

Today in History - April 12

< April 12 >

Select date April 12



Go

Today's Stories: [North Carolina Advocates Independence](#)

Listen to this page

North Carolina Advocates Independence

On **April 12**, 1776, North Carolina's Provincial Congress authorized its delegates to the Second Continental Congress to vote for independence from Great Britain. The first formal call for American sovereignty, the "[Halifax Resolves](#)" not only guided North Carolina representatives, but also encouraged the Continental Congress to champion independence. Virginia directed its delegates to submit a resolution for independence. Richard Henry Lee introduced such a resolution on June 7, 1776, stating that the colonies "are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States."



[The Manner in which the American Colonies Declared themselves independant\[sic\] of the King of England, throughout the different provinces, on July 4, 1776.](#) Illus. in: The new, comprehensive and complete history of England:.../ By Edward Barnard, esq., assisted by... Mr. Millar...London: Printed for the author, and pub. by A. Hogg, [1783?], p689. [Popular Graphic Arts](#). Prints & Photographs Division

The "Halifax Resolves," like the later [Declaration of Independence](#), carefully delineated grievances against the mother country. By highlighting misdeeds perpetrated by the Crown, the colonists justified severing the relationship between themselves and Great Britain. Both the "Halifax Resolves" and the Declaration of Independence demonstrate the radical nature of the move toward independence.

The complaint in the Halifax Resolves "That Governors in different Colonies have declared Protection to Slaves who should imbrue their Hands in the Blood of their Masters" reveals another motivation behind North Carolina's declaring independence from Great Britain: the colonists' fears of armed slave rebellion, which was being explicitly encouraged at the time by Virginia governor Lord Dunmore's offer of freedom to any enslaved person who took up arms for the Crown.

Learn More

- Visit the online exhibitions [Declaring Independence: Drafting the Documents](#) and [Religion and the Founding of the American Republic](#) to learn more about the Declaration of Independence and the context in which it was written.
- Search the [Thomas Jefferson Papers, 1606 to 1827](#) on *Virginia constitution* for correspondence relating to drafting that document. Just prior to writing the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson drafted a constitution for Virginia. With its litany of abuses by King George III, the Virginia constitution presages the content of the Declaration. This document and related works are among the [Top Treasures](#) of the Library of Congress.
- Read [Today in History](#) features on events such as the Boston Massacre, on revolutionary heroes such as Nathan Hale, and on important documents such as the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

The following external websites provide more information about North Carolina's role in the American Revolution:

- [The Colonial and State Records of North Carolina](#)
- From the National Archives' [Meet the Framers of the Constitution](#), read about [North Carolina's delegates](#) to the Constitutional Convention.

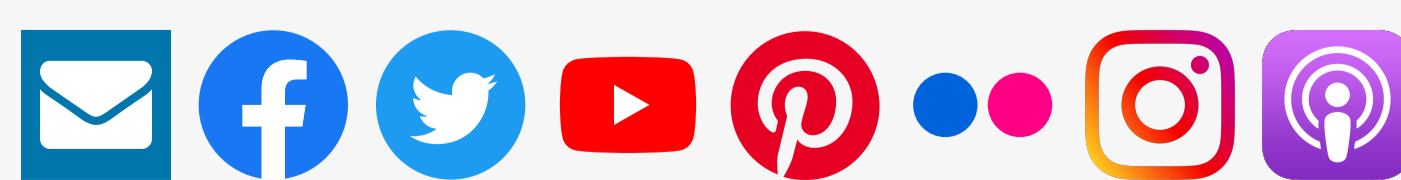
< April 12 >

Select date April 12



Go

Follow Us

[Take our survey](#)