



William Franklin (1731-1813), son of Benjamin, and the last Royal Governor of New Jersey (1763-1776).

NEW JERSEY REBELS: *The Evolution of a Revolution 1765-1776*

New Jersey is not one of the colonies, like Massachusetts or Virginia, that first comes to mind when we think of the outbreak of revolt in 1775, and of the stirring events leading up to. And yet without the united and unanimous involvement of *all* the colonies, presumably, the independence movement could not but have fallen significantly short of its aim. It only makes sense then to join to our knowledge of the Boston Tea Party, Patrick Henry, and Lexington a better sense and idea than what is commonly had of what was going on elsewhere in the thirteen colonies – in, for example, such an one as New Jersey. Indeed, until Howe invaded (and, without himself quite intending to, ravaged) the state in late 1776, consensus in New Jersey was far from an obviously settled matter. And even after Washington’s startling victories of Trenton and Princeton, the state remained an important source for loyalist soldiers; furnishing as it did one of the British army’s most notable and (relatively) full strength Provincial regiments, the New Jersey Volunteers.

By way of selected extracts then from the dated and catalogued entries found in the *Analytical Index to the Colonial Documents of New Jersey, In the State Paper Offices of England* (1858)¹ compiled by Henry Stevens, it is possible to present an informative and edifying picture of how the Revolutionary cause evolved in that colony become state. It is then with this object in mind that we submit the following pertinent portions of Stevens’ compendium to you our readers. If granted this presentation is, as we frankly concede in advance, much less than perfect, not thoroughly meticulous, or on all points exact, it does have the merit of being a brief and digestible summary. And despite unavoidable gaps in the record (whether here or in Stevens’ work as a whole), these entries manage to vividly impart no little of the drama of the times; accompanied by lively, albeit terse, vignettes and sketches of a number of that drama’s leading participants. Those entries in square brackets refer to items or material included as added documents not formally a part of the Royal and official correspondence itself of which this outline is chiefly comprised and in reference to. One thing that becomes apparent in perusing such a record as this is that “taxation without representation” was merely one of a number of issues which set the colonies and Britain at loggerheads. And just as or of more concern to the colonists was the interference with the crown in the power of the colonial assemblies -- including in one instance insisting that *country coroners* be royally appointed rather than chosen by the provincial legislatures.

Most of the footnotes and citations in Stevens’ original text have been omitted; while in the meantime we’ve inserted mention of important events and dates in the general chronology to help the reader better follow what was transpiring from the larger view.

~~~~~\*\*\*~~~~~

**1764**

[April 5, 1764 - The Sugar Act]

---

<sup>1</sup> Found in *Collections of the New Jersey Historical Society* (1858), Volume 5.

Aug. 11. St. James'. Circular Letter from the Secr. of State to the Governors in North America, desiring them from time to time to transmit such information as they may procure relative to the illicit trade within their respective Governments -- the method in which it is conducted, the commodities in which it is concerned, the extent to which it is carried, and the means of preventing the same.

Aug. 11. St. James'. Circular Letter from the Secr. of State to the Governors in North America, desiring them that the conveyance of letters, by the post, should be facilitated and extended throughout the Colonies.

[Aug. 24. Elizabethtown. Letter from Robert Ogden to Cortlandt Skinner -- Encloses a copy of resolutions received from the Committee of Correspondence of Massachusetts Assembly, for his perusal and advice -- all the Colonies should unite and exert themselves to keep off the threatened blow of imposing taxes, duties, &c., -- an Assembly having been called in New York, suggests that Gov'r [William] Franklin<sup>2</sup> be requested to call the New Jersey Assembly at an early day.]

[Mr. Ogden was delegate from New Jersey to the Congress which met in New York, Oct. 7, 1765, and shared with Mr. Ruggles, of Massachusetts, the unenviable distinction of having dissented from the action of the Congress and withdrawn from its deliberations. Being Speaker of the New Jersey Assembly, a meeting of that body was called at his request on 27th Nov., and the next day he resigned that position and his seat as a member from Essex Co., and an indirect censure was passed upon him by resolutions thanking his associates in the Congress for the "faithful and judicious discharge of the trust reposed in them."]

[Sept. 1, 1764 - The Currency Act]

## 1765

Feb. 9. St. James'. Circular Letter from the Earl of Halifax to the Governors in North America, transmitting some explanatory orders relative to the command of the troops stationed in their respective Governments.

[March 22, 1765 - The Stamp Act]

[March 24, 1765 - The Quartering Act]

June 20. Burlington.<sup>3</sup> Letter from the Speaker of the Assembly of New Jersey to the Speaker of the Massachusetts Bay Assembly -- Though the people of New Jersey are not without "a just sensibility" respecting the Stamp Act, yet they are against uniting on the present occasion, and only wish the other Colonies success they can "loyally and reasonably desire."

Sept. 14. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to General [Thomas] Gage -- The Distributor of Stamps in New Jersey having resigned his office on account of the intimations he had received, and having refused to take the charge of the said stamps, Gov'r Franklin is desirous to be informed whether he could have the aid of the military in case he should find it necessary to call upon them.

Sept. 16. New York. Letter from Gen. Gage to Gov'r Franklin, informing him that he may depend upon having one hundred men, with proper officers, ready to march to New Jersey at his requisition, to preserve good order in that Province.

