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The Image of the American Revolution in the United States, 1815-1860.

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THE IMAGE OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION IN THE
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by
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ABSTRACT

From 1815 to 1860 Americans believed that their goals were to assure the success of their republican experiment and to encourage other countries to adopt governments similar to that of the United States. Furthermore, citizens contended that perpetuation of the republic depended upon preservation of the Union, maintenance of a virtuous population, and demonstration of gratitude toward the Founding Fathers. While attempting to accomplish these objectives, Americans were controlled by the nineteenth-century theory of history—philosophy teaching by example. The primary function of history was didactic; a study of the past would inculcate loyalty and patriotism to the nation. On the personal level, historical figures should be emulated in order to instill in individuals the virtues of self-reliance, perseverance, industry, piety, consistency, benevolence, and disinterestedness. A virtuous population would put the good of the nation above all other considerations thereby assuring the perpetuation of the Union. When other nations saw how prosperous and happy Americans were, they would more readily imitate the government of the United States.

Given the goals of Americans and the prevailing philosophy of history, it is not surprising that citizens turned to their Revolutionary history, for the War of
Independence was the first common experience of the American people. According to nineteenth-century citizens, the Revolution proved that the Union was essential for overcoming adversity, and the Constitution represented the written foundation of the Union. A generation that produced the cornerstones of American government—the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution—consisted of heroes who were certainly worthy of emulation. Venerating their fathers, citizens believed that they were contributing to their own patriotism by imitating the virtues of their ancestors. To most Americans of the nineteenth century, the Revolution represented the ideal by which they judged themselves as well as others. Though they became disillusioned when foreign upheavals failed to produce republican governments, Americans felt even more determined to carry on the work of the Founding Fathers. Constantly looking to the past for guidance, most citizens began to wonder if they themselves were living up to the standards of the Revolutionary generation. Other Americans, however, began to question the popular image of the Revolutionary heroes by emphasizing unsavory aspects of the War of Independence.

At the time that citizens were looking to the past, the United States itself was undergoing a transition from a simple agrarian nation to an economically complex one. Despite the changes in economics, politics, attitudes, and values, most Americans continued to use the Revolutionary
generation as the standard of measurement. When problems of tariff, banking, reforms, slavery, and territorial expansion were discussed, both opponents and supporters of particular policies used some aspect of Revolutionary history to justify their positions. Because the Revolution itself was a complex event, the War of Independence ironically became another sectional issue that widened the gulf between North and South.

Rather than discussing the validity of the views of the war, this study analyzes the image of the Revolution found in histories, biographies, fiction, orations, journals, and congressional debates. An attempt is made to relate the image of the Revolution to contemporary events and issues between 1815, a year that marked a resurgence of nationalism, and 1860 when the Union divided along sectional lines.
Chapter 1

SYMBOL OF UNITY: THE NATIONALIST VIEW OF
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Americans devoted much attention to the Revolution, and especially to the reasons for that conflict. Living in a new republic still on trial and concerned about their national identity, citizens believed that they must justify their nation to themselves as well as others. A sense of self-justification could be found by reciting the causes of the American Revolution, an event that resulted in the birth of the nation. Furthermore, Americans maintained that perpetuation of the Union depended in part upon loyalty to the nation; in turn, allegiance to the nation could not exist until citizens were familiar with the origin of their country. Because Americans believed that a knowledge of the War of Independence was essential for preserving the republic, orators, journalists, and novelists as well as historians wrote about the first conflict with Britain. Authors emphasized the nobility and moderation of Revolutionary patriots, the righteousness of their cause, and the

marvelous consequences of their actions. Although most
writers preferred the drama of battles, they noted the rea-
sons Americans had fought the British and the lessons and
benefits that could be obtained from a study of the causes
of the War of Independence. Next to the Bible, a history of
the American Revolution was the most important book to teach
a love of republicanism and a hatred of tyranny.2

At the time of the conclusion of the War of 1812,
almost forty years had elapsed since the beginning of the
American Revolution, and the event was becoming more remote
with the passage of time. Although there were still sur-
vivors of the Revolutionary struggle, the event, for most
Americans, was history and not one they had personally
experienced. Since historians who wrote after 1815 had not
witnessed the Revolution, they realized that if they were to
inform the world of their country's origins, they must have
documents and facts at their disposal. Thus, during the
1820's, compilers such as Abiel Holmes, Jedediah Morse,
Hezekiah Niles, and Timothy Pitkin began to collect docu-
ments in order to complete the story of the past.3

2Francis Xavier Martin, History of North Carolina
from the Earliest Period (2 vols., New Orleans, 1829), I,
v-vi; Samuel Williams, A History of the American Revolution
(New Haven, 1824), v; Herbert Wendall:  A Tale of the

3Abiel Holmes, The Annals of America, from the Dis-
covery by Columbus in the Year 1492 to the Year 1826 (2 vols.,
Cambridge, 1829); Jedidiah Morse, Annals of the American
Revolution (Hartford, 1824); Hezekiah Niles, Principles and
Acts of the Revolution in America (Baltimore, 1822);
Despite the campaign to employ original material, most writers relied heavily, to the point of plagiarism, upon historians who had lived through the war, especially David Ramsay and Mercy Otis Warren. Since nineteenth-century writers utilized the same sources, the histories they wrote tended to be remarkably similar. Fortunately, Ramsay and Warren had produced respectable histories, and their general view of the Revolution as a symbol of national unity remained unchallenged until after the Civil War.

Even the extensive investigations of eighteenth-century records by the notables, George Bancroft and Richard Hildreth, did not substantially alter the interpretations of earlier writers.

During the first sixty years of the nineteenth century, historians were generally New Englanders who had attended college and then studied either law, theology, or medicine

Timothy Pitkin, Political and Civil History of the United States (2 vols., New Haven, 1828).


and sometimes all three. In addition, many of them had served in their state legislatures, and a few had been members of the United States Congress. Generally, the occupations and places of residence influenced the interpretations of the authors. Ministers believed that Providence guided events while lawyers wrote about constitutional or legal conflicts. Since most historians lived in New England, they emphasized the history of that area to the neglect of that of the southern states.  

Even if Americans did not care to read about their past, they were familiar with the principal facts. Their existence as a nation was short, dramatic, and far from obscure. Furthermore, there were opportunities for learning that did not depend on the written word. The annual Fourth of July orations recounted the events of the Revolution as thousands and thousands of citizens celebrated their national anniversary. They also listened to accounts of their past at municipal meetings, on fast and feast days, and at academic and other public exercises.  

Believing that a national history was essential for establishing cultural identity, Americans wanted to break

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with the Old World and contribute to their own developing nationalism. Since one characteristic of Old World nationalism was a common past and an attachment to a particular soil upon which ancestors had lived for many centuries, citizens attempted to create a long history for the United States. Authors and orators did not confine themselves to Revolutionary events of the 1760's and 1770's, but traced the origin of the Revolution to the first colonial settlements. Of course, all writers did not agree to the last detail on the story of the American past, but they generally indicated a sense of estrangement between Britain and her colonies. Some authors emphasized American grievances against England while others focused on the uniqueness and superiority of the colonists.

According to some historians and orators, the colonists had acquired a long list of grievances handed down from generation to generation. From the time of the first settlements, Americans had endured nothing but abuse from provincial governors whose arbitrary actions contributed to the breach between the mother country and her colonies. After the colonists engaged in numerous disputes with the governors and grew accustomed to investigating the relationship between the provinces and Britain, the American spirit of opposition became habitual. Various colonial assemblies periodically disagreed with their executives on the matters

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of salaries, quit-rents, paper currency, and tenure of land.

If they were not abusing the colonists, governors spent more
time courting royal favor and trying to stay in office than
tending to provincial affairs.¹⁰

Since these ineffective governors represented the
link between the colonies and the mother country, people in
England really knew little about American life. In addition,
because of the distance between Britain and her colonies,
Americans and Englishmen were total strangers.¹¹

¹⁰Paul Allen, History of the American Revolution (2 vols., Baltimore, 1819), I, 6, 10-14; Noah Webster, History
of the United States (New Haven, 1832), 195-97; David Barker,
An Address in Commemoration of the Independence of the United
States, Delivered at Rochester, July 4th, 1828 (Dover, 1828),
4-5; David Bokee, Oration Delivered in the First Baptist
Church, Brooklyn, July 4th, 1851, on the Occasion of the
Seventy-Sixth Anniversary of our National Independence
(Brooklyn, 1851), 4; Henry Colman, An Oration Delivered in
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pletion of a Half Century since the Declaration of American
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Everett, An Oration Delivered before the Citizens of Charle­
s- town on the Fifty-Second Anniversary of the Declaration of
the Independence of the United States of America (Charles­
town, 1828), 24-25; Hugh Legare, An Oration Delivered on the
Fourth of July, 1823; Before the '76 Association (Charleston,
1823), 12-14; George Flagg Man, An Oration, Delivered before
the Citizens of the County of Kent, at Apponaug, Warwick,
July 4, 1838 (Providence, 1838), 4; Josiah Quincy, An Ora­
tion, Delivered on Tuesday, the Fourth of July, 1826, it
being the Fiftieth Anniversary of American Independence,
before the Supreme Executive of the Commonwealth, and the
City Council and Inhabitants of the City of Boston (Boston,
1826), 17-18; Jonathan Ward, A Sermon, Delivered at Plymouth,
N. H., July 4, 1825, in Commemoration of American Independence
(Plymouth, 1826), 12-13; [Edward Everett], "Memoir of Richard
Henry Lee," NAR, XXII (April, 1826), 380.

¹¹Allen, History of the American Revolution, I, 17;
Quincy Adams declared,

\[\ldots\] here and there, a man of letters and a statesman, conversant with all history, knew something of the colonies, as he knew something of Cochin-China and Japan. Yet even the prime minister of England, urging upon his omnipotent Parliament laws for grinding the colonies to submission, could talk, without amazing or diverting his hearers, of the Island of Virginia.\[12\]

Ignorant of colonial matters, British ministries put the interests of a little island above the interests of a large empire and sought to prevent colonial prosperity.\[13\]

Although the colonists did achieve a degree of affluence, they were prevented from reaching the heights of progress because of British restrictions. When the colonies were first established, the mother country left them alone, but as Americans became more prosperous, jealous greedy English ministries sought to assure the dependence of the


provinces on the mother country. According to some historians and orators, nothing hindered the development of the colonies more than the Acts of Trade and Navigation. As Americans advanced commercially, England attempted to monopolize colonial trade and to limit manufacturing. In restricting trade and manufacturing, English ministries depleted the colonial supply of currency and then did nothing to alleviate the financial strain. Again, as disputes with governors had led to the questioning of the relationship between the colonies and the mother country, the enactment of the Acts of Trade and Navigation prepared the minds of the colonists to oppose British encroachments upon their

Those authors who slighted the grievances of the colonists emphasized instead the uniqueness and superiority of the American settlers who had brought a love of liberty with them. Moving to the New World for the purpose of escaping arbitrary assumptions of royal prerogative and establishing religious freedom, the colonists founded a country based upon the principles of political and religious independence. The settlers had transported the precedents, laws, and institutions that made up the British constitution and soon found it necessary to liberalize their heritage from the mother country. Because England at first neglected the colonies, descendants of the original settlers became more and more independent. Having less attachment to the mother country, the colonists gradually lost their allegiance until they began to look upon all Parliamentary acts as usurpations of authority that belonged to provincial legislatures.15


16 Jacob Harris Patton, The History of the United States of America, from the Discovery of the Continent, to the Close of the First Session of the Thirty-Fifth Congress (New York, 1860), 281-82; Pitkin, Political and Civil History, I, 4; George Tucker, History of the United States (4
Americans not only had to protect their rights within the Empire, they also had to cope with the primitive New World environment. The colonists had left their native land and endured hunger, cold, pestilence, famine, and war to establish new homes. Day and night while working for food and shelter, they had to defend their lives from the tomahawk of the Indian. Under these circumstances, and living 3,000 miles from the splendor and pomp of royal courts, the descendants of the first settlers were inexperienced with doctrines of royal and ecclesiastical authority.17

As Americans became more alienated from Britain with the passage of time, the colonists evolved an American

17Wilson, History of the American Revolution, 17; Benjamin Faneuil Hunt, An Oration, Delivered by their Appointment, before the Washington Society, in Charleston, South-Carolina, on the 4th of July, 1839 (Charleston, 1839), 12.
character that separated them even more from England. The colonists knew nothing of social classes, and the plain simple people became suspicious of aristocracy and inherited wealth. Since the provincials labored hard for their fortunes, they were hostile to titles, coats of arms, and evidences of nobility acquired by birth and not by work. For the most part, Americans had been farmers or fishermen who exhibited the characteristics of frugality, austerity, industry, and piety. The proud, enterprising, hardy, virtuous colonists acquired wealth through their own energies and distrusted power and encroachments upon their rights.\textsuperscript{18}

Whether authors emphasized American grievances or uniqueness, and some developed both themes, each view lent itself to the idea of the inevitability of separation from Britain, and each further promoted the concept of nationalism. Either the colonials could no longer suffer abuses or they had reached a stage of maturity in which they could no longer be dependent upon a mother country. America itself had become an empire capable of self-protection and self-government. Interested in prosperity, the provincials became irritated with restraints not imposed by themselves nor for their benefit. In any case, authors were repudiating the British heritage and stressing the superiority of Americans. The very nature of the colonists, imbued with a

\textsuperscript{18}Wilson, \textit{History of the American Revolution}, 24-26.
spirit of liberty, would have produced a conflict since these people would not remain mere dependencies. 19

Although independence was inevitable, the separation occurred at the precise time it did because of English greed and persistence in taxing the colonists. During the French and Indian War, Americans had contributed their share to the defeat of France, and as a result of their services, English ministries became more familiar with the resources and strengths of the colonies. Jealous of the increasing wealth of the provincials, Britain sought to obtain a revenue to fill her depleted coffers and, at the same time, to restrict American prosperity. A British army had remained in the

colonies after the French War for the express purpose of forcing a revenue out of the colonists. At the instigation of George Grenville, "a hard, sullen, dogmatic, pernicious man of affairs," Parliament passed the Revenue Act of 1764 and the Stamp Act of 1765, both intended to raise a revenue. Indignation in the colonies was universal to the point that Grenville's replacement, Lord Rockingham, "a sturdy friend" of the Americans, repealed the Stamp Act. However, bent upon maintaining its supremacy, Parliament passed a declaratory act asserting the right to bind the

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20 Charles Augustus Goodrich, History of the United States of America (Hartford, 1823), 141-42; Salma Hale, History of the United States from their First Settlement as Colonies, to the Close of the War with Great Britain in 1815 (Cincinnati, 1833), 126-27; Benson John Lossing, Seventeen Hundred and Seventy Six, or the War of Independence; a History of the Anglo-Americans, from the Period of the Union of the Colonies against the French, to the Inauguration of Washington (New York, 1848), 86-87; Mary Murray, History of the United States of America. Written in Accordance with the Principles of Peace (Boston, 1852), 191; Peterson, History of the American Revolution, 27-28; Pitkin, Political and Civil History, I, 155; LaRoy Sunderland, History of the United States of America, from the Discovery of the Continent in 1492, to the Fiftieth Anniversary of their Independence (New York, 1834), 86-88; Tucker, History of the United States, I, 75-76; Wilson, History of the American Revolution, 30-31, 39-42; Moses Hall, Jr., An Oration Pronounced at Saugus, July Fourth, 1815, the Anniversary of American Independence (Boston, 1815), 5; George Price, An Oration Delivered before the Phileleutherian Society, of Georgetown College, on the Fourth of July (Washington, 1836), 7-8; John M. Putnam, The Pilgrim Fathers and American Independence. An Address to the Sabbath School Children in Dunbarton, Delivered July 4, 1831 (Concord, 1831), 10; Vanden Heuvel, Oration, 15; Samuel Adams Wells, An Oration, Pronounced July 5, 1819, at the Request of the Republicans of the Town of Boston, in Commemoration of the Anniversary of American Independence (Boston, 1819), 9-10; Thomas Whittemore, An Oration, Pronounced on the Fourth of July, 1821, (By Request,) before the Republican Citizens of Milford, Mass. and the Adjacent Towns (Boston, 1821), 4.
colonies in all cases whatsoever. This measure only served to keep the minds of Americans alert so that when "the false, dissipated, veering, presumptuous and unscrupulous Charles Townshend" attempted further taxation, Americans were prepared to resist. Finally, Lord North, "a good-natured second rate, jobbing statesman equally destitute of lofty virtues and splendid vices," secured the repeal of the Townshend duties with the exception of the tax on tea.21

Colonial difficulties with Britain did not end with the repeal of the Townshend duties, for Americans had other grievances like the presence of a standing army, the establishment of a civil list, and the creation of additional vice-admiralty courts. An incident in Boston also roused public opposition; as one old soldier put it,

... how can I forget the horrid massacre of the 5th of March, 1770, in State-street, Boston--where by Col. Preston's orders, a column of British soldiers fired on the peaceful inhabitants--and the street was deluged with blood.22

Other tyrannical acts demonstrating the vindictiveness of British officials included the Tea Act of 1773, the Boston Port Act, and finally the firing upon Americans at Lexington and Concord.

According to historians who wrote about the chain of events from 1764 to 1775, Americans were always innocent victims of British oppression. No mention was made of the property damage during the Stamp Act riots nor of Bostonians' harassment of British troops. Even the dumping of tea in Boston harbor had been a noble patriotic act.23 Nineteenth-century authors and orators emphasized the theme that as members of the British Empire, Americans possessed rights

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22 An Address, Written for the Fiftieth Anniversary of our Independence, by an Old Revolutionary Soldier of Wrentham, who Volunteered his Service in Capt. Guild's Company of Dedham, and Col. Greaton's Regiment, in the year 1776, in the Canada Expedition: And the only Survivor of that Company, Now in Wrentham. With a Catalogue of the Number of Men we Lost in the Several Battles in the Revolutionary War--and the Names of the Soldiers Belonging to Captain Guild's Company, Who Lost their Lives in the Northern Clime during that Campaign--the Day of their Death--and Place of Residence (Dedham, 1828), 6-7.

23 Traits of the Tea Party; being a Memoir of George Robert Twelve Hewes, One of the Last of its Survivors; with a History of that Transaction; Reminiscences of the Massacre, and the Siege, and other Stories of Old Times (New York, 1835), 197; John Leland, Part of a Speech, Delivered at Suffield, Conn. on the First Jubilee of the United States (Pittsfield, 1826), 5; Vanden Heuvel, Oration, 16.
that had not been recognized. Not the amount of the tax but the act of taxation constituted oppression since the British constitution and colonial charters guaranteed no taxation without representation. To the colonists, the contest with England was one of principle and revolved around the question of whether they should give up the privilege of no taxation without representation. The British constitution allowed the people of England to choose one branch of their legislature while Americans did not have a single representative in Parliament. The colonists concluded that the constitution was to be applied one way for the people of England and another way for the colonists.  

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Nationalistic authors of the nineteenth century took great pride in the "spirit" of the American Revolution. They believed that all dependencies had the right to dissolve political ties with a mother country, but the conflict with Britain had further justification. The colonists revolted against England, not because they wished to create a new society or new institutions, but because they wanted to preserve their rights as established by the British constitution. The separation from the mother country was not so much a revolution as an evolution. In fact, up to the moment of the Declaration of Independence, Americans were loyal to the King. The causes that led to the revolt would hardly have been sufficient to warrant a separation by any people less prepared for independence. The Stamp Act and tax on tea "could hardly be regarded as a national calamity." Even the Boston Port bill had not imposed a heavy burden. If the colonists had not been already mature, free, and independent,

Rochester, on the Morning of the Fourth of July, 1826 (Rochester, 1836), 7; James Brown Mason Potter, Oration Delivered at Kingston, R. I. July 4, 1843 (Boston, 1844), 6-8; [Francis Bowen], "Frothingham's Siege of Boston," NAR, LXX (April, 1850), 416-17.

Parliament could have easily collected the revenue. The decision to resist the British was glorious because Americans achieved their independence, but, equally important, because of the moderation exhibited by the patriots prior to armed conflict. From 1763 to 1775, the colonists met Parliamentary demands and refused to yield to any aggression. In petitions and declarations of rights, Americans calmly appealed to reason and justice. Exhausting argument and language to avoid the conflict, they tried every possible means to avoid confrontation. When their efforts were to no avail, the colonists finally drew the sword since the only alternatives were submission and slavery or freedom and independence. As Edward T. Channing put it, "hence the contrast which arose was that of pride and the lust of dominion, on the one hand, of unbending courage, and the love of home and liberty on the other." Without making a

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ruin of the state, the American Revolution was the perfect example of a successful revolt.²⁸

Analysts did not confine themselves to narratives of the political acts leading to independence or to the host of grievances enumerated in the Declaration of Independence. In the long period between the commencement of Parliamentary aggression and the first appeal to arms, the hand of Providence was clearly evident. Although God had allowed Great Britain to oppress and to impose grievous burdens on the colonials, He then delivered them from their oppressors. When their burdens could no longer be endured, He inspired them with resistance. Guided by Providence, American colonists had been a special people imbued with a spirit of liberty which accounted for the success of the Revolution.²⁹

²⁸Channing, Oration, 10-11; see also James Hoban, An Oration, Delivered before the Union and Literary Debating Society, July 4, 1838 (Washington, 1838), 5.

²⁹Bancroft, History of the United States, IV, 55; Goodrich, History of the United States, 142; Lossing, Seventeen Hundred and Seventy Six, 112; Peterson, History of the American Revolution, 21; Webster, History of the United States, 208; Samuel Austin, An Address, Pronounced in Worcester, (Mass.) on the Fourth of July, 1825, being the Forty-Ninth Anniversary of the Independence of the United States, before an Assembly Convened for the Purpose of Celebrating this Event Religiously (Worcester, 1825), 6-7; Nathaniel Bouton, Christian Patriotism. An Address Delivered at Concord, July the Fourth, 1825 (Concord, 1825), 6; John Overton Choulès, An Oration, Delivered in the German Reformed Church, Red-Hook, New York, July 4th, 1826 (New York, 1826), 5; Hedge, Oration, 23; Myron Holley, An Oration, Delivered at Lyons, the Fourth of July, 1826, it being the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Independence of the United States (Canandaigua, 1826), 9; James D. Knowles, Oration, Delivered at the Columbian College, in the District of Columbia, July 4, 1823 (Washington City, 1823), 13; Reuben Post, A Discourse
The orators' and historians' interpretations of Revolutionary events clearly reflected their concern for promoting nationalism. Nineteenth-century Americans set themselves apart from the Old World and created an identity of their own by emphasizing the superiority of the colonists and the uniqueness of their Revolution. Furthermore, wanting to instill a spirit of cohesiveness among their fellow-citizens, analysts contended that all colonials had united as a people to resist British aggression. Historians and orators tended to slight or overlook the presence of Tories; instead, they wrote of the unity of Americans who felt their interests closely associated. The patriots foresaw that a ministry, oppressing one colony, might extend its tyranny to all. Thus, animated by one common cause, the people of a nation arose in arms to place themselves and their posterity

beyond the reach of oppression. 30

Since histories of the Revolution and the United States were written primarily by New Englanders, the picture emerged that Massachusetts, more than any other province, had received the brunt of British tyranny. Authors stressed James Otis' attack against the writs of assistance as the beginning of the struggle. As the story progressed, they noted the disputes between the legislative assembly and Governors Francis Bernard and Thomas Hutchinson, the local committees of correspondence, the Massachusetts circular

letter, the quartering of troops, the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, the Intolerable Acts, and finally Lexington and Concord.\textsuperscript{31}

The interest in histories of individual states did not conflict with the concern for promoting nationalism. According to nineteenth-century Americans, loyalty to a nation originated on the local or state level; therefore, studying the history of a state would increase patriotism and loyalty to the nation.\textsuperscript{32} Although state historians professed to be promoting nationalism, their works indicated that state loyalties still prevailed. Naturally, state historians discussed the grievances of their particular region, and in relating the coming of the Revolution, they generally emphasized disputes between executive and legislative branches. In most instances, the governors, as the King's representative, antagonized the colonials to the extent that Americans lost all affection for Britain. In addition to stressing their peculiar grievances, historians liked to claim for their state the honor of shedding the first blood in the Revolution.

At a time when state loyalties were still evident,

\textsuperscript{31}Allen, History of the American Revolution; Barber, History of the United States; Goodrich, History of the United States; Grimshaw, History of the United States; Hale, History of the United States; Lossing, Seventeen Hundred and Seventy Six; Murray, History of the United States; Wilson, History of the American Revolution.

\textsuperscript{32}Boorstin, The Americans, 363; Van Tassel, Recording America's Past, 90.
the citizens of states other than Massachusetts wanted their history known to the world. To prove that Massachusetts did not have a monopoly on tyrannical governors, Francis Xavier Martin wrote about an incident involving one of the North Carolina governors, William Tryon. In 1766, Tryon harbored a stamp master whom the colonists hoped to remove from office. Although at first refusing to allow the people to talk with the stamp agent, Tryon finally consented, and after conferring with the citizens, the agent resigned. In an effort to appease the colonials, the governor gave a party for the North Carolina militia. Displeased with Tryon's conduct in shielding the stamp master, the militia threw all of the food in the river and even poured the beer on the ground. Excited by this action, British officers started a fight that lasted several days. Thus, violence between British troops and North Carolinians had occurred as early as 1766, whereas the Boston Massacre did not take place until 1770.\(^{33}\)

While the citizens of North Carolina contended with Governor Tryon, John Van Lear McMahon indicated that Maryland inhabitants had difficulty with Governor Robert Eden whose actions constituted Maryland's principal grievance against the mother country after 1770. The lower house of the assembly regulated the fees of various royal officials in the colony, and each year the assembly determined the

amount of payment. In 1770, the house and council failed to agree on the amount of each fee because the councillors were to receive payment as officers. After much discussion, Governor Eden prorogued the assembly and decided that he would regulate the fees. According to McMahon, the colonists considered his action an arbitrary measure that deprived them of their rights. The controversy over the regulation of fees continued with the citizens denouncing the governor's actions and with the governor repeatedly proroguing the assembly. Eden and the assembly were still embroiled in this dispute when hostilities between the colonies and Britain commenced in 1775.34

Adding to the list of histories of the actions of evil governors was the work of Thomas Francis Gordon who wrote of the long-standing feud between Governor William Franklin and the patriots of New Jersey. In 1768, the colonial treasurer, appointed by the governor, claimed that a thief had taken the provincial funds. Two years later when still no clues had been found, the assembly conducted an investigation. Concluding that the treasurer had been negligent, the assembly expressed the view that he should be removed from office, but he refused to relinquish his post. The situation remained at a stalemate for two years during which time there were many angry words between the governor and the

34 John Van Lear McMahon, An Historical View of the Government of Maryland from its Colonization to the Present Day (Baltimore, 1831), 382-401.
assembly. Eventually, after the thief had been discovered, the treasurer resigned. Although the conflict was resolved before hostilities commenced in 1775, New Jersey citizens felt animosity toward Franklin since he had supported the negligent treasurer.35

Virginians could look to histories written by Charles Campbell and Robert Reid Howison to find the disputes between their Revolutionary ancestors and provincial governors. In 1769, Governor Norborne Berkeley, Lord Botetourt, had dissolved the House of Burgesses for passing resolutions that denied the power of Parliament to tax the colonists without their consent. The dissolution of the assembly was merely another step down the path to independence. A few years later, when the Boston Port bill became known in Virginia, the assembly adopted resolutions expressing the "deepest sympathy for their oppressed fellow-patriots"; whereupon, John Murray, Lord Dunmore, who had succeeded Governor Botetourt, dissolved the House of Burgesses. In April 1775, Dunmore further antagonized Virginians when he authorized the seizure of twenty barrels of powder from the citizens. Thus, Campbell and Howison contended that the War of Independence began in Virginia before the news of Lexington arrived.36

35 Thomas Francis Gordon, The History of New Jersey, from its Discovery by Europeans, to the Adoption of the Federal Constitution (Trenton, 1834), 149-52.

36 Charles Campbell, History of the Colony and Ancient Dominion of Virginia (Philadelphia, 1847), 607-10; Robert
Although most of the colonies had difficulties with their chief executives, William Bacon Stevens claimed that Georgia's villain was King George III. A primary grievance of the Georgians was that the King had interfered with colonial legislation. He refused to authorize the printing of paper money and disallowed two laws, one for the better governing of Negroes and the other, an act for encouraging settlers. The people of Georgia detested the requirement of having the King approve a bill passed by the assembly, for the process took about two years. Furthermore, in 1771, the King ordered acting governor James Habersham not to accept the assembly's choice of Speaker of the House. Many of the schemes to tax and punish the colonists originated with George III, and his feeble efforts to preserve the empire resulted in its disunion.37

Vermont's revolution also began before the Battle of Lexington, and according to Benjamin H. Hall, the primary grievance was the maladministration of the courts of justice. By 1775, the people were so dissatisfied that they divided into two factions, one called Tories and consisting of the judges, sheriffs, and court officers while the others included the rest of the citizens and were referred to as Whigs. After the Tories, who controlled the General Assembly,

Reid Howison, A History of Virginia from its Discovery and Settlement by Europeans to the Present Time (2 vols., Richmond, 1848), II, 62-63, 69-71, 81-82.

37William Bacon Stevens, History of Georgia to 1789 (2 vols., Savannah, 1847), II, 60-76.
had rejected the Association of the Continental Congress, a group of Whigs resolved to accept the Association. In addition, they proposed to rid themselves of Tory rule, especially in the court system. Discovering that the Tories planned to capture the courthouse, the Whigs attempted to occupy it first. In the resulting contest, a sheriff's posse fired upon the Whigs killing two and capturing seven. Thus, Hall claimed, the skirmish at the courthouse in March 1775 was the forerunner of the Battle of Lexington, and one of the casualties was eulogized as the first victim of the struggle between British oppression and American liberty.  

While Vermont had its "Lexington" one month ahead of Massachusetts, Rhode Island had a more violent "tea party" than Boston's, and its "Lexington" before either Massachusetts or Vermont, or so claimed Samuel Greene Arnold. The British government had stationed the Gaspee off the coast of Rhode Island to catch violators of the revenue acts. The schooner ran aground, and several colonists set out to destroy it. In the process, the colonials wounded a British lieutenant and burned the ship to the water's edge. Arnold maintained that the burning of the Gaspee was much more important than the Boston Tea Party. While the Bostonians merely threw some tea off a merchantman, the citizens of Rhode Island captured and burned a British man-of-war. Not

only did Rhode Islanders commit a more noble form of destruction, they also shed the earliest blood in the War of Independence.  

Although Rhode Islanders fought for liberty in 1772, the war began in New York even earlier. According to Henry Barton Dawson, New Yorkers experienced an incident similar to the Gaspee, but eight years sooner. In addition, the struggle over the liberty pole between British soldiers and New York patriots had occurred two months before the Boston Massacre.

As nineteenth-century historians wrote about the causes of the Revolution, novelists and journalists criticized the "blundering tedious compilations" that resulted in "numberless inert and few vital histories." The inert works, merely occupying space on library shelves, were dusted once a year, although they might occasionally be used to verify a date. No one ever read them with enjoyment or enthusiasm, for the most important works were usually not the most interesting. Many Americans believed it was "asking too much of their patriotism to require them to wade through a

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dull chronicle of events," and "the only reason why American history is so little read is, that it is not more ably written."42

Besides receiving criticism for their poor writing abilities, historians were taken to task for not capturing intangibles such as happiness or suffering. Although historians could relate how a battle was fought along with the number of combatants and casualties, they could not present a picture of the former day with the characteristics of life, thought, manners, and spirit.43 As one reviewer, Francis Bowen, put it, Richard Hildreth's account of the Revolution was "clearly and succinctly told, but in as cold-blooded a manner as if the writer had been engaged with an account of a long struggle between two tribes of savages in the heart of Africa."44 A partial answer to this problem lay with historical fiction whose authors, without having to rely on

42[John C. Gray], "Tudor's Life of James Otis," NAR, XVI (April, 1823), 349.


44[Francis Bowen], "Hildreth's History of the United States," NAR, LXXIII (Oct., 1851), 444-45.
legal documents, could capture the spirit of the people.\textsuperscript{45}

Since some nineteenth-century citizens found history to be dull and dry, they could turn to fiction to learn something of their past. As far as the causes of the Revolution were concerned, novelists did not dwell upon questions of constitutional principle or upon the chain of events from 1763 to 1775. Virtually all the novels about the Revolution were set in the time after fighting commenced in 1775, but most authors noted why the war occurred. For example, stating that it was not his intention to write an elaborate essay of the wrongs suffered by colonials, James Athearn Jones thought a few observations on the primary causes of the Revolution might be interesting to the patriotic reader. He explained, "those who read to be informed of the progress of a love affair, may, therefore, skip to the middle of the chapter."\textsuperscript{46}

With one notable exception, the views of the Revolution presented by novelists and historians were similar. While fictional writers formed their plots around the conflicts between patriots and loyalists, historians more or

\textsuperscript{45}Cooke, Henry St. John, 375; Paulding, The Old Continental, I, 129; The Polish Chiefs, I, v; Niles Weekly Register Containing Political Historical Geographical Scientifical Astronomical Statistical and Biographical Documents, Essays and Facts; Together with Notices of the Arts and Manufactures and a Record of the Events of the Times, XI (Feb. 1, 1817), 375. Hereinafter cited as Niles.

less ignored the Tories. Otherwise, those novelists who treated the causes of the War of Independence presented almost the same picture as historians of the Revolution and the United States. Most of the action in fiction took place in Massachusetts, and especially Boston where occurred dramatic incidents like the Massacre and the Tea Party prior to the war itself. According to novelists, the tyrannical and oppressive measures of the English ministry could not be endured by the liberty-loving colonists. Americans resented not the amount of taxation but violation of the principle of no taxation without representation. Failing to obtain a redress of grievances through remonstrances, the colonists refused to remain in the British Empire.  

