

Case No. 33971

State of New Jersey v. Jonathan Bown
Indictment for Seditious Words (on December 9, 1776, at Lower Freehold, Jonathan
Bown, in discourse with David Bown and Ann Tice, is accused of uttering seditious
words)
Monmouth : 1778

New Jersey State Archives
Supreme Court of New Jersey
Case Files, 1704 - 1844 (SSV00001)

4/4/2025

Supreme Court Case Files : Case # 33971
State of New Jersey v. Jonathan Bown

<u>Case Number</u>	<u>Case Type</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Dates</u>
33971	Indictment for Seditious Words (on December 9, 1776, at Lower Freehold, Jonathan Bown, in discourse with David Bown and Ann Tice, is accused of uttering seditious words) On December 9, 1776, at Lower Freehold, Jonathan Bown was heard to say concerning David Bown's being warned to cart for the Army of the King: "I would rather a thousand times serve the British Troops than the Rebels and if I was an able bodied man I would go myself and drive the Waggon". See also: SOY00001-Monmouth County Oyer & Terminer Minutes, June 3-224, 1778, page 9 , page 16 , and page 18	Monmouth	1778

PLAINTIFF	State of New Jersey
DEFENDANT	Bown, Jonathan (Yeoman) (of Lower Freehold)
EVIDENCE (WITNESS CALLED)	Bown, David (on behalf of Jonathan Bown; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
EVIDENCE (WITNESS CALLED)	Potter, C. (on behalf of Jonathan Bown; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
EVIDENCE (WITNESS CALLED)	Tice, Ann (on behalf of the State; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
OFFICIAL	Boudinot, [Unrecorded] (Attorney) (for Jonathan Bown; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
OFFICIAL	Paterson, William (Attorney General)
OFFICIAL	Wilson, Edward (Constable) ([detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
JUROR	Bard, Zabulon (Petit Jury; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])

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JUROR	Bray, Samuel (Petit Jury; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
JUROR	Coxe, Thomas Jr. (Petit Jury; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
JUROR	Flaming, Jacob (Petit Jury; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
JUROR	Forman, Jonathan (Petit Jury; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
JUROR	Lafferson, Aukey (Petit Jury; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
JUROR	Lard, William (Petit Jury; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
JUROR	Schenck, John (Petit Jury; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
JUROR	Taylor, Edward (Petit Jury; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
JUROR	Vanderveer, Gariet (Petit Jury; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
JUROR	VanDorne, Jacob (Petit Jury; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])
JURY FOREMAN	Forman, David (Grand Jury)
JURY FOREMAN	Wikoff, Aukey (Petit Jury; [detail from Monmouth O&T Mintutes, June 1778, p. 16])

33971 State v Bown

Monmouth

Indictment for
Seditious Words

Some documents microfilm
under this case # have
been refiled to case #s
33971* + 33971**

Norfolk County Court.

June 1770.

The State } Inquit per
vs } Seditious
Jonathan Bosc } Words.

At two Bell.

David Forman Forman.

The Def. being charged pleads
Not Guilty, & avers himself
upon his Oath, to be;

Wm. Estlin, att. Gen.

The Jurors, in Behalf of the State of New Jersey, for the
Body of the County of Monmouth, upon their Oath depose, That Jonathan
Bown, late of the Township of Lower Freehold, in the County of Monmouth,
and State of New Jersey, being a pernicious and disaffected Man, &
a Person of a turbulent Mind, & seditious Disposition & Conversation,
and contumacious, practising, and falsely, maliciously, advisedly, and
seditiously intending to terrify and disunite the good Subjects of
this State, and to dispose them to favour the Pretensions of the
Enemy, and to alienate the Affections of the People from the
present Government, he the said Jonathan Bown, on the ninth
Day of December - in the Year of our Lord, one thousand, seven
hundred, and seventy six, at Lower Freehold, in the County of
having Discourse then and there with a certain David Brown, &
Ann Lee, then being Subjects of this State, concerning the Military
and Army in the Pay and Service of the King of Great Britain,
then & still being at open War and Enmity with this State & the
United States of America, and concerning the said David Brown's
being wanted to cast for the said Army, in the Presence & Hearing
of the said David Brown & Ann Lee, did, falsely, maliciously, advisedly,
and seditiously say, assert, affirm, pronounce, and with a loud Voice
declare these false, malicious, seditious, and opprobrious English
Words following, that is to say, "I (meaning the said Jonathan
Bown) would rather a thousand Times serve the British Troops
than the Rebels (meaning the Army in the Service of the said
United States, and the Militia, & free Subjects of this State &
of the United States of America, acting in Opposition to the said King of
Great Britain, and on that Account termed Rebels by the
said Jonathan Bown,) and if I (meaning the said Jonathan
Bown) was an able-bodied Man, I (again meaning the said

Jonathan Bowser would go myself and drive the Wagon,
and that the said Jonathan Bowser, in further Prosecution
of his Malice against the said State of New Jersey before had,
afterwards, to wit, on the same Day & Year, at the Place of,
in the County of, did advisedly, maliciously, & seditiously
counsel, move, advise, exhort, and urge the said David
Bowser to go with and employ his Wagon and Horses in
the Service of the Army of the said King of Great Britain;
to the evil and pernicious Example of all others in the like
Case standing, against the Honor of the Act of the Council
and General Assembly in such Case made and provided,
against the Peace of this State, the Government, and
Dignity of the same.

Wm. Paterson, Atty. Genl.