



More than 2,000 years ago, Nehemiah undertook the rebuilding of his nation. As part of the process, he constructed a “House of Heroes” (Nehemiah 3:16) by which those in his generation could learn of the courage and sacrifices made by previous ones. Through *ForYou They Signed*, Marilyn has created a much-needed inspirational “House of Heroes” for this generation.

— David Barton, Wallbuilders

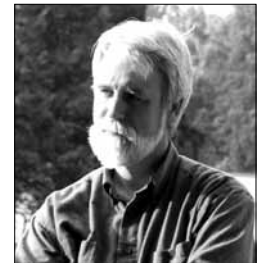


What a unique generation they were, those men of 1776. The intellectual culmination of eighteen centuries of Christian civilization, they possessed not only the most profound intellectual attainments, but each one was prepared to sacrifice his life, liberty, and sacred honor for the ideals of liberty. They were inheritors from the faithful guardians of English common law and constitutional tradition but were now developing a new application for the United States of America.

In a day when Americans confuse heroism with celebrity, and sacrifice with the lateness of a government welfare check, the new book, *ForYou They Signed*, by Marilyn Boyer comes as a refreshing reminder that our Founding Fathers were different; not only different, but exemplars of what we as Americans once were and ought to be again.

Not since B.J. Lossing’s *Lives of the Signers* in 1848, has an historian so lovingly described the character and fortitude of the men who signed their names to the document that proclaimed independence from a tyrannical government. They risked their lives and those of their families and were forced to flee the invasion of a foreign army and attacks by their own neighbors. In the providence of God, most of them survived to celebrate the triumph of their cause. Most of the signers were men well known for their Christian lives; the legacy sealed by their autographs has blessed the whole world.

Mrs. Boyer has included a helpful study page and appropriate Scriptures, which make this book a handy teaching tool for learning the lives and lessons of the Founding Fathers. This is, in fact, one of those books that needs to be in every family’s library, and parents would do well to insure that the next generation does not forget these men and the price they paid for our freedom.



— Bill Potter, Historian,  
The Circa History Guild, Roswell, Georgia

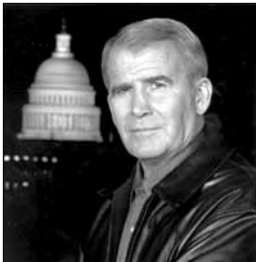


Photo courtesy of Fox News



Many thanks for sending the copy of *ForYou They Signed*. This is a great book and a story that needs to be told! It is my hope that the Good Lord will bless all you do to glorify Him. Semper Fidelis,

— Oliver L. North,  
Founder and Honorary Chairman of Freedom Alliance



Thank you for your gift of *ForYou They Signed*. I have enjoyed reading of our founding fathers and the sacrifices they made to establish our beloved Country. Their dedication to principle and devotion to duty during the perils of the war for independence is an inspiration to our generation in the midst of present difficulties we face as a nation.

I want to thank you for the many hours and personal sacrifices you made to bring to us the story of the brave men who risked their lives for our freedom. May God bless your efforts to restore the integrity and Christian virtue of our founding fathers to our youth today. Your book will be kept as a valuable treasure to my library.



— Roy S. Moore,  
Former Chief Justice, Alabama Supreme Court  
President, Foundation for Moral Law



Thank you for your book. It is very informative. This information needs to be taught to our youth.

— Mathew D. Staver, Dean and Professor of Law,  
Liberty University School of Law

Marilyn Boyer opens the pages of history to reveal the Christian character of many of our founders.

— Michael Farris, President, Patrick Henry College  
Founder of Home School Legal Defense Association



Marilyn Boyer has given all of us who love our country a real treasure. *ForYou They Signed* captures an important but little-known history of 56 brave men who risked everything so we could be free. Marilyn's easy-to-read, succinct summaries of the lives and faith of these forefathers will inspire you and enable you to pass on this rich heritage to your children. The questions after each chapter help you to make this part of your American history curriculum or an effective weekly evening study. This interesting and challenging, well-researched collection of biographies is truly inspirational!

— Chris Klicka, father of seven  
Senior Counsel, Home School Legal Defense Association



Thank you for your sacrificial work in creating this beautiful book. This is certainly a work for “such a time as this.” The wonderful presentation and insightful content will assure this work will remain a well-used reference in our home. It is my prayer that this resource will find a way into every home so that this generation can know the sacrifice required to establish the God inspired design of our nation.

— Stanley John,  
Senior Vice President, Focus on the Family



There are about a half-dozen resources that are “must-have” staples for the Christian homeschool family — *ForYou They Signed* is one of them. Easy to read and full of wonderful quotes, this is the book that will teach your children to thank God for the remarkable, God-blessed foundations of their country.

