



Rev250 Timeline of Events

2024 – Setting the Stage for Revolution

Rev250 Discover Danvers celebrates the nation's upcoming Semi-quincentennial (250th Anniversary) on July 4, 2026.

The Danvers Historical Society invites you to follow along with us as we explore the people and events leading up to the War of Independence. Here in Massachusetts, and especially Essex County, we begin the commemoration sooner than 2026, due to the many events that happened here prior to the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Each week, and sometimes more often, we will post an account of an event or story important to the struggle for independence. Where possible, these stories will relate specifically to Danvers and the surrounding area of Essex County. Follow along and Discover Danvers!

April 1764 – Sugar Act; The French and Indian War has ended with the British driving the French from North America. As a result, the British national debt soars. To continue offering protection to the colonies, they must raise revenue. Settling west of the Appalachian Mountains has been barred. The Sugar Act imposes stricter trade regulations and duties on sugar and molasses.

March 1765 – Stamp Act is announced; This act placed taxes on printed matter, paper goods and legal documents. British stamps were affixed to documents or packages to show that the tax had been paid. Colonists increased their nonimportation efforts.

In Danvers, four pages of the Town Meeting minutes were used to instruct our representatives to the General Court on how they should vote against the Stamp Act. This was one of the most controversial Town Meetings in Danvers. (Richard Trask, "Talk of the Town")

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-2bH6sgqS1c&list=PLXqTCngvZaRu_iNVBTG21g2U7V3oNuQ_T&index=8

May 1765 – Two months later, the Quartering Act was instituted. This required the colonies to provide housing and supplies for British troops.

October 1765 – Riots erupt all over New England protesting the Stamp Act. The Massachusetts Assembly suggests a meeting of all the colonies to work for the repeal of the Stamp Act. The Stamp Act Congress, with representatives from nine of the thirteen colonies meets in New York City to discuss the crisis. They pass a declaration which claims that American colonists are equal to all other British citizens, protests taxation without representation, and states that, without colonial representation in Parliament, Parliament could not tax colonists.

March 1766 – Parliament repeals the Stamp Act but passes the Declaratory Act which establishes its complete authority to make its laws binding "in all cases whatsoever."

June 1767 – After a year of celebrations over the repeal of the Stamp Act, Parliament passes the Townshend Revenue Acts which impose new import duties on things like glass, lead, paint, paper and tea.

February 1768 – The Massachusetts General Court issues Massachusetts Circular Letter, denouncing the Townshend Acts and calling for unified resistance by all the colonies.

August 1768 – Boston merchants again discourage the purchase of British imports and trade with Britain.

October 1768 -- General Thomas Gage and British troops arrive in Boston to enforce compliance.

1769 – Amid the growing unrest, the women, and even children, of eastern Massachusetts hold day-long spinning bees mostly at the homes of local clergymen. The number of spun skeins of wool, flax, cotton, linen and tow were tallied in competitions across New England. By August, Royal Governor Bernard departed for England and Lt. Governor Thomas Hutchinson becomes governor *pro tem*. He is eventually confirmed as Royal Governor. Massachusetts receives responses to its Circular Letter from Assemblies in South Carolina, Georgia and North Carolina. The Virginia House of Burgesses passes resolutions condemning Britain's actions against Massachusetts, and states that only Virginia's governor and legislature could tax its citizens.

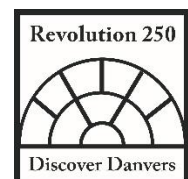
January 1770 – Riots break out in New York between citizens and soldiers over the New York Assembly's compliance with the Quartering Act.

February 1770 – More than 100 women of Boston and other towns sign an agreement not to drink any tea until the Revenue Acts are repealed.

March 5, 1770 – **Boston Massacre** takes place. Five civilians are killed by British troops. A violent uprising was avoided when troops withdrew to islands in the harbor. Several Massachusetts towns vote to support the non-importation agreement. Boston petitions the Royal Governor to remove all troops from the city. The Townshend Acts are repealed in April, except for the tax on tea.

May 28, 1770 – **Danvers** Town Meeting voted to “not import, buy or use tea until the tax shall be removed” (Richard Trask, “Talk of the Town”)

June 1772 – **Attack on the "Gaspee."** Several boatloads of local patriots attack a grounded British customs schooner, the *Gaspee*, near Providence, Rhode Island, and burn it. The Royal Governor offers a reward for the discovery of the men, planning to send them to England for trial. The removal of the "*Gaspee*" trial to England outrages American colonists.



