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**JANUARY** is the first month in the modern calendar and has 31 days. Although the days have begun to grow longer by this point during the year, the temperature in the Northern Hemisphere continues to fall, making January one of the coldest, most oppressive months of the year. In 1853 the Russian emperor Nicholas I said, “Russia has two generals in whom she can confide—January and February,” referring to the brutal winter months which have frequently defended the country against invaders. The name (*Januarius* in Latin) is derived from the two-faced Roman god Janus, who is simultaneously looking forward and backward. Some scholars have claimed that the name Janus is from the Latin *ianua*, meaning *door*, while others have explained it as the mascu-

line form of Diana, which would be Dianus or Ianus.

There are many conflicting theories about Janus and his role in the Roman religion. He apparently figured prominently as the god of all beginnings, watching over gates and doorways and presiding over the first hour of the day, the first day of the month, and the first month of the year. His name was invoked at the start of important undertakings, perhaps with the idea that his intervention as the “janitor” of all avenues would speed prayers directly to the immortals. Janus was also entitled Consivius, or sower, in reference to his role as the beginner or originator of agriculture. As the animistic spirit of doorways (*ianuae*) and arches (*iani*), Janus guarded the numerous ceremonial gateways in Rome. These freestanding structures—such as the *Ianus geminus*, the arcade or covered passage facing east and west and located at the northeast end of the Roman Forum—were used for noteworthy entrances and exits on state occasions, and for troops marching to and returning from battle.

The early Romans originally began the calendar year with Martius (see March), until Numa Pompilius (715–673 B.C.), as is supposed, decreed that two new months should be added at the end of the 10 previous ones. He called the first of these additions Januarius, in honor of Janus. In 153 B.C. the Roman state proclaimed January 1 to be New Year’s Day, thus turning the 11th month, Januarius, into the first month of the year. After the fall of the Roman Empire and throughout the Middle Ages, however, political fragmentation, meager communications, and the hostility of the Catholic Church to pagan traditions resulted in much diversity in the marking of the new year. Finally, in 1582 Pope Gregory XIII instituted a calendar that began on January 1, an innovation that over the next 170 years was gradually accepted by Protestants as well.

The Anglo-Saxons called January Wulf-monath in allusion to the hunger of the wolves, which made them bold enough at that time of year to leave the forests and enter the villages in search of food. The name Aefter-Yule was also used to designate the month after the great feast of Christmas. Charlemagne, the early medieval Frankish emperor, appropriately called January Wintarmanoth or Wintermonth. The Native Americans knew the month as Snow Moon, while the French Revolutionary calendar similarly designated the period from late December to early January as Nivôse (snowy).

In ancient and modern times, particular stones have been connected with the various months. The lucky gem or birthstone often associated with January is the garnet, which symbolizes constancy.

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### Japanese New Year

The Japanese New Year celebration is a

three-day-long holiday known as Shogatsu Sanganichi. The start of the new year has a special meaning for the Japanese, for it symbolizes the birth of their nation, in mythological time, as well as a new beginning in the chronological calendar. On this day, they try to start anew, finishing payment of their

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debts and completing projects rather than carrying them over to the following year. It is a time for families to come together and spend time visiting shrines, watching holiday programs, or playing games. Many families go on vacation, taking advantage of the extended time off from work. The celebration is filled with traditional observances that are believed to ensure a prosperous and happy future.

One important custom practiced at this time is *Susuharai*, the cleaning of the house. Cleaning the house thoroughly is thought to purify the home spiritually and physically of any stains remaining from the previous year, thereby preparing it for the upcoming year. To encourage good luck, pine decorations called *Kadomatsu* are placed on either side of the entrance to the home, and a *Shimenawa*, or sacred rope, is hung from above the doorway. Strips of zig-zag paper are attached to the rope, which is made of straw, to ward off evil spirits.

On New Year's Eve, families stay up until midnight to hear the bells of the Buddhist temples, which toll 108 times, cleansing people of 108 sins. New Year's Day begins with people presenting offerings to household gods and making resolutions for the upcoming year. Although the Japanese visit shrines throughout the year, the First Visit, or *Hatsumairi*, on New Year's Day is particularly important. On this visit, they are supposed to pray for a prosperous and happy year, and special charms are issued at local shrines to secure the worshipers' happiness. Sending cards to friends and relatives is also a popular custom. On New Year's Day, the post office delivers bundles of cards to each house. Visiting friends and family on the new year is also an important tradition called *Nenshi*.

