

The Proclamation of 1763

...And whereas it is just and reasonable, and essential to our Interest, and the **Security** of our Colonies, that the several Nations or Tribes of Indians with whom We are connected, and who live under our Protection, **should not be molested or disturbed** in the Possession of such Parts of Our Dominions and **Territories** as, **not having been ceded to or purchased by Us, are reserved to them.** or any of them, as their Hunting Grounds. — We do therefore, with the Advice of our Privy Council, declare it to be our Royal Will and Pleasure. that ***no Governor or Commander in Chief in any of our Colonies of Quebec, East Florida. or West Florida, do presume, upon any Pretence whatever, to grant Warrants of Survey, or pass any Patents for Lands beyond the Bounds of their respective Governments as described in their Commissions.*** as also that no Governor or Commander in Chief in any of our other Colonies or Plantations in America do presume for the present, and until our further Pleasure be known, to grant Warrants of Survey, or pass Patents for any Lands beyond the Heads or Sources of any of the Rivers which fall into the Atlantic Ocean from the West and North West, or ***upon any Lands whatever, which, not having been ceded to or purchased by Us as aforesaid, are reserved to the said Indians,*** or any of them.

And We do further declare it to be Our Royal Will and Pleasure, for the present as aforesaid, to reserve under our Sovereignty, Protection, and Dominion, for the use of the said Indians, all the Lands and Territories not included within the Limits of Our said Three new Governments, or within the Limits of the Territory granted to the Hudson's Bay Company, as also all the Lands and Territories lying to the Westward of the Sources of the Rivers which fall into the Sea from the West and North West as aforesaid.

And ***We do hereby strictly forbid, on Pain of our Displeasure, all our loving Subjects from making any Purchases or Settlements whatever, or taking Possession of any of the Lands above reserved. without our especial leave and Licence for that Purpose first obtained.***

And ***We do further strictly enjoin and require all Persons whatever who have either wilfully or inadvertently seated themselves upon any Lands within the Countries above described or upon any other Lands which, not having been ceded to or purchased by Us, are still reserved to the said Indians as aforesaid, forthwith to remove themselves from such Settlements.***

Given at our Court at St. James's the 7th Day of October 1763, in the Third Year of our Reign.

God Save The King!!

— Royal Proclamation, October 7, 1763

Colonial Response to The Proclamation of 1763

Proclaim and Inflamm

Despite the Treaty of Paris, many Native Americans continued to fight against European settlement of land west of Appalachia. Ottawa Chief Pontiac led numerous attacks against British and colonial expansion and settlement and his violent aggression is one reason Britain issued the Proclamation of 1763.



But what seemed simple to the British was not acceptable to their colonial subjects. This remedy did not address some concerns vitally important to the colonies. Colonial blood had been shed to fight the French and Indians, not to cede land to them. What was to be said for American colonists who had already settled in the West?

In addition, the colonies themselves had already begun to set their sights on expanding their western boundaries; such planning sometimes even causing tension among the colonies. Why restrict their appetites to expand? Surely this must be a plot to keep the American colonists under the imperial thumb and east of the mountains, where they could be watched.

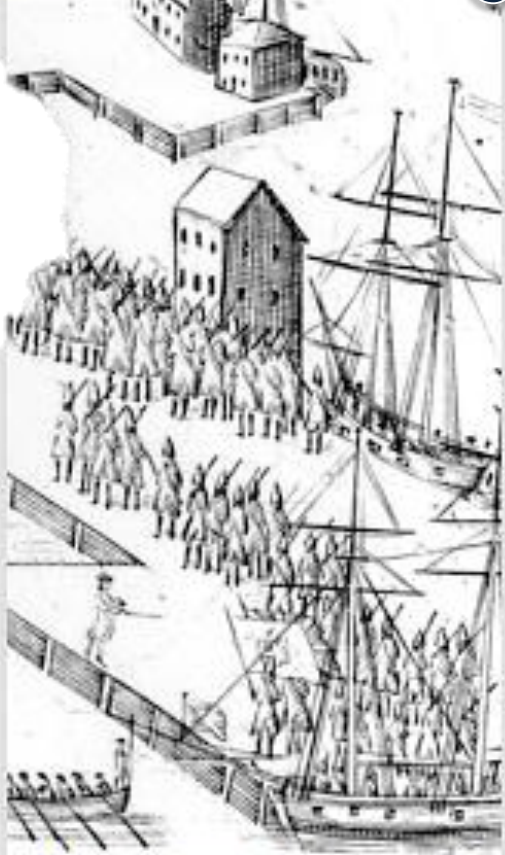
Consequently, this law was observed with the same reverence the colonists reserved for the mercantile laws. Scores of wagons headed westward. How could the British possibly enforce this decree? It was nearly impossible.

