

“The critical Time is now come”
**COLONISTS RESPOND
TO THE STAMP ACT, 1765-1766**

A Selection from Broadsides, Pamphlets, Poetry,
News Reports, Resolutions, Illustrations & A History

1765_____

March 22: STAMP ACT is passed by Parliament to fund the maintenance of British troops in the colonies after the French and Indian War. The first direct tax imposed by Parliament, it requires the use of tax-stamped paper for all newspapers, legal documents, etc.

Summer/Fall: Public protests, legislative resolutions, town meetings, and citizen boycotts of British goods occur throughout the colonies.

Nov. 1: Stamp Act goes into effect.

1766_____

March 18: STAMP ACT is repealed by Parliament, which also passes DECLARATORY ACT to affirm its authority to “make laws . . . of sufficient force and validity to bind the colonies and people of America . . . in all cases whatsoever.”



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__BROADSIDES & PAMPHLETS IN OPPOSITION TO THE STAMP ACT__

In establishing American independence, the pen and the press had merit equal to that of the sword.

—David Ramsay, *The History of the American Revolution*, 1789

- **JOHN DICKINSON.** Broadside, Philadelphia, November 1765, reprinted in several newspapers, EXCERPTS.

FRIENDS and COUNTRYMEN,

THE critical Time is now come, when you are reduced to the Necessity of forming a Resolution upon a Point of the most alarming Importance that can engage the Attention of Men. Your Conduct *at this Period* must decide the *future* Fortunes of yourselves and of your Posterity — must decide whether *Pennsylvanians* from henceforward shall be Freemen or Slaves. So vast is the Consequence, so extensive is the Influence of the Measure you shall *at present* pursue. . . .

WE have seen the Day on which an Act of Parliament imposing Stamp Duties on the *British Colonies* in *America* was appointed to take Effect, and we have seen the Inhabitants of these Colonies, with an unexampled Unanimity, compelling the Stamp-Officers throughout the Provinces to resign their Employments. The virtuous Indignation with which they have thus acted was inspired by the generous Love of Liberty, and guided by a perfect Sense of Loyalty to the best of Kings and of duty to the Mother Country. The Resignation of the Officers was judged the most effectual and the most decent Method of preventing the Execution of a Statute that strikes the Axe into the Root of the Tree and lays the hitherto flourishing Branches of *American Freedom*, with all its precious Fruits, low in the Dust. — . . .

WHAT further Steps you can now take, without Injury to this sacred Right, demands your maturest Deliberation.

IF you comply with the Act by using Stamped Papers, you fix, you rivet perpetual Chains upon your unhappy Country. You unnecessarily, voluntarily establish the detestable Precedent, which those who have forged your Fetters ardently wish for, to varnish the future Exercise of this new claimed Authority. You may judge of the Use that will be made of it by the Eagerness with which the Pack of Ministerial Tools [i.e., officials in the king's cabinet] have hunted for Precedents to palliate the Horrors of this Attack upon *American Freedom*. . . .

THE Stamp Act, therefore, is to be regarded only as an EXPERIMENT OF YOUR DISPOSITION. If you quietly bend your Necks to that Yoke, you prove yourselves ready to receive any Bondage to which your *Lords* and *Masters* shall please to subject you. Some Persons perhaps may fondly hope, it will be as easy to obtain a Repeal of the Stamp Act after it is put in Execution, as if the Execution of it is avoided. But be not deceived. The late Ministry [previous British cabinet] publicly declared “that it was *intended* to establish the Power of *Great Britain* to tax the Colonies.” Can we imagine then, that when so great a Point is carried, and *we have tamely submitted*, that any other Ministry will venture to propose, or that the Parliament will consent to pass, an Act to renounce this Advantage? No! Power is of a tenacious Nature: What it seizes it will retain.

ROUSE yourselves therefore, my dear Countrymen. Think, oh! think of the endless Miseries you *must* entail upon yourselves, and your Country, by touching the pestilential Cargoes that have been sent to you. Destruction lurks within them. — To receive them is Death — is worse than Death — it is SLAVERY! . . .

FOR these Reasons, and many more, it appears to me the wisest and the safest Course for you to proceed in all Business as usual, without taking the least Notice of the Stamp Act. If you behave in this spirited Manner, you may be assured that every Colony on the Continent will follow the Example of a Province so justly celebrated for its Liberty. Your Conduct will convince *Great Britain* that the Stamp Act will never be carried into Execution but by Force of Arms, and this one Moment's Reflection must demonstrate that she will never attempt.

Horrors of this Attack upon *American Freedom*

■ **MAURICE MOORE.** *The Justice and Policy of Taxing the American Colonies*, Wilmington, North Carolina, 1765, EXCERPT.

A representative is to act in every respect as the persons who appointed him to that office would do, were they themselves present: And hath the members of the House of Commons, or any of them, been chosen by the Colonists to represent them? Hath their conduct in respect to the Stamp Duty been consistent with the interests of the Colonists? or hath that conduct been such as the Colonists would have adopted had they been present in Parliament? No surely: So far from it, there are very few members of that assembly who have ever been heard of in America. The Stamp Duty is inconsistent with their interests, and the mode of imposing it destructive of their most essential rights and liberties.

■ **DANIEL DULANY.** *Considerations on the Propriety of Imposing Taxes in the British Colonies*, Annapolis, Maryland, 1765, EXCERPTS.

The right of exemption from all taxes *without their consent*, the colonies claim as *British* subjects. They derive this right from the common law, which their charters have declared and confirmed, and they conceive that when stripped of this right . . . they are at the same time deprived of every privilege distinguishing free-men from slaves.

On the other hand, they acknowledge themselves to be subordinate to the mother country, and that the authority vested in the supreme council of the nation may be justly exercised to support and preserve that subordination. . . .

But the inhabitants in the colonies have no share in this great council. . . . For those securities are derived to the subject [person] from the principle that he is not to be taxed without his own consent, and an inhabitant in *America* can give his consent in no other manner than in assembly.

■ **BENJAMIN CHURCH.** *Liberty and Property Vindicated, and the St-*pm-n* [Stamp-Man] Burnt: A Discourse . . . on Burning the Effigy of the ST__PM_N in . . . Connecticut*, Boston, 1765, EXCERPT.

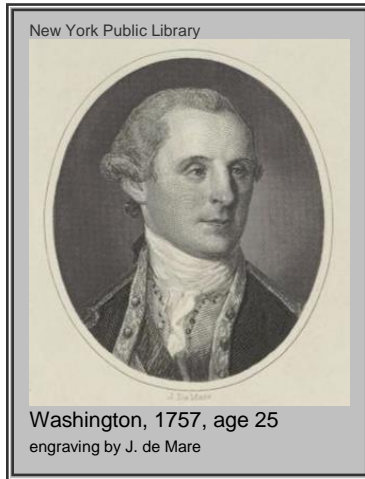
O freemen of the colony of Connecticut! Stand fast in the liberties granted you by your royal charter. Plead the injustice of any that means to infringe upon you by curtailing the rights and privileges once given you freely, without any design [plan] to take them from you again (without your conduct could be deemed rebellious); and my opinion is that it cannot be counted rebelling for the freemen of this colony to stand for their absolute rights and defend them (as a man would his own house when insulted) . . .

