

EPITAPH.

INDIGNANT Reader,
Whoever thou art, more especially an
AMERICAN.
Lift up thine eyes, be thankful, rejoice, and behold!
on a level with former

Tyrants,
Knock'd down and tumbled in the dust,
like his equestrian statue at
New-York.

Relinquish'd, utterly rejected, and deposited,
as a security for
AMERICA,

In sackcloth and ashes, *hucum fere frum*,
corruption with corruption,
Food for profligate *Ministers*, corrupt *Parliaments*,
bloody rapacious *Nobles*, venal *Place-men*,
time-serving *Penfathers*, and decait-
ful, bribing, pretending
peace-making
Commissioners.

The residuum and political remnant of

George the III.

Button-Maker ;

An enemy to liberty, an ungrateful, inexorable

TYRANT.
Of inglorious memory, and an eternal disgrace to those
(who are falsely) called the
Lord's Anointed!

In him was completely verified that saying of
St. Paul's,

"Evil communication corrupts good
manners."

A king, who, while on his earthly throne, pursued va-
rious villainous schemes to obtain,
Arbitrary Power,
And that divinity of all Tyrants
G O L D!

By fleeing, in the most
shameful manner his subjects,
to support luxury, ambition, balls, ac-
tembles, theatres, cotillions, races,
bal-pares, cornelli-masquerades, Stratford jubi-
lees, Ranelagh-regattas, effeminate Ita-
lian fiddlers, emaculated fagots, and
the whole complicated round of
Nocturnal Pleasures.

Making baubles of the laws of the land,
A joke of liberty and property,
Foot balls of petitions and remonstrances,
Kicking heels overboard, religion, justice and humanity,
Turning topsy-turvy, charters and bills of right.

Like **NERO**, burning cities through wantonness,
flaming, poisoning, smothering, putting thousands to
the sword, and wading knee deep with ferret
pleasure, in the blood of his subjects
to gratify a brutal devilish

Revenge;

Like **SYLLA** and **CESAR**, bribing parliaments,
and feasting soldiers, (the execrable instruments
of his tyranny) with visionary confiscated
lands of the friends of
Liberty.

Like **JAMES II.** dispensed with the laws, and
made continual innovations upon the
Constitution.

Like **CHARLES I.** raised a rebellion in the land.
Like **CARACALLA**, loaded the people in all the
provinces, with grievous, arbitrary taxes, to
reduce them to a state of poverty and
Vassalage.

Like **PHARAOH**, hardening his heart, and con-
tumaciously perilling, though often admo-
nished of the fatal
Consequences.

Like **CALIGULA**, overflowing with vanity and
pride, commanded his image to be set up in the
Temple;

So he, (as though making it a point to
affront his maker) by suffering him-
self to be addressed by the
blasphemous title of
"Most Sacred Majesty."

Like **HIMSELF** only, by swearing, while he
wore the crown, and carried the sword, his
subjects should bow down in
"Unconditional Submision,"

Till they were humbled, and brought under his
F E E T.

Like a **LION**, greedy of his prey;
And,
Like a **CORMORANT**, never satisfied, although
crammed with millions, gorging and disgorging
eternally, and eternally craving more.

So that
His sceptre became broken,
His crown transformed into a fool's cap,
And his **THRONE**,
(the throne of his ancestors)
which in ancient days was the seat of regal power,
the meridian and pinnacle of human glory,
visibly declining, and in all human probability,
(unless a miracle intervene, which cannot be expected
in his favour)
will shortly become a footstool to the most christian,
most illustrious, and most invincible,
LOUIS XVI.

Now Reader attend!

On the ever memorable and auspici-
ous 4th day of July, in the year of our Lord, 1776,
after near a sixteen years tyrannical reign, it
was declared unto this second Nebuchad-
nezzar, even while his fleet and ar-
my were riding, (as he thought)
New-York,

calling forth their threats,
and bellowing out death and
destruction, by the voices and
hand-writing of **THREE MILLION OF**
AMERICAN PEOPLE (Tyrants excepted)
"Thy kingdom is departed from thee."

