

II TAXES AND TROOPS

whole country." Was this Abrahams?

5. On August 13, 1770, the *New-York Gazette; or, the Weekly Post-Boy* published the following report: "Last Week two New-York Importers, in crossing a Brook in New-Jersey, on their Way to Philadelphia, the Bridge sunk under them, and they both were handsomely ducked. How enormous must be the Guilt of those who would betray the Liberties of the Public, to advance their private Fortunes, when even a public Bridge is not able to support the Weight of their Eniquities? May this be the Fate of every Wretch who would sell his Country for a Mess of Pottage."

12 The Mansfield Township Resistance Resolutions

[Mansfield Township Minute Book, 101-2, New Jersey Historical Society.]

The determination to maintain the boycott of British goods until all the Townshend duties were repealed played an important role in some communities in further refining the extralegal political organizations formed at the local level during the Stamp Act troubles. The action of the residents of Mansfield Township, a predominantly Quaker community in Burlington County, is especially important. First, the residents took action as a town meeting, rather than an extralegal assemblage, in an attempt to cloak the protest movement with the mantle of legitimacy. Second, in establishing a special committee to enforce the nonimportation agreement, the citizens of Mansfield moved perceptibly toward the assumption of governmental powers and anticipated the committees of observation created by the Continental Congress in 1774.

At a meeting of the most respectable Freeholders and Inhabitants¹ of the Township of Mansfield, County of Burlington and Province of New Jersey, Conven'd by Advertisement at the usual place of Doing Publick business, August the 13th 1770.

Whereas the Merchants and Freeholders of the City of New York have most basely and in direct violation of their Publick faith Plighted to the other Colonies broke through their Non-Importation Agreement to the great encouragement of the Enemies to American Freedom, and manifest injury of their Fellow-Subjects, We the Freeholders and Inhabitants of the Township afores[ai]d, well knowing the very fatal Consequences that must inevitably result from a general Importation of Merchandize from Great Brittain at this Critical Juncture do Resolve.

1st That we owe and will maintain all due Allegiance to our rightfull Sovereign George the third King of Great Brittain France & Ireland &ca.

2d That we are as much the natural Subjects of the Dominion of Great Brittain

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as any born within the Realm, and that as such we have an undoubted Right to all the Priviledges of its happy Constitution.

3d That one of the Capital Priviledges of the British Constitution is that of the Subjects being taxed by his Representative only and that the Late Act of Parliament imposing a duty on Tea Glass &ca. [is] unconstitutional & Oppressive.²

4th That as a Testamony to the World of our disapprobation of the New-Yorker's Conduct we will not purchase nor suffer to be Purchased by any under our direction any Goods or Merchandize from the Inhabitants of the Colony of New-York nor of any Person or Persons that Shall or may purchase, procure or receive them directly or Indirectly from thence, untill the aforesaid Act imposing a duty on Tea &ca. is totally repealed.

5th That we will not Purchase nor suffer to be purchased by any under our direction any Goods or Merchandize from any Pedlar or Petty Chapman,³ but will always strictly inquire into their Authority to Sell or vend Goods, as it cannot possibly be ascertain'd of whom they Purchase or from whence they Receive them.

6th That any Person or Persons who may be Suspected of having in Possession any Goods or Merchandize Imported in, brough[t] from or through the Province of New York, who Shall refuse when requested by any Person or Persons hereafter appointed for the purpose to give an Acco[un]t in what manner they came by such Goods &ca. shall be deem'd Guilty of a violation of this agreement, and his her or their names shall be publish'd in order that they may be handed down with deserv'd infamy to Posterity.

7th That we will exert ourselves by every legal & Constitutional means in our power to aid & Assist all those generous Friends of American Freedom who nobly sacrifice their Private Interest to Serve the Public Good.

8th That Robert Field, William Potts, Peter Talman, Clayton Newbold, & John Black be a Committee to examine into the Trade; the Majority to hear all Complaints determin[e] & Punish Offenders according to the true intent & meaning of these Resolutions, also to correspond with other Committees as occasion may require, and to Publish these resolves with part or all of the other Towns in the County when and where they may think proper.⁴

9th That all these resolves with the Advertisement preparative thereto be entered on the record of the Town and strictly adher'd to untill the same shall be made Void by a general Town Meeting to be call'd by the Committee aforesaid.

1. Freeholders were white adult males who, possessing a specified amount of property, were qualified by law to vote in elections; inhabitants were residents who did not meet suffrage requirements.

2. The Townshend duties of 1767.

3. A roving retailer of small goods.

4. Each committeeman held elected governmental positions in the town; all were Quakers.