The Boston Tea Party Primary Source Collection

The Tea Act (Enacted by British Parliament, 1773)

An act to allow a drawback of the duties of customs on the exportation of tea to any of his Majesty's colonies or plantations in America; to increase the deposit on bohea tea to be sold at the India Company's sales; and to impower the commissioners of the treasury to grant licences to the East India Company to export tea duty-free.

WHEREAS by an act, made in the twelfth year of his present Majesty's reign, (intituled, An act for granting a drawback of part of the customs upon the exportation of tea to Ireland, and the British dominions in America; for altering the drawback upon foreign sugars exported from Great Britain to Ireland; for continuing the bounty on the exportation of British-made cordage; for allowing the importation of rice from the British plantations into the ports of Bristol, Liverpoole, Lancaster, and Whitehaven, for immediate exportation to foreign parts; and to impower the chief magistrate of any corporation to administer the oath, and grant the certificate required by law, upon the removal of certain goods to London, which have been sent into the country for sale;) it is amongst other things, enacted, That for and during the space of five years, to be computed from and after the fifth day of July, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-two, there shall be drawn back and allowed for all teas which shall be sold after the said fifth day of July, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-two, at the publick sale of the united company of merchants of England trading to the East Indies, or which after that time shall be imported, by licence, in pursuance of the said therein and hereinafter mentioned act, made in the eighteenth year of the reign of his late majesty King George the Second, and which shall be exported from this kingdom, as merchandise, to Ireland, or any of the British colonies or plantations in America, three-fifth parts of the several duties of customs which were paid upon the importation of such teas; which drawback or allowance, with respect to such teas as shall be exported to Ireland, shall be made to the exporter, in such manner, and under such rules, regulations, securities, penalties, and forfeitures, as any drawback or allowance was then payable, out of the duty of customs upon the exportation of foreign goods to Ireland; and with respect to such teas as

shall be exported to the British colonies and plantations in America, the said dreawback or allowance shall be made in such manner, and under such rules, regulations, penalties, and forfeitures, as any drawback or allowance payable out of the duty of customs upon foreign goods exported to foreign parts, was could, or might be made, before the passing of the said act of the twelfth year of his present Majesty's reign, (except in such cases as are otherwise therein provided for:) and whereas it may tend to the benefit and advantage of the trade of the said united company of merchants of England trading to the East Indies, if the allowance of the drawback of the duties of customs upon all teas sold at the publick sales of the said united company, after the tenth day of May, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-three, and which shall be exported from this kingdom, as merchandise, to any of the British colonies or plantations in America, were to extend to the whole of the said duties of customs payable upon the importation of such teas; may it therefore please your Majesty that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the King's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That there shall be drawn back and allowed for all teas, which, from and after the tenth day of May, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-three, shall be sold at the publick sales of the said united company, or which shall be imported by licence, in pursuance of the said act made in the eighteenth year of the reign of his late majesty King George the Second, and which shall, at any time hereafter, be exported from this kingdom, as merchandise, to any of the British colonies or plantations in America, the whole of the duties of customs payable upon the importation of such teas; which drawback or allowance shall be made to the exporter in such manner, and under such rules, regulations, and securities, and subject to the like penalties and forfeitures, as the former drawback or allowance granted by the said recited act of the twelfth year of his present Majesty's reign, upon tea exported to the said British colonies and plantations in America was, might, or could be made, and was subject to by the said recited act, or any other act of parliament now in force, in as full and ample manner, to all intents and purposes, as if the several clauses relative thereto were again repeated and re-enacted in this present act.

II. And whereas by one other act made in the eighteenth year of the reign of his late majesty King George the Second, (intituled, An act for repealing the present inland duty of four shillings per pound weight upon all tea sold in Great Britain; and for granting to his Majesty certain other inland duties in lieu thereof; and for better securing the duty upon tea, and other duties of excise; and for pursuing offenders out of one county into another,) it is, amongst other things, enacted, That every person who shall, at any publick sale of tea made by the united company of merchants of England trading to the East Indies, be declared to be the best bidder for any lot or lots of tea, shall, within three days after being so declared the best bidder or bidders for the same, deposit with the said united company, or such clerk or officer as the said company shall appoint to receive the same, forty shillings for every tub and for every chest of tea; and in case any such person or persons shall refuse or neglect to make such deposit within the time before limited, he, she, or they, shall forfeit and lose six times the value of such deposit directed to be made as aforesaid, to be recovered by action of debt, bill, plaint, or information, in any of his Majesty's

