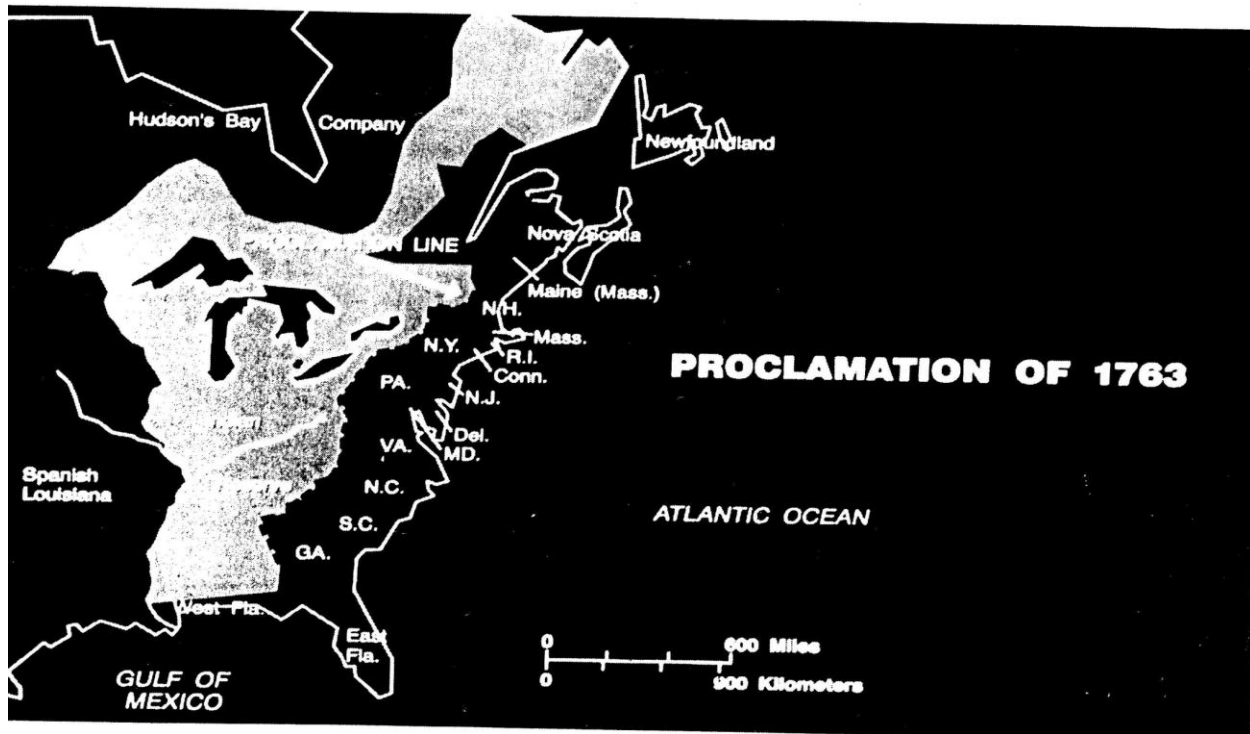


Proclamation of 1763

A "proclamation" is a formal announcement. In the Proclamation of 1763, the British announced that the land won during the French and Indian War—the land west of the Appalachian Mountains—would be reserved for the Native Americans. It was against the law for colonists to settle in that area.

The British wanted to prevent any more wars with the Native Americans. They hoped it would be easier to protect the colonists if they lived only in the lands east of the Appalachians.

The colonists were frustrated by the Proclamation of 1763. Not only were they now unable to move westward as they had hoped, but the Proclamation also made it clear that the British intended to maintain an even tighter control over the colonies than ever before.



The Quartering Act

“To quarter” means to give soldiers a place to stay. The Quartering Act required colonists to put British soldiers up in their homes. In addition, colonists had to provide fuel, candles, beer, and transportation for the troops.

The Quartering Act angered the colonists. They were suspicious of the troops. They believed that they had been sent to America not to protect colonists but to control them. The colonists also felt that the British should have asked for their approval before passing an act that affected their personal lives and their pocketbooks.



The Stamp Act

The British were in debt after the French and Indian War. They felt that the colonists should help pay for some of the expenses involved in defending the colonies from the French. The Stamp Act, passed in 1765, required the colonists to pay a tax on most printed materials, such as newspapers, pamphlets, marriage licenses, and playing cards. A colonist had to purchase a stamp and place it on any printed document to prove that he or she had paid the tax.

