

Introduction

In the spring and summer of 1787 , 55
men met in Philadelphia.

These men knew a great deal about
government.

This is the story.....



Philadelphia Convention

Why Study The British in North America?

- Colonists from France, Spain, the Netherlands and Great Britain started arriving in North America in the 1600s. They settled on the East coast.
- We will focus on the British Colonies - these 13 colonies will become the United States of America!.

- The British colonists were subjects of King George III of Great Britain → being a *subject* meant they were under the rule of a monarch.



- Knowing that the colonists were frustrated under the rule of a monarch - one person, NOT elected, that's in control of everyone, will help us understand why the colonists were frustrated with the King= British Gov= Monarch.



- *Government* means the people and institutions (such as Police, judges, officials) with the authority (aka power) to make and enforce the laws.
- ALSO, with the power to change the laws if they felt they were unjust.

- = They had no power, they were ANGRY! !!!



- The **Liberty Tree** (1646–1775) was a famous tree that stood in Boston, in the days before the *American Revolution*. The tree was a rallying point for the growing resistance to the rule of *Britain* over the *American Colonies*. In the years that followed, almost every American town had its own Liberty Tree—a living symbol of popular support for individual liberty and resistance to tyranny. In 1765 the British government imposed a *STAMP ACT* on the American colonies. It required all legal documents, permits, commercial contracts, newspapers, pamphlets, and playing cards in the American colonies to carry a *STAMP ACT*. Because the Act applied to papers, newspapers, advertisements, and other publications and legal documents, it was viewed by the colonists as a means of censorship, or a "knowledge tax," on the rights of the colonists to write and read freely.

What Were the Colonies Like?

- Boston, New York and Philadelphia were the largest cities in the colonies.
- Most people in cities made a living by professions, trades, crafts, or small factories.
- **BUT 90%** (Wow that's almost everybody!!!) of the colonists were farmers.
- Farms in the North, were typically much smaller than farms in the South.

- Since the Southern farms were so big, they needed A LOT of people to run the farm. Southern farms often had indentured servants, (who willingly exchanged physical labor for the passage from Europe) and slaves clearly unwilling. ← *Hmmm Foreshadowing anyone?*
- Since the farms were often miles from the nearest town, people had to become self-sufficient - which means they had to be able to take care of themselves.

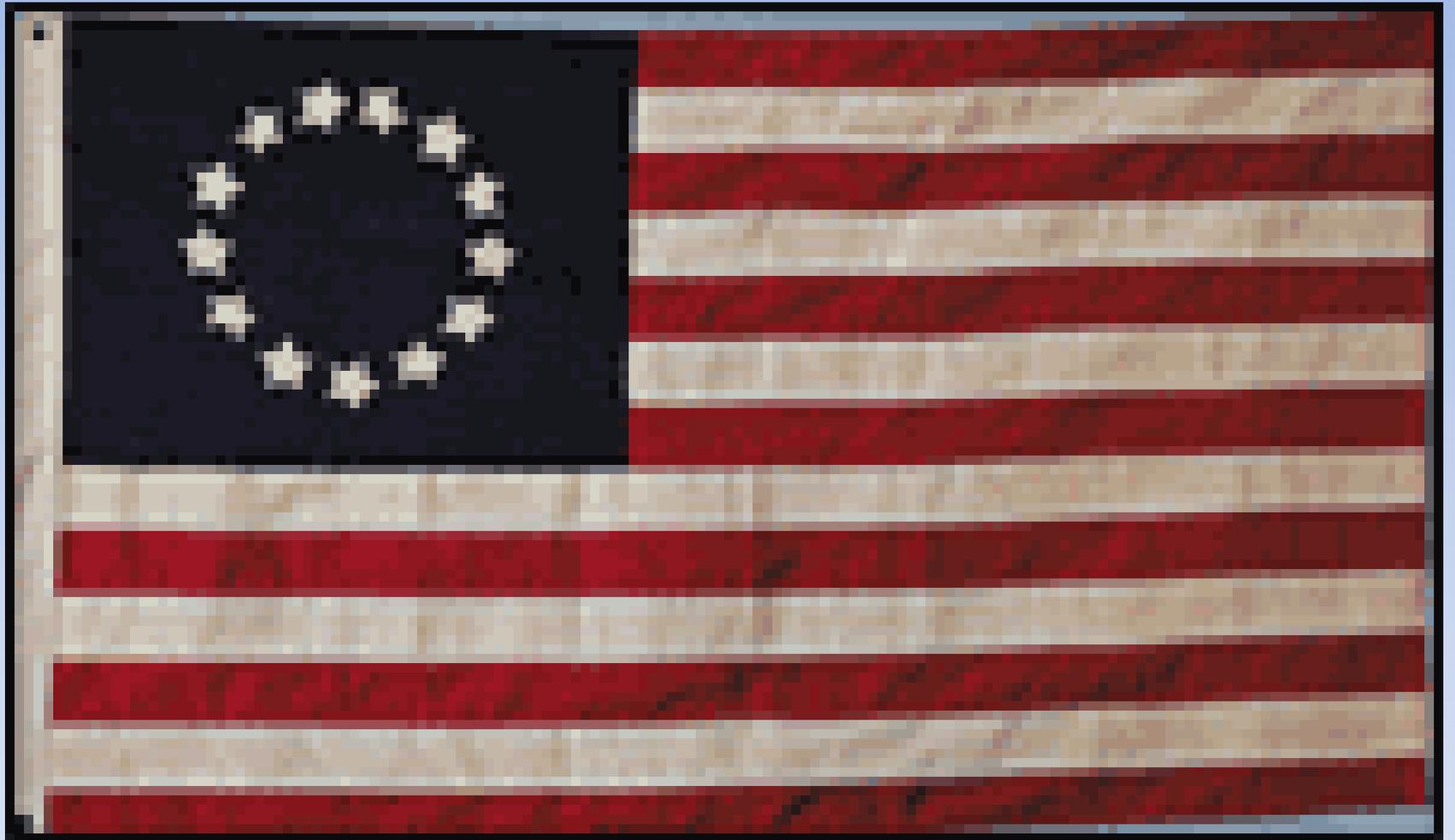
- **STOP AND THINK-** Why would self sufficiency have to do with the dislike of a monarch that was overseas?

