

**The Powder Alarm of 1774
and the End of British
Government in
Massachusetts**

J. L. Bell

www.Boston1775.net



William Brattle's house



William Brattle



Gen. Thomas Gage

- commander-in-chief of the British Army in North America
- stationed in New York for decades
- appointed governor of Massachusetts in May 1774



New England

Massachusetts

Connecticut

Rhode Island

New Hampshire

- Puritan founding
- Town meetings
- Elected governors under their first charters

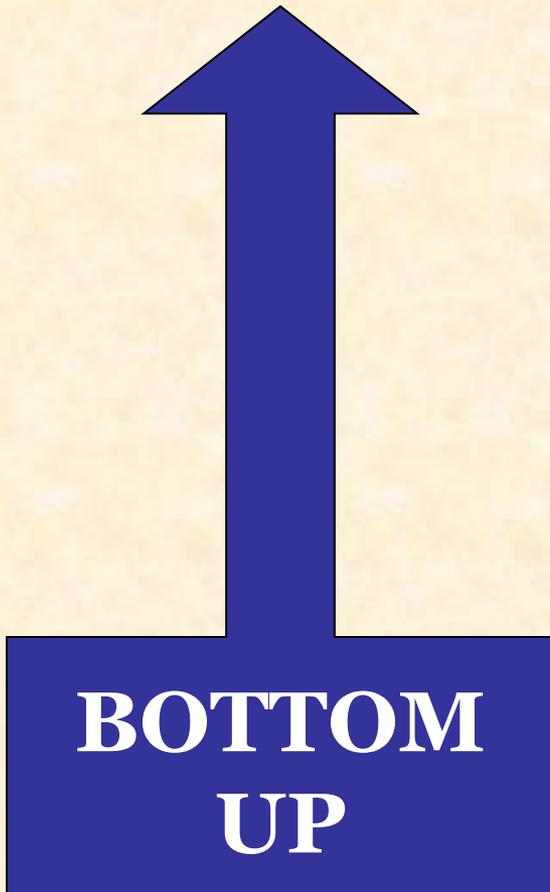
— Royal Government —
King, Ministers & Parliament

