Born in England, Thomas, never Tom, arrived in the United States at age 37. In his pocket was a letter of introduction from Benjamin Franklin.
Thomas Paine was a prolific writer and his pamphlet, Common Sense, ignited people into action toward the Revolutionary War in a way no other leader had been able to.
He did not hold back his opinions on various religions writing, "All national institutions of churches, whether Jewish, Christian or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions, set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit." Paine was a deist but not a christian. For this, he was hated by John Adams and denounced by his fellow founding fathers. Some of his radical ideas also included social security for the poor and elderly, abolition of slavery, and universal basic income.

Disparaged by his enemies, condemned, outlawed and incarcerated for making his beliefs public, there were only 6 people who attended his funeral. Even the Quakers would not allow him to be buried in their graveyard. On his deathbed, Paine was asked if he believed that Jesus Christ was the son of God. Paine's reply, and last words were, "I have no wish to believe on that subject."

Thomas Paine is admired for his incredible writings as well as his courage. Standing up so publicly for what he believed cost him nearly everything but even at the end of his life, with nothing left to lose, he stood by his convictions.

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My Sweet Valentine