courts of record at Westminster, in which no essoin, protection, or wager of law, or more than one imparlance, shall be allowed; one moiety of which forfeiture shall go to his Majesty, his heirs and successors, and the other moiety to such person as shall sue or prosecute for the same; and the sale of all teas, for which such deposit shall be neglected to be made as aforesaid, is thereby declared to be null and void, and such teas shall be again put up by the said united company to publick sale, within fourteen days after the end of the sale of teas at which such teas were sold; and all and every buyer or buyers, who shall have neglected to make such deposit as aforesaid, shall be, and is and are thereby rendered incapable of bidding for or buying any teas at any future publick sale of the said united company: and whereas it is found to be expedient and necessary to increase the deposit to be made by any bidder or bidders for any lot or lots of bohea teas, at the publick sales of teas to be made by the said united company; be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That every person who shall, after the tenth day of May, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-three, at any publick sale of tea to be made by the said united company of merchants of England trading to the East Indies, be declared to be the best bidder or bidders for any lot or lots of bohea tea, shall, within three days after being so declared the best bidder or bidders for the same, deposit with the said united company, or such clerk or officer as the said united company shall appoint to receive the same, four pounds of lawful money of Great Britain for every tub and for every chest of bohea tea, under the same terms and conditions, and subject to the same forfeitures, penalties, and regulations, as are mentioned and contained in the said recited act of the eighteenth year of the reign of his said late Majesty.

III. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That it shall and may be lawful for the commissioners of his Majesty's treasury, or any three or more of them, or for the high treasurer for the time being, upon application made to them by the said united company of merchants of England trading to the East Indies for that purpose, to grant a licence or licences to the said united company, to take out of their warehouses, without the same having been put up to sale, and to export to any of the British plantations in America, or to any parts beyond the seas, such quantity or quantities of tea as the said commissioners of his Majesty's treasury, or any three or more of them, or the high treasurer for the time being, shall think proper and expedient, without incurring any penalty or forfeiture for so doing; any thing in the said in part recited act, or any other law, to the contrary notwithstanding.

IV. And whereas by an act made in the ninth and tenth years of the reign of King William the Third, (intituled, An act for raising a sum not exceeding two millions, upon a fund, for payment of annuities, after the rate of eight pounds per centum per annum; and for settling the trade to the East Indies,) and by several other acts of parliament which are now in force, the said united company of merchants of England trading to the East Indies are obliged to give security, under their common seal, for payment of the duties of customs upon all unrated goods imported by them, so soon as the same shall be sold; and for exposing such goods to sale, openly and fairly, by way of auction, or by inch of candle, within the space of three years from the importation thereof: and whereas it is expedient that some provision should be made to permit the said

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company, in certain cases, to export tea, on their own account, to the British plantations in America, or to foreign parts, without exposing such tea, to sale here, or being charged with the payment of any duty for the same; be it therefore enacted by the authority aforesaid, That from and after the passing of this act, it shall and may be lawful for the commissioners of his Majesty's treasury, or any three or more of them, or the high treasurer for the time being, to grant a licence or quantity of licences to the said united company, to take out of their warehouses such quantity or quantities of tea as the said commissioners of the treasury, or any three or more of them, or the high treasurer for the time being, shall think proper, without the same having been exposed to sale in this kingdom; and to export such tea to any of the British colonies or plantations in America, or to foreign parts, discharged from the payment of any customs or duties whatsoever; any thing in the said recited act, or any other act to the contrary notwithstanding.