The holiday season, which extends beyond the official conclusion of New Year festivities on January 3, is an especially joyous time for children, who receive gifts and money, play special games, and are allowed to wear their nicest clothes. A popular card game played during the holiday is known as *Karuta*, in which cards with pictures or words are spread out. As the reader recites the first part of a poem, the other players scramble to find the card holding the last piece of it. Girls like to play *Hane-tsuki*, a game otherwise known as *battledore* or *shuttlecock*, and the strong winds around this time of year are ideal for flying kites.

Special dishes cooked for the holiday are an important tradition as well. Since most of the stores are closed during the festivities, rice and vegetables, which keep well, are very important in the creation of meals. One important dish is *Omochi*—steamed rice, pounded and shaped into cakes, and then either grilled and eaten or put into soup.

There are many other rituals and customs that accompany the New Year celebrations. For instance, on January 2 storekeepers celebrate *Hatsuni*, a ceremony for the arrival and stocking of the year's first merchandise. On January 2, *Kaizome*, the year's first calligraphic writing done with a brush, is also celebrated. On the third day of the holiday, *Gagaku*, special dances and music are performed at the Imperial Court in Tokyo.

## Act of Union Between Great Britain and Ireland Creates the United Kingdom

The Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland went into effect on January 1, 1801, joining the two nations into a single kingdom. Among other stipulations, Dublin's parliament was abolished and Ireland was represented in Westminster; the Anglican Church became the official church of Ireland; and Catholics were prohibited from holding public office. The union took place in the wake of the French declaration of war on England in 1793. While Irish Protestants wanted to remain allies with England, Irish Catholics admired France's revolutionary ideals of liberty, equality, fraternity, and democracy. The Catholics wanted emancipation from Anglican persecution, to break their ties with England, and to unite the country. Because the Protestants feared that Irish Catholics would unite with the French and create an independent Ireland accessible to England's enemies, the Protestants pushed for an Act of Union in an attempt to forever unite Ireland and Great Britain.

## Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* Is Published

The book *Frankenstein; or the Modern Prometheus*, the "hideous progeny" of 19-year-old Mary Shelley, was published on this day in 1818. It was the product of an alleged bet between Mary and the English poets Lord

Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley, her husband. Not only did Mary win the bet—to write a ghost story—made during one particularly rainy summer in Switzerland in 1816, but the story she produced has become a classic of Gothic literature and one of the most famous works in the English language. By the end of the 20th century, her story about a brilliant but overly ambitious scientist named Victor Frankenstein, who steals thunder from the gods by restoring life to a dead human being, had inspired numerous film and television adaptations and become ingrained in Western culture. Victor’s Promethean endeavor in “giving birth” to his malformed creature has served as a cautionary tale for scientists for nearly two centuries.

The daughter of feminist Mary Wollstonecraft and the philosopher William Godwin, Mary Shelley received a unique education. Her mother died while giving birth to her in 1797, so Mary was raised by her father in a house frequented by some of the most radical philosophical minds in Europe. She listened to their conversations while reading their works and those of her mother, who had vigorously promoted the education of young girls. Mary eloped with Percy Shelley in 1814 while he was still married to his wife Harriet, prompting Godwin to cut off all communication with Mary for two years. In 1816 Harriet drowned herself and her unborn child (her third with Percy); Mary and Percy Shelley married, and Mary and her father began speaking again. During her elopement with Shelley, Mary had given birth prematurely to a girl, Clara, who had died shortly thereafter, and then to a healthy boy, William. Mary’s personal history is reflected in *Frankenstein*, with its themes of parental rejection, the trauma of childbirth, and the tragedy of untimely death.

