Stamp Act Cartoons in the Colonies

Political caricatures are of particular interest to the historian because they preserve in sharp focus the men and events of the past as they felt and appeared at the moment, not as they appear in retrospect to the scholar in his study, or in the dim confused memories of mankind. The collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania do not contain all the Stamp Act cartoons that were issued. What they do have, however, is exceptionally interesting for they were collected at the time; they show us what we can be sure Americans saw during the crisis; and, uniquely, they show us also what cartoons seemed so cogent as to be copied and reissued in America.

The British government's American revenue acts of 1764 and 1765, designed to raise funds for defense and to relieve the British taxpayer, were a turning point in American history. The first to go into effect, the Sugar Act, laying duties on molasses, wines, and spirits, was accepted with gloomy resignation. Franklin wrote to Peter Collinson (April 30, 1764), "Our Opinions or Inclinations, if they had been known, would perhaps have weigh'd but little among

1 Others published in London will be found reproduced in Douglass Adair, "The Stamp Act in Contemporary English Cartoons," William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series, X (1953), 538-542.
you. We are in your Hands as Clay in the Hands of the Potter . . . for interest with you we have but little. The West Indians vastly outweigh us of the Northern Colonies."² The Sugar Act left the southern colonies largely untouched and affected only part of the population in the North. Few recognized how heavily it could affect them. But the Stamp Act touched everyone—merchants, lawyers, farmers, printers of newspapers, rich and poor—for it was laid on every transaction involving official paper, whether clearing a ship from harbor, getting married, or inheriting a farm. It brought everyone from north to south together in common resentment, giving unity of feeling to thirteen colonies that never before had occasion to think of themselves as one. The storm of resentment aroused was the first of those irresistible tidal waves of emotion that have swept periodically through the American people.³

The political caricatures produced by the Stamp Act demonstrate that, as Americans are apt to forget, the Act was attacked first in England. Members of Parliament who had served with the army in America, like Colonel Isaac Barré, or who had American plantations, like William Beckford, opposed the measure. At a hearing before the First Lord of the Treasury, George Grenville, in February, 1765, two members of Parliament who served as agents for colonies, Richard Jackson and Charles Garth, and two agents newly arrived from America, Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania⁴ and Jared Ingersoll of Connecticut,⁵ joined forces with London merchants trading with America to protest against the proposed

³ The Loyalist judge, Thomas Jones, bears testimony to this unanimity of feeling in his History of New York during the Revolutionary War (New York, 1879), I, 18: "The American stamp act which was passed by the British parliament in March, 1765, and enacted to take effect on the first of November in the same year, occasioned a universal tumult throughout the colony; but as all parties, all denominations, and all ranks of people appeared unanimous in opposing its execution, the peace of the province, as to any internal jarrings, or political tenets, among its inhabitants, was not in the least disturbed. . . ."
⁴ For Franklin’s opposition to the act (which his enemies accused him of favoring) see Verner W. Crane, “Benjamin Franklin and the Stamp Act,” The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Transactions, XXXII (1933-1937), 56-77.
⁵ Ingersoll was persuaded, as a public duty, to become stamp officer for Connecticut but was forced to resign by public indignation and never regained his position in the province. Lawrence Henry Gipson, The British Empire Before the American Revolution (New York, 1961), X, 300-301.
tax. This was before the measure came to a vote. The American Stamp Bill was passed, nonetheless, and received the royal assent on March 22, 1765, to take effect on the first day of November following.6

On March 22, the very day of the royal assent, a caricature was published in London called The Deplorable State of America, or Sc[toc]h Government, that neatly summarized popular apprehensions and assigned blame7 (Figure 1). Britannia, seated, offers Pandora’s Box, i.e. “The S[tam]p Act” to America. America, represented as an Indian chief, appeals to Minerva, saying, “Secure Me, O Goddess, by thy Wisdom for I abhor it as Death”; to which Minerva replies, “Take it not.” Liberty, lying prostrate on the ground, groans, “It is all over with me”; and Trade, symbolized by Mercury, makes ready to depart, saying, “It is with Reluctance I leave ye.” At the right, the King of France approaches to present a bag of money to the apparition of a radiant boot in the sky (the caricaturists’ constant emblem for Lord Bute, George III’s Scottish tutor and first minister), from which malign rays pour down upon the scene. Higher in the sky the North Wind blows violently upon the Tree of Liberty. In the left distance are a ship laid up on shore, with a broom fixed to its masthead to indicate that it is for sale, and a group of sailors who point across the water. On the farther shore, in America, another group of sailors say, “We shall all starve—By God, I’ll rob first—Ay, ay, necessity has no Law.” A gallows behind them is labeled “Fit entertainment for St[am]p M[e]n.”

