

A  
NARRATIVE,  
OF THE  
EXCURSION and RAVAGES  
OF THE  
KING'S TROOPS

Under the Command of General GAGE,  
On the nineteenth of APRIL, 1775.

TOGETHER WITH THE  
DEPOSITIONS

Taken by ORDER of CONGRESS,

To support the Truth of it.

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Published by AUTHORITY.

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MASSACHUSETTS-BAY :

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THE  
JOURNALS  
OF EACH  
PROVINCIAL CONGRESS  
OF  
MASSACHUSETTS

IN 1774 AND 1775,

AND OF THE  
COMMITTEE OF SAFETY,

WITH  
AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNTY CONVENTIONS—NARRATIVES OF  
THE EVENTS OF THE NINETEENTH OF APRIL, 1775—PAPERS  
RELATING TO TICONDEROGA AND CROWN POINT,

AND

OTHER DOCUMENTS,

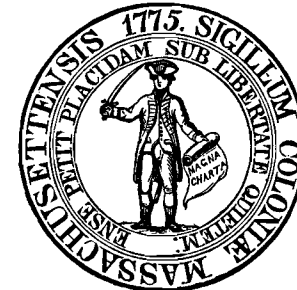
ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

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PUBLISHED AGREEABLY TO A RESOLVE PASSED MARCH 10, 1837,

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF

WILLIAM LINCOLN.



**Boston:**

DUTTON AND WENTWORTH, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.

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1838.



*Battle of Lexington*

NARRATIVES  
OF THE  
EXCURSION OF THE KING'S TROOPS,  
APRIL 19, 1775.

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IN PROVINCIAL CONGRESS, WATERTOWN, MAY 22, 1775.

*Resolved*, That the following narrative of the excursion and ravages of the king's troops, under the command of General Gage, on the nineteenth of April last, together with the depositions taken by order of the Congress, to support the truth of it, be sent to the press for publication.

SAMUEL FREEMAN, *Secretary*.

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A NARRATIVE OF THE EXCURSION AND RAVAGES OF THE KING'S TROOPS,  
UNDER THE COMMAND OF GENERAL GAGE, ON THE NINETEENTH OF  
APRIL, 1775: TOGETHER WITH THE DEPOSITIONS TAKEN BY ORDER OF  
CONGRESS TO SUPPORT THE TRUTH OF IT. PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY.<sup>1</sup>

ON the nineteenth day of April, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five, a day to be remembered by all Americans of the present generation, and which ought, and doubtless will be handed down to ages yet unborn, the troops of Britain, unprovoked, shed the blood of sundry of the loyal American subjects of the British king in the field of Lexington. Early in the morning of said day, a detachment of the forces under the command of General Gage, stationed at Boston, attacked a small party of the inhabitants of Lexington and some other towns adjacent, the detachment consisting of about nine hundred men, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Smith: The inhabitants of Lexington and the other towns were about one hundred, some with and some without fire-arms, who had collected upon information that the detachment had secretly marched from Boston the preceding night, and landed on Phipps's Farm in Cambridge, and were proceeding on their way with a brisk pace towards Concord, as the inhabitants supposed, to take or destroy a quantity of stores deposited there for the use of the colony; sundry peace-

(1) This narrative reported by a committee of which Doct. Church was chairman, and the depositions taken by the committee of which Mr. Gerry was first named, with those subsequently collected, were printed, at Worcester, by Isaiah Thomas, in May, 1775.