Thus, a most glorious
INDEPENDENCY
Commenced,

And the period of his tyrannical race being ended,
after galloping through and trampling under
foot the principles of the

Constitution,
His popularity spent, hated, despised, contemned and
jolly cast off by his American subjects, he
(unk to his deserved insignificance and
obscurity) over a few people
to reign no
more.

Yet, by a fatality peculiar to himself, did this frantic,
lost cause, inflexible, pertinacious Section pur-
sue, with diabolical rage and unrelent-
ing fury, the **Iguis Fatuus** of
AMERICA.

By feeding his impotent fleets and armies to burn,
plunder, desolate, and hover round her coasts,
to gain (if possible) admittance, like the
elder Satan, who failed the way of
Paradise.

But, behold! in due time, (even while his hopes
and expectations were raised to the highest pitch,
from false intelligence of detestable fugitives,
those shooters of fire-brands, arrows and
death, emphatically called **Vipers**,
and the lying (part of an infernal
RIVINGTON!
which had gone forth).

By the permission of kind
PROVIDENCE,

The directing hand of a Godlike Hero!
A mighty
WASHINGTON!

And the generous alliance of our magnanimous
A L L Y;
The **Iguis Fatuus** led him on to his destruction,
besides'd him,
His fleet was beaten, taken, and scattered,
A bloody **CORNWALLIS** Burgoyne'd,

As was some time before
A **BURGOYNE** Cornwallis'd,
And their whole armies
C A P T I V A T E D.

In consequence
of which (having
not the least disposition
towards amendment or re-
pentance) he became spiritiedly
exhausted, perturbed, mortified, dif-
trailed, humbled, and seized with fits of
trepidation, a dramatic pivity, moping,
melancholy, and moon-struck madnets,"

HE FELL UNFITTED,
mourning over, and shedding
thirteen silent tears, for his
lost colonies, and sunk
precipitant to rise
no more;

And the gate of America, immediately closed,
for ever against him; of which the fall
of a jewel from his crown, (on his
coronation day) was a type,
a forerunner, a sad
Omen!

which, (although me-
lancholy in its nature) cre-
ated an universal joy, among
the powers of **EUROPE**, and him-
self the laughing stock of the nations of the
E A R T H.

A Memento-mori, and an instructive lesson to future
Tyrants.

Neither was his
Omnipotent Parliament
Let agitated by the shock, in the **PARLIAMENT**,
Rueful countenances succeeded whippers,
Grooms, fighs, and an hideous gabble ensued,
Horrible diffinitions, discord, and despair flared up,
Followed by a haun, like the found of mighty waters;
Pride, fury, and disappointment together role, in the
character of the

Minden-Hero,
with crest erect, loud flaming
War! War! War!

But on the sudden appearance of
Independence,
Who gave him a frown,
Fide fell back, fury flood tremula'd, and disappoint-
ment disappointed, staggered, hung down his
head, and became instantaneously
D U M B.

BOREAS rose next, with a fabule, keen edge,
and with the voice of thunder, blew his last blast;
but on an oblique view of
General Washington's Picture,
the Thunderer (expiring in an echo) grew instantly
moderate, reluctantly soften'd, and faintly
and inarticulately breathed

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Now a jangling noise, now various sentiments flared
up, and as various interpretations (for "a house
divided against itself cannot stand") till
confusion on confusion rolled, like the
waters of the ocean disturbed by
a mighty leviathan, & closed
the scene in a downright
habbun of various lan-
guages, resembling those
at the conclusion of
BABEL.

