

INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION.

How Dolly Madison Saved It from Capture by British Soldiers.

Clifford Howard in the Ladies Home Journal gives the following interesting account of the saving of the original copy of the Declaration of Independence. He says in part:

"On the twenty-fourth of August, 1814, our national capital was invaded and burned by the British. England and America had been for more than two years engaged in a fierce conflict. It was the outcome of British interference with our foreign commerce, and the seizure of American sailors under the flag claimed and exercised by Great Britain to search our vessels for men who had deserted from the English service. Notwithstanding these serious aggravations it was with many forebodings and much against his personal inclinations that President Madison had signed the declaration of war, on June 18, 1812. He signed it in obedience to the will of Congress, and to the clamor of the American people.

His aversion to a conflict with England was not actuated by any lack of patriotism, as was openly charged by his political opponents. It was due to his solicitude for the peace and welfare of the country, and the fear that war would simply result in a fruitless destruction of life and property. This fear subsequent events fully justified, for when peace was finally declared, after a bloody struggle of more than two years, the question at issue was still far from being settled. In these feelings the president had the hearty sympathy of his devoted wife.

In the winter of 1813, while the war was raging in the northern part of the country and fanning the flame of public disquietude, there came to Washington the exciting news that a large fleet of English war vessels in command of Admiral Cockburn, had just entered Chesapeake Bay.

This sudden proximity of the enemy to the national capital occasioned much apprehension among the more timid inhabitants who feared that an invasion of the city was contemplated. But to others who regarded the seat of government as impregnable, the possibility of such a danger appeared preposterous.

"What!" exclaimed General Armstrong, secretary of war, "the enemy attack Washington? Nonsense! This sentiment emanating from so authoritative a source, and shared by the other officials charged with the safety of the capital, quickly allayed the alarm. Consequently when a motion to increase the military force of the District of Columbia was laid before Congress that body promptly voted it down, regarding such steps as unnecessary.

In the meantime the enemy appeared in strong force. The small British squadron in the Chesapeake Bay was reinforced by a fleet of twenty-one vessels under Admiral Alexander Cochrane. A day or two later there came a number of vessels bearing several thousand land troops commanded by General Robert Ross, an Irish officer, and one of Wellington's most active leaders.

Suddenly in the early morning of August 19, the inhabitants of the villages lying between the Patuxent river and the city of Washington were startled from their slumbers and early labors by the loud clatter of a horse's hoofs, and the voice of a man shouting in wild alarm as he sped past in his onward flight: "To arms! to arms! Cockburn is coming!" Speeding on the heels of the excited horsemen came the official intelligence that a British force of five thousand men, headed by Ross and Cockburn, had come up the Patuxent and landed at a point not more than forty miles from the capital. Instantly a call for volunteers was sent out through all the surrounding country. Stirring appeals were made to the citizens to come forward to defend the capital. General Winder ordered a large detachment of the militia to proceed in the direction of the enemy, whose intention it was to overtake and capture Commodore Barney.

In the midst of the excitement attendant upon these warlike preparations Mrs. Madison remained quietly with her usual occupations, without for a moment betraying to those about her any diminution of her accustomed serenity. Although the president regarded the situation as daily growing more serious she would not permit herself to believe that any such calamity as the invasion of Washington was likely to occur. In this she had the assurance of General Armstrong, who still insisted that there was not the slightest cause for alarm; that the forces at the command of General Winder were more than sufficient to defeat and drive back the enemy when advancing along the river toward the National Capital.

The spirit of wild unrest that pervaded the air, the tramp of horses, the roll of drums, the hurried arrival of messengers from the army headquarters, all inspired Mrs. Madison with a sense of impending evil. This became more formidable with each succeeding dispatch announcing the farther advance of the British, and the failure of the Americans to engage them in battle. Consequently, when on the afternoon of the twenty-second, the president bade her a sudden farewell and hurried away on horseback to join General Winder on the field, her anxiety was indeed very greatly augmented by a dread apprehension of danger.

Scarcely had the president taken his departure when the inmates of the White House were startled by a dispatch announcing that the American fleet in the Patuxent had been destroyed to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy, who had now arrived at a point almost directly east of the city. Wild and conflicting rumors added greatly to the agitation inspired by this ominous news. On the following morning the thoroughly frightened people of Washington were thrown into the utmost consternation which came from Col. James Monroe, secretary of state, who for several days had been reconnoitering the enemy with Gen. Winder. "The enemy are in full march to Washington. Our troops are retiring. Have the materials prepared to destroy the bridges. You had better remove the records."

This startling communication had hardly been made known to Mrs. Madison and the heads of the departments before the news it contained spread like wildfire throughout the city, producing the most intense excitement. Without a moment's delay the work of saving the records and public documents was begun. All that day and late into the night every clerk in the government service

was busy removing the papers and valuables to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy.

