

**Essential Question**

What brought about the clash between American colonists and British soldiers at Lexington and Concord?

**Reading Guide****Content Vocabulary**

militia (p. 133)

Loyalist (p. 137)

minutemen (p. 134)

Patriot (p. 137)

**Academic Vocabulary**

approach (p. 135)

volunteer (p. 136)

**Key People and Events**

Continental Congress (p. 133)

John Adams (p. 133)

John Jay (p. 133)

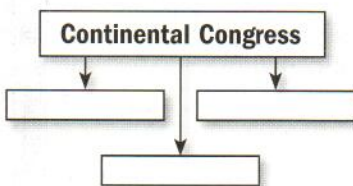
Richard Henry Lee (p. 133)

George Washington (p. 133)

Paul Revere (p. 135)

**Reading Strategy**

**Taking Notes** As you read, list three key actions of the Continental Congress. Use a diagram like the one below.

**American Diary**

Many colonists were frustrated by British efforts to exert authority over the colonies. At an inn, John Adams overheard a Massachusetts farmer saying: "If Parliament can take away Mr. Hancock's wharf . . . they can take away your barn and my house." Another replied, "Well, it is high time for us to rebel. We must rebel . . . and we had better rebel now."

—quoted in the book *John Adams*

Messengers spread the news about the first battle between the Patriot and British forces at Lexington.

# The Continental Congress

**Main Idea** Colonial leaders met in Philadelphia to discuss their opposition to British policy.

**History and You** Have you ever worked with a group to accomplish a shared goal? Read to learn about the common goal that united the Continental Congress.

In September 1774, 55 delegates from all the colonies except Georgia arrived in Philadelphia. They had come to establish a political body to represent American interests and challenge British control. They called the new organization the **Continental Congress**.

## Delegates to the Congress

Political leaders from across the colonies attended the Congress. Massachusetts sent fiery Samuel Adams and his cousin **John Adams**, a lawyer. New York sent **John Jay**, another lawyer. From Virginia came **Richard Henry Lee** and Patrick Henry, two outspoken defenders of colonial rights, as well as **George Washington**. Patrick Henry summed up the meaning of the gathering:

### PRIMARY SOURCE

"The distinctions between Virginians, Pennsylvanians, New Yorkers, and New Englanders, are no more. I am not a Virginian, but an American."

—Patrick Henry, at the Continental Congress

## Decisions of the Congress

The delegates drafted a statement of grievances calling for the repeal of 13 acts of Parliament. They believed these laws violated the "laws of nature, the principles of the English constitution, and the several charters" of the colonies. The delegates voted to boycott British trade. No British goods could be brought in or used in the colonies. No colonial goods could be sold to Britain.

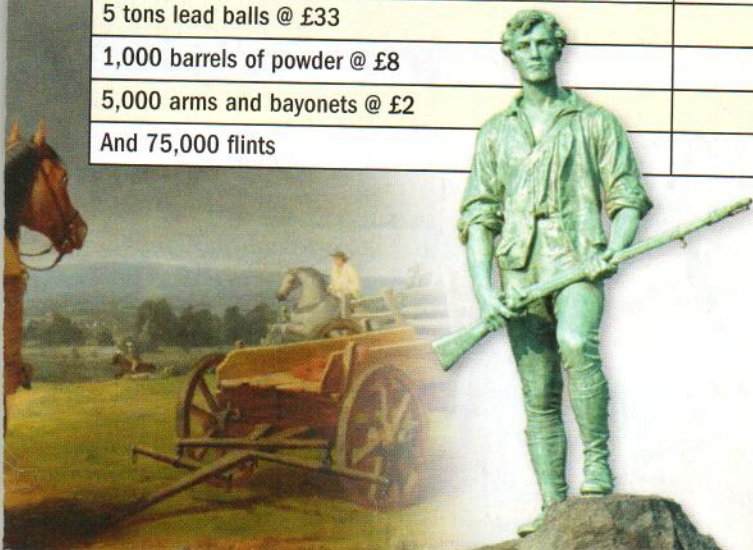
The Congress also decided to endorse the Suffolk Resolves, so named because they were prepared by the people of Suffolk County, Massachusetts. These resolutions called on the people of the county to arm themselves against the British. The people responded by forming **militias**—groups of citizen soldiers.

