

HISTORIC VIEWS

OF

LEXINGTON

AND

CONCORD



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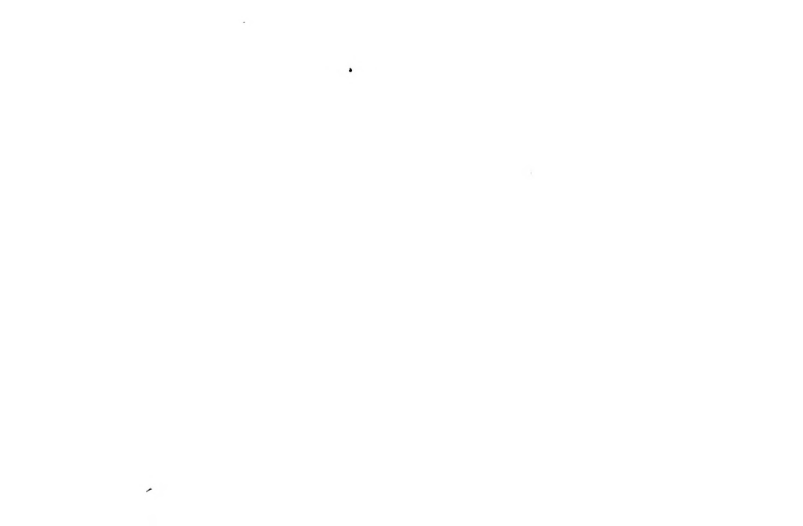
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VIEWS AND DESCRIPTIVE HISTORY
OF
Lexington and Concord

COMPILED AND PUBLISHED BY
O. G. SEELEY, PHARMACIST
LEXINGTON, MASS.

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Topography of Lexington



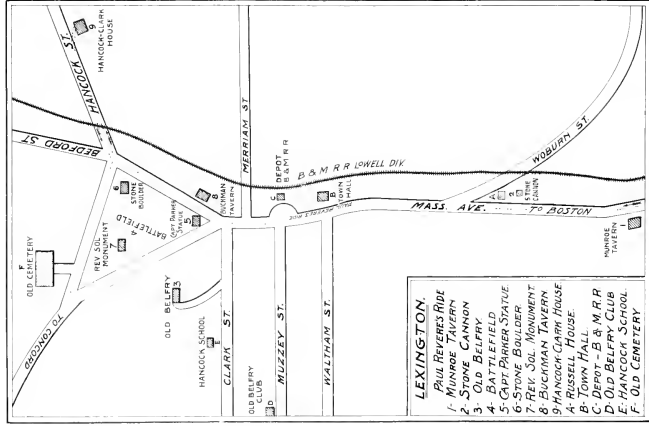
LEXINGTON lies about 10 miles northwest of Boston and 6 miles southeast of Concord. It has an extent of territory of about 12,000 acres and a population of 3800.

It is reached by steam cars from Boston, over the Boston and Maine Railroad (Lowell Division), which leave the North Union Station, Causeway Street, about 25 times daily, passing through Cambridge, Somerville and Arlington, thence to Lexington. It is also reached by two electric car routes from Boston, one leaving the Park Street Subway Station (Arlington Heights car) every 10 minutes; the other leaving Bowdoin Square in front of Revere House, passing through Cambridge to Harvard College Buildings, and near by the noted "Washington Elm," under which General Washington took command of the Continental troops, July 3, 1775.

In passing through Cambridge and Arlington, many historical tablets may be seen by the roadside, which have been erected to commemorate the thrilling events which transpired along the line of Paul Revere's ride.

On reaching Arlington Heights by electric cars, a change is made to cars which run through to Lexington and Concord.

Many of the towns throughout this section of Middlesex County have become noted, not only for the part taken by them in early historic events, but also for the natural beauty of their scenery, and the wealth of their literary and artistic culture.



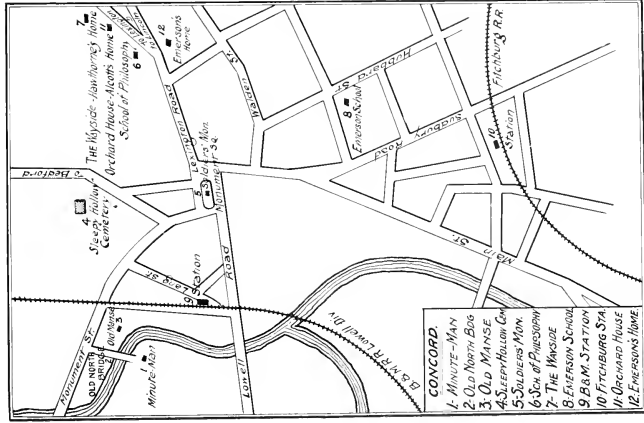
LEXINGTON.

- PAUL REVERE'S RIDE*
 1- MUNROE TAVERN
 2- STONE CANNON
 3- OLD BELFRY
 4- BATTLEFIELD
 5- CAPT. PARKER STATUE.
 6- STONE BOULDER
 7- REV. SOL. MONUMENT
 8- BUCKMAN TAVERN
 9- HANCOCK-CLARK HOUSE.
 A- RUSSELL HOUSE.
 B- TOWN HALL.
 C- DEPOT - B & M. R. R.
 D- OLD BELFRY CLUB
 E- HANCOCK SCHOOL.
 F- OLD CEMETERY

MAP OF LEXINGTON, MASS.