able inhabitants having the same night been taken, held by force, and otherwise abused on the road, by some officers of General Gage's army, which caused a just alarm, and a suspicion that some fatal design was immediately to be put in execution against them. This small party of the inhabitants were so far from being disposed to commit hostilities against the troops of their sovereign, that unless attacked, they were determined to be peaceable spectators of this extraordinary movement; immediately on the approach of Colonel Smith with the detachment under his command, they dispersed; but the detachment, seeming to thirst for blood, wantonly rushed on, and first began the hostile scene by firing on this small party, by which they killed eight men on the spot and wounded several others before any guns were fired upon the troops by our men. Not contented with this effusion of blood, as if malice had occupied their whole souls, they continued the fire, until all of this small party who escaped the dismal carnage were out of the reach of their fire. Colonel Smith, with the detachment, then proceeded to Concord, where a part of this detachment again made the first fire upon some of the inhabitants of Concord and the adjacent towns, who were collected at a bridge upon this just alarm, and killed two of them and wounded several others, before any of the provincials there had done one hostile act. Then the provincials, roused with zeal for the liberties of their country, finding life and every thing dear and valuable at stake, assumed their native valor and returned the fire, and the engagement on both sides began. Soon after, the British troops retreated towards Charlestown, having first committed violence and waste on public and private property, and on their retreat were joined by another detachment of General Gage's troops, consisting of about a thousand men, under the command of Earl Percy, who continued the retreat; the engagement lasted through the day; and many were killed and wounded on each side, though the loss on the part of the British troops far exceeded that of the provincials. The devastation committed by the British troops on their retreat, the whole of the way from Concord to Charlestown, is almost beyond description; such as plundering and burning of dwelling-houses and other buildings, driving into the street women in child-bed, killing old men in their houses unarmed. Such scenes of desolation would be a reproach to the perpetrators, even if committed by the most barbarous nations, how much more when done by Britons famed for humanity and tenderness: And all this because these colonies will not submit to the iron yoke of arbitrary power.

*The following depositions were taken and authenticated as soon as possible after the action, to prove and elucidate the truth of facts relative thereto.*

We, Solomon Brown, Jonathan Loring, and Elijah Sanderson, all of lawful age, and of Lexington, in the county of Middlesex and colony of the Massachusetts Bay, in New England, do testify and declare, that on the evening of the eighteenth of April, instant, being on the road between Lexington and Concord, and all of us mounted on horses, we were, about ten of the clock,

suddenly surprized by nine persons, whom we took to be regular officers, who rode up to us, mounted and armed, each holding a pistol in his hand, and after putting pistols to our breasts, and seizing the bridles of our horses, they swore, that if we stirred another step we should be all dead men, upon which we surrendered ourselves. They detained us until two o'clock the next morning, in which time they searched and greatly abused us; having first inquired about the magazine at Concord, whether any guards were posted there, and whether the bridges were up; and said four or five regiments of regulars would be in possession of the stores soon; they then brought us back to Lexington, cut the horses' bridles, and girths, turned them loose, and then left us.

SOLOMON BROWN,  
JONATHAN LORING,  
ELIJAH SANDERSON.

Lexington, April 25th, 1775.

MIDDLESEX, ss. APRIL 25TH, 1775.

Jonathan Loring, Solomon Brown, and Elijah Sanderson, being duly cautioned to testify the whole truth, made solemn oath to the truth of the above deposition by them subscribed: before us,

WILLIAM READ,  
JOSIAH JOHNSON, } *Justices of the Peace.*  
WILLIAM STICKNEY, }

I, Elijah Sanderson, above named, do further testify and declare, that I was on Lexington common the morning of the nineteenth of April, aforesaid, having been dismissed by the officers above mentioned, and saw a large body of regular troops advancing towards Lexington company, many of whom were then dispersing, I heard one of the regulars, whom I took to be an officer, say, "damn them—we will have them," and immediately the regulars shouted aloud, run and fired on the Lexington company, which did not fire a gun before the regulars discharged on them; eight of the Lexington company were killed, while they were dispersing, and at a considerable distance from each other, and many wounded, and although a spectator, I narrowly escaped with my life.

ELIJAH SANDERSON.

Lexington, April 25th, 1775.

MIDDLESEX, ss. APRIL 25TH, 1775.

