

The Road to REVOLUTION

Two hundred and fifty years ago, trouble was brewing in Boston. It would forever change our country.

AS YOU
READ

Why did the colonists want independence?

A cold wind whipped through north Boston, Massachusetts. It was February 22, 1770. But the bitter chill didn't stop an angry mob from gathering. They yelled and hurled stones at a

store selling British goods. In the crowd was 11-year-old Christopher Seider.

A British official named Ebenezer Richardson lived near the shop. He tried to stop the protest. But the crowd turned on him and he ran off into his house.

Suddenly, a gunshot rang out. Richardson had fired his gun into the group. Christopher dropped to the ground. He was wounded. The boy died later that night.

Christopher's death would spark a **revolution**.

extra fees for goods like tea, glass, and paper.

The colonists were not happy about the British taking money from them. After all, they had no representatives in the British government. They also had no say in how the government was run. This became known as "taxation without representation." The colonists were fed up with the king's **tyranny**. Why should they answer to someone who had never set foot in the Colonies?

Britain sent troops to America to enforce the king's rules.

Thousands were stationed in Boston. There were constant arguments between the soldiers and the colonists. Many of the colonists

Troubled Times

Massachusetts was one of the 13 Colonies at the time of Christopher's death. The Colonies were ruled by Britain. In 1763, Britain ended a long war with France and needed money. So King George III began taxing the colonists. The king charged



The 13 Colonies



Look closely at the map. What do the 13 Colonies have in common?

WORDS TO KNOW

revolution *noun*. the usually violent attempt by a group of people to end the rule of one government and start a new one

tyranny *noun*. unfair treatment by people with power over others

The term "patriots" refers to colonists who wanted freedom from Britain.

boycotted, or refused to buy, goods shipped from England.

Fired Up

News of Christopher's death spread across Boston like wildfire. Thousands of people came together to grieve at a huge public funeral. That grief turned to anger. It pushed hatred of the British to dangerous new levels.

"In Boston, things were at a breaking point," explains historian Nat Sheidley.

Just two weeks after the funeral, a group of angry colonists approached a British soldier. It was March 5, 1770. The colonists began insulting the soldier. Before long, the mob was throwing ice and stones at him. More British troops arrived and then . . . bang!

A soldier fired his gun into the

crowd in the scuffle. More soldiers fired after a few seconds of shocked silence. Five colonists died in all. This incident would become known as the Boston Massacre.

A New Nation

The Boston Massacre was a turning point in the colonists' fight to be free from Britain.

"After the Boston Massacre, there was no way to make peace with Britain," says Sheidley.

In 1775, the first shots of the Revolutionary War were fired. The colonists' long, hard fight for independence had begun. A new nation would soon be born.

—by Tricia Culligan

The Fight for Freedom

The War Begins

The first shots of the American Revolutionary War were fired at the Battles of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775.

A New Leader

Shortly after the war started, George Washington was named commander of the Continental Army. On July 4, 1776, representatives from the Colonies approved the Declaration of Independence, announcing their separation from Britain.



Surrender!

On October 19, 1781, the British surrendered at the Battle of Yorktown. Two years later, the U.S. and Britain signed a treaty officially making the U.S. its own nation.



British soldiers were often called "redcoats" because of their uniforms.

Crispus Attucks is believed to have been the first person killed in the Boston Massacre.