The main points of popular feeling against the Act—that it was a fatal blow to liberties of Englishmen; that it would destroy trade; and that it must be the work of a malign conspiracy—were thus first stated in an English caricature. The form in which these points were made seems unfamiliar, not to say clumsy, to twentieth-century minds; but to the eighteenth century it spoke so eloquently that it was twice redrawn in America. It belongs to the first phase of English polemical prints, which M. Dorothy George characterizes exactly: “In the more elaborate prints the aim is to convey symboli-

---

6 Ibid., 246–281.
cally, or in a blend of symbolism and realism, the complexities of a political situation." Such symbolism, intended for study and attentive analysis, has since given way in modern caricature to an instantaneous image making a single point; but the change began slowly, in the 1780's, and was not perfected until the mid-nineteenth century. The Deplorable State of America presents at least three ideas of considerable complexity: it did not aim to compress these into a symbolic instant.

American response to the Stamp Act built up slowly. The Virginia Assembly was still in session when the news arrived in May. Urged by the eloquence of Patrick Henry, the Assembly passed the Virginia Resolutions (May 29, 1765), denying that Englishmen in America could be governed or taxed by any laws except those "derived from their own consent." On June 9 the Massachusetts legislature called on the other provincial assemblies to send committees to New York City in the coming October to frame an address to the King and "to implore Relief." Other legislatures quickly seconded the call.

In Massachusetts, however, protests gave way to mob violence. On August 14 the effigy of Andrew Oliver, the proposed distributor of stamps in Massachusetts, was hung on a tree, afterwards called the Liberty Tree, and later burned; his house was entered and sacked; and he was forced to resign the post. On August 26 the mob attacked the homes of officials whose duty it was to enforce the trade laws: Charles Paxton, marshal of the Court of Vice-Admiralty; William Story, register of the same court; Benjamin Hallowell, comptroller of the Boston Custom House; and Thomas Hutchinson, Lieutenant Governor and Chief Justice of the province. Hutchinson's house was one of the most beautiful in the colony. "By four in the morning, one of the best houses in the province was completely in ruins, nothing remaining but the bare walls and floors. The plate, family pictures, most of the furniture, and wearing apparel, about £900 sterling in money, and the manuscripts and books, which Mr. Hutchinson had been 30 years collecting, beside many public papers in his custody, were either carried off, or destroyed."

9 Gipson, X, 291.
There seems no doubt that a show of force was intended, backed as in many other instances in colonial America by the merchants, to intimidate those who might undertake to enforce the new revenue acts. Governor Bernard reported to Lord Halifax after the first riot that members of his Council told him "that it was a preconcerted Business, in which the greatest part of the Town was engaged...". After the second riot Thomas Hutchinson wrote to Richard Jackson (August 30, 1765), "The encouragers of the first mob never intended matters should go to this length and the people in general express the utmost detestation of this unparalleled outrage."

The merchants of Boston felt themselves threatened with bankruptcy by the Sugar Act, laying duties on the raw material for the New England staple of rum; by the tightened customs controls against smuggling; and the Stamp Act. This atmosphere of excitement, alarm, and unanimous determination to resist a succession of acts seeming to threaten ruin—and I believe only this atmosphere—can explain the entry of John Singleton Copley as a propagandist into the situation in Boston. Copley was a man who carefully avoided politics and whose later sympathies were Loyalist, but he now was engaged (I think we must so assume) to produce a political caricature. Only one impression exists, so far as I am aware, and it has never been published before.

