High School 50th Anniversary Reunion, May 26, 1989

My dearly beloved, ladies and gentlemen, what a delight it is to meet again, after so long a time, with the people and the place in which I grew up. I am an historian...I am a backyard gardener. But you honor me with an invitation to speak to you at this time. Not TOO much of an honor, for I am allotted 8 minutes. I choose to talk to you briefly about the generation and the time of which we are a part.

The date was June 27, 1936, in the summer after our freshman year in high school. The scene was Franklin Field, a football stadium in Philadelphia. Franklin Delano Roosevelt had just been nominated by the Democratic Party's national convention for a second term as president, and to accept the nomination the president went in person to that place. In his speech he said many memorable things, but I want to quote only three lines, as the motto and theme of our time.

There is a mysterious cycle in human events. To some generations much is given. Of other generations much is expected. This generation of Americans has a rendezvous with destiny.

Sp spoke Pres. Roosevelt. And a rendezvous with destiny our generation has lived. In 1936 the country was deep in economic depression. The world, also suffering, saw in Germany and in Italy and in Soviet Russia violent and extreme experiments in totalitarianism as the solution to misery and despair. Many people saw their choices as reduced to two: liberty down one road, economic survival down the other. Our generation rejected that philosophy outright. Both human rights, and human welfare, was possible, we insisted, and it was our destiny to make it so. When the extremists threatened to dominate the world, in Atlantic and in Pacific, it was our generation that cried Halt, and then paid the price, in lives and wealth and years taken from our lives, to enforce a state of justice and limitation upon power. Civilians all, with our productive capacity, and imagination, and will-power, it was our destiny to overcome the proud militarists. Our destiny led also to the creation of the world's most wealthy country in all of human history, and to cultural and artistic achievements that win for Americans the preponderance of international awards for excellence in the arts and sciences. For all this I am grateful, and I stand in awe of which my country, in my generation, has done. But most of all I am thankful that the accident of birth made me a native Mississippian, 14 years before Franklin D. made that speech in Philadelphia. It was the best of times, in the best of towns, among the best of people, with the best city library and school system and neighborhood. We had the challenge of a rendezvous with destiny, but we had the advantage of this place from which to meet it. There is a west African proverb which says, No matter how far the stream flows, it never forgets its sources. So it is with us. We have gone to the ends of the earth in defense of liberty with order, we have done our bit to make our country great. In it all we have proven the quality of the roots from which we grew. Our generation of Americans had a rendezvous with destiny. I salute you for the courage and valor you have shown in seizing the challenge.

In confronting these threats we gave thought to, and came to know, our political and spiritual heritage.
Those among us who get a philosophy and a theology from the comic strips were especially pleased last month. The comic strip Calvin and Hobbes, about a small boy and his tiger—sometimes a small stuffed animal, at other times a full-grown animal—had lines that express my amazement at the swift passage of time. Let’s say life is this square of the sidewalk, the little boy says to the tiger, pointing to a strip of concrete marked with lines. We’re born at this crack, and we die at that crack. Now we find ourselves somewhere inside the square, and in the process of walking out of it. Suddenly we realize our time in here is fleeting. Is our quick experience here pointless? Does anything we say or do in here really matter? Have we done anything important? Have we been happy? Have we made the most of these precious few footsteps? The last panel in the strip shows the boy and the tiger, standing within the square of concrete, looking apprehensive. Behind them the sky is dark and the sliver of a moon shines in the night sky. They have stood in that square all the day and into the night, wondering about the brevity of life, and what if anything it means. We have all asked the same questions. The 15th century French poet troubador François Villon said it—ou sont les neiges d’antan. William Wordsworth put it like this—there was a time when meadow, grove, and stream, the earth, and every common sight, to me did seem apparelled in celestial light, the glory and the freshness of a dream. ... The pansy at my feet doth the same tale repeat: where is now the visionary gleam? Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

Dear Lord & Father, of us all, we give thanks to you for memories, and for friends, and for the sacred soil and Hardy roots out of which we sprouted. We give you thanks for this group, and for the tie that bind us to our town and state and nation. We pray thy healing hand upon those who are weak and ill and unable to share this fellowship, and we are grieved at those who are nearer to you than they are to us. We pray thy presence with us as we break bread in this place, and until we meet again, hold us in the hollow of your hand. We give thanks too for the beauty prepared

3 clp

9/3/20

Greenwood

Fuentes Point

Friends, Parent

3 clippers & Tithes

...& people who forget things
My dearly beloved, ladies and gentlemen, it is an honor for me to be invited to share this occasion with you. I am an historian, which means that my calling is to remind people in the present of those events and persons and ideas in the past which have made the world we live in. Remembering is important to all of us, for we are debtors to the giants of the past who have enabled us to see farther and to live more happily than we might have done. As someone has said, memory is the ability to gather roses in winter. The remembrance of things past makes it possible for us to live them twice, or a hundred times. Wm Faulkner said that the past is not dead; it isn’t even past. Or perhaps the poet T. S. Eliot said it best, in the four-quarted poem Burnt Norton; time present and time past are both perhaps present in time future, and time future contained in time past. Certain it is that present grows out of past, and future is being formed in the present. So historians look backward to understand this morning’s newspaper, and next month’s revolution in China, or central America, or right down the street from where we live. In every day there is a host of memories of what happened at this time a year ago, a century ago, a millennium ago. This day is no different. I invite you to come with me in your imagination to this day, May 17, thirty-five years ago, at 12:52 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, when Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States Earl Warren began to read the unanimous decision of the Court in the case of Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas. For 26 minutes reporters heard him, with mounting excitement; every few minutes they would scribble hastily-written messages and stuff them into the pneumatic tubes which took them to the telegraph room on the floor below. When Earl Warren completed his task, at 1:20 p.m., the United States was changed in nature and attitude and in liberty and in equality of opportunity, for all time to come. For the Brown decision, 35 yrs ago this afternoon, was without doubt the most controversial and far-reaching Court action of the 20th Century. It is possible to argue that what happened on that day, in that imitation Greek temple which stands as guardian and shield of the rights and protections we need to be human, constituted the most significant half-hour in the century since the end of chattel slavery in 1865. To understand its meaning, let us look briefly at what had gone before that momentous twenty-eight minutes; and at the present day, more than a third of a century since; and conclude with a remark or two about what is yet to be done in the future.

In 1619 yrs had gone by since the first unwilling Africans arrived in America in chains, and were compelled to work without compensation other than subsistence--food, shelter, and clothing. 91 yrs had passed since Pres. Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. Freedom to enslaved black people was the battle-cry of the armies of the United States that invaded the plantation regions to compel obedience to the laws and the Constitution, and also to eradicate from that Constitution and those laws every trace of human slavery upon this continent. But sadly, freedom to the enslaved was much too quickly proven to be a cruel hoax. A decade after Appomattox all of the outward conditions of enslavement were evident, and before the end of the century an elaborate code of laws compelled racial segregation in all public aspects of life. Peonage replaced slavery; tenantry, and crop liens, and a severely restricted area of civil rights for blacks, effectively nullified the promises of legal citizenship contained in the 14th and 15th amendments to the Constitution. Blacks were disqualified from voting and from serving on juries; they were remanded to separate facilities on river boats and railway trains, and were restricted in humiliating and dehumanizing ways. Slavery had denied their humanity but it had protected their persons; in freedom they belonged to no one but themselves and to God. That lust for lynchings and personal violence. It also wrote the laws that declared African Americans to be untermensch in mind and soul. Federal courts accepted the principle of separate but equal in interstate transportation and also in education. That too was a deception; the excuse for separation was to guarantee inequality. That was the condition of American social arrangements during the half-century between 1890 and 1940. Not much changed in the decade of the 1950s, but subterranean writhings were troubling the calm above ground. Some sensitive persons noted the irony in the policy of sending segregated armies to defeat enemies deemed harmful because they thought themselves superior human types--Aryan, Herrenvolk--and set a bout to exterminate lesser peoples. When that war ended another began, between the victorius allies; its battleground was the Third World, where darker-skinned peoples were emerging from colonial empires dominated by fairer-skinned westerners. The State Dept discovered that the denial of civil rights at home exacerbated efforts to win hearts and minds of the economically under-developed continents. Pres. Truman issued orders to segregate the armed forces, and appointed blue-ribbon commissions to propose racial programs, and in 1958 the Democratic Party included a civil-rights plank in its platform--a move that divided the party so that Republicans won with Ike four years later. With increasing success, blacks brought suits against state governments designed to dramatize the inequity in educational facilities--neither Texas nor Missouri had a law school for blacks, for
example, and Alabama had no school of library science that would accept black applicants. With that we come to the centerpiece of the story—the 28 minutes in the Supreme Court building on a day in spring, thirty-five years ago today. It began with Oliver Brown, a father in Topeka, Kans., who was angry because his 8-yr-old daughter was excluded from the elementary school five blocks from his home, and was compelled to walk through railroad switching yards to catch a bus to take her to a school for blacks that was 21 blocks away. Early in 1951 Brown with a dozen other parents brought suit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Kansas, to obtain redress of a nagging grievance. The case proceeded through the appellate courts for two years before the Supreme Court granted permission for the litigants to plead the suit before the most powerful judicial body in the world. On December 7, 1953—many people noted the date, 12 yrs after Pearl Harbor—the Court sat to hear oral arguments. Because the case was crucial to the segregated societies of the ex-Confederate South, they combined their attorneys general to hire as their spokesman John W. Davis of W. Va., 1924 Democratic nominee for president, and the most eminent constitutional lawyer in the land. For Oliver Brown, and for millions of segregated Americans, the advocate was Thurgood Marshall, chief legal counsel of the NAACP who had for over 25 yrs been the legal voice of Black America. Following Davis were the attorneys general and legal lights of several states, defending Kansas and its system of local option in school assignments. When the oral presentations ended, five months of silence passed. Tension grew as the time approached for the Court's summer recess. Then, on Monday, the traditional decision day in the Court, on Monday, May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court through its C.J., announced its opinion. All nine justices were present, Mr. Justice Robert H. Jackson arose from his hospital bed, where he was recuperating from a heart attack, to join his colleagues in a dramatic show of unanimity. Slowly and deliberately Chief Justice Warren read the Court's statement. Warren was an appointee of Pres. Eisenhower, and had been confirmed by the Senate just 11 weeks before he delivered the judgment. The decision is an interesting one. I read only the important paragraph:

We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. Therefore, we hold that the plaintiffs and others similarly situated for whom the actions have been brought are, by reason of the segregation complained of, deprived of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment.