The colonists were very angered by the Stamp Act. They weren't upset just about having to pay the tax. They felt that their freedom had been threatened because they had no say in making the law. The colonists resented being taxed without their consent. Throughout the colonies, people responded in a number of ways:

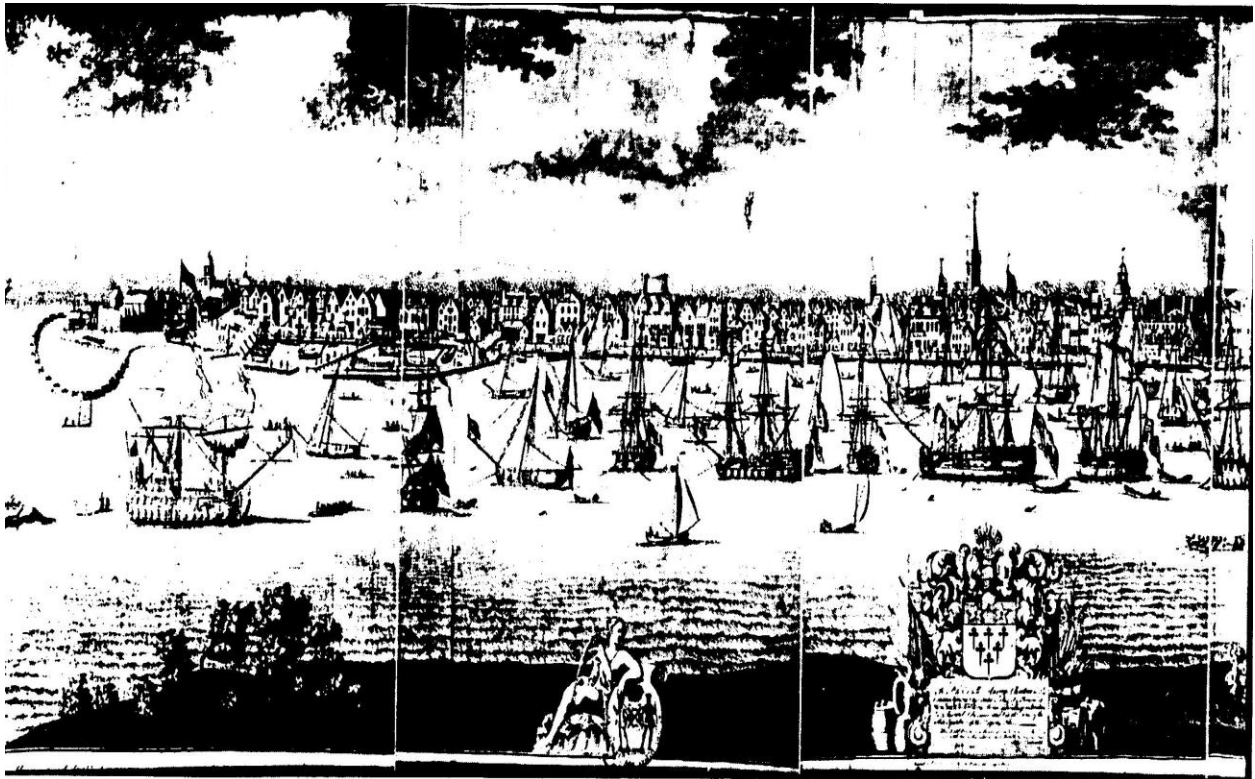
- Groups such as the Sons of Liberty and the Daughters of Liberty stopped stamped papers from being unloaded at docks.
- Merchants organized a boycott of British goods. They agreed not to buy anything British.
- Representatives from nine colonies formed the Stamp Act Congress and declared that the stamp taxes could not be collected without the consent of the colonists. They demanded that Parliament repeal, or do away with, the act. Eventually, Parliament repealed the Stamp Act.



Townshend Acts

Charles Townshend, the new British Prime Minister, imposed a small indirect tax on glass, lead, paper, and tea. The tax was “indirect” because it was collected at the sea ports (such as the one you see on this placard) before the items reached colonial stores. Since the tax would then be included in the price the colonists paid at the stores—and not added onto the price like with the Stamp Act—Townshend hoped the colonists would not even notice they were paying a tax.

The colonists, however, recognized the indirect tax. They saw it as an unjust form of taxation without representation. As under the Stamp Act, they organized a boycott of British goods.



Boston Massacre

- On March 5, 1770, a mob of colonists in Boston began to harass British troops, taunting them and throwing snowballs. The situation soon got out of hand, and finally, the troops opened fire. Five colonists died.
- Most colonists believed that the British soldiers were completely at fault, The enraged citizens of Boston called a town meeting to demand the removal of British troops and to argue for the trial of the British soldiers for murder. The British agreed to the colonists' demands.