From Munroe Tavern to Hancock-Clarke House.

Dotted surface showing the route taken by Paul Revere.



Early History of Lexington

THE BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICAN LIBERTY

The early history of Lexington is involved in that of Cambridge, it being in the early days known as the wood-lots and hay-fields of Cambridge, but generally by the more popular designation of "Cambridge Farms."

Hon. Charles Hudson, the historian of the town, says that no reliable records of the first settlers can be found, but it is probable that Herbert Pelham and John Bridge were the first to take up homesteads in this section, about the year 1642, but it was not until seventy years later that it was set off from Cambridge and incorporated as a town.

In those days it "was as unnatural for a typical New England man to live without an able ministry as for a smith to work his iron without a fire." The early settlers were obliged to travel from five to ten miles to attend religious worship, a state of hardship which existed for many years. At last the increase in population at the "Farms" induced the General Court, after numerous petitions, to grant an order allowing the inhabitants of this scattered hamlet to organize a parish and settle "an able Orthodox minister for the dispensing of the gospel among them."

Early History of Lexington—*continued*

In 1713 the town was incorporated and became a separate, independent settlement, under the name of Lexington. It took its name from Robert Sutton, who bore the title of Lord Lexington, a British statesman of considerable eminence, who at the time was at the very height of his popularity. The name was suggested by Joseph Dudley, at that time Governor of the Province, and who was a distant relative of the Suttons. Thus was Lord Lexington honored by having his name bestowed upon a town which was to become a watchword of freedom throughout the land.

The town became noted for its military spirit at an early day, and was prominent in the Indian and French wars. In the Revolutionary struggle the town was represented, it is said, in seventeen different campaigns, many of her sons being slain on the battlefields. The war of the Rebellion again brought out the patriotic spirit of its inhabitants. Nearly two hundred went into the service, and at the close of the war Lexington's quota was more than full. At no time has Lexington been found wanting in her faith in and devotion to the Republic.

The Battle of Lexington

Out on the "Old Bay Road," now Massachusetts Avenue, about one half hour's ride by steam and about one hour by trolley, is the village green of Lexington, the spot where the first organized resistance to British oppression was made, and the first blood of the Revolution shed.

The heart thrills with a strange emotion as, standing on the park lawn in this town, one recalls the details of that April day in 1775.

History tells us that the morning sun shed its radiance upon a scene of unusual beauty. The verdure of spring was seen on every side; the blossoming trees sent forth their fragrance; and the whole atmosphere was replete with the freshness of the season's new life. "What a glorious morning for America!" was the exclamation of the patriot Adams as he looked out upon the world. Yes, doubly glorious! With that day came the overt act that filled the hearts of the American colonists to the open stand of resistance and defiance by force of arms resulting in the founding of a new republic, "the home of the brave and the true."

The causes which led up to this resistance or determination of the right of government are well known to every American citizen. The spirit of liberty was early and effectually kindled in the hearts of the people of Lexington. They accepted the teachings of Hancock and Adams, that the only rightful course for the colonists to adopt was to declare themselves entirely independent of the mother country, and

The Battle of Lexington — *continued*

to band themselves together into a permanent union. These teachings being considered seditious acts by the British, General Gage, then Provincial Governor of Massachusetts, commissioned Lieutenant-Colonel Smith and Major Pitcairn to march to Lexington with eight hundred troops for the purpose of seizing these distinguished leaders, and then to proceed to Concord and there destroy the military stores. That commission, which the English soldiers looked upon as little less than an excursion party among peaceful citizens, proved to be of mighty import. The holiday pastime was turned into a scene of violence and massacre: it was indeed the opening scene in a drama which culminated in sealing forever the cause of American Liberty and Union.

Although General Gage's orders had been carried out quietly, the movements of the British troops were being carefully watched by General Warren, who had suspicion of their intended march towards Lexington and Concord. Grave fears were entertained for the safety of Hancock and Adams, who were known to be the guests of Rev. Jonas Clarke, and every precaution was taken to guard against their capture. On the night of the 18th of April, Paul Revere and William Dawes had been dispatched to watch the movements of the British, and to alarm the people in case of an advance. A little before eleven o'clock Revere crossed the Charles river in a small boat within sight of the British man-of-war, "Somerset," and waited on the river bank for the pre-arranged signal to be given by hanging a lantern aloft from the belfry of the Old North Church, —

"One if by land, and two if by sea."

The anxious watcher at last saw the signal, and quickly mounting his horse, sped away on that memorable ride, made immortal by its results, and by the commemorative verses written by Longfellow. That

The Battle of Lexington — *continued*

fearless midnight rider, urging his panting steed through the Middlesex towns, typifies, in the minds of this generation, that heaven-called devotion of the "Spirit of '76," and symbolizes the earnest, untiring advance which has been a part of the nation ever since.

