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Crihfield Vocabulary

Unit 2 #43-92

Committee of Observation- Committees of Safety, formed before and during the revolutionary War, to keep watch of and act upon events pertaining to the public welfare, were really committees of vigilance. They were of incalculable service during that period in detecting conspiracies against the interests of the people

Minutemen- a member of a group of American militiamen just before and during the Revolutionary War who held themselves in readiness for instant military service.

Lexington- a town in E Massachusetts, NW of Boston: first battle of American Revolution fought here April 19, 1775. 29,479.

Paul Revere- 1735-1818, American silversmith and patriot, famous for his night horseback ride, April 18, 1775, to warn Massachusetts colonists of the coming of British troops.

William Dawes- American patriot who rode with Paul Revere on April 18, 1775, to warn of the British advance on Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts.

Concord- a town in E Massachusetts, NW of Boston: second battle of the Revolution fought here April 19, 1775.

Second Continental Congress- either of two legislative congresses during and after the Revolutionary War. The first was in session from September 5 to October 26, 1774, to petition the British government for a redress of grievances. The second existed from May 10, 1775, to 1789, and issued the Declaration of Independence and established the Articles of Confederation.

Thomas Jefferson- The third President of the United States (1801-1809). A member of the second Continental Congress, he drafted the Declaration of Independence (1776). His presidency was marked by the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France (1803) and the Tripolitan War (1801-1805). A political philosopher, educator, and architect, Jefferson designed his own estate, Monticello, and buildings for the University of Virginia.

Continental Army- the Revolutionary War Army, authorized by the Continental Congress in 1775 and led by George Washington

Olive Branch Petition- written in the early days of the American revolutionary War, was a letter to King George III, from members of the Second Continental Congress who for

the final time appealed to their king to redress colonial grievances in order to avoid more bloodshed.

**Declaration of Causes and Necessities of Taking Up Arms-** This document was prepared by the Second Continental Congress to explain to the world why the British colonies had taken up arms against Great Britain. It is a combination of the work of Thomas Jefferson and Colonel John Dickinson (well-known for his series "Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer."). Jefferson completed the first draft, but it was perceived by the Continental Congress as too harsh and militant; Dickinson prepared the second. The final document combined the work of the two.

**Ethan Allen-** 1738-1789, American soldier in the Revolutionary War: leader of the "Green Mountain Boys" of Vermont.

**Breed's Hill-** A hill in Charlestown, a section of Boston, Massachusetts. It was the site of the Battle of Bunker Hill on June 17, 1775.

**Benedict Arnold-** American soldier and turncoat, born in Norwich, Connecticut, USA. On the outbreak of the War of Independence (1775-1783) he joined the colonial forces, assisted Ethan Allen in the capture of Fort Ticonderoga (1775), and took part in the unsuccessful siege of Quebec in 1775, for which he was made a brigadier-general. He fought with distinction at L Champlain, Ridgefield, and Saratoga. Though greatly admired by Washington, he had influential enemies, and in 1777 five of his inferiors in rank were promoted over his head. In 1780 he obtained the command of West Point, which, through a conspiracy with John André, he agreed to betray. On the capture of André, he fled to the British lines, and was given a command in the royal army. He went to England in 1781, living in London until his death.

**William Howe-** British soldier who commanded the army in North America during the American Revolution, the brother of Richard Howe. He joined the army in 1746, and served under Wolfe at Louisburg (1758) and Quebec, where he led the famous advance to the Heights of Abraham. He became an MP in 1758. In the American War of Independence his victories included Bunker Hill (1775), the Brandywine (1777), and the capture of New York City (1776). He returned to England, and succeeded to the viscountcy on the death of his brother in 1799.

**Thomas Paine-** Revolutionary philosopher and writer, born in Thetford, Norfolk, E England, UK. A corset-maker from the age of 13, he became a sailor, a schoolmaster, and an exciseman. In 1774 he sailed for Philadelphia, where his pamphlet *Common Sense* (1776) argued for complete independence. He served with the US army, and was made secretary to the Committee of Foreign Affairs. In 1787 he returned to England, where he wrote *The Rights of Man* (1791-2) in support of the French Revolution. Arraigned for treason, he fled to Paris, where he was elected a Deputy to the National Convention, but imprisoned for his proposal to offer the king asylum in the USA. At this time he wrote *The Age of Reason*, in favour of deism. Released in 1796, he returned to the USA in 1802

