

Delegate to the Second Continental Congress

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DAR Manatee Chapter

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1775

Many people may know me as Thomas Jefferson, the Apostle of Liberty, or one of the Founding Fathers. But, just Thomas will do. Recently, I received an invitation to attend the first Second Continental Congress meeting. It will be held on the 10th of May in the Pennsylvania State House in Philadelphia. Though Philadelphia is very far from my home in Virginia, I will make sure to be there at all costs. The arrangement could potentially spark what I hope to be a new era of independence from Britain. Nothing has made me more delighted than to have the privilege of being present at such a significant gathering. Although, I do hope I will not have to speak in front of a large audience there.

May 9, 1775

I arrived in Philadelphia this morning. All the travel from Virginia has caused me to be rather fatigued. Additionally, whilst I intended to reside within Chestnut Street, I soon found the arrangement to be quite undesirable. One does prefer to be away from the commotion of the city. It is, after all, difficult to read a good book in such a ruckus. Later today, I found more suitable lodgings within the home of Jacob and Maria Graff. Their brick house is new and three stories tall. The bedroom and parlor I inhabited were fully furnished and very comfortable. There was no sign of disturbances and all was tranquil and serene. I plan on staying here for a very long while.

After my enslaved valot, Robert Hemmings, had brought all the baggage to my quarters, I dismissed him and began to ponder about the next day. The Second Continental Congress shall assemble in the Pennsylvania State House tomorrow. Delegates from all 13 colonies will be present. The Virginia Colony is what I will be representing since that is where I am from. Though, I am somewhat worried. Perhaps I will be too shy to contribute to any discussions and people shall shun me. Even so, I must not dwell on something so foolish now. There are more important things to think about.

The battle of Lexington and Concord had concluded just about a month ago. It was truly remarkable. Though outnumbered, my fellow Americans prevailed. The British never knew what hit them. I know deep down in my heart, that we will be an independent nation one day.

May 11, 1775

The meeting lasted till early evening. I was too exhausted to write about it yesterday. But now my energy is renewed and I will tell you all about what happened.

I walked into the Pennsylvania State House with very little confidence but promptly found a seat. It only took a bit longer for everyone to arrive so the meeting could begin. We proceeded to address and discuss the war efforts. We also developed ideas on what we planned to do moving forward. Some thought it was still possible to reconnect with Britain even after the battles, which in my opinion is truly preposterous. Even if we had a chance to reunite, it would be foolish to. All the British want is to assume authority over America once again and do with us as they please. However, we are fighting back now. I was practically itching to give them a piece of my mind but unfortunately, I talked myself out of it in a few seconds. Sometimes, I just wish I wasn't so self-conscious.

Though, a bright ol' fellow caught my eye. I believe his name is John Adams. He shares the same beliefs as me and spoke openly about his ideas. I know he was the most important person there. I really admire that man. Perhaps we will be good friends someday.

On the other hand, many people supported the idea of separating from Britain which I find very satisfying. It is the only solution to all this madness, of course.

To be completely honest, I was silent the entire time. But, nothing will change my mind on the fact that we need to sever our ties with the British as soon as possible and create a free country.

June 11, 1776

It has been over a year since the first Second Continental Congress meeting. So far, we've accomplished so much more than I ever imagined. But at the moment, I am focused on telling you about this document I have been assigned to write. Its purpose is to say why we must separate from Britain and declare that the United Colonies are an independent country! I am currently writing a draft that I assume will be finished in a day or two. Hopefully, we will have the approval from all 13 of the colonies.

June 4, 1776

Today was a momentous occasion!

I presented the final draft of the Declaration of Independence on the 28th of June where it was then submitted to the committee. It took me a total of seventeen days to complete the final draft. Although, soon after, members decided to make some changes, which I don't really mind. All in all, about 86 alterations were made! But that isn't the most important part. The document was approved! I've never felt more free in my life! The feeling felt similar to being unshackled from chains or having a huge weight lifted from your shoulders. I knew this day would come from the very start. It's also good to know we won't be under British rule any longer.

But, for some reason, I strongly believe this harmonious day will be celebrated with pride by the people in the near future.

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