

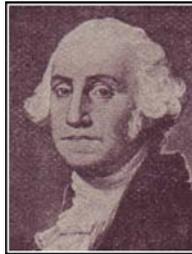
AMERICAN HISTORY STORIES
VOLUME II

**AMERICAN HISTORY
STORIES**

VOLUME II

BY

MARA L. PRATT



YESTERDAY'S CLASSICS

CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA

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CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION



You remember, in the French and Indian War, the colonists began to feel dissatisfied with the way England treated them. Up to that time, England had left them pretty much alone; but as soon as she found they really were beginning to be quite important, that they were carrying on quite a little commerce and manufacturing, that they were raising quite a large amount of cotton and tobacco, and were really growing every year in wealth, and in numbers, and in power, then she thought it quite time that they be made to help support the English government.

The colonists, since they considered England their mother country, were quite willing to do this, and would have done it had England treated them fairly.

Did you ever think where the money comes from to keep in order the cities or town you live in—to build its public buildings, to lay out its streets,

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and to pay all the officers and workmen for their work?

Of course you know that every State has a Governor, who has been chosen by votes of the people. He stands as the head man in the State; but of course he could not go about to every house to ask people what they would like to have done in their particular cities or towns.

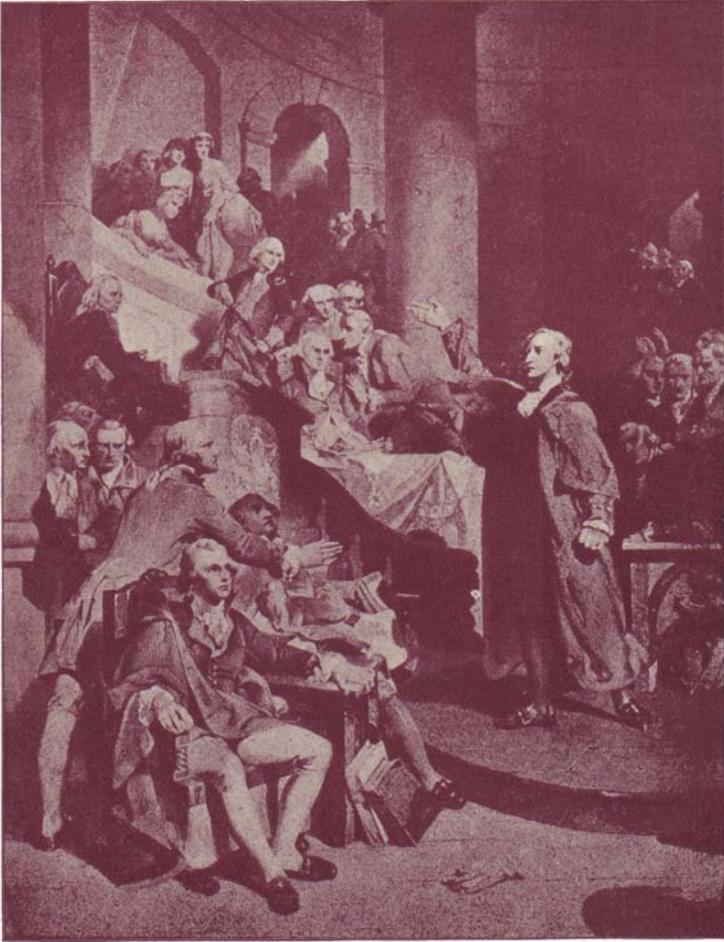
And so the work is divided; somewhat as the school system is in large towns and cities. There is a Superintendent, who has charge of the teaching in the town or city; but as he could not teach every child, he engages a principal to take charge of each school building, and each principal, in his turn, has a teacher to take charge of each room in the building.

The government of the State is somewhat like this—in its division at least. All the men of one town go to the “polls,” as they call it, and vote for some one man to represent them. They tell him what they want, and he is expected, when he meets at the State House with the representatives from all other parts of the State, to express the wishes of these men who voted to have him fill this office.

