



# Revolutionary Times



Containing the Latest News from the Sons of the American Revolution

## Boston Massacre

Conflicts between the British and the colonists had been on the rise because the British government had been trying to increase control over the colonies and raise taxes at the same time.

On March 5, 1770, one confrontation turned violent.

Nervous Redcoats opened fire into a crowd, killing five Bostonians and wounding several others.

When the smoke cleared Crispus Attucks, James Caldwell, and Samuel Gray lay dead in the street with Samuel Maverick mortally wounded, dying the next day and Patrick Carr dying two weeks later.



It was initially referred to as the "Incident on King Street," the "Bloody Massacre on King Street" and the "State Street Massacre." Several decades later, and since, it has been called the "Boston Massacre."

Eight of the British soldiers soon turned themselves in to stand trial. The jury was set, and the true drama was beginning. Only a fair trial would show the world that Massachusetts, and by association all Americans, deserved their liberty by an appeal to justice and not by the rule of a mob.

John Adams represented the British soldiers. Adams' insistence on upholding the legal rights of the soldiers, who in fact had been provoked, made him temporarily unpopular but also marked him as

one of the most principled radicals in the burgeoning movement for American independence.

Following one of the first trials in American history to last for several days, even the intense crowd seemed exhausted. Testimony after testimony had been used to show both sides of the "massacre" story.

But as Adams said in his summary, "facts are stubborn things ... if they [the soldiers] were assaulted at all ... this was a provocation for which the law reduces the offense of killing, down to manslaughter ..."

When the jury quickly returned with a "not guilty" verdict against Captain Preston and the others, Adams felt a great weight lifted from his shoulders. Adams would later describe his role as "the

greatest service I ever rendered my country."

The world saw that justice and liberty were valued as the legal rights of all. The Boston Massacre is one of several pivotal events leading to the Revolutionary War, and ultimately, the signing of the Declaration of Independence. (NPS)

This broadsheet is dedicated to the 250th Anniversary Celebration of the Declaration of Independence for more information visit the National Society Sons of the American Revolution website at: [www.sar.org](http://www.sar.org)

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