

Jefferson Writing Desk Research

Possible themes and objects for inclusion on the 6Floors website organized in categories per 7/6/06 meeting

Introduction

Explore

Explore/Object

- Associated video clips:

1. Description of desk – 1:00:00-4:35
2. Uses—social, functional, traveling companion, insight into Jefferson’s traveling methods, etc—5:00-5:40
3. Had it made for travel? 19:02-52 (Used as book rest in travels, hard to imagine writing when traveling, multi-purpose box, referred to as “the desk.”)
4. Size and weight? 23:40-25:11 (Size of thick laptop)
5. Made in Philadelphia, 25:25-47

I. Explore/Object Row 1: The Desk

- A. What the object is: Display Images #1 and #2 (The desk closed and open for writing)
- B. Description
- C. To be determined
- D. TBD

II. Explore/Object Row 2: History of the Desk before the Smithsonian

- A. The desk at the Constitutional Convention: Jefferson’s “original rough draft”: drafted on the desk; pictured in Bedini, *Declaration of Independence*, pp. 11-15 (Courtesy of the Library of Congress)
 1. Display: an image of Jefferson’s “original rough draft” (Image #13)
 2. Title:
 - a. Roll-over title: History of the Desk: At the Convention
 - b. Descriptive title: Jefferson’s original rough draft of the Declaration
 - c. Categorization title:
 3. Accompanying text (approx. 50 words): Comment on passages that Jefferson included and thought important that Congress later changed or deleted, such as his passage on slavery
 4. Image annotation text: Jefferson’s “original rough draft” of the Declaration of Independence(Note: It would be good if the visitor could scroll through all pages of the document in page images and also transcribed text.)

B. The desk at the Constitutional Convention: Congress’s Declaration of Independence

1. Display: an image of the Declaration with Congress’s changes, as in Maier’s *American Scripture* Appendix C (Supports learning standard 1B)
2. Title:
 - a. Roll-over title: History of the Desk: At the Convention

- b. Descriptive title: Congress's Changes
 - c. Categorization title:
 - 3. Accompanying text (approx. 50 words): Comment on Congress's reasons for modifying the committee's draft, especially the passage on slavery.
 - 4. Image annotation text: Congress's editorial changes to Jefferson's draft of the Declaration
- (Note: It would be good if the visitor could scroll through all pages of the transcribed text with the changes indicated on the transcribed text, as in Maier's *American Scripture* Appendix C)

C. A Gift to a Grandson: Jefferson's gift of the desk to his granddaughter and her husband; and his affidavit attached to the desk

- 1. Display: An image of Jefferson's affidavit that he attached to the desk when he shipped it to his grandson-in-law as a wedding present (Image #12) (See image on Bedini, p. 39) with transcription of the text (on page 36 of Bedini)
- 2. Title:
 - a. Roll-over title: History of the Desk before the Smithsonian
 - b. Descriptive title: A Gift to a Grandson
 - c. Categorization title:
- 3. Accompanying text (approx. 50 words): Explanation of why Jefferson gave the desk as a gift to his grandson-in-law
- 4. Image annotation text: Jefferson's affidavit that he attached to the desk

D. The History At the State Department: perhaps focused on one or more of the anecdotes of copies of the desk

III. Explore/Object Row 3: Master Craftsmen of the Revolution.

- A. Cabinet maker Benjamin Randolph. The craftsman who constructed Jefferson's writing desk. The desk itself is his best representative, but there are several other objects that may be of interest.
 - 1. Display the trade card of Benjamin Randolph. (Image #4) Written on the card: "Makes all Sorts of Cabinet & Chair work Likewise Carving, Gilding, &c Performed in the Chinese and Modern Tastes" (Courtesy the library company of Philadelphia). Also display image of a chair made by Benjamin Randolph (Image #6) and his furniture label (Image #7) Could also display Image #3, a picture of Randolph
 - 2. Title:
 - a. Roll-over title: Master Craftsmen of the Revolution: Cabinet maker Benjamin Randolph
 - b. Descriptive title: The cabinet maker who constructed Jefferson's writing desk
 - c. Categorization title:
 - 3. Accompanying text (approx. 50 words):
 - 4. Image annotation text: Benjamin Randolph's trade card. The inscription on the card reads: "Makes all Sorts of Cabinet & Chair work Likewise Carving, Gilding, &c Performed in the Chinese and Modern Tastes"

