**The Stamp Act**

On February 6th, 1765 George Grenville rose in Parliament to offer the fifty-five resolutions of his Stamp Bill. A motion was offered to first read petitions from the Virginia colony and others was denied. The bill was passed on February 17, approved by the Lords on March 8th, and two weeks later ordered in effect by the King. The Stamp Act was Parliament's first serious attempt to assert governmental authority over the colonies. Great Britain was faced with a massive national debt following the Seven Years War. That debt had grown from £72,289,673 in 1755 to £129,586,789 in 1764\*. English citizens in Britain were taxed at a rate that created a serious threat of revolt.

**1776 One Shilling = Approximately $5.00 12 Pence = One Shilling One British Pound = 20 Schillings**

1. **In total there are 54 on the list of items or documents that can be taxed – Plus 7 Additional Enactments**
2. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any declaration, plea, replication, rejoinder, demurrer or other pleading, or any copy thereof; in any court of law within the British colonies and plantations in America, a stamp duty of *three pence.*
3. …... any special bail, and appearance upon such bail in any such court, a stamp duty of *two shillings.*
4. …... any petition, bill, answer, claim, plea, replication, rejoinder, demurrer, or other pleading, in any court of chancery or equity within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *one shilling and six pence.*
5. …... any donation, presentation, collation or institution, of or to any benefice, or any writ or instrument for the like purpose, or any register, entry, testimonial, or certificate of any degree taken in any university, academy, college, or seminary of learning within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *two pounds. (This Goes On To Cover Almost Any Type of Legal Proceeding*
6. *..*….. any note or bill of lading, which shall be signed for any kind of goods, wares, or merchandise, to be exported from, or any cocket or clearance granted within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *four pence.*
7. ….. letters of mart or commission for private ships of war, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *twenty shillings.*
8. ….. any grant, appointment, or admission of, or to, any public beneficial office or employment, for the space of one year, or any lesser time, of or *above twenty pounds per annum* sterling money, in salary, fees, and perquisites, within the said colonies and plantations (except commissions and appointments of officers of the army, navy, ordnance, or militia, of judges, and of justices of the peace), a stamp duty of *ten shillings.*
9. ….. on which any grant, of any liberty, privilege, or franchise, under the seal or sign manual of any governor, proprietor, or public officer, alone, or in conjunction with any other person or persons, or with any council, or any council and assembly, or any exemplification of the same, shall be engrossed, written, or printed, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *six pounds.*
10. ….. any license for retailing of spirituous liquors, to be granted to any person who shall take out the same, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *twenty shillings. Retailing wine 4 pounds.*
11. .….. any probate of will, letters of administration, or of guardianship for any estate above the value of twenty pounds sterling money, within the British colonies and plantations upon the continent of America, the islands belonging thereto and the Bermuda and Bahama islands, a stamp duty of *five shillings.*
12. ….. any bond for securing the payment of any sum of money, not exceeding the sum of ten pounds sterling money within the colonies, etc. a stamp duty of *six pence.*
13. ….. surveying or setting out any quantity of land above one hundred and not exceeding two hundred acres, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *one shilling.*
14. ….. warrant for surveying or setting out any quantity of land above two hundred, and not exceeding three hundred and twenty acres, and in proportion for every such order or warrant for surveying or setting out every other three hundred and twenty acres, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *one shilling and six pence…*and more depending on the size of the land.
15. ….. any grant, appointment, or admission, of or to any beneficial office or employment, not herein before charged, above the value of twenty pounds *per annum* sterling money in salary, fees, *four pounds.*
16. ….. appointment, or admission, of or to any such public beneficial office or employments or any exemplification of the same, within all other parts of the British dominions in America, *six pounds.*
17. ….. indenture, lease, conveyance, contract, stipulation, bill of sale, charter party, protest, articles of apprenticeship or covenant (except for the hire of servants not apprentices, *two shillings and six pence..*
18. For every pack of playing cards, *one shilling.*
19. And for every pair of such dice, *ten shillings.*
20. And for and every paper called a *pamphlet*, and upon every newspaper, containing public news or occurrences, which shall be printed, dispersed, and made public, within any of the said colonies and plantations, and for and upon such advertisements as are hereinafter mentioned, the respective duties following (that is to say): This goes on to define all types of pamphlet or paper document, with an increasing tax per page or type of document.
21. And there shall be also paid, in the said colonies and plantations, a duty of six pence for every twenty shillings, in any sum not exceeding fifty pounds sterling money, which shall be given, paid, contracted, or agreed for, with, or in relation to, any clerk or apprentice, which shall be put or placed to or with any master or mistress, to learn any profession, trade, or employment.

And also a duty of one shilling for every twenty shillings, in any sum exceeding fifty pounds, which shall be given, paid, contracted, or agreed for, with, or in relation to, any such clerk or apprentice...

**V**

And be it further enacted ..., That all books and pamphlets serving chiefly for the purpose of an almanack, by whatsoever name or names intituled or described, are and shall be charged with the duty imposed by this act on almanacks, but not with any of the duties charged by this act on pamphlets, or other printed papers ...

**VI**

Provided always, that this act shall not extend to charge any bills of exchange, accompts, bills of parcels, bills of fees, or any bills or notes not sealed for payment of money at sight, or upon demand, or at the end of certain days of payment....

**XII**

And be it further enacted ..., That the said several duties shall be under the management of the commissioners, for the time being, of the duties charged on stamped vellum, parchment, and paper, in Great Britain: and the said commissioners are hereby impowered and required to employ such officers under them, for that purpose, as they shall think proper....