



Town of Hanson Historical Commission

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Pembroke Resolves (1772)

Historical Narrative: “The first official utterance of revolution did not spring from a congress of the colonies, or the future chiefs of the republic; from the rich who falter, or the learned who weigh and debate. The people of this little interior town of Pembroke in Plymouth County, unpretending husbandmen, full of glory of their descent from the pilgrims, concluded a clear statement of their grievances, with the prediction, that "if the measures so justly complained of were persisted in, and enforced by fleets and armies, they must, they will, in a little time issue in the total dissolution of the union between the mother country and the colonies." – *History of the United States from the Discovery of the American Continent*” by George Bancroft, 1855.

Modern Narrative: “The Pembroke Resolves is a historic document signed by Patriot John Turner and four others on December 28, 1772, making Pembroke the first town in the Thirteen Colonies to officially renounce British rule. Other towns in Massachusetts Bay Colony and neighboring colonies would release similar resolves following Pembroke’s. In 1772, Hanson was part of Pembroke, known as the West Parish.” – Kurt Tarvis, Chairman of the Hanson Historical Commission.

“Pembroke Resolves” begins on the next page.

Transcribed from History of Plymouth County, Massachusetts: With Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men. United States, D. Hamilton Hurd, 1884.

- Resolved, That this Province and this town as part of it hath a right whenever they think it necessary to give their sense of public measures, and if judged to be unconstitutional and oppressive to declare it freely, and remonstrate or petition as they may deem best.
- Resolved, That it is peculiarly necessary in the present alarming crisis of our affairs to give our opinion, and cause it to be known that not a few men only of factious spirit, as has been falsely represented, but the whole body of the people complain and are uneasy.
- Resolved, That although the British Parliament is the grand legislative of the nation, yet according to the original compact solemnly entered into between the king of England and our ancestors at their first coming into this country and the present royal charter, no legislative authority can be exercised in or over this Province but that of the Great and General Court or Assembly, consisting of the king or his representative, his Majesty's Council, and the House of Representatives.

- Resolved, That acts of the British Parliament made for and executed within the limits of this Province are, in our opinion, against law and the most essential principles of our constitution.
- Resolved, That the attacks that have of late years in this way been made, and by mere dint of ministerial influences are daily making on our happy constitution, are of a very alarming nature, and ought to excite the jealousy and attention of every member of this community, and that such persons as advise to a submission, ought to be esteemed enemies to their country.
- Resolved, That the rights and liberties, civil and religious, which have been transmitted to us from our illustrious ancestors, ought to be deemed sacred, and kept inviolate by us, their posterity.
- Resolved, particularly, That the late ministerial measures in affixing stipends or salaries to the offices of the judges of our Superior Court, is an innovation that menaces the total abolition of fair trials and equitable issues at law, and directly affects both the life and property of the subject, as an entire dependence on the

crown for a support, has a tendency to bias the minds of the judges, and prevent that strict impartiality which ought to attend their decisions. But it is not our design to reflect in the least on the very respectable gentlemen who at present adorn those offices. But we ground our opinions on the imperfection and depravity of human nature.

- Resolved, That the measures so justly complained of by this Province and the other colonies on the continent are persisted in and enforced by fleets and armies, they must (we think of it with pain), they will in a little time issue in the total dissolution of the union between mother country and the colonies, to the infinite loss of the former and regret of the latter.
- Resolved, That the representative of this town be instructed, and accordingly he is instructed, to use his utmost efforts in the next session of our General Assembly to obtain a radical redress of our grievances.
- Resolved, That a committee for grievances be chosen to correspond with the several committees of the same denomination in our metropolis and the other towns throughout the Province, and report to this town such

proposals as may be thought proper to remove our unparalleled hardships. Accordingly, the following gentlemen were chosen for the above purposes, and ordered to transmit a copy of the proceedings of this town at their present meeting to the committee of correspondence at Boston.

Jno. Turner. Abel Stetson. Jeremiah Hall.
Saml. Gould. Seth Hatch.