

# BOSTON TEA PARTY: A Short Play

## Characters:

1. Samuel Adams
2. Governor Hutchinson
3. Francis Rotch (representative of Dartmouth owner)
4. Admiral Montague
5. Esther de Berdt Reed
6. Sons of Liberty
7. The Ladies Association (Edenton Ladies Tea Party)
8. Narrator

## Props:

1. Chest/Box
2. Tea
3. “Mohawk Indian” costume
4. Table
5. Hatchets

Narrator: It is December 13, 1773 in Boston, Massachusetts. Samuel Adams has called a town meeting with the Sons of Liberty.

Samuel Adams: Mr. Rotch, we have called this meeting to warn you of the impending destruction of your cargo. For some time, we have protested the unfair taxes on sugar, paper, tea, and the like. I speak for all colonists, when I say, “We refuse to accept your tea.” Send it back to England. We prefer Liberty Tea!

Sons of Liberty: (*Cheer*)

Francis Rotch: Mr. Adams, I am required to unload this shipment of tea and return with the money due England.

Samuel Adams: If the *Dartmouth* docks in Griffin’s Wharf, all cargo will be destroyed!

Sons of Liberty: (*Cheer*)

Samuel Adams: Mr. Rotch, I will accompany you to the Custom's House, so that you may ask for a clearance to return to England.

Sons of Liberty: (*Chant Loudly*) Liberty Tea, Liberty Tea, Liberty Tea!

Narrator: While Samuel Adams and Francis Rotch meet with the Customs agent, women in the colonies also participate in the boycott. Although women were not allowed to become actively involved in politics, they had their own "tea party" . . . The Edenton Ladies Tea Party.

Esther de Berdt Reed: Welcome to the Ladies Association.

Ladies Association: (*Applause*)

Esther de Berdt Reed: I would like to encourage all of you to continue your efforts to boycott the teas sent from England. I realize that it has become a difficult choice because the British India Tea Co. has lowered its prices to compete with the tea that we have been purchasing from the Dutch India Tea Co. We must support our husbands and our colony in this matter. Continue to drink Liberty Tea!

Ladies Association: (*Applause*)

Esther de Berdt Reed: Please sign this contract, which states that we agree not to purchase British Tea.

Narrator: Francis Rotch was unsuccessful in his attempts to obtain a clearance to return with the cargo back to England. While Samuel Adams went back to the meetinghouse to organize the Sons of Liberty, Francis Rotch met with Governor Hutchinson.

Governor Hutchinson: Good evening, Mr. Rotch.

Francis Rotch: Good evening, Governor.  
(*Shake hands*)

Francis Rotch: I beg your pardon for this disturbance, however I am left with no other alternatives.

Governor Hutchinson: I presume this pertains to your shipment of teas to Griffin's Wharf.

Francis Rotch: Yes, sir. If I do not receive a clearance to return to England with the tea, the colonists will destroy the cargo. And I may not leave the tea in the harbor without receiving what is due England.

Governor Hutchinson: I am afraid I can be of no help. The orders are to drop the shipment of tea and collect the duties. This is what you must do. The only other option is to leave your cargo with the *Castle William* ship.

Francis Rotch: I thank you for your offer, but I cannot accept it. Good evening to you.

*(Francis Rotch leaves)*

Governor Hutchinson: *(talking aloud, to himself)*: I disagree with these taxes England is imposing on us, but there is little we can do to stop them. The colonists are only going to make matters worse.

Narrator: It is now December 16, 1773, and Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty have organized a final meeting before their protest.

Samuel Adams: Mr. Rotch, what will be your decision? Return to England with the shipment or face destruction of your cargo?

Francis Rotch: Mr. Adams, I was not able to obtain a clearance to leave the Boston Harbor. I have no choice but to deliver the tea and collect the taxes.

Samuel Adams: This meeting can do no more to save our country.

Sons of Liberty: *(Burst into the meeting, dressed like Mohawk Indians)*

Samuel Adams: The Mohawks are coming! Hurrah for Griffin's Wharf! Boston Harbor a teapot tonight.

Narrator: The Sons of Liberty dressed as Mohawk Indians boarded the *Dartmouth* ship, opened the crates of tea, and threw the Darjeeling Tea overboard! All the while, British Admiral Montague spied on the patriots.

Sons of Liberty: (*Throw the tea overboard, i.e. the classroom.*)

Narrator: (*After the tea is thrown into the harbor, continue speaking*) When the Sons of Liberty finished their raid of the ship, they continued home, all the while trying to hide their identity.

Admiral Montague: (*As the Sons of Liberty pass by him*) Well Boys, you have had a fine, pleasant evening for your Indian caper haven't you? But mind, you have got to pay the fiddler, yet.

Narrator: Montague's words were ominous for the patriots. The party was indeed over for Boston.