**TOP
DOWN**

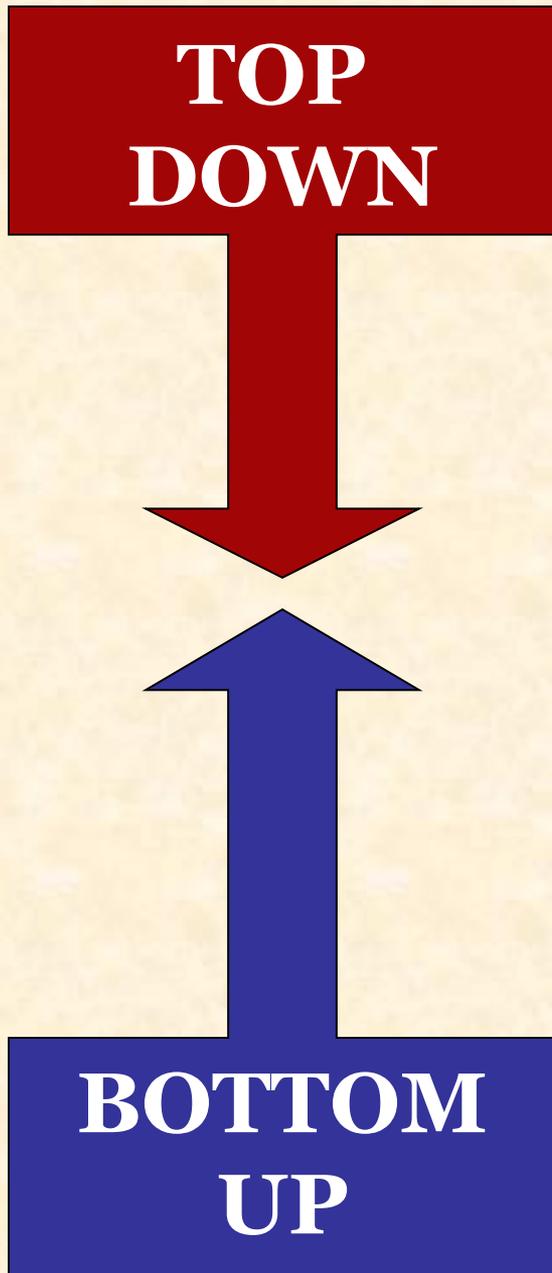


- Governor, Lt. Governor
 - Judges, other court officials
 - Justices of the Peace
 - Sheriffs
 - Militia officers
- Treasurer, Secretary
- Army and Navy officers
- Customs Service

— Popular Government —
White Property-Owning Men

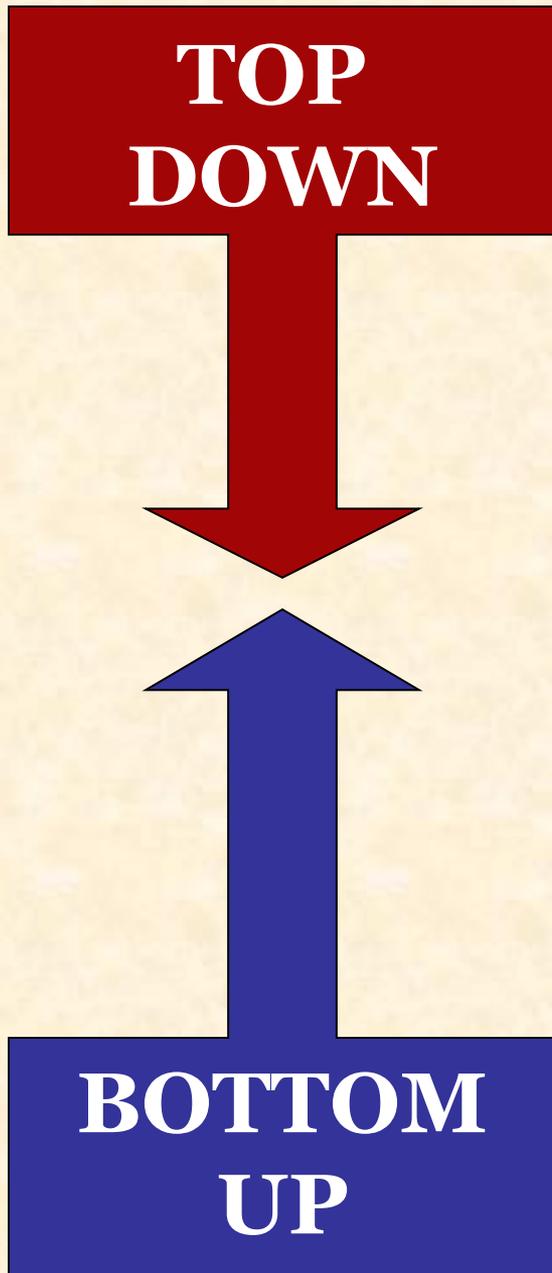


- Town Meetings
 - Selectmen
 - Tax Collectors, Constables
 - House Representatives
- House
 - Speaker, Clerk
 - Councilors
- Council



Areas of Overlap

- Council votes/negatives
- Council approval for some acts by the governor
- Legislative votes/negatives
- Judges and juries
- Militia officer choices



Areas of Conflict

- Delays in paying salaries to royal appointees
- Militia deployments and spending
- New Customs duties and other taxes after 1765
- Convention of 1768
- Boycotts and Mobs
 - *Boston Tea Party of 1773*