The final engagement took place south-east of the city. With a field glass Dolly Madison watched the conflict from her window.

For two hours the fight raged with ceaseless fury, without a sign either of hope or discouragement to relieve the suspense of the brave watcher at the White House. Then amid the smoke of battle, there appeared above the tops of the trees a cloud of dust, growing larger every moment, and rapidly approaching the city as though impelled by a mighty wind, and within the next few minutes a man, bleeding, begrimed, and haggard with fright, dashed up Pennsylvania Avenue on a foaming steed shouting in a voice of terror: Fly! fly! the enemy are coming!" Immediately after him came the secretary of war in full flight, followed by a crowd of men on horseback repeating the dreadful warning. "Fly, fly! the enemy are coming!" On came the retreating, terrified troops amid a whirlwind of dust, and a wild, discordant, hideous tumult, more appalling than any sound of battle, and chilling the heart with its awful significance. Regardless now of their homes or their property, the panic-stricken people rushed from their houses and joined the wild rabble on the streets. Screaming, shouting, jostling, trampling one another under foot in their headlong flight, the tumultuous concourse of men, women, children and horses, animated by a common impulse, rushed toward the river, and crowding on to the narrow passageway in a frenzied, surging mass, drove and fought their way across the Long Bridge in frantic eagerness to escape from the doomed city and find a refuge among the woods and hills of Virginia.

In great alarm and amid the gloomiest forebodings, Mrs. Madison awaited the return of the president. Two messengers, covered with dust and exhausted with heat, arrived at the white house and breathlessly informed her of the fate that she knew only too well had overtaken the Americans, implored her to leave the place at once. Bidding them make good their own escape, she still refused to go, determined to brave her situation to the last in the hope of her husband's return.

In the meantime she resolved to save the famous life-size portrait of General Washington that hung in one of the rooms. Finding the task of unscrewing it from the wall too tedious a process for such perilous moments, she ordered one of her servants to break the heavy gilt frame with an axe, and then with her own hands removed the canvass. Scarcely had this been accomplished when the sound of rapidly approaching troops was heard, and the same instant two gentlemen, bent upon urging her immediate flight, entered the room. Fly! fly at once, madam!" they exclaimed, "The British are upon us." The time for her departure had come; to remain longer would be useless. "Have that picture," she cried addressing her two friends, "if you cannot save it see that it is destroyed. But remember, under no circumstances allow it to fall into the hands of the enemy!"

It was at this moment, just as she was in the act of hurrying away, that Dolly Madison was seized with an inspiration that will ever cause her name to live in the heart of every true American. She stopped to think that she had packed up all of the valuable personal and official papers of the president. The records were safe. Was there anything more? What if the White House should be burned? Did it contain anything of value to the government that she had neglected? The Declaration of Independence? In a flash she called to mind this most precious of all documents. Carefully treasured in a case apart from the other papers, it had been overlooked in the excitement and confusion. It must be saved at all hazards! Without a moment's hesitation she turned and rushed back into the house.

"Stop! for Heaven's sake, stop!" cried her friends, vainly endeavoring to intercept her. Regardless of their commands regardless of danger, the brave woman sped to the room containing the treasure for which she was willing to sacrifice her life. Without attempting to open the glazed door of the case she shattered the glass with her clenched hand, snatched the priceless parchment, and, waving it exultantly above her head, hurried to the door, where she entered her carriage and was rapidly driven to Georgetown.

The last glimpse of twilight was fading away when into the well lighted deserted city rode the redoubtable Cockburn at the head of his band of marauders. Elated at their decisive victory over a force nearly twice as large as their own, and thirsting for spoils, the red-coated soldiers marched triumphantly toward the Capitol. Suddenly, from the window of a house came the report of a musket, and the horse General Ross rode dropped dead. "Fire the house!" shouted Cockburn, and the next moment it was in flames.

Headless of the remonstrances of General Ross, who was averse to such methods, the invaders followed the lead of their admiral and rushed toward the Capitol. This imposing pile, standing upon the brow of a hill overlooking the city in every direction, was even at that early period of its construction a building of unusual magnificence. Discharging their firearms at the windows the reckless soldiers burst in the doors, and with a wild shout of triumph carried their leader to the speaker's chair, from which, with mock gravity, he put the question: "Shall this harbor of the Yankee democracy be burned?" A yell of affirmation rang through the hall, and without further preliminaries papers and other combustibles were piled under the desks and set on fire. In a few minutes this noble edifice, that had been in course of construction more than twenty years, and containing the library of Congress and vast quantities of official documents of great historical value, was enveloped in a seething mass of flames that shot up into the sky in unmistakable proclamation of the awful fate that had come upon the capital of the nation.

