

LESSON 2

1700

1725

1750

1760

1780

1800

THE 13 COLONIES REBEL

READ ALOUD

Hanging from the Liberty Tree, a tall elm in the center of Boston, was a puppet of a British tax collector. The colonists were angry about a new tax the British wanted them to pay. This disagreement was only one of many conflicts between Britain and the 13 colonies that began after the French and Indian War.

THE BIG PICTURE

What is **liberty**? The word *liberty* means “freedom.” To the colonists, liberty came to mean the freedom to govern themselves.

As you read in Chapter 10, Britain did not allow colonists to move onto lands west of the Appalachian Mountains after the French and Indian War. This angered some colonists. A new tax angered them even more.

The colonists said that Parliament had no right to tax them without the vote of the delegates in their assemblies. Cries of “Taxation without representation is tyranny” filled the streets. Tyranny is the cruel use of power.

These and other conflicts led the colonies to **rebel** against the British government. To rebel is to refuse to obey those in charge because of different ideas about what is right.

Focus Activity

READ TO LEARN

What led the colonies to rebel against Great Britain?

VOCABULARY

liberty

rebel

Stamp Act

treason

Sons of Liberty

repeal

Townshend Acts

boycott

Committees of

Correspondence

Boston Tea Party

Intolerable Acts

PEOPLE

Patrick Henry

Samuel Adams

Mercy Otis Warren

Crispus Attucks

Abigail Adams

ENGLAND TIGHTENS ITS GRIP

After the French and Indian War, the British found that governing its empire was difficult. Taxing the colonists seemed like an easy solution to its needs for money.

The Stamp Act

The **Stamp Act** of 1765 was a British law placing taxes on the colonies. The colonists had to pay a tax every time they bought a newspaper or signed a legal document. These items had a stamp to show that the tax had been paid.

In Virginia, a burgess named **Patrick Henry** spoke out. He said that anyone who paid the stamp tax was an enemy of Virginia. Another

burgess accused Henry of **treason**. Treason is the betrayal of one's country by giving help to one of its enemies. Henry's speeches inspired many colonists to protest against the Stamp Act.

The Colonists Fight Back

To fight the Stamp Act, some colonists formed the **Sons of Liberty**. The Sons of Liberty were groups that organized protests against the British. One member, **Samuel Adams**, wrote articles for Boston newspapers attacking the Stamp Act. In other cities the "liberty boys," as they were called, attacked British tax agents.

In October 1765 delegates from nine colonies attended a Stamp Act Congress. They demanded that the Stamp Act be **repealed**, or canceled. A year later, Parliament repealed the Stamp Act.

The **Sons of Liberty** (below) protested the use of tax stamps like this one (right).



TROUBLES IN BOSTON

The repeal of the Stamp Act did not end the troubles. A year after the Stamp Act was repealed, Parliament passed another law taxing the colonies. Boston became the center of protest against the new tax.

The Townshend Acts

The treasurer of the British government, Charles Townshend (TOWN shund), called for new taxes in 1767. Parliament then passed the **Townshend Acts**. Colonists had to pay taxes on all the tea, paper, glass, lead, and paint that they imported from Britain.

Colonists opposing the British often met in Mercy Otis Warren's home. She later wrote a history of how the colonies rebelled.



In Boston, the colonists made a list of all the British goods they would **boycott**, or refuse to buy. To boycott means to refuse to do business or have contact with a person, group, or country.

Women formed the Daughters of Liberty. They held "spinning bees" to spin thread so that they would not have to buy cloth from Britain.