■ **RICHARD BLAND.** *An Inquiry into the Rights of the British Colonies*, Williamsburg, Virginia, 1766, EXCERPT.

Great is the Power of Parliament, but, great as it is, it cannot, constitutionally, deprive the People of their *natural* Rights; nor, in Virtue of the same Principle, can it deprive them of their *civil* Rights, which are founded in Compact, without their own Consent. . . if they are deprived of their civil Rights, if great and manifest Oppressions are imposed upon them by the State on which they are dependent, their Remedy is to lay their Complaints at the Foot of the Throne and to suffer patiently rather than disturb the public Peace, which nothing but a Denial of Justice can excuse them in breaking. But if this Justice should be denied, if the most humble and dutiful Representations [petitions] should be rejected, nay not even deigned to be received, what is to be done? To such a Question *Thucydides* would make the *Corinthians* reply, that if “a decent and condescending Behavior is shown on the Part of the Colonies, it would be base in the Mother State to press too far on such Moderation.”¹ And he would make the *Corcyreans* answer that “every Colony, whilst used in a proper manner, ought to pay Honor and Regard to its Mother State, but, when treated with Injury and Violence, is become an Alien. They were not sent out to be the Slaves, but to be the Equals of those that remain behind.”

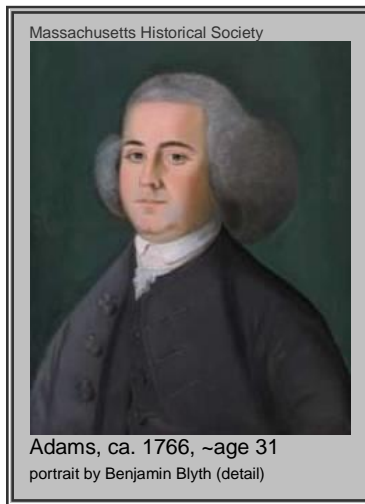
¹ The ancient Greek historian Thucydides (5th c. BCE) begins his history of the Peloponnesian War with the conflict between the cities of Corinth and its colony Corcyra (now Corfu) over the rebellion of an island held by Corcyra — a rebellion that very roughly paralleled the British-American conflict. Britain should give heed to both replies, Bland argues, as the colonists, who were not “sent out to be the Slaves,” will rebel if their “decent Behavior” to the mother country is answered with “injury and violence.”

__THREE FOUNDING FATHERS ON THE STAMP ACT, 1765-66__



■ GEORGE WASHINGTON, Mount Vernon, Letter to Frances Dandridge, London, 20 September 1765.²

. . . The Stamp Act Imposed on the Colonies by the Parliament of Great Britain engrosses the conversation of the Speculative part of the Colonists, who look upon this unconstitutional method of Taxation as a direful attack upon their Liberties & loudly exclaim against the Violation — what may be the result of this & some other (I think I may add) ill judg'd Measures, I will not undertake to determine; but this I may venture to affirm, that the advantage accruing to the Mother Country will fall greatly short of the expectations of the Ministry [king's cabinet]; for certain it is, our whole Substance does already in a manner flow to Great Britain and that whatsoever contributes to lessen our Importations must be hurtful to their Manufacturers — And the Eyes of our People — already beginning to open — will perceive that many Luxuries which we lavish our substance to Great Britain for, can well be dispens'd with whilst the necessaries of Life are (mostly) to be had within ourselves — This consequently will introduce frugality and be a necessary stimulation to Industry — If Great Britain therefore Loads her Manufacturers with heavy Taxes, will it not facilitate these Measures? — they will not compel us, I think, to give our Money for their exports, whether we will or no, and certain I am none of their Traders will part from them without a valuable consideration — Where then is the Utility of these Restrictions?



■ JOHN ADAMS, Diary, Braintree, Massachusetts, 18 Dec. 1765.³

. . . The Year 1765 has been the most remarkable Year of my Life. That enormous Engine, fabricated by the British Parliament, for battering down all the Rights and Liberties of America, I mean the Stamp Act, has raised and spread thro the whole Continent, a Spirit that will be recorded to our Honor with all future Generations. In every Colony, from Georgia to New Hampshire inclusively, the Stamp Distributors and Inspectors have been compelled, by the unconquerable Rage of the People, to renounce their offices. Such and so universal has been the Resentment of the People that every Man who has dared to speak in favor of the Stamps, or to soften the detestation in which they are held — how great soever his Abilities and Virtues had been esteemed before or whatever his fortune, Connections and Influence had been — has been seen to sink into universal Contempt and Ignominy.

The People, even to the lowest Ranks, have become more attentive to their Liberties, more inquisitive about them, and more determined to defend them, than they were ever before known or had occasion to be. Innumerable have been the Monuments of Wit, Humor, Sense, Learning, Spirit, Patriotism, and Heroism, erected in the several Colonies and Provinces in the Course of this Year. Our Presses have groaned, our Pulpits have thundered, our Legislatures have resolved, our Towns have voted, The Crown Officers have everywhere trembled, and all their little Tools and Creatures been afraid to Speak and ashamed to be seen. . . .

How long We are to remain in this languid Condition, this passive Obedience to the Stamp Act, is not certain. But such a Pause cannot be lasting. Debtors grow insolent. Creditors grow angry. And it is to be expected that the Public offices will very soon be forced open, unless such favorable Accounts should be received from England, as to draw away the Fears of the Great, or unless a greater Dread of the Multitude should drive away the Fear of Censure from G. Britain.

It is my Opinion that by this ~~Timorous~~ Inactivity we discover Cowardice, and too much Respect and ~~Regard~~ to the Act. This Rest appears to be by Implication at least an Acknowledgment of the Authority of Parliament to tax Us. And if this Authority is once acknowledged and established, the Ruin of America will become inevitable.

² Courtesy of the Library of Congress, George Washington Papers, at lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html.

³ Massachusetts Historical Society, Diaries of John Adams, at www.masshist.org/jqadiaries/. Reproduced by permission.

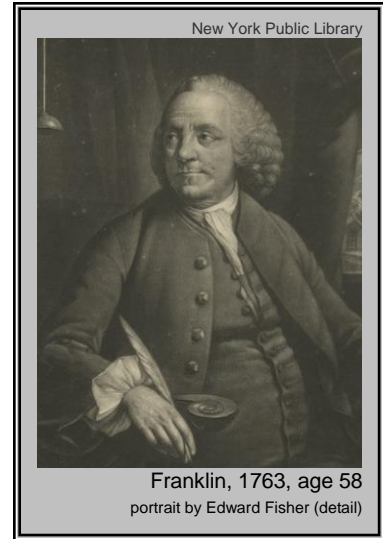
■ **BENJAMIN FRANKLIN**, Testimony before the House of Commons relating to the repeal of the Stamp Act, 13 Feb. 1766.⁴

50. **Q.** Was it an opinion in America before 1763 that the Parliament had no right to lay taxes and duties there?

A. I never heard any objection to the right of laying duties to regulate commerce; but a right to lay internal taxes was never supposed to be in Parliament, as we are not represented there.

51. **Q.** On what do you found your opinion that the people in America made any such distinction?

A. I know that whenever the subject has occurred in conversation where I have been present, it has appeared to be the opinion of everyone that we could not be taxed in a Parliament where we were not represented. But the payment of duties laid by act of Parliament, as regulations of commerce, was never disputed.