- B. Carpenter Francis Trumbull, who probably constructed the Windsor chair (modified to Jefferson's specifications so that it would revolve) that Jefferson most likely sat in while he drafted the Declaration of Independence. According to Bedini, Trumbull provided chairs of the same design (though non-revolving) for Philadelphia's Carpenters Hall.¹
1. Display the revolving chair (Image #9). Pictured in Bedini, *Declaration of Independence Desk*, p. 7 (Courtesy of the American Philosophical Society)
 2. Title:
 - a. Roll-over title: Master Craftsmen of the Revolution: Carpenter Francis Trumbull
 - b. Descriptive title: Maker of Jefferson's revolving Windsor chair
 - c. Categorization title:
 3. Accompanying text (approx. 50 words): Trumbull constructed the chair to Jefferson's specifications.
 4. Image annotation text: Trumbull's revolving Windsor chair in which Jefferson probably sat when he drafted the Declaration of Independence.
- C. Printer John Dunlap, printer to the Congress, who printed the first broadsides of the Declaration of Independence from Congress's approved manuscript in his Market Street printing shop. Bedini (10): "It was essential to have the Declaration printed for immediate distribution to the states for proclamation." (Note: Benjamin Franklin had also been a printer.)
1. Display a printing press of the type used in Dunlap's shop and Display Dunlap's broadside of the Declaration (Image # 8)
 2. Display other tools of the printer (type, etc.)
 3. Title:
 - a. Roll-over title: Master Craftsmen of the Revolution: Printer John Dunlap
 - b. Descriptive title: Printer of the Declaration of Independence for Congress
 - c. Categorization title:
 4. Accompanying text (approx. 50 words): Dunlap was printer to the Congress. Due to the rush to get the Declaration printed, no fair copy of the amended draft was made and it was not transcribed into the Congress's Journal. Instead, a space was left for one of Dunlap's printed copies.
 5. Image annotation text: A press similar to this was used by Dunlap to print the first broadsides of the Declaration.
- D. TBD

Explore/Context

Associated video clips:

1. Scholarship on drafting of declaration, thoughts on Jefferson's role in forming declaration? Thoughts on notes affixed to desk? 15:00-16:44, 16:48- (William Penn, 1820s, interest in declaration as people desire to celebrate, chair that belonged to Penn, Elm Tree, desk becomes revolutionary relic)
2. Other famous docs, penned on desk? 18:10-19:01 (took this with him his entire life as diplomat, etc. Declaration among first docs on desk and affidavit at the end)

I. Explore/Context Row 1: The Desk as a Relic of the Revolution

Letters with one or more of these quotes testifying to the value placed on the desk by the time Jefferson gave the desk to his grandson-in-law and after.

A. Jefferson to Ellen Wayles Randolph Coolidge, 14 November 1825.

1. Display image of the letter or
2. Display image of Ellen Wayles Randolph Coolidge (Image #10)
3. Title:
 - a. Roll-over title: Relic of the Revolution.
 - b. Descriptive title: Jefferson to his granddaughter Ellen Wayles Randolph Coolidge, 14 November 1825.
 - c. Categorization title:
4. Accompanying text will be the highlighted portion of the letter, perhaps with some interpretive comment:

If these things acquire a superstitious value, because of their connection with particular persons, surely a connection with the greater Charter of our Independence may give a value to what has been associated with that... Now I happen still to possess the writing box on which it was written. It was made from a drawing of my own by Ben Randall [sic], a cabinet-maker in whose house I took my first lodgings on my arrival in Philadelphia in May, 1776, and I have used it ever since. ... Its imaginary value will increase with years, and if he lives to my age, or another half-century, he may see it carried in the procession of our nation's birthday, as relics of the Saints are in those of the Church.²

5. Image annotation text: Jefferson's letter to his granddaughter, Ellen Wayles Randolph Coolidge or Thomas Jefferson's granddaughter Ellen Wayles Randolph Coolidge