47Ambrose and Eleanor; or, the Disinherited Pair. A Tale of the Revolution, by an Officer (2 vols., New York, 1834), I, 24-25; Maturin Murray Ballou, Fanny Campbell, the Female Pirate Captain. A Tale of the Revolution (Boston, 1845), 10; Lydia Maria Child, The Rebels; or, Boston before the Revolution (Boston, 1850), 169-70, 194; Jeremiah Clemens, The Rivals; a Tale of the Times of Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton (Philadelphia, 1860), 16; Park Clinton, Glenmore: A Romance of the Revolution (New York, 1853), 6; Mungo Coultershoggle, Leslie Linkfield (Rochester, 1826), 228-31; Harry Halyard, Geraldine; or, the Gipsey of Germantown. A National and Military Romance (Boston, 1848), 12; Herbert Wendell, I, 113; Joseph Holt Ingraham, Fleming Field; or, the Young Artisan. A Tale of the Days of the Stamp Act (New York, 1845), 20-32, and Neal Nelson: or, the Siege of Boston (New York, 1847), I; Jones, The Refugee, I, 74-75; Hannah Farnham Lee, Grace Seymour (2 vols., New York, 1830), I, 66-67; Eliza Leslie, Chase Loring (Philadelphia, 1834), 193-94; James McHenry, The Bethrothed of Wyoming. An Historical Tale (Philadelphia, 1830), 45-46; Morton, a Tale of the Revolution (Cincinnati, 1828), 51; John Lothrop Motley, Morton's Hope; or, the Memoirs of a Provincial (2 vols., New York, 1839), I, 55-56; Paulding, The Old Continental, I, 8; John Hovey Robinson, The Boston Conspiracy or the Royal Police. A Tale of 1773-75 (Boston, 1847), 7-9; Mrs. John Hovey Robinson, Evelyn, the Child of the Revolution. A
Although all writers did not specify the lessons to be learned from the Revolution, a study of its causes fit in particularly well with the prevailing theory of history. Since the past was to provide examples for strengthening society, the purpose of history was to inculcate the principles of morality, religion, and patriotism. A study of the events leading to the War of Independence proved that the patriots epitomized virtue, that Providence guided them through the arduous conflict, and that a nation founded upon the principle of liberty deserved loyalty. Furthermore, a study of the Revolution was beneficial to philosophers who needed to understand the progress of human knowledge, to private citizens who hoped to appreciate their blessings and to imitate the moral excellence of their forefathers, and to statesmen who wished to trace the foundations of political institutions. The principles of 1776 as expressed in the Declaration of Independence also provided useful instruction. Citizens would learn that all men were created equal and had the right to resist oppression. Equally important, the


48 Callcott, History in the United States, 180.

Congress of '76 had laid a political foundation for posterity by affirming that government derived its power from the consent of the governed.  

Noting that history was philosophy teaching by example, one Fourth of July orator, William Plumer, Jr., enumerated the benefits of studying the American Revolution. The first great lesson was the duty of self-devotion to public good. Revolutionary patriots had sacrificed their occupational pursuits and risked their lives, fortunes, and families to achieve independence. According to Plumer, nineteenth-century citizens could also learn to imitate the example of "sagacious forethought and preventive wisdom—to discover the danger, while yet in its embryo—to crush the serpent in the egg." The colonists had revolted not simply against a three-penny tax on tea but because of the possibility that the tax might lead to further aggressions. Still another lesson, Plumer explained, was that of union and perseverance in a good cause. Great Britain had sought to divide and thereby subdue Americans during the Revolution,

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but the people had united and submerged their provincial feelings.\textsuperscript{51}

United States citizens believed that the revolutions during the first half of the nineteenth century were a significant consequence of their own struggle for freedom. Because Americans were a unique people, their War of Independence could not be perfectly imitated to the last detail, but their conflict with Britain did provide the best example of a successful revolution. From the first settlements, the colonists had built their own society and carefully guarded against encroachments upon their rights. Prepared for the disputes between 1763 and 1775, Americans had during them displayed attributes of wisdom and moderation. After fighting commenced, the colonists had overcome insurmountable obstacles to bring the war to a victorious conclusion. Since nineteenth-century Americans believed the Revolution was the foundation of their Union and had important world-wide consequences, the revolt against Britain was glorified and the men who participated in it were seen as nothing less than heroes.

\textsuperscript{51}William Plumer, Jr., An Address Delivered at Portsmouth, N. H. on the Fourth of July, 1828 (Portsmouth, 1828), 13-19; see also Fletcher Webster, An Oration Delivered before the Authorities of the City of Boston, in the Tremont Temple, July 4, 1846 (Boston, 1846), 4-5.
Chapter 2

PARAGONS OF VIRTUE: THE HEROES OF THE
AMERICAN REVOLUTION

In reconstructing the story of the American Revolu-
tion, nineteenth-century authors and orators needed heroes
who participated in and brought the conflict with Britain to
a victorious conclusion. Conscious of the fact that United
States citizens had no long list of kings, queens, and
aristocrats to write about as did Europeans, American
authors compensated for this lack of historical subjects by
creating exemplary patriots. Moreover, since the preserva-
tion of the republic depended upon a virtuous population,
writers emphasized the patriots' characteristics that
deserved emulation. The history of the American Revolution
exhibited "rare examples of personal virtue and heroism in
our ancestors, well worthy of the highest admiration of their
descendants."\(^1\) Stressing quality rather than quantity,
nineteenth-century Americans believed that no nation in the
world had more outstanding heroes than those who participated
in the War of Independence.\(^2\) "No other people can trace so

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\(^1\) Wilson, History of the American Revolution, 13.

\(^2\) Reed, Address, 7; [William Bradford Reed], "Pennsyl-
vanian Biography," NAR, XXXIII (July, 1831), 105; Niles,
XIX (Sept. 2, 1820), 2.
heroic and enlightened an ancestry; none can boast so unsullied an history, or a more brilliant register of statesmen and patriots than could the United States. Since their ancestors were so illustrious, Americans believed that they should collect the patriots' records for themselves and for posterity.

Noting that only four of the fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence were living in 1820, a journalist lamented the fact that the survivors of the War of Independence would not live forever to relate stories of former days. A young boy would be a better and happier man if he could "seat himself at the foot of a venerated revolutionary father and listen to his unvarnished tales of the War of Independence, the battles in which he participated, and the thrilling scenes he witnessed." Since many of the Revolutionary patriots had already died, their documents and letters should be collected and made available to all Americans and to posterity. "We owe it to ourselves, and to the memory of our ancestors, to collect and preserve, if possible every thing that relates to their deeds and

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4 Niles, XIX (Sept. 2, 1820), 1.

5 Thomas Marshall Smith, Legends of the War of Independence, and of the Earlier Settlements in the West (Louisville, 1855), vi; see also Herbert Wendell, II, 209-10.
characters, their sufferings, and perilous situations."\(^6\) If there were no old patriots available to re-tell stories of the Revolution, the next best thing was biography. The idea prevailed that the history of the Revolution could not be written until the biographies of the participants were completed.\(^7\)

In many cases the format for biography in the first half of the nineteenth century was little more than the reproduction of correspondence; for, as Edward Everett phrased it, "the history of the Revolution is in the letters of the great men who shone in it."\(^8\) This method of publishing personal papers, besides requiring little effort on the part of the author, suited the philosophy that biography was the best means to teach others to imitate virtue and to avoid vice. Believing that the truth of a man's character and career could best be found in his private papers, compilers were reluctant to interject their own commentary for fear of distorting historical reality. Arranging the subject's correspondence and personal documents in chronological order, biographers wrote a minimal amount of introductive and connective prose. As William Jay, compiler of John Jay's

\(^6\) [Thomas Cogswell Upham], "New Hampshire Historical Collections," NAR, XVIII (Jan., 1824), 34.

\(^7\) William Bradford Reed, Life and Correspondence of Joseph Reed, Military Secretary of Washington, at Cambridge; Adjutant-General of the Continental Army; Member of the Congress of the United States; and President of the Executive Council of the State of Pennsylvania (2 vols., Philadelphia, 1847), I, 25.

\(^8\) [E. Everett], "Memoir of R. H. Lee," 399.
The biography of public men cannot be well understood without a knowledge of the public affairs in which they were concerned; and hence it has sometimes been found necessary to encroach on the province of history. This, however, has been done no further than the subject required; and pains have been taken, by means of anecdotes and private letters to introduce the reader to a familiar acquaintance with Mr. Jay, throughout the whole course of his political career. The information thus afforded will, it is hoped, compensate for the interruptions of the narrative which it necessarily occasions.9

Hoping to preserve the records of Revolutionary participants, authors compiled biographies of Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, Arthur Lee, George Washington, Daniel Morgan, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison of Virginia; John Adams, James Otis, James Sullivan, and Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts; Nathanael Green of Rhode Island; Gouverneur Morris, John Jay, William Livingston, and John Lamb of New York; Joseph Reed and Henry Muhlenburg of Pennsylvania; John Start of New Hampshire; Jonathan Trumbull of Connecticut; and Francis Marion of South Carolina.10 For the most part,


10William Wirt, Sketches of the Life and Character of Patrick Henry (Philadelphia, 1817); Richard Henry Lee, Memoir of the Life of Richard Henry Lee, and his Correspondence with the Most Distinguished Men in America and Europe. Illustrative of their Characters, and of the Events of the American Revolution (2 vols., Philadelphia, 1825), and Life of Arthur Lee, LL.D. Joint Commissioner of the United States to the Court of France, and Sole Commissioner to the Courts of Spain and Prussia, during the Revolutionary War. With his Political and Literary Correspondence and his Papers on Diplomatic and Political Subjects, and the Affairs of the
these biographies were little more than collections of correspondence. One author explained that biographers were
gathering material for future generations, not writing histories of the country. Though authors reproduced few, if any, letters written prior to 1775, they assured their readers that their subjects were ardent patriots who led the Revolutionary movement in their respective states.

For the citizens who wanted summaries of the lives of the heroes, biographical dictionaries were available. Some collections included Revolutionary patriots along with men who had been prominent in other periods of American history.

Correspondence of Gen. John Stark, with Notices of Several other Officers of the Revolution (Concord, 1860); Isaac William Stuart, Life of Jonathan Trumbull, Sen., Governor of Connecticut (Boston, 1859); Horatio Newton Moore, The Life and Times of Gen. Francis Marion, with an Appendix, Containing: Biographical Notices of Greene, Morgan, Pickens, Sumter, Washington, Lee, Davie, and other Distinguished Officers of the Southern Campaign, during the American Revolution (Philadelphia, 1845); William Gilmore Simms, The Life of Francis Marion (New York, 1844).

11 Johnson, Sketches of Greene, I, ix.

12 American Political and Military Biography. In Two Parts. Part I. The Political Lives and Public Characters of the Presidents of the United States, and other Distinguished Men. Part II. The Lives, Characters, and Anecdotes of the Military and Naval Officers of the Revolution, Who Were Most Distinguished in Achieving our National Independence (n.p., 1825); James O. Brayman, Eight Thousand Daring Deeds of American Heroes with Biographical Sketches (New York, 1855); John Stilwell Jenkins, The Lives of Patriots and Heroes, Distinguished in the Battles for American Freedom (Auburn, N. Y., 1847); John Royer, The Monument of Patriotism, being a Collection of Biographical Sketches of the Lives and Characters of Some of Those Men who Signed the Declaration of Independence of America; and Brief Sketches of Many other Eminent Statesmen. Also, Generals and Heroes who Fought and Bled in the Revolutionary War, and Also, the Most Prominent Characters of the Late War with Great Britain (Pottstown, 1825); Jared Sparks (ed.), The Library of American Biography (25 vols., Boston, 1834-1848); Thomas Wilson, The Biography of the Principal American Military and
while others were devoted exclusively to those who had participated in the War of Independence. The subjects of these biographical sketches were diplomats, higher-ranked Naval Heroes; Comprehending Details of their Achievements during the Revolutionary and Late Wars (2 vols., New York, 1819); Thomas Wyatt, Memoirs of the Generals, Commodores, and other Commanders, who Distinguished Themselves in the American Army and Navy during the Wars of the Revolution and 1812, and who Were Presented with Medals by Congress, for their Gallant Services (Philadelphia, 1848).

military and naval officers, signers of the Declaration of Independence, and political leaders in the various states and the Continental Congress. Whether an entire volume or a few pages were devoted to an individual, note was made of his birth, family, career, and, if applicable, his death. Each account concluded with the subject's leading traits that qualified him for the status of hero.

If most biographies were designed to publicize the virtues of the patriots, other biographies and sketches appeared in the nineteenth century written by or for Revolutionary veterans who appealed for public support in their efforts to obtain pensions. The authors cited the battles in which they had participated and the sufferings which they had endured during the War of Independence. Declaring that they had given the best part of their lives to the service of their country without compensation, they were now prematurely old and neglected. Unable to provide for themselves, the old soldiers sought financial relief from the national government. 14 Berating Congress for not providing for aged

14 Daniel Barber, The History of my Own Times (3 vols., Washington City, 1827-1832), III, 3; Joseph Plumb Martin, A Narrative of Some of the Adventures, Dangers and Sufferings of a Revolutionary Soldier; Interspersed with Anecdotes of Incidents that Occurred Within his Own Observation (Hallowell, 1830); John Nicholas, The Statement and Substance of a Memorial of John Nicholas (Richmond, 1820), 10; Nathaniel Segar, A Brief Narrative of the Captivity and Sufferings of Lt. Nathan'1 Segar, who was Taken Prisoner by the Indians and Carried to Canada, during the Revolutionary War (Paris, 1825), 30-32; Andrew Sherburne, Memoirs of Andrew Sherburne (Utica, 1828); John Slocum, An Authentic Narrative of the Life of Joshua Slocum: Containing a Succinct Account of his
veterans, orators claimed it was a patriotic duty to support indigent soldiers who had fought for liberty and freedom.\textsuperscript{15}

Not only generals and other prominent leaders received attention during the nineteenth century, but private soldiers also either produced their memoirs or had biographies written about them. At least four authors attempted to capitalize on popular interest in the Revolution. John P. Becker entitled his book, \textit{The Sexagenary, or Reminiscences of the American Revolution}; yet Becker was not born until 1765 and did not serve as a soldier in the Revolution, although he did remember hearing about the Battle of Lexington.\textsuperscript{16} Another title designed to appeal to the public was \textit{Memoirs of Samuel Smith, a Soldier of the Revolution, 1776-1783}, edited by Charles Bushnell. Nevertheless, Smith enlisted in the

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\textbf{Revoluntary Services. Together with other Interesting Reminiscences and Thrilling Incidents in his Eventful Life (Hartford, 1844), 102; William B. Wallace, To the Honorable, the Members of Both Houses of Congress. This Condensed Sketch of the Service, and Some of the Privations and Sufferings of William B. Wallace, A Lieutenant of Artillery of the Revolutionary War, Chiefly Relating to his Captivity, is Humbly Submitted (Frankfort, 1826), 2; William Henry Glasson, History of Military Pension Legislation in the United States (New York, 1900), 45.}
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\textsuperscript{15}William Emmons, \textit{An Oration and Poem Delivered July 4, 1826, being the Fiftieth Anniversary of American Independence} (Boston, 1826), 3-4; William Pitt Fessenden, \textit{An Oration, Delivered before the Young Men of Portland, July 4, 1827} (Portland, 1827), 6; Christopher R. Greene, \textit{An Oration, Delivered in St. Michael's Church, Charleston, South-Carolina; on Tuesday, the Fourth of July, 1815; in Commemoration of American Independence} (Charleston, 1815), 10-11; Livermore, \textit{Address}, 10-11; Richardson, \textit{Oration}, 19.

continental army but was never mustered as a soldier because of a physical handicap.17 Samuel Benjamin and K. M. Hutchinson also preserved for posterity the lives of their kinsmen. Each of these authors narrated the life of his subject including his Revolutionary services in less than twenty pages.18

In time the only qualification an individual needed in order to be a hero was to have lived during the War of Independence. For example, Colonel Marinus Willett of New York was honored and celebrated as an old Revolutionary soldier in the 1820's,19 even though he had been stationed on the frontier during most of the war and had participated only in the Battle of Monmouth.20 Residents of Indianapolis were not the least bit distressed when they discovered that their only Revolutionary hero, who was honored at July Fourth celebrations, had been a Hessian soldier.21 William


18Samuel Benjamin, Brief Notice of Lieutenant Samuel Benjamin, an Officer of the Revolutionary War, with Extracts from a Diary Kept by him during the War (Washington, 1865); K. M. Hutchinson, A Memoir of Abijah Hutchinson, a Soldier of the Revolution (Rochester, 1843).

19Niles, XXIII (Sept. 20, 1822), 71; XXV (Dec. 13, 1823), 228.

20William Marinus Willett, A Narrative of the Military Actions of Colonel Marinus Willett (New York, 1831), 6-7.

Jay identified his father, John Jay, as a Revolutionary patriot without noting his services as diplomat, as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, or as Governor of New York. In like manner, Henry Flanders, in *Lives of the Chief Justices*, presented biographical sketches of John Jay, John Rutledge, William Cushing, Oliver Ellsworth, and John Marshall. By no means did Flanders dwell upon these men as Justices, for he concentrated on their careers during the War of Independence.

Of all the heroes of the American Revolution, no one was more prominent, more idolized, or more worthy of emulation than was George Washington. Although "Parson" Mason Lock Weems inaugurated in print the Washington legend, thousands more contributed to it. In addition to the five hundred biographies of Washington appearing in the nineteenth century, journalists, orators, and novelists contributed their share to sanctifying the hero. He was "that complete model of the citizen and the soldier" and "his country's savior." Not just another hero, Washington was the hero who had no equals.

As late as 1860, a contributor to the *North American*

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24*Niles*, XXV (Oct. 25, 1823), 127.

Review, Cornelius Conway Felton, was highly indignant that William Makepeace Thackeray in his novel The Virginians had fictionalized Washington. According to the journalist, Thackeray presented a totally false picture by having George propose marriage to Martha three years before Mr. Custis died. Even worse, Washington accepted a challenge to duel, and "this moral blunder is worse than all the rest." Felton continued

And yet we have heard some Americans praise this foolish picture, because, forsooth, it makes Washington like other men. Why, this is the very essence of falsehood. Washington was not like other men; and to bring his lofty character down to the level of the vulgar passions of common life, is to give the lie to the grandest chapter in the uninspired annals of the human race.26

While British authors were guilty of moral blunders, American writers cast no aspersions on Washington's character. One novelist referred to Washington as "that great chief whom God seemed to have left childless, so that a nation might call him 'Father.'"27 Another wrote, "whenever the writer has mentioned Washington, she has felt a sentiment resembling the awe of the pious Israelite when he approached the arc of the Lord."28 The epitome of perfection, 

26 [Cornelius Conway Felton], "Everett's Life of Washington," NAR, XCI (Oct., 1860), 581.

27 Edward Zane Carroll Judson, Saul Sabberday; or, the Idiot Spy. A Tale of the Men and Deeds of '76 (New York, 1858), 27.

28 Catharine Maria Sedgwick, The Linwoods; or, 'Sixty Years Since' in America (2 vols., New York, 1835), I, xiii.

Nineteenth-century Americans lauded Washington not as the first President of the United States but as the Commander-in-Chief of the continental army. He was "the soul of the revolution, felt at its center, and felt through all its parts, as an uniting, organizing power." Only Washington could have led Americans to the successful conclusion of the War of Independence. "He was security in defeat, cheer in despondency, light in darkness, hope in despair—the one man in whom all could have confidence—the one man whose sun-like integrity and capacity shot rays of light and heat through everything they shone upon." As long as


30 Whipple, Washington, 23.
Revolutionary patriots had God and Washington on their side, success was inevitable.  

The only individual who, for a brief time, was accorded the status of Washington's equal was the Marquis de Lafayette who, at the time of his tour of the United States in 1824-1825, was the last surviving general of the Revolutionary War. At hundreds of celebrations held in Lafayette's honor during his thirteen-month journey, Americans reminded themselves again and again that he had abandoned his family, fortune, and homeland to fight for the cause of liberty. Upon arriving on American shores, he had found a destitute army without resources, and resorting to his own pocketbook, Lafayette made it possible for armies to advance or retreat. In the midst of hazardous warfare, "the amiability of his manner, and the goodness of his heart, with his ardent devotion to the cause, encouraged the weak, strengthened the wavering, and confirmed the resolute." Departing for France without compensation after the war ended, Lafayette said to his fellow patriots, "'be happy and I shall be satisfied.'"

31Paulding, The Old Continental, I, 56.

32Niles, XXVI (Aug. 21, 1824), 401; (Aug. 28, 1824), 427; XXVII (Sept. 4, 1824), 12-14; (Sept. 18, 1824), 41-43; (Sept 25, 1824), 60; (Oct. 2, 1824), 71; (Oct. 9, 1824), 82, 96-99; (Oct. 16, 1824), 97, 101-11; (Oct. 23, 1824), 117-23; (Oct. 30, 1824), 138-42; (Nov. 6, 1824), 153-58; (Nov. 20, 1824), 190; (Dec. 4, 1824), 218-19; (Dec. 18, 1824), 241-42; (Dec. 25, 1824), 259; (Jan. 1, 1825), 273, 275; (Jan. 8, 1825), 291-92; (Feb. 12, 1825), 369; Anne C. Loveland, Emblem of Liberty: The Image of Lafayette in the American Mind (Baton Rouge, 1971), 46.

33Niles, XXVII (Nov. 6, 1824), 145-47.
To Americans of the 1820's his actions were a perfect example of disinterestedness that deserved emulation.34

No less worthy of imitation were other sages and heroes of the American Revolution.35 Cataloguing only the good characteristics of Revolutionary patriots, Hezekiah Niles cited Benjamin Franklin's "wonderful mind and profound knowledge of things," Samuel Adams' "zeal and skill in managing men," John Adams' "energy," Joseph Warren's "amiable devotion," John Hancock's "firmness," Thomas

34 Address by an Old Soldier of Wrenthan, 10; Hazen, Oration, 15; Grenville Mellan, Address, Delivered before the Citizens of North-Yarmouth, on the Anniversary of American Independence: July 4, 1825 (Portland, 1825), 18-19; Francis Winter, An Address, Delivered at Bath, July 4, 1825, on the Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence (Bath, 1825), 607; Loveland, Emblem of Liberty, 26-28.

35 G. W. Adams, Oration, 21-23; Brown, Address, 14-15; Bynum, Oration, iii; Adoniram Chandler, An Oration, Delivered before the New-York Typographical Society, on their Seventh Anniversary, July 4, 1816 (New York, 1816), 11; Thomas D. Condy, An Oration, Delivered in St. Philip's Church, before an Assemblage of the Inhabitants of Charleston, South-Carolina, on the 5th Day of July, 1819; (the 4th being Sunday) in Commemoration of American Independence (Charleston, 1819), 18-19; William Huffington, An Oration Delivered at the State-House in Dover, the 4th July, 1827 on the Order of the Delaware Blues, to that Corps, and to Respectable Delegations from other Volunteer Troops and Corps of the Second Brigade of Delaware Militia, and to a Numerous Collection of Ladies and Gentlemen from Different Parts of the County of Kent (Dover, 1827), 5-6; William Powell Mason, An Oration Delivered Wednesday, July 4, 1827, in Commemoration of American Independence, before the Supreme Executive of the Common-wealth, and the City Council and Inhabitants of the City of Boston (Boston, 1827), 3; Henry B. Smith, An Oration, Delivered at Dorchester, on the Fourth of July, 1822 (Boston, 1822), 7; Joseph E. Sprague, An Address Delivered before the Salem Charitable Mechanic Association, on their Fourth Anniversary, July 4, 1821, in the North Meeting House (Salem, 1821), 14; [Reed], "Pennsylvanian Biography," 105-106; Niles, XXV (Nov. 15, 1823), 167.
Jefferson's "beautiful simplicity of principles and talents," Israel Putnam's "blunt honesty," Horatio Gates' "perseverance and sincerity," Anthony Wayne's "impetuosity," Joseph Reed's "incorruptibility," Charles Thompson's "fidelity," Patrick Henry's "eloquence," Francis Marion's "enterprise," Robert Morris' "skill in 'ways and means,'" John Dickinson's "moderation;--and so on through a list of heroes and sages whose names are as lasting as the history of their country, and recorded in the hearts of their countrymen." Not one of the fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence became a "reprobate," "nor in the army was there anyone of considerable rank, Arnold excepted, who turned traitor to the cause of his country, notwithstanding the powerful temptations to sin."

If Revolutionary heroes provided exemplary behavior to imitate, Benedict Arnold had many of the vices that should be avoided. Surprisingly, many nineteenth-century Americans ignored the existence of Tories in their earlier history, but they were quick to castigate Arnold. "But one traitor was found among the disciples of Christ--but one was found among the sages and heroes of the American Revolution. That traitor was Benedict Arnold, a major in the army of the illustrious Washington." From the time he was a child,

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36 Niles, XXII (June 15, 1822), 243.
37 Ibid., XIX (Sept. 2, 1820), 1-2.
38 Judson, Sages and Heroes, 32.
Arnold demonstrated the traits of his defective character.

Reckless, pitiless, and daring, he was the terror of his playmates, and disliked by all. He would not only rob nests of their young, but torture his victims so as to draw forth the agonizing cries and efforts of the parent bird. He would scatter broken glass in the road, where the school-children passed barefoot, and tempt them round the druggist-shop in which he was employed, with broken phials, only to scourge them away with a horsewhip. He was bold as he was cruel, and delighted in those perilous feats which none of his companions dared imitate.39

Exhibiting brilliance, skill, and bravery as a Revolutionary officer, Arnold, nevertheless, was impetuous, arrogant, over-bearing, and unscrupulous. Although the Continental Congress erred in promoting his juniors over him, a real patriot would not have become a traitor. In addition to the guilt of treason, Arnold's life taught the lesson "that it is no less dangerous than criminal, to let party spirit or personal friendship, promote the less deserving over their superiors in rank. The enemies of Arnold have a heavy account to render for their injustice, and our Congress would do well to take warning from their example."40

Since Americans found few villains among themselves, they could look to England for those whose actions demonstrated vices to be avoided. Far too rigid in treating the people of England and the colonists the same, George Grenville "was no great thing of a statesman," and was known as

39Headley, Washington and his Generals, I, 147.
40Ibid., I, 194.
"a man of red tape." Whereas Parliament had the right to tax Englishmen, Parliament did not have the right to tax Americans. Failing to recognize this distinction, Grenville's "error was the result not so much perhaps of willful intention as of inconsideration, favored by a spirit habitually negligent of popular rights." The colonists then were forced to resist "the recklessness of one public man who from selfish motives, lighted the torch of civil war."

Nineteenth-century Americans were cautioned to recognize selfish inconsiderate politicians who ignored the rights of the people.41

Although individual Americans received condemnation or adulation, for the most part, citizens tended to think of their Revolutionary fathers collectively. According to nineteenth-century citizens, Americans displayed unsurpassed intelligence and enthusiasm in opposing British usurpations of authority during the controversy between England and the colonies from 1763 to 1775. Patriots of the Revolution were not concerned with "mere worldly policy, selfish revenge, or vulgar ambition," nor were they "greedy adventurers" and "cold, long-sighted politicians." Individual ambition for personal gain was not a motivating factor in deciding to resist the British; rather, separation was accomplished by a disinterested body of patriotic men who were devoted to the

41 Charles Francis Adams, An Address Delivered before the Members of the Schools, and the Citizens of Quincy, July 4, 1856 (Boston, 1856), 12, 19.
cause of liberty and the happiness of man.42

Once in the field of battle, Americans faced a large army composed of disciplined, healthy, vigorous, ably commanded and completely equipped troops. American soldiers, on the other hand, were unfed, unclothed, ill-equipped, diseased, and discouraged throughout the war. Lacking money and having almost no credit, the Continental Congress had no power but that of recommending. The commanding officers had problems with enlistments and desertions, especially among militiamen who wanted to return to their families. However, those "poorly paid, scantily fed and scarcely clothed" soldiers who remained on the battle field fought valiantly.43 Through the intervention of Providence along with the skill of Washington and his generals, and the pervasive sentiment

42 Biddle, Address, 29-30; Channing, Oration, 8-9; Colman, Oration, 5; Dexter, Oration, 12; Dwight, Oration, 16-17; Edward Everett, Oration Delivered on the Fourth Day of July, 1835, before the Citizens of Beverly, without Distinction of Party (Boston, 1835), 4; George Wurtz Hughes, Oration; Delivered on the Seventy-Sixth Anniversary of the Declaration of the Independence of the United States, July 4, 1851, in the Senate Chamber of the Capitol at Annapolis (Annapolis, 1851), 14; Lee, Oration, 2; John Nelson M'Jilton, God's Footsteps, A Sermon Delivered in St. Stephen's Church, Baltimore, July 4th, 1852 (Baltimore, 1852), 11; Quincy, Oration Delivered 1826, 6; Sumner, Oration, 1; Van Pelt, Discourse, 20-21; Wells, Oration, 25.

43 Judson, Sages and Heroes, 126; see also Hooper Cum- ming, An Oration, Delivered July 4th, 1817 (Albany, 1817), 14; Samuel Lewis Southard, Address Delivered before the Newark Mechanics' Association, July 5, 1830 (Newark, 1830), 5-6; Van Pelt, Discourse, 6; James Humphrey Wilder, An Ora- tion Delivered at the Request of the Young Men of Hingham, on the Fourth of July, 1832 (Hingham, 1832), 15.
of love of liberty throughout the country, American troops successfully defeated the British.

While biographers, orators, and journalists emphasized the nobility of the Revolutionary patriots, novelists also created fictional heroes who were no less deserving of emulation. Following the War of 1812, Americans became increasingly interested in their own history, particularly the War of Independence, as a subject for historical romances. As more and more novels dealing with the war—eventually a hundred or so—appeared between 1820 and 1860, the heroes became even more virtuous and stereotyped. The typical hero was a man of strong feelings "who threw his whole soul into all subjects that engaged his attention. He was never luke-warm, especially when the question involved the rights of any human being." The decision of the hero to side with the patriots was no rash act but came only after he had impartially examined the issues between the colonies and Britain. The cause of the Americans was so righteous and just that even Quakers could not stand by


their pacifist convictions. 47

Having decided to support the Americans, the representative patriot sacrificed fortune and family. Disowned by his wealthy father who sympathized with the Tories, the typical hero surrendered the prospect of inheriting a fortune in order to fight for his country. 48 Not only did the patriot sometimes lose the respect of his father, but he often had to leave the side of his loved one. For example, during the wedding ceremony of Louise Arnoult and Ernest Rivers, firing was heard from enemy guns.

One kiss upon the bride's forehead, as he places the ring upon her finger— one clinging embrace, as the trumpet-note falls on his ear— and then Ernest Rivers resigns the wife of his bosom to her father's arms. The next moment he is gone from the apartment and at the head of a gallant troop of patriots, hastens to the river's banks.

Such were the men of the Revolution. 49

47 John Richter Jones, The Quaker Soldier; or, the British in Philadelphia. An Historical Novel (Philadelphia, 1855), 100; Judson, Saul Sabberday, 3.


49 Augustine Joseph Hukey Duganne, The Bravo's Daughter or the Tory of Carolina. A Romance of the American Revolution (New York, 1849), 8; see also Robert Hare, Standish the Puritan. A Tale of the American Revolution (New York, 1850), 74; Willis, Carleton, II, 39.
Usually, the hero fought by himself or at the head of a small band of patriots rather than as a member of the continental army or a state militia. Always thinking of the safety of others, he exposed himself to danger in order to prevent the capture of his friends.50

Embarked upon his venture, the hero had almost insurmountable obstacles to overcome as he was pitted against Tories, Indians, British and mercenary troops. Of all these opponents, Tories were the worst villains since they often professed Whig principles but secretly aided the British.51 Writers presented the struggle between Whigs and Tories as a contest between good and evil. For example, in one novel, the password of patriots was "liberty," and that of Tories was "women and whiskey."52 The dichotomy of good and evil

50 Aria Ashland, The Rebel Scout: A Romance of the Revolution (New York, 1852); Benjamin Barker, Ellen Grafton, the Lily of Lexington; or the Bride of Liberty. A Romance of the Revolution (Boston, 1846), 41; William Tell Barnitz, The Recluse of the Conewaga; or, the Little Valley of the Blue Spring (Carlisle, 1853), 8; Dennis Hannigan, The Swamp Steed; or, the Days of Marion and his Merry Men. A Romance of the American Revolution (New York, 1852), 18; Hare, Standish, 40; Joseph Holt Ingraham, Burton; or the Sieges (2 vols., New York, 1838), I, 239-40.

51 Newton Mallory Curtis, The Scout of the Silver Pond (New York, 1849), 3; Eliza Lanesford Cushing, Saratoga; a Tale of the Revolution (2 vols., Boston, 1824), I, 44; Hare, Standish, 87; Jones, The Quaker Soldier, 42; Labree, Rebels and Tories, 32; McHenry, The Betrothed, 18; Mrs. J. H. Robinson, Evelyn, 21.

52 The Buttonwoods; or, the Refugees of the Revolution (Philadelphia, 1849), 25; see also Duganne, The Bravo's Daughter, 3.
was even applied to physical description.

Joseph and William Warner looked as unlike each other as they really were in pursuits and inclinations. Joseph was dark, lowering, and designing; with eyes deeply set, and looking out from beneath their shaggy brows, like the fiery balls of a tiger hidden in the clefts of a precipice. William's complexion was likewise dark, but his expression was extremely noble and ingenuous, and his face had much fresh youthful beauty. Joseph was a furious Tory; William was a firm and decided Whig.53

More often than not, the heroine was captured by Tories thereby giving the hero the opportunity to show all his ingenuity, bravery, and courage in arranging the escape. In the contest between patriot and Tory for the hand of the fair maiden, the patriot won just as the Whigs were successful in their revolt against Britain.

In describing the characteristics of fictional heroes and the actual participants in the Revolution, both novelists and biographers presented their heroes in the best possible light for the purpose of inculcating the virtues of self-reliance, honesty, piety, industry, practicality, courage, and patriotism. Although writers stressed the same characteristics, the heroes they chose to write about were different in one important respect. Biographers naturally chose as subjects higher-ranked military and naval officers, diplomats, prominent politicians, and congressmen, for these leaders were more likely to have carried on correspondence

and preserved their records. Novelists, on the other hand, created heroes who fulfilled an important function. In an age that prized individualism, self-reliance, and bravery, fictional protagonists appealed more to the "common man." A nineteenth-century citizen who never achieved any prominence or notoriety could more easily identify with an "unknown" patriot who bravely and by himself faced English soldiers or traitorous Tories. In any case, both the fictional heroes and the real participants possessed only noble characteristics that allowed them to overcome all difficulties whether facing an individual Tory or a battalion of British troops. Because of the success of Revolutionary patriots, the United States had become a free and independent nation.

Nineteenth-century Americans were conscious that their government was an experiment on trial before other nations of the world. Since perfect men had withdrawn from the British Empire and formed a new government in 1787, then the product of their creation had to be faultless. Uncertain of the future of the United States, Americans of the middle period constantly looked to the example of the Revolutionary fathers for guidance in preserving the republic. They believed that a study of the trials, tribulations, and accomplishments of the fathers would foster national pride, strengthen patriotism, and stimulate a concern for liberty.54

54Edward S. Bellamy, Domestic Manufactures, the Source of Real Independence: An Oration, Delivered before the New-York Typographical Society, on the Celebration of their
At the same time, since they were well-schooled in classical history, citizens were aware of the charge that two ancient republics, Athens and Rome, had fallen because the people failed to appreciate the founders.\(^5\) Thus, a second impulse behind American preoccupation with the Revolutionary fathers was the desire to show gratitude. Collecting documents, writing biographies of old patriots, and celebrating the Fourth of July were methods of showing an appreciation for the accomplishments of the heroes. Furthermore, citizens could demonstrate their gratitude by encouraging other nations to adopt the form of government that the Revolutionary patriots had founded.

