

the patriotism of the people; now such enactments assumed the dignity and majesty of law, and, aided by a spirit of obedience which pervaded the colonies, there was no failure of orderly conduct nor any hiatus in the municipal government of the people. Through radical changes and for a season through the failure of any organic law, the town of Ashburnham held meetings, chose officers and levied taxes with no authority except a loyal public sentiment.

In May of this year the General Court passed an order calling upon the people to express an opinion concerning a formal and entire separation from Great Britain. It was not presumed that a reconciliation was either probable or possible, but an explicit expression of opinion was suggested by this action. On the twenty-fourth day of June a warrant for a town meeting was issued and four days later the inhabitants of Ashburnham were assembled to deliberate upon a grave and momentous question. The article and the vote are self-explanatory.

Article 2. To see if the Inhabitants of said Town are willing to stand by the Honourable Congress in declaring the Colonies Independent of the Kingdom of Great Britain with their lives and fortunes to Support them in the measure.

June 28, 1776. Pursuant to the above warrant the town being met made choice of Mr. Elisha Coolidge moderator.

Voted. We the Inhabitants of the Town of Ashburnham, in Town meeting assembled being sensible of the disadvantage of having any further connections with the Kingdom of Great Britain and are willing to brake off all connections with them and it is our Resolution that if the Honorable Congress shall declare the Colonies Independent of the Kingdom of Great Britain that we the said Inhabitants will stand by them with our lives and fortunes to support them in the measure.

The foregoing motion being put was voted unanimously.