— Beall Phillips, homeschool mother of eight



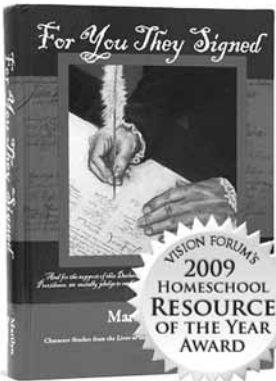
There are three books that every home school family needs to bring to their table this year. For the foundations of our faith and worldview — bring your Bible. To help you define your words and build your vocabulary in terms of that Christian worldview — bring your *Webster's 1828 Dictionary*. But to teach your children to know, understand, and defend the remarkable providence of God in American history and to rejoice in the gift of liberty He has bestowed on them — you must bring Marilyn Boyer's *ForYou They Signed*.

Here is why: *ForYou They Signed* is an antidote to the rampant historical revisionism dominating the schools and media today. Our founders were not atheists. Nor did they believe in some deistic God who was disconnected from the affairs of men. In fact, they were one of the most theologically literate and God-fearing generations in the history of Western civilization.



Our Founders invoked the name of Jesus Christ in their public prayers, and appealed to the God of the Trinity in formal acts of Congress. They affirmed that Christian laws and Christian morals were the only safeguard for freedom. It was this foundation of Christianity that was used of the Lord to lay the foundations for liberty in America. To understand America, you must understand the character and faith of the men who built it. That is precisely what you get in *ForYou They Signed*.

— Douglas W. Phillips,  
President, Vision Forum



To understand America, you must understand the character and faith of the men who built it. That is precisely what you get in *ForYou They Signed* . . . We love it so much that we have given it Vision Forum's **2009 Homeschool Resource of the Year Award**. A beautiful, oversized, hardcover book, full of gorgeous illustrations, *ForYou They Signed* is a welcome resource of hope for the 2009 homeschool year.

*For You They Signed*

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*Parenting from the Heart*

*Fun Projects for Hands-On Character Building*

*Home Educating with Confidence*

*Proverbs People Book One and Book Two*

*Crossroads of Character*



# For You They Signed



*The Spiritual Heritage of Those Who Shaped Our Nation*

**By Marilyn Boyer**

**Illustrated by Linda Linder**

**First printing: January 2009**  
**First Master Books printing: July 2010**

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Master Books®  
P. O. Box 726, Green Forest, AR 72638

ISBN: 978-0-89051-598-3  
LOC: 2010932465

Interior artwork by Linda Linder  
Cover by Heidi Rohr Designs

Illustrations of Signers © 2009 by Linda Linder  
Illustrations of the Signers' homes from  
*The Book of the Signers*, edited by William Brotherhead, Philadelphia, PA, 1861

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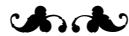
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*Dedicated to those men  
who put their  
lives, fortunes, and sacred honor  
in God's hands  
to secure freedoms  
for you  
and me.*







## ❧ Acknowledgments ❧

**I**would like to thank David Barton of Wallbuilders as the instrument God used to inspire me to write this book. As I watched him on several occasions refer to the painting of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, he would ask how many in the audience could identify more than three of the signers. I identified three. As he proceeded to tell some of their stories I was struck with my own ignorance of the incredible sacrifice these men made to secure my freedom today, and I couldn't shake the thought. I want my own kids to know who these men were and what they laid on the line for their posterity — for US! Thanks, Dave, for allowing God to use you to impart vision and inspiration to so many! The Boyers view you as a real American hero!

Without so many faithful helpers, I could never have accomplished this enormous undertaking. I would like to thank my family for allowing me the time for research and writing, and for listening to all the exciting bits of information as I discovered them. Specifically, a huge thanks to two of my daughters, Kate and Emily, who spent hours deciphering my handwriting and sitting at the keyboard to transcribe the entire manuscript!

Many thanks to Linda Linder, my awesome illustrator, whose expertise so accurately conveys the character of these men. She spent hundreds of hours masterfully drawing each signer and formatting the text. Linda, thanks for a job well done! This book would not have been a reality without your expertise and exceptional talent.

To my wonderful editors, Carol Arnold and Judy Saunders, who spent hours looking for misspelled words, missing periods and commas, indentations, etc., all the details I don't even see! I appreciate your time and devoted effort to make this book a work of excellence. Thank you!

Additional editing work was done by my dear friend Kati Grow, who has for many years helped in our ministry in too many ways to list here. Thanks, Kati!

Many thanks are due Ed and Mary Ann Edman. They made a huge contribution through many hours of hard work and an unusually high level of perceptiveness and creativity. Mary Ann was indispensable with her incredible eye for detail and passion for excellence in final preparation of the text for press.



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## ❧ Introduction ❧

**I**t was a question David Barton posed that God used to challenge me to write this book. While showing a picture of the signers the Declaration of Independence, he asked who could identify more than three of the signers. Everyone knows Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin. I knew John Hancock, having grown up in Boston (his picture was often in bank logos), but those are all I could identify. The question continued to pierce my soul; I realized that a huge chunk of our history, that which is Christian in nature, has been carved from our public school classrooms (of which I was a product). God used that to challenge me to begin researching the lives of these men, and when I did I was astounded by what I found. The vast majority of these men were true Christians who were looking to their Savior for guidance and daily direction in the events which led to the signing.