When the novel (Mary’s first) was published, it was greeted with a fair amount of shock, and many did not believe that it could have been written by a young woman. Women who did write during the 19th century typically produced bucolic domestic tales of virtuous heroines whose primary goal was to preserve or establish a happy marriage and family life. *Frankenstein*, by contrast, is a domestic nightmare, in which men isolate themselves from their families, parents reject children, an innocent creature is deemed “monstrous” by his father and by society, and one man’s attempt to play God causes the

deaths of everyone he loves. The book’s vivid imagery and the manner in which it addresses complex moral and philosophical issues about science and human rights have resonated with readers for nearly two centuries, making it a favorite work of students and film adaptors worldwide.

## Commonwealth of Australia Comes into Being

Until January 1, 1901, when the Commonwealth of Australia was officially formed, the continent of Australia consisted of six separate British colonies, each with its own set of laws and governing practices. The British had first settled Australia in 1788, when they established a penal colony on the continent, but free settlers began arriving shortly afterwards in the 1790s. Before long, six governors were administering to the separate colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania. Great Britain passed an act that gave the colonies further autonomy in 1850, but in time the system by which they governed separately proved to be detrimental to the security and economic well-being of all. A central government was needed to deal with such issues as defense, trade, and immigration. Many also felt the taxes on goods transported between colonies



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*Australia with its neighboring countries.*

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should be abolished along with customs and quarantine checks. In 1897, in a climate of growing nationalism, a constitution was drawn up, and the Australian populace voted decisively for it. The British Parliament then passed an act allowing Australia to become its own nation, and in 1901 the Commonwealth was officially formed.

### Republic of China Is Founded

The founding of the Republic of China on January 1, 1912, was a result of the successful Wuchang Uprising of October 10, 1911, a day celebrated as Double Tenth, or National Day, in Taiwan. The uprising was an antifederal, anti-imperialist revolution which forced Chinese emperor Xuan Tong of the Qing dynasty and his government to abdicate. The new government of the Republic of China (ROC) elected Dr. Sun Yat-sen its interim president and created a democratic constitution declaring all people equal, regardless of class or race, and entitled to the freedoms of speech, religion, and association. In 1949 Chinese communists took over the government of mainland China and, with the backing of the Soviet Union, formed the People's Republic of China. The ROC government was forced to move to the tiny island of Taiwan off the coast of China, where it remains independent of mainland rule.

### North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Takes Effect

Signed in 1992 by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney of Canada, President George H. W. Bush of the United States, and President Carlos Salinas de Gortari of Mexico, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) went into effect on January 1, 1994. It removed tariffs and other investment and trade barriers on goods produced and sold between the three countries in the course of the next 15 years. The agreement also eliminated restrictions on automobiles, agricultural products, textiles, and investments. It called for minimum wages, safe working conditions, and environmental protection while protecting copyrights, patents, and trademarks.

From the beginning NAFTA was controversial. Labor groups in the United States feared the loss of jobs to Mexico, which could supply cheaper labor, and environmental groups were concerned that laws controlling pollution and food safety would be more difficult to enforce. In an attempt to appease both groups, the three countries signed supplemental agreements addressing some of these issues in 1993. In late 1994 talks began to expand NAFTA to include all Latin American nations, except for Cuba, as long as that nation remained communist.

### Unified Currency in Europe Is Adopted

During the 20th century, the use of multiple European currencies was inconveniencing tourists, companies doing business in Europe, and small towns along each country's borders. In order to relieve this difficulty, on January 1, 1999, 11 nations—Austria, Belgium, France, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Spain, and Portugal—surrendered their national currencies and adopted the euro, a unified European currency. On January 1, 2001, Greece became the 12th nation to do so. By January 1, 2002, the national currencies of the 12 countries were phased out of circulation, and all banking, stocks, bonds, and debts were quoted exclusively in the euro. In the years before the new system took effect, competitions were held for the designs of the euro banknote and coins, with Robert Kalina of the Austrian Central Bank winning for his banknote design in 1996, and the coin design of Luc Luyckx of the Belgian Royal Mint being chosen in 1997.

One important purpose of uniting all of Europe under a single form of currency was to enable the participating nations, with their combined annual output of \$6.28 trillion, to compete as a single force with America's dominant \$8.1-trillion economy. To achieve this feat, the nations involved had to overcome philosophical differences as well as disagreements regarding control of the new European central bank. As of this writing, not all of the 15 members of the European Union, established on February 7, 1992, have adopted the euro; Denmark and the United Kingdom have opted out of the currency's adoption, while Sweden is expected to adopt it in the near future.

