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CONTAINING

A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

OF

THE ENGLISH COLONIES IN NORTH AMERICA,

FROM

THE KING'S MESSAGE TO PARLIAMENT, OF MARCH 7, 1774,

TO

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

BY

THE UNITED STATES.

BY PETER FORCE.

VOLUME II.

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UNDER AUTHORITY OF AN ACT OF CONGRESS, PASSED ON THE SECOND OF MARCH, 1833.

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Lamb, has violated the Resolve of the Provincial Convention; that such measures may be of mischievous consequence, as tending to create a disregard to publick regulation, formed for preserving the liberties of America.

Ordered, That a copy of these proceedings be signed by the Chairman, and sent to be published in the *Maryland Gazette*. Signed by order of the Committee:

JULIUS BEATT, Chairman.

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY (MARYLAND) COMMITTEE.

At a meeting of the Committee of Observation for Anne Arundel County, held at Mr. Isaac McHard's, the 10th of April, were present forty-three Members.

It being moved that a Paper printed in the *Publick Ledger* of the 4th of last January, entitled, "Facts relative to the Riot at Annapolis in Maryland," be read, and the motion being seconded, the Paper aforesaid was read accordingly by the Clerk:

On motion, Resolved, That the said Paper be reprinted in the *Maryland Gazette*.

2. Resolved unanimously, That the said Paper contains a false, scandalous, and malicious narrative of facts invented by the author, or so disguised and misrepresented, that when they burden upon truth, and even seem to assume its semblance, they are devoid of its reality.

3. Resolved unanimously, That the Author of the said Paper has designedly injured, against the conviction of his own conscience, the characters of the gentlemen mentioned and alluded to in his publication, gentlemen of approved worth; that he has cast unjust and invidious aspersions on a great number of very respectable inhabitants of this and two adjoining Counties, by representing them as a lawless mob, ignorant of their interests, or too lazy to be at the trouble of investigating them.

4. Resolved unanimously, That the Author has manifested an inveterate enmity to the liberties of this Province in particular, and of British America in general, by insinuating the necessity of introducing a military and mercenary force to support the Civil Government, and to secure obedience to the Laws of this Colony: that, by a suggestion so false and so malicious, he has inadvertently discovered his political opinion, that these Colonies ought, and his secret wish that they may be forced to submit to the arbitrary decrees of a despotic Ministry and a servile Parliament.

ISAAC MCHARD, Clerk Committee.

Facts relative to the Riot at ANNAPOLIS, in MARYLAND.

Nothing but a civil war at home can be so pernicious and detrimental to this Nation, as a contest with the Colonies driven to too great a length, as they are connected with the Mother Country by every social tie subsisting between subjects of the same Empire divided by so great a distance: the commerce of the one, and the defence of the other, depending in a great measure on a mutual harmony and good understanding with each other; in a word, they may be said to be linked together by the strongest interests, those of protection and profit.

This being the case, it is not surprising that every piece of intelligence on a subject so important and consequential to the community at large, should be received by every individual with the utmost avidity; for it is next to impossible for any British subject to be so neutral or disinterested in a matter so momentous as the present unhappy situation of our affairs on the Continent of America, as not to wish to be acquainted with the proceedings there, however limited and confined they may be in their nature, and private in their consequences. I hope, on this account, the following narration, taken from the best and most authentic authorities, will be agreeable to the publick, as from it may be deduced the real source and primary causes of the riot at Annapolis in Maryland, in which the Brigantine, called the *Peggy*, laden with Teas, was burnt; but I imagine none will scarcely believe that "an Officer in his Majesty's Revenue" was the principal abettor and promoter of the riot, though this was actually the case.

At the first publick meeting at Annapolis on American affairs, after the passing the Boston Port Bill, a resolution was proposed and zealously supported by many members at the meeting—"That the gentlemen of the Law should

decline bringing any action for debts due to persons in Great Britain." The passing so dishonest a resolution, however necessary and convenient it might appear to some people in trade, was too pregnant with injustice to meet with general approbation; for the honest and thinking traders plainly foresaw that this measure, calculated only to serve the private purposes and views of a few individuals, would, in the end, greatly prejudice and injure the general credit of the Province, and prove extremely prejudicial to its commerce; therefore a strong opposition was formed, and a spirited protest was entered against the resolution, in both of which Mr. Stewart, one of the owners of the Brigantine, distinguished himself, and bore a very active share therein.

But notwithstanding that the opposition of the protesters against this dishonest and illegal resolution seemed to give general satisfaction, and met with almost universal approbation, as appeared by that measure never having again been proposed to be adopted at any of the future meetings; nevertheless Mr. Stewart's conduct therein procured him many enemies amongst those whose interest was injured; and it afforded matter for calumny and complaint to many of the neighbouring Merchants, who did not fail to embrace the first opportunity which happened by the arrival of the Brigantine with Teas on board, of gratifying their spleen and malice, and satiating their diabolical resentment and revenge, by endeavouring the ruin, perhaps the death of the man who had honestly dared actively to oppose these dishonest designs.

