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*Sam. Danvers* 1803  
Sam. Danvers

# ORATION,

DELIVERED AT

NASHUA VILLAGE, DUNSTABLE, N. H.

THE

Fourth of July,

A. D. 1803.

—◆◆◆◆◆—  
BY DANIEL ABBOT.  
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AMHERST, N. H.

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Samuel A. Green of class 1854

DUNSTABLE, JULY 4, 1803.

SIR,

IN compliance with the request of the Committee of Arrangements, and a large number of the citizens of this and the neighboring towns, the Sub-Committee wait on you, to return you their united thanks for the ingenious and well adapted Oration, delivered this day, and to request of you a copy for the press.

We are, Sir, respectfully,

your very humble servants,

FREDERIC FRENCH,  
ELIAS MAYNARD,  
SAMUEL PRESTON,

} Sub-Committee.

DANIEL ABBOT, Esq.

GENTLEMEN,

BE pleased to make my grateful acknowledgments acceptable to those, who have treated my public performance this day with so much civility. It was hastily written, and boasts no merit but that of being *well intended*. Without apologizing, but not without diffidence, I submit to their candor, what will not bear the test of their criticism.

I am, gentlemen, very sincerely,  
your obedient servant,

D. ABBOT.

FREDERIC FRENCH, Esq.

Dr. ELIAS MAYNARD,

Mr. SAMUEL PRESTON.

July 4, 1803.



AN

# ORATION.

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FATHERS AND FELLOW CITIZENS,

**WE** are assembled to commemorate the most joyful day in the American calendar. Its auspicious return convenes thousands and thousands of our patriotic citizens, from the St. Croix to the St. Mary's, from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, to offer up the incense of gratitude on the Altar of Freedom. Though we cannot all unite in *one vast assembly*, yet *one theme* animates all hearts. The oblation is such, as ministering angels shall with rapture bear to Him, who sways the sceptre of the universe.

**WHILE** other nations have assembled to pay the homage of respect to the birth day of a tyrant, or have been constrained to wear the smile of joy on the return of the day, which placed a despot in the chair of empire, we are convened to celebrate the happy return of *that Day*, which gave birth to American Liberty. This day commences the twenty-eighth year, since our Sages, assembled in Congress, solemnly declared

in the face of the admiring world, that our then Colonies “ WERE, and OF RIGHT OUGHT TO BE, FREE, SOVEREIGN and INDEPENDENT STATES.”

You, my venerable fathers, who were busy actors on the stage at that important moment, can better appreciate the feelings, which then agitated your manly breasts, than is in the power of language to describe, or fancy to paint. Thanks to that Almighty Power, “ who rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm,” your fears, if such you had, as to the events of that day, are vanished; that you now reap the golden harvest of your labors in the rich enjoyment of rational liberty, and the undissembled gratitude of your posterity.

THE feeble scion of our liberty, which at that time appeared to demand the tenderest attention, stood continually exposed to the blast of intrigue and the tempest of war; but, by the fostering care of our sages and patriots, it has now increased to a goodly tree, whose extensive and flourishing branches afford to our citizens both shade and shelter.

THAT we may feel more affectingly the importance of the blessings we enjoy, let us for a moment review the situation of the first settlers of our country. Driven from their native land by the sword of persecution, they sought a retreat on these then inhospitable shores. To enjoy the the *imprescriptible* right of nature, *the liberty of conscience*, they

exchange the vine and olive of their parent country for this wilderness, tenanted only by wild beasts, or men equally savage and ferocious. Here for a series of years they struggled with hardships and dangers unparalleled, and faced death almost in every shape. Unaccustomed to their new climate; almost shelterless in the severity of the seasons: frequently overtaken by famine; exposed to continual alarm from the natives; harrassed by unexpected invasion; their fields often destroyed; their habitations frequently consumed; their wives and children sometimes inhumanly murdered before their eyes, or led captive into the wilderness, there to suffer savage barbarity, far worse than instant death, seemed to fill to the brim their cup of wretchedness. But from all their difficulties, the finger of that Being, who pointed out a path for the children of Israel through the wilderness, made a way for their escape.

