

## Topic Page: [Stamp Act \(1765\)](#)

Definition: **Stamp Act** from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

(1765) First direct tax levied on the American colonies by the British government. Introduced to raise revenue for the defence of the colonies, it required a special stamp on all printed material, including newspapers and legal documents. It roused widespread opposition and led to the Stamp Act Congress (1765), at which representatives of nine colonies met in New York City, and resolved that only the colonies could tax themselves. It was repealed in 1766.

### Summary Article: **Stamp Act**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

1765, revenue law passed by the British Parliament during the ministry of George Grenville. The first direct tax to be levied on the American colonies, it required that all newspapers, pamphlets, legal documents, commercial bills, advertisements, and other papers issued in the colonies bear a stamp. The revenue obtained from the sale of stamps was designated for colonial defense; while the means of raising revenue was novel, the application of such revenue to defense continued existing British policy.

The act was vehemently denounced in the colonies by those it most affected: businessmen, merchants, journalists, lawyers, and other powerful persons. Among these were Samuel Adams, Christopher Gadsden, Patrick Henry, John Dickinson, John Lamb, Joseph Warren, and Paul Revere. Associations known as the Sons of Liberty were formed to organize opposition to the Stamp Act. Merchants boycotted English goods; stamp distributors were forced to resign and stamps were destroyed; and the Massachusetts legislature, at the suggestion of James Otis, issued a call for a general congress to find means of resisting the law.

The **Stamp Act Congress**, which met in Oct., 1765, in New York City, included delegates from New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Delaware, South Carolina, Maryland, and Connecticut. The congress adopted the Declaration of Rights and Grievances; it declared that freeborn Englishmen could not be taxed without their consent, and, since the colonists were not represented in Parliament, any tax imposed on them without the consent of their colonial legislatures was unconstitutional. Faced with a loss of trade, Parliament repealed the Stamp Act in 1766.

See Bullion, J. L. , *A Great and Necessary Measure: George Grenville and the Genesis of the Stamp Act* (1983);.

Morgan, E. S. H. M. , *The Stamp Act Crisis* (rev. ed. 1983).

### **APA**

### Chicago

### Harvard

### MLA

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Stamp act. (2018). In P. Lagasse, & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia* (8th ed.). New

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## Chicago

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## Harvard

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## MLA

"Stamp Act." *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, Paul Lagasse, and Columbia University, Columbia University Press, 8th edition, 2018. *Credo Reference*, [https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/stamp\\_act](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/stamp_act). Accessed 12 Nov. 2019.