Proving the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence Adopted May 20, 1775 is not a Myth by Disclosing how the American Revolution was “Financed”

The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence is one of approximately 15 such declarations written in the spring of 1775 by a Colonial community in response to the Battle at Lexington. The Mecklenburg Declaration differed from others in that it actually declared the right for independence and asked the North Carolina delegates at the Philadelphia Continental Congress to move for independence. The declaration was drafted by some articulate Princeton graduates, and other important family members, who lived in the Mecklenburg area, all part of the Mecklenburg Committee of Safety. Responsible families like the Polk family whose genealogical trail included our 11th President James K. Polk were involved. It is believed that there were 28 signers of the Mecklenburg Declaration. The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence was the first declaration calling for independence known to have been presented to Continental Congress prior to the spring of 1776. During and after the Civil War, the North Carolina state flag bore the date May 20, 1775. This was done to show how proud north Carolinians were of their past participation in the struggle for independence. Unfortunately, no original copy of this document is known to exist and the authenticity of later drafts has been challenged by historians. No other declaration written during this time period has been so challenged.

The Mecklenburg Declaration is important as it involves secrets of how and why the nation’s Declaration of Independence was written. This history is complex and involves several major important aspects of the Revolution that have not been previously made known to the public, and probably our current government. Recently uncovered history, that has remained carefully filed for about 240 years will be used to more fully preserve the truth of the U.S. Declaration of Independence. This is not creating new history, but rather better describing the prior and unrevealed events. Napoleon Bonaparte explained how “the victors will write the history”. However, today there are many historians pouring over more material with the aid of the Internet and beginning to match pieces of history that would otherwise be lost. There is an objectivity that time can bring into the historical analysis that will undoubtedly lead to a better understanding of our past. The more accurately we understand our past, the better we can plan our future. We need the full, complete and accurate story.

The concept that we are the “Promised Land” of biblical reference, and the concept that virtually all the signers and many other prominent founding fathers identify themselves to be “Deist” is usually stereotyped rather than discovering the cause for this change in their outlook as participants in the Revolution. The unique role of the Bourbon Kings is stereotyped and misunderstood. There are numerous historical pieces of evidence that will cause us to better understand this aspect of what has historically happened. How often we
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fill in a piece of history based upon the insertion of a cultural stereotype will eventually become evident. When things are planned by man, they are easy to understand. When things are planned by a higher intelligence they are not easy to uncover. The motivation of the Bourbon Kings and their history will help to unlock more aspects of this current mystery. This story is an important piece of evidence and needs preservation. It is just a step as we learn about our complex past.

The modern state flag of North Carolina bears the date of the Mecklenburg Declaration, May 20, 1775. Even so, there are historians who believe it is a myth. The U.S. Declaration of Independence shares phrases and verbiage that are the same. Five copies of the Mecklenburg Declaration, the Mecklenburg Resolutions, and a letter to the three North Carolina delegates requesting that the Mecklenburg Declaration be laid before the Continental Congress were all delivered to Congress on June 20, 1775 by Captain James Jack. Two of the three delegates (i.e., William Hooper and Joseph Hughs) were not in favor of conflict and Captain James Jack was told that the document was too dangerous and was consequently instructed to take the Declaration back to Mecklenburg.¹ There is independent proof that the Mecklenburg Resolve was later in print in colonial newspapers.² Captain James Jack returned the copies to John McKnitt Alexander who stored them in his home. In 1800, John McKnitt Alexander's home burned to the ground, and the document lost to history. Subsequently, on September 3, 1800, John McKnitt Alexander constructed two copies from memory. One copy had been improved through the efforts of his son (Dr. Joseph McKnitt Alexander) who had checked with other surviving members of the Mecklenburg Committee of Safety (of the 28 who had composed, and then signed, this Declaration the day after they had received information about the battle in Lexington, Massachusetts).

The Mecklenburg Resolves, a separate document written May 31, 1775 only a few days after the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence are not disputed. The Resolves, also written by the Mecklenburg Committee of Safety, were written in response to Colonial Governor Josiah Martin seeking safety for himself in a British Ship off the coast of North Carolina, fifteen months prior of July 4, 1776. Thus, Royal Governor Martin had refused to call the Legislature to assemble, and this left North Carolina without British government. Governor Martin transmitted a copy of the Mecklenburg Resolves to England, which he described as "setting up a system of rule and regulation subversive of his majesty's government".³

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¹ Observed in Thomas Jefferson's letter of July 9, 1819 to John Adams and again John Adams Letter of August 6, 1819 to Timothy Pickering. William Hooper and Joseph Hughs were not in favor of conflict. Richard Caswell is the third delegate and he organizes the patriots for the Moore's Creek Bridge Battle on February 27, 1776.

² Mecklenburg Resolves printed in June 16, 1775 in the North Carolina Gazette and again on June 23, 1775 in the Cape-Fear Mercury. Colonial Governor Martin included a copy of the June 23, 1775 printing in his June 30, 1775 letter to his superior, Lord Dartmouth.

In 1774, when the NC Legislature had appointed three delegates to represent them at the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia, Royal Governor Martin’s authority was effectively challenged. Governor Martin recognized that the N.C. Militia was heavily influenced by the Legislature. In 1776, Governor Martin attempted to assemble a force of Tories to bolster 5,000 Troops that were to be sent to aid him by British General Howe. In response, Richard Caswell assembled a force of militia and ambushed the Tories at the Battle of Moore’s Creek Bridge on February 27, 1776. The majority of the promised 5,000 British Troops did not arrive in time to help Governor Martin, and the skirmish with the Tories ended up in a defeat and their capture by the Patriots. The British sailed on to a failed attempt to Capture Charleston, SC. Colonial Governor Dunmore’s similar request for Troops to help him in Virginia was never answered by General Howe.

Forty-plus years later (on April 30, 1819), the Raleigh North Carolina Register published the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence document that is said to have been adopted by the Committee of Mecklenburg County. There were a series of five letters that explained important parameters and established important known facts that make it almost possible to link the Mecklenburg and United States Declarations together. Newly uncovered information will make it possible to understand the need for secrecy and how well the Founding Fathers applied it. The first letter is from John Adams to Reverend Bentley in Salem on July 15, 1819, and indicates that Jefferson must have seen the Mecklenburg Resolutions since he “copied the spirit, the sense, and the expressions of it verbatim into his Declaration of the 4th of July, 1776” while likewise requesting Bentley to have the printer of the Gazette send him half dozen copies of the June 5th issue “whatever the costs”.

John Adams is convinced by the physical evidence on July 15, 1819 that this is where Thomas Jefferson learned of this information and copied it for the Draft Declaration of Independence. This story does account for this document’s travel from Mecklenburg County to Philadelphia. The four remaining letters capture the correspondence between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson regarding the subject of the “Mecklenburg Declaration” in the summer of 1819. The first letter is from Adams to Jefferson on June 22nd, 1819: “May I inclose you one of the greatest curiosity and one of the deepest Mystery’s that have ever occurred to me. It is in the Essex Register of June 5, 1819. It is entitled from the Raleigh Register Declaration of Independence. How is it possible that this paper should have been concealed from me to this day? Had it been communicated to me at the time of it, I know, if you do not know, that it would have been printed in every Whig News-paper on this Continent. You know if I had possessed it, I would have made the Halls of Congress Echo and re-echo, with it fifteen months before your Declaration of Independence.” Thus he confronts Thomas Jefferson with a type of exuberance that John Adams thinks is appropriate.

