

# ORATION,

DELIVERED IN THE WHITE MEETING-HOUSE,  
STONINGTON-BOROUGH,

On the FIFTH DAY OF JULY, 1802, (the 4<sup>th</sup>  
being Sunday.)

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BY THE REV. JOHN FOSTER, OF GROTON.


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*"How does the lustre of our Fathers actions,  
Through the dark cloud of ills that cover'd them,  
Break out and burn with more triumphant brightness."*

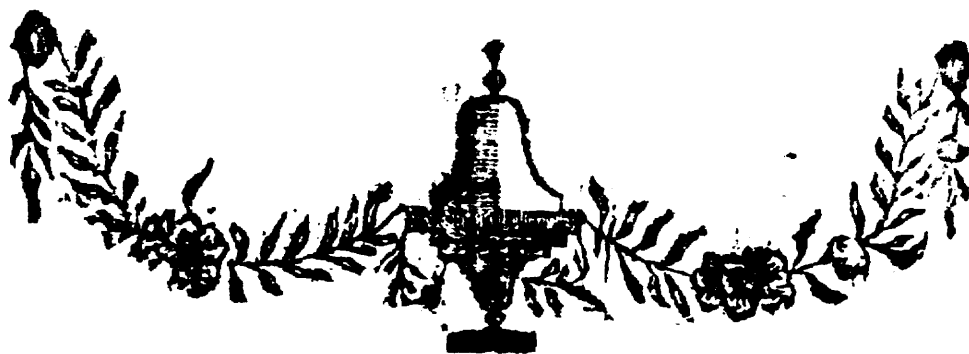
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STONINGTON:

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 BY the particular request of the Committee of Arrangements, Mr. Foster obligingly favored them with a copy of his Oration for the press.—In return, for his politeness, and the general satisfaction given by its delivery on the 5th inst. the Committee tender their sincere acknowledgments.

*Stonington-Borough, July 20, 1802.*



## AN ORATION.

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**T**HE radiance of *this* auspicious morn,—the *genius* of Independence, and the *free soul* of an American, disdain the common, tho' mean cast of pitiful apology. GOD, and nature, have made all men equally free: of consequence, the *original* investiture of rights unalienable is *one*, as JEHOVAH supreme donor is *one*.

HONOUR, and desert, can never be predicated of any superior, inherent and original *claims*, one man may be supposed to inherit above another; but are in ratio to social virtue: he therefore who is most beneficial in society, is the most dignified character.

To be born a *Prince*, and to be born a member of any particular religious order,—the *former* with a native title to *sinccures*, the *latter* with a demand for *certificates*, is an inversion of the order of nature, and a commencement of hostilities upon the scheme of GOD! However little attended to, this infraction of the establishment of nature, has nerv'd the tyrannic arm; added a kind of diabolical omnipotence to despotic fury,—enslaved and

tortured to death millions of our race, and drenched the world with rivers of human blood !

FROM misshapen monsters of *this same genius*, nurtured by black design,—and clothed with all the nameless horrors and energies of *aristocratical* and *pontifical* usurpations,—have proceeded war, murder, rapine, devastation, dungeons, proscriptions and all the heaven detested trumpery of the monarchical clan : also the execrable business of creed-making, anathema, subscription, hot-pan, gibbet, and all the woes and curses attendant on the *Roman question* ! Civil tyranny would be unnerved, like *Sampson* when his hair was lost, were it not for the interposition of *church* auxiliary : so also, *ecclesiastical artillery* and *monkish vengeance*, would be innocuous, were it not for the civil arm, to carry by fire and sword, *their horrid bul's* into execution.—*Usurped* power in the noble, and *black* design in the hypocritical *priest* united, have been the prolific source of all the wickedness, and of all the woes, time has witnessed, and poor human nature has struggled with, in every period of the world ! ! !

UPON *this*, eternally to be execrated altar, of *ambition* and of *avarice*, alias *Church* and *State* united, millions of times there has smoked an hecatomb of human beings as a sacrifice ! ! The ghosts of the slaughtered, having a recent recollection of their agonized torture,—in pity to man, and to fan the flame of primeval liberty, points to the *Throne* and to the *Inquisition*.

BEING dead they yet speak, and in the most moving philanthropic eloquence bid us keep a watchful eye on those in power ; and if the limits prescribed by the people are exceeded, to rally round the standard of Independence, unsheath the sword of God and of liberty, and crush the tyrant or perish in the attempt.

