

G125 (1) 1774. Letter.

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2/8/10/19
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Tulip Hill Thursday Morning
Oct 20: 1774

John Willmott
Oct 20: 1774

Hon Sir

I am now set down to give you an account as well as is in my power of yesterday's transactions of the Committee of the County and the mass assembled at Annapolis relative to the 17 Chests of Tea imported by Tho Williams & Co and the Peggy Stewart.

It seems by Capt Jackson commander of the brig ^{affidavit} refused Kelly Lot of Tea to bring any Tea to America in his Vessel, and that Mr. Tho Williams who was then in London without his ~~Western~~ knowledge paid 17 Chests on board and that he did not discover it till after when the brig arrived at Annapolis Mr. Anthy Stewart ordered him to enter his Vessel and all his Cargo except the Tea the Custom house officer would not admit him to a partial entry. Mr. Stewart having not considered the matter well and to save his Vessel from being libeled went himself and entered the whole cargo and paid the Duty on the Tea. In Thursday paper there was an advertisement for a meeting of the County as yesterday but on Friday Evening when it came to be known that the Tea was entered and

might if the owners thought proper be landed the Committee of Annapolis met and also on Monday following and the results of their meeting was that the Tea should be burnt but they deferred doing it till the County Committee had a meeting which was on Tuesday. after the Gentlemen of the County Committee had met and determined what should be done. they called the inhabitants together to Mr Jacques porch of Mr. T. Hammond and as one of the Committee stood forth and ^{made} a speech to the people (to be sure it was the most shocking one I ever heard) and read the concessions that Messrs Stewart & Williams was to make publicly to the people for the infringements they had made on the Liberties of the People after this was over Mr Charles Carroll B. desired to know the sense of the Gentlemen in regard to what was to be done with the Tea and it was the unanimous opinion of all present that it should be burnt. the Committee then ordered the Tea from on board the brig, but some of the Mob called out that it should not ^{come off} on shore that the Vessel should also share the same fate. Matters now began to run very ~~high~~ high and the people to get warm some of the Gentlemen from Elk Ridge and Baltimore Town insisted on burning the Vessel. Mr Carroll then went and consulted Mr. Dick who immediately consented to the destroying

of the Vessel Mr Dick was fearful that if they did not give up the Vessel that it would be attended with worse consequences to Mr Stewart as the Mob had threatened to lay violent hands on him. Mr Carroll then declared to the people that Tea & Vessel should both be burnt. Mr. Dyer then stood forth and said that it was not the sense of the majority of the people that the Vessel should be destroyed and made a motion which was seconded that there should be a vote on the Question. we had a Vote on it and a majority of 7/8 of the people, still the few that was for ~~burning~~ destroying the Vessel, was clamorous and insinuated that if it was not done they would prejudice Mr Stewart more than if the Vessel was burnt. the Committee then with the consent of Mr. Dick declared that the Vessel and Tea should be burnt. then Doctor Warfield (a youth that practice under Doctor Thompson at the Ridge for some time) made a motion that the Gentlemen should make their concessions on their knees, there was a vote on it and carried in favour of the Gentlemen, they then came and read their concessions to the Publick and then Mr Stewart went on board of his Vessel and set fire to her with his own hands and she was a burning when I left town

I think I went to Annapolis yesterday to see
my Liberty destroyed ~~which~~ which was done & sent fire
was put to the brig. Every body allows that Mr. Heward was
to blame in entering the Trec, here as advised by many
not to ~~do~~ it, and made two attempts and was per-
suaded from it before he did do it. but after making
such concessions as he did do (which I shall send you) and
agreeing to pay for half of the Trec, it was monstrous
to destroy his vessel which is worth 900 currency more
but but madmen could do such a thing, ~~but~~ they have
not only punished the guilty, ~~but~~ but the Innocent
must also suffer. Capt. Menden is a 1/3 Owner of the
Vessel, he did not enter her nor was he privy to any
part of the transaction. If this is Liberty, If this is Justice
they certainly must have found a new code of Laws on
Elk Ridge, but ^{they must be} very different from any others ever was
pened by man or ever appeared heretofore on the face of
this Earth. Whilst they were preparing to go on board
the Vessel sober sought of people began to think what
a scandal it would to suffer an action to be put into
execution against the sense of the majority of the people
Stephen in particular began to declare his sentiments

