

Play 4 - Lexington and Concord: April 19th 1775

Speakers:

Paul Revere (Patriot rider)

General Gage (led British troops in Boston)

William Dawes (Patriot rider)

Major John Pitcairn (led British troops in Lexington & Concord)

Cpt. John Parker (led Lexington men)

Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith (with Pitcairn)

Revere: Listen, my children, and you shall hear
 Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
 On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
 Hardly a man is now alive
 Who remembers that famous day and year.

Dawes: Huh! *Chance* would be a fine thing! Nothing like
 blowing your own trumpet – but you, of course, had
 the added advantage of someone *else* blowing it for
 you. That wretched Longfellow – a poet who
 certainly has a lot to answer for!

Cpt. Parker: What do you mean? How could celebrating our
 history in poetry lessons be a *bad* thing?

Dawes: Just the small matter that *he* wasn't the only one
 who rode out that night! *I* went on exactly the same
 mission, only *my* name didn't happen to rhyme with
 'hear'!

Gage: And *that* wasn't the *only* error in that much renowned poem!

Pitcairn: Quite. I don't recall seeing *my* name anywhere in it, either!

Lieut. Smith: Or mine!

Gage: That's true – but I was referring to this Paul Revere *making it* to Concord!

Pitcairn: Which he *didn't!* He'd got past our men once – on the way to Lexington. But he *wasn't* so lucky on the second part of his journey.

Lieut. Smith: Correct! Stopped in his tracks by us Redcoats!

Dawes: Just as well there was another rider – a man called Prescott who carried out the last part of his mission.

Gage: To warn those folk in Concord of our intentions to take their ammunition and arms.

Revere: And you'd thought yourselves *so* clever setting off from Boston under cover of darkness. But *not quite dark enough*, thanks to those 2 lanterns that shone out from the Old North Church, warning our men that you were coming by water!

Dawes: And then the famous midnight ride! OK, we could *all* hear *that* coming a mile off!

Revere: I'm sorry about my fame – please remember *I* didn't write the poem!

Cpt. Parker: Come! Come! Gentlemen! Let's not argue! You *both* did a magnificent job that night. Without *you* my army of 80 men would *never* have got ready in time!

Gage: And of course it was down to *you* that those two scoundrels, Samuel Adams and John Hancock, were warned of our coming and left Lexington just in time!

Revere: Though they seemed in no hurry to do so! It wasn't until my return trip to Lexington, having failed to get through to Concord, that I persuaded them to leave!

Pitcairn: And so it was we arrived at Lexington, 240 men strong! More than a match for those straggly Lexington men!

Lieut. Smith: So who *did* fire that first shot?

Cpt. Parker: *You* did!

Pitcairn: No, *you* did!

Lieut. Smith: I guess we'll *never* know. But when I arrived on the scene it was sheer *mayhem*!

Cpt. Parker: Seven of our men dead and 10 more wounded!

Pitcairn: *Not* so many then.

Cpt. Parker: You wouldn't say that if you'd lost a relative – like I did, one Jonas Parker.

Dawes: And to see your loved one die right in front of you, on your very own doorstep, like Mrs Harrington, wife of Jonathan Harrington.

Revere: *And* with their son looking on! How cruel!

Gage: And there *we* were, with just *one* wounded!

Pitcairn: But it wasn't to stay that way for long. *None* of us who went on that fated march to Concord and back will *ever* forget the experience.

Lieut. Smith: Indeed. Not only did we come away empty-handed

Dawes: Thanks to Prescott warning everyone to hide away their weapons and ammunition.

Pitcairn: But we could never have foreseen those *barbaric* guerilla tactics used by their soldiers during our retreat to Lexington.

Gage: They were *indeed* barbaric! Certainly not the actions of a well disciplined, well trained force like ours!

Cpt. Parker: But firing from behind bushes, trees and walls proved far more effective than *your* traditional ways. It wasn't easy for *you* firing at enemies you couldn't see!

Gage: Very *ungentlemanly* behavior, if you ask me!

Revere: And what was so *gentlemanly* about firing on our troops at North Bridge?

Pitcairn: Well, what about *your* men advancing on *ours*?

Dawes: Only after they'd spotted that smoke from the center of town and thought you were ransacking Concord!

Lieut. Smith: And who says we fired the first shot anyway?

Gage: *That's* a question that seems to pop up *again* and *again*!

Revere: Just goes to show how un-planned all these events were. Nobody, not even those supposedly in charge, seemed to have a *clue* what they were doing!

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