## Cuban Liberation Day

January 1 commemorates two significant anniversaries for the Caribbean island nation of Cuba. On this day in 1899, Cuba won its independence from Spain after several years of conflict, and, 60 years later to the day, Fidel Castro overthrew the regime of Fulgencio Batista.

The leader of Cuba's struggle for independence was its national hero, José Martí, who returned from exile in 1895 and announced a "call to arms." Banished to Spain at the age of 17, Martí openly argued against colonial rule. His views on liberty and patriotism were heavily influenced by the writings of Father Felix Varela, whose *Lecciones de filosofía* had been the primary textbook for Cubans during the 19th century. Martí had published an exposé about the horrific treatment of political prisoners in Cuba and believed that conflict was rooted in good and evil, not in class and race. When he returned to Cuba in 1895, he rejoined the war for Cuban independence that he had carefully organized while in exile.

The United States became involved in the conflict in February 1898 after the explosion of the USS *Maine* in Havana Harbor, an event that triggered the Spanish-American War. As a consequence of winning the war, America gained control of Cuba in December 1898 under the terms of the Treaty of Paris. By January 1, 1899, Cuba was free from Spanish rule but remained under American control until 1902, when it was finally granted full independence.

After gaining its independence from the United States, Cuba soon spiraled into turmoil. Military rulers came to power by force, politicians were corrupt, and uprisings were frequent. In 1933, Sergeant Fulgencio Batista led a revolt that established himself as a dominant political force in Cuba for the next 25 years. In 1952, under conditions of widespread gangsterism and political unrest, Batista was able to justify a coup d'état, taking power and canceling scheduled elections for that year.

Fidel Castro, a lawyer born in the Oriente province of Cuba and educated at the University of Havana Law School, had intended to run for a seat in parliament in 1952. With the election canceled and the court rejecting Castro's petition that Batista had violated the constitution, Castro saw no other course of action than to stage a revolt. On July 26, 1953, he led his supporters in a failed attack



Courtesy of Lynn M. Messina

*The statue of José Martí at Central Park in New York City depicts the moment he was mortally wounded during the battle for Cuba's liberation from the Spanish.*

on the Moncada barracks in Oriente province, an action that led to his imprisonment. Released on amnesty, Castro launched another unsuccessful attack, on December 2, 1956, with his newly formed July 26th Revolutionary Movement, but he was forced to retreat into the mountains, where he carried on guerrilla warfare against Batista's government. Alienated as they were by Batista's harsh rule and the decline of the Cuban economy, a growing number of followers joined Castro. Finally Castro's guerrilla tactics forced Batista to flee Cuba on January 1, 1959, at which time Castro assumed power. Soon afterward, Castro allied Cuba with the Soviet Union and established the only communist regime in the Western Hemisphere. He has survived numerous political crises, including several confrontations with the United States, and remains Cuba's dictator to this day. See related articles throughout this book.

## January 2

### Berchtold's Day

Berchtold's Day, celebrated in Liechtenstein and Switzerland on January 2, pays tribute to Berchtold V, duke of Zähringen, who founded Switzerland's capitol, Bern, in 1191. Berchtold was appointed by the Ger-

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man emperor Lothar II to be one of the chancellors of Burgundy, which included not only present-day Burgundy in France but also the territory west of the river Aare in the French-speaking area of present-day Switzerland. These chancellors defended the land from rebellious nobles while safeguarding a strategically important mountain route from Germany down through Italy. Berchtold decided to build his city in Upper Burgundy, on the Aare in the area surrounding Nydegg Castle, a fortress built perhaps in the 11th century and around which a small village had grown.

Legend has it that, during a hunt in the woods surrounding the village, Berchtold said he would name the city after the first animal that was killed. That animal was a bear, or *bern* in German, and thus the capitol of Switzerland is named Bern. However, some believe that Bern may have been named for Verona, which was called Bern or Welsch Bern in German during the Middle Ages.

### Granada Falls: Spain Completes the Reconquista

On January 2, 1492, Spanish forces took the city of Granada, the last outpost of the Moors who had once ruled virtually all of Spain and terrified Europe with their armies.