Richard Henry Lee- 1732-1794, political leader in the American Revolution, b. Westmoreland co., Va.; brother of Arthur Lee, Francis L. Lee, and William Lee. He served in the house of burgesses (1758-1775), where he favored ending the slave trade. An opponent of the Stamp Act (1765), he was the leader in the formation of a nonimportation organization. To help unite colonial resistance further, he advocated, and helped to form, the intercolonial committees of correspondence. As a member (1774-1779) of the Continental Congress, he was most active in promoting a nonimportation agreement. Lee was a member (with John Adams and Edward Rutledge) of the committee that placed George Washington in command of the Continental Army. He was also vigorous in arguing for independence and introduced the motion that led to the Declaration of Independence, which he later signed. Lee served again in the Continental Congress (1784-1787). He opposed the U.S. Constitution because he feared that it would destroy states' rights. As U.S. Senator from Virginia (1789-1792) Lee was largely responsible for adoption of the first 10 amendments (the Bill of Rights) to the Constitution.

Declaration of Independence- The fundamental document establishing the United States as a nation, adopted on July 4, 1776. The declaration was ordered and approved by the Continental Congress and written largely by Thomas Jefferson. It declared the thirteen colonies represented in the Continental Congress independent from Britain, offered reasons for the separation, and laid out the principles for which the Revolutionary War was fought. The signers included John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock and Jefferson. The declaration begins (capitalization and punctuation are modernized): "When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the Earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

Patriots- on the side of the Colonies during the American Revolution

General George Washington-led America's Continental Army to victory over Britain in the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783), and was later elected the first President of the United States. He served two four-year terms from 1789 to 1797, having been reelected in 1792. Because of his central role in the founding of the United States, Washington is often referred to as the "Father of his Country". His devotion to republicanism and civic virtue him an exemplary figure among early American politicians.

General Nathaneal Greene- 1742â€‘86, American Revolutionary general, b. Potowomut (now Warwick), R.I. An iron founder, he became active in colonial politics and served (1770â€‘72, 1775) in the Rhode Island assembly. At the beginning of the American Revolution he commanded a detachment of militia at the siege of Boston and was in charge of the city after the British evacuation (1776). Greene helped plan the defense of New York (1776), but illness kept him from the battle of Long Island. He was with Washington (1776â€‘77) at Trenton, Brandywine, Germantown, and Valley Forge. In Feb., 1778, he became quartermaster general while still holding his field command; he reorganized the department, found supplies for the army, and rendered fine service in this capacity. His notable ability at organization also appeared in his fieldwork. He fought (1778) at Monmouth and in the Rhode Island campaign and was president (1780) of the court-martial board that sentenced Major John Andr . After Gates was defeated at Camden (1780), Greene became the commander in the Carolina Campaign. He reorganized the Southern army, and he and his lieutenants (notably Daniel Morgan and Henry Lee), with aid of partisan bands under Francis Marion, Thomas Sumter, and Andrew Pickens turned the tide in Carolina. Greene's forces were defeated at Guilford Courthouse, Hobkirks Hill, and Eutaw Springs, but each time the British victory was reversed, and he pushed south to surround Charleston until the British evacuated it (1782). The campaign is generally considered an example of excellent strategy, and Greene's generalship is much admired. To get supplies for the Continental Army, Greene often had been forced to endorse personal notes. After the war the dishonesty of a contractor forced him to sell his estates to honor those pledges. The people of Georgia, however, gave him a plantation.

Continental Congress- either of two legislative congresses during and after the Revolutionary War. The first was in session from September 5 to October 26, 1774, to petition the British government for a redress of grievances. The second existed from May 10, 1775, to 1789, and issued the Declaration of Independence and established the Articles of Confederation.

Continental- A soldier in the American army during the American Revolution.

Abigail Adams- 1744â€‘1818, wife of President John Adams and mother of President John Quincy Adams, b. Weymouth, Mass. She was born Abigail Smith. A lively, intelligent woman, she was the chief figure in the social life of her husband's administration and one of the most distinguished and influential of the first ladies in the history of the United States. Her detailed letters are a vivid source of social history. The correspondence with her husband was edited in a number of volumes by Charles Francis Adams; her letters as well as John's, are included in *The Adams-Jefferson Letters*, edited by Lester J. Cappon (1959); letters to her sister, Mary Smith Cranch, are in *New Letters of Abigail Adams, 1788â€‘1801*, edited by Stewart Mitchell (1947, repr. 1973).

