

THE "OLIVE BRANCH PETITION"

Saturday, July 8, 1775

The Congress met according to adjournment.

The Petition to the King being engrossed, was compared at the table, and signed by the several Members.

To the King's Most Excellent Majesty.

①

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN: We, your Majesty's faithful subjects of the Colonies of *New-Hampshire, Massachusetts-Bay, Rhode-Island, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania*, the Counties of *Newcastle, Kent, and Sussex*, on *Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina*, in behalf of ourselves and the inhabitants of these Colonies, who have deputed us to represent them in General Congress, entreat your Majesty's gracious attention to this our humble petition.

②

The union between our Mother Country and these Colonies, and the energy of mild and just Government, produce benefits so remarkably important, and afforded such an assurance of their permanency and increase, that the wonder and envy of other nations were excited, while they beheld *Great Britain* rising to a power the most extra-ordinary the world had ever known.

③

Her rivals, observing that there was no probability of this happy connexion being broken by civil dissensions, and apprehending its future effects if left any longer undisturbed, resolved to prevent her receiving such continual and formidable accessions of wealth and strength, by checking the growth of those settlements from which they were to be derived.

④

In the prosecution of this attempt, events so unfavourable to the design took place, that every friend to the interests of *Great Britain* and these Colonies, entertained pleasing and reasonable expectations of seeing an additional force and exertion immediately given to the operations of the union hitherto experienced, by an enlargement of the dominions of the Crown, and the removal of ancient and warlike enemies to a greater distance.

⑤

At the conclusion, therefore, of the late war, the most glorious and advantageous that ever had been carried on by *British* arms, your loyal Colonists having contributed to its success by such repeated and strenuous exertions as frequently procured them the distinguished approbation of your Majesty, of the late King, and of Parliament, doubted not but that they should be permitted, with the rest of the Empire, to share in the blessings of peace, and the emoluments of victory and conquest.

⑥

Attached to your Majesty's person, family, and Government, with all devotion that principle and affection can inspire; connected with *Great Britain* by the strongest ties that can unite societies, and deploring every event that tends in any degree to weaken them, we solemnly assure your Majesty, that we not only most ardently desire the former harmony between her and these Colonies may be restored, but that a concord may be established between them upon so firm a basis as to perpetuate its blessings, uninterrupted by any future dissensions, to succeeding generations in both countries, and to transmit your Majesty's name to posterity, adorned with that signal and lasting glory that has attended the memory of those illustrious personages, whose virtues and abilities have extricated states from dangerous convulsions, and, by securing the happiness to others, have erected the most noble and durable monuments to their own fame.

⑦

We therefore beseech your Majesty, that your royal authority and influence may be graciously interposed to procure us relief from our afflicting fears and jealousies, occasioned by the system before-mentioned, and to settle peace through every part of our Dominions, with all humility submitting to your Majesty's wise consideration, whether it may not be expedient, for facilitating those important purposes, that your Majesty be pleased to direct some mode, by which the united applications of your faithful Colonists to the Throne, in pursuance of their common counsels, may be improved into a happy and permanent reconciliation; and that, in the mean time, measures may be taken for preventing the further destruction of the lives of your Majesty's subjects; and that such statutes as more immediately distress any of your Majesty's Colonies may be repealed.

(Signed:) JOHN HANCOCK. NEW-HAMPSHIRE, *John Langdon, Thomas Cushing*. MASSACHUSETTS, *Samuel Adams, John Adams, Robert Treat Paine*. RHODE-ISLAND, *Stephen Hopkins, Samuel Ward, Eliphalet Dyer*. CONNECTICUT, *Roger Sherman, Silas Deane*. NEW-YORK, *Philip Livingston, James Duane, John Alsop, Francis Lewis, John Jay, Robert Livingston, Jr., Lewis Morris, William Floyd, Henry Wisner*. NEW-JERSEY, *William Livingston, John De Hart, Richard Smith*. PENNSYLVANIA, *John Dickinson, Benjamin Franklin, George Ross, James Wilson, Charles Humphreys, Edward Biddle*. DELAWARE COUNTIES, *Cæsar Rodney, Thomas McKean, George Read*. MARYLAND, *Matthew Tilghman, Thomas Johnson, Jr., William Paca, Samuel Chase, Thomas Stone*. VIRGINIA, *Patrick Henry, Jr., Richard Henry Lee, Edmund Pendleton, Benjamin Harrison, Thomas Jefferson*. NORTH-CAROLINA, *William Hooper, Joseph Hewes*. SOUTH-CAROLINA, *Henry Middleton, Thomas Lynch, Christopher Gadsden, John Rutledge, Edward Rutledge*.

"Olive Branch Petition"

* Was this petition written before or after the Battle for Bunker Hill? How do you know?

* Who are the Massachusetts signers?

* What name, or names, do you recognize from Pennsylvania?

* What name, or names, do you recognize from Virginia?

Paragraph #1:

* How can you tell that the writers of this petition are trying to be friendly to the king?

Paragraph #2:

* The writers compare the bond, or union, between Great Britain and the American colonies to what?

* How do the writers praise Great Britain in this paragraph?

Paragraphs #3 & 4:

* What "rivals" of Great Britain are the writers referring to in these paragraphs?

Paragraph #5:

* What war are the writers referring to in this paragraph?

* Why do the petitioners believe they should "share the blessings of peace and the emoluments (rewards) of victory?"

Paragraph #6:

* According to this paragraph describe the relationship the colonists want to have with Great Britain in the future?

Paragraph #7:

* What specifically are the colonists asking the king to do? (Hint: It is located near the very end of the paragraph)