The effect was not immediate, but it proceeded with all deliberate speed to work legal and almost peaceful revolution in America. We who are a nation of immigrants, a nation of minorities, began to assimilate into the melting pot the sons and daughters of African origins. As schools opened, opportunities expanded, and blacks could, with the TV series about the Jefferson family, move on up from Archie Bunker's neighborhood to high-rise luxury living. Lawyers, doctors, authors, poets, prize-winning playwrights, scientists in all fields, began to add their talents to the pluralistic American scene. Last week I heard from a finalist in the Wake Forest oratorical contest a warm and encouraging pride in roots, and in chocolate-colored skin; to be young, gifted, and black, she concluded, in the words of Lorraine Hansberry, is a gift of God. We have come a long way in 35 yrs, and the country is better for it. We know now that the God who made us in His image has a face of many colors, all of them beautiful.

Time past is also time future, T.S. Eliot wrote; what is yet to do? Much, say my black students and friends. Many young blacks still find doors closed to them, and try to win recognition by getting rich quickly and illegally. Others blame white European immoralities for the degradation of the black family and society. Some students say that we are more nearly two nations now than we were in 1954, and two months ago I talked to a black man who warned me that race war was simmering and would soon, and suddenly, explode. Revolutions come not at the bottom of history's cycle, but after long upward swing, when expectations are elevated above realities. We must not fail those who acted courageously and lawfully a generation ago. Let us work and grow, that another 35 years after Oliver Brown's case we shall be in fact one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.
My dearly beloved, ladies and gentlemen, you do me honor by inviting me to share in these proceedings. I am a professional historian whose major interest has been the study of the American South. It is a topic rich in irony and in tragedy, in contradiction and in paradox, in romanticism and in the harsh reality of cold, hard, and inescapable fact. It is also an enduring enigma, an enigma challenging comprehension. Because for nearly four centuries the South has defied either location or analysis, I have entitled my remarks to you The Teahouse of the Southern Moon, a text from John Patrick's play about the occupation of Okinawa by United States forces after 1945. Patrick's title was the Teahouse of the August Moon, but it has something important to say about our own region and our own past. The play is the story of the outwitting, and ultimately the undoing, of the dominating conquerors by the apparently simple natives. This becomes clear even to the invaders. The American captain in command of a village military government says: I'll tell you something, Sakini, who is the interpreter and Okinawan conspirator in the elaborate subterfuge, I'll tell you something. I used to worry a lot about not being a big success. I must have felt as you people felt at always being conquered. Well, I'm not so sure who's the conqueror and who the conquered. In an ironic, topsy-turvy way, that the historian's rueful cry of dismay when he thinks he has finally captured the elusive element that makes the American South distinctive. The burden of my career has been defining the subject I undertook to study. For forty years, as I have travelled across this beautiful land, I have asked people whether or not they were southern, and I have gotten definite answers. Some of them have been accompanied by theological references to a hereafter of rewards and punishments. To spare your tender ears I shall translate into gentler terms the responses I have received. Inferno, Yes, I won't forget. Perdition and condemnation no, and you insult me even by asking. It seems clear that Americans know whether they are southern, and they will take their stands, loud and clear. But when I ask what it was that they are, or are not, at once the certainty vanishes. No one knows for sure what the South is, or where it begins and ends; and what characteristics set it apart from other members of the family of man. The problem of studying the Teahouse of the Southern Moon arises from the fact that it possesses no definite place or nationality to give it identity. It has no geographic unity, or limitation. It has so varied a climate that the meteorologists with their isotherms and pressure gradients are of no assistance. It has no recognizable language, or accent, or dialect, no distinguishable philosophy or theology or literary style; no foods, no fashions, no unique political pattern. Every effort to define, describe, or locate The American South has founded upon the rocks of cold reality or the inexorable passage of time. The student's embarrassment over the imprecision of the subject is rendered more painful because of the unblinkable fact that the Brothers' War between geographic sections of the country is the focal event in American history, and that 650,000 participants perished in battle to defend or to destroy an entity called South. Surely, we reason to ourselves, with such costly smoke there must be fire. There must be a cause for that sacrifice and for the unquenchable awareness of Rebels and Yankees into the present. There must be a root to the conviction that is so much a fact of American folklore, and it must be concrete, self-evident, superlatively and inductively valid. Thus the scholarly inquest persists. Once it was the land of cotton, and in the streets of Memphis the fleecy staple blew in the autumn breezes and collected in the gutters; that has largely disappeared. For over two centuries it was the land of slavery, until the XIII Amendment jerked that one from beneath our feet. And with that we must not forget that in 1776, when Jefferson proclaimed all men created equal, and equally entitled to life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness, slavery existed in every one of the thirteen English colonies. To the undying shame of every inhabitant of this free land, that monstrous institution became illegal in the state of New York only on July 4, 1827. It generation before it ended in my native state of Mississippi. Would you then argue that New York was South before 1827, and that nowhere was South after 1865? But then, after 1895 it could be identified as the land of legal segregation. But where do you find it after the judicial and legislative abolition of racially separate facilities? Racism is restrained by no latitude. If that ugly attitude be taken as the measure of the South, then must we not include Bunker Hill in Boston along with Watts and the Bronx and South Chicago and Detroit? But it will not do to point the finger; there is enough rudeness in personal relationships to spread all over the land.

The problem, then, is not a simple one. People proclaim or condemn the presence of a South in their tradition, but as historians we find it like smoke; when I get a handful of it, it dissolves into nothing. Perhaps I have been grasping the wrong straws. I submit for your consideration two possible lines of study and thought. One is the book by W. J. Cash which this symposium has met to re-examine. Sixty-nine years ago, in the fall of 1920, Sleepy Cash, as he was called, showed up as a student at the college where I work. There he read everything in
the library, if not in fact then certainly in the legend. He read much, and he forgot nothing. Out of his mental library, and his imagination, he fashioned a literary gem filled with provocative insights, a book which has stood the test of nearly half-a-century. In March, 1930, he wrote to the publisher Alfred A. Knopf to propose a volume on the mind of the South. My thesis, he said then, is that the Southern Mind represents a very definite culture, or attitude towards life, a heritage, primarily, from the old South, but greatly modified and extended by conscious and unconscious efforts over the last hundred years to protect itself from the encroachments of three hostile factors: the Yankee Mind, the Modern Mind, and the Negro. In other words, Cash wrote, it is a combination of certain orthodoxies and a defense mechanism. The working out of that fertilized seed occupied most of the remainder of his life. While each of these parts may be found in other regions and in other traditions, perhaps their concentration may serve as a divining rod to strike the well-springs of something fundamental.

The other suggestion must begin at a hallowed spot not far from where we are gathered this morning. It is the recording studio of Sam Phillips, a building that began life as a radiator shop, out of which the distinctive sounds of the popular culture of an entire generation. By 1945 Memphis was the epicenter of Rock and Roll, the musical creation of an army of composers and performers who came to Sam Phillips to have their cacaphony captured in plastic to entrance an immense audience hungry for culture. The King, Elvis Presley, made his first recording in July 1954 in that temple to the rock religion, and overnight was a dazzling success. The music itself was a distant relative of church revival songs, enhanced by sexual allusions and motions, along with drug-associated code-words. And then there was the Nashville sound, and the grass-roots music, bluegrass and country, all dominated by artists whose roots ran deep into the soil of one small corner of the national immensity. Can we find in popular culture in your country in your time—and in W.J. Cash's poetic ruminations—the expression of the historical and social memory that has remained fresh and green in the rural regions, and in the cities whose inhabitants are really good ol' boys and girls disguised as urban dudes? I invite your reflection and investigation of the enigma that is the Teahouse of the Southern Moon. Who is the conqueror, and who the conquered?

