

Lexington and Concord: Tipping Point of the Revolution

America in Class[®] Lesson

—Readings—

1. The Diary of Matthew Patten, New Hampshire, April 1775, excerpts 2
2. Announcement of the Battle of Lexington and Concord 3-4
(19 April 1775), broadside of the Williamsburg, Virginia,
Committee of Correspondence, 29 April 1775
3. Resolution to resist “force by force” adopted by the Citizens of Cross
Creek, Cumberland County, North Carolina, 20 June 1775 5
4. “The Fate of Blood-Thirsty Oppressors,” sermon of Rev. Jonas Clark, 6-7
Lexington, Massachusetts, on the first anniversary of the Battle of
Lexington and Concord, 19 April 1776, excerpts





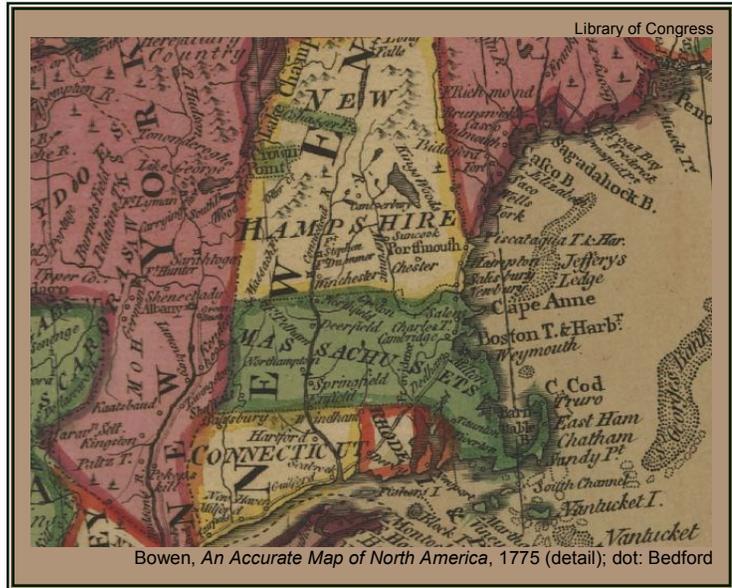
Matthew Patten House, Bedford, New Hampshire, ca. 1903

The Diary of Matthew Patten of Bedford, New Hampshire

April 1775 ■ EXCERPT

18th I made a new handle to our Spade and made a pole to fish at the ponds
 19th I got James Orr to make two hoops for our great Kittle one of them was my iron the other was Sheds and he made part of a chain for my Cannoe of my iron and writ a deed from Alexander McCalley to his son Alexander and I took the acknowledgement unpaid 2/

20th I Recd [received] the Melancholy news in the morning that General Gages troops had fired on our Contrymen at Concord yesterday and had killed a large number of them our town was notified last night We Generay met at the meeting house about 9 of the Clock and the Number of twenty or more went Directly off from the Meeting house to assist them And I came to Sheds and James Orr made me a great wheel Spindle of my Steel and he mended the Ear of a little kittle and finished the chain for my cannoe he found iron for near a quarter of the chain the rest was mine And our John came home from being down to Pentucket and intended to Sett off for our army to morrow morning and our Girls sit up all night bakeing bread and fitting things for him and John Dobbin



21st our John and John Dobbin and my bror [brother] Samuell two oldest sons sett off and joynd Derryfield men and about six from Goffestown and two or 3 more from this town under the comand of Capt John Moor of Derryfield they amounted to the No of 45 in all Sunkook men and two or three others that joined them marched in about an hour after they to 35 there was nine more went along after them belonging to Pennykook or thereabouts and I went to McGregores and I got a pound of Coffie on Credit

Diary of Matthew Patten of Bedford, N. H.: From Seventeen Hundred Fifty-Four to Seventeen Hundred Eighty-Eight, Published by the Town (Concord, NH: Rumford Printing Co., 1903), frontispiece image (Patten house) courtesy of Internet Archive, archive.org.