59. **Q.** You say the Colonies have always submitted to external taxes, and object to the right of Parliament only in laying internal taxes; now can you show that there is any kind of difference between the two taxes to the Colony on which they may be laid?

A. I think the difference is very great. An external tax is a duty laid on commodities imported; that duty is added to the first cost, and other charges on the commodity, and when it is offered to sale, makes a part of the price. If the people do not like it at that price, they refuse it; they are not obliged to pay it. But an internal tax is forced from the people without their consent, if not laid by their own representatives. The Stamp Act says we shall have no commerce, make no exchange of property with each other, neither purchase nor grant, nor recover debts; we shall neither marry, nor make our wills, unless we pay such and such sums, and thus it is intended to extort our money from us, or ruin us by the consequences of refusing to pay it.

60. **Q.** But supposing the external tax or duty to be laid on the necessaries of life imported into your Colony, will not that be the same thing in its effects as an internal tax?

A. I do not know a single article imported into the Northern Colonies but what they can either do without or make themselves.

61. **Q.** Don't you think cloth from England absolutely necessary to them?

A. No, by no means absolutely necessary; with industry and good management, they may very well supply themselves with all they want.

68. **Q.** Considering the resolutions of Parliament, as to the right, do you think if the Stamp Act is repealed that the North Americans will be satisfied?

A. I believe they will.

82. **Q.** Can anything less than a military force carry the Stamp Act into execution?

A. I do not see how a military force can be applied to that purpose.

83. **Q.** Why may it not?

A. Suppose a military force sent into America, they will find nobody in arms; what are they then to do? They cannot force a man to take stamps who chooses to do without them. They will not find a rebellion; they may indeed make one.

84. **Q.** If the act is not repealed, what do you think will be the consequences?

A. A total loss of the respect and affection the people of America bear to this country, and of all the commerce that depends on that respect and affection.

⁴ The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, Yale University Press & the American Philosophical Society. Permission request in process.

“The TIMES are Dreadful, Dismal, Doleful, Dolorous, and Dollar-Less”

On October 31, 1765, one day before the Stamp Act was to go into effect, the publisher of the *Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser* announced that he would stop publishing his newspaper until the colonists could “escape the insupportable Slavery” of the Stamp Act. His skull-and-crossbones image was reproduced in newspapers throughout the colonies.

Library of Congress



I AM sorry to be obliged to acquaint my Readers, that as The STAMP ACT, is fear'd to be obligatory upon us after the *First of November* ensuing, (the *fatal Tomorrow*) the Publisher of this Paper unable to bear the burthen [burden], has thought it expedient TO STOP awhile, in order to deliberate, whether any Methods can be found to elude the Chains forged for us, and escape the insupportable Slavery, which it is hoped, from the last Representations [demonstrations] now made against that Act, may be effected. Mean while, I must earnestly Request every Individual of my Subscribers, many of whom have been long behind Hand, that they would immediately Discharge their respective Arrears [pay their overdue subscriptions] that I may be able, not only to support myself during the Interval, but be better prepared to proceed again with this Paper, whenever an opening for that Purpose appears, which I hope will be soon.

WILLIAM BRADFORD



A LOYALIST DEFENDS THE STAMP ACT

Joseph Galloway published this anonymous essay “to point out the impudence and folly” of opposing Parliament’s authority.

- “AMERICANUS” (Joseph Galloway), letter to *The New-York Gazette*, 15 August 1765, reprinted two weeks later in the *Pennsylvania Journal* (29 August 1765), EXCERPTS.⁵

At a time when *almost every American pen* is employed in placing the transactions of the Parliament of our mother country in the *most odious light*, and in *alienating the affections* of a numerous and loyal people *from the royal person* of the best of sovereigns; permit, however unpopular the task, through the impartial channel of your paper, to point out the impudence and folly of such conduct, and to give a brief and true state of the facts included in the dispute between Great Britain and her colonies. From whence the cool and unprejudiced may form a right judgment of the motives of her late [recent] conduct, and of the impropriety and rashness of the method that is taken to prevail on her to alter or repeal her measures.

It is a truth too universally known that the people of England are involved in a debt under which they struggle with the utmost difficulty. From its enormity many judicious persons have predicted the ruin of the nation. Foreign powers rely on it as the only foundation of their hopes of reducing the British dominions. The protection of America has, in no small degree, contributed to this burden of the mother country. To the large sums of money that have been expended from the English treasury and the parental care of a British Parliament, we in a great measure owe our present freedom from Indian barbarities, popish cruelties and superstition. . . .⁶

. . . The preservation of America is of the utmost importance to Great Britain. A loss of it to the British crown would greatly diminish its strength, and the possession of it to any other nation would give an increase of wealth and power totally inconsistent with the safety of Britons. *If* then the power of protection is rightfully and solely vested in the crown; *if* America is of so much importance to her mother country; and *if* it is just and reasonable that she should contribute towards her own defense, so essential to her own and the happiness of Great Britain, *will any be so absurd as to deny the reasonableness, the necessity, of the crown’s having some certainty that she will pay her proportion of aids when requisite and demanded.* . . .

. . . It is a proof of the greatest infatuation [delusion] to conceive that we can bully the British nation, now at peace with the whole world, and possessed of strength which the united powers of France and Spain could not subdue. Let us then convert our idle threats into dutiful remonstrances [petitions]. Reveal to them the poverty of our circumstances, and rectify the false representations which they have received of our wealth.⁷ Show them our incapacity to pay the impositions which they have laid upon us without more freedom of commerce and a circulating medium⁸ to carry on that commerce. Tell them that, should they make a thousand acts of Parliament to oblige us, we cannot give what we have not, and what they prevent us from procuring for want [need] of a due attention to our circumstances. And tell them our incapacity to pay the debt already due to the British merchants, our inability to take off [trade in] their future manufactures, and the impossibility of our contributing to the wealth, power and glory of our mother country, unless she will relax her present measures, which so essentially affect her own as well as our welfare.

a spirit of disloyalty against the crown

⁵ As reprinted nine years later, in 1774, by a Philadelphia Quaker and Loyalist, Jabez Fisher, to “show that the political principles . . . are by no means incompatible with those advanced by the first and most able of our American Patriots.” Fisher’s attempts were futile, however, and he left for Britain soon after, as did many Loyalists.

⁶ “Popish cruelties and superstitions,” i.e., from the French Catholics in Canada, had they not been defeated by the British in the French and Indian War (1754-1763).

⁷ The colonies were in the midst of a postwar economic downturn.

⁸ I.e., coin or paper money. Britain had banned the colonies from issuing their own paper money.

PUBLIC PROTESTS AGAINST THE STAMP ACT: NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina Gazette, 20 November 1765

On Saturday the 19th of last Month, about Seven of the Clock in the Evening, near Five Hundred People assembled together in this Town [Wilmington], and exhibited the Effigy of a certain Honorable Gentleman; and after letting it hang by the Neck for some Time, near the Court-House, they made a large Bonfire with a Number of Tar Barrels, &c. and committed it to the Flames.—The Reason assigned for the People's Dislike to that Gentleman, was, from being informed of his having several Times expressed himself much in Favor of the STAMP-DUTY.—After the Effigy was consumed, they went to every House in Town, and brought all the Gentlemen to the Bonfire, and insisted upon their drinking, LIBERTY, PROPERTY, AND NO STAMP-DUTY, and Confusion to Lord B-TE and all his Adherents, giving three Huzzas at the Conclusion of each Toast.—They continued together until 12 of the Clock, and then dispersed, without doing any Mischief.

