

Celebrating Constitution Day

The final draft of the United States Constitution was signed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on September 17, 1787. Months later, enough states had ratified it (nine out of thirteen) to officially make it our nation's new system of government.

In the years following, many citizens of the United States have celebrated the creation of the Constitution at various times during the month of September. One particular group, the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), has been especially vocal in its desire to preserve the history of our Constitution and convey its true meaning to all Americans. In fact, DAR even erected the only structure dedicated to the Constitution -- Constitution Hall. This memorial is registered as a national historic landmark.

In 1955, DAR began actively petitioning Congress to proclaim the week following September 17 as Constitution Week, in observance of our treasured document. Because of the group's effort and dedication, Senator William F. Knowland of California formally initiated a Senate Joint Resolution to make Constitution Week an annual event and on August 2, 1956, President Eisenhower signed the motion into public law. Constitution Week was now official.





Fifty years later, in 2005, the Constitution was in the news once again. President George W. Bush signed public law 108-447 requiring all educational institutions that receive federal funds to teach the United States Constitution on September 17 (or the closest school day if it falls on a weekend.) In addition, the law states that educators must be provided with the necessary teaching materials in order to fulfill the mandate. Designating September 17 as Constitution Day demonstrates the value that our government places on this historical document. Students around the nation will now have multiple opportunities to grasp its significance.



Every Day Is Constitution



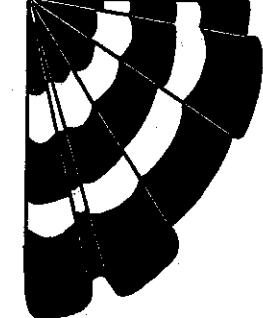

Day





Preamble to the Constitution

*We the people of the United States
of America, in order to form a more perfect
union, establish justice, insure domestic
tranquility, provide for the common defense,
promote the general welfare,
and secure the blessings of liberty to
ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and
establish this Constitution for the
United States of America.*



George Washington's Hair

EASY

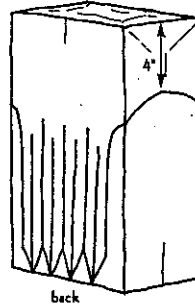
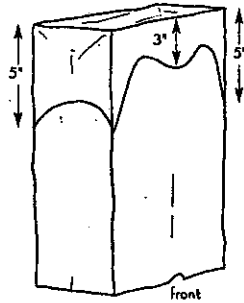
size 12 paper bag
pencil
ruler
scissors
white glue or transparent tape
30" piece of ribbon or string

*Like many gentlemen
of the 18th century,
George Washington
powdered his hair
to make it white, and
tied it behind in a
ponytail, or queue.*

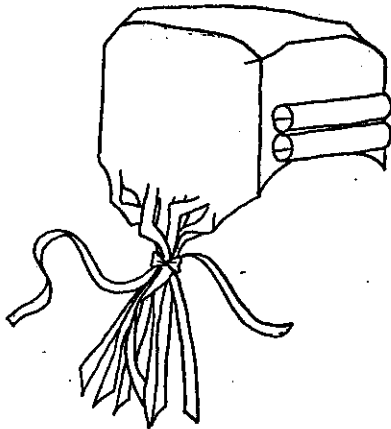
George Washington (detail)
Gilbert Stuart, American, 1755-1828
Oil on canvas, 30 1/4 x 25 1/4 in.
Rogers Fund, 1907 07.160



1 Draw the cutting lines on the bag and cut it as shown in the drawings below. Reserve the cutoff pieces.



2 Cut the back section into strips to make "hair," trimming the ends with zigzag cuts.

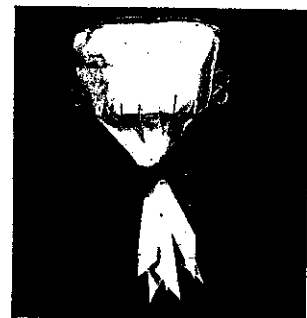
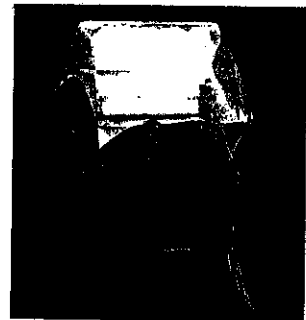


3 To give the wig a rounder shape on top, tuck in the corners, as shown in the Basic Instructions, page 11.

4 Using parts of the bag that have been cut away, cut four 4-inch-wide strips at least 3 inches long.

5 Roll the strips, securing the ends with glue or tape. Glue or tape the rolls in place on the sides of the wig.

6 Tie the hair in back with a piece of ribbon or string, tying a bow.



Teaching with Documents: Observing Constitution Day

The Constitution Game

The following activity was developed by Rennie G. Quible, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Volunteer Docent, as an introduction to a unit on the Constitution. It is frequently used by NARA volunteers with visiting school groups and by volunteers who visit local schools.

Time required: One class period

Objective:

To describe how the members of the Constitutional Convention might have felt as they gathered and began the arduous and memorable task of writing the United States Constitution.

Materials needed:

Envelopes containing:

- 1 die
- 12 paper clips
- The following rhymed instructions:

It's time to play a little game.
No two groups will play the same.
What and how is up to you.
The group must choose what it will do.
Use the things that you find here.
It won't take long; you need not fear.
In six short minutes you'll share your fame
By telling how you played your game.

Procedure:

1. Arrange students into groups of three or four.
2. Distribute one prepared envelope to each group, instructing participants to wait for a signal to open them.

3. Instruct the students to follow the instructions contained in the envelope. Caution them to remember how they feel as they follow the instructions.
4. Give the signal to begin. The word "Archives" works well as a signal.
5. Circulate around the room, and remind students to remember how they are feeling as they play the game. When students ask what they are to do, simply say, "Follow the instructions you found in the envelope."
6. After 6 minutes, instruct participants to stop the game.
7. Ask a spokesperson from each group to describe the game they devised, and how they felt as they played. Some of their remarks might include the following: We were confused, we thought it was dumb, we did not know what to do, or we were excited about getting to make it up as we went along.
8. List the responses on the chalkboard.
9. After all groups have reported, begin describing the Constitutional Convention:

In May of 1787, outstanding citizens from 12 states gathered in Philadelphia. They planned to be there only a little while. They had come to improve the Articles of Confederation and try to create more unity and cooperation among the states. Rhode Island sent no representatives.

How did those men feel that May? (Read the responses the students offered in reference to their feelings toward the game.)

Today, you used 12 paper clips. They represent the patriots who came from the 12 states. The die represents luck and each day that rolled around from May 25 to September 17. You figured out how to play the game. They figured out how to write our Constitution. And while they went about the great task of writing the United States Constitution, they probably felt much the same as you did today.

Additional information about the Constitution, a lesson plan related to the ratification of the Constitution, and biographies of each signer are also available online.

A teaching packet containing a detailed Teacher's Guide and a set of 34 document reproductions that highlight the making of the Constitution, the beginning of the Government, and the evolution of a constitutional issue is available for purchase from the National Archives.

www.archives.gov/education/lessons/constituion-day/game.html

The Constitution

Placemat Scavenger Hunt

1. How many articles does the Constitution have?
2. What is the Preamble?
3. What is federalism?
4. What are the three branches of government?
5. How many times has the Constitution been amended (changed)?
6. What are the first 10 amendments called?
7. What amendment lowered the voting age to 18?
8. In what year was the Constitution changed to give women the right to vote?
9. Who is the head of the Executive Branch of the government?
10. According to the Constitutional Timeline, what happened on September 17, 1787?
11. Make a quick sketch of the building where Congress meets and label which side is for the House of Representatives and which side is for the Senate.

By BETTY DEBNAM

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Separation of Powers and Compromise

Big Ideas in the Constitution

Separation of powers

The men who wrote our Constitution knew they wanted a strong national government. The government under the Articles of Confederation just did not work. The delegates feared that giving too much power to any one person or group could be dangerous. The delegates decided that the powers of government should be divided. This idea is called separation of powers.



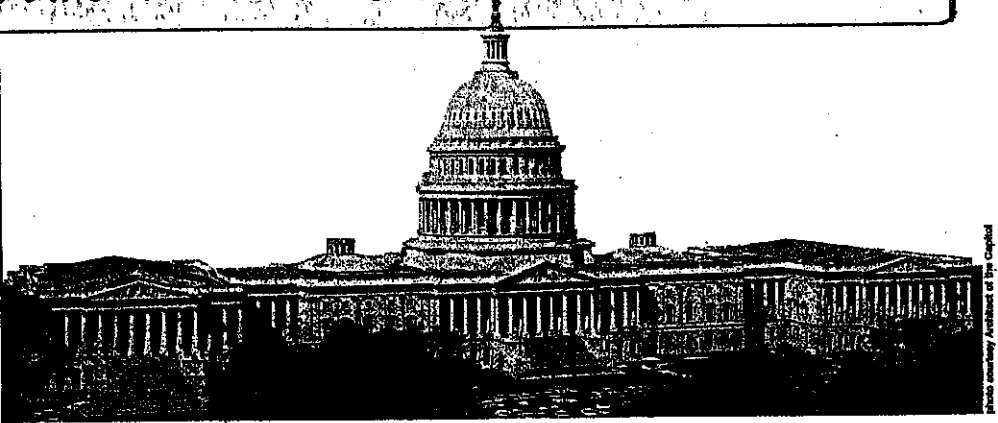
The Legislative Branch is Congress. Congress makes laws, imposes taxes and borrows money.



The Executive Branch is headed by the president. The president has many jobs. One is to see that the laws are carried out.



The Judicial Branch is headed by the Supreme Court, which decides whether the laws passed by Congress are in keeping with the Constitution.



Today our U.S. Congress meets in the Capitol building in Washington, D.C. From this view, the House of Representatives is on the left side and the Senate is on the right. Only a few members have offices in the Capitol. Most have offices in nearby buildings.

Compromise

When the delegates disagreed, they worked out a compromise. How was the new Congress to be set up? How many members could each state send to Congress? These were the big questions. It was a debate between big and small states.

Virginia Plan

Virginia was a big state. The Virginians suggested that the number of members be decided by the number of people who lived in the state.



James Madison wrote the Virginia Plan.

New Jersey Plan

A smaller state, New Jersey, suggested that all states, big and small, have the same number of members.



William Paterson wrote the New Jersey Plan.



Connecticut Plan

Connecticut came up with what is called "The Great Compromise."

Roger Sherman wrote this plan.

The Great Compromise

This plan set up two lawmaking groups, or "houses," as they are called. The House of Representatives was to be based on the number of people living in each state. The other house, called the Senate, was to have the same number of members (two) from each state. Laws had to be passed by both houses. The Three-Fifths Compromise determined the number of representatives each state could send to the House, based on the number of slaves in that state. While slaves could not vote, every five slaves were counted as three "other persons."



Constitutional Timeline

1776, July 4:
Declaration of Independence approved by the Continental Congress.



1781, March 1:
Thirteen states ratify the Articles of Confederation, our country's first Constitution.



1783, Sept. 3:
Treaty of Paris that ends the Revolutionary War is signed.



1785, March 24-28:
Mount Vernon Conference marks first time states meet to discuss problems.



1786, Sept. 11-14:
Annapolis Convention: Delegates from several states meet and agree that the government must be changed.



1787, May 25:
Meeting to write a new Constitution begins in Philadelphia.



1787, Sept. 17:
The Constitution is signed by 39 delegates.

We the People

1787, Dec. 7:
Delaware becomes the first state to ratify the Constitution.



1788, June 21:
The Constitution becomes the law of the land when New Hampshire becomes the ninth state to ratify it.



1789, April 30:
George Washington becomes the first president of the new United States.



Fall 1789: The Bill of Rights is sent to the states for ratification.

Amendment I:
Congress shall make no law respecting an ...

1791, Dec. 15:
The Bill of Rights is ratified.



Mini Spy ...



Mini Spy and her friends are marching as Colonial soldiers. See if you can find:



- exclamation mark
- kite
- ladder
- number 3
- bell
- heart
- rowboat
- coffee cup
- feather
- word MINI
- lima bean
- safety pin
- pencil
- pig's face
- letter u



PREAMBLE TRY 'N FIND

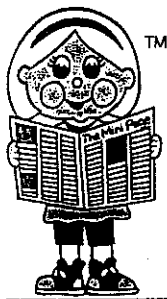
Words and names that remind us of the Preamble to the Constitution are hidden in the block below. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find: STATES, CONSTITUTION, RIGHTS, POWERS, TRANQUILITY, SOVEREIGNTY, WELFARE, POPULAR, DOMESTIC, GOVERNMENT, UNITED, JUSTICE, LIBERTY, BLESSINGS, POSTERITY.

CAN YOU SAY THE PREAMBLE?



Q N Y Z P O S T E R I T Y R E
W E L F A R E G P O P U L A R
G O V E R N M E N T N V K O S
J T R A N Q U I L I T Y J L R
S T H G I R D O M E S T I C E
Y T R E B I L E C I T S U J W
V Y T N G I E R E V O S E B O
U N I T E D S T A T E S U L P
C O N S T I T U T I O N F C B





Especially

for



kids



and their

families

The Mini Page

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By BETTY DEBNAM

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The Preamble

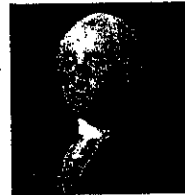
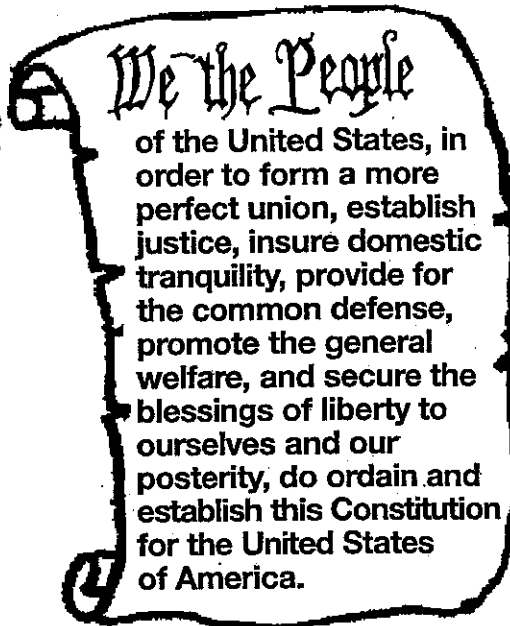
Our Constitution's Purpose

Most people agree that these first three words – “We the People” – are the most important words in the Constitution. They clearly say that the American people are in charge of their government. This is known as “popular sovereignty.” The people hold the power.

Who are “We the People”?

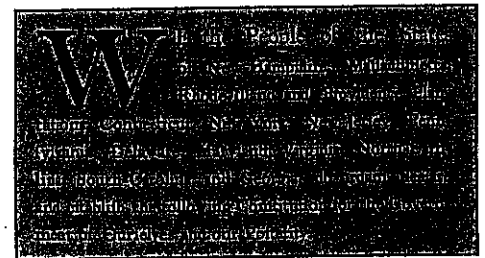
In 1787, when the Constitution was written, there were almost 4 million people in the United States.

Today there are about 300 million. We the people have grown!



George Washington served as president of the Constitutional Convention. While the Constitution was being worked out, he had a printed copy of what was being considered. In

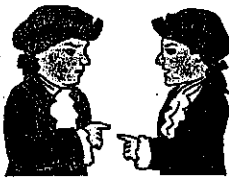
this draft, the original 13 states were listed right after “We the People.”



The above is only the top of George Washington's first page. Can you read the original states?

The Preamble set forth six goals for our government:

(1) In order to form a more perfect union ... The union of the states under the first laws of the land, the Articles of Confederation, were just not working. There were many problems.



(3) Insure domestic tranquility (to promise peace within the country) ... The states had been quarreling among themselves.



(2) Establish justice ... The laws of the land had to be fair to all citizens.



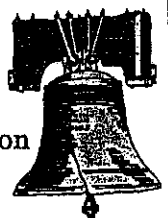
(4) Provide for the common defense ... During the Revolutionary War, the states found out how hard it was to raise money and troops. Strong national forces would make a stronger country.



(5) Promote the general welfare ... State governments needed to work together for the well-being of all citizens.



(6) And secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity (descendants) ... do ordain and establish (set up) this Constitution for the United States of America.



Mini Constitution Guide

What's the big idea?



U.S. Capitol

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH



White House

EXECUTIVE BRANCH



Supreme Court

JUDICIAL BRANCH

Inside the Constitution are several big ideas:

- **Separation of powers:** The delegates feared that giving too much power to any person or group could be dangerous. So they created three branches, or parts, of government: executive, legislative and judicial.

- **Checks and balances:** This limits the power of each government branch. No single branch can overpower the others. Often, each branch needs the help of the others to do its job.

- **Enumerated (e-NOOM-er-ate-ed) powers:** the listed powers of government.

- **Implied powers:** the powers that are not listed but suggested.

- **Federalism:** the idea that our government divides powers between the national government and the state governments.

We will have more about the big ideas in the issues to come.

The Constitution has:

- A preamble (an introduction)
- Seven articles (sections) covering:

Article I: The Congress (legislative branch)



Article II: The president (executive branch)



Article III: The judges and national courts (judicial branch)



Article IV: How states relate to each other and the national government.



Article V: How the Constitution can be amended or changed.



Article VI: The Constitution is the supreme law of the land.



Article VII: Ratification, or approval.

- The signatures of 39 delegates.

Amendments to the Constitution

Our Constitution is not perfect. It has been amended, or changed. Twenty-seven amendments have been added. The first 10 are called the Bill of Rights (1791).



1st: freedom of religion



freedom of speech



freedom of the press

freedom of assembly and petition.



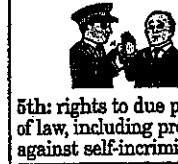
2nd: right to bear arms.



3rd: quartering of soldiers limited.



4th: searches and seizures regulated.



5th: rights to due process of law, including protection against self-incrimination.

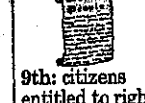
6th: rights of a person accused of a crime, including the right to be represented by a lawyer.



7th: right to a trial by jury.



8th: unfair bail, fines and punishment forbidden.



9th: citizens entitled to rights not listed in the Constitution.



10th: powers not listed reserved to the states or the people.

11th: rules for lawsuits against states (1795).



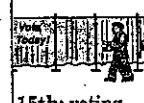
12th: new way of selecting the president and vice president. (1804)



13th: slavery abolished (1865).

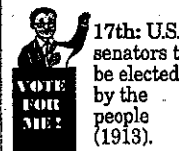


14th: rights of citizenship, due process and equal protection under the law (1868).



15th: voting rights for former slaves (1870).

16th: federal income taxes authorized (1913).



17th: U.S. senators to be elected by the people (1913).



18th: sale of alcohol banned (1919).



19th: women gained right to vote (1920).

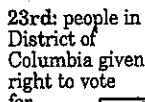
20th: dates of the presidential and congressional terms set (1933).



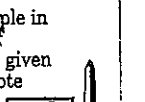
21st: 18th Amendment repealed (1933).



22nd: president limited to two terms (1951).



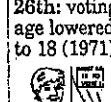
23rd: people in District of Columbia given right to vote for president (1961).



24th: no poll taxes in federal elections (1964).



25th: presidential succession and disability (1967).



26th: voting age lowered to 18 (1971).

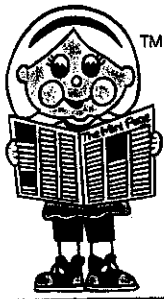
27th: congressional salaries regulated (1992).



The Bill of Rights

Placemat Scavenger Hunt

1. Why was The Bill of Rights added to the Constitution in 1791?
2. Why was The Bill of Rights not added to the original Constitution?
3. Why did George Mason refuse to sign the Constitution?
4. Which amendment is the best known?
5. Why was the third amendment included in the The Bill of Rights?
6. What freedoms are protected in the First Amendment?
7. Where is the original copy of The Bill of Rights displayed?
8. Which amendment do you think is most important? Why?



Especially

for

kids

and their

families

The Mini Page

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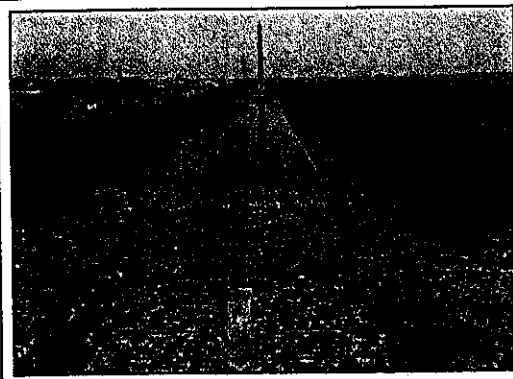


By BETTY DEBNAM

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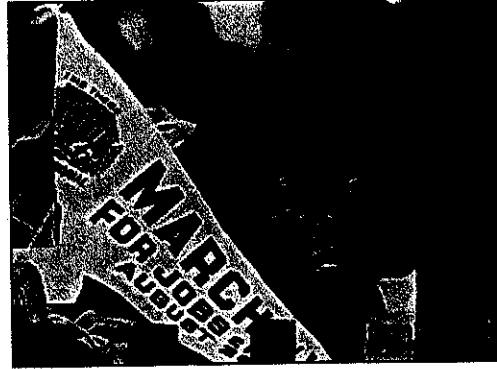
The First 10 Amendments to the Constitution

The Bill of Rights



The 1963 March on Washington for equal rights, led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., is an example of the right to peaceably assemble granted by the First Amendment.

photo courtesy D.C. Public Library



This girl was one of the thousands of marchers in the Washington march for equal rights in 1963.

photo courtesy National Archives

An amendment is a change or addition. The first 10 amendments to the Constitution are called the Bill of Rights. They were added in 1791 to limit the power of the national government over the people.

There were several reasons why a bill of rights was not part of the original Constitution. Many of the men who wrote the Constitution felt that another bill of rights was not needed because these rights were already protected by state constitutions.



Others felt that the Constitution says that all powers not given to the government go to the people. They thought that making a list of people's rights was not a good idea because they might leave one out.

We thank the staff of the National Archives and Lee Ann Potter, director of education and volunteer programs, for their help.



George Mason of Virginia was one of the delegates who thought that a bill of rights should be included.

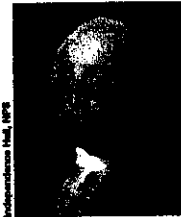
In 1776, Mason had written the first bill of

rights for the Virginia state constitution. Many other states copied his ideas. Mason refused to sign the U.S. Constitution because it did not have a bill of rights.



James Madison of Virginia realized that a bill of rights had to be added if the Constitution was to be accepted. Some states had agreed to sign only if this was done.

Madison was elected to serve as a representative to the first Congress under the new Constitution. He presented 17 amendments to Congress. These were cut down to 12.



On Oct. 2, 1789, President George Washington sent to the states a copy of these amendments for their approval.

By Dec. 15, 1791, enough states had approved 10 of the amendments so that the Bill of Rights went into effect.

The two amendments that were not adopted dealt with the salary of the members of Congress and a change in the number of members allotted to each state.

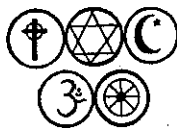
The First Amendment:
"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

The First Amendment of the Constitution is the best-known. In fewer than 50 words, it sets down many of our basic rights.



Mini Guide: The Bill of Rights

First Amendment



• **Freedom of religion** means that Congress cannot pass a law setting up a religion that everyone must follow. You are free to worship as you please.

• **Freedom of speech** means that you are free to speak out and give your side of things. Others are free to listen. However, there are some limits. You can't shout "fire" in a crowded room when there is no fire.

• **Freedom of the press** means that members of the press do not have to get what they are planning to print or say approved by the government beforehand. They are free to print what they wish as long as it is not a deliberate lie.



• **Freedom of assembly** means that you are free to meet peacefully.



• **Freedom of petition** means that you are free to ask the government to correct things that you think are wrong.

Site to see: The National Archives at www.archives.gov

Look through your newspaper for stories about people using rights guaranteed them by the Bill of Rights.

The Mini Page is created and edited by **Betty Debnam**

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Wendy Daley

Second Amendment



• **Guarantees the right to bear (carry) arms (weapons).** Congress cannot prevent people from owning guns for their own protection. However, states and local governments can make laws about who may own them.

Third Amendment



• **This amendment stops the government from forcing citizens to keep soldiers in their homes.** In Colonial times, citizens were forced to offer rooms to British soldiers.

Fourth Amendment



• **Limits searches and seizures.** This amendment says that before a police officer can enter your home, he must have a warrant, or legal paper from a judge, giving permission for a search or arrest.

Fifth Amendment



• **Grants the following rights:**
• A person cannot be brought to trial for a serious crime until a grand jury, made up of a group of citizens, has studied the charges.

• If you have been tried for a crime, the government cannot bring you to trial again for the same crime.

• A person accused of a crime cannot be forced to say anything against himself (no self-incrimination).

• The government cannot take away your life or property, or put you in prison, without "due process of law."

• If the government has a good reason to take away your property for public use, it must pay you a fair price for that property.

Sixth Amendment



• **Lists the rights you have if you are charged with a crime.** It guarantees:

• a speedy trial as soon as possible after your arrest.
• a fair jury of citizens who live in the same area where the crime was supposedly committed.

• a report of exactly what crime you are accused of.

• an opportunity to defend yourself against any witness who testifies against you.

• a lawyer to represent you, paid for by the government if you are unable to pay yourself.

Seventh Amendment



• **Extends your right to a trial by jury in civil cases**

(those dealing with disagreements between two people or people and their governments). These are not punishable by death.

Eighth Amendment



• **The government cannot demand a person to pay bail or fines that are too high and unreasonable.**

Also, punishment for a crime cannot be cruel or unusual.

Ninth Amendment



• **Entitles you to rights not listed in the Constitution.**

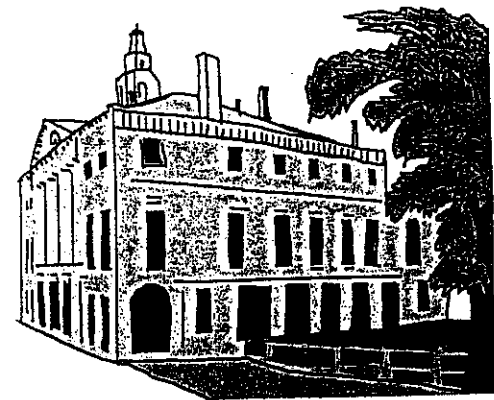
10th Amendment



• **Powers not given to the U.S. government are reserved to the states or to the people.**



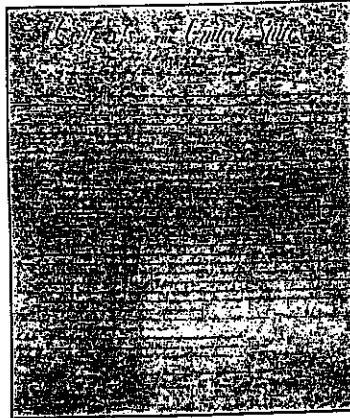
Congress meets in New York City



The first Congress met in Federal Hall in New York City in 1789. According to the Constitution, there were 26 senators and 65 representatives. Federal Hall is no longer standing.

Celebrating Bill of Rights Day, Dec. 15

The original engrossed copy of the Bill of Rights hangs on display in the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C. It is so faded that it is hard to read.



Ever since the year 1941, the president of the United States has issued a proclamation, or official announcement, that Dec. 15 is to be celebrated as Bill of Rights Day.

Bill of Rights Day

On Dec. 15, 1791, Virginia became the 11th state to ratify, or approve, the first 10 amendments to the Constitution. They became the law of the land.

One of the amendments that failed to pass dealt with the number of the members of the House of Representatives in Congress.

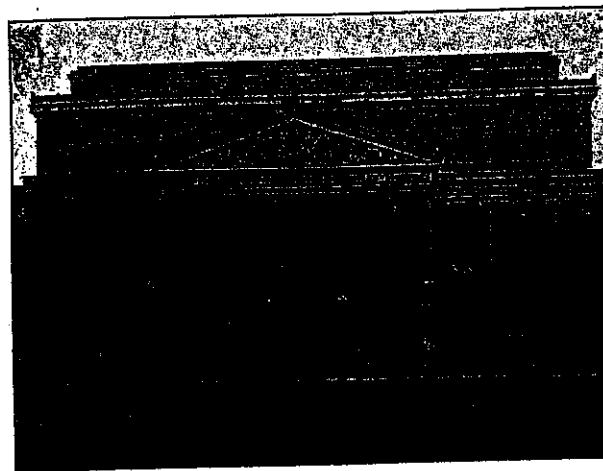
The other dealt with congressional pay raises.

An amendment dealing with raises was approved in 1992 by the addition of the 27th Amendment to the Constitution.

Why New York City?

The Bill of Rights document begins: "Congress of the United States begun and held at the City of New York on Wednesday, the fourth of March, one thousand seven hundred and eighty nine."

What was Congress doing in New York? New York City was then the capital of the United States. In 1790, Philadelphia became the capital, and then Washington, D.C., became the capital in 1800.

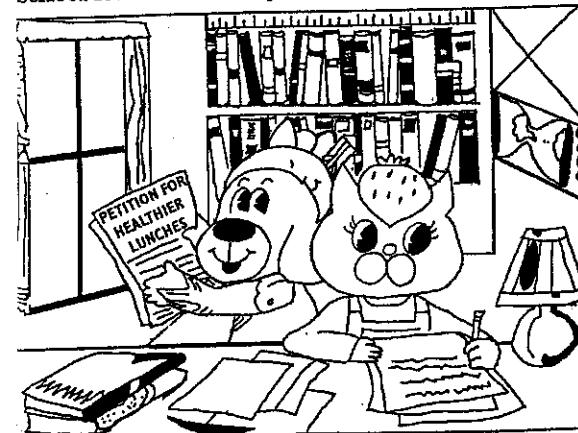


When a citizen of one country has taken steps to become a citizen of another country, we say he or she is "naturalized." Many new U.S. citizens are naturalized on Bill of Rights Day at the National Archives building in Washington, D.C. The Bill of Rights is on display along with the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

Mini Spy ...



Mini Spy and Basset Brown are writing a petition for healthier school lunches. See if you can find: • man in the moon • peanut



- strawberry
- number 7
- exclamation mark
- kite
- hourglass
- carrot
- ruler
- question mark
- pencil
- fish
- sailboat
- arrow

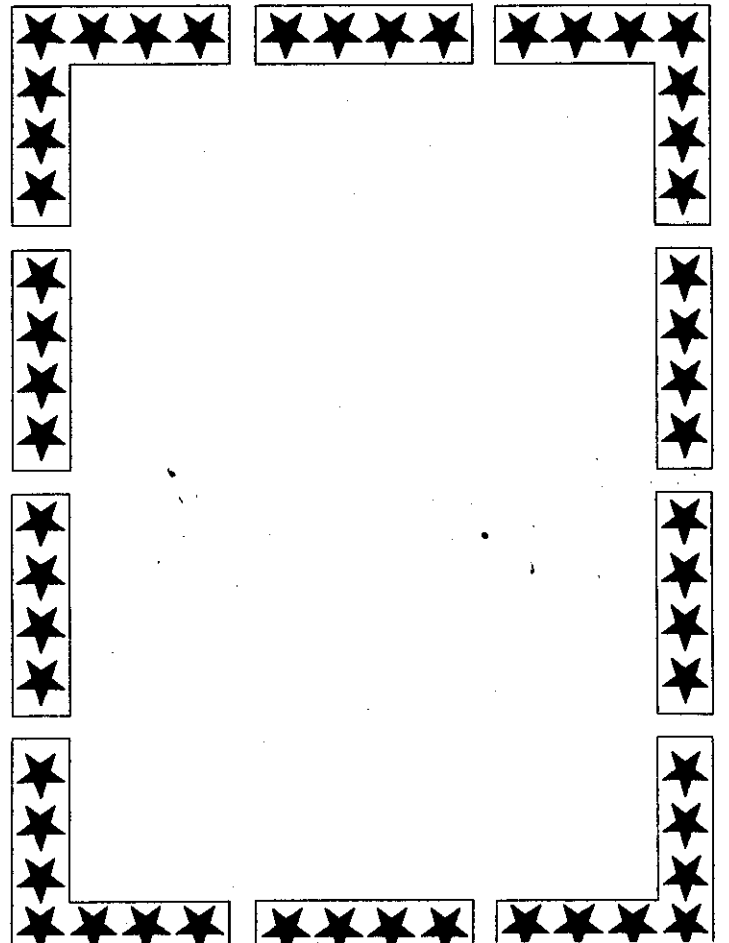
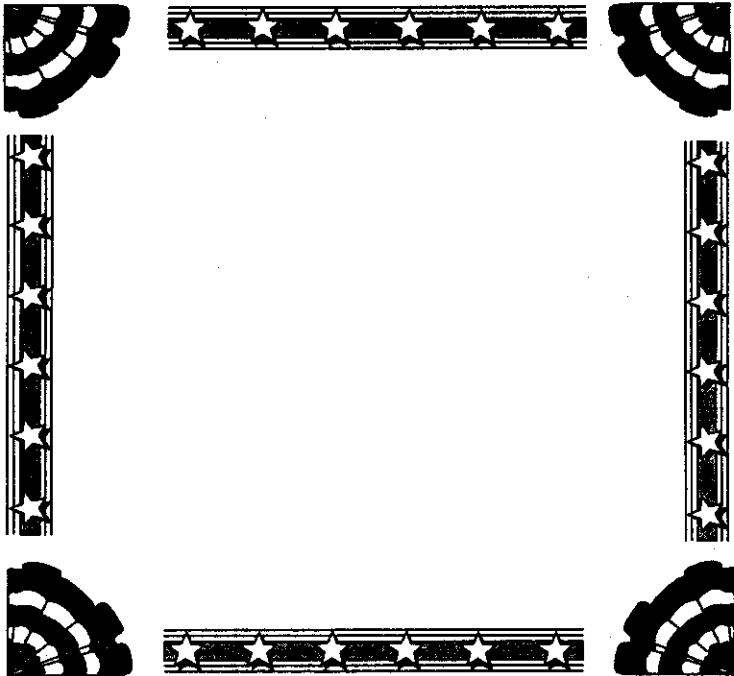
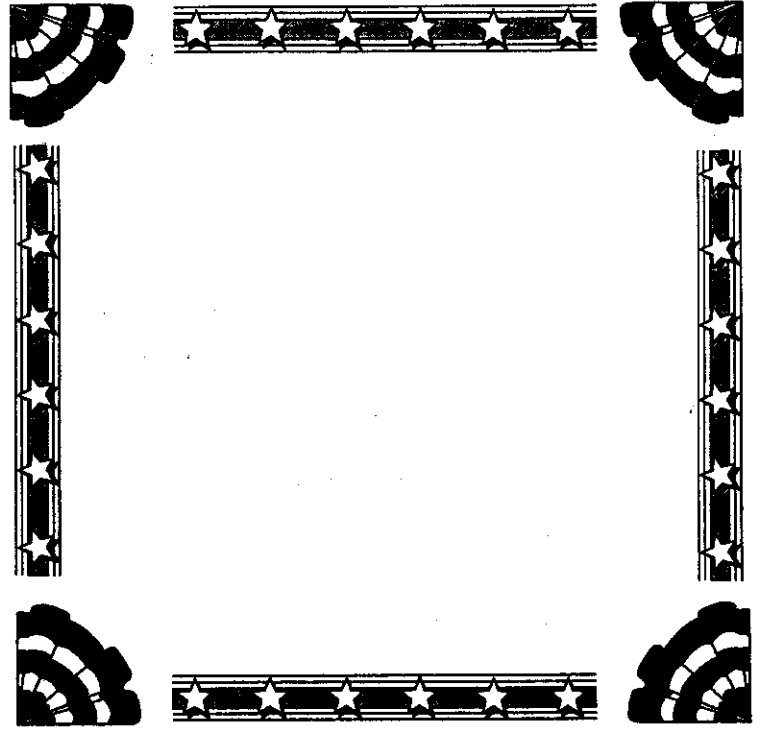
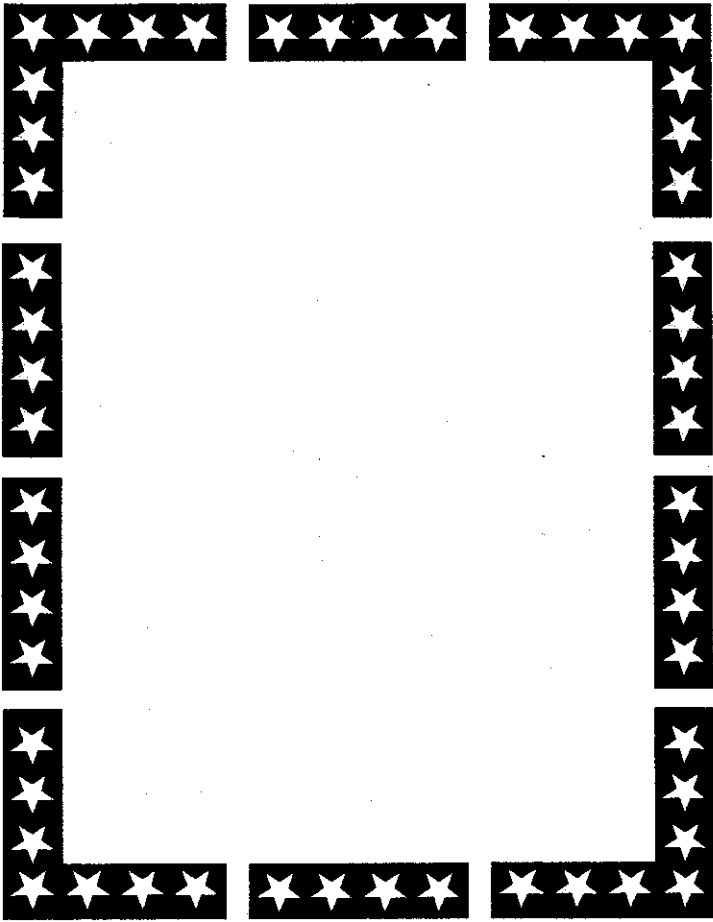


Bill of Rights TRY 'N FIND

Words and names that remind us of the Bill of Rights are hidden in the block below. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find: CONSTITUTION, ASSEMBLE, AMENDMENTS, JURY, APPROVAL, DELEGATES, BILL OF RIGHTS, GOVERNMENT, SPEECH, PRESS, POWERS, RELIGION, GEORGE, MASON, JAMES, MADISON, PETITION, TRIALS.