— Williamsburg, Virginia, Committee of Correspondence —
Announcement of the Battle of Lexington & Concord (19 April 1775), 29 April 1775

W I L L I A M S B U R G, S A T U R D A Y, *April 29, 1775.*

LA T E last night an express arrived from Philadelphia, with the following melancholy advices from the province of Connecticut, forwarded to the committee of correspondence in this city.

The blow (so much dreaded by our noble friend LORD CHATHAM) is now struck, a great deal of blood spilt, and much more, it is likely, than the present advices communicate. That great man, in his speech upon the necessity of withdrawing the troops from Boston (delivered in the House of Lords the 20th of January last) says: "Perhaps, even whilst I am now speaking, the decisive blow is struck, which may involve millions in the consequences; and, believe me, the very first drop of blood that is spilled will not be a wound easily skinned over; it will be irritable vulnus, a wound of that rancorous and festering kind, that, in all probability, will mortify the whole body."

P H I L A D E L P H I A, *April 24, 1775.*

An express arrived at five o'clock this evening, by which we have the following advices, viz.

WATERTOWN, Wednesday morning, near 10 o'clock.

To all F R I E N D S of A M E R I C A N L I B E R T Y.

BE it known, that this morning, before break of day, a brigade, consisting of about 1000 or 1200 men, landed at Phipps farm, at Cambridge, and marched to Lexington, where they found a company of our colony militia in arms, upon whom they fired, without any provocation, and killed six men, and wounded four others. By an express from Boston, we find another brigade is now on its march from Boston, supposed to consist of 1000 men. The bearer, Trial Briffet, is charged to alarm the country, quite to Connecticut; and all persons are desired to furnish him with fresh horses, as they may be needed. I have spoken with several, who have seen the dead and wounded. Pray let the Delegates from this colony to Connecticut see this; they know Col. Foster, one of the Delegates.

J. PALMER, one of the committee.

A true copy from the original, by order of the committee of correspondent of Worcester, April 1775.

Attested and forwarded by the committees of Brookline, Norwich, New London, Lyme, Saybrook, Killingworth, E. Guilford, Guilford, Brandford, Newhaven.

FAIRFIELD, SATURDAY, April 22, 8 o'clock.

Since the above written, we have received the following, by a second express.

THURSDAY, 3 o'clock after noon.

S I R.

IAM this moment informed, by an express from Woodstock, taken from the mouth of the express at two of the clock after noon, that the contest between the first brigade that marched to Concord was still continuing this morning at the town of Lexington, to which said brigade had retreated; that another brigade, said to be the second mentioned in the letter of this morning, had landed with a quantity of artillery at the place where the first did. The Provincials were determined to prevent the two brigades from joining their strength, if possible, and remain in great need of succour.

N. B. The Regulars, when in Concord, burnt the courthouse, took two pieces of cannon, which they rendered useless, and began to take up Concord bridge; on which Capt. ----- (who, with many on both sides, were soon killed) made an attack upon the King's troops, on which they retreated to Lexington.

I am, &c.

E. B. WILLIAMS.

To Col. O. B. JOHNSON, CANTERBURY.

P. S. Mr. M'Farlane of Plainfield, merchant, has just returned from Boston, by way of Providence, who conversed with an express from Lexington, who farther informs, that 4000 of our troops had surrounded the first brigade above mentioned, who were on a hill in Lexington; that the action continued, and there were about 50 of our men killed, and 150 of the Regulars, as near as they could determine, when the express came away. It will be expedient for every man to go, who is fit and willing.

The above is a true copy, as received by express from Newhaven, and attested by the committee of correspondence from town to town.

Attest, } Committee.
 JONATHAN STURGIS,
 ANDREW ROWLAND,
 THADDIUS BURR,
 JOB BARTRAM,

The above was received yesterday at 4 o'clock by the committee of New York, and forwarded to Philadelphia by ISAAC LOW, chairman of the committee at New York.