February, 1773 – Danvers Town Meeting voted to “use all lawful endeavors for recovering, maintaining and preserving the invaluable rights and privileges of this people and stand ready if need be to risk our lives and fortunes in defense of those liberties which our forefathers purchased at so dear a rate.” (Richard Trask, “Talk of the Town”)

May 1773 – Tea Act; By reducing the tax on imported British tea, this act gave British merchants an unfair advantage in selling their tea in America. American colonists condemned the act, and many planned to boycott tea.

October 1773 – Danvers Board of Selectmen’s meeting held at Turk’s Head Tavern, Danvers, owned by John Piemont. A Paul Revere engraved bill was found in the Danvers Town Hall basement in 1969 by Richard B. Trask. The printed services listed were “Lodging, eating, wine, punch, porter, horse-keeping, oats, tea and cakes.” It was common for town business to be conducted at taverns. The Turk’s Head was located near what is now Pine Street near Sylvan Street. The Selectmen were apparently entertained before, during or after their meeting resulting in a bill of 11 shillings, 8 pence to the Town of Danvers for eating, punch, horse-keeping, cakes and brandy. What could the Selectmen have been meeting about? Were they conducting routine business? Did they discuss the Tea Act? Note that no tea was purchased at this meeting. Read Richard Trask’s entire account and the significance of this small piece of paper in Danvers Historical Collections, Vol. XLIV, p. 17-20, “Unique Revere Engraving Discovered in Danvers Town Papers.”

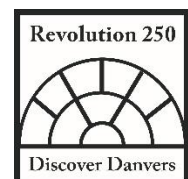
Also see Richard Trask’s video of Danvers Revolutionary War artifacts at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkkC-5J9UVw>

December 1773 – Boston Tea Party; When British tea ships arrived in Boston harbor, many citizens wanted the tea sent back to England without the payment of any taxes. The Royal Governor insisted on payment of all taxes. On December 16, a group of men boarded the ships and dumped all 342 chests of tea in the harbor. The commemoration of this event in December 2023 attracted an estimated 20, 000 visitors.

March 1774 – Boston Port Act – King George III sends a message to Parliament informing them of the destruction of the tea in Boston harbor. A bill to close the port of Boston until the tea is paid for is debated in March, passes Parliament. The Boston Port Bill is read a third time and sent into the House of Lords for concurrence.

April 16, 1774 -- General Gage embarks for Boston to take his role as Governor and Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty’s forces in America.



May 16, 1774 -- “Arrived his Majesty’s Ship Lively Capt. Bishop, in 26 days from London, in whom came his Excy: General Gage, who is appointed Govr. and Commander in Chief of this Province. Genl. Gage has brought over with him an Act of Parliament for blocking up the Port of Boston, which Act is to take place the first Day of June next – By this cruel edict of the British Parliament Thousands of our inhabitants, will be involved in one common undistinguished Ruin!”

May 20, 1774 – Coercive Acts anger colonists. In response to the Boston Tea Party, Parliament passed several acts to punish Massachusetts. The Boston Port Bill banned the loading or unloading of any ships in Boston harbor. The Administration of Justice Act offered protection to royal officials in Massachusetts, allowing them to transfer to England all court cases against them involving riot suppression or revenue collection. The Massachusetts Government Act put the election of most government officials under the control of the Crown, essentially eliminating the 1691 Massachusetts charter of government. Civil courts were abolished, and a Mandamus court system was imposed with Trial by jury terminated.

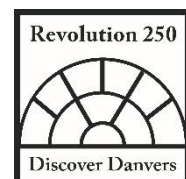
Altogether these acts were later called the **Intolerable Acts**.

June 1, 1774 -- Transports arrive bringing the 4th Regiment of Foot and the 43rd Regiment of Foot to Boston in support of Governor Thomas Gage. The Boston Port Act goes into effect. The Port is closed.

June 2, 1774 – Quartering Act amended. Parliament broadened its previous Quartering Act (1765). British troops could now be quartered in any occupied dwelling.

June – September 10, 1774 – The General Court is ordered to assemble at Salem, moving the capital from Boston to Salem. General Thomas Gage, newly appointed Royal Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony takes up residence at “King” Robert Hooper’s summer home, later known as *The Lindens*, in Danvers. He establishes an office in the south front room of Jeremiah Page’s House (excerpt from Danvers Historical Collections Vol. 40, p. 84). British troops of the 4th and 43rd Regiment of Foot bivouacked near what is now Danvers Ford and Liberty Tree Mall. The family that still owns the land under the mall would find Native American and military artifacts like musket paper cartridges and musket balls while farming.

