

mises, and other previous violations of the rights of the good people of America, have therefore declared that the thirteen united colonies are, of right, wholly absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, or any other foreign jurisdiction whatsoever; and that the said colonies now are, and for ever shall be, free and independent states:

Wherefore, in our present state, in order to prevent anarchy and confusion, it becomes necessary that government should be established in this state; therefore, we, the representatives of the freemen of North Carolina, chosen and assembled in congress for the express purpose of framing a constitution, under the authority of the people, most conducive to their happiness and prosperity, do declare, that a government for this state shall be established, in manner and form following, *to wit*:

1. That the legislative authority shall be vested in two distinct branches, both dependent on the people, *to wit*, a *senate* and *house of commons*.

2. That the senate shall be composed of representatives, annually chosen by ballot, one for each county in the state.

3. That the house of commons shall be composed of representatives, annually chosen by ballot, two for each county, and one for each of the towns of Edenton, Newbern, Wilmington, Salisbury, Hillsborough, and Halifax.

4. That the senate and house of commons, assembled for the purpose of legislation, shall be denominated the *general assembly*.

5. That each member of the senate shall have usually resided in the county in which he is chosen for one year immediately preceding his election, and for the same time shall have possessed, and continue to possess, in the county which he represents, not less than three hundred acres of land in fee.

6. That each member of the house of commons shall have usually resided in the county in which he is chosen for one year immediately preceding his election, and for six months shall have possessed, and continue to possess, in the county which he represents, not less than one hundred acres of land in fee, or for the term of his own life.

7. That all freemen of the age of twenty-one years, who have been inhabitants of any one county within the state twelve months immediately preceding the day of any election, and possessed of a freehold, within the same county, of fifty acres of land, for six months next before, and at the day of election, shall be entitled to vote for a member of the senate.

8. That all freemen of the age of twenty-one years, who have been inhabitants of any one county within the state twelve months immediately preceding the day of any election, and shall have paid public taxes, shall be entitled to vote for members of the house of commons, for the county in which he resides.

9. That all persons possessed of a freehold, in any town in this state, having a right of representation, and also all freemen, who have been inhabitants of any such town twelve months next before, and at the day of election, and shall have paid public taxes, shall be entitled to vote for a member to represent such town in the house of commons: provided, always, that this section shall not entitle any inhabitant of such town to vote for members of the house of commons for the county in which