

The BLOODY MASSACRE, perpetrated in King-Street BOSTON on March 5th 1770 by a party of the 29th REG^t



Engraved Printed & Sold by PAUL REVERE BOSTON

Unhappy Boston! see thy Sons deplore,
 Thy hallow'd Walks besmear'd with guiltless Gore.
 While faithless P—n and his savage Bands,
 With rancorous Rancour stretch their bloody Hands,
 The fierce Barbarians grinning o'er their Prey,
 Approve the Carnage and enjoy the Day.

If scalding drops from Rage from Anguish Wring
 If speechless Sorrows lab'ring for a Tongue
 Or if a weeping World can ought appease
 The plaintive Ghosts of Victims such as these:
 The Patriot's copious Tears for each are shed.
 A glorious Tribute which embalms the Dead.

But know PAT^r firmness to that awful Goal,
 Where JUSTICE strips the Murderer of his Soul:
 Should venal C—ts the scandal of the Land,
 Snatch the relentless Villain from her Hand,
 Keen Execrations on this Plate inscrib'd,
 Shall reach a JUDGE who never can be brib'd.

The unhappy Sufferers were Mess^{rs} SAM^l GRAY SAM^l MAVERICK, JAM^s CALDWELL, CRISPUS ATTUCKS & PAT^r CARE
 Killed. Six wounded; two of them (CHRIST^s MONK & JOHN CLARK) Mortally

The Bloody Massacre..., 1770
 Paul Revere (1734 – 1818)

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Boston

Hand-colored engraving

112344



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Full Title: The Bloody Massacre Perpetrated in King Street Boston on March 5th 1770, by a Party of the 29th Regt.

Revere produced and began selling this image less than a month after a riot broke out next to the building now known as the Old State House in Boston. Tensions over the presence of British troops in Boston erupted in violence on the evening of 5 March 1770; five men died and six others were wounded. Accounts suggest that both sides were unruly, but this is not indicated in Revere's image. Revere also does not include the figure of Crispus Attucks, an African-American who was among those killed.

Similar versions of the "Boston Massacre," as it was called, were created at the time, but Revere was the first to print and distribute his version. Its early and wide distribution and strong political bias toward the American colonists ensured the print's success.

ART HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The image reinterprets the event so that the British seem to be shooting into a defenseless crowd, when we know from other accounts that this was not the case. The scene is, however, finely engraved, dramatically represented, and brightly colored. Because of the timeliness and artistic and political savvy of Revere's image, the engraving has become emblematic of the "Bloody Massacre."

Copperplate engraving was popular in the 18th century for its ability to convey finely detailed images for multiple copies. To create a print, an artist etches or engraves an image into a smooth plate of copper. When ink is applied, the grooved areas hold ink that is then transferred onto paper.

SAMPLE GUIDING QUESTIONS

- List five details about what you see in this picture.
- How does Revere seem to feel about the colonists? The British soldiers?
- What does Revere's print suggest about what happened in Boston on March 5, 1770?
- Do you think Paul Revere saw this event happen? If he wasn't there, how do you think he found out about the event?
- What was Revere's purpose in creating this engraving? Why do you think so?
- What does this engraving suggest about Revere's political sentiments?
- Do you think Revere favored the British soldiers or the colonists? Why?

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Compare Revere's print with other accounts or images of the March 5 encounter between colonists and soldiers. Ask students to compare and contrast what is present or absent from the different sources, and how these details affect the overall message of the source.
- Ask students to read an article from a school publication or a local newspaper. Ask each student to draw their own interpretation of that event. Post all of the drawings on the wall and select a few more provocative images for discussion. Ask students to compare the results, including point of view, additions or omissions from the original story, and such issues as how choice of color affect viewers' interpretations of the original event.