June 17, 1774 -- To protest Britain's actions, Massachusetts suggested a return to nonimportation, but several states preferred a congress of all the colonies to discuss united resistance. The colonies soon named delegates to a congress -- the First Continental Congress -- to meet in Philadelphia on September 5th. Massachusetts General Court, in a locked-door meeting, appoints James Bowdoin, John Adams, Sam Adams, Thomas Cushing & Robert Treat Paine as



delegates to the Continental Congress. Gov. Hutchinson tries to dissolve the General Court.

June 21, 1774 -- General Gage dissolves the local provincial legislature and brings the 64th Regiment of Foot to Danvers

July 12, 1774 – The Arrow Incident - Someone takes a shot at a British sentry, but misses

August 1, 1774 -- Arrival of General Gage in Marblehead and a company of the 59th Regiment of Foot to attend the meeting of the General Court in Salem.

August 9, 1774 – In Danvers, the Governor announces his list of Mandamus Councillors - 35 are Nominated; 18 Resign

August 10, 1774 -- Sam Adams, John Adams, Robert Treat Paine, and Thomas Cushing set out for Philadelphia and the 1st Continental Congress.

August 25, 1774 -- In response to their calling together a meeting of the Freeholders and Merchants of Salem to choose representatives to a County Convention, General Gage has the Salem Committee of Correspondence arrested.

September 1, 1774 -- Governor Thomas Gage issues a writ that calls for an election of the General Court. British Troops arrive in Somerville to remove powder from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Powder House.

September 2, 1774 -- 4000 militia men from New England assemble at Cambridge on the “Powder House Alarm” and force Thomas Oliver, Samuel Danforth and Joseph Lee to resign as Mandamus councilor.

September 3, 1774 -- General Gage breaks ground on the fortifications on Boston Neck.

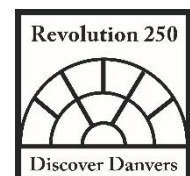
September 6, 1774 – In an act of defiance, Essex County residents call the Ipswich Convention, requiring each town to send 1 or 2 representatives. Though Town meetings were abolished, Danvers manages to appoint Samuel Holten and William Shillaber. It was set to convene on 10/5/74. Marblehead town meeting votes to have their militia regiment train 4 days a week with arms and ammunition.

September 5 – October 26, 1774 – First Continental Congress meets in Philadelphia. Twelve of the thirteen colonies sent a total of fifty-six delegates. Only Georgia was not represented. One accomplishment of the Congress was the Association of 1774, which urged all colonists to avoid using British goods, and to form committees to enforce this ban.

September, 2024 – 250th anniversary of Provincial Congress in Salem

September 7, 1774 – In Ipswich, the Essex County Convention passes the Essex Resolves

September 8, 1774 -- Letter from the Society of Mechanicks to the same in New York asking them not to help General Gage build fortifications across Boston Neck.



September 9, 1774 – In Milton, MA, Suffolk County Convention passes the Suffolk Resolves.

September 10, 1774 – General Gage returns to Boston.

September 14, 2024 at 4:30PM – Trails & Sails – The General and The King, Part 1; Judy Anderson of Marblehead presents a look at the architecture of the “King Hooper” country house in Danvers where General Gage resided

- On display: copy of Broadside abolishing Oct. sitting of House of Rep, signed by Gage; when Gov. Gage didn’t show up, this was first break with England

September 16, 2024 at noon – Film: *Women during the Revolutionary War*

September 16, 2024 at 1:30PM – Trails & Sails – The General and The King, Part 2; Judy Anderson of Marblehead presents an Illustrated talk about the two dozen members of Robert “King” Hooper’s family in Marblehead, Newburyport & Danvers

September 17, 2024 at 7PM – Trails & Sails – Eric Jay Dolin, speaker; *Rebels At Sea*; privateering during the Revolution

September 20, 2024 – Porch Swing

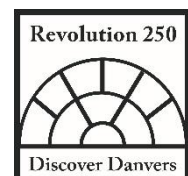
September 28, 1774 – In Danvers, following the county conventions and the passage of their resolves, Governor Gage issues a proclamation canceling the earlier writ calling for an election of representatives to the General Court.

