

James S. Leamon

THE STAMP ACT CRISIS IN MAINE:

THE CASE OF SCARBOROUGH

Analyses of the Stamp Act do not usually include the town of Scarborough. The riotous mobs of Boston, Newport, and New York City far overshadowed what went on in this obscure Maine coastal town. But the case of Scarborough is instructive for, despite its obscurity, it offers an insight into how a small town responded to the tumultuous events of 1765-1766. More particularly, Scarborough demonstrates what the violent reaction to the Stamp Act and the act's subsequent repeal meant to the Americans themselves.

Recent studies have emphasized that eighteenth century Americans were no strangers to mob violence. [1] But the violence against the Stamp Act was unique in its scope, in its intensity, and in its apparent success. Mob violence and economic boycotts backed by the threat of violence succeeded in completely nullifying the Stamp Act during the few months it was supposedly law. Then on March 18, 1766, Parliament repealed the obnoxious measure. It was hard for Americans to avoid the conclusion that their violence had succeeded in preserving basic constitutional rights when peaceful protests and resolutions had failed. The result was to endow with widespread popular approval riotous behavior when directed toward socially desirable ends.

In Scarborough, such attitudes were explosive; for this was a town riven by deep personal hatreds of long standing. Encouraged by the quasi-legitimate disorders used to nullify the Stamp Act, one faction employed the same rhetoric and methods for purely personal ends. The object of their violence was the town's leading citizen, Richard King.

Richard King had moved to Scarborough in 1745 from Watertown in Massachusetts where he had been a timber merchant and served the colony as Captain of Commissary in the



Richard King Mansion, Scarborough, Maine

relief expedition to Annapolis Royal. [2] During the next twenty years, he rose from modest circumstances to become Scarborough's leading entrepreneur: a merchant, ship-builder, exporter of lumber, an owner of mills, a land speculator, and the possessor of a fine two story home, and of a warehouse. [3] On his death in 1775, King left 500 acres of land valued at £1,663, a family of Negro slaves, five yoke of oxen, about 40 head of cattle, 61 sheep, and four pigs. His library of 37 books, though modest, reflected the practical and philosophical concerns of a prosperous landed merchant. [4]

As befits one of such economic standing, King played an active role in the civic and religious life of his town. He held the usual onerous honors of assessor, surveyor of highways, and selectman. [5] In addition, King energetically sought to establish a grammar school, for lack of which the town paid repeated fines. [6] He was also an important member of the Second Parish Church at Dunston where he served as treasurer annually from 1759 to 1763. [7] But preeminence had its dangers as well as its perquisites. King eventually found himself the object of factional animosities that had as their object nothing short of his ruination or, at least, his expulsion from town.

to a large extent, King's troubles arose over his own economic power in a town beset by war, depression, drought, fire and emigration. As the town's leading merchant and land owner, King was also its chief source of credit. During normal times, he was repeatedly involved in litigation over land titles, mill rights, and payment of debts. But Scarborough's economic situation during the 1760's aggravated matters. The depression attending the conclusion of the French and Indian War was serious enough, but it coincided with a disastrous fire that swept through Scarborough in July of 1762 leaving half-a-dozen houses, several mills and barns, as well as a bridge all in ruins. [8] The fire was the terrible climax of two summers of unusual drought which drove a significant portion of the town's population eastward to found Machias between 1763 and 1765. [9] Scarborough's economic condition was precarious indeed. Its tax collectors defaulted and fled to avoid prosecution, and in 1762, the town failed to send its representative to attend the General Court. [10] However, the sympathetic legislature not only remitted the usual fine for such a lapse, but even voted £100 for the relief of those who had suffered from the fire. [11]

During these difficult times, Richard King became creditor to a large portion of Scarborough's population. Although King appears to have carried some debts from as far back as 1752, times were hard for creditors too. As a merchant retailer, King was himself in debt to Boston merchants who were retrenching, and more seriously, he had recently lost a ship at sea. [12] There is some indication that under these pressures, King may have called in some of his loans. [13] In any case, he became the personification of all the relentless economic troubles besetting the struggling community.

King also aroused opposition in his role as treasurer for the Second Parish Church. Although he had held the position for four years, in 1763 the congregation voted to reject as too high his accounts of expenses he had incurred on behalf of the parish. [14] King refused to surrender the records for an accounting, and the parish found a new treasurer in John Stuart - who was also one of King's outstanding debtors. A legal suit followed to force King to yield up his accounts, but he responded with a counter-suit of his own based on his claims against the parish. [15] King apparently won his case, and although he resumed an active role in parish affairs, the animosities persisted. [16]

On more than one occasion, the sharpening faction disturbed the community's civic affairs. In 1765, King protested his selection as constable on grounds that having held a

commission formerly, he was exempted from further such responsibilities. But John Stuart, fresh from representing Scarborough at the General Court, stoutly lied that the legislature had recently passed an act effectively removing those exemptions. [17] Over King's protests, the town meeting insisted he was legally chosen. Still, he refused either to serve or to pay the usual fine to excuse himself. The town appealed to the county justices and meantime appointed King hog reeve. [18] The justices resolved the impasse by upholding the town and fining King £5 for his refusal to fulfill his civic obligations. [19] King did not soon forget this matter.