**Reading Check** **Explaining** What was the purpose of the Continental Congress?

## If You Were There Militias in the Colonies

**Citizen Soldiers** Even before the American Revolution, the American colonists had a long tradition of serving in the military. If you were a member of a militia, you were an important part of the defense of your town. You trained and drilled with the other soldiers. You practiced musket and cannon drills. You were required to provide your own weapons—usually a musket—and ammunition. As the break between Great Britain and the American colonies grew, town governments also supplied their militias. The chart to the left shows arms purchased by the town of Salem, Massachusetts.

20 tons grape- and round shot, from 3 to 24 lb. @ £15	£300
10 tons bomb shells @ £20	£200
5 tons lead balls @ £33	£165
1,000 barrels of powder @ £8	£8,000
5,000 arms and bayonets @ £2	£10,000
And 75,000 flints	£100



## Critical Thinking

**Speculating** What advantages would local militias have against British soldiers?

# The First Battles

**Main Idea** America's fight for independence began when British troops clashed with minutemen at Lexington and Concord.

**History and You** Why would the element of surprise be a valuable weapon during a war? Read to learn how the minutemen used the element of surprise to their advantage.

Colonists expected that if fighting against the British broke out, it would begin in New England. Militia companies in Massachusetts held frequent training sessions, made bullets, and stockpiled rifles and muskets. Some companies, known as **minutemen**, boasted they would be ready to fight on a minute's notice. In the winter of 1774–1775, a British officer stationed in Boston noted in his diary:

**PRIMARY SOURCE**

"The people are evidently making every preparation for resistance. They are taking every means to provide themselves with Arms."  
 —from *Diary of Frederick Mackenzie*

## Britain Sends Troops

The British also prepared for conflict. King George announced to Parliament that the New England Colonies were "in a state of rebellion" and said that "blows must decide" who would control America. By April 1775, several thousand British soldiers were in and around Boston, with many more on the way. Their general, Thomas Gage, had instructions to take away the weapons of the Massachusetts militia and arrest the leaders.

Gage learned that the militia was storing arms and ammunition at Concord, a town about 20 miles (32 km) northwest of Boston. He ordered 700 troops under Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith to march "to Concord, where you will seize and destroy all the artillery and ammunition you can find."

