Appendix C: John Adams to Abigail Adams Letter 2, July 3, 1777

The following images were scanned from a letter written by John Adams to his wife, Abigail Adams, on July 3, 1776.

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All these ills together in conjunction would not have disappointed us, if it had not been for a disposition which could not be foreseen, and perhaps could not have been prevented. It was the scheme of the small party among our Troops, a small party, which complained of our elections in the Year of Providence upon us, which we ought to lay to heart.

And on the other hand, the delay of this Declaration to this Time, has many great advantages attached to it. The hope of Reconciliation, which was firmly entertained by Multitudes of sound and well-meaning men, and mistakes, have been gradually and at last totally relinquished. Time has been given for the whole People, maturely to consider, the great Question of Independence, and to express their Judgment, dispose their Heads, and alter their opinions, by disposing it in Newspapers and Pamphlets, by debating it, in open and secret meetings, Committees of Safety and Influence in Town and County Meetings, as well as in private conversations, so that the whole People in every Colony of the 13 States may adopt it, as their own Act. This will secure the winning, and avoid that spirit which might have been occasioned by such a Declaration six Months ago.

But the Day is past. The Second Day of July 1776, will be the most memorable Page in the History of America.
I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by future generations as the great anniversy of Liberty. It ought to be commemorated, as the Day of Dedication by solemn Act of Devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade with Shows, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward For ever more.

You will think me transported with enthusiasm, but I am not. I am well aware of the toil and Blood and Sufferings that it will cost us to maintain this Declaration, and support and defend these States. Yet, through all the gloom I can see the Dawn of rainbow light and glory. I can see that the End is more than with all the Means. And that posterity will triumph in that Day's Transactions even as they would of us. We should see it, which I trust is God willing.