B. Joseph Coolidge to Jefferson, 27 Feb. 1826:

1. Display image of the letter or
2. Display image of Joseph Coolidge (Image #11)
3. Title:
 - a. Roll-over title: Relic of the Revolution.
 - b. Descriptive title: Joseph Coolidge's letter to Thomas Jefferson, 27 February 1826.
 - c. Categorization title:
4. Accompanying text will be the highlighted portion of the letter, perhaps with some interpretive comment:

When I think of this desk, "in connection with the great charter of our independence," I feel a sentiment almost of awe, and approach it with respect; but when I remember that it has served you fifty years, been the faithful depository of your cherished thoughts; that upon it have been written your letters to illustrious and excellent men, your plans for the advancement of civil and religious liberty, and of Art and Science; that it has, in fact, been the companion, of your studies, and the instrument of diffusing their results; that it has been the witness of a philosophy which calumny could not subdue, and an enthusiasm which eighty winters have not chilled, I would fain consider it as no longer inanimate, and mute, but as something to be interrogated, and caressed.³

5. Image annotation text: Joseph Coolidge's letter to Jefferson or Thomas Jefferson's grandson-in-law Joseph Coolidge

C. Robert C. Winthrop's Centennial celebration oration, 4 July 1876: speech made when the desk was on display during the Centennial celebration in Boston. Winthrop was the president of the Massachusetts Historical Society and a former U.S. senator.

1. Display: The text of the speech or an image of the desk
2. Title:
 - a. Roll-over title: Relic of the Revolution
 - b. Descriptive title: Robert C. Winthrop's Fourth of July Oration, 1876
 - c. Categorization title:
3. Accompanying text (approx. 50 words): Accompanying text will be the highlighted portion of the letter, perhaps with some interpretive comment:

There is no imaginary value to this relic, and no superstition is required to render it as precious and priceless a piece of wood as the secular cabinets of the world have ever possessed, or ever claimed to possess. No cabinet-maker on earth will have a more enduring name than this inscription has secured to "Ben [Randolph], of Philadelphia." No pen will ever have a wider or more lasting fame than his who wrote the inscription. ... What momentous issues for our country, and for mankind, were locked up in this narrow drawer, as night after night the rough notes of preparation for the Great Paper were laid aside for the revision of the morning! To what anxious thoughts, to what careful study of words and phrases, to what deep and almost overwhelming impressions of responsibility, it must have been a witness!⁴

4. Image annotation text:

D. TBD

II. Explore/Context Row 2: The meaning of the Declaration: Jefferson's interpretation

A. Jefferson's letter of August 30, 1823 to James Madison, in which he provided his answer to charges by (Federalists) Timothy Pickering and John Adams that the Declaration contained no new ideas and was "a commonplace compilation":

1. Display: Image of the letter with transcription
2. Title:
 - a. Roll-over title: The meaning of the Declaration: Jefferson's interpretation
 - b. Descriptive title: Jefferson's letter to James Madison, 1823
 - c. Categorization title:
3. Accompanying text (approx. 50 words): Accompanying text will be the highlighted portion of the letter, perhaps with some interpretive comment:

... they [the committee of five tasked by Congress to draft the Declaration] unanimously pressed on myself alone to undertake the draught. I consented; I drew it; but before I reported it to the committee, I communicated it *separately* to Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams requesting their corrections; because they were the two members of whose judgments and amendments I wished most to have the benefit, before presenting it to the Committee; ... their alterations were two or three only, and merely

verbal. I then wrote a fair copy, reported it to the Committee; and from them, unaltered to Congress. ... whether I had gathered my ideas from reading or reflection I do not know. I know only that I turned to neither book or pamphlet while writing it. I did not consider it as any part of my charge to invent new ideas altogether and to offer no sentiment which had ever been expressed before.⁵

4. Image annotation text: Jefferson's 1823 letter to James Madison

B. Madison's reply of September 6 is also of interest:

1. Display: Image of Madison's letter in reply to Jefferson with transcription

2. Title:

a. Roll-over title: The Meaning of the Declaration: Jefferson's interpretation

b. Descriptive title: James Madison's reply to Jefferson's letter

c. Categorization title:

3. Accompanying text (approx. 50 words): Accompanying text will be the highlighted portion of the letter, perhaps with some interpretive comment:

Nothing can be more absurd than the cavil that the Declaration contains known and not new truths. The object was to assert not to discover truths, and to make them the basis of the Revolutionary Act. The merit of the Draught could consist only in lucid communication of human rights, a condensed enumeration of the reasons for such an exercise of them, and in a style and tone appropriate to the great occasion, and to the spirit of the American people.⁶

4. Image annotation text : Madison's reply to Jefferson

C. Jefferson's letter of May 8, 1825 to Henry Lee:

1. Display: Image of the letter with transcription

2. Title:

a. Roll-over title: The meaning of the Declaration: Jefferson's interpretation

b. Descriptive title: Jefferson's letter to Henry Lee, 1825

c. Categorization title:

3. Accompanying text (approx. 50 words): Accompanying text will be the highlighted portion of the letter, perhaps with some interpretive comment:

... but with respect to our rights and the acts of the British government contravening those rights, there was but one opinion on this side of the water. All American whigs thought alike on these subjects. When forced, therefore, to resort to arms for redress, an appeal to the tribunal of the world was deemed proper for our justification; this was the object of the Declaration of Independence. Not to find out new principles, or new arguments, never before thought of, not merely to say things which had never been said before; but to place before mankind the common sense of their subject, in terms so plain and firm as to command their assent, and to justify ourselves in the independent stand we are compelled to take. Neither aiming at originality of principle or sentiment, nor yet copied from any particular and previous writing, it was intended to be an expression of the American mind, and to give to that expression the proper tone and spirit called for by the occasion. All its authority rests then on the harmonizing sentiments of the day, whether expressed in conversation, in letters, printed essays, or in the elementary books of public right, as Aristotle, Cicero, Locke, Sidney, &c.⁷

4. Image annotation text: Jefferson's 1825 letter to Henry Lee

D. TBD

III. Explore/Context Row 3: The Meaning of the Declaration: American Democracy

Standard 1B: The student understands the principles articulated in the Declaration of Independence

7-12 Demonstrate the fundamental contradictions between the ideals expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the realities of chattel slavery.

5-12 Explain how key principles in the Declaration of Independence grew in importance to become unifying ideas of American democracy.

Standard 2C: The student understands the Revolution's effects on different social groups.

5-12 Explain the revolutionary hopes of enslaved and free African Americans and the gradual abolition of slavery in the northern states.

A. Introductory quotes from Pauline Maier *American Scripture*:

1. Display: Two quotes from Maier setting the context for the American Democracy section

2. Title:

a. Roll-over title:

b. Descriptive title:

c. Categorization title:

3. Accompanying text (approx. 50 words): Accompanying text will be the highlighted portion of the letter, perhaps with some interpretive comment:

The Declaration was at first forgotten almost entirely, then recalled and celebrated by Jeffersonian Republicans, and later elevated into something akin to holy writ, which made it a prize worth capturing on behalf of one cause after another. The politics that attended its creation never entirely left its side, such that the Declaration of Independence, which became a powerful statement of national identity, has also been at the center of some of the most intense conflicts in American history, including that over slavery which threatened the nation itself. In the course of those controversies, the document assumed a function altogether different from that of 1776: it became not a justification of revolution, but a moral standard by which the day-to-day policies and practices of the nation could be judged. ... No less than its original creation, the redefinition of the Declaration was a collective work by Americans who struggled over several generations to establish policies consistent with the revolutionary heritage as they came to understand it in the only way open to them – through politics.⁸

As the future of slavery emerged again as a critical issue in American politics, contenders repeatedly debated the meaning of the Declaration's assertions of human equality and unalienable rights, which despite the contrary opinions that whirled around it served to reinforce the Declaration's status as a national icon.⁹

4. Image annotation text:

B. First Party system interpretations – Federalists vs. Republicans. "The modern reputation of the Declaration of Independence was born in the bitter partisan politics of the 1790s..."¹⁰