The State calls these representatives together, finds what each town wants, and the money which all these property owners in all the towns have paid in, is distributed as these representatives think best.

In the same way, the work is divided in each city or town. The men all go to the polls again for a *municipal election*, as it is called; that is, to elect men to carry on the city affairs. They elect one man to over-

CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION



PATRICK HENRY DELIVERING HIS CELEBRATED SPEECH, 1765

see the whole city, much as the Governor oversees the whole State, and as the Superintendent oversees the whole school system. Then there is another man elected to oversee the water supply, another to oversee the roads, another to collect the taxes—and many, many more; so many that, rather than take the

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time here to try to name them, I think I will leave you to ask your fathers about them; for very likely they can explain it all to you a great deal better than I can on paper.

But all these officers must be paid for working for the city, and they must also have money to carry on the work that is expected of them. And this money is raised by taxation,—that is, every property holder pays in a certain amount of money to help pay the expenses of the town or city. The tax-payers are willing to do this, because they know it will all go to pay the salaries of these officers, to build roads, lay out public parks, support the schools,—all those things that go to help make our cities and towns pleasant and comfortable.

This sort of tax paying is perfectly just; because each town in this way gets its share of the good things which its tax money has bought.

Now let us see what England tried to do,—what it was that made the colonies so angry that at last they rose in arms against the mother country.

She said, “You are getting so wealthy now, you ought to pay tax to us.”

The colonists said, “Very well, we shall be glad to do so; for we consider ourselves as little towns belonging to England, and so of course we expect to give our share of the money which the government needs.”

“But you are not to have any of this money back again,” said England. “The King will do what

CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION

he pleases with it. Neither are you to send any representative to us, and we will hear none of your prayers.”

Then the colonists were angry indeed. “We are not slaves,” said they, “and we are not going to pay money to England unless we can have representatives and be treated like the towns in England.”

But greedy England only laughed at them, and said, “You shall do as we tell you to, or we will send our soldiers over to whip you into obedience.”

England didn’t realize that the colonies might prepare to whip British soldiers themselves.

Now I hope from all this,—and this has been a pretty long lesson I fear,—I hope you will understand, and will never forget, that the reason the colonists made war with England was because England was determined to tax them without allowing them any part in the government. As the histories say, the cause of the Revolution was

“Taxation without Representation.”

THE STAMP ACT



One of the first things England did to raise money from the colonists, was to issue the *Stamp Act*.

The king sent over a large amount of paper on which had been put a certain *stamp*. This paper the king ordered the colonists to use on all their government writing.

Nothing, so the king said, would be considered of any value unless it was written on this stamped paper. For example, suppose a man owed another man a hundred dollars. When he paid the debt, the receipt would not be considered of any value unless it was written on this particular paper. Suppose a young man and maiden were to go before the minister to be married; the marriage was not legal, so the king said, unless the minister did the writing, which was always given the married bride and groom, on this stamped paper.



Now, as the king had put a very high price upon this paper, you can see how, by compelling the American colonists to buy it, it was but one way of getting a heavy tax from them.

BEHAVIOR OF THE COLONISTS

The colonists all over the country were furious when this stamped paper was sent to them.

The Boston people declared they wouldn't buy one sheet of it; they would buy nothing, sell nothing; the young men and maidens would not get married; they would do nothing, indeed, which should compel them to use this stamped paper. To show their contempt for the whole matter, they made a straw figure of the English officer who had the paper to sell, dressed it in some old clothes of his, and hung it on a big tree on Boston Common.

In New Hampshire, the people paraded the streets with a coffin on which was written, "Liberty is dead." They carried it to the grave, had a "make-believe" funeral and then, just as they were about to bury it, some one shouted, "Liberty is not dead!"

Then they drew up the coffin and carried it through the streets again; crying, "Liberty's alive again! Liberty's alive again!"

