

Descendants Icons Legend



Participant

Boston Tea Party Participants are categorized as men who were likely present on-board ships destroying tea on December 16, 1773. For more information on the various methods used to track Boston Tea Party participants, and how those lists evolved over time, visit our *Who Was Really There?: A Historiography of Boston Tea Party Participant Lists* page!



Eyewitness

Individuals who were likely not aboard the ships on December 16, 1773, but have family lore associated with either participating in, planning, or witnessing the event. For more information on the various methods used to track Boston Tea Party participants, and how those lists evolved over time, visit our *Who Was Really There?: A Historiography of Boston Tea Party Participant Lists* page!



Revolutionary Leader

Several participants were involved in both unofficial and official political organizations associated with the growing movement against Parliamentary taxation in Boston. These include groups such as the Sons of Liberty, the Loyal Nine, and others. It is important to note that these organizations are separate from the many normally elected civic positions within Boston society. While many were involved in these groups, some stood out as leaders in the movement. These men have been labeled with the Liberty tree, along with men who were considered "boarding party captains" during the boarding of ships and tea destruction on the night of December 16th.



Freemason

Many Boston Tea Party participants were part of some of the early Masonic lodges in Massachusetts, such as the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, St. Andrew's Lodge, and St. John's Lodge. In particular, the Grand Lodge and St. Andrew's Lodge members were among some of the heavy influencers in early Revolutionary Action, such as the Boston Tea Party.



Merchant

Merchants include shopkeepers, tavern keepers, and others who sold products that they did not make themselves. This often included items such as wine, rum, various types of fruits, fabrics, and more. While most imported goods included legal exports from England and other places around the world, many merchants also sold smuggled goods that avoided import taxes and duties (one of which was John Hancock). One of the goods merchants often sold was tea. Many tea merchants in Boston had meetings prior to December 16, 1773, attempting to decide what to do with the news of the Tea Act and to discuss how this would affect their businesses.



Laborer

Laborers are those who took part in trades that aided in the function of infrastructure in Boston and elsewhere in the colonies. This included trades such as carpenters, housewrights, masons, house painters, and other trades outside of the scope of the maritime trades on the waterfront. Farmers, yeomen, teamsters, and other country trades outside of the urban center of Boston also contributed to the larger infrastructure function and were essential to the upkeep of living conditions and the movement of domestic goods.



Artisan

Artisans are those who were responsible for the creation and sale of specialized items or those who practiced specialized trades. Silversmiths, japanners, distillers, and printers are examples of artisans who create unique, stylized items. Barbers, lawyers, and physicians are examples of artisans who provide a specific service to the citizens of colonial New England. Many artisans were heavily impacted by the Townshend Acts in 1767.



Maritime Trades

This person built a career focused on the various seafaring trades. Sailors are the most common of the maritime trades, operating the ships that come in and out of Boston Harbor. Captains are the lead officers onboard their ships, commanding the mariners. Shipwrights design ships that sail the ocean. Ship Builders take the designs of Shipwrights and construct the ships at various docks. Caulkers, rope makers, and other laboring jobs associated with the construction, rigging, and the operation of docks, wharfs, and ships also contribute to maritime trade.



Apprentice

This person is a young lad, often between the age of 12 and 18, who is training under a "master" in their field. Apprentices can be trained in any of the profession categories: Merchant, Laborer, Artisan, and Maritime Trade. This symbol highlights that this person was an apprentice on the night of December 16, 1773.



Civic

This person was involved in a civic role that benefited colonial society in 18th-century New England. Selectmen, Members of the General Court, and the Governor's Council are examples of people holding civic positions. However, other infrastructure and safety positions also fall within civic duties. These positions include Fire Ward members, those who ran schools, tax collectors, Overseers of the Poor, various political clubs, and other elected offices.



Ship Guard

This person held an important role in the leadup to the Boston Tea Party. This icon represents a person who volunteered to guard the ship *Dartmouth* or other vessels containing tea between the nights of November 29th and December 16th, 1773. The duty of this volunteer was to prevent the offloading of the East India Company tea until an agreement was reached between the Royal Tea Consignees and the Boston Sons of Liberty. This agreement would never be reached.



Military

This person was a member of a military organization such as a militia or artillery company. Although many participants go on to fight in the American Revolutionary War, this icon only acknowledges those who were part of military organizations before or during 1773. Veterans of the French & Indian/Seven Years War (1754 - 1763) do not fall in this category. Active members of the militia, Hancock's Company of Cadets, Ancient and Honourable Artillery Company, Adino Paddock's Artillery Company, and others are also included in this category.