

# Rolling Toward Revolution...December 1774



British Royal Coat of Arms 1771

**In London:** The letter received by the King from the so-called “Continental Congress”, was forwarded to Parliament. Taking their cue from the King, they also declined to read it.

**In New England:** The plans of the Continental Congress and Committees of Safety were all well and good, but word had reached Massachusetts Royal Colony that in late October, HRH George III had forbidden the export of arms and powder to the colonies. Royal Governor General Gage had already removed powder from a storage magazine near Boston. Rumors were that the magazine at Fort William and Mary overlooking Portsmouth, in New Hampshire would be next. Paul Revere rode north, some 62 miles, to warn them. On **Dec. 14**, NH militia men attacked the lightly manned fort and seized the stored powder. The following day, John Sullivan returned with additional men to confiscate the fort’s cannon. <https://fortwilliamandmary250.org/history/> If it came to blows as HRH had predicted, New England would be ready.

**In New Jersey:** Governor Franklin was relishing a major victory: His officials recently arrested and broke-up a ring of notorious counterfeiters of New Jersey’s paper money, but the colonial assembly sessions were still contentious rather than appreciative. The tea boycott, now in effect for almost a year was having some effect, and on **Dec 22**, another tea party occurred on his watch. In Greenwich, a small town along the Delaware, New Jersey’s second “tea party” took place. The merchant ship’s captain had assumed that by landing the tea across the river in Jersey as opposed to Philadelphia he could avoid trouble. He was mistaken. <https://www.cumberlandcountynj.gov/greenwich-tea-burning>

**In the Raritan Valley:** New Jersey representatives William Livingston, James Kinsey, Stephen Crane, Richard Smith, and John Dehart had signed onto the full boycott agreement (all British imports, not just tea). In November-December, they promoted this “Continental Association” among the various county Committees of Correspondence and prepared a formal report to NJ’s Assembly. Snell (1881) tells us that the record of Somerset’s County’s deliberations has been lost, but like New Englanders, they were preparing to move when they had to.

## Sources

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Snell, J. P. (1881) *History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties*. Philadelphia: Lippincott.