The Proclamation of 1763 merely became part of the long list of events in which the intent and actions of one side was misunderstood or disregarded by the other.

The Quartering Act

June 2, 1774

Library of Congress



Paul Revere, *A prospective view of the town of Boston, the capital of New-England — and the landing of — troops in the year 1768*, woodcut, 1770 (detail)

The Quartering Act of 1765 required colonial authorities to provide housing, supplies, and food & drink for British troops in America, most of whom were stationed in New York.

HOUSING (not in inhabited private homes), to be paid through soldiers' allowances

- "barracks provided by the colonies"; if insufficient, then . . .
- "inns, livery stables, ale houses, victualling-houses, and the houses of sellers of wine by retail . . ."; if insufficient, then . . .
- "uninhabited houses, outhouses, barns, or other buildings"

FOOD & BEVERAGES, to be paid through soldiers' allowances

- "diet [food], and small beer, cyder, or rum mixed with water"

SUPPLIES, to be paid by colonial assemblies, not by the soldiers

- "fire, candles, vinegar, and salt, bedding, utensils for dressing their victuals, and small beer or cyder, not exceeding five pints, or half a pint of rum mixed with a quart of water, to each man, without paying any thing for the same"

An act for the better providing suitable quarters for officers and soldiers in his Majesty's service in North America.

WHEREAS doubts have been entertained, whether troops can be quartered otherwise than in barracks, in case barracks have been provided sufficient for the quartering of all officers and soldiers within any town, township, city, district, or place, within his Majesty's dominions in North America: And whereas it may frequently happen, from the situation of such barracks, that, if troops should be quartered therein, they would not be stationed where their presence may be necessary and required: be it therefore enacted by the King's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That, in such cases, **it shall and may be lawful** for the persons who now are, or may be hereafter, authorised be law, in any of the provinces within his Majesty's dominions in North America, and they are hereby respectively authorised, impowered, and directed, on the requisition of the officer who, for the time being, has the command of his Majesty's forces in North America, **to cause any officers or soldiers in his Majesty's service to be quartered (accommodated) and billeted (housed) in such manner as is now directed by law, where no barracks are provided by the colonies.**

II. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if it shall happen at any time that any officers or soldiers in his Majesty's service shall remain within any of the said colonies without quarters, for the space of twenty-four hours after such quarters shall have been demanded, it **shall and may be lawful for the governor of the province to order and direct such and so many uninhabited houses, out-houses, barns, or other buildings, as he shall think necessary to be taken, (making a reasonable allowance for the same), and make fit for the reception of such officers and soldiers, and to put and quarter such officers and soldiers therein, for such time as he shall think proper.**

III. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That this act, and **everything** herein contained, **shall continue and be in force**, in all his Majesty's dominions in North America, **until the twenty-fourth day of March, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-six.**

Source:

Great Britain

The statutes at large ... [from 1225 to 1867] by Danby Pickering
Cambridge : Printed by Bentham, for C. Bathhurst ; London, 1762-1869

Colonial Response to the Quartering Act

LEGISLATIVE PETITION OPPOSING THE QUARTERING ACT, 1767

- **NEW YORK GENERAL ASSEMBLY**, Petition to the Royal Governor, Sir Henry Moore, 15 December 1766 (published in the *New-York Mercury*, 24 December 1766). EXCERPTS.

We, His Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects, the General Assembly of the Colony of *New York*, have taken your Excellency's message of the 17th of *November* last, into our most serious Consideration: and beg Leave to assure your Excellency that nothing would give us a greater Pleasure than to find it in our Power to comply with every Requisition tending in any manner to promote His Majesty's Service. It is therefore with great Concern that we find it impossible to comply with what is now demanded, consistent with our Obligations to our Constituents [citizens of the colony]. . . .

In the Provision we made last Session for quartering Two Battalions and one Company of Artillery, we loaded ourselves with a Burden much greater than any of the neighboring Governments lie under for that Service, and imagined that, far from being censured on that Account, it would be accepted as a new Instance of that Loyalty and Affection to His Majesty's Government, of which this Colony has exhibited so many Proofs.

We beg Leave, further, to represent to your Excellency that, by the Act of Parliament, it appears to be the Intention of the Legislature to provide for the quartering Soldiers only on a March; but according to the Construction [interpretation] put on it here, it is required that all the Forces which shall at any Time enter this Colony, shall be quartered during the whole Year, in a very unusual and expensive Manner: That by marching several Regiments into this Colony, this Expense would become ruinous and insupportable; And, therefore, we cannot consistent with our Duty to our Constituents, put it in the Power of any Person . . . to lay such a Burden on them.

- **SIR HENRY MOORE**, governor of New York, Reply to the petition of the New York Assembly, 19 December 1766 (published in the *New-York Mercury*, 24 December 1766).