Newly aroused to their work of plunder, a howling crowd of the desperate marauders hurried to the White House in the hope, perchance, of capturing the president and wife. Finding the house locked and deserted they battered down the doors, and consulting themselves for the loss of their distinguished captives by a ruthless destruction of the furniture, they raided the ladder and reigned themselves with a hastily prepared fast in the state dining room. They destroyed the remaining provisions, and ransacked the place from garret to basement, breaking and mutilating whatever they could readily lay hands on, they

concluded their visit by setting fire to the home of the president.

American pride and determination built again the city that Cockburn had burned, but never could they have replaced the priceless parchment which the noble Dolly Madison bravely, gladly risked her life to save.

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EDITORS' IDEAS.

The Tammany organization of New York City has invited Governor Holcomb to address the people of New York on July 4. The governor ought not to miss so good a chance of exhibiting to a live western governor, a populist and a great man. He might with propriety tell the east of the great things populism has done for Nebraska.—Clipper Citizen.

The real reason for the annexation of Hawaii by our government is because the sugar kings demand it. That island will be a constant source of expense and trouble to the United States for all time. But King Spreckles is pleased, and since the chief aim of the administration seems to be the pleasing of kings, we suppose the common herd ought to be satisfied.—Papillon Times.

Senator Thurston is now proclaiming in oratorical style that Nebraska went popocratic last fall "for the first and last time." By the way—Isn't this the same Thurston who prophesied at St. Louis that whoever might be nominated for the presidency Nebraska was good for 25,000 republican majority? It was a man just his size and like him given to oratorical flourish.—Antelope Tribune

Populists must keep up their work and preserve their organization. If democracy should abandon silver then the work of reorganization would all have to be done over again. Our party is a unit on the reforms we ask for and if a 1,000,000 free silver republicans will organize a new party instead of trusting the democrats why should 2,500,000 populists give up a compact organization?—Stanton Register.

The lords dukes and aires of England and the apes of America have all congregated in London this week to celebrate Queen Victoria's jubilee. What a conglomeration of vanity and snobbery! The world has never seen its equal. With the plain people of England bending under the yoke of tax oppression; with her colonists in India starving; the vast amounts paid out in gorgeous display might be put to better use.—Adams County Democrat.

When the Grand Island Republican and the Kearney Hub run short of adjectives in following in J. W. Johnson's line of argument, that is "lie and fall back," they slobber all over themselves in talking about "Senator John M. Thurston, the young leader of the senate." For the sake of suffering humanity (this hot weather) it is hoped no one will take this soft soap seriously about Mr. Thurston. These two newspapers all alone, out in the wild and woolly west, deceive no one with their honeyed words. There is government pie at the bottom of such laudation, and not a grain of sincerity in it.—New Era Standard.

The tendency of the hour is to run the government by commission—so we have a civil service commission, an interstate commerce commission, and we are to have a monetary commission and an arbitration commission; and if the people's affairs do not run to suit some commission, then they are stopped by an injunction. Now commissions and injunctions are mighty poor make-shifts for self-government, and were never intended by the founders of the republic. Why not let the people rule directly, without tying their hands by commissions and injunctions.—Custer County Independent.

Here is an item from the Tecumseh Journal that is worthy of more than passing notice: An effort is being made among the pop newspapers to create a boom for ex-Attorney-General Leese for supreme judge this fall. We have no objections to Mr. Leese as a man, but as a matter of right and justice the candidate for judge should this fall come from the democratic party. We can offer a candidate for that office who is the peer of any man in Nebraska, and his name is Jefferson H. Broadv. If the silver forces are to unite against the goldbugs this coming fall, it will be necessary for the democrats to have better treatment from the populists than they had in 1895. Now recall the facts in the case.—Nemaha County Herald.

Bradstreet has published a table that will strike terror to the hearts of the gold advocates. It shows the decline in prices from 1890 to the present time. The quotations are on a hundred different American staple products and the general average of prices are here given:

Table with 4 columns: Date, Price, Date, Price. Rows include October 1, 1890 (\$114.17), April 1, 1894 (\$75.39), January 1, 1891 (\$17.74), July 1, 1895 (\$7.85), April 1, 1891 (\$10.30), October 1, 1895 (\$7.91), July 1, 1891 (\$7.83), January 1, 1895 (\$6.70), October 1, 1891 (\$5.05), April 1, 1895 (\$7.02), January 1, 1894 (\$4.25), July 1, 1895 (\$7.14), April 1, 1892 (\$7.74), October 1, 1895 (\$6.56), July 1, 1892 (\$5.48), January 1, 1896 (\$6.86), October 1, 1892 (\$4.74), April 1, 1896 (\$7.19), January 1, 1895 (\$6.75), July 1, 1896 (\$7.13), April 1, 1893 (\$6.79), October 1, 1896 (\$5.17), July 1, 1893 (\$5.29), January 1, 1897 (\$5.64), October 1, 1893 (\$4.37), April 1, 1897 (\$4.91), January 1, 1894 (\$5.81), May 1, 1897 (\$4.13)