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\(^5\) William E. Arthur, An Oration Delivered on the Fourth Day of July, 1850, before the Citizens of Covington, Ky. (Covington, 1850), 9; Richardson, Oration, 21-22.
Chapter 3

STRUGGLES FOR LIBERTY: FOREIGN REVOLTS
AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Proud of their country and its institutions, Americans in the decades after 1815 hoped that other countries would establish governments similar to their own. Since a revolution was in progress somewhere in the world during most of the first half of the nineteenth century, there was ample opportunity for other nations to imitate the United States example by establishing republics. Of course, those revolutions that involved "colonies" and "mother countries" were the most popular among American citizens. Merely achieving independence was insufficient, for in a war of independence, the final step—the formation of a republic—was essential for a truly successful upheaval. Americans could agree that their own history had inspired other revolutions, but not all concurred that the foreign revolts were an exact imitation of the United States experience.

Addressing those countries that were still in a colonial stage, Americans explained the advantages of being independent. No longer were they subjected to restrictions by a mother country located three thousand miles across the ocean. If independence had not occurred, the United States
would have been without rank and power among the nations of the world. As British subjects, they would have been slaves, their commerce would have been inhibited by English policy, and their navy would have been shackled to British whim. As William Pinckney explained, "imagination startles at the bare conception of the miseries which would have been entailed by continued dependence upon Britain." Americans would "have been a poor, despised, oppressed, degenerate population." Now that the War of 1812 had ended, Americans felt secure, free, and prosperous since their industry, commerce, and agriculture were flourishing once again. Elated by their progressive young nation, citizens traced this prosperity back to the Revolution.

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1 Samuel Berrian, An Oration, Delivered before the Tammany Society, or Columbian Order, Hibernian Provident, Columbian, and Shipwright's Societies, in the City of New-York, on the Fourth Day of July, 1815 (New York, 1815), 3.

2 Henry Laurens Pinckney, An Oration, Delivered in St. Michael's Church, before an Assemblage of the Inhabitants of Charleston, South-Carolina; on the Fourth of July, 1818. In Commemoration of American Independence; by Appointment of the '76 Association, and Published at the Request of that Society (Charleston, 1818), 8.

3 Berrian, Oration, 4.

4 Barton, Oration, 15; Brooke, Oration, 8; Dunlap, Oration Delivered 1819, 4; Dwight, Oration, 9-10; Gerry Fairbanks, An Oration, Pronounced July 4, 1821, at the Request of the Republicans of the Town of Boston, in Commemoration of the Anniversary of the National Independence (n.p., 1821), 22; Benjamin Gleason, Anniversary Oration, in Commemoration of American Independence. Pronounced before the Republican Citizens of Charlestown, July 5, 1819 (Charlestown, 1819), 14-15; Knight, Oration, 20; John Berwick Legare, An Oration, Delivered in St. Michael's Church, Charleston, South-Carolina, on the Fourth of July, 1822; before the '76 Association
The simple act of separation did not solely account for the progress of the next half century, for orators gave credit to the national government established by the Revolutionary fathers. The colonies had been disunited, dependent, and feeble until the War of Independence freed them to form the Union. According to nineteenth-century Americans, the Revolution terminated not with the cessation of hostilities in 1783, but with the implementation of the Constitution of 1787. The adoption of the Constitution had resulted in the formation of a republic that confirmed the principles of equal liberty, equal justice, and equal rights, at a time when the powerful nations were monarchical.  

(John Quincy Adams, An Oration Delivered before the Inhabitants of the Town of Newburyport, at their Request, on the Sixty-First Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, July 4th, 1837 (Newburyport, 1837), 44; Dwight, Oration, 7; Elfe, Oration, 10-11; Elliott, Oration, 35-36; John C. Gray, An Oration Pronounced on the Fourth of July, 1822, at the Request of the Inhabitants of the City of Boston, in Commemoration of the Anniversary of National Independence (Boston, 1822), 7; Mellan, Address, 12; Ramsay, Address, 32; Silas Wright, Jr., Address: Delivered 4th of July, 1839, at Canton, N.Y. (n.p., n.d.), 9-10; Niles, XIII (Oct. 18, 1817), 114; XXV (Oct. 18, 1823), 108.)
was still on trial, Americans after 1815 felt they must prove to the world that their experiment was successful.⁶

Believing that they had the greatest political and economic freedom to be found anywhere, Americans offered their country, at least through the 1820's, as an asylum for the oppressed.⁷ Since the world population obviously could not come to American shores, citizens hoped that other countries would follow the example of the United States. One journalist, Edward Everett, presented a formula for other nations that might attempt a republican independence. The first step in preparation was to educate the people and


⁷Joseph Bartlett, The Fourth of July Anticipated. An Address, Delivered at the Exchange Coffee-House Hall, on the Evening of the Third of July, 1823 (Boston, 1823), 14; Bisbe, Oration, 10; James Chestney, Jr., An Oration, Prepared and Published at the Request of the City Guards, of the City of Albany; Delivered July 4th, 1818 (Albany, 1818), 12; Condy, Oration, 5; Cross, Oration, 16; H. Cumming, Oration Delivered in 1817, 13; Knight, Oration, 11; Noah, Oration, 22-23; Richardson, Oration 6; Horace Smith, Oration, 20.
to produce gifted leaders. Through written discourse the people could learn of their rights and duties. The history of the colonies down to 1760 represented the first stage of preparation through written discourse. According to Everett, the second step in bringing reform was to inform the masses through public speaking. This procedure was not quite so effective because speech could occasionally appeal more to passion than reason. Nevertheless, this stage, occurring in America from 1760 to 1775, was useful when the masses comprehended the reforms to be undertaken. The third step was nothing more than "to raise the arm of flesh" if rights were not acknowledged. 8

The first revolutions to engage the attention of United States citizens after 1815 were those that had been in progress for a number of years in the South American provinces. Attention toward Latin American affairs had been diverted during the War of 1812; now for economic and political reasons, some Americans renewed their interest in the cause of the Latin states and hoped to see them independent of Spanish rule. 9 While Americans sympathized with the revolting provinces and believed that their own example had inspired the Hispanic-American revolts, not all agreed that the United States should recognize these governments.


Although Latin American independence had been briefly discussed in Congress, the first lengthy debate on the subject began in March 1818 when Henry Clay introduced an amendment adding $18,000 to an appropriation bill for the purpose of sending a minister to Buenos Aires. The exchange of diplomatic representatives was tantamount to United States recognition of the independence of the Latin American provinces. Economic and political factors dominated the debates, but congressmen did use the American Revolution in arguing for or against the proposal. For example, supporters and opponents held different views on whether there was an analogy between the North American contest for independence and the South American battle for freedom.

Expressing the view of congressmen who opposed the recognition of the southern provinces, John Forsyth of Georgia argued that there was little similarity between Latin American struggles for freedom and the American Revolution. Comparing the motives of the participants, the causes of the contests, and the progress of the battles, Forsyth maintained that the only resemblance between the North and South American revolutions was that the colonists contended for independence. The northern War of Independence was more moderate because as oppression approached, British subjects had calmly discussed their rights, had legitimately petitioned for a redress of grievances, and finally had been forced to fight for freedom.

10 Ibid., 244-45.
for long-established rights. Once war was underway, Americans had continued their practice of subordinating the military to the civil power and of organizing a government responsive to the will of the people. The South American colonists, on the other hand, had accepted oppression and tyranny for centuries until political independence was accidentally forced upon them. Inexperienced in forming governments based on popular vote, Latin Americans organized a government based on military rule. Ruled by the military, they divided into factions and engaged in intrigues to the point that internal revolutions were common occurrences.\textsuperscript{11}

Arguing further against recognition of Latin American independence, Forsyth saw no similarity between the character of the two wars. Except for minor personal feuds among Whigs and Tories, the contest between Britain and the colonists had been conducted honorably according to the laws of civilized warfare. No patriot officer had ordered the death of anyone who opposed the Whig cause. Furthermore, British armies had given ample justification for Americans to seek revenge especially after the "massacre of Paoli"; yet patriots had not dishonored their reputation by retaliating with a slaughter. The South Americans, however, instituted a policy of exterminating Spanish soldiers who were guilty of atrocities. Although southerners were justified in their actions and northerners would have been had

\begin{footnote}  
\textsuperscript{11}Annals of Congress, 15 Cong., 1 Sess., 1511 (March 25, 1818). 
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they sought retribution, the latter were more honorable for resisting temptation.¹²

Supporting the recognition of the Spanish American provinces, other congressmen maintained that the Latin American revolts and the North American War of Independence were analogous. Neither revolution began with the idea of gaining independence; rather, northern and southern patriots looked to a redress of grievances and remained loyal to the Crown until remonstrances were in vain. According to partisans of Clay's amendment, denying the righteousness of the Spanish American revolutions was equivalent to rejecting the legitimacy of the North American War of Independence. If anything, the neighbors to the south had more right to revolt because they had suffered severe oppression for centuries. Furthermore, southerners were fighting against actual tyranny while northerners had opposed only the theory and possibility of tyranny. Because they were enduring inhumane treatment, the Spanish colonists deserved sympathy and support. Since South Americans were fighting for liberty and against oppression, the United States could do no less than recognize the independence of these provinces.¹³

While opponents of Clay's amendment saw a difference between the character of the two wars, proponents contended

¹²Ibid., 1512.

¹³Ibid., 1478, 1479, 1488; ibid., 1528-29, 1561, 1562, 1563 (March 26, 1818), 1615, 1617 (March 28, 1818).
that the wars were similar. Although South Americans had factions, traitors, and intrigues, their cause did not deserve condemnation. After all, North Americans had had factions, Tories, and Benedict Arnold. In addition, North Americans had suffered other evils "where the father and the son have been armed against each other--where cold-blooded murders have been perpetrated, butcheries and indiscriminate massacres of men, women, and children, because they were Whigs, or because they were Tories." As far as Britain was concerned, the only reason that North Americans did not retaliate against England was that nothing had been done to provoke revenge. If British troops had committed execrable outrages, George Washington would have surely resorted to retribution.

Looking for precedents to use for recognizing newly independent nations, congressmen turned to the American Revolution when France had acknowledged the independence of the former British colonies. Again, the interpretation of the past was determined by the views of the individual on recognizing the Latin American provinces. Adversaries of Clay's amendment argued that United States acknowledgment of independence would lead to war with Spain just as French

\[14\] Ibid., 1491-92 (March 25, 1818), 1527 (March 26, 1818).
\[15\] Ibid., 1551-52 (March 26, 1818).
\[16\] Ibid., 1564; Ibid., 1587-88 (March 27, 1818), 1613-14 (March 28, 1818).
recognition of the American colonists had led England to declare war against France. Partisans of Clay's amendment maintained that Britain had waged war against France, not because she had acknowledged the independence of Americans, but because France had overtly guaranteed by treaty financial assistance, military support, and United States independence. Opponents countered with the contention that even though England knew that France had provided aid prior to 1778, she had not declared war. Furthermore, although Holland had allowed Americans to trade with her colonies, she had provided no aid and had prohibited shipment from her ports to the colonies; yet England had not declared war until the British had captured documents in which the Dutch had recognized the independence of the United States.

Among the arguments used to oppose the recognition of the Latin American provinces were that definite boundaries were unknown, that independence was not established, and that states to be acknowledged were not specified. Resorting to the time of the American Revolution, supporters of Clay's amendment noted that surely the American claim to

17Ibid., 1540-41, 1545 (March 26, 1818), 1575, 1577-78 (March 27, 1818), 1624, 1628-29 (March 28, 1818).

18Ibid., 1487 (March 25, 1818), 1532 (March 26, 1818), 1644 (March 28, 1818).

19Ibid., 1540, 1545 (March 26, 1818), 1638 (March 28, 1818).
independence was not lessened because the boundaries of the thirteen colonies had not been defined. In answering the second charge, the reply was that Spanish occupation of parts of the provinces did not diminish the claims to independence, for during the North American war, many areas and cities had been occupied by enemy troops. And, thirdly, the question of the specific provinces to be recognized was irrelevant since the British had not asked Benjamin Franklin which states were to be acknowledged.20

When the debates were concluded in 1818, supporters of the resolution to appropriate money for a minister to South American lost.21 Although the United States President and Congress at that time would not commit their government to a recognition of the Latin American provinces, North Americans continued to praise the efforts of South Americans. Calling for the recognition of the Latin American states, Hezekiah Niles maintained that those people were struggling for freedom and independence just as the British colonists had some forty years earlier.22 During the decade of the 1820's, one of the themes of the July Fourth orations was the inspiration the South Americans received from the American Revolution and the hope of northerners that the Latin Americans would

20Ibid., 1550-51, 1557 (March 26, 1818), 1611-12 (March 28, 1818).
21Ibid., 1655 (March 30, 1818).
22Niles, XV (Oct. 10, 1818), 106; (Oct. 24, 1818), 169.
be successful in the revolt against Spain. 23

The division of opinion in Congress on the question of Latin American independence was reflected also among editors and orators. 24 While the majority of the writings

23 An Address, Delivered before the Members of the Franklin Debating Club, on the Morning of the 5th July, 1824, being the Forty-Eighth Anniversary of American Independence (Newburyport, 1824), 2; I. Barton, Oration, 16; Cross, Oration, 13-14; Caleb Cushing, An Oration, Delivered in Newburyport, on the Forty-Fifth Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, 1821 (Newburyport, 1821), 11-12; Ewell, Oration, 12; Fairbanks, Oration, 8-9; Barnabas Field, An Oration, Pronounced in Commemoration of American Independence, before the Citizens of Dedham, and the Military Company for the Day, Composed of Citizen-Volunteers, July 4, 1822 (Dedham, 1822), 15; John Geddes, Jr., An Oration, Delivered in St. Andrew's Church, on the Fourth of July, 1821. Before the St. Andrew's Company, and at their Request (Charleston, 1821), 17; M. Holley, Oration, 21-22; William Hunter, Oration Pronounced before the Citizens of Providence, on the Fourth of July, 1826, being the Fiftieth Anniversary of American Independence (Providence, 1826), 43; James, Address, 17-18; William Lance, An Oration, Delivered in St. Andrew's Church, on the Fourth of July, 1820, before the Company of the Parish, and at their Request (Charleston, 1820), 11; H. Legare, Oration, 27; Nathaniel Hall Loring, An Address, Delivered at the Request of the Republican Committee of Arrangements, on the Anniversary of Independence, Fourth July, A. D. 1822, Charlestown, Mass. (Boston, 1822), 3; Rollin C. Mallary, An Oration Pronounced at Rutland Fourth July, 1826; being the Fiftieth Anniversary of American Independence, and the Year of Jubilee (Rutland, 1826), 20; Asher Robbins, Oration, Delivered on the Fourth of July, A. D. 1827, at Newport, R. I. (Providence, 1827), 3; J. E. Sprague, Oration, 9-10; Sumner, Oration, 15; Taylor, Address, 16-17; Vanden Heuvel, Oration, 24; Aaron Vanderpoel, An Oration, Delivered at Kinderhook on the 5th of July, 1824 (Hudson, 1824), 14; Paul Willard, An Oration, Pronounced at Charlestown, on the 4th of July, 1821, at the Request of the Republican Citizens of that Town, in Commemoration of the Anniversary of National Independence (Boston, 1821), 4; Winter, Oration, 9.

24 Emery, Oration, 4; Fessenden, Oration, 22-23; Huffington, Oration, 17; J. Willard, Oration, 18.
supported the South Americans, a few were nevertheless critical. The most vituperative blast came from Edward Everett, editor of the *North American Review*. Everett contended that the American Revolution and the current revolutions were not analogous because North Americans, having grown up with liberty, had been socially and institutionally prepared for political independence. South Americans, however, were not civilized enough either to appreciate or to deserve American support. Latin Americans sent "the letter post down the river, on the back of a swimmer. How can your industrious frugal yeomen sympathize with a people that sit on horseback to fish?" The American Revolution had occurred without spilling one drop of blood in civil warfare, but southerners were "hanging and shooting each other in their streets, with every fluctuation of their ill-organized and exasperated factions." Finally, the editor concluded that the United States should extend nothing more than moral sympathy. Even though France and Holland had aided Americans in their revolution, the former British colonists would have been successful without their help.

Although Everett opposed recognition of the South American provinces, he was more favorably disposed to the Greek revolution that had begun in 1821. Calling for acknowledgment of the independence of Greece from the Ottoman

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25[Edward Everett], "South America," *NAR*, XII (April, 1821), 434.

Empire and requesting financial aid for the Greek cause, he referred to the American Revolution. He reminded Americans that their War of Independence had been so recent that citizens should remember the assistance rendered them. "Who does not know that there were times in our own revolutionary war when a few barrels of gunpowder, the large guns of a privateer, a cargo of flour, a supply of clothing, yea, a few hundred pairs of shoes, for feet that left in blood the tracks of their march, would have done essential service to the cause of suffering liberty." 27

Everett's arguments were to no avail, for although orators praised the Greek cause, the government was not willing to acknowledge Greek independence. 28 Resolutions that supported recognition were defeated in 1824 and in 1827. Occasionally, supporters of the resolution of 1824 mentioned that the American War of Independence had inspired the Greek revolt. 29 Opponents of the resolution used


29 Annals, 18 Cong., 1 Sess., 1090, 1099 (Jan. 19, 1824), 1145, 1157 (Jan. 22, 1824).
arguments heard earlier during the South American debates that recognition would lead to war just as England had declared war against France in 1778.\textsuperscript{30} By 1827, when enthusiasm for the Greeks had diminished, legislators did not even refer to the American Revolution.\textsuperscript{31}

If the United States government showed little interest in the Greek struggle, events closer to home forced congressmen once again to turn their attention south when Texas began fighting for its independence from Mexico. As was the case with earlier revolutions, the question of United States recognition arose. In the debates of 1836-1837, opponents of the acknowledgment of Texas independence did not mention the American Revolution while supporters claimed that Texans were fighting for rights and liberties of free men just as the Revolutionary heroes had.\textsuperscript{32}

An ardent proponent of recognition, Senator Thomas Hart Benton answered popular criticism that because Mexico had outlawed slavery, Texans revolted in order to retain their slave labor. According to Benton, since the Texas and American revolutions had been fought for the same reasons, no one could claim that either was a war for the extension

\textsuperscript{30}Ibid., 1134 (Jan. 24, 1824), 1205 (Jan. 26, 1824).

\textsuperscript{31}Congressional Register, 19 Cong., 2 Sess., 654 (Jan. 11, 1827).

\textsuperscript{32}Congressional Globe, 24 Cong., 1 Sess., 401 (April 26, 1836), 434 (May 7, 1836), 436 (May 9, 1836), 486, 487, 488 (May 23, 1836), 547 (June 13, 1836); 24 Cong., 2 Sess., Appendix, 226 (March 2, 1837), 230 (Feb. 27, 1837).
of slavery. In fact, Benton declared that no war, including the American Revolution, had a more just origin. To prove his point that the two wars were analogous, Benton recited a brief history of Texas. When United States citizens settled Texas, they found a government similar to the one they had left behind, one that protected life, liberty, and property. Within a few years the situation had altered. Suffering through violent changes in government and the rapid overthrow of rulers, Texas advocated the re-establishment of the federal constitution and retained its own state government. In September 1835, a Mexican army with orders to arrest state authorities and to seize weapons invaded Texas.

A detachment of General Cos's army appeared at the village of Gonzales on the 28th of September, and demanded the arms of the inhabitants; it was the same demand, and for the same purpose, which the British detachment under Major Pitcairn had made at Lexington, on the 19th of April, 1775. It was the same demand! and the same answer was given--resistance--battle--victory! for the American blood was at Gonzales as it had been at Lexington.33

When congressional debates concluded, both the House and the Senate approved resolutions recognizing the independence of Texas, and President Andrew Jackson extended formal diplomatic recognition in 1837.34 But acknowledging the independence of the Lone Star Republic did not terminate discussions on Texas because in 1844-1845 the question of annexation came before Congress. Those who favored the

33Ibid., 24 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 531-32 (July 1, 1836).
34Justin Harvey Smith, The Annexation of Texas (New York, 1941), 62.
admission of the Lone Star Republic to the Union continued the assertion that the American Revolution and the Texas war of independence were analogous. Arguing in favor of annexation, Senator Sidney Breese of Illinois maintained that the two revolutions were similar. San Jacinto and March 2, 1836 were equivalent to Yorktown and July 4, 1776. As Robert Dale Owen of Indiana exclaimed, "like the United States in 1776, Texas had to complain that her legislature had been suspended, her chartered rights violated, her form of government essentially altered, and her 'repeated petitions answered only by repeated injury.' Like the United States in 1776, Texas cast off the yoke of a tyrant, and declared herself a free and independent Republic." Senator Robert James Walker of Mississippi went further and claimed that Texans had more right to revolt than had Americans, for Texans revolted not against an established government but against a military usurper and a central despotism. If anyone denied the right of the Lone Star Republic to revolt, then Americans might as well return to

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35 *Cong. Globe*, 28 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 446 (May 7, 1844), 521 (May 21, 1844), 764 (June 4, 1844); 28 Cong., 2 Sess., Appendix, 66 (Jan. 6, 1845), 87 (Jan. 7, 1845), 95 (Jan. 14, 1845), 96 (Jan. 15, 1845), 143 (Jan. 25, 1845), 147 (Jan. 21, 1845), 236 (Feb. 17, 1845), 254 (Feb. 20, 1845), 322 (Feb. 22, 1845), 377 (Jan. 9, 1845).


British authority. 38 When supporters of annexation noted the similarity of the two revolutions, Representative Luther Severance of Maine, an opponent of annexation, contended that the Texas revolution was not accomplished by native Texans struggling against tyranny; instead, the rebellion was begun by a few adventurers and land speculators from the United States. 39

The question of French assistance during the American Revolution remained a popular topic. One of the arguments used by adversaries of annexation was that the United States had a treaty of amity with Mexico. Since Mexico did not recognize the independence of Texas, the United States would be denounced by the world if she annexed Texas. Partisans of annexation answered that even though France and England had signed a treaty in 1763, "who will accuse France of having violated her faith with England, say she justly deserved the condemnation of the world for coming to our rescue?" 40 Supporters also claimed that since France had assisted the colonies in the American Revolution, the United States must aid Texas. In fact, even if the United States had interfered in Texas in 1836, Americans would have been following the example of France who allied with the colonies

38 Ibid., 551 (May 20, 1844).
39 Ibid., 28 Cong., 2 Sess., Appendix, 370-71 (Jan 15, 1845).
40 Ibid., 28 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 723 (June 8, 1844).
during, and not after, the War of Independence. 41

Opponents of annexation saw no analogy between French aid to the former British colonies and United States support for Texas. According to Senator John Macpherson Berrian of Georgia, France had not acted honorably in assisting Americans because she had not been motivated by a spirit of benevolence. The French monarch had certainly not been fighting for the rights of free men or self-government; instead, for selfish reasons he merely had wanted to cripple Britain. 42 Another view came from Senator William Segar Archer of Virginia who denied any similarity between France in the 1770's and the United States in the 1840's. He claimed, however, that France had acted far more honorably, for she had entered the war and had provided aid before fighting ended. Even if the French monarch had been selfish in wanting to break England's power, at least France had not interfered with the independence and development of the United States. Americans, on the other hand, by annexing Texas would be destroying the independence of that Republic. 43

Adversaries of annexation charged that the United States was trying to rob Mexico of Texas and that the Constitution did not grant authority to annex foreign

41 Ibid., 541 (June 3, 1844), 530 (May 23, 1844).
42 Ibid., 703 (June 8, 1844).
43 Ibid., 694.
territory. These accusations brought rebuttals based upon the American Revolution. If the United States were trying to rob Mexico, then the Declaration of Independence was "an act of highway robbery," and Revolutionary ancestors had robbed Great Britain of her rich colonies in North America.44 Answering the contention that the Constitution did not grant authority to annex foreign territory, partisans maintained that a precedent had been set when Revolutionary patriots had invited Canada to join them in opposing Britain.45 In reply, Senator Alexander Barrow of Louisiana declared that asking Canada to participate in the revolt should not be used as a precedent because the heroes had wanted allies and once the war was won, efforts to negotiate with Canada were not renewed.46

Although the question of annexation was not strictly sectional, sectionalism did play a role in the debates. References were made to the Revolution when the discussions turned to the possibility of war with Mexico if the United States annexed Texas. Representative James Edwin Belser of Alabama admitted that many southerners wanted Texas to enter the Union so that the institution of slavery could extend

44Ibid., 28 Cong., 2 Sess., Appendix, 82 (Jan. 9, 1845), 148 (Jan. 21, 1845).

45Ibid., 28 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 649 (June 8, 1844), 539 (June 3, 1844).

46Ibid., 28 Cong., 2 Sess., Appendix, 391 (Feb. 19, 1845); see also 28 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 707 (May 21, 1844).
westward. The South had fought for northern interests in the Revolutionary war; now was the time for northerners to protect southern interests. Representative Joshua Reed Giddings of Ohio declared his opposition to annexation because the ensuing war with Mexico would have to be fought by northern men while "our southern friends must remain at home to watch their slaves" just as they had during the War of Independence. "In 1779, South Carolina sent a special messenger to inform Congress that the South could furnish no troops for the common defense, as it was necessary that their men should remain at home to watch their negroes, and protect their families, in case of insurrection."  

As the debates became more heated, southerners began to question the patriotism of their northern colleagues. Defending the sons of Massachusetts, Representative Caleb Blood Smith of Indiana pointed to the days of the Revolution when Massachusetts patriots had fought for freedom at Lexington and Bunker Hill. Smith asserted that Massachusetts citizens of the 1840's were guided by the same spirit and love of liberty that had led Adams, Hancock, and Warren to resist the encroachments of Great Britain.  

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47Ibid., 28 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 524 (May 21, 1844).
48Ibid., 705; 28 Cong., 2 Sess., Appendix, 344 (Jan. 22, 1845).
49Ibid., 81 (Jan. 8, 1845).
Lowndes Yancy of Alabama did not deny that Massachusetts patriots of the Revolution had performed gloriously and honorably, but he noted that unfortunately these men were in their graves, and their sons were trying to subvert rather than preserve the Union that the heroes had created.  

While legislators argued about the patriotism of northerners, Representative Isaac Edward Morse of Louisiana called for a return to the spirit of '76 when people had acted in the best interests of the nation rather than being motivated by selfish sectional considerations.  

By the time the vote was taken on annexation, enough lawmakers overlooked their differences of opinion, sectional disagreements, and political rivalries in order to admit Texas to the Union.  

After Texas was admitted, the United States was presented with the opportunity of annexing Canada. Economic and political difficulties in Canada led Liberals to conclude that their country would fare better outside the British Empire and as part of the United States. Although Americans wanted to extend their democratic institutions, United States citizens in the 1840's were at best indifferent to the prospect of welcoming their neighbor to the north into the Union.

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50Ibid., 90; see also 104 (Jan. 10, 1845), 108 (Jan. 14, 1845).

51Ibid., 91 (Jan. 11, 1845); see also 142 (Jan. 25, 1845).

52Smith, Annexation, 329.
the Union. An essayist in the *North American Review*, Lorenzo Sabine, took great satisfaction in pointing out that the Liberals, descendants of exiled Tories of the American Revolution, were "imitating so exactly the conduct of those whom their fathers resisted in the field as rebels and traitors." Contending that Liberals should no longer denounce the Whigs of '76, the author noted that Liberals were opposed to the restriction on the manufacture of hats just as patriots had in the eighteenth century.

The possibility of annexation came to naught and indicated in part that Americans were not seeking revenge toward Britain, an opponent in two wars. In fact, as early as 1815, orators and journalists called for forgiveness of England and requested their audiences not to hold animosity toward Britain. Believing the Fourth of July should not be set apart "for the unholy purpose of cherishing hatred and perpetuating revenge," one orator pointed to the Declaration of Independence for an instructive lesson. "In the heat of the arduous conflict, the authors of that paper, designed expressly to set forth the wrongs and grievances, which compel them to the measure, have the magnanimity to declare,

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54 [Lorenzo Sabine], "British Colonial Politics," *NAR*, LXVII (July, 1848), 3.

that henceforth they will regard Englishmen like all other people, enemies in war, in peace friends." Furthermore, Americans should appreciate the English heritage for which their ancestors had fought. After all, the ministries of the 1760's-1780's had erred, not the governments of the nineteenth century. Britain too had profited by mistakes her leaders had made in the 1770's and now possessed a more enlightened colonial policy. Closing the customs houses in the nineteenth century was an admission that the colonists


57 Address by an Old Soldier of Wrentham, 13; Bassett, Oration, 16; Hooper Cumming, An Oration, Delivered at Newark, N. J. July 4, 1823 (Newark, 1823), 7; George Ticknor Curtis, The True Uses of American Revolutionary History. An Oration Delivered before the Authorities of the City of Boston, on Monday, the Fifth of July, 1841, being the Day Set Apart for the Celebration of the Sixty-Fifth Anniversary of American Independence (Boston, 1841), 10-12; Asbury Dickens, Oration, Delivered in the Capitol in the City of Washington, on the Fourth of July, 1825 (Washington, 1825), 3; George Washington Doane, America and Great Britain: The Address, at Burlington College, on the Seventy-Second Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, MDCCCLVIII (Burlington, 1848), 6-8; Dunlap, Oration Delivered 1832, 4-7; Thomas Durfee, An Oration Delivered before the Municipal Authorities and Citizens of Providence, on the Seventy-Seventh Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, 1853 (Providence, 1853), 15; Ewell, Oration, 18; Fessenden, Oration, 29; Hall, Oration, 7; Sherman Leland, An Oration, Pronounced at Dorchester, July 4, 1815. In Commemoration of the Independence of the United States of America (Boston, 1815), 15; Solomon Lincoln, An Oration, Delivered before the Citizens of the Town of Quincy, on the Fourth of July, 1835, the Fifty-Ninth Anniversary of the Independence of the United States of America (Hingham, 1835), 23; Metcalf, Oration, 3-4; Price, Oration, 3-4; [Charles Card Smith], "Life of Lord Cornwallis," NAR, LXXXIX (July, 1859), 121; Niles, XXIX (Sept. 24, 1825), 58.
in the 1770's had been performing acts of duty rather than crimes when they had driven customs commissioners out of the colonies.  

Americans showed little concern for Canadian affairs, but they were enthusiastic about the European revolutions that began in 1848. Although more than fifty revolutions occurred in 1848-1849, United States citizens were interested primarily in the French and Hungarian revolts. This was not the first time in the nineteenth century that the French had attempted a change in government, for a three-day revolution had occurred in July, 1830. Since French revolutionists did not have to throw off a mother country, they imitated the last stage of the American Revolution by attempting to establish a republican form of government. Disappointed Americans lost some of their enthusiasm when the republic failed, and one monarch replaced another. Hopes were revived in 1848 when France established another republic, and Congress took the unprecedented action of offering congratulations. During the debate, time and again legislators declared that Americans could do no less than extend recognition since France and especially Lafayette had assisted

58 [Sabine], "British Colonial Politics," 15.

Americans in their struggle against Britain.\textsuperscript{60}

Just as the French revolution was popular in the United States, so too was the Hungarian revolution, which provided more possibility of analogy to the American experience since Hungary was fighting a "mother country," Austria. Throughout the United States, meetings were held and resolutions adopted that celebrated the similarity between the struggle of 1776 and the Hungarian revolt.\textsuperscript{61} By the autumn of 1849, however, the revolution was crushed, and Austria regained control.

Congressional debate on the Hungarian revolution did not coincide with the struggle of 1848 but occurred some three years later when Louis Kossuth, leader of the defeated rebels, traveled to the United States to seek support for his cause. Americans heartily welcomed Kossuth,\textsuperscript{62} although the government was less than enthusiastic since the United States had treaties with Austria. Members of the House of Repres-

\textsuperscript{60}Cong. Globe, 30 Cong., 1 Sess., 571 (March 31, 1848), 573, 579 (April 3, 1848), 601 (April 10, 1848); Appendix, 454-55 (March 31, 1848), 458, 462 (April 6, 1848).


\textsuperscript{62}Democratic Review, XXXI (July, 1852), 38; Harper's New Monthly Magazine, IV (Dec., 1851), 131; (Jan. 1852), 265-66; (Feb., 1852), 418-19.
sentatives refused to become embroiled in the controversy, but Senators discussed the nature of the reception that Congress should accord the defeated rebel. Some members of the Senate advocated a written welcome while others favored a public reception for Kossuth. Once again, appeals were made to the American Revolution, and congressmen debated whether the origin of the Hungarian revolution was similar to the American War of Independence.

Opponents of Kossuth's reception denied that there was any analogy between the Hungarian and American revolutions. The Hungarians were inconsistent and insincere, for they began their revolt with professions of loyalty to the Austrian crown and vowed that they did not seek independence. As the rebels grew in strength, they increased their demands. Americans had not increased their demands from time to time but from the beginning had claimed their rights as Englishmen. Only when their petitions and remonstrances were to no avail had they resorted to arms and declared themselves independent.63

Supporters of Kossuth's reception, of course, pointed to the resemblance between the Hungarian and American wars for independence. The American Revolutionary heroes also had declared their attachment to the English crown, and even after fighting had begun, they had not initially desired separation. If the charges of inconsistency and insincerity

63 Cong. Globe, 32 Cong., 1 Sess., 87 (Dec. 12, 1851).
applied to the Hungarians, the same accusation could be made against "Washington and his associates whom we all love and honor." 64

Kossuth's visit gave lawmakers the opportunity to refer to Lafayette's journey to the United States a quarter of a century earlier. Opponents of a public banquet for Kossuth maintained that the congressional reception for Lafayette was no precedent since the Frenchman had actually participated in the American Revolution. Furthermore, he came to the United States in the 1820's, not to agitate for political purposes, but to return to the scenes of early battles and to visit survivors of the Revolution. 65 Supporters of Kossuth's reception declared that a precedent for welcoming the rebel was unnecessary because the United States, the Fourth of July, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution all were precedents. Even though Kossuth had not participated in the American War of Independence, he was no less worthy than Lafayette since both men had fought for freedom. Europe had contributed to the Revolution by sending a Kosciusko, a DeKalb, and a Steuben, and if Americans would accept the defeated rebel, their debt to Europeans would be partially paid while they demonstrated

64 Ibid., 67 (Dec. 11, 1851).

65 Ibid., 22 (Dec. 3, 1851), 43 (Dec. 9, 1851), 87 (Dec. 12, 1851), 192 (Jan. 2, 1852).
fidelity to the principles of the American Revolution.⁶⁶
Kossuth's supporters won when a public banquet was held in January, 1852.⁶⁷

Finding that congressmen were not inclined to support his cause, Kossuth traveled throughout the United States and agitated for governmental intervention in Hungary. Because of his activities, the Hungarian and American revolutions remained popular topics. Opposed to intervention, one journalist, Cornelius Conway Felton, saw no analogy between the two wars for independence. Accustomed to self-government transacted in an orderly manner by and for educated men, American patriots had sought to preserve not to establish political and social institutions. On the other hand, mob disorders and political assassinations characterized the Hungarian revolution. Felton also denied any similarity between Kossuth in the United States and Benjamin Franklin in France when he negotiated a treaty of alliance. First, the North American colonies had demonstrated the possibility of winning independence, and Hungary had not. Secondly, France had been prepared to enter war against England, but the United States would not enter a European war. Thirdly, Franklin had been commissioned by the Continental Congress

⁶⁶Ibid., 42, 45 (Dec. 9, 1851), 50-51 (Dec. 10, 1851), 180 (Dec. 31, 1851).
⁶⁷Merle Curti, "Young America," American Historical Review, XXXII (Oct., 1926), 37.
to seek an alliance while Kossuth had no authority from any
government to negotiate an agreement. 68

While most Americans preferred not to interfere in
Old World affairs, a group of men supporting the "Young
America" movement were not content with merely providing the
example for other nations to follow. The innumerable revolu­
tions of the nineteenth century did not result in the
establishment of republican governments; in fact, all the
revolutions of 1848 were overcome by reactionary governments.
Since these countries could not establish republics by them­
selves, the United States government should make economic
and military contributions, or so "Young America" advocated. 69
An equally important reason for intervention was that the
same motive--the desire to be freemen--inspired the masses
in 1776 and in 1848. When the revolutionists were success­
ful in 1848, monarchs made concessions only to retract them
when danger was over. This duplicity made United States
support even more necessary.