It is with no small Concern that I find the Sentiments of this House differing so much from mine in Regard to the Subject Matter of the Address now presented to me, which shall, by the first Opportunity, be transmitted to the [British] Secretary of State in Order to be laid before his Majesty.

The Stamp Act

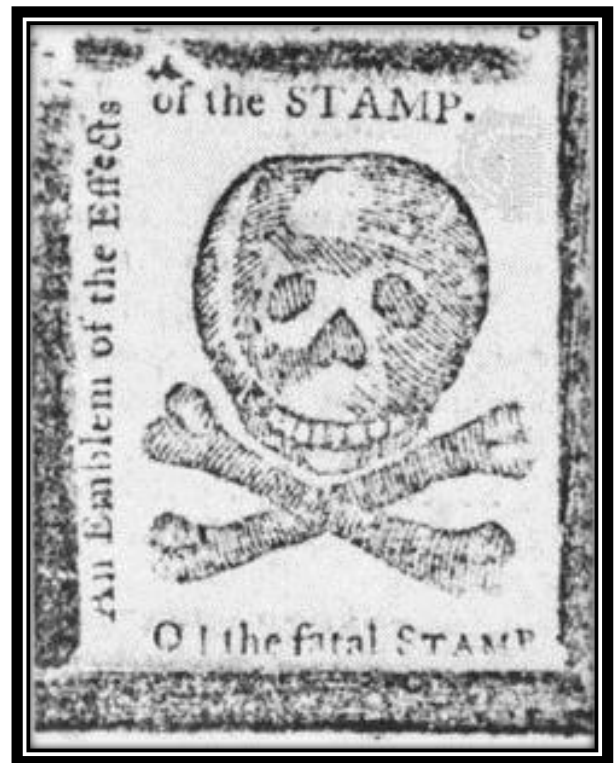
1. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any declaration, plea, replication, rejoinder, demurrer or other pleading, or any copy thereof; **in any court of law** within the British colonies and plantations in America, **a stamp duty of three pence.**
2. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any special bail, and appearance upon such bail in any such court, **a stamp duty of two shillings.**
3. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any donation, presentation, collation or institution, of or to any benefice, or any writ or instrument for the like purpose, or any register, entry, testimonial, or certificate of any degree taken in any university, academy, college, or seminary of learning within the said colonies and plantations, **a stamp duty of two pounds.**
4. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any appeal, writ of error, writ of dower, *ad quod damnum*, certiorari, statute merchant, statute staple, attestation, or certificate, by any officer, or exemplification of any record or proceeding, in any court whatsoever, within the said colonies and plantations (except appeals, writs of error, certiorari attestations, certificates, and exemplifications, for, or relating to the removal of any proceedings from before a single justice of the peace), a stamp duty of *ten shillings.*
5. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, **any writ of covenant for levying fines**, writ of entry for suffering a common recovery, or attachment issuing out of, or returnable into, any court within the said colonies and plantations, **a stamp duty of five shillings.**
6. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, **any judgment, decree, sentence, or dismissal** or any record of *nisi prius* or *postea*, in any court within the said colonies and plantations, **a stamp duty of four shillings.**
7. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any **license for retailing of spirituous liquors**, to be granted to any person who shall take out the same, within the said colonies and plantations, **a stamp duty of twenty shillings.**
8. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any **license for retailing of wine**, to be granted to any person who shall not take out a license for retailing of spirituous liquors, within the said colonies and plantations, **a stamp duty of four pounds.**
9. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, **any order or warrant for surveying or setting out any quantity of land**, not exceeding one hundred acres, issued by any governor, proprietor, or any public officer, alone, or in conjunction with any other person or persons, or with any council, or any council and assembly, within the British colonies and plantations in America, **a stamp duty of six pence.**
10. **And for and upon every pack of playing cards, and all dice, which shall be sold or used within the said colonies and plantations, the several stamp duties following (that is to say):**
 1. For every pack of such cards, **one shilling.**
 2. **And for every pair of such dice, ten shillings.**
11. **And for and every paper called a pamphlet, and upon every newspaper, containing public news or occurrences**, which shall be printed, dispersed, and made public, within any of the said colonies and plantations, and for and upon such advertisements as are hereinafter mentioned, the respective duties following (that is to say):
 1. For every such pamphlet and paper contained in a half sheet, or any lesser piece of paper, which shall be so printed, a stamp duty of *one half penny* for every printed copy thereof.
 2. For every such pamphlet and paper (being larger than half a sheet, and not exceeding one whole sheet), which shall be printed, a stamp duty of *one penny* for every printed copy thereof.
 3. For every pamphlet and paper, being larger than one whole sheet, and not exceeding six sheets in octavo, or in a lesser page, or not exceeding twelve sheets in quarto, or twenty sheets in folio, which shall be so printed, a duty after the rate of *one shilling* for every sheet of any kind of paper which shall be contained in one printed copy thereof.
 4. For every advertisement to be contained in any gazette newspaper, or other paper, or any pamphlet which shall be so printed, a duty of *two shillings.*
12. For every **almanac, or calendar**, for any one particular year, or for any time less than a year, which shall be written or printed on one side only of any one sheet, skin, or piece of paper, parchment, or vellum, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *two pence.*