Thus was begun,
And by a progressive series of remarkable events,
continued and brought about,
The most wonderful Revolution
since

Noah's Flood;
And out of the ruins of a cast off, funkren reprobate
Monarchy,
ascended upwards
(like the smoke of an
accepted sacrifice, and with
radiant light, like the beams of the
sun in his meridian splendor, spreading
every way instantaneous, like a shooting star,
to the wonder and joy of the whole universe)
thirteen glorious Republics.

More the Light above,
far more resplendent than the flashes of his favourite
gunpowder,
G R A N T,

That his deeds be recorded in the memory of all true
patriots, until the general conflagration, reticulation,
and renovation of all things, never to be thought
of, but to be executed, by those Americans,
whom he hath, and those whom he would have
plundered; and that like
NEBUCHADNEZZAR I.

his hairs may grow as eagles feathers,
his nails like birds claws, and in-
stead of grass his food be thistles,
to graze on, not even only,
but seventy times seven
years, thrice told, on
the summit of the
highest mountain
in North Britain,
but never like
him to reign
again.

PHILADELPHIA;
Printed by F. BAILEY, in Market-Street, 1782.

This 1782 broadside—a satirical "epitaph" for King George III after Britain's defeat in the Revolution—was published by the noted Philadelphia printer, Francis Bailey. As official printer for Congress and Pennsylvania during the war, Bailey had published many official documents including the Declaration of Independence. His press poured forth annual almanacs, editions of the New Testament, a newspaper *The Freeman's Journal*, and a monthly magazine entitled *The United States Magazine*. Known as a fervent Patriot (and later anti-Federalist), Bailey may have penned this scathing and provocative condemnation of George III and Parliament. It's quite a piece: in one page it encapsulates the history of the Revolutionary period, voices the Patriots' utter contempt for British leadership, and celebrates in verbal fireworks and graphic flourish the triumph of the "thirteen glorious republics." [See annotated text on the following pages.]

EPITAPH

—Broadside published by Francis Bailey, printer, Philadelphia, 1782; 40 x 29 cm. (15.7 x 11.4 in.)—

—TEXT OF EPITAPH—

INDIGNANT Reader,
Whoever thou art, more especially an
A M E R I C A N,
Lift up thine eyes, be thankful, rejoice, and behold!
On a level with former
Tyrants,
Knock'd down and tumbled in the dust
like his equestrian statue at
New-York.
Relinquished, utterly rejected, and deposited,
as a security for
A M E R I C A,
In sackcloth and ashes, *stratum super stratum*
corruption with corruption,
Food for profligate *Ministers*, corrupt *Parliaments*,
bloody rapacious *Nabobs*, venal *Placemen*,
time-serving *Pensioners*, and deceit-
ful, bribing, pretending,
peace-making
Commissioners.
The residuum and political remnant of
George the III.
Button-Maker;
An enemy to liberty, an ungrateful, inexorable
T Y R A N T,
Of inglorious memory, and an eternal disgrace to those
(who are falsely) called the
Lord's Anointed!
In him was completely verified that saying of
St. Paul's,
**"Evil communication corrupts good
manners."**
A king, who, while on his earthly throne, pursued va-
rious villainous schemes to obtain,
Arbitrary Power,
And that divinity of all Tyrants
G O L D !
By fleecing, in the most
shameful manner his subjects,
to support luxury, ambition, balls, as-
semblies, theatres, concerts, routs, races,

—ANNOTATIONS—



Library of Congress

French depiction of the destruction of the statue of King George III in New York City, July 9, 1776; 177-, detail. (Slaves were not involved in tearing down the statue.)

sackcloth and ashes: ancient attire as penitence for sins.

stratum super stratum: layer upon layer (Latin).

Ministers: officials of king's cabinet (not clergymen).

Nabobs: wealthy influential merchants.

Placemen, Pensioners: officials appointed by the king, often irrespective of qualifications.

bribing . . . Commissioners: In 1778 a British negotiator tried to bribe three members of the Continental Congress, news of which further antagonized Patriots.

Button-Maker: George III was often satirized in caricatures as the "royal button maker" due to his interest in mechanical devices.