The second letter is from Jefferson to Adams on July 9, 1819 in which he responds to Adam’s letters of May 21st and 27th before responding to June 22nd. (The quote is selected

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4 See page 173 of “American Scripture” by Pauline Maier. Her note 37 is on page 173 is explains on page 277 that the letter to Reverend Bentley was written on July 15, 1819.
based upon its relevance to July 9th) “But what has attracted my peculiar notice is the paper from Mecklenburg county of N. Carolina, published in the Essex Register which you were so kind as to inclose in your last of June 22. And you seem to think it genuine. I believe it spurious, I deem it to be a very unjustifiable quiz, like that of the volcano, so minutely related to us as having broken out in N. Carolina, some half dozen years ago, in that part of the country, and perhaps in that very county of Mecklenburg, for I do not remember it’s locality.” Jefferson proceeds to develop arguments that he believes will support the sudden appearance of a competitive Declaration. However, Jefferson’s arguments demonstrate how the story of the Mecklenburg Declaration was a surprise to him.

The third letter is from Adams to Jefferson on July 21, 1819: “I am greatly obliged to you for your letter of the 9th. It has entirely convinced me that the Mecklenburg Resolutions are a fiction. When I first read them in the Essex Register, I was struck with astonishment. It appeared to me utterly incredible that they should be genuine; but there were so many circumstances calculated to impose on the public, that I thought it my duty to take measures for the detection of the imposture. For this purpose I instantly enclosed the Essex Register to you, knowing that if you had either seen, or heard of these resolutions, you would have informed me of it. As they are unknown to you, they must have been unknown to all Mankind. I have sent a Copy of your letter to Salem, not to be printed but to be used as decisive authority for the Editor to correct his error in the Essex Register.”

Adams begins to think of who might want to damage him or Jefferson. What purpose could such a document serve? The search for a motive causing someone to make this document begins. The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence carries a date fifteen month prior to the Declaration of Independence. No malicious purpose for this document has been acknowledged or discovered. The detail of what Dr. Alexander had reconstructed includes some 28 signers of this Declaration. There were many family members to support the writing of this document when it was constructed and published by Dr. Alexander. These families are still families of significant importance to North Carolina. Without Congress reading this document, there is no way John Adams or Thomas Jefferson could have responded differently. The transaction which placed a copy of the Mecklenburg Declaration into interested hands was not obvious to Congress.

The fourth and final letter on the topic is from Adams to Jefferson, and is written on July 28, 1819: (I quote) “I inclose you a National Register, to convince you that the Essex Register is not to blame for printing the Mecklenburg County Resolutions. On the contrary I think it to be commended, for if those Resolutions were genuine, they ought to be published in every Gazette in the World. If they are one of those tricks which our fashionable Men in England call hoax’es and boares, they ought to be printed in all American journal, exposed to public resentment, and the Author of them hunted to his dark Cavern. For altho you and I should as easily believe that a flaming Brand might be thrust into a Magazine of Powder without producing an Explosion, as that those Resolutions could have passed in 1775; had it been known to any member of Congress in 1776. And if they were not known to you, as I am sure they were not, it
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is impossible they were known to any other Member. I am, Sir, whether at you first, or second home, always affably. Respectfully your Friend. John Adams"

The matter is closed by John Adams smoothing over what he had first expressed as surprise. There is no effort by either John Adams, or Thomas Jefferson, to further examine the people who in North Carolina might be able to verify the existence of the Declaration and explain how this could happen. The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence was not read or shown to Congress on June 20, 1775. Thomas Jefferson did not report into Congress until June 21, 1775. The newspapers of that day had no means of examining the accuracy of this story. Today we have the advantage of discussing news by phone, watching the TV, and seeking for more information on the internet, and from additional witnesses coming forward on the record. The two most probable individuals, who could provide us with details how this happened, do not discuss any cause. It would appear that neither knew anything more! Once this is proven (i.e., that the Declaration of Independence had to be approved by a clandestine agent), then at that point the infusion of phrases and verbiage will have had both a purpose and cause that resulted in the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence appearing as it was if plagiarized (rather than memorized and agreed to as a signal to King Louis XVI in France) and we will know how it happened. This will then provide us with an opportunity better evaluate John Adams’ message in his letter of June 22, 1819, to Thomas Jefferson, and again on July 15, 1819 in his letter to Reverend Bentley.

When the Second Continental Congress opened and replaced the First, it moved down the same street in Philadelphia from Carpenter Hall to the Pennsylvania State House (Independence Hall) on May 10, 1775. A secret meeting took place after the formal meeting, and the concept of a Continental Dollar was first presented. There were no Banks in America, and notes had been restricted by Britain (i.e., permission to print any notes had to be gained by requesting authority from Britain). The knowledge about currency was primarily European. The French had substantial experience. The term Dollar is Spanish, and that recognition provides us with the logic that a foreign representative (connected with at least Spain) was putting forth this concept, and likewise a clandestine agent to explain how it will work. There is no formal record of anyone being in Congress from either France, or Spain. The purpose of a clandestine agent is to remain secret. This type of secrecy had an extensive history in France. This kind of agent was to operate without leaving a trail. Substantial planning and thought is required to establish and maintain this type of discipline. This agent must have youth and a name that does not associate him with

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5 Journal of Continental Congress, Vol. 2, and page 18, first item of the day recorded is Thomas Jefferson’s arrival.
6 In 1829 Thomas Jefferson letter of July 9, 1819 was published and so aroused the North Carolina legislature in 1830-31 that a committee was organized to investigate. Thomas G. Polk, chairman organized the fiftieth anniversary celebration and gathered substantial evidence to support the contention the declaration was authentic
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either France, or Spain, thereby aiding his invisibility. This agent will be connected (via) lineage in a manner that allows him to share a common mission with all the parties.\(^7\)

The clandestine agent’s discussion about the Continental Dollar was interrupted when Captain James Jack delivered the Mecklenburg Declaration to Continental Congress on June 20, 1776.\(^8\) During the interruption, the clandestine agent was able to quickly see the value of the Mecklenburg Declaration, as the North Carolina delegates moved toward the desk of President John Hancock, and Captain James Jack met with the delegates and President Hancock. The Mecklenburg Declaration is a short document, and the agent would have been impressed (as John Adams reflects in his letter of June 22, 1819 to Thomas Jefferson, or on July 15, 1819 to Reverend Bentley upon reading only a part of it). This was a document that was valuable to him and would provide King Louis XVI with confidence that the Revolution was ready. He would promise Captain James Jack that he intended to utilize one copy of it for the benefit of the Revolution. The agent was a Mason\(^9\) (as was Captain James Jack), and the agent could have requested that they not make this document public knowledge, which would account for the document being hidden long after the Revolution.

The clandestine agent has a name and his return to Europe was for the purpose of obtaining Gold to back the Revolution. Jacob Becker was the clandestine agent, returning to release this Gold that could ship without arousing a lot of European suspicion.\(^10\) He is not French, nor Spanish, but related to the Bourbons. His family fled in 1244 as the last of the Cathar to exist in safety to live with their fellow Jews. This is a special hoard of Gold that has been brought to Caves in France. This Gold was dedicated to the building of a “Promised Land”. The completion of the mission was far more important than any personal credit. The fear that the mission would be captured by people who would use the Gold for alternate purposes made it necessary to employ strict personal self-discipline. The Templars had filled the caves and would develop the Masonic Order that would assist in building the House not built with Hands.

As he sailed back to Europe, the clandestine agent used the Mecklenburg Declaration to construct a signal for King Louis XVI that would communicate the following important objectives had been completed after his return to America. The signed Declaration of Independence would signal: the objective of **Unity of the new Nation had been secured; the Colonies that needed to be prepared, had been visited and prepared;** that **serious**

\(^7\) Portrait known as “Washington meets with his staff on October 14” that has been displayed at Yorktown Battlefield Museum next to painting of General Lincoln taking the Yorktown Surrender.


