



Rebellions & Revolutions Cards

St John Rebellion

1733-1734

Causes: Natural

A series of storms led the enslaved peoples to flee to the hills. Whilst there they discussed their freedom.

A plague of locusts ate crops so all inhabitants suffered food shortages. However, the enslaved people suffered more than most. A severe drought meant a lack of drinking water.

St John Rebellion

1733-1734

Causes: Enslaved people wanting their freedom.

From the moment enslaved people were captured most of them were looking for ways to gain their freedom.

St John Rebellion

1733-1734

Causes: Increased severity of punishments

People who 'owned' enslaved people knew they were outnumbered and worried that they would be killed if the enslaved people rebelled.

The masters believed that by increasing the severity of punishments the enslaved people would be less likely to rebel. However, this had the opposite effect as many enslaved people now believed they had no choice but to rebel.

St John Rebellion

1733-1734

Leaders : Prince Aquashie

An Akwamu leader who was captured and sold into slavery. He was able to communicate with other enslaved peoples and maroons. He led the enslaved troops which took over the fort and fired cannon which was the signal to start the rebellion.

St John Rebellion

1733-1734

Leaders : King June

An Akwamu leader who was captured and sold into slavery. He was able to communicate with other enslaved people and he was recognised by kinspeople who were willing to follow his instructions.

St John Rebellion

1733-1734

Leaders : Breffu

A Queen amongst enslaved people. It is believed she was separated from her children and took revenge on the white slave owners to be reunited with her children.



Rebellions & Revolutions Cards

St John Rebellion

1733-1734

European Involvement:

At the time of the rebellion, the island of St John was under Danish rule. However, the Danes were absentee landowners. Only 6 fulltime soldiers were left to guard the island, and there were only about 200 white people altogether, compared to about 1000 enslaved people.

St John Rebellion

1733-1734

European Involvement:

Fearing the spread of rebellion to other slave colonies Swiss soldiers were sent to put down the rebellion. Many Swiss banks had invested in French businesses that relied on slavery. The Swiss could not afford the loss of money invested.

St John Rebellion

1733-1734

European Involvement:

Fearing the spread of rebellion to their slave colonies the French sent fulltime soldiers to St John to put down the rebellion. These soldiers hunted down the ring leaders of the rebellion and the maroons.

St John Rebellion

1733-1734

How it Ended:

Defeat for the enslaved rebels. Some enslaved people helped their white masters to escape who sailed to nearby islands to get military help.

St John Rebellion

1733-1734

How it Ended:

In Brown's Bay St John, seeing that their rebellion had failed; 23 of the leading rebels, including Breffu committed suicide rather than return to slavery.

St John Rebellion

1733-1734

How it Ended:

Even with the arrival of several hundred French and Swiss trained troops it took until August 1734 before the rebellion was over. It had started in November 1733. A full investigation was carried out and its findings pointed to a lack of supervision of the enslaved people and a lack of troops on the island.



Rebellions & Revolutions Cards

Haitian Revolution

1791-1804

Causes:

Different groups in Haiti believed they could take advantage of the French Revolution to increase their power. The poorest whites believed they could run the island for their own benefit. Free people of colour wanted an end to racial discrimination. The largest plantation owners, who were white, wanted to continue slavery. Conflict among free people made space for enslaved people to fight for their freedom.

Haitian Revolution

1791-1804

Causes:

Enslaved people wanting their freedom.
From the moment enslaved people were captured most of them were looking for ways to gain their freedom.

Haitian Revolution

1791-1804

Causes: French Revolution

The French revolution changed France with a promise of Equality, Brotherhood and Freedom.

The enslaved people of the French-controlled colony of Saint-Domingue believed that these promises included them. So, they started a rebellion to gain their freedom.

Haitian Revolution

1791-1804

Leader: Toussaint Louverture

Born into slavery in the colony of Saint Domingue. Toussaint gained his freedom as a younger man and had tried several different jobs prior to the revolution.

By the time of the revolution Toussaint was 50 years old and became a general in the revolutionary forces and the leader of the colony. He is now recognised

Haitian Revolution

1791-1804

Leader: Vincent Oge

Vincent Ogé was a wealthy educated mixed race aristocrat. He believed the French Revolution had given him rights and freedoms, but the white Governor of Haiti refused these. He led an armed group which defeated professional soldiers. He did not support the end of slavery, but wanted rights for free people of colour.