Sept. 23. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the R't Hon. H. S. Conway, Secr. of State -- Congratulates upon his appointment to the Secretaryship -- the principal matter which agitates the minds of the people of New Jersey, is the Act of Parliament for establishing a stamp duty in America -- the Distributor of Stamps resigned his office -- Gen. Gage has promised the aid of the military if it should be

---

<sup>2</sup> Loyalist son of Benjamin Franklin.

<sup>3</sup> New Jersey then was divided in two halves, and had two capitals: Burlington in the west and Perth Amboy in the east.

necessary -- he, the Governor, will appoint a person to distribute the stamps until he receives further commands on the subject from home.

Oct. 10. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Board of Trade -- Notwithstanding the many inflammatory publications which have been circulated against the Stamp Act, from the neighbouring Provinces, peace and order prevails throughout New Jersey -- the Distributor of Stamps resigned his office through timidity -- the stamps are removed on board the King's ship Sardine -- there will be a great difficulty to find any gentleman in the Province who can give security, and be willing to undertake the office of Distributor of Stamps.

Nov. 13. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Board of Trade -- Received no instructions to carry the Stamp Act into execution -- transmits a copy of the Minutes of Council, with their advice on the subject -- the seditious spirit from the neighbouring Colonies is beginning to appear in New Jersey -- the people of that Province are sure to follow the example set to them by their neighbours -- at the last Supreme Court only criminal matters were transacted -- the lawyers have entered into an agreement not to act under the Stamp Law.

Nov. 30. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to Secr. Conway -- The infection, with regard to the Stamp Act, has spread from the neighbouring Colonies to N. Jersey -- they committed no riots as yet, but the most prudent management is necessary to prevent them -- the Minutes of Council and Votes of Assembly are sent to enable to form a true judgment of the situation of the Province.

[Dec. 9. Letter from the Committee of Correspondence of the New Jersey Assembly to Joseph Sherwood, the agent of the Province, in London -- Transmitting copies of the petitions to the King and both Houses of Parliament, agreed to by the Congress in New York -- the Minutes of the House of Assembly, relating to the resignation of the Speaker, (Robert Ogden,) and communicating their views upon the exciting topics of the day.]

## 1766

[March 18, 1766 - The Declaratory Act]

## 1767

[June 29, 1767 - The Townshend (Revenue) Act. Other Townshend Acts later included in the same year were the Indemnity Act, the Commissioners of Customs Act, the Vice Admiralty Court Act, and the New York Restraining Act.]

July 18. Whitehall. Letter from Secr. Shelburne to Gov'r Franklin -- Conveying the King's displeasure at the Assembly of N. Jersey for having avoided a complete obedience to an Act of the British Parliament, for rendering more effectual in America, an Act for punishing mutiny and desertion.

Aug. 7. Letter from the Secr. of State to Gov'r Franklin, enclosing an Order in Council repealing an Act passed in the Province of New Jersey, for supplying the barracks with furniture and other necessaries for the King's troops, and copy of the representation from the Board of Trade upon said Act.

Aug. 22. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to Secr. Shelburne -- Sends Minutes of Council and Assembly, and copies of twelve Acts passed at the last session -- the Assembly of New Jersey made provision for supplying the King's troops, quartered in that Colony, with all the necessaries required by Act of Parliament.

(Oct.) 22. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to Secr. Shelburne -- The inequality of the expense in quartering troops causes dissatisfaction in the Colonies -- suggests a plan to obviate this, by appropriating some of the Crown revenue in America, for the defraying of those expenses for the future.

## 1768

Jan. 23. Whitehall. Circular Letter from the Earl of Hillsborough to all the Governors in North America and the West Indies, desiring them to transmit a complete collection, either in manuscript or print, of the laws of each Colony.

Feb. 20. Whitehall. Circular Letter from the Earl of Hillsborough to all the Governors in North America, transmitting a duplicate of the Address of the House of Commons to the King, of the 27th March, 1766, and desiring the Governors to pay exact obedience to the said Address.

Feb. 23. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Hillsborough, Secr. of State, to Gov'r Franklin -- The law passed in New Jersey for making provision for quartering the King's troops is referred to the Board of Trade -- the King received the greatest satisfaction from the submission and obedience of the Colonies, to the laws and authority of the Mother Country -- his, the Governor's, plan for regulating the expenses in the Colonies for quartering the King's troops, will have a proper attention paid to it -- any irregularities and improper behaviour of the officers or soldiers ought to be severely punished.

[April 4. Great Barrington, Mass. Rev. Samuel Hopkins to Rev. Mr. Bellamy -- The Rev. Jeremiah Halsey of Lamington, N. J., preached the public Lecture for Mr. Foxcraft, in Boston -- he greatly disoblged every clergyman in town, except one or two -- his theme Was: 'Tis impossible for an impenitent to believe on Christ -- and one inference was, that faith is not the first act of the renewed soul -- Dr. Chauncy says he is astonished at the man's impudence -- the Clergy in Boston are greatly displeased with the letter wrote by the Convention of Clergy at Elizabethtown, in which they repeatedly declare they have nothing against a Bishop's being sent to America, if by an Act of Parliament he may be confined wholly to the people of his own denomination, and excluded from all civil authority, &c., -- they say this gives up the whole, even all they desire -- such an Act of Parliament may be made, but will soon be repealed, when a Bishop has once got footing in America, &c., &c.]

April 30. Whitehall. Circular Letter from the Earl of Hillsborough to all the Governors on the Continent of America, directing them to take all legal measures for the apprehending of Melchisedeck Kinsman, charged with murder of one William Odgers, a Custom Officer, who sailed from Falmouth in one of the N. York packets about three weeks ago.