Early the following year, John Stuart was presiding over a meeting at a local tavern to distribute the General Court's relief money to the sufferers of the recent fire. No sooner had King entered the door than Stuart publicly denounced him as one who had refused to sign the petition for help and who now should have no share in the relief. King retorted that as one of the victims of the fire, he was indeed entitled to a share, but that he rejected it voluntarily on the same grounds that had prevented his joining in the petition from the first, namely, Stuart had set himself up "of God like Impo[r]tance" to distribute what came from the government as though it were his own bounty and revelling in the worship paid to him by the recipients. [20] Warming to his task, King went on to remind his audience of the recent affair of the commission. He had done some research and discovered, as he suspected, the General Court had passed no such law as Stuart had claimed. He proceeded to lecture Stuart on "how unbecoming a lying Spirit was in a member to his Constituents, upon his return from that Hon[orable] Court." [21] Infuriated, Stuart struck back with his fist, and he branded King as one who had come to Scarborough with his pockets empty, but who had become rich by gouging the poor, but, he darkly punned, the King's reign will be but short. [22]

Among the many charges Stuart heaped on King at this tumultuous meeting was a curious one that indicates how personal was the bitterness between the two men. Stuart accused King of killing a mare that Stuart owned, but he warned, King would discover "She should be a Dear mare to him." [23] Stuart was referring to an incident early in the year when he discovered one of his horses had been shot dead. At that time, he immediately charged King who had protested his innocence. [24] Nonetheless, Stuart's mind fed on the suspicion, and he referred to the incident frequently. [25] Some time later, King discovered one of his own mares wandering loose with one ear cut off and the other badly mutilated. [26]

Aiding Stuart in his campaign of harassment was one of King's neighbors, Amos Andrews. King had good reason to believe that Andrews, who was also the parish clerk, was stealing hay from King's barn and surreptitiously grazing his livestock on King's pasture by night. By day, he delighted in impounding King's animals whenever he could, requiring King the trouble, and expense, and humiliation of paying the necessary fines. Andrews, however, was notorious for the impunity with which he and even his wife conducted "pound breaks" to rescue their animals without expense. [27] King later complained that the Andrews family had for years treated him in a manner unbecoming their Christian profession. [28]

Into this situation came the news of the Stamp Act riots in Boston, New York, and the other major cities. The Reverend Thomas Smith of Falmouth reported in his journal for August 15, "Last night there was a great mob in Boston, that destroyed the new stamp house and attacked the Secretary's." [29] One week later, he reported more news from Boston:

On Monday there was a second mob, that did violence to Capt. Halloway's and Story's houses and almost ruined the Lieut. Governor's, whose loss by it is computed at £30,000. Intoxicated by liquors, found in the cellar of Mr. Halloway, the rioters inflamed with rage, directed their course to the house of the Lieut. Gov. Hutchinson, whose family was instantly dispersed, and who after attempting in vain to save himself within doors, was also constrained to depart to save his life. By four in the morning, one of the best houses in the Province was completely in ruins, nothing remaining but the bare walls and floors. The plate, family pictures, most of the furniture, the wearing apparel, about 900 sterling in money, and the manuscript books which Mr. Hutchinson had been thirty years collecting, besides many public papers in his custody, were either carried off or destroyed. [30]

On September 12, Smith recorded, "We hear of mobs continually at Newport, Connecticut, etc. as well as in this Province. Affairs seem to be ripening to an universal mob; all relative to the Stamp officers, who are obliged to give up their commissions." [31]

By November 1, 1765, when the act was to go into effect, there existed neither stamps nor the persons to distribute them. Andrew Oliver, stamp distributor for Massachusetts, submitted his resignation August 15, the day after the mob had gutted his home. His counterpart in Newport quickly followed

suit and thereby saved his home if not those of his Tory friends. In New Hampshire and Connecticut, stamp distributors resigned not once but several times to prove their sincerity. The stamp distributor for New York quit on news of events in Boston; the New York Sons of Liberty then turned to aid the cause in Maryland. The stamp officer there had fled for safety to New York from a mob that was sacking his house. But the Yorkers took up the chase, pursued him to Long Island and forced him to resign there. The New York mob became so threatening that Governor Colden, fearing a frontal assault upon the fort, finally surrendered the stamps to prevent unnecessary bloodshed. [32] In Falmouth, Maine, the stamps met a similar fate. A brig arrived from Halifax on January 25 bringing stamped paper. The townspeople responded by seizing the offending cargo, parading through town and then burning it. [33] The same thing occurred in the town of York. [34] By December, colonial shipping had begun to move again despite the lack of stamped clearances, and by January at least some of the courts had resumed activity without the required stamped papers. [35]