V. Provided always, and it is hereby further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That a due entry shall be made at the custom-house, of all such tea so exported by licence, as aforesaid, expressing the quantities thereof, at what time imported, and by what ship; and such tea shall be shipped for exportation by the proper officer for that purpose, and shall, in all other respects, not altered by this act, be liable to the same rules, regulations, restrictions, securities, penalties, and forfeitures, as tea penalties, &c. exported to the like places was liable to before the passing this act: and upon the proper officer's duty, certifying the shipping of such tea to the collector and comptroller of his Majesty's customs for the port of London, upon the back of the licence, and the exportation thereof, verified by the oath of the husband or agent for the said united company, to be wrote at the bottom of such certificate, and sworn before the said collector and comptroller of the customs, (which oath they are hereby impowered to administer,) it shall and may be lawful for such collector and comptroller to write off and discharge the quantity of tea so exported from the warrant of the respective ship in which such tea was imported.

VI. Provided nevertheless, That no such licence shall be granted, unless it shall first be made to appear to the satisfaction of the commissioners of his Majesty's treasury, or any three or more of them, or the high treasurer for the time being, that at the time of taking out such teas, for the exportation of which licence or licences shall be granted, there will be left remaining in the warehouses of the said united company, a quantity of tea not less than ten millions of pounds weight; any thing herein, or in any other act of parliament, contained to the contrary thereof notwithstanding.

Source: Danby Pickering, *The Statutes at Large, from the MAGNA CHARTA To the END of the Thirteenth Parliament of GREATY BRITAIN* (London: 1773), Vol. 30, pp. 74–77.
https://archive.org/details/statutesatlarge70britgoog/page/n6/mode/2up

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Boston Port Act (Enacted by British Parliament March 31, 1774)

An act to discontinue, in such manner, and for such time as are therein mentioned, the landing and discharging, lading or shipping, of goods, wares, and merchandise, at the town, and within the harbour, of Boston, in the province of Massachuset's Bay, in North America.

WHEREAS dangerous commotions and insurrections have been fomented and raised in the town of Boston, in the province of Massachuset's Bay, in New England, by divers ill-affected persons, to the subversion of his Majesty's government, and to the utter destruction of the publick peace, and good order of the said town; in which commotions and insurrections certain valuable cargoes of teas, being the property of the East India Company, and on board certain vessels lying within the bay or harbour of Boston, were seized and destroyed: And whereas, in the present condition of the said town and harbour, the commerce of his Majesty's subjects cannot be safely carried on there, nor the customs payable to his Majesty duly collected; and it is therefore expedient that the officers of his Majesty's customs should be forthwith removed from the said town: May it please your Majesty that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the King's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That from and after the first day of June, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-four, it shall not be lawful for any person or persons whatsoever to lade put, or cause or procure to be laden or put, off or from any quay, wharf, or other place, within the said town of Boston, or in or upon any part of the shore of the bay, commonly called The Harbour of Boston, between a certain headland or point called Nahant Point, on the eastern side of the entrance into the said bay, and a certain other headland or point called Alderton Point, on the western side of the entrance into the said bay, or in or upon any island, creek, landing place, bank, or other place, within the said bay or headlands, into any ship, vessel, lighter, boat, or bottom, any goods, wares, or merchandise whatsoever, to be transported or carried into any other country, province or place whatsoever, or into any other part of the said province of the Massachuset's Bay, in New England; or to take up, discharge, or lay on land, or cause or procure to be taken up, discharged, or laid on land, within the said town, or in or upon any of the places aforesaid, out of any boat, lighter, ship, vessel, or bottom, any goods, wares, or merchandise whatsoever, to be brought from any other country, province, or place, or any other part of the said province of the Massachuset's Bay in New England, upon pain of the forfeiture of the said goods, wares, and merchandise, and of the said boat, lighter, ship, or vessel or other bottom into which the same shall be taken, and of the guns, ammunition, tackle, furniture, and stores, in or belonging to the same: And if any such goods, wares, or merchandise, shall, within the said town, or in any the places aforesaid, be laden or taken in from the shore into any barge, hoy, lighter, wherry, or boat, to be carried on board any ship or vessel coming in and arriving from any other country or province, or other part of the said province of the Massachuset's Bay in New England, such barge, hoy, lighter, wherry, or boat, shall be forfeited and lost.