Elijah Sanderson, above named, being duly cautioned to testify the whole truth, made solemn oath to the truth of the above deposition by him subscribed: before us,

WILLIAM READ,  
JOSIAH JOHNSON, } *Justices of the Peace.*  
WILLIAM STICKNEY, }

I, Thomas Rice Willard, of lawful age, do testify and declare, that being in the house of Daniel Harrington, of Lexington, on the nineteenth instant, in the morning, about half an hour before sunrise, I looked out at the window of said house and saw, as I suppose, about four hundred regulars in one body, coming up the road and marching toward the north part of the common back of the meeting-house of said Lexington: and as soon as said regulars were against the east end of the meeting-house, the commanding officer said something, what I know not: but upon that, the regulars ran till they came within about eight or nine rods of about an hundred of the militia of Lexington, who were collected on said common, at which time the militia of Lexington dispersed; then the officers made an huzza, and the private soldiers succeeded them; directly after this, an officer rode before the regulars, to the other side of the body, and hollowed after the militia of said Lexington, and said "lay down your arms—damn you—why don't you lay down your arms?" and that there was not a gun fired till the militia of Lexington were dispersed: and further saith not,

THOMAS RICE WILLARD.

MIDDLESEX, ss. APRIL 23D, 1775.

The within named Thomas Rice Willard, personally appeared, and after due caution to testify the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, made solemn oath to the truth of the within deposition, by him subscribed: before us,

WILLIAM READ,  
JONATHAN HASTINGS, } *Justices of the Peace.*  
DUNCAN INGRAHAM,

Lexington, 25th of April, 1775.

Simon Winship, of Lexington, in the county of Middlesex, and province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, being of lawful age, testifieth and saith, that on the nineteenth of April, instant, about four o'clock in the morning, as he was passing the public road in said Lexington, peaceably and unarmed, about two miles and a half distant from the meeting-house in said Lexington, he was met by a body of the king's regular troops, and being stopped by some officers of said troops, was commanded to dismount; upon asking why he must dismount, he was obliged by force to quit his horse, and ordered to march in the midst of the body, and being examined whether he had been warning the minute men, he answered no, but had been out and was then returning to his father's. Said Winship further testifies, that he marched with said troops until he came within about half a quarter of a mile of said meeting-house, where an officer commanded the troops to halt, and then to prime and load; this being done, the said troops marched on till they came within a few rods of Capt. Parker and company, who were partly collected on the place of parade, when said Winship observed an officer at the head of said troops, flourishing his sword, and with a loud voice

giving the word *fire!* which was instantly followed by a discharge of arms from said regular troops; and said Winship is positive, and in the most solemn manner declares, that there was no discharge of arms on either side, till the word fire was given by said officer as above.

SIMON WINSHIP.

MIDDLESEX, ss. APRIL 25TH, 1775.

Simon Winship, above named, appeared, and after due caution to testify the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, made solemn oath to the truth of the above deposition, by him subscribed: before us,

WILLIAM READ, } *Justices of the Peace.*  
JOSIAH JOHNSON, }

Lexington, April 25th, 1775.

I, John Parker, of lawful age, and commander of the militia in Lexington, do testify and declare, that on the nineteenth instant, in the morning, about one of the clock, being informed, that there were a number of the regular officers riding up and down the road, stopping and insulting people as they passed the road, and also informed that a number of the regular troops were on their march from Boston, in order to take the province stores at Concord, I ordered our militia to meet on the common in said Lexington, to consult what to do, and concluded not to be discovered, nor meddle, or make with said regular troops, if they should approach, unless they should insult or molest us; and upon their sudden approach, I immediately ordered our militia to disperse and not to fire. Immediately, said troops made their appearance, and rushing furiously on, fired upon and killed eight of our party, without receiving any provocation therefor from us.

JOHN PARKER.

MIDDLESEX, ss. APRIL 25TH, 1775.

The above named John Parker, personally appeared, and after being duly cautioned to declare the whole truth, made solemn oath to the truth of the above deposition, by him subscribed: before us,

WILLIAM READ,  
JOSHUA JOHNSON, } *Justices of the Peace.*  
WILLIAM STICKNEY,

Lexington, April 24th, 1775.