My dearly beloved, ladies and gentlemen, what a delight and honor to be with you this evening, to share with you this gathering of remembrance and thanksgiving. Sunday is a very special day in the history of the American republic, for it marks another bi-centennial in the momentous series of events which made the English colonies into independent states, made good that independence in a seven-year-long conflict against the strongest military and naval power in all the world, and whose successful outcome was for long dreary years discouraging and uncertain. Two yrs ago there were celebrations of the writing of the U. S. Constitution, a document that has preserved order while granting more individual liberty for more years than any other written frame of government among human kind. Now we come to remember the 200th anniversary of the inauguration of George Washington as first president of the U. S. under that Constitution. Come with me in your imaginations, then, back in time, and in space, to that emotionally moving and patriotically proud moment. Shortly after noon on April 30, 1789, that tall, handsome Virginian, escorted by a small troop of cavalry, and a committee of Congress, and a throng of cheering citizens, rode from his residence in NYC to the new Federal Hall in Wall Street. There, on a balcony overlooking Broad street, George Washington took the oath of office as first president of the United States. N.Y.State Chancellor Robert R. Livingston administered the oath, the one that is written into the Constitution. Washington bowed to kiss the Bible that was held up to him or a large crimson pillow, and he murmured so that all around could hear him, I swear, and added, so help me God. The Chancellor ended the public ceremony by shouting, It is done; and then he cried, Long live George Washington, president of the U. S. In the streets the cry was repeated, with loud shouts of acclaim to the new president. The Chancellor who had done the swearing-in could do no more than wave his hat in the air, for he was too choked with tears and sobs to join in the joyous shouting. After a few moments, receiving the accolades of his fellow citizens, Washington, with vice-pres John Adams at his side, returned to the hall where the Senators and Congressmen awaited him. The legislators took their seats, and the general, now president, arose to deliver his inaugural address. The elected lawmakers did him the honor of rising with him, and stood in silence as he read from a single sheet of paper. Washington's voice was low and tremulous, and his hand shook as he held the paper that was his text. To some observers he appeared to be nervous, afflicted with stage-fright. When he held the paper in one hand he stood ramrod straight, with the little finger of the other hand glued rigidly to the seam of his tight trousers; when he changed hands, to hold the paper in the other hand, again his little finger sought and found the seam on the other leg of the knee-britches. The president wore a dark brown suit with silver buttons, white stockings, black shoes with square silver buckles, and had a sword at his waist. His face was grave and sad, and he spoke so softly that many in the hall did not hear him. Still, all who were in that room were aware that they were a part of one of their country's most emotional and most dramatic moments. The man who had led the continental armies to independence, and had then presided over the convention which met in Philadelphia to write the constitution, who had been first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen, through all the suffering and agony of those eventful years, now stood before them, ready to lead them as the elected executive officer of a republic, deriving its just powers from the consent of the governed. Many of them could not hold back their tears as they remembered all that had gone before, remembered the cost in blood and young lives and in immense indebtedness. When they saw the stern, proud man who stood before them so affected by the occasion and what it represented, kept unashamedly. Slowly, but in all seriousness, Washington began to read his address. "Among the vicissitudes incident to life no event could have filled me with greater anxieties than that of which the notification was transmitted by your order, and received on the 14th day of the present month," he said, in a reference to the arrival at Mt. Vernon of the courier announcing his election to the presidency. "On the one hand I was summoned by my country," he recalled, "my country, whose voice I can never hear but with veneration and love, from a retreat which I had chosen with the fondest predilection, and, in my flattering hopes, with an immutable decision, as the asylum of my declining yrs." On the other hand, he said, the magnitude and difficulty of the trust to which the voice of the country called him, caused his doubts that he was qualified for the position. In that conflict of emotions, he reported, in the language of the soldier, he responded in the name of duty to that which he preferred to avoid. He gave thanks to God, the almighty being who rules over the universe, and prayed God's mercy and guidance upon the new government and the administration of its powers, and he promised to protest and extend the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government which free men had instituted. He promised to obey the constitutional obligation that he present to Congress such measures as he deemed necessary and expedient, and he informed the House of Representatives that he would accept no salary for his services, and no remuneration other than the expenditures that the public good required him to spend. Thus
was that first inauguration completed, 200 years ago this coming Sunday. In the evening the city of New York was illuminated in celebration, and a spectacular fire-works display over the river followed. A week later, so sedate were the habits of our illustrious ancestors, there was an inaugural ball at which all social and political leaders attended. In the yrs that folwed, the fledgling republic could give thanks to the God of their Fathers for the firm, judicious political judgment and tact of George Washington. In his 8 yrs as president he began the cabinet offices of the administration, he sent Anthony Wayne deep into the Indian country of the west to end the depredations of the original inhabitants of the national domain, and he entered into treaty obligations with both England and Spain which insured the success of American independence. It is not too much to say that the first president of these united states was the most influential of them all. He was a man of unfailing integrity and strong sense of duty, a man people would follow because of his personal presence. George Washington's acceptance of the highest office within the power of the American people to grant, marked the culmination of the first chapter in the American quest for liberty with order. The Constitution of 1787 was the final act in fulfilling that quest. It buttressed American independence with strong bonds of freedom; it protected property lawfully acquired; it made impossible any taxation or law-making without popular representation; it was the embodiment of the declaration that all men, and all women, were created equal in law and in justice; it opened to Americans the discovery of their own nationality. As the prelude to the revolution had taught men the dangers of tyranny, so the Constitution was so delicately balanced that it worked to prevent tyranny. With George Washington's acceptance of the seal of office, part one of the American pilgrimage had ended. But he, and his generation, knew well that their efforts, in war and in peace, to guarantee to those who came after the liberty that was the creator's gift to humankind, their efforts were not the end of the journey. They were instead the beginning. They had come a long way in the quarter-century between 1763 and 1789, perhaps farther than any generation of people who ever lived and loved on planet earth ever came in so short a time. But the farther they travelled toward the light of liberty with responsibility, and integrity, and honor, the brighter grew the prospects that lay still farther ahead. Ultimately it would not be words in printer's ink on a piece of parchment that would assure to future generations the blessings of liberty. It would be flesh and blood humanity, with all its fears and its failures, with all its temptations to greed, and to power, and to the private vision of paradise apart from the group, that would preserve that precious freedom which those indomitable founders won for themselves and bequeathed to us. Into your day, my fellow citizens, the bfüark stands, and the pilgrimage to human liberty continues. So long as any man, or woman, of whatever race or national origin, remains less free than another, we cannot cease. Your liberty is a candle in a high wind; guard it with all that you are, and have.

that struggle
Someone whose poetic vision is clearer than mine, has said that memory is the ability to gather roses in winter. Today, upon the final day of this year's cold season, let us call into action our imaginations and remember the sacrifices and the exploits of those who are our honored ancestors, and collect roses in our minds and hearts, dark red roses for their courage, and for their blood shed in a cause that was lost but will never be forgotten. Other notable persons have also reached into the vast continent of memory to find meaning in a confused and dismaying present. On Nov 12, 1940, when France had fallen to German invaders, and Great Britain, the last bastion of the old Europe, was on her knees but not on her back, Winston Churchill arose in the narrow confines of the House of Commons chamber at Westminster. What he said on that day has meaning for us here today. "History with its flickering lamp stumbles along the trail of the past, trying to reconstruct its scenes, to revive its echoes, and kindle with pale gleams the passion of former days." That, in brief, is the historian's mandate—to see, to hear, and to feel, what men and women in the past experienced, and thereby to know ourselves better, and to understand more deeply our own time, because we have in imagination relived a past that once was the present. And if the lamp flickers, and we who follow upon the trail of the past, we continue the course, for all men and women desire to know who they are, and where they came from, and out of what roots they grew. Remembering is one of the keys to survival. If we forget those by whose deeds we were brought to this day, then we will not be surprised if those who come after us, forget us, for we failed in our mission to be the link between our forebears and our posterity. The Biblical Psalmist, wrote a poem to the duty of remembering. In far-distant Babylon, where he with his people was held captive from Jerusalem the golden holy city, he said, If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither; let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. That is the way many of us feel about our own honored past and our own bit of cherished ground. We know it is important that we remember, so we tie strings about our fingers, we put on our remembering rings, and we write ourselves notes and put them on the calendar or the ice-box door. Even then we feel our hand withering and our tongues sticking to the roof of our mouths. Remembering is such hard work; forgetting is so much easier, let the dead past bury the dead, away with all those shadows, those curious buttons and fading ribbons, those rusting swords and spurs that no longer jingle, monuments of a long-forgotten campaign, scars of battle the world prefers to forget.