May 7. New Jersey. The Humble Address and Petition of the Assembly of New Jersey to the King, praying relief from some of the late Acts of Parliament imposing a duty on them for the express purpose of raising a revenue.

N. B.-- This Address was not delivered until after the 15th Nov., 1768. See the E. of H.'s letter to Gov'r Franklin of that date.

May 9. Virginia. Letter from Payton [Peyton] Randolph, Speaker of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, to the Speaker of the Assembly of New Jersey, calling upon the said Assembly to join the union, in order to take every regular step to assert their constitutional liberty, of which the late Acts of the British Parliament manifestly tend to deprive them of.

Enclosed in letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Holderness, Jan. 28, 1769.

May 14. Whitehall. Letter from Secretary Lord Hillsborough to the Governor of New Jersey -- Requesting him to give all the assistance and support in his power to the Officers of Customs in the discharge of their duties.

July 11. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to Secr. Hillsborough -- The Assembly of New Jersey sent an answer to the letter from the Speaker of the Massachusetts Bay, but no notice of it was taken on their Minutes, which induced him to believe they had not -- the answer was printed in "The Pennsylvania Chronicle and Universal Advertiser" of 4th July, 1768, No. 24, of Vol. II., a copy of which is herewith enclosed -- the Assembly of New Jersey have been dissolved, and a new one elected -- sends an anonymous pamphlet, published first in New York, and reprinted in Philadelphia.

Enclosing the Pennsylvania Chronicle and Universal Advertiser, July 11, 1768, and "The Power and Grandeur of G't Br., &c.," (a pamphlet).

----- Philadelphia. A pamphlet entitled "The Power and Grandeur of Great Britain, founded on the liberty of the Colonies, and the mischiefs attending the taxing them by Act of Parliament, demonstrated" --- Philadelphia, printed and sold by Wm. Goddard, at the new Printing Office in Market Street. MDCCLXVIII.

Enclosed in foregoing letter of Gov'r Franklin.

[Aug. 1, 1768 - Boston Non-Importation Agreement]

August 25. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Hillsborough -- Received copies of several papers relative to the murder of William Odgers, one of the Officers of the Customs in Cornwall -- every step will be taken to secure the murderer if he should be found within the Government of N. J.

Aug. 25. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Hillsborough, in answer to the complaint made by the Commissioners of Customs in America to the King -- There has been but one instance in N. Jersey when one of the Custom Officers was obstructed in the execution of his duty; but Mr. Hatton, the Collector of Salem, had exceedingly misbehaved himself, being "a man of a most unhappy temper."

## 1769

May 13. Whitehall. Letter from Sec. Lord Hillsborough to the Governor of New Jersey -- Encloses the King's speech to Parliament -- His Majesty's present Government have at no time entertained a design to propose laying any further taxes on America, for the purpose of raising a revenue -- their intention to propose the taking off duties upon glass, paper and colours, such duties having been laid contrary to the true principles of commerce -- reliance upon his prudence to explain such measures, which may tend to remove prejudices and re-establish mutual confidence and affection.

## 1770

[Jan. 28. New York. Gov'r Franklin to Cortlandt Skinner -- The riotous proceedings at Monmouth of so alarming a nature that he had thought it necessary to summon a meeting of the Council at Amboy on 7th Feb., and to require the attendance of the Sheriff and Justices of the County present at the riot -- the affair such an audacious insult to the Government, that let the consequences be what they might, the offenders should be punished in the most exemplary manner.]

[March 5, 1770 - The Boston Massacre]

[April 12, 1770 -- Parliament repeals Townshend Acts]

April 28. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Hillsborough -- The mandamus appointing Mr. Stephen Skinner of the Council of N. Jersey received -- the Assembly was called on account of the riots committed by the "Sons of Liberty" in the counties of Monmouth and Essex, but the rioters are entirely quelled and humbled -- observations upon an Act against excessive costs in the recovery of debts under £50 -- the Assembly are pressing the Governor to give up the appointment of Coroners, and to let them for the future be entirely elected by the people as in the counties in England.

June 6. St. James'. Order of Council, disallowing two Acts of the Assembly of New Jersey passed in 1769, viz., an Act for striking £100,000 in bills of credit, and a supplementary Act for settling the common lands of the township of Bergen.

June 12. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Hillsborough to Gov'r Franklin, desiring him to take the proper steps for promulgating His Majesty's Royal disallowance of two Acts of the Province of New Jersey.

July 6. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Hillsborough to Gov'r Franklin -- The Acts of the Assembly of New Jersey are communicated to the Board of Trade -- the activity and zeal of the Council and Civil Magistrates to suppress the riots in the counties of Monmouth and Essex highly commended -- the King approves Gov'r Franklin's conduct in not giving up the power of appointing Coroners.

Sept. 29. Perth Amboy. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Hillsborough -- The members of the Assembly of New Jersey are greatly displeased at the disallowance of the paper money Act, and it is to be feared that a party among them will take the advantage of the ill-humor, and prevail on the Assembly not to grant any money for the support of the King's troops stationed in that Province.

Nov. 5. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Hillsborough -- The session of the Assembly of New Jersey lasted until the 27th of Oct. -- they came to a resolution that no further provision should be made for the supply of the troops, but the matter was reconsidered, and they granted £500 currency for that purpose, which will last until April -- the Assembly have left the appointment of the barrack masters entirely to the Governor -- the masters nominated by the Assembly greatly imposed upon and defrauded the Province.

