

# *Rolling Toward Revolution... December, 1773*



*Coat of Arms of the East India Tea Company*

**In London:** Motto of the East India company translated: Nothing harms the God who guides. Tea was another matter entirely...

**In Boston:** On Dec 16<sup>th</sup>, a public meeting at Old South Church presided over by Samuel Adams, was attended by more than 5,000 persons. Adams, who may (or may not) have planned events that followed, announced that the Royal Governor had refused to order the return of 3 shiploads of Bohea Tea to England contrary to the local law: the customs duty on the cargo had to be paid within 20 days or the cargo impounded or returned. It was **day 19**, no duty had been paid and the tea was still on board the ships. There was nothing more he could do; Adams told the crowd. That evening, a group of 50-130 men headed to Griffin's Wharf, dressed as Native Americans of the Mohawk tribe. In 3 hours, 340 chests of some 92,000 pounds of tea were tossed into Boston Harbor. John Adams was not in Boston that night but wrote in admiration of "so bold, so daring, so firm" actions when he heard the news the next day. *Elsewhere in the Colonies:* Tea shipments also were refused this month in New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston, although in none of these ports was there property destruction. In New York and Philly, the tea consigners were forced to resign and the unloaded ships returned to England. In Charleston, the untaxed, unclaimed tea was seized by customs officials.

**In New Jersey:** Hendrick Fisher was faithfully attending the sessions of the colonial assembly, which was meeting almost daily until 2 pm, Monday thru Saturday. The splash of tea in Boston and news about tea made no impact on the Assembly's business on the 17<sup>th</sup> nor any day through December 22<sup>nd</sup>, when Fisher's motion that the Governor grant them a recess, was passed. They would not meet again until February 1724. If the legislators had heard the news, they continued to consider mainly with the budget, coinage, and punishing counterfeiters. Fisher made sure before the recess that as Chairman of the Committee of Bridge and Road Repair that bills to repair bridges and roads in Bedminster and Bernards were introduced and passed by 14<sup>th</sup>. He also introduced an Act on the 10<sup>th</sup>, "For More Equitable Manumission of Slaves and Other Purposes. It had a 2<sup>nd</sup> reading, but no vote on the 14<sup>th</sup>. In their meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, the assembly heard letters and resolutions from representatives of Virginia, Massachusetts Bay, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Lower Delaware "respecting the Common Rights of the Colonies". Consideration of these was deferred by the assembly.

Produced by The Heritage Trail Association, 2023

The Boston Tea Party Ship. <https://www.bostontepartyship.com/boston-tea-party-history-article>

Today in American History --On this day. <https://www.onthisday.com/today/american-history.php>

Votes and Proceedings of the Provincial General Assembly of New Jersey , 1772-1776. 22<sup>nd</sup> Assembly. New Jersey State Archives online.