

Otto's Tales



Today is
PRESIDENTS' DAY!

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Otto's Tales

Today is

PRESIDENTS' DAY!





Ruff Ruff! I'm Otto. Today is Presidents'

Day. What a fun, wild, and wonderful day it's been! My best friend, Dennis, stayed home from school and we went on another big adventure.



"This is our ship," said Dennis, jumping on his bed.

"Can it be our time machine?" I asked.

"Yes, Otto," said Dennis. "We can go back in time and learn about the two important presidents we celebrate on Presidents' Day: George Washington and Abraham Lincoln."

We dressed up like sailors and set sail on the sea.

ZOOM... We traveled back in time to 1773
and landed in America when it was a group of **colonies**.



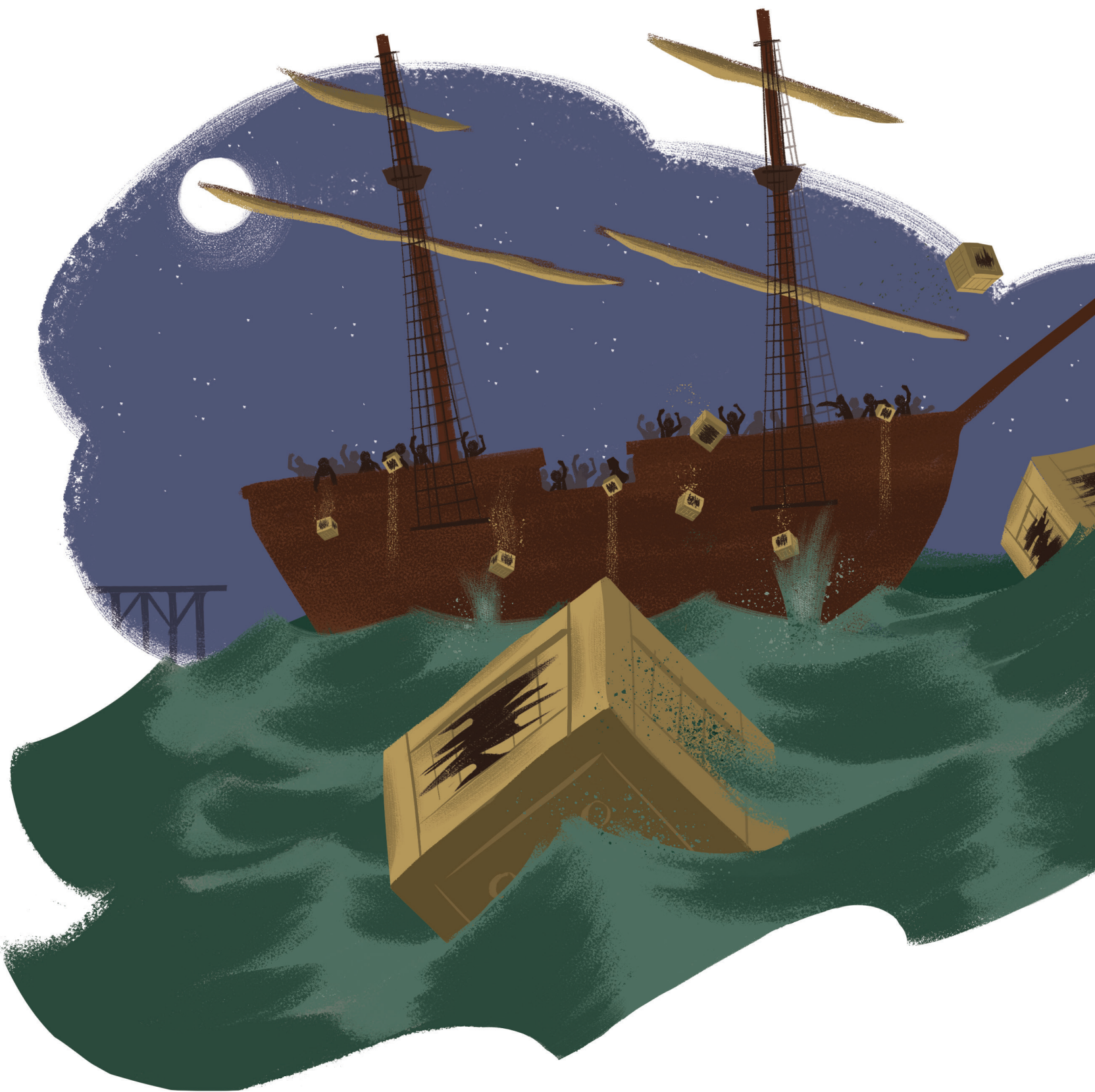
Great Britain had powerful George as its king.
He controlled our new land; many thought he was mean.