CITIZENS,—“ *an hour,—a moment of virtuous liber-*

" *ty, is worth a whole eternity in bondage.——O Liberty,*  
 " *—O virtue,—O my country.*"

REPUBLICANS,—it becomes us, when convoked by the inspiring call of gratitude, to celebrate the *natal anniversary* of our yet infant empire, to retrograde in our recollection to that singular concatenation of fortunate events which, centring in the *single point* of Independence, has rear'd the *broad stone* in the stupendous temple of liberty, and pronounced all its immoveable glories our own.

In an attitude of silent devotion, from the towering precipice which nods over the foaming atlantic, let us wait, in retrospective idea, the arrival of the little bark which bore on the bosom of the ocean our venerable forefathers. Look,—and 'tis a view next the lamb of God: they come!——With a noble thirst for the undisturbed enjoyment of that liberty, wherewith Christ, and nature, have made them free; and, upborne by faith in the universal parent of good—my God! unhurt they have shaped their devious way,—and with united voices cry out—a shore, a shore,—and 'tis fabled America!

REPUBLICANS,—image to yourselves, if possible, the nameless perils and untold hardships, which ~~like~~ *like* ~~en-~~ *en-*venomed legions drew up in *batalia* and menaced ~~swift~~ *swift* destruction upon their disembarkation!—No dome for their reception but the cold regions of space;—no covering but the canopy of heaven;—no food but that which in a precarious manner resulted from the musket and hook, and no friend but Jehovah who feedeth the little birds!

FROM the fearful bosom of the gloomy forest issued the painted *Sachem*, leading his yellow throng, thick as the swarms that blackened Egypt's strand,—and, united to the mellorating influence of mercy, as the ferocious

**Tigress.**—Behind them prowls the tenant of the wood ;—stern winter rages with all his horrors, and slays the murmuring rivulet in his cold embrace : yea, by famine, —by sickness,—by beasts of prey, and the shaft of the savage, leveled with a dextrous arm, all nature seemed armed against them, and irremediable destruction charged with their total extermination !!!

BUT were our renowned Fathers like *Ephraim* of old, a silly *dove* without heart ?—Did the survivors cry we shall one day perish by the *hatchet, knife* or *arrow* as our brethren have done ?—Was there a groan, the Lord hath forsaken us, to be heard ?—No : more than death *they* suffered—but more than glory *they* hoped to merit by *their* precious blood, for millions then unborn.

FOSTERED by the pitying hand of heaven, a remnant of *this Israel* was preserved from the vortex of destruction : and while struggling with storms of tale, the Almighty *fiat*, which broke up for the sea a decreed place, appointed limits to *savage* butcheries and *beasts* of prey ; and said to *sickness, famine*, and *death*, hitherto shall ye come, and no further.

THERE 's, says the great Mr. HUME, an ultimate point of depression as well as exaltation ; from which human affairs naturally return in a contrary progress ;—and, beyond which, they never proceed, either in their advancement or decline.—To that *last* point of depression our venerable fires were reduced ; yet like Israel at the sea, they tarried not : soon—soon, the darken'd hemisphere was streaked with cheering radiance : winter's chilling blast that rent the forest mellowed into the vernal breeze ; the earth opened her friendly and productive bosom ; the Eternal God made many tawny neighbours to be at peace : in fine, civilization with her amiable train of blessings and of graces enter'd the rude retreat of the aborigines—and like a handful of corn upon the mountain, who soon became a numerous people.

**THESE,—Republicans,** are the faintest martyrs, who nurtur'd Freedom in America's wilds!—*Their* Patriotic blood purchased our charter of liberty; *their* hazard and penury, were a prelude to our safety and enjoyment,—and their night of unequalled darkness, lights up for us a day, which will shine with admired and envied effulgence, 'till the Sun himself, shall grow dim with age, and nature sink in years!

**LIKE Abraham,** obedient to the divine command in the affairs of his Son,—our renowned fathers, nothing doubting, attended the *call of Almighty Liberty*, and sacrificed at the shrine of republican sin, not an *Isaac*, nor the *quadruped substitute*, but *their own lives!!*

**THE** unparalleled patriotic perseverance of the *Republican Plymouth company*, laid the immoveable foundation of **LIBERTY, SCIENCE, and VIRTUE**,—upon which the *vast structure of American Independence* has since been reared,—towering to the very heavens, and cemented with blood!—To *this* sacred Temple, the *last* great attempt of **GOD**; whose turrets rise immeasurably high, and fade in distant perspective, *American Thunder-bolts* of war, have conducted the *fair Goddess of LIBERTY*.

**REPUBLICANS.**—I need not tell you, that our immortal *Sires*, impelled by dire necessity, and emboldened by ties of blood, looked up to *Britain* for succour and protection; pledging *allegiance*, while treated like *free born Britains*—No: the historic page announces this transaction.