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II. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if any warfinger, or keeper of any wharf, crane, or quay, of their servants, or any of them, shall take up or land, or knowingly suffer to be taken up or landed, or shall ship off, or suffer to be waterborne, at or from any of their said wharfs, cranes, or quays, any such goods, wares, or merchandise; in every such case, all and every such wharfinger, and keeper of such wharf, crane, or quay, and every person whatever who shall be assisting, or otherwise concerned in the shipping or in the loading or putting on board any boat, or other vessel for that purpose, or in the unshipping such goods, wares, and merchandise, or to whose hands the same shall knowingly come after the loading, shipping, or unshipping thereof, shall forfeit and lose treble the value thereof, to be computed at the highest price which such sort of goods, wares, and merchandise, shall bear at the place where such offence shall be committed, together with the vessels and boats, and all the horses, cattle, and carriages, whatsoever made use of in the shipping, unshipping, landing, removing, carriage, or conveyance of any of the aforesaid goods, wares, and merchandise.

III. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if any ship or vessel shall be moored or lie at anchor, or be seen hovering within the said bay, described and bounded as aforesaid, or within one league from the said bay so described, or the said headlands, or any of the islands lying between or within the same, it shall and may be lawful for any admiral, chief commander, or commissioned officer, of his Majesty's fleet or ships of war, or for any officer of his Majesty's customs, to compel such ship or vessel to depart to some other port or harbour, or to such station as the said officer shall appoint, and to use such force for that purpose as shall be found necessary: And if such ship or vessel shall not depart accordingly, within six hours after notice for that purpose given by such person as aforesaid, such ship or vessel, together with all the goods laden on board thereon, and all the guns, ammunition, tackle, and furniture, shall be forfeited and lost, whether bulk shall have been broken or not.

IV. Provided always, That nothing in this act contained shall extend, or be construed to extend, to any military or other stores for his Majesty's use, or to the ships or vessels whereon the same shall be laden, which shall be commissioned by, and in the immediate pay of, his Majesty, his heirs or successors; nor to any fuel or victual brought coastwise from any part of the continent of America, for the necessary use and sustenance of the inhabitants of the said town of Boston, provided the vessels wherein the same are to be carried shall be duly furnished with a cocket and let-pass, after having been duly searched by the proper officers of his Majesty's customs at Marblehead, in the port of Salem, in the said province of Massachuset's Bay; and that some officer of his Majesty's customs be also there put on board the said vessel, who is hereby authorized to go on board, and proceed with the said vessel, together with a sufficient number of persons, properly armed, for his defence, to the said town or harbour of Boston; nor to any ships or vessels which may happen to be within the said harbour of Boston on or before the first day of June, one thousand seven hundred and seventy four, and may have either laden or taken on board, or be there with intent to load or take on board, or to land or discharge any goods, wares,

and merchandise, provided the said ships and vessels do depart the said harbour within fourteen days after the said first day of June, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-four.

V. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all seizures, penalties, and forfeitures, inflicted by this act, shall be made and prosecuted by any admiral, chief commander, or commissioned officer, of his Majesty's fleet, or ships of war, or by the officers of his Majesty's customs, or some of them, or by some other person deputed or authorised, by warrant from the lord high treasurer, or the commissioners of his Majesty's treasury for the time being, and by no other person whatsoever: And if any such officer, or other person authorised as aforesaid, shall, directly or indirectly, take or receive any bribe or reward, to connive at such lading or unlading, or shall make or commence any collusive seizure, information, or agreement for that purpose, or shall do any other act whatsoever, whereby the goods, wares, or merchandise, prohibited as aforesaid, shall be suffered to pass, either inwards or outwards, or whereby the forfeitures and penalties inflicted by this act may be evaded, every such offender shall forfeit the sum of five hundred pounds for every such offence, and shall become incapable of any office or employment, civil or military; and every person who shall give, offer, or promise, any such bribe or reward, or shall contract, agree, or treat with any person, so authorised as aforesaid, to commit any such offence, shall forfeit the sum of fifty pounds.