Mercy Otis Warren- 1728â€‘1814, American writer, b. Barnstable, Mass.; sister of James Otis and wife of James Warren, who was speaker of the Massachusetts house of representatives. An ardent patriot, she conducted a political salon during the pre-Revolutionary days and wrote two satirical plays, *The Adulateur* (1773) and *The Group*

(1775), against the Tories. Well acquainted with many leaders of the Revolution, she urged, unsuccessfully, that equal rights for women be included in the U.S. Constitution, and outlined her objections to that document as originally drafted in *Observations on the New Constitution* by a Columbian Patriot (1788). Many of her criticisms were met by the Bill of Rights and later amendments. Her history of the American Revolution (3 vol., 1805) is still important for factual information as well as for its sketches of contemporary figures.

Loyalists- a person who supported the British cause in the American Revolution

Martha Washington- 1731-1802, wife of George Washington, b. New Kent co., Va. The daughter of John Dandridge and Frances Jones Dandridge, she first married (1749) Daniel Parke Custis. She bore him four children, but the first two died in childhood. Custis himself died in July, 1757, leaving Martha one of the wealthiest women in Virginia. Washington first met her in Mar., 1758, lost no time in proposing, and was just as quickly accepted. They were married in Jan., 1759, and Washington took Martha and her family, John Parke Custis (d. 1781) and Martha Parke Custis (d. 1773), to his Mount Vernon estate. They had no children of their own, but John Parke Custis had four, and after John's death Washington adopted the youngest two, Eleanor Parke Custis and George Washington Parke Custis, whose daughter married Robert E. Lee.

Mary Ludwig Hays- Revolutionary heroine, born near Trenton, New Jersey, USA. In 1778 she joined her first husband, **John Hays**, at his army encampment in New Jersey. During the battle of Monmouth, she carried water to the American troops, earning the sobriquet **Molly Pitcher**, and when her husband was wounded at his cannon, she is said to have taken over and continued firing. After the American Revolution, she returned to Carlisle, PA and after her second husband died, she was voted an annuity for her services rather than as a veterans' widow, suggesting that she had seen action. She was said to have sworn like a trooper and chewed tobacco. Later her story would sometimes be confused with that of Margaret Corbin.

Margaret Corbin- 1751-1800, American Revolutionary heroine, b. Franklin co., Pa. Upon the death of her husband in the attack on Fort Mifflin (Nov. 16, 1776), she commanded his cannon until she was seriously wounded. She was the first woman to be pensioned (1779) by the government. In 1916 her remains were moved from Highland Falls, N.Y., to West Point, where a monument was erected in her honor.

Deborah Sampson- Revolutionary soldier and lecturer, born in Plympton, Massachusetts, USA. After a youth as a domestic servant and a few months as a teacher, she left town in 1782 to enlist in the American Revolution by disguising herself as a man and adopting the name Robert Shurtleff (or Shirliff). She concealed her identity while participating in several battles, including one near Tarrytown, NY, where she was wounded. Only when hospitalized with fever did a doctor discover her sex, and she was discharged from the army. After marrying Benjamin Gannett and having three children, she inspired a romanticized biography (1797), and this led to her making a lecture tour in 1802. Thanks in part to the intercession of Paul Revere, she was awarded a federal pension (1805), and

11 years after her death Congress voted her husband and heirs special payments in recognition of her military service.

Tories- another term for Patriots

Benedict Arnold- see above

General Henry Clinton- Soldier, born in Newfoundland, E Canada, the son of the Newfoundland governor. He served with distinction in the Seven Years' War (1756-63), and was promoted major-general in 1772. Sent to America in 1775, he fought at Bunker Hill, and in 1776 was repulsed in an attack on Charleston. After Burgoyne's surrender in 1778, Clinton succeeded Howe as commander-in-chief. In 1780 he captured Charleston and the entire Southern army, but after Cornwallis' capitulation at Yorktown in 1781 he resigned his command and returned to England.

Sir William Howe- British soldier who commanded the army in North America during the American Revolution, the brother of Richard Howe. He joined the army in 1746, and served under Wolfe at Louisburg (1758) and Quebec, where he led the famous advance to the Heights of Abraham. He became an MP in 1758. In the American War of Independence his victories included Bunker Hill (1775), the Brandywine (1777), and the capture of New York City (1776). He returned to England, and succeeded to the viscountcy on the death of his brother in 1799.

Hessian- The term Hessian refers to the inhabitants of the [German state](#) of [Hesse](#). In [American English](#), it most commonly refers to 18th century German regiments in service to the [British Empire](#).