To put the case plainly the products that would have brought \$114 in 1890, now bring only \$74. The purchasing power of the dollar having increased from \$1.00 in 1890 to \$1.54 in 1897. Every mortgage has increased proportionately. Every debt has swelled more than 50 per cent. Every government bond, state bond or municipal bond has had a corresponding increase in value. Labor feels the bill. For every dollar loaned by the money shark in 1895, the debtor must pay back \$1.54 besides the interest, it takes that much more of his labor or products to foot the bill. A more damnable and outrageous system of robbery was never conceived in the mind of man than this system of outcrosting.—Saunders County Journal.

PLAY ON THE ROOF.

NEW SCHOOL WITH ALL THE LATEST IMPROVEMENTS.

To Keep Children Off the Street—Huge Wire Cage That Will Protect the People Who Are Five Stories Below—The Largest in the Country.



MAYOR STRONG surprised some persons in this town, when he said, in his second message to the board of aldermen, that the new school on Henry street, between Oliver and Catherine, would be the largest school building in the world, says the New York Press. Members of the board of education who completed arrangements for the new school house, and even the architects who had a hand in drawing the plans did not fully realize before the magnitude of the undertaking.

Charles B. J. Snyder, superintendent of school buildings, thinks that the mayor is not fully posted on foreign school buildings, for though he himself is an expert on the subject, Mr. Snyder will not admit that the Henry street school is as large as Mayor Strong seems to make it appear.

The new Henry street school house will be, however, the largest school building in this country, and this is enough to be proud of. It will tower in the air 108 feet, while the roof playground, the first of its kind anywhere, will be nearly 100 feet from the street level. The building will cover the whole of the Henry street side of the block, making the length nearly 200 feet. Its depth from the street will be about 100 feet. The building will contain five stories, not counting the playground on the roof.

The figures giving the general dimensions do not convey much idea of what this new school building really will be. In several respects, even besides the innovation of the roof playground, the building will be a noteworthy addition to New York's collection of model school buildings.

Besides forty-eight classrooms, giving accommodations about 3,000 children, the building will contain a large assembly hall, a commodious gymnasium, a cooking school, a carpenter shop, a library and a kindergarten. With all these departments an abundance of room is left for other experiments that future boards of education may see fit to introduce.

Besides the playground on the roof, the whole of the first or ground floor will be used also as a playground or recreation hall, as teachers nowadays prefer to term it.

With these conveniences for the amusement of the young East siders, it is likely that school buildings with such playground attachments will be kept open after school hours in order to take the children off the street, but as yet no definite plans in that direction have been announced.

Of the five stories the first will be used as a play room, with possibly bath rooms to come later. The next three stories will contain the forty-eight class rooms, the fourth being arranged so as to form an assembly hall, was needed. The other floor will be given up to the carpenter shop, library and other extra rooms.

The roof playground, being the first of the kind in this country, is naturally the most interesting feature of the structure. The new school, officially to be known as grammar school No. 1, will be a mixed school—that is, the studies will be of the grammar and primary grades, for both boys and girls. The roof garden, in consequence, will be divided into two sections, one for boys and the other for girls.

The roof playground will be inclosed in a huge cage.

The floor will be concreted, so that it will be as pleasant for boy and girl games as an asphalt street. The upper portion of the mansard roof of the building will form a coping of about three and a half feet in height, extending all around the playground. Resting on this will be the huge wire cage, supported above the roof by light steel trusses, so that no posts or girders extend to the floor of the roof.

The top of this cage will be about sixteen feet from the floor of the roof playground. This means that the network above the coping will be about twelve and one-half feet high. The object of the wire cage will be, strange as it may seem, to protect persons on the street more than for the safety of the pupils.

The mesh of the wire network that forms the cage will be so small that stones, balls and other objects that boys and girls delight to throw when at play will not go through and fall to the street below and injure persons who happen to pass near the school.

The wire cage will be strong enough, moreover, to stand a good deal of assaulting. Boys may play baseball on the roof without fear of losing the ball by batting out a home run while the ball is falling five stories to the street.

The Young Hopeful. "I used to put powder on my hair," remarked the gentleman with the bald head. "Is that what made it go off?" inquired the young hopeful.—Youkers Statesman.

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