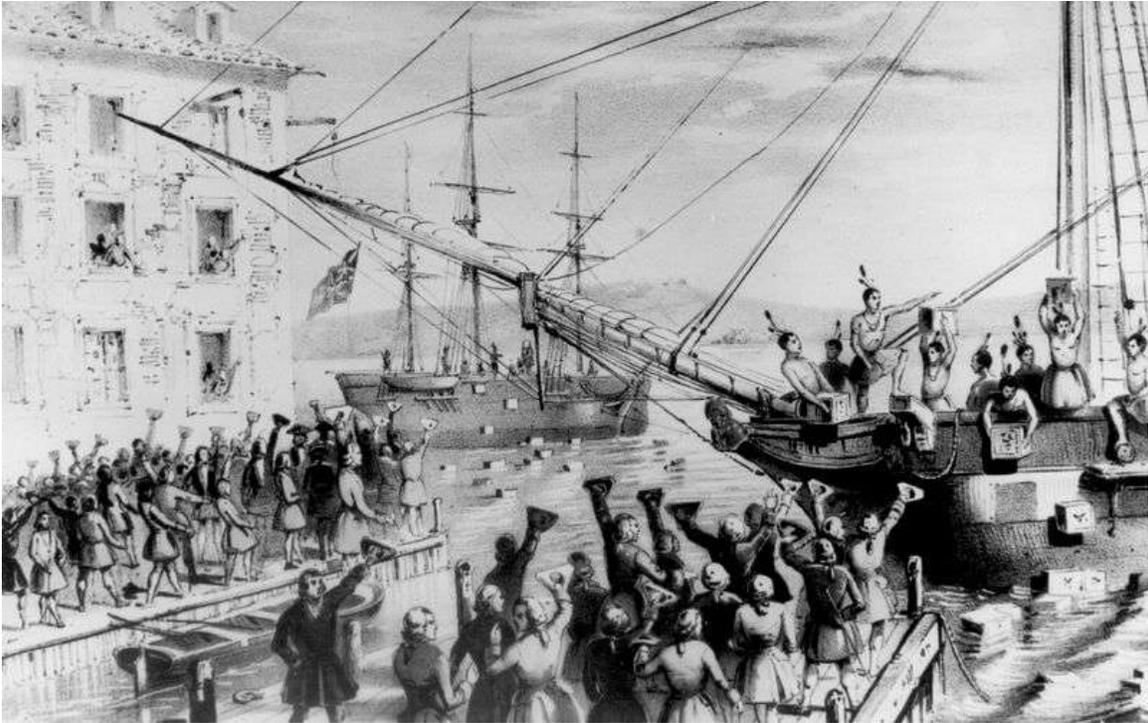


Boston Tea Party

1773



The British won the French and Indian War. King George III wanted to tax the colonists to help pay for it. The taxes he and the Parliament passed were not popular with the colonists. Arguments over the taxes led to rebellion. The colonists opposed the Stamp Act, and the British canceled it. The colonists opposed the Townshend Acts, and the British canceled all but the tax on tea. Colonists bought tea to America illegally without the tax. Great Britain then gave money to the British East India Tea Company. That cut the price of their tea so much that even with the tax, it was cheaper than foreign tea the colonists brought in illegally. This would lead to a showdown.

The colonists opposed the tax and did not want to pay. They did not want to listen to Parliament. They felt they were not represented in Parliament. Parliament said it had the right to tax them. If the colonists bought tea from the British East India Tea Company, it would admit Parliament still had the right to tax them. Tea was very important to colonists. Parliament demanded they pay the tax. The colonists who opposed taxation knew if the taxed tea were put on sale, many people would buy it because it was cheaper.

The colonists who opposed the taxes decided to stop the unloading of the East India Company tea. There were four shipments coming in. One went to Philadelphia. Another was sent to New York. Those ships were warned to stay away, and they did. A third shipment docked in Charleston. However, the tea was not sold for three years. It was unloaded and stored in a warehouse belonging to a colonist opposed to the tax. Later, it was sold to fund the American Revolution.

Boston was a different story. The tea's arrival started a conflict. It took place on December 16, 1773. Seven thousand people came to the marina. They surrounded the tea ships. They looked mad. They wanted the ships to leave. The royal governor insisted the ship's crew unload the tea, or the British would confiscate the tea and not pay them. The ship did not leave. The crew wanted to be paid. The tea was going to be unloaded the next day. The colonists were angry. About two hundred men boarded the ships. They dumped the tea into the Boston Harbor. The colonists who opposed the tax were happy. They thought the British would cancel the tax, as they had done before with the Stamp Act and the Townshend Acts.

The British government was not happy. They did not cancel the tax. They did just the opposite. Parliament passed the Intolerable Acts. This was in 1774. They closed the port of Boston to all trade, which cost many people their jobs. They demanded the city of Boston pay for the tea. They closed the Massachusetts local government. They sent in more British troops, but not to protect the colonists. The troops were there to rule the city of Boston.

These actions led to the start of the American Revolution.

