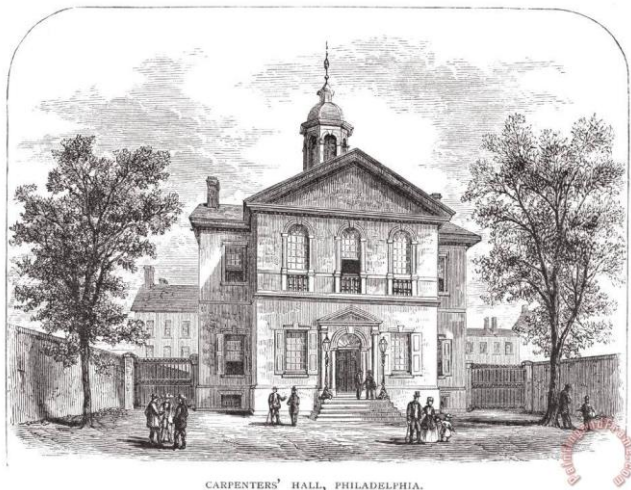


# Philadelphia, the Indispensable City of the American Founding

The FPRI Ginsburg—Satell Lecture 2020





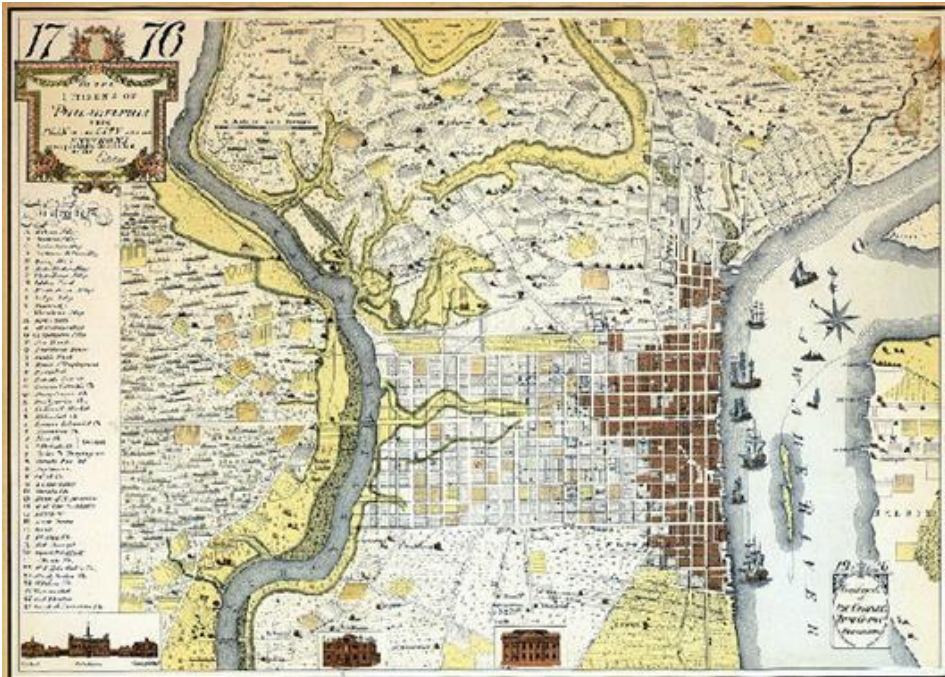


## Colonial Philadelphia

**Though its population was only 35,000 to 40,000 around 1776 Philadelphia was the largest city in North America and the second-largest English-speaking city in the world!**

**Its harbor and central location made it a natural crossroads for the 13 British colonies.**

**Its population was also unusually diverse, since the original Quaker colonists had become a dwindling minority among other English, Scottish, and Welsh inhabitants, a large admixture of Germans, plus French Huguenots, Dutchmen, and Sephardic Jews.**





**Pennsylvania**



**But Beware of Prolepsis!**

**Despite the city's key position its centrality to the American Revolution was by no means inevitable.**

**For that matter, American independence itself was by no means inevitable.**

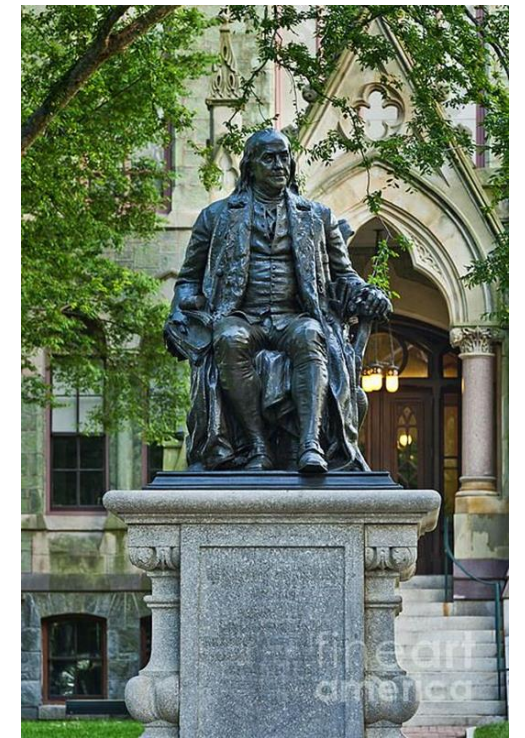
**For instance, William Penn (above) and Benjamin Franklin (below) were both ardent imperial patriots.**

**We learned of Franklin's loyalty to King George III last time....**





## Benjamin Franklin ... ... and the Crisis of the British Empire



The FPRI Ginsburg-Satell Lecture 2019

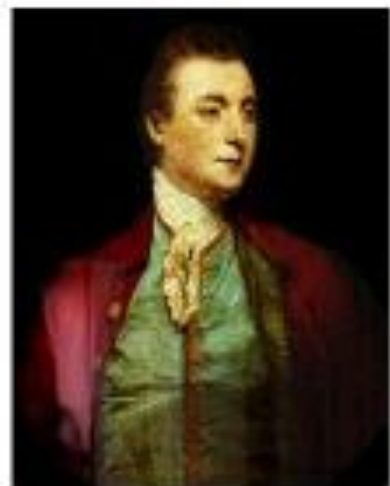


His newspaper publishes the first American political cartoon. This cartoon supported the colonial cause.





