

HISTORY - Who was Patrick Carr of the American Revolution?

We all know the names of the heroes of the American Revolution. They faced the ruling British at great risk to their lives and livelihoods. But one name has been almost forgotten. The name is Patrick Carr. If you ever visit Boston, you can see his name listed with four others on a monument at the Old Granary Burying Ground, on Tremont Street. The memorial is dedicated to the Boston Massacre of March 5, 1770. Patrick was an Irishman born in Ireland. He died after British troops fired into a crowd that day. Crispus Attucks, a man of African and Indian descent, died that night, as did English colonists Samuel Gray and James Caldwell. The following morning, 17-year-old colonist Samuel Maverick died. Irishman Patrick Carr died 9 days later. The Boston Massacre had a large impact on relations between the British rulers and the Americans. Colonists became even more weary of Britain's oppressive rules and taxation. The Boston Tea Party followed, and the first Continental Congress was soon formed. In 1776, the revolution broke out full scale.

But there is more to the story of the violent and lingering death of Patrick Carr. The British soldiers were put on trial for murder. Ironically, the patriot and future president of the U. S. John Adams, led the British soldiers' legal defense. It is said he believed everyone deserved a fair trial and the rule of law was essential to a worthy society. The trial was the momentous news of the day. Over 40 witnesses were called. At the trial, the crowd on the day of the event was referred to as a rabble, not even worthy of being called a mob. Carr was referred to as an Irish teague and a papist, both derogatory terms of the day used against Catholics. The sensational trial was full of accusations, hearsay, name-calling, stereotyping, and irony. But the most interesting testimony may have been that of Patrick Carr. Although Carr had died, his surgeon, John Jeffries, testified on his behalf. The surgeon testified that Carr essentially forgave the soldier who shot him.

Another ironic element of the event was that the soldiers who fired that night had been drafted and recruited from Dublin, Ireland. The British often conscripted or recruited from the poor and hungry of the lands they ruled. It may have been that Carr was sympathetic to the soldiers who fired that night because he understood their plight. In any case, it was an extraordinary act of compassion. The British soldiers were found innocent of murder but guilty of only manslaughter. Their punishment was reduced to branding on the thumb, a common punishment in 1770. Still, the Boston Massacre remains one of the outstanding flashpoints of the Revolution. **Patrick Carr, Irishman, American patriot, staunch supporter of compassion, and another example of the connection between Irish and American history. - Submitted by Bill Burke. Sources: Irishman P. Carr, irishboston.org 3.5.2023/ The Trial of the Soldiers, Tiverton Historical Society, masshist.org/ The Boston Massacre Trial, National Park Service, Adams/ Boston Massacre, History.com editors, 10.27.2009**

Corporation News – Officers of the board now are President Pat Walsh, Secretary Tracy Wagaman, and Treasurer Rich Maloney. Repairs to the hvac system are completed. Bands in March include 3/6 BC Pipes, 3/7 J. Tobias, & hopefully the Phila. Pipes, 3/17 Shambles. If you need a sash, contact Kevin Brynes at 607 759 7715.