According to "Young Americans," the precedent for
intervention occurred during the American Revolution when
France had come to the aid of the people rather than the
monarch and had saved the United States from destruction.

68 [Cornelius Conway Felton], "Stiles's Austria in

69 Curti, "Young America," 34-35.
The French King had agreed to help the colonies not for selfish revenge against England but because the "right-minded and stout-hearted working classes" had pressured him into supporting the struggling republic. This assistance had been indispensable to the American cause and had resulted in a victory over monarchy. Since France had rescued the American colonists, the United States could do no less than participate in European struggles. The arguments of "Young America" were in vain, for the leaders could not attract enough support to sway Americans from the traditional policy of merely providing an example for other nations.

Throughout the period 1820-1860, Americans became increasingly disappointed that other countries were failing to adopt governments similar to their own. Only Texas, which had been settled by United States citizens, won its independence and established a successful republic. Although the Spanish American and Greek revolutions were popular in the 1820's, Americans became disillusioned when Latin Americans did not imitate their example. Rather than considering their experiment a failure, however, Americans stressed the uniqueness of their War of Independence and the superior character


71Curti, "Young America," 54-55.
of the Revolutionary heroes. The brave, intelligent, gallant patriots had utilized moderate remonstrances in contending for legitimate rights. Old World reforms of the nineteenth century had resulted from ignorance and were founded on the excitement of popular feeling. "No intemperate zeal of faction—no lawless spirit of innovation, sweeping in their destructive rage, the decorations of polished life, and the institutions of organized authority, characterized the contest, which eventuated in our freedom." Political institutions alone were useless unless the people had the intelligence and virtue to appreciate them.

Even though Americans believed as early as 1830 that their Revolution was inimitable, they continued to support foreign revolts. Citizens greeted the 1830 French revolution and the 1848 European struggles for liberty with great

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73 Hughes, Oration, 9; see also Frederick Whittleseley, An Address, Delivered at Washington Square, Rochester, July Fourth, A. D. 1842 (Rochester, 1842), 6-7.
enthusiasm until they saw that republics were not forthcoming. Since they believed that revolutions were failing in the nineteenth century, Americans felt even more compelled to perpetuate the institutions that their fathers had established. Because the heroes had fought for posterity, Americans could not jeopardize the accomplishments of the Revolution but had to preserve the liberties for which the noble patriots had fought, bled, and died.  

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74 Biddle, Address, 11; Mann Butler, An Oration on National Independence, (Delivered by Public Request,) on the Fourth of July, 1837, at Port Gibson, Mississippi (Frankfort, 1837), 18-23; Jonathan Chapman, An Oration Delivered before the Citizens of Boston, on the Sixty First Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, 1837 (Boston, 1837), 24; Caleb Cushing, An Oration, on the Material Growth and Territorial Progress of the United States, Delivered at Springfield, Mass. on the Fourth of July, 1839 (Springfield, 1839), 3; Dunlap, Oration Delivered 1832, 20; Greenough, Conquering Republic, 38; Hughes, Oration, 14; Francis Scott Key, Oration Delivered in the Rotundo of the Capitol of the U. States, on the 4th of July, 1831 (n.p., n.d.), 12; N. H. Loring, Address, 9-10; Price, Oration, 4; Richardson, Oration, 5.
Determined to preserve the republic as established by the Revolutionary generation, Americans believed that the maintenance of the Union was essential for the protection of freedom and liberty. If the Union were severed, the result could be anarchy and civil war. Constantly citing dangers to be avoided in order to prevent the downfall of the republic, orators contended that the greatest enemies were not foreign foes but internal dissensions, particularly in the form of sectional jealousy, state pride, and party faction.¹ To avoid internecine war, Americans had to accept the premise that the majority shall govern and had to use the franchise wisely to install in Congress representatives who would place the good of the country above personal or

sectional considerations.  

Although Americans had obtained their political and commercial freedom as a result of the American Revolution and the War of 1812, some citizens believed that the United States would not be completely independent until the nation was no longer dependent upon foreign industry. Attempting to promote nationalism through the development of the infant industries, these Americans advocated a protective tariff that would allow citizens to compete with foreign, especially British, manufacturers. As early as 1819, one proponent of a protective system called for citizens to emulate the Revolutionary sages who had refused to wear British clothing and

who had always been clad in "home-spun." Even though the tariff was designed to promote nationalism, discussions in Congress soon revealed that the protective system was contributing to sectional tensions. Both supporters and opponents of the tariff used some aspect of the American Revolution to defend their positions.

After the War of 1812, the tariff was a popular subject, though not until 1824, did lawmakers refer to the Revolution, and then only briefly. Those who favored the tariff contended that British tyranny in the form of restrictions on manufacturing had been opposed by the Revolutionary heroes. The War of Independence had occurred because English ministers had failed to heed Benjamin Franklin's advice to repeal British legislation that had curtailed American industry. Opponents of protective legislation, on the other hand, maintained that the heroes had fought to free themselves and their posterity from oppressive taxation. Claiming that gallant patriots had taken up arms rather than submit to taxes, John Randolph of Virginia, a

3The Principles and Practice of the Patriots of the Revolution; being an Appeal to Reason and Common Sense (Philadelphia, 1819), 7; see also Durfee, Oration, 18; Packard, Oration, 6; Palfrey, Oration, 15; Vanden Heuvel, Oration, 25-26.

4Annals, 18 Cong., 1 Sess., 1573-74 (Feb. 18, 1824), 1634-35, 1640 (Feb. 24, 1824), 585 (April 28, 1824), 596 (April 29, 1824).

5Ibid., 2202 (April 6, 1824), 600-601 (April 29, 1824), 682-83 (May 4, 1824).
staunch foe of the tariff, declared that those who did not resist protective legislation were "bastards to those fathers who achieved the Revolution."  

Although legislators did not mention the American Revolution during the debates of 1828, the passage of a higher protective system in that year touched off more discussion on the relationship between the tariff and the War of Independence. By the late 1820's, the tariff was a sectional issue at least as far as southern opposition was concerned. Whether or not congressional legislation was in fact responsible for economic distress in some southern areas, many South Carolinians blamed their financial problems on the tariff of 1828.  

In response to the tariff of abominations, South Carolinians compared themselves and their situation to their Revolutionary fathers and the war with Britain. A United States congressman from South Carolina, George McDuffie, declared, "the stamp act of 1765, and tariff of 1828--kindred acts of despotism; when our oppressors trace the parallel, let them remember, that we are the descendants of a noble ancestry, and profit by the admonitions of history." In addition, McDuffie claimed that southerners were "ten-

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6Ibid., 2360 (April 15, 1824).
8Niles, XXXV (Sept. 20, 1828), 61.
fold more insulted, more injured, more disgraced and con-
temned," by the majority of Congress than their fathers had been by the ministers of Great Britain. Although the people of the South were represented in Congress, they were worse off than if they had no representation. McDuffie maintained that the patriots, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and John Hancock, had realized that a colonial representation of sixty members in a Parliament consisting of five hundred members would be a useless venture. South Carolinians were in precisely the situation that their fathers had rejected since southerners accepted minority status in Congress.9

After concluding that they were more oppressed than their fathers had been, southerners called for remedies similar to those that had been instituted by the Revolutionary heroes. Believing that they were following in the footsteps of the patriots who had refused to import British products, students at South Carolina College resolved that they would neither buy nor wear any article of clothing manufactured north of the Potomac River.10 A Fourth of July orator, Alfred Bynum, also called for the formation of non-consumption societies in order to close southern markets to northern fabrics. Furthermore, he urged southern women to make cloth just as their mothers had done during the conflict with Britain.11

9Ibid., XXXIV (July 19, 1828), 340.
10Ibid., (July 5, 1828), 301. 11Bynum, Oration, 20.
When the non-consumption movement failed because of lack of cooperation, South Carolinians themselves disagreed as to the course of action they should then follow. Some favored nullification of the protective system no matter what the consequences—even disunion—while others believed that the Union must be preserved. While Nullifiers and Unionists held opposing views on nullification, they also had different interpretations of the events leading to the American Revolution.

Representing the Nullifiers' viewpoint, Robert Barnwell Smith used the events leading to the War of Independence as an example for fellow-citizens to follow in resisting congressional legislation. By acting quickly, the heroes had been able to obtain favorable changes. For example, so determined and violent was the opposition shown by the colonists to the Stamp Act that it was repealed at the very next session of Parliament in 1766. The following year, when Parliament had renewed its efforts to tax the colonies by placing duties upon tea, glass, paper, and colors, Americans again had forced Parliament to retract its legislation. The colonial non-importation and non-consumption resolutions had led to the repeal of the duties except that on tea. Finally, refusing to consume the luxury item, the colonists had violently seized the cargoes when the East India Company had attempted to force tea upon the patriots. Looking upon the

12Freehling, Prelude, 148, 210-11.
events prior to 1775 as a forceful assertion of rights, Smith called for southerners to imitate their fathers and resist the attempts of northern taxation. Furthermore, if South Carolina were forced into war against northern aggression, North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia would surely join the fight against oppression.¹³

Unionists, on the other hand, appealed to their fellow-citizens to demonstrate patience and tolerance as the Revolutionary heroes had done from 1763 to 1775. A United States senator from South Carolina, William Smith, disagreed with the Nullifiers' contention that just as the South had followed Massachusetts at the beginning of the Revolutionary war, so would the southern states come to the aid of South Carolina. Smith maintained that there was no analogy between the actions of the southern colonies and the South of the nineteenth century. The colonists had been oppressed by the mother country for more than twenty-five years before fighting commenced, and during that time Americans communicated on the subject of revolution. Moreover, the colonists decided to separate forever from Britain, but South Carolinians were not seeking separation from the Union.¹⁴

At the same time that South Carolinians were debating among themselves on a course of action to follow, they also

¹³Niles, XXXVII (Sept. 5, 1829), 26-27.
¹⁴Ibid., XXXIX (Dec. 4, 1830), 247.
engaged in discussions with northerners on the relationship between the tariff and the American Revolution. South Carolinians argued that as a result of the tariff, the South was "in the same relation now, to the Northern States, that the Stamp Act, and Tax upon Tea, placed our Fathers with regard to Great Britain—a state of complete, Colonial servitude."  

Opponents of protective legislation also contended that, as the Revolution approached, southerners had no complaints against Britain, for the mother country had given bounties and had invested money so that South Carolina had been more prosperous than any of the other provinces. Furthermore, southerners had engaged in no disputes with the King's ministers, had no complaints against the navigation system, and had no troops billeted upon the population. Yet, because of principle and philanthropy, South Carolina had rushed to the aid of the North and had contributed one-fifth of the revenue that had been spent during the Revolutionary war. Since Southerners had furnished more than their share in the War of Independence, they believed that northerners were demonstrating ingratitude by placing the South in colonial servitude. Unless the tariff were eliminated, South Carolinians would be justified in resisting northern aggression just as the patriots had rejected British

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15 Bynum, Oration, 18.
oppression.\textsuperscript{16}

To prove that the anti-tariff group had proper authority for their actions, Senator Robert Young Hayne cited living Revolutionary patriots who supported the free trade party. Included in this group of heroes were General Thomas Sumter; General Francis Marion's friend, Keating Simon; George Washington's friend, Major James Hamilton, Sr.; and Captain Richard B. Baker, the last survivor of the Battle of Fort Moultrie. Hayne continued, "fellow-citizens, THAT CAUSE MUST SURELY BE STRONG, which is supported by pillars like these."\textsuperscript{17}

While South Carolinians debated among themselves and harangued the North, supporters of the tariff used the Revolution to further the protective system. Whereas southerners believed that the Revolutionary patriots had utilized non-consumption as a tactic to force a redress of grievances, proponents of the tariff pointed to the non-importation agreements as an example of colonial interest in

\textsuperscript{16}William Drayton, \textit{An Oration Delivered in the First Presbyterian Church, Charleston, on Monday, July 4, 1831} (Charleston, 1831), 5-6; \textit{Niles}, XXXIV (June 29, 1828), 289; XXXVII (Sept. 19, 1829), 50; XXXVIII (July 3, 1830), 340; XXXIX (Oct. 16, 1830), 130; (Dec. 25, 1830), 304; XL (March 26, 1831), 68; (June 18, 1831), 276; (July 23, 1831), 369.

\textsuperscript{17}Robert Young Hayne, \textit{An Oration, Delivered in the Independent or Congregational Church, Charleston, before the State Rights & Free Trade Party, the State Society of Cincinnati, the Revolution Society, the '76 Association, and Several Volunteer Companies of Militia; on the 4th of July, 1831, being the 55th Anniversary of American Independence} (Charleston, 1831), 37-38.
developing domestic industry. According to advocates of protection, the tariff was not new but was part of the original plan that the gallant heroes and sages had adopted to emancipate the country from the oppressive British system of restricting manufacturing. The initial act of the first Continental Congress in 1774 had been to examine the laws affecting the trade and manufacturing of the colonies. During the next few months, Congress had resolved not to import English goods or export products to Britain. In addition to continuing the policies of the first Congress, the second Continental Congress had established societies for the promotion of manufacturing.  

Despite southern opposition to the tariff and the threat of nullification, all members were not willing to reduce duties when the subject of tariff reform came before Congress in 1832. Supporters of protection reiterated earlier arguments that British restrictions on manufacturing had caused the Revolution. Furthermore, proponents maintained that if free trade prevailed, the United States would be re-colonized under the commercial dominion of Britain.

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Under the eighteenth-century colonial system, Americans had been required to import all goods from the mother country and her possessions. Since English industry was superior to that of the United States in the nineteenth century, free trade policies would prevent the development of American industry and would perpetuate the necessity for importing goods from Britain. 19

While tariff advocates made fewer references to the Revolution, southern opponents used their earlier history extensively. Denying the assertion that free trade would lead to re-colonization, adversaries claimed that a protective system returned the South to colonial vassalage by substituting New England for Old England. Opponents saw no difference between Britain compelling the colonists to buy manufactures only from her and Congress forcing the southern part of the Union to buy from the North. In fact, southerners contended that they were suffering more than their ancestors had, for in colonial days England had possessed the best markets while the nineteenth-century markets were inadequate. 20

Attempting to gain western support for reducing the

19 Cong. Reg., 22 Cong., 1 Sess., 157 (Jan. 23, 1832), 214-15 (Jan. 30, 1832), 266-69 (Feb. 2, 1832), 477-78 (Feb. 27, 1832), 3278 (June 5, 1832), 3300-301 (June 6, 1832), 3634-35 (June 16, 1832).

20 Ibid., 324 (Feb. 7, 1832), 340 (Feb. 9, 1832), 3162-63 (May 28, 1832).
tariff, southerners argued that westerners were also more oppressed than the colonists had been. Eighteenth-century Americans had bought manufactures at a cheaper rate from Britain than westerners did from New England. Secondly, the form of payment from the colonists to Britain had been in goods and westerners were required to pay in money. Thirdly, Americans had furnished raw materials to be made into finished goods in England; yet high-tariff states did not use western products but imported foreign raw materials and passed the costs to the consumer.21

Continuing the analogy with the American Revolution, tariff opponents claimed that the struggle of the southern states for their constitutional rights was identical to the contest that the American colonies had waged against Great Britain. Even the governmental systems were the same, since the United States government had replaced the British as the "federal head." England had maintained that she had a right "'to tax the colonies in all cases whatsoever.'" The American government contended that she had a right "'to tax the States in all cases whatsoever.'" The Revolutionary patriots had risked their lives to oppose a small tax on stamped paper and a three pence duty on tea. The duties on paper and tea were trifling when compared with the burdens southerners had suffered for more than twelve years.22 For example, during

21Ibid., 586 (March 15, 1832).
22Ibid., 186 (Jan. 30, 1832), 3157 (May 28, 1832), 3357-58 (June 11, 1832).
the Revolutionary era, only the wealthy had drunk tea, an item that carried an insignificant duty. Under the nineteenth-century tariff laws, southerners were taxed not three pence but an average of forty-five per cent, and not on luxuries but on necessities like sugar, salt, iron, flannels, and blankets. Parliament had imposed taxes on paper and tea for the purpose of supporting the government. Acting more oppressively than Parliament, the United States Congress imposed duties not to support the government but to benefit a privileged class of manufacturers.\textsuperscript{23}

Like their fathers, southerners had petitioned and remonstrated, only to hear from Congress the same cold answer—the laws must be obeyed—that the colonists had received from the King. To prove that nullification was not a novel remedy, southerners pointed to colonial documents resolving that Americans would not pay taxes imposed upon them by Parliament. This refusal to comply with British laws had been tantamount to nullification; and when the War of Independence began, Americans were nullifying measures enacted by the English government.\textsuperscript{24}

In addition to colonial resolutions, southerners explained that they had the authority of the Declaration of Independence on their side. Among the grievances against the King found in that document were restrictions on American

\textsuperscript{23}Ibid., 3578 (June 15, 1832).
\textsuperscript{24}Ibid., 3561 (June 14, 1832).
trade and the imposition of taxes without colonial consent. Since the Revolutionary heroes had taken up arms when a redress of grievances was not made, South Carolinians could do no less than follow the noble example of their fathers if concessions were not forthcoming.25

While supporters of the tariff argued that the heroes had fought against British restrictions on manufacturing and opponents contended that the patriots had nullified British taxation, both groups in one instance used the same colonial document to justify their beliefs. During the tariff debate of 1832, Representative Augustin Smith Clayton of Georgia quoted a 1766 newspaper account of a meeting of the

"'Daughters of Liberty.'"

On the 4th instant, eighteen daughters of liberty, young ladies of good reputation, met at the house of Dr. Ephraim Brown, (Providence, Rhode Island,) in this town, in consequence of an invitation of that gentleman, who hath discovered a laudable zeal for introducing home manufactures. There they exhibited a fine example of industry, by spinning from sunrise until dark, and displaying a spirit for saving their sinking country, rarely to be found among persons of more age and experience. The Doctor provided an elegant plain dinner and other refreshments for the fair company; but they lost but very little time, and cheerfully agreed to omit tea, to render their conduct consistent. Besides this instance of their patriotism, before they separated, they unanimously resolved that the stamp act was unconstitutional; that they would purchase no more British manufactures unless it be repealed; and that they would not even admit the addresses of any gentlemen, should they have an opportunity, without they were determined to oppose

25Ibid., 103 (Jan. 16, 1832), 327-28 (Feb. 7, 1832), 451 (Feb. 21, 1832), 561 (March 15, 1832), 3579 (June 15, 1832).
its execution to the last extremity, if occasion required.26

After reading the newspaper article to Congress, Clayton commented, "this is nullification with a vengeance." Less than two years earlier, in support of the protective system, Hezekiah Niles had reprinted the same newspaper account of the Daughters of Liberty meeting as an example of the Revolutionary efforts to establish home manufactures.27

During debates on the tariff, a bill to expand the list of Revolutionary pensioners came before Congress and immediately became a sectional issue. The provision of the bill that added militiamen to those eligible to receive pensions brought objections from southerners. To prove that the measure was sectional, Representative John Davis of South Carolina stated that the southern states had on the federal list only eleven hundred pensioners while the remainder of the states contained more than eleven thousand pensioners. Furthermore, the state of South Carolina for the past forty years had paid its militia about fourteen thousand dollars annually while Massachusetts with twice the population had paid only fifteen hundred dollars. Because the pension list was financed with tariff receipts, southerners argued that the pension bill favored northerners

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26Ibid., 3564 (June 15, 1832).

27Niles, XXXIX (Nov. 13, 1830), 195.
at the expense of the South.  

When southerners pointed out that they had fewer pensioners, they left themselves open to the charge that the South had not supplied many troops during the War of Independence. Northerners asked, "is it strange that the States which furnished so large a part of the army should furnish an equal proportion of the survivors?" Furthermore, the Revolution had begun in Massachusetts, and during the war northern troops were found everywhere, in the South as well as in the North. Massachusetts alone had raised more than one-fourth of the Revolutionary army and along with New Hampshire and Rhode Island, one-third of the soldiers.

Southern claims that they had contributed more than their share to the Revolution prompted Hezekiah Niles to write:

One would think that South Carolina had redeemed all the rest of the states from the dominion of England, in the revolution—instead of being rescued by the valor of the people of other states. The whole free population of South Carolina and Georgia was only 184,000 in 1790—perhaps hardly 140,000 in 1776; and Delaware sent more soldiers into the regular army, for general service, than both these loud-talking states—and, out of her own limits, Delaware had more regulars killed in battle than both, out of theirs! Neither had a man to spare—Georgia was weak, because of the dispersed condition of her small population, and nearly one half of the inhabitants of South Carolina were rank tories; and besides there was another enemy within that required close watching. These people must think that the history of the revolution is already lost.

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28 Cong. Reg., 22 Cong., 1 Sess., 2390-94 (April 4, 1832); see also 2501 (April 12, 1832).

29 Ibid., 2457-58 (April 9, 1832).

30 Niles, XLIII (Sept. 29, 1832), 65.
Only a few weeks after the pension bill passed Congress in 1832, members approved tariff legislation that left South Carolinians dissatisfied. When the state-rights faction gained control of the state government later in the year, a South Carolina convention nullified the tariff acts of 1828 and 1832 and announced that by resisting oppression the Nullifiers were upholding the spirit of '76. In fact, South Carolinians argued that they had more right to revolt since their fathers had fought against the principle of oppression while they were resisting actual tyranny. In response to nullification, President Andrew Jackson submitted to Congress proposals that were later incorporated into the Force Bill whereby the President was authorized to collect federal duties in South Carolina and, if necessary, utilize the national army and navy without warning the insurgents.

Debates in Congress on the Force Bill, along with a new tariff act in 1833, brought forth more discussion on the American Revolution. Again, southerners compared the current situation to events leading to the War of Independence. Opponents of the Force Bill maintained that proceedings of the executive branch towards South Carolina resembled the actions of George III and Lord North toward Massachusetts.

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31Ibid. (Sept. 22, 1832), 56; (Sept. 29, 1832), 77-78; (Dec. 8, 1832), 233; (Jan. 5, 1833), 311-12; (Jan. 19, 1833), 348 (Feb. 2, 1833), 380; (Feb. 9, 1833), 397-98.

32Freehling, Prelude, 285.
The colonial assembly had protested against the tax on tea as a Parliamentary usurpation of power. Even though patriots had resolved that a standing army was unconstitutional, Lord North had sent the British army and navy to Boston to enforce the tax. South Carolinians objected to unconstitutional taxes that imposed duties not for revenue but to protect domestic manufactures. President Jackson responded by sending the United States army and navy to Charleston to enforce the collection of duties. Lord North had rejected colonial petitions and had declared, "'now is the time to assert our right to tax the colonies, and bind them in all cases whatsoever.'" In addition to refusing to hear the complaints of South Carolina, President Jackson called for force to subdue South Carolinians into obeying unjust taxation.\(^{33}\)

Southerners cautioned members of Congress to remember their earlier history and to profit from the example of the patriots. The Boston Port Act was remarkably similar to the Force Act that authorized the President to open and close ports of entry. According to southerners, moving the custom-house from Boston to Salem had roused the people to resistance and was a prominent cause of the Revolution. Opponents of the Force Bill noted that South Carolina had not acted hastily, for she had remonstrated for twelve years, a period

\(^{33}\)Cong., Reg., 22 Cong., 2 Sess., 265-68, 270-71 (Jan. 30, 1833), 344 (Feb. 4, 1833), 539-40 (Feb. 15, 1833), 625 (Feb. 19, 1833), 1259 (Jan. 23, 1833), 1894 (Feb. 28, 1833).
longer than the patriots had petitioned England prior to the Revolution. If Congress failed to redress the grievances of southerners, just as Parliament had ignored the complaints of the colonies, armed conflict would follow.34

Congressmen who objected to nullification and those who favored retention of high tariff duties saw no analogy between the events in South Carolina and the circumstances leading to the War of Independence. They contended that the colonists had complained not because they were oppressed but because they were taxed and not represented. On the other hand, South Carolina's grievance was not that she lacked representation but that she did not have enough power to outvote the majority. Moreover, the Boston Port Bill and the Force Bill were not analogous, for the Boston measure had moved the customhouse to Salem while the Force Bill would keep the customhouse in Charleston.35

Whereas northerners had virtually questioned southern patriotism during the pension debates, now that South Carolina had resorted to nullification, northerners became conciliatory. Rather than questioning the South's contributions to the War of Independence, northerners noted that since South Carolina had participated in the Revolution, she was

34 Ibid., 372 (Feb. 6, 1833), 520 (Feb. 15, 1833), 1261 (Jan. 23, 1833), 1895 (Feb. 28, 1833).

35 Ibid., 1470 (Jan. 29, 1833), 1530, 1545 (Jan. 31, 1833), 594 (Feb. 18, 1833).
entitled to a place in the Union. The protective issue was temporarily resolved when Congress passed a compromise tariff that appeased South Carolinians even though the Force Bill became law.

At the same time that debates on the tariff and pensions were contributing to sectional tensions, factionalism, the other danger that orators had warned against, was rampant. By the late 1820's, however, a new generation of politicians viewed political parties as a positive good. In the egalitarian movement of the Jacksonian era, aristocrats replaced political parties as the enemy. For example, during the tariff debates southern congressmen had condemned northern manufacturers as an aristocratic elite. Between 1828 and 1840, members of the Republican, Democratic, Anti-masonic, and Whig parties maintained that their own group was directly descended from the Revolutionary Whigs while their opponents were equated with aristocratic Tories or the oppressive British government.

During the Presidential campaign of 1828, Andrew Jackson's supporters billed him as a democrat opposed to the

36 Ibid., 301, 312 (Feb. 1, 1833), 472 (Feb. 12, 1833), 507 (Feb. 14, 1833), 655 (Feb. 19, 1833), 1095 (Jan. 15, 1833), 1628 (Feb. 5, 1833).

aristocratic John Quincy Adams. Jacksonian campaigners claimed that at various times, political parties had been called "whig and tory, anti-federal and federal, democratical and aristocratical, and republican and monarchical." The tory, federal, aristocratic, and monarchical parties denied the equality of the people and sought to increase the powers of the national government, particularly the executive branch. The whig, anti-federal, democratic, and republican parties were based upon the equality of the people. Since Jackson had actually fought against aristocratic Tories as well as the tyrannical British during the War of Independence, and since the nineteenth-century democrats favored equality, Jacksonian Democrats concluded that they were descendants of the Revolutionary Whigs. John Quincy Adams, Jackson's partisans charged, was the son of John Adams who, although a Revolutionary leader, later wrote in favor of the British form of government. Born into a wealthy aristocratic family, John Quincy missed "the lofty and redeeming spirit of Seventy-Six," for he was in Europe "soaking up more aristocratic pretensions."


39 Cyrus Barton, An Address, Delivered before the Republicans of Newport, and Vicinity, July 4, 1828 (Newport, 1828), 4, 15; Isaac Hill, An Address Delivered before the Republicans of Portsmouth and Vicinity, July 4, 1828 (Concord, 1828), 6-7; J. Prince, Oration, 15-16.

40 Hill, Address, 8.
Adams's followers in the Presidential campaign of 1828 also used the Revolution to support their candidate and to oppose Jackson. Claiming that the Revolution had preceded the Declaration of Independence, William Plumer, Jr., a New Hampshire state senator, stressed the time prior to 1775 when Americans had been transformed from British subjects to citizens of a free republic. For their independence and happiness, nineteenth-century Americans were indebted to the peaceful victories of James Otis, John Hancock, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Patrick Henry. Plumer cautioned his fellow-citizens not to over-emphasize the heroes' military efforts at the expense of their civil contributions.41

In addition to stressing the moderation of Revolutionary sages, Plumer used the Declaration of Independence to denounce Jackson as a traitor to the principles of '76. Among the charges brought against George III had been "'he has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws;''for imposing taxes on us, without our consent;' 'for depriving us, in many cases, of the benefit of trial by jury;' 'for suspending our own legislatures;' and finally, 'he has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.'"42

41 Plumer, Address, 10-12.
42 Ibid., 16-17.
Plumer cited Jackson's past actions that were similar to the charges levied against the King. When he was governor of Florida, Jackson had subjected the inhabitants "'to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution and unacknowledged by our laws'--'imposed taxes' on them, 'without their consent'--and passed laws and ordinances, so arbitrary and unjust, that Congress was obliged, at its next session to 'declare them null and void.'" Moreover, Jackson had "'suspended the Legislature' of Louisiana, filling its halls with armed soldiers, and presenting their bayonets to the breasts of its members." During the War of 1812, he had advocated the substitution of courts martial for "'trial by jury,'" and upon the return of peace, Jackson had brought a civilian before a court martial. He not only refused the defendant the benefit of trial by jury but imprisoned the judge and arrested the defending attorney. Jackson had prohibited the southern army from obeying War Department orders unless he approved, had violated the Constitution by raising an armed force of fifteen hundred volunteers, and had refused to disband his troops when ordered to do so by the President of the United States. Similar acts of military usurpation over civil authority had led Revolutionary patriots to pronounce the British King "'a Tyrant.'" Plumer then inquired, "whether he 'whose character is marked by acts such as these, is not,' in the words of the Declaration of Independence,
'unfit to be the ruler of a free people?'"\(^{43}\)

If Jacksonian Democrats were direct descendants of Revolutionary Whigs, members of the Antimasonic party also claimed that privilege. Antimasons pictured themselves as champions of the people warring against an aristocratic elite, the Masons.\(^{44}\) For encouragement in the arduous task of ridding the United States of Masons, Antimasons turned to the early days of the American Revolution. From 1770 to 1775, a few patriots had been responsible for enlightening the public on the encroachments of the British government. Brave and daring men had convened assemblies and had utilized the press to raise their voices against the tyranny of the mother country. The "minions of power," however, had branded these heroes with "ignominious and opprobrious" epithets like "'factious demagogues,' 'political incendiaries,' 'the disturbers of the public peace,' 'the enemies of the country.'" The Revolutionary fathers had contended not only with the army and navy of England but with Tories who loved the King and saw no harm in the aggressions of the British government.\(^{45}\)

\(^{43}\)Ibid., 17-18; see also Barker, Address, 5-7; Livemore, Address, 7, 12; Richardson, Oration, 18.