In passing Charlestown Neck, he came upon two British officers, who attempted his arrest, but wheeling his horse about, he fled back towards Charlestown, and, outriding his pursuers, gained the Medford road, alarming the people on his way, and reaching Lexington safely at about twelve o'clock. Immediately proceeding to the house of Rev. Mr. Clarke, he warned Hancock and Adams of their danger, and after a strong protest on their part, they allowed themselves to be conducted out of town to a place of safety.

In quick response to the alarm of Paul Revere, the bell clanged sharply; the drums sounded on the night air; there was a taking down of muskets by the "minute men," and far-off cries and confusion. Captain John Parker assembled his men at the usual place of parade on the Common, and gave orders for each man to load his musket with powder and ball, but not to fire unless fired upon. The company was then dismissed, with instructions to be in readiness at the first notes of alarm.

Meanwhile the British troops were advancing, never suspecting that the people had been warned of their approach. Lieutenant Colonel Smith, who led the advance with about eight hundred grenadiers, infantry and marines, had not proceeded far when he discovered that the country was up and alarmed; and detaching six companies under the command of Major Pitcairn, gave orders for a quick march with the intention of destroying the bridges at Concord. This was the body of soldiers which the messengers, sent out to detect the approach of the enemy, discovered within a mile and a half of the town, the news of

The Battle of Lexington — *continued*

which caused the alarm guns to be fired and the drums beat to arms. The militia, a ~~number~~ band of fifty or sixty men, formed in two ranks a little north of the meeting-house, while spectators gathered near by, some of them armed with muskets. "But," says Hudson, "what was to be done? What could this devoted little band do in the face of what they then believed to be twelve or fifteen hundred veteran troops? To attack them would, from a military point of view, be the height of madness; to stand their ground in case they were attacked by such overwhelming numbers would be exposing themselves to certain destruction. They stood there not merely as soldiers, but as citizens; nay, almost as statesmen, having the destiny of the country in their hands." They stood ready, on that morning of April 19, 1775, to redeem their pledge: "To sacrifice their estates and everything dear to life — yea, and life itself — in support of the common cause."

When Major Pitcairn appeared upon the scene, he must have gazed on that little band of hardy minute men, drawn up in line as if to resist the advance of the brilliant British army, with something of amazement and no little irritation. Riding forward, he shouted: "Disperse, ye rebels! Lay down your arms and disperse!" The patriots moved not. Pitcairn, exasperated by their stolidity, rushed forward, ordering his men to fire, to which no response was made. The determination and bravery displayed by the sturdy yeomen undoubtedly deeply impressed King George's troops, and it was not until the second command was given, accentuated by the discharge of his pistol, that his men responded with a murderous volley, which killed seven and wounded nine of Captain Parker's gallant company. Before the close of the events of that day, ten of their number had sealed their devotion to the cause with their precious lives.

Thus the first blood of the Revolution was shed.

Paul Revere's Ride.

A hurry of hoots in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet:
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night:
And the spark struck out by that steed in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

It was twelve by the village clock
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town,
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down,

It was one by the village clock
When he galloped into Lexington,
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swing in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

You know the rest. In books you have read,
How the British Regulars fired and fled,
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farm-yard wall,
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere,
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex Village and farm,
A cry of defiance and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door;
And a word that shall echo forevermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

LONGFELLOW.



PAUL REVERE'S PIDE

It was on this "Verge" Cook when he galloped into Lexington.

An Ancient Hostelry

IN the village ride from Boston to Lexington, one of the first tablets to be seen within the borders of the town is the one designating the "Old Munroe Tavern," situated about a mile southeast of Lexington Green. Like many another hostelry of "ye olden times," this one has an interesting history of its own; but in this volume only reference can be made to that period of which we are relating, — the Revolution. Near this spot, Earl Percy, with his reinforcements, succeeded in holding back the American patriots, meanwhile converting a portion of the tavern into a hospital. We are told that Earl Percy allowed his soldiers to loot and pillage the place to their heart's content. In the bar-room, which was located on the right hand side of the front door, is to be seen in the ceiling a bullet hole made by a British musket ball. And in this bar-room is a chair in which George Washington sat on his visit to Lexington in 1780, and in the dining hall in the southeast end of the second story he was royally entertained upon the same occasion.

When the British were about to retire from the place and continue their retreat, a fire was kindled in the bar room, but fortunately was extinguished before serious damage was done. For several years a portion of the house was used for Masonic lodge rooms. It is well preserved, and has undergone few alterations since the colonial days.



MUNROE TAVERN - LEXINGTON, MASS.

Built in 1704 - Earl Percy's Headquarters and Hospital - General George Washington was entertained here Nov. 17, 1775.

Earl Percy Meets the Fugitives

It was two o'clock in the afternoon when the British fugitives were met by Earl Percy. One of his field-pieces was planted near the site of the old Town Hall, which was later used as a High School, and the other upon the high ground above the Munroe Tavern. Here, with his guns trained upon the Americans, wherever they could be discovered, he held them in check for a brief time. One of the shots passed through the meeting-house and out at the pulpit window, burying itself in the ground, on the back part of the Common. The cannon from which this shot was fired is supposed to have been on the high ground where the High School building stands, and at this point a stone cannon has been placed by the Lexington Historical Society, to mark the spot where Percy came to the relief of his fleeing army.

