

## Fighting Begins

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Title:

After the First Continental Congress, colonists in many eastern New England towns stepped up military preparations. Minutemen, or civilian soldiers, began to quietly stockpile firearms and gunpowder. General Gage soon learned about these activities and prepared to strike back.

The spring of 1775 was a cold one in New England. Because of the long winter frosts, food was scarce. General Gage had been forced to put his army on strict rations, and British morale was low. Around the same time, Gage became concerned about reports brought to him concerning large amounts of arms and munitions hidden outside of Boston.

In March, Gage sent agents toward Concord, a town outside of Boston reported to be the site of one of the stockpiles. The agents returned with maps detailing where arms were rumored to be stored in barns, empty buildings, and private homes. The agents also told that John Hancock and Samuel Adams, perhaps the two most prominent leaders of resistance to British authority, were staying in Lexington, a smaller community about five miles east of Concord. As the snows melted and the roads cleared, Gage drew up orders for his men to march along the Lexington Road to Concord, where they would seize and destroy all munitions that they could find.

Main Idea:

Title:

As General Gage began to ready his troops quartered in Boston, minutemen were watching. Rumors were that a strike by British troops against resistance activities would come soon, although no one knew exactly when, nor did they know which towns would be targeted.

With Hancock and Adams in hiding, much of the leadership of resistance activity in Boston fell to a prominent young physician named Joseph Warren. Sometime during the afternoon of April 18, Doctor Warren consulted a confidential source close to the British high command. The source informed him that Gage intended to march on Concord by way of Lexington, seize Adams and Hancock, and destroy all hidden munitions. Warren immediately sent for Paul Revere, a member of the Sons of Liberty, and told him to warn Adams and Hancock as well as the townspeople along the way. Revere began to organize a network of riders who would spread the alarm.

On the night of April 18, Paul Revere, William Dawes, and Samuel Prescott rode out to spread word that 700 British Regulars, or army soldiers, were headed for Concord. Before long, the darkened countryside rang with church bells and gunshots—prearranged signals to warn the population that the Regulars were coming.

Revere burst into the house where Adams and Hancock were staying and warned them to flee to the backwoods. He continued his ride until he, like Dawes, was detained by British troops. As Revere was being questioned, shots rang out and the British officer realized that the element of surprise had been lost. When more shots rang out, the officer ordered the prisoners released so that he could travel with greater speed to warn the other British troops marching toward Lexington that resistance awaited them there.

Main Idea:

Title:	
<p>By the morning of April 19, 1775, the king's troops reached Lexington. As they neared the town, they saw 70 minutemen drawn up in lines on the village green. The British commander ordered the minutemen to leave, and the colonists began to move out without laying down their muskets. Then someone fired, and the British soldiers sent a volley of shots into the departing militia. Eight minutemen were killed and ten more were wounded, but only one British soldier was injured. The Battle of Lexington lasted only 15 minutes.</p> <p>The British marched on to Concord, where they found an empty arsenal. After a brief skirmish with minutemen, the British soldiers lined up to march back to Boston, but the march quickly</p>	<p>became a slaughter. Between 3,000 and 4,000 minutemen had assembled by now, and they fired on the marching troops from behind stone walls and trees. British soldiers fell by the dozen. Bloodied and humiliated, the remaining British soldiers made their way back to Boston.</p> <p>While the battles were going on, Adams and Hancock were fleeing deeper into the New England countryside. At one point, they heard the sound of musketfire in the distance. Adams remarked that it was a fine day and Hancock, assuming that his companion was speaking of the weather said, "Very pleasant." "I mean," Adams corrected Hancock, "this is a glorious day for America."</p>
Main Idea:	

List the six most important things that happened regarding the fighting at Lexington and Concord

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- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.