

My name is Joseph Grant. I have lived on God's earth for 41 years. Presently, it is near midnight on June 19th, 1775. I have been struck by an intense urge to write on this night, for I have seemingly outlived my 41 years in just the past two days. Until two days ago, I was a Massachusetts farmer. Now I am a soldier. My militiamen and I are traveling from the Battle at Breed's Hill, in which we confidently held our own against the redcoats, to a small patriot outpost in eastern New York. I will attempt to give some of my personal history as well as history of my nation to be, so that one may better understand the life – altering circumstances that I have come upon.

The promise of land and opportunity brought the first settlers to America, which quickly flourished into a land of economic centers and vast farmlands. Jamestown, Virginia was founded in 1607. Twenty – two years later, King Charles I divided the Virginia territory into Virginia and Maryland. Near the same time, the New England territory was developing quickly with figures like John Winthrop and Roger Williams leading the way. In the 1660s, Charles II granted a large plot of land to nobles who turned this vast land into the Carolinas in 1729. Charles also granted land for the foundings of New York in 1664 and New Jersey in 1674. In 1682, William Penn set up a form of governing guidelines for the territory to the south of New York. Puritans had settled the territory, when Penn, a Puritan himself, attained the royal grant to create Pennsylvania. Later, he granted the lower portion of the state, their own assembly, and the portion was renamed to Delaware. To complete the 13 glorious states of America,

Years War (in which our leader George Washington fought gallantly), which drained the country's treasury. Although the Albany Plan of Union, written by the master of the arts and sciences, Thomas Jefferson, failed to bring us all together, we won victory for Britain. This, in turn pulled us together yet, sadly showed the leadership – lacking performance of the redcoats. Despite our victory, the British Parliament began imposing even more vicious restrictions on the colonies. In 1763, for no clear reason, King George III (I prefer to call him the royal scoundrel!) placed the Proclamation of 1763 on America – this called for a halt of westward expansion past the Appalachians. Then, the real limitations manifested. Parliament, and the Prime Minister, George Grenville passed many tax laws to rebuild the English treasury, including The Sugar Act of 1764, the Quartering Act, and the Stamp Act of 1765. After the Stamp Act was passed an actual Congress was formed to protest. This was the first inkling, for me at least, that this struggle was real and in my own backyard. Soon, Charles Townshend took over the job of “Chancellor of the Exchequer” (the condescending, British term for clerk of the treasury) and instituted new laws. The Townshend Acts that he instituted caused me to join my local chapter of the “Sons of Liberty.” Following these acts came the Boston massacre (of which I'm sure you all know much about) as well as the Boston tea party. Yet the last straw came when the port of Boston was shut down in 1774.

And now I am fighting. I have gone from a farmer, to a quiet dissenter, to a vocal protester to a soldier. Yet, I can think of no better way to ease my mind about the future of my nation than to fight for what is right. Life is right, liberty is right and independence is right.