DO YOU KNOW YOUR RIGHTS?

D	G	O	V	E	R	N	M	E	N	T	Z	H	R	G
P	E	T	I	T	I	O	N	O	S	A	M	C	E	E
B	I	L	L	O	F	R	I	G	H	T	S	E	L	C
P	Y	L	E	L	A	V	O	R	P	P	A	E	I	F
R	R	K	O	G	M	A	D	I	S	O	N	P	G	G
E	U	S	E	M	A	J	P	O	W	E	R	S	I	E
S	J	C	N	O	I	T	T	I	T	S	N	O	C	
S	T	N	E	M	D	N	E	M	A	B	V	Z	N	X
A	S	S	E	M	B	L	E	S	T	R	I	A	L	S







Preamble to the Constitution



We the people of the United States
of America, in order to form a more perfect
union, establish justice, insure domestic
tranquility, provide for the common defense,
promote the general welfare,
and secure the blessings of liberty to
ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and
establish this Constitution for the
United States of America.



HOW TO MAKE A FORTUNE TELLER FOR THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

1. Fold your square piece of paper in half. Fold it in half again.
2. Unfold your paper. (You should have four small squares.)
3. Fold each corner to the center.
4. Turn over.
5. Fold each corner, again, to the center.
6. Fold in half.
7. Place your fingers into the flaps and work it out.
8. Make a crease, dividing the top into eight sections or triangles. (Before making the crease the top looks like four diamonds.) Write the numbers 1-8 on the top.
9. Write the numbers 1-8 on the inside triangles.
10. Write eight questions and answers about the U.S. Constitution and The Bill of Rights under the second set of numbers.
11. When you are done see me for your grade.
12. Find a friend who is done with their fortune teller and quiz each other.



Our Founding Fathers

After the American Revolution, how did the 13 Colonies come together to create a nation?



CAST OF CHARACTERS

Alexander Hamilton, a delegate from New York
 James Duane, the Mayor of New York
 Elizabeth (Betsey) Hamilton, Hamilton's wife
 Blacksmith
 Seamstress
 Chambermaid
 } citizens of Philadelphia
 George Washington, a delegate from Virginia
 Elbridge Gerry, a delegate from Massachusetts
 Roger Sherman, a delegate from Connecticut
 George Mason
 James Madison
 Edmund Randolph
 } delegates from Virginia
 John Jay, a lawyer, writer, and government official
 Patrick Henry, the former Governor of Virginia
 Narrators A-E

*An asterisk indicates a fictional character.

by Kathy Wilmore

INTRODUCTION

Under British rule, the 13 American Colonies existed mainly as separate units. Each had been settled for different reasons. Economies and industries differed, and so did values and ways of life. Winning the American Revolution was a giant step toward nationhood. But the habits of more than a century proved hard to break.

Once the states' common enemy was gone, they began to come apart. What united the 13 states of America?



Words to Know

- **confederation:** an alliance of independent groups united for a common need or interest.
- **delegate:** a person authorized to represent others, such as at a convention or conference.
- **democracy:** a system of government by the people in which the majority rules, directly or through representatives.
- **executive:** the branch of government that manages the country's affairs and carries out its laws.
- **monarchy:** a system of government led by someone whose power is inherited and who usually rules for life.
- **republic:** a system of government in which the supreme power lies in a body of citizens who are entitled to vote for officers and representatives responsible to them.

Scene 1

Narrator A: In 1781, a few months before Britain's surrender, America adopted the Articles of **Confederation**. The Articles established a central government, but it was too weak to enforce its own laws. In 1786, Alexander Hamilton, a veteran of the American Revolution, expresses his worry.

Alexander Hamilton: The Articles of Confederation aren't working!

James Duane: Congress was so afraid of creating a **federal** [national] government as powerful as the King, it leaned too far in the other direction.

Betsey Hamilton: Nothing requires states to cooperate. For instance, Congress may set taxes, but can't make anyone pay them.

A. Hamilton: The same was true during the war. General Washington was desperate for soldiers and supplies. But if a state ignored Congress's order to send them, we were out of luck! If America is attacked again, it will be just as hard to defend ourselves.

B. Hamilton: The money is a mess, too. A shopkeeper who gave me a South Carolina dollar as change last week refused it as payment today.

Duane: James Madison has called a convention to be held this September in Annapolis, Maryland. State **delegates** will discuss our problems with trade and finance.

A. Hamilton: I will propose that we hold another convention, to discuss the Articles of Confederation. They

are broken and must be fixed—
or tossed out!

Narrator A: Only 5 of the 13 states send delegates to Annapolis. The rest fear that a stronger federal government could turn America into a monarchy. But the attending delegates agree with Hamilton. They schedule a convention to start on May 14, 1787, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Scene 2

Narrator B: Every state but Rhode Island sends delegates to the Philadelphia convention. Most delegates have been told to make only minor changes to the Articles. Any changes must be approved by the legislature [law-making body] of every state. Suspicion runs high. On a Philadelphia street corner...

Blacksmith: Those fellows keep the doors locked and windows shut—in this heat! I'll bet they're plotting to seize control of the country.

Seamstress: I heard that they are going to invite King George's son to become King of America.

Chambermaid: But General Washington and Mr. Franklin are in there! After all they risked to win our freedom from Britain, I don't think they will let anyone else grab it.

Scene 3

Narrator C: Is it possible to give a federal government enough power to be effective, but not so much that it overwhelms the rights and freedoms of states and individual people? The delegates search for solutions.

George Washington: Mr. Randolph has proposed a national government whose officers are elected by the people. Mr. Gerry is opposed.

Elbridge Gerry: That kind of govern-



Delegates at the 1787 Constitutional Convention argued for four months before reaching agreement.

ment would take power away from the states!

Roger Sherman: What if we have state legislatures elect national legislatures? The people should have as little to do with government as possible.

Gerry: Fine with me. We already suffer from too much democracy. In a democracy, the majority rules. But most people are ill-informed and easily misled.

George Mason: I disagree. We must respect the rights of every class of people, not just the wealthy and educated!

James Madison: If people elect only local leaders, and local leaders elect state leaders, and then state leaders elect national ones, we will lose sight of the *people* altogether!

Narrator C: The delegates realize that there is no way to fix the Articles. To remain a nation, they must come up with an entirely new agreement—a Constitution of the United States.

Scene 4

Narrator D: Through the long, hot summer, proposals are made, argued over, and scrapped. By September...

Washington: We have established a federal government with three branches: legislative, executive, and judicial. We shall have one executive, instead of the three proposed by Mr. Randolph.

Edmund Randolph: I am now satisfied that the other two branches will balance the power, keeping the executive from having too much.

Hamilton: We also balanced Congress.

Eventually, it becomes clear that the only way to ensure full acceptance of the Constitution will be to add a Bill of Rights.



Virginia Plan supporters wanted Congress's membership based on a state's population or wealth. New Jersey Plan supporters wanted every state, large or small, to have the same number of members. We were deadlocked. **Madison:** Then Mr. Sherman proposed the Great Compromise. Senate membership will be two per state, regardless of size. House membership will be based on each state's population. **Gerry:** I hate the decision to count a slave as three fifths of a person! **Hamilton:** Not counting slaves at all would misrepresent the Southern states' sizes. But if we count each slave as a person, how could we not let him vote? We *had* to compromise! **Gerry:** Everything we have decided so far is about structure. Form of government, who controls the military, who the money. But we are forgetting the people's basic rights! **Madison:** Isn't it clear that all rights not spelled out as belonging to government belong to the people? **Gerry:** No. Not everyone is honest and fair. If we don't spell out individual rights, we will leave the people unprotected from leaders who abuse power! **Narrator D:** Finally, the delegates have a Constitution acceptable to most. On September 17, 39 of the 42 delegates still in attendance sign it. Gerry, Mason, and Randolph do not.

Scene 5

Narrator E: For the Constitution to become law, at least 9 of the 13 states must ratify [approve] it. But a war of words explodes. Federalists want a national government, which

the Constitution would establish. Anti-Federalists do not. Hamilton, Madison, and John Jay anonymously publish a series of essays, now known as *The Federalist Papers*. **Hamilton:** More people are reading our essays than we ever imagined! **John Jay:** Madison's latest essay argues that the Constitution would create a republic, which is better than a pure democracy. Pure democracies—citizens assembling to administer government themselves—eventually fail. **Hamilton:** The Constitution would help officials balance the desires of the people who elect them against the good of the nation as a whole. Senators, elected statewide, will see things differently from House members, who answer to smaller communities. But to make laws, the Senate and House must compromise. Then the President must agree. **Jay:** We also have the Supreme Court to strike down laws that violate the Constitution. **Narrator E:** In June 1788, leading Virginians meet to vote on ratification. Patrick Henry, a fiery speaker, addresses the assembly. **Patrick Henry:** Are states to give up their independence? This Constitution grants too much power to federal officials. What is to keep them from abusing that power? Guard the public liberty with jealous attention. Suspect everyone who approaches that jewel! **Narrator E:** Eventually, it becomes clear that the only way to ensure full acceptance of the Constitution will be to add a Bill of Rights. In 1789, 10 amendments, written by Madison,

become that Bill. They guarantee individual rights that Americans still rely on, including freedom of speech.

Afterword

Some of the men involved in creating the Constitution and Bill of Rights went on to play key roles in the new republic. Washington was the first President. Madison was the fourth. Jay was the first Chief Justice of the U.S. (head of the Supreme Court). Hamilton was the first Secretary of the Treasury. Along with John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin, they are considered the Founding Fathers of the United States of America. The decisions they made had a profound effect on the nation—continuing to this day. JS

Your Turn

WORD MATCH

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 1. delegate | A. government led by a King or Queen |
| 2. legislature | B. government run by citizens' representatives |
| 3. monarchy | C. approve |
| 4. ratify | D. lawmaking body |
| 5. republic | E. representative at a convention |

write it!

Imagine that you are responsible for writing the basic laws of your town or city. List the five laws that you think are the most important. Then write a paragraph explaining your choices.

The Words in the Preamble and What They Mean . . .

PREAMBLE: The first part of something, an introduction.

WE THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES: All the people in our country, including kids.

IN ORDER TO FORM A MORE PERFECT UNION: To come together and make things better for everyone who lives in our country.

ESTABLISH JUSTICE: To make things fair and honest for everyone.

INSURE DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY: To make sure we can all have a nice life and get along with one another.

PROVIDE FOR THE COMMON DEFENSE: To protect us from other people or countries who might try to harm us, as in a war, and to help us if we have been harmed.

PROMOTE THE GENERAL WELFARE: To help make life good for everybody. Having enough to eat, a place to live, being safe, and having friends and fun times are some of the things that make our lives good.

AND SECURE THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY: To protect our rights and freedoms and not let anyone take them away. Being able to choose our religion, to say what we think, and to get together with friends, family, and other people are some of the freedoms we have.

TO OURSELVES AND OUR POSTERITY: For kids, parents, other grown-ups, and all the people born in our country after we are.

DO ORDAIN AND ESTABLISH THIS CONSTITUTION: To write down, and then to live by, a list of rules and promises for our government to keep and our people to obey.

FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Our country—where we live. .

From: *We the Kids*
By David Catrow

ISBN 0-8037-2553-1

The Words in the Preamble and What They Mean . . .

WE THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES:	All the people in our country, including kids.
IN ORDER TO FORM A MORE PERFECT UNION:	To come together and make things better for everyone who lives in our country.
ESTABLISH JUSTICE:	To make things fair and honest for everyone.
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DO ORDAIN AND ESTABLISH THIS CONSTITUTION:	To write down, and then to live by, a list of rules and promises.
FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:	Our country---where we live

TORN PAPER MURAL: THE BILL OF RIGHTS

NOTE: This strategy can be used with any unit of study.

Materials for each group:

- * 12x18 black construction paper
- * Assorted colored construction paper cut into 6"x6" squares
- * Glue Sticks

Group Roles:

- * Idea Gatherer
- * Material Gatherer
- * Glue Stick
- * Presenter

1. Assign four students per group and have each student select a role.
2. Explain to students that they are going to create a Torn Paper Mural that will feature 10 or more symbols that represent the Bill of Rights. Tell students that they are only to use their hands to tear out the symbols. No pens, pencils, rulers or scissors are to be used! They simply TEAR OUT the symbols. The group's mural must also include a slogan or a title (i.e., The Bill of Rights). These letters must also be torn out.
3. Have the Material Gatherers pick up the needed materials.
4. Instruct the Idea Gatherers to lead a quick brainstorm session with the group to come up with 10 or more symbols that range from Amendments 1-10.
5. All group members tear out the symbols. One group member should work just on the title. Once there are enough symbols /letters torn out, the group member in charge of gluing can begin his/her job.
6. Students WRITE their names on the BACK of the mural.
7. The Presenter presents the mural to the class, explaining the symbols and amendments.
8. Collect, grade, and display. This is a great project to display at Open House!

PREAMBLE COLLAGE

A collage is an art project that uses a combination of pictures and words that illustrate a topic.

Using newspapers and magazines, create a collage about the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution.

Your collage should include words AND pictures that illustrate ALL of the five goals as well as other words in the Preamble.

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, (1) establish justice, (2) insure domestic tranquility, (3) provide for the common defense, (4) promote the general welfare and (5) secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Pictures and words should be cut out and glued on neatly.

Work as a team!

Your collage should cover almost the whole paper, leaving NO GAPS!

“ PREAMBLE ”

Read Around

Procedure

1. Distribute the numbered phrases among the students. If you have fewer students than phrases, have some students double up on some of the shorter ones.
2. Inform students that they will take turns speaking their words in a loud and dramatic fashion. They will speak in sequence so fast and clear that the rendering of the Preamble will be seamless – as if one, not 30+ students, is speaking the words.
3. “You will read the Preamble’s words several times. You are responsible for doing your part effectively. Try to memorize the words. If you need to, rewrite the words in pen on the back of the paper (facing you).”
4. Allow one minute for students to write their phrases on the back of the paper if they need to do so.
5. Have students form a circle in numerical order around the room. Tell them to hold their papers at chest level, facing the center of the circle.
6. When all is ready and quiet, begin with the student who is #1. The first and second reading rounds will be imperfect. Expect better performances in subsequent rounds.
7. While students are still in a circle, a brief follow-up with some questions and discussion of vocabulary might be appropriate.

1

WE

2

THE PEOPLE

3

OF THE

4

UNITED STATES,

5

IN ORDER

6

TO FORM

7

A MORE PERFECT

8

UNION,

9 ESTABLISH JUSTICE

10 INSURE

11 DOMESTIC

12 TRANQUILITY,

13

PROVIDE FOR

14

THE COMMON

15

DEFENSE

16

PROMOTE

17

THE GENERAL
WELFARE,

18

AND

19

SECURE THE

20

BLESSINGS OF
LIBERTY

21 TO OURSELVES

22 AND

23 OUR POSTERITY,

24 DO ORDAIN

25

AND

26

ESTABLISH

27

THIS
CONSTITUTION,

28

FOR THE

29

UNITED

30

STATES

31

OF AMERICA

Every Day Is Constitution

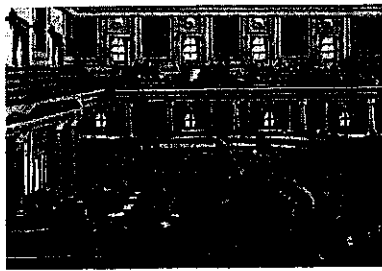
Day



THE BILL OF RIGHTS

Read the situations below and decide which basic rights of Mr. Silverman, an American citizen, were violated.

1.	Mr. Silverman was prevented by the authorities from speaking on the subject of his religion.	1. Freedom of speech and religion.
2.	Mr. Silverman was reading a book when local police officers broke down his door and began searching for stolen property. They did not say a word to Mr. Silverman about why they were there.	
3.	Mr. Silverman was put in jail for failing to pay his parking fine. Bail was set for \$10,000.	
4.	Mr. Silverman was found guilty for failing to pay his parking fine. The judge ordered Mr. Silverman to turn in his driver's license and not drive again for 10 years.	
5.	Five years later, after Mr. Silverman was put in jail, he was tried again in court for the same crime and was fined \$500.	
6.	Mr. Silverman was told by the head of a local National Guard that five soldiers were going to spend the next month in his home.	
7.	Mr. Silverman owned a newspaper and was told that he could not print his ideas because the President did not like his ideas.	
8.	Mr. Silverman was not told why he was arrested for speeding. He was put in jail for over a month before a trial date was set. He was told he could not have a lawyer.	



Name _____

Senate vs. House

Perhaps the fiercest arguments during the Constitutional Convention came when the delegates began to determine how power should be divided in the governments. Eventually a compromise was reached. It was called the Great Compromise.

Read the statements below. Determine if each statement is true of the Senate only, the House of Representatives only, or if it is true for both. Circle the **S** if the sentence is true for the **Senate** only. Circle the **H** if the statement is true for the **House** only. Circle both the **S** and the **H** if the statement is for **both** the **Senate** and **House** members.

1. S H Each state has only two members in its _____.
2. S H To qualify, a person must be a citizen for seven years.
3. S H They vote on bills. Sole Power?
4. S H A candidate must be 25 years old.
5. S H Members serve a term of six years.
6. S H Two-thirds of them are required to override the President's veto.
7. S H They must approve the President's choice for Supreme Court Justice.
8. S H A person must be a citizen for nine years to qualify to be one.
9. S H They are members of Congress.
10. S H They serve a term of two years. President/Vice
President?
11. S H This has the most members.
12. S H Bills can start here.
13. S H It's candidates must be at least thirty years old. Two per State
14. S H They choose a Speaker as their leader.
15. S H It's President is the Vice-President of the United States.
16. S H Members must be an inhabitant of the state in which they are chosen.
17. S H Money bills must start here.
18. S H They have the power to hold a trial for all impeachments.

Challenge: On the back of this paper make a Venn diagram using all the statements listed above.



Name _____

AMENDMENTS

Directions: Write down the number of the amendment which is being described. An answer may be used more than once.

1. The first ten amendments to the Constitution are called the _____.
2. Amendment that says no cruel or unusual punishment. _____
3. Amendment that says you cannot be tried twice for the same crime. _____
4. Amendment that gives you freedom of speech. _____
5. Amendment that gave us income tax. _____
6. Amendment that says you may own weapons for lawful purposes. _____
7. Amendment that did away with slavery. _____
8. Amendment that says you have the right to a lawyer. _____
9. Amendment that gives us freedom of the press. _____
10. Amendment that says you do not have to testify against yourself. _____
11. This amendment made the voting age eighteen. _____
12. This amendment gives us freedom of religion. _____
13. Amendment says the government has to give fair price for property. _____
14. Amendment that says warrant is needed for search or arrest. _____
15. Amendment that gave women the right to vote. _____
16. Amendment that gives you a right to a speedy trial. _____
17. Amendment that protects you from soldiers staying in your home. _____
18. Amendment that says no excessive bails or fines. _____
19. You cannot be tried for a major crime unless a Grand Jury sees good reason. Amendment _____
20. Amendment that gives you the right of peaceful assembly. _____
21. Amendment that says no person shall be denied equal protection under the laws of the United States. _____

Who Am I?



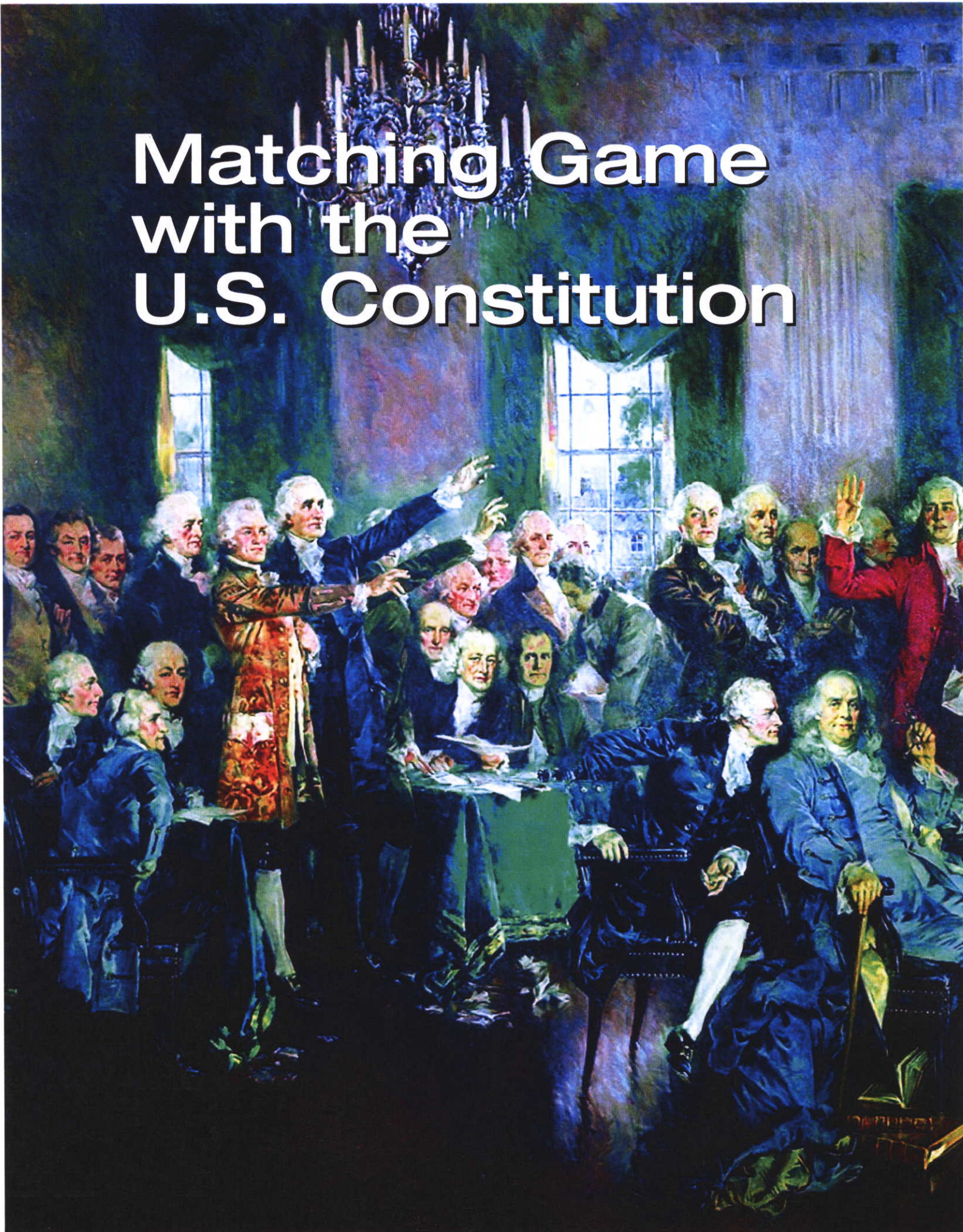
Benjamin Franklin

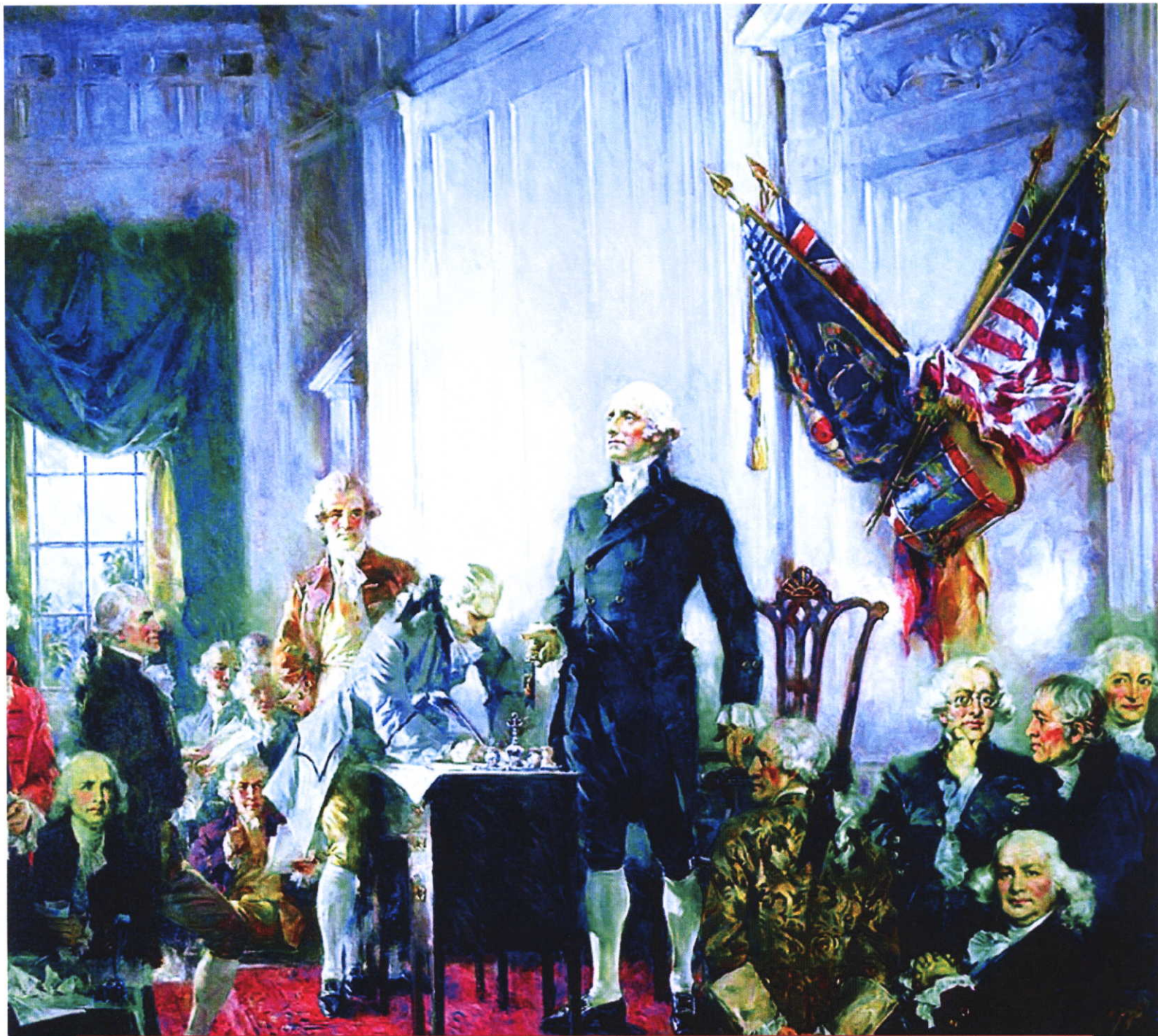


George Washington

1. I fought in the Revolutionary War.
Benjamin Franklin George Washington
2. I signed the Declaration of Independence.
Benjamin Franklin George Washington
3. I invented many things including bifocals and the lightening rod.
Benjamin Franklin George Washington
4. I am called the Father of My Country.
Benjamin Franklin George Washington
5. I was the first President of the United States.
Benjamin Franklin George Washington
6. I am famous for writing Poor Richard's Almanack.
Benjamin Franklin George Washington
7. I led the delegates who wrote the U.S. Constitution.
Benjamin Franklin George Washington
8. I worked as a printer.
Benjamin Franklin George Washington
9. I started a newspaper in Philadelphia.
Benjamin Franklin George Washington
10. I worked as a surveyor and a farmer.
Benjamin Franklin George Washington

Matching Game with the U.S. Constitution





ABOUT CONSTITUTION DAY

In 1952, President Harry S. Truman signed a bill that moved I Am an American Day from the third Sunday in May to September 17 in order for the holiday to coincide with the signing of the U.S. Constitution in 1787. Congress renamed the holiday Citizenship Day. A joint resolution passed in 1956 requested that the president proclaim the week beginning September 17 and ending September 23 each year as Constitution Week.

In 2004, Senator Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia entered an amendment to the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2005 to change the name of the September 17 holiday to Constitution Day and Citizenship Day. The purpose of Constitution Day and Citizenship Day is to commemorate the creation and signing of the supreme law of the land and to honor and celebrate the privileges and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship for both native-born and naturalized citizens.

Byrd's amendment, known as Public Law 108-477, requires that all schools receiving federal funds hold an educational program for their students on September 17 of each year. This lesson, which is adapted from curricular materials on the Constitution produced by the Center for Civic Education, is designed to assist schools and federal agencies to meet the requirements of this law.

OBJECTIVES	PROCEDURE
<p>By the end of this lesson, students will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 understand what the Constitution is and what it does for them; 2 recognize key images related to the Constitution and its history. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Begin the lesson by telling students that it is Constitution Day. Ask students if they have ever heard of the Constitution and to share what they know about it. 2 Read background information about the Constitution aloud to students. Use either the story provided here or other suitable materials. (Some schools have Constitution books geared toward younger students.) 3 After reading the background story, check for students' understanding. 4 Prepare students to play the Matching Game by sharing the following rules with them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules for Matching Game • All cards will be placed face down on the carpet or table. • One student will be called on to turn any two cards over. If the cards match, the student will pick up the cards and take another turn. If they do not match, the student will turn their two cards back over and it will be the next student's turn. • The game ends when students have matched all the cards. The student with the most matches is the winner. 5 Play the Matching Game. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show each picture to students. • Do a practice game with five students while the other students observe. • Divide the class into groups of four or five, and have the students play the game in their groups.
TERMS TO KNOW + IDENTIFY	
<p>American flag</p> <p>Benjamin Franklin</p> <p>Bill of Rights</p> <p>Constitution</p> <p>courts</p> <p>George Washington</p> <p>James Madison</p> <p>law</p> <p>signing the Constitution</p> <p>White House</p>	
MATERIALS	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Background story on the Constitution (page 5) 2 Five to six sets of game pieces (pages 11–14) 	

- 6 After students have played for ten minutes, have them clean up the game and settle down into their seats. Show each picture to the students, and have them describe something that they have learned about that image.

BACKGROUND STORY ON THE CONSTITUTION

In 1787, a group of men met because they did not like the way the government worked. They fixed the government by writing the Constitution. We call these men the Framers. The Framers are famous. George Washington was a Framer. Benjamin Franklin and James Madison were Framers, too.

The Framers met during a hot summer in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They had a lot of arguments about how to fix all the problems of the government. In the end, they agreed to the words in the Constitution. The Constitution created a new government.