**British Whig personalities played musical chairs with the Prime Ministry  
until King George made the seemingly lucky choice of Lord North**



**Bute**  
April 1762-  
May 1763



**Grenville**  
Apr 1763-  
July 1765



**Rockingham**  
July 1765-  
July 1766



**Chatham (Pitt)**  
July 1766-  
Oct 1768)

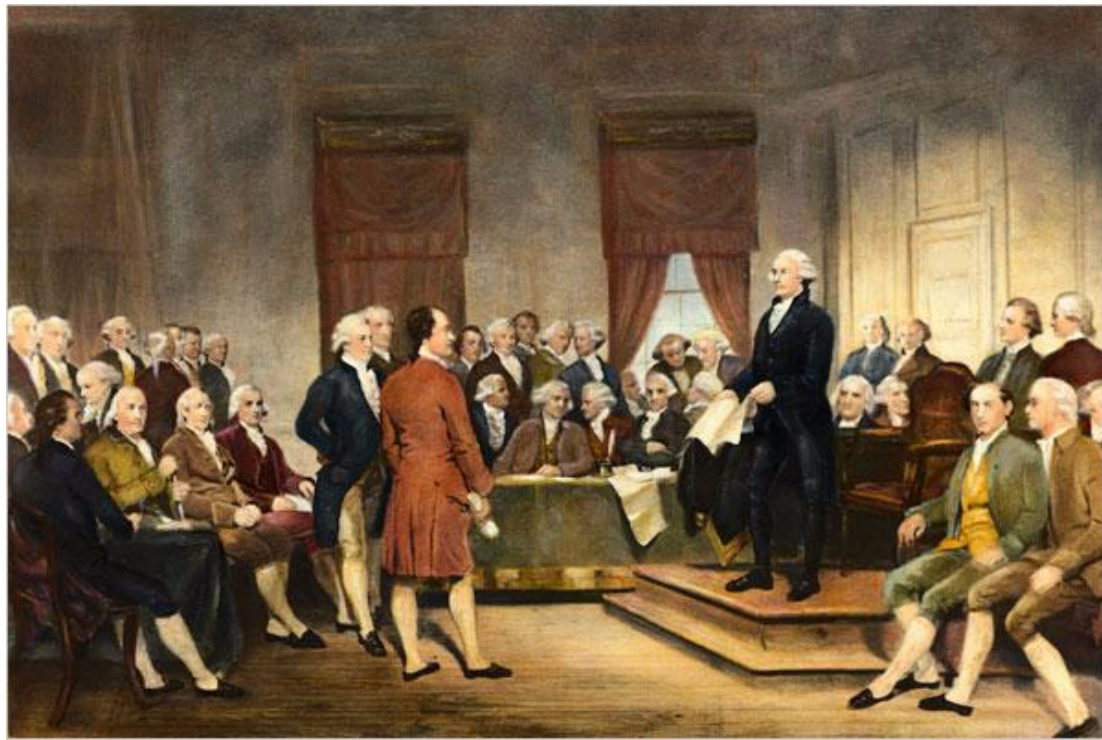


**Grafton**  
Oct 1768-  
Jan 1770)



**North**  
Jan 1770-  
July 1782





The First Continental Congress met at Carpenters Hall in Philadelphia where representatives of 12 of the colonies met to protest Parliament's Coercive Acts, deemed "Intolerable" by Americans.



But Congress (narrowly) *rejected* the Galloway Plan under which Americans would form their own legislature and tax themselves on behalf of the British crown.

Hence, "no taxation without representation" wasn't really the issue.

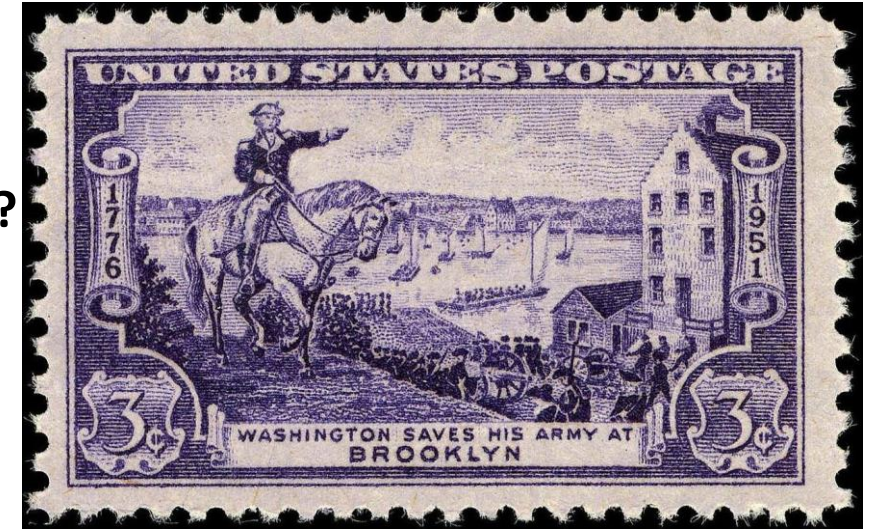


## WHAT IF...



The Redcoats had won the Battle of Bunker Hill (left)?

The Continental Army had not escaped capture on Long Island (right)?



Washington had been shot at the Battle of Brandywine (left)?

Or dared not undertake the risky Yorktown campaign (right)?





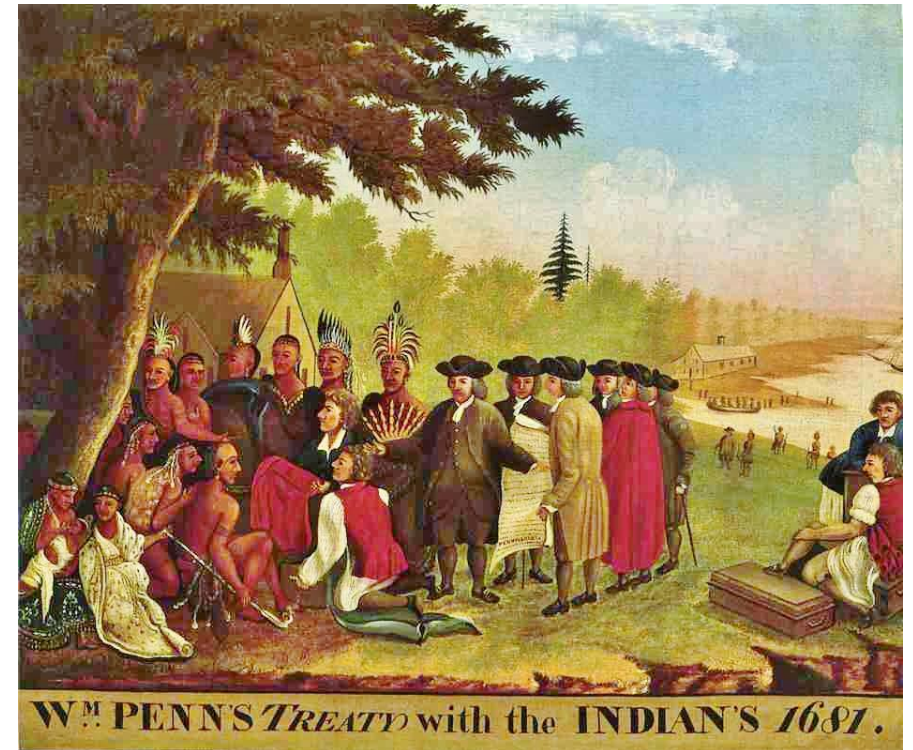


**Why did King Charles II grant William Penn a charter for a New World colony nearly as large as England itself?**

**Nobody knows, but his intention was to found a Quaker colony dedicated to peace, religious toleration, and prosperity.**