What we now call the “American Revolution” was not, in fact, a revolution at all, nor did it occur as a protest of “taxation without representation” as I’d been led to believe. I felt like I was on a treasure hunt, constantly uncovering nuggets of our lost spiritual heritage. It has consumed hundreds of hours of work, but my hope is that what you learn from the study of these men’s lives will inspire you to 1) value your freedom in a new and fresh way; 2) be inspired to actively protect that freedom so that future generations can benefit from it, and 3) catch a vision that God wants to use you and each member of your family to effect a permanent change in our society, a turning back to the godly principles upon which our country was founded, so that God will be able to continue extending His hand of blessing on this great land.





## ❧ Preface ❧

*A nation which does not remember what it was yesterday does not know what it is today, nor what it is trying to do. We are trying to do a futile thing if we do not know where we have come from, or what we have been about.*

— Woodrow Wilson

**A**s President Woodrow Wilson so forcefully reminded us, we must understand where our country has come from in order to accurately attend to our duties as citizens today. Our country was, at the time of the American Revolution, a Christian nation. That means Christian principles governed the way people lived their lives. They had been trained to have a proper respect for God’s principles and ways.

The Church was influential in shaping the beliefs of the founders. John Adams stated that Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mayhew and Rev. Dr. Samuel Cooper were two of the individuals “most conspicuous, the most ardent, and influential [in the] awakening and revival of American principles and feelings that led to our independence.”<sup>1</sup>

The pulpits of America helped to shape what Americans thought about issues of the day. Current events were preached about, and the Bible was revered as having the answers to every dilemma in life. Even those who did not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (a true Christian) had a respect for Scripture and godly principles. John Adams declared, “The general principles on which the fathers achieved independence were . . . the general principles of Christianity . . . now I will avow that I then believed, and now believe, that those general principles of Christianity are as eternal and immutable as the existence and attributes of God.”<sup>2</sup>

In a court case in 1854 the U.S. Congress stated:

Had the people, during the Revolution, a suspicion of any attempt to war against Christianity, that Revolution would have been strangled in its cradle. At the time of the adoption of the Constitution and the amendments, the universal sentiment was that Christianity should be encouraged, but not any one [denomination]. In this age there can be no substitute for Christianity. That was the religion of the founders of the Republic, and they expected it to remain the religion of their descendants.<sup>3</sup>

When the fifty-six men signed their names to the Declaration of Independence, King George ordered his soldiers to find and execute them all, putting an end to the “foolish” rebellion. The British soldiers were just miles away from some of the homes of the New York signers on the day they placed their signatures on that document. They all knew, if captured, they would die the death of a traitor. John Adams, on the eve of the signing, wrote to his wife Abigail, “I am well aware of the toil, and blood, and treasure, that it will cost to maintain this declaration, and support and defend these states; yet, through all the gloom I can see the rays of light and glory. I can see that the end is worth more than all the means.”<sup>4</sup>

They were laying their lives, fortune, and sacred honor on the line for you and me — their posterity.

*Posterity* — “You will never know how much it has cost my generation to preserve your freedom. I hope you will make good use of it.”<sup>5</sup> — *John Quincy Adams*

The statement pierced me deeply. We have forgotten. As a nation, we have forgotten; we never learned what sacrifices were made on our behalf. This was not a decision lightly made.

The first Congress, held in Philadelphia on September 5, 1774, opened with prayer which lasted for hours. They read Psalm 35 and felt God used it to speak direction into their lives.

## Psalm 35

Plead my cause, O LORD, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me.  
Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.  
Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.  
Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.  
Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the LORD chase them.  
Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the LORD persecute them.  
For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.  
Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall.  
And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.  
All my bones shall say, LORD, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?  
False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.  
They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul.  
But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.  
I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.  
But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together; yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not; they did tear me, and ceased not:  
With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth.  
Lord, how long wilt thou look on? Rescue my soul from their destructions, my darling from the lions.  
I will give thee thanks in the great congregation; I will praise thee among much people.  
Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me; neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.  
For they speak not peace; but they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land.  
Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it.  
This thou hast seen, O LORD: keep not silence: O Lord, be not far from me.  
Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even unto my cause, my God and my Lord.  
Judge me, O LORD my God, according to thy righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me.  
Let them not say in their hearts, Ah, so would we have it: let them not say, We have swallowed him up.  
Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify themselves against me.  
Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.  
And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.

