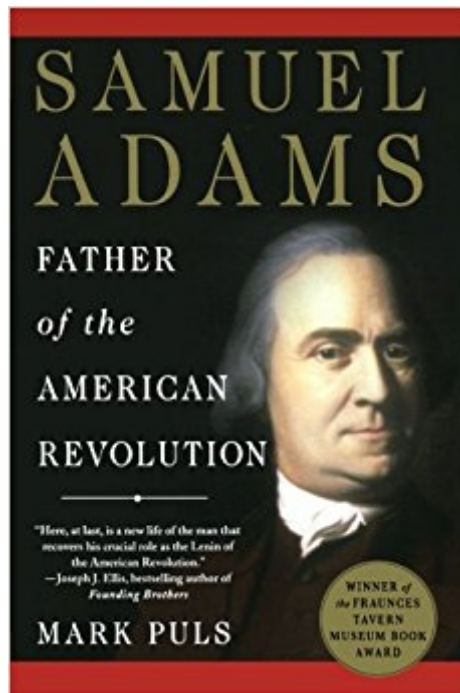




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Samuel Adams: Father Of The American Revolution



Synopsis

Winner of the 2007 Fraunces Tavern Museum Book Award! Samuel Adams is perhaps the most unheralded and overshadowed of the founding fathers, yet without him there would have been no American Revolution. A genius at devising civil protests and political maneuvers that became a trademark of American politics, Adams astutely forced Britain into coercive military measures that ultimately led to the irreversible split in the empire. His remarkable political career addresses all the major issues concerning America's decision to become a nation -- from the notion of taxation without representation to the Declaration of Independence. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams all acknowledged that they built our nation on Samuel Adams' foundations. Now, in this riveting biography, his story is finally told and his crucial place in American history is fully recognized.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Mark Puls' Samuel Adams: Father of the American Revolution is a quick read. It provides a useful sketch of one of the Revolution's major figures--Samuel Adams. The book takes a chronological perspective, beginning with Adams' childhood and the experiences with his father, a well regarded local businessman (including owning a malt shop) and community leader (becoming a deacon in his church and a member of the legislature). The story continues with his education and efforts to make a life for himself. He was not overly ambitious for economic success and, after his father's death, essentially saw the family brewery go bankrupt. Nonetheless, he hustled and was able to make

ends meet, although times were often tough for him and his family. Early on, Sam Adams became discontented with aspects of the Massachusetts colony's relationship with England, the King, and Parliament. He was one of the leading agitators in the 1760s and 1770s. He was developer of several innovations, such as the Committees of Correspondence throughout the colonies, a mechanism to enhance communication across boundaries. He was involved in many of the key activities leading to the Declaration of Independence and the Revolutionary War, including urging a Continental Congress, fighting against English taxes, seeking the naming of George Washington as the general officer to lead the colonial forces in the siege of Boston. The biography continues with his role in development of the first constitution of the United States, the Articles of Confederation, as well as his part in the ratification of the Constitution itself. This is a serviceable biography. However, it does have a couple problematic aspects.

When you read about most revolutionary war figures - Washington, Hamilton, Adams, Jefferson or Madison - their stories more or less start with the American Revolution. Even Ben Franklin, a member of an earlier generation, did not jump on the Independence wagon very early or very easily. Samuel Adams, however, was the most important figure in the early Independence movement and quite rightfully deserves the title Father of the American Revolution. Mark Puls brief (less than 250 pages of text) biography shows how important Adams was. From an early age, Adams started thinking of independence from England. In 1764, he unsuccessfully opposed the Sugar Act, but laid the foundation for his battle against the 1765 Stamp Act. Showing both good organizational ability and political savvy, he was able to successfully organize a boycott that forced Parliament to repeal the measure. Although it would take a decade to take root, this was really the first blow for independence; it began harder and harder for the British to deal with colonial unrest. Eventually, after acts like the Boston Massacre and Boston Tea Party, the rift widened and reconciliation, though attempted, was clearly impossible. During the Revolutionary War, Adams played key roles behind the scenes. Although not an author of the Declaration of Independence, his ideas permeated the document; he also helped construct the Articles of Confederation. After the war, however, other figures moved into the spotlight, a role he was fine with giving up. In ways Samuel Adams was an idealist, willing to sacrifice his health and financial well-being to accomplish his objectives. He was also, however, a pragmatist, able to work behind the scenes to meet his goals.

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