Colonial Life Was Pretty Awesome!

- The typical colonial family had the HIGHEST standard of living in the entire WORLD !!!
The land was fertile and crops grew well.
- As a result the food grew better, and people were healthier.
- The colonists were also better EDUCATED than people in Europe.

- Since most immigrants were from England, most people spoke English.
- Yet there were people from ALL over Europe (and Africa.)
- And they brought with them their own traditions, religions, food, and culture, making colonies very diverse.

- **STOP AND THINK-** What was the 1 thing that UNITED all of these different people?



- ALSO, unlike England, there was not a HUGE difference in wealth. In the colonies there was **NO** royalty, and no titles/ nobility.
- People were more EQUAL - a person could get *rich* AND *elected* for hard work.

- A greater percentage of colonists could **READ AND WRITE** than Europeans- the most popular publications were the

news papers



Hmm, foreshadowing anyone?

→ **STOP AND THINK-** Why could a non divide social class and high literacy AND circulation of a News Paper positively affect a dislike of a monarchy?

So If I Was an Immigrant, I Really Could Live the American Dream!?

- Well.... Not quite- 20% of the population was made up of slaves from Africa.
- Slavery was legal in *both* the North and South and will continue until 1865.
- While MANY people had opportunities to gain wealth and power, it was mostly white men (not Native Americans, Africans, Women or other minorities) that could vote.

- **What does voting give you!?**



- But... Even though it was white men that voted, it was a diverse Socio- economic group of men.
- America was full of land- which ANY free white man could buy (rich, poor- remember, unlike England there was NO nobility!) and with only 50 acres you could vote!!!
- More people in the colonies had the RIGHT to VOTE than any other country in the world!

→ **STOP AND THINK**- Why is voting SUCH a huge and IMPORTANT right?

→ **STOP AND THINK**- Even though this country isn't perfect, why was it A HUGE improvement?

So... What Did Colonists Value

Anyways?

- Since colonists were self-sufficient, they REALLY valued freedom.
- Basically, they didn't like being told what to do!.
- The people of the colonies thought they were superior (better) to the people of Europe, because they viewed it as corrupt, filled with monarchs - which they viewed as unjust.