We owe its preservation to the indefatigable and omnivorous collector, Pierre Eugène Du Simitière. Du Simitière arrived in the North American colonies in the year of the Stamp Act, 1765, after some years spent in the West Indies. He traveled about, visiting New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Newport and Burlington, New Jersey, before settling permanently at Philadelphia. One of his major interests was the history of the provinces to which he had come. John Adams, who visited his collection in the summer of 1776, described him and his methods in a letter to his wife (August 14):

This M. Du Simitière is a very curious man. He has begun a history of this revolution. He begins with the first advices of the tea ships. He cuts out of the newspapers every scrap of intelligence, and every piece of speculation,

11 Quoted by Edmund S. Morgan in his useful collection of documents, Prologue to Revolution—Sources and Documents on the Stamp Act Crisis, 1764-1766 (Chapel Hill, 1959), 107.
12 Ibid., 109.
The Deplorable State of America or Sc—h Government.

Figure 1. The Deplorable State of America or Sc—h Government (London, March 22, 1765).
FIGURE 2. JOHN SINGLETON COPLEYS, *The Deplorable State of America*  
(BOSTON, NOVEMBER 1, 1765).
and pastes it upon clean paper, arranging them under the head of that State to which they belong, and intends to bind them up in volumes. He has a list of every speculation and pamphlet concerning independence and another concerning forms of government. . . .

Among the Du Simitière papers in the Library Company of Philadelphia are two Stamp Act caricatures. Both derive from the ideas and symbolism of the caricature published in London on March 22. The first, and by far the more important, is inscribed in Du Simitière's hand in the upper margin: "The Original Print done in Boston by J o. S. C-pl-y" (Figure 2). The second he inscribed in the upper margin: "The wretched Copy done in Philadelphia"; and in the left margin, "for an explanation of this print See the Penna Gazette No 1926 for November 21, 1765" (Figure 3).

The passage referred to in the Pennsylvania Gazette is in the Boston letter which, after reporting certain other matters, goes on to say: "On the fatal First of November, 1765 [the day the Stamp Act was to come into effect], was published, a caricatura Print, representing the deplorable State of America, and under what influence her Ruin is attempted. . . ." The rest of the description, read alone, would lead one to expect a close copy of the London print, for the same ideas are expressed by the same symbolic figures; but the composition is far more elaborate and local Boston allusions are added.

France has become a flying Genius holding out a purse to the comet marked with a jack boot [Bute], saying, "What a surprising virtue there is in Gold. With it I make the very Stars shed their influence as I please." The comet shines its malignant rays upon Britannia, who is also a flying figure, behind whom flutter in the air torn fragments of paper labeled "Mag[n]a Ch[art]a." She holds out Pandora's Box to America, saying, "Take it Daughter its only y e S-p A-t."

Loyalty now leans against a tree labeled, "The Tree of Liberty Aug. 14, 1765" (the day of the first Boston riot), and, clasping a

16 Ibid., No. 395.F.1.
heart to her bosom, gazes sadly at a crown, saying, "O tis a horrid blast I fear I shall lose my support." A viper now creeps from under the Scottish thistle to sting the dying Liberty. A dog, its collar inscribed "W. Pit's Dog," hoists its leg and douses the thistle.17

There is another local allusion among the sailors. Two men stand by a cart, one asking, "have ye seen ye Stamp Men?" The other answers, "there he Drives D--n his eyes"; and on the other side of the tree, a fleeing figure on horseback cries, "Fort George will save me." Fort George was an island six miles off in Boston Harbor where troops were stationed.

In the left background a group of well-dressed men stand about the gallows, which is labeled, "Fit Entertainment for St-p M-n." One mourns, "we loose 500 sterling p'. an.'; his neighbor says, "who would not sell their Couny for so large a sum." The reason for their dismay is a group in front of them. Two men bend over an open grave. As one shovels dirt into the grave, the other asks, "Will you resign?" A voice from within the grave answers, "Yes, yes, I will!"

The point made in the English caricature that the Stamp Act was the work of a wicked and disloyal conspiracy is thus enlarged: (1) in America only greedy placemen would support it; and (2) they would be safe from their angry countrymen only when protected by British troops.

There is no reason to doubt Du Simitière's attribution of the print to Copley. He was careful and exact in his search for information and always inquiring about artists and works of art. Two internal factors support the attribution. One is the wealth of local Boston allusions. The other is the way in which the simple structure of the English print was transformed (and, it must be said, confused) by the artistic ambitions of the Boston print maker. The English print makes its points by a simple row of figures that pass ideas from hand to hand, like a bucket brigade, across its stage. The Boston print maker, not satisfied with this simple, monotonous composition, turned his into an elaborate rococo composition of linked chains of movement, sweeping back and forth, up and down, across his plate.