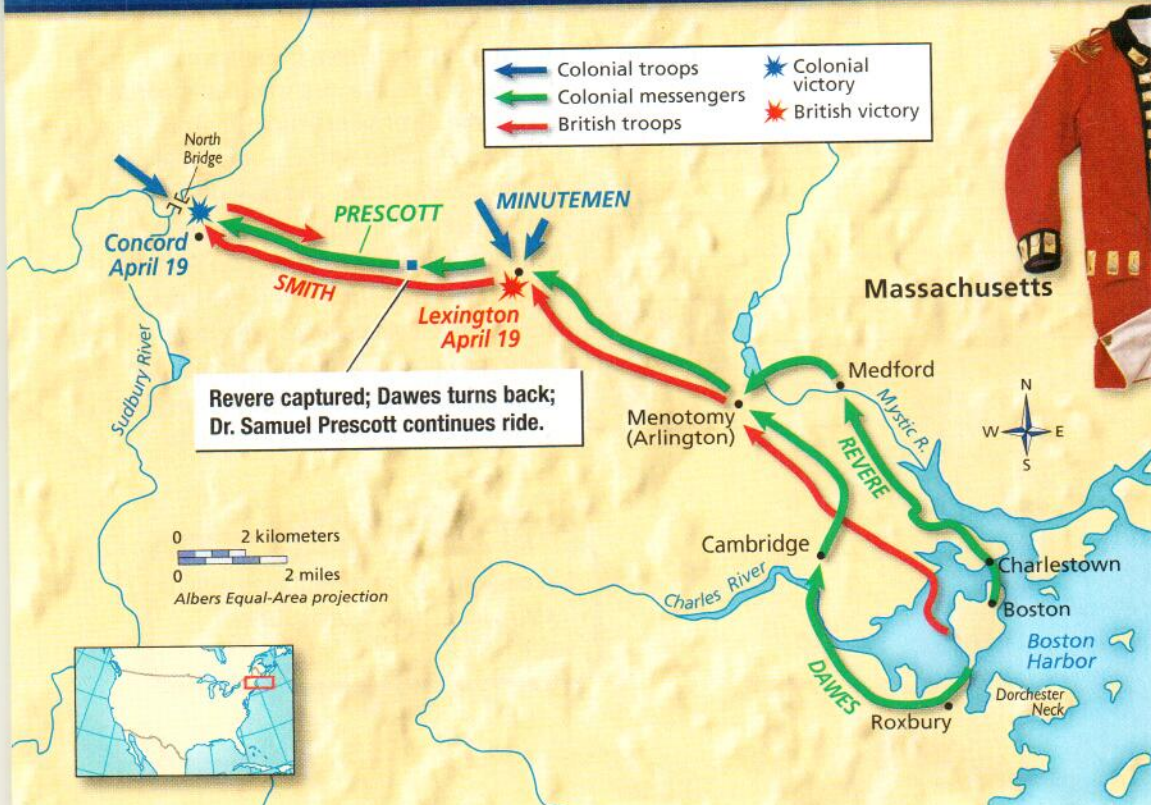
## Alerting the Colonists

On the night of April 18, 1775, Dr. Joseph Warren walked the streets of Boston looking for any unusual activity by the British army. He saw a regiment form ranks in Boston Common and begin to march out of the city.

# The Battles of Lexington and Concord, 1775



- Colonial troops
- Colonial messengers
- British troops
- Colonial victory
- British victory



British uniform coat

**"Stand your ground. Don't fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a war, let it begin here."**

— Captain John Parker to the Lexington Militia

Warren rushed to alert **Paul Revere** and William Dawes, members of the Sons of Liberty. Revere and Dawes rode to Lexington, a town east of Concord, to warn Samuel Adams and John Hancock that the British were coming. Revere galloped across the moonlit countryside, shouting, "The regulars are out!" to people along the way. Upon hearing the news, Adams exclaimed, "What a glorious morning this is!" Adams was ready to fight for independence.

## Lexington and Concord

At dawn the redcoats **approached**, or moved closer to, Lexington. There they discovered about 70 minutemen who had been alerted by Revere and Dawes. Led by Captain John Parker, the minutemen stood on the town common with muskets in hand. A minuteman reported:

### PRIMARY SOURCE

"There suddenly appeared a number of the king's troops . . . the foremost of which cried, 'Throw down your arms, ye villains, ye rebels!'"

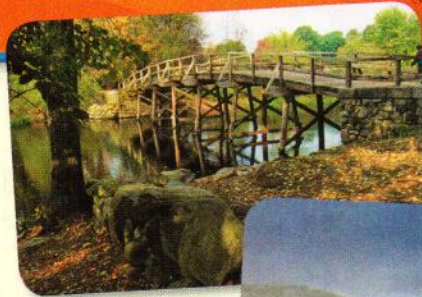
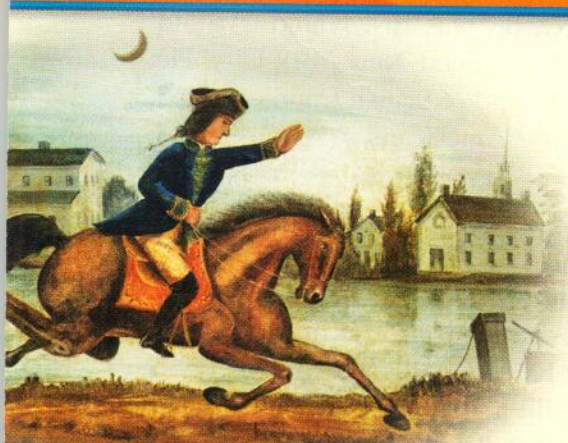
—from *The Military Journals of Two Private Soldiers*