Evil communication . . .: 1 Corinthians 15:33 [King James], translated as "bad company corrupts good morals" in the New American Standard Bible.

Royal Academy of Arts, London



King George III, oil portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1779 (detail)

bal-pares, cornelli-masquerades, Stratford-jubi-
lees, Ranelagh-regattas, effeminate Ita-
lian fiddlers, emasculated singers, and
the whole complicated round of
Nocturnal Pleasures.

Making baubles of the laws of the land,
A joke of liberty and property,
Foot balls of petitions and remonstrances,
Kicking heels overhead, religion, justice and humanity,
Turning topsy-turvy, charters and bills of right.

Like **NERO**, burning cities through wantonness,
starving, poisoning, smothering, putting thousands to
the sword, and, wading knee deep with secret
pleasure, in the blood of his subjects
to gratify a brutal devilish
Revenge:

Like **SYLLA** and **CESAR**, bribing parliaments,
and feasting soldiers, (the execrable instruments
of his tyranny) with visionary confiscated
lands of the friends of
Liberty.

Like **JAMES II**, dispensed with the laws, and
made continual innovations upon the
Constitution.

Like **CHARLES I**, raised a rebellion in the land.
Like **CARACALLA**, loaded the people in all the
provinces, with grievous, arbitrary taxes, to
reduce them to a state of poverty and
Vassalage.

Like **PHARAOH**, hardening his heart, and con-
tumaciously persisting, through often admo-
nished of the fatal
Consequences.

Like **CALIGULA**, overflowing with vanity and
pride, commanded his image to be set up in the
Temple;
So he, (as though making it a point to
affront his maker) by suffering him-
self to be addressed by the
blasphemous title of
“Most Sacred Majesty.”

Like **HIMSELF** only, by swearing, while he
wore the crown, and carried the sword, his
subjects should bow down in
“Unconditional Submission,”
’Till they were humbled, and brought under his
F E E T.

bal paré, etc.: grand evening balls and entertainment.

Foot balls of petitions: King George often refused to
consider colonists’ petitions before the Revolution.

Nero: Roman emperor, AD 54-68.

Sylla: Sulla, Roman general and dictator (82-79 BCE).
Cesar: Julius Caesar, first Roman emperor (49-44 BCE).

James II: Roman Catholic king of England deposed in the
Glorious Revolution of 1688-1689 due in part to his
disregard for liberties granted in the English Constitution.

Charles I: King of England (1625-1639)
executed during the Cromwellian revolution.

Caracalla: Roman emperor (AD 211-217).

Vassalage: feudal serfdom.

Pharaoh: title of leaders of early Egypt.

Caligula: Roman emperor (AD 37-41).

“We are reduced to the alternative of choosing an uncon-
ditional submission to the tyranny of irritated ministers,
or resistance by force.—The latter is our choice.”
Second Continental Congress, Declaration of the Causes
and Necessity of Taking Up Arms, 6 July 1775

Like a LION, greedy of his prey;
 And,
 Like a **CORMORANT**, never satisfied, although
 crammed with millions, gorging and disgorging
 eternally, and eternally craving more.
 So that
 His sceptre became broken,
 His crown transformed into a fool's cap,
 And his T H R O N E
 (the throne of his ancestors)
 which in ancient days was the seat of regal power,
 the meridian and pinnacle of human glory,
 visibly declining, and in all human probability,
 (unless a miracle interpose, which cannot be expected
 in his favour)
 will shortly become a Footstool to the most christian,
 most illustrious, and most invincible,
LOUIS XVI.