And, On Thursday, 31st of the same Month, in the Evening, a great Number of People again assembled, and produced an Effigy of Liberty, which they put into a Coffin, and marched in solemn Procession with it to the Church-Yard, a Drum in Mourning beating before them, and the Town Bell, muffled, ringing a doleful Knell at the same Time:—But before they committed the Body to the Ground, they thought it advisable to feel its Pulse; and when finding some Remains of Life, they returned back to a Bonfire ready prepared, placed the Effigy before it in a large Two-arm'd Chair, and concluded the Evening with great Rejoicings, on finding that LIBERTY had still an Existence in the Colonies.—Not the least Injury was offered to any Person.

On Saturday the 16th of this Inst. William Houston, Esq; Distributor of STAMPS for this Province, came to this Town; upon which three or four Hundred People immediately gathered together, with Drums beating and Colors flying, and repaired to the House the said Stamp-Officer put up at, and insisted upon knowing, “Whether he intended to execute his said Office, or not?” He told them, “He should be very sorry to execute any Office disagreeable to the People of

the Province.” But they, not content with such a Declaration, carried him into the Court-House, where he signed a Resignation satisfactory to the Whole.

As soon as the Stamp-Officer had comply'd with their Desire, they placed him in an Arm-Chair, carried him first round the Court-House, giving three Huzzas at every Corner, and then proceeded with him round one of the Squares of the Town, and sat him down at the Door of his Lodgings, formed themselves in a large Circle round him, and gave him three Cheers: They then escorted him into the House, where was prepared the best Liquors to be had, and treated him very genteely. In the Evening a large Bonfire was made, and no Person appeared in the Streets without having LIBERTY, in large Capital Letters, in his Hat.—They had a large Table near the Bonfire, well furnish'd with several Sorts of Liquors, where they drank in great Form, all the favorite American Toasts, giving three Cheers at the Conclusion of each. The whole was conducted with great Decorum, and not the least Insult offered to any Person. . . .

Circular Letters were sent last Week by the Governor, to the Principal Inhabitants in this Part of the Province, requesting their Presence at his Seat at Brunswick, on Monday last; where, after Dinner, his Excellency conferr'd with them concerning the Stamp Act: The Result of which shall be in our Next.

We hear from Newbern, that the Inhabitants of that Place, try'd, condemn'd, hang'd, and burn'd Doctor William Houston, in Effigy, during the Sitting of their Superior Court.—Mr. Houston, however, thinks that there was too much of the Star-Chamber Conduct⁹ made Use of, in condemning him unheard; especially as he had never solicited the Office: Nor had he then heard he was appointed Stamp-Officer.—At Cross-Creek, 'tis said, they hang'd his Effigy and M' Carter's together, (he who murder'd his Wife;) nor have they spar'd him even in Duplin, the County where he lives.

⁹ Star Chamber: a secret court that does not adhere to civil law and individual rights; referring to an English court of the 15th-17th c.

__PUBLIC PROTESTS AGAINST THE STAMP ACT: MASSACHUSETTS__

Boston Gazette, 19 August 1765

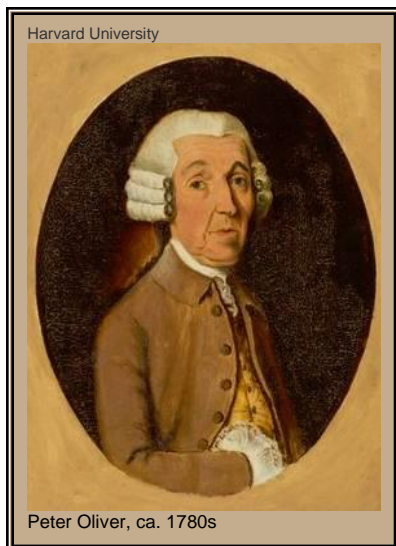
Early on Wednesday Morning last, the Effigy of a Gentleman sustaining a very unpopular office, viz. [namely] that of St—p [Stamp] Master, was found hanging on a Tree in the most public Part of the Town, together with a Boot, wherein was concealed a young Imp of the D—I [Devil] represented as peeping out of the Top. — On the Breast of the Effigy was a Label, in Praise of Liberty, and denouncing Vengeance on the Subvertors of it—and underneath was the following Words, HE THAT TAKES THIS DOWN IS AN ENEMY TO HIS COUNTRY. — The Owner of the Tree finding a Crowd of People to assemble, tho' at 5 o'Clock in the Morning, endeavored to take it down; but being advis'd to the contrary by the Populace, lest it should occasion the demolition of his Windows, if nothing worse, desisted from the Attempt. —

The Diversion it occasioned among a Multitude of Spectators, who continually assembled the whole Day, is surprising; not a Peasant was suffered [allowed] to pass down to the Market, let him have what he would for Sale, 'till he had stop'd and got his Articles stamp'd by the Effigy. — Towards dark some Thousands repaired to the said Place of Rendezvous, and having taken down the Pageantry [the effigy], they proceeded with it along the Main Street to the Town-House, thro' which they carried it, and continued their Rout thro' Kilby-Street to Oliver's Dock, where there was a new Brick Building just finished; and they, imagining it to be designed for a *Stamp-Office*, instantly set about demolishing of it, which they thoroughly effected in about half an Hour.

In the mean Time the High-Sheriff, &c. &c., being apprehensive that the Person of the then Stamp-Master, and his Family, might be in Danger from the Tumult, went and advised them to evacuate the House, which they had scarcely done, making their Retreat across the Gardens, &c. before the Multitude approach'd Fort-Hill, continuous thereto, in order to burn the Effigy, together with the Timber and other Woodwork of the House they had demolish'd. After setting Fire to the Combustibles, they proceeded to break open the Stables, Coach-Houses, &c. and were actually increasing the Bonfire with a Coach, Booby Hutch, Chaise, &c. but were dissuaded

going so far by a Number of Spectators present, tho' they burnt the Coach Doors, Cushions, &c. But it seems, not having yet completed their Purpose, they set about pulling down a Range of Fence upwards of 15 Feet high which enclos'd the bottom of the Garden, into which having enter'd, they stripped the Trees of the Fruit, despoiled some of them by breaking off the Limbs, demolished the Summer House, broke the Windows in the Rear Part of the House, enter'd the same, went down the Cellars, and help'd themselves to the Liquor which they found there in the Silver Plate that the House afforded, none of which however was missing the next Day, altho' scatter'd over various Parts of the House. — They then destroyed Part of the Furniture, among which was a Looking Glass said to be the largest in North-America, with two others, &c.