VI. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the forfeitures and penalties inflicted by this act shall and may be prosecuted, sued for, and recovered, and be divided, paid, and applied, in like manner as other penalties and forfeitures inflicted by any act or acts of parliament, relating to the trade or revenues of the British colonies or plantations in America, are directed to be prosecuted, sued for, or recovered, divided, paid, and applied, by two several acts of parliament, the one passed in the fourth year of his present Majesty, (intituled, An act for granting certain duties in the British colonies and plantations in America; for continuing, amending, and making perpetual, an act passed in the sixth year of the reign of his late majesty King George the Second, intituled, An act for the better securing and encouraging the trade of his Majesty's sugar colonies in America: for applying the produce of such duties, and of the duties to arise by virtue of the said act, towards defraying the expences of defending, protecting, and securing, the said colonies and plantations; for explaining an act made in the twenty-fifth year of the reign of King Charles the Second, intituled, An act for the encouragement of the Greenland and Eastland trades, and for the better securing the plantation trade; and for altering and disallowing several drawbacks on exports from this kingdom, and more effectually preventing the clandestine conveyance of goods to and from the said colonies and plantations, and improving and securing the trade between the same and Great Britain;) the other passed in the eighth year of his present Majesty's reign, (intituled, An act for the more easy and effectual recovery of the penalties and forfeitures inflicted by the acts of parliament relating to the trade or revenues of the British colonies and plantations in America.)

VII. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That every charter party bill of loading, and other contract for consigning shipping, or carrying any goods, wares, and merchandize whatsoever, to or from the said town of Boston, or any part of the bay or harbour thereof, described as aforesaid, which have been made or entered into, or which shall be made or entered into, so long as this act shall remain in full force, relating to any ship which shall arrive at the said town or harbour, after the first day of June, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-four, shall be, and the same are hereby declared to be utterly void, to all intents and purposes whatsoever.

VIII. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That whenever it shall be made to appear to his Majesty, in his privy council, that peace and obedience to the laws shall be so far restored in the said town of Boston, that the trade of Great Britain may safely be carried on there, and his Majesty's customs duly collected, and his Majesty, in his privy council, shall adjudge the same to be true, it shall and may be lawful for his Majesty, by proclamation, or order of council, to assign and appoint the extent, bounds, and limits, of the port or harbour of Boston, and of every creek or haven within the same, or in the islands within the precincts thereof; and also to assign and appoint such and so many open places, quays, and wharfs, within the said harbour, creeks, havens, and islands, for the landing, discharging, lading, and shipping of goods, as his Majesty, his heirs or successors, shall judge necessary and expedient; and also to appoint such and so many officers of the customs therein as his Majesty shall think fit, after which it shall be lawful for any person or persons to lade or put off from, or to discharge and land upon, such wharfs, quays, and places, so appointed within the said harbour, and none other, any goods, wares, and merchandise whatever.

IX. Provided always, That if any goods, wares, or merchandize, shall be laden or put off from, or discharged or landed upon, any other place than the quays, wharfs, or places, so to be appointed, the same, together with the ships, boats, and other vessels employed therein, and the horses, or other cattle and carriages used to convey the same, and the person or persons concerned or assisting therein, or to whose hands the same shall knowingly come, shall suffer all the forfeitures and penalties imposed by this or any other act on the illegal shipping or landing of goods.