By daring to speak out against the Masons, Antimasons argued that they were following their fathers' example. Like the Whigs, Antimasons were "assailed by all the vindictive calumny, and loaded with all the contempt and reproach, that malignity could inflict. Like them, they have been branded as 'unprincipled and seditious riot breeders.'" Since the English King had never seized an American citizen and deprived him of life without trial by jury, the Antimasonic cause was even more righteous than that of Revolutionary patriots. Rather than precisely imitating their fathers by waging armed conflict, Antimasons called for the exposure of Masonic secrets and advocated the defeat of Masons who held public office.46

At the same time that Antimasons claimed to be following the example of Revolutionary patriots, Masons pointed out that such heroes as Washington, Clinton, Warren, Franklin, and Montgomery had been and Jackson and Lafayette were members of Masonic lodges. In fact, Masons wondered how Americans could oppose an organization over which Washington, Warren, and Clinton had presided.47 Admitting that Washington and many of his compatriots had been Masons, Antimasons asserted that none of the heroes had obtained more than three degrees. Furthermore, Washington never had visited a lodge

46Ibid., 21-24.
47Niles, XXIX (Oct. 15, 1825), 110; XXXVIII (May 22, 1830), 237; XLI (Jan. 7, 1832), 346.
except once or twice after 1768 and never had presided in one. According to Antimasons, Washington and fellow-officers in effect had renounced the Masons when they had voluntarily extinguished the aristocratic Cincinnati Society.*®

While the Antimasons opposed Jackson primarily because he was a Mason, the President's actions on nullification and the re-charter of the Second Bank of the United States provided issues that contributed to the formation of the Whig political party. Of course, southerners depicted the unpopular Force Act as presidential usurpation of power. During the nullification controversy, Jackson vetoed the charter of the Bank, an action that his supporters referred to as the Second Declaration of Independence. According to some proponents of the veto, Jackson saved the country just as Washington had come to the rescue in the winter of 1776-1777.49

48 Ibid., XLI (Oct. 1, 1825), 85; (Oct. 29, 1831), 169.

49 Barber, Oration Delivered 1839, 13-17; Orestes Augustus Brownson, An Oration before the Democracy of Worcester and Vicinity, Delivered at Worcester, Mass., July 4, 1840 (Boston, 1840), 36-37; Theophilus Fisk, Labor the only True Source of Wealth; or the Rottenness of the Paper Money Banking System Exposed, its Sandy Foundations Shaken, its Crumbling Pillars Overthrown, An Oration Delivered at the Queen-Street Theatre, in the City of Charleston, S. C. July 4th, 1837 (n.p., n.d.), 22-23; Benjamin Franklin Hallett, An Oration Delivered July 4th, 1838, at the Plymouth County Democratic Celebration, Held at Middleborough Four Corners, in the Tenth Congressional District, Massachusetts (Boston, 1838), 41; Robert Rantoul, Jr., An Oration Delivered before the Democratic Citizens of the County of Worcester, July 4, 1837 (Worcester, 1837), 34; John Parker Tarbell, An Oration Delivered before the Democratic Citizens of the North Part of Middlesex County, at Groton, July Fourth, 1839 (Lowell,
Opponents of the President's banking policies likewise appealed to the Revolution to denounce Jackson's actions, especially the removal of deposits from the Bank. According to the President's adversaries, the Revolutionary fathers had fought against executive encroachment; therefore, since Jackson was abusing his presidential powers, the people must resist.\textsuperscript{50} By referring to the President as King Andrew I, Whigs implied that Jackson's followers were Tories.\textsuperscript{51}

Although few references were made to the Revolution during the Bank controversy, the formation of the Whig party offered the opportunity for Whigs to claim to be direct descendants of the Revolutionary sages and heroes.\textsuperscript{52} The Whigs of 1776 and the Whigs of the 1830's were devoted to freedom from executive encroachment. According to the President's opponents, those who referred to Jackson as the "second Washington" were sacrilegious and were violating the memory of the former commander-in-chief. The first grievance

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{50}Cong. Reg., 23 Cong., 1 Sess., 800-801 (March 4, 1834); \textit{Niles}, XLII (Aug. 4, 1832), 409.
\item \textsuperscript{51}Glyndon G. Van Deusen, \textit{The Jacksonian Era, 1828-1848} (New York, 1959), 96.
\item \textsuperscript{52}Cong. Reg., 23 Cong., 1 Sess., 1314 (April 14, 1834); \textit{Niles}, XLVI (Aug. 2, 1834), 387; XLVII (Sept. 6, 1834), 9; (Oct. 18, 1834), 109; XLVIII (June 6, 1835), 244; XLIX (Nov. 21, 1835), 200.
\end{itemize}
against George III listed in the Declaration of Independence was that "'he had refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good,' in other words that he had exercised his right to veto laws enacted by the legislative branches." If the Whigs of 1775 found the King's actions sufficient to justify a revolution, descendants of the illustrious patriots were justified in voting the executive out of office. Furthermore, the history of the Revolution demonstrated that legislative assemblies had detected and denounced usurpations of power. Since nineteenth-century Whigs believed that the executive was attempting to dominate the government, they called for a return to legislative supremacy.53 From a denunciation of the President, a Fourth of July orator moved to censure Jackson's advisers, especially the kitchen cabinet. After characterizing the Revolutionary heroes as praiseworthy statesmen, the orator described Jackson's advisers:

Their coats they were black,
And their trowsers were blue,
With a hole in the rear, for their tails to come through.54

Even after Jackson left office in 1837, Whigs continued to berate "Old Hickory." A Boston Whig, Jonathan Chapman,


54 William B. M'Clure, An Address Delivered at the Whig Festival, in the City of Pittsburgh, on the Fourth of July, 1834 (Pittsburgh, 1834), 8.
denied that the Revolution had been fought merely to exchange "a chief magistrate born to the throne, and one elected to office. The encroachment upon popular right by those who had been entrusted with executive power, countenanced by those who were paid for their support--this was the great central evil, and resistance to this was the real cause of the American Revolution." Chapman maintained that of twenty-six grievances in the Declaration of Independence, all were "imputed to that same rapacious executive." Among other things, he "'refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good;' 'made judges dependent on his will alone;' and 'created a multitude of new offices and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.'" Because Democrats were guilty of these same offences, Chapman called for the election of Whigs to office.55

As the election of 1840 approached, Democrats not only defended themselves as descendants of Revolutionary patriots but pictured the Whigs as children of Tories and, even worse, of Hartford Convention Federalists. Democrats argued that there were two parties in government--one based on "government of money" and the other, "government of many." Even during the Revolution there had been two classes, one of which wanted to secure the rights of property for a few

while the other had the best interests of the people in mind. The Tories had been friends of the English aristocratic government and had opposed the rights and liberties of the masses while the Whigs had been for the people. Thus, the two parties from Revolutionary times through the 1830's represented a contest between a government based upon wealth, aristocracy, power and a government representative of the people. Characterizing the Presidential election of 1840, a Democrat, Samuel Young, exclaimed, "on the one side is arrayed the aristocratic spirit, with its pride, its wealth, and its hungering and thirsting for power. On the other side of the contest is arrayed that unconquerable spirit of democracy which in the revolutionary struggle achieved our Independence; that spirit, in short, which indignantly repels the upstart pride of aristocracy and which perpetually and practically adopts as its polar star the self-evident truth that 'all men are created equal.'"57

With the Whig, William Henry Harrison, installed as President in 1841, Americans could recall the past two

56 Barber, Oration Delivered 1839, 10-11; Hallett, Oration, 8-9; Tarbell, Oration, 10-11; Seth J. Thomas, An Address Delivered before the Democratic Citizens of Plymouth County, Massachusetts, at East Abington, July 4, 1839 (Boston, 1839), 29.

57 Samuel Young, Oration Delivered at the Democratic Republican Celebration of the Sixty-Fourth Anniversary of the Independence of the United States, July Fourth, 1840, at the Methodist Episcopal Church, Greene-Street, in the City of New York (New York, 1840), 22-23.
decades when during the discussions on the tariff, nullification, the Bank, and political parties, politicians claimed they were following in the footsteps of the Revolutionary patriots. Opponents of the tariff argued that the heroes had resisted oppressive taxation while proponents of the tariff maintained that the patriots had waged war against Britain in order to establish domestic manufacturing. During the nullification controversy, South Carolinians asserted that they were emulating their fathers by resisting tyranny, and northerners contended that the Union as established by the sages must be preserved. The veto of the Second Bank of the United States led the President's supporters to conclude that he was the "second Washington" while Jackson's adversaries charged that King Andrew had replaced George III. Of course, members of all the political parties claimed to be directly descended from the Revolutionary Whigs. Yet at the very time that politicians believed that they were imitating their ancestors, authors and orators were accusing legislators of departing from the principles and practices of the Revolutionary heroes.
Chapter 5

LUXURY, DISSIPATION, AND EXTRAVAGANCE: THE DEGENERATION OF ANTE-BELLUM SOCIETY

Since Revolutionary patriots had fought for posterity, nineteenth-century Americans looked upon themselves as guardians of the liberties their fathers had won; they believed it their duty to pass these rights on to their own descendants. Although Americans no longer had to establish rights or conduct a revolution, they maintained that they had the more arduous task of protecting their system from the evils of selfish ambition, sectionalism, and factionalism that had overthrown all other free governments. If

1Addison, Oration, 24; Address by an Old Soldier of Wrentham, 11; Bellamy, Domestic Manufactures, 15; Chestney, Oration, 6-7; Everett, Oration Delivered on the Fifty-Second Anniversary, 4; Hacketstown Celebration, 1-2; Henry Willis Kinsman, An Oration, Pronounced before the Inhabitants of Boston, July the Fourth, 1836, in Commemoration of the Sixtieth Anniversary of American Independence (Boston, 1836), 25; Lee, Oration, 3; Mason, Oration, 16-17; Packard, Oration, 3-4; Perkins, Oration, 11; Potter, Oration, 21; Shaw, Oration, 24; Judson, Biography of the Signers, ix; Josiah Priest, A True Narrative of the Capture of David Ogden, Among the Indians, in the Time of the Revolution, and of the Slavery and Sufferings he Endured, with an Account of his Almost Miraculous Escape after Several Years' Bondage (Lansingburgh, 1841), 4; Stark, Memoir of Stark, iii; James Thacher, A Military Journal during the American Revolutionary War, from 1775 to 1783, Describing Interesting Events and Transactions of this Period, with Numerous Historical Facts and Anecdotes from the Original Manuscript (Boston, 1823), v-viii; Joseph White, An Narrative of Events, as They
citizens could agree that they should preserve their heritage, they nevertheless began to wonder if they were accomplishing this objective. A paramount question of the nineteenth century was whether or not Americans were adhering to the standards, principles, and practices that had been established by the Revolutionary generation.

During the decade after 1815, most citizens celebrated the recent conflict with Britain as the second War of Independence and compared it with the Revolution. Like their fathers, Americans had patiently remonstrated against the aggressions of Great Britain, but to no avail. Once again, "American swords flew from their scabbards" proving that nineteenth-century citizens were worthy descendants of their ancestors and capable of protecting their rights, liberties, and institutions. The first war for independence had resulted in political freedom, and the second brought national honor and glory to the United States.²

²J. T. Austin, Oration, 6; Bangs, Oration, 11-12; I. Barton, Oration, 14; Bisbe, Oration, 13; A. Chandler, Oration, 8; Colman, Oration, 11; Condy, Oration, 16; Dunlap, Oration Delivered 1819, 11; Elliott, Oration, 9-10; Julius Forrest, Oration Delivered before the Republican Students of the Belles-Lettres and Union Philosophical Societies of Dickinson College, July 4th, 1815 (Carlisle, 1815), 2; Haig, Oration, 27; Hazen, Oration, 22; John Holmes, An Oration, Pronounced at Alfred, on the 4th of July, 1815, being the Thirty Ninth Anniversary of American Independence (Boston, 1815), 16; William Lance, An Oration, Delivered on the
Although most Americans celebrated their recent victory over England, one dissenting voice came from John Davis, a Massachusetts Federalist. Denying that the War of 1812 resembled the Revolution, he contended that the eighteenth-century patriots had rebelled against a mild system of taxation; the present generation, however, permitted "the leeches of administration to suck up the wealth of the nation." Agreeing that the nineteenth-century war resulted in national glory, Davis nevertheless pointed out that the venture had cost more than a hundred million dollars. He cautioned taxpayers to remember that "when the flinty-hearted tax-gatherer knocks at your doors" national honor would not "feed the hungry, or clothe the naked." 

Even though most United States citizens believed that they had fulfilled the principles of '76 during the War of 1812, orators and authors continued to present formulas for preserving the Revolutionary heritage. The preservation of the Union called for the kind of "public spirit" that had

Fourth of July, 1816, in St. Michael's Church, S. C. by Appointment of the '76 Association (Charleston, n.d.), 11-13; Solomon Lincoln, An Oration Delivered before the Citizens of Hingham, on the Fourth of July, 1826 (Hingham, 1826), 17; Mauger, Oration, 12; Noah, Oration, 12; Ramsay, Address, 26; Taylor, Address, 11; Eber Wheaton, Oration Delivered July 4, 1828, at Masonic-Hall, before the Several Civic Societies of New York (New York, 1828), 12-13; Whittemore, Oration, 7; Niles, VIII (March 14, 1815), 3; X (March 23, 1816), 53; XI (Nov. 23, 1816), 194.

accounted in part for the success of the patriots of '76. Without spirit, Americans could not protect their liberties. Without liberties, "you may vegetate for a time, like the Mexican, or like the Hindoo, merely 'propagate and rot;' but such a drivelling bestial existence will deserve and receive all the contempt and chains it invariably provokes." 4

Throughout the period of 1815-1860, authors repeatedly emphasized the necessity for formal education in order to avoid the downfall of their republic.5 Because the American colonists were a remarkably literate people for their day and because they were accustomed to self-government, the war of 1775 had the support of almost the whole nation. Instead of blindly following a few leaders, all the patriots had understood their rights.6 Through an awareness of the sacrifices

4 Levi Woodbury, An Oration, Pronounced at Lyndeborough, N.H, in Commemoration of the Independence of the United States of America, July 4, 1815 (Amherst, 1815), 12-13; see also Berrian, Oration, 8.


6 J. C. Gray, Oration, 9; [Orville Dewey], "Popular
and sufferings of the Revolutionary heroes, the institutions that were established, and the principles that the government was based upon, nineteenth-century citizens could maintain their freedoms. Ignorant Americans were slaves, for they neither appreciated their rights nor knew how to preserve them. Education was essential for enhancing intelligence and wisdom, for teaching moral propriety, for observing social order, and for responsibly using the franchise.7

Another ingredient in the formula for preserving their heritage was for citizens to hold modest celebrations on the Fourth of July. The festivities conducted on the anniversaries of national independence were neither for the purpose of perpetuating the memory of the defeat of Britain nor for the objective of demonstrating hostility toward

Education," NAR, XXXVI (Jan., 1833), 77; [Jared Sparks], "Education in Tennessee," NAR, XXIV (Jan., 1827), 22-23.

7 John Bailey, An Oration, in Celebration of American Independence, Pronounced at Natick, July 5, 1824, before the Officers of the Regiment of Militia, Comprising the Towns of Natick, Framington, Hopkinton, Holliston and Sherburn (Dedham, 1824), 15; Bisbe, Oration, 14; Nehemiah Cleaveland, An Address, Delivered at Newburyport, July 5, 1824. In Commemoration of American Independence (Newburyport, 1824), 7-13; Francis, Oration, 21; Albert Gorton Greene, An Oration in Commemoration of the Forty Seventh Anniversary of the Declaration of American Independence, Delivered July 4th, 1823, before the Citizens of Providence, R. I. and Published at their Request (Providence, 1823), 11; Kinsman, Oration, 6; C. G. Loring, Oration, 16-17; Authur Middleton, Jr., An Oration, Delivered in St. Michael's Church, Charleston, South-Carolina, on the Fifth of July, 1824 (Sunday being the Fourth) before the '76 Association (Charleston, 1824), 13-14; Packard, Oration, 5; Penney, Discourse, 14; Sanders, Address, 12-14; Wilder, Oration, 5; Rogers, A New American Biographical Dictionary, iii; Niles, XXI (Sept. 15, 1821), 34.
England; rather, Fourth of July celebrations were to commemo-
rate the accomplishments of the Revolutionary genera-
tion.⁸ "When a nation whose history has been marked by some
signal deliverance from danger or destruction, either wholly
neglects to commemorate that deliverance by public rejoicings
and thanksgivings, or suffers it to be signalized with un-
meaning and inappropriate displays, it needs no prophet to
devine [sic] that the spirit of freedom hath departed from
the hearts of its citizens."⁹ By referring to the principles
that guided patriots through the War of Independence to the
establishment of the Union, nineteenth-century Americans
could discard prejudices, partisan feelings, and local
jealousies.¹⁰

Other palladia of the Union and liberty were virtue
and Christianity. As population increased, transportation
improved, and wealth increased in the nineteenth century,
Americans found it difficult to cope with their new-found

⁸Bynum, Oration, 6; Cushing, Oration Delivered 1821, 3-4; Dexter, Oration, 3-4; Everett, Oration Delivered on the Fifty-Second Anniversary, 43; O. C. Hartley, An Address Delivered before the Soldiers and Citizens of Bedford, Pa., July 4, 1844 (Chambersburg, Pa., 1844), 3; Lincoln, Oration Delivered 1835, 6; Putnam, Pilgrim Fathers, 13-14; William B. Sprague, Religious Celebration of Independence: A Discourse Delivered at Northampton, on the Fourth of July, 1827 (Hartford, 1827), 6; Train, Oration, 5-6; Wilder, Oration, 3-4; L. Woodbury, Oration, 4.

⁹Barber, Oration Delivered 1839, 3.

¹⁰Lincoln, Oration Delivered 1835, 6.
Prosperity.\footnote{For a discussion on the concept of prosperity, see Fred Somkin, \textit{Unquiet Eagle: Memory and Desire in the Idea of American Freedom, 1815-1860} (Ithaca, 1967), 11-54.} Although they celebrated prosperity as a consequence of the Revolution, citizens believed that wealth unwisely used would likely lead to vices, and dissolute characters would surely contribute to the downfall of the republic. Since each generation produced civil, political, religious, and military leaders, society would be deplorable if unprincipled men guided public affairs. So long as the people were actuated by "good moral principles," their Union was safe.\footnote{Bailey, \textit{Oration}, 10; Bellamy, \textit{Domestic Manufactures}, 8; Benedict, \textit{Oration}, 26; S. B. Brittan, \textit{Oration Delivered on the Sixty Eighth Anniversary of the Independence of the United States, in the City of Bridgeport, Fourth of July, 1844} (Bridgeport, n.d.), 8; Freeman G. Brown, \textit{Oration Delivered before the Enosinian Society of the Columbian College, D. C., July 4th, 1835} (Washington, 1835), 6-7; Emerson, \textit{Oration}, 4; Farnham, \textit{Oration}, 15; Hill, \textit{Address Delivered January 1828}, 3; Huling, \textit{Oration}, 8; Ebenezer Jennings, \textit{Address Delivered at Plainfield, (Mass,) July 4, 1836. Being the Sixtieth Anniversary of American Independence} (Northampton, 1836), 14; Edward Norris Kirk, \textit{Oration Delivered July 4, 1836, at the Request of the Committees of the Common Council, Civic Societies, Military Associations} (Albany, 1836), 25; Whittemore, \textit{Oration}, 14-15; Wilder, \textit{Oration}, 29; Niles, \textit{XVIII} (July 1, 1820), 313.} Christianity played the role of providing instruction in virtue and insuring morality in politics. Furthermore, religion could perpetuate the Union because of the ties that it formed among the citizens living in
different parts of the country.  

If the War of 1812 was seen as a fulfillment of Revolutionary principles, Americans nevertheless soon came to believe that their society was degenerating. During the 1820's the idea prevailed, even among the rulers in Washington, that politics as a vocation was demeaning. Suspicious of power that made men unscrupulous and tended to corrupt integrity, Americans had little regard for modern legislators. For the most part, citizens were at best indifferent and apathetic toward the national government. Very early Hezekiah Niles set the tone that continued to dominate at least until 1860. He agreed with a Baltimore citizen who


14 Young, Washington Community, 55, 107.
noted that although familiar with the issues of freedom and liberty, Benjamin Franklin remained silent for ten or twelve days after his election to the Continental Congress. The citizen concluded, "the reflection will, perhaps, follow from some of your readers—how unlike many of the fresh-produced legislators whom we have seen since." Again noting the degeneracy of the times, the editor reported, "in a toast lately given in reference to the congress of 1776, it was said 'there were giants in those days:' if so, and we should look at the last national legislature, we must admit that there are pigmies in the present."

Continuing the theme of deterioration, Niles printed a letter written by a former Revolutionary soldier, Matthew Lyon, who noted that while the cost of living had not increased, salaries for government officials had grown from approximately $150,000 in 1790 to $1½ million in 1820. Lyon exclaimed, "what habits of dissipation and extravagance have the rulers of the republican nation descended to since the declaration of independence. In former times, we prided ourselves in the simplicity of our habits and the unostentatiousness of our rulers," but now "there is luxury, dissipation, extravagance, and effeminancy."

If citizens were indifferent to their government in

15Niles, XI (Feb. 1, 1817), 375-76.
16Ibid., XX (July 28, 1821), 339.
17Ibid., XXIII (Dec. 7, 1822), 214.
the 1820's, by the end of that decade voters developed different attitudes. During Andrew Jackson's tenure as President, Americans confronted a society in which urban population was increasing, farming was becoming more commercialized, and the transportation system was expanding. With more citizens now involved in an economy that extended beyond their doorsteps, they became interested in governmental action on such matters as banking, public land policy, internal improvements, tariffs, Indian removal, and territorial expansion. By the time Jackson was inaugurated, the suffrage had been broadened, and during his term more direct methods of nominating and voting for candidates were adopted. Thus faced with a larger electorate aware of public issues, candidates, instead of stressing these issues, appealed for the votes of the common man through parades, barbecues, hard liquor, and demagogic speeches.  

Orators said little about politicians as such until the 1830's when, for the next three decades, they unleashed their criticism against modern political figures. While authors wrote in glowing terms of the physical strength, moral purity, and principles of Revolutionary heroes, they berated modern politicians who were morally and physically weak and who readily changed their principles whenever the

18 Edward Pessen, Jacksonian America: Society, Personality, and Politics (Homewood, Ill., 1969), passim.
occasion suited. Revolutionary patriots "were entirely ignorant of the first principles of a contested election, and thought it wrong, and beneath the dignity of honest citizens, to carouse and drink with their constituents, to obtain their votes. In those times, office sought men—they sought not office." Another orator lamented, "since the great men of the revolution passed away, candidates have been nominated, not for the reason that they were the best men to fill high and responsible stations, but because, and only because, they would catch votes." Although eighteenth-century officials had sought for government service the honest, capable, and faithful candidates, descendants of the illustrious patriots stooped to the use of the spoils system whereby offices went to members of the party regardless of ability.


20Julien Cumming, Address Delivered before the Philonomosian Society of Georgetown College, District of Columbia, on the 4th of July, 1846 (Washington, 1846), 12.


22Ibid., 9-10; Richmond, Oration, 9.
While orators persisted in attacking government officials throughout the period, the most severe criticism of legislators and politicians came from Levi Carroll Judson, author of *The Sages and Heroes of the American Revolution*. In biographical sketches of prominent Revolutionary participants, Judson cited characteristics that made them superior to their descendants. Admiring and exemplifying strong common sense, John Adams had abhorred formal ceremony and pedantry. Furthermore, Adams had been too honest to be a modern politician.\(^{23}\) As a member of the Continental Congress and the New York legislature, William Floyd had worked hard in committees and rarely had entered into debates. "He was a working man—working men were then properly appreciated. The congressional speakers of that day were also more highly appreciated than nine-tenths of them are now for the very good reason that they were laconic on all subjects. Long speeches were as uncommon as they are now frequent and useless."\(^{24}\) Judson did not advocate the cessation of all debate; instead, he suggested, "their wicks should be cut shorter and the volume of their flame diminished so as to emit less smoke."\(^{25}\)

If Revolutionary patriots were more active and less talkative than modern politicians, their most important attribute was their disinterestedness in putting the good of


\(^{24}\)Ibid., 100.

\(^{25}\)Ibid., 281.
their country above personal considerations. As Judson put it, "would to God that all our public men were of the same stamp at the present day."26 Along with other failings of nineteenth-century legislators, Judson listed their lack of frugality, especially "the enormous and worse than useless expense of public buildings." He concluded,

Independence Hall, built of plain brick and mortar, was deemed sufficiently splendid for the accommodation of the master spirits of that eventful era. A plain yard, with native forest trees for an ornament, was satisfactory. Now nothing but a marble structure, surrounded by extensive highly ornamented pleasure grounds, at an expense of MILLIONS, will answer for the legislators of this anti-republican era. The dear people are no longer consulted relative to the expense of our government--to pay is their only privilege.27

Not only congressmen came under attack for their spending sprees, but ordinary citizens also were chided for their departure from the simple habits, manners, and dress of their Revolutionary ancestors.28 Nineteenth-century

26Ibid., 361. 27Ibid., 87-88. 28Charles Francis Adams, An Oration, Delivered before the City Council and Citizens of Boston, in Faneuil Hall, on the Sixty-Seventh Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1843 (Boston, 1843), 32; Barber, Oration Delivered 1839, 17-18; The Eighty-Second Anniversary of American Independence: Being a Full Report of the Events of the Day in the City of Boston, July 5, 1858 (Boston, 1858), 27; R. L. Jennings, An Address Delivered before the First Society of Free Enquirers, in Boston, on Sunday, July 4, 1830 (Boston, 1830), 14; Mason, Oration, 14-15; William Foster Otis, An Oration Delivered before the "Young Men of Boston," on the Fourth of July, MDCCCXXXI (Boston, 1831), 7; Isaiah Rynders, Oration Delivered July 4th, 1851, (75th Year of our National Independence.) (New York, 1851), 3-4; Andrew Leete Stone, The Struggles of American History: An Oration Delivered before the Municipal Authorities of the City of
Americans were unlike a member of the Continental Congress, William Ellery, who "was temperate, plain and uniform in his habits and dress and could seldom be induced to join in chase after the *ignis fatuus*-FASHION." Attributing the degeneration to love of money, an orator explained,

Have we cultivated the self-sacrificing spirit of patriotism, so proudly manifested by the fathers of the revolution, or are we cowardly cringing to the power of money? Where now is that lofty patriotism that dared at the peril of life to do those deeds that made the heart of real oppression quail? Gone—lost—swallowed up in sordid avarice, hollow hypocrisy, and blood-sucking ambition; making us remarkable for little else than a mean, dastardly, craven spirit of abject submission to the little great men who are respected only for their worth—that is, *the money they are worth*.

Orators repeatedly castigated citizens who squandered fortunes by imitating foreign fashions, manners, and social customs. Rather than courting luxury, descendants of the frugal patriots should return to the virtues of morality.

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29 Judson, *Sages and Heroes*, 96.

industry, and economy that characterized their fathers.\textsuperscript{31}

As one orator sarcastically exclaimed,

How can we, who live in this age of refinement, refrain from a pitying smile of contempt at the primitive manners of our simple fathers of '76. Then men were silly enough to comply with their engagements, keep all their promises and pay their debts. Those were the days when the farmer ploughed along the same furrow with his laborers, and thought it not beneath the dignity of the landholder to inquire into the internal arrangements of the farm yard.\textsuperscript{32}

Another departure from Revolutionary times was evidenced by the formation of a class composed of "gentlemen idlers" who dressed finely "by borrowing and spunging." When these methods failed, they turned to "swindling, stealing, gambling, and robbing." As long as they maintained their fashionable appearance and eluded the friendly police, these neer-do-wells were accepted in aristocratic society. "By virtue of a fine coat, lily hand and graceful bow, many an idle knave has been received into fashionable circles with eclat and walked roughshod over a worthy young clerk,


\textsuperscript{32}J. Cumming, \textit{Address}, 12.
mechanic or farmer who had too much sense to act the monkey flirtations of an itenerant dandy." Even worse, these so-called "gentlemen" perpetuated the pernicious practice of gambling and led many an innocent youth to "gambling hells" [sic] where "high handed robberies" by "finely dressed boa-constrictor black legs" took place. "To the honor of the members of the Continental Congress, they placed a veto upon this heaven provoking, soul destroying, reputation ruining, wealth devouring, nation demoralizing vice."34

If participants in the Revolution provided noble examples, the actions of another less noble group of that day were also instructive. Using the Revolution as an excuse, the seven Doan brothers of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, had launched a campaign of murder, rape, arson, and robbery thereby filling the countryside with mourning and ruin. The brothers who were not killed in raids were eventually captured after the War of Independence ended. Nineteenth-century commentators held up the career of these men as an incentive for good citizens to do everything possible "to put down the desperadoes of crime which even in these days still exist."35

34Ibid., 114-15.
35The Seven Brothers of Wyoming; or the Brigands of the Revolution (New York, 1850), 114; see also Henry K. Brooke, Annals of the Revolution; or a History of the Doans (Philadelphia, 1843), 5.
Along with a decline in morals, some Americans believed that there was a degeneration in religious fervor accompanied by a lack of respect for clergymen.

In all the proceedings of the revolutionary period, we observe the constant influence of religion. The people, in some parts of the country, were aroused to resistance by the powerful appeals of their ministers. Sermons then breathed the fire of patriotism, and the contest partook of a sacred character. The pastor sometimes accompanied his flock to the field; commenced the battle with fervent supplications to the God of armies, and was everywhere over the field, to animate the living, and to administer to the dying the last consolations of a hope full of immortality.36

Nineteenth-century ministers themselves objected to the attempts to limit their public discussions to religious Biblical subjects rather than politics. Like the heroes of '76, clergymen declared that since they were taxed, they had the right to participate in political discussions.37

Even on the one day that Americans devoted to the celebration of their national anniversary, many believed that they were insulting the memory of their fathers. Rather than observing the Fourth of July in a solemn, religious ceremony, citizens had deteriorated to "drunkenness and riot" --revealing a "Bacchanalian" spirit, for the occasion had become one of festivity, bonfires, cannon shooting, and

36Knowles, Oration, 12.

political activity. In fact, as one orator observed, "many of our more serious people generally flee from its noisy and turbulent festivities. Early in the morning, trains of vehicles may be seen leaving the city by every outlet, anxious to escape from the celebration of National Independence." If the celebration had degenerated, the speeches delivered on that occasion had not improved. Aptly characterizing the typical Fourth of July oration, an essayist wrote, "the sentences that body forth what of body it has, are long, disjointed, and involved, overlaid with inappropriate epithets and unmeaning metaphors; and the style, on the whole is infelicitous to that degree, that wherever the choice lay between a compact and tasteful expression, and a clumsy one, the latter would appear to have been scrupulously preferred."

While nineteenth-century men suffered in comparison with their ancestors, Revolutionary mothers were equally

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38 M. Brown, Address, 4; Eighty-Second Anniversary, 15; Wilbur Fisk, Substance of an Address Delivered before the Middletown Colonization Society, at their Annual Meeting, July 4, 1835 (Middletown, 1835), 3; B. F. Hunt, Oration, 6; Mellish I. Motte, The Christian Patriot. A Sermon Delivered at the South Congregational Church, Boston, July 5th, 1840 (Cambridge, 1840), 15; Potts, Address, 7-8; Putnam, Pilgrim Fathers, 12.


40 [John E. Palfrey], "Woodbury's Discourse," NAR, XLV (July, 1837), 257.
more worthy of emulation than women of a later day. Describing a young female participant in the War of Independence, one novelist wrote, "she was none of your modern belles, delicate and ready to faint at the first sight of a reptile; no, Fanny could row a boat, shoot a panther, ride the wildest horse in the province, or do almost any brave and useful act. And Fanny could write poetry too, nay, start not gentle reader, her education was of no mean character." Along with all these talents, she "was a noble looking girl."^41

Another novelist portrayed eighteenth-century heroines who had "more perfectly developed muscles, and cheeks of ruddier glow, which may be attributed to proper exercises, and a diet better adapted to the constitution. It is true that they were unable to thrum a guitar, or torture a piano with that assurance and effect peculiar to a boarding school miss of the present day; yet they were far from deficient in useful knowledge and solid attainments."^42

Distaff patriots had also been more utilitarian than their descendants. Discussing a "Spinning Bee" held during the War of Independence, an author believed it necessary to elaborate

As our modern young ladies may never have had the pleasure of attending one of these convivial assemblies, we will in this place, for their especial gratification, endeavor to give them a description of this one. As an introduction, however, we will

^41Ballou, Fanny Campbell, 12.
^42Robinson, Boston Conspiracy, 25.
state, that the young ladies of that period, when the clanging of arms and the thunder of British and American artillery reverberated along the valleys, and among the hills of our bleeding country, were well versed in the use of certain domestic implements which said implements were to be found in nearly every domicile of our ancestors; but have, of late years, given place to the more refined and musical piece of furniture, to wit: the Piano.43

Another novelist continued the theme that Revolutionary mothers were known by their "domestic virtues" and added, "quite as much as by their erect carriage, their swan-like movements, their robes of rich brocade, or their stomachers of lace." Turning to a discussion of the 1850's, the author argued, "young ladies would scream now-a-days, if caught sewing, whose grandmothers won scores of hearts by the bewitching feminine art. We are old-fashioned enough to think that the grandmothers understood our sex the best, and that they slew thousands with their pretty household graces, while their fair descendants, with all their Italian music, slay but tens."44

Along with adults, American youth showed signs of degeneration. Some nineteenth-century young people kept records of British Parliament election returns, exulting in the defeat of an obscure candidate in some remote borough. These same individuals were not ashamed of confessing ignorance of their own Revolutionary history. How different

43 Clinton, Glanmore, 17.
44 Charles Jacobs Peterson, Kate Aylesford, A Story of the Refugees (Philadelphia, 1855), 82-83; see also J. Cumming, Address, 12.
from the youth of Revolutionary days when young people were aware of their rights and understood the issues between England and her colonies. In addition, during the eighteenth century, "children were children, and were generally kept under strict and wholesome parental subjection."

Parties given by young people during the Revolutionary era were similar to parties of the nineteenth century with one exception.

The guests of Miss Ripley seemed all on an equality, whereas in modern times, it is becoming exceedingly difficult to bring a dozen young people together, but what some will evidence that they consider themselves far from being flattered if, in fact, they do not take it in high dudgeon that some of their schoolmates who are less vain than themselves are invited guests; although possibly they may be richer in both prospective wealth and good sense. It is anti-republican, entirely so, for individuals to manifest hauteur towards their worthy fellows; and not less impolitic to assume aristocratic airs in company.

During the War of Independence, guests were treated with "generous hospitality" while visitors of the nineteenth century were exposed to a formal hospitality that was extended only "because it is fashionable to appear civil; although in the kitchen, the family visited may wish their parlor friends in Heaven, or almost any other place, so they are rid them."

Although Americans could be critical of themselves,
they were quick to defend their habits from the comments of outsiders. By the 1830's when foreign travelers willingly conceded that American society was different from their own, United States citizens were sensitive to their observations. According to British visitors, Americans "chew tobacco, spit on the floor, take snuff, drink whiskey, call each other colonel and esquire, lean back in a chair, talk politics, walk fast, and murder the King's English." To these criticisms, a Fourth of July orator, Myron Lawrence, gave the most apt reply: "let our good friends over the water be as fastidious in their tastes as they please, sit on their chairs as perpendicularly and immovably as they choose, and spit into their pockets, or on an embroidered napkin, if they like, but leave us to 'go ahead' in our own way."

Even though Americans would not tolerate the captious remarks of foreigners, they nevertheless believed that the Revolutionary generation had been superior to their own. The talk of degeneracy came in part from conservatives who feared that changes in population distribution, electoral procedures, and economic development would result in social


leveling. \textsuperscript{51} Other Americans, however, emphasized the shortcomings for the purpose of improving their society. Since most Americans believed that they were not living up to the standards of their ancestors, they emphasized evils and injustices that had to be eliminated in order to live in a flawless society. Stressing only the good aspects of the Revolutionary era served the function of providing a standard, whether real or mythical, by which citizens could judge themselves. Furthermore, depicting Revolutionary times as ideal proved that perfection was attainable. Whether they worked individually or through organizations, many nineteenth-century Americans wanted to improve the environment in which they lived.

\textsuperscript{51}Pessen, \textit{Jacksonian America}, 157.
While some Americans talked about degeneracy, others confronted the task of improving a society that revered but did not reflect the Revolutionary principles of freedom and equality. Hoping to eradicate evils and injustices, most ante-bellum reformers used some aspect of Revolutionary history to gain popular support for their reforms. Believing that man and his society were perfectible, reformers envisioned a nation based upon the principle found in the Declaration of Independence that all men were created equal.

Although the most blatant contradiction of this sacred principle was slavery, women and free blacks also were discriminated against legally, socially, politically, economically, and intellectually. Other reformers believed that a perfect society could exist only when citizens no longer consumed alcoholic beverages, and when debtors were no longer incarcerated for being impoverished.

Tending to identify reform with human rights, some individuals claimed that imprisonment for debt violated the Declaration of Independence and principle of liberty that
the Revolutionary heroes had fought for. On the occasion of Fourth of July celebrations, William Emmons argued against the practice of imprisoning debtors. According to Emmons, on the day devoted to the celebration of liberty thousands of citizens were denied their freedom and independence simply because they were poor. He continued, "if it was praise worthy in our fathers to resist oppression from foreign powers from '63 to '75, would it not be more honourable in us, their sons to resist, even unto DEATH, laws exercised to the destruction of men, who know no crime but misfortune and poverty?"