Colonial Response to The Stamp Act

The "hated Stamp Act" required that all newspapers, pamphlets, almanacs, advertisements, legal documents such as deeds, wills and diplomas, and even playing cards and dice in the colonies were to be printed on specially stamped paper, which was to be shipped from a London central office and distributed in America by special agents after payment of a revenue-raising tax.

The colonists foremost objection to this tax was that it had been levied without their consent. The Americans had long been aware that the Stamp Act was coming, and once passed, the act did not take effect until November. This allowed ample time for resistance to build up in the colonies. The boycott, which had been so useful against the Sugar Act, was again utilized to protest the Stamp Act. In addition, mob threats against appointed stamp distributors discouraged the implementation of the act. By the time shiploads of the stamped paper arrived in America, virtually no customs officer was willing to attempt to execute the Stamp Act. When the date for the enactment of the Stamp Act came, business in America went on with scarcely a pause, and without the stamped paper. Courts carried on as usual. Unstamped newspapers continued to be printed, urging the populace to remain firm.

The Stamp Act brought to the fore a question that had been smoldering for a long time in America: just how much authority, and of what kind, did Parliament have over the colonies? Following the Stamp Act, a great many men took up their pens to write upon this question, including Thomas Whately and Daniel Dulany. Eventually the Stamp Act Congress issued the Declaration of Rights and Grievances, which put into words the understanding of Parliamentary authority with which the colonies had lived for decades. Throughout the firestorm of controversy sparked by the short-lived Stamp Act, Americans were at least agreed upon one thing: there should be no taxation without representation.



The Townshend Act

June 29, 1767

AN ACT for granting certain duties in the British *colonies and plantations in America*; for allowing a drawback of the duties of customs upon the exportation from this kingdom, of coffee and cocoa nuts of the produce of the said colonies or plantations; for discontinuing the drawbacks payable on china earthen ware exported to America; and for more effectually preventing the clandestine running of goods in the said colonies and plantations.

WHEREAS it is expedient that a revenue should be raised, in your Majesty's dominions in America, for making a more certain and adequate provision for defraying the charge of the administration of justice, and the support of civil government, in such provinces as it shall be found necessary; and towards further defraying the expenses of defending, protecting and securing the said dominions; ... be it enacted.... That from and after the twentieth day of November, one thousand seven hundred and sixty seven, there shall be raised, levied, collected, and paid, unto his Majesty, his heirs, and successors, for upon and the respective Goods here in after mentioned, which shall be imported from *Great Britain* into any colony or plantation in *America* which now is or hereafter may be, under the dominion of his Majesty, his heirs, or successors, the several Rates and Duties following; that is to say,

For every hundredweight avoirdupois of crown, plate, flint, and white glass, four shillings and eight pence.

For every hundred weight avoirdupois of red **lead**, two shillings.

For every hundred weight avoirdupois of green **glass**, one shilling and two pence.

For every hundred weight avoirdupois of white lead, two shillings.

For every hundred weight avoirdupois of **painters colours**, two shillings.

For every pound weight avoirdupois of **tea**, three pence.

For every ream of **paper**, usually called or known by the name of *Atlas fine*, twelve shillings. ...

Colonial Reaction to The Townshend Act

Reaction assumed revolutionary proportions in Boston, in the summer of 1768, when customs officials impounded a sloop owned by John Hancock, for violations of the trade regulations. Crowds mobbed the customs office, forcing the officials to retire to a British Warship in the Harbor. Troops from England and Nova Scotia marched in to occupy Boston on October 1, 1768. Bostonians offered no resistance. Rather they changed their tactics. They established *non-importation* agreements that quickly spread throughout the colonies. British trade soon dried up and the powerful merchants of Britain once again interceded on behalf of the colonies.



The Tea Act

An act to allow a drawback of the duties of customs on the exportation of tea to any of his Majesty's colonies or plantations in America; to increase the deposit on bohea tea to be sold at the India Company's sales; and to empower the commissioners of the treasury to grant licences to the East India Company to export tea duty-free.