17 This detail is perhaps borrowed from a print of 1762, The Raree Show (British Museum, No. 3975), an attack upon Hogarth in which a dog is giving the same treatment to Hogarth's political print, The Times.
It is much more artistic. Its sketchy but remarkably free and vigorous drawing shows that a fine hand is at work. But the clarity and bite of effective polemic are somewhat lost.

Paul Revere’s Stamp Act cartoon, *A View of the Year 1765* (issued at Boston on January 27, 1766), offers an instructive contrast. Revere had neither the skill in depicting the human figure nor the artistic ambitions of Copley. Using as model an English cartoon satirizing the Revenue Act of 1763, he copied as many figures as possible, introducing others of his own, worse drawn, on either side the main group. Since the main group did not fit Revere’s subject very well, he engraved letters over the heads of all the figures, referring to explanatory verses below. It is a stiff, crude performance compared with Copley’s complex, spirited etching.18

Seven weeks after Copley’s print appeared in Boston, the *Pennsylvaniaische Staatsbote*, a Philadelphia newspaper, carried an advertisement (January 20, 1766) repeating verbatim the description of Copley’s caricature from the *Pennsylvania Gazette* with one added sentence: “This copperplate is to be had from the engraver Wilkinson, in Arch St., and also from the editor of this paper; for 8 pence.”19

Wilkinson’s (Figure 3) is a crude copy, in reverse, of Copley’s print and deserves Du Simitière’s description as a “wretched copy.” Where Copley’s print is rough but vigorous, Wilkinson’s is weak, and, since the image is reversed, the already crowded composition becomes doubly confused and difficult to identify one’s self with.20 William Murrell, failing to find Copley’s print and supposing Wilkinson’s to be original, rightly criticized it as heavy and overloaded. Wilkinson eliminated the date of the Boston riot from the placard on the Liberty Tree, added a crape on Mercury’s arm, inserted a reference to the *Pennsylvania Gazette’s* story, and filled the few vacant areas of Copley’s composition with engraved verses: around the coat of arms (a gallows) for Stamp men, in the foreground;

19 This is the correct date. William Murrell, *A History of American Graphic Humor* (New York, 1933), I, no. 20, gives the date incorrectly as May 26, 1766. By some mischance, he failed to discover Copley’s print and knew only Wilkinson’s.
20 For the visual and psychological confusion created by a reversal from left to right, in a reversed image, see Mercedes Gaffron, “Right and Left in Pictures,” *Art Quarterly*, XIII (1950), 312–331.
You say the Ministry are young, 'tis truth
But why, ye Scriblers, cavel at their youth?
[A boot] knows, that ministers have long been things
That walk in go-carts and in leading strings.
But to all wretches of that slavish spirit
Grant, ye good Gods, the cart, and string they merit.

beneath the feet of Britannia;

All for the best the candid say,
Still things would better suit
If Townshend had a little play
And Pitt took place of But.

An uninspired performance, yet it is an indication of the public interest that a print issued in Boston was pirated within two months in Philadelphia.21

The Grenville ministry, which had passed the Stamp Act, fell in the early summer of 1765. The King negotiated through his uncle, the Duke of Cumberland, with Pitt, but could not agree with his terms to return to office; then turned to an untried young nobleman, the Marquess of Rockingham, who took office as prime minister on July 10. Rockingham and his two secretaries of state, the Duke of Grafton and General Henry Seymour Conway, faced a difficult situation—a calamitous decline, caused by the American nonimportation agreements, of the American trade, which had been worth £2,000,000 a year; added to this, riots and the disorganization of authority, bringing practical nullification of an act of Parliament. Many merchants in the manufacturing and shipping centers of Britain would be ruined if the old harmonious relations between England and America could not be restored. Yet repeal of the Stamp Act was a delicate problem. The ministry's majority in Parliament was shaky. Many members were angered by the violence and intimidation of officials of the Stamp Act and the customs in America. George Grenville attacked the ministry in Parliament, using terms like "open

21 Two impressions of the Wilkinson caricature have survived: (1) the Du Simitière copy in the Library Company of Philadelphia (No. 395.F.3); (2) The Historical Society of Pennsylvania has an untrimmed copy, which has the price 8th. below the margin at the left, and the name John Arbo (presumably an owner) in ink in an eighteenth-century hand on the reverse (No. 1766–1).
rebellion” to describe what was going on and demanding enforcement.