In Charleston, South Carolina, stood an old tree, known as "Liberty Tree." It was a great live

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oak, growing in the centre of the square between Charlotte and Boundary Streets.

During the excitement over the Stamp Act, about twenty men, belonging to the "best families" in the state, assembled beneath this tree to hear an address by General Gadsen.

With vigor he condemned the measure, and urged his hearers to resist to the utmost such abominable tyranny.

This is said to have been the first public address of the kind that had been delivered in the colonies.

The men, after hearty cheers, joined hands around the tree, and pledged themselves to "resist English oppression to the death."

The names of these men are still on record. Most of them were indeed true to their pledge and distinguished themselves in the war that followed, by their courage and patriotism.

This "Liberty Tree" was regarded with such reverence by the patriotic Carolina people, that Sir Henry Clinton, who held Carolina after its surrender to the British, ordered it to be destroyed. It was cut down, and afterwards its branches were heaped about the trunk and the whole burned. A mean act, one would say, to burn an unoffending tree; but perhaps Sir Henry had in mind the old anecdote which, if I remember rightly, runs something like this:

BEHAVIOR OF THE COLONISTS

“Why do you kill me, an innocent trumpeter? I have not fought against you.”

“Very true,” replied the captor; “you may not fight yourself, but you incite others to fight. Hence I kill you.”

In Pennsylvania, William Bradford, the editor of the *Pennsylvania Journal*, came out with a “final issue,” at the head of which were “skulls and crossbones,” pickaxes and spades, all suggestive of the death-blow that had been struck at the press. This number of the journal was deeply embellished with heavy black margins, and was in truth a most dolorous looking affair, as you may see from the picture on the next page.

In Virginia, a young man, named Patrick Henry, so stirred up the people that the old men, angry as they were with England, were frightened, and begged him to be careful what he said.

Benjamin Franklin was sent to England by the colonists to see what could be done. When he reached there, he found that many of England’s greatest men were on the side of the colonists.

One of the men in the English government rose and made a speech against the colonists, in which he said, “What! will these Americans, these children of ours, who have been planted by our care, nourished by us, protected by us, will they now grudge us their money to help throw off our heavy debt!”

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Up jumped Colonel Barre. "Planted by your care, indeed! It was your persecution that drove them to America in the first place!" he cried.



FACSIMILE OF THE "PENNSYLVAINIA JOURNAL" ON THE STAMP ACT

"Nourished by you! When have you nourished them? They have grown up by your very neglect of them! Protected by you! Have they not just now been fighting with your soldiers to protect *you*, rather, from the French and the Indians?"

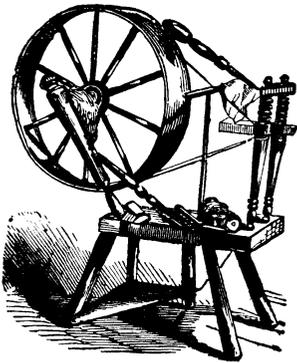
And good William Pitt of England! He arose and made a speech which, by and by, every boy and girl should learn. He said, "We are told that the Americans are obstinate; that they are in almost

BEHAVIOR OF THE COLONISTS

open rebellion against us. I *rejoice* that America *has* resisted. I rejoice that they are not so dead to all feelings of liberty as to be willing to submit like slaves!”

Hurrah for William Pitt and Colonel Barre! Don't forget, all you little American men and women, that we had good friends in England then as we have now. There were lovers of liberty in that country, who were as eager as we were to resist all unjust laws.

DAUGHTERS OF LIBERTY



People who write histories always tell how brave and bold and patriotic the men and boys are; but seldom do they think it worth while to tell of the brave deeds of the women and girls. Now, I don't think this is fair at all, do you girls? And you, little boys, if your sisters had done something just as brave as your brothers had done, wouldn't you be very indignant if every body should come to your house and praise your brothers, and cheer them, and all the time shouldn't speak one word to your sisters?

I am sure you would; manly, brave hearted boys are always ready to stand up for their sisters, and are always very angry when some one hurts or neglects them in any way.