The ball was preserved for some time, when it was transmitted to Harvard College, and by some neglect was allowed to disappear.



STONE CANON, LEXINGTON, MASS.
Marking the position of the British cannon used to shell the Continental Congress.



OLD BELL TOWER, LENOIR COUNTY, N.C.

From the bell tower was rung out the alarm on the morning of the 7th of April, 1862, along the "Military Men's" road south on the Commons.

The Story of the "Old Belfry"

At the time the parish was set off from Cambridge, a new meeting-house was built on the spot now marked by the Meeting-house Monument on the battle-ground. The house having no steeple, a belfry was built near it, and the bell which was presented by the town of Cambridge was hung in it. In 1761 a new bell was presented to the town by Isaac Stone, and a belfry was built for it on a hill which rises within five or six rods from the scene of the battle. In 1768 this belfry was removed to the Common and placed near the meeting-house. It was the ringing of this bell that aroused the inhabitants on the morning of the 10th of April, 1775, and for thirty years thereafter it was used to summon the people to worship, and tolled a solemn requiem for the departed. Its clanging notes also reminded the householders of their duty to keep the fires well raked up and to go to bed at a prescribed hour. In 1796 the belfry was removed to the Parker homestead in the south part of the town, and nearly a century thereafter, in 1891, it was donated to the Lexington Historical Society, and by that society placed on its present site, now known as "Belfry Hill."

The bell has long since become a thing of the past, but the tongue, which sounded the notes of alarm on that never-to-be-forgotten morning, is now preserved among the valuable relics of the Historical Society.

The Battlefield (Lexington)

THE ground known as the Battlefield, or the Common, contains about two acres, and is marked an imperfect parallelogram, situated at the junction and lying between the roads leading to Concord and to Bedford. It is nearly level, with the exception of a gentle swell on the southerly side, on which slight elevation stands the monument erected by the State in 1799, and now overgrown with ivy.

This monument, erected to the memory of the first Revolutionary martyrs, is pointed to with pride by the present residents as the memorial of the first stroke for freedom, and is probably the oldest monument of the Revolution in the country. Upon its face is inscribed the names of those who fell in battle, with an elaborate eulogy of the men, written by Rev. Jonas Clarke, an eminent divine of that period, a facsimile of which will be found on another page. In a stone vault in front of this monument rests the remains of these patriot sons of Lexington.

The line of battle is marked by a large stone boulder placed about ten rods north from the Meeting-house Monument. This latter monument was erected to designate the site of the first three meeting-houses in town. On this is inscribed the names of the first seven ministers of the parish. A few feet in the rear of this is the centennial elm planted by General Grant, April 10, 1875. Near the center of the Common is the liberty pole, bearing the inscription:

“THE BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICAN LIBERTY.”



BATTLEFIELD, LEXINGTON, MASS.

The Birthplace of American liberty - The spot where the first organized resistance to British oppression was made, and the first blood of the Revolution shed.



CAPTAIN JOHN PARKER.

Surmounting the "Hayes Memorial Fountain," Commander of the Minute-Men, at the battle on Lexington Green, April 19, 1775.

HENRY HUGHES, KILBURN'S (5/20/1901)

Captain John Parker

At the time of the opening of the Revolution, Captain John Parker was living at the old homestead, located in the southwest part of the town, and which has been in the Parker family since 1710. He was succeeded in the ownership of the farm by his son John, and here in 1810 his grandson, Theodore Parker, was born.

The fact that Captain Parker was selected to command the minute men is evidence that he was a man of more than average character. His firmness and coolness on that trying occasion when he faced the foe with an injunction from his superiors not to allow his men to fire unless fired upon is worthy of the highest praise. It was a responsibility few men would have cared to assume in moments which must have been fraught with the most intense excitement. Says Ripley, in his history of the fight at Concord, "The military company under Captain Parker were prompt, patriotic, and courageous to admnation. That a single company should parade in an opposing attitude, directly in the face of nearly a thousand of the picked troops of Great Britain, places their courage and firmness beyond all controversy." Upon the return of the enemy from Concord, Captain Parker met them with his company, and poured a deadly fire into their ranks. On the 6th of May he repaired with a detachment of forty-five of his command to the headquarters of the army, to assist in the prevention of any further incursion of the king's troops into the country. And on the occasion of the memorable battle of Bunker Hill, he marched with sixty-one of his company to Cambridge, where they were stationed to prevent the British crossing the Charles river.

He did not live to witness the termination of a struggle in the opening chapters of which he was one of the foremost actors. He died September 17, 1775, aged forty six years. His grave may be seen in Old Cemetery.