What does remembering mean? It is a time of quiet meditation on the greatness and the sacrifice of our ancestors in the past. We remember the actions of men—and women—of courage, and valor, and gallantry, and loyalty, and endurance, and it is important that we do, for these old-fashioned words are losing their attraction in a world that tries to turn each of us in upon ourselves, so that the private vision of the good life takes precedence over the marriage, and the family, and the neighborhood, and the nation. For that reason it is of crucial significance that we gather the roses of memory, and stumble along the trail of the past, back to the days when courage and honor and loyalty were not words, but were character traits. What we hunger for, what people are crying for, are heroes—men and women, in great places and in small, who set patterns of thought and conduct for the community. For that we must go back to the kind of self-control and dedication that was a way of life among our Confederate ancestors. They had so little, and they suffered so much, but still they kept faith with their best selves and gave examples we can still admire and praise. Over a quarter of a million of them died in battle, including more than 70 generals. It was the highest casualty rate in proportion to total numbers involved that any Amer army has ever sustained. For most of the war they refused trenches and breastworks. They faced massed muskets, and cannon, and rifles, and some embryonic machine weapons, and they faced them standing upright, marching in lines by company and by regiment. They immortalized places with rustic American names, Pea Ridge and Brandy Station, Chickamauga, Shiloh Church, Antietam Creek, White Oak Swamp, Falling Waters. 11,000 of them fell at Seven Pines, 36,000 during the 7-days battles around Richmond. Some units took losses that stagger the imagination, and bring tears to the eyes. At Franklin/TN in 1864 John Bell Hood lost 6,000 of 21,000 in a two-hour battle. At the stonebridge at Antietam the 1st Texas Inf lost 82% of its effectives. At Gettysburg the 26th N.C. Regt lost 71% of 800 troops, including the boy colonel Harry Burgwyn, Boston born but Tar Heel to the soles of his feet. Burgwyn died with sword in hand, and regimental colors on his shoulder. One of his friends wrote a report to his parents. "I can not attempt to offer consolation, he told them, but I can only mourn with you the loss of one of my most cherished friends. His death, however, was so noble and so glorious that it was all a soldier could desire. "North Carolina's proud boast, of being farthest at Gettysburg, would not find support until the following day. But from that day to this, no citizen of this state can avoid a patriotic pride in knowing..."
that in the Old North State where plantations were few and sturdy farmers predominated, one of its units, of brave and courageous men, gave more of their number in the cause of Independence than any other regiment on either side of the line. This is the nature of tragedy in its deepest sense. And as the thin gray line broke, Atlanta burned, and then a score of cities, and hundreds of plantation homes, ending with Columbia and Richmond. State capitals fell before the thundering cannon of the invader. Public records were destroyed, valuables looted, animals killed. On the sea islands of the Carolina tidewater irreplaceable genetic messages stamped into the seeds of silky long-staple cotton were burned in huge fires.

It was the English writer Horace Walpole who said that the world is a comedy to those who think, a tragedy to those who feel. Only the sensitive can see the triumph in pain and suffering, and only a poet can express the exaltation and the poignant beauty which transform the confusion and injustice that make up human life. Death there is, and defeat. But when, out of the night of the soul, we have a vision of the strength and the character that ennobles the human spirit, then we know the meaning of the hope that sees beyond the moment. Life no longer masters us, but we can master it, and sell ourselves for the highest purpose, because we can be part of all that is heroic. Every battle death in that cataclysmic ordeal was destined from birth to meet that rendezvous. As heroes they lay down their lives for a cause that meant more to them than their lives.

Out of the dissonance of life, one clear harmonious chord whose echoes still reverberate in our souls. T.S. Eliot, in one of his quartets, wrote a line that speaks to them a century and a quarter ago, as it speaks to us on this last evening of winter 1979. "A people without history is not redeemed from time, for history is a pattern of timeless moments. So, while the light falls on a winter's afternoon, in a secluded chapel, history is now." The heroes from whose loins we sprung were of that timeless past, for they are history. "Never let me hear that brave blood has been shed in vain," Sir Walter Scott shouted. No, it is not in vain. It sends a challenge down the years, through all the generations, so that we are humbled by their gift and inspired by their example. When great souls suffer pain, and know defeat, and die giving the last full measure of devotion to a cause greater than themselves, then is that pain and suffering magnified into a sharper, deeper reality. It becomes meaningful and moving insight—suffering filled with inspiration, love that will not let us go. If we forget thee, Oh brave Rebel band, may our hands wither, and our tongues cleave to the roof of our mouths. A pattern of timeless moments binds you and us together. May we never, ever, forget.
To write a letter successfully, you need to think about the message you wish to convey, the tone you wish to set, and the audience you are writing to. Consider the following tips for writing a great letter:

1. **Know Your Audience**: Understanding the reader’s perspective and needs will help you tailor your message to their expectations. If you are writing to a client, for instance, your letter should focus on how you can help them achieve their goals. If you are writing to a friend, your tone can be more casual and personal.

2. **State Your Purpose Clearly**: In the opening paragraph, clearly state the purpose of your letter. This helps the reader understand the context and focus of your message. For example, if you are writing to request a update on a project, you could say, "I am writing to request an update on the status of the project we discussed last week."

3. **Keep It Concise and To the Point**: Long, rambling paragraphs can lose the reader's attention. Instead, aim for short, crisp sentences that get to the point quickly. This not only respects the reader's time but also keeps your message clear and easy to digest.

4. **Use a Professional Tone**: Whether you are writing to a colleague, client, or professional contact, your tone should reflect professionalism. Avoid casual language or colloquialisms that might come across as disrespectful or unprofessional.

5. **Be Polite and Courteous**: A letter is an extension of your personality, so it's important to convey politeness and respect. Use formal language and avoid any negative or confrontational language. A courteous tone makes your letter more approachable and less likely to be ignored.

6. **Proofread Before Sending**: Double-check your letter for spelling and grammar errors. Typos and grammatical mistakes can undermine the credibility of your message. Consider having someone else proofread your letter to catch any errors you might have missed.

7. **Follow Up**: If the purpose of your letter is to request information or action, consider following up with a phone call or email a few days later. This shows initiative and can help ensure that the reader has your message.

By following these tips, you can improve the effectiveness of your letters and increase your chances of getting the desired response.
Disease and Distinctiveness in the American South. Edited by Todd L. Savitt and James Harvey Young. Pp. xvii, 211. Price not given. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee
A Pattern of Timeless Moments.

Ships. Mar 15/89. My dearly beloved, ladies and gentlemen, it is an honor for me to share this occasion with you. I am not a sailor, but I possess an abiding and unlimited reverence for the water and those who challenge the deep. Of all humankind's most ancient and continuing loves--as the love of ships and sails, rudders and oars, and the long graceful roll of the ocean swells. In all languages, and among all peoples, the sea is both mother and enemy, both charmer and merciless foe, both highway to adventure and barrier to travel. The emotional climax to Xenophon's March up Country, which is the story of ten thousand Greek warriors left leaderless deep within the Persian empire, is the moment when the head of the column reached the crest of a hill and looked over it to see before them the welcoming waters of the Black Sea. Thalassa, thalassa, they shouted; the sea, the sea. To a Greek the sea was home. Their miseries had ended. The English poet John Masefield expressed the same surge of joy at man's view of salt water: I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky. And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by. In another poem he confessed even clearer the human yearning for the beauty and the freedom of open water. "Then in the sunset's flush they went aloft, and unibt sails in that most lovely hour, when the light gentles and the wind is soft, and beauty in the heart breaks like a flower." Another Englishman, David William Bone, born in the same year as John Masefield, wrote a paragraph about the love affair between men and ships. "We sailors are jealous for our vessels," he wrote. "Abuse us if you will, but have a care for what you may say of our ships. We alone are entitled to call them bitches, wet brutes, stubborn craft, but we will stand for no such liberties from the beach." The sea is the heart's blood of the earth, said the American Henry Bost, and the Polish emigre Joseph Conrad condemned the mighty waters for lack of generosity and pity. Kenneth Grahame, in that masterpiece of childhood literature The Wind in the Willows, said a truth that all of us can endorse--believe me, there is nothing--absolutely nothing--half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats.

But it is a line from T. S. Eliot that is my text this evening, for I propose to remind you of three dramatic moments in the proud story of men and sailing vessels that make up a significant portion of our nation's past. In one of his quartets, Eliot wrote: A people without history is not redeemed from time, for history is a pattern of timeless moments. So, while the light falls on a winter's afternoon, in a secluded chapel--History is Now. Come with me then, in your imaginations, to three brief scenes in the maritime history of the United States in the days of sailing vessels, scenes that are indeed timeless and unforgettable moments. One of them is a tense and gritty event in the valiant record of the U.S.S. Constitution, another is the short naval battle on Lake Erie, and the third is the story of the U.S.S. Saratoga at Plattsburg. Together these episodes constitute a pattern of timeless moments out of the endless weaving of the seamless garb of history. All express the spirit of brave men at war 1799-1860.

The Constitution is the oldest naval vessel still on the list of actively commissioned ships. You may have seen her in Boston harbor, where her flag rises each morning and is folded away in the sunset. She was built in Boston and launched in 1797, when John Adams was president of the republic. She has a displacement of 2200 tons with a 43 foot beam, and was made of live oak, red cedar, and hard pine. The copper sheathing on her bottom was smelted and rolled by Paul Revere. She was fifteen years old when she won her honors and her nickname. Her seamen saw the British shot strike but fail to penetrate the strong oaken walls of the ship and in pride and affection named her Old Ironsides. The date of her most glorious victory was July 17, 1812, off the New Jersey capes. Her captain, Isaac Hull, sighted sails and assumed them to be friendly. In a light wind he slowly drifted toward the flotilla. Then they did not answer his signals he suspected that something was wrong and began his escape. There followed two days of the most imaginative and thrilling events in U.S. naval history. W/ Brit ships in pursuit, and w/wind so light that the entire operation was played out in slow motion, Hull put out small boats w/oarsmen to tow the Constitution. The procedure, with which you are all familiar, is called towing and kedging. The sailors used all the rope on the Constitution to lengthen the anchor line. The rowboats hauled the anchor ahead of the ship, dropped it into the water, and on shipboard the line was pulled in by winch. It was hard work, and it went on for two days without sleep or rest. Steadily the British ships gained upon the Constitution. But the American efforts were not in vain. On Jul 19 a weather front swept across the ocean, carrying with it a heavy rain squall. The storm enabled Hull to take in his small boats and easily outdistance the more clumsy British men-of-war. Rarely have skill and endurance been so evident, and so successful. Hull was a hero when he finally reached Boston harbor, cluttered then as now with the kind of effluvia that elects presidents, and the ship herself became part of the navy legend. In Sept, 1830, when the navy announced its intention to scrap the gallant frigate, young Oliver Wendell Holmes dashed off that poem we all memorized in grade school--aye, tear her battered...
ensign down. So vociferous was the public outcry that she rides today in honorable retirement near the spot where she first tasted salt water nearly two centuries ago.

