

# Explanation of the Boston Tea Party

US.1C





# Boston Tea Party

- On Monday morning, the 29th of November, 1773, a handbill was posted all over Boston, containing the following words: "Friends! Brethren! Countrymen!-  
-That worst of plagues, the detested tea, shipped for this port by the East India Company, is now arrived in the harbor.

# Boston Tea Party

- In 1773 Parliament passed the Tea Act, which gave the English East India Company a chance to avert bankruptcy by granting a monopoly on the importation of tea into the colonies.
- The new regulations allowed the company to sell tea to the colonists at a low price, lower than the price of smuggled tea, even including the required duty.
- The British reasoned that the Americans would willingly pay the tax if they were able to pay a low price for the tea.

# Boston Tea Party

- However, the colonists were angry at the government of Great Britain, because the Tea Act almost guaranteed that the American colonists would buy tea from the East India Company.
- Other tea companies weren't happy about the Tea Act, of course, but the American colonists viewed it as another example of “taxation without representation”.
- In effect, the Tea Act was putting a tax on tea sold by companies other than the East India Company. As with the Stamp Act and other unpopular taxes, they were all voted in by Parliament, which was thousands of miles away, and the American colonists had no way to influence the law or speak out against it while it was being debated in government.

# Boston Tea Party

- The colonists were angry. They wanted to do something else to let the British know about the unhappiness that the Tea Act was causing. Some people wanted to keep things nonviolent; others wanted bloodshed. The result was somewhere in the middle.
- A group of colonists determined to make things change was the Sons of Liberty. Led by such impassioned patriots as Samuel Adams and John Hancock, the Sons of Liberty had secret meetings at which they discussed how best to get their message across to Great Britain, that the American people wanted more of a role in governing themselves.

# Boston Tea Party

- Christmas was approaching in the year 1773, and the colonists faced another year of unopposed and unrepresentative taxes. The Sons of Liberty decided to take action.
- Donning disguises that made them look like they were Native Americans, a large group of the Sons of Liberty on December 16 stormed aboard those three unsuspecting British ships and dumped 342 crates full of tea overboard. By any standards, that's a lot of tea. These crates happened to be jammed full of tea, and so the companies that made that tea lost a lot of money that night.

# Boston Tea Party

- Christmas was approaching in the year 1773, and the colonists faced another year of unopposed and unrepresentative taxes. The Sons of Liberty decided to take action.
- Donning disguises that made them look like they were Native Americans, a large group of the Sons of Liberty on December 16 stormed aboard those three unsuspecting British ships and dumped 342 crates full of tea overboard. By any standards, that's a lot of tea. These crates happened to be jammed full of tea, and so the companies that made that tea lost a lot of money that night.

# Boston Tea Party

- Because the Sons of Liberty were disguised as Native Americans, they could claim that they were not guilty of dumping the tea. The British government knew better, of course, and grew angrier than ever at what it saw as Americans' ingratitude. The very next year saw the passage of what came to be called the Intolerable Acts, one of which closed the port of Boston entirely.
- The Boston Tea Party was a symbolic act, an example of how far Americans were willing to speak out for their freedom. Two short years later, Americans were willing to give their lives for their freedom, as shots rang out on Lexington Green.