**Penn receives the charter from the hands of the king.**



**Penn makes a treaty of friendship with the Lenape.**



**Below: Thomas Holme’s plat for the “City of Brotherly Love” published in 1687.**



**Right: James Logan (1654-1751), Penn’s secretary, resided in Pennsylvania for the rest of his life and managed its phenomenal growth while Penn spent most of the rest of his life back in England fighting lawsuits of various kinds until his death (in poverty!) in 1718.**



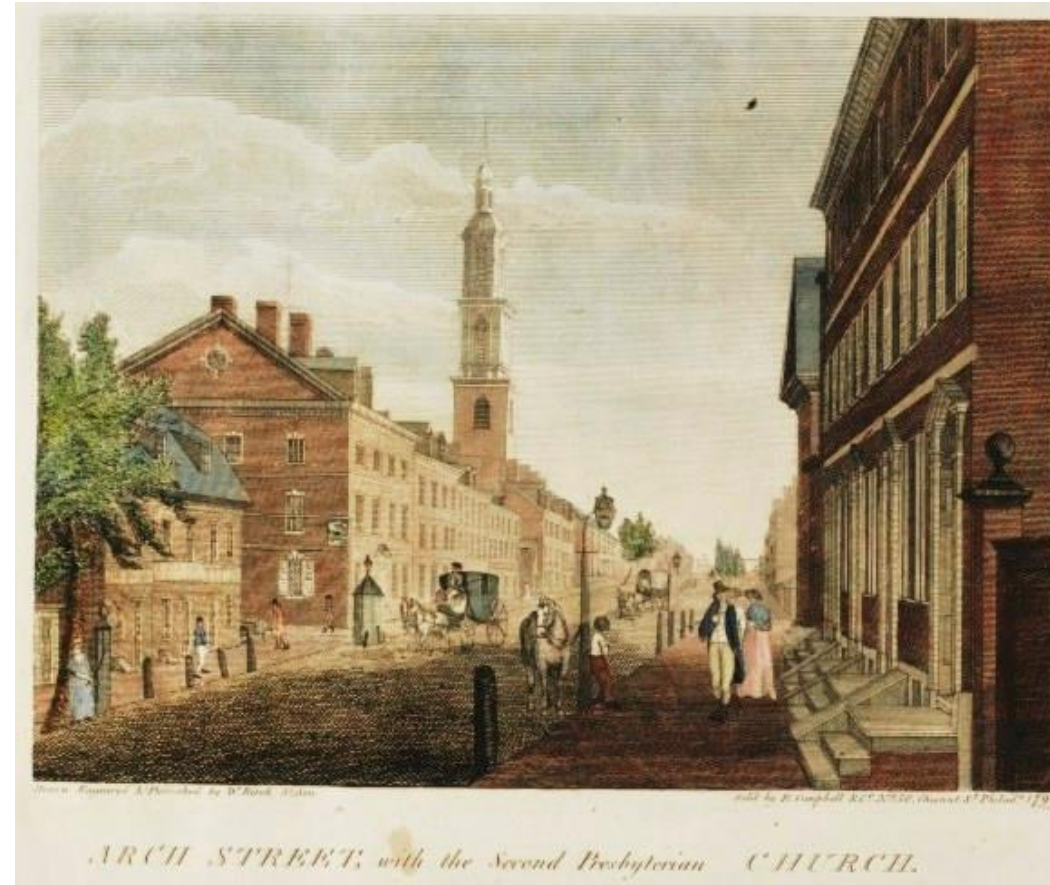




**Benjamin Franklin arrives from Boston in 1723 as depicted in this illustration based on his autobiography.**

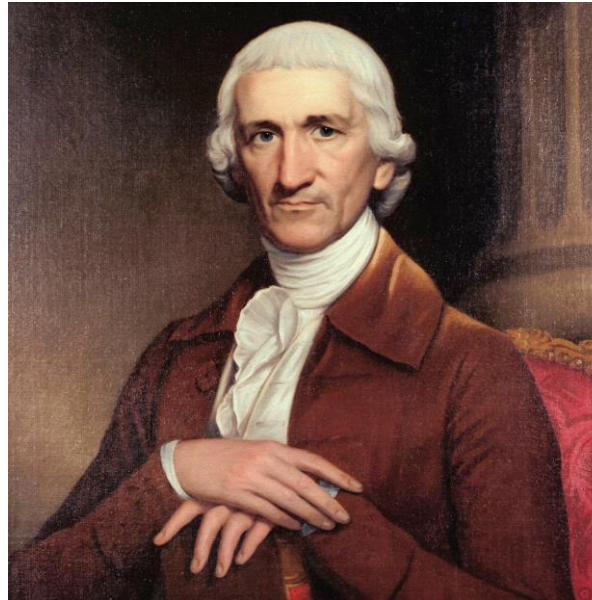
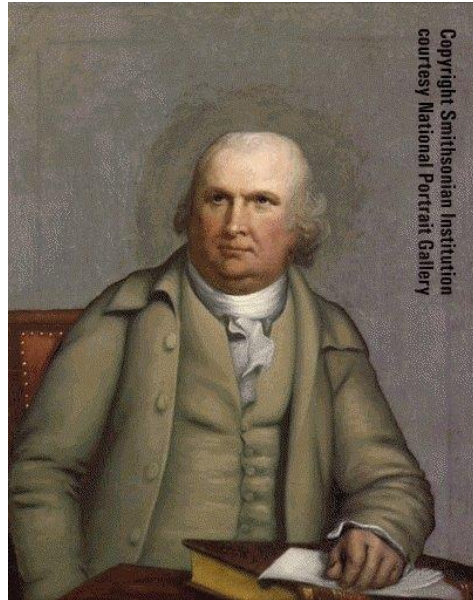
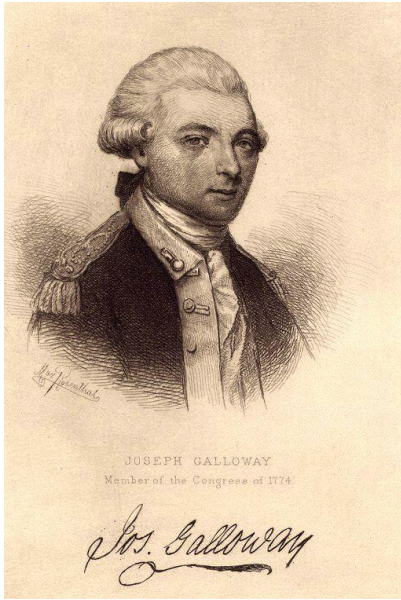