This atmosphere of quasi-legitimate violence offered an admirable opportunity for those who wished to use it for their own private purposes. Such was the case in Scarborough. Very late on the night of March 19, 1766, a band of about thirty men, faces blackened, descended upon Richard King's house and store, smashed its way in and terrorized the defenseless family. Although King, his pregnant wife and five children escaped bodily harm, their personal horror may be imagined. The intruders, in a manner reminiscent of the Boston mob, methodically set to work gutting the house. They broke windows and doors, smashed the staircase and woodwork, destroyed plates, earthenware, and hangings, hacked apart the furniture - and especially concentrated upon King's desk. Here they seized his financial records: notes of indebtedness, deeds for land, and records of legal judgments worth about £1100. [36] The rioters then retired leaving a crude warning affixed to King's gatepost in which the Scarborough "Sons of liburty" having shown "a mordrit resment [*i.e.* resentment] for the repeted abus which they have reseved for many yers past" warned King or anyone else that if he took legal action against the participants, "he ma Depend onit that he not onley will have houses and barnes burnt and Consumed but him Self Cut in Peses and burnt TO ASHES... . [37]

One of King's tenants, John Fitts, received a similar sort of warning:

Fits this is to Give you notice that Wee are all ditirmand If you dont move off and Leave the Place We will Sarve You as Wd dide king Cause we are ditirmand to destroy him and all he hass. And Wee Give you 12 days to go of in and if you ant gone in that time you may Expect to be destroyed. [38]

As though to hasten his departure, his house, which King owned, was set afire and badly damaged. [39] Fitts took the hint and left the house vacant. King sought to rebuild the structure, but the mob eventually returned a year later to complete what it had begun. On the night of March 2, 1767, a band of men virtually demolished the restored house. In an almost frenzied fury, the rioters smashed in the doors, windows, and ceilings, knocked down the chimney, cut the studs and posts leaving the building a worthless pile of lumber. [40] Even livestock was not spared; King found one of his colts slaughtered and hanging from a nearby tree. [41] Ten days later, a fire totally consumed King's very large barn with its entire contents of hay and farm implements. [42]

Even this does not exhaust the list of personal outrages inflicted upon the unfortunate merchant. He was not a victim of a single spontaneous outburst, but rather of a consciously planned campaign of terror and harassment that extended over a long period of time. His windows were broken or defiled with human excrement, articles and livestock were stolen, and on one occasion, King was assaulted physically. [43] Had King cut his losses after the first violent episode, or "rested easy" as one of the rioters later put it, he might have been spared the later tribulations. However, Richard King was not to be intimidated. His response to the campaign of terror was magnificently courageous - and futile. He immediately prepared to take legal action against his assailants, petitioned the General Court for relief, and meanwhile sought a militia guard for his home and family. Unfortunately, his spirited reaction only encouraged his tormentors to be as good as their threats while proving the impossibility of obtaining redress when, as King complained, the community was unsympathetic. [44]

A militia guard for King and his family was unobtainable despite his pleas for protection. Militia commander Colonel Samuel Waldo, of Falmouth, sympathized with King's plight and did authorize Lieutenant Colonel Edward Milliken, of Scarborough, to provide the requisite guard at King's request. [45] But King, engaged in a land dispute with the Milliken family, distrusted the arrangement and preferred a guard drawn from

the neighboring communities. [46] The result was that King's home and family remained unprotected while he antagonized the rioters further by his equally futile efforts at legal redress.

It was the threat of organized violence that brought the legal machinery to a standstill. Although the justices of the peace immediately issued warrants for the arrest of some dozen suspects and a large number of witnesses, only two allowed themselves to be taken up, and they were quickly released. [48] The rest hid themselves, fled to other towns, or went about in armed groups to intimidate the law officers. One of John Stuart's sons, Timothy, escaped from the constable on the way to jail; Thomas Sanders, wanted as a witness, fled aboard ship for Machias. [49] Deputy Sheriff Samuel March reported that while he was searching for persons to serve with the king's warrants, a party of armed men was looking for him, and he confessed he feared for his life should he insist on doing his duty. [50] One of the rioters, Silas Burbank, was overheard asserting that if Richard King put any man in jail, King would very soon lose his life; the jail would be pulled down, and that man rescued. He went on to boast that the conspirators were "so bold and Resolute that they would not fear, that if his majesty Affronted them to go into his palace & take the bed from Under him or even the Crown from his head." [51]

By such means, warrants went unserved, witnesses failed to appear, and despite Richard King's trip to Boston to confer with the Attorney General, every means of redress seem frustrated. [52] Even the government itself appeared unconsciously to conspire against him. In December, 1766, the General Court passed an act providing compensation at public expense for the victims of the Stamp Act riots as well as an amnesty for the rioters. But the General Court rejected King's petition to be included in the compensation on the grounds that his sufferings were not connected with the Stamp Act. [53] Therefore, King's only recourse lay with the courts, but, as he complained, it was a discouraging prospect for,

a Privat man to bring a Great number of Persons to Justice for such Disorders as first originated under a Notion of Publick Utility Committed in a Time of General Disorder and Confusion while others who were alike Guilty were Exempt from Punishment by act of Government... . [54]

But finally, in 1773, King enjoyed a measure of success.