October 4, 1774 – As reported in the *Essex Gazette, Oct. 18-25, 1774*: “At a meeting of the following commissioned Officers of the first Regiment in Essex (under the Command of Wm. Browne, Esq.,) held at Danvers, 4th Day of October, 1774, William Putnam, William Pickman, Benj. Ward, tertius, Capt. Low, Joseph Gowen, Samuel Flagg, Jeremiah Page, Ephram Fuller, Samuel Gardner, Christopher Osgood, William Brown, Ezekiel Marsh, Nathaniel Sherman, Robert Foster, Enoch Putnam, Samuel Eppes, John Hathorne, Samuel King, John Dodge, James Bancroft, Amos Curtis, Ebenezer Proctor, Elias Endicott. Voted unanimously. That they resign their Commissions as Officers in said Regiment, and they do hereby declare their Resignation thereof.

N. B. The above Vote passed in Consequence of the said Col. Browne's refusing to resign his Seat at the Council Board.”

October 5, 1774 – General Court convenes in Salem despite Governor’s latest decree. But Gage finds out and sends troops to arrest the rabblers. They all escape and later reconvene in Concord.

October 6, 1774 -- The General Court resolves itself into a Convention with John Hancock as President to consider Governor Gage’s September 28 proclamation.



October 7, 1774 – The Massachusetts Convention then resolves itself into Provincial Congress, specifically, “to take into consideration the dangerous and alarming situation of public affairs in this province, and to consult and determine on such measures as they shall judge will tend to promote the true interest of his majesty, and the peace, welfare, and prosperity of the province.”

October 7, 1774 -- A Great fire in Salem burns a number of houses and buildings causing £20,000. damage.

October 11, 1774 – Provincial congress meets at the First Church of Concord. John Hancock is chosen President.

October 12, 1774 – Three companies of the 65th Regiment of Foot arrive in Boston.

October 13, 1774 – In Concord, a committee chosen to consider the state of the province reported same and addressed General Gage for the purpose in Boston.

October 18, 1774 – In Newburyport, tea was outlawed, but people openly continued to drink it. The result was a newspaper account of Teas being destroyed by Fire and Water.

October 20, 1774 – In Concord, Mandamus Councilors who refuse to resign are ordered to be entered onto town records as rebels against the state and their names ordered to be published. Those who have resigned are to be forgiven for their “past misconduct” and to be free from molestation. Provincial Congress issues a resolution to encourage the entire disuse of tea and that those who use or sell the same have their names posted in a public place.

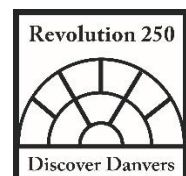
October 23, 1774 – Three companies of the Royal Irish Regiment arrive from New York.

October 24, 1774 – The 47th Regiment of Foot arrives from New York.

October 26, 1774 -- Provincial Congress Resolves – officers of the militia companies to assemble and elect field officers to command the regiments formed and that the field officers enlist ¼ of the militia companies to equip themselves and hold themselves in readiness on the shortest notice (minute regiments). Every company to have a Captain and 2 Lieutenants and at least 50 men. Ordered the citizens to train and procure arms. Towns must fund and equip the militia companies. Cottage industries sprang up to make supplies: swords, bayonets, cartridge boxes, knapsacks etc. Each man had a musket or fowling piece and supplied his own ball as they were all different calibers. Minutemen companies (men aged 16-30 yrs) were formed from the Militias (men aged 16-60 yrs) and regiments formed by County. Each town was required to have at least one militia company, some had several. Danvers had at least three.

October 27, 1774 – The Third Company in Danvers, part of the First Essex, met and chose Jeremiah Page as their chairman. As reported in the Essex Gazette:

“At a Meeting of the People (both the Alarm and Training Band) of the third Company in Danvers, being



part of the first Regiment in the County of Essex, held at Danvers, 27th October, 1774, for the Purpose of choosing Officers for said Company, in Consequence of their former Officers resigning their Post of office.

Capt. Jeremiah Page, Chairman,

Voted, Capt. Jeremiah Page, Captain.

Voted, Lieut. Enoch Putnam, First Lieut.

Voted, Mr. William Towne, Second Lieut.

Voted, Mr. Joseph Porter, Ensign.

Voted, That the said Officers be acknowledged by the said People as their Officers, until the said Company shall be otherwise settled in the old constitutional way.

Attest, Arch. Dale, Clerk."

Essex Gazette, Oct. 25-Nov. 1, 1774.

November 7, 1774 – Jeremiah Page, as Captain of the Third Company, petitions the Town of Danvers to provide muskets, bayonets and other supplies.

