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Patrick Henry's Stirring Call

When the Virginia Patriot Delivered His Immortal "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death," and Thus Moved the Old Dominion to Arm for the Coming Revolution.

One hundred and fifty years ago in St. John's church, Richmond, Va., Patrick Henry stood before the now famous convention and delivered his immortal "give me liberty or give me death" speech. Virginia's delegates had convened to consider whether or not to organize an armed force to resist the soldiers of the British king. Revolution was in the air. The Declaration of Independence was little more than a year away. But opinion was divided among the planters of the Old Dominion. Some would arm in self-defense, others trust to his Brit-



ish majesty to right the wrongs they were suffering. If it came to revolution and the revolution failed, their heads were at stake. There needed the impact of eloquence to move the convention to join with the patriots of other colonies. That impetus was given when Patrick Henry arose and addressed the convention. When he had finished, the convention adopted resolutions calling for the organization of militia, and the taking of such other steps as would put the colony in a state of defense. The speech follows:

"Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth and listen to the song of that siren, till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those, who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst and provide for it.

"I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future, but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves and the house? Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has lately been received? Trust it not, sir. It will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss.

An Appeal to Arms.
"Ask yourself how this gracious reception of our petition comports with these warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are

fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are implements of war and subjugation; the last arguments to which kings resort. I ask gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy in this quarter of the world to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us; they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying

Saint John's Church, at Richmond, Virginia, Where Patrick Henry Made His Fiery Appeal



St. John's church, Richmond, Va., one of the most famous meeting places during the Revolution. It was here that Patrick Henry, that fiery-tongued orator, in his speech denounced the articles of the English king to enslave the Colonists (March 20, 1775) in his famous speech which ended—"Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God. I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death."

...for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer.

"We Must Fight."
"Sir, we have done everything that could be done to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned; we have remonstrated; we have supplicated; we have prostrated ourselves before the throne and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded, and we have been spurned with contempt from the foot of the throne! In vain, after these things, may we



Interior of St. John's Church.

Indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free—if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending—if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained—we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!

Liberty or Death."
"They tell us, sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our back and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are

An hour within the little church I sat: Where Patrick Henry's voice was heard to ring.

Rousing his friends against a greedy king,

Calling to arms all lovers of the State. I seemed to see his eyes in high debate Flashing, yes, felt my heart for action spring.

To attention, and heard the northwind bring The sound of clanking chains!—and rose, elate,

Swearing, as many a patriot soul did swear, That come what may, not slavery should be

Man's heritage, but freedom, evermore. So lives the power of eloquence, so share

We in the feasts of immortality, Drinking the wine that Liberty doth pour.

not weak, if we make a proper use of these means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable—and let it come! I repeat, sir, let it come.

"It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, 'Peace, peace,' but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the North will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it the gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"



Omaha Is Planning for Greatest Legion Meet

Plans for accommodating a hundred thousand visitors who will attend the national convention of the American Legion to be held in Omaha, Neb., October 5 to 9, are being made, according to announcement by A. H. Richardson, general chairman of the 1925 national convention committee.

Mr. Richardson said: "Omaha will be the mecca for Legionnaires and visitors from all parts of the world during the national convention. Plans are being completed that will make a 'bunk' available to every veteran and visitor who wanders into the city, for what promises to be the greatest gathering of our veterans. Thirty-one hotels, five clubs with dormitories and 50,000 homes will be thrown open to the visitors. Railroads entering Omaha are setting aside adequate trackage where the pullmans that carry the boys can be parked during the meeting."

FROM A PRISONER

A PRISONER in the federal prison at Atlanta, Ga., asked for writing material and a check book bearing the name of a Rhode Island bank. When the guard handed them to him, he sat down on his prison bunk and wrote:

"American Legion Endowment Fund,
National Headquarters American Legion,
Indianapolis, Ind.

"Dear Comrades: I herewith enclose a check for \$15 as my contribution towards the celestial fund that has been undertaken by the American Legion, for the purpose that carries the high ideals of the noble work of the organization.

"May I ask you to kindly place this small amount to the allotted quota that is required from the state of Rhode Island organizations of the American Legion.

"I regret exceedingly, due to my present position, I cannot give to you my physical assistance for the success of this drive, but assure you of my sincere good wishes and confidence in your work. Your comrade, etc."

Fireworks and the Fourth

Fireworks have been associated with the Fourth of July from the beginning. At the time of the signing of the Declaration of Independence John Adams in a letter to his wife says the following: "It (Independence day) ought to be solemnized with pomp and parades, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forevermore."

The American Legion

(Copy for This Department Supplied by the American Legion News Service.)

WHY THURSTON IS HONORED BY IOWA

Lloyd Thurston of Osceola, Iowa, is the first veteran of the Spanish-American or World wars to be elected from Iowa to the house of representatives. Congressman Thurston is a veteran of both these great conflicts and is an enthusiastic member of the American Legion. He was elected to his present position in 1924 by the greatest majority ever received by a congressional candidate in his district.



Lloyd Thurston.

Following his World war service, Mr. Thurston was elected to the Iowa state senate. He was especially active in the interest of soldier relief legislation. Iowa has many measures of this type on her statute books. Captain Thurston is responsible for the greater part of them.

He is the author of the soldiers' preference law, which gives thousands of former service men jobs which otherwise would go to others. His soldiers' tax exemption measure grants tax exemption of certain amounts to all veterans of the Civil, Spanish-American and World wars.

Another measure exempts all property belonging to service organizations from all taxes. Yet another grants to former nurses all the relief privileges given to former soldiers, sailors and marines.

Mr. Thurston is a charter member of Isaac Davis Post, No. 80, of the Legion. At the beginning of the Spanish-American war he enlisted at the age of eighteen as a private in the Fifty-first Iowa Volunteer infantry. He saw service with his regiment in the Philippines. At the beginning of the World war he was commissioned a captain. He served throughout the war.

Born at Osceola, the congressman has made his home there all his life. He graduated from the law school of the State University of Iowa and served two terms as county attorney.

Big Saving in Fees to World War Veterans

The saving in attorney's fees of nearly \$2,000 to incompetent World war veterans in Livingston county, New York, is the effect of a decision handed down by Adolph J. Rodenbeck, justice of the Supreme court in the county.

The decision marked the first victory of the Livingston County American Legion committee in action taken to establish lower attorney's fees in the cases of 16 incompetent veterans. The veterans had been defrauded of more than \$50,000 by their guardian, George W. Scott, former attorney, who is now serving a 20-year term for embezzlement.

Litigation involving the surety company which bonded Scott followed with the attorneys for the company asking the court to sanction a fee of \$300 in each of the 16 cases. The Legion went to the bat for the veterans in court, holding that the fees were exorbitant, and their contention was sustained by Justice Rodenbeck's decision.