After collecting a mass of evidence and agreeing to drop the charges against several of the rioters in exchange for their testimony, he not only succeeded in bringing his case to trial before the Superior Court, but even obtained a favorable result. [55] It was only a moral victory, however, for although the jury convicted six persons, all members of the Stuart and Andrews clans, it awarded King but £200 damages - one-tenth the sum he had originally demanded. [56] In the following year, the court reconsidered the case through a writ of review. Despite the legal aid of John Adams, King obtained an award increased by only £60:10. Even this limited victory was tarnished by a reversal of judgment against Jonathan Andrews to whom the court awarded £40:10 at King's expense. [57] Thus vindicated if not recompensed, King died in March, 1775, leaving his widow and son to try to collect the court's award.

The Massachusetts government had been correct in a technical sense when it claimed that King's losses were not directly related to the Stamp Act riots. John Adams, King's legal counsel, also saw the entire affair as nothing more than a detestable instance of "insolent Rabbles" seeking to satisfy "private Prejudice and Passions." [58] King himself acknowledged this by his petitions to the General Court which clearly indicated that the rioters were seeking "the Discharge of their debts, by the Distruction of my papers." [59] Moreover, the testimony he collected for his legal actions emphasized repeatedly the primacy of local concerns quite independent of Stamp Act issues.

The Stuart family, John and his sons, John, Jr., and Timothy, were among the outstanding debtors and leaders of the anti-King movement. Their debt of £66 was a considerable one which in modern currency must have been about \$2500. [60] But the economic relationship only seemed to embitter a deep personal rivalry in which John Stuart appeared to be competing with King for leadership in town affairs, whether in the parish treasury or as representative to the General Court. King alluded to this when he denounced Stuart as raising himself to a "God like Impo[r]tance" and delighting in the public following.

The Andrews family were not major debtors to King, but shared the Stuart's antipathy to him. Amos had complained that King was a very troublesome neighbor. Undoubtedly as parish clerk and later as deacon, Amos found his neighbor equally troublesome as a churchmember. Amos' son and grandson, Jonathan and Jonathan, Jr., were blacksmiths who seem to have inherited and carried on their family's hostility

without the need of much economic stimulus.

Silas Burbank, another of the rioters, had a different sort of grudge. He was a "joyner," or cabinet maker, who at the time of the riot was engaged in litigation with King over "Cabinet wair" shipped aboard one of King's vessels that had been lost at sea. [61] In recruiting Burbank for the riot, Amos Andrews deliberately played upon the issue and urged Burbank to show some resentment. [62] In similar fashion, the Andrews clan harangued one Thomas Knight with the suspicion that King had wrongfully possessed his parents' property since the deed had been destroyed. [63]

King's legal actions against unpaid debts, disputed land titles, mill rights, and cases of trespass fill his business records and those of the courts. John Stuart's rhetoric must have stirred a responsive chord in many hearts when he asked, "has not the Potter Power over the Clay. We built him up and why Shant we pull him down[?]" [64] Yet it would be a mistake to view this episode as simply the exploited poor against the grasping rich. King's accumulated evidence reveals a mob composed of property owners and skilled craftsmen such as carpenters and blacksmiths. They were led by men of estate and reputation: the parish clerk and the parish treasurer who had also been the town's representative to the General Court. The members of the mob were also busily engaged in legal suits of their own regarding disputed boundaries, land titles, and unpaid debts. Indeed, they differ from King not so much in their activities, but rather in their scope. Scarborough's society appears to have been open and highly mobile - witness the career of Richard King himself. Yet it was all the more bitterly competitive for all that. The freedom of economic opportunity and the lack of a set hierarchical order made for a massive free-for-all in which those clambering upwards, such as the Stuarts or the Andrews, flailed away at those, such as Richard King, who had "arrived."

It is exceedingly doubtful if King's enemies would have dared to express their personal and economic grievances against him so violently had the Stamp Act riots not occurred. The disorders in Boston, Newport, New York, and even Falmouth enabled the Scarborough faction to use the gloss of patriotic violence to mask their real motives of personal advantage and private revenge. In this context, some of the arguments and logic the ringleaders used to instigate and to justify the riots are especially revealing. For example, the use of the term "Suns of liburty" in the note of warning after the first riot was an obvious effort by the mob to secure patriotic

merit for their actions. Silas Burbank later testified that John Stuart and Amos Andrews were at pains to blacken King as a supporter of the Stamp Act. [65] Andrews embellished the rumor with the warning that King even possessed the stamped paper in his own house, and that if the act were enforced, King would become stamp master for Scarborough. [66] Burbank reported further that Stuart had proposed they give King a "rally" for he had "done as much hurt to the people here, as Bute had done to the people at home." [67] This reference to Bute appears to be another effort to link King with the current political injustices and the need to reform them. The Earl of Bute had been friend and advisor to George III. Politically inept and notoriously corrupt, he was deeply hated both in England and in the colonies. In America, he was correctly regarded, along with Lord Grenville, as one of the originators of the restrictive colonial policy that included the Stamp Act. In Boston and elsewhere effigies of Grenville and Bute were hanged together during the Stamp Act disorders. [68]