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very freely, Mr. C. Wallace Mr. G. Hopkins Mr. Jos. Cowman
my kins and in short every person present who had
any sense of honour or Justice cryed out Shame and de-
termined immediately to prevent it. But as they were
going down to the water side with that intent they
met poor Mr. Dick who beg and entreated for God sake
not to ~~meddle~~^{meddle} in the matter, but let her be burnt, he said
that ^{if} they were prevented, they would certainly destroy
Mr. Stewart's house and prejudice ^{him} more than the value
of the Bree. on this the Gentlemen desisted from proceed-
ing any farther, but it is my Sentiments that the Gen-
tlemen ought to have proceeded, for if they ^{were} able to pre-
vent the burning the Refuse, they certainly ^{might have} prevented
any insult being offer to Mr. Stewart or prejudice done
his house. Some of the Gentlemen from Elk Ridge and
Baltimore when they came to Town was very much ex-
asperated against Mr. Stewart they talk of taring and
feathering him, they were perswaded from it with a
good deal of difficulty. Mr. ~~Charles~~ Thomas Williams
the Shipper of the Tea would have undergone discipline ^{that}
if they had him. Mr. John M. Linn and others have made
oath they heard him say in London, they the Association
& some others

in a America was a mere big bear and that he would
import what goods he thought proper to that Country
he is now on his passage to Philadelphia from London
I would ^{not} advise him to come to Annapolis. I shall send
you the News paper and Mr. Stewart's handbill. I am
to believe the Committee will meet with some diffi-
culty in putting this Affair in print as they cannot
say it was with the consent of the major part of the peo-
ple that the Vessel was burnt. It is not proper for me
to make remarks on a Committee chose by the people
of Ann Arundel Co. but for the future I would not give
a Copper for all that this Committee can say or do.

Thus Sir I have related you the whole
and in as full manner as is in my power this most
infamous and rascally affair which makes all men
of property reflect with horror on their present situa-
tion to have their lives and properties at the disposal
of mercy of a Mob is shocking indeed! the whole Province
are crying out against the proceedings and the Ring-
-leaders begin to be ashamed of themselves, I heard one
of them who calls himself a Gentleman, about after the

affair was over ^{say} that it was not his sentiments to burn
to the Vessel. Mr. Stewart had agreed to pay for half of the
Tea before this matter happened. the Ring leaders where
Mr Charles Ridgely son of John Doct. Howard Dr. Warfield
of Walter Butler of Prince Georges (please not to mention these names)

Tulip Hill Friday morning

It seems that Mr. John Price
has been trying to persuade Duvall not to leave him and has
not succeeded in it which has been a means of breeding
a Quarrel between them. Duvall has applied to me
to send a Boat for him immediately. I told him I should
do it on my return from the Eastern one are you to be
at the Expence of the Boat hire. Please to inform by
next post. I have seen Mr. Waters he is to come

down to-morrow to look at Tanner and if he thinks he
is able to travel as far as New York he will take him
he has more flesh on his Bones than ~~was~~ when you left
home tho' still very thin. Old Selim thrives fast I must
have some oats got for him he does not eat Corn kindly
Mr Heath certainly must have been running the Old Horse
to have made him so thin

Our People has been two Days longer than I expected
in securing the Fodder they have been very busy being
out of sight and I have not been able to attend to them
so closely as I could wish being engaged in putting ^{on} my
papers into some kind of order. We set about the po-
-tatoes on Wednesday. in some places the yield very well
in others but poorly. I still have Fires kept in the Old Tobacco
house at home the rest of the Houses I think are suffici-
-ently cured. I am fearful it will be very late before the
wheat will be put into the potatoe ground as drying
the potatoes is no tedious and our Negroes do not do
much when I am absent which I must be next week
I have spoke to Mr. Oyle for some early wheat for to sow
in that ground. We have not had any rain since
my last & is the driest fall that ever was known
the wheat suffers very much. The warm weather rots
the breeding Apples very fast. we had gathered this year
more than I have ever known so that I hope there
will be a sufficient quantity to last the winter. I make
the Gardener pick them over every now and then. The
Cyder we made last is very Good when I return from
the Eastern Shore I will have drunked of.

Thos. Ringgold

Oct 21. 1774