The next Day the Transactions of the preceding Night was of Course the general Topic of Conversation; when the St—p M—r, in order to appease the Sensations which seemed to possess the Breasts of everyone, at the Prospect of a future Stamp Duty, sent a Card to several Gentlemen, acquainting them that he had absolutely declined having any Concern in that Office; which, being publicly read upon 'Change, it was thought all Uneasiness would subside; but the Evening following they again assembled, erected a Number of Stages with Tar Barrels, &c. in the Form of a Pyramid, in the Centre of which was a Flag Staff, and a Union-Flag [British flag] hoisted; whereupon 'tis said the St—p M—r sent them a Letter with the aforementioned Resolution of Non-acceptance, and Assurance of Endeavors to serve the Province, &c. Upon which they thought proper to demolish the Bonfire and retire — but they did not disperse till they went down to his H—r the L—t G—r's [his Honor the Lieutenant Governor's] with whom they said they wanted to have a Talk; but not finding him at Home, they concluded the Business of the Night by loud Acclamations in every Quarter of the Town, on account of the Resignation of the Stamp Master: which, they were assured was forwarded by Express to New-York, to go to the Pacquet [ship carrying mail to Great Britain] from thence.



A LOYALIST DESCRIBES THE “FRENZY OF ANARCHY”

IN THE BOSTON STAMP ACT PROTESTS, 1765

■ **PETER OLIVER**, *Origin and Progress of the American Rebellion*, 1781.

For his staunch defense of British imperial authority and power to tax the colonies, Oliver was harassed by Sons of Liberty and forced from his judgeship. He forever resented the destruction of his brother's house by a Boston mob. He left America with the British evacuation of Boston in 1776, living in Britain until his death in 1791.

The Mob, also, on the same Evening, broke into the Office of the Register of the *Admiralty* & did considerable Damage there; but were prevented from an utter Destruction of it.¹⁰ They also sought after the *Custom House* Officers; but they secreted [hid] themselves — these are some of the blessed Effects of smuggling. And so abandoned from all

Virtue were the Minds of the People of *Boston*, that when the Kings Attorney examined many of them, on Oath, who were Spectators of the Scene & knew the Actors [participants], yet they exculpated them before a Grand Jury; & others, who were Men of Reputation, avoided giving any Evidence thro' Fear of the like Fate. Such was the Reign of Anarchy in *Boston*, & such the very awkward Situation in which every Friend to Government stood. Mr. *Otis* & his mirmy-dons,¹¹ the Smugglers & the black Regiment, had instilled into the Canaille¹² that Mr. *Hutchinson* had promoted the *Stamp Act*; whereas, on the Contrary, he not only had drawn up the decent *Memorial* of the Massachusetts Assembly, but, previous to it, he had repeatedly wrote to his Friends in *England* to ward it off, by showing the Inexpedience of it & the Disadvantages that would accrue from it to the English Nation, but it was in vain to struggle against the *Law of Otis*, & the *Gospel* of his black Regiment. That worthy Man must be a Victim; Mr. *Otis* said so, & it was done.

Such was the Frenzy of Anarchy that every Man was jealous [suspicious] of his Neighbor & seemed to wait for his Turn of Destruction; & such was the political Enthusiasm that the Minds of the most pious Men seemed to be wholly absorbed in the Temper of Riot. One Clergyman of *Boston*, in particular,¹³ who seemed to be devoted to an Abstraction from the World, and had gone through an Existence of near 70 Years, reputedly free from both original Sin & actual Transgression, yet by the perpetual buzzing of Incendiaries at his Ear, being inquired of, as an Oracle, what ought to be done by the People? He uttered his Decision with this laconic Answer: “*Fight up to your Knees in Blood.*” Never could the exclamation of *Tantaene animis celestibus irae*¹⁴ be more just than on this Occasion.

The *Secretary* of the Province also, who was appointed a Stamp Master, was attacked, and his House much damaged.¹⁵ He was carried to the Tree of Liberty by the Mob & a Justice of the Peace provided to swear him; & there he was obliged, on pain of Death, to take an Oath to resign his Office. This Tree stood in the Town & was consecrated as an Idol for the Mob to worship; it was properly the *Tree ordeal*, where those whom the Rioters pitched upon as State delinquents, were carried to for Trial, or brought to as the Test of political Orthodoxy. It flourished until the British Troops possessed *Boston*, when it was desecrated by being cut down & carried to the Fire ordeal to warm the natural Body. It would have been lucky for the Soldiery had it continued to give a natural Warmth as long as it had communicated its political Heat; they then would not have suffered so much by the Severity of a cold Season.

¹⁰ “William Story, the deputy register of the Vice-Admiralty Court, was visited by the mob on Aug. 16, 1765, when most of his personal and official papers and his home were damaged. Benjamin Hallowell, the comptroller of customs, suffered almost the total loss of his beautiful home.” Douglass Adair & John A Schultz, eds., *Peter Oliver's Origin and Progress of the American Rebellion: A Tory View* (The Huntington Library, 1961), p. 52.

¹¹ Myrmidons: in ancient Greek mythology, skilled and fierce warriors.

¹² Canaille: mob, rabble.

¹³ Sermon of Rev. Jonathan Mayhew, 25 August 1765, shortly before the arrival of the stamped papers. Many blamed the sermon (based on Galatians 5: 12-13) for the next day's rioting, during which the houses of the governor and of other officials were attacked.

¹⁴ “Is there so much wrath in heavenly hearts?” Vergil, *Aeneid* I, 11.

¹⁵ The secretary was Peter Oliver's brother, Andrew, who had been secretary of the colony since 1756 [Adair & Schultz, 53]. See Ramsay, p. 16.

__SONS and DAUGHTERS OF LIBERTY, 1766__

While the Sons of Liberty protested the Stamp Act by hanging British officials in effigy, punishing merchants who did not boycott British goods, and other demonstrations, young Daughters of Liberty attended spinning meetings to produce domestic cloth.

__BOSTON, FEBRUARY 24__

Last week was taken up and committed to the Custody of the SONS OF LIBERTY in this Town, a most *detestable* Object [stamped papers], lately transported to *America* — Notice being given a Jury was summon'd, and a bill found, setting forth that the said Prisoner did on the first of November last, endeavor to make its Appearance in a forcible manner, and in Defiance of the known and establish'd Laws of the British Constitution, to deprive the Subject of his Rights and Privileges, &c. — They then proceeded to Trial, which lasted two Hours, and after many learned Debates, the Evidence was so clear that the Jury, without going out of Court, found the said Prisoner guilty of a Breach of Magna Charta, and a Design to subvert the British Constitution, and alienate the affections of His Majesty's most loyal and dutiful Subjects in *America* from his Person and Government — Sentence was immediately passed by the honorable Judge of the said Court, and accordingly executed in the following Manner — A



Stage having two Effigies thereon was erected, one of them representing B—te dressed in Plaid, the other G—le [Bute and Grenville, former /current British prime ministers]; over whom was a Gallows on which the Devil appeared with a Stamp Act, and a Stamp Paper in one Hand, and a Chain in the other, hanging over the Gallows, with the following Words proceeding out of his Mouth to G—le, who held a Lock in his left Hand, *Force it* — to which he answer'd, *That we will upon the REBELS*; — B—te, who held a Key in his right hand, replies: *We can't do it!* — Upon the Stamp Paper were these Words, *For the Oppression of the WIDOW and FATHERLESS*. — Previous to this Execution on Thursday Morning last, Notifications were found posted up in several Parts of the Town, of which the following is a Copy:

HANOVER SQUARE

Boston, THURSDAY 20th February 1766

The Committee of the true born Sons of Liberty, having in their Possession a Piece of Paper mark'd with America's Oppression* — DO hereby Notify their Brethren that they are determin'd to make a public Exhibition of it under the TREE OF LIBERTY This Morning, where it will hang till XII o'Clock, and then be taken down and committed to the Flames — together with the Effigies of the Authors of this Oppression. . . .

