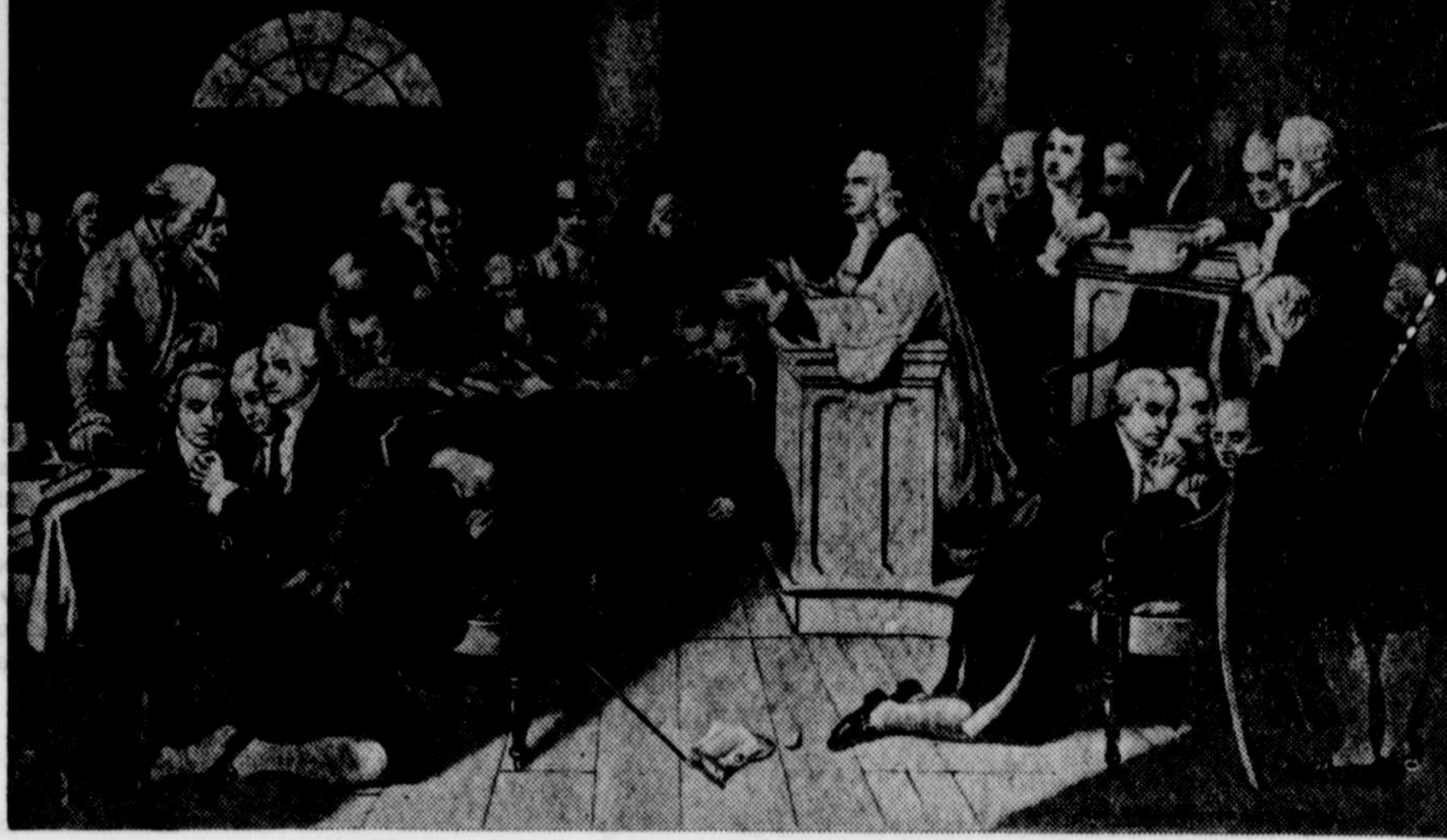


The First Prayer in Congress



In September, 1774, the first Continental Congress met and offered up a petition for divine guidance through days which were ominously turbulent. The four kneeling figures in the left foreground are, from left to right, Patrick Henry, Va.; John Rutledge, S. C.; George Washington, Va., and Peyton Randolph, Va. Directly to the left and standing are Samuel and John Adams of Massachusetts. The Congress said in reference to the Intolerable Acts that "no obedience is due from this province." And "whereas our enemies have flattered themselves that they shall make an easy prey of this numerous, brave and hardy people," those "who are qualified" are urged "to acquaint themselves with the art of war as soon as possible, and do for that purpose appear under arms at least once a week." Its drawing up of "The Association" to forbid the import of British goods after December 1, 1774, and the export of American goods to Great Britain, Ireland and the West Indies after September 10, 1775, aroused severe opposition but it has been called "virtually the beginning of the federal union."

What Made July 4 Our Greatest Day

JULY 2, in the year 1776, fell on a Tuesday. The Continental Congress, then in convention in Philadelphia, opened its session at 9 a. m. in Independence hall. The record of that day's business, as set forth in the Journal of the Continental Congress, is brief and lacking in many details, observes Hal Borland in the Philadelphia Public Ledger. Several letters, including one from General Washington, were read and disposed of, that of Washington being "referred to the board of war and ordinance." Then the Journal says: "The congress resumed the consideration of the resolution agreed to by and reported from the committee of the whole; and the same being read, was agreed to as follows:

"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, "Agreeable to the order of the day, the congress resolved itself into a committee of the whole; the president resumed the chair. Mr. Harrison reported, that the committee have had under consideration the declaration to them referred; but, not having had time to go through, desired leave to sit again.

"Resolved, That this Congress will, tomorrow, again resolve itself into a committee of the whole, to take into their further consideration the declaration of independence."

A few minutes later the session adjourned until "9 o'clock to Morrow."

