

## I REFORM AND RESISTANCE

1. I know of no such advertisement.
2. I have inserted this sentence, a marginal notation in the original, into the text since that apparently was the author's intent.
3. The petition of the Stamp Act Congress.
4. The writer is referring to a series of bold declarations issued by the New England Sons of Liberty during the winter of 1765-1766, perhaps the most audacious being the assertion of the Wallingford, Connecticut, Liberty Boys on January 31: "That we will oppose the same [the Stamp Act] to the last extremity, even to take the field." *Connecticut Courant*, February 3, 1766.
5. A reference to the migration of Separatists (the "Pilgrims") and Puritans to New England in the 1620s and the 1630s because of opposition to the Church of England (Anglican).

### 13 The Resolutions of the Woodbridge Sons of Liberty

[*New-York Gazette; or, the Weekly Post-Boy*, March 6, 1766.]

Chapters of the Sons of Liberty appeared in New Jersey in February and March 1766, largely because of prompting by the New York City Liberty Boys. Most popular and effective in the Middlesex County communities of New Brunswick and Woodbridge, the Jersey Sons were important in further galvanizing opposition to the Stamp Act and providing greater unity to the resistance movement. Eschewing the radicalism that marked the activities of Sons in other colonies, the Jersey organizations accurately reflected the resolute yet moderate temperament of the province in the imperial crisis. Nonetheless, they embodied both the potential for more extreme forms of protest should the stamp tax be retained and the actuality of an agency capable of enforcing the measures of the popular front at the local level.

Woodbridge, February 26, 1766

Sir,<sup>1</sup>

Please to insert the following Resolves in your next Paper.

AT a Meeting of the SONS of LIBERTY, of Woodbridge, in New-Jersey, they have come into the following RESOLVES.

I. RESOLV'D, That we yield hearty and unfeigned Obedience to His Majesty King GEORGE the Third.

II. RESOLV'D, That we maintain and abide by all and singular the Constitutional Laws of our Mother Country; but no other Laws or Impositions whatsoever.

## NEW JERSEY IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

III. RESOLV'D, That as we are of the unanimous Opinion of our Countrymen, that the STAMP ACT is unconstitutional, we will pay no Sort of Regard to it; but are resolv'd to oppose it to the utmost, with our Lives and Fortunes, if the glorious Cause of Liberty requires it.

IV. RESOLV'D, That a Committee of five Persons be immediately chosen, to act in Conjunction with the several Committees of our neighbouring Townships in the County of Middlesex, in Order that the respective Committees of the several Townships may form a Committee out of their own Body, to act in Conjunction with the several Committees of the neighbouring Counties in the Province of New-Jersey, that we may be in actual Readiness on any Emergency.<sup>2</sup>

V. RESOLV'D, That our Committee are hereby authorized to transact all Affairs relating to the Stamp Act, any Three of which acting, shall be decisive.

VI. RESOLV'D, That we commit these Resolves to the Press, without any Design to Dictate to our neighbouring Towns or Counties, but only to communicate our Sentiments, for them to improve upon; and shall be ever ready to hear other Proposals that they shall think more conducive to the public End aim'd at, namely, the Union of the Provinces throughout the Continent.

P. S. We have taken the above Measures, in Consequence of a Letter from a Committee of the Sons of Liberty of the City of New-York, recommending such a Step as a necessary Precaution against the Stamp Act.

1. John Holt, publisher of the paper.
2. The identities of the committeemen are not known.

### 14 Richard Smith to the Committee of Correspondence of the New York City Sons of Liberty

[Miscellaneous Manuscripts, 502, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.]

Support for the Sons of Liberty was not nearly as widespread in the more rural areas of West Jersey as in the towns of the eastern division. The counties of south Jersey were especially cool toward the organization, owing mainly to the presence of a sizable Quaker population. Still, the resistance movement had firm supporters in the West, among them some members of the Society of Friends who, like Richard Smith, placed political above religious convictions. Richard Smith, Jr. (1735-1803), maintained an extensive law practice in Burlington and Philadelphia in addition to performing the duties of county clerk for Burlington. Despite his Quaker professions, Smith played an active role in the