Now, of course the mothers and maidens couldn't take guns and swords and go into battle as the men did, although they did even do that in some

DAUGHTERS OF LIBERTY

cases. But let us see what they did do. Somebody must stay home and take care of the children, and the homes, and keep up the farms. So the brave women said to their husbands and sons, "You go into the battle-field, because you are stronger and larger and know about war; we will stay at home and keep the children cared for, that they may grow up strong to help you by and by; we will spin and weave day and night to keep you in yarn for stockings, and in cloth for clothes and blankets to keep you warm; we will plant, and harvest, and grind the corn, and do all your work on the farm that there may be food to send you, and food to keep you from starving when you all come home again."

What, think you, would the brave men in any war do if it were not for the brave women back of them at home to keep them from starving? O, it is a mean, cowardly man who would say that because the women didn't go forth in battle array that they didn't do their half in saving our country from British soldiers!

Let us see who these "Daughters of Liberty," as they called themselves, were.

As soon as the trouble between England and America broke out, the men had formed themselves into societies, and had called themselves "Sons of Liberty." They pledged themselves to do everything in their power to drive back the English rule. The women, too, not wishing to appear to be one step behind their fathers, and husbands, and brothers, formed themselves into societies—"The Daughters

of Liberty.” They pledged themselves not to buy a dress, or a ribbon, or a glove, or any article whatever that came from England. They formed spinning societies to make their own yarn and linen, and they wove the cloth for their own dresses and for the clothes of their fathers and brothers, and husbands and sons.



The women used to meet together to see who would spin the fastest. One afternoon a party of young girls met at the house of the minister for a spinning match. When they left, they presented the minister with thirty skeins of yarn, the fruit of their afternoon's work. The old women, some of whom were too old to do very much work, pledged themselves to give up their tea-drinking because the tea came to them from England, and because

DAUGHTERS OF LIBERTY

England had put a heavy tax on it. These dear old ladies, who loved their tea-drinking so much, bravely stood by their pledge. They drank catnip, and sage, and all sorts of herb teas, and pretended they liked it very much; but I suspect many an old lady went to bed tired and nervous, and arose in the morning with an aching head, all for the want of a good cup of tea.

At that time, there appeared in the newspapers many verses written by the English officers, no doubt, often making fun of these brave women, old and young. Here is one of the verses:

“O Boston wives and maids, draw near and see,
Our delicate Souchong and Hyson tea;
Buy it, my charming girls, fair, black or brown,
If not, we’ll cut your throats and burn your town.”

“Within eighteen months,” wrote a gentleman at Newport, R. I., “four hundred and eighty-seven yards of cloth and thirty-six pairs of stockings have been spun and knit in the family of James Nixon of this town.” In Newport and Boston the ladies, at their tea-drinkings, used, instead of imported tea, the dried leaves of the raspberry. They called this substitute Hyperion. The class of 1770, at Cambridge, took their diplomas in homespun suits, that they too might show their defiance of English taxation without representation.

THE BOSTON BOYS

Here is a story about the Boston Boys, which is a match for the one you have just read about the Boston girls.

On Boston Common the boys used to skate and coast and build forts, just as other boys do today. Perhaps their skates weren't quite so elegant as those the Boston boys have now, and very likely their sleds were clumsy, homemade affairs, not at all like the beautiful double-runners and the toboggans you boys are so proud of; nevertheless those little lads then had just as jolly times, coasting down the same hills and skating the same ponds.

The English had, by this time, become so convinced that the colonists were preparing for war, that they sent over a large detachment of red-coated soldiers. These soldiers made headquarters in Boston, and soon became generally disagreeable to the people.

The boys had been watching eagerly the freezing of the ice on the pond on the common.

THE BOSTON BOYS

“To-morrow,” thought they, “the ice will be strong enough to bear; and then, hurrah for the skating!”