*a Crown Stamp

. . . Since which a large Plate has been affix'd to the Tree with the following Inscription, *viz.* "This Tree was planted in the Year 1646, and prun'd by order of the SONS OF LIBERTY, February 14, 1766." So that the Tree is now become a great Ornament to the Square. — *And we doubt not but the TREE of LIBERTY will thrive and flourish, when all the Friends to the Stamp Act will decay and perish.*

The Boston Gazette: And Country Journal, 24 February 1766

__PROVIDENCE, MARCH 12__

On the 4th Instant [of the month] Eighteen *Daughters of Liberty*, young Ladies of good Reputation, assembled at the House of Doctor *Ephraim Bowen*, in this Town [Providence, Rhode Island], in Consequence of an Invitation of that Gentleman, who hath discovered a laudable Zeal for introducing Home Manufactures. There they exhibited a fine Example of Industry by spinning from Sunrise until Dark, and displayed a Spirit for saving their sinking Country rarely to be found among Persons of more Age and Experience. The Doctor provided an elegantly plain Dinner, and other Refreshments for the fair Company, but they expended but very little Time in dining and cheerfully agreed to omit Tea, to render their Conduct consistent. — Besides this Instance of their Patriotism, before they separated they unanimously resolved that the Stamp Act was unconstitutional. — that they would purchase no more *British* Manufactures unless it be repealed . . . We hear another meeting of these *Daughters of Liberty*, with many more, is intended to be held at the Court-House some Time in *April* next, there to spin a handsome Piece of Linen as a Premium [prize] to be given to the Person who shall raise the greatest Quantity of good Flax, in the County of *Providence*, in the Year 1766.

The Providence Gazette: And Country Journal, 12 March 1766

POETRY IN OPPOSITION TO THE STAMP ACT, 1765

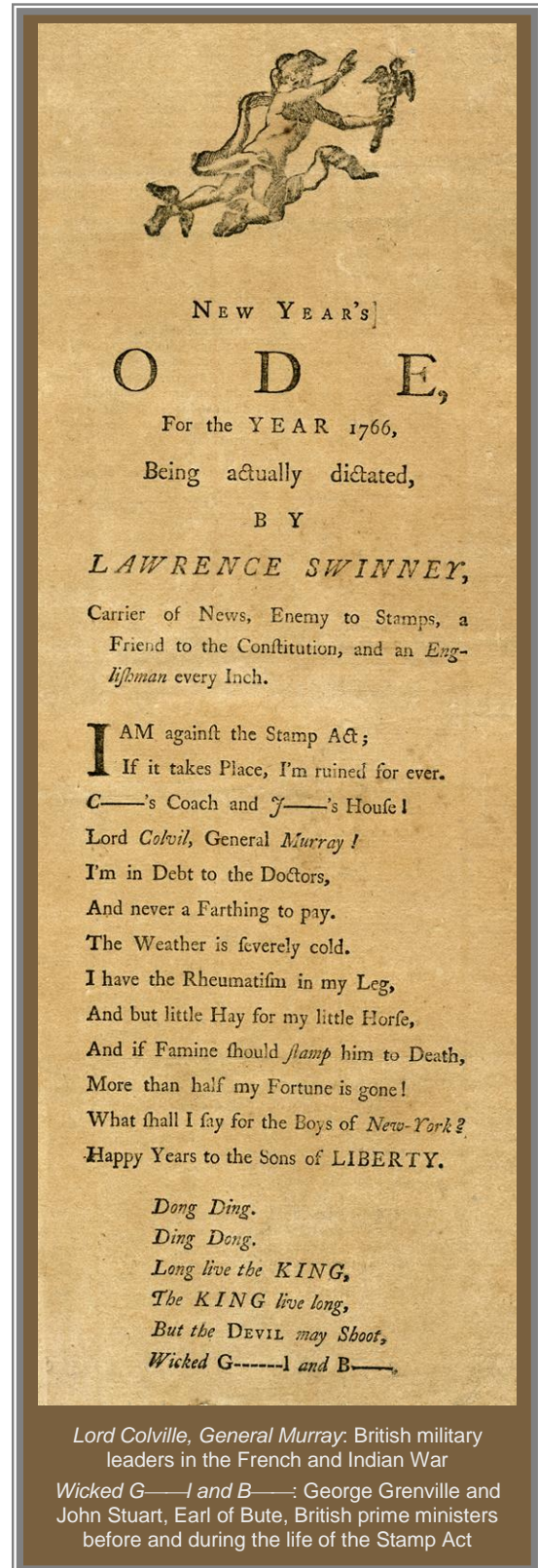
- “New Year’s Ode for the Year 1766,” publ. December 1765, distributed January 1, 1766.

News carriers often distributed broadsides with one-page poems as New Year’s greeting for their customers. Lawrence Swinney, a news carrier for the *New-York Gazette*, distributed the poem at right on January 1, 1766.

- “The Lamentation of Pennsylvania, On Account of the Stamp Act,” late 1765.

This anonymous poem is typical of many published in newspapers or as broadsides to oppose the Stamp Act. John Hughes was the newly appointed stamp distributor for the colony of Pennsylvania. Many “stampmen” resigned their positions after the colonists’ vehement protests and harassment.

ARISE my Boys, awake and hear my Song,
 Your Spirits cheer, your Liberty not gone,
 Though *England* strives to put his Stamp on you,
 We’ll drive the *Scotch* Mist back, from whence it blew.
 This *Highland* Plot ’twas first that made the Scheme;
 A spiteful Dog, whose Teeth is very keen,
 To strive to ruin *England*, Still but he,
 Shall dance without a Head you all shall see.
 Our English Natives never did invent,
 To hurt their Fellow Subjects, but prevent.
 No *GEORGE* our *British* King, did never strive:
 To hurt his Kingdom, but to make it drive.
 And now before we will receive the Stamp,
 We’ll make the *Scotch* Dogs all to have the Cramp,
 No Traitor never shall our Courage fade,
 Nor STAMPS for PHILADELPHIA then be made.
 For Liberty and Property we’ll have,
 And stand to it with Courage, then so brave;
 If *J---n H----s*, don’t the *Stamp* refuse,
 I with he may be thus abus’d.
 Grant Heaven, that he may never go without
 The Rheumatism, Itch, the Pox or Gout;
 May he be hamper’d with some ugly Witch,
 And die at last in some curst fouldsome Ditch,
 Without the Benefit of Psalms or Hymns,
 And Crowds of Crows devour his rotten Limbs.
 May wanton Boys, to Town his Bones convey,
 To make a Bonfire on a Rejoicing Day. _____



RESOLUTIONS & BOYCOTTS AGAINST THE STAMP ACT

Colonial Assemblies, Citizen Meetings, and Merchants Associations, May-November 1765, Selections

■ VIRGINIA, House of Burgesses, 29 May 1765__

1. *Resolved*, that the first adventurers and settlers of His Majesty's colony and dominion of Virginia brought with them and transmitted to their posterity . . . all the liberties, privileges, franchises, and immunities that have at any time been held, enjoyed, and possessed by the people of Great Britain.
3. *Resolved*, that the taxation of the people by themselves, or by persons chosen by themselves to represent them, who can only know what taxes the people are able to bear or the easiest method of raising them, and must themselves be affected by every tax laid on the people, is the only security against a burdensome taxation, and the distinguishing characteristic of British freedom, without which the ancient constitution cannot exist.