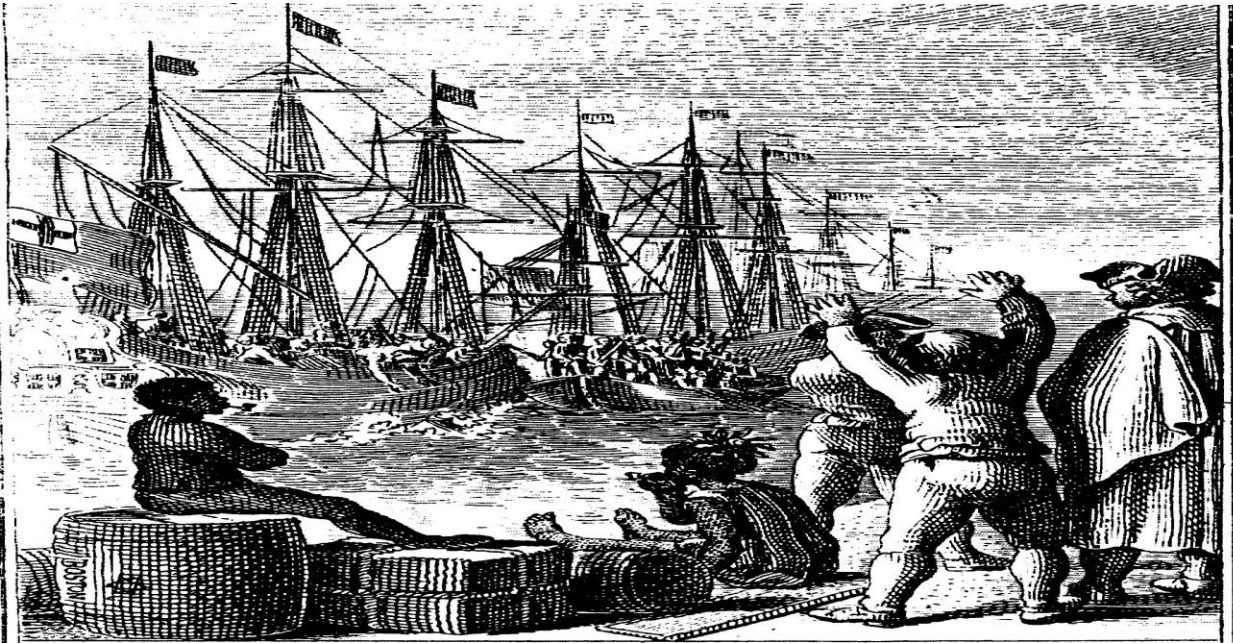


Boston Tea Party

In 1773 Parliament passed the Tea Act, which gave the British East Indies company a complete monopoly of the American tea business—meaning that colonists could only buy tea from this company. No other company could compete with it.

Despite the fact that this act actually lowered the price of tea, the colonists still opposed it. They viewed the Tea Act as merely another example of England making a decision that concerned the colonists without consulting them.

To protest the Tea Act, the Sons of Liberty organized the Boston Tea Party. Dressed as Native Americans, colonists raided three British ships in the Boston Harbor. They smashed open 340 chests of tea and dumped them into the harbor, while a crowd of people watched in approval.



*Die Einwohner von Boston werfen den
englisch-ostindischen Thee ins Meer
am 18. December 1773.*

The Intolerable Acts

“To coerce” means to force someone to do something. The British passed the Coercive Acts in reaction to the Boston Tea Party. They hoped to force colonists to pay for the tea lost and to obey British rule. The Coercive Acts closed the port of Boston and imposed military rule on all of Massachusetts. The Massachusetts legislature and town meetings were suspended.

Sam Adams, whose painting appears on this placard, helped to stir up colonial response to these acts. The colonists call the acts the “Intolerable Acts” because they did not feel that they could tolerate them. The taxes they had been battling were nothing in comparison to this harsh British crackdown on colonial rights. Although the acts applied only to Massachusetts, the other colonies rallied to protest them. The colonists feared that if such British actions were to continue, the rest of the colonies were in danger of losing their liberties as well. On the day the acts went into effect, flags throughout the colonies were flown at half-mast.

Meanwhile, in the towns surrounding Boston, “minutemen” began to store arms and to train for possible battle at a minute’s notice.



First Continental Congress

As a result of the Coercive Acts, the colonies put aside their individual differences and, for the first time, agreed to work together to protect their collective rights. They felt they needed to present their complaints to the British as a unified group.

Representatives from 12 of the 13 colonies met and formed the First Continental Congress. They met in the building in Philadelphia that is featured on this placard. Distinguished men such as Samuel Adams, John Adams, George Washington, and Patrick Henry attended. After seven weeks, the Congress drew up the Declaration of Rights, as well as appeals to the King and to the British people. In addition, Congress called for a complete boycott of all trade with England. Both exports to and imports from England would cease. Violators were regularly tarred and feathered.



LEXINGTON AND CONCORD

Fighting broke out between the Americans and the British near Boston in 1775. The city been occupied in 1774 by the British army. Early on April 19, 1775, a detachment of 700 British soldiers was secretly sent to destroy the military supplies colonists had collected at Concord, 21 miles ~~from~~ Boston. Learning of the soldiers' destination, the Boston Sons of Liberty ^{Com} took action. The organization sent Paul Revere and William Dawes the alert the minutemen in the towns and villages along the way. When the British reached the town of Lexington, about 70 armed minutemen ^{to} awaited them. In the skirmish eight colonists were killed. The British force pushed on to the neighboring town of Concord and burned what little gun powder the colonists had not used for themselves.