Battle of Long Island- Aug. 27, 1776, American defeat in the American Revolution. To protect New York City and the lower Hudson valley from the British forces massed on Staten Island, George Washington sent part of his small army to defend Brooklyn Heights, on Long Island. After several unsuccessful peace overtures, Sir William [Howe](#) landed at Gravesend while the British fleet under his brother, Richard [Howe](#), shelled New York. After Sir William's troops defeated an American force under John Sullivan and William [Alexander](#) (Lord Stirling), Israel Putnam, the corps commander, prepared for the main attack. Sir William, not wanting another Bunker Hill, decided to lay siege instead of storming Brooklyn Heights. Washington saw the position was hopeless and evacuated (night of Aug. 29-30) his army back to Manhattan. Shortly afterward, the Americans began the retreat northward in which delaying actions were fought at Harlem Heights, White Plains, and Fort Mifflin. Washington managed to extricate most of his troops, and he regrouped them before striking at Trenton.

Admiral Richard Howe- 1726-99, British admiral; elder brother of Viscount [Howe](#). He won early recognition in the Seven Years War for his operations in the English Channel. After the outbreak of the American Revolution, he was given (1776) command of the North American fleet. He and his brother were commissioned to seek a peaceful settlement of the dispute with the colonies, but negotiations at Staten Island in 1776 came

to nothing, and he supported (1777) his brother's successful campaign against Philadelphia. In 1778 he outmaneuvered the French fleet under the comte d'[Estaing](#) in its attempt to cooperate with land troops to take British-held Newport, R.I. He resigned later that year, but in 1782 he assumed command of the Channel fleet and relieved the siege of Gibraltar. Howe is best remembered for his decisive victory over the French fleet in the battle called the First of June in 1794. Created Earl Howe in 1788, he was popularly known as Black Dick.

[Benjamin Franklin](#)- American public official, writer, scientist, and printer. After the success of his *Poor Richard's Almanac* (1732-1757), he entered politics and played a major part in the American Revolution. Franklin negotiated French support for the colonists, signed the Treaty of Paris (1783), and helped draft the Constitution (1787-1789). His numerous scientific and practical innovations include the lightning rod, bifocal spectacles, and a stove.

[John Adams](#)- was a [Founding Father](#) of the United States and [American politician](#) who served as the first [Vice President of the United States](#) (1789-1797), and the second [President of the United States](#) (1797-1801). He was defeated for reelection in 1800 by [Thomas Jefferson](#). Adams was a sponsor of the [American Revolution](#) in [Massachusetts](#), and a diplomat in the 1770s. He was a driving force for independence in 1776- the "Colossus of Independence," declared Thomas Jefferson. As a statesman and author Adams helped define [republicanism](#) as the core American political value, meaning overthrow of monarchy and, especially, rule by the people, hatred of corruption, and devotion to civic duty. As President he was frustrated by battles inside his own [Federalist](#) party against a faction led by [Alexander Hamilton](#), but he broke with them and averted a major war with France in 1798, during the [Quasi War](#) crisis. Regarded as one of the [Founding Fathers of the United States](#), he became the founder of an important family of politicians, diplomats and historians, and [his reputation has been rising in recent years](#).

[Edward Rutledge](#)- 1749-1800, political leader in the American Revolution, signer of the Declaration of Independence, b. Charleston, S.C.; brother of John Rutledge. He studied law at the Middle Temple, London, and was admitted (1772) to the English bar. He returned to America and was (1774-77) a member of the Continental Congress. He later held official posts at both the national and state level. He was captured (1780) by the British at the fall of Charleston. He was governor of South Carolina from 1798 to 1800.

[General Charles Cornwallis](#)- British general and statesman, born in London, UK. He studied at the Military Academy of Turin, and served in the Seven Years' War. Though personally opposed to taxing the American colonists, he accepted a command in the war, and defeated Gates at Camden (1780), but was forced to surrender at Yorktown (1781). In 1786 he became Governor-General of India, where he defeated Tippoo Sahib, and introduced the series of reforms known as the *Cornwallis Code*. He returned in 1793, to be made marquess. He was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland (1798-1801), and negotiated the Peace of Amiens (1802). He was re-appointed Governor-General of India in 1804.

Brooklyn Heights- The area was heavily fortified prior to the largest battle of the American Revolutionary War - The Battle of Long Island (also known as The Battle of Brooklyn). After British troops landed on Long Island and advanced towards Continental Army lines, General George Washington withdrew his troops here after heavy losses, but was able to make a skillful retreat across the East River to Manhattan without the loss of any troops or his remaining supplies.

Harlem Heights- The Battle of Harlem Heights was fought in the New York Campaign of the American Revolutionary War. The action took place in what is now the Morningside Heights and west Harlem neighborhoods of Manhattan in New York City on September 16, 1776.

