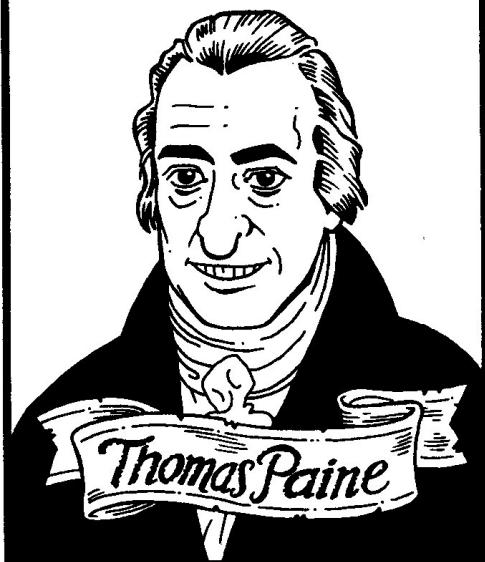


SOME PEOPLE HAVE A SURNAME WHICH DESCRIBES THEM APTLY. SUCH A MAN WAS--



BORN IN ENGLAND IN 1737, PAINE RECEIVED A MEAGER EDUCATION, AND BY AGE 13 WENT TO WORK AT HIS FATHER'S CORSET SHOP. IT DIDN'T WORK OUT.



HE TRIED A NUMBER OF CAREERS WITH SIMILAR RESULTS.



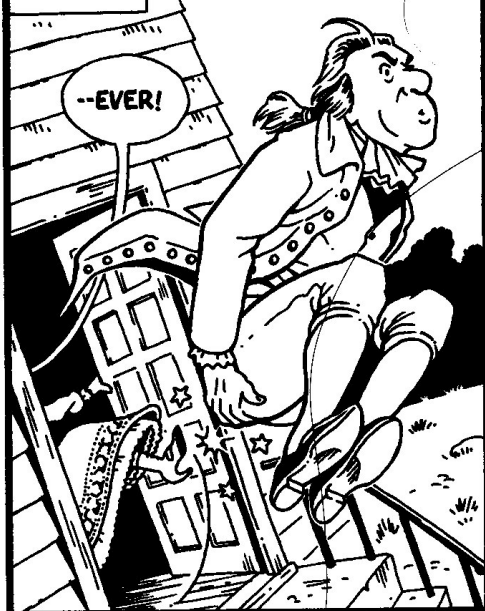
PAINE LOST A GOOD JOB IN BRITAIN'S EXCISE OFFICE WHEN HE PUBLISHED A PAMPHLET DECRYING GOVERNMENT CORRUPTION AND DEMANDING HIGHER PAY.



PAINE GOT MARRIED--



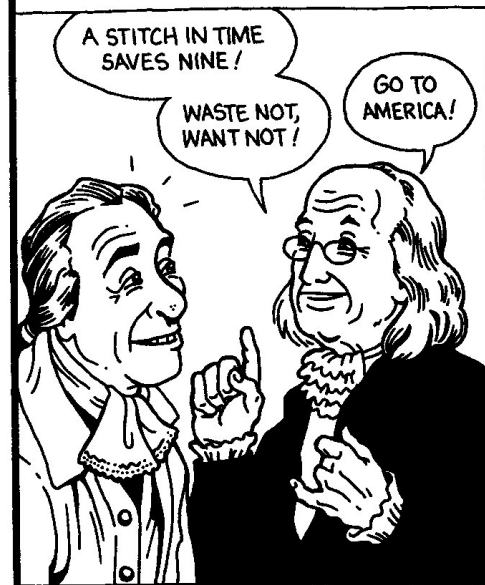
--TWICE.



IN 1772, JUST WHEN HE FELT UTTERLY UNWANTED--



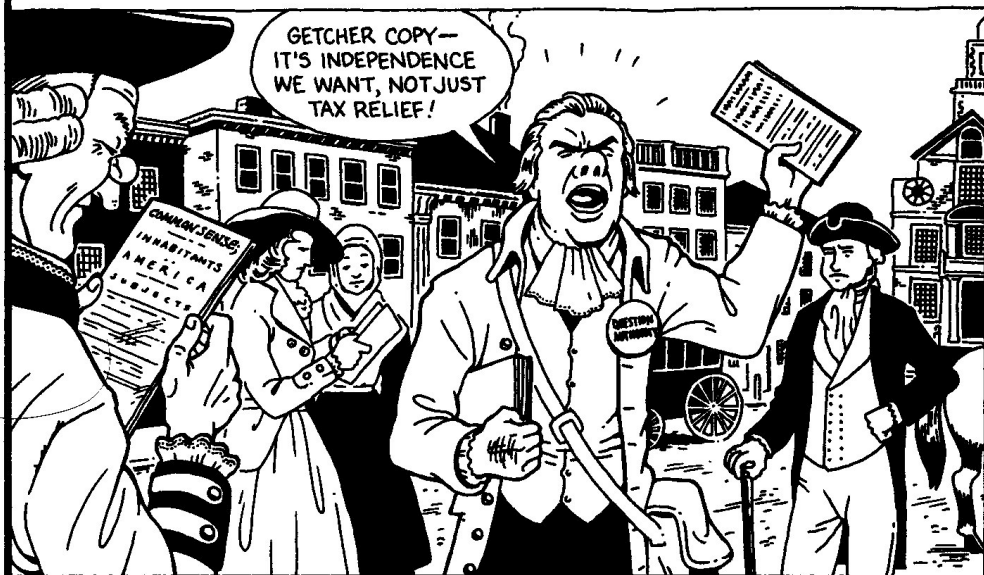
--HE RAN INTO BEN FRANKLIN, WHO GAVE HIM ADVICE.