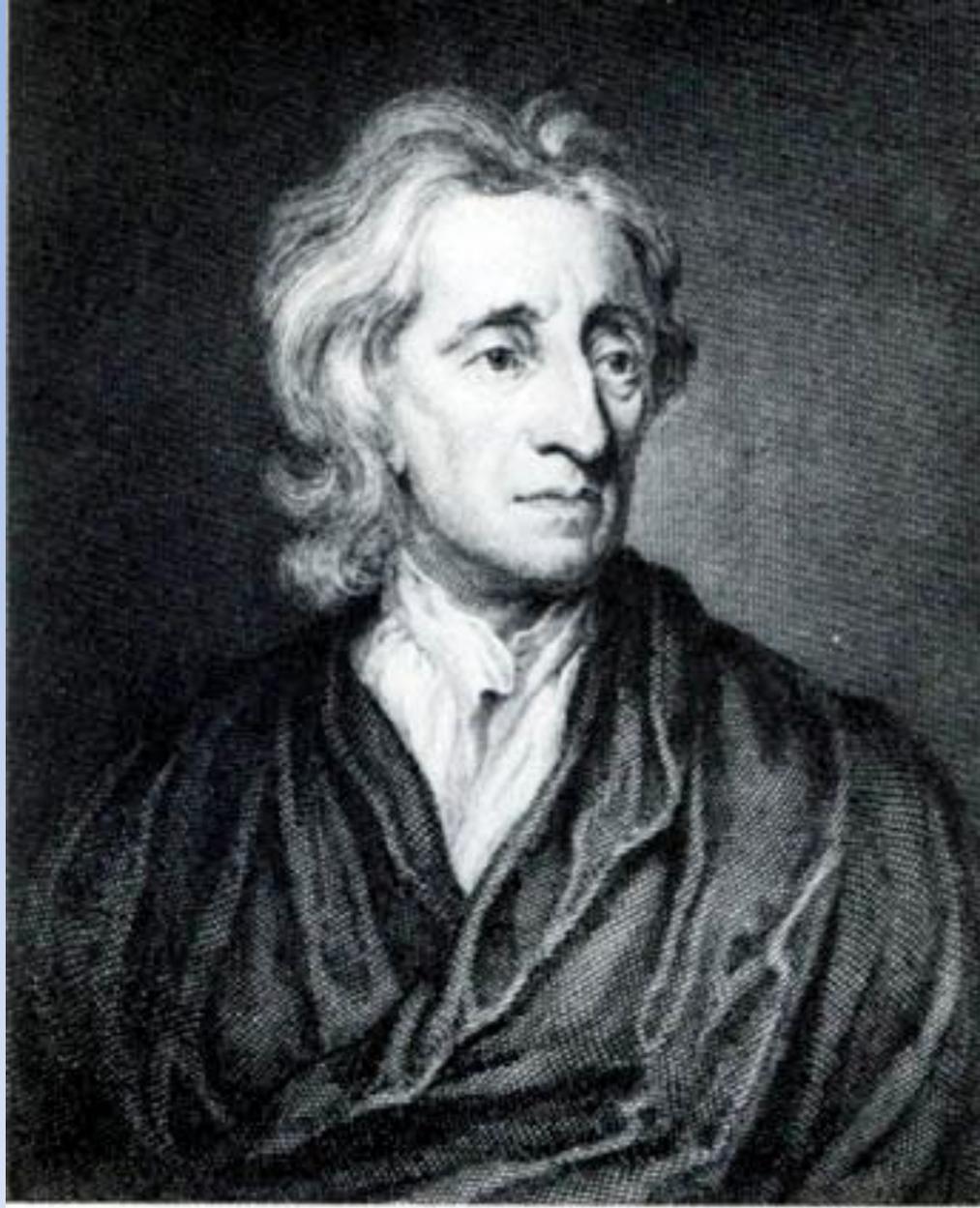
- Colonists considered themselves to be virtuous, hard working, simple people.
- Since the colonists were still under British rule, by King George III that meant they were still subject to British law.
- But, many LOCAL colonial governments also gave and protected the rights of the colonists.

- Some local laws included rights about freedom of religion and speech.
- Before the revolution, the colonists were VERY sensitive about the British monarchy limiting their rights.

Who Were these Founding Fathers!?

- The founders were the political leaders of the colonies.
- They had developed their own, unique and revolutionary (*hint hint*) ideas about the best type of government.

- These ideas were formed by their experiences with the British gov/ monarchy in Great Britain and by studying political philosophers like John Locke
- The founders lead the fight for independence for the American colonies.



“We are like
chameleons, we
take our hue
and the color of
our moral
character, from
those who are
around us.”

- The founders created
The US gov and their
ideas HEAVLY influenced the
CONSTITUTION.

- **STOP AND THINK-** John Addams, a *Founder* said, “Revolution was in the minds and hearts of people before Lexington and Concord” (aka the Revolutionary War), what does that mean?