■ PENNSYLVANIA, Colonial Assembly, 21 September 1765__

3. *Resolved*, That the inhabitants of this Province are entitled to all the Liberties, Rights and Privileges of his Majesty's Subjects in Great Britain or elsewhere, and that the Constitution of Government in this Province is founded on the natural Rights of Mankind and the noble Principles of English Liberty and therefore is, or ought to be, perfectly free.
4. *Resolved*, That it is the inherent Birthright and indubitable Privilege of every British Subject to be taxed only by his own Consent or that of his legal Representatives, in Conjunction with his Majesty or his Substitutes.
7. *Resolved*, That the laying Taxes upon the Inhabitants of this Province in any other Manner, being manifestly subversive of public Liberty, must, of necessary Consequence, be utterly destructive of public Happiness.
8. *Resolved*, That the vesting and Authority in the Courts of Admiralty to decide in Suits relating to the Stamp Duty, and other Matters foreign to their proper Jurisdiction, is highly dangerous to the Liberties of his Majesty's American Subjects, contrary to Magna Charta, the great Charter and Fountain of English Liberty, and destructive of one of their most darling and acknowledged Rights, that of Trials by Juries.
9. *Resolved*, That it is the Opinion of this House that the Restraints imposed by several late [recent] Acts of Parliament on the Trade of this Province, at a Time when the People labor under an enormous Load of Debt, must of Necessity be attended with the most fatal Consequences, not only to this Province, but to the Trade of our Mother Country.

■ NEW JERSEY, "general meeting of the Freemen," Essex County, 25 October 1765__

5. *Resolved*, That they will detest, abhor, and hold in the utmost contempt all and every person or persons who shall meanly accept of any employment or office relating to the Stamp Act, or shall take any shelter or advantage from the same; and all and every stamp pimp, informer, favorer and encourager of the execution of the said act; and that they will have no communication with any such person, nor speak to them on any occasion, unless it be to inform them of their vileness.

■ MASSACHUSETTS, Colonial Assembly, 29 October 1765__

1. *Resolved*, That there are certain essential rights of the British constitution of government which are founded in the law of God and nature, and are the common rights of mankind; — therefore,
2. *Resolved*, That the inhabitants of this province are unalienably entitled to those essential rights in common with all men: and that no law of society can, consistent with the law of God and nature, divest them of those rights.
3. *Resolved*, That no man can justly take the property of another without his consent; and that upon this original principle the right of representation in the same body, which exercises the power of making laws for levying taxes, which is one of the main pillars of the British constitution, is evidently founded.
4. *Resolved*, That this inherent right, together with all other essential rights, liberties, privileges, and immunities of the people of Great Britain, have been fully confirmed to them by Magna Charta, and by former and later acts of Parliament.
5. *Resolved*, That his majesty's subjects in America are, in reason and common sense, entitled to the same extent of liberty with his majesty's subjects in Britain.
6. *Resolved*, That by the declaration of the royal charter of this province, the inhabitants are entitled to all the rights, liberties, and immunities of free and natural subjects of Great Britain, to all intents, purposes, and constructions whatever.

10. *Resolved*, That the inhabitants of this province are not, and never have been, represented in the Parliament of Great Britain; and that such a representation there as the subjects in Britain do actually and rightfully enjoy is impracticable for the subjects in America; . . .
12. *Resolved*, as a just conclusion from some of the foregoing resolves, That all acts made by any power whatever other than the general assembly of this province, imposing taxes on the inhabitants, are infringements of our inherent and unalienable rights as men and British subjects, and render void the most valuable declarations of our charter.
13. *Resolved*, That the extension of the powers of the court of admiralty within this province is a most violent infraction of the right of trials by juries — a right which this house, upon the principles of their British ancestors, hold most dear and sacred; it being the only security of the lives, liberties, and properties of his majesty's subjects here.
14. *Resolved*, That this house owe the strictest allegiance to his most sacred majesty king George the third; that they have the greatest veneration for the Parliament; and that they will, after the example of all their predecessors, from the settlement of this country, exert themselves to their utmost in supporting his majesty's authority in the province, in promoting the true happiness of his subjects, and in enlarging the extent of his dominion.

■ **NEW YORK CITY**, Merchants Meeting, Non-Importation Agreement, 31 October 1765__

1. *Resolved*, That in all orders they send out to Great Britain for goods or merchandise of any nature, kind, or quality whatsoever, usually imported from Great Britain, they will direct their correspondents not to ship them unless the Stamp Act be repealed. . . .
3. It is further unanimously agreed that no merchant will vend [sell] any goods or merchandise sent upon commission from Great Britain that shall be shipped from thence after the first day of January next unless upon the condition mentioned in the first resolution.

In consequence of the foregoing resolutions the retailers of goods of the city of New York subscribed a paper [printed a broadside for distribution] in the words following, viz. [namely]

We, the underwritten, retailers of goods, do hereby promise and oblige ourselves not to buy any goods, wares, or merchandises of any person or persons whatsoever that shall be shipped from Great Britain after the first day of January next unless the Stamp Act shall be repealed—as witness our hands [signatures].

■ **SOUTH CAROLINA**, Colonial Assembly, 29 November 1765__

11. *Resolved*, That, as the profits of the trade of the people of this province ultimately center in Great Britain, to pay for the manufactures which they are obliged to take from thence, they eventually contribute very largely to all the supplies granted there to the crown; and besides, as every individual in the province is as advantageous at least to Great Britain as if he were in Great Britain; and as they pay their full proportion of taxes for their support of his majesty's government here (which taxes are equal or more, in proportion to our estates, than those paid by our fellow subjects in Great Britain upon theirs), it is unreasonable for them to be called upon to pay any farther part of the charges of the government there.

■ **CONNECTICUT**, New Haven Town Meeting, 10 December 1765__

6. *Resolved*, That it is the duty of every person in the colonies to oppose by every lawful means the execution of those acts imposed on them, and if they can in no other way be relieved, to reassume their natural rights and the authority the laws of nature and of God have vested them with.

And in order effectually to prevent the execution thereof, it is recommended:

- 1st. That every officer in this colony duly execute the trust reposed in him, agreeable to the true spirit of the English constitution and the laws of this colony.
- 2d. That every officer neglecting the exercise of his office may justly expect the resentment of the people, and those who proceed may depend on their protection.
- 3d. It is presumed no person will publicly, in the pulpit or otherwise, inculcate the doctrine of passive obedience or any other doctrine tending to quiet the minds of the people in a tame submission to any unjust impositions.

THE Merchants and Traders of the city of Philadelphia, taking into their Consideration the melancholy State of the North-American Commerce in general, and the distressed situation of the Province of Pennsylvania in particular, do unanimously agree.