**A statue outside Philadelphia's grand Masonic Lodge depicts Franklin the Craftsman at his printing press, the business he began in 1728.**



**Arch Street, Philadelphia, circa 1750. The Second Presbyterian Church in the background testifies to the religious diversity of the otherwise “Quaker” colony.**

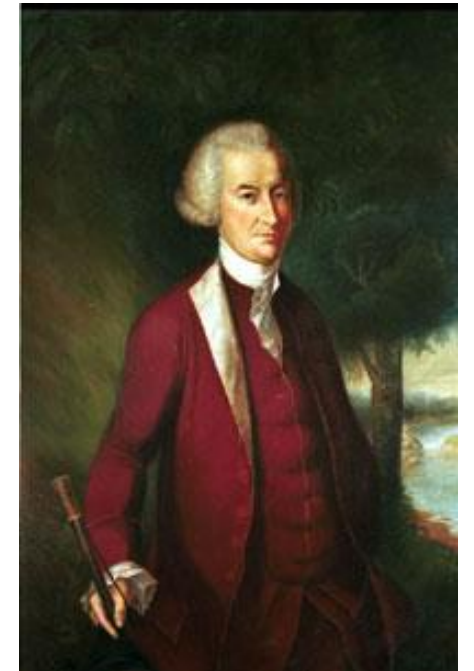




## PENNSYLVANIA DELEGATES TO THE FIRST CONTINENTAL CONGRESS, 1774

**Clockwise from lower left: James Wilson, Joseph Galloway, Robert Morris, Charles Thomson, John Morton, John Dickinson.**

**Thomson, secretary of Congress, was the *eminence grise* of the American Revolution.**

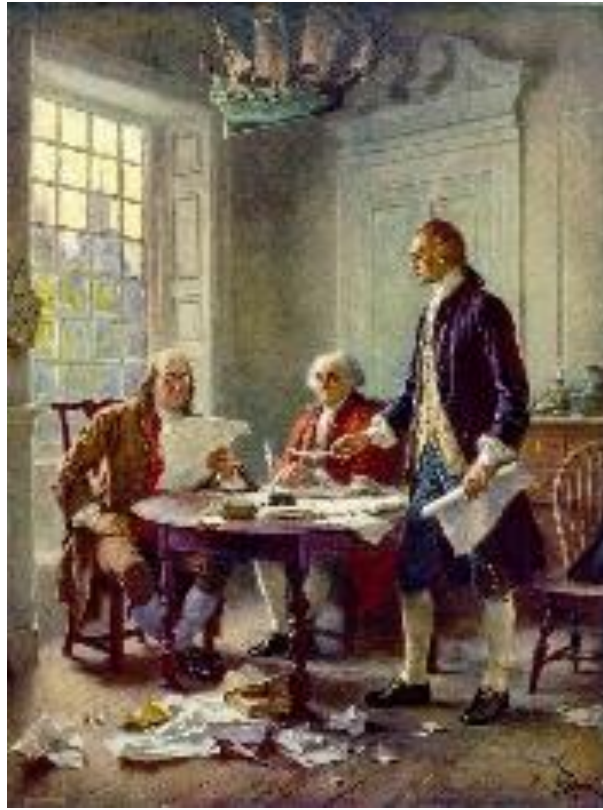




# THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE WAS PRIMARILY A *WAR MEASURE* ENABLING CONGRESS TO SEEK FINANCIAL AND MILITARY AID FROM FOREIGN POWERS



Tom Paine's pamphlet *Common Sense* inspired it.



Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson drafted it.



Philadelphia crowds pulled down the statue of King George III in the wake of it.





## Not one, But four “Wars of American Independence”

Upper Left: the Puritans’  
War (Minutemen at the  
Battle of Lexington)

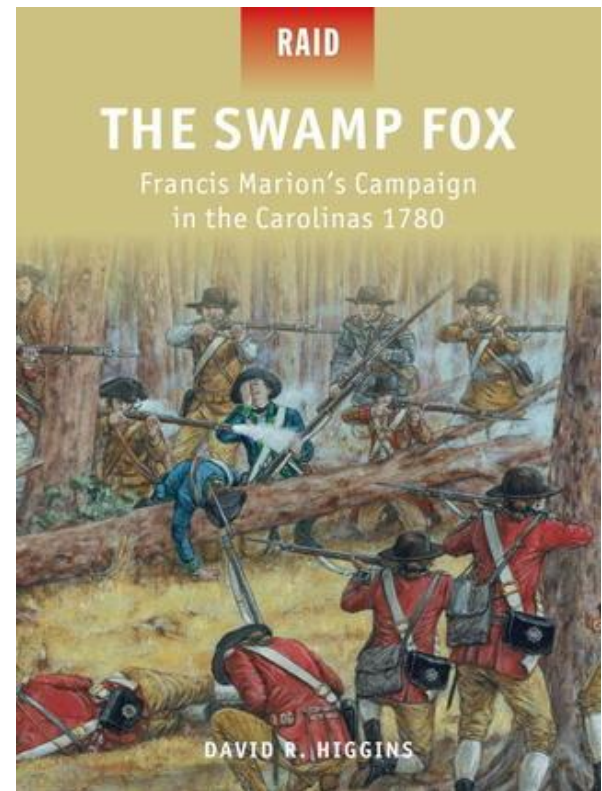


Upper Right: the Cavaliers’  
War (Washington at Valley Forge).



