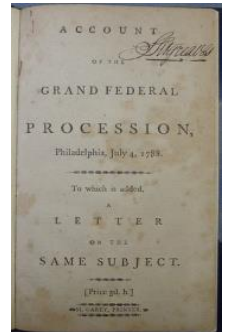


*ACCOUNT OF THE GRAND FEDERAL PROCESSION
Performed at Philadelphia on Friday, July 4th 1788*

By Frances Hopkinson

The Grand Federal Procession was a parade organized to celebrate the ratification of the U. S. Constitution. The author, Frances Hopkinson, had signed the Declaration of Independence, served as a delegate to the 1787 Constitutional Convention, and was the main organizer of this Grand Procession. He wrote a long pamphlet describing the parade four days after the parade. Pamphlets were a major form of journalism and method of political debate in the Revolutionary Era. They were widely read and discussed. Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* is, perhaps, the most famous pamphlet of that era. This is an excerpt from Hopkinson's pamphlet.



On Friday the 4th of July 1788, the citizens of Philadelphia celebrated the declaration of *Independence* made by the Thirteen United States of America on the 4th of July 1776, and the establishment of the *constitution*, or frame of government proposed by the late general convention of the states, and now solemnly adopted and ratified by ten of those states.

The rising sun was saluted with a full peal from Christ church steeple, and a discharge of cannon from the ship, *Rising Sun*,...superbly decorated with the flags of nations in alliance with America.

Ten vessels ... were dressed and arranged the whole length of the harbor; each bearing a broad white flag at the mast-head, inscribed with the names of [each state and date of ratification] in broad gold letters ...

About half after nine o'clock, the grand procession began to move; ...

1. Twelve axe-men, dressed in white frocks, with black girdles round their waists...
2. The first city troop of light dragoons....
3. *Independence* – John Nixon, Esq. on horseback bearing the staff and cap of liberty...

[Ed. Note: paragraphs numbered 4-23 have been deleted for brevity; they describe other people and groups representing military, political and diplomatic events of the Revolutionary war through the drafting and ratification of the *Constitution*]

24. The NEW ROOF, or GRAND FEDERAL EDIFICE; on a carriage drawn by ten white horses. This building was in the form of a dome supported by 13 Corinthian columns, raised on pedestals proper to that order; the freize decorated with 13 stars. Ten of the columns complete, but three left unfinished.... On the top of the dome was a handsome cupola surmounted by a figure of plenty bearing a cornucopia...

This elegant building was begun and finished in the short space of four days, by Messrs. William Williams and Co. The grand edifice was followed by architects and house carpenters, in number 450, carrying insignia of the trade... [followed by] saw-makers and file-cutters...

29. The manufacturing society, [on a carriage 30 feet in length and 18 feet wide and 13 feet high] ...was placed the carding machine worked by two persons and carding cotton at the rate of fifty pounds weight per day; next a spinning machine of eighty spindles worked by a woman ...

32. The Federal Ship *Union*... followed by pilots, boat builders, sail makers, ship carpenters, ship joiners, rope makers and ship chandlers, merchants and traders...

33. Cordwainers. A carriage drawn by four horses representing a cordwainers shop, in which were six men actually at work; the shop hung round with shoes, boots, &c. ... 300 cordwainers followed six-abreast, each wearing a white leather apron...

35. Cabinet and Chair-Makers. Mr. Jonathan Gostelow, carrying the scale and dividers; Mr. Jedidiah Snowden with the rules of architecture; four of the oldest masters; Mr. James Lee, attended by three masters bearing the standard, or cabinet maker's arms, elegantly painted and gilt, on a blue field, ornamented with thirteen stars; ten radiant and three unfinished; below the arms, two hands united -- Motto -- "*By unity we support society*" ... The workshop 17 feet long... on a carriage drawn by four horses... The shop followed by journeymen and apprentices six-abreast.... 100 [men] in train.

36. Brickmakers. Carrying a large flag of green silk, on which was represented a brickyard, hands at work, a kiln burning... Ten master brickmakers ... followed by one hundred workmen in frocks and trousers, with tools &c.

[Ed. Note: paragraphs 37-40 describe House, Ship and Sign Painters; Porters; Clock and Watch Makers; Fringe and Ribband Weavers]

41. Bricklayers. Headed by Messrs. Nicholas Hicks, William Johnson, and Jacob Grass, with their aprons and trowels; a flag with the following device; the federal city rising in a forest, workmen building it, and the sun illuminating it -- Motto -- "*Both buildings and rulers are the works of our hands.*" ... ten master bricklayers, wearing aprons, and carrying trowels, plum-rules, &c. followed by 55 of the trade.

[Ed. Note: paragraphs 42-47 describe Taylors; Instrument Makers, Turners, Windsor-Chair Makers and Spinning-Wheel-Makers; Carvers and Gilders; Coopers; Plane Makers; Whip and Cane Makers]

48. Blacksmiths; White Smiths and Nailors. A machine drawn by nine horses representing a Smith's manufactory. The Smiths arms highly ornamented -- Motto -- "*By hammer in hand, all arts do stand.*" ... Mr. Mingler and assistant completed a set of plough-irons out of old swords, worked a sword into a sickle, turned several horseshoes ... Messrs. Andrew Feffinger and Benjamin Brummel forged, finished and sold a number of spikes, nails and broad tacks.

[Ed. Note: paragraphs 49-76 describe Coachmakers; Potters; Hatters; Wheelwrights; Tin-Plate Workers; Skinners, Breech-Makers and Glovers; Tallow Chandlers; Victuallers; Printers, Book-Binders and Stationers; Saddlers; Stone-Cutters; Bread and Biscuit-Bakers; Gun Smiths; Copper Smiths; Gold-Smiths, Silver-Smiths and Jewellers; Distillers; Tobacconists; Brass Founders; Stocking Manufacturers; Tanners and Curriers; Upholsterers; Sugar Refiners; Brewers; Peruke-Makers and Barber Surgeons; Engravers; Plasterers; Brush-Makers; Stay-Makers. Paragraphs 77-87 describe corps of light infantry; city and state officials - including city clerk and treasurer, Pennsylvania legislators, justices, sheriff; musicians band of watchmen; members of the College of Physicians; and university students]

88. This grand procession began to move... about half past nine... and the front arrived at Union Green, in front of Bush Hill, about half past twelve. The length of the line was about one mile and one half, the distanced marched, about three miles...

It should not be omitted in this account, that the several trades furnished the devices, mottos, machines, and decorations themselves, and at the expence of their respective companies. And that nearly the whole of the work exhibited on that day, was completed between Monday morning and the Thursday evening following. ...

It is impossible to be precise in numbers on such an occasion; but averaging several opinions there were about 5,000 in the line of procession, and about 17,000 on Union Green.

Text excerpted by Nikki Mandell, Professor of History, emerita, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

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