The polarization of opinion in Parliament is represented in another English caricature in Du Simitière’s collection. The fact that *The State of the Nation An: Dom: 1765 &c* (Figure 4) was in Philadelphia and also advertised by Nathaniel Hurd in the *Boston Gazette* is perhaps more interesting than the print itself, although it predicts with remarkable accuracy the positions that the men represented would take during the debate on repeal in Parliament. Britannia leans grieving on the shoulder of an angry America, represented as an Indian. At the right, Grenville rushes with drawn sword at America, saying, “Il Enforce,” but Pitt stops him, saying, “you have no right.” At the left, Bute gives instructions to Lord Mansfield, who, dagger in hand and a viper in his bosom, threatens America; but Sir Charles Pratt, newly created Lord Camden, seizes his wrist saying, “no General Warrants” (thus linking the cause of the colonies with that of Wilkes).

When Parliament was considering repeal in the following winter, Grenville strongly opposed any change in the government’s position, but Pitt said, “The Americans have not acted in all things with prudence and temper. They have been wronged. They have been driven to madness by injustice . . . the Stamp Act must be repealed absolutely, totally and immediately.” Mansfield asserted Parliament’s complete and unlimited power to legislate for and govern America. But Camden, a devoted follower of Pitt, who, as Judge of Common Pleas, had freed Wilkes in 1763 on a plea of *habeas corpus*, asserted that it was absolutely illegal for Parliament to tax the colonies while they remained unrepresented.

The basis for repeal was a flood of petitions for relief addressed to the House of Commons from merchants of London, Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Halifax, Birmingham and other cities and towns. In February, 1766, the House heard testimony from a number of witnesses. The star witness was Benjamin Franklin, whose

---

23 *Boston Gazette*, Nov. 11, 1765.
24 Quoted by Gipson, X, 372.
25 Ibid., 402.
26 Ibid., 401 and note 52.
testimony was published in the autumn of that year, under the title The Examination of Dr. Benjamin Franklin, before an August Assembly, Relating to the Repeal of the Stamp Act, &c. in Philadelphia, New York, Boston and Williamsburg.27 The simplicity and effectiveness with which Franklin stated the economic arguments for repeal in his answers to the questions of the House of Commons is matched in the cartoon, MAGNA Britannia; her colonies REDUC'D (Figure 5).28 We know from Franklin's own statements that he had this etching printed on a message card to be used in writing to government officials. It is said he also hired a waiter to hand these cards to members of Parliament as they entered the House to vote.29 None of the cards have survived but Du Simitière secured an impression on letter paper, to which he added the inscription: "The Original Print done in England on the back of a Message Card, the Invention and for the use of BENJAMIN FRANKLIN ESQ.: LL.D. Agent for Province of Pennsylvania, in London."30 With his remarkable skill in persuasion, Franklin compressed the argument against the Stamp Act into an image almost as compact as one done today. Britannia leans helplessly against the globe, looking despairingly upward and lifting the stumps of her arms. Her severed arms and legs, labeled "Virg, Pensyl, New York, New Eng," lie on the ground about her. Her shield and spear lie on the ground, the spear pointed at her own breast. A lifeless tree stump is at the right; behind it are merchant ships laid up on shore, brooms at their mastheads to show that they are for sale. On a banderole draped across the globe and Britannia are the words DATE OBOLUM BEL-LISARIO (give a penny to Belisarius), which conveyed plainly enough to the classically-educated eighteenth century that even the


28 Edwin Wolf, II, "Benjamin Franklin's Stamp Act Cartoon," Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, XCV (1955), 388-396, gives a very complete account of the history and variations of this cartoon, with a bibliography of previous references.

29 Written in an unknown hand on a broadside of the cartoon, in the Library of the American Philosophical Society among the Franklin papers. Wolf, 390, 392.

