

## Independence

My name is Crispus Attucks, I was the first to fall (1)  
I died in the name of liberty, justice and freedom for all  
My life is untold but I'm known for starting a brawl  
That led to my body laid in state at the funeral hall

The British soldiers were intolerable indeed (2)  
But this was still before Paul Revere could ride his mighty steed (3)

My name is Matthew Kilroy of Regiment 29  
And yes I did fire back at the man who called me a swine  
And for this I was branded forever more  
For reasons to this day I'm quite unsure

I was a victim of autonomies just to pay a simple tax (4)  
Before this they had the nerve to call us lobsterbacks (5)

The truth should be told  
The war was started to be free  
Where it goes depends  
Tax or reason  
Truth or treason (6)

My name is Matthew Kilroy  
I just wanted peace on the streets  
But this proved to be a rather difficult feat  
Not a revolution but a riot on that day  
All we asked was for some tax and we'll go away

I'm not a murderer, I was just protecting me  
It wasn't my fault. I hope you can see

My name is Crispus Attucks, as O'Reilly once wrote  
The first to defy and the first to die  
People say the Tea Party was a great act of revolution (7)  
But it was well before the written constitution

I died for the cause. I heeded the call  
And now I'm bleeding to death outside of Butcher's Hall

The truth should be told  
The war was started to be free  
Where it goes depends  
Tax or reason  
Truth or treason

So before the Liberty Tree (8)  
I insulted the majesty  
Long before the 56 could sign  
Yeah that's right! I called that soldier a swine

## Notes

- 1) **Crispus Attucks**: Crispus Attucks is widely regarded to be the first soldier to be killed in the Boston Massacre, and therefore, in the American Revolution itself. A black man, it is unknown whether Attucks was a slave or freeman.
- 2) **British soldiers**: British soldiers occupying Boston during the revolution were widely disliked by local Boston natives. British soldiers presence, meant to crush the rebellion against taxes and other British laws, led to high tension in the period leading up to the war.
- 3) **Paul Revere**: Paul Revere was a patriot leader who is most famous for his midnight ride through the countryside of Massachusetts. During this time, he warned local citizens of the invading British, just before the first armed conflicts at Lexington and Concord.
- 4) **tax**: Opposition to British taxes was one of the primary causes of the American Revolution. Most taxes were placed on imports or exports. This had long been a requirement under colonial rule, but leading up to the war, was enforced more strictly to pay debts to England.
- 5) **lobsterbacks**: “Lobsterback” was a slur used against British soldiers based on their red uniforms.
- 6) **treason**: All free whites were given the decision to choose a side, either in favor of revolution or loyalty to the crown (England). Loyalty tended to shift depending on which side appeared to have the upper hand. Famous patriot John Adams estimated that  $\frac{1}{3}$  were patriot,  $\frac{1}{3}$  were Tory or Loyalist, and  $\frac{1}{3}$  were neutral or shifting.
- 7) **Tea Party**: As a protest against a tax on tea imports, patriots disguised as Indians dumped several tons of British tea into Boston Harbor. The destruction of property increased tension between the two sides.
- 8) **Liberty Tree**: This symbolic name was given to a large elm tree near the Boston Commons, marking a rallying site for colonial patriots.

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