THIS morning the committee of correspondence met, and have determined to send expresses to the southward.----It is now full time for us all to be on our guard, and to prepare ourselves against every contingency. The sword is now drawn, and God knows when it will be sheathed.

PRINTED BY ALEXANDER PURDIE.

R_E_S_O_L_U_T_I_O_N

adopted and signed by Citizens of

Cross Creek, Cumberland County, North Carolina

June 20, 1775

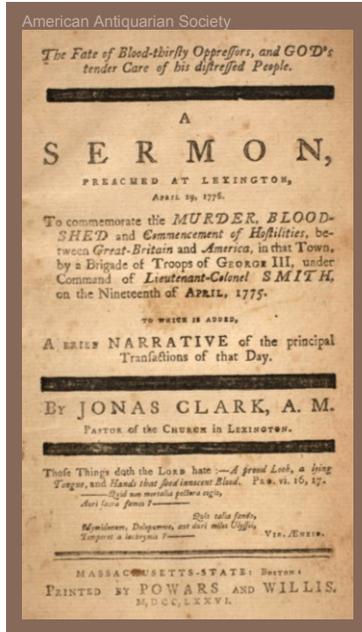
The actual commencement of hostilities against the Continent by the *British* Troops, in the bloody scene on the nineteenth of *April* last, near *Boston*; the increase of arbitrary impositions, from a wicked and despotick Ministry; and the dread of instigated insurrections in the Colonies, are causes sufficient to drive an oppressed People to the use of arms: We, therefore, the subscribers of *Cumberland* County, holding ourselves bound by that most sacred of all obligations, the duty of good citizens towards an injured Country, and thoroughly convinced that under our distressed circumstances we shall be justified before you in resisting force by force; do unite ourselves under every tie of religion and honour, and associate as a band in her defence against every foe; hereby solemnly engaging, that whenever our Continental or Provincial Councils shall decree it necessary, we will go forth and be ready to sacrifice our lives and fortunes to secure her freedom and safety. This obligation to continue in full force until, a reconciliation shall take place between *Great Britain* and *America*, upon constitutional principles, an event we most ardently desire. And we will hold all those persons inimical to the liberty of the Colonies who shall refuse to subscribe to this Association; and we will in all things follow the advice of our General Committee, respecting the purposes aforesaid, the preservation of peace and good order, and the safety of individual and private property.

Robert Rowan
 Lewis Barge
 Maurice Newlan
 Lewis Bowell
 Martin Leonard
 Theophilus Evans
 Thomas Moody
 Joseph DeLesting
 Arthur Connue
 John Oveler
 David Shepherd
 Micajah Terrell
 Peter Masser
 John Wilson
 Thos Cabeen
 Thos Rea
 Danl Douse
 James Emmet

James Dick
 Aaron Vardey
 John H Wenson
 One'rs West
 Wm Bathgate
 George Fletcher
 Charles Stevens
 James Pearl
 John Parker
 Walter Murray
 Thos White
 Joshua Hadley
 John Jones
 Wm Blocker
 Robt Council
 Sam Hollingsworth
 James Giles
 John Clendenin

Robert Carver
 Sam'l Carver
 George Barns
 James Edmunds
 John Caraway
 Wm Gillespy
 Wm Herin
 Philip Herin
 David Evans
 Robert Varner
 James Gee
 John Elwell
 Benj Elwell
 David Durm
 Wm White
 Simon Bauday
 Joseph Greer
 Robert Greer

[Resolution originally written by the Committee of Safety of Charleston, South Carolina, June 3, 1775, and copied by the Committee of Safety of Wilmington, North Carolina (signed June 19, 1775), and copied and signed by residents of Cumberland County, North Carolina (signed June 20, 1775, later known as the Cumberland Association or the Liberty Point Resolves).]



REV. JONAS CLARK

Pastor, Church of Christ, Lexington, Massachusetts

The Fate of Blood-Thirsty Oppressors and God's Tender Care of His Distressed People

A SERMON PREACHED AT LEXINGTON, APRIL 19, 1776. To commemorate the *MURDER, BLOODSHED*, and *Commencement of Hostilities*, between *Great-Britain* and *America*, in that Town, by a Brigade of Troops of GEORGE III, under Command of Lieutenant-Colonel *SMITH*, on the Nineteenth of APRIL, 1775.

