

Town Meeting - January 10, 1774

The colonists were furious that the King had imposed a duty on tea imported by the East India Company as a means of raising revenue for Great Britain. The men of Sudbury elected a committee composed of the now familiar men – Plympton, How, Maynard, Belcher, Baldwin, Glezen and Langdon – to prepare a report to state their opposition to these acts. The report voiced outrage that they were being deprived of “our American Liberties, Transmitted to us by our Worthy Ancestors, at no less expence, than that of their Blood and Treasure.... Which Liberties, through the Indulgent Smiles of Heaven, We have possessed in peace and Quiteness, till within a few years Past.... but now Behold! the pleasing scene is changed.” The people of Sudbury now faced a “sad Dilemma, either to Resolve like Men in defence of our just Rights and Liberties or sink under the weight of their Arbitrary and unconstitutional measures, into a State of abject Slavery.”

The statement concluded that, “Even though the Cost of the defence should equal that of the Purchase [of tea] Therefore Resolved:

- First: that because “no Power on Earth has a right to Tax or make Laws, binding us, without our consent”;
- Second: that allowing the East India Company to collect a duty on the tea had “a direct tendency to rivet the chains of slavery upon us”;
- Third: that Sudbury supports the resolve of Boston that “they will not Suffer any Tea to be imported into that Town while subject to an unrighteous Duty”;
- Fourth: that those employees of the East India Company

who collect the duty “can expect no favor or respect from us; but we leave them to accumulate a load of Infamy, proportionate to the Vileness”; and

- Fifth: “that whosoever shall sell, Buy, or otherwise use Tea, while subject to and poisoned with a Duty, shall be deemed by us, Enemies to their Countrys Welfare: and shall be treated by us as Such.”

The Town voted to have this Resolution sent to Boston with “sincere thanks....for their Manly Opposition to every Ministerial Measure to enslave America”.

(Throughout this presentation, the spelling is as it appeared in the original records. Spelling was flexible in the 1700's!)