Lower Left: the “Quakers’ War”  
of finance and diplomacy  
(Franklin at the Court of Louis XVI)

Lower Right: the Bordermen’s War  
(Francis Merion’s guerilla tactics)





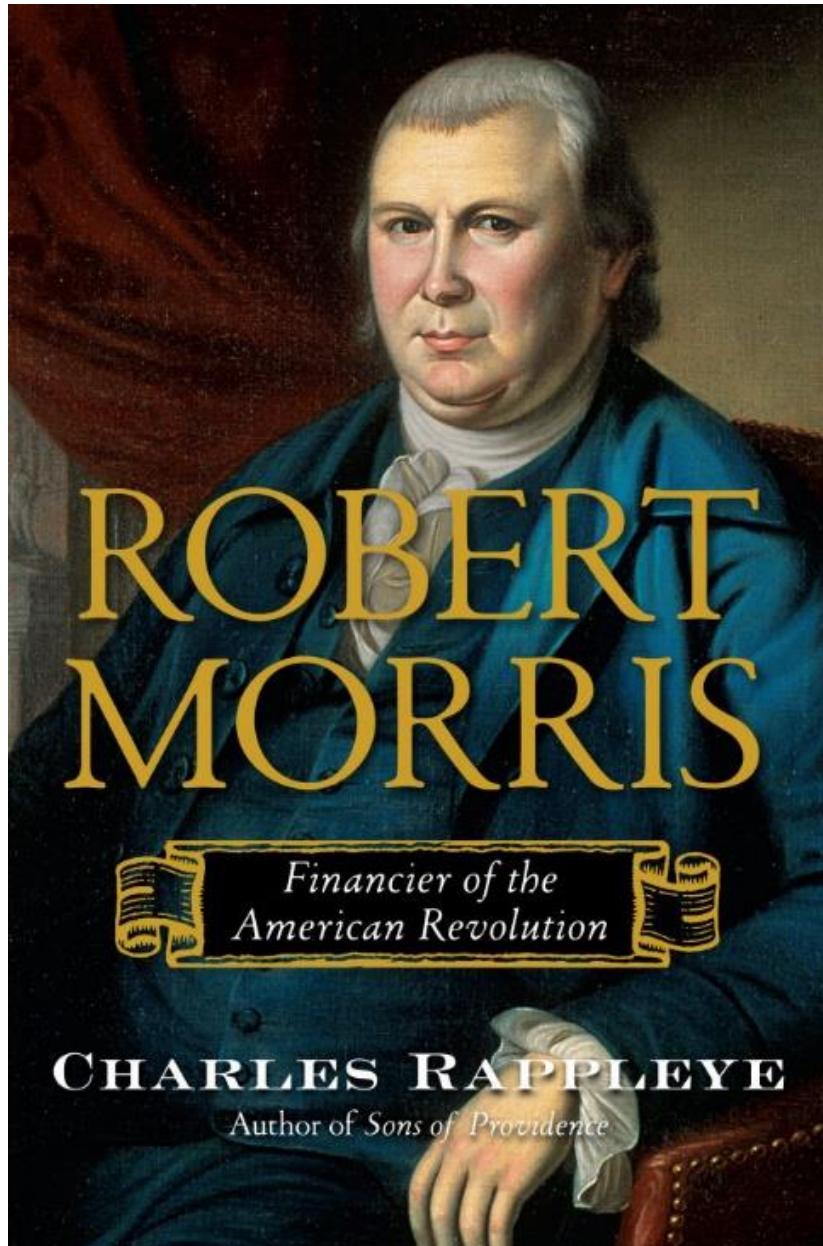


**Congress dispatched Benjamin Franklin to Paris where he played the American rustic in his bearskin hat (above left), wooed aristocratic society (especially the ladies), and negotiated with Louis XVI's foreign ministry (below right).**

**Finally, he talked the French into a full military alliance in February 1778. When the news reached Valley Forge in May, Washington's army cheered, wept, and prayed in thanksgiving.**





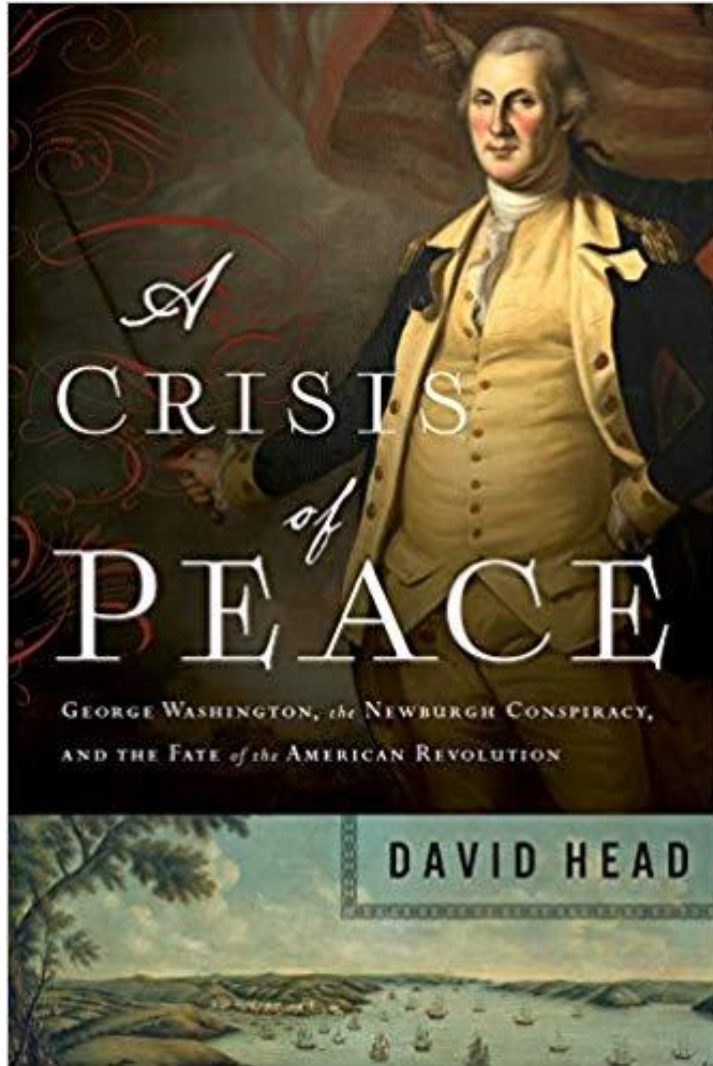


Philadelphia  
merchant  
Robert Morris  
served as  
Superintendent  
of Finance for the  
Congress and  
contributed  
mightily to  
American victory  
in the War of  
Independence.