WHEREAS by an act, made in the twelfth year of his present Majesty's reign, (intituled, An act for granting a drawback of part of the customs upon the exportation of tea to Ireland, and the British dominions in America; for altering the drawback upon foreign sugars exported from Great Britain to Ireland; for continuing the bounty on the exportation of British-made cordage; for allowing the importation of rice from the British plantations into the ports of Bristol, Liverpoole, Lancaster, and Whitehaven, for immediate exportation to foreign parts; and to empower the chief magistrate of any corporation to administer the oath, and grant the certificate required by law, upon the removal of certain goods to London, which have been sent into the country for sale;) it is amongst other things, enacted, That for and during the space of five years, to be computed from and after the fifth day of July, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-two, *there shall be drawn back and allowed for all teas which shall be sold after the said fifth day of July, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-two, at the publick sale of the united company of merchants of England trading to the East Indies, or which after that time shall be imported, by licence, in pursuance of the said therein and hereinafter mentioned act, made in the eighteenth year of the reign of his late majesty King George the Second, and which shall be exported from this kingdom, as merchandise, to Ireland, or any of the British colonies or plantations in America, three-fifth parts of the several duties of customs which were paid upon the importation of such teas,* which drawback or allowance, with respect to such teas as shall be exported to Ireland, shall be made to the exporter, in such manner, and under such rules, regulations, securities, penalties, and forfeitures, as any drawback or allowance was then payable, out of the duty of customs upon the exportation of foreign goods to Ireland; and with respect to such teas as shall be exported to the British colonies and plantations in America, the said drawback or allowance shall be made in such manner, and under such rules, regulations, penalties, and forfeitures, as any drawback or allowance payable out of the duty of customs upon foreign goods exported to foreign parts, was could, or might be made, before the passing of the said act of the twelfth year of his present Majesty's reign, (except in such cases as are otherwise therein provided for:) and whereas it may tend to the benefit and advantage of the trade of the said united company of merchants of England trading to the East Indies, if the allowance of the drawback of the duties of customs upon *all teas sold at the publick sales* of the said united company, after the tenth day of May, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-three, and which *shall be exported from this kingdom, as merchandise, to any of the British colonies or plantations in America, were to extend to the whole of the said duties of customs payable upon the importation of such teas,* may it therefore please your Majesty that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the King's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That there shall be drawn back and allowed for all teas, which, from and after the tenth day of May, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-three, shall be sold at the publick sales of the said united company, or which shall be imported by licence, in pursuance of the said act made in the eighteenth year of the reign of his late majesty King George the Second, and which shall, at any time hereafter, be exported from this kingdom, as merchandise, to any of the British colonies or plantations in America, the whole of the duties of customs payable upon the importation of such teas...

Colonial Response to The Tea Act



The Boston Tea Party of December 16, 1773, took place when a group of Massachusetts Patriots, protesting the monopoly on American tea importation recently granted by Parliament to the East India Company, seized 342 chests of tea in a midnight raid on three tea ships and threw them into the harbor.



Intolerable (Coercive)

Acts

The **Intolerable (Coercive) Acts** was the Patriot name for a series of punitive laws passed by the British Parliament in 1774 relating to Massachusetts after the Boston Tea party. The acts stripped

Massachusetts of self-government and historic rights, triggering outrage and resistance in the Thirteen Colonies. They were key developments in the outbreak of the American Revolution in 1775.

Four of the acts were issued in direct response to the Boston Tea Party of December 1773; the British Parliament hoped these punitive measures would, by making an example of Massachusetts, reverse the trend of colonial resistance to parliamentary authority that had begun with the 1765 Stamp Act.

The Massachusetts Government Act; May 20, 1774

An act for the better regulating the government of the province of the Massachusetts^A's Bay, in New England.

