington Post* (July 3, 2010).

View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Declaration-of-Independence-Citizens-not-Subjects



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