**The Newburgh Conspiracy: Officers of the Continental Army threatened to march on Congress in March 1783 unless their soldiers received their promised wages and land grants.**



**But Washington himself shamed them with a poignant address: “Gentlemen, you will permit me to put on my spectacles, for I have not only grown gray but almost blind in the service of my country.”**



**The first interstate meeting to discuss “amending” the Articles of Confederation was held at Annapolis in 1786. But the delegates wisely chose Philadelphia as the locus of the 1787 convention which they hoped would replace the Articles with a new federal government.**

## Annapolis Convention



**Maryland State House, site of  
the Annapolis Convention in  
1786**

**Twelve delegates from five states attended this meeting in Annapolis, Maryland, in September 1786. They sought to remedy the problems of the Articles of Confederation. The actual name of the meeting was “Meeting of Commissioners to Remedy Defects of the Federal Government,” and it focused primarily on trade issues among the states. The result of the meeting was to call for another gathering in May in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.**

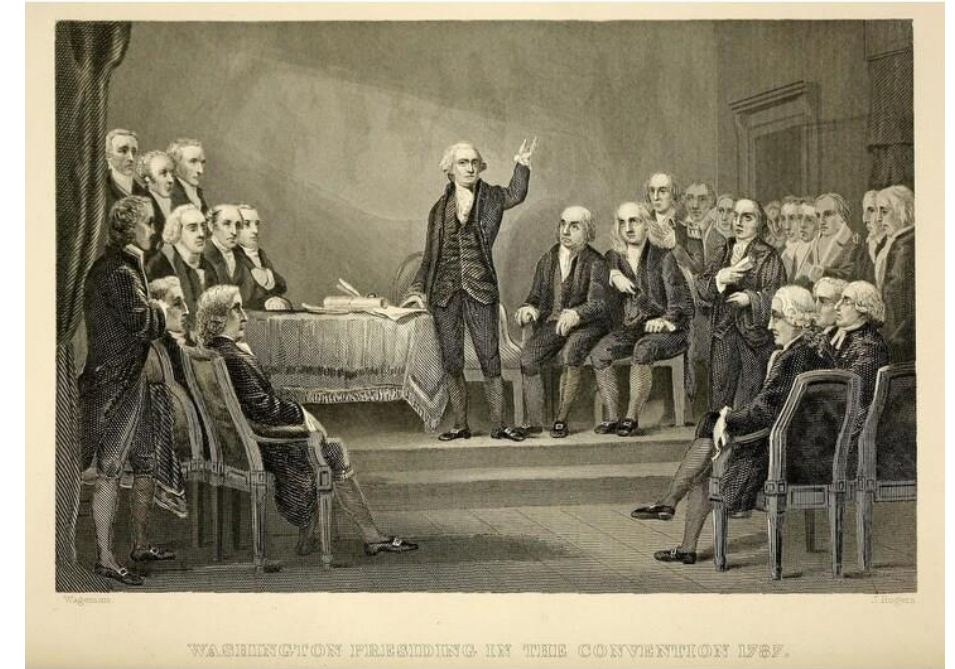
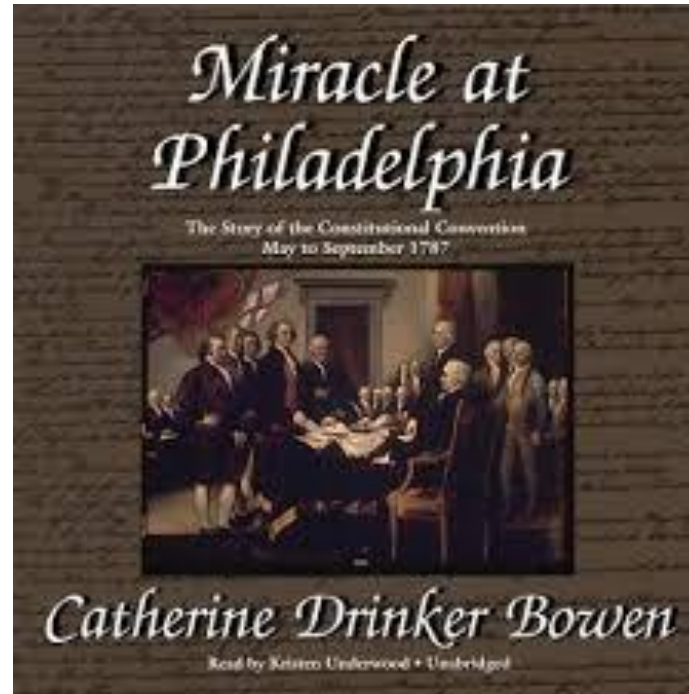
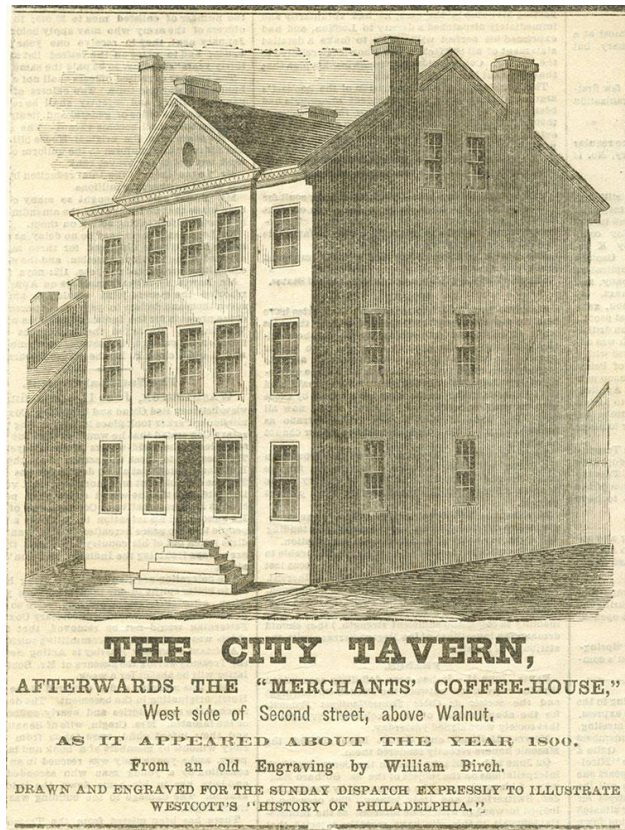
## DECISION IN PHILADELPHIA



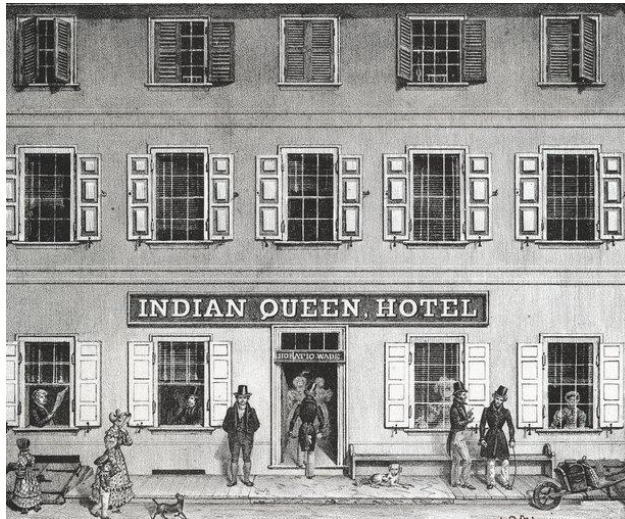
**The Constitutional Convention of 1787  
Christopher Collier and James Lincoln Collier**



Most of the delegates slept, ate, drank, and talked at just a handful of hotels and boarding houses within a few blocks of each other.