A shot was fired, and then both sides let loose an exchange of bullets. When the fighting ended, eight minutemen lay dead. The British troops continued their march to Concord. When they arrived, they found that most of the militia's gunpowder had already been removed. They destroyed the remaining supplies. At Concord's North Bridge, waiting minutemen turned back the British.

Messengers on horseback had spread word of the British movements. All along the road from Concord to Boston, farmers, blacksmiths, and clerks hid behind trees and stone fences. As the British marched down the road, the militia fired. By the time the redcoats reached Boston, at least 174 were wounded and 73 were dead.

Looking back, the poet Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote in "The Concord Hymn" that the Americans at Lexington and Concord had fired the "shot heard 'round the world." The battle for independence had begun.

 **Reading Check** **Explaining** How were the colonists preparing for war with Britain?



◀ The North Bridge today

The North Bridge at Concord was the site of the first American victory in the Revolutionary War. ▶



- ▲ On the night of April 18, British troops secretly set out from Boston to Concord. Messengers, including Paul Revere (above), were sent to spread the alarm. When the British reached Lexington, Patriot minutemen were waiting.

### Critical Thinking

**Analyzing** What happened after British forces reached Lexington?

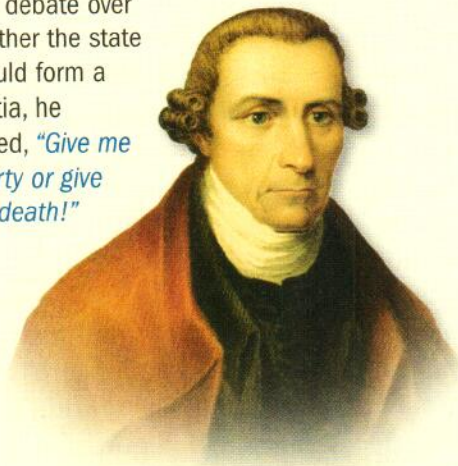
**Maps in Motion** See StudentWorks™ Plus or [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com).

# People IN HISTORY

## Patrick Henry

Lawyer and Revolutionary

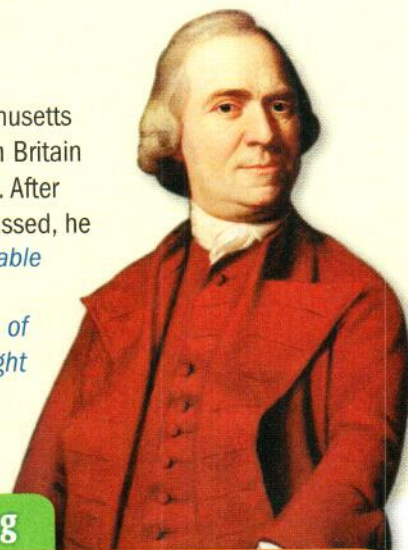
Henry was one of the first members of the Virginia House of Burgesses to argue for independence from Britain. In a debate over whether the state should form a militia, he vowed, "Give me liberty or give me death!"



## Samuel Adams

Patriot Leader in Boston

Adams argued that Massachusetts should be independent from Britain long before anyone else did. After the Townshend Acts were passed, he wrote that it was "irreconcilable to . . . common sense and reason, that a British house of commons, should have a right . . . to give and grant the property of the Colonists."



### CRITICAL Thinking

1. **Synthesizing** What did Patrick Henry and Samuel Adams have in common?
2. **Analyzing** What do you think Patrick Henry meant when he said, "Give me liberty or give me death!"?

## More Military Action

**Main Idea** As colonial militias formed and the fighting continued, American loyalties were split.

**History and You** Have you ever taken sides in a dispute between two friends? Read to learn how the issue of independence divided Americans.

