

An oath of allegiance to King George III, 1781–1804

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This document, transcribed opposite, is the subject of discussion in the next paper in this Journal (pp.59–69).

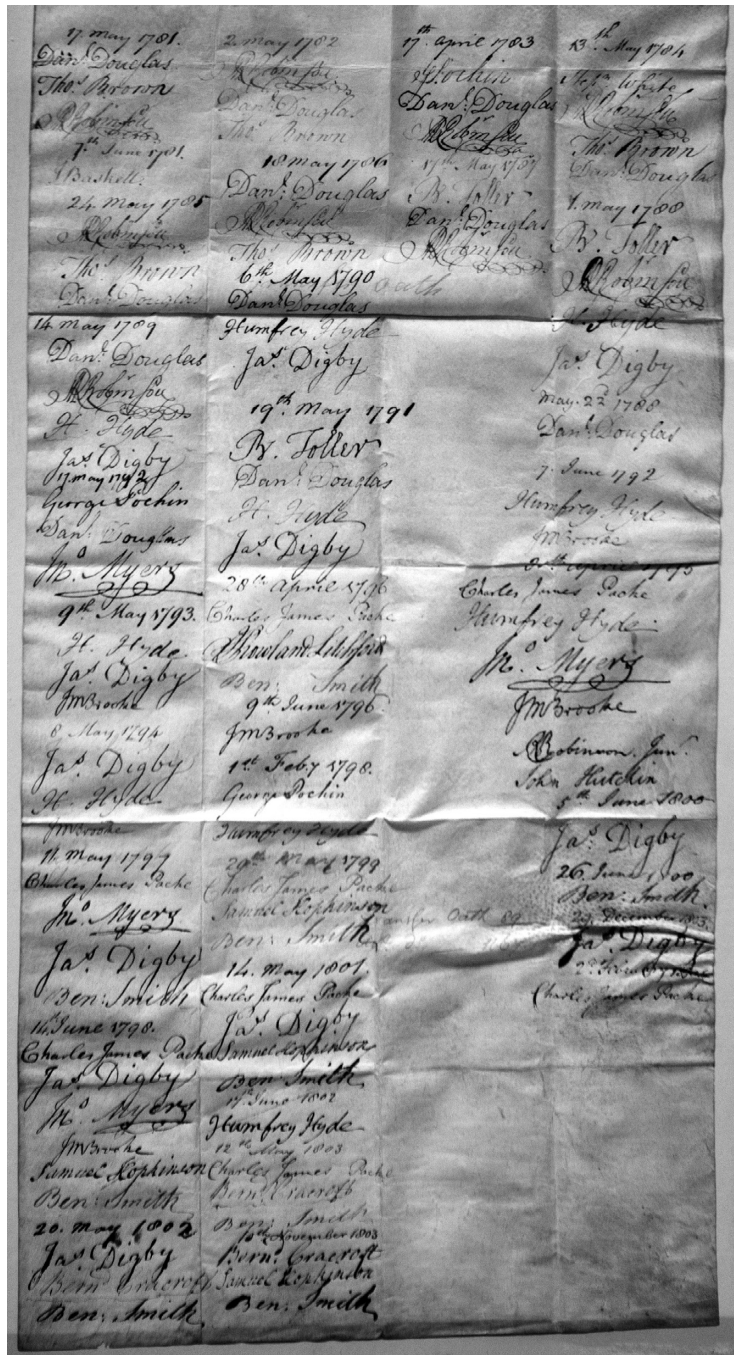
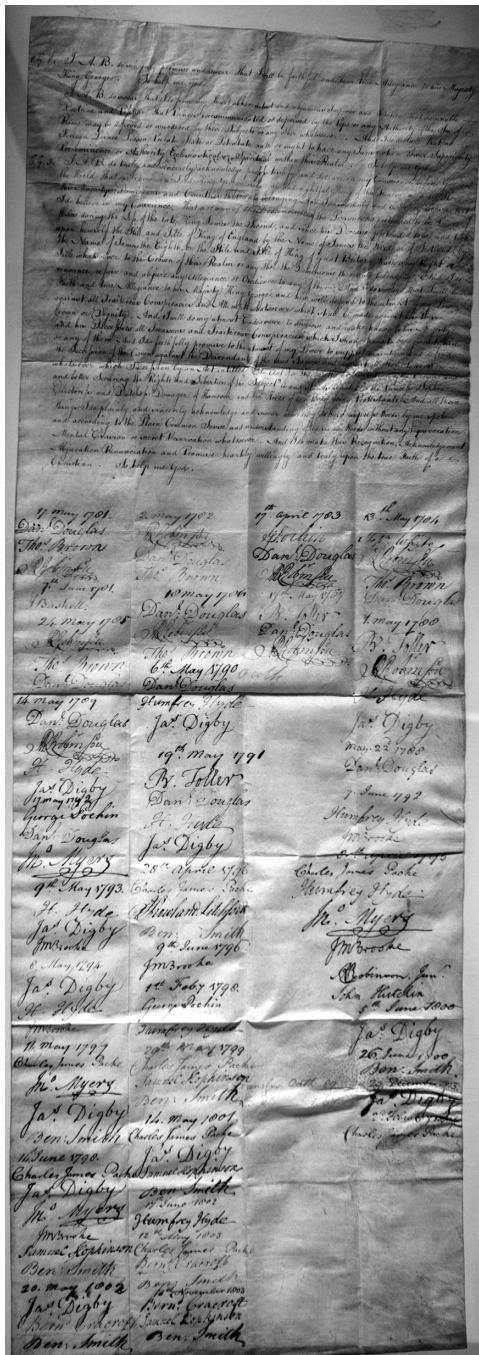