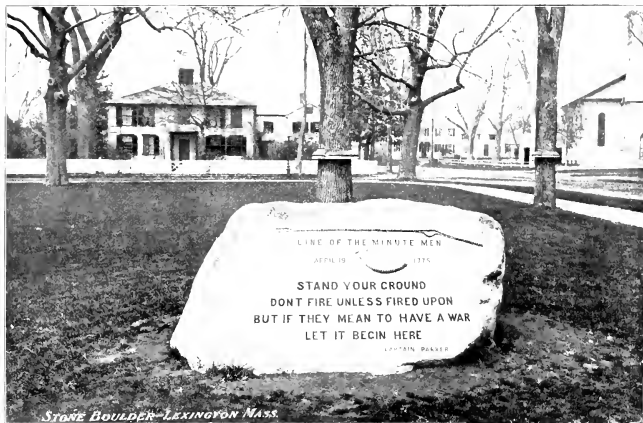
The Line of Battle (Stone Boulder)

Ox the battlefield, about ten rods from the Meeting-house Monument, has been placed a large boulder to mark the line of the minute-men — that Spartan band who stood firmly at their post on the 19th of April, 1775, when the impetuous Pitcairn, cursing the “rebels,” ordered them to “disperse.”

“No muscle moved, but every ear was tense”

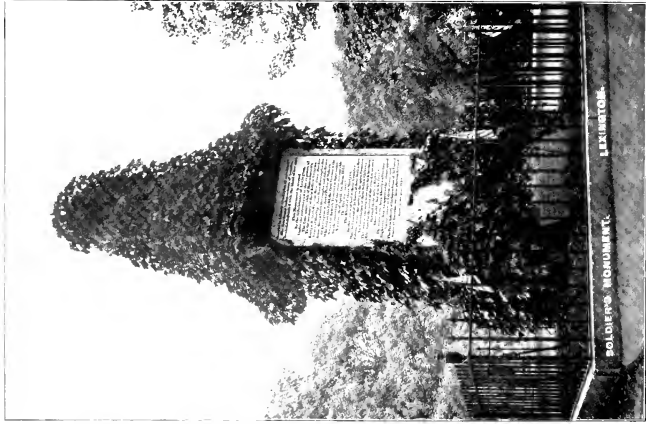
To hear the word which Captain Parker had been commanded not to give “until fired upon.” Is it a wonder, under the circumstances, that some of the men should seem to falter? That the firm voice of the leader had to admonish them that he would have the first man shot down who should quit the ranks or leave his post without orders? Thus they stood, bravely, obediently, within sight of their homes and permitted themselves to be shot down by the enemy’s merciless muskets. When the order was given by Captain Parker for them to disperse, seven of the minute men had been slain and the British were coming upon them in front and from both sides of the meeting-house.

This huge boulder well symbolizes the spirit of the men whose deeds it has been placed here to commemorate. It is estimated to weigh from twelve to fifteen tons. On its face is carved an old musket with a powder horn thrown over it, pointing in the direction of the line of battle. Beneath are inscribed the words of Captain Parker to his men: “Stand your ground; don’t fire unless fired upon; but if they mean to have a war let it begin here.”



STONE BOULDER - LEXINGTON, MASS.

This large boulder marks the position of the "Minute Men" when they were fired upon by the British. In the year, the house of Jonathan Harrington, who was wounded on the morning of April 19, 1775, dragged himself to the door and died at his wife's feet.



The first monument of the Revolution, erected in America. The burial place of Capt. Parker's men killed in the battle.

Revolutionary Soldiers' Monument on the Battlefield

BUILT IN THE YEAR 1799.

**SACRED TO THE LIBERTY AND THE RIGHTS OF MANKIND!!!
THE FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE OF AMERICA,
SEALED AND DEFENDED WITH THE BLOOD OF HER SONS.**

This Monument is erected
By the inhabitants of Lexington
Under the patronage and at the expense of
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts,
To the memory of their Fellow Citizens,
Ensign ROBERT MUNKOE, and Messrs. JONAS PARKER,
SAMUEL HADLEY, JONATHAN HARRINGTON, JR.,
ISAAC MUZZY, CALEB HARRINGTON and JOHN BROWN,
Of Lexington and ASAHEL PORTER of Woburn,
Who fell on this field, the first victims to the
Sword of British Tyranny and Oppression
On the morning of the ever memorable
Nineteenth of April, An. Dom. 1775,
The Die was cast! * * *

The Blood of these Martyrs
In the cause of their God and their Country
Was the Cement of the Union of these States, then
Colonies, and gave the spring to the Spirit, Firmness
and Resolution of their Fellow Citizens,
They rose as one man to Revenge their Brethren's
Blood, and at the Point of the Sword, to Assert
and defend their Native Rights,
They Nobly dar'd to be Free!!
The contest was long, Bloody and Affecting,
Righteous Heaven Approved the Solemn Appeal
Victory crowned their Arms, and
The Peace, Liberty, and Independence of the United
States of America was their Glorious Reward.

The Buckman Tavern

APPROACHING the Battleground from the southeast, on the right, a few rods from the street and directly opposite the Captain Parker Statue, stands the Old Buckman Tavern, build in 1692, and which is now known as the Merriam house.