PAINE RELOCATED TO PHILADELPHIA IN 1774 — THE PERFECT PLACE FOR A POLITICALLY CHARGED WRITER TO MAKE HIS MARK.



HIS PAMPHLET "COMMON SENSE" SOLD MORE THAN 500,000 COPIES IN A FEW MONTHS AND PAVED THE WAY FOR THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.



PAINE WROTE INFLUENTIAL PAMPHLETS THROUGHOUT THE WAR.



IN 1777, CONGRESS APPOINTED PAINE SECRETARY TO THE COMMITTEE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.



--BUT HE ACCIDENTALLY QUOTED FROM SECRET DOCUMENTS WHEN PRESENTING HIS EVIDENCE.



FOR THIS INDISCRETION, HE WAS SUMMARILY DISCHARGED.

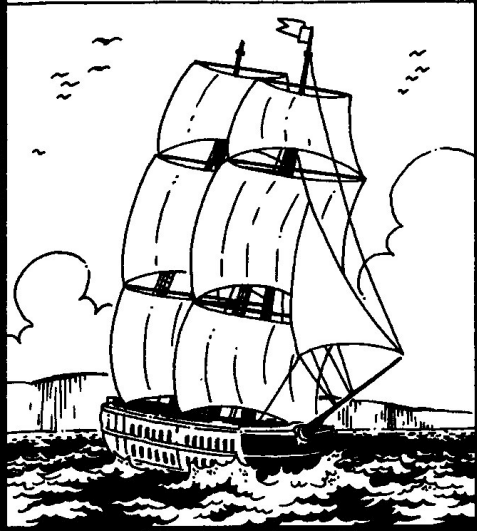
AS THE REVOLUTION ENDED, PAINE WAS BROKE. HE HAD SOLD HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PAMPHLETS, BUT SO CHEAPLY THAT HE HAD MADE NO MONEY FROM THEM.



PAINE'S PETITION TO CONGRESS FOR A PENSION WAS BURIED BY HIS ENEMIES.



PAINE WAS EVENTUALLY VOTED £500 AND WAS OFFERED SOME FARMLAND IN NEW YORK, BUT IN 1787 HE OPTED INSTEAD TO SAIL TO ENGLAND.



HE BECAME ENTRANCED WITH THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, AND PRODUCED A RADICAL DEFENSE OF IT ENTITLED "THE RIGHTS OF MAN."



THE BOOK WAS A SENSATION, BUT BRITISH AUTHORITIES CONSIDERED IT A CALL TO REVOLUTION. A WARRANT WAS ISSUED FOR PAINE'S ARREST.



BUT PAINE WAS ALREADY ON HIS WAY TO FRANCE.



AS AN ELECTED MEMBER OF THE FRENCH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, PAINE ARGUED AGAINST THE REIGN OF TERROR--



--WHICH GOT HIM PUT IN JAIL.



WHILE IN PRISON, PAINE'S *AGE OF REASON* WAS PUBLISHED. ITS CRITIQUE OF ORGANIZED RELIGION CAUSED HIM TO BE CALLED AN ATHEIST.



AFTER HIS RELEASE FROM PRISON, PAINE RETURNED BRIEFLY TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, AND THEN WENT BACK TO AMERICA IN 1802.





BUT WHEN PAINE RETURNED TO THE U.S., IT WAS NOT TO A WARM WELCOME. THERE WAS HIS SUPPOSED ATHEISM, AS WELL AS HIS VIRULENT ATTACKS ON GEORGE WASHINGTON.



NO LONGER RESPECTED AS A PATRIOT, HE WAS NOW CALLED THE WORLD'S GREATEST INFIDEL. HE BEGAN DRINKING HEAVILY --



--AND RARELY BATHED OR CHANGED HIS CLOTHES. HE CONTINUED TO WRITE, BUT NO ONE WAS INTERESTED.



IN 1806, WHILE LIVING IN A CHEAP ROOMING HOUSE, PAINE HAD A STROKE AND FELL DOWN A FLIGHT OF STAIRS.



AFTER THAT, PAINE REQUIRED CONSTANT CARE. NEVERTHELESS, HE MANAGED TO GET KICKED OUT OF EVERY ROOMING HOUSE HE STAYED IN, USUALLY AFTER OFFENDING THE OWNER.



PAINE DIED IN 1809. HE HAD EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO BE BURIED IN A QUAKER CEMETERY, BUT THE QUAKERS REFUSED.



AN ENGLISH ADMIRER TOOK PAINE'S BONES BACK TO ENGLAND, HOPING TO BUILD A MONUMENT OVER THEM. THE PLAN FELL THROUGH, AND THE BONES WERE SOLD TO A FURNITURE DEALER AT AUCTION.

