the direction of Alderman DeRosset, who received from Houston his commission and other papers, and necessarily it was a very orderly performance. The ringing huzzas, the patriotic toasts, the loud acclaim, echoing from the courthouse square, reverberated through the streets of the town, but Mr. Stewart is quite sure that no mischief was done, and not the least insult was offered to any person. These and other similar proceedings led the Governor to send out a circular letter to the principal inhabitants of the Cape Fear region, requesting their presence at a dinner at his residence at Brunswick on Tuesday, the 19th of November, three days after Dr. Houston resigned; and after the dinner, he conferred with these gentlemen about the Stamp Act. He found them fully determined to annul the act and prevent its going into effect. He sought to persuade them, and begged them to let it be observed at least in part. He pleaded that if they would let the act go into partial operation in the respects he mentioned, he himself would pay for all the stamps necessary. It seems that he liked the people, and they liked and admired him, and difficult indeed was his position. He was charged with the execution of a law which he knew could not be executed, for there was not enough specie in the province to buy the necessary stamps, even if the law could be enforced; but, then, the people were resolved against recognizing it in any degree. The authority of the King and of the Parliament was defied, and he, the representative of the British Government, was powerless in the face of this resolute defiance. While still maintaining dignity in his intercourse with the people, the Governor wrote to his superiors in London strongly urging the repeal of the law. A week later the stamps arrived in the sloop of war *Diligence*. They remained on the sloop and were not landed at that time.

Now was there a lull; but the quietude was not to remain unbroken. In January two merchant vessels arrived in the harbor, the *Patience* and the *Dobbs*. Their clearance papers were not stamped as the act required. The vessels were seized and detained while the lawfulness of their detention was referred to Attorney General Robert Jones, then absent at his home on the Roanoke. But the leaders of the people were determined not to submit to an adverse decision. They held meetings and agreed on a plan of action.

In view of the crisis, on January 20, the mayor of the town retired to give place to Moses John DeRosset, who had been the foremost leader in the action previously taken by the town.

One whose spirit never quailed was now to stand forth as the head of the Corporation.

On the 5th of February, Captain Lobb, in command of the *Viper,* had made a requisition for an additional supply of provisions, and Mr. Dry, the contractor, sent his boat to Wilmington to obtain them. The inhabitants, led by the mayor, at once seized the boat, threw the crew into the jail, and, in a wild tumult of excitement, placed the boat on a wagon and hauled it through the streets with great demonstration of fervid patriotism. The British forces on the river were to receive no supplies from Wilmington; their provisions were cut off, and they were treated as enemies—not friends—so long as they supported the odious law of Parliament. Ten days later came the opinion of Attorney General Jones to the effect that the detained merchantmen were properly seized and were liable to be confiscated under the law. This was the signal for action. The news was spread throughout the counties, and the whole country was astir. Every patriot "was on his legs." There was no halt in carrying into effect the plan agreed upon. Immediately the people began to assemble, and detachments, under chosen leaders, took up their march from Onslow, Bladen, and Duplin. On the 18th of February, the inhabitants of the Cape Fear counties, being then assembled at Wilmington, entered into an association, which they signed, declaring they preferred death to slavery; and mutually and solemnly they plighted their faith and honor that they would at any risk whatever, and whenever called upon, unite, and truly and faithfully assist each other, to the best of their power, in preventing entirely the operation of the Stamp Act.

The crisis had now arrived. The hand of destiny had struck with a bold stroke the resounding bell. The people, nobly responding, had seized their arms. At all times, when some patriot is to throw himself to the front and bid defiance to the established authority of government, there is a Rubicon to be crossed, and he who unsheathes his sword to resist the law must win success or meet a traitor's doom. But the leaders on the Cape Fear did not hesitate at the thought of personal peril. At their call, the people, being armed and assembled at Wilmington, chose the men who were to guide, govern, and direct them. They called to the helm John Ashe, the trusted speaker of the Assembly, and associated with him Alexander Lillington and Col. Thomas Lloyd, as a Directory to manage their affairs