Shortly after Lexington and Concord, Benedict Arnold, a captain in the Connecticut militia, was authorized to raise a force of 400 men to seize Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain. Ticonderoga was not only strategically located but also rich in military supplies.

Arnold learned that Ethan Allen was also mounting an expedition in Vermont to attack the fort. Arnold joined his militia with Allen's force, known as the Green Mountain Boys. Together they caught the British by surprise. Fort Ticonderoga surrendered on May 10, 1775.

Later during the war, Arnold sold military information to the British. When he conspired to surrender the key fort of West Point to the British, his treason was discovered. Arnold fled to British-controlled New York City. He was given command of British troops and led raids against the Americans in Virginia and Connecticut.

## Building Forces

After Lexington and Concord, the committees of correspondence sent out calls for **volunteers**, or helpers, to join the militias. Soon the colonial militia assembled around Boston was about 20,000 strong. For several weeks, the American and British armies waited nervously to see who would make the next move.

### History ONLINE

**Student Web Activity** Visit [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com) and complete the Chapter 5 Web Activity about Benedict Arnold.

## The Battle of Bunker Hill

On June 16, 1775, about 1,200 militiamen under the command of Colonel William Prescott set up fortifications at Bunker Hill and nearby Breed's Hill, across the harbor from Boston.

The British decided to drive the Americans from their strategic locations overlooking the city. The next day the redcoats assembled at the bottom of Breed's Hill. Bayonets drawn, they charged up the hill. With his forces low on ammunition, Colonel Prescott reportedly shouted the order, "Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes." The Americans opened fire, forcing the British to retreat. The redcoats charged two more times, receiving furious fire. In the end the Americans ran out of gunpowder and had to withdraw.

The British won the Battle of Bunker Hill but suffered heavy losses—more than 1,000 dead and wounded. As one British officer wrote in his diary, "A dear bought victory, another such would have ruined us." The British had learned that defeating the Americans on the battlefield would not be quick or easy.

## Choosing Sides

As American colonists heard about these battles, they faced a major decision. Should they join the rebels or remain loyal to Great Britain? Those who chose to stay with Britain, the **Loyalists**, did not consider unfair taxes and regulations good reasons for rebellion. Some Loyalists lived in relative isolation and had not been part of the wave of discontent that turned many Americans against Britain. Still others expected Britain to win the war and wanted to gain favor with the British.

The **Patriots**, on the other hand, were colonists who supported the war for independence. They believed that British rule had become unbearable. The Patriots were determined to fight the British until American independence was won.

The American Revolution was not just a war between the Americans and the British. It was also a civil war among colonists—Patriots against Loyalists.

 **Reading Check** **Analyzing** What did the British learn from the Battle of Bunker Hill?

## Section 3 Review

**History ONLINE**  
Study Central™ To review this section, go to [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com).

### Vocabulary

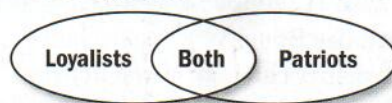
1. Define each of the following terms and use them in a paragraph: **militia**, **minutemen**, **approach**, **volunteer**, **Loyalist**, **Patriot**.

### Main Ideas

2. **Explaining** How did endorsement of the Suffolk Resolves by the Continental Congress push the colonies closer to war?
3. **Describing** What tactics did the colonists use against the British troops on their march back from Concord to Boston?

### Critical Thinking

4. **Interpreting** Reread Patrick Henry's quote about the Continental Congress. What change was occurring in the way the colonists saw themselves?
5. **Comparing and Contrasting** Use a diagram like the one below to show the similarities and differences between Patriots and Loyalists.



6. **Creative Writing** Write a one-act play in which ordinary people in a small town react to the news of the Battle of Lexington. Remember that not all colonists wanted independence from Britain.

### Answer the Essential Question

7. What brought about the clash between American colonists and British soldiers at Lexington and Concord?