Now Reader attend!
 On the ever memorable and auspicious
 4th day of July, in the year of our Lord, 1776,
 after near a sixteen years tyrannical reign, it
 was declared unto this second Nebuchad-
 nezzar, even while his fleet and ar-
 my were riding, (as he thought)
 T R I U M P H A N T L Y at
 New-York,
 casting forth their threats,
 and bellowing out death and
 destruction, by the voices and
 hand-writing of THREE MILLION of
 A M E R I C A N F R E E M E N (Tories excepted)
 “*Thy kingdom is departed from thee.*”

Thus, a most glorious
INDEPENDENCY
 Commenced;
 And the period of his tyrannical race being ended,
 after galloping through and trampling under
 foot the principles of the
 Constitution,
 His popularity spent, hated, despised, contemned and
 justly cast off by his American subjects, he
 sunk to his deserved insignificance and
 obscurity; over a free people
 to reign no
 more.
 Yet, by a fatality peculiar to himself, did this frantic,
 infatuated, inflexible, pertinacious Briton pur-
 sue, with diabolical rage and unrelent-
 ing fury, the Ignis Fatuus of
AMERICA,



Monstrous Crows, caricature of George III (middle), Queen Charlotte, and their son (the Prince of Wales) gorging themselves on gold coins from the Treasury; by James Gillray, London, 29 May 1787

Louis XVI: King of France, i.e., Britain will be defeated by France, the primary ally of the U.S. in the Revolution.

attend: play close attention.

Nebuchadnezzar II: king of Babylon (605-562 BCE) who conquered Jerusalem and sent the Jews into exile.

Tories: Loyalists.



The Blessings of Peace, caricature of King George III (middle) receiving conflicting advice from his cabinet ministers as “England’s sun [is] setting” and a witch flies overhead displaying a banner that heralds “PEACE—PEACE—PEAC”; London, 16 April 1783 (detail)

Ignis Fatuus: an illusion, a sinister unattainable goal (Latin: “foolish fire”).

By sending his impotent fleets and armies to burn,
plunder, desolate, and hover round her coasts,
to gain (if possible) admittance, like the
elder Satan, who scaled the walls of

Paradise.

But, behold! in due time, (even while his hopes
and expectations were raised to the highest pitch,
from false intelligence of detestable Refugees,
those shooters of fire-brands, arrows and
death, emphatically called Vipers,
and the lying spirit of an infernal

RIVINGTON!

which had gone forth).
By the permission of kind

PROVIDENCE,

The directing hand of a Godlike Hero!
A mighty

W A S H I N G T O N !

And the generous assistance of our magnanimous

A L L Y ;

The Ignis Fatuus led him on to his destruction,
bewilder'd him,

His fleet was beaten, taken, and scatter'd,
A bloody CORNWALLIS *Burgoyne'd*,

As was some time before,

A BURGOYNE *Cornwalliss'd*,

And their whole armies

C A P T I V A T E D.

In consequence
of which (shewing
not the least disposition
towards amendment or re-
pentance) he became spiritless,
exhausted, perturbed, mortified, dis-
tracted, humbled, and seized with fits of
trepidation, "demoniac phrensy, moping-
melancholy, and moon-struck madness,"

HE FELL UNPITIED,

mourning over, and shedding
thirteen silent tears, for his
lost colonies, and sunk
precipitant to rise

no more;

And the gate of America, immediately closed,
for ever against him; of which the fall
of a jewel from his crown, (on his
coronation day) was a type,
a forerunner, a sad

Omen!

which, (although me-
lancholy in its nature) cre-

*false intelligence . . . : false reports
from American Loyalists/*

*James Rivington: editor of Loyalist
newspapers in New York City.*

magnanimous Ally: France.

*Cornwallis & Burgoyne: British generals defeated
at Yorktown (1781) and Saratoga (1778).*

*demoniac frenzy . . . : i.e., mental illness; lines from John
Milton's epic poem, Paradise Lost (1667).*

By the end of his life, George III was incapable of ruling
and in 1811 his eldest son was named regent. Nine
years later George died. The long-held theory that he
suffered from porphyria has been challenged—
bipolar disorder now considered a likely alternative.