Nov. 15. Whitehall. Letter from Secr. Lord Hillsborough to the Governor of New Jersey -- The King's pleasure that he should, without delay, with the advice of his Council and Assembly, fall upon some means to put Indian affairs under such regulations as may have the effect of preventing abuses of trade and violences, &c., which the Indians so justly complain of.

Dec. 11. Whitehall. Circular Letter from the Earl of Hillsborough to the Governors in North America and West Indies, directing them to give every assistance to the King's Officers to raise such a number of recruits as shall be necessary for augmenting the battalions now serving in America.

Dec. 11. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Hillsborough to Governor Franklin -- Transmits two Orders of Council; one disallowing an Act of New Jersey for regulating the practice of the law, another confirming an Act for choosing Representatives in the counties of Morris, Cumberland, and Sussex -- observations upon the said Acts.

Dec. 19. Whitehall. Representation from the Board of Trade to the King, recommending the repeal of an Act of the Assembly of New Jersey, passed there in November, 1769, entitled "An Act to erect courts in the several counties in this Colony for the trial of causes of ten pounds and under."

## 1771.

Jan. 2. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Hillsborough to Gov'r Franklin -- Nothing would have been more unbecoming than the New Jersey Assembly's refusal to provide for the King's troops -- it gives great pleasure to find they had receded from so indecent a resolution.

[March 30. Burlington. Letter from Governor Franklin to Lieutenant Arthur Wadman, 26th Regiment -- Promising all the assistance in his power in furthering the recruiting of men in New Jersey -- Lieut. W. having arrived in the Province for the purpose, and made New Brunswick his headquarters -- had issued a proclamation to all magistrates and other civil officers to aid and assist.]

May 4. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Hillsborough to Gov'r Franklin -- The King doubts not but the people of New Jersey will put themselves in a state of defence in case of a war with Spain -- His Lordship is aware of the difficulties that will attend making a general regulation for the Indian trade, and cannot but lament the obstacles which have been thrown in the way of establishing a general superintending power over all the British' Dominions in America -- the King has been pleased to approve Mr. D. Coxe for the vacancy in the Council of New Jersey, occasioned by the death of Mr. John Ladd.

June 1. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Hillsborough -- The Assembly of New Jersey still refuse to grant any money for the supply of the King's troops stationed there -- the reasons why they should not be dissolved -- they will be prorogued from time to time, until the orders from the King shall arrive what is to be done in this matter.

June 7. St. James'. Order of Council disallowing an Act of the Assembly of New Jersey, passed in March, 1770, entitled "An Act to explain and amend an Act for the relief of insolvent debtors."

June 7. St. James'. Order of Council disallowing an Act of the Assembly of New Jersey, passed in November, 1769, entitled an Act to erect Courts in the several counties in this Colony for the trial of causes of ten pounds and under.

Oct. 21. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Hillsborough -- Mr. Lawrence thankful for the honor of being appointed to the Council Board of New Jersey -- the meeting of the Assembly will take place on the 20th November, when he will not fail to renew his endeavours to persuade the Assembly to provide for the King's troops -- is surprised to find that the Commissioners of the Customs at Boston have transmitted to the Treasury Board the complaint of Hatton, whom they knew to have before acted "as a villain in his office."

Dec. 27. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Hillsborough -- The Assembly was prevailed upon to provide for the arrears due to the troops stationed in New Jersey -- the debt of the Colony incurred during the late war, about £200,000 currency, is to be paid off annually until 1783, at £15,000 a-year -- observations on this subject -- the matter of appointment of an Agent is also settled agreeably to the wishes of the Board of Trade.

## 1772

Feb. 8. Whitehall. Circular Letter from the Earl of Hillsborough to all the Governors in America, informing them of the death of the Princess Dowager of Wales, which took place on that day in the morning. Enclosing. Circular about the mourning, and Circular about the alteration of the Form of prayer for the Royal Family.

Feb. 13. Whitehall. Representation from the Board of Trade to the King -- Enclosing drafts of an additional instruction for the Governors in America, relating to the alteration in the prayers for the Royal Family.

March 4. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Hillsborough to Gov'r Franklin -- The King approves of the zeal and attention shown for his service in obtaining the provision for his troops lately stationed in New Jersey.

[June 9, 1772 - The burning of the *Gaspee*]

June 24. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Hillsborough -- Glad to hear that his success to obtain a provision for the troops has been so satisfactory to the King -- the Assembly are called for the 19th of Aug.

Sept. 4. Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to the Chief Justices of New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and the Judge of the Vice Admiralty Court at Boston, informing of their being appointed Commissioners for inquiring into and making report to the King of all the circumstances relative to the attacking, plundering and burning the *Gaspee* schooner within the Colony of Rhode Island.

Sept. 4. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth (Secr. of State) to Gov'r Franklin -- In consequence of the daring insult offered to His Majesty's Commission, in the plundering and burning the *Gaspee* schooner in the River of Narraganset, within the Colony of Rhode Island, the Chief Justice of N. Jersey is directed with all convenient despatch to repair thither, in order to the carrying the issued Commission into execution.

Sept. 5. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to the Chief Justices of New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and the Judge of the Vice Admiralty Court at Boston, enclosing copy of a despatch received from R. Ad. Montague, with the list of the names of persons stated to have been ringleaders in the attack and burning of the *Gaspee* schooner in Rhode Island.

Oct. 5. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Hillsborough -- The Assembly of New Jersey (notwithstanding all the resolutions of the late House to the contrary) granted a sum of money for the support of the King's troops.