Another timeless moment from the age of sailing ships and the men who rode them on the spanking breeze occurred less than a year later, at the western end of Lake Erie. I wish there were time to tell you about the construction of that fleet in the forest. A lifetime ago, when I was a small boy, I read a book about the genius of American shipbuilding, and it became one of the straws in the wind that turned my life toward history. Control of the Great Lakes was critical to the continued independence of the young United States. To challenge British dominance on Lake Erie the navy constructed a shipyard far beyond the seas, to the forests of western Pennsylvania. Using green timbers, and metal fittings hauled overland from the Mohawk River in New York State, construction began on a fleet of war vessels. The master builder was Daniel Dobbins, a man of rich experience with Lake boats, and he was assisted by much ingenious improvisation by blacksmiths and carpenters who again and again did the impossible. On Sept 10, 1813 the small fleet of 9 small and ineffective ships put out to do battle. Oliver Hazard Perry was comdr, with his flag of the mast of Lawrence, a small boat named for the comdr of U.S. Navy ship Chesapeake who was killed in battle with Shannon. In the battle Lawrence took a heavy pounding. Perry decided to abandon her and transfer his flag to Niagara, which was the next ship in line. Under fire in a small boat, he made the change just as Lawrence struck her flag in surrender. In Niagara Perry defeated the British in a 15-minute battle that changed the balance in Lake Erie and also in the war. To his commander Genl. Harrison Perry sent that famous msg which is part of the Navy tradition, which echoes down the years to remind us that liberty is worth the sacrifice. We have met the enemy and they are ours. 2 ships; 2 brigs, one schooner and one sloop. The battle took place at Put-in-Bay near the Sister and Bass Islands at the end of Lake Erie. In 1913, on the centennial of the battle, Pres. Woodrow Wilson dedicated a monument. The result of that battle, and the arbitration that followed the peace in 1815, is the world's longest undefended frontier.

The third scene was exactly a year and a day after Put-in-Bay, and it happened on Lake Champlain, the historic invasion route from the St. Lawrence to the heart of New York State. The lake stretches about 250 miles south of the Canadian border, and is 13 miles at its widest place. It is one of the finger lakes scratched out by the retreating glacier some thousands of years ago. It also is border between NY and Vt, and is one of the most beautiful spots in all the world. U.S. naval comdr was Thomas McDonough with a weak and unlikely fleet of 13 small vessels. Saratoga was his flagship, built of timbers cut from standing trees only 40 days before. On 11 Sept 1813 the British fleet on the lake, not much stronger, shielded the land invasion of the largest foreign military force ever to set foot upon American soil. The naval battle was crucial, therefore. MacDonough selected the battle site carefully, about 2 miles offshore in Plattsburg bay, in case British land guns fired upon his small sailing ships. He put Saratoga at the center of his line, and put out two anchors, one on each side of her, their lines attached to winches. Into the trap came the unsuspecting British. Saratoga fired her broadside at the approaching enemy, and then quickly wound the ship, letting out line to one anchor, drawing in line to the other. In a very few minutes the other broadside faced the enemy, and fired its rounds. In another few minutes, again the ship was swung about, and the gunners were ready. It was a bloody engagement, with every ship engaged suffering casualties. It was also one of the two or three most significant decisive battles ever fought within the U.S. The monster British invading force turned about and returned to Canada, in effect defeated by a handful of small sailing boats on a narrow lake. It was a tiny battle, but upon it hung the future of the republic. When word reached London, the govt ordered its negotiators in Belgium to make peace on whatever terms were available. The independence of your country rode in the holds of MacDonough's frail ships in an obscure corner of a small body of water.

History, T. S. Eliot wrote, is a pattern of timeless moments. So, while the light falls on a winter's evening, in a secluded dining room in an inland town in North Carolina, let us remember that History is Now. In some of its most dramatic moments the peace and well-being of the present was assured by brave and intelligent men, unbending sails when the light gentles and the wind is soft. Men who go down to the sea in ships are heroes. Let us salute them.
Triad Town Meeting on the Constitution
Planning Meeting
October 31, 1989, 9:30 AM

Special Guests
Professor Emeritus Richard Bardolph, UNC-G
Professor Rhoda Billings, WFU
Professor David Smiley, WFU
Dean Louis Westerfield, NCCU
Keith Monroe, Winston-Salem Journal

Welcome & Review of Entire Flow of Events Barbara Anderson
The View from Guilford County Gayle Fripp
The Velvet Coat: Comment on Main Themes Deborah Pullen
Town Meeting Jack Noffsinger
   Time Concerns
   Content Concerns
Opens Bardolph/Billings/Smiley/Westerfield Discussion

Review of November 9 "Plan of Action"
Adjournment
Triad Town Meeting on the Constitution
November 9, 1989, 7:30 P.M.

Rehearsals of The Velvet Coat to be held at 11 AM and 3PM (lights, makeup, etc.) at the High Point Theatre.

Respondents will be seated in audience halfway back, to one side, for easy exit at conclusion of The Velvet Coat.

7:30 P.M.

Welcome to event by James Madison

Madison introduces Frank Borden Hanes, who will present the Triad Crown of Valor

Hanes presents Award

Madison brings on Page High School Choral Ensemble

Performance by Choral Ensemble

At conclusion of choral segment, the drama, The Velvet Coat, will "bring on itself."

At conclusion of drama, respondents will leave the auditorium through side door and be led backstage.

At conclusion of drama, Madison will bring cast out front "opera style" for another round of applause, will call for written questions and comments from the audience, and make remarks of transition between drama and Town Meeting.

Senator Sanford (or Madison, in Sen. Sanford's absence) will open Town Meeting.

Opening remarks from Bardolph, Billings, and Westerfield?

Pre-selected questions to cover the Bardolph, Billings, and Westerfield "special areas"?

Interaction between James Madison and Bardolph, Billings, and Westerfield

Wrap-up.

James Madison announces adjournment to reception, sponsored by Wachovia Bank & Trust
On January 20, 1953, near the mid-point of the present century, at 12:32 p.m., near the high noon of that day, General of the Armies Dwight D. Eisenhower took the oath of office to become the 34th President of the United States. Eight years had passed since he commanded Allied forces in what he called a crusade in Europe. Now, as he delivered his inaugural address, he used the occasion to summon the American people to yet another crusade in the unending vigilance that was the price of liberty. "The world and we have passed the midway point of a century of challenge," he said. The challenge presented by the tumultuous 20th Century included the shock of two major wars and continuing economic instability, and the threat of war and of what he called aggressive Communism. He pledged that his Administration would neither compromise, nor tire, nor ever cease the effort to establish a worldwide peace, but he warned that "forces of good and evil are massed and armed and opposed as rarely before in history." In that fragile and frightening condition, the urgency of seeking peace was all the greater because "science," he said, "seems ready to confer upon us, as its final gift, the power to erase human life from this planet." Thus, in the short span of a few minutes, the incoming President disclosed the salient realities of the years in which we have lived out our lives. This morning I request your consideration and active thinking about these days which are granted to us, as we attempt to understand our time. It is of course impossible to explain the present in one short session, even if I knew where it was headed and what in the present would contribute to making the future which shall very soon become our present. In general it is true that none of us can know our own times, for until we know the consequences of our votes and our voices, we cannot measure their wisdom. Certain it is that this has been a century of violence unmatched in previous times. Not long before Dwight Eisenhower was sworn in as President, elder statesman Averill Harriman, who was among many other things the U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, said that anyone who wished to enjoy a peaceful life should have chosen another century, a statement that when I heard it compelled me to wonder just which century would have been more serene. It is neither simple nor self-evident that another life-time might be less upsetting or uncertain. It is part of the burden of living--and perhaps also its delight--that tomorrow is ours to make, that its orderly procession is nowhere guaranteed, and that the unexpected requires our best in wits and learning. But as a way of inciting your thought and discussion of this bewildering present, I propose to invite you to come with me in your imaginations to five cradles of our present world, to five places where action and achievement produced the circumstances in which we live at the end of the 20th decade of the century, and then to relate to you the parable of the life-raft, as one description of the underlying Ford cradles must be brief. The first one is, oddly enough, on the outer banks of North Carolina. The date was Dec 17, 1903, on the narrow strip of sand named Kill Devil Hill, near Kitty Hawk. There, at that poetically-named spot, began the human conquest of aeronautics. Wilbur and Orville Wright, born in Dayton, OH, and gifted mechanics with imagination and active curiosity, designed bicycles, and then gliders, and then engine-driven flying machines. They came to North Carolina, perhaps because they wanted to change the state's auto license tags 80 yrs later, and because the weather bureau assured them that wind conditions were ideal. There, on a ten-degree slope, and from a monorail and catapult, and into a 27-mph wind, they demonstrated that heavier-than-air flight was possible. That first attempt lasted 12 seconds and covered 120 feet, forty yards, less than half a foot-ball field. But we all stand in awe of that place, and those men, for from that small step for mankind came, in time, military aircraft, and commercial aviation, and the jet-propulsion engine, and rocket-powered space voyages--next month marks the 50th anniversary of the first man on the moon; I hope you plan a celebration, or a re-enactment. The Wright brothers' technical advance has made of the world a global village, and has brought the human race into confrontation with itself as it has not been since recorded history. Tomorrow morning any of us could be on another continent, befuddled by the circadian syndrome, meeting people whose roots sprout from different, and yet strangely similar soils, with whom we must find a way to live if the planet is to survive. So visit Kill Devil Hill, and see it in your imaginations, for it is a cradle from which has grown your world.