—Timothy J. Peters

—"The Madness of King George: A Psychiatric
Reassessment," *History of Psychiatry*, March 2010.

—"George III: A New Diagnosis," *History Today*, 1 Sept. 2009.

ated an universal joy, among
the powers of E U R O P E, and him-
self the laughing stock of the nations of the
E A R T H.
A Memento-mori, and an instructive lesson to future
Tyrants.

Neither was his
Omnipotent Parliament
Less agitated by the shock, in the PANDEMONIUM,
Rueful countenances succeeded whispers,
Groans, sighs, and an hideous gabble ensued,
Horrible dissentions, discord, and despair started up,
Followed by a hum, like the sound of mighty waters;
Pride, fury, and disappointment together rose, in the
character of the
Minden-Hero,
with crest erect, loud storming
War! War! War!
But on the sudden appear of
Independence,
Who gave him a frown,
Pride fell back, fury stood transfix'd, and disappoint-
ment disappointed, staggered, hung down his
head, and became instantaneously
D U M B.

BOREAS rose next, with a subtle, keen edge,
and with the voice of thunder, blew his last blast;
but on an oblique view of
General Washington's Picture,
the Thunderer (expiring in an echo) grew insensibly
moderate, reluctantly soften'd, and faintly
and inarticulately breathed

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Now a jangling noise, now various sentiments started
up, and as various interpretations (for "a house
divided against itself cannot stand") 'till
confusion on confusion rolled, like the
waters of the ocean disturbed by
a mighty leviathan, & closed
the scene in a downright
hubbub of various langu-
ages, resembling those
at the confusion of
BABEL.

Thus was begun,
And by a progressive series of remarkable events,
continued and brought about,

The most wonderful Revolution
since

Noah's Flood;

Memento mori (Latin): Remember death; i.e.,
remember, man, that death awaits us all.

Minden-Hero: satirical reference to Lord George Germain,
(also known as Lord George Sackville), Secretary of State
for American Affairs, who was court-martialed and found
guilty for refusing to order a charge during the Battle of
Minden [Germany] in 1759, during the Seven Years' War.

Boreas: caricature nickname for Prime Minister Lord North
(Boreas: Greek god of the North Wind). On learning of
Cornwallis's surrender in October 1781, Lord North despaired
of winning the war and resigned the next spring.

the Thunderer: Lord North.



Caricature of George III and Prime Minister Lord North as
the "state cooks" bemoaning the loss of the colonies
(overtaken pan of fish) in front of a map labelled "Plan of
North America," London, 10 Dec. 1781 (detail)

George III: "O Boreas, the loss of these fish will ruin us
forever."

North: "My honored liege never fret. Minden & I will
cook 'em yet."

And out of the ruins of a cast off, sunken reprobate

Monarchy,

ascended upwards

(like the smoke of an

accepted sacrifice, and with

radiant light, like the beams of the

sun in his meridian splendor, spreading

every way instantaneous, like a shooting star,

to the wonder and joy of the whole universe)

thirteen glorious Republics.

May the Light above,

far more resplendent than the flashes of his favourite

gunpowder,

G R A N T,

That his deeds be recorded in the memory of all true
patriots, until the general conflagration, resuscitation,

and renovation of all things, never to be thought

of, but to be execrated, by those Americans,

whom he hath, and those whom he would have

plundered; and that like

NEBUCHADNEZZAR I.

his hairs may grow as eagles feathers,

his nails like birds claws, and in-

stead of grass his food be thistles,

to graze on, not seven only,

but seventy times seven

years, thrice told, on

the summit of the

highest mountain

in North Britain,

but never like

him to reign

again.



general conflagration: the Final Judgment,
the Second Coming of Christ.

Tate Museum, London



William Blake, *Nebuchadnezzar*, color etching, between 1795 and 1805, depicting the Babylonian king suffering God's punishment for his pride and arrogance, as described in the Book of Daniel [Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562 BCE), not Nebuchadnezzar I]