After the Framers wrote the Constitution, they asked the states to vote to approve it. It took some time, but all the states did approve the Constitution.

Some people did not like the Constitution. Some people thought the Constitution did not do enough to protect the rights of the people.

After the Constitution was approved, the Bill of Rights was added. The Bill of Rights is the first ten amendments, or changes, to the Constitution.

The law is the set of rules that we live by. The Constitution is the highest law. It belongs to the United States. It belongs to all Americans.

The Constitution says how the government works. The government has three parts. The executive branch has the president. He or she lives and works in a place called the White House. The legislative branch is the Congress. The judicial branch is the courts.

The Constitution lists some key rights. Rights are things that all people have just because they are alive. The Bill of Rights is a part of the Constitution. The Bill of Rights lists many rights of the people. By listing the rights, the Bill of Rights makes rights special. They are made safe.

The Bill of Rights protects important ideas. It protects your right to say what you want. It lets you think for yourself. It keeps the laws from being too hard. It gives rules for the police.

The Bill of Rights lets you believe in God if you want. No one can tell you not to believe. It lets you gather with your friends to talk. It makes sure that newspapers can print true stories.

The Bill of Rights also protects your home. It helps keep Americans safe. Today, we are happy the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution.

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

The following content is provided as teacher background for the lesson on the Constitution.

What Is a Constitution?

A constitution is a set of fundamental customs, traditions, rules, and laws that set forth the basic way a government is organized and operated. Most constitutions are in writing, some are partly written and partly unwritten, and some are not written at all.

If you study the constitution of a government, you will be able to answer the following questions about the relationship between the government and its citizens.

Government

- What are the purposes of the government?
- How is the government organized?
- How does the government operate?

Citizens

- Who is a citizen?
- Do citizens have any power or control over the government? If so, how do citizens exercise their powers?
- What rights and responsibilities do citizens have?

By this definition of a constitution, nearly every nation has a constitution. Good governments and bad governments have constitutions. Some of the worst governments have constitutions that include lists of the basic rights of their citizens. A list of rights does not mean that the citizens actually enjoy those rights.

What Is a Constitutional Government?

Having a constitution does not mean that a nation has a constitutional government. If, for example, a constitution provides for the unlimited exercise of political power by one, a few, or many, it would not be the basis for a constitutional government. If a constitution says that power is to be limited, but it does not include ways to enforce those limitations, it also is not the basis for a constitutional government.

The principles of constitutional and limited governments are intertwined. Limited governments are characterized by restraints on power, such as laws that both the rulers and the governed must obey, and free and periodic elections. The opposite is unlimited government, in which those who govern are free to use their power as they choose, unrestrained by laws or elections. Aristotle described unlimited government as tyranny. Today the terms *autocracy*, *dictatorship*, or *totalitarianism* are frequently used to describe such governments.

What Are the Characteristics of the Higher Law?

In a constitutional government, the constitution, or higher law, has the following characteristics:

- It sets forth the basic rights of citizens.
- It establishes the responsibility of the government to protect those rights.
- It establishes limitations on how those in government may use their powers with regard to citizens' rights and responsibilities, the distribution of resources, and the control of conflict.

- It can be changed only with the widespread consent of the citizens and according to established and well-known procedures.

Source: *Constitution for the United States of America*.
Center for Civic Education, 1987.

How Did the Framers Create the Constitution?

The U.S. Constitution was written at a convention held in Philadelphia in 1787. The following describes the idea of a constitutional convention, how the Philadelphia Convention came to be, some of the most important people who attended it, and some of the first steps they took to create our present Constitution.

What Attempts Were Made to Solve the Problems of the Articles of Confederation?

Many political leaders, including Alexander Hamilton and James Madison, were dissatisfied with the government under the Articles of Confederation. They claimed the government was inadequate for meeting the problems of the United States.

A number of prominent leaders suggested holding a meeting of representatives of all the states. This idea of holding a special meeting, or convention, to discuss constitutional changes, instead of using the legislature, was an American invention. Most of the early state constitutions had been written by state legislatures. In 1780, Massachusetts became the first state to hold a constitutional convention.

By 1786, Madison and other leaders decided that if a convention could be used successfully in a state, it was worth trying at the national level.

In 1786, a meeting to discuss commercial problems was held in Annapolis, Maryland. Only five states sent representatives. Disappointed at the low turnout, Hamilton, Madison, and others wrote a report asking Congress to call a meeting in Philadelphia to suggest ways to change the Articles of Confederation to strengthen the national government. Congress did so after a delay of several months. Delegates to the Philadelphia Convention were authorized only to propose amendments to the Articles, not to develop an entirely new constitution, which is exactly what they did.

Who Attended the Philadelphia Convention?

Fifty-five delegates attended the meeting that later became known as the Philadelphia Convention. This group of men are now often called the Framers of the Constitution. Most of the delegates were fairly young: the average age was forty-two. About three-fourths of them had served in Congress. Most were prominent in their states, and some had played important parts in the American Revolution. Some delegates were wealthy, but most were not. A French diplomat in America at the time said that the Framers “without being rich are all in easy circumstances.”

Contemporary observers were impressed by the quality of the delegates to the Philadelphia Convention. Another French diplomat stationed in America observed that never before, “even in Europe,” had there been “an assembly more respectable for talents, knowledge, disinterestedness, and patriotism.” From Paris, Thomas Jefferson wrote to John Adams in London that the convention “is an assembly of demigods.”

We should remember, however, that some of the Framers were men of modest abilities or questionable motives. Probably the most balanced view of the men at Philadelphia has been given by Max Farrand, a historian, who wrote the following:

Great men there were, it is true, but the convention as a whole was composed of men such as would be appointed to a similar gathering at the present time: professional men, business men, and gentlemen of leisure; patriotic statesmen and clever, scheming politicians; some trained by experience and study for the task before them; and others utterly unfit. It was essentially a representative body.

Most of the Framers' stories are worth telling in detail. The following two are of particular importance.

George Washington George Washington was probably the most respected and honored man in the country. During the Revolutionary War, he left Mount Vernon, his Virginia plantation, to lead the American army to victory over the British. When the war was over, Washington returned to private life. Although convinced of the necessity for a strong national government, he was not interested in holding public office.

At first, Washington refused the invitation to attend the Philadelphia Convention. He later agreed to be a delegate from Virginia, fearing that if he did not attend, people might think he had lost his faith in republican government. Washington was unanimously elected president of the convention, although he was not active in the debates. His presence and support of the

Constitution, together with the widespread assumption that he would be the nation's first president, were essential to the Constitution's ratification by the states.

James Madison Of all the Framers, James Madison probably had the greatest influence on the organization of the national government. Born in 1751, Madison was one of the youngest of the revolutionary leaders, and by 1787 his talents had long been recognized and admired. In 1776, at the age of twenty-five, Madison was elected to the Virginia convention, where he was named to a committee to frame the state constitution. There, he first displayed his lifelong commitment to freedom of religion. Madison was instrumental in persuading George Mason, author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights, to change the clause that guaranteed "toleration" of religion to one that secured its "free exercise."

As a leader in Virginia politics and a member of the Confederation Congress, Madison was active in the 1780s in support of a stronger national government. His influence at the Philadelphia Convention was great, in part because he brought with him a plan he had already developed for creating a new national government—the Virginia Plan. After much debate over alternatives, this plan was used as the basis for discussion on improving the national government.

Had it not been for Madison, we probably would not know much about what happened during the convention. The Framers had decided to keep the discussions a secret, although delegates were free to take notes. Madison attended nearly every session and kept careful notes. Much of what we know today about what happened in the convention is based on his records.

After the convention, Madison collaborated with Alexander Hamilton and John Jay to write a defense of the new Constitution. This defense was a series of eighty-five articles written for newspapers in New York. In 1788, the articles were collected in a book titled *The Federalist*. The articles urged citizens of New York to vote for delegates to the state ratifying convention who were favorable to the Constitution. *The Federalist* is probably the most important work written on the basic principles and ideas underlying our constitutional government.

What Other Important Delegates Attended?

In addition to Washington and Madison, the delegates included many other prominent men. Benjamin Franklin was eighty-one and in poor health, but because he was internationally respected, his mere presence lent an aura of wisdom to the convention. Alexander Hamilton, although one of the strongest supporters of a strong national government, was outvoted within his own state delegation and left in frustration before the convention was half over. He returned for a few days and signed the completed document in September. Hamilton later played a major role in the struggle over ratification, as a principal author of *The Federalist* and as the leader of pro-Constitution forces in New York. James Wilson, although not as well known as Madison or Hamilton, was also a major influence in shaping the theory of the Constitution. Later, Wilson led the Federalist forces in Pennsylvania. In 1789, President Washington appointed him to be a justice of the Supreme Court.

Besides Madison and Wilson, the delegate who spoke most frequently at the convention was

Gouverneur Morris of Pennsylvania. Edmund Randolph, who as Governor of Virginia was officially the head of the Virginia delegation, introduced the Virginia Plan to the convention. Randolph, however, refused to sign the completed document. Roger Sherman of Connecticut was instrumental in forging the Connecticut Compromise on representation in Congress. George Mason, author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights, believed that the national constitution also should contain explicit guarantees of fundamental rights. Like Randolph, he did not sign the Constitution. Elbridge Gerry, who also refused to sign the Constitution, later led the forces against ratification in Massachusetts. Later still, he served as vice president under President James Madison.

What Important Founders Did Not Attend the Convention?

There also were some important political leaders who did not attend the Constitutional Convention.

Thomas Jefferson was in Paris as the U.S. ambassador to France. John Adams, who was recognized as a leading American political thinker, was serving as U.S. ambassador to Great Britain. Adams had been a principal architect of the Massachusetts constitution of 1780. The first volume of his *Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America* had also appeared in early 1787.

Patrick Henry, the revolutionary leader, refused to attend the Philadelphia Convention. He was against the development of a strong national government and was suspicious of what might happen at the convention. He supposedly said, "I smell a rat" to explain why he would not attend the Convention.

Other leaders not present at Philadelphia included John Hancock, Samuel Adams, and Richard Henry Lee. Besides these prominent individuals, one state—Rhode Island—refused to be represented at the convention.

What Happened When the Convention Began?

By Friday, May 25, 1787, eleven days after the convention was scheduled to begin, delegations from a majority of the states were present in Philadelphia. George Washington was unanimously elected president of the convention, and a committee was appointed to draw up the rules for the meeting.

The delegates agreed that each state would have one vote at the convention, even though the delegations varied in size. They also agreed that a member could not be absent from the convention without permission if his absence would deprive his state of its vote. In addition, delegates adopted a rule making it possible to reconsider issues freely. This way no decision had to be permanent until the entire plan was completed.

The Framers decided that what was said in the convention should be kept secret. There were two reasons for this.

- The Framers wanted to develop the best constitution they could. This required a free exchange of ideas. They were afraid that if their debates were made public, many of the delegates would not feel free to express their real opinions.
- The Framers also thought the new constitution would have a greater chance of being accepted if people did not know

about the arguments that went on while it was being created.

Once the rules were agreed on, the convention got to work. Almost immediately, the Framers decided to ignore their instructions from Congress to limit their work to amending the Articles of Confederation. Instead, they voted to work on the development of an entirely new constitution.

Source: *We the People: The Citizen & the Constitution*, Level 3, Lesson 11, "Who Attended the Philadelphia Convention? What Did They Agree to Do?" Center for Civic Education, 1995.

MATCHING GAME CLIP ART



THE WHITE HOUSE

THE WHITE HOUSE



SIGNING THE CONSTITUTION

SIGNING THE CONSTITUTION

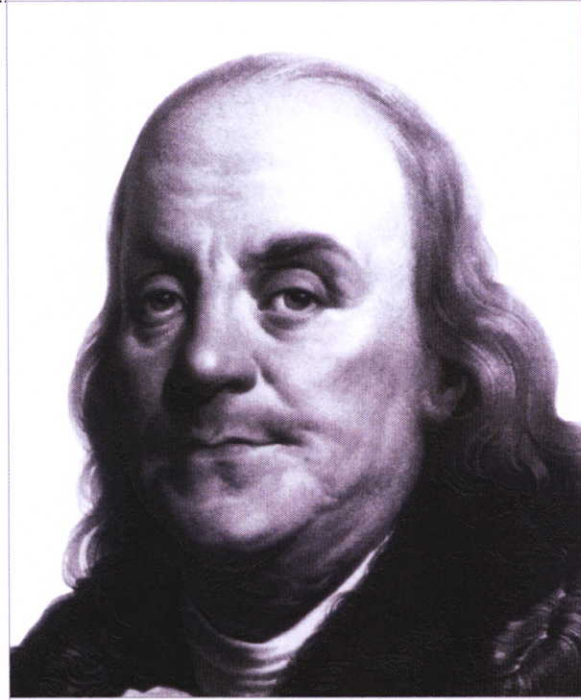
MATCHING GAME CLIP ART



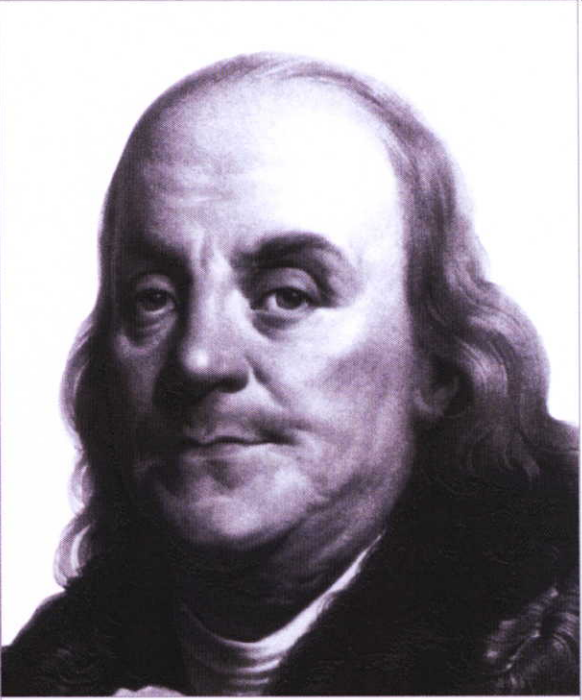
COURTS



COURTS

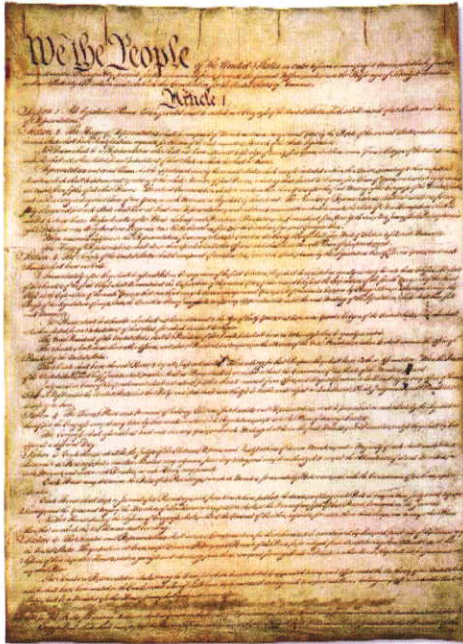


BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

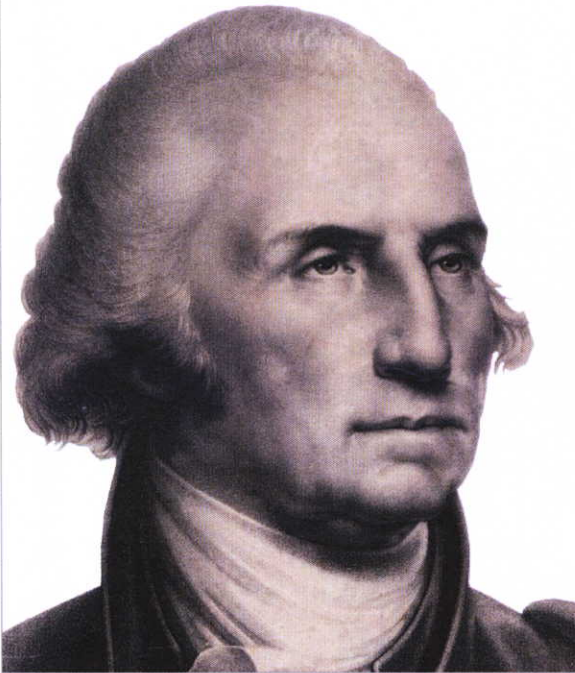
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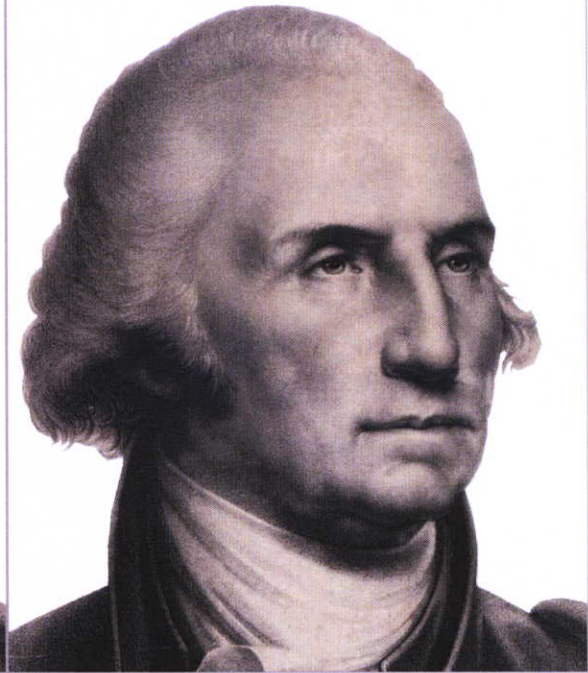
THE CONSTITUTION



THE CONSTITUTION



GEORGE WASHINGTON



GEORGE WASHINGTON

MATCHING GAME CLIP ART

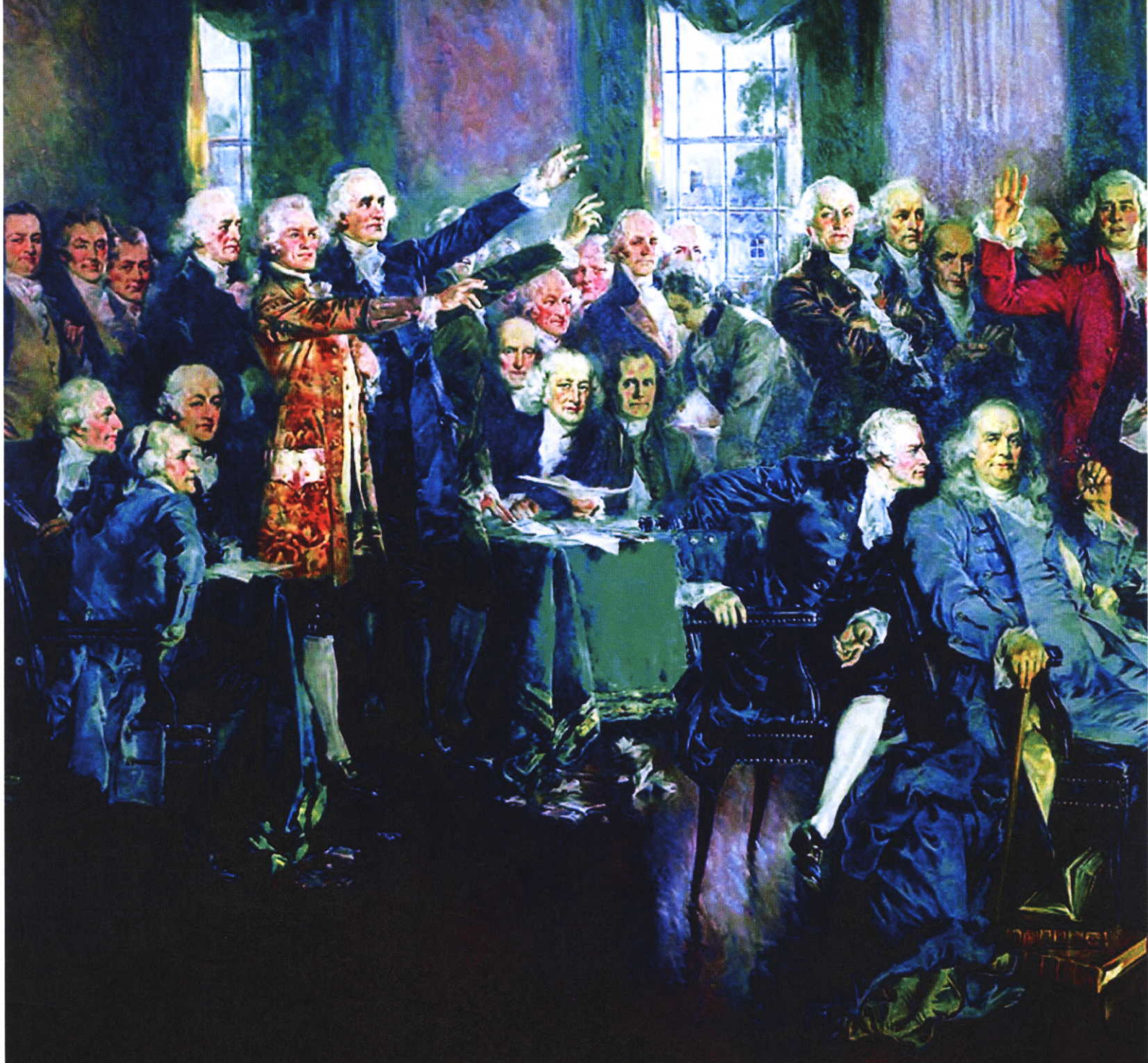


THE AMERICAN FLAG



THE AMERICAN FLAG

The Constitution: The Country's Rules



OBJECTIVES

Students will develop an awareness of the Constitution by exploring what it is and why it is important.

TERMS TO KNOW + IDENTIFY

citizens

Congress

Constitution

Framers

judges

laws

president

rights

rules

MATERIALS

- 1 Classroom rules poster
- 2 "The Constitution Poem" (page 12)
- 3 Images of the following. These can be taken from any magazine or newspaper or downloaded and printed from the Internet.
 - U.S. Constitution (page 8)
 - President of the United States
 - A multicultural group of people of different ages
 - Congress in session
 - Supreme Court or a judge
 - The signing of the U.S. Constitution (pages 2 and 3)

- 4 Drawing paper
- 5 Pencils
- 6 Crayons
- 7 Paper towels
- 8 Pretzels with three sections
- 9 Red, white, and blue glitter
- 10 Glue
- 11 Gold ribbon or string
- 12 Recording of a patriotic song or two

PROCEDURE

By now, your classroom is up and running, and your classroom rules have been established with the help of your students.

- 1 Display your classroom rules poster. Take a few minutes to review how and why your class rules were developed. Remind students that the class made rules so that everyone could be safe, learn, and have fun. Tell students that our country also made rules, called laws, so people could be safe and free.
- 2 Show the image of the U.S. Constitution. Identify the document, and tell students the Constitution is the law, or rules, of the United States. The Constitution was written over two hundred years ago and signed on September 17, 1787.
- 3 Display the other images listed in the materials section. Read "The Constitution Poem" and point to the displayed prints as they are mentioned in the poem.

After reading the poem, you may want to go back and add details. For example:

- **Job of the president**—to enforce the laws
- **Job of Congress**—to make the laws
- **Job of the judge**—to decide what the laws means when there are questions

Explain to students how these jobs represent the three branches of government described in the Constitution. Tell students how important it is for all the branches to work together to create, enforce, and follow the law of the United States.

- 4 Ask students: “What are rights?” Have students share what they think rights are. Tell students that rights are what people have just because they are alive. Help students identify the protection of rights as one of the most important ways that the Constitution protects us, the citizens.

Tell students that the Constitution protects important ideas. For example, it lets you think for yourself, keeps you safe, and lets you gather with your friends and talk.

- 5 Identify some of the authors, or Framers, of the Constitution such as George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and James Madison (see pages 9–11).
- 6 Encourage students to read with you as you reread the poem.
- 7 Sing or listen to one of your favorite patriotic songs, or play the songs softly in the background as the students draw the picture described in procedure 8.

- 8 Have each student draw a picture of himself or herself following a school or neighborhood rule. The illustration should include a label or caption telling about the picture.

- 9 As students are drawing their pictures, work with small groups of children to make a Constitution necklace.

Each student will need a labeled paper towel. Place a pretzel on the towel. Put glue on the pretzel. Each ring of the pretzel will be covered with a different color of glitter: one red, one white, and one blue to represent the three branches of government. After the pretzels dry, loop an appropriate length of gold ribbon or string through each pretzel and tie to create a necklace.

Students can wear their Constitution necklaces as they share their illustrations showing good citizen behavior with the class.

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

The following content is provided as teacher background for the lesson on the Constitution.

What Is a Constitution?

A constitution is a set of fundamental customs, traditions, rules, and laws that set forth the basic way a government is organized and operated. Most constitutions are in writing, some are partly written and partly unwritten, and some are not written at all.

If you study the constitution of a government, you will be able to answer the following questions about the relationship between the government and its citizens.

Government

- What are the purposes of the government?
- How is the government organized?
- How is the government supposed to go about doing its business?

Citizens

- Who is a citizen?
- Do citizens have any power or control over the government? If so, how do citizens exercise their powers?
- What rights and responsibilities do citizens have?

By this definition of a constitution, nearly every nation has a constitution. Good governments and bad governments have constitutions. Some of the worst governments have constitutions that include lists of the basic rights of their citizens. A list of rights does not mean that the citizens actually enjoy those rights.

What Is a Constitutional Government?

Having a constitution does not mean that a nation has a constitutional government. If, for example, a constitution provides for the unlimited exercise of political power by one, a few, or many, it would not be the basis for a constitutional government. If a constitution says that power is to be limited, but it does not include ways to enforce those limitations, it also is not the basis for a constitutional government.

The principles of constitutional and limited governments are intertwined. Limited governments are characterized by restraints on power, such as laws that both the rulers and the governed must obey, and free and periodic elections. The opposite is unlimited government, in which those who govern are free to use their power as they choose, unrestrained by laws or elections. Aristotle described unlimited government as tyranny. Today the terms *autocracy*, *dictatorship*, or *totalitarianism* frequently are used to describe such governments.

What Are the Characteristics of the Higher Law?

In a constitutional government, the constitution, or higher law, has the following characteristics:

- It sets forth the basic rights of citizens.
- It establishes the responsibility of the government to protect those rights.
- It establishes limitations on how those in government may use their powers with regard to citizens' rights and responsibilities, the distribution of resources, and the control of conflict.
- It can be changed only with the widespread consent of the citizens and according to established and well-known procedures.

Constitution for the United States of America.
Center for Civic Education, 1987.

What Are Rights?

Rights are moral or legal claims justified in ways that are generally accepted within a society or the international community.

Where Do Rights Come From, and How Do They Relate to One Another?

Rights set individuals or groups apart from each other and entitle them to be treated in a particular way. Most Americans think about their place in society and the world in terms of their rights. However, rights are complicated.

Who May Hold Rights?

Rights may be held by individuals, classes or categories of individuals, or institutions.

- **Individuals** The idea that individuals can hold rights reflects the belief that humans should be considered autonomous and self-governing. This includes the belief that each individual should possess certain fundamental rights, such as those to freedom of thought and conscience, privacy, and movement. The emphasis on the rights of individuals is reflected in natural rights philosophy and exemplified in the Declaration of Independence by the statement 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.”
- **Classes or categories of individuals** These commonly are created by constitutions and statutes and provide a basis for treating categories of people differently. For example, the United States Constitution protects the right of persons eighteen years of age or older to vote. By the laws of several states, only people who have joined a political party can participate in that party’s primary, or nominating, elections.

- **Institutions** Institutions such as schools; government institutions at the local, state, and national levels; unions; universities; business partnerships; and corporations also hold certain rights.

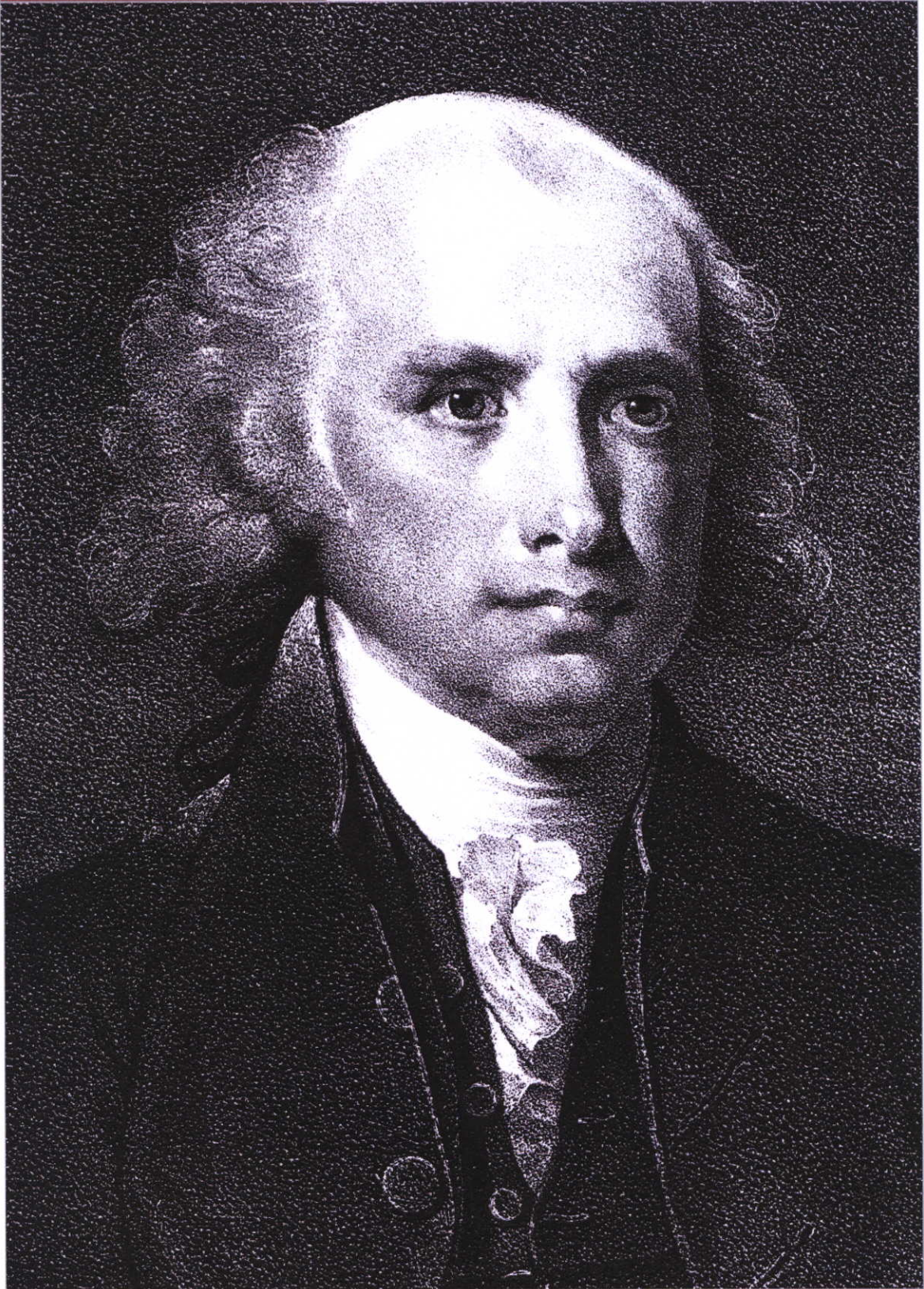
What Are the Common Categories of Rights?

- **Personal rights** These relate to individual autonomy, including freedom of thought and conscience, privacy, and movement. The idea that human beings are autonomous, self-governing individuals with fundamental rights is central to the natural rights philosophy of John Locke. The rights of life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness are said to come from God or nature. The purpose of government is to protect those rights.
- **Political rights** These rights address political participation and also are granted by the Constitution or statutes. Examples are the right to vote and to engage in political activities, such as supporting particular candidates for office or running for office.
- **Economic rights** These include choosing the work one wants to do, acquiring and disposing of property, entering into contracts, creating and protecting intellectual property such as copyrights or patents, and joining labor unions or professional associations. Most economic rights trace to constitutions or statutes. Many people consider economic rights associated with property ownership to be personal rights as well.

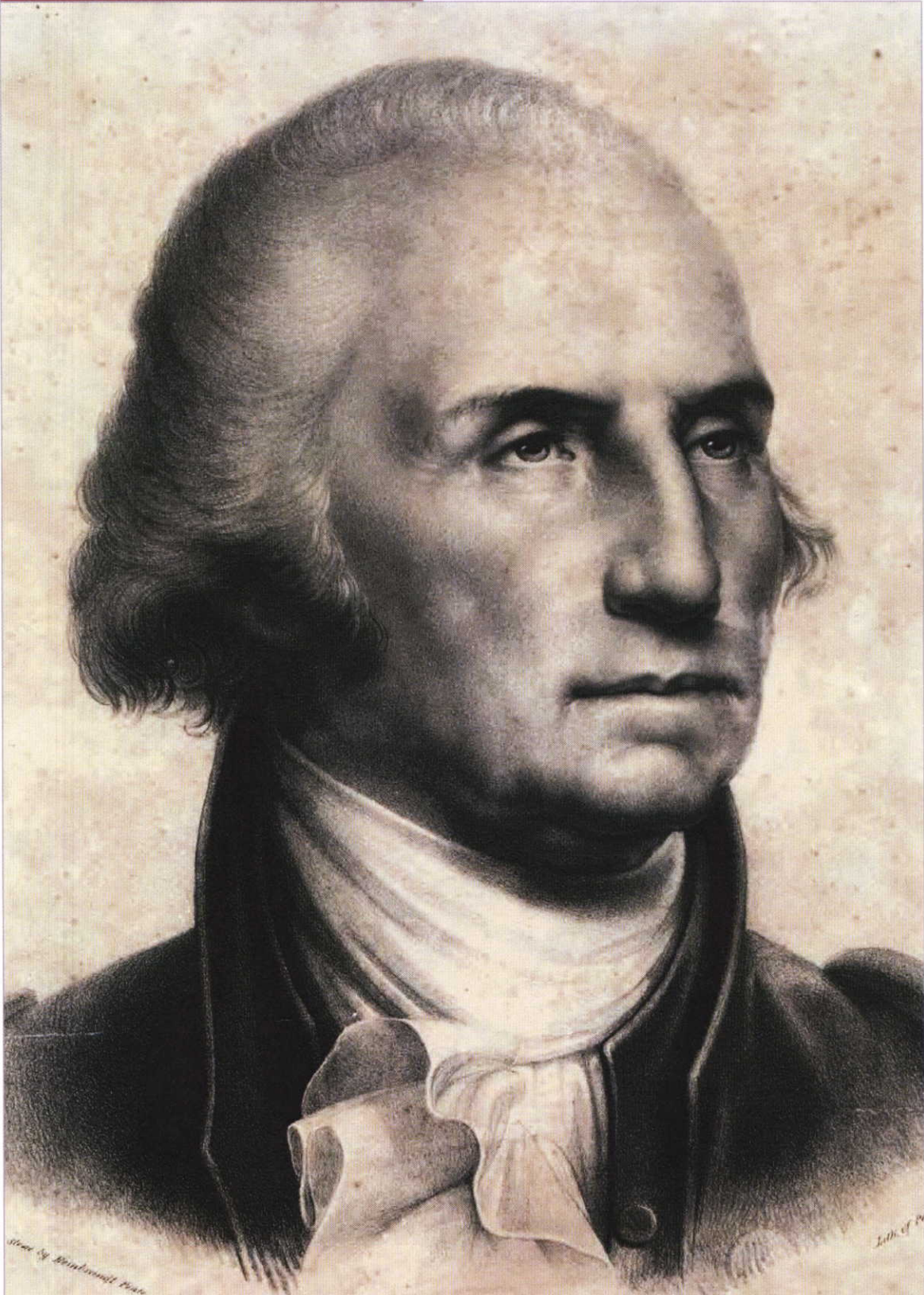
Source: *We the People: The Citizen & the Constitution*, Level 3. Center for Civic Education, 2008.