In Congress the most persistent opponent of imprisonment for debt was Senator Robert M. Johnson of Kentucky who, several times during the 1820's, introduced legislation designed to abolish incarceration of the poor. In addition to using the same arguments that Emmons made, Johnson further pointed out that no one was exempt, for even old

1Niles, XIV (Aug. 15, 1818), 423; XX (March 24, 1821), 59; XXX (Aug. 12, 1826), 412; John R. Commons, et al., History of Labour in the United States (4 vols., New York, 1918-1935), I, 179; Curti, Roots of American Loyalty, 108.


3Emmons, Oration Pronounced 1829, 14.

Revolutionary soldiers were behind bars. While these old heroes were in jail, they heard talk of freedom—freedom that they had helped to achieve. The Senator had seen "a free man, who had fought for his country—a man who was not meant by nature for a slave, but who was born to the possession of the liberty which he loved—walking, dejected through the public street, a prisoner, attended by a petty officer, because he had forfeited his bond, and was unable to meet an obligation made with honest intentions." Through Johnson's perseverance, Congress finally passed legislation early in 1832 abolishing imprisonment for federal debts. Already a few states had enacted legislation prohibiting the incarceration of the poor, and soon other states followed their example.

Although the New York legislature had abolished imprisonment for debt in 1832, some legislators were in favor of restoring the practice. In response to this challenge, Asa Greene wrote *The Debtors' Prison: A Tale of a Revolutionary Soldier*. In this novel the Heartwell family in the

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5*Annals*, 18 Cong., 1 Sess., 267-68 (Feb. 16, 1824), 280-81 (Feb. 17, 1824); *Cong. Reg.*, 19 Cong., 2 Sess., 5 (Dec. 12, 1826); 20 Cong., 1 Sess., 11-12 (Dec. 19, 1827).


7*Ibid.*, 22 Cong., 1 Sess., 2259 (March 27, 1832).


1820's found on their doorstep a starving raggedly dressed man seventy years of age. Convinced that the gentleman was a Revolutionary veteran, the Heartwells persuaded him to tell of his adventures. Revealing his name to be James Freeman, the old man confirmed that he had achieved the rank of major in the War of Independence. In fact, he had been present at Lexington and at Yorktown and at innumerable other battles where he had received more than twenty wounds, the scars of which he still carried. After the Revolution, Major Freeman had purchased a farm. Since he had been paid in inflated currency for his services during the war, he had been forced to borrow more money to stock his farm. Even though drought and insects had caused his business venture to fail, the creditor had Major Freeman imprisoned. Furthermore, Freeman's Revolutionary sword was seized by the landlord who "had never done anything in his country's cause," and who "had staid like a coward at home while that sword was made red for the common benefit of him and his countrymen." The remainder of Freeman's tale concerned his experiences in jail, his release, his joining the army to combat Indians, his fighting at age fifty-seven in the War of 1812, and his second imprisonment when, after his purse was robbed, he could not pay his hotel bill. Released from prison again, the old man was returning to his birthplace when he fell ill on the Heartwell's doorstep. After hearing

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10 Ibid., 42.
his story, Mr. Heartwell arranged for the old veteran to receive a pension. Before the first payment arrived, Major Freeman died. An impoverished man who had failed to receive the gratitude of his fellow Americans, Freeman was finally transported by the Heartwells to lie in a grave beside his wife and children.

Although Major Freeman's business failures were due to natural disasters, many reformers claimed that debtors were impoverished because of their intemperate use of alcohol. Just as the abolition of imprisonment for debt became a popular cause in the 1820's and 30's so too did the movement to prohibit the consumption of ardent spirits.\textsuperscript{11} Identifying temperance with the preservation of the republic, one orator declared, "if there is any one vice, which, more than another, can be considered the root of all evil in a free government, it is that of excess in animal indulgencies, and a devotion of those passions, whose tendency is to degrade moral and intellectual dignity, while they prostrate physical power."\textsuperscript{12} Another Fourth of July speaker claimed that the most dangerous vice threatening the downfall of the republic was "the use of ardent spirits as a drink."\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{11}John Allen Krout, \textit{The Origins of Prohibition} (New York, 1925), 235; Tyler, \textit{Freedom's Ferment}, 308, 322.

\textsuperscript{12}Daniel H. Gregg, \textit{An Address Delivered before the Newton Temperance Society July 4, 1828} (Boston, 1828), 22.

\textsuperscript{13}Bethune, \textit{Our Liberties}, 17.
Calling for temperance reform, one crusader reported that at a night session of Congress, "members too drunk for the decency of a tavern bar room, were not uncommon sights in the senate chamber and in the hall of the house of representatives of a republic, whose fathers handed down to it the hallowed and immutable truth, 'that no free government or the blessing of liberty, can be preserved to any people, but by firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, frugality, and virtue!'" 14

For more than half a century, the Fourth of July had been a holiday marked by an abundance of intoxicants, and temperance crusaders used the celebrations to speak out against the use of alcohol. 15 As one orator put it, "a drink offering must be poured out, and a copious one too; not in ancient heathen style, upon the head of the victim,

14 Niles, LII (July 15, 1837), 311.
15 Bethune, Our Liberties, 17; Fessenden, Oration, 21; Gregg, Address, 2; Hacketstown Celebration, 8; Rowland Gibson Hazard, An Address Delivered by Request of the Pawcatuck Temperance Society, at Westerly, R. I. July 4, 1843 (Providence, 1843); Humphrey Moore, An Address Delivered before the Temperance Society in Pembroke, July 4, 1836 (Concord, 1836); Lucius Sargent, Address, Delivered at the Congregational Meeting-House, July 4, 1838; being the First Temperance Celebration of American Independence, in Providence (Providence, 1838); James M. Slade, An Address Explanatory of the Principles and Objects of the United Brothers of Temperance. Delivered on the Third of July, 1837, at Shoreham, Vt. (Vergennes, 1848); Whittlesey, Address, 14; J. Willard, Oration, 17; Niles, LVIII (July 11, 1840), 290; LXII (July 9, 1842), 289; Ralph Henry Gabriel, The Course of American Democratic Thought (2d ed., New York, 1956), 100-101.
but in modern style, poured into the head."\textsuperscript{16} Through the efforts of temperance reformers July Fourth celebrations became more sober occasions.\textsuperscript{17} Even the customary toasts were drunk in cold water or "in full bumpers of lemonade; the entertainment and entire celebration being conducted on cold water principles."\textsuperscript{18}

Orators appealed to the Revolutionary heroes as examples to follow in re-establishing sobriety.\textsuperscript{19} Patriots had been "trained to rigorous and abstemious habits of living, strangers to indulgence and effeminacy, cultivating only the sterner and more Roman virtues, were distinguished alike for their bodily and mental energies, their zeal and devotion to their country and religion." At the time of the War of Independence, the British had confronted American "men of sober and correct thinking—men of temperate but determined resolution, and fitted for the noble enterprise they achieved."\textsuperscript{20} Descendants of the noble patriots, however, paid more taxes "to that fiery king, the still" than the Revolutionary heroes had paid to the King of England.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{16}Moore, Address Delivered 1836, 6.

\textsuperscript{17}Krout, Origins, 143.

\textsuperscript{18}Joseph Dunbar, Oration Pronounced at the Celebration of the Fourth of July, 1846, at the Oaklands School (Burlington, 1846), 3.

\textsuperscript{19}Gregg, Address, 7; Hazard, Address, 4; Moore, Address Delivered 1836, 3-4; Slade, Address, 8.

\textsuperscript{20}Gregg, Address, 6-7.

\textsuperscript{21}Moore, Address Delivered 1836, 5.
Temperance crusaders also argued that nineteenth-century citizens, though not enslaved by the King of England, had imposed their own chains in the form of alcohol. Ardent spirits destroyed the liberty and independence that had been gained by the War of Independence.\(^{22}\) As one orator explained, "it is not freedom to be enslaved by animal appetites. It is not freedom to be thrown into the poor-house by reason of intemperance, or be cast into prison and confirmed there, for the same cause. It is not independence to be obliged to lean on a neighbor's arm while going home from a fourth of July celebration, or to be scraped up from the road and be carried he knows not where."\(^{23}\)

Just as the Revolutionary patriots had thrown off the yoke of the British King, temperance reformers called for their fellow-citizens to repel the evil of alcohol. As one orator elaborated,

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\text{We may say, in the language of the Declaration of Independence, that intemperance has, by a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinced a design to reduce us under absolute despotism, and it is our right and our duty to throw it off and provide new guards for our future security. The catalogue of grievances which it has inflicted upon us, is longer and more galling than that charged upon the British King. It has at least burthened us with taxes--harassed our people, and eat out their substance, and has endeavored to bring upon us hordes of merciless enemies to involve in an undistinguished destruction, all ages, sexes,}
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\(^{22}\)Gregg, \textit{Address}, 23-24; Sargent, \textit{Address}, 5; \textit{Niles}, LII (July 15, 1837), 311.

\(^{23}\)Moore, \textit{Address Delivered} 1836, 11.
and conditions. And we were called upon by every high inducement of patriotism, character, and religion to do as our fathers did, and with the same firmness of purpose, and the same reliance upon the Supreme Judge of the world, to declare ourselves free and independent, and to pledge to that declaration our lives and sacred honor.24

Since a few of the temperance organizations encouraged wives and mothers to participate in the movement, the cause of women’s rights was furthered when some local temperance societies admitted women to their ranks.25 In the nineteenth century, women had many responsibilities and duties but few rights. During their crusade to improve their legal status and expand their educational opportunities, they tried to raise themselves from a subordinate status to one of equality with men.

With increased agitation for women’s rights between 1830 and 1860, the view of the American Revolution took on a new dimension. Now the role of women in the period 1763-1783 received recognition. Occasionally, Fourth of July orators mentioned the patriotic sacrifices of the Revolutionary mothers. Distaff patriots had refused to drink tea and had forsworn to attend splendid balls given by British officers.26

24Whittlesey, Address, 14.
26Arthur, Oration, 20-21; Ivers James Austin, An Oration Delivered by Request of the City Authorities, before the Citizens of Boston, on the Sixty Third Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, 1839 (Boston, 1839), 5;
More so than July Fourth orators, novelists emphasized the services of women in the Revolution. Although fictional heroines did not engage in hand-to-hand combat with the British, they often acted as spies who supplied information to the patriots. On occasion, the heroine's ingenuity led to the escape of the hero who had been captured by British troops. For example, in Harry Halyard's *Geraldine*, the heroine smuggled female clothing to Horace Harlowe who effected his escape by disguising himself as a woman.

For the most part, however, fictional heroines played a passive role in the Revolution; most novelists stressed

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their patriotism and their influence upon the heroes. As one author wrote, "indeed, it is worthy of notice that during the whole war, the American women were almost universally patriots; and they encountered their full share of privation and suffering, that too with a cheerfulness and fortitude that often infused courage and vigor into the hearts of the almost desponding soldiery." Furthermore, the patriotism of women animated the heroes' resistance,

29 Emerson Bennett, Rosalie DuPont; or, Treason in the Camp. A Story of the Revolution (Cincinnati, 1851), 28; Buttonwoods, 3; Child, The Rebels, 133; Sylvanus Cobb, Olivia Trevett, or, the Patriot Cruiser. A Story of the American Revolution (New York, 1835), 7; Jones, Refugee, I, 105; George Lippard, The Rose of Wissahikon; or, the Fourth of July, 1776; a Romance Embracing the Secret History of the Declaration of Independence (Philadelphia, 1847), 56; McHenry, Betrothed, 56-57; Mancur, The Deserter, 65; Paulding, The Old Continental, I, 73; Charles F. Sterling, The Red Coats; or the Sack of Unquowa. A Tale of the Revolution (New York, 1848), 48, and Buff and Blue, 18; see also Eveline Trevor: A Romance of the Revolution (Philadelphia, 1843); Justin Jones, The Rebel Bride: A Revolutionary Romance, and other Tales (New York, 1853); George Lippard, Blanche of Brandywine; or, September the Eleventh, 1777. A Romance, Combining the Poetry, Legend, and History of the Battle of Brandywine (Philadelphia, 1846); James McHenry, Meredith; or, the Mystery of the Meschianza, A Tale of the American Revolution (Philadelphia, 1831); John H. Mancur, Christine. A Tale of the Revolution (New York, 1843); Peter Hamilton Myers, Ellen Welles; or, the Siege of Fort Stanwix. A Tale of the Revolution (Rome, 1848); Charles J. Peterson, Grace Dudley; or, Arnold at Saratoga. An Historical Novel (Philadelphia, 1849); The Thrilling and Romantic Story of Sarah Smith and the Hessian. An Original Tale of the American Revolution. To Which is Added, Female Heroism Exemplified, an Interesting Story, Founded on Fact. Together with Mr. Keith's Captivity Among the American Indians (Philadelphia, 1844).

30 Hale, Sketches, 42-43.
"nerved their arms, inspired their souls, and finally enabled the peaceful cultivators of the earth to wrest from boundless wealth, disciplined armies, and almost irresistible power, the most glorious prize for which nations ever contended."31 If heroines did not take up arms, they could "always be ready, even under the worst circumstances, with their cheeful countenances and sweet smiles, for there is nothing that will help so unerringly to plant the very soul of bravery in the breast of a true man, as the cheerful, encouraging smile of the woman he really loves."32 Women too resolved not to marry until their nation was free, and then they would choose one who had taken an active part in obtaining liberty.33

While women urged the patriots to resist British aggression, they also sacrificed their favorite beverage—tea. Because of British duties on the product, women resolved not to drink tea and to ostracize those who continued to consume the beverage.34 In one fictional account, when Lexington patriots rushed to Boston after passage of the Port Bill, only women remained in the village. Refusing to stay with Mrs. Niles who was left alone, Mrs. Buker

31Paulding, The Old Continental, I, 19.
32Barker, Ellen Grafton, 29.
33Ibid., 26, 55; Ingraham, Neal Nelson, 24-25; Simms, The American Spy, 25.
34Coultershoggle, Leslie Linkfield, I, 235; Cooke, Henry St. John, 95; Leslie, Chase Loring, 195-96.
announced, "I strongly expect Mrs. Niles drinks boughten tea, and if I knew she did, I'd never set my foot in her house again." Deciding to investigate the situation, "Mrs. Buker, whose patriotism would not let her rest, called on her two neighbors, Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Hill to go over with her and spend the afternoon with Mrs. Niles. On the way Mrs. Buker revealed to Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Hill her suspicions with regard to Mrs. Niles, at which both of those ladies uttered an exclamation of patriotic horror, and declared if that were the case, she ought to be exposed at once." Much to their dismay the visitors were served a beverage in teacups whereupon Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Hill confirmed their suspicions by tasting the tea while Mrs. Buker knew the odor without drinking the forbidden beverage. After hearing her guests lecture her on the consequences of drinking tea, Mrs. Niles finally explained that the rules allowed people to drink tea they already owned before the non-importation agreement went into effect. Upon hearing this good news, each of the guests drank five cups of tea.\^{35}

The most famous use of Revolutionary history came from women themselves when a group meeting at Seneca Falls, New York in 1848 issued a Declaration of Sentiments modeled

\^{35} Incidents of the Revolution. Tales Illustrating the Events of the American Revolution (Bath, 1841), 155-59.
upon the Declaration of Independence. \textsuperscript{36} Women declared, "all men and women are created equal," and "the history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her." Then followed a list of grievances that woman held against man. Without allowing her the franchise, he nevertheless compelled her to submit to legislation even though she had no representation. Depriving her of political rights, man also oppressed her legally. In the eye of the law a married woman was "civilly dead" with no right to own property nor to retain the wages she earned. In the marriage covenant, the husband was "her master--the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty and to administer chastisement." Furthermore, he framed divorce legislation in order to benefit himself. An unmarried woman, too, had no advantages for her property was taxed "to support a government which recognizes her only when her property can be made profitable to it." As far as employment was concerned, man monopolized all profitable careers, closed all avenues to wealth and distinction, and would not allow her to teach theology, medicine, or law. Since all colleges were closed to women, he would not allow her to obtain an education. In addition to excluding her from the ministry, he denied her an active role in the

church. The Declaration of Sentiments concluded

Now in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious degradation—in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.37

Since historians and biographers neglected the heroines' activities during the War of Independence, Elizabeth F. Ellet hoped to make known the contributions of female patriots by writing *The Women of the American Revolution*.38 The three volumes contained biographical sketches of approximately one hundred seventy distaff patriots who had aided in the struggle for liberty. Like fictional heroines, the participants had served as spies, prepared clothes and bandages, tended the sick and wounded, and devoted themselves wholly to the cause. Even though women had been away from the battlefield, they had suffered far more than men, according to Ellet. The active Revolutionary fathers had their thoughts filled with engaging British troops. Mothers, on the other hand, could only wait for news of battles and hope for the safety of their loved ones.39


Nineteenth-century women were not alone in their quest for equality since blacks also were subjected to legal, political, and social discrimination.40 While women emphasized the contributions of distaff Revolutionary patriots in order to gain more rights, blacks pointed to the role of Negroes during the War of Independence. At a Boston meeting of "free people of color" the following toast was drunk:
"The black regiment of the American revolutionary army—The Goddess of Liberty was not then ashamed to own them as her sons and her defenders."41

A history of black Revolutionary patriots did not appear until William C. Nell published Services of Colored Americans in the Wars of 1776 and 1812 in 1852.42 Three years later a revised edition under another title appeared and contained an introduction by Harriet Beecher Stowe. According to Stowe, "the colored race have been generally considered by their enemies, and sometimes by their friends as deficient in energy and courage." Nell's book, however, redeemed the character of the Negro race by chronicling the contributions of blacks in the major battles of the War of Independence. Indirectly criticizing the Revolutionary

41 Niles, XXIX (Sept. 3, 1825), 4.
heroes, Stowe maintained that Negroes deserved utmost respect because their services were "rendered to a nation which did not acknowledge them as citizens and equals, and in whose interests and prosperity they had less at stake. It was not for their own land they fought, not even for a land which had adopted them, but for a land which had enslaved them, and whose laws, even in freedom, oftener oppressed than protected." Stowe concluded that whites should "remember that generosity, disinterested courage, and bravery are of no particular race and complexion."\(^{43}\)

Of all the reform movements in nineteenth-century American society, none had more impact than those that advocated the abolition of slavery. The first full-scale discussion of slavery came from 1819 to 1821 when Congress debated the admission of Missouri into the Union. Attempts to restrict the expansion of slavery into Missouri brought forth comments on the American Revolution. Advocates of restriction argued that slavery was inconsistent with the principle found in the Declaration of Independence that all men are created free and equal.\(^{44}\) Southerners, unwilling to denounce that sacred document, argued that its principles


\(^{44}\)Annals, 16 Cong., 1 Sess., 137, 149 (Jan. 17, 1820), 1395 (Feb. 17, 1820), 1446 (Feb. 21, 1820).
were inapplicable to slavery. To the charge that slavery was inconsistent with the Declaration, southerners responded that northern states had used state laws, not the authority of the Declaration, to abolish slavery in the North. Furthermore, claimed southerners, if the Declaration literally meant that God created men equal, then not only would everyone look alike, but there would be no distinctions between poverty and wealth, virtue and vice, and industry and idleness.45 Another popular contention of restrictionists was that the existence of slavery inhibited southern military efforts during the War of Independence.46 Resenting assertions that they had not contributed their share, southerners were fond of mentioning as examples of their patriotism the Battles of Cowpens, King's Mountain, Guilford, Eutaw, and Yorktown.47

Even though debates in Congress received little attention from the American public,48 at least three orators condemned the compromise that allowed slavery to extend to Missouri.49 By "that disastrous vote of Congress," the evil

45Ibid., 227 (Jan. 20, 1820), 301 (Jan. 28, 1820), 1384 (Feb. 17, 1820).

46Ibid., 1428-29 (Feb. 21, 1820).

47Ibid., 162 (Jan. 18, 1820), 228 (Jan. 20, 1820), 333 (Feb. 1, 1820), 1312, 1327 (Feb. 14, 1820).


49Bisbe, Oration, 19; Theodore Lyman, An Oration Delivered at the Request of the Selectmen of the Town of Boston, on the Anniversary of American Independence in the
of human bondage was perpetuated by a people who boasted of freedom and liberty. As one orator put it, "may a reforming spirit go forth and redeem us from the disgrace of slavery. May no African be permitted to breathe in those States, who is held in involuntary bondage. Shall domestic slavery be encouraged, extended and perpetuated, while national vassalage is deprecated?"  

During the 1820's and 1830's the most prominent anti-slavery organization was the American Colonization Society whose objective was to transport Negroes to Africa. Officials of the Colonization Society urged July Fourth orators to publicize their organization as well as to collect donations at the annual celebrations. Opposed to human bondage, the colonizationists'
philosophy was to persuade southerners to manumit gradually their slaves.  

While the Colonization Society was failing in its goal to transport Negroes to Africa, orators continued to press for an end to slavery. Increasingly, speakers denounced human bondage as a threat to the Union and as a stain upon the national character. Furthermore, until they ceased to violate the principles of the Declaration of Independence, Americans could not expect other countries to imitate their example. William Claggett declared, "the literature, the philanthropy, the moral sense of all Christendom now accuse the citizens of the North American republic of INSINCERITY and HYPOCRISY in not adhering to the sacred

1832 (Princess-Anne, Md., 1832), 3; John H. Kennedy, Sympathy, its Foundation and Legitimate Exercise Considered, in Special Relation to Africa: A Discourse Delivered on the Fourth of July 1828, in the Sixth Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia (Philadelphia, n.d.), 5; Knowles, Perils and Safeguards, 28; Robert Little, The National Anniversary. In Two Sermons Preached July 4th, 1824, in the First Unitarian Church, Washington City; with a Short Address Respecting the Views of the Colonization Society (Washington, 1824), 14-15; John Newland Maffitt, A Plea for Africa, A Sermon Delivered at Bennet Street Church, in Behalf of the American Colonization Society, July 4, 1830 (Boston, 1830), 13; William B. O. Peabody, An Address, Delivered at Springfield, before the Hampden Colonization Society, July 4th, 1828 (Springfield, 1828), 8-9; Penney, Discourse, 10-11; Post, Discourse, 16-17; Potts, Address, 44; Nathaniel Scudder Prime, The Year of Jubilee; But not to Africans; A Discourse, Delivered July 4th, 1825, being the 49th Anniversary of American Independence (Salem, N. Y., 1825), 6; Sprague, Religious Celebration, 26-27; Elisha Whittlesey, An Address, Delivered before the Tallmadge Colonization Society, on the Fourth of July, 1833 (Rovenna, 1833), 4.

53Staudenraus, African Colonization, 121.
principles, contained in the charter of their rights."

From the 1830's through the 1850's abolitionists became more adamant in their demands for an immediate end to human bondage. Using Revolutionary history to argue against slavery, abolitionists cited the heroes, Washington and Jefferson, who had made statements calling for an end to slavery. Abolitionists moved also to the conclusion that force rather than moral suasion would be justified if needed.

54 William Claggett, An Address, Delivered before the Portsmouth Anti-Slavery Society, on the Fourth of July, A. D. 1839, being the 63D Anniversary of the Independence of the United States of America (Portsmouth, 1839), 14.

to free the Negroes. As William Lloyd Garrison queried, "if the principle involved in a three-penny tax on tea, justified a seven years' war, how much blood may be lawfully spilt in resisting the principle, that one human being has a right to the body and soul of another, on account of the color of his skin?"56 And finally a few abolitionists advocated the dismemberment of the Union--the Union that the Revolutionary heroes had created--if slavery were not eradicated.57

By 1860 reformers had achieved some success in eliminating what they considered imperfections in American society. Imprisonment for debt had been abolished federally and in many states. Temperance reformers had won partial victories with the passage of prohibition or local option laws in several states. Women had received some legal rights, gained admission to some colleges and professions, and were allowed to speak before public audiences.58 Ironically, the abolitionists who were so intent upon creating a perfect society contributed to the sectionalism that eventually resulted in civil war and the end of slavery.

While viewing their crusades as fulfillments of the Revolutionary principle of freedom and equality, reformers continued to use the Revolutionary generation as the standard


of measurement for exemplary behavior. Most reformers did not attempt to reconcile the fact that the evils and injustices they were battling had been prevalent at the time of the War of Independence. In fact, crusaders could not acknowledge that the problems had existed in the eighteenth century, for such an admission would disallow the use of the Revolutionary heroes as models for emulation. Treating the Revolution as afait accompli, most reformers seemed to believe that alcoholism, the minority status of women, and imprisonment for debt were conditions that originated in the nineteenth century. Abolitionists, on the other hand, did not attempt to conceal the fact that slavery had been in vogue during the Revolution, for they pointed to the Declaration of Independence as proof that the patriots had opposed human bondage. Nevertheless, antislavery reformers offered no explanation for the failure of the Founding Fathers to eradicate slavery. Only three antislavery orators were willing to suggest that the Revolutionary patriots might have been fallible. One of the speakers declared, "we are not of the number who think every thing that the founders of this great republic did was wisest, best, and unimprovable."59 His views, however, did not coincide with the popular idea that exemplary heroes had established a perfect republic.

59 Little, Two Sermons, 14; see also Hays, Address, 6; Ward, Sermon, 22.
Although most Americans viewed the Revolutionary heroes as models of exemplary behavior, some refused to accept the myth that perfect men had waged a noble war for the best of reasons. Of all the ante-bellum reformers, only the pacifists publicly recognized the inconsistency of appealing to the heroes in order to fulfill the Revolutionary principles of liberty and equality. Finding it difficult to reconcile the doctrines of peace with the War of Independence, a few pacifists exposed some of the myths surrounding the Revolution in an attempt to demonstrate the evil effects of the war; and some pacifists were forced to repudiate the War of Independence. Other nineteenth-century Americans for different reasons chose to challenge the mythical view of the Revolution. Disillusioned with the direction American society was taking, James Fenimore Cooper and Herman Melville used their fictional accounts of the war to question contemporary values. In addition, the revelation that all Americans had not united in resisting Britain resulted in a reassessment of the nobility of the heroes. Discovering that the Revolutionary patriots had not been without
failings, one author concluded that nineteenth-century Americans were not so degenerate as they had been led to believe.

If other reformers ignored the behavior of the Revolutionary heroes, pacifists could hardly point to the patriots as examples to follow for avoiding war. On the other hand, vilifying the heroes and questioning the legitimacy of the Revolution were tantamount to treason. Since the War of Independence was obviously a sensitive subject to pacifists, some orators in the 1820's ignored the subject of the Revolution.1 Others justified the War of Independence as an event whose principles were too sacred to be denounced. These citizens maintained that the Revolution was a defensive war fought by a band of patriots who were inspired by a love of country.2

Whereas most pacifist orators in the 1820's sought to preserve the sanctity of the American Revolution, Thomas Grimké in an address delivered in 1832 before the Connecticut Peace Society declared that the War of Independence and pacifism were irreconcilable. According to Grimké, even though liberty was a worthwhile consequence of the war, the

1Humphrey Moore, Address Delivered before Hollis Branch of Massachusetts Peace Society, July 4th, 1821 (Amherst, 1821); Merle Curti, The American Peace Crusade, 1815-1861 (Durham, 1929), 52.

2Bouton, Christian Patriotism, 9; Emerson, Oration, 7-8; Thacher, Military Journal, viii.
means employed to obtain that objective were iniquitous. Violence, war, and bloodshed were anathema to Christian patriots, and independence could have been achieved without resorting to the sword. He asserted that the patriots should have vowed not to resort to armed conflict in vindicating American rights. By pursuing a policy of nonresistance toward Britain, the colonists could have won their freedom. After the righteous peaceful-loving Americans had been tyrannized a few more years, the English masses eventually would have felt guilty because the patriots were being persecuted. Since the British people were Christians, they would not have tolerated excessive oppression and would have forced their leaders to grant independence to the colonists. Grimké's oration received wholesale condemnation from the public. Even the Connecticut Peace Society, which published the address, inserted the statement: "for the remarks respecting the revolutionary war, which follow in this Address, Mr. Grimké is to be considered responsible."

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5Grimké, *Address*, 42.
By the end of the 1830's members of the American Peace Society were seriously divided in their opinions on pacifism; some like Grimké opposed wars of all kind while others sanctioned defensive wars.\textsuperscript{6} By claiming that the American Revolution was a defensive war, John Lord attempted to uphold the legitimacy of the War of Independence. It was not brought about by greedy political leaders or by military men seeking martial glory; rather, the Revolution "was simply the offspring of an idea--that all men had a right to 'life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness.'"\textsuperscript{7} Furthermore, the colonists had contended that the British were violating American rights by taxing them without their consent. Lord believed that the Revolution was justifiable because any war that was waged in defense of rights and institutions necessary for general welfare did not conflict with Christianity if revenge, cruelty, and ambition were absent.\textsuperscript{8}

Although Lord had found a way to reconcile pacifism and the Revolution, not all members of the American Peace Society agreed with him as evidenced by the sermon of a Unitarian minister, Sylvester Judd. Defying public opinion, Judd denounced the American War of Independence in \textit{A Moral}

\textsuperscript{6}Brock, \textit{Pacifism}, 521-22.

\textsuperscript{7}John Lord, \textit{An Address Delivered before the Peace Society of Amherst College, July 4, 1839} (Amherst, 1839), 3-4.

\textsuperscript{8}\textit{Ibid.}, 12-14.
Review of the Revolutionary War. In fact, he used the Revolution, "the holiest war on record," to show the evils and immoralities of armed conflict. Like Grimké, Judd did not deny that there were causes for separation from the mother country but questioned the means used to obtain independence. Unlike Grimké, Judd dwelt at length upon the evils, immoralities, and inconsistencies exhibited before, during, and after the war. Without contradicting the popular view that the Revolutionary fathers had been noble characters, Judd insisted, however, that their judgment had been distorted. Certainly, noted the minister, the patriots had a right to resist British oppression in the form of unjust taxation, but they should not have brought upon themselves the evils of war. In addition, the patriots possessed the right to be independent but not by adopting a course that had involved the dislodgment and destruction of Indians. "The people of this country would not be taxed without representation. They did not tax the Indians, without representation, but exterminated them and planted themselves in their territories."  

Examining the causes of the Revolution, Judd maintained that colonial response to English legislation had been

9Sylvester Judd, A Moral Review of the Revolutionary War, or Some of the Evils of that Event Considered. A Discourse Delivered at the Unitarian Church, Augusta, Sabbath Evening, March 13th, 1842 (Hallowell, 1842).

10Ibid., 4-6.
disproportionate to their grievances. During the "Old French War," Judd noted, the British and the colonists had fought side by side in every battle. Americans had been indemnified for their financial contributions, and the land gained as a result of victory had been beneficial to the colonies. England, however, had incurred a huge debt during the war and to meet expenses passed the Stamp Act. The minister declared, "the colonists when they came to be assessed for their part of the expenses of the war chose to go into another war, rather than pay a cent. I do not say that the colonists did not do right in refusing to pay the taxes. That is not the point before me. The single point is, that they should go into another war, to get rid of the burdens of the first." Although the colonists had refused to pay taxes to Great Britain, they had taxed themselves "a hundred fold over" during the War of Independence.11

Further criticizing the inconsistency of the Revolutionary fathers, Judd stated that in 1794 they passed a law taxing stills and distilled spirits throughout the United States in order to defray the expenses of the War of Independence. "A very considerable body" of Pennsylvanians refused to pay the tax, compelled tax gatherers to resign or have their houses burned, robbed the mail, burned the inspector of the revenue in effigy, and collected in large armed bands. Judd claimed that events in Pennsylvania were analogous to incidents that had occurred when England had

11Ibid., 7-10.
earlier issued her excise bills. The people of Boston had assembled in mobs, had demolished houses, had erected effigies, and had organized into armed bodies. England likewise had sent an army to compel obedience at a time when the people of Massachusetts had professed allegiance to the authority of the British crown.¹²

Returning to a discussion of the causes of the Revolution, Judd ridiculed the American argument that they had not been represented in the British Parliament. He pointed out that the colonists had lacked representation during the "Old French War"; yet 12,000 sailors and 20,000 troops had fought against France. Massachusetts alone had spent nearly $2 million dollars during the war. Another cause of the War of Independence supposedly was Britain's closure of American ports. Judd contended that England had closed the ports only after Americans had refused to pay taxes. Furthermore, British restrictions on commerce were regulations designed to prevent smuggling that had long been practiced between the colonies and foreign ports. Another alleged cause of the Revolution was the immense debt that southerners had owed to English merchants. "Two things I do know; one is, these slave holders did owe Great Britain a vast sum; and another is, they never paid it. Wars wipe out all debts." The final cause of the Revolution concerned western lands.

¹²Ibid., 10-11.
Immediately after independence had been declared, Congress, in order to induce enlistments in the army, voted that portions of western lands would be given to officers and soldiers. Judd noted that this territory had been acquired by Britain as well as the colonies as a consequence of the "Old French War," and England was still taxing her people "to utter exhaustion" in order to pay for the war by which the land was obtained. He added, "and, by the way, I would remark, that England had no more right to these lands than you and I have— they belonged to the Indians."  

To prove that Americans had not wanted to separate from the mother country, Judd pointed to the declarations of loyalty to Great Britain found in all public acts that had been published throughout the Anglo-American controversy between 1763 and 1775. The minister queried, "if the king, as the Congress style him, was their 'loving father,' why did they not pay the taxes this same loving father had assessed for what he considered the good of his family?" Even after fighting commenced, there had been wide-spread opposition to the war, and some colonies had been reluctant to sign the Declaration of Independence.  

Attempting to dispel the myth that the Revolutionary generation had been "exceedingly patriotic, zealous, patient, disinterested, self-sacrificing, and high minded," Judd claimed that if the people had been given the opportunity to

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13 Ibid., 11-12.  
14 Ibid., 12-14
decide whether to conduct an eight years war, nine-tenths would have voted against it. Yet, nineteenth-century citi-
zens were taught that the whole country had flown to arms and had fought until their scarred bodies could no longer carry a musket. Moreover, latter day patriots told stories of 40,000 soldiers who had assembled around occupied Boston; of Quakers who, contrary to their peace principles, had joined the army; of an "Old Men's Company" that had chosen for its captain a man nearly one hundred years old; of women who had resolved to raise and equip a regiment at their own expense; and of people who had refused to drink tea because of its association with British tyranny. Disputing this popular view of the Revolution, Judd noted that General Washington had maintained no control over his 40,000 troops, who had been more interested in rank and pay than in fighting the British. Desertions had been common and six months after the declaration of independence, Washington was beg-
ing for men and supplies. Furthermore, Judd contended that Americans had been interested only in pecuniary advancement and luxuries. In fact, so-called patriots had continued to drink tea under another name.\footnote{Ibid., 16-18.}

Denying that he was denigrating the Revolutionary fathers, Judd claimed that he was using the War of Indepen-
dence to show "the effects of war upon a people confessedly as good as any on the earth. If a war in the best of causes,
liberty, carried on by the best of men, our forefathers, was so corrupt and corrupting (be it more or less,) what shall we say of the whole system of war in general. Among the evil effects of war was depreciation of currency accompanied by corruption and fraud in issuing paper money not backed by specie. Furthermore, war led to despotism over the mind since soldiers were slaves who always took orders without thinking. Supporting itself by plunder, the army had confiscated the property of those who had elected to remain loyal to the British crown.

