

NEW JERSEY IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

after paying the damages at £25, and asking pardon of the gaol-keeper, were again set at liberty, and embarked for their voyage, tho' many thought the punishment not adequate to the atrociousness of the transaction that brought it on, yet it is a pity, that men, who call themselves men of honour, should leave a place with such an odious name behind them. The other part of the regiment who were quartered at Amboy, embarked on board the transports the same day, and to their honour be it said, that during their continuance there, they have in general behaved with honour and integrity.

1. An accepted spelling of "jail" in the eighteenth century was "gaol"; hence "gaoler" is "jailer." It was also commonly spelled "goal" and "goaler."
2. A fusee or fusil was a small flintlock musket.
3. The customary signal for an alarm.
4. Frederick Smyth (see Sec. III, Doc. 9).

3 Samuel Allinson to David Cooper

[Letter Book, Allinson Papers, Alexander Library, Rutgers University.]

Burlington attorney Samuel Allinson (1739-1791) had a keen interest in politics and the law. Commissioned in 1762 as one of the surrogates for West Jersey, his legal talents were put to good use in compiling a new edition of provincial laws, *Acts of the General Assembly of the Province of New Jersey 1702-1775* (Burlington, 1776). Adhering faithfully to the tenets of his Quaker religion, Allinson strenuously opposed both the institution of slavery and secession from the empire in 1776. David Cooper (1724-1795), who became Allinson's father-in-law in 1773, was also a member of the Society of Friends. A prosperous Woodbury farmer, he represented Gloucester County in the assembly from 1761 to 1768. Through measures sponsored as an assemblyman and pamphlets written as a private citizen, he worked for the manumission of slaves. As spokesmen for the sizable Quaker population in New Jersey, Allinson and Cooper consistently coupled criticism of imperial policies with disavowal of violent or extralegal protest measures.

1st 1st Mo. 1768¹

Dear Friend,

... The last Chronicle² has or will show thee that our most important & interesting political Matters are now handled in a pathetick & Masterly Manner by

II TAXES AND TROOPS

Farmers; & for aught I know, one of them lives at Woodbury: if so I should be glad he would admit me into the secret by adding to the present signature a "W" in [the] future, for however it may reflect on the World, it's most certain, we read a piece with much more attention & sooner discover its excellencies when we know & regard the Author.³ I wish the last Chronicle may be read & I am confident it will be read, in England with attention; I suppose thou hast heard the Schuylkill Farmer is Dickenson.⁴

The New England governm[en]ts seem to me too forward and imprudent, but it is in character for them, their subscriptions are too declaratory of an Independency, & as the tendency of their conduct wou'd render them in a manner useless to the Mother Country, must greatly alarm her. I hope no such resolutions will be seen of our or the neighbouring provinces. G[rea]t Brit[ai]n will certainly see her interest in relieving the present distresses of the Colonies in due time if we behave prudently. An emission of Money upon the plan published in the Chronicle some time ago⁵ is now much talked of & approved by most that I have heard speak on the subject; I hear S. Smith⁶ begins to give into it, or is one of the number; for my part I fear the consequences, as every one will be at liberty to take or refuse it, w[hic]h in the end very probably [will] occasion a depreciation to the ruin of many & injury of all. I think if the governors were petitioned to call the assemblys, that they might severally remonst[ra]te & petit[io]n the King for a repeal of the restraining Act. At this time it wou'd be look'd upon in a good light as showing our dependence, submission & regard for G. B. & wou'd probably obtain the desired end.

I fear the consequence of setting up to act in contradiction to & independent of the ruling authority of our Mother Country, for altho an Instance in this way will not be equal to the N.E. proceed[ing]s, as we hereby admit the force of the law against us, yet it is evading that law and shows them we will do without them. I do not mean slavishly to submit to every burden they shall impose without endeavouring to relieve ourselves in the best manner we can but am against taking any independent measures until we have endeavoured even more than once to obtain redress by dutiful & constitutional applications for it, if then we are refused & thereby brot into extreme difficulties, we may plead the most powerful excuse for taking those Measures to relieve ourselves. My Wife sends her love to Patty &c.

I am thy affect[iona]te Friend
S. A.

1. The first day of the first month, or January 1.

2. The *Pennsylvania Chronicle, and Universal Advertiser*, launched in competition with the *Pennsylvania Gazette* and the *Pennsylvania Journal*; and the *Weekly Advertiser* on January 26, 1767, by Joseph Galloway, foremost attorney in the province, and Thomas Wharton, wealthy Quaker merchant. The publisher of the paper was William Goddard, who may have produced the *Constitutional Courant* in New Jersey in 1765. The *Chronicle* of December 2, 1767 contained an essay by "Philo-Patriae," a variant of a pseudonym used in the *Courant*.

3. Cooper denied authorship of the essay.

4. John Dickinson, whose "Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania to

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the Inhabitants of the British Colonies," contesting the Townshend program, appeared in twelve successive installments in the *Chronicle* from December 2, 1767, to February 15, 1768.

5. Allinson is referring to a proposal to issue provincial currency without the stipulation that it circulate as legal tender, thus complying with the Currency Act of 1764.

6. Samuel Smith of Burlington, Quaker merchant and member of the provincial council.

4 The Petition of the New Jersey Assembly to George III

[*Votes and Proceedings, April 15-May 10, 1768* (Woodbridge, 1768), pp. 36-39.]

Although official news of the Townshend duties reached North America in September 1767, it was not until early the following year that organized, inter-colonial protest began. Once again Massachusetts took the lead, petitioning the king to repeal the legislation on January 20 and inviting the other assemblies to follow suit on February 11. Eventually every colony protested the measure, but only the Virginia House of Burgesses, which adopted a moderate remonstrance on April 14, acted upon the Bay Colony's proposal before the Jersey assembly. Because they were acting in advance of their counterparts elsewhere, the Jersey legislators deliberately modeled their petition after the form and content suggested by the Massachusetts circular letter of February 11. Moreover, not wishing to arouse interference from Governor William Franklin, the solons took great pains to conceal both their consideration of the Massachusetts missive and the formulation of the petition; in fact, Franklin did not learn of the assembly's action until the official journals of the session were printed. In addressing their protest to the king instead of Parliament and in forwarding the petition to London agent Henry Wilmot instead of the governor, the legislators circumvented the normal channels of imperial administration. And in acting promptly and forthrightly on the Massachusetts proposal, the assemblymen demonstrated greater commitment to intercolonial unity than during the Stamp Act crisis. Nonetheless, although the legislators were resolute in stating their grievances, they were equally firm in professing loyalty to the crown. New Jersey was opposed to specific laws, not to the British imperial system.