I, John Robbins, being of lawful age, do testify and say, that on the nineteenth instant, the company under the command of Captain John Parker, being drawn up sometime before sunrise, on the green or common, and I being in the front rank, there suddenly appeared a number of the king's troops, about a thousand as I thought, at the distance of about sixty or sev-

enty yards from us, huzzaing, and on a quick pace towards us, with three officers in their front on horseback, and on full gallop towards us; the foremost of which cried, "throw down your arms!—ye villains!—ye rebels!" upon which, said company dispersing, the foremost of the three officers ordered their men saying, "fire!—by God!—fire!" at which moment we received a very heavy and close fire from them; at which instant, being wounded, I fell, and several of our men were shot dead by me. Capt. Parker's men I believe, had not then fired a gun: and further the deponent saith not,

JOHN ROBBINS.

MIDDLESEX, ss. APRIL 24TH, 1775.

John Robbins, within named, appeared, and being duly cautioned to testify the truth, and nothing but the truth, made solemn oath to the truth of the within deposition, subscribed by his special order, he being so maimed and wounded, that he thought he could neither write his name, nor make his mark: before us,

WILLIAM READ, }  
 JOSIAH JOHNSON, } *Justices of the Peace.*

We, Benjamin Tidd, of Lexington, and Joseph Abbot, of Lincoln, in the county of Middlesex, and colony of the Massachusetts Bay, in New England, of lawful age, do testify and declare, that on the morning of the nineteenth of April, instant, about five o'clock, being on Lexington common and mounted on horses, we saw a body of regular troops marching up to the Lexington company, which was then dispersing; soon after, the regulars fired, first a few guns, which we took to be pistols, from some of the regulars who were mounted on horses; and then the said regulars fired a volley or two, before any guns were fired by the Lexington company. Our horses immediately started and we rode off: and further say not,

BENJAMIN TIDD,  
 JOSEPH ABBOTT.

Lexington, April 25th, 1775.

MIDDLESEX, ss. APRIL 25TH, 1775.

Benjamin Tidd, and Joseph Abbott, above named, being duly cautioned to testify the whole truth, made solemn oath to the truth of the above deposition, by them subscribed: before us,

WILLIAM READ, }  
 JOSIAH JOHNSON, } *Justices of the Peace.*  
 WILLIAM STICKNEY, }

We, Nathaniel Mulliken, Phillip Russell, Moses Harrington, Jun., Thomas and Daniel Harrington, William Grimer, William Tidd, Isaac Hastings, Jonas Stone, Jun., James Wyman, Thaddeus Harrington, John Chandler,

Joshua Reed, Jun., Joseph Simonds, Phineas Smith, John Chandler, Jun., Reuben Lock, Joel Viles, Nathan Reed, Samuel Tidd, Benjamin Lock, Thomas Winship, Simeon Snow, John Smith, Moses Harrington, 3d, Joshua Reed, Ebenezer Parker, John Harrington, Enoch Willington, John Hosmer, Isaac Green, Phineas Stearns, Isaac Durant, and Thomas Headley, Jun., all of lawful age, and inhabitants of Lexington, in the county of Middlesex, and colony of the Massachusetts Bay, in New England, do testify and declare, that on the nineteenth of April, instant, about one or two o'clock in the morning, being informed, that several officers of the regulars, had, the evening before, been riding up and down the road, and had detained and insulted the inhabitants passing the same; and also understanding, that a body of regulars were marching from Boston, towards Concord, with intent, as it was supposed, to take the stores belonging to the colony in that town, we were alarmed, and having met at the place of our company's parade, were dismissed by our captain, John Parker, for the present, with orders to be ready to attend at the beat of the drum. We further testify and declare, that about five o'clock in the morning, hearing our drum beat, we proceeded towards the parade, and soon found, that a large body of troops were marching towards us; some of our company were coming up to the parade, and others had reached it; at which time, the company began to disperse; whilst our backs were turned on the troops, we were fired on by them, and a number of our men were instantly killed and wounded. Not a gun was fired by any person in our company on the regulars, to our knowledge, before they fired on us, and they continued firing until we had all made our escape.