♦ EXCERPTS ♦

. . . [One great purpose of this sermon] is to rouse and excite us to a religious acknowledgment of the hand of God, in those distressing scenes of MURDER, BLOODSHED and WAR, we are met to commemorate, upon this solemn occasion. . . .

At length, on the night of the eighteenth of April, 1775, the alarm is given of the hostile designs of the [British] troops. The *militia of this town* are called together, to consult and prepare for whatever might be necessary, or in their power, for their own, and the common safety; though without the least design [purpose] of commencing hostilities, upon these *avowed* enemies and oppressors of their country. In the mean time, under cover of the darkness, a brigade of these instruments of violence and tyranny, make their approach, and with a quick and silent march, on the morning of the nineteenth, they enter this town. And this is the place where the fatal scene begins! — They approach with the morning's light; and more like *murderers* and *cut-throats*, than the troops of a *christian king*, without provocation, without warning, when no war was proclaimed, they draw the *sword of violence*, upon the inhabitants of this town, and with a *cruelty* and *barbarity*, which would have made the most hardened savage blush, they *shed INNOCENT BLOOD!* — But, *O my GOD!* How shall I speak! — or how describe the distress, the *horror* of that *awful morn, that gloomy day!* — *Yonder field** can witness the *innocent blood* of our *brethren slain!* — And from thence does their *blood* cry unto God for vengeance from the ground! — There the tender father bled, and there the beloved son! — There the hoary head, and there the blooming youth! And there the man in his full strength, with the man of years! *They bleed — they die*, not by the sword of an open enemy (with whom war is proclaimed) in the field of battle; but by the hand of those that delight in spoil, and *lurk privily that they may shed innocent blood!* — But they bleed, they die, not in their own cause only; but in the cause of this whole people — in the cause of God, their country and

* The field (not of battle) but of *murder* and *bloodshed* where our men were fired upon by the troops. [Footnote in original sermon, as published].

posterity. — And they have not bled, they shall not bleed in vain. — Surely there is one that avengeth, and that will plead the cause of the injured and oppressed; and in his own way and time, will both *cleanse and avenge their innocent blood*. — And the names of *Munroe, Parker*, and others, that fell victims to the rage of *blood-thirsty oppressors*, on that gloomy morning, shall be had in grateful remembrance, by the people of this land, and transmitted to posterity, with honour and respect, throughout all generations.

...

But it is not by us alone, that this day is to be noticed. — This *ever memorable day* is full of importance to all around — to this whole land and nation; and big with the fate of *Great-Britain* and *America*. — From this *remarkable day* will an important *era* begin for both *America* and *Britain*. And from the *nineteenth of April, 1775*, we may venture to predict, will be dated, in future history, **THE LIBERTY or SLAVERY of the AMERICAN WORLD**, according as a sovereign God shall see fit to smile, or frown upon the *interesting cause*, in which we are engaged.

How far the prophecy before us, may be applicable, upon this solemn occasion, and with what degree of truth, or probability, it may be predicted, in consequence of the present unjust and unnatural war, “that *Great-Britain* shall be a desolation, and *England* be a desolate wilderness, for the *violence* against the children of *America*, because they have shed **INNOCENT BLOOD** in their land: But *America* shall dwell forever, and *this people* from generation to generation. And the **LORD** himself *will cleanse their blood*, that he hath not *already cleansed*.” — How far (I say) this prophecy may be applicable, in the present *interesting contest*, and how far it may be accomplished in the issue [result/ consequences] thereof, God only knows, and time only can discover. — But of this we are certain, if we “humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God upon us, we shall be exalted, in His due time;”³ and if we rightly improve his dealings, “accept the punishment of our sins” and righteously trust in his name, we shall see his salvation.



³ 1 Peter 5:6. “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.” [King James Version]