AFTER a tedious course of patient labor and unremitting toil, "the wilderness begins to blossom like the rose." From a handful of needy pilgrims arises a flourishing people. The time arrives when our parent country invites the assistance of our arms. In the year 1745, our New-England militia are crowned with the laurels of victory at Louisburgh. The surrender of Canada bears witness to their martial prowess. Our industry enriches, our enterprize adds to the aggrandizement of our parent state.

BUT lofty Albion, after triumphing over two powerful and warlike nations of the old world, by which her vanity was more inflated, than her coffers replenished, adopted the fatal policy of subsidizing her colonies to increase her revenue. But this day, devoted as it ever should be to joy and gratulation, shall not be profaned by calling up afresh the angry feelings of that moment.

THE day approaches when we must determine either tamely to surrender the precious rights, earned by the toil and blood of our pious fore-fathers, or manfully resist their infraction. *Important moment!*

“The dawn is overcast,

“The morning lowers, and heavily in clouds

“Brings on the day.”

The voice of their threatening waxes louder and louder; the distant thunder of their arms resounds from shore to shore,

BUT *Americans* are not to be intimidated. They boldly dare to throw the gauntlet at a power, whose recent triumphs had entitled her to the highest rank in martial prowess. The soldiers oath, “WE WILL CONQUER OR DIE,” was inscribed on the heart of every patriotic American. But as yet, fearful anxiety at times appalled the stoutest breast. The moment *American liberty is born*, “the men from the East” are sent to spy out the cradled infant, not to pay it the tribute of “worship,” but to destroy it.

LEXINGTON opens the awful tragedy. The heights of *Charlestown* add a melancholy coloring to the dark picture. There fell, fighting for the liberties of his country, the ILLUSTRIOUS WARREN. There fought, there bled many heroic Sons of Freedom. Some of *you*, my fathers, shared in the toils and glories of that day.

OUR brave but unmarshalled yeomanry are called to combat with troops long trained in the school of military experience ; our empty magazines must furnish them for the attack. But hark ! the voice of our American Congress, like that, which summoned *Moses* from the "*burning bush*" at Mount Hebron, calls to our aid a *political saviour*. WASHINGTON bows obedient to his country's call. *His presence* invigorates bravery ; *his counsels* effect discipline ; *his energy* commands success. But fortune, ever famed for her caprice, does not always afford him her smiles. Yet still *his mind* remains unwavering ; undepressed by disaster, unelated by success. If we at one moment tremble for him, while retreating before a victorious enemy, with a handful of men, sick and emaciated ; at the next he surprises us with the joy of unexpected victory. If we shudder for his fate at Long-Island, yet the brilliancy of his success at Yorktown diffuses a radiance around him, which extinguishes, by its lustre, all past misfortune.

"SUCH WAS THE MAN, COLUMBIA'S PRIDE AND BOAST,

"HIS HEAD A SENATE, AND HIS ARM A HOST."



After a tedious and fruitless war, our enemies are taught that Americans, with *Washington* for their leader, *are invincible*; and in the year 1783, they were obliged to acknowledge us, "FREE, SOVEREIGN AND INDEPENDENT." Thus they lost the brightest jewel in their royal diadem; we gained a respectable rank among the nations of the earth.

To you my venerable fathers, who obeyed your country's call, "and jeoparded your lives in the high places of the field," this returning anniversary must bring increased pleasure.

" This day shall ne'er go by,  
 " But you shall stand on tiptoe when 'tis nam'd;  
 " Shall strip your sleeves, and shew those scars,  
 " You for your country have receiv'd."

On this day tell to us, who were just treading the first steps of life, the tale of sieges fought, of battles won, and deeds of patriotic worth, till the manly tear steal down our cheeks; make us with you acknowledge, that "had it not been the Shield of Israel, who was on our side, when our enemies rose up against us, they had swallowed us up alive, and whole as those that go down to the pit." May we, with you, join in the sincere hope, that the songs and joy of American prosperity will continue to arise, till drowned by the groans of expiring nature.