By the Brigantine, Messrs. Williams, the gentlemen to whom the Teas was consigned, had also fortunately received a plentiful supply of other goods from London; this gave umbrage to some of their neighbours who had been disappointed of the goods they intended to lay in before the Association or Non-Importation Agreement, which was then generally expected, and which has actually taken place, should operate; amongst these there was one house, a branch of a mercantile one in London, and of which Mr. Davison, Deputy Collector and Deputy Comptroller is a partner, to which the Messrs. Williams were likely to become formidable rivals in trade, who had the misfortune to have a vessel, on board of which the goods were shipped, stranded in the English Channel. Chagrined at their own disappointment, and determined that Messrs. Williams should not reap the benefit of this reasonable supply by the *Peggy Stewart*, resolved also to wreak their vengeance on Mr. Stewart. They used every means to inflame the populace, not only to prevent the landing of the Teas, but also to procure its destruction.

In this dilemma, Messrs. Williams adopted the only prudent method they had left to extricate themselves from the impending danger. Aware of the machinations of their enemies, they wisely refused to enter the Teas, or pay the duties, imagining that thereby the people would be satisfied, and that the Teas being seized for non-payment of the duties, the Officers of the Customs would in that case be obliged to laud them, even at the risk of tarring and feathering.

But Mr. Stewart, as an owner of the vessel, anxious for despatch, in order that she might proceed to another port, too precipitately, as appeared by the issue, settled the matter otherwise. He agreed to deposit a bill of exchange at the Custom-House, as security for the duty of the Teas, which was the very point his enemies wished; for by this measure he laid himself open to the most virulent attacks malice could invent to excite the populace against him, which would end in his destruction.

To forward their malicious and infernal designs, the officer of the revenue before mentioned, although the house of which he was a partner had, unmolested, three months before, landed Teas, used every means in his power, personally, and by the interest of his partner, who is undertaker of the publick buildings, and by the means and assistance of every friend and dependant they had in the neighbourhood, endeavoured to stir up the populace against Mr. Stewart, in which they proved but too successful; for having depicted his proceedings as a crime of the most atrocious nature, giving out "that it was done intentionally to entail slavery and heavy taxes on the Americans, and to strike at the root of, and tear up every privilege British subjects possessed on the Continent of America," the minds of the people were so inflamed, that they threatened death to

Mr. Stewart, and desolation to his store and dwelling-house.

The mob of *Maryland*, like the common people of all Countries, are ever ready to receive the first impressions; and being too lazy or too ignorant to inquire or examine into causes or complaints, they are ever violent in their proceedings; and when a notion is once impressed on them, it is scarcely to be effaced by reason. Can it then be surprising that the Committee who met to inquire into the merits of the affair (inflamed as they were by the incendiaries who set them on) could not put a stop to their rage, though a great majority of the Committee were of opinion that the destruction of the Tea, and a publick acknowledgment of the fault from the parties, was a sufficient atonement for the trespass? Is it surprising that this should not appease, when the death or destruction of Mr. Stewart only could have satiated their vengeance?

To avert so great a calamity, some of Mr. Stewart's friends proposed "that the Vessel with the Tea on board, should immediately be burnt," which was executed almost as soon as proposed, and the happy expedient had the desired effect. The mischief they had perpetrated, and the blaze of the vessel pleased and appeased the populace, and in some measure, though it may be presumed not to the extent of their wishes, gratified the malicious and interested, and saved Mr. Stewart, if not from death and destruction, at least from ruin, tar, and feathers.

This disturbance happened in the absence of the Governour, who was then on his passage from *England*; but had he been on the spot it could not have been prevented, for the civil power in *Annapolis*, though the capital of *Maryland* and residence of the Governour, is unable to cope with, or curb the fury of an exasperated people. There are no military in the Province. AMERICANUS.

TO THE PUBLICK.

Committee of Inspection Chamber,
Falmouth, Mass., April 10, 1775. }

To hold a man up as an object of general detestation, to deprive him of the benefits that result from society, is disagreeable, is painful; but, on the other hand, to neglect the interest of our Country, to disappoint the just expectations of our constituents, is dishonourable and base. The Committee of Inspection for the Town of *Falmouth*, therefore, come forward, to discharge the duty they owe the publick, and the trust reposed in them by their fellow-citizens.