This reference to Bute suggests yet another theme to justify the resort to violence. From rectifying political evils violently, it is but a short step to using the same methods to reform social wrongs. Amos Andrews made this very clear when he justified the riots by claiming King was an evil man who took advantage of everybody. He reminded Burbank of his dispute with King from which "you see how he trys to cheat you, and may judge by that, how he uses everybody. ...He is a bad man, and will ruin us all, if he goes on at this rate; if something or other is not done with him, if he is not humbled, it is not worth while for any of us to live here; and he is hard hearted to the widow and the orphan. [69] This same person had the reputation of denying to children their legal inheritance and of cheating the church of its income too.

To mob such a blackguard as this was not only social necessity, but a moral duty. Andrews assured Burbank it was no sin. [70] Stuart was quoted to the effect that if anyone merited heaven by works, those that mobbed King's house did. [71] He even found scriptural support for his cause. He recalled the Old Testament figure of Nehemiah who warned his leaders to cease taking interest and extorting houses, fields, and orchards from the poor. As a final admonition, Nehemiah shook out his robes saying, "So may God shake out every man from his house and from his labor who does not perform this promise." [7]] Scarborough's discontented elements could hardly miss the relevance of such a passage.

But the ultimate moral justification for giving King a

"rally" was not simply that it was the patriotic thing to do, or that it was social obligation, but that it would help make the intended victim, Richard King himself, a better person! Silas Burbank testified that John Stuart assured him the proposed riot "was a good thing, and would do King good, and make him a better man." [73] The evidence of another participant, Jonathan Wingate, is particularly valuable in demonstrating how the current disorders over the Stamp Act could stimulate riots to improve society in general and Richard King's character in particular. Wingate claimed that he first came across Amos Andrews in a local shop where Andrews,

...of his own motion began to discourse about the mobbings and riots that had lately happened in several parts of the province and then said the Mr. Richard King was reported to be a very bad man, took all advantages of people, was a near neighbour to him and he had found him very troublesome and he thought it would be a good scheme to mob him, and that it would do him good... . [74]

Several days later, Andrews renewed his proposals when he again met Wingate: "...he then said it was a very good thing to pay Mr. King a visit and to mob him; that he might be made a better man by it." [75] Apparently Wingate still had some doubts on the propriety of such methods of reformation, for Andrews sent him to talk with John Stuart. To Wingate's naive query of whether he thought it was best to do it, Stuart replied "with all earnestness yes by all means; which I think he repeated." [76] On his return home, Wingate stopped by the blacksmith shop belonging to Amos Andrews' son, Jonathan. Here the conversation was reopened and Jonathan had the opportunity to press his father's argument: "he said it would be a good thing to pay Mr. King a visit and that he might be made a better man by it." [77]

The ringleaders of the movement against King did not push their arguments so far as to claim that their intended victim would be undyingly grateful for their concern over his own moral restoration. Possibly they felt that they had secured enough moral and political merit to vindicate their planned activities without going that far. But the question persists as to whether the rioters might actually have been sincere in setting forth or in accepting such arguments. Were they combining economic, political, and moral sentiments or simply using the latter to disguise the former? Edmund S. Morgan has pointed out the formative persistence of Puritan values and thought through the Revolutionary period. One

powerful strand was a grudging tolerance of merchants who were suspect because they encouraged unnecessary consumption and failed to produce anything tangible, unlike the shoemaker or the farmer. Moreover, the merchant often practiced his calling to the detriment of society: charging exorbitant interest, speculating, and manipulating prices. The merchant's prosperity was also suspect - derived not from God's favor, but rather from other people's weaknesses and tribulations. It was a tainted wealth at best and a perpetual temptation to luxury and vice. [78]

It is entirely possible that Scarborough's rioters were acting - at least in part - from these premises. Their own economic adversity and personal jealousies enabled them all the more easily to see in Richard King and his prosperity a source of moral rejuvenation for the rioters who were doing God's work, for the community which was suffering, and for King himself who might be reminded that adversity was a means by which God recalled people to him. It is doubtful if such ideas were causative, but as Morgan points out, the colonists discussed and understood events of the time in terms derived from the Puritan ethic. "And the way men understood and defined the issues before them frequently influenced their decisions." [79] For Scarborough, then, the Stamp Act riots not only provided an example and opportunity to vent personal and economic grievances, but to combine these motives, not merely mask them, with powerful moral drives for personal and social reformation.

