

# The Boston Massacre

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My name is Bill Bacon and my family and I live in Boston, Massachusetts. I am a businessman who sells supplies for my community in a general store on King Street. My family and I were at the table finishing up our breakfast when my young son, John said, "Why was there a fight last night near our store, Dad?"

Last night on March 5, 1770 was the evening when the Boston Massacre happened. I was closing up my store on King Street, when I heard yelling and screaming followed by gunshots down the street in the direction of the Custom House. Some colonists, who called themselves Patriots, were angry that the British troops were trying to control our city. The protesters marched on the Custom House in opposition to the British troops who were placed there to enforce the taxes being imposed on the colonies by the British Parliament ("The Boston Massacre," 2010).

I said to John, "We colonists were protesting the control that King George of England is trying to have over us. A riot broke out and we were fired upon by King George's soldiers. King George puts a lot of taxes on our colony because he thinks he owns us."

I explained to John that people were angry that King George created the Stamp Act in 1765 and the Townshend Act in 1767 to exploit and control the people. The Stamp Act was the first internal tax levied directly on American colonists by British Parliament. It imposed a tax on all paper

documents in the colonies. They taxed contracts and wills, newspapers, magazines, and even the playing cards that we used to play our games on Saturday nights. Colonists were taxed, but were not able to have representation in the British Parliament. Thus, they were angry that they had "taxation without representation." The colonists protested and boycotted imports from England and the Stamp tax was repealed the next year in 1766 ("Stamp Act of 1765", 2020).

I also told John that after the Stamp Act was repealed, the Townshend Acts were enacted as another way to control and exploit money from the colonists. These Acts were a series of laws passed by the British government on the American colonies in 1767. The Townshend Acts got their name by being introduced to the British Parliament by Charles Townshend. They imposed duties on British china, glass, lead, paper, paint, and tea imported to the colonies ("American Revolution," n.d.). This tax really hurt my business at the general store because many of the items that were imported from England cost more for my customers to buy. Often they went without buying items rather than paying the increased cost because of the tax.

Anyway, as I was saying, as we were finishing up breakfast, my wife, Joan, said, "It must have been terrible out there!" She did have a point, it was terrible out there. The colonists were yelling and protesting, throwing

snowballs and other objects at the British troops . I saw this confrontation start to escalate as I was hurrying home from the store. The troops then started firing at the crowd of protesters. Five people died in the fight (The Boston Massacre," 2010).

I did know one of the persons who died that night. His name was James Caldwell. He was only seventeen years old when he died in the riot. He was a sailor on a ship called "Hawk" which brought molasses from the West Indies to be made into rum in Boston to then be shipped to England for sale ("James Caldwell", n.d.). I knew him because I often saw him on the docks when I was picking up goods for my store. He was a lively young man who often told me exciting stories about turquoise blue seas and warmer waters. It is so sad that he died so young standing up for what he believed in.

Samuel Maverick, was at the Custom House accidentally. He was shot in the stomach and died the next morning. He was a carpenter's apprentice and like James Caldwell died much too young at the age of 17 ("Samuel Maverick," n.d.). I did not know him that well, but I later found out that he was fond of my 14 year-old daughter, Angela and had hoped to ask me if he could court her in the future.

The other men that died immediately at the time were Samuel Gray, a rope maker ("Samuel Gray," n.d.) and Crispus Attucks, a mulatto man of

mixed race who was also a seaman (Kiger, 2020). Patrick Carr, a 30 year-old leather craftsman, was mortally injured and died just over a week later ("Patrick Carr," n.d.). A sixth victim of the massacre was Christopher Monk, a shipwright's apprentice, who was shot in the groin, severely injured and disabled because of it. Although he died 10 years after the massacre, his life is thought to have been shortened because of his disability ("Christopher Monk", n.d.).

Tonight at dinner I will discuss this incident some more with my family. I fear a revolution may be coming if the British continue to exert their control over our colonies. These riots seem to be getting worse, and I fear my sons Will, age 12 and John, age 8 will someday have to fight. My sweet girls Angela, age 14 and Vanessa, age 11 may be married by then, but what effect will it have on their families too? May God watch over all us if that happens.

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