According to Judd, the Revolutionary heroes had demonstrated several inconsistencies as the War of Independence progressed. For example, one of the complaints against the British king found in the Declaration of Independence had been that he dispensed with trial by jury; nevertheless, American deserters usually had been shot "without any trial at all." A second incongruity occurred when Congress gave Washington dictatorial powers while the Revolutionary fathers had been supposedly fighting for liberty, equality, and human rights. A third inconsistency was apparent when Americans, fighting for republican liberty, had received aid from France, one of the most absolute monarchies in Europe. And finally, Revolutionary officers had organized the Cincinnati Society that exhibited all the trappings of

16 Ibid., 19.  
17 Ibid., 21-25.  
18 Ibid., 26-28.
aristocracy since the organization contained only officers and membership was inherited by the eldest son. "Our poor oppressed fathers puritanically devoted to freedom, crying out against the usurpations of government, rebelling against a three-penny tax, fighting against crowns and wigs, stars and garters, and aristocratic assumption, came at last to this. But such is the effect of war. Nothing but war could have brought about such a change in the feeling and conduct of these excellent men." 19

Throughout his sermon Judd reiterated his contention that independence had been unavoidable but could have occurred without spilling a drop of blood; yet he failed to explain how separation would have come about. Rather than convincing his audience that the War of Independence had been unnecessary, Judd's attack on the Revolutionary fathers roused the ire of his listeners. During the course of his sermon, many members of the congregation walked out. Later, because of his intemperate remarks about the patriots, Judd was dismissed from the honorary post of chaplain to the Maine legislature. 20

Even though most citizens were horrified at Judd's attack on the Revolutionary heroes, members of the American Peace Society continued their criticism. William Jay questioned the legitimacy of the War of Independence by declaring

19 Ibid., 40-41.
20 Brock, Pacifism, 628.
that armed conflict could have been avoided. Without directly attacking the Revolution, Charles Sumner delivered in Boston on the Fourth of July an anti-war oration in which he denounced all war as dishonorable and immoral. When the oration was published, the appendix contained a letter in which Sumner explained why he failed to discuss the Revolution. If Americans accepted the legitimacy of a revolt based upon the collection of a small amount of money, then nineteenth-century slaves would certainly be far more justified in rebelling. He suggested that pacifists simply avoid mentioning the Revolution.

Although some members of the American Peace Society praised Sumner's speech, other citizens made it clear that they would tolerate no criticism of the Revolution. In response to Sumner's oration, George Putnam wrote, "how any assembly on a day of rejoicing, could have sat quietly and heard it through, is more than we can explain. That they did so clearly proves, that if the heroes of the Revolution have transmitted no other of their virtues to their

21William Jay, War and Peace: The Evils of the First, and a Plan for Preserving the Last (New York, 1842), 44-45.
22Charles Sumner, The True Grandeur of Nations: An Oration Delivered before the Authorities of the City of Boston, July 4, 1845 (Boston, 1845), 8.
23Ibid., 81.
24David Herbert Donald, Charles Sumner and the Coming of the Civil War (New York, 1960), 112-14.
descendants, they certainly have that of their patience and long-suffering." Once the oration was delivered, members of the audience had the opportunity to comment on Sumner's speech at the customary Fourth of July dinner. City officials and guests quickly denounced Sumner's ideas by praising the Revolution as a defensible and desirable war. 

While pacifists were more or less forced into criticizing the Revolution, James Fenimore Cooper chose to attack the popular image of the War of Independence. Throughout his career, however, Cooper was inconsistent in his treatment of Revolutionary participants, particularly the American hero. Even though he presented different portraits of the patriot, his novels did not resemble the popular historical romances. Unlike the typical heroes who had fought gallantly in the field after being disinherited by their wealthy fathers, Harvey Birch, the hero of Cooper's *The Spy*, was a peddler of humble origins, who secretly supplied military information to the Americans. To most of the other characters, Birch appeared to side with England because he was allowed access to enemy-held New York City, to trade with British troops. Although Harvey was loyal to the

25 George Putnam, *Remarks upon an Oration Delivered by Charles Sumner before the Authorities of the City of Boston, July 4th, 1845* (Boston, 1845), 5.


27 James Fenimore Cooper, *The Spy; a Tale of the Neutral Ground; Referring to Some Particular Occurrences during the American War; Also Pourtraying American Scenery and Manners* (2 vols., New York, 1821).
American cause, his life was constantly in danger from the patriot forces he really loved, and he had to endure disgrace because his neighbors thought him a British agent. Brave, self-reliant, and ingenious, Birch demonstrated his disinterested love for the patriot cause by refusing payment for his services.

Although the peddler, Harvey Birch, was the hero, Cooper exhibited no animosity toward either the Loyalists or the British. Unlike popular novelists who pictured the Tories as the epitome of evil, one of Cooper's central characters in The Spy was Harry Wharton, a Loyalist lieutenant in Sir Henry Clinton's army. Much of the action of the complicated, historically implausible plot centered around the efforts of George Washington and Harvey Birch to free Harry after his capture by an American army.

During the 1820's when Americans were not on particularly good terms with Englishmen, Cooper presented a sympathetic portrait of the British in Lionel Lincoln. Although the hero, Lionel Lincoln, was American-born, he had been educated in England, had acquired a seat in Parliament, and had obtained a commission in the British army. Returning to the colonies as an English officer, Lincoln faced the dilemma of choosing between America where he had been born and Britain where he had lived most of his life. The wise

28James Fenimore Cooper, Lionel Lincoln; or, the Leauee of Boston (2 vols., New York, 1824-1825).
old patriot, Ralph, who tried to turn Lionel to the patriot cause was finally exposed as an escaped lunatic, and Lincoln returned to his seat in Parliament. If the connection between loyalty to the American cause and lunacy seemed unpatriotic, Cooper and his contemporaries did not suspect the association. Unconsciously, however, Cooper had revised his concept of the patriot, no longer portraying him as a courageous, self-reliant spy but as a raving madman.

During the 1840's when Revolutionary novels with their patriotic heroes were popular, Cooper wrote another fictional account of the War of Independence that was quite different from his earlier efforts. During the two decades since the publication of Lionel Lincoln, Cooper, who believed in an aristocracy based upon morality, intellect, and landed wealth, had grown increasingly resentful of changes in the social order brought about by the leveling influence of Jacksonian democracy. In the late 1830's he discovered firsthand the attitudes of the "majority" when he became involved in a controversy over some land, known as Three Mile Point, that legally belonged to the Coopers but which the family had always opened to the village as a picnic place. The villagers, who regarded Three Mile Point as public property, proceeded to improve the site by cutting down a tree that Cooper valued highly for sentimental reasons. Believing in the sanctity of private property, he

posted "No Trespassing" signs. A verbal battle between Cooper and the newspapers ensued and finally resulted in a libel war that lasted from 1837 to 1843. Furthermore, during the early 1840's Cooper reaffirmed his belief in the rights of property-owners when he sided with wealthy New York landowners in the Anti-Rent War.

While the libel suits and the Anti-Rent War were in progress, Cooper wrote *Wyandotte* in which he revealed not only his disillusionment with the present but also his contempt for the past and particularly the American Revolution. Unlike "popular" novelists who wrote about disinterested heroes, Cooper portrayed the patriot, Joel Strides, as a demagogue who merely wanted to confiscate the estate of Hugh Willoughby, an aristocrat. Willoughby was just, benevolent, and respectable but was not appreciated by the demagogue who was so inferior that he could not recognize good qualities much less demonstrate them. Rather than being imbued with patriotic principles and love of country, Strides was the villain whose demagogic tactics encouraged American deserters to attack Willoughby's home resulting in the death of Willoughby's wife and daughter but not in the confiscation

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30 For complete details of the Three Mile Point controversy see Ethel Rose Outland, "The Effingham Libels on Cooper," *University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature*, No. 28 (1929).

of his estates.\textsuperscript{32}

Although other nineteenth-century writers raved about the superior American soldiers, Cooper was critical of the patriot army that fought more like "wrangling women" than soldiers. Admitting that the troops had potential, he asserted that their main problem was lack of aristocratic leaders who had proper military education and pride.\textsuperscript{33} Moreover, Cooper subtly questioned the nineteenth-century criteria for assigning the status of hero to a Revolutionary participant. The central character in \textit{The Chainbearers} mentioned that his grandfather did not become a Revolutionary hero because he died of smallpox, although another man who was slain and scalped while returning from a "drunken carouse" did become a hero.\textsuperscript{34}

Cooper was not the only novelist who indicated dissatisfaction with his fellow Americans as was evident with the publication in 1855 of Herman Melville's \textit{Israel Potter: His Fifty Years of Exile}, based upon the manuscript of an old Revolutionary soldier.\textsuperscript{35} Whereas Cooper lamented the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibid., 210-11.
\item James Fenimore Cooper, \textit{The Chainbearer; or the Littlepage Manuscripts} (2 vols., New York, 1845), I, 3-4.
\item Israel Ralph Potter, \textit{Life and Remarkable Adventures of Israel R. Potter, (a Native of Cranston, Rhode-Island.) Who was a Soldier in the American Revolution, and Took a Distinguished Part in the Battle of Bunker Hill (in which he
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declining influence of the aristocratic class, Melville had become increasingly critical of the values of Americans, especially when they failed to appreciate his work. Thus, he created a satiric picture of Israel, the Revolutionary hero, as well as of American society of the 1850's. Born in the mountains of Massachusetts, Israel, at an early age, rejected his oppressive father and began his wanderings through the various vocations of woodsman, trapper, Indian trader, harpooner, and farmer. While most patriots rushed to the aid of Massachusetts, Melville’s hero acted differently upon hearing the news of the Battle of Lexington.

Like Putnam, Israel received the stirring tidings at the plough. But although not less willing than Putnam to fly to battle at an instant’s notice, yet—only half an acre of the field remaining to be finished—he whipped up his team and finished it. Before hastening to one duty, he would not leave a prior one undone; and ere helping to whip the British, for a little practice’ sake, he applied the gad to his oxen. From the field of the farmer, he rushed to that of the soldier, mingling his blood with his sweat. While we revel in broadcloth, let us not forget what we owe to linsey-woolsey.36

As a patriotic volunteer, Israel embarked on a journey that led him to Bunker Hill where he was wounded and then to the brigantine Washington that was captured by the British.

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Received Three Wounds,) after which he was Taken Prisoner by the British, Conveyed to England, where for 30 Years he Obtained a Livelihood for himself and Family, by Crying 'Old Chairs to Mend' through the Streets of London.—In May Last, by the Assistance of the American Consul, he Succeeded (in the 79th Year of his Age) in Obtaining a Passage to his Native Country, after an Absence of 48 Years (Providence, 1824).

Shipped to England, he met eventually with historical characters Benjamin Franklin, John Paul Jones, and Ethan Allen. Unlike other authors and orators who extolled the virtues of the Revolutionary fathers, Melville was critical of Franklin and Jones. He pictured Franklin as the personification of Poor Richard, always delivering sanctimonious speeches and pithy sayings. At the same time, he was revealed as an unscrupulous man of business who put his own welfare above all other considerations.\(^{37}\) Equally ambitious and self-centered was the courageous Jones who was also a barbarous rake.\(^{38}\) Only Ethan Allen, who appeared briefly in the novel, possessed the characteristics of a hero—conviviality, bravery, honesty, and heartiness of manner.\(^{39}\)

Amidst his denigration of the prominent historical figures, Franklin, Jones, and Allen, Melville clearly depicted Potter as the true hero. Satirically attacking the theme "God helps those who help themselves," Melville proceeded to show that in the case of Israel's miserable existence for fifty years, God did nothing to aid the old patriot. Israel was self-reliant, cunning, honest, and persevering in attempting to survive in an indifferent and hostile environment. After experiencing poverty and illness for a number of years, Israel found his way to Massachusetts only to discover that no one remembered him. The old patriot of

\(^{37}\)Ibid., 52-67.  
\(^{38}\)Ibid., 88.  
\(^{39}\)Ibid., 212-14.
Bunker Hill could not even obtain a pension and shortly thereafter died in poverty, a forgotten hero. In dedicating his book "To His Highness the Bunker Hill Monument," Melville made it clear that he resented the expenditure of money for a stone monument in preference to providing for one who had actually participated in the Battle of Bunker Hill.

Rather surprisingly, only one reviewer noted that "a tinge of obscure sarcasm" pervaded Israel Potter. Reviewers for the most part praised the book as a patriotic adventure story; nevertheless, the public continued to ignore the work of Herman Melville. Not until two years after publication of Israel did anyone disagree with Melville's characterization of Franklin and Jones. One writer resented the picture of Franklin as "one of the prosiest possible old maxim-mongers, though at the epoch he was living brilliantly in Paris" and Jones as merely a "hero of melodrama." This was the last word on Israel Potter in the nineteenth century.

If Cooper and Melville pictured the Revolutionary patriots as less than perfect, other writers began to attack the myth that all Americans had taken up arms against England. As late as 1842 Charles Francis Adams noted, "numbers of persons in the United States, at this day, cherish a

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40 Ibid., 239-41.

41 Hugh W. Hetherington, Melville's Reviewers: British and American, 1846-1891 (Chapel Hill, 1961), 239-46.
general idea" that the colonists had been nearly unanimous in resisting Britain. Those who did recognize the existence of Tories believed that they were few in number and that they "embraced all the dissent to the opinion of the majority, that was entertained in America."42 Throughout the 1820's and 30's, historians virtually ignored the Tories and novelists portrayed them as archvillains, the epitome of evil and treason. In fact, until the 1840's, Americans used the epithet "Tory" as an opprobrious term that could arouse great indignation. For example, when Duff Green referred to South Carolina Unionists as "tories," Congressman James Blair of South Carolina assaulted Green who reportedly received severe injuries from the beating. Blair explained, "to have myself, and the party with whom it is my pride to be associated denounced as 'a tory faction who had profaned the sacred name of union,' was more than I could brook. My father had not only fought throughout the revolutionary war, but bled in the cause of American independence. There never ran one drop of tory blood in the veins of my family, on 'either side of the house,' that I am aware of."43

One of the first writers to challenge the myth of American unity was Henry Cruger Van Schaack who compiled a biography of his Loyalist father. Peter Van Schaack was

42[Charles Francis Adams], "Life of Peter Van Schaack," NAR, LV (July, 1842), 97.

43Niles, XLIII (Jan. 5, 1833), 304-305.
pictured as one who opposed the actions of Great Britain but believed that establishing a new government was too hazardous in the face of a powerful enemy. Because Van Schaack had failed to support the Whigs and because he had refused to take up arms against them, he was forced to travel to England after hostilities commenced.  

Reaction to the Van Schaack biography was favorable from the North American Review, and during the next few years, essays in that journal called for an understanding of those who had remained loyal to the British crown. One author, Lorenzo Sabine, found that opponents of the Revolution had been powerful in all the thirteen colonies and in some of them nearly equaled the number of Whigs. Another essayist, Charles Francis Adams, found several distinct classes of Loyalists. "There were the merely ambitious, who were willing to sell their country for a mess of pottage; the greedy after office and patronage; the hangers-on of all people in place, who cared nothing for the question at issue except as it affected their bread and butter." The "ambitious," "greedy," "hangers-on" merited condemnation;
however, the class of Loyalists represented by Van Schaack, deserved compassion and not censure. Not knowing that the controversy between the mother country and her colonies would result in conflict, Van Schaack and other exiles, who had become known as Tories, were not resisting a revolution but were striving to preserve order and an observance of the rights of persons and property.

Sabine agreed that the mobbing, tarring, harassing, and burning activities carried on by so-called Sons of Liberty were not conducive to gaining converts to the cause. Further investigation showed "that all who called themselves 'Whigs' were not necessarily disinterested and virtuous, and the proper objects of unlimited praise; and that the 'Tories' were not, to a man, selfish and vicious, and deserving of unmeasured and indiscriminate reproach."  

After discovering that patriots had not been united during the War of Independence, Sabine used the information to reassure Americans who were convinced that society no longer reflected the principles and practices of the heroes. Going beyond a study of the Loyalists, he made a thorough investigation of eighteenth-century times. Concluding that the Revolutionary generation had not been more pure or liberal, Sabine stated that the reason many people believed that Americans had degenerated was that they had an

erroneous idea of the virtues of their ancestors. Without repudiating the assertions that there were deficiencies in United States society, he contended that perhaps Revolutionary participants were not so perfect as many claimed. In fact, maintaining that Americans had made progress in morals, the author argued that many of the sins and evils had been bequeathed by their fathers.

The first subject Sabine considered was the state of religious feeling. From the pulpit and press, citizens were repeatedly admonished that religion was dying and before long the United States would be a nation of skeptics. The writer noted, however, that during the Revolution many prominent men, including signers of the Declaration of Independence, diplomats, and military officers, were atheists or deists. Without taking a survey, Sabine concluded that although there were probably a greater number of infidels in proportion to the population in the nineteenth century, the precepts of Christianity were more influential than they had been earlier.

Answering the charge of the American "lust for conquest, and the insatiable thirst for the acquisition of territory," he declared that for two centuries the colonists quarreled among themselves over land grants and boundary


50Ibid., 428-30.
lines. In the midst of these controversies, the colonists found time to fight a number of wars against France. Then, the Whigs of the Revolution, "by no means exempt from the lust of dominion," engaged in land speculation and confiscated Loyalist property. Furthermore, in an attempt to obtain a French alliance, Americans proposed the return of Canada to France. The only aggressive act that the generation of 1848 was responsible for was the annexation of Texas.51

Sabine next considered the accusation that "as a nation we are increasing in sordidness and the love of gain." He argued that during the Revolutionary era, "avarice and rapacity were as common then as now. The stock-jobbing, the extortion, the forestalling, the low arts and devices to amass wealth, that were practised during the war for independence seem almost incredible." Citing newspaper reports and Washington's correspondence, he noted that Americans had plundered, robbed, traded with the enemy, and counterfeited paper money.52

To the charge that Americans of the nineteenth century were less patriotic than their fathers, Sabine replied that all Revolutionary Americans were not as patriotic as some of their descendants contended. Even though the war was fought "for the holiest cause which ever arrayed men in battle," the Whigs were in a minority in some of the states, barely

51Ibid., 430-32. 52Ibid., 433-34.
equaled their opponents in others, and in the whole country composed only "an inconsiderable majority." Some Tories actually took up arms against the patriots while others were active in supporting the British. Since these Loyalists were Americans, "it will hardly be contended that they were distinguished for patriotism." Even Whigs could be charged with lack of patriotism because, although resources were sufficient to supply an army, the states refused to cooperate. Moreover, "extraordinary inducements" in the form of bounties were necessary to persuade some so-called patriots to serve their country.\textsuperscript{53}

Further vindicating his belief that the United States had not degenerated, Sabine examined the Revolutionary army whose troops were filled largely with foreigners, deserters from the British ranks, and young boys. Plagued with desertions, mutinies, robberies, and murders, the Revolutionary army was as immoral as critics claimed about armies of the 1840's. "Indeed, we fear that whippings, drummings from the service, and even military executions, were more frequent in the Revolution than at any subsequent period of our history." Discussing the army further, the author noted that many officers were not above reproach either in discharge of duty or in morality. Appointed to high office were unworthies who hoarded money and failed to pay the soldiers. Courts-martial sat constantly and long lists of cashiered names

\textsuperscript{53}\textit{Ibid.}, 435.
were sent to Congress. In times of crisis, the innumerable resignations of officers and soldiers denoted a lack of principle.\(^54\)

Another sign of supposed degeneracy of the nineteenth century was the large number of congressmen who served only one term. Looking at the Revolutionary era, Sabine pointed out that only Thomas McKean of Delaware served in the Continental Congress each of the eight years of the war. Furthermore, only three signers of the Declaration of Independence were in Congress when the Treaty of Paris was submitted. Attendance in Congress was so poor that often business could not be transacted for the lack of a quorum.\(^55\)

Other denials by the writer included the charges of increased sectional feeling and party spirit. Sabine maintained that there always had been antipathy between the North and the South as evidenced by proceedings in the Continental Congress and problems with the Revolutionary army. As far as factions were concerned, Americans were better off in the nineteenth century because during the Revolutionary era, there were royal governors, Whigs, and Tories. Even Whigs were not in agreement on every subject.\(^56\)

The essayist concluded that at the time of the Revolution, Tories had predicted that if Americans were independent of Britain, they would become "the victims of every moral and

\(^{54}\text{i}b\text{id.}, 437-38.\)

\(^{55}\text{i}b\text{id.}, 442-43.\)

\(^{56}\text{i}b\text{id.}, 443.\)
political disorder. Those who insist that we are degenerate sons of worthy sires do but echo the predictions which the Loyalists uttered seventy years ago." Denying that the United States had deteriorated, Sabine claimed that in developing resources and in increasing their wealth, Americans had done more than the people of any other nation. He warned that if they were not making any progress in virtue, then the consequences would be suffered by their children.\footnote{Ibid., 445.}

Although few writers supported Sabine's conception of the Revolutionary heroes, Charles Francis Adams did attempt to topple George Washington from the pedestal on which his countrymen had placed him. Adams stated, "if Washington was perfect, then is there nothing in common between him and any of us who feel a strong sense of our own imperfections. He is inimitable, therefore no object for imitation. His example is of no use whatever to the world." Cautioning Americans to avoid the "tendency to transform Washington into a mythical idol," the orator maintained that the Revolutionary commander-in-chief was like all other men who had emotions, temptations, prejudices, and passions. Nevertheless, by accepting Washington as a fallible person who performed his duties nobly, conscientiously, and disinterestedly, citizens had a worthy man to emulate.\footnote{C. F. Adams, Address Delivered 1856, 21-22.} Without emphasizing corruption and evil that occurred during the War of Independence,
other authors claimed that nineteenth-century Americans were progressing, that there were differences between the past and the present, but that citizens still retained the "spirit" of their fathers.59

Thus by the beginning of the 1840's, the myth of the Revolution was being attacked not by outsiders but by Americans. No one suggested that the colonists should have remained British dependencies; the point at issue was the behavior of the patriots during the war. The "demythologizers" showed that all Americans had not been united, that there had been "good" Loyalists and "bad" Whigs, and that corruption, graft, desertions, and mutinies had not been unknown. Though the authors' information was accurate, the public either repudiated or ignored their attempts during the 1840's to portray the Revolution in realistic rather than mythic terms. Nevertheless, the "demythologizers" would have a profound impact upon American history. By emphasizing and publicizing unsavory aspects of the Revolution,

59 Arthur, Oration, 3-5; Richard Busteed, Oration Delivered at Morristown, New Jersey, July 4, 1859 (New York, 1859), 4; Caleb Cushing, Oration Delivered before the Tammany Society, or Columbian Order at Tammany Hall, on Monday, July 5th, 1858 (New York, 1858), 7-8; Edward Everett, Oration Delivered before the City Authorities of Boston, on the Fourth of July, 1860 (Boston, 1860), 44-45; Henry C. Johnson, An Oration Delivered at Conneautville, Pa., on Saturday, July 3d, 1858 (Conneautville, 1858), 13; Newton Mallory Curtis, The Marksmen of Monmouth: A Tale of the Revolution (Troy, 1848), 4; [John G. Palfrey], "Sparks's Correspondence of the Revolution," NAR, LXXVII (July, 1853), 96-97.
these few individuals supplied ammunition for the verbal battle between the North and the South in the 1850's.
Although abolitionists had advocated the emancipation of slaves for a number of years, congressmen had been somewhat reluctant to debate this topic until the late 1840's when the question of the expansion of slavery into the territories arose. During the 1850's, when human bondage was widely discussed by legislators, orators, journalists, and novelists, supporters and opponents invoked some aspect of the American Revolution to justify their respective positions. Arguing for either emancipation or non-extension, northerners pointed to the impracticality of slavery as evidenced by the weak performance of the South during the War of Independence. Southerners, on the other hand, insisted that the American Revolution proved that slaveholders had been capable of defending themselves. Furthermore, fearing that a government dominated by northerners might abolish slavery, southerners argued that since they had contributed their share to the War of Independence and to the formation of the Union, they were entitled to an equal voice in the government. Thus, much of the debate in the 1850's revolved around which section or state had
contributed the most to the American Revolution. As the dispute between northerners and southerners became more intense, moderates reminded them that the War of Independence had been a time when all Americans had fought together.

Congressional debate on the slavery question could no longer be avoided when Representative David Wilmot of Pennsylvania introduced his resolution that slavery should be prohibited in all territory acquired as a result of the Mexican War. During the debates on the Wilmot proviso of 1847 and the compromise measures of 1850, northerners used the American Revolution to question the expediency as well as the morality of the "peculiar institution." Claiming that slavery was impractical and had inhibited southern military efforts during the War of Independence, congressmen argued that Massachusetts alone had furnished more troops during the Revolution than the entire slave states combined.¹

As far as the morality of slavery was concerned, other legislators insisted that because the patriots of 1776 had regarded slavery as a great moral and political evil, they had wished to see the slave trade abolished. Northerners were fond of quoting abolitionist sentiments found in resolutions passed by the continental congresses, colonial legis-

¹Cong. Globe, 29 Cong., 1 Sess., 355 (Feb. 8, 1847); 31 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 412 (March 25, 1850), 518 (April 23, 1850).
latures, and local governments. Furthermore, opponents of slavery pointed to a complaint in the original draft of the Declaration of Independence that George III had refused "his sanction to laws for the restriction of the slave trade; thus keeping open, by the exercise of his kingly power, 'markets where men may be sold.'" As one lawmaker queried, "are we to be guilty of the very thing for doing which George III was accused by that congregation of sages?" Of course, the final draft of the Declaration contained that famous statement inimical to slavery, "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." One congressman suggested that southerners write their own Declaration of Independence based upon the premise that all men are created unequal and not endowed with unalienable rights.

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2Ibid., 29 Cong., 2 Sess., 474 (Feb. 22, 1847), 548 (March 1, 1847); Appendix, 171, 284, 296 (Feb. 4, 1847); 31 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 92 (Jan. 23, 1850), 179 (Feb. 19, 1850), 254 (March 11, 1850), 304 (March 12, 1850), 355 (March 14, 1850), 458 (April 8, 1850), 469 (March 26, 1850), 508 (April 19, 1850), 565 (May 13, 1850), 596, 607 (May 21, 1850), 693 (June 3, 1850), 729 (June 4, 1850), 742 (June 7, 1850).

3Ibid., 29 Cong., 2 Sess., 378 (Feb. 10, 1847); see also 546 (March 1, 1847); 31 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 843 (June 5, 1850).

4Ibid., 29 Cong., 2 Sess., 378 (Feb. 19, 1847), 546 (March 1, 1847); Appendix, 171, 284 (Feb. 4, 1847), 393 (Feb. 13, 1847); 31 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 232 (March 4, 1850), 257 (March 11, 1850), 470 (March 26, 1850), 575 (May 14, 1850), 734 (June 4, 1850).

5Ibid., 31 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 223 (Feb. 15).
Quick to dispute the arguments that northerners were making, southerners defended their patriotism by claiming that their Revolutionary fathers had participated in all the battles of the War of Independence. In fact, slavery had been an asset during the war, for British statesmen had believed that because of slavery, southerners "were fiercest in the vindication of their liberties." To the charge that the Revolutionary heroes had opposed slavery, southerners answered that Washington, Jefferson, and Madison had been slaveholders. These heroes, along with others "fresh from the battle-fields of liberty," had sanctioned slavery in the Constitution by permitting the importation of slaves for twenty years. And finally, since Jefferson had been a slaveholder, he had not intended for the phrase, "all men are created equal," to be applied to slaves.

As the congressional debates became more heated in 1850, southerners freely admitted that they would not hesitate to dissolve the Union if Congress prohibited slavery in the territories, or emancipated the slaves in the District of Columbia, or failed to provide adequate securities for the return of runaway slaves. Although the Revolutionary heroes had created the Union, southerners claimed that they

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6Ibid., 53 (Jan. 19, 1850), 164 (Feb. 19, 1850), 546 (May 8, 1850), 667 (June 7, 1850), 746 (June 5, 1850).

7Ibid., 29 Cong., 2 Sess., 384, 386 (Feb. 11, 1847), 554 (March 1, 1847); Appendix, 78 (Jan. 7, 1847), 134 (Feb. 4, 1847), 137 (Jan. 26, 1847), 152 (Feb. 10, 1847), 247 (Jan. 15, 1847), 359 (Feb. 12, 1847), 399 (Feb. 15, 1847); 31 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 499 (April 23, 1850).
would be following the example of their ancestors should
dissolution become necessary. Believing that their rights
had already been violated by the North, southerners appealed
to that part of the Declaration of Independence that read:
"when a long train of abuses and usurpation, 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." As one legislator
declared, "Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, Adams, and all
that tribe of patriots were disunionists, when George the
Third disregarded the rights of thirteen American colonies;
and they broke up such union and formed a new one. The
Tories who profited by that bad government, were all 'union
men,' and cried out 'treason, treason,' as loudly as some at
the present day, when the people of the southern States talk
of not submitting to your wrongs."

Answering these threats of disunion, Senator Salmon P.
Chase of Ohio announced that dissolution was "an old cry, not
without profit to those who have used it." For example,

8Ibid., 31 Cong., 1 Sess., 53, 54 (Jan. 10, 1850), 83
(Jan. 24, 1850), 98 (Feb. 8, 1850), 105 (Feb. 12, 1850), 364
(March 25, 1850), 668 (June 7, 1850); see also Samuel F.
Phillips, Address Delivered before the Union and Mountain
Spring Divisions of the Sons of Temperance, on the Fourth of
July, 1850 (Hillsborough, 1850), 8-9.

9Cong. Globe, 31 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 949 (June
6, 1850).
talk of disunion had been heard first in 1774 when the Continental Congress in an attempt to obtain a redress of grievances had entered into a non-exportation agreement. South Carolinians, however, wanting rice exempted had threatened to withdraw from Congress unless both rice and indigo could be exported. To appease South Carolinians, members of Congress had compromised by allowing rice and not indigo to be exempt from non-exportation. Since rice had been the major crop, South Carolinians "got what was substantive, and surrendered what was unimportant."^10

If congressional debates indicated estrangement between the sections, northern and southern writers were also contributing to sectional tensions. The controversy began when Lorenzo Sabine published a book that contained a list of Loyalists as well as a brief history of each of the colonies. Unlike Charles Francis Adams who called for sympathy toward the expatriots, Sabine stressed the patriotism of New Englanders and, at the same time, questioned the contributions of Pennsylvanians, New Yorkers, and southerners by emphasizing the number of Loyalists in those areas. Singled out for special attention, however, was the state of South Carolina. According to Sabine, "the public men of South Carolina of the present generation, claim that her

^10Ibid., 479 (March 27, 1850); see also William M. Scott, An Address Delivered at a Barbecue, Given by the Citizens of Boyle County, Ky. at Danville, July 4, 1851 (Philadelphia, n.d.), 13-14.
patriotic devotion in the revolution, was inferior to none, and was superior to most of the states of the confederacy. As I examine the evidence, it was not so.\textsuperscript{11} Composed of emigrants from Switzerland, Germany, France, and Ireland, the population had been too diverse to allow unanimity in political matters. Although individuals had taken a decisive stand in opposition to English policy and had participated in battles against the British, the actions of a few did "not prove that the whig leaven was diffused through the mass of the people."\textsuperscript{12}

Sabine quoted statistics showing that Massachusetts alone had provided more regulars for the continental army than had the slave states combined. Furthermore, southern states had been unable to supply troops because of the presence of slaves. South Carolina had furnished 6600 soldiers, only 752 more than Rhode Island, the smallest state; only one-half as many as New Hampshire had recruited; and only one-fifth the number supplied by Connecticut. In fact, insisted Sabine, unable to defend herself against Tories, South Carolina had been forced to rely upon northern troops. More New England Whigs had fought in South Carolina and lie buried in her soil than she had sent to every

\textsuperscript{11}Lorenzo Sabine, \textit{The American Loyalists; or Biographical Sketches of Adherents to the British Crown in the War of the Revolution; Alphabetically Arranged; with a Preliminary Historical Essay} (Boston, 1847), 29-30.

\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Ibid.}, 30.
battlefield from Lexington to Yorktown.\textsuperscript{13}

If one southern editor praised Sabine's book because he demonstrated "no invidious spirit towards the South,"\textsuperscript{14} William Gilmore Simms held a quite different view. The time had arrived when southerners could no longer reconcile slavery with a war waged in the name of liberty and freedom. Unwilling to repudiate the Revolution or to renounce the idea of liberty, southerners were forced to fashion another interpretation of the War of Independence. The South found its spokesman in Simms who served as editor of the Southern Quarterly Review from 1846 to 1854. In several essays, Simms defended the reputation of South Carolina and presented a southern interpretation of the American Revolution.

Instead of picturing the Revolution as a unified movement, Simms distinguished between northern and southern motivations for fighting Britain. Significantly, he retained for the South the idea that southerners had fought for liberty but shifted the meaning of the concept from individual freedom to self-government for the community. At the same time, he ascribed to northerners an economic motivation, contrary to the commonly accepted notion that the Revolution had been a noble war of principle. According to Simms, the tyrannical legislation in the form of the trade and navigation acts had fallen almost exclusively on the

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{14}Benjamin Blake Minor, "The Impartiality of History," Southern Literary Messenger, XIII (July, 1847), 448. Hereinafter cited as \textit{SLM}. 
northern colonies while South Carolina had been unaffected by British restrictions. In fact, southerners had benefited economically in the Empire since they had maintained a favorable trade with England and had received protection from the British navy. Thus Massachusetts, motivated by economics, had resisted Britain while South Carolinians had sacrificed their economic advantages in order to aid New England in the War of Independence. This was not to say that southerners had no grievances against England, for the wrongs done to the South had been of a different nature and had consisted of denying the rights of self-government to those who had been capable of governing themselves.  

