Freedom 250

Spirit of 76

★ AT FREEDOM PLAZA ★

HONORING THE HEROES AND MARTYRS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

A STATUARY EXHIBITION

Caesar Rodney & 12 Soldiers of the Revolution

Spirit of Liberty

Prison Ship Martyrs Monument

Dedicated on June 30,2026

1325 PENNSYLVANIA AVE NW WASHINGTON, DC 20004



CAESAR RODNEY & 12 SOLDIERS OF THE REVOLUTION

As the United States approaches its 250th anniversary, Americans are taking time to reflect on the individuals whose courage and determination shaped the nation's earliest moments. Among them is Caesar Rodney, a Delaware statesman whose legendary ride on July 1–2, 1776, became a decisive turning point in our nation's quest for independence.

Rodney's journey has long stood as a symbol of personal sacrifice in service to the ideals of liberty. Gravely ill with a long-standing cancerous condition affecting his face and jaw that caused him chronic pain, Rodney received urgent word that Delaware's vote for independence was deadlocked. Knowing the gravity of the moment, he mounted his horse and rode nearly 80 miles through darkness, rain, and a violent storm to reach Philadelphia. His arrival broke the tie, allowing Delaware to cast its vote in favor of independence on July 2, helping to secure the adoption of the Declaration of Independence.

The statue of Caesar Rodney commemorates not only this dramatic ride but also his broader contributions as a colonial leader, military officer, and public servant. Throughout his career, Rodney worked to balance the challenges of a divided colony, the demands of wartime leadership, and the emerging ideals that would define a new nation.

As Americans visit historic and cultural sites across the country, Rodney's story invites reflection on the many individuals, well-known and lesser-known, whose efforts helped build the United States. By exploring these narratives in full, including their triumphs and complexities, visitors gain a deeper understanding of the nation's ongoing journey toward a more perfect union.

Rodney's legacy endures as a reminder that the path to independence relied on acts of extraordinary resolve from ordinary people. His ride is one chapter in a much larger story, but it continues to inspire all who seek to understand the origins of American freedom.

THIS STATUE WAS SCULPTED BY JAMES EDWARD KELLY.
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ERIC ARNELL.





1

SIMON KNOWLES

Knowles enlisted in the Continental Army at the age of 15 and served throughout the entire American Revolution. Knowles fought in the Battle of Bunker Hill, crossed the Delaware with General George Washington, saw combat at Trenton, Princeton, and Saratoga, and endured the bitter winter at Valley Forge. He received an honorable discharge under Washington at Newburgh in 1783. After the war, Knowles returned to a modest civilian life as a farmer. His estate was modest, comprising a sword from his father and a walking cane, but his record is enduring.

THIS STATUE WAS SCULPTED BY ATELIER MISSOR.
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ERIC ARNELL.





2

CAESAR GLOVER

Glover was eight years old in 1750, when he was enslaved in Africa and sold in Massachusetts. At the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, he enlisted in John Glover's Marblehead Men of Massachusetts. He participated in the unit's heroic actions, including the miraculous rescue of General George Washington's army from Brooklyn Heights, and in moving the Continental Army across the icy Delaware on Christmas Day. Glover served three years, and obtained his freedom after the war.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ERIC ARNELL.





3

JOSEPH WARREN

A Boston physician and patriot leader, Warren sent Paul Revere on his famous midnight ride to warn of advancing British troops. In June 1775, Congress commissioned him a major general, but upon arriving at the Battle of Bunker Hill, Warren refused to outrank the officers already in command. He instead chose to fight as a private in the ranks. He fought heroically, but was shot and killed by British soldiers, becoming one of the first martyrs of the American Revolution.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ERIC ARNELL.





4

JUDE HALL

Hall escaped from slavery and joined the 3RD New Hampshire Regiment in May 1775. He fought at the Battle of Bunker Hill, where he was thrown headlong after a cannonball struck the ground near him. He fought at Ticonderoga, Trenton, Hubbardton, Saratoga, and Monmouth. At Monmouth, he earned the nickname "Old Rock" for his strength and heroism. Hall served until peace was secured in 1783.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ERIC ARNELL.