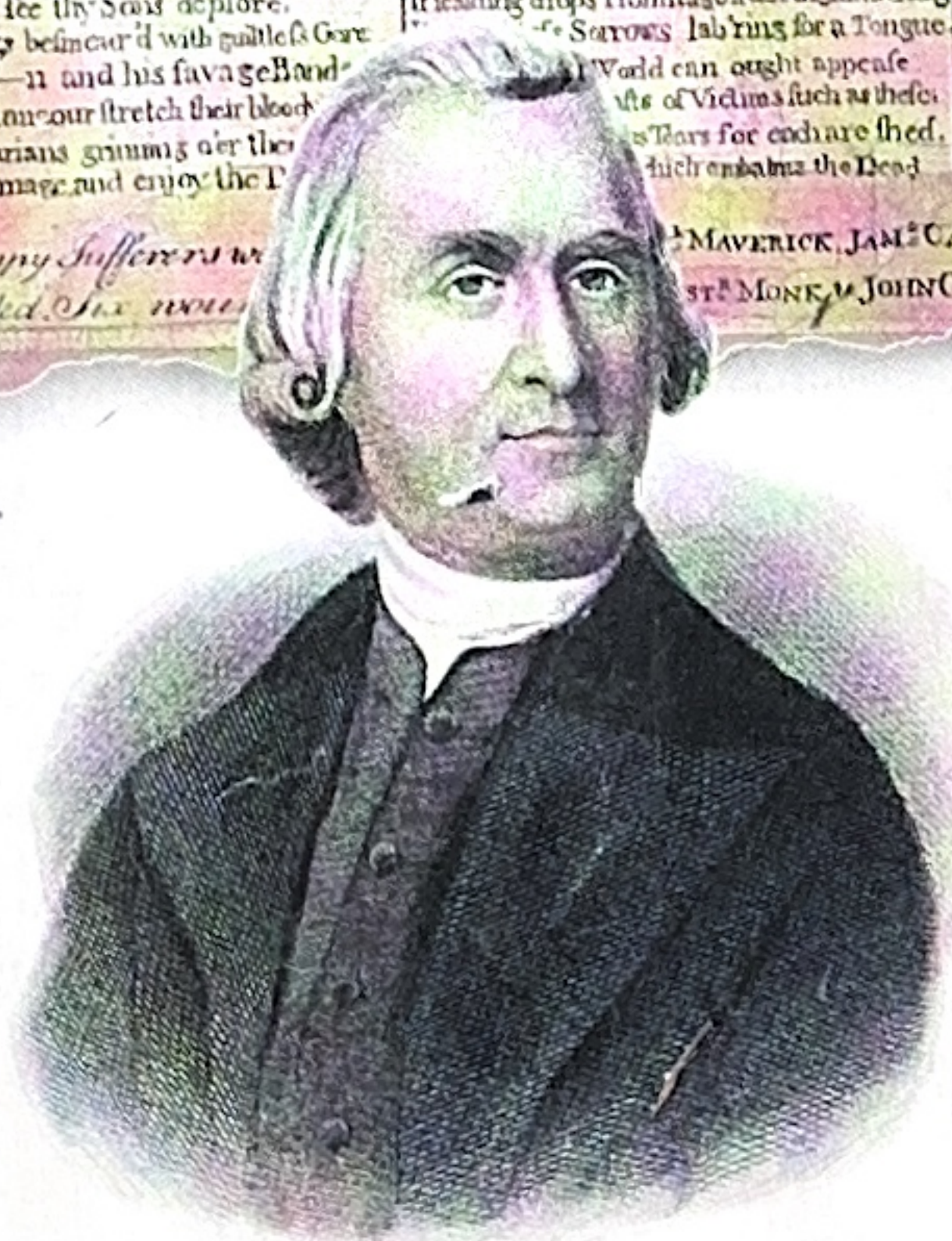
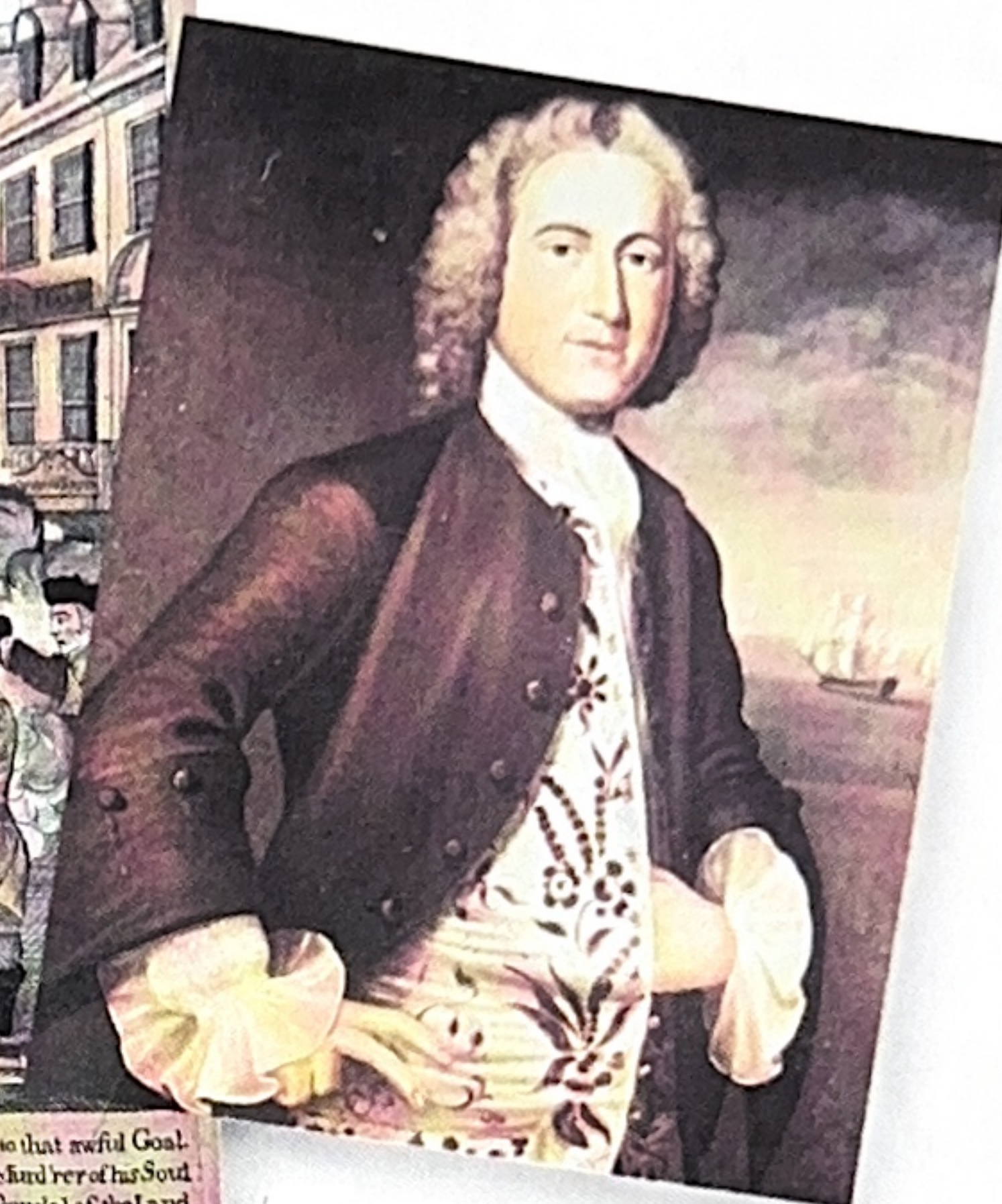
Poet and playwright **Mercy Otis Warren** asked women to give up tea and other British goods. She asked them to make "a small sacrifice."