November 9, 1774 -- At a Meeting of the People (both of the Alarm and Training Band) of the first Company in Danvers, being Part of the first Regiment in the County of Essex, held at Danvers, 9th Day of November, 1774, for the purpose of choosing officers for said Company in Observance of the Recommendation of the Provincial Congress.

Dr. Samuel Holten, Chairman.

Voted, Mr. Samuel Flint, Captain.

Voted, Mr. Daniel Putnam, 1st Lieut.

Voted, Mr. Joseph Putnam, 2nd Lieut.

Voted, Mr. Asa Prince, Ensign.

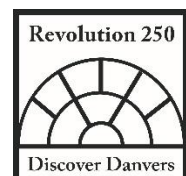
Attest, Asa Putnam, Clerk.

Essex Gazette, Nov. 8, 1774.

November 21, 1774 – The Town of Danvers resolved its minute companies would be equipped with “an effective fire-arm, bayonet, pouch, knapsack, thirty rounds of cartridges and balls.”

<https://historicalnerdery01.blogspot.com/2022/01/>

November 28, 1774 – “At a meeting of the Training Band of the second Foot Company in Danvers, on 28, Nov., 1774, agreeable to advice of the Provincial Congress, to choose officers for said Company. The



Meeting was opened with Prayer by the Rev. Nathan Holt. Voted, Jonathan Tarbel, Chairman.

Voted, Samuel Eppes, Captain.

Voted, Benjamin Jacobs, 1st Lieut.

Voted, Gideon Foster, 2nd Lieut.

Voted, Francis Symonds, jr. Ensign.

Attest, Samuel Eppes, Clerk.”

Essex Gazette, Dec. 6, 1774

December 5, 1774 – “At a meeting of the Alarm List on Dec. 5, 1774. Voted, Deacon Malachi Felton, Chairman.

Voted, Caleb Low, Captain.

Voted, Ezekiel Marsh, jr., Lieut.

Voted, John Dodge, Ensign.

Attest, Sylvester Proctor, Clerk.”

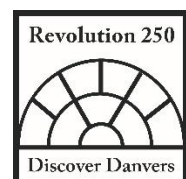
Essex Gazette, Dec. 6, 1774.

1775:

January | In early 1775, Danvers had a population of approximately 2200. Committees of Safety were created to enforce the non-import and non-export directive of the First Continental Congress. Each Danvers man was ordered to have an effective firearm, bayonet, thirty rounds of cartridges and balls and other equipment. If he could not afford these, the Town saw that it was provided. The town was also prepared to pay each man one shilling per half day of service. Samuel Page (Jeremiah’s son), made 2652 cartridges with the Town’s allotment of gunpowder and distributed it among the militia men. DHC, Vol. 44, p. 60, 73

9 January | Town Meeting votes to “encourage one-quarter part of the Train Band soldiers of this town to enlist as minutemen”. DHC, Vol. 44, p. 73

19 January | A Town ordinance was voted to prohibit the holding of “parties at Houses of Entertainment, for the purpose of Dancing, Feasting, etc.” DHC Vol. 44, p. 61



1 February | Second Provincial Congress convenes in Cambridge

2 February | John Hancock chosen as President of Provincial Congress

6 February | John Sawyer of Rowley offers a Troop of Horse to the Provincial Congress

<https://essexheritage.org/> Road to Revolution

9 February | “Resolved – it be recommended by this Congress to every family in the province, to preserve all their linen and cotton and linen rags as well as to encourage the manufacture aforesaid”

<https://essexheritage.org/> Road to Revolution

13 February | The Provincial Congress authorizes communication with Indigenous tribes and the Province of Quebec in hopes of bringing them into supporting the colonial cause.

16 February | Provincial Congress adjourns.

26 February | General Thomas Gage, military governor, knew that colonists were arming themselves against possible encounters with his Royal troops. He sends Lt-Col. Alexander Leslie and troops of the 64th Regiment of Foot to arrive in Marblehead and march to Salem at the North Bridge on orders to capture rebel cannon stored there. Salem and Danvers militiamen give armed resistance and remove cannon to Danvers. Men who took up arms included Rev. Benjamin Wadsworth and Samuel Epes’ South Danvers militia company. Leslie agreed to march a short distance across the river after the drawbridge was lowered and finding no guns, turned and marched back to Marblehead. The road Leslie marched his men across and back is now Rt. 114.

For more about Leslie’s Retreat, activities and events commemorating this significant local incident, go to <https://www.salem400.org/leslies-retreat/>

Enjoy more REV250 history facts here soon!