And now, to a second cradle, this one in global communications. It is the electronics laboratory of Peter Carl Goldmark, on a grassy hill in Connecticut, overlooking a traffic artery in Stanford. From that place came much that we need to know about to understand our world and time. Goldmark was born in Hungary in 1906, one of a brilliant generation of scientists that east European country contributed to the welfare of your land—including Edward Teller, John von Neumann, and Eugene Wigner. But while they were concocting atomic weapons, Goldmark created the communications revolution that has contributed to the world village and to the internationalization of pop culture. Sixty yrs ago he migrated, first to England and then to America, bringing with him...
a genius for the radio transmission of pictures, what we call television. In August 1940 he demonstrated the world's first color TV for CBS officials in New York. It is appropriate in these days of flag politics that part of that first broadcast was a red, white, and blue national pennant fluttering in a breeze. He also invented the long-play record, a machine to add depth to recorded sound, a miniature TV to send pictures from deep inside body organs so physicians could diagnosis illnesses. Another of his magical devices was EVR, electronic video recordings, that made possible the instant replay and, in time, the video cassette recorder. He also put into orbit the first satellite in fixed position to provide live pictures from anywhere in the world. Your life, and mine, are different, and hopefully more informed, because the fertile brain of Peter Goldmark imagined, and produced, a planet tied together with electronic beams. One summer, as we watched in hope, and then in horror, those events in Beijing's main square, and fifteen years ago, when we saw the blood of Viet-nam battles in our living rooms, we used devices from Goldmark's laboratory. And if you use film strips, or educational TV, in your classroom, you are also paying respect to his vision (no pun) of instruction through ionic bombardment of the end of a cathode-ray tube. There are many other technological cradles which have determined the life of the century; let us take Goldmark's lab as the representative of them all.

For the next one we go westward, nearly to the watery edge of the continent, to a place called Jornada del Muerto, or Journey of Death, in the desert near Alamogordo, N. Mex. The time was 5:29 a.m. on July 16, 1945, 9 yrs ago next month. In a bunker 20 miles from ground zero, a blinding flash, brighter than a 1000 suns, marked the explosion of the world's first atomic bomb. It stands (after all these yrs) as the central moment in the history of our time. It cuts the human story into two parts; every aspect of life in every part of this earth was changed for all time in that two minutes of light and thunder. Only three weeks later an Air Force bomber released an atomic bomb upon the Japanese city of Hiroshima, and an old order died, yielding place to new. Our peace of mind, our Psychological and physical beings, are not what they were before. It was a threshold of a new age. It was the climax of an irreversible mastery of scientific reasoning over nature, and its consequence is measurable in us all, in background radiation, in nuclear accidents, in effects upon religious faith, even the meaning of life itself. It was the work of a team of physicists headed by J. Robert Oppenheimer. He was born in NYC in 1904, educated at Harvard and in the most advanced of European centers of learning. In 1929, 8 yrs ago, he took a job at CalTech, where he had no telephone, never read the newspaper, and never bothered to vote. But in 1936 the ominous storm-clouds in Spain, Italy, and Germany aroused him, and he devoted his mind to the race for a super-weapon. He also read the classics; when the bomb exploded, he quoted the Bhagavad-Gita: Now I am become death, the destroyer of worlds. It meant more than it said, for those pioneers were walking into darkness; they did not know whether the prototype would ignite the sands of the desert and turn the entire earth into a mushroom cloud of cinders. Now, as our state legislators in Raleigh debate the disposal of hazardous wastes, the 20th century becomes a challenge to the survival of life itself. Eight years later, Pres. Eisenhower in his inaugural would remind his countrymen that science seemed ready to confer upon us, as its final gift, the power to erase human life from the planet. Learn of it, my dear friends, for only in mind and spirit can we confront that awesome reality.

For the next cradle let us move backward nine years, to 1936, and turn in relief to the expression of the human spirit in art. For that let us travel to a lovely spot in the Appalachian mountains 60 miles south of Pittsburgh, to Bear Run, and to a house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright—another Wright brother, two yrs younger than Wilbur, and two states farther west. This Wright proved the judgment of Robert Schumann that Beethoven's Fifth Symphony established that revolution could take place within the four walls of a musical composition and the police be none the wiser. Wright, a master architect born in 1869 in Wisconsin, developed what he called organic buildings; the living space should be an extension of nature and also of the human beings who live and work in it. That ideal is evident in nearly everything he built, but perhaps most clearly in Fallingwater, delicately balanced over the falls of a small creek, with balconies that were projecting beams supported only on one end, soaring over the flowing water as if they were unsupported. To look at the house, Wright said, you can hear the murmur of the waterfall; and again, he told the client, I want you to live with the waterfall, not just look at it. Thus, one wall is entirely of glass, allowing the illusion that the family within, and the natural setting without, were in unity with each other. It is a major masterpiece of imagination, one of the most interesting houses on earth, and the representative of 20th century artistic expression. It is a piece with the Appalachian folk music in Aaron Copland's tone-poem, or the sturdy New England simplicity of Robert Frost, or the primitive charm of Grandma Moses. I invite you to know the sounds and colors of 20th century art; I invite you to devote the times of your lives seeing, and hearing, and reading, that which enriches at little cost, and enlarges with small demand, the times we are allotted in this pilgrimage that has so many treasures to bestow upon us.
Finally, the fifth cradle is in the sanctuary of the Holt Street Baptist Church in Montgomery, AL, at 7 p.m. on Monday, Dec 5, 1955. There a mass meeting of the city's black population heard the first of many speeches by Martin Luther King, Jr., whose short life represents the national struggle of conscience and law to define the meaning of citizenship and of belonging in a land of immigrants and minorities. King was born on Jan 15, 1929 in Atlanta, where his father was minister of Ebenezer Church, and was educated at Morehouse College and at seminaries in Pennsylvania and in Boston. In 1954 he was chosen to be pastor of a church in Montgomery. In the folwg yr he became recognized spokesman, dramatizing in rolling Biblical cadences of a polished rhetoric the injustices and inequities in which, a century after emancipation, African-Americans were compelled to live. His career as prophet to 20th Century America began that December evening, to a gathering called to plan a response to legally segregated seating on the public street buses of the capital city of Alabama. It was an emotionally moving experience that, like a non-violent Alamogordo experiment, was a threshold separating one age from another. "We are here in a specific sense," he began, "as American citizens determined to apply our citizenship to the fullness of its means." Just because Mrs. Rosa Parks refused to get up from her bus seat, he said, she was arrested. "And you know, my friends, there comes a time when people get tired of being trampled over by the iron feet of oppression." At that, the meeting exploded into shouts of Yes, yes, and Amen, brother, and a rising cheer that rolled on and on that seemed to press upon the walls of the church. There was the sound of feet stamping on the floor, there were vibrations that shook the building, there was the sound of hope, and determination. One sentence had set it off, and it rolled and echoed from that place, and that time, to the farthest reaches of the country, and down to this present moment. "There comes a time, my friends," King continued, breaking into the shouting crowd, "when people get tired of being pushed out of the glittering sunlight of life's July, and left standing amidst the piercing-chill of an Alpine November." More shoutings interrupted him. Patiently he waited for a break in the wall of sound. When it came, he said, "We are here--we are here because we are tired now." And out of that tiredness, and that revival of protest, there came another key to understanding this present century. This nation, one nation, under God, indivisible, with freedom and justice for all, is more nearly a reality as we end the 5th decade of the century than it was when the century began, or when Dwight Eisenhower offered his inaugural address, or when Robert Oppenheimer lit up the night sky in the southwestern wastes, or when Frank Lloyd Wright imagined, and then realized, those flying balconies over a small stream in a mountain valley. The mind to challenge nature, and to push back distance and geographic differences, to heal ancient diseases and to make two blades of grass grow where only one grew before, are fitting companions to the human spirit which when aroused possesses the strength and the courage to wipe away the tears and give opportunity to talent and personality. It is a small planet, this beautiful blue earth of ours, and it is made to be the home of the human family. If we do not blow it up, most of you will live through the first half of the century that is yet to be. I wish you well in it. The future belongs to those who make it; make it yours.
Someone whose poetic vision is clearer than mine has said that memory is the ability to gather roses in winter. This morning, let us call upon our imaginations, and remember the sufferings and the sacrifices of those few who were present at the battle which won for you, and for me, and for our country, the blessings of liberty and independence which we cherish. In our minds and hearts let us for a short few minutes gather roses, dark red roses for their courage, dark red roses for their blood shed in a cause from which we all take profit and patriotic pride.

