

## **A Pledge to Violate the Stamp Act** <sup>[1]</sup>

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*In 1766, during the colonial protests of the Stamp Act, some residents of eastern North Carolina, including many colonial leaders, signed a pledge to refuse to pay the tax. Their pledge was published in Wilmington's newspaper the North-Carolina Gazette on February 26, 1766. Read the primary source transcription below. It includes annotations with historical commentary.*

## NORTH-CAROLINA.

**W**E the Subscribers, free and natural-born Subjects of George the Third, true and lawful King of Great-Britain, and all its Dependencies, (whom God preserve) whose sacred Person, Crown and Dignity, we are ready and willing, at the Expence of our Lives and Fortunes to defend, being fully convinced of the oppressive and arbitrary Tendency of a late Act of Parliament, imposing Stamp Duties on the Inhabitants of this Province, and fundamentally subversive of the Liberties and Charters of North-America; truly sensible of the inestimable Blessings of a free Constitution, gloriously handed down to us by our brave Forefathers, detesting Rebellion, yet preferring Death to Slavery, DO, with all ~~due~~ ~~to~~ ~~our~~ ~~most~~ ~~Gracious~~ ~~Sove-~~ ~~raign,~~ with all Deference to the just Laws of our Country, and with a proper and necessary Regard to ourselves and Posterity, hereby mutually and solemnly plight our Faith and Honour, that we will at any Ri que whatever, and whenever called upon, unite, and truly and faithfully assist each other, to the best of our Power, in preventing entirely the Operation of the Stamp Act.

Witness our Hands, this 18th Day of February,  
1766.

We the [subscribers](#), free and [natural born](#) subjects of George the third, [true and lawful King](#) of Great Britain and all its Dependencies (whom God preserve) whose [sacred](#) <sup>[3]</sup> person, crown and dignity, we are ready and willing, at the expense of our lives and fortunes to defend, being fully convinced of the oppressive and [arbitrary](#) <sup>[4]</sup> tendency of a [late](#) Act of Parliament, imposing Stamp duties on the inhabitants of this Province, and fundamentally [subversive](#) <sup>[5]</sup> of the [liberties and Charters](#) of North America; truly sensible of the inestimable blessings of a [free Constitution, gloriously handed down to us by our brave Forefathers](#), detesting Rebellion, yet preferring death to [slavery](#), Do, with all loyalty to our most gracious [Sovereign](#) <sup>[6]</sup>, with all [deference](#) <sup>[7]</sup> to the just Laws of our Country, and with a proper and necessary regard to ourselves and [Posterity](#), hereby mutually and [solemnly plight our faith and honour](#), that we will at any risque whatever, and whenever called upon, unite, and truly and faithfully assist each other, to the best of our Power, in preventing entirely the operation of the Stamp Act.

Witness our hands this 18th day of February 1766.

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**Primary Sources:**



<sup>[21]</sup> A proof sheet of one-penny stamps to be used on newspapers, pamphlets, and all other papers.

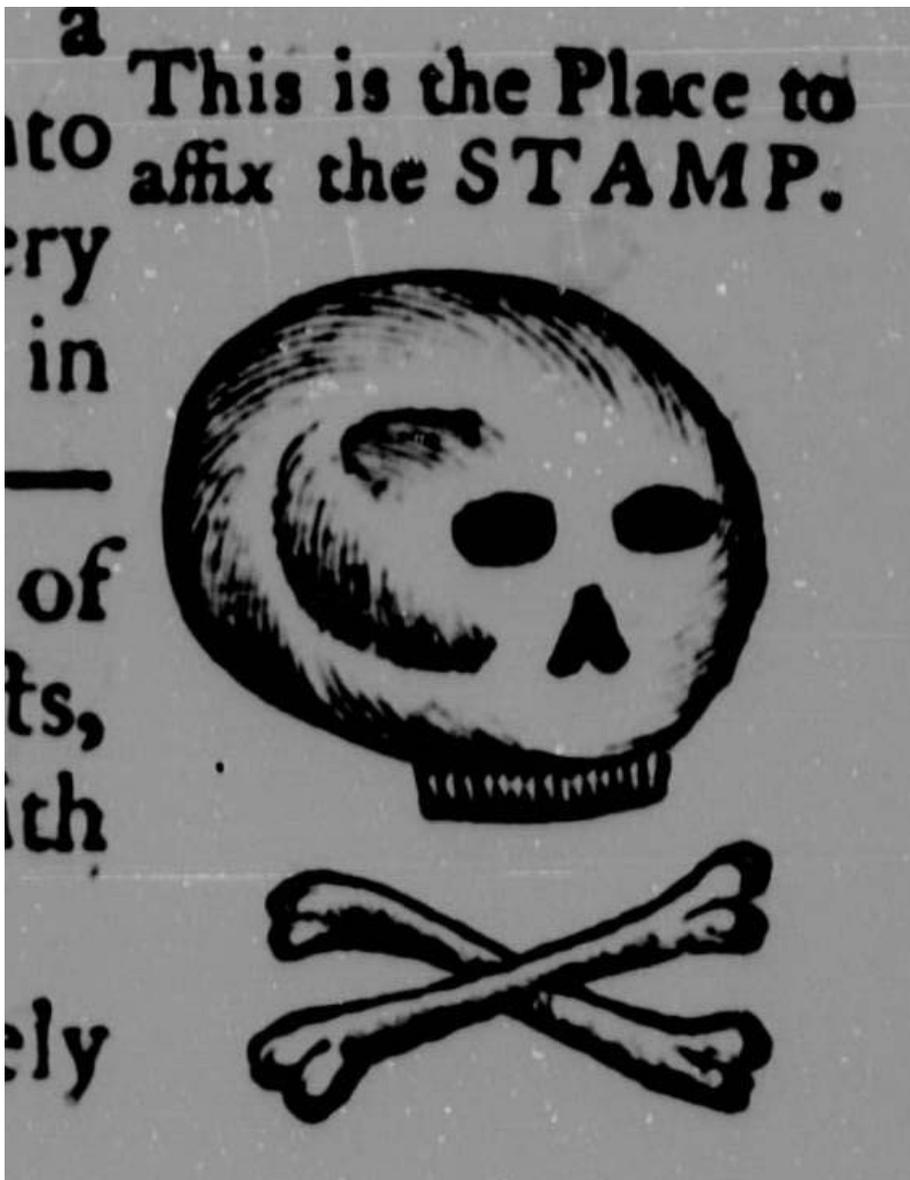


Image of the "death's head" stamp or the

"fatal" stamp. Many printers responded to the Stamp Act by replacing the required paper stamps with cartoons like this one from the *North-Carolina Gazette*.

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