LET us improve the inestimable privileges we enjoy, and "stand fast in the liberty, with which we

have been made free." To effect this, we should regard as sacred and inviolable the *Great Charter* of our national happiness, dignity and independence, **THE CONSTITUTION**. It is the *ark* of our *political rest*; the sheet anchor of our safety; lose it, and we are afloat on the "tempestuous ocean of liberty," momentarily liable to be sunk by the storms of contending party, or ingulphed in the vortex of destructive faction. Do you doubt its benign influence upon our country? Look at the happy change, it has wrought in the face of our political affairs. What was the prospect presented at the close of the war? An army, which had achieved our Independence, unpaid, and but for *Washington*, almost mutinous. An exhausted treasury; different interests, and parties half ripe for insurrection; public and private credit at low ebb; our commerce languid and defenceless; our husbandmen and manufacturers without the spirit of enterprise. Mark the change. By the constitution, jarring interests are quieted; public confidence has been raised upon a respectable and permanent basis; our stripes and stars traverse all seas; husbandry and manufactures flourish beyond example. Who is there so blind as not to see our constitution's beauty? It is the centred wisdom of the sages of our land; the political girdle, by which we have voluntarily bound ourselves to each other. Who so hardy as to charge our past

administrations with corruption and deceit? By their vigilance we escaped the political toils and nets, which had been artfully lain to draw us into the war, which so long raged in the European world; thus, while they were lavishing their treasures, and bleeding at every pore, we were rapidly increasing in wealth and population. The flourishing situation of our country is the strongest comment both upon the goodness of our constitution, and the integrity and ability of the early administration of it.

BUT little more than a century and a half has elapsed, since the first permanent settlement of our fathers on the shores of this then howling wilderness. Where the rude defying cliff then stood, now arises the stately edifice; cities, towns and villages now flourish, where not long since the thickened forest seemed to challenge the strokes of industry and art. Here, where almost within the recollection of you, my fathers, the fell tenant of the wilderness assembled his savage compeers, to barbarize the hapless victims, whom the fortune of war had made their prisoners, now convenes a polite and respected assembly, to celebrate the continuance of rational, virtuous freedom.

By the enterprize of our citizens, works of public utility are continually progressing. To this, the ingenious, and, in this part of our country, novel structure, on yonder bank, soon to be embosomed in its

proper element, affords one proof.\* By our internal navigation the husbandman finds an easy conveyance for his heavy articles to the market ; by the improvement daily making in roads, travel is both expedited and made easier. The fertility of our soil enriches the industrious husbandman ; the salubrity of our climate gives him health to enjoy the fruits of his labor. *Ours is indeed a "goodly land, flowing with milk and honey."*

BUT in the possession of all these blessings, in the enjoyment of present peace and prosperity, in the prospect of future greatness, *party spirit* that bane of all republican governments, has not slept. All the republics of the old world, by intriguing ambition, and the destructive influence of the spirit of party, are now blotted from the map of nations. While "others have fallen on our right hand, and on our left, shall no evil come nigh us?" If we would avoid this "pestilence, which walks in darkness," we must regard the admonition of our *immortal benefactor WASHINGTON*, in his invaluable legacy to us.

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\* IMMEDIATELY after the Oration, an elegant BOAT, sixty-two feet in length, built on the banks of *Nashua River*, for R. FLETCHER, Esq. intended for river navigation, was launched. The scene was new and interesting. After the launching, between two and three hundred gentlemen sailed down the river in it.

“Let me,” says he, “in the *most solemn manner*, warn you against the baneful effects of the *spirit of party*. The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is *itself a most frightful despotism* ; but this at length leads to a more permanent and formal one. It exists in different shapes in all governments ; in those of a popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their *worst enemy*.”

THIS is the counsel of that man, who *has proved himself our friend* ; who has braved death for his country. His instructions flowed from the sincerity of his heart ; they are founded in *justice and morality* ; they deserve to be engraven with the *pencil of a sun-beam*, on *tables of adamant*.

