

What happened at Lexington Green?

1. Sworn Testimony of Emma Frye to the Justices of the Peace

Lexington, April 23, 1775

I, Emma Frye, wife of Marquette Frye, testify and declare, my husband reported to me that while being in a pasture near the meetinghouse at said Lexington, on Wednesday last, at about half an hour before sunrise,... he saw three officers on horseback advance to the front of said Regulars, when one of them being within six rods of the said Militia, cried out, **“Disperse, you rebels, immediately!”** on which he brandished his sword over his head three times; meanwhile the second officer, who was about two rods behind him, fired a pistol pointed at said Militia, and the Regulars kept huzzaing till he had finished brandishing his sword, he pointed it down toward said Militia, and immediately on which the said Regulars fired a volley at the militia. It was at this time that my husband ran off as fast as he could as the Militia as firing. He also reported to me that as soon as the officer cried, **“Disperse, you rebels,”** the said Company of Militia dispersed every way as fast as they could, and while they were dispersing the Regulars kept firing at them incessantly.

Emma Frye

2. Letter from General Thomas Gage, Leader of the British Soldiers, to Lord Barrington, British Secretary of War
April 22, 1775 Boston

I wish to tell your Lordship of what happened on April 19. I had heard that weapons and ammunition were being stored at Concord. They were to be used by some troops who would act against our King’s rule.

On the night of April 18, I got some of our troops out of town. The leaders of these men were Lt. Col. Smith and Major Pitcairn. I did this as secretly as possible. Their orders were to destroy the supplies at Concord. The next morning I sent 32 more companies to help them. These men were lead by Lord Percy. Lt. Col. Smith must have been seen because their men fought off his troops. This took place within six miles of Concord. A few of these men fired at the front companies first. This caused our troops to fire back. That sent all the rebels running.

3. Report of John Parker, Leader of the Lexington Men

What I will tell happened on April 19 about 1 o'clock. I was told that there were British officers riding up and down the road. They were stopping people who passed on the road and saying mean things to them. I was told that a number of British troops were coming to Boston. They were going to take our weapons that we had at Concord. There we talked about what we should do. We decided that unless we were harmed we wouldn't

be seen or bother the British troops. When they suddenly came I ordered our men to leave quickly and not to fire. They killed eight of our men. All of this happened without us even firing at them.

4. A letter from Joseph Warren to the Town in Massachusetts

To all of us, friends who are ruled by the King. General Gage and his soldiers have begun to attack this colony.

On the night of April 18 some of the King's soldiers secretly came to Cambridge. Colonel Smith was in charge of them. They hoped to either take or destroy the weapons and ammunition that our colony had. These supplies were stored in Concord and were there to protect our colony. That night some of our people were on a road between Boston and Concord. These people were unarmed. They were captured and harmed by British soldiers. These soldiers seemed to be the officers in General Gage's Army.

The British soldiers came to Lexington on their way to Concord. Seeing these soldiers, the men from Lexington ran in different ways. The British soldiers ran toward them and began firing. Eight of the Lexington men were killed and five or six were wounded. The British soldiers kept firing. Only those who weren't killed or wounded escaped.

Friends, these are acts of cruelty against our colony. They are doing these acts because we and the other colonies won't become Britain's slaves. Now we will still do what the King asks of us. And we would still go to war for him, his family and his crown. We would give our monies and our lives to him. However, if he continues this cruel treatment we must fight against him. We pray that heaven understands why we must fight. We will either die or be free.

5. Diary of Lt. John Barker, A British Soldier:

Last night 600 men crossed to the other shore of Cambridge marsh. It was between 10 and 11 o'clock. The leaders of these men were Lt. Col. Smith and Major Pitcairn. Only the leaders and a few others knew why we were doing this. As we crossed the marsh we got wet up to our knees. Then we stopped on a dirty road. There we stood until 2 o'clock in the morning. We were waiting for supplies to be brought from our boats. Most of the men threw these supplies away when they came. This was because the men had to wade in water that was up to our

middles. After going a few miles we came upon 3 or 4 people. There were the scouts for the rebels so we captured them.

We marched until we were 5 miles from a town called Lexington. Then we heard that there were hundreds of people ahead. They wanted to stop us from going on. At 5 o'clock we came to Lexington. We saw between 200 and 300 people. They were on the Common in the middle of the town. We kept marching forward. We were ready in case we were attacked but we didn't plan to attack them. However, when we were close to them, they fired on or two shots. Our men rushed in without any orders. Our men also fired and the Lexington men ran. Some of these men were killed. We couldn't tell how many because they went behind walls or into the woods. One of our men was wounded but he was the only one. We then lined up on the Common. But this was very hard because our men were so wild they couldn't hear the orders.

6. The Report of Major John Pitcairn, Leader of the British Soldiers, to General Gage.

April 25, 1775

Sir, I am sending you this report since you wish to know what happened at the town of Lexington on April 19. I will briefly state the facts since I am very busy. Otherwise I'd give you a longer report of what happened that day.

Six companies of soldiers were sent to Concord by Lt. Col. Smith. They were to capture the two bridges on either side of

Concord. At 3 o'clock in the morning we were within two miles of Lexington. Here we learned that 500 armed men had gathered in order to fight against us. Hearing this I got on my horse and galloped up to the six companies. I went to the very front company. Two officers told me a rebel had left the others and come up to them. He tried to shoot them but the gun misfired. After this I told our soldiers to move forward. They were not to fire unless ordered. When I came to the end of the town I saw 2000 rebels. They were on a common and I came within 1000 yards of them. Then they began to file off towards some stonewalls. These stonewalls were off to the right of us. Our soldiers saw this and ran after them. I called to our soldiers not to fire. I said they should surround and disarm them. Four or five times I ordered them not to fire. Then some rebels jumped over the wall. They fired five or six shots at our soldiers. A

man in one company was wounded and my horse was wounded in two places. At the same time five or six more shots were fired. Theses shots came from a meetinghouse at our left. When this happened our soldiers fired here and there. They had not been given any order to fire. I won't tell you any more since I'm sure Col. Smith has given you more details.