

Rolling Toward Revolution... February 1775



British Royal Coat of Arms 1771

In London: Still in London waiting for good sailing weather, on February 7, Benjamin Franklin publishes “An Imaginary Speech”. He refuted in his logical, yet cheeky, style a public accusation claiming that “Americans are unequal to the People of this Country [Britain] in Devotion to Women, and in Courage, and worse than all, they are religious.” Undevoted to women? Not so, he wrote (my paraphrase), as the population of the colonies is growing while Britain’s is in decline, implying much devotion between the men and women in America.

On February 9, Parliament formally declared that the colony of Massachusetts was in **Rebellion**. They petitioned King George take the most effective means “to enforce obedience to the laws and authority of the supreme legislature” (i.e., Parliament). Colonists suspected of resisting the royal governor are now traitors to the crown and could be shot on sight.

In New England: The port of Boston had been closed for nine months. British regulars are everywhere. The new Military Governor, General Thomas Gage exerts his authority throughout Boston and the colony, including sending spies into the countryside to make sketches of the terrain. They start with Suffolk County.

In New Jersey: The Assembly session continues to conduct routine business, beginning February 3. They hear petitions for Charters of Incorporation by two new Dutch Reformed congregations in Somerset County, the churches at Neshannik (*sic*) and Hillsborough, and advise the Governor to grant these. Lord Stirling’s complaint against Samuel Ogden was referred to the Court of Law by the Governor. On the 8th, Governor Franklin appoints Jacob Bogart, Justice of the Peace in Somerset County. On the 11th and 13th, the assembly votes to pay bills and authorizes repairs to the Queen’s Bridge in Bound Brook. A request to alter the boundaries of Hackensack for tax purposes is held over by the Governor to the April session and so, they adjourned.

Sources

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