Eagerly the boys hastened to the pond in the morning, their skates over their shoulders, their faces bright with the thought of the pleasure before them; but what do you suppose the cowardly soldiers had done during the night? Having nothing else to do, they had broken the ice all over the pond—and just to bother these little boys. Don’t you think those great, strong soldiers must have had very mean hearts to go to work to plague little boys in that manner?

I am inclined to think these boys were pretty angry when they learned who had done this cowardly act, and very likely they scolded furiously about it.

Again and again the soldiers did the same thing. At last, one day when the boys were building a fort, some of these soldiers came idling along and knocked down the fort with their guns.

The boys, now angry through and through, determined no longer to bear this mean treatment.

“Let us go to General Gage,” said one of the boys, “and tell him how the soldiers are treating us; and if he is any kind of man, he will put a stop to it.”

And go they did at once. With eyes ablaze with anger, they marched into the presence of the great English general.



GENERAL GAGE

After they had laid their wrongs before him, he said, "Have your fathers been teaching you, too, to rebel, and did they send you here to show their feelings?"

"Nobody sent us, sir," answered the leader; "but your soldiers have insulted us, thrown down our forts, broken the ice on our pond, spoiled our coasts, and we will not stand it."

THE BOSTON BOYS

General Gage could not help laughing at the earnestness of these plucky little fellows. He promised that the soldiers should not bother them any more; then turning to an officer near by, he said, "Even the children here draw in the love of liberty with the very air they breathe."

A BRAVE LITTLE GIRL



While General Gage held the town of Boston, our people were nearly starved, because of the number of British soldiers that must be fed. Accordingly, men were sent into the surrounding villages to obtain help. "Parson White," of the little town of Windham, urged his people to give all they could; and his little daughter, catching the spirit of loyalty, wondered how *she* could help the suffering Bostonians. Soon after, the villagers prepared to send Frederic Manning to the town with sheep and cattle and a load of wheat. The little girl thought of her pet lamb. *Could* she, *ought* she to part with it? Running to her father, she eagerly asked his advice; but the parson, smiling kindly, said, "No, dear; it is not necessary that your little heart be tried by this bitter strife;" and bade her run away and be happy. But the thought would not leave her. There in Boston were little girls, no older than herself, crying

A BRAVE LITTLE GIRL

for food and clothing; she *must* give all she could to help them. At last the day came on which the cattle and supplies of help were to be driven to town. Choking down her sobs, the little martyr untied her pet from the old appletree, and, crossing the fields, waited for Manning, the driver at the cross-roads.

“Please, sir,” said she, her lip quivering, and the tears rolling down her cheeks, “I want to do something for the poor starving people in Boston—I want to do my part, but I have nothing but this one little lamb. Please, sir, take it to Boston with you, but, couldn’t you carry it in your arms a part of the way—’cause it—it—it is so little, sir?” Then bursting into tears and throwing her apron over her eyes as if to shut out the sight of her dear little pet, she ran towards her home. Poor, brave little girl! I hope when she told her mamma and papa what she had done, that they took their little girl up in their arms and kissed her many, many times, and told her what a dear, brave little girl she had been. I suspect the tears were in their eyes, too, when she told them; and I have always wished the good parson had sent a fleet messenger to overtake the driver and bring back the little lamb to its loving owner; for I think it took more real courage to give up that one pet lamb, than it did for the Boston boys to go before General Gage when the soldiers had spoiled their fort.

THE BOSTON MASSACRE

Soldiers who would be mean enough to bother little boys as these soldiers had done, would be pretty sure to get into trouble with the citizens by their mean acts.

They had entered the town, one quiet Sabbath morning, but instead of coming in quietly and doing whatever was necessary to do in a quiet way, they came in with colors flying, and drums beating, as if, for all the world, they had conquered the city. Then, as if this were not insult enough, they took possession of the State House, and then marched to the Common, where they set up their tents, planted their cannon, and indicated to the enraged citizens, in every way, that they were going to stay.

