

**History Standards:** Students will understand political, religious, social, and economic institutions that evolved in the colonial era.  
**Analysis skills:** Historical interpretation  
**Language Arts Standards:** Reading comprehension; literary response and analysis; writing applications and conventions

### Using Primary Sources—Causes and Effects

“A View of Part of the Town of Boston”...(1768 landing of British troops),  
engraving by Paul Revere, 1770.

Pre-revolutionary times in the colonies can be seen as a series of causes and effects. By the summer of 1768, Boston’s Governor Bernard and British officials took steps to squelch the rebellious behavior of colonists reacting to the Stamp Act and the Townshend Acts. As a result, two regiments of British troops were sent to the town. However, this decision created many additional problems. Colonists were upset that soldiers were sent in peacetime to control them. After all, they were subjects of the Crown with rights of Englishmen.

Paul Revere’s engraving “A View of Part of the Town of Boston” captured the moment when troops began to arrive on September 30, 1768, to a hostile reception from many Bostonians. Fourteen British ships anchored in the Boston harbor. The next day, over seven hundred troops--with muskets charged and bayonets fixed--landed and marched through the town to the Common. To add to this show of strength, they were accompanied by a train of artillery and the sounds of fifes and drums.

At first, troops pitched tents on the Common and in Faneuil Hall. Bostonians were not about to offer their homes to unwanted British troops. However, James Murray, Elizabeth Murray’s brother, agreed to house troops in the sugar factory which belonged to his brother-in-law and sister. This unpopular move immediately created problems for James Murray, making him a target of public censure. James, not a Bostonian by birth, stood to profit from a situation that appalled many of his neighbors.

The situation in Boston continued to deteriorate. British troops and Bostonians clashed constantly. James Murray was one of the most politically unpopular men in Boston at this time due to his hospitality to British troops and his job as justice of the peace. Over the next few years, Elizabeth Murray found her loyalties increasingly in conflict. For over a decade, she had made Boston her home while establishing her reputation as a retailer. She, as many other Bostonians, continued to see herself as a devoted subject of the Crown. However, she despised the corruption of the customs service.

After almost two years, hostility erupted into bloodshed. On March 5, 1770, colonists taunted a British soldier on guard duty. Other troops came to reinforce him. As snowballs and insults were thrown in the growing confusion, shots were fired, leaving five colonists dead or dying of wounds. This confrontation later became known as the Boston Massacre. Had James Murray not offered the British troops a place to stay in Boston, perhaps this incident would not have happened. Like it or not, the Murray family was right in the middle of this growing unrest.

**History Standards:** Students will understand political, religious, social, and economic institutions that evolved in the colonial era.  
**Analysis skills:** Historical interpretation  
**Language Arts Standards:** Reading comprehension; literary response and analysis; writing applications and conventions

## Answer Key

### Pre-Revolution—British Troops in Boston—1768

Cause	Effect
British imposed the Stamp Act and Townshend Acts	→ More colonial protests
Spreading of protest in Boston	→ British troops brought over to Boston
Fourteen British troops anchor in Boston harbor; 700 armed troops landed	→ Increasing outrage from colonists
Bostonians grew angry, refusing to house British troops	→ James Murray offered sugar factory owned by his sister Elizabeth and her husband for housing the British troops
James Murray offered British troops shelter in his brother-in-law and sister's sugar warehouse in Boston	→ Colonists outraged—James Murray received public censure
Elizabeth Murray and her family became part of the growing controversy between Patriots and Loyalists.	→ Loyalties are torn among families and friends
Colonists and British troops continued to clash in Boston.	→ March 5, 1770—British troops and colonists have major confrontation which became the Boston Massacre