

# Major events in american history

[History](#)



Christopher Columbus sailed west believing the distance is shorter than going east. Unfortunately, Columbus underestimated the vast ocean and did not know there was a large, unknown land. Upon arriving to the New World, Christopher Columbus was unaware where he has landed. Columbus believed he was off the coast of China; therefore, he called them Indians. Columbus was truly intrigued with what he saw; he first noticed the land was too large to be an island and automatically assumed he landed on a main land. Columbus was expecting a lot people along the coast when he arrived, but he saw no one was around. He described the land he came across as having an abundance of resources. From his experience, there are large trees filled with different fruits. He explained in his letter that the island is nothing he has seen before.

The people on the island seemed foreign to them too. When Columbus first landed on the island he saw them running away. He was surprised to see the men and women walking around without any clothing on and not owning weapons. Columbus describes the native people as idiots. They would trade the European with gold for everyday items such as glass and bows.

Columbus realized he can achieve many things easily by manipulating the Indians with everyday items. Columbus was able to convert the Indians to Christianity and teach them a different language. Columbus and his crew saw the Indians as naïve, because they believe the Europeans were sent from heaven. Once he gained the trust of the Indians, Columbus built a fortress and Espanola and controlled the island. Columbus believed everything he is doing, he is doing for God.

This letter from Christopher Columbus is an indication of isolation among different groups. It is not surprising to Christopher Columbus enslaving the Native Americans and suppressing them in order to get riches and convert them to Christianity. To Columbus and many others explores after him saw the Native Americans as a way to bring glory to their country by easily manipulating them. The Europeans took advantage of the resources of the New World and claimed their spot.

As the colonist settled in the New World, they started to have a sense of independence. The Americans' sovereignty was challenged by Parliament; the British crown saw the Americans as a part of the British Empire. The Americans, on the other hand, saw themselves as becoming a separate nation. The Americans created their own currency and traded with other nations other than the British. Tension between the two nations started to rise and one of the incidents where they got into a conflict was the Boston Massacre. In Captain Thomas Preston's account of the Boston Massacre, he argues his innocence against those who believe he is guilty. Preston explains the events leading up to his trial and death of many people.

At the time of the event, Preston was aware of the angry mass. Preston knew his army had to be cautious of their actions to make sure a riot does not break out. According to Preston – “ So far was I from intending the death of any person that I suffered the troops to go to the spot where the unhappy affair took place without any loading in their pieces; nor did I ever give orders for loading them.” (Preston, p. 2) In the statement, Preston clearly had no plan to harm the colonist. The colonist would shout out, “ come on

you rascals, you bloody backs, [...] fire if you dare, G-d damn you, fire and be damned, we know you dare not” (Preston, p. 2) and stayed composed.

Although Preston was hoping to stop the protest, one of the troops believed he heard Preston say fire. As a result he fired at the colonist causing a chain effect. Preston was put on trial because people said it was Preston who caused the riot. Preston claims he is “ perfectly, innocent.” (Preston, p. 5) With all the commotion, it is easy to mistake that Preston could have said fire. The troops could have heard the man who asked Preston whether he was planning to fire.

Thomas Preston’s account is an excellent indication of different viewpoints. This source allows people see the perspective of the British Empire. The British Empire saw the Boston Massacre as an act of rebellion; whereas, the Bostonians saw it as a protest. Paul Revere’s “ The Boston Massacre,” is an example of propaganda; Revere depicted the Bostonians as the victim. Many Bostonians and other colonist saw their act as patriotic.

The British troops were on a foreign land, and many Bostonians were against the troops occupying “ their” land. The British troops were in a place where they were not wanted and were not the majority; they had no power over the colonists. At the time of the massacre, there were 150 Bostonians and only twelve soldiers. The soldier stood out like a sore thumb. There was a higher chance of a soldier dying rather than a colonist. In order to stop the Bostonians, the soldiers had to fire the rifle in order to defend themselves. The soldier’s lives were “ in imminent danger” (Preston, p. 2)

The Boston Massacre was a mile stone for the colonist. The Boston Massacre was a step towards the American Revolution. As a result of the Boston Massacre, the soldiers occupying Boston left.

While most Americans were worried about the British and gaining independence, others were concern with religion. The 17th century was an era of religious reformation. Religions believed the Devil was connected to witchcraft and had the power to harm people. In Marther's Relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions, he describes Mary Glover was linked to witchcraft. Mather played a role in the Salem Witch Trials. His writing stimulated the idea of all those who are involved in witchcraft should be punished. Mather's view on witchcraft seems extreme.

In the excerpt, Mather explains the children were victims of Mary Glover. They were acting strange and were " tortured everywhere." (Mather, p. 2) Goodwin daughter fell ill " with strange Fits, [...] Epilepsy, or The Disease of Astonishment." (Mather, p. 1) During this time, people saw famine and disease as God's message to the world. There were no real medical reasons for disease; people have not yet learn the importance of sanitation and medical techniques.

Mather accused Mary Glover of witchcraft in the excerpt. During her trail, she needed a translator because she spoke Irish. This gave her a disadvantage, because there was an Irish translator but not an English one. Glover could only know what they were saying to a certain extent. If she was wealthy, she would have probably learned English and would be able to explain herself. Mather accused almost everyone in Salem of witchcraft and was no longer

loyal to God. When Grover was given an examination nothing happened to the Physicians; however, she could not recite a line in Latin and they concluded she should sentence to death. Most of those who were convicted were sentenced to death for one crime. The unfairness of the Salem Witch Trial, led to the idea of innocent until proven guilty – the Fifth Amendment.

At Mary Grover's trial, one of the testimonies was the abused children. The child " fell into sad Fits, before the assembly." (Mather, p. 4) Evidences taken from Grover's home were puppets with images. The physicians during the trial based their conclusion on religion. Today, religion would be taken out of the courts.

The Salem Witchcraft Trial was a tragic event; many people were killed even if an ounce of witchcraft was spotted. I would compare the Salem Witchcraft Trial to the French Revolution. Maximilien Robespierre would sentence anyone to the guillotine if he thought a person was plotting against the revolution. Even those who were actually innocent died. It was not until the death of Robespierre did the French Revolution end.

It is not surprising that the Colonial American justice was unsuccessful at making good decisions in the beginning of the century. America was trying to establish the limits of natural rights. In this particular source, the conviction of Grover influences the Fifth Amendment. For most on Colonial America, court cases will be overruled and be considered unconstitutional. Amendments will be passed that are based in these court cases.