\(^10\) This Gold is discussed in Caron de Beaumarchais letter to the Committee of Secret Correspondence dated 18 August 1776. When Caron hears of the Signed Declaration of Independence, it is his clue to write this letter. By mentioning this Gold in the context he uses, his is disclosing that his letter is a part of the planned activity.
political obstacles had been resolved or removed; a “Secret Treaty” signed, and the information leak from Congress to Parliament and the King of England had been contained. These objectives had been discovered by way of applying the nine principles of warfare to improve the chances of victory. This assured King Louis XVI that the risk he was about to take had been minimized. While it was important to send the supplies before it was too late, it was also important not to send them too early. These same objectives can be located within Silas Deane’s letter (dated 18 August 1776) to the Committee of Secret Correspondence. Deane’s letter reflects the worrying that would occur after the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, until this knowledge reached those waiting ears in Europe.

This communications lag time has enabled us to demonstrate the implementation of planning in France. A secret plan can begin to disappear if the communication’s lag time is not acknowledged carefully. Silas Deane is not repeating what they said in America, but what they said in France (before they knew what happened in America) and tells of the worry in France because it was planned in France. The role of a Clandestine Agent with enormous influence, financial aid, military aid, and valuable insight, was assisting the birth of this country, and is also reflected in the Silas Deane letter. Deane records Count Vergennes (on the subject of Independency) as stating “That, as to Independency, it was an event in the womb of time, and it would be highly improper for him to say anything on that subject, until it had actually taken place” (remark made on July 11, 1776 in France, after the birth had occurred on July 4, 1776 in Philadelphia, which the Count would not have known had already occurred).11

The relationship of France, Spain, and their common utilization of Caron de Beaumarchais and his firm, (Roderique Hortalez & Co.) were pillars helping to support our Revolution, yet are not provided any credit because what they did has remained secret. The common image of King Louis XVI of France, and of King Carlos III of Spain, is that they always were in pursuit of self-interest, even as they hated Britain. Their connection with Caron de Beaumarchais is extremely unique. This is not a business man, but a musician, the author of Operas. The Bourbon family compacts that existed have not been considered relevant to the American Revolution, principally because we have failed to study the struggles inside France and Spain as part of the history of the United States of America at the time of the Revolutionary War.

We have record of the Military Officers supplied from France who were sent to aide us in the Revolution. A clandestine officer sent by the Bourbon Kings to aid the Revolution would logically have been assigned to aide Congress, even as it is logical that we have no open record. By July 2, 1776, all thirteen states had provided their delegates with the necessary authority to do the two of the three tasks involved in Richard Henry Lee’s Independence Resolution which was made on June 7, 1776.

11 Page 36, The Diplomatic Correspondence of the Revolutionary War, Vol. 1, by Jarred Sparks – from Dean’s 18 Aug. 1776 letter. Comment made on July 11, 1776 using a calendar to align the dates cited in the letter.
After the clandestine agent had returned to America, he began to complete each objective. On April 4, 1776 the fourth provincial government met in Halifax, North Carolina. The document that would become known as the Halifax Resolves was written by a committee of seven delegates (visited by the clandestine agent who advised them to add authority for delegates to sign a treaty with foreign powers). On April 12, 1776 the provisional government of 83 delegates passed the Halifax Resolution, thereby providing the Delegates the authority to vote for Independence from Britain, and sign treaties with foreign powers. Virginia would pass their authority for the delegates on May 15, 1776. Following that, three Congressional committees of the Continental Congress were appointed on June 11, 1776. One committee of five was appointed to write a Declaration of Independence. A second committee was appointed to write the Articles of Confederation. This Confederation document required ratification by the States. The third committee was appointed to draft a treaty with a foreign power. From the hand of John Adams, in a letter to Timothy Pickering (written on August 6, 1822), we learn that a treaty was written for France. The objective of the treaty with a foreign power is an idea that appears before it is part of Richard Henry Lee’s resolution of June 7, 1776 and left out of the 10th May 1776 resolution and the 15th May 1776 Resolution of Independence that were written after the April 12, 1776 Halifax Resolution.

Since the concept that the French and Spanish contributed heavily to the Revolution may be new to many of the people who will likely read this article, let us explain that their agent Caron de Beaumarchais managed the firm Roderique Hortalez & Co. which shipped 200 Brass Cannon, 70 Brass Mortar, 25,000 Muskets, 25,000 Tents, enough material for 40,000 Uniforms, 2,000 tons of Gunpowder, with enough munitions to sustain them in battle. This is just the first shipment, and is all out of the French Armory. None of these items could be made in America. If we were to successfully win against the British, we had to purchase these materials on the open market, but the open market did not have this quantity and quality to sell. The Brass Cannon were smooth bore which meant that the cannon balls could be sized to fit. The muskets were smooth bore weapons. One could load and shoot them in about 20 seconds. A rifle has a spiral bore, which caused the ball to be rammed into place, and would require about one minute to load. The need to obtain such a supply was necessary to enable the citizens of America to unite and fight. The risk of an Olive Branch Petition had been rendered because it was thought to be the only way one could survive without Armament and gunpowder. All the military encounters during 1775 and 1776, were accomplished with sparse amounts of ammunition and powder, thereby requiring the American commander to consider this disadvantage before planning to engage the enemy. The military objective had to include the concept of living to fight another day. This action required extreme secrecy to work. Intelligence information can

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12 See letter from John Adams to Timothy Pickering dated August 6, 1822. Fact is noted about midway in the letter.
13 See “Supplying Washington’s Army”, by Erna Ruch, published by Center of Military History, United States Army, Chapter 12, Supply of Ordnance and Ordnance Stores.
only work when it is correctly understood and applied. The facts and information about this secret operation required the 15th May 1776 Resolution of Independence, signed by John Hancock, President be identified, which has taken 240 years. The necessity of relating this history is at least 100 years behind the plans that were made to inform the public. Plans have a way of continuing to function especially when they are left to hands that do not belong to man.

Of special importance is a document that pre-dates the more popular July 4, 1776 Declaration of Independence. It is the 15th May 1776 Resolution of Independence, and it is signed by John Hancock, President. It was returned to Silas Deane’s family and given to the Connecticut Historical Society. They had filed it by date with his additional papers. It was a product of the 10th May, 1776 Resolution on the subject of Independence, as proposed by John Adams. The Journal of Continental Congress attests to the resolution’s passage, and only a printing in a Colonial newspaper. This signed document was sent to Silas Deane to present to King Louis XVI at Versailles. The clandestine agent had let it be known that we needed to pass legislation providing for Independence and present it to King Louis XVI in order to obtain the Armament and gunpowder we needed to fight the British. While the clandestine agent was busy in Virginia, and assisting them with legislation that permitted their delegates the authority “to vote for Independence and approve treaties with foreign powers”, it was on May 15, 1776, that Congress was busy passing this 15th May 1776 Resolution of Independence. [A printed copy of the 15th May Resolution of Independence that was printed by Dunlap (he printed the Declaration of Independence) has been uncovered in the North Carolina Archives.14] Subsequently, the clandestine agent returned to Philadelphia and related that this document is not sufficient; rather they need a Declaration of Independence. The importance of the 15th May 1776 Resolution of Independence is diminished as they learn it will not cause the release of the Armament and gunpowder. While Silas Deane’s letter of 18 August 1776 (published date – letter started July 27, 1776)15 relates “The resolution of Congress of the 15th May, is not considered by the ministry to be a declaration of independence, but only a step a previous step, and until this decisive step is taken, I can do little more to any purpose.”16 This uncovered document makes the message in Silas Deane letter historic, and allows us to prove that a clandestine agent was in America with substantial power.