JAMES MADISON



GEORGE WASHINGTON



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



The Constitution Poem

By Teri Delich

The Constitution is the law,
The highest in the land.

And everyone in the U.S.A.
Is expected to obey.

The president, the Congress, and the judges too,
All have different jobs and know just what to do.

They all work together for the rights we share—
So we can be free and the rules be fair.

Now—
Put your hands together,
Shout a hip-hip-hooray
For the Framers of this law
On Constitution Day!

Signers of the Constitution

Preparation

Make a poster of the map titled “The 39 Signers of the Constitution of the United States” and post in the front of the room.

Glue the fact cards for each of the 39 signers individually on construction paper and laminate.

Directions

Give each student a fact card (several students can have more than one card depending on class size.)

Have the signers from each state come up to the front of the room as a group. One by one they introduce themselves as a signer and tell the class a few details about their accomplishments (from the fact card) and have them sign the map next to their state.

To debrief, have students make observations and comments about the signers (i.e. how many names did they recognize and why; what gender were all the signers and why; figure out the average age of the signers; who were the oldest and youngest signers; which states had the most/least signers.

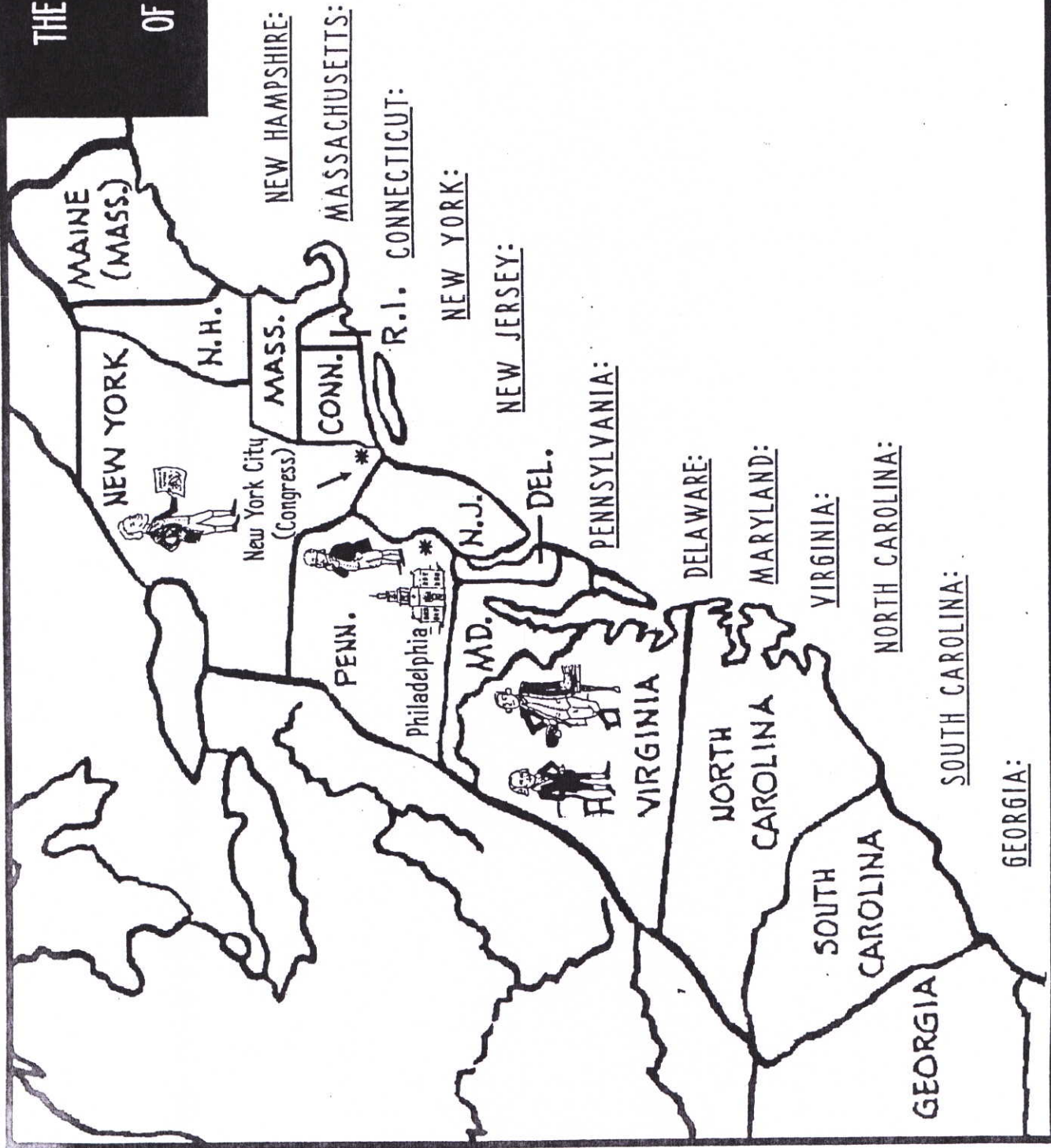
Notes

The fact cards/pictures are from <http://www.constitution.org/img/> so you may want to download better pictures or enlarge them.

More detailed information about the signers can be obtained from:

http://www.nps.gov/history/historyonline_boks/constitution/bio1.htm

THE 39 SIGNERS OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES



From: Adventure Tales of America
By Jody Potts, Ph.D.
ISBN # 0-9616677-4-5

Abraham Baldwin - Age 32

I am a delegate from Georgia, born in 1754 in Connecticut. Because I stayed at the Convention, Georgia was assured to have a quorum of its delegates present, and could vote.

Richard Bassett - Age 42

I am a delegate from Delaware, born in Maryland. I am a statesman, lawyer and farmer. I helped to establish the Methodist church in the United States. I attended all sessions of the Convention except August 6-14.

Gunning Bedford, Jr. – Age 40

I am a delegate from Delaware, born in 1747 in Philadelphia. I am a farmer by trade and I am the Attorney General of Delaware. At the Convention, I defended the interest of small states.

John Blair – Age 55

I am a delegate from Virginia. I was born in Virginia in 1732. At the Convention, my support of Washington and Madison provided the vital third vote needed for Virginia to approve the Constitution.

William Blount – Age 38

I am the delegate from North Carolina. I was born in 1749 in North Carolina. I am a land speculator and manufacturer. I had no major role in the Convention.

David Brearley – Age 42

I am the delegate from New Jersey. I was born in New Jersey in 1745. I am a Chief Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court. I am also the first delegate elected by any State to the Constitutional Convention.

Jacob Broom – Age 35

I am a delegate from Delaware, born in 1752 in Delaware. I attended every session at the Convention except for June 5-12. I support the small states' demand for equal representation and the election of the president by electors.

Pierce Butler – Age 43

I am a delegate from South Carolina, born in 1744 in Ireland. At the Convention I moved for rules to keep the proceedings secret. As a planter, I am a strong spokesman for Southern slaver-holders.

William Few – Age 39

I am a delegate from Georgia. I was born in Maryland in 1748. I served as one of Georgia's first U.S. Senators. I attended the sessions irregularly and did not have a major role in the Convention.

Daniel Carroll – Age 57

I am a delegate from Maryland. I was born in 1730 in Maryland. I am a planter and a businessman. I signed two historic documents—the Articles of Confederation and the U. S. Constitution. I oppose having the states pay members of Congress, and I also oppose giving the central government power to tax exports.

Jonathan Dayton – Age 26

I am a delegate from New Jersey, and I am the youngest person to sign the Constitution. I was born in 1760 in New Jersey. At the Convention my support is with the small states' demands for equal representation and opposition to slavery.

John Dickinson – Age 54

I am a delegate from Delaware, born in 1732 in Maryland. I support the balance between state and nation which characterizes our Federal system.

George Clymer – Age 48

I am a delegate from Pennsylvania. I was born in 1739 in Philadelphia. Because I was busy in the legislature, I took little part in the writing of the Constitution, but I am taking a more active role in the debates.

Thomas Fitzsimons – Age 46

I am a delegate from Pennsylvania. I was born in 1741 in Ireland. I am also the first Roman Catholic elected to public office in Pennsylvania. I served as a representative in the first U. S. Congress under the Constitution. I am considered an expert in foreign trade and shipping.

Benjamin Franklin – Age 81

I am a delegate from Pennsylvania and the oldest at the Convention. I was born in 1706 in Boston. I am a retired printer and expert statesman, and I am hosting the Convention. I remained active in the debates throughout the summer. I am the tension breaker and I lend stability to the Convention.

Nicholas Gilman – Age 32

I am a delegate from New Hampshire, born in New Hampshire in 1755. Politics is an important part of my life, but I didn't participate very much at the Convention since I did not arrive until July 23rd.

Nathaniel Gorham – Age 49

I am a delegate from Massachusetts, born in 1738 in Massachusetts. I am taking an important role in writing the Constitution. I am proposing staggered terms for Senators, and also proposing the appointment of judges by the President with the advice of the Senate.

Alexander Hamilton – Age 30 or 32

A delegate from New York I was born in either 1755 or 1757. I am a lawyer. Along with James Madison and John Jay, I wrote The Federalist Papers, which helped secure the ratification of the Constitution. I feel strongly about a strong centralized government.

Jared Ingersoll – Age 37

A delegate from Pennsylvania, I was born in 1749 in Connecticut. I am a prominent lawyer in Philadelphia, and considered the act of signing the Constitution “as a recommendation.”

Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer – Age 64

I am a delegate from Maryland, born in 1723 in Maryland. I am a planter and I gladly join my long-time friend, George Washington, in efforts to construct a stable national government.

John Langdon – Age 46

I am a delegate from New Hampshire, born in 1741 in New Hampshire. I am a shipbuilder, and I distinguished myself for patriotism, generosity, and liberalism, in more than 35 years of service to state and nation.

William Livingston – Age 63

I was born in New York in 1723 but I am a delegate from New Jersey. I am a lawyer and also the Governor of New Jersey. I am considered a hero of the Revolutionary War and I urge my state to early ratification.

William Samuel Johnson – Age 59

I was born in 1727 in Connecticut, and I am a delegate from Connecticut. I am one of the first U.S. Senators from Connecticut.

Rufus King – Age 32

I was born in 1755 in Maine, but I am a delegate from Massachusetts. I served in public office under the first six Presidents of the United States. During the Convention I speak frequently to clarify issues and propose common sense solutions.

Robert Morris – Age 53

I was born in England in 1734 and I am a delegate from Pennsylvania. I am one of only two men to sign the three most important documents of the Era—the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the U.S. Constitution. I nominated George Washington as President of the Convention, and I am hosting Washington in my home during the Convention.

Charles Pinckney – Age 29

I am a delegate from South Carolina where I was born in 1757. I am one of the youngest members at the Constitutional Convention. I support a strong central government.

Thomas Mifflin – Age 43

A delegate from Pennsylvania, I was born in 1744 in Philadelphia. I am a politician, farmer, and merchant. I attended the entire Convention, but I appear on the record only as seconding a motion.

Gouverneur Morris – Age 35

I am a delegate from Pennsylvania. I was born in 1752 in New York. I am an accomplished orator and writer, businessman and lawyer. I am the most frequent speaker at the Convention, and I wrote the Preamble and stylized the Constitution.

James Madison, Jr. – Age 36

I am a delegate from Virginia, born in Virginia in 1751. I am called the “Father of the Constitution” because I labored on the groundwork for the Constitutional Convention and helped win ratification. I am taking careful notes of the proceedings so future generations will know about the Convention.

James McHenry – Age 33

A delegate from Maryland, I was born in Ireland in 1753. I am not able to stay at the Convention the entire time due to my brother’s illness. Fort McHenry at Baltimore, where the “Star-Spangled Banner” was inspired, is named for me.

William Paterson – Age 41

I am a delegate from New Jersey, born in 1745 in Ireland. I am one of the main authors of the Constitution, and I serve as governor of New Jersey. I am a U.S. Senator and an associate justice of the Supreme Court.

Charles Cotesworth Pinckney – Age 41

I am a delegate from South Carolina and also a cousin to Charles Pinckney. I was born in 1746 in South Carolina. I am a lawyer and a planter, and I strongly oppose any provision which threatens slavery.

George Read – Age 54

Born in Maryland in 1733 I am a delegate from Delaware. I am one of six Founding Fathers who signed both the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution. I favor strong national government and I propose that the President be given the power to appoint members of the U.S. Senate.

John Rutledge – Age 48

I am a delegate from South Carolina where I was born in 1739. Along with my fellow South Carolinians, I favor a national government.

Roger Sherman – Age 66

I am a delegate from Connecticut, born in 1721 in Massachusetts. Along with Robert Morris, I signed the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the United States Constitution. I suggested the Connecticut compromise, and bring practical experience in government to the debates.

Richard Dobbs Spaight, Sr. – Age 29

I am a delegate from North Carolina where I was born in 1758. I am a planter and I attended the Convention from beginning to end, which enabled North Carolina to keep its vote. I am one of three Founding Fathers who dueled over politics. (I died as result.)

Hugh Williamson – Age 51

I am a delegate from North Carolina but I was born in Pennsylvania in 1735. I am well educated—a minister, professor, physician, astronomer, merchant, and legislator. I am an active participant in the Convention, speaking up for representation based on population.

James Wilson – Age 45

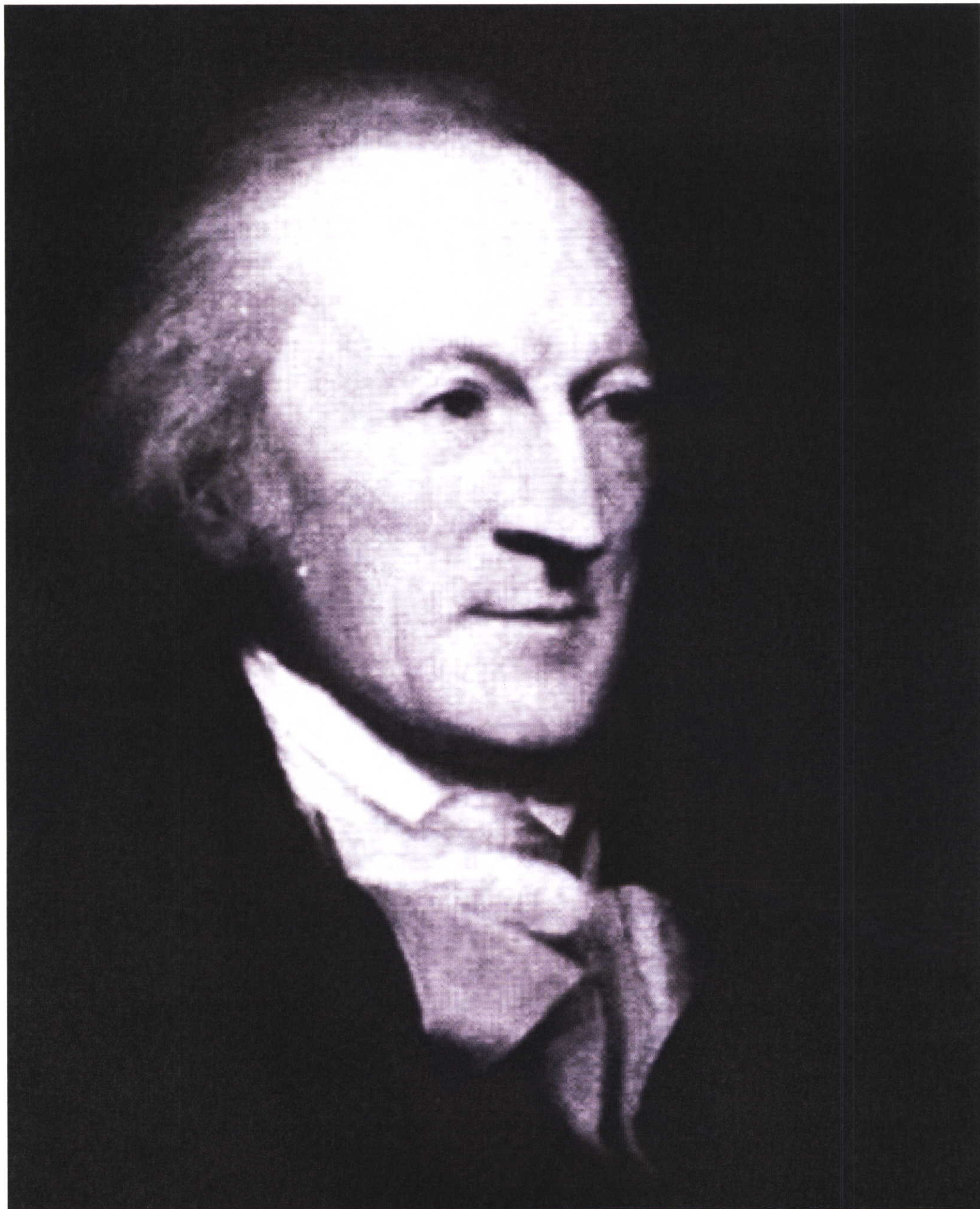
I am a delegate from Pennsylvania, born in 1742 in Scotland. I am regarded as the leading lawyer of Philadelphia. I am one of the hardest-working and most vocal delegates to the Convention. I firmly speak for the rights of the people to elect members of Congress and the President.

George Washington - Age 55

I was born in 1732 in Virginia. I am a delegate from Virginia and the President of the Convention. By trade, I am a farmer. I stand as the man most responsible for the founding of freedom in the United States. I worked against great odds to win independence from Great Britain, then pulled quarreling states together into a permanent union under the Constitution. I was the first President of the United States. I am considered a hero by the examples I set throughout my life.



Abraham Baldwin



George Clymer



Daniel Carroll



Pierce Butler.