1. Display: Two quotes, one from a Republican newspaper and the other from a Federalist newspaper
2. Title:
 - a. Roll-over title:
 - b. Descriptive title:
 - c. Categorization title:
3. Accompanying text (approx. 50 words): Accompanying text will be the highlighted portion of the letter, perhaps with some interpretive comment:

Quote from Republican newspaper on Republican Fourth of July festivities lionizing Jefferson's authorship and hailing the Declaration's statement of rights. Boston *Independent Chronicle* of July 5, 1802 describing a Republican celebration dinner in Faneuil Hall:

After dinner the Declaration of Independence written by the immortal Jefferson and signed by the intrepid sages who presided in the Council of the Nation in those times which tried men's souls was read in a manner distinct and energetic by Dr. Jarvis amid the most lively plaudits of the citizens; and a toast was drunk to "Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States – the undeviating Patriot whose political creed is on record in the Declaration of our National Independence."¹¹

Quote from Federalist newspaper noting corporate authorship of the document and emphasizing Congress's vote for Independence, not the Declaration as the most important act of Revolution. The *Columbian Centinel*, June 21, 1804:

The friends of the Washington and Adams' Administrations have no new stimulus to excite them to a due celebration of Independence. Every page of the history of our country since 1776 will shew their zeal, gratitude and fidelity. The democrats never gave any proofs of their attachment to independence until since Mr. Jefferson has been elected President. And now they come forward with all the fury of converts; and pretend that Mr. Jefferson is entitled almost exclusively to the credit of the declaration. We have no evidence of the fact but their bare word; which will go but little way. I will admit that Mr. Jefferson was of the Committee of Congress appointed after the subject had been fully discussed in Congress, and the *Great Question decided*, to draw up the *Declaration* of that question. But it is also a fact that Mr. John Adams – who is now much calumniated by the Jefferson party – was also of the Committee – and must have had his voice in the instrument.¹²

4. Image annotation text: TBD

C. Second Party System interpretations: Excerpts from two speeches demonstrating the opposing interpretations of the Declaration that had developed by 1820. Southern view: North Carolina Senator Nathaniel Macon in the Missouri admission debate, January 1820.

1. Display: Quote from Nathaniel Macon's speech in Congress during the Missouri Controversy (in which he also used the proslavery argument)
2. Title:
 - a. Roll-over title: Meaning of the Declaration: American Democracy
 - b. Descriptive title: N.C. Senator Nathaniel Macon: The proslavery Southern view
 - c. Categorization title:

3. Accompanying text (approx. 50 words): Accompanying text will be the highlighted portion of the letter, perhaps with some interpretive comment:

A clause in the Declaration of Independence has been read, declaring “that all men are created equal;” follow that sentiment, and does it not lead to universal emancipation? If it will justify putting an end to slavery in Missouri, will it not justify it in the old States? ... And is it not wonderful, that, if the Declaration of Independence gave authority to emancipate, that the patriots who made it never proposed any plan to carry it into execution? ... And is it not equally wonderful, that, if the Constitution gives the authority, this is the first attempt ever made, under either, by the Federal Government, to exercise it? For if, under either, the power is given, it will apply as well to States as Territories. If either intended to give it, is it not still more wonderful that it is not given in direct terms? ... If the words of the Declaration of Independence be taken as part of the Constitution, and that they are no part of it is as true as that they are no part of any other book, what will be the condition of the Southern country when this shall be carried into execution?

4. Image annotation text:

D. Second party system interpretations: Northern Whig/Republican view. Lincoln quote from debates with Douglas (though out of period best on explaining “how key principles in the Declaration of Independence grew in importance to become unifying ideas of American democracy.”)

1. Display: Two quotes from Lincoln’s speeches in his with Douglas in the 1850s
2. Title:
 - a. Roll-over title: Meaning of the Declaration: American Democracy
 - b. Descriptive title: Abraham Lincoln
 - c. Categorization title:
3. Accompanying text (approx. 50 words): Accompanying text will be the highlighted portion of the letter, perhaps with some interpretive comment:

The doctrine of self government is right.... If the negro is a *man*, why then my ancient faith teaches me that “all men are created equal;” and that there can be no moral right in connection with one man’s making a slave of another. ... What I do say is, that no man is good enough to govern another man, *without that other’s consent*. I say this is the leading principle – the sheet anchor of American republicanism. Our Declaration of Independence says: “... That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.” ... Now the relation of masters and slaves is ... a total violation of this principle. ... Allow ALL the governed an equal voice in the government, and that, and that only is self government.¹³

[The authors of the Declaration] meant simply to declare the *right* [to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”], so that the *enforcement* of it might follow as fast as circumstances should permit. They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all, and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence, and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere.¹⁴

Conclusion: the contested meaning of the Declaration, especially the “all men are created equal” clause, is not decided until the victory of the Union in the Civil War.