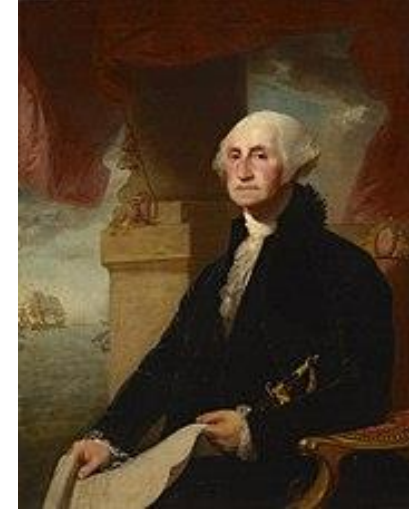
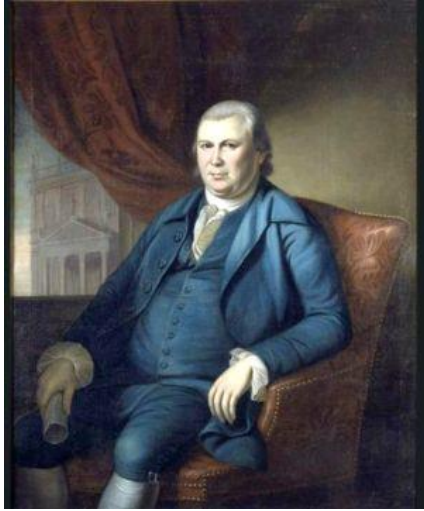


Cloistered together in the infernal summer heat and humidity most (not all) of them bonded with each other, reached a series of compromises, and drafted the Constitution in less than four months.

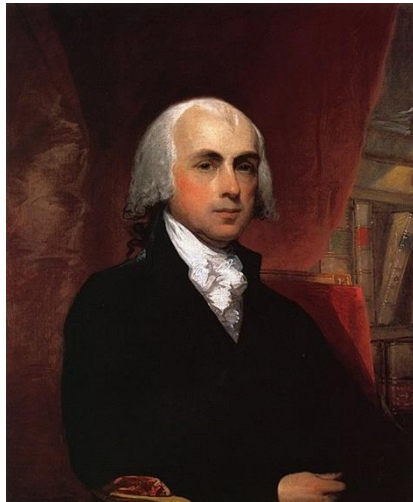




**Two delegates who lived apart from the rest were Philadelphia's Robert Morris and his distinguished house guest ... George Washington (Morris's Chestnut Street mansion below)**