NATHANIEL MULLIKEN,	JOEL VILES,
PHILLIP RUSSELL,	NATHAN REED,
MOSES HARRINGTON, JUN.,	SAMUEL TIDD,
THOMAS HARRINGTON,	BENJAMIN LOCK,
DANIEL HARRINGTON,	THOMAS WINSHIP,
WILLIAM GRIMER,	SIMEON SNOW,
WILLIAM TIDD.	JOHN SMITH,
ISAAC HASTINGS,	MOSES HARRINGTON, 3d.,
JONAS STONE, JUN.,	JOSHUA REED,
JAMES WYMAN,	EBENEZER PARKER,
THADDEUS HARRINGTON,	JOHN HARRINGTON,
JOHN CHANDLER,	ENOCH WILLINGTON,
JOSHUA REED, JUN.,	JOHN HOSMER,
JOSEPH SIMONDS,	ISAAC GREEN,
PHINEAS SMITH,	PHINEAS STEARNS,
JOHN CHANDLER, JUN.,	ISAAC DURANT,
REUBEN LOCK,	THOMAS HEADLEY, JUN.

Lexington, April 25th, 1775.

MIDDLESEX, ss. APRIL 25TH, 1775.

Nathaniel Mulliken, Phillip Russell, Moses Harrington, Jun., Thomas

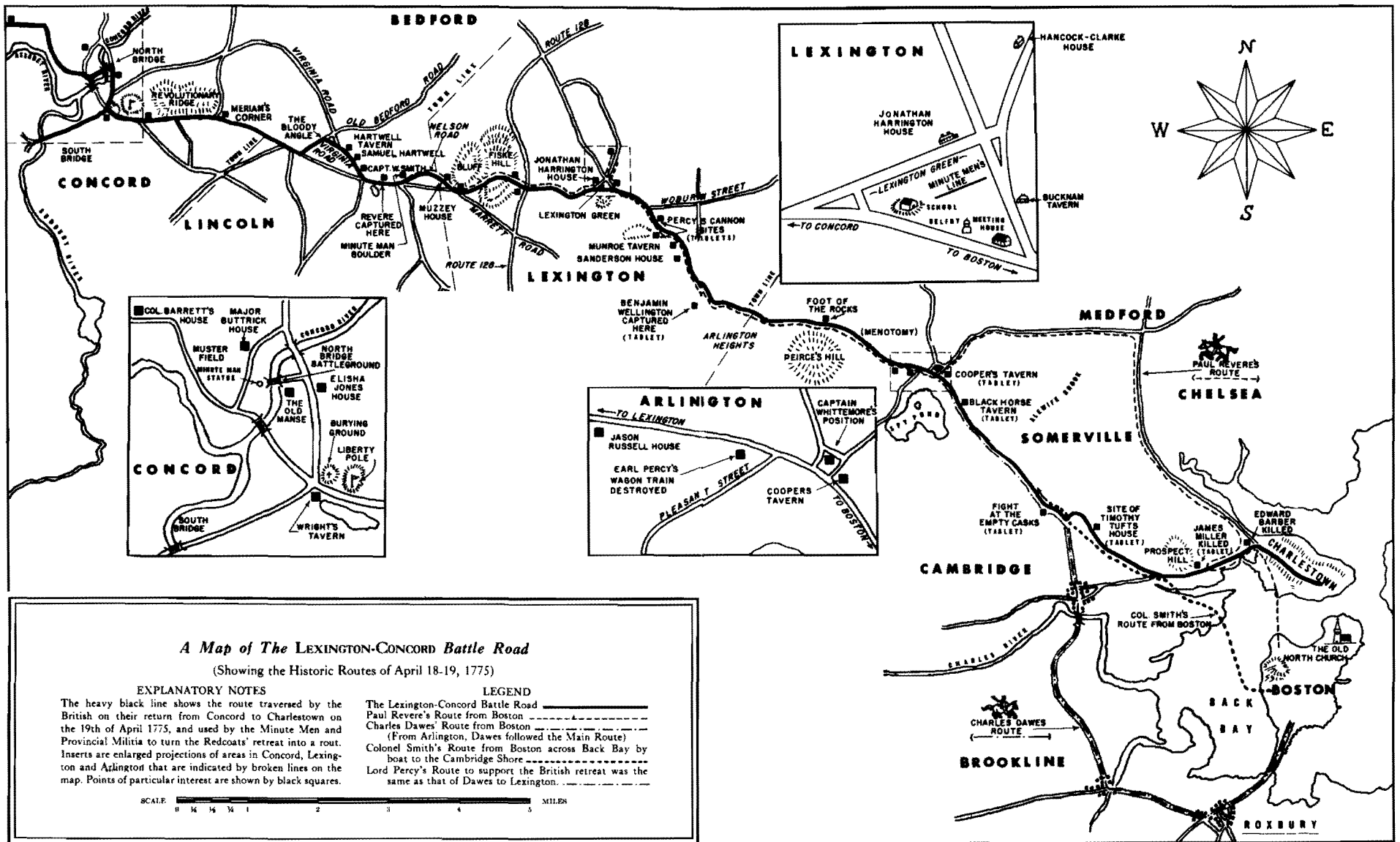
Harrington, Daniel Harrington, William Grimer, William Tidd, Isaac Hastings, Jonas Stone, Jun., James Wyman, Thaddeus Harrington, John Chandler, Joshua Reed, Jun., Joseph Simonds, Phineas Smith, John Chandler, Jun., Reuben Lock, Joel Viles, Nathan Reed, Samuel Tidd, Benjamin Lock, Thomas Winship, Simeon Snow, John Smith, Moses Harrington, 3d, Joshua Reed, Ebenezer Parker, John Harrington, Enoch Willington, John Hosmer, Isaac Green, Phineas Stearns, Isaac Durant, and Thomas Headley, Jun., above named, being duly cautioned to testify the whole truth, made solemn oath to the above deposition, as containing nothing but the truth, as subscribed by them: before us,

