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It wasn't until 62 years after the shots at Lexington and Concord were fired that the phrase "shot heard round the world" was first used. It was coined by Ralph Waldo Emerson in his poem "Concord Hymn." This National Guard Heritage Painting imagines the scene at Concord Bridge when the Patriots defeated the Redcoats on April 19, 1775.

Refusing to lay down their arms, as British Major John Pitcairn had ordered, the Lexington militia formed ranks to block the soldiers.

As the Brits rushed Lexington Green, someone fired a shot. To this day it's not clear which side fired first.

Eight Minutemen were killed (some by British bayonets) while ten others were injured. (Follow this link to see the place where the Minutemen formed their line.) One Brit fell, wounded but not dead.

Firing a victory volley, the British soldiers ("Redcoats") marched on toward the North Bridge in Concord. They would not be as fortunate there.

Using their system of spies, 300-400 Minutemen were ready for the Redcoats when they reached Concord. (Follow this linked U.S. Military Academy map to examine the details of the Lexington and Concord fighting.)

As Ralph Waldo Emerson later described it:

*By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood
And fired the shot heard round the world.*

By the end of the day, British losses (273) were three times greater than American losses (95). In their retreat from Concord to Boston, the Redcoats sustained more casualties.

Legend has it that one British soldier described the retreat (this is a PDF link) as follows:

I never broke my fast for 48 hours, for we carried no provisions. I had my hat shot off my head three times. Two balls went through my coat and carried away my bayonet from my side.

Reconciliation between George III and the colonies was now out of the question. On August 23, 1775—issuing a royal decree—the King declared:

The colonies are in open and avowed rebellion. The die is now cast. The colonies must either submit or triumph.

It would take 6½ years before George III and the colonies knew which side would ultimately triumph. In the meantime, a Charlestown hill was about to lend its name to one of the most famous battles of the American Revolution: Bunker Hill.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/LEXINGTON-AND-CONCORD-American-Revolution-Highlights>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/LEXINGTON-AND-CONCORD-American-Revolution-Highlights>

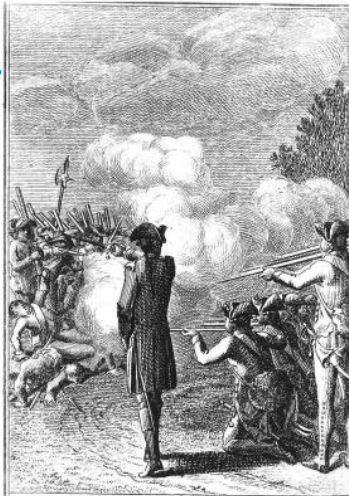
Media Stream



Battle of Lexington

Image online, courtesy the U.S. National Archives.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Battle-of-Lexington>



First Battle of the American Revolution

Library of Congress, *An American Time Capsule: Three Centuries of Broadsides and other Printed Ephemera*.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/First-Battle-of-the-American-Revolution>

Das erste Bürger Blut, zu Gründung der Americanischen Freiheit, vergossen bey Lexington am 19ten April 1775.



Death of Minute Men at Lexington

Image online, courtesy the U.S. National Archives.

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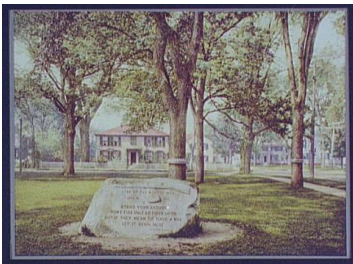


The First Blow for Liberty

Engraving by A. H. Richie after a drawing by F. O. C. Darley. Published in 1868.

Image online, courtesy the U.S. National Archives, image 200(S)-JH-3.

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Buckman Tavern and Lexington Green

Photo, Library of Congress.

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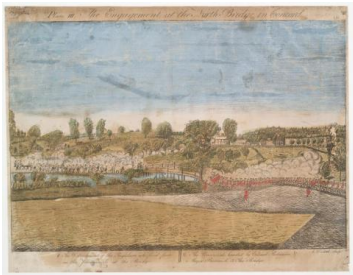
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Minutemen at Lexington

Image online, courtesy the U.S. National Archives.

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Engagement at the North Bridge, Battle of Concord

Hand-colored engraving. Originally published, 1775. Amos Doolittle (engraver) and Ralph Earl (artist).

This is the third of four Doolittle Engravings of the battles at Lexington and Concord, 1775.

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

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Battle of Concord - Patriots and Redcoats

Image online, courtesy the U.S. National Archives.

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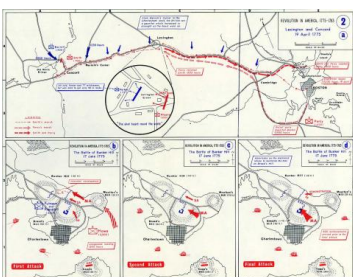
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British Troops in Concord

Doolittle Plate II, A View of the Town of Concord. Drawing from engraving by Amos Doolittle, a Connecticut militiaman, in The Doolittle Engravings of the Battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775. U.S. National Archives.

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Battle Map, Lexington and Concord

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Military Academy.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Battle-Map-Lexington-and-Concord>



Bloody Butchery of the British Troops

"Bloody Butchery of the British Troops," printed in Salem, 1775. Reprint: Salem, Massachusetts - 1850.

Library of Congress - *John Bull and Uncle Sam: Four Centuries of British-American Relations* - image vc45.

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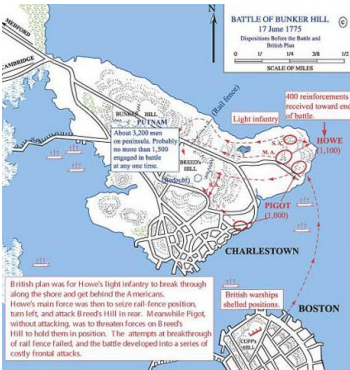
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British Retreat from Concord

Image online, courtesy the U.S. National Archives, image 66-G-5-35.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/British-Retreat-from-Concord>



Charlestown, Scene of the Bunker Hill Battle

Map, U.S. National Park Service.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Charlestown-Scene-of-the-Bunker-Hill-Battle>

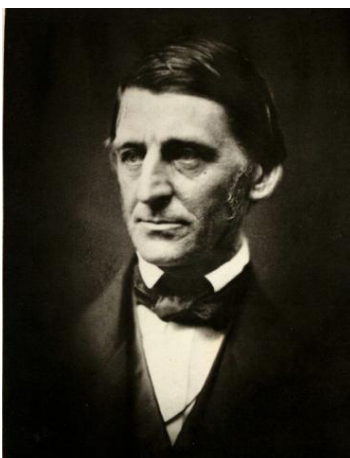


Victory Volley - Redcoats at Lexington

New York Public Library, Digital Gallery, Image 808492.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Victory-Volley-Redcoats-at-Lexington>

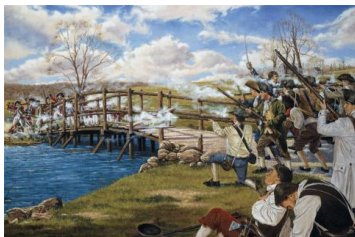


Ralph Waldo Emerson

Photograph from *Ralph Waldo Emerson: An Estimate of His Character and Genius in Prose and in Verse*, by Amos Bronson Alcott. Published in Boston by A. Williams and Co., 1882.)

Houghton Library, at Harvard University, is the principal repository of Emerson's archives.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Ralph-Waldo-Emerson>



LEXINGTON AND CONCORD

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