

THE STAMP ACT

DISTANCE: 25 YARDS



Starting November 1st, 1765 by law, all printed documents in the colonies had to bear the tax stamp. The stamps were required on legal documents, newspapers and pamphlets, playing cards, etc. The money raised by the sale of the stamps was supposed to help defray the costs of the French and Indian War and the increasing size of the British government. With no American representation in Parliament, the Stamp Act was taxation without representation and a violation of the British Bill of Rights. Further, the stamps were to be paid for in British Sterling silver coins. This was seen as restrictive by the colonists, who typically used barter and their own currency as opposed to paying for purchases with minted government coins. In an act of blatant defiance, some colonial printers not only refused to put the king's stamp on their newspapers, they instead put their own version of a "stamp" in the corner of the front page:



British government officials had the audacity to write:

"DO NOT EVEN PONDER THE THOUGHT OF SELLING OR TRADING GOODS WITHOUT THE ROYAL STAMP. IF YOU CHOOSE TO DISOBEY THIS LAW A SEVERE PENALTY WILL BE PAID."

