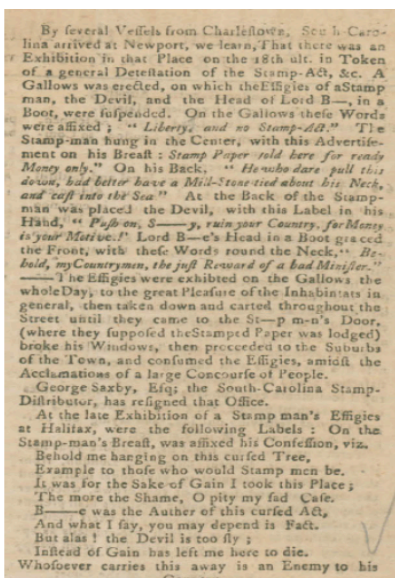


The Stamps Have Arrived– Public Protests Begin, October 19, 1765

The South-Carolina Gazette was a prominent colonial newspaper published in Charles Town, South Carolina, and was one of the earliest newspapers in the American colonies, first appearing in 1732. The editor during the Stamp Act protests was named Lewis Timothy, a prominent member of the Sons of Liberty in Charles Town. The newspaper provided coverage of the Sons of Liberty's protests, helped spread their messages of resistance, and played a crucial role in amplifying colonial opposition to the Stamp Act.

Friday, the 18th instant, late in the evening, arrived and came to anchor, under the cannon of Fort Johnson, the ship Planter's Adventure, Captain Miles Lawley, from London. It having been sometime before reported that a Distributor of Stamps for this Province was coming over in this ship, and it being suspected, from the circumstances of its not coming up to town that night, that there was on board either a stamp officer, stamps or stamp paper.

Early on Saturday morning (Oct. 19th), in the middle of Broad street and Church street, near Mr. Dillon's (being the most central public part of the town), appeared suspended on a gallows



twenty feet high, an effigy designed to represent a distributor of stamp paper, with a figure of the devil on its right hand, on his left a boat, with a head stuck upon it, distinguished by a blue bonnet; to each of which were affixed labels expressive of the sense of a people unshaken in their loyalty, but tenacious of just liberty, who had conceived "that all internal duties imposed upon them without the consent of their immediate or even virtual representatives, was grievous, oppressive and unconstitutional; and that an extension of the powers and jurisdiction of admiralty courts in America would subvert one of their most darling legal rights and privileges, that of trial by juries."

A very similar report of this protest appeared on page 2 of the *Supplement to the Massachusetts Gazette*, 21 November 1765. Courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

On the gallows, in very conspicuous characters, was written "LIBERTY and no STAMP-ACT," and on the back of the principal figure these words, viz: "Whoever shall dare attempt to pull down these effigies, had better been born with a mill-stone about his neck and cast into the sea." In this situation the effigies continued the whole day without one person offering to disturb or take them down, the court of general sessions of the peace, oyer and terminer, assize and general jail delivery, sitting all the while; or was there the least riot or disturbance, though a great concourse of people incessantly resorted to the place of exhibition.

In the evening the figures were taken down and received in a cart or wagon, drawn by eight or ten horses, when a procession commenced down Broad Street to the Bay, attended at least by 2000 souls, continuing from then to the Exchange, and up Tradd street, halting at the door of a house belonging to George Saxby, Esq., (the then supposed distributor of stamps) occupied by Capt. William Coats. Some small injuries to the windows of which it was impossible to prevent from so great a number (whom it required great prudence and no less exertion of influence in many to restrain from leveling it to the ground), not owing however, to any personal dislike to Mr. Saxby, but their detestation of the office; and even these might have been prevented, had there been no backwardness shown in opening the doors, and an answer as readily given as was expected to the question "whether there was any stamp papers in the house?" Upon the doors being at length opened, and no such papers found, the cart and its contents proceeded to the Green, back of the brick Barracks, when the effigies were committed to the flames, amidst the loud and repeated shouts of an encreasing multitude.

The bells of St. Michael's rang muffled all day; during the procession there was a most solemn knell for the burial of a coffin on which was inscribed "AMERICAN LIBERTY."

No outrages whatever were committed during the whole procession, except the trifling damage done to Mr. Saxby's house, whose furniture 'twas said, had been mostly removed into the country ten days before. But after the procession and funeral, diligent search was made for another gentleman, upon a report prevailing in the evening that HE was appointed DISTRIBUTOR of the stamps, and not Mr. Saxby, in order to be informed "whether HE intended to execute the act."

This gentleman not being found that night, had like to have produced some commotion, but the next day being (Sunday) a solemn declaration, signed by him, was stuck up at the Exchange, importing "that he neither had received a commission, knew of his appointment, or that the stamps were consigned to him," which in some measure appeased the people.

Glossary: (in order of appearance)

Commotions – civil unrest among the population.

Concourse – a meeting of people

Prudence - with wisdom

Discussion Questions:

1.	How did the use of effigies and other public displays in the protest against the Stamp Act reflect the colonists' anger about British taxation and legal jurisdiction?	
2.	How did the event demonstrate both the unity and the tensions within the town regarding the enforcement of British policies?	
3.	Evaluate the effectiveness of this protest in convincing British authorities in London or supporters of the Stamp Act in North America.	