Haitian Revolution

1791-1804

Leader: Jean-Jaques Dessalines

Was a black French commander who fought for France and defeated the British and Spanish in Haiti. He then changed sides and fought for Haitian independence. He led the Haitian armies that defeated the French in 1803, after Toussaint Louverture was sent to France by French forces.



Rebellions & Revolutions Cards

Haitian Revolution

1791-1804

European Involvement:

British were at war with France and attempted to take control of Saint Domingue. After the loss of over 10,000 soldiers fighting against the enslaved rebels, they gave up. Instead they blockaded the main port from Haiti to economically strangle France. Britain did not want to support the slave rebellion in fear of similar slave revolution spreading to their slave islands.

Haitian Revolution

1791-1804

European Involvement:

5,000 Polish soldiers had been sent by French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte to put the slave revolution down.

After seeing the terrible conditions that the enslaved people had to put up with the remaining Poles switched sides and became rebels helping the enslaved peoples to victory.

Haitian Revolution

1791-1804

European Involvement:

Saint Domingue was a French colony dominated by slavery. The French revolution sparked the revolt. French troops were used to put down the original revolution, but then agreed to end slavery to get the enslaved armies onto their side.

Later, Napoleon Bonaparte of France decided to reimpose slavery. He sent a new army from France, but it was defeated by the Haitian forces.

Haitian Revolution

1791-1804

How It Ended:

Toussaint Louverture became the dominant leader of the Haitian forces. His armies worked with French revolutionary forces to defeat the British and Spanish.

However, he was eventually captured by Napoleon Bonaparte's men and died in a French prison in 1803.

Haitian Revolution

1791-1804

How It Ended:

A new French leadership wanted to reinstate slavery. A fresh revolutionary impetus under the new leadership of Jean-Jacques Dessalines in 1802 brought victory, independence and freedom for all enslaved people in Haiti on 1 January 1804.

The revolution created the first Black Republic in the Western World and the first country to fully abolish slavery.

Christmas Rebellion

1831-1832

Causes:

Enslaved people wanting their freedom. From the moment enslaved people were captured most of them were looking for ways to gain their freedom.



Rebellions & Revolutions Cards

Christmas Rebellion

1831-1832

Causes:

The failure of amelioration
British policies in the 1820s were supposed to 'ameliorate' slavery (make it better), but enslaved people still experienced violence and lots of restrictions on their lives.

They knew about abolitionist activity in Britain and believed the British government would listen to their demands for freedom.

Christmas Rebellion

1831-1832

Causes:

Conflict over religion
Many enslaved people in Jamaica joined churches led by missionaries in the 1820s and early 1830s.

Enslavers often refused to allow them to go to church services. This led to conflict and resentment.

Christmas Rebellion

1831-1832

Leader:

Deacon Samuel Sharpe

Samuel Sharpe was born enslaved. He became a Baptist Deacon and spread the Christian gospels amongst the enslaved workers on plantations. He believed that the outlawing of slavery across the British Empire was near. He thought a general strike of enslaved people at the sugar harvest time would quicken the end of slavery. The strikers also burned down sugar fields and houses, and attacked enslavers.

Christmas Rebellion

1831-1832

Leader:

Colonel Johnson

An enslaved person who led the Black Regiment which defeated the local military in Montego Bay. They went from plantation to plantation encouraging enslaved people to strike, and join their war for freedom.

Christmas Rebellion

1831-1832

European Involvement:

The rebellion took place in Jamaica, a British colony. The leader of the British forces in Jamaica was Sir Willoughby Cotton an experienced military commander.

Using warships and soldiers, he quelled the rebellion in 10 days.

Christmas Rebellion

1831-1832

How It Ended:

British Abolitionists were outraged at the response to the Christmas rebellion. They doubled their efforts and forced the passing of the 1833 Abolition of Slavery Act.

This led to the freeing of all slaves in the British Empire (except in India) by 1838. This act also compensated slave owners with money for their loss of enslaved property.



Rebellions & Revolutions Cards

Christmas Rebellion

1831-1832

How It Ended:

Defeat for the striking enslaved people. Around 200 enslaved people were killed by the British military and the Jamaican militia. About another 300 people were executed for their part in the rebellion.

Christmas Rebellion

1831-1832

How It Ended:

Deacon Samuel Sharpe was tried and found guilty of starting a rebellion. Before his execution he said, "I would rather die upon yonder gallows than live my life in slavery."

Christmas Rebellion

1831-1832

How It Ended:

Some churches were burnt down by plantation owners as they believed that missionaries spread the ideas of abolition.

The British Government reimbursed plantation owners on Jamaica for losses incurred during the Christmas rebellion.