

JANUARY 1776-2026 AMERICA 250

THIS MONTH IN AMERICAN HISTORY

Jan 1, 1776

George Washington unveils the Grand Union Flag.

Jan 10, 1776

"Common Sense" by Thomas Paine is published.

Jan. 8, 1815

Battle of New Orleans



National Archives photo
James W. Marshall at Sutter's Mill.

Jan. 24, 1848

Gold discovered at Sutter's Mill launching the Gold Rush and the Western Expansion.

Jan. 1, 1863

Abraham Lincoln delivers the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing American slaves.

Jan. 1, 1892

The Ellis Island immigration center opens in New York.

Jan. 29, 1919

Prohibition ratified.

Jan. 15, 1929

Civil Rights leader the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. is born in Atlanta, Georgia.

Jan. 23, 1933

The 20th Amendment is ratified, modernizing the transition of power.

Jan. 20, 1945

President Franklin D. Roosevelt is inaugurated for a record fourth time, leading to the two-term limit.

Jan. 5, 1949

President Harry Truman's Fair Deal raises minimum wage and expands Social Security post-World War II.

Jan. 3, 1959

Alaska becomes 49th state.

Jan. 28, 1967

Three Astronauts killed in Apollo 1 training test.

Jan. 22, 1973

Supreme Court rules on Roe v. Wade, establishing a constitutional right to abortion.

Jan. 28, 1986

Seven astronauts killed in Challenger explosion.



Department of Defense photo
U.S. Marines roll into Kuwait airport during Operation Desert Storm in Iraq.

Jan. 16, 1991

Operation Desert Storm begins.

Jan. 6, 2021

Save America Rally/insurrection at U.S. Capitol.

COMMON SENSE PLANTS SEED THAT SPROUTS INTO THE UNITED STATES

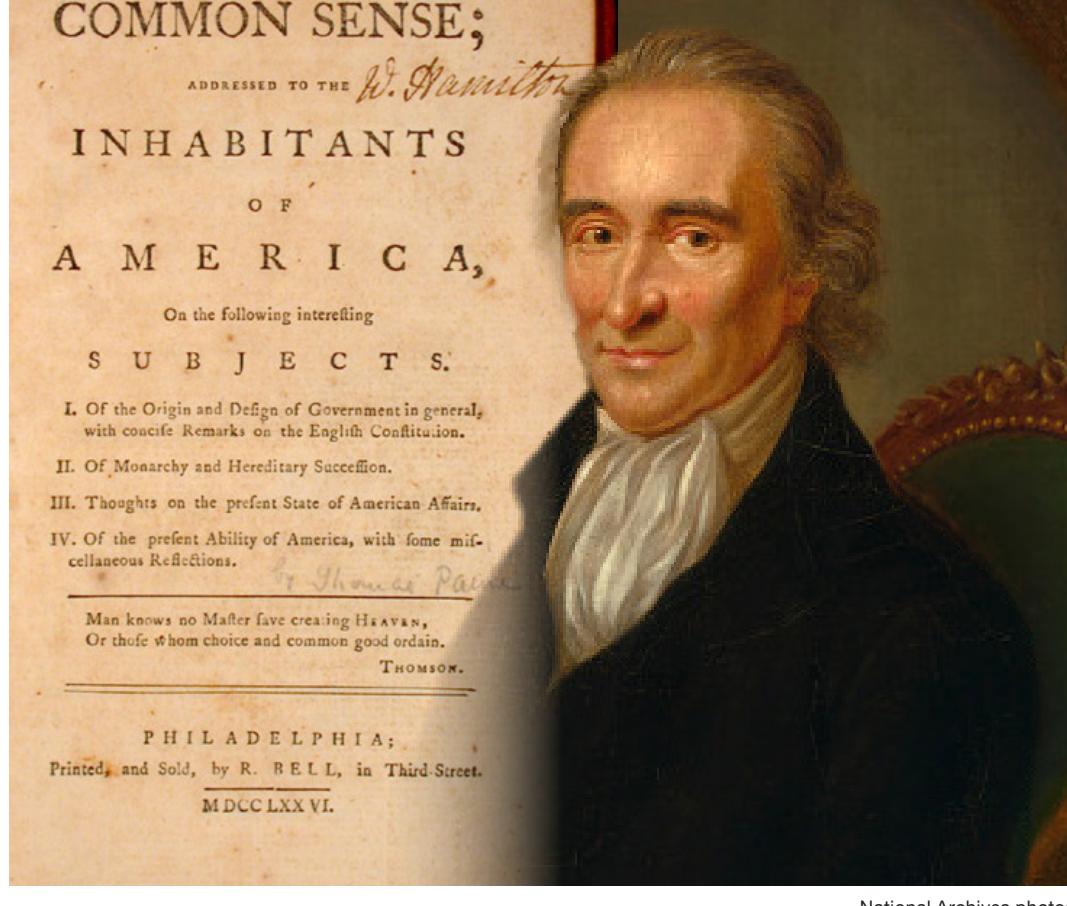
CNHI News

"Common Sense" was published on Jan. 10, 1776, in Philadelphia and circulated in the American colonies at a time when reconciliation between the colonists and Britain seemed unlikely, according to the National Constitution Center.