THIS resolution, agreed to many years ago, had been presented to the Congress for action on the seventh day of the June preceding, almost a month before. It was drawn up and presented by Richard Henry Lee, pursuant to a resolution of the Virginia house of burgesses adopted on May 15, the same year. It was seconded, when presented to the Congress, by John Adams, on behalf of the Massachusetts delegation. Consideration, however, was deferred until the following day, when it was referred to the committee of the whole. Postponed again on the eighth, which was a Saturday, on the tenth of June a committee was appointed "to prepare a declaration to the effect of the said first resolution." That committee was composed of Thomas Jefferson, chairman; John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Robert R. Livingston and Roger Sherman.

This committee brought in its report on June 28, with the first draft of the declaration. It was read and ordered to lie on the table. That was a Friday. The Congress adjourned that day until the following Monday, July 1.

THEN came July 2, with the passage of the resolution presented on the seventh of June by Mr. Lee, but still without agreement on the text of the declaration itself. July 3 saw a similarly fruitless discussion. But on Thursday morning July 4, differences had been smoothed out. The Journal, in its entry for that day, records: "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. The president resumed the chair. Mr. Harrison reported that the committee of the whole Congress have agreed to a Declaration, which he delivered in. The Declaration being again read, was agreed to."

The text of the declaration as agreed to finally was substantially as Jefferson had prepared it.

THE Declaration received the votes of all the Colonies except New York, whose delegates were not then authorized to commit themselves on the matter. A short time later they were so authorized and also sanctioned it. At the July 4 session, after agreement to the Declaration, the Congress ordered that it be printed and copies sent to the various Colonial Assemblies and to the commanding officers of the Continental troops and that it be proclaimed "in each of the United States, and at the head of the army." It was signed the same day by John Hancock, as president of the Congress. The other signatures, however, were not inscribed on the original text. That text was copied on parchment, and on August 2 the formality of signing took place. Fifty-three signed that day; three signed later in the year. Of the fifty-six signers, seven were not members of the Congress on July 4 when the Declaration was agreed to, and of those who were present on that historic day, seven never signed the document.

The Declaration was first proclaimed in public on July 8, when it was read by John Nixon from the platform built in Independence Square in 1769.

