

Rolling Toward Revolution... March 1775



British Royal Coat of Arms 1771

In London: MP Edmund Burke made a last proposal to Parliament to make peace not war. A statesman and philosopher, Burke often championed unpopular causes in Britain, including Catholic emancipation. Long a critic of taxation policies toward the American colonies, he rose in Parliament on the 22nd to appeal for peace, proposing six resolutions to avert the impending conflict. Among them: Allow Americans to elect their own representatives; acknowledge wrongdoing and apologize for grievances; set up an American General Assembly with power to regulate taxes locally; grant needed aid to the colonies. Would it have worked? We'll never know. They didn't listen.

In New England: Boston port had been closed for ten months. Military Governor General Thomas Gage's spies continued their work. An attempt to seize field pieces hidden at Salem had come to a stand-off. Next time, he was sure would be different.

In New Jersey: Although not in session this month, Jersey's Assembly delegates planned to convene in Trenton (independent of Governor Franklin) on the 29th to elect delegates for the second Continental Congress in Philadelphia in May. Virginia's colonial assembly was somewhat ahead of New Jersey, with their delegates convening on the 23rd for this same purpose. Virginians also discussed whether the time had come to raise a colonial militia independent of their Royal Governor. Delegate Patrick Henry argued passionately in favor of doing so, uttering the line for which he is now famous: "*I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!*"

In the Raritan Valley: John Gordon and his wife Anna sold their mill to Jacob Schenck. The four Tunison brothers, Philip, Abraham, Corneluis and Folkert, buried their elderly patriarch, Cornelius, in the family burial ground near the River. {It exists today as "First Settlers" or "Tunison Family" Burial Ground, off S. Bridge Street in Somerville}. Their tavern at the crossroads would remain in the family. Freeholders James Castner and Samuel Coejeman oversee the routine business of Somerset County.

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