4. Image annotation text: TBD

Explore/Museum

I. Explore/Museum Row 1: How the object came to the Smithsonian

II. Explore/Museum Row 2: Museum info

III. Explore/Museum Row 3: Dilemmas of Display

- A. Conservators vs. visitors #1 (originality vs. access)
- B. Conservators vs. visitors #2 (originality vs. access)
- C.

Tour

(Refer to “Explore” section above for full description/content of each item)

Tour/Brief Tour (Single Row)

- I.** Congress’s Changes to Jefferson’s Draft (Explore/Object II. B)
- II.** Master Craftsman of the Revolution Benjamin Randolph (Explore/Object III. A)
- III.** Relic of the Revolution (Winthrop’s view: Explore/Context I.C)
- IV.** Jefferson’s interpretation of the Declaration’s meaning (Explore/Context II.C)
- V.** Lincoln’s interpretation of the Declaration’s meaning (Explore/Context III.D)

Tour/Extended Tour

I. Tour/Extended Tour Row 1: Object

- A. What the object is/description
- B. The desk at the Constitutional Convention: Jefferson’s draft (Explore/object II. A)
- C. The desk at the Constitutional Convention: Congress’s changes (Explore/object II. B)
- D. Master Craftsmen of the Revolution: Randolph

II. Tour/Extended Tour Row 2: Object/Context

- A. Master Craftsmen of the Revolution: Dunlap
- B. Gift to a Grandson
- C. Relic of the Revolution: Jefferson to Ellen Coolidge
- D. Relic of the Revolution: Winthrop’s oration

III. Tour/Extended Tour Row 3: Context

- A. Meaning of the Declaration: Jefferson’s interpretation: Jefferson’s letter to Henry Lee
- B. Meaning of the Declaration: Maier introduction
- C. Meaning of the Declaration: First party system
- D. Meaning of the Declaration: Slavery/second party system/Lincoln

Bibliography

Images:

Images #1 and #2



From “Legacies: Collecting America’s History at the Smithsonian”

<http://www.smithsonianlegacies.si.edu/objectdescription.cfm?ID=258> © 2001, Smithsonian Institution Press.

Image #3:



Portrait of Benjamin Randolph

Made in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States c. 1775-80, Charles Willson Peale, American, 1741 – 1827, Watercolor on ivory, 1 1/4 x 1 inches (3.2 x 2.5 cm), Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Johnes Westbrook, 1990, * [Gallery 104, American Art, first floor](http://www.philamuseum.org/collections/permanent/85812.html), 1990-21-1
<http://www.philamuseum.org/collections/permanent/85812.html>
Philadelphia Museum of Art

Image #4:



Benjamin Randolph's Trade Card

Image #5



“Cadwalader Chair

On view in Gallery 287

The Museum has recently acquired an elaborate eighteenth-century side chair commissioned by the Revolutionary War hero General John Cadwalader (1742–1786) and his fashionable wife Elizabeth (Lloyd), whose spectacular Philadelphia townhouse—among the most extravagantly decorated in the American colonies—was a critical meeting place for the Continental Congress and eventual signers of the United States Constitution.

The side chair is exemplary of the exuberant style known as "Philadelphia Rococo" and is distinguished by exquisite carving and its characteristic "hairy paw" feet. It was made about 1770, most likely in the shop of one of the city's premier cabinetmakers, Benjamin Randolph (1721–1791)."

