



## Smithsonian Institution

*National Museum of African American History and Culture*

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"CRISPUS ATTUCKS, ONE OF AMERICA'S FIRST AND NOBLEST HEROES"

By John Wesley Dobbs, 33°, Grand Master of Georgia

Boston, Mass., August 16, 1960

Hon. Booker T. Alexander, Imperial Potentate, Officers and Members of The Ancient, Egyptian Arabic Order, Nobles of the Mystic Shrine for North and South America—GREETINGS!

First, I would like to commend our Imperial Potentate, Hon. Booker T. Alexander, and his officers, for so wisely planning this commemorative testimonial program to a great hero. Next we sincerely appreciate the splendid manner in which the city officials of the great city of Boston, Massachusetts have cooperated in making this event such a big success.

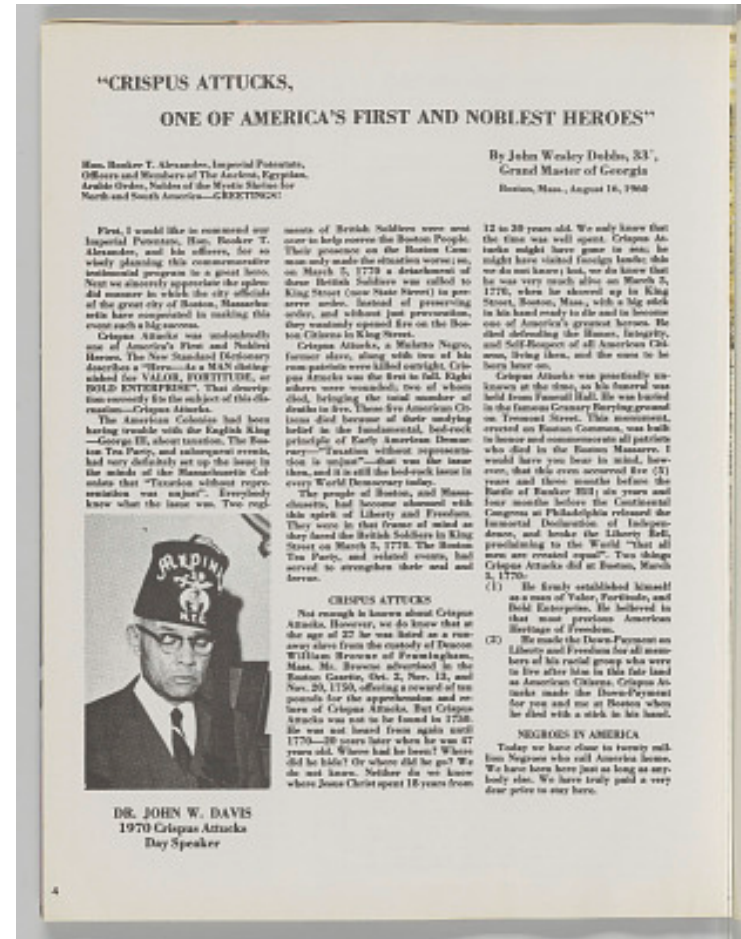
Crispus Attucks was undoubtedly one of America's First and Noblest Heroes. The New Standard Dictionary describes a "Hero—As a MAN distinguished for VALOR, FORTITUDE, or BOLD ENTERPRISE". That description correctly fits the subject of this discussion—Crispus Attucks.

[[image – black & white photograph of Dr. John Davis wearing eyeglasses and a fez marked Medina 19 atop the Shriners Sword, Crescent, and Star and the letters N. Y. C.]]  
 [[caption – DR. JOHN W. DAVIS 1970 Crispus Attucks Day Speaker]]

The American Colonies had been having trouble with the English King—George III, about taxation. The Boston Tea Party, and subsequent events, had very definitely set up the issue in the minds of the Massachusetts Colonists that "Taxation without representation was unjust". Everybody knew what the issue was. Two regiments of British Soldiers were sent over to help coerce the Boston People. Their presence on the Boston Common only made the situation worse; so, on March 5, 1770 a detachment of these British Soldiers was called to King Street (now State Street) to preserve order. Instead of preserving order, and without just provocation, they wantonly opened fire on the Boston Citizens in King Street.

Crispus Attucks, a Mulatto Negro, former slave, along with his com-patriots were killed outright. Crispus Attucks was the first to fall. Eight others were wounded; two of whom died, bringing the total number of deaths to five. These five American Citizens died because of their undying belief in the fundamental, bed-rock principle of Early American Democracy—"Taxation without representation is unjust"—that was the issue then, and it is still the bed-rock issue in every World Democracy today.

The people of Boston, and Massachusetts, had become obsessed with this spirit of Liberty and Freedom. They were in that frame of mind as they faced the British Soldiers in King Street on March 5, 1770. The Boston Tea Party, and related events, had served to strengthen their zeal and fervor.



## CRISPUS ATTUCKS

Not enough is known about Crispus Attucks. However, we do know that at the age of 27 he was listed as a runaway slave from the custody of Deacon William Browne of Framingham, Mass. Mr. Browne advertised in the Boston Gazette, Oct. 2, Nov. 13, and Nov. 20, 1750, offering a reward of 10 pounds for the apprehension and return of Crispus Attucks. But Crispus Attucks was not to be found in 1750. He was not heard from again until 1770—20 years later when he was 47 years old. Where had he been? Where did he hide? Or where did he go? We do not know. Neither do we know where Jesus Christ spent 18 years from 12 to 30 years old. We only know that the time was well spent. Crispus Attucks might have gone to sea; he might have visited foreign lands; this we do not know; but, we do know that he was very much alive on March 5, 1770, when he showed up in King St., Boston, Mass., with a big stick in his hand ready to die and to become one of America's greatest heroes. He died defending the Honor, Integrity, and Self-Respect of all American Citizens, living then, and the ones to be born later on.

Crispus Attucks was practically unknown at the time, so his funeral was held from Faneuil Hall. He was buried in the famous Granary Burying ground on Tremont Street. This monument, erected on Boston Common, was built to honor and commemorate all patriots who died in the Boston Massacre. I would have you bear in mind, however, that this even occurred five (5) years and three months before the Battle of Bunker Hill; six years and four months before the Continental Congress at Philadelphia released the Immortal Declaration of Independence, and broke the Liberty Bell, proclaiming to the World "that all men are created equal". Two things Crispus Attucks did at Boston, March 5, 1770:

(1) He firmly established himself as a man of Valor, Fortitude, and Bold Enterprise. He believed in that most precious American Heritage of Freedom.

(2) He made the Down-Payment on Liberty and Freedom for all members of his racial group who were to live after him in this fair land as American Citizens. Crispus Attucks made the Down-Payment for you and me at Boston when he died with a stick in his hand.

## NEGROES IN AMERICA

Today we have close to twenty million Negroes who call America home. We have been here just as long as anybody else. We have truly paid a very dear price to stay here.



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