BUT yet in all popular governments there will be some crafty designing Absaloms, “who rise early, stand in the highways,” and declare with as much sincerity, as did the son of David, if they “were made rulers in the land, they would do justice to every man.”

“Can fierce passions vex the breast,  
“While every word is peace, and every accent love?”

We innocently believe ; we incautiously trust. For the deluded there is charity ; but for the ambitious, intriguing demagogue, who would, like Cæsar, bot-

tom his power upon the destruction of the liberties of his country, there is judgment in reserve.

“ Is there not some chosen curse,  
 “ Some hidden thunder in the stores of heaven,  
 “ Red with uncommon wrath, to blast the man,  
 “ Who owes his greatness, to his country’s ruin ?”

WE boast of patriotism. Is it the love of party? An entire reverence for a sect? Must we “ frame to pronounce exactly aright” the political “ *Shibboleth*” of a few? Is it not rather an uncircumscribed love of our country, regardless of particular, private interests? An adherence to such principles as *past experience* has *demonstrated salutary*? Already has the spirit of party raged too long. If recent information prove correct, the desolating sword in the old world is again unsheathed. May the dove of peace, who there finds no “ rest for the sole of her foot,” return unto us, bearing the olive branch, and in *our ark* meet an undisturbed and permanent asylum.

To perpetuate the blessings of liberty, to convey them down unimpaired to posterity, the practice of *religion* and *virtue* is absolutely essential; they are the *main pillars*, in the *fair fabric* of our national *dignity* and *happiness*. They are as necessary to add respectability to a *political* as *individual* character. When our houses for public worship are profaned,

or neglected, when those, "who minister at the altar" are contemned, "farewel, a long farewel to all our greatness." Our rulers, to be "a terror to *evil doers*," should be "*just men*," practising that religion, to obtain the free enjoyment of which, cost our *pious fathers* so much toil and blood. But if we, regardless of the sacred institutions of our ancestors, desert them for the false *dreams of philosphists*, and trample on their sacred rights, on the fair temple of our national happiness will be inscribed "*The glory is departed*."

ON you, Gentlemen Officers, who command our militia, a most important task is devolved. While you instruct in the military art, inspire also with *martial enthusiasm*, an invincible love of country; form patriots, as well as soldiers. Point out as the pattern of all military, as well as civil and moral excellence, him for whose loss our country will never cease to heave a sigh, THE PEERLESS WASHINGTON. The militia is the security of our country; you hold the keys of this important treasure; let not your country's call overtake you, sleeping on your posts. Discipline, added to American bravery, will preserve us invincible. You, their soldiers, who to add dignity to the day now voluntarily appear in arms, while you cheerfully perform the important duty of your stations, are entitled to the undis-

sembled gratitude of your country. The soldier, with his musquet, sustains an equally necessary and honorable post, as the statesman, in the cabinet. Let *courage* and *conduct* be ever your boast. The fields of Bennington can attest what the valor of the New-Hampshire militia once achieved. Should a similar exigence require, (which Heaven avert) we trust, with firm confidence, you will be ready to display equal magnanimity.

WE, my equals in age, who have entered "the vineyard at the eleventh hour," are enjoying equal blessings of liberty with those, "who have borne the heat and burden of the day;" who have toiled and bled. Let us prove ourselves the worthy descendants of the patriots, who have transmitted to us such privileges. Let us unite like the "*Sacred Band*" of Epaminondas, with the oath to defend each other, and the sacred liberties we enjoy. Let our COUNTRY be our *party*; our *boast* that we are AMERICANS.

MAY this returning Anniversary long be held dear by our patriotic citizens. Let us this day call to mind the memory of the sages, who have toiled, the heroes, who have bled for us. Let us renew our fealty to *Liberty* and the *Constitution*.





MAY our country long continue the seat of civil and religious liberty ; the residence of every noble and patriotic virtue ; that happy land, which “ He, who standeth in the congregation of the mighty” shall deign to bless and prosper, till “ the Angel, standing on the earth and on the sea, shall lift his hand to heaven, and swear by him, who liveth forever and ever, that time shall be no longer.”