*Modern-day Spain with its neighboring countries.*

It had taken centuries for the Spanish to reconquer their country, a process known as the Reconquista, and their success symbolized the eclipse of Islamic civilization and the growing might of European nation-states.

Christianity was introduced into Spain by the Visigoths, a Germanic tribe which had invaded from the north and conquered Spain and part of France in A.D. 419. In 711 invaders from North Africa, galvanized by the revolutionary new faith of Islam, changed the course of Spanish history forever. Known as the Moors and led by Tariq ibn Ziyad, they crossed the Strait of Gibraltar into Spain and defeated the Visigothic king Roderigo near Barbate. The Islamic forces swept through Spain and into France, where their juggernaut was finally halted near Tours and Poitiers by the Frankish king Charles Martel in 732.

The Moors now controlled all of Spain, except for small areas in the north. Spain became part of the vast caliphate of Damascus, which ruled North Africa and much of the Middle East. Dynastic power struggles eventually weakened the caliphate, until the independent Spanish emirate of Córdoba was established in 756, ruled by the Umayyad dynasty. Meanwhile, the remaining Visigothic Christian kingdoms in the north maintained a precarious independence, and by 1037 they were united under a single ruler, Ferdinand I.

The Moorish caliphate of Córdoba was one of the most prosperous and advanced states in Europe. Córdoba itself rivaled Constantinople for the beauty of its architecture and as a center of learning and culture. The Córdoba caliphs also improved agriculture by building irrigation systems, encouraged commerce, and sponsored many fine universities. Ancient Greek literature, nearly lost to the rest of Europe during this period, was known and studied in Córdoba.

The Christian kingdoms to the north did, nevertheless, overrun Córdoba and several other Moorish holdings with the end of the Umayyad dynasty in 1036. The Christian Reconquista suffered a temporary setback when new Islamic forces arrived from North Africa, but it resumed apace in the 13th century. By 1212 most of Spain was ruled by the Christian states of Castile and León in the northwest and Aragon in the east, with the Moors confined to Cádiz and Granada. In 1469 Queen Isabella I of Castile and King Ferdinand V of Aragon were married, bring-

ing both kingdoms under joint rule by 1479. In 1480 a parliamentary assembly, known as a Cortes, was held at Toledo and acted to centralize royal authority in Castile while reforming government institutions. Ferdinand and Isabella, both fervent Catholics, also introduced the infamous Spanish Inquisition into their domains. Now stronger than ever and inspired by religious zeal, they launched a decade-long war against Moorish Granada. On January 2, 1492, they finally took Granada, and nearly eight centuries of Reconquista came to an end.

The fall of Granada in 1492 signified Spain's appearance on the European scene as a great power. Later that same year Columbus would discover America and Spain would begin to build a worldwide empire. Isabella's death in 1504 momentarily stalled Spain's rise, as Castile's throne passed to Joanna and then to her husband Philip. However, Philip died in 1506 and Ferdinand asserted control over Castile. He died in 1516 and was succeeded by his grandson Charles, who as heir to both Aragon and Castile became the first king of a united Spain.

### **La Isabela Is Founded**

During Christopher Columbus's second voyage for Spain, the explorer landed on the northern coast of Hispaniola (today the Dominican Republic) on January 2, 1494, at which time he founded La Isabela, the first settlement in the New World. Although it seemed like an ideal spot, the colony was soon plagued by diseases and pounded by hurricanes, at least two of which resulted in the loss of several vessels. The site also suffered from a lack of fresh water, and the paucity of gold found there created friction among the settlers, who jealously coveted the commodity. The weight of these crises caused dissension and rebellion against Columbus among the men, while the native Tainos were also provoked into hostility against the Spaniards—and Columbus in particular. In 1498 King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain ordered the establishment of a new settlement on the southern shore of the island, today known as Santo Domingo, and La Isabela was abandoned.

While the Spaniards occupied La Isabela, they erected a number of structures that have been uncovered by recent archeological excavations. These include a barracks, a

large storehouse, a watchtower, a powder house, and a hospital. Archeologists have also found the remains of a church, the first in the New World, at the site of the first mass held in the New World on January 6, 1494. A quarry about a half a mile away from the site reveals evidence of the first Old World-style manufacturing in America of such items as cannon balls and ceramic pottery.