While Simms abandoned the Revolution as a contest for individual liberty, he also rejected the war as an egalitarian movement. According to Simms, support for the War of Independence in South Carolina came from the aristocratic "native intellect of the country," not from the masses who exhibited little sympathy or interest in the events of the 1770's. Contending that a country's character should not be judged by the opinions of the masses, Simms insisted that it had been unnecessary for all citizens to unite in a common cause. In fact, since South Carolina had fought against powerful enemies at home, she deserved even more respect and

Readily agreeing with Sabine that South Carolinians had not been united, Simms nevertheless repudiated his contention that northerners had rescued southerners during the war. Explaining that early historians had used phrases like "'troops from the north'" and "'a northern army,'" the author noted that northern historians wrote as if these troops had been from New England. When southern historians wrote about a northern army, they really meant the states immediately north of South Carolina—i.e., Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina. Simms maintained that New England troops had never come farther south than Yorktown, and even then General Washington had been forced to advance them a month's pay in order to induce them to leave Philadelphia.\(^{17}\)

Quoting Sabine's statistics that Massachusetts had provided more troops than the southern states combined, Simms queried, "but what became of them?" During the last three years of the war when the British armies had already evacuated New England, there had been no northern soldiers in the south where the enemy had moved. "What then became of these men in buckram, whose claim to our gratitude is so great, and so little recognized and acknowledged?" Simms


explained, "the truth is, that the whole militia force of New England was enrolled nominally in the continental service. They were all on paper, supposed to be forth coming, but they never appeared, except on the record" for the purpose of collecting pensions.  

Simms did not argue against Sabine's statistic of 6600 South Carolina troops, but he insisted that this small band had driven away a British fleet and army and had defended Georgia as well as their native state. Furthermore, he maintained that the numbers in the continental line did not reflect the true number of participants, for local militias had also provided troops.

The battles of the South generally, and of South Carolina wholly, were fought by Southern troops exclusively,—including a small contingent which came from Delaware; and we have further assurance to make, that these battles were fought by thousands who never dreamed of the pay list which was probably, during this time, in the keeping of New England. No wonder that the account has been so well kept; for her troops, the last three years of the war, had ample leisure for making all the entries.

Denying that southern military weakness was due to the slave system, Simms declared, "this military weakness of the South, exists only in the imagination of the abolitionist." He argued that in fact slavery was a source of strength because labor was available to provide an abundant agricultural supply while the entire white male population

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18[Simms], "South Carolina in the Revolution," 56-57.
19Ibid., 58-60.
could engage actively in battle. At the time of the Revo-
lution, South Carolina slaves had furnished all the food
consumed in South Carolina and Georgia during the last three
years of the war. In addition, most slaves had been faithful
to their masters except for a few who had deserted to the
British. 20

Simms was not alone in claiming that Revolutionary
patriots had not been forced to remain at home in order to
prevent slave insurrections, for other southerners pointed
to the Revolution to prove that slaves were contented with
their subservient position. 21 As Ellwood Fisher put it, "in
vain did the British, in the revolutionary war, issue proc-
clamation after proclamation calling on them to rise in
rebellion and go free under the protection of the British
arms--and in vain did the Tories and abolitionists of that
day urge it upon them." During the war, when masters had
been serving in the patriot army, the slaves had continued
their work on the plantation, "and no watchdog was ever more
ture in giving the alarm of the approach of an enemy, or, if
needed, to assist their masters families to escape to a

20 Ibid., 61.

21 [David James McCord], "Slavery and the Abolition-
ists," SQR, XV (April, 1849), 199; Solon Robinson, "Negro
Slavery at the South," DeBow's Review: The Commercial Review
of the South and West. A Monthly Journal of Trade, Com-
merce, Commercial Polity, Agriculture, Manufactures, Internal
 Improvements, and General Literature, VII (Sept., 1849),
216; Ellwood Fisher, "The North and the South, ibid., VII
(Oct., 1849), 313. Hereinafter cited as DeBow's Review.
place of safety."22

Unhappy that southerners were losing control of the federal government, journalists continued to compare the South of the 1850's with the colonies of the 1770's. "If our fathers had cause for disunion with England, ten fold now are the right and the duty which point us to a similar cause."23 In the eighteenth century the grievance had been simply "misgovernment at a distance." Now southerners were exposed to more actual tyranny than any politician of that former day could have anticipated. While only the luxuries of the rich colonists had carried duties of less than five per cent, now all the essentials of life were taxed at an average rate of thirty per cent. In the eighteenth century, although Britain had claimed the right to tax each of the colonies for the support of the empire, "the amount expended for the benefit of South-Carolina very far exceeded all that she was called on to contribute." In contrast, New England required South Carolina, along with a few other states, to furnish for the Union all the revenue none of which was returned to the contributory states.24


23 "The South and Her Remedies," DeBow's Review, X (March, 1851), 267; see also [David Flavel Jamison], "The National Anniversary," SQR, XVIII (Sept., 1850), 190-91; [Simms], "The Southern Convention," 207-208.

Appealing for a redress of grievances, a southern essayist, Nathaniel Beverly Tucker, reminded northerners that South Carolina had gone to the aid of Massachusetts when Britain had closed the Boston port. Now Massachusetts was in league with abolitionist fanatics who wished "to make war upon an institution entwined with our very vitals." The journalist concluded, "is South-Carolina not the land of MARION? Let his spirit animate her. Let his example instruct her. Patient, vigilant, indefatigable, enduring, never ashamed to run, never afraid to strike, let her show, in her own quarrel, the same qualities she displayed in fighting the battles of ungrateful Massachusetts, and she cannot fail."\[25\]

In response to the threats of disunion made by some legislators and journalists, Fourth of July orators for the years 1850–1853 countenanced a more moderate course. Appalled at the possibility of the dissolution of the Union, orators appealed to their fellow-citizens to remember the common sacrifices, sufferings, and accomplishments of the Revolutionary forefathers as the basis for preserving the union of the states. Rather than denouncing southerners for advocating disunion, both northern and southern orators repudiated the abolitionists whom they accused of violating the Constitution and interfering in local affairs by

\[25\] [Tucker], "South Carolina," 297.
attempting to emancipate the slaves. Even some novelists were disturbed about the possibility of a dissolution of the Union. Sounding like a Fourth of July orator, one novelist wrote:

Let those who talk of disunion as a mere business affair, as a mere question of dollars and cents, pause in their reckless career, and looking back through the vista of years behold the mighty struggles; the deep heart-struggles; the self-denials; the sufferings; the hardships, the sacrifices of the best and bravest blood of the country; --in order to build up the union of these United States; and then let them check themselves, ere, with a high-wrought sectional and fanatical

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enthusiasm, they seek to sunder those sacred ties between the states that were cemented with the blood of thousands of patriots, and sealed with the tears of thousands of suffering widows and orphans.27

Debate on the status of slavery in the territories resumed in 1854 when Congress considered the organization of the Kansas and Nebraska territories. The issue became complicated when a proposal was made to repeal the Missouri compromise line that had prohibited slavery north of 36° 30'. Invoking the Revolution to argue in favor of repeal, legislators stated that the violation of the principle of no taxation without representation had brought on the War of Independence. Thus, since the people of the territories had no representation in the national government, Congress had no authority to legislate on the question of slavery.28

Attacking the opponents of repeal, Representative Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia exclaimed,

The doctrine of the Restrictionists or Free-Soilers, or those who hold that Congress ought to impose their arbitrary mandates upon the people of the Territories in this particular, whether the people be willing or unwilling, is the doctrine of Lord North and his adherents in the British Parliament towards the Colonies during his administration. He and they claimed the right to govern the Colonies 'in all cases whatsoever,' notwithstanding the want of

27Clinton, Glanmore, 25-26; see also Bennett, Rosalie DuPont, 112.

28Cong. Globe, 33 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 337 (March 3, 1854), 348 (Feb. 23, 1854), 376-77 (Feb. 25, 1854), 442 (March 23, 1854), 534 (April 24, 1854), 728, 745 (May 17, 1854), 501 (April 7, 1854), 757, 767, 777-78, 783 (May 25, 1854).
representation on their part. The doctrine of the South upon this question has been, and is the doctrine of the whigs of 1775 and 1776. It involves the principle that the citizens of every community should have a voice in their government.29

Agreeing that the question of legislating for the territories was analogous to the dispute between Great Britain and her colonies, Congressman Thomas L. Clingman of North Carolina cautioned southerners to remember one difference. The American colonists had denied the right of Great Britain to tax them but Congress possessed the constitutional authority to tax, to dispose of public lands, to build military and post roads, to establish forts and arsenals, and to subject the people to actions and laws that citizens of other states were required to obey. Notwithstanding these congressional powers, Clingman maintained that the inhabitants of the territories retained the authority to manage their own local affairs including slavery.30

Northerners denied that there was any similarity between the territorial issue and the American War of Independence since self-government in the territories did not exist. The President of the United States was responsible for appointing governors, judges, and marshals. Congress gave the governor absolute veto power, set the size of the legislature, and determined the qualifications of voters. Organized by the authority of Congress, territories

29Ibid., 195 (Feb. 17, 1854).
30Ibid., 490 (April 4, 1854).
eventually entered the Union as states. The colonies had been settled through charters granted by the King and were never to have any representation in Parliament.31

Several northern legislators disagreed with Stephens' contention that supporters of repeal were following in the footsteps of the Whigs of 1776. Referring to Stephens' speech, Richard Yates of Illinois declared,

We are told that we are opposed to the great principle of self-government, and that we advocate the same principles advocated by Lord North and his confederates in the British Parliament towards the Colonies. What, sir, was Lord North's object? Why, to crush freedom, and the very spirit of freedom in the Colonies. What, sir, is our object? To preserve freedom in the Territories. What is the gentleman's object? Disguise it as he may, what, sir, is his object? To make the Territory free? No, sir, it is already free. His object, or rather the effect of his doctrine, is to give them the right to make it slave.32

Discussions of slavery once again brought forth the northern contention that New England had supplied the largest number of troops, that the Revolutionary fathers had opposed slavery and that the practice of human bondage was inimical to the Declaration of Independence.33 Tired of hearing

31Ibid., 245-46 (Feb. 17, 1854), 278 (Feb. 20, 1854), 450 (March 29, 1854), 494 (April 7, 1854), 582 (May 9, 1854), 662 (May 17, 1854).

32Ibid., 448-49 (March 28, 1854); see also 583 (May 9, 1854), 703 (May 16, 1854), 736 (May 18, 1854), 754 (May 20, 1854).

33Ibid., 137 (Feb. 4, 1854), 150 (Feb. 11, 1854), 177 (Feb. 11, 1854), 266, 268 (Feb. 24, 1854), 277 (Feb. 20, 1854), 492, 495 (April 7, 1854), 521 (April 6, 1854), 577 (May 10, 1854), 791 (May 18, 1854), 811, 889, 1102-1103 (May 19, 1854).
northerners harp on the subject of the inconsistency of slavery and the Declaration, one southern essayist lamented, "we may well ask with Othello, 'what needs this iteration?'"\(^{34}\) Once more southerners declared that Jefferson, a slaveholder, had not intended for the Declaration to apply to slaves. And, finally, southerners reminded northerners that "when George Washington went to Boston, in 1775, to help drive the British out of the city, he was not repudiated because he was a slaveholder. New Yorkers know that in the fight at Saratoga, which perhaps determined the result of the revolutionary struggle, Gates and Morgan were thought none the less worthy companions of the brave men of the North because they were slaveholders."\(^{35}\)

The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill along with the repeal of the Missouri compromise line brought about widespread dissatisfaction in the North that was reflected in one of the July Fourth orations of 1854. Although some orators for the next two years continued to appeal to the memory of the War of Independence as a basis for unity,\(^{36}\)

\(^{34}\)"A Few Thoughts on Slavery," SLM, XX (April, 1854), 193.

\(^{35}\)Cong. Globe, 33 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 490 (April 4, 1854); see also 214 (Feb. 20, 1854), 230, 233, 236 (Feb. 24, 1854).

\(^{36}\)James Mandeville Carlisle, Oration Delivered on the Fourth of July, 1855, at the Capitol, in the Hall of the House of Representatives, in the City of Washington (Washington, 1855), 18-19; Edwin Hubbell Chapin, The American Idea, and What Grows out of It. An Oration, Delivered in the New-York Crystal Palace July 4, 1854 (Boston, 1854), 10; George
Henry Jarvis Raymond used the Revolution to repudiate the southern contention that human bondage was legal because the Constitution sanctioned slavery. According to Raymond, the legislative measures that Americans had objected to were not examples of gross and deliberate tyranny, for the colonists had been subjected to essentially the same legislation as had the inhabitants of the mother country. Even though Britain had a legal right to tax Americans as well as English citizens who had no representation in Parliament, Raymond maintained that the British made their greatest error in strictly following the letter of their law. While inhabitants of England had allowed taxation without representation, the British failed to realize that Americans would not tolerate this policy. Like the southern slaveholders of the 1850's, the landed interest group of the eighteenth century had wanted complete control of the government. In both cases, misgovernment had grown out of struggles for class ascendancy and a blind adherence to their respective constitutions. Since a successful government must be flexible, yield to public opinion, and never oppose the people, Raymond proposed as a solution to the difficulties in the 1850's a

While Raymond argued for an amendment to prohibit slavery, a southern journalist declared that citizens of Massachusetts had repudiated the Constitution by refusing to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act. According to the essayist, Massachusetts possessed a Revolutionary history that all citizens could remember with pride.

Faneuil Hall, the cradle of liberty, and Bunker Hill, are classic ground, endeared by a thousand vivid associations to the heart of every American. It was here the fires of the Revolution were first kindled to a blaze. It was here the tree of liberty was first watered with the blood of the patriots. It was from the Old Bay State went forth the shoutings of that battle which finally ended in the freedom of this continent, and the establishment of our present glorious Union.38

Since state authorities in the 1850's refused to support the Constitution, they must have forgotten the time when the gallant patriots of the South had assisted the North in the War of Independence. "Did they say to these fanatics, your war upon the Constitution must cease? The South stood by us and our rights when we were assailed and oppressed, and we will now stand by her and the Union to which we have all alike sworn allegiance. This should have been the course of Massachusetts! It would have been her course, had the


38 "Massachusetts: Her Past and Present Position," SQR, XXVIII (July, 1855), 241.
remembrance of the revolution, and its common sufferings and sacrifices, been cherished in her memory."\textsuperscript{39} The author concluded with the hope that the spirit of 1776 would again prevail in Massachusetts.

Any hope for a return to the spirit of '76 was dispelled in 1856 when Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts delivered his famous speech, "The Crime against Kansas." Favoring the admission of Kansas to the Union as a free state, Sumner denounced his opponents by questioning the patriotism of the states they represented. By this time, Americans regarded any criticism of the Revolutionary patriots from their section as reflections upon themselves. Especially singled out for denunciation was Senator Andrew P. Butler when Sumner mentioned South Carolina's "shameful imbecility from Slavery, confessed throughout the Revolution."\textsuperscript{40} Although this statement was the only reference that Sumner made regarding South Carolina's role in the Revolution, southerners recalled a speech that he had delivered two years earlier. In response to Butler's assertion that independence had been achieved because of the contributions of the slaveholding states, Sumner attempted to prove that the North had contributed far more to the Revolution than had the South. Although the populations of the North and the South had been about equal, the North had provided 249,503

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid., 243.

\textsuperscript{40}Cong. Globe, 34 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 543 (May 20, 1856).
troops while the South had furnished 177,490. "But the disparity swells when we directly compare South Carolina and Massachusetts." Totaling the numbers of continental troops and authenticated militia, South Carolina had sent 5,508 troops to battle while Massachusetts had supplied 83,092.41

Not only did Sumner boast of the superior number of soldiers from the North, he also portrayed "the imbecility of the southern States, and particularly of South Carolina, in the War of the Revolution, as compared with the northern States." Sumner declared that in 1778, six South Carolina regiments plus one from Georgia had mustered only eight hundred men. After the battle of Camden in 1780, no organized American force had been left in the region, for the three southern states had been unable to place any battalions in the field. On the other hand, Massachusetts soldiers had unselfishly served away from home because the enemy had not been in their state after the declaration of independence. The senator further questioned the courage and patriotism of South Carolina's governor John Rutledge who, when confronted by a British army, had offered the neutrality of his state for the remainder of the conflict. Finally, a northern general, Greene, had rescued the South from the British. According to Sumner, the source of all the difficulty had been the existence of slavery, for South Carolinians had

41Ibid., 33 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 1014 (June 28, 1854).
been forced to guard their slaves to keep them from deserting to the British. "Not by slavery, but in spite of it, was independence achieved." The senator concluded that the Revolution had been fought for personal liberty and human rights.42

While Preston Brooks of South Carolina sought to defend the honor of his state and his relative, Butler, by caning Sumner,43 other southerners rushed to a verbal defense of South Carolina's Revolutionary history. Butler was first: "I come next to an allegation which, if the Senator were here, I think he would not look me in the face when I repeat, and that is, his insolent and untrue charge of the 'shameful imbecility' of South Carolina during the war of the Revolution in consequence of slavery." Butler went on to say that as soon as news of the battle of Lexington arrived, Charlestonians had sent food, wine, and powder to Massachusetts. In addition, not a battle occurred south of the Potomac that had not been fought by southern troops and slaveholders. After stating, "if you wish to test the sacrifice, and measure it by blood, South Carolina has poured out hogsheads of blood where gallons have been poured out by Massachusetts," the senator listed thirty-one battles that had occurred in South Carolina and had been fought by South

42Ibid., 1014-1015.

43Donald, Charles Sumner, 294-95.
Providing a lengthy defense of Rutledge, Butler explained that the governor had agreed to consider the neutrality of South Carolina merely as a means of gaining time in the hope that reinforcements would come to the defense of Charleston. Since American troops had arrived to drive off the British, the stratagem had succeeded. The next year, however, when General Benjamin Lincoln of Massachusetts had been charged with the responsibility of defending Charleston, he had surrendered that city to the British. Although praising Lincoln's actions as humane in preventing loss of lives, Butler charged that Sumner "has gone out of his way to pronounce a judgment against Rutledge, to which his own countryman has been actually liable." 45

The debate was on as Anson Burlingame, Representative of Massachusetts, rushed to defend his state. Reiterating arguments heard for decades, the congressman stated that Massachusetts had provided more troops during the Revolution than all the southern states together and that New Englanders had fought more battles in the South than South Carolinians had. Defending General Lincoln's surrender of Charleston, Burlingame asserted that the General had been forced to abandon the city when its citizens had refused to fight. Further criticizing the patriotism of South

44*Cong. Globe*, 34 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 627 (June 12, 1856).

Carolinians, the congressman stated that while the citizens had refused to give provisions to Greene's army, they had furnished all supplies for the British troops. Moreover, "while the American army could not be recruited, the ranks of the British army were rapidly filled from that State." Burlingame concluded, "I will not proceed further with this history, out of regard for the patriots--the Sumters, the Marions, the Rutledges, the Pinckneys, the Haynes--truer patriots, if possible, than those of any other State. Out of regard for these men, I will not quote from a letter of the patriot Governor Mathews to General Greene, in which he complains of the selfishness and utter imbecility of a great portion of the people of South Carolina." 46

Although northerners and southerners continued to defend their respective sections and states by using much the same arguments as Burlingame and Butler, 47 Representative Lawrence M. Keitt of South Carolina revealed information never before heard in Congress. Censured by the House for his failure to take action to prevent Brooks from attacking Sumner, 48 Keitt resigned from Congress and devoted most of his farewell speech to a lengthy defense of South Carolina's role as well as that of other southern states during the

46Ibid., 655 (June 21, 1856).
47Ibid., 658, 664 (June 24, 1856), 707-709 (June 23, 1856), 912 (July 12, 1856).
48Donald, Charles Sumner, 308.
Revolution. In addition to repeating much that had already been said, Keitt went further and attempted to show that southern states had been either more patriotic or first in areas so long attributed to the North. First, North Carolinians in 1765 had seized a British ship loaded with stamped paper, had publicly burned the paper, and had forced the stamp master to refuse to execute his office. "Here was an act of heroism and magnanimity greater than that of the Boston tea party or the battle of Bunker Hill." Secondly, Charlestonians in November 1773 had confiscated in their harbor British tea and prevented its sale. Not until the next month had the Boston Tea Party occurred, and then Bostonians disguised as Indians had acted at night. "The citizens of Charleston had already done a similar act in daylight, and in the eye of the sun. Were their different modes of action in this matter indicative of a difference in the character of the two people?" Thirdly, North Carolinians in Mecklenburg county had been the first to declare independence, and, finally, the first victory of the Revolution had occurred at Moore's Creek, North Carolina in February 1776. 49

Since northerners claimed to have had the largest number of patriotic heroic troops in the field, Keitt submitted a list of one hundred Massachusetts soldiers who had been declared unfit for service. Statistics were unavailable for all the recruits in the categories of age, size, location of

49 *Cong. Globe*, 34 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 833-34 (July 14, 1856).
recruitment, and bounty paid. For those on which information was known, the table revealed that the recruits had ranged from ages 13-15 and late 40's-70's, had been under five feet tall, and even though unfit for service had received substantial bounties. The category entitled, "Remarks," contained the reason that each had been declared unfit and included ailments such as "Ruptured," "Dropsical," "Subject to falling sickness," "Rheumatic," "Lame in his hips, cannot march," "Old, and too infirm to bear fatigue," "Idiot," "Deaf," "Blind," "Decrepit," "Subject to fits," and "Lost one eye, and lame." Other disabilities included "Always sick, and subject to fits," "Infirm and void of understanding," "Badly deformed," "Dropsy, scorbutic, and deaf," "Lunatic," "Neither speaks nor understands any language," "Lues venera, chronic," "Scorbutic, blind, and lame," "A complication of disorders," "Idiot, blind, and debilitated," and "Epilepsy." Keitt suggested that this list indicated the caliber of troops that Massachusetts had recruited.  

Not only did South Carolina have its defenders in Congress but one of its greatest champions, William Gilmore Simms, submitted the issue to the northern people. Taking advantage of a lecture tour of the North that had been planned prior to the Sumner-Brooks episode, Simms in the fall of 1856 chose for his topic, "South Carolina in the

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50Ibid., 839; J. D. B. DeBow was so impressed with Keitt's speech that he reprinted it: Lawrence M. Keitt, "Patriotic Services of the North and South," DeBow's Review, XXI (Nov., 1856), 491-508.
Revolution. Rather than serving as a reminder of the unity of the Revolutionary forefathers, the speech contributed further to the emotionalism brought on by Brooks' attack on Sumner. Speaking before a New York audience of 1200, Simms stated that South Carolinians had always been confident that their Revolutionary history "was secure—safe equally against the dull hoof of the ass, and the slimy trail of the reptile." He went on to defend South Carolina from the accusations of Senator Sumner. Basing his remarks upon his earlier writings, Simms claimed that South Carolina's motives for entering the Revolution had been noble, and she had contributed her share of troops despite her internal enemies. After presenting an elaborate defense of Governor Rutledge, he concluded by saying, "it so happens that Charleston is the only city, which, in the Revolution, was defended by the Americans at all! Boston, New York, Philadelphia, all more populous and powerful, were yielded quietly to the enemy, without striking a blow; while Charleston was defended for six weeks, by five thousand men, against 1200 British regulars, supported by a powerful fleet."  


53 Ibid., 531-43.
Simms merely repeated what he and other southerners had been saying for the past eight years. He aroused the ire of his listeners not so much by the contents of his speech but by his manner of delivery. As a modern critic put it, "in a forensic style that sounded as if he were prosecuting the ruffian assailants of a widowed mother, he turned every phrase in praise of South Carolina into a vicious thrust at New England. From opening sentence into heated peroration, his tone was variously contentious, gibing, insulting." Fortunately, Simms' tour had begun in New York rather than Massachusetts, and after speaking in three cities, he met such hostile receptions that he cancelled the remainder of his engagements. By this time, Simms' committee on arrangements "could not only sell no tickets, but could not succeed in giving them away."

Until his outburst in New York, Simms had enjoyed a good reputation because of the popularity of his novels of the American Revolution. Nevertheless, his fictional accounts of South Carolina during the War of Independence written in the 1850's reflected the southern view of the

54Ridgely, William Gilmore Simms, 121.
55Ibid., 123; for reviews of the lecture, see Oliphant, ed., Letters of Simms, III, 456-63.
Revolution along with the sectionalism that was prevalent in American life. Northern novelists depicted the patriot hero either as one of humble origins or as one who was disinherited by his wealthy father. In either case, the hero, imbued with a love of liberty and familiar with the grievances against Britain, joined the masses who were fighting the aristocratic Tories and British. Thus, when northern authors pictured the Revolution as an egalitarian movement waged in the name of liberty, southerners in the 1850's could not reconcile equality with slavery. Forced to abandon the patriot of humble origins fighting for freedom, Simms created aristocratic protagonists, many of whom were uncertain whether to join the British or the provincials. Even then, the motivations of South Carolinians, both of the aristocratic and of the lower classes, were mixed. Since most citizens did not understand the issues between England and her colonies, they joined the patriots, Tories, or British out of fear or pecuniary interest.

Simms' novels also differed from northern fictional accounts that depicted the War of Independence as noble and glamorous. Although patriots suffered and made sacrifices...
in northern novels, they finally won the war as well as the hand of the heroine. The reader was left with the impression that the heroes had done their duty and would immediately resume their everyday lives as if no war had occurred. Simms, on the other hand, stressed the tragedy, brutality, and destruction of warfare—those who fought on the patriot side returned to find their homes burned, their slaves abducted by the British, and creditors awaiting payment. Yet, these same heroes had served in the field for many years without compensation. 61

Even though the American Revolution was becoming a sensitive subject, a few northern and southern extremists from 1856 through 1860 continued to claim that they alone were following the principles of the Revolution. Berating southerners for having departed from the spirit of 1776, northerners called for emulation of the patriots who had fought for liberty and against slavery. Rather than counseling warfare to achieve their objective, these abolitionists called for the election of Republicans whose platform was based on the principles of '76. 62

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61 Simms, The Sword and the Distaff, 46.

elaborate view of the southern position came from a Georgia Fourth of July orator, William Stiles, who stated that the only alternative to war was the election of Democrats. If war did occur, southerners would be following the example of their fathers who had fought for the right of self-government. Not one of the grievances listed in the Declaration mentioned anything about human rights nor had British legislation been oppressive. According to Stiles, just as the British had sought to interfere with colonial governments, the North was meddling in local affairs with the objectives of abolishing slavery and weakening the South.63

Stiles issued the warning:

Let the people of the North remember too, when they think it a difficult task to sever relations which have existed nearly seventy years, let them recollect that our fathers, when their rights were invaded, did not hesitate to sever relations, which had existed upwards of one hundred and sixty years!

Let them remember, finally, when they think it a step impossible, to resist a brother, let them recollect that our fathers in defence of their chartered privileges did not hesitate even to resist a mother!64

Contributors to DeBow's Review also made it clear that southerners would be justified in seceding just as their

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63 William Henry Stiles, An Address, Delivered before the Georgia Democratic State Convention, Held at Milledgeville, July 4th, 1856 (Atlanta, 1856), 9, 11, 23-24; see also Herschel V. Johnson, An Address Delivered before the Volunteer Encampment, and a Large Concourse of Citizens, at the Capitol, in Milledgeville, on the 4th of July, 1857 (Milledgeville, 1857), 3-4.

64 Stiles, Address, 23.
fathers had. In fact, southerners were suffering more wrongs and oppressions from northerners than the colonists had from England. One journalist contended that grievances against the British King similar to those that the South held against the North included: "He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good. He has obstructed the administration of justice. He has incited domestic insurrections amongst us; and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of the frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions." The author maintained that northerners were guilty of the first two offenses because of their refusal to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act. For the third grievance the South accused northerners as follows: "They have incited domestic insurrections at the South, and have endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of the frontier States of the South, if not the merciless Indian race when aroused by their passions—the predatory, sanguinary, and lustful African negroes, whose known rule of warfare is not only an 'undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions,' but one of beastly appetites, blood-drinking


66"The Secession of the South," ibid., XXVIII (April, 1860), 369.
According to the southern essayist, northerners had incited the Nat Turner rebellion and John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry. Thus, the author called upon southerners to secede from the Union just as the colonists for lesser reasons had dissolved their ties with the mother country. Finally, southerners invoked the name of the slaveholder George Washington who had unsheathed his sword when the union between the colonies and the mother country "ceased to subserve the purposes for which it was intended."

While northern and southern extremists agitated from 1856 to 1860, moderates appealed to the American Revolution as a time when unity had prevailed and claimed that all the states had fought all the battles. As the possibility of secession increased, moderates advocated a return to the principles of 1776 when patriotism, unity, wisdom, disinterestedness, sincerity, and purity had prevailed.

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67 Ibid., 378-79.
68 Ibid., 380-81.
70 Balch, Dangers of our Republic, 14; John Augustus Bolles, An Oration, Delivered before the Inhabitants of Winchester, Mass. July 4, 1860 (Boston, 1860), 9; Busteed, Oration, 9, 11; Thomas M. Clark, Oration Delivered before the Municipal Authorities and Citizens of Providence, on the Eighty-Fourth Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, 1860 (Providence, 1860), 16; Cushing, Oration Delivered 1858, 12; John Hall, The Examples of the Revolution. The Anniversary Oration of the Cincinnati of New Jersey, at Trenton, July 4, 1859 (Trenton, 1859), 7, 11; Fleetwood Lanneau, Oration Delivered before the Cincinnati and the '76 Association, July 4, 1857 (Charleston, 1857), 5; Charles Miner, The
late as 1860, one orator stated that the Union would not be severed because Americans were too devoted to the memory of their Revolutionary fathers. He was proven wrong only a few months later.

Just as northerners and southerners had disagreed on most other subjects, they also had different views on the relationship between secession and the American Revolution. Northerners claimed that secession was a violation of the principles of the Revolution whose patriots had created the Union. Maintaining that they were following in the footsteps of the heroes who had seceded from the British empire, southerners quoted the Declaration: "That whenever any form of government becomes destructive of the ends for which it was instituted, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a 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

Olive Branch; or, the Evil and the Remedy (Philadelphia, 1856), 9-13; Edward Griffin Parker, The Lessons of '76 to the Men of '56. An Oration Delivered before the Municipal Authorities of the City of Boston, at the Celebration of the Eightieth Anniversary of American Independence (Boston, 1856), 6-7; Henry Ruffner, Union Speech; Delivered at Kanawha Salines, Va., on the Fourth of July, 1856 (Cincinnati, 1856), 14.


72 Cong. Globe, 36 Cong., 1 Sess., 1028, 1042 (March 7, 1860); Nagel, One Nation Indivisible, 136.
safety and happiness. 73 Like the institutions of government, political parties, and churches, the memory of the American Revolution failed to hold the Union together and in fact contributed to the sectionalism that resulted in Civil War.

By late 1860 Americans had failed to achieve their goals of persuading other countries to adopt republican forms of government and of assuring the success of their experiment by preserving the Union. Although innumerable revolutions had occurred between 1815 and 1850, none of the countries had established governments similar to that of the United States. For years Americans had warned that the evils of sectional jealousy, state pride, and party faction must be avoided in order to prevent civil war. Nevertheless, by 1860 the Union was divided along sectional lines, loyalty to a state was still predominant over allegiance to the nation, and four political parties were campaigning for different Presidential candidates. The ultimate blow came late in 1860 when southern states began seceding from the Union. With the outbreak of war, Americans could no longer hope that other nations might follow their example.

Since 1815 almost all Americans had contended that preservation of the Union depended on emulating the virtues of their fathers, the patriots of the War of Independence. The constant invocation of the Revolution throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the repeated analogies between the days of the War of Independence and current times, testified to Americans' attempts to preserve the Union
by emphasizing the history of the Revolution. Yet, the attempts were in vain. Appeals to the Revolution did not produce the hoped-for result. A partial explanation of this fact can be found by considering nineteenth-century Americans' theory of history, the significance of the "demythologizers," and the complex nature of the Revolution itself.

As an historical event, the War of Independence was not the property of a community of scholars but was of interest to lawyers, politicians, reformers, authors—in fact, to anyone who wrote for or spoke to the populace. Since Americans of the middle period conceived of history as philosophy teaching by example, these authors and orators employed the Revolution not as the source, but as the justification of positions they took on contemporary issues. For example, southerners did not examine the causes of the War of Independence, conclude that the patriots had fought to free themselves from oppressive taxation, and finally reach the decision that the tariff must be opposed. Nor did northerners through an impartial investigation of their history decide that the sages and heroes had fought against the British system of restricting manufacturing and conclude that protective legislation must be supported. Instead, both northerners and southerners either advocated or opposed the tariff; only then did they search their Revolutionary history for some example that would justify their position.

While measuring themselves by the Revolutionary generation, Americans created the myth that perfect patriots had
united in resisting the British. Believing that the Union was essential for perpetuating the republic, nineteenth-century citizens nevertheless had few bonds to hold them together as a nation. The United States was a rapidly expanding country composed of a variety of cultures and with but a brief history. To compensate for their diversity and their lack of antiquity as a nation, Americans relied on the memory of a common past as a means of maintaining unity.

When "demythologizers" refuted the notion that all Americans had united during the American Revolution, a basis of the Union was shattered. The impact of this idea that the Revolution was not the work of a single people could be seen during the 1850's when the War of Independence was still a popular topic—perhaps even more so than in 1815. Even though Americans were farther removed in time from the Revolution than citizens of 1815 had been, southerners especially seemed to feel closer to the days of the War of Independence. Because the issues of slavery and sectional dominance of the federal government became entwined with Revolutionary history, southerners eventually identified with the patriots. Meeting northern criticism with a defensive attitude, southerners regarded attacks upon their ancestors as reflections upon themselves. Northern accusations that the South had not contributed its share of troops, supplies, and money to the War of Independence were interpreted as criticism of the patriotism of southerners of 1850. By the end of the decade, Americans no longer had a
common past to which they could appeal. The War of Independence had become an emotional issue on which Americans could find no basis of compromise.

Another weakness in American reliance on the Revolution as a unifying agent derived from the multifarious nature of the event. The Revolution was not only a war for independence and self-government but a contest that resulted in the union of the states. Southerners could point to the Declaration of Independence as justification for the right of self-government while northerners claimed that the Union created by the patriots must be preserved. Although nineteenth-century Americans praised the Revolutionary sages for their consistency, in fact the inconsistency between some of the heroes' words and actions contributed to the failure of the Revolution to hold the Union together. For example, northerners were able to appeal to the Declaration's statement that all men were created equal to justify the abolition of slavery, whereas southerners could observe that the Founding Fathers had owned slaves.

By 1860 the United States was divided, and dissension over the nature of the Revolution had contributed to that division. Ironically, citizens had chosen as their model for preserving peace, harmony, and unity a generation that had conducted an eight-year war against Britain.
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VITA

Carolyn Sue Weddington was born in Borger, Texas, on April 10, 1941. After graduating from Borger High School in May of 1959, she entered Cottey College in Nevada, Missouri and two years later received the Associate of Arts degree. In September, 1961, she enrolled in the University of Houston in Houston, Texas where she received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English in May of 1963 and the degree of Master of Arts in History in August of 1965. She entered Louisiana State University Graduate School in September, 1965. From September of 1968 through May of 1970, she served as Assistant Professor of History at Macon Junior College in Macon, Georgia. Since June of 1970, she has been completing requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree for which she is a candidate in May, 1972.
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Major Field: History

Title of Thesis: The Image of the American Revolution in the United States, 1815-1860

Approved:

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Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

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Date of Examination: May 1, 1972