Dennis shouted, "**King George** does not want us to be free, taxing our goods and our favorite drink—**tea!**"



People asked King George to tend to their needs,
but he refused to listen and ignored all their pleas.



So, one night in **Boston**, colonists threw chests of British tea one after another, into the cold and dark sea.



Tensions were high, so Dennis decided to leave.
I barked, “Not so fast, Dennis! Wait for me, please!”

Then **ZOOM...**we sailed on to the year 1776,
when 56 men signed the **Declaration of Independence.**





Dennis and I joined all the people.

Together we exclaimed, "All men are created equal!"



King George was so mad, it made him seethe!

He sent men in red coats to demand, "YOU SHALL NOT LEAVE!"

United we stood, and **George Washington** would lead.
Through the **Revolutionary War**, we fought to be freed.



When it looked like American freedom would disappear from history,
Washington crossed the Delaware and won a great victory.

When the war was done, we Americans had won.
But who would lead our new nation with the British all gone?
The people said, "Washington, you should be our king."
But Washington had a different vision, it seemed.





He proclaimed, "Above others, I refuse to be elevated.
I want our people to stay liberated."

The United States of America, for its leaders, will vote.
It will be a republic with no kings or red coats.

Saluting President Washington, we bid him farewell.
Our journey continued, with more stories to tell.



ZOOM... We traveled to 1861, riding aboard a steam train.

"Dennis," I asked, "why are people shackled in chains?"

It was America—Land of the Free,
except for black **slaves**, who wished they could flee.

Dennis said sadly, "How could this be?"



We then met a tall and wise, skinny man.
He introduced himself kindly, "Hello, I'm Abraham."
"It's **President Lincoln!**" Dennis declared.
His hat was so tall, I kind of got scared.





"Don't be frightened, my friends," assured Honest Abe,
"I want to do good. Will you come to my aid?"

The South struck **Fort Sumter**! So began the **Civil War**.

But Lincoln had courage. He said, "Our country must endure."

North against South, a war against slavery.

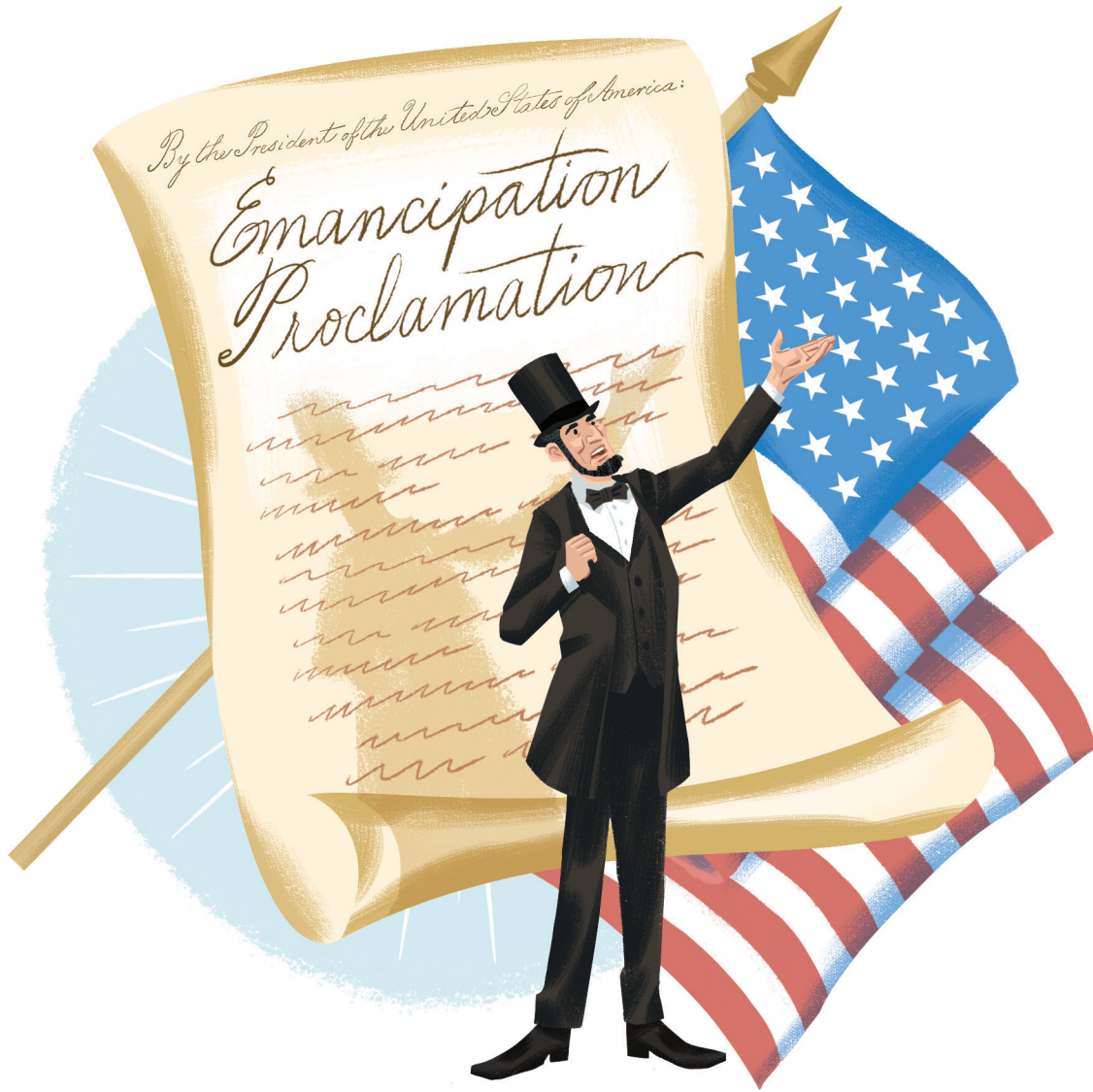
Freedom could not be won without many soldiers' bravery.