The most difficult management decision that one can make is to alter a decision that is made. The 15th May 1776 Resolution of Independence, signed by John Hancock, President

14 See website www.ncessar.org and the article posted relating to New Information on the Declaration of Independence. Digital copies of both 15th May 1776 Resolutions are posted along with additional information.
15 A calendar of June, July, and August 1776 is needed to obtain the date significance that is folded into Silas’s letter.  
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is scrapped after it is shipped to Silas Dean to present to King Louis XVI and it is replaced without any mention of feedback from France. The entire Continental Congress was completely involved in the management of scrapping a course of action and legislating for the Declaration of Independence that the clandestine agent, Jacob Becker outlined to Thomas Jefferson for authoring. Jacob would then amend the document with Congress, so Armament and desperately needed gunpowder can be supplied. This reversal of position could not have been accomplished with a representative for France and Spain to guide them. We have always considered this Declaration to be the sole product of the American mind. The concept that we were aided and capable of altering our intension in this task is a major realignment of our concept of American history. However, we should applaud Continental Congress because it was capable of very quickly altering their plan, so they could win. Americans are known as being able to modify their approach when it is alters the outcome between winning and losing. This is a culturally unique ability that marks Americans.

Once it becomes clear that the 15th May 1776 Resolution of Independence effort had been scrapped; and events leading to the July 4th Declaration of Independence are complete before reaction from France could have been received; and there was a person with the authority to sign a treaty with the delegates for a foreign power present with Continental Congress; the unique proceeding becomes logical. When one compares John Adams’ May 10th resolution of Independence with Richard Henry Lee’s, there are three major changes. First, the United Colonies becomes the United States of America, and there is a call for Independence in each; Secondly, that measures should be immediately taken for procuring the assistance of foreign Powers; and thirdly, a Confederation be formed to bind the colonies more closely together. Now the effort of the clandestine agent can be clearly seen ahead of the famous statement by Richard Henry Lee. The principle of war relating to Unity of Command is advanced by the pursuit of Confederation and a new name that promotes unity. This follows the prophecy of Genesis Chapter 48. (President George Washington places his hand on this part of the Bible when taking the oath of office.)

The Draft Declaration of Independence was approved by the clandestine agent with Thomas Jefferson as he wrote it; and it was laid before Congress on June 28, 1776. In addition, there were important items added that are not considered to have been natural for Thomas Jefferson to have incorporated. John Adams relates in his letter to Timothy Pickering (dated August 6, 1822), how he sensed that the Slavery issue in Jefferson’s Draft would become a problem, but he did not attempt to encourage him to take it out. (We know that John Adams had discussed matters with the agent, who previously had the task of telling him that his 15th May proposal would not work.) We learn how Thomas Jefferson sat with the other members of the committee of five as the Draft Declaration was being revised (and approved by the clandestine agent and other members of Continental Congress). Thomas Jefferson reveals his behavior to James Madison in a letter dated August 30, 1823.

John Adams in his August 6th letter reveals that he personally approved of the Slavery as Thomas Jefferson had written in the draft Declaration. However, it should be noted that the
15th May 1776 Resolution of Independence does not include any comment about slavery by John Adams. Thomas Jefferson never attempted to push against slavery after that, although he would have an opportunity to advance this issue later in his life. The 15th May Resolution does not include the information that is in the Draft Declaration of Independence. The complaint that the King is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to complete the work of death, desolation, and tyranny; already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & Perfidy; scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages; and totally unworthy of the Head of a civilized nation, is another statement which distinguishes the Declaration over the Resolution. This type of information is not easy to link with Thomas Jefferson’s personal history.

The clandestine agent had been raised in a German Jewish ghetto, and had been trained as a Hessian Soldier, so that he could walk the streets as a free man. His feeling about slavery and the use of Mercenaries prompted him to call out the use of Mercenaries to the World, and to attempt to abolish slavery. He is the party who devised the secret treaty with the French that was signed on July 4, 1776, there is also information showing who was on that committee. This accounts for the many statements about the signing the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. In point of fact, they all did sign the engrossed Declaration of Independence on or after August 2, 1776 and they signed “Secret Treaty Number One” on July 4, 1776 with the clandestine agent as one of the pages of the Declaration of Independence that now known as “Secret Treaty Number One”.

The clandestine agent had sworn Congress to secrecy thereby making himself the responsible party to make the secrets public after his death, thus he constructed a plan to properly make this happen. The name of the clandestine agent is Jacob Becker as previously mentioned. As a direct descendant I have substantial family based verbal history pertaining to Jacob Becker planning for this information, which the government does not possess. In 1971, the late Larry A. Becker, my younger brother was requested to sign an Amendment to “Secret Treaty Number One” with President Richard M. Nixon. Larry was working as a volunteer for Army Intelligence when this request was made. As Army Intelligence he had to submit to very strict security practices. Larry requested that President Nixon replace him with our father as he should be the party to sign. President Nixon refused and Larry found himself in a position where he had no rights and was pressed to sign this Amendment to Secret Treaty Number One on August 15, 1971 at the White House that allowed the US to go off the Gold Standard. Larry was permitted to see Jacob Becker’s file prior to the signing. Larry was able to merge the family information with what he had learned from Jacob’ secret file. Larry shared his information with his father and older brother (Vietnam Veteran, 1st Lt. QM Officer) as it was history of our family that should have been releasable.

17 The Secretary of the Treasury, John Connelly was invited to Camp David the weekend before and briefed. He was not present for this secret signing. The Treasurer of the United States, Dorothy Andrews Elston died of a heart attack on July 7, 1971.
Jacob’s personal plans to release information first encountered a snag when his home in Lancaster County was burnt in the night in 1832, during the Anti-Masonic Party riots. The government files confirmed the nature and importance of the valuable information lost in that fire. The family information confirmed how much anguish this had cost Jacob. Jacob Becker and Catherine Becker had moved with only the oldest son Henry and his wife and family to Montgomery County, Ohio as a result of the fire. Jacob was age 76 at the time of this move. The last signer of the Declaration of Independence passed in 1832, Jacob was the last surviving party to the writing of the U S Declaration of Independence. Larry had read evidence that Jacob Becker had the Original Declaration of Independence stored with his rifle and that it has been lost in the house fire.

Thus it become clear that Secret Treaty Number One was signed as the place to put the signature for the original Declaration of Independence that was signed on July 4, 1776. The original Draft of the Declaration (the fair copy by Thomas Jefferson) was included with the original and changes that allowed for the original draft to be revised into the printed Duncan Broadside copy of the Declaration of Independence that was distributed on July 8, 1776. This is why the famous painting shows a Declaration of Independence consisting of more than one page. This is why Thomas Jefferson is so insistent that the Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776. This confirms the logic behind the letter to John Vaughn of September 16, 1825 by Thomas Jefferson assuring Vaughn that “someday when all the copies were assembled the “fair copy of the draft declaration” would be found.”

The Amendment to “Secret Treaty Number One” was signed at the White House on August 15, 1971 and it allowed the United States of America to go off the Gold Standard. This is a change that was not handled as it should have been as Larry, our father, and myself knew, that Section VI, Article II of the US Constitution was written to be followed. In 1982, I convinced Larry to run for the 19th Congressional seat for Pennsylvania. If Larry had won, the family would have had a way to address the reality that Secret Treaty Number One had not been handled correctly. Larry was familiar with the information inside of Secret Treaty Number One and determined to personally see that the terms of this treaty were correctly honored.