Oct. 5. Amboy, N. J. Letter from Mr. Smyth, Chief Justice of New Jersey, to the (Earl of Hillsborough) -- Arrived at N. York on the 22d of Sept., -- on his coming to New Jersey he found the Governor and Assembly engaged in a violent contest on the subject of the Treasurer of the Province, who about four years ago was robbed of £6000 of public money -- the opinion of the people in general on the subject of the new projected Government on the Ohio is very unfavorable -- desires to be allowed to receive a certain sum of money that may be granted by the Assembly for his travelling expenses on the Circuit -- the demand for the British goods in the Colonies is very brisk.

### 1773

Feb. 8. New York. Letter from Frederick Smyth, Esq., Chief Justice of New Jersey, to the Earl of Dartmouth, upon his return from Rhode Island, where he went to assist in carrying on an inquiry into the circumstance relative to the plundering and burning the schooner *Gaspee* -- gives a particular account of the disposition of the inhabitants of that and the neighbouring Provinces, and expresses his fears that the intention of the Government will be defeated, and the offenders screened from the hand of justice.

[May 10, 1773 - The Tea Act]

[Dec. 16 1773 - Boston Tea Party]

### 1774

March 10. Whitehall. Circular Letter from Mr. Pownall, by order of the Earl of Dartmouth, to all the Governors in America, enclosing copies of the King's Message to both Houses of Parliament, relative to the disturbances in America, and the resolutions of both Houses which followed thereupon.

[March 31, 1774 - Boston Port Act]

April 6. Whitehall. Circular Letter from Mr. Pownall, by direction of the Earl of Dartmouth, to all the Governors in America, enclosing copy of an Act of Parliament to prevent the landing of goods in the harbour of Boston.

[May 20, 1774 - Administration of Justice Act and Massachusetts Government Act]

May 31. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- The people of New Jersey are not concerned in carrying on any commerce with the Massachusetts Bay -- the merchants of Philadelphia and New York are inclined to assist those of Boston -- a Congress of members of the several Houses of Assembly proposed -- the people of New Jersey joined in the scheme, as they did not choose to appear singular -- the measure is absurd, if not unconstitutional -- he will endeavour to keep the Province quiet, and no attachment nor connections shall ever make him swerve from the duty of his station -- as the times are likely to be more and more difficult, the Seat of Government will be removed to Amboy, where a Council can be assembled with greater ease than at Burlington.



June. 1. Whitehall. Circular Letter from Mr. Knox, by order of the Earl of Dartmouth, to all the Governors in America, (except Massachusetts Bay,) transmitting copies of two Acts of Parliament, viz. -- An Act for the impartial administration of justice in the cases of persons questioned for any acts done by them in the execution of the law, or for the suppression of the riots and tumults in Mass'ts Bay; and an Act for better regulating the Government of the Province of Mass'ts Bay, in New England -- directing the said Acts to be made public in each colony.

[June 2, 1774 - (2<sup>nd</sup>) Quartering Act]

[June 13. Elizabethtown. Letter from the Committee of the people of Essex County to the inhabitants of Monmouth County -- "Friends to the liberties and privileges of the American Colonies" -- commenting upon the events at Boston, and recommending a general meeting at New Brunswick, July 21.]

[June 22, 1774 - Quebec Act]

July 6. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to Gov'r Franklin -- It could hardly be expected that the Assembly of New Jersey would resist appointing a Committee of Correspondence -- the King approves the removal of the Government Seat from Burlington to Amboy.

Sept. 3 & 5. Philadelphia. Extracts of two (secret and confidential) letters from one of the Delegates for the Congress at Philaphia [sic] to Gov'r Franklin -- Giving an account of the temper of the Delegates, their first day's proceedings, individual description of some of them -- the resolves, &c.  
Enclosed in Gov'r Franklin's letter to the Earl of Dartmouth of 6th September, 1774.

[Sept. 5-Oct. 26 - Meeting of the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia]

Sept. 6. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- There has been a general meeting at New Brunswick, when they came to resolutions similar to those of the other Colonies a copy of which is contained in the enclosed -- "The Pennsylvania Gazette" [July 27, No. 2379] -- transmits copies of two letters from a member of the Congress, containing an account of their first two days' proceedings, with the request that they should be kept secret [dated Sept. 3 and Sept. 5] -- the same gentleman wrote a pamphlet, entitled "Arguments on both Sides, &c.," which is already printed, and a copy herewith transmitted, but is doubtful whether it will be of any use to make it public.

-- A printed Pamphlet, but it is very doubtful if ever it was circulated, entitled "Arguments on both sides in the dispute between G't Britain and her Colonies," -- In which those in favor of the power of Parliament to bind the Colonies are stated and answered, and the rights of the Colonists explained and asserted on new and just principles -- by a sincere friend to both countries -- to which is added, Lord N.'s [North's] Political Creed with respect to America -- printed in the year 1774.

Enclosed in Gov'r Franklin's letter to the Earl of Dartmouth, of 6th Sept., 1774.

Sept. 7. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to Gov'r Franklin -- Acknowledges the receipt of several public papers -- the King is very much concerned about the nomination of Deputies from the different Colonies to meet in general Congress at Philadelphia -- the complaints of grievances coming from each Colony separately, would have much greater weight than from a channel, of the propriety and legality of which there may be much doubt -- the measure is gone too far to encourage any hope of its being retracted.

Oct. 19. Whitehall. Circular Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to all the Governors in America -- Enclosing King's order for arresting and securing any gunpowder, arms or ammunition, which might be imported from England to the Colonies, except the Master of the ship will show a license for so doing.