We helped Lincoln by chanting, "Slaves Must Be Freed!"
It was a perilous time for our country, indeed.

The **Emancipation Proclamation** was issued in 1862.
Freeing all of the slaves, it promised to do.
“Four score and seven years ago,” Lincoln later did say.
We remember his **Gettysburg Address** to this day.



We hopped on our train again, to the end of the war.
It was 1865, and battles were no more.
The North had won, and the states reunited.
Slavery was over, and Lincoln was delighted.



We thanked our new friend, Abe, for being so brave.
We said, "We're proud of America, our country you saved."
We hopped onto our train and then again ***ZOOM...***
Chug-chug-chugged back to Dennis's room.

“That was my favorite adventure yet!” I barked.

“You say that every time, Otto.”

“Well, I never knew that George Washington and Abraham Lincoln were so important.”





“That’s true,” said Dennis. “President Washington helped our country win its freedom.”

“And President Lincoln made sure everyone in America got to be free,” I replied.



“America didn’t always get it right,” Dennis explained. “It’s not perfect. There are lots of sad moments in our history, but there are also lots of amazing moments too, and we’ve always tried to make things better. That makes me proud to be American.”



"Me too!" I barked.

"Happy Presidents' Day!" shouted Dennis.

"Happy Presidents' Day!"

Ruff Ruff!"



We Love Our History

Colonies: New settlements established by people from a different country. The American colonists, for example, came mostly from England, travelled across the Atlantic Ocean, and established new settlements in America. Those settlements were called “colonies.”

Great Britain: An island nation off the coast of Europe made up of the kingdoms of England, Wales, and Scotland. It established colonies in North America that eventually became the United States.

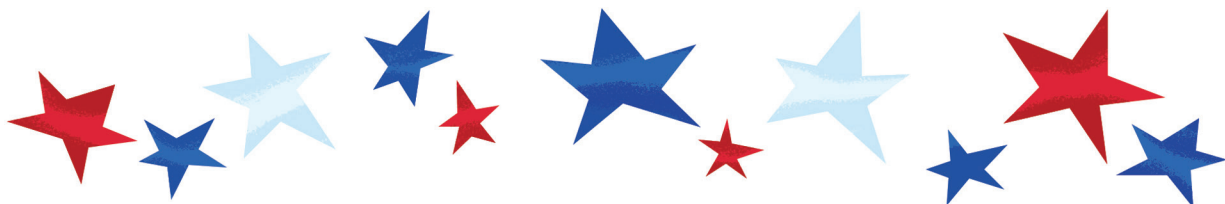
King George: The King of Great Britain during the American Revolution. His full name was George III (“the Third”), because he was the third British king to have the name “George.” He mistreated the colonies, but eventually recognized the United States as a new nation after the colonies won the War of Independence.