— Royal Government —
Strengthening Measures, 1767-1774

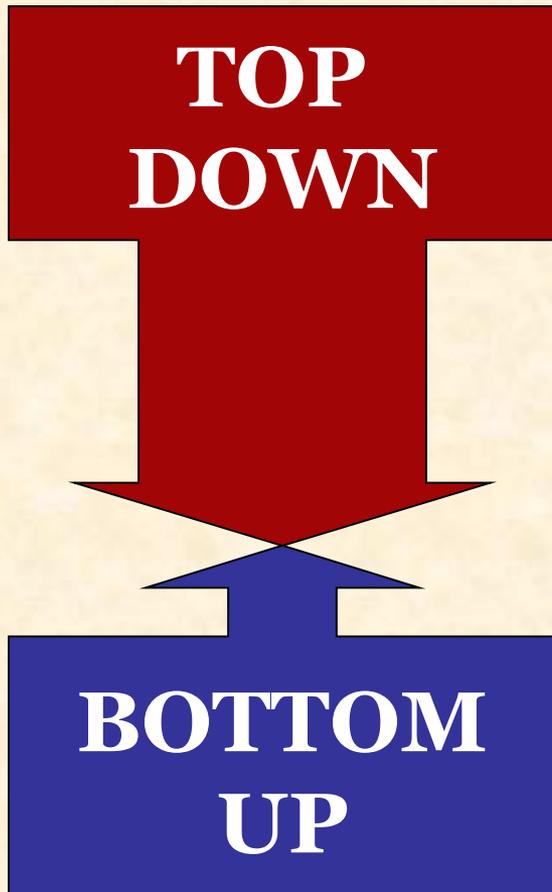
**TOP
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- Salaries for Governor, Lt. Governor, others
- Salaries for Judges
- Increased funds for Customs Service
 - *All paid from tea duties*
- Vice Admiralty court
- Army and Navy deployed to Boston, May 1774

— Popular Government —

Limiting Measures, 1774



– *Under the Massachusetts Government Act*

- Town Meetings restricted to one per year
- “Mandamus” Council instead of Councilors elected by the House
- Province-wide Conventions forbidden



Gen. Thomas Gage

- charged with enforcing the Massachusetts Government Act
- accompanied by troops
- capital moved to Salem
- Boston port shut down by Royal Navy and Customs

— New Royal Rule —
Instituted by August 1774

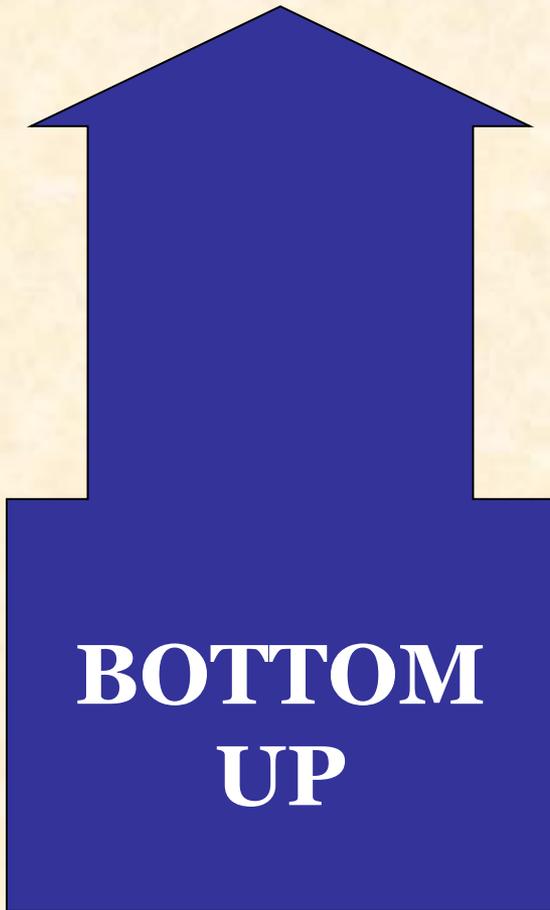
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- Limits on town meetings
- Governor not accountable to legislature for salary
- Judiciary not accountable to legislature for salaries
- Fewer legislators elected, more appointed

