Boston Gazette’s Article on the Murder of Christopher Seider

Christopher Seider (here called Snider) was an eleven-year old boy who was part of a mob demonstrating at the home of Ebenezer Richardson, a known Boston loyalist. After the mob broke down Richardson’s front door, he fired a musket into the crowd, killing Seider. The event caused outrage among Boston patriots, and contributed to an atmosphere of tension and hostility in the days leading up to the Boston Massacre two weeks later.

On Thursday last in the Forenoon, a barbarous Murder extended with many aggravating Circumstances, was committed on the Body of a young lad of about eleven Years of Age, Son to Mr. ___ Snider of this Town. A Number of Boys had been diverting themselves with the Exhibition of a Piece of Pageantry near the House of Theopolis Lillie who perhaps at this Juncture of Affairs may with the most Propriety be described by the Name of an IMPORTER — This exhibition naturally occasioned Numbers to assemble, and in a very little Time there was a great Concourse of Persons, especially the younger sort. — One Ebenezer Richardson, who has been many years employed as an under Officer of the Customs, long known by the Name of an INFORMER, and consequently a Person of a most abandoned Character, it seems, took Umbrage at the supposed Indignity offered to the Importer, and soon became a Party to the Affair— He first attempted to demolish the Pageantry, and failing in the attempt, he retired to his House, which was but a few Rods from the Exhibition. Several Persons passing by the House, Richardson, who seemed determined to take this Occasion to make a Disturbance, without the least Provocation, gave them the most opprobrious Language, charging them with Perjury, &c., which raised a Dispute between them—This, it is supposed, occasioned the boys to gather nearer Richardson’s House, and he, thinking he had now a good Colouring to perpetuate the Villainy, threatened to fire upon them, and Swore by GOD that he would make the Place too hot for some of them before Night, and that he would make Lane through them if they did not go away. Soon after, a Number of Brickbats or Stones were thrown among the People from Richardson’s House, but the Witnesses, who were sworn before the Magistrates, declared that it did not appear to them that till then any Sort of Attack was made by the People on the House. This, however, brought on a Skirmish, and Richardson discharged his Piece, loaded with Swan Shot, at the Multitude, by which the unhappy young
Person above-mentioned was mortally wounded, having since died of his Wounds — A Youth, Son to Captain John Gore, was also wounded in one of his Hands and in both his Thighs, by which his life was endangered, but he is likely to soon recover of his Wounds.

…We are assured that not less than eleven Shot were found in the Body of the unfortunate Boy, who was inhumanly murdered by the infamous Informer on Thursday last.

It is hoped the unexpected and melancholy Death of young Snider will be a Means for the future of preventing any, but more especially the Soldiery, from being too free in the Use of their Instruments of Death.

Source: Boston Gazette, February 26, 1770