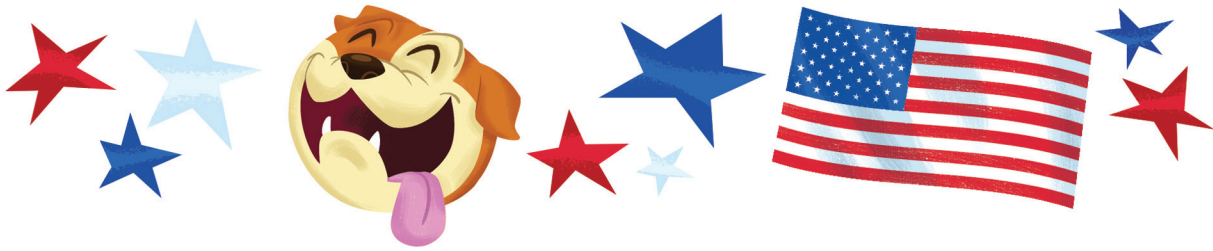
Tea: A drink created by boiling the leaves of the tea plant in hot water. It was extremely popular in both Great Britain and the American colonies!

Boston: An American city in the state of Massachusetts (one of the original colonies). It played an important role in the early days of the American Revolution. It was founded in 1630 by Puritan settlers, and was the home of famous Founding Fathers like John and Sam Adams.

Declaration of Independence: The document written by the Founders and approved by Congress on July 4, 1776. It declared the United States was independent of Great Britain, and explained how King George III had oppressed the colonies. It also explained American political principles. It famously said: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

George Washington: The Commander-in-Chief of American armies in the Revolutionary War, and later the 1st President of the United States, from 1789-1797. He was one of the richest men in the colonies, but he risked it all to help America be free! He was the most widely admired and beloved person in early America. The people wanted him to be a new king, but he said “no.” There is a big monument to him in Washington, D.C.





Revolutionary War: The war of the American colonies against Great Britain. The war began because the British mistreated the colonists. The colonies won and established the United States as a new nation. It is also known as America's War of Independence.

Slaves: Human beings unjustly held against their will to work for other people. Whatever their labor earned went to those who claimed to “own” them. Slavery existed in every country in the world throughout history, and it was an accepted practice in America’s South for hundreds of years. But America was one of the first places in the history of the world to put an end to slavery.

President Lincoln: Abraham Lincoln was the 16th President of the United States, from 1861-1865. He guided our nation through the Civil War and helped free the slaves. Like President Washington, Abraham Lincoln also has a big monument honoring him in Washington, D.C.

Fort Sumter: A U.S. military site located on an island near Charleston, South Carolina. The South attacked the site on April 12, 1861, which marked the beginning of the Civil War.

Civil War: The war between the Northern and Southern parts of the United States that took place from 1861-1865. The South (also known as the Confederate States of America, or the Confederacy) wanted to create its own country to keep slavery going. The North (also known as the Union) believed in keeping America together, but wanted slavery to come to an end. The North won, and slavery was abolished.

Emancipation Proclamation: The document signed by President Lincoln during the Civil War that declared all the slaves in the states that had seceded from the Union to be forever free.

Gettysburg Address: A famous speech by President Lincoln at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, after the Battle of Gettysburg—one of the biggest battles of the Civil War. The North won, but at a heavy price. President Lincoln’s speech honored the soldiers who gave their lives to fight for America.



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**See you in
our *next* adventure!**

- Dennis and Otto

ABOUT

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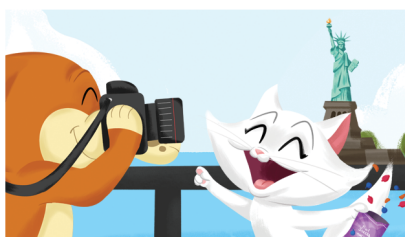
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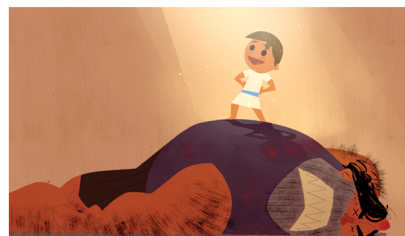
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