Richard King appears to have understood these sentiments, but not to have repented of his past. He obtained a panel of referees to evaluate his business practices and to pass on the justice of any complaints against him. But since not one appeal was forthcoming, the community must have doubted his sincerity. [80] Perhaps the persistence with which he pressed his actions against the rioters convinced them of his unregenerate condition. It certainly kept the entire affair alive so that its influence persisted to the eve of the Revolution. It even helped to shape the political attitudes over various crises leading up to that event.

So successfully had King's opponents blackened his reputation that they effectively denied him any political free will. Although he continued to serve his town in several important capacities, he never really recovered from the events of 1766 and 1767. By 1774 he was widely regarded as an out-and-out Tory. In 1769, for example, King stood for election to the General Assembly against his old nemesis, John Stuart, and Edward Milliken. King's speech to the

Scarborough freeholders was a model of concern over the constitutional crisis facing the empire. He urged the voters to select:

a faithful upright man who best understands the Constitution of the Brittish Government, the Rights of the Crown, Her Charters and Compacts with her Collineys & our Natural Rights as men, a man fearing God by whome Kings Reign, that will with Equal firmness Render to the King the Rights of the King. and Nobly withstand aney Attempts Even of the King's servants however Dignified, that have a manifest tendency to enslave the Subjects of the King [81]

Yet, King's opponents, probably Stuart, impugned his motives by spreading the rumor that his only interest in going up to Boston as representative was to secure from the legislature a special act that would make the town responsible for the losses he had suffered. The rumor gained sufficient credit that King felt obliged to go before the electorate in a futile effort to vindicate himself:

I am told there are sum who to serve their Private views, alledge, that I have Petitions & Privat affairs to Negotiate at Court which would be against the Interest of the Town and in Perticuler that I have Petitioned for an act to Oblige the Town to make good the Damages I sustained by a riot etc. I know not wheather the man that alledges such a Thing is most to be Pittyed for his Ignorance or Despised for his Imposing on the People, [82]

King went on to assure his audience that he neither would nor could obtain such an act, yet he lost his bid for election. The result must have been especially bitter to him, for the winner was John Stuart. [83]

By 1774 King no longer resisted his role as a Tory. Indeed, he had come to accept this position intellectually for he was convinced the colonies would fall to the Catholic French if they tried to separate from Britain. [84] When it was learned that one of his ships had sold a cargo of lumber to the British at Boston, the rum-flushed militia marched in from Gorham and forced the now ailing old man to mount a table and to express from there sentiments favorable to the colonial cause. [85] Shortly after this humiliation, King died. His toryism tainted his son, Rufus, and son-in-law,

Dr. Robert Southgate, whom the Committee of Safety ordered to stand for investigation. [86] King's relatives overcame the stigma, but Richard King never could. He really had no choice. They had turned him into a Tory long before he, himself, had expressed views on the constitutional issues facing the empire.

The affair of Richard King indicates that the effects of the Stamp Act riots in Boston and elsewhere were not confined to the issues and persons directly involved, but spread far and wide. Violence breeds violence. In Scarborough's divided society, news of the riots sparked similar activities but for different reasons. Although they were personal and private, they were tinged with reforming zeal and deeply influenced the political stand the participants assumed in the later Revolutionary period.

-----NOTES-----

1. Gordon Wood, "A Note on Mobs in the American Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., Vol. XXIII, No. 4 (October 1966), 635-642. Jessie Lemich, "Jack Tar in the Streets: Merchant Seamen in the Politics of Revolutionary America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., Vol. XXV, No. 3 (July 1968), 371-407. Pauline Maier, "Popular Up- risings and Civil Authority in Eighteenth-Century America," 3rd Ser., Vol. XXVII, No. 1 (January 1970), 3-35.
2. Augustus F. Moulton, *Grandfather Tales of Scarborough* (Augusta, Maine, 1925), pp. 65-68. William S. Southgate, *The History of Scarborough from 1633-1783*, n.p., n.d., pp. 213-214. Robert Ernst, *Rufus King: American Feder- alist* (Chapel Hill, 1968), contains the most recent and fullest study of Richard King.
3. Southgate, *History of Scarborough*, p. 214. Richard King's Day Books for 1758-1759, 1766-1768 are in the Massachu- setts Historical Society, Boston; for 1772-1774 in the Maine Historical Society, Portland. They indicate the scope and complexity of his economic activity: he built several vessels, exported boards, shingles, and clap- boards, as well as some livestock to Halifax, Bermuda, Nantucket, and especially to Boston. He retailed almost every conceivable article including hay, and rented out pasture land and horses.
4. Partial inventory of Richard King's estate in the Richard King papers (microfilm) in the Rufus King manuscripts, The New York Historical Society, New York City. Ernst, *Rufus King*, pp. 7-8.