WHEREAS by letters patent under the great seal of England, made in the third year of the reign of their late majesties King William and Queen Mary, for uniting, erecting, and incorporating, the several colonies, territories, and tracts of land therein mentioned, into one real province, by the name of Their Majesties Province of the **Massachusetts Bay**, in New England; whereby it was, amongst other things, ordained and established, That ***the governor of the said province should, from thenceforth, be appointed and commissioned by their Majesties, their heirs and successors.*** It was, however, granted and ordained, That, from the expiration of the term for and during which the eight and twenty persons named in the said letters patent were appointed to be the first counsellors or assistants to the governor of the said province for the time being, the aforesaid number of eight and twenty counsellors or assistants should yearly, once in every year, for ever thereafter, be, by the general court or assembly, newly chosen: And whereas the said method of electing such counsellors or assistants, to be vested with the several powers, authorities, and privileges, therein mentioned, although conformable to the practice theretofore used in such of the colonies thereby united, in which the appointment of the respective governors had been vested in the general courts or assemblies of the said colonies, hath, by repeated experience, been found to be extremely ill adapted to the plan of government established in the province of the Massachusetts Bay, by the said letters patent herein-before mentioned, and hath been so far from contributing to the attainment of the good ends and purposes thereby intended, and to the promoting of the internal welfare, peace, and good government of the said province, or to the maintenance of the just subordination to, and conformity with, the laws of Great Britain, that the manner of exercising the powers, authorities, and privileges aforesaid, by ***the persons so annually elected, hath, for some time past, been such as had the most manifest tendency to obstruct, and, in great measure, defeat, the execution of the laws; to weaken and, in great measure, defeat, the execution of the laws,*** to weaken the attachment of his Majesty's well-disposed subjects in the said province to his Majesty's government, and to encourage the ill-disposed among them to proceed even to acts of direct resistance to, and defiance of, his Majesty's authority; And it hath accordingly happened that an ***open resistance to the execution of the laws hath actually taken place in the town of Boston,*** and the neighbourhood thereof, within the said province: And whereas it is, under these circumstances, become absolutely necessary, in order to the preservation of the peace and good order of the said province, the protection of his Majesty's well-disposed subjects therein resident, the continuance of the mutual benefits arising from the commerce and correspondence between this kingdom and the said province, and the maintaining of the just dependance of the said province upon the crown and parliament of Great Britain, that ***the said method of annually electing the counsellors or assistants of the said province should no longer be suffered to continue but that the appointment of the said counsellors or assistants should henceforth be put upon the like footing as is established in such other of his Majesty's colonies or plantations in America, the governors whereof are appointed by his Majesty's commission, under the great seal of Great Britain.*** Be it therefore enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That from and after the first day of August, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-four, so much of the charter, granted by their majesties King William and Queen Mary to the inhabitants of the said province of the Massachusetts Bay, in New England, and all and every clause, matter, and thing, therein contained, which relates to the time and ***manner of electing the assistants or counsellors for the said province, be revoked, and is hereby revoked and made void*** and of none effect; and that the offices of all counsellors and assistants, elected and appointed in pursuance thereof, shall from thenceforth cease and determine: And that, from and after the said first day of August, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-four, the council, or court of assistants of the said province for the time being, shall be composed of such of the inhabitants or proprietors of lands within the same as shall be thereunto nominated and appointed by his Majesty, his heirs and successors, from time to time, by warrant under his or their signet or sign manual, and with the advice of the privy council, agreeable to the practice now used in respect to the appointment of counsellors in such of his Majesty's other colonies in America, the governors whereof are appointed by commission under the great seal of Great Britain: provided, that the number of the said assistants or counsellors shall not, at any one time, exceed thirty-six, nor be less than twelve.

Colonial Response to The Intolerable Acts

First Continental Congress October 1774

The good people of the several Colonies of New Hampshire, Massachusetts bay, Rhode Island and Providence plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Newcastle Kent and Sussex on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, justly alarmed at these arbitrary proceedings of parliament and administration, have severally **elected, constituted, and appointed deputies to meet, and sit in general Congress, in the city of Philadelphia**, in order to obtain such establishment, as that their religion, laws, and liberties, may not be subverted:

Whereupon **the deputies so appointed** being now assembled, in a full and free representation of these Colonies, taking into their most serious consideration the best means of attaining the ends aforesaid, do in the first place, as Englishmen their ancestors in like cases have usually done, for asserting and vindicating their rights and liberties, **declare**,

- That the inhabitants of the English Colonies in North America, by the immutable laws of nature, the principles of the English constitution, and the several charters or compacts, have the following Rights:
- That our ancestors, who first settled these colonies, were at the time of their emigration from the mother country, entitled to all the rights, liberties, and immunities of free and natural born subjects within the realm of England.
- That by such emigration they by no means forfeited, surrendered, or lost any of those rights, but that they were, and their descendants now are entitled to the exercise and enjoyment of all such of them, as their local and other circumstances enable them to exercise and enjoy.
- That **the foundation of English liberty, and of all free government, is a right in the people to participate in their legislative council: and as the English colonists are not represented**, and from their local and other circumstances, **cannot properly be represented in the British parliament**, they are entitled to a free and exclusive power of legislation in their several provincial legislatures, where their right of representation can alone be preserved, in all cases of taxation and internal polity, subject only to the negative of their sovereign, in such manner as has been heretofore used and accustomed. But, from the necessity of the case, and a regard to the mutual interest of both countries, we cheerfully consent to the operation of such acts of the British parliament, as are bona fide restrained to the regulation of our external commerce, for the purpose of securing the commercial advantages of the whole empire to the mother country, and the commercial benefits of its respective members excluding every idea of taxation, internal or external, for raising a revenue on the subjects in America **without their consent**.
- That the respective colonies are entitled to the common law of England, and more especially to the great and inestimable privilege of being tried by their peers of the vicinage, according to the course of that law.
- That they are entitled to the benefit of such of the English statutes, as existed at the time of their colonization; and which they have, by experience, respectively found to be applicable to their several local and other circumstances.
- That these, his majesty's colonies, are likewise entitled to all the immunities and privileges granted and confirmed to them by royal charters, or secured by their several codes of provincial laws.
- That **they have a right peaceably to assemble, consider of their grievances, and petition the King**; and that all prosecutions, prohibitory proclamations, and commitments for the same, are illegal.
- That the keeping a **Standing army in these colonies, in times of peace, without the consent of the legislature of that colony in which such army is kept, is against law**.
- It is indispensably necessary to good government, and rendered essential by the English constitution, that the constituent branches of the legislature be independent of each other; that, therefore, the exercise of legislative power in several colonies, by a council appointed during pleasure, by the crown, is unconstitutional, dangerous, and destructive to the freedom of American legislation.