5

JOHN PETER GABRIEL MUHLENBERG

As a Christian pastor, Muhlenberg raised troops to fight the British at the request of General George Washington. He reportedly preached at his church: "there is a time to preach and a time to fight, and now is the time to fight!" 300 men enlisted as a result of his efforts. He fought in many major battles, suffered through the winter at Valley Forge, and helped win the Battle of Yorktown. After the war, he was elected to the First Congress and helped pass the Bill of Rights.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ERIC ARNELL.





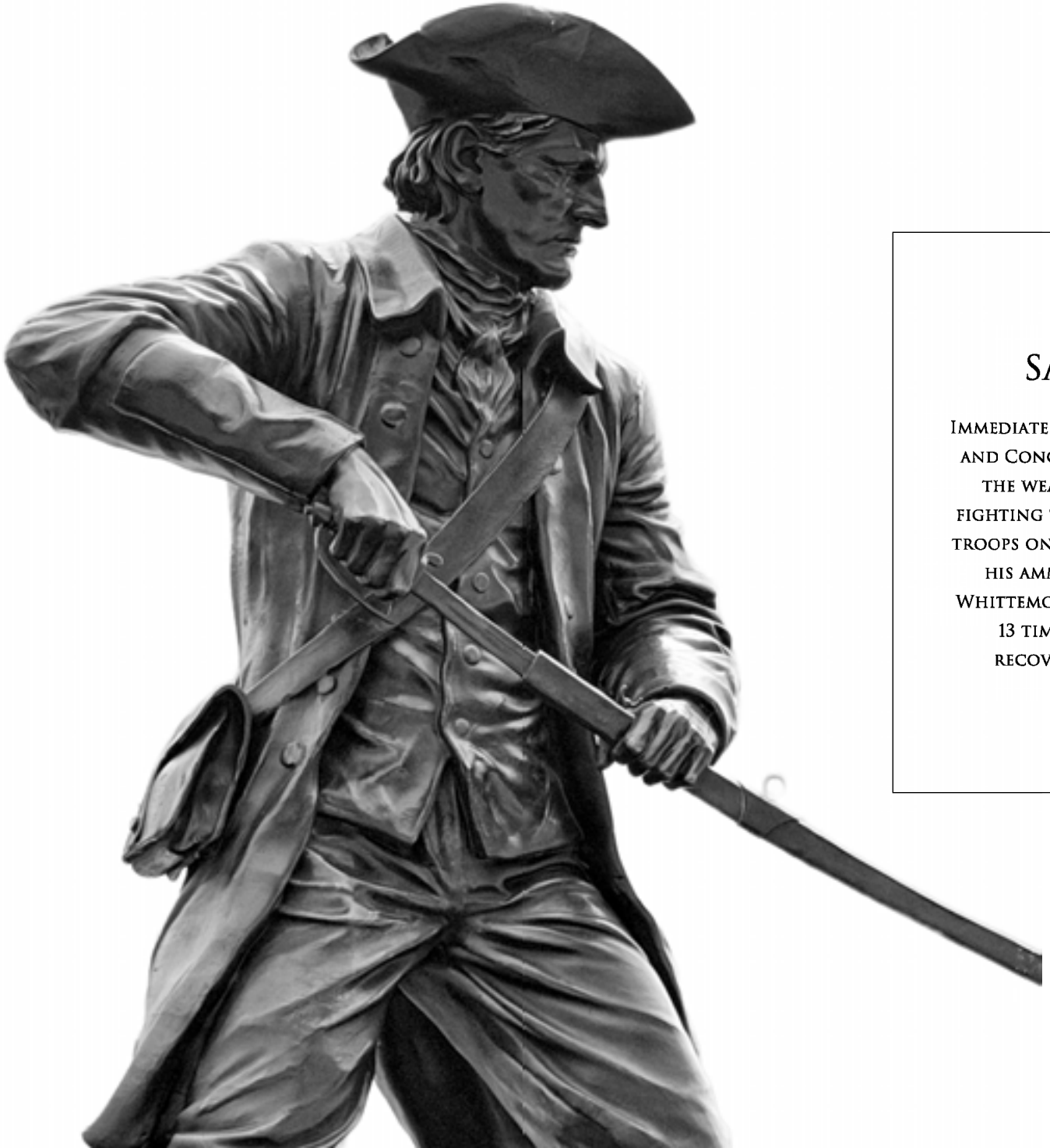
6

JAMES ARMISTEAD LAFAYETTE

Born into slavery, James was one of America's first double agents. He infiltrated the headquarters of both British General Cornwallis and traitor Benedict Arnold, and posing as a runaway slave, fed them false information. He also sent true reports back to Generals Washington and Lafayette, helping them win the Battle of Yorktown. After the war, at the urging of Lafayette, the Virginia legislature granted James his freedom. James adopted the surname "Lafayette," built a farm, and raised a family.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ERIC ARNELL.