Oct. 29. New York. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- Transmits a pamphlet, published by the Congress at Philadelphia, containing their resolutions, &c.

Oct. Philadelphia. Petition of the members of the Congress at Philadelphia to the King, praying the redress of the grievances -- fifty-one original signatures, among which are Samuel and John Adams, General Washington, and other eminent men.

Nov. 2. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to Gov'r Franklin -- The King approves his conduct in transmitting the papers in his despatch of the 6th of September -- every information with regard to the state of North America would be very useful -- it will be kept most secret.

Dec. 6. Perth Amboy. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- Although the proceedings of the Congress are not altogether satisfactory, yet the terms of association (non-import) will be generally carried into execution -- the opinion of the moderate men is, that the mother country must either consent to what must appear humiliating in the eyes of all Europe, or to compel obedience to her laws by a military force -- a plan of constitutional union with Great Britain was proposed and even entered on their Minutes, with an order referring it to further consideration, but the plan and order was afterward erased from the Minutes -- copy of the "plan of constitutional union with [the mother country is herewith transmitted."

Dec. 10. Whitehall. Circular Letter from Earl of Dartmouth to all the Governors in America, transmitting to them copies of the King's speech to both Houses of Parliament, their Addresses, and the King's declaration of his determination to withstand every attempt to weaken his authority over the Colonies.

[Dec. 22. New Jersey citizens of the town of Greenwich dressed as Indians, and emulating those of Boston, seized tea from the British brig *Greyhound*, moored on Cohansey Creek (a tributary of the Delaware River), and burned its cargo. This event came to be known as "The New Jersey Tea Party."]

## 1775.

Jan. 4. Whitehall. Circular Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to the Governors in North America, directing them to prevent the choice of Deputies to attend the Continental Congress, and to exhort all persons from such unjustifiable proceedings.

[Jan. 5. Shrewsbury. Advertisement calling a meeting of the inhabitants of Shrewsbury for the 17th Jan., to choose a Committee in accordance with the recommendations of the Continental Congress.]

Jan. 7. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to Gov'r Franklin -- The despatch of the 6th of Dec., and the plan of a proposed Union was received -- the Parliament at the next sitting will come to some final decision with regard to the Colonies -- the disapprobation of the proceedings of the Congress from the higher class of men in New York and New Jersey, must have an influence upon the minds of unprejudiced persons.

Feb. 1. Perth Amboy. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the (Earl of Dartmouth) -- The Assembly of New Jersey met on the 11th of Jan., and have approved the proceedings of the Congress at Philadelphia -- transmits public papers -- observations on the Assembly's Address.

Feb. 13. New Jersey. Address of the Assembly of New Jersey to the King -- Recapitulating their grievances, and praying for the redress of them.

Feb. 18. Perth Amboy. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- Notice is given to all the officers of the Customs in New Jersey, to seize all arms and ammunition which may be imported into that Province, without a license from the King or the Privy Council.

Feb. 22. Whitehall. Circular Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to the Governors of New York, N. Jersey, New Hampshire and Pennsylvania, enclosing the Addresses of both Houses of Parliament to the King, with regard to the state of the American Colonies -- a bill brought to the House of Commons for restraining the trade and fisheries to the four New England Governments, and a copy of a resolution declaratory of the

sense of Parliament upon the subject of taxation -- it is hoped that the last-named resolution will produce such a conduct on the part of the Colonies as shall lead to a restoration of the public tranquility [sic].

March 3. Whitehall. Circular Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to the Governors in North America -- Enclosing copy of a resolution of the House of Commons, (27th Feb.) which resolution the King approves entirely, and hopes that the Colonies will handsomely provide for the Civil Government -- but every attempt to violate the rights of Parliament, to distress and obstruct the lawful commerce of his subjects, and to encourage in the Colonies ideas of independence, he will resist with firmness.

April 3. Perth Amboy. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- Desires that all the intelligence which he communicates may be kept as secret as possible -- transmits extracts of several letters, giving an account of the disposition of the people of New Jersey -- Mr. Galloway has published a pamphlet containing his plan of a proposed union between Great Britain and the Colonies, with reasons in support of it -- is very much concerned to find that his letter of the 29th of Oct. was not delivered -- the Assembly had resolved upon appointing members for the intended general Congress in May -- all the Circular Letters sent to the Governors are published in Rhode Island newspapers, with some innocent remarks.

April 5. Whitehall. Circular Letter from Mr. Pownall, by order of the Earl of Dartmouth, to all the Governors in North America -- Enclosing copy of an Act of Parliament for restraining the trade and commerce of the four New England Colonies.

April 5. Whitehall. Circular Letter from Mr. Pownall to all the Governors in America -- Enclosing a Gazette containing a Proclamation issued by order of the States General, prohibiting the exportation of arms and ammunition from their dominions.

Enclosing the London Gazette from March 28 to April 1, 1775. No. 11548.

April 15. Whitehall. Circular Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to the several Governors in North America -- Acquainting them with the King's pleasure that the orders of the Commander-in-Chief of the forces in America shall be supreme, and be obeyed accordingly.

[April 19 1775 - Battles of Lexington and Concord]

May 6. Perth Amboy. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- The reconciliation with the people was totally defeated by the proceedings of the King's troops at Concord -- the people of N. J. are alarmed—they are arming themselves -- attempt to carry the treasury chest and the records away -- they are entering into associations similar to that of New York, to obey their Congress -- observations on Gen. Gage's measures -- the impropriety of publishing the Governor's correspondence, by order of the House of Commons.