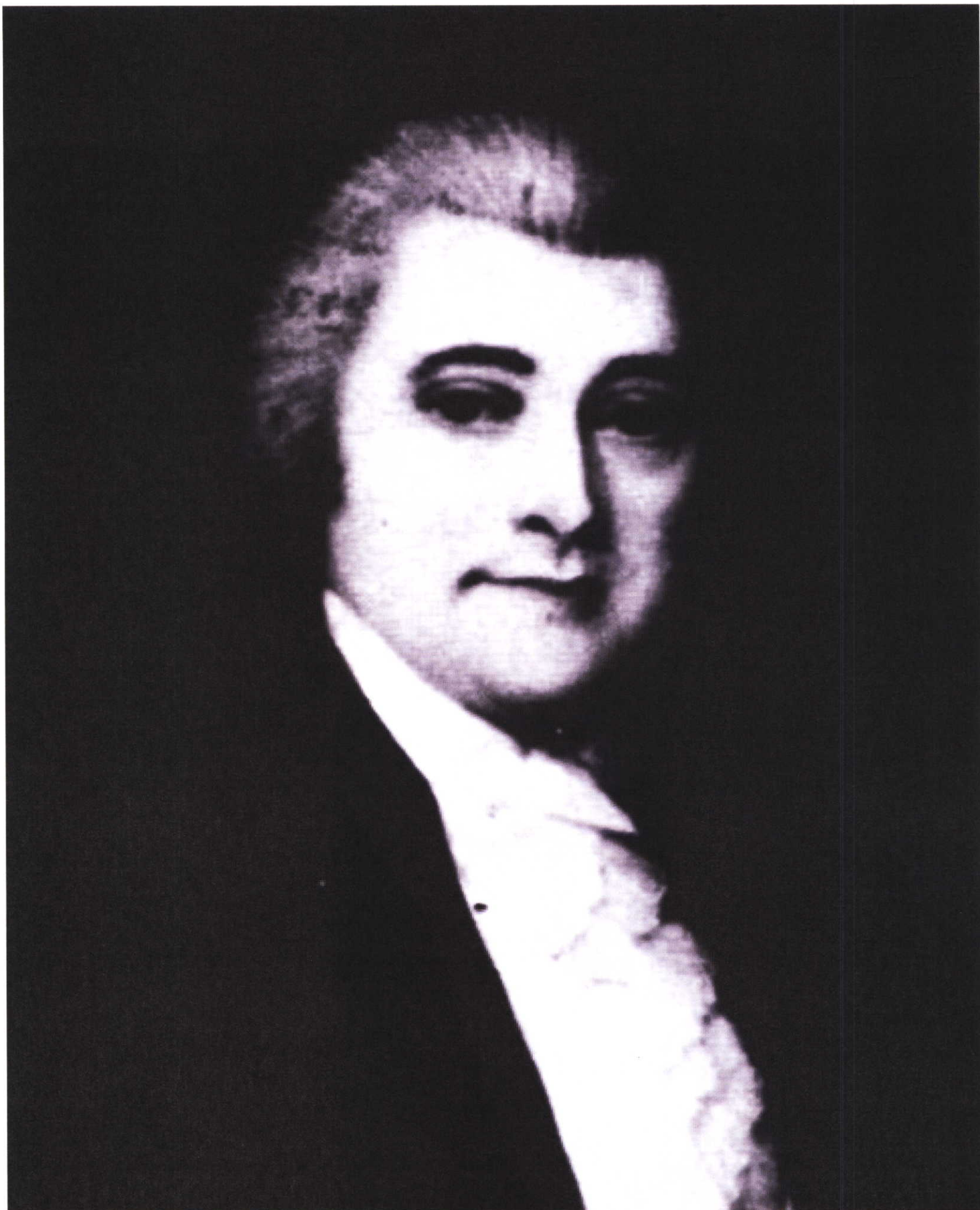
Jacob Broom

No Known
Portrait

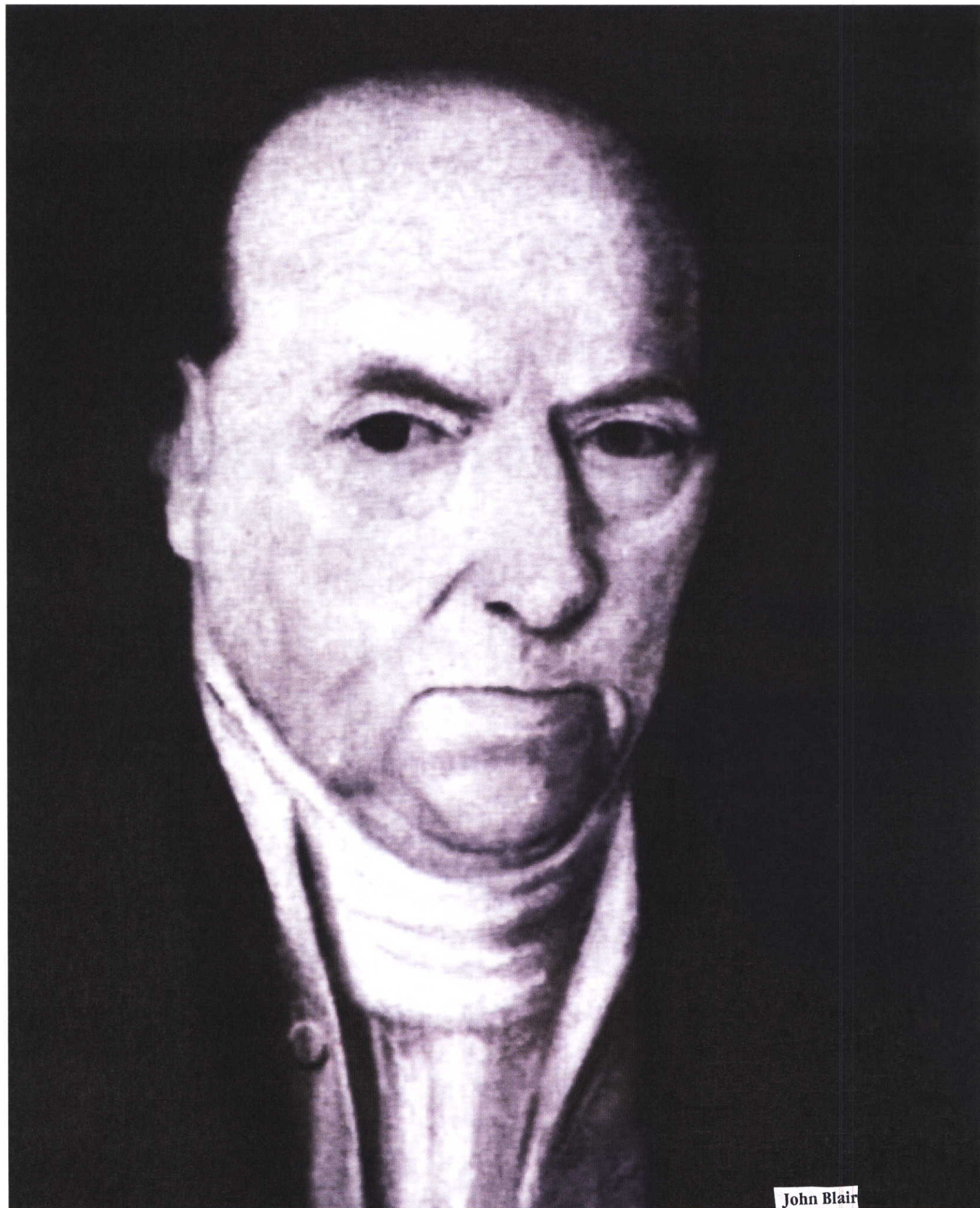
Jacob Broom



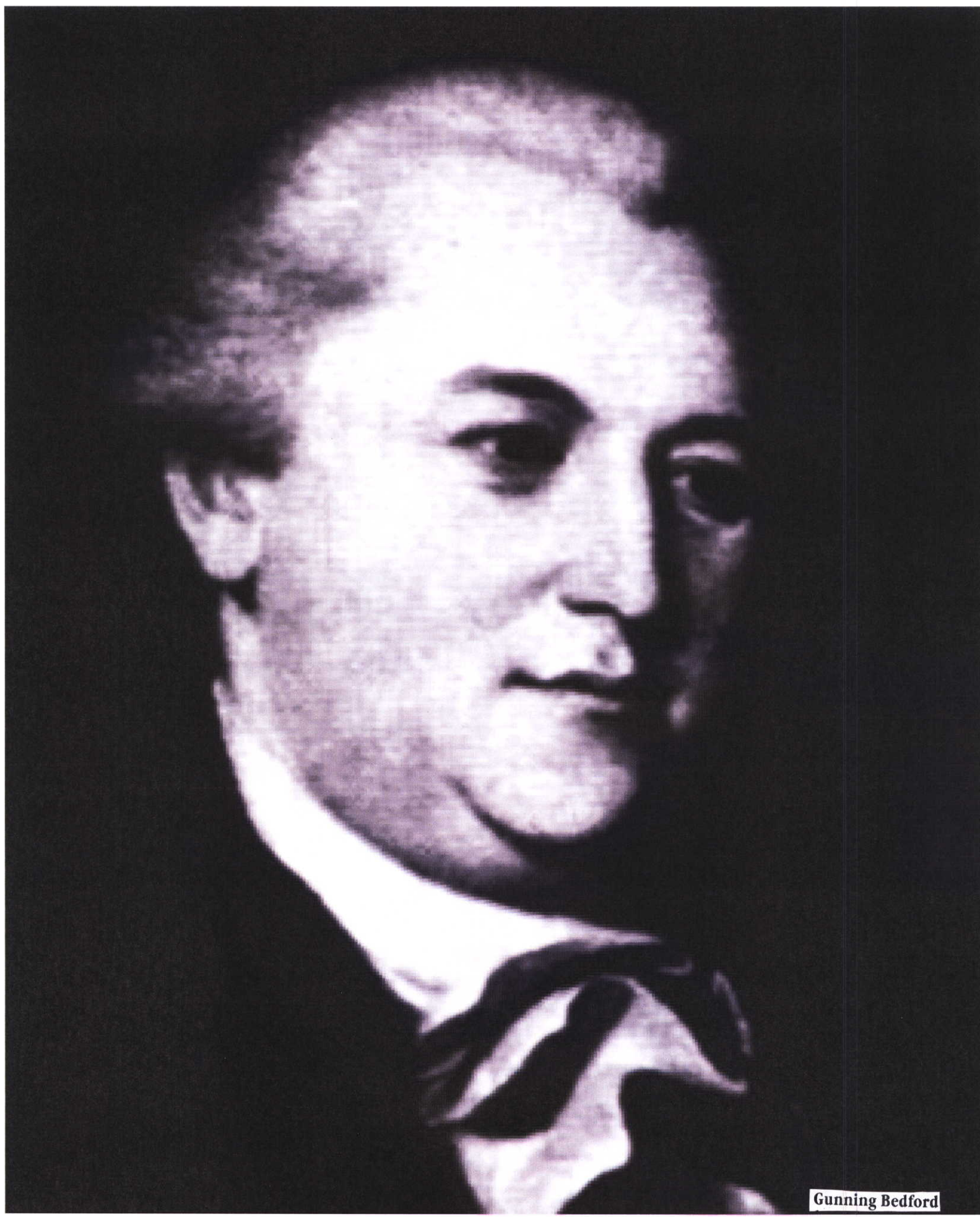
David Brearley



William Blount



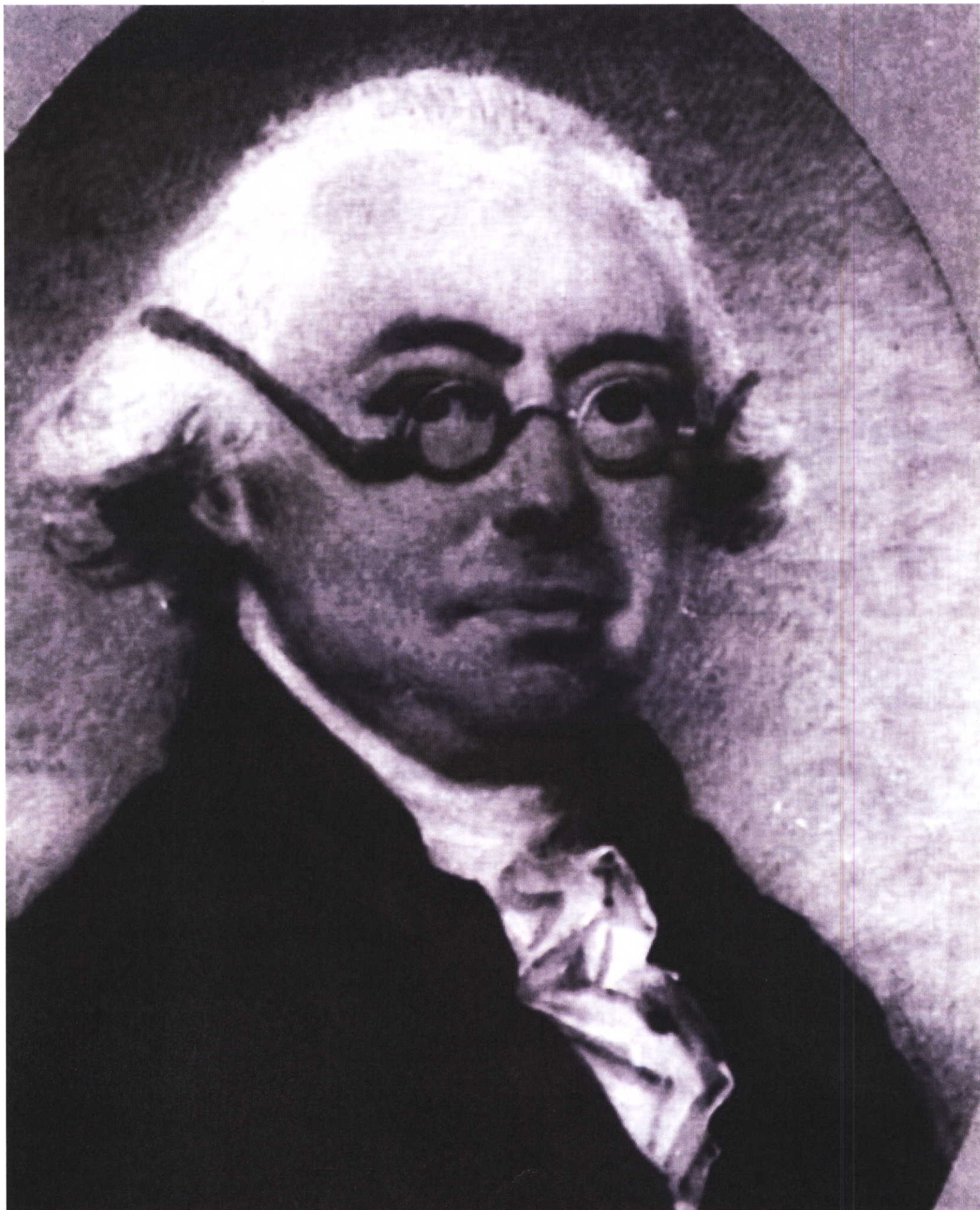
John Blair



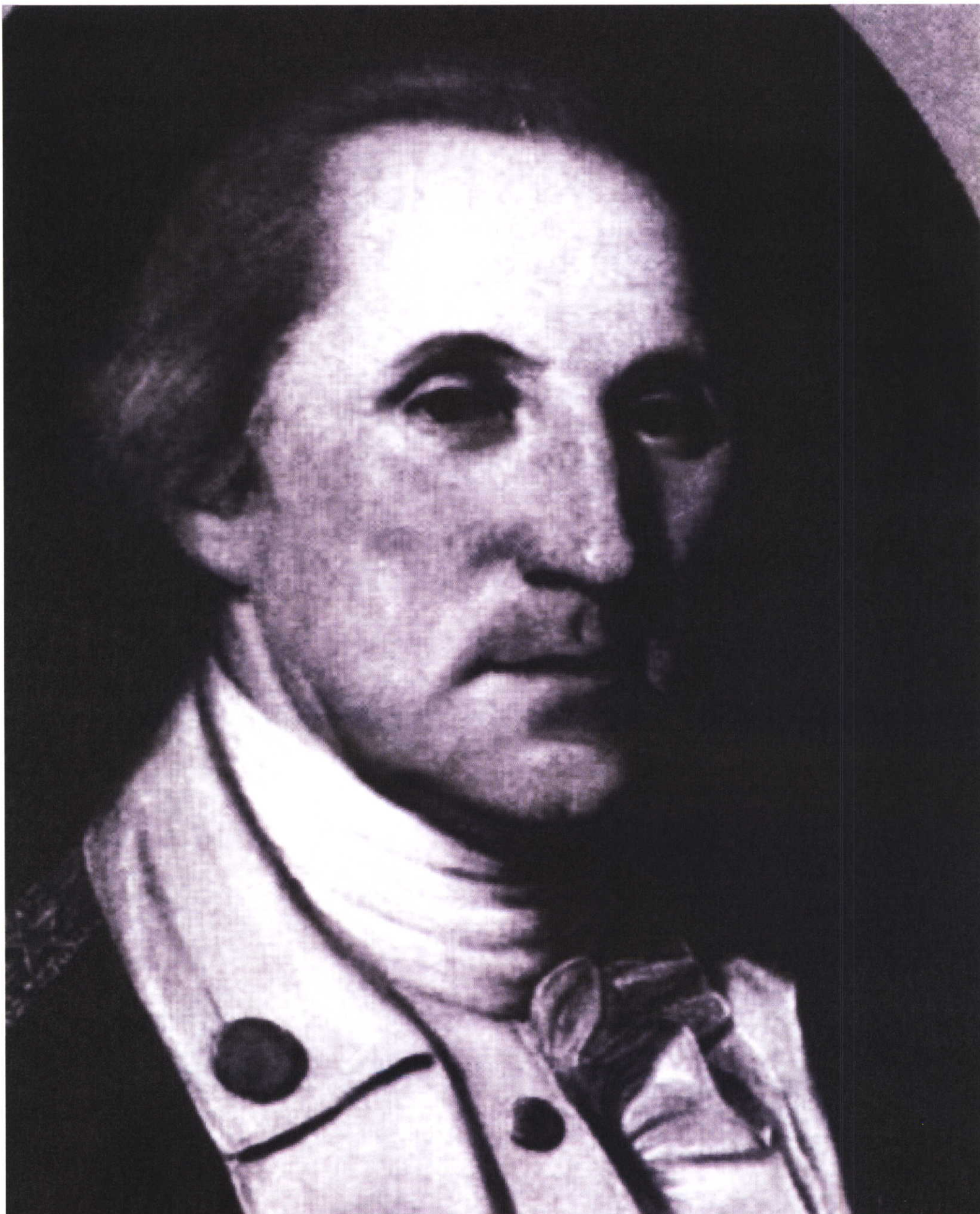
Gunning Bedford



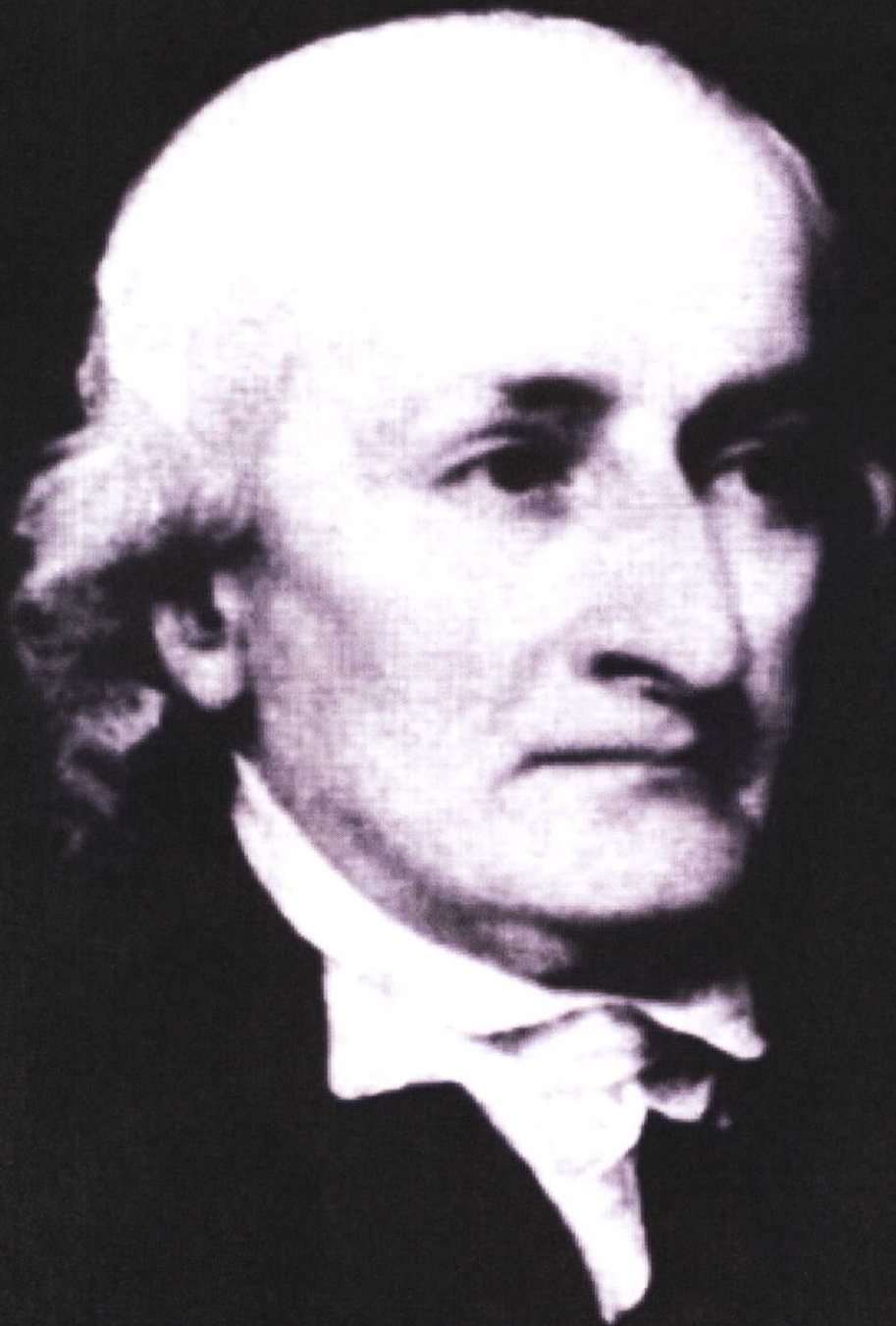
Richard Bassett



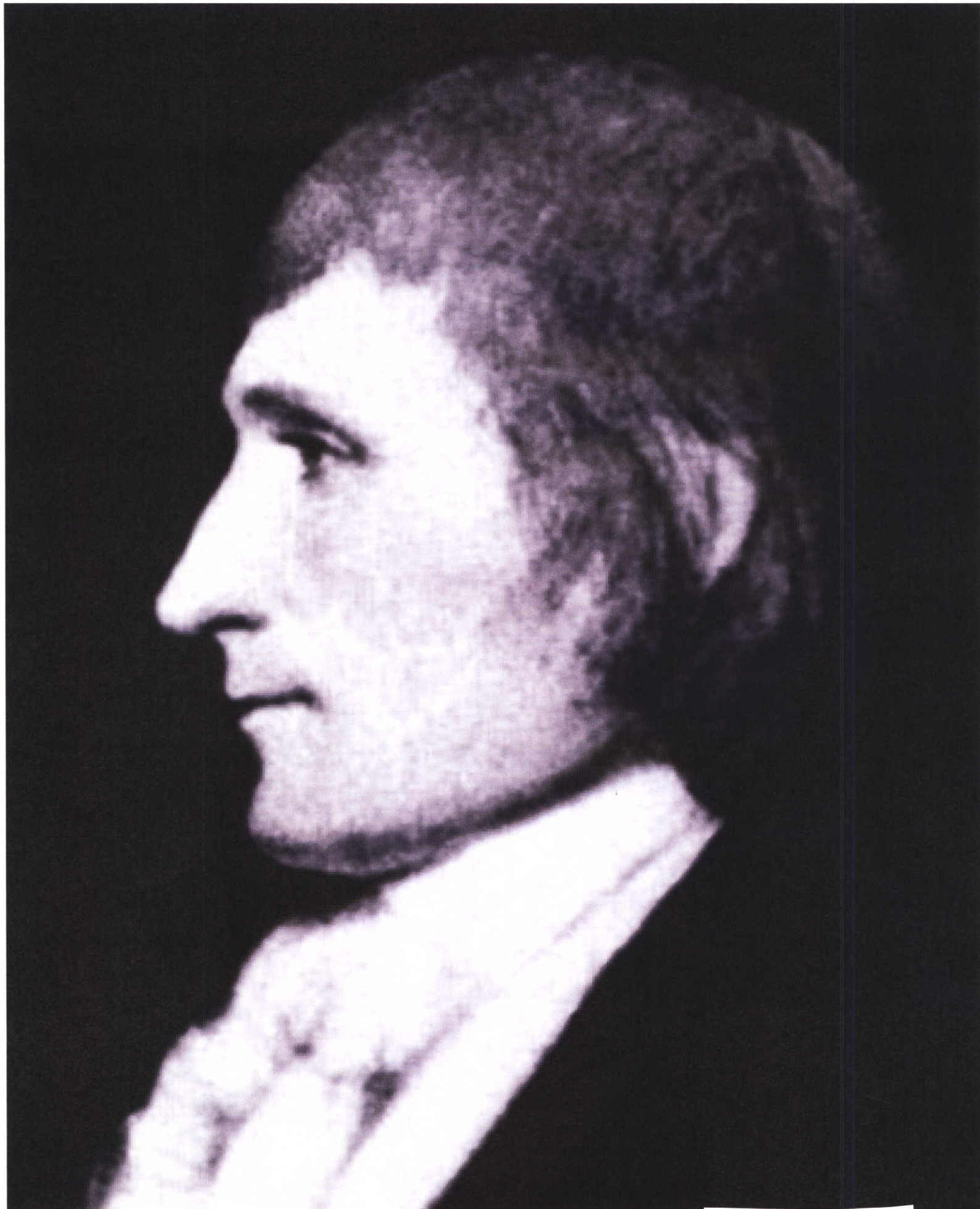
James Wilson



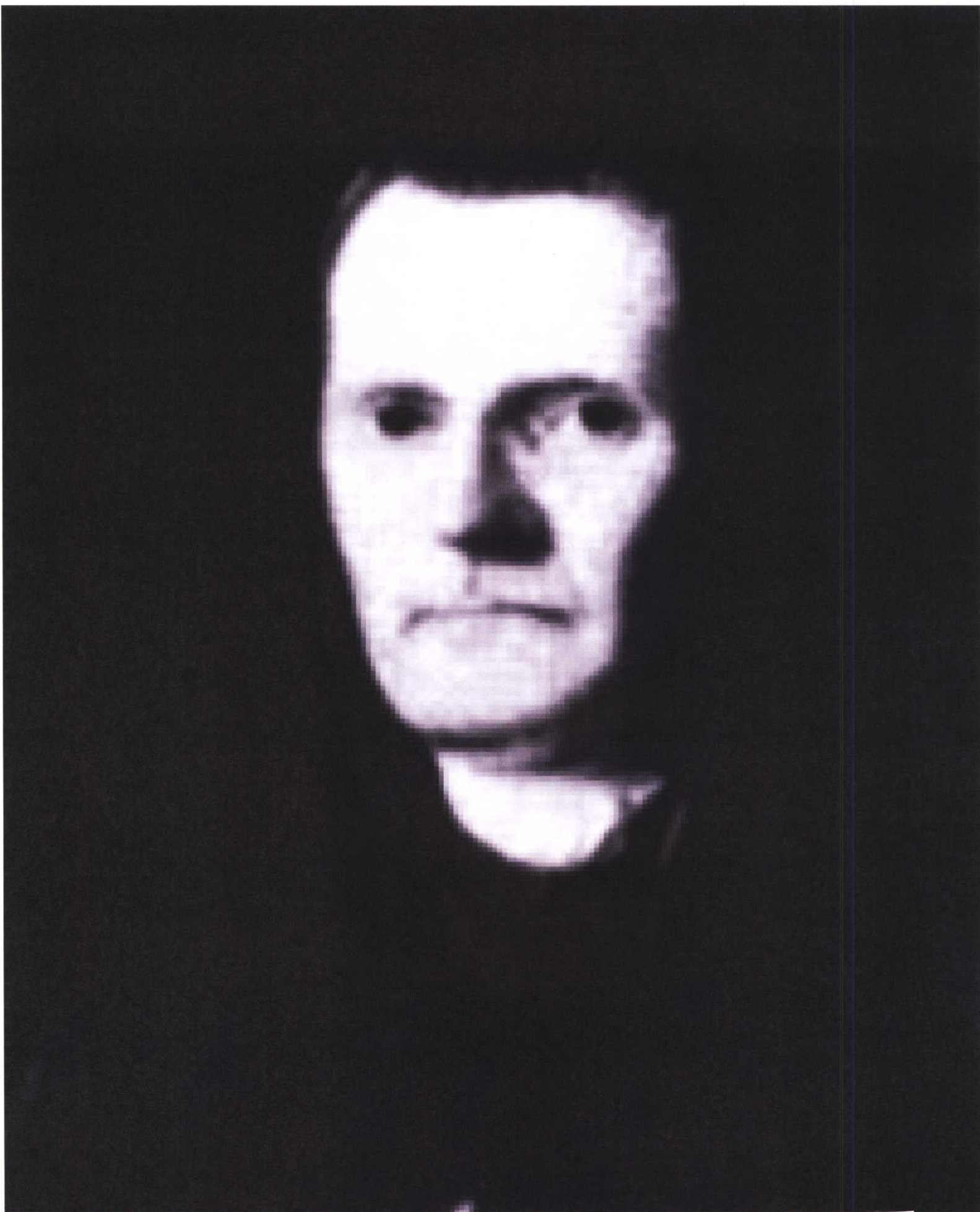
George Washington



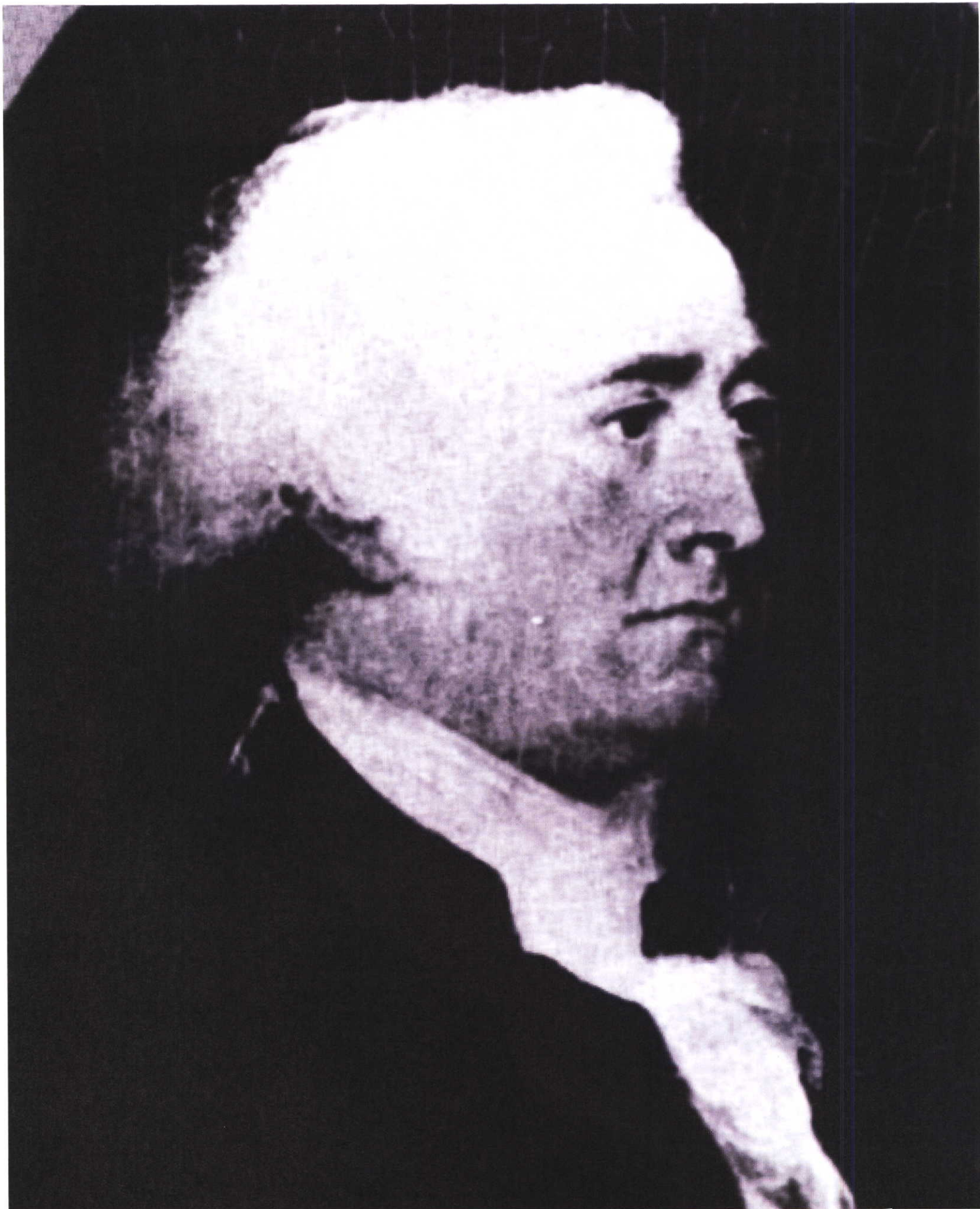
Hugh Williamson



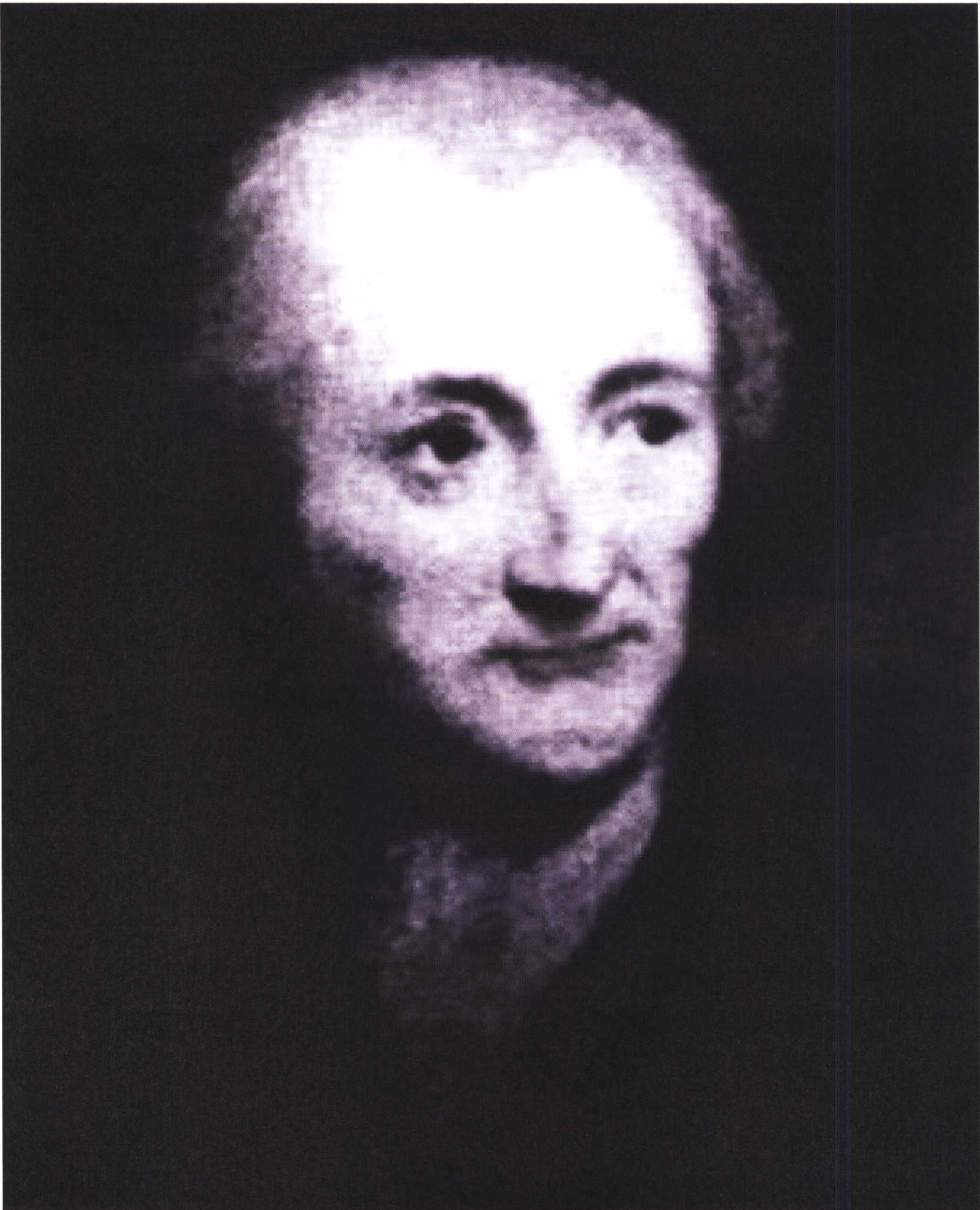
Richard Dobbs Spaight, Sr.



