

Name _____



The Boston Tea Party

By Cathy Pearl

The Boston Massacre was over. England had repealed most of the new laws and taxes. They had kept the tax on tea. England tried to enforce the tax on tea in 1774. This time more colonists started to think it was time to rebel. They wanted to finally be free of England.



One million American colonists drank tea twice a day. The British East India Company brought most of the tea to the colonies. They would sell the tea to merchants in the colonies. The merchant sold the tea to the colonists. The merchant would sell the tea for a little more than he paid for it. This way everyone made money.

Soon the British East India Company was broke. A lot of tea was not being sold. It sat in warehouses. Colonists would not buy the tea. They did not want to pay the taxes. Colonists did not think it was right for England to tax America.

Parliament tried to help the British East India Company. They passed the Tea Act in 1773. The company did not have to sell their tea to colonial merchants. They could sell it to the colonists. Colonists would still have to pay the tea tax. They would save money though. They would not have to pay the higher price that tea merchants charged.

England thought this would make the colonists happy. They would not have to pay as much for the tea. England was wrong. Tea merchants were angry because the tea would not be sold to them first. They would lose a lot of money. People who drank tea were also angry. They thought it was a trick. England was trying to trick them into accepting the tea tax. This meant they had the right to tax the colonists.

A new boycott was started. Women made tea out of other things. They used raspberry leaves. Some people called it freedom tea. People started to drink coffee instead. Groups of colonists did not let the ships unload their tea.

Three ships came to Boston in November 1773. The governor said that they should unload their tea. Colonists did not agree. On December 16, a group went to a church. They sent a message to the governor. They wanted the governor to send the ships away. He would not. He told the colonists the ships could unload the tea.

Another group of people suddenly came to the meeting. They were dressed as Native Americans. They waved hatchets in the air. These colonists left the meeting and went to the harbor. They went on the ships. They opened up the tea and dumped it into the harbor. What they did became known as the Boston Tea Party.

The colonists had made their point. They showed how unhappy they were with the tax. It had only taken a short time to dump the tea in the harbor. The effects of what they did would last a long time. England was very angry. They would punish Boston for destroying the tea. Colonists began to see that war was coming soon.

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Questions

- _____ 1. What happened to the tea on the ships in Boston?
 - A. The governor sent it back to England.
 - B. It was dumped into the water.
 - C. Colonists drank it.
- _____ 2. What did colonists dress as during the Boston Tea Party?
 - A. Animals
 - B. Pirates
 - C. Native Americans
- _____ 3. How many colonists drank tea twice a day?
 - A. Three million
 - B. One million
 - C. Two million

