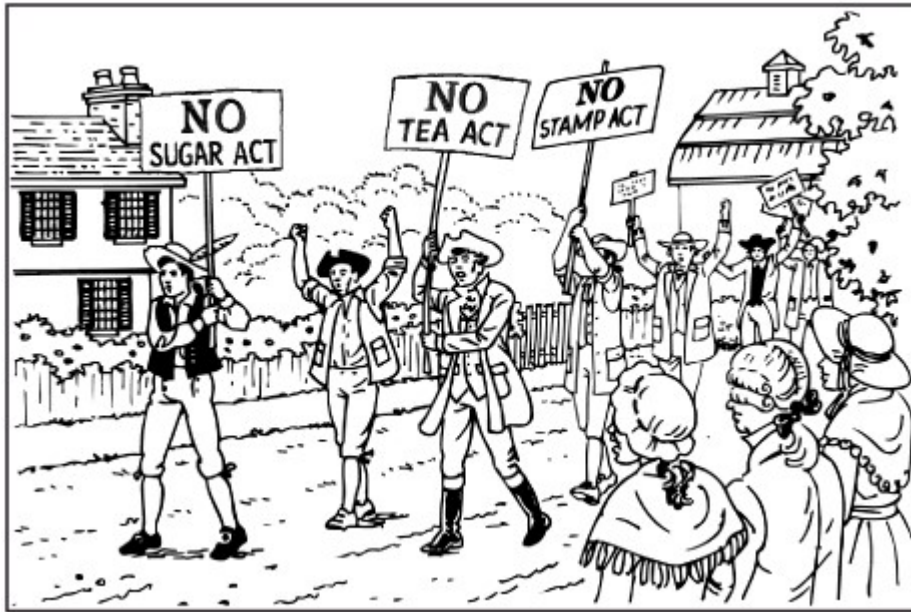


Wilmington and the Stamp Act



Protest to the Stamp Act

The port city of Wilmington opposed the Stamp Act. And, it had the support of influential politicians who led the resistance against the North Carolina Tories. Cornelius Harnett, a member of the General Assembly, rallied his opposition to the Sugar Act of 1764. When the British Parliament passed the Stamp Act the following year, the citizens of protested. On October 19, 1765, several hundred townspeople gathered to protest the new law and in the process burned an effigy of one person in the town who favored the Act. Then, toasted "Liberty, Property and No Stamp Duty." On October 31, another crowd assembled in the streets representing the symbolic funeral of "Liberty" but before they could burn their effigy, the patriots rallied. When Dr. William Houston was appointed the Stamp Receiver for Cape Fear he was surrounded by townsfolk who demanded to know whether he intended to enforce the Stamp Act and while the town bell rang and drums beat, he resigned his position. Meanwhile, Governor William Tryon attempted to mitigate the opposition to no avail. On November 18, 1765, he plead his case directly to prominent residents who answered that the

law restricted their rights. Thus, when the stamps arrived on November 28th on the vessel H. M. Sloop Diligence, Tryon ordered that the stamps be kept on board. Thereafter, shipping on the Cape Fear River ceased.

But trouble continued to brew. On February 18, 1766, two merchant ships arrived at Brunswick Town without stamped papers. Each ship provided signed statements from the collectors at their respective ports of origin that there were no stamps available, but Captain Jacob Lobb of the British cruiser Viper seized the vessels. In response, numerous residents from the southern counties met in Wilmington and organized themselves as the "Sons of Liberty" pledging to block implementation of the Stamp Act. The following day, as many as a thousand men, including the mayor and aldermen of Wilmington, were led by Cornelius Harnett to Brunswick to confront the defiant Governor Tryon. A mob seized ships and forced royal customs officers and public officials in the region to swear never to issue stamped paper. Note: Parliament repealed the Stamp Act in March 1766. Find more about your ancestors on North Carolina Pioneers

James Hogg, Supporting Man

James Hogg was a tacks man, meaning "supporting man" from the Highlands who brought many new settlers into North Carolina. Large groups of emigrants left Scotland because of high rents from the lairds, reappointment of farm land (especially in Argyll) for sheep, and so many families falling into poverty. Eventually, an over-sweeping population of poor people in the Highlands created so great a burden on the country that the system of clan leaders and lairds no longer worked. From about 1720 to 1800, families jumped at the opportunity to migrate. During the 1770s, James Hogg, who had acted as a tacksman collecting rents for the lairds, also sought opportunity in America. He contacted ships captains and arranged passages for hundreds of persons. As new settlers arrive at Wilmington or Brunswick, they faced a laborious 90-mile trip up the Cape Fear River to Cross Creek where a great number of Scottish clans had

settled on land grants from 1734 to 1737. The Scots spoke Gaelic and needed Hogg to arrange passages, etc.