This ancient structure with its timbers of oak betokens that it is of the fashion of the 17th century, and like many other ancient landmarks to be seen in this historic town, fittingly represents the spirit of the unconquerable colonists. Here many of Captain Parker's men gathered on the evening of the 18th o April to talk over the stirring events of the hour and to make ready for the threatened approach of the British troops, little dreaming what direful scenes they were to witness on the village green the following morning.

When compelled to disperse under the murderous fire of the enemy many of the patriots took refuge in this ancient hostelry, and from the doors and windows returned the fire. The perforated clapboards are evidence that the British acknowledged the compliment with return shots.

The place was long used as a tavern and for many years the first postoffice in Lexington was located in it.

The house shows no sign of decay, and from all outward appearance may stand for another two centuries as a memorial of the incidents of the Revolution.



BUCKMAN TAVERN - LEXINGTON MASS.

BUCKMAN TAVERN, LEXINGTON, MASS

It was the rallying place of the Minute-Men on the night of April 18, and on the morning of the encounter at the Common. It contains bullet holes made by the shots of the British soldiers, who were fired upon from the house."



HANCOCK-CLARK HOUSE - LEXINGTON, MASS.

Built by the father of the Revolution of Rev. John Hancock (1723-1793), and of his successor, Rev. Jonas Clark, (1717-1794). Here Samuel Adams and John Hancock were imprisoned by Paul Revere, April 19, 1775.

Hancock-Clarke House

Lexington was blessed with two distinguished clergymen in the person of Rev. John Hancock, the second minister of the town, and Rev. Jonas Clarke, his successor. They were not only eminent for their talent and piety but for all those qualities which contribute towards good citizenship. They were esteemed and venerated by their own people and by the public at large, hence their influence was widely felt. In the truest sense of the word they were the "parish priests," beloved, honored and respected. Says Mr. Hudson: "A history of Lexington without the mention of Mr. Hancock and Mr. Clarke, would be as defective as a history of the Jewish dispensation without the mention of Moses."

The Hancock-Clarke house, which stands about a hundred rods north of the Common, on Hancock St., is, therefore, of especial interest to the visitor. The one-story, gambrel-roofed house was erected in 1660 by Mr. Hancock, and in this little house was born and reared his three sons and two daughters. The eldest son, John, followed his father's profession and was settled in Quincy, where his son John, of Revolutionary fame, was born. Thomas, the second son, who moved to Boston and became one of the wealthiest merchants in New England, made the additions to the present house, for the comfort and convenience of his parents, and here his father at the ripe old age of eighty-two passed away, in the fifty-fourth year of his ministry.

Rev. Jonas Clarke, who succeeded him, married Lucy Bowes, a granddaughter of Mr. Hancock, and here he lived from 1760 until the time of his death in 1805. The two clergymen thus completed a ministry in Lexington of one hundred and five years, and not less than twenty five clergymen may be numbered among the descendants of Hancock and Clarke.

The Town Hall (Lexington)

THE Town Hall, on Massachusetts Avenue, is a solidly built structure, pleasantly and conveniently located. The first floor is devoted to the Cary Library, and a Memorial Hall, dedicated to the memory of the men from Lexington who gave their lives to their country's service.

The library was founded by Maria Hastings Cary of Brooklyn, N. Y., a native of Lexington, and contains about 20,000 volumes. These are annually added to by an appropriation of the town and by the income of a fund. The walls are adorned by portraits and busts of distinguished personages. There have also been gathered here many valuable relics relating to the early history of the town, particularly to the Revolutionary period, all of which are of interest to the visitor.

On this floor has been set aside a convenient space as a memorial to the town's patriot dead. On marble tablets are inscribed the names and deeds of those who have fallen in battle, and in niches are marble statues of John Hancock, of Samuel Adams, of a Minute-man of 1775 and of a soldier of 1861.

In the main hall in the second story is a commanding picture of the battle of Lexington, painted by Sandham, at a cost of \$4000.

The Library is open to visitors every week day from 2 to 8 P. M.

C O N C O R D



OLD NORTH BRIDGE - CONCORD, MASS.

Historical photo of the Old North Bridge in Concord, Massachusetts, taken in 1900. The bridge is a simple wooden structure with a central arch and railings, crossing a river. The scene is framed by large, leafy trees on both sides. In the foreground, a dirt path leads up to the bridge.

The Battle at the North Bridge (Concord)

THE story of the fight at Concord has been told again and again. The people took a decided stand in favor of liberty from the time of the earliest controversy between England and the colonies. While admitting their "firm attachment and ardent love to Our Most Gracious Sovereign, King George," they declared in open town meeting that, "As men we have a right to life, liberty, and property." They denied the right of Parliament to tax them without their consent, and plainly signified their intention "never tamely to submit" to any infringement of their liberties.

Concord had been made the leading military post, and it was the intention of General Gage to either capture or destroy these supplies. Colonel Barrett, however, had been cautioned as to the probable attack of the British, and had already taken measures to secrete many of them.

Paul Revere, in attempting to reach Concord after notifying Lexington, was captured by some British officers, and his companion, Dr. Prescott, who succeeded in eluding arrest, conveyed the intelligence. The militia and minute men, under Colonel Barrett, were hurriedly called together, and before daybreak their numbers had been greatly augmented by "minute companies" from Acton and other nearby towns.

