

# Mecklenburg Resolves

— CHARLOTTETOWN, Mecklenburg County, May 31st, 1775.

This day the Committee of this county met and passed the following resolves: —

*Whereas*, By an address presented to His Majesty by both Houses of Parliament in February last, the American Colonies are declared to be in a state of actual rebellion, we conceive that all laws and commissions confirmed by or derived from the authority of the King and Parliament are annulled and vacated, and the former civil constitution of these colonies for the present wholly suspended. To provide in some degree for the exigencies of this county in the present alarming period, we deem it proper and necessary to pass the following resolves, viz:-

- I. That all commissions, civil and military, heretofore granted by the crown to be exercised in these colonies, are null and void, and the constitution of each particular colony wholly suspended.
- II. That the Provincial Congress of each Province, under the direction of the Great Continental Congress, is invested with all legislative and executive powers within their respective provinces, and that no other legislative or executive power does or can exist at this time in any of these colonies.
- III. As all former laws are now suspended in this Province, and the Congress has not yet provided others, we judge it necessary for the better preservation of good order, to form certain rules and regulations for the Internal Government of this county, until laws shall be provided for us by the Congress.
- IV. That the inhabitants of this county do meet on a certain day appointed by the Committee, and having formed themselves into nine companies (to wit: eight for the county and one for the town), do choose a colonel and other military officers, who shall hold and exercise their several powers by virtue of the choice, and independent of the crown of Great Britain, and former constitution of this province.
- V. That for the better preservation of the peace and administration of justice, each of those companies do choose from their own body two discreet freeholders, who shall be empowered each by himself, and singly, to decide and determine all matters of controversy arising within said company, under the sum of twenty shillings, and jointly and together all controversies under the sum of forty shillings, yet so as their decisions may admit of appeal to the Convention of the Select Men of the County, and also that any one of these men shall have power to examine and commit to confinement persons accused of petit larceny.
- VI. That those two select men thus chosen do jointly and together choose from the body of their particular company two persons to act as constables, who may assist them in the execution of their office.
- VII. That upon the complaint of any persons to either of these select men, he do issue his warrant directed to the constable, commanding him to bring the aggressor before him to answer said complaint.
- VIII. That these select eighteen select men thus appointed do meet every third Thursday in January, April, July and October at the Court-House in Charlotte, to hear and determine all matters of controversy for sums exceeding 40s., also appeals; and in case of felony to commit the persons convicted thereof to close confinement until the Provincial Congress shall provide and establish laws and modes of proceeding in all such cases.
- IX. That these eighteen select men thus convened do choose a clerk, to record the transactions of said convention, and that said clerk, upon the application of any person or persons aggrieved, do issue his warrant to any of the constables of the company to which the offender belongs, directing said constable to summon and warn said offender to appear before said convention at their next sitting, to answer the aforesaid complaint.

X. That any person making complaint, upon oath, to the clerk, or any member of the convention, that he has reason to suspect that any person or persons indebted to him in a sum above forty shillings intend clandestinely to withdraw from the county without paying the debt, the clerk or such member shall issue his warrant to the constable, commanding him to take said person or persons into safe custody until the next sitting of the convention.

XI. That when a debtor for a sum above forty shillings shall abscond and leave the county, the warrant granted as aforesaid shall extend to any goods or chattels of said debtor as may be found, and such goods or chattels be seized and held in custody by the constable for the space of thirty days, in which time, if the debtor fails to return and discharge the debt, the constable shall return the warrant to one of the select men of the company where the goods are found, who shall issue orders to the constable to sell such a part of said goods as shall amount to the sum due.

That when the debt exceeds forty shillings, the return shall be made to the convention, who shall issue orders for sale.

XII. That all receivers and collectors of quit rents, public and county taxes, do pay the same into the hands of the chairman of this Committee, to be by them disbursed as the public exigencies may require, and that such receivers and collectors proceed no further in their office until they be approved of by, and have given to this Committee good and sufficient security for a faithful return of such moneys when collected.

XIII. That the Committee be accountable to the county for the application of all moneys received from such public officers.

XIV. That all these officers hold their commissions during the pleasure of their several constituents.

XV. That this committee will sustain all damages to all or any of their officers thus appointed, and thus acting, on account of their obedience and conformity to these rules.

XVI. *That whatever person shall hereafter receive a commission from the crown, or attempt to exercise any such commission heretofore received, shall be deemed an enemy to his country;* and upon confirmation being made to the captain of the company in which he resides, the said company shall cause him to be apprehended and conveyed before two select men, who, upon proof of the fact, shall commit said offender to safe custody, until the next sitting of the Committee, who shall deal with him as prudence may direct.

XVII. That any person refusing to yield obedience to the above rules shall be considered equally criminal, and liable to the same punishment, as the offenders above last mentioned.

XVIII. That these Resolves be in full force and virtue until instructions from the Provincial Congress regulating the jurisprudence of the province shall provide otherwise, or the legislative body of Great Britain resign its unjust and arbitrary pretensions with respect to America.

XIX. That the eight militia companies in this county provide themselves with proper arms and accoutrements, and hold themselves in readiness to execute the commands and directions of the General Congress of this province and this Committee.

XX. That the Committee appoint Co. Thomas Polk and Dr. Joseph Kennedy to purchase 300 pounds of powder, 600 pounds of lead, 1000 flints, for the use of the militia of this county, and deposit the same in such place as the Committee may hereafter direct.

Signed by order of the Committee,  
EPH. BREVARD,  
*Clerk of the Committee*