The Boston Massacre

Historic Timeline

It took only few hours for the tragic events to unfold on the evening in March of 1770, starting from a confrontation with the British regulars and ending with the death of five colonists. It took several years to get to the situation. The Boston Massacre is best understood in the context of several other key historic events.

June 29, 1767 – the British Parliament Passes the Townshend Acts

The heavy presence of British troops in Boston that lead to the fatal shooting was the direct results of the Townshend Acts passed by British Parliament to impose additional taxes on common products imported into the Colonies. These products among others included paper, glass and tea.

October 1, 1768 - British Troops Start Arriving to Boston

On October 1, 1768 a group of British regulars arrived in Boston, MA to maintain order. The civilians reacted to the redcoats like they were invaders by taunting them through name calling, spitting, and fighting. The people of Boston had gained control of the reigns of power and prevented the soldiers from carrying out their duties. During the next eighteen months tension mounted between the two sides.

March 5, 1770 - The Boston Massacre Occurs

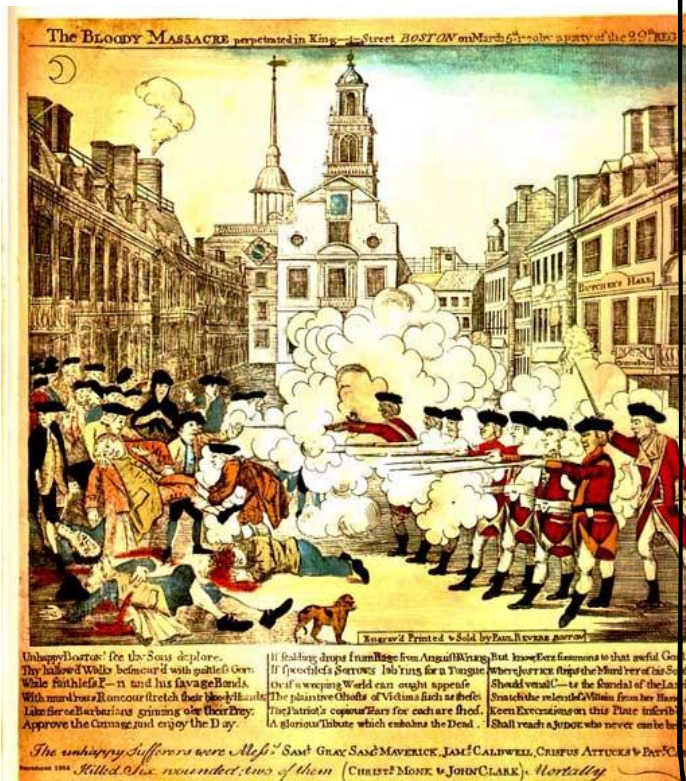
On March 5, 1770 the Twenty-Ninth Regiment came to the relief of the Eighth on duty at the Customs House on King (now State) Street. The soldiers, led by Captain Thomas Preston, were met by a large and taunting crowd of civilians. Captain Preston was unable to disperse the crowd and as they chanted "Fire and be damned" he ordered his troops "Don't Fire!" With all the commotion the soldiers probably did not hear his orders and they opened fire on the crowd killing three men instantly and another two who died later.

October 24-30, 1770 - The Trial of Captain Preston

Seven months later, in October of 1770, Captain Preston was tried for murder in a Boston courtroom. He was defended by John Adams and Robert Auchmuty and assisted by Josiah Quincy Jr. Captain Preston was acquitted by a Boston jury. It was never satisfactory explained why the radicals Adams and Quincy represented Preston, and later the soldiers, although some surviving documents suggest that the jury in Preston's case was "packed." When the soldiers case came to trial soon after they were defended by Adams, Quincy, and Sampson Salter Blowers. The jurors in their case came from outside of Boston and they won acquittals a month after the trial began.