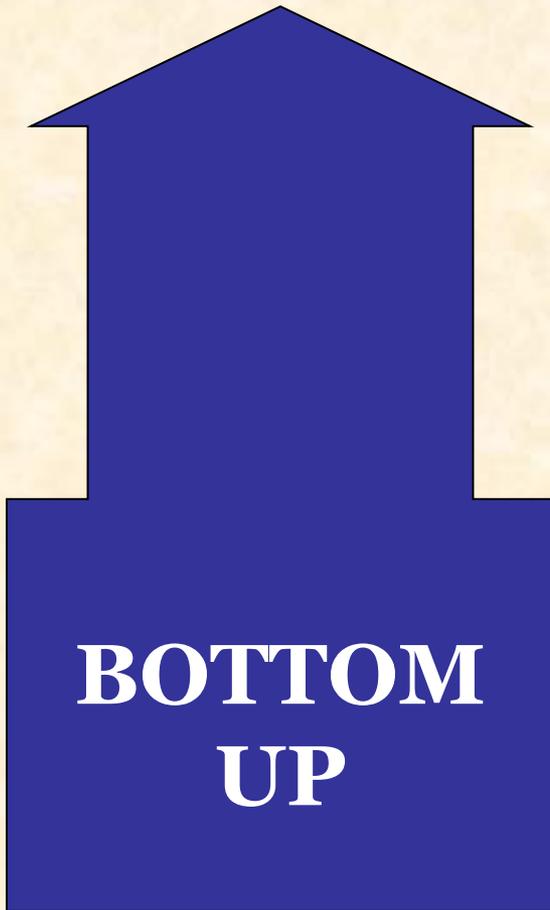
— Popular Government —

Resistance Measures, summer 1774



- House chose delegates for a Continental Congress
- Solemn League & Covenant
- County Conventions
 - *Berkshire County, 6 July*
- Town committees of correspondence gathered
 - *Worcester County, 9-10 August*

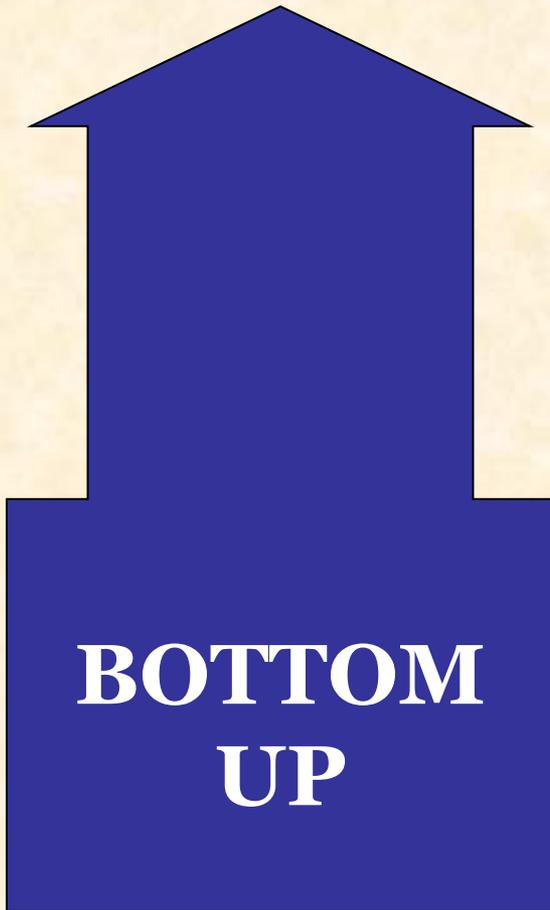
— Popular Government —
Resistance Measures, August 1774



- Crowds halted courts
 - *Berkshire County, 16 August*
 - *Hampshire County, 30 August*
- Intimidation of Councilors
- Town meetings by adjournment
 - *Salem, 24 August*
- Men refused jury duty