The following was recorded of that day:

Washington was kneeling there, and Henry, and Randolph and Rutledge, and Lee and Jay; and by their side there stood, bowed down in deference, the Puritan patriots of New England, who at that moment had reason to believe that an armed soldiery was wasting their humble households... They prayed fervently for America, for the Congress, for the province of Massachusetts Bay, and especially the town of Boston... "It was enough," said Mr. Adams, "to melt a heart of stone. I saw the tears gush into the eyes of the old pacific Quakers of Philadelphia." John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail, "We have appointed a continental fast. Millions will be upon their knees at once before their great Creator, imploring His forgiveness and blessing; His smiles on American councils and arms."<sup>7</sup>

Minutemen were often groups of laymen from local churches, led by their pastor or deacon. It wasn't unusual following militia drills for the men to then attend their church service for preaching of the Word and prayer. The spiritual nature of the American troops was reported by a Crown-appointed British governor, writing to Great Britain, "If you ask an American, who is his master, he'll tell you he has none, nor any governor but Jesus Christ."<sup>8</sup>

One of their early biographies made this declaration:

It was fortunate for the cause of America, and for the cause of freedom, that there was a class of men at that day, who were adequate to the high and mighty enterprise of sundering the ties which bound the colonies. For this they were doubtless specially raised up by the God of heaven; for this they were prepared by the lofty energies of their minds, and by that boldness and intrepidity of character, which, perhaps, never so signally marked another generation of man.<sup>9</sup>

God clearly showed His providence in mighty ways during the Revolution. "It was truly a miracle that the American Navy would attempt a battle with the British warships. They fought with rowboats, furnished with a cannon at each end. They had taken out two British warships, one loaded with sixty-four guns and the other with twenty guns. As Adams later told his wife of the victory at Fort Mifflin, 'It appears to me the eternal Son of God is operating powerfully against the British Nation.'<sup>10</sup>

Even George Washington wrote: "The Hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in all this, that he must be worse an infidel that lacks faith, and more than wicked, that has not gratitude enough to acknowledge His obligations."<sup>11</sup>

In his first inaugural address, he stated:

No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand which conducts the affairs of men more than the people of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of Providential agency... We ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of heaven cannot be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which heaven itself has ordained.<sup>12</sup>

Even the standards to which Washington held his troops reflect the Christian nature of our country at the time.

Washington wrote, "every officer and man will endeavor so as to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier, defending the dearest rights and liberties of his country."<sup>13</sup>

He charged his troops, "To the distinguished character of Patriot, it should be our highest glory to add the more distinguished character of Christian."<sup>14</sup>

The Massachusetts Legislature gave the following orders to the Minutemen on December 10, 1774:

You are placed by Providence in [the] post of honor because it is the post of danger. And while struggling for the noblest objects — the liberties of your country, the happiness of posterity, and the rights of human nature

## Preface

— the eyes not only of North America and the whole British Empire, but of all Europe are upon you. Let us be therefore, altogether solicitous that no disorderly behavior, nothing unbecoming our characters as Americans, as citizens and Christians, be justly chargeable to us.<sup>15</sup>

Congress officially recognized the hand of God in the victory at Saratoga and issued a proclamation on November 1, 1777:

Forasmuch as it is the indispensable duty of all men to adore the superintending providence of Almighty God, to acknowledge with gratitude their obligation to Him for benefits received and to implore such further blessings as they stand in need of; and it having pleased Him . . . to crown our arms with most signal success: It [a day] is therefore recommended . . . for solemn thanksgiving and praise; that with one heart and one voice the good people may express the grateful feelings of their hearts, and consecrate themselves to the service of their Divine Benefactor; and that together with their sincere acknowledgments and offerings, they may join the penitent confession of their manifold sins . . . and their humble and earnest supplication that it may please God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, mercifully to forgive and blot out of remembrance [and] . . . to take schools and seminaries of education, so necessary for cultivating the principles of true liberty, virtue and piety, under His nurturing hand, and to prosper the means of religion for the promotion and enlargement of that kingdom which consisteth “in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” [Romans 14:17].<sup>16</sup>

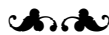
Alexis de Tocqueville, a French observer, came to America in the 1830s seeking to find what made Her great. This was his conclusion:

Upon my arrival in the United States, the religious aspect of the country was the first thing that struck my attention. And the longer I stayed there the more did I perceived the great political consequences resulting from this state of things to which I was unaccustomed. In France, I had almost always seen the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom pursuing courses diametrically opposed to each other. But in America, I found that they were intimately united, that they reigned in common over the same country.<sup>17</sup>

As you study the lives and character of these men who birthed our great country, consider the words of President James Garfield, spoken over a century ago.