Frequent quarrels took place between these soldiers and the people. One day they fell into an “out-and-out” fight.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, an author who has written such beautiful stories for you children,—The Snow Image; A Wonder Book; Grandfather’s Chair,

THE BOSTON MASSACRE

etc.,—gives the following account of the Boston Massacre:

It was now the 3d of March, 1770. The sunset music of the British regiments was heard as usual throughout the town. The shrill fife and rattling drum awoke the echoes in King street, while the last ray of sunshine was lingering on the cupola of the town-house. And now all the sentinels were posted. One of them marched up and down before the custom-house, treading a short path through the snow, and longing for the time when he would be dismissed to the warm fireside of the guard-room.

In the course of the evening there were two or three slight commotions, which seemed to indicate that trouble was at hand. Small parties of young men stood at the corners of the street, or walked along the narrow pavements. Squads of soldiers, who were dismissed from duty, passed by them, shoulder to shoulder, with the regular step which they had learned at the drill. Whenever these encounters took place, it appeared to be the object of the young men to treat the soldiers with as much incivility as possible.

“Turn out, you lobster-back!” one would say. “Crowd them off the side-walks!” another would cry. “A redcoat has no right in Boston streets.” “Oh, you rebel rascals!” perhaps the soldiers would reply, glaring fiercely at the young men. “Some day or other we’ll make our way through Boston streets at the point of the bayonet!”

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Once or twice such disputes as these brought on a scuffle; which passed off, however, without attracting much notice. About eight o'clock, for some unknown cause, an alarm-bell rang loudly and hurriedly. At the sound many people ran out of their houses, supposing it to be an alarm of fire. But there were no flames to be seen, nor was there any smell of smoke in the clear, frosty air; so that most of the townsmen went back to their own firesides. Others, who were younger and less prudent, remained in the streets.

Later in the evening, not far from nine o'clock, several young men passed down King street, toward the custom-house. When they drew near the sentinel, he halted on his post, and took his musket from his shoulder, ready to present the bayonet at their breasts. "Who goes there?" he cried in the gruff tone of a soldier's challenge. The young men, being Boston boys, felt as they had a right to walk in their own streets without being accountable to a British red-coat. They made some rude answer to the sentinel. There was a dispute, or perhaps a scuffle. Other soldiers heard the noise, and ran hastily from the barracks to assist their comrade.

At the same time many of the townspeople rushed into King street by various avenues, and gathered in a crowd about the custom-house. It seemed wonderful how such a multitude had started up all of a sudden. The wrongs and insults which the people had been suffering for many months now kindled them into a rage. They threw snowballs and lumps of ice at the soldiers. As the tumult grew

THE BOSTON MASSACRE

louder, it reached the ears of Captain Preston, the officer of the day. He immediately ordered eight soldiers of the main guard to take their muskets and follow him. They marched across the street, forcing their way roughly through the crowd, and pricking the townspeople with their bayonets.

A gentleman (it was Henry Knox, afterwards general of the American Artillery) caught Captain Preston's arm. "For heaven's sake, sir," exclaimed he, "take heed what you do, or there will be bloodshed!" "Stand aside!" answered Captain Preston, haughtily; "do not interfere, sir. Leave me to manage the affair." Arriving at the sentinel's post, Captain Preston drew up his men in a semicircle, with their faces to the crowd. When the people saw the officer, and beheld the threatening attitude with which the soldiers fronted them, their rage became almost uncontrollable.

"Fire, you lobster-backs!" bellowed some. "You dare not fire, you cowardly red-coats," cried others. "Rush upon them," shouted many voices. "Drive the rascals to their barracks! Down with them! Down with them!"

"Let them fire if they dare!" Amid the uproar, the soldiers stood glaring at the people with the fierceness of men whose trade was to shed blood.