To more fully understand the situation on the morning of the invasion by the enemy, let us take a glance at the topography of the village of Concord. It is situated on level ground, and is completely commanded on either side by hills. The approach from Lexington is from the southeast; the road, before

The Battle at the North Bridge—*continued*

reaching the village, runs nearly a mile at a level grade, and along the side of a hill which rises abruptly from thirty to fifty feet, terminating at Monument Square. The top of this elevation forms a plain and overlooks the village. Concord river flows on the westerly side of the village, winding in its course and placid in its movements. The North Bridge, which crosses this river, was about half a mile from the meeting-house, and from the bridge was a causeway leading westerly over low ground in the direction of Acton. Several companies of the American forces took position on the west side of this bridge, upon an eminence now called "Battle Lawn," where the enemy's movements could be watched.

The British entered the town at about seven o'clock in the morning, marching in two columns,—one in the main road, and the other on the hill to the north. Reaching the village without opposition, they sent forward a detachment to secure the bridges, while the main body went in pursuit of the stores. The patriots from their point of view not only saw the British gathered at the bridge, but also saw smoke arising from the village; and fearing for the fate of their families, determined to recross the bridge in the face of the enemy and march to the center of the town. The British seeing the Americans approach, recrossed to the east side of the bridge, formed in order of battle, and commenced taking up the planks. Seeing their object, the minute-men rushed forward, and when within a few rods of the bridge were fired upon by the British, wounding one of the patriots. Another and fatal volley followed, killing the brave Captain Davis and Abner Hosmer of the Acton company. Seeing this, Major Buttrick exclaimed: "Fire, fellow-soldiers, fire! for God's sake, fire!" A general discharge from the whole line of provincial ranks followed, killing two of the British soldiers and wounding others. The firing was followed by a

The Battle at the North Bridge—*continued*

general charge across the bridge by the patriots, the British fleeing precipitately along the road towards the village, joining the main body of the king's troops near the meeting-house.

The British, thwarted in their designs, and seeing the aggressive movements of the colonists, now greatly reinforced by arrivals from neighboring towns, became uneasy as to their own safety, and at noon commenced their retreat. At Merriam's Corner they were attacked by the Americans, and several were killed and others wounded. From this point it became a fight from every house, barn, wall, or covert, and finally the retreat became a rout. Back, back they fled, past the Lexington green, the scene of the morning battle, dispirited and well-nigh exhausted, and nothing but the timely arrival of Lord Percy with his reinforcements saved them from utter destruction.

The Gray Old Manse

A cross the meadows, by the gray old manse,
The historic river flowed."

It was in 1842 that Nathaniel Hawthorne brought his bride to Concord and took up his residence at the old Emerson parsonage. In his introductory chapters of the "Mosses from an Old Manse," he gives a delightful picture of this protracted honeymoon and his sequestered life, as tranquil as the placid stream near whose banks it was passed. From a little room on the second floor he could look out upon the shaded lane that led down to the "rude bridge that arched the flood" and see beyond the battlefield where the farmers of Concord turned back King George's men.

In this beautiful and quiet retreat nearly four years of unbroken happiness were passed, and the book the title of which is quoted above was the fruit of this seclusion.

The "Old Manse" was the parsonage built for William Emerson in 1765, a zealous patriot of the Revolution. In the opening chapter of his book, Hawthorne thus introduces the reader to his new abode: "Between two tall gate-posts of rough hewn stone (the gate having fallen at some unknown epoch) we beheld the gray front of the old parsonage, terminating the vista of an avenue of black ash trees. . . . It was worthy to have been one of the time-honored parsonages of England, in which, through many generations, a succession of holy occupants pass from youth to age, and bequeath each an inheritance of sanctity to pervade the house and hover over it as with an atmosphere."



THE OLD MANSE, CONCORD, MASS.

The photograph is by J. C. Wells and is one of a series of pictures of the Boston scene. In the "Home of Hawthorne" part of the series, and which is in the book "The Old Manse" in Concord, Mass.



THE WAYSIDE - (HAWTHORNE'S HOME) - CONCORD MASS.

THE WAYSIDE - HAWTHORNE'S HOME - CONCORD, MASS.

Booklet "The Wayside" is available from the Concord Historical Society, Concord, Massachusetts. The house is called by Mr. Hawthorne, Jr., "Mount of Vesuvius" in the "Cover of the Wayside."

“*The Wayside of Nathaniel Hawthorne*”

IN 1852, Hawthorne, after an absence of several years, returned to Concord and bought the Bronson Alcott home, situated on the Lexington road at the foot of a long steep hill, thickly grown with hemlock and pine, a place especially suited for one of his solitary disposition and well calculated to permit full scope to his imaginative faculty. To this place he gave the name of “The Wayside,” and on the crest of a hill near the house, which Mrs. Hawthorne called his Mount of Vision, he was accustomed to take his solitary walks while he brooded over his last romance.

On the main structure he had erected for his study a large square room which he called “the tower.” This tower was entered by a trap-door, and upon this door Hawthorne would place his chair when writing to secure his seclusion from all intruders.