Other people before us have reached into the vast treasury of memory to find meaning in a confused and sometimes dismaying present. On Nov 12, 1940, when France had fallen to German invaders, and Great Britain stood as the last bastion of the old Europe, on her knees but not on her back, Winston Churchill arose in the narrow well of the House of Commons chamber at Westminster. What he said on that day has meaning for us here today. "History with its flickering lamp stumbles along the trail of the past, trying to reconstruct its scenes, to revive its echoes, and kindle with pale gleams the passion of former days." That is the historian's mandate—to see, to hear, and to feel, what men and women experienced in the past, so that we may know ourselves better, and to understand our own time more fully, because we have in imagination relived a past that once was for the participants the only present they would know. And if the lamp flickers, and we stumble along the path, we stay the course, for all of us desire to know who we are, and where we came from, and out of what roots we grew. Remembering is thus one of the keys to survival. So let us light the lamps of our memories, and reconstruct the scenes and echoes of a significant event that brought us to this present. 200 yrs ago this weekend, at Yorktown peninsula in Virginia, General George Washington accepted the surrender of the last army our British parents sent to this continent in the attempt to compel their erring children to return to the imperial family. It would take another 18 months to conclude the peace treaty, but General Charles Cornwallis' capitulation, in the 4 days beginning on October 17, 1781 with the waving of the white flag from the parapet, marked the effective end of hostilities. It was a dramatic conclusion to a war for independence that began on the 18th of April in 1775, hardly a man is now alive, who remembers that famous day and year. Into the 7th year the war dragged, draining manpower and wealth and stamina. Few people were optimistic enough to think that the weak nation, struggling to be born, could survive much more buffetings like it had endured in those bitter years. Summer soldiers and sunshine patriots were numerous, and the zeal for battle against professional British troops waned with each passing month. Still the indomitable and indispensable Washington held the course, nimbly skipping out of danger when outnumbered, striking fiercely when British commanders blundered into his trap. In the summer of 1781 he still thought of attacking the enemy garrison at New York and on Long Isl, but far to the south Cornwallis' force presented a tempting target. The redcoats were victorious at Camden and Cowpens, but were momentarily checked at Kg's Mtn. Still they came, seemingly invincible, rolling up the southern colonies where loyalists were strong. At Guilford Ct Hse a strong force of Continentals and local militia gave battle--on the night before, Cornwallis slept in a house in Bethania, still standing, just to the north of us--and although his force carried the field, the casualty cost was so high that he went from Guilford to Wilmington to take supplies and reinforcements from the covering navy. From the Cape Fear the army moved northward into Virginia, and to the narrow peninsula between the York and the James rivers, very near the spot where the first permanent English colony built its stockade at Jamestown. Had he known in late September what he would so painfully learn in the next three weeks he would never have remained in so constricted a spot. But he did not know, and in that hangs the tale. Yorktown was on a bluff on the southern side of the York river about 11 miles above its mouth. The river was about two miles wide at that place, but a point of land projected from the opposite bank, reducing its size to about half a mile. Behind the village of Yorktown, about 60 dwellings, there were two deep ravines which almost met at their beginnings. The British fortified the town with a curving line of positions and redoubts, the ruins of these are still visible, having been well preserved as a national shrine. What made Cornwallis' position so rich a prize was the arrival in the Chesapeake of a large French fleet com by Count François-Joseph-Paul de Grasse, which for a crucial three weeks controlled the waterways and prevented British reinforcements or escape by sea. The other determining factor was the presence on the field, by forced marches from New Jersey, of 8000 well-drilled French soldiers, com by General Jean-Batiste de Rochambeau, and another force of about 9000 troops in the Continental line. Today we may read the order of battle, with the names of the regiments and their officers, even of every private soldier on both sides. Washington travelled with a small guard, and travelled rapidly. From the head of the Chesapeake Bay it was 120 miles to his home at Mt. Vernon; more than 6 yrs had passed since he stepped over the doorsill of that handsome building. He covered that distance in two days, which does not
set a record, but gives some idea of his strength in the saddle. He had one day in his home, w/ his wife Martha, and the four little step-grandchildren who were there, before Rochambeau and the French command staff arrived. On Sept 11 they conferred, and within two weeks their armies were converging on the land side of Yorktown, while the French fleet stood downstream to block the river. Yorktown is one of the most decisive battles ever fought upon this continent, yet it was, like Gettysburg, where the commanders would have preferred to fight somewhere else. Cornwallis did not foresee his entrapment, nor the siege of his position; the Royal Navy was supreme upon the seas, so that British troops were always safest when they were within cannon-fire of a covering fleet. But Yorktown was the exception that proved the rule, and which delivered us our liberty. On Sept 27 Washington's general order sent his allied force into siege positions about the British lines. It was a stylized form of warfare that was routine for European armies, but was totally unknown to the Americans. Rochambeau, the French general, and the Baron von Steuben, a Prussian officer who volunteered to assist the Americans, took charge of the operation; they were veterans of the 7-yr's war, which ended in 1763, and in which they did battle against each other. Now, in this topsy-turvy world of professional military specialists, they were allies and tutors to the amateur Americans. Gradually they tightened the siege, digging parallel trenches to get closer to the enemy positions, and on Oct 6 the British were completely encircled, by land & by sea. On Oct 9 the artillery barrage of Yorktown began; General Washington himself lit the fuse to fire the first shot from an American battery on the field. On Oct 14 two key British positions on the allied right were stormed, one by a French unit, the other by an American. Both were taken, after fierce fighting and heavy casualties. They were the focus of the British position, and when taken made Cornwallis' position untenable. He had to make a cruel decision. He could continue the battle, taking losses from the unceasing artillery fire, or he could surrender his force. No longer did he expect relief from the sea. 2000 of his men were on the sick list; Yorktown was a miasmic place and his ammunition was about gone. On both sides the losses in lives were small by the measures of the time. Fewer than a 1000 died in battle, of which about 130 were Americans, 250 were French, and 550 were British. The battle that so profoundly altered the course of world history was mild in cost. But the British commander made his decision. On the morning of the 17th of October a drummer in full military regalia beat the signal for a conference—the word was parley, from the French. Later people noted with awe that it was the 4th anniversary of the other surrender of an entire British army, at Saratoga in N.Y. State, a victory that had brought the French into the war against their hereditary enemies. So deafening were the cannon that no one on the allied side heard the drum, but another appeared beside him, waving a white handkerchief. That ceased all fire, a conference was held, conditions were approved, and on Oct 19, 208 yrs ago this week, the British marched out of their camp, wearing new broadcloth uniforms brilliant in red and white; they stacked their arms in a field south of the town, Cornwallis sent his sword to Washington in chivalric token of surrender—Washington immediately returned it—and the British formed ranks and as the Band played a popular tune of the day, left the field, left the country as soon as they got to New York City. Incredibly, the war was over. The tune the band played on that October afternoon so long ago, was The World Turned Upside Down. Surely it was what the British must have thought. Peace, and the assurance of freedom, meant that the American experiment in republican liberty would have a chance to prove its value. May we gather roses in winter, and remember.

Good evening, and a hearty welcome to the Triad Town Meeting on the Constitution. My name is James Madison, and I am the oldest person in this hall. I was present at the establishment of the republic to which we all then, and now, give honor, allegiance, and support, and I am pleased to share with you here, in this place, the formal celebration of the Old North State's ratification of the Constitution which is its authority to govern. It was on Nov 21, 1789, two months after the Congress approved a Bill of Rights for acceptance by the people in their states, that North Carolina ratified the Constitution and became the 12th State to join the union of the American States. Tonight we shall commemorate that event in a variety of ways. And it is significant that this gathering brings together delegates from the many communities and neighborhoods of the Piedmont Triad region. It is one which has endeared itself to me, for it was in this place that my beloved Dolley, Mrs. Madison, was born and grew to young womanhood. It would please her, I know, to see in this assembly so many intelligent and attractive women. She joins me in spirit as we salute you, and your grand old state, upon the bicentennial of the beginning of a glorious and satisfying wedding of the states in an indivisible union. One part of this celebration shall be a discussion by a panel of authorities of questions that you the delegates may wish to ask. I invite you to pass to me the topics and questions you have about the U.S. Constitution in our day—or yours; the Ushe's have cards for this purpose. Please write your name and your community, along with your question, on the card, and be prepared to hand them in later in the program, as indicated in the order of this Town Meeting. Now, to open our meeting, we are privileged to have with us the Page Vocal Ensemble, of Greensboro, conducted by Sam Doyle. This is the talented group of singers who represented North Carolina at the Bicentennial Festivities in Philadelphia in 1987. Let us welcome them to this meeting.

MUSIC
Thank you, Sam Doyle, and thank you, talented students, for that beautiful music. Next is a very special event of the evening. We are honored to have with us Frank Borden Hanes, a longtime business, civic, and arts leader in the Triad. Frank Borden Hanes is an ardent supporter of the Univ of N.C. his alma mater, and is a trustee of the Morehead Foundation in Chapel Hill. He is a gifted writer; he has won the Sir Walter Award and the Roanoke Chowan Award for the excellence of his writing, and his novel The Fleet Rabble was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in Literature. Frank Hanes, I call you to the stage for a presentation.