7

SAMUEL WHITTEMORE

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE BRITISH ASSAULT ON LEXINGTON AND CONCORD, THE 78-YEAR-OLD RETIRED VETERAN GRABBED THE WEAPONS HE STILL HAD FROM HIS MILITARY SERVICE FIGHTING THE FRENCH AND INDIANS, AND ATTACKED BRITISH TROOPS ON HIS OWN, KILLING AND WOUNDING SEVERAL. WITH HIS AMMUNITION OUT, THE BRITISH TURNED AND SHOT WHITTEMORE POINT-BLANK IN THE FACE AND BAYONETED HIM 13 TIMES, LEAVING HIM FOR DEAD. BUT WHITTEMORE RECOVERED AND LIVED ANOTHER 18 YEARS, TO AGE 96.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ERIC ARNELL.





8

JACK SISSON

Born into slavery, Sisson volunteered to join a daring nighttime raid in Newport, Rhode Island to capture British General Richard Prescott. Sisson steered the leading boat in the raid and broke down the British general's door. The raid succeeded without a shot fired. Sisson later joined the First Rhode Island Regiment, which included black, white, and American Indian soldiers. He fought in the battles of Rhode Island and Yorktown. After the war, he returned to Plymouth, Massachusetts.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ERIC ARNELL.





9

JAMES CALDWELL

As a chaplain in the Continental Army, Caldwell was known to preach on Sundays with pistols on his pulpit. Caldwell became legendary in the Battle of Springfield, after soldiers ran out of paper "wadding" needed to load cannons. For wadding, he gave them hymnals written by Reverend Isaac Watts, saying, "Give 'em Watts, boys!" British soldiers murdered his wife, but Caldwell only fought harder. He was killed in 1780 in a suspected British plot.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ERIC ARNELL.