The Boston Massacre

British troops marched into Boston in October 1768. That was the first time soldiers had been sent to control the colonists.

Boston residents grew angry as soldiers began their drills and set up guard posts around the city. Some colonists picked fights with the soldiers. Young boys called them "lobsters" because of their red uniforms.

The growing anger finally boiled over on March 5, 1770. A large group of colonists met outside the Customs House. **Crispus Attucks**, a former enslaved person, yelled to the crowd, "The way to get rid of these soldiers is to attack the main guard." The British soldiers fired. Five men were killed, including Attucks. The people of Boston were horrified. The soldiers were arrested. But John Adams agreed to defend them because he believed everyone should have a fair trial.



Sam Adams (left) and John Adams (above right) led the colonists' early struggles. The Boston Massacre (above left), engraved by Paul Revere, horrified many colonists.

The Committees of Correspondence

The colonies needed unity. They began to work together by forming **Committees of Correspondence**. In October 1772 Sam Adams asked members of a Boston town meeting to form a committee "to state the rights of the colonists." By 1774 all of the colonies except Pennsylvania

had formed their own Committees of Correspondence. The committees told colonists about important political events in the colonies.

John Adams was also a founder of the Committees of Correspondence. He believed that keeping the people informed was an important goal of the committees. He wrote:

Liberty cannot be preserved without a general knowledge among the people, who have a right . . . and a desire to know . . . the characters and conduct of their rulers.