Fig.1. The oath of allegiance to King George III (Photograph Emilio Pabón).

Fig.2. Lower section of the oath of allegiance to King George III, showing the signatories, 1781–1804 (Photograph Emilio Pabón).

The following is a complete transcript of the oath and its signatories:

I A.B. do sincerely promise and swear That I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to his Majesty / King George. So help me God.

I A.B. do swear that I do from my Heart abhor detest and abjure as Impious and Heretical that damnable / Doctrine and Position that Princes excommunicated or deprived by the Pope or any Authority of the See of / Rome may be deposed or murdered by their Subjects or any other whatsoever. And I do declare That no / Foreign Prince Person Prelate State or Potentate hath or ought to have any Jurisdiction Power Superiority / Pre eminence or Authority Ecclesiastical or Spiritual within this Realm. So help me God.

I A.B. do truly and sincerely acknowledge profess testify and declare in my Conscience before God and / the World That our Sovereign Lord King George as lawful and rightful King of this Realm and all other / His Majestys Dominions and Countries thereunto belonging. And I do solemnly and sincerely declare that / I do believe in my Conscience, That not any of the Descendants of the Person who pretended to be Prince of / Wales during the Life of the late King James the Second, and since his Decease pretended to be and took / upon himself the Stile and Title of King of England by the Name of James the Third, or of Scotland, by / the Name of James the Eighth, or the Stile and Title of King of Great Britain, hath any Right or / Title whatsoever to the Crown of this Realm or any other the Dominions thereunto belonging. And I do / renounce, refuse, and abjure any Allegiance or Obedience to any of them. And I do swear That I will bear / Faith and true Allegiance to his Majesty King George, and him will defend to the utmost of my Power / against all Traiterous Conspiracies and Attempts whatsoever which shall be made against his Person / Crown or Dignity. And I will do my utmost Endeavour to disclose and make known to his Majesty / and his Successors all Treasons and Traiterous Conspiracies which I shall know to be against him / or any of them And I do faithfully promise to the utmost of my Power to support maintain and defend / the Succession of the Crown against the Descendants of the said James and against all other Persons / whatsoever which Succession by an Act intituled “An Act for the further limitation of the Crown and better Securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject”¹ is and stands limited to the Princess Sophia / Electoress and Dutchess Dowager of Hanover² and the Heirs of her Body being Protestants And all these / things I do plainly and sincerely acknowledge and swear according to these express Words by me spoken / and according to the Plain Common Sense and understanding of the same Words without any Equivocation / Mental Evasion or Secret Reservation whatsoever. And I do make this Recognition, Acknowledgement / Abjuration Renunciation and Promise heartily willingly and truly upon the true Faith of a / Christian. So help me God.