5. Scarboro Records, 1681-1781, copied by Samuel D. Rumery, Maine Historical Society, Portland, I, 180, 181, 186; II, 197-198, 200, 205, 215, 216, 225, 227, 235. Dorothy S. Libbey, *Scarborough Becomes a Town* (Freeport, Maine, 1955), p. 269.
6. Scarboro Records, I, 190-191; II, 195, 197-199. Records of the Court of General Sessions of the Peace for the County of Cumberland, Cumberland County Engineer's Office, Cumberland County Court House, Portland, I, 44-45, 59.
7. Records, Second Parish, Scarborough, 1759-1865, copied by Samuel D. Rumery, Maine Historical Society, p. 5 *et passim*.
8. Edmund S. and Helen M. Morgan, *The Stamp Act Crisis* (New York, 1963, rev. ed.), pp. 48-49. William Willis (ed.) *Journals of the Rev. Thomas Smith and the Rev. Samuel Deane* (Portland, 1849), p. 192. Memorial of John Stuart of Scarborough pleading for relief, *Acts and Resolves, Public and Private, of the Province of Massachusetts Bay* (Boston, 1912), XVIII, 102.
9. Southgate, *Scarborough*, pp. 177-181.
10. Scarboro Records, II, 207-210; *Acts and Resolves*, IV, 632, 633; V, 218.
11. *Acts and Resolves*, IV, 632; XVIII, 102.
12. Petition of Richard King to the General Court, May 30, 1767, Richard King papers (microfilm); Richard King to Silas Burbank, May 31, 1773, *Legal Papers of John Adams*, eds., L. Kinvin Wroth and Hillier B. Zobel (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), I, 118.
13. Solomon Lombard to Richard King, March 23, 1772, Robert Southgate papers relating to Scarborough, Maine Historical Society.
14. Records, Second Parish, Scarborough, p. 17.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 18, 21, 24, 26; King's Day Book, 1766-1768, Massachusetts Historical Society, contains the costs of his suit, witnesses called, etc.
16. Records, Second Parish, Scarborough, pp. 27, 30-32; *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 106 n.
17. Draft letter of Richard King to Attorney General, n.d.; "Evidence of Sundry Persons about the mob," both in Richard King papers (microfilm).
18. Scarboro Records, II, 200, 205.
19. Records of the Cumberland County Court of General Sessions, I, 89-90.
20. "Evidence of Sundry Persons about the mob," Richard King papers (microfilm). The General Court had actually nominated three others to distribute the relief funds, but Stuart maintained his control in the matter. See *Acts and Resolves*, XVIII, 102.

21. "Evidence of Sundry Persons about the mob," Richard King papers (microfilm).
22. Evidence of Benjamin Carter and Daniel Merrill, *Ibid.*
23. Evidence of Jonathan A. Milliken, *Ibid.*
24. "Evidence of Sundry Persons about the mob," draft letter of Richard King to Attorney General, n.d., both in *Ibid.*
25. "Evidence of Sundry Persons about the mob," evidence of John Holmes, Sarah Milliken, and Martha Milliken, all in *Ibid.* Deposition of Silas Burbank, June 28, 1773, *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 121.
26. Undated note in Richard King papers (microfilm).
27. Note dated May 1, 1766, *Ibid.*
28. Incomplete draft of letter, King to Parson [Elvins?] & Church, n.d., *Ibid.*
29. *Journal of the Rev. Thomas Smith*, p. 206.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Ibid.*
32. See Morgan, *The Stamp Act Crisis*, for the most readable and exhaustive study of these episodes.
33. *Journal of the Rev. Samuel Deane*, p. 317; William Willis, *The History of Portland* (Portland, 1833), II, 126.
34. Charles E. Banks, *History of York, Maine* (Boston, 1931), I, 379.
35. *Journal of the Rev. Samuel Deane*, p. 316; Willis, *History of Portland*, II, 126; Morgan, *Stamp Act Crisis*, Chap. X.
36. Southgate, *Scarborough*, pp. 183-184; Richard King's petition to the General Court, January 4, 1768, and Richard King to Silas Burbank, May 31, 1773, both in *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 108, 118-119.
37. *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 126.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 108 n.
39. Richard King's petition to the General Court, January 4, 1768, *Ibid.*, p. 108.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
41. Deposition of Silas Burbank, June 28, 1773, *Ibid.*, p. 122.
42. Richard King's petition to the General Court, January 4, 1768, *Ibid.*, p. 110. King rebuilt the barn, October and November, 1767 at the cost of £42. Eighty men assisted at the raising exclusive of those who "pertook" of the entertainment, Richard King's Day Book, 1766-1768, Massachusetts Historical Society.
43. Richard King's petition to the General Court, January 4, 1768, *Ibid.*, p. 110; notes of August 18, 1766, September 20, 1766, Richard King papers (microfilm); Richard King v. Jonathan Andrews, Jr., Records of the Cumberland

