

Rolling Toward Revolution... March 2024



British Royal Coat of Arms 1771

In London: King George formally charged the citizens of Boston for attempting to damage British commerce on March 5 and requested Parliament do a “whatever necessary”. On March 20, Parliament responded by passing the Boston Port Act, which closed the port to all commerce (food and fuel excepted) until the damages from the “tea incident” were recovered. They followed up on March 28, with the Massachusetts Government Act, the first of several extreme and punitive laws that would soon come to be called the Coercive (British) or Intolerable (Colonists) Acts.

In Boston: Unaware that the boom was about to be lowered, John Hancock on March 7 delivered the 4th Annual Massacre Memorial Address. He denounced the presence of British troops in Boston.

In New Jersey: The New Jersey Provincial Assembly continued its deliberations until March 9. It passed several laws regulating colonial money and other fiscal issues, all of which Royal Governor Franklin signed. Somerset County at this time still included Princeton, a town of about 100 homes, and New Brunswick, its only incorporated city and major population center. The County had an estimated population of about 8,000 of whom about 8% were African descent. The most densely populated area was the corridor between New York City through the Raritan Valley. There were: six major subdivisions or townships (Bedminster, Bernards, Hillsborough, Bridgewater, Franklin, and Montgomery); two chartered towns (Bound Brook and Bedminster), several smaller village centers, and the courthouse at present-day Millstone, then simply called “Somerset Courthouse.” There were no newspapers in the County. Word of mouth and the newly authorized Committee of Correspondence was it.

In the Raritan Valley: The main industry of the Raritan Valley continued unabated: the milling of flour and other grains at the various mills located along the Raritan and Millstone and the brooks which fed them.

Sources

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