In 1994, after a formal request to the National Archives for information they had on Jacob Becker, I received a formal notice that “Due to the Fire during the War of 1812 all of his records had been burnt”. I was in the middle of submitting my application for the National Society of the Sons of the Revolution. My friends who happened to be Civil War rein actors convinced me to hire a professional researcher, as that was what they most often had to use. With their help, I arranged for Norma M. C. Gransee to research the National Archives. On her first search, unusual articles were discovered which lead her to suggest that if I would

19 Receipts from Norma Gransee and listing of items sent from archives to me. Items from Dark side of Revolution not listed, sent separately. See www.ncssar.com website.
Proof the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence is Not a Myth

give her permission, she would inquire with the "Dark side of the Revolution" personnel inside the Revolutionary War library of the National Archives. When Norma made her request, the US Army Officer demanded to know where I had learned that Jacob Becker was associated with a file by the name of National Record – 14 or as abbreviated, NR-14.

They agreed to provide me with some papers if I provided them with this information. The knowledge that I had this information had been delivered by one of the NSDAR researchers as they requested information for me in 1993 through the National Archives in response to a request from Nancy Burkey, Registrar General for the NSDAR. Nancy was assisting me in putting my application together for NSSAR. This US Army Officer had sat for over one year with this question. He had feared an exchange of information involving Nancy would have caused a firestorm as the act of attempting to classify important information about the Revolution could not prevail if known by the public. Nancy’s request to the NSDAR genealogist had been to find information about Jacob Becker who was associated with NR-14. No information ever came back to Nancy. The exchange was made in 1994 thru Norma. Most all of the papers provided were about others also named Jacob Becker who were also revolutionary soldiers. None of the documents contained any marking identifying them as classified and were not related to military matters of importance, except one letter from Major General Timothy Pickering to Robert Morris dated August 14, 1782. This letter reported a short conversation about a thread issue that Major General Timothy Pickering had discussed with Jacob Becker. Have a difficult time understanding how documents can be produced on a subject 240 years old, when they had been noted as burnt. However this letter completes the linkage of Jacob Becker, Timothy Pickering, and Robert Morris. The date of Pickering’s letter is also close to the date in the painting mentioned in footnote 7. This painting had been on view at the Yorktown Battleground for over 40 years. The curator of the Yorktown Battleground Museum simply changed the topic six different times when I requested a picture of this painting that is no longer displayed.

Professor Julian Boyd noted how former Secretary of State, Timothy Pickering was never worried about the loss of the Original Declaration of Independence, but concerned about Thomas Jefferson's role in not being able to produce the "Fair Copy of the Draft of the

_____________________________________________________

20 NR-14 is a government abbreviation for National Register and then the number of the listing on the Register. Nancy was working on getting the Rocky Ridge Presbyterian Church added to the Chambersburg, PA list of historical places. The number 14 is a reference to the Sarcophagus in the Rotunda of our National Capitol. This indicates that they have plans to relocate Jacob. These are plans the government has derived without consultation with the family. This does fit with the quality of Jacob's accomplishments that Larry was able to discover. The concept of hiding something this important from the family and public are actions that are not respectable. Evidence points to actions started by elected representatives that knowingly and unknowingly served to separate Jacob's estate from Jacob's family.

21 Currently in my private files, and I will attempt to arrange to have it added to the website: www.ncssar.org. I have been unable to find a copy of this document in any files of Timothy Pickering at Universities and public libraries or via written request to National Archives.

22 Please note that the information involved in the trade were not marked with any security classification, just not normally available to anyone.
Declaration that was laid before Congress on June 28, 1776.\textsuperscript{23} Pickering knew who had the Original Declaration of Independence and that it was secure during his lifetime and that there was more than Tomas Jefferson involved in the construction of the Declaration of Independence. John Adams in his letter of August 6, 1822 relates to the Treaty with the French (Secret Treaty Number One) which would serve as a reminder to Pickering that Secrecy must prevail and that Thomas Jefferson is given full credit for the Declaration of Independence. A need to separate Secret Treaty Number One from the packet of four pages known as The Original Declaration of Independence makes the purpose of the legislation on July 19, 1776 a very logical and needed revision. The creation of the vellum copy was to resolve human glitches that occurred. It has also helped to maintain needed secrecy for the Revolution that now can also serve to block preservation and history from the citizens who own it if secrecy is used to classify relevant information.

President Barack Obama is thereby being requested to open the files pertaining to Jacob Becker and any related files that would allow us to fully preserve the history of the Declaration of Independence. When materials like the 15th May 1776 Resolution of Independence, signed by John Hancock, President are uncovered, it has been important to place them in the context that will allow them to provide us with insight. A letter to a US Senator requesting assistance in this manner advised me that the assistance I seek could only be responded to by President Barack Obama.

In summation, the new details surrounding the Declaration of Independence now fill in major questions that allow the letter of Thomas Jefferson to John Vaughn dated September 16, 1825 to establish the reality that answers (new documents) should be forthcoming in the future. The role of John Adams and his dedication to our founding can respectfully now note how he adapted to the information that the Resolution he wrote had to be replaced by the Declaration. The capacity of Congress to adapt, accept, and seamlessly cooperate with the clandestine agent has taken 240 years to emerge. When a free country allows achievements of Revolutionary War Soldiers to become secrets thereby keeping this knowledge away from the descendants it is a type of “enslavement”. Larry was only able to find one item that Jacob had requested the government keep secret for three hundred years. There is no purpose served in keeping his name and the name of this request secret. Larry did understand that Secret Treaty Number One began to explain the funding of the Revolution, which is over 200 year old. We are unable to understand how Secrecy can benefit the public’s knowledge of our national founding. I hope that my grandchildren can learn about their ancestor Jacob Becker and his accomplishments from published records related to the Revolutionary War.

The challenge of attempting to uncover the past mysteries of our Revolution so history can be preserved has resulted in a very complex story that only comes to life when history in America and history in France of the same time period is compared. Many of those who lived next to the history we have discussed did not actually understand the complexity of what was happening. In addition, we have uncovered very complex actions that involved a whole Congress being part of the action. Ignoring the actions of 15th May and replacing it with a path that creates the Declaration of Independence provided us with secrecy, but now we need to peruse preservation.

PS: How NR-14 became associated with Jacob Becker.

On September 6, 1990 three new historic sites were added to the National Register in Montgomery County, Ohio – without application. 1st site was St. Jacob’s Evangelical Lutheran Church in Miamisburg, Ohio numbered NR 90001290. 2nd site was Emmanuel’s Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germantown, Ohio numbered NR 90001292. 3rd site is known as the Ellerton and German Reformed Church District south of Dayton, Ohio and numbered NR 90001291. This site consist of three separate deeds of land. The Salem Bear Creek Church (was reformed German, now UCC), the Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Ellerton Cemetery. Each are owned by separate entities. The Ellerton Cemetery was provided a letter telling them how they were now on the Historic Register. The Cemetery Secretary was provided with an envelope that contained information about Jacob Becker and his general involvement in the Revolution. The outside of the envelope was stamped NR-14. Via phone conversation with the Ellerton Cemetery Secretary I learned about this marking and that this was the only unique item they were provided with at that time. The pastor at the Salem Evangelical Church knew about this envelope and that it was most likely the reason why they were all placed on the Historic Register. She had looked up the church history on Jacob Becker. He had joined the church after Catherine, his wife had died in 1847.

Nancy Burkey had related how hard she and others in Chambersburg had been working to get Rocky Ridge Presbyterian Church added to the Historical Register. The applications for all three sites in Montgomery County, Ohio had been without application. The government showed up with all the paperwork completed and a letter telling them they were now on the Historic Register. All three site applications were completed by the same consultant. This consultant had taken courses at Wright State University from my distant cousin Carl Becker, who is now a retired Professor of History, Emeritus.