Signatories with dates of initial signing and renewal:³

17 May 1781 Dan'l Douglas ⁴ Thos Brown ⁷ R. Robinson ⁸	2 May 1782 R. Robinson Dan'l Douglas Thos Brown	17th April 1783 G. Pochin ⁵ Dan'l Douglas R. Robinson	13th May 1784 Steph'n White ⁶ R. Robinson Thos Brown Dan'l Douglas
7 June 1781 J. Bashell ⁹	18 May 1786 Dan'l Douglas R. Robinson Thos Brown	17th May 1787 B. Toller ¹⁰ Dan'l Douglas R. Robinson	
24 May 1785 R. Robinson Thos Brown Dan'l Douglas	6th May 1790 Dan'l Douglas Humfrey Hyde Jas Digby		1 May 1788 B. Toller R. Robinson H. Hyde ¹¹ Jas Digby ¹²
14 May 1789 Dan'l Douglas R. Robinson H. Hyde Jas Digby	19th May 1791 B. Toller Danl Douglas H. Hyde Jas Digby		May. 22d 1788 Dan'l Douglas
17 May 1792 George Pochin Dan'l Douglas Jno Myers ¹⁴			7 June 1792 Humfrey Hyde J M Brooke ¹³
9th May 1793 H. Hyde Jas Digby J M Brooke	28th April 1796 [Land tax meeting] Charles James Packe J. Rowland Litchford ¹⁶ Ben: Smith ¹⁷		30th April 1795 [Land tax meeting] Charles James Packe ¹⁵ Humfrey Hyde Jno Myers J M Brooke R. Robinson Junr ¹⁸ John Hutchin ¹⁹
8 May 1794 Jas Digby	9th June 1796 J M Brooke		
	1st Feby 1798		

<i>H. Hyde</i> <i>J M Brooke</i>	<i>[Appeal day]</i> <i>George Pochin</i> <i>Humfrey Hyde</i>	<i>5th June 1800</i> <i>Jas Digby</i>
<i>11. May 1797</i> <i>Charles James Packe</i> <i>Jno Myers</i> <i>Jas Digby</i> <i>Ben: Smith</i>	<i>29th May 1799</i> <i>Charles James Packe</i> <i>Samuel Hopkinson²⁰</i> <i>Ben: Smith</i>	<i>26 June 1800</i> <i>Ben: Smith</i>
<i>14th June 1798</i> <i>[Stow horse fair]</i> <i>Charles James Packe</i> <i>Jas Digby</i> <i>Jno Myers</i> <i>J M Brooke</i> <i>Samuel Hopkinson</i> <i>Ben: Smith</i>	<i>14 May 1801</i> <i>Charles James Packe</i> <i>Jas Digby</i> <i>Samuel Hopkinson</i> <i>Ben: Smith</i>	<i>29 December 1803</i> <i>Jas Digby</i> <i>2d February 1804</i> <i>Charles James Packe</i>
<i>20 May 1802</i> <i>Jas Digby</i> <i>Bern'd Cracroft²¹</i> <i>Ben: Smith</i>	<i>17th June 1802</i> <i>Humfrey Hyde</i> <i>12th May 1803</i> <i>Charles James Packe</i> <i>Bern'd Cracroft</i> <i>Ben: Smith</i>	
	<i>10th November 1803</i> <i>Bern'd Cracroft</i> <i>Samuel Hopkinson</i> <i>Ben: Smith</i>	