On *Thursday*, the 2d ult., the Sloop *John and Mary*, *Henry Hughes*, master, arrived here from *Bristol*, supposed to have goods on board for Captain *Thomas Coulson*, of this place; and as the late Continental Congress had, by their Association, prohibited the importation of any goods from *Great Britain* after the first day of *February* last, this Committee, chosen by the said Town of *Falmouth* to observe the conduct of all persons in said Town touching said Association, immediately convened, and after employing some persons to see that nothing was taken out of said Sloop during their debates, they proceeded to consider the circumstances of the case; and being informed by Captain *Coulson* that said vessel had on board sundry Rigging, Sails, and Stores, sent him by Mr. *Garnet*, Merchant in *Bristol*, for a new Ship lately built here by said *Coulson* for said *Garnet*, the said Committee, after a full and serious consideration of the matter, gave it as their opinion, that his taking said Rigging and Sails out of the vessel in which they arrived, and appropriating them to rig his new Ship, in order to send her to *England*, would be a violation of the Continental Association, and therefore that the said Rigging, Sails, and Stores, ought forthwith to be sent back again, without breaking any of the packages thereof.

Of this opinion the said *Coulson* had due notice, but not making any preparations to comply therewith, the said Committee again convened on *Tuesday* following, viz: the 7th ult. Captain *Coulson* then attended, agreeable to the desire of this Committee, and being asked why he had not sent away the goods, agreeable to the opinion of this Committee, founded on the foresaid Association, he said, because it was not for his interest; and further said that the vessel wanted repairs, and therefore was unfit to go to sea, and that he did not choose to procure another, or to send back the said Rigging and Sails, otherwise than by rigging

his said new Ship with them, and thus to send them back in the said new Ship; but that he would consent to have them stored at the Committee's risk until the vessel was repaired, and that then he would re-ship them, and send them out of the harbour. But being asked whether he would send them back to *Bristol*, he declined giving the Committee any assurance that he would, though he was willing to send back the two hogsheads of Lines, which came in said vessel.

This Committee then sent for a Committee of Carpenters, Riggers, and Caulkers, who had been on board to view her, at the request of a number of the inhabitants of this Town, and they informed us that the vessel wanted some repairs, but that, in their opinion, she might be repaired, fit to return, in about two days, without taking out the goods. Upon which the Committee passed the following Resolve, and sent a copy of it to Captain *Coulson*, viz:

"That seven days be allowed said *Coulson*, from this time, to repair said vessel, and to make the necessary preparations for sending her back; and if he does not, at the end of that term, (wind and weather permitting,) send said vessel out of this harbour to proceed to *Bristol*, this Committee will forthwith cause the truth of the case to be published, agreeable to the Continental Association."

At the expiration of said term, viz: on the evening of the 14th ult., the Committee met again, and although a deposition, signed by several persons, some of whom were merchants, masters of vessels, and ship-carpenters, was then handed in to this Committee, purporting that said vessel was unfit to go to sea until the goods were taken out, and she thoroughly repaired, yet it appeared that Captain *Coulson* had not taken due care to get said Sloop repaired, nor had endeavoured to procure another, in which to re-ship the goods to *Bristol*, and would give the Committee no assurance that he would send them back, in any other manner than he at first proposed. The Committee then adjourned to the 15th ult., and then passed the following Vote, viz:

"That if Captain *Coulson* will re-ship the aforesaid goods in some other vessel, and send them back immediately, without breaking any of the packages, it will be satisfactory to this Committee."

To this Captain *Coulson* (who was again desired to attend, to hear the Committee's determination) would not consent, though one of this Committee offered him a vessel gratis, to carry them to *Halifax* or *Newfoundland*.

We, the said Committee of Inspection, do therefore, agreeable to the directions of the said Continental Congress, as expressed in the said Eleventh Article of their Association, hereby publish the name of the said *Thomas Coulson*, as a violator of the Continental Association.

By order of the Committee:

ENOCH FREEMAN, Chairman.

Committee of Inspection Chamber,
Falmouth, March 2, 1775. }

At a meeting of the Committee of Inspection, at the Library Chamber, to determine what ought to be done with respect to a vessel that arrived here this day from *Bristol*, supposed to have goods and merchandise for Captain *Thomas Coulson* on board:

Voted, That Mr. *Benjamin Mussey*, Captain *Joseph McLellan*, and Mr. *Benjamin Titcomb*, be a Committee to employ some persons to see that no goods are landed from said vessel during the debates of the Committee of Inspection, and to desire that Captain *Coulson* and the Master of said vessel would attend this Committee.

Captain *Coulson* and the Master accordingly attended; and being asked if said vessel came from *Bristol*, and what she had on board, answered that she did come from *Bristol*, and had on board Rigging, Sails, and Stores for a new Ship lately built here by Captain *Coulson*.

Voted, That Captain *Joseph McLellan*, Mr. *Jedidiah Cobb*, Mr. *Benjamin Mussey*, and Mr. *Samuel Freeman* be a Committee to go on board said vessel, or employ some other persons to go on board her, to see whether she has on board any goods other than the Rigging, Sails, and Stores for said new Ship.

The meeting was then adjourned to eight o'clock tomorrow morning, to meet at the Library Chamber, and