THE Declaration was not adopted by the Continental Congress until almost fifteen months after the War for Independence started with the engagements at Concord and Lexington. They occurred on April 19, 1775. In fact, seven important battles of that war had been fought before the resolution of independence introduced by Mr. Lee was agreed to. They were, besides Concord and Lexington, Ticonderoga, on May 10; Bunker Hill, on June 17; Montreal, on November 13; Quebec, on December 31, all in 1775, and Fort Moultrie, on June 28, 1776. George Washington had been commander-in-chief—though he was termed a general—of the Continental forces since June 15, 1775. At the time of the Declaration, Washington was in the field and had been for more than a year. On the day it was formally adopted he was in New York, preparing for what was to be the Battle of Long Island.

Despite the deliberate action of the Congress, however, there had been demands for a declaration of independence months before that July day in 1776. There was the Macklenberg Declaration passed on May 20, 1775. And on April 22, 1776, the freeholders of Cumberland county, Virginia, called for similar action by the Virginia convention itself, which met on May 6 and moved for the declaration which Richard Henry Lee presented to the Congress the following month.

Presidents and the Fourth
Data of things that happened on the Fourth of July reveal that one President, Calvin Coolidge, was born on the Fourth and three Presidents, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe, died on July 4. Adams and Jefferson dying on the same date in 1826.

Independence Day From Washington Star

*When those fleeting flaming glories
Were displayed across the sky
In remembrance of the stories
Of brave men in days gone by,
Then we thought of deeds of daring
And of clear and steadfast minds
That had set the country faring
Safe through the tempestuous winds.*

*Then we pondered on the toiling
And the watches of the night;
Of the suffering and despoiling
Brought in reverence of the right,
And each memory we cherish
Shall not fade away and die,
Shall not be allowed to perish
Like a rocket in the sky.*



Where Old Glory Was First Flown

IN June, 1777, a committee having been appointed by congress to confer with General Washington concerning a design for a national flag, it reported in favor of one containing thirteen stripes, alternately red and white, and a blue field adorned with thirteen white stars. This was adopted June 14, and the design was carried to the upholstering shop of Mrs. Ross, No. 239 Arch street, Philadelphia, where the first national flag was made.

The original design required six-pointed stars, but, upon Mrs. Ross' suggestion that five-pointed stars would be more symmetrical, the pattern was changed. This lady was afterward given the position of manufacturer of government flags, which occupation upon her death was retained by her children.

The claim is well established, states a writer in the Cleveland Plain Dealer, that a flag of this design of stars and stripes was first hoisted at Fort Stanwix, called Fort Schuyler at the time, near the present city of Rome, N. Y., on August 3, 1777. It was first under fire three days later in the battle of Oriskany.

By act of congress January 13, 1794, the design of the flag was changed so as to incorporate fifteen stripes and fifteen stars, after the admission of Vermont and Kentucky, and one star was to be added for every subsequent state admitted. This, however, was repealed in 1818, when the original number of stripes was established, the stars continuing to increase as new states were admitted.

DISPLAYING THE FLAG

THE flag code states that when the flag is displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, i. e., to the observer's left. Under the heading "Cautions," the code reads: "Do not use the flag as drapery in any form whatever. Use bunting of blue, white and red."

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Foreign Words and Phrases

Aequo animo. (L.) With equal (equable) mind.
Comp d'oeil. (F.) A comprehensive glance.
Dulce est desipere in loco. (L.) It is delightful to unbend upon occasion.
Ex post facto. (L.) After the fact or act.
In extremis. (L.) At the point of death.
Lapsus linguae. (L.) A slip of the tongue.
Necessitas non habet legem. (L.) Necessity has no law.
Sans pareil. (F.) Without equal.
Vade in pace. (L.) Go in peace.
Resurgam. (L.) I shall rise again.
Sursum corda! (L.) Lift up your hearts!
Tant mieux. (F.) So much the better.
Onus probandi. (L.) The burden of proof.
Pro bono publico. (L.) For the public good.

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