## **January 3**

### **Cicero's Birthday**

Marcus Tullius Cicero, the famous Roman statesman and writer, was born into a wealthy family on or about January 3, 106 B.C., in the Italian city of Arpinum, now known as Arpino. As a public official, he fought the political changes and centralization of power in the hands of a small elite that eventually turned the Roman Republic into the Roman Empire. His contributions to Roman literature include books on oratory, rhetoric, and philosophy, in addition to his letters and political treatises.

Cicero attended schools in Rome and Greece and also studied law. His first known appearance in the Roman courts was in 81 B.C. Cicero quickly earned a reputation as an exceptional lawyer and orator, but he decided to enter public service in 75 B.C. and accepted a commission as a quaestor, or financial administrator, in Sicily. Over time he achieved the judicial office of praetor, a position of some importance in Roman politics.

During the 60s B.C., Cicero became more deeply involved in the political affairs of the centuries-old Roman Republic, which had been weakened by civil wars, slave rebellions, and unrest among the peoples that the Romans had conquered over the centuries. Ambitious and powerful politicians, generals, aristocrats, and wealthy men of commerce were contesting for control over the decaying Republic. This struggle would eventually lead to the destruction of the Republic and its replacement by the Roman Empire, under which an emperor and a narrow oligarchy of military leaders, bureaucrats, and members of the imperial families ruled the Roman lands with a decidedly undemocratic hand. Cicero fought this transition, ultimately without success.

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Cicero first allied himself with the opponents of Marcus Licinius Crassus, the wealthiest man in Rome and also the commander of several legions. Cicero opposed Crassus's desire to parlay his wealth, aristocratic prestige, and military power into rule over the Republic, and was successful enough in this quest to achieve election in 63 B.C. as consul, one of the most ancient and respected offices in the Republic.

Cicero used his new position to expose the seditious machinations of Catiline, a politician who unsuccessfully attempted to assassinate Cicero, flee Rome, and organize a rebellion throughout Italy. Cicero had Catiline captured and executed, an act that earned him enormous popularity among the Roman people. However, he was unable to unite the populace and stem the Republic's decline. In 60 B.C. Cicero refused to join Crassus, Julius Caesar, and Pompey in a political alliance, and in 58 B.C. he fled Rome in fear for his life as more anti-Republican adversaries rose to power. Cicero lived in exile until 57 B.C. and then returned for the next few years to work against the Crassus-Caesar-Pompey alliance, which now dominated Roman politics.

During the 50s B.C.—Cicero's most productive period as a writer—he wrote some of his most famous books, including *On the Orator* (55 B.C.), *On the Republic* (54–52 B.C.), and *On the Laws* (52 B.C.) He studied philosophy, wrote hundreds of letters that have survived to this day, and perfected his distinctive prose style. Cicero also served as governor of the province of Cilicia in 51 B.C. Cicero returned to Rome from Cilicia in 50 B.C. to find that Julius Caesar was now eliminating his former allies, including Pompey and Crassus, in order to consolidate his political control and establish a de facto dictatorship. Resigned to defeat, Cicero left public service for private life and ended his open opposition to Caesar. He lived quietly and continued his writing.

After Caesar's assassination in 44 B.C., Cicero continued to advocate a return to the traditions of the Roman Republic, supporting Caesar's adopted son Octavian in Octavian's power struggle with a new leader named Mark Antony. Cicero wrongly thought that Octavian would restore the Republic, but Octavian eventually made himself the emperor Augustus, first emperor of the Roman Empire. Meanwhile, Cicero became

politically inconvenient for both Octavian and Mark Antony, and he was executed on December 7, 43 B.C., near Formia in Italy.

The severed head and hands of the man who opposed the demise of the Roman Republic were publicly displayed at the forum in Rome. The Roman Empire, which followed, lasted until A.D. 476 in Western Europe, and its eastern half lasted until the 15th century under various guises.