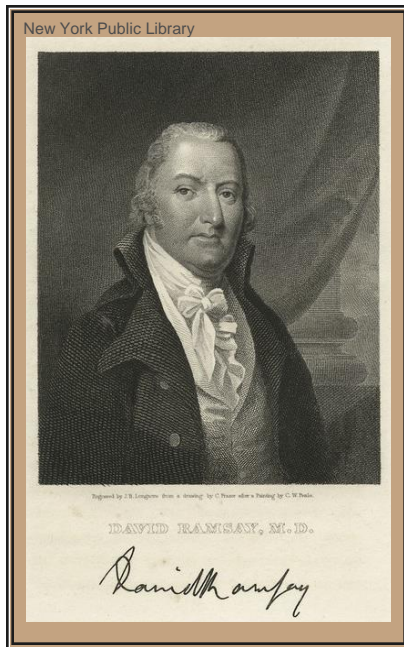
DECLARATION OF RIGHTS AND GRIEVANCES

STAMP ACT CONGRESS ■ New York City ■ 19 October 1765

Delegates from nine of the thirteen colonies sent delegates to the meeting, which issued this declaration and petitions to Parliament and the King. Parliament refused to consider the petition.

The members of this congress, sincerely devoted with the warmest sentiments of affection and duty to his majesty's person and government, inviolably attached to the present happy establishment of the Protestant succession [i.e., Glorious Revolution of 1688], and with minds deeply impressed by a sense of the present and impending misfortunes of the British colonies on this continent; having considered as maturely as time would permit the circumstances of said colonies, esteem it our indispensable duty to make the following declarations of our humble opinions, respecting the most essential rights and liberties of the colonists and of the grievances under which they labor, by reason of several late [recent] acts of Parliament.

- 1. That his majesty's subjects in these colonies owe the same allegiance to the crown of Great Britain that is owing from his subjects born within the realm, and all due subordination to that august body the Parliament of Great Britain.
- 2. That his majesty's liege subjects in these colonies are entitled to all the inherent rights and liberties of his natural born subjects within the kingdom of Great Britain.
- 3. That it is inseparably essential to the freedom of a people, and the undoubted right of Englishmen, that no taxes be imposed on them but with their own consent, given personally or by their representatives.
- 4. That the people of these colonies are not, and, from their local circumstances, cannot be, represented in the House of Commons in Great Britain.
- 5. That the only representatives of the people of these colonies are persons chosen therein by themselves; and that no taxes ever have been, or can be constitutionally imposed on them, but by their respective legislatures.
- 6. That all supplies to the crown being free gifts of the people, it is unreasonable and inconsistent with the principles and spirit of the British constitution for the people of Great Britain to grant to his majesty the property of the colonists.
- 7. That trial by jury is the inherent and invaluable right of every British subject in these colonies.
- 8. That the late [recent] act of Parliament entitled *an act for granting and applying certain stamp duties, and other duties, in the British colonies and plantations in America, &c.*, by imposing taxes on the inhabitants of these colonies, and the said act and several other acts, by extending the jurisdiction of the courts of admiralty beyond its ancient limits, have a manifest tendency to subvert the rights and liberties of the colonists.
- 9. That the duties imposed by several late acts of Parliament, from the peculiar circumstances of these colonies, will be extremely burdensome and grievous, and from the scarcity of specie [currency, esp. paper money], the payment of them absolutely impracticable.
- 10. That as the profits of the trade of these colonies ultimately center in Great Britain to pay for the manufactures which they are obliged to take from thence, they eventually contribute very largely to all supplies granted there to the crown.
- 11. That the restrictions imposed by several late acts of Parliament on the trade of these colonies will render them unable to purchase the manufactures of Great Britain.
- 12. That the increase, prosperity and happiness of these colonies depend on the full and free enjoyments of their rights and liberties, and an intercourse with Great Britain mutually affectionate and advantageous.
- 13. That it is the right of the British subjects in these colonies to petition the king, or either house of Parliament.
- Lastly, That it is the indispensable duty of these colonies, to the best of sovereigns, to the mother country, and to themselves, to endeavor by a loyal and dutiful address to his majesty, and humble applications to both houses of Parliament, to procure the repeal of the act for granting and applying certain stamp duties, of all clauses of any other acts of Parliament, whereby the jurisdiction of the admiralty is extended as aforesaid, and of the other late acts for the restriction of American commerce.



AN AMERICAN LOOKS BACK AT THE STAMP ACT, 1765

■ **DAVID RAMSAY**, *The History of the American Revolution*, 1789.

A South Carolina physician, Ramsay served as a surgeon in the Revolutionary Army. After the war, he served in the Continental Congress under the Articles of Confederation (1782-83, 1785-86), and wrote his Revolution history in the late 1780s, as the new nation was crafting its final Constitution.

. . . A new mode of displaying resentment against the friends of the Stamp Act began in Massachusetts and was followed by the other Colonies. A few gentlemen hung out early in the morning on the limb of a large tree towards the entrance of Boston, two effigies, one designed for the stampmaster, the other for a jackboot,¹⁶ with a head and horns peeping out at the top. Great numbers both from town and country came to see them. A spirit of enthusiasm was diffused among the spectators. In the evening the whole was cut down and carried in procession by the populace shouting “liberty and property forever, no stamps.” They next pulled down a new building lately erected by Mr.

[Andrew] Oliver, the stampmaster. They then went to his house, before which they beheaded his effigy and at the same time broke his windows. Eleven days after, similar violences were repeated. The mob attacked the house of Mr. William Storey, deputy register of the court of admiralty — broke his windows — forced into his dwelling house and destroyed the books and files belonging to the said court, and ruined a great part of his furniture. They next proceeded to the house of Benjamin Hallowell, Comptroller of the customs, and repeated similar excesses, and drank and destroyed his liquors. They afterwards proceeded to the house of Mr. [Thomas] Hutchinson [governor] and soon demolished it. They carried off his plate, furniture and apparel, and scattered or destroyed manuscripts and other curious and useful papers which for thirty years he had been collecting. About half a dozen of the meanest of the mob were soon after taken up and committed, but they either broke jail or otherwise escaped all punishment. The town of Boston condemned the whole proceeding, and for some time, private gentlemen kept watch at night to prevent further violences.

Similar disturbances broke out in the adjacent colonies, nearly about the same time. On the 27th August the people of Newport in Rhode Island exhibited three effigies intended for Messieurs Howard, Moffatt, and Johnson, in a cart with halters about their necks, and after hanging them on a gallows for some time, cut them down and burnt them amidst the acclamations of thousands. On the day following, the people collected at the house of Mr. Martin Howard, a lawyer, who had written in defense of the right of Parliament to tax the Americans, and demolished everything that belonged to it. They proceeded to Dr. Moffatt’s, who in conversation had supported the same right, and made a similar devastation of his property.

In Connecticut they exhibited effigies in sundry [several] places and afterwards committed them to the flames.

In New-York, the stamp master having resigned, the stamp papers were taken into Fort George by Lieutenant Governor Colden. The people, disliking his political sentiments, broke open his stable, took out his coach and carried it in triumph through the principal streets to the gallows. On one end of this they suspended the effigy of the Lieut. Governor, having in his right hand a stamped bill of lading and in the other a figure of the devil. After some time, they carried the apparatus to the gate of the fort and from thence to the bowling green under the muzzles of the guns and burned the whole amid the acclamations of many thousands. They went thence to Major James’ house, stripped it of every article and consumed the whole because he was a friend to the Stamp Act.

¹⁶ Bully; one using militaristic, authoritarian means to enforce obedience (for jackboot, a black leather military boot).