Figure 5. Benjamin Franklin, *Magna Britannia: her Colonies Reduc'd* (London, c. February, 1766).
richest and greatest may be reduced to beggary. Franklin himself expressed his intention in a letter to his sister (March 1, 1766): "I send you a few of the Cards on which I wrote my messages during the Time it was debated here whether it might not be proper to reduce the Colonies to Obedience by Force of Arms: The Moral is, that the Colonies may be ruined, but that Britain would thereby be maimed." 31

The Rockingham ministry coupled the repeal of the Stamp Act with a Declaratory Act asserting Parliament's right to legislate for and tax the colonies, if it so wished. The ministry also took a most unusual step: it attacked its opponents with ridicule in two unusually large and elaborate caricatures. Using Edmund Burke as a go-between, the ministry engaged a leading British artist, and friend of Franklin, to speak for it. The first caricature, The Tombstone, was published during the debate, on February 25, 1766. It showed the leading "hard liners" dancing on the tomb of the Duke of Cumberland, who had died the preceding October after helping bring in the Rockingham ministry. An inscription coupled the treason of the Scots in 1745 with the actions of the ministry that enacted the Stamp Act. 32 Directed at internal parliamentary feelings and interests, it seems to have had less interest for Americans; at least it was not preserved by Du Simitière. But it satisfied the Ministry, so that Burke engaged the artist to do a second cartoon, The Repeal, published on the day Parliament voted the repeal, March 18, 1766. It proved, in the words of R. T. Haines Halsey, "probably the most popular satirical print ever issued" and is said to have netted the artist £300. 33 Within three days the publisher issued an advertisement that, because of the extraordinary demand, he could not fill all orders at once and appealed for patience. 34 Within a week other print sellers were issuing their own versions. The New York Public Library in 1939 exhibited six of these pirated versions. 35

31 Wolf, 390; Labaree, Papers of Benjamin Franklin, XIII, 189.
34 His advertisement is quoted in the British Museum catalogue of the print, No. 4140.
The artist was Benjamin Wilson (not to be confused with Richard Wilson the landscape painter). Like Copley, he covered his tracks. We know that he did these prints only from a manuscript autobiography incorporated (against his instructions) in Herbert Randolph's life of Wilson's son, Sir Robert Wilson (1862). Wilson was not only an excellent artist but a scientist who published a book on electricity in the 1750's, and a member of the Royal Society. At this time he was also a friend of Franklin—although later, in the embittered phase of the American drive for independence, he attacked Franklin on the design of lightning rods. When Franklin went to London in 1757 at the beginning of his first long residence there, he asked Wilson to paint a portrait group of the Franklin family, Franklin himself from life and the others from likenesses brought from Philadelphia, but Wilson, not liking this, painted instead the life portrait of Franklin now in the White House and one of Mrs. Franklin (from a Philadelphia likeness) now owned by the American Philosophical Society.

Two impressions of *The Repeal* are of exceptional interest to us. One, a proof before letters, belonged to Horace Walpole, General Conway's intimate friend and very much in his confidence at this time. Walpole's identification of the actors, written in the margin, are therefore those of an insider. This is in the Tilden Collection, the Prints Division, The New York Public Library. The other is Du Simitière's copy, which he inscribed: "This is the Original and best print of the Repeal it came from London to Philadelphia, and was put up at the coffee house there the day the news arrived of the Stamp-act being repealed." Franklin's own copy given him by the artist, which was sent in a package to his wife on April 6, 1766, unfortunately seems lost.

The theme of the print is the joy of England at the repeal and the gloom of its enemies. These latter form a funeral procession.

---

36 M. Dorothy George, I, 134, note 2; and Herbert Randolph, *The Life of Sir Charles Wilson* (1862).


38 Halsey.


40 Labaree, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, XIII, 234.
across the foreground, headed toward an open tomb inscribed, “Within this Family Vault lie (it is to be hop’d never to rise again) the Remains of Hearth mon[ey] Ship mon[ey] . . .” and the names of a number of unpopular measures. Above moulder the skulls of traitors executed after the Jacobite risings of 1715 and 1745, reminders of Scottish treason encouraged by France. The procession is headed by Dr. James Scott, who had written the bitter and effective Anti-Sejanus letters. He reads the “Burial Serv[ice]” and a “Funeral Sermon by Anti-Sejanus,” while a dog lifts its leg and douses his gown. Two lawyers, whom Walpole identifies as Lord Mansfield and Sir Fletcher Norton, carry banners on which are parodies of the stamps bearing the white rose and thistle (again the Jacobite theme), derisively labeled “Semper eadem Three Farthings” and the numbers 71 and 102 of those voting against repeal in the Lords and Commons. Mansfield’s stand against repeal has been mentioned. Sir Fletcher Norton was an unpopular lawyer whom Walpole says was accused of taking money from both sides in his cases and using information supplied by one against the other. George Grenville, parent of the tax, carries the coffin labeled “Miss Ame. Stamp. B. 1765 died 1766.” He is followed by Lord Bute, in Scots plaid, as chief mourner. Then, other supporters of the tax, Lord Temple, Lord Halifax, and Lord Sandwich, and in the rear two bishops whom Walpole identified as Warburton, Bishop of Gloucester, and Johnson, Bishop of Worcester. Behind them, on the quay, are bales of “Black Cloth from America” and “Stamps from America.” The procession thus includes most of those—Bedford, Halifax, Sandwich, Temple—who had spoken most strongly against Repeal, using terms like “rebellion” and “traitors” in denouncing colonial resistance.41