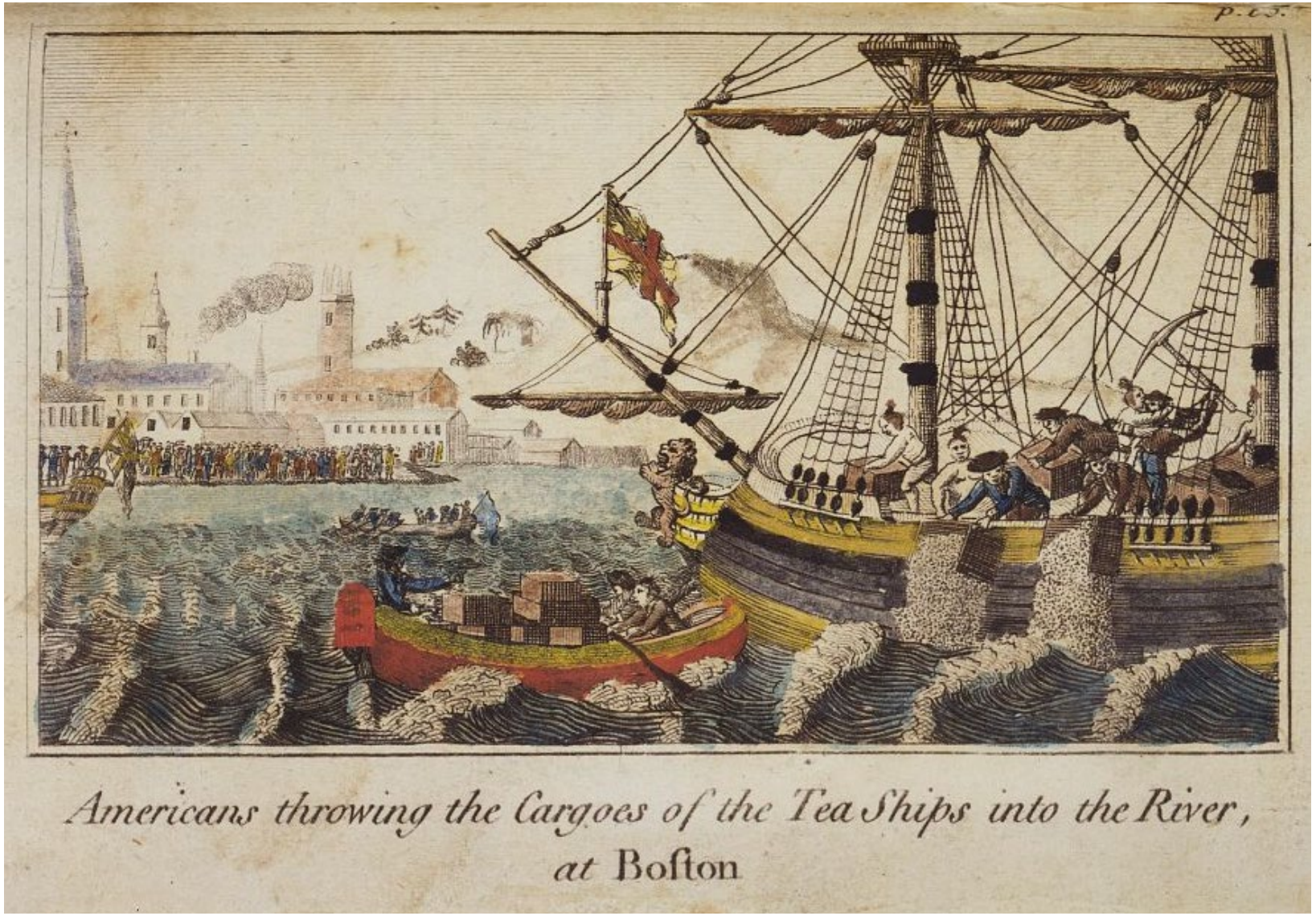
X. Provided also, and it is hereby declared and enacted, That nothing herein contained shall extend, or be construed, to enable his Majesty to appoint such port, harbour, creeks, quays, wharfs, places, or officers in the said town of Boston, or in the said bay or islands, until it shall sufficiently appear to his Majesty that full satisfaction hath been made by or on behalf of the inhabitants of the said town of Boston to the united company of merchants of England trading to the East Indies, for the damage sustained by the said company by the destruction of their goods sent to the said town of Boston, on board certain ships or vessels as aforesaid; and until it shall be certified to his Majesty, in council, by the governor, or lieutenant governor, of the said province, that reasonable satisfaction hath been made to the officers of his Majesty's revenue,

and others, who suffered by the riots and insurrections above mentioned, in the months of November and December, in the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-three, and in the month of January, in the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-four.

XI. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if any action or suit shall be commenced, either in Great Britain or America, against any person or persons, for any thing done in pursuance of this act of parliament, the defendant or defendants, in such action or suit, may plead the general issue, and give the said act, and the special matter, in evidence, at any trial to be had thereupon, and that the same was done in pursuance and by the authority of this act: and if it shall appear so to have been done, the jury shall find for the defendant or defendants; and if the plaintiff shall be nonsuited, or discontinue his action, after the defendant or defendants shall have appeared: or if judgment shall be given upon any verdict or demurrer, against the plaintiff, the defendant or defendants shall recover treble costs, and have the like remedy for the same, as defendants have in other cases by law.