### **Some Key Figures Who Contributed to the Convention's Success**



**James Madison**



**Roger Sherman**



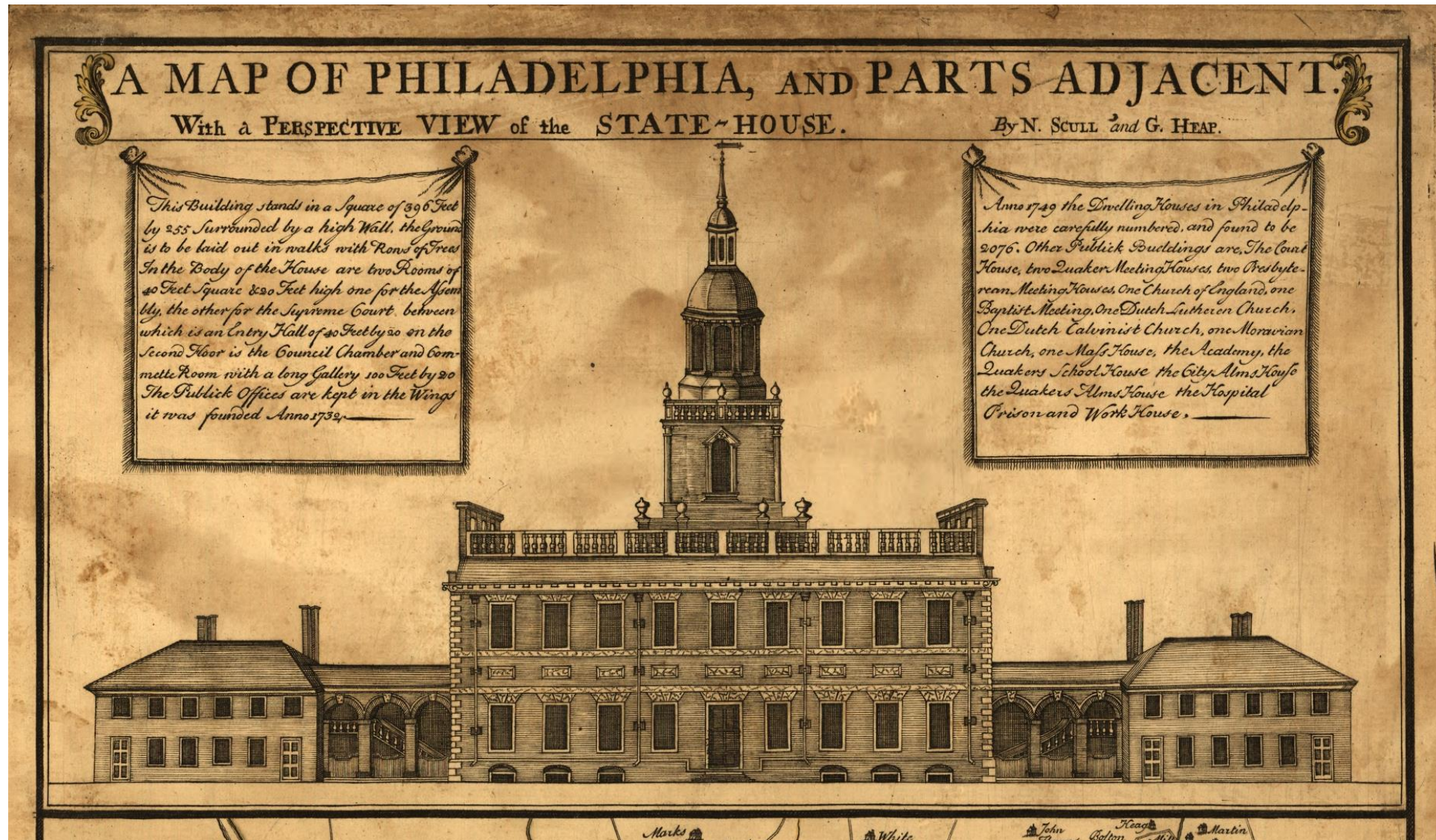
**Hugh Williamson**



**James Wilson**

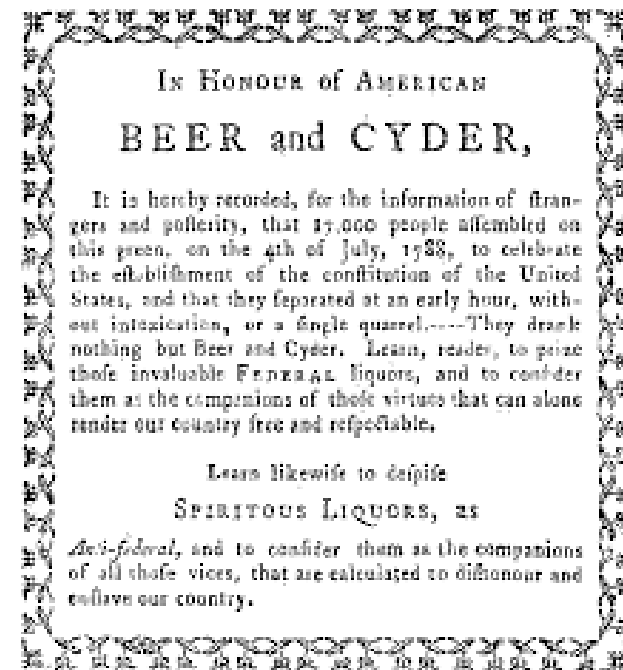
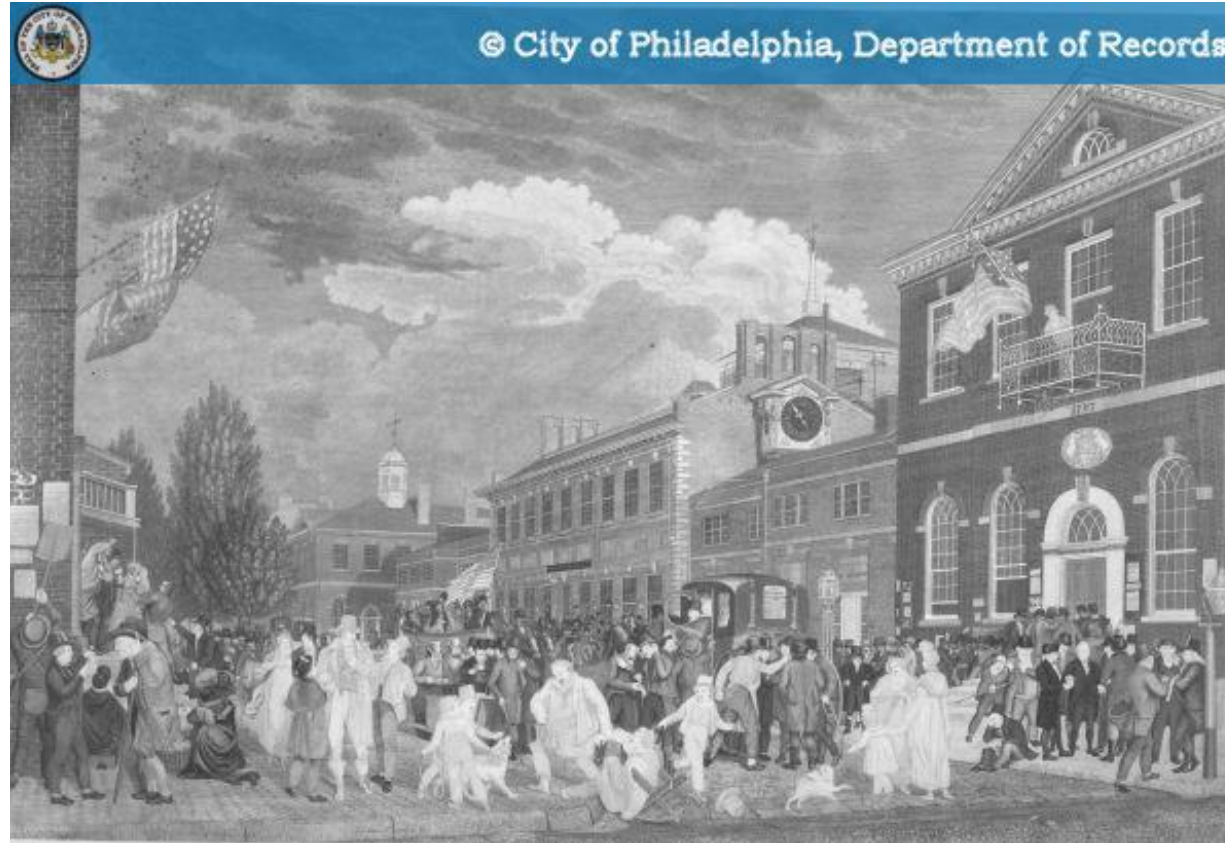
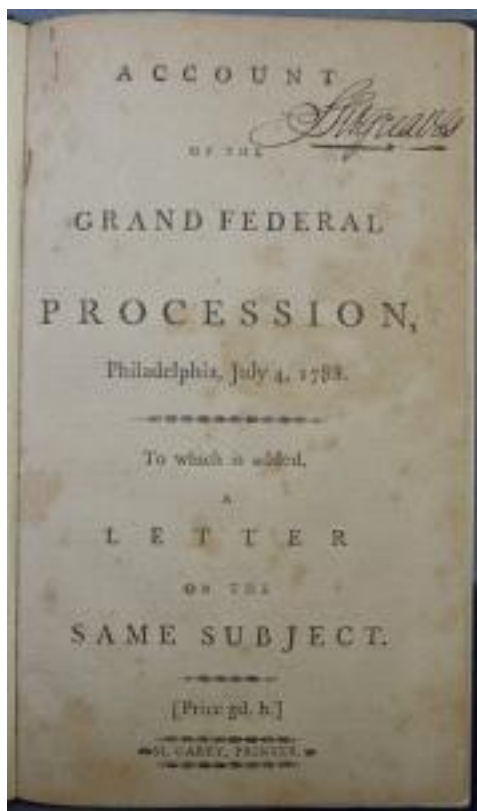


# BIRTH OF A NATION, 1787





# THE GRAND FEDERAL PROCESSION of July 4, 1788, celebrating ratification of the Constitution by a ninth state (New Hampshire) which brought the federal government into being.



Right: the Grand Federal Edifice  
designed by Charles Willson Peale.





Another Philadelphia polymath, Hopkinson designed the flag sewn by Philadelphian Betsy Ross and composed the ode to the Grand Federal Procession.