Supporting Footnote Documents follow this page.
December 20, 1995

Mr. James A. Becker  
Member of Lodge No. 143  
701 East Main Street  
Waynesboro, Pennsylvania 17268

Dear Brother Becker:

We have received your communication requesting Masonic information on your ancestor, Jacob Becker.

In researching our records we found that a Brother Becker attended a meeting of Lodge No. 3 on March 5, 1778. I have enclosed a copy of the information which does not list his given name or the Lodge that he was affiliated with.

I trust this information is satisfactory. Best wishes to you.

Sincerely and fraternaly,

Thomas W. Jackson  
Grand Secretary

TWJ/baf  
Enclosure

Footnote #9: Jacob Becker's Proof of Masonic Membership
Mr. James A. Becker
701 East Main Street
Waynesboro, Pennsylvania 17268

Footnote #9: Jacob Becker's Proof of Masonic Membership
OLD MASONIC LODGES
OF PENNSYLVANIA

"MODERNS" AND "ANCIENTS"

1730-1800

Which Have Surrendered Their Warrants or Affiliated with Other Grand Lodges

Compiled from Original Records
In the Archives of the R. W. Grand Lodge, F. & A. M. of Pennsylvania, Under the Direction of the Committee on Library

By

JULIUS F. SACHSE, LITT.D.
Librarian of the Grand Lodge

VOLUME I
Covering Period 1730-1777

PHILADELPHIA
1912
member of this Lodge recommended by the Master, was duly ballotted for and unanimously admitted.

March 4, 1778. The Regular Stated Meeting of Lodge No. 4 was held.

Members present.

Bro. Diegel, Master
" Boyle, S. W.
" Webb, J. W.
" Whitehead
" Glenn
" Pecker
" Duncan

Visitors.

Bro. Catly
" Webb
" Camplin
" Badger

At this meeting, Bros. Morris and Pecker were raised, Bro. Duncan, passed, and William Armstrong and Benjamin Trotter approved.

March 5, 1778. Lodge No. 3 was opened in due form at 7 O’clock.

Members present.

Bro. Alexander Kidd, M.
" Jacob Webb, S. W.
" Robert De Silver, J. W.
" John Turner
" Anthony Yieldal
" Laurence Fegan
" Cosby Swindell
" Webb
" John Brightman
" Robt. Ruthmell
" Alex. Cairns

Visitors.

Bro. Alexander Boyle
" Jacob Diegel
" John McAlpin
" George Leybourne
" Becker
" Burnham

Bros. Nathaniel Horton, Solomon Smith, John Colvill and

77 William Armstrong was Captain in a Loyalist Corps, and was a native of Sadsbury Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania.
78 Bros. Duncan and Trotter were both Loyalists.
79 Solomon Smith, a proscribed Tory, banished from Massachusetts.

379
James A. Becker
701 E. Main Street
Waynesboro PA 17268-2334

Dear Mr. Becker,

Report on search for Jacob Becker—relationship to Henry Becker

Jacob & wife Catherine, Henry & Susannah Becker all buried next to each other in Ellerton Cemetery, Montgomery County, Ohio.

The Revolutionary War Pensions for Jacob & Henry Becker, Bacher, Baker have been read and are abstracted below:

Jacob Bacher PA S23534 No family data—Letter dated Nov.4, 1913 from Mrs. C.A.Krout-Tiffin Ohio says he was born 1860 (means 1760) lived Northampton Co., Pa until at least 1806. Wife's name Maria Barbara who died about 1838 buried Fairfield Co. Ohio. Jacob of Schuylkill Co. Pa. formerly Northampton (W. Penn Twp.) 1832 application he was 71/72 years of age in Schuylkill Co. when applied. Paid Pa. Act of 1832 #11451

Henry Becker—Catharine W3646 Paid Pa. Act of 1848 #5582


There were two other pensions for Jacob Becker, both from NY. One never left NY. The other resided in Canada in 1847.

Checked the following records—M629 #2 Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers served in the Indian Wars 1815-1858. No Jacob Baker from PA. #3 No Jacob BECKER.

M847 Special Index to numbered records in the War Dept collection of Rev. War Records—M859 Manuscript records—all copied and enclosed. M853 Numbered Books—Most copied and enclosed, except the following.

#35 Bk117 pg. 8 Disbursements by Samuel Hodgdon Deputy Commissioner of Military stores Mar. 22, 1780-Mar. 8, 1781

Sept. 9 to.....paid Jacob Baker for 6 Lt. Rosin @ $18.

Bk114 pg. 17 Sept. 23 Cash paid Jacob Baker for 6 lbs. Rosin @ .8 dollars—18.

#36 Bk144 pg. 23 Cash paid 1780 Sept. 9 for 6 lbs. Rosin $18.

M654 Gen. Wilkinson's Court Martial Records 1787-1818

Papers of the Continental Congress—no listing for Jacob Becker/Baker.

All of the above were checked at the National Archives.
The following records were checked at the DAR Library:

- PA Archives—all references to Jacob Becker/Baker checked and copied.
- Index of Wills and Administrations 1803=1893 Montgomery County Ohio by Lindsay M. Brien
- Cemetery Records of Montgomery Co.Ohio comp. by Lindsay M. Brien
- An Index to Children’s Home records from Montgomery County Ohio 1867-1924 indexed by Eugene Joseph Jergens
- Montgomery County Ohio cemetery inscriptions etc. comp. by Montgomery Co. Chapter of the OGS
- Montgomery County Ohio common pleas Law Record 1803-1849 by Shilt & Gilbert
- Fairfield County Ohio Marriages
  - Book B pg.20 Becker, Jacob m. Mary Smith 28 Nov. 1816 by Andrew Henkel
  - Becker, Henry m. Bink, Polly 25 Dec. 1808 by Phillips Sphon
  - Becker, Christian m. Ruffner, Magdalene 8 Apr. 1817 by Lewis Seitz

You might want to write to the—Montgomery County Chapter OGS
   P O Box 1584
   Dayton OH 45401
Perhaps they might be able to help with some more information.

ENCLOSURES:Rev & Indian Wars S2946 Jacob Baker (2 pgs.)
- Re & 1812 Correspondence re:Bounty Land Jacob Baker (6 pgs)
- Pa. Archives 5th Series—Vol.IV Title pg.310-313 (3 pgs)
  - Vol.V Title pg. 186-189, 602/603, 636/637 (5 pgs)
- Trinity Lutheran Church Records—Lancaster Pa. Vol.1 1730-1767
  - edit. by Debra D. Smith, & Frederick S. Weiser
  - Title page, 212/213 (2 pgs)
- Lancaster C. (Pa) Church Records Vol.I
  - Title page, 229
  - by Rose Shilt & Audrey Gilbert
  - Title pg: 67 (2 pgs)
- Special Index to numbered Records in the War Dept. Collection of Rev.War Records
  - M853 Books Roll#29 bk.103 pg.127;#4 bk 28 pg.169;
  - #27 bk 85 pg.158
  - M859 Manuscripts (MS) Roll #63 ms19875; #22 ms7117;
  - #65 ms20514; #64 ms20330

As was stated on the phone I shall keep my eyes open for anything
which might come to my attention that will help you solve your problem.

Sincerely,

Norma C. Gransee

Footnote #19: Receipts from Norma Gransee for research at National Archives.
Footnote #19: Receipts from Norma Gransee for research at National Archives.
Footnote #21: Copy of Letter from General Timothy Pickering to Robert Morris in 1781 that discusses talk with Jacob Becker.
Sir, Phila. Aug. 12, 1782.