The Americans—under Generals George Washington, Nathaniel Greene, and Israel Putnam, totaling around 2,000 men—held a series of high ground positions in upper Manhattan against an attacking British division totaling around 5,000 men under the command of General Alexander Leslie. British troops made what became a tactical error by sounding a fox hunt bugle call while in pursuit, meant to insult the Continentals, who were in orderly retreat. This instead infuriated the Americans who galvanized to hold their ground and rallied for victory.

White Plains- city (1990 pop. 48,718), seat of Westchester co., SE N.Y., N of New York City; settled by Puritans from Connecticut in 1683; inc. as a village 1866, as a city 1916. The city has some light industries and serves as the headquarters for several corporations and laboratories. The state convention that ratified the Declaration of Independence met (1776) in White Plains. The battle of White Plains (1776), a principal engagement of the American Revolution, followed Gen. George Washington's retreat from New York City. Washington briefly made his headquarters (1738) in White Plains at the Elijah Miller House, which still stands. Other buildings from the Revolutionary period are also preserved. The city is the site of a cultural county center, a branch of Pace Univ., and the New York School for the Deaf.

Trenton- In the American Revolution, Trenton was the scene of a battle when Washington crossed (Dec. 25, 1776) the ice-clogged Delaware and surprised and captured (Dec. 26) 918 Hessians. The Americans, avoiding a British relief force led by Cornwallis, then struck at Princeton. A 155-ft (47-m) granite monument topped by a statue of Washington commemorates the battle, and the place where the Americans crossed the Delaware is marked in a state park. Trenton grew as a commercial center and became the site of many industries; the famous Roebing Works, where wire rope was manufactured, was established in 1848. The city's noteworthy buildings include the golden-domed capitol (1792), much remodeled and enlarged; the capitol annex (1931); the state cultural center, with a museum, planetarium, and state library; the World War I memorial building (1932); the old barracks, built in 1758 and restored as a museum; and the William Trent House (1719), the city's oldest standing building, also a museum.

Princeton- borough (1990 pop. 12,016) and surrounding township (1990 pop. 13,198), Mercer co., W central N.J.; settled late 1600s, borough inc. 1813, township est. 1838. A

leading education center, it is the seat of Princeton Univ., the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton Theological Seminary, Westminster Choir College of Rider Univ., St. Joseph's Seminary, and other institutions. Numerous national and international corporate research centers and headquarters are there, including the Educational Testing Service (ETS). In the American Revolution the British and later colonial troops occupied Nassau Hall (of Princeton Univ.) as barracks. Shortly after the battle of Trenton, Princeton was the scene of a battle (Jan. 3, 1777) in which Washington surprised and defeated a superior British force. Gen. Hugh Mercer was mortally wounded in the attack.

General John Burgoyne- British general and playwright, born in Sutton, Bedfordshire, SC England, UK. He entered the army in 1740, and gave distinguished service in the Seven Years' War (1756-63). He then sat in parliament as a Tory, and in 1777 was sent to America, where he led an expedition from Canada into New York State, taking Ticonderoga, but being forced to surrender at Saratoga. He later joined the Whigs, and commanded in Ireland (1782-3). His best-known work was his comedy, *The Heiress* (1786).

Fort Ticonderoga- a pitched battle in which American revolutionary troops captured Fort Ticonderoga from the British in 1775

General Horatio Gates- US soldier, born in Maldon, Essex, SE England, UK. He entered the British army as a boy, and saw action in America during the French and Indian War. After 10 years back in England, he settled in W Virginia in 1772. Appointed brigadier-general in the Continental Army (1775), he proved himself a capable administrator and played a major role in the American victory at Saratoga (1777). He had a tendency to quarrel with his fellow officers, including General Schuyler at Ticonderoga and Benedict Arnold after Saratoga, and in 1778 he permitted his name to be associated with the "Conway Cabal", a plot to have Gates supplant Washington as commander-in-chief. Although not formally implicated, Gates never truly regained Washington's friendship or trust, and for two years he had little role in the action. Finally restored to command in the South (1780), he commanded the militia at Camden, SC that was routed by the British, and although Congress demanded an investigation, no court of inquiry ever convened. He played little role in the final actions of the war, and retired to his Virginia plantation (1783). Ever the outsider, he freed his slaves (1790) and passed his last years as a gentleman farmer on Manhattan Island, New York City.

Saratoga- (Oct 1777) One of the most important engagements of the US War of Independence. Actually fought near modern Schuylerville, NY, the battle brought the defeat of a large British army under John Burgoyne by American continental troops and militia under Horatio Gates. The outcome ended British plans to cut New England off from the rest of the states, and encouraged French intervention on the American side.