**ENGLAND** lent her aid—and while united, the nation was the terror and envy of the world!—An immense and incalculable revenue Britain derived from the colonies—but waxed haughty, and callous to every fine paternal feeling of the soul, claimed to tax America without her consent!—Eleven annual revolutions bear

witness to *innumerable remonstrances*, breathing the language of *injured innocence*, against so tyrannical and oppressive a procedure : *But in vain !*—**GEORGE** and his council, like the tyrant of Babylon, cried of America—“ *this is Babylon which we have built.* ”—To rivet the chains of vassalage, forged neither by **GOD** nor **NATURE**—and to crush the tender bud of *Liberty* just bursting from the stem, a formidable *fleet*, whitening the Atlantic with its canvass, is ordered to blockade *our harbours*, while *hostile troops*, at the nod of the tyrant, are to carry *victory or destruction* through astonished and defenceless America ! !

**REPUBLICANS**,—the resistless ardor of *indignant* recollection will, I presume, retrograde to *seventy-five !*—an *epoch* in the historic page, which will stamp the name of Britain with *infamy*, till the angel of God shall swear that time shall be no longer.

**BUT** the fire of a Seraph, the *exergy* of numbers, and *omnipotence* of rhetoric, must eternally fail in an attempt to describe America's fearful condition ! In military arts untaught ; not versed in camps, nor disciplined in blood ; no leading chief ; and fear depicted in every face—destitute of ordnance and warlike stores——in fine, no hope of human aid from any point of heaven.

**IN** this very article of our extremity, **GOD ALMIGHTY** arose from his throne, encircled by the never fading radiance of the hope inspiring rainbow :—--all Heaven was wrapt in silent, but adoring attention, till the *Eternal* pronounced the tyrant crushing mandate : Then the angel of Liberty, with a trait of ethereal light, through Heaven bent his way to Earth, and on **WASHINGTON**'s martial brow bound the wreath of liberty, and stamped with the seal of omnipotence the *Independence of America ! ! !*

**TELL** ye your children of it, and let your children



tell their children, and their children another generation. A prophet, divinely inspired, breaks out into this exclamation---an *exclamation* happily adapted to the present occasion, and calculated to perpetuate the remembrance of *that* event, which sure is written on every American heart---every lover of his country.

THE combined wisdom of the *Sages* of the world, hath not been able to reduce to a system, the phænomena of Nature : nor can grateful Americans scan the methods of providence, and calculate the glory our freedom and sovereignty embrace for millions yet unborn.

HAIL auspicious day that *emancipated* the United States---*regenerated* America, and blest this Western World with *Freedom, Sovereignty, and Independence*.—There is a sacred luxury in reflecting that the race of man is saved by Christ ; and that *that* Almighty grace which gave *America* her name and rank, embraces the *World* and means its happiness : It retrogrades to the birth of time, and looks forward to its dissolution.

BUT after *that* tremendous night of darkness, which will live in the dread recollection of Americans till *Liberty shall slumber forever* : after the perils and hardships of the *Camp*, the danger of war, the hoarse drum and shrill trumpet's sound ;—after the groans of dying Fathers and Brothers, and the sight of garments rolled in blood—it pleased the *Patron* of Liberty, in *seventy six*, to streak our horizon with lines of sacred effulgence : *America*, though bleeding at every pore, and involved in the tempest of war, raging with unabated fury—named her *Independence* : “ *Well hast thou done*, the Almighty Father spoke ; *well hast thou done*, all Heaven the *euge* took, and saints and Angels in their songs replied.” Then we broke the chains of slavery—threw off the British tyrant's yoke—disdained for a whole eternity the name of *King*, and owned no Sovereign but *Jehovah* ! Then like a gi-

ant rejoicing in his strength, arose the *Sun of America's Republican glory*—and floods of light burst upon this Western World, heightening the raptures of Creation.

BUT let us not tarnish the fair page of creation, nor damp the ardor of *Republican joy*, on *this sacred, this festive, and this eventful day*, by a momentary recurrence to the *name, the character, and the conduct* of those *execrable monsters* from among ourselves, who aided the British tyrant against *their country—the cause of Freedom—the Rights of Man—and investiture of Almighty Nature!* “Is there no secret curse, no hidden thunder in the “stores of heaven, red with uncommon wrath, to blast “the man who owes his greatness to his country's ruin.”