Now, more than ever before, the people are responsible for the character of their Congress. If that body be ignorant, reckless, and corrupt, it is because the people tolerate ignorance, recklessness, and corruption. If it be intelligent, brave, and pure, it is because the people demand these high qualities to represent them in the national legislature. . . . [I]f the next centennial does not find us a great nation . . . it will be because those who represent the enterprise, the culture, and the morality of the nation do not aid in controlling the political forces.<sup>18</sup>

Let what you learn guide you as you and your family strive to be salt and light where you live today. Let us, with a clear conscience, be able to echo the words spoken by John Adams after his long years of service in Congress: “Whatever becomes of me, my friends shall never suffer by my negligence.”<sup>19</sup>



# ❧ Suggestions for Using This Book ❧

**T**HIS BOOK IS DESIGNED TO BE USED IN ANY OF THE FIVE FOLLOWING WAYS:

## **A YEAR’S WORTH OF FAMILY DEVOTIONAL CHARACTER STUDIES**

Dads may use this book to lead their family in character studies through history. Contained in this book are studies of the fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence. Studying the life of one signer per week, there are more than a year’s worth of lessons. As the dad leads his family in the character studies, the family learns character, history, and Scripture together. Traditionally, the study of the period of the American Revolution is covered in one chapter of a history textbook. This book is designed to challenge and inspire the entire family by learning history in a practical way that will change the way you live your life!

It’s also a way for dads to relieve a bit of the pressure on the homeschooling mom, as the whole family will learn together, retaining and applying information learned to their own lives. Read a selection and ask thought-provoking questions (provided in each chapter) to encourage family discussion and challenge family members to set specific goals for applying character qualities to their own lives.

The family is trained to build character into their own lives. Learn what some signers said about their relationship with Jesus Christ — in their own words! Definitions of character qualities are taught, as it is hard to implement character goals in our lives if we don’t understand what they mean. The family sees character exemplified in the life stories of our own founders. This motivates family members to live lives that make a difference. The family is inspired with vision as they study the impact these men made in their time.

A Family Activity Guide is available online as a companion book. Coloring pages are included so little ones can keep their hands busy in a profitable manner while Dad is reading and they are absorbing much of what is taught. Weekly character qualities with verses for memorization are available as calligraphy prints to hang on the refrigerator for the week or to place in a frame on the coffee table as the family learns together. Fun quizzes are provided for use during family fun night. There is one provided for every other week throughout the year. In our home, Rick and I ask the questions and have candy to share for correct answers. This way, the practical facts learned are reviewed and drilled in a fun way, effectively and easily implanting them in your memory. You may download this companion guide online at [www.thelearningparent.com](http://www.thelearningparent.com). Just sign in on the website and enter the code SIGNERS at the checkout and you may have this resource free of charge to help you use this book effectively.

## **A COMPLETE RESOURCE FOR A SINGLE MOM**

This book can be a valuable tool in the hands of a single mom who struggles to balance work time, household time, and teaching. This book is a tool that can enable her to make a significant contribution to teaching her children Bible, character, and history in a way she and her kids will never forget! We have designed the book so she can pick it up and use it without preparatory work on her part.

## **A PRACTICAL, LIFE-CHANGING SELF-STUDY**

Is your family looking for a practical character/history curriculum for your children to work through on their own? One signer per week affords a year’s worth of study and review. This study documents the movements of God’s hand in the founding of our country.

## Suggestions

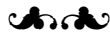
### **A GROUP STUDY DESIGNED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

This book may also be used for group study and discussion. A unit study undertaken by members may include other material from the time of the American Revolution, if desired. Check out suggested readings in the Appendix!

### **INSPIRATIONAL GENERAL READING**

The original intent of this book was as general reading for junior high age through adults. As an adult, I found this to be totally new information to me, which I felt would greatly benefit any reader's life. I was inspired by the sacrifices made on our behalf by men whose names I had never heard. My prayer is that you will be inspired to be a productive citizen whose focus is on our Lord and whose life exemplifies His principles for godly living. May others be drawn to our Savior by the life they see reflected in you!

**Be sure to take advantage of our online companion guide to this book at  
[www.thelearningparent.com](http://www.thelearningparent.com)  
Use code: SIGNERS**



## The Signatures

The actual signing of the document did not take place until August 2, 1776. An embossed copy (hand-copied with calligraphy) was prepared. The custom of the day was to sign beginning on the right side of the paper, under the text. They signed in groups of states geographically from north to south, starting with the State of New Hampshire.



<b>John Hancock</b>					
Button Gwinnett	Wm Hooper	Samuel Chase	Rob Morris	Wm Floyd	Josiah Bartlett
Lyman Hall	Joseph Hewes	Wm Paca	Benjamin Rush	Philip Livingston	Wm Whipple
George Walton	John Penn	Thos Stone	Benj Franklin	Francis Lewis	Sam Adams
	Edward Rutledge	Charles Carroll of Carrollton	John Morton	Lewis Morris	John Adams
	Thos Heyward Jr.	George Wythe	George Clymer	Rich Stockman	Rob Treat Paine
	Thomas Lynch Jr.	Richard Henry Lee	Ja Smith	Jon Witherspoon	Elbridge Gerry
	Arthur Middleton	Th Jefferson	Geo Taylor	Fra Hopkinson	Step Hopkins
		Benj Harrison	James Wilson	John Hart	William Ellery
		Th Nelson Jr.	George Ross	Abra Clark	Roger Sherman
		Francis Lightfoot Lee	Caesar Rodney		Sam Huntington
		Carter Braxton	Geo Read		Wm Williams
			Tho McKean		Oliver Wolcott
					Matthew Thornton

