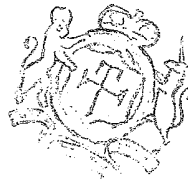
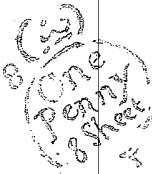
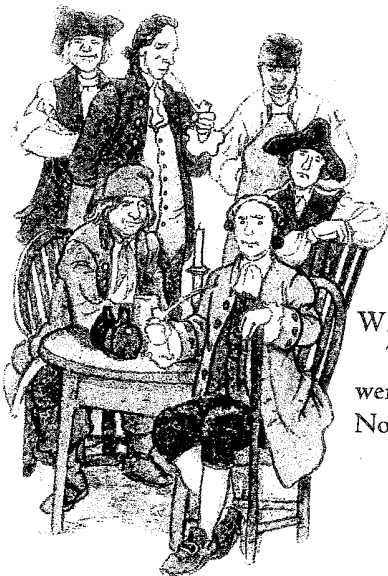




If a stamp tax collector refused to resign, he was sometimes chased out of town by a mob carrying clubs and throwing stones.



The colonists drew stamps with a skull and crossbones. This was to show their belief that the Stamp Act was the death of liberty.



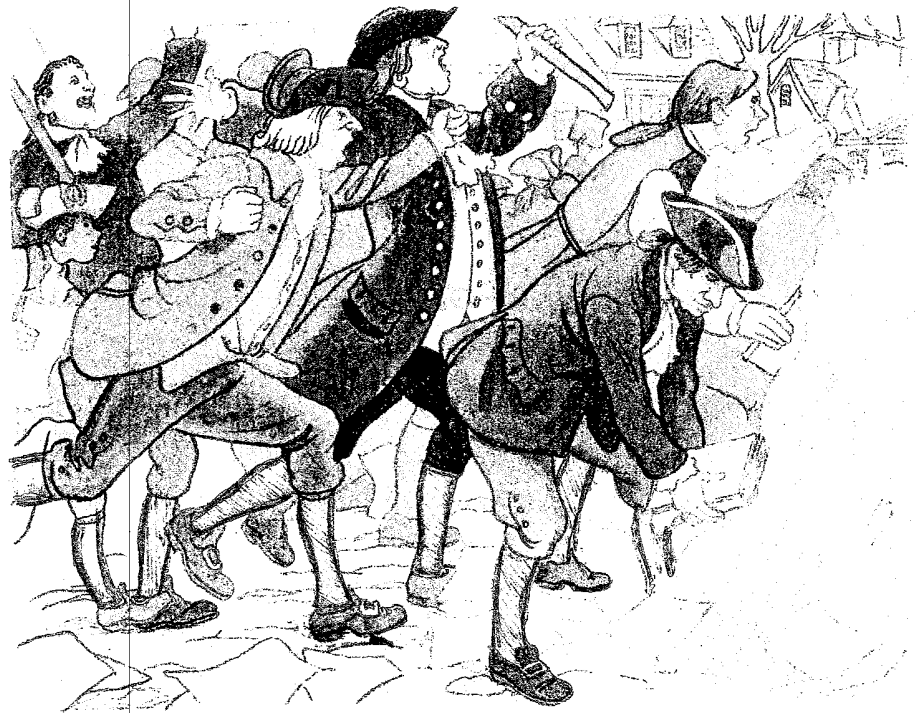
The Death-Head Stamp

The Stamp Act of 1765 was the last straw!

Parliament had passed a new tax. Now every piece of paper that changed hands in the colonies—every newspaper, marriage license, will, diploma, and land deed—had to carry a British stamp before it could be considered legal. And the colonists had to pay for these stamps.

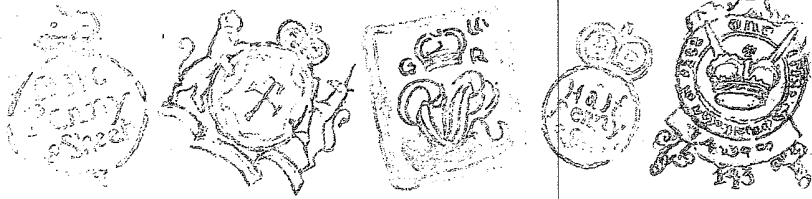
People were furious! Riots broke out in Boston. In other cities there were demonstrations and violent speeches against the British. To many, the Stamp Act seemed like the death of liberty.

Americans didn't mind paying taxes to their *local* governments. That seemed fair because they elected their own representatives. But there was nobody to represent them in the British Parliament.



Who were the Sons of Liberty?

They were groups of men opposed to Britain's treatment of the colonies. Some were poor, uneducated workers. Others were wealthy merchants, lawyers, and teachers. Not all of them believed in mob violence, but the threat of it scared their opponents.



The Stamp Act was taxation without representation! It could not be allowed.

Groups of angry men formed bands called the Sons of Liberty. They burst into the homes of stamp tax collectors and warned them to resign. If a stamp tax collector refused, the Sons of Liberty threw rocks through his precious windows—glass was very expensive. If he still held out, they smashed his house and all his belongings.

Naturally, hardly any stamps were sold. Parliament finally gave in and repealed the Stamp Act.

What wonderful news! Bells rang out in every city. People danced in the streets. They cheered and drank toasts to good King George. "Long live the king!" They were sure that the king was on their side. Now they thought America would be treated fairly, at last.



Ebenezer McIntosh, a shoemaker, led a gang that joined the Sons of Liberty. They tore down the houses of stamp tax collectors and other British officials. They were always ready for a fight. McIntosh ran among his men shouting orders through his speaking trumpet.



One night, an effigy of Andrew Oliver—who had been appointed stamp tax collector for Massachusetts—was hung from the Liberty Tree. An effigy of a boot with the devil crawling out of it was also hung from the tree. The boot stood for Lord Bute—a British politician whom the colonists hated. They considered him responsible for the Stamp Act.