AND to name *those worthies*, who, in the cause of *Liberty*, turned their backs on the dearest connections; abandoned domestic scenes of quiet; braved the horrors of war; met the blaze of British ordnance undaunted, and nobly died in their Country's cause, is but to follow the long beaten track: 'Tis enough to say—“*Liberty*, which from heaven had bow'd to watch the scale or fight, when *these brave Heroes* fell, who lov'd and who ador'd *her cause* so well---retired behind a crimson cloud!”

OUR Temple of Independence, was rear'd upon the slaughtered carcasses of MANY brave American Soldiers—MANY, who thought it a pity, *they* could die but once to serve their Country! The glorious groans of the expiring Hero, rent the galling fetters of slavery; for he conquered when he fell.—Our Charter of Freedom, crimsoned o'er with *American blood*, will eternalize the *memory* and the *virtues* of the *fallen Martyrs*; and add a dignity to their characters in that serene Country where the tempests of war never comes! When *balmy Peace* returned to America, like the *Dove* to the ark, and the brave Patriot WASHINGTON filled the first chair of State;—when our admired and envied Constitution was framed,

and our *Republican Government* organized—*America* was venerable as a Roman Senate, and terrible as an Alexander at the head of the victorious legions of *Macedon*.

THROUGH the whole course of *this* administration, the *Constitution* was the political compass ; *Washington* the pilot of the republican bark ; and peace, wealth and honour, kept pace with the progress of time---while *America* assumed a dignified rank, and became the envy and wonder of the world !

WITH *Washington* at our head—*America* a band of brothers, uniting the name of *soldier* and *friend*, and roused in a moment to arms—there needed not the incalculable expence of a *Navy*—No : *Rome*, once mistress and arbitress of three fourths of the globe, would have faded in remembrance on a comparison with *America* : yea, the firm soul of the enterprising *Cæsar* would have revolted with dismay from the thoughts of an invasion.

WASHINGTON's noble republican soul was a stranger to *despotic sensations* ; nor had he the late aristocratical art, of calculating the native superiority of claims, *one* man is supposed to possess over *another* : millions were therefore saved from the public burden ; no Standing Army being deemed necessary, either to *protect* Congress, or *enforce* her decrees. The integrity and attachment---the patriotism and faith of our first President, rendered a *Sedition Law*, to prevent the *free* investigation of his conduct, quite unnecessary.

THIS brave Patriot loved the country for which he fought ; its soil manured by rivers of blood, he proffered as an assylum for republicans from the old world : and, that merit should be rewarded, he would admit emigrants from every quarter of the globe, to a participation of the honors and profits of our government : and, tho' in *his* administration, the hated form of an *alien bill* was con-

ceived, and the *haggard fetus* was nourished by the allments of *foreign influence* ; yet it could not be brought forth, until *Washington*, like *Marlborough* retired, to think of eternity !

BUT how does it chill every passion of the patriotic mind, to view, in retrospective idea, the eminent danger *America* has of late been in, of losing her *name*, her *liberty*, her *all* ! I refer to the *fearful period*, when the republicans of *America* reposed *too* much confidence in Rulers ; and, being without design *themselves*, could view public men, only as ministers of God for good : a dread period this indeed ! — *American Republicans* asleep, and *designing rulers* forging for *them*, chains of eternal slavery ! — Let not God from on high regard the black era, nor may it come into the number of the months. Had the brave *Heroes* of *seventy-five*, have slept another Olympiad, the resurrection would have surprized the world, ere *America* would have recovered her liberty from the monarchical ravisher !

THE *same* impositions which nerv'd the hero's arm in *seventy-five* ; fired his indignant soul, and roused the whole country to arms, were practiced again, in the reign of darkness ! Could *Americans* who bravely fought, while the field was covered with the dead bodies of their fellows----to liberate the country from tyrannic impositions, and the detested stamp act not the least ; ever again be entangled with the yoke of bondage ?

COULD *this* country tamely submit to measures which favoured so much of monarchy, as the loss of the liberty of the Press ? Judiciary systems ? Standing Armies in time of peace, remonstrated against by the immortal *Washington* ? Could they crouch down under the intolerable burden of unnecessary taxes,--to break the spirits of the people ; to discourage tradesmen, mechanics and manufacturers ? And all this to open a way for

kingly government, under the qualified term of *Federalism*?

COULD this country brook the intended union of *church and state*? *Lords* temporal and spiritual—*civility*, blended with the clever, little *clerical* hierarchy? And was not this design obvious, from the mouthing of a *particular* order of the clergy in favour of *monarchy*, under the feigned name of *federalism*? And was it not further evident, since the bursting of a volcano in the Northern States, would not be a greater phenomenon, than one---poor---little---lean prayer of *that* order, in favour of the President, and present administration?