Side Chair, c. 1770

Benjamin Randolph, American

Mahogany, white cedar; modern upholstery

Philadelphia Museum of Art. <http://www.philamuseum.org/acquisitions/5.html>

Image #6



Side chair (one of a pair) labeled by Benjamin Randolph, Philadelphia, 1765–1775. Mahogany. H. 38 3/8", W. 23 3/4", D. 19". (Courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. and M. Karolik Collection.)

From:

Philip D. Zimmerman

“Labeled Randolph Chairs Rediscovered”

<http://www.chipstone.org/framesetabouthistory.html>

Image #7



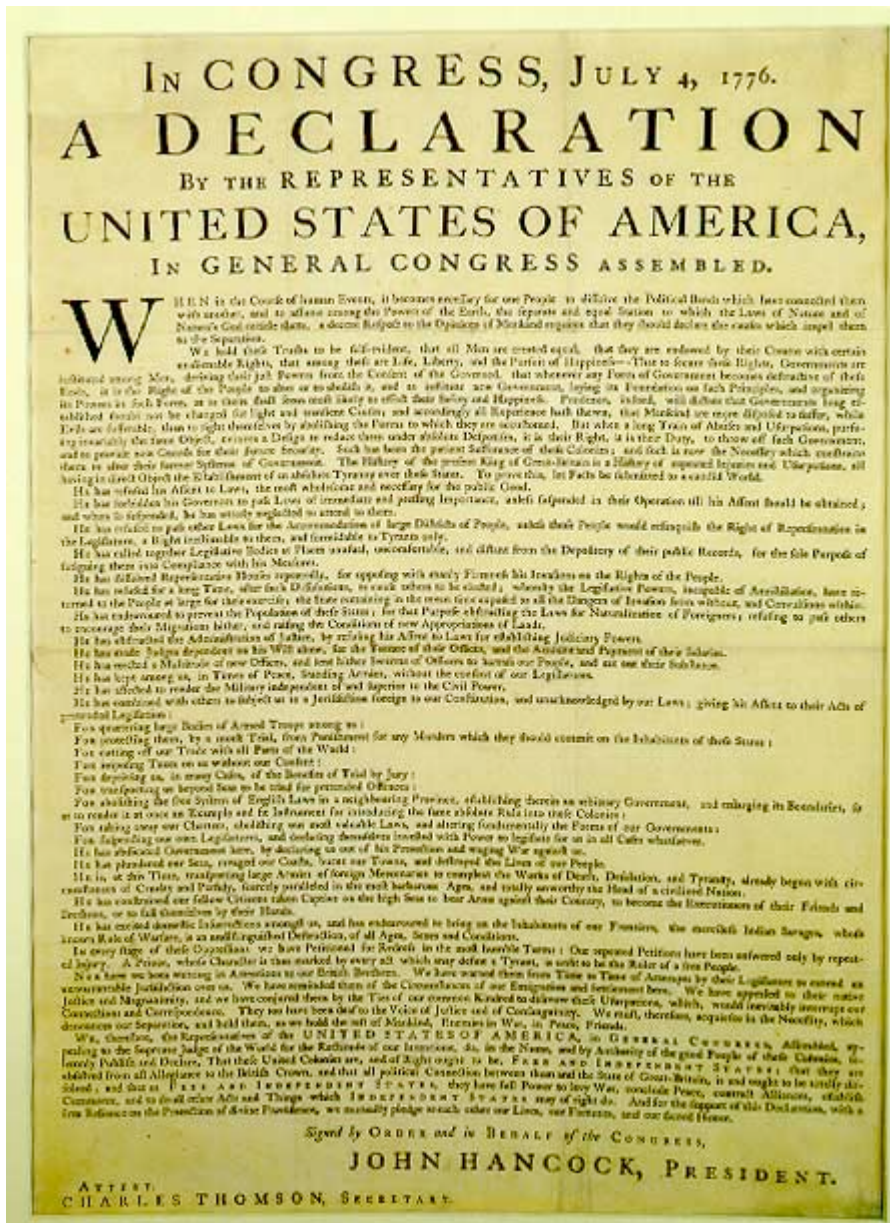
Detail of the label applied to the inside rear rail of the chair illustrated in fig. 1.

