

NEW JERSEY IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

1. Stephen Crane and James Kinsey, delegates to the First Continental Congress.
2. This is the same delegation as was sent to the first Congress. See Sec. III, Doc. 4.
3. Prior to adjournment, the first Congress resolved to meet in May 1775 if the dispute with Britain had not been resolved by that time.
4. Cortlandt Skinner.

5 “A Jersey Farmer” Proposes a Loyalist Association

[*Rivington's New-York Gazetteer*. . . , January 26, 1775.]

Opponents of the popular front, whether staunch royalists or conservatives dedicated to law and order, began to band together in the aftermath of the First Continental Congress. However, their activities were loosely organized, covert, and clandestine. The counter-association proposed by “A Jersey Farmer” never got beyond the stage of rhetoric; there were no formal Loyalist organizations in New Jersey until the summer of 1776.

[January 26, 1775]

Mr. Rivington:¹

I am a plain countryman, and know that many of my good honest neighbours disapprove of most of the late measures and proceedings of the Congress, as well as myself; and some of them having expressed a desire, that some person would draw up a paper declarative of their sentiments, they would sign it, as the only method now left them of disavowing their ever having countenanced, or concurred in the late measures. I take the liberty, through the channel of your *useful paper*, to convey the following (to them, and others in like circumstances) which they may adopt or modify to their liking. I am,

Your most humble servant,

A Jersey Farmer

A Proposal for an Association; Humbly offered
to all Lovers of good order and government, in America

We the subscribers, having taken into our most serious consideration the grievances complained of, by the tendency and operation of certain acts of the British Parliament, relative to America, with the modes and measures adopted by *many* of the inhabitants of this country for obtaining redress; by appointing town and county meetings, provincial congresses, and lastly, a *congress* of deputies from

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the different provinces; all of which, but especially the last, did enter into many resolves, (in our opinion) highly derogatory to the honour and dignity of our most gracious Sovereign, the supreme legislative authority of Great Britain, and subversive of the legal constitution, good order and government of this country; and which, if adhered to, will in the end probably be productive of the most dreadful calamities, and "*mournful events*," to this country in general, and to those people in particular, who shall obstinately persist in carrying the resolves and associations of the late congress in execution.

Therefore we think it a duty we owe to ourselves, our King, and our country, to declare our disapprobation of the resolves, association, and proceedings of the said late congress, and also of the committees since attempting to carry the same into execution: SUCH resolves and association, with many their concordant circumstances, being, in our opinion, highly illegal, and of ruinous tendency to this country. And, as we never voted or assented to the resolves or proceedings of any town or county meetings, "*except such as by law established*," we do not hold ourselves bound by, or pay any regard or obedience to any resolutions or regulations of any congress or committee whatever; that are inconsistent with our acknowledged allegiance to our most gracious Sovereign, the laws of Great-Britain, or those of the province in which we live: but to these the known laws of the land, we not only know and will cheerfully pay just obedience; but if necessary, will expend our lives and fortunes in defence and support of the same; in opposition to all innovators and disturbers of the public peace and good order of government. NOTHING DOUBTING, but that whatever grievances we labour under, when constitutionally represented by our lawful *Assemblies*, to his Majesty and the British Parliament, they will carefully listened to, and readily removed, if compatible with the general interest of the whole EMPIRE.

1. James Rivington, New York City bookseller and printer, who in April 1773 commenced publication of the *New-York Gazetteer*. Given his conservative temperament and willingness to open the newspaper to writers of all political persuasions at a time when the popular press was dominated by Whigs, Rivington soon came to be regarded as the chief oracle of Tory sentiment. The target of much verbal abuse and a commercial boycott, Rivington fled to Britain after a band of Connecticut radicals destroyed his press in November 1775. He later returned to New York, publishing a paper during the British occupation of the city.

6 The Nottingham Petition to the Legislature

[Manuscript Collection, 70, New Jersey State Library.]