The message in the 47-page pamphlet was presented in "plain, unadorned writing," according to the center, appealing to common capacities of all people. "Common Sense" questioned traditional hierarchies, condemning monarchy as an affront to God.

"But there is another and greater distinction for which no truly natural or religious reason can be assigned, and that is the distinction of men into KINGS and SUBJECTS," Paine wrote. "Male and female are the distinctions of nature, good and bad the distinctions of Heaven; but how a race of men came into the world so exalted above the rest, and distinguished like some new species, is worth inquiring into, and whether they are the means of happiness or of misery to mankind."

It is unknown how many copies were printed but it was read by thousands and read aloud in taverns and meeting places, pushing colonists literate and illiterate toward the coming fight for America's independence.



Common Sense and Thomas Paine.

National Archives photo

DID YOU KNOW?



American actors **Betty White**, and James Earl Jones share their Jan. 17 birthdays with athletes **Muhammad Ali** and Dwyane Wade, artists Kid Rock and Lil Jon, Founding Father Benjamin Franklin and Department of Health Secretary **Robert F. Kennedy Jr.**

EMANCIPATION

President Abraham Lincoln, on Jan. 1, 1863, in the third year of the bloody American Civil War, made the Emancipation Proclamation, an order freeing slaves in the Confederate states.

"Although the proclamation did not end slavery in the nation, it captured the hearts and imagination of millions of Americans and fundamentally transformed the character of the war. After January 1, 1863, every advance of federal troops expanded the domain of freedom," according to the National Archives.

BY THE NUMBERS

Operation Desert Shield became Desert Storm on Jan. 16, 1991. The war in Iraq also became the largest airborne campaign since the Vietnam War.

Over six weeks, the U.S. and 40 allied nations combined for:

18K Air missions **85.5K** Tons of bombs **116K** Combat air sorties

Ground forces liberated Kuwait in 100 hours following the air campaign.

SOURCE: DEPT. OF DEFENSE

HISTORIC SITE: THE BATTLE OF PRINCETON



Gen. George Washington, mounted in the center, is depicted in the Battle of Princeton, his first victory against British forces.

CNHI News

The Battle of Princeton on Jan. 3, 1777, was Gen. George Washington's first victory against British forces. It followed a victory in Trenton against Hessian forces.

The win electrified the young nation, according to mount-vernon.org, a nonprofit charged with preserving, restoring and managing the estate of George Washington.

The general's use of guerrilla warfare and his effective leader-



Princeton Battlefield State Park photo
The battlefield from the Battle of Princeton is now a state park in New Jersey.

ship delivered confidence to Continental Army soldiers that they could beat the best British soldiers and discouraged loyalists and the opposing forces.

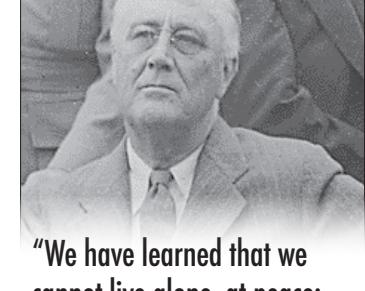
The final actions of the battle took place at the center of what is now Princeton University, at Nassau Hall, which still bears damage from the attack.

THEY SAID IT



"The crew of the space shuttle Challenger honored us by the manner in which they lived their lives. We will never forget them, nor the last time we saw them, this morning ..."

— President Ronald Reagan, Jan. 28, 1986



"We have learned that we cannot live alone, at peace; that our own well-being is dependent on the well-being of other nations far away. We have learned that we must live as men, not as ostriches, nor as dogs in the manger."

— Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jan. 20, 1945, during his fourth inaugural address

OTHER AMERICANS BORN THIS MONTH

Paul Revere, Jan. 1, 1735

Thomas Paine, Jan. 29, 1737

Benedict Arnold, Jan. 14, 1741

Alexander Hamilton, Jan. 11, 1755

Edgar Allan Poe, Jan. 19, 1809

Douglas MacArthur, Jan. 26, 1880

Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jan. 30, 1882

JD Salinger, Jan. 1, 1919

Jackie Robinson, Jan. 31, 1919

Gene Hackman, Jan. 30, 1930

Elvis Presley, Jan. 8, 1935

Dolly Parton, Jan. 19, 1946

Oprah Winfrey, Jan. 29, 1954

Kevin Costner, Jan. 18, 1955

Jeff Bezos, Jan. 12, 1964

Bradley Cooper, Jan. 5, 1975

Zooey Deschanel, Jan. 17, 1980

Alicia Keys, Jan. 25, 1981