November 27 - Dec 14, 1770 - the Trial of the British Soldiers

The eight British soldiers accused of murder were tried separately from their officer Captain Preston. But just like the Preston's trial the proceedings were delayed by 8 months after the incident to allow emotions to cool down. As a result of the trial, six soldiers were acquitted on the grounds of self-defense, but two were found guilty of murder because of the overpowering proof that they fired into the crowd.



Report on The Battles at Lexington and Concord

Major John Pitcairn

April 26, 1775

Boston Camp,

To: General Thomas Gage



Sir,

As you are anxious to know the particulars that happened near and at Lexington in the 19th Inst agreeable to your desire, I will in as concise a manner as possible state the facts, for my time at present is so much employed, as to prevent a more particular narrative of the occurrences of that day.

Six companies of Light Infantry were detached by Lt Colo Smith to take possession of two bridges on the other side of Concord, near three in the Morning, when we were advanced within about two miles of Lexington, intelligence was received that about 500 men in arms were assembled, determined to oppose the Kings troops, and retard them in their march. On this intelligence, I mounted my horse, and galloped up to the six Light Companies. When I arrived at the head of the advance Company, two officers came and informed me, that a man of the rebels advanced from those that were assembled, had presented his musket and attempted to shoot them, but the piece flashed in the pan. On this I gave directions to the troops to move forward, but on no account to fire, or even attempt it without orders; when I arrived at the end of the Village, I observed drawn up upon a Green near 200 rebels; when I came within about 100 yards of them, they began to file off towards some stone walls on our right flank. The Light Infantry, observing this, ran after them. I instantly called to the soldiers not to fire, but surround and disarm them, and after several repetitions of those positive orders to the men, not to fire, etc. some of the rebels who had jumped over the wall fired four or five shots at the soldiers, which wounded a man of the Tenth and my horse was wounded in two places, from some quarter or other, and at the same time several shots were fired from a meeting house on our left. Upon this, without any order or regularity, the Light Infantry began a scattered fire, and continued in that situation for some little time, contrary to the repeated orders both of me and the officers that were present. It will be needless to mention what happened after, as I suppose Colo Smith hath given a particular account of it.

I am, Sir, Your Most Obedt

Humble Servant

John Pitcairn

Reaction to the Battles at Lexington and Concord

#1:

Resolution signed by citizens of Cross Creek, Cumberland County, North Carolina, June 20, 1775 (excerpt). The actual commencement of hostilities against this Continent by the British Troops, in the bloody scene on the nineteenth of April last, near Boston; the increase of arbitrary impositions, from a wicked and despotick Ministry [Parliament]; and the dread of instigated insurrections in the Colonies, are causes sufficient to drive an oppressed People to the use of arms: We, therefore, the subscribers [signers], of Cumberland County, hoplding ourselves bound by that most sacred of all obligations, the duty of good citizens towards an injured country, and thoroughly convinced that under our distressed circumstances we shall be justified before you in resisting force by force; do unite ourselves under every tie of religion and honour, and associate as a band in her defence against every foe; hereby solemnly engaging, that whenever our Continental or Provincial Councils shall decree it necessary, we will go forth and be ready to sacrifice our lives and fortunes to secure her freedom and safety.

#2:

Broadside communicating news of Lexington and Concord, printed by the Williamsburg (Virginia) Committee of Correspondence, April 29, 1775 (excerpts).

WILLIAMSBURG [Virginia], SATURDAY, *April 29*, 1775.

LATE last night an express [news bulletin sent by stagecoach or person on horseback] arrived from Philadelphia, with the following melancholy advices from the province of Connecticut, forwarded to the committee of correspondence in this city. . . .

PHILADELPHIA [Pennsylvania], *April 24*, 1775.

An express arrived at five o'clock this evening, by which we have the following advices, viz. [namely]:

WATERTOWN [Connecticut], *Wednesday morning, near 10 o'clock.*

To all FRIENDS of AMERICAN LIBERTY.

Be it known, that this morning, before the break of day, a brigade, consisting of about 1000 or 1200 men, landed at Phipps farm, at Cambridge [Massachusetts], and marched to Lexington, where they found a company of our colony militia in arms, upon whom they fired, without any provocation, and killed six men, and wounded four others. By an express from Boston, we find another brigade is now on its march from Boston, supposed to consist of 1000 men. The bearer, Trial Bisset, is charged [ordered to] to alarm [warn] the country, quite [all the way] to Connecticut; and all persons are desired [requested] to furnish him with fresh horses, as they may be needed. I have spoken with several, who have seen the dead and wounded. . . .

J. PALMER, one of the committee.

A true copy from the original, by order of the committee of correspondence of Worcester [Massachusetts], April 1775. Attested and forwarded by the committees of Brookline [Massachusetts], Norwich, New London, Lyme, Saybrook, Killingsworth, E. Guilford, Brandford, Newhaven [Connecticut towns].