

The Boston Tea Party

The importance of the event

The Boston Tea Party was the key-event for the Revolutionary War. With this act, the colonists

started the violent part of the revolution. It was the first try of the colonists, to rebel with

violence against their own government. The following events were created by the snowball

effect. There, all the colonists realized the first time, that they were treated wrong by the British

government. It was an important step towards the independence dream, which was resting in the

head of each colonist. They all flew from their mother country to start a new life in a new world,

but the British government didn't give them the possibility by controlling them.

The causes for the Boston Tea Party

The events leading to the Boston Tea Party began already ten years before (1763), when the

English won the French-and-Indian War. The king of Britain passed taxes on the colonies to

make up for the loss of money because of the war. He did it in a line of acts, called the Sugar

Act (tax to protect and secure the colonists) and the Stamp Act (tax on all licences, newspapers

and business papers). The colonists reacted with protests against those acts, what made the

British Parliament to repeal the taxes within 5 months. Then they (the government) passed taxes

on lead, paint, paper and tea. These acts were called the Townshed Duties, but the colonists

called them the "Insidious Acts". Mass meetings were held and people tried to influence others

not to buy English imported goods anymore. In the end the parliament removed all the taxes

except for tea. Actually the colonists easily didn't want to accept, to pay taxes to a government,

they don't really belong to anymore. Although this tax on the tea cost a colonial family just

pennies a year. Sam Adams, a kind of leader of the colonists, figured out, that the tax could be

raised or lowered by the parliament at will. (Sam Adams: "The power to tax is the power to

destroy!").He also pointed out, that the colonists had no representation in the Parliament, and

that they can't be taxed without having a representation in there, to care for their interests and

wills. However, most people drank tea smuggled in from the Netherlands, so they didn't care

very much whether the parliament raises or lowers the taxes.

When the East India Tea company realized, that the colonists were drinking cheap, smuggled

tea, the Parliament gave them (the company) the monopoly to export tea without paying duties.

That way the tea could be much cheaper than the holland tea, even with the taxes. This act was

called the Tea Act, which was of great importance for the following Boston Tea Party.

The colonists reacted to this act by holding meetings to discuss it. Supporter of the revolution (

just to name some of them: John Adams, John Hancock, Dr. Joseph Warren) wrote letters of

protest to the government's officials, but they didn't achieve anything. The tea ships arriving in

Boston still had to pay the full British tax.

The event (its getting exciting)

In September, 1773, a radical group of colonists found out, that three East India tea cargo ships,

laden full with tea, were heading for Boston under full sail. They knew, that if the ships got

unloaded and the tax would be paid, it would be a crushing defeat.

The same radical group wanted to make the agents of the East India Company resign from their

job in front of a big crowd, but this part didn't work.

Over the following weeks speeches in form of propoganda were made, to get all colonists

informed about the events. People even quitted drinking tea (what they did for their whole life)

and started drinking coffee.

The actual event

On November 18th, 1773, the ships arrived. Pamphlets were posted to arrange a meeting between

the citizens and the governor (Hutchison), called the "Committee of Correspondence". They

wanted him to call the ships back to Britain.

When he didn't agree, a bunch of men, disguised as Indians, went and stormed towards the

harbor, planning to throw the tea into the bay. They divided in three groups, each of them with

one leader. After they made the captain and his crew getting down below, they grabbed all the

boxes of tea, opened them and threw them overboard. Even some members of the crew helped

them to destroy the tea. A big crowd was created in the harbor, some of them even tried to steal

some tea. Altogether they destroyed 340 chests. At 10:00 pm the event was over, and the streets

of Boston were empty again.

The next day everybody was happy, and plans were made, to public the important event in all

colonies of America.

The reaction of the British Government

The reactions of the British Government were called the "Intolerable Acts". The Boston Harbor

was closed by 4000 British soldiers, so that Boston couldn't get any food or other important

goods. But this act failed it's mission, because the other colonists sent the Boston citizens food

and other life important goods. They also created a militia to protct themselves of the British

army.

They also weren't allowed to held any meetings in Boston anymore.

These tries to get the colonies under their control again were the last ones with a view of

success. The connection between Britain and the new world

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