In the background life and activity return to the quays and the warehouses labeled “Manchester, Halifax, Leeds, Liverpool,” and “The Sheffield and Birmingham Warehouses. Goods Now shipped for America.” A crate marked “A Statue of Mr. Pitt” is lowered into a lighter numbered 250, the votes for Repeal in the Commons.

41 Franklin seems to have been the only prominent figure not to blame Lord Bute. In his letter of April 6 to his wife about the print, he says, “I think he the artist was wrong to put in Lord Bute, who had nothing to do with the Stamp Act. But it is the fashion to abuse that Nobleman, as the author of all mischief!” Ibid., XIII, 234.
Figure 6. Wilkinson, The Repeal (Philadelphia, May 26, 1766).
(In May, 1766, the legislature of South Carolina voted to commission a marble statue of Pitt, which, executed by Joseph Wilton, still stands although damaged by cannon fire in two sieges of Charleston.) A bale of goods is lowered into another lighter numbered 122, the vote in the Lords. Three proud ships, the Conway, Rockingham, and Grafton, are getting up sail.

In addition to the imitations of The Repeal issued by print sellers in London, a copy appeared in Philadelphia that has not been reproduced before (Figure 6). On May 26, 1766, the engraver Wilkinson advertised in the Pennsylvaniaische Staatsbote: “In the middle of the next week may be had at the engraver’s, Wilkinson, in Arch St. and at Henry Miller’s in 2d St. The Repeal, or, The Funeral of the Stamp Act, such as is shown in an engraving which was first designed and made in London and is here reproduced.” Two impressions of this print have survived. One is in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania; the other in the Library Company is Du Simitière’s copy, on which he wrote the comment, “a wretched copy of the preceding Print, done in Philadelphia.”

Du Simitière also preserved a copy of another print issued as a sequel to The Repeal by the same print seller, William Smith, on April 21, 1766. It is The Statue, or the Adoration of the Wise—Men of the—West (Figure 7) and its printed prospectus or explanation with it. Dr. Scott (Anti-Sejanus), who had been only a little dog with a long tail dancing on the tomb of the Duke of Cumberland in the Tomb-Stone, is now grown into a ludicrous statue, crowned with a wreath of Virginia tobacco, leaning on a desk of the custom house and holding a roll of stamps. The statue is being admired by a group of connoisseurs, Bedford, Sandwich, Halifax, George Grenville, and two unpopular lawyers, Wedderburn and Norton. The starving ragged wife and children of a weaver kneel in supplication at the foot of its pedestal. But Horror, a demoniac figure labeled “Repeal” hovers overhead brandishing a scourge and holding a mirror for Dr. Scott to see his own reflection. It may indicate the Rockingham Ministry’s respect for the power of the Anti-Sejanus letters, which

42 Historical Society of Pennsylvania, No. 1766.1.1.
The **Statue**, or the **Adoration** of the **Wise-Men** of the **West**.

**FIGURE 7. The Statue, or the Adoration of the Wise-Men of the West**
(LONDON, APRIL 21, 1766).
were so popular that the sale of *The Public Advertiser*, in which they appeared, increased from 1,500 to 3,000 a day.  

On the reverse of the sheet containing the printed prospectus of the print, Du Simitière pasted an article clipped from the *South Carolina Gazette* commenting with indignation on the contrast between the loyalty of the American colonies and the disloyalty of the Scotch in 1715 and 1745. Americans were loyal to their King, but were prepared to defend their liberties against injustice.

---

*Philadelphia*  

E. P. Richardson

---

45 Quoted in the British Museum catalogue under No. 4141.