Some unexpected business occurring, I was prevented getting in town to-day in time to see you. And as I intend to set out next Monday morning for the army, I shall not have that pleasure, unless you have any commands which require my coming again to town.

Permit me to renew my application for £148. to pay Van Heer, according to my promise, and for £13.18.1/2 to pay Jacob Becker for thread furnished for making shawls, which was by agreement payable in three months from the 27th of April last. These sums Col. Mills will receive when you order them to be paid. He will also wait your determination on the several estimates laying before you which have been presented by me.

I forgot to mention that in about a month Col. Mills will call on you for money to pay for the making the waggoners' shirts, to the amount of about £25 — unless you previously direct another mode of payment.

[Signature: Pickering, Jr.]
Footnote #21: Copy of Letter from General Timothy Pickering to Robert Morris in 1781 that discusses talk with Jacob Becker.
The preceding letter I was favored the following interesting answer:

Your favor of the 2nd interest has prescribed a dismal plan, which leaves I never very well calculated to execute, but am more wholly incapable. I can write nothing which will be suspected of personal vanity, local prejudice, or Provincial or State partiality. However, I hold myself responsible, at my age, to one and only one tribunal in the Universe; I will give you a few hints at all hazards.

As Mr. Hancock was sick and confirmed, Mr. Bowdoin as the head of the Massachusetts delegation to Congress. His relations thought his great fortune hazarded. Cushing, two Adams and Paine all destitute of fortune – from poor Pilgrims – all in one coach, were escorted through Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York and New Jersey into Pennsylvania. We were met at Frankfort by Dr. Rush, Mr. Mifflin, Mr. Bayard, and several others of the Massachusetts sons of liberty in Philadelphia who desired a conference with us. We invited them to take tea with us in an appropriate apartment. They wished to give us some information and advice. Which we thankfully granted. They represented to us that the friends of Britain were in the Eastern States, in their correspondence with friends in Pennsylvania and all the Southern State had represented us as four desperate adventurers. Mr. Cushing was a harmless kind of man; but poor and fully dependent upon his popularity for his subsistence. Mr. Samuel Adams was a very artful designing man, but desperately poor, and wholly dependent upon his popularity with the lowest vulgar for his living. John Adams and Mr. Paine were two young lawyers with no great talents reputation or weight. Who had no other means of raising themselves into consequences but by courting popularity. We were all sons suspected of having Independence in view. Now I see its they you must not utter the word Independence nor give the least instruction of the idea, neither in Congress or any private conversation; if you do you are undone; for the idea of Independence is unpopular in Pennsylvania and in all the mid and Southern States as the Stamp Act itself. No man dares to speak of it. Moreover you are the representatives of the suffering states.

Boston and Massachusetts are made a rod of iron. British fleets and armies are tyrannizing over you: you yourself are personally obnoxious to them and all the friends of government. You have been long persecuted by them all; your feeling have been hurt; your passions excited; you are thought to be too warm, too zealous, too sanguine; you must therefore be very cautious. You must not come forward with very bold measures; you must not pretend to take the lead. You know that Virginia is the most populous State in the Union. They are very proud of their ancient Dominion, as they call it; they think they have the right to take the lead; and the Southern States and Middle States too, are too much disposed to yield it to them. – This was so ____ dealing, Mr. Pickering; and I must confess, that there appeared so much wisdom and good sense in it, that it made a deep impression on my mind, and it had an identical affect on all my colleagues. This conversation the facts and the motives suggested in it, have given a colour, complication and character to the whole policy of the United States from that day to this. Without it, Mr. Washington would have never commanded our armies, nor would Mr. Jefferson have been the author of the Declaration of Independence, nor Mr. Richard Henry Lee the mover of it; nor Mr. Chase the mover of Foreign communications. If I ever had cause to repent of any part of this policy, that repentance has been and will ever be unavailing. I had forgot to say, nor had Mr. Johnson ever have been the nominator of Washington for General.
Transcribed Letter from John Adams to Timothy Pickering

dated August 6, 1822.

Although this advice dwelt deeply on my mind, I had not in my natural prudence and caution enough to observe it. When I found the members of Congress, Virginians and all that they should be able to persuade or terrify Great Britain into a relinquishment of her policy, and restoration of us to the state of 1763, was astonished and muttering in Congress and some time out of doors, that they would find, that the proud domineering spirit of Great Britain, their vein conceit of their own omnipotence - there to test contempt of us, and the incessant representation of their friends and their instruments in America, would drive us to extremities and finally conquer us; transport us to England for trail, there to be hanged drawn and quartered for Treason; or to the necessity of declaring Independence, however hazardous and uncertain such a desperate measure might be.

It soon became rumored about the city that John Adams was for Independence. The Quakers and the Proprietary gentlemen took the alarm, represented me the worst of men; the true blue sons of liberty suited me; all put me under a kind of Coventry I was avoided like a man infected with leprosy. I walked the streets of Philadelphia in solitude; borne down by the weight of care and unpopularity. But every ship, for the ensuing year, brought us fresh proof of the truth of my prophecies; and one after another became convinced of the necessity of Independence.

I did not shrink under my discouragements; I had before experienced enough of the wantonness of popularity, at the trial of Preston and the Soldiers in Boston.

You inquire why so young a man as Mr. Jefferson was placed at the head of the Committee for preparing a Declaration of Independence? I answer; it was the Frankfort advice, to place a Virginian at the head of everything. Mr. Richard Henry Lee, might be gone to Virginia, to his sick family, for aught I know, but that was not the reason of Mr. Jefferson’s appointment. There were three committees appointed at the same time. One for the Declaration of Independence, another for preparing articles of Confederation, and a other for preparing a treaty to be proposed to France. Mr. Lee was chosen for the Committee Of Confederation, and it was not thought convenient that the same person should be upon both. Mr. Jefferson came into Congress, in June, 1775, and brought with him a reputation for literature, science, and a happy talent of composition. Writings of his were handed about, remarkable for the peculiar felicity of expression. Though a silent member in Congress, he was so prompt, frank, explicit, and decisive upon committees and in conversation, not even Samuel Adams was more so, that he soon seized upon my heart; and upon this occasion I gave him my vote, and did all in my power to procure the votes of others. I think he had one more vote than any other, and that placed him at the head of the committee. I had the next highest number, and that placed me the second. The committee met, discussed the subject, and then appointed Mr. Jefferson and me to make the draught, I suppose because we were the two first on the list.

The sub-committee met. Jefferson proposed to me to make the draught I said, “I will not.” “You should do it.” “Oh! no.” “Why will you not? You ought do it.” “I will not.” “Why?” “Reasons enough.”
Transcribed Letter from John Adams to Timothy Pickering
dated August 6, 1822.

“What can be your reasons?” “Reason first–You are a Virginian, and a Virginian ought to appear at the head of this business. Reason second–I am obnoxious, suspected, and unpopular.– You are much otherwise. Reason third–You can write ten times better than I can.” “Well,” said Jefferson, “if you are decided, I will do as well as I can.” “Very well.– When you have drawn it up, we will have a meeting.”

A meeting we accordingly had, and conned the paper over. I was delighted with its high tone and the flights of oratory with which it abounded, especially that concerning negro slavery, which, though I knew his Southern brethren would never suffer to pass in Congress, I certainly never would oppose. There were other expressions which I would not have inserted, if I had drawn it, particularly that which called the King a tyrant. I thought this too personal. I never believed George to be a tyrant in disposition and in nature; I always believed him to be deceived by his courtiers on both sides of the Atlantic, and in his official capacity only, cruel. I thought the expression too passionate, and too much like scolding, for so grave and solemn a document; but as Franklin and Sherman were to inspect it afterwards, I thought it would not become me to strike it out. I consented to report it, and do not now remember that I made or suggested a single alteration.