Notes

1. Commonly known as the Act of Settlement, 1701 (12 & 13 Will.3, c.2), which secured the Hanoverian succession.
2. Sophia, Electress of Hanover, was a granddaughter of James I and VI of England and Scotland and heiress to the throne of England after Queen Anne. Sophia died shortly before the latter.
3. Besides Daniel Douglas (who signed twelve times) and Benjamin Smith Sr (eight), there were sixteen others: those who signed more than twice included five laymen – James Digby (eleven times), Charles James Packe (nine), Robert Michael Robinson Sr (nine), Thomas Brown (five), George Pochin (three) – and five clerics, of whom the Rev. Humphrey Hyde was the most frequent signatory (nine), followed by Brooke (six), Hopkinson and Myers (four times each) and Cracroft (three). Five laymen (Litchford, Hutchin, Bashell, White and Robinson Jr) signed twice or a single time. Robinson Jr may have been merely a stand-in for his father. Many were clients/social acquaintances – the Tollers and Douglasses, Brown, Digby, Brooke, Cracroft, Hopkinson, Robinson Sr, and Myers, Pochin and Hyde – whom Smith variously entertained or by whom he was entertained.
4. Daniel Douglas (1735-93), who was probably the chief organizer of the oath of allegiance, was prominent as an enclosure commissioner and Sheriff of Lincolnshire. Douglas is discussed in detail in the paper which follows in this journal.
5. George Pochin (1732-98), who served as a colonel in the Leicestershire Militia and was Deputy Lieutenant of the counties of Leicestershire and Lincolnshire, was also involved with local turnpike matters.
6. Stephen White, mentioned once as a signer – identity uncertain.
7. Thomas Brown was no doubt of the affluent and politically connected Brown family of Horbling, although a Thomas Brown with feasible dates does not fit credibly any known genealogy. He was, nonetheless, the Thomas Brown who collaborated with Daniel Douglas and Edward Brown both on turnpike matters and enclosures. Further, Horbling Enclosure Act and the *Proceedings of the Commissioners for Enclosing Horbling* (LA, DIOC/LDAP/2/5) cite a Thomas Brown (again, very likely this one) as ‘Gentleman and Lord of the said manor and proprietor of a considerable part of the said fields and meadows, etc’, leaving little doubt that Brown the oath-taker was, indeed, the turnpike venturer and Horbling encloser.
8. Robert Michael Robinson Sr of Hawthorpe was signer of the oath, sheriff of the county of Lincolnshire in 1791 and identified with the local land tax and turnpike commissions.
9. John Bashell, although an initial oath-taker, signed only once. His name appears as a tenant in the Horbling Act: *Proceedings of the Commissioners for Enclosing Horbling, 1764-71*. Nothing more is known of him.
10. Rev. Brownlow Toller of Billingborough (near Horbling) signed three times before his death at sixty-one in 1791. The Tollers and Benjamin Smiths were close friends, as evidenced by the care for and comforting of Widow (Anne) Toller by the Smiths. Anne died in 1803 at age sixty-eight. Toller was listed as a proprietor in the enclosure proceedings for Horbling in 1764.
11. Rev. Humfrey Hyde (c.1737-1807), rector of Dowsby and vicar of Bourne, 1763-1807. His daughter Catherine married oath-taker James Digby of Bourne in 1796.
12. James Digby (d.1811) of Red Hall, Bourne signed the oath of allegiance nine times. Digby served on the turnpike commission and was Deputy Lieutenant of the county. He married Catherine (d.1836), sole daughter and heiress of the Rev. Humfrey Hyde, vicar of the parish of Bourne and himself a frequent signer of the oath. Digby, mentioned frequently in the Smith diary as a family friend, was also a Smith client.
13. The Rev. John Moore Brooke (1757-98), the son of the novelist Frances Brooke nee Moore (1724-89) and the Rev. John Brooke D.D. (1709-89), was rector of Folkingham, a member of the Folkingham Association for the Prosecution of Felons and a familiar attendee at land tax meetings. He emerges in young Benjamin Smith Jr’s diary as a family friend (LA, Smith 15/3/1: mentions on 5 Feb, 13 & 30 Apr, 7, 12 and 19 May 1795). The modern spelling of Folkingham rather than the eighteenth-century version, Falkingham, is used here.
14. Rev. John Myers of Folkingham, a frequenter at land tax and turnpike commission meetings, was most likely the Rev. John Myers who married Alice Thorold in 1778.
15. Charles James Packe (1758-1837) of Claythorpe was descended from the Husseys who had been at Caythorpe since the mid sixteenth century. His father was Charles James Packe (1726-1816) and his mother Charlotte was a Pochin.
16. Rowland Litchford, who signed twice, is mentioned with some frequency in Ben Smith Jr’s diary. He attended land tax meetings and was a friend of Frank (1778-1844) and Edward Smith (1788-1813), second and third sons of Benjamin Smith Sr. In *Lincolnshire Pedigrees* A. R. Maddison notes, but does not explain why, Thomas Rowland after his marrying Mary Welby in 1726 called himself Litchford. His descendants, as evidenced by Rowland Litchford, followed suit.
17. Benjamin Smith Sr (1732-1807), born St Peter’s Eastgate, Lincoln, practised as an attorney in and around Horbling from the 1760s until retirement in 1798. For more, see the text of the main article which follows in this journal.
18. R. Robinson Jr is the son of Robert Michael Robinson, and he signed but once.
19. John Hutchin, a ‘single’ signatory, attended Folkingham land tax meetings.
20. Rev. Samuel Hopkinson (1754-1841), vicar of Morton and Bourne.
21. The Rev. Bernard Cracroft (1752-1821), fifth son of Robert Cracroft of Hackthorn and rector of Rippingale. Three times a signer of the oath, he also served as a turnpike commissioner.