— County Conventions —

30-31 August 1774



- Middlesex County Convention at Concord
 - issues Middlesex Resolves
- Worcester Convention Calls for a Provincial Congress
 - after meeting with Bostonians, 26 August
- Call to stop court session in Worcester on 6 September
- Worry about army troops



Provincial Powderhouse

- Remote area of Charlestown
- Storage for both towns and province
- Represented militia preparedness







— Breakdown of Royal Rule —

- August: Some Councilors intimidated
- 30 Aug: Worcester and Middlesex Conventions begin
 - Courts closed in Hampshire County
- 1 Sept: **Soldiers take gunpowder and cannons**

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April 19, 1775, Militia Rolls

Rices from Marlborough

- Cpl. Thomas Rice
- Gershom Rice
- Gershom Rice, Jr.
- Willard Rice
- William Rice
- Daniel Rice
- John Rice
- John Rice, Jr.
- Ashbel Rice
- Jabez Rice
- Jabez Rice
- Jabez Rice

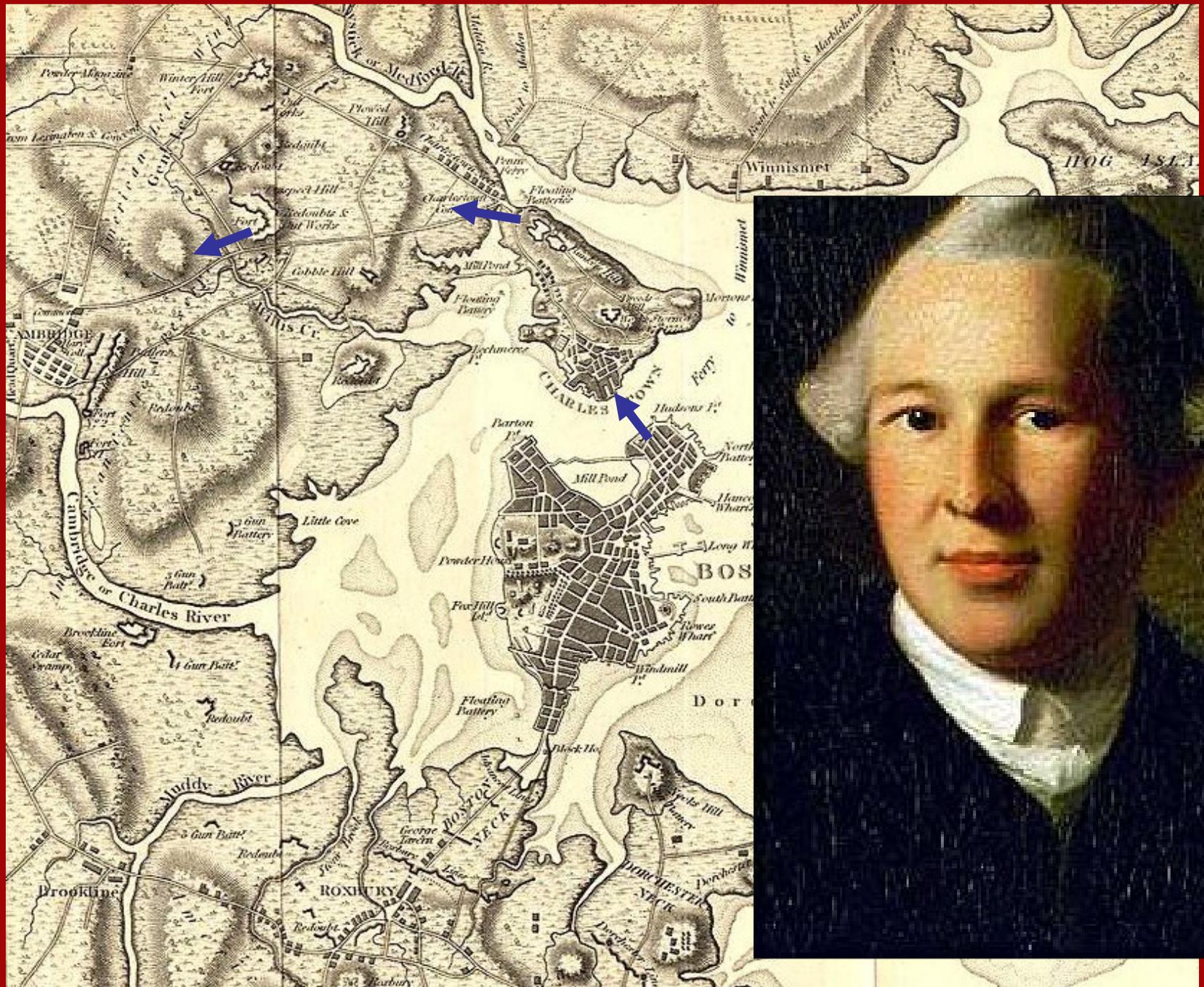
April 19, 1775, Militia Rolls

Rices from Sudbury

- Lt. Jonathan Rice
- Cpl. Ithamon (Ithamar?) Rice
- Isaac Rice
- Isaac Rice, Jr.
- Daniel Rice
- David Rice
- Jonas Rice
- Edmund Rice, Jr.
- Charles Rice
- James (second Jonas?) Rice
- Nathaniel Rice











Thomas Oliver's house







**BOWLES'S MAP
OF THE SEAT OF WAR IN
NEW ENGLAND.**

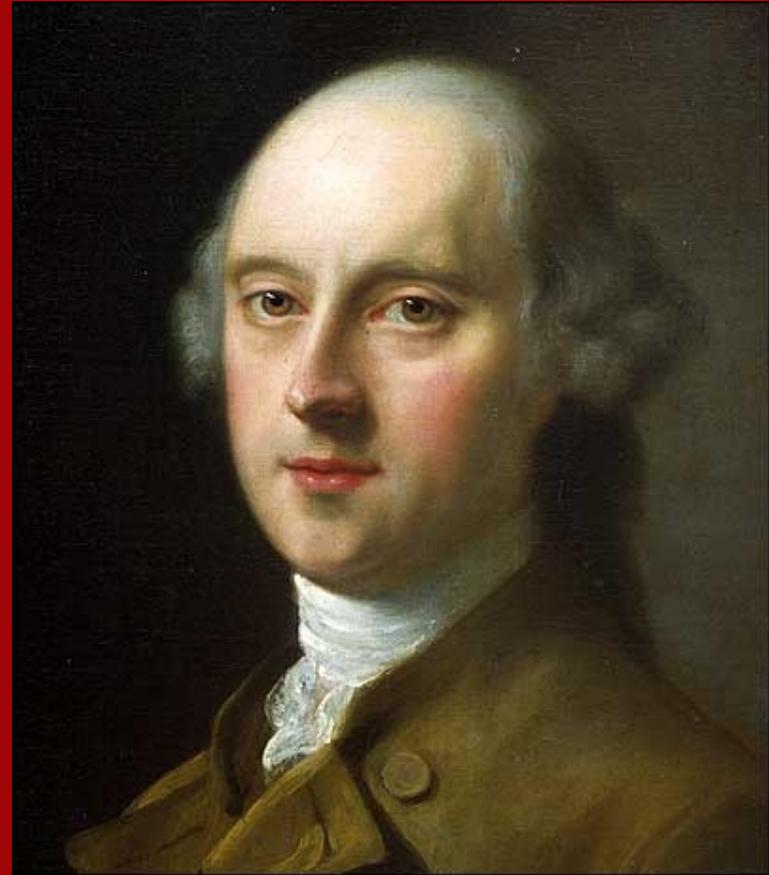
COMPREHENDING THE PROVINCES OF
**MASSACHUSETTS BAY, AND
NEW HAMPSHIRE,** WITH
THE COLONIES OF
**CONNECTICUT AND
RHODE ISLANDS.**
Drawn from the best Authorities.
By **J. BOWLES,**
Geographical Historian, &c.
London, Printed by **J. BARNES,**
in Pall-mal, near St. James's Church, 1756.