Although Hawthorne spent much of his life away from his fellow-men and apparently preferred so to do, there are touching passages in his note books showing his sense of loneliness and his wish for recognition from the world. Here he was at work on “Septimus Felton,” the scene of which was “The Wayside” and the period the Revolution, when death overtook him, and the romance was left unfinished

“ There in seclusion and remote from men
The wizard hand lies cold,
Which at its topmost speed let fall the pen,
And left the tale half told.”

The Minute-Man Still Holds His Ground

THE splendid statue of a Minute-Man, an engraving of which is given on the opposite page, is located on the "Battle Lawn," a little way beyond the North Bridge where the militia and minute men stood watching the British forces on the morning of their entrance into Concord, April 19, 1775, and near the spot where the gallant Captain Davis fell, pierced by a British bullet.

It was designed by a native sculptor, D. C. French, whose powers in the delineation of pose and expression are wonderfully effective and life like. It was dedicated on the one hundredth anniversary of the "Concord Fight," and embodies to perfection the spirit of the day it is intended to commemorate, symbolizing not the act of any one individual but of every sturdy and virtuous yeoman of that day who left his plow in the furrow to seize his musket and powder horn, prepared to defend with his life his country's rights.

The statue will stand as an abiding memorial of their sacrifice and a monument to their heroism. From its base of granite it proclaims to the world the truth of these hardy sons' resolve: "That he can never die too soon who lays down his life in support of the laws and liberties of his country."



MINUTE MAN-CONCORD, MASS.

THE CONCORD MINI MAN, CONCORD, MASS.

Situated on the "Battle Lane," near the old North Bridge. Erected for the town of Concord in memorial to those who fell in the battle, and dedicated on the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Concord, April 19, 1875. Designed by D. C. French, a native sculptor.



·LOUISE M. ALCOTT·



·HAWTHORNE·

A GROUP OF CELEBRITIES

CONCORD, MASS.



·EMERSON·



·THOREAU·

GROUP OF CELEBRITIES, CONCORD, MASS.

LOUISE M. ALCOTT — Born 1832, Died 1888. Author of "Little Men," "Amy Jo's Scrap Bag," etc.
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE — Born 1804, Died 1864. American Novelist and Essayist.
RALPH WALDO EMERSON — American Philosopher, Essayist and Poet. Born 1803, Died 1882.
HENRY DAVID THOREAU — Born 1817, Died 1849. Poet Naturalist.

The Group That Gave to Concord its Literary Atmosphere

IN 1842 the four who gave to Concord much of its literary atmosphere were all gathered near the banks of the winding, silent river. Emerson was thirty-one, Alcott, the father of Louisa May Alcott, was thirty-five; Hawthorne was thirty and Thoreau twenty-five. Thus we see Miss Alcott was removed a generation from the others. Her father was an idealist; benign, saintly, unworldly and impracticable. His attempts to carry out his theories were seldom successful, and his business ventures were fraught with little pecuniary benefit to the family. Miss Alcott's early life was made up of noble sacrifices and heroic effort. She lived, however, to see her work crowned with success and to enter at last into the full enjoyment of the fruit of her labors. Among the widely known and appreciated stories which she wrote, "Little Women" and "Little Men," founded on her home life, touched the popular chord. They were not only reprinted and sold in England but were also translated into several foreign languages. Her remains rest with those of her kin on Authors' Ridge in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery in Concord.

Ralph Waldo Emerson was descended from the best New England stock — what might be called the intellectual aristocracy. He was the prophet of the sect known as transcendentalists and Concord was the mecca. He must have been acknowledged not only the head but the brain of the Concord School of Philosophy. Says a writer: "Of this group, the most conspicuous in its domain that has ever existed in America, Mr. Emerson was easily chief; and during his strongest years perhaps he was more." He was

The Group that gave to Concord its Literary Atmosphere—*continued*

the acknowledged exponent of New England thought, and as a keen philosophic seer he was accorded rank among the master minds of the world. But with all his philosophy, Mr. Emerson managed to retain enough of his saving common sense to enable him to command the respect and veneration of his fellow-citizens.

Henry David Thoreau, the "poet naturalist," and native disciple of Emerson, lived in the woods about Wadden. Emerson speaks of him in his biography as "homely in appearance, a rugged stone hewn from the cliff. Though living in civilization he was the keenest observer of external nature I have ever seen. He had the trained sense of the Indian, eyes that saw in the night, his own way of threading the woods and fields, so that he felt his path through them in the densest night. He saw as with microscope, heard as with ear trumpet, and his memory was a photographic register of all he saw and heard." "He possessed a mind singular for its independence, its resolute confronting of the problems of life, its insight into nature, its isolation and its waywardness."

The life of Nathaniel Hawthorne in Concord has already been spoken of in these pages. He does not seem to have been entirely in harmony with the teachings of the two last characters, and never came into sympathy with their ideas of "God, Freedom and Immortality." Emerson spoke of his writings as of "the terrible, the grotesque, and sombre."

The four, however, have helped the village of Concord do more for American literature, than has any great metropolis of the nation, and there are few places where associations, both poetic and patriotic, cluster so thickly.