- County Inferior Court of Common Pleas, Cumberland County Court House, Portland, III, 43-44.
44. Richard King's petition to the General Court, January 4, 1768, *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 110-111; Richard King's draft petition to the General Court, May 30, 1767, Richard King papers (microfilm).
 45. Samuel Waldo to Richard King, April 4, 1766, Robert Southgate papers relating to Scarborough, Maine Historical Society; Richard King's draft petition to the General Court, May 30, 1767, Richard King papers (microfilm).
 46. Samuel Waldo to Richard King, May 18, 1767, Richard King papers (microfilm). For legal action between King and the Milliken family see Records of the Cumberland County Inferior Court of Common pleas, III, 81, 317-318, 396-398.
 47. Richard King's draft petition to the General Court, May 30, 1767, Richard King papers (microfilm).
 48. Richard King's Remonstrance to the Superior Court, July 1771, *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 112-113; Richard King's draft petition to the General Court, n.d.; warrants for alleged rioters, March 28, 1766, and release of John Stuart and Abraham Tyler, all in Richard King papers (microfilm).
 49. Richard King's Remonstrance to the Superior Court, July 1771, *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 112-113; Depositions of William Chamberlain, Jr., September 20, 1773, and Samuel March, Deputy Sheriff for Cumberland County, n.d., both in Richard King papers (microfilm).
 50. Deposition of Samuel March, Deputy Sheriff for Cumberland County, n.d., Richard King papers (microfilm).
 51. Depositions of Simon Brown, n.d., and Moses Banks, n.d., *Ibid.*
 52. Richard King's draft petition to the General Court, n.d., *Ibid.*
 53. *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 111 n. Merrill Jensen, *The Founding of a Nation* (New York, 1968), pp. 196, 198, 209-211.
 54. Richard King's petition to the General Court, January 4, 1768, *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 110-111.
 55. Documents relative to Burbank's release, *Ibid.*, 120-123.
 56. *Ibid.*, p. 106.
 57. *Ibid.*, p. 107.
 58. John Adams to Abigail Adams, July 7, 1774, *Ibid.*, p. 140.
 59. Richard King's draft petition to the General Court, May 30, 1767, Richard King papers (microfilm).
 60. "Notes of hand Destroyed or carried off by the Riot," *Ibid.* The value of colonial money varied considerably,

- but Jackson T. Main in *The Social Structure of Revolutionary America* (Princeton, 1965), pp. 9 n., 89-90, suggests that a pound sterling averaged about fifty 1965 dollars. To convert Massachusetts currency to sterling, one should subtract one-quarter.
61. Richard King to Silas Burbank, May 31, 1773, *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 118; Records of the Cumberland County Inferior Court of Common Pleas, III, 27-29.
 62. Deposition of Silas Burbank, June 28, 1773, *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 122.
 63. Deposition of Thomas Knight, n.d., Richard King papers (microfilm).
 64. Evidence of John Rice *et al.*, "Evidence of Sundry Persons about the Mob," *Ibid.*
 65. Deposition of Silas Burbank, June 28, 1773, *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 121.
 66. *Ibid.*, pp.121-122.
 67. *Ibid.*, p. 121.
 68. Sidney Lee, ed., *Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1909), XIX, 92-98. Bute was so unpopular he could not appear on the street without considerable personal risk. His house was always the object of attack during a riot.
 69. Deposition of Silas Burbank, June 28, 1773, *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 122.
 70. *Ibid.*
 71. Evidence of Isaac Deering, "Evidence of Sundry Persons about the Mob," Richard King papers (microfilm).
 72. Evidence of Abraham Leavitt, *Ibid.*; Nehemiah V:13, Revised Standard Version.
 73. Deposition of Silas Burbank, June 28, 1773, *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 121.
 74. Deposition of Jonathan Wingate, June 16, 1773, *Ibid.*, p. 125.
 75. *Ibid.*
 76. *Ibid.*, p.126
 77. *Ibid.*
 78. Edmund S. Morgan, "The Puritan Ethic and the American Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., Vol. XXIV, No. 1 (January 1967), 5-6.
 79. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
 80. Richard King's draft proposal, June 18, 1766, Richard King papers (microfilm); Richard King's petition to the General Court, 4 January, 1768, *Adams Legal Papers*, I, 109-110.
 81. Richard King's address "To the Freeholders and Others of the Town of Scarborough...", May 13, 1769, Richard King

- papers (microfilm). For a somewhat modernized version see Southgate, *Scarborough*, p. 237.
82. Richard King papers (microfilm).
83. *Acts and Resolves*, XVIII, 374.
84. Richard King papers (microfilm). For a modernized version see Southgate, *Scarborough*, pp. 191-192 n.
85. Southgate, *Scarborough*, pp. 190-193; Libbey, *Scarborough*, pp. 113-114.
86. Scarboro Records, II, 258; Rufus King to Dr. Robert Southgate, August 21, 1777, August 24, 1777, *Life and Correspondence of Rufus King...*, ed., Charles R. King (New York, 1894), I, 26-28.

James S. Leamon is Associate Professor of History at Bates College in Lewiston. He is a member of the Standing Committee of this Society and Chairman of the Publications Committee. Dr. Leamon was instrumental in setting up the joint Bates-Maine Historical Archives course for Bates students now in its third year.

I would like to become a member of the Maine Historical Society in the category indicated below:

Active	\$8.00	☐
Sustaining	\$20.00	☐
Life	\$200.00	☐

My check in the amount of _____ is enclosed.

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____