President of Continental Congress					
Georgia	N. Carolina	Maryland	Pennsylvania	New York	N. Hampshire
					Massachusetts
	S. Carolina				Rhode Island
		Virginia	Delaware		Connecticut
					N. Hampshire

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such Principles and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Tyranny, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. Such has been the patient Sufferance of these Colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world. He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good. He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them. He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of People, unless those People would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only. He has called together legislative Bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their Public Records, for the sole purpose of obscuring them, and by this means, He has refused to assent to their Acts. He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the People. He has refused for a long time after such Dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of Invasion from without, and convulsions within. He has endeavored to prevent the Population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Seas for Navigation of Strangers; refusing to encourage their migrations thither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands. He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers. He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their Offices, and the amount and payment of their Salaries. He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our People, and eat out their Substance. He has kept among us, in Times of Peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our Legislature. He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power. He has combined with us to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution, and unacknowledged by our Laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation: For quartering large bodies of armed Troops among us: For keeping us long in a State of Alarm, by quartering our Soldiers in Towns, Houses, and public Buildings: For obstructing our Trade with all parts of the world: For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent: For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury: For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended Offences: For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighboring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies: For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments: For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with powers to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever. He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us. He has plundered our Seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our Towns, and destroyed the lives of our People. He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to complete the works of Death, Desolation and Tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized Nation. He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, to fall themselves by their Hands. He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of Warfare, is an undistinguished Destruction of all Age, Sex and Condition. In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Relief in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered by insult and injury. A Prince, whose Character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free People. Nor have We been wanting in attention to our British Brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their Legislature to extend an unwarrantable Jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the Circumstances of our Emigration and Settlement here. We have appealed to their native Justice and Magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common Kindred to disavow these Usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our Connections and Correspondence. They too have been deaf to the Voice of Justice and of Consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our Intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political Connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

List of signatures including John Hancock, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and others.



IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America

When in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. — We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. 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A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends. —

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# **New Hampshire**



**Josiah Bartlett**  
**Matthew Thornton**  
**William Whipple**

# Josiah Bartlett

## Enthusiastic Patriot

Colossians 3:23

“He made the rafters echo  
with his approval.”



### BORN

November 21, 1729

### BIRTHPLACE

Amesbury, Massachusetts

### EDUCATION

Common Schools

### OCCUPATION

Physician

### MARRIED

Mary Bartlett, 1754

### CHILDREN

12


### AGE AT SIGNING

46

### DIED

May 19, 1795; age 65

*As Josiah Bartlett took up the quill to put his name to the document, William Ellery saw a rugged-looking man in his forties. Bartlett was tall, his curly hair had a reddish tint, and he moved with determination and vigor. When the vote for independence had been tallied, he had “made the rafters echo with his approval,” according to fellow delegates. Now he had the privilege of being the first of the regular delegates to sign the Declaration.<sup>1</sup>*



**T**he youngest of seven children, Josiah Bartlett was born November 21, 1729, in Amesbury, Massachusetts. His parents ran a farm by the name of Lin’s Mouth and his father was a shoemaker. Even as a young boy, Josiah was determined to be a doctor. He received some schooling from the town teacher, but by the time he was 16 years old he had mastered Latin and Greek, and was apprenticed to an Amesbury physician (who was also a relative), Dr. Ordway. Josiah learned to mix medicines, deliver babies, and treat patients. By the time Josiah was 21, his master declared him ready to enter the ranks of physicians and he became known as Dr. Bartlett.

A physician was needed in Kingston, New Hampshire, ten miles from Amesbury. Bartlett set up practice and became known for his expertise in treating fevers and using quinine.

The story is told that Bartlett became seriously ill with a high fever. The physician who treated him insisted that the windows to his room be tightly closed and that he should receive no liquids. The fever continued to rise, and the doctor diagnosed Bartlett’s condition as hopeless. Finally, rallying slightly, Bartlett prevailed upon friends to bring

*His staunch support of the cause of the Patriots led to his dismissal from the post of justice of the peace by the Royal Governor and, presumably, to the burning of his house.<sup>2</sup>*

him a jug of cider which he drank in small quantities throughout the night. In the morning, the cider he had drunk enabled him to perspire heavily; the fever broke, and his life was saved. Later, one of his most important discoveries as a physician was the use of Peruvian bark, or cinchona, to relieve cases of severe sore throat. This was long before the drug quinine had been extracted from cinchona.<sup>5</sup>

In 1754 he married his cousin, Mary Bartlett. The couple had twelve children, eight of whom lived to adulthood. Three of their sons became physicians, as did seven of their grandsons.