Source: https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/boston_port_act.asp

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Source: W. D. Cooper, *History of the North Americas* (London, 1789), "Americans throwing the cargoes of the Tea Ships into the river, at Boston." Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Collection. https://www.loc.gov/item/2002718863/

Massachusetts Gazette and Boston Weekly News-Letter, Dec. 23, 1773

Just before the dissolution of the meeting, a number of brave and resolute men, dressed in the Indian manner, approached near the door of the Assembly, gave the war whoop, which rang through the house and was answered by some in the galleries, but silence being commanded, and a peaceable deportment was again enjoined till the dissolution. The Indians, as they were then called, repaired to the wharf where the ships lay that had the tea on board, and were followed by hundreds of people to see the event of the transaction of those who made so grotesque an appearance. They, the Indians, immediately repaired on board Capt. Hall's ship, where they hoisted out the chests of tea, and when upon deck stove the chests and emptied the tea overboard: having cleared this ship, they proceeded to Capt. Bruce's and then to Capt. Coffin's brig. They applied themselves so dexterously to the destruction of this commodity that in the space of three hours they broke up 342 chests, which was the whole number in those vessels, and discharged their contents into the dock. When the tide rose it floated the broken chests and the tea insomuch that the surface of the water was filled therewith a considerable way from the south part of town to Dorchester Neck, and lodged on the shores. There was the greatest care taken to prevent the tea from being purloined by the populace. One or two, being detected in endeavouring to pocket a small quantity, were stripped of their acquisitions and very roughly handled. It is worthy to remark that although a considerable quantity of goods were still remaining on board the vessels, no injury was sustained. Such attention to private property was observed that a small padlock belonging to the captain of one of the ships being broke, another was procured and sent to him. The town was very quiet during the whole evening and night following. Those persons who were from the country returned with a merry heart; and the next day joy appeared in almost every countenance, some on occasion of the destruction of the tea, others on account of the quietness with which it was effected. One of the Monday's papers says that the masters and owners are well pleased that their ships are thus cleared.

Source: Massachusetts Gazette and Boston Weekly News-Letter, December 23, 1773.

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Poem, "A New Song, To the Plaintive Tune of Hosier's Ghost"

As near beauteous Boston lying,
On the gently swelling Flood,
Without Jack or Pendant flying,
Three ill fated Tea Ships rode.

Just as glorious Sol was setting,
On the Wharf a numerous Crew,
Sons of Freedom, Fear forgetting,
Suddenly appear'd in View.

Arm'd with Hammer, Axe, and Chisels,
Weapons new for warlike Deed,
Toward the Herbage-freighted Vessels
They approach'd with dreadful Speed.

O'er their Heads, aloft in Midsky,
Three bright Angel Forms were seen;
This was Hampden, that was Sidney,
With fair Liberty between.

"Soon, they cry'd, your Foes you'll banish,
"Soon the Triumph shall be won,
"Scarce shall setting Phebus vanish,
"Ere the deathless Deed be done."

Quick as Thought the Ships were boarded,
Hatches burst, and Chests display'd;
Axes, Hammers, Help afforded;
What a glorious Crash they made!

Squash into the deep descended
Cursed Weed of China's Coast,
Thus at once our Fears were ended;
British Rights shall ne'er be lost.

Captains! once more hoist your Streamers,
Spread your Sails, and plow the Wave!
Tell your Masters they were Dreamers
When they thought to cheat the BRAVE.

Source: *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon). January 20, 1774.

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A Society of Patriotic Ladies

The protests over taxes took many forms. Non-importation agreements were a common way for American merchants and consumers to protest the unpopular Townshend Duties. In 1775, in Edenton, NC, fifty-one women signed a declaration that they would not drink tea or purchase other British imports. This political cartoon from Britain is making fun of the ladies who signed the declaration.



Source: Robert Sayer And John Bennett, Publisher, and Philip Dawe. "A society of patriotic ladies, at Edenton in North Carolina," London: Printed for R. Sayer & J. Bennett, 1775. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division. https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3g04617/. The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation also owns a copy of this print: https://emuseum.history.org/objects/16129/a-society-of-patriotic-ladies-at-edenton-in-north-carolina