WILLIAM REED,	}	<i>Justices of the Peace.</i>
JOSIAH JOHNSON,		
WILLIAM STICKNEY,		

We, Nathaniel Parkhurst, Jonas Parker, John Munroe, Jun., John Winship, Solomon Peirce, John Muzzy, Abner Meads, John Bridge, Jun., Ebenezer Bowman, William Munroe, 3d, Micah Hagar, Samuel Sanderson, Samuel Hastings, and James Brown, of Lexington, in the county of Middlesex, and colony of the Massachusetts Bay, in New England, and all of lawful age, do testify and say, that on the morning of the nineteenth of April, instant, about one or two o'clock, being informed, that a number of regular officers had been riding up and down the road the evening and night preceding, and that some of the inhabitants as they were passing, had been insulted by the officers and stopped by them, and being also informed, that the regular troops, were on their march from Boston, in order, as it was said, to take the colony stores then deposited at Concord, we met on the parade of our company in this town. After the company had collected we were ordered by Capt. John Parker, who commanded us, to disperse for the present, and be ready to attend the beat of the drum, and accordingly the company went into houses near the place of parade. We further testify and say, that about five o'clock in the morning, we attended the beat of our drum, and were formed on the parade. We were faced towards the regulars then marching up to us, and some of our company were coming to the parade, with their backs towards the troops, and others on the parade began to disperse, when the regulars fired on the company before a gun was fired by any of our company on them; they killed eight of our company and wounded several, and continued their fire until we had all made our escape.

NATHANIEL PARKHURST,	JOHN BRIDGE, JUN.,
JONAS PARKER,	EBENEZER BOWMAN,
JOHN MUNROE, JUN.,	WILLIAM MUNROE, 3D.,
JOHN WINSHIP,	MICAH HAGAR,
SOLOMON PEIRCE,	SAMUEL SANDERSON,
JOHN MUZZY,	SAMUEL HASTINGS,
ABNER MEADS,	JAMES BROWN.

Lexington, 25th April, 1775.



*The Lexington-Concord Battle Road extends over a distance of 20 miles from Hanover Street in the heart of Old Boston to the Barrett Farm beside the Assabet River in Concord, 2 miles beyond the North Bridge and the farthest point reached by the British Expeditionary force, on the 19th of April 1775.*

*At Meriam's Corner in Concord began the true Battle Road of the 19th of April 1775. Here the continuous running fight of the afternoon was precipitated when the Redcoats, having proceeded thus far without opposition, hastily fired upon the Reading Militia taking cover around the old Meriam House.*