



Edenton Tea Party
250TH ANNIVERSARY



OCTOBER 25, 1774 - OCTOBER 25, 2024
EDENTON, NORTH CAROLINA



Preserve. Restore. Educate.

OVERVIEW

In 1774, 51 women from Edenton and the surrounding area signed a document, now known as the “Edenton Resolves”.

Dated October 25, 1774, this document states the Signers’ support for the North Carolina Provincial Deputies’ decision to join in the boycott of British goods to protest “taxation without representation”.

This action forms one of the earliest-known political actions written and organized by women in the American colonies.

The “Edenton Resolves” with the full list of signatures first appeared in the “Virginia Gazette” on November 3, 1774, and then appeared in London’s “Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser” on January 16, 1775. The “Resolves” were also printed in other English newspapers throughout the remainder of January 1775.

The “Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser” also published an extract from a letter, dated October 27th, which may have enclosed the “Resolves”. The author of the letter is unfortunately unknown.

As female voices were not typically welcome in politics in the eighteenth century, both the letter and the “Resolves” caught the imagination of two particular Englishmen.

In addition to a mocking letter penned by Arthur Iredell to his brother, James, satirical artist Phillip Dawe created the mezzotint print, “A Society of Patriotic Ladies at Edenton in North Carolina”. Published on March 25, 1775 by R. Sayer & J. Bennett in Fleet Street in London, the print is the fifth plate in a series of satirical prints on protests in the American colonies.

The events of the “Edenton Tea Party” today form an iconic moment in our nation’s history, when a community of women used their own voices to stand by their loved ones and risk the wrath of the Crown by protesting injustice.

Please join the Edenton Historical Commission in celebrating the 250th anniversary of the “Edenton Tea Party” in 2024.

TEXT OF THE EDENTON RESOLVES, LETTER EXTRACT, & LIST OF THE SIGNERS' NAMES

“Extract of a letter from North Carolina, Oct. 27.

“The Provincial Deputies of North Carolina having resolvd not to drink any more tea, nor wear any more British cloth, &c. many ladies of this Province have determined to give a memorable proof of their patriotism, and have accordingly entered into the following honourable and spirited association. I send it to you, to shew your fair countrywomen, how zealously and faithfully American ladies follow the laudable example of their husbands, and what opposition your matchless Ministers may expect to receive from a people thus firmly united against them.”

Edenton, North Carolina, Oct. 25, 1774.

“As we cannot be indifferent on any occasion that appears nearly to affect the peace and happiness of our country, and as it has thought necessary, for the public good, to enter into several particular resolves by a meeting of Members deputed from the whole Province, it is a duty which we owe, not only to our near and dear connections who have concurred in them, but to ourselves who are essentially interested in their welfare, to do every thing as far as lies in our power to testify our sincere adherence to the same; and we do therefore accordingly subscribe this paper, as a witness of our fixed intention and solemn determination to do so.”

Abigail Charlton	Mary Blount
F. Johnstone	Elizabeth Creacy
Margaret Cathcart	Elizabeth Patterson
Anne Johnstone	Jane Wellwood
Margaret Pearson	Mary Woolard
Penelope Dawson	Sarah Beasley
Jean Blair	Susannah Vail
Grace Clayton	Elizabeth Vail
Frances Hall	Elizabeth Vail
Mary Jones	Mary Creacy
Anne Hall	Mary Creacy
Rebecca Bondfield	Ruth Benbury
Sarah Littlejohn	Sarah Howcutt
Penelope Barker	Sarah Hoskins
Elizabeth P. Ormond	Mary Littlede
M. Payne	Sarah Valentine
Elizabeth Johnston	Elizabeth Crickett
Mary Bonner	Elizabeth Green
Lydia Bonner	Mary Ramsey
Sarah Howe	Anne Horniblow
Lydia Bennet	Mary Hunter
Marion Wells	Tresia Cunningham
Anne Anderson	Elizabeth Roberts
Sarah Mathews	Elizabeth Roberts
Anne Haughton	Elizabeth Roberts
Elizabeth Beasley	

PUBLISHED ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS OF THE EDENTON RESOLVES

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Lydia Bennet	Mary Hunter
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Sarah Mathews	Elizabeth Roberts
Anne Houghton	Elizabeth Roberts.”
Elizabeth Beasley	

FULL TEXT WITH NAMES

- "Virginia Gazette", Purdie & Dixon: Nov. 03, 1774 (postscript) – pg. 1
- "London Evening Post": Jan. 12, 1775 - pg. 4
- "Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser": Jan. 16, 1775 - pg. 2

FULL TEXT WITHOUT NAMES

- "Middlesex Journal and Daily Advertiser": Jan. 14, 1775 - pg. 3
- "Morning Post and Daily Advertiser": Jan. 17, 1775 - pg. 2

PARTIAL EXTRACT WITHOUT NAMES

- "Caledonian Mercury": Jan. 21, 1775

LETTER FROM ARTHUR IREDELL TO JAMES IREDELL

COMPTROLLER OF CUSTOMS FOR PORT ROANOKE, EDENTON, NORTH CAROLINA

"LONDON , QUEEN SQUARE , Jan , 31st , 1775 . DEAR BROTHER : -Not having as yet heard that the American Congress have prohibited the correspondence of an English man, I am now sat down to extort from you...a long letter...Pray are you become patriotic? I see by the newspapers the Edenton ladies have signalized themselves by their protest against tea-drinking . The name of Johnston I see among others; are any of my sister's relations patriotic heroines? * Is there a female Congress at Edenton too? I hope not, for we Englishmen are afraid of the male Congress, but if the ladies, who have ever, since the Amazonian Era, been esteemed the most formidable enemies, if they, I say, should attack us, the most fatal consequence is to be dreaded . So dexterous in the handling of a dart, each wound they give is mortal; whilst we, so unhappily formed by nature, the more we strive to conquer them, the more are conquered! The Edenton ladies, conscious, I suppose, of this superiority on their side, by former experience, are willing, I imagine, to crush us into atoms, by their omnipotency; the only security on our side, to prevent the impending ruin, that I can perceive, is the probability that there are but few places in America which possess so much female artillery as Edenton..."**

*At least two of Hannah Johnston Iredell's sisters are listed among the 51 Signers.

**McRee, Griffith John. Life and Correspondence of James Iredell: One of the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States. United States: D. Appleton, 1857. Pages 230-231.

"A SOCIETY OF PATRIOTIC LADIES AT EDENTON IN NORTH CAROLINA"

March 23, 1775

Plate V in a Series of Satiric Prints by Philip Dawe (See Below)

Published by R. Sayer & J. Bennett in London