### March of Dimes Is Founded

Founded by U.S. president Franklin D. Roosevelt on January 3, 1938, the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis is today known as the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation. It was originally established to find a cure for polio, a disease that had crippled Roosevelt at the age of 39 and which had reached epidemic proportions among America's youth. The nickname March of Dimes, a play on the popular newsreel feature "March of Time," was coined by comedian Eddie Cantor, who urged radio listeners interested in donating to the organization to send their dimes directly to the White House. After this hugely successful campaign, the name stuck, but the National Foundation would not officially change its name to the March of Dimes until 1979. Money from the foundation helped to fund the research of Dr. Jonas Salk, who discovered a vaccine against polio in 1948. The March of Dimes is now dedicated to preventing birth defects and infant mortality and to improving the health of infants.

### United States Severs Diplomatic Relations with Cuba

The United States and Cuba officially severed diplomatic relations on January 3, 1961, after nearly 100 years of U.S. involvement in Cuban affairs. The Cuban government, led by Fidel Castro, who had become prime minister in 1959, had reestablished diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1960 and had negotiated agreements with the Soviet Union to eliminate Cuban dependence on the United States. After Cuba seized and nationalized U.S. petroleum properties in June 1960, a U.S. trade embargo was imposed on the country in August. By September the first shipment of Soviet arms had reached Cuba



and were being assembled. By December Cuba had openly admitted to aligning itself with the Soviet Union, but on January 2, 1961, Soviet leader Nikita Krushchev publicly denied that the Soviet Union had established a military base on the island, a claim that would be disproved in October of 1961 during the Cuban Missile Crisis. See *The American Book of Days*, 4th edition, for information about the latter event.

### **People's Uprising (Burkina Faso)**

A coup popularly known as the People's Uprising was led by Lt. Col. Sangoulé Lamizana in Upper Volta, present-day Burkina Faso, on January 3, 1966. Upper Volta, located in Western Africa, had gained its independence from France on August 5, 1960, and Maurice Yaméogo had become its first president. Yaméogo proceeded to ban all political parties except for his, the Voltaic Democratic Union. Ethnic conflicts and economic instability caused unrest, and Yaméogo found his supporters dwindling. After numerous strikes and demonstrations by civil servants, labor unions, and students, Yaméogo was ousted in the coup headed by Lt. Col. Lamizana in 1966. After he assumed power, Lamizana dissolved the constitution and the national assembly, and prohibited all political activity. Upper Volta, which changed its name to Burkina Faso in 1984, has experienced an almost continuous cycle of political upheaval ever since.

### **START II Treaty Is Signed**

The second Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START II), was signed on January 3, 1993, by presidents George H. W. Bush of the United States and Boris Yeltsin of Russia. START II was a bilateral arms control treaty aimed at cutting both countries' nuclear arsenals by two-thirds. It stipulated that each country would reduce its strategic nuclear warhead stockpiles to 3,000–3,500 by 2007. It also required all ground-launched intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) with multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs) to be eliminated as well.

The U.S. Senate ratified START II on January 26, 1996, but the Russian Duma was not as supportive. They had several concerns, the first being economic. Strategic planners in

Russia, which was still reeling from the fall of the Communist regime in 1991, felt that the country was in no position to make decisions on its nuclear arsenal in a time of economic uncertainty. They believed that, given Russia's rapidly declining economy, the country would not be able to afford the cost of replacing the multiple warheads with single warheads, and that possessing MIRVed ICBMs was the most economical way for Russia to remain on a level playing field with the U.S. With or without START II, Russia was going to have to reduce its military forces for economic reasons, and maintaining MIRVed ICBMs was their last chance to remain a superpower.

The Duma's second concern was a strategic one. Those who opposed START II felt that Russia's national security would be threatened by the cut in the nuclear stockpile. NATO expansion and the spread of the United States' international presence were seen as direct threats to Russia, and, with the already heavy reductions in Russia's conventional forces, the Duma thought it was the wrong time to agree to further military cuts. The Duma also believed that replenishing its forces, should the treaty fail, would be more difficult for Russia than it would be for the United States. There was also the question of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty of 1972. With the U.S. looking to amend the ABM Treaty to allow for missile defense shields to be constructed to defend against rogue states, Russia worried about its future. If Russia signed START II, further reducing its nuclear stockpiles, the United States could truly have the upper hand if it ever put a missile defense shield in place over Europe. Many feared that the United States could possibly use that shield one day against Russia, which neither had such a defensive shield of its own nor could afford to build one. Also, START II dealt with land-based nuclear missiles, not the kinds of sea- or air-launched nuclear missiles that the United States possessed but Russia did not.

