

JANUARY 1776-2026 AMERICA 250

THIS MONTH IN AMERICAN HISTORY

 **Jan 1, 1776**

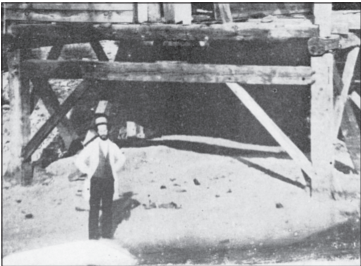
George Washington unveils the Grand Union Flag.

 **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

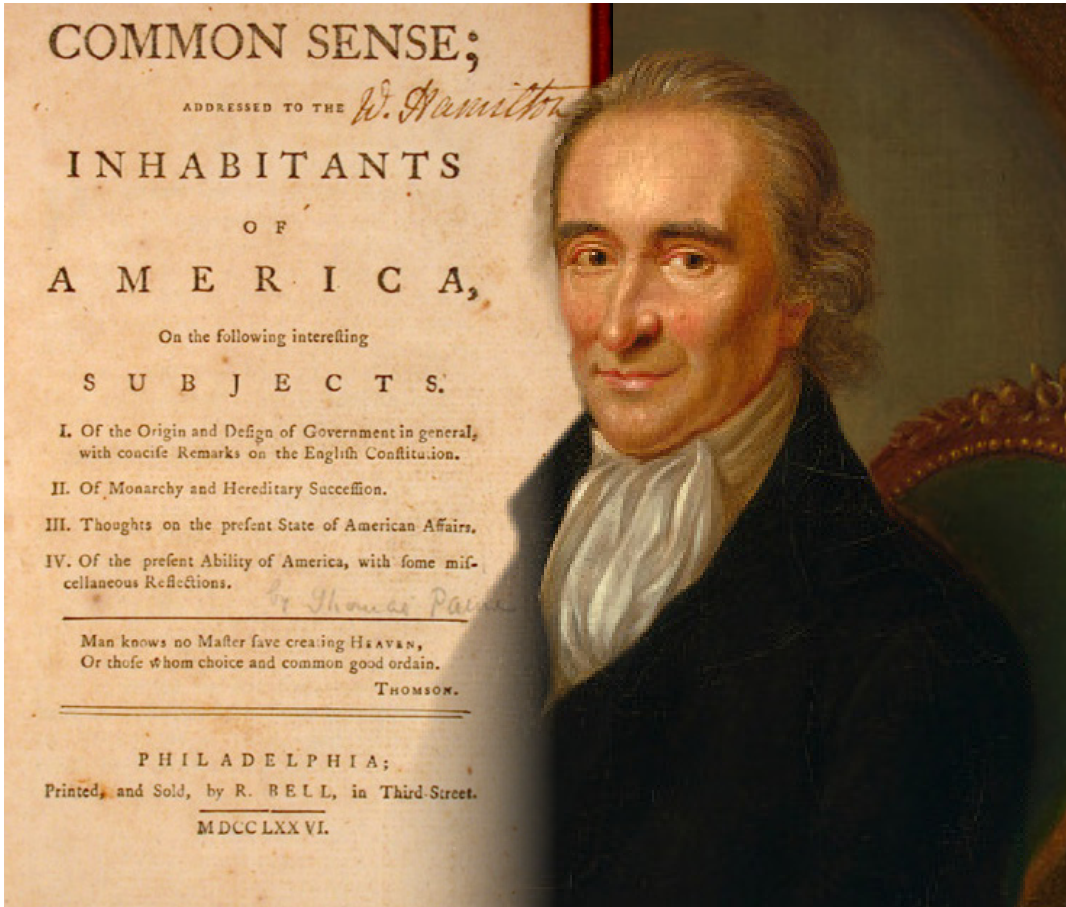
CNHI News

“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.



National Archives photos

Common Sense and Thomas Paine.

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



Painting by John Trumbull

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-vernion.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.

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
Zooe Deschanel, Jan. 17, 1980
Alicia Keys, Jan. 25, 1981

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**