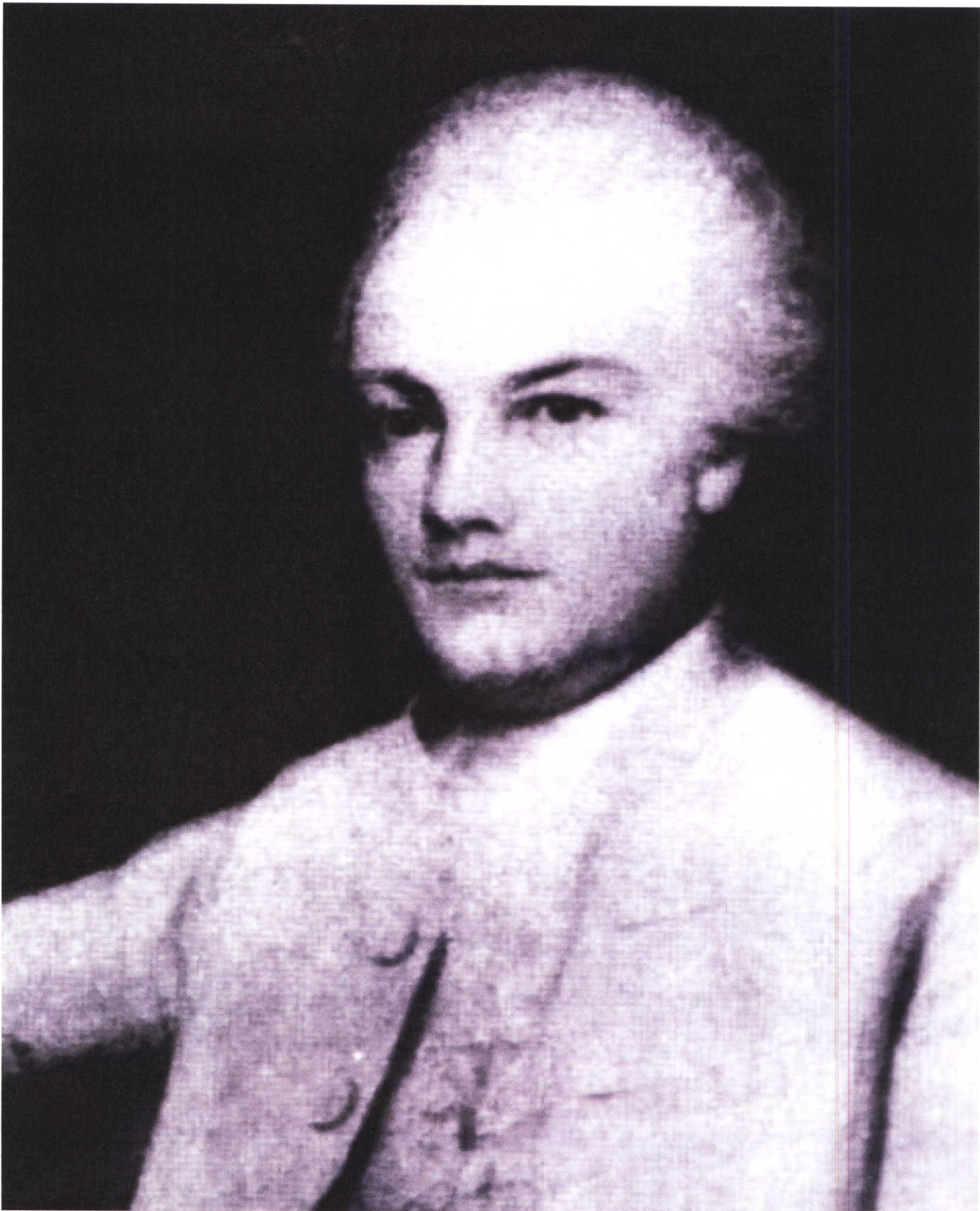
Roger Sher



John Rutledge



George Read



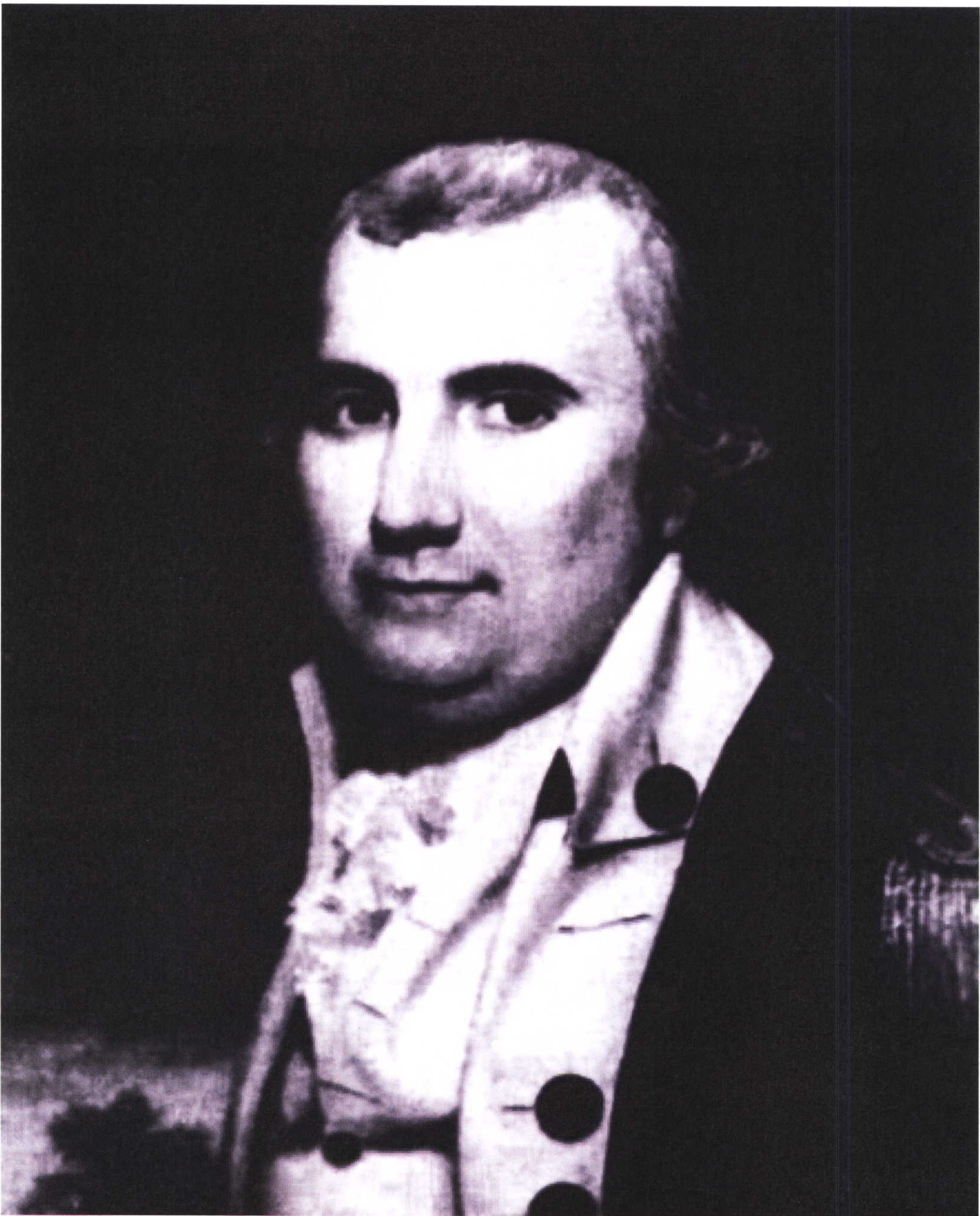
Charles Pinckney



William Paterson



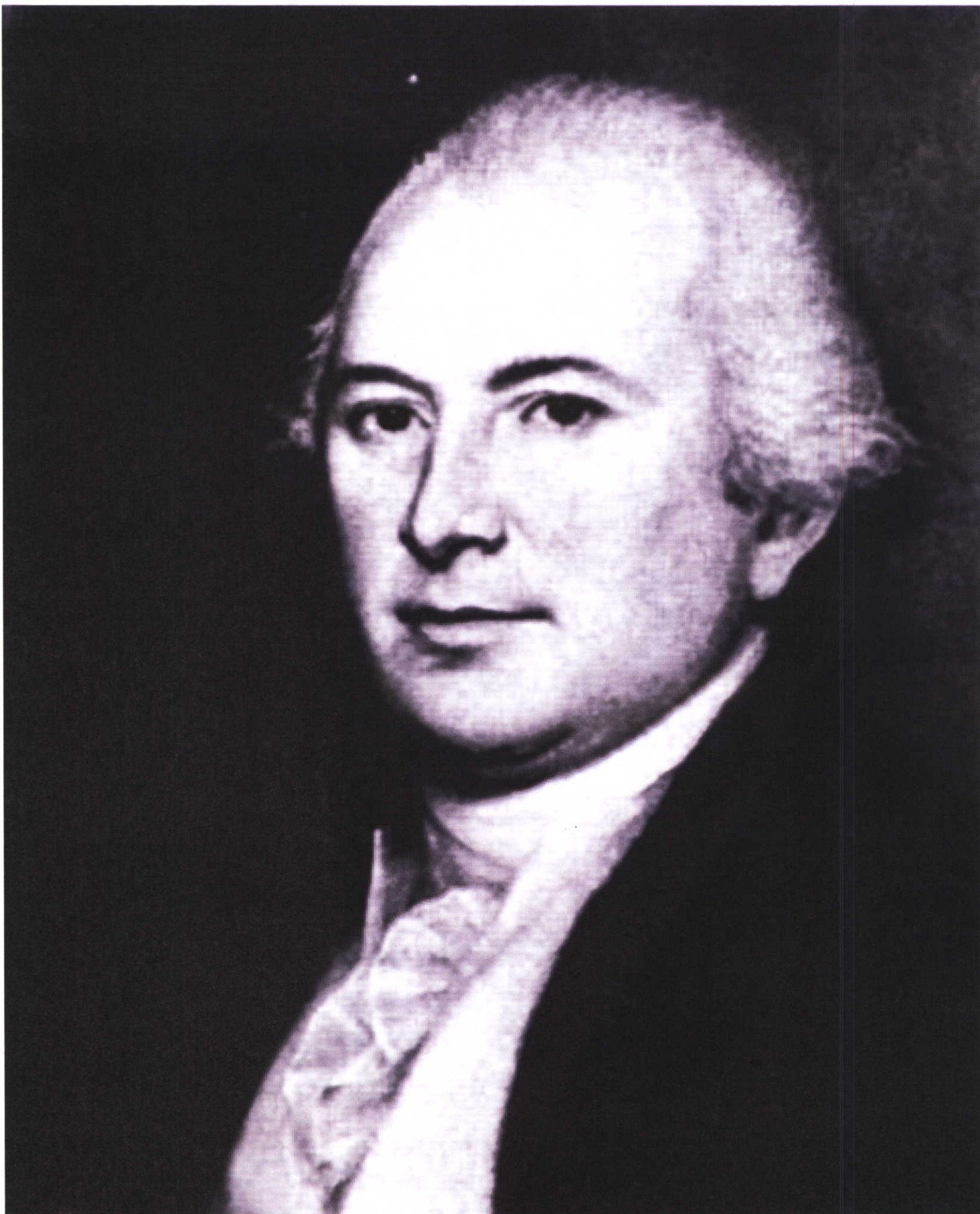
Robert Morris



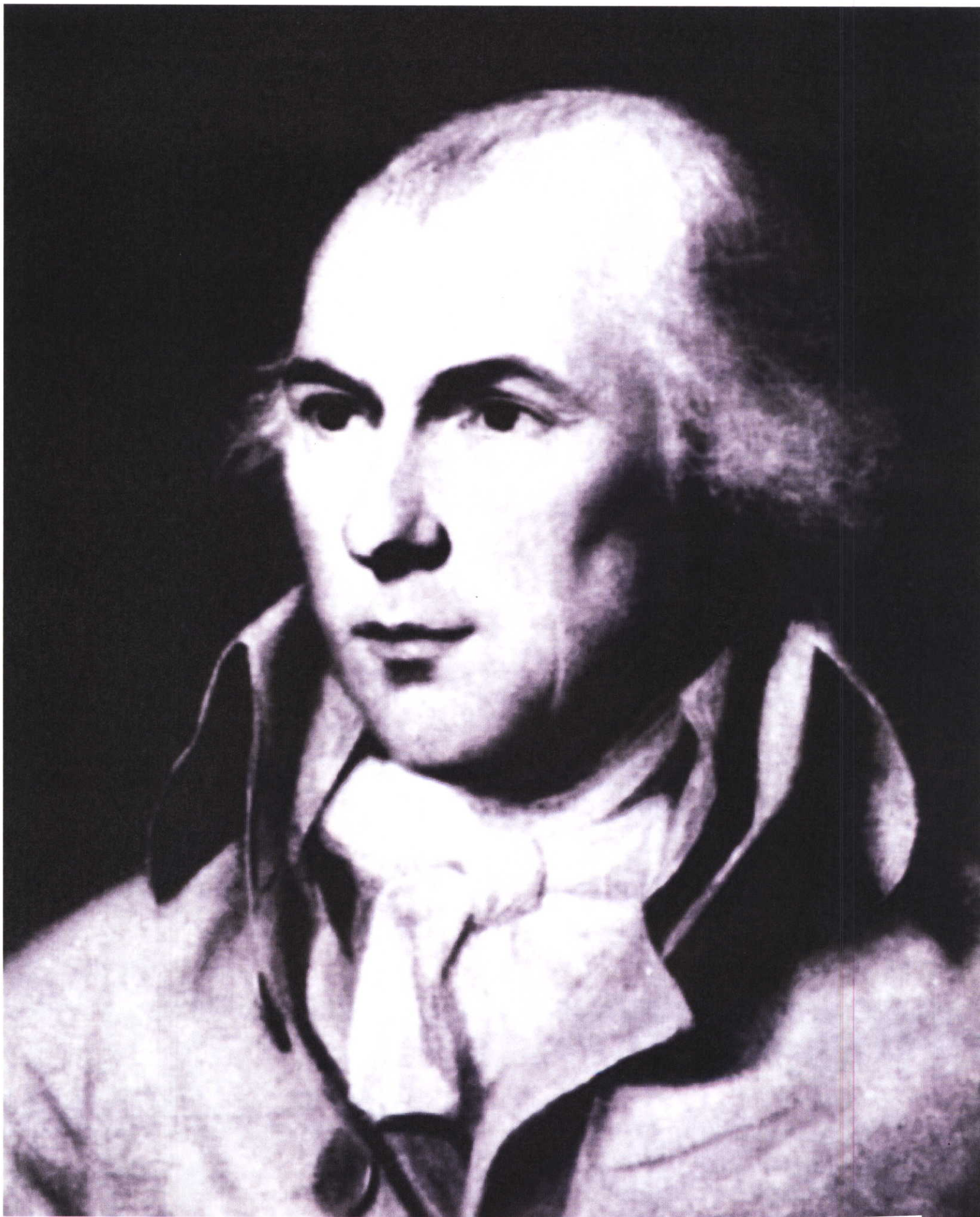
Charles Cotesworth Pinckney



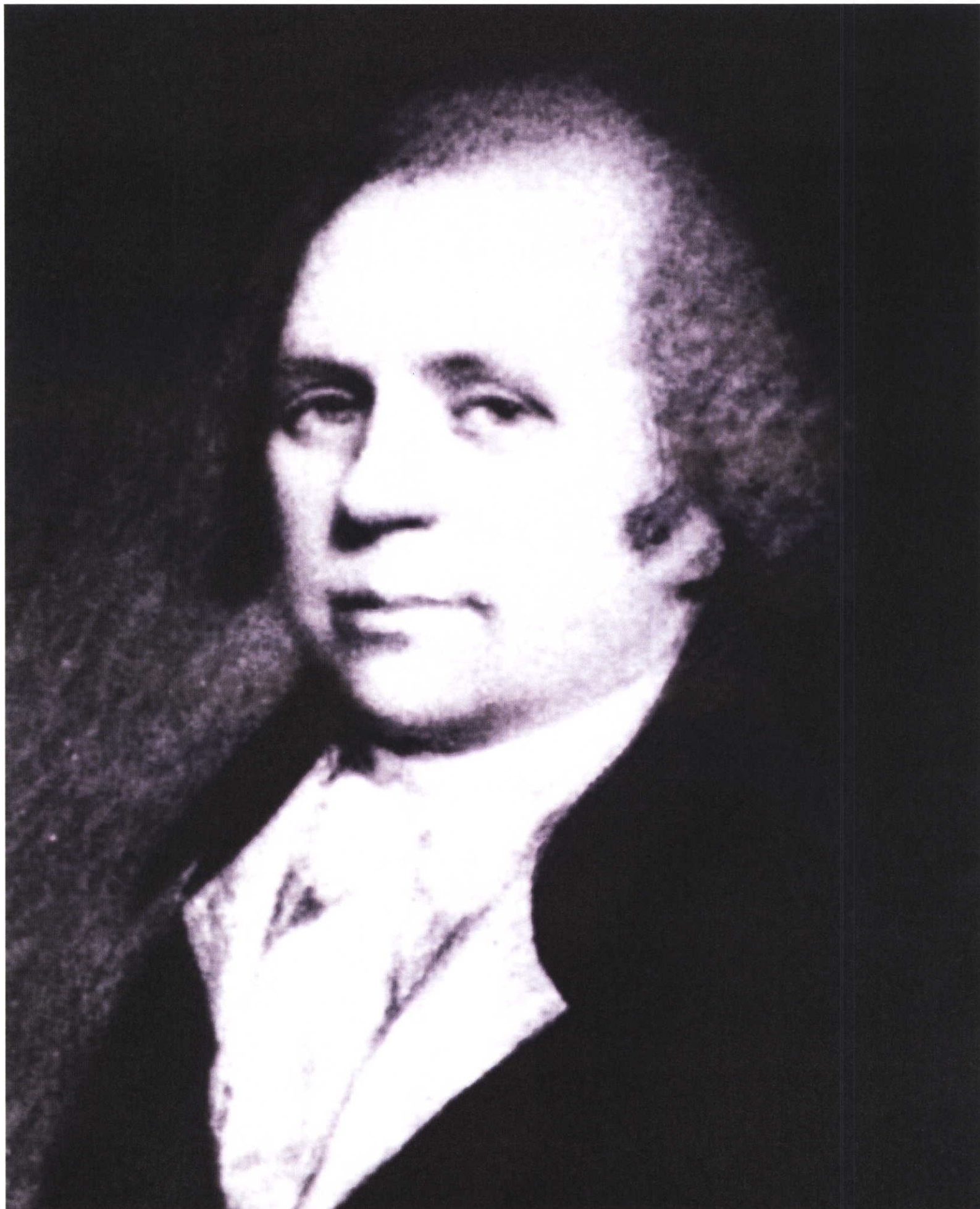
Gouverneur Morris



Thomas Mifflin



James Madison, Jr.



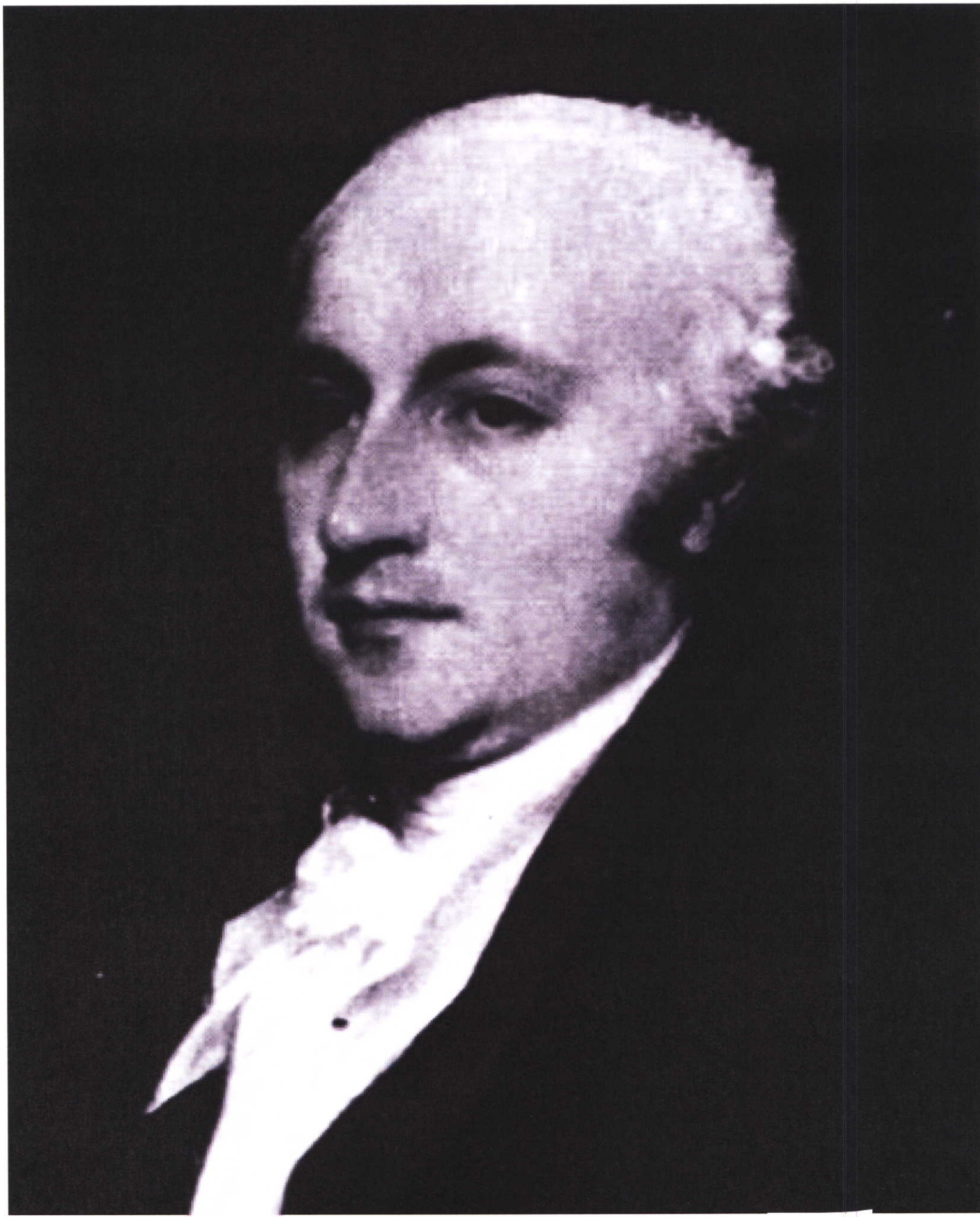
James McHenry



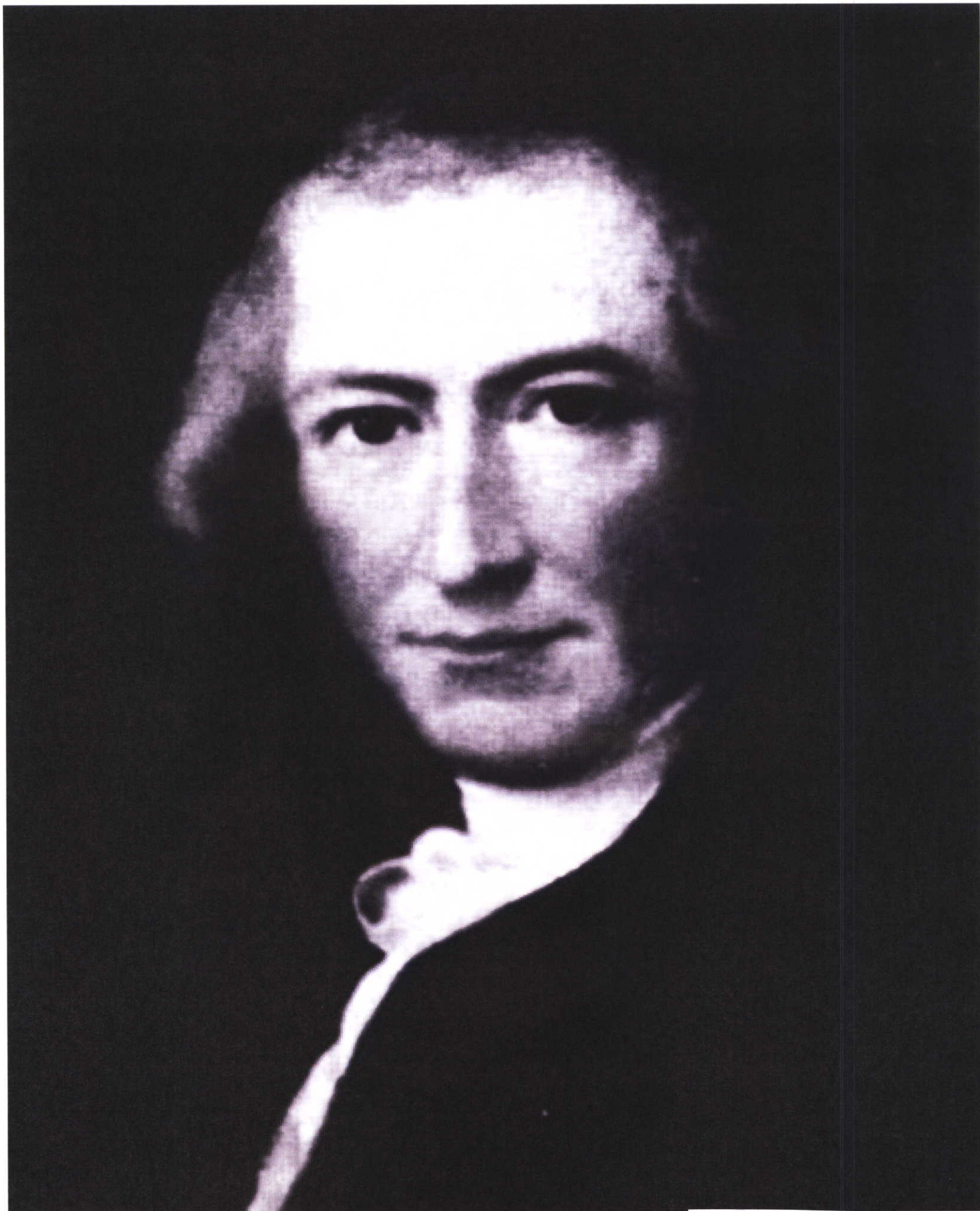
William Livingston



John Langdon



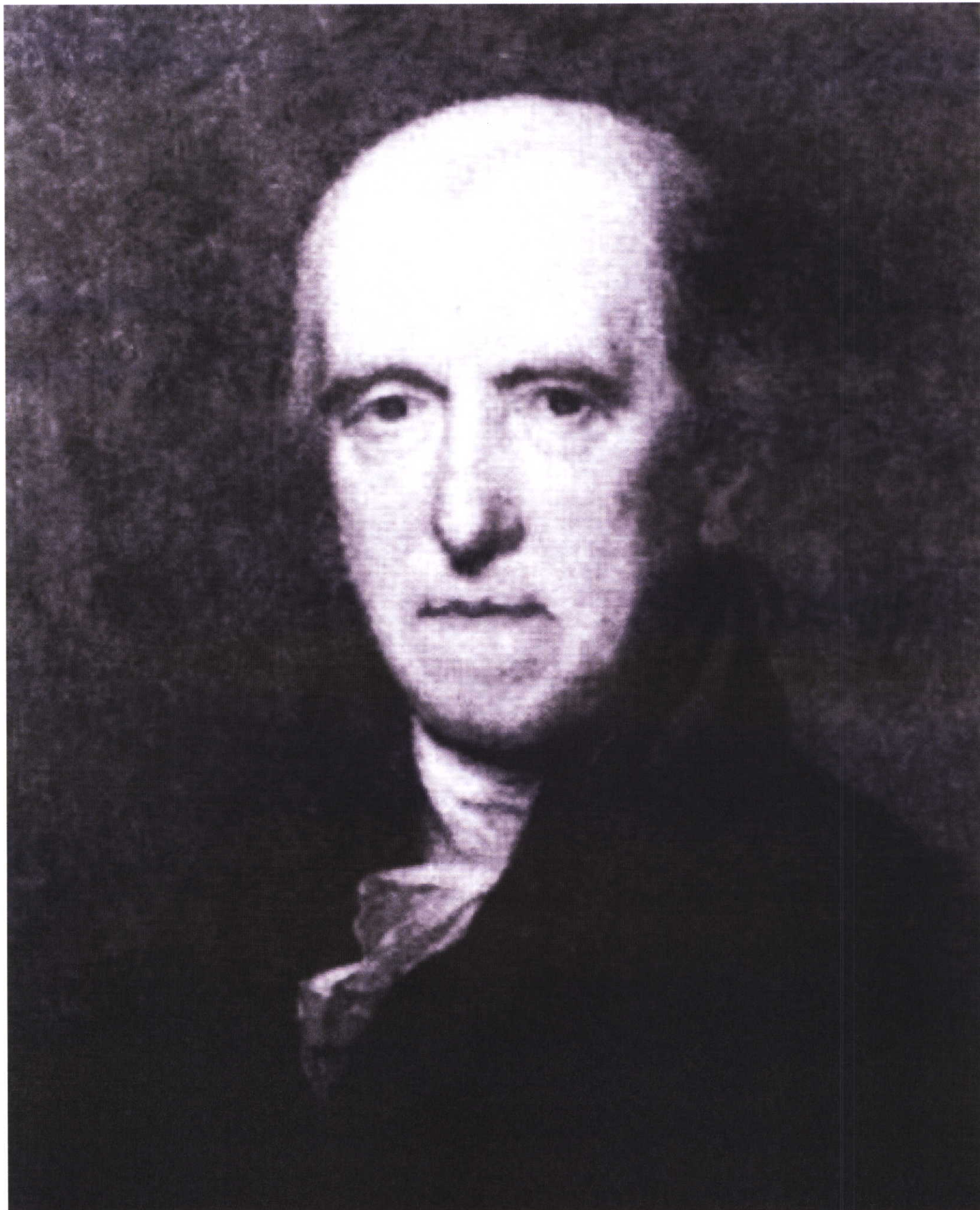
Rufus King



William Samuel Johnson



Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer



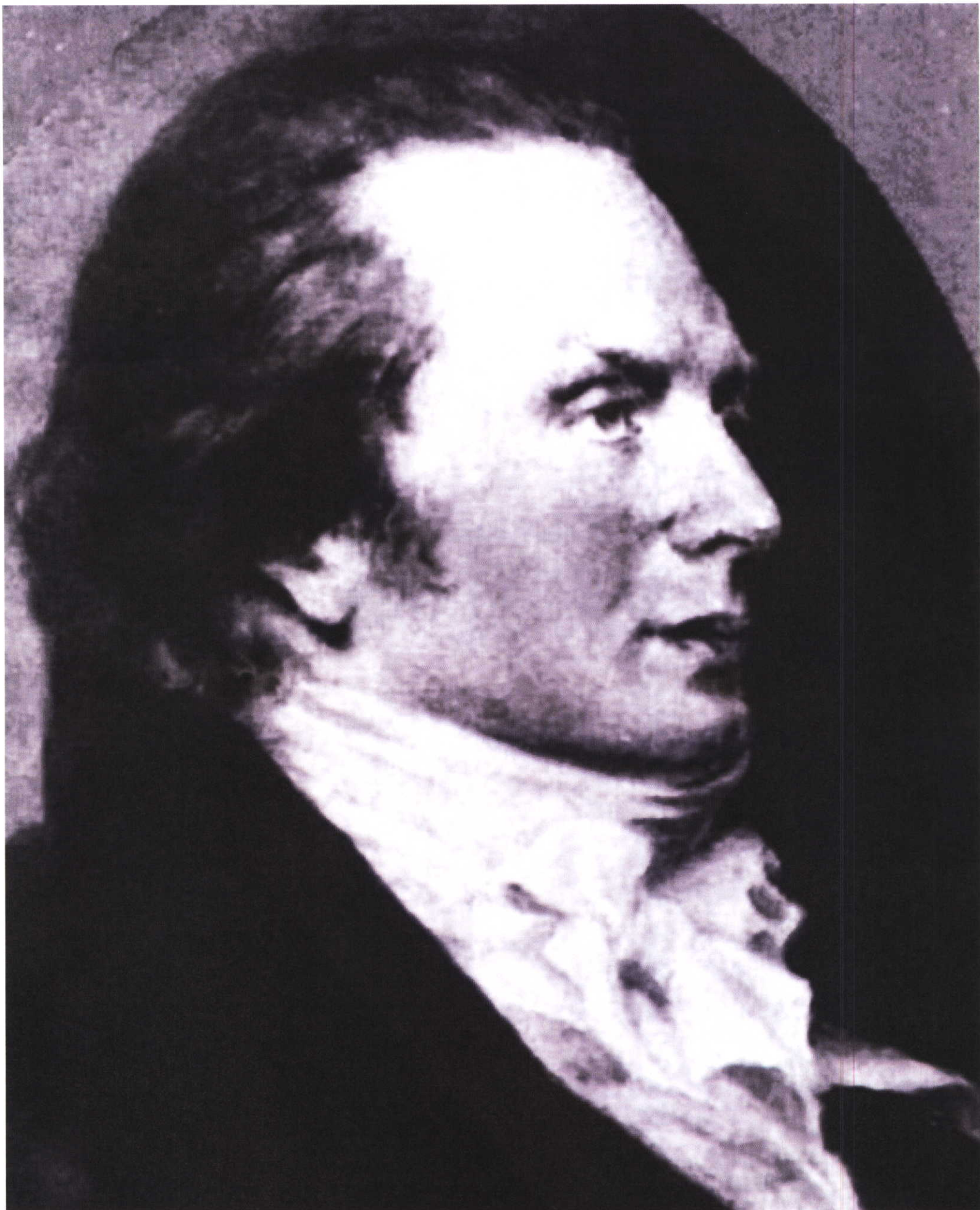
Jared Ingersoll



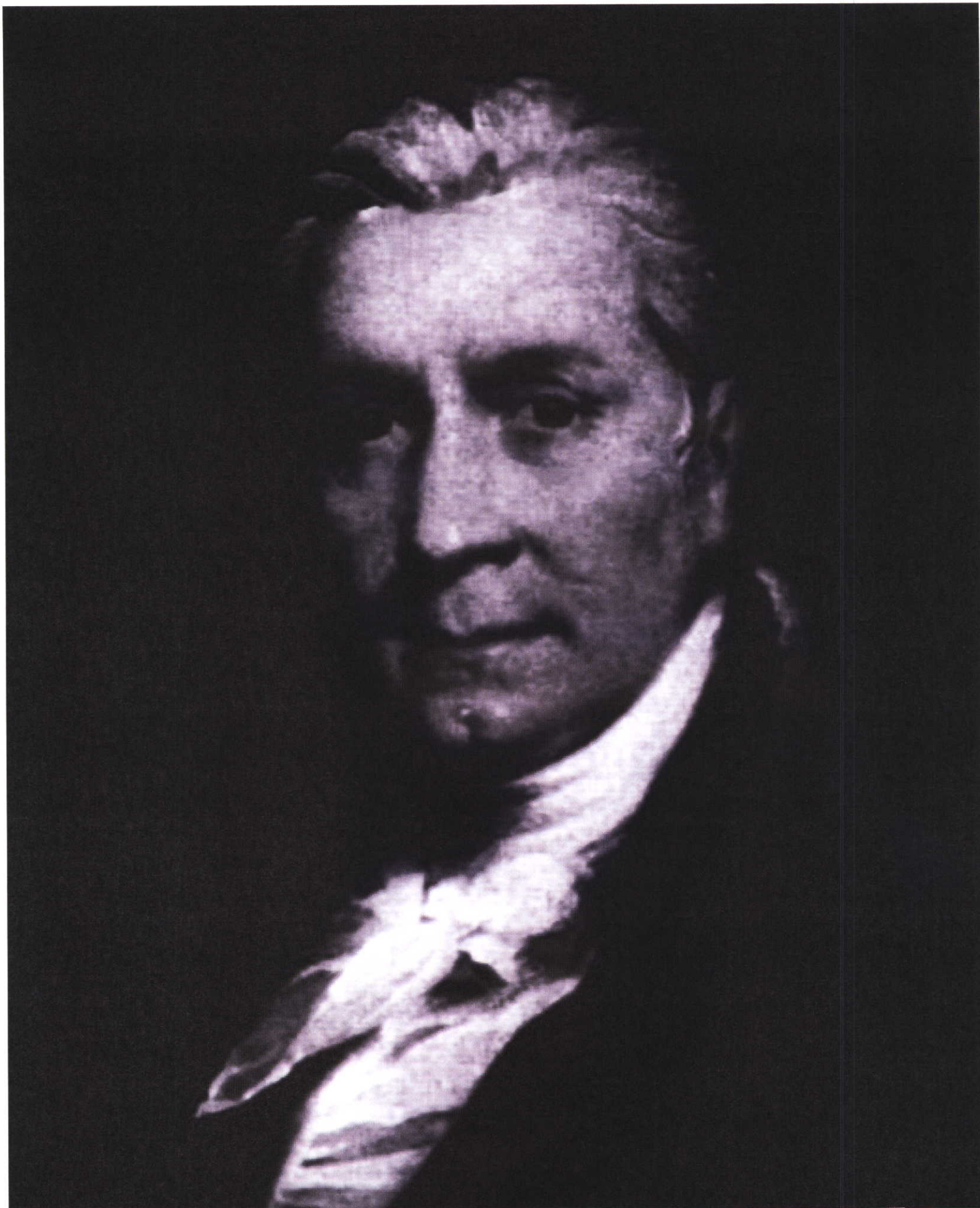
Alexander Hamilton



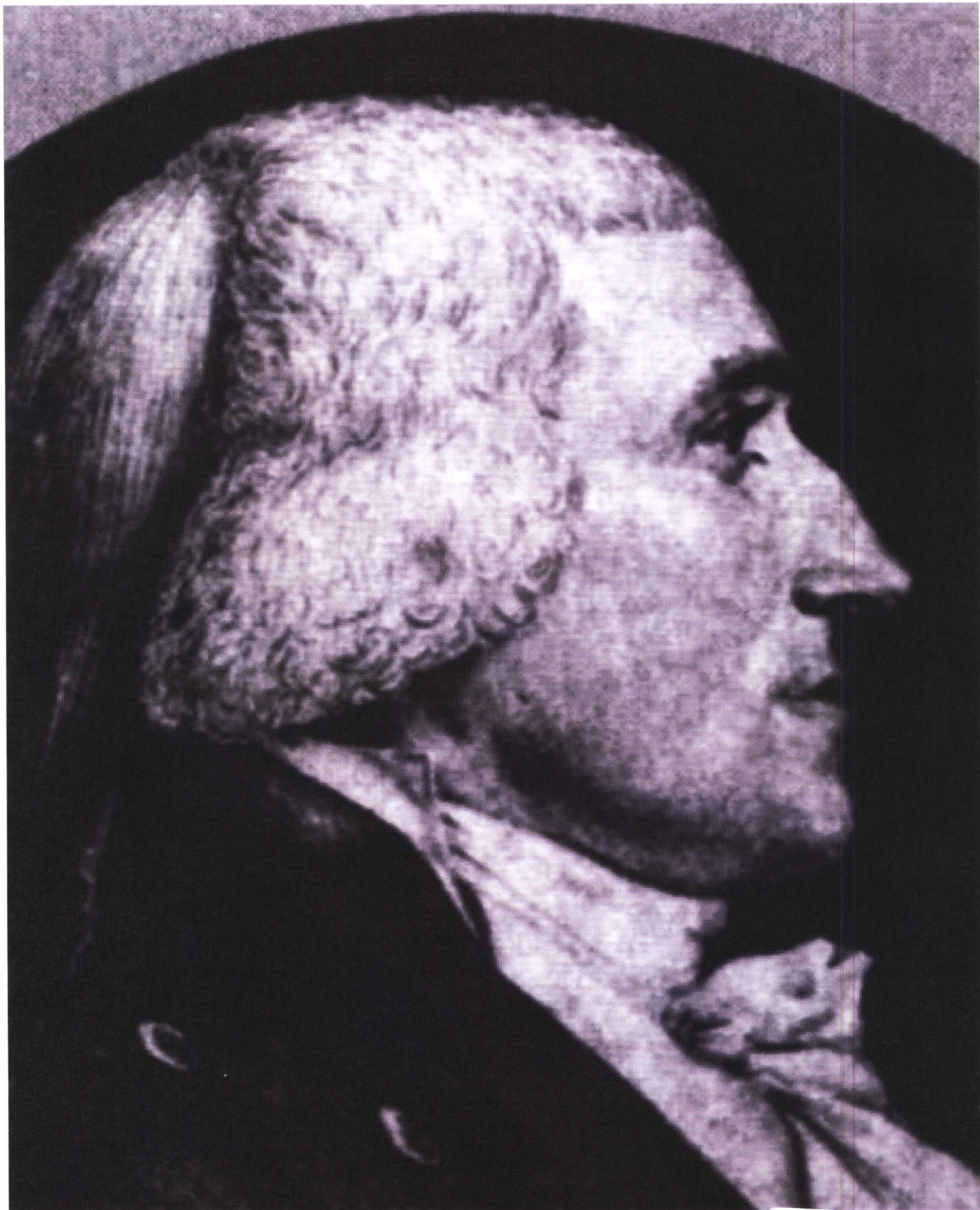
Nathaniel Gorham



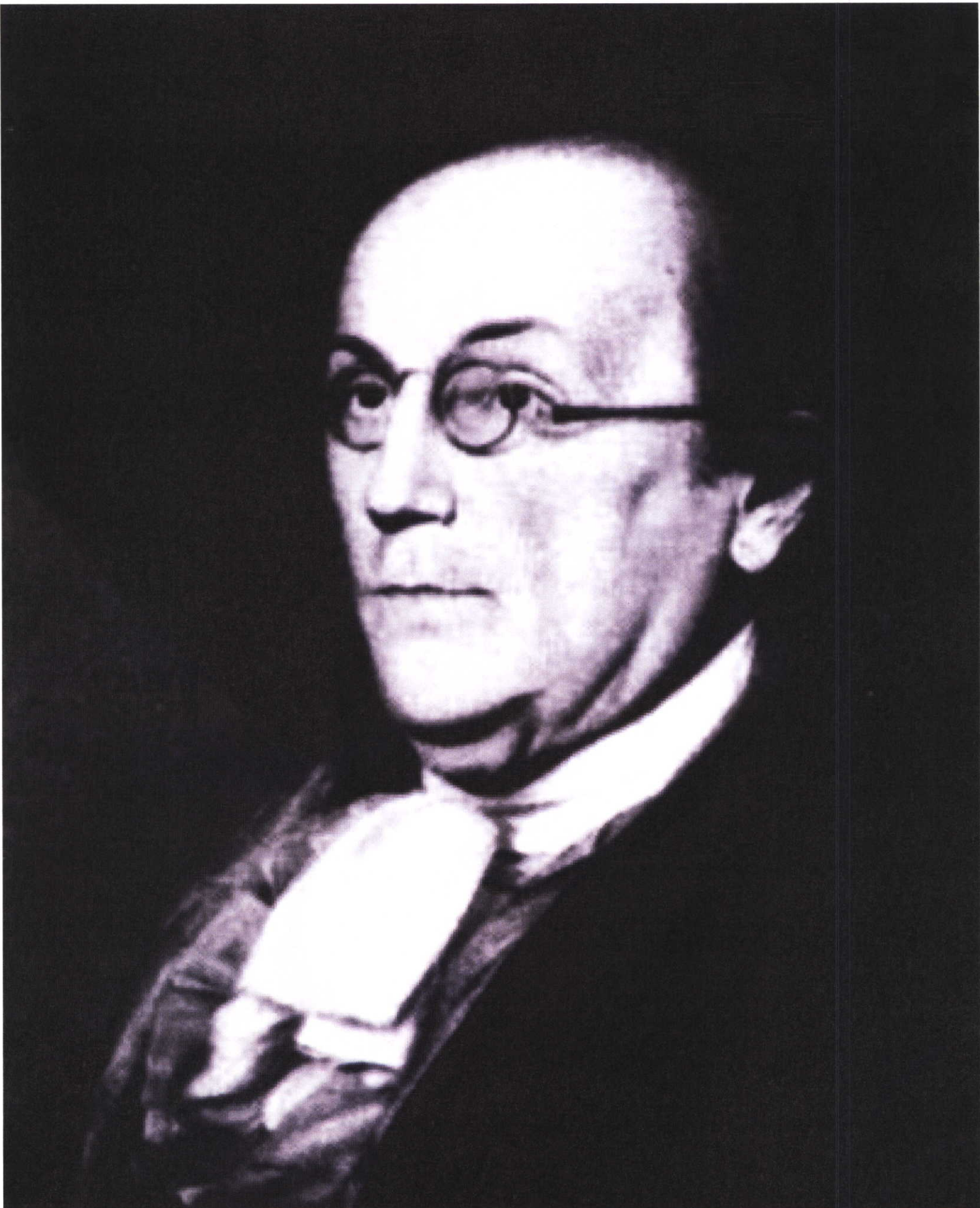
Nicholas Gilman



Thomas Fitzsimons



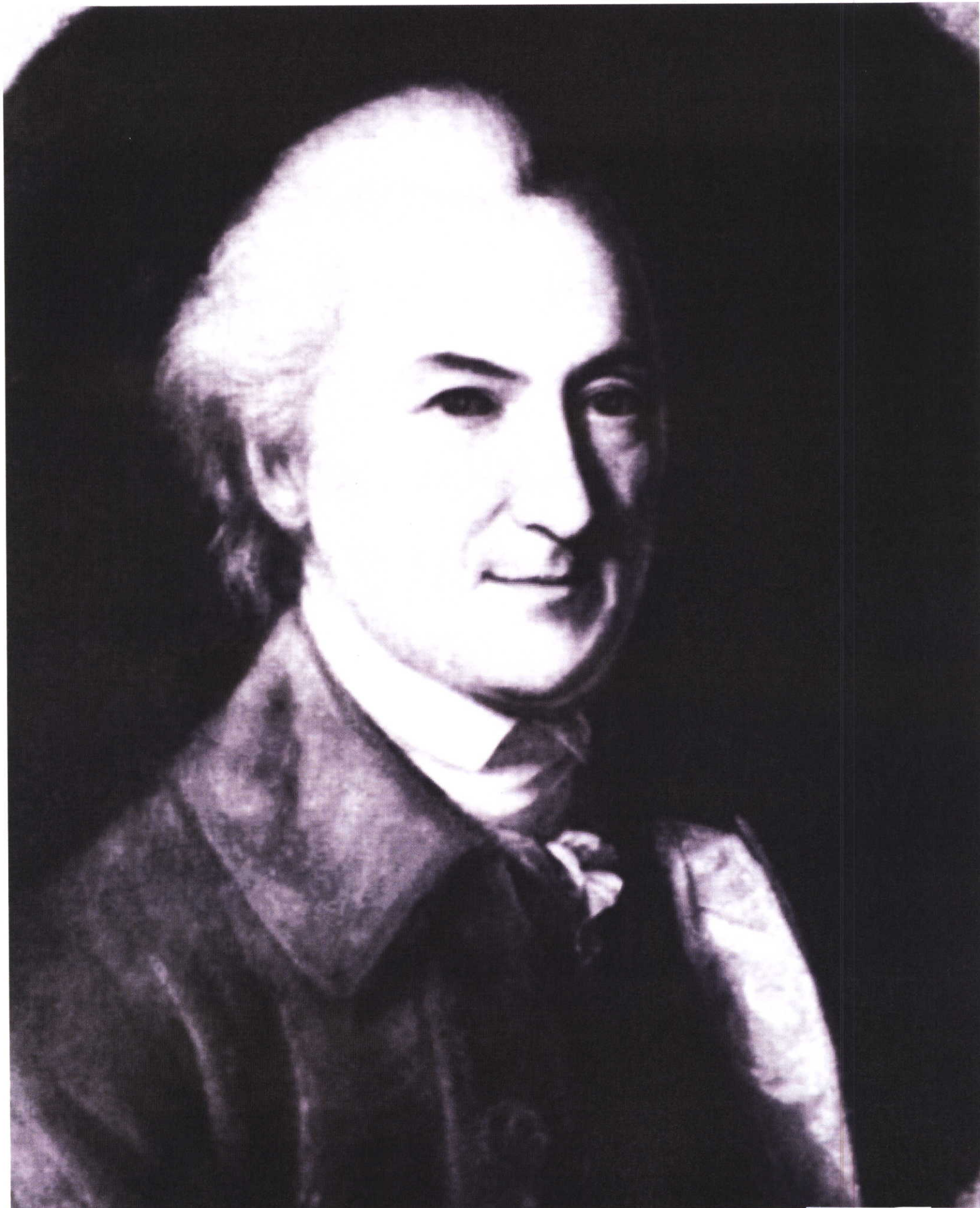
Jonathan Dayton



Benjamin Franklin



William Few



John Dickinson

Unit III: Authority

LESSON 2: THE TIRED KING

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Identify the three functions of government.
- Sort a list of governmental tasks into executive, judicial, and legislative.