Those in favor of START II in Russia eventually prevailed, and the Duma ratified the treaty on April 14, 2000. Supporters of START II saw it as a good way to reduce the cost of maintaining strategic forces, which would have to be done due to the downturn in the Russian economy. It was also viewed as an effective means of forcing the United States to reduce its own nuclear arsenal. The money Russia saved on maintaining strategic

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forces could then be used to improve its conventional forces, which were in shambles, while still maintaining something of a nuclear defense system. Many Russian strategic missiles were also past, or quickly approaching the end of, their service life and were going to have to be discarded anyway. By signing START II, Russia would not have the financial burden of replacing them. Russia would also have more leverage in thwarting attempts made by the United States to amend the ABM Treaty. Finally, Russia saw START II as a way to stay out of another nuclear arms race with the most powerful country in the world.

## January 4

### Isaac Newton's Birthday

Isaac Newton was born on January 4, 1643, in Woolsthorpe, near Grantham in Lincolnshire, England. His parents were prosperous farmers, though he never knew his father, who died in October 1642, before Isaac was born. His mother, Hannah Ayscough, remarried in 1645 to Barnabas Smith, a minister in the nearby village of North Witham. Isaac was largely raised by his grandmother, Margery Ayscough, in Woolsthorpe. He entered Trinity College at the University of Cambridge in 1661 and graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1665.

Newton received a fellowship from Cambridge and was awarded his master's degree in 1668. It was while he pursued his master's degree that Newton developed the revolutionary new mathematics of differential and integral calculus, which he referred to as "fluxions." Calculus enabled the user to solve such problems as finding the lengths of curves and the area swept by curves.

In 1669 Newton was appointed to the prestigious Lucasian Chair at the University of Cambridge and given the official title of Lucasian Professor of Mathematics. His mathematical abilities and discoveries were by now widely known in English academia, and, although in 1671 he wrote his book *De Methodis Serierum et Fluxionum* concerning calculus, he was reluctant to publish it. Newton did not tolerate criticism, and he kept his discoveries out of the limelight. This came to haunt him when a German mathematician named Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz indepen-

dently discovered calculus in 1675 and published his findings. It was Leibniz who actually coined the word *calculus*, and he got sole credit for the achievement until Newton finally published his own work in the field.

While Lucasian Professor, Newton developed an interest in optics beginning in 1670. He discovered that a beam of white light could be broken into a spectrum of colors by passing it through a glass prism. Newton also perfected a new type of telescope called a reflecting telescope, which earned him a position as Fellow of the Royal Society in 1672. His "corpuscular" theory concerning the nature of light earned him some criticism, however, to which he reacted by withdrawing to Cambridge. His book *Opticks* was not published until 1704. The death of his mother and what may have been a nervous breakdown in 1678 further contributed to Newton's self-imposed isolation.

During the 1680s Newton emerged from this seclusion with his discovery of the laws of universal gravitation. Until Albert Einstein published his special and general theories of relativity in the early 20th century, the motions of all objects on Earth and in space were explained by the force Newton named *gravity*. Whether or not Newton's theories were actually inspired by his being hit by a falling apple while sleeping under a tree is uncertain. For many decades the story was discredited, but more recently it has gained some credence. Regardless, in 1687 Newton published his ground-breaking treatise *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, or *Principia*, as it is usually called, in which he set forth the laws of gravity and motion. The book was a success and is quite likely his greatest contribution to scientific progress.

Newton also became involved in a struggle against the efforts of the unpopular Roman Catholic king James II to make Cambridge a Catholic university. When a position at Cambridge became vacant, the king would appoint a Roman Catholic to fill it, a policy that Newton and other Protestant faculty members challenged. In 1688 James II was ousted in the Glorious Revolution, which brought the Protestant king William of Orange to the English throne. Cambridge elected Newton as one of its representatives to the Convention Parliament of 1689, at which William and his queen Mary were crowned England's monarchs.