Oh, what a crisis had now arrived! Up to this very moment the angry feelings between England and America might have been pacified. England had but to stretch out the hand of reconciliation, and acknowledge that she had hitherto mistaken her

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rights, but would do so no more. Then the ancient bonds of brotherhood would again have been knit together as firmly as in old times. But, should the king's soldiers shed one drop of American blood, then it was a quarrel to the death. Never, never would America rest satisfied, until she had torn down royal authority, and trampled it in the dust.

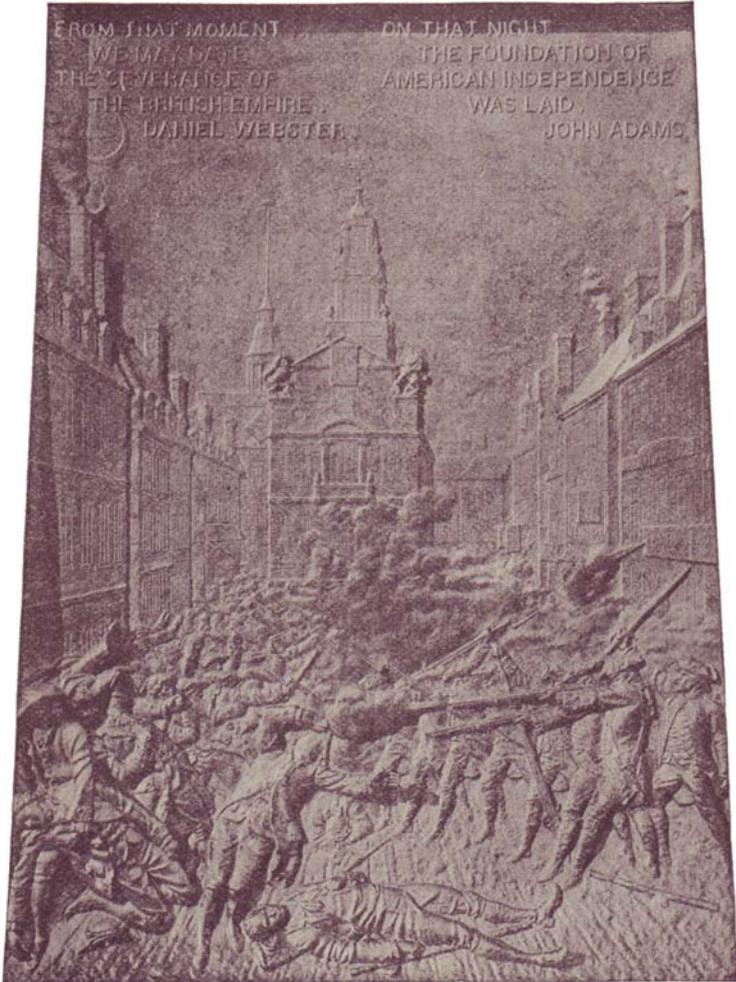
"Fire, if you dare, villains!" hoarsely shouted the people, while the muzzles of the muskets were turned upon them: "you dare not fire!" They appeared ready to rush upon the levelled bayonets. Captain Preston waved his sword, and uttered a command which could not be distinctly heard amid the uproar of shouts that issued from a hundred throats. But his soldiers deemed that he had spoken the fatal mandate, "Fire!" The flash of their muskets lighted up the street, and the report rang loudly between the edifices.

A gush of smoke overspread the scene. It rose heavily, as if it were loath to reveal the dreadful spectacle beneath it. Eleven of the sons of New England lay stretched upon the street. Some, sorely wounded, were struggling to rise again. Others stirred not, nor groaned, for they were past all pain. Blood was streaming upon the snow; and that purple stain, in the midst of King Street, though it melted away in the next day's sun, was never forgotten nor forgiven by the people.

At once the bells were rung, and the citizens, rushing out to learn the cause, hastened to the fight. The people in the country around, hearing the bells,

THE BOSTON MASSACRE

hurried in with their muskets to help the town. At last the soldiers, seeing that the whole country around was aroused and rushing to the rescue, took to flight.



TABLET ON THE CRISPUS ATTUCKS MONUMENT, BOSTON