Overview

In this lesson, students are introduced to the three functions of government (legislative, judicial, and executive) through a story about an overworked king who must handle all the tasks of government. Next, students are given descriptions of the three functions of government and asked to match tasks to departments (lawmakers, executives, and judges). Finally, students create job descriptions for lawmakers, executives, and judges.

PREPARATION

- **Handout A: The Tired King**—1 per student
- **Handout B: King Louie's Letters**—Cut out 1 letter per pair of students and place the letters in King Louie's basket.
- **Handout C: In Your Own Words (Optional)**—1 per student
- **King Louie's Basket**—A container to hold the letters
- **King Louie's Signs**
- **Sample Letters**—Cut out the three letters.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

National Civics Standard 5: Understands the major characteristics of systems of shared powers and of parliamentary systems. Level III (Grade 6–8) (1) Understands the primary responsibilities of each branch of government in a system of shared powers (e.g., legislative, executive, judicial) and ways in which each branch shares the powers and functions of the other branches.

California History Social Science Content Standard 5.7: Students describe the people and events associated with the development of the U.S. Constitution and analyze the Constitution's significance as the foundation of the American republic. (4) Understand how the Constitution is designed to secure our liberty by both empowering and limiting central government and compare the powers granted to citizens, Congress, the president, and the Supreme Court with those reserved to the states.

Procedure

B. Teacher Reading—The Tired King

1. Tell students that they are going to hear a story about an imaginary king in a make-believe kingdom. Explain that this king, King Louis the Umpteenth, is exhausted because he has been running the kingdom with no real help. To make it run smoother, he has an idea. Tell students that the idea King Louis comes up with is one that our own government today is modeled on.
2. Distribute and read aloud **Handout A: The Tired King**.
3. Check student comprehension by asking the following questions:
 - Why was King Louie tired? (He had too many jobs to do.)
 - Where did King Louie's jobs come from? (Letters written by people in his kingdom.)
 - What jobs did the letters ask King Louie to do? (Make new rules, catch people who broke the rules, decide what to do with people who break the rules.)
 - What did King Louie decide to do about his jobs? (Form departments to help him run his kingdom.)

C. Paired Activity—Reading King Louie's Letters

1. Tell students that they are going to play the part of King Louie's nobles. Their job will be to read the letters in King Louie's basket and decide where each letter should go.
2. Tell students to look at the story of **The Tired King** to find King Louie's departments. As students name each department, place **King Louie's Signs** on the board.
 - **Department #1—Lawmakers.** Make new rules to keep the kingdom running smoothly.
 - **Department #2—King's Guards.** Enforce the rules to make sure that everybody is safe. Catch people who break the rules.
 - **Department #3—Judges.** Decide what the rules mean. Hold trials to decide if someone is guilty of breaking the rules.
3. Explain to the class that you have taken three letters from King Louie's basket to show them how to decide where each letter should go. Read each **Sample Letter**. Ask students:
 - What job is the letter talking about?
 - Which department should do that job?Fasten each letter beneath the correct sign.

4. Have each pair of students take one of King Louie's letters from **Louie's Basket**. Explain that they should read their letter and use **Louie's Signs** on the board to decide which department should do the job.

As pairs finish, ask them to place their letter under the correct sign.

D. Debriefing—Finding the Right Department for the Job

1. Read each letter aloud and ask the class to determine if the letters are under the correct signs. Help the class re-categorize any letters that are placed incorrectly.
2. Lead a discussion using the questions below:
 - Do you think that King Louie's government will run more smoothly now? Why or why not?
 - Do you think it is a good idea to divide up certain tasks in a government? Why or why not?
3. Explain to students that having three branches of government is very important to our democracy. Americans, past and present, have not liked the idea that one person, or king, could be in charge of all tasks and all decisions the government makes. This helps our government run more smoothly and protects the rights of our citizens against a ruler that might be unfair.

Tell students that our federal government has three branches: the legislative (Congress), the executive (headed by the president), and the judicial (headed by the Supreme Court). Ask students:

- Which of these branches is like the lawmakers? (Congress)
- Which of these branches is like the king's guards? (Executive)
- Which of these branches is like the judges? (Judicial)

Tell students that in the next *Adventures in Law and History* lesson they may be talking some more about this.

Enrichment (Optional)

1. Who Might Help?

Have students brainstorm problems in the community or nation. Once you have compiled a list, ask which branch of government might be able to do something about each of the problems.

2. In Your Own Words

Distribute **Handout C: In Your Own Words** to each student. Ask students to describe each of King Louie's departments in their own words and give one example of a job that each department might do.

3. Help Wanted

Have students write "Help Wanted" classified ads describing jobs from each department and qualifications and skills necessary.

The Tired King

King Louie the Umpteenth ruled over a large kingdom. It had thick forests, green fields, and peace-loving people. His tall stone castle was full of fancy furniture, beautiful paintings, and precious jewels. But King Louie had a big problem.

King Louie was a very tired man. He was tired because he had too many jobs to do. Finally, King Louie couldn't stand it anymore. He told all the nobles of his kingdom to meet in the throne room of the castle.

King Louie marched into the throne room. He was followed by three pages who huffed and puffed under the weight of three heavy bags. The pages dumped the contents of each bag into a huge basket beside Louie's throne. King Louie sat down on his throne. He looked at the basket and sighed. "This basket is full of letters from the people of my kingdom," he said. "They all need my help. Listen to this..." Louie pulled a letter out of the basket and read it.



Dear King Louie,

The people of my village want to let their cows and sheep eat the grass in the village square. We need a new rule to keep us from fighting about the grass.

Signed,

Sam, the Shepherd

"This is an important problem," said Louie. "But I can't spend my time making new rules for every village. I need help!" King Louie pulled a second letter out of the basket.

Dear King Louie,

Every night, somebody comes and steals vegetables out of my garden. Please come and catch him for me.

Signed,

Hungry Hannah

"First, they want me to make the rules," he groaned. "Now they want me to catch the people who break my rules. I can't do both. I don't have time!" King Louie pulled a third letter out of the basket.

Dear King Louie,

I think we found the man who set fire to my barn. Please come and help us decide if he did this dirty deed.

Signed,

Burnt-Out Barney

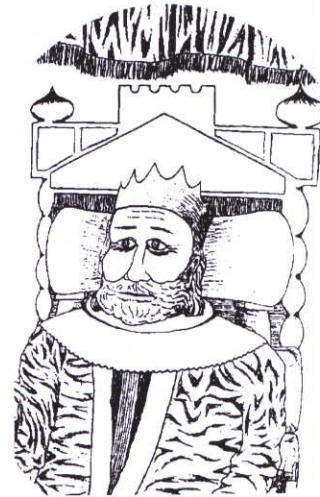
"Do you see my problem?" asked Louie. "First, I have to make the rules. Then I have to see that everyone follows my rules and now..." Louie waved the third letter in the air. "Now I have to decide what to do with people accused of breaking my rules."

"We need rules. We need to make sure people follow the rules. And we need to decide how to use the rules fairly. That is too much work for me to do alone." King Louie looked at his nobles. "So I am going to form three new groups, or departments, to run my kingdom more smoothly."

Next, King Louie clapped his hands three times. The royal artist brought out three signs. Each sign described the different jobs that Louie's new departments would do.

King Louie held up the first sign. **"Department #1 will be called the Lawmakers,"** said Louie. **"The lawmakers will make new rules to keep the kingdom running smoothly."**

King Louie held up the second sign. **"Department #2 will be called the King's Guards,"** said Louie. **"They will enforce the rules to make sure that everybody is safe. And they will catch people who break the rules."**



King Louie held up the third sign. **"Department #3 will be called the Judges,"** said Louie. **"They will decide what the rules mean. And they will hold trials to decide if someone is guilty of breaking the rules."**

"Take this basket," Louie told his nobles. "Read the letters. I want you to decide which new department should do the job described in each letter. Now, I am going to take a nap."

King Louie's Department #2

KING'S GUARDS

Enforce the rules
to make sure that
everybody is safe.

Catch people who
break the rules.

King Louie's Department #1

LAWMAKERS

Make new
rules to keep
the kingdom
running
smoothly.

King Louie's Department #3

JUDGES

Decide what the
rules mean.

Hold trials to
decide if someone
is guilty of
breaking the rules.

Sample Letters

Dear King Louie,

I need to get some sleep. We **need a new rule** in my village to stop people from making loud noises at night.

Tired Mary

- Which department should do the job?

Dear King Louie,

A musician in my village plays his trumpet until 11 o'clock every night. The rule says "no loud noises late at night." Please **catch him when he breaks the rules.**

Sleepy Marie

- Which department should do the job?

Dear King Louie,

The musician admits that he plays the trumpet every night. The rule says, "no loud noises late at night." The musician says that 11 o'clock is not late. Can you help us **decide if he is breaking the rules?**

Wide Awake Wayne

- Which department should do the job?

King Louie's Letters

Dear King Louie,

Two knights from your kingdom keep fighting in our pastures. We need our pastures to grow crops and feed the cows. **We need a new rule to keep the knights from ruining our pastures.**

David Deadgrass

• Which department should do the job? _____

Dear King Louie,

Yesterday, two of your knights got into a big fight. Their horses stomped all the wheat in my field. Your new rule says, "No knights shall fight in the farmer's fields." **Please catch these knights who are breaking the rules.**

Carrie Wheatcrush

• Which department should do the job? _____

Dear King Louie,

One of your guards saw two knights fighting in a farmer's wheat field. The rule says, "No knights shall fight in the farmers' fields." But both knights said they were slaying a dragon on that day and were nowhere near the field. **Please hold a trial to decide if these two knights are guilty of breaking the rules.**

Suspicious Sid

• Which department should do the job? _____

Dear King Louie

Every morning, farmers hurry to get their fruits and vegetables to market ahead of each other. They race past my front door in their heavy wagons. It is very dangerous. **We need a new rule to keep the farmers from racing their wagons through our village.**

Vera the Villager

- Which department should do the job? _____

Dear King Louie,

Yesterday, a farmer nearly ran over my child. The new rule says, "Farmers must drive slowly through the village." **Please enforce the rules to make sure everyone is safe from these farmers.**

Worried Father

- Which department should do the job? _____

Dear King Louie,

One of your guards caught a farmer racing his wagon through our village. The farmer says he was driving slowly. **Please hold a trial to decide what your new rule means when it says "Farmers must drive slowly."**

Connie Confused

- Which department should do the job? _____

Dear King Louie,

My daughter Sally won't go to school. She says she doesn't care about learning. I don't want her to be stupid. **We need a new law to keep our children in school.**

Esther Slipoff (Sally's mother)

- Which department should do the job? _____

Dear King Louie,

I saw Sally Slipoff in the next village on a school day. Your new rule says, "All children must go to school." **Please catch Sally when she breaks this rule.**

Sally's Teacher

- Which department should do the job? _____

Dear King Louie,

One of your guards caught Sally Slipoff skipping school. Sally says she is not a child anymore. **Please hold a trial to decide what your new rule means when it says, "All children must go to school."**

Larry Slipoff (Sally's father)

- Which department should do the job? _____

Dear King Louie,

I own the mill in my village. Last month I ground Tom Pitt's corn. He had no money to pay me. Now he refuses to pay me. **We need a new rule saying that people must pay for their corn when I grind it.**

Bill Miller

• Which department should do the job? _____

Dear King Louie,

Bill Miller owns the mill in our village. Every time I take corn to his mill to be ground he steals some from me. **Will you help me catch him stealing?**

Tom Pitt

• Which department should do the job? _____

Dear King Louie,

Tom Pitt and Bill Miller have been fighting about grinding corn in the mill. They argue day and night. The new rule says that people must pay the miller when he grinds their corn. **Please come and decide if anybody is guilty of breaking the rules.**

Chester Peacemaker

• Which department should do the job? _____

Dear King Louie,

Someone has been sneaking onto my land and shooting the deer that live there. **We need a new law that says that animals belong to the people who own the land.**

Bob of York

• Which department should do the job? _____

Dear King Louie,

Yesterday my son was almost killed by a man who was hunting deer in the forest. These hunters are not following the law. **Please come and make sure that everybody is safe from hunters in the forest.**

Scared Steve

• Which department should do the job? _____

Dear King Louie,

My family is hungry. I need to be able to hunt wild animals in the forest. Wild animals belong to no one. **Please come decide what the rule means that says, "Animals belong to the people who own the land."**

Henry Hunter

• Which department should do the job? _____

Name _____

Date _____

In Your Own Words

Describe in your own words what each of Louie's New Departments does. Give an example of a job that each department might do.

Lawmakers. _____

For example:

King's Guards. _____

For example:

Judges. _____

For example:

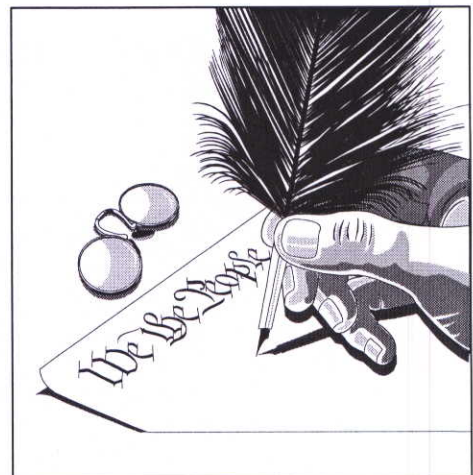
The Constitution of the United States

After the Revolutionary War, the former colonies faced many decisions. They no longer recognized British laws or British government. Still, people needed laws and government. Soon, the states began to set up their own governments. Different states had different laws. They had different taxes. They even had different systems of money. People thought of themselves as citizens of one state – not citizens of a country.

America's founders knew that for the new nation to survive, all thirteen states would have to work together. America needed a national government. On May 25, 1787, delegates from every state except Rhode Island met in Philadelphia. At first, these fifty-five men did not all agree about the best system of government. They talked about different governments. They debated. And they compromised. They worked for nearly four months. The system they finally agreed upon had three branches. The legislative branch would make laws. The executive branch would carry out the laws. The judicial branch would decide what the laws meant.

Working together, the delegates wrote the U.S. Constitution. The Constitution explains how the three branches of government function. It also sets rules for all three branches. On September 17, 1787, thirty-nine delegates signed the final draft of the Constitution.

The Constitution is still the basis of U.S. government today. The original copy of the Constitution is housed in a special display case in Washington, D.C.



ANTICIPATION GUIDE

The Constitution of the United States

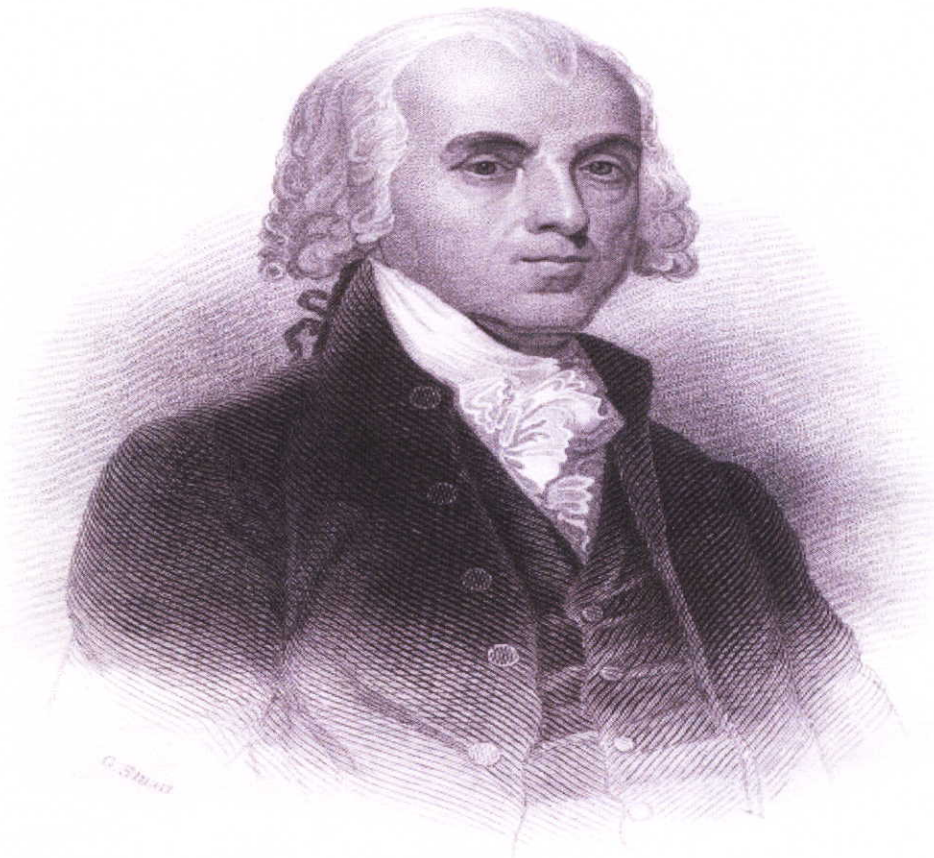
Directions: Read the following statements.

Decide if the statements are **TRUE** or **FALSE**.

After reading about the Constitution, read the statements again to see if you need to change any of your responses.

	<u>Before Reading</u>	<u>After Reading</u>
1. The people of Rhode Island did not want a national government.		
2. The Constitution was written in Philadelphia.		
3. George Washington was the father of the Constitution.		
4. The Constitution established three branches of government.		
5. Only men signed the Constitution.		
6. The Constitution is no longer in use today.		
7. All the delegates to the Convention signed the Constitution.		

James Madison Remembers
September 17, 1787



JAMES MADISON

James Madison

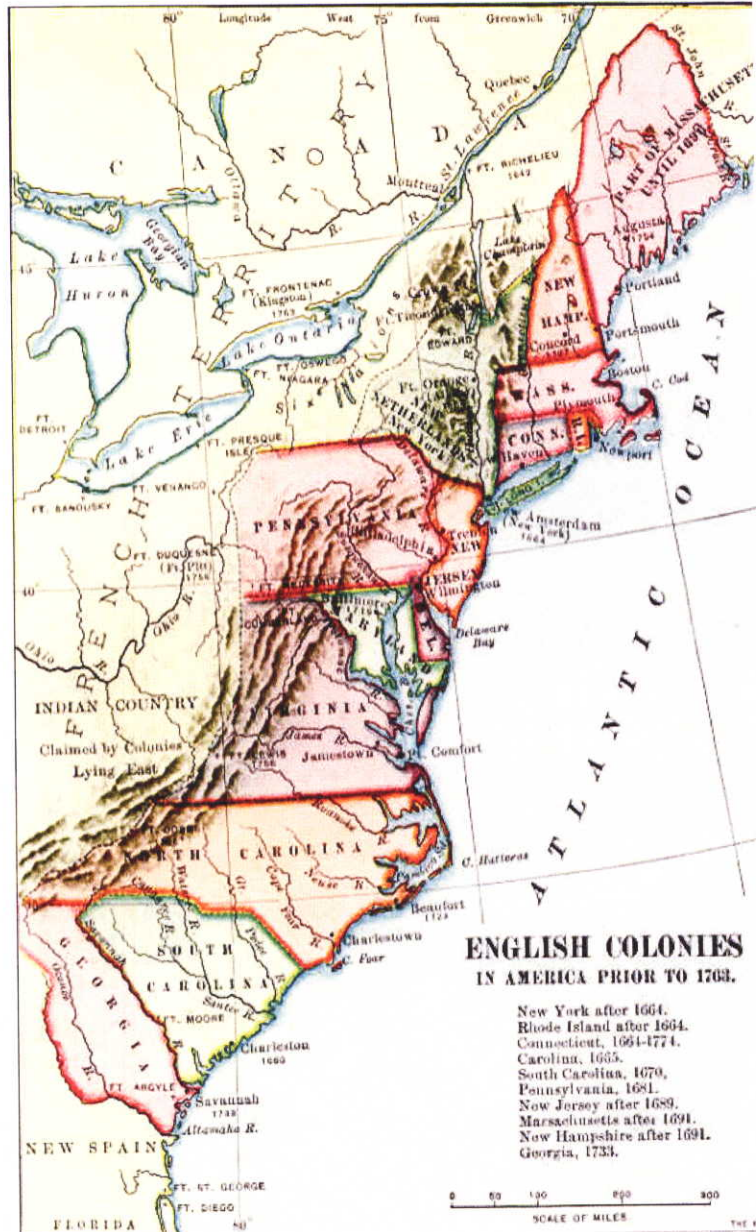
James Madison Remembers

September 17, 1787.

That was one of the proudest days of my life. That was the day we signed the Constitution of the United States.

Our country was very young then. We had fought a war with England and gained our independence. But we weren't quite sure how to run our new country.

In fact, the United States was in trouble. In our new country, we had 13 states, but they were not working together. Each state had its own government and its own rules. Each state wanted to do things its own way. Sometimes it seemed as though the states were ready to fight each other!



We were worried that our new nation would fall apart. So, some of us decided to meet in the city of Philadelphia and see what could be done.



In the hot and sticky summer of 1787, we gathered in the building called Independence Hall.

I can still picture the scene, as if it were yesterday. George Washington was there. He had led our soldiers in the fight against England. Now we asked him to lead our meeting. He sat at a desk on a platform at the front of the room.

The rest of us sat at tables draped with green cloth. Some of the wisest men in America were there—it was a thrill to see them together! Even old Ben Franklin joined us—we knew we would need his wisdom.

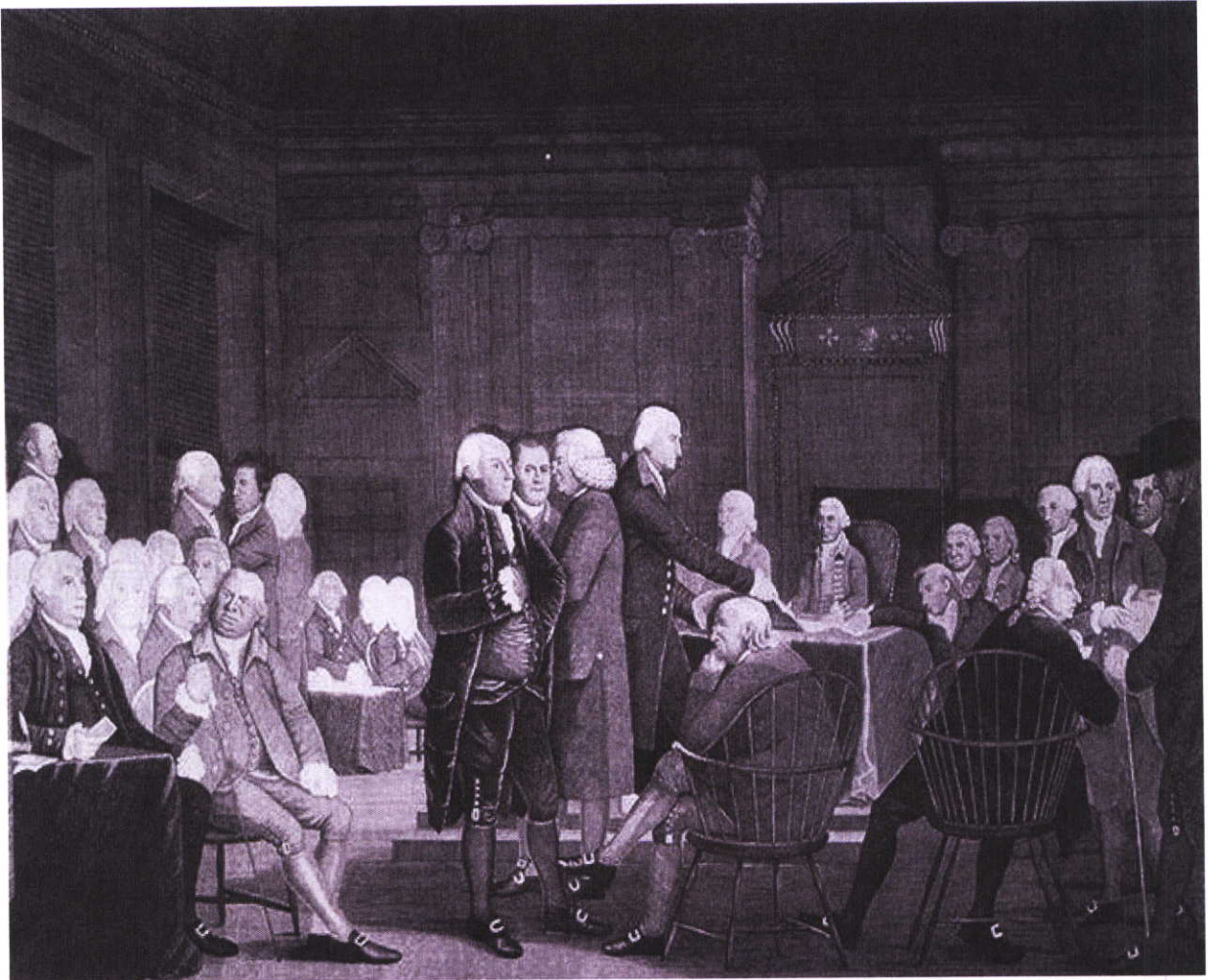
Ben Franklin noticed the figure of a shining sun carved on the back of George Washington's chair. He said he wondered whether it was a rising sun or a setting sun. He meant: Was our meeting a bright beginning for the United States, like the start of a sunny day? Or would we soon see the end of our young country, like when the sun sets and darkness falls? We all wondered the same thing.

We began to talk about the many problems our new country faced. We soon realized that if the 13 states were going to get along and work together, then we would need a new government for *all* the states. And this new government would need rules and laws. So we set out to write a Constitution for the United States.



Hmmmm... It was always difficult for painters to show the difference between the rising sun and the setting sun.

That's when all the talking, and the arguing, really began. We had to answer many hard questions. For example, who should be the leader of our new government? Should we have a king? NO—no more kings for us! We would be ruled by a president, chosen by the people.



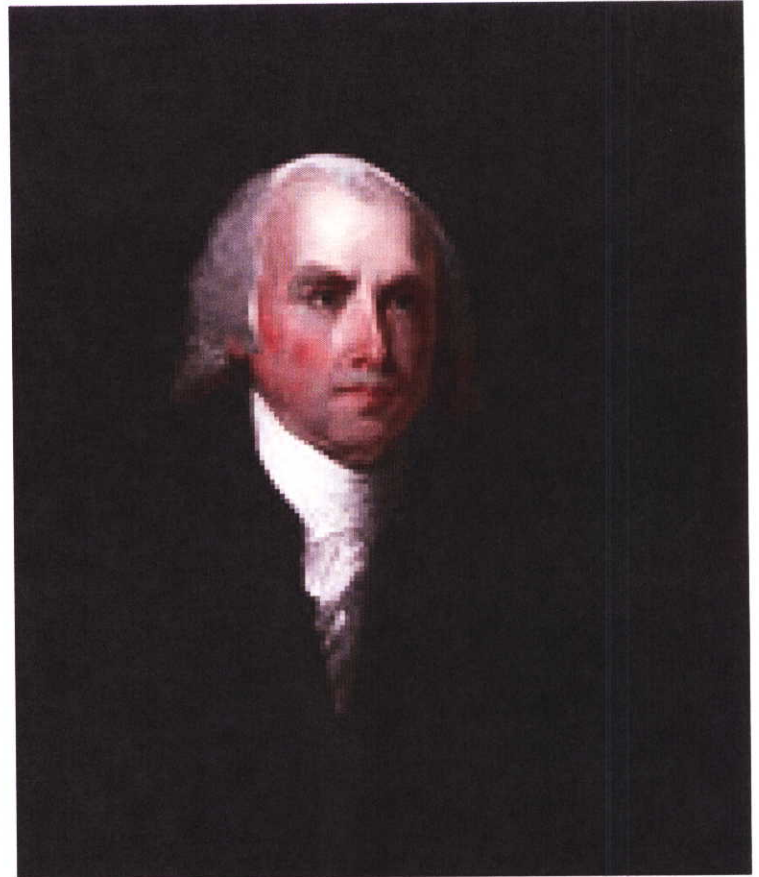
But there were many more questions. How much power should the president have? How could we keep the bigger states from ganging up on the smaller states? How could we make sure our new government worked for the people and not against them?

We met all summer long, talking and arguing about such questions. Oh, the heat in the hall! We sweated in our woolen suits. Flies buzzed against the windows. Big mosquitoes bit right through our silk stockings! No wonder we sometimes lost our tempers with each other.



There was something else that made our job very hard. No one had ever before written a constitution for a brand new country run *by the people*. We were trying a grand experiment. Would it work? Or would it fail?

I did not miss a single meeting. Day after day, all summer long, I wrote down what everyone said.



I wanted to hear everything! I wrote and wrote, but I spoke as well. You see, I had some ideas about what our Constitution should say. I do not have a loud voice, and sometimes when I spoke, the others cried,

“Louder! Louder!”:

But they always seemed interested in what I had to say.

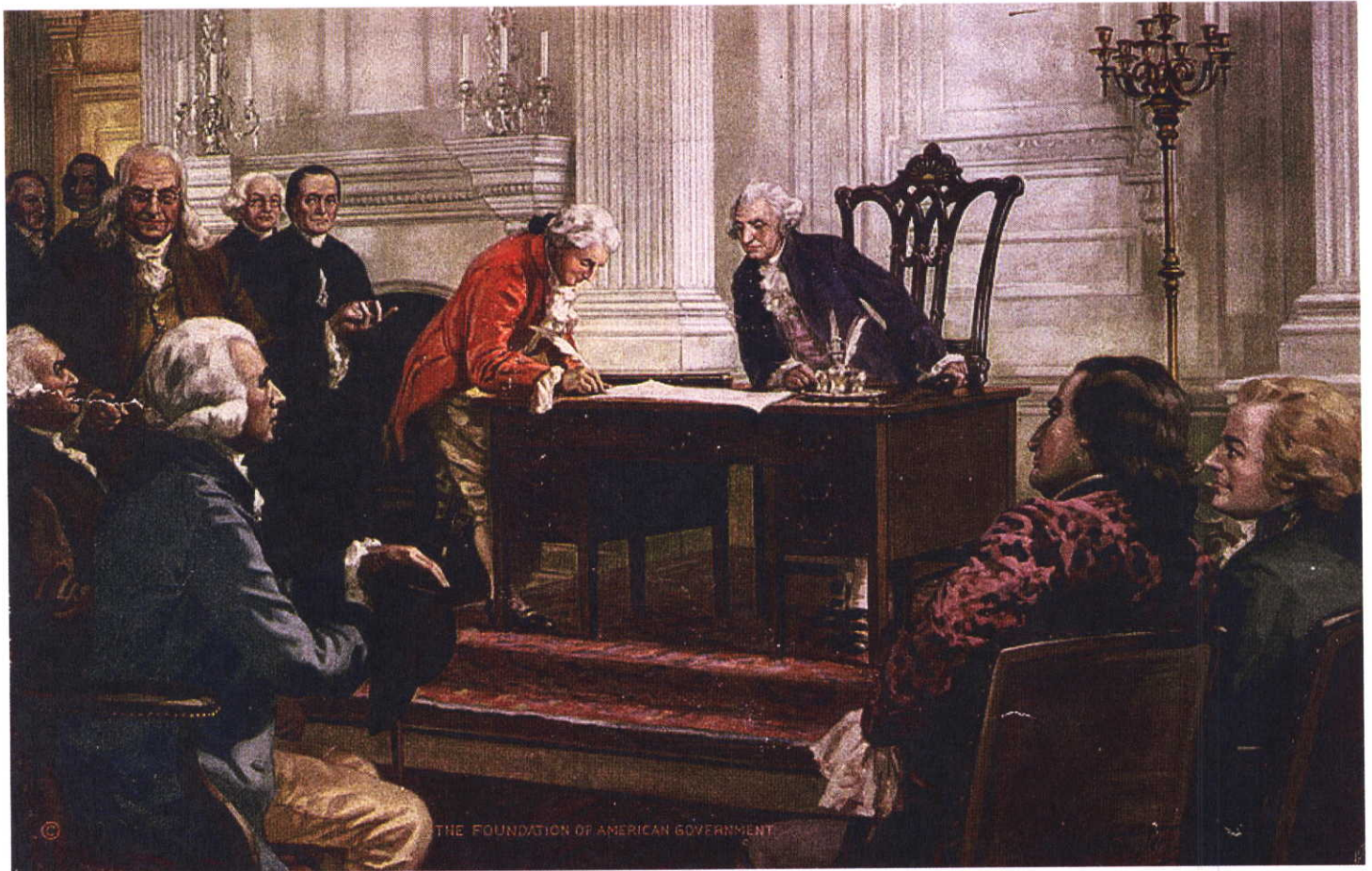
A few folks lost patience with all the talking, and they went home. But most of us kept at it. When we grew tired or lost hope, we looked at George Washington, sitting at the front of the room. The expression on his face said: You must go on! You must succeed!

