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Thomas Hutchinson

Thomas Hutchinson was born in Boston, Massachusetts on September 9, 1711. After living a long busy life, he died in London, England on June 3, 1780. He was a Loyalist that played a huge role in enforcing British policies during events leading up to the American Revolution. He was also a talented colonial historian.

Hutchinson was the son of a wealthy merchant and gave his all to his business before he started his career in the public. He was the royal governor of the British North American Province of Massachusetts. He advanced in politics, becoming a member of the state council (1749-1766), Chief justice of the Superior Court (1760-1769), and Lieutenant governor (1758-1771). Thomas Hutchinson continued to be a faithful Loyalist. In 1763, when they were discussing the Sugar Act, Thomas was sent to England on behalf of the colony’s disagreement to the proposal. Protest followed and Hutchinson was in agreement with the Otises (who around this time began using the phrase “no taxation without representation” that the law hurt the economy in Massachusetts.

Thomas Hutchinson enforced British Policies. During the time of the Boston Tea Party

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in 1770, Thomas was the acting governor. He felt it was his duty to enforce the British law, which made him become very unpopular. As relationships between the Colonies and the British seemed to get worse, he was not a supporter of the Stamp Act of 1765. It was a direct tax on the British colonies in America requiring all printed materials, such as legal documents, magazines, newspapers, and even playing cards to be printed on stamped paper. He believed it should be revoked. It was later revoked and parliament decided to pass a new tax called the Townsend Act. The Townsend Act was passed by the British Parliament in 1767. It taxed goods that were imported by the British Parliament. The colonists saw this as an abuse of power. Tensions with Great Britain grew as they got closer to the start of the American Revolutionary War.

Even though Thomas Hutchinson led a very active life in politics, he was also a well known historian. A historian is someone who studies, analyzes, and writes about the past. During a span of about three years, Hutchinson put together about three volumes of research. The first two volumes were mainly about the history of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. They were published in 1764 and in 1767. After his death, a third volume was published about his time as a governor. He also published a piece on the history of the Hutchinson family.

Thomas Hutchinson was a faithful Loyalist that did what he thought was right. He didn’t always agree with the different laws being passed and he didn’t always make everyone happy. He ended up leaving Massachusetts and spent the rest of his life in England until he died.

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