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Gen. Gage



**Lord Dartmouth,
Secretary of State**

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- 4-5 Sept: **Governor strengthens Boston’s defenses**

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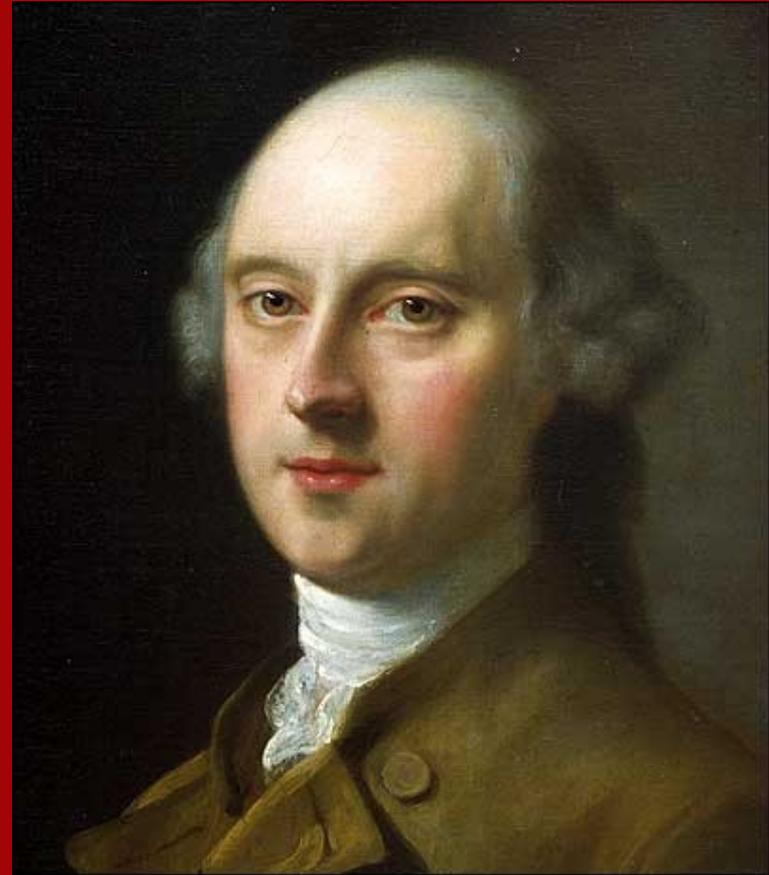
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- 6 Sept: Courts closed in Worcester County
 - 4,622 militiamen block the courthouse
- 6 Sept: Essex and Suffolk Conventions begin

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- 6 Oct: **Massachusetts Provincial Congress**



Gen. Gage



**Lord Dartmouth,
Secretary of State**

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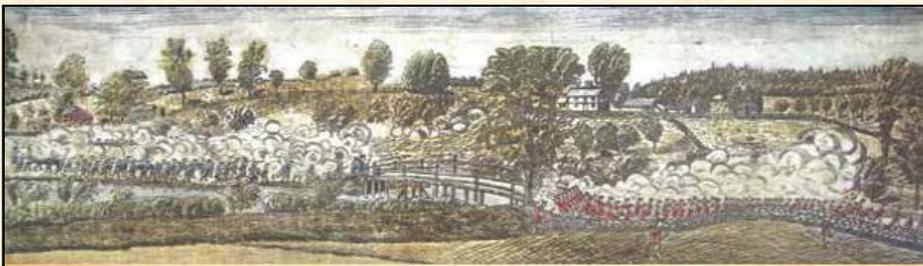
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THE SPIRIT

— OF —

'74



How The
AMERICAN REVOLUTION
BEGAN

RAY RAPHAEL

and

MARIE RAPHAEL

Ray & Marie Raphael

- Worcester Historical Museum, *September 30*
- Minute Man National Historical Park, *October 1*

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