

Joseph Warren Was a Patriot to Remember

Mark Spencer's review of Stacy Schiff's "The Revolutionary: Samuel Adams" (Fall Books, Oct. 8) provides an insightful look at a historical character about whom, as Mr. Spencer puts it, history has forgotten more than it has remembered. While Samuel Adams is remembered as the father of the American Revolution and lives on in the eponymous beer, I'd like to bring attention to his contemporary and even more forgotten compatriot, Joseph Warren.

Warren was involved in nearly every major insurrectionary New England event in the decade leading to independence. He delivered two fiery Boston Massacre orations and was instrumental in planning the Boston Tea Party. After Parliament shut the

port of Boston, Warren drafted the Suffolk Resolves, a declaration of rights and grievances unanimously adopted at the first Continental Congress and a precursor to the Declaration of Independence.

Warren, who had also established an intricate spy network, sent Paul Revere and William Dawes on their epic midnight rides, setting off the "shot heard around the world" in April 1775. Warren rode into battle and was almost killed that day when a British musket ball grazed his head. Warren later implored Congress to form a national army and appoint a "generalissimo," which led to George Washington's nomination as commander in chief of the new Continental Army.

On June 17, 1775, at age 34, Warren was killed in action at the battle of Bunker Hill. His death sent shock waves throughout the patriot ranks. The men we now consider the founders lamented his premature death, and the nation still owes him an enormous debt of gratitude. Without his efforts, there may have been no American Revolution or Declaration of Independence, and maybe no United States of America.

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