WE have never considered the *clergy*, as being totally dead to the good things of this sinful world: and as Mr. *Jefferson* has caused many of them to drink of the brook, and receive, *without* money and *without* price, much of *their* living from *his* personal bounty: in *their* forbearing to bless him in the name of *their* God, is unaccountable but upon this design:--- a *national* religion! union of church with state! hereditary succession of spiritual magistracy, and resurrection of an ecclesiastical, inquisitorial, and federal hierarchy!!!—Will America again court the yoke, and bow the neck to *King*, or *Pope*?—No;---the *great patron* of liberty round the globe,---who saved our fathers from savage butcheries, a *precious grain*,---who assumed the character of the man of war, when Britain dared invade our rights; awake for the defence of *that* Independence he set the seal of omnipotence to,---discovered the design of *tory* and of *priest*,---pointed out *that* sea of liberty, *Jefferson*,---and the tempest that thundered nigh subsided into a calm.

IF we revolve the history of man, and number those worthies who have ascended the hill of fame,---sure our venerable President will not appear a whit behind the

chief Apostle. While encircled with the names of a *Thyoth, Solon and Numa*, wise legislators of gentile antiquity ; --- *Cato, Plato and Moses* : --- *Lock, Addison, Pope, Franklin, and Washington*, --- our *Jefferson* shines like a Sun amidst ten thousand stars.

HE needs no *Sedition Law*, to protect him, --- or Navy to spread his fame : That he is *Thomas Jefferson*, is enough to raise him to an immortality of political glory. All that the natural Sun is to this world, our President is to America : enlightening and warming the noble souls of a Republican Congress, --- his wise management has, in the *last session of that august body*, saved the nation more than 1,000,000 of dollars ! Citizens, the people are the source of power : they alone have right to say who shall govern them, and by what laws.

IN a government, *republican*, every class of citizens, have, from nature, the unalienable right, not only to elect their representatives, but in turn to represent : --- to appoint legislators, and to legislate. A Government founded upon *this* great first principle of democracy, will be mild, peaceful and lasting, because eternally equitable. Hereditary offices and emoluments, are the *stamina vite*, of tyranny and despotism. Long continuance in power, originates *that* haughture and independence, twin brothers with monarchical tyranny.

A REPUBLICAN government should be especially careful to limit the term its servants shall continue in places of power and trust : and *this* term, should be always short. A servant of the people, returned by the expiration of his *limited* time in office, may be eligible for re-election : but to preserve him from *that* too common vanity, a *thirst* for domination, --- let him be within reach of the people who made him.

LET public men be taught by the people, that they

are amenable to their constituents; that *they* are not creators, but created—and no longer entitled to the honour of *God's Ministers*, than they pursue the good of the people. When re-election is made to depend upon the *integrity* and *faithfulness* of the elected, the rights of the people will be safe, and the *public servant* will return to his constituents the same honest republican he was at his departure.

SUCH a Government will be mild and equitable; because the ministers of it, are obliged to be subject to the same laws they have enacted, when remanded to the private walks of life.—But if a single class of citizens be excluded the right of appointing their legislators, and themselves to legislate, all laws obligatory on *such* class, are arbitrary, oppressive, and to be resisted with unrestrained indignation.

BUT the limits I have prescribed myself, and I may probably add your patience, will oblige me to abandon this disquisition. This is the *first*, and probably will be the *last* time, the Orator of the hour, has had, or will have, the honour of a call from the Committee of Arrangements, to celebrate the natal anniversary of our Empire. I am therefore pleased to find my duty and pleasure in unison;...suffer me then, to invite you, with myself, to recollect the many signal interpositions of God in our favour, as a nation, and a people; 'tis his Almighty arm that broke the yoke of tyrannic Britain, & brought salvation to this western world! We should then reflect that national honor and national happiness, (like that of individuals) depend upon national virtue. The *Affrian*, *Persian*, *Egyptian*, *Grecian* and *Roman* Empires, once so flourishing, all fell by vice and effeminacy!—It was a maxim with the wise old Romans, that the education of youth, very much concerned the public good: in our dear children we are to live through time. If then we love our Country, devotionally respect the name of Al-

mighty God, and regard the best interests of the rising generation and the millions yet unborn, let us propose as objects of our constant pursuit—*Religion, Liberty, and Literature.*

As this eventful day is an era of the world, next to be remember'd after that which gave Christ to man—let our gratitude be devotional—our rejoicing universal, our souls warm, and full of fraternal affections.

Now to "him whose temple is all space; whose altar earth, sea, skies—one chorus let all beings raise, all nature's incense rise!"

**FINIS.**

*Corrected  
for imminent Page 12. 5<sup>th</sup> line  
read imminent*