Bartlett’s devotion to his profession, his friendliness, and his intelligence, soon won him a wide medical practice and many friends. Although he had no formal training in the law, he was elected as a local justice of the peace because the community knew it could rely on his impartiality. His rising community leadership also led to his appointment by the royal governor as a commander of militia troops.<sup>6</sup>

In 1774, New Hampshire’s House of Representatives created the Committee of Correspondence as part of the patriotic network. The royal governor, recognizing Bartlett’s role in this patriotic activity, ordered him to be removed from his office as justice of the peace and dismissed him from his command in the militia. He was elected delegate from his colony to the First Continental Congress in 1774, but declined, due to the loss of his house by fire, presumably set by the British.

The royal governor repeatedly ordered the dissolution of the legislature. Bartlett and other members would disband and meet elsewhere, and soon formed the Committee of Safety, which became the governing body of New Hampshire when the governor fled to the protection of the British troops in 1775. In August, Bartlett was appointed colonel of a militia regiment.

On August 27, 1775, Bartlett was chosen for the Second Continental Congress to represent New Hampshire along with John Langdon.

With permission of Congress, on January 5, 1776, the Assembly of New Hampshire established a government which was, however, only “to Continue During the Present Unhappy and Unnatural Contest with Great Britain. Protesting and Declaring that we Never Sought to throw off our Dependance upon Great Britain...And that we Shall Rejoice if Such a reconciliation...can be Effected.”<sup>7</sup>

Colonel Bartlett, attending Congress at Philadelphia, wrote to John Langdon about the instructions disavowing independence which had been given the Portsmouth representatives in the New Hampshire Assembly: “...by the instructions I find the town (Portsmouth) is very much afraid of the idea Conveyed by the frightful word *Independence!* This week a pamphlet on the subject (*Common Sense*) was printed here, and greedily bought up and read by all ranks of people — I shall send you one of them which you will please to lend round to the people: perhaps on Consideration there may not appear anything so terrible in that thought as they may at first apprehend if Britain should force us to break off connections with her.”<sup>8</sup>

New Hampshire was torn between the patriot faction and that group which felt need of Great Britain’s protection. Colonel Bartlett requested explicit instructions.

Colonel Bartlett wrote on June 6 to Nathaniel Folsom: “The affair of declaring these Colonies Independent States...must soon be Decided whatever may be the opinion of the Delegates of New Hampshire on that matter they think it their duty to act agreeable to the minds of their Constituents and...Desire the Explicit Directions of the Legislature...” On the day of the postponement, June 10, Bartlett wrote to John Langdon, requesting instructions and urging that favorable ones “would Carry great weight with it (independence).”

Folsom, who was present in the Council, replied to Colonel Bartlett on the 15<sup>th</sup>: “...I doubt not that you

*Josiah Bartlett, according to Rush, was a practitioner of physics, of excellent character, and warmly attached to the liberties of his country.<sup>3</sup>*

## New Hampshire

will be pleased to hear that a pretty General harmony in the Grand American Cause Prevails here — the vote for independency you will see is unanim' in both Houses...I wish you the divine blessing at the Congress — I doubt not if we remain firm and united we shall under God disappoint the Sanguinary designs of our Enemies — ”

The instructions were “to join with the other Colonies in declaring The Thirteen United Colonies, A FREE & INDEPENDENT STATE...”<sup>9</sup>

Over a week later, John Langdon, now being considered for Congress' agent of prizes in New Hampshire, wrote from Portsmouth to his colleague Bartlett that he then knew of none who opposed independence.

New Hampshire's instructions reached Philadelphia just in time:

...Colonel Bartlett tells that the independence resolve of their colony “came to hand on Saturday, very seasonably, as that Question was agreeable to order

this Day taken up in a Committee of the whole House and every Colony fully represented...”<sup>10</sup>

Josiah Bartlett is thought to have been the second to sign the Declaration on August 2, following John Hancock. Bartlett's signature, just under the pledge of “our Lives” in the text, is at the head of the extreme right-hand column of names on the priceless parchment — a signature which might have hanged him!<sup>11</sup>

During the year 1777, Bartlett remained in New Hampshire. He occupied himself mainly in recruiting soldiers to serve in the state's regiments in the Continental Army. He also aided in the administration of the government of the state. Bartlett returned to Congress in May, 1778, while it was meeting at York, Pennsylvania. When the British evacuated Philadelphia, Congress adjourned to that city in July. In a letter written shortly after his arrival in Philadelphia, Bartlett described changes made in the city by the British occupation:

## Public Service

<b>1750</b>	<b>Began practicing medicine in Kingston, New Hampshire</b>
<b>1765–1775</b>	<b>Delegate of New Hampshire legislature</b>
<b>1775–1776</b>	<b>Delegate of New Hampshire to the Continental Congress; first delegate to vote approval of the Declaration of Independence</b>
<b>1778</b>	<b>Delegate of New Hampshire to the Continental Congress; first delegate to sign the Articles of Confederation</b>
<b>1779–1782</b>	<b>Chief justice of New Hampshire Supreme Court</b>
<b>1782–1788</b>	<b>Associate justice of New Hampshire Supreme Court</b>
<b>1788</b>	<b>Member of State Ratification Convention of U.S. Constitution</b>
<b>1788–1790</b>	<b>Chief justice of New Hampshire Supreme Court</b>
<b>1790–1793</b>	<b>President of State of New Hampshire</b>
<b>1791</b>	<b>First president of the New Hampshire Medical Society</b>
<b>1793–1794</b>	<b>First governor of the State of New Hampshire</b>