We reported it the committee of five. It was read, and I do not remember that Franklin or Sherman criticized anything. We were all in haste. Congress was impatient, and the instrument was reported, as I believe, in Jefferson’s handwriting as he first drew it. Congress cut off about a quarter of it, as I expected they would; but they obliterated some of the best of it, and left all that was exceptionable, if anything in it was. I have long wondered that the original draught has not been published. I suppose the reason is, the vehement philippic against negro slavery.

As you justly observe, there is not an idea in it but what had been hackneyed in Congress for two years before. The substance of it is contained in the Declaration of Rights and the Violations of those Rights in the Journals of Congress, in 1774. Indeed, the essence of it is contained in a pamphlet, voted and printed by the town of Boston, before the first Congress met, composed by James Otis, as I suppose, in one of his lucid intervals, and pruned and polished by Samuel Adams.

Your friend and humble servant,

John Adams
John Adams
Salem August 2, 1822

Sir,

As no day of the Congress of the Thirteen United America Colonies was so distinguished as by which their Independence of Great Britain was declared, the most particular history of that transaction will be sought for not merely intensifying animosity, but to do substantial justices to the ability and energy of the lessons in that great measure.

By the public journals, it appears the on the seventh of June 1776, “certain resolutions respecting independency were moved and seconded;” & that on the 10th, the first resolution, “that the United Colonies are and of rights ought to be free and independent States”, were adopted, and the next day, the committee for preparing the declaration to this effect was chosen, consisting of “Mr. Jefferson, Mr. J. Adams, Mr. Franklin, Mr. Sherman and Mr. R. R. Livingston.” Mr. Jefferson being first on the list became the chairman. This considering the composition of the committee, and Mr. Jefferson being the youngest man, would appear remarkable. – Mr. Charles Lee, who married a daughter of Richard Henry Lee, once gave me this account: that Mr. Lee having moved the resolution for declaring the Colonies Independent would, according to the usual course, have been elected chairman of the committee for preparing the declaration; but sickness in his family caused him to return home. Mr. Jefferson, another Virginian was there chosen to supply his place.

By Dr. Ramsay’s history of this revolution it appears that R. H. Lee moved this resolution, and that it was seconded by you. This, I have always supposed was done by previous concerns: is being the policy of the Massachusetts delegates (as Mr. Sam Adams once told me) to cultivate the best harmony with those of Virginian, and in great measure to get her to take the leading step. This flatters the pride of this Anais Dominican [King’s Dominion] and obtained a pledge of her perseverance. That Massachusetts should second this resolution was to be expected. She was then deemed second in power among the colonies; and not behind any of them in bold & decided measures.

It was in the natural order of proceeding for the committee to meet and discuss the subject, and after mature deliberation, to decide on the principals or propositions which should constitute the basis of the declaration, and to refer the making of draught [SP] to the chairman, or to a sub-committee. – The last chief justice Parsons once told me that in conversing on this subject, you informed him that you and Mr. Jefferson were the sub-committee to prepare the declaration, and that you left to Mr. Jefferson the making of the draught.

Some years ago, a copy of the declaration, was reported to Congress, was put into my hands by sons of the Lee family. It was in Mr. Jefferson’ handwriting, and included in a short letter from him to R. H. Lee together with a copy of the declaration of independence as amended in Congress. Those Amendments consisted chiefly in striking out; and about one fourth the part of the whole was struck out; manifesting to the mortification of Mr. Jefferson; for in his letter to Mr. Lee he says – “you will judge whether it is the better or worse for the critics.” Accurate copies of the reported declaration & this letter I lodged a few years ago with the Historical Society in Boston. To us the alterations made in Congress seem important and substantial amounts; processing the declaration of superfluous and comparatively feeble concurches and
presenting is in a more distinct and dignified form. But I was at a loss to account for the committee letting it be reported in the shape in which Mr. Jefferson had presented it to them. The solution could be merely conjectural. I suppose the other members of the committee saw the faults and the practicability of no one to offer amendments; but that observing a strong attachment of the parent to his offspring, it was concluded to let it pass into Congress; relying on the requisite amendments being there moved and carried; and perhaps interesting to suggest the most material to other members, from whom motions for that purpose would be less invidious, (arouse anger). The bearing would then be on the whole committee and not on the chairman alone.

After all, the declaration does not contain many new ideas. It is a rather complication of facts and sentiment stated and examples during the proceeding eleven years, by those who wrote intimidated the rights of the Colonies- including the proceedings of the Congress of 1774; that is from the years of the stamp act to the commencement of the war. The great names of men compilation can shift in the basics and forces. The reported declaration evidently consumed by its re arrangement of matter. Yet there is an end report of Mr. Jefferson as the Author of the Declaration of Independence. If he had been the Author of our independence itself he could hardly be more eulogized. I have thought it desirable that the facts in the case should be ascertained. You alone can give a full statement to be commiserated to whom you think proper. To arrive at truth, and to assist to everyone his just portion of applause are the sole objective of these remarks

I have the honor to be
Very respectfully, Sir
Your obedient servant

Timothy Pickering
Monticello    September 16, 1825

Dear Sir:

I am not able to give you any particular account of the papers handed to you by Mr. Lee, as being either the original, or a copy of the declaration of independence, sent by myself to his grandfather. The draught when completed by myself, with a few verbal amendments by Dr Franklin and Mr. Adams, two members of my committee, in their own hand writing, is now in my own possession, and a fast copy of this was reported to the committee, past by them without amendment, and then reported to Congress. This record should be among the records of Old Congress. And whether this or the one from which it was copied, and now in my hands, is to be called the original is a question of definition. So that in my hands worth preserving, my relations with our University gives irresistible claims. Whoever in the course of the composition, a copy became overcharged, and difficult to be read with amendments, I copied it fair, and when that was also crowded with other amendments, another fair copy was made by ECT. These rough draughts I sent to distant friends, who were anxious to know what was passing, but to how many, and to whom, I do recollect. One sent to Mazzei was given by him to the countess de Tesie (aunt of Messieurs de Lafayette) as the original, it is probably now in the hand of her family.

Whether the paper sent to RH Lee was one of these, or whether, or after the passage of the instrument, I made a copy for him, with the amendments of Congress, May, I think be known from the face of the paper. The document Mr. Lee has given you must be of great value, and until all those private hoards are made public, the real history of the Revolution will not be known.

Nothing has yet been printed respecting our University worthy of notice. The annual report of visitors to the legislature will give a time and minute history of it. These are in print, and safely preserved. Whenever anything shall be published, worthy of notice, I will take care to furnish it to our society. It would be premature as yet, our whole plan being not yet brought in to action. Thus I see, for example has authorized 10 professorships. The funds enable us to establish 8 only.

Jefferson, Esq.

Letter from Thomas Jefferson to John Vaughn dated September 16, 1825. Complete text relates to Timothy Pickering's letter of August 2, 1822, when he finds himself with Jefferson's letter of July 8, 1776, to Richard Henry Lee when Lee went home due to sickness in his family. The copy of his draft Declaration is not in line with the the draft Declaration laid before Congress on June 28, 1776. The copies A and B are displayed in the Journal of Continental Congress to depict approximately what he had formally presented. His letter and this circumstance proves how soon the draft vanished. He is certain that it will appear someday. (It is used in the Original Declaration of Independence.) It was lost in the 1832 House fire of Jacob Becker when he lived in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. This happens after Thomas Jefferson died on July 4, 1826. This leaves Thomas Jefferson's expectations unfulfilled.