



# The American Revolution

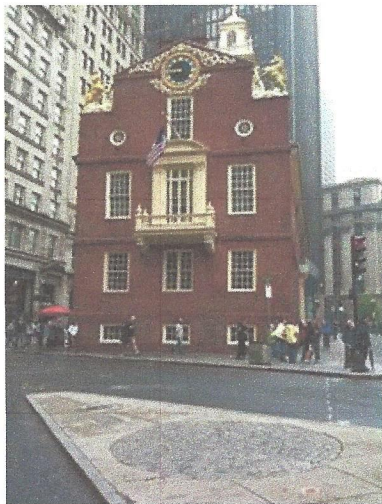
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Sons of the American Revolution

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## Colonial American Discontent: Article 3 of 3

This *Massachusetts Government Act* allowed the loading, by appointments and not election, of all government positions with royal loyalist. In anticipation of colonial discontent over these measures, there followed on 2 June 1774, *The Quartering Act*. Everyone understood this act. British troops were to be shipped to Boston where American colonists were to provision, and quarter all of them. The mission of the troops was to suppress colonial protest. The final act in this series of intolerable acts was the passage of *The Quebec Act*. This act called for the replacement of the existing French government by a British government.



*Boston Custom's House, site  
of the 1770 Boston Massacre*

Now readers, in case you have assumed that American colonists have taken all of this calmly, I want to relate just one incident occurring during this period which refutes that idea. After the *Townsend Act* but before the *Intolerable Acts*, on 5 March 1770, a serious incident happened on King Street in Boston, Massachusetts. We call it the Boston Massacre. British troops had been stationed in Boston since 1768, to suppress disorder resulting from

unpopular Parliamentary legislation.

On the evening of March 5th, British Private Hugh White, was on guard duty at the Boston Custom's House on King Street. A heckler, Edward Garrick, was busy annoying Private White, when the latter gave Garrick a butt stroke with his musket. Garrick's cries attracted an angry crowd. A young bookseller named Henry Knox (who would later serve as a general in the revolution), witnessed the event and warned Private White that "if he fired he must die for it." Another witness was a runaway slave named Crispus Attucks, who was throwing things at White and challenging him to fire. This Custom's House mob caused British Captain Thomas Preston to dispatch an officer and six privates to the scene. The soldiers formed a semi-circle in front of the Custom's House door. The mob became raucous. A thrown object hit a Private Montgomery, knocking him to the ground and separating him from his musket. Upon retrieving his weapon, he was heard to shout, "Damn you, fire! And fired into the mob. A protester hit Private Montgomery with a stick and then swung at Captain Preston. Two seconds passed, and then the troops fired a volley into the crowd. Instantly killed were rope maker Samuel Gray, mariner James Caldwell and Crispus Attucks. Later, two seriously wounded individuals would die. Making the death toll 5 with 11 wounded.

In the aftermath, colonial passions spiraled out of control. Soldiers were transferred away from the site, and a lengthy trial would attract much attention. The first time I visited Boston, I naturally sought out this location. At that time, the raised curb in the street (see photo in this article) was not there and the area was level street. I inquired of a pedestrian as to the exact location of this incident. She said, " Oh yeah, it's actually right out there in the middle of the street, but they took down the big granite

marker because people kept running into it." Should you visit Boston and want to locate the exact spot, then put these coordinates (42 degrees 21 minutes 32 seconds N and 71 degrees 03 minutes 25 seconds W) and your smart phone GPS will show you.