

# The boston massacre

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Boston Massacre The Boston Massacre was a pivotal event in American history for the significant contributions it made to the eventual start of the American Revolutionary War. The actual events of the Boston Massacre are that on March 5, 1770 the British army shot and killed five men living in the American colonies. While this is the eventual occurrence, there is substantial background that led up to these events. For a number of years surrounding the Massacre the British government had increasingly taxed the colonies causing large amounts of strife within the colonial residents. In terms of specific tax acts the Townshend Acts had recently been passed within colonial America. The Townshend Acts went beyond merely taxing the colonies, but were designed to ensure that the governors and judges ruling over the colonial empire were entirely under British control. This tactic was put in place to further solidify colonial compliance with British taxes and to better gain control of trade regulations within the colonial empire. As one might imagine, such a tactic was met with great resistance in the colonies. Petitions were sent to King George asking that the Townshend Acts be repealed. In making no progress in direct petitions to King George, increasing amount of assemblies began to take place throughout Massachusetts. These assemblies began to threaten British officials residing within the colonies. Lord Hillsborough, who had recently been made the Colonial Secretary, became alarmed by the growing amount of resistance to the Townshend Acts. He began to instruct the colonies that they needed to cease resistance operations to the British laws. As the colonists continued their resistance to the Townshend Acts, the British government responded by sending military enforcement to the colonies to ensure they followed the new regulations. On June 10th the British troops acquisitioned the colonial

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ship Liberty because, they claimed, the ship had been involved in smuggling actions. This prompted great outrage from the colonists and riots among the local sailors began to occur. These riots resulted in increasing tensions between British and colonials, with the British sending soldiers to Boston. The actual incident of the Boston Massacre occurred in the commotion of these swirling tensions. After a British officer had been accused of not paying his bill at a local tavern, he struck one of the employees with a musket. This resulted in general public unrest. A crowd of angry protestors began to gather and by the evening the number reached between 300 and 400. The crowd grew increasingly angry and the British officers increasingly found themselves the object of spite and advancing physical threats. After one of the British officers, Hugh Montgomery, had been struck to the ground by a local tavern keeper he rose up and shot his musket at the crowd. The crowd then began taunting the soldiers to fire. The crowd slowly encroached on the British soldiers' positions and eventually the other British officers that had been accompanying Montgomery fired into the crowd, injuring many and murdering five individuals. These events would be used as fodder for propaganda for a populace that was already thirsting for rebellion.