May 22. Whitehall. Letter from Sec. Lord Dartmouth to the Governor of New Jersey -- Acquainting him with the death of the Queen of Denmark, the King's sister, and enclosing the Gazette containing the orders for mourning.

June 5. Perth Amboy. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- Incorporated the whole letter of the 3d of March into his speech at the opening of the session in New Jersey -- It is whispered that the Assembly intend to propose some other terms of accommodation -- opinions on the Governor's speech -- since the affair at Lexington the Colonies have been in the utmost commotion -- proceedings in New Jersey -- the militia officers send their resignations-- the paper money could not be sunk -- the Assembly took notice of the extracts from his despatches, published in Almon's Parliamentary Register, and have entered it on their Minutes -- encloses several printed and MS. papers.

June 7. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to Gov'r Franklin -- Every intelligence received from him will be kept secret -- it is evident now that the appointment of the Delegates to the Congress could not have been prevented by any measures -- received an unfavorable account of a conflict between the King's

troops and some of the Provincials, but receiving no intelligence from Gen. Gage, no reliance can be placed upon the truth of it.

[July - Congress offers King George the "Olive Branch" petition, but which he refuses even to read.]

July 4. Perth Amboy. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- Intelligence of the movements of the Provincial troops in New Jersey and Philadelphia -- sends Minutes of the Council and Journals of the Assembly.

July 4. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to Gov'r Franklin -- Gen. Gage's attempt at Concord had a fatal effect upon the mind of the people, and frustrated the object for which the Circular Letter of the 3d of March was sent to the Governor -- no hope of a reconciliation -- the King is firmly resolved to crush the rebellion -- Gen. Gage and Admiral Graves have orders to exert the most vigorous efforts for suppressing the rebellion.

July 5. Perth Amboy. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- Major [Philip] Skene arrested in Philadelphia -- Copies of the order of the Congress for the arrest of Maj. Skene -- his letter to Gov'r Penn, and the Governor's answer transmitted.

[Major Skene arrived in Philadelphia from London with some other officers on 7th June. He had been appointed Governor of the Forts at Ticonderoga and Crown Point. His papers were examined, and he sent a prisoner to Connecticut. On July 24th, 1776, Gen. Washington was authorized to consent to his exchange.]

July 12. Whitehall. Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to Gov'r Franklin -- His speech to the Assembly of New Jersey on the 16th of May is highly approved -- the Assembly felt the force of it, only withheld their concurrence from the fear of the consequences that would follow from the appearance of separating from the other Colonies -- the notice which the Assembly has taken of the publication in the Parliamentary Register of one of his letters, is illiberal and unjust.

Aug. 2. Perth Amboy. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- A formal Declaration has been published by Congress, and every preparation is made for carrying on war -- sends a copy of that declaration, and a letter from Col. Coxe to Mr. Skinner -- the latter shows the critical situation of the Government officers -- the leaders of the people are aiming to establish a Republic.

Sept. 1. Petition of the Congress to the King, signed by 48 members from the different Colonies -- those of New Jersey were Wil. Livingston, John De Hart and Richard Smith -- praying His Majesty to adopt measures of reconciliation—delivered to the Earl of Dartmouth by Messrs. Penn and Lee.

Sept. 5. Perth Amboy. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- The despatch of the 7th of June came to him opened at the Post Office at New York -- orders should be given to the Captains of the packets to deliver despatches to the Captain of the man-of-war stationed in New York -- an account of the proceedings of the people -- he is loth to desert his station, but it would mortify him extremely to be led like a "bear" through the country to some place of confinement in New England like Gov'r Skeene -- the Government officers in New Jersey are not protected -- the Provincial Congress at Trenton took upon them the entire command of the militia -- no prospect of the salaries being paid to the King's officers.

Sept. 6. Whitehall. Circular Letter from Mr. Pownall, by order of the Earl of Dartmouth, to all the Governors in America, enclosing the King's Proclamation of the 23d of Aug., for suppressing rebellion and sedition.

Oct. 3. Perth Amboy. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- The matters are now carried so far that unless some propositions should come from Great Britain, there seems little probability of a change of conduct among the people -- suggests the expediency of his speech being published in England -- suspects that his despatches were opened either in London, Falmouth, or some intermediate office -- John Adams avowed that the letters published in Draper's Mass. Gazette to Gen. Gage were his -- Lord Stirling, (Mr. Alexander,) one of the Council of New Jersey, accepted a Colonel's Commission from the Provincial

Congress<sup>4</sup> -- Samuel Smith, Esq., on account of his age and infirmities, has resigned his seat at the Board, but no gentleman as yet would consent to be nominated -- the Courts are still open -- the Council advised calling the Assembly on the 15th of next month, but there is a doubt if they will meet.

Oct. 28. Whitehall. Circular Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to all the Governors in America, except Massachusetts Bay and North Carolina, enclosing the King's speech and the address, in order to convince the rebellious inhabitants of the Colonies of the firm resolution of every branch of the Legislature to maintain the dignity and authority of Parliament, as well as their desire at reconciliation.

Nov. 1. Perth Amboy. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- Some of the despatches were miscarried -- by order of the Continental Congress, two battalions are to be raised in New Jersey -- unless the army under Schuyler or Washington be defeated, there seems every probability of the inhabitants following the Congress implicitly -- sends some newspapers containing various intelligence -- one Dr. Church arrested by Washington, and accused of acting as a spy in his camp -- encloses copy of Dr. Church's letter to Major Kane at Boston, intercepted at Rhode Island, and delivered to Washington -- the fate of transport from Boston to New York -- the uncertainty of conveyance of letters prevents writing more particularly.