Philip D. Zimmerman

“Labeled Randolph Chairs Rediscovered”

<http://www.chipstone.org/framesetabouthistory.html>

Image #8



Dunlap's Broadside of the Declaration of Independence

Picture courtesy of [ushistory.org](http://www.ushistory.org)
(Also need to fill out their form at <http://ushistory.org/permit1.html>)

Image #9:



Francis Trumbull's Windsor Chair

Image 10:



Image 11:



Image #12

Mr. Jefferson gives this writing desk
to Joseph Coolidge junr. as a memorial of
affection. it was made from a drawing
of his own by Ben. Randall, a cabinet maker
in Philadelphia on his arrival in that
city in May 1776. and is the identical
one on which he wrote the Declaration
of Independance. Politics, as well as
Religion has its ^{gaining strength with time} superstitions. These, may,
one day, give value to this relic, for it's
association with the birth of the
Great Charter of our Independance.

Jefferson's Draft Affidavit

Image 13:

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 position~~ ^{separate and equal} station to
which the laws of nature & 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~~ ^{the} separation.

We hold these truths to be ~~self-evident~~ ^{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, & to institute new government, laying its foundation on~~
~~such principles & organising its powers in such form, as to them shall~~
~~seem most likely to effect their safety & happiness.~~ ^{prudence indeed}
~~will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for~~
~~light & transient causes: and accordingly all experience hath shewn that~~
~~man kind 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 & usurpations [beginning at a distinguished period]~~
~~& 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, & to provide new guards for their future security. such has~~
~~been the patient sufferance of these colonies; & 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 [among which, appears no solitary fact~~
~~to contradict the uniform tenor of the rest, all of which have in direct object the~~
~~establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. to prove this, let facts be~~
~~submitted to a candid world, for the truth of which we pledge a faith~~
~~not unswayed by falsehood.]~~

First page of Jefferson's Rough Draft of the Declaration

Books:

Bedini, Silvio A. *Declaration of Independence Desk: Relic of Revolution*. Washington, D.C.:
Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981.

- Besler, Roy P., ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953)
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- Smith, James Morton, ed. *The Republic of Letters: The Correspondence between Thomas Jefferson and James Madison 1776-1826*, Vol. 3. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995.
- Warren, Charles. "Fourth of July Myths." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Serial, Vol. 2, No. 3, (July 1945), 237-272.

¹ Bedini, 6.

² Jefferson to Ellen Wayles Randolph Coolidge, 14 November 1825, Massachusetts Historical Society, Manuscripts Division, *The Jefferson Coolidge Papers*. Quoted in Silvio A. Bedini, *Declaration of Independence Desk: Relic of Revolution* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981), 34-35.

³ Joseph Coolidge, Jr. to Thomas Jefferson, February 27, 1826, Library of Congress, Jefferson Papers. Quoted in Margaret W. Brown "The Story of the Declaration of Independence Desk and How It Came to the National Museum" *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution Showing the operations, Expenditures, and Condition of the institution for the Year Ended June 30 1953* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1954), 458-459.

⁴ Quoted in Bedini, 41-43. Full oration printed in Robert C. Winthrop, *Addresses and Speeches on Various Occasions from 1869 to 1879* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1878), vol. 3, pp. 378-79).

⁵ Jefferson to James Madison, August 30, 1823, *Jefferson Papers*, Library of Congress.

⁶ Madison to Jefferson, Sept. 6, 1823, James Morton Smith, ed., *The Republic of Letters: The Correspondence between Thomas Jefferson and James Madison 1776-1826*, Vol. 3 (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995), 1877.

⁷ Jefferson to Henry Lee May 8, 1825, *Jefferson Papers*, Library of Congress.

⁸ Pauline Maier, *American Scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 154-55.

⁹ Maier, *American Scripture*, 199.

¹⁰ Maier, 170.

¹¹ Quoted in Charles Warren, "Fourth of July Myths," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Serial, Vol. 2, No. 3, (July 1945), 266.

¹² Quoted in Warren, "Fourth of July Myths," 270.

¹³ Abraham Lincoln, "Speech at Peoria, Illinois" October 16, 1854, Besler, Roy P., ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953), 265-266

¹⁴ Abraham Lincoln, "Speech at Springfield, Illinois," June 26, 1857, in Basler, 406.