PRESENTATION: THE VELVET COAT—DRAMA.
Please join me in applauding the theatrical representation of North Carolina's ratification of the Constitution. Let's welcome the paperboys—Maggie, Constance, Timothy Bloodworth, William Mount, and the newsboy. And please recognize the playwright, Deborah Pullen; please stand, Deborah Pullen. Thank you, for illustrating in dramatic clarity the truth that in the American tradition, government exists to serve the citizens, and it derives its just powers from the consent of the governed. That is what my turbulent and surely tried generation has bequeathed to you; may it be your achievement to preserve, and to enlarge, that liberty without which no human being can be fully human. In your day the issues are different from those my colleagues and associates debated, but they are no less important, and bound up intimately in the continuing tension between freedom and authority. Now, I have received a message for you, by electronic Committee of Correspondence, from the Capitol in Washington, from North Carolina Senator Terry Sanford.

Sen. Sanford's absence, because of the press of business in the Senate this evening, is of course a disappointment to us all. But we are fortunate tonight to have with us three distinguished North Carolinians to discuss today's Constitution. They are Richard Bardolph, Rhoda Billings, and Louis Westerfield. Richard Bardolph has devoted his professional life to the teaching of history at UNC-G and was for almost all of his 36-year tenure the Chairman of the History Department. In 1979 he received the O. Max Gardner Award, the highest faculty honor that is offered by the first state university, the UNC System. He is also an author; one of his books is The Civil Rights Record: Black Americans and the Law, a study of one of the civil rights movements over a two-century span. I call to the podium Distinguished Professor and Historian Richard Bardolph.

BARDOLPH
Thank you, Professor Bardolph. Next it is a distinct privilege to introduce to you Rhoda Billings. Professor Billings has served as a practicing attorney, as a District Court Judge in Forsyth County, as Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court. In 1986 Governor James Martin appointed her Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court. She is now a distinguished Professor of Law at Wake Forest University. Recently she named as her heroes "the people who wrote the Constitution," for which I thank her most kindly. I call to the podium the Distinguished Judge and Teacher Rhoda Billings.

BILLINGS
Thank you, Professor and Judge Billings.

Next, I have the high honor and distinct privilege of introducing Louis Westerfield. Dean Westerfield, a native Mississippian, received the Master of Laws degree from Columbia University and has served as assistant district attorney in New Orleans. He has taught in the law schools of Loyola University in New Orleans, and at the University of Mississippi. An author and scholar, he wrote Louisiana Evidence Law, and other works. In 1986 he was appointed Dean of the North Carolina Central Law School in Durham. I call to the podium the Distinguished Dean, Louis Westerfield.

W ESTERFIELD Thank you, Dean Westerfield.

It is now time to hear from you, the audience, who have submitted questions for the panel of Authorities on the Constitution and what it means today.

QUESTIONS

Now the time has flown into the past, from which I have only briefly emerged for this occasion. I thank you all for the questions you have submitted, for they demonstrate that the Constitution is alive and well in the Piedmont Triad neighborhood of North Carolina. Your presence, and your participation, in tonight's Town Meeting is strong evidence of that fact, evidence that would be readily admissible in any court in the land. Before we adjourn I'd like to speak for the Forsyth and Guilford Commissions on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, to thank the many individuals whose time, and talents, and ideas have made this Town Meeting a success. I cannot name them all, but know, from all our citizens, that you are loved, and appreciated, and are invaluable to this continuing community celebration of our liberties. Thank you all for being here, and filling to the rafters the High Point Theatre.

Now, so that we may meet and talk less formally, it is my pleasure to invite you all to a reception, sponsored by Wachovia Bank and Trust Company, in the adjoining Stage Deli area. If you have enjoyed, and learned from, this Town Meeting, please tell your personal banker about it. And now, will someone from the local arrangements group please come forward with instructions about the reception. INSTRUCTIONS. Thank you all, and a most pleasant Good Night.
Memorial for Joe Fiorani. 18 November 1989.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside still waters; he restoreth my soul. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I fear no evil, for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. Psa 23.

Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever he does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son, and shows him all that he himself is doing; and greater works than these will he show him, that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. Truly, truly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself, and has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life. John 5.

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever. John 6.

Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may also be. I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me. John 14.

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable. For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting? Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor 15: 42-57.

I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as an bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a great voice from the throne saying, Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away. And he who sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said to me, It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water without price from the fountain of the water of life. Rev. 21.

Shall we pray to the God who gave life to the Son, that all who believe may also have life in abundance. O Eternal Father of us all, we come before you this morning to thank you for the life and the faith of our Brother Joe, and to celebrate the resurrection which is now his. Through our sobs and our tears we can still shout the triumph, which we have seen in his life, lived in brotherhood with his fellow men and women, and in humble faith in his work before Thee. In the name of Jesus the Lord of life we pray, Amen.

Addio, cara famiglia Joe:
Mr. Smiley:
Thank you for treating me with your rates.
I don't know when this thing will ever really get information.
"history lesson."

With kindest regards.

P.S.
The write-up of the American should appear in the Saturday...
As you salute the flag of the republic, and drive over the broad land, and enjoy the freedoms
that the people of other countries risk their lives to taste, give thanks to their courage and
their wisdom. On a cold day, two hundred years ago, they acted, and we have benefitted for it.

My name is James Madison. I am older than anyone here, which means that for more years than any
other I have expressed my love for country and my passion for liberty that is ordered by law, and
my concern for a religious freedom that is neither demanded nor forbidden by the authority of
the political state. I base my concern for liberty upon the knowledge that without it the full
life of mankind is not possible. The function of government is to make possible the conditions
in which people may enjoy life, and then liberty, and then the quest for the individual vision of
happiness, unhampered by the interference of any authority outside the conscience and the mind
of man. I know that freedom itself is the source of risks and uncertainties, and threats to com-
fort and serenity that the rule of tyrants might prevent. I was myself president of these United
States at a time of crisis, when the outcome seemed so perilous that many turned coat and ran
away. It was at the beginning of the year 1815, when at the mouth of the Mississippi River the
enemy was at the gates of the continent; in New York state, at the other end of the country, the
largest invading army ever to set boots upon the American soil was marching in apparent triumph.

Another still-fluid force came into the capital city of Washington, and in the president's mansion
the dinner that had been prepared for my family and me. And when I mention my family, I
remember my beloved Dolley. I am grateful to the piedmont region of North Carolina for giving
her birth and nurture. Oh, yes, I have known times of uncertainty. For three weeks that January,
in 1815, I was homeless, I went without rest, not knowing whether you here today would remember
me as the fourth president of the United States, or the last president of the United States.

But it was in the making of the United States Constitution that I take greatest pride. In Phila-
delphia in the summer of 1787 a group of exceptionally talented men met in the same room, and sat
at the same desks, where 11 years before the Declaration of Independence had been approved and
signed. One document, the work of my friend and Virginia neighbor Thomas Jefferson, declared the
goal that would occupy the brains, and brawn, and talents, of my generation; the other, in which
I had myself a minor part to play, was the culmination and completion of that goal. One declared
the purpose of proclaiming liberty throughout the land, while the other established the framework
of law and order, without which liberty cannot long endure. One of them was ratified in the blood
of patriots, shed in battle to make good the declaration of independence; the other was ratified
in calmer scenes of political debate, in the several states, in convention assembled. Within the
year 1788, eleven of the allied states had joined the new union which the Constitution proposed
to make still more perfect than the heat of battle had done in the war against the continued con-
control of the mother country over the affairs of free men upon the American continent. In some of
those states there were complaints that the Constitution contained no bill of rights for the pro-
tection of human liberties from the encroachments of government. I myself felt convinced that a
bill of rights would be but a redundancy, unnecessary under a frame of government that placed the
strongest limitations upon the legislative powers, which are, as all men know, the most fruitful
sources of peril to the liberties of individuals. Among the states whose leaders in 1788 hesita-
ted to venture their newly-won liberty upon the untried waters of a stronger union, was the old
North State. Meeting in Hillsboro in July, 1788, they adopted a resolution that curiously tried
to carry water upon both shoulders; as they put it, "neither to ratify nor reject the constitution
proposed for the government of the United States." They drew up a list of 27 amendments which
must be adopted before they could become part of the Union of the States. Then, a little more
than a year later, and almost two years before the bill of rights was adopted, they changed
course and by a 2 to 1 majority voted to become the 12th state in the union. It was 200 yrs ago
yesterday that it happened. So that we shall remember, come with me in your memories to that
scene. It was in the town of Fayetteville, and in the newly-constructed State House, that North
Carolina became part of the whole nation. They met in an upstairs room overlooking the town
square, a room that was freezing cold even with 5 cast-iron stoves in full flame. There were in
the group the brightest and best of the state's leaders; their names written upon the map of the
state in the counties and towns of North Carolina. Caswell, Person, Jones, Caldwell, McDowell,
and Davie were among those present. Quickly they acted. The friends of the Constitution had done
well their work of organizing for the vote. It was Saturday, November 21, late in the morning,
when the vote was taken. The Constitution was approved, 187 to 82 in the first balloting, and
191 to 74 in the final vote. Their names are all recorded in the records of the convention.

As you salute the flag of the republic, and drive over the broad land, and enjoy the freedoms
that the people of other countries risk their lives to taste, give thanks to their courage and
their wisdom. On a cold day, two hundred years ago, they acted, and we have benefitted for it.

I, James Madison, father of the Constitution, greet you upon this birthday of the union.