Nov. 8. Whitehall. Circular Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to the several Governors in North America, directing them to inform all the King's officers in their respective Governments, that they are at liberty to withdraw themselves from the Colony whenever their personal safety shall make it necessary for them so to do.

Dec. 3. Burlington. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- Transmits copies of his Speech at the opening of the session, the Council and Assembly's Addresses and his Answer; also a Message to them on the support of Government, and a proclamation for suppressing rebellion and sedition, &c., which will give an idea of the present state of affairs.

Dec. 23. Whitehall. Letter from Lord George Germain to Gov'r- Franklin -- The King is very much concerned that the people of New Jersey have submitted to the Congress -- the King approves of his conduct, and relies upon his fidelity.

Dec. 23. Whitehall. Circular Letter from Lord George Germain to all the Governors in America, except Connecticut and Rhode Island -- Enclosing an Act of Parliament appointing Commission to enquire into the state of the Colonies, in order to restore tranquillity, and to establish a permanent union with the mother country.

## 1776.

[Perth Amboy? Draft of a pledge for the signature of Royalists, written in a feigned hand -- Arms to be provided, and they to hold themselves in readiness three times a week for instruction in their use, to enable them "the better to defend our constitutional rights, maintain the laws, support the magistrates, and protect ourselves and fellow-subjects from violence and injury"-- allegiance to King George the Third to be faithfully borne, &c.]

Jan. 5. Perth Amboy. Secret and confidential letter from Governor Franklin to the Earl of Dartmouth -- Several petitions presented to the Assembly to discourage any attempt to promote an independency of Great Britain -- majority of people in New Jersey and Pennsylvania averse to it -- danger seems to be that the design will be carried by degrees -- Assembly granted the usual support to Government, but they evaded complying with His Majesty's requisition -- their intention to petition the King on the present unhappy disputes prevented by a Committee of the General Congress at Philadelphia -- has reason to believe that some of the Council are strongly inclined to favor the measures of Congress -- two Judges and one Justice of the Peace have been seized for refusing to sign associations, and speaking against

---

<sup>4</sup> William Alexander, i.e., "Lord Stirling," of course, would later become a Major General in the Continental Army.

proceedings of Congress -- William Stirling, commonly called Earl of Stirling, he has suspended from the Council -- generally believed that Congress will have assistance from France, if not from Spain -- French fleet expected in the St. Lawrence, and French troops have already arrived in the West Indies -- the Tories (as they are called) in Sussex County have furnished themselves with arms -- two of the New Jersey Delegates to Congress have resigned their seats, &c.

Jan. 8. Perth Amboy. Letter from Gov'r Franklin to Secretary Lord Dartmouth -- That Lieut.-Col. Wm. Winds, with a party of Provincials, surrounded his house at two o'clock in the morning, and presented his servant with a letter demanding that on account of his letters, that were intercepted, having been sent to the Continental Congress, he was to give his word and honor that he would not leave the Province till the issue were known -- his reply, that he did not intend to do so -- Mr. Skinner's house was also invested, but he had previously escaped, and believes he is safe on board one of the King's ships at New York -- Lord Stirling alone is to blame for these transactions, who seized his despatch of the 5th instant -- finds it is conjectured the Congress will order him to be seized and sent to the interior of the country, so that he may not have any opportunity of transmitting any further intelligence to His Lordship -- whatever may happen will not swerve him in the least from his loyalty.

[Feb. 9. Commission of Elias Dayton to be Colonel of third battalion of the New Jersey troops, signed by John Hancock.]

[March 17. Lord Stirling to the New Jersey Committee of Safety -- Relating to the necessity for suspending the operation of the civil law during the campaign.]

March 28. Perth Amboy. Letter from Governor Franklin to Secretary Lord George Germain -- A full account of being seized prisoner in his own house, by Lord Stirling's orders, with the intention of conveying him to Elizabethtown, which was however prevented by the interference of the Chief Justice, who went to Lord Stirling -- the proceedings, as he has heard, have been disapproved of by the Continental Congress -- remarks on same -- regrets the absence of Mr. Cortlandt.

Skinner, the Attorney General and Speaker of the Assembly, on board a man-of-war with Governor Tryon, whose services would, as always, have been of great assistance -- he has left a wife and thirteen children depending on him for support -- recommends his case to the King -- anticipates some difference with the Council at their next meeting -- has been told that a majority of the Provincial Congress which lately met at Brunswick, appeared inclined to adopt an independency -- encloses printed pamphlets and newspapers, with articles touching the seizing the Commissioners immediately on their arrival -- fears their labours will be comparatively useless -- many represent "reconciliation and ruin as nearly related" -- encloses public papers.

[July 3. John Witherspoon to President of Congress -- Expressing his surprise that Governor Franklin had not yet been carried further than Hackensack.<sup>5</sup>]

[For particulars of Gov'r Franklin's arrest, see *Contributions to East Jersey History*, pp. 194-199. Capt. Kinney, who commanded the Escort having him in charge, was cited before the Provincial Congress to account for his "loitering on the way" to Connecticut.]

---

*William Thomas Sherman*

<http://www.gunjones.com> and <http://www.scribd.com/wsherman> 1

For a full list of titles in the Continental Army series, see:

<http://www.gunjones.com/Cont-Army-series.html>

And for Lee's Legion on Face Book:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LeesLegion/>

---

<sup>5</sup> The arrested Governor was being sent to Connecticut for confinement there.