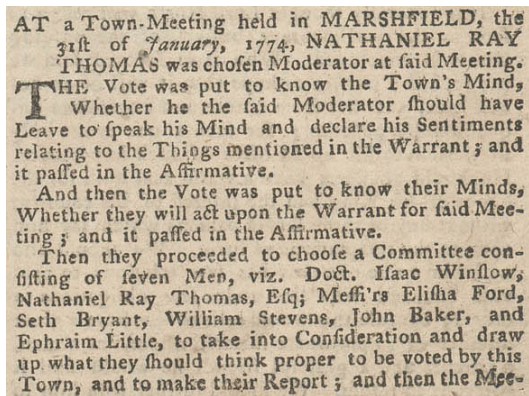


## Marshfield townspeople condemn the destruction of the tea, February 1774 (excerpt)

Context: Local reactions to the Boston Tea Party were mixed. While there was strong support for resistance to British oppression in Boston itself, elsewhere the Tea Party was divisive due to its more radical nature. Rural areas tended to be more neutral, while other areas, like Marshfield, were politically dominated by Loyalists. In early 1774, it was the one place in Massachusetts outside of Boston where General Thomas Gage stationed troops and imagined forming a local pro-Crown militia. These sentiments were made clear 31 January 1774 during the proceedings of the Town Meeting when the town felt the need to formally express their beliefs on the Boston Tea Party from just a few weeks prior. This account was published in the *Massachusetts Gazette*, a Loyalist newspaper.

AT a Town-Meeting held in MARSHFIELD, the 31st of *January*, 1774...



AT a Town-Meeting held in MARSHFIELD, the 31st of *January*, 1774, NATHANIEL RAY THOMAS was chosen Moderator at said Meeting. THE Vote was put to know the Town's Mind, Whether he the said Moderator should have Leave to speak his Mind and declare his Sentiments relating to the Things mentioned in the Warrant; and it passed in the Affirmative. And then the Vote was put to know their Minds, Whether they will act upon the Warrant for said Meeting; and it passed in the Affirmative. Then they proceeded to choose a Committee consisting of seven Men, viz. Doct. Isaac Winflow, Nathaniel Ray Thomas, Esq; Messrs Elidia Ford, Seth Bryant, William Stevens, John Baker, and Ephraim Little, to take into Consideration and draw up what they should think proper to be voted by this Town, and to make their Report; and then the Mee-

This Town taking into Consideration the late tumultuous and as we think illegal Proceedings in the Town of Boston in the Detention and Destruction of the Teas belonging to the East-India Company, which we apprehend will effect out Properties if not our Liberties, think it our indispensible Duty to show our Disapprobation of such Measures and Proceedings :-- Therefore VOTED and RESOLVED, as the Opinion of this Town.

1st. That this Town ever have and always will be good and loyal Subjects to our Sovereign Lord King GEORGE the Third...

2d. RESOLVED, That the late Measures and Proceedings in the Town of Boston, in the Detention and Destruction of the Teas belonging to the East-India Company, were illegal and unjust and of a dangerous Tendency.

Therefore 3dly, RESOLVED, That Abijah White, Esq; the present Representative of this Town, be and hereby is instructed and directed to use his utmost Endeavours that the Perpetrators of thos Mischiefs may be detected and brought to Justice. And as the Country has been heretofore drawn in to pay their proportionable Part of the Expence which accrued from the riotous and unruly Proceedings and Conduct of certain Individuals in the Town of Boston, -- if Application should be made to the General Court by the East-India Company or any other Persons for a Consideration for the Loss of said Teas, you are by no Means to acquiesce...that those People only who were acting, aiding and assisting or conniving at the Destruction of said Teas pay for the same...

# History SOURCE

Source Citation: "At a Town-Meeting held in Marshfield ..." Article from pages 1-2 of *The Massachusetts Gazette; and the Boston Post-Boy and Advertiser*, Number 859, 31 January - 7 February 1774, Massachusetts Historical Society, <https://www.masshist.org/database/411>.

## Questions to Consider:

1. How did the people in Marshfield view the protest that occurred in Boston? Is this similar or different from other sources and why might that be?
2. Why would the *Massachusetts Gazette* choose to highlight this Marshfield Town Meeting in the wake of the Boston Tea Party?
3. A note printed immediately after the article said, "Marshfield is in the Country of Plimouth. . . and according to an Account taken in 1764, contains upwards of Fifteen Hundred Inhabitants ; many of whom are said to be very wealthy." How might the composition of the town have influenced their political leanings?