And we did. After four months of thinking and talking and writing, we agreed on a new constitution. It began with these three words:



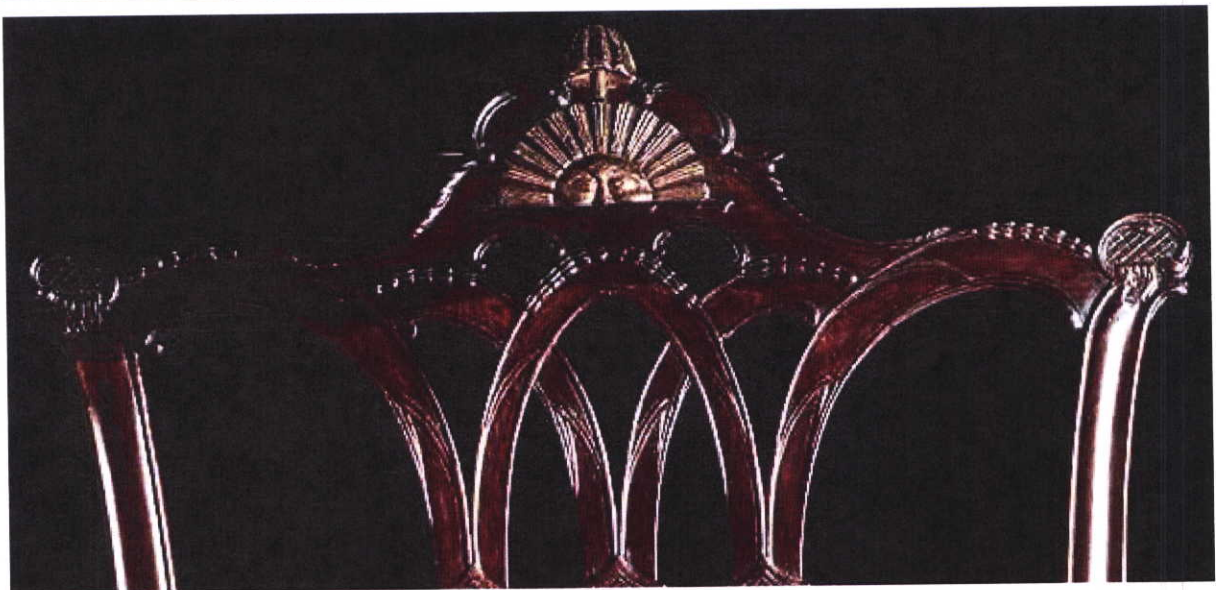
Yes, "*we the people*" had worked together. Now we had the rules and laws we needed to help us keep working together as a nation.

On the seventeenth of September, we gathered to sign the new Constitution. George Washington was the first to sign his name. Then the rest of us filed to the front of the room to sign. As he wrote his name, old Ben Franklin had tears in his eyes.





Before we all went home, Ben Franklin took one last look at the sun carved on the back of George Washington's chair. He had wondered if that was a rising sun or a setting sun. Now, he said, he knew for sure—it was a rising sun! The signing of our Constitution was the beginning of a glorious new day for the United States of America.





**We the People
of the United States,**





**in order to form
a more perfect Union,**



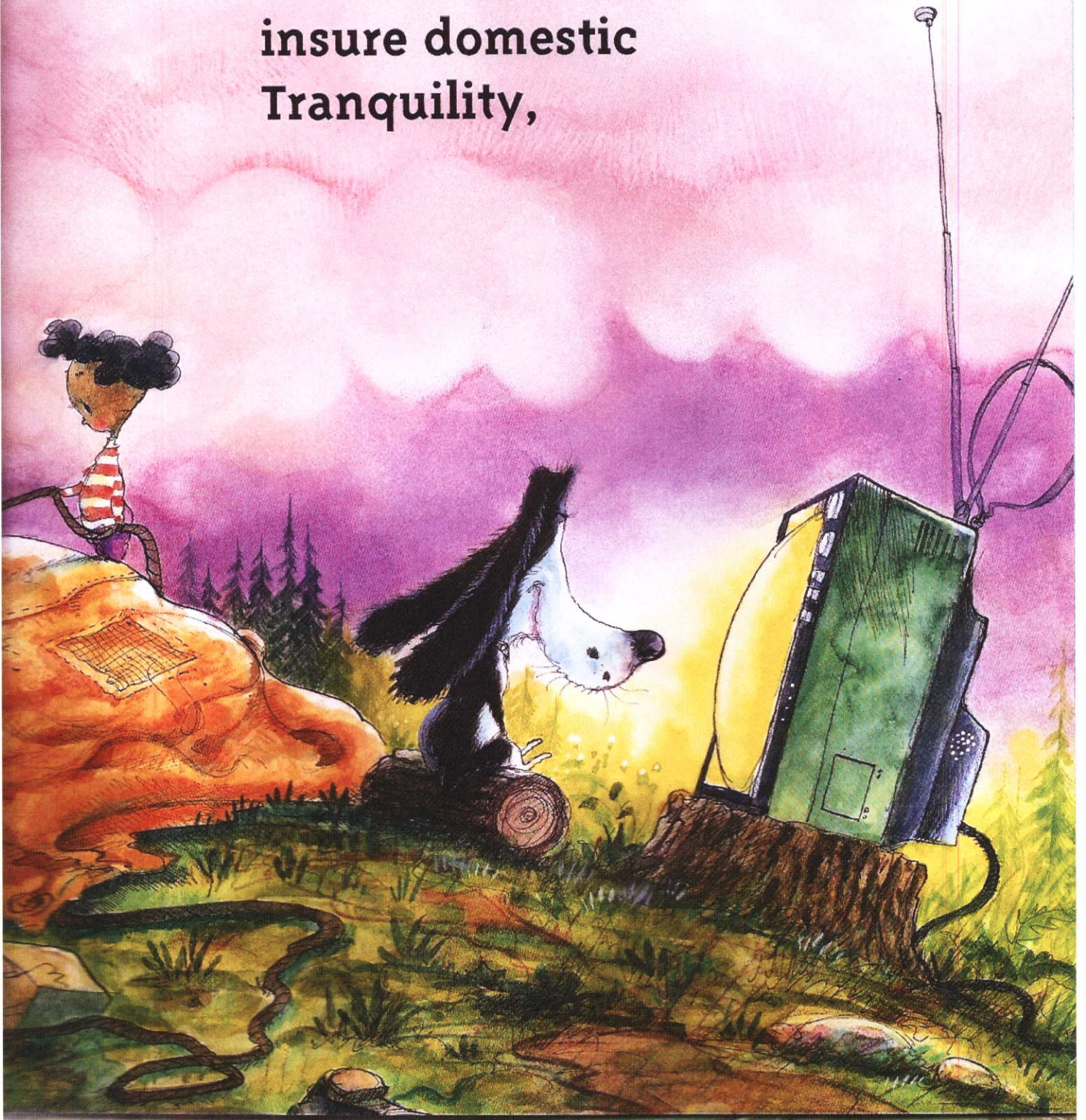


establish Justice,



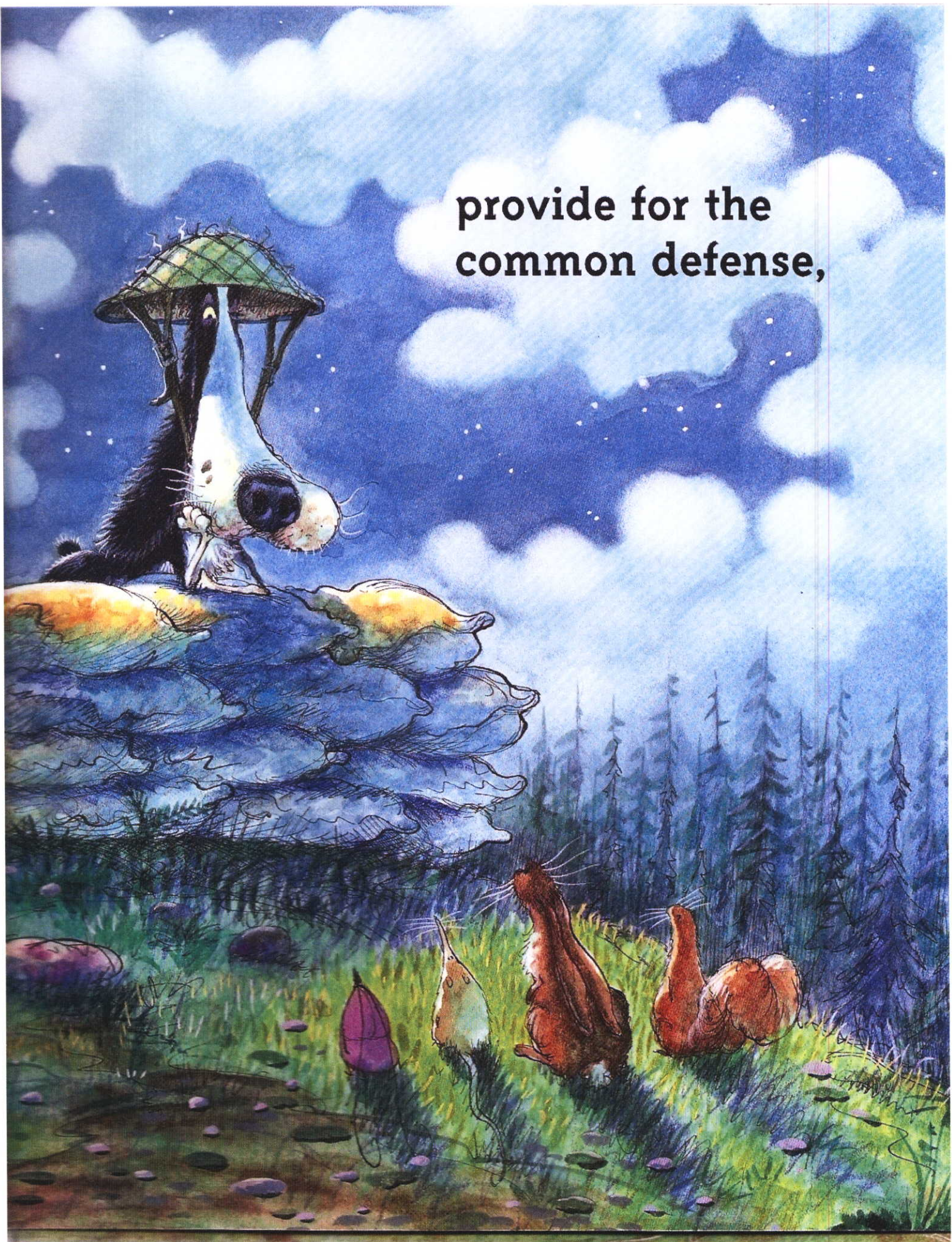


**insure domestic
Tranquility,**





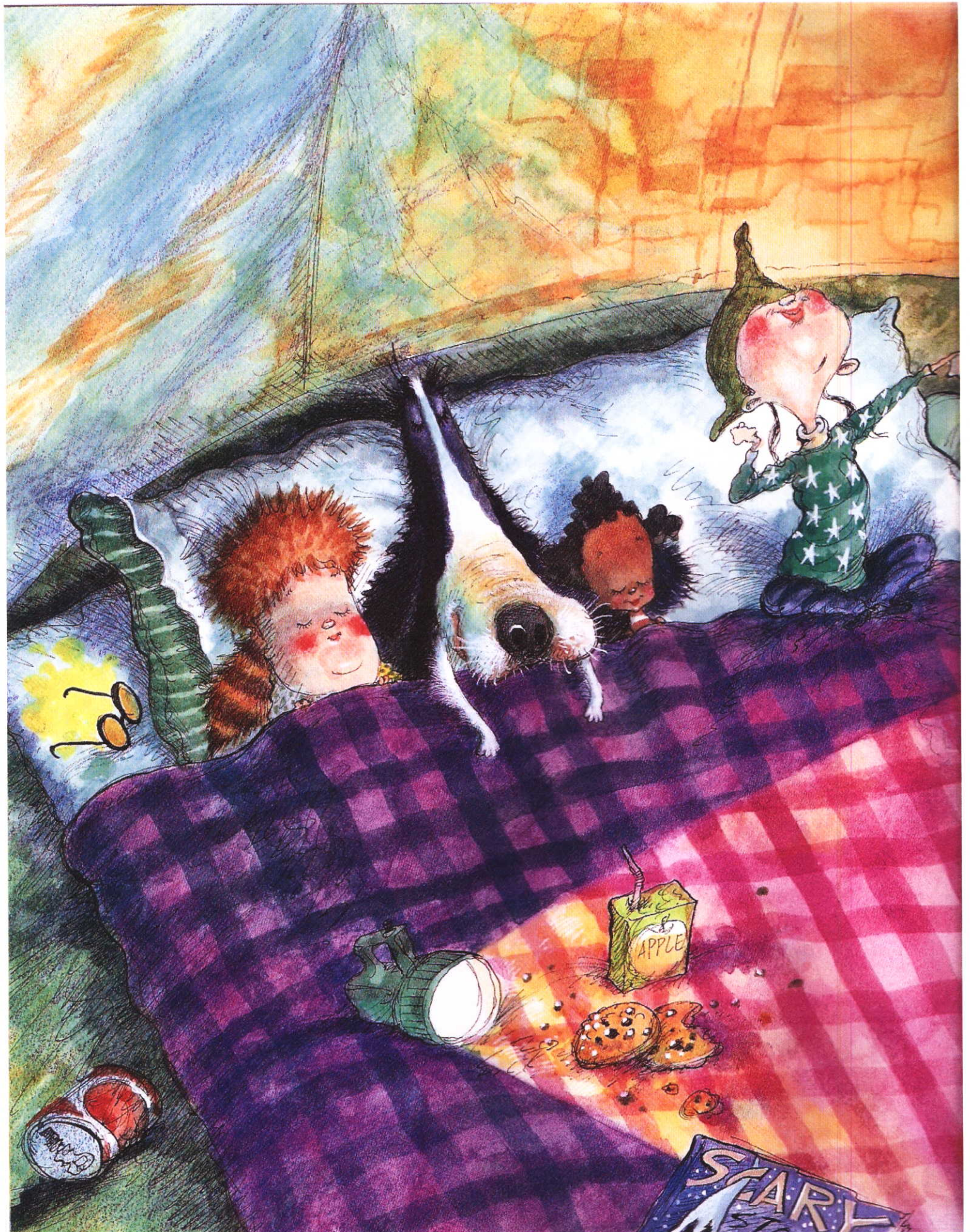
**provide for the
common defense,**

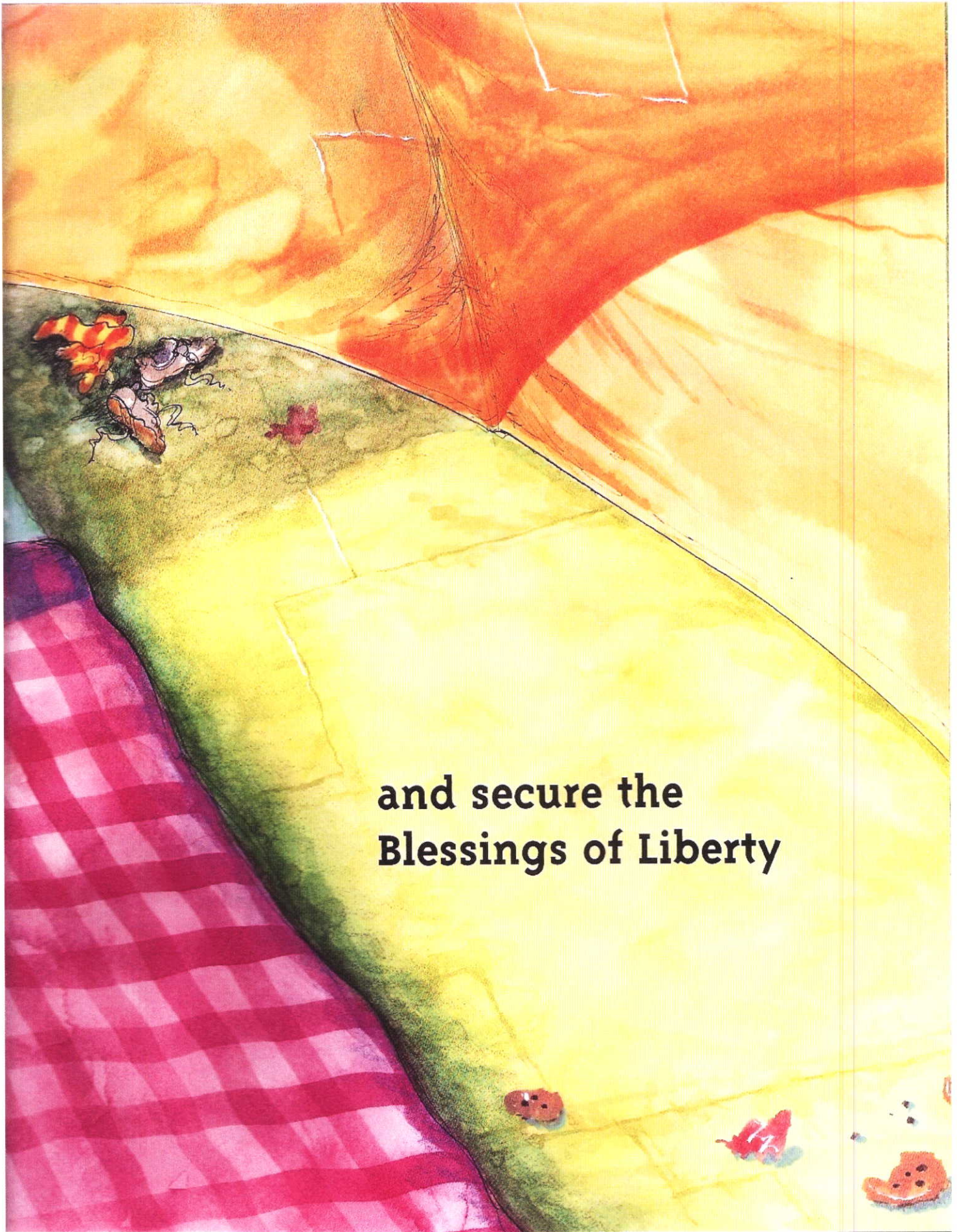




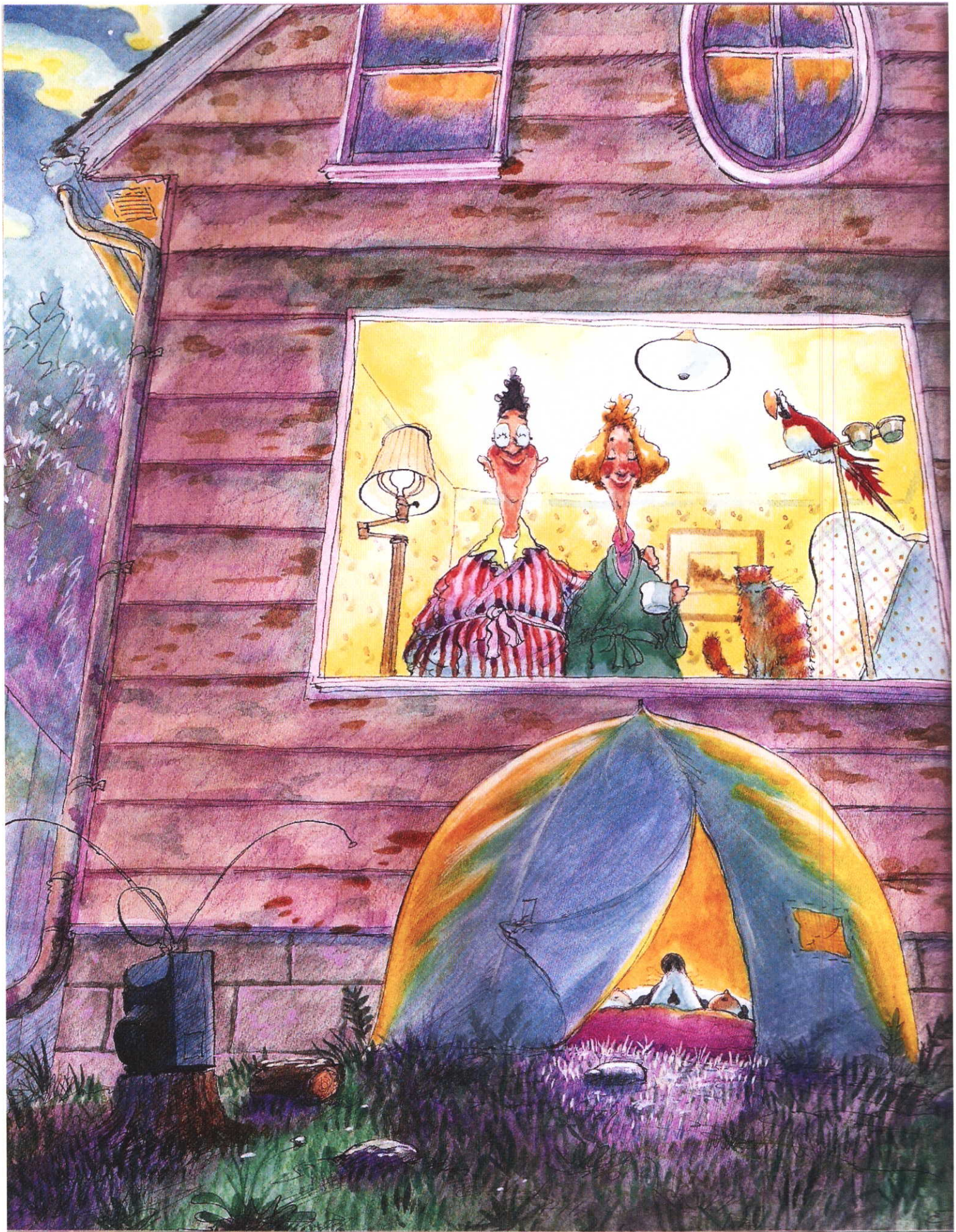
**promote the
general Welfare,**



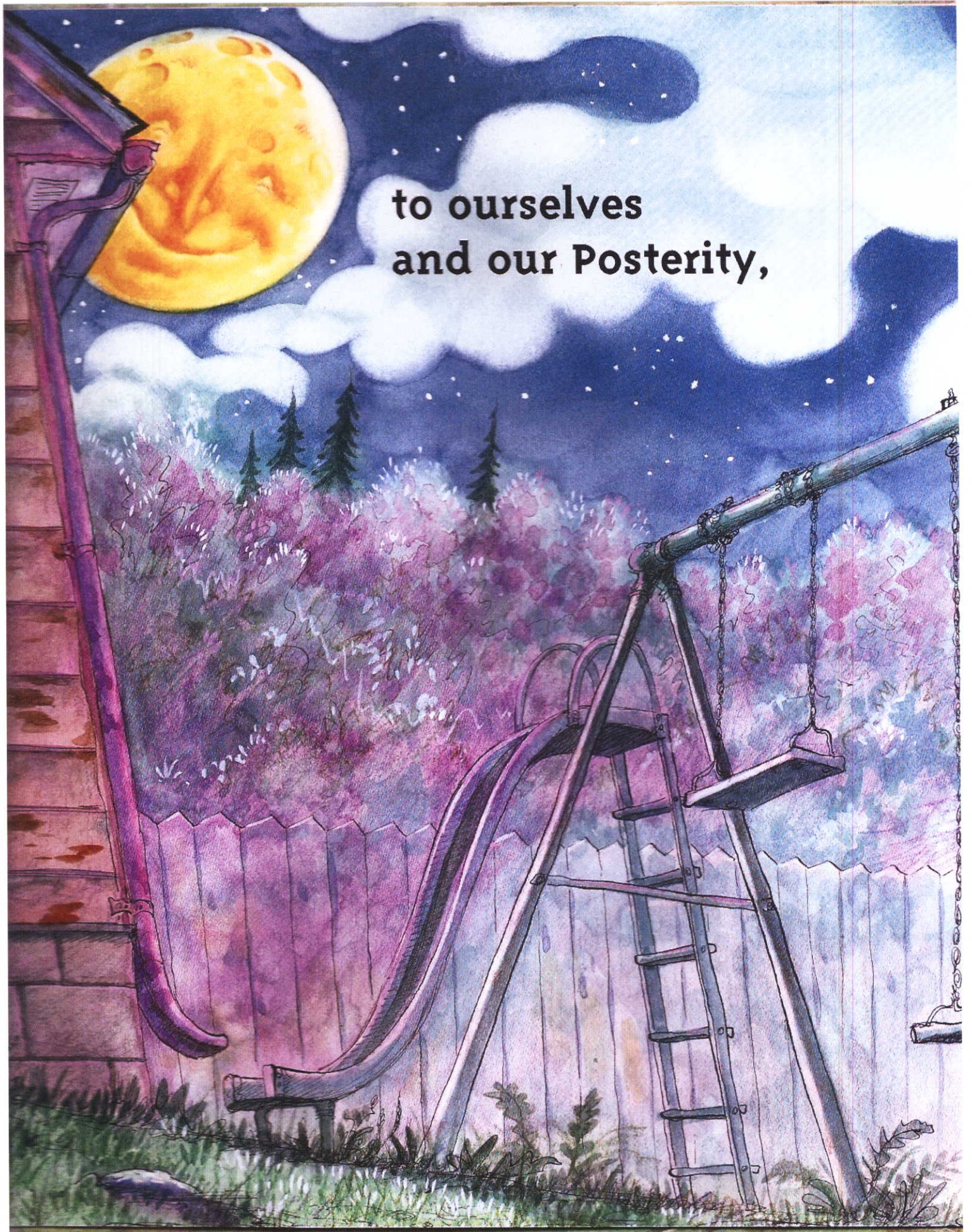




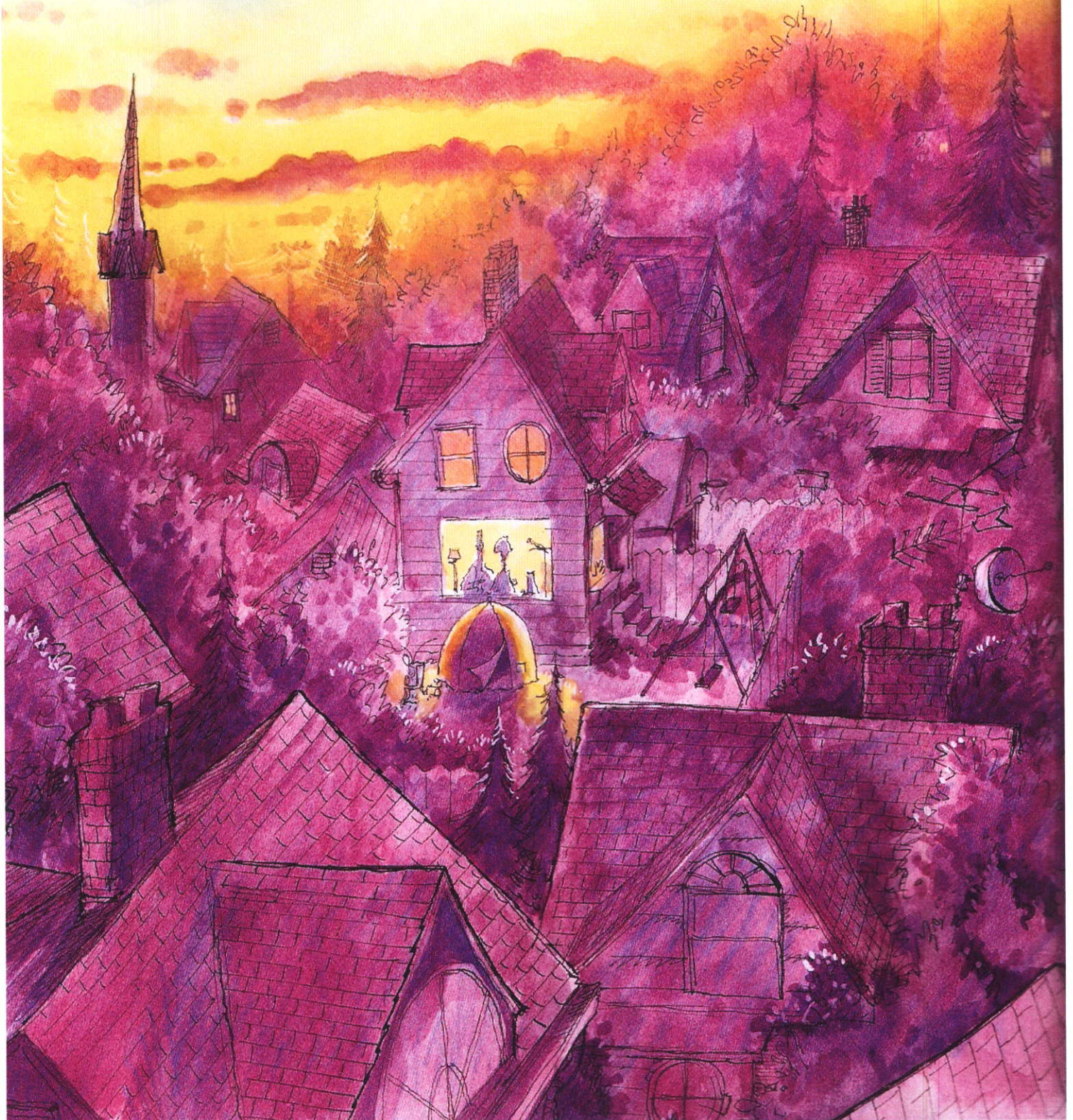
**and secure the
Blessings of Liberty**

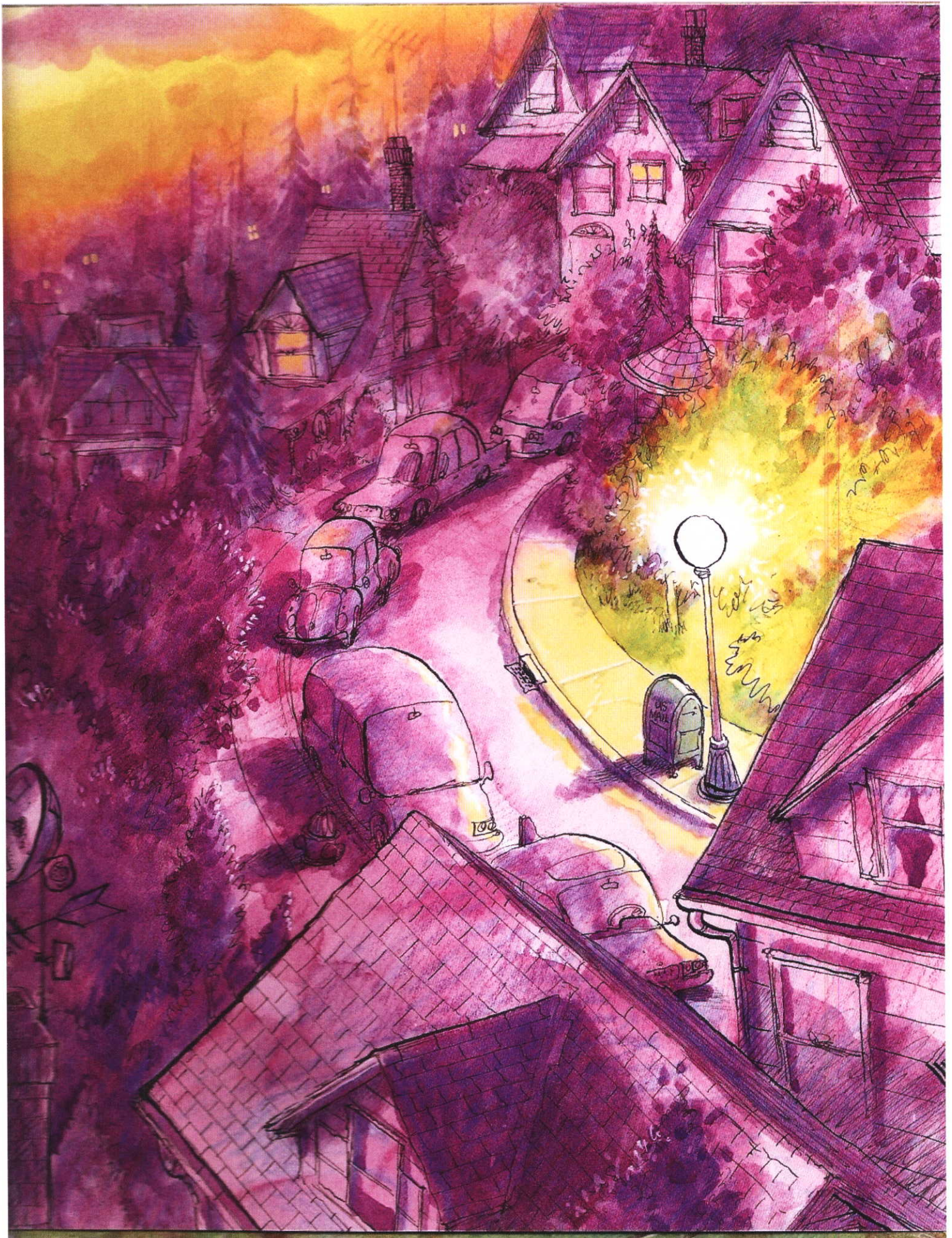


**to ourselves
and our Posterity,**



**do ordain and establish
this Constitution**





**for the United States
of America.**