The Congress meets in the college hall, as the state house was left by the enemy in a most filthy and sordid situation, as were many of the public and private buildings in the city; some of the genteel houses were used for stables, and holes cut in the parlour floors, and their dung shoveled into the cellars. The country northward of the city for several miles is one common waste; the houses burnt, the fruit trees and others cut down and carried off, fences carried away, gardens and orchards destroyed; Mr. (John) Dickinson's and Mr. (Robert) Morris's fine seats all demolished; in short, I could hardly find the great roads that used to pass that way: the enemy built a strong abbatis with the fruit and other trees, from the Delaware to the Schuylkill, and at about forty or fifty rods distance along the abbatis, a quadrangular fort for cannon, and a number of redoubts for small arms; the same on the several eminences along the Schuylkill, against the city.<sup>12</sup>

During the war, Bartlett worked in Congress to build the American navy, and also treated wounded soldiers.

In October of 1778, Dr. Bartlett obtained leave of absence from Congress and returned home to attend to his personal affairs, which had suffered greatly in his absence. In 1779, he was appointed chief justice of the common pleas, and in 1780, muster-master of the troops. In January 1782, when Judge Thornton retired, he was appointed a justice of the superior court and in 1788 was made chief justice.

Dr. Bartlett attended the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia to help draft the constitution, and strenuously supported its adoption. He was chosen senator in the same year, but because of infirmities that came from being 60 years old, he declined. In June 1790, he was



*John Greenleaf Whittier composed a poem in honor of Josiah Bartlett entitled, "One of the Signers." One verse says: "Amidst those picked and chosen men, Than his, who here first drew his breath, No firmer fingers held the pen That wrote for liberty or death."<sup>4</sup>*

elected president of New Hampshire, in which office he continued until he was elected the first governor of the state in 1793.

He discharged the duties of this high station with his usual promptitude and fidelity: he was a ruler in whom the wise placed confidence, and of whom even the captious could find nothing to complain.<sup>13</sup>

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of January, 1794, he addressed the following letter to the legislature:

Gentlemen of the Legislature,

After having served the public for a number of years, to the best of my abilities, in the various offices to which I have had the honour to be appointed, I think it proper, before your adjournment, to signify to you, and through you to my fellow-citizens at large, that I now find myself so far advanced in age, that it will be expedient for me at the close of the session, to retire from the cares and fatigues of public business, to the repose of a private life, with a grateful sense of the repeated marks of trust and confidence that my fellow-citizens have reposed in me, and with my best wishes for the future peace and prosperity of the state.

I am, Gentlemen, your most obedient, And very humble servant, JOSIAH BARTLETT.

To the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives, to be communicated.<sup>14</sup>

His well-deserved rest was short-lived. On May 19, 1795, this distinguished patriot was "gathered to his fathers," at the age of 65. The following is an excerpt from Rev. Dr. Thayer's funeral sermon for Dr. Josiah Bartlett:

The New Hampshire stern patriotism and inflexible republicanism which adorned the character of Doctor Bartlett, have already been developed. His mind was quick and penetrating, his memory tenacious, his judgment sound and perspective. His natural temper was open, humane, and compassionate. In all his dealings he was scrupulously just, and faithful in the performance of all his engagements.<sup>15</sup>

The town of Bartlett, New Hampshire was named in his honor.



## Questions for Discussion

1. What qualities did William Ellery observe in Josiah Bartlett?
2. How was Bartlett called to suffer for signing the Declaration?
3. What qualities caused Bartlett to be ready to practice medicine on his own at the early age of 21?
4. How did Bartlett prove to be innovative when he was seriously ill?
5. What qualities in Bartlett's life helped to build a successful medical practice? What quality caused folks to elect him as justice of the peace?
6. What caused the Royal Governor to remove Bartlett from his position as justice of the peace?
7. What character quality did Bartlett demonstrate to help form the Committee of Safety?
8. Were the patriots at first actually desiring a break from Great Britain, or reconciliation?
9. What did Josiah Bartlett do when the vote for independence was tallied? What does this tell us about him?
10. Describe Bartlett's description of British destruction in and around Philadelphia.
11. Tell of Bartlett's duties during the war. After the Revolution?
12. List the character qualities of Josiah Bartlett, as described in Dr. Thayer's funeral sermon.
13. Look up the definition of "enthusiasm." How did this characterize Bartlett's life?
14. About what aspect of your life could you ask God to help you be more enthusiastic?