

**Declaration of Independence.** The committee included Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman, Robert Livingston, and **Thomas Jefferson.**

The group chose Jefferson to compose the Declaration. Two reasons for selecting Jefferson were that he was an excellent writer and that he came from Virginia. The members knew that no independence movement could succeed without Virginia's support.

Jefferson immediately went to work. In two weeks, he had prepared most of the Declaration. (See pages 184–188.) On July 2, 1776, Congress considered Lee's resolution again. Despite some opposition, the measure passed. The colonies now considered themselves independent from Great Britain.

## COMPARING *Symbols of Freedom*

### REVOLUTIONARY FLAGS

During the Revolution, Patriot militiamen created elaborate flags to represent their colony and military traditions. Often these flags were carried into battle.

This flag was carried to the Battle of Bunker Hill by Massachusetts militiamen in 1775. The Liberty Tree represented freedom in the colonies.



Regiments from South Carolina adorned their flag with a crescent. Another version had the word "Liberty" stitched in the crescent.



This flag was carried to Boston by Rhode Island militiamen in 1775.



This flag, created in 1775, was adorned with the British Union, as well as 13 red and white stripes.



The North Hampton County Militia adorned its flag with 13 white stars, a blue field, and 13 red and white stripes.



This was the flag of Gadsden, South Carolina's Continental Navy. The snake was a warning to those who would tread on liberty.



### Activity

#### Create a Revolutionary Flag

Create a flag that might have been carried in the Revolution. Use symbols to represent your state or hometown.

**CRITICAL THINKING Make Inferences** Why did some Patriot flags include British symbols? What does that tell you about some colonists' desire for independence?