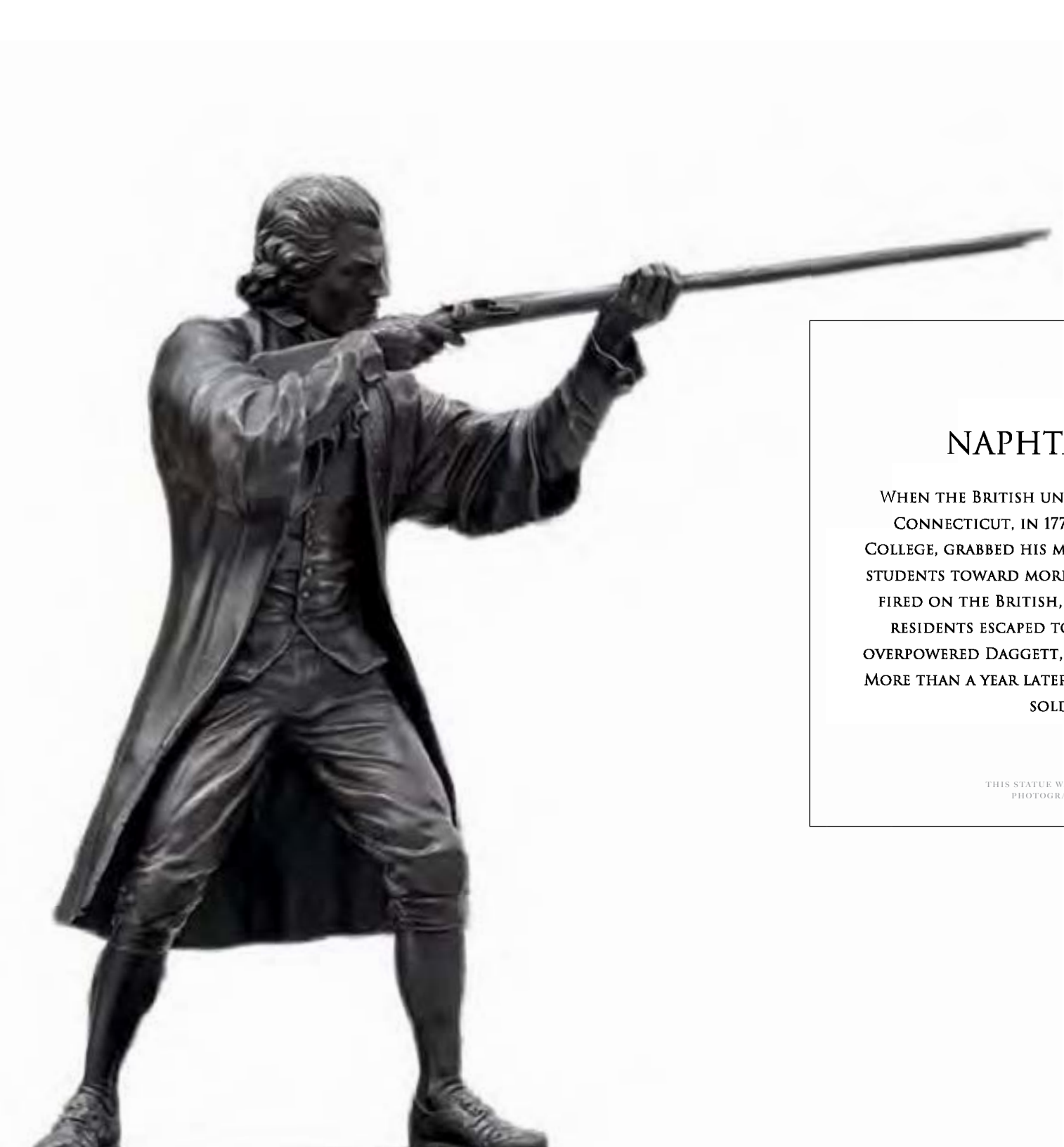
10

PETER SALEM

Born into slavery and emancipated in early 1775 at the age of 24, Salem enlisted in a local Massachusetts militia and fought in the first battles of the Revolutionary War, at Lexington and Concord. Salem also fought at the Battle of Bunker Hill, where many credited him with firing the shot that killed British Major John Pitcairn. He also fought at Harlem Heights, Trenton, Saratoga, Monmouth, and Stony Point. In 1780, Salem returned to Massachusetts, earning a living weaving chair seats and baskets.

THIS STATUE WAS SCULPTED BY ATELIER MISSOR.
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ERIC ARNELL.





11

NAPHTALI DAGGETT

When the British unexpectedly attacked New Haven, Connecticut, in 1779, Daggett, a professor at Yale College, grabbed his musket and advanced with 100 Yale students toward more than 2,000 British soldiers. They fired on the British, delaying them until New Haven residents escaped to safety. The British eventually overpowered Daggett, and tortured him with bayonets. More than a year later, he died of his wounds, a citizen soldier to the end.

THIS STATUE WAS SCULPTED BY ATELIER MISSOR.
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ERIC ARNELL.





12

SALEM POOR

Born enslaved, Poor purchased his freedom before the war. He is remembered for his heroism at the Battle of Bunker Hill, which was so exceptional that 14 officers signed a petition requesting that Congress grant Salem an award for his actions, stating that he, an enlisted man, "behaved like an experienced officer" and "a brave and gallant soldier." Poor later fought at White Plains, Saratoga, and Monmouth, and endured the winter at Valley Forge. Poor resided in Boston after the war.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ERIC ARNELL.





Spirit of Liberty

"The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the Republican model of Government, are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally staked, on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people."

This statue was sculpted by Mathew Taylor.
Photography by Peter Eric Arnell.





The Prison Ship Martyrs

This monument honors the memory of the Prison Ship Martyrs—American Patriots aboard British Prison ships who endured inhumanable suffering and Death.

In the War of Independence, more than 200,000 Americans served in the Continental Army and more than 100,000 in state and Local militias. Nearly 7,000 were killed in Action. We commemorate the more than 11,500 Americans held prisoner aboard British ships in conditions of deprivation and disease. More Americans died on these prison Ships than in all of the war's battles. Many prisoners willingly endured captivity rather Than Renounce the patriot Cause. Their sacrifice Remains one of the most enduring chapters of the American Revolution.

THIS RELIEF PANEL WERE SCULPTED BY MATHEW TAYLOR.
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ERIC ARNELL.



